



EALC RULES FOR COW DOG INSTINCT TRIALS

(with kind support of NALC)

LEVEL I & II

Place and Set-Up

- ❖ A field or pasture that is relatively open with adequate fencing for the type of cattle used.
- ❖ The ideal place should not be smaller than 50 x 100 m.
- ❖ Water for both dogs and cattle is at the place.
- ❖ Host must be able to provide as many heads of cattle as needed to supply all runs with fresh animals.
- ❖ The holding pen for cattle entering the trial should be located away from the main working area.
- ❖ A designated starting point for entry and his/her dog should be area of 2 x 2 m.

Entries

- ❖ Only NALC registered Catahoulas may enter this competition.
- ❖ No dog may run more than once per trial.
- ❖ Run positions will be drawn by EALC secretary before the trial.
- ❖ The dog enters the arena leashed. Collar and leash is removed before starting work.
- ❖ No electric devices or pinched collars are allowed during the trial.
- ❖ „In heat“ females may enter the trial, but they will enter the competition as the last ones.
- ❖ A person shall not be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs while participating in the trial. This may cause a person to forfeit that day's entries.
- ❖ Neither EALC nor the host is responsible for any injuries or damage that may result from the entry's participation.

A Run

A „run“ will be considered one Entry with one Catahoula.

A Contestant must be aware of:

- ❖ An entry with a handle of his/her dog may use it at his/her discretion and give commands to his/her dog, but know that the judge will be considering whether the handle is obeyed and/or used for the best results in the run.
- ❖ Dogs may only enter and receive points once during the trial.
- ❖ All runs start at the same designated starting point.
- ❖ A run needs at least 3 head of cattle. No fewer than 3 and no more than 25 head of cattle is allowed.
- ❖ Cattle will be turn at the same place for each run.
- ❖ If cow walks out unassisted by a dog, it will at the judge's discretion how he/she evaluates it.

Time

EALC Cow Dog Instinct trials is NOT „who can do it in the fastest time“ event. Those who think so do not know, nor do they appreciate the true working style of Catahoulas. A time limit was set in order to give each entry an equal amount of time to show his/her dog's working abilities.

- ❖ A run will be 15 minutes maximum. A run's time starts when the cows are turn out.
- ❖ A run consists of a 2 minute **Bay-Up**.
- ❖ The timekeeper (when possible) will give a sign when 5 minutes are left in a run.
- ❖ Five minutes will be given to an entry to catch and secure his/her dog. If the dog is not secured in that time limit, the dog may be disqualified at the judge's discretion.
- ❖ If a non-secured dogs or a stray dog enters the trial area, the judge will decide how the situation should be evaluated and solved. The judge's scoring will reflect the interruption.

Bay-Up 2 min

The 2 minute Bay-Up is the most important part of a run. This shows to the judge that the Catahoula has the complete control of the cattle.

- ❖ The entry must let the dog work on his/her own – without encouragement.
- ❖ All dogs must participate in the Bay-Up.
- ❖ If during the Bay-Up, a dog causes a “bust“, the severity of the point reduction is at the discretion of the judge.
- ❖ If during the Bay-Up, a cow(s) leaves the Bay-Up on its own and the dog follows and brings the cow(s) back before the time is up, the Bay-Up score should remain high because the dog performed on its own even though there was a “split“ during the Bay-Up.
- ❖ If during the Bay-Up, a cow(s) leaves the Bay-Up on its own and the dog follows it but is unable to get the cow(s) re-bunched, the judge, at his/her discretion, will score the Bay-Up accordingly.

Judges

At the discretion of EALC or the trial host, there will be one or more judges. They may be in the field on horse or on an elevated place outside of the fenced area. After each run, the judge will turn in the run's scorecard to the timekeeper.

- ❖ All entries are welcome to attend the judge's meeting to be held 15 minutes before the trial. The judge will discuss what he/she will be looking for in a run, pertinent rules, type of cattle, location of gates, water supply, and starting point area. The meeting will be brief and the trial will start on time.
- ❖ A judge shall give his/her full attention to each entry's run.
- ❖ During the trial, the JUDGE'S WORD IS FINAL.
- ❖ Entries should NOT talk casually to judges or spectators during a run.
- ❖ If a cow leaves the run area, it will be at the judge's discretion to score against the run (the number of cows out and/or how the cows got out) or declare the run be scored as if no cow(s) were lost.
- ❖ Judges may stop the clock during a run to fix fence, to gather lost cattle, or for other adverse conditions.
- ❖ Cancellation because of bad weather will be: (A) at judge's decision, (B) host's decision, (C) a ballot vote of 75 % entries.

Handling dogs

Reading a set of cattle and knowing when to give his/her dogs a hand is the mark of a true leader. Catahoulas need time to work, bunch and have control **before** and **while** moving the cattle. The judge is looking for said control by the dogs, not by the horse and rider, and may deduct „handling“ points from the entry for this type of action. The judge is looking for a team, with the handler and the dog getting the job done together. Be advised that points may be deducted when an entry does not help the dog when is needed. Remember: the handler's job is support the dogs so they can show their truly unique and instinctively natural working abilities.

Disqualification or Severe Point Reduction

- ❖ Dogs fighting with other dogs during a run.
- ❖ Dogs acting in threatening manner towards horseman.
- ❖ Dogs threatening the handler, judge or spectators.
- ❖ Unsportsmanlike conduct and the use of offensive language.
- ❖ Excessive pressure on livestock by the dog or the entry – such as forcing a cow to leave or go through the fence.
- ❖ The first time a dog „catches“, the judge will give the entry the option to muzzle or remove the dog from the trial area. The judge will determine the difference between a catch or a tag. The run time will not stop during either.

Ties

All eligible dogs involved will receive the same awards and points. If a tie needs to be broken, the following will occur:

- ❖ **Use Bay-Up Points or Handling Points.**

All above rules are valid for both Levels.

LEVEL I

The main task for the team will be to keep bunched a herd of 5-15 heads of cattle.

- ❖ The herd is kept in middle of the arena.
- ❖ The handler enters the arena with his/her dog leashed and reaches the designed starting point where he/she should stay during a run.
- ❖ The handler will sign to the judge that he/she is ready for work. The time limit for a run starts running at this moment.
- ❖ The handler will release his/her dog from a collar and leash and let the dog work. Excessive encouragement or pressure from the handler will result in handling point reduction which is on the judge's discretion.
- ❖ The dog must show 2 minutes of Bay-Up.
- ❖ The dog should encircle a herd in space between cattle and a line where horsemen are standing. Dog's running behind the horses will result in point reduction that is on the judge's discretion.
- ❖ The dog may be called out from the cattle if he/she behaves too aggressively or for other reasons and then start again. The evaluation is on the judge's discretion.
- ❖ The handler will sign that he/she is ready to recall the dog after finishing work. The 5 minute time limit for recall will start running at that moment.
- ❖ The handler leaving the designed starting area will face the severe point reduction that is on the judge's discretion.

The judges evaluate:

- Dog's effort
- Selfconfidence
- Reading and understanding of a herd
- Eye contact with his/her master
- Obedience (namely, during recall).

LEVEL II

This level is meant for dogs that are more experienced in working cattle. Dogs should be able to work with 5 horse riders and move together a herd of 25 cows from one point to another one. A dog should help horsemen keep a herd bunched and return back all cows that leave themselves. This should be done twice during a run.

- ❖ The herd is kept on larger field.
- ❖ The handler enters the area with his/her dog leashed and reaches the designed starting point from where he/she should follow a group of horsemen and his/her dog during a run.
- ❖ The handler will sign to the judge that he/she is ready for work. The time limit for a run starts running at this moment.
- ❖ The handler will release his/her dog from a collar and leash and let the dog work. Excessive encouragement or pressure from the handler will result in severe handling point reduction which is on the judge's discretion.
- ❖ The dog must show 2 minutes of Bay-Up.
- ❖ Then, a herd is moved by horsemen from one point to another. The dog must cooperate with horsemen and help keep the herd bunched and bring lost cow(s) back to the herd on his/her own during the time limit for a run. Then, the dog must be recalled, when the herd is settled down. This exercise is repeated twice during a run.
- ❖ The handler may support his/her dog by giving a command to bunch a herd or he/she may leave on the dog how he/she solves a situation. The judge will decide how he/she will evaluate it.
- ❖ The dog may be called out from the cattle if he/she behaves too aggressively or for other reasons and then start again. The evaluation is on the judge's discretion.
- ❖ The handler will sign that he/she is ready to recall the dog after finishing work. The 5 minute time limit for recall will start running at that moment.

The judges evaluate:

The same as for the Level I, but more focus is on:

- Reading and understanding of a herd
- Cooperation with horsemen