

# NATIONAL BIRD DOG CIRCUIT RULE BOOK

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## **RULES OF COMPETITION IN THE FIELD**

### **A. EVENTS**

#### **1. *MINIMUM NUMBER OF DOGS REQUIRED TO MAKE AN EVENT***

4 different handlers and 8 dogs, not owned by the promoter to make a top gun (singles) or a doubles division. In all other divisions, 2 handlers and 4 dogs not owned by the promoter, will be required. If the minimum number of dogs is not met, the competitor/dog team will play for qualifying points only. Competitors will no longer be able to play for champion points less than 5,3,1.

2. ***“The Top Gun Single Main Event”*** consists of one (1) hunter and one (1) dog. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest a minimum of three (3) qualifying birds. Qualifying birds can be one of or any combination of the following species- Chucker, Pheasant, Quail, or Hungarian Partridge as long as the same quantity and combination are used for all competitors even if birds still remain in the field from the previous competitor. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. A Top Gun Single Main event will have a format of a preliminary run and a run-off or two run combined score to declare a winner. Any exceptions to the listed Formats must be approved in advance of the event by BDC.
3. ***“The Doubles Main Event”*** consists of two (2) hunters and one (1) dog. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest six (6) qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted for competitors, but they are not allowed to share the quota of shells. A doubles event will be formatted with a preliminary run and a run-off or one single run top score in the same field. Any exceptions to these formats must be approved in advance of the event by BDC. It is acceptable to adjust the number of qualifying birds harvested to accommodate for weather or daylight.
4. ***“The Hunter Division”*** comprises one (1) competitor and one (1) dog per brace. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest a minimum of three (3) qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. This event consists of one (1) of the formats listed for the Hunter Division.

Hunters will compete for trophies, ribbons or certificates unless otherwise determined by the club or competition organizer. A competitor can compete in the Hunter division if this is where they feel most comfortable. However, it is the intent of this division to provide an event to those competitors and/or dogs that are either learning the BDC format of competition or those who compete very infrequently so that they may compete against others with similar skill and experience levels. Therefore, the BDC reserves the right to no longer allow a competitor to compete in the Hunter Division if it is determined that the competitor has achieved a level of skill and aptitude that no longer maintains this intent. Affected competitors will be allowed and encouraged to utilize their experience and success in Main Event Competitions.

5. ***“The Puppy Event”*** comprises one (1) competitor and one (1) dog whose age was twenty-four (24) months or younger on the first of the year (January 1). A dog meeting these criteria is allowed to compete in this event the entire year – its birthday has no significance until January 1 the following year and it is now recognized as a three (3) year old and is no longer able to compete as a puppy, with the exception of the National Championships the following year if qualified. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter

to safely harvest a minimum of three (3) qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. This event consists of one (1) of the puppy formats listed in the promoters guide.

5. ***“The Masters Top Gun Event”*** comprises one (1) competitor and one (1) dog. A competitor in this division must be 50 years and older. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest a minimum of three (3) qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. This event consists of one (1) of the formats listed for masters in the promoters guide.
6. ***“The Ladies Event”*** comprised of one (1) Lady Competitor and one (1) dog. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest three (3) qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. This event consists of one (1) of the formats listed for the ladies event in the promoters guide.
7. ***“The Youth Event”*** comprised of one (1) competitor qualified as a youth and one (1) dog. This team has a predetermined amount of time established by the promoter to safely harvest a minimum of three qualifying birds. Two shells are allowed per bird planted. This event consists of one (1) of the formats for youth events listed in the promoters guide. Youth competitors must provide a copy of their gun safety certificate prior to participation at a BDC event.
8. **LADIES, YOUTH and HUNTER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

Ladies, Youth, and Hunter Players of the Year will be awarded to the competitor that has the most QUALIFYING points. Qualifying points are earned based on the number of dogs you beat in your stake.

Points that count toward Ladies, Youth, and Hunter Player of the Year are as follows:

LADIES: Ladies only. Because there are several events that do not have these stakes available at them, competitors in these 3 divisions can enter the Top Gun division and declare that they want their entry to count towards the Ladies Division. Any Champion Points earned in the Division will go to the dog’s Lifetime World Ranking. Competitors can only declare in one stake/entry.

YOUTH: Youth only. Because there are several events that do not have these stakes available at them, competitors in these 3 divisions can enter the Top Gun division and declare that they want their entry to count towards the Youth Divisions. Any Champion Points earned in the Division will go to the dog’s Lifetime World Ranking. Competitors can only declare in one stake/entry.

HUNTER: Hunter only. A competitor can play in the Hunter division as long as they’d like, unless the Board feels that the competitor should not be permitted to play in that division. In addition, a competitor can only win the Hunter Player of the Year one time. There will no longer be a run-off competition at Nationals for the Hunter Player of the Year. Because there are several events that do not have these stakes available at them, competitors in these 3 divisions can enter the Top Gun division and declare that they want their entry to count towards the Ladies, Youth, or Hunter Divisions. Any Champion Points earned in the Division will go to the dog’s Lifetime World Ranking. Competitors can only declare in one stake/entry.

## **B. GENERAL**

1. Electronic Collars are permitted in any event unless otherwise determined by the host or competition organizer and promoted as such prior to the competition date. GPS collars are not permitted.

2. Competitors are not allowed to run a check cord or leash on their dog during the competition run.
3. If your dog does not enter the competition field for any reason and attempt to hunt, that run will be deemed “non-competitive” and you will forfeit your entry and sanction fees. Furthermore, this dog will get zero points and will not count toward the minimum number of dogs to make a stake.
4. The BDC requires that all competitors, scorekeepers, bird planters, spectators and others in the vicinity of the competition sign a liability and promotional release prior to their respective participation in a sanctioned or co-sanctioned BDC competition.
5. It is required that all competition fields are flushed each morning prior to the first brace. This activity may NOT be performed by a competitor entered in that competition or a dog entered in that competition. It is recommended that the bird setter and scorekeeper of each respective field do this with a dog not in season or ATV as a means to become familiar with “their” field. Bitches that are in season/in heat should not be used to flush a field.
6. One extra bird must be set for the first brace in each utilized competition field or on the first brace after a field was just flushed (except in Run-off and One dog competitions.)
7. Birds are not to be released or set within close proximity of a boundary. Every effort will be made to assure that released birds remain in the field prior to a brace beginning. Any bird(s) witnessed leaving the field while the field is being set by either the bird setter or scorekeeper will be immediately replaced.
8. A competition field will not be planted until the competing competitors are in the designated blind. The scorekeeper will direct the bird setter when to set the field.
9. Scorekeeper and bird setters are not allowed to compete in the same division that they are scoring, unless pre-determined by the host or competition organizer due to a shortage of competition personnel. All efforts should be made to prevent this from occurring.
10. Bitches in season will have their braces conducted last, or in an all-female field; never in a separate field.

Bitches in season will not be allowed to run in Match-play formatted events. Bitches in season will be limited to two stakes per day at Majors and Super Majors.

Hosts or competition organizers of events that are not Super Majors shall have the option to prohibit bitches in season from competing, but shall so indicate such prohibition on the BDC website, and shall refund one hundred (100%) percent of any entry fees for dogs that do not run because they are in season. Similarly, one hundred (100%) of entry fees shall also be refunded for any stakes for a bitch in season that are cancelled because the bitch is limited to two stakes per day.

A competitor must make the host and competition organizer aware of the fact that his/her bitch is in season at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the dog and competitor.

11. All fields will be clearly defined by marked posts and/or an obvious natural boundary or other measure. It is the competitor’s responsibility to learn this information prior to their run, and in no circumstance will a rerun be granted because of lack of knowledge of the boundaries.

12. It is not the requirement of the BDC for a dog to be registered, have a documented pedigree or to be a “purebred”. Effective June 2017, dogs will be required to be registered with the UKC (United Kennel Club).
13. All BDC Super Major and Declared Major events will have a Rules Committee present consisting of at least 3 people.
  - a. The Rules Committee should consist of at least one pointing division representative, one flushing division representative and one “neutral” representative identified with both divisions or neither division (i.e., BDC staff, event organizer, preserves owner, etc.) The identities of the members of the Rules Committee shall be announced and/or posted at the event.
  - b. The Rules Committee shall be responsible for determining all Rules interpretations, deciding all protests, resolving all disputed issues and answering all rules or administrative questions arising during or related to the event.
  - c. The decisions of the Rules Committee shall be final for the event at which it presides.
  - d. The Rules Committee will not be asked to meet/discuss any judgement calls in the field. This means that any rulings on a safety, non-performing bird, or caught bird cannot be challenge. The ruling of the scorekeeper is final.
  - e. No person on the Rules Committee shall vote on any issue with respect to which he or she would have a conflict of interest, including any issue that would impact placement of the Rules Committee member or dog at that event. However, the other members of the Rules Committee may, in their discretion, consult and/or deliberate with a Rules Committee member having such a conflict of interest, provided that the member having the conflict does not vote on resolution of the issue or question.

### **C. PLAYER CONDUCT**

All competitors and those affiliated with a competitor agree to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and socially responsible manner. Competitors will not engage in behavior that damages the image of the BDC, its affiliates, sponsors or other competitors.

All competitors agree to refrain from behavior or language that might be perceived as threatening or offensive. This behavior and language should not be hearsay, and must be directed toward the person feeling threatened or offended.

Competitors will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with another teammate, competitor, sponsor, attendee or BDC representative at any time. This includes post event communication via email, telephone, etc. All competitors agree not to engage in any behavior which would endanger the health or safety of themselves, another competitor, spectator, attendee, sponsor, BDC representative, host or dog at any time.

All competitors agree to respect and support the decisions or rulings as administered by an official, host, marshal or other BDC representative. Once this ruling is made, it is final.

Competitors will not judge from the gallery.

All competitors understand that they are financially responsible for all fees and costs associated with competing and being a member of the BDC.

All competitors agree that they are required to be punctual and on time for posted brace times in

order to maintain the intentions and integrity of a competition.

All competitors agree not to use alcohol or any other controlled substance (unless prescribed by a physician) prior to or while competing.

All competitors agree that they will abide by the definition and expectations of Player Conduct as it is outlined above. Failure to do so will be subject to immediate disciplinary action as determined by the BDC Executive Board or its designee(s) assigned by the BDC Executive Board.

Violations of the Player Code of Conduct which are determined to be worthy of suspension or banishment will be determined by the BDC Executive Board or its designee(s) assigned by the BDC Executive Board. These determinations will be made and communicated via conference call and/or personal hearing, and then communicated in writing once a length of time is established. Under no circumstance will a competitor and his dog be allowed to compete in a BDC sanctioned competition during the time of suspension or banishment.

It is the intent of the BDC to host competitions whereby its competitors, participants, hosts, spectators, and the sponsors are able to have the greatest upland experience, to create an environment that is safe while enjoying a valued competition that is highly entertaining, and also exhibits the finest quality of dog work. No individual or party diminishing this intent will be tolerated or welcome within our organization.

Ignorance of the rules will not be grounds for protest. Any situation not covered in these rules or in the rulebook, is considered bad luck for the competitor. If it is in the rulebook that you can, you can; if it is in the rulebook that you can't, you can't; if it is not in the rulebook, you cannot.

Manipulation of these Codes of Conduct in any way that they were not intended, will not be tolerated.

#### **D. RULES OF SAFETY**

1. A safe shot is always the **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SHOOTER**. The BDC has no liability for accidents occurring at a BDC sanctioned event.
2. It is the recommendation of the BDC that all competitors and event personnel take all precautionary measures to protect themselves when they are in close proximity to a competition field or a place where shooting is conducted.
3. Running during competition is **NEVER** allowed. Scoresheets include "WATCH YOUR PACE" boxes on them. As you leave the gate, scorekeepers will inform competitors of what an acceptable pace is. From that point forward, anytime a scorekeeper has to slow a competitor down or believes the competitor to be moving at an unsafe pace, they will be penalized. First penalty is 2 points, second penalty is 4 points, and third penalty is a disqualification. Any penalty will be communicated at the time of the infraction.
4. No bird may be shot while on the ground.
5. No bird is to be shot in flight unless it is safe to do so. Failure to abide by this rule is subject to immediate disqualification as determined by the scorekeeper. The guidelines for safe shooting are determined as follows:
  - a. The bird must be rising and at a safe distance from the dog.
  - b. The bird must be clear of all personnel, structural property up to and including

temporary structures, permanent buildings, vehicles (occupied or unoccupied), roads or traversed paths and all other hazards that present potential liability consequences to the shooter.

- c. The skyline should be clearly visible to the shooter (below the bird) prior to taking the shot.
6. Blaze orange vests and/or caps must be worn during competition.
7. Firearms are to be free of ammunition and the action or chamber broken or open when not competing. Any competitor deemed to be negligent of safe gun handling risks immediate disqualification and banishment from future BDC competitions.
8. Only OEM produced loads are permissible in competition. Those competitors using a twelve (12) gauge gun are allowed to use shells no longer than two and three quarters (2  $\frac{3}{4}$ " ) inch in length and loads no greater than size six (6) shot. Competitors electing to utilize a twenty (20) gauge gun and smaller are allowed to use three (3") inch shells and loads no greater than size six (6) shot. Reloads in any caliber or load are *not* permissible. A Steel shot/Non-toxic exception will allow shot size to be no larger than shot size four (4)
9. Each host club may modify these requirements by adding to them to conform to imposed rules and regulations unique to them or otherwise enforced by an outside agency (no lead loads for instance).
10. If a competitor aids a dog across an obstruction such as a fence or other barrier, or leaves the field for any reason, competitors are able to take their gun out of bounds BUT, they must unload their firearm and the action or chamber must remain broken or open. If the competitor leaves the competition field with their gun loaded or the action/chamber is closed, it will result in an immediate disqualification.
11. Safety is always the responsibility of the shooter and will always be respected. A scorekeeper may call a safety at any time. In doubles, the shooter on the side of the bird should shoot the bird and the partner should never endanger others or property by swinging their gun in the direction of the bird. If a scorekeeper must proclaim disqualified no points will be scored and the team will be immediately disqualified.
12. Any gun placed on the ground prior to the run at the gate or in the competition field at any time will be declared an unsafe action and subject to immediate disqualification.
13. Competitors shall keep their dogs on a leash at all times not competing in a field. Competitors are liable for the actions of their dogs and shall indemnify BDC and any event host or organizer for any actions of their dog or injuries caused thereby. If a dog entered in an Event attacks another dog or person, the offending dog must be reported to BDC by the Event host or competition organizer within the same period provided for reporting scores and/or Event results. Event hosts and/or organizers shall have the option of banning any dog that has been reported to BDC as having attacked another dog or person. A dog defending itself from an attack by another dog should not be reported to BDC. But if it is not clear which of two dogs instigated an attack, both dogs should be reported to BDC.

#### **D. DISQUALIFICATIONS AND PENALTIES**

1. When a disqualification is determined, only the competitor will be disqualified and that score nullified. The dog may continue to compete, if previously entered in another event at that same competition. A competitor may be disqualified for any of the following acts:
  - a. Poor sportsmanship
  - b. Mistreating a dog in or out of competition field
  - c. Unsafe or reckless use of a firearm

- d. Use of alcohol or non-prescription drugs prior to or during a competition
  - e. Failure to adhere and/or abide by the instruction of BDC personnel
  - f. Behaving in a manner that may jeopardize the integrity of a competition or reflect poorly on the BDC, its sponsors, personnel or other strategic partners or relationships
2. All dead birds and bird parts **must** be removed from the competition field if at all possible prior to leaving that field. Intentionally leaving whole birds or bird parts in the competition field is not allowed.
  3. If a scorekeeper is unsure whether or not a competitor fired a shot that placed an individual or property in danger, he or she is obligated to inform the competitor that an inquiry will be conducted at the conclusion of the respective brace. If a scorekeeper deems that indeed an unsafe shot was fired, intentionally or otherwise, that competitor shall be disqualified.
  4. If two or more BDC officials or official representatives of the host club witness damage caused by pellets from an unsafe shot, they too have the authority to disqualify that competitor.
  5. All competitors, their dogs and gear must be in the blind during the planting of their field and the planting of the preceding brace if so required at the event.
  6. Competitors intentionally loading a competition field in an effort to create an unfair competitive advantage for the next brace will be immediately disqualified. Competitors who are making no effort to bag birds, do not have their dog under control or it is running wild may be disqualified. A competitor who **intentionally** bags more than the designated quota of birds shall be disqualified. The unintentional harvesting of more than the designated quota of birds shall not result in disqualification. However, a shell shall be counted for each trapped bird and/or shot fired and the extra bird(s) shall not be replaced in the field.
  7. Entry fees are forfeited and non-refundable in the event a disqualification is levied.
  8. This list is not all inclusive and the BDC reserves the right to modify this list at any time. At their discretion, the BDC may impose other penalties should they deem the cause worthy of such action.

#### **E. COMPETITOR(S)/SCORE SHEETS**

1. All information to the dog and handler on a score sheet is the responsibility of the competitor or dog handler. All score sheets must accurately include the dog's, owner's, competitor's and partner's name. Score sheets must be verified for all data entry and signed by the competitor at the conclusion of the brace. Signed score sheets are final with the exception of a mathematical error.

Should the competitor have a protest with a ruling or judgment while in the competition field, he or she should leash their dog, ask the scorekeeper to stop the clock and review the scorekeeper's call. The protest should be noted in detail only if it is over a rule not a judgment call, (i.e. a safety call) on the affected score sheet and the brace should continue. The score keeper will then bring the protest to the attention of the Field Marshall (or otherwise designated individual or individuals) for a final determination.

2. No competitor will be allowed to walk the fields the morning prior to the competition. Upon request scorekeepers will provide to each competitor a description of the competition field.
3. Beeper collars may be used during the competition, but should only be activated at the starting gate.

4. All competitors must be current BDC members and have no outstanding debts to the Association for competitions or events to be recognized and sanctioned. All host clubs must have no outstanding debts before an event. Host clubs that allow non-members to enter will be responsible for the membership fee and be billed by the BDC as such.
5. A competitor that is physically unable to walk as determined by a medical professional and possesses documentation stating such, shall request permission of the competition organizer or the BDC to utilize a small ATV or golf cart while competing. Their pace is not to exceed that of a walking competitor and will be monitored by the scorekeeper.
6. Members that have sons or daughters that want to compete are able to enter their children in the Top Gun event with the same dog a second time. This is allowed until the child turns 22 years of age. In events that allow a dog to enter an event twice, the dogs are only allowed to enter twice and the second entry must be used by the child if that is how they choose to utilize it.

#### **F. SCORED POINTS TO BE AWARDED**

1. If a competitor does not find a bird during the run the score will be total of unused shells.
2. Competitors must declare point verbally by saying, "POINT" and they must also raise hand in the air also indicating the dog is on POINT. Both must be done before the 3-second point will begin.
3. Ten (10) points will be awarded for a three (3) second, non-advancing point in the Pointing division.
4. Ten (10) points will be awarded for a bird flushed to flight (or caught during an attempt to flush) in the Flushing division.
5. **To earn a score for a point or flush birds must be acted on in order to get credit for it. Acted on it means that competitors must shoulder the gun and shoot at the bird. Competitors are unable to clean up a dirty run.)**
6. Twenty (20) points will be awarded for bagged birds in both divisions.
7. Ten (10) points will be awarded for a full retrieve.
8. Five (5) points will be awarded for a partial retrieve.
9. Two (2) points will be awarded for each full minute remaining of the total time limit (in events where two runs are combined to generate a score, the cumulative time is calculated prior to determining the score). Time is called when the last bird is in hand, the dog is under control and total minutes, seconds and hundredths recorded.
10. Five (5) points will be awarded for each shell not used.
11. Ten (10) points will be deducted for a caught or trapped bird in the pointing event.
12. In the Pointing Division, a competitor must at least 3 good attempts to move the bird to flight. If that effort results in the bird moving at least 10 feet without taking flight, the bird should be declared a non performing bird by the Judge. If the bird is running and runs a minimum of 20 feet, this bird should be declared a non performing bird by the judge. Once a bird is declared a non performer, it will be considered a clean harvest and full points will be awarded for a full

retrieve and a bagged bird (with a shell assessed). However the non performing bird must be removed from the field by any means not prohibited by the safety rule (i.e. shooting on the ground).

- ❖ If a non performing bird flies at any time during your attempt to remove the bird from the field, you should shoot it. Any shells used in an attempt to shoot a bird that has been declared by the Judge to be a non performing bird do not count. If this bird becomes a safety, the safety rule prevails and the hunter must stay in place and call the dog back and make physical contact with the dog before proceeding or hunter will be assessed with a partial retrieve.
  - ❖ If a non performing bird flies and lands back in the field that was not deemed a safety bird you must pursue it and remove it from the field.
13. Hand tossing is not allowed – the only time a competitor may place a hand on the bird is to remove from the dog’s mouth on a retrieve, pick up a bird on a partial retrieve that has previously been in dog’s mouth, pick up a bird deemed “non-performing”, or to pick up a warm/cold dead bird. In all cases the bird must be placed in the bag and not tossed for shooting. (If a competitor throws a live bird, no further scoring will be allowed on that bird (i.e., no retrieve or bagged bird points will be allowed and points will be deducted for any shells used to shoot at the thrown bird). If a scorekeeper determines that your dog caught or trapped the bird because of a non-performing bird, full points will be awarded. The decision on non-performing bird(s) is FINAL and not disputable.
  14. Any time prior to the bird being shot, if the dog has the bird in its mouth, it will be scored as a “caught bird”.
  15. When a commonly called "soft load" occurs and the shot is fired but no part of the over powder wad or shot remains in the barrel a shell will be counted. A "soft load" where the over powder wad or shot remain in the barrel no shot will be counted. At this point you must inspect your gun to be sure barrel is clear and safe to proceed.

#### **G. DENIED SHOOTING OPPORTUNITY**

Denied Shooting Opportunity (“Safety”) is called for any unsafe condition involving potential injury to person, dog or property. A denied shooting opportunity can be awarded at any time during an event.

1. The hunter should loudly proclaim “no shot, no shot” or “safety” and keep the muzzle of the gun pointed in a safe position during an unsafe shooting condition. This alerts the scorekeepers of the unsafe condition. Once the scorekeeper has acknowledged the unsafe condition no shot should be taken. Any shot taken after a safety has been declared and acknowledged by the scorekeeper may be grounds for immediate disqualification. However if an opportunity presents and the shot becomes safe, the competitor may take the shot without penalty. Once a safety has been granted the handler (or partner) must make physical contact with the dog before advancing further in the run. All points for that bird will be awarded if a three second point had been awarded before the safety was awarded. If the handler (or partner) fail to make physical contact with the dog before advancing from the location the safety was called this will be scored as a partial retrieve. This is as if the dog was making a retrieve either in singles or doubles, handler and partner if in doubles must remain stationary until physical contact is made with the dog for full credit.
2. At any time, a scorekeeper may also call “safety” with the same rules applying.
3. Full credit will be awarded in a denied shooting opportunity once the hunter makes contact with the dog prior to advancing down the field. If the hunter advances prior to touching his dog, a partial retrieve will be given.

4. If the bird was not pointed, but flushed by the pointing dog or hunter, an additional ten (10) points is deducted from the above denied shooting opportunity score.
5. If the bird was not flushed (according to the flushing rule) by the flushing dog, an additional ten (10) points is deducted from the above denied shooting opportunity score.
6. If the bird stays in the field after a denied shooting opportunity is awarded you may accept the denied shooting opportunity score, pull the dog off the bird for three (3) minutes, and then hunt the bird for full points or produce another bird and then hunt the bird for full points. The scorekeeper will let the hunter know when three (3) minutes have elapsed.
7. If on the “last bird” to be bagged, a denied shooting opportunity presents itself, time should stop when the “safety” is called and the dog is either on leash or the competitor has physical control of the dog (by its collar). The competitor must remain in place as if dog was retrieving bird or it will have to be scored as a partial retrieve.
8. If a cameraman or scorekeeper flushes a bird full points credit will always be awarded. If bird remains in the field it cannot be acted upon for three minutes or another bird being produced in between. The safety rule (touching the dog) does not apply.

#### **H. TRAPPED BIRD/CAUGHT BIRD**

A bird is trapped or caught when a dog places it in its mouth prior to being shot. A bird can be in or out of its nest for this to occur. Once a dog has placed a bird in its mouth, that same bird cannot be deemed a “non-performer”.

#### **I. BAGGED BIRD**

A bird (that is the designated species) securely in the possession of the competitor while in the field of competition is a bagged bird. If a bird escapes from a competitor’s control and is no longer in his/her possession at the conclusion of the brace, it is no longer considered “bagged”. The clock will be restarted where the birds were counted and the competitor must either find and place this bird back in his/her bag while the clock is running or find, harvest and retrieve an additional bird to meet the requirement of the event or until the allocated time has elapsed, whichever comes first.

#### **J. SHELLS**

1. Five (5) points will be given for each unused shell. Each competitor will be allowed a total of two (2) shells per bird. Shells are to be divided equally between a team of competitors competing in the Doubles event.
2. One shell will be forfeited for each trapped or caught bird. In doubles, shell should be taken from the competitor with the most shells remaining. In a denied shooting opportunity the shell will be taken from the competitor calling the “safety”.
3. When a commonly called "soft load" occurs and the shot is fired but no part of the over powder wad or shot remains in the barrel a shell will be counted. A "soft load" where the over powder wad or shot remain in the barrel no shot will be counted. At this point you must inspect your gun to be sure barrel is clear and safe to proceed.

#### **K. BIRDS**

Twenty (20) points will be awarded for each bagged bird (assuming it is the pre-determined, hunted species), up to the number of birds established as the quota for the respective event.

#### **L. BOUNDARIES**

1. Time of the brace is stopped when the last bird is in hand and the competitor has full control of the bird and dog in bounds.
2. A bagged bird may be in-bounds or out of bounds when flushed or pointed. **The competitor or competitors may not go out of bounds to produce, shoot or bag a bird** except as permitted under the partial retrieve rule. A competitor cannot purposely send a dog out of bounds or go out of bounds to harvest a bird.
3. If a bird is unintentionally pushed into the competition field by an out of bounds dog, full points are awarded as long as the bird is bagged. If a competitor leaves the field to retrieve his dog and accidentally flushes a bird back into the competition field

The competitor must pull the dog off of that bird for three (3) minutes, hunt another area of the field for (3) minutes or produce another bird prior to hunting the original bird.

4. It is considered unsportsmanlike for a competitor to refrain from calling their dog back into the competition field when the dog is out of bounds in hopes that the dog will flush a bird. The scorekeeper will make a judgment for disqualification or deduct four (4) points should the competitor ignore their direction to bring the dog back into the competition field in a timely manner.
5. If a dead bird is found in bounds, the competitor should collar his/her dog and the clock should be stopped by the Scorekeeper while a determination is made as to whether the bird is cold or warm. The Scorekeeper shall immediately determine whether the dead bird is warm or cold. If a cold, dead bird is found in the competition field by the dog, it will be scored as a no bird. If a warm, dead bird is pointed by a pointing dog or retrieved by a flushing dog, full points will be awarded. Once the Scorekeeper has determined whether the dead bird is warm or cold and how it will be scored, time shall be resumed, unless the warm dead bird is the final bird to be bagged, in which case stopped time shall be the final time.
6. It is considered unsportsmanlike for a competitor to injure a bird while attempting to flush a bird. Additionally, a competitor may not, on the discovery of a nest containing multiple birds, impede the flight of any of the birds while flushing another. If the birds are in a resting state, the competitor may attempt to flush them individually, but may not impede the other birds from leaving during the flushing process. The scorekeeper will make a judgment call for disqualification or deduct four (4) points per offense, whichever they deem appropriate.

#### **M. POINTED BIRDS (POINTING DIVISION)**

1. Competitors must declare point verbally by saying, "POINT" and they must also raise hand in the air also indicating the dog is on POINT. Both must be done before the 3-second point will begin.
2. To earn a score for a point, birds must be acted on in order to get credit for it. Acted on it means that competitors must shoulder the gun and shoot at the bird. Competitors are unable to clean up a dirty run.)
3. Ten (10) points will be awarded for each three (3) second pointed bird of the intended species, up to but not exceeding the quota established, unless a competitor fails to successfully bag a bird his/her dog has previously pointed, and the dog again points the same

bird. The dog and the competitor(s) must establish a **NON-ADVANCING, FIXED POSITION**, (it is permissible for a dog to lift a leg and place it back down). Once the competitor declares “POINT” (and the scorekeeper witnesses the dog on point) this position becomes fixed for the dog and the competitor(s) until the scorekeeper awards the “POINT”. If at any time the dog should close the distance between it and the bird (or the competitor(s) moves) before 3 seconds, the scorekeeper will begin the count over at one (1) until the dog and the competitor(s) has remained steady for three (3) consecutive seconds.

4. A competitor may not “whoa” or otherwise command (verbally or non-verbally – including by use of a collar) his/her dog into a point. And, once the competitor has declared “POINT”, he or she may not give a command (verbal or non-verbal – including by use of a collar) to steady the dog until the scorekeeper has awarded the point. Should a command be given prior to the point being awarded the competitor has three (3) options:
  - a. Remove the dog from the area and hunt another area in the field for three (3) minutes before returning to this bird.
  - b. Remove the dog from this area and hunt other areas. If in a period of time less than three (3) minutes elapsed, the competitor produces another bird he may waive the three minutes.
  - c. Flush this bird, losing the ten (10) points for a point and resume hunting.

**These rules apply to all birds whether the infraction occurs on the first bird, the last bird or at any other time in the brace; the options (a, b or c) do not change.**

5. Multiple three (3) second points are not awarded each time that the dog relocates whether the bird is moving or remains in the nest.
6. If the dog fails to establish a three (3) second point prior to catching or trapping the bird (which is then bagged), NO SCORE for the point will be awarded as the dog did not establish an approved point, a shell will be forfeited and ten (10) points deducted for caught bird.
7. If the dog establishes a three (3) second point and multiple birds rise on the flush, the dog will receive only the number of points for each bird observed by the Scorekeeper to have been shot at by the competitor. However, extra shells used will still be counted for unharvested birds shot at. **On a multiple bird point that is declared by the hunter, the dog does not need to reestablish point on the additional bird, and whoa commands can be used. Once the competitor received the retrieve and moves toward the next zone, dogs will need to reestablish point on the next bird to get credit on any additional birds in the area.**
8. Both dog and competitor must remain simultaneously steady for three (3) consecutive seconds.

#### **N. RETRIEVES/PARTIAL RETRIEVES**

1. Ten (10) points will be awarded for each full retrieve up to but not exceeding the established quota of intended species of birds.
2. Five (5) points will be awarded for each partial retrieve. A partial retrieve is defined as a hunter who must move his or her pivot foot in order to assist the dog in making the retrieve. The dog must still pick up the bird in his mouth in order to be scored a partial retrieve.
3. A competitor must keep one (1) foot stationary after the bird is shot, or once the dog has released to retrieve a bird, or catch a bird.
4. A competitor may kneel down but **MAY NOT** lay down to retrieve a bird. The competitor

may not place his or her gun on the ground while removing the bird from the dog's mouth.

5. A competitor may not physically assist the dog (beyond the pivot foot distance) during the retrieve to receive full points.
6. A competitor may not use a foreign object to reach a bird the dog has dropped beyond the distance allowed while maintaining his or her pivot foot.
7. If the allotted amount of time for a brace has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the competitor has a thirty (30) second grace period to complete the retrieve. If this grace period elapses and the bird is not yet retrieved, no points will be awarded for a bagged bird or a retrieve. If the bird is retrieved within the 30 second window, the time shall be scored as equal to the allotted amount of time for the brace (i.e. 15 minutes not 15 minutes and 30 seconds). If the allotted amount of time for the brace has elapsed and the dog is on point, no points are awarded unless a bird is produced before time runs out.
8. If a competitor fails to cleanly shoot a bird so that it lands in the field of competition forcing the competitor to move for any reason to assist the dog, it will be scored as a partial retrieve as long as the dog picks up the bird in its mouth. If a fence prohibits the dog from making an out of bounds retrieve it should be considered unfortunate and bad luck. Tournament Directors have latitude in the setting of fields and in addressing fence rules prior to the start of a tournament should they wish.

If, in the course of attempting a retrieve, a pointing dog appears to go on point on a new or different bird, the handler or competitor is allowed to move to this "new position" to flush the second bird with no penalty. However, this position is now the position that the dog must make both retrieves to in order to receive full retrieve points. Should the handler or competitor move to this position and the scorekeeper does not witness a produced bird, the original retrieve may only be scored as a partial retrieve. If this happens after the last bird has been shot the hunter may move to this new location if the dog has retrieved the shot bird to the location of the new point the competitor must show the scorekeeper that a bird is there they then can take the bird from the dog or pick it up if within one step of the dog and call time and leash the dog. If the dog was on the way to retrieve the final bird and the dog goes on point the competitor can move to this new position and flush the bird but not shot the bird. The competitor must remain stationary while the dog retrieves the previously shot bird if the competitor must move it must be recorded as a partial retrieve. The bird flushed leaves the competition field the bird will be replaced in either situation.

9. If a shot bird lands in a tree or obstacle out of bounds it is considered bad luck you are charged a shell and are not awarded a bird in the bag.
10. If a shot bird lands in a tree located in the competition field and the scorekeeper determines the bird is dead, full points for the retrieve are to be awarded. If the bird remains alive, the competitor may shoot or throw an object at the bird and if it falls out of the tree, the dog must retrieve the bird to the competitor to receive full retrieve points or the competitor may elect to take a partial retrieve. If the bird dies in the tree but fails to fall to the ground, full retrieve points will be awarded.

Competitors may use a foreign object (golf ball, corncob, water bottle, etc.) to toss out to help the dog locate a mismarked bird. No "live" shells should be used to help mark a bird

#### **O. FLUSHED BIRDS (FLUSHING DIVISION)**

1. Ten (10) points will be awarded for each flushed bird of the intended species, up to but not exceeding the predetermined quota.

2. **To earn a score for a flush, birds must be acted on in order to get credit for it. Acted on it means that competitors must shoulder the gun and shoot at the bird. Competitors are unable to clean up a dirty run.)**
3. If a dog flushes multiple birds, flushed bird points will be awarded for *only the number of birds observed by the Scorekeeper to have been shot at by the competitor or trapped by the dog*. Extra shells used will still be counted for missed birds when acted upon as described above.
4. If a bird is trapped or caught by a dog in the Flushing division, ten (10) points will be awarded in place of a flush, and a shell must be forfeited.
5. A flushed bird is a bird which takes flight due to the action of the dog, if a flushing dog scares the bird to flight, **IS WORKING** the area that the bird was in and the bird takes flight, full flushing points are to be awarded.
6. A flushing dog must flush or “scare” all bagged birds for a clean run.

**P. TIME**

1. Time will be recorded by the scorekeeper in minutes, seconds and 100<sup>th</sup> seconds. For scoring purposes, unused time is calculated as the allotted brace time minus the whole minutes used (does not include seconds not used). Example: for a recorded brace time of twelve (12) minutes and thirty (30) seconds in a brace that has the maximum number of minutes available of twenty (20) minutes, the used time is twelve minutes and the unused time is eight (8) minutes. Seconds are only calculated to determine a winner in the event of a tie. Time of each harvested bird should be noted by the scorekeeper.

Any event using two runs added together to generate a score will first add the total time from the two runs together before calculating a score. The amount of time allotted for each brace will be added together also prior to calculating the score. Example:

Run 1 – 6:59:12 in a brace allowing 15 total minutes  
 Run 2 – 5:59:12 in a brace allowing 15 total minutes  
 Total Time – 12:58:24

The total time required will be subtracted from 30 minutes:  $30-12= 18 \times 2 = 36$  points

2. A scorekeeper shall declare “Time” for any of the following reasons:
  - a. A competitor ceases to hunt. In this instance, **NO POINTS** will be awarded for unused minutes.
  - b. The competitor has the last bird in hand and dog is in the competitor’s control. Any unused minutes are awarded in this case. Should a bird escape from the competitor or all intended bagged birds cannot be produced (less safety birds), the clock must restart and the hunt continued when the competitor re-enters the field at the closest point to his current position and until the allotted birds are accounted for.
  - c. All shells have been used or forfeited. In this case, no points are to be awarded for unused time unless the established quota of the intended species has been bagged.
  - d. If points are awarded on the last bird due to a denied shooting opportunity, the clock should be stopped when the competitor has gained control of his dog, but not until.

- e. An infraction of a rule, which requires that the competitor be immediately disqualified.
3. If a dispute in the competition field should arise, the scorekeeper will note the time and the details, and the brace shall continue.
  4. If time must be stopped for clarification of a rule, the dog must be immediately leashed. Once the dog is leashed the time will stop. The dog must not be unleashed until the clock is restarted.
  5. Once the hunt has begun, the clock may only be stopped at the discretion of the scorekeeper.

**Q. TIES**

1. If two or more competitors have the same score, the tie breaker will be the lesser time used based on number of seconds used after eliminating whole minutes used. In events with only one run, the least amount of seconds used will be the tiebreaker. In events where two runs are combined, the remaining seconds after the combination of both times will be used.

Example: Team A’s time was 5 minutes 45 seconds. Team B’s time was 10 minutes 15 seconds. The whole minutes are eliminated and 45 seconds are compared to 15 seconds. Team B’s 15 seconds place it ahead of Team A’s 45 seconds.

Top Gun Example for two runs combined:

	Team A	Team B
Run 1	6:05	4:45
Run 2	9:03	5:30
Total	15:08	10:15

Team A would beat Team B in the event of a Tie.

2. In the event of a tie following the 100<sup>th</sup> of a second or full time, the next tie breaker will be the time of the last bird harvested that did not stop the clock.
3. If neither of these measures is able to determine a winner – a tie will be declared.

**R. RERUN**

1. A rerun is defined as an aborted run, which is begun again. In the event of a rerun, the field will not be flushed but will be replanted with the number of birds removed since the beginning of the original run. Reruns are called for various reasons (See Section T. Interference). In the event that a rerun is required, the competitor will be allowed the option to immediately conduct the rerun or wait a period of time (not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes as mutually agreed by him/her and the scorekeeper). If a rerun is granted for unforeseen circumstances not covered by this rule the ruling body can adjust this rule.
2. When a rerun is granted, a competitor cannot better his/her time or erase penalties incurred in the original run **at the time of the interference. Example, at 10 minutes the competitor is interfered with or a rule misunderstood by the scorekeeper. The competitor has two birds in the bag and a partial retrieve. On the rerun, the competitor runs 8 minutes clean. His/Her run score will revert to the 10 minute run with the partial.**
3. In the event that a lack of sunlight does not permit that the rerun be held that day, it should commence prior to the first brace the next day. In this circumstance, the field will be reset as it was for the competitor’s original brace minus any extra birds.

## **S. INTERFERENCE**

1. If a dog interferes in a field the hunter in the “interfered” field should stop the clock, get control of his dog and leash his dog. Scorekeeper should note the time, and wait for the interfering dog to leave. If the interfering dog points or identifies the location of a bird, a rerun is required. The scorekeeper will determine if a rerun is warranted and if the hunter so chooses, a rerun will be granted only if a Field Marshall or Event Coordinator determines it made a difference in the Top 5 Placements or a Top 10 Run-off situation. The competitor should continue to hunt if they are sure it made no difference to a competitive outcome in their run. An example of interference is: An out-of-bounds dog entering into a fellow competitor’s field and distracting the competing dog, or moving a bird.
2. A rerun may be awarded for various safety reasons (example: lightning) or for any inconsistencies in scoring or quota.

## **T. DESIGNATED SHOOTER**

1. A designated shooter is defined as the person, other than the dog handler, assigned to carry the gun and perform the shooting. This is only allowable if the handler/competitor is physically handicapped. The designated shooter must be a person in the same division
2. The designated shooter must obtain written permission from the parent or legal guardian of an underage handler/competitor for whom they are performing this duty (designated shooting).
3. All entries involving a designated shooter must be declared by the competitor and approved by the Competition Host prior to the competition’s start.
4. Designated shooters are not allowed to perform any other function in the field other than shooting unless otherwise authorized by the Competition Host.

## **U. INJURED COMPETITOR**

A competitor that is injured during a competition can be replaced by another competitor in the competition. The competitor that is selected to replace the injured player however, cannot be at the maximum number of runs or already be in the finals of that event that he or she is the replacement in.

## **V. SPECTATOR**

Hosts and/or competition organizers shall have the option of prohibiting competitors and/or spectators from observing fields of competition during an event. However, any competition at which observation of fields of competition is to be prohibited must be so identified in advance on the BDC website.

## **W. WORLDS AND NATIONALS QUALIFYING**

Worlds qualifying will begin the day after Labor Day and finish on Labor Day. Nationals qualifying will begin on January 1 and finish on December 31.

Qualifying Criteria for both the World Championships and the National Championships are the same. They are as follows:

- 1.) Autobids at Super Majors. Top Gun & Doubles = Top 5; Puppy, Masters, Ladies, Hunter, & Youth Champions. Autobids will slide to the next unqualified dog.
- 2.) Autobids at Declared Majors. Top Gun & Doubles = Top 3. Autobids will slide to the

next unqualified dog.

- 3.) A dog who earns 16 Champion Points or more in the qualifying year is qualified.
- 4.) After eliminating those dogs with Autobids and/or 16 Champion Points or more, the Top 20 dogs in each region based on Qualifying Points. This will occur in each division.

#### **X. MISCELLANEOUS RULES**

1. Rules and Regulations may be amended by the BDC at any time.
2. All BDC promoters are required to be BDC members.
3. Ignorance of the rules will not be grounds for protest. Any situation not covered in these rules or in this rulebook, is considered bad luck for the competitor. If it's in the rulebook that you can, you can; if it's in the rulebook that you can't, you can't; if it's not in the rulebook, you cannot.
4. Manipulating these rules in a way that they were not intended will not be tolerated.

#### **Y. POINTING LABS PARTICIPATION**

A pointing lab will need to be declared at their first event if they are going to run in either pointing or flushing for the tournament year. They are unable to compete in both.

#### **Z. NO SHOW & LATE CANCELLATION**

To protect BDC promoters from having out-of-pocket expense due to competitors who do not show up or decide at the last minute that they are not going to attend, the BDC is implementing a NO SHOW AND LATE CANCELLATION POLICY. This will be a penalty that is incurred to competitors who enter an event and do not show up at an event and do not give a promoter any notification that they are not attending. No show penalty will result in the competitor paying 100% of their entry fees to the promoter. Late cancellation is defined as a cancellation made to the promoter within 3 days or less of the event. Penalty incurred for a late cancellation is 50% of all entry fees. Promoters will inform the BDC of these penalties and competitors will be unable to participate in BDC related events until the promoter is paid in full.

#### **AA. UKC (UNITED KENNEL CLUB) REGISTRY**

Competitors are able to register your dogs with the UKC. BDC Titles that will be recognized include: Champion/20 Champion Points (CH), Legendary/500 Champion Points (LC), Super Major Win (SM), National Champion (NC), World Champion (WC), and Dog of the Year (DOY).

| **A**ll dogs will be required to register their dogs with the UKC.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional, updated or amended information, go to [www.nbdca.com](http://www.nbdca.com).