

International Rules for Sheepdog Trials

- Collecting Style –

for Border Collie and Kelpie exclusively



INTRODUCTION

The object of a trial course is to test the ability of a dog to manage sheep properly under the variable circumstances which may be encountered in everyday work: the various tests such as gathering, driving, shedding, singling, penning, loading in a trailer or using a shedding race are all tasks which may be necessary as the shepherd goes his daily round. The aims of the sheepdog trials should be to promote good handling of the sheep with a minimum of stress for them as well a good handling of the sheep dog, to promote its utility and sport, and to secure and select the best working lines. It reflects “**collecting style**”.

Regarding the difficulties of finding the "ideal field" or the "ideal sheep" some flexibility is allowed in the distances and in the amount of sheep used in the three classes 1, 2, 3.

Before a dog is allowed to compete in a trial it has to pass the FCI Herding Working Test (Collecting style).

International trials shall be conducted according to these rules.

Those trials must be advertised as: **CACIT International Herding Trial - FCI**. The catalogue must show the FCI logo together with the following notice: “**Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI)**”.

1. TRIAL COMMITTEE

The organizing committee for each local, national or international trial works under the responsibility of its national sheepdog working group which has to be affiliated to, or have an agreement with its National Canine Organization recognised by the FCI.

This committee will determine the number of entries for each class, the entry fees and all the awards.

Sheepdog trials should be organized on clean and closed field (natural edges, fences or flexi nets) that gives a maximum of security for the public, sheep and dogs.

The organizing committee consists of members in charge of :

- getting all the helpers they need,
- sending the programme to the competitors and judges as soon as possible,
- preparing the judging sheet (report) and providing assistants for the judges,
- laying out the course and supervising the running of their respective trial,
- controlling the good health of the sheep and the dogs,
- controlling the handlers and dogs qualifications to run in the class,
- keeping all the dogs out of the field before and after their respective run,
- handing over the judging sheet (report), correctly filled and signed, to each competitor,

It is the responsibility of each member organisation to select the team (handler & dog) for any local, national or international trial.

The organizing committee is to be headed by one course director, responsible for all the tasks related to the trial; he should be present at all times.

2. SHEEP

The course shall be on five sheep in all classes, selected in such a way that each competitor shall work with sheep of equal quality. Preferably, the sheep used for the trials shall all come from the same flock and be similar in type.

The sheep shall be well dogged and in good health. Lambs should be weaned.

The organizing committee should make sure to have sufficient sheep in order that each lot of sheep should not be stressed and should not be used more than twice in a day for the class 3, three times for the class 2 and maximum four times in class 1. The sheep shall be brought at the post in a quiet manner, in the same way for each competitor and the helpers shall behave the same way for each competitor until the dog has lifted the sheep and started the fetch. The sheep shall be kept quietly and as close as possible to their post.

3. DOGS

Sheepdog trials -Collecting style- are open to

Border Collies and Kelpies.

The dogs must be entered in a studbook recognized by the FCI. All results must be noted in the dog's scorebook or any equivalent document. Identification of the dog must be done by controlling their tattoo number or micro-chip.

Any dog which is not in condition e.g. a bitch which is near birth or lactating, a dog that is laming or suffering from an infectious disease shall not be brought to the ground.

Competitors whose bitch is in season must notify the organizing committee before the start and cannot take her to the ground until called to do so. No dog competing shall wear or carry anything that might in anyway assist or hinders its performance.

4. COMPETITORS

Any owner or handler may work with several dogs in class 1, 2 or 3. Each competitor must be ready when called by the course director and anyone failing to answer the call can be disqualified and forfeit his run.

Competitors must be aware that even if the order of the programme will be followed strictly, the timing cannot be guaranteed if any handler is missing due to unforeseen circumstances.

Once a competitor has started, his work is under the evaluation and authority of the judges and he is considered to know the course and to follow it precisely. Before the trial starts, the course director has to summon all the competitors and brief them about all details related to the competition. All questions or clarifications have to be asked by the competitors at that time.

While working, competitors cannot get any help or advice from anybody. Any participant receiving assistance in any form will be disqualified.

Any participant in conflict with the rules or whose behaviour, in and out of the field, could harm, according to the organizing committee or to the judges, the organisation of the trial, will automatically be punished by sanctions or disciplinary actions such as :

- a) disqualification from the day's trial ,
- b) cancellation of any prizes and awards won by him at the day's trial,
- c) suspension from sheep dog trials in the organizing country for a period as decided by the organizing committee.
- d) any other penalty considered suitable by the organizing committee.

Handlers without their dogs can inspect the course before the trial commences.

Participants shall keep their dogs under full control at all times. Any handler or/and his dog disturbing another dog or another participant who is working shall be eliminated and disqualified.

The affected participant will be given a re-run by the judge. It is within the authority of the judge to decide on a complete or a partial re-run. In case of a partial re-run, the points which the participant already achieved will count. Any participant who is disqualified shall lose all his points. Any participant losing one or more sheep shall be disqualified.

Entries are made in the name of the owner(s) but a dog can be handled either by the owner or by a handler who must be a member of an FCI recognised member or contract partner. When handlers are nominated, the owner(s) must indicate their name and address on the entry form.

5. QUALIFICATIONS

In order to compete in the different classes, the following has to be achieved

(Minimum qualifying points ≥ 70 %).

After 1 time ≥ 70 % the dog can move to the next class.

After 3 times ≥ 70 % the dog has to move to the next class.

\geq means “higher than or equal to”

Return to a lower class is not permitted.

All judging sheet handed over to the competitor have to be completed, signed by the judges and have to include the following information:

Excellent (Exc):	≥ 80 % up to the total points
Very good (VG):	≥ 70 % & < 80 %
Good (G):	≥ 60 % & < 70 %
Non-qualifying:	less than 60 %

\geq means “higher than or equal to”

$<$ means “lower than”

6. COMPLAINT

Any decision made by a judge regarding the merits of the dogs, the placing and the points, is final and indisputable, unless the judge has violated formalities and existing rules.

Such complaints as well as complaints about how the trial was run, have to be made immediately in writing to the organising committee and against the deposit of 50 € as surety. If the complaint is found to be unjustified, this surety will be handed over to the organiser of the trial. If the protest is substantiated, the deposit will be refunded.

The judges will meet with the organising committee and the protest shall, if possible, be settled. The majority decision will be final and binding.

7. DISQUALIFICATION

In an unsporting situation, for the well-being of the sheep and the dog, the handler is asked to withdraw before being disqualified.

The handler will be immediately disqualified, if the dog is not under perfect control or grabs unnecessarily.

It is within the judge's authority to decide if a gentle nip is needed in a particular situation. In case of a dog facing a nasty sheep that turns on to charge the dog several times, the judges might accept one self-defence grab if so justified and the competitor will be authorized to continue his course under the condition that the grab was not a nasty bite in which case the dog must be immediately disqualified.

A handler who is visibly drunk or under the influence of drugs will be disqualified.

In case the sheep are not workable, the judges, together with the course director, can take the decision to allow a re-run.

8. RE-RUN

The judges can instruct the course director to stop a dog at any point of its course and order a complete or a partial re-run if they consider that the circumstances justify such an action. This is entirely up to the judge to decide. In case of a partial re-run the points which the participant already achieved will count.

9. EQUALITY

If two or more competitors get the same total of points, the judges shall use the following criteria

- (1) their points for the outrun, lift and fetch
- (2) with the addition of the drive or
- (3) ordering re-trials of any part of the course.

10. JUDGES

The organizing committee shall invite judges with experience and integrity and who are approved and recognized by their national canine organisation.

Judges shall have, if so desired, a trial secretary and a time keeper.

11. COURSE GENERALITIES

The course, scale of points and time limit are set below.

It is the responsibility of the organizing committee to lay out the course in accordance with these rules.

- a) Distance between the gates is 7 m
- b) The shedding ring is 35 m in diameter
- c) The rope at the pen is 1,50 m
- d) The pen is 2,5 x 2,5 m with a gate of 2 m.

OUTRUN 20 points

Handler and dog must stay at the starting post. In the outrun, the dog can be directed on either side. A good outrun should be in a pear shape, not too straight or too wide, and be completed without stops or commands. Both can be the subject of penalties. At the end of the outrun, a slow down or stop command is not penalised. If a dog crosses the course, a minimum of 10 points and a maximum of 19 points will be deducted.

The outrun will end when the dog has reached the point of balance to drive the sheep, that is to say if the sheep have moved from the post, the dog should stop at the point of balance in order to be in the position to fetch them in a direct line to the first obstacle.

LIFT 10 points

At the end of the outrun, whether the dog has come to a full stop or merely slowed down, his approach should be smooth, cautious and steady. He should not rush in and scare the sheep or lie back and requiring numerous commands. The dog should not disturb the sheep unduly.

FETCH 20 points

The sheep should be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the place of lifting to the handler, passing the "fetch gate". The dog should not hurry or over-flank his sheep, giving a zigzag movement. If a gate is missed there will be a minimum deduction of half a point per sheep but the judges will take into consideration all the relevant circumstances. The sheep should be driven behind the handler (who stands at the post) as close to him as possible.

DRIVE 30 points

The "Drive" takes place in a triangular direction (not in class 1) and can be performed from left to right or right to left according to the decision of the organising committee.

The first part of the triangle starts immediately after the sheep have passed behind the handler and the sheep are required to go in a straight line to the first set of gates. Having got the sheep through the 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 a straight line to the shedding ring. The sheep should be kept moving gently, excessive bursts of speed and excessive stopping is not desirable and will be penalised.

As in the "Fetch" the gates are guides to the alignment of the sheep. Good handling in difficult situations will be taken into consideration by the judges.

DRIVING TOGETHER (class 1)

The order during the "Driving together" is: Handler - Sheep - Dog. The "Driving together" is most important for a young dog to develop good balance and is a real practical piece of work in shepherding that must be taken in consideration. In class 1, after the drive away for 40 m and the sheep are back to the handler, he will drive his sheep on the course, walking in front of the sheep with the dog balancing in the back, on a minimum of 150 meters, towards the 3 gates that they must pass in the direction set by the organising committee.

Throughout the "Drive together" the sheep should be kept moving gently, excessive burst of speed and subsequent stopping is not desirable and will be penalised. The "Driving together" ends at the approach of the shedding ring.

SHEDDING (class 1)

The shedding will have the form of a funnel, giving enough space for the sheep and the dog to manoeuvre inside. In case the sheep are inside, the handler has the choice to close the gates or not. One point will be deducted for closing a gate. Two points for closing the two gates. In case the sheep are inside, the handler is authorized to move the sheep towards the narrow passage with his hands or his crook. All the sheep have to go through the funnel. The work ends when all the sheep are gathered outside the funnel and the handler has closed the exit gate and opened the other two gates if he had closed them.

SHEDDING (class 2) 10 points

The shedding ring has a diameter of about 35 meters in class 2, two unmarked sheep must be shed off from the rest of the flock. The ideal "Shed" occurs when the dog comes towards the handler when commanded by him, splits his sheep and drives the two unmarked sheep away from the rest. The "Shed" is complete when the dog has brought the sheep under control. On completion of the "Shed" the handler should bring his sheep together in the ring, in a correct manner. The handler cannot proceed to the pen if he did not shed to the judges approval.

PEN (all classes) 10 points

The pen must have a sufficient dimension for the sheep. The gate will not be less than 2 meters wide with a 1,50 m. rope tied to it. On completion of shedding, the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving his dog to hold the sheep in the ring and then bring the sheep to the pen.

The handler will stand at the gate, holding the rope until all sheep are inside and the gate is closed. After releasing the sheep, the handler will close the gate with the rope and shall be penalised for failing to do so.

SINGLING (class 3) 10 points

"Singling" is not a compulsory exercise.

For the "Singling" the handler will proceed to the shedding ring letting the dog bring the sheep from the pen to the ring.

One of the two marked sheep will be shed off within the ring and "isolated" by the dog (inside or outside the ring) to the judge's discretion.

Like with the "Shed", when the handler has prepared the sheep that has to be shed off, it is the dog, and not the handler, that has to perform the work.

The shed of the single sheep is complete when the dog has come in and has brought the sheep under control. The handler is not allowed to assist the dog in driving off. Like with the "Shed", if the judges feel that the dog has not been fairly tested owing to the disposition and action of the sheep, they can order the handler to collect the sheep again, shed off and isolate any other sheep.

LOADING ON THE TRAILER (classes 2 and 3) 10 points

Loading on the trailer can be conducted **instead** of the "Pen"

The trailer is open and has protections on both sides of the ramp.

The handler proceeds to the trailer, stands on either side, left or right of the ramp, leaving his dog to hold the sheep in the ring.

The dog brings the sheep quietly from the ring in a direct line to the ramp.

In class 3, handlers are forbidden to touch the sheep.

MALTESE CROSS (class 3) 10 points

The Maltese Cross is not a compulsory exercise; however, it has to be conducted after the "Drive".

IMPORTANT: if one exercise is added, the total scale of points should be 110.

CLASS 3

The running shall be on 5 sheep, 2 of them being marked.

GATHERING (Outrun) : Distance about 350 meters (depending on the area)

In the outrun the dog can be directed on either side. A straight fetch from the lift to the handler, through a centre gate about 7 metres wide, 150 m from the handler. No retry at the gate is allowed. The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the outrun; at the end of the fetch the dog will drive the sheep behind the handler to start the drive.

DRIVING : The handler will stand at the post and direct his dog to drive the sheep for about 350 m (depending on the length of outrun) minimum over a triangular course through two sets of gates about 7 m wide, a second attempt at either gate is NOT allowed.

The drive ends when the sheep enter the shedding ring.

The handler will remain at the post until the sheep are in the shedding ring.

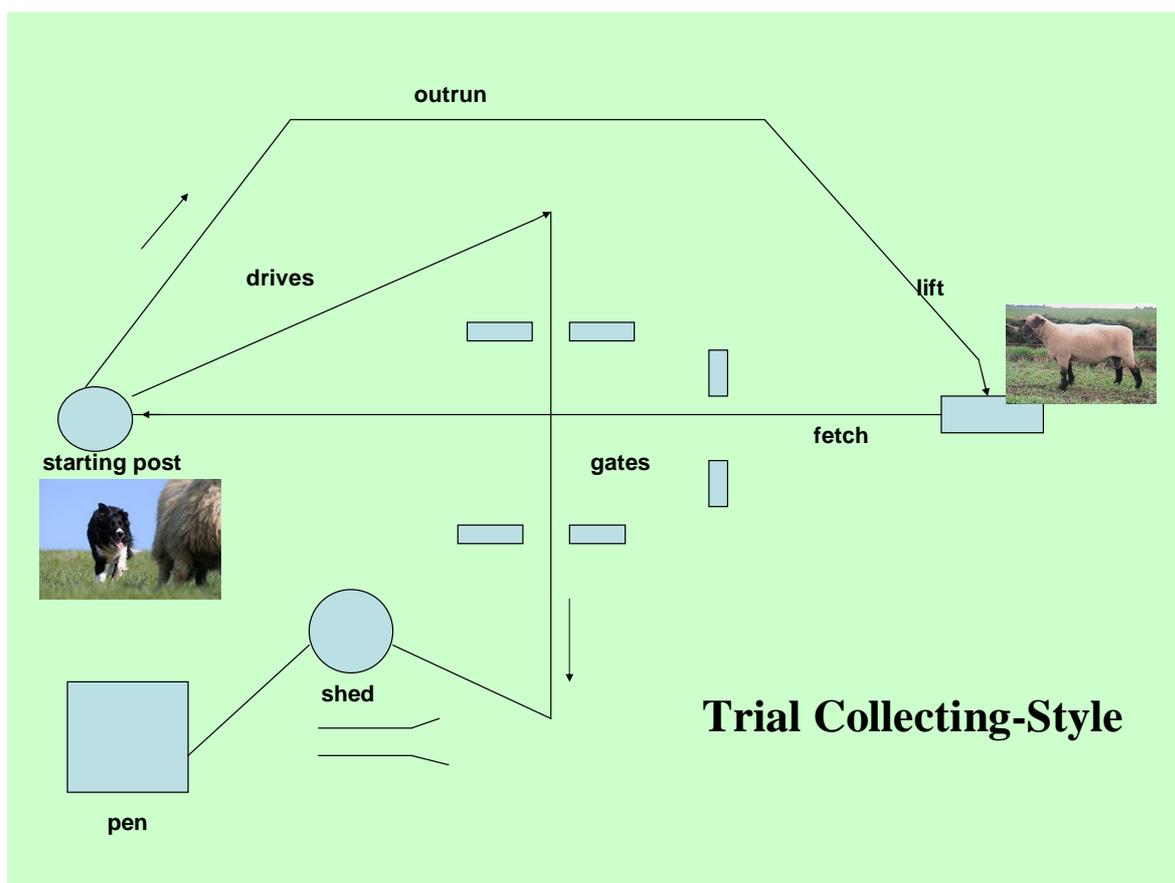
In the case of a short course, when the fetch is less than 350 m, the drive should be extended if possible, so that the total length of the fetch and drive would be about 500 m. The drive may be either side, left or right, and shall be decided by the organising committee prior to the trials.

SHEDDING: Two marked sheep to be shed within a ring 35 m in diameter. The dog must control the two sheep (in or outside the ring), otherwise the shed will not be considered satisfactory. On completion of the shed the handler shall gather his sheep before proceeding to pen.

PENNING: The pen will be 2,50 X 2,50 m wide with a gate 2m wide and a 1,5 m rope tied to it. On completion of shedding, the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving his dog to bring the sheep to the pen. The handler is not allowed to assist the dog to drive the sheep to the pen. The handler will stand at the gate holding the rope. After releasing the sheep, the handler will close the gate with the rope.
 “Loading on the trailer” can be performed instead of “penning” as in class 2.

SINGLING : The handler will proceed to the shedding ring letting the dog bring the sheep from the pen to the ring. One of the two marked sheep will be shed off within the ring and isolated (in or outside the ring) to the judge’s discretion. The handler is not allowed to assist the dog in driving off.

TIME LIMIT: 15 MINUTES. No extension.



Class 1

Number of sheep: 5 minimum to 10 unmarked sheep. Distance: about 100 m.
 Time limit: 10 minutes. No extension

Scale of Points: 100

Outrun 20 Lift 10 Fetch 15 Drive Away 15
 Drive Together 15 Shedding Race 15 Penning 10

Total: 100 points

Class 2

Number of sheep: 5 unmarked Distance: 150 m min.
Time limit: 12 minutes. No extension.

Scale of Points: 100

Outrun 20 Lift 10 Fetch 20 Drive 30 Shed 10 Pen 10

Total: 100 points

Class 3

Number of sheep: 5 (2 of them marked). Distance: 300 meters minimum (depending on the area)

Time limit: 15 minutes. No extension

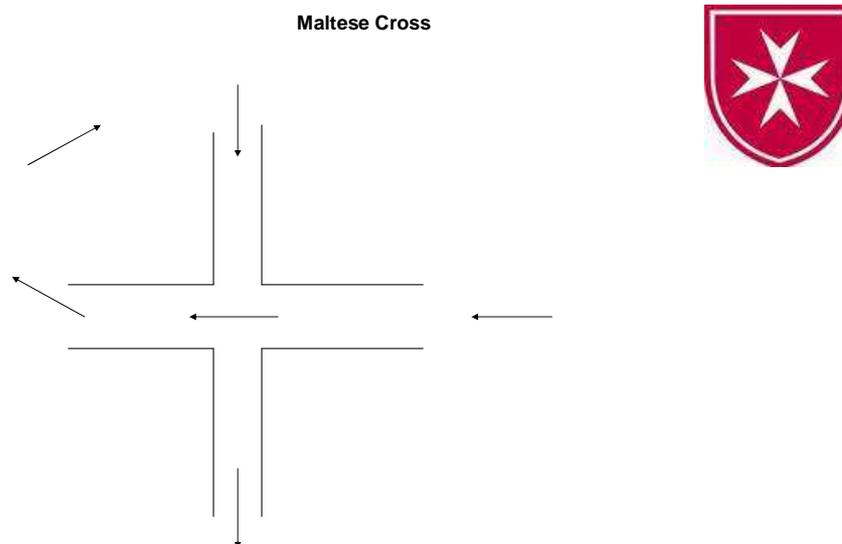
Scale of points: total 100 or 110 points

Outrun 20 Lift 10 Fetch 20 Drive 30 Shed 10 Pen 10

Total: 100 points

Additional exercises: (Singling or Maltese Cross): each 10

Total: 110 points



The English text is the authentic one.

A 5-year transition period, starting from June 1st, 2008 until December 31st, 2013, is given to all dogs having already taken part in national or ISDS Herding tests. The results obtained by these dogs in those trials make them eligible to take part in the FCI International Herding Tests (Collecting Style), in addition to the FCI Herding Working Test (Collecting style).

These regulations were approved by the FCI General Committee at the meeting in Berlin, on October 31st, 2007. They become effective from June 1st, 2008.

The text in bold and italic character has been approved by the FCI General Committee in Madrid on April 1st 2008.