

SPORTS SHEAR AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION INC. - (SSAA) SHEEP SHEARING COMPETITION GENERAL RULES

EFFECTIVE 5-10-2006

THESE RULES CANCEL ALL PREVIOUS RULES

INTERPRETATION

In these Rules unless the context otherwise requires:

Words implying the masculine gender will include the feminine as the context fits.

Words implying singular will include the plural as the context fits.

Penalties & Points

Do not confuse penalty strokes with points.

(i) A penalty stroke is subject to further calculation (i.e. addition and division)

(ii) A point is subject only to inclusion and addition to the score

1. ENTRIES

- (a) Entries will be in the format required by the organising committee.
- (b) Late entries may be accepted at the organising committee's discretion and may incur a surcharge.

2. COMPETITORS

- (a) Competitors must abide by the Rules and Protocols of Sports Shear Australia Association Inc. (SSAA).
- (b) Competitors enter and compete at their own risk.
- (c) Competitors must report to the entry desk 30 minutes before the start of the event.
- (d) Competitors must be suitably attired, which includes footwear. The referee will administer this ruling.
- (e) Competitors will not wear conflicting sponsors singlets or any singlet that may give offence and will replace it or turn it inside out if requested by referee. Failure/refusal to do so will result in disqualification.
- (f) The use of drugs, drips or oxygen is banned in all competitions.
- (g) Random drug tests may be taken and if proved positive, the competitor will pay all costs and be disqualified for 12 months from the date of the tests.
- (h) Competitors should be suitably attired for the prize giving.
- (i) Competitors must provide their own hand-pieces, combs and cutters and hand shears. Sharpening equipment will be available unless forbidden by Regulation or Law.
- (j) Competitors will each be allowed two loaded hand-pieces or two pairs of shears which are his responsibility and no time will be allowed for stoppage caused by his shears, hand-piece, or sheep getting away from the competitor on the board. However, should any stoppages occur through the fault of the machine or through other competitors sheep escaping, a time allowance will be made or a re-run given only at the Disputes Committee's discretion. The organising committee may allow competitors to use up to 3 handpieces in multiple breed/wool type events.
- (k) Without assistance, each competitor must:
 - (i) Start and stop his machine;
 - (ii) Catch his own sheep; (see 7h)
 - (iii) Put each sheep out of the chute/porthole; (see 7m)
 - (iv) Switch his handpiece off between sheep.
- (l) It is the responsibility of the competitor to be clear on ruling re socks/shanks.
- (m) Competitors may be required to sort sheep into even lines prior to their heat or final.
- (n) Competitor may enter his pen in the presence of a judge, to inspect and sort his sheep. No plucking of wool allowed.
- (o) Competitors must wait on the board and may place hand/s on the closed door/s to await the word 'Go'.
- (p) Competitors have the right to appeal to the referee in regard to any sub-standard sheep before the heat commences. The referee's decision in the matter is final. Should a sub-standard sheep be disqualified by the referee, the sheep will be raddled and withdrawn from the entire event.
- (q) There will be a draw to determine heats and stands before the start of the event.

- (i) Competitors in all finals will draw their stand after the pens are filled and/or sorted.
- (ii) This will be done in time to allow the names of the competitors to be put above their stands.
- (r) Each competitor may be provided with an official in his pen to act as a second. This person may not tip or lift the sheep for the competitor or switch the machine on or off and will ensure sheep are facing away from the pen door. No unauthorised person/s will be permitted in the catching pens.
- (s) In any event, competitors may change handpieces at any time (i.e. do not have to change when shearers change in a team event).
- (t) Any competitor who is not present for the presentation of prizes will not receive the prize unless reasonable grounds for being absent are presented to the organising committee before the prize giving.
- (u) On completion of shearing his sheep, each competitor will remain on his stand until the last competitor on the board has finished, unless,
 - (i) he needs to seek urgent medical attention.
 - (ii) he has been granted permission to leave the board by the referee prior to the commencement of such heat or final.
- (v) Competitors will contest one class only except at discretion of organising committee.
- (w) All finalists will receive a print out of the final results if facility is available.
- (x) Competitors will be disqualified for conduct deemed by the referee, a judge, or the relevant committee, to be detrimental to SSAA, e.g. deliberate injury to a sheep, abusive language, not conducting themselves in a manner appropriate to a sportsperson, under the influence of drugs or alcohol. (see 4e, 5e, 9d)
- (y) Disqualified competitors will receive no prize or prizemoney other than a ribbon.

3. SHEEP

- (a) Preparation of competition sheep must be kept to a minimum, at a uniform standard, but sufficient to ensure the safety of teats, vulva and pizzle.
- (b) Competitors may not present their own sheep for outside judges but may be required to present sheep from other heats or competitors.
- (c) It is important to select an even line of sheep from a single flock for each event. A high standard of sheep quality is expected.
- (d) The sheep numbers to be shorn by each competitor will be at the discretion of the organising committee, save and except in the SSAA National Championships and the Golden Shears World Championships, where the number to be shorn will be decided by SSAA and the Golden Shears World Council respectively.

4. THE REFEREE

- (a) A referee or chief referee will be appointed for each competition.
- (b) A chief referee may appoint one or more referees for a specific event. e.g. pen and board.
- (c) The referee or chief referee will be Chairman of the Disputes Committee. (see 13a)
- (d) The referee will be responsible for the administration and control of the competition strictly according to these rules, any additional local rules and the SSAA Protocols.
- (e) The referee has the right to disqualify any competitor whose work or conduct is detrimental to the good reputation of competition shearing. (see 2x, 9d)
- (f) Prior to the commencement of any competition heats, all the competition rules must be available to the competitors and the referee must be available to answer any queries.
- (g) Any person may seek a clarification on any point from the referee. The referee may rule on the matter raised or refer it to the Disputes Committee.
- (h) The referee will ensure that the board judges use different colour pens or markers or approved hand held counters.
- (i) The referee will ensure that the pen judges strictly adhere to the pen judging method adopted for the particular event or competition and do not confer while judging, except as in 8e.
- (j) The referee must be called and decide the penalty for 9b. (see 8e)
- (k) The referee for an event will draw up the names of and place the judges.
- (l) Before the start of the competition the referee will announce whether 'socks' or second growth wool, are to be taken off or left on.

5. THE JUDGES

- (a) A competitor may judge at a competition where he is competing, but not in the class in which he is competing.
- (b) Judges must report to entry desk or referee 15 minutes before the first event they are required to judge.
- (c) Judges must be tidily dressed, preferably wearing a white coat.
- (d) Judges are not permitted to judge while under the influence of liquor or to smoke while judging.
- (e) A judge has the right to switch off and/or disqualify any competitor whose work or conduct is detrimental to the good reputation of competition shearing. (see 2x, 9d)
- (f) Judges are to ensure they understand all rules prior to judging at a competition.
- (g) At the start of every heat or final, judges must ensure counter is zeroed and score card is filled in if necessary. Starter or referee to check/remind. (see 6m)
- (h) Judges must not be changed during the heats of an event. Judges may be changed for any finals of an event.
- (i) If required, the referee will have the final say on all decisions re dog bites, yoke boils, stitching etc. (see 9b re stitching)

6. THE BOARD JUDGES

- (a) The board judges will judge for:
 - (i) double cutting of the wool;
 - (ii) skin pieces on fleece;
 - (iii) handling of sheep;
 - (iv) breaking of fleece;
 - (v) work before or after time; (see 2n and 7n)
- (b) Board judges must start on the same stand in each heat or semi-final.
- (c) Board judges must be alert to protect competitors and woolhandlers if a sheep escapes.
- (d) Floating judge to change after the fastest competitor finishes the belly of the first sheep.
- (e) Board judges must not hesitate when changing unless it is prudent to do so.
- (f) Board judges will rotate during the course of every heat so that each sheep is judged by more than one judge.
- (g) Board judges must ensure they spend time on all stands even if one or more be vacant to avoid altering the overall pace of change.
- (h) Board judges rotation must continue until last sheep of last shearer is finished.
- (i) When changing, incoming judge must tap outgoing judge, then outgoing judge scores no more.
- (j) Place the counter so the incoming judge can find the trigger easily.
- (k) Board judges must retain a constant focus on the sheep and competitor while judging for board penalties.
- (l) Board judges to keep away from timer button.
- (m) Board judges using counters must, at completion of last sheep of heat, record penalty strokes on card provided. They should check counter with shearer and/or person collecting cards, then zero counter. (see 5g and 6h)

7. BOARD PENALTIES

- (a) Second cuts – one matchbox in size equals two penalty strokes.
- (b) Two penalty strokes for not throwing the belly wool clear and within reach of the woolhandler.
- (c) Up to five penalty strokes for wool thrown interfering with another competitor.
- (d) One penalty stroke per side for obvious belly wool not removed.
- (e) Two penalty strokes for first hind leg wool broken out deliberately by competitor.
- (f) One penalty stroke for not breaking the neck wool.
- (g) Up to three penalty strokes for using blades or handpiece to cut open neck wool.
- (h) Two penalty strokes if penhandler lifts sheep to assist catch.
- (i) Two penalty strokes for dragging competitor's foot through fleece on completion of the long blow.
- (j) One penalty stroke for competitor placing foot on fleece. Two penalty strokes if fleece is damaged.
- (k) Up to four penalty strokes if shorn sheep on release breaks up fleece or carries fleece wool out into release pen.
- (l) Rough handling of sheep – up to 20 penalty strokes per offence.
- (m) Allowing a shorn or partly shorn sheep to escape – up to 20 penalty strokes per offence. The shearer must make a genuine effort to pen the sheep. Does not apply if sheep is fully penned and returns to board.
- (n) Work before or after time (i.e. plucking, removing tassels etc.) – up to 20 penalty strokes per offence. (see 2n and 6a). Judges must be aware that –
 - (i) If stopwatch timing, time is until pull of rope after last sheep (i.e. handpiece stops);
 - (ii) If self timing, (i.e. button) time is until button is pushed. (i.e. handpiece may be still running). (see 10b(ii))
- (o) Skin pieces on fleece to be penalized as if skin cut on sheep (i.e. pen penalty – see 9a).
- (p) Each competitor's board points will be calculated by dividing his total number of board penalty strokes by the number of sheep shorn.

8. THE PEN JUDGES

- (a) There will be a minimum of two pen judges judging the shorn sheep either together or singly. If single judging is used, each pen judge must judge the same number of sheep for each competitor. (e.g. – 2 pen judges – 7 sheep heat. Judge A judges 4 for each competitor, Judge B judges 3 for each competitor).
- (b) Each pen judge must record his score for each sheep he judges on the scorecard provided. Pen judges must sign the card as required.
- (c) Pen judges must not confer and must form their own opinion as to the number of penalties taken from each competitor, except as required by Rule 8e.
- (d) The pen judges will judge shorn sheep for –
 - (i) Wool left on.
 - (ii) All cuts on sheep (i.e. skin, eye, ear, vulva and minor teat or pizzle cuts) except as per 9b and 9d.
- (e) The pen judge/s must call the referee to decide penalty for 9b and 9d, then judge the rest of that sheep. Pen judges cannot impose a whole point penalty.

9. PEN PENALTIES

- (a) (i) Wool left on sheep – one matchbox in size equals one penalty stroke.
(ii) Skin cuts – one penalty stroke per 30mm (1¼”) depending on width of cut and position on sheep.
(iii) Two penalty strokes per full sock left on, unless prior arrangements by committee and referee. (see 2l)
- (b) Referee must be called and must decide the penalty (see 8e) if the competitor
(i) Cuts a teat and impairs the breeding ability of a ewe.
(ii) Seriously damages the pizzle on a wether.
(iii) Cuts a sheep to the extent that it requires surgical attention.
For each infringement this penalty will be up to a maximum of 10 whole points added to his calculated score. (The referee may require a minor cut to be stitched without imposing the above penalty).
- (c) Each competitor’s pen points will be calculated by:
(i) Single judging – Divide total number of penalty strokes by number of sheep.
(ii) More than one judge judging each sheep – Divide total penalty strokes by number of judges, then divide by number of sheep.
- (d) A competitor will be disqualified:
(i) If he severs a hamstring.
(ii) For a major cut (e.g. major artery).
(iii) Also see 2x, 4e, 5e, & 8e.

10. THE TIMEKEEPERS

- (a) Each competitor will have a separate timekeeper with a stopwatch or an approved self-timing device.
- (b) Competitor’s time will be taken from the word ‘Go’ until he has –
(i) Completed his final sheep and switched off his handpiece, or in the case of hand shears, replaced the shears in the water tin.
(ii) Pushed the button on self-timing device.
- (c) One spare stopwatch and timekeeper will be available to time any stoppages and the stoppage time will be deducted from the competitor’s total time.

11. TIME PENALTIES

1 point for each 20 seconds.

Multiply minutes by 3. Multiple seconds by 5 and move decimal point two places or divide by 20.

Organising committee may elect to vary the time penalty for events provided all competitors and scorers are informed of the change prior to the event. (Exception – National Championships – Permission to vary must be applied for and granted at the previous SSAA AGM).

12. THE WINNER

- (a) The eventual winner will have the lowest combination of time points, board quality points and pen quality points.
- (b) In the event of a tie, the competitor with the lowest score for board and pen will take precedence. If there is still a tie, the competitor with the lowest pen score will take precedence. If there is still a tie, the competitor with the lowest board score will take precedence.

13. DISPUTES COMMITTEE

- (a) A disputes committee will be appointed and the members names displayed during the competition. This committee will include the referee, another experienced judge, and an experienced committee member with knowledge of the rules.
- (b) In the event of a dispute or appeal that relates in any way to the procedure adopted for the judging or staging of the event, the matter will be handled expeditiously by the Disputes Committee.
- (c) A person seeking clarification under 4f may request the referee to raise the matter with the Disputes Committee.
- (d) An appeal to the Disputes Committee
 - (i) may be required in writing;
 - (ii) will be accompanied by a \$20 fee;
 - (iii) must be made within 10 minutes of becoming aware of the need for such appeal.
- (e) Person/s appealing may speak to their appeal before the Disputes Committee. Other persons will not enter discussion unless requested or invited to do so by referee.
- (f) In all cases, and in any matters not covered by the rules, the decision of the Disputes Committee will be final and binding on competitors.
- (g) If appeal is upheld, \$20 fee will be refunded.

14. NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

- (a) To be eligible to represent Australia, a competitor must be a resident of Australia and must have Australian citizenship prior to the National Championships.
- (b) Competitors must provide proof of Australian citizenship if requested by a SSAA member committee, the Disputes Committee or National Executive.
- (c) Competitors in the National Championships should be prepared to represent Australia in Australia and/or overseas, and, as a State or Australian team member, must agree to meet any reasonable sponsorship obligation or request.
- (d) A competitor has the right to contest the National final, but if unavailable to represent Australia, his position in the team will go to the next highest competitor. i.e. a competitor may win the National Title but not proceed to team membership.
- (e) Competitors seeking to represent Australia after having represented another country, (who would qualify under 14a above), must also have completed a three year 'stand down' period commencing from the date they last represented that other country.

15. ADDITIONAL RULES

- (a) All competitions must be equipped with first aid kit, needle, thread and antiseptic.
- (b) Each competitor's points will be calculated and recorded regardless of whether he has scored insufficient quality points or has a slow time,
- (c) Where a prize is given for the best shorn pen of sheep then the pen must have been shorn within a reasonable time as decided by the referee.
- (d) Organising committees should endeavour to provide a clock that is visible to competitors and spectators.
- (e) An organising committee may formulate additional rules to apply to a specific event (e.g. local prize, sheep mix in a multi-breed event, novelty event, rules re entry (see 1a). Any such rules shall not override rules 1-16 and may only be additional to these rules.

16. CHANGING OF RULES

Application to change a particular SSAA General Shearing Rule must be made in the form of a motion for discussion and decision at a SSAA general meeting.