

BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG WORKING CART COURSE RULE BOOK

(As of January 2011)

GENERIC RULES FOR ALL LEVELS OF THE COURSE

- ONLY CONVENTIONAL COLLARS MAY BE USED WHEN COMPETING ON THE COURSE (*No halti or gentle leader type collars to be used*)
- THE JUDGE ON THE DAY WILL HAVE THE CORRECT LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE TO JUDGE UP TO ADVANCED LEVEL AND HAVE UNDER GONE FORMAL JUDGE TRAINING.
- BAIT OR TIT BITS CAN ONLY BE USED WHEN COMPETING ON THE BEGINNERS LEVEL AND NOT IN INTERMEDIATE OR ADVANCED
- THE WHEEL BASE OF COMPETITION CART CANNOT BE LESS THAN 19 INCHES FROM OUTSIDE EDGE TO OUTSIDE EDGE OF THE REAR WHEEL (*to be checked at the judge's discretion*)
- COMPETITORS ARE ALLOWED TO USE ALL OF THE COURSE IN AN ATTEMPT TO LINE UP FOR OBSTACLES, BUT MUST NOT HIT OTHER PARTS OF THE COURSE WHEN DOING SO. (*i.e. when you have completed the reverse manoeuvre you may come forward through the obstacle again but must not touch or knock any of the cones, even though you have already completed the obstacle.*)
- HANDLERS MUST NOT IMPEDE THE DOGS FORWARD TRAVEL BY WALKING IN FRONT OF THE DOG IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE HANDLER STOPS THE DOG WITH ANY PART OF THEIR BODY.
ANY INFRINGEMENTS MUST BE PENALISED
- HANDLER MUST NOT LEAD THE DOG BY THE HEAD OR COLLAR THROUGH ANY OF THE OBSTACLES ON THE COURSE.
ANY INFRINGEMENTS MUST BE PENALISED.
- HANDLERS ARE ALLOWED TO PRAISE THEIR DOG VOCALLY AND LIGHTLY TOUCH BUT ONLY BETWEEN OBSTACLES NOT DURING THE MANOEUVRE.

FIRST TIME CARTERS

- All First time Beginners shall undergo a Control test before competing on the beginner's level.
- The handler will be asked to walk the dog around a small part of the course and bring the dog to a halt, all in a controlled manner.

If the Judge is not satisfied the test may be repeated, or advise the handler to try again later in the day. The Judge may also advise the handler that their dog is not ready to compete on the course yet. Also if a bad round is made by a beginner the Judge may at their discretion allow a second round to be taken, this applies to beginners only.

THE WEAWE

- Dog and cart must proceed through the cones in a controlled manner without hitting the cones – ***The handler is allowed to walk around the cones alongside their dog but must decide for themselves which way to enter the weave so as to align up for the next obstacle.***

1 point for each infringement

CHICANE

- Dog and cart must proceed through the Chicane without hitting the sides with the cart or the dog stepping outside of the Chicane. – ***The Handler may step on to the Chicane or handle the dog from either side but must not impede the dog's forward travel in doing so.***

1 point to be deducted for each infringement

Beginners :- Wide-side out (right) Wide-side Back (left)
 Intermediate :- Wide-side out (right) Narrow-side Back (right)
 Advanced :- Narrow-side out (left) Narrow-side Back (right)

LOAD 1

- Dog and cart must halt to allow the handler to place a load into the cart. Your dog must not move while at the halt, but your dog may sit, stand or lie down during the manoeuvre. –
- ***Beginners Handler may walk round or lean over the cart to load, a long lead is allowed.***
- ***Intermediate may let go off the lead.***
- ***Advanced competitors must let go of the lead.***

POND

- The Dog and Cart must go over the obstacle and make sure that all the wheels pass over the plastic sheet. – ***The Handler may walk across the plastic sheet***

BRIDGE

- The Dog or Cart should manoeuvre over the bridge without touching the sides of the obstacle.

1 point for each infringement

5 points if both wheels go off the bridge

HALT

- Dog and Cart must approach the halt and stop between the strips and must remain stationary for a count of 10 seconds. - ***The Handler must approach the halt without faltering or stopping short. Failure to do so will result in 2 points off before the halt has begun.***

Points will be lost for movement of dog and cart while at the halt.

UNLOAD 1

- Dog and Cart must halt to allow handler to unload the cart. The dog should not move while at the halt but dog may sit, stand or lie down during the manoeuvre. – ***The Handler may walk round or lean over the cart to unload. Only Advanced competitors may let go of the lead.***

Long lead is allowed

Points will be lost for movement.

GATE

- The gate either opens away from you or towards you but is at the Judge's discretion.
- Advanced and Intermediate dogs to be left at the halt while the gate is opened and again when the gate is closed. Your dog must be on a lead when moving through the gate.

Points will be lost for dog hesitating, failing to halt or moving at the Halt or hitting the gate.

RIBBON RAIL

- Dog and Cart should approach the ribbon rail and proceed through it. – *The Handler should not pass through the obstacle and should not let the lead go but pass it through the ribbons to the other hand to complete the manoeuvre.*

Points will be lost for hitting the rail, hesitation or indeed refusal.

FIGURE OF EIGHT

- Dog and Cart must proceed around the figure of eight without hitting the cones.

Points will be lost for each touch of the cones by dog or cart.

Extra circuits may be used to line up for the next obstacle.

RATTLEBOARD

- Dog and Cart must pass over the board without touching or going over the sides.
- *The handler must not step on the board*

Points will be lost for each touch and half points for only two wheels going over the board.

LEAVE AND RECALL

- Dog must halt outside the cones. Your dog must stand, sit or lie down.
- The handler should be approx. 10 feet in front of the dog.
- Recall will be on signal from the Judge.

Points will be lost for movement before the recall, failure to halt or knocking over any of the cones.

RAMP

- Dog and Cart must move over the ramp without hitting the sides. - *The Handler must not walk on the ramp*

Points will be lost for each time it is touched by the dog or cart.

Points may also be lost for uncontrolled completion of the obstacle. (*i.e.dog rushing off*)

LOAD 2 (long load)

- Load to be approximately 10 feet from the halt. Dog must be left in sit, stand or in a down position while the load is completed.
- Dog or cart must not move until the load is completed.

Points will be lost for movement.

REVERSE

- A locking devise may be used to prevent jack-knifing of the cart and removed after completion of the obstacle. The lead should be loose. - ***The handler should not touch the dog, cart or harness.***
- The reverse movement will be approximately 4 feet.

Points will be lost for pushing or pulling the dog backwards, knocking over cones or not completing the manoeuvre.

UNLOAD 2 (long unload)

- Unload is approx. 10 feet from the halt. Dog must be left in a sit, stand or down position while unload is completed. Dog or Cart must not move until the load is completed.

Points will be lost for movement.

KERBS

- On approaching the obstacle the Dog's feet must not go on to the kerbs, and wheels must stay in contact with the kerbs for the complete length of the obstacle, except when entering or leaving the obstacle, (i.e. cocking the rear wheel).
- - ***The Handler may not touch dog, harness or cart.***

Points will be lost for wheels off the kerbs or manhandling of the dog or cart.

HANDLING

- Dog must halt at the appointed place. Dog must sit and go down in any order on command from the handler. (approx. 5 secs for each manoeuvre)

Points will be lost for hesitation by the dog to obey or failure to complete the manoeuvre.

NOISE (distraction)

- The dog should ignore or be mildly interested in the sound. Dogs that react slightly from the sound should be penalised by 1 or 2 points, whilst a dog that is disturbed by the noise will be penalised more. *Noise is part of Intermediate and Advanced levels only*
- The noise source can be a bell or tin/can with stones in it, but it is not to be used in a violent manner. The noise is meant to be a distraction and no more than that.

TROT TO FINISH

- The trot to finish is to show a change of pace and need not be an all out run to the end.

Points will be lost for no change of pace from the pace used by the dog when negotiating the main part of the course.

EASE OF CONTROL

- Ease of control gives the biggest proportion of available points. Point will be lost for tightness of lead, excess tugging on the lead, dragging the dog through obstacles, manhandling the Dog or Cart in any way.

Enjoyment by the dog and handler must be taken in to account, especially for the dog. Beginners ease of control should be used with a bit more digression and a certain amount of leigh way allowed to the first time dog and handler

SCORING THE COURSE

The Judges decision is final.

Unless some unusual circumstance has occurred then, in this case the Chairman, will consult the Rule book and advise the judge.

If there is a tie when competing at the gold medal level then a run off will take place consisting of two Judges and one Steward.

Both Judges will score both dogs as they compete and the Steward will give instructions to the competitors.

In the event that the Judges tie the steward of the course will be asked to go over their scores just to confirm their results, and if there still remains a tie, the Chairman if attending, will be asked to decide (or nominated committee member)

Judging Guidelines

Judges need to be aware of equal placings. Use your “Ease of control” to help avoid this happening and remember that a dog with a lower score at this discipline will come before a higher scoring Ease of control. Also remember that you can go to half points in Advanced level.

Be aware of awarding maximum points too hastily for a round at the beginning. If you do award maximum points and a better dog and handler come along what would you do then?

The course will be laid out as per the Carting Group plan, unless the area allocated to us cannot accommodate the course as laid down. If this occurs then the plan must be altered to suit but obstacles will be negotiated in the normal order.

The judge has the final say in all matters to the course layout.

If a competitor, while on the course is distracted by outside influences, i.e. intruders on the course, the handler may choose to continue after such interruption but you as a Judge must give the competitor the choice to restart the round.

The Judge must be aware of ill-fitting equipment i.e. harness maybe too low thus impeding the dog or indeed too high that the breast strap is across the throat. Also be aware of the rear bar of the shafts being too close to the Dogs rear legs.

It is very important that we get the Score sheets correct and we know there is always pressure to get the scores turned around quickly at the end of the competition. Please feel free to ask a committee member to double check your scores if you feel the need.

Please make sure that the return score sheets are returned to a member of the Carting Group Committee at the end of the competition. Do not allow anyone from the Club hosting the event to have them without checking with a member of our Committee first. We need the scores to update our database, publish them on the website and to enable us to do write-ups for other publications.