

## Absence of Handler

10 points

### Account of the exercise

*The dog will be placed at a spot indicated by the Judge, in a "down" position for Level I and II. In Level III the position (sit or down) will be determined by a drawing. The Judge may change the position during the competition according to the condition of the field and the weather.*

*This exercise will last 1 minute, which starts when the handler enters the designated blind. The handler must not look back when he leaves his dog on the way to the blind, nor when entering the blind. During the Absence of the Handler, a distraction occurs, to which the dog must remain indifferent, without moving or changing position. The diversion will depend on the level. It must never take the form of aggression or provocation. Interference from the Decoy is forbidden. The distance from the distraction to the dog shall be at least 10 m in Level I and II and 5 m away from the dog in Level III.*

The ABSENCE exercise is designed to test the dog's ability to hold a position in the face of distractions in the absence of the handler. This one minute exercise is relatively simple for any dog that has been prepared to deal with distractions. Examples of scenarios from trials used for this exercise include:

- Person pushing wheelbarrow around dog, dropping stuff.



- Dog left in front of a mirror.
- Man circling dog with a large bell, squatting while ringing bell.
- Person banging on barrel with a metal pole.
- Hula hoops thrown past dog.



- Gunshots coming from behind a tarp.
- Frisbee game over dog.
- Horn played during a sit.



- Soccer game between three persons.
- Person in blind rattling a child' s toy.

It often seems that the dogs actually do better when there are multiple distractions. It seems to take their mind off of the fact that they have been left. This is an exercise best begun early, and progressed in small increments. Anxiety is not your friend!