

## GSDA - Code of Conduct and Rules

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### **Section One: General Rules and Conduct.**

The following provisions regarding rules and conduct shall apply to all Association approved or sponsored events. Any member or non-member placed on suspension shall not be permitted to compete in any trial or event sanctioned by the GSDA. A GSDA member or non-member may be fined and/or suspended for any of the following:

- 1.1 Attempting to bribe, influence or intimidate the judge, trial secretary, time keeper, course director, or any other trial official will result in disqualification, suspension, and a minimum fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).
- 1.2 A contestant shall not talk with the judge about any trial related matter throughout the duration of the trial, nor shall a contestant discuss with the judge any ideas or methods of judging or handling except at approved handlers' meetings.
- 1.3 A contestant shall make no comment within a judge's hearing regarding any work taking place at a trial.
- 1.4 No alcoholic beverages can be consumed by or brought into the judges stand while a GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event is taking place.
- 1.5 A contestant shall not intimidate, attempt to intimidate, or argue with a judge. The penalty for violating this rule will be a minimum fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00), and/or a minimum of thirty days suspension.
- 1.6 Altering or attempting to alter the draw of livestock will result in disqualification and a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), nor more than two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00).
- 1.7 Any member or non-member who threatens, or actually inflicts bodily harm or injury to another person based upon that person's actions, conduct, or decisions while acting in any official capacity for the GSDA or for any GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event shall be suspended from membership in the GSDA for a period of not less than one (1) year.
- 1.8 Abusive language, unsportsmanlike conduct, and/or fighting shall not be permitted on the trail field or at any GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event.
- 1.9 Attempting to aid or distract another competitor while they are competing will result in immediate disqualification, suspension, and/or fine.
- 1.10 Misconduct discrediting the GSDA will not be tolerated.
- 1.11 Training activities of any kind on the trial grounds other than in designated practice areas are prohibited.
- 1.12 Inhumane treatment of a dog or livestock in any manner on the trial field or on the trial grounds is prohibited. If the trial management at any Association approved or sponsored event discovers inhumane treatment of a dog or livestock, it may immediately bar the responsible party and dog from further participation in the trial. Trail management may consult with the trial judge before taking any action allowed by this rule. The GSDA shall be notified within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence and a meeting to consider further disciplinary action against the responsible party shall be scheduled.

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1.13 Any member may be fined, suspended, and denied privileges of the Association, and any non-member, approved trial, or official thereof may be denied privileges of the GSDA for failure to pay when due any obligation owing to the GSDA or for giving a worthless check for entry fees, office charges, stock charges, premiums, or any other fees or charges connected with the exhibition of herding dogs, provided, however, that the member or non-member subject to the suspension shall be given twenty-one (21) days written notice of the amount due, and the intention of the GSDA to suspend or withhold privileges. Any suspension or denial of privileges under this rule shall terminate upon full payment of the obligation due the GSDA.

1.14 Any member passing a worthless check or checks in a trial area, which would affect the image or benefit of the local trial, the GSDA, or any GSDA member, will be fined fifty (\$50.00), and will write a letter of apology for the first offense. For the second offense, the member will be fined one hundred (\$100.00), will write a letter of apology, and will be suspended for six months. For the third offense, the member will be suspended for one year.

1.15 No person shall make a derogatory remark, nor threaten to take, adverse action against a GSDA trial sponsor, its agents, servants or employees, relating in any manner to the sponsor's involvement with the GSDA or a GSDA event. Any person who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action and is also responsible to the GSDA for any loss or damage caused by a violation of this rule.

1.16 Any member tampering with competition livestock will be disqualified for the remainder of the particular trial and will be subject to a twenty-five (\$25.00) to a two hundred and fifty dollar fine.

1.17 Trial organizers, or producers, may be suspended for any of the aforementioned offenses and, in addition, any of the following offenses: failure to pay added money as advertised and leaving bad debts in any town associated with the production of a GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event.

### **Section Two: General Trials Rules for a GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event.**

2.1 A course director shall be in charge of each trial class. A course director shall appoint assistant directors and delegate duties. The course director shall call competitors in their turn according to the program, unless otherwise delegated by the course director. If requested by a competitor before the run starts to explain the course, he shall do so. After the run starts, he shall not assist the competitor by giving advice or in any other way. He shall see that each lot of sheep when let out is placed to give each competitor a fair and equal chance. He shall be available at all times during the trial to convey to the competitor any instructions from the judges. He is responsible at all times for keeping the course clear and ensuring that competitors or their dogs are not interfered with in any way while competing.

2.2 It is the time keepers duty to accurately start the stopwatch at the beginning of each competitor's run and to promptly call time when the allotted time for the course has expired.

2.3 Entry forms must be completed and timely logged. Entry fees for all runs and/or events shall be of such sum as is determined by the trial organizers and must be paid on entry.

2.4 (a) Any competitor running two dogs will run his/her second dog after all other competitors with two dogs have run their first dog. A handler MAY NOT designate which dog is to run first. (b) To implement this, all handlers with one dog will be drawn randomly, one at a time, and divided alternately into two lots. Entries of handlers with two dogs will be added to the first lot. Entries of the first lot will then be drawn for running order. First dog drawn runs first, second dog drawn runs second, etc. When a handler with two dogs is drawn a second time that entry will be placed in the second lot for re-draw. Upon completion of drawing the first lot, the trial Secretary will randomly draw the second lot to continue the running order. (c) We suggest that where trials allow three dogs to compete that the running order be drawn as follows: All handlers with one dog will be drawn and randomly divided into three (3) lots. All handlers with two (2) dogs will be drawn and randomly placed in two of the three lots. All handlers with three (3) dogs will be drawn and added to each of the three (3) lots. Beginning with the first lot each lot shall be drawn to determine the running order.

2.5 If two or more competitors stand equal in total points, the course director shall settle their priority either by: (a) See: GSDA\_Policy(TieBreakDetermination); (b) ordering re-runs of any kind; or (c) dividing prize money involved. In cases of

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equality where a trophy is at stake and the course director orders re-runs, the re-runs will decide not only the trophy, but also the cash prizes involved.

2.6 A judge may stop a run at any point and order a re-run. The judge shall decide if the re-run will commence at the beginning and, if not, at which point the re-run will start. If decided that the re-run starts at any point other than the beginning, the points scored up to the point prior to the re-run shall stand. When a re-run is granted, the handler shall send the dog on the outrun in the same direction as the original run, if an outrun is required.

2.7 All awards announced at any GSDA trials are subject to correction of any error discovered within two weeks after the trial. Any error that may be discovered will be corrected, and the awards as announced readjusted accordingly. If such is the case, awards may be recalled and will be returned to the trial management. All prizes and awards won at any trial shall be paid within one month after said trial.

2.8 GSDA Official Score Sheets are to be used for all GSDA Sponsored Trial Classes and GSDA Points Trial Classes. The score sheets are to be maintained by the trial host for one year and made publicly available upon request. Additionally, within twenty one (21) days of the trial conclusion, the total points lost and kept for all GSDA Trial Class runs must be certified by the event host as accurate and provided to the GSDA Secretary. GSDA official score sheets can be found at [GSDA.org](http://GSDA.org) or [DogTrialEntry.com](http://DogTrialEntry.com).

2.9 Competitors should be properly attired for any competition. Good judgment should prevail.

2.10 GSDA points or GSDA sponsored trial classes are to be 'Judged' classes.

The Judging of any GSDA points or GSDA sponsored trial class includes that:

(a) the handler/dog team does not gain points for making obstacles, they lose points for not making an obstacle, (i.e. turning the post the wrong way, missing a panel, etc., causes a loss from the total points possible for the class.)

(b) points shall be deducted from the handler/dog team, at the judges discretion. Examples include, but are not limited to, the sheep not completing obstacles, the sheep not being maintained on straight lines between obstacles, the sheep not being moved in a workman like manner, (harassed sheep, gripping sheep, etc.), for commanding the dog during the outrun, etc., etc. (See "One Man's Opinion" for more information on techniques for judging a trial).

(c) the outrun/gather shall be 20 points, the lift shall be 10 points, the fetch shall be 20 points, the drive/wear shall be 20, 30, or 40 points depending on the class, the pen shall be 10 points, the single shall be 10 points, the shed shall be 10 points, and the international shed 20 points. Additional legs or obstacles, (i.e. maltese cross, etc.), if added to the course shall be pointed accordingly to determine the maximum points possible for the class that may be deducted from the handler/dog team.

(d) the run of the handler/dog team, if not ended before hand, is ended when the allotted time for the class expires. Points for any remaining non-completed legs/obstacles are deducted from the handler/dog team total score.

(e) if it is also sanctioned by the USBHCA, USBCHA rules for those classes shall not be violated.

2.11 The judge's (s') decision is final.

### **Section Three: Humane Rules.**

3.1. A veterinarian shall be in attendance, or reasonably available at every trial or GSDA event.

3.2. No stock belonging to either a contestant or stock contractor should be confined to vehicles beyond a period of twenty-eight hours without being unloaded, properly fed and watered, provided that when animals are carried in conveyances in which they do have proper food, water, space and opportunity to rest, the provision for unloading shall not apply.

3.3 No sick or injured animals, whether discovered before or after the draw, will be permitted to be used in competition.

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Animals will be inspected and objectionable ones eliminated before drawing. judges and/or the course director will be responsible for inspection.

3.4 Sick or injured dogs will not be allowed to compete at the recommendation of the veterinarian or at the discretion of the judge and/or course director.

3.5 The safety and welfare of livestock shall be ensured at all times. The person spotting the livestock, the person holding livestock, the course director, or assistant directors, may intervene if a dog is considered to be out of control.

### **Section Four: GSDA Operated Trials; GSDA Designated Points Trials NOT Operated by GSDA.**

4.1 Regular season shall be from August 1st – July 31st.

4.2 GSDA operated trials must follow all rules for ~~trials~~ Section Two: General Trials Rules for a GSDA points or GSDA sponsored event.

4.3 Members in good standing may apply for designation points trials by contacting the GSDA Secretary.

4.4 Ribbons, prizes, or other awards may be provided, at the discretion of the trial coordinator. It is suggested that ribbons be awarded for 1st – 5th place in each class.

4.5 If certified results are not received within the specified time period points may be disallowed for that event.

4.6 GSDA operated trials must have a copy of the GSDA Code of Conduct and Rules on the premises during the event either physically or electronically.

4.7 GSDA regular season trials may consist of the following five classes: Beginning Novice, Novice Novice, Pro Novice, Open Ranch, and Open.

4.8 Liability insurance must be provided for any GSDA operated trial or event.

4.9 Entry fees, expenditures, awards, prizes, etc., shall be as each trial coordinator determines.

### **Section Five: General Competition Rules.**

5.1 Each competitor must be ready when called and when failing to answer the call, may be disqualified. Competitors are required to note that while the order of the program will be followed strictly, (unless a change is authorized by the judge and/or course director), the timing cannot be guaranteed.

5.2 Any competitor wishing to have the course explained or have any point clarified must question the course director before they start the run. They cannot have questions answered once their run begins. By commencing the run, competitors are presumed to know the course and follow it in all its detail.

5.3 Once a competitor starts his run, he is entirely in the hands of the judge(s). By deviating from the course, he is liable to disqualification or such penalty as the judge(s) consider suitable having regard to all the circumstances.

5.4 Any competitor who receives assistance of any kind while running his dog, may be disqualified. If he is disqualified, he shall earn no points to be considered for a year end award.

5.5 If not previously stopped on the instructions of the judges, a handler will be called off on the expiry of the time limit, but in the latter case, the points earned to that stage will be earned.

5.6 After being called off the course, a competitor will cease working his dog and will collect the sheep and remove them from the field.

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- 5.7 Any competitor who intentionally harasses the stock after his run will be disqualified at the discretion of the judge in conference with the course director and may be subject to further discipline by the Association.
- 5.8 Neither competitors nor any others shall take dogs onto the trial course, before the competition starts, except with the permission of the course director or trial management.
- 5.9 No competitor, or other person, shall engage in any form of misconduct or harassment toward trial management, judges, or GSDA officials. Trial management has the right to disqualify or refuse entry to any competitor or other person for violation of this rule.
- 5.10 Any competitor so denied access may appeal to the Board with a deposit of \$100.00 (which will be refunded when the competitor wins their appeal), knowing the appeal may or may not be heard, in the discretion of the Board.
- 5.11 A competitor may drop out of any competition due to injury, sickness, or other such serious occurrence or event.
- 5.12 A competitor shall not at any time withdraw from any trial he is participating in due to dissatisfaction, grievance with the judge(s), trial management, or other competitors without forfeiting all money/prizes he may have won in previous runs.
- 5.13 Trial management has the right to establish cutoff dates for trial withdrawal refunds.
- 5.14 A competitor shall not enter the trial field at any time with any kind of training device, including, but not limited to, weighted collars, training collars, electronic collars, leashes or ropes that are not detached before the dog is sent. The judge has the right to inspect the dog.
- 5.15 Any dog may compete in any GSDA operated event, without regard to pedigree or registration.
- 5.16 Handler/dog team may not run non-competitively in any class before running competitively in any class.
- 5.17 At such time as a Handler/dog team runs competitively in a class, they may not run competitively in a class of lesser designation.
- 5.18 A Handler/dog team may run non-competitively in a class of greater designation, with the course director's express permission. The entry fee a non-compete run shall be the same as a competitive runs. Non-competitive runs shall be scored, but are not considered for year end point awards.
- 5.19 No dog may run competitively with more than one handler in any one trial.

### **Section Six: Specific Competition Rules for Individual Classes**

6.1 GSDA regular season trial classes include the following five classes: Beginning Novice, Novice Novice, Pro Novice, Open Ranch, and Open.

6.2 Beginning Novice -The course shall consist of the following elements:

Gather Handler must send the dog to gather the sheep and bring the sheep to the Handler. The gather will be a maximum of 75 feet. After the gather, the Handler may leave the Handler's post and remain with the dog and sheep as is necessary. Wear: The Handler may walk through a series of obstacles (cones, chute, or panels) with the dog wearing the sheep to the Handler. There will be a series of turns and a there may be a figure eight. Pen: The Handler must hold the sheep in a designated area. There will be no gate on the entrance to the hold area.

The Beginning Novice class is for beginner handlers and dogs. If the Handler and/or dog have competed in ANY regular season GSDA points or GSDA sponsored class such as Open, Nursery, Ranch, Pro-Novice, the Handler and/or dog may not compete in Beginning Novice. At such time as a Handler/dog team have won at three separate regular season GSDA points or GSDA sponsored classes, the team must move to a class of greater designation, i.e., Novice Novice, Pro Novice, Open

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Ranch, or Open, unless the team is competing for the class year end point award, then they remain in this class until the close of the fiscal year in which the three like classes were won.

6.3 Novice Novice – The course shall consist of the following elements:

Outrun, Lift, Fetch, Wear, and Pen.

The Novice Novice class is for Handlers and/or dogs who have never run in an Open class competitively. At such time as a Handler/dog team have won at three separate regular season designated points trial classes, the team must move to a class of greater designation, i.e., Pro Novice, Open Ranch, or Open. Additionally, once a Novice/Novice Handler has started three (3) dogs in the Novice/ Novice class, the Handler must move to a class of greater designation to start any dog thereafter, i.e., Pro Novice, Open Ranch, or Open, unless the team is competing for the class year end point award, then they remain in this class until the close of the fiscal year in which the three trial classes were won.

6.4 Pro Novice – The course shall consist of the following elements:

Outrun, Lift, Fetch, Drive of one (1) panel, *an optional pull-through on return*, and a Pen.

The Pro Novice class is for a Handler/dog team consisting of either:

1.) An Open Handler/dog team that has never run in Open or Open Ranch

(i.e. If an Open Handler buys an Open Ranch dog, the Open Handler cannot run the dog below Open Ranch.)

2.) A Non-Open Handler/dog team that has never run above Pro-Novice.

(i.e. If the Non-Open Handler/dog team runs Open Ranch, that Non-Open Handler/dog team can no longer run Pro-Novice.)

At such time as a Handler/dog team have won at three separate regular season designated points trial classes, the team must move to a class of greater designation, i.e., Open Ranch or Open, unless the team is competing for the class year end point award, then they remain in this class until the close of the fiscal year in which the three trial classes were won.

6.5 Open Ranch / Ranch – The course shall consist of the following elements:

Outrun, Lift, Fetch, Drive, Cross Drive, and Pen.

The Open Ranch / Ranch class is for a Handler/dog team that has not competed in ANY GSDA points or GSDA sponsored Open class. At such time as a Handler/dog team have won at three separate regular season designated points trial classes, the team must move to Open, unless the team is competing for the class year end point award, then they remain in this class until the close of the fiscal year in which the three trials were won.

6.6 Open – The course shall consist of the following elements:

Outrun, Lift, Fetch, Drive, Cross Drive, Pen, and Shed.

USBCHA handled in 2.10

The course may consist of other obstacles as determined by the judge or course director.

The Open class is for any Handler/dog team.

6.7 Nursery – The course shall consist of the following elements:

Outrun, Lift, Fetch, Drive, Cross Drive, and Pen.

USBCHA handled in 2.10

### Section Seven: Class Year End Awards.

7.1 GSDA members may accumulate points for a year end award at GSDA designated points trials. Year end awards will be given to the dog with the greatest number of points at the end of the fiscal year in each of the five competition classes. Although a dog may win three trials before the end of a season, he may remain in that particular class for the remainder of that particular trial season for the purpose of competing for the year end award.

7.2 Dogs, whose owners are GSDA members, competing in GSDA designated points trial classes, will acquire points based on the total number of dogs running in each trial class. Dogs may accumulate points each qualifying year. Dogs may win the year end award only one time in each trial class.

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7.3 “Year end points shall be calculated according to the USBCHA Open Point System (see [www.usbcha.com](http://www.usbcha.com)).”

7.4 Retired or disqualified dogs receive no points; although retired and disqualified dogs are used when calculating points for the dogs that finished above them.

7.5 GSDA points shall be credited to the handler/dog team and shall remain with the handler/dog team. GSDA points are not transferable from class to class.

7.6 Year end awards will be given each year at the annual meeting. Point accumulations shall begin with fiscal year 1999, from August 1 – July 31, 2000, and shall continue for each fiscal year thereafter.

### **Section Eight: Disciplinary Procedures.**

8.1 All GSDA members shall read and know the prevailing rules of the Association, in addition to any special rules that may apply at an individual trial.

8.2 The responsibility for reporting violations rests with, but is not limited to, trial management, GSDA Members, officials, and judges.

8.3 Every notice required by these rules and regulations may be served by delivering a copy of the notice to the person to be served, or his attorney, either in person or by certified mail, postage prepaid, to his last known address as it appears on the GSDA records and upon mailing, such notice shall be deemed received by such person when it is deposited in the United States mail.

8.4 Any member or non-member may be disciplined, placed on probation, fined (not to exceed \$500.00 dollars), or suspended from all GSDA privileges (not to exceed one year) whenever it shall have been established by a preponderance of the evidence that such member or non-member has been found to have violated the stated rule or rules.

8.5 The President may appoint a special Hearing Committee to conduct any disciplinary hearing. The committee shall have a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of nine (9) members and a majority shall constitute a quorum for hearing purposes. Members of the committee must be members of the GSDA in good standing.

8.6 The decision of the GSDA Club Board and/or Hearing Committee shall be final and binding on all parties.

8.7 When the rule in question contains a specific punishment provision, any disciplinary action taken by the Hearing Committee or Board shall assess same in accordance with the severity of the rule infraction.

8.8 When anyone shall be accused by a Hearing Committee or Board of any rule violation, the accused party shall be sent a letter by the GSDA Club Vice President outlining the alleged violation and given not less than fifteen (15) days notice of the item and place for hearing such accusation, and at which time and place they shall have the opportunity, in person, or by counsel to be heard and to present evidence in their own behalf and to hear and refute evidence in their own behalf and hear and refute evidence offered against them. It is acceptable for the Hearing Committee and the accused to meet by means of a telephone conference call, video call, etc., which shall be followed by a written report or recorded statement by the GSDA Club Vice President.

8.9 No continuance shall be granted unless requested in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing, and good cause shown. A continuance shall be granted or denied at the sole discretion of the GSDA Club President or Chairman of the GSDA Club Board.

8.10 When the GSDA Club Board or Hearing Committee has ruled on a complaint and disciplinary action has been taken against a member, or non-member, the person’s name, the rule violated, and the disciplinary action taken shall be published as appropriate.

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### **Section Nine: Protest Process of Rule Violations.**

9.1 Protests under this section may be made by members in good standing only. The member must be a member in good standing PRIOR to the occurrence of the alleged rule violation being protested.

9.2 Any member desiring to file a letter of complaint regarding any alleged violation of these rules may do so by submitting the letter of complaint the GSDA Club President in care of the GSDA Club Secretary's address. Said letter shall be accompanied by a fifty dollar (\$50.00) cashier's check payable to the GSDA. The letter of complaint must be filed within seven (7) days of the closing date of the trial or event involved. Upon receipt of said letter of complaint, the same will be referred to the appropriate Hearing Committee for investigation and consideration. If the Hearing Committee determines, after investigation, that no further action is warranted, the complainant will be notified by the GSDA Club Vice President and no further action will be taken. In this case the fifty dollar (\$50.00) cashier's check will not be returned to the complainant. A majority decision of the Hearing Committee will be binding.

9.3 If the Hearing Committee determines, after investigation, that there are grounds for possible disciplinary action the fifty dollars (\$50.00) will be returned to the complainant. The GSDA Club President shall be notified and the matter will be scheduled for a hearing before the GSDA Club Board.

9.4 Any member may lodge a protest signed by him/her against any contravention of any rule for trials, against any prize being awarded, delivered or paid, or protest a judge's decision upon submission in complaint stating alleged errors made by judge or judges. All conditions above must also be met. The Hearing Committee may also require any member to whom a prize has been paid or delivered to return the same. The member shall be bound to do so within the time fixed by the Hearing Committee.

9.5 Details of all protests under these rules and the decisions reached by the Hearing Committee shall be reported to the complete BOD by the GSDA Club Secretary.

9.6 A judge may present in writing, within seven (7) days of the occurrence, any grievance he/she may have against contestants or trial officials to the GSDA Club President or a member of the GSDA Club Board who will present the grievance to the entire GSDA Club Board. Procedures established in Section Nine: Protest Process of Rule Violations will then be followed.

9.7 If any trial official or GSDA Club Board Member witnesses a grievance against a judge, that individual must report it to the entire Board immediately.