



FTLC

**FIELD TRIAL LIAISON COUNCIL
of the Kennel Union of
Southern Africa**



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2021 Annual Report

2021 was a rather erratic year for the field trial community with the COVID-19 Pandemic, which struck the country in 2020, continuing its impact through 2021 with varying levels of lockdown across the field-trialling season.

This very sadly led to the cancellation of a number of field trials during the course of 2021, as well as severe limitations on training and working tests through the course of the lockdown periods. (Eight retriever trials were unfortunately cancelled in 2021 due to Covid-19, however on the upside a total of 340 dogs still ran in the retriever trials which were held in 2021.)

The Weimaraner shooting ratings were also cancelled this year due to lock-down; while the Spaniel trials were held under the auspices of the Gundog club field trial.

A small number of the retriever clubs, also managed to hold "Retriever Working Tests" during the "open" parts of the season, which enabled dogs to get some extra training and trial experience.

Regrettably the impact of COVID-19 is such that it will most likely have a long-term effect on the field-trailing community with a year of relative inactivity in a sport that is struggling to grow.

The 2021 KUSA National Championship Field Trial was held in the Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth) and was successfully hosted by the field-trialling community of the Walmer and Suburban Kennel Club. This prestigious event was exceptionally well run by the Club and had 10 entrants invited to run. Four dogs finished the champs stake and it was won by a Golden Retriever "Gospelash Highlander of Chardale", owned by Charles Trollope.

Despite the FTLC's best endeavours to continue its initiative to focus on improving judging skills and of trying to attract new judges to the sport, this has been severely hampered by COVID. We, however, managed to get three new learner Retriever field trial judges into the sport, who began their journey into judging this year.

On the HPR and Pointing breeds front, the NFTA Reciprocity Agreement came to its finality in 2021, with KUSA no longer recognising NFTA trials and qualifications. Following on the termination of the agreement, we have however welcomed 13 new NFTA HPR judges who successfully wrote and qualified the KUSA HPR Judges exam (for previously qualified NFTA Judges) and have joined the KUSA judges panel for HPR trials.

Sadly the HPR Club did not hold licenced field trials during 2021 (with the exception of a single Natural Ability Test) and then at the end of the season chose to resign its affiliation from both the FTLC and KUSA.

On the upside, we have had five new clubs affiliate to KUSA, join the FTLC and the HPR trialling community which has significantly grown this part of the field trialling sports.

They are namely:

- Central Field Trial Club
- German Shorthaired Pointer Gauteng Club
- Highveld Versatile Hunting Dog Club
- KZN Field Trial Club
- Versatile Pointing Club

The Cape Field Trial Club and the Working Deutsche Drahthaar Club have also had two new sets of KUSA tests approved under Schedule 5C(5) and (6) Regulations, namely the Versatile Tests for Pointing Breeds and the Gundog Hunting Tests.

Schedule 5C(1) -Retrievers; Schedule 5C(2) – Spaniels ; Schedule 5C(3) – HPR and Schedule 5C(6) – Versatile Tests have all been updated and are ready for approval by Fedco in December 2021.

A proposed field trial calendar has been set for 2022, which we hope to see rolled out as the new season breaks. We trust 2022 will be a more successful year for the field-trialling community.

For those readers interested in learning more or in participating in field trials, the FTLC website (<http://www.kusa.co.za/fieldtrials>) contains up-to-date information and links to the field trial clubs.

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Chairman, FTLC