

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pacific Northwest Sky Trials

## Judging and Rules

### **PURPOSE:**

The essential purpose of sky trials is to exhibit the aerial ability of exceptional falcons in a controlled venue accessible to a large group of falconers. Using the best racing pigeons available, sky trial competitions do not emphasize capturing prey, but take a holistic view of a flight. From mounting speed and final pitch, to the stoop and strike, and even a prolonged pursuit; the combination of great pigeons and great falcons can produce a visual spectacle.

### **To Enter the Competition:**

In order to participate in the PNW Sky Trials, falconers must register each bird they wish to enter [here](#). Registration is \$40 per bird entered and all payments are final, no refunds.

### **A Note on Judging:**

Thanks to **Marshall Radio Telemetry** and their GPS transmitters we have the answer. We will monitor and judge height by GPS transmission. Each contestant will be required to attached a provided Marshal GPS transmitter to their falcons. No drones, balloons, RC planes, kites, audio or other stimuli to get the bird in the air will be allowed. Use of live lures is also prohibited.

The judged sequence of each flight is determined from the time the falcon is cast off the glove to the time it catches or gives up on the competition pigeon, and the falconer has reported to the head judge with his or her falcon back on the fist. A total of 20 minutes is allowed for this flight. Points will be deducted at 1 point per minute for going overtime. (Although landing does not disqualify the falcon, the clock will continue to run.)

During the flight, the falcon will be judged on *mounting*, *pitch*, *stoop* and the *pursuit* after the stoop.

Three judges will score each flight: one will score mounting only (and will be time-keeper), the 2<sup>nd</sup> will monitor the gps data and score pitch, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> will score stoop and pursuit.

### **MOUNTING (20 points)**

Mounting represents the time from when the falcon leaves the falconer's fist until the falconer calls for a height reading, just before calling for the serve. The height of the bird just before serve will be divided by the time expired from casting off the glove to calling for height reading. Mounting skill is determined in feet per minute and measures how quickly the falcon gets into position for the stoop. The falcon with the highest feet-per-minute score earns 20 points.

### **PITCH** (20 points)

Pitch represents the height the falcon reaches when the falconer calls for the serve. The judges will use the GPS transmitter to determine the height of the falcon. NOTE: No bird will be served under 400 feet high.

Scoring Pitch. The falcon that flies the highest scores 20 points. The rest of the points will be scored in proportion to that highest height.

### **STOOP** (20 points)

The stoop is in the eye of the beholder. As such, the points will be scored based on the outcome of the stoop:

Catches the pigeon = 20 points.

Strikes and feathers the pigeon = 10 points.

Attempts to strike with considerable force, but no contact = 6 points.

Intent on the pigeon, but not close = 2 points.

Not too interested = 0 points.

NOTE: If the falcon does not stoop or chase the pigeon, it is not disqualified. It will only score points for Mounting and Pitch.

### **PURSUIT** (15 points)

Pursuit points are earned as the falcon makes additional threatening passes/attacks at the quarry after the initial stoop and attempt at the pigeon. There is a degree of difference in a crafty pigeon *offensively* dodging a pursuing falcon who is well behind it and one that is forced *defensively* to dodge an immediate impact.

The pigeons flown in the Sky Trials are bred as competitive racers and are often well out ahead of the falcon, juking and maneuvering the falcon who is trying to keep up. Falcons that get full pursuit points close the gap quickly and force the pigeon into defensive lifesaving maneuvers (*turns*).

5 points are awarded for each time the falcon forces the turn of the pigeon (up to 3 turns awarded). 3 points are awarded if falcon forces the pigeon to put in to the judges, the crowd, a bush, etc.

The full 15 points are awarded if the pigeon is caught in the pursuit. If the pigeon is caught while putting in at the judges table, under a car, etc., this is a *put in* and only the

three points are awarded. Note: This is also a reason to limit the number of people in the field with the falconer.

#### **Additional Rules:**

- **No second flights** for any reason.
- **No contest.** The head judge or organizers may call **no contest** if they feel the Sky Trials is compromised by unfair manipulation, intentional or otherwise. The judges' decisions are final.
- **All dogs must stay on leash:** The only exception will be the dog of the falconer that is competing during his/her allotted time slot.
- **Live Lures. In the past this read: *No live lures. Any contestant using a live lure within one mile of the meet will be disqualified. Please have your birds trained and in proper weight so that they will come down to a lure. A live lure may be used beyond 1 mile if necessary.***
- **Pigeon selection.** The contestant should pick the 2 pigeons he or she wants for the flight, but will not touch the pigeons at any time.
- **No interchanging time slots.** Contestants entering more than one bird are not allowed to interchange their time slots between their birds or with other contestants. (No exceptions.)
- **Falcons are released from glove.** Falcons can only be released in the field from the glove beyond the judges' table. No releases from the rooftop of a vehicle, etc. (No exceptions.)
- **Two pigeons served.** Each falcon will be served 2 pigeons simultaneously. This gives the pigeons a much higher level of confidence and they will fly much better as result. Normally, a pair of pigeons won't put in with pressure.