



THE WORKING KELPIE COUNCIL OF AUST INC.

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NKFTC Judging Guidelines

Introduction

The first National Kelpie Field Trial was held at Manildra Golf Course NSW 1969 and was won by J E 'Jack' Mills of Orange NSW working Waringa Mulga. Between 1969 and 1980 the trial was hosted in New South Wales. In 1981 it was hosted in Victoria for the first time at Mortlake. From 1983 onward the trial has been hosted annually in a different Australia State

Since 2001 the Working Kelpie Council has sponsored the prize money for the National Kelpie Field Trial Championship and has enjoyed the support of hosting committees who have contributed greatly to the overall standard of the work displayed and the prestige position the trial now enjoys.

The trial usually attracts an entry of approximately 100 WKC Stud registered dogs from all States.

JUDGING GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL KELPIE TRIAL

The NKFTC should not be viewed as a 3 sheep arena trial, a yard trial or a utility trial- It should be judged as a unique event with its own specific rules. From a Breed Society's point of view, it is generally agreed that the dogs outside work is of prime importance and that the WKC's sponsorship of the NKFTC should be to encourage the production of good natural casting and mustering dogs which can be useful in the yards. The emphasis on outside performance is supported by the allocation of 70 of a total of 100 points.

COURSE: The course as set in the National Kelpie Field Trial Championship is designed to assess the ability of Kelpies to carry out effective work under conditions simulating paddock and yard conditions. Points allotted are a maximum of 70 for field work and 30 for yard work. Special WKC By-law 11.3.2.4 'In addition to the yard section the course shall include 3 additional obstacles one of which is a free standing pen'. The trial can finish with either the yard section or a free standing pen

FIELD WORK:

CAST, LIFT AND DRAW: Special WKC By-Law 9.6.9 'One cross with a 20-point penalty is permitted'

The cast should be naturally wide enough that the sheep are not unsettled before the cast is completed. Redirection during the cast is not desirable and may at the Judges discretion incur a penalty for each redirection. At the judge's discretion a penalty should not be given if there is an obstacle on the course or the sheep become unsighted. The ideal is a natural free running cast with the dog steadying and lifting the sheep cautiously. The dog should stop in the position where he has most control before commencing the draw and fetch. The sheep should be delivered to the handler in the circle in as straight a line as possible; the handler is free to move to any position within the circle. The sheep, on delivery to the circle, should be steadied but do not necessarily have to be halted. The judge will indicate when the sheep have been steadied to his satisfaction.

COURSE: Depending upon the course layout The sheep must be kept on a right hand course regardless whether on route to the obstacles or to the yard, travelling as quietly as possible with the dog in a position of control at all times. Any unwarranted assistance given at obstacles should be heavily penalised and all points for an obstacle deducted if the assistance given so warrants. The field work must finish with a free standing pen except where the trial finishes with the yard section.

The time for the trial should be at least 15 minutes and possibly more if the cast is over 200 yards. Crossing outside the yards should incur disqualification. (Exception: A cross in the cast with a 20-point penalty is permitted)

YARD WORK:

Following the cast lift and draw, or following the finish of the field work the sheep are then taken in as straight line as possible to the yards. The handler should stand with one hand on the open gate at yards until sheep are in.

Special WKC By-laws (Yard)

- 11.3.2.3 YARD: An easily worked yard segment designed to permit and encourage calm movement of the sheep through the yard, race and draft.
- 11.3.2.3.1 Dogs which work the yards effectively without backing or barking are not to be penalised. (Adopted 25/4/2007)
- 11.3.2.3.2 The total points allocated to the yard section shall not exceed 30% of the total points for the course. (Modified and adopted 12/8/2001)
- 11.3.2.3.3 The worker cannot lose more points in this section than the total allocated for the section. (Adopted 12/8/2001)
- 11.3.2.3.4 The Judge to advise the worker when the 30 points for the (Yard) section have been lost and ask the worker to 'move on' to assist his dog to finish the yard section or to retire. (First part Adopted 12/8/2001) (Adopted 15/7/2007)

Throughout the work in the yards, the handler should take up his position at each gate. If this position is not maintained points are deducted. However, he may assist the dog at any time for the loss of points, according to the amount of assistance given.

If any sheep are distressed or down, they must be assisted to their feet with no penalty incurred, except in the case where the dog causes the sheep to go down. Overworking and unnecessary aggression, causing the sheep to jam, should be penalised. A free flow around the yards is the aim, with the least possible stress to the sheep. In the case of stubborn sheep, barking, light nipping and mouthing of sheep by dogs is permitted. The latter two may incur a penalty. Severe biting must mean disqualification. Dogs are allowed to start sheep in race and draft by pulling top knot of sheep whilst backing.

The handler must fasten all gates in the yard and loses points (maximum of 2 points per gate) if not done. In the event of a sheep jumping into a wrong yard, the worker should return the sheep to correct yard for a loss of points. If, however, a sheep jumps out of the perimeter of the yards it shall be deemed a LOST SHEEP and trial will terminate.

Whilst working in the yards, any method can be used to fill the race and draft, but effectiveness is the criterion of the work and points allocated accordingly, i.e. if a dog goes over the sheep and they do not move to the desired position, points should be deducted for ineffective work. Points should also be deducted for a dog being in the wrong position or wrong yard to carry out the work to be done. If a dog leaves the area of the yards it should be disqualified

When drafting, the worker may attempt to fill the race before taking his place at the drafting gate. If sheep refuse to enter the race the worker may assist by starting them off, for a loss of points each time a sheep is handled. Any mistakes in drafting must be corrected for a penalty of 2 points per mistake.