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**Disc Dog**

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## Introduction

We all agree with the fact when it comes to throwing a disc things are not so easy. But anyway, with some basic explanation and exchanging the secrets anyone can master the basics and in time also more complicated elements. This document represents my personal experience and knowledge gathered on seminars and as international judge.

## Terms

- Team – A human and his dog. In some cases (pairs) 2 humans and 1 dog.
- Handler – Human part of team
- Frisbee, Disc – round object made from plastic we throw to the dog
- Catch – A catch is made, when a dog successfully grab a disc in the air and has it under control. The disc should not touch the ground before the disc is under control (except with skip throws).
- Throw – throw of the disc is a motion to toss a disc from handler to his dog.
- Organization – is a formal business community, who set their own rules under which we should play disc dog.
- Round – Is a part of disc dog discipline, which is played from beginning to the end with the purpose to be judged by judges.
- Routine – is part or whole freestyle to be played for audience and is not necessary judged by judges.
- Segment – Segment is part of freestyle routine and is made from multiple elements
- Element – Element is part of segment or routine, made with different throws and tricks.
- Take – Take is, with difference from throw, a disc intended for the dog but does not leave handlers hand, before the dog takes the discs.
- Hyzer – Is the angle in which the disc is throws, where the part of the disc, which is held by handlers' hand, is higher from the ground then the part of opposite side of the disc.
- Anhyzer – Is the angle in which the disc is throws, where the part of the disc, which is held by handlers' hand, is closer from the ground then the part of opposite side of the disc.
- Clock – spinning of the disc in clock wise spin.
- Counter – spinning of the disc in counter clock wise spin.

## What is disc dog

Simplest explanation is very simple. We have a dog, a disc, a field, some pray drive and want to have some fun. Handler throws a disc to his dog and the dog runs and catches the disc. But in time your needs increase. It is not enough to just throw some discs, something is missing. The kick, the competitive part of you demands something more, demands to compare yourself with others and grow your abilities. Latest now is the time to visit one of our classes and get the proper introduction into disc dog world!

## What is freestyle

Probably one of the most interesting discipline in disc dog out there. A lot of work, trainings, ideas and consistency with your dog is needed to make a great looking freestyle routine. Together with your dog, you make a team which shows interesting dance show with discs. One round of freestyle is between 90 and 120s long were we use different throws, tricks and elements to satisfy the crowd and judges.

## Organizations, differences and similarities

Disc Dog is not part of FCI, that is why we don't need any special exams neither we need pedigree to play on any competitions. Within disc dog there are quiet some organizations, who managed their

own rules and offer competition under their roof. This is the reason why we have many European or world champions (USDDN world champion, Skyhoundz world champion...). Let's see some of the biggest and some differences between them:

- USDDN – offers very specific rules and explanations what will be judged. 7 elements, from which best 4 are scored are detailed described in rules. 1 round of FS is 2 minutes long and we can have up to 10 discs. Super Pro Toss & Fetch is 90s long but only best 5 throws are counted.
- GCDC – System that offers up to 2-3 round of freestyle (depends of length of whole competition) which are 90+90+60s long. We can have up to 6 disc, whole system is based on mathematical judging with predefined what to score how much.
- AWI – Simple rules allowing player to show much creativity with up to 9 discs.
- UFO – Rules that allow from us much creativity without much point deduction in case we don't succeed. We can use up to 7 discs.
- Skyhoundz – Can be a challenge to play a whole routine with 5 disc. Rules are simple, but putting together 90s routine with 5 discs demands great disc management.

## Throwing a disc

To learn how to properly throw a disc is definitely the biggest challenge every newbie faces. But always it this obstacle on handlers' side, their 4 legged companions is not important if we can or cannot throw a disc. They will run and chase a discs if we know how to throw or not. To learn throwing the discs the right way is not so hard if we know some of the basics characteristics of the disc, how to set up the throw and how to properly release the discs. Let's see some of basic grips we can use to throw a disc:

- Backhand – probably the most important and most used throw. We are holding a discs in our throwing hand, our thumb is on the upper side, other fingers on bottom. We are standing sideways to the direction with nice and easy stand, holding a disc in chest height on the opposite direction of the direction of throw. Weight is 90% on back leg. We toss a disc in straight line towards out target, with some hyzer and a snap of the wrist we send the discs towards the target. Remember always look at the target not the discs. This throw has clockwise spin.
- Side arm or Forehand – is the opposite of backhand, we throw a disc to the opposite direction. We are holding a disc the way, that our thumb is on the upper side, pointing and middle finger on the bottom the way, that middle finger is touching the edge and hand is turned upside, so the back of your hand is facing towards the ground. Keep the discs in waist height, holding arm in normal way, with 90° angle of your elbow. When throwing the discs remember to stop your hand and snap the wrist to give the discs enough rotation. Keep some hyzer when throwing the disc. This throw has counter clockwise spin!
- Overhand wrist flip – throw where we hold the disc with thumb under the disc and other fingers above the disc. We are holding the disc in shoulder height throwing it in thumb direction. Rotation is counter clockwise.
- Brush – This throw is in two parts. We rotate the disc with floater or an throw, where the disc has a lot of spin, then we brush the disc with any part of our body or another discs to give it direction. Rotation is clockwise.
- Thumber – We turn the hand around and put the disc so it is laying on our hand. Then we close the hand, leave the thumb on lower part and other finger on upper. We throw the disc by pushing it with our thumb. Rotation is counter clockwise.

- Staker – to throw a staker, we need to hold the edge of the disc like a pinch of salt. We hold the thumb on inner side and pointing and middle finger on outer side. We lay the disc on out arm and spin it away. The disc has clock wise rotation.
- Push pass – is the only throw where we, by definition, hold the pointing finger on the outer rim of the disc. We push the disc forward and spin it, by dragging the pointing finger on the rim. Disc has clockwise rotation.

### Flying physics

Unlike a ball, which is spherical and travels in an end over end motion, a disc becomes oriented in its flight path by spin. Maximum spin can be greatly enhanced by sharper snapping of the wrist just prior to release, along with a firm and correct grip on the disc. The disc spins in a gyroscopic motion. Therefore, the disc must be released at an angle to compensate for this automated gyroscopic flight adjustment once the disc is released. For simplicity in the beginning, let's say that you should always release the disc at a 45 degree angle with the part of the disc farthest from the tip of your nose pointed towards the ground.

There is yet another angle of release factor to be considered during the release of the disc. When releasing the disc with the "nose" up, the disc will climb and ultimately stall. Depending upon how much spin remains when the apex is reached, the disc will either come back to the thrower or fall off in the direction of the spin. When released with the nose down, and the "trailing edge" up, we see the disc flies straight into the ground with high velocity. If the disc is released with the lead shoulder down, and makes contact with the ground, the disc will skip back up into the air (we will also cover "skip" throws in a later chapter). If the trailing shoulder makes contact with the ground first, your disc will become a "roller". If the disc is thrown correctly, you will be rewarded with a perfect, tranquil, graceful, and sometimes even awe-inspiring flight path, which will be met at the precise moment by a very appreciative canine companion.

### »Clock« or »Counter«

The next aspect to understand is the direction of the spin of the disc once it is released. Depending upon whether the disc is spinning "clockwise" or "counter-clockwise" the disc will react with different results. A right hand thrown Backhand throw (the normal way you throw a Frisbee) is going to have what we call "clock" spin. This means that when the disc is released it is going to be spinning in the same direction as the hands on a clock – thus the "clock" nomenclature. A right hand thrown sidearm is going to have the opposite imparted spin on the disc then from when you throw a backhanded throw - "counter-clockwise". (Or in disc jargon "counter") It would be the exact opposite if you were a left-handed person.

You may be wondering why this is important to you as a canine competitor. The main reason is that when you start releasing different throws you then open your dog up to an entirely new way of catching the disc. If you throw a "clock" spin disc to your dog, they will be accustomed to the disc entering their mouth with the spin moving the disc across their face from left to right. They also know that the disc, especially with a lot of spin, is going to move their head from left to right to make the catch. Now, you throw them a "counter" disc and it is going to move from right to left across their face. Imagine the element of surprise that the dog is going to experience the first time you throw a counter spin disc to them.

### Basic Elements

There are many different formats and organizations in the sport and you will need to learn the rules specific to which one you will be competing in at your next competition. But I will outline some of the general overall guidelines. Some of the major organizations are the Skyhoundz, USDDN, UFO, AWI,

GCDC, etc. Like I said you will need to and I highly recommend study over the rules on the website of each of these organizations before attending one of their events. It will not only make you familiar with what is expected it might also give you an edge over your competition by knowing something that you might need to do or not need to know or do and it will help your overall personal scoring at the event to which you entered. In the USDDN format they also require you to do Four of Predetermined Seven Elements to be scored successfully. You will find out in many of the organizations that you already do most of these but if you compete in a USDDN event you need to check your routine beforehand to make sure you are doing these and the seven are.

### Over

Canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player, to catch a disc placed in flight.

### Vault

Canine leaps off player's body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight.

### Multiple

Segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession.

### Dog Catch

Player catches the dog with the disc in flight.

### Team Movement

Coordinating team movement, i.e. spin together, dog stall, weave under legs, etc.

### Passing

Consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line.

### Distance Movement

The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs' catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like.

When putting together the elements, all elements from same group count, not only the best ones. So more overs, vaults... do not mean higher score.

### Some of the most used tricks

Freestyle is much more than just jumping and vaulting. While some jumps are ok and looks save, a good discdogger always thinks about safety of his canine companion. There are a lot of tricks and elements that we can include in our routine and are perfectly safe also for younger, older or heavier dogs. Let's see some of most common tricks in freestyle:

- **Around** – most common trick, also used in distance events, to send the dog around us and run forward
- **Pendulum** - Go Arounds clockwise then counter clockwise – ending with a leaping catch to the right and left of the handler
- **Strong Flip** – dog jumps in flip to his strong side – circular movement – to catch a disc.
- **Weak Flip** – dog jumps in flip to his weak side – circular movement – to catch a disc.
- **Bounce** – The dog flips from the handlers body to catch a disc
- **Jackie** – A Jackie is a flip or a leap that is caught with the intent to use the handler to navigate the landing.
- **Fake Bounce** – The dog flips from handlers body, but no disc is set in flight
- **Hoop** - dog leaps through a hoop made of the handler's arms
- **Seating Over** – we are seating on the floor and the dog jumps over our legs to catch a disc

- **Scoot**  – The dog turns and goes through our legs with his rear legs first
- **Through legs**  – The dog goes through our legs in order to continue to the next trick or catch a disc
- **Through legs revers**  - The dog goes through our legs from behind in order to continue to the next trick or catch a disc
- **Leg Vault**  – the dog uses our legs as a launching pad in order to jump and catch a disc
- **Flank**  – the dog moves in a circular movement at a distance and follows the handler's hand.
- **Big Over**  – dog jumps in a big loop over our entire body to catch a disc. Throw early, slightly towards the dog and high enough.
- **V Over**  – handler lies on the ground with his legs apart, then he throws the disc upward. The dog jumps between the legs over the handler to catch the disc.
- **Reverse V Over**  – Like V Over, just the dog comes from the head to catch the disc, and clears the body of the handler through his legs.
- **Bridge Over**  – handler makes a bridge with his body and the dog jumps over it to catch the disc
- **Under Bridge**  – the dog runs under the bridge, made by handler, in order to catch a disc set in flight.
- **Dog Catch**  – The dog jumps in handler's arms and catches the disc in between
- **Flip 2 dog catch**  – the dog performs a flip after which handler catches him
- **Cross**  - change working sides with the Cross move from the Clockwise Flank to the Counter Clock Flank with the dog turning towards the handler.
- **Chest Vault**  - the dog leaps up and vaults over the handler, front to back, from the handler's chest.
- **Zig Zag**  - The dog must turn at least 90 degrees after each throw to count as a zig-zag, but 180 degrees is even harder for the dog and will be scored as more difficult. It should be obvious that a dog is performing learned pattern, not only chasing discs thrown to the left and to the right. Minimum of 4 catches and turns has to be made. (by: USDDN 2018 Handbook)
- **Left turn**  – the dog makes 360° turn to his left and waits for next command
- **Right turn**  – the dog makes 360° turn to his right and waits for next command
- **Shotgun**  – the dog catches 3 consecutive discs in rapid succession
- **Shuffle**  – the dog catches 3 consecutive discs in rapid succession but only 2 discs are exchanged (the handler picks the discs the dog is dropping in between)
- **Around The World**  – The dog moves at the distance in a circular movement and catches at least 4 discs. It doesn't have to be a full circle. If a team is performing running circling movement, it's still the distance between the player and the dog that is very important in this element.
- **Scoot 'n Flip**  – the dog performs the Scoot and then flips for the disc behind thrower's back
- **Kneeling Over**  – the handler kneels on one leg and the dog jumps over the other leg.
- **Catch 'n Drop**  – the dog performs a flip and the handler takes the discs from the dog's mouth before he lands
- **Back Vault**  – the dog uses handler's back as a Launchpad in order to catch the disc
- **Back Stall**  – the dog leaps on handler's back and waits for next command or throw
- **Reverse Leg Vault**  – the dog performs a flip and uses the handler's leg as a Launchpad to catch the disc
- **Through in Bounce**  – the dog goes through handler's legs and performs a bounce from handler's back.
- **Tap**  – the dog taps the discs back to handler

- **Kick** – the disc is thrown with fast rotation so that it floats in front of the handler then he kicks the disc forward.
- **Mini Maxi the Lab** – the dog catches second disc without dropping the first one
- **Maxi the Lab** – the dog catches 3 discs without dropping first two - <https://youtu.be/WyuOz0h67-A>



## Disruptive factors

### Weather

- Sun

It is nice to play in sunny day, but we need to know what it means for the dog. The sun is up, the disc is up so it is important for us to make sure the sun is not our enemy in play. If the dog looks into the sun it can blind him for the moment and it is the exact moment he is looking for the disc. If possible throw away from the sun and choose darker discs so the contrast is higher. On the contrary in evening, when the visibility is lower, choose brighter discs.

- Wind

The wind can either hurt you, or help you. I hear people complain about the wind, but they never really take the time, nor the effort to understand how to use it to their advantage. Let's first learn a little bit about the wind and how it affects a disc in its flight path.

If a person throws a disc facing the wind, the disc is going to have a tendency to initially rise upward. If throwing with your back to the wind, the disc is going to have a tendency to be pushed down in its flight path; which in stiff wind can actually be your better choice for gaining more distance. Obviously, we need to compensate for these effects prior to the release of the disc. The stiffer the wind, when throwing into it, the more angle you need to place on the disc when releasing, and the less distance the disc is going to travel. Also, you would like to be able to release the disc slightly lower than your normal release point. Likewise, throwing with the wind in stiff winds, you can get the disc to travel more distance, but you need to place less angle on the disc, release it higher, and realize that it is going to be traveling much faster. The significance here is that if your dog is super fast and you can release it high enough, you may be able to do better throwing down wind when throwing distance. Otherwise, when throwing into the wind, your disc will have a tendency to not travel as far. It will also be more apt to "air-bounce" at the last second when your dog is air born for the catch; or shelf, rise, and float back toward you, or drift off to either side out of control.

- Cold

Be cognizant during the Winter months of the year in relation to the outside temperatures. Most discs will crack on impact below 0°C, and cracked discs are very dangerous to both you and your canine companion. The disc I like the most in cold weather is **K9-Discs C-HBR** model, which is flexible and remains flexible even if it is exposed to subfreezing temperatures for long time. You can get yours at: <https://www.pasjifrizbi.eu/product/k9-disc-c-hbr/>

- Heat

We try to avoid the heat. That does not mean we have to stop working in summer months, just make sure not to play too long and during the hottest time of the day. If you are training for competitions make some throws also during the day so the dog gets used to play in heat but make sure not to

play longer than 2 minutes (freestyle routine length) and the dog can cool down and has enough water afterwards.

Also try not to leave your discs lying exposed to the direct sunlight for any period of time, especially not up on the rear window ledge of your car. You will find that the sun can destroy your disc very quickly, if not in some instances even melt it!

### Color of the disc

The dogs do not see the world in same colors as we do, they have more blue-yellow color spectre so some of the dogs can be sensitive to disc color. Keep that in mind when choosing the disc.

### Spectators

We like to say we play for us and for our dog, but in the meanwhile on competitions and shows there are a lot of spectators around to watch us. They can be a distraction for your dog so keep in mind where and how you throw during your round.

### Field edge

On the edge of the field there can be stuff a dog can run into and injure himself. Before every routine look around and check the field for hidden dangerous stuff.

### Music

We train at home, club or in park in quiet. No music, no loud sounds, just us and maybe some friends. When we arrive at the competition field there are a lot of unfamiliar sounds, smells, dogs... So try to train every so with the music. The dog will hear the music and will know exactly what he needs to do.

### Sounds in background

We play in the city or in the park, there can be transport routes nearby or heavy industry. A lot of sounds your dog is not used to. A plane takeoff is loud, in a nearby factory with some loud machinery, trains, cars or just some kids playing football. All this sounds can be a huge disruption while playing with your dog.

### Nervousness

Is probably our biggest enemy. Try to calm down and go on the field like on training. Your dog feels your nervousness and everything can go bad. Just relax, but it is easier said than done.

## Putting together a routine

**Make your dog look good!** The truly amazing thing about watching all the Frisbee Dog teams over the years has been the variations of not only the size and physical statue of the dogs and humans; but also how each team has their own flare of performing a routine. It is amazing to watch literally dozens of dogs perform the same trick, without it every appearing to be exactly the same way that the previous team executed the same move. The simple fact behind all of this is that the trainers and handlers have learned to take the physical characteristics of their dogs and showcase them in their routines.

It would not be fair to any dog to do the exact same routine with them that you would do with another dog; nor would it look good in the judges' eyes. It is fine to do some of the same moves, or even a lot of them, but you should not do most of them in the same sequence as another dog.

Last, but not least, make it all about having FUN! I have seen some awesome teams over the years go out and pull off some incredible routines, but do it mechanically; even to a point of almost

seeming to be rote. I have also witnessed teams go out on to a field and not have the highest degree of difficulty, nor even have a flawless routine, but they had fun; and the audience and judges fed off of that excitement.

### My first routine

- Putting together a routine

Let's start at the beginning. Know yourself and your dog. Write down what you know, you're your dog knows and what you know together. Update this list when you learn new trick, elements or segments. Connect tricks into elements, elements into segments and segments into your routine. This way it might take little longer to plan your routine, but it will be easier for you and your dog to play. It will also be easier to add new elements you learn or adopt your routine to new format with different number of discs or different time your play.

- Arrival

Think about where you want to start your routine on the field. The terrain, the weather, the wind and your routine itself are factors you need to consider when setting up your routine and at what point you want to enter the field

- Pre-routine

Your pre routine should not be overly long I believe many judges would like it to be no more than 15 seconds and if you don't want to do a pre routine you don't have to you can start your routine from the second the music is started. But remember one major plus about the pre routine is you can get your dog excited and warmed up and you can quickly make a last second wind direction check and which way you want to use the wind to help your routine the best. The judges will be also watching you at this point and in some organizations the scoring has already started at this point so you need to be really focused and aware of what you are doing at this time. Many handlers at this point with showcase many of the non-disc tricks you have taught your dog this will also excite the crowd and the judges will know they like it also.

- Segments

Try to divide your routine into smaller subroutine called segments. One segment should have entry point, exit point and some elements inside. You should know where your dog comes from, how many discs you need to complete this segment and how long does it take to complete it. Try to make your segment 10-30s long and to use 2-5 discs.

- Segment training

Train your segments separate. One segment at the time. Use command for different segments the same as for individual tricks. Your dog will learn them and he will know what to do.

- Field usage

A lot of this is my own preference but I know many judges who want you to and expect you to use a lot of the field and they want to see not only the dog flowing around the field they want to see you also moving around different sections of the field and utilizing it efficiently. Some people try to divide the field up into Three Sections and some even try to use more than this. When you are mapping out your routines and segments you need to think about this.

- Send throw

You need to remember when things are not working and instead of repeating the same mistakes over and over in segment and your dog is right there by you to use a SEND throw as your rescue throw. As said by Mark Muir: "When in doubt throw out".

- **Safety!!!**

This is an absolute major priority no matter when, where or why you are playing with your disc dog. Unsafe situations that can potentially do harm to your dog in a routine can lead to serious point deductions, as well as you possibly being disqualified from a tournament. The judges take this very seriously. It can also make you look very bad as a trainer if you are jeopardizing the safety of your dog for your own personal success. So if your dog lands hard on its rear end or on its side, or even worse on its back, or you play with your dog who is obviously injured or limping, you can definitely EXPECT your scores to be lowered, at the very least.

- Timing your moves

Remember that the time that is allotted is different between some organizations (90 – 120s) and that you must be familiar with that organizations timing rules. Also remember you always want to start strong and finish strong so when they say you have 30 seconds left you need to think where you are in your routine and how you want to finish strong.

- Errors we make

- You let your dog to wait for you during the routine
- You don't check the rules you play
- You don't use whole field
- The discs are just lying around the whole field
- We don't keep track of the time
- We choose music that is not aligned with our play
- We don't use different releases and throws
- We repeat the elements

- Start and end of routine

The star and the finish are most important points in our routine. Make the look great, use your best trick. When you start you need to make a great impression for the judges and for the crowd. They will like you and show interest in your routine. When you finish you need to make great leave as this is what most of spectators will remember after you leave the field.

- Slowing down your dog

Some people say their dogs is coming to fast to them for a move or segment, well I have learned that SCOOTs, ROLLOVERS AND CIRCLES etc. can slow a dog down to help you better set up the next move. Don't be afraid to use this tricks as part of your routine they can even increase your score.

### For spectators (shows)

When we play for spectators we don't have experts who judge us, we have common people who are usually easier to entertain. We can have unlimited number of discs, we have much more time to show something, we can show our best tricks and no one will look if it is done perfectly. But we need to examine the field much more in details, as it can be smaller, have more dangerous parts and can be uneven.

## For competitions

When we put together a routine for competitions we need to follow some rules. We can have limited number of discs, we have limited time and we usually have better and bigger field available.

Competitions take whole day or even whole weekend so it is important to properly prepare your dog, to rest him when needed and that he is ready when needed. We prepare our routine for judges, for experts and we need to show them what we know.

## What are the judges looking for

On most freestyle competitions there are 4 judges. Everyone is looking at something different. In

AWI they look at (<http://www.ashleywhippet.com/freestyle>):

- **DOG** – The Dog category scores the performance of the canine member of the team. Some of the elements used for deciding the dog's score are focus, prey drive, excitement, willingness to cooperate with the handler, speed, endurance, jumping ability (both aided, e.g., using the handler's body as a launch pad, and unaided), and body awareness displayed by control in the air and landing properly. The dog's ability to catch a disc while in a variety of positions, at varying distances, and in varying directions can also enhance the dog's score.
- **HUMAN** - The Human category scores the performance of the human member of the team. Some of the elements used for deciding the human's score are athletic ability, coordination, and smoothness of movement, ingenuity, innovation, creativity, and overall skill level. A variety of throws, disc control, and the difficulty level of the routine can also enhance the human's score.
- **TEAM** – The Team category scores both the dog and the human in their performance as a team. Judges are looking primarily at the overall cohesiveness of the team and the communication between dog and handler. Some of the elements used for deciding the team score are the flow of the routine, disc management, field management, innovation, and creative and effective use of multiple discs for fast-paced throws requiring the dog to change direction, move quickly, and communicate with the handler. Chaining throws together with a succession of different tricks and moves involving the dog and the disc will also enhance the score. A routine should flow smoothly without long pauses between sequences to collect discs or for other purposes; however, brief pauses in flow to accommodate the setup for extremely difficult tricks may not negatively affect a team's score.
- **OVERALL** – The Overall category is a catch-all category used to score the overall impression given by a routine and to take into account other factors that may not be adequately scored under the other categories. Some of the elements used for deciding the overall score include crowd appeal, energy level, excitement, "wow factor," showmanship, and effective showcasing of the abilities of the dog, the human, and the team. Interpretation of the music, artistic impression, and production may also enhance the score.
- **CATCH RATIO** – The catch ratio is mathematically determined number that is obtained by dividing the number of catches by the number of throws, multiplying by 10, and then rounding to the nearest tenth of a point. For example,  $(22 \text{ catches}) / (30 \text{ throws}) * 10 = 7.3333$ , or 7.3 by rounding to the nearest tenth of point. Judges can be asked by a competitor, prior to their round, to write a few short notes or suggestions in regards to their round on a comment card, that must be provided by the competitor for the benefit of the competitor. Competitors may not request comment cards for other handler's routines.

UFO they look at (<http://www.ufoworldcup.org/content/Rules/Freestyle.php>):

- **Drive and Athleticism** - Judges look at the athletic ability of the canine competitor with special consideration for the dog's level of prey drive, speed, stamina, tracking skills, leaping

ability, and control while in the air and during landings. Canines should show consistency while catching discs with varying spins and orientations over a range of distances.

- **Ingenuity** - Judges look at the creativity, athleticism and throwing ability of the human half of the team with special consideration for the consistent placement of discs, and ability to deliver a variety of difficult throws. Successful completions are an important part of this category, but emphasis is placed on innovation and variety, not execution and repetition.
- **Sequence and Flow** - Judges look at how the team works together to present a routine that flows naturally from trick to trick and transitions smoothly between sequences. Individual sequences should be composed of tricks that logically flow together, and competitors should pay close attention to proper disc management when linking sequences to form a routine. Solitary tricks that are not part of an obvious sequence are given consideration for their contribution to the flow of the routine as a whole. Teams are not penalized for taking time to set up tricks properly provided the overall momentum of the routine is not compromised.
- **Comprehensive** - Judges score the general impression of the routine as a whole with special consideration for showmanship, presentation, energy, and overall crowd appeal.
- **Catch Ratio** - A mathematically determined number that is obtained by dividing the number of completions by the number of attempts, multiplying by 10, and then rounding to the nearest tenth of a point. For example, (22 catches) / (30 attempts) \* 10 = 7.3333, or 7.3 by rounding to the nearest tenth of a point.

Skyhoundz the look at (<https://skyhoundz.com/competition/rules/freestyle/>):

- **Presentation** - The team's presentation of a crowd-pleasing routine with exciting choreography, continuous flow, good disc management and smooth transitions.
- **Athleticism** - Intensity and athleticism in completing catches, tricks or maneuvers together with a dog's speed, quickness, leaping ability relative to its size and control over his/her body while competing.
- **Waw!Factor** - Ability to successfully complete challenging tricks or moves, including successful catches of throws with varied spins or releases. Also, the presentation of completely new moves, or a novel or unique presentation of a previously performed move, will result in higher scores in this category.
- **Success** - The team's ability to successfully execute a routine with specific consideration given for the difficulty of the throws/catches and tricks. A team's overall success score will affect, positively or negatively, the scores in all PAWS categories. In this category, it is entirely possible for a team with a few misses to score higher than a team with no misses if the team having the misses completes a more difficult routine.

GCDC they look at (<http://globalcaninediscchallenge.com/general-structure-gcdc/fetch-it-in-style-gcdc-freestyle.html>):

- **Drive** - In this category, judges will monitor the field use of the dog (where the dog catches the disc or the disc lands will be marked), the throw count (the total amount of throws you manage to make during the routine) and occurring drive issues (sniffing around, refusing discs, verbal reprimand, running off the field, tactile reprimand). There is also a score for entertainment which is the personal opinion of the judge, this category comes back in all the judged elements
- **Oh my dog** - Apart from the catch ratio (the amount of caught vs the amount of throws), elements showing entertainment and creativity are rewarded in this category. A major stress lies on the technical difficulty but even more on the safe execution. To get a clear view, throws were ranked according to the difficulty in execution according to, but not limited to the throws or moves mentioned

- A-throws basic throws (forehand, backhand, floater, wrist flip, functional takes, roller)
- B-throws basic throws with a twist (under the leg, behind the back, inversed)
- C-throws not so basic throws (taps, brushes, basic kicks, skip, air bounce, body roll, nail delay with release)
- D-throws combined and/or unseen moves
- **Guard** - This is the most important category and will be monitored by the Head-Judge. It looks at the disc count (number of discs you bring to the field), performs a general safety check (number of incidents in the routine), but mostly at the crash severity. Examples of elements that are looked at are: dropping the dog, the dog slamming on the ground after landing, buckle (the back twisting in the wrong direction upon landing), crash (the dog landing on any other body part then the paws), turn (forcing a short, unnatural turn), excess (excessive use of high elements and flips) and throw (throwing a disc towards a dog running in your direction).
- **Structure** - the general structure of the routine or improvisation as well as the overall impression on the routine will be shown in this score, judged by the number and length of the breaks in the routine as well as the disc management (active, passive, none) are the key elements in this part of the judging.

USDDN have most detailed structure to look at (<https://usddn.com/usddn-official-rules/>):

- **Dog**
  - Prey Drive – During the entire routine consistent focus and concentration must be sustained.
  - Retrieval – The dog’s ability to track, chase, and catch discs, while demonstrating a variety of retrieval options (dropping discs away from the player, at the player’s feet, handing them to the player).
  - Athleticism – The canine must execute control and consistency while leaping and landing, during standing, running, flipping and/or vaulting maneuvers.
  - Grip – Before, during and after the moment of executing a disc, the canine must exhibit consistent commitment with adequate focus.
- **Player**
  - Field presentation – The routine must demonstrate planned movement around the playing field, incorporating a variety of throw of different lengths thrown in different directions.
  - Release diversity – A diversity of throws must be demonstrated by the player with variations in the grip and release, including with a minimum of 3 different releases.
  - Disc Management – Releasing and replacing of all discs must be engaged in the seamless and consistent manner with no breaks.
  - Rhythmic Team – Transitional movement must be designed with smooth transitions between maneuvers and segments.
- **Team (Team Elements are scored on the highest 4 out of 7 elements):**
  - Overs: “The team performs 2 different over-the-body tricks: canine travels over the body, clearing the body of the player, to catch a disc placed in flight. “
  - Vaults: “The team performs 2 different vaults: canine leaps off player’s body, touching the body, to catch a disc placed in flight. Player utilizes 2 different stances. “
  - Passing: “Consecutive throws where the dog passes close to the player at least twice in a straight line. “
  - Dogcatch: “One dog catch with the disc in flight. “

- Multiple: “One multiple segment with a minimum of three consecutive throws in rapid succession. “
  - Team Movement: “Team movement coordinating team movement, i.e. spin together, dog stall, weave under legs, etc. “
  - Directional Distance Movement: “The team performs tricks consisting of at least 4 consecutive throws where by the dogs catches discs in a plane of space at a distance from the handler, including such movements as zig-zags, circling outruns, and the like. “
- Execution
- Execution Score is simply the exact ratio of the team’s catches and misses. Execution score is counted as a total number of catches divided by a total number of throws. The result is then multiplied by 10 to get the final execution score.

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