# FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (FCI) (AISBL)

*Place Albert 1ᵉʳ, 13, B – 6530 Thuin (Belgique), tel : +32.71.59.12.38, internet : https://www.fci.be*

_____

# FCI RULES FOR INTERNATIONAL HERDING TRIALS
# TRADITIONAL STYLE
# "FCI-IHT TS"

*(excluding Border Collie)*

**May 1ˢᵗ 2023**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**N.B.: Terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders and numbers.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.    FCI International Herding Trials in Traditional Style (**FCI-**IHT TS) are carried out in order to preserve the characteristics related to the ability to handle sheep and obtain this aptitude through the work of many herding dog generations at sheep flocks. The **FCI-**IHT TS rules are set up in this sense.

1.2.    The breeds eligible for participating in the TS have very different backgrounds and different herding styles. Some breeds evolved in boundary work (guarding border) in agricultural areas, others control the movement of herds and drive them to pasture crossing pathways and roads.

1.3.    In the TS there was and is daily contact of the farmer/shepherd with his flock to feed them or to graze them in unfenced areas. Their sheep have no fear of humans or dogs, they just respect them. The sheep trust their shepherd and are willing to follow him to new grazing land or to be milked.

1.4.    In the **FCI-**IHT TS the dogs have to prove that they have the qualities to be a farm dog or herding dog. The task of dogs is handling the flock by taking them in or out of a pen and controlling the movement of the flock in simple manoeuvres and correcting sheep that split off the flock.

1.5.    The FCI carefully provides exercises which all dogs in the TS are able to perform; looking for the common ground of variability of the herding style of the breed.

## 2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

2.1.    The main principles for **FCI-**IHT TS are to be found in the "GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF FCI HERDING EVENTS (**FCI-**NHAT – **FCI-**HWT – **FCI-**IHT)".

2.2.    The **FCI-**IHT TS must be recognized by all FCI members and contract partners.

## 3. PERFORMANCE CLASSES

3.1.    The competitions are conducted in three classes of difficulty; **FCI-**IHT**-1**, **FCI-**IHT**-2** and **FCI-**IHT**-3.**

3.2.    The differences in classes are:
   a) much stricter requirements for the dog's skills;

   b) relatively less time for the completion of all exercises;

   c) more time set to guard sheep in the grazing space;

   d) greater length of the whole course;

   e) grazing area partly or not fenced;

   f) shorter or longer distances between passages ;

   g) more exercises, more difficult passages.

   h) the number of sheep may vary in the different classes (the number of sheep may be higher in the higher classes to make passing the passages more of a challenge).

## 4. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

### 4.1. Area and its equipment

4.1.1. **Field** – a surface of 50 x 100 m at the minimum, preferably even larger; it may be with natural barriers such as trees, but clearly framed. Fencing is recommended, but the border can be natural or artificial.

4.1.2. **Grazing area** – with a perimeter of at least 80 meters; square or rectangular. Preferably with vegetation for the sheep. The boundaries of the grazing area should be marked, e.g. by poles (rods) on the edges, sand, sawdust, a ploughed furrow etc., ideally natural boundaries like a path or a mowed strip.  The grazing area may be fenced on one or two sides or without any fencing.

4.1.3. *Passages* – they can be made both from natural objects (bales, fences, stone walls), and from special portable panels (gates). Panels must be suitable to build up different combinations of passages. Each type of passage may have several variations, and therefore a higher performance and a higher degree of difficulty. Some can also be taken in different ways; entering them to or leaving them from different sides. The passages must be safe for animals and/or handlers. The judge can choose own variants of passages or a method overcoming them.

4.1.4. **Pen** – with a size suitable for the flock (the shape is not prescribed, it may be oval, square or rectangular), with a gate of at least 2 meters wide, ideally on hinges and with functional protection against opening by the sheep or by the dog.

4.1.5. **Re-Pen** – can be the same as the exit-pen or can be in another place and it can be a smaller one as the exit-pen. In FCI-IHT-3 it can be as a livestock trailer (for loading the sheep into it).

4.1.6. **Course** – natural or simulated way with natural and/or artificial passages /exercises.

4.1.7. **Markings** – poles or other items or a natural point to mark the places of change of direction (at least 4), stopping area (at least 4), grazing area (at least 4), or possible places that should be avoided.

4.1.8. **Vehicle** – only in FCI-IHT-3, a car or another type of transport to simulate traffic on a road.

## 4.2. Number of sheep

4.2.1. The flock for each run must consist of a minimum of 10 sheep, preferably more.

4.2.2. The total number of the competing teams must be limited by the organizer in view of the total number of the sheep available, with respect to the requirements on arranging the welfare of the animals.

## 4.3. Time

4.3.1. The measuring of time starts when the handler touches the gate to open it and ends when the handler has shut the gate after Re-Pen. If the team does not manage to finish the exercises within the specified time of maximum:

      a) 25 minutes in FCI-IHT-**1**;
      b) 30 minutes in FCI-IHT-**2**;
      c) 35 minutes in FCI-IHT-**3**;

or less when the judge decides (but the same for all teams and pre-informed).
Only the points of the finished exercises acquired within the time limit are counted.

4.3.2. Too fast progress when fulfilling the exercises does not reflect a good performance, so it is up to the handler to plan the time needed for the fulfilment of the exercises very carefully.

## 5. EXERCISES

## 5.1. The exercises which include control of the flock

5.1.1. **Pen** – guarding exit of the sheep from the pen.

5.1.2. **Stop** – control stabilization of sheep.

5.1.3. **Graze** – guarding border as the sheep graze/eat and do not move out of the grazing area.

5.1.4. **Catch sheep** – holding flock when handler catches one sheep.

5.1.5. **Separation –** Only in **FCI**-IHT-**3**, some sheep must be shed off from the rest of the flock. Separation replaces the "catch sheep" exercise**.**

5.1.6. **Vegetation** – only in **FCI**-IHT-**2** and **FCI**-IHT-**3**: protecting a forbidden area (vegetation or other crops) from the sheep.

5.1.7. **Traffic** – only in **FCI**-IHT-**3**; protecting sheep against a car or another type of transport simulating traffic on a road.

5.1.8. **Re-Pen** – control by stabilizing sheep before bringing sheep back in the pen or other resting place at the end of a run.

## 5.2. The exercises which include conduct exercises.

5.2.1.    **Moving** – guiding the flock on the way to the grazing area and back.

5.2.2.    **Passages** – e.g. bridge, gate, chute, crossroad, slalom, sorting corridor.

5.2.3.    **Retrieving work** – retrieving the sheep over different distances in the different classes and bringing the flock to the handler.

5.2.4.    **Drive away –** driving the sheep away from the handler*.*

## 5.3. Behaviour

Evaluation of functional activity, style, power and gentleness of the dog, and cooperation with the handler.

## 6. EXERCISES AND POINTS EVALUATION

## 6.1. The exercises which include control of the flock

### 6.1.1. Pen

Purpose:
The dog takes the sheep out of the pen, calmly and without stress.

Description:
The task is based on the fact that in TS practice the sheep know the dog and the shepherd. The handler at first can take his dog around the pen and introduce the dog to the sheep outside of the pen.
Time starts when the handler touches the gate to open it. The handler may enter the pen with the dog to observe their behaviour and to introduce them to the dog inside the pen. Then the handler places the dog near the gate to prevent the sheep from taking off. After the handler opens the gate, the dog will lift the sheep out of the pen. The handler and the dog stabilize the flock outside of the pen and the handler closes the gate while the dog controls the flock. The evaluation of the pen ends when the handler sends the dog to lift the flock.

Serious mistakes:
Dog hurries the sheep or chases and splits them. Their exit is too fast or if a sheep that already was outside runs back inside.

### 6.1.2. Stop

Purpose:
As the flock must sometimes stop on the way to the grazing land and back, for example before a crossroad where vehicles run, the exercises include also stopping of the flock and protecting the stopping-line.

Description:
The flock must be stopped within a delimited space with the help of active work of the dog that also protects the stop-line after the flock has stopped. As soon as the flock has calmed down, the handler goes to the delimited stop-line and looks both ways, similarly to crossing a real crossroad.

Serious mistakes:
Dog or the flock pass the front stop-line of the space in the direction of movement, if the dog was not involved in stopping the flock.

### 6.1.3. Graze

Purpose:
Grazing of the sheep is described at 4.1.2. Calming down and starting the sheep to graze is one of the most important exercises. The sheep must not be disturbed and stressed, to be able to graze. However, it is important for them not to graze outside the borders of the grazing area.

Description:
After taking the sheep to the grazing area (preferably to its centre) the handler and the dog must leave the grazing area. The handler commands the dog to guard the borders of the grazing area. The sheep can start grazing, or at least calm down in case they do not want to eat. It is usually sufficient for the flock to graze peacefully:
 a) in **FCI**-IHT-**1**: about 2:00 minutes;
 b) in **FCI**-IHT-**2**: about 2:30 minutes;
 c) in **FCI**-IHT-**3**: about 3:00 minutes;
or more if the judge decides (the same for all teams in that class).
The task of the handler and the dog is to watch that the flock stays in the grazing area, but if a sheep leaves the space, the dog should bring it back. The style of the dogs in guarding the boundaries depends on the specific working style of the breed. Important is that the dog observes the sheep and keeps them in the delimited area on its own initiative. The judge gives a signal when the handler must order the dog to retrieve the flock on its own to leave the grazing area and bring it to the handler.

Serious mistakes:
Sheep leave the delimited area because the dog did not manage to guard it; or if the dog drives the sheep away.

### 6.1.4. Catch a sheep

Purpose:
The handler needs to catch one sheep when the dog is immobilizing the flock.

Description:
While the flock is immobilized (anywhere, but better inside of the grazing area or the stop area) and calm in the indicated space, the handler catches and briefly holds a sheep. During this time the dog should contain the rest of the flock in the indicated space, if possible on its own initiative.
 In FCI-IHT-1 the handler should catch a random sheep.
 In FCI-IHT-2 the handler should catch a marked sheep by the neck or leg and take it to the edge of the flock.
 In FCI-IHT-3 the handler should catch a marked sheep by the neck or leg, take it to the edge of the flock and/or let the sheep sit and/or take off the sheep neck collar or a similar thing and raises it above his head in his hand.
The handler is allowed to use a shepherd's crook to catch the sheep.

Serious mistakes:
Dog does not hold the flock well.

### 6.1.5. Vegetation – guarding forbidden area

Purpose:
While the sheep follow the handler, the dog should prevent sheep going into a forbidden area (e.g. vegetation).

Description:
The dog should move back and forth on the suitable side of the flock out of the path on which the flock moves, showing the sheep that the vegetation is not intended for them. If a sheep leaves the path and goes into the forbidden area, the dog should drive it back.

Serious mistakes:
Dog doesn't guard the forbidden area well.

### 6.1.6. Traffic – guarding sheep from the vehicle

Purpose:
The sheep follow the handler on the road, while the dog is guarding the sheep against the moving vehicle – a moving vehicle constitutes a danger to the sheep.

Description:
The dog should hold the suitable side of the road free for traffic by moving back and forth on that side of the flock when the flock is moving on the road. This exercise can be performed on a real road or on a simulated road that can substitute the conditions occurring on a real road. The road must be clearly delimited and at least one of its sides must be so distinctively marked that the flock can orientate itself on it during the movement. It is suggested to fence one side of the road, so that an eager dog does not push the flock out of the road. The judge may include only one direction of move of the vehicle (usually in the direction opposite to the move of the sheep).

Serious mistakes:
Dog doesn't guard sheep well.

### 6.1.7. Re-Pen

Purpose:
To bring the sheep to their resting place, the pen (or a livestock trailer with loading ramp in FCI-IHT-3), in a calm way to avoid injuries, the sheep must not return too rapidly to the pen; jamming at the gate is not desirable.

Description:
It should be accomplished by the active work of the dog under the command of the handler: it must be done calmly and without rush. Near the pen, the flock should be stabilized and held in place by the dog, while the shepherd opens the gate.
As soon as all sheep are inside the pen, the handler closes the gate while the dog is blocking the gate opening. Closing the gate means the end of the test and of the time measurement.

Serious mistakes:
The dog is not able to keep the sheep immobilized or to Re-Pen them, or if a sheep that already was inside runs out.


## 6.2. The exercises which include conduct exercises

### 6.2.1. Moving

Purpose:
Passaging on the way to the grazing area and back the dog must demonstrate that it is able to control the flock so that the flock moves, changes direction calmly and smoothly, without stress.

Description:
Pick up the sheep to go towards the handler calmly without stress. The dog must accompany the flock in a calm, uninterrupted manner. The judge should mark 4 places for a change of direction (a pole, tree, outer corner of a fence, etc.) to be passed around on the real or simulated way. The dog must work with sense of distance from the flock, not pressing the flock unnecessary. The movement around the sheep must be calm, making the sheep moving fluently in the specific direction, preventing them from crowding around the handler or, on the contrary, from going too far from the handler.

Serious mistakes:
Dog loses control of the flock, if the dog is not able to influence the flock, or if a sheep takes a shortcut. Dog drives sheep away or chases and splits them.

### 6.2.2. Passages

Purpose:
The dog must demonstrate that it is able to drive sheep through passages calmly and smoothly, without stress. A difficult passage should demonstrate and test situations which a shepherd could face with his/her dog when working on a farm.

Description:
The bridge must be in all classes.
The number of passages and ways of their passage depends on the class of difficulty in which the competitions are organized:

a) in **FCI**-IHT-**1**: bridge and 1 easy passage (different gates and slalom);
b) in **FCI**-IHT-**2**: bridge and 1 easy passage and 1 difficult passage (i.e. chute, transom);
c) in **FCI**-IHT-**3**: bridge, 2 difficult passages and 1 very difficult passage (i.e. Maltese cross, crossroad, turkey´s foot, sorting corridor, loading trailer, distance work).

The judge has to start evaluating of the passage when sheep are about 10 meters in front of the passage. To get full points all sheep must go through the passage. The judging ends when sheep are under the control by dog behind the passage.

Serious mistakes:
Dog has not enough power to push sheep into the entrance of the passage, one or more sheep do not go through the passage. Dog is not able to guard side exits of a passage.

### 6.3. Behaviour

Purpose:
The judge evaluates the functional activity and gentleness of the dog and cooperation with the handler all over the fulfilment of the exercises, from the start until the end of the run. The dog must be also self-active, not only obey commands. A good cooperation between the handler and the dog reflects in how the dog responses to commands.

Description:
The judge evaluates primarily the dog's aptitude for herding, which is reflected in the style of work of its breed. The judge evaluates the power of the dog, sense of balance point, the initiative of the dog and its desire to work. The more negative characteristics the dog has the less points it can get for its activity. If the dog is not active from its own initiative, it is hard to motivate it to perform well.
The commands should have a distinctive effect on the dog's behaviour, they should be given calmly and convincing. In more difficult conditions and with "more difficult" sheep, the judge should take consideration of that situation or evaluate positively the handler's and dog's way of managing it.

<u>Serious mistakes:</u>
Dog ignores the commands. Dog has low interest in the sheep.

<u>Disqualifying mistakes:</u>
Grabbing or biting sheep.

## 7. EVALUATION

### 7.1. Evaluation points

7.1.1. The judge decides how many points to take off for each task (it can be all points for one task).

7.1.2. The judge can only take off whole point (not half or less).

7.1.3. Judge's point-table classified according to trial experience. No predefined subpoints give more freedom to the judge's decision.

| Name of exercises | FCI-IHT-1 | FCI-IHT-2 | FCI-IHT-3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Control of the flock** | 55 | 55 | 60 |
| Pen | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Stop(s) | 15 | 15 | 20 |
| Graze | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Catch sheep | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| *Re-pen* | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| **Moving** | 25 | 35 | 50 |
| Moving together | | | |
| Retrieve work | | | |
| Drive away | | | |
| Vegetation | - | | |
| Traffic | - | - | |
| Separation (replaces "catch the sheep") | - | - | |
| **Passages** | 10 | 20 | 30 |
| Bridge | | | |
| Easy Passage | | | - |
| Difficult Passage | - | | |
| Difficult Passage | - | - | |
| Very Difficult Passage | - | - | |
| **Behaviour** | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| **Natural ability** | | | |
| **Gentleness** | | | |
| **Intelligence of execution** | | | |
| **Obedience** | | | |
| **Total points** | **100** | **120** | **150** |

## 7.2. Qualifications

**7.2.1 Qualifications table:** The base of qualifications is the percentage of the result, which must be calculated as Percentage (%) = 100 * gained points / total points

| Qualification | Abbreviation | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | EXC | 90 - 100 *%* |
| Very Good | VG | 80 - 89 *%* |
| Good | G | 70 - 79 *%* |
| Not Passed | NP | less than 70 % |
| No points awarded | NPA | 0 % (no points) |
| Retired | RET | 0 % (no points) |
| Disqualification | DIS | 0 % (no points) |

## 7.3. Ranking

7.1.4. **FCI**-IHT are trials in which the order and the winner are announced; the first 3 places cannot be shared places.

7.1.5. If dogs have equal points, the dog who has the most points for moving wins (after that the points for pen, and then follow the next points of the judge's point-table).

## 8. CLOSING PROVISIONS

8.1. **These rules fully replace the rules valid since 1st February 2019.**

8.2. **These rules were approved at the meeting of the FCI Herding Dogs Commission held in Dortmund (DE) on July 9-10 2022.**

8.3. **These rules were approved by the FCI General Committee in Budapest, March 2023. They enter into force as from 1st May 2023.**

8.4. **In case of translation discrepancies, the English text is considered the original.**

**ANNEX 1 RECOMMENDED JUDGES SHEETS "FCI-IHT-1 TS", "FCI-IHT-2 TS", "FCI-IHT-3 TS"**

| SCORE CARD | | | | Catalogue No | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FCI-IHT-1 TS** | | | | **Start No** | |

| Event | | | | Place | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dog name | | | | | Born |
| Pedigree Reg. No | | | | Chip | Sex |
| Owner | | | | | Breed |
| Handler | | | | | No |

| Exercises | Max | Minus | Score | Max. time 25:00 min | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pen | 10 | | | **Control of the flock (max. 55)** | |
| Stop | 15 | | | | |
| Graze (2:00 min) | 15 | | | | |
| Catch sheep | 5 | | | | |
| Re-Pen | 10 | | | | |
| Moving together | | | | **Moving (max. 25)** | |
| Retrieve work | | | | | |
| Drive away | | | | | |
| Bridge | | | | **Passages (max. 10)** | |
| Easy passage | | | | | |
| Natural ability | | | | **Behaviour (max. 10)** | |
| Gentleness | | | | | |
| Intelligence of execution | | | | | |
| Obedience | | | | | |
| **Total points (b):** | 100 | **Gained sum (a):** | | **Percentage (%)** (100*a/b) = | **Qualification** / **Rank** |
| **Judge No, Name, Signature** | | | | **Clarification by** | |

| SCORE CARD | | | | Catalogue No | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FCI-IHT-2 TS** | | | | **Start No** | |

| Event | | Place | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dog name | | | Born |
| Pedigree Reg. No | | Chip | Sex |
| Owner | | | Breed |
| Handler | | | No |

| Exercises | Max | Minus | Score | Max. time 30:00 min | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pen | 10 | | | **Control of the flock (max. 55)** | |
| Stop | 15 | | | | |
| Graze (2:30 min) | 15 | | | | |
| Catch sheep | 5 | | | | |
| Re-Pen | 10 | | | | |
| Moving together | | | | **Moving (max. 35)** | |
| Retrieve work | | | | | |
| Drive away | | | | | |
| Vegetation | | | | | |
| Bridge | | | | **Passages (max. 20)** | |
| Easy passage | | | | | |
| Difficult passage | | | | | |
| Natural ability | | | | **Behaviour (max. 10)** | |
| Gentleness | | | | | |
| Intelligence of execution | | | | | |
| Obedience | | | | | |
| **Total points (b):** | 120 | **Gained sum (a):** | | **Percentage (%)** (100*a/b) = | **Qualification** | **Rank** |
| **Judge No, Name, Signature** | | | | **Clarification by** | |

FCI Rules for International Herding Trials, Traditional Style "FCI IHT TS" (excluding Border Collie)

# SCORE CARD

## FCI-IHT-3 TS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Catalogue No** | | |
| **Start No** | | |

| Event | Place | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Dog name | | Born |
| Pedigree Reg. No | Chip | Sex |
| Owner | | Breed |
| Handler | | No |

| Exercises | Max | Minus | Score | Max. time 35:00 min | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pen | 10 | | | **Control of the flock (max. 60)** | |
| Stop | 20 | | | | |
| Graze (3:00 min) | 15 | | | | |
| Catch sheep | 5 | | | | |
| Re-Pen | 10 | | | | |
| Moving together | | | | **Moving (max. 50)** | |
| Retrieve work | | | | | |
| Drive away | | | | | |
| Vegetation | | | | | |
| Traffic | | | | | |
| Separation (replace Catch sheep) | | | | | |
| Bridge | | | | **Passages (max. 30)** | |
| Difficult passage | | | | | |
| Difficult passage | | | | | |
| Very difficult passage | | | | | |
| Natural ability | | | | **Behaviour (max. 10)** | |
| Gentleness | | | | | |
| Intelligence of execution | | | | | |
| Obedience | | | | | |
| **Total points (b):** | 150 | **Gained sum (a):** | | **Percentage (%)** (100*a/b) = | **Qualification** **Rank** |
| **Judge No, Name, Signature** | | | | **Clarification by** | |