MSSA RULES

Dated August 2018

Association Purpose

The Mountain States Stockdog Association (hereafter MSSA) is formed for the purpose of:

- Fostering, promoting and developing the use of stockdogs for the benefit of farmers, ranchers, other livestock owners and stockdog handlers.
- Fostering, promoting and facilitating humane handling of livestock by educating farmers, ranchers, other livestock owners and stockdog handlers in the proper use of well-trained stockdogs.
- Conducting educational events, including clinics, demonstrations, sanctioning trials, and keeping records for the purpose of qualifying dogs for the MSSA Finals, Dog Of the Year and year-end awards.

Information

MSSA will provide information to its members via Facebook, email, and the MSSA website www.mountainstatesstockdog.com

Board of Directors

- The MSSA Board of Directors has the authority to act on hardship situations on a case-by-case basis.

- The MSSA Board of Directors has the authority to set disciplinary action for any valid, written complaint filed by a MSSA member. A complaint must be filed, in writing, within thirty (30) days of the infraction or incident. These infractions can include, but are not limited to unsportsmanlike conduct, offensive language, disrespect to sponsoring host, laborer, or other trial official, abuse to animals, or misrepresentation of dogs and their classifications.

RULE CHANGES

Rule changes and/or new rules made during the trial year will go into effect immediately after the rule change is approved by the Board of Directors, unless the change will affect year-end issues such as Dog of the Year points or handler status. In those cases, the rules will go into effect with the first trial of the next trial season.

MEMBERSHIP

- Membership is not required to compete in an MSSA sanctioned trial.
- Membership dues are to be paid annually, January 1st through December 31st.
- Participating Membership dues are $25.00 per year for Annual or $60 for a 3 Year. This level of membership is for the handler who wants to compete in MSSA sanctioned trials and earn Dog of the Year points.
- Family Membership dues are $35.00 per year for Annual or $90 for a 3 Year. This level is for family members living in the same household. Each member has the same privileges as the Participating Membership.
- Participating or Family Membership is required to be current before going to the post in order to earn qualifying points for Dog of the Year.

MSSA Sanctioning

- The MSSA sanctions five (5) classes: Open, Nursery, Intermediate, Novice and Junior Handler. The eligibility requirements for each class are described below. It is not necessary for all MSSA sanctioned classes to be offered in order to have the trial qualify for sanctioning. Trials may also include additional non-sanctioned classes. The qualifications for non-sanctioned classes are left up to the trial host.
- ALL runs made during a sanctioned trial are required to be included in the sanctioning fees to MSSA. Non sanctioned classes held during an MSSA trial are covered under insurance so they must be included in the sanctioning fees of $5 per run.

- Sanctioned trials are limited to the following states: Washington, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. As well as all of Canada.
- If you would like to host a trial outside of the above states you may petition MSSA Board of Directors for approval. Please use admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com
- The trial host must be a member in good standing with the MSSA.

Dates, locations and results of all sanctioned trials will be published on the MSSA website.

Sanctioning Fees

The MSSA charges a sanctioning fee of $5.00 for each dog run in a sanctioned class. Note: Finals classes are not sanctioned classes. These funds are used for the operation of the association, to help put on the MSSA Finals, and pays for the annual liability insurance and stock insurance.

MSSA Calendar Year

The MSSA qualifying year is July 1st to June 30th.

Qualifying Points

- MSSA members competing in MSSA sanctioned trials will be eligible to earn points for their dog(s) toward qualification for the MSSA Finals, which will be held in July of each year.
- Members are eligible to earn points beginning on the 1st day of their membership.
- Dog Of the Year awards will be all accumulated points for each class earned at MSSA sanctioned trials from July 1st to June 30th.

How are MSSA points calculated?

The top 30% of dogs in a class will earn points. Point calculation example: 30 points are given for each dog in a class. A class with 8 dogs would be calculated as follows: 8 dogs x 30 points each = 240 total points for the class. The dog that placed 1stin this class will earn 240 points. You then subtract 100 points for each place thereafter until you can no longer subtract 100. So, 2nd place will earn 140 points and 3rd place will earn 40 points. The trial host does not need to calculate these points. MSSA qualifying points will be calculated at the MSSA office when the trial results are received.

Event Insurance

As a sanctioned trial with MSSA you are automatically covered by MSSA insurance.
Non-sanctioned classes are NOT covered by MSSA insurance.

The following is a highlight of the coverage:
General Liability

$ 1,000,000.00	Per occurrence
$ 1,000,000.00	Personal and Advertising injury
$ 10,000.00	Medical Expenses
$ 300,000.00	Damage to Premises Rented to You
$ 1,000,000.00	Products / Completed Operations Aggregate
$ 2,000,000.00	General Aggregate

Animal Bailee

$ 100,000.00	Annual Limit
$ 100,000.00	Per occurrence
$ 250.00	Deductible

Terms & Conditions of Insurance claims are as follows:

If your facility owner or stock contractor would like an insurance binder showing them as additional insured please email their full name and address to admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com

Potential Claim guidelines:
Death – Trial Host has 24 hours to have a licensed veterinarian post the animal in question and an official report written on cause of death. This report and a picture of animal in question must be emailed to admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com
Injury – Trial Host has 24 hours to have a licensed veterinarian inspect and write a report on cause and extent of injured animal. This report and a picture of animal in question must be emailed to admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com.
Lost or stolen livestock will NOT be covered by us for any reason.
For any reason that you don't fully comply to our standards your claim will be VOID!!!!!!!

Sanctioned Classes:

- **Open:** Any dog of any age may compete in the Open class. Any handler may compete in the Open class. A handler who has competed in an MSSA sanctioned Open class is no longer eligible to compete in the Intermediate class.
- **Nursery:** Eligibility for the Nursery class is determined by the age of the dog. Dogs eligible to compete in sanctioned Nursery trials during the 2018-2019 qualifying year must have been born after October 1, 2015.
- **Intermediate:** The Intermediate class is limited to handlers who are not competing in the Open class. Any dog may compete in the Intermediate class.
- **Novice:** THIS IS FOR BEGINNER HANDLERS. A Novice handler is a beginning handler who has not competed in the Open class. A Novice handler cannot have won a 1st or 2nd place in the Intermediate class prior to entering their first novice class. Eligibility for the Novice class is determined by the handler. Any dog can compete in the Novice class. The MSSA board reserves the right to move up a Novice Handler after their second trial if it felt deemed they do not fit the Novice criteria. If a MSSA board member is not present, the trial host may contact a board member to discuss a handler.
- **Junior Handler:** A Junior Handler must be 14 years or younger. A JH can show any level dog. All points will follow the JH, not the dog. At minimum the JH will be able to send their dog on an outrun, lift and fetch to the exhaust without assistance of an adult.
- **NOTE:** No dog may be shown by more than one handler in the same class at any time (except for the JH class).
- **NOTE:** At any time if you feel you are classified in the wrong class, you have the right to petition the board of directors for reclassification. Please write a letter and submit to admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com

HANDLER RULES

1. It is each handler's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the rules and each trial host accepts the responsibility to enforce these rules at each trial. Any questions on rules should be discussed before the trial begins.
2. Handlers with physical disabilities will be allowed the use of tools that are not normally accepted (binoculars, wheelchairs, electric scooters, or a walking aid). While not normally accepted as a tool, a horse or mule may be considered on a case by case basis after the handler has submitted a petition to the Board of Directors for consideration. If a horse or mule is used, the animal will be treated as the handler insofar as they cannot get out of a walk, cannot be used in a cutting horse capacity and they cannot

enter any part of an obstacle. Infractions will be treated as they would for a handler and could result in disqualification. Handlers needing these tools should notify the trial host of their needs before the trial starts so there are no surprises. MSSA encourages those with physical handicaps to participate in our sanctioned events and believes that trial hosts and trial officials should make reasonable efforts to accommodate these handlers.
3. A handler shall not enter the trial field at any time with any kind of training device. This includes, but is not limited to, remote controlled devices, dummy or weighted collars, any device used to distract or cause pain to a dog. The trial official has the right to inspect a dog for any suspected violations of this rule and may disqualify a handler if he/she enters the trial field with any such equipment.
4. A handler is responsible for injury to livestock and property, both on and off of the trial field that results from a dog being loose and/or out of control.
5. All dogs should be kept securely tied, on a leash, or in a crate when not competing. While realizing that ropes can be chewed and chains can be broken, if a dog gains access to the trial course while competition is under way through negligence of the owner/handler, a trial official has the right to access disciplinary action against the dog and its owner, including disqualification of the handler and dog for the duration of the trial being held.
6. Handlers should always demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct.
7. While recognizing that it is often necessary for a dog to bite the livestock to make a turn, excessive or out of control biting will NOT be tolerated. A dog that hangs onto the livestock as the livestock runs down the arena, or bites so hard as to bring the livestock down will not be tolerated. If the trial official deems the conduct to be excessive, the handler/dog will be disqualified for that run.

Maximum number of MSSA sanctioned classes per day

The maximum number of MSSA sanctioned classes per day is: 2 Open, 2 Nursery, 2 Intermediate classes, 2 Novice & 2 JH.

Number of dogs per handler in a sanctioned class

A handler may enter as many dogs in an MSSA sanctioned class as is allowed by the local trial host.

What to do after your trial

1. The MSSA sanctioning fee is $5 per entry per trial for all classes. Fees and completed trial results must be submitted to MSSA as soon as possible after your trial (email and check postmark not to exceed 10 days after last day of trial).

2. Submit full results to admin@mountainstatesstockdog.com
3. Send checks Payable to
   MSSA
   70 Laden Lane
   Bozeman, MT 59718

MSSA Finals

- The Finals will be held in July of each year.
- Western attire will be mandatory (long sleeve western shirt, cowboy hat or no hat, and jeans – no caps allowed)
- Handlers who are MSSA members may earn points to qualify dogs for the Finals in any MSSA sanctioned trial held between July 1st to June 30th.
- At the Finals event no collars or stocksticks will be allowed.
- All classes, including Open, Nursery, Intermediate, Novice, and Junior Hanlder are to be represented at the trial.
- Finals Champions will be calculated by points earned at the Finals Event.
- The course will be set up by the Finals Trial Committee when it arrives at the trial site and has had time to observe the disposition of the stock, the physical attributes of the arena, the location of the bleachers, etc. The committee may modify the course in each class as they see fit.
- If a handler chooses to retire the run, the handler will be given all points earned up until the time of retire, with full time.

COMPULSORY ADVANCEMENT OF DOG OF THE YEAR AND RESERVE DOG OF THE YEAR CHAMPIONS AND/OR FINALS CHAMPION AND RESERVE CHAMPION AND HANDLERS

- There is no compulsory advancement of Dog of the Year or Reserve Dog of the Year champions in the Open class.
- Compulsory advancement of the Nursery dog is controlled by the age requirement. There is no compulsory advancement of the Nursery Dog of the Year champion or reserve champion handler.
- The MSSA Intermediate Dog of the Year, Reserve Dog of the Year, the Finals Champion and Reserve Champion handler and dog can no longer compete in the Intermediate class.
- The MSSA Novice Dog of the Year, Reserve Dog of the Year, the Finals Champion and Reserve Champion handler and dog can no longer compete in the Novice class.
- The MSSA Board of Directors reserves the right to mandate a handlers level in which they compete at any time during the year.

- Any handler that competes at a sanctioned MSSA trial, even if not an MSSA member, are under the same stipulations of compulsory advancements. At any time, the Board of Directors reserve the right to move up such handlers.

Futurity

- Qualification: This is open to any dog that is of nursery age for the qualifying year (see sanctioning classes for Nursery) and has not been shown before nominating and futurity fees paid to MSSA.
- These dogs will have one (1) year as a futurity dog.
- Declaration: Owners/handlers must declare their Futurity Dog prior to showing it for the first time. This MUST be done on the MSSA Website. All information and fees of $200 MUST be paid prior to first show, no exceptions.
- Class at trials: Futurity Dogs will run within the Nursery class at MSSA sanctioned trials. They will not have a separate class at trials.
- Points: The Futurity Dogs will earn points based on where they place in the Nursery class. For example: If the dog places 3rd in a Nursery class and receives 100 Nursery points then it will also earn 100 Futurity Points. Points will be posted on the MSSA website under Futurity Dog Standings.
- Awards: MSSA will award a Futurity Dog Of The Year during the qualifying years Finals. MSSA will also award a Finals Futurity Dog during the qualifying years Finals.
- MORE DETAILS TO COME!
- CONTACT AN MSSA DIRECTOR WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

Rules discussed and voted on at the August 24th, 2018 Board Meeting held in via telephone conference.