



Suomen paimenkoirayhdistys ry. SPKY
Finnish Sheepdog Society

Rules for cattle trials

The objectives and guidelines for a cattle trial

The course of the trial track is written or explained clearly before the trial. It is a handler's own responsibility to be on time in pre-trial briefing. The "number zero" dog outside the competition can run before the trial to make course, judging and conditions more clear. The organizer of the trial will select the group of animals so that each competitor shall receive as homogeneous group of cattle as possible. The number of the animals in a one group can vary from 3 to 10, same number of cattle in all the groups.

The time is defined according to the conditions. The time limit is 15mins, no extension. All sections must be able to do at a normal working pace.

The duration of the trial course will be defined by the conditions, whereas the maximum time limit for a run is 15 minutes, no extension. All the sections of the trial course must be doable in the given time.

To test the ability of a dog, as part of a team with the handler, to manage cattle properly under the differing circumstances that may be encountered in daily work. The handler should help his/her dog when necessary. Good handling is essential. Cattle and dogs must be guided effectively but avoiding unnecessary stress.

The judge will tell in briefing before trial, what he/she wants to see.

In the pre-trial briefing judge will clarify his/her preferences, how the trial course should be run.

Gather (OLF):

Outrun

The dog must be free and positioned close to the handler/post. The dog may be sent out on either side. The dog should not be too straight or too wide.

The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the run. A good outrun should be in the shape of one side of a pear with the blunt end of the pear at the far end of the field near the cattle. The dog should not stop until it has reached the point of balance. The point of balance being where it will lift the cattle in the direction of the fetch gate/ handler. If the cattle have left their appointed place at the post, the outrun should end at the point where the dog is facing them in order to bring the cattle in a direct line to the fetch gate/ handler.

Lift

At the end of the Outrun, the dog will either come to a full stop or merely slow down. The dogs approach should be smooth, cautious and steady but not too slow or ineffective. The dog will take control in a firm and quiet manner. The lift should be smooth and balanced where the cattle move away in a direct line to the fetch gates/ handler.

Fetch

The cattle must be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the place of lifting to the (fetch gate and thereafter in a straight line to the) handler/post. If the cattle deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable. On fetch can be used fetch gates. No retry at the gate is allowed. At the end of the Fetch the handler shall pass the herd around the post in the direction of drive or turn the herd after stopping in front of the post.

Drive

The dog should show obvious ability to drive steadily, effectively and gathering the herd. The cattle are required to go in straight lines between the gates and reasonable turns at the post and at both gates are expected. If the cattle deviate from the line, they should be brought back to that line as soon as practicable. Throughout the Drive the cattle should be kept moving gently - excessive bursts of speed and subsequent stopping are not desirable and should be penalized.

A retry at any gate is not allowed.

The dog should not cross the line in front of the herd, turning the herd back or circling around the herd is a huge mistake. Judge must take into consideration all the relevant circumstances to the missing of a gate and adjust deductions accordingly. The gates are 6-10 meters apart. The second drive can be used narrow gates apart (2m) if necessary.

Shedding / Sorting

The important aspect here is to test the dog's ability to shed and hold the separated animals from the rest of the herd.

Shedding/sorting will be done in clearly marked area (shedding ring). The dog is required to show its ability to separate and hold the separated cattle from the rest of the herd until the judge will call the shed.

After shedding the dog shall reunite all the cattle.

Points are deducted from the company, missed opportunity and cattle that left the shedding ring before separation.

Penning

The dog will reunite all the cattle in a practical and workman like manner, and the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving the dog to bring the cattle to the pen. The handler is forbidden to assist the dog to drive the cattle from the shedding ring to the pen.

Points are lost if the herd goes around the cage, some of the cattle pass the gate opening, too slow or aggressive. The handler must not use the gate to lever the cattle into the pen nor should he/she touch the cattle with the pen gate which will result in points being deducted.

Penning will end in releasing the cattle from pen, the handler will close the gate and the dog will take control of the herd.

The pen and its mouth opening needs to be wide enough for the herd being used. The dog needs to be able to move underneath the pen.

Rules for Cattle Trial Class 2

Gathering (Outrun, lift, fetch)

Gathering 100-300m from handler. The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the run. Fetch gates can be used on the fetch. (20/10/20 p)

Driving

Driving is divided in two parts.

Drive 1

The handler will remain at the post/marked place. If handler leave the post for helping a dog, points are significantly reduced for both drives.

Drive 2

The handler will choose his/her placing without restraint.

Drive 1 and 2 are with 1-4 sets of gates. The drive can be divided into two sections, shedding or penning in between, for example.

Driving ends usually when the dog will gain control of the herd. Depending on the situation and conditions, the course can be shaped into a triangle or, for example, a Z-pattern (15 +15 p).

Penning

The handler opens the gate/rope, a dog will drive the herd to the pen and the gate/rope is closed.

Penning will end in releasing the cattle from pen, the handler will close the gate and the dog will take control of the herd or penning continues for driving.

A pen, fence, sorting alley or a trailer can be used according to conditions and cattle. In judge's pre-trial briefing it will be defined when the penning is complete in each trial (10p)

Shedding/sorting

The dog will drive the herd to sorting alley or clearly marked area (shedding ring). Inside area or ring the handler and the dog sort out one heifer or more.

Shedding/sorting could be done also inside fences. Sorting could be done after gathering, driving or penning. After shedding/sorting the dog will take a control of the herd (10p).

Double fetch trial for cattle

Outrun, lift and fetch

Gathering 100-300m from handler. The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the run. On fetch can be used fetch gates. The turn back post should be marked clearly. Points 2 x 20/10/20

Drive

Minimum total of drive is 150m with 1-4 sets of gates or other clear obstacles. The driving can be done with a full herd or after shedding with half of a herd. The same herd may not be used twice in a row for the same section. The drive can be divided into two sections like normal 2. class cattle trial. Points 40

Shedding / Sorting

Shedding/sorting will take place in clearly marked area (shedding ring) or inside fences. Sorting could be done after gathering, driving or penning. The herd sorted out must usually be taken to a clearly marked area or thru the gate or to the other pen. Points 20

Penning

A pen or a trailer can be used according to conditions and cattle. A full herd or a half of a herd can (after shedding/sorting) be used. Penning can be done anywhere during the course. Points 10

General for double fetch cattle trial

Number of animals in one group is 8 to 20 (4+4 to 10+10). The groups must be clearly distinguished from each other. Different breeds can be used, collars or marking sprays.

Same groups could run twice in a row, circumstances permitting. The use of the same group of cattle consecutively in the same trial section must be avoided.

For example, the group is the first group in gather, sorting, drive and penning. The same group is the second group in gather and sorting for the next dog.

The time is defined according to the conditions. The time limit is 30 mins in double fetch runs, no extension. All sections must be doable at a normal working pace.