

2009 USDDN

US Disc Dog Nationals
USDDN.COM

US National &
World Finals Series

Judging Handbook



US Disc Dog Nationals Steering Committee (USDDN) Code of Conduct

The US Disc Dog Nationals is an annual championship series administered equitably by representatives of the US disc dog community. USDDN competitions adhere to the rules and guidelines established by the USDDN steering committee. This group of club representatives and experienced handlers is committed to establishing policies that represent the best interests of the sport's handlers, and which are supportive of other event organizers. The goal for all USDDN competitions is to provide an environment that shall be safe, fair, and fun for all involved. Participants and competitors at events held under USDDN rules are required to demonstrate behavior that is in the best interests of our dogs and our sport. In an effort to ensure a positive, family-friendly environment, this Code of Conduct applies to all participants (both Human & Canine) at USDDN events:

DO

- Enjoy and Encourage the performances of other competitors
- Be considerate of the Safety and Enjoyment of others throughout the event
- Observe and Control the actions of your dog(s) at all times
- Participate Soberly by avoiding the abuses of Alcohol or Drugs
- Recognize and play within your own physical limitations & those of your dog(s)
- Recognize and play within limitations imposed by weather and field conditions during an event
- Comply with the rules of the event venue, host club, & competition officials
- Be respectful of the efforts of the event judges & officials
- Cooperate honestly with officials during incident investigations
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times

DO NOT

- Engage in fighting
- Use vulgar or inappropriate language or gestures
- Publicly criticize the efforts of judges, officials, or other competitors
- Purposefully, recklessly, or carelessly cause harm to any dog or person
- Intentionally try to distract other competitors during their competition round
- Knowingly make a false complaint with the intention of causing event disruptions
- Attempt to intimidate or offer bribes to judges for the purpose of influencing their decisions
- Participate in a mind altered state (be it the result of Alcohol, Drugs, or Emotional Fatigue)

Participants and competitors who commit violations of this Code of Conduct during competitions held under USDDN rules & guidelines may be subject to disciplinary responses pursuant to the USDDN's Incident Investigation Review Panel.

General rules for all divisions of competition

- Player may be any age or of either gender. Note: Any Reference to a Junior Handler in competition is open to players 12 years of age or younger on January 1 of that competition year.
- Prior to competition, players must read and sign, without altering, the competition Registration Form, which contains a liability waiver and publicity release.
- Teams shall consist of one dog and one player.
- Only one team, the dog and player, is allowed to compete, be involved in the routine, at a time during the performance.
- Only the competing dog, player, and contest officials are allowed on the field during competition.
- Players may enter more than one dog in this competition.
- The USDDN Steering Committee has approved four disc manufacturers' discs for the competition series which are: **Wham-O, Inc; Discovering the World; The Innova Hero discs; Hyperflite, Inc.; and DogStar. For a full list of approved discs please read the new press release as of February 2009** Teams can use up to a **maximum of ten (10) discs** during a freestyle routine and **one (1) disc for Toss & Fetch round and a player can not mix discs of different weight classes or different diameter discs within the same round.** However, dogs with a **shoulder height of 15 inches or less are allowed to use must use a any disc from the smaller diameter discs or any larger disc from the approved list. If a Player takes more than 10 discs out onto the field then and it is not noticed before the Player begins then the Team will be penalized 1 point per extra disc, before any multiplier or total.**
- Upon sign-in, players may be issued an official competition T-shirt, which is requested to be worn, un-altered with the logos visible, during competition if a T-shirt is supplied.
- Players must not use props of any kind during their Freestyle or Toss & Fetch rounds (e.g. hoops, sticks, ribbons, etc.).
- Dogs must be kept on leash at all times, except when competing or practicing.
- Players must walk dogs on leash to the on-deck area of field, when called. Dogs must be put back on leash immediately after competing. Practicing teams must be out of range of the competition area and spectators so that competing teams are not distracted.
- Where required by local ordinance, all competing canines must have proof of rabies inoculation and a valid license. Parvo and Canine Cough (Bordetella) immunizations are strongly recommended for all competing dogs.
- During competition, one or more Scoring Judges will assess the points scored by each team and the total points scored by each team. The "calls" and decisions of the Judges are final and will not be subject to review or appeal.
- Boisterous challenges, abusive language, or other inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior, whether directed at contest officials or not, may result in the contestant being disqualified from that competition or further competitions.
- Players are responsible for the safety and welfare of their dogs at USDDN competitions. Players and/or owners or their agents are expected to properly supervise and maintain control over their canines at all times.
- USDDN contest officials reserve the right to change format, competition rules, time allotments, etc., at their discretion.
- Mandatory Disqualification will occur for the following cases, but are not limited to these instances: abuse by the player of an animal; female dogs in any stage of heat; canine endangerment, and/or aggressive canine behavior.

Press Release

U.S. Disc Dog Nationals Announces 2009 Disc Rule Changes

February 23, 2009: The USDDN Steering Committee has approved the following for implementation in the 2009 National/International Qualifier Season.

Below is the approved Policy by the USDDN Steering Committee. The SC set forth Size/Weight class distinctions in discs. Players can use any of the approved discs; **HOWEVER**, players may NOT mix disc sizes and weights in a single round. For example, competitors cannot compete with a EuroBlend & standard Fastback in the same Round; competitors cannot you use standard fastbacks and Jawz in the same round; and, competitors cannot combine Pup size discs with any larger discs.

2009 USDDN Approved Discs and Disc Manufacturers

The USDDN SC requires, in both Toss & Fetch and Freestyle Formats, the use of the discs specified below. A competitor may not mix discs within any one (1) round of competition - all discs must be the same size and weight class. If a competitor is found to have mixed the sizes or weight class of discs in a single round, a five (5) point penalty will be applied in Freestyle before the multiplier and in Toss & Fetch formats there will be a one (1) point penalty applied per throw made. However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero. Important note: a penalty assessed for mixing discs is separate from any Canine Endangerment penalties.

If your dog measures 15.01 Inches or Taller at the Shoulder, you must use one of the discs identified below:

Discs by Size/Weight Class:

"Standard Large Discs": Between 9 - 9.5 Inches in Diameter & Less Than 115 grams

- Wham-O: Fastback Standard, Flex & Super Flex
- DTW: Chomper Standard, Flex & SuperFlex
- Innova Hero: 235's: AIR and Xtra
- DogStar: Standard and Crusher

"Standard Medium Discs": Between 8.5 to 8.75 Inches in Diameter & Less Than 115 grams

- Innova Hero: 215's: Sonic, Super Sonic, Sonic Xtra
- Hyperflite: K-10 Competition Standard, Frostbite, UV & Midnight Sun

"Heavy Large Discs": Between 9 - 9.5 Inches in Diameter & between 130 grams and 145 grams

- Wham-O: Eurablend;
- Innova Hero: 235's: Super Hero/K9 Candy, SuperStars, SuperSwirls
- DogStar: Crusher Heavy & Crusher T-Rex

"Heavy Medium Discs": Between 8.5 to 8.75 Inches in Diameter & between 130 grams and 145 grams

- Hyperflite: Jawz (All variants of Jawz - HyperFlex, XComp, Standard)

If your dog measures 15.00 inches or less at the shoulder, you may choose to compete with any of the discs defined above or those specified below. The same rules and penalties for mixing disc size/weights defined above apply.

"Small Dog Discs": Between 6.25 and 7 Inches in Diameter and between 40 grams and 90 grams

- Innova Hero: Pup 160's
- Hyperflite: Pup Jawz, Pup Frostbite, Pup Competition Standard

Freestyle Rules

- **Nationals Division** Freestyle teams will be allowed a maximum of **120 seconds**. **Timing begins** when the player either **throws or places a disc in flight** and the canine makes any movement that can be considered an attempt to retrieve the disc and the scoring will begin when the music starts. No practice throws will be allowed.
- Contestants are encouraged to bring their own music on CDs (marked with selection number) to perform to. CDs must be properly marked with the player's name and presented in unbroken jewel cases.
- Each team may use up to 10 discs in their routines, and if a team competes with more than 10 discs that team will **be penalized 1 point per extra disc they have used**.
- **Dogs must be at least 18 months of age to compete in any Freestyle Division**
- Only tricks or moves that begin or end with the disc in sustained flight are judged in execution; the disc must be in flight at some point during the move in order for a move to be scored in execution. The discs only thrown to the dog are scored in execution. Tricks where the disc is handed off from the player's hand to the dog will not be counted in execution.
- Innovation will be scored in any of the respective judging elements, such as, an innovated release or individual trick will be scored within its respective elements.
- Note: The use of vaults, which employ the thrower's body as a launching pad, should be tempered with consideration for the dog's welfare. Dogs of different breed, size, and temperament execute vaults with varying degrees of finesse during the push off, airtime, and landing and must have complete control during all three stages of the leap; therefore, excessive heights, and/or frequent repetition of vaults especially where the dog "crashes" should be avoided, as they can be scored down and penalized.
- If there is two rounds of Freestyle played during a competition then each Freestyle round will multiplied by 1.5 to keep the 85% Freestyle and 15% Toss & Fetch ending score.
- If only one round of Freestyle is played during a competition then that Freestyle will be multiplied by 3 to keep the 85% Freestyle and 15% Toss & Fetch ending score.
- **If there is a tie after all of the calculations are made in a freestyle and Toss & Fetch formatted tournament and the multiplier and any deductions have been taken, the tie breaker rule will be to add all of the 7 team elements together (from both rounds, where applicable)and recalculate the Grand Total to get your winner.**
- **The Semi Finals will utilize a random draw order for Round One - Freestyle. The same order will be used for Toss Fetch. For Round 2 - Freestyle, a reverse to first order will be used. For the finals round, the start order will be reverse to first based on the Semi-Final totals. The same order will be used for round 1 and toss fetch. Round 2 will be a reverse to first based on Finals round 1 + toss fetch results.**

The following table shows the maximum scores a team can achieve using the USDDN Freestyle Rules:

Canine Elements

1. Prey Drive	During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained.	2.50
2. Retrieval	The dog's ability to track, chase and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player's feet, and handing them to the player).	2.50
3. Athleticism	The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.	2.50
4. Grip	Before, during and after the moment of catching a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.	2.50
Total Canine Score =		10.00

Player Elements

5. Field Presentation	The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throws of different lengths thrown in different directions.	2.50
6. Release Diversity	A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the handler with variations in the grip and release, including a minimum of 3 different releases.	2.50
7. Disc Management	Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with no breaks.	2.50
8. Rhythmic Team	Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments.	2.50
Total Player Score =		10.00

Team Elements

(Only the best 4 of the following 7 elements score)

9. Two Different Overs	The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player to catch a disc placed in flight.	2.50
10. Two Different Vaults	The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances.	2.50
11. Multiple Segment	1 multiple segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession.	2.50
12. Dog Catch	1 dog catch with the disc in flight.	2.50
13. Team Movement	Coordinated team movement i.e. spin together, weave under legs, dog stall, etc.	2.50
14. Passing Segments	Consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line.	2.50
15. Directional Distance Movement	The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like. Circle Outrun segments 1)___ 2)___ 3)___ 4)___ Zig-Zag segments 1)___ 2)___ 3)___ 4)___	2.50
Total Team Score =		10.00

Execution

Execution Score = ___ Catches / ___ Throws x 10 =
18 Minimum Throws (Each round of Freestyle is multiplied by 1.5 if 2 rounds of Freestyle)
TOTAL SCORE = 40.00

Freestyle Rules cont'd

In addition to the rules above this contest will use the **US Disc Dog Judging Criteria for Freestyle**. These criteria are outlined below.

1. The USDDN Steering Committee has approved four disc manufacturers' discs for the competition series which are: **Wham-O, Inc; Discovering the World; The Innova Hero discs; Hyperflite, Inc.; and DogStar. For a full list of approved discs please read the new press release as of February 2009** Teams can use up to a **maximum of ten (10) discs** during a freestyle routine and **one (1) disc for Toss & Fetch round and a player can not mix discs of different weight classes or different diameter discs within the same round.** However, dogs with a **shoulder height of 15 inches or less are allowed to use must use a any disc from the smaller diameter discs or any larger disc from the approved list. If a Player takes more than 10 discs out onto the field then and it is not noticed before the Player begins then the Team will be penalized 1 point per extra disc, before any multiplier or total.**
2. Any throws that leave the Player's hand before time expires may count towards the team's total score although the actual catch may not be executed until after time has expired.
3. If, during the allotted time, **a dog takes a nature break on or off the field, time will be immediately stopped and will not resume.** Player will be immediately required to thoroughly clean any affected area of the field. Teams will not be disqualified for such an infraction, but in addition to forfeiting the remainder of their time, **a 5 point penalty will be deducted from their total score out of forty points.** However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero.
4. If an **interruption occurs** during competition that is beyond the control of the competitor (i.e., not a nature break), time will be suspended as quickly as possible by an indication from any of the field judges. The interruption will be dealt with (field cleared, offending interruption severely chastised) and the competitor will **be allowed to continue with the rest of the round.** Time will start immediately where it was suspended, and the canine may start anywhere on the field. **Additionally, the competitor can be given the option to start the round over, but only with the support of the majority of the Judges** in order to avoid interruptions that in the Judges' opinions were intentionally caused by someone wanting to provide the competitor with a restart opportunity. **As the interruption may have occurred early in the round, the competitor may choose to take their new round immediately. If the interruption occurred in the second half of the round, the competitor may elect to move to the end of the order and start the round over after their dog has rested.** Time will be suspended for all unforeseen distractions or interruptions that occur on the field and that may directly, or indirectly put the canine competitor at risk of injury or that hamper a team's ability to compete fairly. The decision to halt a team's round will be made at the discretion of contest officials.
5. The Judging Crew for any division of competition shall consist of four people with one person assigned to judge each of the four scoring categories: Canine, Player, Team, and Execution. Each Judge will identify a score out of 10 using hundredths of a point variations, so that the maximum possible score for a competing team will be 40 points. The Scoring Judges have total discretion for determining scores, and their decisions will not be subject to review or appeal.
6. The Canine Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the four Canine Elements. The Total Canine Score will be the total of the four elements.
7. The Player Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the four Player Elements. The Total Player Score will be the total of the four elements.
8. The Team Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the seven (7) Team Elements. **The Total Team Score will be the total of the best four (4) elements only.**
9. The Execution Judge will calculate the **Catch-Throw ratio for the team and multiply it by 10.00** to derive the Total Execution Score. There must be a **minimum of 18 throws** during a routine or the number 18 will be used at the total number of throws to calculate the execution score. To be counted as a throw or intended roller (and a possible catch) the disc must be released from the player's hand before the dog attempts the catch. **Consequently, takes shall not be counted as either a throw or a possible catch in calculating the execution score,** but all other releases shall be counted as a throw and possible catch. Only discs intended for the dog to catch are counted in the Execution calculation.

10. **Canine Endangerment Rule** - In an effort to promote the safe training and handling of disc dogs, the USDDN has implemented a canine endangerment rule that levies the following point deductions when incidents that increase the risk of injury occur. Deductions will be made to a team's freestyle scores before the multiplier for the following incidents:

- **Contortion:** Dog squirms awkwardly enough to risk injury while jumping, catching, or landing.
Half (1/2) point to up to One (1) point deduction per occurrence.
½ points to 1 point
- **Buckle:** Dog's legs collapse on landing to the point that another part of the dog's body (such as torso or head) also strikes the ground.
Two (2) points to up to Three (3) point deduction per occurrence.
2 points to 3 points
- **Slam:** Some part of dog's body (back, chest, head, etc.) strikes the ground before the legs during a landing from a jump, vault, catch, or stall. (Excludes face first skids while pursuing low throws from a running stride.)
Three (3) points to up to Four (4) point deduction per occurrence.
3 points to 4 points

Two (2) of the four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the minimum penalty deduction and Three (3) out of Four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the maximum deduction penalty (3 out of 4 judges could still agree to give the minimum penalty as well), to ensure that one of the following penalty events has occurred in order for the deduction to be applied. During or after each freestyle round, the contest director will inform all contestants that received deductions for the above incidents so that they may have a chance to correct their freestyle performance. They can personally tell the competitor or place a sheet with the team(s) names that have incurred penalties at the registration desk.

Teams that incur six or more deduction points during one day will be disqualified.

National/World Finals Divisions – Division must be at all Qualifiers

At registration **National/International Qualifier Division competitors will be by random draw** then compete in that order in the first round of Freestyle. The competition order will remain the same for the first two rounds of competition and in **reverse order of score from lowest score to the highest score for the last round of Freestyle**. At the International Finals Championships Saturdays National Finals competitors first two rounds are in random draw order with the third round in reverse order of score to the highest last. At the International Finals Championships Sunday International Finals competitors will start in the previous days reverse order of score from the lowest score first to the highest score last. All competitors start with a zero equal score.

Nationals Division competitors use the US Disc Dog (USDDN) Judging Criteria for Freestyle and the US Disc Dog Judging Criteria for Toss & Fetch developed by the Steering Committee.

- 90 seconds in Toss & Fetch and two - 120 seconds rounds of Freestyle
- Toss & Fetch counts the best five throws
- Toss & Fetch distance scale 10, 20, 30 and 40 yards
- Toss & Fetch point scale 1, 2, 3, and 4 points, with an extra ½ point awarded for any catch that is made with all four paws off the ground in an obvious leaping motion, points 1– 4.5
- A throw is good as long as any ONE paw is ON or INSIDE the left and right side lines
- All competitors move on to the final round, unless otherwise stated
- winners are calculated by multiplying both Freestyle scores by 1.5 and adding Toss & Fetch score

Division II Freestyle

At registration Division II (at National Finals only not qualifying division) competitors will be assigned their order of competition based upon their order of registration and this starting position will be written underneath one of your competitor package if supplied. The competition order will remain the same for both rounds of competition, of one round of Freestyle and one round of Toss & Fetch.

Division II competitors are anyone that has not Qualifier for the National Finals and will use the US Disc Dog (USDDN) Judging Criteria for Freestyle and the US Disc Dog Judging Criteria for Toss & Fetch developed by the Steering Committee.

- 90 seconds in Toss & Fetch and 90 seconds round of Freestyle
- Toss & Fetch counts the best five throws
- Toss & Fetch distance scale 10, 20, 30 and 40 yards
- Toss & Fetch point scale 1, 2, 3, and 4 points, with an extra ½ point awarded for any catch that is made with all four paws off the ground in an obvious leaping motion, points 1– 4.5
- winners are calculated by multiplying the Freestyle score by 3 and adding the Toss & Fetch score

Toss & Fetch Rules for all Divisions of Competition

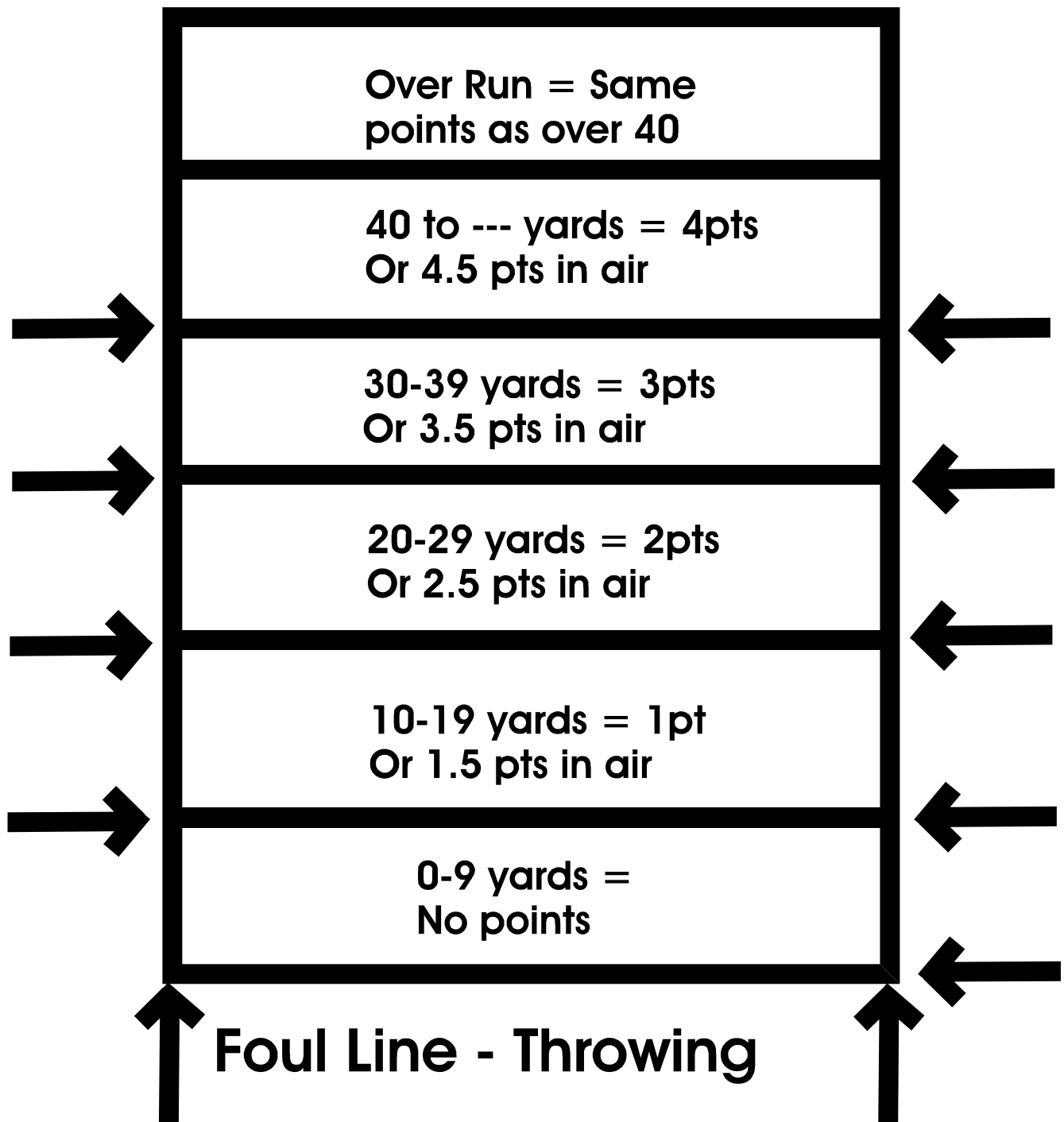
Teams competing in Toss & Fetch formats will receive **90-seconds** to compete. During a team's allotted time, the team is allowed an **unlimited number of attempted throws** with a single disc, but only the **BEST FIVE** throws will count towards the teams' score.

Due to time constraints at some competitions **practice throws may not be permitted** prior to each competitor's turn. The team must be behind the throwing line for time to begin. **Time will begin the instant the dog or the disc cross the throwing line.** The thrower must always release the disc from behind the throwing line. The thrower may move freely about the field at other times. A throw will not count (and be called as a foot fault) if the thrower steps **on or over** the throwing Foul Line during release of the disc. If the disc has left the thrower's hand before time is called, the throw will be scored if caught. A player can move about the field freely after the disc is thrown, but must return behind the throwing (Foul Line) before every throw. The dog only has to be behind the throwing line on the first throw. When a dog makes a catch it is scored where the dog lands with their trailing paw, (the paw closest to the Foul Line). Points are earned at the 10 yard, 20 yard, 30 yard and 40 yard lines with 1 point at 10 yards, 2 points at 20 yards, 3 points at 30 yards, and 4 points at the 40 yard line and an extra ½ point earned if all four (4) paws are off the ground within any 10 – 40 yard zones. If a dog lands with any one foot on the ground during a catch it is scored as a down catch. A mid-air catch is called when the dog breaks stride or visibly leaps with all four paws off of the ground. If there is any question if it is up or down the call is called down. There is an out of bounds side lines and a catch must be made within those left and right sidelines. A dog only needs to make a catch with at least one paw landing **ON** or **INSIDE** the side lines for the catch to be good. If a dog lands on any of the 10-40 yards lines with their last trailing paw then **ON** the **LINE** is the **NEXT ZONE**.

At any time during their 90 seconds a thrower may inform the Line Judge that they will be **exchanging discs** in order to ensure that the player does not use a disc that has a broken rim, tear, or other type of damage that may substantially impair the flight of the disc or potentially injure the dog. To exercise this option a player must walk over and hand the disc that they have been using to the Line Judge before taking hold of their replacement disc. Time does not stop during this exchange. **The player has total discretion for deciding if and when such disc exchanges will take place.**

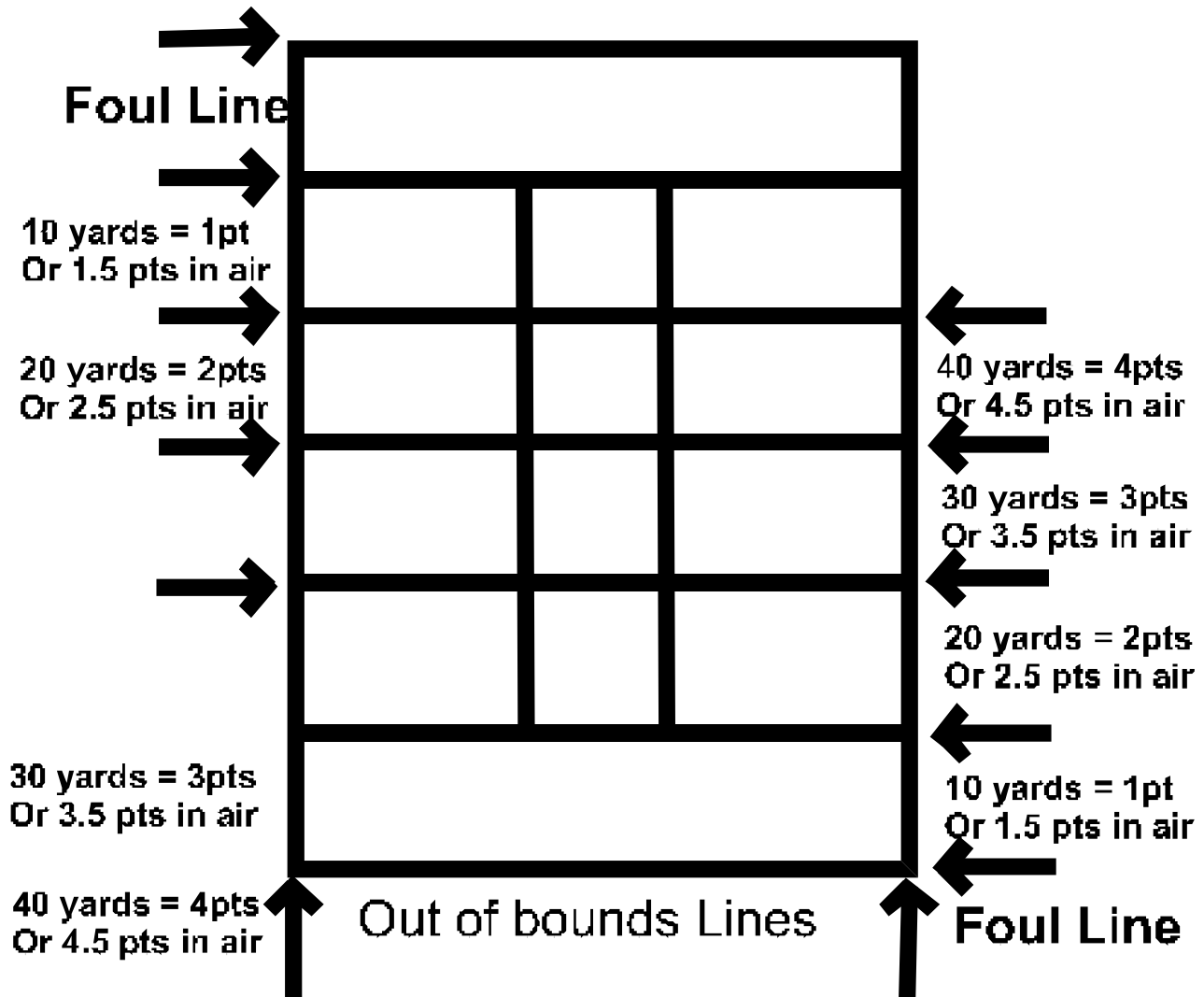
If, during a team's allotted time, **the dog takes a nature break on or off the field, time will be immediately stopped and will not resume.** Player will be required to immediately and thoroughly clean up after their dog. Teams will not be disqualified for such an infraction, **but in addition to forfeiting the remainder of their time, points will be deducted from the team's score equal to the number of throws/catches that had been made by the player before the nature break took place.** However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero.

Toss & Fetch Divisions Diagram



Out of bounds Lines are left and right

Super - Pro Toss & Fetch Divisions



The middle column is an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ point bonus.

Judging Tips

When judging by the USDDN Freestyle Criteria it is **important for a judge to remember that he/she will be judging one element**, and to concentrate on that one element 100 %.

All of the four elements are independent from each other and the scores can and will differ. For example, a team has an experienced player and the canine is a beginner you can usually expect the player's score to be higher than the canine. Yet, if you have a talented canine and the player is either not experienced, not well organized, not innovative, repeats tricks, has no or little difficulty, does not use the field well, or does not have smooth transitions, the canine's score will usually be higher than the players. However, if you have super dog that displays all great qualities, but the player is not experienced or is displaying easy throws, the dog will not always receive a 2.5 in all of the categories. **This is because the dog may not have been challenged with more innovated or difficult throws may not keep the same Prey Drive, Retrieval, Athleticism, Grip, and should not receive 2.5's in each category, unless the Player has adequately challenged the dog.**

If the canine and player have the team elements required and do not demonstrate the elements in a smooth, seamless, and confident manner the teams element may reflect a lower score.

Prey Drive: If a canine loses focus in the routine at any time the canine is judged lower in the prey drive. If a canine has too much drive has time to bite and damage the disc the canine score may be lowered in Prey Drive or Grip. **However, a canine displaying lack of focus (or looks off the field and star gazes) is scored lower than a canine with too much drive chewing on the disc.**

Retrieval: If a canine does not demonstrate retrieving at different levels or misses a very high percentage of throws the player throws the dog may be scored down in all four canine elements. It depends if the canine lost focus and missed the disc, did not track well, leaped too early, or just did not grip the disc during a catch. You would raise the retrieval score if they had an innovative retrieval such as, where they have to decide where to bring the disc to the person's hand, like a mid-air exchange of discs.

Athleticism: A canine's athleticism is **judged on NOT how high they jump, but rather on how well they leap with control in relationship to their breed ability.** You can tell if a canine has control of their leap if they feel comfortable in the air. You can tell if a canine is NOT comfortable in the air (and will not score well in athleticism no matter how high the dog jumps) if their body sways, swings from side to side, lands on one hind foot, or even worse yet crashes on any landing. A dog with a well controlled leap displays the three elements of a leap in a sound push off, controlled air-time, and a sound landing. Dogs are also judged on running, standing, flipping, and vaulting leaps. A player that excessively vaults their canine in excessive heights or numbers will ultimately lower their release diversity score, and if the canine is not landing well will lower the canine's athleticism score. The Flips as a separate Sub-Element was discussed when the Freestyle Judging Criteria was initially reviewed and the SC agreed that Flips would count in the Multiple Sub-Element and the Canine Athleticism Sub-Element, which is described in the Judging Handbook. Flips would count as a Multiple as long as the person displayed a minimum of three consecutive Flips. The Dog is also judged in Athleticism for Flips as being one kind of Leap and the Canine Judge also looks to see if the dog flips both directions or not, and/or are the Flips of equal value in both directions. The Dog is judged in Athleticism in four different kinds of leaps, Standing leaps, Running leaps, Flipping leaps, and Vaulting leaps (any of these could be vertical or horizontal leaps). Not all four kinds of leaps are necessary, but show versatility if a dog displays multiple types. If a person does one or two Flips then it is scored overall in the Release Diversity Sub-Element and the Dog is judged in Athleticism.

Grip: A canine that accelerates in a dog's bite on tapping a disc on the run three or four times and then catching it; like tapping a disc back to their owner, or catching a butterfly would be innovation and may increase this element.

Field Presentation: This is where a Player has the freedom to create field movements around the field to play to the crowd or the judges with a variety of different length of throws and also a how the competitor presents themselves on the field. A player must have a planned field movement around the field with short, medium, and long throws, whether it is moving from down the field to up the field, in a large circle, in a diamond, in a square, or up and down the field with smooth movement. Other field movement is okay, however, look for players that just chunk straight throws from one end to the other or in a circle and end up throwing in one circle, this is not good field movement because the dog is displaying field movement not the player. A player that displays only or several medium and/or long throws in a circle, which puts the disc directly in front of the dog, is not displaying difficult or innovated field movement, and release diversity. The more 90 degree or 180 degree turns the dog makes will increase all three elements: Canine, Player, and Team. This is because the player has added more innovation and difficulty by adding blind releases to their routine, thus making it more difficult for the Player and Canine. The movement is throughout the routine not just in one segment.

Release Diversity: This is the **most innovated** element in our judging criteria. This is where competitors have the freedom to be creative on their throws, releases, and **other tricks not covered in our other categories are covered here**, as long as they have a variety of different releases and grips. An innovated team would score well in this category. **A player must at a minimum demonstrate 3 different releases with different grips in order to receive a good score.** How well the player demonstrates these throws, and if they attempt and demonstrate more, depends on how well the player scores in this sub-element. A player's innovation can be scored in any of the four elements depending on if the innovation was a trick, transitional movement, field movement, or disc management. Any trick, throw or release that is repeated more than twice, unless in a multiple segment, may lower their release diversity score. So, the third time a trick is repeated with out variation the trick is scored down. **A player that has a higher degree of difficulty and innovation (even if they have a lower hit/miss percentage) will usually score higher than a person with lower difficulty and a better hit miss percentage in the player elements.**

Rhythmic Team: This is a great element to add innovated transitional movements with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments to increase your chances of a better score. **This is one category that can add professionalism to your routine by concentrating on and added great spins or squats after a dog flip, or spin before a segment leading into the next segment.** An example of a great transitional move is where the player rolls and the dog leaps over the person in mid roll. This is also where some showmanship can be scored if added in a transitional move. A player that does not move from trick to trick, segment to segment, or transition well between then will lower their rhythmic team score. Watch for an inexperienced team to be too worried about transitional moves when they have not mastered the throws or releases yet.

Disc Management: A great innovated move here is when a competitor has a disc in his shirt or shorts ready for the next trick. A player that does not seamlessly release and replace all discs with out breaks will lower their disc management score. If a player only does tricks in groups of four then throws a fifth one all of the time (or one that does not vary their groups of throws) will receive a lower score, without some variation. A player that stands around and waits for their canine to return and does not move well may lower three different scores, their disc management, field presentation, and rhythmic team. An inexperience team may be still picking up discs while the dog is standing around or following them or they may only have what we call a two disc routine. This is where a team, once in

the middle of their routine, only ends up with throwing segments with two or three discs because the rest are all scattered around the field. Good Disc Management is where you rarely ever see a player pick up the disc, because your focus is on the dog.

Team Elements: If a Team does an innovated skill in - Two Different Overs, Two Different Vaults, Multiple Segment, Dog Catch, Team Movement, Passing Segments, Directional Distance Movements Segments (Circling or Zig-Zag or like movements) then they would get scored for their innovation in that respective category. Remember, that a team only has to perform 4 out of the 7 recommended, so that gives them plenty of freedom to be innovative. Especially, since some of these categories can be accomplished at the same time it is not difficult to meet these elements. If a team did a different trick that would not be scored in any of the seven elements then they would be scored in the Release Diversity category. In team elements a team must accomplish 4 out of the 7 sub-elements. If a player only attempts 3 out of the 7 then they get scored in only the 3 sub-elements. If a player attempts 4, 5, 6, or all 7 then the four highest are calculated. It is always better for a competitor to attempt as many of the 7 elements because they will get scored on all attempts. The score is dependant on how well they displayed the element. The team elements are a guideline and these team elements were created by watching several world finals routines over many years and 98% of the world finalist had 5 out of the 7 sub-elements.

Multiple: A multiple segment are any three discs thrown in rapid secession, this can also be a variety of multiples, like shuffling, or even flips, as long as they are rapid.

Execution: Execution Score is just that. The exact ratio of the teams catch miss ratio. There is a minimum number of throws that need to be displayed in a Freestyle routine. That minimum number is 18 throws. If there is not 18 throws then the execution judge will place an 18 in the throw column and use that number to get the exact execution score. Only the throws that are thrown to the dogs (intended for the dog) will be scored in execution. This nice thing about having a separate category is that teams are scored here only on the catch and misses and it has nothing to do with the other categories. It is important to separate this score because we have seen competitors that have high execution scores get high difficulty scores in other formats and they should not be connected. The way I see some competitors increase their execution score is to completely drop the difficulty in their routines. How many of you have seen that a Toss & Fetch dog that is consistent will lose their catching consistency (and height of leap) at first when they start freestyle. This is because the dog no longer can anticipate the discs flight patterns. So, that is why release diversity is important when challenging a dog's and competitor's skills.

Scoring Examples:

- If a team attempts any sub-element they will usually receive at least a 1.0 – 1.5 score out of 2.5.
- If the player attempts and misses with some fair effort they will usually receive a 1.5 – 1.7.
- If a player attempts, makes or misses any sub-element with be good effort they will usually receive 1.7 – 1.9.
- If the player attempts and makes any sub-element with good success and difficulty they will usually receive 1.9 - 2.2.
- If a player attempts and make a sub-element with great success and difficulty and could not have done better then they should receive 2.2-2.5.

Imagine in the routine you just watched all four sub-categories were equal and you wanted to give over 96% in that element of a maximum score is 10.00 pts. You would give, i.e. 2.4 in each sub-element when multiplied by the 4 sub-elements = 9.60 out of 10.00 pts or (96%) in that Element.

(This is just a guideline, but it works well.)

- 2.40 X 4 = 96% (9.60) or higher, “A+” Superior
- 2.25 X 4 = 90% (9.00) or higher, “A” Excellent
- 2.00 X 4 = 80% (8.00) or higher, “B” Above Average
- 1.75 X 4 = 70% (7.00) or higher, “C” Average
- 1.50 X 4 = 60% (6.00) or higher, “D” Below Average

If you want to score canine, player, or team element an average of 80% out of 10 possible points in the element that you are judging you can imagine that 2.00 the score that you would want to give them in each sub-element. For instance, if the canine excelled in Athleticism, above that 2.00, you can give 2.0 in each of the other sub-elements and then just increase the Athleticism score to 2.26 or whatever you want.

If a player is excessively vaulting in height or quantity you can adjust the competitor’s score down in athleticism for the canine, release diversity in the player, and in the team #10 vaults. On an average if a team is performing 3-5 vaults at safe heights, different releases, and different stance positions that would be great. If a competitor does not vary the releases, stance positions, and especially pushes the dog to excessive heights or quantity the competitor would be scored down.

In any element if a competitor repeats (for instance, overs, vaults, multiples) because they did not like the previous ones all of the elements will be scored. So, if they did two lower quality vaults and then decided to do two more the two lower quality vaults will bring down the two good vaults score. The rule of thumb is quality is better than quantity.

Freestyle counts 85% of the ending score and Toss & Fetch counts 15% of the ending score.

National Division

In Nationals Division most competitors will fall from the 1.6 – 2.5 range. Look for some variation in canines that score well compared to the player. As well as players that score better than canine.

Division II

In Division II most competitors can fall within the same 1.6 – 2.5 range.

Toss & Fetch

In other competitions the Toss & Fetch format has become a race to get as many catches and throws off as possible. If a competitor has a small dog they will not fair well in other competitions, or if a competitor has an off breed (not herding breed) then their dog gets penalized for its slower athleticism in the Race format. If a person has a fast dog then they will get more throws off. If a person in a Toss & Fetch competition makes one mistake they may as well back up and go home because they will most likely, in most formats not make the cut, or not come in the top 10. The USDDN voted for it not to become a RACE. So, we encourage competitors to focus on good technique for each throw (90 seconds with unlimited throws, but the best 5 throws count). So, small dogs, big dogs, fast dogs, off breed dogs all have the same playing field. This USDDN Toss & Fetch format is the one format the any dog of any size, shape, and breed has the ability and can reach (and strive for) a perfect score.

USDDN- National Finals

Canine Disc Championships Score Sheet
Nationals Division / Division II

USDDN Freestyle Format - Judges Worksheet

Competitor's # _____

Mark Catches with a ✓ Misses an X

Judge's Name _____

Canine Elements

(Freestyle-based on 0.01 to 2.50 scale per category (1/100 pt. scale), totaling 10pts per each 4 Elements)

Round 1 Round 2

1	Prey Drive	During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained.		
2	Retrieval	The dog's ability to track, chase, and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player's feet, handing them to the player).		
3	Athleticism	The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.		
4	Grip	Before, during and after the moment of executing a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.		

Judges Comments:

Execution %: _____

Competitor's # _____

Mark Catches with a ✓ Misses an X

Judge's Name _____

Player Elements

(Freestyle-based on 0.01 to 2.50 scale per category (1/100 pt. scale), totaling 10pts per each 4 Elements)

Round 1 Round 2

5	Field Presentation	The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throw of different lengths thrown in different directions.		
6	Release Diversity	A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the player with variations in the grip and release, including with a minimum of 3 different releases.		
7	Disc Management	Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with no breaks.		
8	Rhythmic Team	Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments.		

Judges Comments:

Execution %: _____

Competitor's # _____

Mark Catches with a ✓ Misses an X

Judge's Name _____

Team Elements

(Team Elements are scored on the highest 4 out of 7 elements)

Round 1 Round 2

9	The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player, to catch a disc placed in flight. 1) _____ 2) _____		
10	The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances. 1) _____ 2) _____		
11	1 multiple segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession 1) _____		
12	1 dog catch with the disc in flight 1) _____		
13	Team movement coordinating team movement, i.e. spin together, dog stall, weave under legs, etc. 1) _____		
14	Passing segments consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line 1) _____ 2) _____		
15	Directional Distance Movement – The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like. Circle Outrun segments 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ Zig-Zag segments 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____		

Judges Comments:

Execution %: _____

USDDN- National Finals - Judges' Spreadsheet

Canine Elements Players by Numbers																
#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1																
2																
3																
4																
T=																
%																
Player Elements Players by Numbers																
#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
5																
6																
7																
8																
T=																
%																
Team Elements Players by Numbers																
#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9																
10																
11																
12																
13																
14																
15																
%																

Chief Judge/Head Judge - Players' and Staff Meeting

The Chief Freestyle Judge is the Team Element Judge and the Head Toss & Fetch Judge is the Scoring Judge. These two judges have over riding and presiding rulings on all calls on their respective fields and their divisions. The Far Line Judge or any other volunteer, staff, or competitor will NOT make any calls. The Far Line Judge will only make visible hand signal calls when solicited by the Scoring Judge. The Far Line Judge is one of the most important members of the Toss & Fetch judging teams as they need to pay attention and be the second set of eyes and ears on that field.

Qualifier Competition Format

Nationals Division – The first two (2) rounds are in order of the original Random Draw and the last round is in order of reverse order of score, lowest score to highest score.

- One Round of Freestyle 2 minutes
- One Round of Toss & Fetch 90 seconds
- One Round of Freestyle 2 minutes

Qualifying Teams are taken from the highest one Freestyle Division only.

Freestyle Rules – By the USDDN Judging Criteria

- Minimum Age of **18 Months of Age** to compete in any Freestyle Divisions
- A competitor can try to Qualifier with as many dogs as they want but can only receive the **first two dogs Qualified** as their two choices to compete with at the National Finals. The competitor can make up their mind at the National Finals Semi-Finals event day.
- **Now to Qualifier as an Official Alternate teams it rolls down two new people places**
- **Each Qualify person will take their original slot by person**
- Both rounds of Freestyle are 2 minutes in length from the time of the first disc is released.
- Teams can use up to 10 approved discs by these three manufacturers and these approved models: the *Wham-O, Inc. Fastback Frisbee disc standard plastic, Flex plastic, and Super-Flex; the Hyperflite K-10 disc standard plastic, and Frostbite; and the Innova Hero disc standard plastic. Each team must use the same make and model within each round.*
- There is a *minimum of 18 throws* that will be calculated in Execution.
- **Rollers now count in Execution**
- **Dog Stall is scored in Team Movement** unless it fits in a Team Element
- *Fouling/Soiling the field* is a mandatory penalty of a 5 point deduction before the multiplier and time stops for the team. The competitor is score up to that point and may continue to the next round(s).
- There is a **one (1) point deduction per extra disc** if a competitor exceeds the number of 10 discs allowed to compete with.
- The judging criteria are the based on Four Elements which total 10 points per Element that **total 40 points possible in each Freestyle round: Canine, Player, Team, and Execution.**
- Each Element has a Sub-Element which is based on 2.5 maximum points.
- The *Canine* and *Player Elements* have 4 Sub-elements that total the 10 possible points in each, and the *Team Element* has a possible 7 Sub-Elements where a player must chose Four Sub-Elements at a minimum to obtain the maximum 10 possible points in that Team Element. The *Execution Element* is based on the number of Catches made divided by the number of Throws attempted then multiplied by 10 to get a whole number to equal a possible of 10 points possible in the Execution Element.

TEAM ELEMENT CHANGE

The name of the Zig-Zag Element has been changed to incorporate Circling Segments and is now called the Directional Distance Movements.

	<u>The Directional Distance Movements</u>	<i>Complete Element Totaling</i> 2.50
15. Directional Distance Movements	The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like.	
	Circle Outrun segments 1) ___ 2) ___ 3) ___ 4) ___	
	Zig-Zag segments 1) ___ 2) ___ 3) ___ 4) ___	

Chief Judge/Head Judge - Players' and Staff Meeting (Page 2)

Canine Endangerment Rule - In an effort to promote the safe training and handling of disc dogs, the USDDN has implemented a canine endangerment rule that levies the following point deductions when incidents that increase the risk of injury occur. Deductions will be made to a team's freestyle scores before the multiplier for the following incidents:

- **Contortion**: Dog squirms awkwardly enough to risk injury while jumping, catching, or landing.
Half (1/2) point to up to One (1) point deduction per occurrence. 1/2 points to 1 point
- **Buckle**: Dog's legs collapse on landing to the point that another part of the dog's body (such as torso or head) also strikes the ground.
Two (2) points to up to Three (3) point deduction per occurrence. 2 points to 3 points
- **Slam**: Some part of dog's body (back, chest, head, etc.) strikes the ground before the legs during a landing from a jump, vault, catch, or stall. (Excludes face first skids while pursuing low throws from a running stride.)
Three (3) points to up to Four (4) point deduction per occurrence. 3 points to 4 points

Two (2) of the four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the minimum penalty deduction and Three (3) out of Four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the maximum deduction penalty to ensure that one of the following penalty events has occurred in order for the deduction to be applied. During or after each freestyle round, the contest director will inform all contestants that received deductions for the above incidents so that they may have a chance to correct their freestyle performance. They can personally tell the competitor or place a sheet with the team(s) names that have incurred penalties at the registration desk. **Teams that incur six (6) or more deduction points during one day will be disqualified from that competition.**

Toss & Fetch Rules by the USDDN Judging Criteria

- 90 seconds in Toss & Fetch – time starts when the dog or the disc cross the line
- The **highest five (5) throws count with unlimited attempts** - all catches must be made within the left and right sidelines.
- Yardage of the **distance scale is 10, 20, 30 and 40 yards with a point scale of 1, 2, 3, and 4 points, with an extra 1/2 point** awarded for any catch that is made with **ALL FOUR PAWS** are off the ground in an obvious leaping motion (a break in stride), points 1– 4.5 and they **MUST** be visible air between the dog and the ground.
- If there is **any question** of on the ground or in the air it is **ON THE GROUND**.
- A **Foot Fault** is when a competitor **Steps ON or OVER the FOUL LINE** at anytime during a Throw. If a Foot Fault happens that one throws catch does **NOT** count towards the ending score.
- The **Dog and Competitor MUST be behind the Foul Line** on the first throw.
- Competitors can move freely about the playing field as long as the competitor is behind the line on each throw.
- Competitors are allowed to **change discs**, as long as they have planned ahead and provided an exact same model disc to the Foul Line Judge before they started. The competitor may change discs as often as they want as long as they follow one rule. The competitor **MUST** walk over to the Foul Line Judge and **hand them the IN PLAY disc before receiving** the exchange disc to place IN PLAY.
- Each **scoring zone starts ON the LINE** and ends to the beginning of the next line. The **dog is SCORED on their TRAILING Leg(s)**. The closest landing leg(s) to the Foul Line. On the line is the next scoring zone.
- Any **ONE PAW that lands ON the Left and Right sidelines** is scored in bounds as a catch, so the dog must have one paw IN or ON the sidelines for a catch to be made. **OUT OF BOUNDS** is defined as a dog catching a disc with all four paws **OUTSIDE** the left and/or right sidelines.
- **Fouling/Soiling** the field is a **penalty of 1 point per throw** made subtracted from the total score.
- If a dog steps on the line in a catch, on the line is over the line and the dog only has to have one paw on the line or in bounds for the sidelines for the catch to be counted as a good catch.

Nationals Division and Division II

Usually 1.6 – 2.5 range

Intermediate Freestyle

Usually 1.0 – 2.0 range

2.40 X 4 = 96% = (9.60 out of 10 points)

“A+” Superior

2.30 to 2.5 score

2.25 X 4 = 90% = (9.00 out of 10 points)

“A” Excellent

2.01 to 2.29 score

2.00 X 4 = 80% = (8.00 out of 10 points)

“B” Above Average

1.76 to 2.00 score

1.75 X 4 = 70% (7.00 out of 10 points)

“C” Average

1.51 to 1.75 score

1.50 X 4 = 60% (6.00 out of 10 points)

“D” Below Average

1.0 to 1.5 score

.99 X 4 = 40% (4.00 out of 10 points)

“D” Below Average

.50 to .99 score

Canine Endangerment Rule - In an effort to promote the safe training and handling of disc dogs, the USDDN has implemented a canine endangerment rule that levies the following point deductions when incidents that increase the risk of injury occur. Deductions will be made to a team's freestyle scores before the multiplier for the following incidents:

- **Contortion:** Dog squirms awkwardly enough to risk injury while jumping, catching, or landing.
Half (1/2) point to up to One (1) point deduction per occurrence.
½ points to 1 point
- **Buckle:** Dog's legs collapse on landing to the point that another part of the dog's body (such as torso or head) also strikes the ground.
Two (2) points to up to Three (3) point deduction per occurrence.
2 points to 3 points
- **Slam:** Some part of dog's body (back, chest, head, etc.) strikes the ground before the legs during a landing from a jump, vault, catch, or stall. (Excludes face first skids while pursuing low throws from a running stride.)
Three (3) points to up to Four (4) point deduction per occurrence.
3 points to 4 points

Two (2) of the four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the minimum penalty deduction and Three (3) out of Four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the maximum deduction penalty (3 out of 4 judges could still agree to give the minimum penalty as well), to ensure that one of the following penalty events has occurred in order for the deduction to be applied. During or after each freestyle round, the contest director will inform all contestants that received deductions for the above incidents so that they may have a chance to correct their freestyle performance. They can personally tell the competitor or place a sheet with the team(s) names that have incurred penalties at the registration desk.

Teams that incur six (6) or more deduction points during one day (one tournament) will be disqualified from that competition.