

# USDAA® Official Rules & Regulations – Amendments effective January 1, 2009

The following rule changes related to equipment specifications for construction and performance have been approved effective January 1, 2009, unless otherwise specified.

- The Long Jump shall have new specifications as follows:

### Championship Program

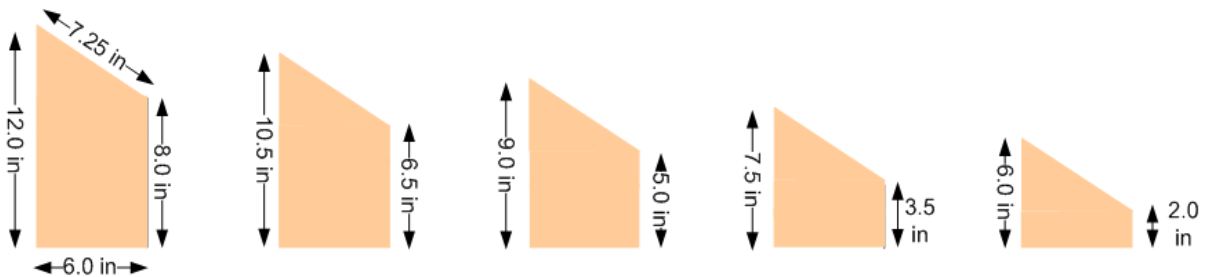
Jumping Height	# of Planks	Height at Back Edge of Plank	Overall Span
12"	2	7 ½", 6"	20"
16"	3	9", 7 ½", 6"	36"
22"	4	10 ½", 9", 7 ½", 6"	48"
26"	5	12", 10 ½", 9", 7 ½", 6"	60"

### Performance Program

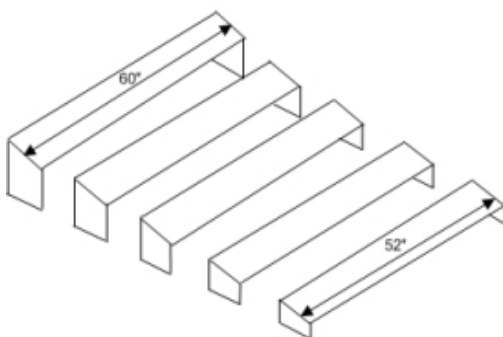
Jumping Height	# of Planks	Height at Back Edge of Plank	Overall Span
8"	1*	7 ½"	6" (app)
12"	2	7 ½", 6"	24"
16"	3	9", 7 ½", 6"	36"
22"	4	10 ½", 9", 7 ½", 6"	48"

\*Note that 7 ½" board is used instead of the lower 6" board when only one board is used.

All planks shall be 7¼" wide and measure in length between 36" and 60", have a pitch measuring approximately 33 degrees from the plane parallel to the ground, resulting in a 4" drop in height on each plank from back to front. See diagram below for visual construction specifications for each unit at each height. The planks shall be equally spaced over the span for each jump height.



*It is recommended that side supports exceed 6.0 inches in width in order to flare out (not shown) for stability. Boards should be evenly spaced from the first board to the last board.*



*The length of each long jump element may be slightly less in length than the previous higher element in order to permit nesting for storage.*

*Max Width: 60"; Min. width: 36".  
(Diagram shown is an example only.)*

*[This rule was adopted to create a more dynamic jump by conforming the long jump to specifications used historically in the sport and in current use overseas. The effect is a jump that has the appearance of a wall to the dog on approach, with space between planks not being visible on initial approach in the normal flow of the course, and with slightly greater height than previous regulations.]*

- A tire should be firmly tethered into a sturdy frame that will not topple with the potential torque that might be created should a dog hit a tire at high speed. Some “give” is recommended but “bungees” or similar highly pliable tethers that may permit the dog to “carry the tire” or create “sling-shot” effect are strongly discouraged. Should a tire be constructed to temporarily break apart upon contact by the dog, the pull-force necessary to break the tire must meet specifications to be announced, and all parts of the tire shall remain suspended within the frame in such a manner as to not create risk of injury to the dog, The Board anticipates an announcement by year-end for the specifications for pull-force and whether an automatic reset is permitted, along with judging criteria when such a tire is used. When a break-apart tire is utilized, the tire jump as a whole must meet all other specifications for the tire jump.

*[This rule is to address safety concerns relative to the tire. The present use of bungees has indicated a tendency to interject added risk by creating additional torque by the dog carrying the tire with them should their rear legs not fully clear the height, increasing the stress on the frame, or by creating a sling-shot effect flipping the dog or catapulting them back. A more rigid tether should permit the dog to slide through without the risk of additional forces. In the case of a breakaway tire, the same would be true, and the pull force required to break a tire could be increased if the force of impact is absorbed by the tethers.]*

- Weave pole spacing shall be set at 21” (subject to specified tolerance in Appendix A), when measured center of one pole to center of the next. Further, when poles are taped, tape must be firmly attached to the poles and not be frayed or create drag if the dog should make contact with the pole while weaving.

*[The purpose of this rule is to conform weave pole spacing to the standard utilized by most USDAA groups under the present regulations, which are intended to focus on demonstration of a dog’s suppleness while weaving the line of poles; while speed is always an element in performance, it is not the goal of the weave poles to demonstrate speed.]*

- Jump cup holders/supports shall not protrude more than 2” from their mount on the wing and shall not have any sharp edges.

*[This rule is to recognize the wide variety in design of jump cups and to reduce the risk of a dog being cut or bruised by jump cup supports.]*

- The See-Saw shall be of sufficient thickness and structural integrity such that it will not flex or torque excessively when it hits the ground. Either the base or other visual indication of the pivot point must be visible to the dog when approaching the ramp from the front.

*[This rule is to draw attention to maintaining the structural integrity of the plank, so that added torque that may arise from a non-rigid plank or base does not increase the likelihood of injury to a dog.]*

- Granulated rubber surface materials may be used on contact obstacles; matting and carpeting remain unacceptable.

*[A variety of new materials have become available in recent years that appear to provide the durability and stability desired on ramps. Matting and carpeting, however, are still prohibited due to the tendency of such materials to shred or fray. ]*

- The wishing well is removed from the rule book.

*[The wishing well has not be used in more than ten years due to design and function issues for different heights of dogs. It originally was a specialty jump in England used when only one jump height existed, but its adaptability to a variety of heights made it impractical. The jump could still be utilized under the regulations of "Other Jumps and Hurdles", but must clearly conform to these provisions. ]*

- The viaduct is to be added to the rule book with specifications. The width of the main unit may not exceed 8". The top portion must consist of displaceable, lightweight blocks (rounded in appearance) – or- a jump bar suspended above the main section. Two arches (one required) to be cutout in the central base unit to simulate a viaduct in the classical style.

*[The viaduct has been a standard jump in use throughout Great Britain and other parts of Europe. It adds to the color and flavor of a course presentation, and is much like a wall jump, which is also permissible. The primary difference between the two being the absence of arches through the wall.]*

- Clubs are encouraged to place a visual indicator attached either to the side of the A-frame or the supporting chain to assist in distinguishing the height setting of the A-frame from a distance. As previously announced, the A-frame shall be set at angle of no more than 99 degrees for dogs jumping 22" and 26", and no less than 104" for dogs jumping 12" and 16", and for all dogs in the Performance Program.

*[It is determined that the angle (i.e., slope) determines the degree of force upon the dog when engaging the ramps, and therefore the critical factor in setting the A-frame for performance to assure a consistent measure for the A-frame. It should be noted that other factors related to other specifications for the style of construction can impact the height when the angle is accurately set. Depending on the actual length of these measures (length of ramps, pointed or flat top), it should be noted that the height of the A-frame could vary as much as five or six inches, when the A-frame is properly set compared to another of different design. Therefore it is important the angle be measured accurately, and that marks be place on the sides of the A-frame to show a straight line when the A-frame is set at the appropriate angles in order that judges and competitors can determine the A-frame is at the correct setting. See separate [White Paper](#) for diagrams and clarifications.]*

- Spread jumps - spread jumps need to be winged and the wing needs to be generally in line with the back bar. Bar width must be 5' in length.

*[This rule was adopted to enhance the visibility of a spread hurdle by providing more consistent appearance and providing a consistent span (within permissible tolerance as set forth in Appendix A) between wings on spread hurdles.]*

# RULES & REGULATIONS ADDENDUMS

## Performance Program Developments for 2008

Posted Date: January 7, 2008

*A recap of the rule changes impacting the Performance Program*

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In a year-end review, the Board has postponed the inclusion of Relay qualifications in the *Performance Dog I, II and III* titles (PD1, PD2 & PD3) to January 1, 2009. In implementing the relay titling classes in 2007, the Board had previously announced in November 2006, that inclusion of relay qualifications in the PD1, PD2 and PD3 title requirements would be implemented January 1, 2008, subject to further review. Similarly, tournament qualification inclusion in the *Accomplished Performance Dog* title will be postponed until January 1, 2009.

The postponement comes as the Board received various reports throughout the year from smaller shows in some areas of the country that there had been difficulties with competitors securing pairs partners at certain levels in the Performance Pairs classes. The Board views that further growth in the Performance Program in 2008 will see a resolve of these difficulties, citing that this was not unlike issues encountered in the early years of agility when few people were in the Masters or Advanced levels of what is called now the Championship Program.

Also, as announced earlier in 2007, beginning in 2008, the Lifetime Achievement Award will be calculated without regard to which program a qualification has been earned. Fittingly, the Board noted that a person who has competed in the Performance Program, Championship Program, or crossed between programs during their career should receive USDAA recognition for the collective results throughout their competitive career, regardless of the composition of results within a particular program. Additional designations may be applied based upon that composition, but the basic award itself should be program-neutral.

In all cases, as in previous changes, any qualifications earned become a part of a competitor's permanent record, and such qualifications will be considered at such time a new titling requirement may become effective. For example, 2007 qualifications in Performance tournaments will count toward the Lifetime Achievement award under its new formula beginning January 1, 2008.

Further, because the effective dates of implementation of the relay and tournament requirements in the versatility titles - Performance Dog I, Performance Dog II, Performance Dog III, and Accomplished Performance Dog - are being postponed for another full year to 2009, *there will be no grandfathering of the old titling requirements for these awards once the new regulations become effective.* It is important that competitors be forward looking in setting their goals for the coming year, and give due consideration to the new requirements in setting realistic expectations in pursuit of qualifications in the coming year.

**ORIGINAL POST DATE MARCH 27, 2007**

## **USDAA Board Announcements from Annual Meeting Re-posted June 11**

Posted Date: March 27, 2007

*Included is information about earning IFCS points, change to the A-frame, and other resolutions from annual Board meeting following a comprehensive review of Programs.*

*For the purposes of this document, only information concerning rules changes will be presented.*

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USDAA has announced the following key resolutions from a wide array of topics discussed at the Board's annual meeting:

### **A-Frame Standards**

The Board has revised the regulations for the A-frame, setting the height in the Championship Program for large dogs at no less than 5'9" and no more than 5'11", and for small dogs and all dogs in the Performance Program, no less than 5'5" and no more than 5'7". The final regulations will stipulate the range of angles in order that the standard will be more accurately specified and not be impacted by different construction standards. (In adopting the change, it was noted that the IFCS standard may be changing to 5'11", or 180cm, while remaining at 170cm for small dogs).

*(Note that this announcement was modified on March 9, 2007; the range for the small dogs was intended to be 5'5" to 5'7" instead of 5'3" to 5'5". The top of each range represents the IFCS international standard.)*

*On March 22nd, the judges were provided the following information in regard to setting the A-frame heights:*

The sidewalls shall be securely hinged together on one end such that when standing upright in the "A-Frame" position, it can be adjusted such that the angle at the apex can be set at a 99 degree angle for dogs competing in the Championship Program at 22" and 26" heights, and at a 104 degree angle for all other dogs competing in the Championship Program and all dogs in the Performance Programs. These angles approximate 5'10" and 5'6" in elevation when measured on a level surface. The angle and height of the A-Frame shall not vary by more than one degree, or 1" from these standards. Because of minor variations in construction standards and terrain upon which the A-frame is utilized, the angle measurement is to be considered the more reliable measurement.

Also, note that in the Junior Handler Program, the Senior class will utilize a 5'10" A-frame, instead of a 6'0" A-frame.

*The effective date is March 30, 2007.*

### **Gamblers Regulations**

The time standards for the "gamble" or "joker" is changed to read twelve (12) seconds to twenty (20) seconds in the Championship Program. The regulations presently stipulate a range of ten (10) to twenty (20) seconds.

*The effective date is March 30, 2007.*

### **Official Language and Other Topics**

The official text for the above changes, as well as announcements on other topics will be forthcoming over the next couple of months.

Said USDAA President Kenneth Tatsch, "We had one of the most comprehensive review sessions the Board has ever had, and it was highly productive. One major item not yet complete that I believe will be greeted favorably is USDAA's course design guidelines policy statement, which will help clarify the standards between levels for all classes."

The new policy statement will not be a 1-2-3 of course design, but will clearly help competitors and judges alike identify course difficulty. It has taken more than a year to get the extensive document ready for publishing, and it is anticipated that this new directive will be released in the next couple of months, along with the announcement of a few other lesser resolutions.

**NOVEMBER 29, 2006**

## **Performance Program Expands with Relay Titles in 2007**

Posted Date: November 29, 2006

*In addition to adoption of Speed Jumping and Versatility Pairs tournaments for 2007, Performance Relay becomes a title qualification class as of January 1, 2007*

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Effective January 1, 2007, Performance Relay will be held as a title qualifying class. This means that pairs relay titles will be offered at each level - Performance Relay I, Performance Relay II and Performance Relay III; however, performance relay qualifications will not be a requirement for earning the Performance Dog I (PDI), Performance Dog II (PDII) or Performance Dog III (PDIII) versatility titles until January 2008.

Even though performance versatility titles (i.e., PDI, PDII, PDIII) will not require a relay qualification until 2008, eligibility for entry and advancement in the performance relay classes may be determined based upon what versatility titles have been earned. For example, a PDI title makes one eligible for the Performance Relay II class, even though a Performance Relay Level I qualification is not required for earning the PDI title.

Crossing over from Championship to Performance programs works similarly - for example, if a dog has been awarded the AAD title, it is eligible for the Performance Relay Level III class. Also as for other specific class titles, a class title in the Championship Program makes one eligible for the next higher level in the Performance Program. For example, a Starters Relay title in the Championship Program will make one eligible for entry to the Performance Relay II class. Of course the competitor may still opt to run in Performance Relay I class unless they have earned a qualifying score in Performance Relay II or have earned the Performance Relay I title. This is consistent with current practice for the other title classes (i.e., standard, jumpers, gamblers & snooker).

As in the Championship Program relay classes, remember that two partner dogs must be in the same level and in the same height division (i.e., mini-division, which is 8" and 12", and open division, which is 16" and 22").

Performance Relay qualifications earned in 2007 will count toward Lifetime Achievement Awards and any future titles for which the qualification may be a requirement.

Any questions related to the implementation of the Performance Relay should contact the USDAA office at [info@usdaa.com](mailto:info@usdaa.com).