THE CARTOON BOOK OF

SHEEPDOG TRIALS



ANIMAL

SPORT ON EARTH

Sport on Earth Books · The Animal sports Family

Original illustrations · No characters were copied in the making of this book

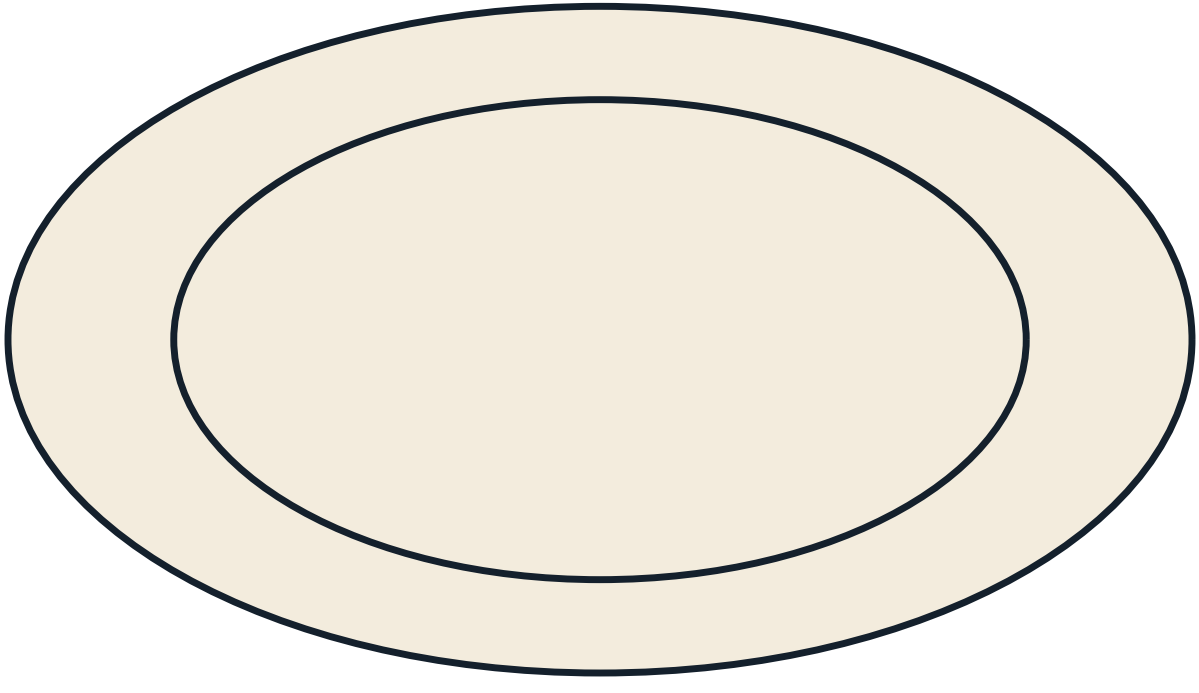
Meet Sheepdog Trials!

Dogs herd sheep through set courses.



Where It Is Played

A large open field course with fetch and drive gates, a shedding ring and a pen; qualifying courses use a group of sheep let out several hundred yards from the handler's post.



The Gear

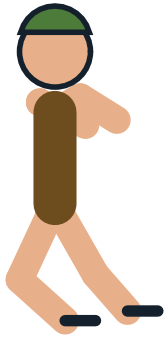
A trained sheepdog (usually a Border Collie), a shepherd's crook and whistle; sheep, a pen and course gates are provided by the organisers.





How It Starts

Train a young sheepdog on basic commands (come-bye, away, lie down, that'll do) with sheep under an experienced handler, then enter nursery and novice trials.



How to Play

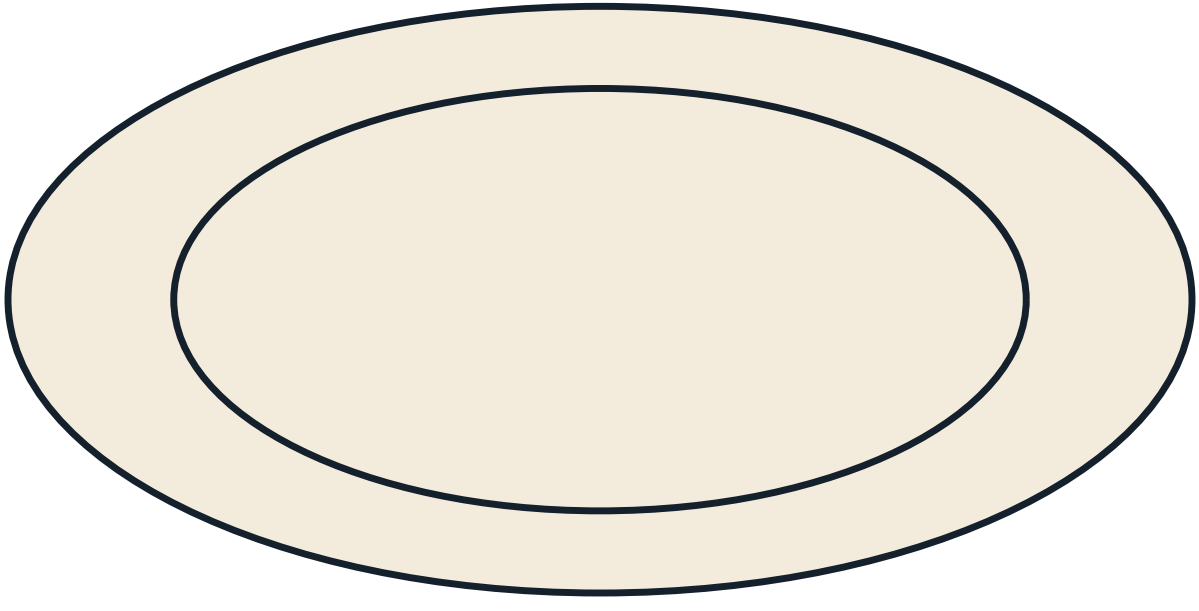
- Format: the objective is to test the ability of a dog, working as a team with its handler, to manage sheep as in daily shepherding work — through Gathering, Driving, Shedding, Penning and Singling phases on a set course within a time limit.
- Scoring (National / International qualifying course): Outrun 20 points, Lifting 10, Fetching 20, Driving 30, Shedding 10, Penning 10 and Single 10 — a total of 110 points; no points are awarded for any phase not completed within the prescribed time limit.
- Winning: the dog and handler with the highest aggregate points total wins; judges mark each phase against the ISDS common standard and their decision is final.
- In the Outrun the dog runs out, wide of the sheep, to a point behind them without disturbing them; the Lift then moves the sheep off steadily towards the handler.

More of the Game

- In the Fetch the dog brings the sheep directly to and through the fetch gates to the handler at the post; in the Drive the dog drives the sheep away through the drive gates and across the course as directed.
- In Shedding the dog must separate a designated number of sheep from the group and hold them away; in Penning the dog works the sheep into the pen while the handler works the gate / rope.
- In the Single the dog must separate one designated sheep and prove it can keep that single sheep away from the remainder to the judges' satisfaction.
- Handlers direct the dog by voice and whistle commands from the handler's post (except at the pen and shed) and may not enter the course or touch the sheep or dog during the run.

The Shape of a Match

One handler and dog work a small group of sheep through outrun, lift, fetch, drive, shed, pen and single phases against the clock; highest points out of 110 wins.



More of the Animal sports Family

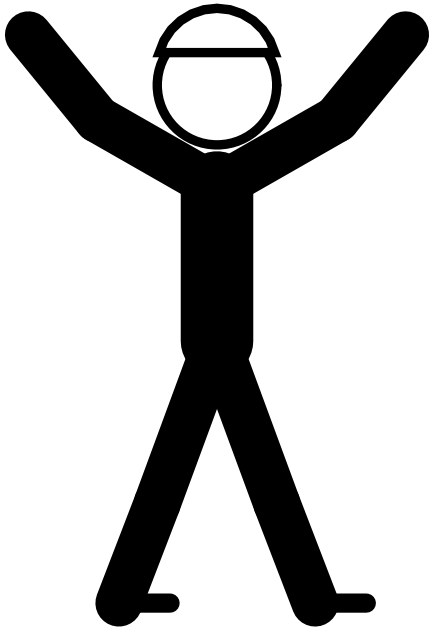
- Horse Racing — Thoroughbred and harness racing, with the Triple Crown and Breeders' Cup.
- Rodeo and Bull Riding — PBR and rodeo circuits of riding events.
- Polo — Mounted team game; Argentina is the leading nation.
- Polocrosse — Polo and lacrosse hybrid on horseback.
- Cycle Polo — Polo played on bicycles.
- Dog Agility — Dogs run obstacle courses with handlers.

A Note on the Rules

Sheepdog trials are governed by the ISDS under a traditional judged framework (outrun, lift, fetch, drive, pen, shed — points deducted against an ideal) essentially unchanged since the trial system's 19th-century formalisation. No major documented rule change is carried for sheepdog trials.

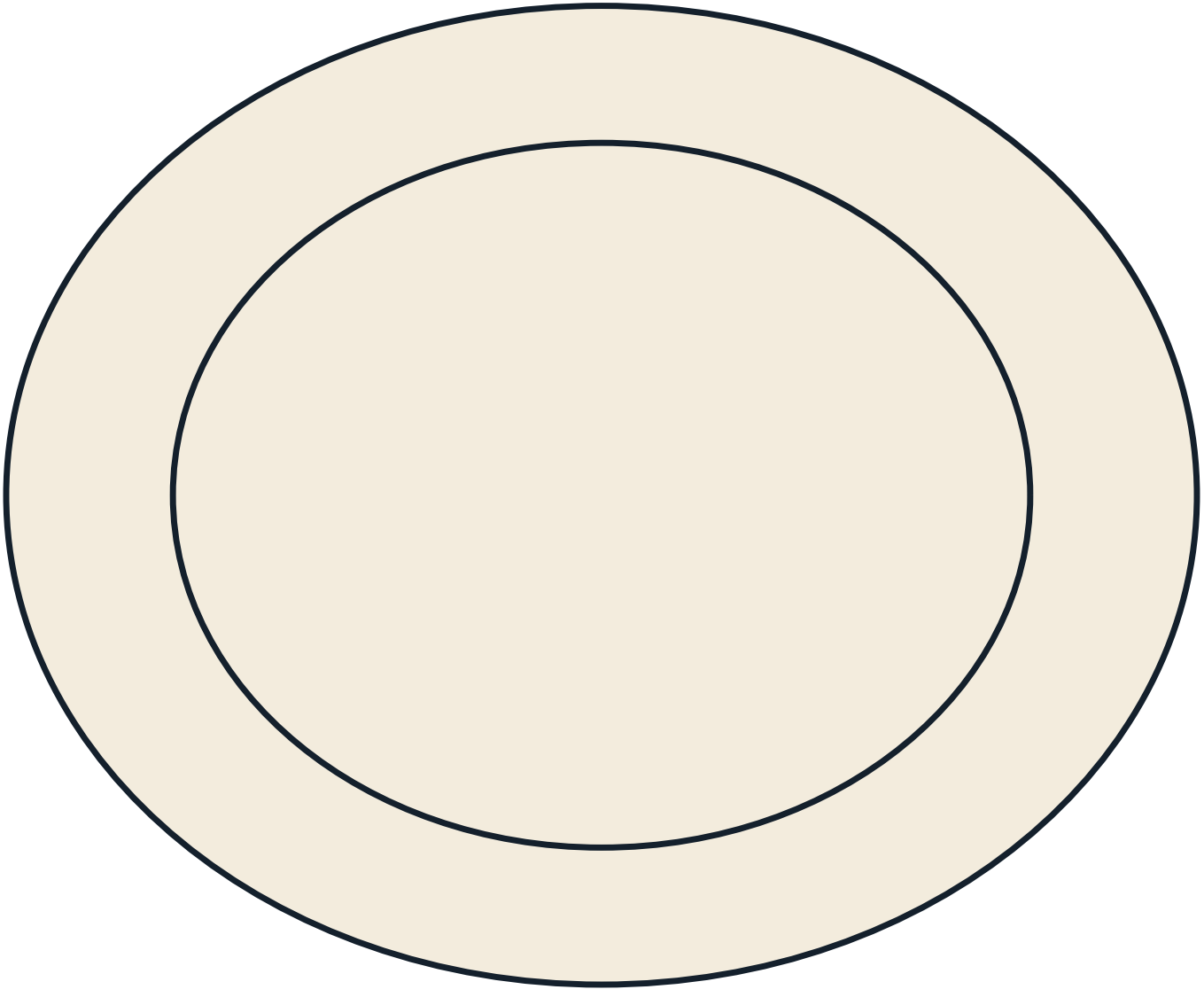


Colour the Action

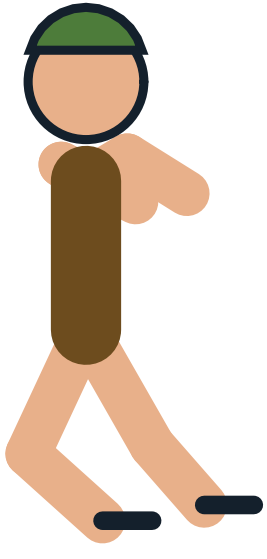


Psst — this page is a colouring page!

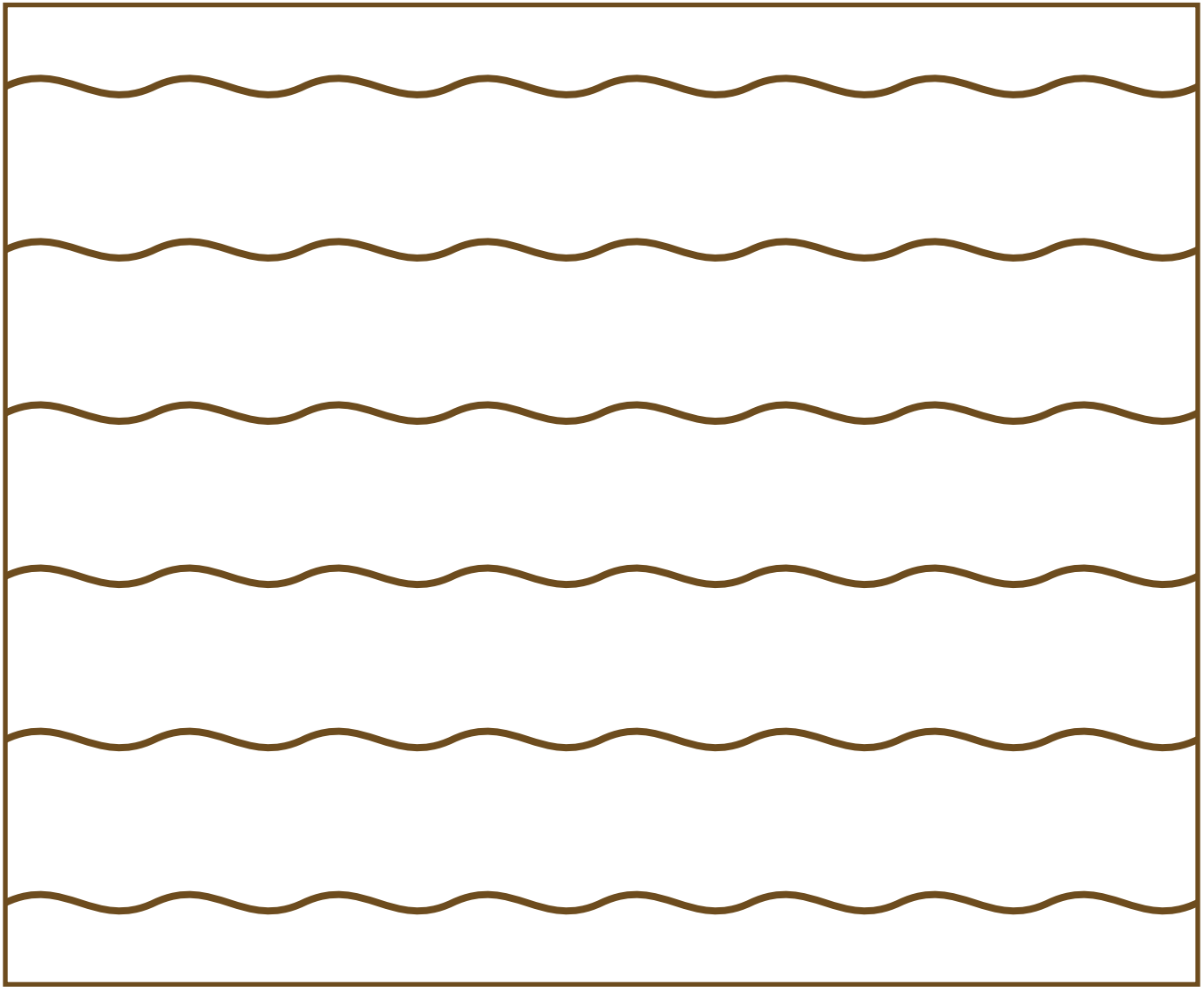
The Sport Today



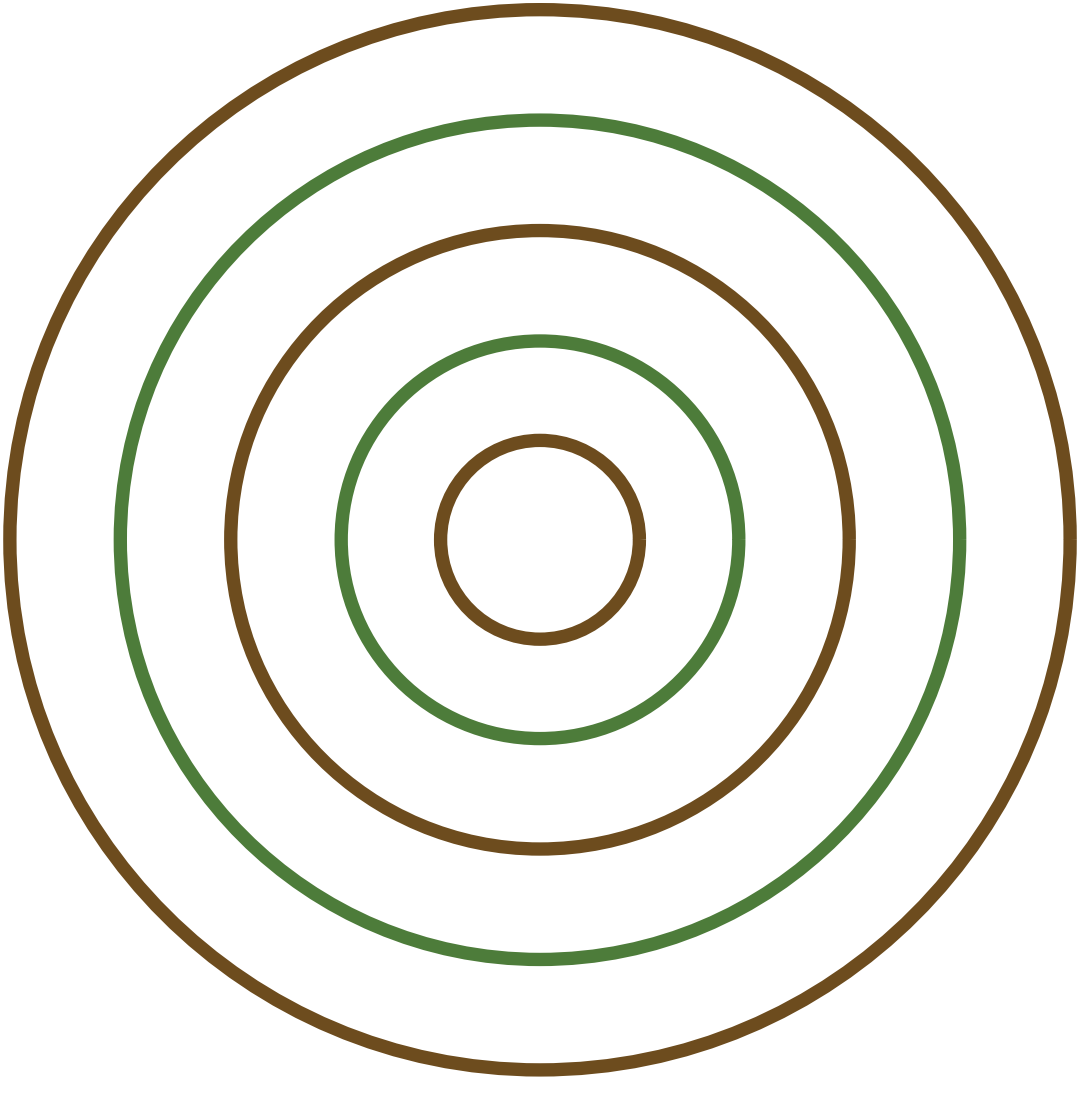
At School and College



Play It Near You



Through the Year

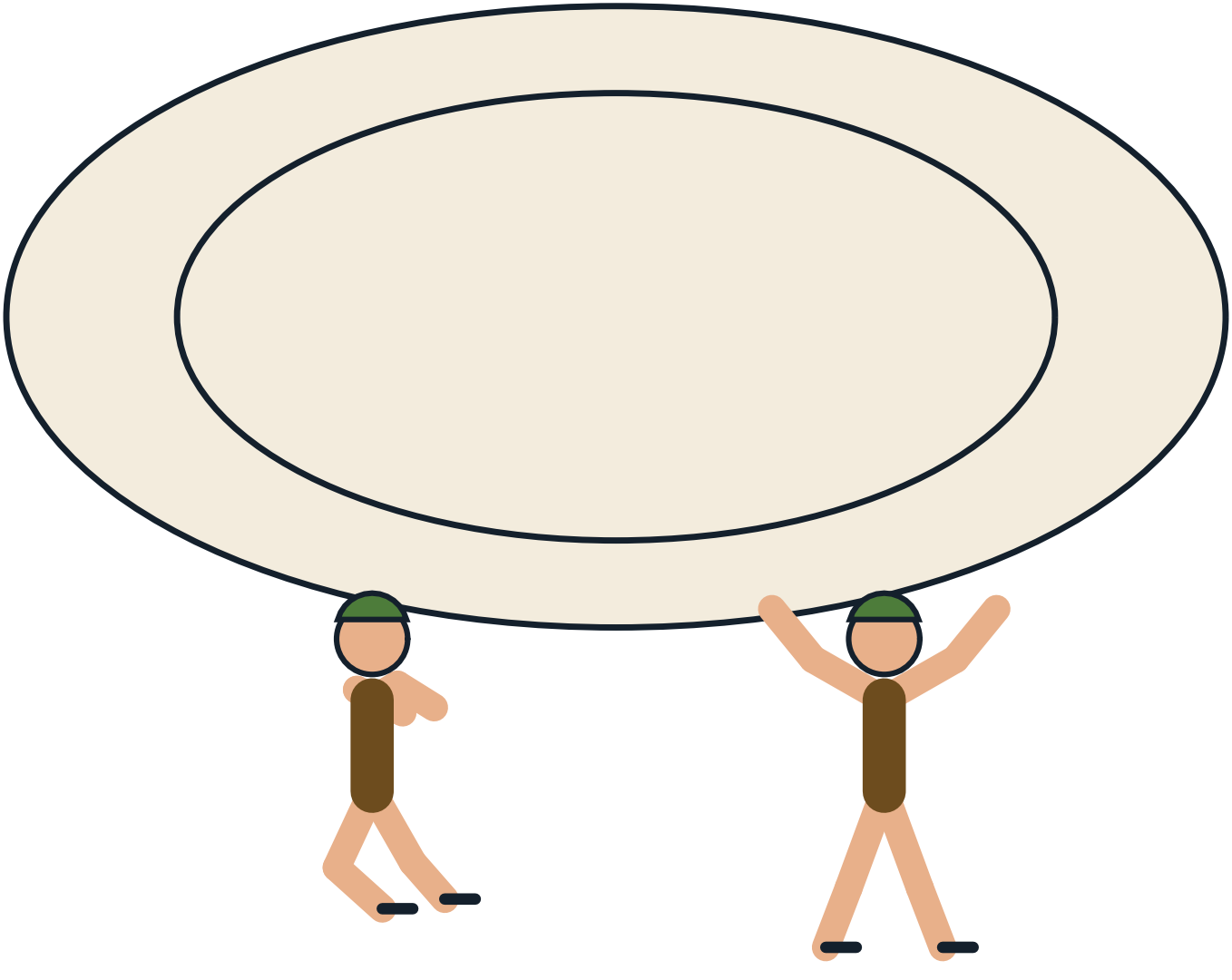


The Animal sports Family

Every sport belongs to a family of games that share its shapes and skills. Here are some of this book's closest relatives — each with a cartoon book and a colouring book of its own.

- Horse Racing — Thoroughbred and harness racing, with the Triple Crown and Breeders' Cup.
- Rodeo and Bull Riding — PBR and rodeo circuits of riding events.
- Polo — Mounted team game; Argentina is the leading nation.
- Polocrosse — Polo and lacrosse hybrid on horseback.
- Cycle Polo — Polo played on bicycles.

Game Day!



The Sport on Earth Mark

Every sport on Sport on Earth carries its own original mark, drawn for the site. Here is this sport's.



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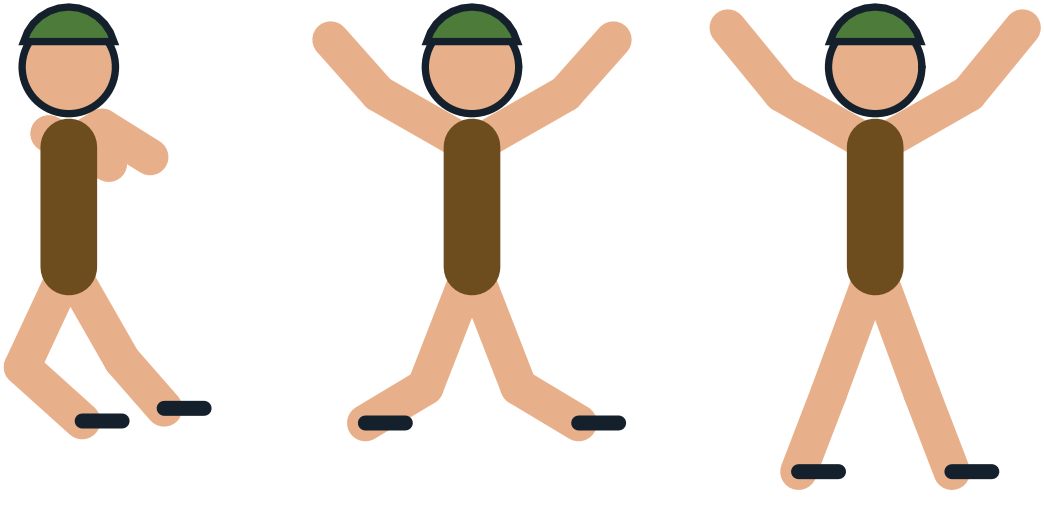
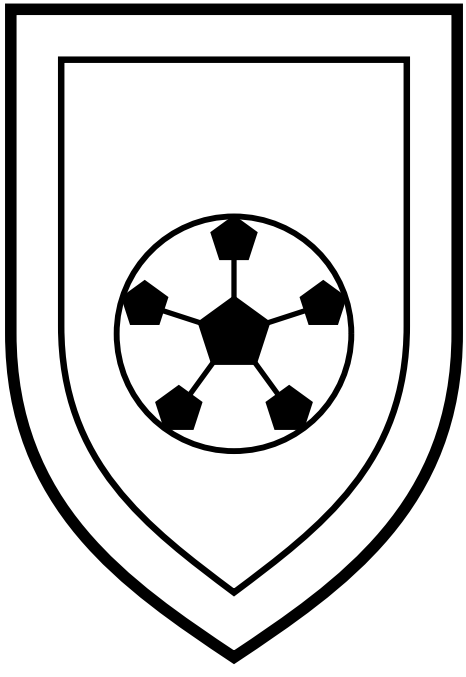
Moves of the Game



Design a Badge



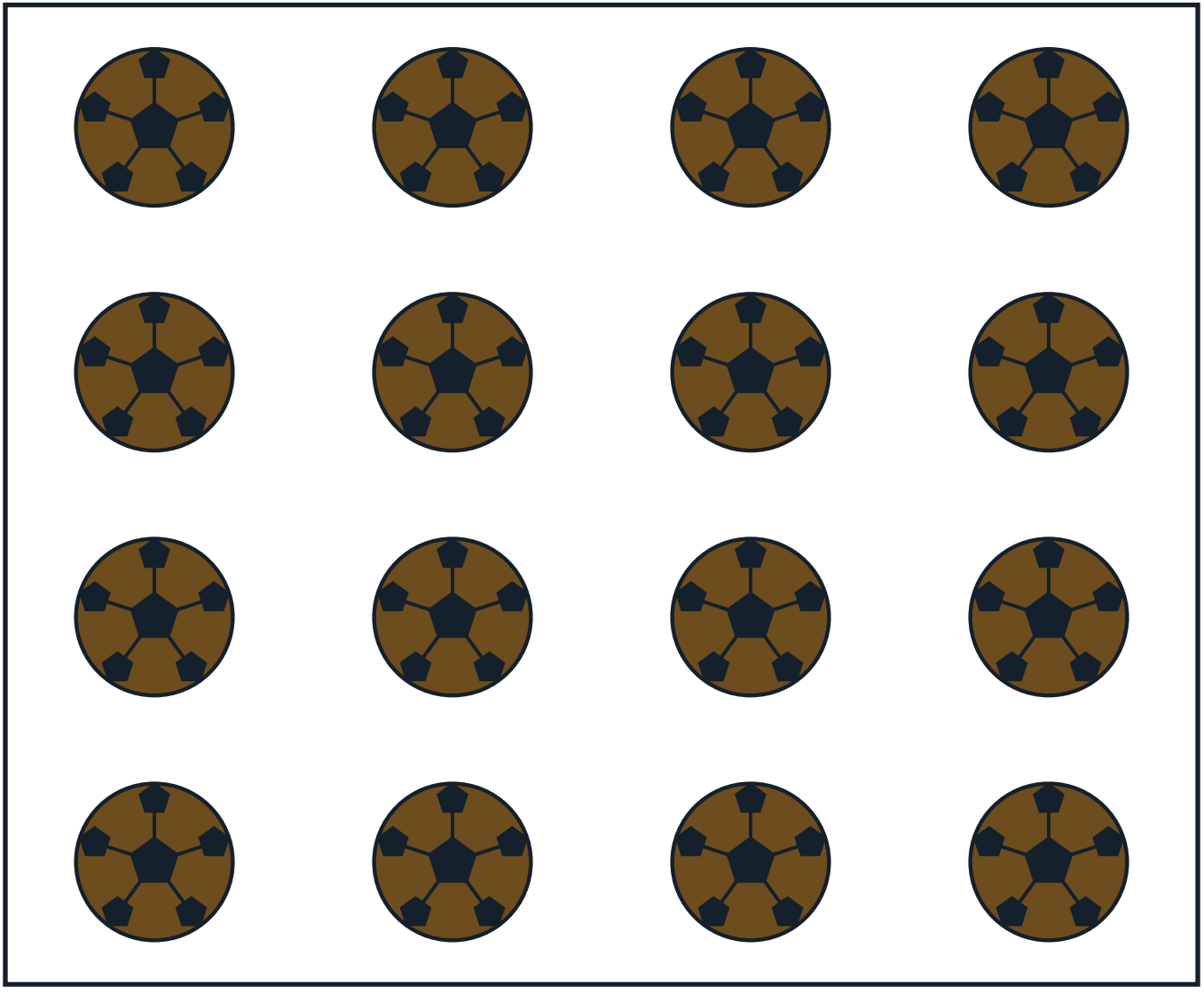
Draw and colour a badge for your own team.

The Gear Parade

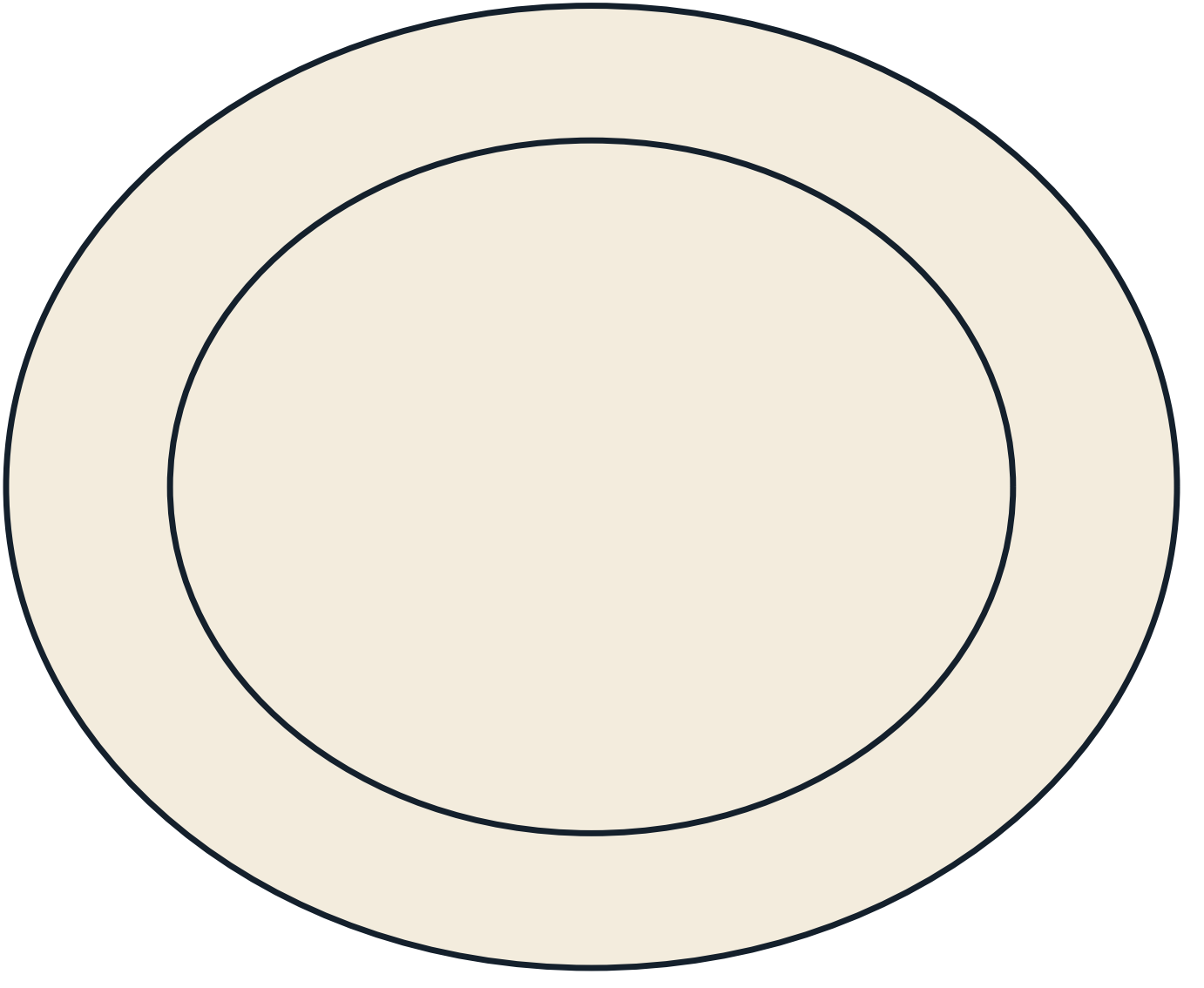




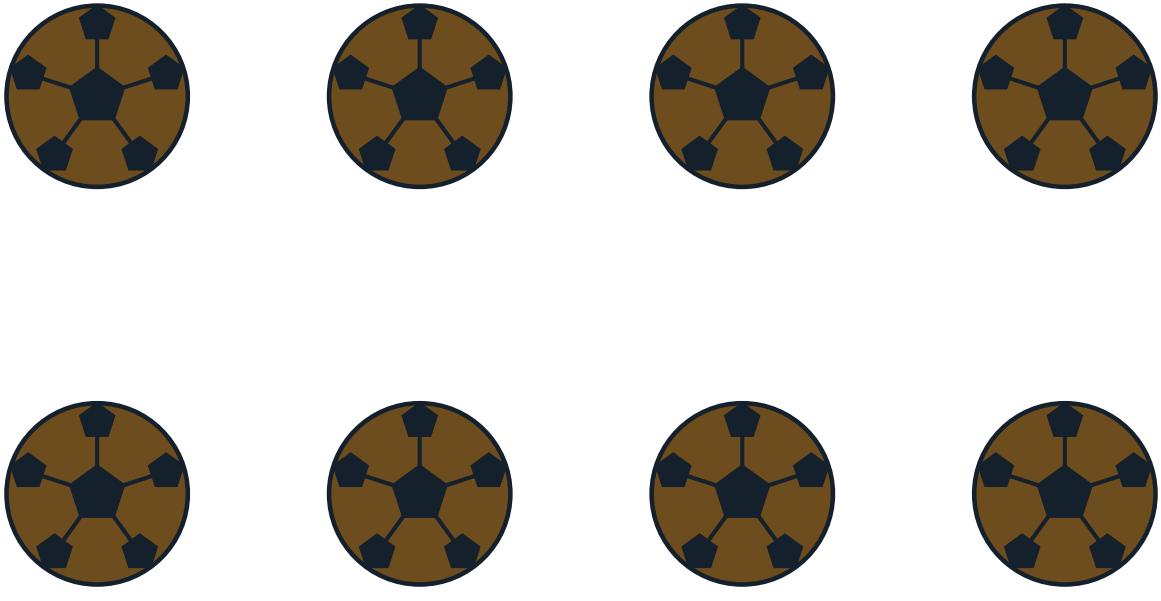
Pattern Play



The Arena From Above



Count the Balls!



How many can you count? Write the number here: _____

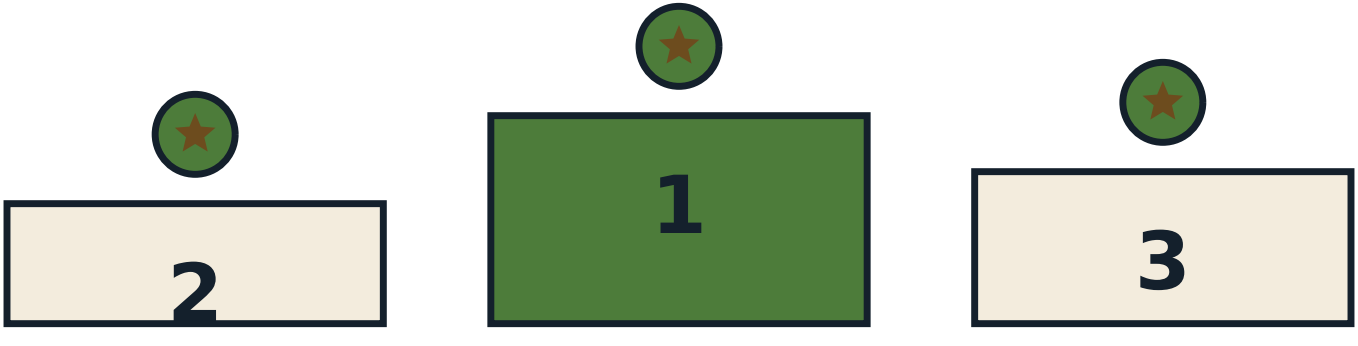
My Favourite Part of Sheepdog Trials

Gear Close-Up

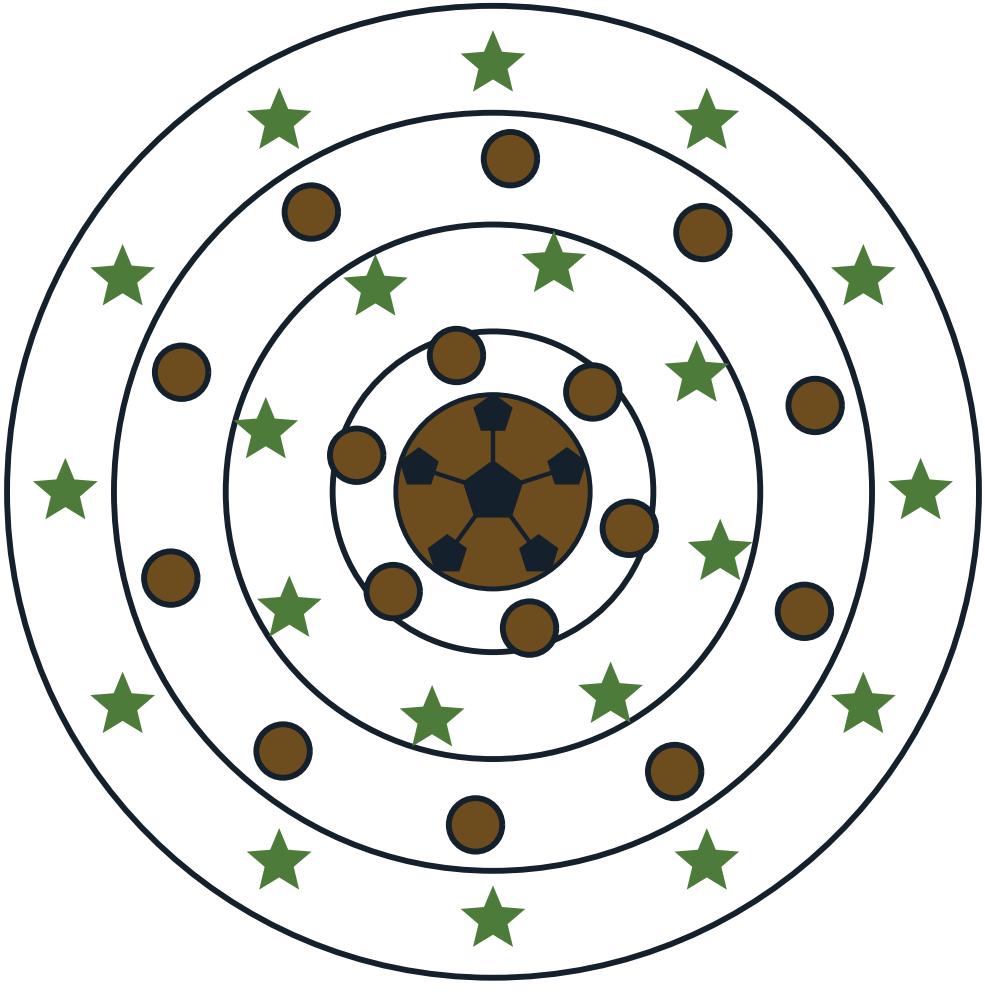


Champions!





The Mandala of the Game



About This Book

Governing body: International Sheep Dog Society (ISDS). Laws edition the site's rules file follows: ISDS Rules for Trials, revised 2026 (document updated 2010, with motions to 2026). Everything in this book comes from Sport on Earth's own verified sport files — the same words you can read on the sport's page at Sport on Earth. The illustrations are original artwork drawn by computer for this book series. They are not pictures of real players, real teams or anybody else's characters.

More Books in the Family

- The Cartoon Book of Horse Racing
- The Cartoon Book of Rodeo and Bull Riding
- The Cartoon Book of Polo
- The Cartoon Book of Polocrosse
- The Cartoon Book of Cycle Polo
- The Cartoon Book of Dog Agility
- The Horse Racing Colouring Book
- The Rodeo and Bull Riding Colouring Book

My Notes

Sheepdog Trials

The Cartoon Book of Sheepdog Trials — a Sport on Earth Book.

Text from Sport on Earth's verified sport files. Illustrations: original programmatic artwork created for this series, including the site's own sport mark. No copyrighted characters, team logos or player likenesses appear in this book.

Collect the whole shelf: a cartoon book and a colouring book for every one of the 442 sports and games on Sport on Earth.

