

## FOREWORD:

As you read through your rule book you will note that it is comprised of six parts: Judging Guidelines, Judging Rules, Rules for Recognized Field Trials, References, and the Constitution and By-Laws. The judging guideline section provides a summary of scoring, plus and minus factors for scoring, scoring range guidelines and scoring examples. The judging rules section provides all NSTRA approved rules for judging NSTRA sanctioned field trials in the areas of the find, the retrieve, the back, dog obedience, and ground coverage. The rules for recognized field trials section provide all NSTRA approved rules that apply to NSTRA sanctioned field trials. Following some of the judging and field trial rules there may be *interpretations* and *applications* in italics. The interpretations are the meaning of the rule as interpreted by NSTRA in the past. The applications are approved methods of applying the rule. The interpretations and applications have been in force and used from the time of their approval and therefore have the same application as the rule itself.

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# NATIONAL SHOOT-TO-RETRIEVE FIELD TRIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

## JUDGING GUIDELINES

This section is intended to aid judges by providing them with a starting point for scoring pieces of work. The scoring range “finds”, “retrieves”, and “ground coverage” is from 0-100; the scoring range for “obedience” and “back” is 0-75. Judges are encouraged use the full range of this system (0-100 or 0-75) and shall be judges rather than scorekeepers.

Judges should also work together as a team – during a brace, after a brace, and throughout the day – discussing and comparing various aspects of dog work and commensurate scores. It is important for each judge to remain consistent in scoring throughout the trial.

NSTRA recommends the use of two-way radios for judges to be used for judging purposes only, not to be used for general conversation or discussion of a previous brace.

### 1. FIND SCORE: 0-100

(Scoring begins when the dog makes game)

<u>PLUS FACTORS:</u>	<u>MINUS FACTORS:</u>
Exceptional style Remains steady regardless of interference Extreme intensity Hard, slam point Remains high and intent during long difficult flush attempt Good game location Works scent intelligently	Flagging Lack of intensity Creeping Low tail Down in front Laying down

2. RETRIEVE SCORE: 0-10 (Scoring begins after the bird is flushed, and the bird is shot or flies away)

<u>PLUS FACTORS:</u>	<u>MINUS FACTORS:</u>
Quick location of downed bird Quick pick up Blind retrieve Snappy return to handler Easy release to handler Exceptional retrieves such as water, or a long retrieve Tender Mouth	Trouble locating bird Slow pick up Hard mouth Indirect return Unwilling release

3. BACK SCORE: 0-75 (Scoring begins when backing dog has the opportunity to see pointing dog.)

<u>PLUS FACTORS:</u>	<u>MINUS FACTORS:</u>
Backs immediately upon seeing pointing dog Dog is intent with good style Remains intent until handler reaches dog to control him while pointing dog completes his retrieve	Lacks intensity Flags, lays down, has a low tail or is low in front Looks at handler rather than at pointing dog Takes out bird Interferes with pointing dog

4. GROUND COVERAGE: 0-100

<u>PLUS FACTORS:</u>	<u>MINUS FACTORS:</u>
Quick and thorough search for birds such as quartering Sharp, classy movements	Pottering with ground scent Running and not actually hunting, such as head racing Not covering the ground thoroughly Spending time out of bounds Lack of enthusiasm

## 5. OBEDIENCE: 0-75

<u>PLUS FACTORS:</u>	<u>MINUS FACTORS:</u>
Displays immediate response to handler's commands Consistently responds to handler	Failure to respond to handler consistently

### SCORING RANGES:

- A. Points per find: 0-100
- B. Points per retrieve: 0-100
- C. Points per back (1 only): 0-75
- D. Points per obedience: 0-75
- E. Points for ground coverage: 0-100

### **FIND - RETRIEVE - GROUND COVERAGE (0-100)**

**Excellent** work in one of these categories should score in the 80-100 range.

**Good** work should score in the 60-80 range.

**Fair** work should a score in the 30-60 range.

**Poor** work should score in the 20 to 30 range.

**Very Poor** work should score in the 0-20 range.

### **OBEDIENCE - BACK (0-75)**

**Excellent** work in one of these categories should score in the 60-75 range.

**Good** work should score in the 40-60 range.

**Fair** work should score in the 20-40 range.

**Poor** work should be scored in the 0-20 range.

*The above are only guidelines and only the judge can determine what the correct score should be.*

## JUDGING RULES

### Section 1 FIND:

#### Points per Find (0-100)

- 1.01 “Point” must be called by the handler before a judge can score a creditable find.

Exception: In the event a handler is unable to see a dog on point, the judge will begin judging the point and advise the handler his dog is on point.

***Application:** If the judge is aware that the dog is on point, do not take the find away because the handler fails to call point.*  
4/93

- 1.02 When a dog establishes point, the handler will proceed to their dog and make an aggressive attempt to flush the bird immediately. If the judge of the pointing dog determines that the handler is not making an aggressive attempt to flush, they may direct the handler to do so and may further direct the handler to relocate their dog.

***Application:** If a handler/gunner is unable to locate and flush a bird, the handler may request permission to relocate the dog. Handler/gunner may initiate the relocation by touch, whistle, or command (verbal or visual); however, the dog shall not relocate on its own.*

***Application:** Relocation is a continuation of a piece of work. Scoring does not stop and start with each relocation. 11/00*

- 1.03 If a bird flushes\* “wild” after a dog has clearly established point and if in the judge’s opinion *the dog* did not cause the bird to flush, then a score shall be given for the find. However, the dog shall not receive a score for a retrieve unless the dog retrieves the bird as per Rule 2.02.

***Interpretation:*** The judge should use good judgment to ensure the dog has obtained control and has in fact established point. A walking bird does not mean that it has been removed from its resting place. 4/93

***Application:*** A dog running and stops-to-flush or flash points a bird shall not be scored on the find unless the judge considers that the dog had the bird/find under control. 11/00

***Application:*** Dogs that flush a bird on their own, before or after point has been established, shall be given a warning with the first infraction and shall be picked up after a second infraction. 8/04

**\*Definition of a flush:** when a bird is removed from its resting place.

1.04 Only pointed birds shall be shot.

***Application:*** Judges may request that other birds be shot. 5/00

1.05 No birds shall be shot on the ground except at the judge's request or with specific permission.

1.06 When the 30-min brace time expires, if the dog is on point, or involved in a retrieve, the handler/gunner shall have one (1) minute to complete a flush and/or retrieve. However, if the find is not complete and the bird is not flushed, the dog shall not be allowed to relocate during this extra minute of time.

***Interpretation:*** If the dog moves its feet during the extra minute and prior to the bird being flushed, it is considered "relocation"; the dog should be picked up immediately, and no further scoring occurs. 4/93

**Application:** *If the handler does not flush the bird and the extra one minute of time expires, even if the judge sees the bird on the ground the find is not scored because the flush was not completed before the extra minute expired. 11/00*

1.07 No credit for a find and no score shall be given if a dog points a dead bird.

**Application:** *If in doubt, the judge should inspect the bird to determine if the find is scoreable. If the judge can confirm that the bird was alive when pointed, it may be scored. 4/93*

1.08 SPLIT FIND/1/2-Average Retrieve. When two dogs are found on point, actually pointing the same bird at the same time, each shall be given credit for a find but shall be scored individually before the flush using a scale of 0-50 (instead of 0-100). Judges decide which handler flushes and shoots the bird. Each dog also receives credit for a retrieve equivalent to ½ of that dog's average retrieve score. (See also Rule 2.09)

1.09 All scoreable dog work must take place inside the specific field trial boundaries (both dog and bird must be inside specified boundaries).

**Exception:** If backing dog is in-bounds and pointing dog is out-of-bounds and is the brace mate of the backing dog, then the back is scoreable.

**Application:** *A pointed bird is in-bounds and the pointing dog is out-of-bounds. The judge shall instruct the handler/gunner to aggressively flush the bird and "take it out" for no score. If a bird is not flushed, then the judge should direct the handler to relocate the dog to be sure no bird is in that area. 4/93*

**Application:** *If a bird is flushed by any dog or any handler/gunner/observer from out-of-bounds (whether the gallery, a safety zone or adjacent field) into the specified field in-bounds, then it is marked "dead for the brace" and should be taken out if possible. 4/93 If a handler/gunner walks a bird*



*in from an out-of-bounds area s/he should be directed to take the bird out for no score. 4/93*

***Application:*** *A bird that flies in-bounds, from out-of-bounds on its own is scoreable provided that it was not flushed into the field from an adjacent field trial. The bird should be marked for three (3) minutes. 4/93*

***Application:*** *If a dog has a find close to the boundary line and the judge sees the bird walk out of bounds before the handler arrives to flush, the judge should advise the handler of the situation when s/he arrives and score the find, provided that the dog has remained on point. The judge should then permit the handler to go out of bounds to attempt to flush the bird. If the bird is flushed and retrieved it is scored. If a bird is not flushed a slash is to be awarded for the retrieve. It is important that the judge be on top of the work. 10/01*

1.10 Gunner must aggressively attempt to flush pointed birds to receive credit for the find unless rule 1.03 (find) applies. Handler/Gunner may request permission to throw a bird that cannot fly once the judge is satisfied that the bird is alive. Handler/Gunner has option of firing gun. Handler/Gunner shall not hit the bird over a gun barrel or other object in an intentional effort to stun or kill the bird prior to throwing the bird.

***Application:*** *If the dog is in motion when the flush occurs the find will not be scored. The bird is marked for three minutes. 5/92*

***Application:*** *A bird that is walking around when the point occurs is not considered to have been flushed and the pointing dog is expected to hold until the presence of the handler/gunner causes the bird to change direction or take flight. The bird is considered to have never been in its resting place. 5/92*

***Application:*** *If, when a dog is on point and the handler/gunner is making several attempts to flush at different areas of cover and the bird walks out of the cover between the handler and*

*dog, the flush has occurred and the dog may be scored on the find. Judges must be sure that the handler's presence is what caused the bird to flush from his cover. 4/93*

***Interpretation:*** *When the judge gives permission or requires that a bird be thrown for a scored retrieve, the judge is to advise the handler not to kill the bird. If the handler still then kills the bird and in the judge's opinion the handler intentionally disregarded the judge's direction, then the judge may withhold the retrieve score. 4/93*

1.11 A score for the find shall be given for only one bird per find/point. If more than one bird is pointed (e.g., covey find), then all other birds shall be "marked" to the best of the judges' ability, for three (3) minutes.

***Application:*** *If a dog has a scoreable find and the handler/gunner flushes two birds; shoots one dead, but the dog catches the unshot bird and makes a retrieve, the retrieve should be scored. 4/93*

***Interpretation:*** *If the judge sees more than one bird they must be marked for three minutes regardless whether or not the birds take flight. This rule was written for this specific circumstance. Other guidelines regarding marked birds do not apply to this rule. 4/00*

***Application:*** *When multiple birds are flushed, handler/gunner may shoot at only one. All other birds that remain in-bounds will be marked for (3) three minutes. If the bird(s) fly out-of-bounds, then the birds are not scoreable (Rule 1.09). However, if it is clear to the judge that the pointing dog has not seen the first bird flushed and shot but is instead chasing another bird that flushed, then the bird marked by the dog may be shot for scored retrieve. 2/05*

1.12 "Marked" bird is a judge's decision. This is a bird that may have been inadvertently flushed by a judge, handler, dog, etc., and cannot be pointed for a creditable or scoreable find by either dog in the brace before

three (3) minutes. Should a dog point a marked bird before three minutes expires, then handler/gunner must “take out the bird” for no score. A “marked” bird applies to both dogs and both handlers/gunners shall be notified immediately or as soon as possible.

***Interpretation:*** Dogs shall not be led off and/or “called off” of a pointed bird, unless time in the brace has expire; this is regardless of whether the bird considered scoreable, “marked”, or “scored- on” and “dead for the brace”. All pointed birds must be taken out. 11/00

***Application:*** If a dog points a “marked” bird in less than three minutes and the handler is unable to produce a bird, then the judge should mark the area dead for the brace. The judge shall then treat the area as if a “scored-on” or “dead for the brace” bird is in this vicinity and require that if a dog points in the area later in the same brace, two separate birds must be found before a scoreable find is credited.

***Application:*** Stop to Flush: In cases where a bird is flushed (marked bird) in close proximity to a dog, and in the judge’s opinion the dog stops to flush, the dog’s handler should be given an opportunity to call the dog off. If the dog turns and leaves the area the bird remains a marked bird for the remainder of the three minutes. If the dog, when called off, turns toward the marked bird and points it the judge should consider that the dog was pointing the marked bird and the bird should be taken out as required by the rule. 11/00

***Application:*** Nothing should be said to anyone in the case where a judge sees a bird on the ground and assumes that the handler/gunner may have also seen it. A bird seen on the ground walking is not considered a marked bird unless it moved from its resting place as a result of the presence of a handler, gunner, judge, or dog. 4/93

1.13 The judges will not knowingly let a bird be scored more than once per brace. A judge may ask that “scored-on” or “dead for the brace” bird be removed from the field at his discretion.

1.14 If a pointing dog is backed by its brace-mate and the handler/gunner is unable to flush a bird within two minutes, then the handler/gunner for the pointing dog shall be directed by the judge to relocate the pointing dog. The relocation must be in the same general area as the find occurred. (See Section 3 for additional details and rules regarding the back)

1.15 If, in the judge’s opinion, any other dog (whether the brace mate or a dog from another field) interferes with the pointing dog causing the bird to flush, a score for the find and average retrieve will be given to the pointing dog. A dog that continues to flush its brace mate’s birds, disrupts brace mate’s ability to compete by continually fighting and/or taking out birds without scoring will be picked up at a judge’s discretion.

***Application:*** *If a brace mate comes to the area and moves ahead of the pointing dog and points, and if the pointing dog then leaves the find (breaks point), the bird should be taken out and no credit will be given for the find. The brace mate will be given a zero for refusing to back. 4/93*

***Application:*** *If a brace mate fails to back a pointing dog and moves in front of it but does not point the bird, and the pointing dog then breaks after him and together they take the bird out, no interference is awarded because the pointing dog is considered to have broken point under pressure. If however, the brace mate bumps (touches) the pointing dog, interference is to be awarded and the pointing dog is scored on the find and given an average retrieve. 4/93*

***Interpretation:*** *For the purpose of this rule “continues” means more than once. A warning should be given for the first infraction and pickup after the second infraction. Judges, at their discretion, may have a dog picked up after the first infraction. 2/96*

## Section 2 RETRIEVE:

### Points per Retrieve (0-100)

2.01 A dog must retrieve the bird to within three (3) feet of its handler, who shall remain in the same spot, before any credit is to be given for the retrieve. Handler may step out of heavy cover but may not advance toward the dog or bird.

**Interpretation:** *If a dog is “broke” to Wing and Shot, the handler may release the dog in the normal manner, i.e., touch, whistle. The dog must retrieve the bird to where the handler was standing when they released the dog. 4/93*

2.02 If the retrieving dog backs its brace mate during the course of a retrieve (going to, picking up, or returning to the handler), then the handler may advance to the backing dog and hold him for the back. The dog shall receive an average score for the retrieve and shall be scored on the back, if it is otherwise scoreable. (See Section 3 - Back)

2.03 Should the retrieving dog go on point during the course of a retrieve (picking up or returning to the handler with bird) the handler may advance to the pointing dog and attempt to complete the find. The dog shall receive an average score for the retrieve and shall be scored on the find if it is otherwise scoreable. (See Section 1- Find)

**Note:** *“(picking up or returning to the handler with bird)” means that the retrieving dog must have found the downed bird and have the bird in its (the dog’s) mouth. 2/05*

**Note:** *For clarification the last sentence above means that “an average retrieve score for the (first) retrieve and shall be scored on the (second) find if it is otherwise scoreable.” 2/05*

2.04 A retrieve score shall be given for only one bird per find. If more than one bird is pointed all other birds will be marked to the best of the judges’ ability, for three (3) minutes. (See also Rule 1.11)

2.05 If a gunner is unable to shoot bird because there is a judge, or a handler, or the gallery, or a vehicle, or a dog in the shooting zone, a “safety” shall be granted. A safety is marked on the scorecard as an “A” or average. If, at the end of the brace a dog has one or more finds and all average retrieves, then the judge shall have the handler throw a dead bird for a scored retrieve. The score received for the thrown bird shall be applied to all averages received during the brace.

2.06 The judge determines all safeties his/her discretion. Either the judge or handler/gunner may call safety before or after one or more shots are fired; If safety is called, an average retrieve will be given. If, in the opinion of the judge, a shot is deliberately fired after the judge or handler/gunner calls safety, the retrieve is not scored.

***Application:*** *The gunner must have at least one live round in their gun before a safety will be allowed. A “safety” means that you have the ability to fire the gun but cannot shoot because of a legitimate safety reason.*

***Interpretation:*** *If the retrieve is not scored because a shot was fired after safety was called, a slash is placed on the score card.*  
4/93

2.07 If a bird is dropped and the dog finds the bird but refuses to pick it up or fails to bring bird to within three (3) feet of the handler (*See also* Rule 2.01 - Retrieve), then a zero (0) must be indicated on the score card. A score of zero (0) IS a number that is included in totaling the retrieve score and also is included in determining an average retrieve score.

2.08 If the handler/gunner misses the bird and the bird flies off, then the dog may not have an opportunity to retrieve. If the dog returns with a bird, then the judge shall score the retrieve. If the dog is not sent for the retrieve or does not return with the bird, then the judge shall indicate “no opportunity” on the score card with a slash mark (/). A “/” in the retrieve score boxes is NOT a number and is not added into the total score for retrieves and is not included in determining an “average” retrieve score.

***Application:*** *If a shot bird that is presumed to be “crippled” is re-pointed by the retrieving dog, and the handler/gunner cannot call the dog off point. Score should be: Slash. 11/00*

2.09 If, in the opinion of the judge, the dog could not see the bird fall when shot, or some other unusual situation occurs, the judge may issue a slash mark (/) for no opportunity to retrieve.

2.09 SPLIT FIND/1/2-Average Retrieve. When two dogs are found on point or actually pointing the same bird at the same time, each shall be given credit for a find but shall be judged on a scale of 0-50 instead of 0-100 for the find. The dogs will be scored on the find before the flush. They will each receive one-half of their average retrieve. Dogs shall be scored individually on finds. Either handler may flush and shoot the bird - judge's decision. (See also Rule 1.08)

***Interpretation:*** *On a split find all scoring stops on the find before the flush; both dogs receive one/half of their average retrieve. Either gunner may kill the bird. 4/93*

## Section 3 BACK:

### Score for Back (0-75)

3.01 A back is defined as when the dog “sees” the other dog pointing and then stops and honors the pointing dog; the backing dog remains stationary until released by the judge and/or handler **or** if the pointing dog leaves the points and breaks into a hunting mode. “Back” **must** be called by handler in order for the judge to score the back, unless the handler is unable to see a dog backing – in which case the judge should begin judging the back and advise the handler that his/her dog is backing.  
7/13

**Interpretation:** *If the judge is aware the dog is backing, do not disallow the back if handler fails to call back. 4/93*

**Interpretation:** *Judges may choose to hold the backing dog – at his/her discretion. If, in a judge’s opinion, the backing dog leaves the back because the judge has intimidated him while trying to hold him, the back is not scored but the dog is given another opportunity for a scoreable back on a separate piece of work. 11/12*

**Interpretation:** *If the judge believes that the second dog did see the pointing dog and did not stop until after he smelled the bird (e.g., “in the scent cone”), then a zero back score is awarded.  
7/13*

3.02 A dog must back on his own, without command, before the judge can credit the back. A handler may handle his dog into the general area of the pointing dog. If in the judge’s opinion, the handler intimidates the dog to a back, he may withhold score.

**Interpretation:** *Judges are advised to be alert for command backs; if they feel the dog backed on command, they are not to score the back but give the dog another opportunity. If in the judge’s opinion the dog saw the pointing dog, before the handler commanded the dog to stop, and failed to back, a zero score should be awarded for the back. 4/93*



3.03 The backing dog must be held by his handler until the pointing dog completes his retrieve. Failure to abide by this rule will result in forfeiture of backing points. However, if handler/gunner has not produced a bird within two (2) minutes after backing dog backs, he must relocate his dog. (*See also* Rule 1.14)

***Interpretation:*** *Each time a dog backs, the handler/gunner shall hold the backing dog until a retrieve is completed or until the backing dog is released by a judge's permission. However, maximum time to hold a backing dog shall be a total of three (3) minutes per piece of work.*

***Interpretation:*** *Time on the backing dog starts when the dog backs; time keeping begins when back occurs. The backing dog must be held until judge releases it. When pointing dog relocates on its own, the backing dog should be released by the judge. In this case, when the backing dog is released by the judge, all game is fair for either dog.*

***NOTE:*** *Creeping or steps are not relocating. The judge will not allow backing dog to be turned loose unless the pointing dog leaves the point and goes into a hunting mode. The backing dog shall be held each time it backs, regardless of how many times it backs. The handler of the pointing dog shall wait until the backing dog is held before attempting to flush; failure to abide to this could result in forfeiture of find. 4/93*

3.05 When the handler of the pointing dog asks a judge to relocate the dog OR if the handler is directed to relocate the dog by the judge, the handler of the backing dog must hold their dog for one (1) minute, or until the judge releases the backing dog. Handler must initiate relocation by touch, whistle, or command. Dog may not relocate on its own.

***Interpretation:*** *Relocation is defined as: When a dog, either by command from the handler or on its own goes into a hunting mode. It should not be confused with creeping or steps. 4/93*

3.06 Judges may not communicate via radio (or any other means) the desire of a handler who wants a back or the willingness of a handler to wait on their brace mate to get a back.

3.07 If the backing dog is in-bounds, and the brace mate/pointing dog is out-of-bounds, then the back is scoreable. (*This is an exception to the rule that all scoreable dog work must take place inside the boundaries of the field*).

## Section 4 SAFETY:

4.01 All participants shall wear a hat or vest of blaze orange, or **safety green where allowable by law**, while in the field. This includes judges, marshals, gunners, gun bearers, photographers, observers, and birdplanters. 10/14

4.02 No birds shall be shot on the ground, except at the judge's request. (*See also* Rule 1.05)

4.03 If a gunner is unable to shoot bird because there is a judge, or a handler, or the gallery, or a vehicle, or a dog in the shooting zone, a "safety" shall be granted. (*See also* Rule 2.05)

4.04 No guns will be fired except following the flush of a scoreable find, or with the permission of a judge.

4.05 There shall be no running in the field.

## **Section 5 PICKUP:**

5.01 No dog may be taken out of the field or put on a leash before the brace is finished, except by permission or at the direction of a judge. Violation of this rule may result in a handler's/gunner's suspension from all recognized trials for a calendar year following a violation.

5.02 If a dog is picked up and removed from a brace for whatever reason (disqualification, injury, etc.), a bye-dog shall run in the field for the remainder of the brace. A dog that is picked up and does not complete the full thirty (30) minutes of his brace shall receive a zero (0) on his scorecard.

5.03 A dog out of judgment (out of bounds) or non-competitive for a period of ten (10) minutes of any thirty-minute brace shall be picked up and receive a zero (0) on the scorecard.

5.04 At the point a dog is picked up and removed from a brace, the clock is stopped until a replacement dog is put in the field. The second handler must hold their dog in the immediate area the handler was in when time was called. The bye-dog should be brought into the field as close to the location from which the dog was picked up. Once the bye dog is in the field, the clock for time remaining in the brace should start.

## Section 6 GENERAL:

6.01 All scoring is stopped when brace time expires, except when Rule 1.06 applies. When a judge announces time is up for the brace, handlers shall put leads on their dogs and take the shortest route out of the bird field so that the next brace can start on time.

6.02 If a dog breaks loose from the gallery area and enters the bird field, causing a nuisance to a working dog, the trial should be stopped and the dog removed.

6.03 Gunner shall remain a reasonable distance behind the handler until point is called. There shall be no communication between gunner and handler after leaving the blind. 4/14

6.04 Handler using a gunner shall stay at least fifteen (15) feet or more behind the pointing dog. After flushing and shooting, gunner shall return to judge or stay behind the handler until the retrieve is completed.

6.05 The use of training aids such as electronic devices, weighted collars, flushing whips, spiked collars, silent whistles, bells or voice (for the obvious purpose of stopping a dog for a creditable find or back) is prohibited. The use of the above training aids will result in disqualification from that recognized trial.

***Application:** Some handlers desire to use a wide red collar in addition to their regular collar. Only one collar may be worn by a dog while running a brace. Judges will advise the handler to remove one of the collars; it will be their choice as to which one they want to remove. 7/95*

6.06 Judges shall collect all birds whether pointed, flushed, shot and retrieved, or caught alive by the dog.

6.07 The judges' decisions are final on judgment calls. However, each judge is personally responsible to use good judgment in the application of these written rules and also those situations not covered by written

rule. Only application of a rule may be protested. The judges' decisions must be respected and followed by each trial participant.

6.08 Harassment in the form of threats or verbal abuse (cussing) of a judge or field marshal or the disregard of judges' decisions may result in immediate disqualification from the trial and/or association. At the time of disqualification, the offending handler, or dogs entered under that handler, will not be allowed to participate on that field for the remainder of that day. At such a time, any and all placements handled or owned by the offending handler, on that field, will be forfeited. 4/14

6.9 Whenever possible, judges should judge dog #1 for half of the brace (or as close to this as possible) - then judge dog #2 for the balance of the brace.

6.10 All judges must be members in good standing with current certification. NSTRA reserves the right to revoke any judge's trial card at any time.

6.11 For a trial to be recognized (trial placements recorded), the field marshal must be a member in good standing with current certification by NSTRA. All bird planters must be NSTRA members. Placements will not be recorded for a trial not meeting all these requirements.

6.12 NSTRA welcomes members of any age. The minimum age to be in the field shall be ten (10) years of age; and the minimum age to gun for oneself shall be 16 years of age and possessing a current Hunter's Safety Course Card.

6.13 The minimum age to plant birds is 16 years of age. The minimum age to be a field marshal is 18 years of age. 10/14

## **Section 7 SUBMISSIONS FOR RULE CHANGES:**

7.01 Proposed new rule changes or additions shall be submitted sixty (60) days prior to the first day of the Trial of Champions and/or the Dog of the Year Trial.

7.02 Rule changes must be submitted as follows in order to be considered:

- a) Statement of need for the rule change that includes specific examples.
- b) Restatement of the rule (if applicable) as it is currently written.
- c) Rewrite of the rule (changes highlighted) as requested.
- d) Rule changes must be presented by a member in good standing.
- e) The rule change needs signatures showing the support of 10 additional regular NSTRA members in good standing.
- f) The rule change needs to include a signature showing the support of a Region President (not necessarily the home Region President) or a National Officer. 4/14

7.03 The Board of Directors shall decide which, if any, of these changes will be submitted to the general membership for ballot vote.

7.04 A ballot shall be included in the first available regular published issue (depending on publication deadlines) of the NSTRA magazine.

7.05 All ballots received within forty-five (45) days of the publication date will be tallied and the results published in the next available regular published issue (depending on publication deadlines).

7.06 Rule changes will become effective upon publication.

## Section 8 RULES FOR RECOGNIZED FIELD TRIALS:

8.01 Field trials will consist of a minimum of twelve (12) dogs and a maximum of thirty-two (32) dogs. Championship points awarded reflect the number of dogs entered as follows:

12-17 dogs:            One First place point  
                              Second or Third points not awarded

18-23 dogs:            Two First place points  
                              One Second place point  
                              Third place points not awarded

24-32 dogs:            Three First place points  
                              Two Second place points  
                              One Third place point  
                              (Full points awarded)

8.02 Field trial entries should be submitted by mail, facsimile, email, or using the NSTRA electronic entry form (when available). If a trial chairman needs additional entries to complete the trial, he may solicit entries by phone. The first 32 entries received shall fill the trial, and the chairman shall immediately hold a drawing and notify entrants of their brace(s). Any additional entry received after receipt of the first 32 entries, shall be returned with the fee, to the sender.

8.03 Entrants traveling more than 100 miles shall be assured an opportunity to run in the second day of a two-day trial, with an equal number of dogs entered in each trial, provided he is eligible and drawn for the first day trial. In order to execute this properly, it is important that the same field trial chairman be appointed to be in charge of all trials during the two days. It should be noted on the entries, two-day trial.

***Interpretation:*** for all intents and purposes, “trial” refers to each individual field.



#### 8.04 A dog must be registered with a recognized registry to enter any NSTRA trial. (06/22)

- a. A copy of the registration of the dog must be sent to the NSTRA Office prior to entering and NSTRA trial.
- b. NSTRA recognizes the UKC, AKC (no PAL/ILP registered dogs), FDSB, CKC (Canadian Kennel Club), and VDD registries.
- c. Regardless of which registry is used, the dog must **be registered** in one of the above-mentioned registries as a recognized pointing dog breed to be entered in any NSTRA trial.

8.05 Entry forms must contain all requested information or entry cannot be accepted. Trial chairman shall not accept entries postmarked prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> for the Spring trial season (January 1 to June 30), postmarked prior to June 1 for the Fall trial season (July 1 to December 31). Trials will be advertised in the NSTRA magazine, NSTRA web page, or regional presidents may be contacted.

8.06 Entries shall be limited to five (5) dogs per owner and/or handler per trial. Three shall be specified, with the additional two (2) dogs to be added to the field seven (7) days prior to the trial only if the trial is not full on that date. **Exception:** *All NSTRA Championship trials.*

*Application:*

*Trial chair should be aware **before drawing the trial** of potential logistical or operational problems related to drawing a trial that contains handlers running multiple dogs in single trials with fewer than 16 braces. (See Rules 8.08, 8.03, 8.07, 8.08, 8.11)*

8.07 If a person enters more than one dog, s/he will not be drawn to run subsequent braces in the same trial (field), unless s/he is drawn for the last two braces of the trial. If s/he is drawn for a back-to-back brace, the

second entry will be redrawn for a later brace. Subsequent braces means sequentially within the same field or trial. Each field is a stand-alone trial and independent competition.

Example 1: A5, A6 is not allowed.

Example 2: A5, B5 is not allowed.

Example 3: A5, B6 **is** allowed.

*Application:*

*NSTRA Rules for Recognized Field Trials provide that if a person enters more than one dog s/he will not be drawn to run subsequent braces. It goes without saying that the dogs entered by one person cannot be drawn in the same brace. Likewise, a handler who is handling dogs for more than one person cannot be drawn to run in the same brace.*

*The preceding paragraph defines the only instances when dogs may not be drawn to run in the same brace. Dogs registered to different members of the same family that are entered in the same trial may in fact be drawn to run in the same brace unless as noted above they are being handled by the same person. 11/00*

8.08 No braces shall be added to the trial after the drawing.

8.09 Owners or handlers running more than one (1) dog must run the dog drawn in the brace specified. Any change due to sickness, will be at the discretion of the field marshal.

8.10 Any dog withdrawn from a trial shall not be re-entered in the same trial. The owner may substitute a replacement with another dog he owns, at the discretion of the field marshal.

***Application:*** *The handler designated at the time that a dog is drawn for a trial must be the one to handle the dog in the trial unless the field marshal, prior to the brace participants being*

*placed in the blind, has approved a change. In the past there have been cases where a handler was listed for a particular dog but yet was changed to the owner when it came time to enter the blind. In many cases it was apparent that the practice was being used to avoid the possibility of two particular dogs being drawn together for the same brace. 2/96*

***Application:*** *Even though the rule speaks to owners/handlers running multiple dogs, it is intended to apply to all dogs entered in a trial. It would be unfair to allow owners/handlers running only one dog to pull their dog from a trial for any reason while at the same time only allowing the owner/handlers of multiple entries to pull a dog only in instances of sickness. 2/96*

***Application:*** *The key to the rule is “Any change due to sickness, will be at the discretion of the field marshal.” The field marshal has control of the trial. When an owner/handler pulls a dog for sickness, it is up to the field marshal to determine where the replacement dog is to come from, be it from the owner, which has pulled the dog, from the paid standby list, or use a non-scoreable by dog. The field marshal has the option to allow the owner/handler to replace a dog that he has pulled from a trial due to sickness but is not required to do so. 2/96*

***Note:*** *The above addresses dogs that are pulled from trials after the drawing has been conducted. Trial entries that are cancelled before the drawing are addressed below in Rule 8.11.*

***Application:*** *In the case where a handler that cannot complete a brace the situation should be treated the same as when a dog cannot complete a brace. A standby handler should be brought in to complete the brace. The standby handler may, with the owner’s permission, handle the existing dog in the field or may bring in a standby dog. In any case, the dog belonging to the handler who is coming out of the field is no longer in competition once the handler is replaced by a standby handler. 11/00*

8.11 Should an owner/handler cancel a trial entry, he must notify the trial chairman five (5) days prior to the running of the trial, and he (owner/handler) must find a replacement for his entry at the discretion of the field marshal.

- a. Option 1: Fill spot with dog he owns.
- b. Option 2: Must use standby dogs if available.
- c. Option 3: Use non-scoreable bye dog.

8.12 Dogs in season shall not be permitted to run in a recognized trial.

8.13 All recognized trials must use game birds for bird release. Quail must be used in Regional Elimination and National Championship trials.

8.14 Number of birds to be released shall be six (6) game birds for the first brace and five (5) game birds for each brace thereafter. Should a bird fly out of the field when released, the host club shall release another bird to ensure six (6) birds for the first brace and five (5) birds for the remaining braces at the beginning of each brace.

8.15 Bird handlers must wear gloves.

8.16 Gunners must use 7 ½, 8 or 9 shot shells.

\*Light loads only.

8.17 Brace duration shall be 30 minutes.

***Application:*** NSTRA requires that all braces be completed in the field. The above rule requires that all brace times be thirty minutes duration. The only two exceptions are when a fifteen-minute run-off is conducted to settle a tie, or the final one-hour braces conducted at Championship or Regional Elimination trials. 11/00

***Note:*** In National Championship or Regional Elimination trials where more than one round of competition is held in one day it is important that all dogs spend the same amount of time in competition.

8.18 Standby dogs for all recognized trials shall be furnished by host club and should be a minimum of three (3) dogs. Handlers of standby dogs running shall pay the entry fee to be eligible for placement.

8.19 Dogs, handlers, and/or gunners must remain behind a blind while birds are being released for their brace.

8.20 All trials/fields shall have two judges designated by the Trial Chair. One judge will be designated the official timekeeper.

8.21 All trials/fields shall have a certified Field marshals designated by the Trial Chair. **Exception:** All National Championship Trials. S/he will be responsible for enforcing trial rules and receiving complaints from participants.

8.22 Field marshals shall check all vests before a handler/gunner leaves the blind.

8.23 It is the responsibility of the field marshal and judges to establish definite boundaries for each trial/field.

8.24 Unreasonable harassment of judges or field marshals (to be determined by the Regional and/or National Officers and Board of Directors) will not be tolerated. Any entrants, handler and/or gunner violating this rule shall be suspended from all recognized Association trials for one calendar year.

8.25 A dog may be entered in a field trial that the owner is judging, however, the owner shall not judge his/her own dog (i.e., the judges do not switch dogs during the brace). 10/13 While judging a field trial, a judge is not permitted to handle a dog in the field he is judging or in the opposing field(s). 3/10

8.26 Bird handlers will not be able to own or handle any dogs in the same trial/field in which they plant birds. 7/08

8.27 Binoculars or similar equipment may not be used by anyone to observe the bird handler while s/he is releasing birds. Violation of this rule could be interpreted as an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and subject to appropriate disciplinary actions as provided in the NSTRA by-laws. **Exception:** Trial officials may use binoculars in the performance of their duties as a trial official only. Said officials will make no communication to any owner and/or handler as to the location of birds. Trial officials that are also handling dogs may not use this exemption to gain an advantage.

*Note: "similar equipment" is to include photographic equipment with telephoto or zoom lenses attached. 2/05*

8.28 There shall be no cell phones allowed in the field at any time by anyone including handlers, gunners, or judges. Anyone violating this rule could be suspended from all recognized field trials for a calendar year following the violation.

8.29 Maximum number of persons in bird field shall be limited to six (6) people.

8.30 No alcoholic beverages, or the consumption thereof, are permitted on the grounds. Participants who have consumed alcoholic beverages may be required to have a gunner or have their dog scratched from the trial, as determined by the field marshal.

8.31 Every club or individual hosting a trial shall provide at least three (3) water containers (for dogs) in each bird field. All three water containers must be of sufficient size to allow a dog to immerse itself. All containers are to be readily visible or marked.

8.32 All participants should sign the official score card validating accuracy, prior to the posting by field marshal. If card is not signed within twenty-five (25) minutes after completion of each brace, the score will become official (unless under protest) and be posted by the field marshal.

8.33 Ties for first, second or third place shall be decided by a fifteen (15) minute run-off. Two (2) birds shall be released for this purpose.

8.34 Trophy awards and recommended cost are as follows:

12-17 dogs: one first place trophy, recommended cost: \$35.00

18-23 dogs: one first place trophy, one second place trophy, recommended cost: \$65.00

24-32 dogs: one first place trophy, one second place trophy, one third place trophy, recommended cost: \$100.00

8.35 Recommended judging fees will be based on the number of dogs judged (i.e., \$1.25 per dog). Any additional hospitality shown to the judges will be greatly appreciated (such as meals, drinks, etc.)

8.36 Each field trial chairman and hosting club must establish appropriate “No Shooting” safety zones to ensure safety of spectators and adjoining properties.

8.37 No dog shall be eligible to run for creditable NSTRA points by competing in more than one (1) NSTRA trial per day unless the fields are on the same set of grounds. **Exception:** A dog that has participated in one of the national trials and has been eliminated from contention is eligible to participate in another trial.

8.38 Prior to the Final Hour in any Regional Elimination or National Trial, the field marshal/marshals are responsible for ensuring that the field/fields to be used in running the Final Hour are “cleaned” of any and all known birds left in the field from any prior brace/braces. The Final Hour cannot commence until this has been accomplished.

8.39 Regions have the authority to manage cross border trials at the regional level without involvement from the National Officers as long as the acting region is adhering to NSTRA rules and regulations. 6/21

## **Section 9 ATV VARIANCE:**

9.01 Except as noted below, all handlers and gunners are required to be on foot (walking) while participating in NSTRA sanctioned field trials.

NOTE: Only with an exception granted as a result of a majority vote of NSTRA Board of Directors members present at a scheduled meeting (April and October only) may a handler or gunner participate in any NSTRA sanctioned field trial by any means other than walking.

9.02 A member that is applying for permanent ATV variance may be granted “interim” approval by the region officers, which will allow the member to participate in home region trials only. The interim approval will only be valid until such time that the member’s application is brought before the NSTRA Board of Directors at their scheduled meeting for action.

9.03 A member that has any injury or surgery that temporarily impairs their capability to walk for a specified time period may request a “temporary” ATV variance for participating in trials in their home region for the specified time period of their recovery. Region officers shall vote within one week of receipt of the member’s request for temporary ATV variance due to injury or surgery to either approve, disapprove, or to delay if it is the opinion of the Region officers that the member’s condition would present a safety factor. Approval requires a majority vote of the Region officers. Upon approval, the member shall have the right to participate in trials in their home region under the standard ATV variance guidelines until the end of their specified temporary variance. At the end of the temporary ATV variance, the member shall either start participating under the normal walking NSTRA rules and regulations or submit another request for temporary variance. If a member and/or Region are found to be abusing the use of the good faith intention of the temporary ATV variance, they shall receive a documented warning from their designated NSTRA National Officer. If the member and/or Region continue to abuse the good faith of the temporary ATV variance, then they shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion under the NSTRA rules and regulations.



9.04 A member who is granted an interim or temporary ATV variance shall be required to comply with all ATV operation guidelines (available from the national office staff or National Officer representative). If a member with an interim or temporary ATV variance wants to enter a trial outside of their home region during the interim or specified term of their ATV variance, the member will need to get the approval of both the President of that Region and the Trial Chairman. The interim or temporary approval will not be valid for participation in National Championship Trials.

9.05 In the case of National Championship Trials, the National Officers are empowered to grant temporary variances on a case-by-case basis.

9.06 Only the National Board of Directors can remove a permanent ATV variance. The member with the permanent ATV variance must continue riding an ATV in all NSTRA trials until an application to remove the permanent ATV variance is approved at a National Board of Directors meeting. 3/10

## **Section 10 PROTEST PROCEDURES:**

### **10.01 Scheduled Association trials:**

- a) Protest must be submitted in writing to Regional Officers and Board of Directors within ten (10) days of occurrence.
- b) Untimely protests shall not be considered.
- c) Regional Officers and Board of Directors must answer the protest in writing within twenty-one (21) days.
- d) If the protester disagrees with the regional decision, he may submit a protest to the National Officers and Board of Directors. This submission must occur within ten (10) days of the regional answer.
- e) The National Officers and Board of Directors must provide a final answer in writing within twenty-one (21) days.

### **10.02 Regional Dog of the Year trials:**

- a) Protest must be submitted to Regional Officers and Board of Directors to permit timely decisions as trial progresses. Due to timeliness of decisions, national review is not possible.
- b) Untimely protests shall not be considered.
- c) Regional Officers and Board of Directors decisions are final.

### **10.03 All National Championship trials:**

- a) Protest must be submitted to National Officers to permit a timely decision as trial progresses.
- b) Untimely protests shall not be considered.
- c) National Officers' decisions are final.

## **REFERENCES**

NOTE: This section of the book is provided for reference only. It contains information on NSTRA Championship trial formats, Championship classifications, and repeats of some information that is contained in the NSTRA Constitution and/or By-Laws, etc. This information will be modified as changes occur.

## **Section 11 DOG OF THE YEAR TRIAL & REGIONAL ELIMINATIONS**

11.01 Standby dogs for annual Dog of the Year Trial shall be selected by National Officers from Regional Elimination Finals runner-up dogs. Standby dogs will be eligible to win, should they run, providing the entry fee has been paid.

11.02 A large trophy will be given to the Dog of the Year winner with appropriate trophies for first, second, third, fourth and fifth runners-up.

11.03 To win any or all NSTRA Championship Trials, a dog must prove that it will point, back and retrieve. If it has not demonstrated its ability in each of these areas during the Regional Elimination trials, it will be required to demonstrate its ability prior to being declared the winner.

A dog must prove that it will back at both Regional Elimination and Dog of the Year trial. Even if the winning dog has received one or more zero backing scores during the trial it will be given one opportunity to prove that it will back by having a backing situation setup after the conclusion of the trial.

Should the top dog fail in its attempt to prove that it will back, the next dog in line would be declared the winner provided it had a scored back during the trial; if it did not have a scored back a backing situation would be setup for it as well. If that dog fails in its attempt, the same procedure would apply to the next dog in line.

11.04 The National Officers shall be responsible for managing the Dog of the Year Trial Finals (i.e., judge and field marshal selection, entry fees, date, birds, trophies, grounds, etc.) as outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

11.05 Dog of the Year participants shall be selected from the Regional Elimination finalists on prorated basis (based on the total number of dogs drawn and run in each Regional Elimination) to participate in the Dog of the Year Trial Finals.

11.06 If a dog is withdrawn after the drawing from the Dog of the Year trial, he will receive 50% refund of his entry fee, unless the dog is ill or in season. This is to be verified by a vet certification.

11.07 Championship points will be awarded in the qualifying rounds and shall be counted toward the Region High Point System.

11.08 Dogs that obtain Championship status will automatically be qualified for the Regional Dog of the Year Trial Eliminations. They will not be counted in the quota unless they run.

11.09 An owner shall be allowed to enter his/her dog (or dogs) in the home region elimination trial if the dog has earned points in the region or has earned points in any other region.

Dogs that earn points in the home region must run in the home region.

Dogs that hold Championship status must run in home region.

An owner shall be allowed to enter his/her dog (or dogs) in another region's elimination trial if the dog has earned points in another region, has not earned any points in the home region, and is not a champion.

A dog may enter only one Regional Elimination trial per year January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. To qualify for Regional Elimination trials, a dog must receive a placement in a sanctioned trial during that year's trial season or the dog may have achieved Champion status; the current regional champion is also automatically qualified for the following year's regional elimination trial. 10/13

11.10 Dogs that have co-owners must have a home region designated and the national office of NSTRA shall be notified within two weeks of the ownership change. 4/08

11.11 Members requesting a change of home region must do so, in writing, through the National Office, between the dates of October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Exception:** A member who permanently relocates to within the boundaries of a region, other than their home region, may make written application to the NSTRA office at any time to request a change in their home region.

11.12 A dog must be registered with a recognized registry to receive placement in any NSTRA trial and/or Regional Elimination or National Championship trial, consistent with Rule 8.04. Without a recorded placement a dog will not be eligible to run in a Regional Elimination trial. 1/12 (06/22)

11.13 Cutoff date for eligibility to run in a Regional Elimination trial shall be two weeks prior to that region's elimination trial. The weekend two weeks prior to the elimination may be counted as eligibility for that year's trial, but not the following year's trial.

11.14 Regional Elimination trials must all be run at least 45 days prior to the Dog of the Year trial. Region presidents shall not schedule Regional Elimination trials on the same weekend as any of the National Championship trials. Note: The Regional Elimination trials are an extension of the Dog of the Year trial.

11.15 Regions using more than one field shall award points for each field in the same manner as a recognized sanctioned weekend field trial. Regions using more than one field shall award points for the finals based upon the total number of dogs run in the (overall Regional Elimination trial) finals. Regions must have more than 32 dogs running in the Elimination to use more than one field.

## REGIONAL AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

It will be up to each region to decide if, when, and where it will hold a Regional Amateur Championship trial. Established NSTRA sanctioning fees shall apply.

11.16 Qualification: Any amateur placement or having an Amateur Champion title [with fewer than seven (7) open points] during the qualification period (same time period as Regional Open Championship).

11.17 Format: Beat your brace mate

11.18 Minimum of 16 qualified amateur dogs

11.19 No final hour

11.20 Qualification rounds: Regular amateur points apply as in all other amateur formats.

11.21 Final points as follows

16-23 Dogs	1 <sup>st</sup> -3 amateur points
	2 <sup>nd</sup> -2 amateur point
	3 <sup>rd</sup> -1 amateur point

24-32 Dogs	1 <sup>st</sup> -4 amateur points
	2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 amateur points
	3 <sup>rd</sup> -2 amateur points
	4 <sup>th</sup> -1 amateur point

11.22 All first place amateur points awarded for finals.

11.23 A dog must prove it will back at a Regional Amateur Championship trial. If the winning dog has received one or more zero backing scores during the trial and no scored backs, then it will be given one opportunity to prove it will back by having a backing

situation setup at the conclusion of the final brace of the trial.

If the winning dog fails in its attempt to prove that it will back, the next placing dog is declared the winner provided it has a scored back during the trial; if it did not have a scored back, then a backing situation is setup for that dog. If that dog fails its attempt, the same procedure would apply to the next dog in line.



## **Section 12 PERFORMANCE CLASSIC:**

12.01 The number of dogs in the trial shall be a minimum of 64 with a maximum of 128.

12.02 Dogs will be eligible to enter the trial based on open points earned from weekend trials only. All points will count except those points earned during qualifying and final rounds of National Championship and Regional Elimination trials. Amateur points do not qualify entry into Championship trials.

12.03 Time frame for qualification will be determined by the date of the trial but will be no less than one year and will commence from at least the cutoff for points from the previous year's trial.

12.04 The trial format will be top 16 scoring dogs for the 1<sup>st</sup> round competition. The trial will then switch to beat your bracemate for the remainder of the trial. 10/20

12.05 The top 128 qualified entries received by the published deadline will be entered into the trial. Any qualified dogs entered by the deadline will be placed on the bye list if so desired. Point ties will be determined by the following criteria:

- a) Number of 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes.
- b) Number of 1<sup>st</sup> place points
- c) Number of 2<sup>nd</sup> place points
- d) Number of 3<sup>rd</sup> place points

All tiebreakers to come from the same time period in which points are earned.

12.06 Deadline enforcement: No entries will be accepted after the entry deadline except as noted below. All mailed entries must be postmarked on or before the entry deadline. Any entry received after the deadline,

but prior to 7 days before the trial, will be put at the end of the standby list, in order of receipt, and used only after all other paid standby dogs have been used provided the dog is qualified to enter the trial.

12.07 National Officers will be responsible for managing the NSTRA Performance Classic trial.

12.08 The NSTRA Performance Classic trial may be sponsored by one of the major sponsors of NSTRA and this trial will bear that sponsor's name.

12.09 If dog is withdrawn after the drawing of the NSTRA Performance Classic, a 50% refund will be issued unless the dog is ill or in season. A veterinarian certificate is required in such cases in order to receive a full refund.

12.10 A dog must prove he will back naturally on its own in order to be declared the winner of this trial.

12.11 Championship points will be awarded for the qualifying rounds and shall be counted towards the Region High Point competition.

## **Section 13 TRIAL OF CHAMPIONS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TRIAL:**

13.01 The Trial of Champions shall be for those dogs that have attained the status of Champion (open) and have been recognized by the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc. The criteria for entry into this trial is that the dog has earned an open championship and is at least a 1x Champion by February 1 of the current year. Dogs that obtained their first championship between February 1 through March 31 of the current year may be entered as paid standby dogs.

13.02 The National Officers shall be responsible for managing the Trial of Champions, i.e. judge and field marshal selection, entry fees, date, birds, trophies, grounds, etc.

13.03 If a dog is withdrawn after the drawing, he will receive 50% refund of his entry fee, unless the dog is ill or in season, this to be verified by a vet certification.

13.04 Trophies for Trial of Champions:

- a) A large trophy shall be awarded to the winner.
- b) A moderate trophy shall be awarded to the runner-up.
- c) Appropriate trophies will be awarded to third, fourth, fifth, and sixth place dogs.
- d) Daily trophies will be awarded to the first, second and third place dogs.

13.05 Championship points will be awarded for the qualifying rounds and shall be counted towards the Region High Point competition.

13.06 A dog must prove he will back naturally on its own in order to be declared the winner of this trial.

## **AMATEUR TRIAL OF CHAMPIONS**

13.07 The Amateur Trial of Champions shall be for those dogs that have obtained Amateur Champion status or have an Amateur Champion title during qualification period (same time period as Trial of Champions) until that dog earns an Open Champion title.

13.08 The National Officers shall be responsible for managing the Amateur Trial of Champions, i.e., judge and field marshal selection, entry fees, date, birds, trophies, grounds, etc.

13.09 The National Amateur Championship trial will require a minimum of 32 dogs and have a maximum of 64 dogs.

13.10 Format: Beat your brace mate.

13.11 If a dog is withdrawn after the drawing, he will receive 50% refund of his entry fee, unless the dog is ill or in season, this to be verified by a vet certification.

13.12 No Final Hour

13.13 Open/Amateur/Combined Trial format for qualification rounds that awards Amateur and Open points, including 1st place points.

13.14 Open points awarded for final round placements as follows:  
32-64 Dogs 1st-4 1st place open points, 2nd-3 1st place open points, 3rd-2 1st place open points, 4th-1 1st place open point

13.15 A dog must prove he will back naturally A dog must prove it will back at a National Amateur Championship trial. If the winning dog has received one or more zero backing scores during the trial and no scored backs, then it will be given one opportunity to prove it will back by

having a backing situation setup at the conclusion of the final brace of the trial

.

The National Amateur Championship trial will be held at the Amo, Indiana trial grounds (C Field) at the same time as the Trial of Champions trial. NOTE: Points earned from placements in a National Amateur Championship trial do not count towards Top Performance Award or Hall of Fame.

## **Section 14 QUAIL FOREVER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TRIAL:**

14.01 The number of dogs in the trial shall be a minimum of sixty-four. The qualification period for this trial is Nov. 1 through Oct. 31. This includes all open points earned during the time frame, except points earned from placements in the final “Top 4” of a national championship trial or Regional Championship trial (qualifying rounds do count). Entry into the trial is based on points (dogs with the most points first to get in and on down the list, etc.).

Any dog with a placement during the specified time frame will be eligible to enter. Amateur points do not qualify entry into Championship Trials.

14.02 The National Officers shall be responsible for managing the Quail Forever Trial, i.e. judge and field marshal selection, entry fees, date, birds, trophies, grounds, etc.

14.03 Trophies for Quail Forever Trial:

- a) Six trophies for first elimination round (two sets of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>).
- b) Four trophies for final four or belt buckles for the top four.

14.04 A dog must prove he will back naturally on its own, in order to be declared the winner of this trial. The dog may not be stopped by the owner/handler on a back.

14.05 If a dog is withdrawn after the drawing, he will receive 50% refund of his entry fee unless the dog is ill or in season, this to be verified by a vet certification.

14.06 The Quail Forever trial is sponsored by a major sponsor of NSTRA, and this trial will bear that sponsor’s name.

14.07 This will be a rotating trial based on applications received from NSTRA Regions.

14.08 Championship points will be awarded for the qualifying rounds and shall be counted towards the Region High Point competition.

### **Section 15 PURINA ENDURANCE CLASSIC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TRIAL:**

15.01 The number of dogs in the trial shall be a maximum of one hundred twenty-eight. Region quotas will be determined based on number of trials held in each region June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. Entry into this trial is based on all open points earned within a dog's home region (10/08) from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>, except points earned from placements in the final "Top 4" of a National Championship trial (qualifying rounds do count).

15.02 Brace winners will advance throughout the trial.

15.03 The National Endurance Classic is sponsored by one of the major sponsors of NSTRA and this trial will bear that sponsor's name.

15.04 This will be a rotating trial based on applications received from NSTRA Regions.

15.05 The National Officers shall be responsible for managing the National Endurance Classic, i.e., judge and field marshal selection, entry fees, date, birds, trophies, grounds, etc.

15.06 Trophies for National Endurance Classic Trial:

- a) Three trophies for each field where regular trial points are awarded.
- b) Four trophies and/or belt buckles for the Champion and runners-up.

15.07 A dog must prove he will back naturally on its own, in order to be declared the winner of this trial.

15.08 If a dog is withdrawn after the drawing, he will receive 50% refund of his entry fee unless the dog is ill or in season, this to be verified by a vet certification.

15.09 Championship points will be awarded for the qualifying rounds and shall be counted towards the Region High Point competition.



## **Section 16 PURINA TOP PERFORMANCE AWARD:**

16.01 A dog may win the Purina Top Performance award by participating in recognized National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc. trial by accumulating the greatest point total for the one-year period.

16.02 The award shall be presented at the annual meeting of the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Association, Inc. Points shall be based on one year's accumulation, from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

16.03 Dogs must have at least 20 Open points from June 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup> of the applicable year to be eligible. Points will be from weekend trials only. From there, the award will be based on National Trials and Regional Eliminations.

Note: Only those Regional Eliminations which qualify as a Championship are eligible to apply towards the Top Performance award.

16.04 The Performance Classic trial will be the beginning national trial each year, even if it ends prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> in order to keep the number of nationals the same each year.

16.05 The Regional Elimination trial will be based on regularly scheduled regionals for each year and only one Regional Elimination can count per year. Regionals scheduled or rescheduled to be held after June 1<sup>st</sup> will apply to the previous year.

16.06 For National trials, a dog must make the top 32 to receive a qualifying score (10/20). Each national trial will have a point value of 800 points and the value will drop 25 points per placement throughout the Saturday cut (1st - 800, 2nd - 775, 3rd - 750, etc.). In addition, 100 bonus points will be awarded to the Champion, 75 for the 1st runner up, 50 for the 2nd runner up and 25 for the 3rd runner up.

16.07 Each Regional Elimination will have a point value of 600 points and the value will drop 25 points per placement until the last dog or points run out (1<sup>st</sup> - 600, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 575, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 550, etc.). In addition, 100 points will be awarded to the Champion, 75 for the 1<sup>st</sup> runner up, 50 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> runner up and 25 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> runner up.

16.08 The placement for the Regional Eliminations and National trials is determined by the score of the last round in which the dog ran.

16.09 The National Officers shall be responsible for conducting the award ceremony for the Top Performance Award winner. This presentation shall be made by the Purina representative.

## **Section 17 OPEN/AMATEUR TRIAL FORMAT:**

17.01 Eligibility: Any dog that has six (6) or less Open points, including first place points, is classified as an Amateur dog and is eligible for the Amateur division. An Open dog is one that has seven (7) or more Open points of any type. Entrants are responsible for the proper classification of their dogs (Amateur or Open). An Amateur dog can run in either the Amateur or Open Division at the owner's discretion (including moving back and forth between the two) until the dog achieves seven (7) Open points. If an Amateur dog earns seven (7) or more points in the Open Division, and if the dog has earned at least seven (7) Amateur points of any kind, then the dog will receive their Amateur Champion title if the dog does not already have an Amateur Champion title.

17.02 Once any of the foregoing benchmarks are achieved, the dog can no longer compete in the Amateur Division, except as noted in the following sentence. The only exception would be that should a dog be drawn for the second day of a weekend trial and on the prior day it achieved any one of the aforementioned benchmarks the dog would be allowed to continue in the Amateur Division in the second day trial if originally drawn for that trial. A dog cannot compete in the Open portion and the Amateur portion of an Amateur/Open trial on the same day.

17.03 Trial Format: Amateur Trials are to be conducted following the last brace of the Open Division of the trial. There will be five birds released first brace of the Amateur Trial, and five birds released for each brace thereafter (e.g.: 24 Open dogs drawn to run the first 12 braces, then 8 Amateur dogs drawn to run the next 4 braces).

17.04 The Amateur portion of the trial shall consist of a maximum of four braces (8 dogs), and a minimum of two braces (4 dogs). The combined total of Amateur and Open braces shall not exceed 16 nor can it be less than 8. Under the rules of a recognized field trial, the minimum is 12 dogs (6 braces) for an Open trial. Also 4 dogs (2 braces) are the

minimum for an Amateur Trial under this Open/Amateur format. The trial shall be advertised in the schedule portion of the NSTRA magazine and website if it is an Amateur/Open trial or Open. If advertised as an Open trial all rules pertaining to NSTRA Open trials apply. The entry fee shall be the same for both the Amateur and the Open portion of the Amateur/Open trial.

17.05 Entries in the Open/Amateur trial: Entries in the Open division of the trial shall be limited to five (5) dogs per owner and or handler per trial. Two shall be specified with the additional dogs to be added to the field seven (7) days prior to the trial only if the trial is not full per rules of a recognized field trial. Under the Open/Amateur format 24 Open dogs and 8 Amateur dogs (16 braces) is considered a full trial. Preference shall be given to filling the Amateur division first.

17.06 Entries in the Amateur division shall be limited to two (2) dogs per owner and/or handler per trial. One shall be specified with the additional dog to be added to the field seven (7) days prior to the trial only if the trial is not full (8) dogs on that date. Preference shall be given to filling the Amateur division first.

17.07 Regional Eligibility: An Amateur dog is eligible to compete in the Regional Elimination Trial once it has earned five (5) amateur points during the qualifying period.

17.08 Drawing the Trial: Drawing procedures should utilize the Double/Double format utilizing Endurance drawing logic. Handlers/Owners may be drawn to run back-to-back braces in the Amateur division, if necessary. This should be avoided if possible but in the event that 2 handlers have 2 dogs each entered, back-to-back draws may be necessary. Handlers/Owners may be drawn back-to-back in the last two braces of the Open portion of the trial.

17.09 Established NSTRA Sanction Fees shall apply. The Amateur/Open shall be sanctioned under one fee for both divisions.

17.10 Points Earned: Points earned as an Amateur will only count

towards an Amateur championship (which is defined as a total of 18 Amateur points, 9 of which must be First Place Amateur points) and eligibility in the dog's regional elimination trial upon earning 5 points during the region's specified time period. Amateur points will not count for any other titles, invitations to National trials, High Points Awards, Performance Awards, or other awards in the Open Division. These points are Amateur points only.

17.11 A Three Point Trial: 12 braces (24 dogs) are required for a three point Open Division trial.

17.12 Applicability: All rules of NSTRA regarding judging standards in effect for the Open Division shall apply to the Amateur Division.

17.13 If total braces of Amateur dogs and Open dogs are less than 16, adjustments can be made to the Open Division in or to fill the void (e.g.: If 24 Open dogs are entered and only 6 Amateur dogs entered 7 days prior to the trial, an additional open brace can be added if entries are available). Braces may not be added after the draw.

17.14 If total braces of Amateur dogs and Open dogs are more than 16, adjustments can be made to the Open Division with approval of the National Officers on a case-by-case basis. 4/10

17.15 All scheduled Open/Amateur field trials will be officially sanctioned trials by NSTRA.

17.16 Points: All Amateur/Open trials shall be run under National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association all age rules. Points shall be awarded as follows:

Amateur portion of a trial:

4 entries:                      One point for first place

5-6 entries:                    Two points for first place  
One point for second place

7-8 entries:        Three points for first place  
                         Two points for second place  
                         One point for third place

Open portion of a trial:

12-17 entries:     One point for first place

18-23 entries:     Two points for first place  
                         One point for second place

24-plus entries:   Three points for first place  
                         Two points for second place  
                         One point for third place

**17.17 Bye Dogs:** Should an uneven number of Amateur entries be received; a bye dog may be used to round out the field provided the bye dog meets all the eligibility criteria for Amateur competition (6 or less Open NSTRA points). If no suitable bye dog is available, the last Amateur entry received will be returned with a full refund. In the event of an uneven number of entries in the Open Class, a standby dog may be used. An Amateur entry may compete in the Open Class if he so chooses but may not compete in both classes on the same day. There are no changes to the rules governing bye dogs in the Open Trial.

## **Section 18 OPEN/NOVICE TRIAL:**

18.01 All Open/Novice trials shall be run under National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association all age rules. Championship points shall be awarded as follows:

12-17 entries:	One point for first place
18-23 entries:	Two points for first place One point for second place
24-32 entries:	Three points for first place Two points for second place One point for third place

18.02 A Novice dog is one that has a total of six (6) Open points or less. An Open dog is one that has seven (7) or more Open points.

18.03 Entrants are responsible for assuring their Novice dog has six (6) points or less.

18.04 An Open and Novice dog shall not be drawn against each other. All Open dogs will be braced together, and all Novice dogs will be braced together. The draw will be done utilizing randomized braces.  
4/14

18.05 In the event of an uneven number of entries in the Novice Class, the last entry received will be returned with fee refunded.

18.06 In the event of an uneven number of entries in the Open Class, a standby dog may be used. If unavailable, a Novice entry may compete in the Open Class if he so chooses.

18.07 An Open/Novice dog is eligible to compete in the Regional Elimination trial.

18.08 Established NSTRA sanction fees shall apply.

## **Section 19 REGION CHALLENGE:**

19.01 All Region Challenge Trails shall be run under National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association all age rules. Each region may participate in no more than one Region Challenge trial per year. Championship points to be awarded as follows:

- 12-17 entries:     One point for first place
- 18-23 entries:     Two points for first place  
                         One point for second place
- 24-32 entries:     Three points for first place  
                         Two points for second place  
                         One point for third place

19.02 Regions will be permitted to hold one 2-day trial per calendar year.

19.03 Entries shall be determined by regions involved in the challenge.

19.04 Established NSTRA sanction fees shall apply.

19.05 Championship points earned in a Region Challenge shall count towards the dog's home region High Point competition.



## **Section 20 AMATEUR FIELD TRIAL:**

20.01 Eligibility: Any dog that has six (6) or less Open points, including first place points, is classified as an Amateur dog and is eligible for the Amateur division. An Open dog is one that has seven (7) or more Open points of any type. All Amateur Trials shall be run under National Shoot-To-Retrieve Association rules. All trials must be scheduled through Region Presidents. Entrants are responsible for the proper classification of their dogs. There is no sanctioning fee required to be paid to NSTRA for Amateur trials.

20.02 All scheduled Amateur field trials will be officially sanctioned trials by NSTRA.

20.03 Amateur points shall be awarded as follows:

4 entries	One point for first place
5-6 entries	Two points for first place One point for second place
7 or more entries	Three points for first place Two points for second place One point for third place

20.04 All Amateur points acquired in the time frame for qualifying for Regional Elimination trials shall count as qualification points for Regional Elimination trials.

20.05 No Amateur points shall apply toward the Top Performance Award.

20.06 Total number of entries per owner and/or handler shall comply with 8.08 under Rules for Recognized Field Trials.

20.07 Trial participants must be NSTRA members.

20.08 Awards: plaques, trophies, etc. shall be awarded to the top six placements of each Amateur trial.

20.09 Trial articles and photos of the placements of Amateur trials will be published in the NSTRA magazine if forwarded to the NSTRA office.

## **Section 21 REQUIREMENTS FOR CHAMPION CERTIFICATION:**

21.01 Registry: A dog must be enrolled in a recognized breed or field dog registry, approved by National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association Inc. officers and Board of Directors to be awarded the certificate of champion. *See also* Rule 8.04.

21.02 Points: Champion points must be accumulated by dog placement in field trials recognized by the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc.

21.03 Champion Status shall be attained when a dog has accumulated a total of eighteen (18) points as follows:

a) Recognized Field Trial Winners:

\*Based on 24-32 dog trial

Three (3) points for winner

Two (2) points for second place

One (1) point for third place

b) Dog of the Year Eliminations Regional Trial Winners:

\*Based on 24-32 dog trial

Four (4) points for first place

Three (3) points for second place

Two (2) points for third place

One (1) point for fourth place

\*Based on 18-23 dog trial

Three (3) points for first place

Two (2) points for second place

One (1) point for third place

\*Based on 17 dogs or less

Two (2) points for first place  
One (1) point for second place

c) National Dog of the Year Trial Winners:

Six (6) points for winner  
Five (5) points for first runner-up  
Four (4) points for second runner-up  
Three (3) points for third runner-up

All points received in the finals of Regional Elimination trials and/or NSTRA Championship trials may be counted as first place points.

21.04 First place wins: A dog must have a minimum on nine (9) first place points in his total point accumulation.

21.05 Backing: A dog must demonstrate that he will back another dog to be eligible for certification as champion.

## **Section 22 OPEN/AMATEUR/COMBINED TRIAL FORMAT 07/19**

22.01 Eligibility: Any dog that has six (6) or less Open points, including first place points, is classified as an Amateur dog and is eligible for the Amateur division. An Open dog is one that has seven (7) or more Open points of any type. Entrants are responsible for the proper classification of their dogs (Amateur or Open). In the OPEN/COMBINED trial format an Amateur dog competes in the Amateur and Open division in the same brace. An Amateur dog can run in either the Amateur or Open Division at the owner's discretion (including moving back and forth between the two) until the dog achieves seven (7) Open points. If an Amateur dog earns seven (7) or more points in the Open Division, and if the dog has earned at least seven (7) Amateur points of any kind, then the dog will receive their Amateur Champion title if the dog does not already have an Amateur Champion title.

22.02 Once any of the foregoing benchmarks are achieved, the dog can no longer compete in the Amateur Division, except as noted in the following sentence. The only exception would be that should a dog be drawn for the second day of a weekend trial and on the prior day it achieved any one of the benchmarks the dog would be allowed to continue to compete for Amateur and Open points in the second day trial if originally drawn as an Amateur for that trial.

22.03 Trial Format: OPEN/COMBINED Trials are to be conducted and drawn the same as an OPEN Trial format, where all the dogs are drawn as if they are Open dogs. Amateur dogs can be braced against Open dogs. Amateur dogs can place in both the Open division and Amateur division of the trial.

22.04 The Amateur portion of the trial shall consist of a minimum of 4 dogs. The combined total of Amateur and Open braces shall not exceed 16 nor can it be less than 6. Under the rules of a recognized field trial, the minimum is 12 dogs (6 braces) for an Open trial. 4 Amateur dogs are the minimum for Amateur placements. The trial shall be advertised in

the schedule portion of the NSTRA magazine and website if it is an Open/Combined trial or Open. All rules pertaining to NSTRA Open trials apply. The entry fee shall be the same for both the Amateur and Open dogs.

22.05 Entries in the Open/Combined trial: Entries in both the Open and Amateur divisions of the trial shall be limited to five (5) dogs per owner and or handler per trial. Three (3) shall be specified with the additional dogs to be added to the field seven (7) days prior to the trial only if the trial is not full per rules of a recognized field trial. Under the Open/Combined format 24 dogs (12 braces) is considered a full 3 point Open trial. Preference shall be given to entering eight (8) Amateur dogs in order to achieve a 3 point Amateur trial.

22.06 Regional Eligibility: An Amateur dog is eligible to compete in the Regional Elimination Trial once it has earned five (5) Amateur points or (1) Open point in the regions qualifying period.

22.07 Drawing the Trial: Drawing procedures should utilize the same format as an Open trial. (Note: The Open/Combined format can be used on one field and the Amateur/Open format on the other.)

22.08 Established NSTRA Sanction Fees shall apply. The Open/Combined shall be sanctioned under one fee for both divisions.

22.09 Points Earned: Points earned as an Amateur will only count toward an Amateur championship (which is defined as a total of 18 Amateur points, 9 of which must be First Place Amateur points) and eligibility in the dog's regional elimination trial upon earning 5 points during the region's qualifying period. Amateur points will not count for any other titles, invitations to National trials, High Points Awards, Performance Awards, or other awards in the Open Division. The only exception would be if NSTRA chooses to have a National Amateur Champions Trial. These points are Amateur points only.

22.10 A Three Point Trial: 12 braces (24 dogs) are required for a three point Open/Combined trial.

22.11 Applicability: All rules of NSTRA regarding judging standards in effect for the Open Division shall apply to the Amateur Division.

22.12 All scheduled Open/Combined trials will be officially sanctioned trials by NSTRA.

22.13 If an Amateur dog has a score high enough relative to the open dogs, an Open placement will be awarded. (Amateur dogs are eligible to place in both the Amateur and Open divisions of the trial.)

22.14 Awards for placements in the Open side will be the same as any Open trial. The awards for placements in the Amateur side will be NSTRA placement certificates. (The trial chairman may choose to give awards for Amateur placements, but this should not take away from the awards for Open placements).

22.15 Points: All Open/Combined trials shall be run under National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association all age rules. Points shall be awarded as follows:

Amateur portion of a trial:

4 entries:	One point for first place
5-6 entries:	Two points for first place One point for second place
7 or more entries:	Three points for first place Two points for second place One point for third place

Open portion of a trial:

12-17 combined entries:	One point for first place
18-23 combined entries:	Two points for first place One point for second place
24-plus combined entries:	Three points for first place Two points for second place One point for third place

22.16 Bye Dogs: The procedure for handling bye dogs in the Open/Combined trial is the same as in the Open trial. If the trial is drawn and an Open or Amateur is pulled, it can be replaced with either an Open or an Amateur dog.

## **Section 23 MENTOR PROGRAM**

23.1 In order to expand our outreach and assistance to new members coming in to our sport, a mentor program was initiated to allow seasoned trailers to help and instruct new members beginning their trialing career. This program allows a new member to have an experienced member to accompany them in the field to instruct them in handling their dog. (04/16)

- a) Mentor or mentors must be determined and trial chairman notified prior to the start of the trial. More than one may need to be determined in case one of the mentors falls into a back to back situation.
- b) Mentor may not be used if the requested mentor has the following brace on the same field.
- c) Requesting member is allowed the use of a mentor a total of 8 times. This must be tracked at the Region level.
- d) Mentor program is to be limited to weekend trial levels only. No Region elimination or National trials allowed.
- e) Mentor may also be the designated gunner.
- f) In no case will there be more than 6 people in the field during any brace.



**NATIONAL SHOOT-TO-RETRIEVE  
FIELD TRIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I  
NAME**

**Section I**

The name of the association shall be the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc.

**ARTICLE II  
PURPOSE**

1. To promote, carry on, conduct and foster research, education, training and publication related to the sport, breeding, enjoyment, appreciation and competition of upland game hunting with dogs.
2. To establish education and provide leadership to regional and local organizations associated with our National organization.
3. To establish and regulate the national standard for Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trials for dogs and to conserve game by using well-trained, reliable hunting dogs before and after the shot.
4. To aid in the prevention of cruelty to animals by discouraging nonselective and uncontrolled breeding, which produces unwanted and uncared for dogs.

## Section I

A. The primary objective of this organization is to promote, carry on, conduct and foster research, education, training and publication related to the sport, breeding, enjoyment, appreciation and competition of upland game hunting with dogs.

B. To establish education and provide leadership to regional and local organizations associated with our National organization.

C. To establish and regulate the national standard for Shoot-to-Retrieve Field Trials for dogs and to conserve game by using well-trained, reliable hunting dogs before and after the shot.

D. To aid in the prevention of cruelty to animals by discouraging nonselective and uncontrolled breeding, which produces unwanted and uncared for dogs.

E. As part of the education process, establish and regulate the standards for Shoot-To-Retrieve field trials under which seminars are conducted to educate judges on the standards established and regulated with specific judging, rules, scoring and awards and thereby encouraging members to fulfill their obligations to better service the upland game hunting interests.

F. Schedule and conduct annual “Dog of the Year” and/or National Championship field trials, said Dog of the Year and the National Championship Trial to be held at the Conservation Bird Dog Club at Amo, Indiana.

## ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

### Section I

Membership in the National Association shall consist of members who subscribe to and fully support the objectives and goals as set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws, field trial rules and guidelines governing recognized trials of the National Association.

### Section II

The National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc. does not discriminate because of age, race, religion, national origin or gender.

## ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATION

### Section I

The National Association will consist of regions where boundaries and divisions shall be determined by the National Officers and Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE V OFFICERS

### Section I

A. Officers of the National Association shall consist of a president, first vice-president, second vice-president, secretary and treasurer. They shall serve three-year terms.

B. The terms of office and election of the president, first vice-president and treasurer shall occur with a one-year separation from that of the second vice-president and secretary. The election of the second vice-president and secretary for a three-year term shall occur in calendar year 2002 and each three years thereafter. The calendar year 2000-2002 terms of the president, first vice-president and treasurer shall be extended by one year with the election of those offices for a three-year term to occur in calendar year 2003 and each three years thereafter.

C. The officers shall be nominated and elected in accordance with the following: **(08/20)**

1. During election years for National Officers and not later than September 10 of those years, and independent professional firm designated by the current National Officers shall **create and** mail a ballot, **by USPS mail or establish an approved electronic balloting system,** to every NSTRA member in good standing. **In addition to the ballot, a resume of each candidate nominated for national office shall be provided and available for review from the National Office, on the website, by mail, or in the electronic balloting system.**
2. **If a ballot is received by USPS,** said ballot must be marked, sealed and returned via mail to the designated firm in the envelope provided and postmarked no later than September 30 or October 1 in those years when September 30 falls on a Sunday.

3. **If a vote is conducted by an electronic balloting system, the recipient member shall mark and return the ballot as required by the electronic balloting system.**
4. **Regardless of the system used, the ballots will remain sealed until the vote counting process is initiated.**

D. No later than October 10 of each election year the designated firm handling the election will open the ballots and begin counting the votes for each candidate. The counting of votes is to be completed no later than October 15 of each election year. When the vote count is completed and no later than October 15 of each election year the designated firm will notify the National President via telephone of the results of the voting followed up with a document sent to the National President via certified overnight delivery certifying the election results. When notified the National President will notify the current National Officers and all candidates on the ballot of the results of the election. A representative for the designated firm shall make an official announcement of the election results during the awards banquet and meeting held during the Dog of the Year trial held the same year. The newly elected officers will assume their offices as of the first Sunday following the general business meeting during which the election results were announced. The designated firm shall hold in their possession the ballots for that election year until the end of the Dog of the Year trial the following year.

The nominees for national office shall be selected as follows:

1. All National Officers desiring re-election shall be placed on the ballot.
2. The nominating committee shall provide a minimum of one (1) and maximum of two (2) candidates for each position including any National Officer seeking re-election.
3. The nominating committee shall be appointed by the National President prior to February 15 and shall be comprised of five

(5) NSTRA members of good standing. The selection shall include three (3) from regions east of the Mississippi River and two (2) from regions west of the Mississippi River.

4. Any at large candidates can be added to the ballot, becoming the third candidate, if received by the National Office prior to July 1. The “at-large nomination,” when received, must be accompanied by the signatures of at least 150 members of good standing along with a personal resume of the candidate. In the event of more than one at large nominee for a single position, the nominating committee will determine which candidate will be entered on the ballot. In no event shall more than three (3) candidates for each position be considered or placed on the ballot.

D. The office of president shall be limited to two (2) consecutive terms (a term to consist of three (3) years).

E. In case of a vacancy in the office of the president, the first vice-president automatically becomes president.

F. In case of a vacancy in the office of vice-presidents, secretary or treasurer, the officers shall appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. The appointee will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors if there is one year or more remaining in the term. A mail ballot will be mailed to each member of the Board.

## ARTICLE VI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall consist of the current National Officers, the past National President who will serve until the term(s) of the current National President has expired, and one individual from each Region. The Regional representative will be the current Regional President, or if the current Regional President is unable to attend, another officer from that Region (i.e., v.p., sec/treas., regional BOD). Each region must

designate a director other than the President 7 days prior to each scheduled Director's meeting in October and April.

## ARTICLE VII HEADQUARTERS

The National Headquarters are established in Plainfield, Indiana; the headquarters may be relocated by unanimous vote of National Officers and simple majority concurrence by the National Board of Directors. Any relocation of the National Headquarters shall be limited to a distance no more than 50 miles in any direction from the Conservation Bird Dog Club currently located in Amo, Indiana. 8/22

# NATIONAL SHOOT-TO-RETRIEVE FIELD TRIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

#### Section I

Membership in the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc. shall be open to all persons expressing their interest in the objectives and purposes of this association. The members shall further signify and express their interest and intention in participating in the research, education and training related to the sport, as well as in the area of prevention of cruelty to animals.

#### Section II

Membership into the Association shall be granted to any individual meeting membership requirements, including current dues payable.

#### Section III

Each member shall be given a permanent membership card and number with Home Region designated. Members requesting a change of Home Region must do so, in writing, through the National Office between the dates of October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. *\*Exception: A member who permanently relocates to within the boundaries of a Region, other than their Home Region, may make written application to the NSTRA office at any time to request a change in their Home Region. Dues shall be paid annually.*



## Section IV

Any member proven to be guilty of practicing or using unfair or dishonest methods of entering or handling in any recognized competition, or who knowingly commits an intentional act which shall tend to injure the honest character or reputation of a fellow member, or to disturb the harmony or function of the Association, shall be automatically expelled from all NSTRA activities for a period of one year. A second offense shall result in lifetime expulsion from the Association. This disciplinary action may be initiated on the Regional or National level. All regional disciplinary action must be coordinated and approved by the National Officers and Board of Directors, all national disciplinary action must be coordinated and approved by the board of Directors. In all cases, the accused shall be given the opportunity to defend themselves at all levels.

Any person barred from Shoot-To-Retrieve Trials as per Article 1, Section IV, said suspension shall also include any dogs owned by the person at the time of the infraction, for a period of time concurrent with the expulsion of the member, not to exceed one year.

## Section V

In order to judge a NSTRA field trial, to be a field marshal, gunner, handler, owner, to be chairman of said trial, to hold any NSTRA office or to vote on any NSTRA business, a person must be a member in good standing with NSTRA.

## ARTICLE II MEETINGS

### Section I

Meetings shall be scheduled as determined by the Officers and Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE III FINANCE

### Section I

The annual membership fee will be payable to the National Association. The fees shall be recommended by the Officers and Board of Directors and approved by the membership.

### Section II

Field trial registration fees shall be required for each recognized field trial. The fee shall be recommended by the Officers and Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE IV DUTIES OF MEMBERS

### Section I

The National Office shall be advised of any change of address, phone, etc.

### Section II

Attend National Association meetings whenever possible.

### Section III

Serve on committees as requested.

## ARTICLE V DUTIES OF REGIONS

### Section I

Support the National Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trial Association, Inc.

### Section II

A. Establish field trial schedule dates.

B. Submit field trial schedule to National Office through Region Presidents.

C. Promote Shoot-To-Retrieve Field Trials in their area.

D. Each Regional President shall submit an annual financial statement to the region members present at the annual regional meeting.

E. All regional officers shall turn over complete records pertaining to their office to succeeding officers within 30 days.

### Section III

A. The Regional Secretary shall provide the National Office with the owner's name and address and dog's registered name and number, of the regional semi-finalists, with the numbers of semi-finalists being predetermined by the officers and Board of Directors of the National Association, for the National Dog of the Year trial.

B. All regional winners shall be the first dog sent from the region to the National Invitational Dog of the Year trial. All subsequent dogs sent will be determined by an open vote of each region on a specified date and time to be determined independently by each region, as whether to use placement or high point dog.

C. The quota from each region for the National Invitational Dog of the year trial shall be based on only qualified dogs (drawn and run) in the Regional. Bye dogs may not be considered in determining the region's quota.

D. All regional high point dogs are not required to run in the Regional Elimination Trial provided the National Office has been notified that the region is using the High Point System.

\*If high point dog does not run in the Regional Elimination trial, he may not be counted in the number of dogs run in the Regional Elimination trial for quotas.

E. The region president or secretary shall be responsible for submitting all Regional Elimination trial results to the NSTRA Office no later than five days after the running.

## ARTICLE VI DUTIES OF OFFICERS

### Section I - Duties of President

A. Preside at all meetings of the Association.

B. Appoint committees as needed.

C. Monitor, coordinate, and review functions of the NSTRA Office.

### Section II - Duties of Vice-President

A. First Vice-President assumes the duties of the President in his absence.

B. Second Vice-President presides in the absence of the President and First Vice-President.

C. Perform special duties as assigned by the President.

### Section III - Duties of Secretary

A. Keep the minutes of all meetings.

B. Issue correspondences.

C. The NSTRA Office shall maintain (for the Secretary) an association membership roster which includes the address and telephone number.

D. Assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents.

E. Maintain necessary and appropriate files of the current information as well as the historical reference.

F. The NSTRA Office shall receive funds (for the Secretary) coming into the Association, giving receipt thereof to the Treasurer.

G. The NSTRA Office shall receive and validate all recognized field trial placements (for the Secretary) and forward said validated placements to the appropriate registry.

### Section IV - Duties of Treasurer

A. The NSTRA Office shall receive and deposit funds of the Association (for the Treasurer) giving receipt thereof.

B. The NSTRA Office shall keep an itemized record of all receipts and expenditures (for the Treasurer).

C. Report on financial matters at Association meetings.

D. Submit records to an audit committee as required.

## Section V - General

A. The Officers shall provide assistance to the regions.

B. The Officers shall manage all National Championship field trials. The Dog of the Year and Trial of Champions trials shall be held at the Conservation Bird Dog Club, Amo, Indiana.

C. The Officers and Board of Directors shall receive and decide on grievances.

D. The Officers shall attend board meetings as required.

E. The Officers shall manage the hiring and employment of all paid employees of the Association.

## ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Section I

Assist the Officers in the operation and management of the Association.

### Section II

Attend board meetings as required.

### Section III

Receive and decide on grievances, with the Officers.

## ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

### Section I

#### Amendments to the Constitution and By-laws:

A. All proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-laws shall be submitted to the National Officers at least ninety (90) days prior to the first day of the Champion of Champions or the Dog of the Year trial.

B. The National officers shall review proposed amendments for consistency with the laws of Indiana and the spirit and purpose of NSTRA. Recommended changes to the amendment shall be approved by its author prior to being forwarded to the National Board of Directors.

C. The National Board of Directors shall decide, by a **two-thirds (2/3)** majority vote, which, if any, of these proposed amendments will be submitted to the general membership for ballot vote.

D. D. After approval by the Board of Directors, the text of the proposed amendment, arguments in favor and against the proposed amendment (if any), and a ballot for the general membership shall be included in the next issue of the NSTRA magazine **in addition to an electronic balloting system to ensure more opportunities for member participation, better security of and accuracy in the election, and to allow faster application of amendments. (08/20)**

E. All ballots received within forty-five (45) days after publication of the magazine will be counted.

F. The proposed amendment shall pass if approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the ballots cast and counted.

G. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws will become effective upon publication of the next issue of the NSTRA magazine.

## ARTICLE IX IDEMNIFICATION

### Section I

The corporation shall indemnify every officer and director, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, against expenses reasonably incurred by him in connection with any action, suit or proceeding to which he may be made a party by reason of his being or having been a director or officers of the corporation, or, at its request, of any other corporation of which it is a stockholder or creditor and from which he is not entitled to be indemnified, except in relation to matters as to which he shall be finally adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable from misconduct; in the event of a settlement, indemnification shall be provided only in connection with such matters covered by the settlement as to which the corporation is advised by counsel that the person to be indemnified did not commit such a breach of duty. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of other rights to which he may be entitled.



## NOTES

[illegible]

[illegible]

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