

SUNDOWNER STOCKDOG ASSOCIATION
TRIAL RULES
Updated January 17, 2009

1. TYPES OF TRIALS:

- A. 2 DAY TRIALS – All classes run both days. Winners determined by averaging scores and times from both days. Association Champion Points awarded after second day.
- B. 2 ONE DAY TRIALS – All classes run both days, with winners declared at the end of each day.
- C. 1 DAY TRIAL – All classes run.
- D. SPECIAL EVENT TRIAL – such as “Red River Classic” and “Lone Star Futurity” and joint trials with other organizations will not participate in association champion award.
- E. TRIAL SITES – typical ranch site that can include area for outruns, fetch panels, manmade or natural obstacles. No site charge authorized.

2. TRIAL ENTRIES:

- A. The Trial Director will assure that late arrivals have not witnessed any runs in their class and may only be entered last in the run order.
- B. All Handlers must attest, by signature, to the dog’s age and their eligibility for the class they are entering. This statement and signature will be on the entry form.
- C. Entry forms must include the Association Liability Waiver and must be signed by each entrant.

3. TRIAL PAYBACKS:

- A. \$25.00 to \$30.00 of each entry fee is paid for cattle charges.
- B. \$5.00 of each entry fee is kept by this Association to cover expenses.
- C. The balance will be paid to winners in accordance with the following formula:
 - 1) 1 to 4 entries – 100%
 - 2) 5 to 9 entries – 60% for 1st place, 40% for 2nd place
 - 3) 10 to 19 entries – 50% for 1st, 30% for 2nd, 20% for 3rd
 - 4) 20 to 29 entries – 34% for 1st, 28% for 2nd, 22% for 3rd, 16% for 4th
 - 5) 30 to 39 entries – 32% for 1st, 26% for 2nd, 20% for 3rd, 14% for 4th, 8% for 5

4. LIMITING ENTRIES:

- A. If entries exceed the capacity of cattle furnished or trial duration, Handlers with multiple dog entries will be asked to reduce their entries starting with the Handler with the most dogs entered in that class. Reductions will continue until limits are reached. Example: Handlers with 5 dogs entered in Open Class. All Handlers with 5 dogs will be asked to withdraw one dog, etc.
- B. Fees will be refunded for dogs withdrawn due to limitations.

5. HANDLERS' MEETINGS:
 - A. Will be held before each class run.
 - B. Class Trial Director will conduct or delegate the Handler's meeting for their class.
 - C. Trial Director will establish an interim (tie breaker) point or line.
 - D. Trial Director or designee will brief the entire course in include maximum Pen or Timeline, Time allowed, setout points, arena time allowed, point where time ends, points awarded for each obstacle, and define specific trial rules such as gate settings before and after a run.
 - E. A representative from the scorekeeper's table must attend every Handler's meeting.

6. RUN ORDER:
 - A. Will be determined by random drawing.
 - B. Drawn positions will not be altered after drawn with the following exception:
 - 1) Back to back runs will be avoided by providing at least one Handler in between the drawn back to back runs.
 - C. Run order will be announced at the end and as part of the Handler's Meeting or will be posted on the run board.

7. RUN START TIME:
 - A. When all cattle have cleared the release trailer, crossed the start line, or when start is signaled by a set out crew member, or when the cattle have cleared the release gate.
 - 1) If dog is sent before any of the above conditions are met and cattle have been called for, the time starts when the dog leaves the Handler's side.
 - B. Cattle must be called for by the Handler before the dog can legally leave the Handler's side.
 - 1) If dog leaves early on his own and before the cattle are called for, the dog must be recalled and restarted by the Handler. Time will start when the dog leaves the Handler's side the first time. Not to recall the dog or the dog's failure to return requires disqualification or penalty.

8. HANDLER RULES:
 - A. You cannot touch the stock unless they pose a threat to your safety. (Stock bumping the Handler is not considered touching.)
 - B. You cannot run or climb over fences or gates unless there is a threat to your safety
 - C. You cannot carry ANYTHING in your hand. (amended 1/19/06)
 - D. Dogs cannot wear training or dummy collars during their run.
 - E. You must leave all gates set as they were briefed at the Handler's Meeting.
 - F. You cannot leave the Handler's post, line or zone prior to the time briefed at the Handler's Meeting.
 - G. Handlers with disabilities may have a person in the arena with them to aid their mobility and may use walking cane/walker to help in mobility but MAY NOT use them to help dog or direct cattle. (amended 1/19/06)

(Handler rules continued on next pg.)

- H. You must not physically abuse any dog. This act could cause disqualification action.
- I. Handlers cannot work the cattle by themselves. It must be clear to the observers that the dog and Handler are working the cattle together. (amended 3/23/03)
- J. You are expected to act in a courteous and respectful manner, both verbally and physically around the Membership, Hosts, Guests, Trialers, Spectators, Timers and Scorekeepers. Abusive or abrasive behavior will not be tolerated and could be met with disqualification/penalties/sanctions.

9. GENERAL RULES:

- A. Pen time stops when the last cow clears the gate opening or the pen gate is closed.
- B. Scoring: The Trial Director has three options which are:
 - 1) At least one cow must go through each obstacle before proceeding to the next obstacle, or,
 - 2) You can only make one pass or attempt at an obstacle, or,
 - 3) All cattle must go through each obstacle before proceeding to the next obstacle.
- C. If any stock leaves the trial boundaries by running through or going over fences or gates, the run and time will stop but any points earned to that point will be awarded.
- D. If the exhaust gate is used as the final obstacle, the Trial Director has the following options:
 - 1) Time will stop when all cattle clear the gate opening.
 - 2) Time will stop when all cattle are exhausted and gate is closed.
 - 3) All cattle that cleared the opening when time expires will be counted.
 - 4) Handler can close the gate at any time and get credit for those cattle exhausted. Handler will be awarded maximum run time when they close the gate.
- E. If a trailer is used as the final obstacle, the Trial Director has the following options:
 - 1) Time will stop when all cattle are inside the trailer with the end gate open.
 - 2) Time will stop when all cattle are inside the trailer with end gate closed.
 - 3) All cattle that are inside the trailer when time expires will be counted.
 - 4) Handler may opt to close the trailer gate at any time and gain credit for cattle inside. They will be awarded maximum run time when they close the gate.
- F. Gates cannot be used as an aid to force movement of cattle due to the possibility of injury to the Handler and/or stock.
- G. After the first dog is sent on the first run in any given class, all dogs in the class must attempt the run without any, alterations, adjustments, or deviations to the course or the environment. If any changes are authorized by the Trial Director and Host, all Handlers that made the run prior to the change must be granted a re-run if requested by the Handlers.
- H. Verbal coaching from the sidelines is allowed. Any physical interference is not allowed.

(general rules continued on next pg.)

- I. Removal of “bad cattle” must be done after the last run of the class unless stock is injured. The Trial Director and/or Host will determine if any stock is to be removed

10. DETERMINING WINNERS:

- A. High points gained in each class will determine the winner. Ties will be resolved by:
 - 1) The lowest time elapsed for the entire run or if still tied
 - 2) The lowest time at the interim timing point or pen time
 - 3) It is highly unlikely that there will still be a tie after going through the steps above, but if it did happen, there would be an abbreviated course tie-breaker run made. The winner shall be determined before the next class begins.

11. DISQUALIFICATION:

- A. During the run—
 - 1) Handlers will be allowed to finish their run as long as they have a full compliment of stock.
- B. Authority to disqualify or penalize shall rest with any Officer of the Governing Body, acting scorekeeper, timer, and/or assigned observers.
- C. Handlers have the right to challenge any disqualification if it appears to be unjust in any way.
 - 1) Challenge shall be written, signed and submitted to their Class Director or any Member of the Governing Body.
 - 2) Immediately following receipt of a challenge, the person making the disqualification and at least three Members of the Governing Body will meet and determine whether to uphold or overrule the disqualification.
 - 3) All points will be lost if upheld, returned if overruled.
- D. A Handler that calls time will be disqualified unless:
 - 1) The Handler is injured and unable to continue
 - 2) The dog is injured and in the Handler’s best judgment should not continue
 - 3) All points earned to the point of injury or injury time called, will be awarded
- E. Abusive Conduct—If a Handler is disqualified twice for abusive conduct, they will lose their right to participate and their voting rights in this organization’s activities for a period of one year from the date of the second offense. A third offense will bar the offender for life.

12. *There is not a par.12*

13. ASSOCIATION CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD:

- A. Handlers and Owners must be member in good standing prior to participation.
- B. Open, Ranch, Novice, and Beginner are eligible.
- C. All sanctioned trials will be “Association Champion” point trials except those specifically excluded.

(Assoc. Champion rules continued on next pg.)

- D. Points from 100% of the total trials held each season will counted.
- 1). Individual championship points will be awarded based on the number of entrants in each eligible class including the non-members.
Example—20 entrants: 1st place=20 pts., 2nd place=19 pts., 3rd place=18 pts.
 - 2) Non-member entrants participate in payback only.
(amended, #3 omitted -80% attendance rule-1-17-09)
- E. In the event of tied point scores at the end of the trial year, and there is not a clear winner, the dog that has attended more trials that year will be declared the winner. EXAMPLE: Dog Tuff has 35 pts. and attended 14 trials, Dog Sam has 35 pts and attended 13 trials, then, tuff would be declared the winner.
- If all dogs in the points tie have attended the same number of trials, the entry forms from all of that season's trials will be pulled and the TOTAL TIME for each added together for a TOTAL TIME FOR THAT YEAR. The dog with the fastest time will be declared the winner.
- If by some chance, and it should never happen, there is still a tie, 3 head of cattle for each dog in the tie will be pulled, and each dog/handler will run each set of cattle. The time and points will be added together and a winner declared.
- F. Awards shall be presented at the general membership meeting after the last trial of the season.

AMENDMENT RECORD:

par.8-I added 3/23/03; par.13 added 5/6/03; par.2 amended 12/14/03;
par.13-D1&2 incorporated 1/11/04; par 3-A amended 7/25/05; par.8-J amended 2/5/05
par. 3-C amended 1/19/06; par 8-C amended 1/19/06; par.8-G amended 1/19/06;
par. 13 amended 1/1/08; par.13-D amended 1-17-09

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Sundowner Stockdog Association (SSA) is to promote the trained, working stockdog through a non-judged (points and timed) competition. We promote the involvement of youth in our organization and by doing this, we are helping them develop confidence, patience, good sportsmanship and fellowship. A good dog is a hard worker, never asks for time off, never complains, and most of all is the best friend a person can have. Our organization's (SSA) goal is for all to be blessed with at least one good dog.