

# FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

Place Albert 1er, 13, B - 6530 Thuin (Belgique) Tél : ++32.71.59.12.38 internet : <https://www.fci.be>

---

## FCI INTERNATIONAL RULES FOR HERDING TRIALS COLLECTING STYLE

“FCI IHT CS”



*January 1, 2025*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. GENERAL CONDITIONS .....	3
3. PERFORMANCE CLASSES .....	3
4. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS .....	3
4.1. Area and its equipment .....	3
4.2. Number of sheep.....	4
4.3. Time.....	4
5. EXERCISES.....	4
5.1. Outrun .....	4
5.2. Lift.....	4
5.3. Fetch.....	5
5.4. Drive away (in IHT-1).....	5
5.5. Drive together (in IHT-1) .....	5
5.6. Drive (in IHT-2 and IHT-3).....	6
5.7. Shedding race (in IHT-1) .....	6
5.8. Shedding (in IHT-2 and IHT-3) .....	6
5.9. Penning (in IHT-1; alternative task in IHT-2 and IHT-3).....	7
5.10. Singling (alternative task in IHT-3) .....	7
5.11. Maltese cross (alternative task in IHT-3) .....	7
5.12 Loading trailer (alternative-task in IHT-2) .....	7
6. EVALUATION.....	8
6.1. Evaluation points.....	8
6.2. Qualifications .....	8
6.3. Ranking.....	8
7. CLOSING PROVISIONS .....	9

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. FCI international herding trials in collection style (IHT CS) are open to Border Collies exclusively.
- 1.2. The object of a trial course is to test the ability of a dog to manage sheep properly under the various circumstances which may be encountered in everyday work: the various tests such as outrun, lift, fetch, drive, shedding, singling, penning, loading in a trailer or using a shedding race or Maltese cross, are all tasks which may occur in a shepherd's every day work.
- 1.3. The aim of the sheepdog trials should be to promote good stock management with a minimum of stress for the sheep as well as good handling of the sheepdog, to show its utility and sport, and to secure and select the best working lines. It reflects collecting style.
- 1.4. Before a dog is allowed to compete in a trial it has to pass the FCI Herding Working Test (collecting style).

## 2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 2.1. The main principles for IHT CS are to be found in the "GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF FCI HERDINGEVENTS"
- 2.2. The IHT CS must be recognized by all FCI members and contract partners.

## 3. PERFORMANCE CLASSES

- 3.1. The competitions are conducted in three classes of difficulty (IHT-1, IHT-2 and IHT-3).
- 3.2. The differences in classes:
  - a) much stricter requirements for the dog's skills, reactions and accuracy;
  - b) more difficult work;
  - c) longer distance of outrun and drive;
  - d) unmarked or marked sheep;
  - e) relatively less time for the completion of each exercise.
- 3.3. The specific differences (the distances and time are recommended)

Index	IHT-1	IHT-2	IHT-3
Sheep	5	5	5 (2 marked)
Distance outrun	100 m	200 m	300 m
Distance drive away	50 m	-	-
Distance drive together	150 m	-	-
Drive	-	200 m	300 m
Time limit	10	12	15
Special tasks	shedding race	shedding	shedding
Alternative tasks		pen/loading trailer	singling/Maltese cross

## 4. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

### 4.1. Area and its equipment

- 4.1.1. **Field** – the measurements of the field should be **at least** 100 x 200 meter for IHT-1, **150 x 300 meter for IHT-2 and 200 x 400 meter for IHT-3**, preferably even larger. Fencing is recommended, but the border can be natural or artificial. The field must be clean before the event starts and must be without inappropriate or unnecessary **passages**. There must be free space of at least 10 meters at the minimum around the pen and the gates. In order to allow a sufficient outrun, the area for the lift must be at least 40 meters from the sheep.

- 4.1.2. **Pen** – with a perimeter of at least 10, but max. 12 meters (the shape may be square, or rectangular), with a gate 2 or 2.5 meters wide with a 2 m rope tied to it.
- 4.1.3. **Markings** – a post to mark the handler's starting post.
- 4.1.4. **Shedding ring** – it must be marked, for instance with sawdust, about 35 m in diameter.
- 4.1.5. **Gates** – 2-3 *passages* resembling an open gate. Each gate consists of two panels about 2-3 m wide (recommended). The gap between the panels *is* 7 m.
- 4.1.6. **Shedding Race** – (only in IHT-1) is about 8-10 meters long with one side 2 meters longer at the entrance and 0.5 meters wide.
- 4.1.7. **Loading trailer** – (only in IHT-2, not compulsory) the trailer is open and has protections on both sides of the ramp.
- 4.1.8. **Maltese cross** – (only in IHT-3, not compulsory) the *passage* consists of 8 panels creating a Maltese cross.
- 4.1.9. **Handler preparation point** – (not compulsory) next to the entrance there should be a point where the handler can see the whole course.

## 4.2. Number of sheep

- 4.2.1. The flock for each run must consist of 5 sheep, **2 sheep will be marked in IHT-3.**
- 4.2.2. The total number of the competing teams must be limited by the organizer in view of the total number of the sheep available, with respect to the requirements on arranging the welfare of the animals. Sheep can be used no more than two times a day.

## 4.3. Time

- 4.3.1. The measuring of time starts when the handler sends the dog for the outrun and ends when the set time is up.
- 4.3.2. The recommended time is 10 minutes for IHT-1, 12 minutes for IHT-2 and 15 minutes for IHT-3.
- 4.3.3. If the team does not manage to finish the exercises within the set time, only the points of the finished exercises acquired within the time limit are counted.

# 5. EXERCISES

## 5.1. Outrun

Purpose: Gathering the sheep over different distances in the different classes.

Description: The handler and the dog start at the handlers post. The dog can be directed on either side. A good outrun should be in a pear shape, not too straight or too wide, and be completed without stops or commands. At the end of the outrun, a slow down or stop command is allowed. The outrun will end when the dog has reached the point of balance to lift the sheep, that is to say if the sheep have moved from the post, the dog should stop at the point of balance in order to be in the position to fetch them in a direct line through the fetch gate to the handler.

The handler will remain at the post from the commencement of the outrun.

Serious mistakes: The dog crosses, doesn't find the sheep and tries to return to the handler, drives sheep away, or chases and splits them.

## 5.2. Lift

Purpose: The dog lifts the flock gently towards the handler.

Description: At the end of the outrun, whether the dog has come to a full stop or slowed down, the dog's approach should be smooth, cautious and steady. The dog should not rush in and scare the sheep. The dog should not disturb the sheep unnecessarily.

Serious mistakes: The dog loses control of the flock, is not able to influence the flock, drives sheep away, or chases and splits them.

### 5.3. Fetch

Purpose: Bringing the flock to the handler by the dog in a straight line through the fetch gate.

Description: The sheep should be brought at a steady pace and in a straight line from the point of lift to the handler, going through the fetch gate. The dog should not hurry or over-flank his sheep, giving a zigzag movement to the sheep. The dog should require few commands and where the sheep stay from the true line the dog's ability is judged by its control of them and its immediate answer to all commands. All the sheep should be driven around the handler (who stands at the post) as close to him as possible.

Serious mistakes: The dog loses control of the flock, is not able to influence the flock, chases and splits them.

### 5.4. Drive away (in IHT-1)

Purpose: Driving the sheep away from the handler through the gate. The sheep must be driven by the dog.

Description: The drive away takes place in a direction to the left or to the right according to the decision of the judge. It starts immediately after the sheep have passed behind the handler **after the fetch** and the sheep are required to go in a straight line through the gate. Having got the sheep through the gate, **the handler meets the flock on the crossdrive and continues in the drive together. The drive away is completed when the sheep have passed through the gate or the proximity of the gate. Then the drive together starts and the handler can leave the starting pole.**

Serious mistakes: The dog loses control of the flock, is not able to influence the flock or chases and splits them.

### 5.5. Drive together (in IHT-1)

Purpose: The dog must demonstrate that it is able to control the flock so that the flock moves, changes direction and walks the course calmly and smoothly, without stress.

Description: The driving together is most important for a young dog to develop good balance and is a real practical piece of work in shepherding, that must be taken in consideration. **The handler and the dog shall drive the sheep together in a steady pace over** a minimum of 150 meters through the gates set out by the judge. Throughout the drive together the sheep should be kept moving gently. Excessive bursts of speed and subsequent stopping **are** not desirable and will be penalized. The drive together ends at the approach of the shedding race.

Serious mistakes: The dog loses control of the flock, is not able to influence the flock, drives sheep away, or chases and splits them. The sheep overtake the handler.

## 5.6. Drive (in IHT-2 and IHT-3)

Purpose: moving the sheep in various directions directed by the handler.

Description: The drive takes place in a triangular direction and can be performed from left to right or from right to left according to the decision of the judge. The handler stays at the starting post. The first part of the triangle starts immediately after the sheep have passed behind the handler and the sheep are required to go in a straight line to the first set of gates. Having got the sheep through the gates they should be turned immediately on to a direct line across the course to the second set of gates. When through these gates, they should then be turned as neatly as possible on a straight line to the shedding ring. The sheep should be kept moving gently, excessive bursts of speed and excessive stopping **are** not desirable and will be penalized. As in the fetch the gates are guides to the alignment of the sheep. Good handling in difficult situations will be taken into consideration by the judges. The drive ends when the sheep enter the shedding ring. The handler will remain at the post until the sheep are in the shedding ring.

Serious mistakes: The dog loses control of the flock, is not able to influence the flock, drives sheep away, or chases and splits them. All sheep do not pass through the gate.

## 5.7. Shedding race (in IHT-1)

Purpose: Pushing sheep through a narrow passage; it has to be conducted after the drive together.

Description: The handler chooses on which side he will stand on and may not change sides. The handler and dog work together to get all the sheep through the shedding race. The dog and the handler are not allowed to pass through the shedding race. The judge may allow the handler to push a sheep when they get stuck inside. The work ends when all the sheep are gathered after going through the shedding race.

Serious mistakes: The dog or the handler passes through the **passage**. If not all sheep go through the **passage**.

## 5.8. Shedding (in IHT-2 and IHT-3)

Purpose: Two sheep must be separated from the flock.

Description: Two **unmarked** sheep must be shed off from the rest of the flock inside of the shedding ring. The dog comes towards the handler when commanded by him, splits his sheep and drives **them** away from the rest. The handler is not allowed to assist the dog in driving off. The task is completed when the dog has brought the sheep under control. On completion of the task the dog should bring the sheep together back into the shedding ring in a correct manner. The handler cannot proceed to the pen if he did not shed to the judge's approval.

Serious mistakes: The dog does not come in to take over the sheep. The sheep move out from the shedding ring.

### **5.9. Penning (in IHT-1; alternative task in IHT-2 and IHT-3)**

**Purpose:** *To drive the sheep in a small enclosure.*

**Description:** *Near the pen, the flock should be stabilized and held in place by the dog, while the handler opens the gate. On completion of shedding, the handler must proceed to the pen, leaving his dog to hold the sheep in the shedding ring and then bring the sheep to the pen. The handler will stand at the gate, holding the rope until all sheep are inside and the gate is closed. After releasing the sheep from the pen, the handler will close the gate. He loses all the points of his run if pushing the sheep into the pen with the gate, when closing the gate.*

**Serious mistakes:** *The dog is not stabilizing the flock, or a sheep runs out again. If handler forgets to close the gate.*

### **5.10. Singling (alternative task in IHT-3)**

**Purpose:** One sheep must be separated from the flock.

**Description:** It is not a compulsory exercise. For the singling the handler will proceed to the shedding ring letting the dog bring the sheep from the pen to the ring. One of the two marked sheep will be shed off within the ring and "held" by the dog to the judge's satisfaction. Like with the shedding, when the handler has decided which sheep that has to be shed off, it is the dog, and not the handler, that has to perform the work. The shed of the single sheep is complete when the dog has come in and has brought the sheep under control.

The handler is not allowed to assist the dog in driving off. Like with the shedding, if the judges feel that the dog has not been fairly tested owing to the disposition and action of the sheep, they can order the handler to collect the sheep again, shed off and isolate any other sheep.

**Serious mistakes:** The dog does not come in to take over the sheep.

### **5.11. Maltese cross (alternative task in IHT-3)**

**Purpose:** showing a high level of cooperation with the handler, driving the sheep through a very difficult **passage**; it has to be conducted after the drive.

**Description:** The task of the handler and the dog is to drive the sheep through the entrance so that they pass through in a straight line. Then the sheep have to be turned by the dog to the left or the right, according to the vision of the judge, to enter the next opening and once again pass the **passage** in a straight line. The handler can leave his place only when the first sheep leaves the **passage**.

**Serious mistakes:** The dog or the handler passes through the **passage**. If not all sheep go through the **passage**.

### **5.12 Loading trailer (alternative-task in IHT-2)**

**Purpose:** The sheep must be driven over a sloping ramp on to the trailer.

**Description:** Loading on the trailer can be conducted instead of the pen. The trailer is open and has protections on both sides of the ramp. The handler proceeds to the trailer, stands on either side, left or right of the ramp, leaving the dog to hold the sheep in a correct position. The dog brings the sheep quietly from the position in a direct line to the ramp.

**Serious mistakes:** The dog is not stabilizing the flock, or a sheep runs out again.

## 6. EVALUATION

### 6.1. Evaluation points

6.1.1. The judge decides how many points to take off for each task (it can be all points for one task).

6.1.2. The judge can only take off whole points.

6.1.3. No points are awarded when:

- a) the dog grabs or nips sheep;
- b) the dog is not working and leaves the field;
- c) sheep leave the trial field;
- d) the handler pushes the sheep into the pen with the gate, when closing the gate.

6.1.4. Disqualification from the event when the dog is aggressive to sheep, other dogs or people.

6.1.5. Judge's point-table:

Name of exercises	IHT-1	IHT-2	IHT-3
Outrun	20	20	20
Lift	10	10	10
Fetch	20	20	20
Drive away	15	-	-
Drive together	15	-	-
Drive		30	30
Shedding race	10	-	-
Shedding	-	10	<b>10</b>
Penning or loading trailer	10	10	10
Singling or Maltese cross	-	-	<b>10</b>
<b>Sum</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110</b>

### 6.2. Qualifications

Evaluation	Abbreviation	Points
Excellent	EXC	90 <i>or more</i> points
Very good	VG	80 - 89 points
Good	G	70 - 79 points
Not passed	NP	less than <b>70</b> points
Retired	RET	no points
No points awarded	NPA	no points
Disqualification	DIS	no points

### 6.3. Ranking

6.3.1. IHT are trials in which the order and the winner are announced; the first 3 places cannot be shared places.

6.3.2. If dogs have equal points, the dog that has the most points for the combination of outrun, lift and fetch will be first; after that the points for driving, and then the next points on the judge's point-sheet.



## 7. CLOSING PROVISIONS

- 7.1. These rules fully replace the rules valid from February 1, 2019.
- 7.2. These rules were approved at the meeting of the FCI Herding Dogs Commission held in Stockholm November 25, 2023.
- 7.3. **The changes in bold and italic characters were approved by the FCI General Committee in Thuin, March 2024.**
- 7.4. In case of translation discrepancies, the English text is considered the original.


**ANNEX 1. RECOMMENDED JUDGING SHEET FOR "FCI IHT-1 CS"**

	<b>SCORE CARD</b>  <b>IHT-1 CS</b>	Catalogue No
		Start No

Event	Place	Date
Dog name		Born
Pedigree No	Chip	Sex
Owner		Breed
Handler		Club and membership number (No)

Exercises	Max	Minus	Score	Comments	Time
Outrun	20				
Lift	10				
Fetch	20				
Drive away	15				
Drive together	15				
Shedding race	10				
Penning	10				
<b>Points total</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>Evaluation</b>	
<b>Judge, No Name, signature</b>				<b>Authorisation</b>	


**ANNEX 2. RECOMMENDED JUDGING SHEET FOR "FCI IHT-2 CS"**

	<b>SCORE CARD</b>  <b>IHT-2 CS</b>	Catalogue No
		Start No

Event	Place	Date
Dog name		Born
Pedigree No	Chip	Sex
Owner		Breed
Handler		Club and membership number (No)

Exercises	Max	Minus	Score	Comments	Time
Outrun	20				
Lift	10				
Fetch	20				
Drive	30				
Shedding	10				
Penning/loading trailer	10				
<b>Points total</b>	<b>100</b>				<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Judge, No Name, signature</b>				<b>Authorisation</b>	

**ANNEX 3. RECOMMENDED JUDGING SHEET FOR “FCI IHT-3 CS”**

	<b>SCORE CARD</b>  <b>IHT-3 CS</b>	<b>Catalogue No</b>
		<b>Start No</b>

Event	Place	Date
Dog name		Born
Pedigree No	Chip	Sex
Owner		Breed
Handler		Club and membership number (No)

Exercises	Max	Minus	Score	Comments	Time
Outrun	20				
Lift	10				
Fetch	20				
Drive	30				
Shedding	<b>10</b>				
Penning	10				
Singling/ Maltese cross	<b>10</b>				
<b>Points total</b>	<b>110</b>				
<b>Judge, No Name, signature</b>				<b>Authorisation</b>	