



2025-26 Rules and Regulations

Gun Dog Challenge



HORSE & HUNT'S GDC RULES AND REGULATIONS

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I. DOGS

A. DOG BREEDS

Dogs will compete only in the division designated by breed pointer or flusher.

B. FLUSHER CLASS

FLUSHER: A flusher is defined as a breed that flushes birds or trap birds after flush.

C. POINTER CLASS

- 1) **POINTER:** A pointer is defined as a breed that when a bird is found the dog locks up and points.
- 2) **POINT:**
 - a) A pointing dog is required to maintain a non-advancing, pointed position for three (3) consecutive seconds, in order to achieve a find. (Except for Hunter class)
 - b) After a point occurs, the judge will begin a count of three (3) seconds.
 - i) During this time, the competitor may use verbal commands (whoa or point) or an e-collar to steady the dog for three (3) seconds.
 - ii) The competitor or partner may advance to the dog or bird.
 - c) After a period of three (3) seconds, a point will be granted verbally by the judge declaring "good point".
 - d) After the judge declares a good point the bird must be eased into flight by any means other than using hands.
 - i) If the competitor picks up the bird off the ground, it will result in loss of retrieve, shot deduction, and bagged bird.
 - ii) It is acceptable for a dog to put the bird into flight after judge declares a good point.
 - iii) A caught bird by the dog is a trap.
 - iv) At no time is the bird allowed in the dog's mouth until it is flushed and shot or deemed non-performing. SEE BIRDS > NON-PERFORMING BIRD.
- 3) **TRAP:**
 - i) In Pro Class NO traps are allowed.
 - ii) In Open Class only one (1) trap can be made without penalty. Additional traps will have points deducted.
 - iii) Hunter Class there is no trap penalty.
 - iv) SEE POINTS & PENALTIES > EXTRA TRAP.
- 4) **BUMP EXCEPTION:** SEE BIRDS > BUMPED BIRD.

D. DOG IN SEASON

- 1) Female dogs in season (heat) will only be entered at the end of the competition day or after all male runs are complete.

- 2) A maximum of (3) total runs in 2 different classes may be entered per day of competition.
- 3) Female dogs in season may not be used to clear fields or be allowed into competition fields prior to the start of an event.
- 4) Failure to report a dog in season to the promoter will result in disqualification. SEE COMPETITOR CONDUCT>DISQUALIFICATIONS>DISQUALIFIED COMPETITION RUNS

E. DOG INJURY

If a dog is injured and unable to continue its competition prior to harvesting fifty percent (50%) of the birds in the field, the bird setter or the judge can get a competitor's dog to harvest down to fifty percent (50%) of the set birds from the field.

II. BIRDS

A. BIRD SPECIES

- 1) Bird Species most often used in tournaments are pheasants or partridge. Types of partridge could include chukar, Hungarian, and red-legged.
- 2) The qualified bird species for an event is determined by the event promoter.
- 3) It is the competitor's responsibility to verify the bird species for each tournament.
 - a) Points will only be awarded for the bird species of a particular tournament.
 - b) When another bird species is harvested, the shot deduction will still apply, but no finds, retrieves, or bird bagged will be awarded.

B. OTHER SPECIES (NOT A BIRD)

If the dog engages a fur-bearing animal, if legal within the state and permitted by the judge, a competitor may dispatch the fur-bearing animal from the field. The clock will be stopped until the situation is resolved and restarted when the competition run can continue. No shell will be charged. There will be no re-runs for interference.

C. BAGGED BIRDS

- 1) A bagged bird is a bird harvested from the field of play of a qualified species.
- 2) If the bagged bird count is in question, the judge or competitor may request a bird count at any reasonable time during the competition.
 - a) After the dog is on lead and all competitor(s) are present, the judge will stop the clock.
 - b) The competitor(s) reveal and count the birds they have bagged to ensure the required amount of qualified birds are present.
 - c) The judge will resume the clock when completed, if appropriate.

- 3) Cold dead birds do not count towards the bagged bird count. SEE BIRDS > DEAD BIRD FOUND IN THE FIELD
- 4) A safety counts as a shot and bagged bird.
- 5) Intentional OVERHARVEST will result in a DISQUALIFICATION

D. NON-PERFORMING BIRD

A non-performing bird is established when a bird does not take flight after attempts to flush the pointed bird.

- 1) After three (3) honest attempts to flush a pointed bird resulting in the bird traveling a minimum of ten (10) feet, the bird will be considered non-performing.
- 2) A running bird caused by attempts to flush the bird will be considered non-performing.
 - a) If the bird run out-of-bounds.
 - b) If the bird runs a minimum of thirty (30) feet and will not fly.
- 3) Once the judge deems the bird non-performing, it must be removed from the field by any safe means to get full credit for that bird.
 - a) Competitor or dog may retrieve the bird.
 - b) Ground shooting is not allowed and will result in disqualification. SEE COMPETITOR CONDUCT > DISQUALIFICATION.
 - c) If the non-performing bird flies while trying to be removed it can be shot.
 - i) Shells used to remove a non-performing bird will be counted.
 - ii) If the non-performing bird becomes a safety bird full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.
 - d) If the competitor is unable to bag the non-performing bird, only the find points will be awarded and will not count towards your bagged birds.
 - e) A non-performing bird cannot be replayed for points at any point during the competition run.

E. BIRD PARTS

- 1) Whenever bird parts are found in the field, it is the judge's or bird setter's responsibility to remove them.
- 2) Competitors should never drop or leave bird parts in the field. If they do, they will receive a warning. Competitors who continue to drop or leave bird parts in the field after they have been warned will have a penalty point deduction. SEE POINTS & PENALTIES > BIRD PARTS.

F. BUMPED BIRD

- 1) A bumped bird is a bird that flushes as result of pressure from the dog.
- 2) **FLUSHER**: A bumped bird is considered a find and will be awarded find points.
- 3) **POINTER**: A bumped bird is a bird flushed by the dog before a three (3) second point is established. This would be a bird that wild flushes due to the action of the dog before a three (3) second natural point.
 - i) In Pro Class, ZERO bump birds are allowed. Any bumped bird will result in loss of "find".
 - ii) In Open Class, one (1) bumped bird will be allowed per competition run over a pointing dog without loss of find.
 - iii) A competitor bumped bird is a bird that flushes due to pressure on it by a competitor and the dog is outside thirty (30) feet from the bird. If the competitor chooses to play the bird, all points may be awarded with loss of find.
- 4) A Judge bumped bird is a bird that flushes due to pressure by a judge with no dog in the area. No shot should be taken, and full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.

G. TRAPPED BIRD

- 1) **FLUSHER**: A flushing dog in the flushing division is awarded a find and bagged bird. One shell will still be deducted.
- 2) **POINTER**:
 - i) In Pro Class NO traps are allowed. Any trap will result in a 2 minute 30 second penalty.
 - ii) In Open Class only one (1) trap can be made without penalty. Additional traps will have points deducted. One shell will still be deducted.
 - iii) Hunter Class there is no trap penalty.

H. DEAD BIRD FOUND IN THE FIELD

- 1) Dead birds are defined as consisting of the whole, intact bird. Wings or other body parts do not constitute a dead bird.
- 2) When a dog traps a bird, there must be an adequate demonstration of life for the judge to rule a trap. The judge must state if the bird is warm or cold to determine the amount of points awarded.
- 3) **WARM BIRD**: If a bird dies after it is set, and it is warm from your plant which is an error on the bird setter and full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.
- 4) **COLD BIRD**: If the dead bird is cold and stiff, it should be removed from the field and is awarded no points. Cold dead birds DO NOT count towards the bagged bird count.
- 5) Judge must handle the bird to award cold or warm.

III. COMPETITOR CONDUCT

A. SPORTSMANSHIP

- 1) All competitors agree to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner that reflect a positive and responsible image.
- 2) Competitors will promote a family-friendly, all-inclusive environment.
- 3) Competitors and spectators will not judge from the gallery.
- 4) It is the competitor's responsibility to know and understand the rules. Manipulation of the rules in a way that is not the intent of the rule will not be tolerated.
- 5) Unsportsmanlike behavior towards any spectator, judge, bird setter, official, or another competitor will not be tolerated during or post event.
- 6) Any disagreements that cannot be resolved with the judge should be brought to the managing tournament official to be resolved in an appropriate manner.
- 7) Competitors who do not comply with this requirement will receive a warning which will be communicated to the managing tournament official.
- 8) Rulings by the managing tournament official will be respected and supported as the final decision.
- 9) If tournament promotor cannot resolve an issue- a 3 man commit will be formed by tournament promoter to make an end ruling

B. DISQUALIFICATION

- 1) **UNDER THE INFLUENCE:** Competitors under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will receive an event disqualification.
- 2) **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** Competitors who receive more than two (2) warnings will receive an event disqualification.
- 3) **ABUSE:** Physical abuse of event officials or dogs will not be tolerated and will result, based on severity, event disqualification, season disqualification, or lifetime ban.
- 4) **CHEATING:** Competitors cheating will result, based on severity, in competition run disqualification, event disqualification, season disqualification, or lifetime ban.
- 5) **UNFAIR ADVANTAGE OR DISADVANTAGE:**
 - a) Competitors intentionally cleaning the field (by means other than normal hunting) or loading the field for the next run (by intentionally not hunting), will result in an event disqualification.
 - b) Disregarding judge's warnings for watching their own bird set will be disqualified from the event.
- 6) **BIRD ABUSE:** Competitors intentionally incapacitating birds by kicking, stomping, breaking wings, etc. will be disqualified from the competition run.
- 7) **UNSAFE FIREARM HANDLING:** Competitors who receive more than one (1) warning will receive a competition run disqualification.
- 8) **SHOT LIMIT:** Shooting over the allowed competitor shot limit will be disqualified from the competition run.

- 9) **ILLEGAL AMMO:** Disregarding judge's warnings regarding illegal shell usage will be disqualified from the competition run.
- 10) **SHOOTING A BIRD ON THE GROUND:** Shooting a bird on the ground puts dogs, competitors, spectators, and judges at risk for injury. Under no circumstances should you shoot a bird that is on the ground and will be disqualified from the competition run. Safe shots at birds in trees or bushes are allowed.
- 11) **DISREGARD RULES:** Disregarding judge's warnings concerning competition rules will be disqualified from the competition run.
- 12) **BOUNDARIES:** Disregarding the judge's warnings concerning boundaries will result in disqualification of the competition run.
- 13) **RUNNING:** If running judge will call out "running" and the hunter and be given a 10 second penalty for the first offense, (there is no warning given) the second offense will be 20 seconds, 3rd offense 30 second and 4th offense the run will be disqualified.
- 14) **SAME COMBINATION:** SEE COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS & RESTRICTIONS > CLASS RESTRICTIONS
- 15) **MAX RUNS:** Exceeding the daily or event maximums for dogs will result in the disqualification of the infracting competition run(s). SEE COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS & RESTRICTIONS > MAX RUNS
- 16) **INJURED COMPETITOR:** Injured competitors are not disqualified; however, they are not eligible for to a refund, re-run, points, or prizes for the competition run.
- 17) **DOG IN SEASON:** Failure to report a dog in season to the promoter will be result in disqualification of the competition run.
- 18) **DISQUALIFIED COMPETITION RUNS:**
 - a) Competitors receiving a competition run disqualification are not entitled to refunds, re-runs, points, or prizes.
 - b) **DOUBLES** - When one competitor is disqualified, the remaining competitor is encouraged to hunt and remove birds from the field, if applicable.
 - c) Disqualified competition runs that were not hunted down to fifty percent (50%) of the set birds in the field, the bird setter or the judge can get a competitor's dog to harvest down to fifty percent (50%) of the set birds from the field.

C. SAFE FIREARM HANDLING

- 1) All competitors are required to practice safe firearms handling before, during, and after their competitive runs.
- 2) Firearms should be unloaded with actions open or chamber broken open when entering or exiting a competition field.
- 3) Firearms will always be pointed in a safe direction away from other competitors, judges, dogs, spectators, structures, buildings, vehicles, nearby competition fields, and any unsafe shooting zones.
- 4) No shells larger than 2 ¾ inch for 12-gauge or 3 inches for 20-gauge. Shot size from 8 to 5 are allowed.
- 5) Birds will not be shot on the ground. SEE COMPETITOR CONDUCT > DISQUALIFICATION > SHOOTING A BIRD ON THE GROUND.

- 6) Guns will not be placed on the ground.
- 7) Running in any class is not permitted.
- 8) If the competitor is operating a firearm in an unsafe manner, the judge will issue a warning. Only one (1) warning will be allowed before the competition run is disqualified.
- 9) Competitor and Judge should both be on the spot when calling a safety.

D. SAFETY FOR COMPETITORS & SPECTATORS

- 1) A safe shot is always the **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SHOOTER!**
- 2) Dogs should be leashed whenever they are not competing in a field. The dog handler and/or owner is liable for the actions of their dog(s).
- 3) HHGDC, the promoters, and host have no liability for accidents occurring at a HHGDC sanctioned event.
- 4) All competitors, judges, and spectators should take all precautionary measures to protect themselves.
- 5) Blaze orange/Pink vests and/or caps should be worn by competitors, spectators, and judges during competition.

E. SAFE SHOT

COMPETITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

A safe shot is always the **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SHOOTER!** Even in the unlikely event the judge does not grant a safety, **NEVER** take an unsafe shot.

- 1) **SAFETY/ DENIED SHOOTING OPPORTUNITY:** A competitor may call a safety when there is an unsafe shot towards judge, dog, spectators, structures, buildings, or vehicles.
 - a) The judge must immediately respond that the safety is granted.
 - b) When a safety is granted, full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.
 - c) The competitor will not move from the spot safety was called and must touch the dog before proceeding to the next bird.
 - d) If a safe shot presents itself after safety is granted, the competitor may take the shot, and none of the additional shots are deducted from either competitor. The judge's ruling is the overriding call and, therefore, precedence is held.
 - e) **DOUBLES** – There are no competitor safeties, so always be aware of your teammate.
 - f) If a competitor misses a bird but is denied a shooting opportunity, on their second shell, they may call a safety and be awarded full points, however they will be charged for an extra shot.
 - i) If 2 shots were already fired at the bird and missed, then this rule is void.
 - ii) **NO** safety is awarded on an empty chamber.
 - g) If a safety bird lands in the competition field, it is considered good luck and can be pursued after:
 - i) Five (5) minutes have gone by since the safety.
 - ii) Another bird was pursued before returning to the safety bird.

- 2) **BAGGED BIRD:** A Safety counts as a shot and bagged bird.
- 3) **SAFETY ON LAST BIRD:** If a safety is called on a last bird of the run, the clock will be stopped once the dog returns and is touched.

JUDGE'S RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) Call out "SAFETY" if (in judges opinion) an unsafe shot will be taken towards the dog, judges, gallery, etc. A shot will be deducted on the scoresheet
- 2) ANY shots resulting in personal injury or property damage result in an AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION
- 3) Judge should be no closer than 15 feet and no farther than 50 feet away from the competitor/dog
- 4) Verify scoresheet with competitor and ensure all boxes are checked appropriately
- 5) Judges should call out the time after each good bird is bagged
- 6) When a good retrieve or point is made, call it out loudly (ie. 'Good')
- 7) 1 judge should be in the field while the 2nd judge should be getting the next players ready

IV. POINTS & PENALTIES

A. COMPETITION RUN POINTS/PENALTIES:

FINDS (per find)	45
FIND (Hunter, Ladies & Mix Doubles)	15
EXTRA FIND (maximum of 1) (OPEN & PUPPY CLASS ONLY)	45
RETRIEVE (per retrieve)	50
REMAINING MINUTES	60
REMAINING SECONDS	1
COLD DEAD BIRD FIND (per find)	0
BIRDS HARVESTED (per bird)	250
SHOTS PRO CLASS (per shot)	120
SHOTS OPEN CLASS (per shot)	60
RUNNING FIRST WARNING	-10
RUNNING SECOND WARNING	-20
RUNNING THIRD WARNING	-30
TRAP PRO CLASS POINTER	-150
EXTRA TRAP OPEN CLASS	-60
BIRD PARTS – LEFT IN FIELD AFTER FIRST WARNING (each offense)	-100
PURPOSEFULLY FLUSHING BIRD WHILE LEAVING FIELD	-200

B. TOURNAMENT EVENT POINTS:

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	Award To
1-4 runs per class	6	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 places
5-9 runs per class	10	8	6	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	5 places
10-25 runs per class	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	0	0	8 places
26-35 runs per class	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	10 places
36-50 runs per class	30	28	26	24	22	20	18	16	14	12	15 places
50+ runs per class	40	38	36	34	32	30	28	26	24	22	20 places

V. FIELD OF PLAY

A. FIELD PREPARATION

- 1) **FIELD:** The field will be clearly marked with poles, ribbons, or equivalent to show boundaries.
- 2) **CLEARING THE FIELD:**
 - a) All competition fields should be cleared of birds each morning prior to the first competition run.
 - b) A competitor or dog may not compete in a field that they cleared that day.
 - c) Female dogs in season may not be used to clear fields or be allowed into competition fields prior to the start of an event.
 - d) Fields will be cleared between runs at the showdown.

B. THE BIRD SET

- 1) **COMPETITOR(S) PRESENT:** A field will not be set until the competitor(s) are in the designated blind. Dogs must be contained on a leash or in a kennel.
- 2) **NUMBER OF BIRDS:** Subject to promoter's discretion. Number of birds can be verified with the promoter, judge, and/or scoresheet prior to the competition run.
- 3) **FIRST RUNS:** The first runs of each day of competition will have one (1) extra bird set in the back of the field (zone 4 for singles or zone 6 for doubles). No extra birds set at showdown. Birds will be set GATE BIRD 1ST, Zone 2 2nd, then Zone 3&4.
- 4) **SET COMPLETE:** Bird setter will notify judge when the set is complete.
- 5) **BIRD PLACEMENT:**
 - a) The judge will communicate to the bird setter when and how many birds to be set.
 - b) Birds shall be placed at random by the bird setters.
 - c) The gate bird will be placed within one hundred (100) feet of the starting gate. If cover is inadequate within one hundred (100) feet, the bird will be placed as soon as there is enough cover available for multiple nests to hold a bird.
 - d) Birds shall be placed more than thirty (30) feet of a boundary. Every reasonable effort should be made to assure that stocked birds remain in the field prior to a run beginning.
 - e) When setting a bird in the field, if the bird gets loose and flies away, it should be replaced.
 - f) If a bird planted for that run is flushed and flies away while the bird setter is setting the field, the bird setter will replace the bird.
 - g) If the flyaway takes place after all bird setters have returned and while the competitors have been removed from the designated blind but not yet begun their run. It is considered bad luck and the bird will not be replaced.
 - h) If a bird leaves the field after the clock has started, it is considered bad luck. The competition will continue, and the bird will not be replaced.
 - i) If a bird flies into the field while setters are in the field, it is considered good luck and may be played as part of the competition run.

C. WATCHING THE BIRD SET

- 1) The managing tournament official shall determine if spectators may observe the set.
- 2) Competitors cannot view:
 - a) Their own set
 - b) The set before their competition run
 - c) The run before their own competition run
- 3) Designated blinds should be developed for the competitors while their set is taking place.
- 4) There will be no communication of any type between the spectators and competitors regarding sets.
- 5) Use of cell phones while waiting in the designated blind is prohibited.

D. INTERFERENCE

- 1) **BIRDS ENTERING THE FIELD:**
 - a) When a bird enters the field, it may be played as part of the competition run.
 - b) When a staff error creates an unfair advantage, such as a crate being left open for example, an official ruling may require removal of birds from the field.
- 2) **DOGS ENTERING THE FIELD:** When another dog enters an active competition field, it is the responsibility of all to contain the dog.
 - a) **THE ENCROACHING TEAM:**
 - i) The clock continues running.
 - ii) The competitor may, with permission of the judge in the encroached field, enter the field to retrieve the dog. The competitor may bring their firearm but discharging it outside their own field will result in disqualification of the competition run.
 - iii) No find will be granted when the dog is in another competitor's field.
 - b) **THE ENCROACHED UPON TEAM:**
 - i) The clock should be stopped and time noted on the scoresheet.
 - ii) Their own dog should be leashed.
 - iii) **FIRST FLUSHED BIRD** – If the encroaching dog flushes a bird full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.
 - iv) **SECOND FLUSHED BIRD** – After a second (or more) bird(s) are flushed, a rerun is granted. The field will be cleared and reset.
 - v) Judge and the competitor will need to agree on a logical time to restart the clock.
- 3) **VEHICLES ENTERING THE FIELD:**
 - a) **PRIOR TO RUN** – When a vehicle enters the competition field after a set but before the clock starts, any flushed birds will be replaced.
 - b) **DURING RUN** – Once the clock is started:
 - i) The competitor will leash their dog and the clock will be stopped.

- ii) The judge will work with the driver to remove the vehicle as quickly as possible with the least amount of disturbance to the field.
- iii) Once the vehicle has left the field, the clock will be restarted.
- iv) If the vehicle flushes a bird, full points are awarded for find, retrieve, bagged bird and one (1) shot deduction.

E. OUT-OF-BOUNDS

- 1) Dogs may go out-of-bounds if actively pursuing a bird.
- 2) Competitors may not intentionally send a dog out-of-bounds.
- 3) A competitor may go out-of-bounds to retrieve a dead bird with the judge's permission. The judge will grant permission provided the retrieve does not interfere with the adjoining field's competition.
- 4) DOUBLES – One competitor may go out-of-bounds. They may bring their firearm but if a shot is taken while out-of-bounds, that run will be immediately disqualified. Instead, the in-bounds competitor may take the shot.
 - a) **FLUSHER**: The competitor may go out-of-bounds to assist a dog with a retrieve. They may bring their firearm but if a shot is taken while out-of-bounds, that run will be immediately disqualified.
 - b) **POINTER**: A competitor may go out-of-bounds with their firearm if the dog is on point or when chasing a running bird out-of-bounds.
- 5) SINGLES POINTER – The competitor may shoot the bird out-of-bounds in a safe manner approved by the judge.
- 6) If a new bird is produced and flies back in-bounds, the competitor may pursue that bird less a find since it was found while the competitor was out of bounds.
- 7) The retrieve must be inside of the competition field for retrieve points to be awarded.
- 8) In the case of the last bird, the competitor must be in-bounds to stop the clock.

VI. THE COMPETITION RUN

A. THE BLIND

- 1) Competitor(s) must be in the designated blind before a judge sends the bird setter out to set the field.
- 2) Judges, setters, and event promoters are the ONLY people allowed out of the blind during setting. Spectators MUST be in the blind along with competitor(s).
- 3) Competitors will enter legible full names of competitor(s) and dog, verify scoresheet is for the correct class, and take note of number of birds, max number of shots, etc.
- 4) Dogs must be contained on a leash or in a kennel.

- 5) Competitor(s) competing in the following run cannot watch the bird-set or the run.
- 6) Competitor(s) should not compete back-to-back in the same field. If it is unavoidable, the competitor must wait for fifteen (15) minutes between the end of the first run until they can proceed with the second run.

B. STARTING GATE

- 1) **BOUNDARIES:** Judges should point out the boundaries of the field and any safety considerations particular to that specific field. Competitor(s) may ask questions for clarification.
- 2) **FIREARM:** Firearms should be unloaded with actions open or chamber broken open. Just before you begin your run, you may load your firearm.
- 3) **SAFETY:** Competitor(s) should take note of their surroundings including competitors, judges, dogs, spectators, structures, buildings, vehicles, nearby competition fields, and any unsafe shooting zones.
- 4) **START:** Once the leash is removed, the dog should remain at the starting gate until the competitor is ready. The clock starts when the competitor releases the dog. If the dog moves out into the field and does not return to the competitor immediately, the judge will consider the run to have started and will start the clock.

C. FIND

- 1) **FIND:** Only produced or visible birds may be awarded find points
- 2) **FIND ON SAME BIRD:** If a live bird was granted a find lands back into the competition field (ex. bird that was shot at and missed, safety bird), it can be pursued for a second find after:
 - a) Five (5) minutes has gone by since the bird was seen.
 - b) Another bird was pursued before returning to the bird.
- 3) **MAX FINDS:** There is a maximum of one (1) extra find per run in classes Open and Hunter. No extra finds in Pro class.
- 4) **OUT-OF-BOUNDS:** If a new bird is produced and flies back into the hunting boundaries, the competitor may pursue that bird less a find since it was found while the competitor was out-of-bounds.
- 5) **FLUSHER:** A flusher is awarded a find after a flush or trap by the flushing dog.
- 6) **POINTER:** SEE DOGS > POINTER CLASS > POINT
- 7) **BUMP:** SEE BIRDS > BUMPED BIRD

D. SHOT

- 1) **SHOTS FIRED:** Any shot fired, intentionally or accidentally, counts as a shot fired.
- 2) **SAFETY:** A safe shot is always the **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SHOOTER!** A competitor may call a safety when there is an unsafe shot towards judge, dog, spectators, structures, buildings, or vehicles. SEE COMPETITOR CONDUCT > SAFE SHOT
- 3) **NEVER SHOOT A BIRD ON THE GROUND!** Ground shooting is not allowed and will result in disqualification. SEE COMPETITOR CONDUCT > DISQUALIFICATION > SHOOTING A BIRD ON THE GROUND
- 4) **CORRECT BIRDS:** SEE BIRDS > BIRD SPECIES

E. RETRIEVE

- 1) **TAKING THE RETRIEVE:** After a bird is successfully shot, the competitor should remain in the spot the shot was taken and wait for the dog to retrieve the bird to hand. In doubles, retrieves can be to the hand of either competitor. Regardless of which competitor takes the shot, the competitor taking the retrieve must be in the spot they were standing when the shot was taken.
- 2) **RETRIEVES TO HAND:** The dog must place the bird firmly in the hand. A bird firmly in the hand is one that is **UP OFF THE GROUND** and securely placed in the competitor's hand. A bird picked up off the ground or is touching the ground is not a successful retrieve.
- 3) **VERBAL CONFIRMATION:** The judge should confirm verbally to the competitor whether a retrieve is good or not good at the time of the retrieve. If the retrieve is not good, the competitor can either forgo the retrieve points, or can work with the dog to fulfill the requirements of the retrieve before continuing to the next bird. If the competitor does not hear the ruling, they should clarify before continuing. It is the competitor's responsibility to verify whether the retrieve is good for points. Once the competitor moves out of position and continues to the next bird, there is no opportunity to re-do the retrieve to hand.
- 4) **MOVEMENT BY PIVOT:** The competitor taking the retrieve may pivot on one foot in a full 360-degree circle. The competitor may also entice the dog to complete the retrieve by moving backwards or at a right angle (90 degree) of their position. It is not acceptable to use the enticement to improve the position in the field for their next bird. Once movement has been made by the competitor, no forward movement may occur. The judge will warn the competitor if they are out of compliance so that the competitor has an opportunity to adjust their movement accordingly. Repetitive warnings will result in loss of retrieve points.
- 5) **GUIDE THE DOG TO DEAD/DOWN BIRD:**
 - a) **SINGLES** – Before a competitor moves from spot the shot was taken to guide the dog, the judge will establish the competitor's original spot while competitors guide dog to bird. Once retrieval is made, the competitor must return to the marked spot.
 - b) **DOUBLES** – Either competitor may guide a dog to an unmarked bird, however, one competitor must remain in or return to their original location.
- 6) **TRAINING AIDS:** Verbal commands, whistle commands, or the use of an electric collar may be used during the retrieve. Leads or other physical means will not be allowed.

F. STOPPING THE CLOCK

- 1) **STOP THE CLOCK:** The clock stops once the last bird touches the competitor's hand in-bounds with the proper number of birds are harvested. Judge and competitor should exit the field and count birds at the gallery.
If the appropriate number of birds are not in the competitor's possession, the judge and competitor go back to the gate and the clock will restart until either the final bird(s) are harvested, or the clock runs out of time.

- i) (If a bird is partially alive from the pile and re-enters back into the field, the competitor will move to the starting gate, the clock will restart and the competitor must remove the bird from the field (run it out of bounds or get it in the competitor's possession to complete the run).
- 2) **IN-BOUNDS**: The competitor must be in-bounds for the clock to stop.
- 3) **FIREARM SAFETY**: Once the clock has stopped, firearms should be unloaded with actions open or chamber broken open when exiting a competition field.
- 4) **DOGS ON LEAD**: Once the clock has stopped, all dogs should be immediately put on a lead.
- 5) **SCORESHEET**: At least one (1) competitor should review and sign the scoresheet prior to leaving the field. Signed scoresheets are final, so any concerns should be brought up immediately.
- 6) **LEAVING THE FIELD**: The competitor(s) and dog should promptly leave the field on a path designated by the judge. If a bird flushes while a competitor or dog is leaving the field, the judge may rule:
 - a) **PURPOSELY** – The team will be fined points, and the bird shall be replaced anywhere in the field of play. SEE POINTS & PENALTIES > PURPOSELY FLUSHING BIRD WHILE LEAVING FIELD.
 - b) **ACCIDENTALLY** – The bird should be replaced anywhere in the field of play.

VII. CLASSES

A. PROFESSIONAL

- 1) **SINGLE** – one (1) dog and one (1) competitor format.
 - a) Two (2) four (4) bird run, ran in two (2) different fields in the same day OR one (1) Four (4) bird run (promoters discretion).
 - b) Duplicate runs (same dog/competitor combo) are not allowed. Either competitor or dog must change to prevent duplicate run. **If a duplicate run occurs, 1st run counts and 2nd run is a disqualification.**
 - c) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
 - d) Four (4) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion).
 - e) Thirty percent (30%) payout to class (promoter's discretion).
 - f) Points earned accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitor.
 - g) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Professional Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy and professional class showdown. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS and SHOWDOWN
- 2) **DOUBLES** – one (1) dog and two (2) competitor format.
 - a) One (1) double set four (4) single birds.
 - b) Duplicate runs (same dog/competitor combo) are not allowed. Either competitor or dog must change to prevent duplicate run.

- c) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
- d) Six (6) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
- e) Thirty percent (30%) payout to class (promoter's discretion).
- f) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
- g) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Professional Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy and professional class showdown. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS and SHOWDOWN

B. MASTER

- a) Master class is now it's own individual class.

Competitor is sixty (60) years old or older on day of competition run.

- 1) One (1) four (4) bird run.
- 2) one (1) dog and one (1) competitor format.
- 3) Same dog/competitor combo is allowed for points and payout once per day that master class is offered.
- 4) If you choose to run the same (dog/ hunter) combo two (2) times in one (1) day the runs will count but only towards trophy. Runs will not count towards purse or points. Points and purse money will be moved down.
- 5) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
- 6) Four (4) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
- 7) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
- 8) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Master Class High Point Competitor-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS
- 9) Max on player four (4) times a day
- 10) Master class is run under open rules.

C. PUPPY

Dog is under two (2) years at the beginning of tournament season, then can be in puppy class all season.

- 1) SINGLE – one (1) dog and one (1) competitor format.
 - a) Same dog/competitor combo is allowed for points and payout once per day that puppy singles class is offered.
 - b) If you choose to run the same (dog/ hunter) combo two (2) times in one (1) day the runs will count but only towards trophy. Runs will not count towards purse or points. Points and purse money will be moved down.
 - c) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
 - d) Four (4) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
 - e) Two (2) retrieves needed to receive full retrieval points. If the dog is not retrieving well after 15 seconds you can advance forward and get the retrieve.
- f) In pointer one free trap and one free bump will be allowed any additional traps beyond will result in a 60 second penalty, any additional bumps will result in loss of find.

- g) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitor.
 - h) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Puppy Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS
- 2) DOUBLES – one (1) dog and two (2) competitor format.
- a) Duplicate runs not allowed (either competitor or dog must change).
 - b) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
 - c) Five (5) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
 - d) Twenty five dollar (\$25) Option Pot
- e) Two (2) retrieves needed to receive full retrieval points. If the dog is not retrieving well after 15 seconds you can advance forward and get the retrieve.
- f) In pointer one free trap and one free bump will be allowed any additional traps beyond will result in a 60 second penalty, any additional bumps will result in loss of find.
- g) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
 - h) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Puppy Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS

D. OPEN

- 1) SINGLE – one (1) dog, one (1) competitor.
- a) One (1) four (4) bird run
 - b) Same dog/competitor combo is allowed for points and payout once per day that open singles class is offered.
 - c) If you choose to run the same (dog/ hunter) combo two (2) times in one (1) day the runs will count but only towards trophy. Runs will not count towards purse or points. Points and purse money will be moved down.
 - d) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
 - e) Four (4) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
 - f) In both pointer and flusher only three (3) good retrieves are required for full points. If a good retrieve is not going to be performed, the hunter must wait for 15 seconds before they may advance and get the bird. If this happens more than once the penalty will be loss of a retrieve.
 - g) In pointer one free trap and one free bump will be allowed any additional traps beyond will result in a 60 second penalty, any additional bumps will result in loss of find.
 - h) Twenty Five dollars (\$25) Option Pot
 - i) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
 - j) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Open Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy and open class showdown. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS and SHOWDOWN
- 2) DOUBLES – one (1) dog and two (2) competitor format.
- a) One five (5) bird run.
 - b) Duplicate runs not allowed (either competitor or dog must change)

- c) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
- d) Four (4) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promoter's discretion)
- e) Doubles partners must be declared at U.S. Open for scheduling purposes
- f) In both pointer and flusher only four (4) good retrieves are required for full points. If a good retrieve is not going to be performed, the hunter must attempt for 15 seconds before they may advance and get the bird. If this happens more than once the penalty will be loss of a retrieve.
- g) If first 3 retrieves are good, competitor must ATTEMPT the retrieve for 15 seconds on 4th bird before advancing to the bird.
- h) In pointer one free trap and one free bump will be allowed any additional traps beyond will result in a 60 second penalty, any additional bumps will result in loss of find.
 - i) Twenty Five dollars (\$25) Option Pot
 - j) Points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
 - k) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Open Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (both flusher and pointer) trophy and open class showdown. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS and SHOWDOWN

E. HUNTER

New players encouraged!

- 1) one (1) dog and one (1) competitor format. Dog trainer without a firearm can assist with one tournament event.
- 2) Competitor is allowed two (2) runs per day that hunter class is offered (ex. twice on Saturday and twice on Sunday) for points.
- 3) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day. If a 3rd run occurs, 1st and 2nd runs count and 3rd run is a disqualification.
- 4) An honest attempt to retrieve bird to hand for a minimum of fifteen (15) seconds is required without penalty. After fifteen (15) seconds, the competitor may retrieve bird on their own. A minimum of one (1) bird must be retrieved to hand, in order to receive full retrieval points.
- 5) Unlimited shots. Fastest time wins!
- 6) In pointer one good point is required (In pointer hunter class a "good point" is defined as; dog holding point for a minimum of 1 second. "one - one thousand" called out by the judge.)
- 7) Three (3) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promotor's discretion)
- 8) Twenty five dollar (\$25) option pot.
- 9) Points accumulate towards hunter lifetime points for dog and competitors.
- a) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Hunter Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS
- 10) Once competitor's dog wins Hunter Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year, both the dog and competitor are ineligible to compete in hunter class again.

F. LADY

- 1) SINGLE – one (1) dog and one (1) competitor (either Junior or Lady) format.

- a) Same dog/competitor is allowed for points and payout once per day that the lady Class is offered.
 - b) Dog may compete in each class a maximum of twice per day: twice for the lady.
 - c) Three (3) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promotor's discretion)
 - d) Points earned accumulate towards hunter lifetime points for dog and competitor.
 - e) Points earned by a lady competitor also accumulate towards lady lifetime points for a lady competitor.
 - f) Points earned in the lady apply towards event trophy and points.
 - g) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Lady Class High Point Competitor-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS
- 2) MIXED DOUBLES – one (1) dog and two (2) competitor format. One competitor minimum must either be a lady.
- a) Duplicate runs not allowed (either competitor or dog must change)
 - b) Dog may compete in this class a maximum of twice per day.
 - c) Three (3) bird set and twelve (12) minute limit (promotor's discretion)
 - d) Points earned accumulate towards hunter lifetime points for dog and competitor.
 - e) Points earned by a lady competitor also accumulate towards lady lifetime points for lady competitor.
 - f) Points earned in lady/mixed apply towards event trophy and points.
 - g) Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Lady/Junior Class High Point Competitor-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy. SEE YEAR-END AWARDS

*Entries will be closed at 25 total runs per CLASS per DAY, all events are FIRST COME FIRST SERVE

*Participants must be on time to their scheduled run. Run times are drawn at RANDOM

*Without prior approval, players are expected to be available all day during tournaments

*If you are 2+ hrs late/no show to your runs, NO REFUND will be issued

VIII. COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS & RESTRICTIONS

A. MAXIMUM RUNS

- 1) **DOG MAXIMUM RUNS:** A dog may only be entered a maximum of twice in the same class per day, four (4) different classes per day, and eight (8) runs per day. If a dog exceeds the maximum runs per class or day, the run(s) exceeding the maximum will be disqualified from competition. No points, re-runs or reimbursement of fees will be given. The runs prior to exceeding the maximum will remain as legal runs.
- 2) **DUPLICATE COMBINATIONS:** SEE CLASSES Hunters can run a maximum of 8 runs per day

B. CLASS RESTRICTIONS

- 1) Players can run Hunter and Open class with the same dog. Players can run open and Pro with the same dog. Players can NOT run Hunter and Pro with the same dog.
- 1) **HUNTER CLASS:** competitors may play hunter, puppy, open, lady, and mixed classes during the same tournament event.

The offending runs will be disqualified from the competition. No re-runs or reimbursement of fees will be given. The non-offending runs will remain as legal runs.

IX. RE-RUNS

Re-runs are rare but may be granted in extreme cases. Circumstances that negatively affect a competition run and may warrant a re-run are: severe weather (tornado, lightning, or other acts of God), vehicle interference, or bird setter error (unintentionally set birds outside the competition field boundaries). Re-runs can be granted by the managing tournament official, and the field may need to be cleaned.

X. YEAR-END AWARDS

A. PROFESSIONAL

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Professional Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year trophy. A trophy will be awarded to both the high point flusher and the high point pointer. A trophy will also be awarded to both the high point runner up flusher and the high point runner up pointer.

B. MASTER

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Master Class High Point Competitor-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy and year end plaque.

C. PUPPY

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Puppy Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year trophy. A trophy will be awarded to both the high point flusher and the high point pointer. A trophy will also be awarded to both the high point runner up flusher and the high point runner up pointer. \$500 prize money will be awarded to Puppy Class High Pointer or Flusher Dog-of-the-Year.

D. OPEN

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Open Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year trophy. A trophy will be awarded to both the high point flusher and the high point pointer. A trophy will also be awarded to both the high point runner up flusher and the high point runner up pointer.

E. HUNTER

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Hunter Class High Point Dog-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy and \$500 prize money.

F. LADY

Points earned during the tournament season apply towards year-end Lady Class High Point Competitor-of-the-Year (flusher/pointer combined) traveling trophy \$500 prize money.

XI. SHOWDOWN

b)

Showdowns are held Sunday of the US Open. HHGDC will communicate number of tournament events required to qualify a dog for the showdown prior to the start of the tournament season. Showdowns earn double points! This year, four (4) out of the five (5) tournaments are required for a dog to qualify for the showdown.

Qualifying: For the showdown dog must run four (4) out of five (5) tournaments in the class they are trying to qualify the dog for in the showdown.

A. Professional

- 1) **ENTRY:** Seven (7) dogs in both flusher and pointer will be entered in the showdown.

- a) First place winner of Pro Doubles at the US Open event (if qualified dog).
 - b) Top six (6) highest point dogs.
 - c) If the first Pro Doubles winner is also within the top six (six) high point dogs, the next entrant will be the seventh high point dog.
- 3) **FORMAT:** One (1) dog and two (2) competitor format. Six (6) bird set and fifteen (15) minute limit.
- 2) **AWARDS:** Minimum of \$3,000 guarantee total awards! Potential for more based on runs. A percentage of each PRO run, ran during the season will go towards the showdown purse.
 - a) FLUSHER – \$1,500: First place \$1,000 and second place \$,500
 - b) POINTER – \$1,500: First place \$1,000 and second place \$500
 - c) Double points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
- 3) **RESTRICTIONS:** Owner or competitor who qualified the dog, must run that dog in the showdown. A dog may run in both open class for one (1) time, and professional class two (2) times for the showdowns.

B. Open

- 1) **ENTRY:** Five (5) dogs in both flusher and pointer will be entered in the showdown.
 - a) First place winner of Open Singles at the US Open event.
 - b) Top four (4) highest point dogs.
 - c) If the first place Open Singles winner is also within the top four (4) high point dogs, the next entrant will be the fifth high point dog.
- 4) **FORMAT:** One (1) dog and one (1) competitor format. Four (4) bird set and fifteen (15) minute limit.
- 2) **AWARDS:** \$3,000 total awards! Potential for more based on runs. A percentage of each OPEN run, ran during the season will go towards the showdown purse.
 - a) FLUSHER – \$1,500: First place \$1,000 and second place \$500
 - b) POINTER – \$1,500: First place \$1,000 and second place \$500
 - c) Double points accumulate towards professional lifetime points for dog and competitors.
- 4) **RESTRICTIONS:** Owner or competitor who qualified the dog, must run that dog in the showdown. A dog may run in both open class for one (1) time, and professional class two (2) times for the showdowns.