



This publication, its words, rules and guidance are under the sole ownership of Hoopers Inc(lusive). This document, or any of its parts, must not be copied, plagiarised, altered, published or reproduced without the express permission of the owners and directors of Hoopers Inc(lusive). Any person found to be doing so may have legal action taken against them.

This publication is designed to offer transparent and comprehensive information around Hoopers Inc(lusive) policies and procedures, its rules and regulations for both Show Organisers and Competitors.

- 1 Mission Statement and Objectives of Hoopers Inc(lusive)
  - 2 What is hoopers?
  - 3 General rules
    - a. Eligibility
    - b. Age
    - c. Supervision of dogs
    - d. Conduct of competitors and spectators
    - e. Smoking and vaping
    - f. Entry rules
    - g. Class conduct
    - h. Reactive dogs
    - i. Dog apparel
    - j. Course concerns or issues
  - 4 Registration
    - a. Handlers under 18
    - b. Show results
  - 5 Dog eligibility
  - 6 Handler support
  - 7 Running a show
    - a. Support
    - b. Expectations
  - 8 Cancellation of a show
  - 9 Judges
  - 10 Progression and points
  - 11 Points and awards
    - a. Additional skill points
- I.Box points  
II.Line points

- b. Point award examples
  - 12 Show awards
  - 13 Height categories
  - 14 Measuring
  - 15 Classes
    - a. Hoopers
    - b. Barrellers
    - c. Touch and go
    - d. Mixed
  - 16 Nursery classes
    - a. General rules of nursery classes
  - 17 Special classes
    - a. Tunnellers
    - b. Time fault and out
    - c. Snakes and ladders
    - d. The snake challenge
    - e. Pairs
    - f. Team
    - g. Children
    - h. Additional needs
  - 18 faults and eliminations
    - a. Faults
    - b. elimination
  - 19 Complaints and complaint procedure
  - 20 Policies, procedures and forms

## 1 Mission Statement and Objectives of Hoopers Inc(lusive)

Hoopers Inc(lusive) is run by a committee of 12 members who bring a plethora of training, competing, employment and life experiences.

Hoopers, by its very design, is a sport which has traditionally aimed at inclusivity, we will actively promote inclusiveness, and this will be at the heart of all decisions made within the organisation.

At Hoopers Inc(lusive), the primary aim will be to level the field, enabling dog/handler combinations to progress whatever their handling styles, and have their skill rewarded fairly.

The welfare of the dog is paramount, and we actively embrace dogs and handlers with additional support needs.

We have spent a lot of time considering what adjustments could be helpful to dogs and handlers with additional needs, and we are committed to accommodating these needs wherever we can. Examples of this might include the need for additional course walking time, the need to have another person in the ring, etc. and will continue to evolve and adapt to changes of need and any other adaptability required that is brought to our attention.

We will have robust policies and procedures in place.

We will tailor fledgling and nursery course types for dogs new to competition, dogs who are retired and unable to handle twisty/turning courses, dogs who need support in the ring to build confidence, and much more.

We will bring to the sport fun games classes and nursery classes. A points league and, of course, our all-inclusive finals at the end of the year which all combinations have a shot at qualifying for.

We are committed to ensuring that rules, regulations and policies at Hoopers Inc(lusive) are fair and inclusive, celebrating all dog/handler combinations in their individual styles and skill levels.

We very much hope to welcome handlers and dogs who do not currently compete but would like to and aim to give a confidence giving and welcoming experience.

## **Ours aims**

Hoopers Inc(lusive) hopes to promote Hoopers as a sport, whilst also improving accessibility, and safeguarding the welfare of our canine teammates. Fun and inclusivity for both dog and handler are at the very core of this organisation. The aim of Hoopers Inc(lusive) is to create a format of Hoopers agility competition that prioritises accessibility for both dogs and handlers. The policies, procedures and general rules of Hoopers Inc(lusive) have been designed having due respect and regard to dogs and handlers of all abilities, levels and handling styles.

“The box” is often observed to be a source of communication breakdown between dog and handler. A familiar pattern is then observed: Dog is being directed from the box, dog becomes confused and is not sure what is being asked of him, handler responds by shouting louder/waving their arms, and the dog still doesn't understand – sometimes becoming visibly by affected by the handler's reaction. We feel this can often be avoided by the handler stepping out of the box to support the dog, which would result in a happier dog and a happier handler leaving the ring.

For this reason, within Hoopers Inc(lusive), there will not be a prescribed, set way of handling that must be adhered to in order to gain progression. There will be no penalty or fault if a handler steps out of the box mid-run, changing from a distance handling to a closer handling technique. That said, we still seek to reward handlers and dogs who have mastered distance handling, by awarding extra points for handling from within the box or behind points lines etc.

## **2 What is Hoopers?**

Whilst Hoopers does share similarities with agility, Hoopers has no jumps. Jumps are replaced with ground-level hoops for the dog to run through. Hoopers has the same pace and excitement as agility, but the courses are flowing and do not generally involve the tight turns often seen in agility courses, making it gentler for dogs.

Hoopers is a low-impact sport suitable for all age dogs, including young and older dogs. Many agility dogs who are nearing retirement, and those who actively compete in agility, find a home within the sport of Hoopers. Some retired ex-agility dogs (and their handlers!) may even return to dog sports and the thrill of competition through Hoopers.

The goal of Hoopers is to build team-work and mutual care, trust and respect between dog and handler through training with modern, force free, non-force, aversion-free, positive training methods.

Hoopers - from its conception – has had the long-term goal of distance handling. The non-force owner stands still or uses limited movement whilst the dog is directed around the course using subtle body movements and verbal cues. Due to changes in some organisations whereby those dogs who are comfortable and confident at working away at distance are recognised and progress, those who need a little more support find

themselves stuck or, at worst, their progress achievements stripped away and downgraded to low levels. At Hoopers Inc(lusive) we want to level the playing field and improve choice over handling styles, should a person wish to progress up the levels.

In levelling the playing field, supporting and embracing a handler's choice on how they wish to work with their dog we still celebrate those teams who are comfortable with working at distance without holding back those who aren't. Whilst additional points will be awarded to those teams who do handle within a box or behind points lines, all clear runs will accumulate points and the fastest, most accurate team will take the placings (irrespective of whether bonus points were incurred or not). Please see progression and points section for detailed examples.

It is hoped that in taking this approach, Hoopers Inc(lusive) can recognise and reward the skills of those dogs and handlers comfortable working at distance, whilst also providing progression opportunities for those dogs less comfortable working away.

### **3 General rules**

#### **a. Eligibility**

Dogs of all breeds\* (pedigree, mixed etc) are eligible to compete provided that they are:

- Suitably trained; and
- Are of an appropriate level of physical fitness enabling them to participate without undue risk, strain or emotional distress.

\*Some breed exclusions may apply, and this will be dependent upon the insurance limitations of the individual show organisers, for example with regard to XL bullies/XL bully types.

Disabled dogs, including those on wheels, are welcomed and may run in either nursery or general competition classes.

The following categories of dogs will be deemed ineligible to compete at Hoopers Inc(lusive) events:

- Dogs not registered with Hoopers Inc(lusive).
- Dogs under 15 months of age.
- Dogs displaying aggression that puts dogs and/or people at risk.
- Dogs suffering from any communicable illness (e.g. kennel cough).
- Dogs carrying an injury and/or disability which would make it unethical and a risk to the welfare of the dog to ask it to take part.

All Hoopers Inc(lusive) events are open to anyone who is registered with Hoopers Inc(lusive). By registering with the organisation and entering events, you are agreeing to adhere to all rules and regulations laid out by Hoopers Inc(lusive). Hoopers Inc(lusive) retains the right to refuse or revoke membership, and refuse licencing, show entries or registration at its discretion.

#### **b. Age**

Dogs must be 18 months old to enter competitive classes. Nursery classes will be open to dogs 15 months old and above.

Should a dog reach 18 months of age during a show they can be entered into competitive classes from that day onwards.

Dogs 10 years and over may choose to run their dog in veteran classes.

### **c. Supervision of dogs**

Dogs must not be left unattended at any time on the show ground (unless inside a vehicle). This includes being tied to a ring whilst a competitor walks a course.

We understand that some competitors may have puppies at home and may wish to use the opportunity for early desensitisation to such things as travel and noise. Puppies over the age of 6 weeks old are permitted on site but must remain in a suitable enclosure within a vehicle, with their mother.

We welcome the bringing of puppies aged 6 weeks and over (with the mother) for socialisation purposes, however, this is undertaken at the competitor's own risk and must not at any time compromise the emotional or physical wellbeing of the puppies on site. Unless explicitly stated by an individual show organiser, buying and selling of puppies on show ground premises is not permitted.

Family dogs which do not train or compete in the sport are welcome to attend the show ground and spectate so long as this does not cause a disruption or disturbance to any competitor.

Females in season may compete at Hoopers Inc(lusive) shows, however the competitor must declare this and provide a suitably sized waterproof backed pad or mat to commence their run on. The dog must be kept away from ringside when not competing. Hoopers Inc(lusive) will not take nor hold any responsibility for any incidents relating to their attendance at shows. The handler is solely responsible for their dog at all times. No organised mating is to take place in any area of any showground.

### **d. Conduct of competitors and spectators**

By attending a Hoopers Inc(lusive) event (either as a competitor or a spectator), you are agreeing to behave in a sportsmanlike manner towards other people, and in a caring and ethical manner towards dogs on site. No harsh handling will be tolerated anywhere on the showground and such behaviour may result in disciplinary procedures, including a person being asked to leave a showground, and/or that person's membership of Hoopers Inc(lusive) being revoked.

At no point will any form of discrimination or bullying be tolerated. Anyone found to be engaging in bullying, judge or show bashing, in person or on social media, or found to be engaging in any form of discriminatory behaviour in person or on social media will be removed from the organisation. The practice of Judge and show bashing (sadly becoming a common sight on social media) will not be tolerated. If any competitor or member is found to be doing so, including under the guise of "not naming names", they will be removed from the organisation.

No person, be that handler or spectator, or any dog are to enter any competition ring which is not in use. Should anyone be found to be in a ring they may be warned or excluded from the remainder of the event without refund. Children are at all times the responsibility of the parents and/or guardians, who are responsible for their behaviour and actions at all events.

#### **e. Smoking and vaping**

Smoking and vaping are not allowed within 10 metres of a ring. Vaping and smoking must not take place at any show which is run indoors. Some show organisers may request that smoking takes place only in designated areas or within the confines of your vehicle / camp area for safety reasons – for example at shows held on farms or at livery yards. Should designated smoking areas be stipulated, any person found to be smoking outside of those designated areas will be asked to leave the show ground with no refund, and disciplinary action may be taken.

#### **f. Entry rules**

When you enter a Hoopers Inc(lusive) event, you are agreeing with the statement included on the entry form that you:

- Will not bring to the venue any dog that has contracted or been knowingly exposed to any infectious or contagious diseases within 21 days prior to the show date.
- Agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the event and accept that you enter the show and run your dogs at your own risk.
- You agree that if you run your dogs in any special additional classes, you do so at your own risk.
- You agree that you will not at any point use harsh handling with any dog on site and acknowledge that should you be seen to do so, you will be asked to leave the venue immediately and no refund for lost runs will be given.

Harsh handling includes the below, but is not limited to:

- Hitting.
- Pinching.
- Lead popping.
- Any form of physical punishment.
- The use of choke or grot leads.
- Shouting and intimidation of which a dog is seen to be demonstrating fear or distress.

In addition you agree that all dogs entered or brought onto the show ground are done so at their owners risk, and, whilst Hoopers Inc(lusive) or any club running shows under Hoopers Inc(lusive) rules and regulations will take every care to safeguard you from loss, damage or incident, Hoopers Inc(lusive) or clubs running shows under Hoopers Inc(lusive) rules, will not accept responsibility for any loss, damage or injury howsoever caused to dogs, persons or property whilst at Hoopers Inc(lusive) events.

#### **g. Class conduct**

- Courses may not be walked until you are invited to do so by the judge.
- Any judges may run in any classes they are not judging, as long as this does not interfere with their appointment.
- No food is to be taken into the ring at any point – be that in the hand, the pocket or a toy.
- Leads may be left at the start hoop and collected at the end of the run or carried in a pocket/wrapped around the waist.
- Toys may be carried in the hand until the dog is on the start line, it may then be carried in the pocket. The toy must remain in the pocket and not visible or dropped until the dog is significantly clear of the last obstacle.

- Toy rewards can be given in the ring; however, they must not be thrown for the dog to chase unless the dog is a significant distance clear from the final obstacle and the direction does not drive the dog towards the exit of fence where people and dogs are queuing or spectating.
- Any dog which is spectating or queueing must at no point be allowed to lunge at any dog or person running or within a ring.
- Any member of the show organisation, e.g. the Show Manager, Secretary, Judge, Judges Aide or show organising club management has the explicit authority to dismiss a dog or handler from the ring or from the show ground. This decision is final.

#### **h. Reactive dogs**

Reactive dogs are able to and actively encouraged to compete. Reactive dogs do not need to queue and may wait at a distance at which they feel comfortable. We understand the difficulty of working with reactive dogs and wish to make theirs and your experience as stress free as possible. All Hoopers Inc(lusive) judges will hold the ring to allow a competitor to collect their reactive dog to be able to walk straight into the ring without waiting.

This may include running last in a class, asking spectators to move, judging taking place from outside the ring and not having a queue around the ring whilst running. Should a dog behave reactively towards any person or dog you may be asked to leave the venue – this will depend upon the circumstances and will be at the discretion of show management.

#### **i. Dog apparel**

- Dogs are only permitted to wear flat, close-fitting collars of any fabric or leather (with the exception of metal or spiked). The wearing of head collars, harnesses, coats, half choke chains or collars is not permitted in the ring. Collars, with the exception of those worn by dogs whose handlers require a sound for location on the course such as bells, must not have any item dangling from them such as ID tags, charms etc.
- Dogs may wear a second collar, if the purpose of the second collar is for veterinary treatment such as seresto type collars or magnetic collars.
- Dogs may run courses without a collar. In this case, the collar must be removed at the start line and placed back on as soon as the last obstacle is taken.
- Dogs must enter and exit the ring on a lead. For handlers with mobility or other issues where the holding of a lead may cause difficulty, the handler may release their dog to free run to the start line once the ring has been entered.
- Grot leads, choke chains, electronic spray, shock or vibration collars, pet correctors, shake or quilt bottles or any other form of device for control or training which is deemed aversive are not permitted onto any show which is run under Hoopers Inc(lusive).

#### **j. Course concerns or issues**

Should there be any timer or equipment failure during a run, a re-run may be offered, and any faults already given will carry over to the rerun. During a rerun, even if the first run was clear, every obstacle must be undertaken for time.

Should an entrant have a genuine concern around a judge's course this must be raised directly with the show manager prior to the course running commencing and not with the judge.

The judge's decision is final and will stand in all circumstances. Judges must not be asked to watch videos of runs. It is open to competitors to ask for clarification about faults or eliminations given, however the judge may decline to discuss this. The competitor must understand that the judge may not recall specifics of runs after a class has finished.

## **4 Registration and Show Entries**

All dogs and handlers must be registered with Hoopers Inc(lusive)to compete in any event. A registration form can be obtained by downloading from the Facebook page, registering on the website or requesting one via email.

Every dog and handler registered will be allocated a unique number to which any competition results will be assigned. Results will only be recorded from qualifying rounds and count towards progression within the levels and leagues.

A one-off fee of £7.00 per handler and £5.00 per dog membership fee is required to compete at Hoopers Inc(lusive) shows. Any person who wishes to handle or run at dog at any show must be a registered member. Handler registration fees are applicable to all adult members who wish to run a dog regardless of whether they have a dog registered in their name. i.e. Owners of a family dog who both wish to run the dog must both be registered as a handler. Dog registration is applicable to dogs of all ages.

A registration, once accepted by Hoopers Inc(lusive)and a number allocated, cannot be changed. The dog cannot be registered again under a different name or owner / handler. An application may be made to transfer the dog into a new handler or owner, however any points gained, or levels achieved will remain with the dog.

Dog and handler registration can take place prior to the dog being old enough to compete.

Registration fees can be made via the website, Cheque or Cash at a competition.

Show entries can take place up until the show closing date which will be given on the show schedule. Payment must be made upon submitting the entry form. Entries cannot be cancelled for any reason after the closing date, or the capping level is reached. If payment is not received by the specified time, then entries will be deleted.

Entry fees, once the closing date has been reached will not be refunded in the event of non-attendance. A competitor may approach the show organiser in exceptional circumstances; it is at the show organisers discretion as to whether this is accepted and monies refunded (minus the administration fee)

### **a. Handlers under 18**

At Hoopers Inc(lusive) we actively encourage the next generation of hoopers competitors to take part. Therefore, whilst any child handler under the age of 18 must be registered, handler registration fees are not charged until the age of 18, whereby an adult registration must be applied for. Please see Junior class rules for more information.

### **b. Show results**

All scores, levels, league tables and results will be held electronically and will be published, along with show results, either on the website or shortly after the show. Registration of handler and dog permits you to enter any show sanctioned by and being run under Hoopers Inc(lusive) rules.

Wherever possible score tables should be made available once prize giving has taken place, the format of which this is presented in is down to the show managers discretion.

## **5 Dog eligibility**

Dogs may enter nursery classes from the age of 15 months.

Dogs may enter competitive classes from the age of 18 months.

Disabled dogs may take part in either nursery or competitive classes if deemed fit, physically capable or it being ethical to do so.

Disabled dogs are welcomed and celebrated at Hoopers Inc(lusive), for those special dogs, tri paws, dogs on wheels, those with sight or hearing impairment all support and feasible adaptations will be given to support their inclusion into the sport.

## **6 Handler support – please see Juniors and additional support rules**

Handlers with additional needs who do not identify or fall under the additional support league and wish to compete in general classes may have support within the ring to enable them to take part, this is not an exhaustive list but, may include:

- A second person leading the dog to the ring and setting the dog up
- The dog wearing an audible aid
- A second person directing a handler with limited or no sight
- A second person in the ring supporting the handler's mobility and movement, which may include the pushing of a wheelchair or mobility aid
- The use of a motorised mobility aid such as mobility scooter or electric wheelchair
- The carrying in the hand an aid which supports an individuals need
- Extra time to walk a course or permission/time to walk a course separately from other competitors.

## **7 Running a show under the Hoopers Inc(lusive) umbrella**

- Any person or club can request to run a show under Hoopers Inc(lusive)rules and regulations.
- The club must hold the correct level of insurance cover which enables them to run a public event.
- The person or club must agree to maintain the high standards set by Hoopers Inc(lusive),
- Any persons appointed to judge must undertake judges training and, shadow a judge on at least one occasion and have support on the day. Judges currently judging under other organisations may not be required to undertake training, only a rule discussion/test.
- Course design must fall within the guidance stated within the rules. We do not require judges to send course plans prior to appointment.
- It is hoped that in judges setting their own courses we remove any advantage from any clubs setting and practising their courses, show organisers or the organising body and ensure a fairer playing field for all competitors.

### **a. Support**

Hoopers Inc(lusive)will support any person or club who requests to run a show under Hoopers Inc(lusive)rules and regulations as much as possible which may include:

- Course planning and course advice
- Advice in respect of equipment suitability
- Show and class scheduling

- Attending and supporting at their first show
- Judging and or supporting judges

## **b. Expectations**

Those running a show must ensure they provide the following:

- Copy of the schedule
- Copy of Hoopers Inc(lusive)Rules and Regulations
- Toilet facilities adequate for anticipated entry numbers
- Suitable exercise area for dogs
- Provisions for dog waste and its disposal
- Suitable and adequate car parking
- Disabled parking
- Disabled toilet facilities
- Wherever possible, reactive dog parking
- A minimum of two manual timers or appropriate electronic timers
- A safe ring surface
- A ring size of which a minimum of 10 meters wide by 10 meters long enables two or obstacles to be in a row
- A minimum of one scime and wherever possible a line/box judge to work alongside the judge.
- Equipment compliant with the rules and regulations
- Rosettes and prizes in line with those stated within the rules and regulations
- A suitably qualified first aider
- Contact details of nearest local veterinary services
- A measuring wheel
- A supply of drinking water

Shows offering camping must provide:

- A suitable camping area which permits space for a minimum of 6 meters between pitches
- Firefighting equipment
- A reactive dog camping area or an area which permits a distance in excess of 6 meters between pitches
- A disabled camping area close to facilities
- Suitable toilet facilities
- An elsan point if the camping is more than two nights

## **8 Cancellation of a show**

Refunds will be issued once all expenses incurred have been covered, refunds must be applied for within 14 days of the show date, any monies not requested to be refunded must be donated to charity, the show organisers must provide a detailed breakdown of expenses, refund amounts and amounts donated to charity along with a donation receipt. It should be noted that in the event of a cancellation the money refunded after all expenses have been paid may be significantly lower than entry fees paid.

## **9 Judges**

The show manager is responsible for the appointment of judges, and ensuring the judge is suitably qualified to undertake the appointment,

The judge is expected to maintain a fair judging system within the rules and regulations of Hoopers Inc(lusive), giving no favour to any team or club mate, their own dogs or family and friends.

Judges must have completed the online assessment and training and preferably shadowed at least once prior to the judging appointment.

The judge is responsible for the safe, fair, level appropriate design and set up of courses, and should any changes to the course be required due to any identified issues noted on its running, all dogs already run are to be offered a rerun.

From the point of set up a judge is responsible for the ring until the last dog has run.

The judge must measure the course, ensure the spacings between obstacles fall within minimum and maximum distances.

A judge may test the course with their own noncompeting dog or ask any person not entered with any dog to test run the course and make any changes or tweaks prior to course walking.

A judge may judge their own dogs, family members and friends, any dog which is owned by the judge but run by another must be judged in the same manner as every other competitor.

A judge must provide a briefing for any special class and give a written or verbal briefing around box or line points; there may be more than one opportunity within a course to gain box or line points and these must be made clear.

A judge may support competitors in the answering of questions about the course such as which side of Barrells etc, a judge must not offer any advice around how a course should be handled or run.

Any judges must not critique a run, offer opinion around how it was run, however may offer supportive comments such as x part was lovely, well done or similar

A judge is expected to dismiss persons from the ring under the following circumstances and report immediately to the show manager who will take any action necessary within the rules and regulations.:

- any handler from the ring that is seen being harsh with their dog.
- Any dog who fouls within the line of the course
- Any dog in distress
- Any dog which appears to be in discomfort or pain
- Any dog which is behaving in a manner in which it is clear they are not comfortable or happy to be in the ring
- Any dog which runs out of the ring
- Any dog who leaves the line of the course to react at any person or dog ringside
- Any dog which is dangerously out of control
- Any dog which shows any form of aggression directed at any member of the ring party

## **10 Progression and points**

Dogs progress on points gained in qualifying runs over a series of shows, progression is applicable and the same for both veteran and non-veteran dogs.

Hoopers Inc(lusive) holds Six progression levels

- Fledgling – all dogs, regardless of their level within other organisations start here. These courses are flowing with minimal changes of side and contain no traps to lure the dog off course.
- Rookie – Dogs must gain 60 points in Fledgling to win into Rookie. These courses are flowing and may contain minimal changes of side and barrel wraps; a minor trap is permitted.
- Novice – Dogs must gain 100 points in Rookie to win into Novice. These courses may contain minimal changes of side, traps which deviate the dog to another line is permitted.
- Senior – Dogs must gain 200 points in Novice to win into Senior. These courses may have several changes of side and carry traps to pull the dog off line.

- Champion – Dogs must gain 200 points in Senior to win into Champion. These courses may have multiple changes of side, may have significant traps and be of a challenging level.
- Master – Dogs must gain 400 points in Champion to win into Master. These courses are set at a level which significantly tests the dog and handlers' skill and teamwork.

Once a dog has gained enough points to compete in the next level the competitor must inform the show manager and, whilst the dog may continue to compete at the old level for the remainder of the show, after this the dog is no longer eligible to compete in any lower class unless this is at NFC.

A commemorative electronic certificate may be requested at any level change, there is also an option to purchase a commemorative rosette or trophy.

Once Master level has been reached a series of awards can be worked towards

- Bronze Master level Title Award certificate – A Bronze Master level electronic certificate is awarded by handler or owner request when 60 points in Master level has been reached
- Silver Master Title Award level certificate - A Silver Master level electronic certificate is awarded by handler or owner request when a total of 160 points has been reached at Master Level
- Gold Master Title Award level certificate - A Gold Master level electronic certificate is awarded by handler or owner request when a total of 360 points has been reached at Master Level
- Platinum Master Title Award level certificate - A Platinum Master level electronic certificate is awarded by handler or owner request when a total of 760 points has been reached at Master Level
- Diamond Master Title Award level certificate - A Diamond Master level electronic certificate is awarded by handler or owner request when a total of 1000 points has been reached at Master Level
- Outstanding achievement award – An outstanding Achievement electronic Award certificate is awarded by handler or owner request upon reaching your Diamond Master Title

## 11 Points and awards

Points are awarded upon each run which is both free of time or other faults.

Points awarded are as follows:

- 1st – 6 points
- 2nd – 4 points
- 3rd – 3 points
- Clear round – 2 points

### a. Additional skill points

#### I. Box points

Handling from the box for either the entire course or part course as specified by the judge will gain an additional 6 points. There may be more than one opportunity within a course to gain box points however only 6 points will be awarded.

#### II. Line points

Handling from behind the line for either the entire course or part course as specified by the judge will gain an additional 6 points. There may be more than one opportunity within a course to gain line points however only 6 points will be awarded.

### b. Point award examples

Dog 1 completes the course in 20 seconds  
Dog 2 completes the course in 21 seconds handling from the box  
Dog 3 completes the course in 18 seconds  
Dog 4 completes the course in 18.5 seconds handling from the box  
Dog 5 completes the course in 40 seconds  
Dog 6 competes the course in 40 seconds handling from the box

1<sup>st</sup> place dog 3 - 6 points  
2<sup>nd</sup> place dog 4 - 4 points plus 6 box points  
3<sup>rd</sup> place dog 1 – 3 points  
Clear round dog 2 – 2 points plus 6 box points  
Clear round dog 5 – 2 points  
Clear round dog 6 – 2 points plus 6 box points

## **12 Show awards**

Individual show organisers may decide on which placing award rosettes and trophies they recognise and award, as a minimum the following must be awarded:

Rosettes to 3<sup>rd</sup> place and a clear round rosette for every clear round regardless of entry numbers.

Non qualifying rosettes are to be awarded by class size:

1 – 10 entries no qualifying runs 1<sup>st</sup> place  
11 – 20 entries no qualifying runs 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place.  
20+ entries no qualifying runs 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place

1 – 10 entries qualifying runs 2<sup>nd</sup> place  
10 + entries 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place

Trophies / medals

Trophies and medals are awarded based on pre-entry numbers and awarded for qualifying runs only.

1st place award to be given to entry numbers between 5 and 10  
2nd place award to be given to entry numbers 10 and above.

Awards for less entries and no qualifying runs are at the discretion of the show organisers.

## **13 Height categories**

Hoopers Inc(lusive)will run with three height categories, small, medium and large.

Dogs are measured at the shoulder to the floor.

Small – 30cm and below

Medium 30.01cm – 42cm

Large – 42.01 cm and above

## **14 Measuring**

All dogs who wish to compete in small must be measured, this may be carried out by any show official or judge, should the dog be of a disposition whereby it is showing any sign of distress during the process a height category will be awarded at the measurer's discretion.

Obviously small or large dogs do not require measuring, all dogs who wish to compete in Large will not require a formal measure. Once medium height has been introduced all dogs who wish to compete in medium must be measured.

Any judge or show organiser may question a height and seek a remeasure should it appear that a dog is running in the wrong class.

## **15 Classes**

All classes are graded unless advertised as an open class. An open class is designed at the level which allows all grades to compete against each other and all dogs from all levels are eligible to enter.

### **a. Hoopers**

A course of up to 25 obstacles with a minimum of 16 obstacles using only hoops, Hoops must have a minimum of 4.5m and 7m between obstacles. Hoops can be based or baseless. Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and will be adjusted for each height category.

### **b. Barrellers**

A course of up to 25 obstacles with minimum of 16 obstacles using both hoops and large barrels, short and narrow barrels are not to be used. Barrels can be used as either a run past or run around. When using a barrel for a run past Barrels are to be positioned in a manner in which the dog would naturally run past the obstacle and not have to deviate from the natural path.

When using barrels as an obstacle to full or part circle the barrel must be placed in a manner in which the dog is not expected to turn sharply or deviate from the path of travel on its approach. Hoops must have a minimum of 4.5m and 7m between obstacles.

Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and will be adjusted for each height category. Barrel distances are measured from centre point to centre point; barrels are to be positioned a minimum of 4m and a maximum of 6m from or between obstacles.

When dogs are asked to fully wrap a barrel the maximum distance of 6m must be used to ensure as smooth a path as possible before returning to the next obstacle.

A hoop must be used for both the start and finish obstacle. Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and will be adjusted for each height category.

Depending on the judge's course design, there may be a prescribed side in which your dog must take the barrel.

### **c. Touch and go**

a course of up to 25 obstacles with a minimum of 16 to include both hoops and a touch and go mat. Up to three touch and go mats may be used in a class and repeated uses of them permitted as part of a course design.

Mats must have a straight entry and exit and must not be used on turns. A mat will be marked with a marker pole at each corner. The marker pole must be a minimum of 70cm high. Mats are to be a minimum of 90cm wide and between 150cm and 200cm long.

A hoop must be used for both the start and finish obstacle. Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and will be adjusted for each height category.

### **d. Mixed**

A course of up to 20 obstacles with a minimum of 16 obstacles using any of the above equipment and may also include tunnels and gates.

Tunnels must be a minimum of 1m long and 80cm diameter, they can be based or baseless. Gates must be of a material in which can be seen through easily.

Gates are to be around 1m high and up to around 150cm long dependant on the design and materials used.

A hoop must be used for both the start and finish obstacle. Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and will be adjusted for each height category.

## **16 Nursery classes**

Nursery classes are a non-points class and run for clear round only. Nursery classes may be either Hoopers or Barrellers and must not exceed 20 obstacles with a minimum of 12 obstacles. The course must be a simple flowing course with no tight turns. If running a nursery Barrellers class, this must not include a barrel wrap and only use run pasts, or 180 degree turns.

Dogs may enter nursery classes from 15 months old. Any dog may run in a nursery class, however, if doing so the dog is not eligible for competitive classes for the remainder of the days event.

Hoopers Inc(lusive)Nursery classes are designed to give young dogs competition experience, to give support to those dogs who need a little more assistance to feel comfortable in the ring, to train and reinforce learning. Any dog of any level can enter nursery classes to support training, reinforcing or come back from a confidence drop.

### **a. General rules of nursery classes**

No food is permitted to be carried either in the hand, within a toy or in the pocket.

You can run for a clear round with a toy in the hand. The handler must at no point touch the hoops or place a hand or toy through the hoop. There are no bonus boxes or point lines in Nursery.

All class rule faults apply (please see faults and eliminations section)

## **17 Special classes**

Shows may choose to run fun points classes which may include games such as snakes and ladders, time fault and out, snake challenge, Pairs and Teams. There are no box or lines within these classes.

### **a. Tunnellers**

A course of up to 20 obstacles with a minimum of 15 obstacles comprising of only tunnels and a start and finish hoop.

Tunnels of any length and a minimum width of 60cm may be used in this class and only this class.

Tunnels must have a gentle curve or bend only and be secured every 1.5 meters with a safe pegged in or bagged strap. The dog's line of travel must not include any sharp turns.

Tunnels are to be positioned a minimum of 6 meters between obstacles. A hoop must be used for both the start and finish obstacle. Course time to be calculated on the overall course distance and may be adjusted for each height category.

### **b. Time fault and out**

A course of hoops and tunnels with an initial up to 20 obstacle design which allows for a smooth line of travel from the last obstacle back to the first to restart the course.

The course is given a set time limit which is dependent on the course length.

The dog runs the course until the whistle blows or the judge shouts fault upon which the handler must direct the dog back to the final hoop regardless of where on the course the dog is to stop the timer.

The whistle will blow or the judge or timer shouts time or fault if a fault is incurred or the time limit reached.

The winner/s are those who have obtained the greatest number of obstacles and stopped the timer in the shortest time.

Due to the nature of snakes and ladders and time fault and out there is a strong likelihood that the dog may have to leave the ring before a full course is run.

Within these this class it has been noticed that this in general appears to happen within the first three hoops.

We appreciate that this does not give good value for money for the entrant and can cause frustration to the dog being asked to leave the ring as part of the rules of the game.

We will trial in 2026 having a straight three hoop start.

If the dog faults on hoop one, two or three the handler has two options:

The option to continue their run knowing they are eliminated, if this option is selected the handler is given the course time to complete the course, they must leave the ring at the calling of time.

The option of accepting the elimination and leaving the ring if the dog faults on any hoops as per the normal rules of the game.

The handler has the option to return to the start hoop and resetting their dog and waiting for the judge or scime before starting their run again. Their score and time will be reset.

If the dog faults after resetting the dog they must leave the ring as per general class rules.

### **c. Snakes and Ladders**

The goal of this game is to complete all high pointed obstacles and as many hoops as possible before the time runs out.

The Snakes - touch and go mat and up to 3 three tunnels.

The Ladders – up to 3 barrels and up to two gates.

Snake and ladder obstacles are numbered for judging only.

To gain a clear round, all the Snakes & Ladder obstacles plus a minimum of 8 hoops must be negotiated successfully within the allotted time.

The competitor on believing they have taken all obstacles may make their way to the finish hoop, they do not need to try for additional points if they do not wish to.

If the time limit has been reached or a fault has been made the competitor will be advised and they make their way to the finish hoop to stop the time.

If faulted or timed out any obstacles taken on the way to the finish hoop do not score.

Those who stop the timer before being told time and have taken all required snakes and ladders will accrue an additional 5 points.

The competitor with the highest points accrued within the allotted time wins. The usual class points apply. Non qualifying runs, if there are no qualifying runs the most points in the quickest time will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

There are no box or lines within the game.

The rules

Ladder obstacles can only be taken up the field

Snake obstacles may only be taken down the field (towards the club house).

Hoops can be taken in any direction.

The start and finish hoop start and stop the timers only; the finish hoop may be taken in any direction.

If you accidentally go through the finish hoop your run ends.

Snake and ladder obstacles will only score twice; you may take them again as part of your course but they will not score. Each obstacle scores 2 points.

Hoops score multiple times. Each hoop scores 1 point.

You and the dog may be the same side as the barrel and gate.

The dog must be seen to be making an effort to navigate the obstacle, running past at an angle whilst they take the wrong directed line will not count.

There will always be a logical route to take with a gentle line for the dog this route will not be numbered. The handler may choose to take whatever lines or course they choose in order to try for maximum points within the allotted time given.

There will be a means at the end of each row of obstacles for the dog to make a gentle turn, this may be either a barrel or a pin wheel of hoops. End of line barrels will be marked as such and may be taken in any direction.

An end of line barrel can be taken multiple times and will score 1 point.

Due to the nature of Snakes and Ladders there is a strong likelihood that the dog may have to leave the ring before a full course is run.

Within these two classes it has been noticed that this in general appears to happen within the first three hoops.

We appreciate that this does not give good value for money for the entrant and can cause frustration to the dog being asked to leave the ring as part of the rules of the game.

We will trial in 2026 time fault and out having a straight three hoop start.

If the dog faults on hoop one, two or three the handler has two options:

The option to continue their run knowing they are eliminated, if this option is selected the handler is given the course time to complete the course, they must leave the ring at the calling of time.

The option of accepting the elimination and leaving the ring if the dog faults on any hoops as per the normal rules of the game.

The handler has the option to return to the start hoop and resetting their dog and waiting for the judge or scime before starting their run again. Their score and time will be reset.

If the dog faults after resetting the dog they must leave the ring as per general class rules

#### **d. The snake challenge**

A course of hoops, which may include barrels and touch and go mats.

The course may have a maximum of 25 obstacles.

The course is laid out in a single or double S shape, the course if using a single S shape may wrap back on itself and finish at the start jump.

General fault and elimination rules apply.

Due to the nature of snakes and ladders and time fault and out there is a strong likelihood that the dog may have to leave the ring before a full course is run.

Within these two classes it has been noticed that this in general appears to happen within the first three hoops.

We appreciate that this does not give good value for money for the entrant and can cause frustration to the dog being asked to leave the ring as part of the rules of the game.

We will trial in 2026 both snakes and ladders and time fault and out having a straight three hoop start.

If the dog faults on hoop one, two or three the handler has two options:

The option to continue their run knowing they are eliminated, if this option is selected the handler is given the course time to complete the course, they must leave the ring at the calling of time.

The option of accepting the elimination and leaving the ring if the dog faults on any hoops as per the normal rules of the game.

The handler has the option to return to the start hoop and resetting their dog and waiting for the judge or scime before starting their run again. Their score and time will be reset.

If the dog faults after resetting the dog they must leave the ring as per general class rules.

#### **e. Pairs**

A course design of either Hoops or Barrels of up to 20 obstacles, a team of two dogs and two handlers take it handlers turns to run the same or reverse course.

The first dog is to go when the judge states when you're ready. The first team run the course; the second team must wait to be released by the judge upon the completion of the final obstacle by the first dog.

Faults are incurred as a team; the team will be eliminated if the second dog starts before the judge has released the dog either by whistle or by the word go.

Should the second dog take any obstacles while dog one is under test and waiting to go these will not count nor be faulted until the first dog is on the final obstacle.

However, if the judge releases the second dog and they are already on the course then they will be eliminated.

Dog one must be under control while dog two is running and moved away from the course start or finish line.

A reward may be given and the dog may be placed on a lead while the second dog is running.

#### **f. Team**

A course design of either Hoops or Barrels or up to 15 obstacles, a team of two to four dogs (dependant of the show organiser) and two handlers take it in turns to run the same or reverse course.

The first dog is to go when the judge states when you're ready. The first team run the course, the second team and onwards must wait to be released by the judge upon the completion of the final obstacle by the previous dog.

Faults are incurred as a team; the team will be eliminated if the following dogs start before the judge has released the dog either by whistle or by the word go.

Should the following dogs take any obstacles while a dog is under test and waiting to go these will not count nor be faulted until the first dog is on the final obstacle.

However, if the judge releases the second dog and they are already on the course then they will be eliminated.

Dogs who have completed the course must be under control while team dogs are running and moved away from the course start or finish line.

A reward may be given and the dog may be placed on a lead.

#### **g. Juniors**

**Please see Juniors policy**

Juniors classes will run in three categories

- Three to seven
- eight to twelve
- Thirteen to eighteen

#### **h. Additional support classes.**

These classes are aimed at those competitors who need a little extra help to compete.

Please see additional support policy

Additional support classes will run in three categories A, B and C.

## **18 faults and eliminations**

### **a. Faults**

Dog runs past a hoop, a dog will be considered to have run past once the nose passes the start of the hoop, barrel or similar – those competitors who wish to reinforce a dog's line through a hoop may call back the dog

to retake the hoop with no further penalty incurred for doing so. Further faults will be given should the dog refuse the hoop once taken back.

Toileting in the ring – please see point c below.

The knocking over of a hoop which prevents its being traversed later in the course. If this hoop is only used once in a course there is no fault.

During teams or pairs any dog which starts or goes through the start hoop before started by the judge. Any dog running back onto the course whilst another is running.

Significant hesitation in front of obstacles.

Turning back and moving away from an obstacle once the approach has begun (spinning is not included).

Excessive time on the start line once permission to start given.

Casual contact with the dog which aids the run, i.e. a leg placed in the dog's line to block

Dog being on the same side of the barrel as the handler unless handling from a stationary box unless informed otherwise in a judges briefing the handler must be on the other side of the barrel to the dog.

### **b. Elimination**

Starting the course before the judge has invited you to commence.

Dog urinates or defecates on any piece of equipment or within the lines of the course.

The incurring of 3 faults on any part of the course.

Not passing through the final hoop or returning the dog to the final hoop.

The carrying of food into the ring in either the hand or pocket.

The rewarding of the dog after their run even when outside of the ring using food taken from a pocket or hand.

A dog dangerously out of control (zoomies do not count as being dangerously out of control)

A dog which shows any aggression directed to any member of the ring party.

A toy which has dropped from a pocket (inside the ring)

Starting the dog in a throw around or from outside the ring

The wearing of any bag, treat pouch or bum bag once the dog has gone through the first obstacle.

Dog traversing the barrel in a direction or side not indicated by the course design number.

Toys being in the hand or visible once the dog has passed through the first obstacle until it has passed through the last obstacle.

Handling or touching the dog whilst once the dog has passed through the first obstacle until it has passed through the last obstacle.

Taking obstacles in an order which is not the course plan

### **c. Toileting in the ring**

If a dog defecates at any point from entering the ring to leaving the ring at the end of their run they are eliminated

We appreciate that we train and run competitions on land where public have access, as do other clubs. Whilst members of the public do not have access to the training area, they do have access to walking around the perimeter of said area, and as such members of the publics or other competitors' dogs may toilet against the perimeter.

We understand that this can be difficult for some dogs and as such we will be trialling in 2026 The following rule:

Should the dog enter into the arena and urinate on the way to the first hoop group this will not be marked as an elimination or fault.

The handler must use the disinfectant provided on the urination spot, once done they may proceed to the start hoop and set up their dog.

Should a dog urinate or defecate once they are under test they are eliminated and must leave the ring

A dog is considered to be under test when the judge or ring party has indicated that they may start when ready.

## **19 Complaints and complaint procedure**

Complaints may be submitted using the official Hoopers Inc(lusive) form for any genuine and non-ambiguous reason within 7 days of the show. Issues such as any form of dog aggression, person aggression, abusive treatment of a dog, breeches of Hoopers Inc(lusive) rules or social media conduct or cyber bullying relating to persons or judges at shows.

Hoopers Inc(lusive)) will, once a complaint has been received investigate the matter, which, may include the interviewing of parties involved and witnesses. The viewing of any photo of video evidence, social media posts etc. The interviewing of any minor will take place with parental permission and under parental supervision.

Once investigation has taken place a response will be given to the complainant with the findings and any potential actions taken against any party involved will remain confidential.

Appeals may be submitted in response to action taken by Hoopers Inc(lusive) and will be heard and investigated by a member of Hoopers Inc(lusive) not involved with the original complaint.

## **20 Policies, procedures and forms**

Hoopers Inc(lusive) policies, procedures, forms and general rules will be reviewed annually, or sooner in the event of incident or recognised improvement to rules or practices. All updates will be made available on the Hoopers Inc(lusive) pages.

All policies, procedures, forms and general rules can be requested.

- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children
- Health & Safety
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Equipment
- Complaints
- Risk assessment
- Committee
- Complaints
- Juniors

- Additional support