



Ontario Border Collie Club

TRIAL GUIDELINES

Previous revisions: 1997, 2000, 2009, 2014, 2015
This revision qualifies for 2023 Trial Season forward

1.0 CLASS DEFINITIONS

Only three classes are recognized for OBCC annual championships: Novice, Pro-Novice and Open. Other classes may be offered at the discretion of the trial manager e.g. USBCHA Nursery, Ranch, Double Lift, Silent Gather.

1.1 Novice-Novice Class

DEFINITIONS:

HANDLER: Novice or Pro-Novice competitor with Novice dog

DOG: Dog of any breed that has not competed at any level higher than Novice with exception of those dogs identified in section 2.0

1.1.1 The Novice course shall consist of an outrun of no more than 150 yards (135 m), a lift, a fetch, a wear of no more than 60 yards (55m) to one drive panel and pen.

1.1.2 It is at the trial manager's discretion to allow assisted driving in sanctioned trials where OBCC rules prevail. Such decision to be announced prior to start of class. (see 6.2.2)

1.1.3 No handler may enter who has competed in a full Open course trial (see 2.3).

1.1.4 No handler who actively solicits &/or charges for individual or clinic herding training may compete in the Novice Class, regardless of the level or experience of the dog.

1.2 Pro-Novice Class

DEFINITIONS:

HANDLER: Any level competitor with a Pro-Novice dog

DOG: Dog of any breed that has not competed at any level higher than Pro-Novice or other classes with more phases of work anywhere, with exception of those dogs identified in section 2.0

1.2.1 The Pro-Novice course shall consist of an outrun of no more than 250 (228 m) yards, a lift, fetch, drive away of up to approximately 2/3 of the outrun, but not exceeding the length of the outrun, a cross drive of two obstacles set up to a maximum distance of 100 yards (90m) apart, a return drive and a pen.

1.3 Open Class

DEFINITIONS:

HANDLER: Competitor with any qualified dog

QUALIFIED DOG: Dog of any breed that is has moved up from lower classes or is capable of running in class

1.3.1 The Open course shall consist of an outrun of at least 200 yards, a lift, fetch, a full drive consisting of away, cross and return sections at least 250 yards, pen and at least one shed.

1.4 Class/Course description guidelines

1.4.1 The course descriptions indicated above are guidelines only. The dimensions of the course will be decided by the judge, trial manager and the Trials Committee. Any course size that does not meet specifications will not be recognized for OBCC year-end awards unless approved by the Trials Committee. Such approval will be granted rarely and will not be regarded as a precedent for other trials.

1.4.2 Alternate or additional obstacles such as Chutes, Treadles, Maltese Crosses, etc. may be substituted for the standard trial obstacles at the Trial Manager's discretion with the Trial Committee's approval.

1.4.3 Arena or time/points style trials are not eligible for Championship points or awards.

2.0 CLASS ELIGIBILITY

Determination of class or exemptions that either dog or member/handler is permitted to compete in for OBCC Championship points.

- 2.1 The OBCC Champions and Reserve Champions in the Novice and Pro-Novice classes are required to move up a minimum of one class.
- 2.2 Novice or Pro-Novice OBCC class eligibility will not be affected by competition in USBCHA Nursery classes provided the dog was eligible for that class.
- 2.3 Once a dog has moved up from an OBCC recognized class it cannot move back down to that same OBCC recognized class as long as it is handled by the same person. i.e. the same dog/handler team cannot move up from OBCC Pro-Novice to a more advanced class in one trial (whether in OBCC or another association) and then return to OBCC Pro-Novice in a subsequent OBCC trial.
- 2.4 Dogs may move down one class if they change handlers, subject to the new handler being eligible for that lower class as described in the handler definitions. i.e. An advanced level dog (i.e. Open, Open Ranch, Ranch, Advanced Pro-Novice etc.) may revert to the Pro-Novice class if the handler has never competed at a higher level than OBCC Pro-Novice; similarly a Pro-Novice or Ranch dog may revert to the Novice-Novice class if the handler has never competed at a higher level than OBCC Novice-Novice.
- 2.5 On request, the Trial Committee may grant exceptions to the eligibility rules where, in its judgments, a dog or handler is clearly misplaced. Such exceptions are expected to be rare and handlers should not expect that they can "try out" a higher class and then revert.

3.0 COMPETITORS

3.1 Conduct

- 3.1.1 Competitors are required to demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct.
- 3.1.2 Competitors may ask for an explanation of the course only before the run starts, not after. Competitors may walk the trial field prior to the trial, but no competing dog is permitted on the field before a run. An exception may be granted for dogs being used to spot sheep.
- 3.1.3 Entries will not be accepted once a class is underway. Competitors are responsible for being at the post at the proper time. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of the entry.
- 3.1.4 Assistance from the sidelines is not permitted.

3.2 Care of Animals

- 3.2.1 No dog which is unfit or lame shall be permitted to compete in the trial. Any dog whose health endangers other dogs, livestock or persons shall not be permitted on the trial grounds.
- 3.2.2 Dogs may only be equipped with a standard collar. No kind of training device is permitted on the trial field.
- 3.2.3 Abuse of sheep or dogs is forbidden on the trial field, including the exhaust pen, the release facility or any ground associated with the trial. Abuse may result in disqualification by the judge, cancellation of entry and/or disciplinary action (see 7.4).
- 3.2.4 Competitors are responsible for any damage inadvertently or purposely caused to livestock, other dogs, trial property, or fellow competitors by themselves or their dog.

3.3 Disqualification / Retirement

- 3.3.1 If disqualified by the judge the competitor will immediately leave the field, no points will be awarded. Competitor may inquire of the trial manager of the reason behind disqualification, but an answer is not guaranteed to be provided.
- 3.3.2 Should one or more sheep leave the course in any class, the competitor will retire and no points will be awarded.
- 3.3.3 If a competitor runs out of time before completion of the run, points earned for phases of work completed will be retained.
- 3.3.4 If a competitor leaves the post before being permitted to do so it will be assumed that they are retiring. No points will be retained in any class included in trial.
- 3.3.5 If the judge asks a competitor to retire no points shall be awarded in any class included in trial. In the Novice-Novice class only, at the discretion of the trial manager and judge, handlers may be asked by the judge only to retire during the last phase of work (usually the pen) and retain points to that point. This allowance will be advised prior to the start of the class.

4.0 RULES for JUDGES

- 4.1 Selection of judges are to be approved by Trials Committee whenever possible.
- 4.2 All judges shall follow the International Sheep Dog Society's Rules &/or USBCHA Rule Guidelines for Trials.
- 4.3 The judge must ensure that the course description is explained to competitors before the start of each class.
- 4.4 All decisions by the judge are final.
- 4.5 The judge will determine reruns.
- 4.6 The judge may stop a competitor at any point in a trial.
- 4.7 The judge may be assisted by a clerk/secretary and a timekeeper. Other persons or competitors should not be close to the judge in order to minimize distractions.

5.0 OBCC CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

5.1 Eligibility for championship points

- 5.1.1 Points for a dog may be accumulated toward the year-end awards only by OBCC members in good standing at the time of the trial. Points will not be awarded retroactively.
- 5.1.2 Points are earned by the dog, not the handler. If the handler changes during the year, the dog will retain points earned in the class in which it has been competing up to that time. If the new handler is eligible to compete in the same class, then points will continue to accumulate. If the new handler is not eligible to run a dog in the class in which the dog has been competing, then the dog will move to a new class and start accumulating points at that level. Points are not transferable from one class to another.
- 5.1.3 A dog cannot earn championship points for two classes if being run by two handlers in a single trial. This rare event is not encouraged by the OBCC and should only be considered after consultation with the Trials Committee (i.e. the child of a competitor running a higher level dog in a lower class).

5.2 Points

DEFINITION: Distribution of points towards the year-end OBCC Championships

Points for year end awards are determined by actual placement in trial and are not affected by payout determination. Points totals will be maintained and updated by club secretary. The results of trials are to be forwarded to secretary within 21 days of the trial.

2.2 All placements in all trials participated in during the current season will be included in year end totals.

5.2.3 No dog may earn more points than there are entries in the class.

5.2.4 Calculation of points:

1 to 5 dogs entered

1st: 3 points, 2nd: 2 points, 3rd: 1 point

6 to 10 dogs entered

1st: 5 points, 2nd: 4 points, 3rd: 3 points, 4th: 2 points, 5th: 1 point

11 to 24 dogs entered

1st: 6 points, 2nd: 5 points, 3rd: 4 points, 4th: 3 points

5th: 2 points, 6th: 1 point,

25 to 39 dogs

1st: 7 points, 2nd: 6 points, 3rd: 5 points, 4th: 4 points, 5th: 3 points,

6th: 2 points, 7th: 1 point

40 or more dogs

Top 20% as per USBCHA guidelines

5.3 Tie-breaking

5.3.1 In the event that two dogs are tied for a championship or reserve it shall be awarded to the dog that has the most first places. If this fails to break the tie then the award shall go to the dog with the most second places, and so on until the tie is broken.

5.4 Trophies

5.4.1 Perpetual trophies and keeper plaques will be awarded to the Champion and Reserve.

5.4.2 The perpetual trophies must be returned to the Secretary at or before the next annual meeting.

6.0 SANCTIONING TRIALS

DEFINTION: trials eligible for year-end Championship points

6.1 Application

6.1.1 Trial managers should apply for OBCC sanctioning &/or funding to the Trials Committee on form provided on club website. Application should be submitted when possible three months prior to event.

6.1.2 Only trials within Ontario will be considered for sanctioning and funding. Funding exceptions would be at the discretion of the Trials Committee and Board of Directors

6.1.3 Trial managers and/or Trial hosts must be a club member in good standing of the current season for the trial to be considered for sanctioning.

6.1.4 Sanctioned trial must be advertised in either the newsletter or website one month prior to event, unless a special mailing or e-mail announcement is sent to all OBCC members at least one month before the trial

6.1.5 OBCC sanctioning does not prevent Trial managers from obtaining sanctioning from other recognized herding clubs, bodies or organizations.

6.2 Club Funding

6.2.1 Club funding &/or ribbons may be afforded to those trials deemed applicable by the Trials Committee and the Guidelines for Trial Funding. Trial managers may apply for such funds only once per trial season.

6.2.2 OBCC rules and guidelines will prevail first and foremost for sanctioned trials that have applied for and received club funding.

7.0 TRIALS COMMITTEE

7.1 Appointment

7.1.1 The President shall appoint three members to form the Trials Committee and shall name one as Chair.

7.2 Responsibilities

7.2.1 Receive trial sanctioning applications and determine sanctioning suitability of such trials &/or venues for earning OBCC championship points. To this end it may establish forms and procedures to ensure compliance with club rules.

7.2.2 Advise club executive, applicant, newsletter editor and webmaster of trial and sanctioning status.

7.2.3 Determine eligibility of trials to apply for club funds or ribbons.

7.2.4 Approve judges for OBCC sanctioned trials.

7.2.5 Receive and mediate complaints and protests.

7.2.6 Recommend disciplinary action if necessary to Executive Committee.

7.3 Complaints and protests

7.3.1 A competitor may lodge a complaint or protest with a member of the Trials Committee at the time of concern. If this is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, they may ask that it be laid before the full Trials Committee. Such a request-must be submitted in writing to the chair of the trials committee within two weeks of the event of concern.

7.4 Disciplinary action

7.4.1 The Trials Committee may recommend disciplinary action such as suspension from sanctioned trials for up to one year or a fine not to exceed \$200.00. Such penalties must be confirmed by the Executive Committee.

8.0 GUIDELINES FOR TRIAL MANAGERS

8.1 OBCC Recognition

8.1.1 Apply for sanctioning as indicated under section 6.0

8.2 Results

8.2.1. Trial managers must report trial results to the Chair of the Trials Committee within 21 days after the trial using the OBCC form.

8.3 Running Order

8.3.1 It is recommended that the USBCHA rules for running order be adopted including the following: Any competitor running two dogs may not run their second dog until any other handler with two dogs runs their first.

8.3.2 Handlers with multiple dogs should have a minimum of 3 other dog/handler teams between their dogs whenever possible.

8.3.3 It is recommended that the running order list both dog and handler. If so listed, handlers that inadvertently or purposely run the wrong dog are not eligible for placement or championship points.

8.3.4 Handlers with a single dog or 3rd dog (where permitted) may be drawn up anywhere in the order.

8.3.5 Running order is to be announced &/or posted prior to start of class.

8.4 Prizes

8.4.1 Distribution of payback &/or prizes should be announced in advance of trial. While standard practice presently is to award only two money prizes per handler per class, this protocol remains at the trial manager's discretion.

8.4.2 Tie breaking for prize &/or championship points distribution is determined by the best score of the gather phases of work. (i.e. Total of outrun, lift and fetch). If this fails to break the tie, the next phase of work is added in sequence until a placement is awarded.

8.4.3 Club ribbons are available for three places to OBCC sanctioned events.

8.4.4 Once trial expenses have been determined and recovered in whole or in part to trial manager's satisfaction, distribution of any remaining monies as cash prizes are at trial manager's discretion. A suggested disbursement formula is available from the Trials Committee if desired by trial manager.