

2016 National Cattle Dog Finals Guidelines

The trial will start with a judged outrun and a judged lift. The balance of the course will be points for each animal that completes panels, obstacles, or pen/trailer. Any ties will be broken by referring to Section H.4 in the Cattledog Rules. In consideration of the terrain, cattle disposition, and trial course, the Cattledog Committee, in compliance with the Cattledog Rules, may make necessary revisions to the guidelines at the Finals Event.

A. Guidelines

1. **Handler post/line:** A handler line or fetch line with a handler post will be used throughout the trials. All handlers will send their dog from the handler post. Once the dog is sent the clock will start. The Handler will be allowed to leave the handlers post as instructed in the handlers meeting.
2. Upon completing the fetch the cattle must cross the handler line to receive a fetch time. All **cattle** must cross the handler or fetch line before they can continue to the drive panels. The cattle must be driven correctly around the handler post to earn 5 points per head.
 - a. A dog is allowed to go under fences to take control of the cattle without any penalty.
 - b. The day runs may vary in design in an effort to test the dog's ability.
 - c. Should an unruly animal develop during the setout and be deemed unworkable by both judges, they may elect to give the handler a rerun.
 - d. Should unforeseen circumstances develop during the run, such as an act of nature that creates unfair working conditions for the handler or dog as determined by both judges; they may elect to either award the handler a rerun or stop the run at the point the unforeseen circumstances occurred and allow the cattle to be reset at that point with the points earned up to that point and the timer reset as determined by the judges.
3. **Retiring from the field (RT)**
 - a. At the discretion of the Trial Committee and to be determined prior to the first run, a handler can ask a judge to retire at any time for the reasons allowed in this Rule 3(b). If allowed, the handler will keep the points earned up to that point. Similarly, the judge can ask the handler to retire at anytime for the reasons specified in this rule 3 and the handler will keep points earned up to that point. The judge must indicate whether the handler is being asked to retire or if the handler/dog is disqualified for some reason (see 4.)
 - b. The purpose of the retire rule is to allow handlers to stop the run when further progress is doubtful, should the dog be injured, subject to heat stroke, or similar

reason. This retire rule shall not be used if the dog would be otherwise disqualified under these Guidelines or the USBCHA cattledog rules.

- c. The time will be the maximum time allotted for the course.

4. **Disqualified (DQ).**

- a. A dog will be disqualified for abuse to the cattle.
- b. Any dog that forces cattle off the designated trial field will be disqualified. However a situation may arise that the dog is trying to take control but loses the animal from the trial field. This dog may not be disqualified, depending on the judge's decision.
- c. Any disqualification will receive a no score for any work completed.
- d. Other situations exist for a disqualification under the USBCHA Cattledog Rules, please review them.

B. **Judged Portion of the Trial – Points will be deducted.** (Refer to Cattledog Rules Section I for point deductions description.)

1. **Outrun - worth a total of twenty (20) points.**

- a. The set out crew using horses shall keep the cattle settled as near to the established setout area as reasonably possible until such a time the dog makes contact with the cattle.
- b. Difficulty in settling/holding cattle at the established setout area should be considered a relevant trial condition and judged accordingly.
- c. A dog that works the outrun in the most quiet, calm and efficient manner possible, in consideration of the draw (cattle), shall retain more points than a dog that does not.

2. **Lift – worth a total of ten (10) points.**

- a. A dog that lifts in the most quiet, calm and efficient manner possible, in consideration of the draw (cattle), shall retain more points than a dog that does not.
- b. A dog that makes confident contact with the cattle, keeping the cattle grouped and moving, shall retain more points than a dog that does not.
- c. The lift ends once the dog has the cattle moving and at that point the fetch begins.

C. **Points Portion of Trial – Points will be earned.**

1. **Fetch and Drive Panel Obstacles.**

- a. The panels will be placed with an opening between them for the cattle to go through and score points. The panels are normally portable metal cattle panels but natural terrain such as trees, rocks and other markers can be used. The size of the

opening will be left to the trial committee, and based on the disposition and temperament of the cattle.

- b. Each head of cattle will earn 5 points for going through the opening.
- c. Points will be earned when the entire animal has completely gone through the panels.
- d. Should any cattle, after earning points, turn around and walk back through the drive, cross drive or fetch panels those points will be lost and cannot be retrieved.
- e. If cattle go around the panels and break the imaginary line drawn through the panels to the edge of the field they are considered to have passed the panels and can not score that obstacle if retried. The entire animal must cross this imaginary line to be passed the panels.
- f. At least one animal must score or pass the panels before continuing on with the course. A handler must work the course with all head of cattle.
- g. If cattle that have scored or passed the panels and rejoin with animals that have not then you must continue. However, if the cattle do not mix the team can continue working to score with those cattle that have not scored or passed the panels.
- h. The drive will start after completing the fetch panel and circling a post (location determined by committee).
- i. The drive shall be a drive away to the first drive panel and a cross drive to the second panel with a fetch to the handler. Additional fetch and drive panels may be assigned.

2. **Multiple Obstacles and or Pen/Trailer.**

- a. At each obstacle the handler can assist the dog but cannot enter the obstacle.
- b. Should a handler enter the obstacle (as determined by a judge) to assist the dog he will lose all points for that obstacle
- c. Points must be earned to continue to the next obstacle unless penalized as described above.
- d. Each head of cattle that completes an obstacle will earn 5 points.
- e. If an animal has scored and rejoins with the cattle that have not, the handler has a choice: He can continue to the next obstacle with the points earned or the handler can retry the obstacle losing all previous points and start the retry with zero. This applies only to the obstacles or pen.
- f. **Final Obstacle:** As defined in the Cattledog Rules, Part IV 3.b., the final obstacle (pen or other). All cattle must be in or through obstacle(s) for the dog to earn the fifteen (15) points awarded at completion of obstacle(s) in preliminary rounds and thirty (30) points for completion in final round.