

FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

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

GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF FCI INTERNATIONAL HERDING EVENTS (FCI-NHAT – FCI-HWT – FCI-IHT)



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Table of contents

INTRODUCTION	3
ORGANISING COMMITTEE	3
JUDGES.....	4
FIELD AND ITS EQUIPMENT	4
SHEEP	4
PARTICIPANTS.....	5
DOGS.....	5
EVALUATION.....	6
PROCEDURE SYSTEM	7
CLOSING PROVISIONS	7
ANNEX 1: LIST OF HERDING DOG BREEDS <u>THAT CAN TAKE PART</u> IN FCI INTERNATIONAL HERDING EVENTS - SOME BREEDS CAN BE ADDED DEPENDING ON FCI-NCOS REGULATIONS	8

N.B.: Terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders and numbers.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. These general conditions apply to all FCI international Herding events together with their specific Regulations.
- 1.2. FCI Herding events are organized to verify the natural herding aptitude of dogs, depending on the style of the breed, as well as their ability to learn specific training, obedience, initiative and gentleness, in order to improve selective breeding to preserve these qualities. The tests and trials should reflect a shepherd's daily work.
- 1.3. The national organizations are encouraged to promote events in both styles collecting (CS) and traditional (TS).
- 1.4. All FCI herding tests and trials have specific FCI rules.
- 1.5. Definitions of tests:
 - a) **FCI-NHAT – Natural Herding Aptitude Test**; open to all herding dog breeds;
 - b) **FCI-HWT CS – Herding Working Test in Collecting Style**; open only to Border Collies;
 - c) **FCI-HWT TS – Herding Working Test in Traditional Style**; open to herding dog breeds (see **ANNEX 1**, some breeds can be added depending on **FCI-NCOs** regulations - excluding Border Collies).
- 1.6. Definitions of trials:
 - a) **FCI-IHT CS – International Herding Trials in CS**, open only for Border Collies that have passed HWT CS;
 - b) **FCI-IHT TS – International Herding Trials in TS**, open for herding dogs (see **ANNEX 1**, some breeds can be added depending on FCI-NCOs regulations - excluding Border Collies) that have passed FCI-HWT TS.
- 1.7. Special performance can be rewarded only in **FCI-IHT-3** (both styles) and only to the specific breeds listed in the [Lists of Herding and Livestock Guardian dog breeds that can take part in FCI events and receive FCI titles and awards](#).
FCI-CACITR (Certificat d'Aptitude au Championnat International de Troupeau de la FCI). It is valid for the title of **FCI International Herding Champion (C.I.TR.)**.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

- 2.1. The organising committee of FCI herding events works under the responsibility of its national herding group, national canine organisation or committee which has to be affiliated to or have an agreement with the National Canine Organizations (NCO) recognised by the FCI. The organising committee is responsible for the trial organization and is committed to the national animal welfare rules.
- 2.2. The organising committee must appoint a course director who:
 - a) is responsible for all the tasks related to the event;
 - b) must be available to the judge(s) for the entire duration of the event;
 - c) should inform the judge(s) in time about all the details on the trial field and the number of entries;
 - d) prepares the trial field in accordance to the wishes of the judge(s).

JUDGES

- 3.1. The organising committee shall invite FCI judge(s) who are approved and recognised by the **FCI-NCO**.
- 3.2. The organising committee can decide to form a multiple jury made up of several judges.
- 3.3. The judge(s) have full authority to choose the course. At the briefing before starting the competition, the judge(s) should explain this to the participants. It is suggested for the judge to prepare a drawing of the course.
- 3.4. In TS, the judge needs to be able to move in the field following the flock close enough to be able to observe all exercises. The judge must not hinder the handler, the dogs, or sheep by his presence. In CS, the judge always stays in one place.
- 3.5. It is not permitted to the judge:
 - a) to take part in the event with his dog as a handler;
 - b) to judge dogs owned by himself, family members or close relatives, household members or residents of his household;
 - c) to judge a dog, if the dog has been living in the same household as him within six months before the competition;
 - d) to judge more than eight hours a day.
- 3.6. The judge is authorized to finish a performance due to injury or any other reason, even if the handler does not agree.
- 3.7. Judging sheets must be filled in with the scores, qualifications and time. They must be signed by the judge(s).

FIELD AND ITS EQUIPMENT

- 4.1. Herding events should be organized on fields sufficiently large to provide the best safety for the public, sheep and dogs and to offer the possibility to run the courses in different styles and levels.
- 4.2. The use of the site of the field for training is not allowed as from the day before the start of the event. The size of the pen and of the passages should be adapted to the number of sheep in the flock, unless their size is prescribed in the specific rules.
- 4.3. The area, the pen and the passages must be safe for the dog, the sheep and the handler.
- 4.4. The pen fencing must prevent the dog from getting in and the sheep from getting out.
- 4.5. Waiting or resting pens must be arranged in a way that the sheep are not stressed in any way.
- 4.6. The vegetation must be so low that it does not hinder the dog's view.

SHEEP

- 5.1. The number of sheep may vary in different styles and levels, according to the rules for CS and TS.
- 5.2. Sheep must be changed after every **FCI-HWT** and **FCI-IHT** run. How many times the sheep are changed depends on the national laws, specific rules, judge and owner of sheep.
- 5.3. Preferably, the sheep used shall all be from the same flock and be similar in type in such a way that each handler shall work with sheep of equal quality. The sheep shall be used to dogs and in good health.
- 5.4. Lambs should be weaned. In TS, they can be used together with their mother (in the same flock) if they are fit enough and in a fine condition. This is up to the judge(s) and the sheep owner to decide.

- 5.5. The organising committee and the sheep owner should make sure to have sufficient sheep in order that each group of sheep should not be stressed. The sheep shall be kept calmly. The welfare of the sheep should be respected at all times.

PARTICIPANTS

- 6.1. Entries are made in the name of the owner but a dog can be handled either by the owner or by the handler. Both must be a member of an FCI member, contract partner or cooperating partner. When handlers are nominated, the owner(s) must indicate their names and addresses on the entry form.
- 6.2. Any handler may work several dogs. The organising committee may decide to set a maximum number of dogs per handler.
- 6.3. If the dog cannot participate for whatever reason, the owner must notify the event organizer immediately.
- 6.4. At the trial secretary, the handler must provide the dog's scorebook or any equivalent document issued by the NCO; all results must be noted in it.
- 6.5. Every handler must follow the instructions of the judge, as well as of the course director.
- 6.6. Every handler must present his dog in a good manner and must keep the dog under full control at all times. Any handler or/and his dog disturbing another dog or another handler can be eliminated and disqualified on the day of the event.
- 6.7. While working, it is forbidden for handlers to get any help or advice from anybody outside. Any handler receiving assistance in any form can be disqualified, as well as any advisor outside, if this is a competitor.
- 6.8. Before the start, the handlers:
- a) are invited by the course director for the briefing during which the judge(s) will explain all details related to the competition;
 - b) can inspect the course during this briefing before the trial starts, without their dogs;
 - c) can ask anything about the course, all questions or clarifications have to be asked by the handlers at that time;
 - d) must be ready when called by the course director; anyone failing to answer the call will forfeit his run; so, competitors must be aware that even if the order of the program will be followed strictly, the timing cannot be guaranteed.
- 6.9. During the course:
- a) once the team (the handler and the dog) started, the work of the handler is under the evaluation and authority of the judge(s) and he is considered to know the course and to follow it precisely;
 - b) the handler may give commands by voice, whistle or gesture with arm or crook, a combination of these is allowed;
 - c) the handler is allowed to touch the sheep;
 - d) the handler is not allowed to touch the dog, can only praise the dog by voice;

DOGS

- 7.1. For the FCI international herding events the dog must be entered in a studbook recognised by the FCI.
- 7.2. Identification of the dogs must be done by checking their microchip or tattoo number.

- 7.3. Bitches that are 4 weeks before or 6 weeks after giving birth to a litter are excluded from participating at the test or trial. Sick or lame dogs, or dogs suspected of contagious disease are excluded also. The decision to remove the dog is made by the main judge on the basis of his own decision or on the opinion of a veterinarian.
- 7.4. Handlers whose bitch is in season must notify the organising committee before the start, must compete last and keep the bitch off the trial field and area until their run.
- 7.5. Competing dogs are not allowed to wear or carry anything, not even a collar (except during the **FCI-NHAT**). A small hair bobble or pin or something similar is allowed to keep the dog's hair out of its vision.
- 7.6. The dogs can be drug tested.
- 7.7. Neutered, monorchid and cryptorchid dogs are allowed to take part in the events.
- 7.8. Australian Kelpie's have been transferred under the FCI TS herding rules, out of the FCI CS rules, but some Australian Kelpies already have results from FCI CS trials, so if they have passed FCI CS HWT, they can start in **FCI-IHT-1**.
- 7.9. The minimum age of the dog for entering **FCI-NHAT** is 9 months and for entering **FCI-HWT** (for both styles) is 12 months.

EVALUATION

8.1. Re-run

The judge(s) can stop a dog at any point of its course and order a complete or a partial re-run if he considers that the circumstances justify such an action. This is entirely up to the judge(s) to decide. In case of a partial re-run the points which the handler already achieved will count. If sheep are disabled, the judge(s) may decide to allow the handler to continue on a new group of sheep.

8.2. Retired

The handler can withdraw from the trial. He lifts his hand and says: «RET». He will receive no points.

8.3. No points awarded

The course will be immediately stopped and no points are awarded:

- a) if the dog is not under control;
- b) if one or more sheep leave the trial field.

8.4. Disqualification

Reasons for disqualification at the event:

- a) if the dog grabs or bites sheep;
- b) if the dog is unjustified aggressive towards humans or animals;
- c) unaccepted behaviour of a handler or when a handler is apparently drunk or under the influence of drugs.

8.5. Disciplinary rights

The course director is responsible to guarantee order and safety in the entire trial area. The main judge is authorised to terminate the event if the order or safety is compromised in any way.

Flagrant violations of the rules or the animal rights laws will lead to the end of the event. All the decisions of the judge(s) are final and undisputable.

Any critique concerning a judge decision can result in expulsion from the trial area and lead to further disciplinary action according to the national regulations.

PROCEDURE SYSTEM

- 9.1. **FCI-NHAT** and **FCI-HWT** are tests without ranking and a winner.
- 9.2. **FCI-IHT** are trials in which the ranking and the winner are announced; the first 3 places cannot be shared places.
- 9.3. The dog can repeat **FCI-NHAT** and **FCI-HWT**, but not on the same day.
- 9.4. If a dog in **FCI-IHT-1** or **FCI-IHT-2** gets "Very Good" 5 times or "EXC" 3 times under at least two different judges it must proceed to the next class.
- 9.5. If a dog in TS **FCI-IHT-1** gets "EXC" once it may proceed to the next class. If a dog in TS **FCI-IHT-2** gets "EXC" twice under different judges it may proceed to the next class. If a dog in CS **FCI-IHT-1** or CS **FCI-IHT-2** gets "EXC" once it may proceed to the next class.
- 9.6. The dog cannot return and participate in the lower class.
- 9.7. The dog is not allowed to enter more than one test or trial or more than one trial on the same day, but it is allowed to enter both a **FCI-NHAT** and a **FCI-HWT** on the same day.

CLOSING PROVISIONS

- 10.1. These rules fully replace the rules valid from February 1, 2019.
- 10.2. These rules were approved at the meeting of the FCI Herding Dogs Commission held in Dortmund (DE) on July 9-10 2022.
- 10.3. These rules were approved by the FCI General Committee in Budapest, in March 2023. They are valid as from May 1st 2023.
- 10.4. In case of translation discrepancies, the English text is considered the original text.

Last update: 22/12/2025

ANNEX 1: LIST OF HERDING DOG BREEDS THAT CAN TAKE PART IN FCI INTERNATIONAL HERDING EVENTS - SOME BREEDS CAN BE ADDED DEPENDING ON FCI-NCOS REGULATIONS

[FCI Titles and awards](#) can only be awarded to some of the breeds listed below (see [Lists of Herding / Livestock Guardian Dog breeds that can take part in FCI events and receive FCI titles and awards](#))

Country of origin	Breed name	Standard nbr
Group 1 – Section 1: Sheepdogs		
Australia	AUSTRALIAN KELPIE	293
Belgium	CHIEN DE BERGER BELGE	15
Belgium	SCHIPPERKE	83
Croatia	HRVATSKI OVCHAR	277
Czech Republic	CESKOSLOVENSKY VLČIAK	332
Czech Republic	CHODSKÝ PES (PROVISIONAL BREED)	364
France	BERGER DE BEAUCE	44
France	BERGER DE BRIE	113
France	CHIEN DE BERGER DES PYRENEES A FACE RASE	138
France	CHIEN DE BERGER DES PYRENEES A POIL LONG	141
France	BERGER DE PICARDIE	176
Germany	DEUTSCHER SCHAEFERHUND	166
Great Britain	OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG	16
Great Britain	SHETLAND SHEEPDOG	88
Great Britain	COLLIE ROUGH	156
Great Britain	BEARDED COLLIE	271
Great Britain	COLLIE SMOOTH	296
Great Britain	BORDER COLLIE	297
Hungary	KOMONDOR	53
Hungary	KUVASZ	54
Hungary	MINIATURE AMERICAN SHEPHERD (PROVISIONAL BREED)	367
Hungary	PULI	55
Hungary	PUMI	56
Hungary	MUDI	238
Italy	CANE DA PASTORE BERGAMASCO	194
Poland	POLSKI OWCZAREK NIZINNY	251
Portugal	CAO DA SERRA DE AIRES	93
Slovakia	SLOVENSKÝ CUVAC	142
Spain	GOS D'ATURA CATALA	87
Switzerland	BERGER BLANC SUISSE	347
The Netherlands	HOLLANDSE HERDERSHOND	223
The Netherlands	SAARLOOSWOLFHOND	311
The Netherlands	NEDERLANDSE SCHAPENDOES	313

United States	AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD	342
Group 1 – Section 2: Cattledogs (except Swiss Cattledogs)		
Australia	AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOG	287
Belgium	BOUVIER DES ARDENNES	171
Belgium/France	BOUVIER DES FLANDRES/VLAAMSE KOEHOND	191
Great Britain	WELSH CORGI CARDIGAN	38
Great Britain	WELSH CORGI PEMBROKE	39
Group 2 – Section 1.2.: Schnauzer		
Germany	RIESENSCHNAUZER	181
Group 2 – Section 2.1 Mastiff type		
Germany	ROTTWEILER	147
Portugal	CÃO FILA DE SÃO MIGUEL	340
Group 2 – Section 3: Swiss Mountain- and Cattledogs		
Switzerland	BERNER SENNENHUND	45
Switzerland	APPENZELLER SENNENHUND	46
Switzerland	ENTLEBUCHER SENNENHUND	47
Switzerland	GROSSER SCHWEIZER SENNENHUND	58
Group 5 – Section 1: Nordic Sledge Dogs		
Russian Federation	SAMOIEDSKAĪA SABAKA	212
Group 5 – Section 3: Nordic Watchdogs and Herders		
Finland	SUOMENLAPINKOIRA	189
Finland	LAPINPOROKOIRA	284
Iceland	ISLENSKUR FJARHUNDUR	289
Norway	NORSK BUHUND	237
Sweden	VÄSTGÖTASPETS	14
Sweden	SVE NSK LAPPHUND	135
Group 8 – Section 3: Water Dogs		
Spain	PERRO DE AGUA ESPAÑOL	336
Group 9 - Section 5: Tibetan breeds		
Great Britain	TIBETAN TERRIER	209