

RLF Course: General Description

The course is laid out in a 20-acre field which slopes upwards to a crest of a ridge. The perimeter is fenced with box wire field fencing, 40" high. Physical description of course obstacles and features are listed below.

There are several draws for the sheep on this course. In general, this course tests the ability of the Handler and dog to read and react to the impact these draws have on the sheep so that the flock movement, grazing, gathering, holding, and sorting tasks can be completed efficiently.

Orange cones, where specified, will mark the *inside* of all turns on the course. Blue cones will mark the Handler's Gather post for all levels; "Road" and "Graze" edges on the course are marked by furrows. Graze corners are marked with orange cones. Hold/halt zones are marked with cones on both sides of the road.

Water should be available on the course for the dogs and in the pens for the sheep.

Except if otherwise specified by the judge, movement on the course is generally in the counter-clockwise direction on the road around the field.

The sheep should move steadily and quietly along the roads, without rushing, lagging, or weaving. **The combination of shortest paths traveled on line, on course, and smoothest, quietest movement of sheep, dog, and Handler should receive the highest score. The dog should do most of the work (except for the opening and closing of pen gates).**

Except where otherwise specified in these rules, Handler and dog may take any position necessary relative to the flock.

If more than half the flock is 150 feet (50 yards) off course for longer than 5 minutes, if the sheep are being repeatedly harassed by the dog, or if the dog is working out of control without any chance of the Handler regaining control, then the run should be terminated.

For **Level I**, the judge may request an experienced dog and stock handler positioned on the ridge to help prevent sheep from bolting to the top of the ridge, one of the draws.

No. of sheep per RLF run: 25 minimum.

The time limits and total approximate distances the sheep travel for each course:

Level I: 20 minutes, 580 yards

Level II: 30 minutes, 680 yards

Level III: 35 minutes, 925 yards (sheep), (plus an extra 245 yards for person and dog to hike back to retrieve the remaining sheep in the Holding Pen Option).

Ties within classes & courses will be broken on:

- 1) Highest score for **Graze**
- 2) Highest score for **Exit From Take Pen**

Physical Description of Course Obstacles and Features:

Blue cone-- The judge or judge’s assistant should carry/move a **blue cone** to mark the **Handler’s Post** for the **Gather** at a **Graze exit**.

Orange cones and yellow-green cones will be used as specified.

Runs will be disqualified:

- 1. if a Take Pen Gate is not secured and closed by the Handler at any Re-Pen or when leaving the Holding Pen;***
- 2. if the Handler enters the Holding Pen during a Sort;***
- 3. or if any sheep remain unpenned in their specified pens by the end of the run.***
- 4. Sheep are harassed or are running amuck.***

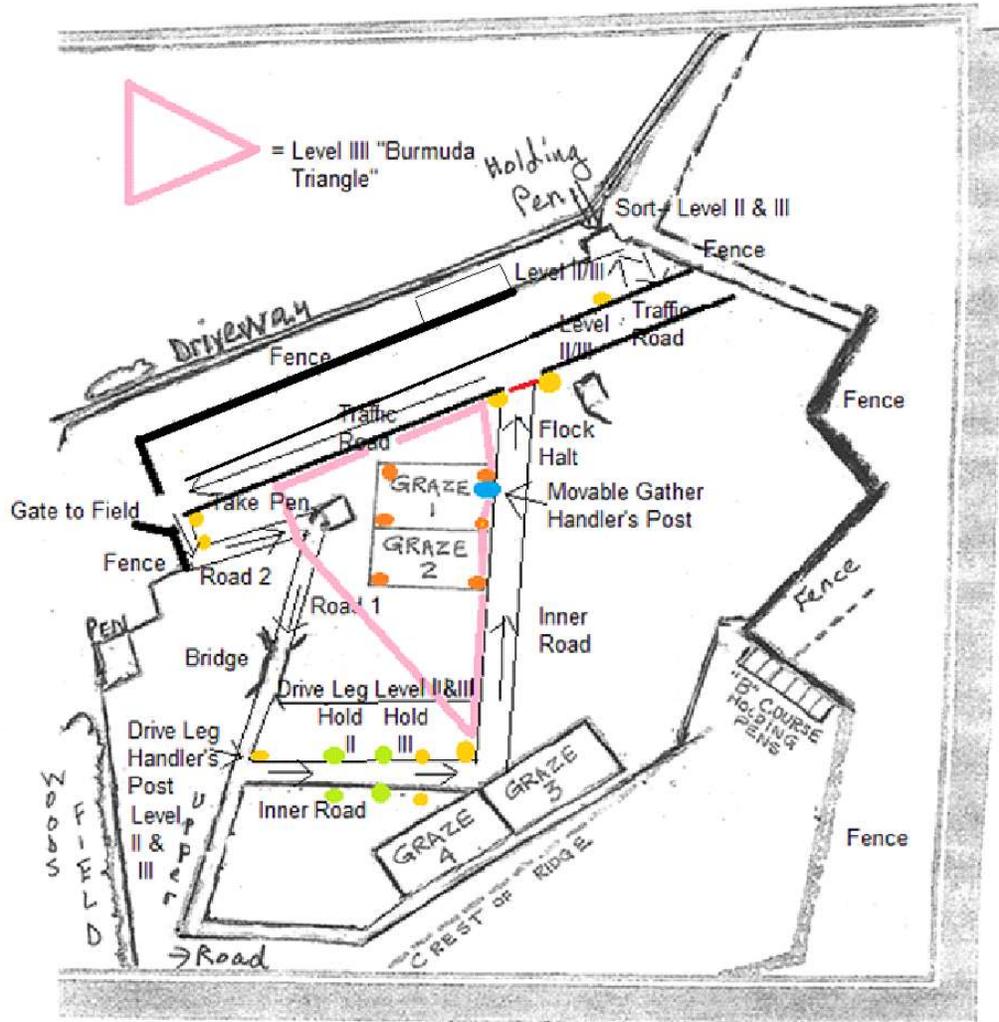
OBSTACLE DESCRIPTIONS:

Take Pen:	32 ft. x 32 ft., fencing 40 inches high, 12-foot gate ("Take Pen" in diagram).
Road 1:	12 ft. wide; edges marked by furrows, Pen to Inner Road = 182 feet.
Bridge-Footbath:	bridge panels approximately 12 ft. wide, 18 ft. long, field floor
Inner Road:	12 ft. wide; edges marked by furrows, total length = 740 feet; sub-length from Road 1 to sharp angle turn = 244 feet.
Traffic Road:	18 ft. wide; edges marked by furrows, total length = 450 feet.
Road 2:	12 ft. wide, edges marked by fence and furrow, and goes back to Take Pen. Road 2 from End of Traffic Road to Take Pen = 146 feet.
Holding Pen:	16 feet x 16 feet with a 12 foot gate and 48 inch tall fencing.
Sort Sheep: (II and III)	10 sheep sorted, including at least 3 marked sheep (10 sheep are marked).

SCORING for RLF

<u>Name of Exercise</u>	<u>RLF I</u>	<u>RLF II</u>	<u>RLF III</u>
1. <u>Exit from Take Pen</u>	10	10	10
2. Before Graze: <u>Fetch/Drive & Bridge-Footbath (including II & III: Drive Leg & Hold)</u>	20	20	20
3. <u>Graze (5 min.)</u>	20	20	20
4. <u>Gather</u>	10	10	10
5. After Gather: <u>Fetch/Drive & Flock Halt</u>	20	15	15
6. <u>Sort</u>	--	5	5
7. <u>Gamblers Option "Holding Pen" or "Outrun"</u>	--	--	10
8. <u>Re-Pen (Both 1st & 2nd times for Level III)</u>	10	10	10
Total Possible Points:	90	90	100
Minimum Points to quality (70%)	63	63	70
Maximum Time of Run (minutes):	20 min.	30 min.	35 min.
Length of Course:	580 yds.	680 yds.	925-1170yds.

RLF Course Diagram:



RLF Step-by-Step Description

**see “RLF Course: General Description” (above) for dimensions, maximum times, distances, flock size, and description of obstacles and features.*

1. Exit from Take Pen

At the Handler’s discretion, the Take Pen gate can remain in an open or closed position after the Exit from the Take Pen. Level I Handler can enter the take pen with or without dog. Level II & III Handler cannot enter the Take Pen without penalty.

2. Fetch/Drive and Bridge-Footbath Level I; plus Drive Leg, Level II & III

The flock travels along **Road 1** in a counter-clockwise direction around field, traveling through the **Bridge-Footbath**.

Bridge-Footbath: Only flock must go through the **Bridge-Footbath**. Handler and dog can go around or through.

After Bridge-Footbath:

Level I: Flock continues onto the **Inner Road**, making left turns (at orange cones), and goes to the assigned **Graze** area. The **Graze** area is **Graze 1, 2, 3, or 4** (at judge’s discretion).

Level II Drive Leg: Flock continues onto the **Inner Road**. The **Handler’s Post (orange corner cone along edge of Inner Road)** marks the beginning of a **60-foot drive leg** along the **Inner Road for Level II**. The Handler must remain on the road behind the **Handler’s post** until the flock passes the first **2 yellow-green cones**, marking the end of the drive leg.

Level II Hold: Dog will then hold the flock in the area marked by the **4 yellow-green cones on the Inner Road**, until the Handler reaches and/or passes the Hold area and the flock. Flock then continues on Inner Road to assigned **Graze** area.

Level III Drive Leg: Flock continues onto the **Inner Road**. The **Handler’s Post (orange cone at corner of Road 1 and the Inner Road)** marks the beginning of a **120-foot drive leg** along the **Inner Road**. The Handler must remain on the road behind the **Handler’s post** until the flock passes the second set of **2 yellow-green cones**, marking the end of the drive leg.

Level III Hold: Dog will then hold the flock in the area marked by the **2 yellow-green cones and 2 orange cones**, until the Handler reaches and/or passes this Hold area and the flock. Flock then continues on Inner Road to assigned **Graze** area.

3. **Graze**

Handler may lead the flock into the **Graze** area and dog and Handler may move anywhere in or out of the **Graze** area at any time. Time for the **Graze** is **5 minutes**. At the **Graze**, the dog may move, stand, sit, or lie down or go to water. Commands may be given, but the calmest picture with sheep grazing in graze should receive highest score. A dog allowing or causing the sheep to leave the graze pre-maturely should be penalized depending on the number that cross a border, each occurrence.

4. **Gather**

The Handler and dog must first go to the **blue cone (placed by the judge so that the distances required by AHBA rules for the Gather can be achieved)** marking the **Handler’s Post**. The exercise begins when the dog and Handler are both within 5 feet of the Handler’s Post and the judge says “Gather.” The Gather ends when the flock has gone counter-clockwise around the post and is back on the road.

Level I: The flock can be in the graze as close as **60 feet (20 yards)** to the Handler’s Post at the start of the Gather for **HRD I**. The Handler may take a **position as close as 15 feet to the flock** before the dog starts the **Gather**.

If the flock is more than 60 feet away, the dog then may be taken to a point *roughly 60 feet from the flock*, and the Handler may take a **position as close as 15 feet to the flock** before the dog starts the **Gather**. (As points of reference, the Grazes 1-4 are 75 feet wide by 150 feet long.)

Level II: The handler and dog both should be **at least 60 feet** from the flock at the start of the **Gather**. (The Grazes 1-4 are 75 feet wide by 150 feet long.)

Level III: The handler and dog should be **at least 120 feet** from the flock at the start of the **Gather**. (The Grazes 1-4 are 75 feet wide by 150 feet long.)

5. **Fetch/Drive and Flock Halt (and 6.Sort - Level II & III and 7. Gambler’s Option-III)**

Flock continues traveling in counter-clockwise direction around field on **Inner Road** until reaching “T” intersection with **Traffic Road**, where flock is halted.

Flock Halt-- At the T-Intersection of **Inner Road** with the **Traffic Road (marked by orange cones)**, dog halts forward progress of flock by standing in front of flock and holding it while the Handler moves away from flock (at least 10 ft.) to “look” for traffic on the **Traffic Road**. Dog should be positioned somewhere on same side of the course as the Flock Halt orange cones (**During flock halt, the dog is to be penalized if dog moves into or crosses over the Traffic Road**). Handler returns to the flock. After the Flock Halt, the movement of the flock continues.

Level I: The flock makes a left turn directly onto the **Traffic Road**. The flock must stay on the **Traffic Road to the end**, then turn left to **Road 2** along fence, then turn left again at the orange cone, and return to the **Take Pen** for the **Re-Pen**.

Level I Re-Pen Re-pen scoring starts 30 feet from Take Pen. If the Handler elected to close the Take Pen gate at the beginning of the run, the dog will hold the flock quietly and in a stationary position away from the gate so the Handler can open the gate smoothly. If the Handler chose to leave the Take Pen gate open at the beginning of the run, then the flock can return directly into the **Take Pen**. The run is complete when all the sheep are inside the pen and the Take Pen gate is closed.

Level II & III after Flock Halt: The flock makes a **right turn** onto the **Traffic Road**. The Handler and flock then leave the **Traffic Road** by turning counter-clockwise around the orange cone on their left and head towards the **Holding Pen** gate.

- 6. **Level II & III Sort:** Sort starts when the Handler first opens the Holding Pen gate. Sheep can be sorted into or out of the Holding Pen. Dog can go into the pen, but Handler cannot. Ten sheep are marked. Ten sheep are sorted out of pen, including at least 3 marked sheep. **Sort** is over when the 10 sorted sheep re-enter the **Traffic Road, going clockwise around the orange cone**, with the remaining sheep staying in the **Holding Pen**.

HRD II & III After Sort: The 10 sheep stay on the **Traffic Road to the end**, then turn left to **Road 2** along fence, **then turn left again at the orange cone, and return to the Take Pen** for the **Re-Pen**.

- 8. **Level II & III-- 10 Sheep Re-Pen:** Re-Pen scoring starts 30 feet from Take Pen. If the Handler elected to close the Take Pen gate at the beginning of the run, the dog will hold the flock quietly and in a stationary position away from the gate so the Handler can open the gate smoothly. If the Handler chose to leave the Take Pen gate open at the beginning of the run, then the flock can return directly into the **Take Pen**. Level II is completed when 10 sheep are in the Take Pen with the gate closed. For Level II and III, dog and Handler are not allowed in Take Pen without penalty. Level III is now ready to start the "Gambler's Option."

7. Level III “Gamblers” Option-- Holding Pen or Outrun (2nd Task Fetch/Drive)

This exercise begins after the Re-pen of the 10 sorted sheep. It ends when the remainder sheep are within 30 feet of the **Take Pen Gate**. After fastening the gate of the Take Pen, the Handler will declare whether he/she opts for the “**Holding Pen**” or “**Outrun**” option.

“Holding Pen Option”

1. The Handler and dog return to the Holding Pen so that the Handler can open the gate and allow the sheep to come out. The Handler may not go into the Holding Pen.
2. The Holding Pen gate is re-fastened by the Handler while the dog holds the sheep.
3. Sheep then are taken back to the Traffic Road, going clockwise around the orange cone in front of the Holding Pen. The flock must stay on the **Traffic Road to the end**, then turn left to **Road 2** along fence, **left again at orange cone**, and back to the **Take Pen**, to **Re-Pen**. Level III is completed with all sheep in the Take Pen with the gate closed.

“Outrun Option”

1. As soon as this option is chosen and signaled by the Handler, the course director or livestock handler will release the remainder sheep from the Holding Pen and secure the closed gate.
2. The Handler and dog can move to any position in the portion of the field in a “**Bermuda Triangle**” bound by inner portion of: 1.) the Traffic Road, 2.) the Inner Road portion running north-south on the field, and outer portion of 3.) Road 1 in front of Take Pen. The sheep must be a minimum of 120 feet away from the Handler and/or dog at the start of the dog’s outrun. The sheep do not have to be in sight. During the outrun/lift/fetch, the Handler can move anywhere within the “Bermuda Triangle.” The dog starts in the Bermuda Triangle and can move anywhere on the field to get to the sheep. The Handler’s objective is to move the sheep on the shortest line back to the Take Pen gate.

8. Level III Final Re-Pen

Scoring starts 30 feet from the Take Pen gate. Level III scoring includes both re-pens. On the final Re-pen, it is not necessary for the dog to hold the sheep away from the Take Pen gate before re-penning, but sheep should not crowd Handler or gate. Level III is completed with all sheep in the Take Pen when the Take Pen gate is closed. Level III dog and Handler are not allowed in the Take Pen without penalty.

American Herding Breed Association
Ranch Large Flock

(Maximum Times: I— 20 min. II—30 min. – II; III—35 min.) Time: _____

Breed _____ Entry No. _____

Registered Name _____

Sponsor _____ Location _____

RLF I _____ RLF II _____ RLF III _____
_____ Sheep _____ Ducks _____ Goats _____ Cattle (provide no.) _____ Other (provide type and number)

Table with 4 columns: Task, Possible Score, Deductions, Points Deducted. Rows include: 1. Exit from Take Pen (10), 2. Fetch/Drive & Bridge-Footbath (20), 3. Graze (5 Minutes) (20), 4. Gather (10), 5. a. Fetch/Drive to Flock Halt; b. Flock Halt; c. Fetch/Drive to Re-Pen (20-I; 15-II&III), 6. Sort -1st Task (Excludes Level I) (5- only II&III), 7. 'Gamblers' 2nd Task (Outrun/Hold Pen) (10- only III), 8. Re-Pen (Both 1st and 2nd re-pens for III) (10). Total Deducted: _____

SCORE: (Maximum—90 pts – I&II; 100 pts – III) TOTAL EARNED: _____

(70% to qualify: minimum score of 63 pts for I & II; 70 pts for III) Q _____ NQ _____

COMMENTS: _____

Judge's signature _____ Date _____