

# TEXAS SHEEP DOG ASSOCIATION RULES

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# TEXAS SHEEP DOG ASSOCIATION RULES

## I.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Texas Sheep Dog Association, Inc. ("TSDA") was founded in 1963 and incorporated in 1981 to advance and create an interest in the breeding and training of working stock dogs across Texas. Also, through a system of awards and sheep dog trials, to encourage the continual development of better stock dogs and their applied use on modern farms, ranches, and livestock operations. While fulfilling this purpose, the TSDA seeks to build cordial relationships in the community and to promote humane treatment of dogs, sheep, cattle and goats.

## II.

### OVERVIEW

**A. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:** The information contained within was created to provide TSDA members with a uniform set of rules and guidelines regarding TSDA sanctioned events. In general, rules must be adhered to and may carry penalties for not doing so; guidelines provide more flexibility and serve to identify common practices or options available to competitors and trial hosts. Rules contain language such as "will", "must", or "may not" (or similar inflexible expressions). Guidelines contain language such as "may" or "can" (or similar more flexible expressions). The Class Definitions section provides dog and handler information. The General Rules & Guidelines section provides other useful information.

**B. INFORMATION:** TSDA maintains a website located at [www.texas sheepdogassoc.org](http://www.texas sheepdogassoc.org). Website information is updated frequently and provides the most comprehensive source of information for both members and non-members. The website contains TSDA Rules, trial entry forms, trial sanctioning forms, standings, as well as, United States Border Collie Handler's Association ("USBCHA") & International Sheepdog Society ("ISDS") rules and/or guidelines.

**C. CLASSES:** The TSDA recognizes the following classes: Open, Open Ranch, Nursery, Ranch, Novice, and Youth. To compete in a class both handler and dog must meet the requirements as stated in their respective definitions, i.e. Open Class: Open Handler, Open Dog.

**D. COURSES:** The typical National Style trial course is run in an open field. However, trials can also be run in indoor and outdoor arenas, baseball diamonds, city parks, etc. The phases of work in a full course most often include, but are not limited to, the outrun, lift, fetch, drive, pen, and shed or single. Obstacles (such as panels) are usually set up and the dog is required to maneuver the livestock in, around and through them in a workmanlike manner using as straight a line as possible from one to another. The trial host and/or trial committee most often set up the course and may incorporate, as part of the course, obstacles already part of the trial field, e.g. a bridge, creek, etc. A complete description of the National Style course can be found in the ISDS rules posted on the TSDA website. Courses differ in difficulty from class to class. The courses, in order of

difficulty, starting with the most difficult are: Open, Open Ranch, Nursery, Ranch, Novice, Youth.

**E. SCHEDULES:** The Dog of the Year points schedule is strictly adhered to. Premium Money Schedules One and Two regarding number of places to pay and allocation of premium moneys amongst the placings attached at the end of these rules are recommended guidelines for trial hosts. The division of premium money is at the trial host's discretion. Trials not following the Premium Money Schedules One and Two must advertise that other schedules will be used. Advertising can be done on the TSDA website. A maximum of two (2) premiums per class per handler are paid.

**F. STATE FINALS:** Each class, except for the Youth Class, is represented at the TSDA'S State Finals trial ("State Finals"). Trophies are awarded to the State Finals champion in each class. State Finals champions are determined by their performance at the State Finals. To be eligible for the State Finals, a dog competing in Open, Open Ranch, Ranch and Novice Classes must compete in 5 TSDA trials (each trial a "Qualifying Run") in its class during the year of the State Finals. The trial year for Open, Open Ranch, Ranch and Novice Classes begins with the first trial after the State Finals. To be eligible for the State Finals, a Nursery dog must compete in 5 TSDA trials (each trial also a "Qualifying Run") during the immediately preceding Nursery Class trial year. The trial year for the Nursery Class begins on August 1st and ends on July 31st of the following year. All Qualifying Runs for Nursery Class must be completed on or before July 31st of the year in which the State Finals is held. A Nursery dog must compete in 5 TSDA Nursery trials and 5 Open or Open Ranch trials in order to compete in both classes at the State Finals. TSDA's nursery dog age rule is the same as that of the United States Border Collie Handlers Association ("USBCHA"). A dog is eligible to compete in Nursery Class at the State Finals if its 3rd birthday falls on or after July 1st of the year in which the State Finals trial is held and has the necessary 5 Qualifying Runs.

**G. DOG OF THE YEAR:** Dog of the Year ("DOY") points are awarded each trial year. The maximum number of DOY points that may be earned in a class at a trial is determined by adding (1) point for every three (3) entries. DOY Points are then awarded for each placing in a trial in accordance Dog of the Year Points Schedule set forth below. Scratched entries and no shows are not considered for purposes of calculating DOY points. Classes with less than three (3) entries are considered Qualifying Trials, but do not award Dog of the Year points. Qualifying Runs and DOY points are earned by and belong to the dog regardless of handler or ownership changes. The handler/owner must be a paid, participating or family member prior to going to the post to be considered a Qualifying Trial and before the dog can earn Dog of the Year points. Both fully judged or timed field or arena trials will award DOY points and are considered to be Qualifying Runs for the TSDA Finals. There shall be no restriction on the number of trials that a dog may run in to earn DOY points. A dog can receive points from a maximum of three (3) trials, per class, at any given trial event. At the Finals Trial, trophies for Dog of the Year are awarded in each class. Dogs moved down within TSDA guidelines are not eligible to compete for DOY in the lower class. Except for Nursery Class, Dog of the Year points begin with zero (0) points starting with the first TSDA sanctioned trial following the Finals Trial. For the Nursery Class, DOY points earned at the Finals Trial are added to DOY points earned through the end of Nursery trial year (July 31st of the year of the finals).

Nursery dogs start off the Nursery trial year (August 1st) with zero DOY points. A dog that moves to a higher class during the trial year retains any DOY points earned in the lower class. The high point dog takes Dog of the Year honors even though that dog may have moved up.

**Dog of the Year Points Schedule (all classes):**

# Entries	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
3 - 5	1									
6 - 8	2	1								
9 - 11	3	2	1							
12 - 14	4	3	2	1						
15 - 17	5	4	3	2	1					
18 - 20	6	5	4	3	2	1				
21 - 23	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
24 - 26	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
27 - 29	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
30 - 32	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
ETC.										

**H. LIFETIME POINTS:** Lifetime points are accumulated DOY Points earned by a dog in a class over the course of its life (“Lifetime Points”). Open Ranch, Ranch and Novice dogs earn both DOY and Lifetime Points in each class. Open and Nursery dogs, while earning DOY points in their respective classes each year, do not accrue Lifetime Points in either class. Youth Class does not accrue DOY or Lifetime Points. Lifetime Points begin to accumulate in a class once a dog earns its first DOY point in that class and shall continue to accumulate for the life of the dog or until the dog points out or advances to a higher class. DOY points retained by a dog that moves to a higher class during the trial

year for purposes of determining that year's Dog of the Year are not to be counted as Lifetime Points earned in the class advanced to. A dog will earn Lifetime Points, irrespective of whether the owner/handler running the dog is a member of TSDA or not. All Lifetime Points earned by a dog as a drop-down dog in a class continue to accumulate towards the dog's total Lifetime Points in that class.

**I. COMPULSORY ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENTS:** Any dog that begins its trial year with 50% or fewer of the Lifetime Points required to point out of its class may continue to run in the same class for that trial year with no restriction on the number of DOY points it can accrue. However, such a dog must move up following the State Finals if it has reached or exceeded the Lifetime Points requiring advancement. Any dog, that begins its trial year with more than 50% of the Lifetime Points required to point out of its class must, to continue competing in TSDA sanctioned trials, move to a higher class immediately upon exceeding its maximum allowable Lifetime Points for the class. Dogs moved down one class must advance at the time they reach or exceed the number of points allowable for such dogs. In Novice Class both the handler and the dog are subject to compulsory advancement. A novice handler whose dog(s), whether one or more, have collectively accumulated the number of Lifetime Points for a single dog to point out of Novice Class will be required to advance to a higher class. The number of Lifetime Points for a dog to point out of each class are as follows:

Open Ranch - 57 or more\*

Ranch - 35 or more\*

Novice - 28 or more\*

\* See, Drop-Down Rules For each class, which affect the number of Lifetime Points that a drop-down dog may earn in a class.

**J. SANCTIONING:** The rules herein apply to TSDA sanctioned trials only. Points, trophies, and earnings awarded by other associations are not considered in determining TSDA's Dog of the Year awards or in accumulating Lifetime Points. For a class or trial to count as a TSDA sanctioned trial and receive TSDA DOY or Lifetime Points, it must be advertised in the TSDA website at least 14 days prior to the date of the trial or class. The trial host has the option of adding additional classes after the 14 day period but these classes will not be considered to be sanctioned and cannot be counted towards TSDA DOY or Lifetime Points, nor can these scores or points be added into the scores or points from a sanctioned class.

**K. EXHIBITION:** Trial hosts have the option of allowing exhibition runs during the course of the trial. These runs are non-competitive and place no restriction on a dog or handler. The handler must pay the TSDA fee plus any fee required by the trial host and/or trial committee, e.g. stock charge. The handler does not receive prizes or money, nor does the dog receive Dog of the Year points. A dog may not run exhibition and then compete in another class during the same trial, e.g. run exhibition in the Open Ranch then compete in the Ranch.

### III.

#### CLASS DEFINITIONS

##### A. OPEN CLASS

###### 1. HANDLER

- a. An Open Handler is a National style competitor who has competed in a TSDA, USBCHA, ISDS Open Class, or a comparable class worldwide.
- b. This handler is eligible to compete in the Open, Open Ranch and Nursery Classes.
- c. This handler cannot move down nor run any Open dog in the Open Ranch Class.
- d. It is the responsibility of buyers and sellers to accurately represent class status of any dog. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against either or both parties.

###### 2. DOG

- a. An Open dog is any dog that has competed in the Open Class worldwide, regardless of winnings (sheep or cattle).
- b. This dog may not compete in any other Class with an Open handler except for the Nursery Class.
- c. This dog does not accumulate Lifetime Points.

###### 3. COURSE

- a. In a field trial, the dog will run a full course with a shed and/or single, if possible. These trials are judged with a time limit for completing the course. The course may be modified to include, for example, a chute or Maltese cross. These obstacles may be in addition to the full course or may replace a phase of work such as the shed or pen. Notwithstanding the foregoing the course must include a drive element.
- b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a full course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

##### B. OPEN RANCH CLASS

###### 1. HANDLER

- a. An Open Ranch Handler is any handler who has competed in the Open Ranch or Nursery Classes but has not competed in Open Class worldwide (sheep or cattle).
- b. This handler is eligible to compete in the Open Ranch, Ranch, and Nursery Classes.

- c. It is the responsibility of buyers and sellers to accurately represent class status of any dog. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against either or both parties.

## 2. DOG

- a. An Open Ranch dog is any dog that has competed in Open Ranch Class or Nursery Class, but not in Open Class (sheep or cattle).
- b. This dog may be a dog in training, handled in competition by an Open Ranch or Open handler.
- c. This dog may have been started in the Open Ranch Class or advanced from the Ranch Class by point system requirement or by choice of the handler.
- d. An Open Ranch Class dog may advance to Open Class by the choice of the handler; but once advanced, the dog may no longer compete in Open Ranch Class.
- e. Any Open Ranch dog earning 57 or more Lifetime Points in the class must advance to Open Class to continue running in TSDA sanctioned trials; except in the event the dog begins its Open Ranch trial year with 28 Lifetime Points or less, in which case, the dog will only be required to move up to Open Class after the State Finals for that trial year.

## 3. DROP-DOWN DOG

- a. An Open Ranch handler, under the following provisions, may purchase and move a dog from the Open to the Open Ranch Class:
  - i. The handler both owns and runs the dog.
  - ii. Once the dog earns 16 Lifetime Points as a drop-down dog, it must move back to Open Class.
  - iii. This handler/dog team is ineligible to compete for Dog of the Year in Open Ranch Class.
  - iv. If an Open dog currently competing as an Open Ranch drop-down dog is subsequently sold to an Open Ranch Handler; then the sale shall be treated the same as if the new owner just moved the dog from Open Class to Open Ranch Class for the first time.
- b. An Open Ranch drop-down dog advancing from Ranch Class to Open Ranch Class, is no longer eligible to compete in Open Ranch Class once the dog earns the greater of 16 Lifetime Points as an advancing drop-down dog in Open Ranch Class or the remaining balance of Lifetime Points necessary to point out of Open Ranch Class. This dog is not eligible to compete for dog of the year.



- c. An Open drop-down dog, advancing from Ranch Class to Open Ranch Class, is no longer eligible to compete in Open Ranch Class once the dog earns 16 Lifetime Points as an advancing drop-down dog in Open Ranch Class. This dog is not eligible to compete for dog of the year.

#### 4. COURSE

- a. In a field trial, the dog may be required to run a full course, excluding the shed or single. The dog is never required to shed or single. The outrun and drive are usually shorter than an Open course. These trials are judged with a time limit for completing the course. The course may be modified to include, for example, a chute or Maltese cross. These obstacles may be in addition to the full course or may replace a phase of work such as the pen. Notwithstanding the forgoing the course must include a drive element.
- b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a full course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host and/or trial committee. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

### C. NURSERY CLASS

#### 1. HANDLER

- a. Any Open or Open Ranch handler may compete in the Nursery Class.
- b. A Ranch or Novice Class handler may compete in the Nursery Class, but the handler will lose his/her Ranch or Novice standing and will thereafter be classified as an Open Ranch handler.
- c. The handler must submit a copy of the dog's registration certificate prior to going to the post.
  - i. Certificates not available at that time have a thirty (30) day grace period.
  - ii. Imported eligibility documents should be included with certificates.
  - iii. It is the responsibility of buyers and sellers to properly represent class status of any dog. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against either or both parties.

#### 2. DOG

- a. Any dog that meets the age requirement is eligible to compete in the Nursery Class.
  - i. A Ranch or Novice dog that competes in the Nursery Class will lose their eligibility to run in both the Ranch and Novice Class.
  - ii. Nursery dogs who have never competed in the Open Class (sheep or cattle) are treated as Open Ranch dogs regarding movement from one class to another.

- b. Age Requirements:
  - i. TSDA's nursery dog age rule is the same as USBCHA. A dog meeting TSDA's 5 qualifying run requirement is eligible to compete in Nursery Class at the State Finals if its 3rd birthday falls on or after July 1st of the year in which the State Finals trial is held.
  - ii. Dogs imported younger than one (1) year of age may compete in the Nursery Class.
- c. Nursery dogs start off the Nursery trial year (August 1st) with zero DOY points.

### 3. DROP-DOWN DOG.

- a. A Nursery dog which has competed in Open Class is classified as an Open dog for drop-down purposes.
- b. A Nursery dog which has not competed in Open Class is classified as an Open Ranch dog for drop-down purposes.

### 4. COURSE

- a. In a field trial, the dog may be required to run a full course, excluding the shed and single, or as directed by the presiding judge. The dog is never required to shed or single. The outrun and drive can be the same as an Open course or may be shortened. These trials are judged with a time limit for completing the course. The course may be modified to include, for example, a chute or Maltese cross. These obstacles may be in addition to the full course or may replace a phase of work such as the pen. Notwithstanding the forgoing, the course must include a drive element.
- b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a modified course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host and/or trial committee. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

## **D. RANCH CLASS**

### 1. HANDLER

- a. A Ranch Handler is any handler who has competed in the Ranch Class but has not competed in a class comparable to Open Ranch, Nursery, or Open Classes worldwide (sheep or cattle).
- b. This handler is eligible to compete in the Ranch Class.
- c. This handler may compete in the Ranch Class with a dog that has a history of Open or Open Ranch Class competition (see Drop-Down Dog provisions below).
- d. Any handler may exhibition a dog.

- e. It is the responsibility of buyers and sellers to properly represent the class status of any dog. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against either or both parties.

## 2. DOG

- a. A Ranch Dog is any dog that has competed in the Ranch Class that has not competed in an Open Ranch, Nursery or Open Class worldwide (sheep or cattle).
- b. A Ranch Class dog may advance to the Open or Open Ranch Class by the choice of the handler; but once advanced, or once the dog runs in Nursery Class, the dog may no longer run in Ranch Class.
- c. Any Ranch dog earning 35 or more Lifetime Points in the class must advance to a higher class to continue running in TSDA sanctioned trials; except in the event the dog begins its Ranch trial year with 17 Lifetime Points or less, in which case, the dog will be required to advance to Open or Open Ranch Class after the State Finals for that trial year.

## 3. DROP-DOWN DOG

- a. A Ranch handler, under the following provisions, may move a dog from the Open or Open Ranch Class to the Ranch Class:
  - i. The handler both owns and runs the dog.
  - ii. Once the dog earns 16 Lifetime Points as a drop-down dog, it is no longer eligible to compete in the Ranch Class.
  - iii. This handler/dog team is ineligible to compete for Dog of the Year in Ranch Class.
  - iv. If an Open or Open Ranch dog currently competing as a Ranch drop-down dog is subsequently sold to a Ranch Handler; then the sale shall be treated the same as if the new owner just moved the dog from Open or Open Ranch Class to Ranch Class for the first time.
- b. A Ranch drop-down dog advancing from Novice Class back to Ranch Class, is no longer eligible to compete in Ranch Class once the dog earns the greater of 16 Lifetime Points as an advancing drop-down dog in Ranch Class; or the remaining balance of Lifetime Points necessary for the dog to point out of Ranch Class. This dog is not eligible to compete for dog of the year.

## 4. COURSE

- a. In a field trial, the dog is not required to run a full course. The dog is never required to shed or single. Typically, the dog is required to do an outrun, lift, fetch, drive element, and pen. The handler may not walk with the dog during any phase of work except to pen. The outrun and drive are usually shorter

than an Open Ranch course. The outrun is approximately 150 yards or less. The fetch may or may not have fetch panels. The drive may have three (3) legs of approximately 35 to 50 yards each; or may be through or around an obstacle then to the pen. Drive points, at the discretion of the judge, may be earned by completing the entire drive or to each leg of the drive. These

trials are judged with a time limit for completing the course. The course may be modified to include, for example, a chute or Maltese cross. These obstacles may be in addition to the prescribed course or may replace a phase of work such as the pen.

- b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a modified course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host and/or trial committee. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

## **E. NOVICE CLASS**

### **1. PURPOSE:**

To give a beginning level handler and dog the experience necessary to be competitive at a higher level.

### **2. HANDLER**

- a. A Novice handler is any person that has not competed in any venue in the world, at any level, with any stock, higher than beginner/started level. In the TSDA rules this is any handler that has not competed in Ranch, Open Ranch, Nursery, or the Open Class worldwide.
- b. A novice handler whose dog(s), including drop-down dogs, whether one or more, have collectively accumulated the number of Lifetime Points for a single dog to point out of Novice Class will be required to advance to a higher class.
- c. It is the responsibility of buyers and sellers to accurately represent class status of any dog. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against either or both parties.

### **3. DOG**

- a. A Novice dog is any dog that has not competed in any venue in the world, at any level, with any stock higher than beginner/started level. In the TSDA rules this is any dog that has not competed in Ranch, Open Ranch, Nursery, Open classes, or a comparable class worldwide.
- b. Any Novice dog earning 28 or more Lifetime Points in the class must advance to a higher class; except in the event the dog begins its Novice trial year with 14 Lifetime Points in Novice class or less, in which case, the dog will only be required to move up to a higher class after the State Finals for that trial year.

- c. A Novice Class dog may advance to Ranch or Open Ranch Class by the choice of the handler; but once advanced, or once the dog runs in Nursery Class, the dog may no longer run in Novice Class.

#### 4. DROP-DOWN DOG

A Novice handler, under the following provisions, may move a dog from the Ranch Class to the Novice Class:

- iv. The handler both owns and runs the dog;
- ii. Once the dog earns 16 Lifetime Points, as a drop-down dog, in Novice Class it is no longer eligible to compete in the Novice Class;
- iii. This handler/dog team is ineligible to compete for Dog of the Year in Novice Class; and
- iv. If a Ranch dog currently competing as a Novice drop-down dog is subsequently sold to a Novice Handler; then the sale shall be treated the same as if the new owner just moved the dog from Ranch Class to Novice Class for the first time. A dog may not be dropped down to Ranch Class and then be sold to and run by a Novice Handler in Novice Class.

#### 5. COURSE

- a. In a field trial, the dog is not required to run a full course. The dog is never required to shed or single. Typically, the dog is required to do an outrun, lift, fetch and pen. The handler may not walk with the dog during any phase of work except to pen. The outrun is approximately 75 to 125 yards. The fetch may or may not have fetch panels. The fetch may be straight to the pen, to the handler, or to a designated spot on the field.
- b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a modified course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host and/or trial committee. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

### F. YOUTH CLASS

#### 1. HANDLER

- a. Any youth ten (10) years of age or younger may enter the Youth Class with a helper at the post.
- b. This class does not compete for prizes or money.
- c. The TSDA fee is waived. However, other fees, as set by the trial host and/or trial committee, can be charged, e.g. stock charge.
- d. Handlers in this class are drawn and compete within the Novice Class.
- e. The judge scores the Youth Class.

- f. Token prizes/certificates may be awarded.
  - g. A youth may choose to run in the Novice Class, with no helper, to compete for prizes and money.
  - h. A youth competing for prizes and money pays the Novice Class entry fee.
2. DOG
- Any dog may run in this class: Open, Open Ranch, Nursery, Ranch, or Novice.
3. COURSE
- a. In a field trial, the dog is not required to run a full course. The dog is never required to shed or single. Typically, the dog is required to do an outrun, lift, fetch and pen. The handler may not walk with the dog during any phase of work except to pen. The outrun is approximately 75 to 125 yards. The fetch may or may not have fetch panels. The fetch may be straight to the pen, to the handler, or to a designated spot on the field.
  - b. In an arena trial, the dog may run a modified course or may run a pattern as determined by the trial host and/or trial committee. The trial may be judged, timed, or a combination of judged and timed.

#### **IV.**

### **GENERAL RULES & GUIDELINES**

#### **A. JUDGES**

- 1. All TSDA sanctioned trials are judged in accordance with the United States Border Collie Handlers Association ("USBCHA") Rules and Sheepdog Judging Guidelines.
- 2. Judges should be familiar with these rules and these rules should be available for review while judging.
- 3. Only a secretary, clerk, and/or timekeeper may sit with the judge.
- 4. The judge should describe the trial field boundaries.
- 5. Distractions to the judge should be limited.
- 6. The judge has the authority to retire any entry that may be abusing the livestock and/or dog.
- 7. All decisions of the judge are final.
- 8. Judges determine reruns.
  - a. Judges determine the manner in which ties are broken and have the following options available to him/her.
  - b. Split the premiums.

- c. Use the highest scoring gather (total outrun, lift and fetch points)
    - i. If the gather is tied, each single phase of work is compared until a higher score is found, thus breaking the tie.
    - ii. Phases or work are compared in the following order: outrun, lift, fetch, drive, pen, shed/single.
    - iii. If a course has been modified so it does not include one or more phases listed above, the "other" phases will be compared in the order they occurred during the run.
  - d. Have a run-off.
9. Judges are not paid by TSDA for judging, except for the Finals Trial.
  10. A judge may call for a personal break at any time during the trial.
  11. If a judge is unable to perform his/her duties, it is his/her responsibility to find a replacement. S/he may call the TSDA secretary for suggestions.
  12. It is the trial host's responsibility to provide a clerk and a secretary.
  13. A judge may run a dog in a class s/he is not judging.

## **B. COURSE DIRECTOR**

1. The trial host, trial committee, or TSDA secretary may appoint a course director.  
If more than one person is designated course director, they should:
  - i. Carry out all duties at different times during the trial.
  - ii. Carry out the specific duties that have been divided among or between those designated.
  - iii. Carry out duties as directed by the trial committee.
2. The course director's duties include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Handling complaints.
  - b. Maintaining the run order.
  - c. Determining the method of exhausting stock. The course director may:
    - i. Appoint someone to exhaust.
    - ii. Require competitors to exhaust the run that follows them.
3. The course director should always be available while dogs are running.
4. All complaints must be filed with the course director. If the course director is unwilling or unable to handle the complaint, any complaint may be filed with the Board In writing.

## **C. DOGS**

1. Any dog may compete regardless of breed, age, or color. A dog is not required to be registered or purebred.
2. There are restrictions as to the equipment a dog is allow to wear on the trial field premises and during competition. Non-adherence to these restrictions may result in disqualification, as well as loss of fees, prizes, and premium monies.
  - a. A dog may be equipped with any standard collar.
  - b. Restricted devices include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Any remote-controlled device on premise.
    - ii. Dummy or weighted collars.
    - iii. A leash or rope not detached before the dog is cast.
    - iv. Any device used to distract or cause pain to a dog.
  - c. The judge and course director each have the right to inspect a dog, on or off the field, for any violation to this rule.
3. All dogs should be kept securely tied, on a leash, or in a crate while not competing.
4. Dogs that are competing should be kept off the trial field prior to their run.

## **D. HANDLERS**

1. A handler is limited to the use of a crook or stock stick while competing.
2. A contestant shall not enter the trial field at any time with any kind of training device. The trial committee, representative, or judge may disqualify a contestant if the contestant enters the trial field with any such equipment.
3. A handler is responsible for injury to livestock and property, both on and off the trial field, that results from a dog being loose and/or out of control.
4. Handlers should always demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct.
5. Assistance from sidelines may subject a handler to disqualification.
6. Handlers may walk the trial field prior to the trial.
7. Upon leaving the post area during a phase of work that does not include the pen, shed, chute, or other similar work, it is assumed the contestant is retiring and, therefore, no points are awarded.
8. When the allotted time for a run has expired, points are awarded through the last completed phase of work.
9. If the judge signals "off course", the handler will quickly retire from the post. No points are awarded.



10. If the judge signals "thank you", the run has been disqualified and the handler will quickly retire from the post. No points are awarded.
11. A handler should be ready to run whenever his/her name is called. Failure to come to the post when called is cause for disqualification of that run.
12. Handlers may be required to be properly attired for any trial event. Handlers are to use good judgment and take into account the weather and the magnitude of the event in selecting attire.

## **E. TRIALS**

1. For each TSDA trial event, all entrants must sign TSDA' form of Release and Statement of Responsibility, included as part of the entry form, prior to competing in the event.
2. Each trial host has the option to limit the number of dogs per handler entered in each class, as well as to limit the total number of runs in each class or per event.
3. Entry fees are payable to the person indicated on TSDA's web site.
4. No entries are accepted after the cutoff date for trials.
  - a. Entrants may be put on a waiting list.
  - b. The trial host may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.
5. Entries are not accepted once a class is underway.
6. TSDA will charge a per run office/office supply fee, set and posted by the board on the TSDA website for the use of TSDA equipment, checks, supplies and postage.
7. The TSDA secretary will furnish scoreboard sheets and a time clock. A run order may be furnished if requested by the trial committee or by the trial host.
8. The complete run order must be drawn prior to the first entry in a class proceeding to the post.
9. Entry fees will not be refunded after published trial entry cancellation date.
  - a. Trial host may make exceptions in meritorious cases.
  - b. Trial host may allow substitution of dogs in meritorious cases.
10. A draw in a run order consists of a dog/handler team.
  - a. An entry must run in order drawn, with the exception of a trial event where a handler is running dogs on two separate fields during the event. In the event a handler is running dogs on two separate fields with insufficient time for the handler to run in the order drawn on both fields, then in such event the run in the more advanced class has priority. The handler's run in the lesser of the two classes shall be scheduled by the course director to as near the original order drawn as is reasonably practicable under the circumstances.

- b. A handler cannot name the order in which his/her dog shall run.
11. A random or rotation draw by the trial committee or someone appointed by the trial committee or by the trial host determines the run order.
    - a. Should a handler's entries be drawn back-to-back or with only one draw between runs, entries are drawn and inserted so the handler has two draws separating his/her runs.
    - b. If it is not possible to separate a handler's runs by at least two (2) draws, that handler is allowed enough time to put up one dog and get the other to the post without the risk of forfeiting his/her run for being tardy to the post.
    - c. All classes are drawn in this manner.
  12. Score sheets are checked and posted by the trial secretary in an area not readily accessible to the judge.
    - a. Total scores only are posted as soon as practical.
    - b. Point deductions are filled in after the last contestant in a class has run.
  13. Once a class starts, the method of spotting livestock cannot be changed. It may be changed at the start of another class. Should it be necessary to change the method of spotting livestock before the end of a class, all competitors who ran using the first method must be given the option of a re-run.
  14. The TSDA secretary must receive the original score sheets, as filled out by the judge and clerk, for every sanctioned class run during a trial. A trial host may use its own score sheet or the form found on the web site.
  15. Each entry fee will include a TSDA sanctioning fee set by the board of directors to be paid to the TSDA.
  16. Any dog may run in a jackpot class without affecting their TSDA class standing. No Dog of the Year points are awarded.
  17. Deviations from TSDA guidelines may result in sanctions.
  18. In order for a trial host to recover for loss or damage to sheep, the trial host must have posted a maximum limit for sheep loss/damage (per head) on the web site prior to the trial opening for entries.
  19. In all arena trials a trial host may limit the number of entries in each class - if the trial host does limit entries it must be listed in on the web site.

## **F. MEMBERSHIP**

1. Membership is not required to compete in a TSDA trial.
2. Dues are paid annually, January 1 through December 31, and are based on the membership level.

- a. Participating Membership: \$25. This level is for handlers who want to compete in TSDA trials and receive Dog of the Year points, run in the Finals trial, and vote in TSDA elections.
  - b. Family Membership: \$25, first member; \$10, each additional member This level is for family members living in the same household. Each member has the same privileges as the Participating Member.
3. Participating or Family Membership is required before going to the post in order to receive Dog of the Year and qualifying points.
  4. The membership elects the Board of Directors.

**G. OTHER**

1. Rule changes and/or new rules made during the trial year will go into effect 30 days after the rule change is approved, unless the change will affect year end issues such as DOY, lifetime points or handler status. In those cases the rule will go into effect with the first trial of the next trial season.
2. In case where the number of handlers placing in a class is less than the number of places paid, the trial host and/or trial committee has discretion as how to distribute the remaining payout fund. They may:
  - a. Split all remaining funds between placing handlers.
  - b. If there are no handlers placing in the class then the handler payout fund for that class shall be retained by the trial host or disbursed at the trial host's discretion.
3. The minutes of the Board of Director's meetings are published on TSDA's web site. The minutes will state how each director voted. All proposed changes to these rules or the guidelines must be published on the TSDA web site for at least 48 hours prior to any vote thereon by the board of directors.
4. The Board has the authority to act on hardship situations on a case-by-case basis.
5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION: The Board of Directors has the authority to set disciplinary action for any valid written complaint filed with a course director or the board. If a course director is unable or unwilling to handle a complaint, the next course of action is through the Board. A complaint, made after the trial, must be filed with the Board, in writing, within thirty (30) days of the infraction. Examples of infractions, include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Unsportsman-like conduct
  - b. Offensive language
  - c. Disrespect to sponsoring host, labor, judge(s), or trial director
  - d. Abuse to animals
  - e. Misrepresentation of dogs or handler classifications

## **H. FINALS TRIAL**

1. Once the drawing for a class is completed and the class starts, the handler is liable for the entry fees.
2. Entry fees must be paid prior to going to the post.
3. The Open Class will have double lift finals.
  - a. The course size may be modified.
  - b. The double lift will have two (2) groups of sheep.
4. DETERMINING RUNS: The following are guidelines as to how the runs will be determined at the Finals. These guidelines may be modified at the discretion of the Board to reflect the availability of sheep, number of entries, location of the course, or any other factor(s) that could influence the organization or conduct of the Finals.
  - a. 75 entries or less: two (2) go-rounds plus a clean slate 40% run back final for all classes. The Open final to be a double lift course
  - b. 76 - 100 entries: two (2) go-rounds with combined scores determining the places for the finals in Open Ranch, Ranch, Novice, and Nursery. The Open final to be a 40% clean slate run back double lift course.
  - c. 101 - 125 entries: one (1) go-round plus a clean slate 40% run back final in all classes The Open final to be a double lift course.

**I. SCHEDULES**

PREMIUM MONEY - SCHEDULE ONE

PLACES PAID

*Open, Open Ranch, Nursery, Ranch, and Novice Classes Unless otherwise stated website or elsewhere.*

Total Entries	Places Paid
1 - 3	1
4 - 6	2
7 - 11	3
12 - 15	4
16 - 22	5
23 - 28	6
29 -35	7
36 - 42	8
43 - 48	9
49 & over	10

PREMIUM MONEY - SCHEDULE TWO

PERCENTAGE ALLOCATION AMONGST PLACES PAID

Percentage (%) of Money Paid

Open, Open Ranch, Nursery, Ranch, and Novice Classes

Places Paid	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
One	100%									
Two	60%	40%								
Three	50%	30%	20%							
Four	40%	30%	20%	10%						
Five	30%	25%	20%	15%	10%					
Six	30%	24%	18%	12%	9%	7%				
Seven	28%	23%	16%	12%	9%	7%	5%			
Eight	25%	20%	15%	12%	10%	8%	6%	4%		
Nine	23%	18%	15%	11%	9%	8%	7%	5%	4%	
Ten	20%	16%	14%	11%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%