

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 these courses. In general, this RLF course tests the ability of the Handler and dog to read the impact of these draws on the sheep and to respond appropriately 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 posts, all levels; a blue cone will mark the beginning of the **RLF II** drive; an orange cone will mark the beginning of the **RLF III** drive; and yellow-green cones will mark the Hold at the end of the Drive legs for **RLF II & III**. "Road" and "Graze" edges on the course are marked by furrows.

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

You don't feed the sheep through their feet. 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 opening and closing gates).**

Except where otherwise specified in these rules, Handler and dog may take any position necessary relative to the flock throughout the course while moving—fetching, driving, or tending.

Except where noted, if more than half the flock is 50 yards off course, or off course for longer than 1 minute, or if the judge feels the dog is working out of control without any chance of the Handler regaining control, then the run should be terminated.

For **RLF I**, the judge may request that an experienced dog and stock handler be positioned discretely on the course for the beginning of the run to prevent sheep from bolting to one of the draws.

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

RLF I: 25 minutes, 580 yards

RLF II: 35 minutes, 680 yards

RLF III: 45 minutes, 885 yards (sheep), (plus an extra 490 yards for person and dog to hike back to retrieve the remaining sheep in the Holding Pen back to the Take Pen.)

Physical Description of Course Obstacles and Features:

- Take Pen:** 32 ft. x 32 ft., fencing 40 inches high, 12-foot gate (“Take Pen” in diagram).
- Road One (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 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 Pen = 146 feet.
- Holding Pen:** 16 feet x 16 feet with a 12 foot gate and 48 inch tall fencing.
- Sort Sheep: and III)** 10 sheep to be sorted in each run, including 3 with ribbons around (II and III) their necks.

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**.

***Runs will be disqualified** if a gate is not secured and closed by the Handler at the Re-Pen and when leaving the Holding Pen, if the Handler enters the Holding Pen during a Sort, and if any sheep are not penned in their specified pens by the end of the run.*

SCORING for RLF

<u>Name of Exercise</u>	<u>RLF I</u>	<u>RLF II</u>	<u>RLF III</u>
1. <u>Exit from Pen</u>	10	10	10
2. Before Graze: <u>Fetch/Drive & Bridge-Footbath (including II & III: Drive Leg & Hold)</u>	20	15	15
3. <u>Graze (10 min.)</u>	20	20	20
4. <u>Gather</u>	15	15	15
5. After Graze: <u>Fetch/Drive & Flock Halt</u>	15	10	10
6. <u>Sort</u>	--	10	10
7. <u>Re-Pen (Both 1st & 2nd times for III)</u>	10	10	10
8. <u>“Gamblers” 2nd Task Fetch/Drive/Tend</u>	--	--	10
Total Possible Points:	90	90	100
Minimum Points to quality (70%):	63	63	70

RLF I: Step-by-Step Description*

30 sheep minimum; Length—approx. 580 yards; Time—25 minutes.

see “RLF Course: General Description**” (above) for dimensions and description of obstacles and features*

1. Exit from Pen (10 points) RLF I

At the Handler’s discretion, the Take Pen gate can remain in an open or closed position after the Exit from the Take Pen.

2. Fetch/Drive and Bridge-Footbath (20 points) RLF I

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

Bridge-Footbath: Flock, Handler, and the dog pass through the **Bridge-Footbath**.

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).

3. Graze (20 points) RLF I

RLF I Handlers may lead the flock into the Graze area and move anywhere in the Graze area to help position their dog and settle the flock at any time during the Graze.

Time for the **Graze** is **10 minutes**. Handler can bring water on course for the dog.

During the Graze, the dog should demonstrate ability to cover the flock while working away from the handler and holding the flock in the designated graze. A dog’s work which successfully prevents the sheep from leaving the designated graze while allowing the sheep to relax and eat is preferred.

At the **Graze**, the dog may move, stand, sit, or lie down. The dog can move anywhere on the course or in the graze or along the border.

Commands may be given by the Handler to the dog to maintain the flock in the Graze area.

4. Gather (15 points) RLF I

For the **RLF I gather** exercise, the Handler and dog must first go to the **blue cone** marking the **Handler’s Post**. The exercise scoring begins when the dog and Handler are **both within 5 feet of the Handler’s Post**.

The flock can be as close as **20 yards** to the Handler’s Post at the start of the Gather for **RLF I**, but if the flock is that close, the dog must start the **Gather** from the **Handler’s Post**. The Handler may take a **position as close as 15 feet to the flock** before the dog starts the **Gather**.

If the flock is **20- 40 (or more) yards** away, the dog then may be taken to a point *halfway between the Handler's post and the flock*, and the Handler may take a **position as close as 15 feet to the flock** before the dog starts the **Gather**.

The dog gathers and moves the flock to the Handler and past the **Handler's post**.

5. **Fetch/Drive and Flock Halt (15 points) RLF I**

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

At the T-Intersection of **Inner Road** with the **Traffic Road**, dog halts forward progress of flock (at the orange cone) by standing in front of flock and holding it while the Handler moves away from flock and beyond dog (at least 10 ft.) to "look" for traffic on the **Traffic Road**. Handler returns to the flock.

After the Flock Halt, for RLF I, AT THE HANDLER'S DISCRETION, the flock then either **crosses the Traffic Road**, going straight and then making a left turn onto **Road 2** (next to fence) **or** makes a left turn directly onto the (wider, but no fence) **Traffic Road**. The flock must stay on the road that the Handler has chosen.

If the RLF I Handler has chosen **Road 2**, the flock stays along the fence and makes 2 more left turns guided by dog and Handler, following **Road 2** to return to the **Take Pen**.

If the RLF I Handler has chosen the **Traffic Road**, the flock stays on the **Traffic Road** until it intersects with **Road 2** at the **Gate to the Field** where the flock makes a left turn onto **Road 2**. **Road 2** leads to the **Take Pen**.

6. **Re-Pen (10 points) RLF I**

If the Handler elected to close the 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 gate open at the beginning of the run, then the flock can return directly into the **Take Pen**.

RLF II: Step-by-Step Description*

30 sheep minimum; Length—680 yards; Time—35 minutes

**see "RLF Course: General Description" (at top, above)
for dimensions and description of obstacles and features*

1. **Exit from Pen (10 points) RLF II**

At the Handler's discretion, the Take Pen gate can remain in an open or closed position after the Exit from the Take Pen.

2. Fetch/Drive to Bridge-Footbath, Drive Leg, Hold (15 points) RLF II

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

Bridge-Footbath: Flock, Handler, and the dog pass through the **Bridge-Footbath**.

Flock continues and makes a left turn onto the **Inner Road** (at orange cone).

Drive Leg: The **Handler's Post (blue cone along edge of Inner Road)** marks the beginning of a **60-foot drive leg** along the **Inner Road**. The Handler must remain on the road behind the **Handler's post** while the dog works, until the flock passes the first **2 yellow-green cones**, marking the end of the drive leg.

Hold: Dog will then hold the flock in the **Square** marked by the **4 yellow-green cones**, until the Handler reaches and/or passes the **Square** and the flock.

Flock, Handler, and dog continue path on the **Inner Road**, making a left or right turn on road and go to the assigned **Graze** area. The **Graze** area is **Graze 1, 2, 3, or 4** (at judge's discretion).

3. Graze (20 points) RLF II

Time for the **Graze** is **10 minutes**. Handler can bring water on course for the dog.

During the Graze, the dog should demonstrate ability to cover the flock while working away from the handler and holding the flock in the designated graze. A dog's work which successfully prevents the sheep from leaving the designated graze while allowing the sheep to relax and eat is preferred.

The dog should be far enough off contact from the flock so that the flock is relaxed enough to feed; yet, the dog's movement and positioning should prevent the sheep from leaving the graze. The sheep should remain inside the Graze area, but the dog should generally remain outside the Graze or outside the sheep's flight zone, with the exception of when the sheep threaten to leave the Graze.

At the **Graze**, the dog may move, stand, sit, or lie down. The dog can move anywhere on the course or in the graze.

Commands may be given by the Handler to the dog to maintain the flock in the Graze area.

4. Gather (15 points) RLF II

For the **RLF II Gather** exercise, the dog is **set at the Handler's post**, and the **RLF II Handler may move halfway to the flock** before the dog is sent for the **Gather**. The **RLF II Handler** should be **at least 60 feet** from the flock at the start of the **Gather**.

The dog gathers and moves the flock to the Handler and past the **Handler's post**.

5. **Fetch/Drive and Flock Halt** (10 points) RLF II

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

At the T-Intersection of **Inner Road** with the **Traffic Road**, dog halts forward progress of flock (at the orange cone), usually by standing in front of flock and holding it while the Handler turns and moves away from flock and beyond dog (at least 10 ft.) to “look” for traffic on the **Traffic Road**. Handler returns to the flock.

The RLF II Handler and flock then make a **right turn** onto the **Traffic Road**. The II Handler and flock then temporarily leave the **Traffic Road** by turning left in front of and heading towards the **Holding Pen** gate. **See II Sort Exercise (below)**.

After the Sort Exercise, the 10 sorted sheep and Handler **continue this exercise** by re-entering the **Traffic Road** traveling in a counter-clockwise direction around field. They stay on the **Traffic Road** until it intersects with **Road 2** at the **Gate to the Field** where the flock makes a left turn onto **Road 2**. **Road 2** leads to the **Take Pen**.

6. **Sort** (10 points) RLF II

Judging for the Sort exercise starts when the sheep leave the Traffic Road by turning left directly in front of the **Holding Pen Gate**. The flock is halted and held in position by the dog on the **right side of front of the Holding Pen Gate** while the Handler opens the gate to prepare for the Sort.

The objective of the Sort at the **Holding Pen** is to separate the **3 marked sheep** from the flock plus 7 unmarked sheep (**total of 10 sheep**), and to leave the remainder of the flock behind in the **Holding Pen**. The dog should keep the sheep on line when the flock goes to and from the Holding Pen; help the Handler get the sheep sorted through the gate smoothly and efficiently; hold the sheep to the Handler without their crowding the Handler or the gate; hold, retrieve, rearrange, re-group, or help cut out sheep during the Sort.

The Handler may not enter the **Holding Pen**. The dog may enter the **Holding Pen** if appropriate.

The sorted sheep not in Holding Pen return immediately to **Traffic Road** (following shortest line to road).

7. **Re-Pen** (10 points) RLF II

If the Handler elected to close the 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 gate open at the beginning of the run, then the flock can return directly into the **Take Pen**.

RLF III: Step-by-Step Description

30 Sheep Minimum; Length—885 yards; Time—45 minutes

see “ **Course: General Description” (at top, above)
for dimensions and description of obstacles and features*

1. Exit from Pen (10 points) RLF III

At the Handler’s discretion, the Take Pen gate can remain in an open or closed position after the Exit from the Take Pen.

2. Fetch/Drive to Bridge, Drive Leg, Hold (15 points) RLF III

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

Bridge-Footbath: Flock, Handler, and the dog pass through the **Bridge-Footbath**. Flock continues and makes a left turn onto the **Inner Road** (at orange cone).

Drive Leg: 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** while the dog works, until the flock passes the first **2 yellow-green cones**, marking the end of the drive leg.

Hold: Dog will then hold the flock in the **Square** marked by the **4 yellow-green cones**, until the Handler reaches and/or passes the **Square** and the flock.

Flock, Handler, and dog continue path on the **Inner Road**, making a left or right turn on road and go to the assigned **Graze** area. The **Graze** area is **Graze 1, 2, 3, or 4** (at judge’s discretion).

3. Graze (20 points) RLF III

The RLF III Handler can move his/her position no more than 2 times during the 10 minute graze without penalty.

Time for the **Graze** is **10 minutes**. Handler can bring water on course for the dog.

During the Graze, the dog should demonstrate ability to cover the flock while working away from the handler and holding the flock in the designated graze. A dog’s work which successfully prevents the sheep from leaving the designated graze while allowing the sheep to relax and eat is preferred.

The dog should be far enough off contact from the flock so that the flock is relaxed enough to feed; yet, the dog’s movement and positioning should prevent the sheep from leaving the graze. The sheep should remain inside the Graze area, but the dog should generally remain outside the Graze or outside the sheep’s flight zone, with the exception of when the sheep threaten to leave the Graze.

At the **Graze**, the dog may move, stand, sit, or lie down. The dog can move anywhere on the course or in the graze.

Commands may be given by the Handler to the dog to maintain the flock in the Graze area.

4. Gather (15 points) RLF III

For the **RLF III Gather** exercise, the Handler and dog both start at the Handler's Post, and the Handler remains standing there, directing the dog as needed to gather and move the flock to and past the **Handler's post**.

5. Fetch/Drive & Flock Halt (10 points) RLF III

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

At the T-Intersection of **Inner Road** with the **Traffic Road**, dog halts forward progress of flock (at the orange cone), usually by standing in front of flock and holding it while the Handler turns and moves away from flock and beyond dog (at least 10 ft.) to "look" for traffic on the **Traffic Road**. Handler returns to the flock.

The RLF III Handler and flock make a right turn onto the **Traffic Road**. The RLF III Handler and flock then temporarily leave the **Traffic Road** by turning left in front of and heading towards the Holding Pen Gate. **See RLF III Sort Exercise (below)**.

After the Sort exercise, the **10 sorted sheep** and Handler **resume the Fetch/Drive and Flock Halt** by re-entering the **Traffic Road**, traveling in a counter-clockwise direction around field. The flock stays on the **Traffic Road** until it intersects with **Road 2** at the **Gate to the Field** where the flock makes a left turn onto **Road 2**. **Road 2** leads directly to the **Take Pen**.

6. Sort—Task 1 at Holding Pen (10 points) RLF III

Judging for the Sort exercise starts when the sheep leave the Traffic Road by turning left directly in front of the **Holding Pen Gate**. The flock is halted and held in position by the dog on the **right side of front of the Holding Pen Gate** while the Handler opens the gate to prepare for the Sort.

The objective of the Sort at the **Holding Pen** is to separate the **3 marked sheep** from the flock plus 7 unmarked sheep (total of 10 sheep), and to leave the remainder of the flock behind in the **Holding Pen**. The dog should keep the sheep on line when the flock goes to and from the Holding Pen; help the Handler get the sheep sorted through the gate smoothly and efficiently; hold the sheep to the Handler without their crowding the Handler or the gate; hold, retrieve, rearrange, re-group, or help cut out sheep during the Sort.

The Handler may not enter the **Holding Pen**. The dog may enter the **Holding Pen** if appropriate.

The sorted sheep not in Holding Pen return immediately to **Traffic Road** (following shortest line to road).

7. Re-Pen at Take Pen— 1st & 2nd (10 points total) RLF III

If the Handler chose to leave the gate open at the beginning of the run, then the flock can return directly into the **Take Pen**.

8. Gamblers” 2nd Task Fetch/Drive/Tend (10 points total) RLF III

After fastening the gate of the Take Pen, the Handler will immediately declare whether he/she opts for the “**Drive**,” “**Tend**,” or “**Fetch**” option to retrieve the remaining sheep from the Holding Pen back to the Take Pen.

“Drive 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 dog may enter the Holding Pen if necessary to exhaust the sheep.
2. The Holding Pen gate is re-fastened by the Handler while the dog holds the sheep no further than 60 feet from the gate.
3. Sheep then can be fetched or driven directly to the Traffic Road.
4. When the sheep are on the Traffic Road, the Handler must cross the Traffic Road to the other side and stay OFF the Traffic Road on the Take Pen side of road and must be behind the flock while the dog drives the sheep on the **Traffic Road** to the Gate of the Field, then **left turn to Road 2**.
5. The Handler can assume whatever distance and whatever orientation she/he wants around the flock when the flock reaches the intersection of Road 2 that leads back to the Take Pen gate.

“Tend 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 dog may enter the Holding Pen if necessary to exhaust the sheep.
2. The Holding Pen gate is re-fastened by the Handler while the dog holds the sheep no further than 60 feet from the gate.
3. Sheep then can be fetched, tended, or driven directly to the Traffic Road.
4. When the sheep are on the Traffic Road, the Handler must be at the front or to the side of the sheep with the dog primarily working outside and along the furrows that define the

Traffic Road. The dog may come to the front of the flock to slow it down and to cross to the other side of the flock. The tending orientation continues until the sheep get to the end of the Traffic Road at the Gate of the Field, then turn left to **Road 2**.

5. The Handler can assume whatever distance and whatever orientation she/he wants around the flock when the flock reaches the intersection of **Road 2** that leads back to the Take Pen gate.

“Fetch Option”

1. As soon as this option is chosen, the course director or assistant will release the remainder sheep in the Holding Pen into the field.
2. The Handler and dog can then assume any position in the portion of the field described in a **“Bermuda rectangle”** bound by: 1.) the Traffic Road, 2.) the Inner Road portion running north south on the field, 3.) the east-west line that extends from the end of Road 2 leading to the Take Pen and past the Take Pen, intersecting the Inner Road, and 4.) the field perimeter fence line closest to the Gate to Field.
3. The dog should be released for an outrun/fetch to gather the sheep back to the Handler’s **established position** at the time the dog is sent for the gather.
4. The sheep must be a **minimum of 40 yards away** from the Handler and dog at the time of the dog’s release. The sheep do not have to be in sight. The Handler waits at the established release point for the dog to fetch the sheep directly to the Handler. When the sheep reach the Handler, the dog must bring and hold the sheep quietly and in a stationary position in front of the Handler for **at least 5 seconds**.
5. Then the Handler brings the sheep in **fetching orientation** directly to the Take Pen gate. The sheep cannot pass the Handler without penalty. The “Fetch Option” Handler can fetch the sheep to the Take Pen gate **or** choose to set the dog up for a **second gather with the Handler standing at the Take Pen gate**. If this second gather is attempted, the run will be penalized if the sheep are allowed to drift closer to the Take Pen while the Handler moves to the Take Pen.

American Herding Breed Association
Ranch Large Flock

Breed _____ Time: _____
Entry No. _____

Registered Name _____

Sponsor _____ Location _____

RLF I _____ RLF II _____ RLF III _____
 _____ Sheep _____ Ducks _____ Goats _____ Cattle (provide number)... _____ Other (provide type and number)

	Possible Score	Deductions	Points Deducted
1. Exit from Pen	10	_____	_____
2. Fetch/Drive & Bridge-Footbath (including II & III: Drive Leg & Hold)	I-20/II, III-15	_____	_____
3. Graze (10 Minutes)	20	_____	_____
4. Gather	15	_____	_____
5. Fetch/Drive & Flock Halt	I-15/II, III-10	_____	_____
Re-Pen (Both 1 st and 2 nd for III)	10	_____	_____
Sort -- 1st Task	II, III -10	_____	_____
“Gamblers” 2nd Task (Fetch, Tend, Drive) III-10		_____	_____
		Total Deducted:	_____
SCORE:	I, II-90/III-100	TOTAL EARNED:	_____

(70% to qualify: minimum score of 63 for RLF I, RLF II; 70 for RLF III): Q___ NQ___

COMMENTS: _____

Judge's signature _____ Date _____