



USE OF DOGS (2)

continued from Use of Dogs(1)

Indicating the presence of deer

- 3 Ensure the dog walks quietly to heel or slightly in front of the stalker, where the reaction to wind-borne scent can be observed.

On scenting a deer the dog will generally become more focussed and alert, often arresting its gait, or in certain breeds, pointing.

Following-up wounded deer

In most cases the deer will be found dead within 10—100m of the initial shot. Some mortally shot and wounded deer can go significantly further.

- 2 Judge the appropriate action from the reaction of the deer* and evidence found at the strike – see table below.
- 2 In all cases approach the area where the deer was hit cautiously, with the dog under control.
- 3 Make the dog sit whilst gathering evidence from the area where the deer was hit and deciding a course of action.

Where the deer requires to be humanely dispatched**:

- 2 If on approach the head of the deer is up and/or being held at bay, deliver the shot from relatively close range with the rifle (1-10m) when there is no risk to the dog.
- 2 On no account use the rifle if the dog has hold of the deer or cannot be clearly discerned from the deer.

Follow up procedures:

Damage	Action	Outcome
Bullet creases top of shoulder, not damaging spinal column*.	Put dog on trail immediately (free).	Success depends largely on severity of injury. The deer is likely in most cases to evade the dog and recover.
Outer head neck and head, mid haunch, legs, brisket*.	Put dog on trail immediately (free) - for a short period of time the deer will be confused and have difficulty finding its balance.	Success depends on the speed with which the practitioner acts, the severity of the injury and the persistence of the dog. Dog either locates deer and reports back to handler or holds deer at bay until it can be humanely dispatched**.



Glossary:

'Free' = Dog is working remote from handler

'In a line' = Dog is attached to handler by long (10m) light line, this is not practical in heavy cover, or when the dog is expected to move quickly.

'Report' = The dog makes the handler aware that it has found something, either remaining with the carcass and baying or returning to the handler then leading him to the deer.

'HPR' = Hunt, Point, Retriever a type of continental gun dog.

'At bay' = The wounded deer is still active but held in place by the greater manoeuvrability of the dog.



Bullet through chest cavity including heart and lungs*.	Put on the trail either free or in a line, depending on cover. Normally there is a good blood trail. A short delay (5 to 20 minutes) normally ensures deer does not get up on approach.	Dog finds dead deer either in line or free then reports back to handler. Trail likely to be relatively long but easy to follow.
Damaged stomach, gut or liver*.	Put on the trail either free or in a line, depending on cover. Blood trail variable with stomach contents. A longer delay (15 to 30 minutes) normally ensures deer does not get up on approach.	Dog finds deer either in line or free then reports back to handler. If deer rises dog either secures or holds deer at bay until it can be humanely dispatched**.
No apparent evidence of any injury at strike.	The dog should still be tried on the track in the line or free if experienced.	No evidence at the strike should not be taken as a 'miss'. In a surprising number of cases the 'missed' deer is found a short distance away shot correctly. The dog can differentiate between a hit deer that is leaving no discernible track and a miss.

Working the dog at night

- 2 Where it is difficult to determine the site where the deer was struck, or to find a deer that has fallen on the spot, use the dog to quarter the ground, downwind of the strike.
- 2 Attach reflective material or a flashing light to the dog's collar, so that it will be visible and safe near roads. These can be found in pet shops.

Hygiene

- 2 Do not allow dogs access to the larder, or the storage area of any vehicle used for transporting carcasses.

Welfare

- 2 This section deals solely with the welfare of the dog in a working situation – all other aspects of care should be attended to, ensuring that the dog is maintained in good physical and psychological health.
- 2 Be aware of the risk of muzzle blast – ensure the dog is safely positioned before firing.
- 2 If using a dog during night shooting operations on forestry clear fell sites, ensure that if the dog is wearing a collar, it is of a design that will either come off or break should the dog become firmly attached to any branches, undergrowth etc.
- 2 Be aware of any stock fences or other physical hazards within the area. If the dog should not return from a track, check all such fences as a priority.

- 2 Exercise caution, particularly where inexperienced dogs are concerned, when working with wounded antlered males.
- 2 Inspect the dog thoroughly after every track for injury – particularly for puncture wounds, which should be treated by a veterinary surgeon. This is especially important if the dog has been working in the vicinity of restock sites or has had close contact with male antlered deer.
- 2 On no account use a loose dog in proximity of a road.
- 3 Micro-chip and register the dog to allow it to be traced, even if its collar is lost.

Legislation

- 2 Deer are protected from hunting with dogs under both the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 and the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002.
There are exceptions built into these Acts to allow for:
 - The retrieval or location of a wild mammal by a dog that the handler reasonably believes is seriously injured or orphaned: Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 5 (1) (c).
 - The humane destruction of an injured, diseased or orphaned deer by means that are normally prohibited: Deer (Scotland) Act 1996, Part 3, Section 25 (a) (b).

*See BPG Reaction to Shot and Follow-Up **see BPG Humane Dispatch