



**Upland Challenge Series
General Rules
2026-2027**

DOG OF THE YEAR: The top 6-point getters of the season and the winner of Match Play will be invited to DOY challenge. If a dog in the top 6 points wins match play, the dog in 7th points place will be invited to DOY run-off. Points will be earned based on competition entries for standard tournaments. For example, 36 dogs enter an event, 1st = 36, 2nd = 35, 3rd = 34 etc. Match play will be a 64 point event. \$5.00 from every entry from the entire season will be the purse for the DOY winner. Points will be earned in both singles and 2-dog doubles. Doubles, dogs will split the points. Winner takes all for DOY prize money. **Dog and Hunter must enter minimum of 3 UCS events that season.** A dog will earn points in the single highest placed finish in OPEN SINGLES if double entered, and both entries in doubles.

PUPPY OF THE YEAR: The top 6-point getters of the season will be invited to POY. Points again will be based off entry numbers. DOY and POY will be held Sunday of Match play. Points in puppy class will be earned in the single highest placed finish.

LADY OF THE YEAR: High point lady player will receive a High Point wooden flag in addition to a custom sterling bracelet.

Ladies Division: A division for ladies only will be offered at all events. Ladies division will be offered in top gun and will be one 4 bird set. Points will be awarded based on entries with a minimum of 5 points for first place.

Open Class Singles: Open class will be a two brace format ran in two separate fields for a combined score. The braces will be 3 planted chukar partridge per field, 10, 12, or 15 minute time limit per brace as declared by promoter. Hunter and or dog can enter this 2 times, same dog/hunter combination allowed on second entry. Fields will be cleared/swept after all runs.

Open Class 2 Dog Doubles: Open Class 2 dog doubles will be one brace, 2 hunters, 2 dogs. Hunters must maintain 30-yard maximum distance from each other. Hunters will be limited to the number of shells equal to the number of birds (ie 9 bird set, each hunter may carry 9 shells for a team total of 18). Hunters cannot share shells. Each hunter must receive one retrieve and must shoot once to receive full points. Pointing dogs must "back" on 5

established points to receive 45 additional points per. A whoa command may be used to hold backs and points once a "Natural point" is established.

*Hunter may enter 2 times, dog 2 times, must change an equation in each entry per division.

Puppy Class: Puppy Class will be an event for dogs under 24 months on **December 31, 2026**. Evidence of age should be readily available. Puppy class will be offered in top gun and will be one 4 bird set. A dog can double enter this event, a hunter may enter 4 times.

Hunter Class Singles: Hunter class will be a one brace event with the fastest time winning. The plant will be 4 Chukar partridge, Flushers and Pointers will compete against each other. 20 minute time limit. A dog and handler can double enter this event

Match Play Specifics: Match play will be a random draw and based on brackets of 8-128 dogs. In the case of a cancelation a "BYE" may be used. If you draw a "bye" you may choose to run your 3 bird plant regardless. Single elimination match play. In the case of a tie, see "ties" portion of rules. The set will be the same for each match. First dog in bracket from top to bottom will draw set card if cards are used. If all birds are not harvested in the run, judge will direct competitor to remove remaining bird(s) from field. In the case of the dog being too exhausted, judges will select another dog to clear field. Matches will be ran until one dog, the Champion is declared. Hunters are sequestered. Hunter and Dog must remain in blind at all times, family and companions as well. At no time will the competitor return to vehicle without judge or official.

When the 3rd bird has been worked and the clock is not stopped, hunter will be allowed 2 minutes to produce another bird before run will be considered full time. No smart watches or GPS will be allowed. No Heat dogs allowed in match play.

Open and Puppy Class scoring:

Find/Point (3 sec): 60 points

Harvested bird: 300 points

Retrieve to one pivot step: 90 points

Bump Penalty: -120 points

Trap Penalty: -150 points

Missed shot: 120 point deduction

Remaining time: 1 point per second

*No extra finds will be awarded

Hunter class scoring: Hunter class is exactly how it is played. Competitors will need to harvest 4 birds in the set boundaries. Hunter may not pick up a live bird from the ground, the only time a hand can touch a live bird is to remove from dogs mouth or pick up a dropped retrieve which was already in the dogs mouth. If bird is shot but not fully dispatched, this can be picked up if the dog does not choose to retrieve. No shell limit, no awarded points for retrieves, points, finds etc. Fastest to harvest 4 birds wins.

Hunter class additions: New player may be accompanied by a non-hunting mentor. Competitors who have received payment/purse money, or won any other large event are not eligible to compete. It will be the promoters discretion on whom is eligible to compete in hunter class. If player has won the UCS Hunter event previously they will no longer be eligible to play hunter class. **This is a class for beginning players.**

Pointing Dogs: To compete in the pointing class events. Dogs must be of the pointing dog standard breeds and or be recognized certified pointing retriever (CPR). The dog must declare at the first event participated that season if they will play pointing class or flushing. No dog may compete in both pointing and flushing class.

Ammunition: No ammunition larger than 2 3/4" for 12ga and 3" 20 ga. Shot size shall be no larger than 6 shot. Participant may carry more shells than allowed but will only be allowed to shoot specified amount for open classes. Shooting over your count will result in a DQ.

Boundaries: Fields will be marked with ribbon to show boundaries. Dogs may go out of bounds if "in pursuit" of a bird. Casting dog out of bounds is not allowed. Hunter and dog may go out of bounds if chasing a bird or retrieving a clearly wounded bird if in buffer zone and approved by judge.

Pointing class specifics:

Flushing birds: At no time will the hunter be allowed to make contact with ones hand to flush the bird. Gently flushing birds with foot is the only acceptable way to put birds to flight. After 3 honest attempts to flush the bird and said bird still will not fly, it will be deemed non-performing. Full credit will be offered and bird should be removed from the field by the hunter. Any hunter found purposely harming or stunting (IE stomping or standing on birds) birds will be disqualified.

Pointing the bird: The dog must show a natural 3 second point without any command or communication in any form. Hunter must silently raise hand to show a natural point. Once dog shows 3 second natural point, a whoa command may be given to help steady dog. Using the term BIRD, POINT, NAME, or any other spoken word is not acceptable until a natural point is established and deemed by the judge. Re-locating the dog to find nested bird is permissible after the point is established. Player may continue to walk during 3 second point if desired.

Pointing / Steady to wing, shot, and fall: If the pointing dog is steady to the wing, shot, and fall; the hunter may go to steady dog and release dog on dispatched bird with physical contact. That will be the new location of the retrieve location given that this is within general proximity of the original established point. Judges discretion will be final say on where retrieve will be taken from.

Bump: A bump is defined as a bird that is sent to flight by the action of the dog. A bump penalty of 120 points will be applied if the bird is acted on (IE shot at or harvested) without establishing a natural point.

Trap: No traps will be allowed in pointing class without penalty. A penalty of 150 points will be applied to final score for each trap. If a trap occurs, the bird must be put into vest/gamebag and will count as a bird harvested, shot fired. If a 3 second point is

established prior to the trap, the point will be awarded. Any contact with the dogs mouth can be declared a trap by the judge.

Additional Rules all classes:

Retrieves: All retrieves must be taken where the shot was taken from (see steady dog clarification). One pivot step is allowed to gain control of the bird. Bird may be picked up from ground as long as no more than a pivot step is taken. Any movement from shooting location will result in loss of retrieve points (45). In doubles play, both hunters must stop forward motion and stay still until bird has been retrieved. Dog may retrieve to either hunter. **Hunter may throw an natural object (ie, rock, stick, corn cob etc).** Not waterbottles, golfballs etc can be used. DQ will result if live shell is thrown.

Flushing class: Dog may trap all birds in set. If hunter chooses to use foot to assist bird to flight and shoot it that is acceptable, but dog must be working same bird/nest.

Stopping the Clock/Completing the run: Hunter must exit field and return to starting gate with set number of birds in their possession/game bag for that class. If a bird flies out of the gamebag walking out of the field or after the clock was stopped. Time will resume till the bird is back in the bag or possession.

Trapped bird flying out of game bag: If a trapped/harvested bird flies from the gamebag and must be shot, an extra shell will be added to the score.

Birds flying out of field: If planted bird flies from field after set and before the hunter and dog begin timed hunt, the bird must be re-stocked. If hunter and dog have began run and bird flies wild from field, this is considered bad luck.

Leashes: No Check cords will be allowed during competition. Dog must be on leash prior to leaving gate as well as immediately following the run. Please bring dog into heal and leash immediately after time has been called or expired. Any birds bumped after the clock has been stopped will not be replaced.

E-Collars: Electronic collars are allowed during competition.

Running during play: Running is not allowed. Judges will give one firm warning, the second time will result in 100 point deduction or DQ based on opinion of judge.

Dead Bird in Field: If a dead bird is found in the field, the judge will determine if this is a bird that was set with the intentions of that particular brace/run. If bird is warm, full credit will be applied for that harvest. If it is determined to not be from that set, no credit will be given.

Safety: A safety will be awarded any time an unsafe condition may arise. This includes low flying birds on dogs, judges, spectators, equipment, buildings, vehicles etc. Dog must come into heal and make physical contact with hunter after safety is called. Hunter must stop movement after calling safety. Safety must be cleared by a firm yes or no of judge.

Fences: If you shoot a bird that clearly had been dispatched on the other side of a fence. Hunter will call fence safety. If judge deems that the bird was missed, fence safety will not be awarded. Dog must once again come make physical contact with the stopped hunter before advancing to next bird or stopping the clock (last bird).

Heat Dogs: All dogs in season must run last. If hunters with female dogs agree that a heat dog can be ran before them, that must be cleared by tournament official. NO Heat dogs in Match play will be allowed.

Ties: In event of a tie (times and scores are exact) the tie-break will be decided by the first bird bagged time. In a two run format, the 2 first bird times will be totaled. In match play, first bird harvested is tie break. If tie still exists in match play, match will be replayed.

Running out of order: At times a judge or field marshal may ask to have a player run ahead of schedule to keep an event moving forward. All changes in schedule must be approved by a UCS official. If anyone purposely runs a dog out of order to gain an advantage this could result in a DQ. Switching dogs in 2 run braces to gain advantage will not be tolerated and also could result in a DQ.

Option Pot Money: If an option pot is offered, no options can be offered after the first run has started. Options will be paid in cash. Option pots will be paid 70/30. Option is only offered in Open and Puppy Classes.

Co-Sanctions: If an event is offering a Co-Sanction, your run must be declared prior to the start of the event. These options are paid above and beyond the UCS run price. Events that are approved to be co-sanctioned, must be advertised no less than 21 days prior.

Liability waivers: All hunters are required to sign liability waivers at every event.

Under the influence: Any hunter found to be or thought to be under the influence of any drug or alcohol will be immediately disqualified from that event.

Blaze Orange requirement: All hunter and judges must wear blaze orange vest or suitable attire showing large portion of hunter orange or pink

Good luck/bad luck: If a bird flies into your field when hunting and time is running, this is considered good luck. If a bird flies or runs out of the field while time is running, this is considered bad luck. If the actions of a bird setter cause more than 2 birds to fly into field due to accident and time has not started, this will be reviewed by tournament officials.

Clearing field due to injury: If a hunter or dog becomes injured and is not able to hunt the following will happen. If no birds were moved prior to injury, officials will remove 1 bird in 3 bird set, 2 birds in 4 and 5 bird set, and 3 birds in 6 bird set.

Un-sportsman like behavior: Any hunter acting negatively in any form of disrespect to any portion of the game will be disqualified on the spot. This includes any form of verbal or physical assault to the dog, judge, score keepers, partner, spectators etc. Any profane or aggressive language heard from gallery is not acceptable and is reason for disqualification. This will be strictly enforced. Promoter has power to ban player from event and UCS in general.

Designated shooter: A person may use a designated shooter if approved by the promotor. The individual requesting a designated shooter must have a condition that limits themselves from competing.

Mistreatment of dogs: Any person found to be harming or abusing a dog, either in run, at parking lot or anywhere surrounding an event will be disqualified by officials.

Judging from Gallery: The judge in the field is the only one that can judge and time the run. If a problem or conflict happens in the field that needs to be discussed. The judge, the field Marshall, and the tournament promoter will collectively determine the outcome of the mishap.

Cancellation or scratched runs: Any cancellation or scratched run within 36 hours tournament start will be responsible for 50% of the entry fee.

All Scoresheets must be signed off by judge and hunter at the completion of the run
All entries must be in and paid prior to start of tournament.