

Virginia Border Collie Association Constitution and By-Laws

Effective: August 1st, 2005

From VBCA Minutes of the 1997 Annual Meeting, July 19, 1997

Motion made by Leighton Brown to accept Option 3, which is: " No term limits Board but officers stand for election each year and directors stand for election every two years." Second by Marc Mesa. Motion carried.

From VBCA Minutes of the 2005 Annual Meeting July 9, 2005

**Motion made by Jean Bell to accept Barry Moyer's proposal, second by Julie Poudrier all in favor:
Article VII, pg 6 - "Amendments to the constitution and by-laws must be submitted to a member of the Board of Directors in writing for review. If the Board feels the recommendation is in the best interest of the club and its members then the recommendation must be published in the newsletter no later than March-April issue. If a recommendation is approved by the board but is too late for the March-April issue of the newsletter it is deferred to the following year. Any VBCA member in good standing may submit a proposed change. Amendments to the constitution and by-laws can only be made with the approval of two-thirds of the members in good standing present at an annual meeting."**

Article I

Name: The name of the association shall be the Virginia Border Collie Association, hereinafter called the Association.

Article II

Purpose: The Virginia Border Collie Association is established to create interest in the breeding, working and training of the stock dogs; to conduct and promote working trials on a uniform basis throughout the state of Virginia; and also to promote cordial relationships among it's own members and affiliated dog associations.

Article III

Officers and Directors: The V.B.C.A. will have these officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. The Board of Directors shall include all officers and four (4) directors at large. All members shall be elected from the general membership, with a maximum term^s of service in each office of two (2) consecutive years. The office of Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor will have no term limits. Any vacancies occurring on the Board or among the Office during the year shall be filled until the next annual election by a majority vote of all the then members of the Board at it's first regular meeting following the creation of such vacancy, or at a special Board meeting called for that purpose; except that a vacancy on the office of President shall be filled by the Board. If an open Board member is elected Officer, the general membership will at that time elect another Board member to complete the term.

Article IV

Duties:

1. President: The President will preside at all meetings of the Association. They will serve as a member of the Board of Directors. The President will be authorized to call a special meeting to further any business of the Association not conducted during regular Board of Directors meetings. The

President will be authorized to conduct all ordinary routine business of the Association.

2. Vice President: The Vice President will act as Chairman in the absence of the President and will also be a member of the Board of Directors. They will be responsible for publicity. The Vice President will audit the Treasurer's books annually.

3. Secretary: The Secretary will maintain a record of all meetings of the Association and the Board of Directors; assist with correspondence and keeping of the other records pertinent to the Association. The secretary shall provide the Board members a copy of all meeting minutes within three weeks of any meeting date. The secretary will be a member of the Board of Directors.

4. Treasurer: The Treasurer will keep a record of receipts, disbursements and expenditures and will provide reports of the financial condition of the Association at each meeting. The Treasurer will be a member of the Board of Directors.

5. Board of Directors: The Board of Directors will promote, control and direct the business of the Association. It will be responsible for the approval of expenditures by the association, the appointment and or the approval of any committee connected with the Virginia Border Collie Association. The Board of Directors will be responsible for establishing dues (the amount of) which are required to maintain the Virginia Border Collie Association on a firm financial basis.

6. Members: Members will be responsible for the election of the Board of Directors by secret ballot. They are also responsible for the improvement of the association, membership relations, invitational trials and promotion of

the Virginia Border Collie Association throughout their own communities.

Article V

Members: There will be (4) categories of members.

1. General membership: Virginia resident who supports the purpose of the Association as stated in article II.

2. Junior Membership: Junior membership shall be available to an individual who has not reached their 18th birthday upon payment of one half the prescribed dues set for active membership, but otherwise on the same terms and conditions as apply to the active membership except that a junior membership does not carry with it the right to vote, hold elective office or to have a direct voice in the business of the club. Upon reaching their 18th birthday, any junior membership in good standing may apply for an active membership and be approved in the regular manner.

3. Out of State Membership: Out of state members will have the right to vote and are eligible for year end awards but cannot hold elective office.

4. Lifetime Membership

5. Membership will be annual or Lifetime. Membership fee is determined by the Board of Directors.

Fees as of August 1, 2000:

Annual Membership \$15.00
Family Membership \$25.00
Lifetime Membership \$225.00

Lifetime Family Membership \$375.00

Children included in Lifetime Membership until they reach the age of 18.

6. Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated:

A. By resignation. Any member in good standing may resign from the club upon written notice to the Treasurer.

B. By lapsing. A membership will be considered lapsed and automatically terminated if such member's dues remain unpaid on the day before the annual meeting; however, the Board of Directors may grant an additional ninety (90) days grace period to such delinquent members in meritorious cases. In no case may a person whose dues are unpaid be entitled to vote at any association meeting.

C. Dues: Dues shall be determined annually by the Board of Directors, subject to approval of the general membership. Dues are due on the first day of August and shall become delinquent the first day of September. No member may vote whose dues have become delinquent. During the month of July the Treasurer shall send each member a statement of his dues via email, snailmail or by way of the Association Newsletter.

Article VI

1: Associations Year: The V.B.C.A. fiscal year shall begin on the first day of August and end on the 31st day of July.

2: Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting shall be held in June or July at which officers and directors for the ensuing year shall be elected. All members shall be elected from the general membership with maximum terms of service in each office of two (2) consecutive years. The offices of Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor will have no term limit. They shall take office immediately following the annual meeting. Each retiring officer shall turn over to his successor in the office all properties and records relating to that office within thirty (30) days of the election.

3: Awards Meeting: An annual Awards Banquet shall be held each year in November or December. The primary focus of this meeting is to present the year end awards and conduct any necessary business requiring general membership approval. From time to time the Board of Directors may recognize special dogs for their contribution to the sport of herding. Additionally the Board of Directors may recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the V.B.C.A. and/or the betterment of the Border Collie.

Article VII

Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members present in good standing for the general meeting and two thirds (2/3) of the Directors at the Board of Directors meetings.

Article VIII

Trials: All Virginia Border Collie Association trials shall be run according to the rules established by the International Sheep Dog Society.

By-Laws

I The Board of Directors will meet at the call of the President or upon petition by four (4) Directors. Fourteen (14) days notice shall be required.

II Official trials will be sanctioned by the Board of Directors.

III Trial rules will be established and approved by at least two thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors.

IV To encourage enthusiasm, cooperation and participation in trials, no dog shall be rejected from any trial sponsored by the Virginia Border Collie Association for the reason of breeding or non-registration.

V Trial judges will be approved by the Board of Directors.

VI The Virginia Border Collie Association may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members. In the event of the dissolution of the Association, whether voluntary or involuntary or by operation of law, none of the property of the Association nor any proceeds thereof nor any assets of the Association shall be distributed to any members of the Association. After payments of the debts of the Association, its property and assets shall be given to a charitable organization for the benefit of dogs selected by the Board of Directors.

~~**VII** Amendments to the constitution and by-laws can only be made with the approval of two-thirds of the members in good standing present at an annual meeting.~~ Amendments to the constitution and by-laws must be submitted to a member of the Board of Directors in writing for review. If the Board feels

the recommendation is in the best interest of the Club and its members, then the recommendation must be published in the Newsletter not later than the March/April issue. If a recommendation is approved by the Board, but is too late for the March/April issue of the Newsletter, it is deferred to the following year. Any VBCA members in good standing may submit a proposed change. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws can only be made with the approval of two-thirds of the members in good standing present at an annual meeting. (Revised, 8/3/04 by Barry Moyer, seconded, all in favor (26/0))

Membership

Loss of Membership: All V.B.C.A. members shall read and know the prevailing rules of the association as well as each individual trial. Failure to know the rules will not be accepted as an excuse.

The following provision regarding conduct shall apply to all Association approved or sponsored events. Any member or nonmember placed on suspension shall not be permitted to compete in any trial or event sanctioned by the VBCA. A VBCA member or non-member may be fined and/or suspended for any of the following.

1. Attempting to fix, bribe , influence or intimidate the judge, trial secretary, time keeper, course director, or any other trial official will result in disqualification , suspension and a minimum fine of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).
2. A contestant shall not talk with the judge about any trial related matter throughout the duration of the trial, nor

- shall a contestant discuss with the judge any ideas or methods of judging or handling except at approved handlers' meetings.
3. A contestant shall make no comment within a judge's hearing regarding any work taking place at a trial.
 4. No alcoholic beverages can be consumed or brought into the judges stand while an Association approved or sponsored trial is taking place.
 5. A contestant shall not intimidate, attempt to intimidate, or argue with a course director. The penalty for violating this rule will be a minimum fine of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), and/or a minimum of thirty (30) day suspension.
 6. A contestant shall not intimidate, attempt to intimidate, or argue with a judge. The penalty for violating this rule will be a minimum fine of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), and/or a minimum of thirty (30) days suspension.
 7. Altering or attempting to alter the draw of livestock will result in disqualification and a fine of Twenty-Five Dollars (\$25.00) to Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$250.00).
 8. Any member or non-member may be disciplined by the Association for unsportsman-like conduct at any approved trial.
 9. Fighting on the trial field is not permitted.

10. Any member or non-member who threatens, or actually inflicts, bodily harm or injury to another person based upon that person's actions, conduct, or decisions while acting in any official capacity for the VBCA or for any VBCA sponsored or approved event shall be suspended from membership in the VBCA for a period of not less than one (1) year.
11. Abusive language is not permitted on the trial field.
12. Attempting to aid or distract another competitor while they are competing will result in immediate disqualification, suspension and/or fine as the Hearing Committee decides.
13. Misconduct discrediting to the Association will not be tolerated.
14. Training activities of any kind on the trial grounds other than in designated practice areas are prohibited.
15. Inhumane treatment of a dog or livestock in any manner on the trial field or on the trial grounds is prohibited. If trial management at any Association approved or sponsored event discovers inhumane treatment of a dog or livestock, it may immediately bar the responsible party and dog from further participation in the trial. The decision of the trial management as to inhumane treatment may be based upon consultation with a veterinarian. If trial management determines, in its sole discretion, that welfare of the animal requires immediate action, and a veterinarian is not available, trial management may consult with the judge of the trial before taking any action allowed by this rule. Any

individual deliberately abusing dogs or livestock in a VBCA trial or event, regardless of whether the abuse happens during a qualified or unqualified run, will be removed from the trial or event, totally disqualified from that trial and fined a minimum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00). The Association shall be notified and a hearing to consider further disciplinary action against the responsible party shall be scheduled.

16. Any member may be fined, suspended, and denied privileges of the Association, and any non-member, approved trial, or official thereof may be denied privileges of the Association for failure to pay when due any obligation owing to the Association or for giving a worthless check for entry fees, office charges, stock charges, premiums, or any other fees or charges connected with the exhibition of herding dogs, provided, however, that the member or non-member subject to the suspension shall be given twenty-one (21) days written notice of the amount due, and the intention of the Association to suspend or withhold privileges. Any suspension and denial of privileges under this rule shall terminate upon full payment of the obligation due the Association.

17. Any member passing a bad check or checks in a trial area, which would affect the image or benefit of the local trial, the VBCA or any VBCA member, will be fined Twenty-Five dollars (\$25.00), must write a letter of apology and make check good for first offense; second offense, member will be suspended and fined One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) ; third offense, member will be suspended and must appear before the Executive committee for reinstatement AFTER restitution of the check or checks has been made.

18. No person shall make a derogatory remark, nor threaten to take, (delete comma here) adverse action against a VBCA trial sponsor, its agents, servants or employees, relating in any manor to the sponsor's involvement with the VBCA or a VBCA event. Any person who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action and is also responsible to the VBCA for any loss or damage caused by the violation of this rule.
19. Any member tampering with competition livestock will be disqualified for the remainder of that particular trial and will be subject to a twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) to Two Hundred Fifty Dollar (\$250.00) fine.
20. Trial organizers or producers may be suspended for any of the aforementioned membership offenses and in addition, any of the following offenses:
 - a. Failure to pay added money as advertises.
 - b. Leaving bad debts in any town connected with the production of a VBCA trial.
21. The responsibility for reporting violations rests with, but not limited to, trial management, association directors, officials, and judges.
22. Every notice required by these rules and regulations may be served by delivering a copy of the notice to the person to be served, or his attorney, either in person or by certified mail, postage prepaid, to his last known address as it appears on the Associations records and upon mailing, such notice shall be deemed

received by such person when it is deposited in the United States mail.

23. A violation of the above rules will call for a maximum Five Hundred Dollar (\$500.00) fine and/or maximum one year suspension.

Protest of Rule Violations

Any person desiring to file a complaint regarding any alleged violation of these rules may do so by submitting the complaint in writing to the VBCA President. A complaint must be filed with the Association within seven (7) days of the of the closing date of the trial involved. Upon receipt, all complaints will be referred to the appropriate committee for investigation and consideration. If the committee determines after investigation, that no further action is warranted, the complainant will be notified, and no further action will be taken on the matter. If the committee determines, after investigation, that there are grounds for possible action, the Executive Director shall be notified, and the matter will be scheduled for a hearing before the VBCA Board of Directors or Hearing Committee.

Disciplinary Procedure and Provisions

Any member may be disciplined, placed on probation, or suspended from the Association and any member or non-member may be denied all privileges of the Association by the Board of Directors or Hearing Committee whenever it shall have been established by a preponderance of the evidence that such member or non-member has violated any rule of the Association. When the rule in question contains a specific punishment provision, any disciplinary action taken

by the Executive Committee or Hearing Committee must be consistent with that provision.

1. When anyone shall be accused of any rule violation, they shall be given not less than fifteen days notice of a time and place for hearing such accusation by the Board of Directors, or by a Hearing Committee appointed by the VBCA President, at which time and place they shall have the opportunity in person or by council, to be heard and to present evidence on their own behalf and to hear and refute evidence offered against them. It is acceptable for the committee to meet by means of a telephone conference call, to be followed by written or recorded statement.
2. Five members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for purposed of disciplinary hearings.
3. The VBCA President may appoint a special Hearing Committee to conduct any disciplinary hearing. This committee shall have a minimum of five members and a maximum of nine members. Each member of the committee must be a member in good standing of the VBCA and approved by the Board of Directors. A majority of the committee members shall constitute a quorum for hearing purposes.
4. No continuance shall be granted unless requested in writing at least seven days prior to the hearing, and good cause is shown. A continuance shall be granted or denied at the sole discretion of the VBCA President or the Chairman of the Hearing Committee.
5. The decision of the Board of Directors or Hearing Committee shall be final and binding on all parties.

6. When disciplinary action is taken against a member or nonmember, the person's name, the rule violated, and the disciplinary action taken will be published in the VBCA Newsletter.
7. A suspended member or non-member will not be allowed to participate in any VBCA approved or sponsored trial as an owner of the dog, a handler, or act as an agent. In the event such suspended member enters an approved trial during the period of his suspension either as an owner, handler, or agent, an additional six months will be added to his suspension.
8. Every person who is suspended by the trial committee for unsportsmanlike conduct at a trial shall stand as suspended by the VBCA upon official notice to this Association from the Trial Secretary or trial chairman of any disciplinary action.
9. When a suspended member is reinstated there will be no delinquent penalty.
10. When a specific fine or penalty is not set herein, fine and/or penalty shall be assessed by the Hearing Committee or Board of Directors in accordance to the severity of the rule infraction.

Humane Rules

A veterinarian shall be in attendance, or reasonably available at every trial.

No stock belonging to either contestant or stock contractor should be confined to vehicles beyond a period of twenty-

eight hours without being unloaded, properly fed and watered, provided that when animals are carried in conveyances in which they do have proper food, water, space and opportunity to rest, the provision for unloading shall not apply.

No sick or injured animals, whether discovered before or after the draw, will be permitted to be used in competition. Animals will be inspected and objectionable ones eliminated before drawing. Judges and course directors will be responsible for inspection.

Sick or injured dogs will not be allowed to compete at the recommendation of the veterinarian or at the discretion of the judge and course director.

Protests

Any competitor may lodge a protest signed by him, against any contravention of any rule for the trials or against any prize being awarded, delivered or paid. Protests must be lodged in writing with the Association within seven days of the close of the trial, and shall be accompanied by a cashier's check for Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) payable to the VBCA.

Any protest, complaint or request by a competitor must be sent to the President of the Association who will then be responsible for calling together a meeting of the Hearing Committee as soon as convenient. A majority decision of the Committee will be binding.

If the protest is refused, the judge's awards shall stand and the deposit may or may not be refunded in the Committee's

option. If the protest is sustained, the prizes involved shall be awarded as the Committee may decide and the deposit refunded.

In deciding protests, the Committee may order any competitor to whom a prize has been paid or delivered to return the same, and the competitor shall be bound to do so within the time fixed by the Committee.

Details of all protest under this rule and the decisions reached are to be submitted by the Secretary to the next meeting of the Directors for any action deemed necessary by them.

Any contestant may protest a judge's decision upon submission to the President a written statement covering the errors made by the judge or said judges. Said statement must be submitted within fourteen days of the closing date of the trial involved, and must be accompanied by a cashier's check or money order in the amount of fifty dollars and made payable to VBCA.

When a judge is ruled incompetent, he will not be permitted to judge any further VBCA sanctioned trials for a period set by the Board of Directors.

Where protests are affirmed, the Fifty Dollar (\$50.00) fee will be returned to the contestant; where denied, the fee will be retained by the Association.

Protests may be made by active members of the Association only.

Competitors

Each competitor must be ready when called by the Course Director, and failing to answer the call may be disqualified. Competitors are required to note that while the order of the program will be followed strictly (unless any change is authorized by the Trials Committee), the timing cannot be guaranteed.

Any competitor wishing to have the course explained or have any point clarified must question the Course Director before they start the run. They cannot have questions answered once their run begins.

By commencing the run, competitors are presumed to know the course and follow it in all its detail.

Once a competitor starts their run they are entirely in the hands of the judges. By deviating from the course they are liable to disqualification or such penalty as the judges consider suitable having regard to all the circumstances.

Any competitor who receives assistance in any form will be disqualified. If not previously stopped on the instructions of the judges, a handler will be called off at the end of the time limit, but in the latter case, the points to that stage at which they were called off will count.

After being dismissed, a handler will cease working his dog on the course and will collect the sheep and remove them from the trial field immediately.

Any person who retires or who leaves the field without the judges' permission will forfeit all points.

Any competitor who intentionally harasses the stock after his run will be disqualified and subject to further disciplinary action by the Association.

Competitors shall keep their dogs under proper control at all times and any dog or owner interfering with another dog or competitor while working shall be disqualified.

Competitors **and/or** others shall not take their dogs on to the course before the competition starts, nor shall any of them run their dogs on the trial sheep before the trials. Handlers without their dogs may inspect the course before the trial begins.

No contestant, or other person, shall engage in any form of misconduct or harassment toward trial management, judges, or Association officials. Trial management has the right to disqualify or refuse entry to any contestant for violation of this rule. In the event a contestant or other person is asked by trial management to leave or withdraw from any Association approved or sponsored show, the Association shall be notified and a hearing to consider disciplinary action against the contestant shall be scheduled.

A contestant may drop out of any contest due to injury to himself or his dog, or due to sickness or death in his family. A contestant shall not at any time withdraw from any trial he is participating in due to dissatisfaction or grievance with the judge or judges, trial management, or other contestants without forfeiting all money he may have won in previous runs. Entry fees, or any part thereof, will not be refunded after a contest starts.

A contestant shall not enter the trial field at any time with any kind of training device. The trial management, representative, or judge must disqualify a contestant if he enters the trial field with any such equipment, and all entry fees and/or premiums pertaining to said contestant shall be forfeited. Such devices include, but are not limited to:

electronic collars, dummy or weighted collars, a leash or rope that is not detached before the dog is sent, or any device used to distract or cause pain to a dog while it is working. The judge has the right to inspect the dog for any violation to this rule.

Awards

All awards announced at any of the Associations trials are subject to the correction of any error discovered within two weeks after the trial. Any error that may be discovered will be corrected and the awards as announced readjusted accordingly. All trophies and prizes given out at the trials are given out subject to this rule and may be recalled. If recalled, the holders will return them to the secretary at once.

Each competitor shall be entitled to receive from the Trial secretary a full statement of the points awarded to them on application within one month after the trial, subject to payment of Two Dollars (\$2.00).

V.B.C.A. General Trial Information and Rules

I General Information

- A. Regular season will run August 1st-July 31st.
- B. V.B.C.A. sanctioned trials must follow rules for trials set up by the V.B.C.A.
- C. Reruns may be given at the judge's discretion.
- D. The judge's decision is final.

E. Livestock Welfare

1. V.B.C.A. sanctioned trials will, for all classes, ensure the safety and welfare of the livestock at all times. The person spotting the livestock or the person exhausting the stock may intervene if a dog is considered to be out of control.
2. At the trial director's discretion a preliminary competency run may be required before a dog will be allowed to compete.

F. Members in good standing may apply for V.B.C.A. sanctioning. Requests for sanctioning must be received at least 60 days prior to the trial using the request form published in the newsletter. The sanctioning request must also be accompanied with a trial entry form. Requests received between 30 days and 60 days prior to the trial will be sanctioned if the trial host mails an entry form to each V.B.C.A. member at the expense of the trial host. The V.B.C.A. will provide labels to the trial host for the mailing upon request. Trials will only be sanctioned and counted towards year end awards in the state of Virginia.

II. V.B.C.A. Sanctioned and Operated Trials.

- (1.) Entry fee will be set by V.B.C.A. members at the annual meeting.
- (2.) Ribbons will be provided for 1st through 6th place.
- (3.) Regular season trials: V.B.C.A. will pay up to an amount of \$150.00 as of 4/18/92 (preset at the annual meeting) for the judge.

(4.) Nursery trials: V.B.C.A. will pay up to an amount of \$100.00 as of 4/18/92 (preset at the annual meeting) for the judge.

(5.) Hardship grant may be approved to cover expenses for a judge that are more than those set forth above.

1. Request brought before V.B.C.A. Board of Directors.

2. Each request considered on a per trial basis.

(6.) Port-A-Pot paid for.

(7.) Liability insurance provided.

(8.) V.B.C.A. sanctioned trials must send complete results to V.B.C.A. points keeper within 21 days of the trial. If results are not received within the 21 days the trial will not be sanctioned the following year.

(9.) V.B.C.A. sanctioned trials must have a copy of the V.B.C.A. rules on the premises during the trial.

(10.) Notice of a sanctioned trial must be published in the V.B.C.A. newsletter with an appropriate entry form. If due to time constraints the entry form cannot be published in the newsletter then a separate mailing to all V.B.C.A. members must be made by the trial host. (revised 5/7/00)

III Trials Sanctioned by but not Operated by V.B.C.A.

(1.) Entry fee will be set by the trial coordinator and moneys can be used as he/she sees fit.

(2.) V.B.C.A. will provide liability insurance.

(3.) Must send complete results to the V.B.C.A. points keeper within 21 days of the trial. If results are not received within the 21 days the trial will not be sanctioned the following year.

(4.) Must have a copy of the V.B.C.A. rules on the premises during the trial.

IV V.B.C.A. Nursery Trials

A. Three Classes: Junior, Senior and Open

1. Junior Class

a. Dogs must be 30 months (2 1/2 years) or under as of October 1st each year.

b. Course

1. outrun 2. lift 3. fetch 4. pen 5. optional drive provides a maximum of 10 points.

2. Senior Class

a. Dogs must be 48 months (4 years) or under as of October 1st each year.

b. Course

1. outrun 2. lift 3. fetch 4. full drive 5. pen

3. Open Class

a. Dog and handler as a team can not have placed 3rd or

higher in a regular season open class trial.

b. Course

1. outrun 2. lift 3. fetch 4. full drive 5. pen 6. shed

V. Regular Season Trials

A. Four Classes: Novice/Novice, Pro/Novice, Open Ranch and Open

1. Novice/Novice

a. Handler can have never run in a regular season Open

Class and the dog can have never run in a class higher

than Pro-Novice. (Also refer to rule V {D}).

b. Course

1. Outrun 2. Lift 3. Fetch 4. Optional wear as stated by trial officials 5. Pen
- c. Once a dog has won three trials (two one day trials on the same weekend only counts as one if the dog wins one day or both days) it must move to Pro-Novice the following season.
- d. Once a handler has run in a regular season Open Class the handler must move to Pro-Novice or higher to run any dog. Additionally a Novice/Novice handler may start any number of dogs as long as the handler is the legal owner of the dogs. (revised 4/16/99)

2. Pro-Novice

- a. Either the dog or handler can be pro (run in a regular season open class) but not both.
- b. Course
 1. Outrun 2. Lift 3. Fetch 4. Drive: one panel 5. Pen. Once a dog has won three trials (two one day trials on the same weekend only counts as one if the dog wins one day or both days) it must move to Open Ranch the following season. The three wins may come from multiple fiscal years. A Pro-Novice is defined as an experienced handler with a young dog, just started dog or an inexperienced handler with a trained dog. (see section IV)

3. Open Ranch

- a. Dog and handler as a team can not have run in a regular season open class.
- b. Course
 1. Outrun 2. Lift 3. Fetch 4. Drive: full course
 5. Pen

Once a dog has won three trials (two one day trials on the same weekend only counts as one if the dog wins one day or both days) it must move to Open the following season. The three wins may come from multiple fiscal years. An Open handler that purchases an Open dog may move the dog down one class and once the dog wins three trials it must move back to Open immediately. (see section IV).

4. Open

- a. Open to any dog and handler.
- b. Course
 1. Outrun
 2. Lift
 3. Fetch
 4. Drive: full course
 5. Pen
 6. Shed
 7. Other obstacles as set by the judge or trial coordinator.

5. Handler's Nursery

Will be run in accordance with USBCHA rules.

IV V.B.C.A. points calculated as follows:

1. V.B.C.A. Dog gets one point for every dog he/she beats.
2. Retired or disqualified dogs receive no points.
3. Although retired and disqualified dogs receive no points they count in calculating points for those dogs that finish above them.
4. Although a dog may win three trials before the end of a season he/she may remain in the class until the start of a new season.
5. Year end awards are calculated on the most points earned from 50% of the total number of trial days available in a fiscal year. As an example, if there were 28 trial days in the class, total year end points will be calculated from the dogs highest 14 trial points earned.
(Revised August 2002)

V V.B.C.A. Rules continued:

- A. Judge's decision is final.
- B. Any dog may run in a trial sanctioned by V.B.C.A. without regard to pedigree.
- C. For trial points to count toward year end awards the trial must meet all rules for sanctioning.
- D. A novice shall be defined as one who does not receive financial gain from training stock dogs other than their own, instructing or judging stock dogs or handlers and also who has not run in a regular season open trial.
- E. Disqualification will result by unwarranted grip, off course, or the handler leaving post or course.
- F. Handler and dog team cannot run in a lessor class noncompetitively before running in their competitive class.
- G. Once a handler and dog team have run competitively in a class they can't move back to a lesser class in a competitive status.
- H. A handler/dog team may run in a higher class noncompetitively but only after all competitive dogs have been run and with the trial director's expressed permission and entry fees paid. Noncompetitive dogs will be scored but are not eligible for awards nor will they be considered for totaling year end awards.
- I. No dog may run competitively twice in the same day on the same field with exception of USBCHA nursery.
- J. Any dog & handler team that wins the year end Champion or Reserve Champion in Novice/Novice, Pro-Novice or Open Ranch must move up to the next class. The move up will be effective the next fiscal year or as soon as notified of the award. If the dog & handler elect

to stay in the class and do not move up they are not eligible for year end award points. (August 1, 2004)

Rev. Wink 2005