

**AWMA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TRIAL GUIDELINES**  
**REVISED 11/27/2017**

**GENERAL GUIDELINE**

To avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, fraternization with judges should be limited to non-competitors until after the trial and no competitor should be charged with the responsibility of being one of the main hosts. This includes (for example) transporting the judge from the airport, to the event location, or direct interaction at meals or social events.

**DRAW**

The draw must be effectuated through marked ping pong balls in a bingo roller or box or something equivalent. Clubs may choose their mechanism but it must be approved by the World Championship/National Events Committee at least two months prior to the event. The draw process must be prepared so that there can be no mechanism for prior knowledge of the outcome of the draw. For example, items with draw numbers pre-arranged on a table for selection are not allowed. The mechanism of the draw will be stated on the host website.

All competitors **must** be present at the draw.

To be fair to all competitors, there will no automatic accommodation in the same flight for competitors sharing a vehicle. If multiple competitors are sharing a vehicle, after the first competitor has drawn the trial secretary will select spots for the other competitors. It is the responsibility of the competitor to be at the designated location for each phase of the competition.

If a handler pulls from the trial, for any reason, he/she will not be allowed to participate as a competitor. No special accommodations will be made, for example, for a handler or dog physically unable to compete at the time of their assigned draw.

**FLIGHT ORGANIZATION**

Flight organization must be prepared prior to the draw. If there are sufficient pulls to warrant elimination of a flight, the order will be revised prior to the draw. No changing of flight order will take place after the draw.

**PRACTICE/TRAINING ON NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP FIELD**

The date and times of official practice for the AWMA National Championship will be set by the host of the event. No handler entered in the trial may train on the National Championship field for two weeks prior to the official practice, nor while the event is in progress. The only exception is for bitches in season, who will be permitted practice time immediately after all other dogs in the competition have completed both phases, but before their scheduled performances.

During the official practice, and prior to the beginning of the trial as defined by handing in the scoreboard at the draw, commonly used corrective devices may be used in a humane manner. Motivational items may also be used. After the official start to the competition, which takes place at the draw when the

scorebook is handed in, no corrective devices may be used within view of the championship venue. Motivational items may be used during the trial until entering the tracking field or “stadium” field.

## **TRACKING**

The tracking coordinator will ensure that all spectators remain at a designated vantage point far enough from all tracks so that such spectators do not inadvertently interfere with or purposely aid the competitors.

Prior to the competition, the tracking coordinator and tracking judge will instruct the tracklayers to lay uniform and consistent tracks. The tracklayers will also be advised to not engage in any form of communication with the handlers or members of the handlers’ teams.

All tracking lines must be checked and marked with a ziptie or something unannounced and not readily attainable from a local store to prevent substitution of another line.

Using a completely random process, tracking order must be drawn at the tracking field and not at the parking lot or other locations.

All articles and flags numbered prior to the draw.

Tracking fields must be pre-designated by flights and held in escrow by the AWMA president or designee to ensure tracking fields are not selected or reassigned AFTER the draw.

## **HELPERS**

Prospective helpers will submit videos and bios to the secretary of the AWMA three months prior to the event. The due date will be publicized. The submitted information will be provided to a committee consisting of the event host and members of the AWMA Judges Committee. This committee will select three helpers no less than two months prior to the event. The selected helpers will be notified by the AWMA secretary. Helpers will have one week from notification to accept the selection. Acceptance will be in writing with a signed attestation that they will abide by the requirement in the contract with the host club that states “These helpers will not be allowed to work any dogs that are to be entered in the event for fourteen (14) days prior to the event.”

The three selected helpers will participate in a try-out at the event. This try-out must be genuine. Host clubs will ensure that there are adequate and sufficiently high quality dogs available for evaluation of the helpers. Helper selection/assignments will be at the discretion of the judge.

## **DOG IDENTIFICATION**

The host club must have a minimum of 2 chip readers (one for tracking one for stadium) and dog identities must be verified for each phase.

## **TROPHIES AND AWARDS**

From the policy adapted in 2014, the host club shall offer the following trophies:

- HIT – for the high IPO 3 team

- High obedience, high tracking, high protection – limited to the IPO 3 competitors

At the club's discretion the following trophies are suggested:

- High IPO 1
- High IPO 2

Other trophies may be made available for which all competitors are eligible. Suggestions are:

- Helper's choice
- High HOT

In each category, eligible dogs are FCI registered Belgian Shepherd Dogs with an AWDF recognized scorebook as well as any dog with an AWMA issued AWDF scorebook that lists the dog as a Belgian Malinois, regardless of whether it is FCI registered or not.

Additions to this policy are:

*Handler Owner Trained* will be determined by the following criteria:

- The dog must be owned and registered in the name of the handler;
- No one other than the owner may have done a significant amount of the dog's training without the involvement of the owner; i.e., the dog may not have been sent to a trainer for tracking, obedience, or protection training.
- When the dog was purchased by present owner, the dog may not have been trained to a level of being able to pass a BH. The handler/owner may be required to sign a statement certifying that he/she has met all of the above, when purchasing a scorebook for said dog.

Sanctions for falsely claiming a dog to be HOT may include disqualification for "unsportsmanlike conduct" from the event, Board of Inquiry charges that could result in suspension of AWMA membership for a period of time to be determined by the Executive Board.

*Awards and Breaking Tie Scores at the Championship for IPO 1-3, FH 1-2, IPO-FH*

- If multiple dogs, entered for the same title, are awarded the same total score, placement will be determined by the highest protection score.
- If after comparing protection scores, a tie still exists, the tie will be broken by comparing obedience scores.
- If obedience scores are identical, the tie will then be broken by tracking scores.
- If after comparing all three phases a tie still exists, the dog earning the title for the first time will have the higher placing. If none of the dogs are earning the score for the first time, the tie will be broken by age; the youngest dog will be granted the higher placement.

## **CHARGES**

If there are instances where violations of these rules are encountered, anyone can bring charges to a three (3) person committee consisting of the trial secretary, trial chair/host, and attending AWMA board officer. The findings and disciplinary actions of the committee are final with no possibility for appeal. The committee is not to hear or provide a decision on items that are the responsibility of and under the jurisdiction of the judge(s).