



# The Australian Sheepdog Championships

## Showcasing the best working dogs

Sheep dog trials have been part of the Australian pastoral history with the first trials held in the world in Australia in the early 1870's. The workers realised that these events brought together owners and breeders in a convivial atmosphere to discuss those matters relating to the breeding, training, feeding, care and development of their canine charges. Since that time, trial objectives, which are for the betterment of breeding, work and treatment of the sheep dog, have not changed.

The working sheepdog is an essential component of the Australian pastoral industry, you will find them wherever sheep run. Australia has over 90,000 livestock producers<sup>1</sup> each of whom employs an average of three working dogs to assist with their stock handling requirements<sup>2</sup>.

The many thousands of dogs working on a daily basis make an enormous contribution to the efficiency of livestock management in Australia's large agricultural sector, which is responsible for approximately 30% of GDP<sup>3</sup>. The \$ value of the work these dogs perform in primary production is undefined but would run to \$millions annually. On properties they are the stockman and woman's constant companion and highly valued assistant. In most cases it would be impossible to manage livestock without them.

## The Australian Sheepdog Championships

The Australian Sheepdog Championships (ASC) were first run in Nyngan in 1956, making it one of the oldest trials held in Australia. The ASC moved to Mudgee in 1979, then to Hawkesbury in 1995 and then Cobar where the ASC ran annually until 2012. The trial was revived in 2020 with a relocation to Koroit, Victoria.

The 2020 trial was a great success attracting large entries from all over Australia, including WA and Tasmania, and was attended by a large crowd throughout the 6 days of the event. In 2020, live streaming of the competition was introduced and this innovation resulted in sheepdog triallers and dog lovers throughout Australia following the Championships live. There was also considerable local interest and the trial attracted good media coverage on both radio and in the local and tourist newspapers and magazines. The trial did take place in 2021, but was limited in size due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics

<sup>2</sup> McNair Ingenuity Research Pty Ltd 2012

<sup>3</sup> Meat and Livestock Australian Statistical Report 2016

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## **150 years of sheepdog trials**

In 2022, the sport of sheepdog trialling in Australia will be celebrating 150 years of heritage and tradition. This is a significant milestone and the Koroit Sheepdog Trial Committee will be acknowledging this throughout the Championships. To be included, please complete and return your bio. By doing so you will help us promote our trial and its history to the general public and also assist us with media and announcing over the course of the event. You will add to the history and heritage of our great sport, so please take a few minutes to tell us a little about yourself on your entry form.

To all of you thank you for your support, and we look forward to welcoming you to the Australian Sheepdog Championships in February 2022.

*The Koroit Sheepdog Trials Committee*