

I. ASHLEY WHIPPET® INVITATIONAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES STRUCTURE AND EVENTS

A. Official Ashley Whippet® Invitational World Championship Series

1. AWI Series Events Divisions

The official AWI Series will consist of the Open Division only, including Freestyle and Toss & Catch. The local clubs running the qualifying events may run additional divisions at their discretion. The AWI does not guarantee continuity of divisions at every competition. Please contact the hosting club to see whether additional divisions will be offered, and check www.ashleywhippet.com often for more updates as they become available.

In 2011, nine Open Qualifiers will be held in the United States, two will be held in Asia and eight will be held in Europe .

The AWI World Championship will be held on October 8, 2011 at Purina Farms in Gray Summit, MO.

The AWI European Championship will be held on August 27, 2011 at a location to be determined.

See www.ashleywhippet.com for more details. Become a fan of Hero Disc USA on www.facebook.com to stay up to date with any news and announcements.

2. Qualifying for the AWI World Championship

The top 5 finishers at all nineteen AWI Open Qualifiers will receive an invitation to the 2011 Ashley Whippet Invitational World Championship. The winner of the previous year's AWI World Championship is automatically invited back for the next year's World Championship.

The top 5 finishers at the eight European Open Qualifiers will also receive an invitation to the 2011 European World Championship. The rules described herein for qualifiers and Championship will apply equally to both the World Championship Series and the European Championship Series.

Competitors may qualify two canines for the 2011 AWI World Championship. If a competitor places in the top five with more than two dogs, the top two placing dogs will be the ones to qualify. The additional dogs' invitations will slide down to the teams finishing in sixth place and beyond. Additionally, if a team that is already qualified for the 2011 AWI World Championship plays at another Open Qualifier and places in the top five, that invitation will slide down to the team finishing in sixth place, and so on.

Invitations will NOT slide if a qualified team chooses not to attend the 2011 AWI World Championship.

Those invited to the World Championship must RSVP by Friday, September 9, 2011. A live drawing will be held via webcast for the running order. This drawing will be held on Saturday, September 17, 2011 at 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time. This drawing will determine the running order for all participants who have RSVP'd.

3. AWI World Championship Series Scoring Structure

At the World Championship, all teams will complete one round of Freestyle and one round of Toss & Catch. These two scores will be added together and the field will be cut to the top 15 teams AFTER any ties have been broken. (Second-round cuts are made at the discretion of the Tournament Director and may be greater than 15 if time and other considerations permit.) These 15 teams will run one more round of Freestyle, and the resulting score will be added to the scores from the first round of Freestyle and the Toss & Catch round to produce the final scores. Tiebreakers will be applied as needed to determine placements. No scores will be doubled.

The open qualifiers may run differently with only one round of freestyle and one round of Toss & Catch, depending on time constraints and number of volunteers. These changes can be made at the discretion of the hosting club, head judge, and/or tournament director.

4. AWI World Championship Tiebreakers

For the Open Division, the following scores from the FIRST round of freestyle will be used to break any ties in the order given below:

1. Catch ratio
2. Team score
3. Dog score
4. Human score
5. Overall score

5. Applicability of Scoring System

The Freestyle and Toss & Catch rules and scoring described herein will be used for the AWI World Championship. The same scoring rules will be used at the Open Qualifiers where possible. In the case of an AWI event piggybacking on another, the hosting club's rules will take precedence. Rules for any additional divisions run at the discretion of the hosting club will be determined by the hosting club.

B. Official Ashley Whippet® Invitational Toss & Catch World Championship

1. Toss & Catch World Championship Structure and Scoring

In addition to the AWI World Championship, the Toss & Catch World Championship will also be held on October 8, 2011. The Toss & Catch World Championship will be open to anyone, with no prior qualifying necessary. **Online pre-registration is required. No registrations will be accepted the day of the event.** Each handler may enter a maximum of three dogs in the Toss & Catch World Championship.

The Toss & Catch World Championship will use the same field and scoring as the Toss & Catch portion of the AWI World Championship and Qualifiers. Teams will play two rounds and scores will be added to determine the winner. The second round will be cut at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

2. Toss & Catch World Championship Tiebreakers

For the Toss & Catch World Championship, the first tiebreaker is the fewest total THROWS made BEFORE time is called, whether or not the throws were caught by the dog. The second tiebreaker is the single highest-scoring round. The third tiebreaker will be a one throw/one catch throw-off in which the highest scoring official catch wins. The head judge will flip a coin to determine who goes first. That team will try to get a catch on the competition field, throwing from behind the throwing line. The dog must also be behind the throwing line until the disc is released in the throw and may not lead out onto the field before the disc is released. If a catch is made, a score will be given and the second team then has a chance to beat that score. A tie begins the process again, in the same order. This continues, allowing the dogs sufficient time to rest between throws, until one team scores higher than the other team in the same round. If a catch is NOT made by the first thrower, the second thrower will win with any completion on the field, following the above rules.

C. AWI World Championship Entry Fees

There will be an entry fee of \$25.00 USD per team at each AWI Qualifier. We greatly appreciate your support.

This entry fee is for the Open Division Qualifiers only. The AWI World Championship will be free to play in for any qualified team.

The Toss & Catch World Championship will have an entry fee of \$10.00 USD per team. The winner of this division will receive 25% of the collected entry fees! An additional 25% of the collected entry fees will be donated to a canine rescue of the winner's choice!

II. FREESTYLE RULES AND SCORING

A. Freestyle Scoring System

The freestyle round is a timed, freeform competition that is judged on a 40 point scale using the following four categories, as described below: Dog, Human, Team, and Overall. Catch ratio will also be tracked as described below, but will not form a part of the freestyle score and will be used only as a tiebreaker.

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,

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 a 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.

B. Judging and Scoring of the Freestyle Competition

The freestyle competition will be judged by a panel of four judges. Three of the judges will each be responsible for judging one of the three subjective categories in the AWI Freestyle Scoring System: Dog, Human, and Team. Catch Ratio will be tracked by the fourth judge. Each judge, excluding the catch ratio judge, will also give a score for the Overall category. The high and low Overall scores will be dropped and the remaining score will be the final Overall category score. Each category is scored on a scale from 1–10 in 0.1 (one tenth) point increments. The Dog, Human, Team, and median Overall score will be added together to determine the team's final score for the freestyle round.

Catch ratio will not be added into the overall score, and will be used only as a tie breaker. Therefore, a very difficult routine with a lower catch ratio can potentially score higher than an easier routine with a very high catch ratio.

Only moves that begin with the disc in flight and end with a catch are scored. Takes—moves in which the disc is handed off to the dog—will not be scored. Rollers—throws that are intentionally rolled along the ground to the dog—will be scored, provided the

dog makes a clean catch. Moves such as taps and double throws in which one or more discs are intentionally missed by the dog and caught by the thrower will be scored, provided they are cleanly executed.

The welfare of the dog is of paramount concern to the judges and sponsors. Therefore, vaulting a dog excessively high, or repeatedly, will not increase the likelihood of a higher score and may result in point deductions and/or disqualification.

Judges have the option of writing a few short notes or suggestions on comment cards for the benefit of the competitor.

C. Point Deductions

Point deductions will be determined by the individual judges and will be reflected in the score reported by that judge for the freestyle category being judged (Dog, Human, or Team), or in the Overall score.

The following actions may result in a lower score.

- Contortion: when a canine twists its body to a degree which could lead to injury while jumping, catching or landing.
- Buckle/Slam: an unstable landing during which a part of the canine's body other than the feet lands on the ground, except when a canine's face touches the ground due to chasing a low throw or similar situations.

Players are performers. Your overall performance can and will be partially judged by how you conduct yourself once you enter and exit the field of competition. Conduct on the field before, during, or after a freestyle round which is perceived by a judge as inappropriate or unsportsmanlike may negatively affect your freestyle score.

D. Freestyle Field Setup and Procedures

The freestyle field will consist of an open area of at least 30 yards by 50 yards. It will have an entrance and exit area that MUST be used by all competitors during the competition. The entry will be in the corner to the left of the judges, and the exit will be in the corner to the right of the judges. A leash runner will make sure your leash is waiting at the exit gate. A tent for shade and water will be available at the entry gate. At the World Championship, we would like to briefly interview each competitor as they finish their round and leave through the exit gate. Please expect a camera and interviewer to ask you a VERY quick question or two. Water will also be provided at the exit gate. Each competitor is expected to report to the entry gate when they are "on deck" and the next competitor up. Please do everything possible to ensure you are at the entry gate before the round ahead of you is done, to ensure the event flows smoothly.

Freestyle routines have a time limit of 120 seconds, or two minutes. Time will start when the first disc is released in an obvious throwing manner. Once time has begun, countdown of time remaining will be given at one minute, 30 seconds, 10 seconds, and time. Each team must perform for at least 90 seconds after time begins for their round to be scored and counted. Competitors are strongly encouraged to limit their pre-routines to less than 15 seconds.

E. Number of Discs

A maximum of nine discs may be used during any freestyle routine. Competitors starting their routines with more than nine discs will receive a penalty of minus one point.

F. Freestyle Music

Competitors must bring their own music and should present it to the AWI sound system staff before the competition starts. Competitors must mark their music clearly with their name and their dog's name and list the track number to be played. Competitors are encouraged to avoid music that is not suited for a family audience. Music must be presented as a CD or MP3 player. No cassette tapes will be allowed.

FOR THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Each competitor's music MUST be submitted to the Event Director, Matt DiAno, by September 17, 2011. You may email your song to mattdiano@yahoo.com or hand it to Matt on a CD or MP3 player.

While the AWI plans to have each competitor's music on a laptop, in running order, at the start of the 2011 World Championship, mechanical breakdowns do occur, so please have an extra copy of your music with you. The AWI will also have a complete backup of all music on site.

G. Costumes and Props

There are no clothing restrictions in the AWI freestyle competition, however, the use of a costume will not increase the likelihood of a higher score if it does not add to the overall entertainment value and crowd appeal of the freestyle routine. Competitors should be aware that use of a costume could actually result in a lower score if it hinders the successful execution of moves or disrupts the flow of the routine. Any costume that the head judge deems to pose a risk of injury to the dog will not be allowed during the competition. Canine costumes should be limited to bandanas or form-fitting coats, like Ashley himself used to wear. Any loose, flowing, or hanging costume on a dog that the head judge deems to pose a safety risk will not be allowed on the field.

The use of any type of prop—an item not worn on the body as clothing—is not permitted while the competing team is on the field. This rule applies regardless of whether the prop is used as part of a pre-routine (before time starts) or otherwise. If a competitor has a question regarding a costume or prop, it is highly recommended that the competitor consult with the judges in advance.

III. TOSS & CATCH RULES AND SCORING

A. Toss & Catch Rules

For the 2011 AWI World Championship and Toss & Catch World Championship, the Toss & Catch rules will be as follows:

In the Toss & Catch round, competitors are given 60 seconds in which to complete as many throws as possible with one disc. The canine and the thrower must be behind the

line before time starts. When the thrower indicates that he or she is ready, the line judge will signal to the announcer that the competitor is ready. At this time, the announcer will count down, “3-2-1-GO,” and will simultaneously start the clock with the word “GO.” Throwers must be behind the line for all throws, but they may move around the field freely between throws. If the thrower steps on or across the throwing line at the time of the release of the disc, the throw will not be scored. Countdown of time remaining will be given at 30 seconds, 10 seconds, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and time. Completions will be scored as long as the disc leaves the thrower’s hand prior to or simultaneous with the call of time.

The competitor may only have one disc in his or her hand at any time during the Toss & Catch round, but may bring one additional disc to the throwing line, which must be handed to the line judge before the round begins. If, during a round, the competitor believes the disc in use has become unsafe for the dog to catch because of a broken rim or a large tear, the disc may be handed to the line judge and exchanged for the second disc provided by the competitor. The damaged disc must be handed to the line judge before a replacement is given, and time will not be suspended during a disc change.

B. Toss & Catch Field Layout and Scoring

1. Field Layout

The field will be 50 yards in length, and players may choose to throw from either side. The field will be divided into four segments, with the first being 15 yards, the second and third being 10 yards, and the fourth being 15 yards. The width of the field will be 20 yards. Low profile cones will be placed 20 yards apart along the edge of the field. There will be no out-of-bounds along the sides or on the ends of the field.

The field is set up so that competitors have a choice to throw from either end of the field; however, the throwing direction cannot be changed once time has started. Competitors will enter and exit the field through the same gate, and should use whichever gate is closest to the throwing line the competitor wishes to throw from.

2. Point Zones

The field is measured in increments of yards from 0 to 50 yards, with scoring zones at 15, 25 and 35 yards, and points are awarded for successful completions as follows:

- 1 point: completed catch beyond 15 yards
- 2 points: completed catch beyond 25 yards
- 3 points: completed catch beyond 35 yards

Completions will be spotted in the zone where the trailing paw of the dog is located at the time of the catch. If the dog is in the air at the time of the catch, the completion will be spotted where the trailing paw of the dog is located when the dog lands. The trailing paw must be completely across the line to score in the higher score zone. If any part of the trailing paw is touching the line, the catch will be scored in the lower zone.

3. Leaping Bonus

A one-half point leaping bonus is awarded for each completion in which the dog clearly has all of its paws off the ground in a distinct jumping motion.

IV. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

A. Discs Allowed in Competition

The following discs are allowed for competition at all AWI competitions:

- All Hero dog disc style models (includes size 235, 215 and the Atom 185)
- All Wham-O fastback models (includes Eurablend)
- All Hyperlite disc models (includes Jawz)
- All Dogstar disc models

Any dog friendly “pup” (smaller diameter) disc will be allowed. If a competitor chooses to use a smaller diameter disc for the freestyle round(s) the competitor may choose to use a larger disc to use for the Toss & Catch round. Any special disc requests to accommodate special needs dogs should be made to the AWI Tournament Director and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Any dog-friendly disc not mentioned on this list will be subject to the approval of the head judge.

B. Dogs Allowed in Competition

Any physically sound dog may compete in the AWI World Championship Series, subject to the restrictions described below:

Due to the risk of injury because of underdeveloped anatomy, dogs must be at least one year old to be eligible to compete in the AWI World Championship Series Open Division. Dogs under one year of age may compete in the AWI Toss & Catch World Championship and any Toss & Catch division run at any Open Qualifier. The AWI realizes that it is difficult to determine the age of some rescue dogs, and does not want to bar any dogs from competition. The AWI requests that handlers use their best judgment in entering dogs of uncertain age, not vault dogs under the age of eighteen months, and above all BE SAFE.

Dogs in any stage of heat are not allowed at the competition site.

All dogs must have current Rabies vaccinations. Vaccinations for Parvovirus and Kennel Cough are strongly recommended.

C. Grounds for Disqualification

Disqualification will be at the sole discretion of the head judge. The following will be grounds for mandatory disqualification:

- Abuse and endangerment of an animal
- Female dogs in any stage of heat that are not reported
- Dogs under one year of age used in freestyle competition
- Overly aggressive canine behavior
- Dogs who are found not to be current on rabies vaccinations

Boisterous challenges of contest officials, abusive language or other inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior could result in the competitor's disqualification from the event.

Competitors are responsible for the safety and welfare of their dogs at all Ashley Whippet® Invitational events. Competing canines should be properly supervised and must be under the care and control of their handler at all times. Failure to do so could result in the disqualification of that team.

Any other violations of these rules may result in disqualification at the discretion of the head judge.

D. Registration Rules

The times for registration opening and closing will be announced before the date of each event. Please arrive on time, or you will not be allowed to register and compete. NO LATE REGISTRATION IS ALLOWED. Once registration is closed, no more entries will be accepted.

All competitors must sign the injury/illness waiver and full publicity release.

No substitutions of either canine or thrower will be allowed at the Ashley Whippet Invitational once the injury/illness waiver has been signed.

E. Interruptions in Freestyle and Toss & Catch Rounds

If, during a freestyle routine, there is an interruption or stop in the music, the competitor must cease performing at the signal of the head judge. If the head judge signals for the competitor to stop, the music must stop and the judges must cease scoring. The music should be re-cued in preparation to resume from the point of interruption. The head judge also reserves the right to allow a restart should he or she deem the interruption to be severe enough. The competitor shall then continue from the point of interruption once the head judge deems the interruption to be rectified.

If, during the freestyle routine or the Toss & Catch round, there is an unexpected interruption on the field, such as a loose dog, or debris on the field, time will stop at signal from the head judge, and the player will have one of three choices:

1. Resume where they left off in the routine, once the field is cleared
2. Start over right away after the field is cleared
3. Re-do their routine after all remaining teams have finished that round of freestyle

F. Nature Breaks

Canine handlers are REQUIRED to clean up if their dog takes a nature break. In consideration of other competitors, and the health and welfare of all competing animals, all competitors must take their competing canine for a nature break before they are called to go on deck. If a nature break takes place while a dog is on the competition field, time will continue to run and the competitor must continue their routine. An appropriate amount of time will be allowed to clean the affected area after time has expired.

G. Miscellaneous Rules

All participants should attend the players' meeting before the competition.

Only the competing canine, thrower, officials, and field staff are allowed on the field during competition.

No food or treats are allowed on the competition field at any time.

Teams may not bring items other than discs used for competition and their dogs onto the field of play.

Dogs may wear standard collars on the competition field for the purpose of leash attachment. No shock, pinch, or other types of training collars are permitted on the competition field.

Competitors must walk their canines on a leash to the on-deck area and when exiting the field of play. Canines must be KEPT ON A LEASH at all times, except when competing.

Any activity that could be considered distracting should be conducted out of range of the competition so competitors are not distracted.

DISCLAIMER: AT ALL LEVELS OF COMPETITION, OFFICIALS OF THE ASHLEY WHIPPET® INVITATIONAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE FORMAT, COMPETITION RULES, TIME ALLOTMENTS, ETC., AT THEIR DISCRETION TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS AND ENSURE THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF THE EVENT.

**Ashley Whippet Invitational
World Championship**

2011

Hero Disc USA