

## Purpose & Objectives of the Temperament Test

This article lists the objectives of the exercises in the GSDCA Temperament Test, their objectives, and a brief summation of each exercise. This should be reviewed not only by the handlers but also by the club helpers for each one of the stations.

**Behavior Toward Strangers: objective to measure the dog's reaction to strangers in a non-threatening situation.**

*Neutral Stranger:* This test is to simulate a typical street situation. The stranger will carry on a conversation with you, but will not make overtures to the dog.

*Friendly Stranger:* The stranger will make overtures to the dog and will touch the dog and handler as well.

**Reaction To Aural Stimuli (Noise): objective to measure alertness to aural stimuli and the degree of investigative behavior toward the stimuli.**

*Can-rattling:* After the rattling begins, the dog is allowed to approach the blind to investigate the source of the noise. As the dog comes around the blind to discover the source of the noise and investigate the can, the dog is given 20 seconds to make a close inspection. DOG MAY BE ENCOURAGED by the using phrases like "what's that?" or "find it".

*Gun Test:* If the dog turns and/or moves toward the sound when the gun is shot, the handler may follow. The dog may be encouraged as in the can-rattling test.

**Reaction To Visual Stimuli: objective to measure the dog's reaction to sudden visual stimuli, degree of investigative behavior and startle recovery.**

*Umbrella Test:* Handler and dog proceed toward the assistant sitting and when the dog is about 3' (no closer) from the tip of the umbrella, it will be opened directly toward the dog. The open umbrella is then lowered and rested on the ground while the assistant retains the handle in his hand. He dog is allowed to move forward (with encouragement if necessary) to investigate the umbrella. It is the recovery that is judged.

**Footing Test: objective to measure the dog's reaction to unusual footing.**

*Footing Test:* Handler and dog approach a strip of polyethylene and proceed directly across an exercise pen laid flat on the ground.

**Aggressive Stranger: objective to measure the dog's capacity to recognize and react in a positive, guarding manner to a potentially threatening situation and, in the event of a threat, to react in an aggressive, confident manner.**

*Self-protective/Aggressive Reaction:* this has three parts; the entrance of the stranger, the strangers approach to the dog and handler, and the threatening gestures by the "weird stranger". The dog's reaction to each is assessed and, if a positive response, the helper will proceed.

*The Temperament Committee welcomes any questions that you may have concerning the temperament test. We also strongly encourage clubs to hold temperament tests in conjunction GSDCA. Please contact us to arrange for a test in your area.*