



International  
**Sheep Dog**  
Society

Registered Charity No. 209009

# **RULES FOR TRIALS**

*Revised 2025*

These Rules were modified following Motions agreed by the Directors as follows:

2025 in respect of rule 3.3m.

2024 in respect of rules 3.2 (j), 3.2 (m), 3.2 (n), addition of 6.2 (zd) & 3.2 (x).

2023 in respect of rules 3.1 (s), 3.2 (b) and 6.2 (i).

2022 in respect of rules 3.1 (i removal and subsequent rules increasing alphabetic identification), 3.3 (c), 3.3 (i), (j), (k).

2020 in respect of rules 2.3 (e), (g), (i), (j), (n), (q), (u), 3.1 (t), General Advice and 6.2 (f)

2018 in respect of rules 2.1, 2.2 and 3.1.

2017 in respect of rules 3.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.2 and 6.4.

2016 in respect of rules 3.2 (w).

2014 in respect of rules 2.2 (f) and 3.1 (t)

2013 in respect of rules 4.4 (h)

2012 in respect of rules 3.2 (u) and 3.2 (v)

The remainder of the document was updated in 2010 which superseded an issue in 2008 that was a substantial reworking of the layout and numbering of the previous Rules (revised 1994).

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# THE INTERNATIONAL SHEEP DOG SOCIETY

## RULES FOR TRIALS

*In these rules the phrase 'the Society' refers to The International Sheep Dog Society*

### I. THE OBJECTIVES FOR A TRIAL

To test the ability of a dog, as part of a team with the handler, to manage sheep properly under the differing circumstances that may be encountered in daily work. Hence the various tests such as Gathering, Driving, Shedding, Penning and Singling which are all tasks which may be necessary as the shepherd goes on his daily round.

This objective helps meet the Main Object of the Society which is to promote and foster the breeding, training and improvement of the working sheepdog, this to secure the better management of stock.

These rules are formulated specifically for the Society's National and International Trials, but it is intended that the principles outlined may be applied for the general running of all sheepdog trials.

The Society stands firmly for a common standard and this should and must be the constant aim of every Judge and Handler.

To achieve consistency and a common standard, it is the considered opinion of the Society that the general observations and rules on the various parts of a Trial Course included in this document must be followed by Judges at any Trial organised by or being affiliated to the Society.

It will be the responsibility of organisers of Open Trials, whether individuals or committees, to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, the ISDS Rules for Trials, with particular reference to prior advertising in accordance with the approved procedures under Rule 3.2b.

### 2. OFFICIALS

#### 2.1 THE TRIALS COMMITTEE

- a. A Trials Committee for each National Trial and for the International Trials will be appointed annually by the Council with powers to make decisions regarding the interpretation and/or administration of any rule in question, to lay out the course and generally supervise the running of their respective Trial.
- b. At National Trials, the Trials Committee shall be the National President, the two National Vice Presidents and the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Society.
- c. At the International Trial, the Trials Committee shall be the four National Presidents and the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Society.
- d. A Trials Committee is empowered to make a decision if either one or two members are unable to attend a meeting having given reasonable notice.
- e. In any situation considered to be an emergency the Chairman, Vice Chairman or National President may make a decision on behalf of the Committee should it not be possible to call a meeting.
- f. The Trials Secretary shall be the Society Chief Executive or Secretary or, if unavailable, a suitable person nominated by the Trials Committee for that Trial.

## **2.2 THE JUDGES**

- a. The two National Singles Judges for each National Trial shall be selected by the respective National President and approved by Council at the Annual General Meeting for service in that year. Their names must have been on the List of Judges for the respective nation at the time of approval and they may not be the President or a Vice-President.
- b. The two National Brace Judges shall be the Singles Judges from the previous year for each Nation or if one is unavailable another shall be selected by the National President from the List of Judges.
- c. The International Trial shall be judged by four Judges, one from each Nation: England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Each one must have previously judged a National Trial or World Trial. No International Judge may be a National Judge for the current year. Their name must have been on the List of Judges for the respective nation at the time of approval. The International Judge will be selected by their respective President and Vice Presidents. The names must be given to the Trials Secretary within 7 days of the completion of the last National Trial for that year.
- d. The four International Brace Judges shall be the International Singles Judges from the previous year from each Nation, or if one is unavailable another selected by the National President from the List of Judges.
- e. The National Singles and International Singles Judges will stay at accommodation identified by the Trials Secretary for the duration of the Trial.
- f. That the ISDS judging panel list be made readily available to all Directors on request.

## **2.3 COURSE DIRECTORS AND ASSISTANT COURSE DIRECTORS**

- a. The National Course and Assistant Course Directors shall be persons selected by the respective National President and approved by Council at its Annual Meeting at Carlisle for service in that year.
- b. The International Course and Assistant Course Directors shall be a persons selected by the respective National President and having been past International or National Course Directors.
- c. Both the Course Directors and Assistant Course Directors must be members of the Society.
- d. They should ideally both be past or present Directors of the Society.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- e. The Course Directors are important trials' officials and must be respected at all times.
- f. The Assistant Course Director shall take on the duties described here whenever he/she is so charged by the Course Director or the Trials Committee.
- g. One of the Course Directors must be in visual contact with the Judges at all times, enabling them to convey the Judges' instructions to the competitors or timekeepers without delay, specifically in regard to the judges' deliberations on the shed and single.
- h. The Course Director shall call competitors in their turn according to the programme, unless directed otherwise by the Trials Committee.
- i. The Competitor must notify the Trials Secretary and the Course Director who must ensure the judges are notified before the start of a run that a nominated alternate dog will be a substitute for the First or Second dog.
- j. Letting out Sheep Stewards at the top of the field, and Sheep Stewards taking sheep off the course, will work under the instruction of the Course Directors.
- k. If requested by the competitor, to explain the course before the run starts, the Course Director shall do so.

- l. The Course Director shall ensure that sheep are correctly presented at the top of the field in good time, giving every competitor a fair and equal chance.
- m. After commencement of the run the Course Directors shall not communicate with the competitor unless instructed to do so by the Judges or if so requested by the competitor to request the Judges to deliberate on an unsound sheep.
- n. The Course Director is empowered to refer any issues relating to the competitor being disadvantaged during the run, to the judges for their deliberation.
- o. The Course Director shall be available at all times during the trial to convey to the competitor any instructions from the judges.
- p. The Course Director may be instructed by the Judges to stop a dog at any point of his/her trial and order a re-run if they consider the circumstances warrant such action.
- q. The Course Director will relay to the Competitor, the Judges' deliberation where the original run was stopped, where the commencement of the re-run will be and that the points scored before stopping takes place will stand.
- r. It is the Judges' discretion to grant a re-run on the basis of what they observe or what the Course Director brings to their attention. A Competitor may not communicate with the Judges or the Course Directors to seek a re-run, but he/she may draw the Course Director's attention to any irregularities (e.g. unsound sheep).
- s. The Course Director is responsible at all times for keeping the course clear and ensuring that the competitors or their dogs are not interfered with in any way while competing.
- t. The Course Director shall be immediately informed by the Judges as to whether or not a dog shall be disqualified.
- u. The Course Director shall inform the competitor if he/she is directed by the judges to disqualify a dog.
- v. The Course Director will give instruction for the removal of the sheep at the end of a run.

**General Advice:**

- 1. Buzzers may be used by judges at National and International Trials for calling the single.
- 2. The use of two-way radios by the judges when 'refusing' the shed and when 'accepting' the single is not advised due to the element of delay.
- 3. The use of two-way radios is recommended for all other communication between Course Director and Judges.
- 4. Re-sheds should be indicated by the Judges to the Course Director as quickly as possible; hence why the eye contact is imperative at all times.
- 5. The use of radios is recommended for the set-out crews, exhaust crews and Course Director along with other members of the local committee e.g. first aid, Secretary, Chairman.

**2.4 THE TIMEKEEPERS**

- a. Timekeepers will be appointed by the National President or, if required by the National President, by the appropriate local committee.
- b. They will be instructed in their duties by a member of the Trials Committee or by the Trials Secretary and are solely responsible.



### **3. ENTRIES**

#### **3.1 GENERAL**

- a. In order to compete in the National Trials or the International Trial, handlers and owners need to be members of the ISDS. Application for membership can be made by annual subscription to the ISDS at any time during the year prior to the deadline for the entry form, accompany the entry form or can be a life membership.
- b. The Entrant must have their main residence in the nation of choice at the time of submitting the Entry Form. The Entrant must have been resident in England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales for at least six months prior to the time of submitting the Entry Form.
- c. No Entrant may compete in an ISDS National Trial if they are competing in any other country's national trials in the same calendar year.
- d. Council, subject to the agreement of the Directors, will determine the number of entries for a National Trial as they see fit.
- e. Entry fees shall be of such sum as is determined by Council from time to time and must be forwarded with the Entry Form.
- f. Dogs eligible to compete at National Trials must be registered in the Society's Stud Book in the name of the competitor before 1st June in the year of the Trials to which the entry refers.
- g. Trial Entry Forms must be completed and lodged at the Trials Secretary's office by the date specified on that year's National Entry Form. All requirements detailed on that form for the efficient running of the entry process must be followed.
- h. Any question arising as to the ownership of any dog shall be decided by the Society's Stud Book records at the 1st of June, as certified by the Trials Secretary.
- j. Further eye examinations may be carried out at the National or International if the Trials Committee so decide and all dogs must be presented. No fee will be charged.
- k. Entries must be in the names of OWNERS.
- l. A dog may be run either by its owner or a substitute handler, who must be a member of the Society.
- m. When substitute handlers are nominated, owners must state on the Entry Form the name and address of the substitute handler.
- n. No owner or substitute handler may handle more than two dogs in the Singles Class nor more than one pair of dogs in the Brace Class.
- o. A substitute handler must reside in the country in which the owner resides.
- p. Unless the handler and the owner are entitled to compete in the same class neither will be eligible to receive the respective trophies. (e.g., Shepherds' and Farmers' Trophies)
- q. In all classes in the International, all dogs must be run by the handlers running them at National Trials.
- r. Any competitor whose entry is questioned for any reason shall have the question settled by the respective Trials Committee or, if more appropriate, by Council who, if thought necessary, shall impose any penalty they consider suitable.
  - s. All dogs used for settling sheep at the International and World trials should wear a reflective/coloured vest, so they are easily differentiated from the competing dogs, if requested by all judges who are judging on that field on that day.
- t. When the points at National trials are displayed, they should be broken down showing each judges score separately.

### **3.2 NATIONAL SINGLES ENTRY AND QUALIFICATION**

- a. The details of qualification may be varied by direction of the Directors at the Annual Meeting following due Notice of Motion and this will be given on the current year's Trial Entry Forms.
- b. For a trial to be considered a Qualifying trial for the National it must not be run as part of a novice or nursery trial and it must be open to all with no unreasonable restriction or qualification, either geographical or in any other way. A minimum of 25 dogs must compete at the Trial. The course must be a National style course that includes a drive element. The trial must be advertised on the ISDS website at least one week before the trial date, or details published in a copy of the local agricultural press either online or printed (in Southern Ireland this being the Farmers Journal) with publication being on a date before the trial date.
- c. If a dog ran in a National team in the preceding year then it pre-qualifies with no need for other points.
- d. Owners may enter up to three dogs.
- e. No handler may run more than two dogs.
- f. Where two dogs are entered, the owner must state on the Entry Form which dog he wishes to run first.
- g. Where three dogs are entered, the nominated alternate dog may run either as a substitute for the first or second dog entered.
- h. The appropriate entry fee must be paid for all entries.
- i. There will be one Class: Hired Shepherds, Farmers, and others. The expression Hired Shepherd means a person who is employed primarily as a shepherd for wages by an employer other than his/her parents or near relative (which expression shall mean wife, husband, child, grandparent, parent, brother, or sister of the member).
- j. All entries from Hired Shepherds shall be signed and endorsed by the Shepherd's employer on the Trial Entry Form or authorised and confirmed by email declaring that the entrant is engaged primarily as a Shepherd along with other subsidiary duties. If a Shepherd is retired a currently serving Director may sign. A record of retired Shepherds will be kept on the database for future reference.
- k. The order of running shall be decided by ballots. Ballots to be drawn in such a way that no competitor shall run two dogs on one day. No competitor shall run his/her second dog until other competitors with two dogs have each run one. As near as possible an equal number of competitors running only one dog in the trial will run on each day of the trial.
- l. The order of running shall be intimated to competitors by the Trials Secretary as soon as convenient and that order shall be strictly adhered to unless the Trials Committee allow or instruct a change.
- m. In the draw for the Irish National, the Isle of Man competitors can be excluded from the Thursday draw and only included in the draw for Friday and Saturday. If they run two dogs, one dog will be drawn to run on each of the two days. Where the competitor is also entered in the brace competition, this rule will not apply.
- n. All successful entrants to a National Trial understand that their qualifying history can be requested from the office for public reference.
- o. Any claim for points found to be false, after due investigation as directed by the Constitution, may render the claimant liable to a ban from any National Trial for a minimum of three years.
- p. Anyone banned from entry to a National Trial may not have qualifying points accepted during the period of the ban

- q. If an entered dog becomes ill, injured, or dies then a refund of the fee will be given on production of a veterinary letter confirming this. A replacement dog will not be permitted to run.
- r. Any dog/bitch entered for the English National must have gained its qualifying points with the person who will handle it at the English National Trial. (w.e.f. 2017)
- s. In order for a trial to qualify for National points, it must incorporate a shed or a single. (w.e.f. 01 June 2017)
- t. By definition, the pen must be a means of containment. (w.e.f. 01 June 2017)
- u. That five reserves be put in place for the singles at Nationals.
- v. That the three sixth placed dogs at Nationals using the five from each day, have a run off for the reserve spot.
- w. To qualify and be eligible to run at a National trial, any handlers alternate dog must have a minimum of the same number of points required by the fifth reserve (i.e., the lowest pointed dog to have its entry accepted for the National).
- x. Qualifying points can be gained in any Nation subject to points r, s, & t above.

### **3.3 NATIONAL BRACE ENTRY AND QUALIFICATION**

- a. Any pair of dogs registered in the Society's Stud Book and otherwise qualified is eligible to compete.
- b. For each nation a maximum of nine entries will be accepted for the brace class with a maximum of 2 reserve entries appearing on the programme, to run in case any entry is unable to compete.
- c. If more than nine entries are received, then those handlers who have represented their Nation in the preceding year will be accepted. The remaining places will be selected by the same method as the singles qualification, only with the combined open points of the two competing dogs. For an alternate dog entry to be accepted, it must along with any of the other two entered dogs, have a combined set of open points that will amount to the same or above the cut-off points entries for the braced.
- d. No owner may enter more than one pair of dogs in the Brace Class.
- e. Both dogs comprising a pair must be registered in the name of the same owner at the time of entry.
- f. Any owner entering a pair of dogs may nominate a third dog and he/she shall select two to run at the Trial.
- g. The fee for the third dog shall be of such sum as determined by Council from time to time.
- h. The order of running shall be fixed by ballot seeking to run dogs on different days should they also run in the Singles Class. Intimation of the order shall be given by the Trials Secretary to Competitors as soon as possible after the closing date for entries.
- i. 'This competition will be held at lunch time on each day of the trial or the day prior to the singles class (subject to the nations' President and local committee's decision).
- j. In the case the Brace Class is not run the day prior to the Singles Class, not more than three entries to be run in any one day.
- k. If a dog or dogs entered in the normal way in the Brace Class becomes ill, injured, or dies, and a Veterinary Certificate is produced, a substitute dog may be run, provided it is qualified in accordance with Rules 3.1d and 3.1 g.
- l. All Brace entrants must report their attendance to the Trials Secretary by 11:00 a.m. on the day they are drawn to run. Failure to do so will result in their place being irrevocably awarded to any reserve entry.

- m. Any competitor put on the Reserve list for the National Trial should be notified immediately if there is a withdrawal and given their running order number. If the reserve competitor already has a run on that day (as they can't have 2 runs on the same day) the next competitor on Reserve list is to be notified promptly.
- n. Any reserve entry not called to run may have his entry fee refunded

## **4. ONWARD QUALIFICATION**

### **4.1 NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL (SINGLES)**

- a. At each of the National Trials, the first 15 dogs in order of merit shall be selected to represent England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales respectively. A travelling reserve shall be the 16<sup>th</sup> dog.
- b. In varied circumstances a National Trials Committee may decide the format of choosing their team at their National Trial.
- c. If for any reason a dog selected cannot run at the International, the Trials Secretary must be notified as soon as possible together with supporting evidence (e.g., Veterinary Surgeon's Certificate). If satisfied that a dog cannot, or should not, run the Trials Secretary shall thereupon notify the travelling reserve that they are to run and inform the next competitor in order of merit that he/she is included in the National Team as the new reserve.
- d. In all classes in the International all dogs must be run by the handlers running them at the National Trials.
- e. Any dog that is disqualified during a National Trial cannot be considered for qualification into the International Trial in the same year.

### **4.2 QUALIFYING TRIALS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SUPREME (SINGLES)**

*(Including the Farmer's Championship, the Shepherd's Championship and the Team Prize)*

- a. This trial consists of 15 dogs each from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.
- b. This Trial is primarily to select the 15 highest pointed dogs, in order of merit, representing England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales respectively, to enter the Supreme Championship. A travelling reserve shall be the 16<sup>th</sup> dog. In addition, the top dog owned and handled by a Farmer in those trials will be entitled to the Farmer's Championship and the top dog owned and handled by a Hired Shepherd will be entitled to the Shepherd's Championship.
- c. This Trial will also decide the Team Prize.
- d. Each competitor shall be awarded the cash prize which he/she is entitled to by virtue of his/her position in the list, but only a Farmer shall be entitled to the Farmer's Cup and only a Hired Shepherd shall be entitled to the Shepherd's Trophy.
- e. Any dog that is disqualified during the Qualifying Trials cannot be considered for qualification into the International Trial Final/Supreme in the same year.

### **4.3 SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP (SINGLES)**

- a. The Supreme Championship is restricted to the 15 highest pointed dogs in the Qualifying Trials.
- b. Dogs will run in the order as shown in the programme for the Qualifying Trials.
- c. The Supreme Championship will be determined on the basis of Merit Points (see appendix).
  - i. In the event of equality in Merit Points, the award will be made on the basis of the competitor with the highest total number of points.

- ii. In the event of equality on the total number of points, the award will be determined on the basis of the lowest number of points lost on the outwork (Outrun, Lift and Fetch), or by a re-run (see rule 6.7).
- iii. Such determination to be at the discretion of the Judges.
- iv. If the Judges are evenly split on this decision, the Trials Committee of the Society to have the casting vote.

#### **4.4 THE YOUNG HANDLER COMPETITION**

- a. The objective is to encourage and foster the development of young handlers by staging a competition at the International Sheep Dog Trials each year. One young handler from each of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales will be selected by their respective National President.
- b. The young handler must be a member of the Society, must be resident in the nation they represent, must be under 21 years of age at the date of the trial, and must not have competed at the International Sheep Dog Trials previously or are to compete in the current year in any other class.
- c. No entry fee is payable, and the young handler is entitled to all Team privileges currently awarded.
- d. They may handle their own dog or any substitute on the day.
- e. The course shall be set by the Trials Committee.
- f. There shall be a draw for the order of running.
- g. The judges shall be the four National Presidents, who shall select one winner and three runners-up.
- h. Young handlers at the International should each receive a 'Team Badge' in recognition of their achievement.

#### **4.5 INTERNATIONAL BRACE**

- a. The first two prize winners at each National Trial shall be selected to represent England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales respectively at the International.
- b. The dogs running at the International must be the same as those winning at the National. Should one of the Brace pair be unable to run because one of the dogs is unavailable, then considering the reason as in Rule 4.1 b for the Singles, the third position handler will be invited to run.
- c. Any Brace pair disqualified during a National Trial cannot be considered for qualification into the International Trial in the same year.

#### **4.6 INTERNATIONAL DRIVING**

- a. At each National Championship, the Judges shall select one dog from the dogs comprising the National Team which, in their opinion, is the best driving dog, or they may order two or more competitors to run a course of 400 yards in a straight line if they so desire.
- b. The number of sheep shall be twenty.
- c. Reserves from the respective National Teams shall also be selected by the Judges.
- d. The selected dog at each National Trial shall represent England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales respectively in the Driving Championship at the International.
- e. If for any reason the selected dog cannot attend the International the Reserve will be notified and he will represent his/her country.

## **4.7 NATIONAL TEAMS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL**

- a. The National Team prize will be awarded to the Nation with the twelve highest aggregate scores in the Qualifying Trial at the International.

## **5. JUDGING AND COURSES**

### **5.1 JUDGING PRINCIPLES**

*To be used in conjunction with the information on courses in sections 5.2 to 5.4.*

- a. The ISDS stands firmly for a common standard and this should and must be the constant aim of every Judge and Handler.
- b. It is intended that these rules will guide Judges at National, International, and local trials to adopt that common standard.
- c. It is the Judges' responsibility to ensure that they judge in accordance with these rules.
- d. Every Judge accepting an invitation to act at any of the Society's Trials will be held, by his/her acceptance, to have given an undertaking that he/she will judge strictly according to the Rules laid down by the Society and that he/she will not favour any dog, man/woman, or country.
- e. The Judge who openly or secretly judges according to his/her own ideas of what a good trial run should be does no service either to the Society or the competitors.
- f. Judges must at all times point runs, up to the point of completion, retirement or disqualification, directly on to the official Society Judging Sheets.
- g. It must be acknowledged that it is not always an easy task to decide the merits of a run AS A WHOLE and Judges should always have a good look at the score sheet after the run has been completed and should then decide whether or not they have been too severe or too lax in any one aspect after marking.
- h. Judges are cautioned not to discuss the merits or otherwise of a run with any other person outside the Judges' Box while the Trial is in progress. Should such an approach be made the Judge will refer them to Rule 5.1h.
- i. The Judges are empowered to direct any Competitor showing insufficient merit to retire, bearing in mind the necessity to safeguard the welfare of the dogs and sheep.
- j. The run commences when the dog is directed /leaves the handler on its outrun.
- k. The run finishes and the Judge completes his/her marking when either the pen gate is closed on the sheep or the Judge accepts the single, or whichever is the final phase or immediately there has been a disqualification, retirement or time is called.
- l. The command by whistle is to be regarded as the same as a spoken command.
- m. Good handling in difficult situations will be taken into consideration by the Judge.
- n. No points will be awarded for any phase of work that has not been completed within the prescribed time limit.
- o. The Judge's decision is final providing their conduct is in accordance with the Rules for Trials.

### **5.2 NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL QUALIFIER CHAMPIONSHIPS (SINGLES)**

#### **5.2.1 Course**

**THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAYING OUT THE COURSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES RESTS WITH THE TRIALS COMMITTEE.**

The Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit now fixed by the Directors are set out below.

The Trials shall be on 5 sheep so selected that each competitor shall receive the same class of sheep if possible.

Subject to the reservation that the Course may be altered by the Trials Committee, the Trial shall, if possible, be decided on the following Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit, viz:

Sheep	5 sheep (3 unmarked and 2 marked with collars).
Gather	400 yards from handler.
Fetch.	Set of gates = 7 yards apart, 150 yards from handler, in the centre of the course.
Drive	450 yards over triangular course, 2 sets of gates = 7 yards apart. First set of gates approximately 150 yards from handler. In the case of a short course, when fetch is less than 400 yards, the drive will be lengthened when possible so that the total length of the fetch and the drive is 850 yards, or as near to this length as is reasonably practical.
Shedding ring	40 yards in diameter
Pen	9 feet x 8 feet wide with a gate 8 feet wide, secured by a rope 6 feet long. The gate must open to not less than 170 degrees.

### 5.2.2 Outrun

- a. The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the run.
- b. The dog must be positioned close to the handler/post.
- c. The dog may be sent out on either side.
- d. The dog should not be too straight nor too wide.
- e. The dog should not require any commands beyond the initial set off command.
- f. Commands given should be penalised.
- g. Re-directional commands on the run are less serious than a stop and a command.
- h. A dog not taking the re-directional commands must be penalised more severely than one that does.
- i. The dog should not stop until it has reached the point of balance. The point of balance being where it will lift the sheep in the direction of the first obstacle.
- j. It is obviously more serious if a dog stops on its outrun than if it goes on after being re-directed, and Judges should mark accordingly.
- k. The dog should not cut in.
- l. A good outrun should be in the shape of one side of a pear with the blunt end of the pear at the far end of the field near the sheep.
- m. The dog should finish far enough away from the sheep so as not to disturb them.
- n. For a crossed outrun a minimum of 80% of the total points for the Outrun is to be deducted and, in addition, points must be deducted for commands.
- o. The perfect outrun should be completed without any commands and Judges should deduct points for every command given and the loss of points will depend upon the Judges' views of the seriousness of the mistake.
- p. Where the Outrun ends will vary with the actual position of the sheep. If the sheep have left their appointed place at the post, the outrun should end at the point where the dog is facing them in order to bring the sheep in a direct line to the first obstacle. This might necessitate the dog stopping on the side of its outrun if the sheep happened to be coming

to meet it, and conversely could mean it going a long way past the post if the sheep were going away from the post in the same direction as it is running.

### **5.2.3 Lift**

- a. At the end of the Outrun, the dog will either come to a full stop or merely slow down.
- b. The dogs approach should be smooth, cautious and steady.
- c. The dog will take control in a firm and quiet manner.
- d. The dog should not rush in and startle the sheep, nor should it lie back and require numerous commands before getting its sheep on the move.
- e. The lift should be smooth and balanced where the sheep move away in a direct line to the first obstacle.
- f. Judges should use their personal knowledge of sheep and sheep dogs to determine whether a lift has disturbed the sheep unduly and mark accordingly.
- g. Judges will deduct points for excessive commands, slowness, etc. at this point of the trial.

### **5.2.4 Fetch**

- a. The sheep must be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the place of lifting to the first obstacle and thereafter in a straight line to the handler/post. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.
- b. The dog should not hurry or over-flank the sheep (i.e., that it should not go too far either side of the sheep, thereby turning them across the course and giving a zig-zag movement).
- c. The dog should require few commands and where the sheep stray from the true line the dog's ability is judged by its control of them and its immediate answer to all commands.
- d. No retry at the gate is allowed.
- e. If the gates are missed or if the sheep are off-line, the penalty must reflect all of the circumstances, and in particular the amount of fault attributable to the dog and/or the handler. Both can be the subject of penalties. If the sheep are docile and mistakes are made, then the penalty should be more severe than where the sheep are awkward and thereby contribute to diversions which the dog is unable to avoid.
- f. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of one point per sheep, but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances contributing to the missing of the gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- g. Unless instructed otherwise by the Trials Committee, at the end of the Fetch the handler shall pass the sheep around the post /behind the handler as close as is practical and the whole work should be done in a steady and smooth manner.

### **5.2.5 Driving**

- a. The drive can run from left to right or right to left according to the course and the decision of the trials committee.
- b. The first leg of the drive starts immediately the sheep have passed behind the handler/post.
- c. Having driven the sheep through the first set of gates they should be turned immediately on to a direct line across the course to the second set of gates. When through these gates they should then be turned as neatly as possible on to a straight line to the shedding ring.
- d. It is important that the last leg of the drive should be in a straight line to the shedding ring which is usually situated to make this also the most direct line.
- e. The dog should show obvious ability to drive steadily without excessive commands.
- f. The sheep are required to go in straight lines between the obstacles and reasonable turns at the post and at both gates are expected. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.



- g. As in the Fetch, the gates are an obstacle to be negotiated also a guide to the alignment of the sheep.
- h. Throughout the Drive the sheep should be kept moving gently - excessive bursts of speed and subsequent stopping are not desirable and should be penalised.
- i. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of one point per sheep, but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances to the missing of a gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- j. A retry at any gate is NOT allowed.
- k. The handler will remain at the post until the first of the sheep is in the shedding ring.
- l. The Drive ends when ALL the sheep enter the shedding ring.

#### **5.2.6 Shedding**

- a. Two unmarked sheep to be shed within the ring.
- b. Shedding necessitates negotiation of the sheep within the ring by the handler and dog to the best position for effecting the deliberate shed by the dog of two specified sheep.
- c. For the Shed to be complete and deemed satisfactory by the judges, the dog is required to shed two of the un-marked sheep within the ring and show control of them, either in or outside the ring.
- d. The important aspect here is to test the dog's ability to shed or separate the two unmarked sheep from the rest of the flock.
- e. It is not necessary for the dog to come right through to the handler.
- f. The dog is required to show its ability to separate and hold the shed sheep away from the rest of the flock. It is not a requirement for the sheep to be driven away.

#### **5.2.7 Penning**

- a. On completion of the shedding the dog will reunite all the sheep, not necessarily within the ring but in a practical and workman like manner, and the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving the dog to bring the sheep to the pen.
- b. The handler is forbidden to assist the dog to drive the sheep from the shedding ring to the pen.
- c. The handler will stand at the gate holding the rope and must not let go of the rope unless it is necessary to re-shed.
- d. It is for the dog to manoeuvre the sheep into the desired position to conclude a successful pen.
- e. The handler must not use the gate to lever the sheep into the pen nor should he/she touch the sheep with the pen gate which will result in points being deducted.
- f. The handler must completely close the gate within the time limit/before releasing the sheep again.
- g. After releasing the sheep, the handler will close and fasten the gate and shall be penalised for failure to fasten the gate.

#### **5.2.8 Single**

- a. Pointing of the Single will commence immediately the sheep leave the pen.
- b. The handler will proceed to the shedding ring, leaving the dog to bring the sheep from the pen to the ring.
- c. One of two marked sheep will be shed off within the ring and thereafter worn in or outside the ring to the Judges' satisfaction.
- d. Handlers are forbidden to assist the dog in driving off or attempting to drive off the single any distance or by forcing it on the dog.

- e. The Single is complete when the dog has worn the sheep to the Judges' satisfaction. The judges will indicate.
- f. As with the Shed the dog and not the handler should come in and cut off the single sheep.
- g. Far too many handlers are seen cutting off the sheep whilst the dog lies back acting as an almost disinterested spectator and should be penalised accordingly.
- h. The greatest help the handler can give his/her dog is by getting out of the way and allowing the dog room to prove its ability to take off and wear a single sheep.
- i. It is essential that the dog should be able to keep the single sheep away from the remainder and the Judges should not express their satisfaction until the dog has been thoroughly tested and they are satisfied that it has proved its ability to do this.
- j. The behaviour of the sheep should be considered by the Judges when deciding whether the Single has been effectively completed or not.

### 5.2.9 Scale of Points

No points will be awarded for any phases of the work that have not been completed within the prescribed time limit.

Outrun (20); Lifting (10); Fetching (20); Driving (30); Shedding (10); Penning (10); Single (10); Total = 110 points.

### 5.2.10 Time Limit

15 minutes. No extension.

## 5.3 NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL BRACE CHAMPIONSHIPS

### 5.3.1 Course

#### ***THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAYING OUT THE COURSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES RESTS WITH THE TRIALS COMMITTEE***

The Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit now fixed by the Directors are set out below.

These will be held at Lunch Time on each day of the Trial, or such time as agreed by the Trials Committee.

The Trials shall be on 10 sheep so selected that each competitor shall receive the same class of sheep if possible.

Subject to the reservation that the Course may be altered by the Trials Committee, the Championship shall, if possible, be decided on the following Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit, viz.:

Sheep	10
Gather	National = approximately 400 yards from handler. International = approximately 600 yards from handler.
Fetch	Through gates 7 yards apart, 150 yards from the handler in the centre of the Course.
Drive	450 yards over a triangular course with 2 sets of gates 7 yards apart. First set of gates to be approximately 150 yards from the handler.
1st Pen	Diamond shaped with entrance of 5 feet and no gate.
2nd Pen	50 yards from 1st pen, pen = 9 feet x 8 feet with a gate 8 feet wide to which is secured a rope 6feet long. The gate must open to not less than 170 degrees.

### 5.3.2 Outrun

- a. The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the run.

- b. The dogs must be positioned close to the handler.
- c. One dog will go out on the handlers left hand side and one on the handler's right-hand side.
- d. It is desirable that both dogs complete their outruns simultaneously.
- e. Crossing at the completion of the outrun is permissible.
- f. The dogs should not stop until they have reached the point of balance. The point of balance being where they will lift the sheep in the direction of the first obstacle.
- g. It is obviously more serious if the dogs stop on their outrun than if they go on after being re-directed and Judges should mark accordingly.
- h. Dogs should remain on the side to which they have crossed, and they should not re-cross.
- i. The dogs should not be too straight nor too wide.
- j. The dogs should not require any commands beyond the initial set off command.
- k. Commands given should be penalised.
- l. Re-directional commands on the run are less serious than a stop and a command.
- m. Dogs not taking the re-directional commands must be penalised more severely than those that do.
- n. The dogs should not cut in on their outrun.
- o. A good outrun should be in the shape of one side of a pear with the blunt end of the pear at the far end of the field near the sheep.
- p. The dogs should finish far enough away from the sheep so as not to disturb them.
- q. For a crossed outrun a minimum of 80% of the total points for the Outrun is to be deducted, and in addition points must be deducted for commands.
- r. The perfect outrun should be completed without any commands and Judges should deduct points for every command given and the loss of points will depend upon the Judges' views of the seriousness of the mistake.
- s. Where the Outrun ends will vary with the actual position of the sheep. If the sheep have left their appointed place at the post, the outruns should end at the point where the dogs are in balance to bring the sheep in a direct line to the first obstacle. This might necessitate the dog stopping on the side of its outrun if the sheep happened to be coming to meet it going a long way past the post if the sheep were going away from the post in the same direction as it is running.

### **5.3.3 Lift**

- a. The dogs' approach should be smooth, cautious, and steady.
- b. It is desirable that both dogs complete their outruns simultaneously in order to exercise a balanced lift.
- c. At the end of the Outrun, the dogs will come to a full stop or merely slow down.
- d. The dogs will take control in a firm and quiet manner.
- e. The dogs should not rush in and startle the sheep, nor should they lie back and require numerous commands before getting its sheep on the move.
- f. The lift should be smooth and balanced where the sheep move away in a direct line to the first obstacle.
- g. Judges should use their personal knowledge of sheep and sheep dogs to determine whether a lift has disturbed the sheep unduly and mark accordingly.
- h. Judges will deduct points for excessive commands, slowness, etc. at this phase of the Trial.

#### **5.3.4 Fetch**

- a. The handler will remain at the post.
- b. The sheep must be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the place of lifting to the first obstacle and thereafter in a straight line to the handler/post. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.
- c. Each dog will keep to its own side.
- d. Throughout the run, if the dogs should cross, they must be returned to their respective sides as soon as possible.
- e. The dogs should not hurry or over-flank the sheep (i.e., that they should not go too far either side of the sheep, thereby turning them across the course and giving a zig-zag movement).
- f. The dogs should require few commands and where the sheep stray from the true line the dogs' ability is judged by their control of them and their immediate answer to all commands.
- g. No retry at the gate is allowed.
- h. If the gates are missed or if the sheep are off-line, the penalty must reflect all the circumstances, and in particular the amount of fault attributable to the dogs and/or the handler. All can be the subject of penalties. If the sheep are docile and mistakes are made, then the penalty should be more severe than where the sheep are awkward and thereby contribute to diversions which the dogs are unable to avoid.
- i. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of half a point per sheep but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances contributing to the missing of the gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- j. At the end of the Fetch the handler will pass the sheep around the post/behind the handler as close to the post as practical and the whole work should be done in a steady and smooth manner.

#### **5.3.5 Driving**

- a. Each dog will keep to its own side and the handler must remain at the post until the end of the Drive.
- b. The drive can run from left to right or right to left according to the course and the decision of the trials committee.
- c. The first leg of the drive starts immediately the sheep have passed behind the handler/post.
- d. Having driven the sheep through the first set of gates they should be turned immediately on to a direct line across the course to the second set of gates. When through these gates they should then be turned as neatly as possible on to a straight line to the shedding ring.
- e. It is important that the last leg of the drive should be in a straight line to the shedding ring which is usually situated to make this also the most direct line.
- f. The dogs should show obvious ability to drive steadily without excessive commands.
- g. The sheep are required to go in straight lines between the obstacles and reasonable turns at the post and at both gates are expected. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.
- h. As in the Fetch, the gates are an obstacle to be negotiated also a guide to the alignment of the sheep.
- i. Throughout the drive the sheep should be kept moving gently - excessive bursts of speed and subsequent stopping is not desirable and should be penalised.

- j. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of half a point per sheep, but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances to the missing of a gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- k. A retry at any gate is NOT allowed.
- l. The handler will remain at the post until the first of the sheep is in the shedding ring.
- m. The Drive is finished when all the sheep enter in the shedding ring.

### **5.3.6 Shedding**

- a. The lot of 10 sheep will be divided into two equal lots by either dog inside the shedding ring.
- b. One lot will be driven off and left in the charge of one dog.

### **5.3.7 Penning**

- a. On completion of the shedding the handler will proceed to the pen.
- b. The handler is forbidden to assist the dog to drive the sheep from the ring to the pen.
- c. The first lot will be penned in the diamond shaped pen by one dog.
- d. It is for the dog to manoeuvre the sheep into the desired position to conclude a successful pen.
- e. Once penned, this dog will be left in charge whilst the second lot are penned by the other dog in the other pen.
- f. If a gated pen is used the handler will stand at the gate holding the rope and must not let go of the rope unless it is necessary to re-shed.
- g. The handler must not use the gate to lever the sheep into the pen nor should he/she touch the sheep with the pen gate which will result in points being deducted.
- h. The handler must completely close the gate within the time limit.

### **5.3.8 Scale of Points**

No points will be awarded when any phases of the work have not been completed within the prescribed time limit.

Outrun (2x20) 40; Lifting (2x 10) 20; Fetching 20; Driving 30; Shedding 10; Penning (2x10) 20; Total = 140 points

### **5.3.9 Time limit**

National = 20 minutes

International = 25 minutes

## **5.4 INTERNATIONAL SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP (SINGLES)**

### **5.4.1 Course**

***THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAYING OUT THE COURSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES RESTS WITH THE TRIALS COMMITTEE***

The Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit now fixed by the Directors are set out below.

The running will commence at 8:00am or such time as agreed by Trials Committee and dogs will run in the order as shown in the programme for the Qualifying Trial.

The Trials shall be on 20 sheep, 5 marked by collar, so selected that each competitor shall receive the same class of sheep if possible.

Subject to the reservation that the Course may be altered by the Trials Committee, the Championship shall, if possible, be decided on the following Course, Scale of Points and Time Limit, viz.:

Sheep, 1st packet      10 sheep preferably unseen by dog.

Gathering	Approximately 800 yards from handler
Fetch	Set of gates = 9 yards wide to a post fixed 20 yards through the gate in the centre of the field.
Sheep, 2nd packet	10 sheep preferably unseen by dog.
Gathering	Approximately 800 yards from the handler.
Drive	Total of 600 yards on a triangular course with 2 sets of gates = 9 yards apart. First set of gates to be approximately 200 yards from the handler.
Shedding Ring	40 yards in diameter.
Pen	9 feet x 8 feet with a gate 8 feet wide to which is secured a rope 6 feet long. The Gate must open to not less than 170 degrees.

#### 5.4.2 Outrun

- a. The first run to be right or left as decided by the Trials Committee before the Trial and all competitors will run on that side, the second run to be on the other side.
- b. The dog must be positioned close to the handler/post.
- c. The dog should not be too straight nor too wide.
- d. The dog should not require any commands beyond the initial set off command.
- e. Commands given should be penalised.
- f. Re-directional commands on the run are less serious than a stop and a command.
- g. A dog not taking the re-directional commands must be penalised more severely than one that does.
- h. The dog should not stop until it has reached the point of balance. The point of balance being where it will lift the sheep in the direction of the first obstacle.
- i. It is obviously more serious if a dog stops on its outrun than if it goes on after being re-directed, and Judges should mark accordingly.
- j. The dog should not cut in on its outrun.
- k. A good outrun should be in the shape of one side of a pear with the blunt end of the pear at the far end of the field near the sheep.
- l. The dog should finish far enough away from the sheep so as not to disturb them.
- m. For a crossed outrun a minimum of 80% of the total points for the Outrun is to be deducted, and in addition, points must be deducted for commands.
- n. The perfect outrun should be completed without any commands and Judges should deduct points for every command given and the loss of points will depend upon the Judges' views of the seriousness of the mistake.
- o. If the sheep have left their appointed place at the post, the outrun should end at the point where the dog is facing them in order to bring the sheep in a direct line to the first obstacle. This might necessitate the dog stopping on the side if it's outrun if the sheep happened to be coming to meet it, and conversely could mean it going a long way past the post of the sheep were going away from the post in the same direction as it is running.

#### 5.4.3 Lift

- a. The dog's approach should be smooth, cautious and steady.
- b. At the end of the Outrun, the dog will come to a full stop or merely slow down.
- c. The dog will take control in a firm and quiet manner.
- d. The dog should not rush in and startle the sheep, nor should it lie back and require numerous commands before getting its sheep on the move.

- e. The lift should be smooth and balanced where the sheep move away in a direct line to the first obstacle.
- f. Judges should use their personal knowledge of sheep and sheep dogs to determine whether a lift has disturbed the sheep unduly and mark accordingly.
- g. Judges will deduct points for excessive commands, slowness etc. at this phase of the trial.

#### **5.4.4 Fetch**

- a. The sheep must be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the place of lifting to the first obstacle and thereafter to the turn back post. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.
- b. The dog should not hurry or over-flank the sheep (i.e., that he should not go too far either side of the sheep, thereby turning them across the course and giving a zig-zag movement).
- c. The dog should require few commands and where the sheep stray from the true line the dog's ability is judged by its control of them and its immediate answer to all commands.
- d. No retry at the gate is allowed.
- e. If the gates are missed or if the sheep are off-line, the penalty must reflect all the circumstances, and in particular the amount of fault attributable to the dog and/or the handler. Both can be the subject of penalties. If the sheep are docile and mistakes are made, then the penalty should be more severe than where the sheep are awkward and thereby contribute to diversions which the dog is unable to avoid.
- f. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of half a point per sheep, but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances contributing to the missing of the gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- g. The first fetch is complete when the sheep have reached the turn back post.
- h. The dog will then be suitably positioned within reasonable proximity to the post to be redirected for the second lot of sheep (if possible, unseen by the dog).
- i. The second lot of sheep should also be brought through the gate in a straight line towards a point parallel to the first lot of sheep (where possible).
- j. In the eventuality of the first lot of sheep drifting back to the far side of the Fetch, in the line of the second gather, the handler may, in a workmanlike manner, unite the two lots of sheep before negotiating the fetch gates.
- k. The dog will unite the two lots of sheep by gathering the first lot and bringing them to the second lot. This to be executed in such a manner that all the sheep will be united before the completion of the Fetch.
- l. At the end of the fetch the handler will pass the sheep around the post/behind the handler as close as is practical and the whole work should be done in a steady and smooth manner.

#### **5.4.5 Driving**

- a. The drive can run from left to right or right to left according to the course and the decision of the trials committee.
- b. The line of the drive starts immediately the sheep have passed behind the handler/post.
- c. Having driven the sheep through the first set of gates they should be turned immediately on to a direct line across the course to the second set of gates. When through these gates they should then be turned as neatly as possible on to a straight line to the shedding ring.
- d. It is important that the last leg of the drive should be in a straight line to the shedding ring which is usually situated to make this also the most direct line.
- e. The dog should show obvious ability to drive steadily without excessive commands.

- f. The sheep are required to go in straight lines between the obstacles and reasonable turns at the post and at both gates are expected. If the sheep deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable.
- g. As in the Fetch, the gates are an obstacle to be negotiated also a guide to the alignment of the sheep.
- h. Throughout the drive the sheep should be kept moving gently - excessive bursts of speed and subsequent stopping is not desirable and should be penalised.
- i. If a gate is missed there should be a minimum deduction of half a point per sheep, but Judges must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances to the missing of a gate and adjust deductions accordingly.
- j. No retry at either gate is permitted.
- k. The Drive ends when ALL the sheep enter the shedding ring.
- l. The handler will remain at the post until the first of the sheep is in the shedding ring.

#### **5.4.6 Shedding**

- a. Fifteen unmarked sheep to be shed off within the ring.
- b. The sheep will be passed between the handler and his/her dog and the dog brought in to stop and hold the marked sheep.
- c. Manoeuvring to take the 5 collared sheep off in one cut from the 15 is not permitted.
- d. Should any marked sheep leave the shedding ring and join any unmarked sheep already shed off, the unmarked sheep with which the marked sheep have joined will be brought into the ring and shedding resumed.
- e. No assistance by the Judges or Course Director will be permitted if a collared sheep leaves the ring un-noticed by the handler.
- f. Until the 15 unmarked sheep have been shed off penning will not be permitted.
- g. The important aspect here is to test the dog's ability to shed or separate the 15 unmarked sheep from the rest of the flock.
- h. Shedding having been completed the handler, in order to operate in a workman like manner, may use the dog to remove the unmarked sheep to a safe distance so as not to interfere with the penning.

#### **5.4.7 Penning**

- a. On completion of the shedding the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving the dog to bring the 5 marked sheep to the pen.
- b. The handler is forbidden to assist the dog to drive the sheep from the shedding ring to the pen.
- c. The handler will stand at the gate holding the rope and must not let go of the rope unless it is necessary to re-shed.
- d. It is for the dog to manoeuvre the sheep into the desired position to conclude a successful pen.
- e. The handler must not use the gate to lever the sheep into the pen nor should he/she touch the sheep with the pen gate which will result in penalties being deducted.
- f. The handler must completely close the gate within the time limit/before releasing the sheep again.
- g. After releasing the sheep, the handler will close and fasten the gate.

#### **5.4.8 Scale of Points**

No points will be awarded when any phases of the work have not been completed within the prescribed time limit.



Gathering 100 (each Outrun 20; each Lift 10; each Fetch 20); Driving 40; Shedding 20; Penning 10; Total = 170points.

#### **5.4.9 Time Limit**

30 Minutes. No extension.

### **5.5 DRIVING CHAMPIONSHIP**

- a. This Championship is restricted to the driving dog selected at each National.
- b. The number of sheep shall be 50 or such number as the Trials Committee may decide but not less than 40.
- c. Subject to the reservation that the Course may be altered if the Trials Committee find this necessary, the Trials shall be decided on a Course of 800 yards.
- d. The sheep shall be gathered and driven around the handler/post then driven through the fetch gates to a distance of approximately 800 yards.

#### **Time Limit**

10 minutes. No extension

## **6. TRIAL CONDUCT**

### **6.1 COURSE DIRECTOR**

- a. The Assistant Course Director shall take on the duties described here whenever he/she is so charged by the Course Director or the Trials Committee.
- b. The Course Director shall call competitors in their turn according to the programme, unless directed otherwise by the Trials Committee.
- c. The Course Director shall ensure that sheep are correctly presented at the top of the field in good time and give instruction for their removal at the end of a run.
- d. If requested by the competitor before the run starts to explain the course, the Course Director shall do so.
- e. After commencement of the run the Course Director shall not communicate with the competitor unless instructed to do so by the Judges or if so, requested by a competitor to request the Judges to deliberate on an unsound sheep.
- f. If the Course Director considers that a competitor has been disadvantaged by the letting out of the sheep for some reason, or if he/she considers the situation ripe for retirement, he/she is empowered to approach the Judges for their deliberation on the issue.
- g. The Course Director shall be available at all times during the trial to convey to the competitor any instructions from the Judges.
- h. The Course Director is responsible at all times for keeping the course clear and ensuring that the competitors or their dogs are not interfered with in any way while competing.

### **6.2 COMPETITORS**

- a. Competitors and/or others shall not take their dogs on to the course before or during the competition, nor shall any of them run their dogs on the trial sheep before the Trials.
- b. Handlers without their dogs may inspect the course before the Trial commences.
- c. No dog which is suffering from an infectious disease shall be brought onto the trial ground.
- d. Handlers must ensure that their dogs are in good health and fit to compete. If there is any doubt they shall not compete without a veterinary check and confirmation letter.
- e. The Trials Committee may require a further veterinary opinion if it has any reason to be concerned.

- f. No dog shall wear or carry anything that might in any way assist his/her performance. All laden or electric collars either remote controlled or otherwise be strictly prohibited from any trial venue.
- g. Colouring or dyeing of a dog is prohibited.
- h. Any competitor whose bitch is in season must notify the Trials Secretary before starting time on the day the bitch is to run.
- i. No dogs allowed in the Grandstands at National, International and World Trials unless they are clearly identified as assistance dogs.
- j. Competitors shall keep their dogs under proper control at all times and any dog or owner interfering with another dog or competitor while working may be disqualified.
- k. No dog may be given any drug or medication that may affect its performance or behaviour before or during a trial, other than medication specifically prescribed or approved by a veterinarian for that dog.
- l. The running will commence each day at such time as the Trials Committee shall decide.
- m. The running shall be on sheep so selected that each competitor shall receive the same class of sheep if possible.
- n. The Trials Secretary or the Course Director must be notified before the start of a run that a nominated Alternate dog will be a substitute for the First or Second dog. Failure to do so will result in a disqualification.
- o. Each competitor must be ready when called by the Course Director and anyone failing to answer the call shall be disqualified and forfeit their run.
- p. Competitors are required to note that while the order of the programme will be followed strictly, the timing cannot be guaranteed.
- q. Any competitor wishing to have the course explained or have any point clarified must question the Course Director before they start their run. They cannot have questions answered once their run commences.
- r. By commencing their run the handler is presumed to know the course and follow it in all its details.
- s. Once a competitor starts their run they are entirely in the hands of the Judges.
- t. A competitor who receives outside assistance in any form will be liable to disqualification.
- u. If a competitor touches a sheep, he/she is liable to disqualification
- v. If not previously stopped on the instructions of the Judges, a handler will be called off at the expiry of the time limit, but in the latter case the points to the stage at which he/she is called off will count.
- w. On the bell sounding, a handler will cease working his/her dog and will collect the sheep and remove them from the course immediately.
- x. Any competitor who retires or who leaves the field without the Judges' permission will forfeit all points.
- y. Any competitor in the Qualifying Trial at the International may retire but only with the Judges' permission and points up to the time of retirement shall still count for the Team Award.
- z. The Judges' decision is final providing their conduct is in accordance with the Society 'Rules for Trials'.
- za. Any competitor who has a question regarding the posting of points should immediately speak to the Trials Secretary.

- zb. Competitors are expected to maintain the highest standards of conduct and behaviour at a trial and any misdemeanour or abuse will be investigated by the trials Committee and render them liable to a report to Council.
- zc. Competitors or their agents are prohibited from approaching a Judge to seek to discuss or influence the award of points. Such an approach is gross misconduct and will render them liable to investigation.
- zd. Where there is a stand/podium at a trial, in order to remain in line with health and safety, handlers must not climb any higher than the base, i.e. do not climb on the safety rails.

### **6.3 RE-RUNS**

- a. The Judges may instruct the Course Director to stop a dog at any point of his/her trial and order a re-run if they consider the circumstances warrant such action.
- b. The re-run will commence where the original run was stopped, and the points scored before stopping takes place will stand.
- c. In the case of a re-run being ordered because of a wrong number of sheep having been let out, or sheep being wrongly marked or one or more sheep being unsound for working, the Judges shall decide whether the run should be from the beginning, or from which point it is to re-start. If decided that the re-run start at any point other than the beginning the points scored up to the point of re-start shall stand.
- d. It is the Judges' discretion to grant a re-run on the basis of what they observe or what the Course Director brings to their attention. A Competitor may not communicate with the Judges to seek a re-run, but he/she may draw the Course Director's attention to any irregularities (e.g., unsound sheep).

### **6.4 DISQUALIFICATION**

- a. The Judges shall inform the Course Director if a dog shall be disqualified.
- b. Disqualification at National Trials:
  - i. Unless the decision to disqualify is unanimous, the competitor shall continue the Trial, but shall be penalised by the loss of points as each Judge, in his/her discretion, thinks fit. However, not exceeding the number of points allowed for the phase of work in which the incident occurs.
- c. Disqualification at the International Trials:
  - i. A majority decision shall suffice.
  - ii. In the event of equality between Judges the rules for National Trials will apply.
- d. A dog that defends itself when attacked by a sheep shall be deemed not to have gripped unless the response is excessive.
- e. In the case of a dog gripping, the Judges shall immediately inform the Course Director whether or not the dog shall be disqualified.
- f. A competitor whose dog deviates significantly from the course is liable to disqualification.
- g. A competitor who receives outside assistance in any form will be liable to disqualification.
- h. Any dog interfering with another dog or competitor while working is liable to be disqualified.
- i. A competitor who is disqualified shall lose all their points.

### **6.5 AWARDS**

- a. All awards announced at any of the Society's Trials are subject to the correction of any error discovered within four weeks after the Trials. Any error that may be discovered will be corrected and the awards as announced re-adjusted accordingly. All trophies and prize

money given out at the Trials are given out subject to this Rule and may be recalled. If recalled, the holders will return them to the Trials Secretary at once.

- b. Each competitor at a National Trial shall be entitled to receive from the Trials Secretary a full statement of the points awarded to him/her on application within one month of the Trial, subject to the competitor supplying a stamped addressed envelope for same.
- c. All prizes and awards won at any of the Society's Trials shall be paid within one month after the International subject to any modification of the amount that may be made under these Rules.
- d. Any trophies won at the Society's Trials (unless won outright) shall remain the property of the Society and shall be returnable by the winners to the Trials Secretary when required to do so by him/her.

## **6.6 PROTESTS**

- a. Any competitor may lodge a written and signed protest against any contravention of any Rule for the Trials or against any prize being awarded, delivered or paid. Protests must be lodged, in writing, with the Trials Secretary before or at the close of the Trials and shall be accompanied by a deposit of £10.00 as evidence of good faith.
- b. Any protest, complaint or request by a competitor must be made in the first instance to the Trials Secretary who will then be responsible for calling together a meeting of the Trials Committee as soon as convenient. The Trials Secretary will attend such a meeting for the purpose only of taking a Minute and advising the Committee on a proper interpretation of the Rules and will be responsible for communicating the decision of the Committee to the competitor. A majority decision of the Committee will be binding, but the Trials Secretary is not obliged to tell the competitor whether the Committee is unanimous or not.
- c. If the protest is refused, the Judges' awards shall stand, and the deposit may or may not be refunded as the Committee decides. If the protest is sustained the prizes involved shall be awarded as the Committee may decide and the deposit refunded.
- d. In deciding protests, the Committee may order any competitor to whom a prize has been paid or delivered to return the same, and the competitor shall be bound to do so within the time fixed by the Committee.
- e. Details of all protests under this Rule and the decisions reached are to be submitted by the Trials Secretary to the next meeting of the Council for any further action deemed necessary by them.

## **6.7 EQUALITY OF POINTS**

- a. If two or more competitors stand equal in total points, the Judges shall settle their priority either by the total of their points for the Outrun, Lift and Fetch or in the case of this also being equal, by the points of the next phase of work and so on as is necessary, or ordering re-trials of any kind, or dividing the prize money involved.
- b. In cases of equality where a trophy is at stake and the Judge's order re-runs, the re-runs will decide not only the trophy but also all cash prizes involved.

## **6.8 CONTRAVENTION OF RULES**

- a. Any competitor, official or member who contravenes any of the Rules for Trials, or who is guilty of conduct on or off the field which, in the opinion of the Trials Committee, is prejudicial to the best interests of the Society shall, in addition to any penalty which may be imposed by the Judges, be reported by the Trials Committee to the Council for disciplinary action, and in particular may:

- i. be suspended or expelled from the Society.
  - ii. forfeit any prizes won by him/her at any of the Society's Trials for the current year.
  - iii. be disqualified from competing or officiating at any of the Society's Trials for such period as the Council may decide.
  - iv. have the registration of any dog or dogs owned by him/her deleted from the Society's Stud Book.
  - v. have any other penalty which the Council consider suitable imposed.
- b. The Trials Committee may authorise the Trials Secretary to withhold any prize money due under (ii) above.
  - c. The person against whom a complaint has been made shall be entitled to appear before the Council in person, with or without a supporter, when he/she will be required to answer any questions put to him/her by any member of the Council.
  - d. Subject to the foregoing Rules, all questions, and disputes in connection with any of the Trials or in connection with any of the foregoing Rules not already settled by the Judges or Trials Committee shall be decided by the Council whose decision shall be final and binding and not subject to a Court of Law.
  - e. Five of the Council shall be a quorum.

## **6.9 AMENDMENTS TO RULES FOR TRIALS**

- a. Any amendments or alterations to the foregoing Rules shall only be made provided notice of the proposal is given in writing signed by two members of the Directorate.
- b. Such notice must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than 1<sup>st</sup> November in the year preceding the one in which it is to be considered by the Directorate at their Annual Meeting.
- c. Should either of the Directors signing the notice fail to move it at the meeting of Directors it shall fall and not be raised again without notice as aforesaid.

## **6.10 CANCELLATION**

- a. Power is reserved to the Council of the Society to cancel any of the Trials at any time, at their discretion.
- b. The Trials Committee, while at the Trial, are empowered to cancel or re-schedule the trial for which they are responsible for reasons of law, public safety, emergency, or weather.

## **APPENDIX – for information only**

### **MERIT POINT CALCULATIONS**

At the end of the Supreme Championship the Trials Secretary will calculate the Merit Points as follows:

1. Take the ranking of competitors by points for each Judge in turn and award 15 points for first, 14 for second, etc. (this assumes there are 15 dogs in the Supreme)
2. If two have the same Judges' points, the Merit Points are a share of the next two positions and where three have the same Merit Points are a share of the next three, etc. For example, if two dogs are on the same Judge's points and the next level is 12 Merit Points, they will be awarded  $(12+11, \text{divided by } 2) = 11.5$  Merit Points each. Three dogs at 10 points will receive  $(10+9+8, \text{divided by } 3) = 9$  Merit Points each.
3. The sum of the Merit Points, calculated by Judge for each dog, decides the final ranking with the highest number coming first. For example, if each Judge placed the same dog in top place it would receive  $(15+15+15+15) = 60$  Merit Points.
4. In the event of Merit Points being equal for any dog the final order will be decided by the total number of Judges' Points awarded. If these are equal then points on Outrun, Lift and Fetch added together will decide.