

# The VIMS Competition

*courtesy of Animal Info Publications*

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## What is the VIMS Competition

**VIMS** is a competition open to German Shepherds. VIMS is named after Victor Ian Maitland-Smith and his son John Maitland-Smith was heavily involved in developing the competition in 1979 in Western Australia, along with Rick and Honey Richardson . The exercises were developed from working trial competitions from around the world. Over the years other exercises have been added.



The VIMS is a 2 day trial consisting of the following exercises. To win, a pass must be achieved in all exercises.

1. Endurance Test (ET) plus heeling routine to Open standard including changes of pace and figure 8, and a retrieve over obstacle
2. Food refusal incorporating an out of sight down stay
3. Temperament test - judge to designate
4. Water retrieve
5. Retrieve across ditch
6. Nosework (4 articles, judges articles, judges scent)
7. Heelwork (signals only) incorporating gun test and down stay
8. Steeplechase, including 700mm jumps, tunnels etc, no bar jumps

**Eligibility:** Open to all German Shepherd Dogs

All dogs must be 24 months old and under 7 years of age

*DAY 1:*

### Endurance Test

Exactly as in Canine Association of Western Australia regulations.

During the ET the dog should gait alongside the bike and not pull. Each lap is approx 2kms. It should take 11 minutes to complete each lap. A handler can check his time with the timekeepers who will be at the beginning of the lap and at the halfway stage.

### Food Refusal

Incorporates a 6 minute down stay with handlers out of sight, and is performed as a group exercise. The judge will test the dogs with w types of food, one of which will be water in a dog dish. The dogs will be tempted immediately the handlers leave and again at the completion of 3 minutes.

## **Temperament Test**

Each dog will undergo 5 tests, 3 of which are equal for all dogs. The remaining 2 being optional or different for each dog. Only the judge and/or the Training Supervisor will know the temperament test. The judge may decide to advise the Chief Steward on the day. The judge will test each dog individually, one test at a time per dog, so as handlers do not obtain premonition as to what the tests will be, as can occur if dogs are subjected to all the tests at once. It is the judge's discretion regarding the reactions of the dog to the test. If a dog shows an unsatisfactory reaction, the judge is to observe the dog's behaviour immediately after the first encounter, and watch the recovery rate. Should a dog remain slightly ill at ease but under control, points will be lost from a total of 25, awarded under the test. It is desired that the dog recovers quickly and is quite at ease. The tests must not include a direct threat to either the dog or the handler.

### *DAY 2:*

The first exercises comprise of water test part A and part B.

**PART A:** Comprises a retrieve of a dumbbell from deep water (it is essential that the dog does swim to retrieve the dumbbell) with a minimum distance of 6 metres, The dog and handler take up position at a point marker indicated by the judge at the waters edge. On the command from the judge, the dumbbell is thrown at least 6 metres into the water, On further order , the retrieve is executed and the dog will return, sit in front and deliver the dumbbell to hand, followed by a finish. If the dog shakes whilst still holding the dumbbell, 2 points will be deducted. The judge will look for willingness to work, style, a good sit in front and finish, and delivery to hand.

**PART B:** is a retrieve across a ditch. Dumbbell should land on the opposite bank. Should the dumbbell be thrown short, a re-throw must be performed, This retrieve is down an embankment to the other side of the stream, retrieve the dumbbell and brought back to the handler. Judges instructions are exactly as water retrieve.

## **Nosework**

Free search of 4 articles in a 5 minute time period. This exercise takes place in the VIMS ring where an area of 25 metres square will be roped off. The area may contain up to 4 items of equipment (at judge's discretion) and if a judge so desires, he and the steward with a dog or two will foul the ground. Somewhere in the ring the judge will place 4 articles, which have been scented by the judge and can be anything from a gum nut to a spectacles case in size. These articles are not readily visible to the handler when he enters the ring with his dog to commence the exercise. On ordered from the judge, the handler will send his dog into the pegged area to search for and find the articles. To pass the exercise, 2 articles must be retrieved; the handler may work around the perimeter of the 25 metres square, but mustn't step over the guide rope, which is pegged 1 metre in from the edge of the ring all the way around the square. He is entitled to encourage the dog as much as he likes and if he can see an article, he can direct the dog to it. It should be noted that this is a scent or nosework exercise and not designed to be a directed retrieve.

## **Heelwork**

This is a signals only exercise and incorporated a down stay and a gun test. 2 dogs will compete in this exercise at the one time. The first dog will be dropped on the spot or position designated by the judge. The handler is required to leave for the other side of the ring where he remains with his back to the dog until the completion of the exercise. The completion of the exercise is when the judge orders 'exercise finish' for the competitor in the ring, who will have been completing a heeling, signals only routine. When the judge gives the order 'exercise finished' for the heeling dog, the steward will ask the handler to return to his dog and order 'exercise finished'. It is a failure in the down stay if the dog sits up or leaves the position. Whilst the dog is in the down position, the judge will test the 2nd. Dog in the heel free, signals only routine, during which the gun will be fired twice at 5 second intervals. The heelwork will include heeling through a group of 6 people and through a tunnel, and also include, in motion, sit, stand and down, as well as the formal part of UD signals only, which will include a stand, whereby the handler leaves his dog in a stand position and on orders from the judge will drop, stand, sit, recall and finish the dog. At the completion of the heelwork the 2nd. Dog will perform the down stay and the 1st. dog the heelwork.

Heeling in motion instructions; at some time during the test, at the discretion of the judge, the dog shall be required, whilst walking at heel at normal pace, to be left in the stand, sit and down positions. This can be in any order (the order to be the same for each dog) upon order;-

- **IN MOTION SIT**
- **IN MOTION DOWN**
- **IN MOTION STAND**

The handler will signal the dog to sit, drop or stand, and continue forward alone without hesitation, and shall continue as directed by the judge until reaching the dog, when both shall continue forward on judges order OR the handler may be ordered to continue walking as directed at the discretion of the judge, culminating in 'heel your dog' when the handler is back in position.

## **Deductions**

Zero for a dog that is unmanageable; for a dog that receives an audible command; for a dog that fails an 'In Motion' position after a second signal only ONE extra signal can be given over the 3 positions). Over 50% if the handler continually guides the dog; for the use of more than one signal during the heeling; if the handler adapts his pace to that of the dog or for anticipation of any part of the principal feature. Substantial for the handler who does not leave the dog promptly during the 'In Motion' position; for the dog who receives an extra signal in the 'In Motion' heeling. Minor deductions for imperfections in the heeling, poor sits and owns, and for occasional guidance.

## **Gun Test**

Two shots will be fired and the dog is to continue heeling, if the dog is 'gun shy' that is shows marked adverse reaction to the gun, he will be marked '0' for the gun test. If the dogs reacts aggressively but is under control of the handler, or if the dog is excited and eager to 'go' but remains under control, substantial or minor deductions will be made from the heelwork, depending on the circumstances. Only the dog that shows full confidence and is not at all concerned by the shots will attain full marks for the gun test.

## **Vim Veterans**

This is open to all veterans that are 7 years old and over. They are exempt from the ET on the day, but who have previously gained an ET title. The Brush jump and closed hurdle will be lowered to 600mm. There will be 6 positions in the formal (UD) signals only - on being left at the marker the dog is in the stand position, the dog will be signaled to drop, sit, stand, drop, stand, sit. Dogs will be penalized for moving forward; 2 points half body length; 5 points 1 body length; 10 points 2 lengths. If the dog moves forward more than this it will fail.

## **Agility or Steeplechase**

This will incorporate all of the following items of equipment as well as the usual agility equipment.

- Closed hurdle - 700mm high
- Brush jump - 700mm plus bristles of Brush
- Half door - 700mm
- 'A' Frame, which will always have a tunnel underneath, through which the dog will go immediately after completing the 'A' frame.

The dog will sit on the table prior to the commencement, at the half way point and again at the end of the exercise. The clock will not stop until the dog is actually sitting at the end of the exercise. The SCT (standard course time) should be in comparison to time allowed in a Novice agility course.

Obstacles for the course to be set as the judge's choice. The dog is heeled to the starting table and on the judges order to 'GO' will start the race against time. The obstacles are:

- Closed hurdle - 700mm
- 'A' frame set at maximum height
- Tunnel under the 'A' frame
- Dog walk
- A marker flag
- Brush jump 700mm plus Brush
- Solid jump 700mm
- SIT ON TABLE - judge to give order as soon as dog has sat

- Weaving poles as used in agility trials, the only exception being that a command or signal to be given at the first pole, signals only for the remaining poles with the exception of one more verbal command may be given half way through
- Tyre (standard agility tyre)
- The See-saw (as in agility trials)
- The door jump
- Another tunnel or broad jump
- The end with a sit on the table

The agility test is run in accordance with agility rules, i.e. only those dogs without faults and within the SCT can qualify. For those dogs that do qualify, they will gain bonus points for speed.