HUNGARIAN HOOPERS

RULEBOOK

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HOOPERS HUNGARY RULEBOOK

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Its purpose is to promote Hoopers as a dog sport in Hungary. The rulebook follows internationally accepted Hoopers rules.

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1. Introduction

Hoopers is a dog sport suitable for every healthy dog or a dog with a veterinary certificate confirming that it may participate. It provides an enjoyable experience for both the dog and the handler.

The objectives of Hoopers are:
• Dogs complete different obstacles in a specified order and within a specified time limit.
• Under the handler's remote guidance, the dog independently and continuously completes the obstacles without jumping over them.
• To develop the dog's intelligence and the mutual relationship between human and dog.

A prerequisite of the sport is a good relationship between the dog and the handler, resulting in perfect harmony. Therefore, teams must have basic training and basic obedience training.

1.1. Hoopers Hungary

The aim of Hoopers Hungary is to promote this dog sport in Hungary and to inform, bring together and support dog schools, clubs and sports associations interested in Hoopers.

Hoopers Hungary organises demonstrations, workshops and competitions, and provides training for trainers and judges.

1.2. Mission Statement

We are committed to ensuring that Hoopers instructors teach to a high standard and use the most modern training techniques. Every Hoopers Hungary instructor must promote responsible dog ownership.

1.3. General Information

At all official events accepted by Hoopers Hungary, every dog may participate provided that it is healthy. Dogs with disabilities require a veterinary certificate confirming that this type of physical activity is permitted. Orthopaedic aids (prostheses, orthoses, etc.) are permitted.

Every dog participating in competitions and events must have valid vaccinations and a registered microchip number.

The minimum age of the dog is 15 months in the FUN and H0 categories, and 18 months in all other categories.

For long-haired breeds, rubber bands or clips above the eyes are permitted. No collar, harness or any other item may be worn by the dog. Exceptions are assistance dogs and females in heat.

Females in heat may participate in competitions, training sessions and events, but they may start only from a mat of appropriate size or while wearing heat pants.

The dog owner is always responsible for any damage caused at competitions and other Hoopers-related events (training sessions, workshops). If the handler is under 15 years of age, an accompanying adult must be present at events and competitions.

2. Size Classes

SMALL: dogs with a height at the withers of up to 40 cm
LARGE: dogs with a height at the withers of 40.01 cm or more

2.1. Official Measurement

Dogs are classified into different size categories according to the size classes above. Dogs must be measured at their first competition so that they can compete in the appropriate size category.

Following measurement, they receive a registration card, which must be presented at competitions.

For the first measurement, the dog must be at least 15 months old. However, on the day of the dog's first official-category competition (H0), a final measurement is also required.

Dogs that have an official measurement in agility do not need to be measured again before their first Hoopers competition; the measurement certificate must be presented at their first official competition.

3. Performance Categories

There are five different competition levels:
• FUN
• H0
• H1
• H2
• H3

CATEGORIES — MINIMUM / MAXIMUM OBSTACLES
FUN 10 / 16
H0 14 / 18
H1 16 / 20
H2 18 / 22
H3 18 / 25

DISTANCE BETWEEN OBSTACLES / FURTHEST OBSTACLE
FUN 3–7 m / 5 m (5 × 5 m square)
H0 3–7 m / 10 m (3 × 3 m square)
H1 4–10 m / 11 m (3 × 3 m square)
H2 6–12 m / 16 m (3 × 3 m square)
H3 8–15 m / 20 m (3 × 3 m square)

3.1. FUN Category

An open category for all dogs (minimum age 15 months) that have not yet competed in H0. This is not an official competition class. A toy may be used during the run, but food rewards are not permitted. The handler may move with the dog within the designated area (see section 4.5). Leaving the designated area incurs penalty points – see 7.2 Course Faults.

The distance between obstacles is minimum 3 metres – maximum 7 metres.
The handler's designated area (square) is 5 × 5 m.
The course must contain a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 16 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.
At the start, assistance may be used to keep the dog in position.
The maximum distance between the designated area and the furthest obstacle is 5 metres.

3.2. H0 Category

An open category for all dogs (minimum age 15 months) that have not yet competed in H1. This is an official competition class. A toy may be used during the run, but food rewards are not permitted. The handler may move within the designated area (see section 4.5) and direct the dog. Leaving the designated area incurs penalty points – see 7.2 Course Faults.

The distance between obstacles is minimum 3 metres – maximum 7 metres.
The handler's designated area is a 3 × 3 m square or a circle with a diameter of 3 metres.
The course must contain a minimum of 14 and a maximum of 18 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.
At the start, assistance may not be used to keep the dog in position.
The maximum distance between the designated area and the furthest obstacle is 10 metres.

3.3. H1 Category

If the dog has reached the minimum age of 18 months and the requirements for moving to H1 (see section 8) are fulfilled, competitors may compete in H1. This is an official competition class.

Neither toys nor food rewards are permitted during the run. The handler must remain within the designated area (see section 4.5). Leaving the designated area incurs penalty points – see 7.2 Course Faults.

The distance between obstacles is minimum 4 metres – maximum 10 metres.
The course must contain a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 20 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.
At the start, assistance may not be used to keep the dog in position.
The handler's designated area is a 3 × 3 m square or a circle with a diameter of 3 metres.
The maximum distance between the designated area and the furthest obstacle is 11 metres.

3.4. H2 Category

If the requirements for moving to H2 (see section 8) are fulfilled, competitors may compete in H2. This is an official competition class.

Neither toys nor food rewards are permitted during the run. The handler must remain within the designated area (see section 4.5). Leaving the designated area incurs penalty points – see 7.2 Course Faults.

The distance between obstacles is minimum 6 metres – maximum 12 metres.
The course must contain a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 22 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.
The handler's designated area is a 3 × 3 m square or a circle with a diameter of 3 metres.
The maximum distance between the designated area and the furthest obstacle is 16 metres.

3.5. H3 Category

If the requirements for moving to H3 (see section 8) are fulfilled, competitors may compete in H3. This is an official competition class.

Neither toys nor food rewards are permitted during the run. The handler must remain within the designated area (see section 4.5). Leaving the designated area results in elimination.

The distance between obstacles is minimum 8 metres – maximum 15 metres.
The course must contain a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 25 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.
The handler's designated area is a 3 × 3 m square or a circle with a diameter of 3 metres.
The maximum distance between the designated area and the furthest obstacle is 20 metres.

4. Obstacles

- Hoop
- Tunnel
- Gate
- Barrel

The obstacles must never pose a danger to dogs and must comply with the following requirements.

4.1. Hoop

The lower part of the hoop is 85–90 cm, and its height is 90–105 cm. The hoop consists of two parts: the base and the arch. The width of the support legs is 60–75 cm. The curved part must always be made of plastic; the base may be plastic or aluminium. The upper part may not be made of metal. The base may not be higher than 2.5 cm, and the arch must be stable.

4.2. Tunnel

The tunnel is 1–3 m long and has a diameter of 80 cm. Tunnels must be weighted to ensure that they are stable and do not move. For dog-safety reasons, tunnels must not be fixed to the ground with hooks or stakes. Tunnels may only be used straight and may not be bent into a curve.

4.3. Gate

Gates may be made of aluminium or plastic and may be fitted with mesh with a maximum mesh size of 5 cm. Width: 100–120 cm; height: 80–105 cm. The width of the supporting legs may be no more than 60–75 cm. The gate mesh/material must be transparent enough to see through it. The centre of the gate may not be made of solid material.

The gate must be stable. The dog may complete the gate on either the inside or outside relative to the handler, according to the course line, and from H2 onwards it is also possible to run through between two gates. The gate may not be used for a sharp turn-back.

4.4. Barrel

Barrels may be made of soft (fabric) or hard (plastic) material; their diameter is 50–75 cm and their height is 50–110 cm. Barrels must be weighted from the inside as necessary, e.g. with sandbags. The dog must pass the barrel on the side where the number is located; if the number is on top of the barrel, it may be passed from either direction. The number must be placed in a safe position for the dog. Barrels must not be fixed to the ground with hooks.

4.5. Designated Area

The designated area (HA) may be a square (5 × 5 m – FUN, 3 × 3 m – H0–H3, 2 × 2 m – Open) or a circle (3 m diameter in H0–H3, 2 m diameter in Open).

The colour of the designated area must clearly contrast with the colour of the ground so that the judge or judge's assistant can easily determine whether the handler is inside the area or has stepped outside it.

If the boundary is not fully visible because of uneven terrain or tall grass, the organiser must provide an elevated position for the judge's assistant supervising the area.

For participants with limited mobility, possible modifications to the designated area must be agreed with the head judge before the competition.

Execution:
The handler is considered to be fully inside the designated area when both feet are on the ground inside the designated area (inside the circle/square). The handler must remain within the designated area throughout the entire run.

If one of the handler's feet completely crosses the line of the designated area, this is considered a course fault (FUN–H2) and results in elimination (H3). If both feet are completely outside the designated area, this results in elimination.

5. The Hoopers Course

The course surface must be non-slip and safe for both the dog and the handler.
Recommended course area: 20 × 30 metres.

Handler's designated area (square or circle):
• 5 × 5 m (FUN)
• 3 × 3 m (H0, H1, H2, H3)
• 2 × 2 m (Open)

The designated area does not have to be in the centre of the course; its location is always determined by the judge. In poor weather, the judge must assess the condition of the course and, in extreme cases, may interrupt the competition due to force majeure.

The course must always be fenced. Judges are responsible for designing the courses and must ensure continuous flow from one obstacle to the next. The minimum number of obstacles is determined by the category.

Before the runs, participants must be allowed to walk the course for a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 minutes. Depending on the number of participants, the competition organiser is responsible for determining the course-walk time.

Obstacle numbers must be positioned so that they are clearly visible to the handler from the designated area, but do not obstruct the dog's path. Every course must always start and finish with a Hoop. A maximum of 2 obstacles may be placed inside the handler's designated area.

6. COMPETITION PROCEDURE

Every competition must have a minimum of 2 runs per category. Within one competition day, only one handler may compete with a given dog.

The appointed judge builds a course appropriate to the level; after the course has been built, 5–10 minutes must always be provided for the course walk.

The competition begins when the judge signals with a whistle that the competitor may start the dog. Timing begins when the dog crosses the line of the first obstacle. The handler guides the dog through the obstacles according to the rules of the relevant category. The handler may not touch the obstacles. Training is not permitted on the competition course, either during a run or during breaks while the competition is in progress.

After elimination, the course may be completed after the faulted obstacle has been corrected, but there is no opportunity for further correction/training. Following elimination, the team may correct the fault, but must leave the course immediately when the maximum time expires; the judge indicates this with a whistle. If the judge considers that correcting/repeating the obstacle causes excessive stress to the dog, the judge will signal with a whistle, after which the team must immediately leave the course.

Before a run, judges may request a "white dog" to check the course line. A white dog runs outside the competition at the judge's request; its performance does not count towards the results list, so no additional entry or judging fee may be charged.

No competitor may challenge the judge's decision; judges' decisions are final.

6.1. Run Time

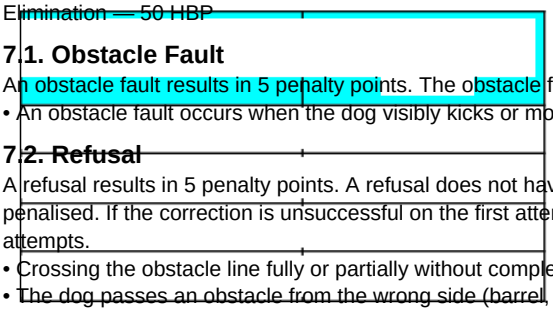
The maximum run time is 3 minutes in every size and performance category. Exceeding the time limit results in automatic elimination. The maximum time for dogs with disabilities is determined by the judge.

Timing begins when the dog crosses the line of the first obstacle, whether it completes the obstacle or passes beside the first obstacle. Timing stops when the dog passes through the last Hoop.

7. Scoring

Every team starts the run with 50 points, from which obstacle faults, course faults, eliminations and time faults are deducted.

Fault — Penalty points (HBP)
Obstacle fault — 5 HBP
Refusal — 5 HBP
Course fault — 20 HBP
Elimination — 50 HBP



7.1. Obstacle Fault

An obstacle fault results in 5 penalty points. The obstacle fault does not have to be corrected.
• An obstacle fault occurs when the dog visibly kicks or moves the obstacle in a way that is clearly visible to the judge.

7.2. Refusal

A refusal results in 5 penalty points. A refusal does not have to be corrected, but if the handler chooses to correct it, this is not penalised. If the correction is unsuccessful on the first attempt, no additional penalty points are awarded for this or subsequent attempts.
• Crossing the obstacle line fully or partially without completing the obstacle.
• The dog passes an obstacle from the wrong side (barrel, gate).
• If the dog crosses the start-obstacle line before the handler has taken their designated position, the team receives 5 penalty points (all categories).

The handler must have both feet inside the designated area!

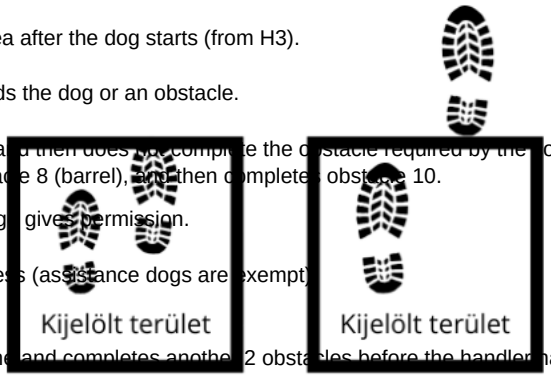
7.3. Course Fault

A course fault results in 20 penalty points.
• If the handler deliberately stops the dog on the course.
• After the dog starts, the handler leaves or steps outside the designated area (FUN–H2).

Leaving the area means the handler visibly steps outside the designated area, even with one foot.

7.4. Elimination

Elimination results in 50 penalty points. The following result in elimination:
• The team has accumulated 3 refusals.
• The team has accumulated 3 course faults (50 penalty points, not 3 × 20).
• The dog knocks over an obstacle that it would have had to complete again during the run.
• Completing any obstacle that is not the next obstacle in sequence.
• If the dog completes an obstacle other than the one indicated by the course line and this stops the photo-cell timing system, the team is automatically eliminated.
• The handler leaves the designated area after the dog starts (from H3).
• Use of a toy, except in H0 and FUN.
• The owner deliberately touches or holds the dog or an obstacle.
• The dog soils the course area.
• The dog skips one or more obstacles and then does not complete the obstacle required by the course line. Example: the dog runs the numbered 1–7 line, skips obstacle 8 (barrel), and then completes obstacle 10.



OK Nem OK

• The team starts the run before the judge gives permission.
• Use of food rewards.
• The dog runs wearing a collar or harness (assistance dogs are exempt).
• Exceeding the maximum time (MT).
• The dog leaves the course area.
• If the dog crosses the start-obstacle line and completes another 2 obstacles before the handler has taken their designated position, the team is eliminated. The handler must have both feet inside the designated area! (FUN–H3)

7.5. Elimination from the Entire Competition

• Rough behaviour towards the dog during the competition (not only during the run, but anywhere within the entire competition area).

7.6. Placings

The competition organiser may award teams according to the competition announcement as follows:
1. The overall winner of a category, based on two runs, is the team that loses the fewest points. In case of a tie, the faster team is placed higher based on the combined time of the two runs.
2. For individual-run awards, the team that loses the fewest points in that run is placed higher. In case of a tie, the faster team is placed higher.

8. Moving Up a Level

After competing in H0 or a higher category, it is no longer possible to move back to FUN.

To move up to a higher category, “qualifications” must be earned. Qualifications are earned by the team per run. A qualification is earned by a specific team. If a dog competes with more than one handler, only the team’s joint clear runs count towards moving up a level.

A qualification is achieved when the following conditions are met:
• H0 → H1: 3 clear runs, on courses designed by at least 2 different judges.
• H1 → H2: 5 clear runs, on courses designed by at least 2 different judges.
• H2 → H3: 7 clear runs, on courses designed by at least 3 different judges.

After moving up a level, the team may compete in the lower category on a further 3 competition days. After that, it must move up a level. Checking this is the responsibility of the competition organiser, who can verify it on the HH website.

Counting results achieved at foreign competitions:
If a competitor completes a clear run at a foreign competition, it may count towards moving up a level provided that the competitor sends the results list to hoopershungary@gmail.com, from which the clear run can be verified.

http://www.hoopershungary.hu/2023-evi-verseny-eredmenyek/

If a competitor fulfils the requirements for moving up a level with their first run on a competition day, they must nevertheless compete in the category in which they originally entered that competition.

Example:
When moving from H0 to H1, if a competitor completes both runs clear at one competition, they have earned 2 qualifications that day. They therefore need one further qualification, which they may obtain at the next competition or competition day. In every case, the condition must be met that the 3 clear runs are completed on courses designed by at least two different judges.

Conversion of qualifications from the previous system:
Qualifications already earned (previously, points earned based on the two runs) remain valid. These must be supplemented in the new system by as many clear runs as are required to move up from the relevant category.

Example – Competitor 1:
In the old system, one qualification (100 points) represented 2 clear runs. This one qualification remains valid, so the competitor needs 2 further qualifications, i.e. 2 further clear runs, to move up.

Example – Competitor 2:
In the old system, the competitor earned 2 qualifications (60-point qualifications). These 2 qualifications remain valid, so the competitor needs one further qualification = 1 clear run to move up.

During the conversion from the old system, proportional differences may arise in the number of runs required for a qualification, but this is considered the fairest way of transferring from one system to the other.

Performance Category Selection:

A handler may retain the performance category they have reached when moving up a level if the dog has reached 8 years of age and/or has a permanent disability. In this case, the competitor may submit a written request to continue permanently competing in a previously achieved category.

Dog with a Disability:

Dogs with health-related disabilities (wheelchair users, partially paralysed dogs, dogs without one or more limbs, deaf or partially deaf dogs, blind or partially blind dogs) may compete. Orthopaedic aids (prostheses, orthoses, etc.) are permitted at competitions. Incontinent dogs must wear an incontinence diaper, incontinence belt, or diaper.

9. Additional Runs (Unofficial Categories)

For additional runs, the organiser must specify the rules of the additional run in the competition announcement.

9.1. Hoop Competition

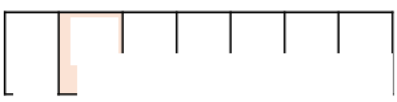
The course may contain Hoop obstacles only. Maximum 14 obstacles.

9.2. Tunnel Competition

A course consisting mainly of tunnels, but it may also contain barrels (for changing direction) and Hoops (start and finish obstacles). Maximum 14 obstacles.

9.3. Team Competition

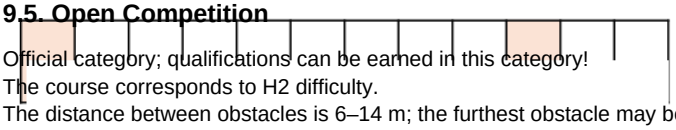
Two or three handlers and two or three dogs form a team (according to the competition announcement). They complete the run one after another; there is no changeover between the teams. Faults and times are added together. The team must complete the run with the fewest faults in the shortest time.



9.4. Barrel Competition

A course consisting mainly of barrels, but the start and finish obstacles must be Hoops. Maximum 14 obstacles.

9.5. Open Competition



Official category; qualifications can be earned in this category!
The course corresponds to H2 difficulty.
The distance between obstacles is 6–14 m; the furthest obstacle may be 16 m from the square/designated area (3 × 3 m or 2 × 2 m).
The course must contain a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 25 obstacles; an obstacle may appear more than once on the course.

In the Open category, the designated area may be square or circular, 3 × 3 m or 2 × 2 m in size/diameter. The competition organiser must state in the competition announcement which one will be used.

10. Force Majeure

An event or events beyond the handler's control that adversely affect the team (e.g. a dog runs onto the course, an obstacle falls over because it is blown by the wind). The judge may stop the competitor, and once the obstacle has been restored or the interfering factor has been eliminated, the judge restarts the team from the start. Faults incurred before the stoppage remain. No other fault may be incurred up to that point. However, the handler must complete the course to the best of their ability. Further faults may only be incurred from the point where the run was stopped.

11. Competition Organisation

Any club, organisation or private individual may request permission from Hoopers Hungary to organise competitions according to the Hoopers Hungary rules. Competitions receiving permission are considered official competitions, and results achieved at such competitions count towards moving up a level.

In all cases, the competition organiser decides which categories to offer at an event, including both official and unofficial runs.

At every competition, the organiser must provide the following:
• Access to the Hoopers Hungary rulebook.
• Start list and results list available online as well.
• Equipment complying with the Hoopers Hungary rulebook.
• A suitable-quality course.
• Optional electronic timing system.
• Backup timing – stopwatch.

The organiser must also ensure:
• After moving up a level, the team may compete on a further 3 competition days in the lower category. After that, it must move up a level. Checking this is the organiser's responsibility and can be verified on the HH website.
• http://www.hoopershungary.hu/2023-evi-verseny-eredmenyek/
• Awards.
• A qualified judge for the runs – official Hoopers Hungary judges or official judges from any other country are accepted.
• In the case of a foreign judge, the competition organiser is responsible for ensuring that judging is conducted according to the Hoopers Hungary rulebook.
• Assistants for the smooth running of the competition (2 scribes, stopwatch timekeeper, course assistants).
• At the judge's request, the assistant provided by the competition organiser is responsible for observing whether the handler leaves the square.
• The organiser is obliged to hold a formal awards ceremony and announce the teams achieving podium places according to the competition announcement.
• The exclusive right to organise the Hungarian National Hoopers Championship belongs to Hoopers Hungary KSE; this right may be transferred to another competition organiser.

A written request for permission to organise a competition must be submitted to Hoopers Hungary at hoopershungary@gmail.com.

The request must include:
• The competition venue.
• The competition date.
• The runs/categories announced.
• The name(s) of the judge(s) invited.
• The maximum number of entries.

12. Participation of Foreign Competitors in Competitions Accepted by Hoopers Hungary

A foreign competitor may compete in a Hoopers Hungary accepted competition in the category corresponding to the level achieved in their own country. They must verify their performance level at registration with a performance book or certificate issued by their country; an electronic version of this certificate is also accepted.

13. Organisation

The following systems are currently under development by Hoopers Hungary KSE:
• Registration process for Hoopers competitors (Hoopresult.com).
• Performance Books in electronic format (Hoopresult.com).
• Electronic recording of competitions and competition results (Hoopresult.com).

14. Awards issued by Hoopers Hungary KSE in H3 category:

• Bronze of Hoopers Dog – after 10 clear H3 runs.
• Silver of Hoopers Dog – after 25 clear H3 runs.
• Master of Hoopers Dog – after 50 clear H3 runs.