

**North American Gun Dog Association**

**SAFETY RULES**

1. When not in the field hunting, all firearms must be unloaded with the action open.
2. Always treat firearms as if they are loaded, keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction; keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
3. A participant shall be disqualified for unsafe gun-handling. A negligent or accidental discharge is a disqualification. Dropping a loaded firearm will result in disqualification. Gun may **not** be laid down on the ground! Result of doing so is immediate disqualification. Gun may be handed to scorekeeper during hunt as long as the action is open.
4. Orange vest or cap must be worn during competition.

**DOG WELFARE GUIDELINES FOR NAGDA COMPETITORS**

5. The Scorekeeper may stop a run for any dog they feel unfit to complete the run and notify the grievance committee to make an evaluation of the dog before the run continues.
6. Bitches in Season- A dog in season will be allowed to hunt, however their run time will be after the last male has run. (Example: if the dog in season draws the No.1 slot it will be moved to follow the last male, not necessarily to the last position).
7. Dogs that have had recent surgery must have a veterinarian written permission release to participate.
8. Any dog that has become hyperthermic (body temperature greater than 104.0 F) will not be allowed to compete again until the following day.
9. Dogs must be on a leash or in a kennels when not running or being aired out. No loose dogs.
10. Any bitch that has whelped within 14 days prior to a competition will be ineligible to compete.
11. If a dog goes down for any reason, the dog has 10 minutes to recover. If the dog does recover the field will not be flushed or replanted and the run will proceed. If the dog cannot recover, the dog and handler must leave the field and the field will be planted for the next competitor.

**RULES**

12. Any species of upland bird may be used and will be designated prior to the event. Only the designated birds will be shot, anyone shooting another species of bird during a run will result in the run immediately ending and will receive a zero score for that run only.
13. All hunters will compete with good ethics and sportsmanship. Poor sportsmanship will result in immediate disqualification and all entry fees will be forfeited. Ignorance of the rules will not be grounds for protest.
14. No Alcohol or Non-Prescription drugs may be consumed before or during your run(s). Automatic disqualification will result.
15. All hunters, scorekeepers, bird planters, photographers or others etc. must sign a liability and promotional release prior to participating and volunteering and working in any NAGDA event.
16. All clubs and contestants must be members in good standing with NAGDA in order for scores or events to be sanctioned.
17. A contestant may only protest his/her run and no one else's.
18. Arguing with the scorekeeper will not be tolerated! If you have a discrepancy, your time and issue will be noted and the run will continue. Do not sign the scoresheet until a decision on the grievance is decided. The contestant, the scorekeeper and the Grievance Committee will resolve the issue at the end of the run.
19. Electric collars will be permitted. Only one collar may be worn on a dog and must be on the dog's neck. No dog will be allowed to hunt with a collar on the flank. Abuse or misuse will result in immediate disqualification. Beeper collars will not be allowed if close field proximity will affect the other contestants.
20. Communication Devices – Absolutely no cell phones, walkie talkies or any other kind of communication devices can be in the blind or in the field. However certain circumstances will permit the contestant to hand their cell phone to the scorekeeper to carry for them during their run, if on-call for work or for emergency etc.
21. It is the hunter's responsibility to keep track of the running order. There will be no excuses for not being in the field on time. A field will not be planted until hunter(s) and dog(s) are in the blind and remain there until the field is planted, at which time the scorekeeper will tell the planter to plant the field. Failure to abide by this rule will mean immediate disqualification.
22. Hunters in Blind – When birds are being set, the next hunter(s) up must be in the blinds with dog, gun and ammunition before previous qualifying run ends. The hunter is to leave the blind and enter the field without contact with outside persons. When your run is over you must exit the field without making any contact with the next contestant in the blind.
23. No running. The hunter must always have one foot on the ground and will receive a warning. A ten point deduction will be assessed for the second warning. A third warning will be a disqualification of the run.
24. No bird is to be shot unless safely in flight. Failure to abide by this rule is grounds for disqualification.
25. The hunter or the scorekeeper may call a safety, but the final decision will be up to the scorekeeper. Safety is called for any unsafe condition involving injury to human(s), dog(s) or property. A safe shot is always the responsibility of the shooter. If a safety is called for any reason, the BIRD CAN'T BE SHOT. If the bird is shot, it will result in an immediate disqualification. If a scorekeeper or staff photographer produces a bird full 40 points will be awarded. If a guest produces a bird no points for a find will be awarded however all other points may be pursued. An intentional safety is grounds for disqualification. Remember, it is always SAFETY FIRST.

**DIVISIONS**

Amateur Flushing/Pointing/Womens - Open Flushing/Pointing/Womens  
Senior Handler - Senior Dog - Youth - Puppy – Doubles

All Single Divisions – Each run will be 20 minutes and a 4 bird plant. The hunter will have a total of 8 shells to use during the run.  
The Doubles Division – Each run will be 20 minutes and a 6 bird plant. The hunters will have a total of 10 shells to use during the run, the shells may be shared by the hunters.

**AMATEUR FLUSHING / AMATEUR WOMENS / OPEN FLUSHING / OPEN WOMENS / SENIOR HANDLER:**

- a. A dog can only run one time per handler, per division, in any singles division and the handler must designate whether it will compete in the Open or Amateur Division. A dog and handler may progress from Amateur to Open but thereafter that same dog and handler may not compete in an Amateur Division.
- b. If a dog has run in the open division and the handler has run in the open division, they as a team are unable to run in the amateur division, even though they have not run as a team in the open. An amateur hunter is able to take a dog that has run in the open division and still compete in the amateur division.
- c. Find: In the flushing division, a find will be awarded when the dog traps, catches or in the scorekeeper's opinion causes a bird to take flight. In the case of a trap or catch, a shell will be forfeited, this applies to both divisions. The competitor must wait 1 minute to pursue the bird IF it lands in the competitor's field.
- d. An amateur handler may compete in Amateur Division with one dog and the Open Division with another, as long as that dog has never run as an Open dog.
- e. Open Women's Division - If you win the Amateur National Championship the Handler & Dog as a team will no longer be able to compete in any Amateur division.
- f. Non-performing bird – There will not be a non-performing bird in these Divisions because dog is allowed to catch the bird.
- g. In the event a bird is pointed in these Divisions, the handler may immediately produce the bird.
- h. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring.

**AMATEUR POINTING / OPEN POINTING**

**Qualified Point:**

- a. To be awarded a qualified point the dog must hold point for a minimum of 3 seconds, determined by the scorekeeper only. Also, the point must result in a bird that takes flight, unless in the scorekeeper's opinion the bird is deemed unable to fly. After the 3-second minimum has been met, the handler must attempt to flush the bird, ahead of the dog, before the dog will be awarded any points. The key is the bird must be produced to the air for the gun. The competitor must wait 1 minute to pursue the bird IF it lands in the competitor's field.
- b. A bird that is a wild flush that is not pointed or flushed by the dog is still eligible to be harvested, however there will be no points awarded for a point or a find in this situation.
- c. All other rules for pointing will apply if not mentioned above.
- d. Non-performing birds – an attempt to flush or move the bird a minimum of 15 feet must be made if the bird still does not fly it is a non-performer and must be removed from the field by the handler. A bird that has been moved from the nest by the dog but does not take flight and is caught by the dog will be scored as a caught bird. Any bird pointed and moved from the nest by the hunter but does not take flight will be scored as a safety.
- e. If the dog is on a retrieve and goes on point before it reaches the handler. The handler is allowed to move to the dog to get the retrieved bird. A bird must be produced at that location to receive a Full Retrieve on the 1<sup>st</sup> bird. If no bird is produced, then the 1<sup>st</sup> bird will be scored as a partial retrieve.
- f. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period time "Pointing Division" the bird must be pointed prior to time expiring

**SENIOR DOG:**

- a. The dog must be a minimum of 10 years old.
- b. One of the below items is required for proof of age.
  - a. Registration Documentation
  - b. Letter from your Veterinarian stating the dog's age
  - c. Proof the dog has been a NAGDA competitor for at least 9 years
- c. FOR THIS DIVISION ONLY: If the dog is in the NAGDA Gun Dog Hall of Fame or has been nominated for the Hall of Fame, that dog may only run in this division. Any senior dog competing in this division cannot compete in any other division.
- d. Flushers and Pointers will run in the same Division under Flushing rules.
- e. A dog can only make 1 run in this Division at each Nationals competitions.
- f. Qualifying for the National Championship, a Hunter and Dog must compete at two events in the Senior Dog Division, placing 1st-3rd at one of those events or attend 4 NAGDA events in one year.
- g. Any dog that meets the criteria for the Senior Division and was a Top 5 finalist in any Division at the previous Nationals will automatically be invited to compete at Nationals the following year regardless of who the handler is. They must compete in at least two events prior to Nationals.
- h. The field size will be smaller whenever possible.
- i. At Nationals, this Division will be one-run-and-done. The high score will be declared the National Champion.
- j. The entry fee will be reduced because they will only run one time at the Nationals.
- k. This division counts towards the six-run maximum per handler at Nationals.
- l. In the event a bird is pointed in this Division, the handler may immediately produce the bird.
- m. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring.

YOUTH:

- a. The youth must not turn 18 years of age prior to the Nationals to compete in the youth division. Once the youth turns 18, they must compete in the appropriate amateur division. Their youth runs will count towards National Qualifications.
- b. A parent or guardian must accompany the youth in the field.
- c. All youth must have proof of completion of a hunter safety course.
- d. The youth hunter must handle the dog, not the guardian. The youth must control the collar at all times.
- e. In the event a bird is pointed in this Division, the handler may immediately produce the bird.
- f. Non-performing bird – There will not be a non-performing bird in this Division because dog is allowed to catch the bird.
- g. If the dog is on a retrieve and goes on point before it reaches the handler. The handler is allowed to move to the dog to get the retrieved bird. A bird must be produced at that location to receive a Full Retrieve on the 1<sup>st</sup> bird. If no bird is produced, then the 1<sup>st</sup> bird will be scored as a partial retrieve.
- h. . If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring.

DOUBLES:

- a. In the Doubles Division, the two handlers and the two dogs are considered a team and can only enter that division once. As long as one of the team members change, a new team may be formed. (Example: the same two handlers may make up a different team as long as they change one of the dogs or vice versa.)
- b. In the Doubles Division, the handlers must stay within a maximum of 50 yards of each other at all times. If a handler has to leave the field to retrieve a dog, the other handler and dog must cease hunting until his/her partner is able to resume hunting. Any birds pointed or flushed during the hunter's absence will not count. Failure to abide by this rule will be cause for immediate disqualification.
- c. In the Doubles Division two hunters have 10 shells (5 shells each). Each hunter must shoot at least one shell. Shells may be shared by the hunters.
- d. Once a bird is shot and hits the ground, both hunters must remain in place and not move until the bird is retrieved to either handler. Result of either hunter moving prior to the bird in the bag will be scored as a partial retrieve.
- e. Non-performing bird – There will not be a non-performing bird in this Division because dog is allowed to catch the bird.
- f. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring.
- g. In the event a bird is pointed in this Division, the handler may immediately produce the bird.

PUPPY AS APPLICABLE:

- a. A puppy may only run one time per sanctioned event per hunter and the handler must designate if the puppy is a pointer or flusher before entering the field to hunt. (All Single Division Rules apply)
- b. Any puppy qualifying during the year will run at the National Championship as an Amateur pointing or flushing division.
- c. A puppy cannot be over 18 months of age.
- d. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring.
3. In the event a bird is pointed in this Division, the handler may immediately produce the bird.

SCORING

- An automatic safety will be called if a scorekeeper or staff photographer produces a bird. The total points awarded will be forty and a shell will be forfeited. The hunter must touch the dog to simulate a retrieve and the time will run until the dog is touched.
26. Multiple Birds Rising – If your dog goes on point or flushes a bird and multiple birds rise, you will get credit for the point or find for every bird you bag. Other than the first bird you act on, if you miss the other birds you will not get credit for the point or find on those birds and a shell will be taken away for every shot you make. You can't accumulate extra finds or points on missed birds you don't bag in a multiple bird rising situation with the exception of the first bird you act on.
27. A shell will be forfeited for each bagged bird.
28. All runs are scored not judged.
  - 10 points – for a point in the pointing division. (Must hold point for a minimum of 3 seconds).
  - 5 points – for a caught bird in all pointing divisions. Cannot be scored as a bagged bird also, but will count as one in the total birds bagged.
  - 10 points – for a flushed bird in all flushing divisions.
  - Extra Finds: points will be awarded however the hunter must shoot at the bird; this will result in the loss of a shell.
  - 20 points - for a bagged bird in all divisions, except for a caught bird in the pointing divisions.
  - 10 points – for a full retrieve. Hunter must keep one foot stationary until the bird is in hand. Hunter may kneel down but not lay down. If time has elapsed and a bird has been shot, the hunter has a 60 second grace period to complete the retrieve. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted time no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve. In order to receive the extra grace period time "Pointing Division" the bird must be pointed prior to time expiring and "Flushing Division" the bird must be in the air prior to
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- time expiring. Delete If the dog has a bird in its mouth at the end of the first 30 seconds of the grace period points will stand for points or flushes
  - 5 points – for a partial retrieve. The dog must find, pick up the bird and make an attempt to bring the bird to the handler.
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  - 2 points – for each full minute left. Time is called when the last bird is in hand or if a safety is called on the last bird, time will be called after touching the dog when the safety was called. Exact time of completion must be noted for tie breakers, but for points time will be rounded up.
  - 10 points – for each shell not used as long as points have been scored.
  - No Points – will be scored until the first bird has been legally produced. (pointed or flushed, depending on the division.) If no points have been scored, the run is scored as a zero.
  - If a safety is called one shell must be forfeited and there will be a two point deduction on the final score for each called safety, unless produced by the scorekeeper. The hunter must touch the dog to simulate a retrieve and the time will run until the dog is touched.
  - Hunter may not use gun as a tool to rake the bird closer to them.
  - 3 Second Point – When your dog goes on point you must verbally tell the scorekeeper point. At that time the scorekeeper will start the 3 second count. The dog must not make any advancement towards the pointed bird during the 3 second count. If the dog advances the count will start over. However, the hunter does not have to stop moving and can verbally whoa the dog if the dog is creeping. You can whoa a dog on the initial point – penalty will be no credit for the point.
29. Tie breakers will be as follows:
- a. Total time in minutes and seconds
  - b. Time first bird is bagged
  - c. Number of shells remaining after run
  - d. Flip a coin
30. If a bird enters and lands inside the boundaries of the field, this bird is considered a legal bird and can be pursued immediately.
31. Scorekeeper will call time for any of the following:
- a. Hunter ceases to hunt without bagging all of the birds. No points for remaining minutes will be added to the score or for remaining shells.
  - b. Time has expired.
  - c. The hunter has all the birds.
  - d. The hunter has used their limit of shells.

#### TECHNICAL RULES

32. No shells larger than 2 ¾ -inch will be allowed for 12 gauge guns. Magnum shells will be allowed in 20 gauge or smaller guns. No shot larger than #6 shot will be allowed. All rounds must be factory made ammunition. No gauge larger than 12 will be allowed.
33. All dogs must be leashed immediately after their run. Hunter, dog and scorekeeper must exit field at the closest boundary.
34. All birds and bird parts must be removed from the field. Intentional leaving of birds or bird parts will cause disqualification.
35. Dead Bird – If the dog goes on point and you find that the bird is dead, you must tell the scorekeeper that the bird is dead. The scorekeeper will stop the clock and inspect the bird. If the bird is cold or stiff you will not get any credit for that bird. If the bird is warm, the hunter will get full credit.
36. If a dog interferes in another field and bumps a bird out of that field, the hunter in that field will get full points (a find, a full retrieve, a bagged bird and have a shell forfeited) for that bird. The hunter can choose to stop the clock until the other dog leaves the field. The offending dog will get a 10 point deduction to their total score for each bird bumped in the other field.
37. At no time may a hunter leave the field unless they are assisting a dog over a fence or obstruction to prevent injury. If a shot bird falls over a fence that the dog can't get through, the hunter may assist the dog over the fence/obstruction and still receive full points for the retrieve. The hunter may also cross the fence to help the dog back.)
38. Hunters intentionally cleaning or loading the field for the next run will be disqualified.
39. If a safety is called and the bird lands back in the field. To count as a different bird and/or find, the bird must fly and land a minimum of 50 yards or more from where the safety was called. It can then be hunted and pursued as a different bird, provided the hunter & dog don't go directly to the spot where the bird landed. They must re-establish a hunt and dog work first. If a bird lands in your field from another field it may be pursued immediately.
40. All birds must be produced within the marked boundaries. The hunter and/or dog cannot hunt purposely out of bounds. If a hunter has a bird and it sailed out of bounds the dog can retrieve the bird and the dog can take as much time as it needs to complete the retrieve before the allotted time expires. If your dog goes out of bounds the scorekeeper will instruct the competitor to get the dog(s) back within the boundaries of the field.
41. Non-performing birds – an attempt to flush or move the bird a minimum of 15 feet must be made if the bird still does not fly it is a non-performer and must be removed from the field by the handler. A bird that has been moved from the nest by the dog but does not take flight and is caught by the dog will be scored as a caught bird. Any bird pointed and moved from the nest by the hunter but does not take flight will be scored as a safety.
42. Scorekeepers will not carry bagged birds but can help put birds in the bag.
43. Club employees, bird planters and scorekeepers may compete in all events at their club. They must wait a minimum of 2 runs before competing in a field they have been a scorekeeper or planted birds in.
44. 60 Second Grace Period – In order to receive the extra grace period to bag a bird: "Pointing Division" – the bird must be pointed prior to time expiring or "Flushing Division" – the bird must be in the air prior to time expiring. You will then have 60 additional seconds to bag the bird. If the retrieve is not completed within the allotted grace period time, no points will be given for a bagged bird or the retrieve.
45. In case of disqualification, no money will be refunded.
46. Any hunter receiving 2 disqualifications in a twelve month period will be sent to the BOD for a review which may include penalties that could result in banning from NAGDA events.
47. The Board of Directors may amend rules at any time. Rule changes will be sent to all host clubs after a change has been made with an explanation why the change was made.
48. Host Clubs are not allowed to amend NAGDA rules.
49. Host clubs are allowed to designate an area as a safety situation (such as fences, roads, hazards and/or any potential landmark that would cause a safety issue) as long as they are clearly posted prior to the event.

**NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

50. If a dog qualifies for Nationals, the same handler that qualified that dog MUST run the dog. No substitute handler will be allowed.
51. A dog may be qualified in pointing and flushing during the year. BUT MUST DESIGNATE WHICH DIVISION THEY WILL RUN IN AT THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP, POINTING OR FLUSHING. No dog may run in both pointing and flushing at Nationals.
52. At Nationals, all Single runs will have a total of 4 birds in the single events. And all Double runs will have a total of 6 birds. It can be a mixed bag of pheasants and chukars or it can be all the same species of bird. It doesn't matter what birds the hunter qualified on during the year. Host Clubs may use what birds are available during the year.
53. Qualifying for The National Championship, a Hunter and Dog must compete at two events, placing 1st – 3 at one of those events or attend 4 NAGDA events in one year.
54. If you win the Amateur National Championship the Handler & Dog as a team will no longer be able to compete in any Amateur division. Any Handler & Dog as a team who places in the top 5 two times at Nationals in the Amateur Division will be required to move up to the Open Division. The Board of Directors reserves the right to require any Handler & Dog as a team to compete in the Open Division.
55. "Top 5" finalists are automatically invited to compete at Nationals the following year. The handler and dog must be the same NO substitutions. They must compete in at least two events prior to Nationals.
56. No more than 6 runs will be allowed by any hunter or handler at Nationals. No dog may enter more than 4 times at Nationals. However, a host club may use their discretion as to the number of entries by any one person.
57. Qualifying in the Doubles Division - Some circumstances prohibit teams from being able to compete together at the Nationals (example: injury, health condition or treatment, work etc.) Any Doubles team can be formed to compete at Nationals based on the following criteria:
  - a. Dog & Handler as a team must have qualified with another Doubles team for that year's Nationals. All other qualifications criteria apply.
  - b. The Board of Directors will determine if a new team will be allowed to compete.
58. National awards will be based on number of entries. For example:  
10 entrants = 5 award placements, 5 entrants = 2 award placements

Revised September 14, 2023