

North East Border Collie Association Guidelines For NEBCA Novice Trials

Adopted January 2003
Revised January 2004 (*)
Revised January 2007 (**)
Revised January 2016 (***)

INTRODUCTION

Novice trials are part of a tradition of dog trialing and handling that goes back hundreds of years. Dog trials are our demonstration of the skills of our dogs and the ability of the Border Collie breed. Anyone competing in a trial should remember that they are part of this heritage and are spokespersons for our breed and sport.

Novice trials are intended to provide a competitive opportunity for handlers and dogs who do not yet have the skills or experience to compete in open sheep dog trials. These trials are intended to showcase the skills of the Border Collie as a herding animal. While any dog may require assistance from its handler during a run and any dog may have a bad run these trials are not intended to be training sessions for the dogs. Any dog running in a novice trial should be under control and capable of performing the work required by the course.

All people competing in NEBCA sanctioned trials are expected to display sportsman-like conduct to the trial manager, judge, and other competitors. It is expected that trial managers will make every effort to ensure the trial is fair to all competitors. It needs to be understood, however, that running a trial is not an exact science and while every effort should be made to give each handler a fair chance, bad luck happens.

HANDLER CATEGORIES

Novice and Open Handlers

A handler that has never run a dog competitively in any open class is considered a novice handler. An open handler is one who has run a dog competitively in any *** sheep or cattle open class. {"Please note that non-compete open runs do not influence novice handler status."}

Junior Handlers

A young handler (under 14 years old) may run a dog in a novice class and earn points with that dog even if the same dog is currently earning novice points for another handler. The dog, however, may only be run competitively by one handler on a given trial day. The young handler may run the dog in a class lower than the older handler according to

the same rules that apply to a dog that changes owners. If the young handler and dog are clearly too competitive in a given class, the novice trial committee may require them to move to a higher class.

NOVICE CLASSES

Novice-Novice

The Novice-Novice Class is designed to give inexperienced handlers a level at which to start competing with an inexperienced dog. The class is open to novice handlers with any dog that has never competed in a class higher than Novice-Novice with its current handler or Pro-Novice with any other handler. Open handlers may not compete in Novice-Novice.

The Novice-Novice class shall consist of an outrun of no more than 100 yards (worth 20 points) a lift (10 points), fetch (20 points), a drive through at least one set of panels no more than 100 yards from the post (20 points), and a pen (10 points). On the drive the handler may wear, drive, or do an assisted drive at their discretion. As a guideline, judging of this phase should be based on the line of the sheep and the workmanlike manner of the dog/handler team.

Once a dog has earned 30 points** at the Novice-Novice level, the dog shall move up to the Pro-Novice level of competition. (see "Schedule of Points")

Pro-Novice

The Pro-Novice Class is designed to give experienced handlers a level at which to start competing with an inexperienced dog. It is also an intermediate level of competition for the inexperienced handler between Novice-Novice and Ranch classes. This class is open to any handler with a dog that has never competed in a class higher than Pro-Novice with its current handler or Ranch with any other handler.

The Pro-Novice Class shall consist of an outrun not to exceed 200 yards (20 points), a lift (10 points), fetch (20 points) and drive through at least one set of panels not more than 100 yards from the post (20 points) and a pen (10 points).

Once a dog has earned 30 points** in Pro-Novice the dog shall be required to move up to the Ranch level of competition.

Ranch

The Ranch Class is designed to prepare dogs and handlers for Open competition. This class is open to any handler with a dog that has never placed in a class higher than Ranch with its current handler or Open with any other handler. If an open handler with an open dog he has never run in open and has taken back to the Ranch level are clearly too competitive for the Ranch level, they may be asked by the Novice Trials Committee to move up to Open. A handler and dog may run in Open and Ranch simultaneously until the dog is no longer eligible for Ranch.

The Ranch Class consists of a full Open course with no shed. A dog is eligible to run in Ranch either until the dog has earned 30 points** and after earning 30 points** won one Ranch Class with at least 6 dogs competing, or * until the dog has placed in the top 20% of an Open trial as defined by the Open guidelines.

GENERAL NOVICE TRIAL GUIDELINES

1. For a Novice Trial to be recognized as a NEBCA Novice Trial it must:
 - a. Request and be granted approval by the Novice Trials Committees at least 30 days prior to the trial and also be advertised to the NEBCA membership via the website, yahoo group lists or the NEBCA newsletter
 - b. Report the trial results to the Novice Trials Committee within two weeks of the end of the trial.
2. A trial may choose to have different judges for different classes, but may have only one judge per class.
3. No dog should be allowed to run competitively after having run in a lower class non-competitively on the same field at that trial.
4. It is recommended that ties for first place should be a run-off. In any event the technique to be used to break all ties should be announced at the beginning of the trial.
5. In the same trial in which a dog points out of a class, it may be run competitively in the next higher class. At any point a handler may choose to move his dog up to the next higher class and may be allowed to run competitively in that higher class at that trial. . Trial managers may, at their discretion, restrict a dog that has pointed out of a class from running again in a higher class at the same trial.
6. Except for running out of time, any run, which is prematurely terminated by the Judge, should receive no score.
7. Any run which threatens the welfare of the dog or the livestock should be terminated by the judge and/or trial manager
8. Handlers may at their discretion move a dog up to a higher class prior to pointing out of a lower class.
9. **Once a handler moves their dog up to a higher class, they cannot move the dog cannot back down to a lower class.
10. **When a dog changes handlers, the new handler may drop their new dog down one level if they wish. * A novice handler may drop ONE AND ONLY ONE dog down two levels from its highest level with any other handler. After a handler drops one dog down two levels, any subsequent dogs will only be permitted to drop down one level. Handlers who have dropped a dog down two levels may ONLY stay in their new class for 20 points, rather than the 30** currently allocated to other teams. Unsanctioned trial runs, non-compete runs or fun trials do not count. Runs in trials sanctioned by other regional and national bodies may count. Please direct any questions to the Novice Committee. Any dog that has run competitively in any Open class trial may not run in Pro-Novice in the Novice Finals.

Handlers who begin to trial in Novice classes with any new dog who has previously

competed in herding trials with another handler must notify the NEBCA "Trial Points System Administrator of the change in handler. Handlers who elect to drop a dog down two levels must complete a Novice Committee Notification Form and send it to the Novice Trials Committee. After approval by Novice Committee, the Handler name will be displayed on the "Handlers Dropped Dog Two Levels" Page.

11. ****If a dog is transferred to a different handler, but stays in the same class, any points the dog has will go with the dog. But if the dog is dropped to a lower class with a new handler, any points the dog had with the previous handler will be dropped .**
12. If a dog is run by multiple handlers, then the following apply:
 - a. The dog may be run by more than one person in one novice class.
 - b. If one handler moves the dog up a class, the other handlers have to run the dog in the higher class.
 - c. All points earned by the dog in any one class stay with the dog. Points will be assigned to either the owner of the dog or the primary handler of the dog.
 - d. Upon accumulating 30 points, the dog will point out of that class.
 - e. Only one qualifying handler/dog team may compete at the Novice Finals.
 - f. A dog may be run competitively by only one handler per trial.
13. Trial managers may, at their discretion, restrict a dog to one competitive run in either Ranch or Open per trial.
14. *The last day of the Novice trial season shall be the first Monday in September.

SCHEDULE OF POINTS

A dog earns Novice points based on the score earned in each run.

Recommended number of points for Ranch - Out of 90 Possible Points:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Points</u>
<u>86-90</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>80-85</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>74-79</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>67-73</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>60-66</u>	<u>1</u>

Recommended number of points for Novice-Novice and Pro-Novice - Out of 80 Possible Points:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Points</u>
<u>76-80</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>70-75</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>64-69</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>57-63</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>50-56</u>	<u>1</u>

NOVICE FINALS

Each year NEBCA Novice Trials Committee will organize a Novice Finals Trial.

To be eligible to compete, the handler must be a member of NEBCA. The handler dog team must have earned at least three points in a NEBCA Novice trial since the previous year's Novice Finals *** and have earned those points while a member of NEBCA.

The dog and the handler run in the highest class in which that team has earned at least three points that year.

Teams which have moved up in class at trails but haven't scored any points in the new trial class would be "grand-fathered" to run the lower class only if they achieved three points in that class in the current trial season.

A dog that has run in Open competitively may not run in the Pro-Novice class in the Novice Finals.

If a qualifying Ranch dog places in an Open trial before the Novice Finals, that dog may not compete in the Novice Finals.

Any dog who has placed in an Open trial is not eligible to run in the Novice Finals. The only exception is a dog(s) who has changed hands and moved down a class from Open to Ranch

GRIEVANCES AND PROBLEMS

In the event that a handler has a problem at a trial, that they consider concerns their Novice standings, and it cannot be resolved by the trial manager, they may appeal to any member of the Novice Trials Committee at the trial for clarification. While a member of the Novice Trials Committee might be willing to discuss the problem with the trial manager the final decision is up to the trial manager.

If a handler considers that these rules have been broken in such a way that some remedy is required, they may apply for such a remedy to the Novice Trials Committee, which will consider their request.

If a handler would like any of these rules waived for them, they may apply to the Novice Trials Committee, which will consider their request and give them their recommendation.

If a NEBCA Novice Trial has followed all of these guidelines, but still has a problem that cannot be satisfactorily settled between the trial manager and Novice Trials Committee then the sanctioning of that year's trial will not be affected, but the next years trial may not be a sanctioned NEBCA Novice Trial at the discretion of the Novice Trials Committee.

If a trial that was advertised as being a NEBCA Novice trial does not meet these guidelines in such a manner that the Novice Trials Committee considers that it should not be counted in the points tally then that trial may not count even though it has already been run (i.e., Fails to submit results, fails to offer required classes, fails to provide a judge).