



WESTERN EUROPE WORKING AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD CLUB e.V.

Farm Trial Rules

**CHANGES APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF THE FARMTRIALCOMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 28TH 2013
VERIFIED BY THE WEWASC BOARD IN DEZEMBER 2013**

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Purpose and Objective

The Farm Trial program provides a variable chore oriented venue in which to display the Australian Shepherd's practical skills as an all around stock dog.

Livestock

Classes of livestock will be cattle, sheep/goats, and/or fowl. Cattle will have the designation (c), sheep/goats will have the designation (s), fowl which includes ducks, chickens, geese and turkeys will have the designation (d).

There must be a minimum of 3 head of stock used in all aspects of the course. A group must contain at least 5 head.

The number of runs allowed per head of stock will be a maximum of 4 per day.

After a group of stock has run the course, they are required to rest at least 1 run before being used in any portion of the course again.

Divisions

The organizer is required to offer the following divisions without priority to any division:

1. Started

2. Advanced

Every dog has to compete in the started division before it is allowed to start in the advanced division.

Any dog that has received two (2) qualifying scores under two different judges in the started division may enter the advanced division (without the possibility of going back to started) or continue to compete in this division for up to 1 year after the date earning the second qualifying score.

For Exhibition Only "FEO" - An exhibitor may run in any division at any time, with or without a title, for Exhibition Only. No placements or prizes will be awarded for dogs running "FEO". The owner or exhibitor must note on the entry form "FEO" and inform the judge they are running "FEO" before the start of their run.

The Farm Trial Course

1. Required Tasks

Because of the varying setups of farms around the country, no two farm trial courses will necessarily be the same. Each course should be designed to showcase the working ability of the Australian Shepherd in the day to day tasks that happen on many farms. The course should not be overly complicated and should try to represent practical work type situations where a dog needs to move stock in an efficient and stress-free manner.

The course designer must take into account the increased difficulty for each division (started or advanced) when developing the course.

Ways to increase difficulty can include, but are not limited to, length of gather, sorting of marked animals, advanced pen/chute work, handler lines, use of drives, use of task(s) that are specific to a division, etc...

The following are the **minimum tasks required for an WEWASC Farm Trial setup.**

a. Pen Work: The work will include, but is not limited to, moving the stock from a pen before and after sort and/or chute work. The dog should work primarily on its own in the pens.

b. Sorting: At least one sort is required during the course regardless of division. For the Started Division there is at least 1 marked animal and for the Advanced Divisions, a sort of at least 3 marked animals is required. The work required includes the sorting of the animals and moving them to a separate pen and/or holding them in a designated area. The dog and handler may work together during sorting.

Note : There is no sorting of fowl. Instead fowl need to be restricted in a designated area, until the judge tells the contestant to move on. A corner for started, a circle for advanced.

c. Gather: In the started division the minimum area must be large enough for a 20 meter (Sheep/Cattle), 10 meter (fowl) gather. This minimum gather is the distance between dog and stock. In the started division, the handlers may help their dogs by positioning themselves up to 1/2 the distance between the dog and stock.

In the advanced division the handler stays at a specified point and the distance will be 50 meters (sheep/cattle) and 25 meters (fowl)

Location Specific Task(s):

Along with the 3 mandatory tasks, 2 other tasks that are specific to the Course location are used.

Find a list of possible tasks below:

- Foothbath simulation
- Loading into Trailer
- Blind Gather
- Natural Obstacles/Bridge
- Hold at designated area
- Removal of halter/ribbon/collar
- Field work (acre or larger)
- Shed
- Maltese Cross

Each required task must be attempted during the course of the trial however, depending on design of the course, there may be situations where the task must be completed in order to continue. These situations must be clearly described in the premium for the trial. During any task, time will be called for overworking stock.

Time:

The minimum time required for a farm trial course is about 10 minutes. A farm trial course should mimic real work and be designed to move stock in an easy and efficient manner. There should be adequate time allotted to each course depending on its task, Class and/or division. When running the course, each handler will be given a warning before their time is expired.

The actual time will be announced by the course director and the judge at the day of trial.

Judging and Scoring

1. Judges can be :

- Anybody who has finished 2 WTCH dogs and is a WEWASC member for 3 years
- Any judge approved by an official herdingbreed club.
- any person approved by the WEWASC board based on his/her credentials.

2.It is the Judge's responsibility to see that the course complies with the trial sanctioning and the stock meets the minimum requirements needed to put on a quality Farm Trial. If necessary the judge may do minor changes to the course in agreement with the course director.

3. Score sheet (see example): are available from the WEWASC secretary.

The total number of points available is 125 for Started/Advanced, broken down for example as follows:

Pen Work: 25 points

Sort Work: 30 points

Gather Work: 30 of total points

Location Specific Task: 20 points each

Ties are broken by time.

Due to the fact that no farm trial course is the same, the course director may change the points for each task, but not the total score available.

4. Qualifying Score

Started and Advanced Farm Trial Dogs must earn 88 points in total out of 125 to qualify.

5. Reclamations can be considered only if they are made not later than one hour after the awarding of the score sheets.

6. Judging Criteria

a. Task: The main objective in ranch and farm work is to get the job done in the most efficient and stress-free manner possible. Moving the stock with little or no weight loss, stress or injury is the purpose of using stockdogs. The bulk of the score earned by the dog should be for the work accomplished during each task.

b. Attitude, Obedience, Power, and Teamwork: All of these are necessary ingredients that go towards making an effective ranch or farm dog and should be considered when scoring each dog.

c. Qualifying Performance: A qualifying score must never be awarded to a dog whose performance has not met the minimum requirements. In deciding whether a dog's performance warrants a qualifying score, the Judge shall consider whether the awarding of any working title would be justified. The Judge must not give a qualifying score for a run if that qualification would not be representative of this sport and was not an example of efficiently handling livestock with a minimal amount of stress.

d. Criteria

Outrun:

If all the stock is lost during outrun lift and fetch, the handler has the opportunity to get the stock back either by her/himself or by the help of the stockhandlers. The handler has to inform the judge if she/he wants the help of the stockhandlers.

In the started division the handler then gets 0 points for the outrun and can continue gaining points. In advanced division the handler can continue, if she/he wants to, but will be FEO. In started the handler may position his/herself halfway up to the stock, before sending his/her dog. There for 50 % of the points for OLF will be taken away.

Loosing of stock in the advanced division will lead to disqualification.

Loosing does not mean the breaking away of some heads of stock, if the dog is capable of bringing it back to the group.

Drive or fetch:

What ever the handler considers suitable for this specific part of the course.

The judging should just lay strength on the stressfree movement of the stock.

In advanced obstacles with handlerlines should be created by the course director to show the advanced dogs driving abilities.

Obstacles:

After at least two attempts the handler can decide to move on and leave the obstacle out, if she/he thinks that no success will be achieved. The judge has to be informed and has to accept, otherwise the contestant has to do another try.

This doesn't count for obstacles, which are mandatory for accomplishing the course. For example if the stock has to move through a gate to another field.

The judge can ask the contestant to move on, if she/he doesn't see success at any given point.

Penwork:

It is the decision of the handler to send his dog in a pen or not. A dog working alone in the pens should get more points than a dog accompanied by the handler.

Warnings of the course director about the stock should be considered.

At least one situation where dog and stock are in the same pen should be created by the course director.

Gripping:

Allowed just when challenged and never without reason.

IV. Warnings and Disqualifications

The judge and the course director may give warnings and disqualifications, if the dog stresses the stock unnecessarily (by chasing, for example) or if the dog is biting without a reason.

Biting:

No biting of fowl is tolerated

Sheep/goats: allowed if challenged

Cows: heeling and biting in the nose is tolerated, if it is necessary to gain respect. Other areas (belly, tail etc) are not tolerated.