

# **USDDN World Finals**

## **International Series**

# **Judging Handbook**





US Disc Dog Nationals (USDDN) Steering Committee

## **Code of Conduct**

The US Disc Dog Nationals is an annual championship series administered equitably by representatives of the US disc dog community. USDDN competitions adhere to the rules and guidelines established by the USDDN steering committee. This group of club representatives and experienced handlers is committed to establishing policies that represent the best interests of the sport's handlers, and which are supportive of other event organizers. The goal for all USDDN competitions is to provide an environment that shall be safe, fair, and fun for all involved. Participants and competitors at events held under USDDN rules are required to demonstrate behavior that is in the best interests of our dogs and our sport. In an effort to ensure a positive, family-friendly environment, this Code of Conduct applies to all participants (both Human & Canine) at USDDN events:

### **DO**

Enjoy and Encourage the performances of other competitors

Be considerate of the Safety and Enjoyment of others throughout the event Observe and Control the actions of your dog(s) at all times

Participate Soberly by avoiding the abuses of Alcohol or Drugs

Recognize and play within your own physical limitations & those of your dog(s)

Recognize and play within limitations imposed by weather and field conditions during an event Comply with the rules of the event venue, host club, & competition officials

Be respectful of the efforts of the event judges & officials

Cooperate honestly with officials during incident investigations Practice good sportsmanship at all times

### **DO NOT**

Engage in fighting

Use vulgar or inappropriate language or gestures

Publicly criticize the efforts of judges, officials, or other competitors

Purposefully, recklessly, or carelessly cause harm to any dog or person

Intentionally try to distract other competitors during their competition round

Knowingly make a false complaint with the intention of causing event disruptions

Attempt to intimidate or offer bribes to judges for the purpose of influencing their decisions Participate in a mind altered state (be it the result of Alcohol, Drugs or Emotional Fatigue)

Participants and competitors who commit violations of this Code of Conduct during competitions held under USDDN rules & guidelines may be subject to disciplinary responses pursuant to the USDDN's Incident Investigation Review Panel.

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# 1. General rules

The USDDN Steering Committee is the sanctioning body for all events that are included in the USDDN World Championship series. However, clubs/hosts have the option of hosting 'local' events utilizing the rules of USDDN. These events do not require pre-approval by the USDDN steering committee. Hosts are required to acknowledge the rules being utilized are the intellectual property of the USDDN Steering Committee.

Once the Steering Committee authorizes an event organizer to conduct a World Qualifier event, that authority cannot be revoked by the Steering Committee for that year. However, the Championships Series Coordinator and other Steering Committee members will be able to forward any concerns and/or complaints about how a World Qualifier event is being organized to the Steering Committee. Because authorization to host a World Qualifier event is only given on a year-by-year basis, event hosts should be aware that the way they organize an event this year will contribute to the assessment of whether or not the event organizer will be authorized to host World Qualifier events in subsequent years.

Hosts of the USDDN World Championship series may offer non-qualifying division for competitors / teams that are not 'ready' for competition at the World level (i.e. Junior, Novice, Intermediate divisions). The host may set the rules for participation in these divisions (age minimums, competitor experience, etc) as long as they clearly communicate these rules to the competitors.

All World Qualifiers are “**Open**” events, so that competitor eligibility is not determined by geographic location. Consequently, competitors must be allowed to attend and compete in any Worlds Qualifier.

The Steering Committee coordinating the USDDN World Championships retains the right to impose restrictions upon competitor entry related to matters such as age eligibility requirements, multiple entries, etc. Event hosts must undertake to enforce these rules for all USDDN World Qualifying Divisions. These restrictions will be communicated to competitors and event hosts prior to the competition season.

USDDN contest officials reserve the right to change format, competition rules, time allotments due to unforeseen weather, disaster situations or extremely large number of competitors etc, at their discretion as required for running a successful and safe event. In case a cut is implemented, these rules must be followed:

- In freestyle division, a cut can be only be done based on the results from 1st round of freestyle and toss & fetch round.
- Event organizers have a responsibility to clearly communicate with the competitors if a cut is going to be implemented.

## Prop Rule

Players must not use props of any kind during their Freestyle or Toss & Fetch rounds :

- No costumes are permitted on the dogs including but not limited to capes, dresses, skirts, hats etc.
- Flounces, ruffles, and other similar neckwear are not allowed.
- No Rex specs, doggles or any other eyewear is permitted on the dog unless a letter signed by a veterinarian, describing the dog's eye condition which requires that the dog wears the eyewear due to an eye condition, is submitted in advance to the host of the competition or in the case of Worlds, to the USDDN chairperson.
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## Collar clarification:

- Decorative collars or bandanas are permitted provided they do not interfere with the dog's movement or affect the dog's ability to properly see.
- No special training collars may be used, including but not limited to, prong, chain, correctional slip, electronic or head halters.

Players can enter more than one dog in any qualifying competition.

Teams shall consist of one dog and one player. Only one team is allowed to compete, be involved in the routine, at a time during the performance.

Only the competing team and contest officials are allowed on the field during competition.

Any throws that leave the Player's hand before time expires will count towards the team's total score although the actual catch may not be executed until after time has expired.

## 1.1. AGE LIMITS

To compete in a USDDN Super Open Freestyle Qualifier, dogs must be at least 18 months of age (beginning of their 18th month) at the Qualifier.

- A dog must reach 18 months of age within the month in which the qualifying event is held. (example: if a dog's birthday is 20th May, the dog can compete from 1st May.)

To compete in a USDDN Super Pro Toss & Fetch Qualifier, dogs must be at least 12 months of age (beginning of their 12th month) at the Qualifier.

- A dog must reach 12 months of age within the month in which the qualifying event is held. (example: if a dog's birthday is 20th May the dog can compete from 1st May)

If a dog's birthday is not precisely known, the estimate of age assessed by the dog's veterinarian will be used.

There is no maximum age for a dog.

Player may be any age. Note: Any reference to a Junior Handler in competition is open to players 12 years of age or younger on January 1 of that competition year.

## **1.2. HOSTING AN EVENT**

Event Hosts are obliged to enforce the types of restrictions specified in previous sections, but are forbidden from enforcing any additional rules that restrict the abilities of handlers, dogs, or teams from potentially competing in a World Qualifier event. In particular, under no circumstances, will hosts be able to exclude a potential competitor from participating because of their club membership status or political affiliation within the sport. Also, event organizers are not able to apply any special eligibility criteria or other discriminatory rules to any sub-set of the disc dog community, except where required by law.

- For example – some countries have banned the exhibition of any dog with cropped ears or docked tail, therefore it would be allowed for an event host in that country to restrict competitor entry accordingly.

Where required by local ordinance, all competing canines must have proof of rabies inoculation and a valid license. Parvo and Canine Cough (Bordetella) immunizations are strongly recommended for all competing dogs.

Event Hosts are obliged to satisfy all relevant legislative requirements banning discriminatory behavior against any person on the basis of criteria including a person's gender and religious beliefs.

Unless they make a commitment to assist in the hands-on running of an event, representatives of the Steering Committee do not have any obligation to attend or volunteer their help at World Qualifier events. When Steering Committee members do decide to attend a World Qualifier event, there is no obligation for the event organizers to pay for the traveling expenses of any individual member of the Steering Committee.

If Hosts are providing a T-Shirt to competitors at registration, they reserve the right to require competitors to wear these T-Shirts, unaltered, logo visible during the performances.

Hosts should clearly communicate in advance of the event with competitors regarding location requirements (i.e. park entry fees), and other competition requirements (i.e. ability to play MP3 players vs. CD only).

### **1.2.1. Financial Issues**

Event Hosts cannot charge an admission fee to spectators who want to watch a World Qualifier event. However, if a Worlds event is part of a broader festival or exhibition then spectators may be required to pay any entry fees that will permit them access into that festival or exhibition in order to attend the World Qualifier event. Event Hosts cannot however insist that spectators pay an additional fee in order to specifically watch the World Qualifier event.

In hosting a World Qualifier event, the event organizers retain all income and are responsible for paying all expenses associated with organizing the event. An event host is entitled to retain or distribute any surplus generated by hosting a Worlds event, as they decide.

Each event organizer has unrestricted opportunity to secure any sponsors they like for their World Qualifier events, provided that they do not promote the sponsors or allow their sponsors to promote the event in a way that states or implies that a sponsor possesses the naming rights or any form of ownership of the USDDN Worlds Championships Series.

Event organizers are free to determine the amount, if any, of any prize money that will be made available to competitors at their event.

Event Hosts are free to charge any event registration fee they like to competitors at the World Qualifier event. No portion of any such collected fees are payable to the Steering Committee coordinating the USDDN Worlds.

No fee of any type is payable by an Event Host to the USDDN Steering Committee in return for their event being designated as part of the Worlds Championships Series.

### **1.2.2. Judges**

Only judges that are trained and certified to judge events using the US Disc Dog Nationals Judging Criteria can be invited to judge a World Final Series event. The following judge positions need to be filled by the USDDN Event Host:

- *Freestyle Judges: Head/Team Judge, Player Judge, Canine Judge, Execution Judge*
- *Toss & Fetch (Super Open Freestyle Division): Head/Scoring Judge, Far Line Judge, Foul Line Judge.*
- *Super Pro Toss & Fetch: Head/Scoring Judge, Far Line Judge, Bonus Zone Judge and Foul Line Judge.*

**THE SCORING AND DECISIONS OF THESE JUDGES WILL BE FINAL, AND CANNOT BE OVER-RULED BY EITHER THE EVENT ORGANIZERS OR THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

Event Hosts are also required to identify an Official Timekeeper(s) who will be responsible for keeping time and making rulings regarding timing issues during the event. Additionally, Event Hosts must ensure that the Official Timekeeper has possession of a reliable stopwatch or countdown timer.

Event hosts are required to pay the expenses of any visiting Judges who are appointed from the Judging Panel to judge at a World Qualifier event.

**1.2.3. Dog and Handler Safety and Convenience**

If a World Qualifier event is to be held at night or in deteriorating light conditions there must be adequate lighting so that competitors and dogs can clearly see the discs.

Event Hosts must, within close proximity to the competition field, either provide adequate shade for competitors and their dogs or else permit competitors to erect temporary shade cover.

Competitors in World Qualifier events must be given the opportunity to warm up on the event field (without their dog) prior to the competition.

Time will be suspended for all unforeseen distractions or interruptions that occur on the field and that may directly, or indirectly put the canine competitor at risk of injury or that hamper a team's ability to compete fairly. The decision to halt a team's round will be made at the discretion of contest officials:

If an interruption occurs during competition that is beyond the control of the competitor (i.e., somebody else's dog on the field), time will be suspended as quickly as possible by an indication from any of the field judges. The interruption will be dealt with (field cleared, offending interruption severely chastised) and the competitor will be allowed to continue with the rest of the round. Time will start immediately where it was suspended, and the canine may start anywhere on the field.

Additionally, the competitor can be given the option to start the round over, but only with the support of the majority of the Judges in order to avoid interruptions that in the Judges' opinions were intentionally caused by someone wanting to provide the competitor with a restart opportunity. As the interruption may have occurred early in the round, the competitor may choose to take their new round immediately. If the interruption occurred in the second half of the round, the competitor may elect to move to the end of the order and start the round over after their dog has rested.

**1.2.4. Field Requirements**

The competition field has to be flat and free of any obstructions. Clearly visible, dog-safe barriers or obstructions such as plastic cones, flags, or fencing must surround the competition field, deterring spectators from purposely or accidentally encroaching onto the competition field.

The competition field must not be fully enclosed in a way that restricts dogs from retrieving discs that have been thrown or knocked beyond the barrier designating the competition field.

It is anticipated that normally World Qualifying events will be conducted on a high quality grass surface, and there must be no ruts or holes in the field that could pose a safety risk to competing handlers and their dogs. Alternatively, Qualifiers may be held on a high-grade artificial turf that provides adequate cushioning support so that the safety of handlers and dogs is not compromised. Additionally, the artificial turf must not have a slippery surface, and must be firmly secured so that there are no gaps or flaps between the turf rolls that might potentially trip either member of a competing team.

**1.2.4.1. FIELD SIZE**

The minimum size Field of Play is 30 yards by 50 yards. The maximum size Field of Play size is 30 yards by 60 yards. In addition to this there has to be at least 5 yards of over run at each side.

**1.3. PLAYER'S RESPONSIBILITY**

Prior to competition, players must read and sign, without altering, the competition Registration Form, which contains a liability waiver and publicity release.

Dogs must be kept on leash at all times, except when competing or practicing.

Players must walk dogs on leash to the on-deck area of field, when called. Dogs must be put back on leash immediately after competing. Practicing teams must be out of range of the competition area and spectators so that competing teams are not distracted.

Players are responsible for the safety and welfare of their dogs at USDDN competitions. Players and/or owners or their agents are expected to properly supervise and maintain control over their canines at all times.

**1.4. DISCS**

The USDDN Steering Committee has approved seven disc manufacturers' discs for the competition series which are:

- *Wham-O, Inc.*
- *Discovering the World (DTW)*
- *The Innova Hero discs*
- *Hyperflite, Inc.*
- *DogStar*
- *Mamadisc*
- *J-disc*
- *Frisbee Escape*
- *Lattitude 64*
- *WirbelWind*
- *Funny Disc*

*For a full list of approved discs please read a List of USDDN approved discs (see Appendix 1)*

Dogs of all sizes are allowed to use any disc from the approved list (see appendix 1).

Teams can use up to a maximum of ten (10) discs during a freestyle routine and one (1) disc for Toss & Fetch round.

Player can not mix discs of different weight classes or different diameter discs within the same round.

## **1.5. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR CONSEQUENCES**

Boisterous challenges, abusive language, or other inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior, whether directed at contest officials or not, may result in the contestant being disqualified from that competition or further competitions.

**Mandatory Disqualification will occur for the following cases, but are not limited to these instances:**

- *abuse by the player of an animal*
- *female dogs in any stage of heat*
- *canine endangerment*
- *aggressive canine behavior*
- *aggressive player's behaviour*

## **1.6 COMPLAINTS**

Only complaints against violation of technical parameteres, such as not meeting the Minimum Standards and Requirements for USDDN Events (the document is available at [www.usddn.com](http://www.usddn.com)) and alike.

Judges have total discretion for determining scores, and their decisions will not be subject to any review or appeal. No complaints related to scoring will be accepted. The scoring and decisions of the judges is final, and cannot be overruled by either the Event Organizers or the Steering Committee. No score – no matter if it's T&F, Execution, Canine, Player or Team score – will be recalculated or changed once the judge has decided.

The only issue that can be reviewed by the tournament judges onsite during an event is if a judge makes a timing error where the competitor did not receive their allotted time.

## **1.7 QUALIFYING RULES**

The USDDN SC invites the Top 4 new teams from each Qualifier from around the world in two separate divisions – Super Open Freestyle & Super-Pro Toss & Fetch. At each qualifier 3 Alternate teams will be identified that may be invited to attend Worlds in the event that a Qualifying team cannot attend. Please see Appendix 6 for instructions on how to determine USDDN Placements.

A competitor can try to Qualify with as many dogs as they want, but they can only compete at Worlds with 1 dog per division. Similarly, multiple handlers may attempt to qualify with the same dog, but a dog may only compete with 1 Handler per division.

A competitor that qualifies for Worlds with multiple dogs must identify which dog they will compete with at the Players meeting on event day.

## 2. Judges' liability and responsibility

### IN GENERAL:

- USDDN Judges are the USDDN representatives at the competition and as such they should behave.
- Judges are the guarantee that the competition will be held in compliance with the USDDN rules. They should always make sure that the field is appropriate, safe and that it fits the USDDN field requirements. If the field doesn't comply with the requirements, they have the authority to stall the competition until the problem is fixed.
- Judges do their job without any biases. When judging, the judges should be fully focused on their respective element or discipline. It's unacceptable for judges to engage in any other activity that may interfere with the judging.
- Every judge gives scores for their respective elements only. It's inappropriate for a judge change other judges' scores.
- Judges have the authority to immediately, without any warning, disqualify a team that violates the Code of Conduct or any other rule related to an appropriate behavior.

### HEAD JUDGE:

- A Head judge administers judges' meeting. It's necessary for the head judge to make sure that all other judges and judging assistants are well familiarized with their job on the field during the competition.
- A Head judge is responsible for the correctness of the results. The organiser, if asked, has to allow the head judge to check the scores and results, where necessary to compare them with original scoresheets.

## 3. Toss & Fetch Rules

Teams competing in Toss & Fetch formats will receive **90 seconds** to compete. During a team's allotted time, the team is allowed an **unlimited number of attempts** with a single disc, but only the **BEST FIVE** throws will count towards the teams' score.

The USDDN encourage competitors to focus on good technique for each throw (only the best 5 throws count). Small dogs, big dogs, fast dogs, off breed dogs all have the same playing field. This USDDN Toss & Fetch format is the one format where a dog of any size, shape and breed has the ability and can reach a perfect score.

**Practice throws don't have to be permitted** prior to each competitor's turn. The team must be behind the throwing line (Foul Line) for time to begin. **Time will begin the instant the dog crosses the throwing line.** A player can move about the field freely after the disc is thrown, but **must return behind the same throwing line before every throw.** It's not possible to change throwing line once the time starts.

If the disc has left the thrower's hand before time is called, the throw will be scored if caught. The dog only has to be behind the throwing line on the first throw.

A **Foot Fault** is when a competitor **steps on or over the Foul Line** at anytime during a throw. A throw will not count (and be called as a foot fault) if the thrower steps **on or over** the throwing Foul Line during release of the disc. If a Foot Fault happens that one throw's catch does **NOT** count towards the ending score. Such a throw is recorded as FF in the scoresheet.

### 3.1 DISCS

**Teams must use one (1) disc for Toss & Fetch round.**

Player can not mix discs of different weight classes or different diameter discs. If a competitor is found to have mixed the sizes or weight class of discs in a single round, in Toss & Fetch formats there will be a one (1) point penalty applied per throw made. However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero.

*Note: A penalty assessed for mixing discs is separate from any Canine Endangerment penalties.*

#### 3.1.1 Disc exchange

Competitors are allowed to change discs during their round in order to ensure that the player does not use a disc that has a broken rim, tear, or other type of damage that may substantially impair the flight of the disc or potentially injure the dog. **At any time** during their 90 seconds a thrower may inform the Line Judge that they will be exchanging discs, as long as they have planned ahead and provided a disc from the same weight/size class to the Foul Line Judge before they started.

Players have total discretion for deciding if and when such disc exchanges will take place. The disc doesn't have to be damaged and they are allowed to change discs as often as they want, but the **time does not stop** during this exchange. To exercise this option a **player must walk over and hand the disc** that they have been using – the in

play disc – to the Foul Line Judge before taking hold of their replacement disc. The Foul Line judge is not allowed to bring a replacement disc or even throw it to the competitor.

### 3.2 COUNT DOWN

A count down is the same for all divisions and formats of Toss & Fetch and it is a bit different from a count down for Freestyle. Remaining time is announced in this way:

– **60 seconds, 30 seconds, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and time.**

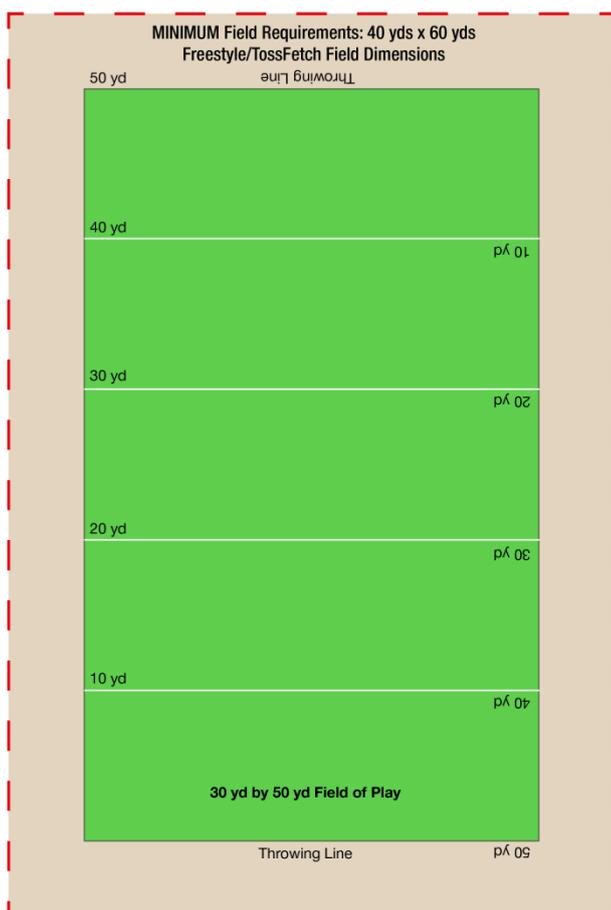
Note: Except of these announced times, the timekeeper should remain quiet.

### 3.3 TOSS&FETCH FIELD (SEE PICTURES BELOW)

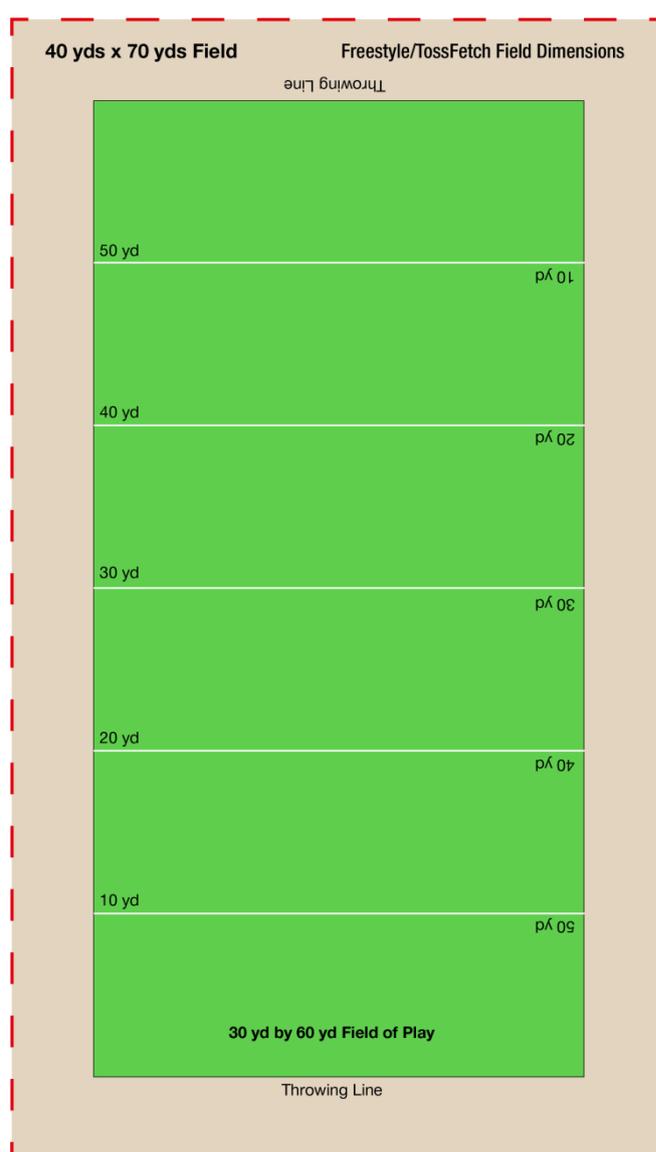
The minimum size Field of Play is 30 yards by 50 yards. The maximum Field of Play size is 30 yards by 60 yards. In addition to this there has to be 5 yards of over run at each side. A field is divided into zones by horizontal lines 10 yards apart.

A team can choose to start from either side of the field. This decision has to be made before the team's round has started.

Minimum field size



Maximum field size



### 3.4 SCORING

When a dog makes a catch it is scored where the dog lands with their trailing paw (the paw closest to the Foul Line). Points are earned at the 10 yard, 20 yard, 30 yard and 40 yard lines with 1 point at 10 yards, 2 points at 20 yards, 3 points at 30 yards, and 4 points at the 40 yard line and an extra ½ point earned if all four (4) paws are off the ground within any 10 – 40 yard zones.

Each scoring zone starts on the line and ends to the beginning of the next line. If a dog lands on any of the 10-40 yards lines with their last trailing paw then **on the line is the next zone**.

If a dog has any one foot on the ground during a catch it is scored as a down catch. A mid-air catch is called when the dog breaks stride or visibly leaps with all four paws off of the ground in an obvious leaping motion (a break stride – a shifting jump). There **must be visible air between the dog and the ground**. If there is any question if it is up or down then it is called down.

There is an out of bounds side lines and a catch must be made within those left and right sidelines. A dog only needs to make a catch with at least one paw landing ON or INSIDE the side lines for the catch to be good. **Out of Bounds** is defined as a dog catching a disc with all four paws OUTSIDE the left or right sidelines. Such a catch is in the scoresheet recorded as OB.

#### 3.4.1 Fouling/Soiling the field

If, during a team's allotted time, the dog takes a nature break **on or off the field**, time will be immediately stopped and will not resume. Player will be required to immediately and thoroughly clean up after their dog.

Teams will not be disqualified for such an infraction, but in addition to forfeiting the remainder of their time, **points will be deducted from the team's score** equal to the number of throws that had been made by the player before the nature break took place. However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero.

Note: A penalty assessed for soiling the field is separate from any Canine Endangerment penalties.

### 3.5 TOSS&FETCH JUDGING CREW

The **Head (Super-Pro) Toss & Fetch Judge** is the Scoring Judge and, according to the USDDN Judging Certification Program (see Appendix 4), has to be at least Level 1 as well as all other line judges. The Scoring Judge has over riding and presiding rulings on all calls related to (Super-Pro) Toss & Fetch divisions.

The Far Line Judge or any other volunteer, staff, or competitor will **NOT** make any physical calls unless solicited by the Head Judge. The Far Line Judge will only make visible **hand signal calls when solicited by the Scoring Judge**. The Far Line Judge is one of the most important members of the (Super-Pro) Toss & Fetch judging team as they need to pay attention and be the second set of eyes and ears on that field.

The Scoring Judge has total discretion for determining scores, and their decisions will not be subject to review or appeal.

### 3.6 TIE BREAKER

All finished score ties are broken by a **sudden death throw off** of one throw per each team with the highest point of that one throw winning. If the teams tie again then the throw off continues. The throw off continues until there is a winner of a team scoring the highest individual points in during one of the throw offs.

A disc or coin is flipped to decide which team chooses to go first or second in each of the one throw each heats.

### 3.7 SUPER-PRO TOSS&FETCH FORMAT

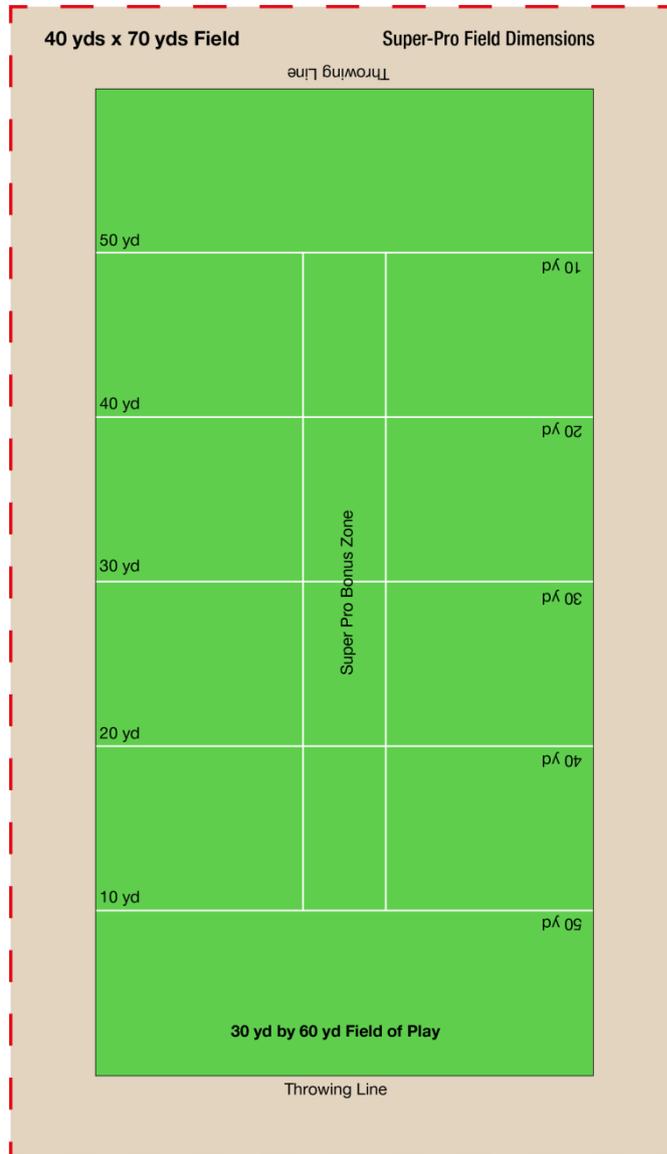
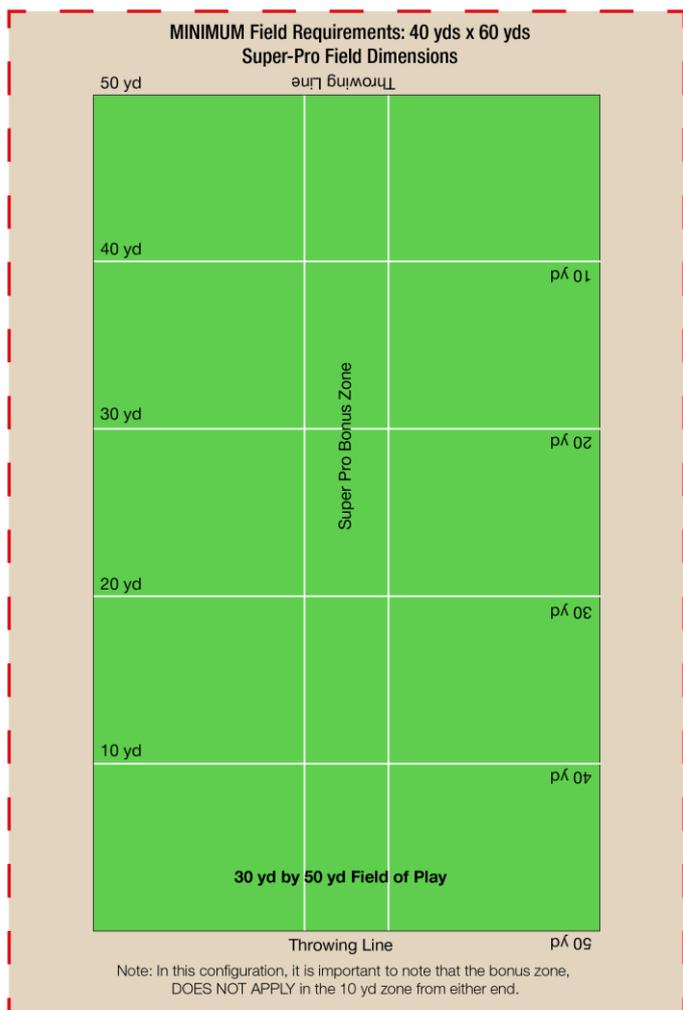
All rules applied for Toss & Fetch are valid also for Super-Pro Toss & Fetch, but there are some more:

#### 3.7.1 Super-Pro Toss&Fetch Field (see pictures below)

In addition to the general Toss & Fetch field requirements, in Super-Pro Toss & Fetch there is a 5 yard wide Challenge Zone which runs in the middle of the field from the 10 yard line to the 50 yard line.

Minimum field size

Maximum field size



#### 3.7.2 Scoring

When a dog catches a disc with any one foot landing in the Challenge Zone the team will earn an additional ½ point more.

A maximum Score per one catch is 5 points (an air catch, in challenge zone between 40 & 50 yards) and therefore a maximum score for the 5 best throws is 25 points in each round.

#### 3.7.3 Super-Pro T&F Judging crew

In addition to all Toss&Fetch juges specified in section Toss&Fetch Judging Crew, there is a Bonus Zone Judge.

## 4. Freestyle Rules

Worlds Division (Qualifier) Freestyle teams are allowed a maximum of **120 seconds**. **Timing begins** when the **player either throws or places a disc in flight** and the canine makes any movement that can be considered an attempt to retrieve the disc. Scoring begins when the music starts. No practice throws are allowed.

Contestants are encouraged to bring their own music on CDs (marked with selection number) to perform to. CDs must be properly marked with the player's name and presented in unbroken jewel cases.

If there are two rounds of Freestyle played during a competition then each Freestyle round will be multiplied by 1.5 to keep the 85% Freestyle and 15% Toss & Fetch ending score.

If only one round of Freestyle is played during a competition then that Freestyle will be multiplied by 3 to keep the 85% Freestyle and 15% Toss & Fetch ending score.

### 4.1 DISCS

Teams can use up to a maximum of ten (10) discs during a freestyle routine. If a Player takes more than 10 discs out onto the field and it is not noticed before the Player begins then the Team will be penalized one (1) point per extra disc, before any multiplier or total.

Player **can not mix discs of different weight classes or different diameter discs** within the same round. If a competitor is found to have mixed the sizes or weight class of discs in a single round, a five (5) point penalty will be applied in Freestyle before the multiplier.

### 4.2 COUNT DOWN

There is a small difference in count down for Freestyle as only 10 seconds are announced and then time. No continuous count down as in T&F. Announced times are:

– **60 seconds, 30 seconds, 10 seconds and time.**

### 4.3 FREESTYLE FIELD

The minimum size Field of Play is 30 yards by 50 yards. The maximum Field of Play size is 30 yards by 60 yards. In addition to this there has to be 5 yards of over run at each side. The over run field can be adjusted if necessary.

### 4.4 FREESTYLE JUDGING CREW

The Judging Crew for any USDDN division of Freestyle competition shall consist of four people with one person assigned to judge each of the four scoring categories:

- Canine
- Player
- Team
- Execution

The **Head (Chief) Freestyle Judge** is the Team Element Judge. The Head judge has over riding and presiding rulings on all calls on their respective fields and their divisions.

According to the USDDN Judging Certification Program (see Appendix 4), a head judge has to be at least Level III. Other Freestyle judges have to be at least **Level II**. The only judge that does not have to be qualified is the Execution Judge; however, it is recommended that the Execution judge be certified judge.

### 4.5 SCORING

Innovation is scored in any of the respective judging elements. Each Judge will identify a score out of 10 using hundredths of a point variations, so that the maximum possible score for a competing team will be 40 points:

- The Canine Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the four Canine Elements. The Total Canine Score will be the total of the four elements.
- The Player Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the four Player Elements. The Total Player Score will be the total of the four elements.
- The Team Judge will allocate scores up to 2.50 for each of the seven (7) Team Elements. The Total Team Score will be the total of the best four (4) elements only.

- The Execution Judge will calculate the Catch-Throw ratio for the team and multiply it by 10.00 to derive the Total Execution Score. There must be a minimum of 18 throws during a routine or the number 18 will be used at the total number of throws to calculate the execution score. To be counted as a throw or intended roller (and a possible catch) the disc must be released from the player's hand before the dog attempts the catch. Consequently, takes shall not be counted as either a throw and a possible catch in calculating the execution score. Only discs intended for the dog to catch are counted in the Execution calculation.

**THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS THE MAXIMUM SCORES A TEAM CAN ACHIEVE USING THE USDDN FREESTYLE RULES:**

<b>Canine Elements</b>			
1.	Prey Drive	During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained.	2.50
2.	Retrieval	The dog's ability to track, chase and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player's feet, and handing them to the player).	2.50
3.	Athleticism	The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.	2.50
4.	Grip	Before, during and after the moment of catching a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.	2.50
			<b>Total Canine Score = 10.0</b>
<b>Player Elements</b>			
5.	Field Presentation	The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throws of different lengths thrown in different directions.	2.50
6.	Release Diversity	A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the handler with variations in the grip and release, including a minimum of 3 different releases.	2.50
7.	Disc	Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with	2.50
8.	Rhythmic Team	Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and	2.50
			<b>Total Player Score = 10.0</b>
<b>Team</b>		<b>(Only the best 4 of the following 7 elements score)</b>	
9.	Two Different Overs	The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player to catch a disc placed in flight.	2.50
10.	Two Different Vaults	The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances.	2.50
11.	Multiple Segment	1 multiple segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession.	2.50
12.	Dog Catches	2 different dog catches with the disc in flight.	2.50
13.	Team Movement	Coordinated team movement i.e. spin together, weave under legs, dog stall, etc.	2.50
14.	Passing	Consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line.	2.50
15.	Directional Distance Movement	The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like. <b>Circle Outrun segments</b> 1)____2)____ 3)____ 4)____ <b>Zig-Zag segments</b> 1)____2)____ 3)____ 4)____	2.50
			<b>Total Team Score = 10.0</b>
<b>Execution</b>		<b>Execution Score = ____ Catches / ____ Throws x 10 =</b>	
		<b>18 Minimum Throws (Each round of Freestyle is multiplied by 1.5 if 2 rounds of Freestyle)</b>	
			<b>TOTAL SCORE = 40.0</b>

**The Judges have total discretion for determining their scores, and their decisions will not be subject to any review or appeal.**

#### **4.5.1 Fouling/Soiling the field**

If, during the allotted time, a dog takes a nature break **on or off the field, time will be immediately stopped and will not resume**. Player will be immediately required to thoroughly clean any affected area of the field.

Teams will not be disqualified for such an infraction. Judges will give points for what they have seen till the accident but in addition to forfeiting the remainder of their time, **a five (5) point penalty will be deducted** from their total score before any multiplier. However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero. Teams can continue to next round(s).

Note: A penalty assessed for soiling the field is separate from any Canine Endangerment penalties.

#### **4.5.2 Canine Endangerment Rule**

In an effort to promote the safe training and handling of disc dogs, the USDDN has implemented a canine endangerment rule that levies the following point deductions when incidents that increase the risk of injury occur. Deductions will be made to a team's freestyle scores before the multiplier for the following incidents:

- **Contortion:** Dog squirms awkwardly enough to risk injury while jumping, catching, or landing.  
*Half (1/2) point to up to One (1) point deduction per occurrence.*  
**½ points to 1 point**
- **Buckle:** Dog's legs collapse on landing to the point that another part of the dog's body (such as torso or head) also strikes the ground.  
*Two (2) points to up to Three (3) point deduction per occurrence.*  
**2 points to 3 points**
- **Slam:** Some part of dog's body (back, chest, head, etc.) strikes the ground before the legs during a landing from a jump, vault, catch, or stall. (Excludes face first skids while pursuing low throws from a running stride.)  
*Three (3) points to up to Four (4) point deduction per occurrence.*  
**3 points to 4 points**

Two (2) out of four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the minimum penalty deduction and three (3) out of four (4) Freestyle Judges must agree to invoke the maximum deduction penalty (3 out of 4 judges could still agree to give the minimum penalty as well), to ensure that one of the following penalty events has occurred in order for the deduction to be applied.

During or after each freestyle round, the contest director will inform all contestants that received deductions for the above incidents so that they may have a chance to correct their freestyle performance. They can personally tell the competitor or place a sheet with the team(s) names that have incurred penalties at the registration desk.

Deductions for crashes are related to throws close to the player's body, especially during vaults, overs, flips and so, which are most often caused directly by the player's mistake. If a dog has bad landing during catching at distance, where the dog usually has time to adjust the movement, it's scored down in Canine element (Athleticism) and/or Player element (Release Diversity) and possibly in Team element (for example, if it happens during Zig-zag or Circle then it will influence the Directional Distance Movement score).

**Teams that incur six (6) or more deduction points for crashes during one day will be disqualified.**

#### **4.6 TIE BREAKER**

If there is a tie after all of the calculations are made in a freestyle and Toss & Fetch formatted tournament and the multiplier and any deductions have been taken, the tie breaker rule will be to add all of the 7 team elements together (from both rounds, where applicable) and recalculate the Grand Total to get the winner.

## 5. Judging Tips and Explanations

When judging by the USDDN Freestyle Criteria **it is important for a judge to remember that (s)he will be judging one element**, and to concentrate on that one element 100 %.

All of the four elements – Canine, Player, Team and Execution – are independent from each other and the scores can and will differ. For example, if a team has an experienced player and the canine is a beginner then you can usually expect the player's score to be higher than the canine's. Yet, if you have a talented canine and the player is either not experienced, not well organized, not innovative, repeats tricks, has no or little difficulty, does not use the field well, or does not have smooth transitions, the canine's score will usually be higher than the player's.

If the canine and player have the team elements required but do not demonstrate them in a smooth, seamless, and confident manner then the team's element should reflect a lower score.

### 5.1 CANINE

There are four sub-elements in Canine element:

- **Prey Drive (PD)**
- **Retrieval (R)**
- **Athleticism (AT)**
- **Grip (G)**

**USDDN Canine judge should take into consideration dog's breed dispositions, to ensure that dogs of different breeds have similar chances and are not penalized for their breed's characteristics.**

As a judge, you don't give score for a dog's potential, but for what you have seen on the field during a team's performance. Canine's score doesn't always reflect how good a dog really is, but rather how well was the dog shown by the player. **A dog should not receive very high points in each category, unless a player has adequately challenged the dog.** If you have a super dog that has all great qualities, but a player is using easy throws, the dog can not receive the highest points.

It happens often that a Toss & Fetch dog that is consistent will lose their catching consistency (and height of leap) at first when they start freestyle. This is because the dog can no longer anticipate the disc's flight patterns or is not used to catching discs with a different spin. So, that is why release diversity is important when challenging a dog's skills.

If a canine does not demonstrate retrieving at different levels or misses a very high percentage of throws the dog may be scored down in all four canine elements. It depends if the canine lost focus and missed the disc (PD), did not track well (R), leaped too early (R or A), or just did not grip the disc during a catch (G).

#### **Prey Drive:**

*"During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained."*

If a canine loses focus in the routine at any time the canine is judged lower in the prey drive. If the dog tries hard to catch every throw, even if the throw is low and fast, tries to catch a disc after tapping it, the dog will get high prey drive score. Fast retrieve can be also a sign of a good prey drive.

To the contrary, if the dog slows down during the routine the prey drive score should be lowered. However, the canine judge has to be able to recognize the difference between a low drive dog that slows down because of lack of interest and a dog with good drive that changes pace according to the routine's demands.

If a canine has too much drive, has time to bite and damage the disc the canine score may be lowered in Prey Drive or Grip. **However, a canine displaying lack of focus (or looks off the field and star gazes) is scored lower than a canine with too much drive chewing on the disc.**

#### **Retrieval:**

*"The dog's ability to track, chase, and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player's feet, handing them to the player)."*

If a canine does not demonstrate retrieving at different levels then the dog can't get maximum score for Retrieval. If the dog repeatedly refuses to drop a disc the score is lowered.

But score for this sub-element reflects also how well a dog can „read“ the disc. If a dog misses very high percentage of throws because the dog doesn't track the disc well, has bad timing during leaping catches etc., then the dog is scored down.

The retrieval score is raised if a team has an innovative retrieval such as, where dogs have to decide where to bring the disc to the person's hand, like a mid-air exchange of discs, jumping retrieve or so.

### **Athleticism:**

*“The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.”*

It's a sub-element where all dog's physical abilities are scored, not only jumping. Also dog's speed, body-awareness and agility are judged in this sub-element. Consequently, if a dog performs tricks that shows their good body control (e.g. foot stall, leg stall) the dog's athleticism score should be increased.

To jumping, a canine's athleticism is **not judged on how high** dogs jump, **but on how well** they leap with control **in relationship to their breed ability**. You can tell if a canine has control of their leap if they feel comfortable in the air. You can tell if a canine is not comfortable in the air (and will not score well in athleticism no matter how high the dog jumps) if their body sways, swings from side to side, lands on one hind foot, or even worse yet crashes on any landing. A dog with a well controlled leap displays the three elements of a leap: a sound push off, controlled air-time, and a sound landing. Dogs of different breed, size, and temperament leap with varying degrees of finesse during the push off, airtime and landing but they all must have complete control during all three stages of the leap.

A player that excessively vaults their canine in excessive heights or numbers will ultimately lower their release diversity score, and if the canine is not landing well will lower the canine's athleticism score. Also bad timing and disc placement may result in unsuccessful leaping and consequently worse score in this sub-element.

The dog is also judged in Athleticism for Flips as being one kind of Leap and the Canine Judge also looks to see if the dog flips both directions or not, and/or whether those Flips are of equal value in both directions.

The dog is judged in Athleticism in four different kinds of leaps, Standing leaps, Running leaps, Flipping leaps, and Vaulting leaps. Not all four kinds of leaps are necessary, but show versatility if a dog displays multiple types. However, **safe and soft landing is necessary in any type of leaps**.

### **Grip:**

*“Before, during and after the moment of executing a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.”*

In general, good grip is when the dog shows no hesitation right before and during catching and catches reliably during the whole routine all types of throw. A good grip dog is able to consistently catch throws with both clockwise (e.g. right handed backhand) and counter-clockwise spin (e.g. right handed sidearm). Catching upside-down throws can also help to get a higher score.

If the dog has a disc in the mouth but doesn't catch it, it's a bad grip. As well as if the dog is holding the disc so softly that it repeatedly falls down off the dog's mouth on the way back. Also if the dog chews the disc or rolls it into his mouth the score should be lowered.

Tapping a disc back to the player (intentionally), or catching a butterfly would be an innovation and can increase this element.

A grip "style" is partly related to a breed disposition (as well as Athleticism) so a canine judge should bear this in mind when giving points.

## **5.2 PLAYER**

There are four sub-elements in Player sub-element:

- **Field Presentation (FP)**
- **Release Diversity (RD)**
- **Disc Management (DM)**
- **Rhythmic Team (RT)**

A player's innovation can be scored in any of the four sub-elements depending on if the innovation was a trick (RD), transitional movement (RT), field movement (FP), or disc management (DM).

A player that has a higher degree of difficulty and innovation, even if they have a lower hit/miss percentage, will usually score higher in the player elements than a person with lower difficulty and a better hit/miss percentage.

### **Field Presentation:**

*"The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throw of different lengths thrown in different directions."*

This is where a Player has the freedom to create field movements around the field to play to the crowd or the judges with a variety of different lengths of throws. Also the way how the competitor presents themselves on the field counts.

A player must have a planned field movement around the field with short, medium, and long throws, whether it is moving from down the field to up the field, in a large circle, in a diamond, in a square, or up and down the field with smooth movement. Other field movement is okay, too. However, look for players that just chunk straight throws from one end to the other or in a circle and end up throwing in one circle, this is not good field movement because the dog is displaying field movement not the player.

The field movement is scored throughout the entire routine not just in one segment.

### **Release Diversity:**

*"A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the player with variations in the grip and release, including a minimum of 3 different releases."*

**Grip:** a way how the disc is held in a player's hand – sidearm grip, backhand grip...

**Release:** a way how the disc is thrown or a „position“ from which a disc is thrown – behind the back, under the leg etc.

***Blind release:** A blind release is a throw that is released from a position that the dog did not see the disc at its release point along the player's body. Yet, the dog has to anticipate where the disc's flight is supposed to be for their catch.*

*Note: Adding blind releases to a routine can increase also canine's (a dog has to be able to „read“ such a type of throw) and team's (e.g. blind releases in zig-zag) score.*

This is where competitors have the freedom to be creative on their throws, releases, and other tricks. A player must demonstrate at a minimum 3 different releases with different grips in order to receive a good score. How well the player scores in this sub-element doesn't depend only on the number of different throws but also on their quality. If the player uses various throws but with not enough spin, bad timing and/or wrong placement, the Release diversity score won't be high. Especially if those bad throws put the dog into dangerous situations.

**All tricks that are not covered in other categories are scored here.** An innovative team would score well in this category.

Any trick, throw or release that is repeated more than twice without any variation, unless in a multiple segment, may lower the release diversity score. So, the third time a trick is repeated with no variation the trick is scored down.

If a player is excessively vaulting in height or quantity you can adjust the competitor's score down in Release Diversity.

### **Rhythmic Team:**

*"Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments."*

This is a great element to add innovated transitional movements with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments to increase chances of a better score. This is one category that can add professionalism to a routine adding spins or squats after a dog flip, or spin before a segment leading into the next segment. An example of a great transitional move is where the player rolls and the dog leaps over the person in mid roll.

A player that does not move from trick to trick, segment to segment, or transition well between them will lower their rhythmic team score. Watch for an inexperienced players to be too worried about transitional moves when they have not mastered the throws or releases yet.

This is also where some showmanship can be scored if added in a transitional move.

## **Disc Management:**

*“Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with no breaks.”*

As there is a limit of 10 discs, it's necessary to plan ahead how to use them during a routine so that there are no breaks in flow – that is Disc Management.

Good Disc Management is when the player has still enough discs for next segment without disrupting a flow of the routine. It's also important that the player is able to do segments with various number of discs and throws during the whole routine.

An inexperienced player may be still picking up discs while the dog is standing around or following them or they may only have so called a two disc routine. This is where a team, once in the middle of their routine, only ends up with throwing segments with two or three discs because the rest are all scattered around the field.

The players should use all the discs that they brought to the field. It happens sometimes that the player forget to use some of the discs in the field which is a sign of not well planned Disc Management.

Also watch for a players who are running across the field to collect as many discs as possible and then drop some of them, because they realize they don't need them for the upcoming segment.

A great innovated move here is when a competitor has a disc in his shirt or shorts ready for the next trick.

A player that does not seamlessly release and replace all discs without breaks will lower their disc management score. If a player only does tricks in groups of four then throws a fifth one all of the time without some variation (or one that does not vary their groups of throws) will receive a lower score. A player that stands around and waits for their canine to return and does not move well may lower three different scores, their disc management, field presentation, and rhythmic team.

The Disc management sub-element is significantly related to the Field presentation sub-element: If the Player doesn't use much of the field, then there is no need for some special Disc Management to have discs at hand. On the other hand, a Player who is moving a lot and is using also long throws during the routine will have to do much more to still have enough discs for next segments.

## **5.3 TEAM ELEMENTS**

In USDDN rules, there are 7 team sub-elements (but only the best 4 count towards team total score):

- **Two different Overs,**
- **Two different Vaults,**
- **Multiple Segment,**
- **Two different Dog Catches,**
- **Team Movement,**
- **Passing Segment,**
- **Directional Distance Movements Segment (Circling or Zig-Zag or like movements)**

Scoring of these element is based on the safety, difficulty, originality, accuracy and fluency. That's why a difficult trick with a miss can be scored higher than an easy one with a catch. But also dangerous, eventhough difficult or original, trick shouldn't be scored very high. An innovation is scored in a respective category.

In Team sub-elements a team must accomplish at least 4 out of the 7 sub-elements to have a chance for a full team score. If a player only attempts 3 out of the 7 then they get scored in only the 3 sub-elements. If a player attempts 4, 5, 6, or all 7 then the four highest are calculated. It is always better for a competitor to attempt as many of the 7 elements because they will get scored on all attempts. Points for all 7 Team sub-elements are used as a Freestyle tie breaker when there are teams with the same total scores.

Remember, that a team only has to perform 4 out of the 7 recommended, so that gives them plenty of freedom to be innovative and to create a routine that fits well to the player and to the dog. Especially, since some of these categories can be accomplished at the same time (see Passing), it is not difficult to meet these elements.

**If a team did a different trick that would not be scored in any of the seven team elements then it would be scored in the Release Diversity category.**

The score is dependent on how well the team displayed the element. Only team elements with a disc obviously in the air can be scored well. Team elements performed with “almost take” are scored low as very simple attempts. The only exception is mouthtake to a Dog catch.

The team elements are a guideline and were created by watching several world finals routines over many years and 98% of the world finalists had 5 out of the 7 sub-elements.

In any element if a competitor repeats (for instance, overs, vaults, multiples) because they did not like the previous ones all of the elements will be scored. So, if they did two lower quality vaults and then decided to do two more the two lower quality vaults will bring down the two good vaults score. The rule of thumb is **quality is better than quantity**.

A judge scores every element and every obvious attempt that the team performs during their routine.

### Overs:

*"The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player, to catch a disc placed in flight."*

Only figures where the dog is **catching or trying to catch a disc** while jumping over the player are scored as overs. A jump over some part of the player's body without a disc is judged as a Team Movement. A jumping retrieve over the player's body can be scored as Team Movement too and by canine judge in Retrieval but it's not an over either.

Teams get points also if they perform only one (1) over, as it's counted as an attempt. However, in such case they can't get full score in this sub-element, even if that one over was excellent. **Two (2) different overs are a limit to have a chance of getting high points.**

### Vaults:

*"The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances."*

The dog uses the player's body as a launching pad to jump for a disc. The dog has to land on the ground to get scored in vaults. If the player catches the dog during the jump, it's scored as a Dogcatch.

Same as with overs: teams are scored in vaults even if they perform only one (1) vault, but in that case they can't get full score in this sub-element, even if that one vault was excellent.

The use of vaults, which employ the thrower's body as a launching pad, should be tempered with consideration for the dog's welfare. If a player is excessively vaulting in height or quantity you should adjust the competitor's score for vaults down. On an average if a team is performing 3-5 vaults at safe heights, different releases, and different stance positions that would be great. If a competitor does not vary the releases, stance positions, and especially pushes the dog to excessive heights or quantity the competitor **WILL** be scored down.

### Passing:

*"Consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line."*

The dog passes close to the player's body twice in row. Especially in Passings with longer throws, it's important that the dog really passes close to the player's body, otherwise it's not a Passing. When passing the player's body, the dog should run in a straight line. However, during the rest of the passing a straight line is not necessary.

The dog can catch the disc at a distance after passing the player, but **the distance is not necessary**. For example, a segment flip-through-flip-through is also counted as a Passing. Overs and vaults can be scored as both in the passing element and an over and/or a vault as long as the pass is complete – a dog passes twice.

### Dog catches:

*"2 different dog catches with the disc in flight."*

A player catches the dog while the dog is catching a flying disc – it should be obvious that the disc is in the air before the dog catches it. The only exception is a **mouthtake dog catch** which is in Team scored as a full-blown dog catch (which is not true for any other team element performed with a take). But it's not counted in the Execution anyway.

As with overs, only figures where the dog is catching or trying to catch a disc are scored as a Dog catch. If a dog only jumps into the arms with a disc in the mouth, it can be scored in Canine sub-element Retrieval and also in Team Movement, but not in Dog catch.

\*\*Dogcatch from a vault is scored as a Dog catch only. Catching/landing of the dog on the player's back and so is also scored as a Dog catch.

### **Multiple:**

*"One multiple segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession."*

A multiple segment are any three discs thrown in rapid succession. This can be a variety of multiples like shuffling, flips, or three discs thrown to a distance one after each other **as long as they are rapid**. The SC agreed that Flips would count in the Multiple Sub-Element and the Canine Athleticism Sub-Element, which is described in the Judging Handbook. Flips would count as a Multiple as long as the person displayed a minimum of three consecutive Flips in rapid succession.

Multiple doesn't have to be performed close to the player's body and the dog doesn't have to stay at one spot during the multiple.

Increasing the number of multiple throws (more than 5), increasing the number of easy multiples or repeating multiples in the routine does may increase a team's execution score, but it should reflect negatively in Multiple score (and possibly also in the Player's score in RD).

### **Team Movement:**

*"Team movement coordinating team movement, i.e. spin together, dog stall, weave under legs, etc."*

It is a coordinated movement performed simultaneously by both a player and a dog. Typical examples are simultaneous spins of a dog and a player, weaving through player's legs or more static forms like various stalls – backstall, footstall etc. All these tricks should be performed in a smooth, fluent way to be scored well.

A disc doesn't have to be involved. Any innovative move without a disc is scored in the Team Movement.

If the team's performance fits into the music, it's also scored as a Team Movement.

### **Directional Distance Movement:**

*"The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like."*

A key point of this element is a **distance between the player and the dog**. But not only distance is important, accuracy is very important, too. The dog should move from a disc to disc without going back to the player during Directional Distance Movement and this should be performed in a fluent way. There is no exact distance stated, but at least about five (5) yards between the player and the dog are recommended.

However, the distance between the player and the dog doesn't have to be constant during the whole movement. The player can send the dog further with each throw. Or the dog can come closer to the player with each throw, but in that case it is important that the dog doesn't get too close to the player.

**Zig-Zag:** The dog must turn at least 90 degrees after each throw to count as a zig-zag, but 180 degrees is even harder for the dog and will be scored as more difficult. It should be obvious that a dog is performing learned pattern, not only chasing discs thrown to the left and to the right.

**Around the world:** To score a circling movement as a Directional distance movement, it doesn't have to be a full circle. If a team is performing running circling movement, it's still the distance between the player and the dog that is very important in this element. If a player does a big running circle, but the the player and the dog are too close to each other, it's not a Directional Distance Movement. It should be obvious that a dog is performing a learned pattern.

Passing and Zig-Zags or Circling can't be scored together. As passing is close, Zig-Zags as well as Circling are at a distance. Moreover, Circling movement lacks those straight lines that are necessary in Passing.

## **5.4 EXECUTION:**

Execution Score is simply the exact ratio of the team's catches and misses. Execution score is counted as a total number of catches divided by a total number of throws. The result is then multiplied by 10 to get the final execution score:

**Execution score = catches / throws(min. 18) x 10**

There is a minimum number of throws that need to be displayed in a Freestyle routine. That minimum number is 18 throws. If there is less than 18 throws than the execution judge will place an 18 in the throw column and use that number to get the exact execution score.

Only the throws that are thrown to the dog (intended for the dog) will be scored in execution. A disc thrown for the dog has to be caught by a dog to be counted as a catch. If the dog doesn't catch it, then it's a miss no matter what else happens – even if the disc is caught by the player. On the other hand, if a player does a trick with a disc where the dog is not supposed to catch it – for example juggling – and a disc falls down, it's not scored in Execution as a miss (It's a job for a Player judge).

One disc equals one throw. If a player throws more discs at once to a dog the Execution judge counts as many throws and catches/misses as there are discs thrown. It doesn't matter whether these discs fly separately or are stuck together.

Intended rollers count in Execution as regular throws.

\*\*Takes are not counted in Execution. It has to be obvious that the disc is in the air when the dog is catching it. If it's not and the judge can't be sure then it's considered to be a take.

## 5.5 SCORING EXAMPLES

- Nothing, no effort, no attempt then the score is 0 (usually an option for Team judge only. All sub-elements in Canine and Player are always present to a certain degree)
- A simple and/or not very successful attempt with not much effort will receive at the maximum 0.5 point out of 2.5. An example of a simple attempt are team figures like vaults or dogcatches performed with (almost) takes (except of mouthtake dogcatch).
- If a team attempts any sub-element with some fair effort they will usually receive a 0.5 – 1.2 score.
- If a player attempts, makes or misses any sub-element with good effort they will usually receive 1.2 – 1.6.
- If a player attempts and makes any sub-element with good success and difficulty they will usually receive 1.6 – 1.9.
- If a player attempts and makes any sub-element with very good success and difficulty they will usually receive 1.9 - 2.2.
- If a player attempts and make a sub-element with great success and difficulty they should receive 2.2 - 2.5.
- If a player makes a perfect sub-element with excellent success and difficulty and could not have done better then they should receive 2.5.
- Imagine in the routine you just watched all four sub-categories were equal and you wanted to give over 96% in that element of a maximum score is 10.00 pts. You would give, i.e. 2.4 in each sub-element when multiplied by the 4 sub-elements = 9.60 out of 10.00 pts or (96%) in that Element.

THERE IS A GUIDELINE:

**>> 2.40 X 4 = 96% = (9.60 out of 10 points) “A+” Superior  
2.30 to 2.5 score**

**>> 2.25 X 4 = 90% = (9.00 out of 10 points) “A” Excellent  
2.01 to 2.29 score**

**>> 2.00 X 4 = 80% = (8.00 out of 10 points) “B” Above Average  
1.76 to 2.00 score**

**>> 1.75 X 4 = 70% (7.00 out of 10 points) “C” Average  
1.51 to 1.75 score**

**>> 1.50 X 4 = 60% (6.00 out of 10 points) “D” Below Average  
1.0 to 1.5 score**

>> **0.99 X 4 = 40% (4.00 out of 10 points) "D -" Below Average**  
**0.50 to 0.99 score**

If you want to score Canine, Player, or Team element an average of 80% out of 10 possible points in the element that you are judging you can imagine that 2.00 is the score that you would want to give them in each sub-element. For instance, if the canine excelled in Athleticism, above that 2.00, you can give 2.0 in each of the other sub-elements and than just increase the Athleticism score to 2.26 or whatever you want.

Freestyle counts 85% of the ending score and Toss & Fetch counts 15% of the ending score.

***Important note:*** *The smaller the differences between teams in Canine, Player and Team scores are the bigger the influence of Execution and Toss&Fetch score is. It's necessary that Canine, Player and Team judge use as much from the 0.01 – 2.5 point scale as possible to ensure that there are significant differences in scores between very good teams, average teams and below average teams so that teams with good freestyle rounds are not easily beaten by those who have only simple routines with high catch/drop ratio and good Toss & Fetch.*

## 6. USDDN Divisions and Formats

### 6.1 FREESTYLE DIVISIONS

#### 6.1.1 Super Open Freestyle Division

*This is a Worlds Qualifying Division*

Worlds Division competitors use the USDDN Judging Criteria for Freestyle and the USDDN Judging Criteria for Toss and Fetch developed by the Steering Committee:

- **90 seconds in Toss & Fetch**
- **two 120 Seconds rounds of Freestyle**
- **winners are calculated by multiplying both freestyle scores by 1.5 and adding the Toss & Fetch Score**

In the **Super Open Freestyle Division**, the competitors will start in **random draw order**. The competition order will remain the same for the first 2 rounds of competition and in **reverse order of score from lowest score to highest score for the last round of freestyle**.

Normally, all teams compete in all 3 rounds of competition.

USDDN World Finals for Super Open Freestyle – As of the 2011 season, all teams competing at USDDN Worlds compete in 3 rounds spread over the weekend. All competitors start with a zero score at Worlds; competitor placement at Qualifiers is used only to create the order for the random draw at Worlds.

If any additional days are added to the event, the USDDN reserves the right to go back to a former format in which the top scoring competitors from Semin-Finals move onto Finals. In that case, the Semi-Finals will utilize a random draw order for the first Freestyle round and Toss Fetch. For the second round of Freestyle, a reverse to first order will be used. For the Finals round, the starting order will be reverse to first based on the Semi-Finals totals. The same order will be used for round 1 and toss fetch. Round 2 will be a reverse to first based on Finals round 1 + Toss & Fetch results.

#### 6.1.2 Division II Freestyle

*This is a non-qualifying Division*

Division II competitors can be any team that is not attempting to qualify for USDDN Worlds and use the USDDN Judging Criteria for Freestyle and the USDDN Judging Criteria for Toss & Fetch developed by the Steering Committee.

- **90 seconds in Toss & Fetch**
- **one 90 seconds round of Freestyle**
- **winners are calculated by multiplying the Freestyle score by 3 and adding the Toss & Fetch score**

At registration, Division II competitors may be assigned their order of competition based upon their order of registration and this starting position will be written on the score sheet. The competition order will remain the same for both rounds of competition.

At USDDN World Finals, this division is open to all handlers that have NOT qualified for Super Open Freestyle. Handlers may enter multiple dogs in this division.

### 6.2 TOSS & FETCH DIVISIONS

#### 6.2.1 Super-Pro Toss & Fetch Division

*This is a Worlds Qualifying Division*

Worlds Division competitors use the USDDN Judging Criteria for Super-Pro Toss & Fetch developed by the Steering Committee:

- **2 rounds of Super-Pro Toss & Fetch**
- **winners are calculated by adding scores from both rounds together**

In the **Super-Pro Toss & Fetch Division**, the competitors will start in **random draw order** and will change to **reverse order of score from lowest score to highest score for the last round of Super-Pro Toss & Fetch**. This same methodology will be followed at USDDN World Finals for Super Pro Toss & Fetch.

Normally, all teams compete in both rounds of competition.

### **6.2.2 Pro Toss&Fetch**

*This is a Non-qualifying division*

Pro Toss & Fetch competitors use the USDDN Judging criteria for Toss & Fetch OR USDDN Judging Criteria for Super-Pro Toss & Fetch.

- **2 rounds of Toss & Fetch**
- **winners are calculated by adding scores from both rounds together.**

At registration, competitors may be assigned their order of competition based on their order of registration and this starting position will be written on their score sheet if supplied. The competition order may remain the same for both rounds of competition.

Normally, all teams compete in 2 rounds of competition.

At USDDN World Finals, this division is opened to all teams regardless of their qualifier status in Super Pro Toss & Fetch.

## **Appendixes**

**Appendix 1 – List of USDDN approved discs**

**Appendix 2 – USDDN Judging worksheets**

**Appendix 3 – USDDN Judging Certification Program**

**Appendix 4 – USDDN Toss & Fetch Field Scheme**

**Appendix 5 – USDDN Super Pro Toss & Fetch Field Scheme**

**Appendix 6 – Instructions for Determining USDDN Placements**

## Appendix 1:

# List of USDDN approved discs

The SC set forth Size/Weight class distinctions in discs.

Players can use any of the approved discs; HOWEVER, players may NOT mix disc sizes and weights in a single round. For example, competitors cannot compete with a EuroBlend & standard Fastback in the same Round; competitors cannot use standard fastbacks and Jawz in the same round; and, competitors cannot combine Pup size discs with any larger discs.

The USDDN SC requires, in both Toss & Fetch and Freestyle Formats, the use of the discs specified below. A competitor may not mix discs within any one (1) round of competition - all discs must be the same size and weight class. If a competitor is found to have mixed the sizes or weight class of discs in a single round, a five (5) point penalty will be applied in Freestyle before the multiplier and in Toss & Fetch formats there will be a one (1) point penalty applied per throw made. However, the application of this rule cannot result in a score lower than zero. Important note: a penalty assessed for mixing discs is separate from any Canine Endangerment penalties.

### **Discs by Size/Weight Class:**

#### **“Standard Large Discs”: Between 9 - 9.5 Inches in Diameter & Less Than 115 grams**

- Wham-O: Fastback Standard, Flex & Super Flex
- DTW: Chomper Standard, Flex & SuperFlex
- Innova Hero: 235's: AIR and Xtra
- DogStar: Standard and Crusher
- Mamadiscs: Light, Medium
- Super Aero
- The Rocket
- The Addict
- WirbelWind Maxi
- 

#### **“Standard Medium Discs”: Between 8.5 to 8.75 Inches in Diameter & Less Than 115 grams**

- Innova Hero: 215's: Sonic, Super Sonic, Sonic Xtra
- Hyperflite: K-10 Competition Standard, Frostbite, UV & Midnight Sun
- J-discs: No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5
- K9-Disc Model C-SBD
- Funny disc

#### **“Heavy Large Discs”: Between 9 - 9.5 Inches in Diameter & between 130 grams and 145 grams**

- Wham-O: Eurablend;
- Innova Hero: 235's: Super Hero/K9 Candy, SuperStars, SuperSwirls
- DogStar: Crusher Heavy & Crusher T-Rex
- Latitude 64 Bite

#### **“Heavy Medium Discs”: Between 8.5 to 8.75 Inches in Diameter & between 130 grams and 145 grams**

- Hyperflite: Jawz (All variants of Jawz - HyperFlex, XComp, Standard)
- K9-Disc Model C-HBR
-

**“Small Dog Discs”: Between 6.25 and 7 Inches in Diameter and between 40 grams and 90 grams**

- Innova Hero: Pup 160's
- Hyperflite: Pup Jawz, Pup Frostbite, Pup Competition Standard
- Atom 185
- Latitude 64 Bite
- WirbelWind mini
- Funny disc ( small)

**Appendix 2:**

# USDDN Freestyle Format - Judges Worksheet

Canine Disc Championships Score Sheet  
Super-Open Freestyle Division / Division II

## USDDN FREESTYLE FORMAT - JUDGES WORKSHEET

Competitor's # \_\_\_\_\_ Judge's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*Mark Catches with a √ Misses an X*

Canine Elements (Freestyle-based on 0.01 to 2.50 scale per category (1/100 pt. scale), totaling 10pts per each 4 Elements) Round 1    Round 2

1	Prey Drive	During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained.		
2	Retrieval	The dog's ability to track, chase, and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player's feet, handing them to the player).		
3	Athleticism	The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.		
4	Grip	Before, during and after the moment of executing a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.		

Judges Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ Execution %: \_\_\_\_\_

Competitor's # \_\_\_\_\_ Judge's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*Mark Catches with a √ Misses an X*

Player Elements - (Freestyle-based on 0.01 to 2.50 scale per category (1/100 pt. scale), totaling 10pts per each 4 Elements) Round 1    Round 2

5	Field Presentation	The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throw of different lengths thrown in different directions.		
6	Release Diversity	A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the player with variations in the grip and release, including with a minimum of 3 different releases.		
7	Disc Management	Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with no breaks.		
8	Rhythmic Team	Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments.		

Judges Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ Execution %: \_\_\_\_\_

Competitor's # \_\_\_\_\_ Judge's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*Mark Catches with a √ Misses an X*

Team Elements (Team Elements are scored on the highest 4 out of 7 elements)		Round 1	Round 2
9	The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player, to catch a disc placed in flight. <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____</span>		
10	The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances. <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____</span>		
11	<b>1 multiple segment</b> with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession <span style="float: right;">1) _____</span>		
12	<b>2 different dog catches</b> with the disc in flight <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____</span>		
13	<b>Team movement</b> coordinating team movement, i.e. spin together, dog stall, weave under legs, etc. <span style="float: right;">1) _____</span>		
14	<b>Passing segments</b> consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____</span>		
15	<b>Directional Distance Movement</b> - The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dog catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like.		
	<b>Circle Outrun segments</b> <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____</span>		
	<b>Zig-Zag segments</b> <span style="float: right;">1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____</span>		

Judges Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ Execution %: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 3:**

# USDDN Judging Certification Program

## JUDGE USDDN LEVEL I

- Approved Format:** Toss & Fetch Only
- Approved Positions:** Foul Line Judge, Field Judge, Scoring Judge, Timekeeper, Field Setup, Judging Secretary
- Prerequisite:** None
- Judging Experience:** None required, recommended to be judging assistant 2 competitions
- Competitive Experience:** None required, recommended
- USDDN Toss & Fetch Exam:** Pass by 75% or better

## JUDGE USDDN LEVEL II

- Approved Format:** Toss & Fetch and Freestyle
- Approved Positions:** Foul Line Judge, Field Judge, Scoring Judge, Timekeeper, Field Setup, Judging Secretary, Canine Elements, Player Elements, Execution
- Prerequisite:** Must be Level I Judge
- Judging Experience:** Must be judge for 6 months OR have been in the sport for 2 years, recommended judging assistant 2 competitions
- Competitive Experience:** Must have competed in Canine Frisbee Freestyle OR in the sport for 2 years and have judged Freestyle before
- USDDN Toss & Fetch Exam:** Pass by 75% or better
- USDDN Freestyle Exam:** Pass by 75% or better

## JUDGE USDDN LEVEL III

- Approved Format:** Toss & Fetch and Freestyle
- Approved Positions:** Foul Line Judge, Field Judge, Scoring Judge, Timekeeper, Field Setup, Judging Secretary, Canine Elements, Player Elements, Team Elements, Execution, Head Judge
- Title Definition:** Head Judge - Head Judge of competition – administer judges meeting
- Prerequisite:** Must be a Level II Judge
- Judging Experience:** Must have been a Freestyle judge for 5 years OR 5 years of Freestyle competition
- Competitive Experience:** Must have 5 years of Freestyle competition
- USDDN Toss & Fetch Exam:** Pass by 75% or better
- USDDN Freestyle Exam:** Pass by 75% or better

## JUDGE USDDN LEVEL IV

- Approved Format:** Toss & Fetch and Freestyle
- Approved Positions:** Foul Line Judge, Field Judge, Scoring Judge, Timekeeper, Field Setup, Judging Secretary, Canine Elements, Player Elements, Team Elements, Execution, Head Judge, Master Judge
- Definitions:** Master Judge - approved to administer Judging Exams
- Prerequisite:** Must be a Level III Judge
- Judging Experience:** Must have 7 years of Freestyle judging
- Competitive Experience:** Must have 7 years of competition experience
- USDDN Toss & Fetch Exam:** Pass by 90% or better
- USDDN Freestyle Exam:** Pass by 90% or better

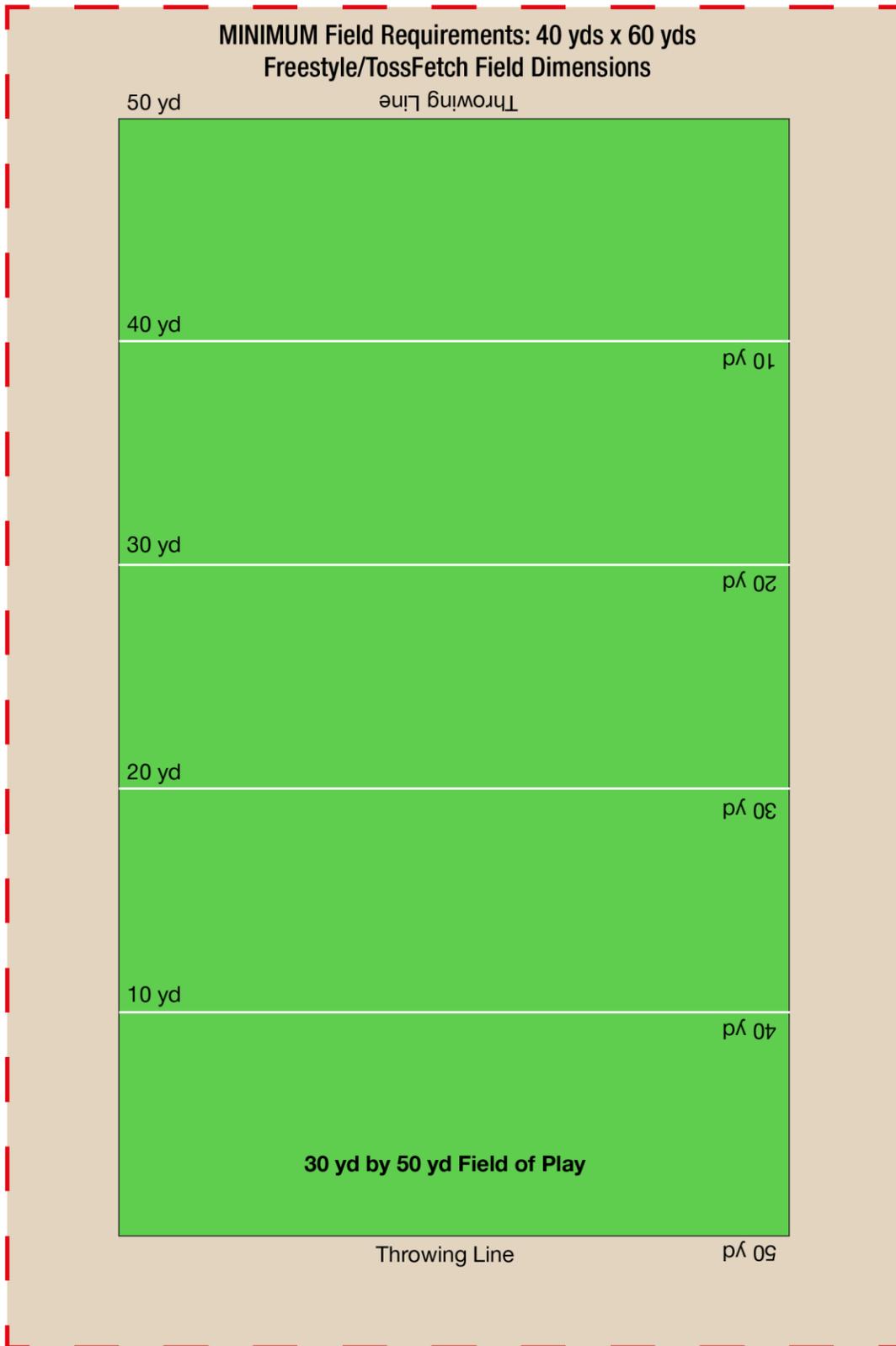
*Proposed by Melissa Heeter*

**Appendix 4:**

# **USDDN Toss & Fetch Field Scheme**

Minimum field size

**MINIMUM Field Requirements: 40 yds x 60 yds  
Freestyle/TossFetch Field Dimensions**

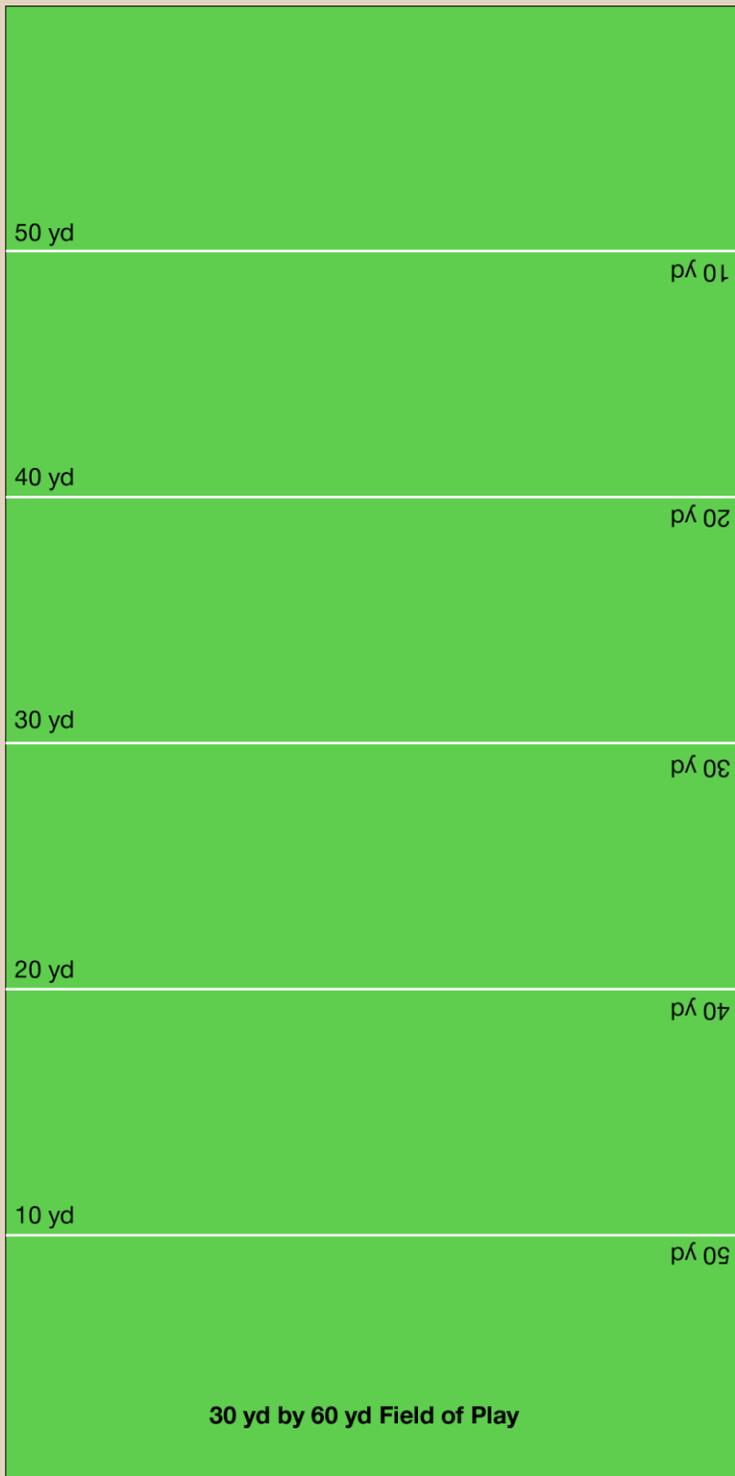


Maximum field size

**40 yds x 70 yds Field**

**Freestyle/TossFetch Field Dimensions**

Throwing Line

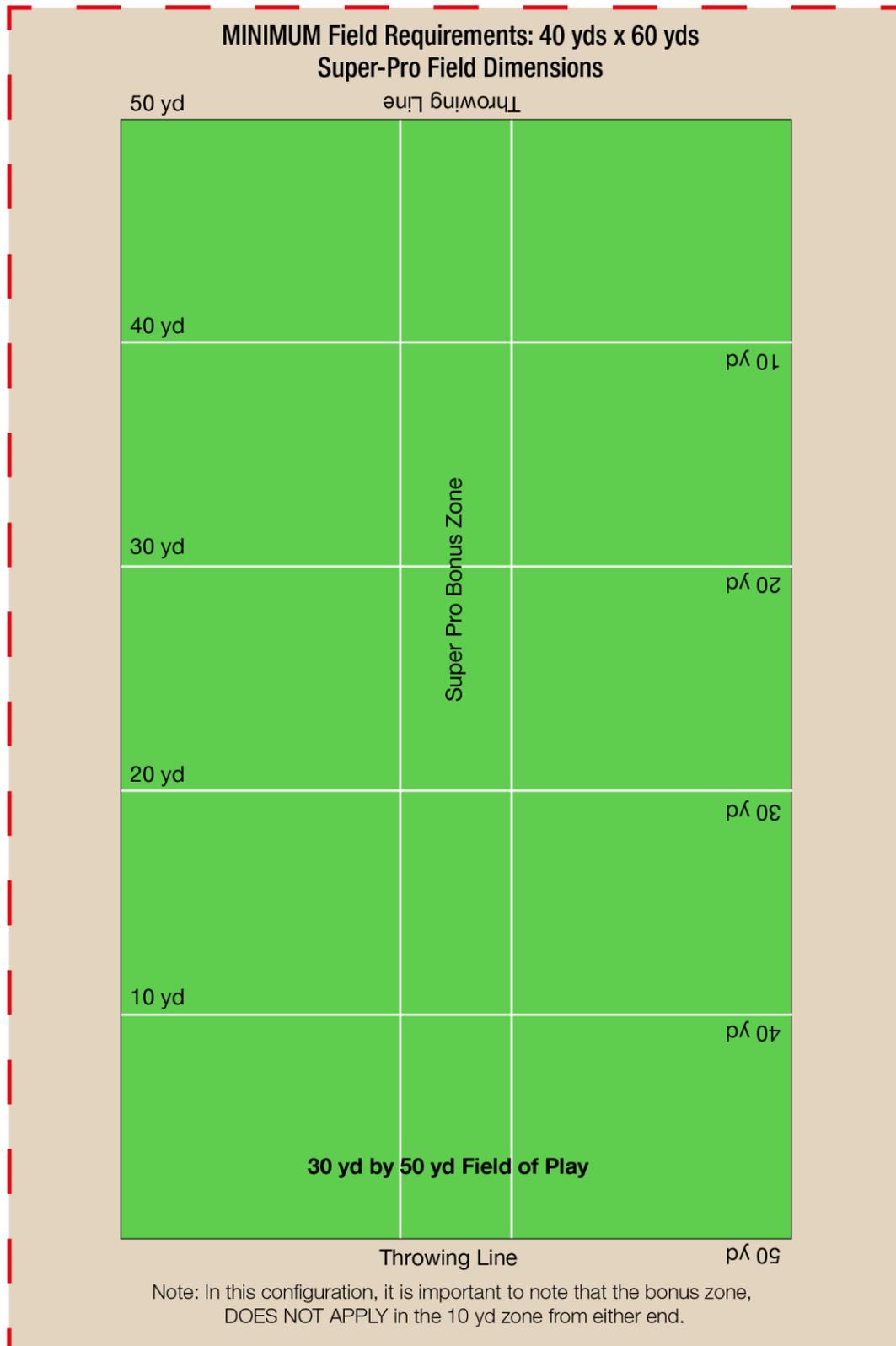


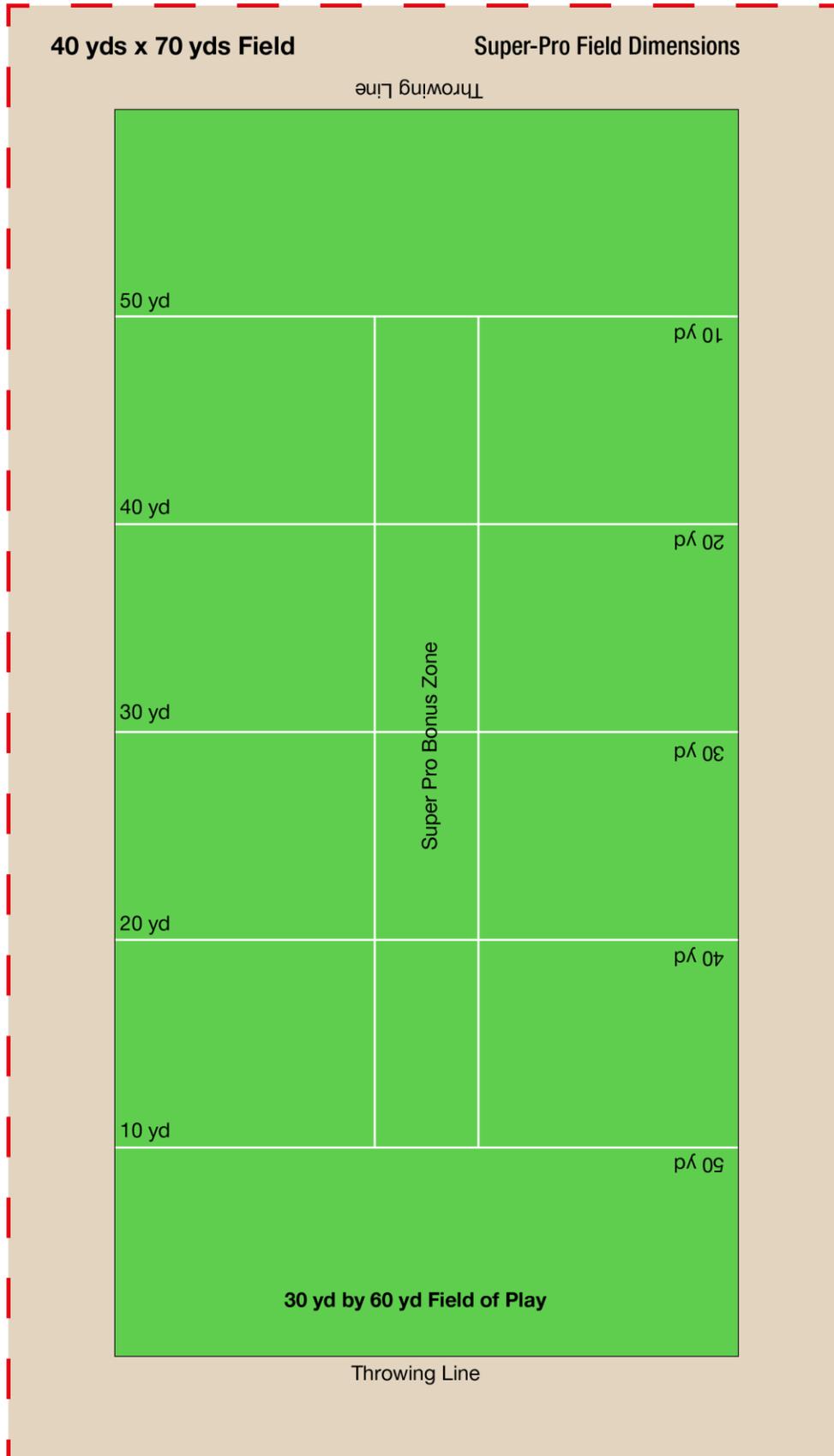
Throwing Line

Appendix 5:

# USDDN Super-Pro Toss & Fetch Field Scheme

Minimum field size





## Appendix 6:

# Instructions for Determining USDDN Placements

The USDDN competitors are attempting to earn an invitation to the annual USDDN World Championships. At USDDN Worlds, a competitor may only compete with 1 dog in each World Championship Division. Similarly, a dog may qualify with multiple handlers, but may only compete at USDDN Worlds with 1 handler in each World Championship Division.

Every USDDN World Qualifier is open to all competitors wishing to enter. The USDDN does not restrict the competitor from competing at multiple Qualifiers or with multiple dogs. However, a Handler will only be awarded one (1) Qualifier status. We will utilize a “roll down” methodology to determine the new Qualifying Teams at each event. There are four (4) official “Qualifier” statuses to be awarded at each event:

- Qualifier (1 through 4)
- Alternate (1 and 2 and 3)
- Already Qualified
- Auxiliary Dog

Explanation of Official Statuses:

### **Qualifier 1 - 4**

*These teams have earned an opportunity to attend USDDN Worlds at THIS event. To be a “Qualifier”:*

- The HANDLER has NOT earned a Qualifying spot at ANOTHER USDDN Competition this year. (With this or another Dog)
- The HANDLER MAY have earned an Alternate spot at ANOTHER USDDN Competition this year. (With this or another Dog)

### **Alternate 1 & 2 & 3**

*These teams may win an opportunity to attend USDDN Worlds if a Qualifier from this event chooses not to attend. To be an “Alternate”:*

- The HANDLER has NOT earned a Qualifying spot at THIS or ANOTHER USDDN Competition THIS year. (With this or another Dog)
- The HANDLER MAY have earned an Alternate spot at ANOTHER USDDN Competition this year. (With this or another Dog)

### **Already Qualified**

*This Handler has already earned an opportunity to attend USDDN Worlds at this or another USDDN Competition this year. To Be “Already Qualified”:*

- The HANDLER & THIS DOG have earned an opportunity at ANOTHER USDDN Competition this year.
- The Handler has earned an opportunity to attend USDDN Worlds with a DIFFERENT DOG, AND did NOT finish in the Top 4 Qualifiers at this event with THIS Dog

### **Auxiliary Dog**

*This Handler will have the choice to compete at USDDN Worlds between this dog or any previously qualified dog. To Be “Auxiliary Dog”:*

- This Handler has already earned an opportunity to attend USDDN worlds (at this or another USDDN Competition) with a Different Dog AND THIS Dog finished within the TOP 4 Placements Qualifiers at THIS event.

## **Review Event Placement Results**

### **Step 1: Determine if there are any Ties**

- Sort final results from HIGHEST score to LOWEST Score
- Determine if there are any ties. If there is a tie in any of the top placements/qualifying spots you must use a tie breaker.
- Freestyle Tie Breaker – Add all of the 7 team elements together (from both rounds) and recalculate the Grand Total.

- Super Pro Toss & Fetch Tie Breaker – Throw off. One Throw at a time – Best throw caught wins tie.

### **Step 2: Determine Tournament Placements**

- Start with the results updated from tie breakers.
- Number the players placements.

### **Step 3: Determine USDDN Qualifiers**

- As tournament host it is your responsibility to verify with participants if they have already qualified at another event and with which dog. Best practice – ask participants to note on their entry sheet if qualified & with which dog. If competing with multiple dogs – make sure it’s written on ALL their forms.
- Start with the results of the Tournament Placements from Step 2.
- Go team by team and identify their placement until all 4 Qualifiers & 3 alternates are identified.

**This may be best explained through the following example. These are the final results from an imaginary qualifier:**

Qualifier Status	Competition Placement	Competitor	Dog	Notes:
Already Qualified	1	Yachi	Vega	Qualified w with THIS DOG at a PRIOR Event
Qualifier 1	2	Chuck	Bam Bam	
Qualifier 2	3	David	Ro	
Auxiliary Dog	4	Chuck	Bling Bling	Qualified w with a DIFFERENT DOG AT THIS EVENT
Qualifier 3	5	Andrea	Moxie	
Auxiliary Dog	6	Tracy	Rampage	Qualified w with a DIFFERENT DOG at a PRIOR Event
Already Qualified	7	Tracy	Siren	Qualified w with THIS DOG at a PRIOR Event
Qualifier 4	8	Daniel	Nick	
Already Qualified	9	Jeff	Killian	Qualified w with a DIFFERENT DOG at a PRIOR Event
Alternate 1	10	Dominika	Kiper	
Alternate 2	11	Alena	Jerry	
Already Qualified	12	Tim	Auggie	Qualified w with THIS DOG at a PRIOR event
Alternate 3	13	David	Hippy Chick	
	14	Laura	Frenzy	
	15	Jimmy	Cisco	

Using the example above – Tracy & Rampage are granted Auxiliary Dog status. Tracy would have her choice to compete at Worlds with either Rampage or Siren. Notice too, that Jeff & Killian are NOT granted Auxiliary Dog status. They did not place before Qualifier 4 was identified.