Poised for Success Freestyle

Guide to the Dynamic Division

For Performer (Regular) and Laude Classes

Updated: 10/20/2023
Rules have been changed for the Laude class for non-dog animals

© Kristine C. Hammar, 2019

Table of Contents

Page	
3	Introduction to the Dynamic Division
4	Dynamic Division Titling Requirements
4	Titling Tracks
5	Laude Class – Dynamic Division
5	Laude Class – Non-Dog Animals
6	General Rules – Dynamic Division
7	Dynamic Division Performance Categories

Performance Categories

8	Freestyle Dance
8	Hand Held Prop
9	Move to the Beat
10	Poised for Success Style Heelwork-to-Music
11	Holiday Theme
11	Live Demonstration
12	Trick It Up
12	The Plot Thickens
13	International Theme
13	Showcase of Precision
13	Distance
14	Something About Your Dog
14	Transition Showcase
14	The Hills Are Alive
15	Theme Through Choreography
15	Theme Through Setting
16	Dynamic Division Judging Criteria
17	Qualifying Submissions
17	Awards

Introduction to the Dynamic Division

Congratulations!! Completion of the Overture, Melody, and Harmony Divisions of the Poised for Success Freestyle Titling Program allows you and your dog eligible to participate in the Dynamic Division.

In contrast to the earlier Divisions of the Program, there are no longer Handling, Technical, and Artistry legs in the Dynamic Division. You and your dog are now ready to take the skills that you learned through completion of the earlier divisions and put them together to create your own short, or partial, choreographed Freestyle performances!

The Dynamic Division is designed to serve as a transition from preparing submissions made up of various video clips to creating and filming Freestyle performances.

In the Dynamic Division, short, or partial, performances will be created and filmed to meet criteria for a particular category. Each Leg for this category is earned through submission of performances in **two** different categories.

In addition to fulfilling the criteria for the category chosen, teams will be assessed on criteria developed in the earlier Divisions of the Titling Program:

Handling

- Engagement and rapport between dog and handler
- Clear and supportive handling
- Clarity of cues
- Cue style chosen is appropriate to the dog
- Props (if used) allow the dog to perform to his or her strengths

Technical

- Dog demonstrates fluency and confidence in movements and moves included in the performance
- Movements and moves allow the dog to perform to his or her strengths

Artistry

- Team demonstrates flow in transition from movement to moves (sequencing)
- Use of performance space
- Handler maintains natural body language, appropriate to the category, throughout performance
- Artistic use of transition moves
- Overall quality of choreography
- Use of Attire, Props, Decoration

Dynamic Division Titling Requirements

To title in the Dynamic Division, PFS-D, **three Legs** must be earned.

Each leg in this Division consists of the performance of two 45 second to 1:30 minute long choreographed performances.

The performances need not be "complete" routines – that comes at the "Master Performer" Level. These performances can begin "in progress", and can "cut off" without an opening or closing pose.

These performances are to be created to meet the criteria described from the categories described below. For each Leg, two different categories must be used. And, within the Dynamic Division, six different categories must be completed. The performances must also be distinct from one another, using different music. You will have the opportunity to build on any, or all, of these in the Master Performer Division, where use of music, categories, choreography, and concepts may be repeated from the Dynamic Division.

Titling Tracks

Two separate titling tracks exist within the Dynamic Division.

Theater: This titling track replicates the "live performance" Freestyle experience. In this titling track, no editing is permitted, other than to trim the beginning and end of the performance video.

Treating during the performance is permitted. (See "Treats and Toys" below)

Music overlay is permitted for only two of the six performances.

Silver Screen: This titling track represents the "video" Freestyle experience. In this titling track, editing is permitted. You may perform the routine in segments and edit them together.

Treating during the performance is not permitted (since the instance of giving treats can be edited out), although you may have treats or toys concealed on you.

Music overlay is permitted for all six performances.

However, for the first three performances submitted, a separate clip from the performance must be submitted separately with the original audio to demonstrate that you and your dog were actually performing to the music used in the routine. This clip need only be a 10 – 15 second segment, and it will not be judged.

All other rules and guidelines for the Dynamic Division are the same for the two titling tracks.

Teams who participate in the Theater Titling Track will earn the Title: PFS-TH-D

Teams who participate in the Silver Screen Titling Track will earn the Title: PFS-SS-D

Teams may choose to complete both titling tracks. However, completion of only one is necessary to progress to the Master Performer Division.

Laude Class – Dynamic Division - Dogs

Because there is a great deal of flexibility already built into the Dynamic Division performance criteria, including the option to participate in the Silver Screen track, which provides an opportunity to film in shorter segments, there are no specific adaptations or alterations to the guidelines for the Dynamic Division **for dogs** in the Laude Class.

That said, the performances of Laude Class dogs will be judged in light of the dog's age and particular limitations, with less of an expectation to see technical components, and more of hope to see the dog and handler enjoying themselves to the music.

Handlers of dogs performing in the Laude Class are encouraged to focus on the dog's comfort level, enjoyment, and performance of skills that the dog performs willingly. Use of props is particularly encouraged, if incorporation of props enhances the dog's motivation and enjoyment level.

Laude Class – Dynamic Division – Other Animals

Handlers of animals other than dogs (sheep, horses, chickens, etc.) may have reinforcers visible to the animal, and may even have food in-hand throughout a Dynamic Division performance in both the Theater and Silver Screen tracks.

We recognize at Poised for Success that most other animals have not been bred to work with humans in the exact same way that dogs have been, and that training other types of animals to work with a high level of engagement over a long duration might be a challenge that far exceeds that which is undertaken by dog handers.

Handlers of animals other than dogs are encouraged to focus on artistry and creativity in their Dynamic performances using whatever reinforcers are necessary to help their dance partners maintain the best engagement and focus possible.

General Rules – Dynamic Division

Music

Since you and your dog are now performing segments of Freestyle routines, it is expected that you are performing to music in all submissions.

Because sometimes technical difficulties happen, in the Theater Titling Track, a music overlay will be permitted for any two of the six performances that a team will create. Music overlay is not required, but permitted for two of the performances.

However, for at least four of the performances, the music must be playing audibly on the video, and music overlay may not be included.

In the Silver Screen Titling Track, music overlay is expected, since pieces of the performance will be edited together. However, for your first three submissions, a separate video clip (about 10 – 15 seconds) from the performance is to be submitted to demonstrate that you and your dog were performing to the music that you placed on the performance video.

Treats and Toys

You may conceal treats or toys in a pocket, or in a container outside of the performance area (example: on a shelf).

In the Theater Titling Track, you may reinforce with food during the performance at any time.

It is recommended that you try to build instances of treat delivery into the performance so the flow of the performance is not interrupted in a major way. Example: Your dog sits, you walk around the dog, reach into the pocket and treat upon return, the two of you break out into movement together. It is fine if there is a slight pause for treating, or if you give your dog a second to eat the treat.

Food must be concealed at all times, except when actually being delivered to the dog. Luring with food is not permitted at any time. Food may not be carried in a hand or mouth throughout the performance.

Unless it can be done in a way that does not interrupt the flow of the routine, reinforcing with a toy during a performance is not recommended. However, you may carry a toy (concealed) and reinforce at the end.

In the Silver Screen Titling Track, food or toys may be carried, but it is expected that all instances of reinforcing be edited out of the final video.

Performance Categories

In this Division, each performance will be crafted to meet the criteria specified for a specific category (listed below)

Please pay careful attention to the specific instructions presented for each of the Dynamic Division categories. This criteria must be met **in addition to** the overall performance criteria (applicable to all performances in this Division).

Performance Duration

Minimum time for each performance in this Division is 45 seconds. That is firm. Please be sure to perform for at least 45 seconds!

Maximum time for each performance in this Division is 1 minute and 30 seconds. I will make allowance for 3 – 4 seconds of extra time, but please limit yourself, as precisely as possible, to 1:30.

In this Division, it is acceptable for your performance to cut off at an "illogical" place. These performances may be full routines, complete with opening and closing pose, but in this Division they are not required to be! You may choose to cut into the performance in medias res, and you may choose to cut off the performance before it is complete. Only that which is presented will be judged.

In the Master Performer Division, full performances will be expected.

However, only that which is presented will be judged! Be sure that all elements needed to meet the criteria of the category you have chosen are evident in the clip that you are submitting.

Other Rules and Guidelines

All general rules and guidelines regarding: size of performance area, leashes, cue styles, handler attire, dog attire, safety etc. apply in the Dynamic Division, as described in the general Poised for Success Titling Program Guidebook.

Dynamic Division
Performance Categories

As you create performance submissions for the Dynamic Division, choose from among these categories. Be sure to read each one very carefully because the criteria differs from one category to another!

Just an important note: You will choose a total of **SIX** from among these categories to complete the Dynamic Division Title. All categories will not be completed!

Category: Freestyle Dance

Description: Create a performance that is a well-balanced dance between yourself and your dog.

No handler dancing is required, but your handling should "suggest" dancing in the way that you cue and interact with your dog throughout the performance. (Note: You do not need to dance).

Use of supporting physical cues is encouraged in this category. If you choose to use verbal cues, be sure that your body language is natural.

Props are allowed in this category, but must be incorporated into the "dance" in some way. For instance, the dog could send around a prop and return to the handler as a dance sequence. Props should not be used in this category to feature tricks.

If handler dancing is incorporated, be sure to balance any handler dance moves with dog movement to create an overall effect of team movement, not just the handler. And, again, handler dancing is not required.

Category Criteria for Freestyle Dance Category:

- Performance is well balanced between handler and dog movement (overall)
- Dancing is "suggested" through cues and interaction with dog
- Supporting physical cues were used, or handler maintained natural body language when using verbal cues
- If props were used (optional), they were incorporated into the dance

Category: Hand Held Prop

Description: Create a short performance in which you hold a hand-held prop (cane, "sword", "wand" etc.) for at least half of the performance. Your dog should interact with the prop in some meaningful way (moving around it, putting paws on it, jumping over it, etc.) at least three times within the performance.

The handler **may** use the prop to cue the dog, and the dog **may** follow the prop as if it were a target, but this is not required

The dog may also take a turn holding the prop, but this is also not required.

Category Criteria for Hand Held Prop Category:

- Prop is held by handler for at least half of the performance
- Dog interacts with prop in meaningful way at least three times

Category: Move to the Beat!

Description: Performances in this category should feature moves, movement, and behaviors that feature your dog's natural open gait, with **your dog's** front footfalls in time to the music. Whether or not the handler moves in time to the music will not be judged.

While stationary moves are recommended for contrast within this category, the use of strong outside curves, large, open floor patterns, flowing circles, and wide turns is recommended. Props may also be incorporated in this category, but all props in the performance space should be used by the dog and handler team at least twice. The team moving around the prop together is considered "use" of the prop in this category.

This category may not work very well for some dogs in small spaces, but for those who wish to give this a try in small spaces, the use of flowing circles, movement around props, and outside turns is suggested.

At least half of the time for this performance should be spent demonstrating your dog's gait. However, no formal "heeling" is required. The dog's position relative to the handler will not be judged in this category.

Finally, the team need not move throughout the entire performance. Stationary moves are highly recommended for contrast.

Category Criteria for Move to the Beat!

- Performance features moves, movement, and behaviors that feature your dog's natural open gait, with **your dog's** front footfalls in time to the music.
- Movement such as: strong outside curves, large, open floor patterns, flowing circles, and wide turns are used in the performance to feature the dog's movement to the music
- If there are props in the performance space (optional), all props are used by the dog and handler team at least twice
- At least half of the performance was spent demonstrating your dog's gait
- Clear contrast to movement provided by some stationary moves

Category: Poised for Success-Style Heelwork to Music

Description

Note: This category has rules that are different from "Heelwork to Music" in other Musical Freestyle venues. Please read the criteria carefully.

In this venue, "Heelwork to Music" is defined as: synchronized movement of dog and handler. "Heelwork" consists of both "Heelwork Movement" and "Heelwork Moves"

"Heelwork Movement" may include: moving forward, backward, or laterally together with dog in heel or side position, or dog and handler facing one another, moving together as the handler moves forward (dog backing), backward (dog moving toward handler), or laterally (dog moving with handler, facing handler). This may also include the dog and handler moving together (forward, backward, or laterally) with the dog in a different position, such as crossed across the front of the handler, or dog in heel or side but facing handler.

"Heelwork Moves" include: Pivots and turns where dog and handler move together, turns (inside and outside), opposite turns, synchronized spins, or mirror spins.

For performances in this category, at least half of the performance should consist of "Heelwork Movement" and "Heelwork Moves".

Any and all other Freestyle moves and behaviors are permitted for up to 50% of the performance. Although I recommend "weighting" performances in this category toward Heelwork Moves and Movements. There is no restriction on leg weaves or jumping in this category. Other moves and behaviors can serve as excellent contrast for the synchronized work that will be featured in this category. Props may be used, but should serve to feature or contrast with heelwork, and not be the main focus.

A note on "Heelwork". No set "heel position" is mandated for this category, and one set "heel position" need not be maintained throughout the performance. In other words, the dog can heel very closely at one point, and heel at a distance from you at another point. As long as the movement appears deliberate on the part of the team, this is fine.

Category Criteria for Poised for Success-Style Heelwork to Music

- At least half of the performance consists of "Heelwork Movement" and "Heelwork Moves"
- Performance is "weighted" toward synchronized movement
- Other Freestyle behaviors and moves make up less than 50% of performance
- Dog and handler movement appears to be deliberate, in the event that "heel position" changes throughout the performance
- Props (if used) feature heelwork, or serve as contrast to heelwork sequences

Category: Holiday Theme

Description: Performances for this category should incorporate an obvious holiday theme. Any readily recognizable holiday may be used (4th of July, Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc.)

The theme may be conveyed through at least two of the following elements: choreography, background decoration, props, attire, the music.

Use of props is not required for this category, but they are permitted. In addition, decoration that is not used as a prop is permitted in the performance area (example: a Christmas tree), but such decoration should not interfere with the performance in any way.

Category Criteria for Holiday Theme:

- Holiday theme is obvious
- Theme is conveyed through at least two elements (choreography, background decoration, props, attire, and/or music)

Category: Live Demonstration

Description: In this performance, you will pretend that you and your dog are performing a live demonstration for an audience of your choice. You may choose any "audience", but your "audience" should be specific. You will identify your "audience" on your entry.

You MAY perform a live demonstration and submit the video for titling for this category, as long as the performance meets all necessary criteria for this category.

In this category, you will want to shoot for audience appeal through: interesting props, prop moves (audiences love to see dogs interact with props!), fancy tricks, elements of comedy, "flashy" tricks or cute tricks, and behaviors that allow your dog's personality to shine.

However, no obvious "theme" is required. You may build your performance around a theme – that can be a great way to create audience appeal. However, if you simply wish to demonstrate a beautiful dance, that is perfectly appropriate.

This is a great category for small spaces! No elements of "movement" are required, although always permitted!!

Category Criteria for Live Demonstration:

- "Audience" identified upon entry
- Audience appeal is evident in at least one obvious way

Category: Trick it Up

Description: In this category, your dog's best tricks can shine!

In this performance, you will want to feature at least four of your dog's best tricks.

The tricks need not be highly difficult, but should stand out as somehow "featured" within the context of the performance.

You can "feature" tricks through use of choreography, props, the way the trick is matched to the music, or other creative means.

However, while these tricks are featured, they should not make up the entire performance. Movement, heelwork, or performance of other Freestyle moves should be blended in with your team's featured tricks.

As always, please keep everything safe.

Category Criteria for Trick it Up:

- At least four different tricks are featured
- Tricks are featured in a clear way
- Movement, heelwork, or performance of other Freestyle moves are blended in with featured tricks
- All tricks are carried out safely

Category: The Plot Thickens

Description: Create a performance that incorporates a "plot" or "story". The performance need not tell a full story, and your dog need not perform as a particular "character".

"Plot" may be included in the song, or may be expressed through choreography (technically, you could do this using music without words!)

This differs from expression of a "theme" in that some kind of a "story" or "acting something out" is conveyed, even if only partially (for this Division).

Music is required for this category.

Use of props and clearly connected attire is encouraged in this category.

Category Criteria for The Plot Thickens

- A plot or story is incorporated into the performance, to some extent
- Something is "acted out" in some way
- Props (if used) and attire are clearly connected to the plot, or story, in some way

Category: International Theme

Description: Choose a country or culture other than your own, and create a performance that reflects an International theme in some way.

Theme may be expressed through music, choreography, props, decoration, attire, etc.

Category Criteria for International Theme

- International theme is clear
- Theme is clearly expressed (through music, choreography, props, decoration, attire, etc.)

Category: Showcase of Precision

Description: Does your dog have a passion for precise performance? In this category, you can allow this to shine!

Elements of precision that your dog can showcase may include: crisp heelwork, clean returns to position through transition, fast response to cues, straight backing, laterals, or pivots, demonstration of skills in different heelwork positions, etc.

It is recommended that you choose at least two elements of precision to feature in this performance.

Category Criteria for Showcase of Precision:

- Two elements of precision were chosen to showcase in this performance
- Precision, as defined by the handler, is evident for each of the two elements in the performance

Category: Distance

Description: Create a performance that features at least three skills carried out at a distance of at least 4 feet from the handler (small dogs), 5 feet from the handler (medium sized dogs), 6 feet from the handler (large dogs). Distances will not be measured by the judge.

If you feature a duration skill (example: distance spiral), go for a duration of at least 5 seconds.

Only one of the distance skills may incorporate use of a prop!

Category Criteria for Distance: (Next Page)

Category Criteria for Distance:

- Three distance skills are carried out in the performance
- Distance skills appear to meet minimum distance requirement
- If a duration distance skill is included (optional), the minimum duration of 5 seconds was met

Category: Something About Your Dog

Description: Create a performance that expresses something about your dog, such as: athleticism, grace, smoothness, sweetness, eagerness, etc.

Expression can be made through use of movement, props, choreography, attire, etc.

Please express positive attributes.

Category Criteria for Something About Your Dog:

- Performance expresses something about the dog
- Positive attributes were expressed through the performance

Category: Transition Showcase

Description: Create a routine made up only of transitions of position and movement in different positions. (Aside from opening/closing pose, if one is incorporated)

Movement can be forward, sideways, or backward.

Note Well: While not strictly required, an opening and/or closing pose that is not a transition move can be performed to start and/or finish the performance.

Category Criteria for Transition Showcase:

- Performance consists only of movement and transitions (of movement and/or position)
- No moves or movements are included that are not an obvious part of a transition

Category: The Hills Are Alive

Description: Perform a routine outdoors in a natural setting.

You may incorporate natural features of the environment as part of the performance. Example: You may use a tree as a prop, or a hillside as a way to add contrast to the performance.

Category Criteria for The Hills are Alive: (Next Page)

Category Criteria for The Hills are Alive:

- Performance takes place in a natural outdoor setting
- If features of the environment are incorporated into the performance (optional), this is done safely

Category: Theme Through Choreography

Description: Create and state a theme for your performance. The theme might be tied directly to the music or the name of the music, but it could also be a theme that is complemented by the music.

Please state your theme in the email when you enter, or include it on a title in your video.

Create a performance through which the choreography expresses the theme in some way. Expression of the theme through choreography might happen through the dog's moves and movements, or in the ways that the dog and handler interact with one another, floor patterns, prop behaviors – anything that a part of the performance itself.

Every move and movement does not have to convey the theme. There should be distinct elements of choreography that convey the theme. Unrelated moves and movements should be incorporated to balance out the performance.

Props may be used, but presence of the prop alone cannot convey the theme. However, particular use of the prop may do so.

Category Criteria for Theme Through Choreography

- A specific theme is established
- The theme is conveyed through one or more of the following: the dog's moves and/or movements, dog and handler interaction, floor patterns, prop behaviors (optional) in the performance
- If props are used (optional), use of a prop conveys the theme in some way

Category: Theme Through Setting

Description: Create and state a theme for your performance. The theme might be tied directly to the music or the name of the music, but it could also be a theme that is complemented by the music.

Please state your theme in the email when you enter, or include it on a title in your video.

Choose, or create, a setting that expresses that theme in some way. Setting can include decoration or props. The entire area need not be a "set", but props or decorations should clearly communicate the theme.

Natural settings may also be used.

Create and perform a routine in that setting. If props are present that can be used by the dog and handler team, they should be used at least once. Background decorations need not be incorporated into the performance.

Category Criteria for Theme Through Setting:

- Music has an obvious theme
- Props and/or decorations convey the theme
- Props (optional) that can be used are used by the team at least once

Dynamic Division Judging Criteria

In the Dynamic Division, the full performance will be judged, as is the practice in other Musical Freestyle titling venues.

For each performance, in all categories, the dog and handler team will receive a score of: Excellent, Good, Acceptable, or Criteria Not Met for each of the following criteria:

<u>Handling</u>

- There is clear engagement and rapport between dog and handler
- Handling is clear and supportive
- Cues are clear to the dog
- The cue style(s) chosen in the performance are appropriate to the dog
- Props (if used) allow the dog to perform to his or her strengths

<u>Technical</u>

- Dog demonstrates fluency and confidence in movements and moves included in the performance
- Movements and moves allow the dog to perform to his or her strengths

Artistry

- Team demonstrates flow in transition from movements to moves (sequencing)
- Performance space used effectively
- Handler maintains natural body language, appropriate to the category, throughout the performance
- Artistic use of transition moves
- Overall quality of choreography
- Use of attire, props, decoration (if applicable)

Category Criteria

This will vary, depending on the requirements of the performance category chosen. (See Performance Category descriptions above)

Each requirement for the category will be scored as Excellent, Good, Acceptable, or Criteria Not Met

Qualifying Submissions

In order to receive a Qualifying Score for a Leg, the following criteria must be met for each performance in the Dynamic Division:

- Team must score "Excellent" or "Good" for most of the criteria listed under "Handling, Technical, and Artistry". Up to 4 scores of "Acceptable" are permitted, and one score of "Criteria Not Met" is permitted per Leg.

  If props are not used in the performance, that criteria will be scored as "N/A" (Not Applicable), and it will not be factored into the judging.

- Team must reasonably attempt to meet all Category Criteria for the Performance Category chosen. See the "Guide to the Dynamic Division" for specific Category Criteria for each Performance Category.

  Please note that the number of points under "Category Criteria" will vary, depending on the exact requirements for the Performance Category. If you would like a blank copy of the scoresheet for any of the Performance Categories, one can be provided via email, upon request.

- One score of "Acceptable" is permitted for Category Criteria, the remainder of the points under Category Criteria must receive a score of "Excellent" or "Good".

Awards

- A flat Qualifying Ribbon will be awarded for each Leg earned in the Dynamic Division

- A flat Title Ribbon will be awarded for each Dynamic Division Title earned

© Kristine C. Hammar, 2019