

HOUSTON'S

BOOK OF Agility Games

5th edition



*Research and writing
and most of the drawings
by Bud Houston*

Dog

AGILITY

IDEA

BOOK

Bud's Ink

The ***Book of Agility Games***, v 5.1.

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Agility

Nearly forty years ago the game of dog agility was introduced to the U.S. The sport has grown steadily since then and is played today by more than tens of thousands of enthusiasts of the game. It is played by people of all ages, sizes, and degrees of fitness. By all indications the sport will continue to be one of the most popular canine sports in the U.S. because it is instant fun for both handler and dog. The handler gets to play and bond with the canine member of his family and pack. For the dogs, agility provides an outlet to perform honest work and contribute to the pack.

Many variations of agility are played. The most common form of the game is the standard course. In the standard course, the judge lays out a pattern of obstacles, designates the order in which they must be performed, and sets a minimum course time for performing them. It's significant that none of the exhibitors have ever seen the course that the judge lays out on a given day. Courses are never the same.

Briefing

The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge. The handler may use voice commands and signals but may not touch the dog or any obstacle.

The competition is between dogs at a given jump height and skill level.

Prior to running the course the exhibitors are allowed to walk the course without their dogs to determine their handling strategies. After the course walk-through, the competition begins.

Scoring

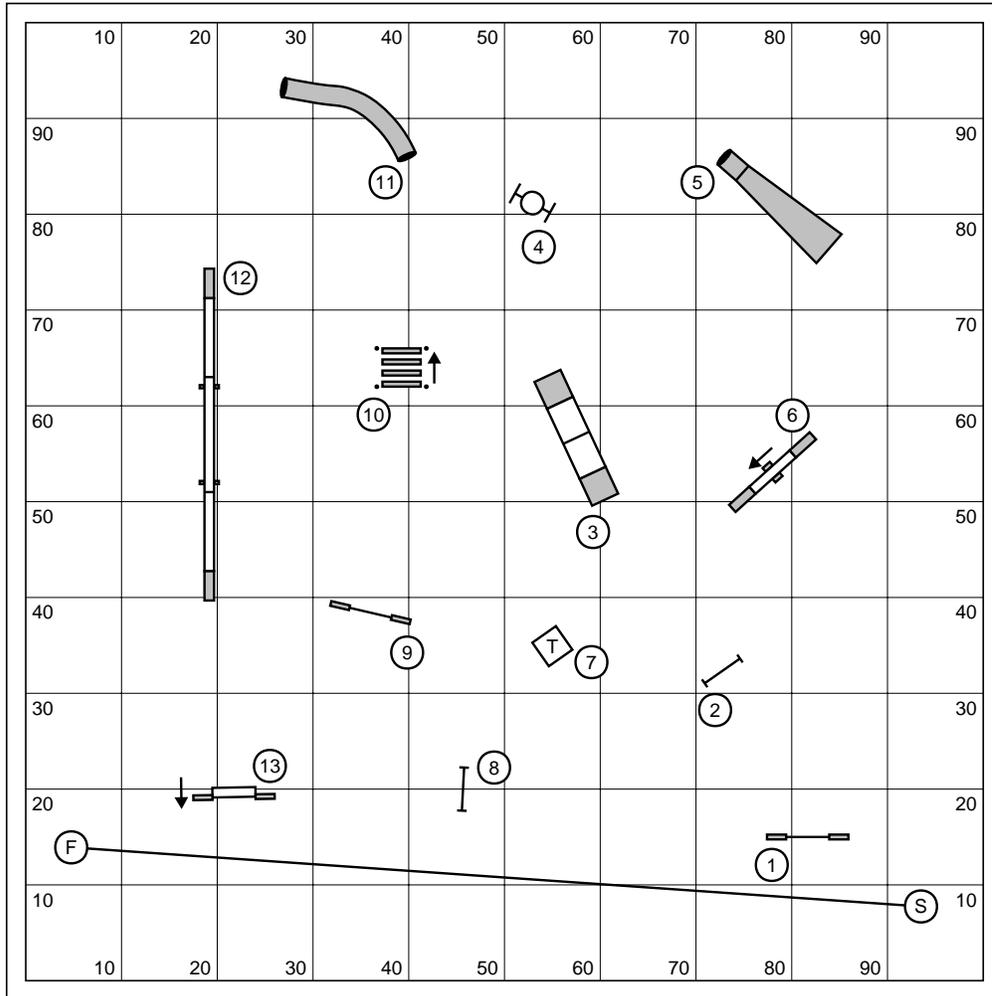
Agility is typically scored Faults, Then Time. However, in some renditions of the game (like the National Dog Agility League) *Agility* might be scored Time, Plus Faults.

Faults are assessed for exceeding the standard course time as well as for a number of performance errors.

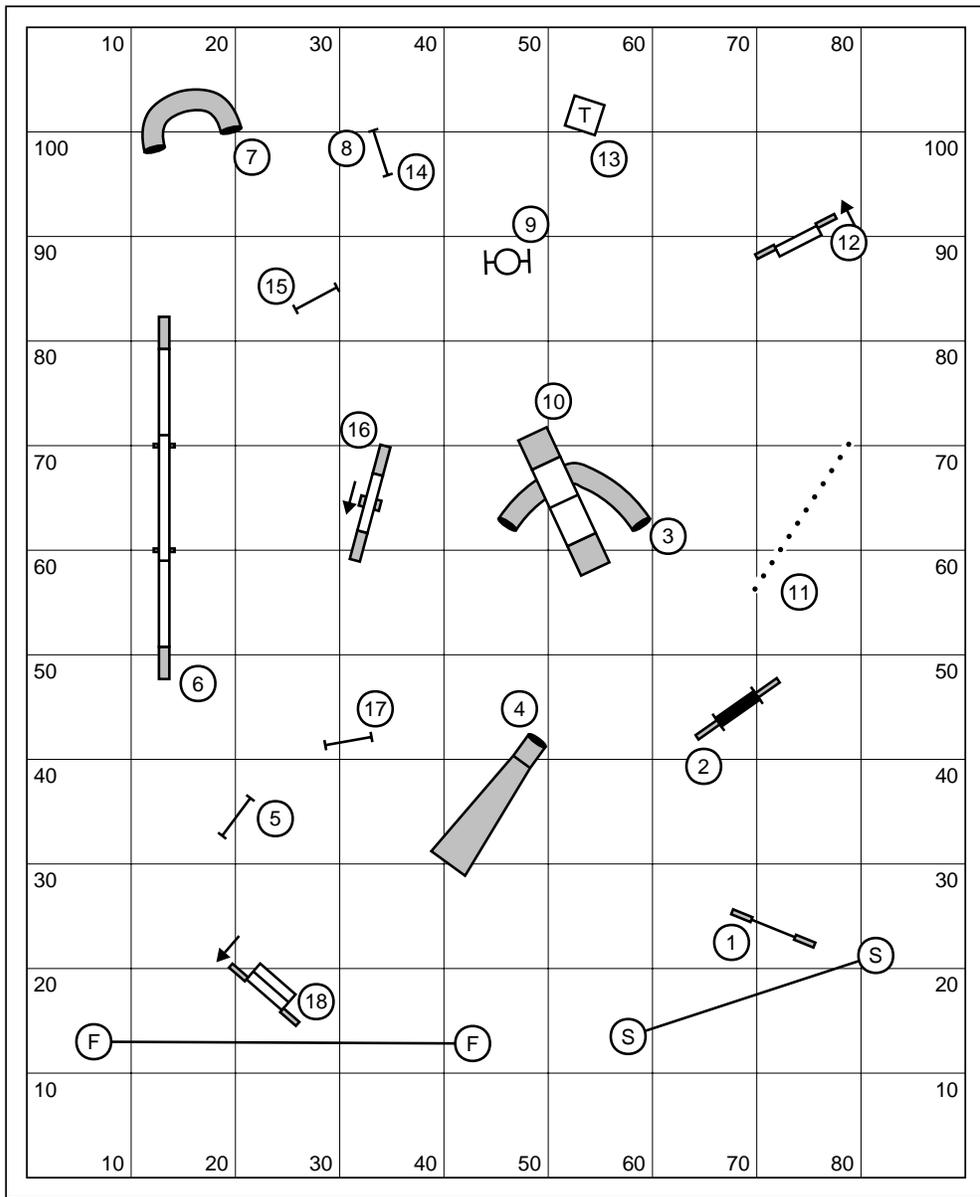
We will not attempt to summarize performance faults for agility in the various organizations. Each organization has its own rational system. And we will presume that the fan of each organization will be acquainted with what constitutes a fault in their favorite form of the game.

Course Design

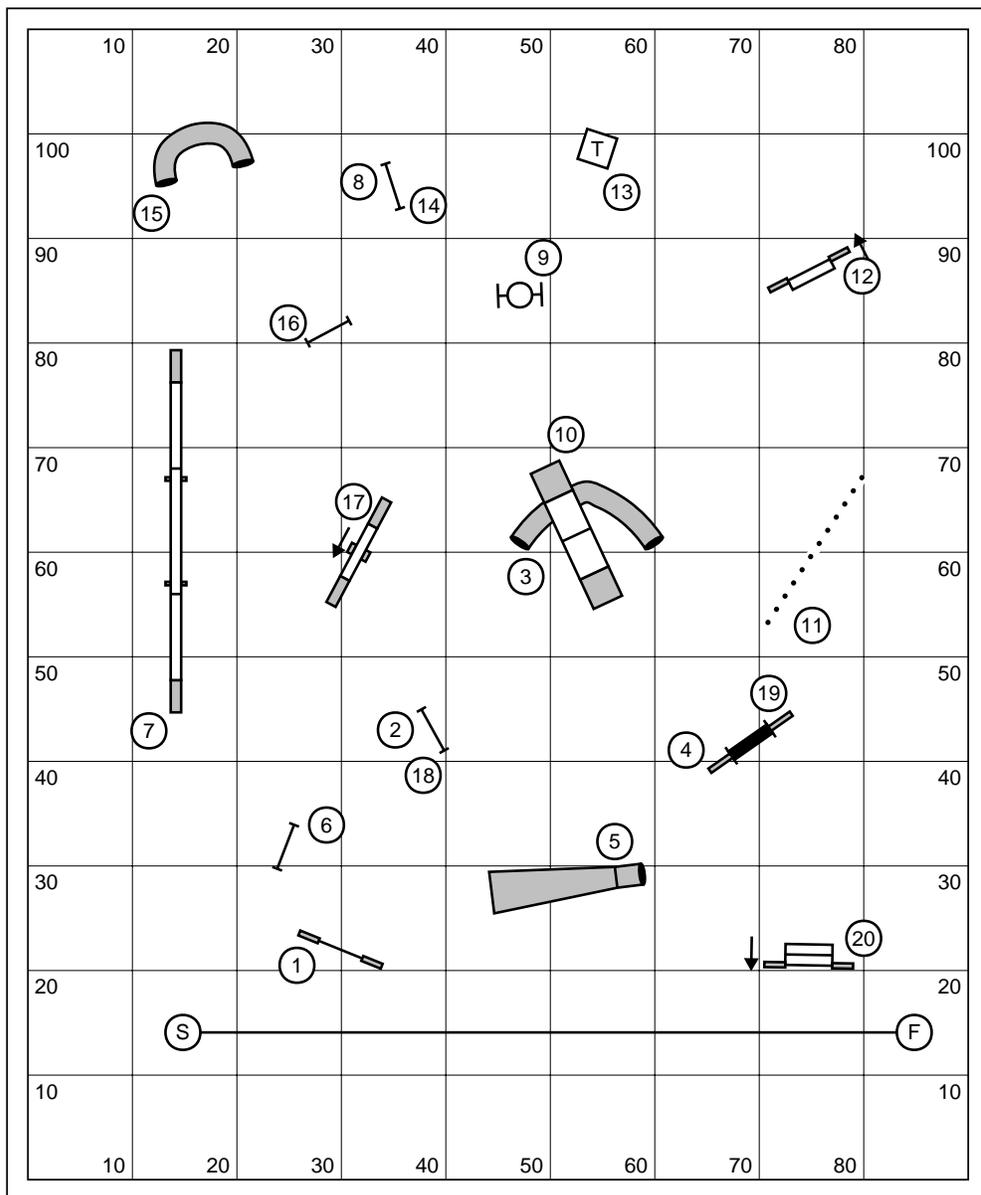
The design of agility courses varies greatly, depending on the design criteria specified by the sanctioning organization and the level of competition. The courses shown here were designed by AKC judge Lori Schultz for three levels of Standard agility.



This Novice Standard course was designed by Lori Schulz. The flow is simple and easy with wide open spaces between the obstacles, consistent with the AKC course design philosophy.



This Open Standard course was designed by Lori Schulz. A few more obstacles have been added and the challenges made a bit more interesting.



This Excellent Standard course was designed by Lori Schulz. Now there are 20 obstacles on the course and the challenges are considerably more technical. These courses were presented at the Columbus All Breed AKC trial on April 7, 2002.

Variations

- Anything But a Collie – Also called ABC, this British variation is standard agility for any dogs but Collies. For the purposes of entry in this class, a Collie is defined as a smooth or rough Collie, a Working Sheep Dog, or a Border Collie cross. Collies must compete in a separate class.
- Black and Whites – This British variation is standard agility for black and white Border Collies only (or black and white dogs with any hint of BC in them).
- Junior Handlers – Also referred to as JH, this is standard agility for younger handlers. The age limit is usually under 19 years. AKC, NADAC, and USDAA all have titling programs expressly for Junior Handlers. It's worthwhile to note that

the titling is for the handler, not for the dog. Junior Handlers can either train their own dog or handle a dog trained by someone else. There is no distinction made for the level of qualification dogs have achieved under an adult handler.

- Veterans – This is a class of agility for older dogs. The minimum age is usually set at seven years. Canine partners of advanced age compete in their own class. Jump heights are reduced, the A-frame lowered; and spread jumps prohibited. Both the USDAA and NADAC have titling programs expressly for Veterans dogs. This variation of agility is known as Golden Oldies in the U.K.
- Time, Plus Faults – For titling purposes in standard agility classes, most sanctioning organizations in the U.S. base their scoring on a Faults, Then Time basis. However, agility can also be scored on a Time, Plus Faults basis. When course faults are added to time, the dog with the lowest score wins. In a match setting or a fun game, Time, Plus Faults is often the scoring system of choice.
- Open entry – Dogs can compete in a class regardless of titles earned. This is called open entry. For instance, in an Open entry USDAA class, dogs that normally compete in Starters, Novice, Advanced, or Masters are all eligible to enter the same class and compete against one another.

Qualifying

When the scoring system is Faults, Then Time a dog will typically be required to finish a course with zero faults, and under standard course time. Some organizations will forgive a certain number of faults for more novice level players.

When the scoring system is Time, Plus Faults the dog will qualify if his score is less than the standard course time set by the judge.

Premium Blurb

Agility is a “Standard” course or numbered course. It is the common version of the game consisting of a logical sequence of obstacles: jumps, tunnels, contact obstacles, and perhaps the weave poles and a table. *Agility* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER1

Agility with a Twist

This game probably should have been called “twisted agility.” It features, among other things, a wooden scaffold used to tie three pipe tunnels together into a large pretzel shape. It also puts the wings of jumps to work as a weaving sequence. The invention of Darlene Woz, Agility With a Twist is a game both of strategy and agility.

Briefing

The objective of this game is to collect up to 21 points without going over.

Obstacles may be taken more than once and in any order but never back-to-back. One paw commits the dog to doing an obstacle. Once committed, the dog must complete an obstacle before going on to another.

The dog can start anywhere along the designated start line. The dog will have 35 seconds to score points. The timekeeper will blow a whistle at the end of this period.

The handler can direct the dog to the Clock Stopper (a table or pause box) at any time during the 35 seconds. If the handler goes to the clock stopper to end time before the whistle blows, each second under 35 will be added to the points the dog accumulated on course. Time adjustments are in whole seconds only. For example, if the dog earns 20 points on course and stops the clock at 33.1, two points would be added to the dog’s score (drop the fraction of a second and subtract 33 from 35). The dog’s final score is 22 points.

If, on the other hand, the handler waits for the whistle to go to the clock stopper and end time, each second over 35 will be subtracted from the points the dog earned on course. For example, if the dog earns 20 points on course and stops the clock at 40.2 five points would be subtracted from the dog’s score. The dog’s final score is 15.

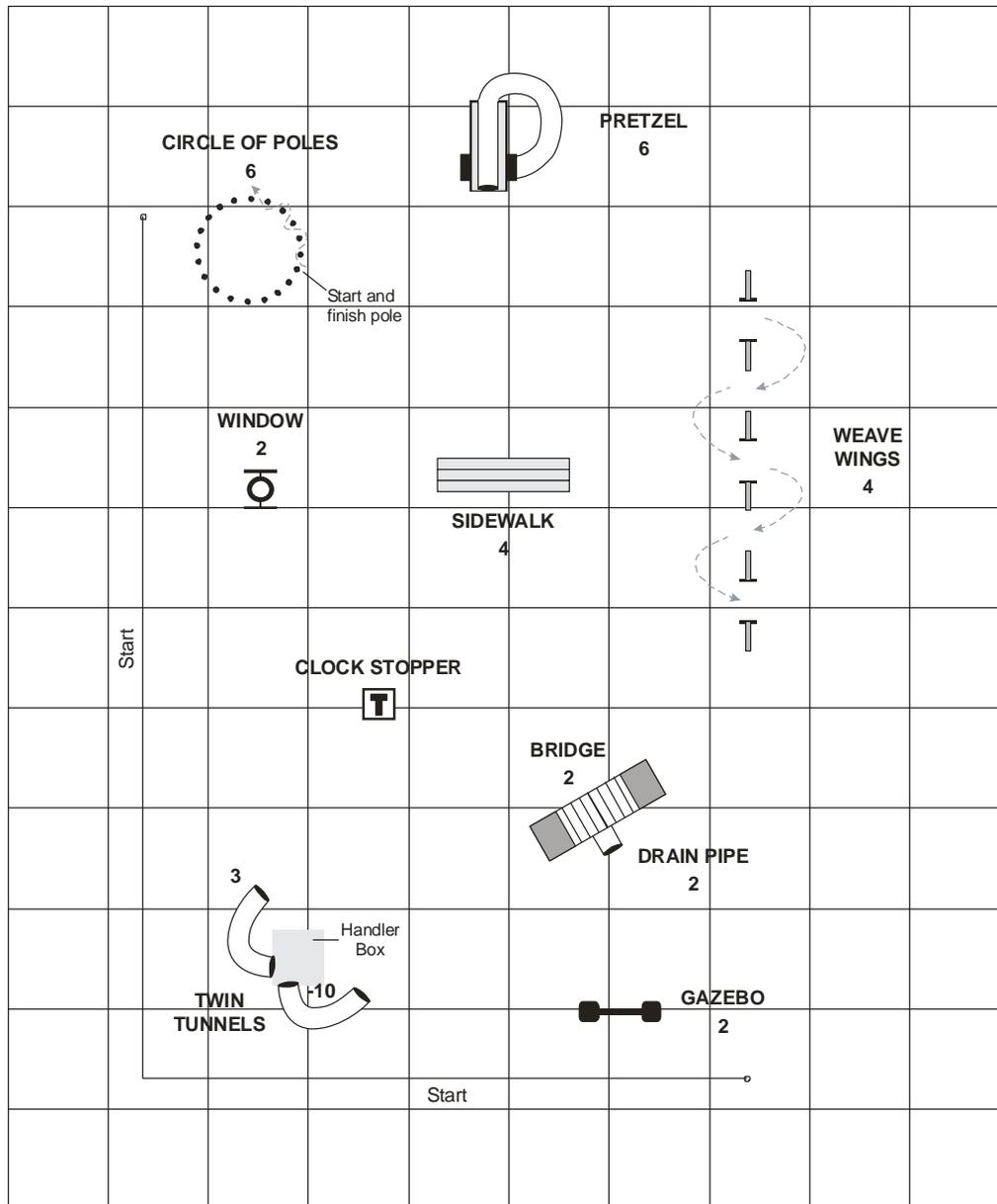
Scoring

Agility with a Twist is scored Points Only.

The team closest to 21 points, without going over, is the winner. Any ties for first place will result in a runoff on a predetermined course design. Fastest time wins.

Faults are judged under USDAA Starters/Novice rules. However, if a dog faults an obstacle, there is no penalty beyond having to retry the obstacle until successfully completed.

Course Design



This is the original Agility With a Twist course designed by Darlene Woz.

Agility with a Twist is usually designed using the materials at hand.

- Dogwalk planks are placed side by side on the ground to form the Sidewalk. The dog is required to walk the length of the sidewalk.
- The Bridge is the A-frame set at a height of 4'.
- 20 stick-in-the-ground weave poles are arranged in a circle to make the Circle of Poles. The dog must enter between two poles designated as the start and weave counterclockwise around the circle of poles. The handler may work outside or inside of the circle.
- The barrel of the collapsed tunnel is used to make the Drain Pipe.

- Six jump wings are arranged end to end, about 4' apart, to form the Weave Wings. The dog is required to weave in and out through the spaces between the wings.
- The Window might be a wishing well jump or a tire.
- The Gazebo might be set up securing together pieces of lattice from the ring enclosure.
- The Pretzel is 30' of pipe tunnel fixed upon a scaffold requiring a three-dimensional performance

Note: Plans for building the scaffold for the Tunnel Pretzel are included in the Appendix.

- The Twin Tunnels represent a distance challenge and a discrimination trap. The handler is not allowed to step into the handler exclusion box. Performance of one tunnel is rewarded with 3 points. Performance of the second tunnel is penalized by a loss of 10 points.

Strategies

The honest approach to this game would be to calculate how many obstacles the dog can do in 35 seconds, make adjustments for the point values of the obstacles and the over/under time implications. Then go out and give it your best run.

The crafty approach might be to leverage the over/under points to arrive at the desired 21 points without worrying about performing a long sequence of obstacles.

Premium Blurb

Agility With a Twist is a game that uses an odd assortment of equipment and requires performances that are only vaguely like any in traditional agility competition. This game is probably not suitable as a game for titling purposes. *Agility with a Twist* is scored Points Only. ER10

Agility Y

Agility Y is a game for beginners and is designed in such a way to ensure a positive and successful experience. It's a great introduction to competition and an early test of the dog's training and readiness for real competition. In the USDAA, the game Agility Y is sometimes known as Pre-Starters or Beginners.

Briefing

The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge.

A safety rule will be observed on contact obstacles. If the dog commits to a contact obstacle with all four-paws and then bails off the obstacle, the judge will direct the handler to skip the obstacle and continue on course. A failure to perform fault will be assessed. If the handler directs his dog back onto the obstacle, the dog and handler will be dismissed.

At the handler's option the dog may perform on leash. If so, it is the responsibility of the handler to manage the leash in a safe manner. For instance, the handler must lift the leash over jump standards, keep the leash slack and out of the way on contact obstacles, and release the leash as the dog goes through tunnels. A dog will be excused if the handler uses the leash in an unsafe manner.

Jumps and the table will be set one height lower than the dog's regulation jump height. Contact obstacles will also be set at a reduced height. The recommended height for the A-frame is 4'6" and the recommended height for the dogwalk is 2'6".

Scoring

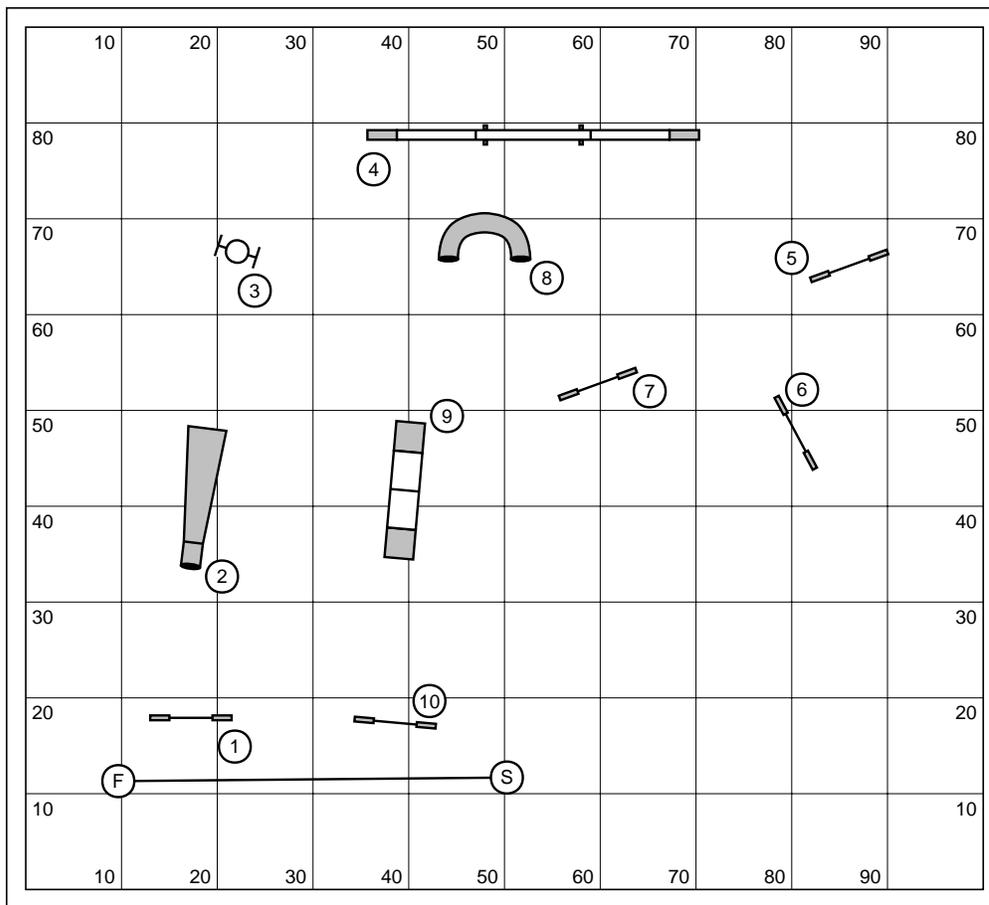
Agility Y is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins. Traditionally faults are judged under USDAA Starters/Novice rules.

A 5-point fault is assessed per occurrence if the handler uses the leash to jerk or pull the dog in any way.

Course Design

Only 10 to 13 obstacles should be used on the course. The course design should not be completely trivial. An element of the sequence should challenge the handler to analyze the implications of a handling position and determine what handling might be required to entice the dog to perform the sequence successfully.

Prohibited obstacles include: the seesaw, weave poles, and spread hurdles. The tire is optional. The height settings for contact obstacles should be indicated on the course diagram for the benefit of course builders.



This is a typical example of an Agility Y or Pre-Starters course. The course has no crossing patterns and may require only one change of sides.

Variations

- Agility Y games – Any agility game (such as Jumpers or Snooker) can be designed for Agility Y. However, the course designer must keep in mind that dogs and handlers at this level are usually not ready for challenging handling sequences.

Premium Blurb

Agility Y is a simple sequencing game, usually intended for very novice dogs as a test of their readiness for competition. Consider *Agility Y* for pre-novice dogs and handlers. *Agility Y* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

April's Fool

April's Fool is the invention of Joyce Sobey of Richmond, Virginia. It's a fun game appropriate for a club outing or casual competition.

Briefing

The April's Fool course is essentially run on a numbered course. Handlers direct their dogs through the course in the order and direction specified by the judge's numbering of the course. However, there is a bit of a twist to the running of the course. Before each dog and handler team run, they will be required to turn their back to the course. A runner will go out on the course and mark two obstacles that must be *skipped* during the run.

The obstacles to be skipped will be marked with an "APRIL'S FOOL" sign attached. After the course was marked, the dog and handler team must immediately run the course.

A dog taking an obstacle marked April's Fool will incur a wrong-course penalty.

When the next handler/dog teams prepare to run, another steward will re-mark the course with two obstacles to be eliminated. The course will be different each for each run.

Scoring

April's Fool is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

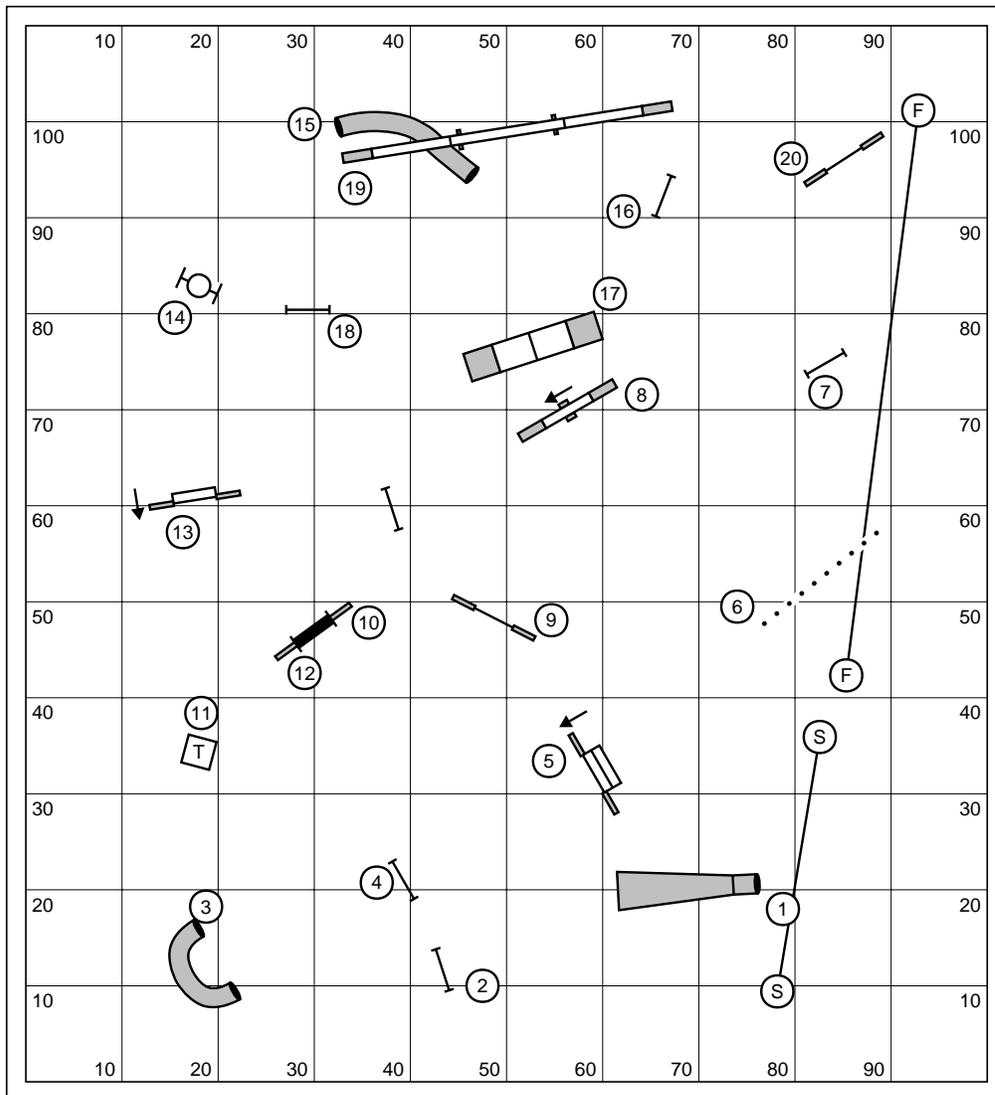
Any rational system for obstacle performance faults can be used. USDAA Starters might be the least onerous.

Qualifying and Titles

The most rational system for establishing a qualification mark is to use the rates of travel from the standard classes and accept qualifications under a Time, Plus Faults scoring system with no additional fudging.

This game poses inherent possibilities for inequity. And so it's necessary for the players to have a sense of humor and a balanced view of life. Not everything is fair. And not everything is equal.

Course Design



This is the original April's Fool Course designed by Joyce Sobey and used in league play in Richmond, Virginia.

April's Fool is adaptable from any course in which a sequence is specified. It could be a standard course, for example, or a jumpers course.

Premium Blurb

April's Fool is a standard course that includes a bit of a practical joke/trick. An obstacle will be withdrawn from the numbered course after the walkthrough and must be omitted by the dog and handler when the course is run. This game *might* be played as a serious game of competition; but is more appropriate as a fun game for a club picnic. *April's Fool* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Barrel Racing

The Barrel Racing game might take several forms, each of them borrowed with some variation from the rodeo crowd. It is guaranteed to showcase the directional and distance working capabilities of the dog and handler team. This game uses a nonstandard agility obstacle: a barrel, set on end, with a hard top. The form of the game shown here is the invention of Lyndal Nichols of Queensland, Australia, where it is played as a very serious game of competition. Lyndal's version is based upon a set of rules originally defined by Kim Duff, in the U.S.

Briefing

As with the equine version, three barrels are placed in a triangular formation which the dogs must gallop around in a set pattern. The dogs are run off-lead and the handler may guide the dog around the barrels in any fashion which encourages it to go accurately and quickly. This does not include touching the dog, touching the barrel or enlisting outside help from the spectators.

The handler must direct the dog through the course and around the barrels in the order and direction indicated by the judge.

There are two courses, one which turns right around the first barrel and then left around the second and third. The other course does the opposite, left around the first barrel and right around the second and third. The dogs must run through the start and finish poles to record a time. There is no fault for running the wrong course. The handler must correct the dog's path to record a time.

The handler is also not allowed to carry food onto the course. However, the handler may carry a toy or ball and is encouraged to use it to promote speed and enthusiasm. The dog must pass through the start and finish poles and the toy or ball can be thrown across the finish line to ensure a fast run home.

Dogs must be twelve months or older to compete. Bitches in season may not compete or stay in the area of the competition. Dogs urinating or defecating on the course will be disqualified. Aggressive or out of control dogs will be disqualified.

Scoring

Barrel Racing is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins.

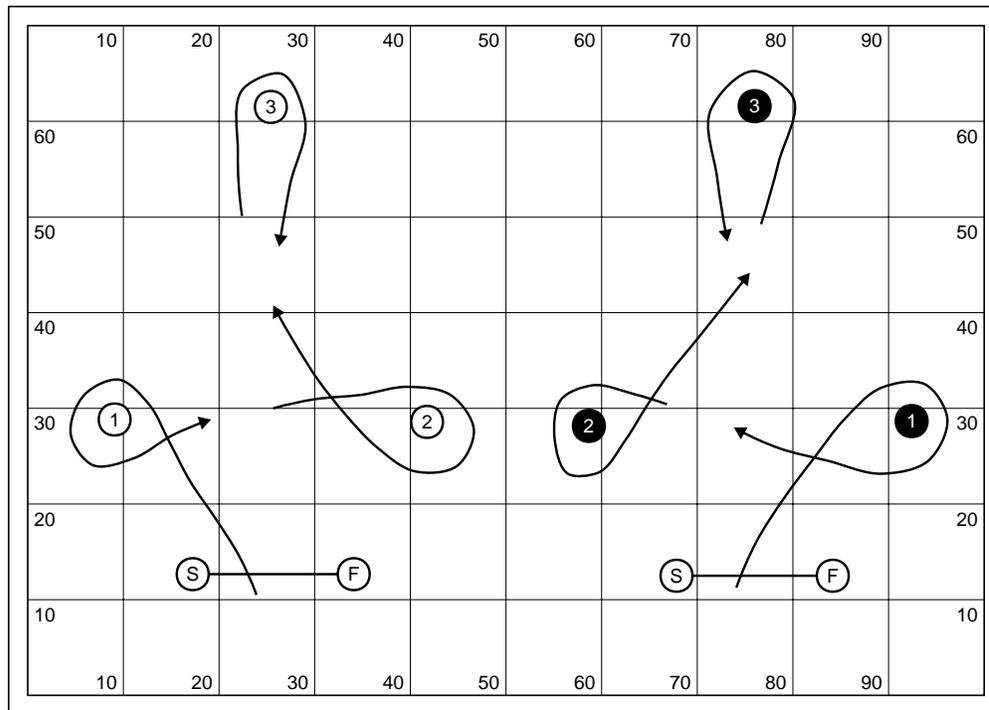
There are two height divisions:

- Mini: up to and including 16" in height at the withers.
- Unrestricted: no restriction in height.

Time faults are caused by:

- 3 second penalty – for the handler deliberately touching the dog
- 3 second penalty – for the handler touching the barrel
- 5 second penalty – for the dog or handler knocking the barrel over

Course Design



These are the two legitimate courses recognized in Australia. The barrels are set up in an area with a minimum spacing of 48 to 63 yards between them. This is the equine course reduced by approximately two thirds. There are two courses: one which turns right, left, left around the barrels, and one that turns left, right, right around the barrels.

There is no reason why an enthusiastic dog should not run as fast if not faster around a Barrel Racing course than a horse. The dog can get in close around the barrel and does not have to balance a rider. However, the best time so far around the course set up as in the diagram is 9.43 seconds. This is definitely a time score to smash as it is only one half the time a horse can do on a course which has been cut down by two thirds. A worth aim is to get dogs tearing around the reduced course in six seconds!

Variations

American variation – The course may be set up in a variety of patterns, as shown in the sample course. The dog is required to negotiate each of the barrels in the course in the sequence indicated by the judge. The dog must circle the barrels in a direction indicated by the judge. The judge may specify that all barrels be taken in a common direction or may change the direction of performance several times in the course.

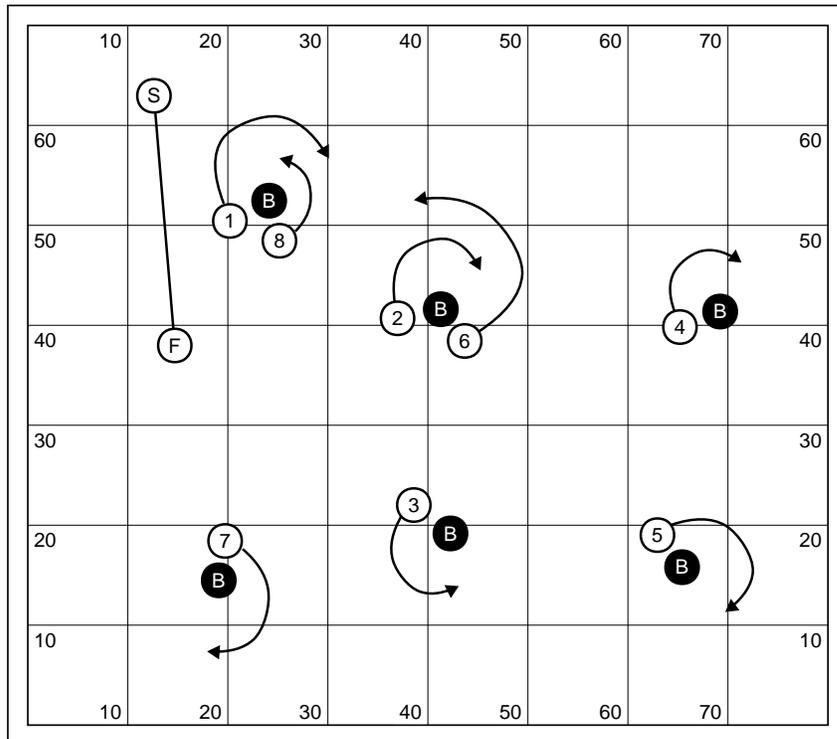
The handler may run with his dog but is not required to.

Barrels may be placed a minimum of 20' apart. No maximum distance is specified, which allows for some interesting transitional routes for both dog and handler. However, placing a barrel in the dog's path between two barrels in sequence is not allowed.

Competition courses should involve six or more barrels. Barrels may be used more than once in the course. However, the course designer should not specify back-to-back performance.

The American variation of Barrel Racing is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins. Faults are assessed for the following infractions:

- Refusal (turning back or jumping on the barrel), 5 faults
- Off-course (wrong barrel or barrel in the wrong direction), 5 faults
- Failure to perform, Elimination



In the American variation, multiple barrels can be used and the pattern of placement of those barrels may be varied. The judge will stipulate which direction the dog must move around each of the barrels and these directions should be shown on a course map or clearly explained to the exhibitors.

Strategies

Barrel Racing is a game which does not require the handler to be particularly fit. A dog can be taught to scoot around the barrels at some distance from the handler, leaving the handler to run the least distance, perhaps even standing in the middle of the formation, using commands and hand signals to guide the dog.

In the American variation, notice from the sample courses that the handler's position is dictated by downstream handling, probably more so than in standard agility. In training, it's necessary for the dog and handler to develop a vocabulary for direction of movement. In general, the handler cannot micromanage the dog's movements as in standard agility. This is a fast event, with broad sweeping motions by dog and handler alike, with just a few commands to communicate direction and action to the dog.

Like anything else, the communication is likely to be awkward at first as the handler struggles to provide the right command with good timing, and the dog tries to learn and understand what the handler is asking him to do.

Qualifying and Titles

Barrel Racing is *not* eligible for titling in any American agility venue. The chief culprit is the barrel itself, a non-standard obstacle.

Premium Blurb

Barrel Racing is a unique game that uses “barrels” as an agility obstacle. The handler is required to send his dog around tunnels in a pattern consistent with the barrel racing of classic American rodeo. This game is probably not a good choice as a game of competition for titling purposes because of the non-standard obstacles. *Barrel Racing* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Baseball

Like the great American pastime, Baseball is a delightful just-for-the-fun-of-it game for a summer afternoon in a park with a band of agility enthusiasts and their dogs. This game is also a useful training exercise for modest distance work. Baseball is the invention of Terry Culley of Bosque, NM.

Briefing

The dog is required to perform the obstacles in sequence at the handler's direction and in the order designated by the judge.

Bonuses are awarded for each base the dog gets to while the handler remains on the pitcher's mound. A home run may (25 bonus seconds) be scored if the handler leaves the dog in a stay at the start line, stands inside the area designated as the pitcher's mound (roughly the center of the course), and remains on the pitcher's mound throughout the dog's performance. If the handler leaves the pitcher's mound before the dog completes the course, the dog will be faulted, and no bonus subsequent bonuses will be earned.

The game can be played in two ways, for individual scores, or the field can be divided into an equal number of dogs and handlers on each side for a cumulative score.

Scoring

Baseball is scored Time, Plus Faults minus bonus. The team with the lowest score wins.

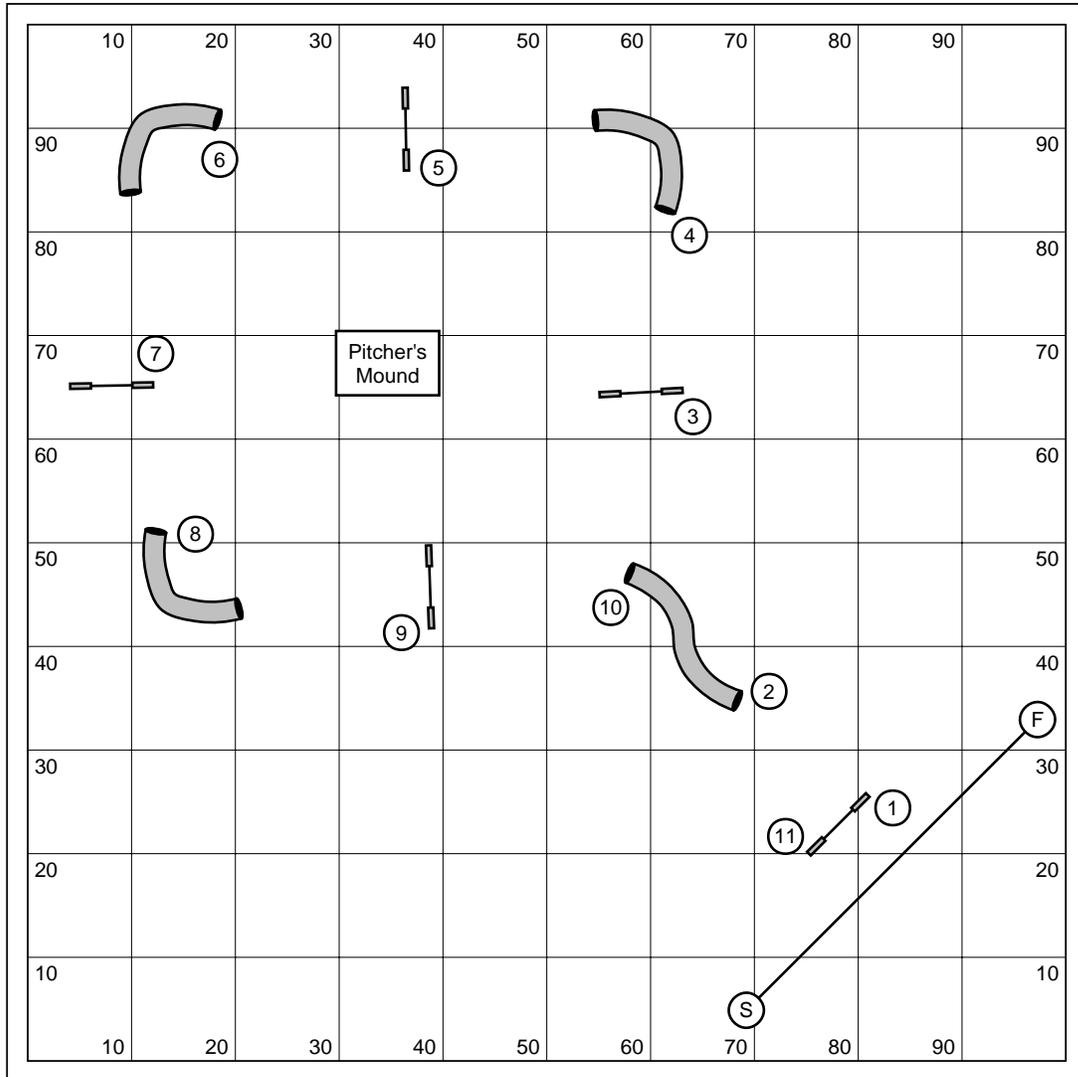
The schedule of faults shall be:

- 5 faults, dropped bars
- 5 faults, off-course
- 5 faults, stepping off the pitcher's mound
- 20 faults, failure to perform
- Refusals are not faulted

The schedule of bonuses shall be:

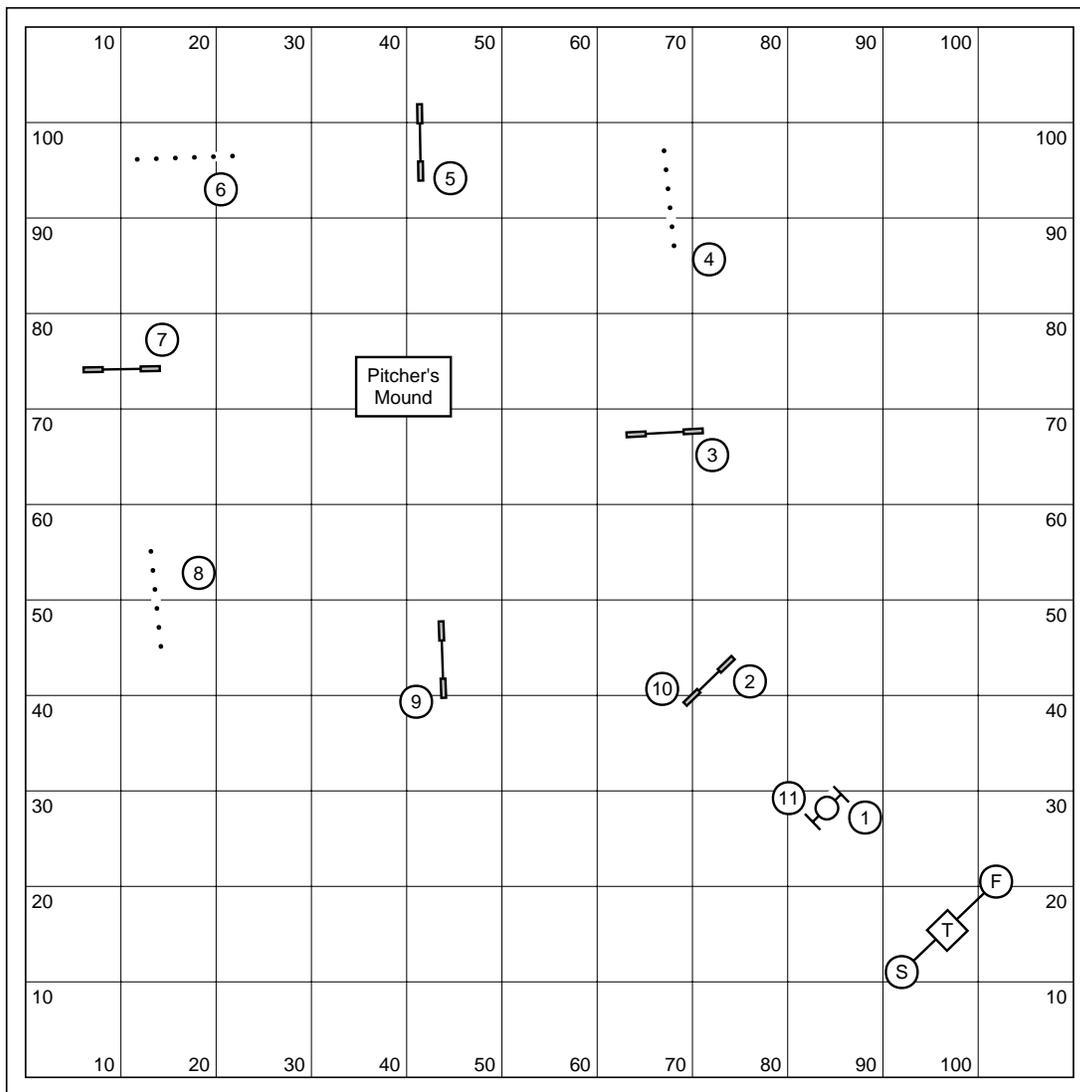
- 5 seconds 1st base
- 5 seconds 2nd base (overall 2nd base would be worth 10 seconds)
- 5 seconds 3rd base (overall 3rd base would be worth 15 seconds)
- 10 seconds home run (overall the home run would be worth 25 seconds)

Course Design



This is a relatively simple Baseball course, demonstrating the basic elements of course design.

The course is diamond-shaped and flows around the pitcher's mound. Notice that the path from the start and finish line (home plate) to the pitcher's mound is a re-used sequence. It points toward the pitcher's mound at the beginning of the course and straight away from the pitcher's mound at the end of the course.



Using weave poles as the bases is a bit more advanced. But it's certainly not out of the question.

There is an argument that can be made here for the course designer to use a bit of imagination. For example, consider using contact obstacles in the lines between the bases; or, consider using no obstacles at all between the bases (that would certainly make the size/real estate of the baseball diamond less demanding.)

Qualifying and Titles

Baseball is eligible as a qualifying game for TDAA. When using this game as a qualifier, a baseline for the standard course time should be established by the judge that reflects the yards per seconds in the Standard classes for the respective level of the dog.

Qualifying criteria should be based upon rates of travel from the standard classes with some expectation of success appropriate to the level of play. When the handler steps outside the box, earning a 5-point penalty, the dog's ability to earn a qualifying score is significantly affected, but not really eliminated.

To qualify the dog's score (Time-Plus-Faults-Less-Bonus) should be equal to or less than

the QCT calculated in this manner:

- Games I – Using the standard rate of travel less 5 seconds
- Games II – Using the standard rate of travel less 10 seconds
- Games III – Using the standard rate of travel less 15 seconds

Variations

- **The Egyed variation** – In this variation, invented by Cynthia Egyed, the table serves as the pitcher's mound. Handlers must stand on the table. This is a fun club outing variation. If a dog takes the table, with the handler the handler will be required to run the course without his dog.
- **The Tables variation** – In this variation all of the bases are tables. The dog will earn a super bonus for demonstrating either a sit, down, or stand on each table (or, all of the above!) The qualifying criteria should be tweaked with some expectation of success earning a super bonus.

Premium Blurb

Baseball is a distance game in which the handler, while standing on the pitcher's mound, runs his dog through bases arranged as a baseball diamond, in order to earn a "home run." *Baseball* is scored Time, Plus Faults minus bonus. ER7

Basketball

Basketball is the invention of John and Arlene Rhodes. The game was originally played on May 25, 2002 after the first fun match put on by Zippity Do Dogs Sports Club in Grand Junction, CO.

Briefing

Basketball is a two-part game. The first part is the point-accumulation period. The second part is the basketball period where point scores can be multiplied.

Please note, there are two jumps marked SD for “Sudden Death.” If the dog takes either of these jumps at any time, sudden death occurs and the dog must run to the table to stop time. The dog retains any score earned up to that point but cannot earn any more.

To start, the handler must leave his dog on a stay behind the start line and then load two tennis balls on the table. If the dog breaks his stay and crosses the start line, the handler forfeits one ball and must repeat the loading sequence with only one ball. If the dog breaks again, he loses his second ball and cannot multiply his score by shooting baskets.

Point accumulation –Big dogs will have 50 seconds to accumulate points; small dogs have 55 seconds. Time starts when the dog crosses the start line; after the handler has “loaded” the table. Points are earned for each obstacle the dog successfully performs. No more than two obstacles may be taken on either side of the court without crossing center court (the red half-court line). If more than two are taken, no points will be earned for the extra obstacles. Jumps are not limited in the number of repetitions. Other scoring obstacles may be taken no more than twice.

During point accumulation, if the dog removes the ball or causes it to fall off the table, the handler must replace it before continuing. Point accumulation ends on the time whistle.

The basketball game – If any tennis balls are left on the table at the end of the opening period, the team will have 20 seconds to shoot baskets. A basket is made when the shooter tosses the tennis ball through the tire. If the shot is behind the 2-point line, the team’s accumulated score is doubled; from behind the 3-point line the score is tripled.

Any tennis balls not forfeited in the opening round must be on the table when the basketball period begins. If both balls were forfeited the handler cannot multiply his score and must run to the table to stop time. If a ball rolled off during play or is carried off by the dog and the handler doesn’t replace it, the handler’s shot is forfeited. Also, the dog must be behind the 2-X line when the handler takes his shot. Otherwise the shot will not count and the score cannot be multiplied. It is permitted for the dog to be on the table, as it is behind the 2-X line; but the dog may not be on the table for the 3-X line.

To stop the time, the dog and one ball must be on the table. The ball may be in the dog’s mouth or simply touching the table. If the handler chose to throw both balls available to him, he may have to retrieve one of the balls and bring it to the table to stop the time.

Scoring

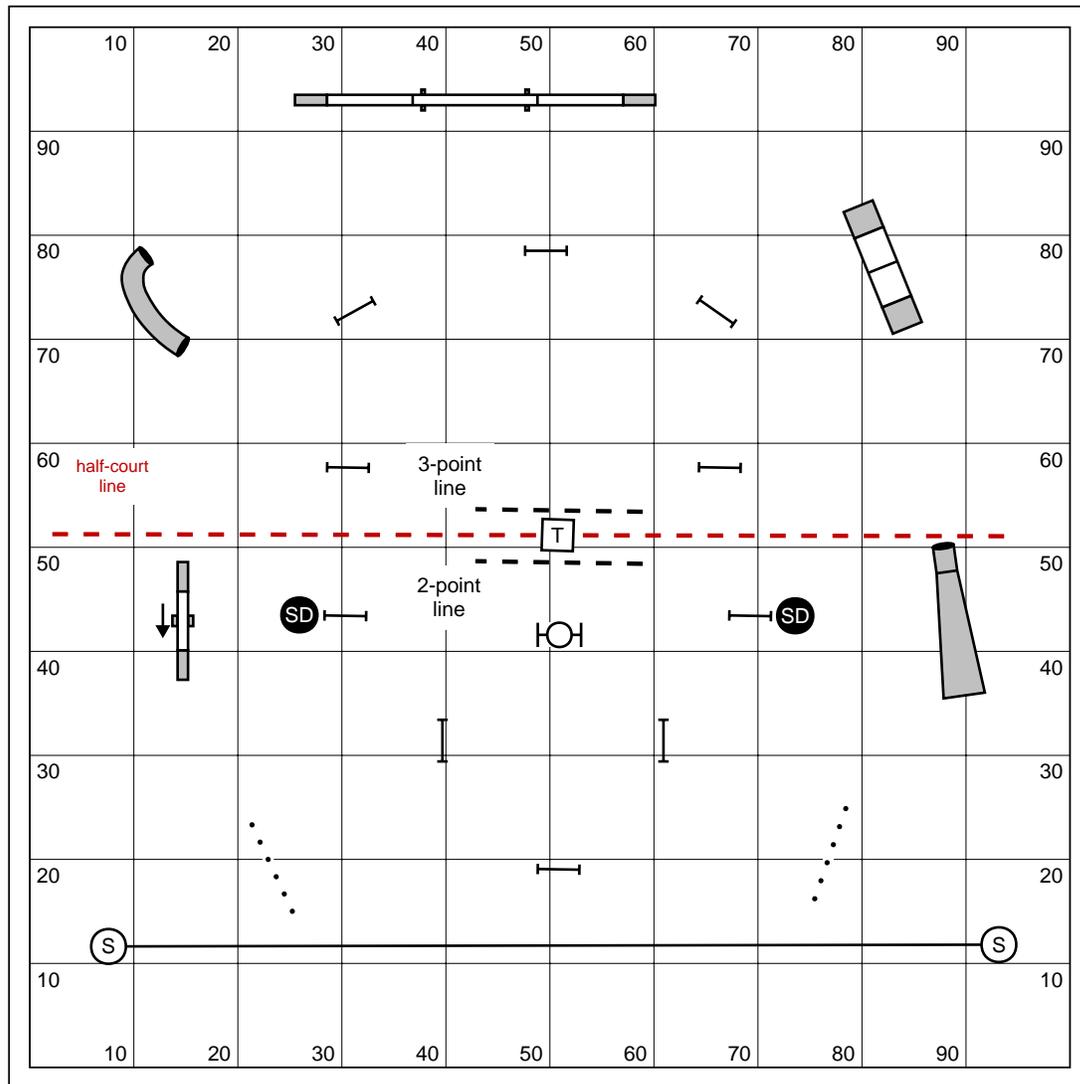
Basketball is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tiebreaker only. Scoring is:

- 1 point for jumps

- 3 for tunnels
- 5 for contacts and weave poles
- minus 3 points for the tire in the point accumulation round

The basketball round only multiplies the score; it cannot add any points.

Course Design



In this sample course the judge stipulated that the collapsed tunnel and teeter may only be taken one time each. Note both are performed in the same direction (toward the starting line). This presents quite a problem because the only other obstacles in the transition to the back of the ring are the Sudden Death jumps (end of scoring) and the tire (-3 points).

The game can be varied by rearranging the obstacles. The arrangement of the tire and table are a required element of the game. The 2-point line is set at 7' from the basket. The 3-point line is set 12' from the basket.

Variations

Just to save time, a ring steward could place the tennis balls on the table, rather than

requiring the handler to carry them out to the table with the dog in a stay.

Simplified Rules – There are several things to be done to simplify the rules of this game. This might not be a bad idea if it's likely that a lot of rules make it hard for competitors to figure out exactly what they are supposed to do at any given moment.

- Do away with the stipulation that a dog has to cross the “Center Court Line” after doing two obstacles on one side of the court.
- Limit throwing the basketball (tennis ball) to one throw. The dog's score is doubled if the handler throws the ball through the tire from behind the 2-point line. If he can then entice the dog to go through the tire to give chase to the ball, the dog's score is tripled. In this variation of the game, there will be only one ball and one shot to the basket. There is no 3-point line.

Strategies

It appears to be a very good idea to throw the ball through the tire; and from behind the 3-X line if possible. Does this really sound like a strategy? Or, is it wishful thinking.

Scoring ~ Qualifying

Basketball is scored Points, Then Time.

Let's be very clear ~ Basketball is not a game that should be used for titling purposes in any venue. The tennis balls add a complexity that creates a competitive disadvantage for certain types of dogs. And throwing the tennis balls can only lead to carnage and chaos.

Premium Blurb

Basketball is a point accumulation game that requires the handler to attempt two “baskets” (throwing a tennis ball through a tire) to earn bonus points. While this game *could* be played as a titling game, in competition, it is more properly intended as an agility game for a fun outing with the club. *Basketball* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Batters Up

Batters Up is a game concocted for play at the NADAC Nationals in 2002. Not much is known about how this game is played as the description comes from the premium for the NADAC nationals and will be played before this book goes to print.

Briefing

Batters Up is a game run in three parts by a team of three dogs and handlers. All members of the team will be in the ring during this round. The first dog and handler team (the batter) runs the first segment of the course. When they reach a pre-determined area the handler will then either down the dog or have a ring steward hold the dog with a leash while the handler then “bats” a Nerf ball through the tire. When the ball has gone through the circular part of the tire a steward will indicate to the second dog and handler team (the pitcher) to perform the second segment of the course.

When the pitcher team (the second dog and handler team) reaches a pre-determined area of the course, they will “pitch” a tennis balls through a tire to the handler of the third dog and handler team (the catcher), who must “catch” the tennis ball. The dog members of the pitcher and catcher pairs must remain on their respective sides of the tire. The dogs may be in a stay or may be held by stewards with a leash. When the ball has been pitched through the tire and has been caught by the catcher, a steward will indicate to the catcher to perform their segment of the course.

If the dog is to be held by a steward, the handler must first place the leash on the dog and hand the leash to the steward. The dog must not show aggression towards the steward, or any other person or dog during any run.

Course Design

All three segments of this course will be comprised of tunnels, weave poles, and contact obstacles. A tire is used in the transition between segments of the course.

Scoring

Batters Up is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Premium Blurb

Batters Up is a team game. The first member of the team runs the first part of a numbered sequence and then “bats” a nerf ball to his partner who, after catching it, will run the second part of the numbered sequence. Again, this is probably not intended as a game for competition, but as a fun game for a club picnic. Batters Up is scored Time, Plus Faults.

ER5

Beat the Clock

Beat the Clock has long been a favorite game in the U.S. Originally the game was used as a warm-up game in the USDAA; a simple, open-entry game in which novice dogs and handlers could compete with more advanced teams. These days Beat the Clock is a popular titling game in the TDAA.

Briefing

The objective is for the team to perform the clock of obstacles before the time expires. Typically, the standard course time is sixty seconds.

The dog and handler begin in the center of the clock where the dog must perform an obstacle that begins course time and then perform a quarter of the obstacles on the course (first #1 through #3; then #4 through #6, and so forth). The handler must direct the dog to the obstacle at the center of the clock-face *prior* to beginning each quarter of the obstacles on the clock. After completing the final sequence of obstacles, #10 through #12, the dog must be directed to the finish line or to a table, at which time the clock is stopped. After completing the #12 obstacle while the dog is on the way to the table or finish line to stop time, he'll not be faulted for taking additional obstacles.

If a dog faults an obstacle in a designated sequence, the judge will call "fault." The handler must direct the dog back to the obstacle at the center of the clock face and reattempt the same sequence. Any points previously won in the group are lost.

Faults are assessed for dropping bars, missing contacts, and taking an obstacle out of order (or from the wrong group). Refusals may be faulted at the discretion of the judge and course designer.

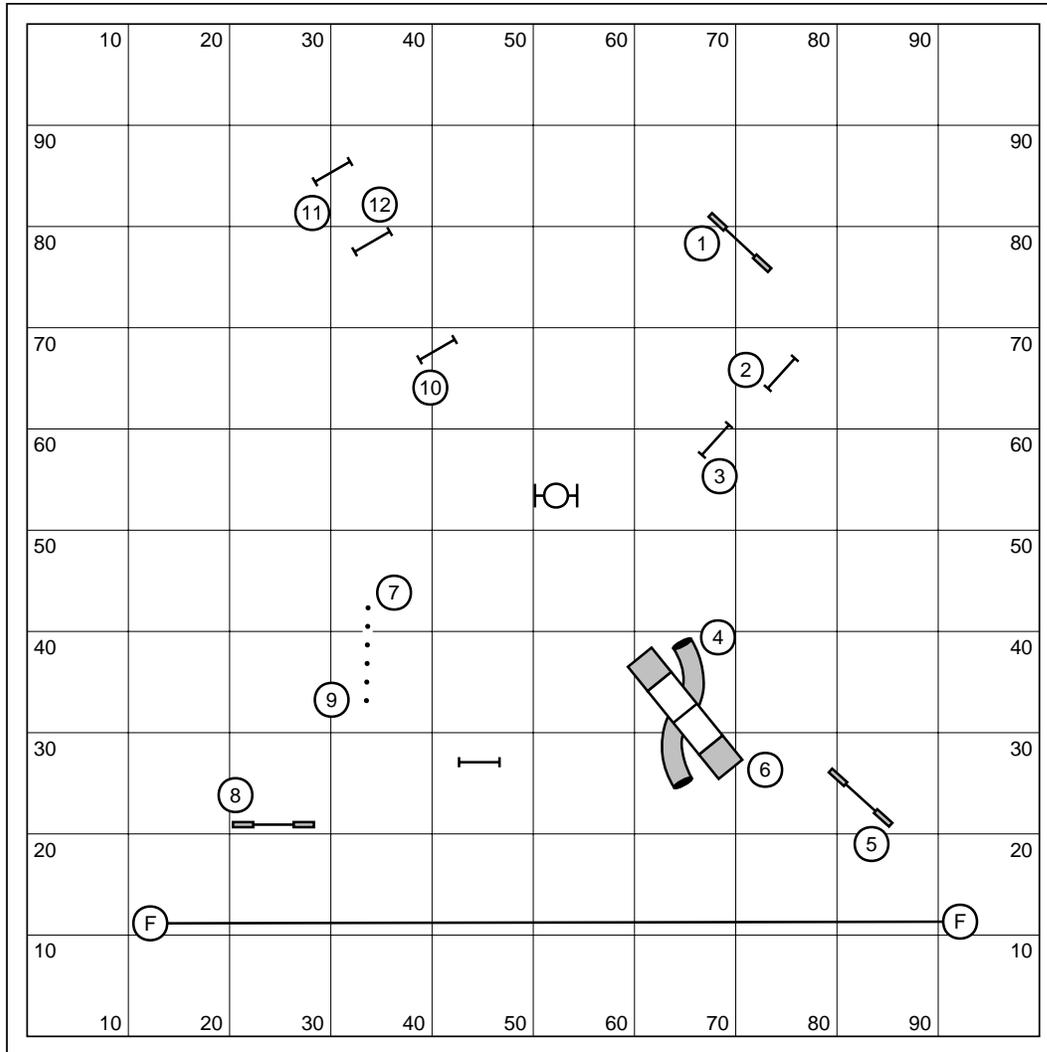
Scoring

Beat the Clock is scored Points, Then Time. The team earns the clock value of each obstacle successfully performed. The winner is the team who accumulates the most points and therefore has the highest score. If two or more dogs have the same number of Points, Then Time breaks the tie.

Faulting an obstacle results in no points earned for that obstacle but the team can still continue on course. An off course results in an immediate cessation of scoring and the team must go to the finish line or table to stop time.

A total of 78 points is possible.

Course Design



This is a typical example of a Beat the Clock course. This course was designed by Bud Houston and originally played in the agility league at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

A Beat the Clock course consists of twelve obstacles, numbered from #1 to #12. The layout is roughly circular with the #12 obstacle positioned at 12 o'clock and the other obstacles arranged in a clock-like fashion.

Another possible design would be to create four *quadrants* which might each contain more than three obstacles. That would certainly make the game more interesting.

Strategy

The handler should find the sweetest path for his dog and push for as much speed as possible without sacrificing the reliability of the dog's performance.

The different variations of Beat the Clock offers greater opportunity for strategy and daring. In the Cuckoo variation, the handler should carefully measure the length of his dog's course. From this measurement the handler should get a pretty good idea whether it's possible to complete the cuckoo and earn the cuckoo bonus points within the allotted

time. During the run, if there is a bobble that takes any amount of time to correct, the handler might think very hard about abandoning the strategy to go for the cuckoo.

In the Dealer's Choice variation, the handler should carefully analyze each of the three-part sequences to find the most efficient line for the dog. Indeed, the tire should always be considered a fourth obstacle to close the three-part sequences. The handler should consider what kind of approach to the tire solving each of the sequences will give his dog.

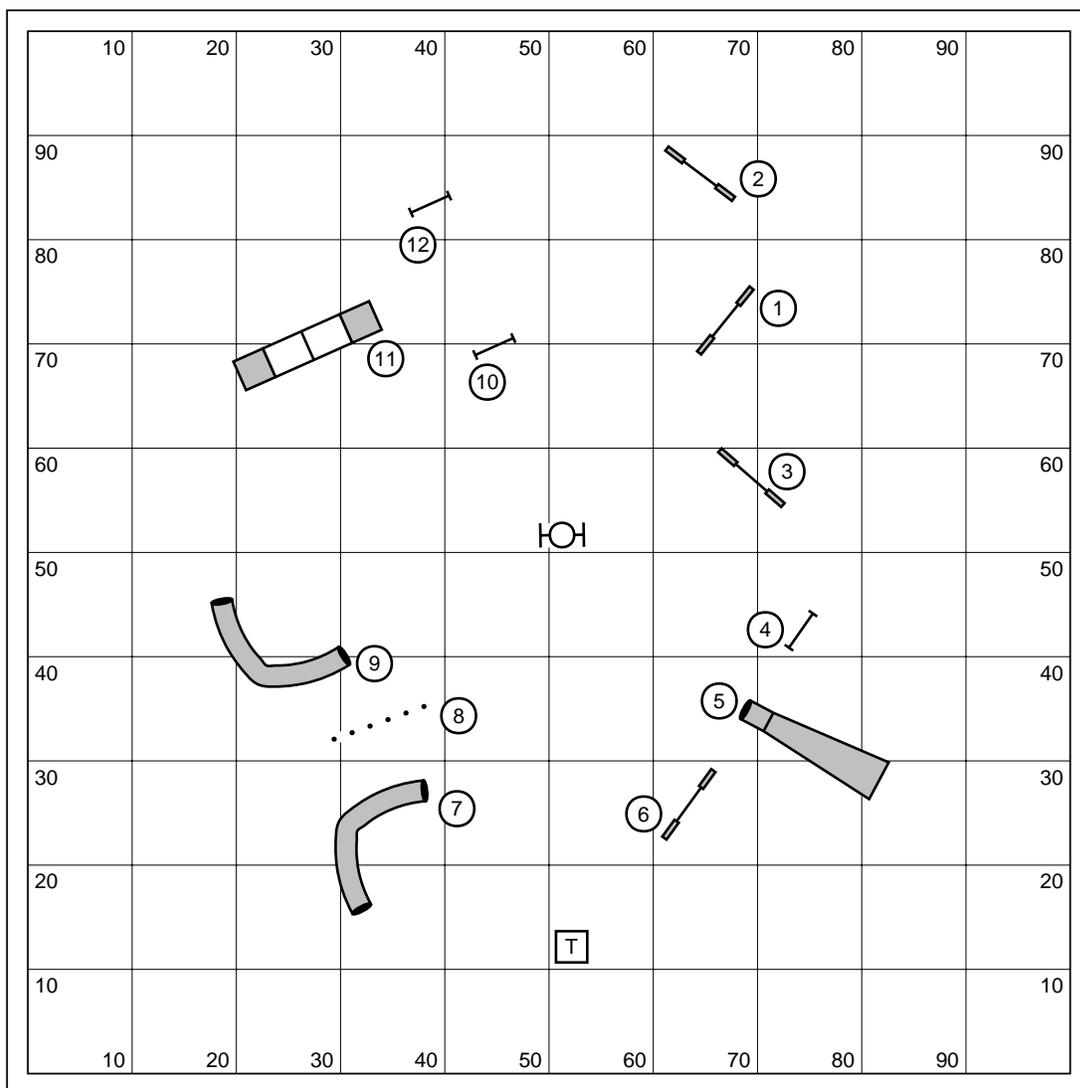
Variations

- **Combination Obstacles** – In this variation, combination obstacles might be used much as they are used in USDAA-style Snooker. A combination obstacle is when more than one obstacle is used to form a single obstacle for performance. This is especially useful when nesting courses for Novice and Advanced levels. The more advanced competitors would have to do the combination obstacles while the Novice level competitors would use only a single obstacle out of the combination. This variation can be used with standard Beat the Clock or the Cuckoo and Dealer's Choice variations. In the Dealer's Choice variation, the judge may specify that the combination obstacle has to be taken in a certain order or direction.
- **Cuckoo** – This variation of Beat the Clock adds a thirteenth obstacle to the clock. If a dog and handler have completed the first 12 obstacles and believe they have enough time left on the clock, they may attempt to perform the cuckoo. If the team completes the cuckoo within the original sixty seconds, then the team's score is doubled. If the team attempts the cuckoo but fails to perform it correctly within course time, then all points are forfeited. This variation is credited to Gordon Simmons-Moake.

When using the Cuckoo variation it is important to specify whether the dog must be directed to the obstacle at the center of the clock's face before (or after) attempting the cuckoo obstacle.

- **Dealer's Choice** – This variation of Beat the Clock allows the handler to choose the order and direction of obstacles to be performed in the segments of the clock; and may allow the handler to choose the order of the segments themselves.
- **Simple Scores** – This variation awards the value of the last obstacle successfully performed when the time whistle blows. As the dog's final score. An important aspect of this variation is that the "last obstacle successfully performed" is not lost for a subsequent fault. A dog faulting the #12 obstacle has credit for up to #11. The only way to score the #12 is to return to the tire and retry the #10 to #12 quadrant of the clock.

Another feature of this variation is to set qualifying criteria more aggressively: GI = 10 pts (or 8); GII = 11 pts (or 10); GIII – 12 pts.



In the Dealer's Choice variation of Beat the Clock, the obstacles in each group may be numbered, but these numbers do not indicate the order and direction the obstacles must be taken. This is left to the handler to determine or the dog, as it were.

Qualifying and Titles

In the TDAA qualification should be set on the basis of points and time, the points earned by the dog should be doable and appropriate to the level of play. While Games II and Games III might require the same number of points, the qualifying time for Games III would be more demanding. For example:

- Games I – For a score of 9 or better
- Games II – For a score of 12 or better
- Games III – For a score of 12 or better

In the Cuckoo variation, this might be changed to require the Master handler to go for the Cuckoo in order to win the higher games qualifier.

- Games I – For a score of 9 or better.
- Games II – For a score of 12

- Games III – For a score of 24

Premium Blurb

Beat the Clock is a sequencing game in which the obstacles are arranged in four parts, like quadrants of the clock. Obstacles are typically arranged around the tire. The handler is required to do the tire before each of the quadrants. *Beat the Clock* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Biathlon

This game, the invention of Stuart Mah, was the runner-up in the 1995 Clean Run magazine games contest. Biathlon is modeled after an Olympic event that tests a variety of skills in athletic competition.

Briefing

A side consists of two dog and handler teams: a shooting team and a penalty team. Both teams on the side begin in the start box. The shooting team begins a sequence designated by the judge in which two areas are marked shooting stations. Both dog and handler of the shooting team must remain in the box, as the handler tries to knock over a target with one of three tennis balls (ammo) supplied at the shooting station.

If the handler successfully knocks down the target, the team continues on the shooting course. When the first team completes the course the penalty team becomes the shooting team and must complete the shooting course in the same manner as the first team.

If a penalty is incurred by the shooting team, the dog on the penalty team runs the assigned penalty course. The shooting team must remain in place until the penalty team has completed their course. A penalty is assessed:

- Any time the dog on the shooting team faults an obstacle;
- Any time the shooter's dog leaves the shooting station before the ammo has been exhausted.

If the dog running the penalty course incurs obstacle performance faults, those faults are added to the side's course time. Any obstacle omitted in the penalty course will incur a failure to perform (20 faults).

If the dog on the penalty team leaves the start box or the penalty course to pick up loose ammo, there is no penalty other than the time it takes to get the dog back under control.

If the shooter fails to knock down a target in three tries, a special penalty is assessed. A special penalty means the handler on the penalty team must run the assigned penalty course.

During the course run, ammo that is dropped by the shooter will be considered unusable and must be left on the field.

There is no penalty if a dog picks up and carries ammo on the course. However, this ammunition is considered unusable by the shooter.

Handlers who are not on course may hold onto their dogs.

Scoring ~ Qualifying

Biathlon is scored Time, Plus Faults. The side with the lowest score wins.

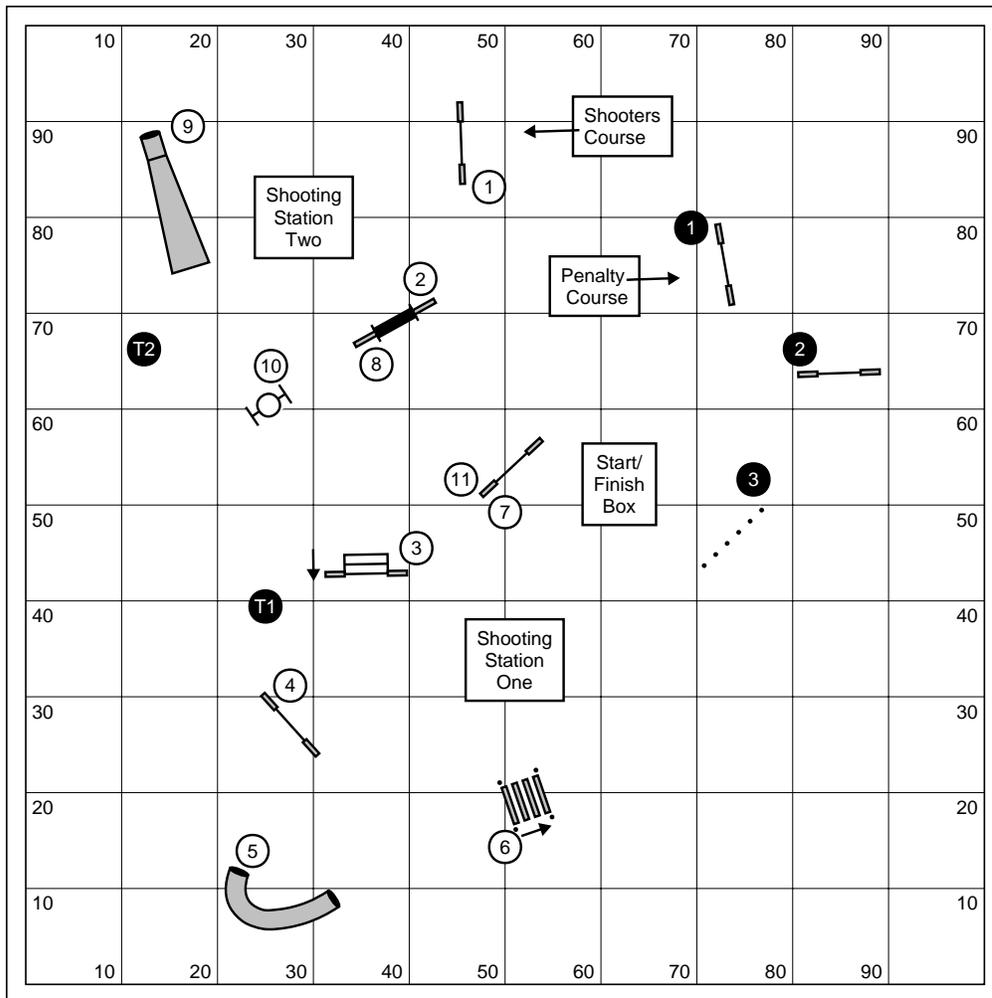
Biathlon is not a game that should be used for titling purposes in any venue. The tennis balls add a complexity that creates a competitive disadvantage for certain types of dogs. And throwing the tennis balls can only lead to carnage and chaos.

Course Design

The shooting course should be designed using 9 to 12 obstacles and should be appropriate to the level of the dogs. Use mainly jumps and tunnels and occasionally, weave poles or a contact obstacle.

The penalty course ideally consists of no more than 2 or 3 obstacles and for the purposes of the special penalty, should not include contact obstacles.

The target is placed 10 to 15' away from the shooting station. Some possible targets are a tire with a net on the end to catch the ball or soft dog toys set on a table or other suitable surface. In addition, if hitting the target will be difficult to judge, it is advisable to use jump stewards as target judges. They can signal with a flag if the target is hit or not.



The shooters course, shown in white numbers, uses 9 to 12 obstacles. The penalty course, shown in black numbers, uses 2 or 3 obstacles. The targets are labeled “T1” and “T2.” This course was designed by Stuart Mah.

Variations

- **Hurry Up and Wait** – In this variation of Biathlon, a typical two-dog Relay course is run. In each leg of the Relay is a shooting station, equipped with six balls and a target. The handler on course must pause at the shooting station and attempt to hit

the target. The shooter can proceed on course only after hitting the target or exhausting all of his ammunition.

- Single shooting station – The Biathlon shooting course can be reduced to one shooting station.
- Alternative penalty course – There may be two different penalty courses set: one course for the dogs and one course for the handlers that is more handler friendly.

Premium Blurb

Biathlon is team game in which each member of the team will run a short course during which the handler is required to attempt to knock down a target with a tennis ball.

Biathlon is probably more appropriate as a game for fun in a club outing rather than a serious game of competition. *Biathlon* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Black Hole

*Black Hole is the invention of Ilze Rukis, who was looking for a different 'spin' on the usual agility game. She created a game in which the focus is **not** to take a particular obstacle. What could be better than the ever-inviting tunnel opening that so many dogs just love to dive into? The game is intended to help to develop discrimination and control skills of the handler.*

Briefing

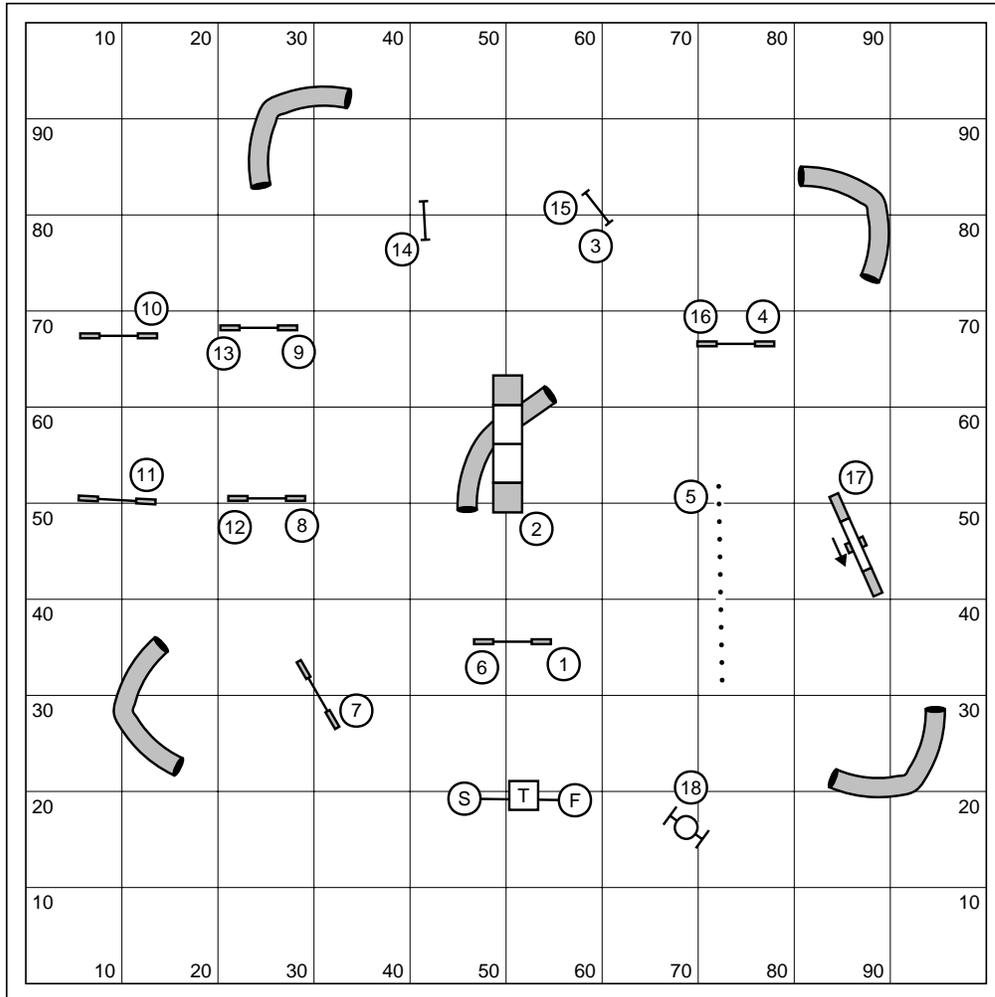
Black Hole is like a standard course. The handler will direct the dog on the numbered course. The dog can continue on course unless the dog goes into a pipe tunnel (the black hole). Scoring stops once the dog goes off-course into a tunnel.

Rules for performance faults are slightly abridged for this class. A wrong-course (other than into a tunnel) is not faulted. Refusals are not faulted; however, the handler must correct the error or earn failure to perform. **If a dog goes into a tunnel** with all four paws he has fallen into a Black Hole and is eliminated. At the handler's discretion the dog may finish the course.

Scoring and Qualifying

Black Hole is scored Time, Plus Faults. The Qualifying Course Time (QCT) is established using the rates of travel from the standard classes respective to the level and the jump height of the dog. The dog qualifies by earning a score equal to or less than the QCT.

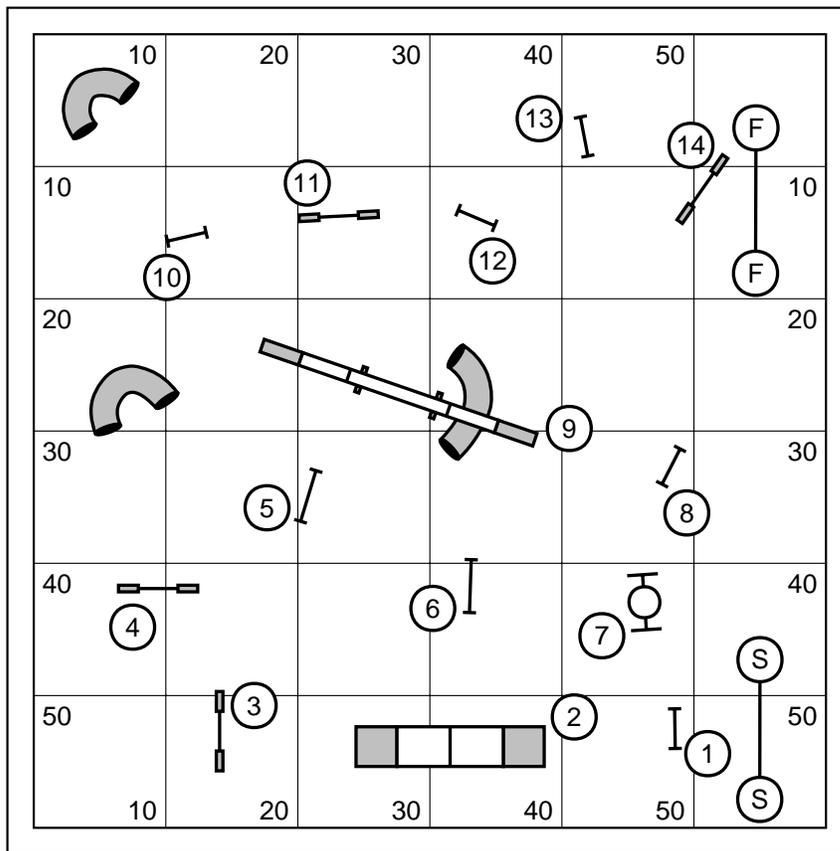
Course Design



This is an example of a Black Hole course. Note that the benchmark time for earning the bonus points is based on an arbitrary yards per second calculation. This course is about 160 yards long. The 50 second benchmark would be based on something better than three yards per second.

The Black Hole course should be designed to suggest a logical path to the dog that presents on-course tunnels as inviting opportunities to the dog. These teasing options should be presented with some frequency.

The Black Hole (wrong course) tunnel might be presented as an *option* which is loosely defined as a course that makes more sense to the dog than the course the judge actually numbered. The option is typically presented in the dog's turning radius and possibly is framed to the dog's attention before the turn begins. The option might also be the presentation of the tunnel as a discrimination with the tunnel along-side the correct obstacle (as in, tunnel under the dogwalk or A-frame).



Black Hole course design for TDAA is comparable to course design for the big dog venues; though the transitional distances between obstacles is considerably tighter. The designer should be careful to provide a *minimum* of 12' for the avoidance of any wrong course obstacle... and the pipe tunnels in a Black Hole course should be given the same thoughtful spacing. The handler must have room to solve the riddle of direction.

Strategies

The chief reasons that a dog goes off course into a pipe tunnel are that the handler has logically presented the tunnel to the dog or that the handler worries so over the potential for an off course at the tunnel that his body gives inadvertent “focus” to the tunnel. Where you have a tunnel-sucking dog, you usually have a tunnel-sucking handler.

The handler might “trust the force” of his own movement while moving confidently and reliably in the direction of the true course without giving the tunnels much attention. On the other hand, the handler could also seek to create a path for the dog that does not present the pipe tunnels logically to the dog.

Since this is a Time, Plus Faults game, the handler should be careful not to have a let down for any fault on course (other than the dog going into a Black Hole); because the dog can recover from a fault and still qualify.

Variations

- *Original* ~ In the beginning Black Hole was scored points plus bonus then time; giving 1 point for jumps; 3 points for the tire or 6 weave poles; 5 points for contact

obstacles and 12 weave poles. And, the dog earned a bonus of 10 points for doing this course in 50 seconds or less. This concept has been moved aside. It frankly makes little sense for a judge to be yelling out point values for obstacles on a numbered course. Numbered courses are predictable (after all) and any game that requires a judge to announce values lends itself to scribing error. Also, the original version specified that the dog starts and stops on a table. This is really a limiting requirement that we can ignore. Under the original variation the game would be scored Points, Plus Bonus, Then Time.

- *Dealer's Choice* ~ In this variation the judge may specify a penalty for the dog going into a Black Hole that is less onerous than leaving the course in ignominious defeat. For example the penalty may be a wrong course fault *and* having to repeat the tunnel before going on.

Premium Blurb

Black Hole is a numbered course requiring the handler to simply avoid any tunnels (Black Holes) with his dog. A dog that goes into a Black Hole is subject to a significant penalty. *Black Hole* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Blackjack

Blackjack is the invention of Jonathan Brown, former President of the Agility Association of Canada (AAC) and is a now defunct titling game for Canine Performance Events (CPE). Blackjack is a game of strategy and agility. The Vegas variation of Blackjack is possibly more exciting and challenging than the original version.

Briefing

The purpose of Blackjack is to accumulate 21 points in the fastest time. Accumulating more than 21 points disqualifies the team.

At least one corner, one side, and one jump must be completed successfully. Corners are typically made from tunnels placed in the corners of the course; sides are always contact obstacles and weave poles which are placed along the sides of the course. The jumps are arranged in a random fashion in the middle.

No contact obstacles may be taken back-to-back. At least one obstacle must be taken between contact obstacle attempts, whether successful or not. Four-paws are required for commitment on any obstacle.

No obstacle may be successfully performed more than twice for points.

Dogs shall accumulate points within a time period established by the judge, usually sixty seconds. If 21 points are accumulated under the time limit set by the judge, the dog and handler go to the table to stop time.

Scoring

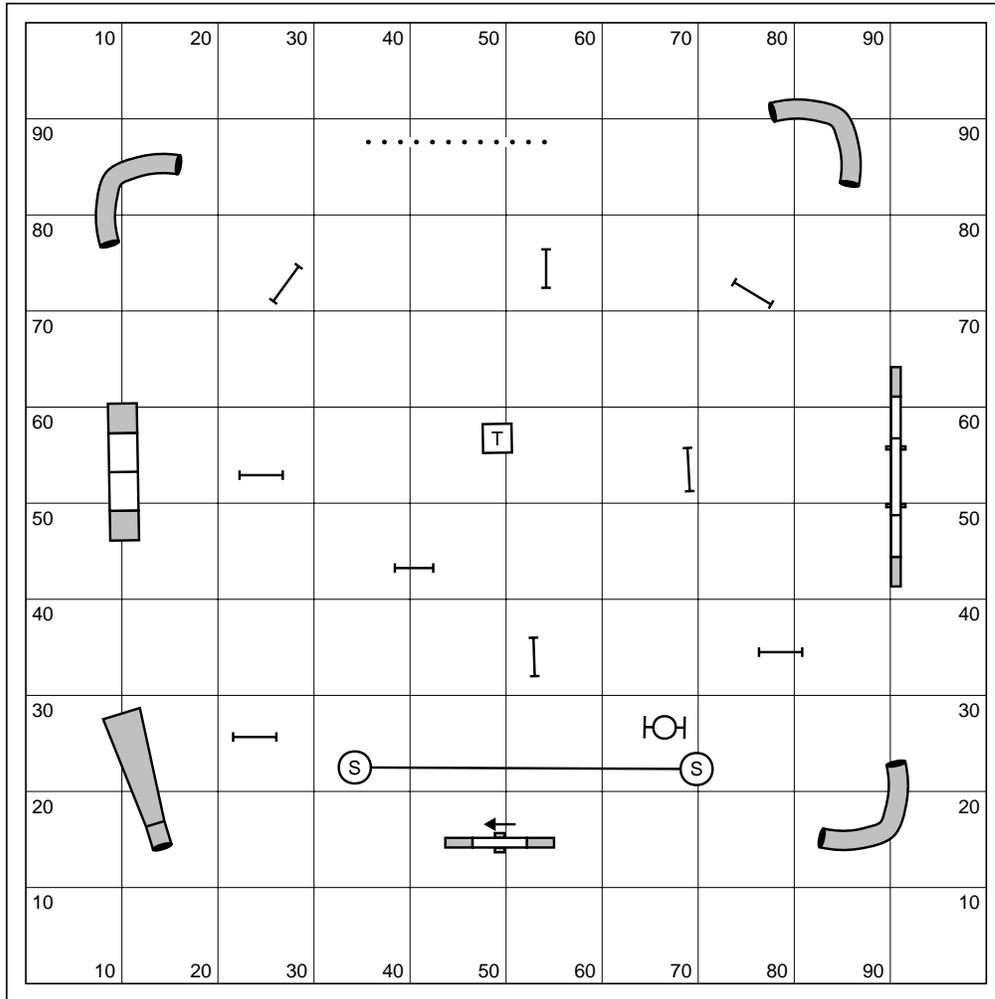
Blackjack is scored Points, Then Time. The highest point value wins. If two or more dogs have the same number of Points, Then Time breaks the tie.

Points are awarded as follows:

- Jumps, 1 point
- Tunnels, tire, window, 2 points
- Contact obstacles, 3 points
- Weave poles, 4 points

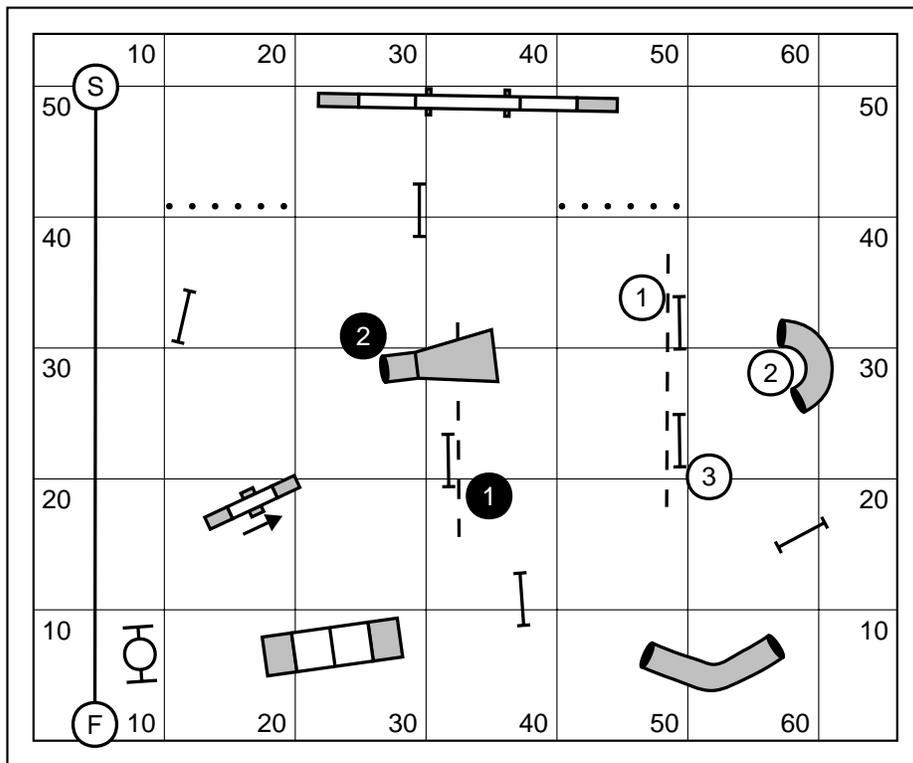
A team scoring over 21 points is eliminated.

Course Design



This is an example of a typical Black Jack course.

This Black Jack course includes the table (near the center of the course), which is used to stop the clock. The table is near 6 to 8 single-bar, non-winged jumps. The contact obstacles and weave poles will be arranged on the outer perimeter of the course. The four corners include a collapsed tunnel, a pipe tunnel, a tire or window jump, with the fourth corner being another tire or pipe tunnel.



This is an example of a Vegas variation of Black Jack. This course was designed for play in the TDAA. The written briefing for this variation should include the advice:

In the Vegas variation two distance challenges are included in the course. After the traditional point accumulation, the team may attempt one of the two gambles on the course. The Ace gamble is worth 11 points, is noted on the course in white numbers. The Blackjack gamble is worth 10 points indicated on the course in black numbers.

A successful performance of a gamble will not be required for the purpose of qualifying. However, if the dog goes over-time in getting to the finish line after the performance of the gamble, then the bonus for the gamble is lost. Further, if the dog incurs a fault during the attempt of either gamble, then the gamble bonus is lost.

than 21 points. The handler probably should attempt each gamble, straight away. If the dog completes one of them, the dog earns the full points. If the dog fails at one, then he needs to fill the 21 points after the dust settles on the two gambles. This means the handler is going to have to be pretty quick on my feet (or doing math in his head).

Qualifying and Titles

Blackjack is eligible as a qualifying game under TDAA rules. As all dogs must earn 21 points, the point schedule should be based on a reasonable standard course time in which 21 points might be earned. In the sample course, for example, the qualifying criteria was set as follows:

- Games I – 21 points in 55 seconds or less big dogs; 60 seconds small dogs
- Games II – 21 points in 50 seconds or less big dogs; 55 seconds small dogs;
- Games III – 21 points in 45 seconds or less big dogs; 50 seconds small dogs

In the Vegas variation of Blackjack, in addition to stipulation for time the qualification criteria shall be:

- Games I – 21 points
- Games II – 10 points + the Ace gamble; or 11 points + the Blackjack gamble
- Games III – Both the Ace gamble and the Blackjack gamble

Variations

- Redux ~ In the original version of the game the judge would specify the beginning obstacle at the start of the class. The order of subsequent obstacles is the handler's choice. The first obstacle must be attempted, if not, points are deducted from the dog's score double the value of the opening obstacle.

We've moved away from this definition because specifying the starting obstacle creates a limit on possible strategies in any *dog's-choice* game.

- Vegas variation – This is the invention of Becky Dean. Two gambles are included in the course. After the traditional point accumulation, the team may attempt one of the two gambles on the course.
 - The Ace gamble, worth 11 points, is noted on the course in letters (tunnel, tunnel, dogwalk). USDAA advanced rules will be used to judge the Ace gamble (only refusals on the contact obstacle only will be called).
 - The Blackjack gamble is noted on the course with numbers (jump, jump, jump). USDAA masters rules will be used to judge the Blackjack gamble (refusals for any obstacle). If the dog successfully completes jump, jump, and then incurs a refusal at the dogwalk, but then successfully completes the performance of the last jump, the team will earn 3 points (rather than 10).

If the dog incurs a fault during the attempt of either gamble, he'll earn simple points for the obstacles completed to that point, but will not be able to earn the gamble bonus.

No more than one obstacle in either gamble can be performed back-to-back except when attempting the gamble. However, one obstacle from the ace gamble

could be performed in conjunction with one obstacle from the Blackjack gamble without incurring a penalty. If more than one obstacle in a gamble is taken back-to-back, the team will not be eligible to earn the gamble.

Gambles can be completed at any time during the run.

When playing the Vegas variation, for the purposes of league play, Blackjack should be scored points-level, then time. It's given that dogs will probably have a score of 21.

Points- Leveling for placements will take into consideration successful performance of on-course gambles using this order of precedence:

1. Both the Ace gamble and the Blackjack gamble
2. 11 points + the Ace gamble
3. 10 points + the Blackjack gamble
4. 21 points no gambles

Premium Blurb

Blackjack is a dog's-choice game in which the dog is directed to accumulate 21 points in the fastest time; going over 21 points disqualifies the team. During point accumulation the dog must score at least one obstacle from three obstacle types. *Blackjack* is scored Points, Then Time. ER10

Blind Man's Bluff

This game was concocted as a training game for Bud Houston's agility competition class at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, OH. The game is intended to promote visualization skills and provide a way out when you show up at the trial finding that you have missed both the briefing and the walk-through and have nothing but the course map to guide your running strategy!

Briefing

Dogs will run a standard agility course. The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge. However, here's the challenge: Handlers are not allowed to walk or even see the course until they are called into the ring.

All exhibitors will be sequestered from the course area. At least 30 minutes before each handler runs, he will be handed a numbered course on paper. He must devise his handling strategy solely from the diagram.

Scoring

Blind Man's Bluff is scored Faults, Then Time. The winner is the dog with the fewest faults. If two dogs have the same number of Faults, Then Time breaks the tie.

Any rules system to determine faults can be used but the skill level of the students should be kept in mind.

Course Design

There are no particular required obstacles or forbidden obstacles. The judge may use whatever obstacles are available in whatever space is available. A course will typically consist of 15 to 20 obstacles.

There should be a means by which the exhibitors are removed from direct sight of the course. This can be accomplished by putting the course in a building and keeping the exhibitors out of the building until it is their time to run. On the other hand, the course could be outside and the exhibitors inside.

Judging Notes

It would be an excellent idea if the course on the field is not numbered. This will take away the option for the handler to read the numbers as they go along.

Strategies

- The two most important elements in this competition are for the handler to remember the correct sequence and to determine a handling strategy without ever having walked the course.
- The handler should spend every available moment before the run visualizing being on course and working with the dog.
- Please note that groaning and complaining only serve to break other people's concentration.

Variations

- Cold Turkey – This variation has been played in competition. Rather than requiring the handlers to be sequestered away from the course, the judge renumbers the course at regular intervals. This minimizes the disadvantage of running early in the class. Cold Turkey is judged under Starters/Novice rules.
- Blind Man's Bluff games – Blind Man's Bluff can be played using nearly any game. Consider it as a basis for Snooker or for Pole Jacks! It's a very scary thought!

Qualifying and Titles

Blind Man's Bluff is eligible as a qualifying game under TDAA rules. It should only be used when the conditions of the game can be met. That is, the course should somehow be segregated from the field of exhibitors.

Courses should be leveled appropriate to the class in competition. Qualifying should be based on any rational schedule of faults, with no standard course time.

Premium Blurb

Blind Man's Bluff is a simple sequencing game, like a standard course, with this one catch; the handler is not allowed to walk the course in advance or even (if possible) see the course. *Blind Man's Bluff* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER1

Boston Bowling

This game was invented by Tammi Skillman. It was first played at a three-day USDAA trial in Boston, Massachusetts, hosted by ARFF, on December 5, 1997. At this trial, remarkably, nearly 1300 runs were recorded in a single ring, averaging almost precisely one dog per minute, an American record.

Briefing

Boston Bowling consists of two short courses, each starting with a specific entry to one of two tunnels, set side by side in a “U” shape. The handler bowls with his dog by sending the dog ahead into a tunnel entrance. Each dog and handler team has two bowls. The handler may not step over the penalty line as he bowls his dog into one of the tunnel entrances.

Each tunnel shall have one entrance, designated the first obstacle in one of two courses. The opposite entrance, of the same tunnel, shall be designated the gutter lane. The course the dog must run depends on which tunnel the dog enters. One tunnel shall be designated the beginning of Course A and the other tunnel designated the beginning of Course B.

Both courses consist of obstacles totaling 10 points or more in value. The team earns points for each obstacle performed and continues the course so long as no obstacle has been faulted. If an obstacle is faulted, then scoring ceases.

If a ball is a gutter ball, then the ball is considered used and no additional points may be earned. If the team has a ball remaining, they may return to the line and bowl again. If no ball remains, the dog must cross the finish line designated by the judge to stop the clock.

A strike is earned if a team performs an entire course without fault.

The second bowl must be to the tunnel that begins the course not yet bowled. If the bowler selects the same lane as previously performed, the bowl will be considered a gutter ball.

Scoring

Boston Bowling is scored Points, Then Time. If two or more dogs have the same number of Points, Then Time breaks the tie.

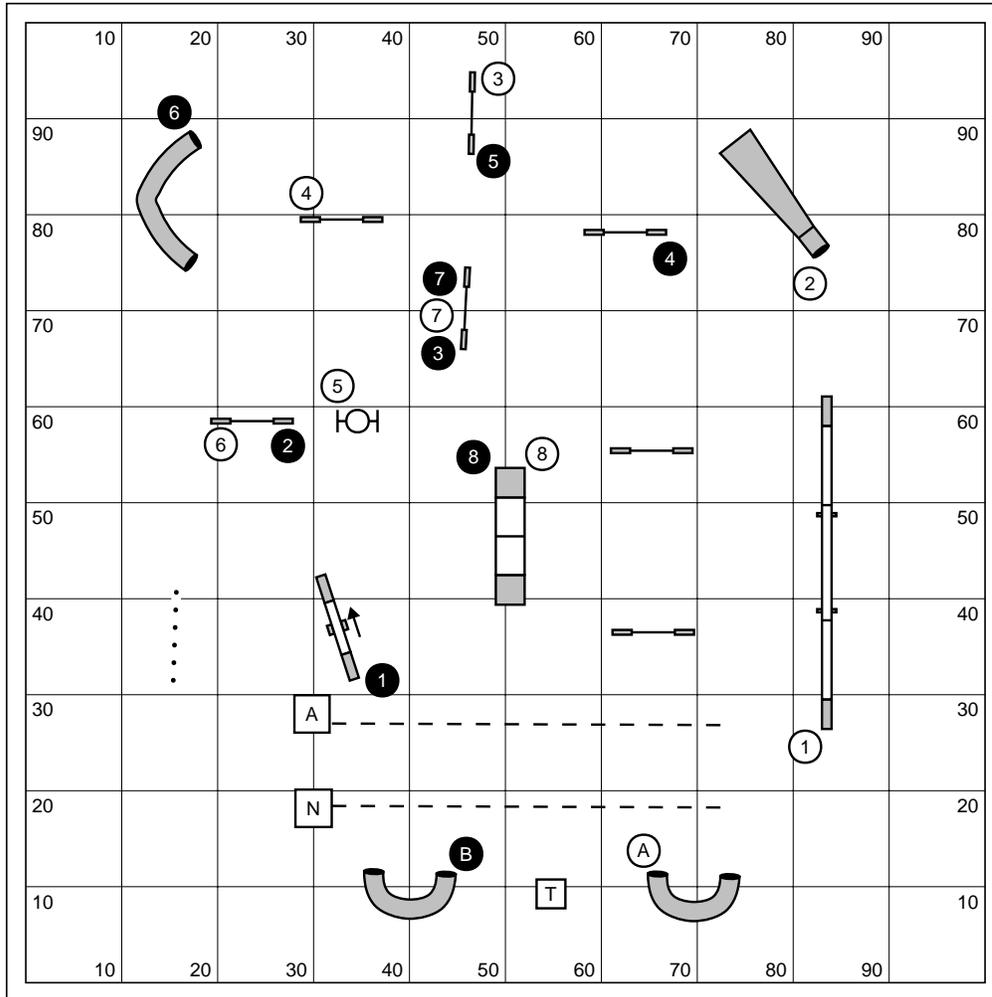
The team earns points for each obstacle successfully completed:

- Jumps and tunnels, 1 point
- Weave poles and contacts, 2 points

Each strike bowled by the team earns 5 bonus points.

The maximum points possible are 30.

Course Design



This is an example of a Boston Bowling course. The “A” on course indicates the advanced send line. The “N” indicates the novice send line. It’s not clear whether the table is a benefit to the bowler or a liability. It certainly creates some separation between the two tunnel lanes. But it also presents a “gutter-ball” possibility should it entice the dog into an off-course in the send.

The Boston Bowling course traditionally begins with two U-shaped pipe tunnels set side-by-side with clearly marked send lines for Novice and Advanced competitors. The correct entries to the tunnels will be clearly marked, leaving the opposite entry to each tunnel to be designated as a “gutter ball” entry. Each course will correspond to a unique sequence on the course.

Strategies

The key to Boston Bowling is, first of all, to memorize both courses. Secondly, be prepared to run whichever course the dog initially chooses.

Variations

- Hendershot’s variation – The 5 point strike bonus is awarded for the send to the pipe tunnel rather than for a fault free bowl. This takes considerable pressure off

of the handler because the failed send is no longer a de facto gutter ball. Qualifying criteria might be set at: G1 = 20 points; G2 = 25 points; G3 = 30 points. The criteria at each level establishes some expectation of success.

Also, in this variation the course doesn't end with a faulted obstacle. Instead, the value of that obstacle is lost to the dog.

- League play variation – In league play, the scoring works a bit differently. The first bowl is the more important of the two. If the dog is successfully sent and performs the short course with no faults, then the dog will score 10 for the bowl, plus an additional 10 to carry forward to the next bowl. If the dog faults, however, the dog earns only a point for each obstacle performed prior to the fault. The second bowl must be to the tunnel that begins the course not yet bowled. If the dog does the same lane as previously performed, the bowl will be considered a gutter ball. A 10 point bonus is earned for sending the dog from the containment line. If successfully sent to both tunnels from this line, without regard to subsequent faults, the dog will earn a 10 point bonus.

In the league play variation, Boston Bowling is scored Points, Then Time. The maximum points possible are 40.

- Time variation ~ Time starts when the dog initially crosses the bowling line and stops on the conclusion of the selected sequence. This timing rule is repeated for the second short course.
- More bowling rules – Boston Bowling can be played by a small group of agility enthusiasts (under 10 people) more strictly according to the rules of true bowling. Play ten frames rather than only two.

Qualifying and Titles

Boston Bowling is eligible as a qualifying game under TDAA rules. All classes can run on the same course. Qualification criteria shall be:

- Games I - 20 points
- Games II - 30 points
- Games III - 30 points

Premium Blurb

Boston Bowling is a sequencing game that is played and scored like bowling. Each handler has three opportunities to “bowl” his dog into a tunnel (a distance send) and then run the course that corresponds to the tunnel entry the dog chooses. Running each short sequence without error will earn a “strike” bonus. Failing to successfully make the send to the tunnel is scored a “gutter ball, and uses one of the three turns. *Boston Bowling* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Boxed Pairs

On first glance Boxed Pairs looks like a standard relay with batons, course times, exchange areas, and so on. In fact, providing nothing goes wrong, this game works exactly like a standard relay. But if something does go wrong, well, that's when the fun begins.

Briefing

The Boxed Pairs course is divided into two separate sequences. One dog shall be designated to run the first sequence and the other dog the second sequence. Handlers are required to carry and exchange a baton. The first handler can choose to lead out or start with the dog. The second handler is not allowed to lead out. While performing the exchange, both dogs and handlers must be in the exchange box. Failure to do so results in a disqualification for passing out of the zone.

Both handlers should become familiar with both parts of the course.

If the first dog faults an obstacle, that team must return to the exchange box, exchange the baton, and the second team continues the course beginning with the obstacle at which the first dog made the error. The second dog continues on until he has run the first half of the course. Should the second dog fault any obstacle, that team must return to the exchange box and again exchange the baton. The alternate team must then resume the course from the point of the fault.

When the first half of the course has been successfully run, a scheduled exchange of the baton takes place. The relay continues as in a standard relay with the second side of the course, except that faults force baton exchanges in the exchange box.

Every time an obstacle is faulted, the judge will signal the handlers to change places.

The active dog (the dog that is supposed to be running at any time) will be faulted for taking an obstacle out of sequence. If the exchange dog performs an obstacle on the way to the obstacle faulted by the other team, that dog too is called for a fault and must immediately return to the exchange area to hand off the baton to the other team. The inactive dog may perform any obstacle going back to the box.

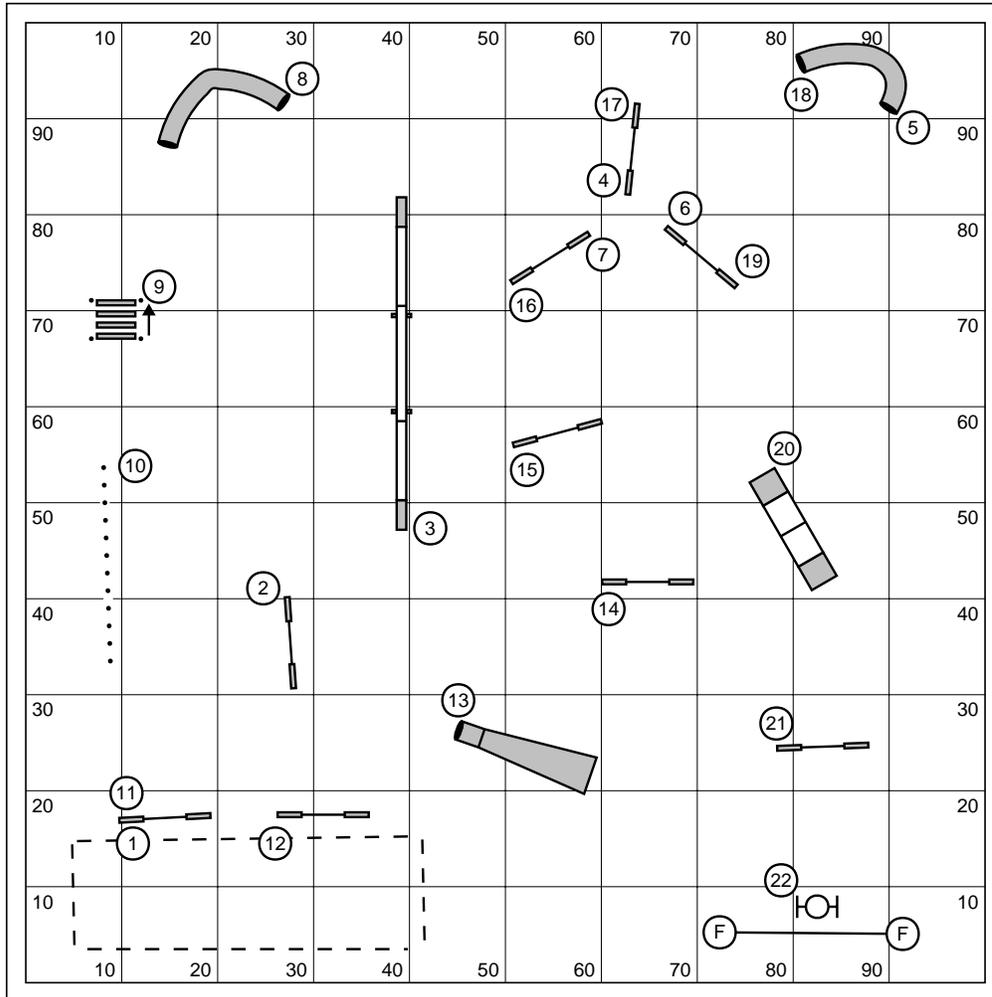
Scoring

Boxed Pairs is scored Time Only. The team with the fastest time wins. Since every obstacle must be successfully completed, no faults are assessed. The time it takes for the teams to exchange places is penalty enough.

There is no standard course time. However, a maximum course time should be established.

The stiffer the rules, the more difficult it is to get through clean. If refusals are faulted, this relay can get downright hectic. Most judges use modified USDAA Starters/Novice rules to cut down on the number of potential baton exchanges.

Course Design



This is a Boxed Pairs relay course designed for competition by ADAA judge, Lyndal Nichols of Queensland, Australia.

The layout of a Relay course is similar to that of a standard agility course. The course is made up of at least 11 obstacles and is frequently made up of many more. Each team performs a sequence of obstacles as designated by the judge. The course can be designed so that one dog will run part of the course and the other dog the remainder or so that each dog runs the entire course. Each sequence should contain at least one contact obstacle.

Strategy

Sequences should be assigned between the two dogs so that the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two dogs allow them to attack the course with the minimum possibility of any errors.

However, each team member should be familiar with the other course.

In running the game, it's very important that the handler of the inactive dog pay keen attention to the performance of the dog on the course. The game will get very sloppy if the second dog and handler don't really know where to resume the course. A very keen competitor would be constantly recalculating his route to pick up the active dog's course

just in case there is a fault.

Variations

- **Boxed Pairs Dress Up** – Darlene Woz decided that traditional Boxed Pairs was boring and livened it up by creating Boxed Pairs Dress Up. Instead of exchanging a baton when a change of dogs is made, the handlers have to get dressed up. A box containing multiple articles of clothing is placed in the exchange area. Upon return to the exchange area, the incoming handler selects an article of clothing from the box for the outgoing handler. The articles of clothing may range from hats and underwear to dresses and skirts.
- **Alternatives to batons** – Darlene Woz has also varied the game by using other objects in lieu of a baton. At one event there was a choice of three exchange items: a can of pears, a pair of mittens, and a pair of socks. Each item was worth bonus points that would be subtracted from the team's total time. The most difficult item to exchange, in this case the socks, was worth the most bonus points. This variation would be very appropriate for a special event such as Halloween or Christmas—all the exchange items could be related to the event.

Premium Blurb

Boxed Pairs is a pairs-relay sequencing game. The first handler carries a baton and exchanges with the second handler midway on course. The teams will switch every time a dog earns a fault. And so it may go, back and forth, until the entire sequence is run. *Boxed Pairs* is scored Time Only. ER5

Box Game

The Box Game is the invention of USDAA judge, Brian McGunigle. Brian conceived this game for a USDAA Starter/Novice-only trial held by ARFF in Massachusetts in 1999. People said they had fun running the game. One of the club members later reported to Brian to say they had subsequently used it in class for training.

Briefing

Like a typical Jumpers course, the dog is required to perform the course in the order and direction specified by the judge.

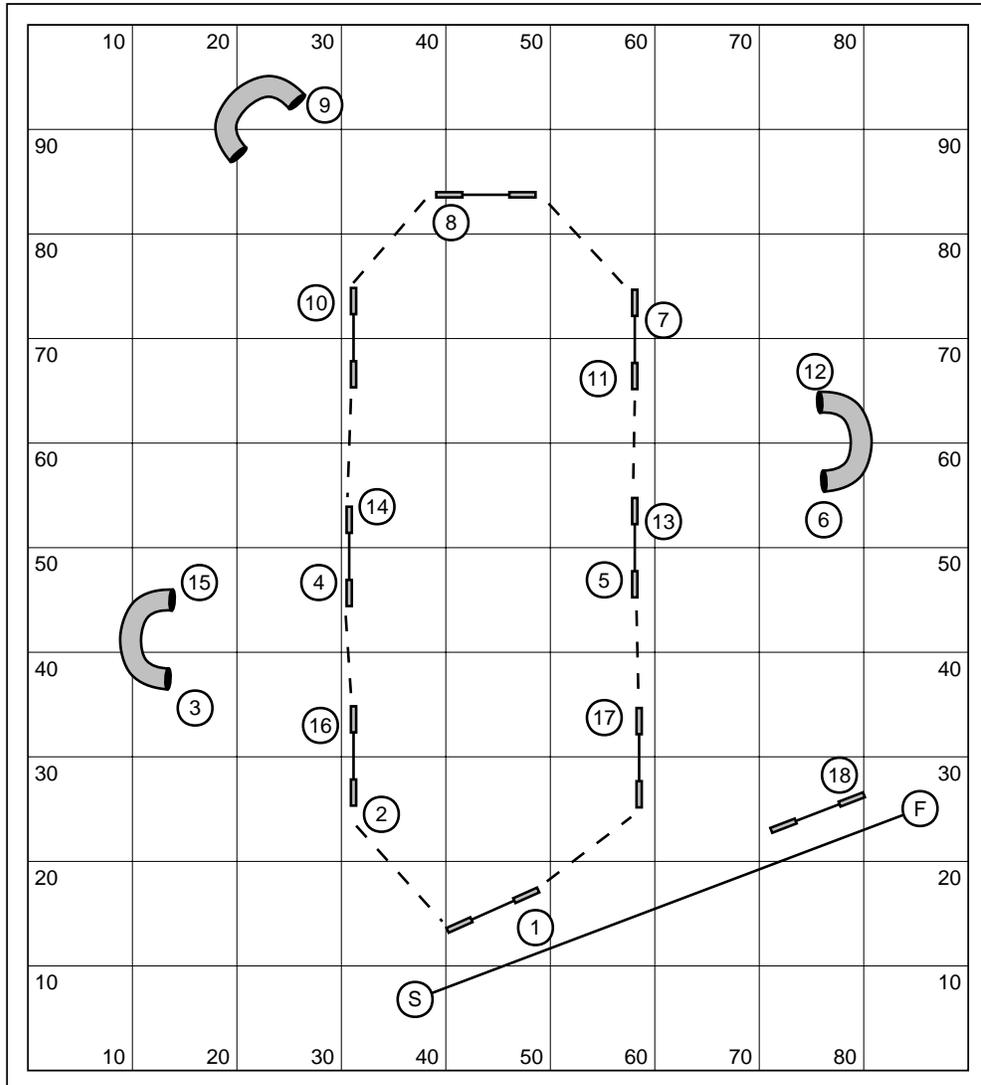
Once the dog clears hurdle #1, the handler must stay within a containment area specified by the judge until the dog completes the course. A 5-point fault is assessed for each time the handler leaves the containment area before the dog completes the course.

A bonus of 5 points is given to the team for each successful *send*. This might off-set any failed sends.

Scoring

The Box Game is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Course Design



This is the original Box Game course designed by Brian McGunigle. This course utilizes the “classic” Starters/Novice gamble of jump-tunnel-jump as the essential challenge on course.

The design of the Box Game course is fairly simple. The course should use simple distance challenges and include a large containment area in its center. The containment area specified by the judge is a large “box” which could be marked with chalk or tape on the ground.

Strategies

If the handler assumes his dog will not send away for the performance of the tunnels in this game, he should take the faults and forget about even trying to send and simply run with his dog throughout the course.

The handler might also use the first couple of sends to condition the dog for going away for the performance of the tunnels, making each send from slightly further away. This might allow the handler to balance faults with bonuses.

If the handler is highly confident of the dog's ability to work away, he should boldly stand in the box and send his dog for each of the tunnel performances.

Qualifying and Titles

The Box Game is eligible as a qualifying game under TDAA rules. When using this game as a TDAA qualifier, a baseline for the standard course time should be established by the judge that reflects the yards per seconds in the standard classes. Thus when the handler steps outside the box, earning a 5-point penalty, the dog's ability to earn a qualifying score is significantly affected, but not really eliminated.

When bonuses are used for successful "sends," the criterion for qualifying scores should be based on a realistic time and an assumed success/failure rate in sending the dog to the tunnel reflecting the intermediate skill level of the game participants.

- Games I – Should be based on the standard course time, taking all the faults for stepping outside of the box
- Games II – Should be based on the standard course time, balancing faults and bonuses for sending outside of the box to be equal
- Games III – Should be based on the standard course time, figuring that the dog will go away and earn all of the eligible bonuses

Premium Blurb

The Box game is a sequencing game, typically using only jumps and tunnels, providing for bonuses for the dog working at a distance. The *Box Game* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonuses. ER7

Brace

Brace is traditionally a USDAA fun class. While it is well-loved for the sometimes hilarious mishaps which beset a handler attempting to negotiate an agility course with two dogs, the game also showcases the inspiring skill of the occasional two-dogs-with-one-handler-team who competes superbly under these rules.

Briefing

The objective of Brace is for two dogs to run an agility course at the same time. A single handler runs both of the dogs. The dogs are required to run the sequence indicated by the judge.

The dogs can perform the obstacles simultaneously or the handler can direct one dog to perform an obstacle first and then the other.

Refusals are not faulted. A handler may put either or both dogs on a stay between obstacles.

Two judges are required, one for each dog. Two scribes are also necessary. Only one timekeeper is required. The timekeeper should start the watch as the first dog crosses the start line and stop the watch as the second dog crosses the finish line.

Scoring

Brace is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins. At the conclusion of the run, the faults for the two dogs and the team's course time are combined to form the team score.

The traditional judging system used for this class is USDAA Starters/Novice rules. Occasionally, a fault is assessed when one dog gets too far ahead of the second dog.

This scoring basis is adaptable, depending on the variation of the game played and the whim of the judge.

Course Design

The teeter, dogwalk, and tire are usually omitted from the Brace class, as these obstacles are generally deemed unsafe to perform by two dogs simultaneously. The A-frame should be lowered to 5'.

Jumps are set at the smaller dog's jump height when teams of mixed heights are running.

Strategies

The difficulty in Brace is running two dogs that work uniquely and possibly at different speeds. The handler is often required to gather the dogs in order to close the gap between them. When performing a complex obstacle, such as the weave poles, a handler might choose to leave one dog in a stay while the other completes the performance. The bolder handler will attack the poles with both dogs, one immediately after the other, possibly leaving the dogs to sort out which will go first and which will follow.

Variations

- Two handlers – Brace can be played with two dogs and two handlers. In this

variation the two dogs and handlers begin the same course in the same place at the same time. Ideally the two dogs will work in close conjunction. However there is no requirement that they do so. The overall time of the dogs shall be taken as the time from which the first dog starts until the time that the second dog ends.

- Two handler braced dogs relay – In this variation a single handler begins by running two dogs in brace and must hand off the dogs to a second handler at a predetermined place on the course.
- Scoring variation – A possible scoring variation would be to have the dogs earn points for obstacles performed correctly (usually 1 point) and accumulate them into a team total. This variation would be scored Points, Then Time.
- Brace games – It is possible to adapt Brace to virtually any other agility game. Consider running Brace in Gamblers or in Snooker.

Premium Blurb

A *Brace* is a sequencing game that is played with one handler running two dogs. *Brace* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Call, Direct & Send

Call, Direct & Send is a numbered course that features the three distance challenges that give the game its name. This original AKC game is the invention of Will Koukkari and Sharon Anderson. Call, Direct & Send was once considered by the AKC as a “distance” game that might have become a part of the suite of required titling games. But this game was abandoned. Ultimately the AKC moved to the game FAST as the feature distance game.

Briefing

In *Call, Direct & Send* the dog and handler team are challenged to solve three distance riddles on a numbered course. The three distance challenges that give the game its name include: a *Call* over one to three obstacles; a *Direct* or mid-course distance challenge of two to five obstacles; and a *Send* over two to three obstacles to close out the game.

In *Call, Direct & Send*, boundaries are drawn to indicate an area into which the handler may not advance while the dog performs obstacles at a distance. Otherwise, the dog should follow the numbers.

For each distance challenge successfully completed the dog earns 10 points. The scoring basis for this game is Time+Faults-Bonus.

Call – The *Call* is a lead-off at the start line, requiring the handler to call the dog over the opening obstacles. In the *Call* the dog is placed on a *Stay* at the beginning of the course while the handler leads out to a point on the course designated by the judge. The handler must then call the dog over the initial obstacles and continue on course.

Direct – The *Direct* is a mid-course gamble sequence in which the dog will be required to work at a distance from his handler. The handler must direct the dog over the sequence of obstacles without crossing a containment line indicated by the judge and continue on course.

Send – The *Send* is the final gamble challenge. The handler sends the dog to perform the finishing obstacles while working at a distance from the dog in an area designated by the judge.

This sample Call, Direct & Send course is based on an Excellent JWW course designed by AKC judge, Melinda Harvey at Oriole DTC on April 18, 1999.

Scoring

Call, Direct & Send is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The team with the highest score wins.

Course Design

While traditionally *Call, Direct & Send* (CDS) was a Jumpers game, often including weave poles, the game has evolved over the years to include technical obstacles. It's likely that this was an evolution of convenience as it allows CDS to be nested with standard courses.

Call, Direct & Send is not a standard course! That means that there are no *required obstacles* and there is no required number of obstacles, by class, as there is in the standard classes. This affords the course designer the leisure to design something lean,

is to dumb-down the challenge and make everything as simple as possible. That should never be your objective. But remember this, if you have never walked on the moon yourself, please don't try to give us lessons.

Note that there's a real opportunity to design a course that runs fast and gets you through the day quickly. *Call, Direct & Send* should not be a marathon.

Qualifying

A dog earning a score equal to or less than the Qualifying Course Time (QCT) will earn a qualifying score.

Establishing QCT

The QCT for the sample course shown above, in *Course Design*, might be established like this:

I've measured the course (in CRCD) and came up with a course distance of 66 yards. I'll call it 68 just to add a fudge factor Running this through my Rates of Travel (RoT) calculator (applying rates of travel from the high end of the range since this is mostly a Jumpers course), I come up with the following numbers:

Games I	4" / 8 "	45	35
	12" /		
	16"	43	33
Games II	4" / 8 "	40	20
	12" /		
	16"	36	16
Games			
III	4" / 8 "	32	2
	12" /		
	16"	30	0

The third column shows what would be the SCT if the correct rates of travel are applied. The QCT for this game, however, is reflected in column four. These numbers incorporate an "expectation for success". GI gets a QCT reduced by 10 points, anticipating that they'll solve at least one of the distance challenges; GII gets a QCT reduced by 20 points, anticipating that they'll solve at least two of the distance challenges; GIII gets the bad news, a QCT reduced by 30 points, anticipating that they'll solve all of the distance challenges.

These numbers aren't as onerous as they might sound. If the GII big dog, for example, runs the course in 29 seconds, but solves only one of the distance challenges. He'll still qualify because his time, less the 10 point bonus, gives the qualifying score.

Please note that the table above is based on TDAA rates of travel, and TDAA jump heights.

Judging Notes

The judge should determine in advance how he will signal earned bonuses to the scribe. It might be a simple authoritative announcement of "Bonus!" Or, it might be an arm signal.

Note that this game should be judged using the rules for performance respective to the dog's level. The weave poles, for example, might be judged differently for every class/level. And any contact obstacle would be judged for refusals for the higher levels; and possibly with a four-paw safety rule for Beginner/Novice.

It is possible for all levels to share the same briefing, and even walk the course at the same time. The real differentiation between classes will be the rates of travel and the qualifying criteria. The course itself can be the same for all levels. However, it's common enough for the judge to draw different containment lines for different levels.

The judge needs a position on course to get a clear view of the containment lines. A gamble or distance challenge succeeds only when the handler stays on his side of the line, and the obstacles are performed without fault (dropped bar, wrong course, missed contact and so forth).

The judge should determine early how he or she will deal with people who return to their dogs at the beginning of the course to put the dog back in position for breaking a *Stay*. The tradition in the game is that when the handler leaves his dog the test has begun, and returning to the dog will negate the gamble bonus.

The Original AKC Variation

While the rules have morphed by play in other agility organization that actually play Call Direct & Send, it's worth noting what were the rules of the game as it was played in the AKC. These are presented without warrant below.

Jumpers CDS (Call, Direct, and Send)

Scoring is based upon a 100 point system, 100 being perfect. Faults are deducted from the 100 points. 85 points are required to qualify. Time is used as a tiebreaker.

Call, Direct & Send is scored Points, Then Time. The team with the highest score wins.

Faults will be scored as follows:

- Each refusal is faulted 5 points. In the Novice class, three refusals will be scored Elimination. In the Open class, two refusals will be scored elimination. In the Excellent class, one refusal will be scored elimination. (Note: An improper entry or missed weave pole in AKC is scored a refusal).
- Each off course is faulted 5 points. Three off courses in any class will be scored elimination.
- A knocked bar is scored elimination.
- If the handler steps on or over any containment line while the dog is performing the indicated obstacles, the dog will earn a failure to perform.
- Failure to perform any obstacle is scored elimination.
- Failure to perform any of the three distance elements (Call, Direct, or Send) will be scored elimination. This includes stepping on or crossing the containment line.

All other performance faults will be applied as in the Standard classes, respective to the level of the dog.

Course Design ~ The typical Call, Direct & Send course will consist of jumps, tunnels, and weave poles. The contact obstacles are not used.

Competitors Analysis

A dog trainer who has given good focus to distance skills in the dog's training foundation will have a pretty good idea about possibilities for success in a distance challenge or gamble. *Know thy dog!*

If the handler believes that the attempt of a distance challenge will likely fail and will certainly cost more time and frustration than it is worth... then the clever handler will decide in advance to forego the bonus and just run his dog through the sequence. The differential for the bonus might be made up in the dog's speed in the overall course. Also, if competing in the TDAA's Petit Prix (for example) the dog is accumulating a background score for placement within the field. So even if the dog doesn't qualify he'll not be set back so far.

Good distance work has very little to do with standing still. Aside from the *Call*, the handler is more likely to have success with the distance challenges by applying the pressure of movement, while at a distance, and while honoring the containment lines of the course. The riddle of the distance challenge is in balancing the efficacy of movement against the placement of containment lines.

There is an excellent series of eBooks for distance training available: *The Joker's Notebook*, issues #0 through #4, available at www.dogagility.org/newstore.

Premium Blurb

Call, Direct and Send (CDS) is a numbered course that requires the team to solve three distance challenges: Call, Direct, and Send. CDS is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Catch Me If You Can

This is a silly motivational game used at Bud Houston's Camp Dogwood. Catch Me If You Can is a test of the dog's desire to give chase to his handler. The game is usually played when handlers think their dogs are completely exhausted by a day's training. The handlers are often surprised by the dog's renewed vigor and excitement.

Briefing

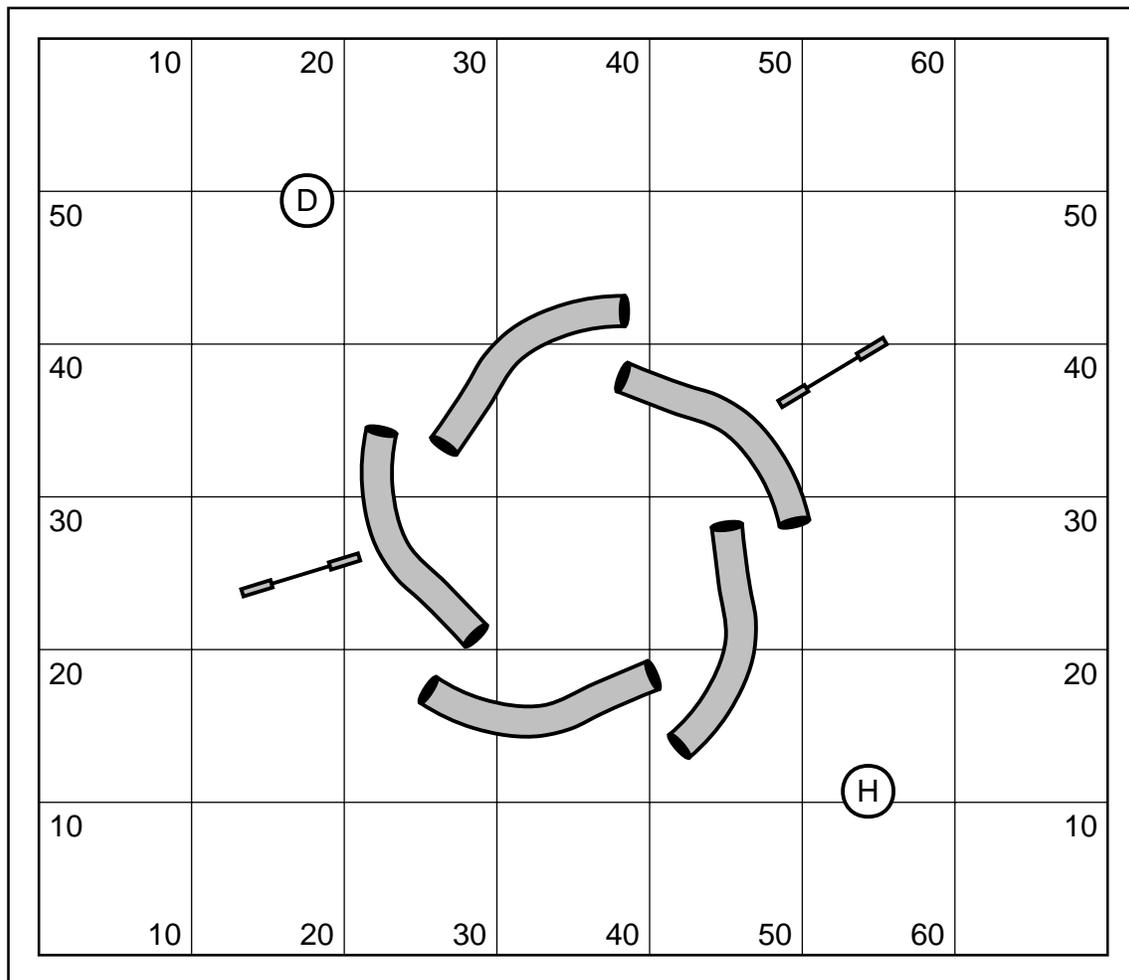
The rules of this game are simple. The handler must try to keep away from his dog for as long as possible, even while he teases the dog and carries on in foolish fashion.

The handler is not allowed to direct the dog to any of the obstacles. If a dog takes an obstacle, it must be of his own choosing.

Scoring

Catch Me If You Can is scored Time Only.

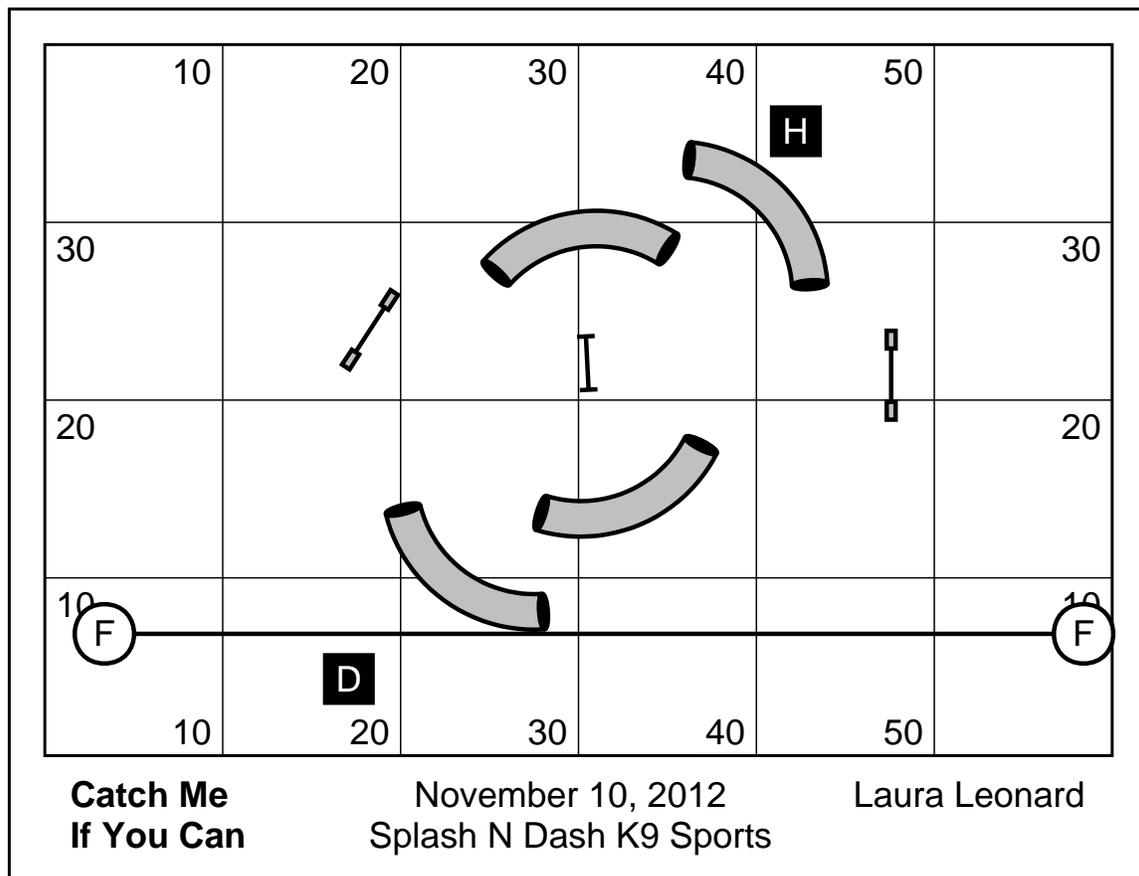
Course Design



This is a typical design for the Catch Me If You Can game. The tunnels are arranged so that in one direction the dog will be tempted to take them, without gaining a real

advantage. If the chase goes the opposite direction however, the handler is faced with having to outrun his dog in a foot race.

The obstacles used Catch Me If You Can should be formed into a circular pattern that allows the handler to run around the outside and perhaps step into if the dog is giving chase on the perimeter. Some care should be taken to make the core obstacles safe for the dog. For example an A-frame might be used, but some dogs might be tempted to leap off the side in their eagerness to catch up with the handler.



This *Catch Me If You Can* course was put up by TDAA judge Laura Leonard as a game of competition (for titling!)

Her exhibitor briefing included this advice:

The handler is not allowed to direct the dog, physically or verbally, to any of the obstacles. If a dog takes an obstacle, it must be of the dog's own choosing.

To begin, the handler may either: (a) put the dog in a sit stay while the handler gets into the starting position notes on the course map; or (b) hand over the leashed dog to someone standing in the dog start position indicated on the course map. This person will unleash the dog when the handler is ready to begin.

Strategies

The handler had better run! The handler might also try switching direction while the dog is in the tunnel. Face it. Dogs are a lot faster than people. The only advantage people might have is that they are, maybe, smarter than the dog. The handler should try to use

that advantage.

The best strategy for the dog is to jump straight over the tunnels rather than run around. There's no beating a dog that is both fast and smart.

In the sample course, take note of the "grain" of the tunnels. The handler may do better with a counter clockwise strategy than a clockwise strategy. Note also that the handler is allowed to step into the inside of the circle of obstacles.

Premium Blurb

Catch Me If You Can is a training game that probably should not be used as a game in competition for qualifying purposes. In this game the handler will attempt to stay away from his dog and ends when the dog catches him. *Catch Me If You Can* is scored Time Only. ER5

Cha-Cha

Cha-Cha is the invention of Jeff Boyer. The Cha-Cha dance was invented in Cuba sometime in the late 1940's and early 1950's. A Latin dance, it is characterized, generally speaking, by two slow, rocking steps, followed by three quick steps (the "cha-cha-cha") danced to a 4/4 beat. (And "slow" is a relative term.) In this game, the handler must figuratively dance the Cha-Cha with his dog around the "ballroom" (the agility ring).

Briefing

The objective is for the team to accumulate as many bars of Cha-Cha steps as they can in the time allotted. A Cha-Cha bar consists of any two obstacles other than jumps followed by three jumps. For example, a bar might be a contact obstacle, a tunnel, and then three jumps. Or it might be two tunnel performances followed by three jumps. For each successful bar, the team will earn one point. The game is scored points, then time. Time is for tie-breaking only.

Bar jumps may be used as often as desired. Other obstacles may be used only twice for credit. Obstacles other than bar jumps may be taken back-to-back, as long as this is done safely. Bar jumps may not be taken back-to-back. The first obstacle to be taken at the start of any run may not be a contact obstacle.

The following faults will be in effect:

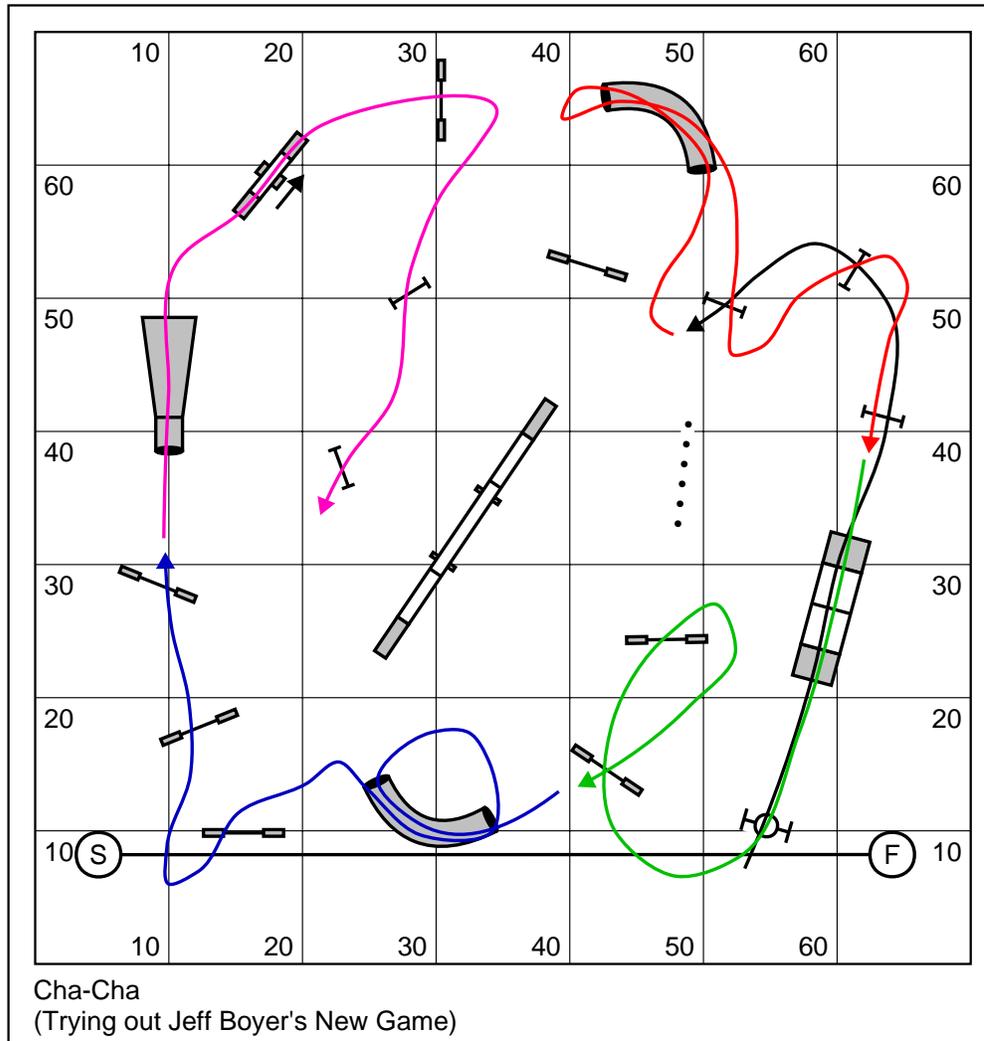
- Dropped bars (dropped bars are not reset and the jump is out of play)
- Missed contacts
- Incomplete weave pole performance
- Back-to-back performance of a bar jump
- Taking an obstacle more than twice (except for bar jumps)
- Taking a contact obstacle as the first obstacle in the run
- Incorrect number of "slow" or "quick" steps since the last successful bar

Refusals will not be faulted. It is the judge's decision as to whether the Four-Paw Safety rule is in effect.

The judge will call "one" for each successful bar (set of 5 obstacles). In the event of a fault, the judge will call "fault," and the team must begin a new bar. Counting of a bar will begin only once the "slow" steps are started.

The dog may begin anywhere along the start line. Time begins when the dog first crosses the Start line. The timer will blow the whistle at the end of point accumulation time, at which point the handler must direct the dog across the finish line or to the finish obstacle to stop the clock. In TDAA, small dogs (4/8) will have 60 seconds to accumulate points, and big dogs (12/16) will have 55 seconds.

Course Design



Course design should enable reasonable paths around the ring, with bar jumps liberally sprinkled all over. Transition distances and approach angles should be consistent with venue rules as much as practicable. For safety, contact obstacles should not be placed where they are likely to be taken as the first obstacle in the run. The obstacles should be set to enable multiple likely paths, yet allow the judge the ability to view all of them with minimal difficulty and movement. A Standard course might lend itself well to reuse as a Cha-Cha course. The number and types of obstacles in a FullHouse course might also be a useful guideline.

The sample course above I put together to test the random nature of the game. It was based on an existing standard course. Still I found myself adding jumps to the course to create three jump pinwheels and jump sets so that the jumps weren't isolated (nothing but trouble under the stated rules).

One of the biggest mistakes TDAA course designers make with "dogs choice" courses is having too much distance between the obstacles. A dog's choice course that is too spread out will NQ a lot of dogs. Judges will often argue the point with me. But that's just because they don't get it.

To test the qualifying criteria I put together 5 economical paths. Note that I studied to avoid the weave poles and dogwalk. I also tried to minimize "flow break" moments; but given the constraints of the game, that's hard to do. Following is the order of the Cha-Cha bar segments, with cumulative course distance:

Black 21 yards
Red 52 yards
Green 80 yards
Blue 110 yards
Purple 137 yards

Note that the 5-Bar qualifier requires a dog to work a minimum of 2.49 YPS for big dogs and 2.28 YPS for little dogs. These rates are over the range suggested by the Superior rates of travel. So I would suggest going with 2-3-4 for the qualifying criteria. There's no sense in having a game in which only the fastest dogs have a real shot at qualifying. [Leave the 5 bar for the win!]

Scoring

Cha-Cha is scored Bars (Points), Then Time

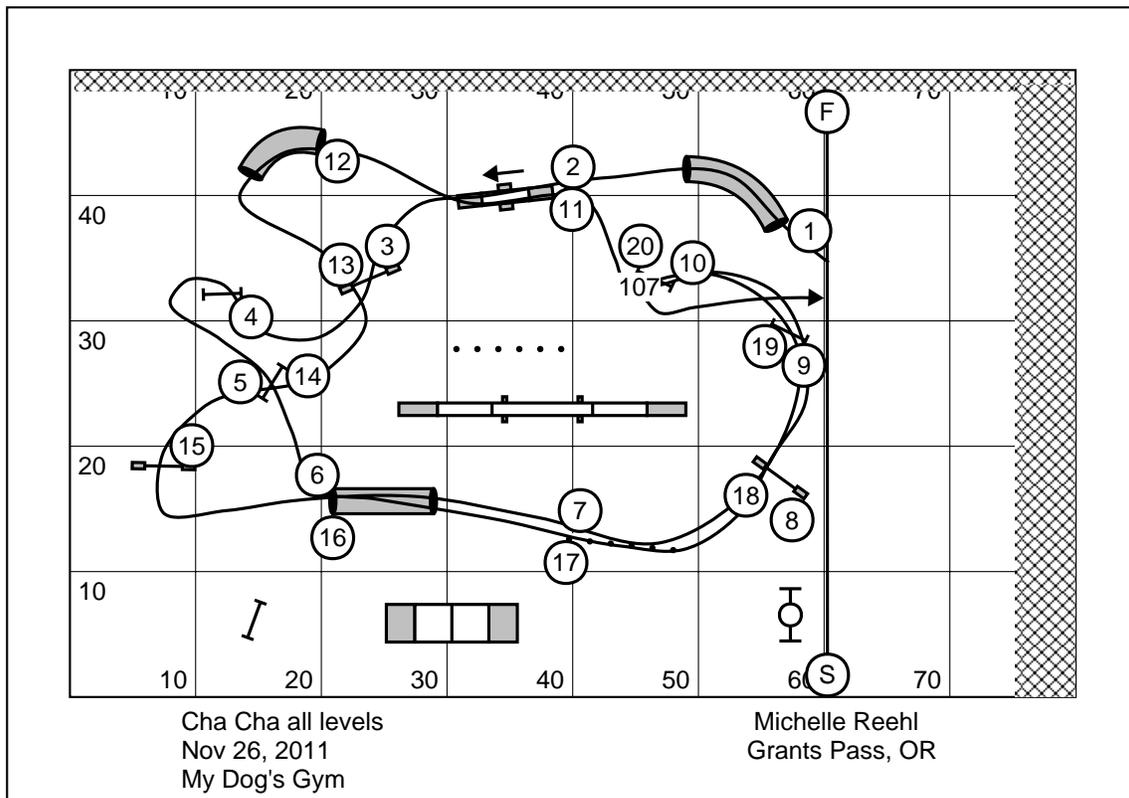
Qualifying

To qualify in TDAA, the teams must accumulate the following minimum number of bars (points):

- Games I – 30 points (3 Bars)
- Games II – 34 points (3 Bars and 4 points)
- Games III – 40 points (4 Bars)

Almost always games like this require some front end analysis in order to set proper qualifying criteria. It shouldn't be so hard that nobody qualifies, or so that even the really wobbly and badly executed runs manage to qualify. The qualifying criteria should reflect the requirement for performance Respective to the venue.

An obvious criterion for performance would have the Masters/Superior dogs performing 20 obstacles in a set time comparable to the time use for a standard class; while Advanced/Intermediate would perform 17 or 18, and Novice/Beginner would perform 14 or 15.



This course (actually used in TDAA competition) measures about 108 yards. The judge should run the measured path through a rate of travel (RoT) calculation. All of the numbers fit neatly in the course times of 50 seconds big dogs, and 55 seconds small dogs.

For this design the judge should probably set the qualifying criteria at: G1=30; G2=34; G3=40. Note that the G2 qualifier takes advantage of the 2 pts earned for each obstacle in a partial set.

Variations

In the *Tillman* variation the game is scored by obstacle point values. And so the scoring basis is Points-Then-Time, rather than “Bars”-Then-Time. In the first use of this variation TDAA judge Vickie Tillman set obstacle values as: “Contact obstacles-3 pts; Tunnel & tire)-2 pts; Jumps 1 pt.” Qualifying criteria was then established as:

- Games 1 – 16
- Games 2 - 24
- Games 3 - 32

Premium Blurp

Cha-Cha is a game that requires the dog to earn points to the beat of the Cha-cha: two slow beats (non-jump obstacles) followed by three quick beats (jumps). This is a game of strategy and precision. *Cha-Cha* is scored Bars (Points), Then Time. ER2

Cherry Picking

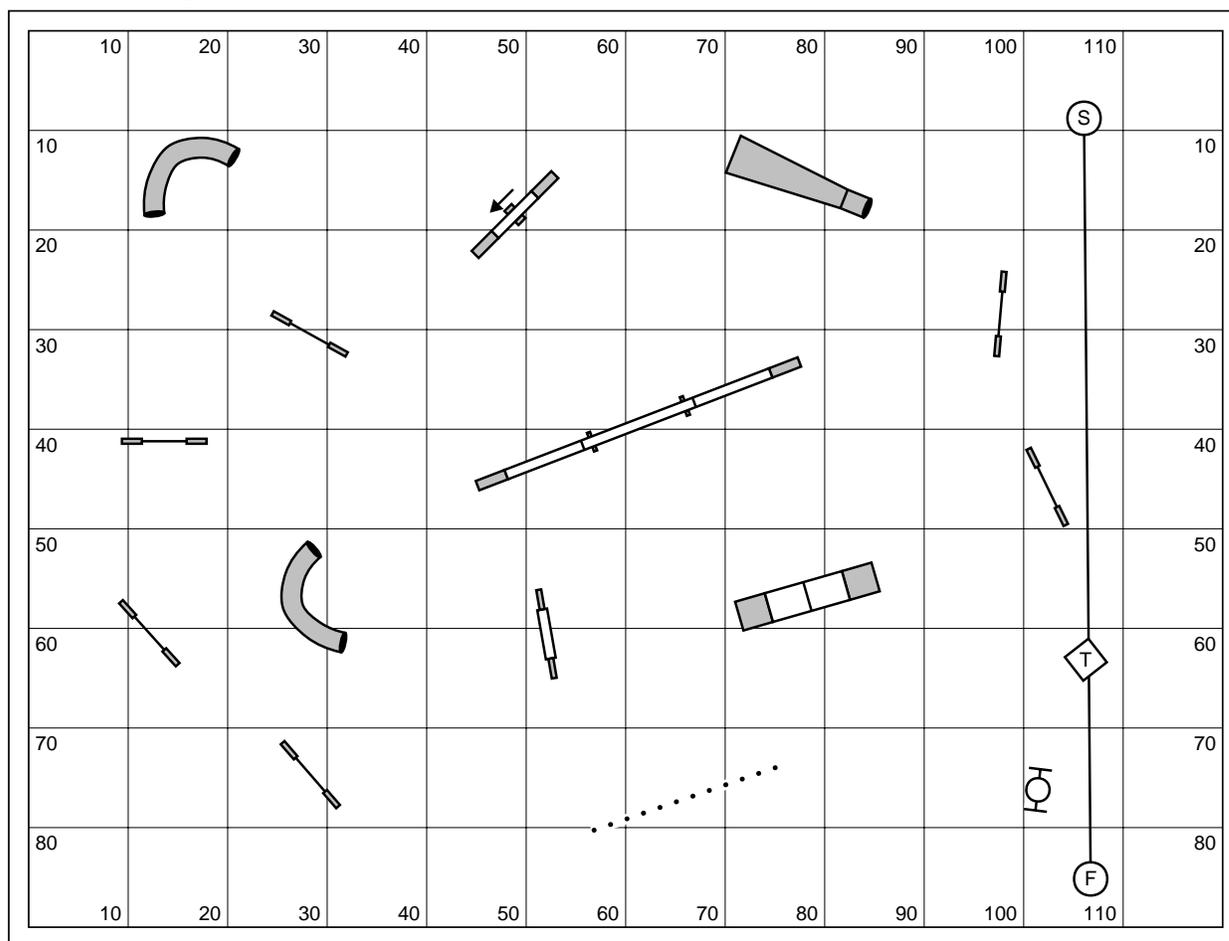
Sometimes called “Picking Cherries” this is a simple game invented by Bud Houston that can be played using the set of equipment from nearly any standard course without having to move equipment around at all. The game was originally designed to teach a unique Snookeresque skill, the ability to move a dog across the field without taking obstacles that might be in his path.

Briefing

The purpose of this game is to direct the dog *only* through the performance of the “cherries” which can be defined as “all the round things”: tunnels and tire; and, at the judge’s discretion, the weave poles.

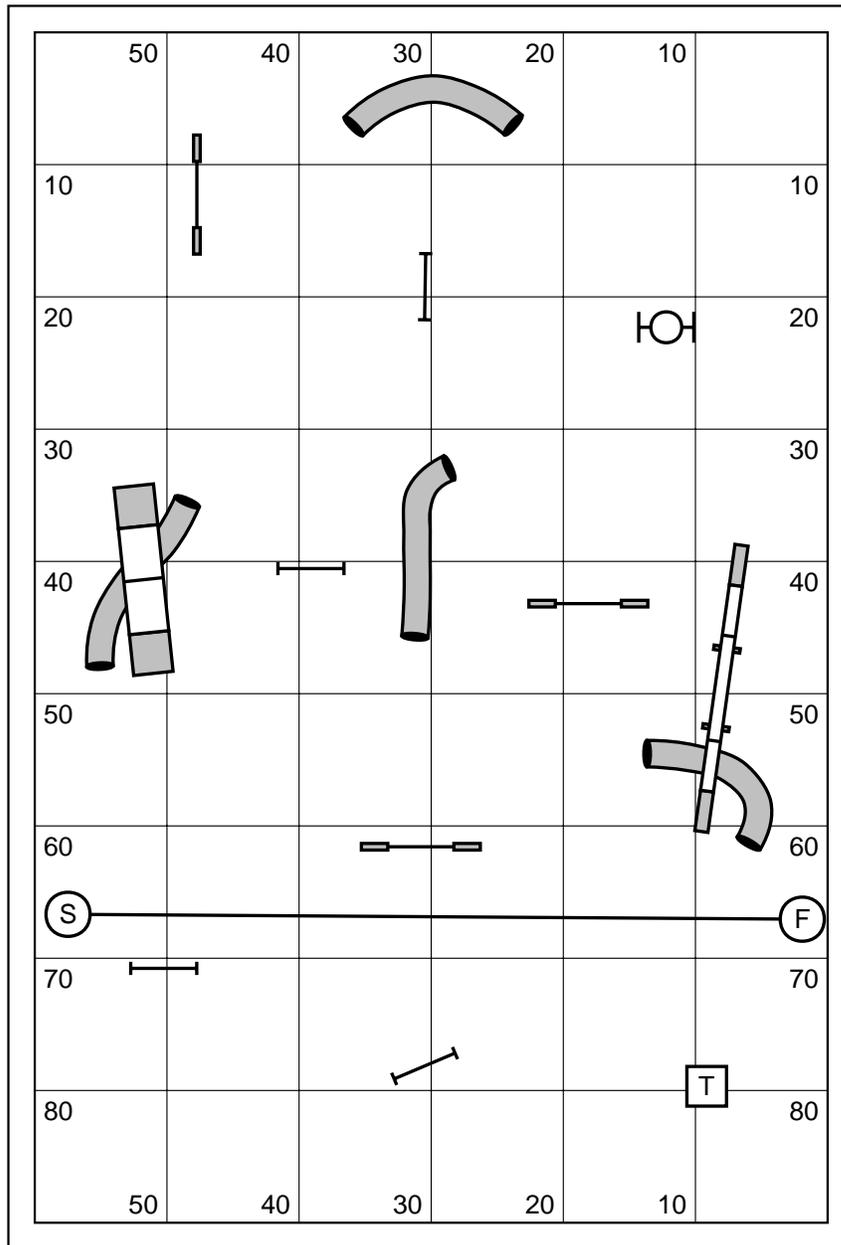
This is a dog’s choice game, so refusals are not faulted. If the dog takes an obstacle other than a cherry, his game is over and must leave the course.

Course Design



This is an adaptation of a standard course. There was no real attempt to “design” the *Cherry Picking* course. All the ring crew has to do is pick up any number cones and then define the start and finish line. The judge might turn around the one-directional obstacles or possibly reshape the tunnels to make the challenge more interesting.

Resist the temptation in this game (or any dog's choice game) to start and/or finish on the table. Defining the start or finish points for a dog will do little more than limit possible strategies.



This is really such a simple game. I'll often play *Pickin' Cherries* to break the tedium of handling drills or when I'm feeling a bit of paralysis by analysis in my students when doing numbered courses.

The purpose of this game is to pick off all of the tunnels on the floor without doing any other obstacle. On this course the start and finish line are a common line. So, we may start anywhere across the front of the course, and finish anywhere on the same line.

Pickin' Cherries is a dog's choice game. That means we can pick off the tunnels in the order and direction of our choosing. The game is scored time plus faults. Doing any obstacle other than a pipe tunnel will result in a 5 second fault. Tunnels may be repeated

without fault... if you think that's actually an effective strategy for the game.

Scoring

Traditionally *Cherry Picking* is scored Time Only. Dog's that take an obstacle other than a "round thing" will be scored Elimination.

The game might also be played Time, Plus Faults. In either case the judge will set an aggressive Qualifying Course Time (QCT). If the dog's score is less than the QCT he will qualify.

Strategy

This game requires both strategy and skill. The handler might want to cultivate the ability to begin the game by drawing the dog across the field from the start line to pick off the most difficult obstacle. This is a skill that is useful in games like *Snooker* and certainly in *Picking Cherries*.

Also look for flow. Dog's choice games are often won or lost by the brevity of the dog's path.

In the second example course (above) ~ Most *Pickin' Cherries* course are considerably harder than this as we often have to move the dog across the field avoiding obstacles placed obtrusively in the dog's path. As it happens, this set of the floor makes for about the prettiest *Cherries* course I've ever seen. Two essential strategies emerge, both being the same overall length.

And yet, even from a simple game like this there are lessons to be learned. Either of the two possible strategies must begin with the approach to an obstacle discrimination puzzle. How does a handler solve a discrimination puzzle? What can go wrong in the transition to and from pipe tunnel at the back of the floor (at the top of the course map)?

Judging Notes

Note that in a Time, Plus Faults game the weight of the penalty should coincide in point value with the schedule of faults in the standard classes. And weave pole faults in the games classes should reflect the performance required in the standard classes.

Taking an obstacle that is not in the target group (e.g. "round things") is equivalent to a wrong course. However, the judge should aggregate the penalty, meaning that the fault is earned for *each* wrong obstacle performed; otherwise it might be a perfectly acceptable strategy to intentionally take a wrong course line on the course.

Establishing a QCT in any dog's choice game is a bit of an art form. The easy thing for the judge to do is find one or two possible strategies and then measure them, applying liberal rates of travel from the standard classes in order to set the QCT. We don't really want to encourage any handler to "heel" his dog around the course so the QCT should be aggressive enough to make the dog actually run. But don't be so aggressive that all the Yorkies fail the test just because their leg's are only 3" long. As a rule of thumb the QCT will be about 20 seconds on the low end, and certainly no more than 30 seconds on the high.

Variations

- Jumps Variation ~ rather than to the round things, the handler must direct the dog to perform all the jumps on course. It's the judge's choice whether the tire should be included.
- Group Choice Team Variation ~ This variation is played by three dog and handler teams. One dog will do all the "round things" (tunnels and tire); one dog will do all contact obstacles; and one dog will do all the jumps. It's the judge's choice whether to put the weave poles with the contact obstacles or the "round things"; and it's the judge's choice whether to put the tire with the jumps or the "round things."
- Vogel's Variation ~ In this variation, dreamt up by TDAA judge Debbie Vogel, the judge will specify how many cherries are required to be picked. For example, the field might feature seven "round things"... but the judge requires only six of those seven for a qualifying score. A bonus of 10 points is accorded to the dog for exceeding the required cherries to be picked. This variation is played Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus.

Also, in Vogel's variation, a dog is given a fault for taking a "non-cherry" obstacle, rather than earning an "E".

Qualifying and Titles

Cherry Picking is a qualifying game only in the TDAA. The dog earns a qualifying score for stopping time at or below the QCT.

Premium Blurb

Picking Cherries is a simple dog's choice game. The dog might be directed to as quickly as possible get all the tunnels on the course... and nothing else. *Cherry Picking* is scored Time Only. ER5

Chutes and Ladders

Chutes and Ladders was created by Karen Maillioux and named after the popular children's game. This game consists of just two types of obstacles: the chutes (tunnels) and the ladders (contact obstacles).

Briefing

The objective of Chutes and Ladders is to negotiate the course of tunnels and contact obstacles. Traditionally, only the A-frame was used and is required to be performed three times during the course run. However, in more recent play, all contact obstacles, including the crossover or the dogwalk and the teeter, have been used in Chutes and Ladders.

A gong or chime is placed on the course which the handler may strike for insurance against faults on a challenge sequence designated by the judge. Insurance will not cover an off course prior to the challenge sequence.

The handler must strike the gong before beginning the first obstacle designated as the challenge sequence and must strike the gong while the team is underway (and not while the dog is sitting at the start line on a stay).

If the handler strikes the gong and the dog does not fault in the challenge zone, 25 seconds will be subtracted from the dog's course time.

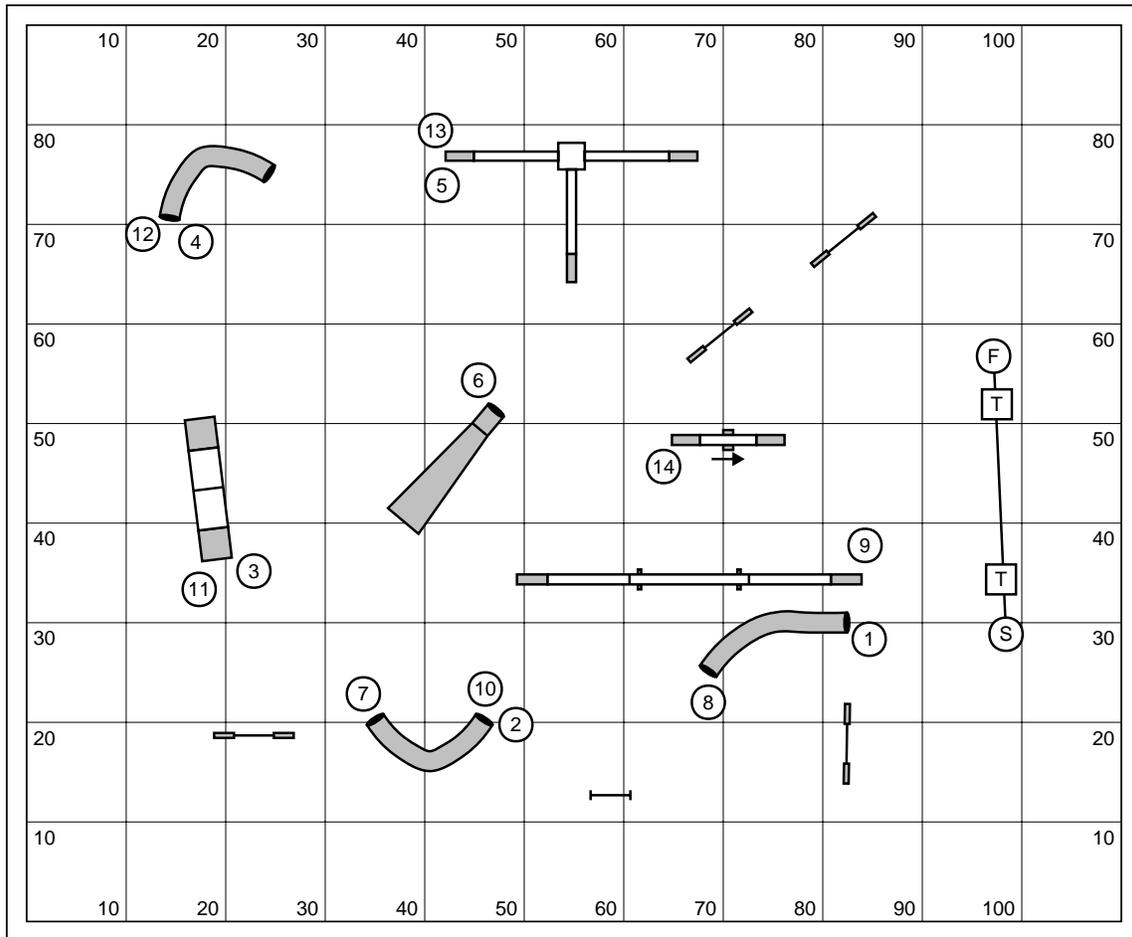
Scoring

Chutes and Ladders is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins the game.

Some performance faults are scored uniquely in this game:

- First missed contact, 5 faults
- Second missed contact, 20 faults
- Third missed contact, Elimination
- Off-course, 5 points
- Failure to Perform, Elimination

- League play variation – In this variation, no “gong” is used and no other concession for “insurance” is used. Modified USDAA Starters/Novice rules apply. That means that all upside contacts will be judged. However, some performance faults are scored uniquely in this game. The first fault will be scored 5 fault points. On each subsequent fault, all faults will be doubled: first missed contact or off course, 5 faults; second missed contact or off course, 10 faults (cumulative); third missed contact or off course, 20 faults (cumulative); and so forth. Failure to perform, 50 faults.



This is an example of the League play variation of Chutes and Ladders. This course was designed by Bud Houston and originally run in league play at Dogwood Training Center. The handling isn't inconsequential.

Qualifying and Titles

Chutes and Ladders is an eligible qualifying game for TDAA games titles. In the TDAA the standard course time is based on the rate established for each class, as set forth in the TDAA rules and regulations.

Premium Blurp

Chutes and Ladders is a sequencing game that uses only tunnels (chutes) and contact obstacles (ladders). *Chutes and Ladders* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Clockwatchers

Clockwatchers is an old favorite in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand and is a guaranteed crowd pleaser. If two dogs and handlers are at the same level, this competition can be cruel (to the handlers!). This is one of the rare formats in which two dogs are competing on the same course at the same time.

Briefing

Two dogs run the same course at the same time, chasing each other around the obstacles which are laid out like the face of a clock. The two dogs start in the middle of the circle, preferably on tables. They both go forward over a hurdle and then both turn right into the flow of the circular course. The dogs go around the course clockwise until each dog returns back to the side on which it started. After taking the last hurdle in the circle, each dog must turn right and go back over the hurdle on which they started. Each dog then finishes on its original starting table.

On course, a slower dog must give way to a faster dog.

Scoring

Clockwatchers is run as a knockout (a single elimination game), with the winner of each round going forward to compete against the winner of another round.

The game is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins, regardless of which dog makes it back to the finish first. In case of a tie in score, time will decide the winner.

Any rational system for defining faults can be used. Each dog has a judge, one of whom blows the starting whistle for both teams to begin. Each dog has a separate timekeeper and scribe.

Course Design

Place twelve obstacles in a circular course that is 75 to 90' in diameter. Place two tables in the middle of the circle with jumps in front of each table, which will be used to introduce the dogs onto the course. These introductory jumps are not numbered. Each dog will take the first hurdle and then make a right turn onto the course.

Each start/finish is a mirror image of the other. After the first hurdle for each dog, the course can alter according to the judge's fancy.

Although start/finish poles can be used instead of tables, the preference is for tables as they are far more visual to spectators. Clockwatchers is very much a spectator event. If start poles are used in lieu of tables in the middle, then ensure there is plenty of distance between the two separate start/finish lines. If the poles are too close, the result could be two excited dogs crossing the finish at the same time and running into each other.

difference is that the two dogs race in the *same* direction along a circular or oval course. The Move Over Rover course consists mainly of jumps, with tunnels or weave poles thrown in occasionally for good measure. Competition is generally on a single elimination, pyramid-type basis.

Premium Blurb

Clockwatchers is a sequencing game that is run by two dogs that begin on opposite sides of a course chase each other to see if one can overtake the other. *Clockwatchers* is typically run as a single elimination knockout. The game is a true crowd pleaser and so may be most useful as a demonstration event. *Clockwatchers* is scored Time, Plus Faults.
ER5

Colors

Colors is the invention of Linda Eickholdt and Rob Robinson and is a tiling game in Canine Performance Events (CPE). Colors is also a cornerstone game used in agility league play.

Briefing

The objective is to successfully negotiate one of three overlapping agility mini-courses. The handler may choose which course to run.

Each course is labeled by colored markers: red, blue, and yellow. The handler is to inform the gate steward of which course he will be running; the gate steward conveys this choice to the scribe and the judge.

Scoring

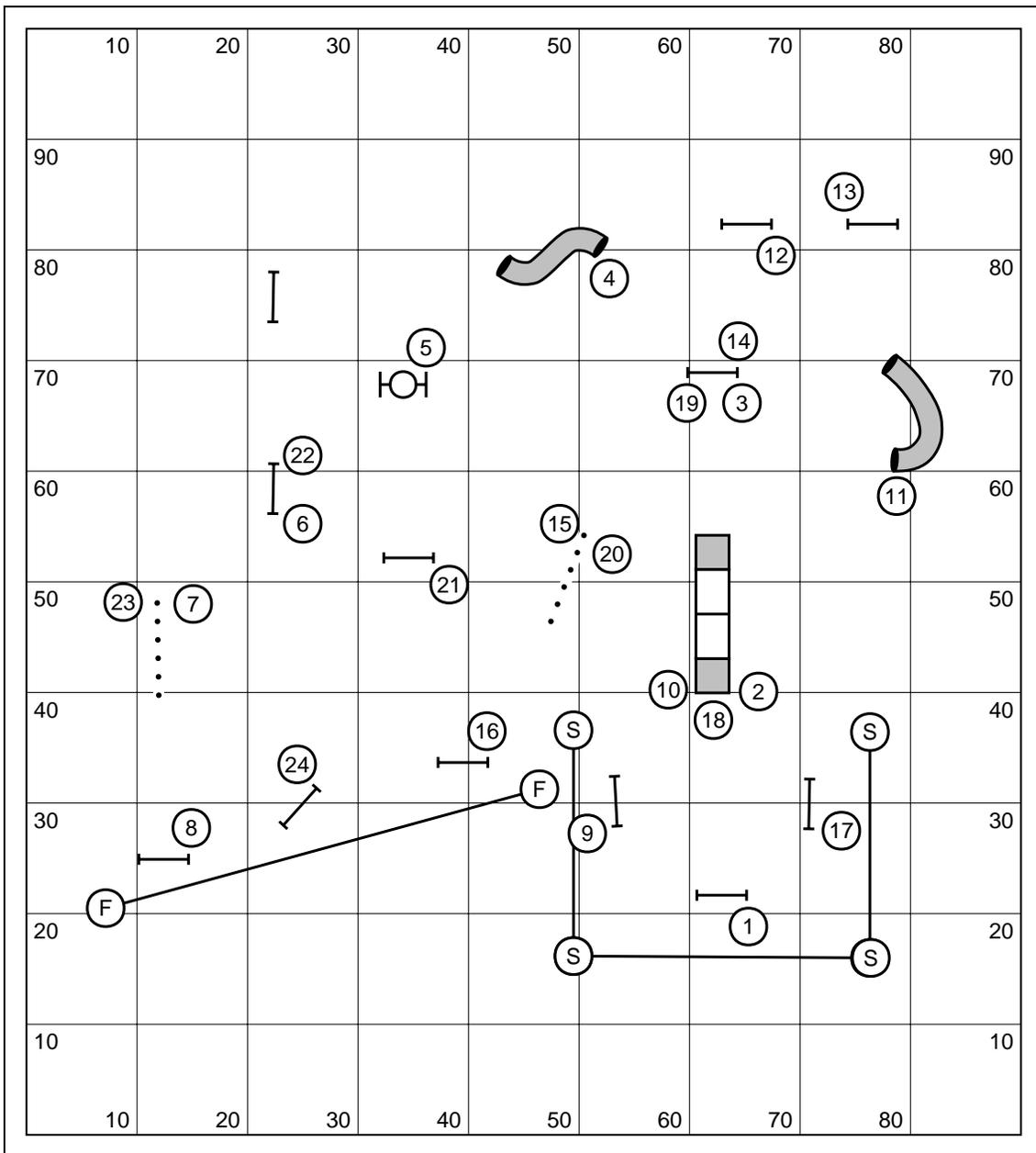
Colors is scored Faults, Then Time. The winner is the dog with the fewest faults. If two dogs have the same number of Faults, Then Time breaks the tie.

Course Design

In CPE, the field will contain 12 to 20 obstacles divided into three relatively equal mini-courses of six to eight obstacles each. Each mini-course will contain the following: one set of 5 to 8 weave poles (substitute another obstacle for Level 1 and 2), one contact, up to two tunnels, jumps, and one or more traps.

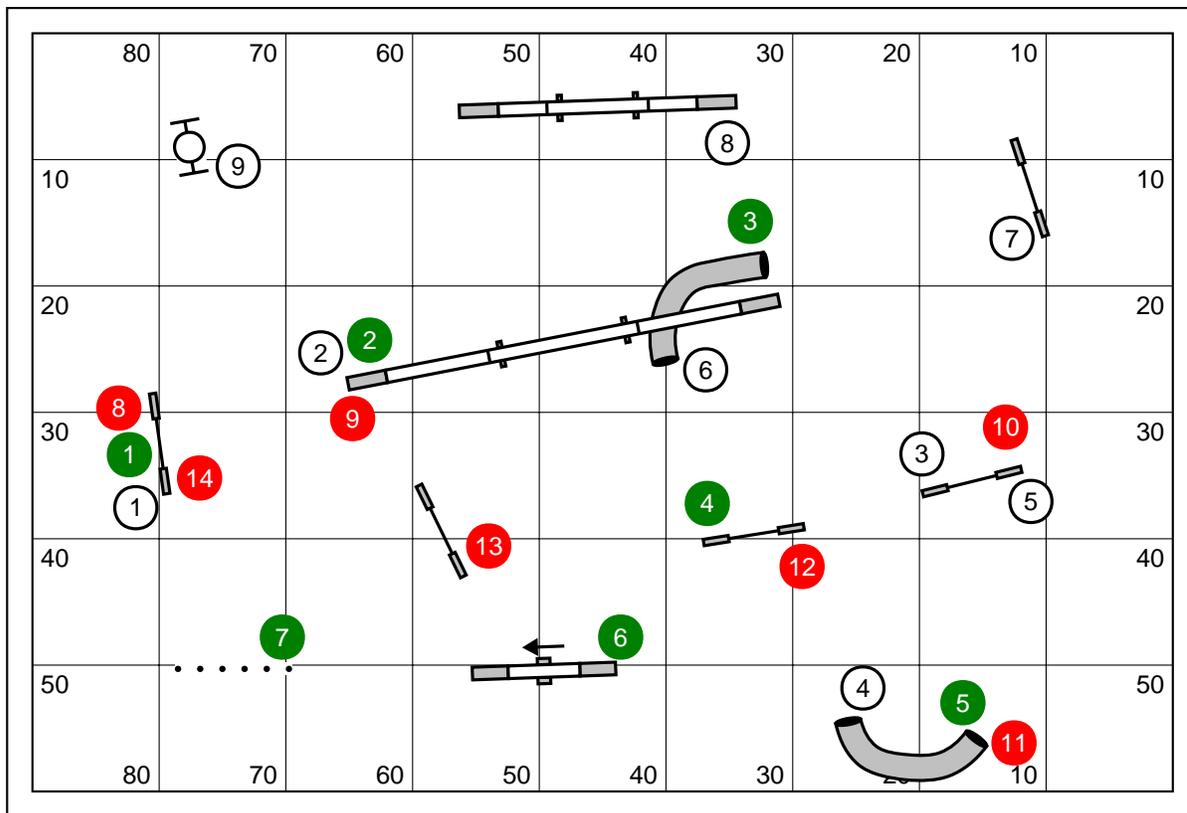
The course can be designed two different ways:

1. The judge shall do his best to make each course length the same; however, the course time will be determined by the average of the three courses together.
2. Three different course lengths and levels of difficulty can be on the same field. Course times would be shortest for the easiest mini-course and the longest for the hardest mini-course with an average time mini-course in between.



In this rendition of the CPE game Colors, the three courses of choice are numbered #1-#8, #9-#16, and #17-#24. The mini courses are roughly equivalent in length and complexity. Notice that obstacles can be reused as the mini courses intertwine and overlap.

Colors ~ Country Dream Style



Discussion

The game Colors comes to us from Canine Performance Events (CPE). I see it from time to time in the TDAA as well. The concept seems to be that the handler has a choice of which of two or three courses he will run his dog for titling purposes. I suppose my biggest criticism of the class is that the sequence as often quite unchallenging, which suggests a bit of a low standard for qualification.

From a course designer's point of view it probably isn't much different from designing a pairs class or even a team relay in which there are multiple sequence options laid out on the course. Though in pairs or teams the designer has to take some care to allow for a hand-off transition between the various elements. In Colors the sequences start and stop as would a standard class.

What I really wanted to do with the game is design sequences that are just a bit on the challenging side acknowledging the proposition that a true *Masters* handler might like the thrill of solving a significant riddle. And so I settled on a slightly different format for the rules... thus the "Country Dream" variation. Exhibitors will actually run all three courses and then throw away one of the three runs; using their best two in a Time Plus Faults format.

The three sequences aren't perfectly balanced in terms of the number of obstacles or the technical merit of the obstacles in the sequence. This isn't really a down-side consideration. What it really means is that the handler had better try to make the simplest of the three sequence one of his "keepers".

In the conduct of the class there might be a couple different ways to do both the walkthrough and the running. For example the judge might specify that handlers will walk all three; and then as a class everyone would run A, then B, then C. However, with my own students I took pity. There is a bit of a *stereo* quality to the three sequences in which a handler might get his head completely turned around and lose track of which one he was working. And so we walked all three, and then ran “A”. I gave them no more than a minute to review (walk) B; and we ran that one. Then, we did the same fire drill with course “C”.

It turned out to be quite a fun league play class. For the purpose of qualification, if that’s ever a consideration, what I would do is measure all three courses and then base SCT on 2/3 of the overall course length for the respective jump height. Scoring, as I suggested earlier, would be Time, Plus faults measured against SCT.

Qualifying

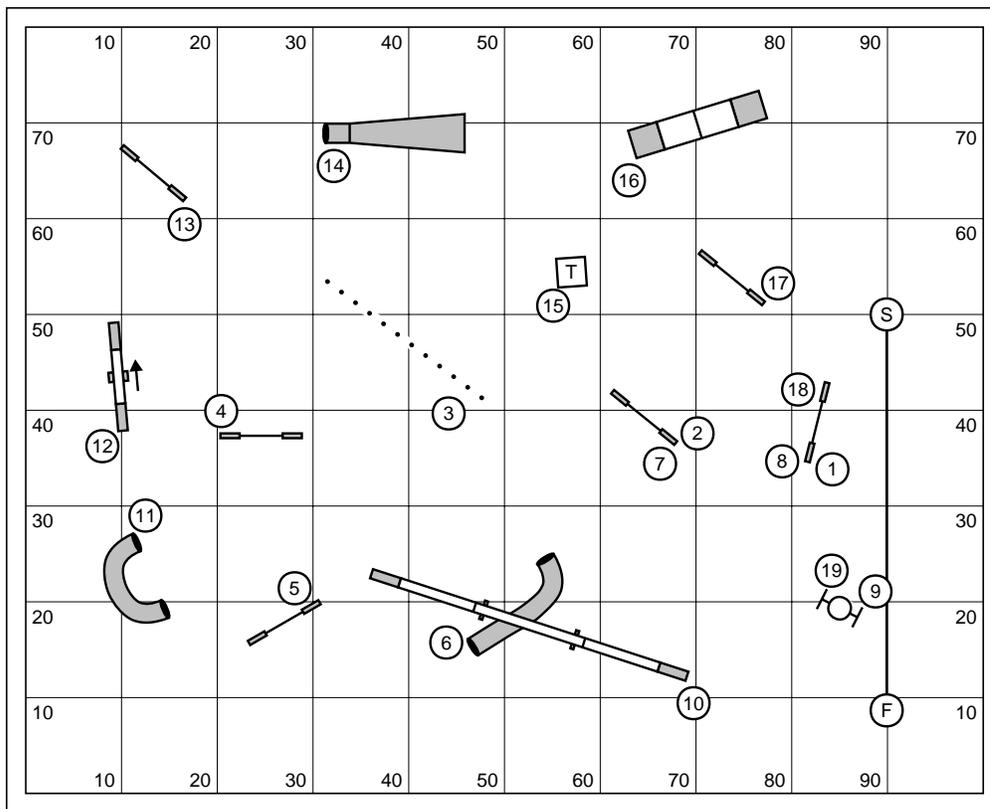
To earn a qualifying score all obstacles must be performed successfully. However, off course faults are allowed in lower levels.

Variations

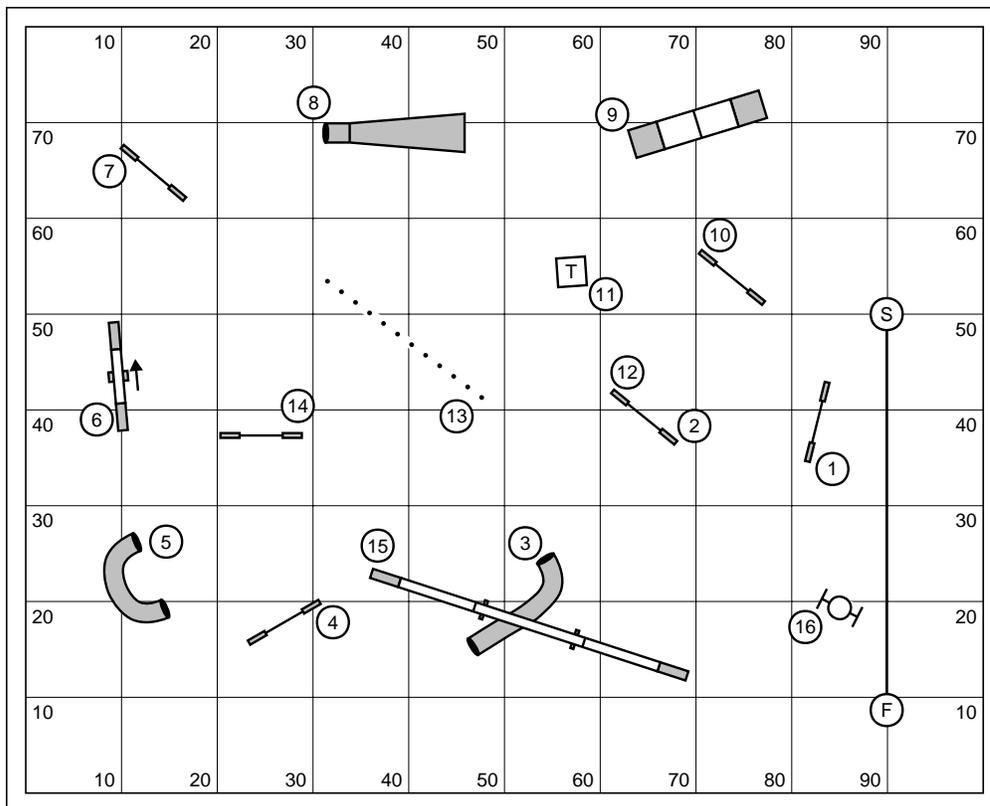
- The Country Dream Variation – The competitor will run all three courses and throw out the worst score in a Time Plus Faults Format.
- Pairs Relay – Colors may be run as a Pairs Relay. The pair must consist of two dogs in the same level and at the same jump height. Dogs are required to run different color courses. Both dogs must qualify for the pair to qualify.
- Separating the class – If the class is very large, the judge may separate the class by the color of the course each team is running. This makes the game easier to judge and enhances ring efficiency.
- League variation – When Colors is played in a league format, the three courses are both nested and layered. That means that there will be a Beginners’ course, an Intermediate course, and a Superior course. The judge may stipulate that a team in league play must report a score for each of the three colors or levels.

In a league format that has more than three members on a team each of the first three members should run a separate color (though this is not required). The remaining member must decide which colored course will improve the team score. Whatever the result (improved or not), the “best” of two scores on the same course will be used to determine the team’s final score.

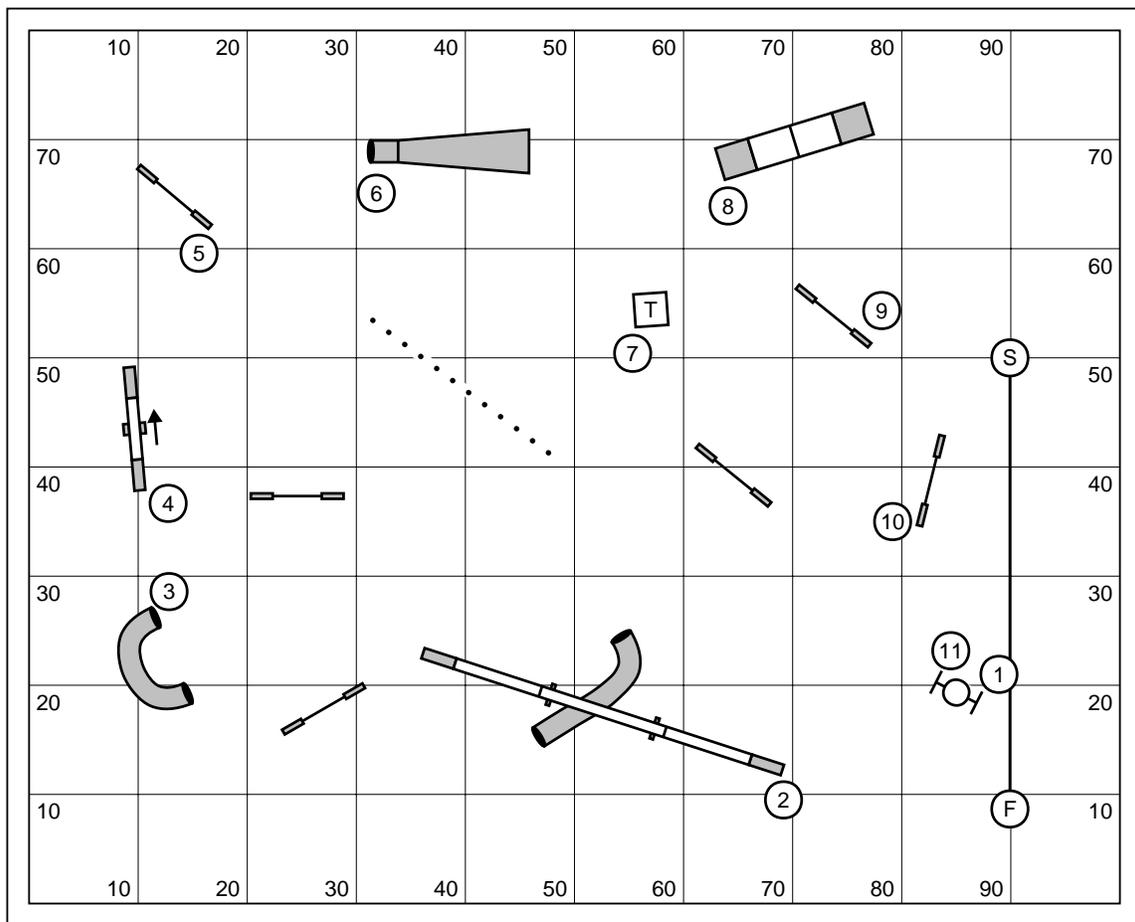
The field should contain 18 to 24 obstacles, divided into three courses at the levels of beginners, intermediate, and advanced. There is no attempt to make the three courses the same level. The sample courses show a leveled and nested League Colors course.



In the league variation, the courses are leveled in complexity. The red course is the Superior course and provides the greatest challenge to competitors.



This is example of the blue course which is leveled for Intermediate.



This final example is of the green course, which is leveled for Beginners.

Strategies

In CPE, the handler should choose the course on which his dog is most likely to have success, or on which the handling is most straight forward.

In league play, the team must report a score at each of the three levels. When team size exceeds three members the handlers running later with their dogs must know which scores are in most need of mending. If a dog is in the running for MVP (Most Valuable Puppy) honors, running the dog at a lower level might jeopardize the dog's standing in the hunt for MVP points. The handler is challenged with doing the right thing for his team while being tempted to play for individual honors.

Premium Blurb

Colors is a sequencing game. The handler has a choice of running any one of two or three short courses that are woven together on the field. *Colors* is scored Faults, Then Time.

ER1

Comin' and Goin'

Comin' and Goin' is the invention of Ilze Rukis. Ilze Rukis' club, Northwoods Agility Group (the NAGs) in Northern Wisconsin played the game Comin' and Goin' at a humane society fun walk on Saturday, September 15, 2001. She writes that it was actually rather interesting to watch the dogs switch from agility to obedience mode! The game was won by Tammie Scheich's Boxer, Coach, with 200 points and a time of 1:36.

Briefing

Comin' and Goin' is a three-part game that tests various skills of the dog and handler team. Total time allotted to complete all three-parts is 90 seconds.

- Part 1 is a send around a barrel from a distance. Deductions may be earned if the dog does not do the exercise or the handler must cross the containment line to show the dog the way.
- Part 2 is an agility sequence. Deductions may be earned if the dog faults any of the obstacles in the sequence.
- Part 3: the dog and handler will do an obedience routine following the judge's call. The obedience pattern will be the same for all dogs and will include heeling, at least one turn, a sit-stay, and a recall. Optionally, the judge may specify that the handler direct the dog to perform an agility obstacle on the recall.

The judge calls the obedience exercise.

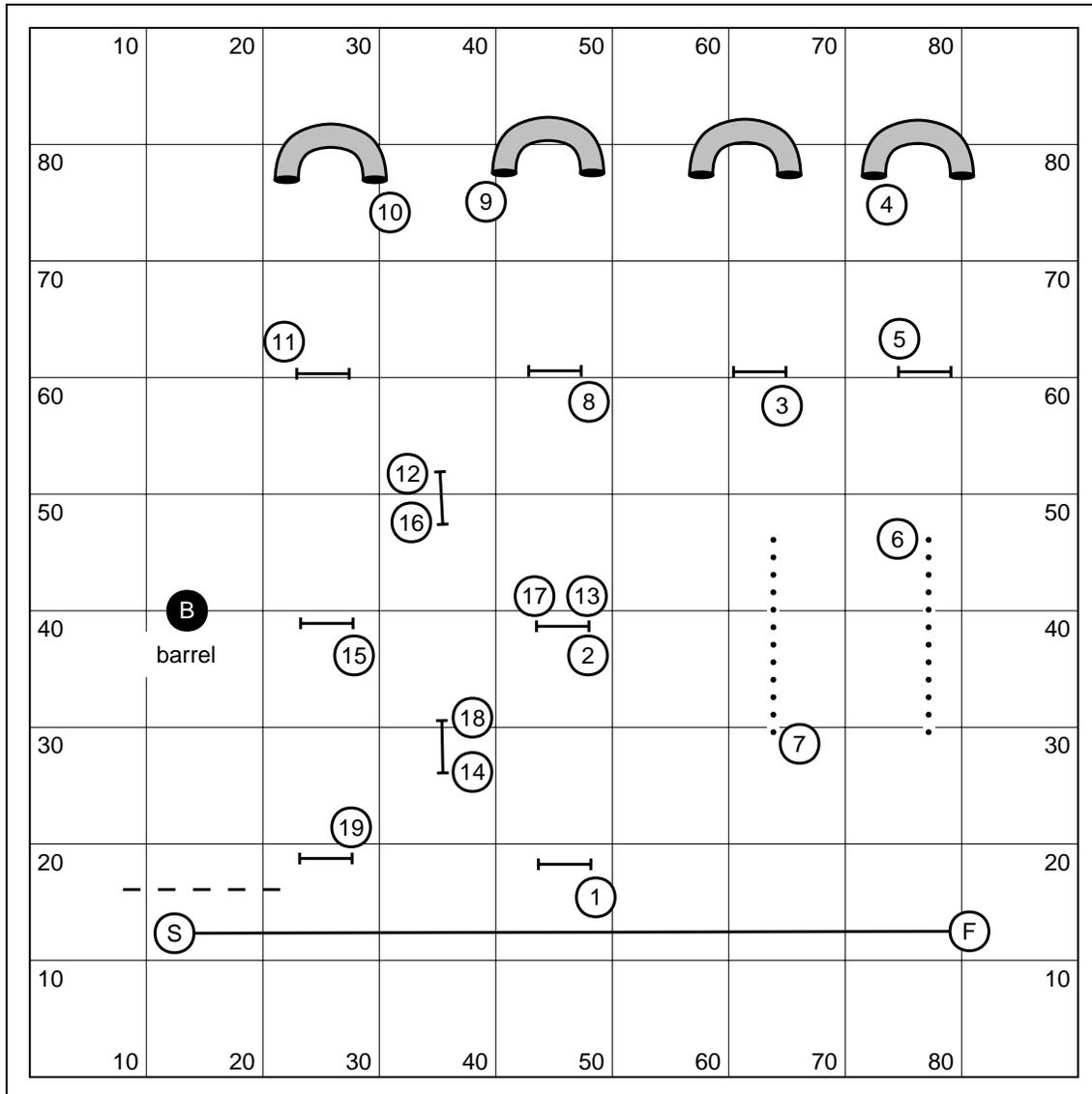
Scoring

Comin' and Goin' is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time. Each dog starts with 200 points. High score wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

Deductions: Forget true precision. Don't score crooked sits and perfect heel position and so on. This is supposed to be fun after all.

- 10 points for crossing the line for the send to barrel
- 5 points for knocked bars
- 5 points for wrong course, optional
- 5 points if dog completely leaves heel position at any time during part 3
- 5 points if dog does not sit without a command
- 5 points if dog does not sit-stay with command
- 5 points if dog does not hold stay
- 5 points if dog does not come

Course Design



This is an example of a Comin' and Goin' course designed by Ilze Rukis. For the agility portion Ilze used a jumpers course utilizing two sets of twelve weave poles.

The Comin' and Goin' course begins with a send to a barrel. The send line should be clearly marked with the barrel set back 25' or so. The agility course used for the second part of the game could be a standard agility course, though is usually a jumpers course. The obedience portion requires a large area on the flat which is ideally positioned beyond the final obstacle on the course.

Strategies

The teams that promise to be most successful are those that manage their transitions from one part of the game to the next. They will take a few seconds to collect themselves and their dogs before proceeding to the next portion of the game.

A team might incur the 10-point send-out penalty with the hope of being fast and accurate for part two, with a solid lead-out for part 3 and still be low score. The faster

parts one and two are completed, the more time there will be for the third part.

Premium Blurb

Coming and Going is a three-part consisting of a send around a barrel; an agility sequence; and an obedience routine. This game is not suitable for agility competition and should be reserved as a demonstration event. *Comin' and Goin'* is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time. ER6

Concentration

Concentration is the invention of Stuart Mah. It was originally used as a training exercise to help promote a handler's ability to quickly memorize a changing course. This game is also known as Follow the Leader and Simon's Horse.

Briefing

Players randomly draw numbers to see who goes first.

The objective of play is to perform obstacles in the proper sequence and direction. The first player starts by picking any obstacle and performing it. His turn is then complete. The second player must now perform two obstacles. He starts by performing the same obstacle as the first player. If successful, the second player can add a new obstacle of his choosing. His turn is now complete. The third player must now perform three obstacles. He starts by performing the obstacle of the first player and the obstacle of the second player. If successful, the handler then performs an obstacle of his choosing. Play continues in this way until each handler has had a turn. The round is then over.

If a dog faults any obstacle or takes the wrong obstacle the team is eliminated and must sit to watch the rest of the competition. The playing following another who has faulted must run the sequence that was intended for the player who faulted.

If after each complete round there are still players the cycle begins again. The original player performs all previous obstacles then adds one of his own choosing to the growing sequence.

If after three complete rounds there are still several players remaining the competition proceeds to the Lightning Round.

In the Lightning Round, the first player must perform the course in sixty seconds or less. If the player succeeds, he can add an obstacle of his choice. The next player must then perform the new sequence in sixty seconds or less. If successful, that player can add an obstacle of his choice. This goes on until only one dog and handler remains. In the event that none of the handlers get through the course in sixty seconds or less, the handler and dog team that completes the most obstacles on the course wins.

Any obstacle can be performed back-to-back. If this is done, a different obstacle must be performed before the obstacle can be used again.

There might be an advantage to being one of the first to go in this game. The order of play will be determined by random draw. First jump heights are drawn, and then players within each jump height.

Scoring

Concentration is scored as in a puissance. Players stay in the game until they have faulted out and until there is only one dog remaining. That dog is the winner of the competition.

Concentration is scored Points, Then Time. If a score *must* be given the dog, the dog's ultimate score will be the number of obstacles the dog performs before faulting out. The winning dog will clearly have the largest number of faults.

Players are eliminated if they break the concentration chain (failing to remember the

course or going off course), fail to perform an obstacle successfully, or take an obstacle in the wrong direction.

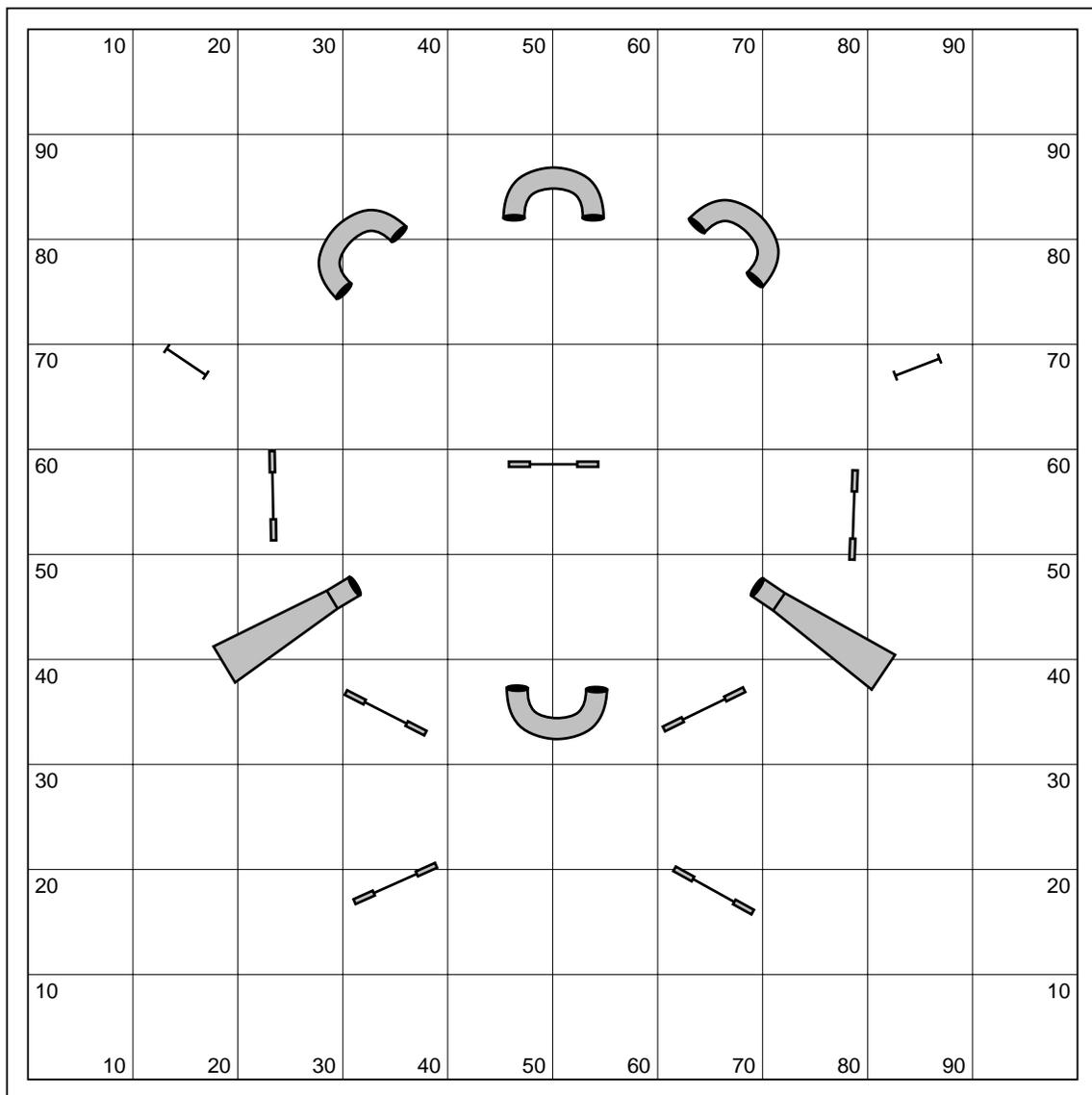
The system of faults might be any rational system. A rational method might be to change the system in each round using progressively more stringent standards. A good model for this would be to use progressive USDAA levels:

- Round one – USDAA Starters & Novice, faults for dropped bars, missed contacts, and off-courses
- Round two – USDAA Advanced, in addition to the faults in round one, a missed weave pole will be faulted and refusals will be faulted at contact obstacles only
- Round three and the Lightning round – USDAA Masters, in addition to the faults in round two, refusals will be faulted on all obstacles.

This progressively more stringent system will help limit the length of sequences so that the dogs aren't overworked.

Course Design

In Concentration, twelve to sixteen obstacles are best for the course design. Jump heights are set at the lowest height to accommodate all dogs. Only short sets of weave poles are used.



In the sample course included here, no contact obstacles are used. Contact obstacles could be used and might be used in a training context to provide work on contact performance.

A design for a Concentration course more suitable for more advanced handlers and their dogs might include a number of weave poles. The obstacles should be arranged so that it's difficult to put together long straight lines in a sequence to ensure frequent changes of direction.

Strategies

The most important skill a handler can develop and use in this game is to carefully watch the dogs running to learn and memorize the course as it develops. The handler must rely solely on visualization to determine a handling strategy. As a handler stays in the competition longer, parts of the sequence will become familiar and can be performed with more speed and gusto. For new elements, the handler might be wise to handle carefully and slowly, babysitting the dog through the new sequences.

Variations

- Adding a new obstacle – The handler whose turn it is to add a new obstacle to the sequence may choose to add the obstacle to the beginning of the sequence rather than the end. The next player must then perform this new obstacle first.
- Alternative obstacles – Not every club is rich enough in tunnels and weave poles to set the types of courses shown here. Concentration can be played with any configuration of agility equipment and any currently available equipment. In fact, this is an ideal game for the end of a training class. You can just leave the equipment where it sits and begin your game.

Premium Blurb

Concentration is a puissance. Each player will run a short sequence that the previous player ran with his dog, adding a new obstacle at the end. A player stays in the game if he runs the correct sequence and earns no faults; but if otherwise, is eliminated from the competition. *Concentration is scored Points, Then Time.* ER2

Connect the Dots

Connect the Dots is a marvelous game invented by Heather White-Cotterman of Delaware, Ohio. This is an easy game that can be used with nearly any obstacle placement from a standard course and without much movement or tweaking of the obstacles.

Briefing

The purpose of this game is for the dog to accumulate as many points as possible in the allotted time by connecting the dots. The “dots” are the contact obstacles on course. These are also the highest valued obstacles on the course.

The dog earns points for each obstacle performed in a “line”, which is the series of obstacles from dot to dot. These obstacles may be performed only once for points between the dots, and may be performed only twice for points overall.

If an obstacle in a line is faulted, then all points in that line are lost from the last dot, through the faulted obstacle. At least one point must be scored from dot to dot. After faulting an obstacle the handler must direct the dog to perform at least one eligible obstacle to earn points before attempting the next dot.

If the dog faults a “dot”—one of the contact obstacles—he must be directed to repeat that obstacle until it is performed correctly, or until the expiration of course time.

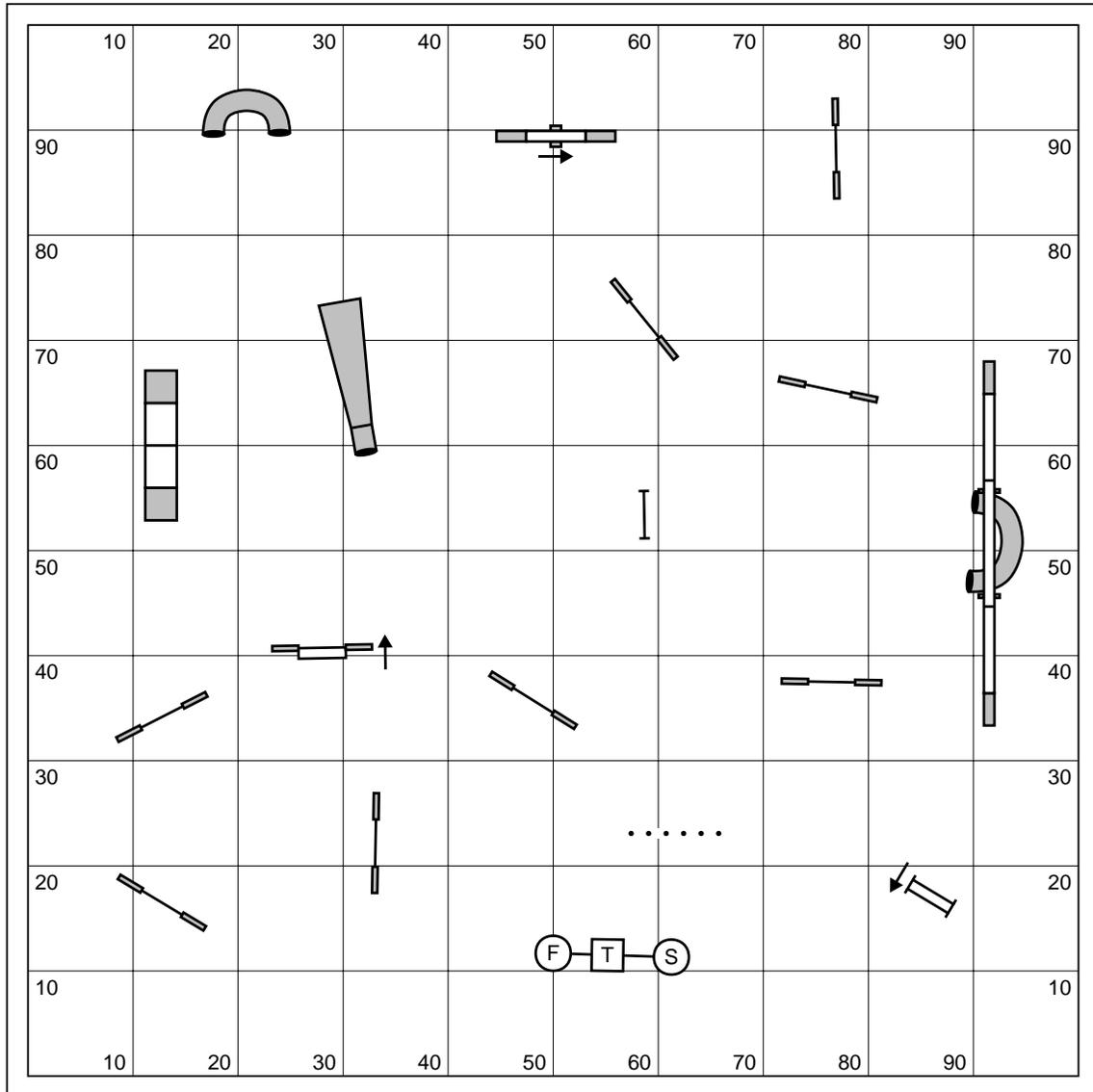
Time starts and stops on the table. Each dog will have 50 seconds. The timekeeper will blow a whistle at 50 seconds to indicate the end of scoring. The dog will lose a point for each second, or fraction thereof, over 50 seconds. The dog can be directed to the table before the expiration of standard course time for no penalty.

Scoring

Connect the Dots is scored Points, Then Time. Points are awarded on the following schedule:

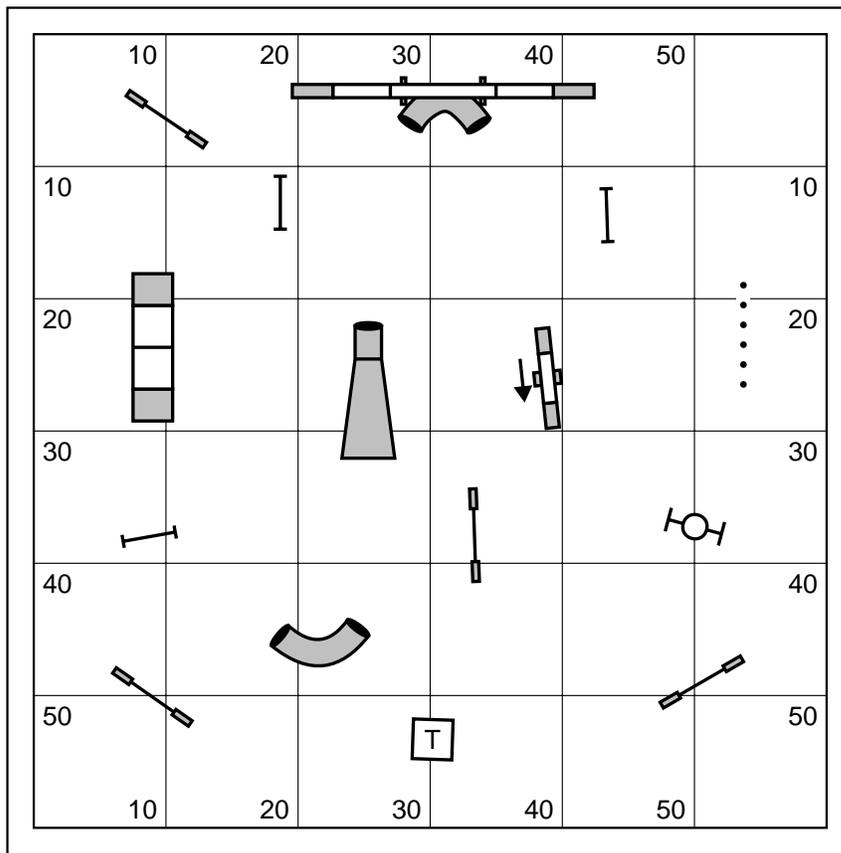
- Dots – 10 points
- Jumps – 1 point
- Tunnels, Tire, and short Weave Poles (6) – 3 points
- Weave poles (12) – 5 points

Course Design



This example of a Connect the Dots course was designed by the game's inventor, Heather White-Cotterman.

A Connect The Dots can easily be an adaptation of a standard course, with only modest tweaking or movement of equipment. The table is used as the start and finish in the game. It should be positioned at the front of the ring to make a timely transition between competitors.



This is a *Connect the Dots* course designed by Don Wolff for play in the TDAA.

Strategies

All “dog’s-choice” games with timing implications require the handler to understand the rate of speed at which his dog will work. This is actually information that is given to the competitor every time he steps onto a standard course. The judge will stipulate the course distance (though not all are skillful at measuring their own courses); and the timekeeper will give the competitor the time that the dog stayed on course. Subtracting the time spent for any table performance will give the exhibitor the numbers required to extrapolate the dog’s rate of travel.

In *Connect the Dots*, there are two conceivable point accumulation strategies worth noting. The handler might attempt robust point accumulation in the lines. In this strategy, the handler seeks to do as many obstacles as possible between the dots with the idea in mind that he will arrive at the table with the completion of only the three basic dots at precisely 50 seconds. The downside of this strategy is that the handler’s points in a line are constantly at risk on any dropped bar (the only fault that can be made in a line).

The second strategy would have the handler directing the dog in the shortest possible line between the dogs to maximize the number of dots performed on the course (which are, in any event, the most valuable obstacles on the course), and to minimize the potential for lost points if a line is faulted.

Qualifying and Titles

Connect the Dots is an eligible qualifying game in the TDAA. The standard course time should be expanded to sixty seconds, or the following numbers reduced by 15% or so:

- Games I – 40 points
- Games II – 53 points
- Games III – 67 points

Premium Blurb

Connect the Dots is a dog's choice point accumulation game. The objective is to handle the dog from dot to dot (the contact obstacles) scoring points on all other obstacles in between. Points for the "in between" obstacles are always at risk, as they'll be lost in case of any fault since the last "dot". *Connect the Dots* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Contact Donut

Contact Donut is the invention of Linda Northrop. This exceedingly simple game tests reliable contact performance at speed and is appropriate as a training tool at the intermediate level. The game also allows the handler to experiment with working his dog at a distance.

Briefing

The objective of Contact Donut is to accumulate as many points as possible by running a circular course composed mostly of tunnels and contacts in a period specified by the judge: appropriate to the rates of travel for the organization with some built-in expectation of success working at a distance.

The dog begins at a designated start line in the circle or donut of obstacles and on completion will begin again and continue until the end of course time. A whistle will end course time; the dog and handler must get to the table to stop time.

Bonus points are awarded for the performance of contact obstacles if the handler can direct his dog to perform the course while remaining in any of three concentric containment areas (the donut hole) at the center of the course. If the handler steps out of the donut at any time the dog will earn no bonus.

Scoring

Contact Donut is scored Points, Plus Bonus, Less Faults, Then Time. The dog with the most points is the winner. Time is a tiebreaker only.

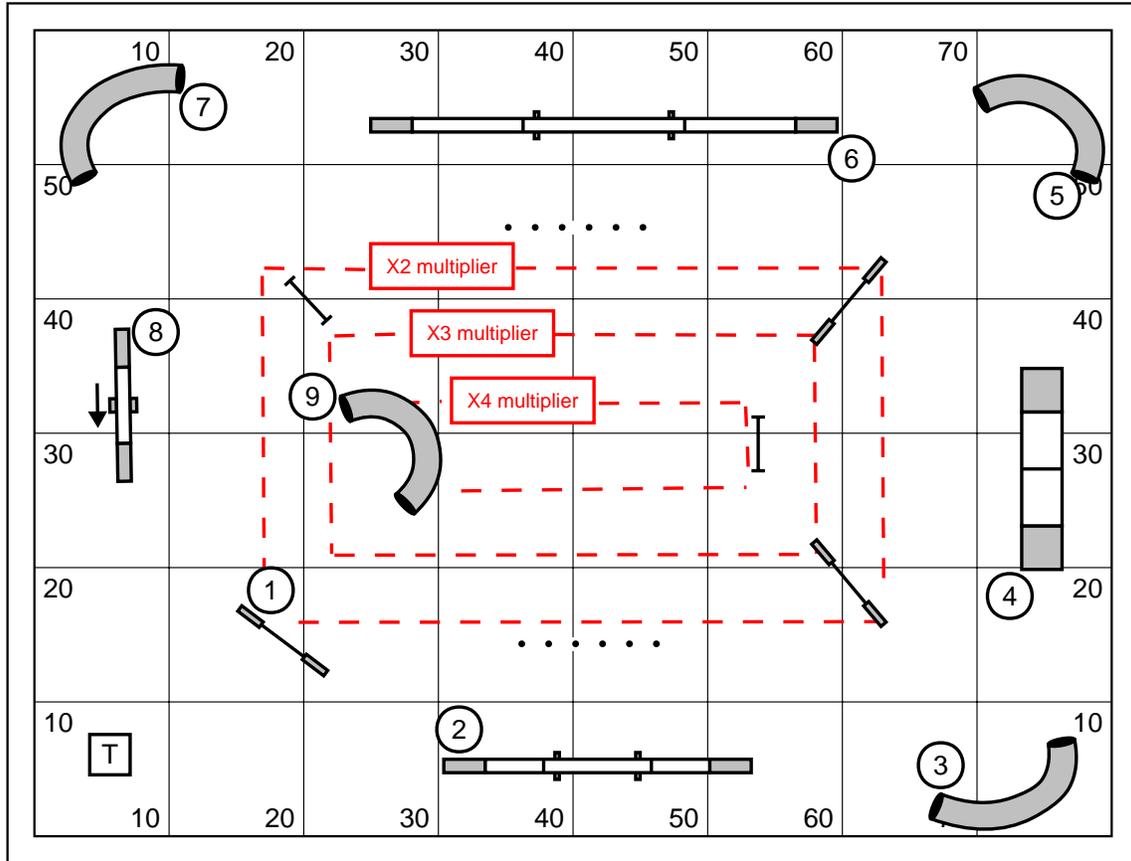
Values are assigned to the obstacles as follows: 5 points for contact obstacles; 1 point for tunnels and jumps.

Three bonus containment areas are shown on the course. Bonuses are awarded for contact obstacles only. The handler must be inside of the respective containment area *both* for the ascent of the contact obstacle *and* for the descent. Four paws constitutes commitment

- 2x multiplier ~ from a 10' containment line contacts are valued at 10 points
- 3x multiplier ~ from a 15' containment line contacts are valued at 15 points
- 4x multiplier ~ from a 20' containment line contacts are valued at 20 points

On any fault the dog will be charged according to the fault schedule of the respective venue. They dog may *not* earn a bonus on a faulted obstacle. It is the judge's call whether refusals will be faulted.

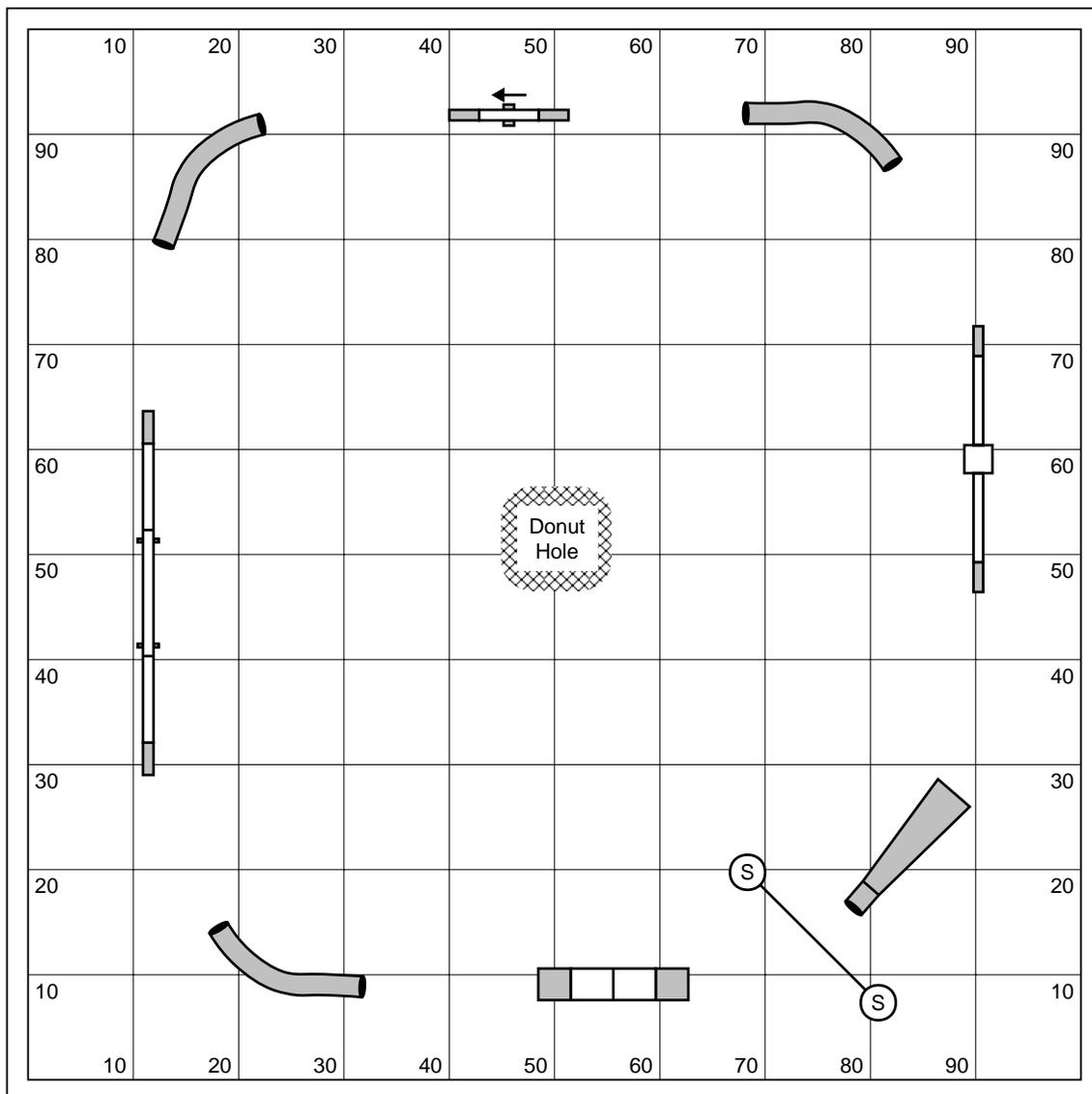
Course Design



This is a Contact Donut course designed by Bud Houston for league play at Topdog Agility Players in Waterford, Ohio. The dummy obstacles are more a matter of nesting the course for class. And for the game, they certainly add interest and complexity.

Note that the #1 jump is rotated so that the handler can make the initial send into the course from the containment region of the field. In the course the #9 pipe tunnel is drawn up into the field to accommodate the repeated loops of the course.

For this course small dogs are given a Qualifying Course Time (QCT) of 60 seconds and big dogs a QCT of 55 seconds.



This Contact Donut course utilizes the traditional three contact obstacles, using the crossover with straight over planks in lieu of the dogwalk. This game allows the handler to work closely on the dog's contacts, or for a more advanced dog, to work the dog at a distance.

In the Contact Donut course the contact obstacles are typically placed on the sides of the course, while tunnels are used to soften or direct the turns in the corners. The "Donut Hole" should be a clearly defined area in the center of the circle of obstacles.

Qualifying

Establishing qualifying criteria is a tricky business. There needs to be a balance between level, jump height, and expectation of success working at distance. Here's a possible schedule:

- Games I ~ 35 points
- Games II ~ 50 points
- Games III ~ 65 points

The Games I qualifier in this schedule is based on a single performance of the loop with 10 bonus points. Games II will require 25 bonus points and/or more than one completed loop. Games III requires 40 bonus points and/or more than one completed loop. Only a lot of experience with competition will prove this schedule. We have neither the expectation to skunk the field, nor any desire to give away the farm.

Variations

Northrop's Traditional Variation ~ In the game as originally designed by Linda Northrop the handler was expected to stand in a "donut hole" roughly the size of an agility table at the center of the course. Handling from the donut hole earned a 15 pt bonus. And, the course was not run as a continuous loop. The original of the game is relegated to the status of "variation" mostly to make it a more rigorous game for competition rather than a game that is mostly a training exercise.

In this variation time was traditionally stopped by taking the dog to the donut hole in the center of the course. This element is no longer recognized, simply to make more efficient use of the ring in competition.

In this variation scoring ceases if time elapses or the dog commits any fault.

The Courtney Keys Team Variation ~ In this variation of Contact Donut the game is played by two, or more, dog and handler teams. Bonuses and objective are essentially the same. However, when a dog commits a fault the alternate dog, or next dog, is expected to begin the course from the start.

In this variation faults points are *not* earned by the team. Instead, as mentioned above, the next dog is expected to begin the course from the beginning.

This variation should include for the purpose of qualification: Each dog is expected to successfully complete at least one contact obstacles; *and* the complete loop must be completed at least once.

The handler of the active dog has an option to "bail" the course with his dog. For example the handler of the first dog could pull the dog away from an approach to the teeter (for whatever reason)... and the second handler will begin the course from the beginning. This will allow the avoidance of some terrible fault in order to switch. The judge might require the handler to yell "Switch!" or something.

Premium Blurb

Contact Donut is a distance game. The sequence is typically a course around the outside of the field (the donut); the dog will earn bonuses for the handler working from the donut hole. *Contact Donut* is scored Points, Plus Bonus, Less Faults, Then Time. ER8

Copycat

Copycat is the invention of Trisha Stall from Latham, New York.

Briefing

Copycat is a “dog’s-choice” game. That means the handler can direct the dog through the performance of obstacles in the order and direction of his own choosing, or the dog’s choosing, as the case may be.

Big dogs will have 36 seconds and small dogs will have 40 seconds to gather points. Point values for obstacles are:

- Jumps 1 point
- Tunnels, and tire 3 points
- Contacts and weave poles 5 points

The dog may perform each obstacle only twice for points. Obstacles must be correctly performed to earn points. If the dog performs obstacles of the same value one after the other the dog will earn a fault for “copycatting”. For each copycat fault the dog will be penalized 5 points; (and will not earn the value of the second obstacle). Every second over course time will be penalized one point.

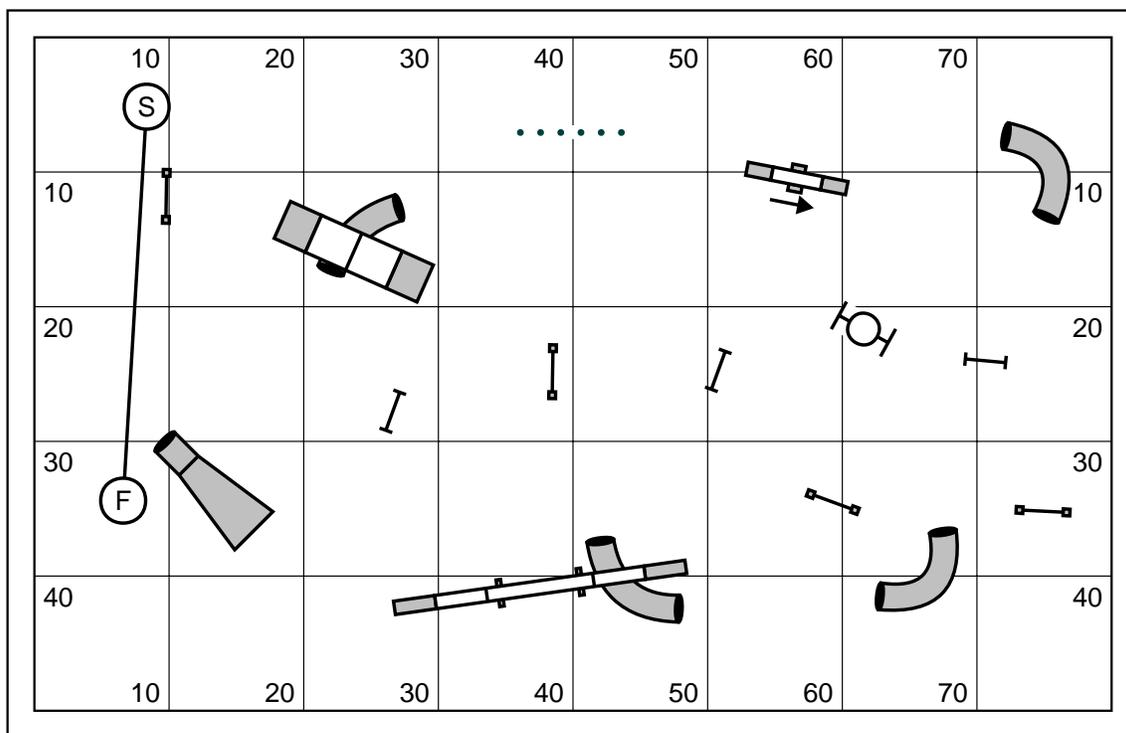
Scoring

Copycat is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time. The dog with the highest number of points wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

The scorekeeper is responsible for determining faults for copycatting. In a copycat sequence the dog is not awarded the value of the second obstacle.

Time starts and stops when the dog crosses the start/finish line.

Course Design



This TDAA Copycat course was designed by Jennifer Tompkins of Moore, OK.

The course should be designed with subtle traps for repeating two obstacles of the same value. The line of jumps in the center of the course should obviously be avoided by the handler. Less obvious is the possibility of being trapped by the tunnels and tire at the right side of the course; and by the weave poles to teeter at the top of the course.

Qualifying

- Games I 16 points or better
- Games II 18 points or better
- Games III 20 points or better

Premium Blurp

Copycat is a dog's-choice game. The handler's job is to avoid taking two obstacles, one after another, of the same point value for which the dog earns a "copycatting" fault. *Copycat* is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time. ER6.

Cowboy Dog

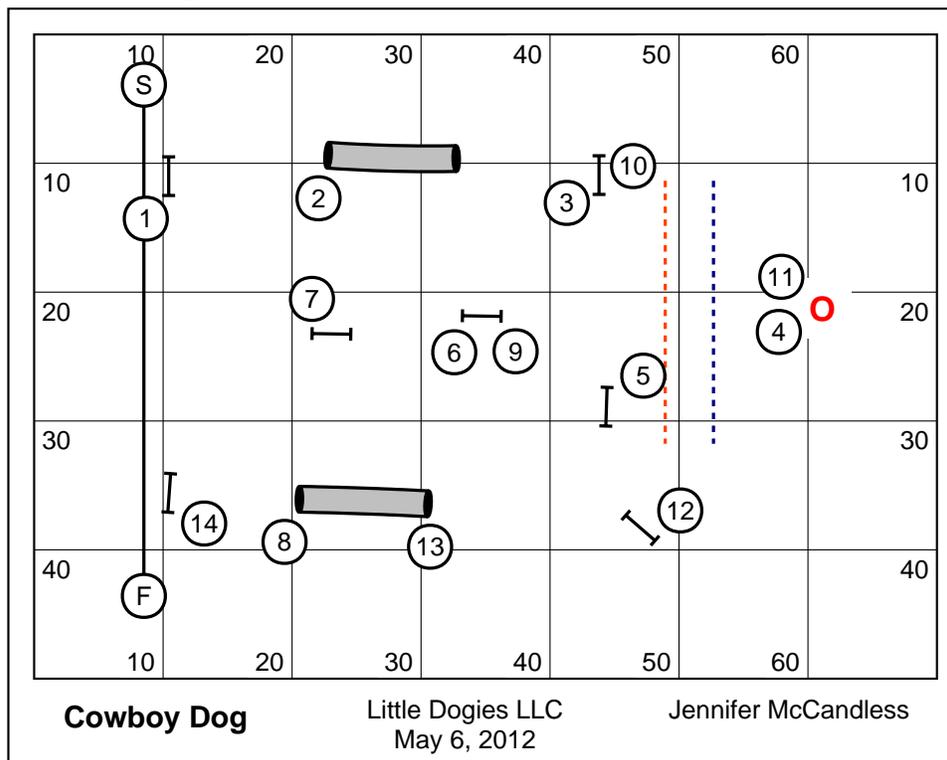
Cowboy Dog is an extension of the Barrel Racing game; and both games were based on barrel-racing for horses. This game establishes the "turn around the barrel" as another obstacle performance which can be included in sequencing among other obstacles. We believe *Cowboy Dog* may have been invented by Jennifer McCandless.

Briefing

This is a numbered course which includes among the obstacles a *barrel*. The dog's turn around the barrel must be clockwise (counterclockwise turn is a wrong course).

- For Games III the dog must be sent around the barrel with the handler behind the *red* line.
- For Games II the dog must be sent around the barrel with the handler behind the *blue* line.
- For Games I the handler has no containment line. The handler may move to the barrel, but not around it.

Course Design



This example of *Cowboy Dog* is based on the original course designed by TDAA judge Jennifer McCandless.

The barrel is a non-standard obstacle. On this course map it is made distinct by a red color so that it stands out to the eye. When a barrel is used with other agility obstacles it should be given plenty of real estate on every side so that stands apart. Give the dog and handler room to work.

Scoring

Cowboy Dog is scored time plus faults. The lowest score wins.

Variations

Standard Sequencing ~ While the game was introduced as a distance game, the barrel(s) might be used in simple sequencing with no real requirement to *send* the dog away.

Indeed, in simple sequencing the dog probably should *not* be faulted by the handler moving around the barrel with the dog; there is no real accounting for the antics of the handler. The dog solely should be judge.

On the other hand, a turn around the barrel in the wrong direction would be a wrong course.

Qualifying

To qualify, team's score must be less than the Qualifying Course Time (QCT) established by the judge. The QCT is based on a measured path, using the rates of travel from the standard classes.

Premium Blurb

Cowboy Dog is a sequencing game that incorporates a "send" around a barrel (usually for bonus) as a part of the sequence. *Cowboy Dog* is scored time plus faults. The lowest score wins. ER5

The Daisy Game

The Daisy Game is the invention of Dennis Vogel for play in the Teacup Dogs Agility Association. The Daisy Game was invented by Dennis to honor his dog that brought him to agility, TACH5 Daisy.

Briefing

The objective of The Daisy Game is to pick the petals off of the daisy by successfully completing all jumps on course at least once in any order or direction in the fastest time possible. Achieve a bonus for picking off petals from the daisy one by one and ending on “she loves me”.

The game starts at the tire followed by the tunnel (A-B). The dog then is to take all of the jumps 1-8 without fault at least once before finishing with the tunnel and the tire (B-A). All jumps can be taken in any direction in any order; however, for jumps 1-8, only a maximum of two jumps can be taken in a row before jump C must be taken. Obviously jump C will be taken multiple times. An opening sequence might be A-B-1-C-5-4-C-2-3-C- etc. There is no penalty for taking jumps 1-8 more than once. There is no penalty for taking a single jump between two Cs. Each time you take a numbered jump (i.e., 1-8) without fault you pick a petal off the daisy and potentially earn a 15 point bonus, see “She loves me, she loves me not” bonus below.

Faults

10 point faults:

- Any of the jumps 1-8 not taken.
- An obstacle not taken in the stem of the daisy, either at the start or on the finish.
- Taking an obstacle in the stem of the daisy as a wrong course obstacle.
- Bar down (jumps 1-8). The jump will be out of play for the rest of the game. This jump will not count as one of the 1-8, so at the scorer’s table there will be a 10 point deduction.
- Bar down for jump C. For the remainder of the game the dog will have to pass between the uprights.

No fault for taking more than two of the jumps 1-8 in a row before taking jump C. If more than two jumps 1-8 are taken in a row, the jumps taken after the first two do not get credited as the required 1-8 jumps to be taken. They will also not be counted as a petal (see Bonus below). Jump C must be taken again to restart the scoring. The judge will call out the number of each jump taken without fault and be silent for faulted jumps.

Failing to perform the final obstacle in the stem will be scored “E” (elimination).

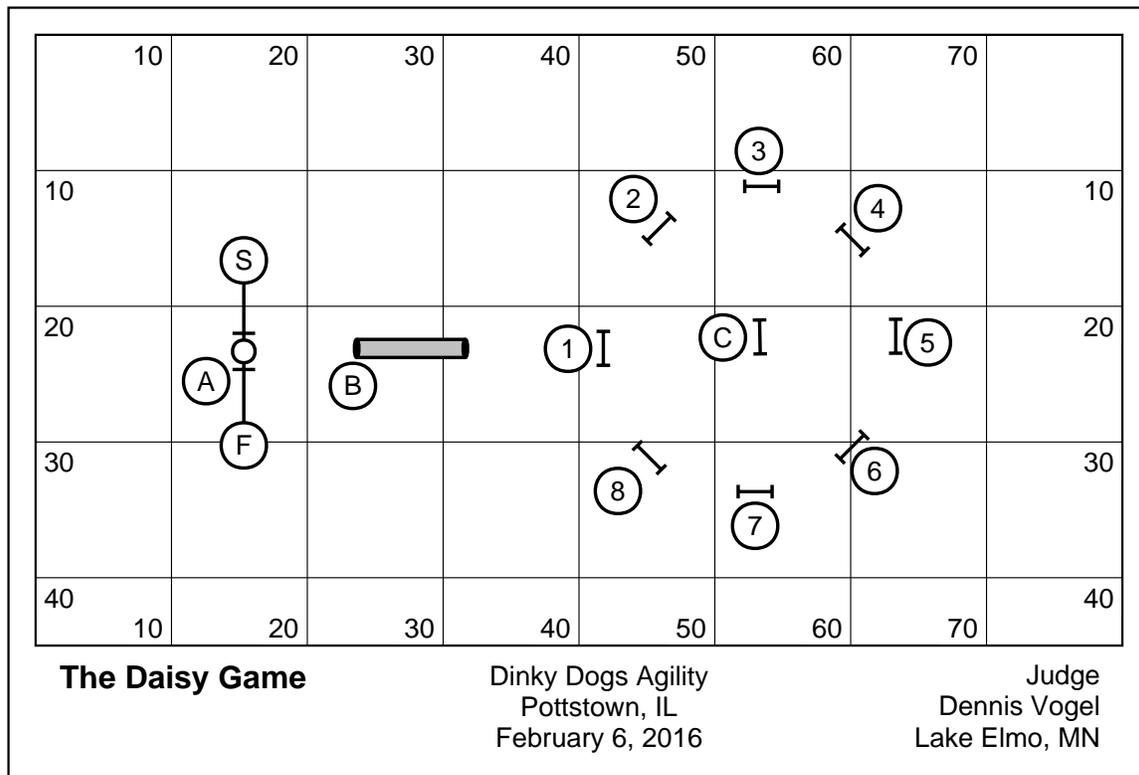
Bonus

She loves me, she loves me not bonus: For each petal you pick off the daisy you alternate with a “she loves me” followed by “she loves me not”. If the last petal you pick off is a “she loves me” then you get a 15 point bonus (15 seconds taken off your score). Picking off a petal is successfully completing a numbered jump (i.e., 1-8) without fault.

Scoring

The Daisy Game is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The lowest score wins.

Course Design



This is the design of the original game by Dennis Vogel (for play in the TDAA at Dinky Dogs, Pottstown, IL, in February of 2016).

On this course the judge measured a modest qualifying strategy and established these course times:

- Games I – 50 small, 45 tall
- Games II – 45 small, 40 tall
- Games III – 40 small, 35 tall

The suggestive shape of the daisy, including both stem and petals may tend to relegate this game to a specific configuration. We could be lulled into believing that Dennis Vogel's original design is the only shape the game can take. The intrepid course designer, however, should recognize that the Daisy has a stem, and it has petals, but the overall presentation might take many interesting shapes and patterns, presenting challenges that are different and interesting in their own right.

Qualifying

A qualifying score is earned for a dog whose score is equal to or less than the QCT established by the judge.

Premium Blurb

The *Daisy Game* is mostly a dog's choice game. The handler and dog choose the order

and direction of play. The petals of the daisy are plucked by the dog, alternating “she loves me ... she loves me not” in scoring. The dog earns a bonus for ending on a “she loves me” pluck of a petal. *The Daisy Game* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus.
ER7

Dare to Double

Dare to Double is the invention of Darlene Woz and was the winner of the 1995 Clean Run magazine games contest. Dare to Double is a game of strategy and daring. This game is sometimes referred to as Double Dog Dare Ya.

Briefing

Dare to Double is a simple dog's-choice game, which means that he will earn points for taking obstacles in the order and direction of his own choosing. The team has 50 seconds to accumulate as many points as possible. The game begins at a start line designated by the judge and ends at the table or a designated finish line.

The team must get to the table before course time elapses. If the team gets to the table before time expires, they keep all points accumulated on course. If the team fails to do so, half of the team's points are lost.

The value of scoring obstacles is based on a simple 1-3-5-7 system:

- 1 point for jumps
- 3 points for tunnels and tire
- 5 points for teeter, dogwalk and weave poles
- 7 points for one of the obstacles in the 5-point list, usually given to an obstacle in a difficult placement

Scoring obstacles can be taken only twice for points. Back-to-back performances are allowed. Jumps that are knocked down will not be reset.

The A-frame has a special value (Note that the A-frame was not included in this list above). It is the doubling obstacle. During the run, a handler may double his current points by performing the doubling obstacle. A successful performance doubles all points earned up to that time. If, however, the dog faults the A-frame, then the dog loses half of his existing points.

A handler may double points any time he wishes, as many times as he wishes. The only restriction on doubling is that the A-frame cannot be performed back-to-back. Thus, the handler must do another obstacle, for points, before attempting to double point values again.

A warning whistle is blown 15 seconds prior to the expiration of time.

Scoring

Dare to Double is scored Points, Then Time. The winner is the dog finishing with the most points. In case of a tie, time is the tiebreaker. The table is live during the entire run. If the dog gets on the table at any time, scoring ends.

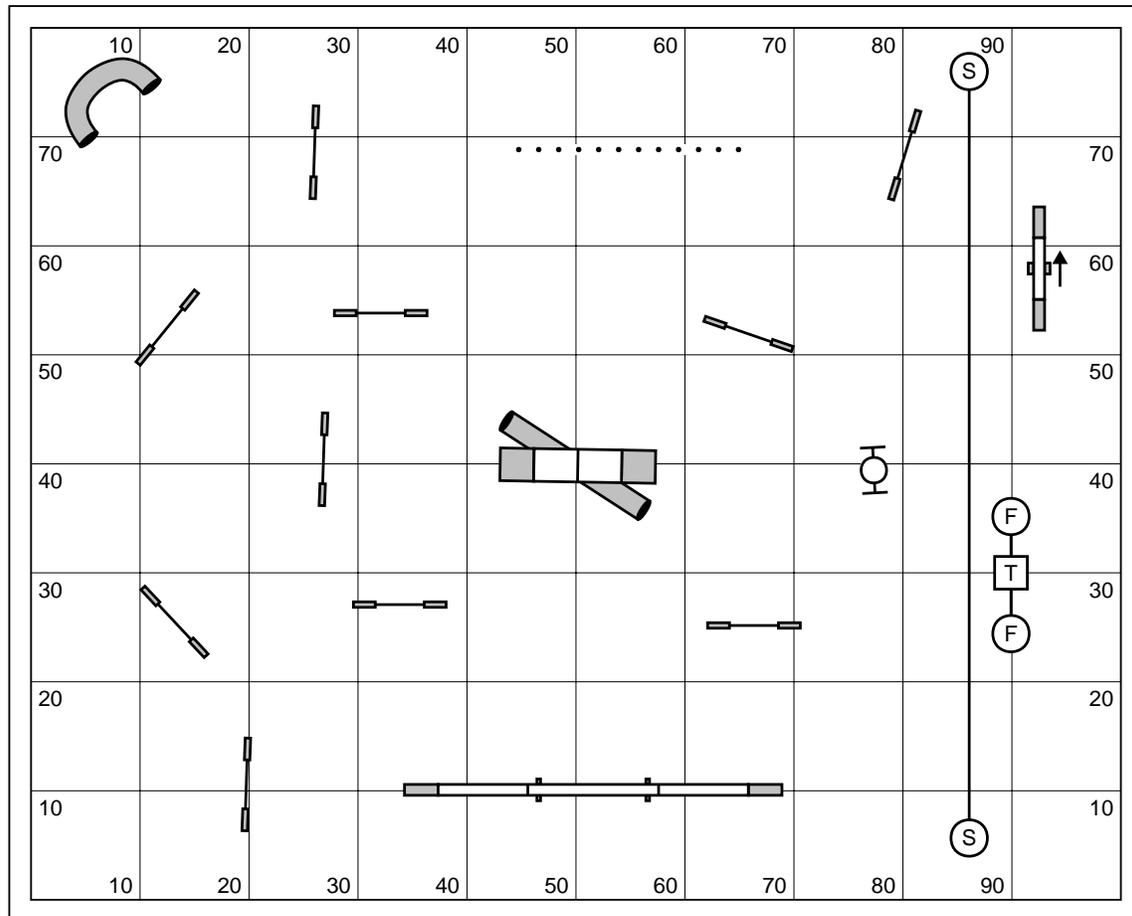
The scribe's notations must be made in streamline fashion so that the scorekeeping table can easily decipher when to apply doubling, when to add points, and when to halve the score. For example, the scribe might write:

1 2 3 D 5 4 6 F 6 7 5 D 3 D

The scorekeeper would score this as 132 points. Note that the value of the doubling

obstacle is recorded as “D,” which means to double the previously accumulated points. “F” indicates that the dog faulted the doubling obstacle and the half of the total points accumulated (up to that point) will be lost.

Course Design



This is an example of a Dare to Double course. This game lends itself to virtually any configuration of agility equipment and is a fine choice for a game that can be played on an existing standard course.

In the original design concept for Dare to Double the doubling obstacle (the A-frame) was placed at the back of the ring. Forward, at the front of the ring (and consequently farthest away from the A-frame) were the jumps. Immediately surrounding the A-frame were higher point obstacles, including the contacts and the weave poles. So the tunnels and tire were placed in an intermediate area between the jumps and the contact obstacles.

More recently the designs of Dare to Double use the A-frame more to the center of the course with jumps placed in more accessible positions. Dare to Double is an ideal game to be played on an existing standard course with a minimum of movement and tweaking of obstacles in their existing positions.

Strategies

The doubling obstacle is the key to accumulating the most points and winning the game. Consequently, performing the doubling obstacle as often as possible is desirable. Double

early, double often is the key to the game.

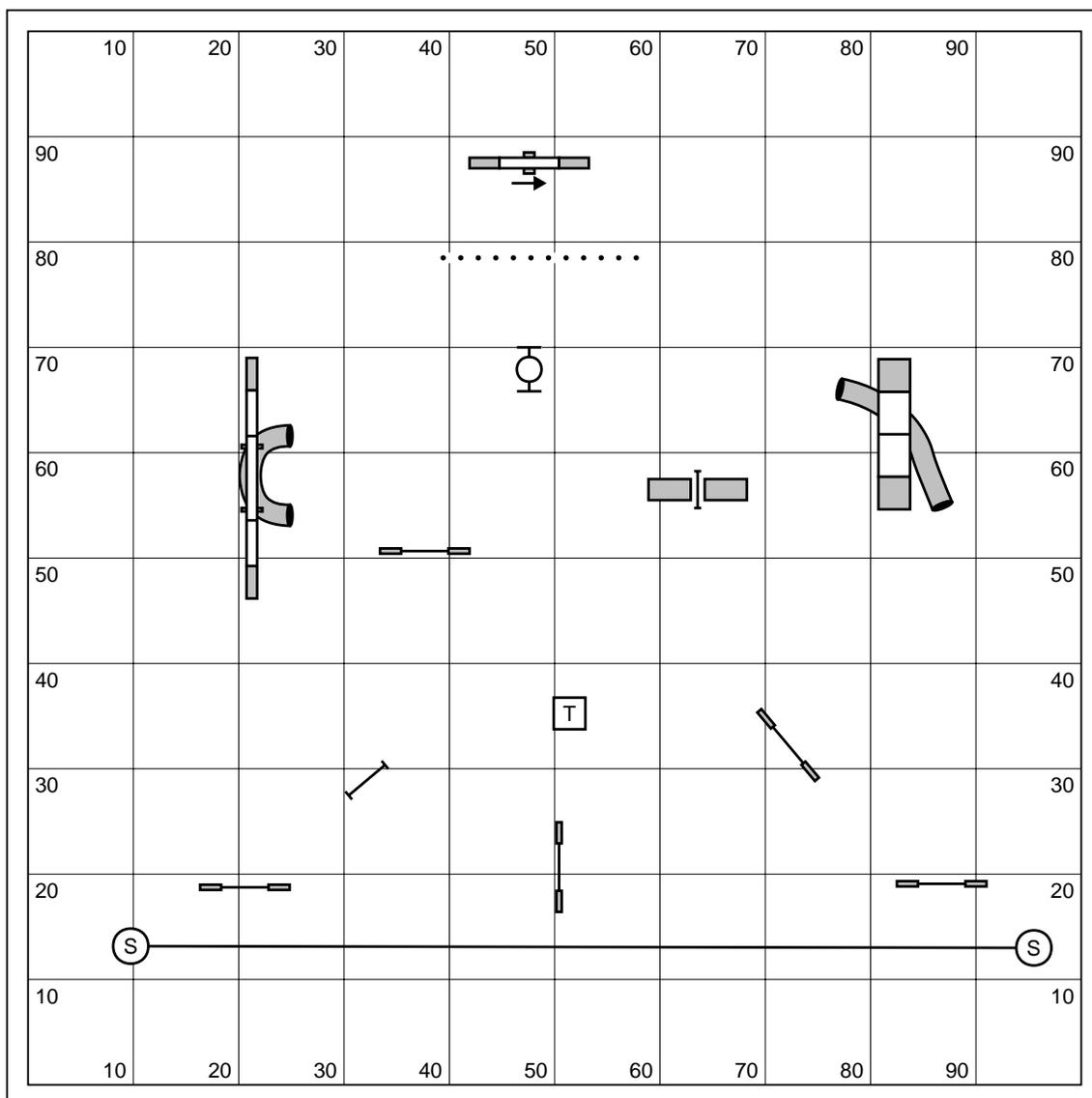
Since scoring obstacles can only be done twice for points, the handler should make judicious use of those obstacles near the A-frame. It doesn't make much sense to do all the obstacles around the A-frame before doubling. It's a better strategy to do an obstacle once, then double on the A-frame; do the single obstacle again, and then double on the A-frame, and so forth.

When playing with a 15-second warning whistle, and the fault for failure to get to the table by the expiration of time costs the team "half" of its score, the handler might think about the implications of being able to double three more times and taking the time fault, rather than racing on to the table to stop time and scoring.

Variations

- Placement of obstacles – Surround the A-frame with low-point obstacles and place high-point obstacles away from the A-frame.
- Change the doubling obstacle – As a training exercise especially, use an obstacle other than the A-frame as the doubling obstacle to focus on the performance of that obstacle.
- The Flanigan variation – In Amy Flanigan's variation, the A-frame can only be taken twice, whether taken successfully or faulted. As a consequence, the handler has to decide at what point in the run the two doubling trips should be taken over the A-frame, but should not tarry so long that an opportunity is lost. Note that the dog can do the A-frame only twice and may not be taken back-to-back whether or not the first performance resulted in a fault.
- The Masters variation – In the Masters variation, there will be no warning whistle. Also, if the dog goes not get to the table at the expiration of course time, all points are lost.
- The Four Paws variation – In this variation the time limit is 45 seconds, with a warning whistle at 40 seconds to alert handlers. Any points accumulated on the way to the table are valid, provided the dog makes time.

The weave poles are designated as the doubling obstacle. No penalty (1/2 score) is assessed for any bobble in the weave poles. However, if the dog faults any contact obstacle, he is assessed a 1/2 score penalty.



This is an actual Dare to Double course using the Four Paws variation. This game was played at Four Paws Training in Antioch, IL. The Four Paws variation is apparently the invention of Erin Friedeman, Tracie Franks, and Rae Tanner.

Qualifying and Titles

Dare to Double is an eligible titling game in the TDAA. The qualifying criteria reflects the “doubling” nature of the game:

- Games I – A score of 40 or better
- Games II – A score of 80 or better
- Games III – A score of 160

Premium Blurb

Dare to Double is a dog’s-choice game. The objective is to score as many points as possible, repeating a doubling obstacle on course (traditionally the A-frame) as often as time allows. The dog risks losing half his points if the A-frame is faulted! The dog must get to the finish

obstacle before course time elapses or be penalized. *Dare to Double* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Dealer's Choice

Dealer's Choice apparently comes to us from the U.K. Not much is known about the game in the U.S. It has been popularized as a training exercise by agility seminar leaders such as Nancy Gyes. This game could be used in competition when you want to do something just a little bit different.

Briefing

Dealer's Choice is like standard agility in that the course must be completed in numerical order. However, unlike standard agility, a Dealer's Choice course contains options. In a number of places on course, the same number appears on more than one obstacle. In these cases, it is the handler's choice or the dog's-choice as to which path to take. The obstacles may be performed in any order and in either direction if they are bi-directional obstacles but no obstacle may be taken more than once. The dog and handler must complete all obstacles with the same number before going on to the next number in sequence.

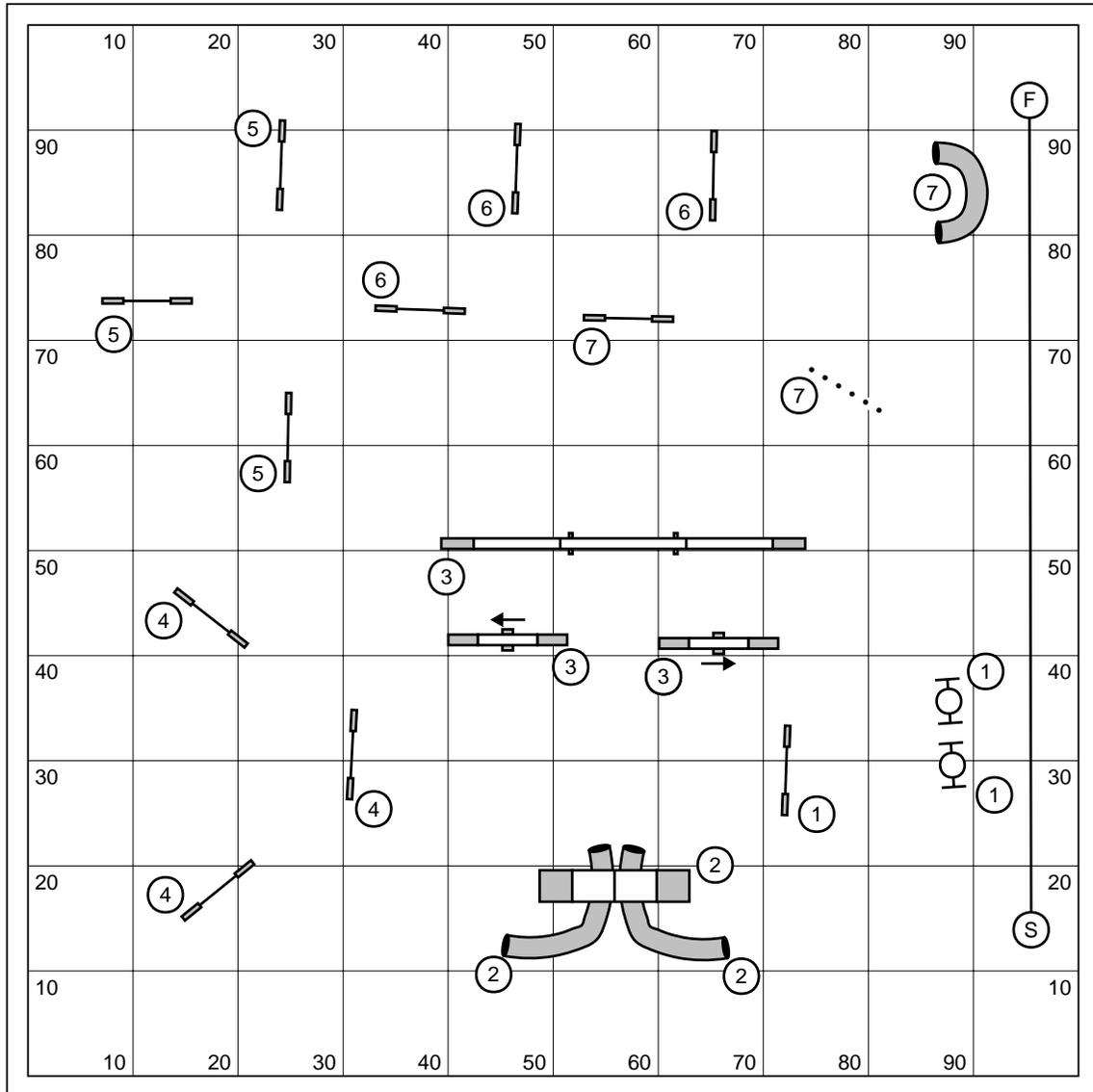
If the collapsed tunnel is part of the course, both the dog and handler may cross the fabric portion of the collapsed tunnel without penalty.

Scoring

Dealer's Choice is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins. USDAA Starters/Novice rules may be used to assess faults since refusals will be difficult to judge as the order of the sequence the dog is attempting is up to the handler.

Nancy Gyes, the American innovator of the game writes: "I play Dealers Choice occasionally at seminars for a fun ending, and occasionally at class here at home. I really don't have any rules unless I make up silly ones. I normally judge it very loosely, as Time, Plus Faults. 5 faults for any dog fault, 20 faults for a stupid handler fault, at my discretion."

Course Design



This example Dealer's Choice course was designed by Bud Houston for play in agility league at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

The course designer must give the handler and dog multiple choices throughout the course. Optional sequences of three obstacles are designed into the overall flow. In these sequences the handler can solve in the order and direction of his choosing. The choices selected must balance risk and reward to make the course an interesting one.

The basics are groups of three obstacles: two jumps and set of weaves, two jumps and the collapsed tunnel, two tunnels and a jump or weave, any contact and two jumps or two tunnels, teeter and two short sets of weaves, and so on. The sets might be linked by a couple of jumps for speed and flow between the sets to keep it fast and moving.

Strategies

Dealer's Choice relies on the handler's knowledge of his dog's working style to find the most efficient path (the fastest route) for completing all of the obstacles on course. The

handler should take into account the transitions between groups when solving the order and direction in which obstacles in a group should be performed.

Qualifying and Titles

Dealer's Choice is an eligible titling game in the TDAA. To earn a qualifying score the dog and handler team must do the course without faults. No standard course time should be used, though a maximum course time would keep exhibitors from "heeling" their dogs through the course.

The level of the game qualifier should depend on the complexity of the course. In the sample course shown, the qualifiers were set as follows:

- Games II – Intermediate Course – Two—and only two—obstacles in each group must be performed.
- Games III – Superior Course – All obstacles in each group must be performed.

Variations

- Judge's Twist – In this variation of Dealer's Choice, the judge may specify combinations requiring more strategic analysis by the handler. For instance, the judge may specify that only two out of three obstacles in a group be performed; or may even specify that three of two obstacles in a group be performed (one of the obstacles must be performed twice). The judge is urged to remember and be prepared to judge whatever sequence rules he makes up.

Premium Blurb

Dealer's Choice is a course to be completed by the numbers. However, the course contains *options*; the same number may appear on more than one obstacle. It is the handler's choice or the dog's-choice as to which path to take. *Dealer's Choice* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Dealer's Gambit

Dealer's Gambit is the invention of Bud Houston and first appeared in the Clean Run magazine in 1995. It is not so much a game as the promise of adventure.

Briefing

Dealer's Gambit is a mystery game. That is, the judge of an agility event will be commissioned to find some obscure game or to make one up. The game will be unknown to the field of competitors and something for which no one will be able to reasonably prepare.

This game format was first used in 1994 at a trial in Mesa, Arizona, hosted by Good Dog Agility. The two judges were invited to bring a game of their own invention or selection. Each judge selected an already existing game. Karen Holik chose Time Gamble and Gordon Simmons-Moake chose Beat the Clock.

The format was used again in Boston, Massachusetts in 1997 (though the host club, ARFF, didn't call it Dealer's Gambit in the premium). For this event, USDAA judge Tammi Skillman invented the game Boston Bowling.

The format was also used in 1997 by Contact Agility Club in New York. USDAA judge Brian McGunigle invented Triple Cross, a variation of the game Time and Score.

How to Invent a Game

Inventing an agility game is no simple matter. If you have a vision for a game, you should go through the following checklist to help you nail down the game so that it is ready to play.

What Makes Your Game Different?

Obviously, there are a lot of agility games out there right now. But that doesn't mean there aren't more and interesting turns we can put on agility contests.

You should be familiar with the games that are defined in this book (The Clean Run Book of Agility Games, Second Ed). If you have a game that looks similar to an existing game, but not quite the same, you might have invented a variation of an existing game. You should also be familiar with the variations to existing games.

There are different kinds of games. You should know what type of game you have invented:

- **Training Games** – This is a game that has specific training objectives and might not be the kind of game you'd play in open competition.
- **Fun Games and Silly Games** – These are games you might play on a holiday or a fun outing with your agility club. They might involve dressing up in funny clothes or the handler doing the agility obstacles, or using water cannons as part of the play.
- **Team Games** – Team games involve play by two or more dogs and their handlers, possibly being on the course at the same time.

- Strategy Games – There are games that require the handler to develop a careful strategy in order to qualify or to win the game. These are games like Snooker, Pairs Pursuit, Pole Jacks, and Twelve-Tone Row.
- Qualifying and Titling Games – These are games that might be appropriate as a titling game for organizations like the TDAA. A qualifying or titling game must have a level or equal basis for all dogs. For example, you couldn't play "Pass the Secret" as a titling game because the sequence might change from run to run. Qualifying criteria must be fairly well established.

What are the Rules

When you define the rules to the game you should take the role of the judge who will brief the field of exhibitors Explain how the game is played and what the players need to understand. Anticipate any question that might be asked.

How is the Game Scored?

There are several methods of scoring games. Here are some to think about:

- Faults, Then Time. This is the usual basis for the standard agility run. The dog with the lowest faults wins. In case of a tie, the fastest dog wins.
- Time, Plus Faults. In this game, time and faults are added together. This might favor the faster dog that with faults will have a better score than a dog that ran without faults but somewhat slower.
- Points, Then Time. This is the basis for games like Gamblers. The dog with the most points wins. In case of a tie, the fastest dog wins.

How are ties broken?

It's almost always a good idea to add a time element to a game so that winners can be clearly differentiated. Imagine a game like Pole Jacks, in which there are only 8 possible scores. There are bound to be a lot of "ties" for points. The time the dog takes to complete the game becomes a very important tiebreaker.

Have You Thought of Everything?

How does the game begin? How does the game end? Are all performance faults accommodated by the rules?

It might be a good idea to play a game with a group of interested agility competitors. It's amazing how many things pop up that might not have been anticipated in the rules you defined for the game.

Report Your Game!

If you've invented a new game, I'll want to know about it for future volumes of the Clean Run Book of Agility Games. Write:

Bud Houston
 14543 State Route 676
 Waterford, OH 45786
[Houston.Bud@gmail.com](mailto:Houstan.Bud@gmail.com)

Dogwood's White Elephant

Dogwood's White Elephant is a New Year's club get-together game. The invitations to club members will go something like this:

Mark your calendars for: December 30 (New Year's Eve's Eve), at 3:00 p.m. We're having an all-Dogwood students and instructors (active and inactive) get-together to play a great new game... and exchange White Elephant gifts. Everyone is invited! This is a great opportunity to meet Dogwood folks that you don't usually get to see on your training night.

Bring a wrapped gift for each dog you intend to run (Note: the wrapping should be loose; just enough to keep anyone from guessing the contents, but easy to remove). Mark the gift with the name of your dog. A white elephant gift is that special something you got for Christmas that just isn't right for you (and you'd love to get rid of). Note that whoever brings the best gifts will probably wind up running the most.

Briefing

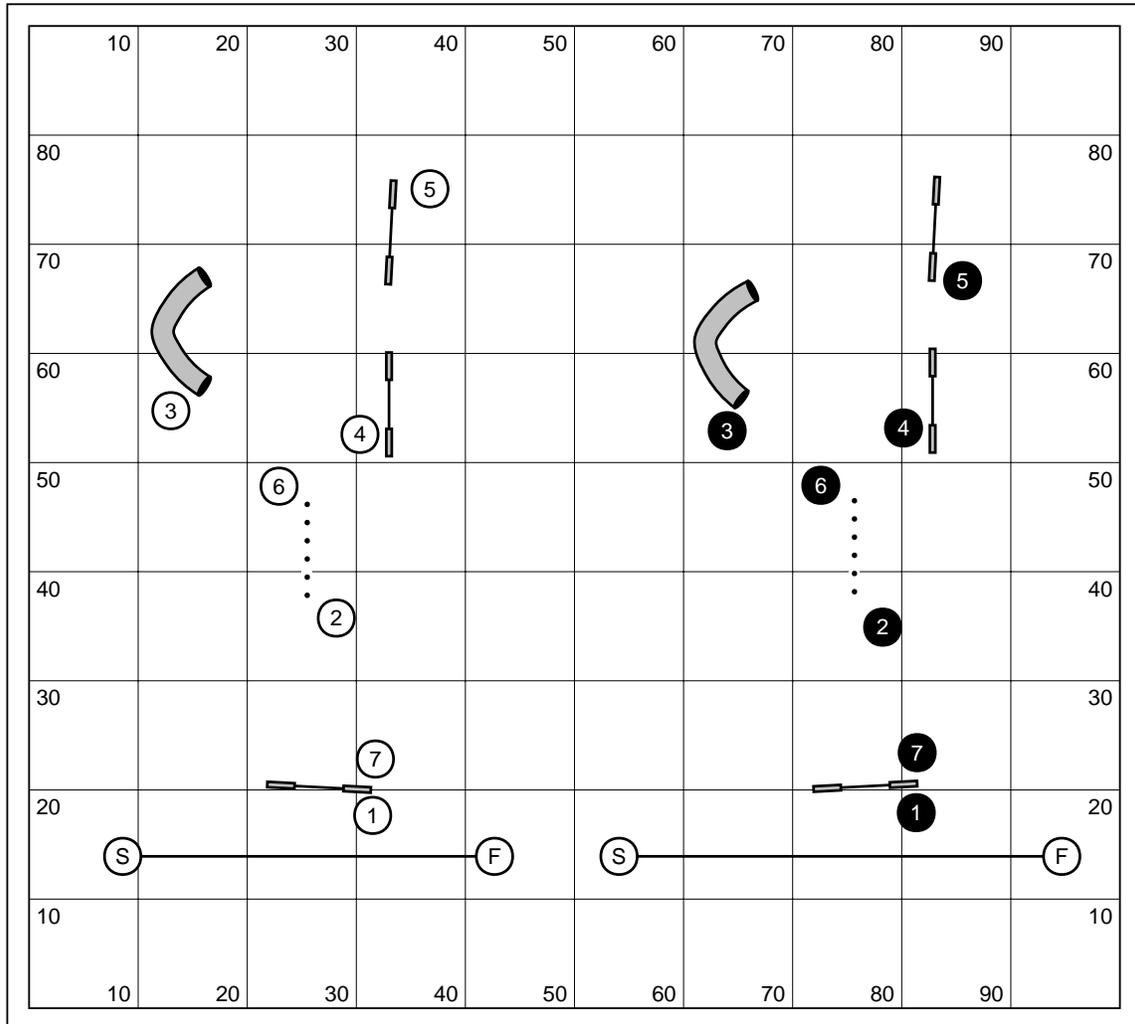
Each handler will have a choice of one of the following:

- a) Pick a new, wrapped gift from under the tree. You must run a knockout (parallel) course with the dog and handler who brought the gift. If you lose, the gift remains under the tree. If you win, you keep the gift (lucky you!)
- b) Take away (challenge) a gift someone else has already selected and won. You must run a knockout course with the dog and handler who brought the gift. You can only take away the gift if you beat them. If you lose, you have to pick a new gift from under the tree and run a knockout course with the dog and handler who brought the gift.

If you win the knockout you keep the gift (until, possibly, challenged by somebody else). The person who had the gift then has the option of challenging someone else for a gift or taking a new gift from under the tree.

Keep going until all gifts are gone from under the tree!

Course Design



This design for the White Elephant game uses identical side-by-side sequences.

Dogwood's White Elephant game typically uses a knock-out format with two identical sequences. The course might also have mismatched obstacles. For example, in one of the sequences a teeter could be used while in the other sequence a short set of weave poles in the same position.

Dogwood's White Elephant game might also be played in a Pairs Pursuit format (Individual competition variation).

Strategies

Each competitor should make careful note of what gifts other competitors have won and also be aware of who brought the gift. In order to wrest the gift from the current owner the challenger's dog will have to beat the dog of the handler who brought the gift.

In general the game runs longer if there are more challenges for gifts that have already been opened. So if things are going a bit too long, the competitors can speed things up by more often picking a wrapped gift from under the tree.

The competitors should also be aware that they'll probably get a lot more time on the floor and in competition if they bring an interesting and compelling gift that a lot of other handler's might want to make a challenge to win.

Don't Sit on the Dog

Don't Sit on the Dog, sometimes called "Red Roof" is a whimsical suite of games and training exercises documented by Bud Houston for the agility fan holed up in a Red Roof Inn during evening's rest at an agility trial, with contributions from Mary Ellen Berger, Shirley Ann Redl, Nancy Creel, Kathy Helmke, and Ken Ring.

Briefings

- Doggie Dodge 'em – The object of the game is to carry as a full arm-load of stuff into or out of your room without letting the dogs escape through the door. It's a wonderful twist-and-stretch warm-up routine for the next day's trial. Bonus points if you carry in your dinner at the same time.
- Doggie Dodge 'em, Gambler's variation – A high-stakes variation of Doggie Dodge 'em, wherein you try to maneuver in and out while leaving the room key in the room. Hint: tell the Red Roof Night Manager the "wind blew the door shut."
- Suitcase Hurdles – The space between the beds and the dresser is just wide enough to squeeze in luggage. Have a impromptu game of straight-line hurdle jumping for dog treats. Be alert for possible concussion activity with the door when the enthusiasm starts to rise, however.
- Go for a Run – Let four to six year olds (other ages optional and just as effective) explore all the hallways of the hotel. Track where they are by the sound of muffled feet and scampering paws. In the even a child is "lost," let dogs go find the child. Warning: all stairwells and all hallways will be investigated before the dogs find the child in a hotel room (yours).
- Automatic Loader – Throw the tennis ball only when the dog actually puts it in the hand, flopped out to the side of the bed, bonus points if done while you watch the television. Five a minute is considered a pretty good rate.
- Bed Jumping – For exercise, jump the dog back and forth from bed to bed. The game is over when all the pillows and bed covers have been spilled upon the floor. Variations include: bed jumping in brace, and bed jumping by the pack.
- Kick the Bucket – Throw the Frisbee® over and over into the bathroom alcove until one of the dog kicks over the Red Roof ice bucket dog water dish. Easy to repeat: fill the bucket back up and play again.
- Intruder Alert – Try to guess which late-night guests are causing your hyper-vigilant-guard-dog-wannabe to growl and yip. Not too popular with the humans but provides hours of entertainment for the dogs.
- Teach the Sheltie to Bark on Command – Clever people who are annoyed by barking dogs have determined that the thing to do is to teach the dog to bark on command. Tell the Sheltie to "speak." When he barks, give praise and a cookie.
- Teach the Sheltie to stop Barking on Command – This isn't actually possible.
- Find the Door – This is a form of variable surface tracking. Allow the dog to run ahead to find the room, which he'll do by magical scenting skills. Praise and

- reward the dog for indicating the right door.
- Recall Practice – Practice and proof recalls when the entire pack of dogs has run into some strangers’ open door while playing “Find the Door.”
 - Aussie Earthdog – The dog’s owner gets under the covers on the bed, tucking them tight all around with no parts of you showing. Yell and cry and make pitiful cries of pain to tease the pups from this superior entrenched position. This game ends when the owner is in great physical discomfort from being scratched and clawed at and getting groin, chest, stomach, and face well used as a trampoline.
 - Pillow Fights – Just like that the kids play. Belabor the dogs with a pillow or two. Whack ‘em good. The charming part about this game is they can’t hit back. This game ends when it becomes apparent that Red Roof is probably going to charge for the shredded pillows.
 - Who ate the Rollover? – As scientifically as possible, using deductive reasoning, figure out which dogs ate the entire five pound log of rollover. (Hint: feel the tightness of their bellies).
 - Who’s that Barfing? – Wake to the sound of retching in the middle of the night, the sound of retching wakes you up. Figure which dog is barfing before rolling out of the bed. A whole mess of penalty points are earned for stepping in it. (Hint: see Who Ate the Rollover?)
 - Who’s the Loudest? – See which dog can bark the loudest when the drunk knocks loudly on the door at 2 a.m. (Insider info for betting odds: JRTs will beat out the GSD-cross!)
 - Handler Demolition Derby – See which person comes out unscathed as they rise from a dead sleep to dive for dogs in the dark when the dogs are playing “Who’s the Loudest.” This game works best when each handler has more than one dog and all the dogs are allowed to sleep uncrated on the beds with the people!
 - Who Knocked Over the Water Bowl? – Best played in the middle of the night. Bonus points for spilling the water bowl on the carpet instead of the tile and for getting your suitcase or towels soaked as well.
 - Who’s Drinking From The Toilet? – Played after the water bowl has been dumped. Figure out which dog to yell at in the middle of the night just from the sound of the drinking.
 - Wake Up Call – Teach your dogs to wake you up in the morning. This can come in very useful when the game of “Automatic Loader” displaced the phone from the cradle on the night before.
 - Don’t Sit On the Dog – This is a foundation exercise for Tunnelers, geared especially for the small dog (8 lbs and under is optimal). Let the dog crawl under the covers of a king-size bed. Go about your business of unpacking. Time to set down and rest... ah... Just where is the dog? Do not pass go and do not collect \$200 if the small dog disagrees with seating arrangements.

Double Joker

Double Joker is the brain child of Bud Houston, who didn't so much invent the game as free it from the rules of the traditional Gamblers game. Inspired by Darlene Woz and Sharon Nelson, agility pioneers who remember that fun is the number one objective in dog agility, this game was considered briefly by the AKC as a sanctioned game. Ultimately, a game without rules was of no interest in a titling program. Double Joker survives today as the essence of pure fun.

Briefing

The objective of Double Joker is for the dog and handler team to accumulate as many points as possible in a specified time and then to perform a designated joker, a sequence of obstacles with the dog and handler working some distance apart.

At any time, points may be doubled if the handler is in the doubling box designated by the judge. This can be an area marked on the course or it can be a portable base that is carried with the handler from the start line so that the handler can choose the location of the doubling box.

If the handler is in the doubling box and leaves, points will be awarded at their regular values. If the handler returns to the doubling box, points will be doubled. If a portable base is used as the doubling box, scores will not be doubled if the handler is carrying the base. The base must be resting on the ground and the handler standing on it for double points to be earned.

Double Joker is a two-part game: the point-accumulation period and the joker period.

Point-accumulation period – The length of this opening period is determined by the judge. Time begins when the dog crosses the start line or leaves the designated starting position. The handler may lead out. The dog earns points for each obstacle successfully performed. The judge will typically call out the point value for an obstacle when it's successfully performed. Point values are doubled whenever the handler is in the doubling box. The timekeeper will blow a whistle at the end of the point-accumulation period, announcing the beginning of the joker period.

Joker period – This closing period requires the dog to perform a sequence of obstacles, the joker, in the order indicated by the judge. If the handler remains behind the specified containment line, point values are doubled. If the joker is successfully completed in the time allotted by the judge, the team may attempt the joker a second time or a third. The timekeeper will blow the whistle again at the end of the specified joker period. Points for the joker are doubled again if the handler is in the doubling box.

The following rules should be observed in the running of the class:

- Back-to-back performance of any obstacle during the point-accumulation period is permitted. Indeed, the dog may perform the same obstacle for the entire period. This is known as the Koukkari Strategy.
- No table or finish line is used on the course to get a time for the dog. The clock is not stopped at the second whistle. That whistle merely signals the end of the point-accumulation period.
- Practicing the joker during the point-accumulation period is permitted. Points may be doubled during joker practices if the dog successfully completes obstacles

while the handler is in the doubling box.

- If a jump bar is knocked down, the dog can earn no more points for that obstacle unless the handler resets the bar.
- More than one joker can be used in the joker period.
- There is no penalty for loitering near the joker.
- No points are awarded for performance of the dogwalk, if one is used. This is an exceptional test of the handlers' ability to listen to and understand the judge's briefing.
- Points may be accumulated for non-joker obstacles in the joker period, providing the obstacles are on the way to performance of the gamble.

Scoring

Double Joker is scored Points, Then Time. The team with the highest accumulation of points wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

A 1-3-5 point system is recommended with point values as follows:

- Jumps, 1 point
- Tunnels, 3 points
- Tire, 3 points
- Weave poles (6), 3 points
- Weave poles (12), 5 points
- A-frame and teeter, 5 points
- Dogwalk, 0 (zero) points

The value of the each joker is double the sum of the regular values of the obstacles included in the joker. This value is doubled only if the handler remains behind the containment line. If the handler is in the doubling box and performs the joker, the value of the joker would be the sum of the regular values of the obstacles doubled for proper performance of the joker, then doubled again because the handler was in the doubling box.

The entire joker does not have to be completed. If the final whistle blows while the dog is engaged in the performance of the joker, the dog will get credit for those obstacles performed.

placement of the portable doubling base is very important. Place the base in a location from which the dog will willingly work, and from which the dog will accumulate enough points to make the positioning worthwhile. The doubling base isn't active until the handler steps on it. Hence, it is a good strategy to throw down the base and run with the dog around the desired sequence once to pattern the performance, before stepping onto the base to double subsequent points.

Another good strategy is to position the base in anticipation of the performance of the joker in the joker period, allowing the handler to rehearse the joker at double point value and ultimately to double the point value of the joker itself when the joker period begins.

Variations

- Sterling's Wildcard – In this variation, concocted by Bill Sterling, a portable base is used rather than a stationary doubling box. Bill used a 1-3-5-7 point system, giving 7 points for performance of a technical obstacle designated by the judge. His variation also used a table to stop the time, which will be used for breaking ties and perhaps for more efficient administration of the ring.
- Boring rule – The Koukkari Strategy, doing the same obstacle throughout the point-accumulation period, can be dreadfully boring to spectators. Therefore, you may choose to use the “Boring” rule. If the spectators chant “Boring! Boring!” and the judge agrees, the judge can subtract the points for performance of the obstacle from the dog's score.
- No negatives – Another twist for this game is to include the prohibition on negative words. The handler loses 5 points for every verbal “No,” “Aack,” or other negative word or sound. The judge's decision as to what constitutes a negative word is final. Note: if the handler is in the doubling box when the penalty is received, then the penalty is likewise doubled.

Qualifying and Titles

Double Joker is an eligible titling game in the TDAA. The qualifying criterion reflects some success in the performance of jokers during the game:

- Games I – A score of 25 or better
- Games II – A score of 40 or better
- Games III – A score of 55

Premium Blurb

Double Joker is like the traditional gamblers game with few of the traditional restrictions. There will be a point accumulation period and a gamble period. Points may be doubled if the handler is in a “doubling box” which might be an area marked on the course, or a portable base carried by the handler. *Double Joker* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Double or Nothing

Double or Nothing is the invention of Sharon Nelson with refinements made by Stuart Mah. This game originated when judge Nelson, unhappy about the success rate of a Gamblers class in Arizona, decided to offer handlers a second chance at the gamble, changing the gamble itself only slightly. Needless to say, several individuals took her up on it.

Briefing

Double or Nothing is similar to the standard Gamblers game. Time allotted, obstacle performance, and the scoring system are all the same. There is also a point-accumulation period and a gamble period (sometimes called a joker period) as in Gamblers. The chief difference is that during the gamble period in Double or Nothing, there are two gambles. However, the team only needs to perform one of the two gambles. Successful completion of the chosen gamble gives the standard bonus points for the gamble.

If a handler is very daring and wants to win the class hands down, he goes for double or nothing. Upon completion of the first gamble, the handler must declare, “Double!” and attempt the second gamble in the remaining gamble time. Successful completion of the second gamble automatically doubles the total score accumulated. Failure to complete the second gamble results in the loss of all accumulated points.

Point accumulation should be set at 40 seconds, with 20 seconds for the performance of one or both gambles.

Scoring

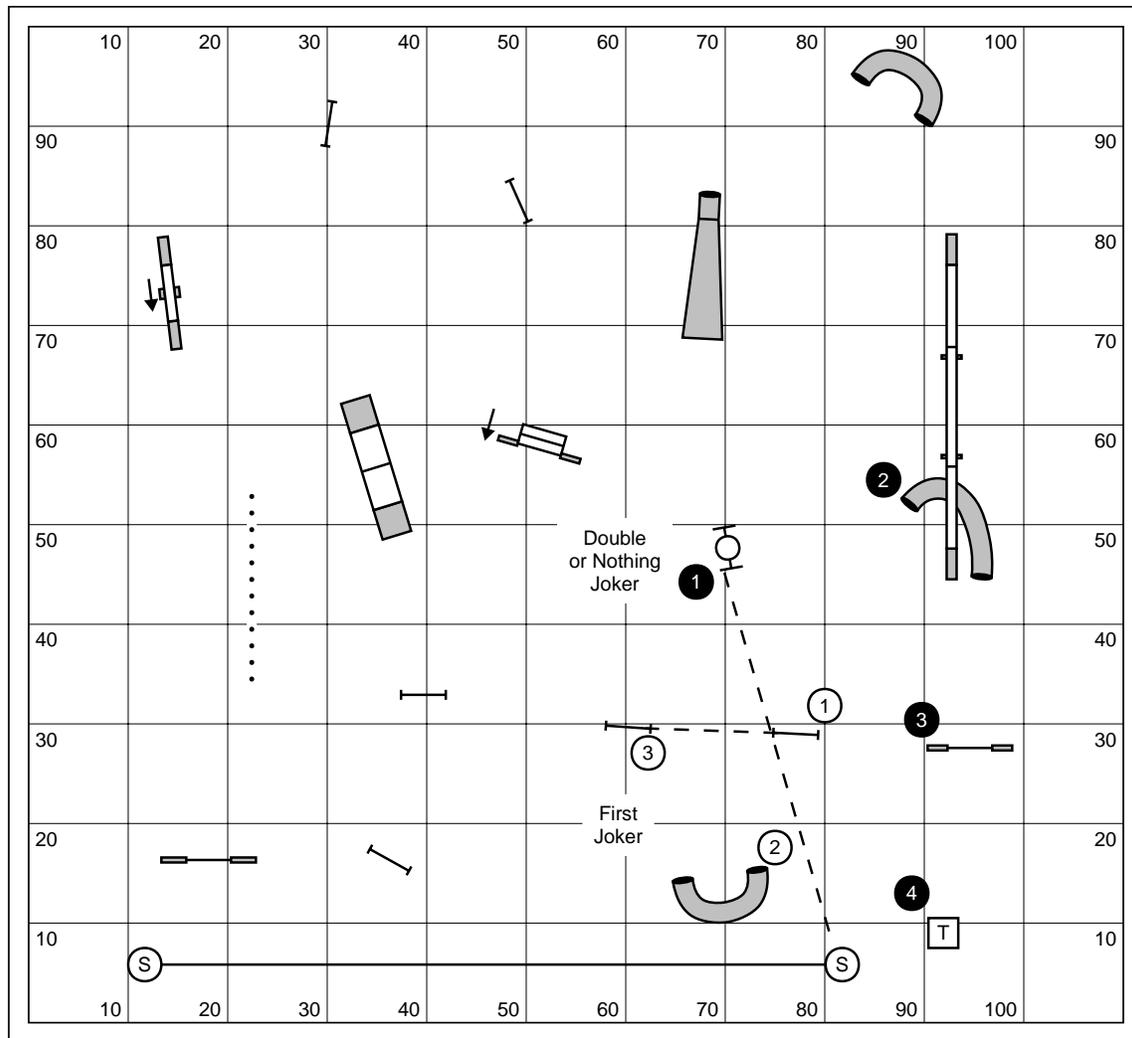
Double or Nothing is scored Points, Then Time. Time is used only to break a tie in points. The winner is the team with the most points, or in the case of a complete disaster, the fastest team to get 0 (zero) points.

The point value for each obstacle is up to the judge. The standard Gamblers point systems defined in the following table can be used.

Obstacle	1-2-3-5 system	1-3-5-7 system
All jumps	1	1
Tunnels	2	3
Tire	2	3
Weave poles (6) (short set)	2	3
Contacts†	3 or 5	5 or 7
Weave poles† (12)	3 or 5	5 or 7

† Only one high-point obstacle should be used on a Double or Nothing course.

Course Design



In this sample course, the dogwalk is designated as the 7-point obstacle. The judge stipulated that the first joker, labeled with white numbers, could be taken in either direction. The handler will be sorely tempted to try the second gamble if he has success with the first.

The Double Joker course is designed very much like a regular gamblers course except that the course will include two distance challenges. These two jokers should be set in close proximity so that the dog can make a quick transition between the two if he decides to go for the double or nothing joker.

Strategies

For the savvy field general, point accumulation is a huge part of this class. Winning or losing is often a matter of how well the point-accumulation period was conducted. The arrangement of obstacles is a puzzle to be solved. The handler must determine the maximum number of points that can be earned. This often means doing high value obstacles back-to-back and running smooth short path through the field. This strategy should be devised so that the dog is on the approach to the first joker when the opening period ends.

Timing is everything in this game. To go for the double-or-nothing gamble, the handler must be in an excellent position to perform the first gamble when the whistle blows. The handler must also have the presence of mind to measure the dog's speed through execution of the first gamble to ascertain whether there is enough time to perform the second gamble. If there is likely to be enough time, if the dog is performing smoothly and at considerable speed, and if the second gamble is in reasonable proximity to the first, then the bold handler should go for it.

Variations

- Handler gamble – A second gamble can be specified in which the handler is required to perform a sequence of obstacles while the dog waits in a specified area. It is common to see handlers racing through weave poles or crawling through tunnels. If the dog leaves his stay in the designated area the gamble is invalidated and no points are awarded.

Qualifying and Titles

Double or Nothing is an eligible titling game in the TDAA. Qualifying criteria depend on the complexity of the jokers. In the sample course shown above, the first joker is a clearly a Beginners challenge; yet the second joker is a superior joker.

In this case, qualifying might be set for the different levels requiring a combination of points earned and performance of the two jokers. For example:

- Games I – Successful completion of the first joker and 20 points earned in the point-accumulation period
- Games II – Successful completion of the first joker and 30 points earned in the point-accumulation period; or successful completion of both jokers and 20 points earned in the point-accumulation period
- Games II – Successful completion of the both jokers and 30 points earned in the point-accumulation period

Note that if the handler risks the second gamble and does not complete it, all accumulated points are lost.

Premium Blurb

Double or Nothing is a dog's choice point accumulation game *exactly* like traditional gamblers except there are two possible gambles. The first gamble is for the qualifying score; the second gamble is... double or nothing. *Double or Nothing* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Egg Hunt is the invention of John Ostrowski. His agility club has played this game for several years as a holiday favorite at Easter time. It's a good game for practicing control and distance handling.

Briefing

A number of plastic Easter eggs are placed in a 10 by 10 foot marked square in the center of the field. The obstacles are set at random, with no discernible sequence. Each obstacle is assigned a point value by the judge.

The handler is provided with an Easter basket at the start of the run. Where each obstacle is performed without fault by the dog, the handler earns the point value of that obstacle and picks up an egg and places it in his basket. The team continues earning points picking up eggs by continuing to successfully perform obstacles. Each obstacle on the field can be performed for points only once.

The course time is set at the discretion of the judge and the trial committee. It is usually in the range of 40 to 60 seconds. The timekeeper will blow a whistle when course time has expired, upon which the handler must direct his dog to a designated finish line to stop the clock.

The penalty for traditional performance faults is that the dog must re-attempt the obstacle. The judge will indicate a performance fault by declaring "Fault!" immediately after it occurs. The handler must then re-attempt the faulted obstacle. If a bar is dropped on a jump, the handler must put the bar back up before attempting the jump again.

This game has certain unique faults which end scoring before course time elapses. The judge will indicate that the fault is an end-of-scoring fault by blowing his whistle. Faults that will end scoring include:

- Performing two obstacles in succession with no egg collected.
- Collecting two eggs without successfully performing an obstacle in between.
- Taking an obstacle that has previously been performed.
- Performing an obstacle in an unsafe manner.

Scoring

Easter Egg Hunt is scored eggs plus Points, Then Time. The greater number of eggs breaks the first tie. Time is used only to break a second tie.

Any system can be used to award points for obstacles. One of the traditional Gamblers point systems (such as 1-3-5-7) can be used or obstacles can be numbered uniquely (1 through 20, for example).

Points are awarded for the eggs collected by the handler. At the judge's discretion, each egg will be worth 1 point or a point value can be painted onto each egg.

Course Design

This is a representative example of an Easter Egg Hunt course.

In the Easter Egg Hunt course the obstacles should be arranged with no discernable flow and no more than about fifteen obstacles on course. An area with ample room should be

included at the center of the course to be designated the Easter Egg area.

Strategies

The handler should keep in mind that trips into the center of the field to collect Easter eggs will often influence the dog's path. With that in mind, the handler should define a strategy that uses the dog's path to the team's advantage for point accumulation.

The bold handler with excellent distance control may choose to stand in the center of the ring and collect eggs while his dog works at the perimeter of the field. The dog's path may be erratic in response to the handler's action of bending over to pick up the eggs.

Premium Blurb

Easter Egg Hunt is a dog's choice point accumulation game. The objective is to score points while collecting Easter eggs. This game is *not* recommended for serious competition, and should be reserved as a game of entertainment for a club picnic. *Easter Egg Hunt* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Egg-in-Spoon Relay

This game is based upon a game reported by Kathryn Bayne, Zone 3 Dog Agility Club, in Wellington, New Zealand.

Briefing

The Egg-in-Spoon Relay is essentially played like the kids' Egg-in-Spoon races. Two teams of dogs and handlers will run two elements of a course, with an "Egg in Spoon" exchange in an area designated by the judge. Tennis balls are used as the eggs.

If the egg is dropped, the handler must put the egg back into the spoon before resuming the course. The course must be resumed from the point to which the dog had progressed before the egg was dropped.

At the exchange area, the first runner will give the spoon and egg to his teammate, who then races with his dog through the second leg of the sequence.

Warning

Be careful when playing this game with jumps and other obstacles. Many dogs will go for the tennis ball. This should be carefully monitored so that the dog doesn't do himself any injury on the equipment by crashing into things. Also, it's possible that some aggressive traits in dogs will be a problem when they get too excited about the toy.

Scoring

The *Egg-in-Spoon Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. Use a simple system of faults, like USDAA Starters/Novice. The judge should make a stipulation before running the game whether faults will be assessed during the "penalty periods" while the egg is out of the spoon. In the quest for a just-for-fun game, it's probably better not to assess faults while the egg is out of the spoon.

Course Design

This example shows the simple design of the Egg in Spoon Relay course.

The Egg-in-Spoon Relay course should be of simple design and give the handler some advantage if taking a lead-out.

Variations

- Egg-in-Spoon and Hop-in-Sack variation – In this variation, the handler is additionally required to navigate the course jumping in a hop sack while balancing the egg in the spoon and directing the dog. This variation is reported by Francis Harvey of Australia.
- Pre-Novice – A pre-novice variation would allow the handlers to work their dogs through the course on-leash. This isn't precisely easier than running with the dog off-leash as the dog may tug on the leash, providing pressure against the handler, who is trying to balance the egg in the spoon.

Premium Blurb

Egg In Spoon Relay is a pairs relay in which the exchange between handlers is an Easter egg carried in a spoon. The Egg-In Spoon Relay is *not* a game for qualifying and competition and should be reserved as a game of entertainment for a club's holiday picnic. The *Egg-in-Spoon Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Extra-Credit Game

The Extra-Credit Game is the invention of Marilyn Steward. The purpose of this game is to engage the students in working and playing with their dogs at home. After teaching a few agility and obedience classes, Marilyn recognized that many students don't practice between class days. Okay, so this isn't the scoop of the century. Before starting a new beginner agility class, she devised a game to motivate the students to do their homework.

Briefing

On the very first day of class the students will have an opportunity to display one trick that they have taught their dogs. And each week after that they will have the opportunity to show off a new trick. They could possibly teach the dog eight new tricks during the time the team is in class.

A new trick needs to be displayed every week. This could include the very basics such as sit-stay or down-stay. This could also be shaking hands, rolling over, and so on. The trick needs to be taught using positive reinforcement. The use of harsh commands will result in no Extra-Credit points.

Scoring

At the end of the session, the team who has accumulated the most trick points will receive a prize. If all teams have been motivated to teach tricks, then all will get a prize.

This game probably should be scored on a total-points basis. Winning isn't so much the objective. More rightly stated, winning encourages students to develop a training relationship with their dogs at home.

Keep a list of students who have extra-credit points. Total point tallies should be acknowledged on the last night of class and maybe offer a prize for those who scored the most points.

Outcome

You'll find the outcome of this game most interesting. People that actively played the game and make sure they had a trick every week will have happy and willing dogs. Those people that don't participate in the game will have dogs that are more cautious of the equipment and still have attention problems. Even those people that teach tricks part of the time will have more confident dogs than those who do not play at all.

Strategies

It might be a good idea to develop handouts on teaching dog tricks and behaviors. Step-by-step instructions can guide your students in how to go about training the behaviors and tricks. In the meantime, they will develop a training relationship with their dogs.

FAST

Briefing

The objective of the Fifteen And Send Time class (FAST) is to perform all or as many of the obstacles as possible so long as time allows, without repeating any; *except* for jumps (valued at one point) which may be repeated (though never back-to-back)—and no more than 6 points can be earned from one-point obstacles.

Somewhere in the course the dog will have a Send Bonus which will allow the dog to earn 20 bonus points. The successful completion of this Send Bonus is required for the dog to qualify in the class.

What the Exhibitor Needs to Know

Each obstacle on course will be assigned a number cone. The number is *not* the obstacle's order in sequence but the point value the dog will earn for successfully performing that obstacle. Those values are: #2 through #10 belonging to one unique obstacle, and six one-point hurdles.

Note that the judge will specify a finish obstacle which has no point value. The dog's time will end *only* when the dog is directed to this obstacle. It is permissible for the dog perform the obstacle before the time whistle blows. The finish obstacle is live as soon as the dog crosses the start line; so approach with caution.

FAST includes a number of very specific **performance guidelines** that the dog's handler must understand to succeed in this class:

- The four-paw safety rule is in effect for all dogs, at all levels.
- No obstacle may be taken back-to-back. If an obstacle is taken in one direction, whether or not the performance was successful or faulted, then the obstacle may not be immediately repeated in an effort to earn points.
- A dog missing a contact or earning a four-paw refusal may repeat the contact so long as he performs another obstacle first. If the dog is directed back to the contact obstacle the judge blow a double whistle, ending scoring whereupon the dog must be directed to the finish obstacle.
- On a double whistle points already earned are kept by the team. The handler should immediately direct the dog to the designated finish obstacle.
- Weave poles may be reattempted immediately from the original entry end and completed correctly to earn points. If the dog faults the poles by popping out or passing the plane of the next pole, they must be restarted at the first pole (at all levels including novice). Novice will always have six weave poles; Open and Excellent will have twelve.
- All obstacles on course may be taken in either direction unless a specific direction is designated by the judge. The exceptions to this are the obvious obstacles like the collapsed chute, the teeter, the triple, and the broad jump.

- An obstacle might be designated with different point values depending on the direction that it is performed. An obstacle assigned different values depending on direction may not be taken back-to-back to earn points. [Not a double-whistle infraction: no points are earned.]
- The dog can never be directed from one technical obstacle to another without doing another obstacle first. The technical obstacles are: the weave poles and the contact obstacles. [Not a double-whistle infraction: no points are earned.]
- To earn points for an obstacle the dog must have completed the obstacles. In other words when the time whistle blows all four feet must be on the ground after the obstacle in order to earn points.

The **Send Bonus** may be attempted at any time; Refusals are faulted only in the Send Bonus.

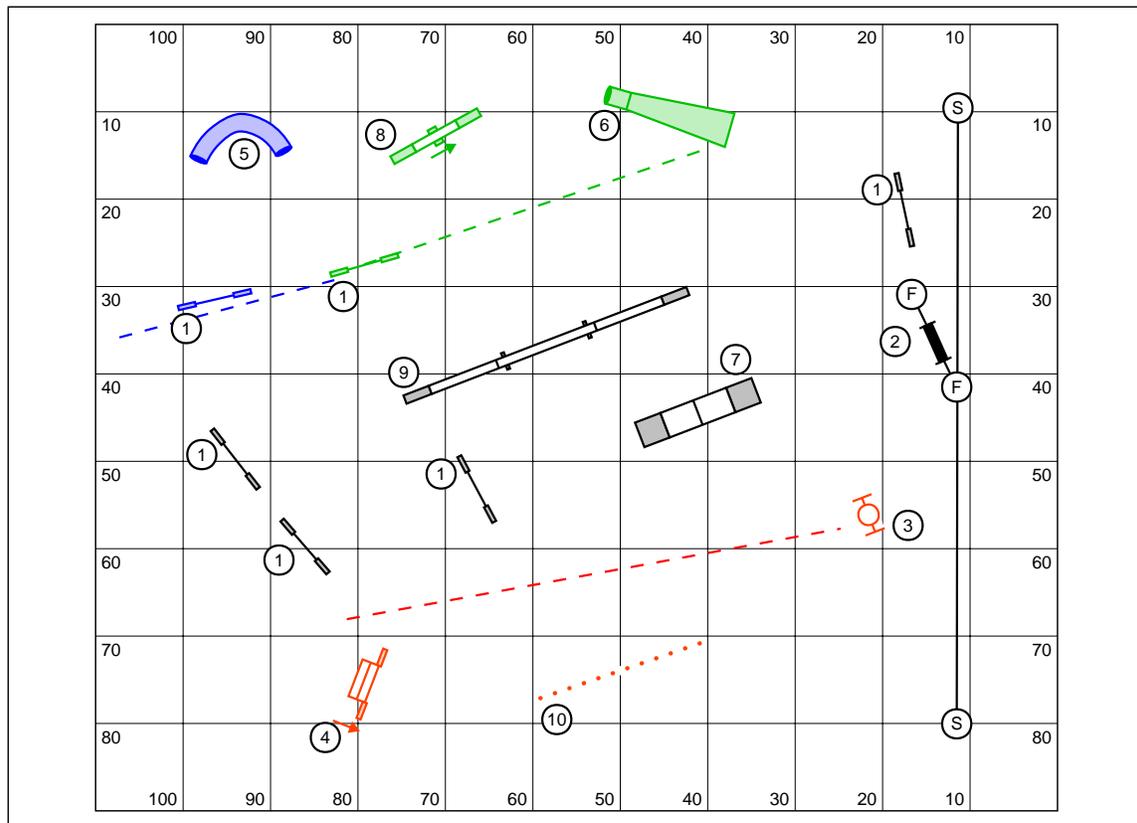
- The Send Bonus may be attempted at any time during the run upon crossing the start line and prior to directing the dog to the finish obstacle.
- Successful completion of the Send Bonus is worth 20 points. The dog also earns the individual value of the obstacles that make up the Send Bonus.
- The handler must be outside of the Send Zone when the dog commits to the first obstacle in the Send in the correct direction. Commitment is defined as four paws in, on, or over the first obstacle in the Send. If the handler is in the Send Zone when the dog commits, the judge will call “Fault,” negating the dog’s Bonus points. The dog may still earn the value of the obstacles.
- The dog cannot be faulted for a refusal on the first obstacle in the Send Bonus. If a dog gets less than a four paw commitment, the handler may reattempt the Send in an effort to earn the Bonus points.
- The judge will call “Fault” for any performance fault for obstacles in the Send Bonus, negating the dog’s Bonus points and the value of that obstacle.
- When the weave poles are the first obstacle in the Send the dog won’t be faulted for missing the entry or popping a pole. The handler can continue to reattempt the weave poles from the start until they are correctly completed, so long as the handler stays outside of the send Zone and time allows. If the dog back-weaves while retrying, the judge will call “Fault” and the Bonus points will be negated.
- Prior to completion of the first bonus obstacle a dog may be directed to perform any obstacle in the Send Bonus in the direction opposite of the direction specified for the Send with no penalty. Of course if the obstacle is a jump with a displaceable panel or bar, the dog will negate the Bonus points if the panel or bar is dropped as these will not be reset during a run. However, no two bonus obstacles may be taken in reverse order successively prior to attempting the Send Bonus. The judge will call “Fault” and the Bonus points will be negated.
- If the #1 obstacle in the Send Bonus is performed backwards prior to starting the Send, the dog must do another obstacle before they attempt that obstacle again. Obstacles may not be done back-to-back.

- If the first obstacle in the Send Bonus is a contact, then the obstacle before attempting the Send must be something besides a contact obstacle.
- If obstacle in the Send Bonus is designated as bi-directional it cannot be performed *immediately* before the start of the Send. The judge will call “Fault” and the Bonus points will be negated. This sounds a bit confusing but it’s a rarified case. Consider a U-shaped pipe tunnel that is designated by the judge as an obstacle that can be taken in either direction in the Send. Usually obstacles will be designated a clear direction for performance in the Send Bonus.

Scoring

FAST is scored points, then time. The number of points the dog earns is the first tie-breaker, and then time the second. In the case of a tie (same points and same time) placement shall be determined by a run off.

Course Design



This is a sample FAST course. The course has been marked to show what distance challenges might be used for exhibitors at different levels. The Blue sequence is certainly Novice; the Green sequence Open; and the Red sequence Excellent.

Strategy

There are two conceivable strategies in playing the Fifteen and Send Time class. The first, and most obvious, is to earn the minimum number of points to qualify and simply survive the game. The second strategy is the No Guts No Glory strategy... playing for the

win, playing for the kill.

It's pretty clear that only the quick dogs and/or clever handler will be able to pick up all of the available points on the course, earning the maximum possible 80 points. This makes the game rather like "What's My Line?" a game in which the handler's strategy is to find the most efficient course to do all of the obstacles on course without repeating any.

A handler who sets unrealistic expectations for what his dog is capable is likely to get caught too far away from the finish obstacle and will lose not only the points for the obstacles not yet performed, but a point for each second over course time.

The handler must begin with a good understanding of the amount of ground his dog can cover, while doing the obstacles, in the available SCT. Begin with a plan to earn the minimum number of points required to qualify. Then the handler might add to the flow based on his own appreciation of the dog's speed on course.

Qualifying

80 points maximum score is possible (60 pts for obstacles + 20 Send Bonus). To qualify, the dog must earn a minimum number of points depending on class:

- Novice 50 points (30 points for obstacles + 20 Send Bonus);
- Open 55 points (35 points for obstacles + 20 Send Bonus);
- Excellent 60 points (40 points for obstacles + 20 Send Bonus).

The Standard Course Time (SCT) shall be the same for all levels, but different for each jump height. The dog can earn points *only* until the time whistle sounds. And, will lose a point for each second over course time, until the dog gets to the finish obstacle. The Standard Course Times are:

- 8" – 38 seconds (4" Preferred 41 seconds)
- 12" – 35 seconds (8" Preferred 38 seconds)
- 20 to 26" – 32 seconds (12 to 16" preferred 35 seconds)

FAST is scored points, then time. The number of points the dog earns is the first tie-breaker, and then time the second. In the case of a tie (same points and same time) placement shall be determined by a run off.

Premium Blurb

The Fifteen and Send Time class (FAST) is a dog's choice point accumulation game, with a distance challenge that can be attempted at any time during the run. The name of the game tells the tale of the game: perform up to fifteen obstacles and attempt the send, and do it all under time. *FAST* is scored points, then time. ER2

Flygility

Flygility is a dog sport that comes to us from New Zealand, using some features taken from both agility and flyball. Flygility is essentially a team knockout competition where two teams compete simultaneously over separate courses that are as close to identical as possible. The best of three runs decides which team proceeds to the next heat.

Briefing

This is a timed-relay performance by a three-dog team over the official course. The course consists of a sequence of agility obstacles. At the end of the sequence, the dog must operate a flyball box, take the ball, and return over the agility obstacles, carrying the ball. When the dog crosses the finish line, the second dog on the team runs the course. When that dog crosses the finish line, the third dog runs.

A dog must rerun the course if he misses any obstacle, fails to touch a contact, or is responsible for the ball crossing the line. Reruns are done after all of the dogs on a team have run. If more than one dog needs to rerun, they will rerun in their original running order.

A 5-second penalty is added to the team's score if a jump bar is displaced. No attempt is made to replace the bar during the round. No additional 5-second penalties are added for subsequent dogs. However, dogs must pass between the uprights of the jump. The dog responsible for dropping the bar is not required to rerun. Bars must be replaced before the next round.

Each dog is to negotiate all the obstacles in succession trigger the box and return, negotiating all the obstacles in succession with the ball in its mouth. Only when the first returning dog has crossed the start/finish line with any part of its body (on the ground or in the air) and the ball it must carry is over the line may the second dog start (and so on). The first team to have all dogs complete a faultless run shall be the winner.

If a dog has started before the preceding dog has reached the start line, does not negotiate an obstacle, dislodges a hurdle bar, does not trigger the box, or does not return with the ball, the judge will immediately flag the dog on its first fault. The dog will be required to rerun after the other dogs have run. If the handler's foot crosses the start/finish line during the dog's run, the handler will be flagged, and the dog will have to rerun after the other dogs have run.

A handler may recall the dog to the start line if the dog makes no progress or earns a fault. The judge will immediately raise the colored flag and commence a 5-second count. The next dog to run will not cross the line until the judge counts "Go" and the flagged dog has returned over the start line. Two dogs must not be on the course at the same time.

Scoring

Flygility is scored Time, Plus Faults. A team's score is the total time for the three dogs to run the course, plus any time penalties (5 faults per bar) for displaced jumps. The team with the lowest score wins.

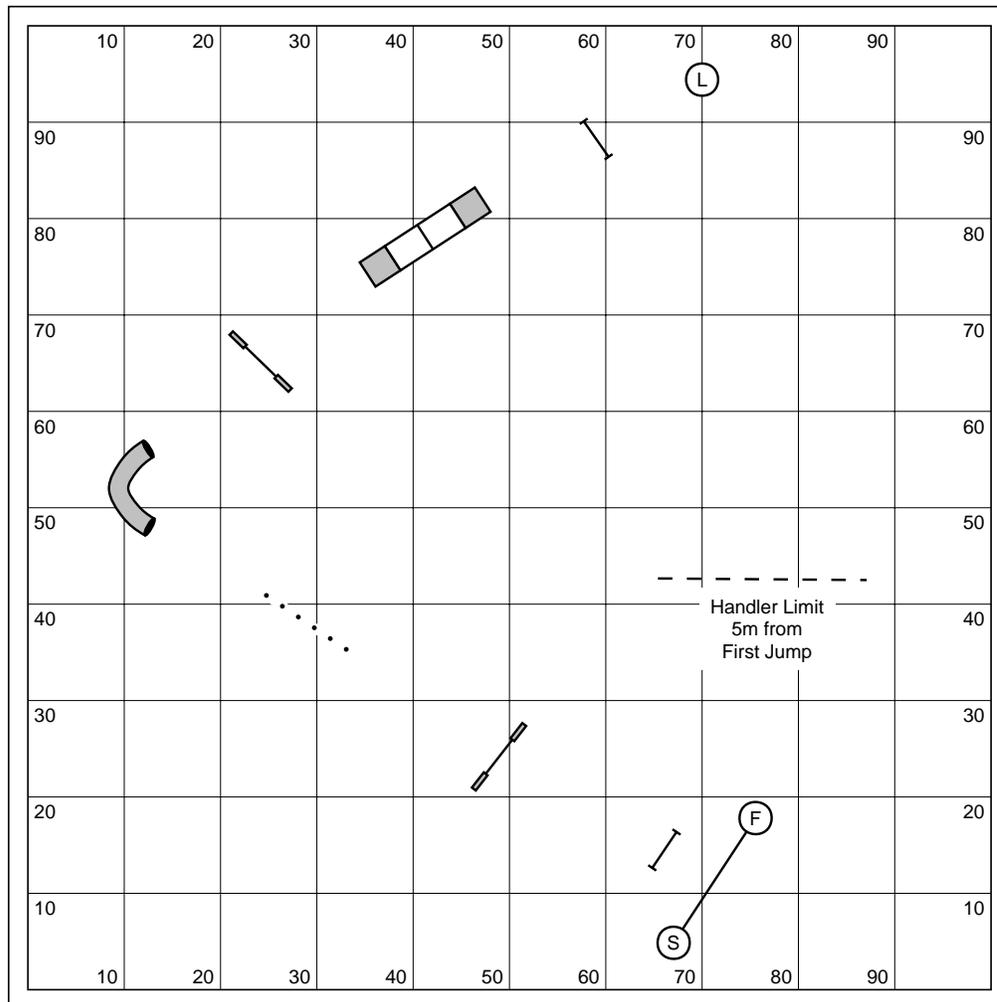
The following rules apply:

- A handler may run more than one dog on a team or different dogs on different

teams. However, no dog can run on two different teams.

- Before the teams compete each dog may have one practice run over the official course. A ball is used in the flyball box as usual. The handler is free to encourage the dog in any way during that practice run.
- The practice runs for a team will be followed immediately by one timed run, including any reruns if necessary.
- A handler may designate the box-loader of his choice.
- The judge will be the timekeeper.
- If the dog starts before the word “Go,” the dog will have to rerun.
- The clock will not be stopped until every dog on the team has completed a faultless run or the necessary rerun.
- On the rerun only, if the handler wishes, he may run with the dog to encourage it, press the pedal of the flyball box, or put the ball in the dog’s mouth. However, the handler may not carry the ball. The dog must carry the ball over or through all of the obstacles and over the finish line. If these conditions are not fully met, the dog (and the team) is disqualified.

Course Design



This is a sample flygility course that is appropriate to the Open level (see below). The distances between obstacles are carefully measured, according to the judge's specifications.

The Flygility course should be designed according to the level of competition. There are three levels of competition:

Beginners: At this level, the course will be straight and will include only jumps.

Intermediate: In addition to jumps, the A-frame and tunnels may be included. One change of direction is permissible but only by way of the pipe tunnel. The change of direction will not be less than 150°.

Open: The weave poles may be included. There may be two changes of direction with or without the pipe tunnel. Any single change of direction will not be less than 120° unless the pipe tunnel is used as the corner, in which case the corner can be as sharp as 90°.

Advanced: The only limitation on the complexity at this level of competition is the equipment available, the practicality of setting out two equal courses, and the safety of the dogs. Dogs that have gained the Fligility Dog Excellent (FDX) title will not be entitled to a practice run.

Novelty Class Points for heat winners in this type of class will not be credited toward titles.

Premium Blurb

Flygility is a game that puts together Flyball and Agility as a game of competition. *Flygility* is run as a team knockout competition where two teams compete simultaneously over separate courses that are as close to identical as possible. *Flygility* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Forty-Yard Dash

The Forty-Yard Dash is a simple game developed by Sharon Thompson, from Lenexa, Kansas. The game is an adaptation of a simpler (if that's possible) game developed by Matt Skogan of the Overland Park, KS Police K-9 unit for their Dog Olympics, held every year. The Dog Olympics raise funding for the pet adoption side of the kennel that Matt Skogan and Bob Valencia own and operate. Bob is a detective and Matt is a K9 officer. The game serves as a simple training opportunity to teach simple matters of motivation and speed, body posture and movement. And for all that this game is a simple foot race, it might also teach some people to relax and have fun with their dogs.

Briefing

All dogs will run a simple straightaway race in a lane (much like a bowling alley lane), with only a single hurdle at the end of the 40 yards. This lane may be fenced to limit the dog's options to run any direction other than forward.

The Forty-Yard Dash is a timed event. The handler can be anywhere in the lane, and may use food, a toy or ball, or just about anything to lure or encourage the dog. The dog can be held by a third person at the start line if the handler desires.

Scoring

The *Forty Yard Dash* is scored time only. The fastest time wins. A dog that drops the jump bar is eliminated.

The lane should measure 35 yards from the Start Line to the hurdle, and 5 yards from the hurdle to the Finish Line.

Strategies

A formal obedience recall is not the best way to get speed from the dog. The handler's posture and movement are important factors in motivating the dog to move as quickly as possible. For some dogs, if the handler gets too far away from the dog, the dog might not want to play the chase game. If the handler stays too close to the dog, then a greater part of the race might be limited to the speed of the handler if the dog won't go forward of the handler.

Variations

Down and Back Again – Make it a 20 yard lane placing a curved tunnel at the end. So the course goes down and back again.

Knockout – Add a second lane side by side so that each dog will race another dog in knockout heats. This really gets the competitive juices going.

Team Relay – When two lanes are used the game can be played in a team relay.

Premium Blurp

Forty Yard Dash is a simple speed race in which a dog will race 40 yards over a single hurdle. The *Forty Yard Dash* is scored Time only. The *Forty Yard Dash* is scored time only. ER5

Four-Leaf Clover

This is a delightful training game concocted by Canada's M.J. Thuot. This is a directional game mostly intended for Novice dogs and handlers. It can be played individually or in teams of two or three. This is just the ticket for tunnel enthusiastic dogs. Perfect for a Corgi, eh?

Briefing

The objective of this game is for the dog to perform a numbered sequence and earn bonuses for working at a distance from the handler.

The equipment is arranged in a clover-like shape. The dog must first perform the stem of the clover, and then each of the leaves. The dog will earn bonuses for the handler remaining in the containment area (usually defined by the jumps). The course ends when the dog makes his way back down the stem to the finish line.

Qualifying course time is established by the judge based on the measured length of the course.

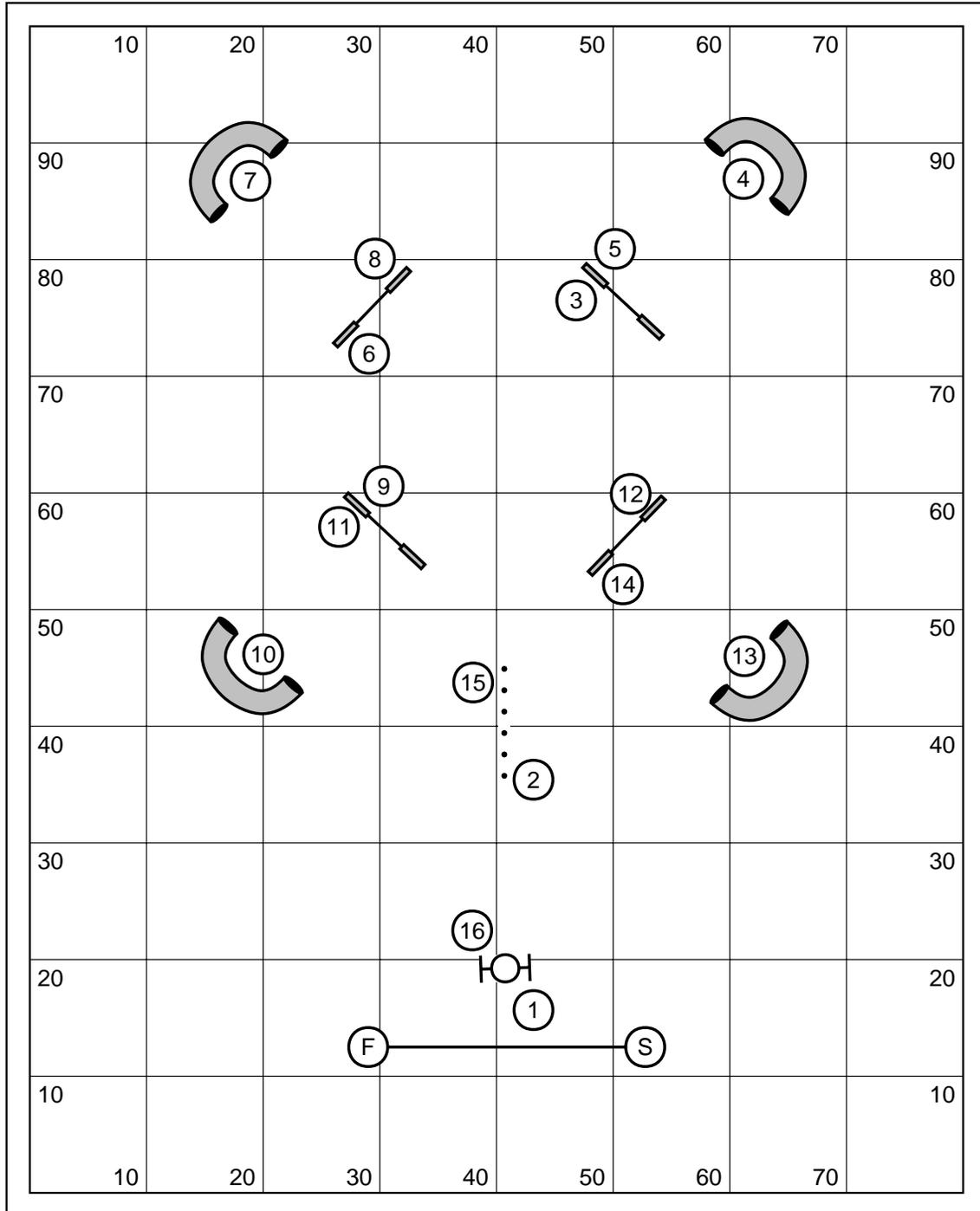
Bonuses

The dog will earn a 5 point for each petal of the clover if the handler stays in the containment area and the dog performs the petal without fault. The dog may also earn a 5-point bonus for the stem. At the beginning of the course, in order to earn the bonus, the handler must leave the dog on a stay and be in the containment area before the dog crosses the start line. At the end of the course the last bonus will be earned as with the petals, the handler must stay in the containment area while sending the dog away to finish the course.

Scoring

Four Leaf Clover is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus

Course Design



This is a sample Four-Leaf Clover course.

The course is set up in a shape approximating either a four-leaf or a three-leaf clover. Pipe tunnels should be used to mark the curve of each of the petals while the weave poles should be used to mark the stem of the clover. The containment area shall be defined as the area between the jumps in the center.

Variations

- Original Rules variation ~ Under the original rules for the game the dog is faulted each time the handler steps outside of the containment area. Also, an extra bonus was given to the dog that performed all petal and leaf challenges with the handler remaining inside of containment. These rules are not much observed as the game has evolved.
- Three-Leaf Clover variation – In this variation, the clover has only three leaves. Otherwise, the concept of the game is the same.
- Fair Enough Scoring ~ Another important variation is to simply run the sequence using aggressive rates of travel from the standard classes. While the dog *could* earn bonuses if the handler stays in the containment area, there would be neither faults nor bonuses for stepping outside of the containment box. The game would be scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. Note that the qualifying criteria should reflect an expectation for success that increases by level.
- Dealer's Choice Variation ~ Rather than numbering the course the handler is given an option to do each of the leaves of the clover in the order and direction of his own choosing. The game should begin and end with performance of the stem.

Premium Blurb

Four Leaf Clover is a game in which obstacles are arranged in a pattern resembling a four-leaf clover (or, as often as not, a three-leaf clover). The dog earns bonuses for performing the leaves of the clover while the handler stays in the middle. *Four Leaf Clover* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Full House

Full House is the invention of Al Ceranko and replaces Blackjack as a titling game for CPE. The intent of the game is to have the dog in the air to the table when the whistle blows. This is akin to the dog being at the start of the gamble when the whistle blows in Jackpot. The game can be played two ways for a qualifying score or may be used as a teaching tool for the handler to learn how to plan for opening strategies in gambler-style distance games. Games are meant to teach skills.

Briefing

The objective of Full House is to successfully accumulate required points and before the expiration of time gather the elements of the Full House:

- three-of-a-kind – 3 single bar jumps
- twosome – 2 "circles" (tunnel, collapsed tunnel, tire or window jump)
- Joker – 1 contact, weaves, broad, double, or triple

All obstacles may be performed only twice for points. Back-to-back performances are allowed.

The timekeeper's whistle will signal the end of point-accumulation time. At the expiration of time, the team has up to five seconds to stop the clock by going to the table or crossing the finish line. Any delay in heading for the finish line or attempting to perform any obstacle on the way to the finish line will result in the loss of the last point value earned. The team will not lose the last point value earned if the dog takes an obstacle without handler direction.

Point accumulation time differs by jump height:

- 8" and 12", whistle at 35 seconds, total game time, 40 seconds
- 16", 20" and 24", whistle at 30 seconds, total game time, 35 seconds

Fractions are dropped for qualifying purposes. One point is deducted for each full second over the total game time.

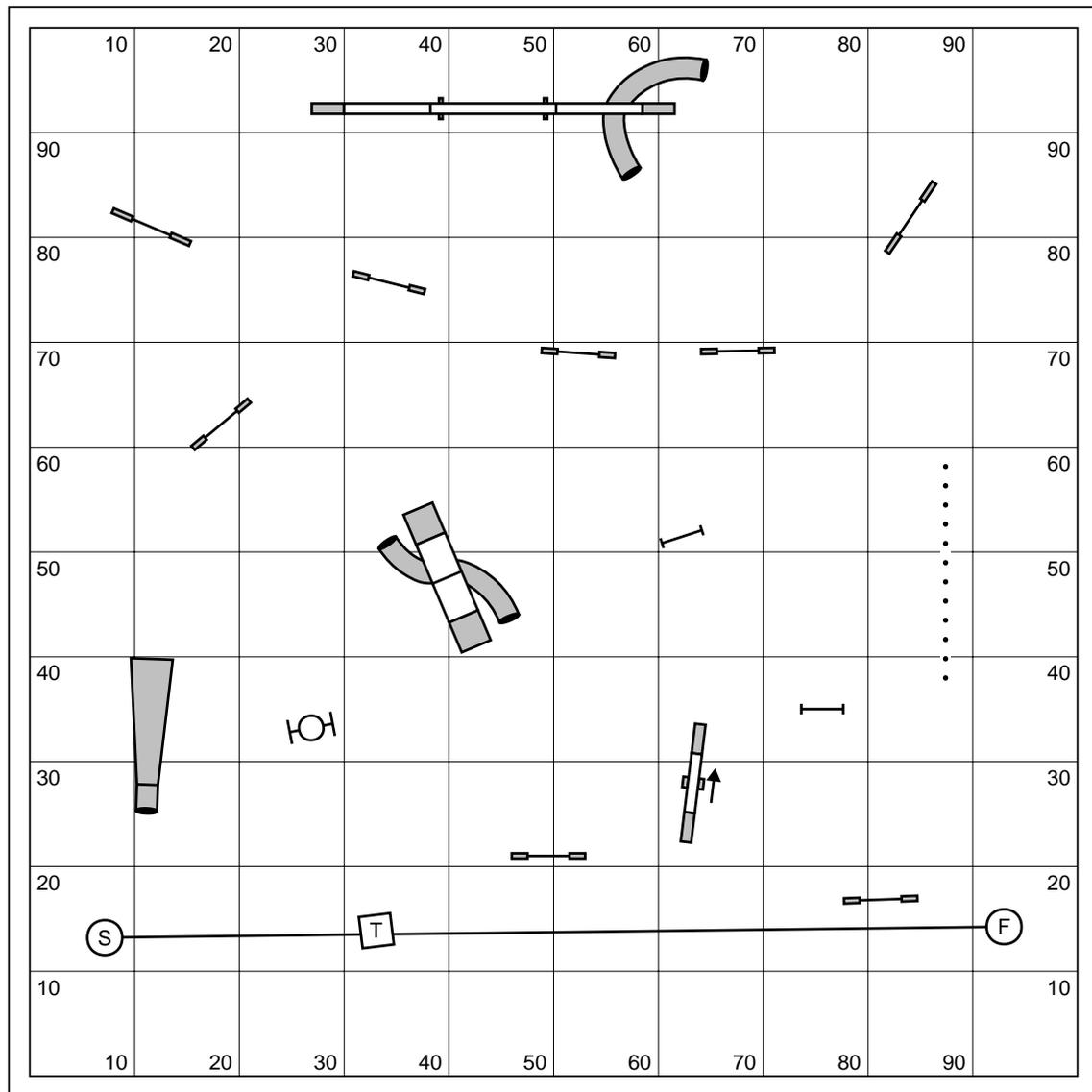
Scoring

Full House is scored Points, Less Penalty, Then Time.

Points for obstacles are on a 1-3-5 system:

- 1 point for Jumps
- 3 points for "Circles" (tunnel, collapsed tunnel, tire, window)
- 5 points for "Joker" (contacts, weaves, broad jump, double, and triple)
- 0 points for the table; stops the clock and is live at all times

Course Design



This Full House course was designed for all levels. 0

The Full House course should include:

- Table, on the finish line, which stops the clock
- 6-10 bar jumps (one must be a one bar jump; panel jump – optional)
- Four "Circles" - pipe tunnel - 2, collapsed tunnel, tire or window jump. Substitute pipe tunnel for collapsed tunnel in adverse conditions
- Three "Jokers" - choose two from List 1 and one from List 2:
 - List 1: dogwalk, A-frame, broad jump, double jump
 - List 2: teeter, weave poles (5 or 6), triple jump

Strategy

CPE judge Al Ceranko notes that one skill that a lot of exhibitors lack is the knowledge

of how long it takes their dogs to perform an obstacle, to get from obstacle to obstacle, and how to be where they needed to be when the first whistle blows for games such as Jackpot or Gamblers. Full House is essentially the opening to a Jackpot run. The twosome (circles: tire, two pipe tunnels, and collapsed tunnel), three-of-a-kind (single bar jumps), and joker (contacts, weaves, and spread jumps) were just a way of fulfilling the need for some kind of requirement. Given that the point accumulation time is slightly less than for Jackpot, the proportion of required points is quite similar.

Qualifying and Titles

In CPE, the dog must accumulate the elements of the Full House while earning the required points for its respective level:

- Level 1 – 19 points
- Level 2 – 21 points
- Level 3 – 23 points
- Levels 4, 5, and "C" – 25 points

Full House is eligible for qualification in the TDAA Games titles using these point totals for different classes:

- Games I – 19 points
- Games II – 22 points
- Games III – 25 points

Premium Blurb

Full House is a game of timing in which the dog is obligated to collect the elements of the full house, earn as many other points as possible, and end time without losing points on a time penalty. *Full House* is scored Points, Less Penalty, Then Time. ER6

Futbol

Futbol is the invention of Kenneth Tatsch, president of the USDAA. Futbol provides a wrap-up class for any day of agility with which everyone will have fun. The inspiration for this game came from someone commenting to Ken one time, "the thing that assures spectator attraction to a sport is having a ball in the game". So he did. Watching some of the dogs, even the little guys, go bonkers after the ball will be entertaining, especially when they herd the thing and not let the handler have it back. In some cases the dogs will chew at the ball, growl at it, herd it, and so forth. The balls will get some wear and tear.

Briefing

The dog and handler are required to run a jumpers course with soccer balls strategically placed. When the team comes upon one of the placed balls the handler has three options: kicking the ball over the hurdle for a 10 second reduction in score; picking up the ball and throwing it over the hurdle for a 5 second reduction in score; or ignoring the ball altogether, for a 5 second penalty.

The handler is allowed to down his dog prior to attempting either a kick. After the kick the handler must direct his dog over the jump that served as the goal posts. If the ball drops the bar the dog will not be penalized for dropping it, but may not earn the bonus whether or not the ball went through the standards.

Scoring

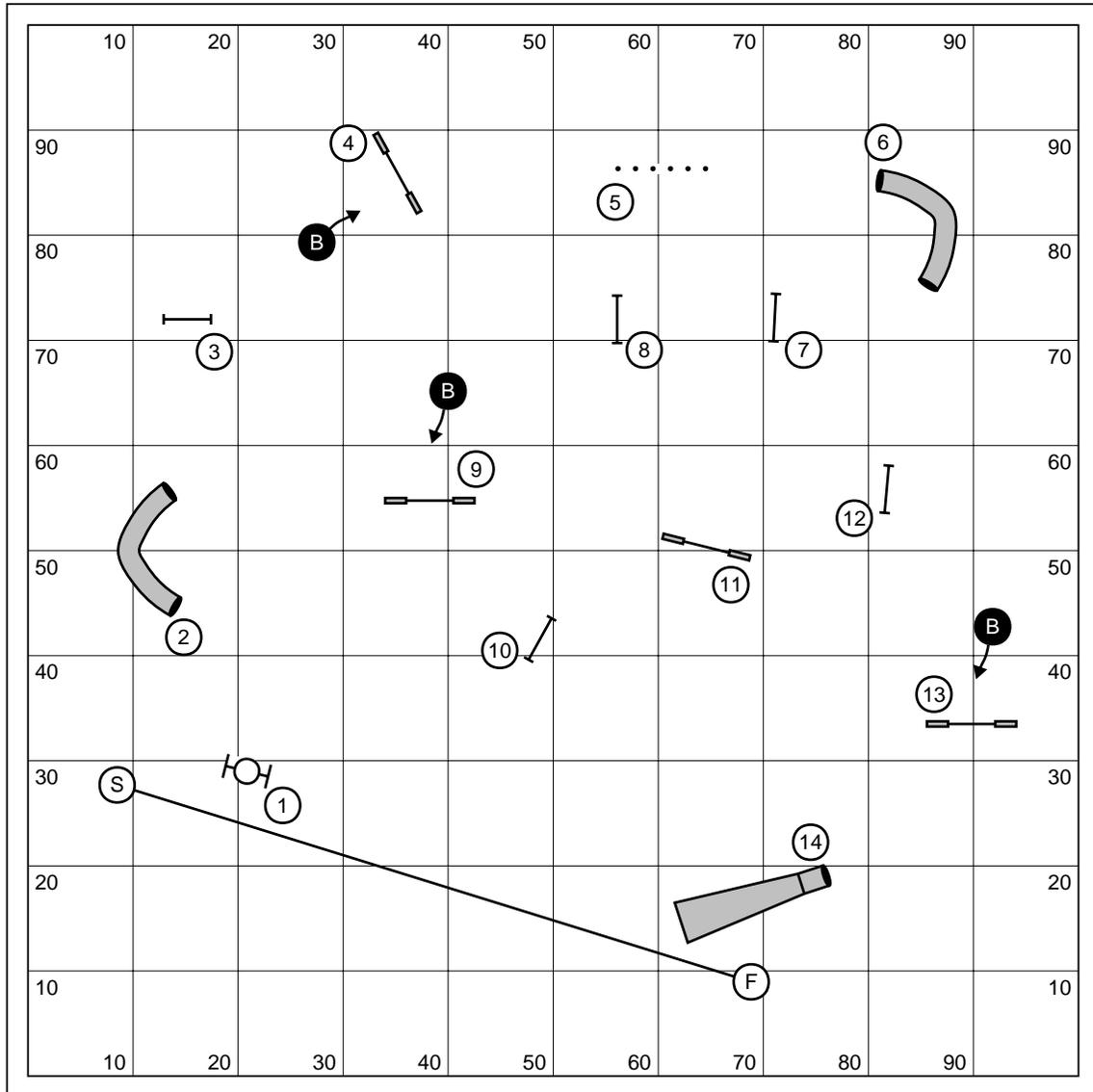
Futbol is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The dog with the lowest score wins. *Futbol* is played using the schedule of faults for the host organization.

In addition,

- Not attempting a kick or throw, 5 faults
- Making a kick, 10 point bonus
- Making a throw, 5 point bonus

The balls used in the game will be awarded as prizes for the contest. First place gets the ball in best shape (it might still be inflated), second place gets the ball in next best shape (partially inflated?), and third place gets the third ball (probably not holding much air).

Course Design



This is an example of a Futbol course. In this course the soccer balls are located at jump #4, jump #9 and jump #13.

Futbol should be designed as a jumpers course of fourteen obstacles or fewer. Three soccer balls located at strategic points. Adequate room should be provided for the handler to have room down his dog, or make the attempt.

Variations

Football variation – In this variation an American-style football is used. The handler is required to pass a football through a tire at a 10' distance.

Premium Blurb

Futbol is a jumpers sequence that features soccer balls placed on the course that the handler must kick or throw over a hurdle to earn a bonus. This game is probably *not* suitable for a competition for titling purposes and should be reserved as a game of

entertainment for a club picnic. *Futbol* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Gamblers

Gamblers showcases a dog's willingness to work at an appreciable distance from his handler and the dog's skill at doing so. Gamblers is intrinsic to the higher levels of titling and accomplishment in most agility organizations.

Briefing

The objective of Gamblers is for the dog and handler team to accumulate as many points as possible in a specified time and then to perform a designated gamble (sometimes called a joker), also within a specified time, which consists of a sequence of obstacles with the dog and handler working some distance apart.

Gamblers is a two-part game: the point-accumulation period and the gamble period.

Point-accumulation period – The length of this opening period is determined by the judge. Time begins when the dog crosses the start line or leaves the designated starting position. The handler is usually allowed to lead out. The dog earns points for obstacles successfully performed. An obstacle can be performed only two times for points. The judge will typically call out the point value for an obstacle when it's successfully performed. The point-accumulation scoring ends when the timekeeper blows a whistle, announcing the beginning of the gamble period.

The time allotted for the point-accumulation period ranges from 30 to 50 seconds, with 40 seconds being the most commonly used. The number of points required in the point-accumulation for qualifying purposes varies among the different organizations. See "Qualifying and Titles" for more information.

Gamble period – This closing period (sometimes called the joker period) requires the dog to perform a sequence of obstacles, the gamble, in a certain amount of time and in the direction and sequence indicated by the judge. The handler is required to remain behind a containment or handler's line. If the gamble sequence is successfully completed in the time allotted by the judge, the dog will earn points for the gamble.

The time allotted for performance of the gamble is closely related to the standard course time of titling classes for the level at which the dog competes, plus a few seconds to get into position for performance of the gamble. The time shall always be greater than 10 seconds and less than 20 seconds.

Gamble points will be lost if any of the following occurs:

- The dog exceeds the time allotted for the gamble period or faults a gamble obstacle. Performance faults are assessed according to the level of the class.
- The handler steps on or over the containment line to aid the dog in performance of the joker. The handler is allowed to extend his hands or arms over the handler's line.
- The handler loiters near the start of the gamble while time remains in the point-accumulation period.
- The dog performs any two gamble obstacles in any sequence during the point-accumulation period.

- The dog knocks down a jump included in the gamble sequence during point accumulation, making correct performance of that jump in the gamble period impossible.

Some rules for Gamblers may change from time to time at the discretion of the judge. These rules should be clarified with the judge in the briefing, prior to the running of the class:

- Back-to-back performance of any obstacle during the point-accumulation period is okay/not okay.
- The table, if one is present, is live/not live during the point-accumulation period.
- The dog must be in the yellow/off the obstacle to get points for a contact obstacle when the whistle ending point accumulation blows.

Scoring

Gamblers is scored Points, Then Time. The team with the most points wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

The judge will call out the point value for each obstacle successfully performed during the point-accumulation period. Obstacle performance in the point-accumulation period uses one of three systems: 1-3-5, 1-2-3-5, or 1-3-5-7. Point values for obstacles are listed in the following table.

Obstacle	1-2-3-5 System	1-3-5-7 System
All jumps	1	1
Tunnels	2	3
Tire	2	3
Weave poles (short set)	2	3
Contacts†	3 or 5	5 or 7
Weave poles (long set)†	3 or 5	5 or 7

In the USDAA only one high-point obstacle can be used on a Gamblers course.

Note: The judge may add up to 4 points to the value of any obstacle in the 1-3-5-7 system or 2 points in the 1-2-3-5 system if the obstacle is placed in a position of relative difficulty. The value cannot exceed the maximum point value in the system being used.

In the USDAA the point value for the gamble is generally arbitrary and set high enough to differentiate a dog that has successfully completed the gamble from the field of dogs. It is, however, possible for a dog that performs the gamble and qualifies in the class to be beaten in placement by a dog that earned more points but failed to perform the gamble (and did not qualify).

In NADAC, the point value of the gamble depends on the number of obstacles included in the gamble. Typically there are four obstacles. The judge may include a fifth obstacle as a bonus. Each obstacle is worth 2 points more than the previous one. The first obstacle in the gamble is worth 2 points, the second 4 points, to the maximum of 5 obstacles or 10 points for the fifth bonus obstacle (30 points possible).

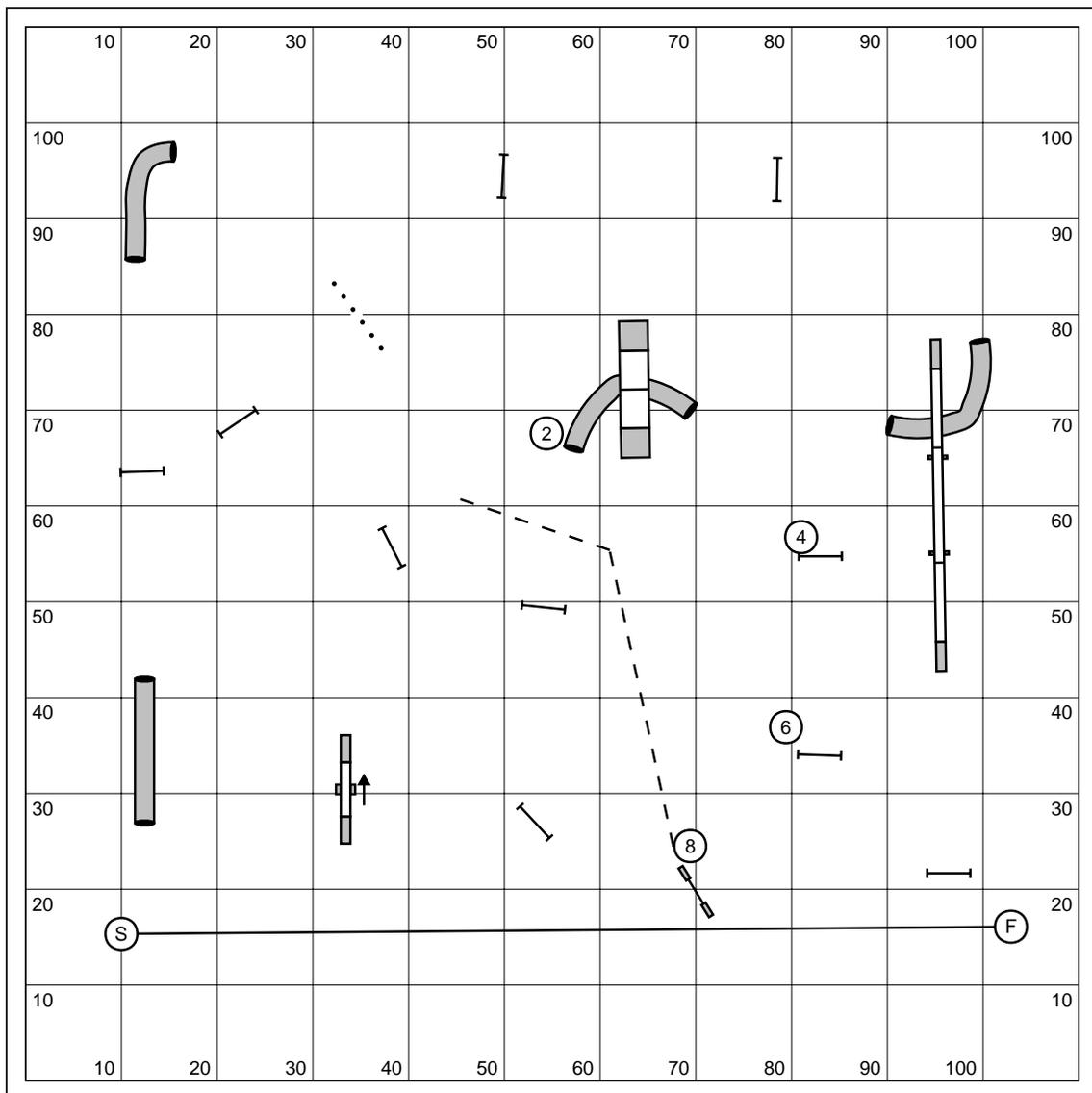
Course Design

Obstacles are arranged on the field in a random fashion without any discernible flow. The judge will take care to set the higher point obstacles apart so that they cannot be performed in an easy flowing sequence.

The dog's time is stopped at a designated place at the end of the gamble. This may be an obstacle, a table, or a finish line.

The design of the gamble should pose a challenge appropriate to the skill level of the class. The USDAA makes a distinction in types of distance challenges. These can be grouped into four distinct types:

- Complex obstacle challenge – The dog demonstrates complex obstacle performance (weave poles or contact obstacles) at a distance from the handler.
- Directional challenge – The dog demonstrates directional control at a distance from the handler. This is the measurement of the handler's ability to direct his dog to change direction with verbal and other cues. Typical directional commands are: Left, Right, Turn, Come, and Go.
- Obstacle discrimination challenge – The dog demonstrates the ability to distinguish between two obstacles placed in close proximity and at a distance from the handler. The pipe tunnel under the A-frame, for instance, is an obstacle discrimination problem.
- Distance challenge – The dog demonstrates the ability to continue forward and perform obstacles while the handler remains behind or to the side.



This is an example of a traditional NADAC Elite Gamblers course designed by judge, Ilze Rukis and played in August 2002 at A-1 Dog Training Club, Brooklyn Park, MN. It's worth noting that the chief distinction in gambler challenges in NADAC is the distance between the gamble containment line and the obstacles in the gamble. The all exhibitors in the field might see the same gamble, but the line would be drawn ever closer to the obstacles in the gamble as the class progresses from Elite to Open, and from Open to Novice.

Strategies

When planning course strategy, there are a number of strategies to consider.

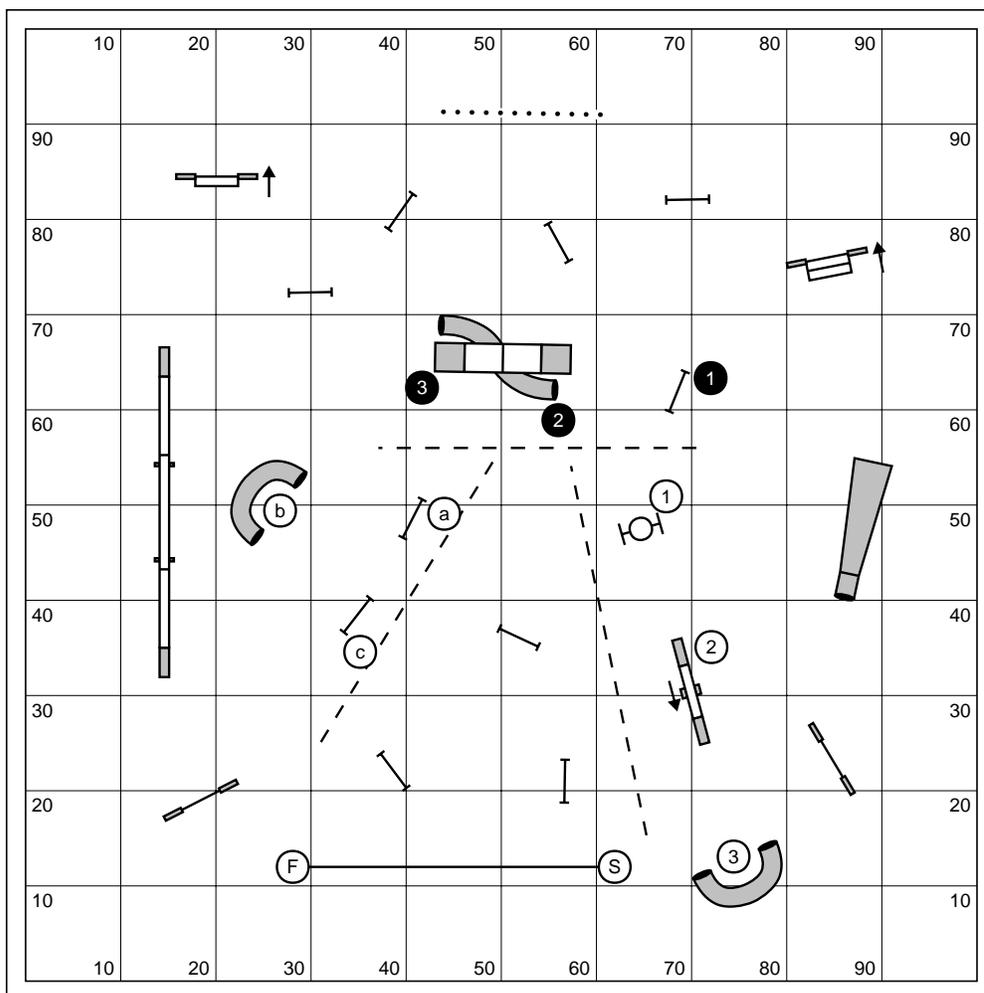
- Plan your strategy before you go into the ring. Find a course path for the opening that will allow you to pick up the minimum number of points required as quickly as possible. You should have a plan for how many points his course plan will earn. You can then begin working the dog at increasingly greater distances, allowing the dog to become comfortable working away. This way when the whistle blows, the transition from close-in handling to distance handling will not

be so pronounced.

- Perform obstacles that are farthest away from the gamble area (often the high-point obstacles) first and then work toward the gamble in order to be in a good position to start the gamble. If too far away from the gamble when the whistle blows, there will likely be insufficient time to complete the gamble.
- Take the time to set up the dog's path properly for the gamble even if the gamble whistle as blown. If the gamble sequence has a curve to the left, for example, set up the dog so that the curve to the left is the more natural flow for the dog.
- Always keep a couple of simple performance obstacles (jumps and tunnels) near the gamble unperformed until near the end of the opening period. If you find yourself ahead of schedule in the opening period, these obstacles allow you to work close to the gamble area without receiving a penalty for loitering. If deemed loitering, no points are awarded for obstacles performed.
- Use the handler's area to maximum advantage. Often a handler restricts his movement, and thus the movement of his dog, more severely than the restriction line warrants. Keep rapid changes of direction to a minimum. Frequent and sharp turns pull the dog's attention more to the handler. This can result in the dog turning back frequently to watch you during the gamble. Avoid slamming on the brakes when going into the gamble as this does nothing but call undue attention to you. It is better to ease into the handler area.
- Occasionally, there is a segment on a Gamblers course that approximates the actual gamble or part of the gamble. It may be beneficial to have the dog perform these sequences so that the dog will have been primed when it's time to attempt the actual gamble.
- Do not get greedy. Frequently, a handler will try to squeeze just one more point out of his dog toward the end of the opening period. These handlers frequently end up out of position and running like crazy when they hear the whistle for the gamble.

Variations

- League play nested Gamblers variation – In this variation, gambles are indicated on course for three different levels of competitors: Starters/Novice, Open, and Masters. The exhibitor is allowed to select which gamble to attempt. USDAA rules are observed. The judge will have to be on his toes for changes in rules for the three different levels.



This is an example of the Nested variation of Gamblers. The judge stipulates that the dog's time would be recorded at the moment a foot touched the ground on the dismount of the final obstacle of the respective gamble.

The Beginners gamble is the sequence labeled "a" through "c," which can be taken in either direction. The Intermediate gamble is labeled white #1 through #3. At the advanced level, refusals are faulted on contact obstacles only. The Superior gamble is labeled black #1 through #3. Refusals are faulted on all obstacles.

Qualifying

Gamblers is eligible for titling in NADAC, DOCNA, the TDAA, and in the USDAA (and a version of this game is played in CPE as well).

Typically qualifying requires that a dog score a certain number of points during point accumulation *and* successfully complete the gamble within the time set by the judge.

Premium Blurb

Gamblers is a two-part game: dog's choice point accumulation followed by a distance challenge. The objective of Gamblers is for the dog-and-handler team to accumulate as many points as possible in the allotted time and to successfully complete the distance challenge. *Gamblers* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Gamblers Anonymous

Gamblers Anonymous is the invention of Bud and Marsha Houston who dreamed this game up on the road, returning from a USDAA trial in Indianapolis, IN, wanting to create a game that might depend on the whimsical fortune of a roll of dice. This game is the result.

Briefing

Gamblers Anonymous is a point accumulation game. All dogs will start on the table and will have exactly sixty seconds to accumulate points. The timekeeper will indicate the end of scoring by blowing a whistle or calling Time!

Dogs earn points for simple performance of obstacles by the following schedule:

- 1 point for Jumps
- 3 points for tunnels and tire
- 5 points for Contacts and Weave Poles

Before a dog can run, the handler must roll the two dice, one white, and one red to determine the High Roller bonus for one of the jokers on the field. The handler will not know until the moment he steps on the field which joker will have a high roller bonus and what that bonus will be.

Joker Points are awarded for performance of any of the individual distance challenges shown on the course. The point value for any of the jokers shall be the combined value of obstacles in the joker plus a five-point bonus. Back-to-back performance of jokers is not allowed. Another obstacle must be successfully completed between.

High Roller Bonus Points are awarded based on the roll of two dice before dog and handler start the course. The *White* die will indicate the joker by number. The *Red* die, multiplied by 10, will determine the

High Roller Bonus Point value (plus the value of obstacles in the joker—not to include the 5-point bonus).

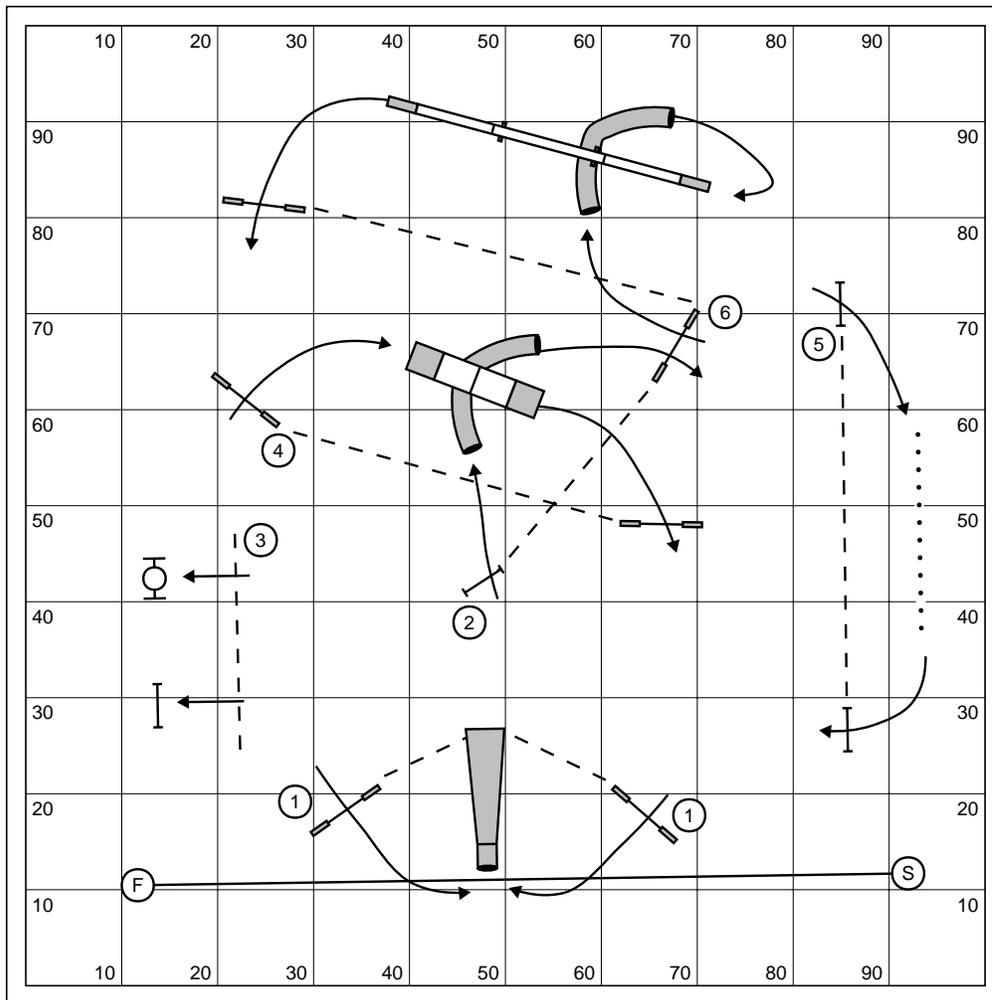
Super Bonus Points are awarded for performing all six of the on-field jokers. The Super Bonus is 200. The Super Bonus will be awarded *in addition* to all other points awarded.

Faulting an obstacle will negate the point value for that obstacle and will negate any overall gamble or bonus points if the obstacle is an element of a gamble.

Scoring

Gamblers Anonymous is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



This is a Gamblers Anonymous course run in Dogwood's agility league. The individual jokers were described as follows:

The #1 Joker (10 points) is only two obstacles, the first being either jump, followed by the collapsed tunnel. Either jump may be used to make the approach to the collapsed tunnel. The containment line will be on the side of the jumps away from the entry to the collapsed tunnel.

The #2 Joker (10 points) is jump to the tunnel beneath the A-frame to jump. This joker can be taken in either direction. The containment line is on the side of the jumps away from the tunnel.

The #3 Joker (10 points) is tire-jump, or jump-tire, with this one stipulation: each must be taken in the same direction. The containment line is about 8' away from the two obstacles.

The #4 Joker (15 points) is jump to A-frame to jump. This joker can be taken in either direction. The containment line is on the side of the jumps away from the A-frame.

The #5 Joker (15 points) is jump to weaves to jump and can be taken in either direction. The containment line is on the side of the jumps away from the weaves.

The #6 Joker (15 points) is jump to tunnel to dogwalk and can be taken in either direction. The containment line begins on the inside of the jump. The handler may not step around the jump to the right.

The Gamblers Anonymous course requires six jokers to be identified with containment lines clearly defined for each. Typically the jokers increase in complexity from #1 through #6.

Strategies

The roll of the dice really tells the tale for the dog and handler team. If the dice give a low High Roller bonus for one of the more difficult jokers, it might be worthwhile not to agonize over performances of that joker, especially if the dog is unlikely to successfully perform it.

If the handler rolls a very high bonus for a simple joker, it might be advantageous to do that joker as many times as possible in the time given for the game.

Ultimately the game might be won by a dog earning Super Bonus Points. If the handler thinks his dog is capable of doing every joker on the field, then the handler's walkthrough should be geared to a handling plan that incorporates every joker.

Qualifying and Titles

Gamblers Anonymous is eligible for qualification for TDAA Games titles using these point totals for different classes:

- Games I – 40 points
- Games II – 80 points
- Games III – 160 points

Premium Blurb

Gamblers Anonymous is a dog's choice game of distance skill. The handler begins with a roll of dice that will multiply bonuses that can be earned for distance challenges on the field. *Gamblers Anonymous* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Gamblers Blessing

Gamblers Blessing is the invention of Lyndal Nichols of the Australian Dog Agility Association (ADAA) and Queensland, Australia. The ADAA recognizes a wide variety of games for play and for titling. Judges are given some leeway in inventing games as well. This is a fun game for four dog-and-handler teams.

Briefing

This is a four dog-and-handler relay, requiring the exchange of a baton. The baton must be exchanged before the next dog can run. If the baton is not exchanged before the next dog starts, then that dog is judged as not started yet and has no faults. The dogs and handlers must be behind the line for the baton exchange.

If any dog does not do all of the obstacles in the specified sequence before the baton is exchanged, it is eliminated. Elimination is assessed as 30 faults.

Please note that the rules for faults and scoring change depending on which dog is running.

The first dog runs the first 7 obstacles. These have the value of one point each. If the handler can send the dog from behind the containment line, the score is doubled (14). Should the handler step over the line at any point in the dog's run, the score will not be doubled.

When the dog faults an obstacle by dropping bars or missing contacts, the dog shall earn no score for that obstacle. Refusals are not faulted but the obstacle must be done correctly before continuing. A wrong course is not penalized.

The second dog runs the next 7 obstacles; refusals and faults are counted.

The third dog runs the next 7 obstacles. These have the value of one point each. If the handler can send the dog from behind the containment line, the score is doubled (14). Should the handler step over the line at any point in the dog's run, the score will not be doubled.

When the dog faults an obstacle by dropping bars or missing contacts, the dog shall earn no score for that obstacle. Refusals are not faulted but the obstacle must be done correctly before continuing. A wrong course is not penalized.

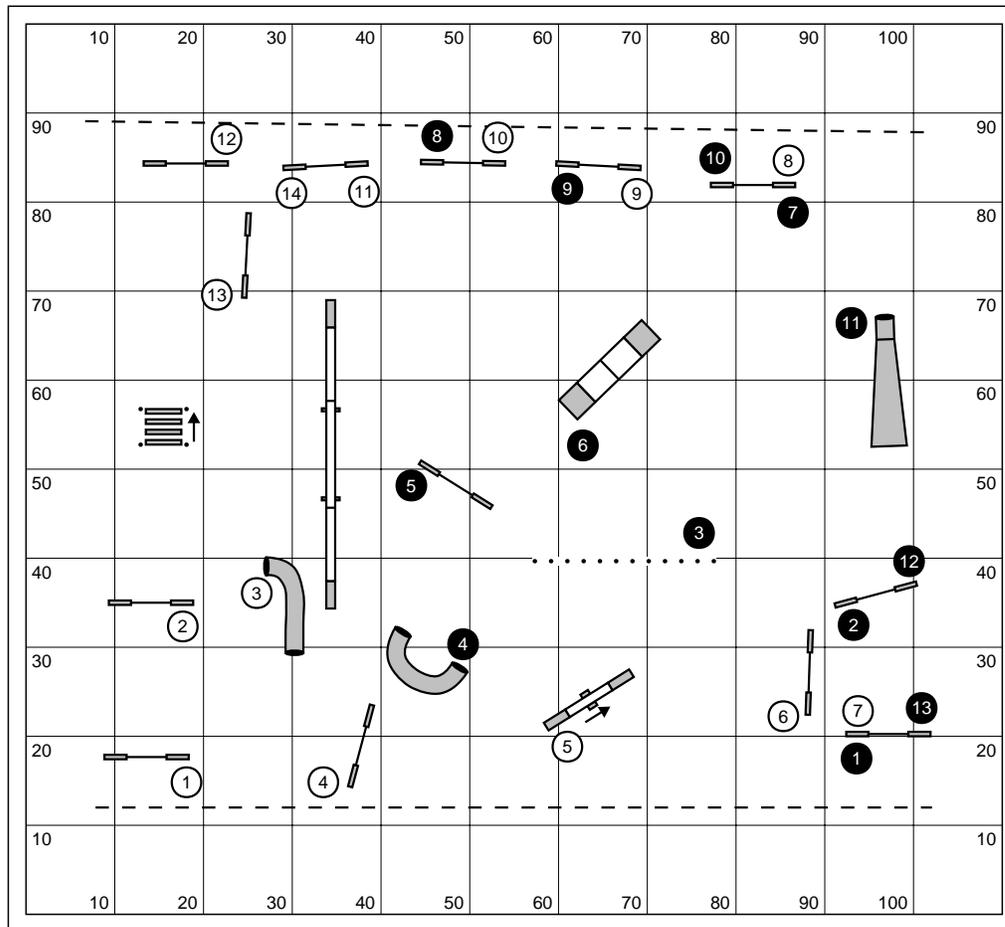
The fourth dog runs home over the last 6 obstacles; refusals and faults are counted.

Scoring

Gamblers Blessing is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Points. The team with the lowest score wins. This may even be a negative score.

The points accumulated by the first and third dog are taken off the final fault score of the four dogs.

Course Design



This is a course designed by ADAA judge, Lyndal Nichols. In this course, the first dog runs (or is sent over) obstacles numbered white #1 through #7. The second dog works to the opposite side of the field, doing obstacles numbered black #1 through #7. The third dog runs (or is sent over) obstacles numbered white #8 through #14. The fourth, and last, dog will work back to the front of the field, doing obstacles numbered black #8 through #13.

The Gamblers Blessing course will have start and finish lines at opposite sides of the field. The course should be designed with consideration of the respective tasks of the dogs. For example the first dog has the option of performing the obstacles while the handler remains behind a containment line. So the first sequence should be designed so that the handler can work at a comfortable lateral distance.

The second leg should begin on the same side as the first leg, but make its way across to the opposite side of the field.

The third leg again allows a bonus for working the dog at a distance while the handler remains on the opposite side of a containment line. And so this segment should be designed so that the handler can work at a comfortable lateral distance.

The fourth and final leg should begin on the same side as the third leg, but make its way across to the opposite side of the field where, typically, the finish line is common with the start line.

Strategy

The send-away sections where there is an opportunity to score points should be attempted by the best dogs for the job. The Gamble sections can be used to make up points to cancel out any faults accumulated by the other team members.

You'll note that, in the sample course, black numbered sequences aren't good candidates for the team to earn the double point value bonus. A specific strategy for the team would be to put the dogs with no appreciable distance handling skills on the long, across-the-field sequences.

Premium Blurb

Gamblers Blessing is a team relay with distance challenges on a numbered course.

Gamblers Blessing is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Points. ER7

Gamblers Choice

Gamblers Choice is a product of agility in the U.K. and was introduced to the United States by Kenneth Tatsch. This game is often played as the Gamblers element in the USDAA Dog Agility Masters® tournament. This game is similar to Gamblers in that points are assigned to obstacles; the more difficult the obstacle, the higher the point value. There is also a point-accumulation period and a gamble or joker period. However, this is where the similarity ends.

Briefing

Gamblers Choice demonstrates the handler's willingness to take risks and how well the handler's mental stopwatch works. The objective is for the dog and handler team to accumulate as many points as possible in a specified time. A good dog and handler team will reach the finish point with less than a second to spare.

Gamblers Choice is a two-part game: the point-accumulation period and the joker period.

Point-accumulation period – The length of this opening period is set by the judge. Time begins when the dog crosses the start line or leaves the designated starting position. The handler is usually allowed to lead out. The dog earns points for obstacles successfully performed. An obstacle can be performed only two times for points. The judge will typically call out the point value for an obstacle when it's successfully performed. Point accumulation scoring ends when the timekeeper blows a whistle, announcing the beginning of the joker period.

The time allotted for the point-accumulation period usually ranges from 30 to 50 seconds.

Joker period – On the timekeeper's whistle, indicating the end of the point-accumulation period, the handler's slate is wiped clean in regard to obstacles performed for points. During the joker period (also referred to as the gamble period) a handler can perform any obstacle up to two times for double the point values.

The joker period usually ranges from 10 to 30 seconds. Scoring ceases when the joker time expires or the dog and handler team reaches a designated area, line, or obstacle that stops the clock.

To keep points earned, the dog must reach the finish point before time expires. For example, if the judge allots 40 seconds for point accumulation and 15 seconds for the joker period, the team must be at the finish point by the 55 second mark. If a dog reaches the finish point even a hundredth of a second after the indicated time, the handler loses all points earned during both the point-accumulation period and the joker period.

The judge may assign a sequence of obstacles a bonus value, usually a doubling of the normal point values of the obstacles. This sequence is an on-course gamble. If the sequence is performed successfully, the team will receive the bonus points. Generally, if the team fails to complete the sequence, they still receive the usual point values for the individual obstacles performed correctly while attempting the sequence.

The judge can exercise considerable latitude in how the on-course gamble is conducted:

- A judge can stipulate that if any part of the sequence is flawed, no points will be awarded, or the judge can stipulate that normal point values will be awarded for obstacles successfully performed, using the same system as in the point-accumulation period.

- A judge can stipulate that dogs are allowed to perform the sequence only once, or the judge can stipulate that the sequence can be successfully performed twice.
- A judge can stipulate that on-course gambles can be performed only during the point-accumulation period, or the judge can stipulate that the gamble can be performed in both the point-accumulation period and in the joker period.

Scoring

Gamblers Choice is scored Points, Then Time. The team with the most points wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

The scribe will record the points earned by a dog in two separate columns, one representing the regular score for an obstacle performance and one representing a score to be doubled by the scorekeeper.

Obstacle performance in the point-accumulation period usually uses one of two systems: 1-2-3-5 or 1-3-5-7. Point values for obstacles are listed in the following table.

Obstacle	1-2-3-5 System	1-3-5-7 System
All jumps	1	1
Tunnels	2	3
Tire	2	3
Weave poles (6)	2	3
Contacts	3 or 5	5 or 7
Weave poles (12)	3 or 5	5 or 7

The judge may add up to four points to the value of any obstacle in the 1-3-5-7 system or two points in the 1-2-3-5 system if the obstacle is placed in a position of relative difficulty. The value cannot exceed the maximum point value in the system being used.

Typically, only one high-point obstacle is used.

These point values are simply guidelines. There are no official rules for this game. Consequently, the judge can make all manner of stipulations for performance by the dog and handler. For example, a judge could stipulate that no points would be awarded for the contact obstacles during the double-point joker period. The judge could also specify that the dog earns the joker-period point value for an obstacle that is being performed when the whistle blows to signal the end of the opening period. That means that the dog would be awarded 0 (zero) points if caught, for instance, on the dogwalk when the whistle blows.

values of the opening, and so no special course design criteria is required. On the other hand the judge may stipulate that certain obstacles or sequences are eligible for double points in the closing. So these must be carefully identified by the judge.

The judge may also stipulate a handler containment area.

Strategies

In Gamblers Choice, it is very important to know the speed at which the dog works. It is especially critical in the joker period where being 1/100th of a second over time will result in the loss of all points. It is very important not to get greedy and go for more points than the dog can realistically accumulate in the given time.

By the same token, if the dog is able to get to the table 6 or 8 seconds before time expires, his competition has a lot more time to score more points. Even slower dogs will gain the advantage to accumulate more points.

Qualifying and Titles

Gamblers Choice is a qualifying game for both Just For Fun Agility and TDAA. This game can be nested and leveled. Three or more jokers can be used on the course for different levels of titling, depending upon the complexity of the challenge.

The judge should establish a simple requirement for the minimum number of points to be earned in the point-accumulation period, in addition to requiring that at least one of the jokers should be performed in the joker period in order for the team to earn a qualifying score.

Variations

- Laubach variation – In this variation, a specific sequence of obstacles must be performed in the joker period. However, the obstacles can be performed with the handler running with the dog. For each obstacle the dog performs correctly, the team earns 10 points. The handler (or the dog, for that matter) may choose to perform any number of obstacles in the sequence, from #1 to #5. After performing that number, the dog must retrace the sequence in reverse and cross the finish line to stop the clock. If the dog breaks the sequence coming back or fails to cross the finish line before the final whistle, the dog gets no points.

The course designer needs to be mindful of an interesting sequence of obstacles to finish the round. In the interest of smart ring administration, the final sequence should point abruptly to the finish line to stop the clock.

Premium Blurp

Gamblers Choice is a dog's choice point accumulation game. The objective is to handle the dog from dot to dot (the contact obstacles) scoring points on all other obstacles in between. Points for the "in between" obstacles are always at risk, as they'll be lost in case of any fault since the last "dot". *Gamblers Choice* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Go For Broke

Go For Broke is the invention of Deb Richey for play in the Just For Fun Runners agility league in Chicago, IL. This game is a variation of Gamblers that takes the game to the next logical dimension. Go For Broke is sometimes called "Survivor Gamble."

Briefing

Go For Broke is played in a manner opposite from the traditional gamblers game. This game starts with a gamble, which is followed by point accumulation. If the gamble is successfully completed, the team goes on to point accumulation.

During point accumulation the dog must earn exactly 16 points, using a 1-3-5 point system:

- 1 point for jumps, tunnels, and tire
- 3 points for contact obstacles and (6) weave poles
- 5 points for (12) weave poles

Once the team has earned 16 points, the handler must either: direct the dog to perform the gamble again, this time from the second gamble line; or send the dog to the table to stop the clock. If the dog is successful with the second gamble, he goes back to point accumulation.

If the team manages to get another 16 points, the handler must either: direct the dog to perform the gamble again, this time from the third gamble line; or send the dog to the table to stop the clock. If the dog is successful with the third gamble, he goes back to point accumulation.

After point accumulation for the third gamble, the handler must direct his dog to the table to stop time.

If the dog fails in any gamble attempt, the team may not proceed to the point-accumulation period. The handler must direct the dog to the table to stop time. If the dog faults a gamble, then no additional points can be earned.

Obstacles may not be performed back-to-back for points and may be taken no more than twice in any one point-accumulation period. If a bar was knocked on a jump during point accumulation, the dog must go to another one to get the single point. If the dog faults a contact obstacle he is required to perform that obstacle again.

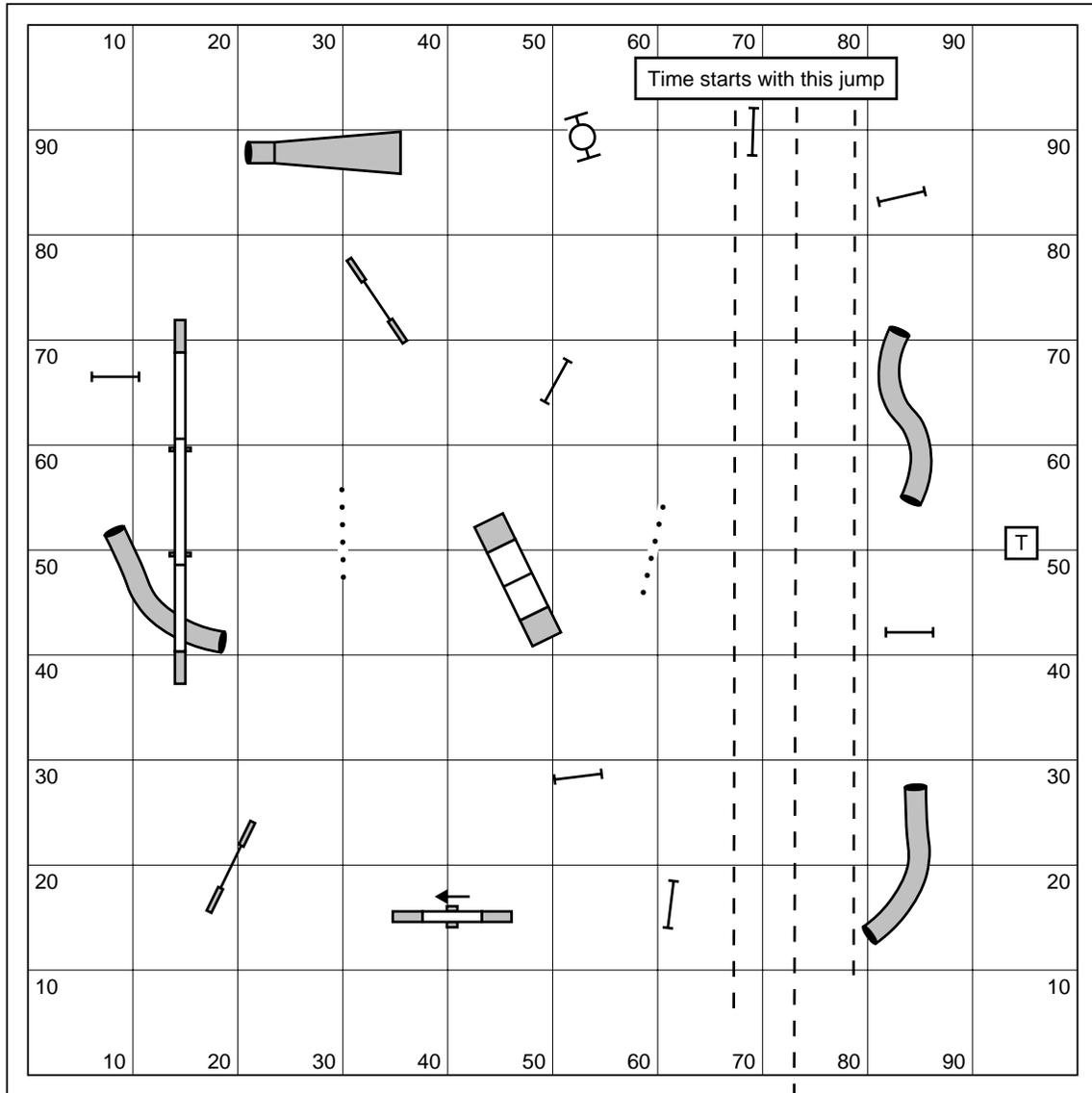
There is no standard course time in Go For Broke. The handler may continue to work his dog until he has successfully completed the three nested gambles, or has faulted out.

Scoring

Go For Broke is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tiebreaker only.

Points must be earned in block of 16. The dog's score will be one of: 16, 32, or 48. If the dog earns more than 16 points in point accumulation, or attempts a gamble with fewer than 16 points, or faults a gamble, then all points are lost.

Course Design



This is the original Go For Broke course designed by Debbie Richey for the JFFun Runners in Joliet, IL. The gambles can be nested, as those shown here, or they can be unique and in different parts of the course. If unique gambles are used, they should be designed with increasing levels of distance or complexity.

Like all Gamblers courses the Go For Broke course should be designed with the agility equipment should be set in a random manner with no discernable and logical flow. The course should be designed with a jump placed so that the dog has some momentum when making the initial approach to the gamble.

The progression of jokers might be the same joker taken from incrementally greater distances. Or, the progression could be a series of different jokers of increasingly greater complexity.

Qualification and Titles

Go For Broke is eligible as a titling game under TDAA rules. Qualifying should reflect

the level of the competitor:

- Games I, 16 points
- Games II, 32 points
- Games III 48 points

Strategies

The first prerequisite in this game is that the dog's handler understand the point system awarded for obstacles and be able to do the math (either by design or on the run) to score points in blocks of 16.

The handler should understand the limitations of his dog's training. Don't overreach! If the dog does the first gamble and earns his 16 points, it's probably a good idea to go to the table to stop the clock (and earn a Beginner's qualifying score).

In league play, the handler is under pressure to balance doing the right thing for his team, versus going for the gusto and personal glory. There is no right answer in keeping this in mind for the sake of a working strategy.

Variations

In the *original* variation of the game if the dog faulted any gamble all points would be lost.

Premium Blurb

Go For Broke is a game that requires some precision in point accumulation (scoring exactly 16 points) between attempts at progressively more difficult distance challenge. Go For Broke is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Go Hawaiian

This is a pretty zany game, probably at the top of the silly list. But it is a game that's ideal for a club picnic. Go Hawaiian is the invention of Michelle Vroman.

Briefing

Dogs are required to run a simple numbered course. The object of the game is to score the most points.

Points are earned as follows:

- 10 points – The handler leaves the dog at the start line in a sit or down, runs to a marked area in the center of the course and dons the following apparel: grass skirt, straw hat and two leis.
- 10 points – The handler performs a hula dance after dressing up.
- 10 points – The dog successfully completes an obstacle.

Scoring

Go Hawaiian is scored Points, Then Time. The highest score wins. Time is only used to break ties. It is recommended that prizes also be awarded for the best and worst hula dancer.

Faults are assessed using modified USDAA Starters/Novice rules. If an obstacle is faulted, no points are earned for that obstacle unless the handler corrects the fault as follows:

- If the dog knocks a jump bar, the handler must reset the bar and do a hula dance.
- If the dog misses a contact or a weave pole, the handler must do the hula for each occurrence.

Course Design

The course should be a straightforward square of obstacles that is suitable for dogs and handlers of all levels.

Premium Blurb

Go Hawaiian features a simple numbered course. And while running this course the handler is required to don an assortment of Hawaiian articles of dress, and dance a hula. *Go Hawaiian* is *not* a suitable game for competition and titling. *Go Hawaiian* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Group Choice

Group Choice is the invention of Marq and Rebecca Cheek. Their goal was to have a game that didn't require moving any obstacles. It can be played before or after almost any other agility game without any obstacle movement since it is extremely unlikely that there would be any significant repeated patterns from the previous class.

Briefing

The objective is to perform all obstacles on the course, as quickly and accurately as possible, according to the following groups:

- Jumps, tire, and tunnels group
- Contact obstacles group
- Weave poles only group

The handler must negotiate his dog through all of the obstacles in a particular group before continuing on to the next group. The order in which each group is completed is up to the handler but all three groups must be completed.

The handler can start anywhere along the start line that runs from one side of the ring to the other. Obstacles may be taken in any direction with the obvious exceptions (teeter, collapsed tunnel, spread hurdles). Each obstacle may be taken only once. After completing all the groups, the dog will finish on the table.

On the way to the table, if all groups and obstacles have been completed, the dog is at risk of repeating an obstacle and earning a 20 point deduction if he takes any one the way to the table.

Time will commence when the dog crosses the start line and will end when the dog's four-paws land on the table.

Course time is generally set at 70 seconds for big dogs and 75 seconds for small dogs.

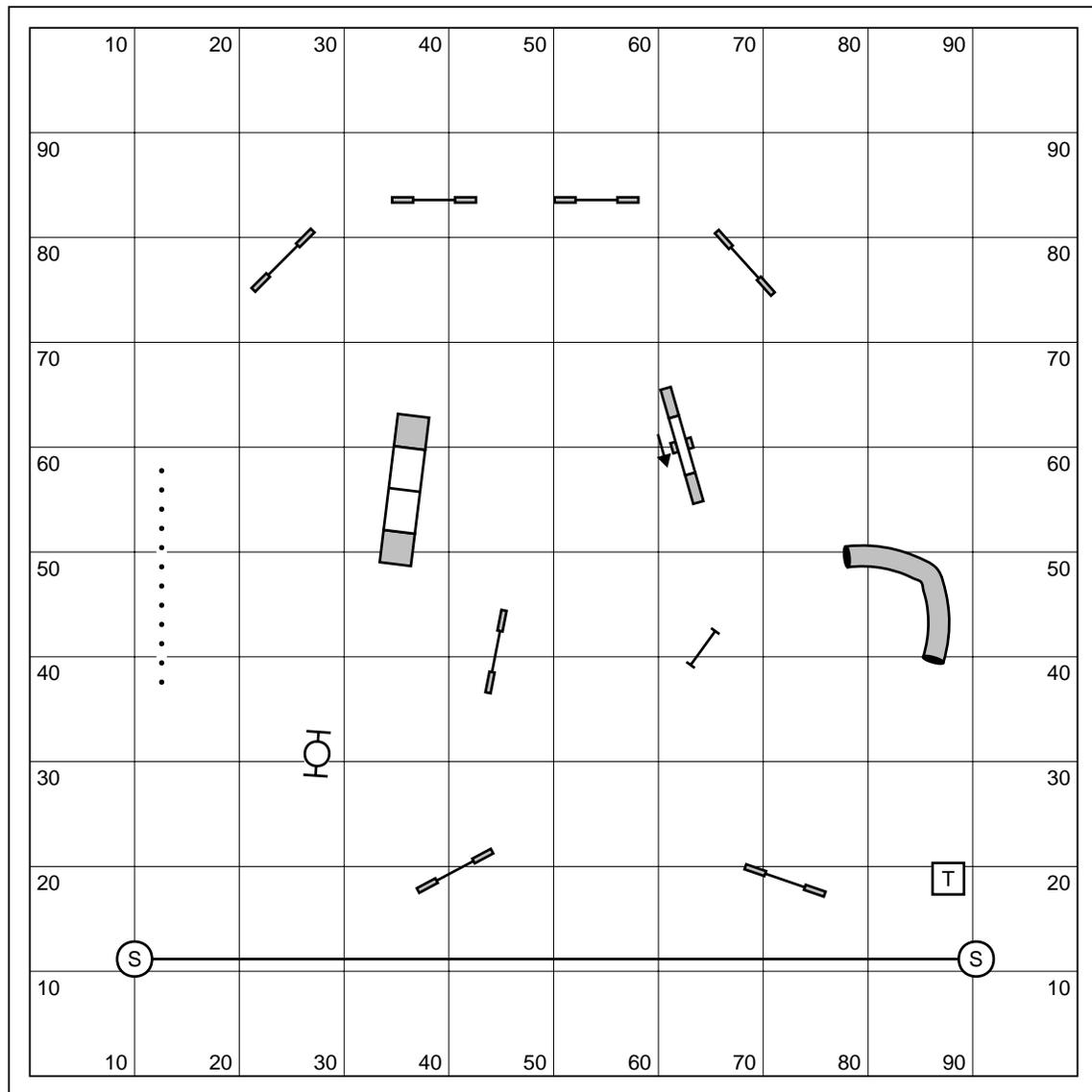
Scoring

Group Choice is scored on a 100-point basis. Time is used as a tiebreaker only. A score of 100 will be given to a dog that finishes the course with no faults under the allotted time.

Faults will result in a deduction of points.

- 5-points deduction – knocking bars, missing a contact, failing to do an individual obstacle (end of run)
- 20-points deduction – performing an obstacle outside the group; repeating an obstacle

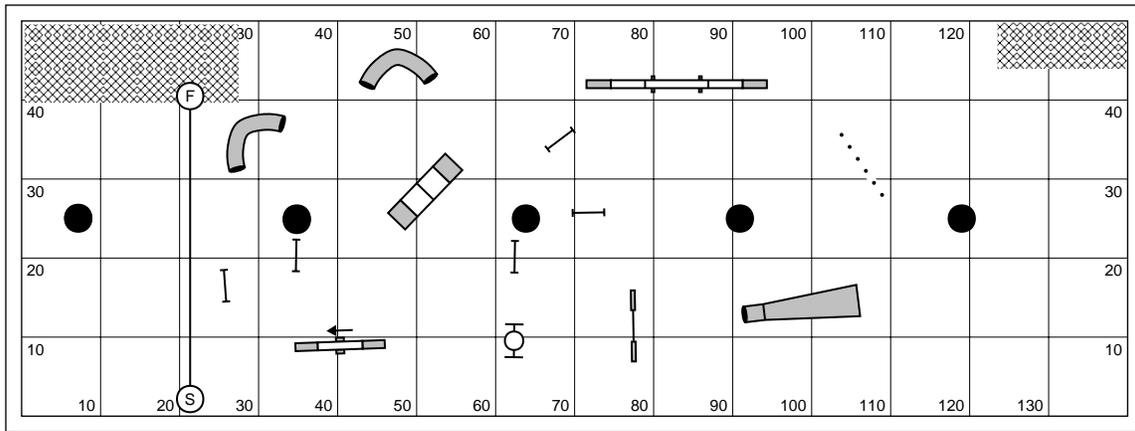
Course Design



This Group Choice course was played at agility league play at Dogwood in June, 2002. The course is the design of Bud Houston. What do you think was the winning strategy?

In Group Choice, obstacles are laid out randomly on the field. It's a game that can be played with an existing set of obstacles, for example, after a standard course has been run.

The difficulty of Group Choice is for the judge to get in position for all contacts without knowing the handler's strategy and remembering if all the jumps have been taken, or if any were duplicated.



This is a *Group Choice* course designed for play in the TDAA. The building is narrow with a line of columns going down the center. This certainly complicates both course design and strategy.

Strategies

Group Choice is, after all, a game of strategy. The key to winning is to define the shortest path to perform all of the obstacles, one group at a time. The choice of which group to begin can be as important as which obstacles to begin with within the group.

Qualifying and Titles

Group Choice is a qualifying game for titling for both Just For Fun Agility and TDAA. The standard course time should be set at 4 or 5 seconds per obstacle on the course. More complex layouts of obstacles allow a greater course time than simpler layouts. The qualifying criteria should be:

- Games I – 75 points
- Games II – 90 points
- Games III – 100 points

Variations

In *Vogel's Scoring Variation* each obstacle performed earns the dog a point. Repeated obstacles or obstacles taken “out of group” earn the dog a one point penalty. Qualifying then is based on the number of obstacles available for play.

Premium Blurp

Group Choice is a game of strategy and dog’s choice point accumulation game in which obstacles are divided into three different groups. Each group must be completed before moving on to the next. *Group Choice* is scored on a 100-point basis. Faults are allowed at some levels and are deducted from the 100 starting points. ER12

Halloween Race

Halloween Race is the invention of Chris Miele. It was created as a special game to be run annually by her agility classes to commemorate October 31, the eve of All Saints' Day or Halloween. Trick or Treat!

Briefing

The Halloween Race is run as a single elimination knockout. The dog that wins each race will advance to the next round. The dog that loses each race is eliminated.

The course is divided into two sequences. Two dogs and handlers will be on course at the same time to run these sequences. Each dog will begin on a different sequence, then run the other sequence immediately after finishing his own. One dog will run the first sequence and then run the second sequence. The other dog will run the second sequence, then the first sequence. Obviously, the dogs must switch sides of the course somewhere in the middle of their runs.

Each dog's faults will be added to his time. Therefore, a dog that crosses its finish line before the other dog still may lose when those faults are added to its time as seconds.

In the event that one dog catches up with the other dog, the lagging dog must give right of way.

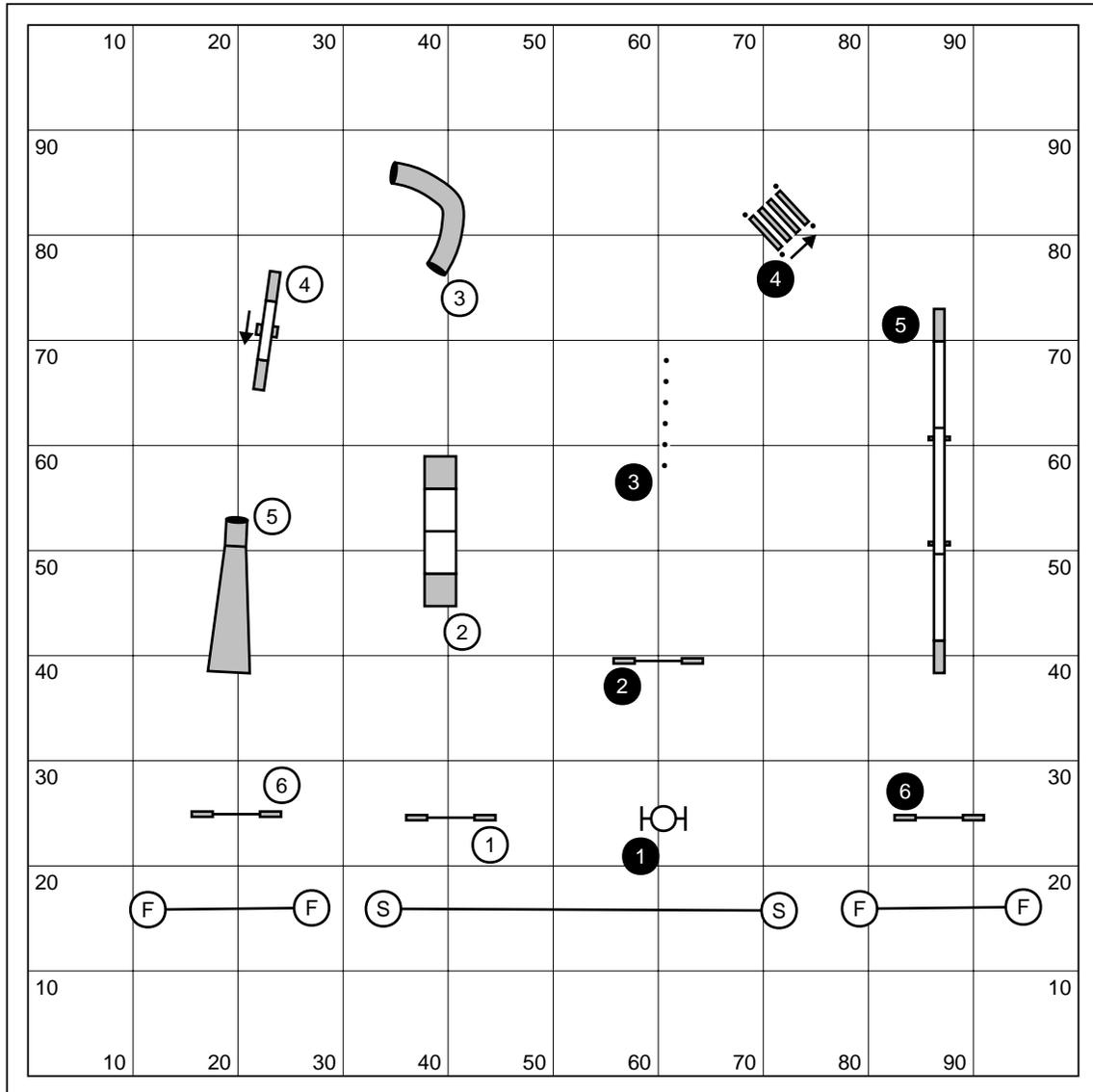
Scoring

Halloween Race is scored Time, Plus Faults and is run as a knockout. The dog and handler that wins every race win the competition.

Two judges are required, one to follow and judge each dog. Two timekeepers and two scribes are also required, so that a timekeeper and scribe are assigned for each dog. At the end of a run, each dog's faults will be added to its time to determine who won and who lost.

To determine third and fourth places, the dogs that are defeated by the two finalists should run against each other.

Course Design



This is an example of a typical Halloween Race course.

Since both dogs have to perform all of the obstacles, the only real design constraint is that the path from the end of one course (white numbers) to the beginning of the other course (black numbers) should be equidistant. That way one team does not have a time/speed advantage over the other on the flat when changing courses.

Obstacles should be arranged so that the contact obstacles are easily judgeable to the respective judges.

Even more important than the placement of the obstacles on course, is the placement of appropriate Halloween accessories on course. In proper spirit, plastic goblins should be attached to the contact obstacles, witches and ghosts added to jumps, pumpkin heads placed on the tops of the weave poles and so on. It wouldn't hurt to have a few bats hanging from tree limbs or lighting fixtures. Judges should also dress appropriately.

Strategies

This would seem to be a matter of the fastest dog winning. In fact, a race of this type will often go to the steadier dog. Therefore, the best strategy for Halloween Race is to run fast, but to work hard to run clean. A steady dog will beat a faster dog, particularly if your opponent is recklessly pushing for speed.

Variations

- Costume rule – For added fun, require handlers to either wear suitable Halloween attire or receive a two-second time fault before the race even starts just for being boring!

Premium Blurb

Halloween Race is typically run as a knock-out on a numbered two-part course. Two dogs, competing against each other, begin at opposite starting points and must complete both short courses. Halloween Race is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lower score advances. *Halloween Race* is scored Time, Plus Faults and is run as a knockout.

ER5

Handler Go Jump

Okay, so this is a perfectly silly game that is more ideal for a club outing than any kind of serious competition. Handler Go Jump is the invention of Karen Gloor. The game is included here mostly for the amusement of those who know her.

Briefing

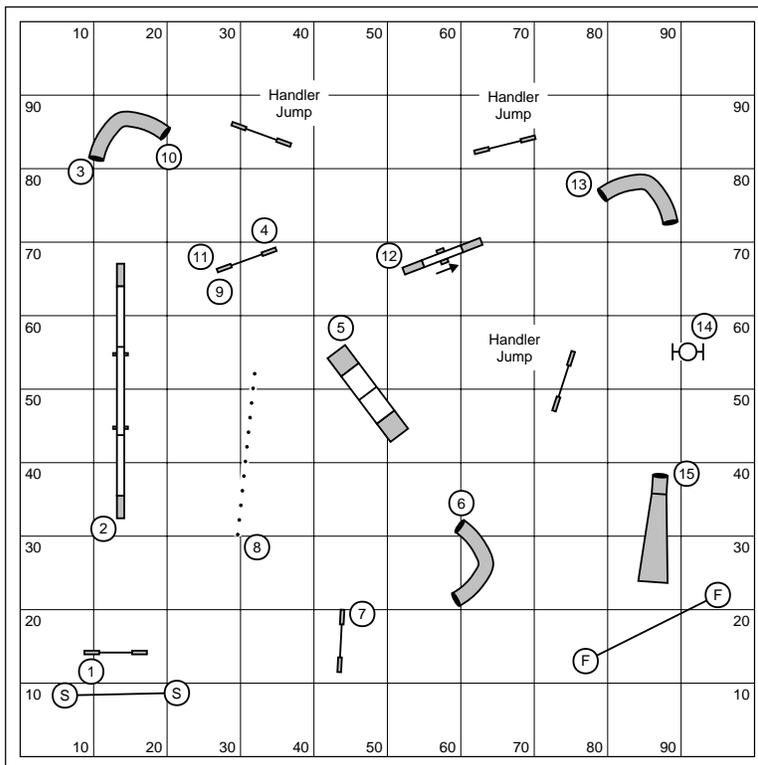
In Handler Go Jump, the dog is required to run a standard agility course. However, each time the dog performs a tunnel of any type, the handler must jump over a designated hurdle. Handler hurdles will be set at 12".

Standard faults will apply to the dog's performance of the obstacles, notwithstanding the antics of the handler. This means that the dog will be faulted for an off course if he follows the handler over a handler jump. If he wishes, the handler can place the dog in a sit-stay or a down-stay so that the handler can take the jump.

Scoring

Handler Go Jump is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins the game.

Course Design



On this sample course, the handler would have to perform five jumps, one for each of the following tunnels: #3, #6, #10, #13, and #15.

Any standard course design suitable for the level of competition will work for Handler Go Jump. Handler jumps should be thoughtfully placed to accommodate the handler's

natural path.

Variations

- Alternative handler obstacles – From the dog’s point of view, Handler Go Jump is a standard agility course. What sets this apart from standard agility is that the handler is required to perform an obstacle. Clearly, if you really want the class to be entertaining, it is possible to designate a set of weave poles or a pipe tunnel, rather than a jump, for the handler’s performance.

Premium Blurb

Handler Go Jump features a numbered course. On this course for every tunnel or tire performed by the dog, the handler is required to jump over a hurdle. Like the standard course, Handler Go jump is scored Faults, Then time. This game is probably *not* a game that should be used in competition for titling purposes. ER1

Handler's Choice

Handler's Choice is a game invented by Webb and Leslie Anderson, who noticed that many of their advanced students were handling beautifully in classes but were having trouble making the transition to the show ring. They were not really comfortable using some of the handling skills they had worked on in class. They came up with this game, Handler's Choice. The students loved it! This game originally appeared in the Clean Run Magazine in October 1999.

Briefing

This game has two purposes: to help students recognize spots on a course where various handling skills could be used and to encourage students to opt for the most effective handling movement. Courses should be designed in such a way that many handling skills could be used.

Points are awarded for each handling movement successfully completed. If the dog faults because of a handling movement, the team does not get the points for those moves (for example, a missed weave entry on a cross behind at the weaves). The judge will call out the handling maneuvers as they are performed during each dog's run. These points will be recorded by a scribe.

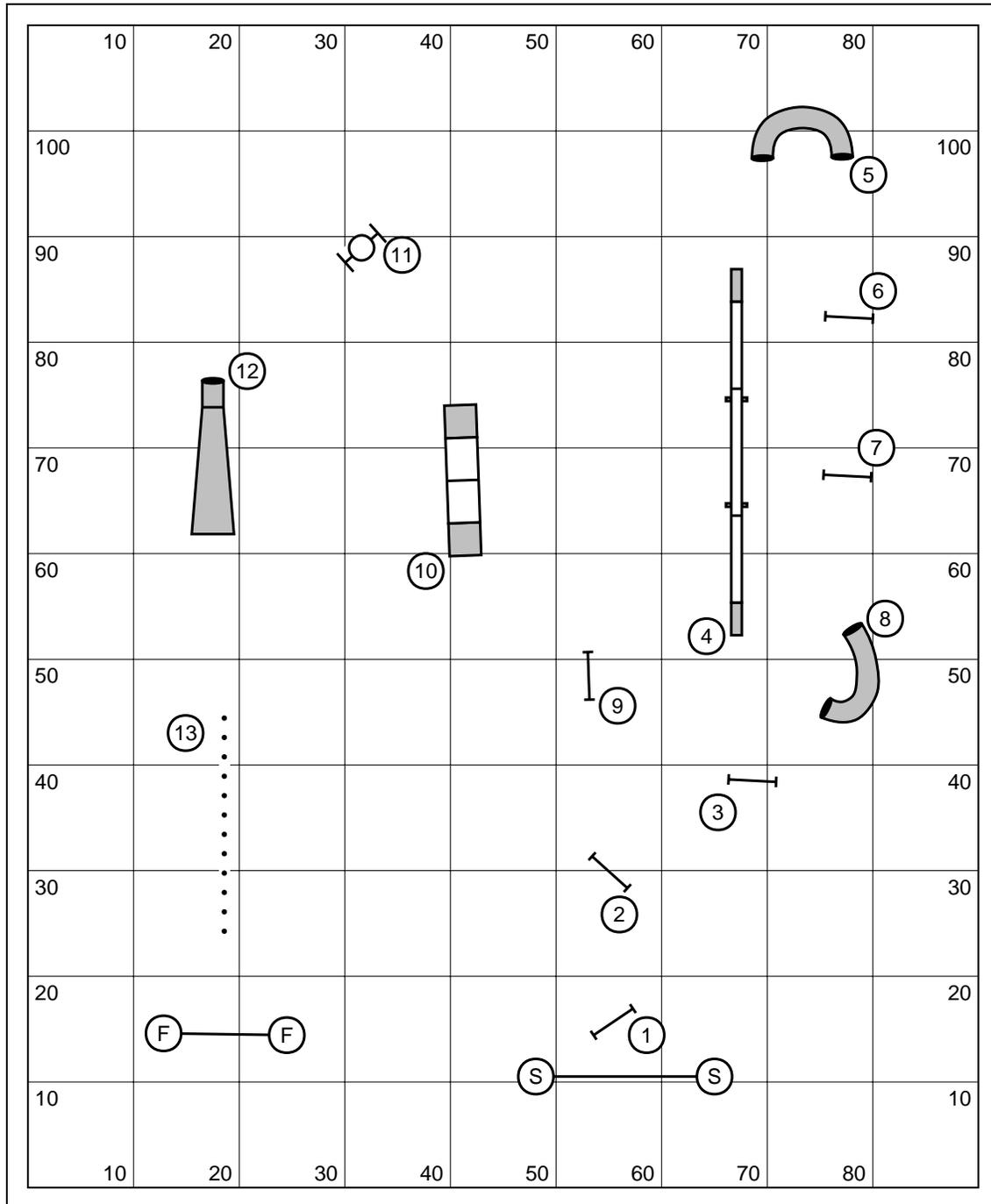
Scoring

Handler's Choice is scored points only. The team that accumulates the most points wins. Points are awarded based on a 1-3-5-7 basis. Harder maneuvers are worth more points.

Following is a sample score sheet for Handler's Choice:

Handling Skill	Times Performed *	Points	=	Total
Running with dog from start		1		
1 obstacle lead-out at start or table		1		
2 obstacle lead-out at start or table		3		
3+ obstacle lead-out at start or table		5		
Lead-out pivot		5		
Cross behind on jump		1		
Cross behind on tunnel		1		
Cross behind on contact		3		
Cross behind on weaves		7		
Cross in front on jump		1		
Cross in front on contact		3		
Cross in front on weaves		7		
Blind cross (not at tunnel)		7		
Reverse flow pivot		5		
Tandem turn		5		
Counter-rotation		3		
Framing		3		
Call-off		1		
Layering		7		
Off-side weaves		5		
Total Score				

Course Design



This course is closely based on one originally designed by Leslie and Webb Anderson. What handling movements would you use on this course to earn high points?

The Handler's Choice course should be designed with some thoughtful consideration to creating opportunity for specific movements or handling skills. For example, a serpentine sequence nearly always requires the handler to change sides to his dog. A handling movement is required for the handler to make this change of sides. What movement will be used is left largely to the wit and creativity of the handler.

Strategy

The competitor should try difficult movements. Be brave. Go for the points! For example, if the handler wants to switch on the upside of the A-frame and then switch again on the downside, he should go for it! The purpose of the game is not only to help the handler recognize good opportunities for particular handling movements on a course, but more importantly, to help the handler practice those movements so they become second nature.

Premium Blurb

Handlers Choice is a game of style. The handler will earn bonus points for the team for demonstrating a wide repertoire of specific handler movements. *Handler's Choice* is a difficult game to play in competition because the names given to handler movements can be dramatically different from region to region. *Handler's Choice* is scored points only.

ER2

Heart to Heart

Heart to Heart is a holiday game (Valentine's Day) invented by Dennis Vogel for play in the TDAA.

Briefing

The object of the Heart to Heart game is to trace out as many “hearts” as possible in the given time (point accumulation period).

The Heart to Heart game consists of two pairs of tunnels and one jump. The game starts when the dog goes over the jump in either direction. To trace out a heart, the dog must start at the jump and take the outside entry to one of a pair of adjacent tunnels on either side of the jump; followed by the jump, and then the other tunnel of the pair (always the outside entry) and back to the jump. The third jump in this sequence also counts as the first jump in the next sequence. Completing the *Heart* pattern without fault earns the dog 10 points. These points are accumulated throughout the game and cannot be lost. When time expires a whistle will sound and the game ends when the dog crosses the finish line to obtain a total game time.

For each obstacle completed in the last attempted heart before time runs out, the dog will earn 2 points.

Faults

Any fault negates the points for that heart sequence only. The judge will call fault and the team must start a new sequence at the jump.

Faults consist of:

Dropping the bar (the game continues without the bar and the dog must pass between the uprights)

Off Course: Any deviation from the above described pattern is an off course. Off course faults are:

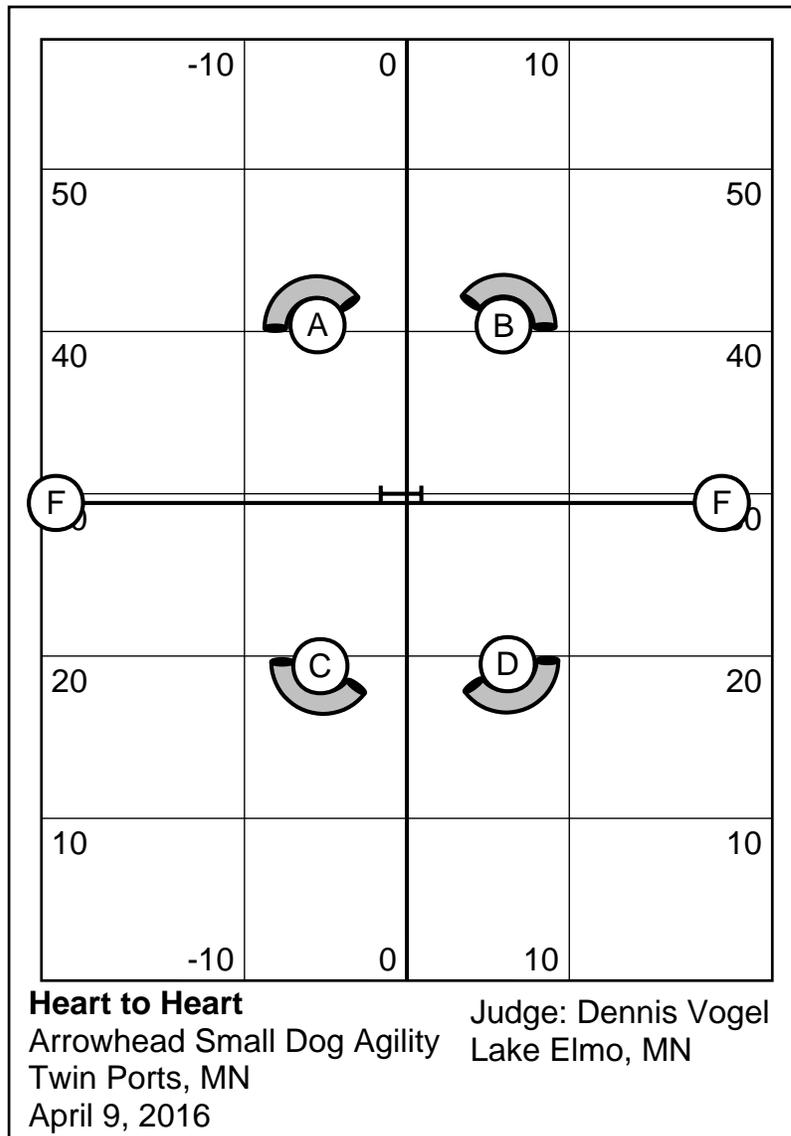
- Taking two tunnels in a row (two different tunnels or the same tunnel twice),
- Taking the *inside* entry to any tunnel,
- Taking the jump back to back (back jumping or in the same direction),
- In a heart sequence, taking a tunnel-jump-the same tunnel again,
- Taking a second tunnel opposite side of the jump as the first tunnel in that sequence.

Scoring

Heart to Heart is scored points then time with time being a tie breaker only.

Small dogs will have 50 seconds to earn points, tall dogs will have 46 seconds.

Course Design



This is the original game design by Dennis Vogel.

Qualifying

- Games 1 - 20 points
- Games 2 - 30 points
- Games 3 - 40-points

Premium Blurp

Heart to Heart is a whimsical holiday game intended for play on a Valentine's day weekend. The dog is required to run a predefined sequence in which the dog's path traces a "heart" pattern. The purpose of *Heart to Heart* is to score as many points as possible. *Heart to Heart* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Heinz 57

Heinz 57 is the invention of Bud and Marsha Houston. The premise for the invention of the game was silly enough... they started with the name of the game and made up the game to fit the name. It turns out to be an interesting application of math to solve the qualifying criteria.

Briefing

The purpose of this game is to score 57 points as quickly as possible. For the purpose of point accumulation, point values are:

- 1 pt for Jumps
- 2 pts for pipe tunnels and the tire
- 3 pts for contact obstacles
- 5 pts for weave poles
- The collapsed chute is doubling obstacle

Obstacles can be taken twice for points; back-to-back performances are never allowed. Another obstacle must be performed before the dog can be redirected to an obstacle (whether or not it was faulted). The collapsed tunnel has a special value, it is a doubling obstacle. The collapsed tunnel can be taken twice; and cannot be taken back-to-back.

With the exception of jumps, if a dog commits to any obstacle with four paws he is required to complete the performance that obstacle, whether or not it is faulted. A faulted obstacle may be repeated, but *only* after another obstacle has been attempted.

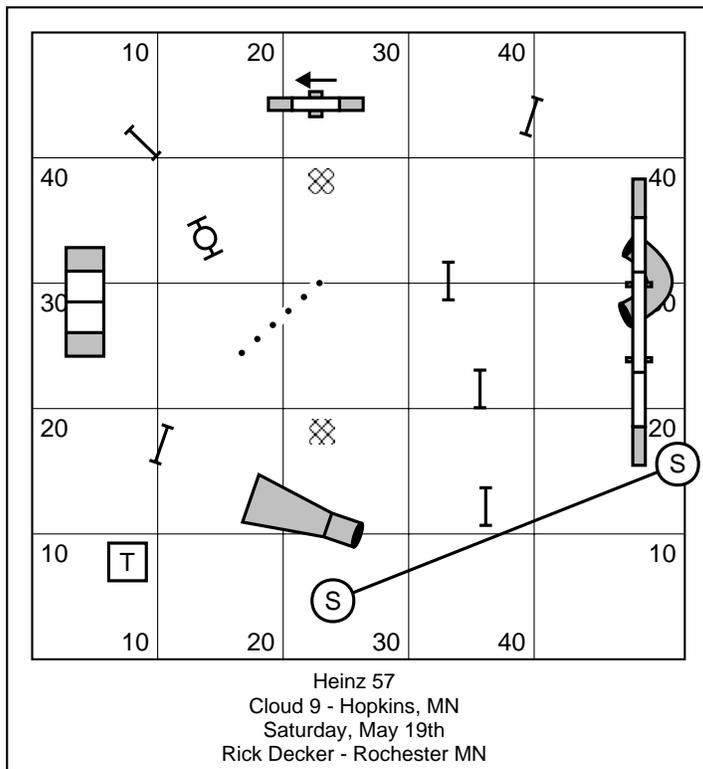
The table marks the finish of the course. The table becomes live after the dog has earned one point (the Mr. Banks rule). The handler should exercise caution when directing the dog to obstacles near the table because if the dog gets on, then scoring ceases, without regard to the handler's intentions.

Scoring

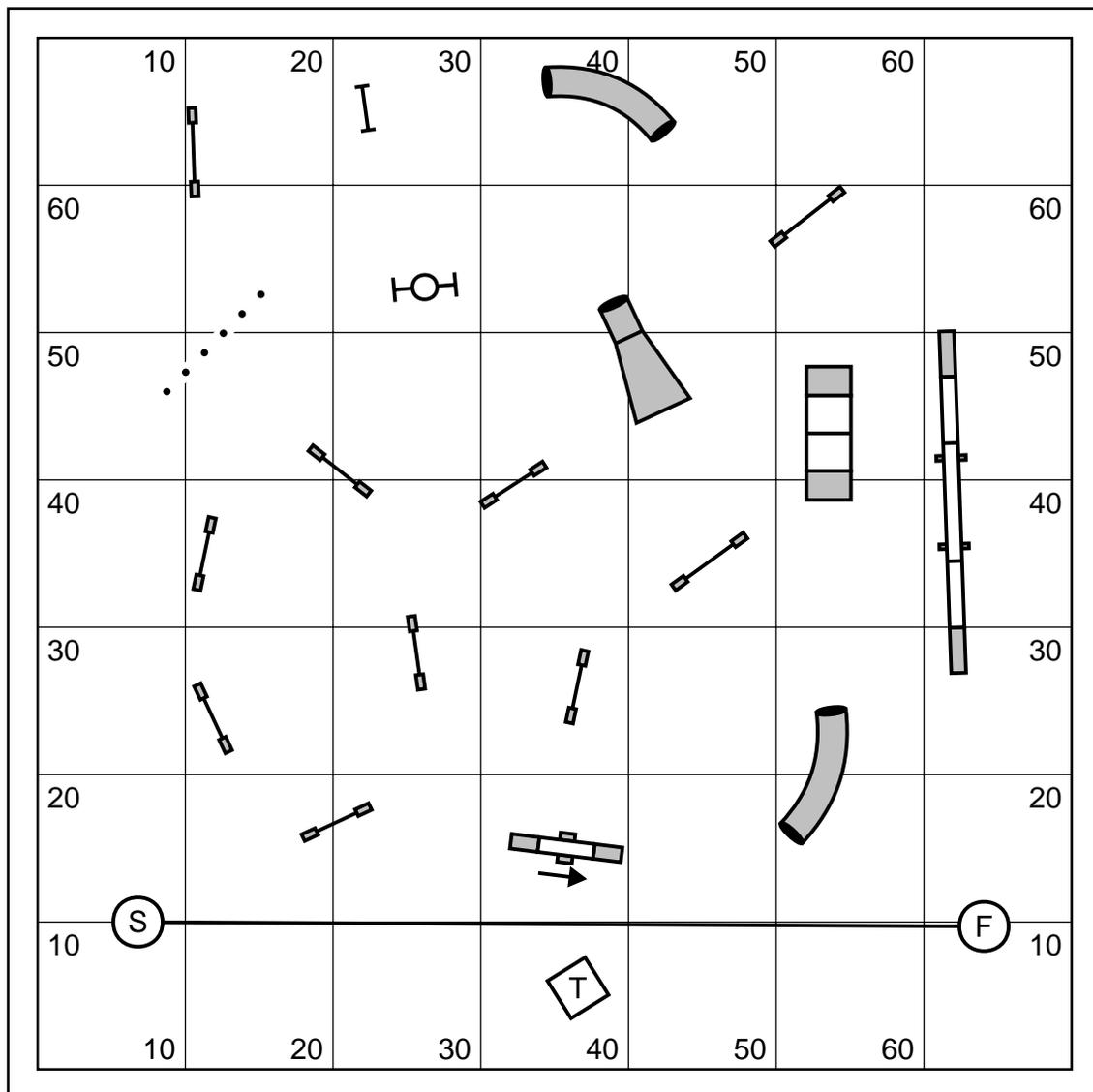
Heinz 57 is scored points then time. 57 points is the benchmark. Any amount over or under 57 will be subtracted from 57 to determine the dog's final score. Time is a tie-breaker only; but in a game like this time is a very important tie-breaker.

Course Design

Heinz 57 requires a random distribution of unnumbered obstacles. It is a game that could easily be nested from the set of equipment another game or course with little equipment movement.



This course was designed to easily pick up one final point at the end of play and head for the table to end time. This TDAA course illustrates: as the point accumulation can be quite modest *Heinz 57* can be played in a relatively few obstacles and in a small space.



This *Heinz 57* course, also a teacup design, has placed the collapsed tunnel at a considerable distance from the table with a lot of obstacles between the tunnel and the table. The riddle isn't quite as easy as it looks, as the dog needs to earn an *odd* number of points before getting to the table.

Judging Notes

In the typical written briefing there are unanswered questions for which the judge actually should have answers. For example the briefing advises:

- 1) "Obstacles can be taken twice for points." **What does the judge do if the dog takes an obstacle more than twice? No point is earned! Be aware that a handler might intentionally perform an obstacle that has already been twice-performed for strategic purposes (flow, for example).**
- 2) "Back-to-back performances are never allowed." **What does the judge do if the dog does an obstacle back-to-back. No point is earned.**
- 3) "If a dog commits to any obstacles he is required to complete the performance of

that obstacle.” **What does the judge do if the dog commits to an obstacle with all four paws but goes on to the performance of another? This is a tough one...** No new points may be earned UNTIL the dog has performed that obstacle to which the dog committed. This can be devastating (to the extent that an NQ is devastation) to the dog's score. With that in mind, this rule should be underscored in the verbal briefing.

Qualifying

The qualifying criteria for Heinz 57 shall be:

- All levels – a score of 57

Strategy

The essential strategy of *Heinz 57* is to find the most efficient path that scores the required number of points in the least amount of time. The game will surely be won by the best time to the table or finish line.

Heinz 57 is a game of arithmetic. The scoring mantra is “13 & Double, 2 and Double, 1 and Done”. This math outlines the strategy for the game when the kindly judge makes it an easy matter to pick up a single point and get to the table without terrible conflict.

On the other hand, the course could put the collapsed tunnel at some distance from the finish. This can be a test of skill, and canny handling, for the handler to bring his dog out of the chute with a number of points that is balanced with the value of a closing sequence of obstacles. It's important to acknowledge that coming out of the tunnel (the doubling obstacle) the score of the dog will always be an even number. That means the accumulation to the table will have to be an odd number to get to 57.

It's nearly impossible to run this game in a willy-nilly fashion, doing the required math as you run. And so the handler should seek a strategy that is as fixed and sure as though it were a numbered course.

Recovering from error will be the real test of the handler's mettle. If the dog drops a bar before the first double, the handler should find a way to make up the point as he works, keeping in mind that the “make-up” should be one point before the first double; two points after the first double; and four points after the second double.

Judging Notes

If a dog faults an obstacle the judge should call fault simply as advice to the handler that his dog did *not* earn the point value for that obstacle. Be mindful that the dog is required to attempt the performance of another obstacle before returning to the faulted obstacle. However, dropped bars will not be reset and the jump with a downed bar will have no value.

Note that “fluffing” the chute of the collapsed tunnel will be problematic as the two doubles should come in rapid succession. Be alert to a problem of twisted fabric, which may be caused by the wind in an out-of-doors trial, or by the *yaw* of the dog in the performance. The judge might quickly step in to give the corner of the chute a tug to straighten it out. In dire circumstance the judge could halt play to prevent a twisted chute from being dangerous to the dog.

Variations

- Alternate doubling obstacle ~ the judge/course designer might specify an alternate doubling obstacle for *Heinz 57*. Indeed, in 2016 most agility organizations removed the collapsed tunnel as an allowed obstacle.

Using a contact obstacle, a bar jump, or the weave poles as the doubling obstacle raises the question: What to do if the obstacle is faulted? In a game like *Heinz 57* any penalty for faulting the doubling obstacle will likely earn a non-qualifying score.

Premium Blurb

Heinz 57 is a strategic dog's choice point accumulation game. The purpose of the game is to score exactly 57 points using a doubling obstacle (usually the collapsed tunnel).

Handler's Choice is scored points only. ER11

Helter Skelter

In the U.K., there is a dog agility class called Helter Skelter. The game is named after a children's ride at parks and fairs where a slide spirals down the side of a tower. This game is extremely popular with dogs and handlers alike. The early Helter Skelter courses tended to start with the dogs on the table at the center of a clockwise spiral course. The dogs would have to jump carefully for the first few jumps as they were close together and on sharp turns, but as the course went on, the dog could go faster and faster as the spiral unwound. Over the years, the class has evolved and nowadays it's often simply a heel-side spiral starting in the center. The courses look deceptively easy but with the increase in speed that these courses encourage, the traps come up really fast.

Briefing

Helter Skelter is traditionally run on a Jumpers course and may contain tunnels and weave poles. The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge. The handler may use voice commands and signals but may not touch the dog or any obstacle.

The judge will set a very aggressive standard course time based on a range of 5 to 6 yards per second.

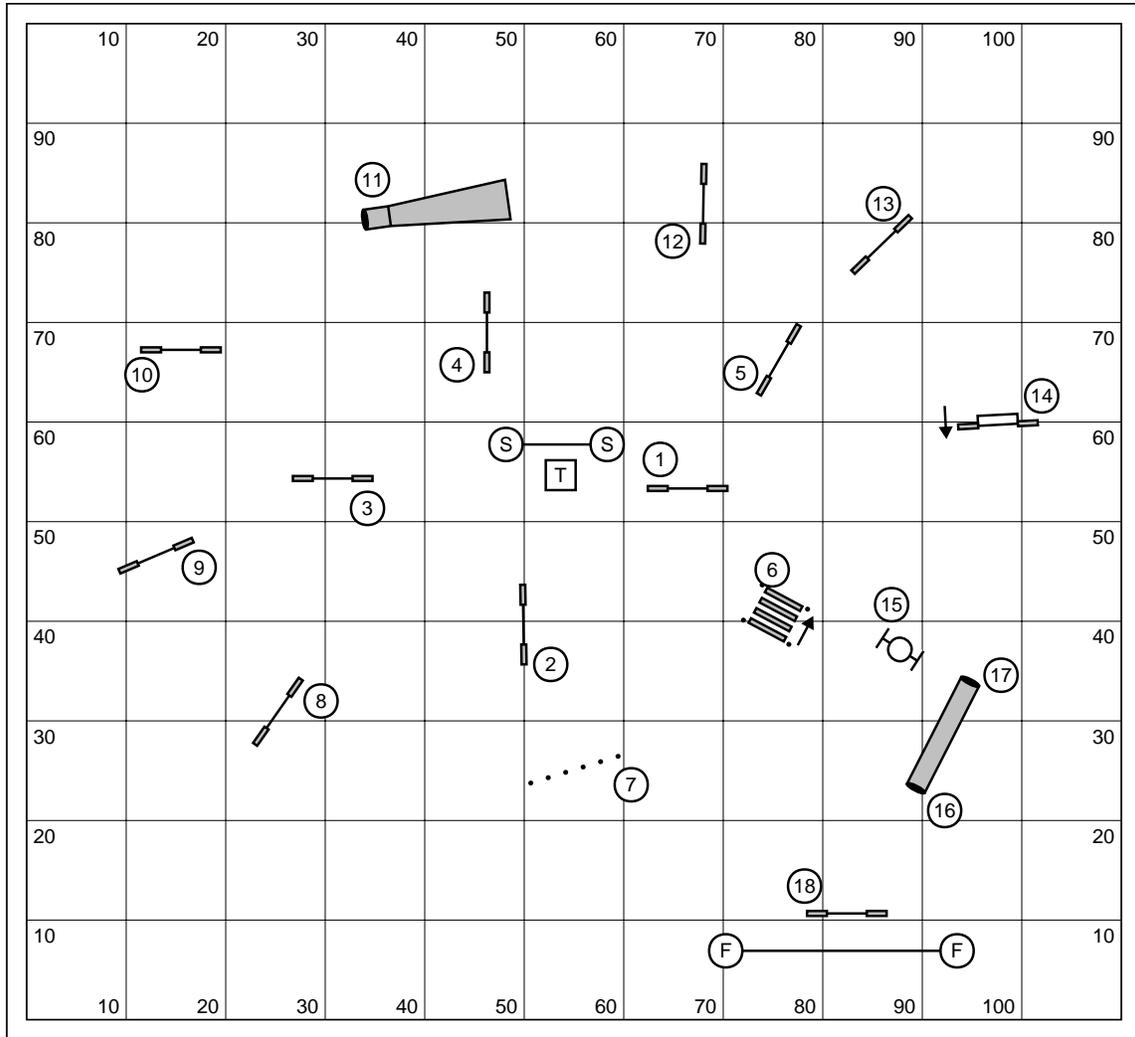
The competition is between dogs at a given jump height and skill level.

Scoring

Helter Skelter is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

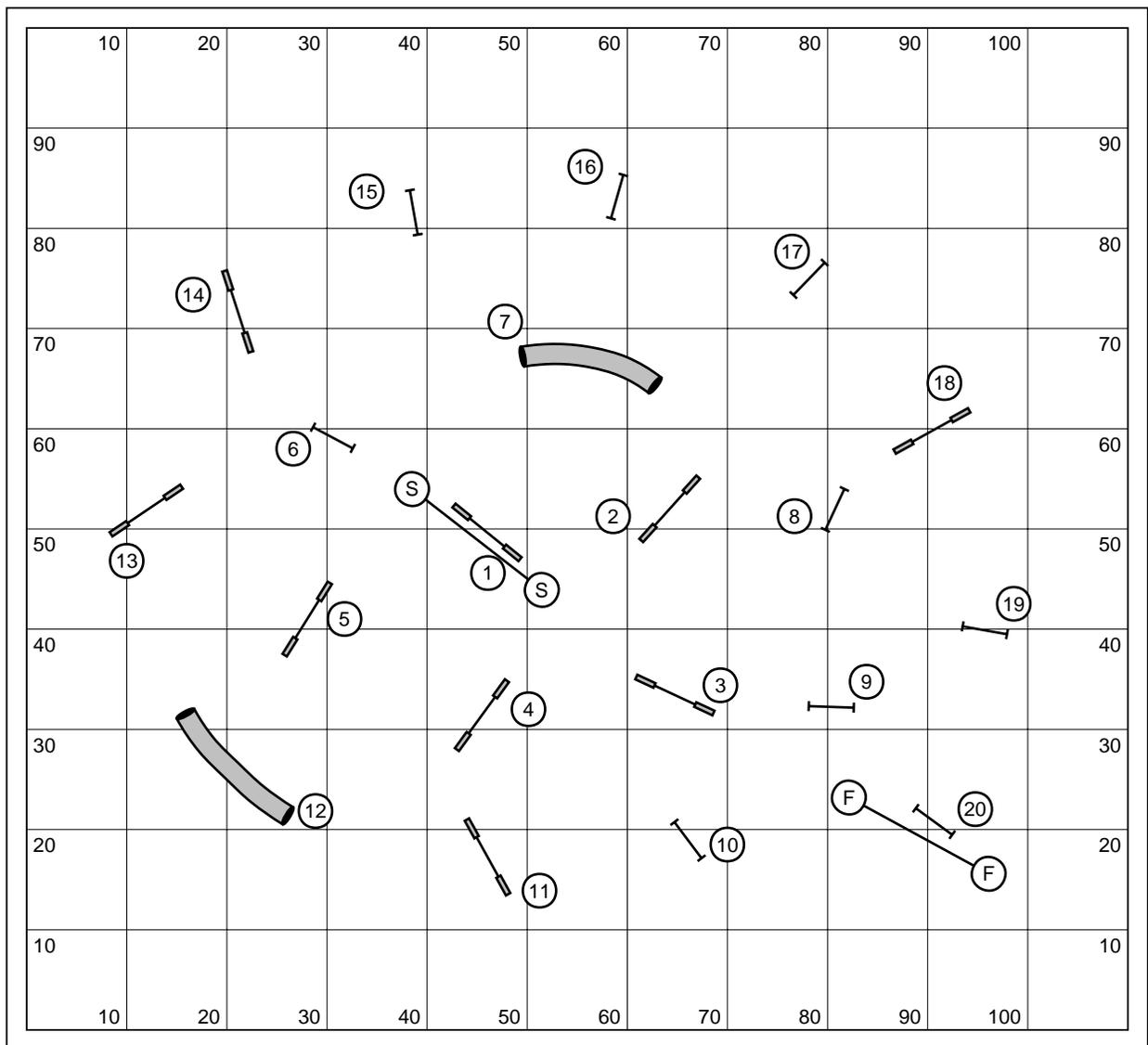
Traditionally refusals are not faulted in *Helter Skelter*.

Course Design



This is a Helter Skelter course designed by Sally Jones, a British agility competitor and agility judge. She writes for the top agility magazine in the U.K., the Agility Eye.

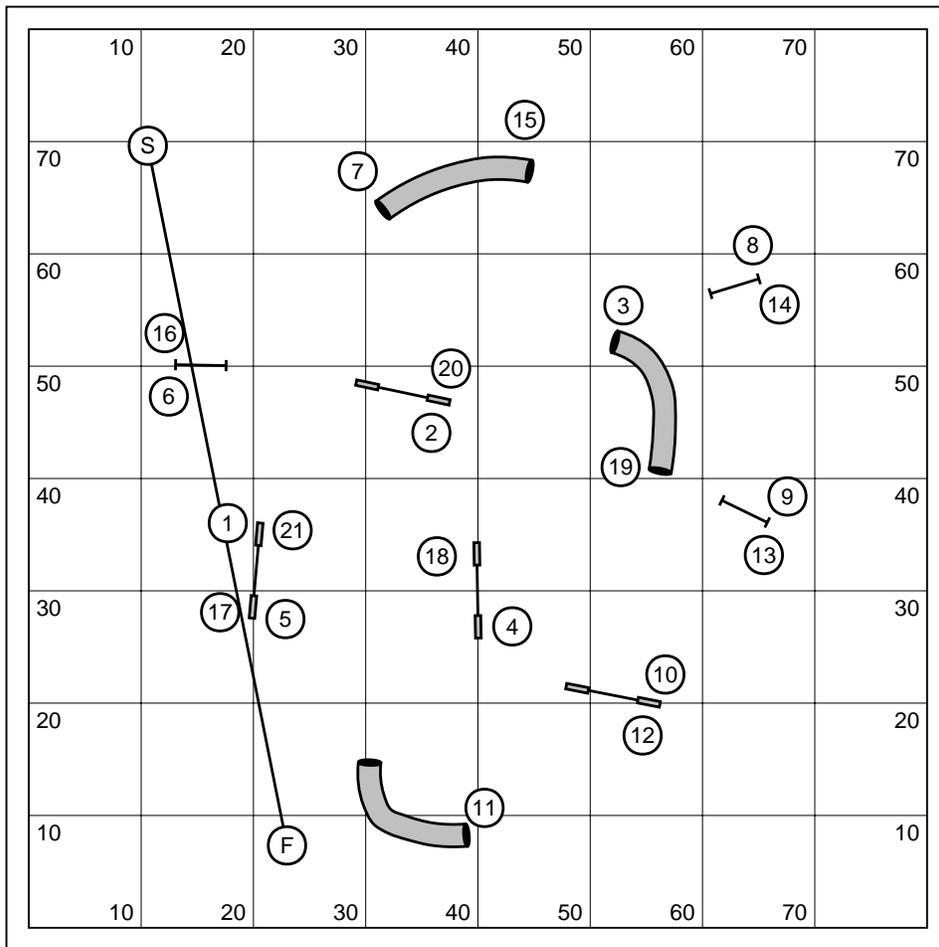
The Helter Skelter course is typically designed as a spiral, beginning in the middle and sweeping outward in increasingly longer loops around the center point. The course should consist of jumps, tunnels and weave poles only. One or more tables may be used to start or finish the run.



The *classic* design for Helter Skelter is faithful to the idea of a children’s playground slide that begins in a tight spiral and unwinds into loops of greater and greater size building a dizzying speed. With only one number to an obstacle the *classic* design can be a bit of a space hog.

There is no prohibition against using contact obstacles or weave poles in a Helter Skelter course; Though the course designer should be aware that technical obstacles will drag on the dog’s speed and probably work against the building speed.

The classic design lends itself to using all manner of specialty hurdles (the tire, spread hurdles, and the long jump).



The *there and back again* design begins with an unwinding spiral; but then turns the dog around and rewinds back into the center. This design has the advantage of using half as many obstacles as the *classic* design and can be played in about half the space.

The *there and back again* design adds a bit challenge in that the dog that has been wound up for nearly reckless speed has to be geared down for a more tightly turning sequence.

This design prohibits the use of one-directional obstacles like the teeter, the collapsed tunnel, and certain hurdles.

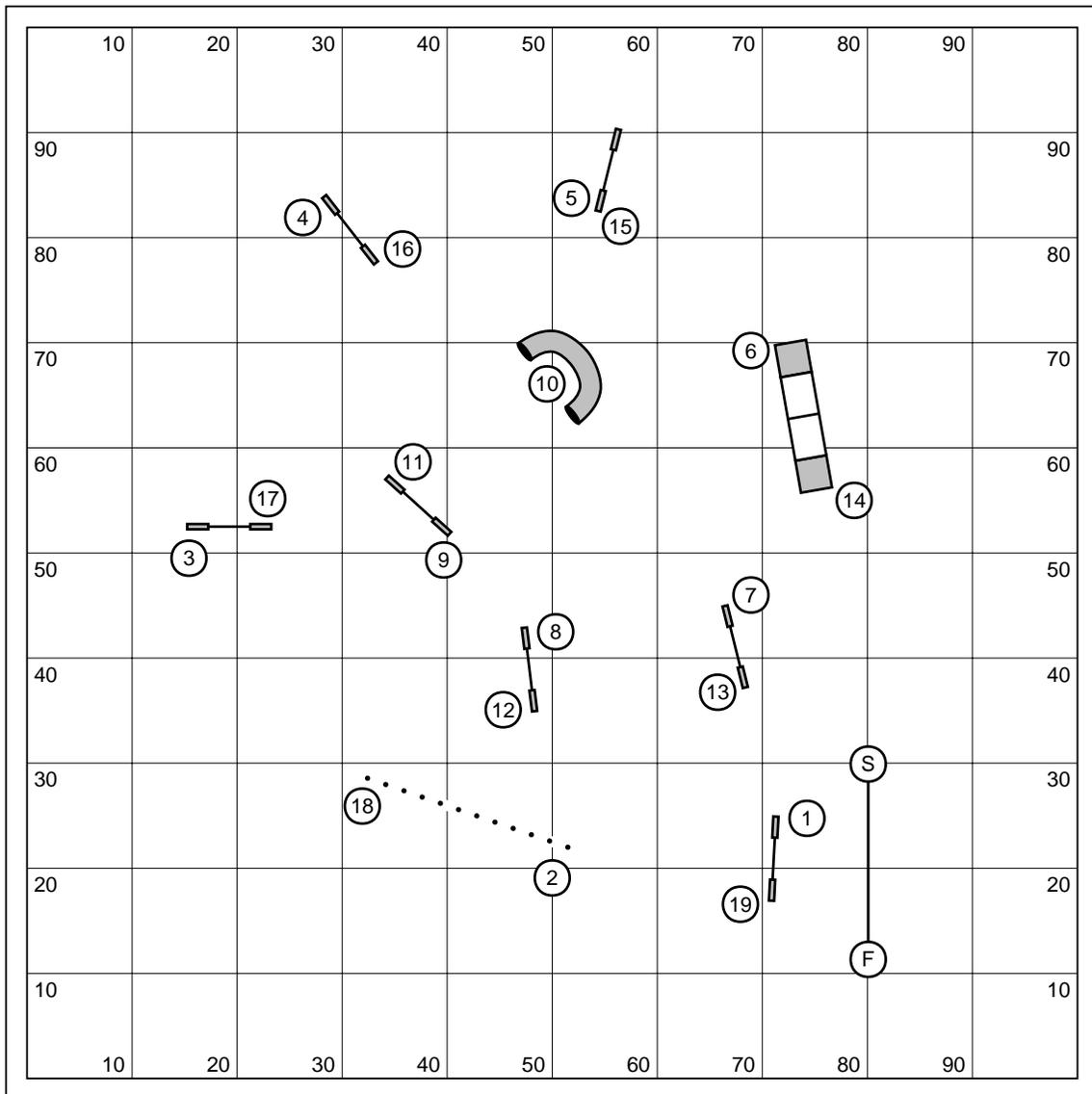
turns only after the dog has committed over a jump.

While in the inner part of the Helter Skelter course the turns are tighter; and so the handler may want to control the dog's working speed. Then on the outside the speed can pick up considerably.

In the Steeplechase variation, technical obstacles (A-frame and weave poles) are allowed in the outer loop of a Helter Skelter course. The handler should be mindful that the dog is building up tremendous speed as he works. The handler should be prepared to slow down the dog for an approach to the weave poles so that the dog has a controlled entry to the obstacle.

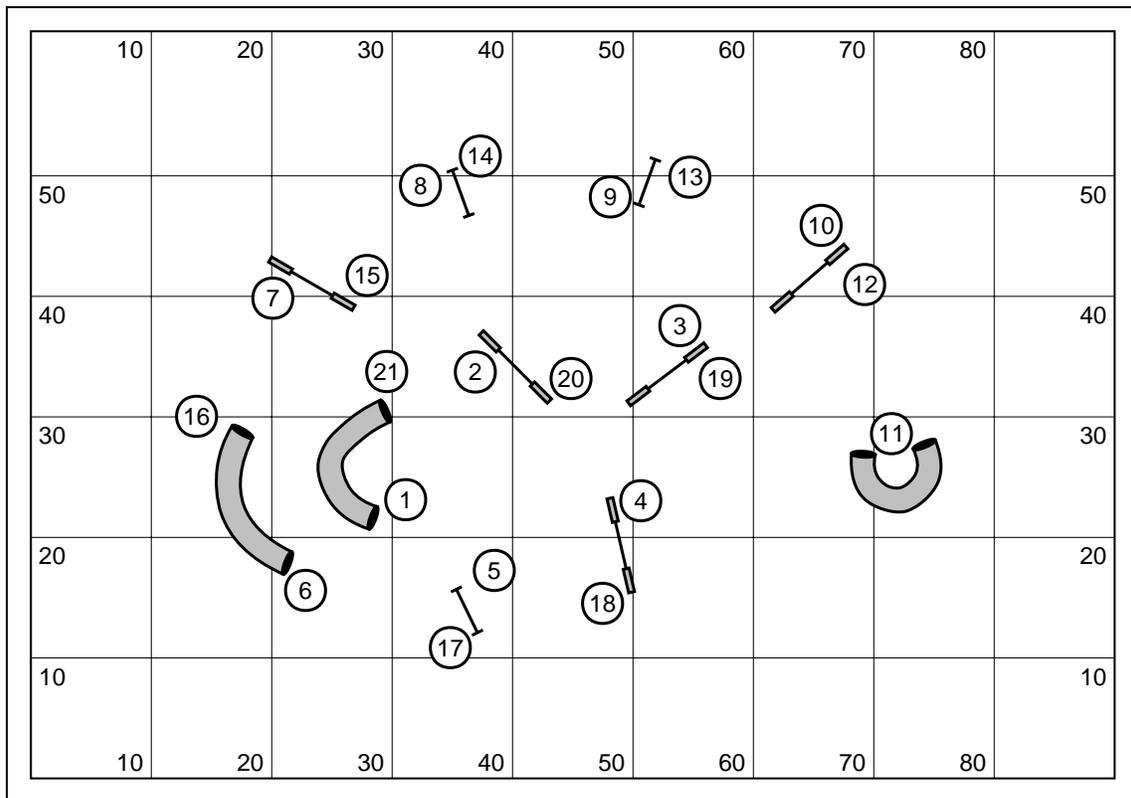
Variations

- Time, Plus Faults – Alternatively, Helter Skelter can be scored on a Time, Plus Faults basis
- Steeplechase variation – In this variation, an A-frame is included in the course and will be judged under the performance rules for the host organization.
- There and Back Again variation – This is a course design variation; the course will initially spiral outward and then turn back on itself to rewind. Of course the design *might* also be to begin on the outside winding in, and then double back to end on the outside again.



This is a sample of the Steeplechase variation of Helter Skelter. This game was used in the Dogwood agility league in 2002 and is based upon a course originally designed by Sally Jones (who did not include the A-frame).

This course layout can be used for both Novice and Advanced competitors. The Novice version begins at jump #3 and ends at jump #17.



This is an example of the *There and Back Again* variation, designed for the TDAA.

Premium Blurb

Helter Skelter is a game of speed and skill, played on a numbered course consisting of obstacles arranged in a spiral that builds speed. *Helter Skelter* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Impossible Tunnel Game

The Impossible Tunnel Game is a training game played at Bud Houston's Camp Dogwood in Ostrander, Ohio. The game has also been adapted for agility league play. This game teaches the handler to sharpen his movements and make clear presentations to the dog when working with tunnels. The game also helps with course-memorization skills. The action is brisk and upbeat. The handler can't miss a trick.

Briefing

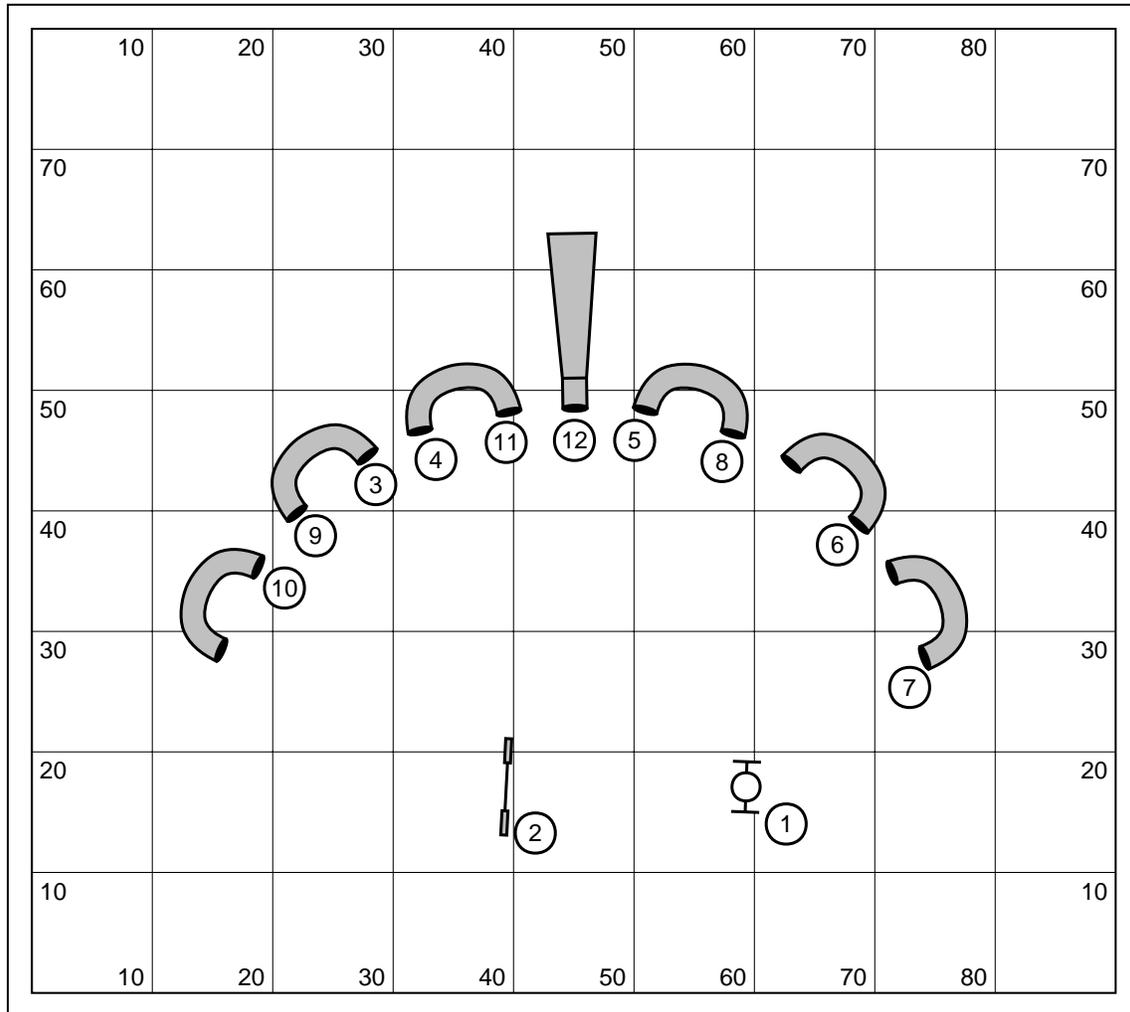
Run the sequence as numbered. The dog will be faulted for any off course. When jumps or contacts are used the dog will be faulted for dropped bars or missed contacts. At the judge's discretion, refusals may be faulted.

Scoring

The *Impossible Tunnel Game* is scored Time, Plus Faults.

- 5 faults for off course
- 5 faults for dropped bars (when jumps are used)
- 5 faults for missed contacts (when contact obstacles are used)
- 5 faults for refusals (optional)

Course Design



This is the classic Impossible Tunnel Game configuration, with a concave curve to a series of tunnels. However, the tunnels might also be set in a convex curve.

The tunnels should be arranged in a semi-circular pattern with an even 3' spacing between the apertures. A couple of hurdles are used to create flow into the arrangement of tunnels, making the first approach one of the most difficult. In a more advanced course, the judge may use a set of weave poles or a teeter in the stem, as these obstacles tend to “trap” the handler at the dog’s side.

The collapsed tunnel is typically the exit obstacle.

Strategies

Most of the strategies for surviving this game relate to simple strategies the handler should take into consideration when approaching a tunnel in any competition. For example:

- The handler should position his body on the turning side of a tunnel whenever possible. This is especially useful for Novice dogs that will tend to refuse a tunnel if the handler is away from the turning side.

Premium Blurb

The Impossible Tunnel Game is a numbered sequence which features a wicked tangle of tunnels. Obstacles other than tunnels may be used. The *Impossible Tunnel Game* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

In and Out

The game of In and Out is the invention of Sheri Boone. This game was created to encourage handlers to think about motivation and strategy. The game is considered motivating because movement and point accumulation on a course does not stop until time runs out. The game is considered strategic for the sole purpose of accumulating points in a variety of different ways.

Briefing

The course is divided into three different segments. The “inner” loop, the “in and out” loop and the “outer” loop. The dog must start with the “inner” loop, move to the in-and-out loop and finish with the outer loop.

If a fault occurs during a loop, the dog must immediately restart from the first obstacle in that loop. The loop is repeated until completed without fault, and is finished when the dog starts the next loop. The judge will call out “fault” when a dog has faulted an obstacle.

The game is scored under rules for performance for the respective host organization. The dog is faulted for dropping a jump bar, missing a contact, or going off course. Refusals are not faulted.

The standard course time shall be established by the judge. The timekeeper will blow a whistle at the end of course time. If the dog has not completed the course, he must be directed to the finish line to stop time.

Each obstacle has an assigned point value. The system for assigning point values may be arbitrary or fixed for the technical merit of the obstacle. For example, the point system might be:

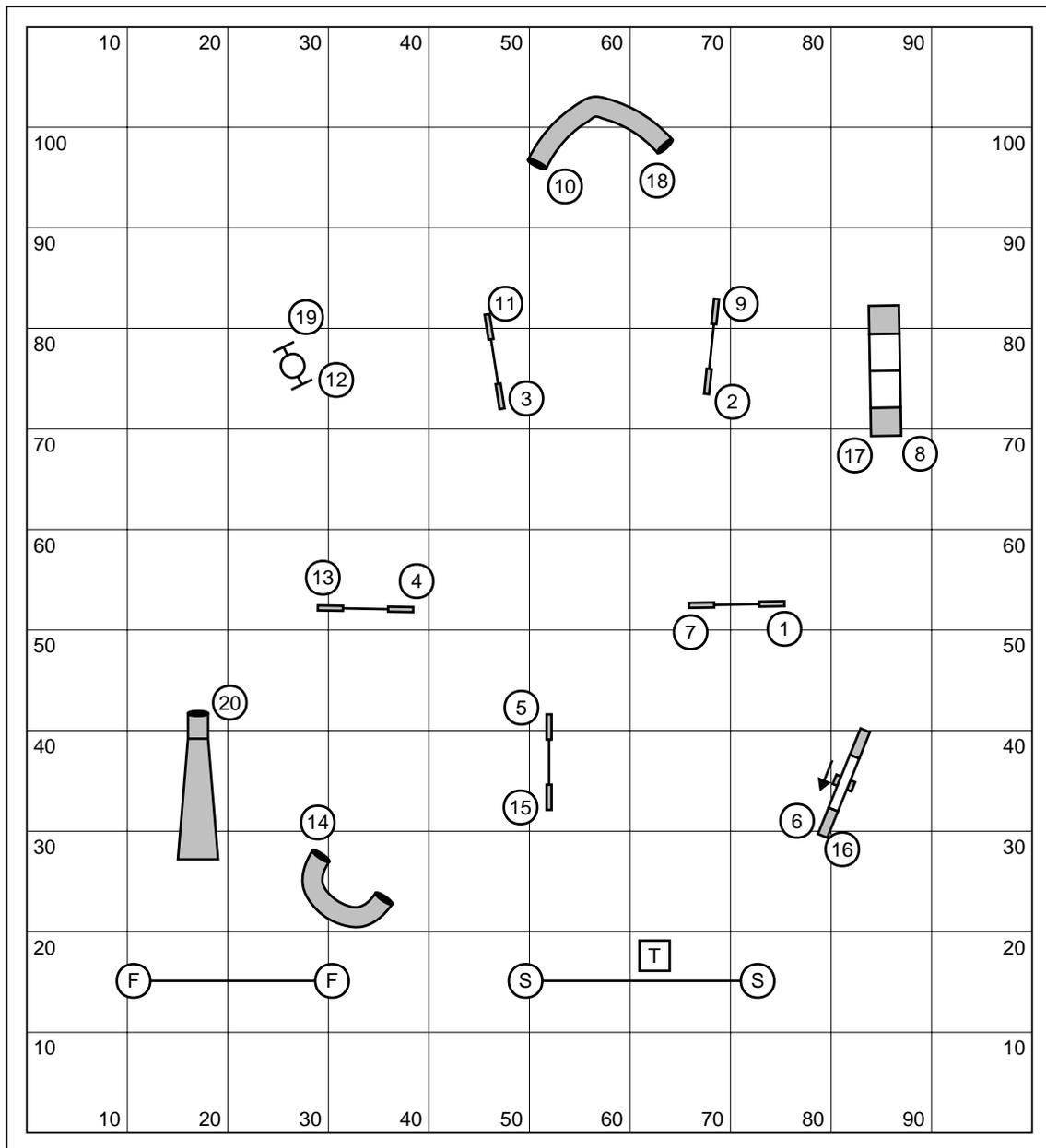
- 1 point for jumps
- 3 points for tunnels and the tire
- 5 points for contact obstacles and weave poles

If the dog completes the entire course before time runs out, the difference between the dog’s time and the course time becomes bonus points added to the score. All times are rounded up to the next second.

Scoring

In and Out is scored Points, Then Time. The dog with the most points wins. Time is a tiebreaker only.

Course Design



This In and Out course was designed by Sheri Boone. The course is divided into three different segments: the inner loop, the in-and-out loop and the outer loop. In this course, obstacles 1-5 are the inner loop, obstacles 6-15 are the in-and-out loop, and obstacles 16-20 are the outer loop.

The In and Out course is always quite a design challenge for the course designer. Any of the agility obstacles may be utilized in the course design. Yet the obstacles should be layered into two essential loops which are performed by the dog in their entirety, and can be interwoven into a unique loop in the second leg of the dog's performance of the course.

A table is typically used to start the dog.

Variations

- In the **Rukis** variation, no points are awarded in a faulted loop. Allowing points to be kept within a faulted loop is a flaw of the game and could encourage bad or unsafe execution.
- In the **Zelinger** variation the team may go to the table to stop the clock and end their run, thus earning the points thus far. If they think they can make it around the outer loop a second time before the course time lapses and make it to the table they double their points, if they fail they lose all points.

Qualifying and Titles

In and Out is a qualifying game for the TDAA.

For TDAA courses the standard course time for each different level should be set at a rate consistent with those specified in the TDAA rules and regulations for standard classes.

Strategies

Points never stop accumulating! Every time an obstacle is performed correctly, points are awarded for that obstacle.

The handler should be careful not to let down because a mistake has occurred. Keep running the course until time runs out. Points continue to accumulate.

This game encourages handlers to push the limit. They must decide if faulting an obstacle will give them more points (because they would have the chance to repeat the same loop) or if they should run clean (bonus points for coming in under time). Note that faulting an obstacle in a loop is not advantageous in the Rukis variation.

Premium Blurb

In and Out is comprised of three distinct elements, or loops: An inner loop; and outer loop; and a combined in-and-out loop. The final in-and-out loop may be repeated, for points, until the expiration of time. The purpose of *In and Out* is to score as many points as possible. A dog that faults a loop must repeat that loop. *In and Out* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Jackpot

Jackpot is the invention of Linda Eickholdt, a titling game in Canine Performance Events (CPE). Jackpot tests the course planning strategies of the handler and the dog's ability to work at a distance

Briefing

Jackpot is run as a two-part game: 1) Point Accumulation and 2) Gamble

Point Accumulation

The first part consists of the handler and dog working the course, attempting to accumulate at least the minimum required points for their level, in the stated amount of time. The end of the accumulation time is signified by the timekeeper's whistle.

Back-to-back performances of obstacles are allowed at any time. The following obstacles may be taken back-to-back, provided the dog makes a complete loop and approaches the obstacle in the correct direction safely: teeter, ascending broad jump, ascending double jump, triple jump and collapsed tunnel. If the judge deems the back-to-back performance unsafe, no points will be awarded for the performance. One obstacle or combination of obstacles that is designated as judge's choice may be executed only once for the higher point value.

Gamble

The handler and dog then proceed to work through a series of obstacles within a time set by the judge. The handler must stay out of a designated area while the dog works within this area with only commands from the handler. The dog must execute the obstacles in the correct order, without faults and cross the finish line within the gamble time.

No two gamble obstacles can be performed in a row in the opening sequence, forward or backward, unless the judge declares differently in his briefing. If a gamble jump bar is knocked down in the opening sequence, the gamble is null and void. The bar will not be reset.

If the judge says "Thank you" (or signals with a whistle) at any point, the team must move immediately to the finish line to stop the clock. Any delay in heading for the finish line or attempting to perform any obstacle on the way to the finish line will result in the loss of the last point value earned. The team will not lose the last point value earned if the dog takes an obstacle without handler direction. The judge's decision is final.

When the handler and dog have earned the required accumulation points or greater, and they have performed the gamble without faults within the required time, they have earned a qualifying score.

Point Accumulation

- For 8" and 12" dogs, 40 to 45 seconds, as determined by the judge
- For 16", 20", and 24" dogs, 35 to 40 seconds, as determined by the judge

Gamble

- For 8" and 12" dogs, up to 18 seconds, as determined by the judge
- For 16", 20", and 24" dogs, up to 16 seconds, as determined by the judge

Fractions of time are dropped for scoring purposes. The timekeeper shall report time in 1/100th of a second for placement purposes.

For the purposes of point accumulation, the point values of obstacles are listed below.

- jumps – 1 point
- tire or window jump, pipe tunnel, collapsed tunnel, weave poles (5 to 8) – 3 points
- weave poles (10 - 12, in higher levels of play), contacts – 5 points
- judge's choice, only one – 7 points

One or more obstacles and designated as judge's choice due to difficult placement or distance from the start line.

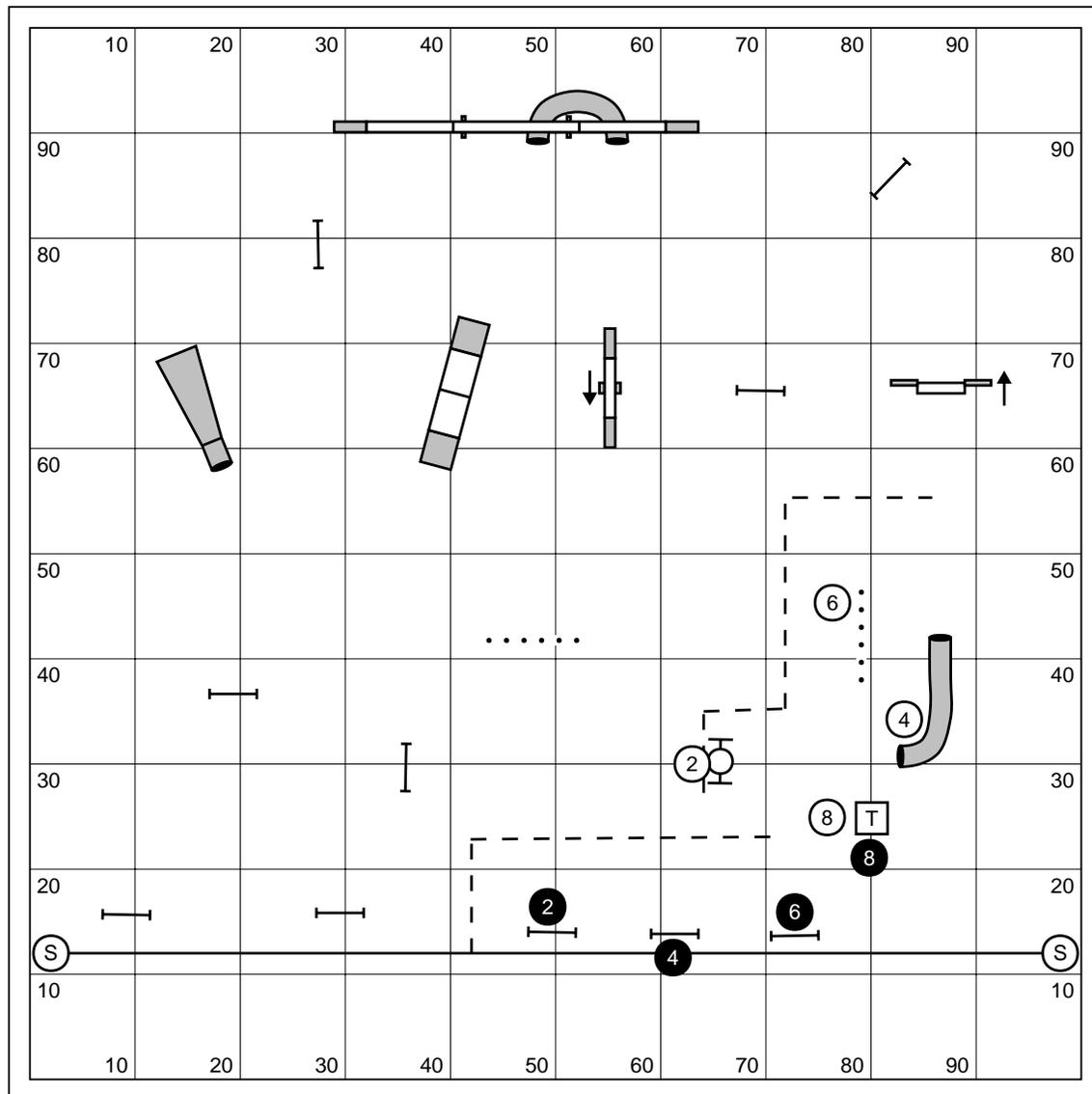
- Jump combo - 2 to 3 jumps, single bar only
- Contact or long set of weaves
- Tire, pipe tunnel or collapsed tunnel, triple spread. If the triple spread is designated the judge's choice, it can only be performed once during the point accumulation for 7 points. The second time will be for the normally assigned points.

Obstacles in the gamble are numbered 2-4-6-8. The corresponding number of the obstacle is the values of each of the obstacles performed successfully by the dog.

Scoring

Jackpot is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



This course was designed by CPE judge Al Ceranko and played on August 18, 2001 at Ravenna, OH. The judge specified that either one or the other of the two gambles must be attempted after the point-accumulation period.

Variations

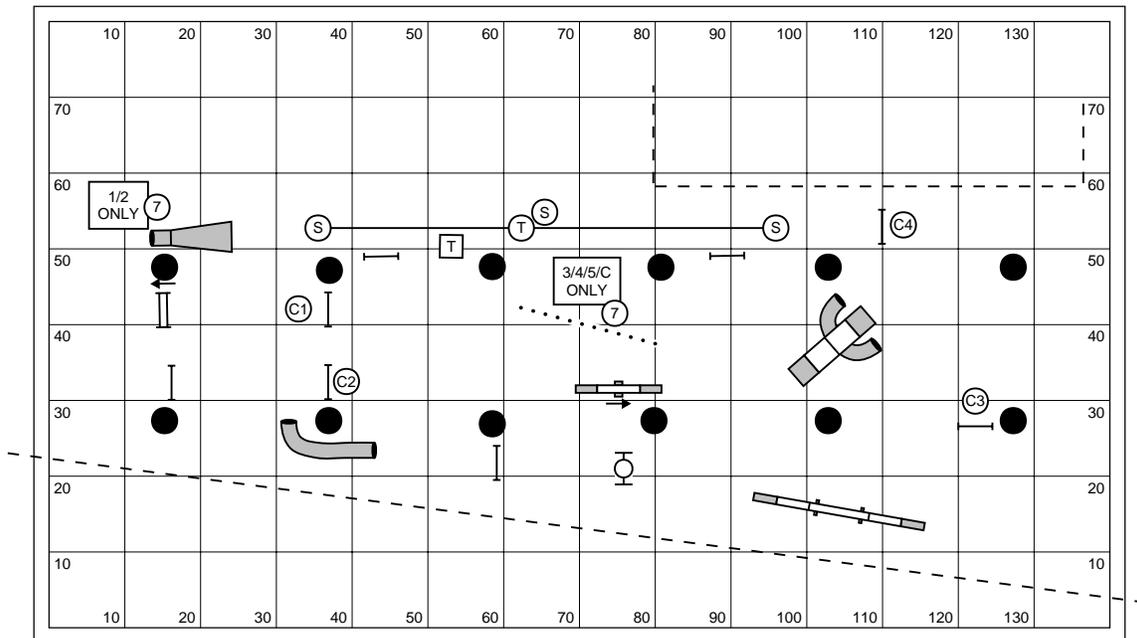
Jackpot is rich with variations. Al Ceranko, a judge and course reviewer for CPE, explains the evolution of *Jackpot*: “Observation and experience pointed up that some exhibitors had a fear of the game, simply because it looked too difficult. Others had become disheartened because they had been so unsuccessful with *Gamblers* in other registries so often. It seemed logical that there should be a bridge to help build or restore handler confidence and a way to teach at a trial.”

In CPE, a judge may use a gamble variation in lieu of the traditional gamble. The judge will be responsible for adequately explaining the variation to the exhibitors.

- **Four-Corners** variation – No distance involved in the gamble. Four obstacles are

stipulated in “four corners” of the course, which the dog must complete at some point during point accumulation, without faulting any. The dog must get the required points in the time allotted.

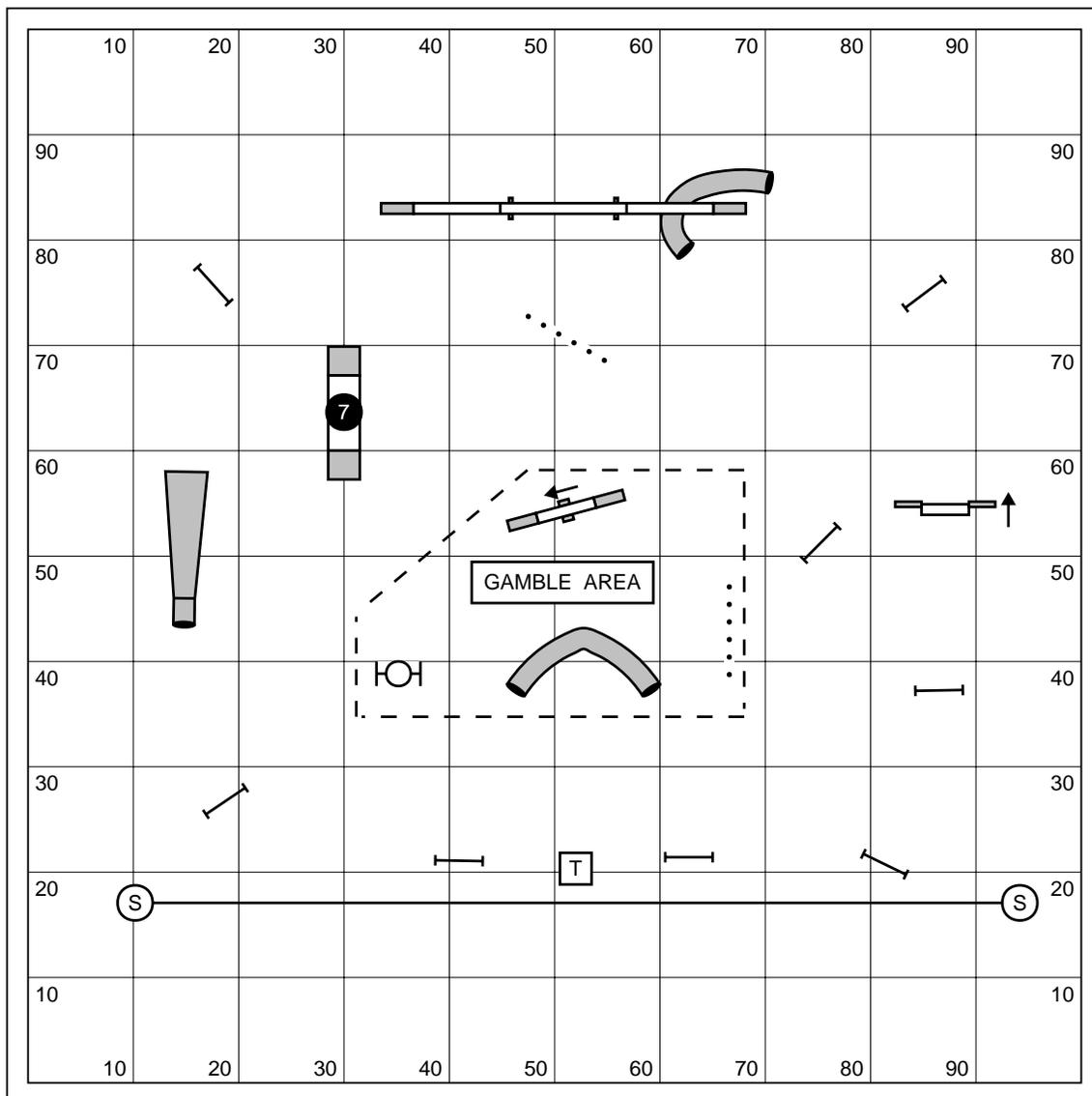
This game has a point-accumulation period, a judge’s choice (in this case, different between the levels) and a gamble period, following the rules of the basic version of the game. Obstacles may be taken twice in the point-accumulation period and back-to-back if done safely, as determined by the judge. Scoring is the 1-3-5 point system with 7 points for the judge’s choice.



This course is the 4-Corners variation of Jackpot. The course was designed by Al Ceranko and played at Gem City on April 7, 2001. The judge specified that the dog must complete all 4 "C" jumps (gamble), plus earn the required points and get dog’s paw on table to stop the clock before the whistle to qualify.

- **Create Your Own** variation – This variation is traditional in the sense that there is a defined opening and gamble. But in the gamble the handler must stay outside the gamble obstacle box. The judge will stipulate an obstacle that the dog must do and the order in which it must be done. The dog is required to get to the table before the expiration of time.

This game has a point accumulation, a judge’s choice, a gamble period, following the rules of the basic version of the game. Obstacles may be taken twice in point-accumulation period and back-to-back if done safely, as determined by the judge. The four obstacles in the gamble area may be performed twice each during point accumulation, with no restrictions on sequence or order.



This is an example of the Create Your Own variation of Jackpot. This course was presented by CPE judge, Al Ceranko at Tinley Park, IL on September 8, 2001. The judge stipulated that levels 4, 5, and C must complete the weave poles and one more gamble obstacle, Level 3 must complete the teeter and one more gamble obstacle, and Levels 1 and 2 must either complete the tire or the tunnel, plus one more gamble obstacle. The second obstacle may not be the same as first obstacle.

- **Gamblers Choice** variation – In this variation, multiple gambles will be defined on the course and there will be no traditional gamble period. The handler may direct the dog to perform any gamble at any time during point accumulation. The handler will be allowed to attempt each gamble only once. The gambles may be nested or exist in entirely different parts of the course. The dog must complete at least one of the gambles in order to qualify.

Premium Blurb

Jackpot is a two-part game. The first part consists of the dog working to accumulate at least the minimum required points for their level. In the second part the dog must be directed to attempt a distance challenge earning points for each successfully completed. *Jackpot* is scored Points, Then Time. ER5

Jackpot Gamblers

Judge Needs to Catch a Plane Variation ~ Jackpot Gamblers is a nifty variation of the (nearly) traditional gamblers game. In the interest of limiting the amount of time required to run the Jackpot/Gamblers class.

Briefing

The objective of this game is for the dog to accumulate 21 points as soon as possible and then to perform the distance challenge. There will be *no* whistle to indicate the end of point accumulation.

Big dogs (22" and 26") will have 45 seconds.

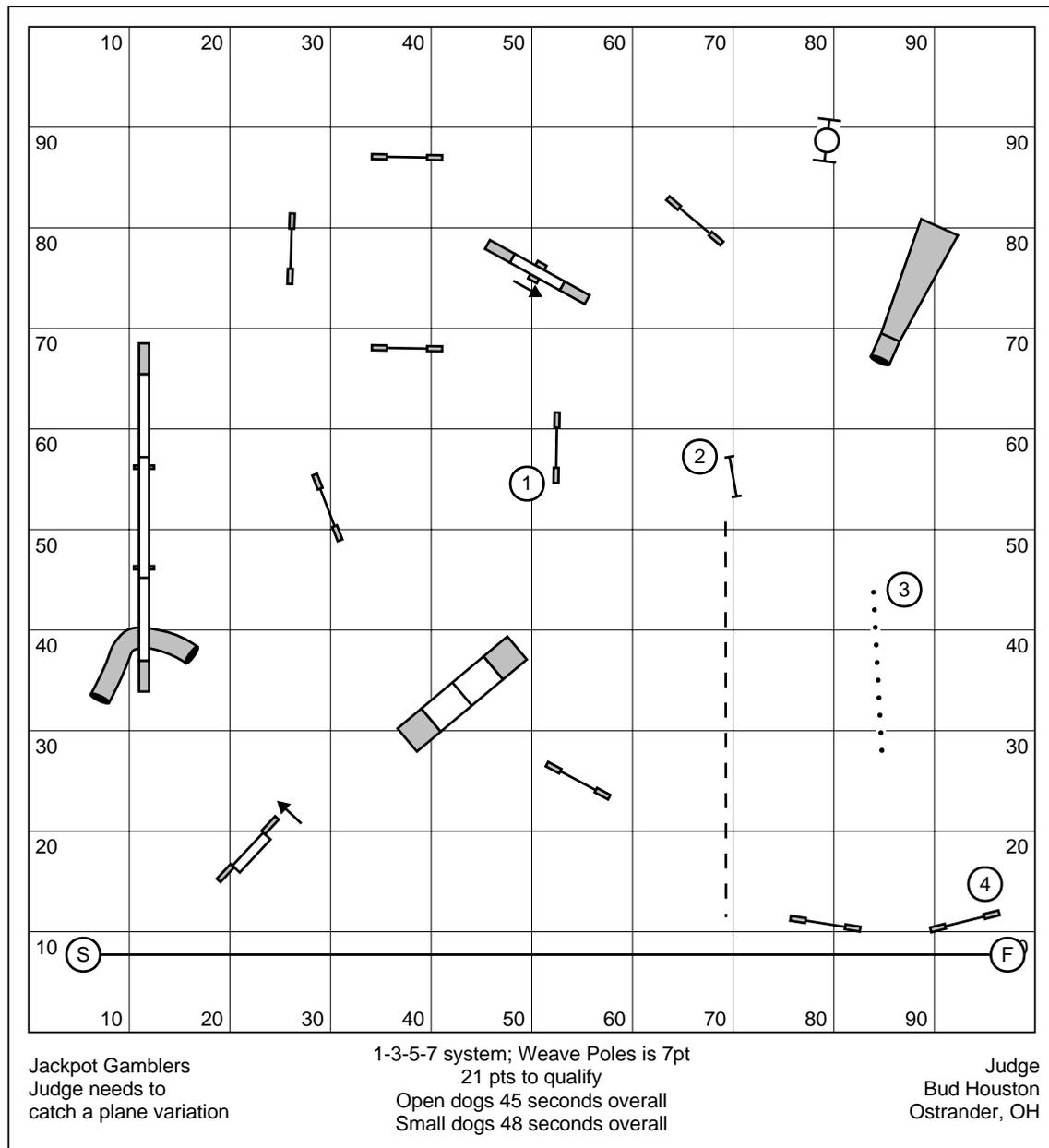
Small dogs (12" and 16") will have 48 seconds.

Successful completion of the gamble shall be negated if:

- a. the dog faults an obstacle during performance of the gamble
- b. during point accumulation the dog drops the bar on a jump used in the gamble sequence
- c. the dog performs two gamble obstacles one after the other during point accumulation
- d. the time whistle sounds before the dog has completed the gamble

Obstacles on field can be taken only twice for points. Back-to-back performance of any obstacle is allowed. *However*, the dog may not be directed to perform two different contact obstacles, one after the other. The dog must perform another obstacle between those two performances.

Course Design



The design of the “Judge Needs to Catch a Plane” variation of *Jackpot* is pretty much the same as a traditional *Gamblers* course.

Scoring

Jackpot Gamblers is scored Time Only. In order to qualify, a point accumulation of at least 21 points is required *and* successful performance of the gamble. With these conditions met, the lowest time wins.

There is no benefit for scoring more than 21 points, and no penalty for doing so.

25 points are awarded for successful completion of the gamble.

Discussion

Here's a nifty variation of the (nearly) traditional gamblers game. In the interest of limiting the amount of time required to run the Jackpot/Gamblers class, the judge changed the scoring basis to "time only". How would this work?

Given that 21 points *and* successful completion of the gamble are required to qualify, the win and all placements would be based on who could do so most quickly. While this variation removes the element of timing-to-the-approach which is an important part of the traditional game; it introduces an interesting strategy of finding the most efficient path for point accumulation.

The game would be played with a single whistle... this would be a combination of times that would ordinarily constitute the gamblers class. For example, in a 30 second point accumulation period given 15 seconds for performance of the gamble, the whistle will sound at 45 seconds. Of course this means if the whistle sounds the dog dig not qualify.

However, what we are more likely to find is that the whistle will seldom sound as the teams whip through the required point accumulation as quickly as possible and make the attempt on the gamble. As a consequence the class will move along with great efficiency.

Competitors' Analysis

This class clearly provides an opportunity for a handler to outwit the younger and fleeter kids who'll run us all down in a *follow-the-numbers* game. Those of us a bit older and slower might for once win with our own special talents, cunning and guile.

This particular course is a considerable riddle. The weave poles offer a 7-point value, which is only sweetened by the proximity of two 3-point obstacles in flow. However, all of this tends to trap the handler back in the corner of the ring, with no really good way out. The teeter is presented in the wrong direction, and below it are two jumps belonging to the gamble sequence and so aren't very promising.

Doing back-to-back weave poles yields a quick 14 points (only so long as the dog actually gives a quick performance, of course); but also traps the team in an area of the course scarcely populated with pointed obstacles.

One possible solution would be to begin with spread-jump to the dogwalk, then sweep around for back-to-back performances of the A-frame. This yields about 19 points leaving the handler with the simple riddle of how to pick up two jumps after the second performance of the A-frame and have a pretty timely approach to the first jump of the gamble sequence. This strategy has a bit of risk in that the dog is at *least* once directed in point accumulation to jump the first jump in the gamble. If the dog should drop this bar, then the gamble bonus will be lost.

The handler should choose a course most appropriate for the skills of his own dog. If the dog isn't a particularly good weaving dog, then the handler might consider not going anywhere near the weave poles; if the dog is apt to miss a contact or two or is slow on contact obstacles, it might be a good idea to avoid the contacts.

Premium Blurb

Jackpot Gamblers is a nifty variation of the (nearly) traditional gamblers game. In the

interest of limiting the amount of time required to run the Jackpot/Gamblers class. The basic premise is that the dog will score 21 points, do the gamble, and get out. *Jackpot Gamblers* is scored Time Only. ER5

JC & Hazel's Stand in the Middle

This game is named with great affection for JC and Hazel Thompson who thrilled agility spectators in the early 1990s as they traveled all over the country to show their dogs, Robby and Rick Rack. JC would walk out into the middle of the ring, stand there and direct his dog from a nonchalant post, remaining in the middle of the ring.

Briefing

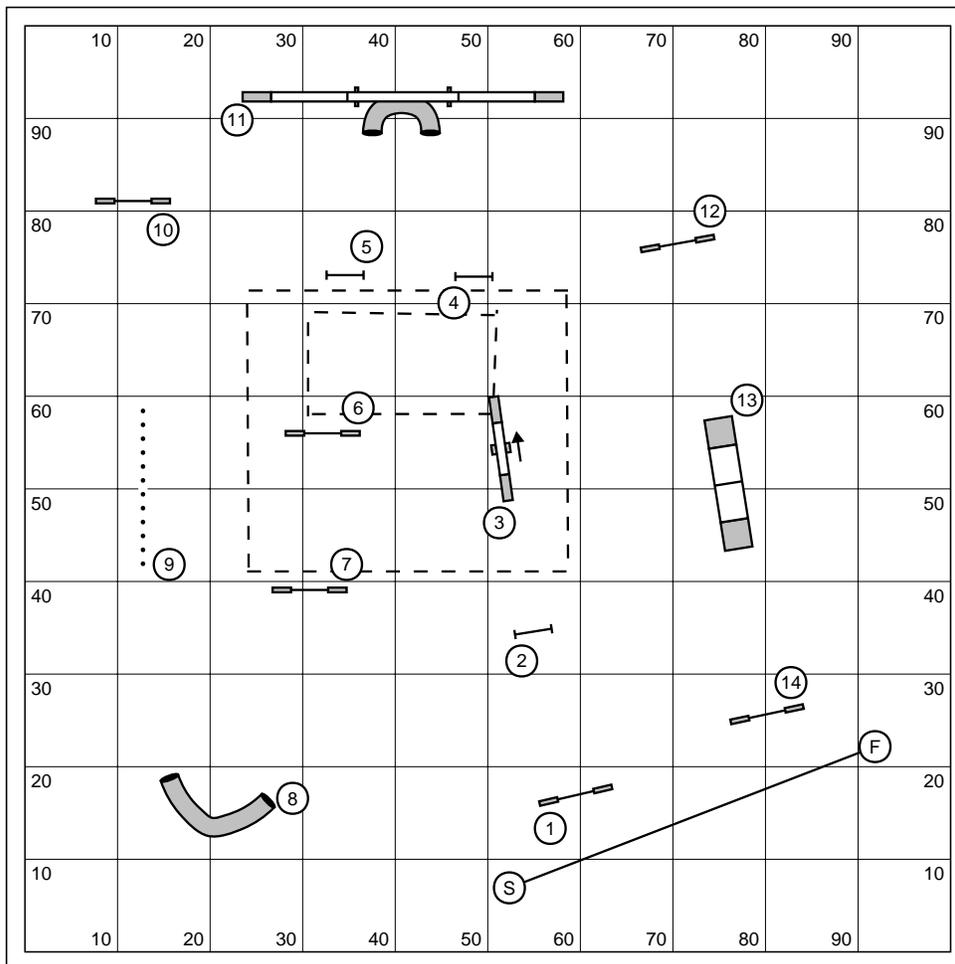
This course must be run in the order and direction specified by the judge.

The handler will confine himself to one of two containment areas. If the handler remains in the larger containment area, the dog will earn a bonus of 30 seconds. If the handler remains in the smaller containment area, the dog will earn a bonus of sixty seconds.

Scoring

JC & Hazel's Stand in the Middle is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. Faults are assigned according to the rules for performance for the host organization. Refusals are not faulted.

Course Design



This sample course is a NADAC course. Unfortunately the judge's name has been

perform any of the obstacles on the field as in the point accumulation period of a gamblers class. The dog can earn no points unless the handler is standing inside one of the two containment areas designated by the four markers on the course. If the handler is standing inside of the larger containment area the point values for obstacles shall be: jumps, 1 point; tunnel and tire, 3 points; contact obstacles and weave poles, 5 points. If the handler is standing inside of the smaller containment area the point values are doubled. Obstacles can be taken as often as the handler (or dog, as the case might be) desires. However, back-to-back performances are not permitted. A faulted obstacle can earn no points for the dog. If a bar drops on a jump the jump is out of play for the duration of the dog's performance. At the end of the point accumulation the handler is required to direct his dog to the table to stop time. If the handler remains inside of the larger containment area all points the dog has earned will be doubled. If the handler remains inside of the smaller containment area, all points are quadrupled. The table is not active until the end of point accumulation is sounded.

Strategies

Buy yourself a copy of the *Joker's Notebook* (available at www.dogagility.org/newstore). You actually have to train your dog to work at a distance if you have any expectation of playing a game like this.

Qualifying and Titles

This game is eligible for qualifying games scores under TDAA rules. The judge should try to ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate for the level of dogs in competition.

The Monkey in the Middle variation uses qualifying criteria that is based upon point accumulation. The number of points required really depends on the amount of time given to the dogs to accumulate points, as well as the number and values of obstacles on the field. In the sample course shown above the qualifying rates were set as follows:

- Games I – 18 points
- Games II – 36 points
- Games III – 72 points

The Katie Duke variation is not eligible for a qualifying games score.

Premium Blurb

JC & Hazel's Stand in the Middle is a follow-the-numbers game in which the handler is confined to a small area of the course while the dog works away. This game calls for excellent distance Skills. *JC & Hazel's Stand in the Middle* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER5

Jokers Wild

Jokers Wild is the invention of Ken Tatsch. This version of the Gamblers game is intended for dog agility enthusiasts who have mastered the basic elements of distance work. This game has been significantly abridged from the original and simpler version and is used in agility league play.

Briefing

While Time Gamble tends to cater to newer agility handlers, Jokers Wild is exactly the opposite. Most dogs and handlers who do well with this game have mastered all of the elements of standard Gamblers to a high degree.

Jokers Wild is a series of gambles that contain one or more of the four elements (distance, direction, obstacle performance, and discrimination) described in the Gamblers section of this book. Each gamble is slightly harder than the previous one.

All dogs will run under a maximum performance time of sixty seconds. Fifteen seconds should be allotted for each gamble. A simple point value is assigned to each of the gambles when completed in their entirety.

- A gamble, 10 points in 15 seconds or less
- B gamble, 20 points in 30 seconds or less
- C gamble, 30 points in 45 seconds or less
- D gamble, 40 points in 60 seconds or less

A dog must successfully complete a gamble within the set time in order to go on to the next higher (and more difficult) gamble. Dogs that do not complete the gamble are eliminated, and the handler must direct the dog to the table or finish line to stop time. Faulting any obstacle in the gamble (knocked bars and missed contacts) will be counted a failure.

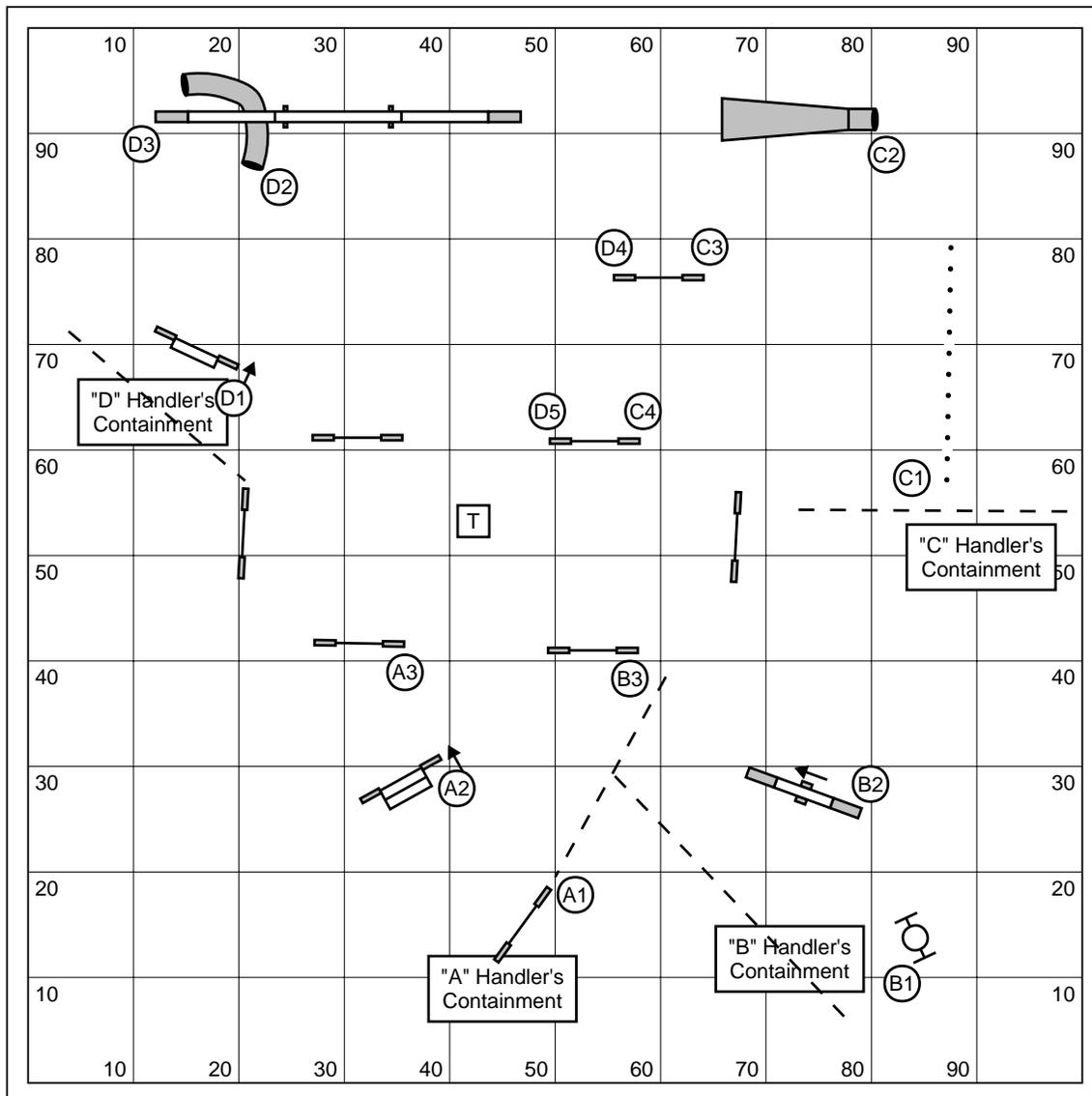
A handler and dog continue on the course, going from gamble to gamble, until they either complete the entire course successfully or fail a gamble attempt and are then eliminated.

Since Jokers Wild requires distance and obstacle control, most new handlers can be eliminated quickly. Thus, this particular game should be reserved for more advanced dogs and handlers.

Scoring

Joker's Wild is scored Points, Then Time. The winner of Jokers Wild is the dog that completes the most advanced gamble in its entirety in the fastest time.

Course Design



This Jokers Wild course is very advanced and not the course you want to put up in anything but competition in Masters. Each of the four distance challenges here keeps the handler back in a flat-footed position with little to direct the dog other than verbal commands.

The Jokers Wild course should be designed with a progressively more challenging series of distance challenges. The handlers' containment line for each should be clearly marked. The table should be positioned somewhat central to all of the distance challenges on course as it will be used to stop time if the dog fails in any one of the jokers.

Strategies

It might be true that a good distance training program is the only reasonable means to prepare for a game like this, particularly if the handler is required to stand flat-footed at a predetermined handling point and send the dog away to work.

However, if the course and the judge allow it, the distance challenges should be

approached wherever possible with the handler working in a smooth, flowing path. At all costs, avoid standing, pointing, and sending. Dogs react much better to movements than to voice commands.

Qualifying and Titles

Jokers Wild is a qualifying game for both Just For Fun Agility and TDAA. For each, the qualifying requirements are:

- Games I – A gamble
- Games II – B gamble
- Games III – C or D gamble

The judge should be very careful to design Gamblers challenges appropriate to the experience and competition level of the class.

Variations

- **Progressive Gamblers** – This variation of Jokers Wild can be used in training. Initially, a very simple gamble is attempted. With successful completion of the first gamble, a second gamble is attempted. The second gamble uses the first gamble as a basis, adding another obstacle. Beginning dogs tend to have more success at this form of Jokers Wild since the dog will key partly on a previously performed gamble. In essence, part of the gamble can be pattern trained.
- **League play** variation – Each distance challenge on the course is assigned a point value based on its complexity. Unlike in the standard Jokers Wild game, the dog's turn does not end if the handler fails an early distance challenge; he gets the opportunity to try the next one. The dog and handler with the most distance challenge points win.
- **Finley** variation ~ Like the *league play variation* failing at an on-course gamble does not immediately disqualify the team. In the *Finley* variation the dog is finished if he fails on two gambles consecutively.

Premium Blurb

Jokers Wild is a distance game that features several distance challenges of increasing complexity. As each gamble is mastered the dog moves on to the next! The dog that scores the most points is the winner. *Joker's Wild* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

JUMP

The game JUMP is like the old version of HORSE in basketball. The rules are pretty much the same. It may be a game of distance, of style, or of sequencing. JUMP is the invention of Terri Everline who trains in northwest Illinois with two agility schools, BC Dog Training and Meyer's Kennel.

Briefing

A running order is created by random draw. The first “shooter” must will declare the sequence or challenge then run it with his dog. If successful each competitor in turn takes a shot at the sequence. The shooter may incorporate a specific handling movement or some other challenge.

Scoring

If the shooter fails when demonstrating the sequence, the team earns a letter in JUMP. Failure is when the dog goes off course, faults an obstacle, or fails to meet some other stipulation of the original shooter the team earns a letter in JUMP. Another team is designated as shooter to declare a new distance challenge, and must attempt the declared challenge.

If any team is successful in attempting the shooters challenge, the team earns a letter in JUMP.

If each team is successful at the sequence, then the shooter goes to the next player. The game continues until someone has JUMP or until only one player is left who has not spelled the word JUMP.

Course Design

Almost any set of equipment can be used for JUMP, as it is a freestyle game limited only by the imagination of the participants.

Participants may rearrange obstacles in order to state their challenge for the group.

Strategies

The handler should be very aware of his dog’s capabilities. The key to winning the game might be to make the most effective use of your turn and do something that you know you can’t fail at yet is challenging enough to cause others in the field to earn letters.

Variations

- Scoring adaptation – The scoring of the game can be adapted in several ways to lengthen the play or shorten it. For example, if a team is the only team to complete the sequence, then they’ll get to take off a letter. This would possibly lengthen the game. The game could be played with all distance challenges, which would surely shorten the game.
- Who gets the penalty – If the shooter is unable to demonstrate the sequence correctly, then everyone else gets to take off a letter. This would also lengthen the game.

- Large Groups – When the field of competitors is quite large, it probably should be broken down into smaller groups of five or six. The importance of breaking up the group is to keep handlers from failing before they've even had an opportunity to make up distance challenge for the group. After the first round, when each group has had a winner, the winners of each group would be combined into a single group to determine the ultimate winner.

Premium Blurb

JUMP is like the game of horse. Each player gets to demonstrate a skill, like a handling movement or a distance challenge; if successful, everyone else is challenged to do the same, but will earn a letter in the word "JUMP" if they fail. This is probably too tedious a game for competition in a trial. JUMP is scored as a puissance, with only the winning dog left at the end of the competition.

Jumpers

The Jumpers class measures a dog's ability to jump and turn and the handler's ability to exert control and timing in this fast-paced version of the agility game. Though the dog only needs to learn to jump to begin competing, Jumpers is one of the most difficult games to perfect as dogs move at a much greater speed than in other classes.

Briefing

Jumpers courses consist only of hurdles and tunnels, with some limitations between the different venues. The dog is required to run the course in the sequence indicated by the judge. Follow the numbers. And keep the bars up.

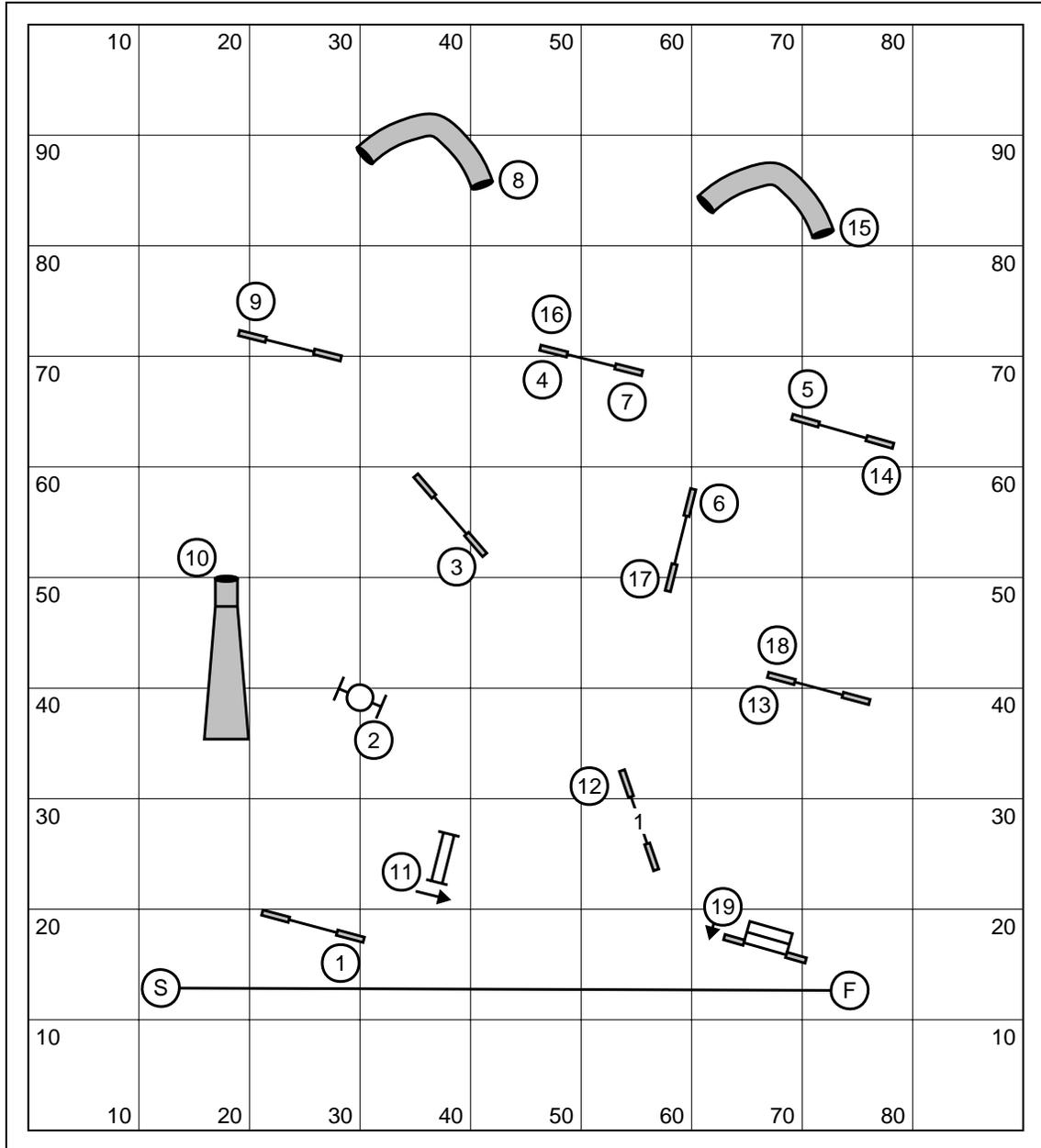
Jumpers is judged according to the performance rules for the respective venue.

Scoring

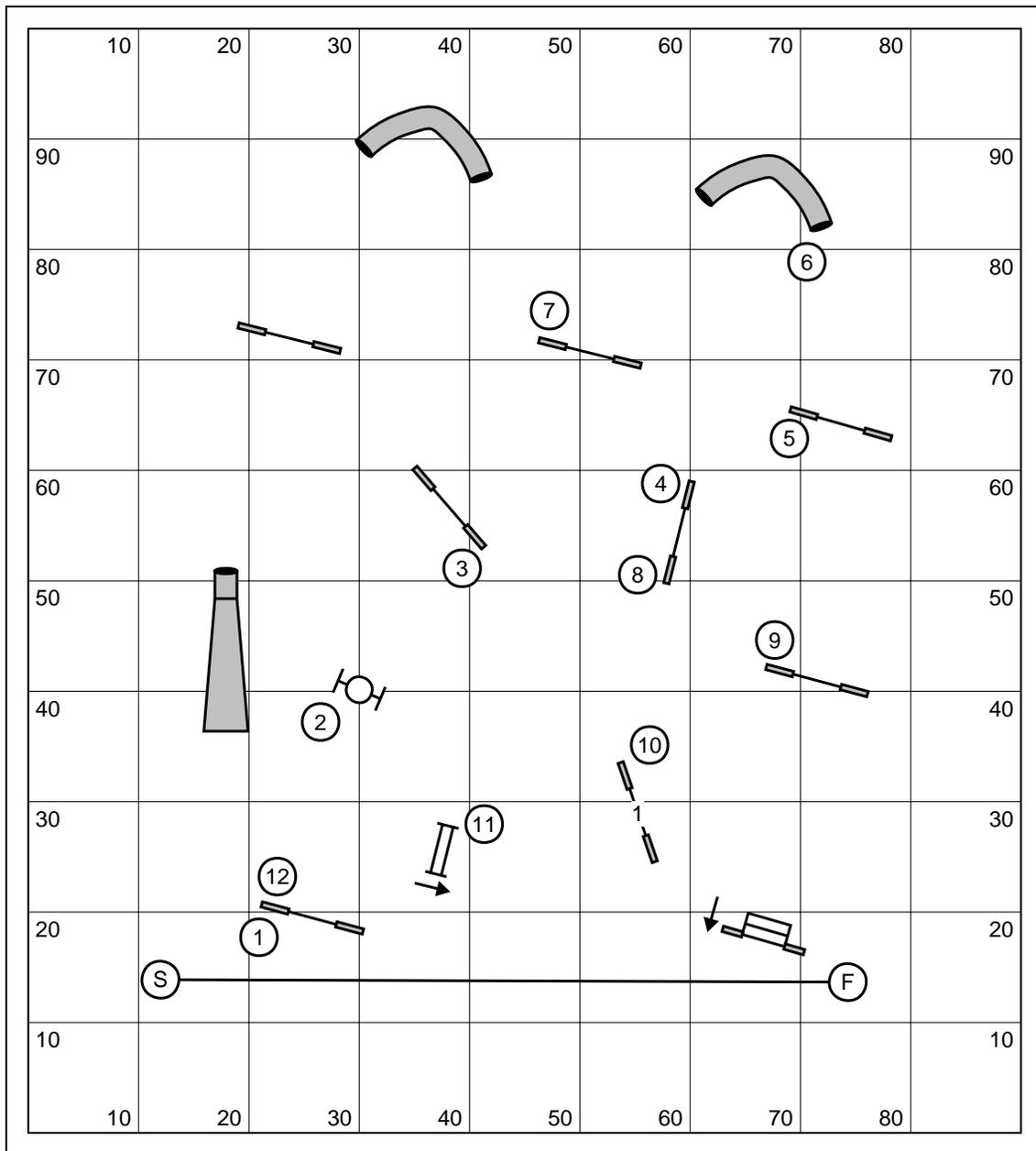
Jumpers is usually scored Faults, Then Time the winner being the dog with the fewest faults. If two dogs have the same number of Faults, Then Time breaks the tie.

Jumpers can be scored Time, Plus Faults. The winner would be the dog with the lowest score.

Course Design

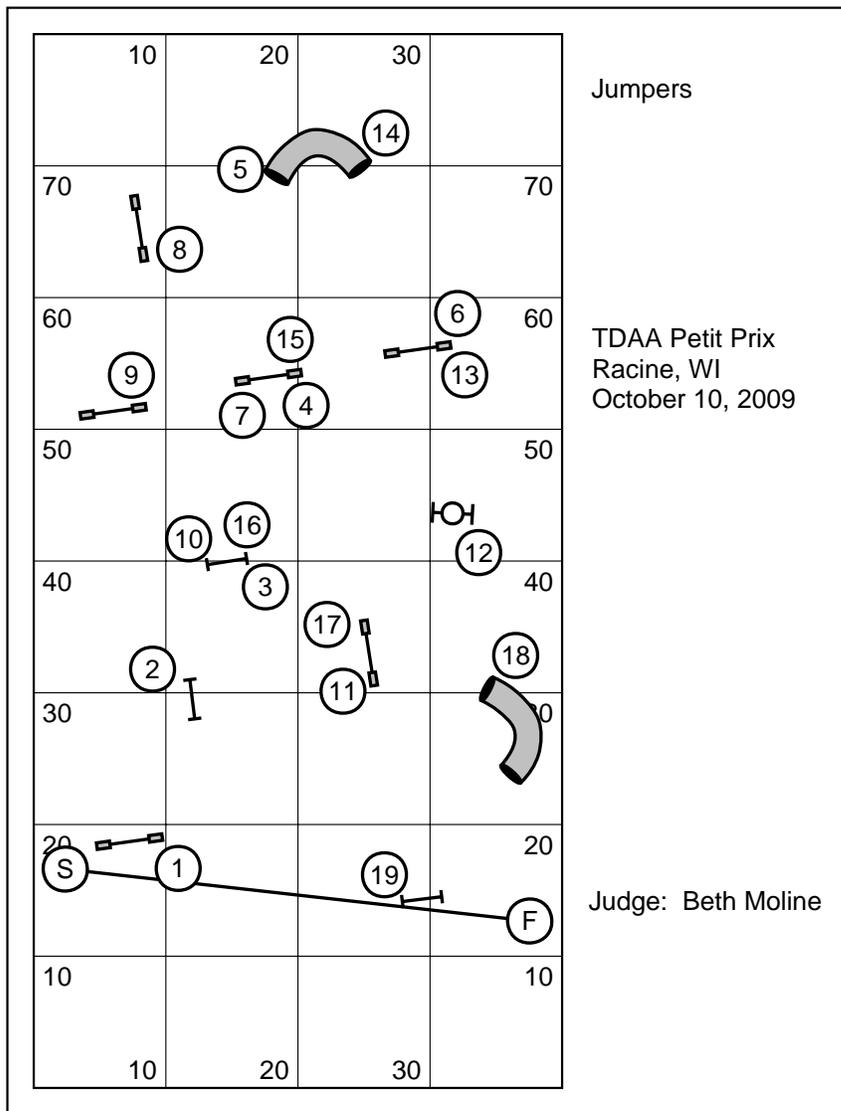


This is an example of a USDAA Masters course. A USDAA course requires the performance of at least three spread hurdles. These courses are not inconsequential in terms of challenge and handling. You'll see options and traps and the need for excellent timing and deft handling.

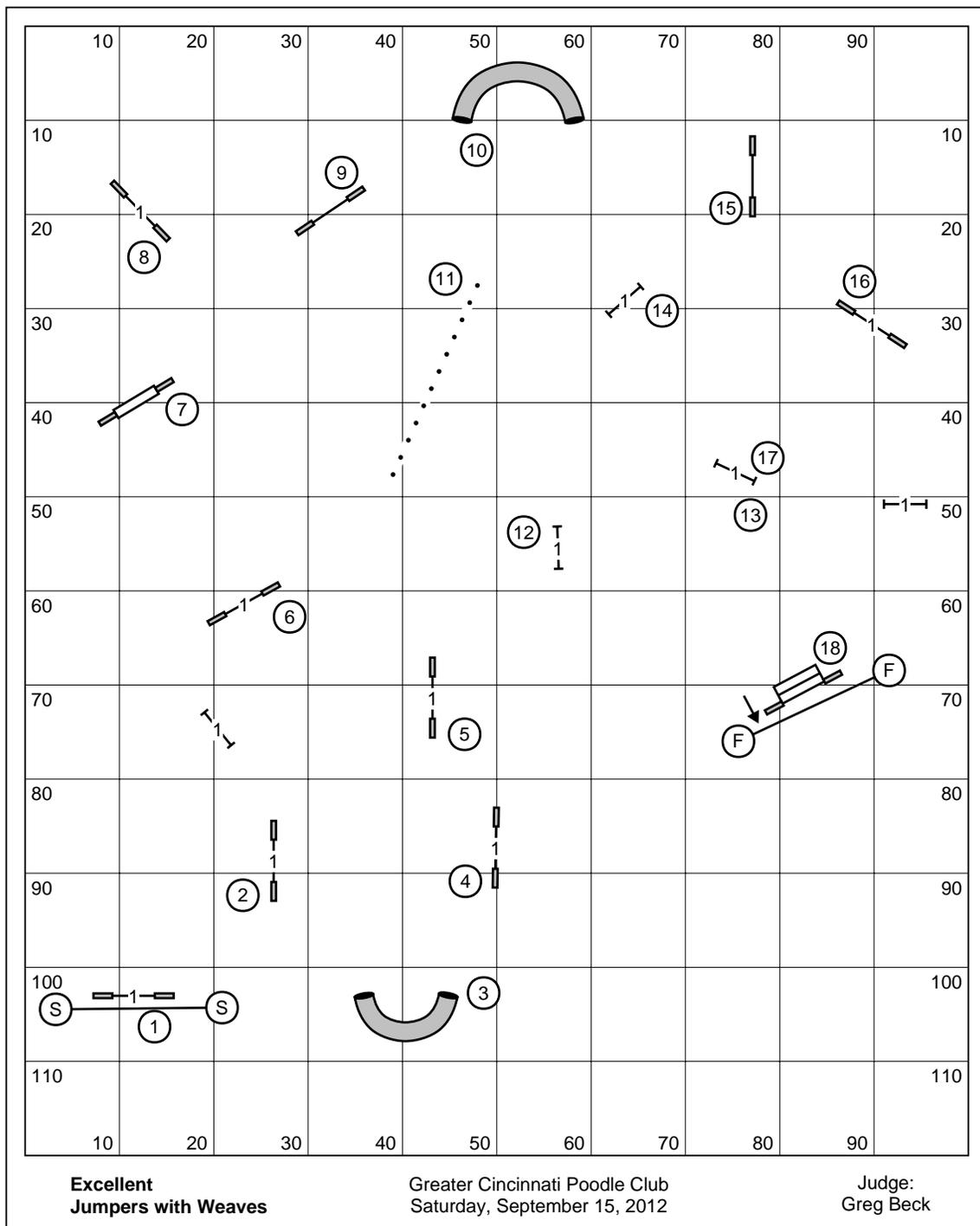


This is an example of a Novice course. Note that it is nested perfectly with the Masters course example. The course designer may want to move out unused obstacles so that the lower levels are not presented with “dummy” jumps.

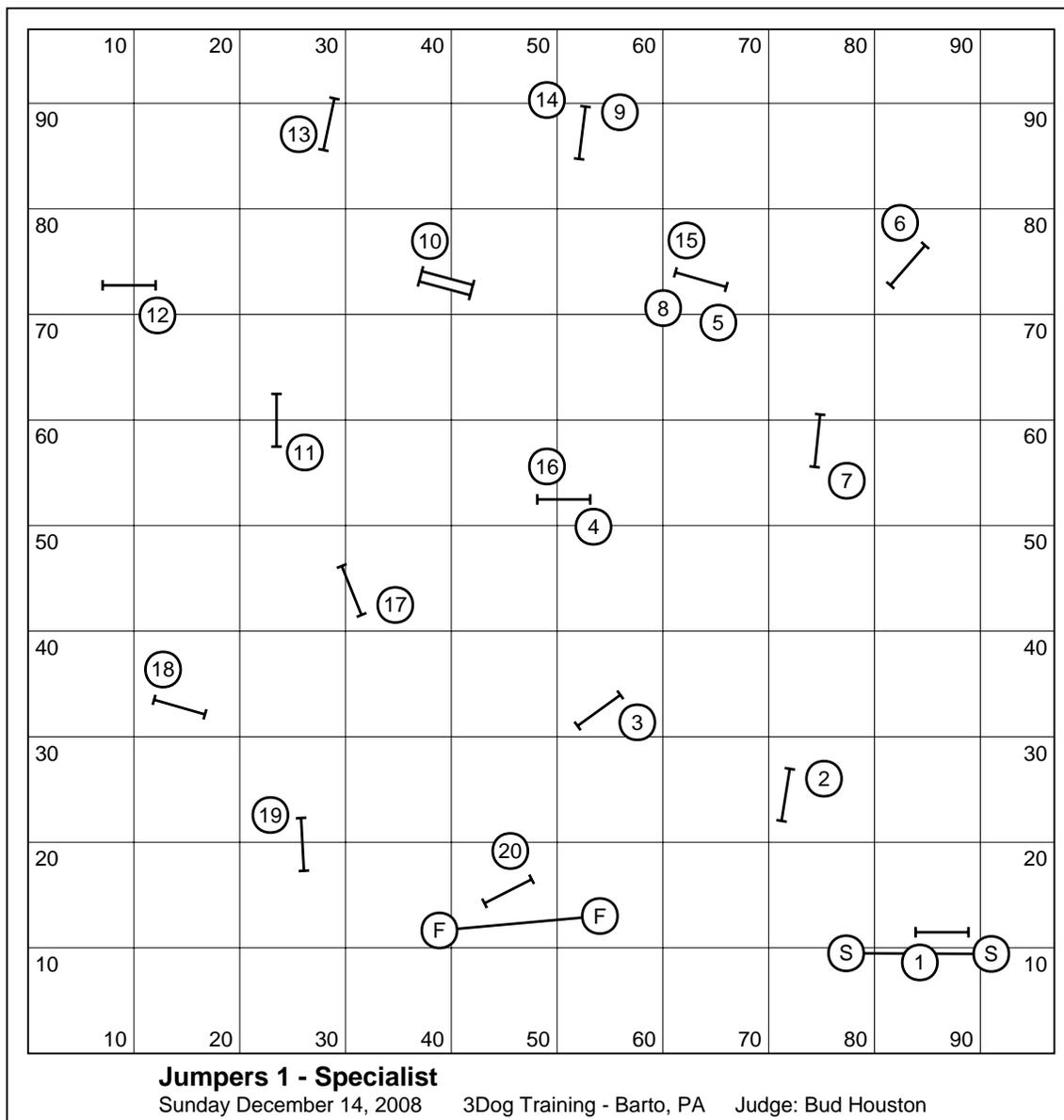
Excepting play in the AKC (and possibly in USDAA Team/PVP) only tunnels and hurdles may be used on the course. As the level of competition rises, so does the complexity of the course. In addition, as the level of competition increases, the time to perform the course decreases.



This is an example of a *Jumpers* course designed for play in the TDAA. The spacing between obstacles is considerably tighter than in any other venues. What's worth remembering about the TDAA is that it is intended for dogs of small stature. And so the *Jumpers* course especially emphasizes the central idea of the TDAA, to present to the small dog handler challenges that are comparable to what big dog handlers face on any given weekend.



This is an example of an important variation of *Jumpers* called, appropriately, *Jumpers With Weaves*. The performance standard for AKC Excellent *Jumpers With Weaves* requires an unflinching mastery of the course.



This is an example of a DOCNA *Jumpers* course (arguably it would be suitable for NADAC as well). You'll note that DOCNA does not use tunnels, and all of the jumps are wingless. In the NADAC-style venues the courses are devoid of challenges that are routine in venues like the USDAA, AKC, and TDAA; you'll find no options, or traps, hard-about turns, or wicked handling moments. Everything is flow and go. As a consequence, the rates of travel for NADAC and DOCNA are more aggressive and demanding than in any other venue.

Strategies

The basic advice in the *Jumpers* class is to follow the numbers, and keep the bars up.

Since only jumps and tunnels (where allowed) are used, *Jumpers* courses tend to be more difficult for handlers to memorize than other types of courses. To be successful in *Jumpers*, it is more important than ever to remember course flow and sequences rather than individual obstacles.

Also, the handler's movement and timing are important on Jumpers courses in the control of the dog as the action is coming fast and furious. The handler should be sharp, and timely.

The most common faults in Jumpers are wrong courses and refusal. Thus, emphasis should be placed on considering approaches, angles, and distances to obstacles during the course walk-through.

The key strategy for Jumpers is to train the dog to jump and to be responsive to handling in fast and flowing situations.

Scoring

Jumpers is scored either Time, Plus Faults or Faults, Then Time.

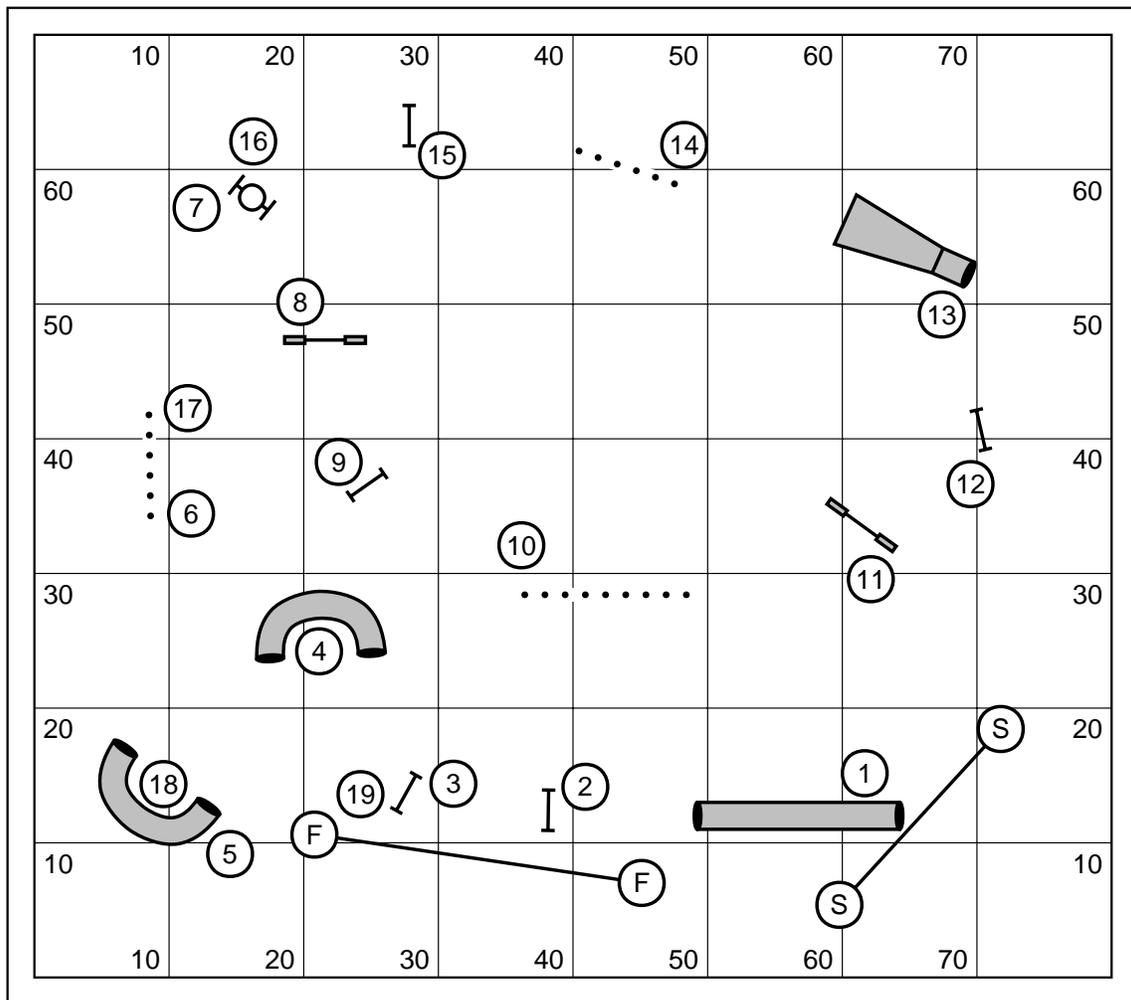
Qualifying

Nearly every venue features *Jumpers* as a titling class and an element of the respective championship programs.

Qualifying is based on the measured length of the dog's path; usually at considerably more aggressive rates of travel than the standard classes.

Variations

- **Jumpers with Weaves** ~ This format is used by the AKC. In a departure from the *Jumpers* class in most venues, Weave poles are featured in the jumpers course.
- **USDAA Dog Agility Masters® (DAM) tournament Jumpers** – The format for DAM Jumpers is different from the Jumpers played in USDAA titling classes: 1) weave poles are often included; 2) a refusal is penalized 2 points; and 3) The scoring system is Time, Plus Faults.
- **Land Rover Drive** – This game, also known as Jump and Drive, is perhaps a historical footnote. The Land Rover Drive and Jumping contest grew out of the sponsorship by Land Rover for agility trials in the U.K. The handler loads his dog into a Land Rover, drives a designated course, parks the vehicle in a garage and then jumps out to run his dog over a Jumpers course. The judge will designate the starting point for the Land Rover, the path of the vehicle and the garage where the vehicle must be parked. Dog and handler (and the course clock) start on foot across a starting line designated by the judge.
- **Black and Whites** – This British variation is Jumpers for black and white Border Collies only (or black and white dogs with any hint of BC in them).
- **Jumpers with Weaves Plus** ~ loosely based on the AKC Jumpers with Weaves titling class, but with multiple weave pole challenges. The Purpose of the game is to complete the course in the specified order, as quickly as possible, without faults.



This is an example of a *Jumpers with Weaves Plus* course (closely based on a course designed by Ilze Rukis for play in the TDAA in Warrensburg, IL on April 12, 2003).

Premium Blurb

Jumpers is a favorite game in the dog agility world. Courses are made up of jumps and tunnels only, so the play is fast and furious. Follow the numbers and keep the bars up. *Jumpers* is scored either Time, Plus Faults [ER5] or Faults, Then Time. ER12

Jumplers

Take a little bit of Jumpers, add a little bit of Gamblers... shake it up and you've got Jumplers. This is a fun game that marries speed and jumping to distance work. This game is always guaranteed fun at a trial.

Briefing

This Jumplers course must be run in the sequence specified by the judge. The dog will earn bonuses for successfully performing distance challenges. These bonuses will be deducted from the dog's total score.

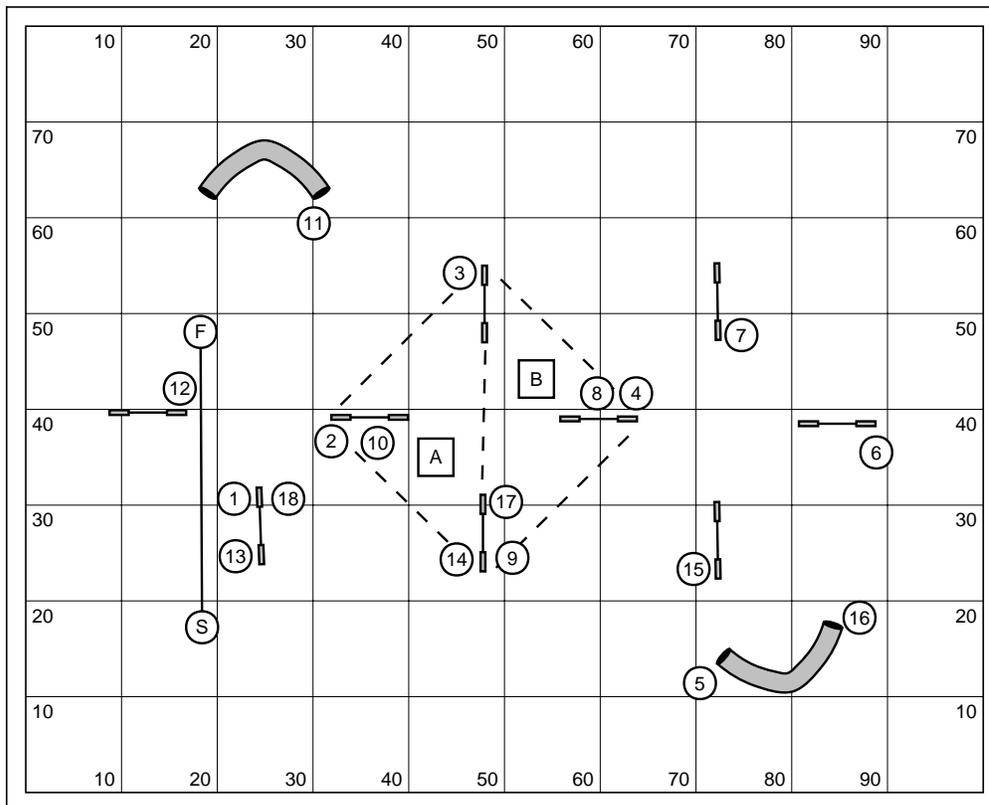
The judge will specify a containment area. The handler will have the option of remaining inside the containment area throughout the dog's run or remaining outside. The course will be balanced so that either option is equally challenging. Should the handler leave containment at any time during the dog's run, the bonus subtraction of points from the total score will be lost.

There is no penalty for not attempting the distance challenges. The handler may opt to run portions of the course or the entire course, as a straightforward Jumpers round.

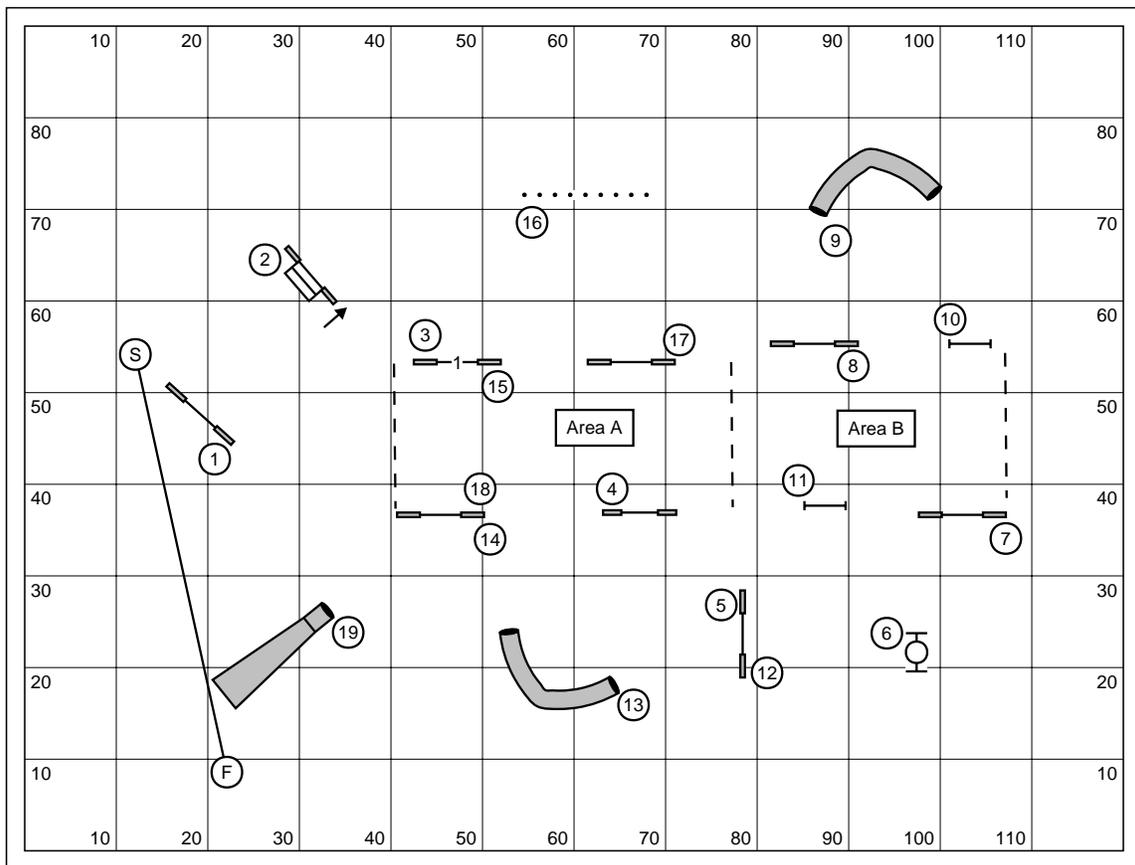
Scoring

Jumplers is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The team with the lowest score wins.

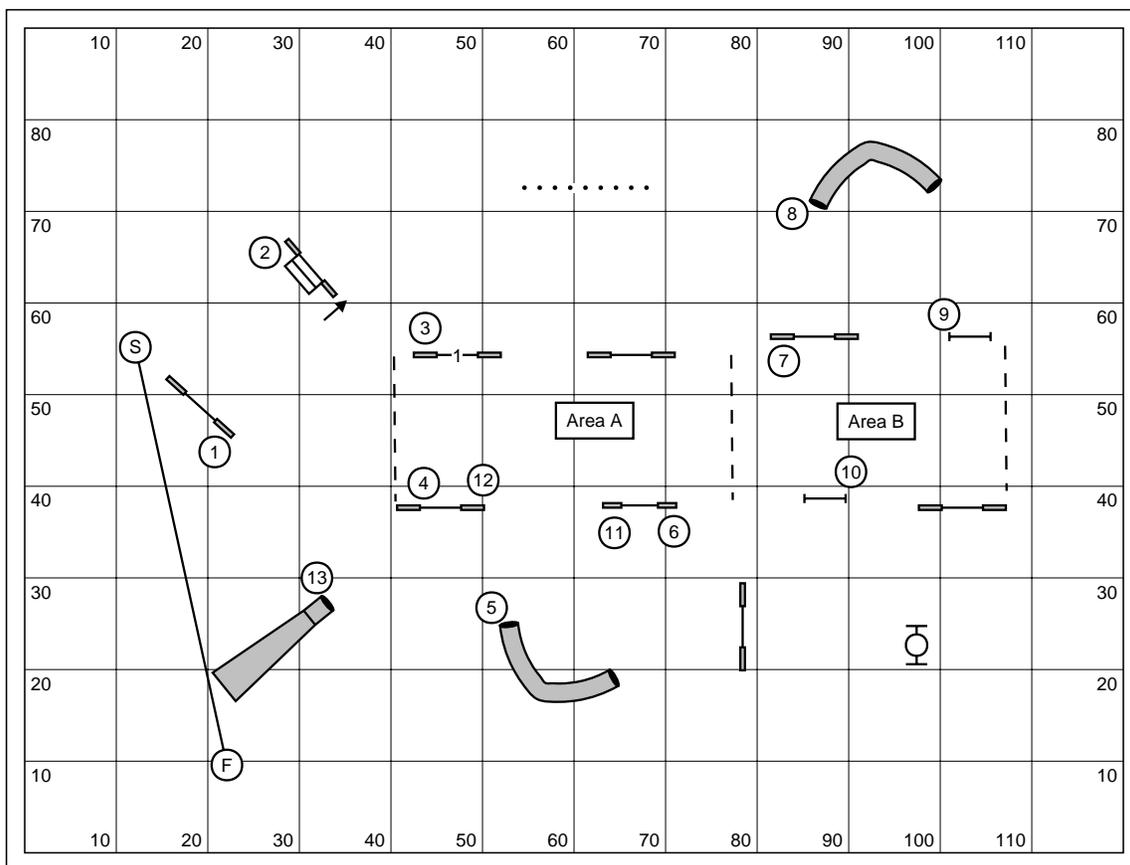
Course Design



The course consists only of jumps and tunnels. As the level of competition rises, so does the complexity of the course and the difficulty of the distance challenges included.



This course was based on an original Jumpers course by former USDAA judge, Dan Dege. This course was run in league play at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, OH on June 17, 2002. A 30-point deduction was specified if a handler stayed completely outside or completely inside the containment area at the center. A 60-point deduction was specified if the handler stayed inside one of the two smaller areas, “A” or “B” that make up the big containment area in the center of the course. Staying inside a smaller box significantly increases the difficulty of the distance challenge.



This is an example of a nested course, based on the more advanced course shown in the previous example. Courses are nested so that the challenge for Novice competition exhibitors faced a Jumpers course more appropriate to their skill level. The distance bonus is completely challenging at either level.

The Jumpers course will include only those obstacles typically found in a Jumpers course or a Jumpers with Weaves course, though there is no list of required obstacles. The handlers' containment area should be fairly large and defined by an arrangement of jumps. This box should be easily divisible into two separate containment areas. All containment areas should be clearly marked.

Note that the finish line is placed in such a way that the dog pretty much has to cross the line on the completion of the final obstacle. It is not fair to dogs to be sent away to an "imaginary" line that is not shaped by the invitation of an obstacle to be performed.

Qualifying

Jumpers is a qualifying game for titling for the TDAA. For each, the qualifying requirements should be based upon a reasonable standard course time for a Jumpers class. There really shouldn't be any stipulation that the handler will have to work the entire course from the containment area. This is an option for the intrepid (or crazy) individual, who will gamble everything for the elusive win.

A course of 140 yards might establish qualifying criteria like this:

- Games I = Novice course, score of 40 or lower
- Games II = Advanced course, score of 50 or lower

- Games III = Advanced course, score of 35 or lower

Note that this is based upon nested Novice and Advanced competition courses.

Strategies

When running in a league play format, the Jumplers course is a real dilemma for the competitor. If the handler doesn't think his dog will do the work at a distance, it's probably a better idea to just run the Jumpers course without even attempting to work the dog at a distance. If the distance work goes wrong, the dog is unlikely to be able to place.

It will likely be the dog that completes the course while the handler stands in a containment area who actually wins. If more than a few dogs manage to work the course at a distance and win a bonus, then the strategy for not running the course at a distance has backfired.

The handler must also consider whether he should do the right thing by his team. Conservatively running the course as a Jumpers course will be respectable. Crashing and burning on the distance send may cause the entire team to fail. On the other hand, working at a distance and earning the bonus will likely put the team in a winning position.

Variations

Bonuses for Individual distance challenges: Rather than the bonuses be an "all or nothing" proposition, the dog would earn a bonus for the performance individual distance challenge.

Premium Blurb

Jumplers is a combined class of *Jumpers* and *Gamblers*. The dog will run a numbered course consisting of jumps and tunnels that will feature elements on which the dog will earn bonuses for working at a distance from the handler. *Jumplers* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Junnel

This is a simple, fun game without much consequence and therefore suited to a training night exercise or something to play at a club picnic. Junnel is the invention of Adra McCleskey, a founding member of Phoenix, Arizona's Jumping Chollas.

Briefing

The dog is required to perform a jumping sequence and a tunnel.

If the dog knocks down a bar at any point, the handler must put the dog on the table and replace the bar. The dog may then continue on course at the faulted jump. The judge may require a specific performance on the table (down or sit).

If a dog goes off course, the handler will be instructed to start the entire course from the beginning.

The course must be performed in the following manner:

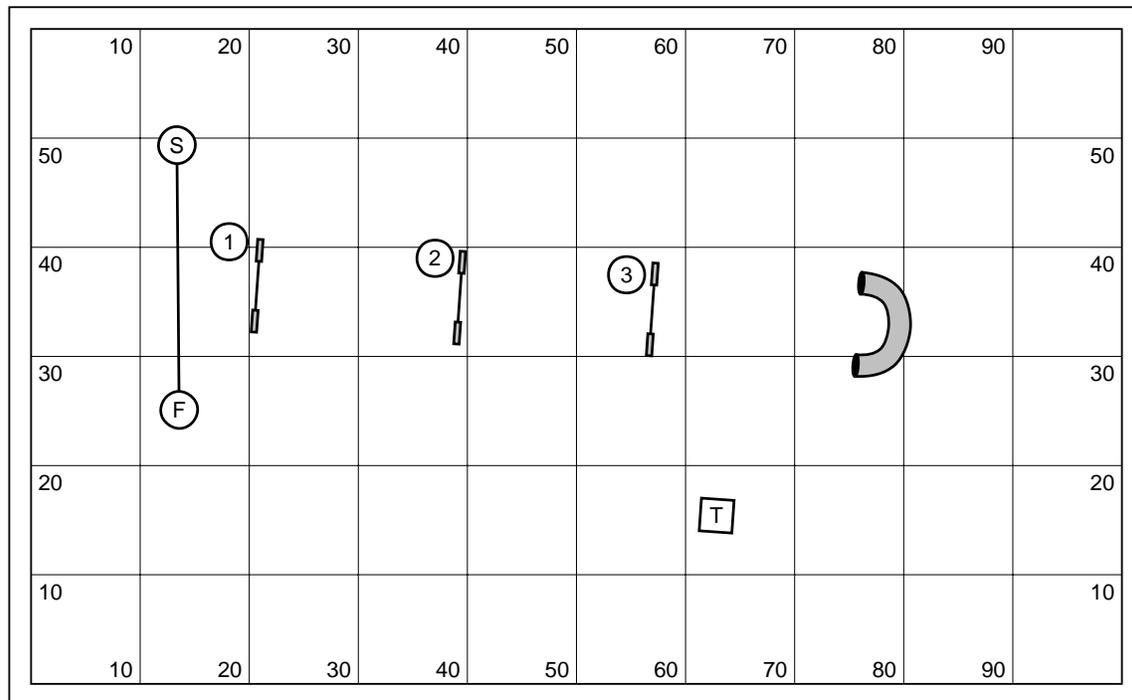
- Jump #1
- Backjump #1
- Jump #1 then #2
- Backjump #2, then #1
- Jump #1, #2, then #3
- Backjump #3, #2, then #1
- Jump #1, #2, #3, tunnel, #3, #2, #1

Scoring

Junnel is scored time only, as the time required to fix faults and complete the course correctly is penalty enough. The dog with the lowest time wins.

Since an off course results in the handler restarting the course, a maximum course time should be observed.

Course Design



This is a simple representation of a Junnel course.

Aside from the arduous course flow, Junnel isn't much different than standard Jumpers. What makes the game different is the correction that the handler must make if a jump bar is knocked down. With that in mind, it probably wouldn't be much of a stretch to designate almost any equally arduous jump and tunnel sequence, so long as the table is featured central to the obstacles used.

There is something in the presentation of this game that makes it appear that the shape of the challenge is fixed. The intrepid course designer might stretch his or her imagination a bit and find something else interesting to do, that represents a compounding sequence challenge. And maybe it would be a good idea *not* to include back-jumping in the sequence. This probably isn't good for our long-term training interests.

Premium Blurb

Junnel is a jumping game that requires the handler to conduct his dog through a compounding sequence challenge. Traditionally the game consists entirely of jumps and tunnels, thus the interesting name of the game. *Junnel* is scored Time Only. ER5

Just in Time

Just In Time is a training game for Gamblers, a popular distance skills game ~ invented by Bud and Marsha Houston. This game is intended to teach an important Gamblers skill, making the approach to the start of a gamble in a timely fashion. This game was first played at Dogwood in March 2002.

Briefing

The objective of this game is to accumulate (the most) points by performance of obstacles and subsequently arrive at the table as close as possible to the expiration of time.

Just In Time is identical to the point-accumulation period of a *Gamblers* class. This is a “dog’s-choice” game. The dog can perform obstacles in the order and direction of his choosing (hopefully, with some collaboration from the handler). Obstacles can be performed only twice for points. Back-to-back performances are permitted.

The judge will set a reasonable period of time to accumulate points. If the dog arrives at the table before the time whistle, no time bonus can be earned.

Scoring

Just in Time is scored Points, Then Time.

The points system is 1-3-5.

- Jumps are worth 1 point
- Tunnels and the short set of weave poles are worth 3 points
- The dogwalk and teeter are worth 5 points.

Unproductive loitering near the table is not permitted and shall result in loss of time bonus points.

The dog will earn a time bonus for getting to the table or finish line after the end of the 30-second point-accumulation period.

- Less than 2 seconds earns 30 time bonus points
- Less than 4 seconds earns 20 time bonus points
- Less than 6 seconds earns 10 time bonus points

is for the handler to be near the start of the joker when the whistle blows.

The more *intrepid* strategy will be the “no guts, no glory” strategy: Don’t wait for the whistle. The handler must time the send of the dog to the table, taking into consideration the time to travel to the table, such that the dog arrives just after the 30-second whistle in order to earn the maximum possible points.

On the other hand, in this game the handler loses all if the dog actually gets to the table before the whistle blows to end the point-accumulation period. In a league play scenario, the competitor should consider what’s best for the team before embarking on the no guts, no glory strategy. The rest of Bud’s team also attempted this strategy and all failed. Therefore Bud’s team went down the tubes in the competition on what week though Bud’s dog Bogie did earn high MVP (most valuable puppy) honors for the week.

Variations

- **Tatsch’s Gamble Variation** – This variation was reported by Kenneth Tatsch, President of the USDAA. The game is played just like a standard gamblers class, with a sequence of obstacles to be performed after the whistle sounds, marking the end of point accumulation. The final sequence of obstacles is *not* a distance challenge; but must be run with the handler alongside the dog. The intention of the game is identical to the standard variation of Just In Time, to teach the handler to make a timely approach to the gamble at the end of the point accumulation period.
- **A Wicked Variation** – This variation, first played at Dogwood Training Center, is much like a standard Gamblers game, in which the a point accumulation period is followed by a distance challenge. However, there will be no whistle marking the end of point accumulation time. The dog will earn a multiplier on his earned gamble points, based on the timeliness of his arrival at the gamble line. There are four bonus scenarios, based on time and performance: 1) If the dog arrives at the first jump of the joker before 35 seconds, then he is not eligible for any joker points; 2) If the dog arrives at the first jump of the joker within two seconds after 35 seconds have expired, all joker obstacles performed before the 50 second whistle will be tripled in value; 3) If the dog arrives at the first jump of the joker within four seconds (and more than two) after 35 seconds have expired, all joker obstacles performed before the 50 second whistle will be doubled in value; 4) If the dog arrives at the table more than four seconds after the 35 seconds have expired all joker obstacles performed will be rewarded at their regular values. In this version the dog will not lose points from the point accumulation period for arriving early at the gamble line.

Qualifying and Titles

To qualify the dog must earn:

- Games I = 31 points
- Games II = 41 points
- Games III = 51 points

Premium Blurb

Just In Time is a dog's-choice point accumulation game in which the dog earns special bonuses for ending in a timely manner. *Just in Time* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Kentucky Derby Day

Here's a game that's for the handlers. Even spectators can get involved. Kentucky Derby Day is a fun, fundraising idea invented by Bud Houston. Participants in the show place bets, using play money, on the outcome of each agility class. At the end of the day, prizes are auctioned to the highest bidder.

Briefing

Each exhibitor has a certain amount of Kentucky Derby Bucks (or Dog Dollars) in his exhibitor package. This money is used to place bets prior to the beginning of each game. Each jump height in each of the classes is considered a separate game.

At the end of the day, a series of prizes will be auctioned off. These prizes can be paid for only in Kentucky Derby Bucks.

Running the Games

To maximize the betting activity the field of competitors in any game should be limited to seven or eight. If you are running a standard agility course and have 20 dogs participating, this field should be split up into four individual competitions of seven dogs, seven dogs, and six dogs.

Nearly any agility game can be used in a Kentucky Derby Day fundraiser so long as winners and placements can be clearly defined.

Running the Betting Cage

The betting cage is not intended to make a profit. All the Kentucky Derby Bucks that come in, must go out. The only exception to this is if no one bets on the dog that actually wins a game. All the money that comes in for a specific game will be distributed evenly to the bettors that picked the winning dog. This is done by determining the payout on a percentage. For instance:

- If \$3,200 Kentucky Derby Bucks are bet on a game and \$550 were bet on the winner, then the winner pays out at 5.8 to 1 (\$3,200 divided by \$550). A bettor placing \$120 Dog Dollars on the winning dog would receive \$700 in winnings, rounded to the nearest hundred dollars (\$120 times 5.8).
- If \$3,200 Kentucky Derby Bucks are bet on a game and \$2,550 were bet on the winner, then the winner pays out at 1.25 to 1. A bettor placing \$120 Dog Dollars on the winner would receive \$150 in winnings.

Betting is open to all games until the first dog is called to the line for that game. The betting will close for that game only. Payouts for each game are made as soon as the results of a game are posted from the scoring table.

Exhibitors who have been wiped out by imprudent bets can purchase new Kentucky Derby Bucks at a rate equivalent to 100 Dog Dollars for every U.S. Dollar. Half of the real money should go into the cash pot, which will be auctioned off with all other prizes.

Conducting the Auction

The auction should take place when there are no other distractions. Start by auctioning

the lowest value prize and then work up the list.

Exhibitors may pool their money to have enough money to win the auction. For example, an entire club might pool their Dog Dollars to purchase the dogwalk prize.

Planning a Derby Day

Aside from being a lot of fun, running a Kentucky Derby Day is a way of returning some of the entry money to the exhibitors. At the same time, the game will generate additional income for the host club.

Use a certain percentage of the entry income as seed money. For instance, 20% would be designated as a fund that goes to prizes. Consequently, if the show generates an entry income of \$5,000, \$1,000 of that would be spent on prizes for this game.

You should purchase prizes that have a scaling value. The following table shows a series of prizes that diminish in value by roughly half.

Cost	Item
\$500	Dogwalk
\$250	Tire jump
\$125	3 jumps
\$60	Dog crate
\$30	Dog bed
\$15	Dog lead
\$7	Tug toy
\$3	Chew toy
0	Donated items
0	Cash pot

The quantity of Kentucky Derby Bucks you initially give to each exhibitor will depend on the amount of money that exhibitor paid to enter the event. For instance, a handler with one dog who only spent \$31 to enter the show would get \$3,100 in Kentucky Derby Bucks (the real value of those Doggie Dollars is only \$6.20 or \$31 times the 20% designated for the fund). Round up the money so that the exhibitor is working exclusively with \$100 bills and \$500 bills.

The quantity of Kentucky Derby Bucks the exhibitor ends up with at the end of the day is another matter. That depends entirely on the exhibitor's ability and luck as a bettor.

King of the Hill

King of the Hill is a truly mixed-pairs agility format. It's a wonderful idea for a club outing or mixer. Mixing is what it does best. King of the Hill is the invention of Bud Houston and is adapted from a popular game of dice.

Briefing

King of the Hill must be played in multiples of four. For the purposes of this discussion, there are 16 dog and handler teams.

The 16 dog and handler teams must be designated into four groups with four dog and handler teams in each. The groups are seeded at first by size of the dogs at play, the larger dogs being put into Group 1 (Bottom of the Hill) and the smallest dogs into Group 4 (Top of the Hill).

Each dog and handler team must be initially partnered with another dog and handler team in the group. This probably should be determined randomly. In the end, it won't matter too much.

The game will have exactly six rounds, an intermission, and six additional rounds. This is a fixed format and not a reflection of the number of teams.

Scoring

King of the Hill is scored simply. The dog with the most wins on individual rounds wins the competition. A tiebreaker might be determined for the end of play in case teams have the same overall score. On the other hand, you could just accept the draw and break out the beer.

Wins are accumulated over the 12 rounds of the competition. After each round, dog and handler teams will change groups and switch partners. Movement from group to group is described below.

After the first round, the groups will be reseeded.

- The two dog and handler teams that won in groups 1, 2, or 3 will go up to the next group.
- The two dog and handler teams that lost in groups 2, 3, or 4 will go down to the previous group.
- When moved to the next group, the team must split up and partner with the other two dogs and handlers in that group.

Obviously, the losers in Group 1 (Bottom of the Hill) cannot go down and the winners in Group 4 (Top of the Hill) cannot go up.

- At the Bottom of the Hill, the losers will stay in that group. After the round, they must split up and partner with the two dogs and handlers moved down from Group 2.
- At the Top of the Hill, the winners will stay in that group. After the round, they must split up and partner with the two dogs and handlers moved up from Group 3.

Course Design

King of the Hill can be played in any pairs or foursome agility format. For example, it is ideal for Pairs Pursuit, which is designed specifically for a two-pair competition.

The format might also be like knockout, making it a race between two dogs on side-by-side, identical courses, with a baton exchange between partners.

Given that King of the Hill is designed to go 12 rounds, the number of obstacles should be kept to a reasonable maximum to avoid exhausting the dogs. If an A-frame is used, it should be lowered at the apex to minimize wear and tear on the dogs.

Games that might serve as a basis for King of the Hill that are described in this book include:

- Baseball taking the combined scores of the two players.
- Blackjack using a strategic baton exchange in the accumulation of the 21 points.
- Bomber (a knockout variation) using four identical courses. In a Bomber format, the dogs wouldn't be teamed. Two dogs go up and two dogs go down.
- Boxed Pairs
- Knockout
- Pairs Pursuit
- Relay
- Strategic Pairs
- Tag 10 alternating between the two dogs. The point accumulation time should be reduced to 30 or 40 seconds instead of 60.
- Three-Tunnel Barrel Race using a baton exchanged in a timed format.
- Tunnelers using a baton exchange in a timed format.
- What's My Line? using a baton exchange in a timed format.

Knockout

Knockout is a game of fast-paced excitement where the winner takes all. Like the NCAA basketball tournament, the field continues to reduce in size by half, as the loser sits down and the winner advances to the next round. This is intense competition, not for the timid.

Briefing

Knockout usually follows a games format, typically in the form of a race between two dogs on side-by-side, identical courses. Dogs are started on a whistle. The goal is simple: Finish the course before your opponent. The winning dog goes on to the next round; the losing dog is eliminated. Competition continues until only one dog remains.

In training, Knockout is useful for stimulating a condition of increased excitement. Dogs that are sluggish with routine exercises will often perk up in the excitement of the competition. Knockout also provides a way to place some competitive stress on the handler to better prepare them for the show stress everyone experiences.

Scoring

The dog and handler team that wins every race wins the competition.

Two judges are required, one each dog. Faults are usually assigned on a 1:1 basis. For example, if a dog runs the course in 15 seconds but drops a bar (5 faults), his score would be 20. If the other dog runs clean in 18.56 seconds, the slower dog advances.

To determine third and fourth places, the dogs that were defeated by the two finalists should run against each other.

Course Design

There are many variations of Knockout; some using tunnels and jumps, some using contacts and weave poles. However, there are always two identical courses set side by side, usually in an up and back configuration.

Variations

- Jag Race 4-H – This variation was invented by Lorraine Brown for the 4-H Junior Agility Group in Massachusetts. Dogs run legs of equivalent complexity but not of identical obstacles.
- Racers – This variation by Tara Choate uses two identical courses of 8 to 12 obstacles. The judge sets a standard course time so that time faults are assessed. Two dog and handler teams run the courses at the same time. The team with the best score (Time, Plus Faults) moves on. However, no dog may accumulate more than 20 faults and still move on (this would give the next dog in the knockout bracket an automatic advancement).

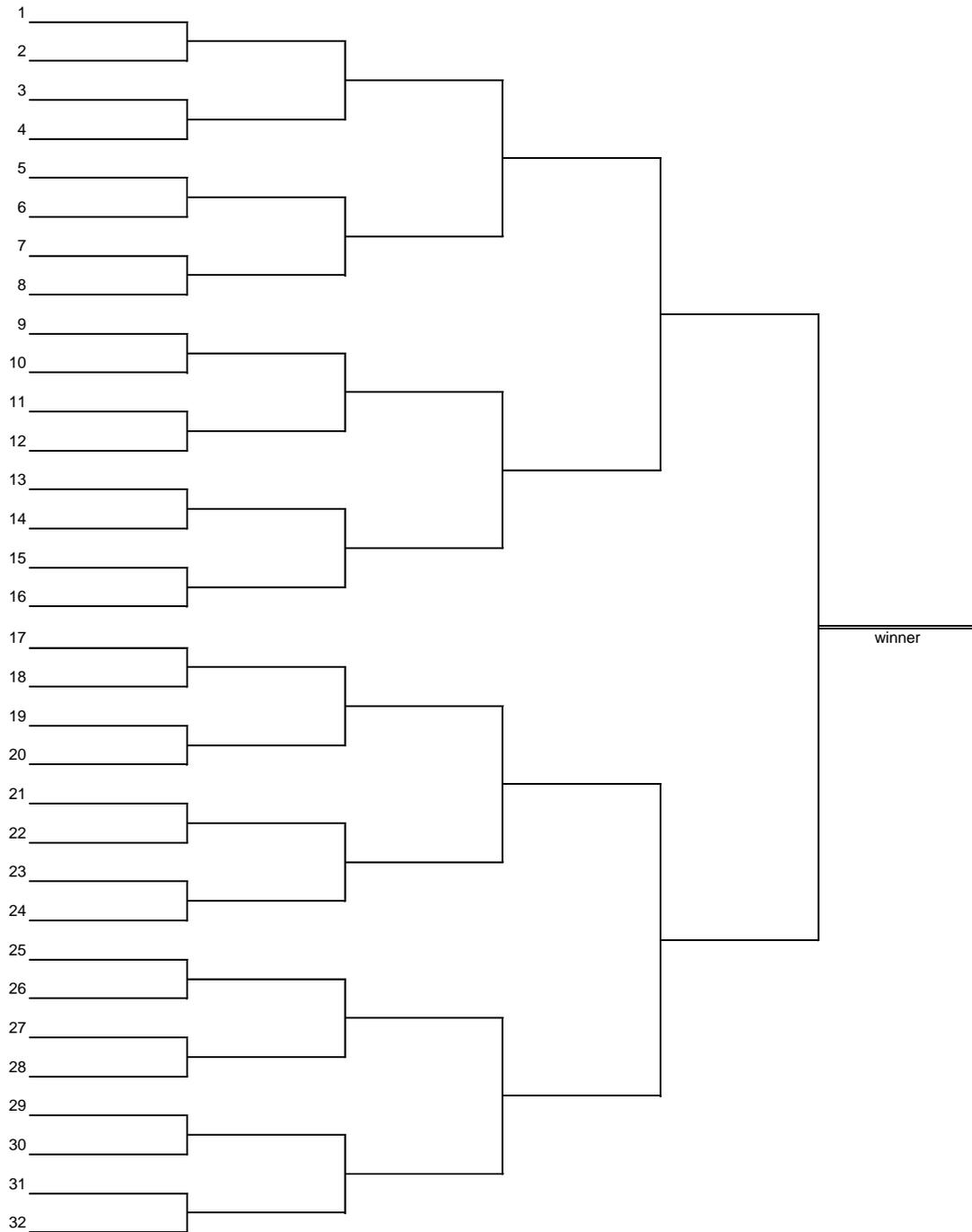
In round one only, a dog that is knocked out, but finishes under course time with less than 20 faults, may reenter competition.

- Texas Shootout – This variation, reported by Kenneth Tatsch, requires handlers to stop in the middle of side-by-side courses to shoot an aluminum can off the top of

a tire jump frame with water guns. They cannot proceed on course until they're successful. Since handlers are on either side of the same tire frame, someone is likely to get wet!

- Watered Down Knockout – This variation by Stephen Lewis is run on two side-by-side straight line sequences. Two 50' sprinkler hoses are run down the center of each sequence, spurting up 6' to 8' foot streams of water. Instead of the winner advancing, the loser advances to the next round. The more a handler loses, the more they run the course and the wetter they get!
- Bomber – This is a variation played in the U.K., where four identical courses are run. The winner gets to run against the next three dogs!
- Elimination basis – On occasion, competition is run as a double elimination. But this variation should be reserved for small entry shows or training.
- Team Knockout – Knockout can also be played by teams (multiple dogs and handlers) who advance together to the next round.

The Knockout Ladder



Before running a Knockout, create a Knockout Ladder or elimination brackets so that your competition comes out evenly.

The key to making the numbers right in a Knockout is that the brackets for advancement must be powers of two: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, and so forth. It's no coincidence that the NCAA basketball championships take a field of 64 teams—64 is one of the magic numbers for a Knockout.

It is likely that the number of dogs entered in the competition will not be one of the magic numbers. To remedy this, some dogs will get an automatic bye in the first bracket of the Knockout Ladder. A bye means that the dog will advance to the next round without

having to compete. This might not be entirely fair but this is the way that it's done.

Here's the formula to determine the number of dogs that must compete in the first bracket: $(N-B) \times 2$

N = Number of competitors

B = Bracket number

To see how the formula works, suppose there are 23 dogs entered in the Knockout competition.

1. Find the magic power-of-two number that is equal to or just less than the number of competitors entered in the Knockout. This is the bracket number (B in the formula). In the example, the bracket number is 16 because it is the power-of-two number that is equal to or lower than 23.
2. Subtract the bracket number from the number of competitors entered in the Knockout (N in the formula). In the example, the formula would be: $23-16=7$.
3. Multiply the result of the subtraction by 2. In the example, it would be 7×2 and the answer would be 14.
4. Take the result and enter that many handler/dog teams in the first bracket of the ladder. Enter the remaining names in the next bracket. In the example, 14 dogs and handlers would run against one another in the first bracket. The remaining 9 dogs have a bye in the first round so they are automatically advanced to the second bracket.

Making the choice of which dogs get the bye and which compete in the first round is a problem for each club or organizer. Names could be drawn from a hat. Whatever the selection method, try to be as fair as possible.

Last of the Mohicans

In the years before the American Revolution certain frontiersmen were greatly feared and respected by hostile Indians because they had learned to load their muskets with powder and shot, and even fire their muskets, while on the run without stopping or even slowing down. This agility game was devised as a means of teaching the very Novice handler to stay in motion when running an agility course (and not stop alongside every jump on the way). Last of the Mohicans is the invention of Bud Houston.

Briefing

You're a settler comfortable in your homestead (the collapsed tunnel) when word comes to you that a band of marauding Indians is on the war path, killing and scalping - defenseless settlers. You know that your only chance to survive is to make it to the fort (the table). As the crow flies it's not very far away. But to get there you must go all the way around the mountain (the A-frame).

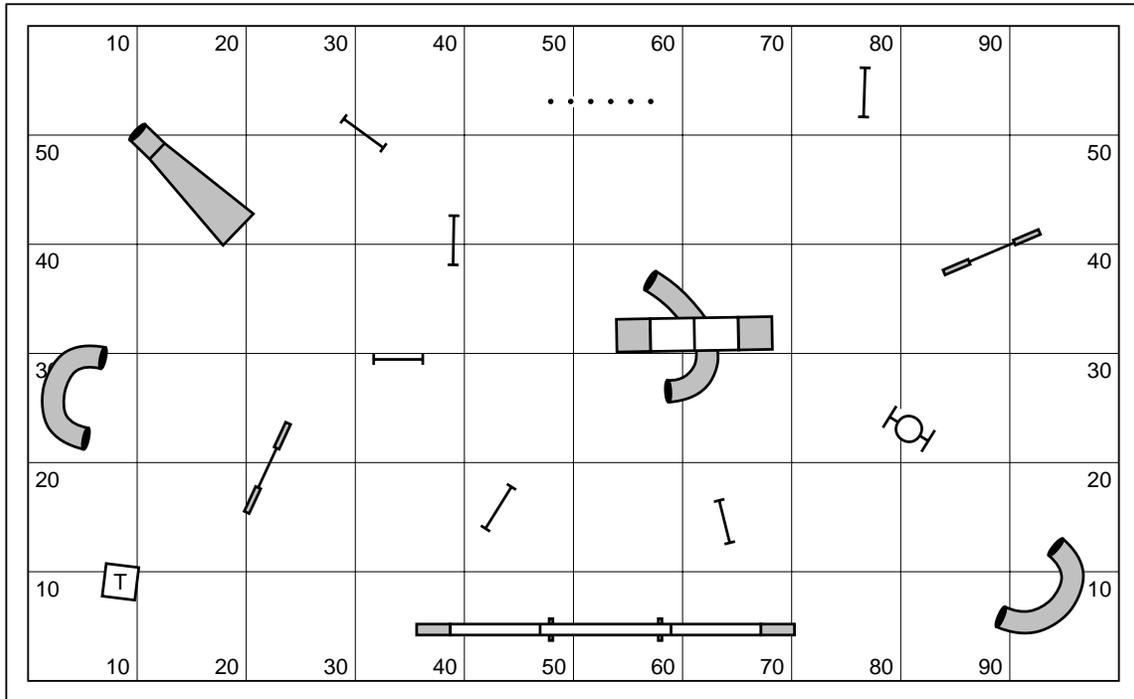
The dog will earn one point for each obstacle performed without fault between the homestead and the fort. The homestead (collapsed tunnel) and the fort (table) have no point value. The dog with the most points wins. Time is a tie-breaker only.

However, should you be caught by the Indians, and scalped, your dog will earn no score. And the scribe will indicate on the scribe-sheet: "RIP".

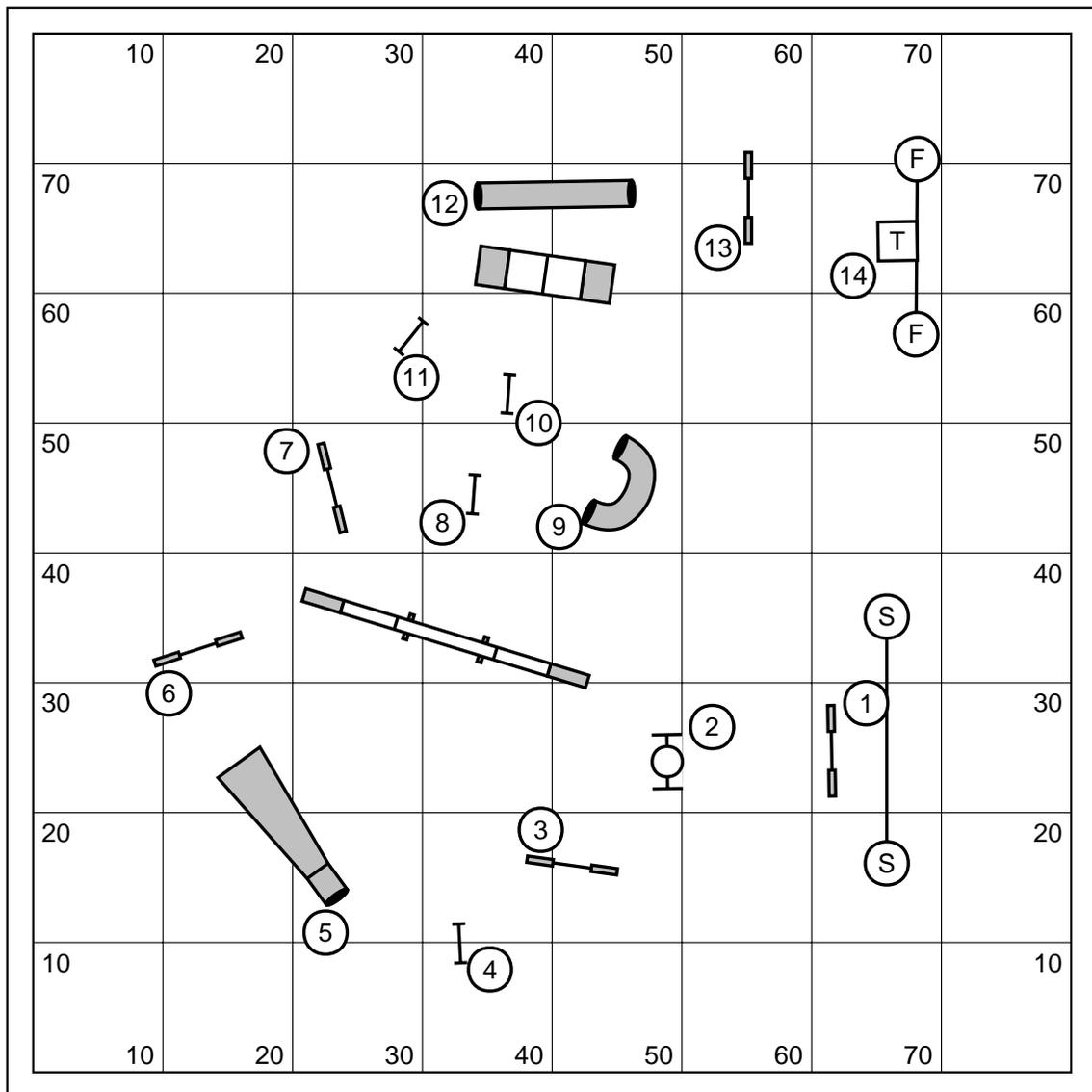
These events will lead to you being caught and scalped by the Indians:

- The handler stops (the Indians will catch you while you're standing still)
- The dog runs past an obstacle and the handler turns back to correct (you've run back towards the Indians. Bad strategy)
- The dog's path crosses itself (again, your path has taken you back towards the Indians). By definition, if a dog repeats an obstacle, he has crossed his own path.
- The dog commits to *any* contact obstacle with all four paws.

Course Design



Last of the Mohicans lends itself to a pick-up transition that requires very little equipment movement. The start and finish obstacles might have to be moved to the two corners of the front of the ring, as with this course. Also the A-frame should be a central figure in the layout of the course with obstacles that provide for flow around it.



This is an example of the *Numbered Course* variation, which is how the game was originally played.

Judging Notes

Last of the Mohicans is one of the rare games in which you must be a judge of the handler; specifically for stopping or *significant hesitation*. This fault, since you are taking their scalp after all, should be accorded the same measure of restraint that you might use for calling a *hesitation* refusal on the dog. The word “significant” gives us a good measuring tool: If you can say the word SIGNIFICANT as the handler hesitates, then you must blow the whistle and take his scalp. However, if all you can get out is “SIG...” you’re doing the team a disservice.

Mindful that the original intention of the game was to encourage handlers to stay in motion with their dogs, the judge should establish criteria for movement at the beginning of the course and at the end. In briefing the judge might advise that the handler could be standing still when calling the dog through the collapsed tunnel (the homestead); but had better be in motion when the dog comes out. Also, the table (the fort) is where time ends;

game will keep the handler from being scalped. If the dog runs past an obstacle without committing to the performance the handler will have to accept the missed point and continue. Remember that going back to correct the dog is a scalpable offense.

Variations

- The *Numbered Course* variation is actually the original implementation of this game. The stated purpose is to stay in motion through a numbered sequence. The dog will earn one point for each obstacle performed. So the dog with the most points wins. Time is a tie-breaker only. As it turns out, *Last of the Mohicans* as a dog's choice game is more interesting and cultivates a strategic approach to the game.
- The *Resurrection* variation can be quite a bit of fun. Allow everyone to rerun the game with the obvious warning that only their second score will count. Certainly everyone with an RIP on their scribe-sheet will be keen to return to the world of the living. Anyone with a score from the first round (and a scalp) will have to measure their score against their ambition when deciding whether to take the gamble.
- *Salmon Run* and other variations have been invented based on the notion that running from the Indians in order to keep one's scalp is a politically incorrect. In *Salmon Run*, for example, we are running from bears.

If you are inclined to invent your own variation avoid including contact obstacles for score. Stopping or significantly hesitating for the dog on a contact obstacle is sometimes crafty handling. Stopping or significantly hesitating can be a matter of safety for the dog. For this reason, we do not include the contact obstacles as pointed obstacles in *Last of the Mohicans*.

Qualification

Typically the number of obstacles should dictate the qualifying criteria. For example, 40% for Games I; 60% for Games II; and 80% for Games III would work. Values should be rounded. So in our sample course above, the qualifying criteria should be:

- Games I ~ 5 points
- Game II ~ 7 points
- Games III ~ 10 points

Variations

No Scalps Variation ~ In this variation the dog is faulted a point (rather than scalping the handler) for any of the special faults (stopping, going back to correct a missed obstacle, or without allowing the dog to ever cross over his own path). If the dog commits a performance fault on an obstacle, the judge simply does not award a point; But for any special fault the dog is given a special fault, which will reduce his score by one.

Premium Blurb

Last of the Mohicans is a game of strategy and daring. The objective is get from the homestead to the fort while performing as many obstacles as possible on the field without

ever stopping, going back to correct a missed obstacle, or without allowing the dog to ever cross over his own path. One point is earned for each obstacle performed. *Last of the Mohicans* is scored points then time. ER2

Las Vegas

Las Vegas is the invention of Ilze Rukis. Ilze teaches for Northwoods Agility Group (NAGs) in Northern Wisconsin. Quirky (agility) minds are always at work.

Briefing

The object of Las Vegas is to accumulate as many points as possible in sixty seconds by running sequences of varying point value. Time starts when the team crosses starting line to any sequence of choice. To get points for a sequence, the dog must complete the sequence without fault.

For Novice: knocked bars, missed contacts, off courses are faulted. For Advanced: all of the novice faults, plus refusals and missed weave poles are faulted. If a dog faults an obstacle then the *entire* sequence has been lost. The team must restart any sequence eligible for point accumulation from behind the containment line.

If a dog drops a bar on a sequence, the bar is not reset and the sequence is deemed ineligible for point accumulation.

Point accumulation stops at sixty seconds. No points are given for partially completed sequences.

Teams must run across the start/finish line to stop time.

Scoring

Las Vegas is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tiebreaker only.

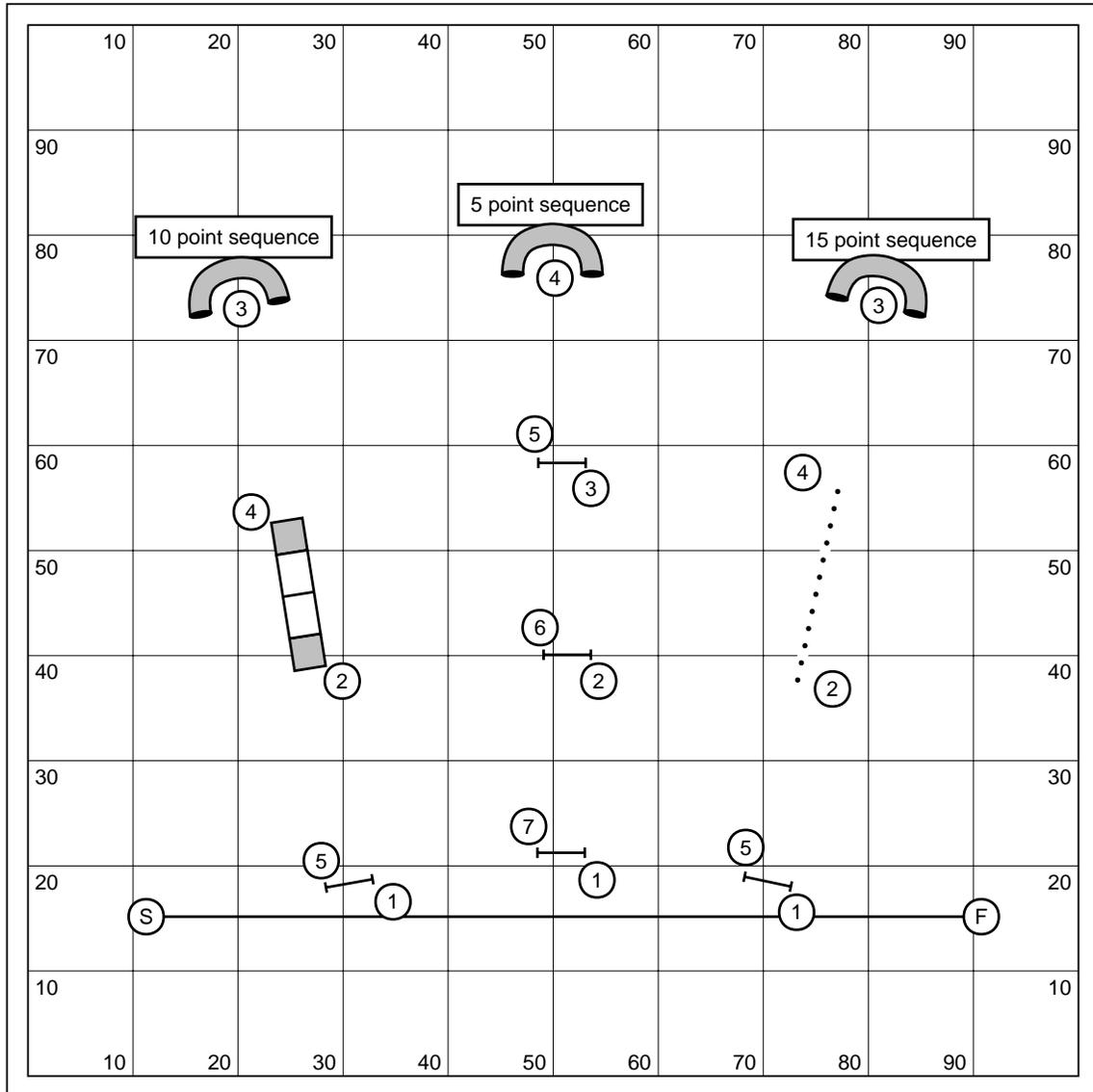
When any single sequence is completed without fault (there and back), the team is awarded the face value of that sequence: 5, 10, or 15 points. When a sequence is performed multiple times, point values are awarded as shown in the table below.

Las Vegas Scoring Summary

	Sequence 1 10 points	Sequence 2 5 points	Sequence 3 15 points
Two of a Kind face value times 2	20 x 2 = 40	10 x 2 = 20	30 x 2 = 60
Three of a Kind face value times 3	15 x 3 = 45	30 x 3 = 90	45 x 3 = 135
Flush (all three sequences once) face value times 5	30 x 5 = 150		
Straight Flush (three sequences twice) Face value times 10	30 x 10 = 300		

If the team has earned both a Two of a Kind, Three of a Kind, or each of the three sequences, then the scores will be added together.

Course Design



This is the classic Las Vegas course design. The sequences are straightaway and the 10-point and 15-point sequences are on opposite sides.

Traditionally the elements of the Las Vegas course are designed in straight-away sequences that double back on themselves. The point values for the three separate legs of the course should be based upon the complexity of the sequence or difficulty of the obstacles included in each sequence.

For the Dogwood High Roller Bonus variation the sequences might be designed so that the obstacles are distributed more at a lateral distance from the handler giving the exhibitors a more modest chance for success in doubling the earned performance when sending their dogs from behind a containment line.

Strategy

The handler should do the sequence on which his dog is least likely to have a fault. If a dog has problems with contact obstacles, stay away from the contact sequence. If the dog

is likely to have weave pole faults, stay away from the weave poles. If the dog drops bars, stay away from the sequence made up predominately of jumps.

Taking advantage of the dog's strengths will maximize point accumulation. For example, a team that completes Three of a Kind twice will have 270 points versus the team that risks going for it all and attempts all three sequences twice for 300 points.

Variations

- Dogwood High Roller Bonus variation – In this variation, invented by Bud Houston, the dog can be sent to complete any sequence from behind a containment line. If the handler sends his dog through the entire performance of any single sequence (while staying behind the containment line) the dog will score twice (as though the dog had just run the sequence twice). Consequently, sending the dog is equivalent to a Twosome.

In the Dogwood High Roller Bonus variation, if the handler is confident of sending his dog ahead for the performance of one of the sequences, it is actually not a good idea to send the dog twice on the same sequence. Remember that Four-of-a-kind is actually worth less than a Full House in this game. The handler would be smarter to run with the dog once on the sequence to pattern the dog, before attempting the distance send.

Qualifying and Titles

Las Vegas is eligible as a titling game in the TDAA. Qualifying criteria shall be:

- Games I – 60 points
- Games II – 90 points
- Games III – 150 points

Premium Blurb

Las Vegas is a point accumulation game in which the dog builds a hand (earns points) for performing short sequences of different value. *Las Vegas* is scored Points, Then Time.
ER2

Let's Dance

Let's Dance is the invention of TDAA judge Natalene Lamming. It is a combination of and inspired by Las Vegas and the Minuet.

The objective of Let's Dance is to complete as many dances as time allowed. Each dance completed earns the team 1 or 2 points depending on the dance. If a dog knocks a bar the handler must replace it and continue. Handler will not be faulted for any obstacle dog takes while replacing the bar.

If the dog goes off-course the dog and handler must start that dance from the beginning. A failure to perform will result in no points for that dance.

Point values are:

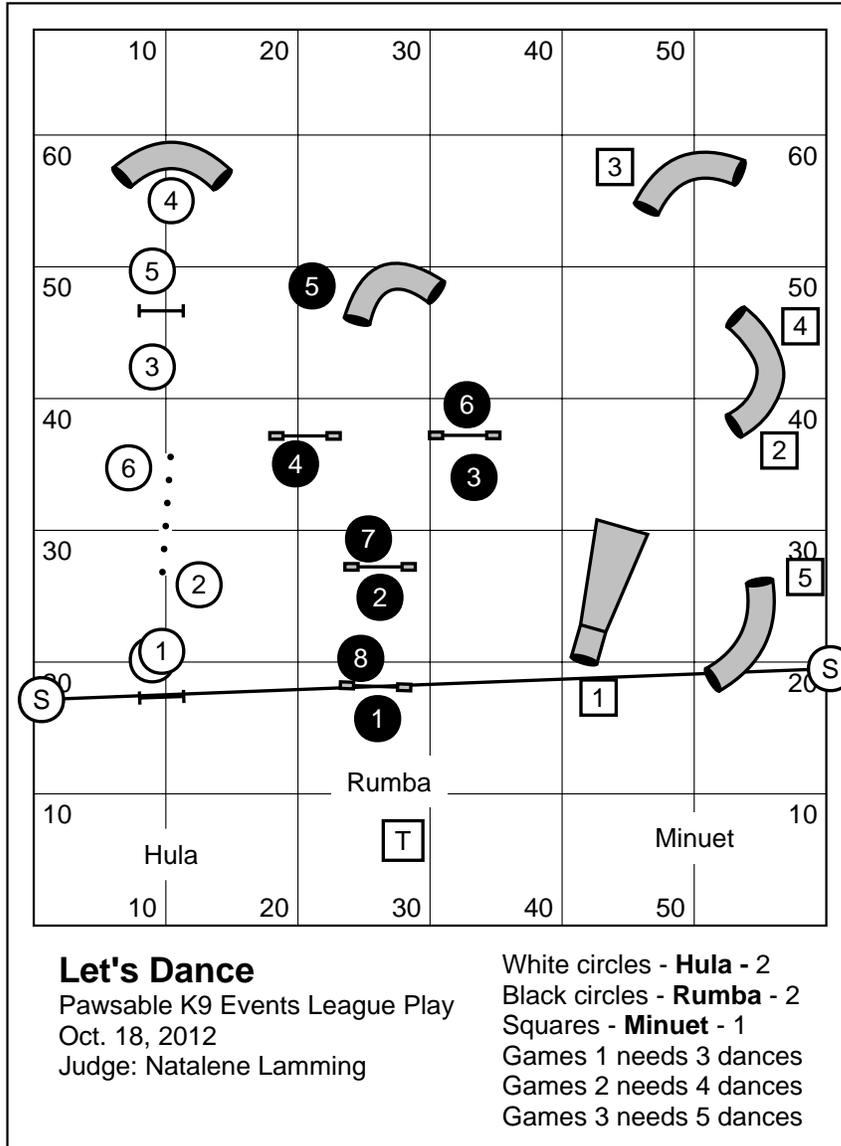
- Light circles dance (Hula) -2 points
- Dark circle dance (Rumba)- 2 points
- Light squares (Minuet) – 1 point

The game ends when the dog gets on the table. A time whistle will sound at the end of Qualifying Course Time whereupon the handler must direct the dog to the table. Small dogs have 60 seconds to dance; big dogs have 55 seconds. The handler may direct the dog to the table at any time.

Time begins when the dog crosses the Start Line. Dog may start with any of the dances. The handler may choose to earn points from the same dance or a combination of any of the dances completed.

The dog earns 0.2 point for each obstacle performed in the final dance, if not completed.

Course Design



This is the original *Let's Dance* course designed by Natalene Lamming for play at Pawsable K9 Events.

Scoring

Let's Dance is scored Points, Then Time

Qualifying

- Games I - 3 dances
- Games II - 4 dances
- Games III - 5 dances

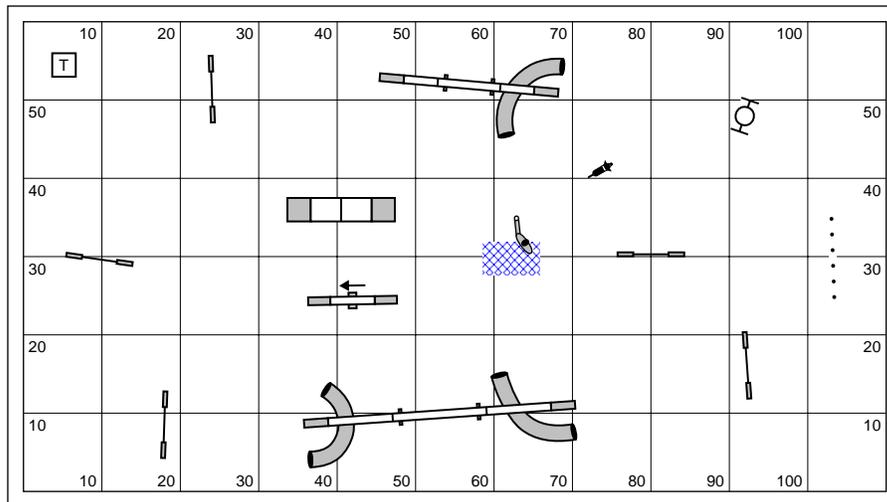
Remember, some of the dances count for two dances. Lets Dance!

Premium Blurb

Let's Dance is a simple game featuring several small numbered sequence, each representing a different dance! The objective of the game is to do as many dances as time allows. *Let's Dance* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

London Bridges

This game was invented during a training session. The floor of the building was slick with moisture and there was some fear of “falling down” as handlers ran to direct their dogs. So the instructor created a game that would have the handler standing still while practicing distance skills.



This is a simple game. The handler must remain with at least one foot in the containment area while sending the dog away to perform a single obstacle; and may be sent away to do another different obstacle only after coming back to the handler. Jumps are worth 1 point; tunnels, the tire, and weave poles are worth 3 points; Contact obstacles are worth 5 points.

The handler may surrender at any time. If the dog repeats an obstacle, then we assume that the team has surrendered.

Scoring

London Bridges is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tie-breaker only.

Variations

1. The handler may direct the dog to perform multiple obstacles on each send and may continue to earn points so long as no obstacle is repeated.
2. The handler may carry onto the field a *portable* containment station and position it where-ever he wants for the duration of play.

Premium Blurb

London Bridges is a distance game that requires the handler to remain at a small station on course while sending the dog away to earn points. *London Bridges* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Looper

Looper is a simple sequencing game invented specifically for play in the National Dog Agility League for monthly competition.

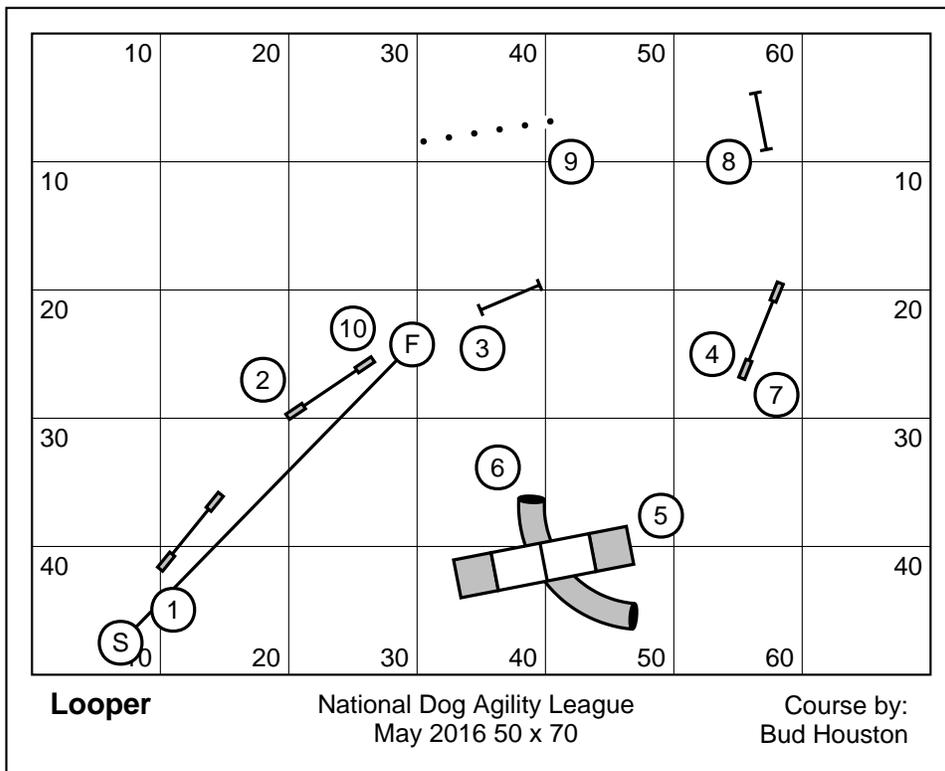
Briefing

Looper has a simple objective. After completing the numbered sequence once, the dog must be directed to complete that same numbered sequence a second time (there is no pause, time doesn't stop until the dog performs the last obstacle in the sequence a second time).

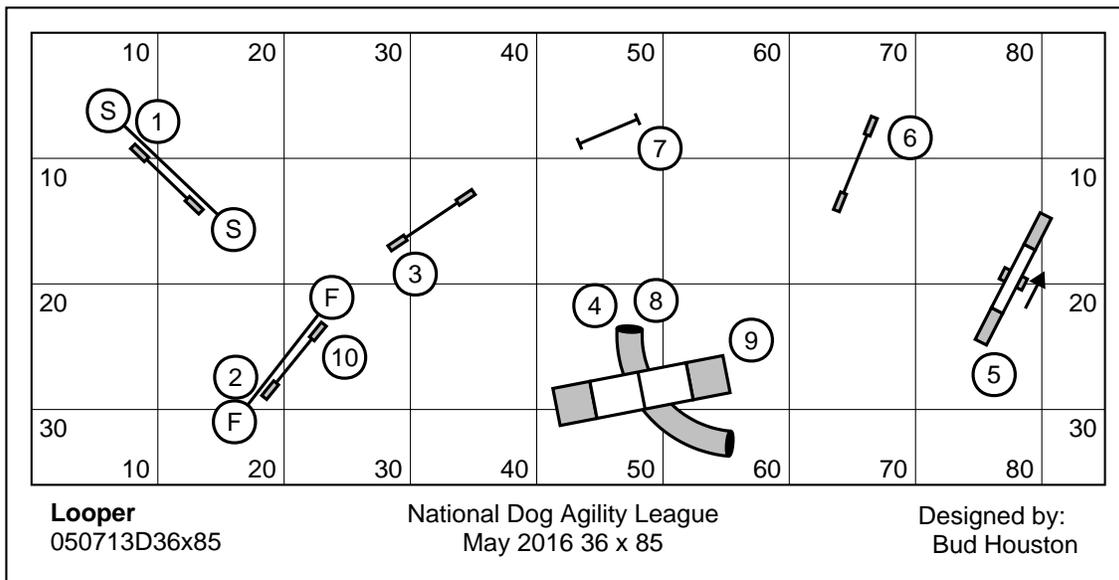
Follow the numbers. After the first performance of the numbered sequence the handler must direct the dog to perform that sequence a second time.

Course Design

This game was specifically invented in order to make use of a small space to raise the obstacle count for the dog's performance without cluttering the floor with too many obstacles.



Looper shares a premise with the Minuet that a repeated sequence may expose handling errors. The course should be designed so that the transition from the last obstacle in the numbered sequence flows to the first obstacle in the sequence.



The *Looper* design might also provide a context for comparing a static start (handler on a lead out) to a moving start with technical implications. In this *Looper* course, for example, the transition from the #10 hurdle to #1 is a bit of a threadle, possibly complicated by a dog in full extension. Note that the downfield impact on handling might be dramatically different between the first start and the second start.

Scoring and Qualification

Looper is traditionally scored Time, Plus Faults. However, the game might just as well be scored Faults, Then Time.

The judge will establish a course time based on the measured length of the numbered sequence (X2). Qualifying shall be based on the rates of travel respective to the level and jump heights of a dog. Once faults are added to time, if the dog's score is lower than the established QCT, then the dog will qualify.

Premium Blurb

Looper is a simple sequencing game in which the dog is directed to perform a numbered sequence of obstacles twice. *Looper* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER7

Louganis

This game derives its name from a great Olympic champion of the springboard and platform dive, Greg Louganis. His name is often borrowed to describe a dog that plunges into space from some high point above the yellow contact zone on the down-side of a contact obstacle.

For those of you too young to remember, Greg Louganis was winner of the springboard and platform at the 1979 Pan-American Games; At the 1982 World Championships, was the first diver in a major international meet to earn a perfect score of 10 from all seven judges;. And in 1984 was winner of gold medals for both the springboard and the platform at the Los Angeles Olympics and winner of the Sullivan Award to America's best amateur athlete. In 1988 he became the first to win double gold medals for diving in two consecutive Olympics.

Briefing

Louganis is like a curious mixture of Power & Speed and Time Warp or Call Direct & Send. The course begins with the untimed performance of two contact obstacles. The dog's time will begin only when he crosses the starting line after the second contact obstacle.

However, bonus points may be earned if the handler advances beyond any of the three handler containments shown on the course, marked by the letters "A" "B" and "C". Containment "A" will earn the dog 5 bonus points. Line "B" earns the dog 10 bonus points. Line "C" (not used in the Novice course) shall earn the dog 20 bonus points.

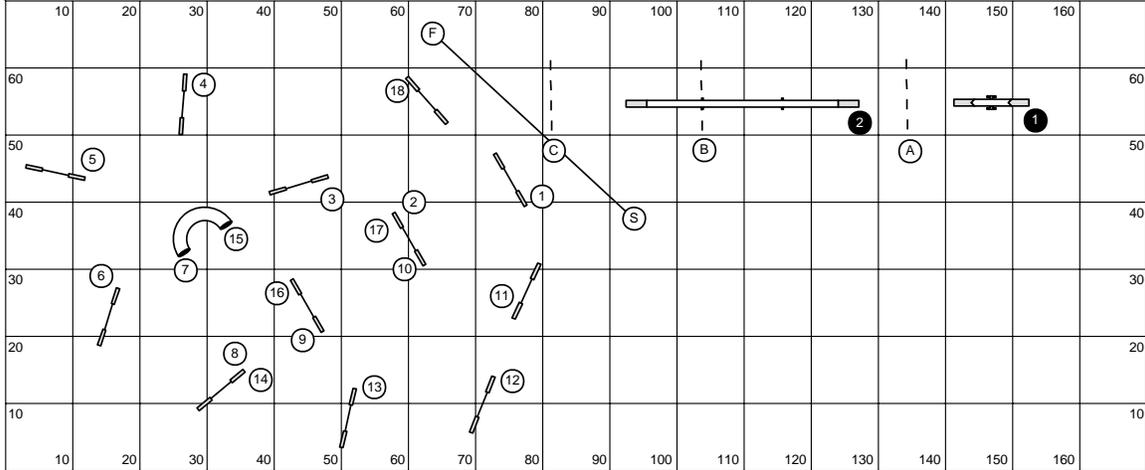
Should the dog miss any downside contact or leave one of the contact obstacles after committing all four paws, then all bonus points are lost. Although the opening is not timed, the handler will forfeit any possible bonus if he returns to reset a dog left behind. The timer will indicate the start of judging by declaring "Ready" to the handler awaiting the start of his course.

The bonuses are "all or nothing". If the dog fails to perform an obstacle or misses a contact, no bonus can be earned. No faults will be given the dog for missing a contact or failing to perform one of the contact obstacles. So, should the dog earn a point, the handler should go on with the jumpers course.

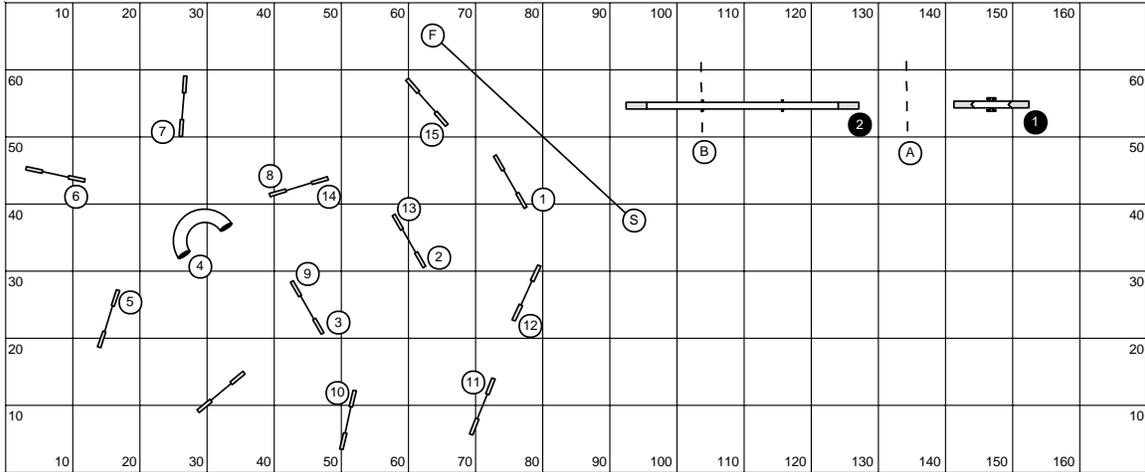
Advanced and Masters league competitors are required to run the advanced course. Novice league competitors must run the novice course.

Course Design

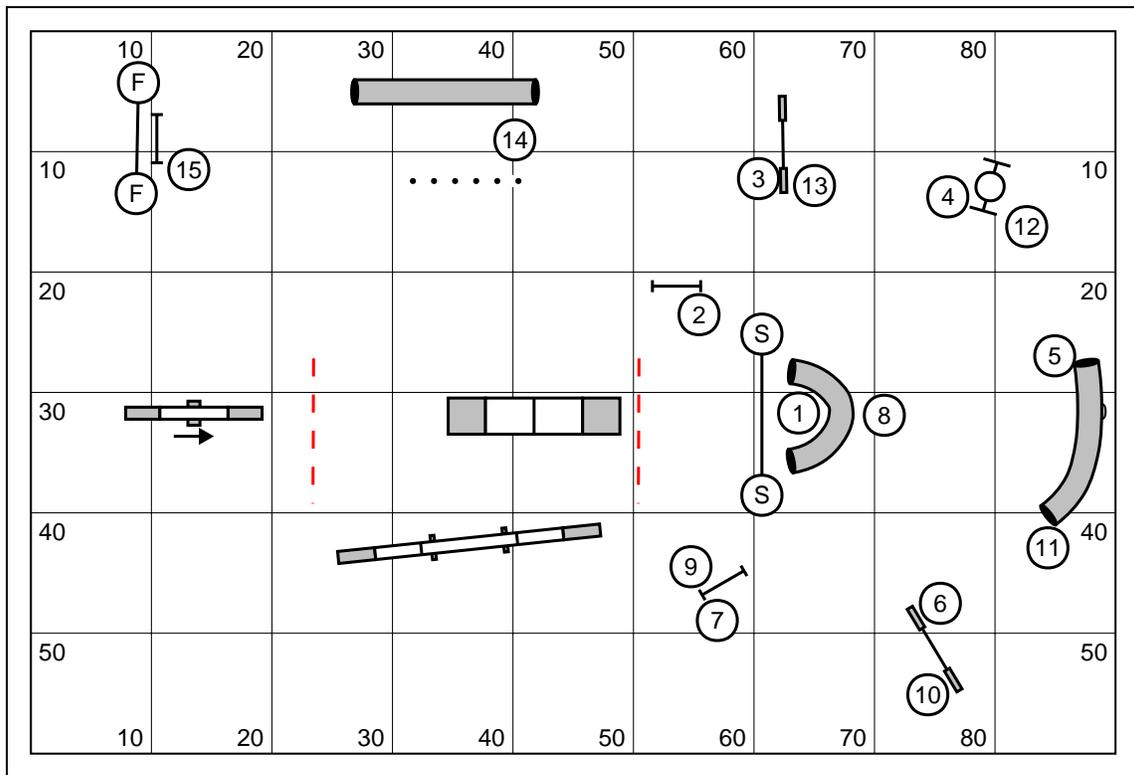
Advanced Course



Novice Course



The basic design principle for Louganis is to line up two or more contact obstacles to enable the start-line bonuses for the handler's lead-out.



In this *teacup* variation the obstacles are clearly more closely spaced; but the principle is the same.

Scoring

Louganis is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Safety

Working at a distance from the dog is an important litmus of whether the dog truly understands the performance of an obstacle, whether the dog's method for performance is a two-on/two-off performance or a running contact.

A position forward of the dog is very different from a lateral position by the handler. Some dogs will bail the contact in their haste to catch up to the handler's position. Both the instructor and the dog's handler should use good judgment in determining for which dogs the handler should even *consider* proofing the performance with a lead-out.

This game should be played on a grassy turf—and certainly *never* on thinly matted concrete.)

Premium Blurp

A *Louganis* course begins with the untimed performance of two or more contact obstacles with two or more lead-out containment lines that challenge the team for an all-or-nothing scoring bonus. Time will begin only after the final contact obstacle in the opening whereupon the dog will be directed through (typically) a fast *Jumpers* course. *Louganis* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER5

Lucky 13

Lucky 13 comes to us from league play competition conducted by Northwest Agility League ~ sponsored by Columbia Agility Team. It is essentially a variation of the game as "12 Tone Row" with a couple of important differences.

Briefing

The object of Lucky 13 is to collect as many points as possible while correctly performing a total of 13 obstacles – no more, no less – with the thirteenth obstacle being the tire. The course design is up to the handler. Each obstacle is assigned a value indicated by the cone next to it. Some obstacles may have two different point values indicated by the cones.

Good natured help by teammates is allowed.

Maximum course times are 50 seconds for big dogs and 55 seconds for small dogs. Scoring begins at the designated start line and ends at the table which is not counted as an obstacle.

General

- If the dog correctly performs more than 13 obstacles, only the first 13 count for points;
- Each obstacle done correctly over OR under 13 incurs a special fault;
- Each bi-directional obstacle (as indicated on course map) may be done once in each direction for points. Each direction correctly performed will count as one of the thirteen obstacles required;
- Repeated obstacles will not count for the obstacle count or assigned obstacle points;
- The tire must be the thirteenth obstacle, done in either direction, to avoid a special fault. Note: the opposite tire direction may be used in the handler's course design; and
- The table is live at all times and stops the clock. No specific position is required on the table to stop the clock.

Notes on faulted obstacles:

- Each faulted obstacle incurs 5 faults (missed contacts, knocked bars, etc.) and there are no failure to perform faults;
- A faulted obstacle is not included in the count of 13 obstacles to be done; and may not be repeated for points.

Notes on special faults ~ Ten point faults assessed for:

- Each obstacle MORE or LESS than the required 13; and
- The tire NOT being the thirteenth obstacle.

Conduct of the Game

Judge calls ALL points for correctly performed obstacles during a run, including repeated

obstacles;

Judge calls out “fault” for any faulted obstacles; and the scribe will record all obstacle numbers called including any repeated obstacles in the order called and indicating an 'F' when “fault” is called by the judge. For example, 6, 9 F, 3, 6, 4, 16, etc.

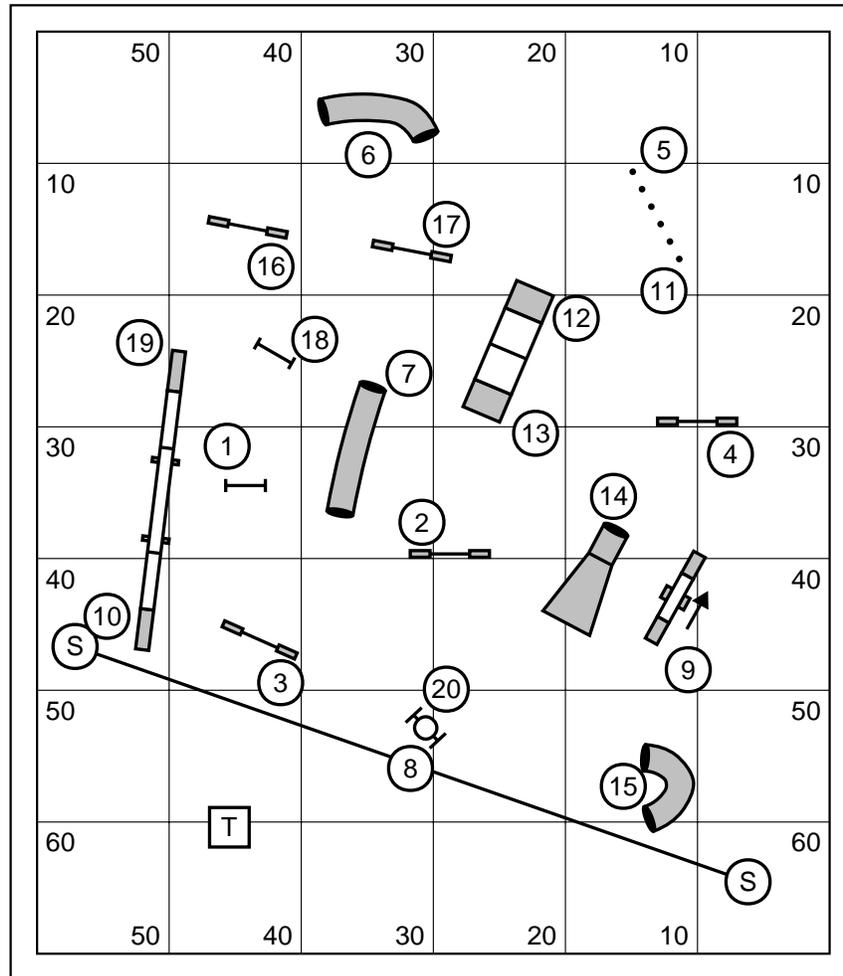
The scorekeeper should count the number of obstacles recorded, excluding any faulted and repeated obstacles, to determine if the thirteenth obstacle was the tire. Then the scorekeeper will add up the number of valid obstacle points and deduct any performance and special 10 point faults. An example of scoring follows.

- The dog performed the obstacles and stopped the clock within the allowed time; and
- The scribe sheet reads: 7, 12, 9, 11 F, 13, 16, 6, 5, 15, 2, 14, 6, 18, 2, 8.

Fifteen obstacles were performed and the thirteenth obstacle was not the tire. One obstacle was faulted and one obstacle was repeated. These two obstacles were not counted. The total of the first 13 obstacles is 138 points. Then the following points are subtracted from the total: 5 faults for an obstacle fault: 10 points for doing one obstacle over the required 13 obstacles, and 10 points for the tire not being the thirteenth obstacle performed. The new point total would be 113 points. ($138-5-10-10 = 113$).

Based on the qualifying criteria (see below) this score would have been an adequate qualifying score for Games I, but not Games II or Games III.

Course Design



This is a *Teacup* sized *Lucky 13* course.

Scoring and Qualification

Lucky 13 is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time. The dog with the most points is the winner.

Qualifying

To qualify the dog must earn:

- Games I – 102 points
- Games II – 128 points
- Games III – 154 points

Editor's Note: The course used in this document was loosely based on the Northwest Agility League course but adjusted for play in the TDAA.

Variations

Darla's Variation makes an important distinction in the play of *Lucky 13*, considerably differentiating the game from the play of *12 Tone Row*. In this variation there is *no*

additional penalty for going over or under 13 obstacles; and there is *no* required/specific obstacle to be performed at the 13th (and, consequently, no additional penalty for not doing a specific obstacle as the 13th.) Only point values for the first 13 obstacles will be included in the dog's score. This is a relaxed variation of game, first played at the 2014 TDAA Petit Prix in Latrobe, PA, judged by Darla Annonio.

Premium Blurb

Lucky 13 is a dog's choice game in which obstacles are laid out on the field valued from 1 point to 20 points. The dog may do only 13, without repeating any; earning the value of the assigned numbers as he works. *Lucky 13* is scored Points, Less Faults, Then Time.
ER6

Luck of the Draw

Luck of the Draw is a game invented by Holly Schmidt and Leslie Willett for play in the Teacup Dogs Agility Association. This is a game of strategy, timing, and skill.

Briefing

Luck of the Draw is a dog's choice game. Note that the three tunnels at the bottom of your course map are labeled A, B, and C. Immediately after the briefing, you will draw a piece of paper that has one of six combinations of those letters on it. The six combinations are ABC, ACB, BCA, BAC, CAB, or CBA. This is the order in which you must complete those tunnels, thus the name of the game, Luck of the Draw!

You will walk the course already knowing your order. All obstacles are bi-directional. Each jump may be taken as many times as you want but not back-to-back. The "Bonus Tunnel" may be taken a maximum of three times, once after each successful completion of an A, B, or C tunnel.

How to Play

The handler will direct the dog to the first tunnel in the drawn order. Time starts as the dog enters that tunnel. And out of that tunnel the dog can be directed to earn points by doing obstacles on the floor, and bonus points for attempting the *Bonus Tunnel* at the back of the ring.

If a dog knocks a bar, the judge will call "0". That jump is out of play for the rest of the game.

The dog must earn at least one point in between taking the random ordered tunnels.

A dog performing one of the ABC tunnels out of order, you will receive a 5 point fault. The handler should move on to direct the dog to the correct tunnel. The dog will not earn points for any jumps along the way. Get back on course as quickly as you can!

The finish line is live after the time whistle blows.

A dog failing to complete the three starting tunnels before the expiration of time will receive a score of "E" (elimination).

Bonus Tunnel

Upon completion of the first tunnel the dog can enter the jumping portion of the course to earn points. Each jump is worth one point. At the back of the course, the handler must attempt the *Bonus Tunnel*; sending the dog to either end of the tunnel, while remaining behind the containment line. A successful performance of the *Bonus Tunnel* will earn 5 points. The tunnel is worth 0 points if the handler steps on or over the gamble line.

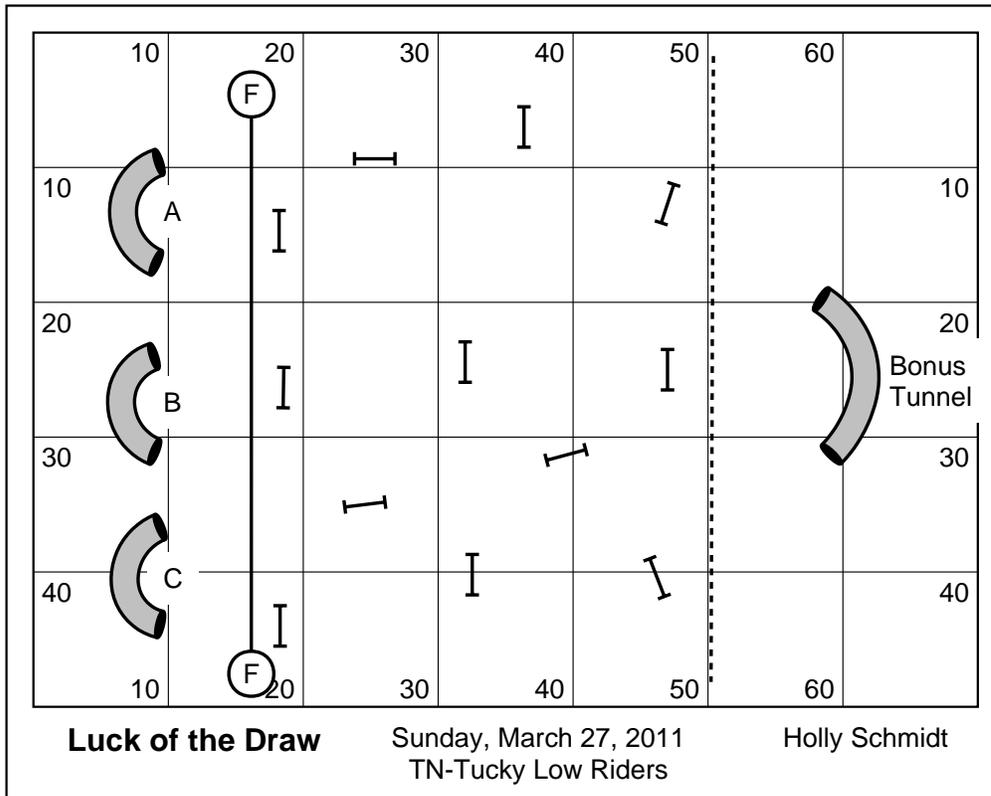
After attempting the *Bonus Tunnel* the handler must then head back to the second of the random ordered tunnels in order to reactivate the *Bonus Tunnel*. Jumps continue to be worth one point.

After the second attempt the handler directs the dog to the final starting tunnel to reactivate the *Bonus Tunnel* one final time.

Scoring

Luck of the Draw is scored Points, Less Faults. Time is a tie-breaker only.

Course Design



This is the original course designed for the play of *Luck of the Draw*. For this game the judge gave these qualifying course times:

- Small dogs 50 seconds
- Big dogs have 45 seconds

Luck of the Draw might be played with obstacles other than jumps on the floor. If so, these obstacles might use a schedule of points more like a *Gamblers* class. The game might be played with a more interesting distance challenge on the field.

Qualifying

The dog must successfully complete the three tunnels in the order of the draw and earn a minimum number of points:

- Games I – 14 points
- Games II – 19 points
- Games III – 24 points

Premium Blurp

Luck of the Draw is a point accumulation game with a twist. The handler will draw a random order of performance for three obstacles that activate an extra bonus for

performance of an obstacle or short sequence. *Luck of the Draw* is scored Points, Less Faults. ER6

Meet in the Middle

Meet in the Middle is the invention of Sherry Bryant, Barbara Atkinson and Claire Schwartz.

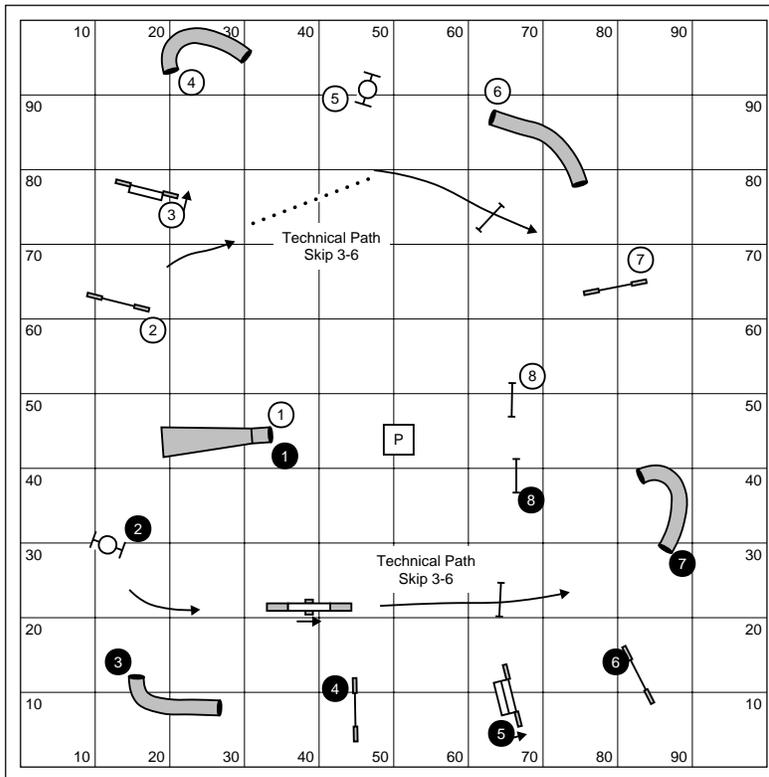
Briefing

Meet in the Middle is a pairs relay, requiring one dog and handler to run a short course and then exchange a baton with a second dog and handler, who will run a second short course. Each dog and handler will run the whole course but only half of the course at a time, exchanging the baton each time the two teams meet in the middle. Each of the two short courses are big and round sequences built for speed. However, each includes a short-cut if the handler thinks he'll do better with the technical obstacles on the shortcut than on the regular path of the course.

Scoring

Meet in the Middle is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins.

Course Design



This is an example of a *Meet in the Middle* course.

The course is laid out in a figure eight, with half the course going clockwise and the other half going counterclockwise. Each half of the course will consist of ten obstacles, eight on the outside circle, representing the speed course, and two in the middle, representing the technical shortcut.

Strategy

The handler should take into account not only whether his dog can gain some advantage by taking the technical shortcut but whether his dog is more likely to fault one side or the other. If there's some likelihood that the dog will fault the technical obstacles, the shortcut probably should be avoided. On the other hand, if the dog has a propensity to drop the bar of a spread hurdle or tends to flatten out and drop bars when moving fast, it could be that the technical shortcut is the better course.

Premium Blurb

Meet in the Middle is an interesting variation of the traditional pairs relay. The team will exchange the baton several times until both dogs have ultimately run the entire course. The *Meet in the Middle* course is typically designed in a figure of 8 pattern to accommodate these exchanges. *Meet in the Middle* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Mikey's Game

Mikey's Game is a fun mix of Tunnelers and What's My Line. Mikey's Game was developed (probably by Wayne Van Deusen) at the request of Deb Chivlicek whose Boston Terrier Mikey loved tunnels. It was first played at the Bark River TDAA Trial at Ixonia, WI.

Briefing

Mikey's Game is a two part game. The first part is a numbered sequence of tunnels. The team will negotiate the numbered course, taking care to avoid any other obstacle. After the Tunnelers sequence the team will finish by performing the remainder of the obstacles in any order or direction. The unnumbered obstacles may be taken only once. Tunnels taken during the second part of the course count as an off-course fault.

Time begins when the dog enters the first tunnel. Cross the finish line to stop time.

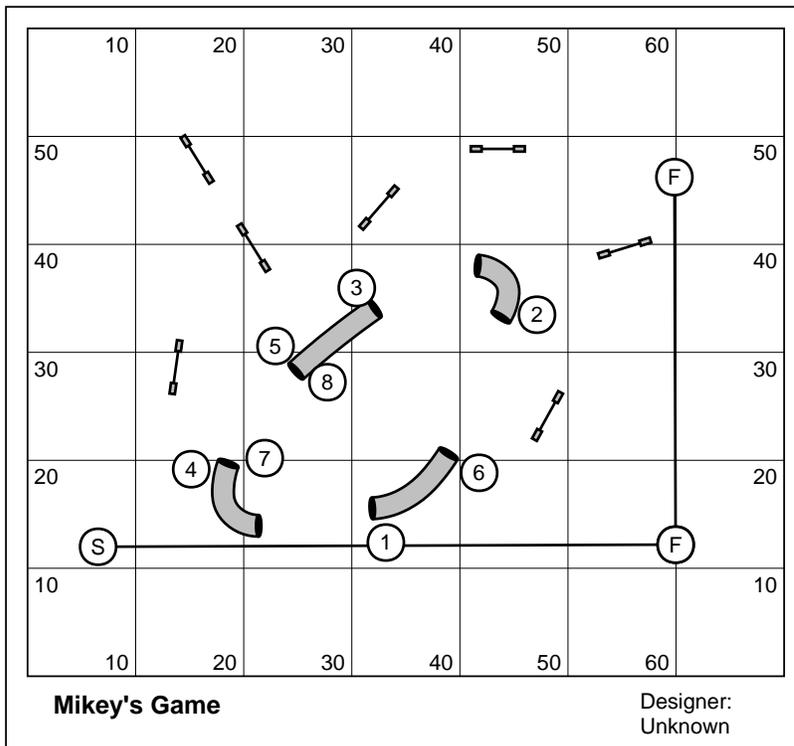
Scoring

Mikey's Game is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Qualifying

Mikey's Game is eligible for titling and qualification in the TDAA. Qualifying will be based on a Qualifying Course Time established by the judge.

Course Design



This course is based upon the original design of *Mikey's Game*. The judge/designer (now forgotten) established these course times.

Games 1 45 seconds
Games 2 40 seconds
Games 3 35 Seconds

Premium Blurb

Mikey's Game is a fun mixture of Tunnelers and What's My Line. After running a numbered course consisting only of tunnels, the handler must direct the dog to perform other obstacles on the field once (and only once) in the order and direction of his choosing. *Mikey's Game* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Miniature Golf

Miniature Golf is the invention of Stuart Mah. The game first appeared in Clean Run magazine. This is one of those fun games in which almost anything can happen and generally does. A team can win either by demonstrating great directional discrimination or a great aptitude for improvisation. The game has also been known as Bye-Bye Birdie.

Briefing

Miniature Golf is usually played as a team game with four dogs and four handlers to a team.

There are three courses on the field. Each course begins with a different tunnel. The dog will run whichever course is selected based on which tunnel the dog first goes through. All courses have the same course time, regardless of the disparity of difficulty.

Each dog must start with its handler in the area designated as the tee. No lead-outs are allowed. The handler must send his dog into the tunnel of choice and then run the course indicated by whichever tunnel the dog actually chooses. If all four of the dog's paws go into a tunnel, that tunnel has been committed to and must be completed along with its associated course. The handler may, however, call a dog back out of a tunnel if three or fewer paws are committed to the tunnel.

The handler may not stand in or walk through the area designated as the handler exclusion box.

Scoring

Miniature Golf is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The team with the lowest score wins.

Displaced poles and missed contacts are scored as 5 seconds added to the running time. Off-courses are scored as 10 seconds added for being out of bounds. Each instance of the handler moving or stepping into the exclusion box will result in a 5-second penalty.

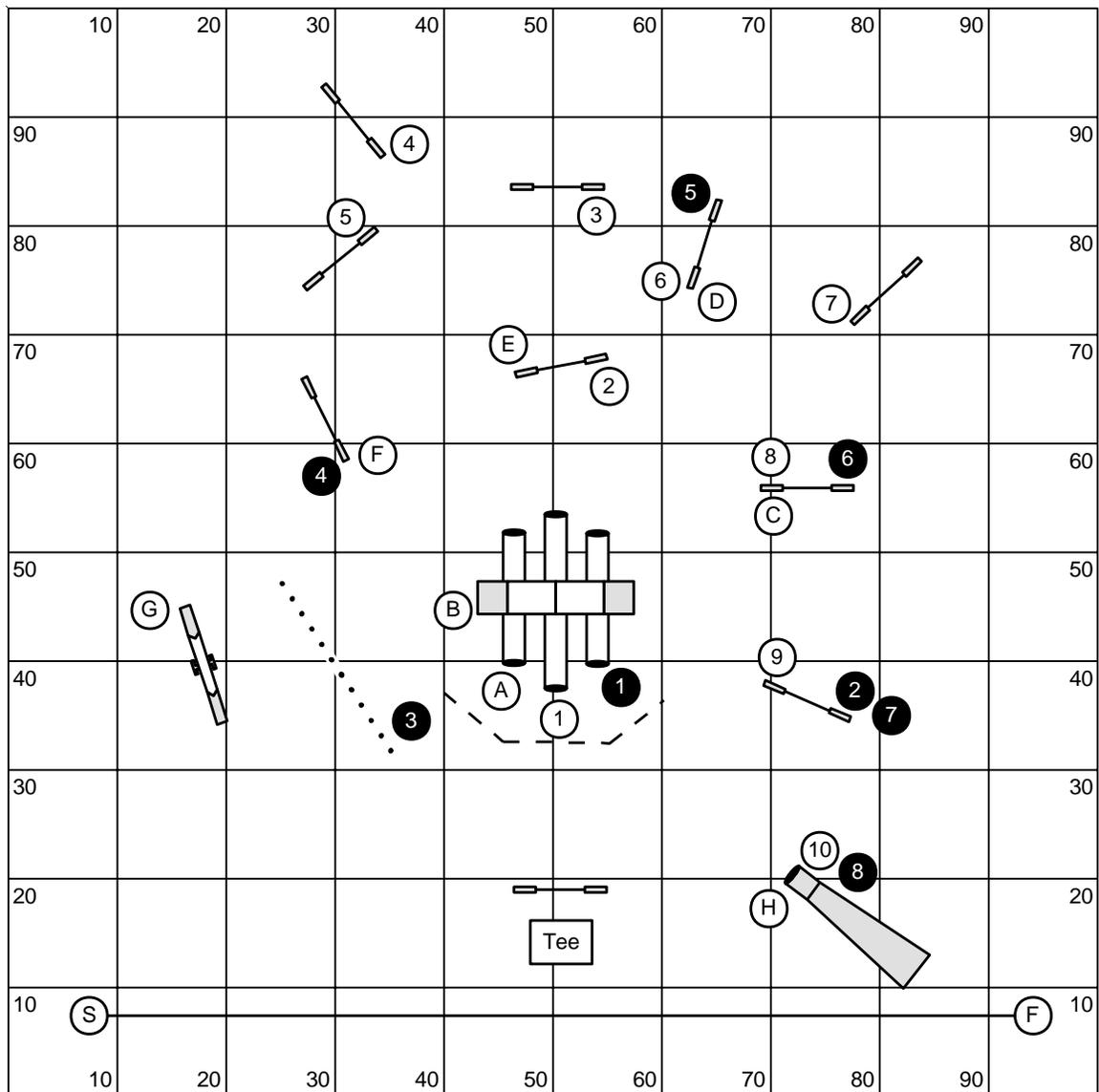
The judge shall set a course time or par for the course. This time shall be established by measuring all three courses, applying a yards-per-second rate of 2.5 to 3.5 yards per second, and dividing that by 3. Generally with a course consisting of 9 to 11 obstacles, par would be in the 25 to 40 second range.

Based on the dog's course time plus its faults, the dog is awarded a golf score as follows:

- Eagle, 15 seconds under or more is scored as -2.
- Birdie, 5.01 seconds to 14.99 seconds under is scored as -1.
- Par, equal to or less than SCT; scored as 0

Ties are broken by a sudden death playoff. One dog, and only one, is selected to run the same course from each team. The winner is the fastest dog on course including faults. This is a quick way to determine a winner in a spectator-appealing manner.

Course Design



This is an example of a Miniature Golf course, designed by Stuart Mah.

The design of the Miniature Golf course requires three straight pipe tunnels to be set side-by-side under the A-frame. The middle tunnel extends 3' beyond the tunnel on either side. A semicircular handler exclusion box is marked 4' from the tunnels. The center tunnel leads to the Jumpers course, the left tunnel leads to the contact course and the right tunnel leads to the weave pole course.

The setup can be of various designs but the initial sequence for each of the three courses is always a jump to a tunnel under the A-frame.

Each course has a dominant obstacle:

- The Jumpers course, consisting of jumps and tunnels
- The contact course, containing the A-frame and teeter (optional)
- The weave pole course, containing a set of weave poles

The Jumpers course shall consist of at least 8 obstacles but may contain more. The

average is 10. It should be longer in yardage and go further beyond the A-frame than the other two courses. The weave pole and contact courses shall contain one or two fewer obstacles than the Jumpers course.

Qualifying Criteria

A dog must earn a score of “Par” or better (a score equal to or less than the SCT) in order to earn a qualifying score.

Variations

- Singles Miniature Golf variation – The game can be played as singles rather than as foursomes.

Premium Blurb

Miniature Golf is an agility game that is played like a game of golf. The handler tees his dog into one of three tunnels closely grouped together and then runs a short course associated with the tunnel the dog chooses. *Miniature Golf* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Minuet

The Minuet was invented by Bud Houston as a physical conditioning exercise for his dogs and a training game for his students. The game was first played in 2001 in ongoing agility league. On the surface, the Minuet is a simple game with a simple sequence repeated over and over again. In fact, the game will expose every flaw in movement the handler might have as the handler must also repeat his movement over and over again. There will be dropped bars, refusals and even off courses. This game demonstrates a simple principal. Most performance faults are the fault of the handler and not of the dog.

Just a note about the “physical conditioning” exercise, Bud reports that it is so strenuous, that he never actually uses it for that purpose.

Briefing

The dog and handler have 50 seconds. Repeat the sequence as a continuous loop until the expiration of time.

The judge may specify that the dog has to cross a finish line or go to a table to stop time after the whistle blows to end scoring.

One point is earned for each completion of the loop. One decimal point is earned for each jump in an uncompleted loop when time expires. For example: In 50 seconds, the dog does 7 complete loops and the first two jumps in the sequence. The dog’s score shall be 7.2.

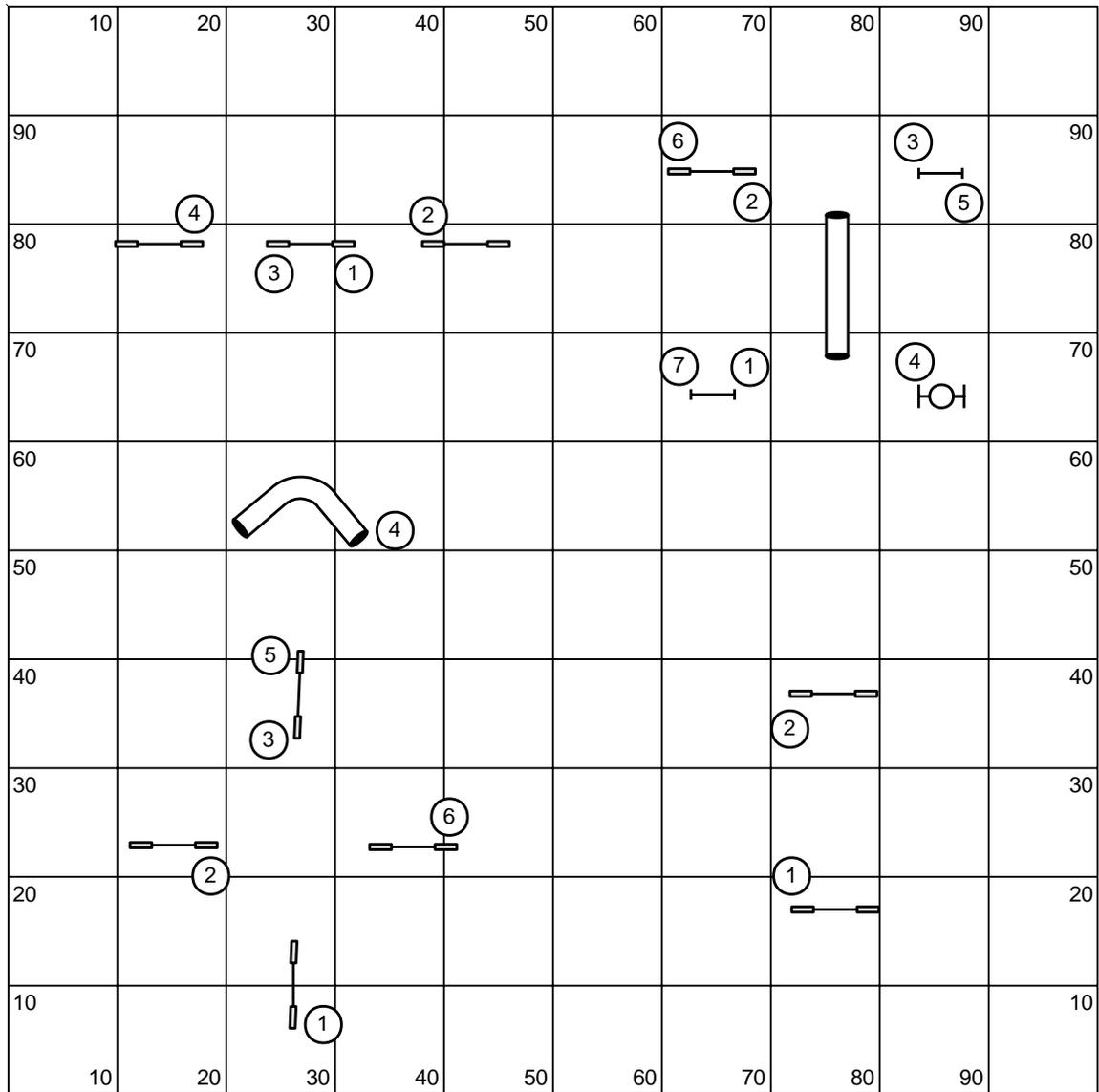
If the dog drops a bar, the handler must stop and reset the bar.

If the dog goes off course, one point is lost. Counting of the loop will not continue until the dog returns to the next on-course jump.

Scoring

The Minuet is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



These are four possible designs of the Minuet. In the original design shown in the upper left side, three jumps are performed in a figure of eight. A design like this will ultimately expose every error in movement on the part of the handler. Other designs might be used. But the pattern should be consequential in terms of the handling required.

The design principle for the Minuet is simplicity. The sequence should be designed in such a way that it can easily be restarted from the last obstacle, back to the first.

A common mistake that course designers new to the game make is having too many obstacles in the minuet. In the above graphic the minuet with the four-sided pinwheel and pipe tunnel probably is too big a sequence. In any case, 7 reps of 6 obstacles is too much to ask of a dog in 50 seconds. And so, the qualifying criteria for a minuet like this one probably should be reduced to something like 4... rather than 7.

Strategies

Surviving the Minuet requires simple discipline. The handler should work in clean lines

through the jumps and show turns only after the dog has committed to each jump. These are simple disciplines that keep the bars up and help prevent refusals. If the handler's movement gets lazy, something bad is bound to happen.

Variations

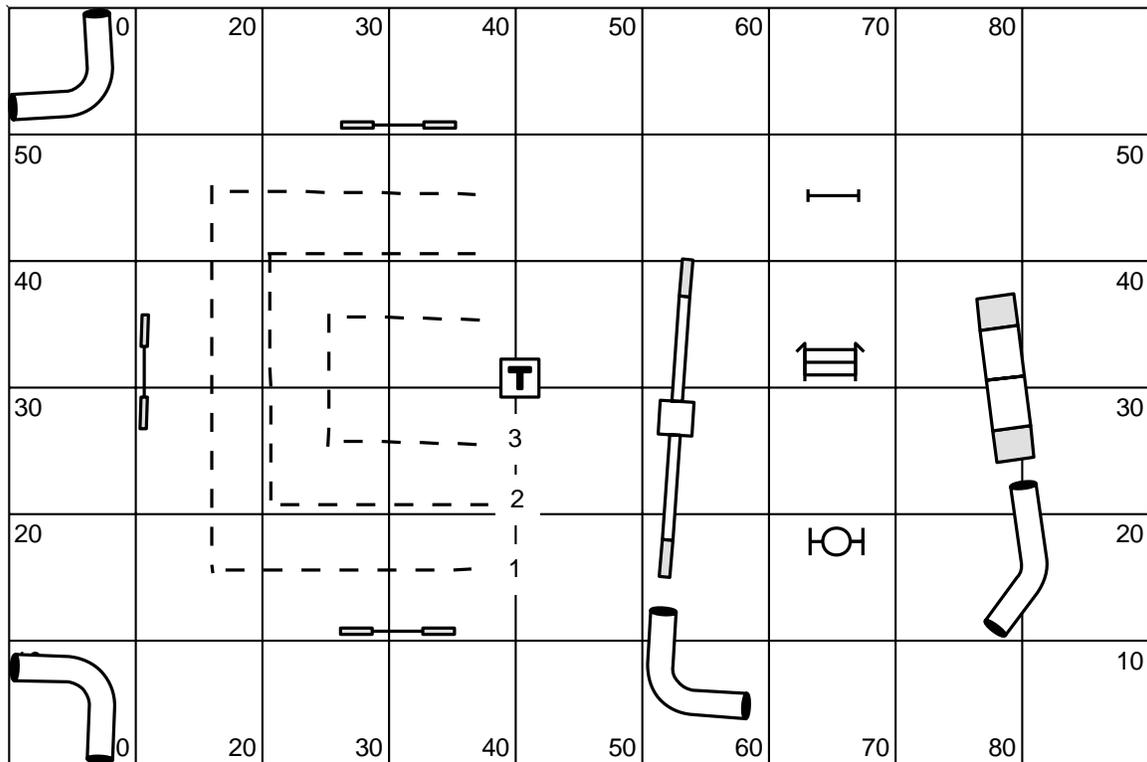
- Gamblers variation – In this variation of the game the dog should be directed to perform obstacles at a distance.

The purpose of this game is to direct the dog to do as many jumps as possible in 50 seconds. Three "send" lines are indicated on the course; 1 pt (5 foot send), 2 pts (10 foot send), 3 pts (15 foot send).

There is only one restriction in this game as to which jump should be performed at a given moment: The dog is required to do all three jumps at some point during the 50 seconds. There are no other restrictions as to order or direction.

If the dog drops a bar on a jump the jump is out of play for the duration of the game, and no more points can be scored on that jump.

The game starts and stops on the table. Time starts when the dog leaves the table. At 50 seconds a whistle will sound to indicate end of scoring. The dog should be directed to the table to stop time. Time is a tie-breaker only.



The example of the Minuet; Gamblers Variation shown here was played at Dogwood Training Center in February of 2003. The obstacles to the right of the table were not involved in the game, but used for the distance curriculum for classes underway. Qualification was: Games I, 10 points or better; Games II, 20 points or better; Games III,

30 points or better.

Qualification and Titling

The Minuet is a qualifying game for the TDAA. In the traditional course, qualifying would be set at:

- Games I – 3 points
- Games II – 5 points
- Games III – 7 points

Qualifying rates for other course designs would depend on several factors:

- The complexity in arrangement and the number of obstacles
- The transitional distances between obstacles

In determining a TDAA qualifying score, the judge should measure the dog's path and base the score for each level of games on the yards per second specified in the TDAA rules and regulations.

The qualifying score might be based on a rational yards per second system, such as that used by the USDAA.

Premium Blurb

The Minuet is a simple sequence that is run over and over again as a continuous loop until the expiration of time. The dog will earn one point for each time the sequence completed. The game requires the handler to reset any bar dropped by the dog and to restart the sequence on any wrong course fault. *The Minuet* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Mulligan Stew

Mulligan Stew is probably the invention of Wayne Van Deusen who concocted the game in order to make an end-run around a prohibition against the "Mulligan" in a vote of the TDAA membership. The membership didn't show much imagination so Wayne was compelled to use his own.

Briefing

Mulligan Stew may be applied to any game played in competition. After the dog has crossed the finish line the handler has 10 seconds to decide if he will call a Mulligan. The Mulligan run will begin at the end of the class, starting with the jump order for the day. The score of the Mulligan run is the score that will count toward qualifying.

The handler will not have an indication prior to calling for the Mulligan whether or not they have qualified. It is a question of strategy or self doubt: maybe I should have done a blind instead of a front cross or a different strategy would have been better as the current plan fell apart during the game. On the other hand, the handler might know perfectly well that the run can only be salvaged by calling the Mulligan.

Judging Notes

Brief your ring crew for handling Mulligan runs:

Gate Steward Briefing ~ As Mulligans are called the Gate Steward should place an M by the name of the dog and handler on the call sheet. At the end of the class double check with the Scribe that all sheets are in order according to jump height for the Mulligan runs. The jump height order of the day will be used.

Scribe Briefing ~ If a Mulligan is called by the handler a single line is marked through the first half of the scribe sheet from end to end. New scoring will be on the second half of the scribe sheet with a large M at the top of the sheet.

Score Table Briefing ~ There should be only one score per dog and handler. If a Mulligan run was taken an M is at the top of the scribe sheet. The first score is disregarded by a single line marked through it.

Trial Secretary Notes ~ The Mulligan is a class by itself, and should be purchased by the exhibitor. And so you should indicate on each scribe sheet whether the dog is eligible for his person to call the Mulligan. It might also be prudent to indicate this on the Gate Stewards call sheet.

On the other hand you might provide the Mulligan Stew option as a Qualifying is as stated in the rules for the game.

Secretary's Note

The game would be listed in the premium as:

“Snooker with Mulligan Stew” or “What's My Line with Mulligan Stew”

Premium Blurb

Mulligan Stew is an opportunity to rerun a game of choice during competition. The

handler is typically given a short amount of time to decide if he will call a *Mulligan*. The score of the Mulligan run is the score that will count toward qualifying.

Musical Chairs

Musical Chairs won third place in the 1995 Clean Run magazine games contest. It was submitted by Sue Tovino and Betty McArthur. Like the popular children's game, Musical Chairs features a diminishing number of seats when the music stops!

Briefing

Musical Chairs is played like the children's game of the same name. Four dog/handler teams begin the course when the music starts. When the music stops, the handler must put his dog into a stay in one of the designated pause boxes. When the handler has his dog in the box, the handler must then find any available chair and sit in it. If his dog gets up or out of the box before the handler sits in a chair, he must vacate the chair and try to get his dog to take a box again.

The dog and handler failing to find a box and chair are eliminated. After the first round, one chair and one box are removed and the process is repeated. The winner is the dog/handler team not standing in the final round.

Performance faults are not assessed. However, unsafe performance results in elimination. Dogs that catch up to another dog must wait their turn for the obstacle. Overtaking a dog while it is performing an obstacle is not permitted.

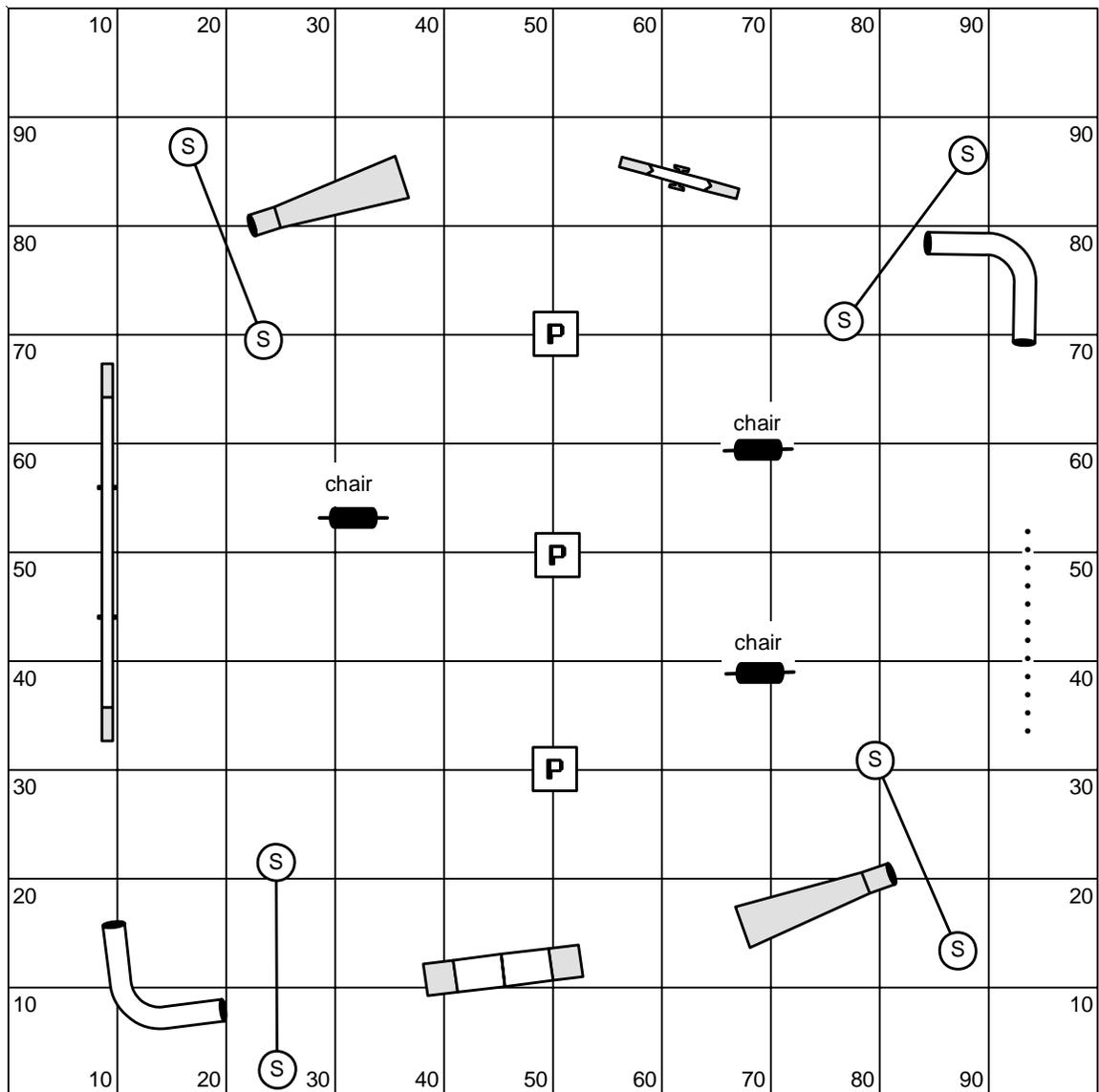
The judge chooses the course direction of the round. The direction may be reversed in subsequent rounds.

Musical Chairs is played as a Knockout. Each successive round will be comprised of the pool of teams that advanced from the previous round, until eventually arriving at the final four. The final four compete until only the winner remains.

Scoring

The winner is the dog and handler team not standing in the final round.

Course Design



This is an example of the typical Musical Chairs course.

There are four starting lines for four teams. There are also three chairs and three pause boxes. The pause boxes are located in the center of the course with the chairs placed randomly.

In Musical Chairs, any obstacle other than jumps can be used.

Premium Blurb

Musical Chairs is like the children's game, a group of dogs work on obstacles scattered around the field while music plays. When the music stops the handlers have to get in a chair. Each round a chair disappears. *Musical Chairs* is not a game suitable for competition.

Musical Pairs

Musical Pairs is the invention of Heidi Fuge and Fran Seibert as a game for a JAZZ Club meeting. Fran reports that it was hysterical! For music, they considered "The William Tell Overture" and "Flight of the Bumblebee" but settled on two Glenn Miller selections, "In the Mood" and "Pennsylvania 6-5000." Dogs ran and spectators danced. Someone suggested 5 fault points be deducted for "style" if the handler in the pause box did a credible dance number.

Briefing

Musical Pairs is a relay with two dog and handler teams on the course at the same time. It is run on any standard agility course. Both dogs must jump the same height; if they normally jump different heights, all jumps will be at the lower height.

At the start of the game, one dog handler team will wait at the start line with the handler holding a baton while the other goes to the pause box or a low table. When both are in place, the music will start and the starting team begins the course, continuing until the music stops. When the music stops, the running team may finish any obstacle they are caught on or in and then proceed immediately to the pause box or table to replace the waiting team. The first handler passes the baton to the second handler and positions his dog in the pause area. The music resumes as soon as the second handler receives the baton. He then proceeds to the point where the first handler was when the music stopped (which is not necessarily where the first handler stopped doing obstacles) and continues to run the course from that point until the music stops again. When the music stops again, the exchange is made as before and the game continues in this fashion until one dog completes the course and crosses the finish line.

If a dog refuses an obstacle, the handler should reattempt it until the music stops. If that team fails to complete the obstacle, the other team should start at that point. Fault scores can be kept separately for each dog then added for a team score. Failure to complete an obstacle will result in elimination. There is no off course penalty for repeating an obstacle at the beginning of a turn or for taking obstacles on the way to starting a turn.

If any bar is dropped, either by dog or handler, the handler must reset it before continuing.

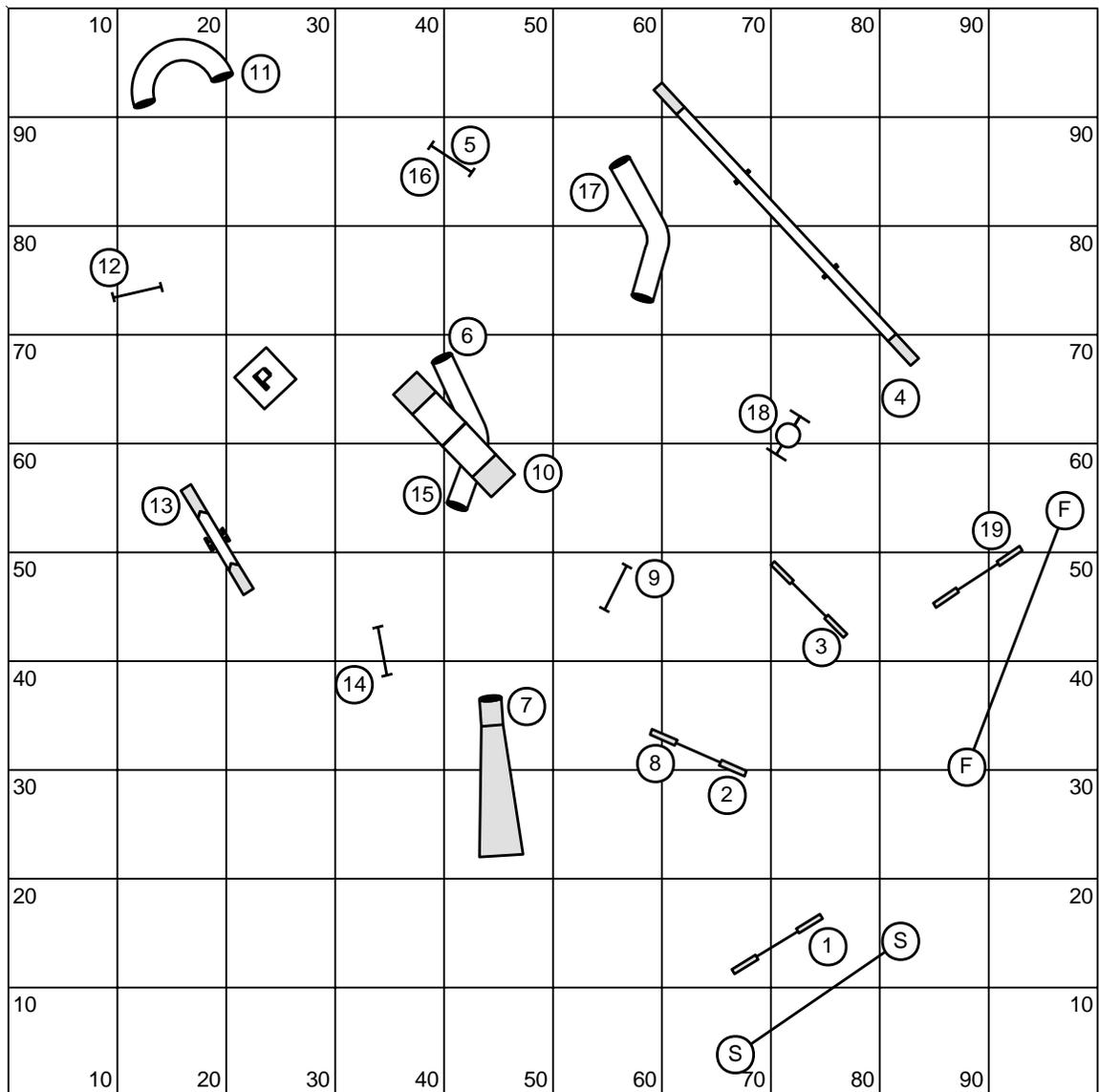
Scoring

Musical Pairs is scored Faults, Then Time.

Notes on the Conduct of the Game

All dogs should get precisely the same amount of music. The person will have a specific schedule. For example, give team #1 twelve seconds, then team #2 twelve seconds; then team #1 five seconds and team #2 five seconds; then each ten seconds and so on. The music restarts to continue the game as soon as the baton is passed. The receiver of the baton has a little less running each time because of the time it takes to get to where they have to go to resume the course. The timekeeper times the run from the moment the music starts until one of the dogs has completed the last obstacle.

Course Design



This is an example of a Musical Pairs course. Note that it is challenging at nearly every turn.

The Musical Pairs course should be fairly complex, include traps, and provide plenty of opportunities for refusals and off courses. Weave poles are optional, depending on the skill level of the participants. The pause box or table should be out of the direct running line. The person controlling the music should give equal time to both teams: perhaps starting with two 15-second turns, then going to 5 seconds, and then to 10, and so on randomly. Lively music is desirable.

Strategies

When deciding who should be the first runner, teams should try to estimate how far they may get on the course. For instance, if one is weak on the teeter and that is the second obstacle, chances are that the first runner will be required to do it. It is imperative that the team in the pause area pay attention to where the other team is when the music stops. If in doubt, they may repeat an obstacle previous to where they suspect they should start to

avoid being eliminated for a failure to complete. Handlers may tell each other where they left off and may offer verbal assistance to the one running the course.

The "paused team" is supposed to restart at the point where the running dog was when the music stops to end his turn, unless he was in the middle of a dog walk or something, in which case the paused dog must pick it up at the next obstacle. The handler waiting in the pause area has to be careful to note what obstacle the dog has completed when the music stops. Many dedicated dogs and handlers might do several obstacles after the music stops. But the replacing team has to remember where that team was when the music stops.

Premium Blurb

Musical Pairs is a pairs relay with music defining the action. The exchange is dictated by the music stopping. The second dog will resume where the first dog left off. *Musical Pairs* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER9

Mute Agility

As a training exercise or for a real competition, Mute Agility is a wonderful test of the dog and handler relationship and often a lot of fun for spectators. This game is frequently used to show the importance of body position and body movement and how much this influences the dog's performance of the course. This game is sometimes called Silent Snake. Mute Agility is most likely the invention of Stuart Mah.

Briefing

Mute Agility can be run on any standard agility course. The dog must perform each obstacle on the course in the sequence designated by the judge.

Unlike on a standard agility course, however, the handler must run the entire course silently. No verbal cues are allowed; that means no verbal commands, no clapping, no stomping the ground, no whistling, and so on. Body language must speak for itself.

A Qualifying Course Time shall be established by the judge based on the rates of travel used in the Standard classes respective to level and jump height.

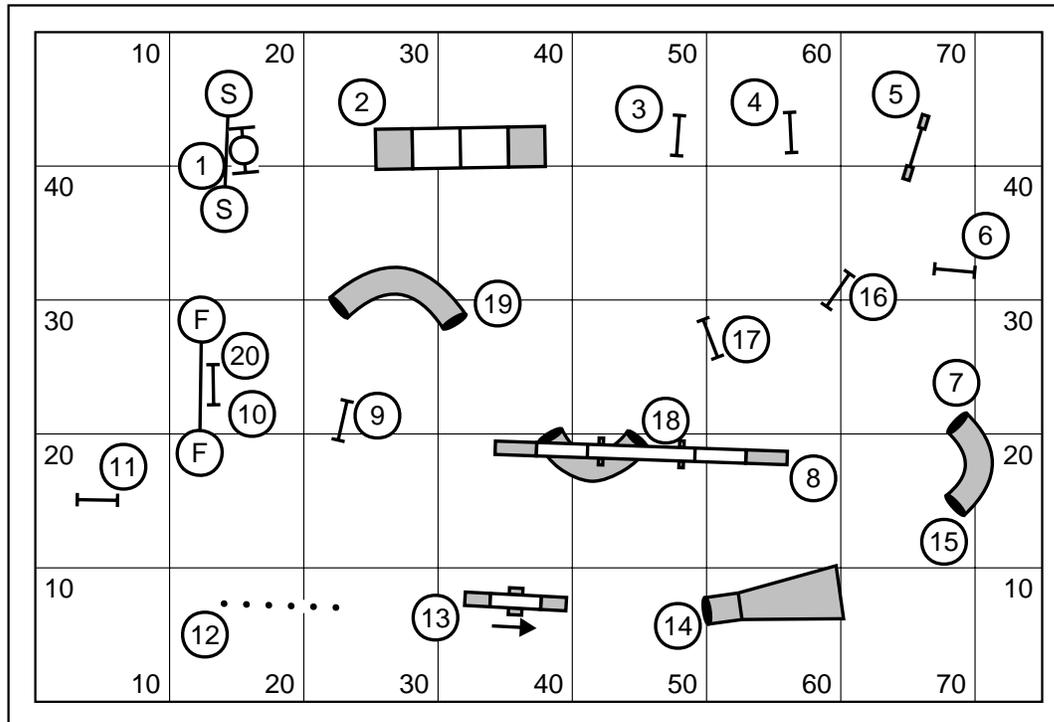
Scoring

Mute Agility is scored Time, Plus Faults. The winner is the dog with the lowest score.

The system used for judging faults should be consistent with the game that is being played.

Mute Agility adds a fault restriction for speaking. Usually, the judge will assess the handler 5 faults for each word spoken on course. *The verbal cue for releasing a dog from the start line is typically exempted from any penalty in this game as it is a good practice for a handler/dog trainer to release from the start line with verbal rather than physical cues.*

Course Design



The sample course is based loosely on a *Mute Agility* course designed by TDAA judge Sheryl Lynch.

The design of the course should include appropriate challenges for the level of competition. The *Mute Agility* course should strike a balance between nice flow and *basic* technical challenges like changes of side, crossing patterns, and changes of direction.

Variations

- Silent Snake variation – In this variation of the game, created by Sue Tovino and Betty McArthur, the course consists of a constant change of sides or snaking motion. 15 faults are assessed the first time a handler breaks the silence. The second occurrence results in elimination.
- Single command – In a variation of this game the handler can give one command, which must be declared to the judge before the dog's run. Thus, for example, a handler may choose *tunnel* or *weave*. Ideally, a handler should choose the command that is most necessary to control the dog. A *come* command might be a good choice.
- Mute agility games – Almost any agility game can be played in the Mute Agility format. However, this format might not lend itself too well to games like Gamblers, which often rely on the handler's voice commands to achieve the joker.
- Monetary penalty – This variation of the game is a good club fundraiser. The handler is penalized \$1–\$5 for speaking (or whispering!).

Qualifying

To qualify the team must score equal to or less than the established course time.

Premium Blurb

Mute Agility is the game of agility with a silent handler; though usually judges will allow a verbal release from the start line. Mute Agility is typically played using a standard course, but really could be played with any agility game. *Mute Agility* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Near and Far

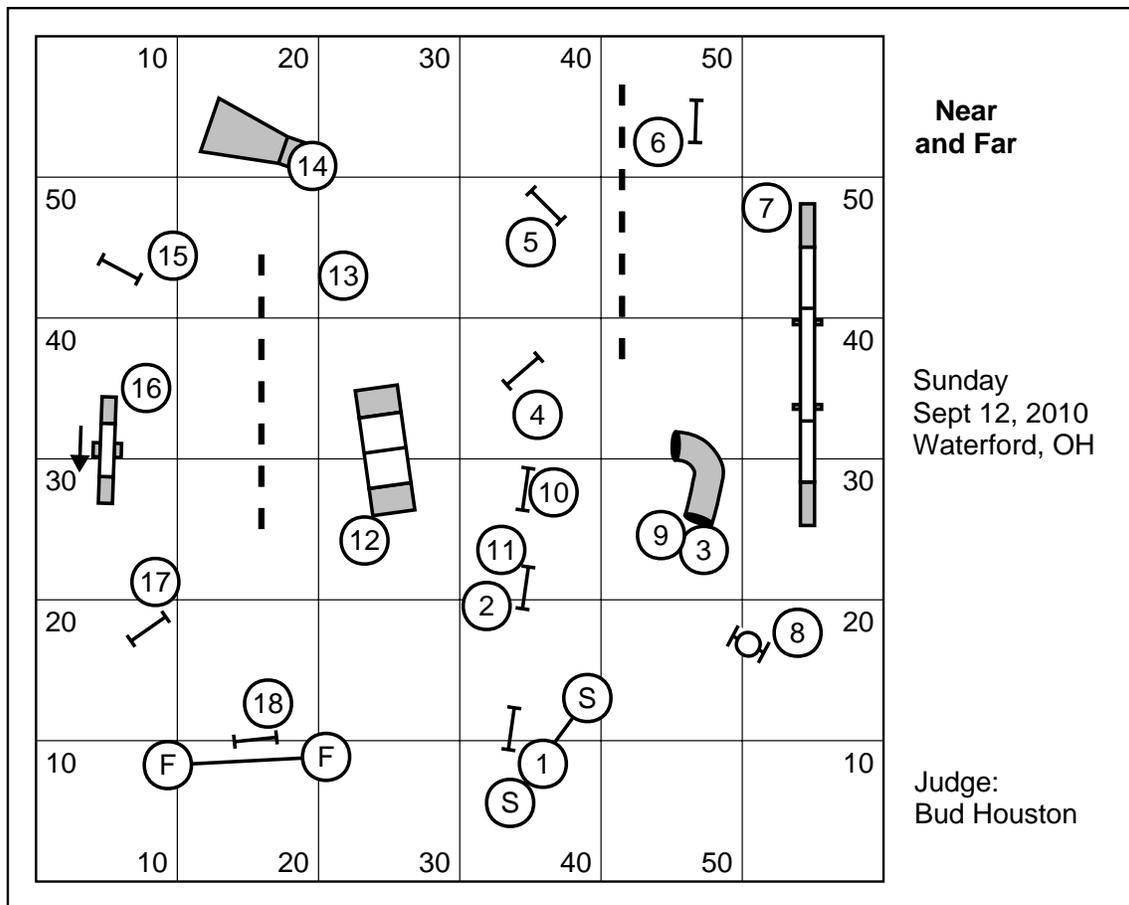
Near and Far is a simple distance game. Not much is known about the origin of the game. Near and Far bears similarity to other distance games like Call, Direct & Send.

Briefing

The objective of Near and Far is to negotiate a course as numbered. At two specified places on course the dog shall go ahead to perform obstacles (the "far" section) while the handler stays behind a specified line.

Crossing the containment line to help the dog will result in a 10 pt fault. At the Games I level, one crossing of the line is permitted, without fault.

Course Design



This is a Near and Far course that was played in TDAA competition. The judge specified that the dog would satisfy the "Far" elements of the game for 1) the performance of jump #6 and the dogwalk at #7, and 2) the performance of the collapsed tunnel, jump #15, and the teeter at #16.

Course time should be calculated from the rates of travel used in the standard classes, respective to jump height and level.

Scoring

Near and Far is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins.

Qualifying

To qualify the team must earn a score equal to or less than the Qualifying Course Time (QCT).

Premium Blurb

Near and Far is a simple sequencing game with two modest distance challenges. For the most part the handler can run along with his dog (Near); but in the distance challenges the dog must work away (Far). *Near and Far* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Nested Gamblers

Nested Gamblers comes to us from the disciplined course design habits of the savvy judge. It makes a great deal of sense to nest courses for multiple levels so that nothing needs to be moved. For a very small competition all levels can be briefed at the same time, and all levels can walk the course at the same time.

Briefing

This is the traditional gamblers game, nested for Novice/Beginner, Advanced/Intermediate and Masters/Superior. The game begins with a point accumulation period of 30 seconds for big dogs and 33 seconds for small dogs. The scoring system is 1-3-5-7. Jumps are 1 point; tunnels, tire and tunnels are 3 points; contact obstacles are 5 points; the weave poles are 7 points. 21 points are required in the opening period to qualify at any level.

15 seconds are allowed for completion of the gamble for big dogs and 17 seconds for small dogs; the last obstacle must be completed when the final whistle blows.

Any obstacle can be performed twice for points. Back-to-back performances are allowed. There are no restrictions as to order and direction except: The dog is not allowed to do any two obstacles in the gamble of choice in sequence. The handler may choose which gamble to be performed at the end of the point accumulation period. A fault during the gamble will invalidate the gamble. Time stops when the dog crosses the finish line. Rules worth noting: The gamble is invalidated if the dog does two of the obstacles in the gamble in sequence. Loitering will also invalidate the gamble.

Note: The scoring system and times for point accumulation and performance of the gamble are not fixed elements of this game. The judge has liberty to adjust either. The USDAA tradition for setting point accumulation is to take the 10th place digit of the time, and multiply it by the high point obstacle to arrive at the required points. In this example take the 3 (in 30) and multiply it by the 7 point obstacle to arrive at 21 points required to qualify.

Variations for Play

- **Traditional** ~ In the traditional variation of Nested Gamblers the dog must perform the gamble designed for his respective level.
- **Modified** ~ In the modified variation of Nested Gamblers the dog must perform a gamble for his respective level, or for a higher level.
- **Open** ~ In the open variation of Nested Gamblers the dog may perform any of the gambles on course. This will be a balance between the handler's confidence in the dog's skills and his ambition for placement in the class.

Note that in the Modified and Open variations of the game the judge will have to keep track of which gambles might have been invalidated by the dog performing more than one obstacle, one after another, thereby invalidating that gamble for qualifying purposes.

Never a Dull Moment

Never a Dull Moment is the invention of Bud Houston. Usually, agility is a matter of whatever works is right. They don't give style points in agility! Oops! Never a Dull Moment is the style-points game, rewarding the handler for technical (however gratuitous) handling movements.

Briefing

In a standard sequence, the handler will earn points for specific movements but only if the dog doesn't fail in his task for the conduct of the movement.

Simplex movements are awarded only 1 point. Compound movements are awarded three points. Thus, the schedule of points shall be:

- Front Cross – 1 point
- Blind cross – 1 point
- Post turn – 1 point
- Tandem turn – 1 point
- Back cross – 1 point
- Unchecked movement in the lead out – 3 points
- RFP – 3 points
- Flip/Ketchker (a combination: Front Cross to Blind Cross) – 3 points
- BLT (a combination: Blind Cross to Tandem) – 3 points
- Post and Tandem – 3 points

The intention of Never a Dull Moment is to provide the handler an opportunity to demonstrate technical prowess. The schedule of points doesn't have to be limited to the specific handling movements shown here. For example, the judge may allow performance points for working the dog at a distance, layering, employing a vee-solution, and so forth. This game is limited only by the imagination.

Note: Should you have a movement named after you, make it something pretty.

Scoring

Never a Dull Moment is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design

The game can be played on any standard course. The technical merit of one handler's run will be compared to the entire field on precisely the same course. The course will have a designated starting line and finish line. It will not be run under a standard course time. Time is a tiebreaker only.

Strategies

The keys to success in agility are threefold, 1) having the right plan; 2) execution of the plan, and 3) luck. Finding the right movement for the right moment is a more difficult matter than learning and practicing the movements themselves.

The handler should take note that combination movements are worth three times the value of simplex movements. Why use a simple movement when a gratuitously fancy movement will do just as well?

The handler should know his dog and understand how his dog responds to movement. Use those movements that are well practiced, and the handler understands the chances for success.

Variations

- Freestyle – Rather than basing the game on a standard course that everyone must run, exhibitors are given a random arrangement of obstacles that can be taken pretty much in the order and direction of the handler's choosing. The freestyle course should have a defined start and finish line. However, the handler is allowed to find his own line on course. The handler's routine may be limited either by time or by the number of obstacles.

Premium Blurb

Never a Dull Moment is a game of style. The team earns points for the handling skills demonstrated on the course. For example, a Front Cross earns 1 point; an RFP earns 3. *Never a Dull Moment* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Octagon Game

The Octagon Game is a fun training game invented by Chris Miele, who writes: "We tend to get too serious about our training at times. We clench our teeth, set our jaws, and go about teaching, determined that our dogs will learn! It often helps us to lighten up and get back to the sense of play that brought us to agility in the first place. As a result we find that our dogs learn, through the game, the very skill we had been trying to teach for months." This game originally appeared in Clean Run Magazine in May 1999.

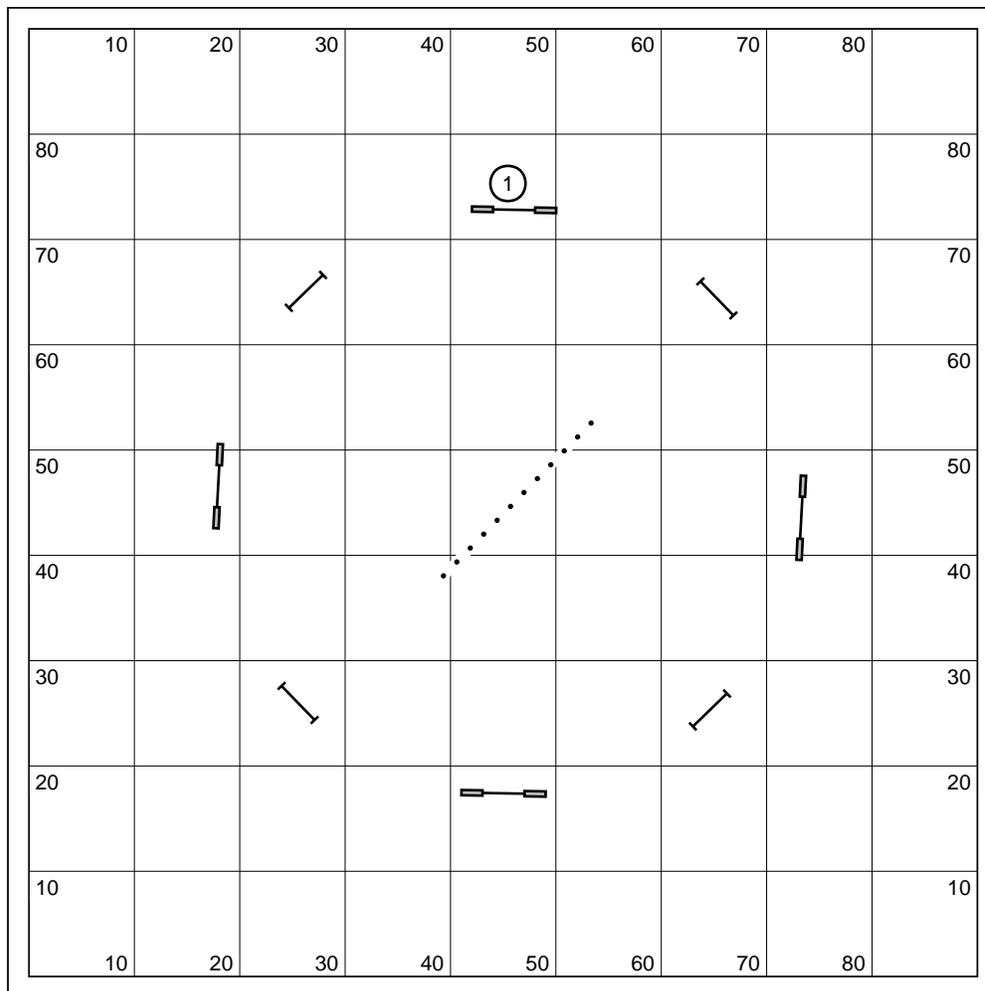
Briefing

Starting with the 12 o'clock jump, dog and handler must perform all jumps in a serpentine fashion in the direction designated by the judge (either clockwise or counterclockwise). If the dog knocks a bar, crosses the line of poles in the center of the octagon, or refuses a jump, the dog must perform the weave poles. The correct weave pole entry is the entry closest to the point of the mistake.

Scoring

The *Octagon Game* is scored time only. The judge will whistle for any fault to indicate that the dog must go to the center of the octagon to perform the weave poles. Weave poles are judged using USDAA Starters/Novice rules. That is, there is no fault for an improper entry or a missed pole. But the handler must redirect the dog to fix a missed entry or a missed pole.

Course Design



The essential design of the Octagon game is a series of eight jumps arranged in the shape of an octagon. The course designer can use tire, panel, winged, and non-winged jumps. For novice dogs and handlers, use only six weave poles. Increase the number of poles with the skill level.

Variations

- Thredle variation – The Octagon Game can be run as a series of *thredles*. That is, all jumps are taken in the same direction, such as from the outside of the octagon to the inside, or from the inside of the octagon out, as directed by the judge. The dog must be threaded between the jumps between each performance.

Premium Blurp

The Octagon Game has the dog performing a series of obstacles arranged in the shape of an octagon. On any fault the dog is required to do a set of weave poles positioned in the center of the octagon. The *Octagon Game* is scored time only. ER5

Odd Dog

As a training exercise or a fun game for competition, Odd Dog is a guaranteed hoot. The game will deliver absolutely unpredictable results. Is it the dog or is it the handler? Odd dog is also a good mixer game, getting people and dogs introduced who otherwise might not have met on such an intimate basis.

Briefing

Odd Dog is usually played on a standard agility course. However, this game requires a handler to work with another person's dog.

Odd Dog demonstrates a handler's ability to adapt to a strange dog and further challenges the handler to bond with the dog and establish a working relationship in a short period of time.

Some dogs will not work for anyone other than their owners. This is unfortunate but also is a matter of the luck of the draw in Odd Dog. Some handlers will draw dogs that are excellent agility partners. By the same token, some dogs will draw experienced handlers, and some will draw novice handlers. These dogs may stretch their prowess as handlers.

Ideally, partners will be drawn early in the morning for a game to be played at the end of the day. This gives handlers and dogs time to bond and prepare. A handler who draws his dog or a dog with which is very familiar with shall be required to re-draw.

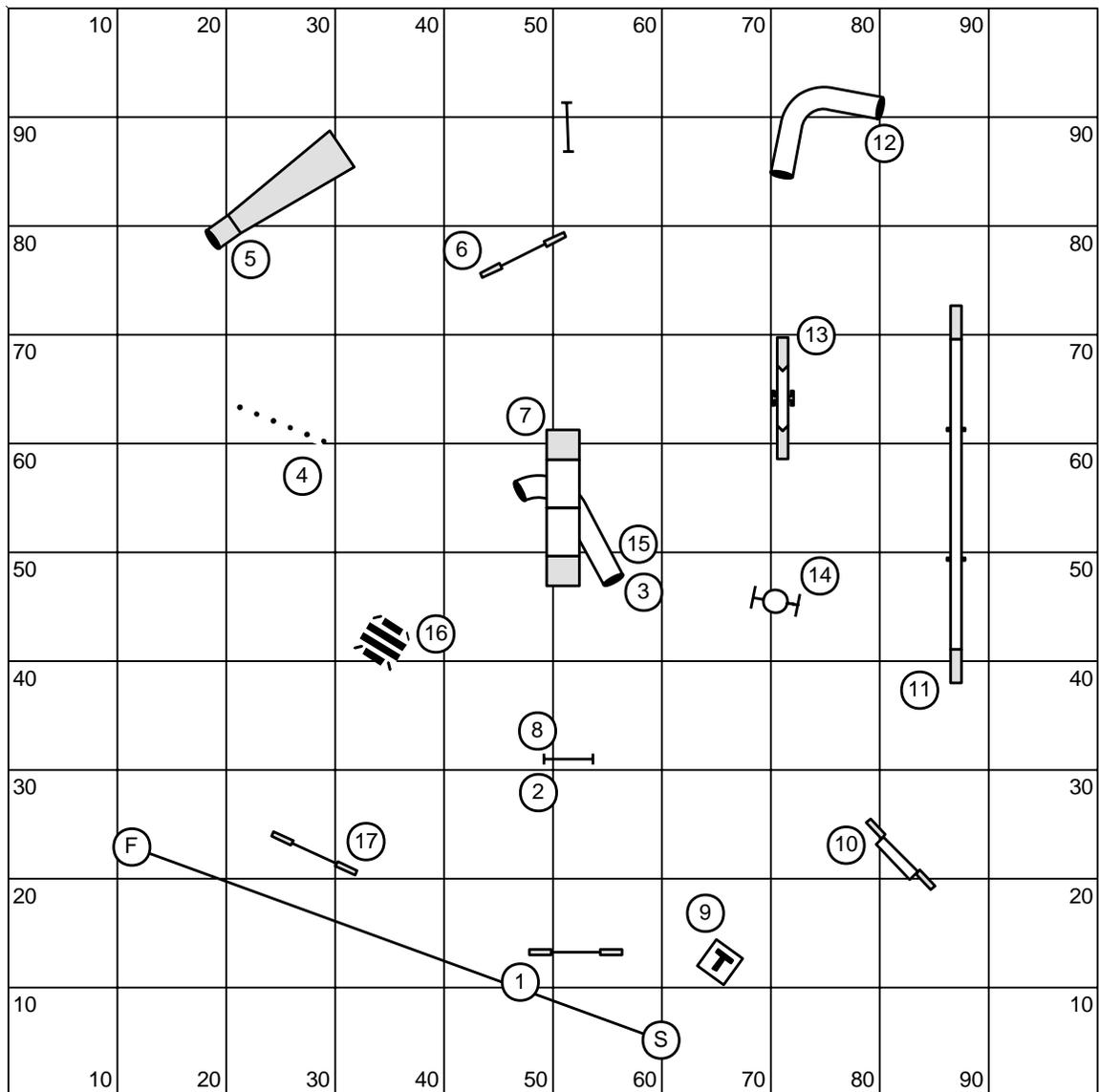
Scoring

Odd Dog is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Typically, Odd Dog will be played on a standard agility course. However, any agility game will be equally entertaining and interesting when a handler runs another person's dog. The scoring basis should match the game being played.

The system used for judging faults and scoring should be consistent with the game that is being played. A standard course is recommended, using USDAA Starters/Novice rules on an advanced course.

Course Design



This Odd Dog course designed by Bud Houston is a relatively fast and flowing course which is better suited to running a strange dog than might be a course that is choppy and challenging. While there are certainly handling challenges, they are at an intermediate level and might be surmounted by some good handling.

The Odd Dog course should be technically challenging but not so oppressive that only handlers and dogs with a finely-tuned relationship could possibly survive. However, you don't want to make it a simple down and back course either. The test is for both dog and handler and it should be potentially amusing for spectators.

Strategies

- The handler of an unfamiliar dog should spend a lot of time socializing and playing with the dog before taking the dog into the ring. If no real connection is cemented between dog and handler, it is likely that the dog will run out of the ring to momma or papa on the first opportunity—if the dog can be enticed to go into the ring at all! Do a lot of attention heeling and play tug-of-war. Provide the dog

with tidbits of wonderful food for paying attention and for responding to the play. Getting the dog's attention will pay off in the ring.

- While competing, the handler must be very upbeat and playful to keep the dog's attention. Handlers must remember that the dog is not familiar with their working style or hand signals. Handlers must be very specific in their commands, body movement, and hand signals.
- Handlers should review what commands are used by the dog's handler. One may say *dogwalk*, while the owner may say *walk up*. Speak the language the dog understands whenever possible.

Variations

- Draw pool – Create a pool of dogs who will run for anyone and draw from that pool. This would mean that some dogs would run more than once.

Premium Blurb

Odd Dog is a simple concept. Every handler will draw from the pool of dogs and run the dog that is drawn. It's a fun game and might not be the perfect choice for a game of titling in competition. *Odd Dog* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Pairs Eggstravaganza

The invention of Susan Morse, Pairs Eggstravaganza debuted as a fun Easter game for the Brevard Kennel Club in Florida. This game is a relay with a twist. The format provides a good way to introduce novice agility enthusiasts to "the regulars," to competition and to the spirit of sportsmanship in dog agility today.

Briefing

A team shall be composed of two dogs and two handlers. Novice handlers should be paired with more experienced handlers so that the field is well balanced. For instance, pair a Starters dog and handler with a Masters dog and handler.

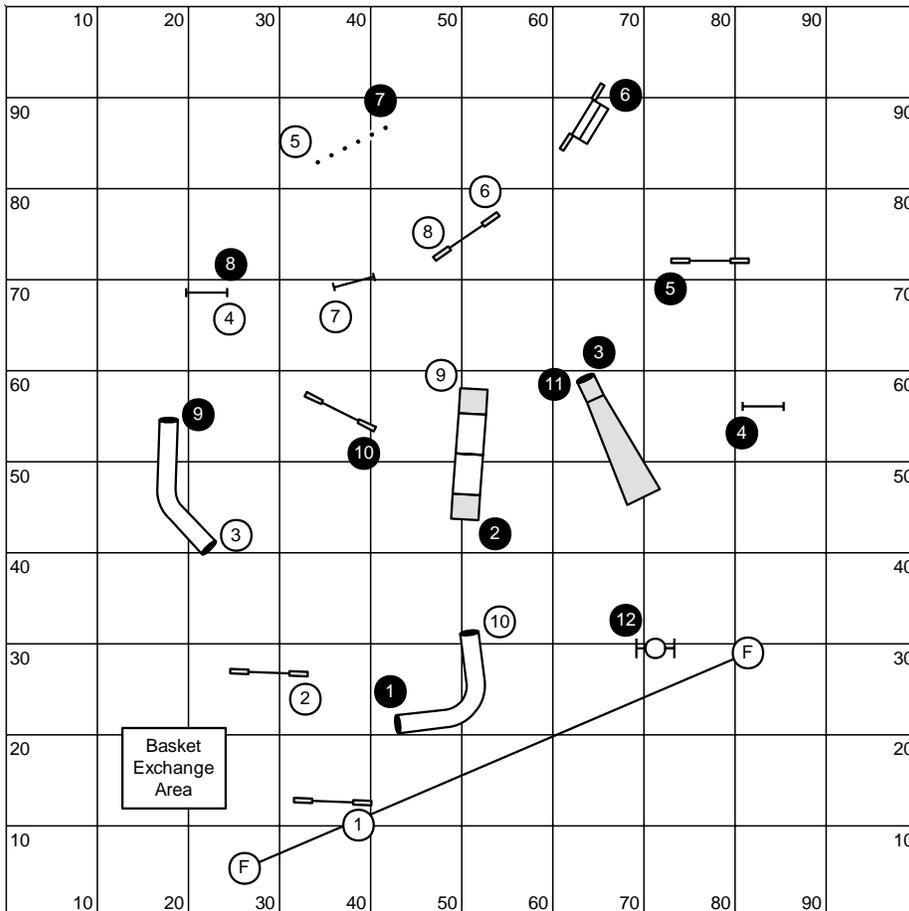
The teams are required to run a standard relay course with an exchange roughly in the middle of the sequence. Rather than exchanging a baton, however, the handlers will exchange an Easter basket that is overfilled with Easter eggs.

There is no fault for dropping an egg so long as the handler picks up the egg and replaces it in the basket before continuing on course. 10 faults will be assessed for leaving behind a dropped egg.

Scoring

Pairs Eggstravaganza is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Course Design



In this sample Pairs Eggstravaganza course, the only contact obstacle involved is the A-frame. The A-frame could be set at a reduced height if there are a large number of exceptionally novice dogs and handlers.

Keeping in mind that novice handlers will be making up a large part of the field, the Pairs Eggstravaganza course should either be quite simple, be a Jumpers course, or be of mixed levels—half technically challenging and half very basic.

Strategies

In the sample course, the course numbered in black is considerably more technical than the first half of the course. This course might be most suitable for teams of mixed levels, novice and advanced dogs and handlers. The more advanced should run the second course.

Premium Blurb

Pairs Eggstravaganza is an Easter fun game. This is a relay in which handlers run with a basket over full of Easter Eggs (rather than a baton). If any eggs drop, the handler is obligated to stop and pick them up. *Pairs Eggstravaganza* is scored Time, Plus Faults.
ER5

Pairs Pursuit

Pairs Pursuit is a strategic relay played in knockout fashion. The format is unique in agility, but the play is so straightforward that everyone immediately will understand. This one will get those competitive juices flowing and give spectators quite a thrill at the same time.

Briefing

Teams consisting of two dogs and two handlers compete against each other. One dog and handler from a team will be designated for scoring and one dog and handler from an opposing team will be designated for timing for each round of the knockout.

The field shall consist of two courses, arranged concentrically. The outer course shall be designated the timing course and the inside course the scoring course.

The timing dog and handler for a team will perform the timing course while the scoring dog and handler of the opposing team simultaneously performs the scoring course. In the time it takes the timing dog to complete its course, the scoring dog may repeat its course as often as possible, accumulating points for obstacles completed successfully.

A second running pits the two dog and handler teams that sat out the first part against one another. This time the timing and scoring roles are reversed.

	Team A	Team B
Run 1	Timing dog runs	Scoring dog runs
Run 2	Scoring dog runs	Timing dog runs

The judge may stipulate that the team is required to switch sides from round to round.

Scoring

The winner of each round is the team that accumulates the most points. The team that wins every race they run will win the overall competition.

Faults earned by the timing dog are deducted from a team's score. The scoring dog does not earn faults. If the scoring dog faults an obstacle, no points are awarded for the obstacle.

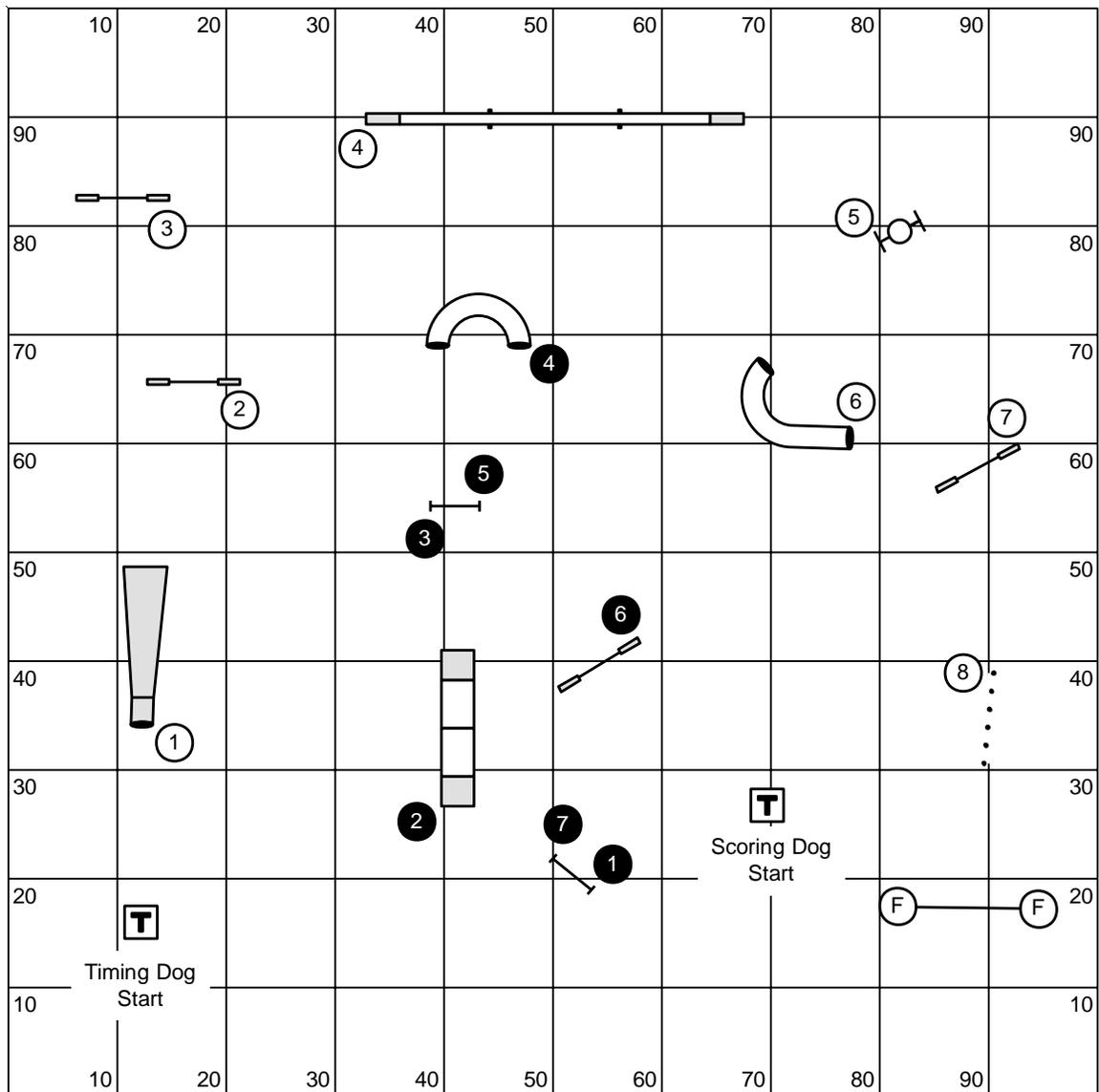
A 1-2-3 system is used to assign point values to obstacles:

- Jumps, 1 point
- Tunnels, 2 points
- Weave poles and contacts, 3 points

However, any point value system can be used since all dogs have an equal chance of scoring.

Pairs Pursuit requires two judges, one for the timing course and one for the scoring course.

Course Design



This is an example of a Pairs Pursuit course.

The inner course is the scoring course and is made up of obstacles whose value is dependent upon the difficulty of the obstacle. The scoring course may contain any type of obstacle but is usually a very short sequence that may be repeated several times.

The outer course is the timing course. It consists of jumps and tunnels and occasionally weave poles or contacts.

The course designer has wide latitude in his ability to adjust the speed of the round and the potential for scoring. For example, if the outside or timing course contains contact obstacles, weave poles, or complex handling challenges, more time is given to the inside, or scoring dog, to rack up points. On the other hand, a fast outside course will limit the amount of time the inside dog can accumulate points. In a format that requires dogs to run multiple rounds, it is sometimes better to shorten the scoring time so that dogs don't become exhausted.

Strategies

Strategy for Pairs Pursuit consists of matching each dog on a team against the opponent's dogs so that a team's strengths can be maximized.

It is important in this game that the handler doesn't fall apart if things start to go wrong. A contest can be won in spite of making errors. The handler should be prepared to regroup and get on with his sequence as briskly and calmly as possible.

Variations

- Individual competition – In this variation, individual dogs run against each other. Each dog runs both courses. Scoring is the same.

Premium Blurb

Pairs Pursuit is a pairs game run as a knockout. A dog from team A will be the timing dog while a dog from team B the scoring dog. Then the other two dogs run, the dog from team B as the timing dog and the dog from team A the scoring dog. Whichever team scored the most points wins! This game *might* be run in competition. The trial host will designate a certain percentage of the survivors of the knockout as "qualifying". *Pairs Pursuit* is scored as a knockout. ER7

Pass the Secret

Do you remember the game you played when you were in grade school? The teacher whispered something in your ear and you whispered it to the person standing next to you. They did the same and the secret went down the line. The last person wrote on the board what was told to them. It was completely different from what the teacher said. Apply that concept to agility and you've got a fun game to play with your class or at your agility seminar. Pass the Secret is the invention of Donna Dombourian.

Briefing

The first player will be shown a numbered course map corresponding to the layout of equipment. That player will have precisely two minutes to look at (even walk the course) before getting under way with his dog. Participants are only allowed to watch the person who runs in front of them. After they run, they can watch everyone else run.

After the first run, the second person runs, trying to duplicate the path the first dog took. This continues until the last dog runs. Then all participants can watch the first dog recreate the initial run. Everyone can laugh at how different the last run was to the first run.

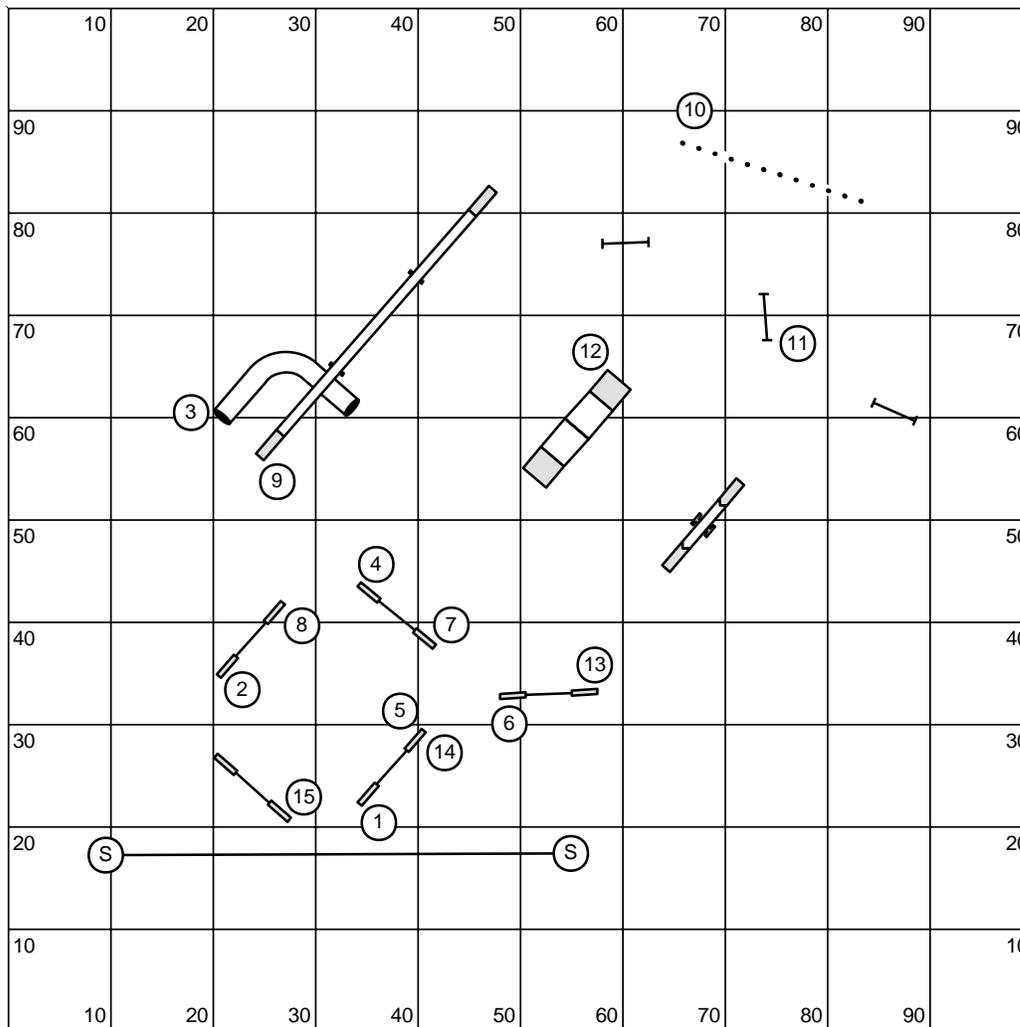
The game can continue on with someone different starting the game each time. This game is actually good for developing a handler's ability to think and memorize sequences quickly.

Scoring

Any schedule of faults may be observed in the running of this game. A suggested schedule follows. Please note that an off course for a player is incurred only when that player deviates from the course as run by the previous player, only since there is no way for a player to know what was really the course once the game is underway.

- Missed contacts, 5 faults
- Knocked bars, 5 faults
- Off-course, 10 faults

Course Design



This is an example of a Pass the Secret course. The box of jumps featured on the course will cause the greatest consternation among competitors as the dog's path must weave in and out of it with different conclusions. The teeter, while not included in the initial course design, might be included in the course by the time all of the exhibitors have run the game.

The Pass the Secret course should be set up with many options. No numbers are allowed on the course itself, though the initial course map (which only the first competitor gets to see) will be numbered to show the initial course. Obstacles that aren't included in the numbering of initial course may be included on the field.

Variations

- First Runner Up – The initial course may also be determined by whoever runs. The first player makes up a course before running it. If the player's dog goes off course, he should just continue on like it was planned.
- Judge goes first – The judge, and course designer may run the course with his dog while the first exhibitor watches on.

Strategies

This is clearly a test of a handler's ability to learn a course with only a scant introduction to the course. It's not practical to try to memorize a course as a series of discrete numbers. It would be better for the handler to develop the ability to visualize the course as a series of "flows" or larger shapes in the dog's path.

Premium Blurb

Pass the Secret is a sequencing game in which each competitor runs a numbered sequence learned only by watching the run of the previous dog. This is a game most appropriately used in training, and is not a suitable game for titling. Though, some clever soul might find a way to use it in competition.

Penny Arcade

Penny Arcade is the invention of Dennis Vogel. This game was designed for a serial trial (league play) in the Teacup Dogs Agility Association for Cloud Nine Training School in Hopkins, MN.

Briefing

The objective of Penny Arcade is to successfully accumulate required points before the expiration of time either by taking individual obstacles for single point values or by playing the arcade games to activate bonus point values.

- 2", 4" and 8" dogs will have 60 seconds
- 12", and 16" dogs will have 55 seconds

Points for successfully completing obstacles are as follows

- jumps – 1 point
- tunnels, tire – 3 points
- contacts, weave poles – 5 points

The successful completion an *arcade game* activates a double or triple point bonus for the next three obstacles. Bonus points can be earned for any obstacle on course including obstacles in the arcade games.

When an arcade game has been successfully performed the judge will announce “bonus times two” or “bonus times three”. The dog earns regular point values for all obstacles taken outside of the bonus period including obstacles taken while playing the arcade games.

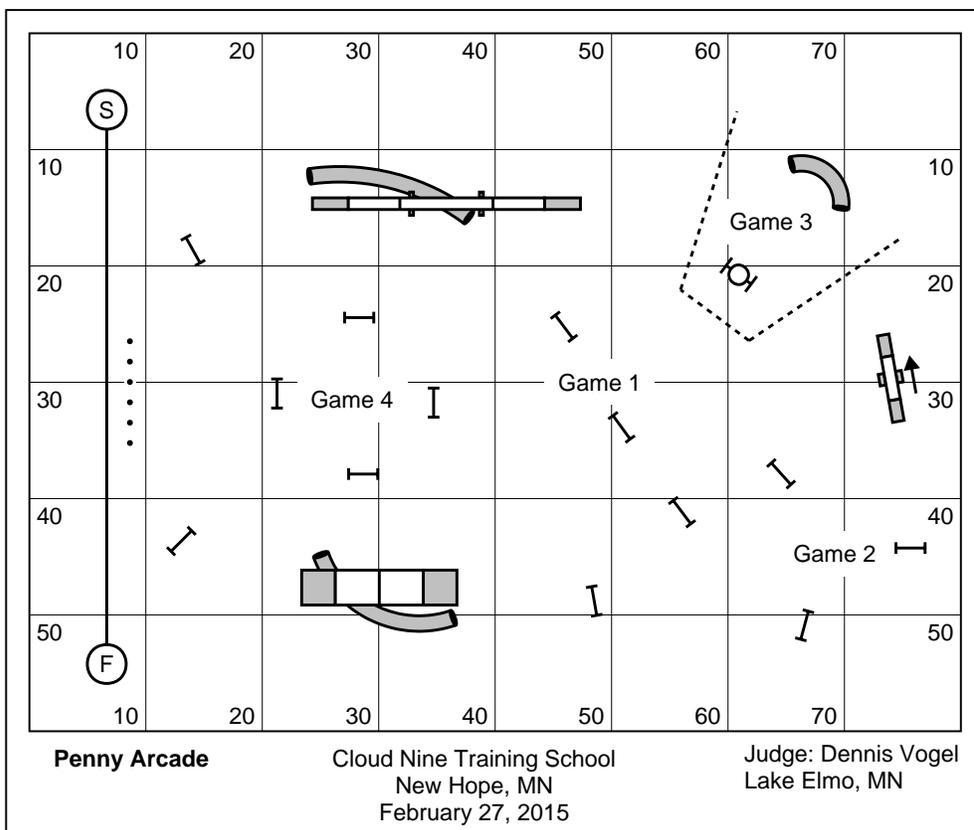
When a bonus multiplier is active, the three obstacles for that bonus period must be different. If a dog repeats an obstacle only the simple value of the obstacle can be earned (no multiplier).

If a dog faults an obstacle when the bonus multiplier is active:

- No points are earned for the obstacle;
- The performance *does* count as one of the three;
- That obstacle *may not* be performed again during the same bonus. [A judge may explicitly allow a dog to repeat a faulted obstacle for bonus.]
- A dropped bar takes a jump out of play (and takes an arcade game out of play).

Once three different bonus obstacles have been attempted point values return to their regular values. Each arcade game can only be used twice to activate bonus point values.

Course Design



This was the original course designed for play by Dennis Vogel. The exhibitor briefing included descriptions and details of each of the arcade games:

- Arcade Game 1 - Double point bonus - Dog takes the three jumps in a serpentine pattern in either direction.
- Arcade Game 2 - Double point bonus - Dog takes each of the three jumps once, starting at any of the three jumps.
- Arcade Game 3 - Triple point bonus - Dog takes tire-tunnel-tire or tunnel-tire-tunnel while handler stays behind the line.
- Arcade Game 4 - Triple point bonus - Dog takes any three of the four jumps in any order in any direction.

Scoring

Penny Arcade is scored Points, Then Time.

The judge will probably brief the scribe to write down a linear representation of the dog's performance. The score-keeping table will have to do the math. The scribe sheet may have a notation like this:

1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - X3 - 3 - F - 3 - 1 - 5

The dog opened play with four jumps and, according to the notes of the scribe, activated the 3X bonus multiplier. So, the scribe will must translate the next three numbers:
 a) multiply the 3 times 3; b) no nothing with the "F" but *count it* as one of the three

scores; c) multiply the final 3 times 3; whereupon, obstacles go back to their simple values.

Qualifying

- Games I – 60 points
- Games II – 70 points
- Games III – 80 points

These qualifying scores are based on a course time of *roughly* 60 seconds. If less time is given to the dog then the qualifying criteria should be reduced proportionally.

Strategy

In *Penny Arcade* it is highly desirable to keep the bonus multiplier active. Since the dog earns the simple value of obstacles in the arcade game that activates the bonus, it is entirely possible to perform those obstacles with an active bonus multiplier.

Premium Blurb

Penny Arcade is a dog's choice point accumulation game. The course contains one or more "arcade games" which grant performance point multipliers allowing for high scores for the skillful and intrepid. *Penny Arcade* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Pillow Dash

Pillow Dash is the invention of Sue Tovino and Betty McArthur. This is certainly a game in the silly genre. However, the game helps promote skills that will be useful to both the dog and handler in other games.

Briefing

Pillow Dash is run on a course that consists of a number of obstacles arranged in a line. Each obstacle in the line must be performed in a successively greater number of repetitions. The first obstacle is performed once, the second twice, and so on up to the final obstacle. The final obstacle is performed only once.

Dogs must complete each obstacle the required number of times before going on to the next obstacle in line. Faults will be assessed for incorrect performance on any of the repetitions.

All obstacles must be taken in the direction designated by the judge. Taking an obstacle in the wrong direction will be faulted as an off course.

After the last obstacle, the handler must cross the finish line and lie down with his head on the pillow. Once the handler's head hits the pillow, he must get the dog to perform a sit-stay in the pause box. Although the dog can be placed in the pause box before the handler assumes his position on the pillow, the dog cannot begin the sit until the handler's head is actually on the pillow. The handler must get the dog to sit within 15 seconds after crossing the finish line. Failure to do so will result in a penalty.

A standard course time will be established by the judge. The judge should pad the course time with approximately 15 seconds to be used for putting the dog in a sit-stay.

Scoring

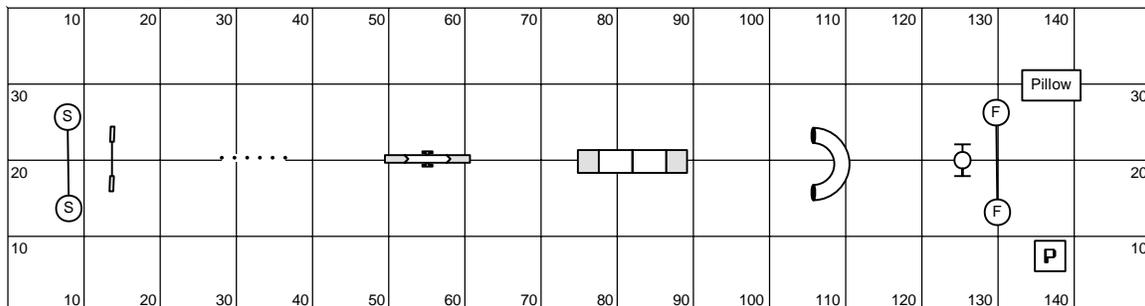
Pillow Dash is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins.

Faults are assessed as follows:

- Missed contacts, 5 faults
- Knocked bars, 5 faults
- Off-course, 10 faults
- Failing to sit the dog within 15 seconds, 15 faults

In addition, time faults will be assessed for exceeding standard course time.

Course Design



This is the original Pillow Dash course designed by Sue Tovino and Betty McArthur.
The Pillow Dash course is long and narrow. All obstacles are arranged in a straight line.

Premium Blurb

Pillow Dash is a bit of a silly game, and probably *not* appropriate for titling competition. At the end of an agility sequence the handler must lay his head down on a pillow while asking the dog to lie down on the table. *Pillow Dash* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER9

Pinball Wizard

Pinball Wizard is a game invented by Margaret Hendershot, played for the first time at a TDAA trial in Washingtonville, OH in July, 2009. The game seems a bit like Dare to Double, but with some important differences that the canny competitor should appreciate.

Briefing

The goal is to accumulate as many points as possible within course time: 50 seconds for big dogs and 55 seconds for small dogs.

The start obstacle is the dogwalk; in either direction. After successfully completing the start obstacle, the team continues to accumulate points by completing obstacles of the handler's/dog's choosing.

- Jumps - 1 point
- Tire, tunnels (other than the bonus), and weaves - 3 points
- Contacts (other than the start) - 5 points

All scoring obstacles may be completed twice for points; triggers and bonuses can be taken many times. No obstacle may be taken back-to-back. The table is always live. If the dog touches the table it is a tilt and play ends.

Once the start obstacle has been completed, the **triggers** become active. Triggers open the **bonus obstacles** allowing the dog to triple all points earned. The bonus is the two tunnels marked bonus, in any order and any direction.

The bonus may be earned three times during play. The successful completion of the bonus triples all points accumulated each time it is completed.

To **reactivate the triggers** after completing the bonus, at least one point must be earned. A whistle sounds at the end of point accumulation. The dog should be directed to the table to stop time.

If a fault is called, point accumulation continues, but *the triggers becomes dormant*. The dog must do the dogwalk/start again to reactivate the triggers. Faults include the usual performance faults like: knocked bar, missed contact, starting the weave poles without completing. These special faults also apply:

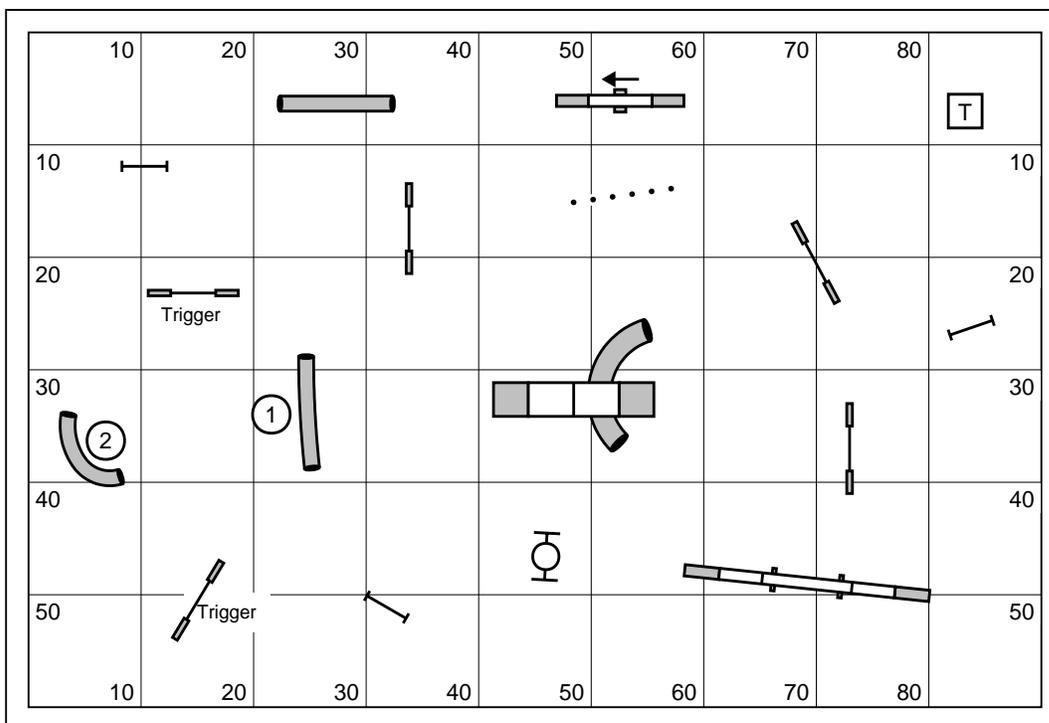
- taking a bonus tunnel without taking one of the triggers first;
- taking an obstacle between the trigger obstacle and the bonus obstacle (including back-jumping the trigger);
- jumping the trigger when it is not active.

Knocking a trigger bar means that trigger is out of play for the rest of the game. The remaining trigger may still be used.

Scoring

Pinball Wizard is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



The placement of the dogwalk as the start obstacle is possibly the most important constraint of the course design task. With that in mind, *Pinball Wizard* might be nested with any standard course that has the dogwalk placed in a reasonable proximity to the front of the ring.

Note that triggers are placed on either side of the bonus obstacles. The briefing might suggest that this is the definition of both trigger and bonus obstacle; but surely an inventive course designer could find equally appealing options.

Qualifying

Qualifying should be based on the assigned value of obstacles on the field. Mindful that the dog can triple his score several times, the qualifying criteria should be fairly demanding.

Games I: 50 points

Games II: 100 points

Games III: 150 points

Strategy

It's true that this game feels a lot like *Dare-to-Double* as the dog gets to multiply points previously earned multiple times. An important difference between the two games is that the dog is penalized for any fault in *Pinball Wizard* by having to repeat the time-consuming/zero value start obstacle (the dogwalk).

The Mental Game

It would be fairly easy to lose heart on any fault, knowing that your strategy has unraveled and your dog probably won't be able to earn the points to qualify.

Your dog will *not* be the only dog to fault in *Pinball Wizard*. There will be a bunch of faults out there. What differentiates the field of players at the Petit Prix is the ability of the handler to pick himself up and go on. The fault wasn't crushing. Melting down on a fault is crushing.

Simple Math Strategy

The key to a dog's choice game is that it should be resolved to a plan as clear and precise as any numbered course. Plan to run without fault.

Two Bonus Strategy

The game might be approached with the simple math to achieve a qualifying score:

$$17 * 3 = 51; + 1 = 52 * 3 = 156$$

This strategy requires the dog to do trigger and bonus only twice. The dog needs to begin with a minimum of 17 points to get to a GIII qualifying score.

$$15 * 3 = 45 + 5 = 50 * 3 = 150$$

Three Bonus Strategy

Three bonuses will surely yield more points than only two. The burning question shall be... how many points should be scored before engaging in the bonus strategy.

$$6 * 3 = 18; + 1 = 19; * 3 = 57 + 1 = 58 * 3 = 174$$

In this strategy the dog begins with only six points, and picks off a single point before returning to the trigger and bonus. Note that this can be done with a fairly economical 12 obstacles, raising the possibility that the trigger and bonus might be approached a fourth time.

$$12 * 3 = 36 + 5 = 41 + 3 = 123 + 3 = 126 * 3 = 378$$

This strategy is a bit more ambitious. Not only does the dog begin with 12 points, but gets more transitional points between trigger and bonus performances.

The Finish

There is no good reason to run for the table as soon as your strategy is exhausted. There is no real downside to getting to the table after the whistle has blown to end point accumulation. You might take another shot at trigger and bonus. Or, at the very least, continue accumulating points for the simple performance of obstacles until the whistle blows.

Analysis

I wrote the following bit way back in July of 2009. Apparently we played the game in *League* to give it a workout:

* * *

It's a funny thing. I went into this pretty much imagining that I had figured out the killer strategy before the first dog had run. Here's my logic... since it takes 150 points to qualify at the GIII level... then it makes sense to collect pretty much precisely just enough in the opening salvo so that it would add up to a qualifying score if tripled only twice.

That would be I figure 16 or 17 points.

And then, as we diligently pursued this line of reasoning... all of our dogs timed out smack in the middle of the third tripler.

We sat and pondered this for awhile and arrived at an interesting conclusion... It would be considerably better points-wise to go into the bonus period with a more modest accumulation of points, say 10 or 12. That will allow time to get the third tripler. That means instead of having a score hovering just above 150 points... the dog would have a score more in the range of 350 +.

Now, what you have to take into consideration is that we were not running on a TDAA course. We were running on a big dog course. So had we all scored our third tripler using the initial logic... then our scores would have been more in the vicinity of 450+ points.

We learned some other interesting things as well... like why it doesn't pay to melt down when the judge calls a fault.

This was a very cool game and likely a keeper in the TDAA.

Variations

- *Pinball Wizard* is often confused by judges/course designers with *Wild West Pinball*. So it will appear in the world with elements of the latter game utterly distorting and obscuring the original Margaret Hendershot game.
- Timing Variation ~ time begins when the dog dismounts the dogwalk... rather than when the dog commits to the dogwalk.

Premium Blurb

Pinball Wizard is a dog's choice point accumulation game with on-the-field bonuses that triple all of the dog's points. The game starts with a performance of the dogwalk; rather like pulling back the plunger on a pinball table before releasing the pinball onto the table and racking up points. *Pinball Wizard* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Poison

Poison is a fun training game invented by Cheryl Varney of Youngstown All-Breed Training Center in Youngstown, Ohio. Cheryl reports that her students really like the game. The game's unpredictable nature is a lot of fun and it helps them think on their feet.

Briefing

All dogs will run a sequence in the order and direction specified by the judge while following the directions of a “caller”. The caller will call out instructions with which the handler must immediately comply, before the dog commits to another obstacle. The calls that may be used are:

- Reverse (immediately change direction and in the opposite direction)
- Pass (pass the next correct obstacle)
- Down your dog
- Or a specific obstacle name (such as “blue tunnel”)

If at any time the dog puts a paw on the table, he is poisoned. The team has to sit down.

The standard course time shall be set in a range from 60 to 80 seconds.

If the dog fails to respond to a call within reasonable limits, the team is done and must sit down.

Scoring

Poison probably should be scored Points, Then Time.

This is a game played for fun and is most suitable as a training night exercise or a club social function. It would be impossible to level the game for competition so that all things are equal to all teams.

The most rational system, if you must score and place dogs, would be to use a simple Faults, Then Time system. Dogs would earn simple faults for performance errors (including the off course). The dog with the least faults wins. Time would be a tiebreaker. It's the time that will be the most difficult element of the game to apply fairly to all players.

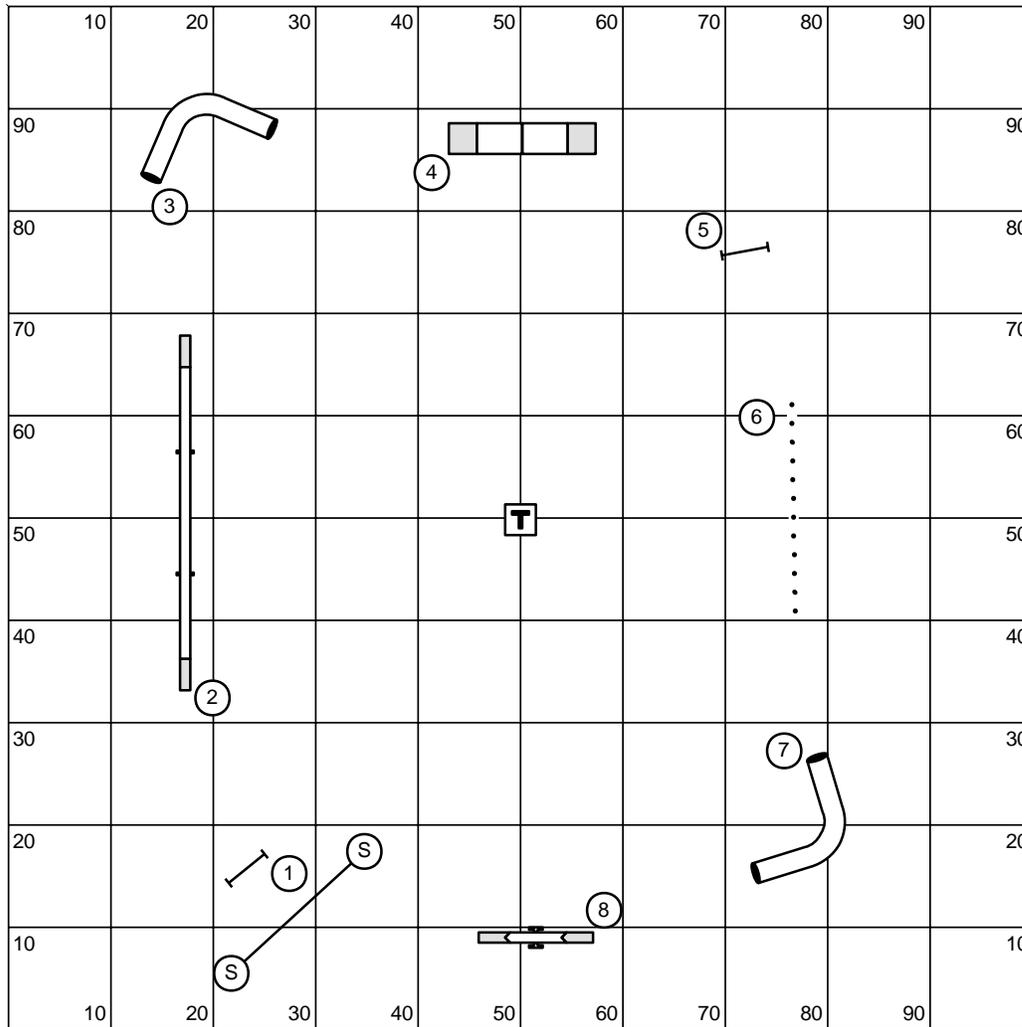
Notes for the Caller

The caller should be very careful with timing of calls to make it possible for the dog to safely play the game. Handlers should be advised in the briefing not to push too hard. Safety is the first priority. The caller should be careful when to call “reverse” around unidirectional obstacles, if present (such as the teeter, collapsed chute, and the triple bar hurdle).

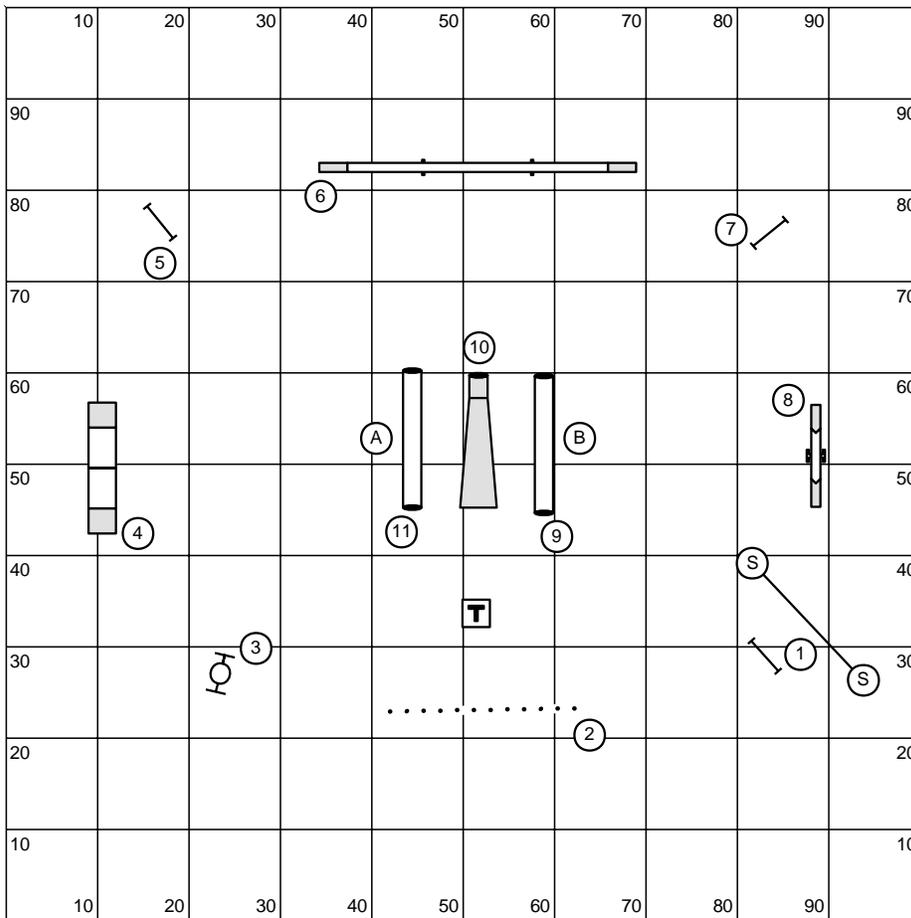
The caller's instructions should vary from team to team so that the handler has no real expectation of when to expect a given call. The same calls should be made for all teams. But the order of the calls, and where they are given, will vary from team to team.

An even number of reverses should be given to the team so that the dog ultimately completes the course in the correct direction.

Course Design



This is an example of a novice Poison course. This one was designed by Cheryl Varney. It's not a very technical course. The most challenging part of it will be for the handler to keep up with the caller's instructions.



This is an example of an advanced Poison course. The course was designed by Cheryl Varney. The course is essentially a circle of obstacles using all the contacts, 12 weave poles, and some jumps along with tunnels. In the center of the circle is the table, which is “Poison,” the name of the game.

Only 8 or 9 obstacles are typically used in the Beginners course. The caller will usually allow the competitor to get through 4 or 5 obstacles before beginning to make calls. In an Advanced Poison course thirteen obstacles are typically used. The caller will usually allow the competitor to get through 8 to 10 obstacles before beginning to make calls.

Premium Blurb

Poison is a bit of a fun outing game, probably not suited to titling competition. In this game the handler works under the direction of a “Caller” who will call instructions with which the handler will attempt to comply. *Poison* should be scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Poker

Poker is a game invented by John Ostrowski as a just-for-the-fun-of-it activity. The game is designed to measure speed, control, timing, and strategy. It also has a side benefit of teaching competitors to play the card game poker!

Briefing

Besides an agility course, a dog, and a handler, you need a deck of 52 playing cards for this game.

The object of the game is for the handler to collect at least five playing cards (the minimum number required for a hand of poker) in the standard course time specified by the judge.

The player earns the right to collect a playing card by successfully performing obstacles on the course. Only tunnels, tires, spread hurdles, contact obstacles, and the weave poles earn poker cards. However, a bar jump (any bar jump) must be successfully completed prior to performing an obstacle that earns a card. For example, to earn the right to collect a card, the handler might direct the dog to perform jump-dogwalk or jump-weaves.

After successfully completing the card-earning obstacle, the handler must go to the dealer's table to collect his card. The dealer will deal out one card, face up. The handler may then go back on course to earn another card. Dealt cards remain on the table.

It is inconsequential (at least in terms of these rules) what the dog is doing while the handler goes to the dealer's table to collect his card. However, the handler will obviously waste valuable time if he has to recall his dog after collecting a card!

No obstacle can be performed more than once for cards. However, an obstacle may be performed for no cards without penalty. The handler is just using up time.

If the dog faults an obstacle he is performing for a card, the judge will say "Fault" and the handler may at his option repeat the obstacle until the dog is successful or move on to another obstacle.

When the standard course time expires, the timer will blow a whistle. The handler then has 10 seconds to return to the dealer's table and construct the best possible poker hand from the cards dealt during the run.

Five cards are necessary for a poker hand. If the dog earned more than five cards, the handler can pick and choose which five cards to keep and then discard the rest. If, however, fewer than five cards were drawn during the dog's run, the handler must make the best poker hand out of what cards were actually dealt.

Scoring

Poker is scored Points, Then Time. The dog with the best poker hand wins. In case of a tie (very unlikely!), the tied dogs must play a new hand to determine the winner. If the dealer runs out of cards, he should reshuffle the deck.

Variations

- Seven card limit – Instead of allowing handlers to collect an unlimited number of cards, the run can be ended when seven cards have been dealt not exceeding the standard course time.
- Dealer coaching – Rather than having the handler construct his poker hand at the end of his run, the dealer can provide coaching to make sure the handler uses the highest possible poker hand.
- Other types of poker – The fun thing about poker, the card game, is that there are a lot of interesting variations already. This game could be played as Jacks or Better, High-Low Split, Deuces Wild, Tens or Better, Suicide Kings Wild, Dr. Pepper, or anything that would be interesting and fun.
- Wild cards – The judge could designate a particular difficult combination of obstacles on course that allows the handler to collect a wild card if successfully performed.
- Using a joker – Another variation on this game is the designation of an obstacle as a joker. If the dog successfully performs the joker obstacle, then the card that is dealt to the handler, along with any like cards, will be wild. For instance, if the card dealt to the handler is a 7, then any other 7 dealt to that handler will also be wild.

Premium Blurb

Poker is intended as a game for a fun club outing. It is probably *not* suitable as a game for titling competition. In this game the handler will direct his dog to perform an obstacle, then draw a card; and then do another obstacle and draw another card, and so forth... until a poker hand is built. The dog/handler with the best poker hand wins! *Poker* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Pole Jacks

This game is an invention of Brenna Fender (and that credit erroneously claimed by Bud Houston for several years). It is intended as a game of strategy, comparable to Snooker. Pole Jacks creates an atmosphere for intensive work on the weave poles. The game requires consistent performance and pits the dog against the poles with a variety of entries and velocity of approach. Use this game in training to sharpen everyone's weave pole work. Pole Jacks has been called Weave Pole Snooker.

Briefing

Pole Jacks is played like the children's game of jacks. The performance of a short set of weave poles is the bounce of the ball. All other obstacles on the course are jacks and have specific point values.

After the "bounce" (doing the weave poles), the team must "pick up" the appropriate number of jacks by scoring an equivalent number of points. The handler and dog team will bounce "onesies," bounce "twosies," bounce "threesies," and so forth until either they reach bounce and "sevensies" or time expires.

The dog's time begins when he first makes a "legal" entry into the weave poles, entering between pole #1 and pole #2 from right to left. A reasonable course time, usually sixty seconds, shall be established by the judge for scoring. The end-of-time whistle ends scoring only; the clock continues to run until the dog crosses the finish line or goes to the table. After the time whistle, there will be no fault and no points for the dog taking additional obstacles on the way to the table or finish line to stop time.

The dog must pick up points equaling the number for which the team is shooting after the bounce. For instance, if the team is shooting for 6, they could do a jump and the teeter or they could do a tunnel and the tire.

Obstacles valued at 3 or more points may be taken only once for points during the run. One-point obstacles may be taken as many times as the handler or dog chooses. No obstacle may be taken twice on the same pick up.

The dog's time begins when he makes a legal entry into the weave poles. The dog's time ends when he gets on the table or crosses the finish line.

More than one set of weave poles may be used on course. Either can be used to start time and either can be used for a "bounce."

Scoring

Pole Jacks is scored Points, Then Time. The dog's score will be the number of his last complete pick-up. The winner is the dog with the highest points and with least time in the case of a tie. The maximum points that can be earned are 7.

The following point values are assigned to obstacles:

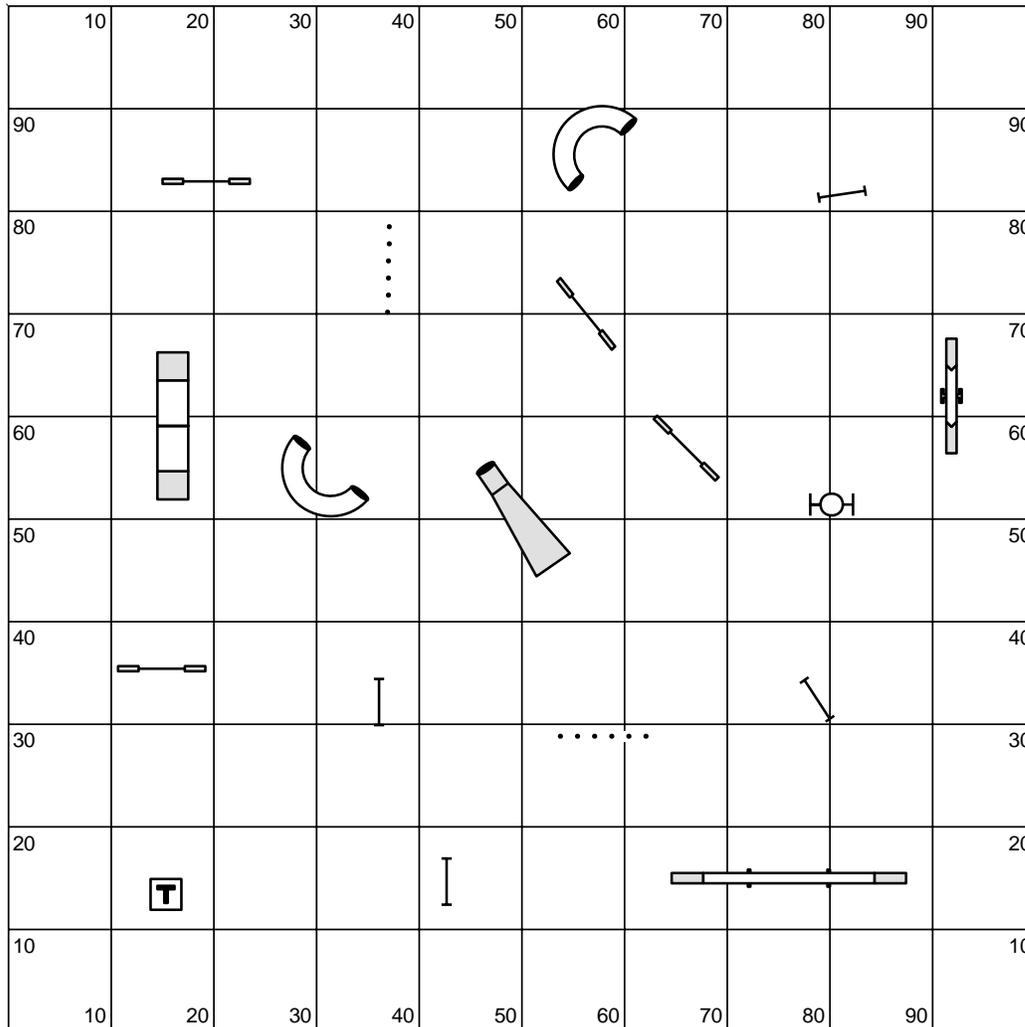
- Jumps, 1 point
- Tunnels and tire, 3 points
- Teeter and A-frame, 5 points
- Dogwalk, 7 points

If a dog faults during a pick-up, the dog must again bounce (perform the poles) and retry

that same number. Faults include the following:

- Any of the usual performance faults (missed contact, knocked pole and so on)
- Picking up a number greater than the number for which the team is shooting
- Crossing the line of weave poles with incomplete points in the pick up
- Performing a 3+ valued obstacle more than once (an optional rule, not often used)
- Repeating an obstacle in the same pick up

Course Design



In this sample Pole Jacks course, two sets of weave poles are being used. The dog can begin at either and can freely alternate between the two during play.

Pole Jacks is played with a full set of agility equipment placed randomly in the ring. The weave poles (usually a short set of 5 or 6 poles) should be centrally positioned on the course.

When two sets of weave poles are used, they should be placed in separate areas of the course but near enough to each other that the handler might occasionally make transitions between the two.

Strategies

This is a game of strategy. The handler must plot a path which will yield 7 points in the shortest amount of time. All is not lost should the dog volunteer for an obstacle that was not on the handler's agenda for points, but that challenges the handler to plot a new course to arrive at the number of points for which the team is shooting.

The dog is faulted for picking up more points than he is entitled to in a pick-up. That actually puts the dog who has earned 7 points before the time whistle blows somewhat at risk. If the dog takes additional obstacles before time has expired, the judge will call "fault" and the dog will lose his 7 point score. It might be better to actually stop the dog and wait for the final whistle to blow when 7 points have been earned. Better yet, devise a strategy that collects 7 points on the way to the table with little chance of an off course.

When more than one set of weave poles are allowed for the "bounce," the handler should carefully make use of the flow between the two sets of poles if at all possible. The better the flow the handler can create for the dog, the greater the dog's speed.

Variations

- **Tunnel Jacks** – Uses pipe tunnels rather than the weave poles for the bounce of the ball. Because of the faster performance of the pipe tunnels the qualifying scores should be elevated at least one point.
- Two or more sets of weave poles – The layout of the equipment may include two or more sets of weave poles, any of which are eligible for the "bounce," or at the judge's discretion, for scoring purposes only. When a short set of weave poles is used for scoring purposes, it should be valued at 3 points.

Qualifying and Titles

Pole Jacks is a qualifying game in the TDAA. For each, the qualifying requirements are:

- Games I – Score of 5
- Games II – Score of 6
- Games III – Score of 7

Premium Blurb

Pole Jacks is a game of strategy and skill, played like the children's game of jacks. The performance of a short set of weave poles is the bounce of the ball. All other obstacles on the course are jacks and have specific point values. After the bounce the team begins with "onsies" then "twosies"... and all the way through "sevensies", time permitting. Pole Jacks is scored Points, then time. *Pole Jacks* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Potluck

Here is a game invented by Natalie Kirkwood in Queensland, Australia for the ADAA agility and for training at the Agility Dog Club of Queensland. Potluck may be run as a training game to work on skills of course walking and memory.

Briefing

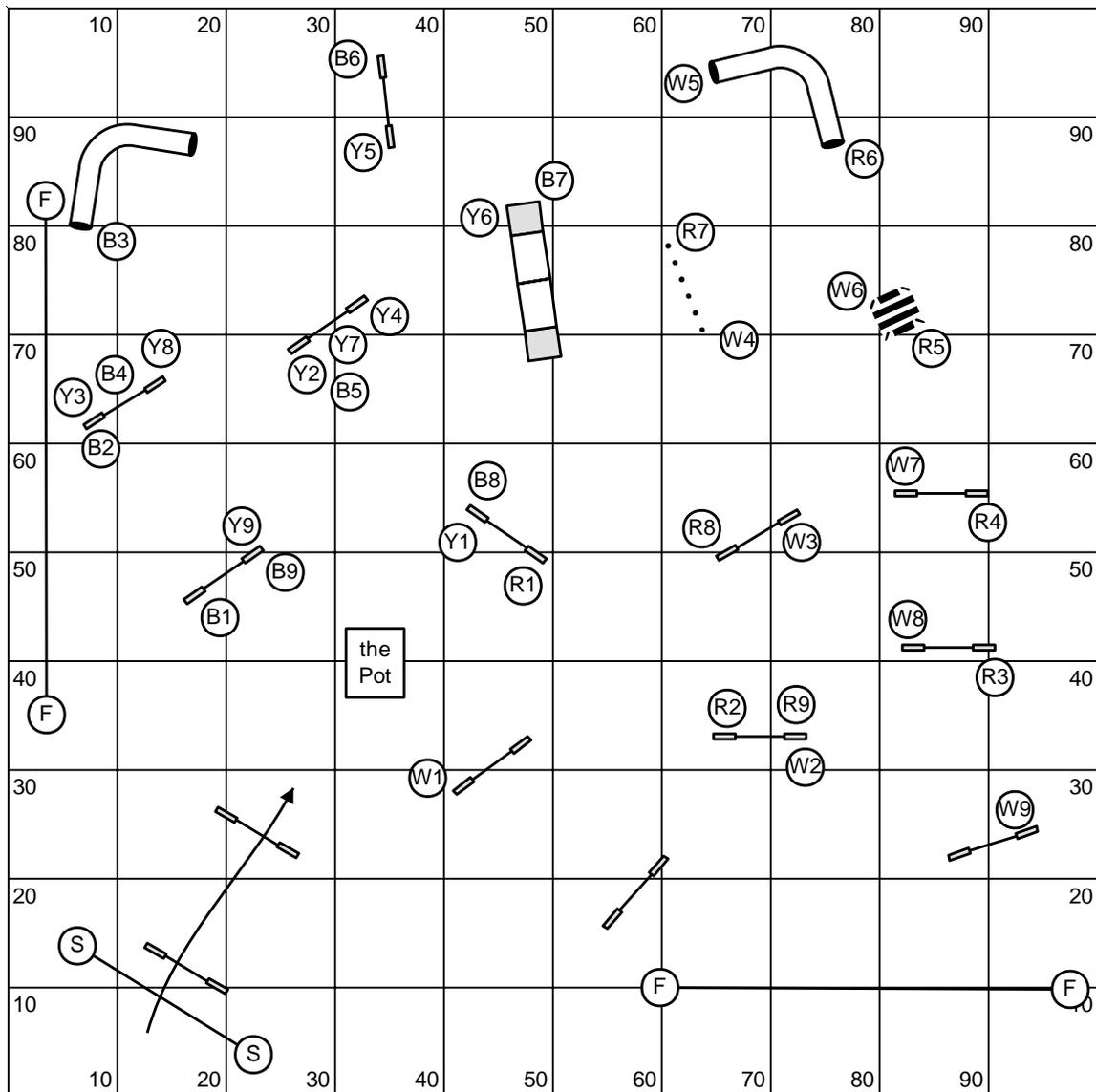
This is a team game for three or more dogs and handlers and requires a pot (bucket) which needs to have a lid with a hole cut in it just big enough for a hand to fit through. In the pot are four colored balls (or similarly marked items) so as to correlate to the four sequences. If there are more than four handlers in the team then a second set of four balls needs to be added to the pot. The obstacle layout includes four simple sequences. Colored flags to match the balls and numbers mark these courses.

All members of the team will need to learn each of the courses. Potluck is run like a relay. Each dog starts behind a start line. At their turn, dogs go over a couple of hurdles to the pot sitting on the ground. Handlers put a hand into the pot and pull out a ball. Handlers then direct the dog to do the sequence that matched the ball that they pulled out. Usually there are plenty of laughs as handlers panic and get all confused when they head off to do the wrong sequence or forget the sequence.

Scoring

Potluck is scored Faults, Then Time. The team with the fewest faults wins. Use a rate of travel appropriate for the standard of competitors. At ADAA competitions, a team qualifies if all dogs in the team earn five or fewer faults and the whole team finishes within the standard course time. The clock starts when the first dog starts and finishes when the last dog crosses the finish line.

Course Design



This sample Potluck course is based on an original course by Natalie Kirkwood.

In Potluck each course is limited to only nine obstacles to make memorization of the various sequences a bit simpler for the handlers. The beginning of each of the three segments should stem from the area near the pot.

The traditional Potluck course design is rather like a Steeplechase in which the only technical obstacle used is the A-frame.

Strategies

Teammates are encouraged to sing out to help the confused and panicked handler. Sequences may either finish back in the start box, or somewhere nearby, and handlers may call out when the next member may go. Balls are kept by the handlers until the completion of their team's run and then returned to the pot for the next team's fun to begin. For more advanced handler and dog teams, the sequences may be more complex and wind through each other, or they could be four gamble-style sequences.

Premium Blurb

Potluck is a relay game with multiple players and multiple courses. Each player must walk each of the different parts of the course because which part each will run will be luck of the draw. Players will draw a colored ball or similar token in the moment before they start their run. *Potluck* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER9

Power and Speed

Power and Speed, a British import game, is the Iron Dog competition of dog agility games. The game demonstrates the ability of the handler to exercise tight control (power) through a part of the course, then show loose control (speed) over another part of the course.

Briefing

Each handler and dog runs a course that is split into two sections: Power and Speed.

Power – The *Power* section typically consists of *technical* obstacles; contacts, and weave poles. The *Power* section may also contain spread hurdles or other specialty hurdles.

The *Power* section is un-timed. Consequently the start-line is positioned between the last obstacle of the *Power* section and the first obstacle of the *Speed* section. If the time is getting close to the course time the timer is instructed to watch the dog. If the dog's time exceeds the course time, the dog will still be allowed to continue on the *Speed* section, but there will be no score awarded.

Any faults earned by the dog will be added to the dog's score. For example, if the dog misses a contact or earns a refusal on a contact obstacle, his score would be 5 for the *Power* section. Obviously, the ideal score for the *Power* section is 0.

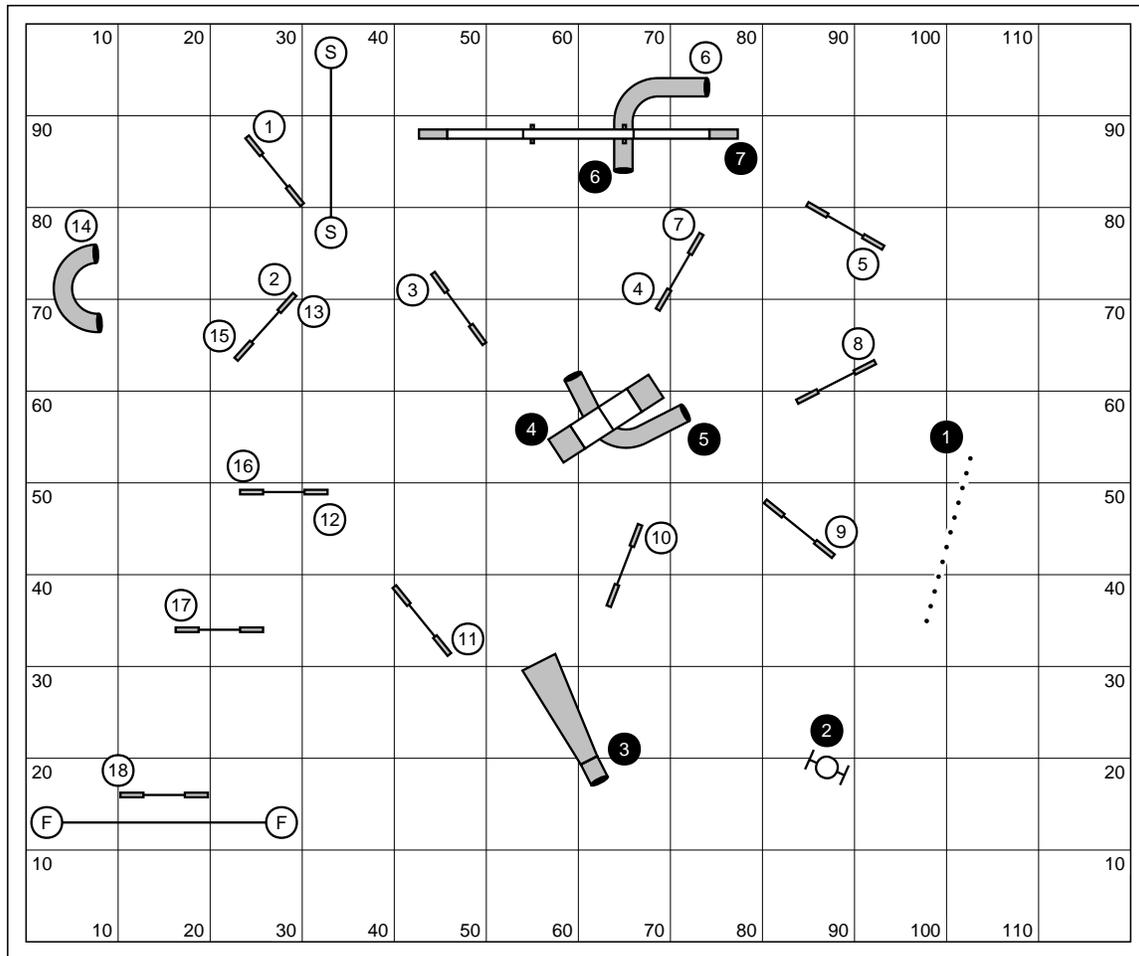
Speed – The *Speed* section contains a straightforward Jumpers sequence. The goal is for the dog to run the course as fast as possible, preferably with no faults.

Scoring

Power and Speed is scored Time, Plus Faults. Faults from both sections are added time from the *Speed* section. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Power and Speed is judged under the performance rules respective to the venue, and level or class of the dog in competition.

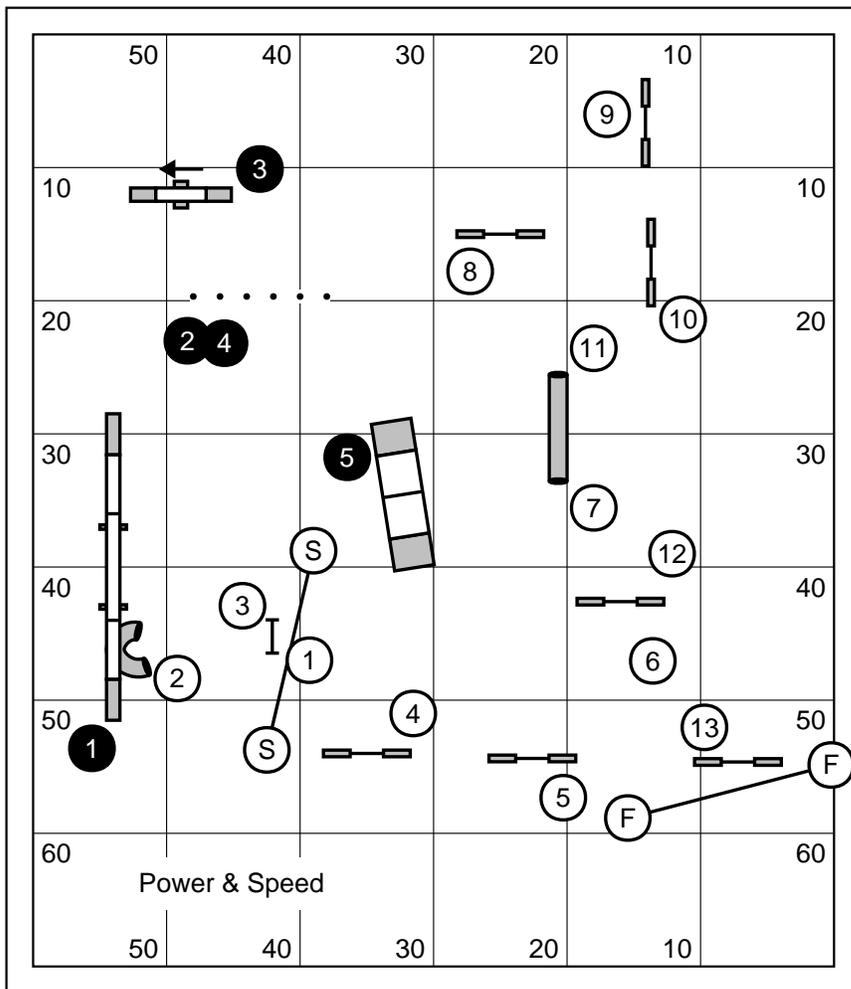
Course Design



This is an example of a Power and Speed course. This course was played at the USDAA Nationals on July 10, 1998.

The Power section of the Power and Speed course should be designed to be somewhat inconsequential in terms of handling; but should be something *more* than an “L” or “U” shape on the field. The idea is to allow the handler to direct his dog with a calm touch making sure to perform the contact obstacles without fault.

The jumping or Speed section of the course might be a bit challenging. But to a larger measure, this part of the course should be flowing and lend itself to on-the-edge speed. Crossing patterns and changes of sides are desirable design features. Flow-breaking calls for micromanagement like “threadles” should be avoided like the plague.



This is an example of a TDAA Power and Speed course designed by Bud Houston in a series of articles to examine the games played at the TDAA 2012 Petit Prix national tournaments. There was a real intention in this design to illustrate important design features of a Power and Speed course. For example, the *Power* section includes interesting handling elements and is something more than an uneventful “L” or “U” shape on the field. The *Speed* section is fast and furious and does not feature a lot of oppressive technical handling.

Strategy

As the Power section of *Power and Speed* is not timed, the handler should not be in a rush to complete that section. When the “Speed” element of the game begins, the handler should push for the best possible speed and a smooth and flowing finish.

A common error in *Power and Speed* is for the handler to rush from the Power section into the Speed section without taking advantage of the fact that time does not begin until on the approach to the Speed section. With this in mind the handler should take careful note of where the start-line is drawn. And if a lead-out from the dog is desirable the handler should leave the dog in a stay and take the lead-out advantage.

A clever host club will put *Power and Speed* as one of the first classes in a weekend trial so that this class can be used both for obstacle familiarization. With the contact obstacles especially the handler can work at a moderate and calculated speed, reminding the dog of

his job on every contact. That careful approach to this competition could benefit the dog's performance on contacts through the entire weekend.

In the *Speed* section the handler should be aware that the clock has begun ticking. This is the time for bold and aggressive handling. Go for the gusto.

Variations

- **Style and Sprint variation** – This refinement of Power and Speed allows a generous but finite limit on the *Power* course to limit the obedience interruptions, downing and staying the dog between obstacles. Enough time should be allowed to do the *Power* course carefully, but not so much that the section becomes a protracted stalling drag.

When this variation is used timing for the *Power* course alone will be required. This time-keeper will be required to blow a whistle, dismissing the dog, if the time is exceeded before beginning the *Speed* course. A 5 second warning whistle might be employed to give the handler the last gasp of a chance to get going.

- **Death Penalty** ~ In this variation any fault in the Power section of the course results in elimination and immediate dismissal. While this is the early tradition, the game has evolved to be more kindly application of faults, deferring instead to an overall Time-Plus-Faults scoring basis.

Qualifying and Titles

The qualifying score for *Power and Speed* is based on the measured length of the *Speed* section using rates of travel appropriate to the level of the dog's in competition. Time-Plus-Faults equal to or less than the SCT will earn a qualifying score.

Premium Blurb

Power and Speed is a two part game. In the first part [Power] the dog will run an un-timed sequence of mostly technical obstacles; and in the second part [Speed] the dog will run a timed jumpers course. *Power and Speed* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Puissance

Puissance is a display of power and strength. The dog agility variation is used mostly as a demonstration event in which the height of the jump bar is raised from round to round until all dogs have failed, save one.

Briefing

In Puissance, the dogs are required to jump one or more hurdles. This is a pass/fail format. If the dog successfully clears the hurdle without dropping the top bar, the dog will advance to the next round. If the dog drops the bar, he is out of the competition.

The jump heights start at 8" or some other height agreeable to the judge and event committee. The hurdle will be raised 2" between each round, making the jump progressively tougher and eliminating dogs from the competition as the height becomes too much for them.

Scoring

The dog that clears the last and highest jump, with all other dogs eliminated, is the winner.

Variations

- Send – The Send variation of this game is quite different. This is a training competition used by Bud Houston to compel his students to practice sending a dog to perform a jump from a distance. Rather than raising the bar of the jump, the line from which the dog must be sent to jump the hurdle is moved progressively further and further away from the jump until a final winner is determined. The jump remains at the dog's regulation jump height or one step lower throughout the competition.
- Trainers' Game variation – Based on the Send variation, this is a game played in seminars and camps taught by Bud Houston. The objective of the game is to teach the handler the value of taking small incremental steps.

This is a game of puissance. That means that if a handler succeeds in any round, he will stay in the game with his dog. But if he fails, he'll have to sit down and watch the rest of the contest.

The game is set over several rounds. In the first round, a line is drawn precisely 10' from a jump. The handlers are briefed to send their dogs over the jump, starting as close as they want to the jump. They may continue sending the dog over the jump so long as they beat their last send and until they actually send from beyond the 10 foot bar.

In the second round, each dog will set a new line that represents the longest send. Handlers may have three attempts to send their dogs over the jump from beyond the previous high mark. Two attempts may be from in front of the line. The third must be to set a new high mark. An important stipulation is made in this round: once the dog has set a new high mark, the team is done. It doesn't matter whether it's the first, second, or third attempt.

In the third round, handlers will have two attempts to send their dogs over the jump from beyond the previous high mark. One attempt may be from in front of the line. The second must be to set a new high mark. Again, once the dog has a new high mark, the team is done, whether it's the first or the second attempt.

In the next and in all subsequent rounds, each handler will have only one attempt to send his dog to the jump and set a new high mark. The game continues until only one dog and handler team is still in the game or until there is no more room to move the jump a greater distance.

Strategy

In the Trainers' Game variation of a Send Puissance, the most important strategy is to take advantage of the rules of the game that allow for incremental steps to reward the dog for performance. Handlers will often want to show off in the early-going with their dogs, ignoring the opportunity to reinforce their dogs for going away to the jump. In the later rounds, when other dogs are happily running out to do the jump, the showoff's dog won't understand the game.

Premium Blurb

Puissance is a game in which a jump height is raised until all dogs fail... but the last. A more palatable variation is to run the *Puissance* as a progressive send, slightly farther until a clear winner is found. *Puissance* is probably not a game appropriate for titling competition. It might be, however, a good game as an extra activity at a tournament, possibly as a fund raiser.

Puppy Cannon!

Puppy Cannon is a fast and furious game of handling, often used as a training game but suitable as a game of competition for top competitors.

Briefing

The objective of Puppy Cannon is for the dog to do three of the numbered sequences shown on the course map. The sequences can be taken in any order. The dog starts on the table and must begin with the pipe tunnel (the Puppy Cannon) before the performance of each of the three sequences.

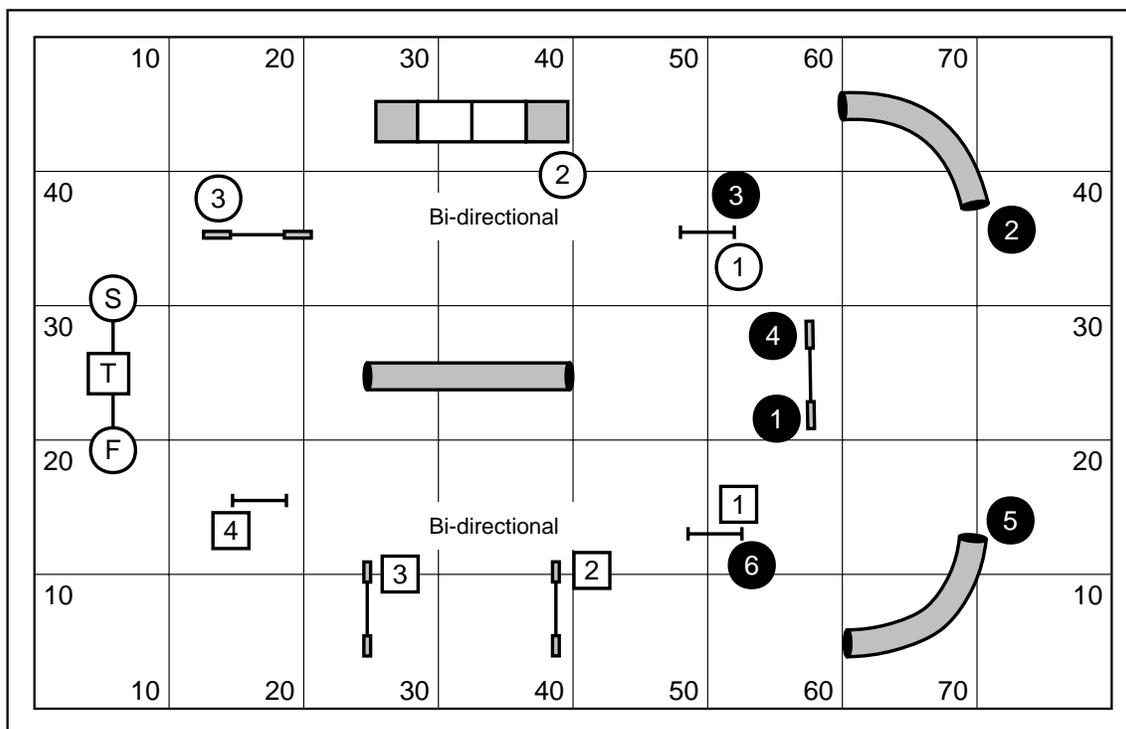
The judge may specify that certain sequences are bi-directional.

After the final sequence the dog can go directly to the table to stop time *or* transition through the pipe tunnel (without penalty) to get to the table.

Scoring

Puppy Cannon is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Course Design



In many ways the design of *Puppy Cannon* resembles *Beat the Clock*, except that the central obstacle is a pipe tunnel, rather than a tire. The featured tunnel should be straight and aimed, like a cannon, at some obstacle (which may or may not be the next correct obstacle).

In the design of this sample course two other pipe tunnels are engaged... aiming at wrong course obstacles; but with sufficient room for the handler to turn the dog towards the next correct obstacle.

On this course the judge specifies that the white-numbered sequences are bi-directional. Note that the table is the starting obstacle on this course. This should not be viewed as a constraint. The judge might use any beginning obstacle.

Judging Notes

Dogs should be judged according to their respective level in the standard classes. That means, when appropriate, refusals and weave pole errors should be faulted.

In briefing the judge should be very clear on several points:

- After the start the dog must be directed to the central pipe tunnel
- After each sequence the dog must be directed to the central pipe tunnel
- The three sequences can be taken in whatever order the handler desires
- Which, if any, sequences are bi-directional
- The dog must be directed to the finishing obstacle after the final performance of the central pipe tunnel.

The judge should offer neither handling advice nor strategy advice to exhibitors in briefing.

Qualifying and Titles

Qualifying Course Time (QCT) is based on the measured length of the overall course using rates of travel appropriate to each dog's level and jump height. After faults have been added to time if the score is equal to or less than the established QCT, then the dog shall receive a qualifying score.

Variations

Original ~ Puppy Cannon was originally envisioned simply as a training game; mostly to demonstrate that turning the dog on the dismount of a pipe tunnel could be quite a trick of handling. In this variation there is no established course time.

Also in the original version the dog is required to take the pipe tunnel (Puppy Cannon) one last time before going to stop time. This stipulation should be at the discretion of the judge (and course designer).

Premium Blurb

Puppy Cannon is a game featuring the pipe tunnel as a test of the handler's skill when redirecting the dog. It is typically played with three (or more) small numbered sequences that can be taken in the order of the handler's choosing. *Puppy Cannon* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Quidditch

Hairy Pawter's Quidditch is the invention of Becky Dean and Jean MacKenzie. The game was played for the first time at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

Briefing

The objective of *Quidditch* is to perform three sequences and attempt to earn a bonus (the *Beater*) after each. The point values for each of the sequences are 15, 20, and 25 points respectively. Each sequence can be successfully completed only once. The sequences can be taken in any order.

The judge will assign Qualifying Course Time (QCT) respective to big dogs small dogs. All levels will compete with the same QCT (as each level has different qualifying points). When time expires the dog¹ should be directed to the table to stop time.

In case of a fault the team can immediately reattempt the same sequence or move to another sequence.

The three individual sequences can be successfully completed only once. Reattempting a sequence will not earn additional points.

When time expires no new points can be earned.

The Beater

Upon the successful completion of a sequence the team will have the opportunity to earn bonus points for a successful performance of a tire; the *Beater* bonus, for which the team will earn an additional 25 points

At the option of the judge the attempt of the beater may require the handler to remain behind a containment line, making the *beater* a distance challenge.

Refusals will be faulted on the *beater* (the tire). The initial direction of the dog's approach to the tire will define the run-out plane of the obstacle for the purpose of judging refusals. If a dog commits a refusal on the tire, the Beater bonus is lost.

After attempting the Beater bonus the team should attempt another three-obstacle sequence. Faulting the *Beater* does *not* fault the sequence prior to the attempt.

The Bludgers Rule

1. A Bludger (wrong course obstacle) performed during the performance of an individual sequence shall result in a sequence fault. No points are earned for the performance of any individual obstacle unless the sequence is not completed due to expiration of time.
2. Performance of a Bludger after the successful completion of a sequence on the way to the Beater (tire) shall be considered a fault of the Beater. The ability for the team to earn the Beater bonus is lost. The team should proceed to the next sequence, or to the table if appropriate.

¹ In this variation of the game the dog is naturally the Quaffle. But for the sake of clarity, we'll just call him a dog.

3. If the wrong course occurs: *Bludgers* (wrong courses) shall *not* be faulted: between the starting line and the first obstacle of a numbered sequence; between the *Beater* and the first obstacle of a numbered sequence; between the *Beater* and the table (to stop time).
4. No points shall be earned for the performance of any *Bludger*.

The Keeper

If the team completes each of the different three-obstacle sequences, they will earn a 'Keeper' bonus of 50 points in addition to the points of the individual sequences. Note: the *Keeper* bonus is based on the three sequences alone and is not influenced by success on attempts to earn *Beater* bonuses.

The Golden Snitch

If a team successfully completes all three sequences, earns all three 25 point *Beater* bonuses, and touches the table prior to the expiration of time, the team will earn the *Golden Snitch* bonus of 75 points.

Scoring

Quidditch is scored points then time. The dog with the most points wins. In the case of a tie, the dog with the shortest time will be the winner.

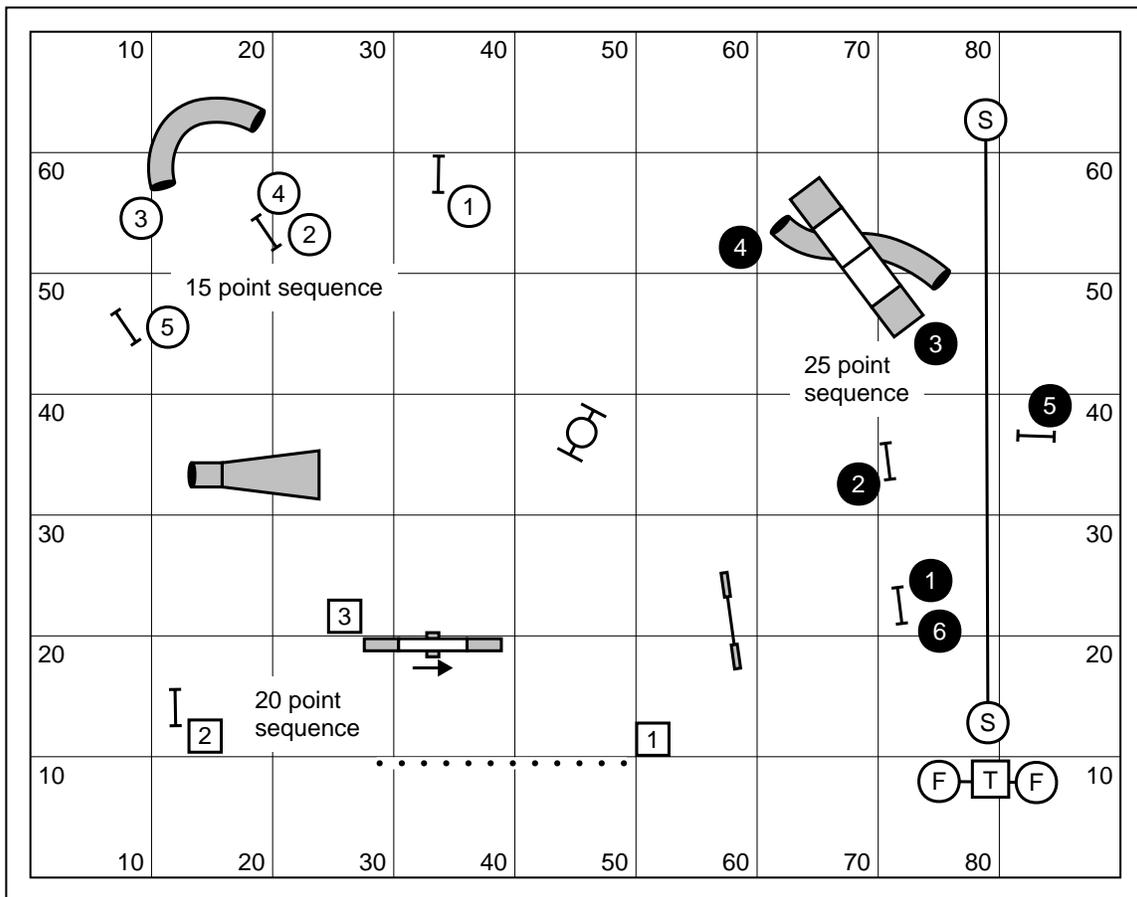
A perfect score requires completion of all three sequences and successful performance of the *Beater* bonus. The scoring notation would look like this: 15-25-20-25-25-25-50-75.

Course Design

With several years experience in designing and playing *Quidditch* (both in league play and in the TDAA) the game has evolved into a more interesting game of strategy and daring. In the early going each of the scoring sequences were typically limited to three obstacles only. This turns out to be not terribly interesting in terms of challenges.

The judge/course designer should be aware that when the length of sequences are expanded the Qualifying Course Time (QCT) might have to be a bit longer. The rational system for applying QCT is to actually measure a modest strategy and then apply the rates of travel used in the standard classes, giving a small fudge factor for transitions between sequences.

Considerable thought should be given to the placement of *Bludgers* between the end of a scoring sequence and on the approach to the *Beater*. Sometimes the *Bludger* can be a simple ham-handed trap; and sometimes a subtle nuance of erstwhile scoring obstacles presented to entice the imagination of the dog.



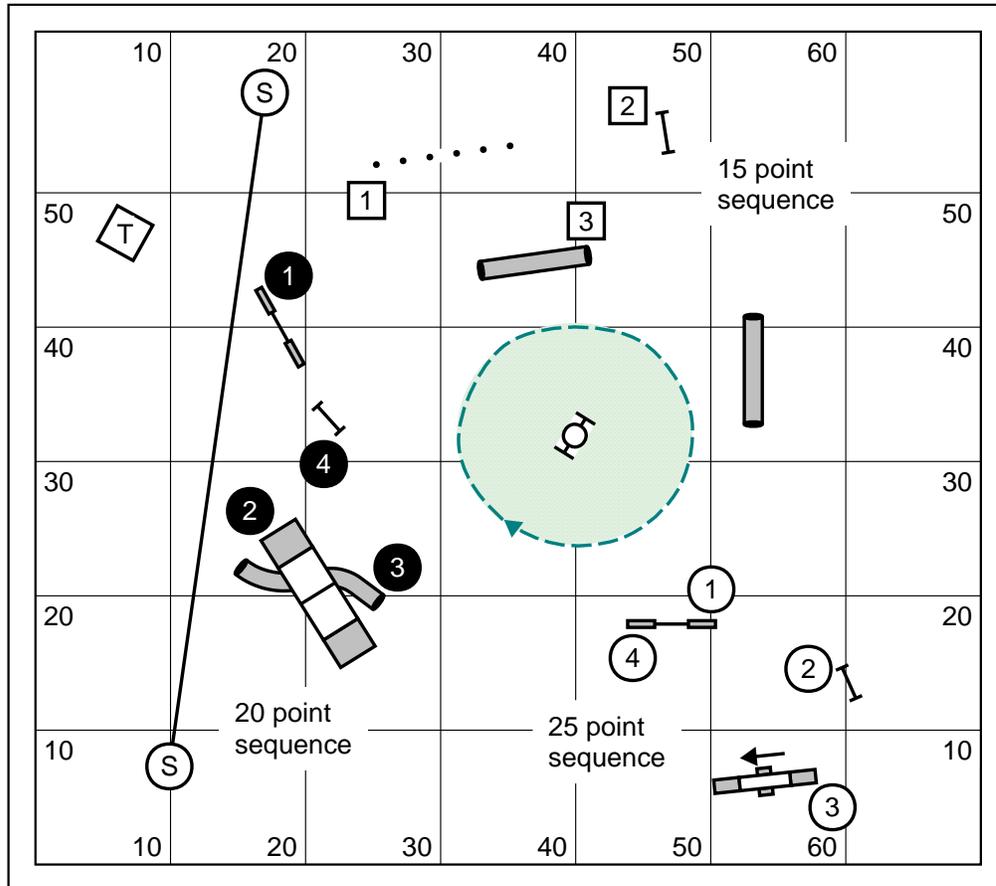
The Quidditch course is a matter of some simplicity. It requires three sequences that are arranged about the *Beater*. The *Beater* should be the tire.

Other obstacles that are not involved in scoring sequences are positioned about the course mostly to confound the team. These are *Bludgers*². Often these *Bludgers* are positioned in that transition from a scoring sequence to the *Beater*. And so the dog's path might take on a *snookeresque* quality and is the true test in the handler's canny ability to manage the movement of his dog.

Use the same course for dogs competing at all levels. The level at which the dog qualifies depends upon the number of points earned.

² If we were to be true to the original game envisioned by J.K. Rowling, the *Bludger* would be a stick, and stewards might be assigned to whack the handler as he attempts to direct his dog to the *Beater*. At the end of the day, we decided to forgo this definition of the *Bludger*.

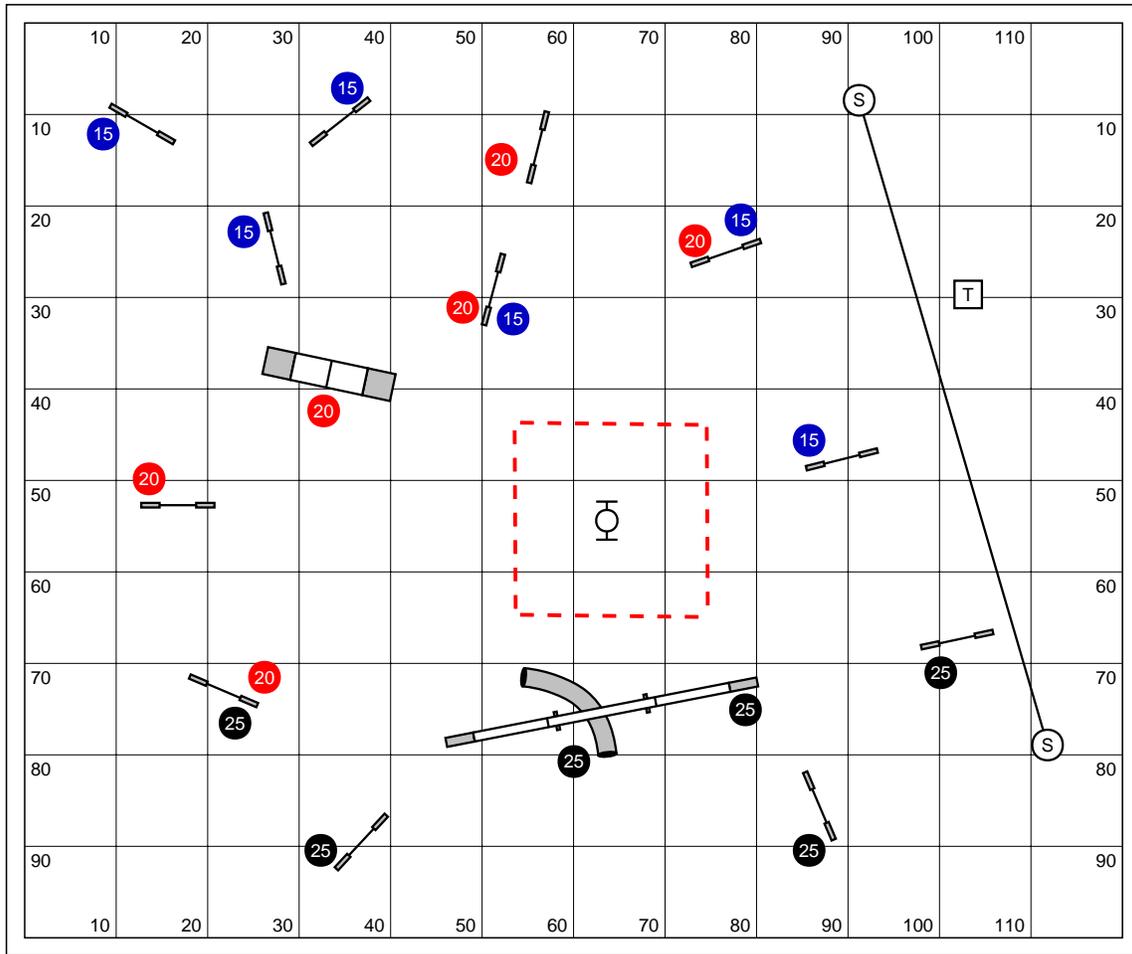
Send to Beater



Adding a bit more challenge to the Beater Bonus, in this variation the handler must send the dog to the Beater (the tire) from some distance. Therefore in the description of the Beater bonus the briefing should use this description:

Games II might also be required to send from a well-defined containment line; and possibly even Games I. However, Games I typically doesn't need this complication.

Dealer's Choice



The scoring sequences are unnumbered. The dog may be directed to do each of the obstacles in that sequence in any order. Note that a *Bludger* is *not* faulted between the *Beater* and any scoring sequence. Consequently, the handler may choose to direct his dog over an obstacle that is *not* a part of the intended scoring sequence before beginning it.

Judging Notes

Rules for performance respective to the dog's level will be applied in judging the scoring sequences. That means (not to be exhaustive) the weave poles should be judged by level, and the contact obstacles by level.

Be aware that you will be judging the tire for refusals after the completion of a scoring sequence.

Understand how to judge *Bludgers*. A wrong course obstacle is *only* significant when the dog has freshly completed a scoring sequence and is approaching the *Beater* or, as in a standard course, taking a wrong course obstacle after beginning one of the scoring sequences. A skillful handler may direct his dog over obstacles for flow from the start line or after performance of a *Beater*.

Qualifying and Titles

Qualifying points required by level shall be:

- Games I: 110 points
- Games II: 135 points
- Games III: 160 points

Variations

* **Houses of Hogwarts variation** ~ In this variation there are four sequences, rather than only three. Typically on the course map the judge will assign *both* the name of the house and the value of the sequence: Gryffindor 25, Slytherin 25, Hufflepuff 20, and Ravenclaw 15.

* **Original Rules** ~ Some of the original rules of the game have been gently nudged aside to become more of a historical footnote and are not much observed these days. These are summarized below:

If a team completes or attempts one sequence more than once the final score for the team will be zero.

Each obstacle has individual point values that are earned by a team if a sequence is only partially completed prior to time expiring.

- 1 point for jumps
- 3 points for tunnels
- 5 points for contact obstacles and weave poles

The application of individual obstacle values can be ignored in routine competition in Quidditch. It really is not possible for the dog to qualify if all three sequences are not completed. However, in competitions like the TDAA's Petit Prix this accounting method should be used because the last smattering of points earned will give additional differentiation for placement within the field.

Competitors Analysis

Remember that *Bludgers* are significant only when you're done with a scoring sequence and on the way to the *Beater*. Sometimes it might be desirable to take an obstacle for flow to move from one part of the field to another. Even if the dog offers performance of an obstacle when you're making a transition across the field you should not waste time with silly call-offs. It's better to take the flow and go.

The attempt of the *Beater* is a distance challenge. Give yourself room to move well. And, you don't always have to look at it as a raw send (with your toes to the line, flapping your arms). It might be solved with you moving parallel to the dog, but at enough distance to stay on your side of the containment drawn by the judge.

Also, remember that the *Beater* is not tied to the scoring sequence. If your *Beater* fails... you need to go on to the next scoring sequence.

The game will be won, and possibly the *Keeper* bonus earned, if your strategy gives your dog the most efficient possible path. Beware of long unproductive transition between scoring opportunities.

Your analysis of the scoring sequences must include both the approach to the *Beater* (and awareness of *Bludgers*) and the flow from the *Beater* to the next scoring sequence, or to the table to end time. Make your dog's movement as smooth and logical as possible.

Premium Blurb

Quidditch is a simple game of handling skill. The handler must direct the dog to perform three sequences of escalating value, and attempting the simple performance of a tire after each. The game is full of interesting bonuses and colorful phraseology. *Quidditch* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Rabbit Express

To answer the age-old question, “Who is faster, the tortoise or the hare?” Rabbit Express is a steeplechase style game designed to summon the inner speed demon in every dog while adding a strategic twist to leave room for the more accurate “tortoise” to prevail.

Briefing

The objective of Rabbit Express is to summon the inner speed in every dog, while at the same time creating an opportunity for the dog that approaches life from the point of view of the tortoise to prevail.

Rabbit Express is a numbered, steeplechase-style speed course that dogs will need to run like the proverbial rabbit. The goal is to negotiate the Rabbit Express sequence as quickly as possible. However, there is a twist, (of course!) that the wise tortoise may take advantage of. Somewhere along the course two Rabbit Holes will be hidden. The reckless rabbit who falls into the hole must navigate a *detour* sequence to dig itself out and get back on the Rabbit Express. That could be just the chance the Tortoise needs to pass right by!

Trap Bonuses

If the dog completes a trap in sequence without fault, the team will be given a bonus subtracted from their time. How fast is your rabbit?

Scoring

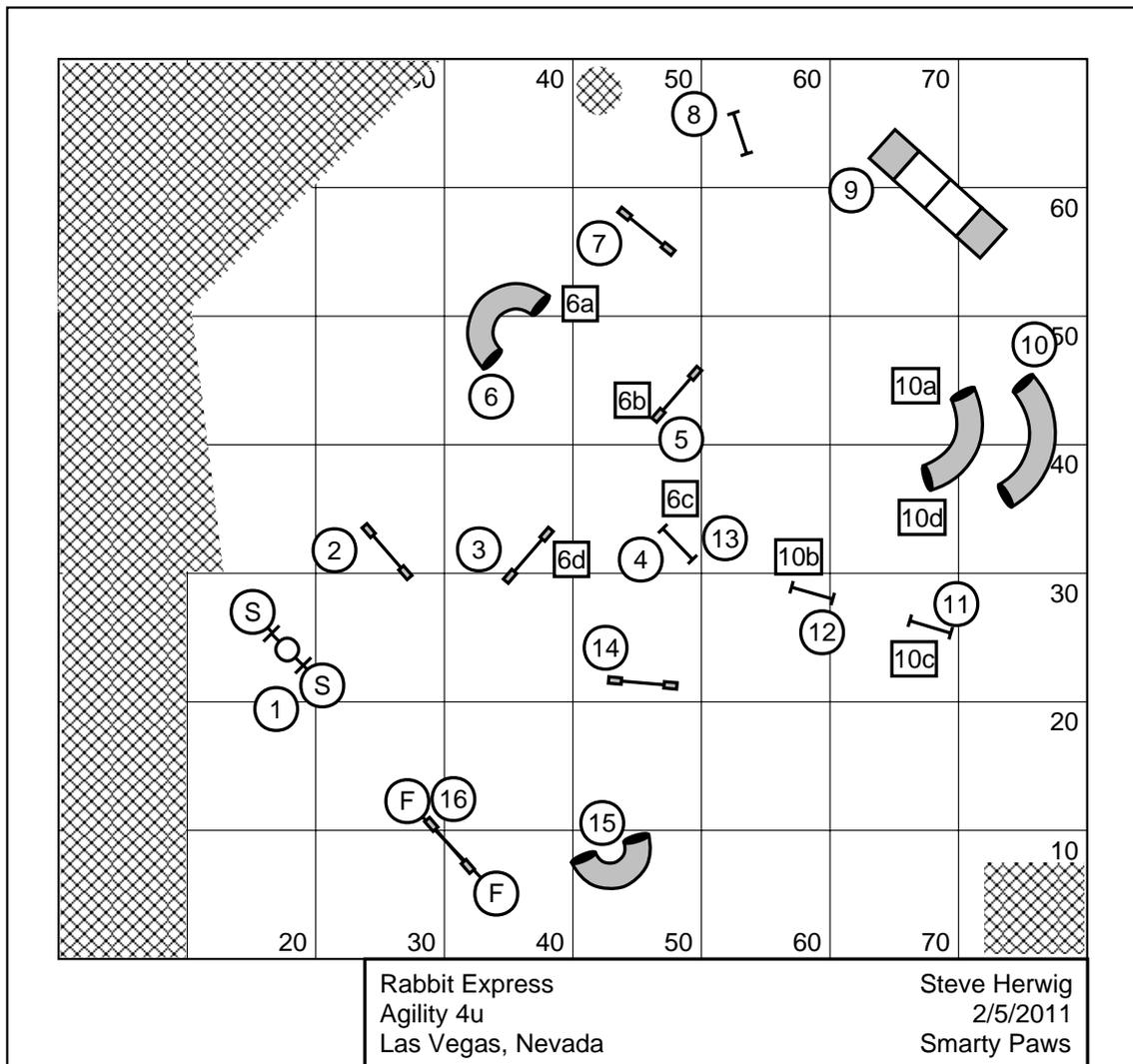
Rabbit Express is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The judge will establish course time for each level. SCT shall be calculated without taking into account any *detour* sequence.

Course Design

Rabbit Express courses may be designed for levels to run separately or together.

The Rabbit Express is a 12-15 obstacle sequence designed to maximize speed through flow, minimizing off-courses, and tending toward maximum distance between obstacles. Technical challenges should be designed so as not to impede momentum. If the A-Frame is used, a comfortable approach must be provided.

“Rabbit traps” (detours) will be a combination of 1-4 jumps and/or tunnels that do not impede flow, but maximize off-course hazards for faster dogs. The trap should provide an inviting challenge to catch the over-achieving “rabbit” while at the same time evening the playing field for the careful “tortoise.”



If a wrong course error occurs at obstacle 6a and/or 10a, the handler must direct his/her dog thru the a, b, c, d sequence else be faulted for failure to perform. Be aware, judging continues and faults shall continue to be assessed during the a-d sequence. If the dog commits a wrong course error while performing the a-d obstacles, the handler must direct his/her dog back to obstacle a and re-attempt the a-d sequence until successful, at which time the course is continued with the next, correct obstacle number. If a wrong course error occurs anywhere else within the course, the handler should simply direct his/her dog back to the next, correct obstacle to be performed.

Obstacles Allowed (12-15, excluding traps)	
Jumps and Tunnels	As many as desired. May choose to create a jumpers or tunnellers feel, or a combination.
Weaves	Optional. Express only. Intermediate: 6 weaves. Superior: 6 - 12.
A-Frame	Optional. Express only. A comfortable approach must be provided.
Either 2 performances of the A-Frame OR two weave performances may be included in the Rabbit Express sequence at the intermediate and superior levels. The second performance may not be back to back with the first.	

Judging

Wrong-courses, dropped bars, missed contacts are 5 faults. Refusals are not called. Once a dog has taken the first obstacle in a trap, the trap will be judged as any other part of the course **except** that on a wrong course within the trap the dog must fix the wrong course before continuing on. Any off-course *in the trap* that is not fixed will earn an NT. On fault-free completion of the trap, the judge will call out the earned bonus (e.g. “Minus 13”) for the scribe to record.

SCT’s should be calculated using the high end of the games YPS scale for each level. Bonus times for “traps” should reflect their difficulty and added yardage.

Qualifying

To qualify, the dog’s score must be equal to or less than the established SCT for the respective level and jump height of the dog.

Premium Blurb

Rabbit Express is a numbered course that features compelling wrong course options called “Rabbit Holes” if the dog falls into one of these he is not faulted, but must run a short “detour” sequence. *Rabbit Express* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Red Rover Relay

Red Rover Relay is the invention of Fran Seibert. This is a delightful game of strategy, agility, and teamwork. Because a crossover is a required obstacle, this game is not played widely, as it richly deserves. Red Rover Relay originally appeared in the Clean Run magazine in 1996.

Briefing

Red Rover Relay is played with teams consisting of two dogs of the same jump height and their handlers. One dog is the red dog and one the blue dog. The red dog runs first.

The objective is to perform all of the obstacles on the course but to divide the performance between the red dog and the blue dog. The handlers decide which dog performs which obstacles and the order in which the obstacles are performed. There are, however, certain obstacle performance requirements:

- Each dog must perform at least eight obstacles
- No obstacle on course can be performed twice by the same dog
- Each dog must perform two contact obstacles, one of which must be the crossover
- Both dogs must perform the crossover and must make a turn on the obstacle. The blue dog cannot take the same two planks of the crossover taken by the red dog, in either direction.

Each dog's start line is the other dog's finish. The start lines are situated on opposite corners of the field. The timer will be positioned at the red dog start, which is also the blue dog finish.

There is no baton exchange. The red dog performs whatever sequence the handler has chosen and then crosses his finish line. The blue dog is allowed to go the instant the red dog finishes.

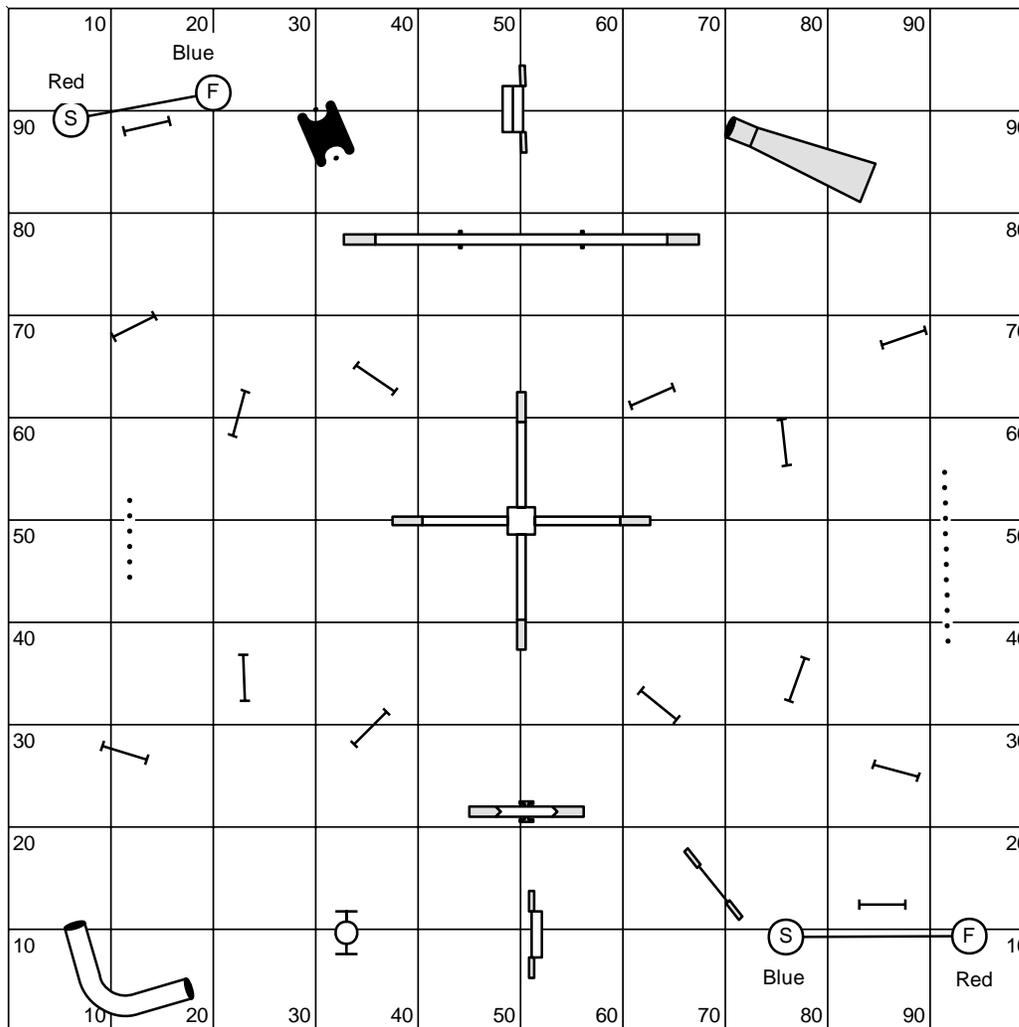
Scoring

Red Rover Relay is scored Time, Plus Faults. The lowest score wins.

Faults will be assessed as follows:

- Omission of an obstacle, 10 faults
- Obstacle taken twice (four-paws committed to obstacle), 2 faults
- Obstacle not completed correctly (missed weave pole, no turn on crossover, missed contact, fly-off, displaced jump pole), 2 faults

Course Design



This Red Rover Relay course by Fran Seibert has 25 obstacles plus the crossover, which can be used more than once so long as the planks are taken in different directions. The distribution of obstacles will not make it easy to come up with a perfect strategy to complete everything. But this is exactly the strategy dilemma the teams must solve.

The Red Rover Relay course consists of a minimum of 21 obstacles and must include the following:

- two sets of 6 to 12 weave poles
- three contact obstacles, one of which must be the crossover
- two “through” jumps (the tire or wishing well)
- two tunnels

Strategies

This game demands that the two team members develop a strategy for completing the course together. The path that each handler chooses to run must not have any common obstacles. In addition, each path should favor a specific dog’s working strengths, while recognizing that certain obstacles are required to be performed. The team must keep in mind that the fastest course is the key to winning.

Variations

Since the crossover is an obstacle that hasn't been used in agility for many years, the requirement that the dogs perform the crossover probably should be removed from the rules. Possibly the game could be reconsidered so that there is a focus obstacle that must be performed by each dog. It might, for example, be the weave poles.

Premium Blurb

Red Rover Relay is an interesting pairs relay game in which handlers choose when to do the exchange while each has certain obstacles and a certain number of obstacles that must be performed. *Red Rover Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Rekoons

Rekoons is not only Snooker spelled backwards... but played backwards. This is an interesting and important variation of the traditional game of Snooker. The Rekoons class is the invention of Sheri Boone.

The objective of Rekoons is to score as many points as possible in the time allotted. Rekoons is the game Snooker played in reverse; and is played as a two-part game:

1. **Numbered Sequence:** A numbered sequence must be attempted. The numbered sequence is taken in reverse; first the #7 obstacle, then the #6, and so on, until the dog reaches the #2 obstacle.

If the dog faults an obstacle in the numbered sequence he must be directed to begin the second part point accumulation. **Note:** A dog going on to another obstacle in the opening after having faulted an obstacle, will earn judge's whistle, and end of game. Listen closely for the judge calling "Fault!"

The Numbered Sequence will be judged using performance faults for the Superior class; (that means, refusals on contact obstacles, for example).

2. **Point Accumulation:** The point accumulation period begins after the dog has completed the #2 obstacle in the opening *or* after having faulted. Points are earned by the completion of a red hurdle and *only* one scoring obstacle of the handler's choice. Each red hurdle can be used only once; and the associated scoring obstacle only if the red hurdle is not faulted.

Point values for each individual obstacles performed without fault are as they are numbered for the opening sequence. Refusals and runouts are not faulted.

Three or four of red hurdles may be taken. At least three are required.

During point accumulation the judge's whistle will indicate the end of scoring. Scoring ends when any of the following occurs:

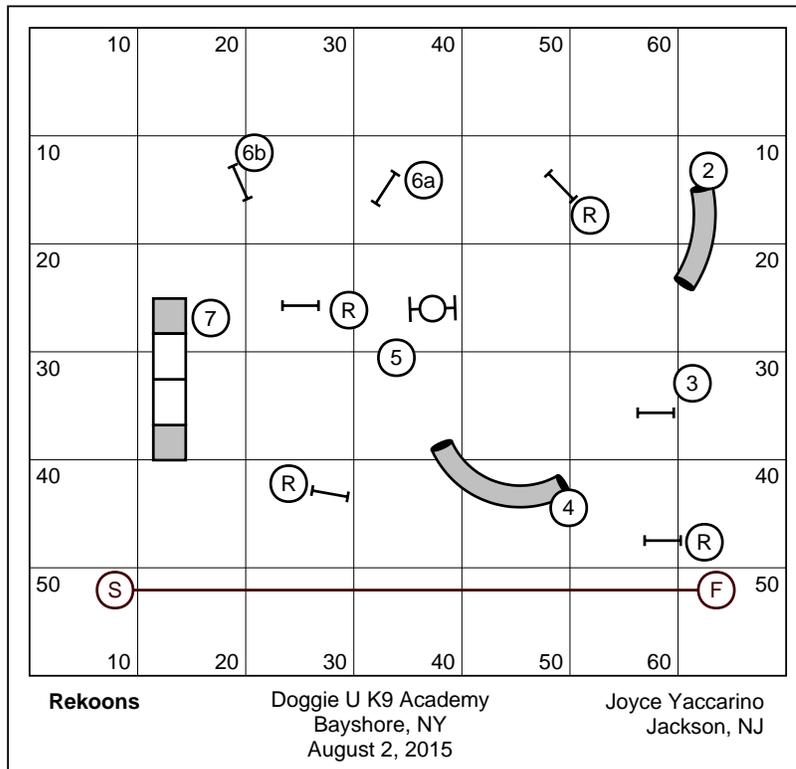
- A red hurdle is repeated
- The dog takes more than one scoring obstacle after taking a red hurdle
- The dog takes a scoring obstacle after faulting the red hurdle

Scoring and Qualifying

All scoring stops at end of SCT and handler must cross the finish line to stop time. Rekoons is scored points, then time. Time is a tie-breaker only. High points wins. The qualifying run is 37 points.

Big dogs have 45 seconds; small dogs have 50 seconds.

Course Design



This is a *Rekoons* course designed by Joyce Yaccarino for play in the TDAA. Note that the #7 obstacle has reasonable proximity to the start line, since the #7 obstacle is the first the dog takes... because he's running *Snooker* backwards.

Rekoons is clearly more limiting than *Snooker* because point accumulation all launches from the dismount of the #2 obstacle. Any time the course designer places a constraint on the number of options that a handler might use, the more predictable will be the game. It could be that the course designer should take care that the dismount of the #2 obstacle has some reasonable departures to get several different red hurdles. Now the game becomes just a bit more unpredictable and flamboyant.

Premium Blurp

Rekoons is Snooker played backwards. *Rekoons* is a two-part game. The opening sequence in *Rekoons* is to perform the numerical sequence 7 – 2. After completing #7 obstacle (or faulting an obstacle in the opening) the dog is directed to collect points by doing different combinations of red (jumps) and obstacles. *Rekoons* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Relay

In the sport of agility the relay represents the essence of sportsmanship, teamwork, and humility. Relays are a very special and indispensable form of the game. Just as it sounds, a relay is a competition on an agility course performed by more than one dog and handler. The most common form is Pairs Relay. There are three- and four-dog relays as well.

Briefing

The objective of a relay is for a team to negotiate the course faster than other teams that are competing.

Each team performs a sequence of obstacles as designated by the judge. A relay course can be set up so that one dog will run part of the course and the other dog the remainder; or so that each dog runs the entire course.

The first team starts from a designated area or start line. The handler is required to carry a baton. The handler can choose to lead out or start with the dog. The dog must perform only the obstacles in his designated sequence. After completion of his designated sequence or side, the first handler and dog must move into an exchange area and pass the baton to the second handler, who starts the second part of the course. The second handler cannot lead out.

While performing the exchange, all dogs and handlers must be in the exchange box. Failure to do so results in a disqualification for passing out of the zone.

The judge may specify whether the inactive dog must be held in the exchange area or whether the dog can be escorted out of the ring after his leg is run.

Relays can be conducted with dogs of mixed heights in the same division. For example, a 30" dog can run with a 24" dog.

Scoring

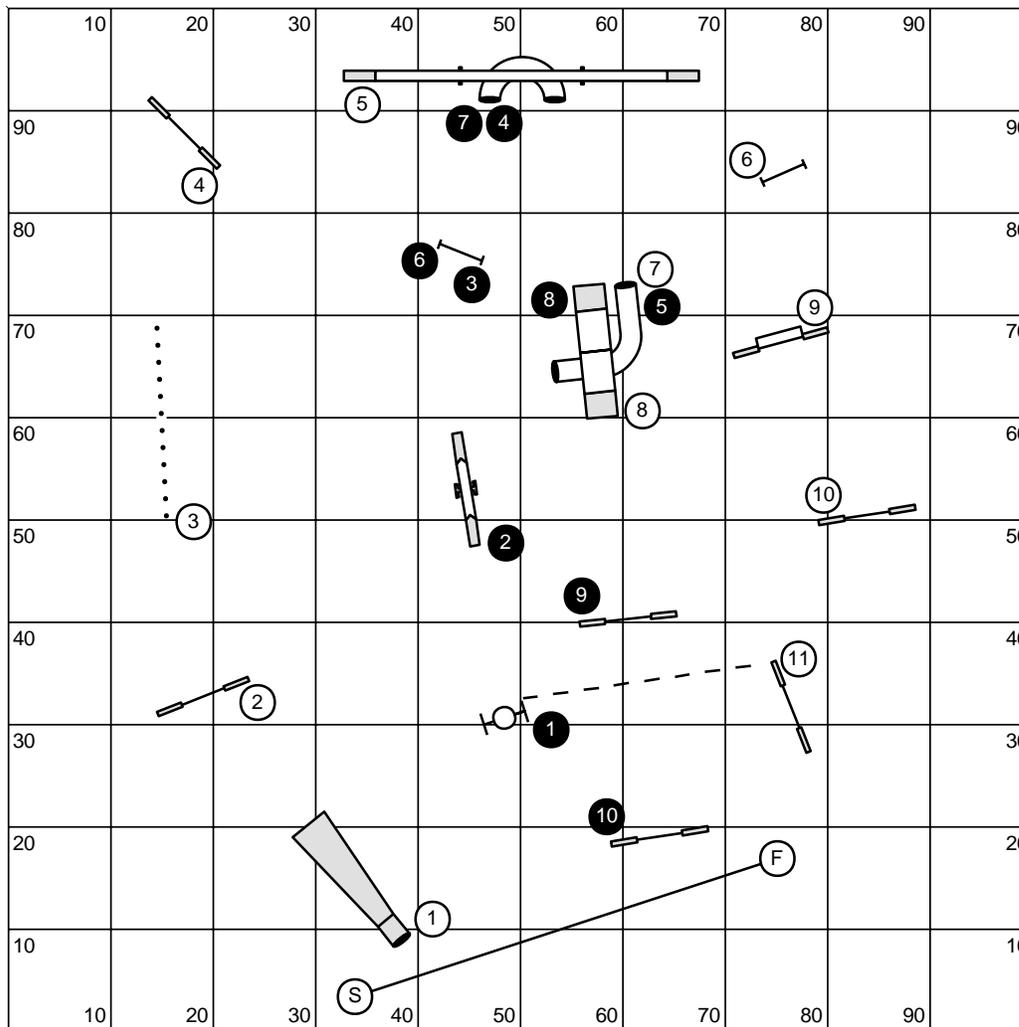
The *Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. The team with the lowest time when faults are added to running time is the winner.

In addition to the standard course faults (see Agility), faults are assessed in relays for:

- Dropping the baton, 10 points
- Throwing the baton, 20 points

A dog can earn an off course after his leg has been completed by running through the exchange area and taking an additional obstacle.

Course Design



This is an Advanced Pairs course designed by USDAA judge Jean Wilkins for play at Keystone Agility Club on February 20, 1999. The first dog will run the white numbers with a baton exchange after jump #11. The second dog runs the black numbers.

The layout of a relay course is similar to that of a standard agility course. Typically, however, no teeter or table is used. The course is made up of at least 11 obstacles and is frequently made up of many more.

Each dog on a relay team should be required to perform at least one contact obstacle.

The essential challenge of course design is to balance the difficulty of performance between the dogs in the relay, whether it's a Pairs Relay, a Three-Dog Relay, or a Team Relay (four dogs and handlers). The difficulty should be appropriate to the level of competition.

Course design can have an impact on ring administration. If the exchange area is placed on the opposite side of the ring from the starting line, that means the running of the ring will be slowed as each dog and handler team gets into the correct position to begin.

Qualifying and Titles

USDAA

Starters/Novice Pairs Relay is for experience and fun and does not count toward qualifying for titles. As with the other USDAA titling games, however, in Advanced Pairs Relay, a dog and handler team can earn the right to move up to the Masters Pairs Relay class by achieving two qualifying scores at the Advanced level. In Masters Pairs Relay, the team can begin earning qualifying scores toward the Relay Master title. A total of five qualifying scores in Masters Pairs Relay must be obtained to get the RM title. An additional stipulation is that the five legs must be obtained with five different partners.

For a relay team to qualify, their Time, Plus Faults score must be less than the assigned standard course time. Thus, if a team ran a relay course in sixty seconds with a missed contact and a displaced bar, their score would be 70 seconds. If the standard course time was 72 seconds, then the team would qualify. If the standard course time were 65, the team would miss qualifying by 5 seconds.

The course rates for a dog to qualify in Advanced or Masters are as follows:

Advanced	Masters
2.50 YPS	3.00 YPS

TDAA

Relays, whether as Pairs or three- and four-dog relays, may be played at any level for games titling in the TDAA. The design of the course should be appropriate to the level or skill of the dogs engaged in the game. And the standard course times should be set at a rate equivalent to the standard course time for the Standard class for each level.

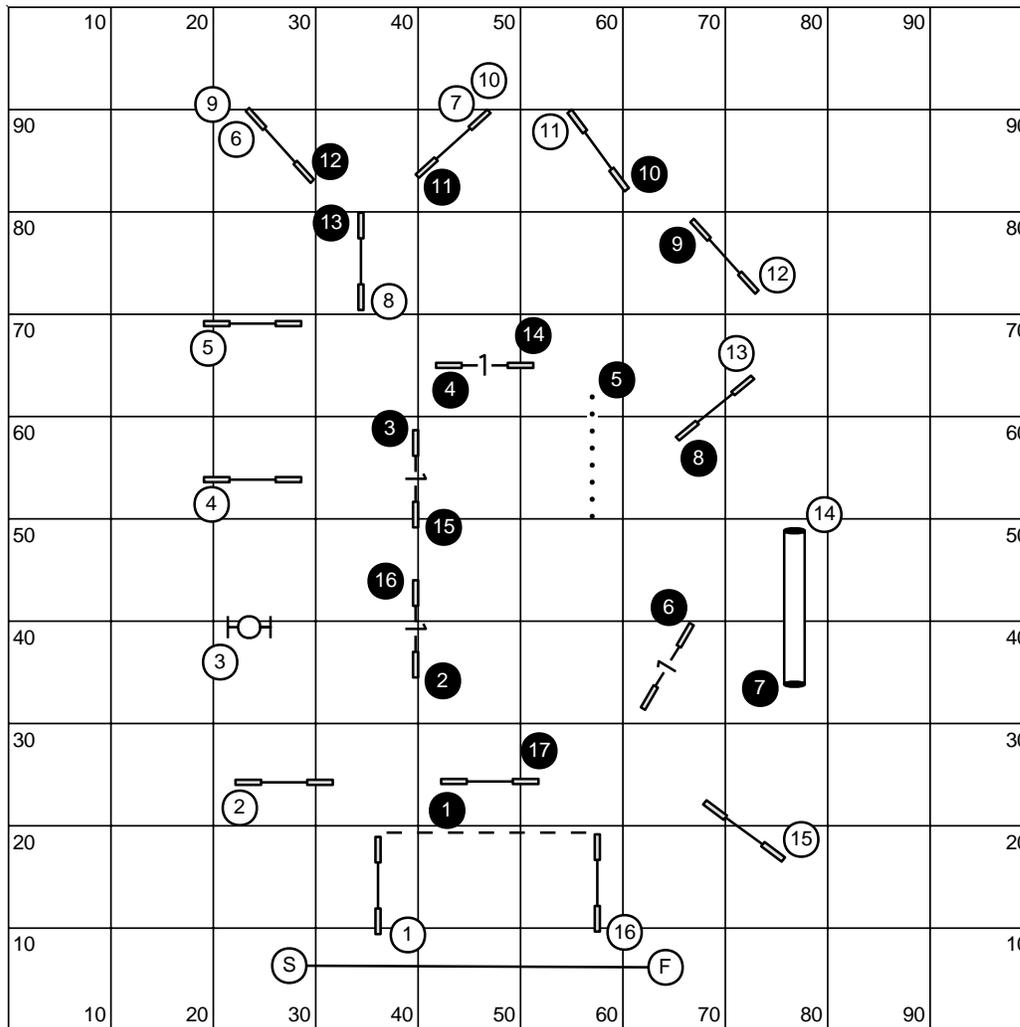
Relays in the TDAA will be played Time, Plus Faults. If the combined score of the team is under the standard course time, then the member dogs on the team will earn a qualifying games leg.

Variations

- Baton exchange – There are a variety of games based on the baton exchange principle. Some of these variations become their own unique games and might be discussed elsewhere in this book. In these games, some symbolic representation of the change of lead other than a baton is used (such as giving a high-five, using a picnic basket, putting on an article of clothing and so on).
- Reverse baton exchange – The reverse baton exchange can be used in a Relay rather than a standard baton exchange. In a reverse baton exchange, the team member not on the course holds the baton. The first handler leaves without the baton; the second handler gives the baton to the first before starting the second leg. This variation is not allowed in the USDAA Relay titling program but is sometimes used in the USDAA Dog Agility Masters Three-Dog Relay.
- Mini-Maxi Pairs – Mini-Maxi Pairs is a uniquely British version of the Pairs Relay game. In this variation, a small dog (a Mini) is teamed up with a big dog (a Maxi) for the competition.
- Three-Dog (Team) Relay – In this variation, the relay is run by three dog and

handler teams. The Three-Dog Relay may be run on a course designed for Pairs Relay. Two dogs run the same side while the third dog does the opposite side of the course. This is a format used in the USDAA Dog Agility Masters (DAM) tournament. Two dogs must be of one jump height while the third may be any other height or the same height.

- Four-Dog (Team) Relay – In this variation, the relay is run by four dog and handler teams. The course might consist of two, three, or four distinct courses.
- Relay Jumpers variation – In this variation, the relay is run on a Jumpers course.



This is an example of a Relay Jumpers course. Little is known about the author of the course, as the course was found on the Internet. The course had this notation: "Donyatt 31/5/99, Pairs Jumping, SCT 90 seconds." (The date is evidently a European notation. Donyatt is located in England, or as the Internet says: "a charming little village in the heart of the unspoilt countryside of South Somerset." The trail goes cold there.)

It is certainly a very tight and technical course and contains considerably more obstacles than the traditional Relay course with technical obstacles. This course was probably intended for Masters level dogs and handlers.

Premium Blurb

The *Relay* is one of the classic dog agility games. Teams of two or more dogs and handlers will run separate numbered sequences, usually with jumps set to the respective jump heights of the dogs on the team. So the combined score of all of the team members will determine who wins. The *Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Reversal of Fortune

Reversal of Fortune is the invention of Marsha Houston with Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio. This game was concocted as a proofing game for training exercises

Briefing

This game is intended as a relay of four dog and handler teams. Every team will have 90 seconds to run a course comprised of three sequences that begin in a central exchange area and finish in that same area.

The three sequences are intended to be run in counter-clockwise order, beginning with “A”, then “B”, and then “C”. However, if a dog faults his sequence the next dog must run the previous sequence and must run it in reverse order. Consequently, on a fault order of sequences will immediately reverse, as will the order of the obstacles within the sequence.

On any fault the judge will call “fault” or blow a whistle so that it is clear that a fault has occurred.

On another fault, the order of sequences and obstacles within each sequence will again reverse (returning to the original order and direction of sequences).

The order of the dogs in the relay does not change or reverse. If the second dog faults his sequence then the third dog in the relay will begin the “previous” sequence in the “opposite” order and direction.

When a dog faults a sequence the next dog is allowed to begin the next proper sequence without waiting for the faulting dog to return to the exchange area. However, if a dog runs a sequence without fault, the next dog must wait in the containment area until the active dog has completed the sequence and has gotten back into the containment area. Anticipating the start will be faulted and will cause a reversal or order and direction that could be a bit confusing.

On the 60-second whistle the dog that is currently active must be directed to the table to stop time. No additional points can be scored on the way to the table.

Scoring

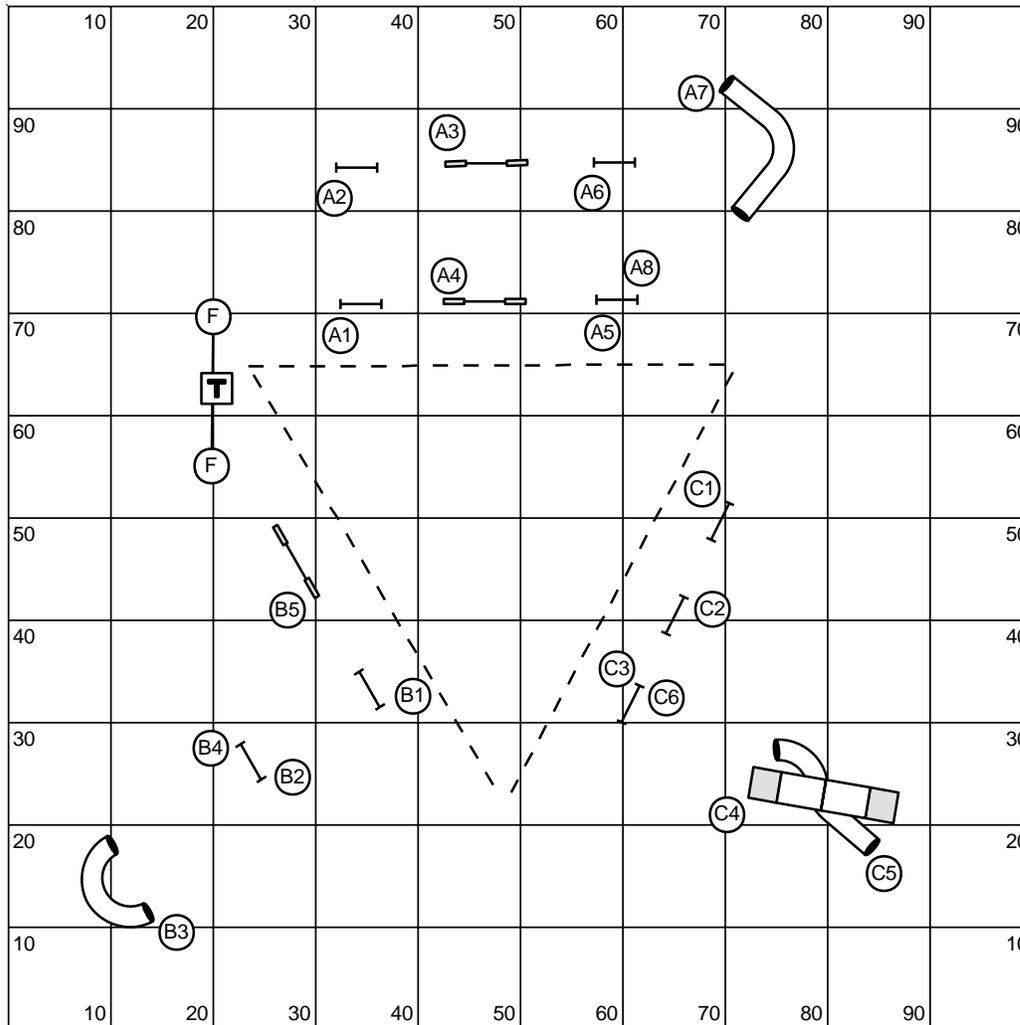
Reversal of Fortune is scored points, then time.

Each sequence has a specific point value that has been predetermined by the judge. The point value of a sequence is a total of the point values of individual obstacles in the sequence:

- 1 point for hurdles
- 3 points for tunnels and tire
- 5 points for contact obstacles and weave poles

No points are awarded for any part of a faulted sequence. However, any portion of a sequence underway when the time whistle blows will be earned by the team and added to the score.

Course Design



This is the first design ever of a Reversal of Fortune course. It is designed using a medley of training sequences. In this course the value of the three different loops are dictated based upon the value of the individual obstacles within each sequence: “A” is worth 10 points; “B” is worth 7 points; and “C” is worth 12 points.

The essential design for Reversal of Fortune is the construction of three sequences that spawn away from a central triangular shaped exchange area. Each of the sequences must begin separate boundaries of the exchange area, and return to the exchange area on completion.

All obstacles should be bi-directional. Indeed, the sequences themselves should be designed with a sense of symmetry so that they can be run in reverse order.

A table is placed on course to stop time. The table should be placed opposite the third sequence on course.

Strategy

The most important skill in Reversal of Fortunes is in knowing what to do on a fault. Each handler must have a mindset that the start he takes with his dog will be one of two sequences, the next in its proper order or the previous in reverse order.

Each member of the team should walk each of the sequences both in forward order and in reverse.

Perhaps a better skill would be to run each of the three sequences without making any faults whatever.

Variations

- Natural Reversal – The judge could specify that the team must reverse directions immediately upon the successful completion of all three sequences.
- Pairs or three-dog teams – Reversal of Fortunes lends itself to be played by multiple dog and handler teams of nearly any number.

Premium Blurb

Reversal of Fortune is a pairs or team game with a twist. On any fault, the dog that resumes play must begin performance of obstacles in reverse. And on a subsequent fault by another dog, the direction of performance is again reversed. This game will turn your head around! *Reversal of Fortune* is scored points, then time. ER2

Riddle of Two Jumps

This is a game played in a seminar format and invented by Bud Houston. The Riddle of Two Jumps tests the handler's ability to adjust for downfield handling requirements. Solving the riddle is sometimes secondary to discovering simple errors in the handler's movement (failing to work through the jumps or not understanding the handling implications on a 180° turn).

Briefing

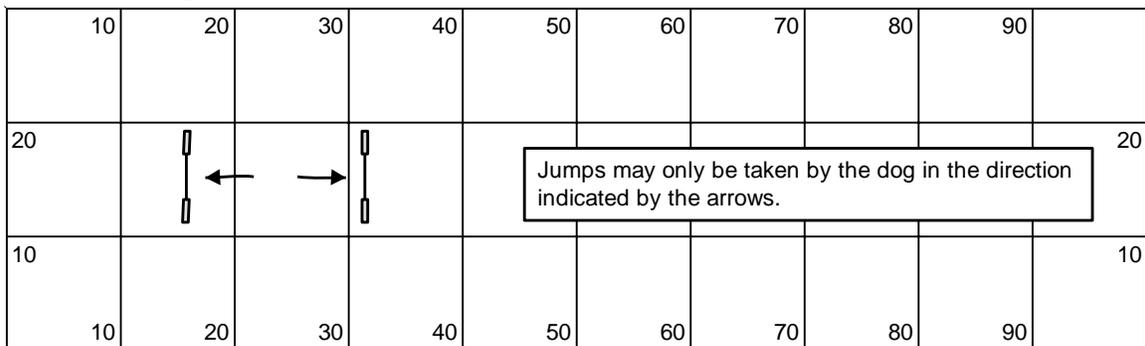
What difference does it make on which side the handler works his dog? This is a simple enough riddle. What handlers quickly learn is that their dogs turn most naturally in the direction of the handler's position. In other words, if the course turns to the right, the intrepid handler will endeavor to be on the dog's right side. If the course turns to the left, the handler will want to be on the dog's left.

In this game, two jumps are set facing each other with only 12' between them.

The dog must be directed to jump five times. The jumps will be performed alternately, but each time from the inside of the "box" to the outside. It doesn't really matter which jump the handler starts the dog.

These are the simple rules. The judge will tell the handler which direction the dog must turn on each jump. Additionally, the handler will be prohibited from crossing behind the dog. Back-crosses and tandem turns will not be allowed. This limits the handler to a simple repertoire of a crossing turn or blind cross (when the handler wants to change leads); and a post turn when the handler wants to keep the dog on the same lead.

Course Design



This is the exclusive design for the Riddle of Two Jumps.

Using this simple course design the judge can specify a number of different turning scenarios. Here are some examples:

- LLRLL
- RLRRL
- RLLLR
- RLRL

Strategies

This game is useful for more than the problem solving riddle. It is a tool that allows the instructor to see how any agility student will approach a jump with his dog. The jump

before a 180° turn is always in danger of being dropped due to errors in movement from the handler. Most dropped bars are the fault of the handler and not of the dog. This viewpoint is certainly at odds with other popular theories of training a dog for agility. The more popular alternative would be to scold the dog for dropping bars in order to teach the dog to take responsibility for keeping the bar up, even in the face of lazy, indifferent, or contradictory movement from the handler.

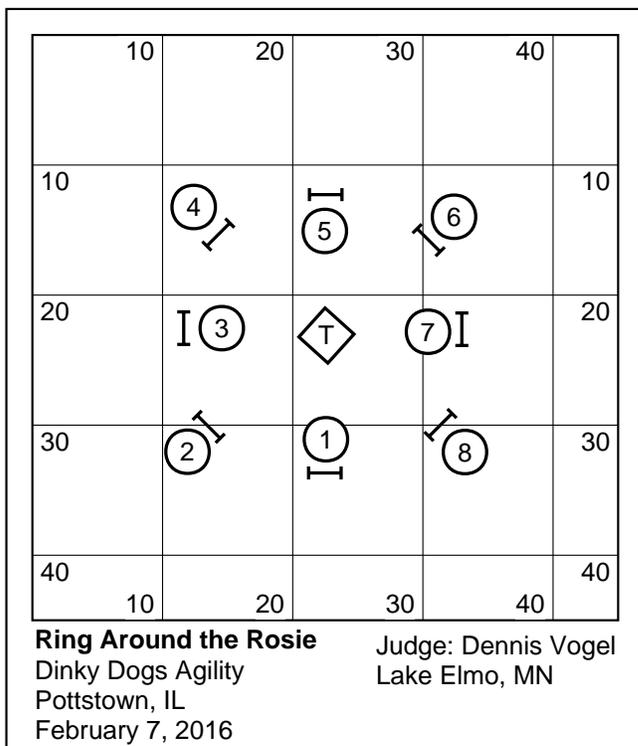
The game is also used to teach agility handlers that there are always more favorable alternatives to crossing behind the dog. There is no movement in competitive agility that will NQ more handlers than the back cross (crossing behind the dog on the take-off side of a jump). Try running the game in a different way, making the handler solve the entire sequence without allowing any cross “in front” of the dog. This small change in the game will dramatically increase the number of refusals and dropped bars in the simple sequences.

Premium Blurb

The *Riddle of Two Jumps* is strictly a training game, and not suitable for titling competition.

Ring Around the Rosie

Ring Around the Rosie is a game for a team of two dogs. One dog completes the ring of jumps while the other dog waits on the table and then they trade off. This is done twice.



One member of the team starts the course at jump number 1 and continues through jump number 8 in a clockwise fashion and then to the table while the other team member stays on the table. Once the first dog completes jump number 8, the other team member starts at jump number 5 and continues also in a clockwise fashion (i.e., 6,7,8,1,2,3,4) until he gets to jump number 4 and then goes to the table.

The first dog remaining on the table until his team mate has completed jump number 4. Once the second dog has completed jump number 4, the first dog takes off to complete the ring of jumps again starting at jump number 1, but this time in a counterclockwise fashion (i.e., 1,8,7,6,5,4,3,2) finishing on jump number 2 and then going to the table.

The last leg of the run is the second dog running his ring of jumps again starting with jump number 5, but also in a counterclockwise fashion (i.e., 5,4,3,2,1,8,7,6) and finishing with jump number 6, while the first dog remains on the table. The game ends when the second dog goes over jump number 6. Dogs of different heights and different levels can make up a team. The jumps are set at the jump height of the smaller dog. When the running dog comes to the table, he must get on the table before his team mate completes the second jump of his loop. The dog on the table may leave to start his loop when the running dog has completed the last jump of his loop.

Special Faults

In addition to the usual faults for the performance:

- When a team mate is on course (between jumps 1-8) if the stationary dog comes off the table – 5 faults for each occurrence.
- Leaving the table early – 5 faults.
- If the stationary dog does not get on the table before his team mate completes the second jump of his loop. – 5 faults and loses the ability to get the table down bonus (see below).
- If the stationary dog comes off the table and does not get back on before the other dog finishes his loop, or if the stationary dog never gets on the table – 20 faults.

Bonus

If the stationary dog assumes a down position on the table before his team mate completes the second jump of his loop, and remains on the table in a down position for the entire time while his team mate runs his portion of the course the team receives a 5 point bonus. This is possible for all four legs of the run. If one of the handlers recites the entire nursery rhyme “Ring-a-round the Rosie, A pocket full of posies, Ashes! Ashes! We all fall down.” sometime during the run than a 5 point bonus will be awarded.

Scoring

Ring Around the Rosie is scored Time, Plus Faults, Minus Bonus and the lowest score wins.

Qualifying Score equal to or less than:

- Games I – 65 small, 60 tall
- Games II – 60 small, 55 tall
- Games III – 55 small, 50 tall

Premium Blurb

Ring Around the Rosie is a team game, probably more suited to a club picnic than to competition for titling purposes. ER7

Roadside

Roadside is an agility training game invented by Ilze Rukis, who writes “Yesterday I was so lazy I didn't want to take the time to set out jumps in my backyard, just freshly mowed, but Zuzu needed ‘entertainment’ so I played a game with her that requires no equipment and is something that is actually the result of preparing for my first Dogwood camp with you a couple of years ago. You had sent out ‘homework’ that one of the things our dogs should know coming into the camp was a ‘go around’ command. And so I taught Zuzu to go around anything close by: chairs, trees, tables, or car.”

Briefing

When traveling on the road and your dog needs some exercise, stop at a roadside and pick a spot with at least three objects (trees, signs, picnic benches, trash barrel, bench, and so forth) in the general vicinity of about 30 to 40' of each other, in an area away from other people since this is an off-leash exercise.

Send the dog to go around the first object, for example a tree. Then send the dog to the table. Send the dog back to the tree or out further to another tree (great get-out practice). Mix up the send patterns either in big circles or big figures-of-eight for a change of direction. Do all of this randomly. It's great mental and physical exercise for the dog!

Five minutes later a panting dog is happily settled in the car, ready to go on the road again.

Strategy

Training a dog to *go around* a thing is really quite simple. Start close to the object but do not go around it yourself. Coax the dog into going around and give a reward, such as food or a toy. As soon as possible add a bit of distance so that the *go around* is the culmination of a *Send*. Dogs are remarkably clever animals and should pick up this game very quickly. This is the foundation of distance training and quite easy to accomplish.

Caution

Be very careful when working your dog in roadside rest areas. Do not treat park benches and stone walls as agility equipment. They may be dangerous to your dog. Dogs have lost their lives in improperly supervised play at a roadside park. Be careful of the dog running into traffic when left off-leash. You should have an excellent recall on your dog before ever daring to allow your dog off-leash in such a place.

Variations

- Bud's La-Z-Boy variation – In this variation, the dog's handler can be parked in a nearly horizontal position on the La-Z-Boy in the living room. Practice sending the dog around furniture, around islands in the house's architecture or whatever. If the furniture can be *layered*, this is a great opportunity to work on *get outs* and *go arounds*. The dog should be rewarded for working.

Premium Blurb

Roadside is an excellent training game, and not suitable for titling competition.

Rock, Paper, and Scissors

Rock, Paper, and Scissors is a game invented by Becky Dean and Kay Miller, advanced training instructors at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

Briefing

The game is called Rock, Paper, and Scissors and is based on the children's game bearing the same name. The children's game requires two people; on the count of three, each person selects either rock, paper, or scissors. Each person must choose a different object; otherwise the game is repeated until two different objects are chosen. The winner of the selection based on the two choices shall be:

- Paper covers rock (paper wins)
- Scissors cuts paper (scissors wins)
- Rock breaks scissors (rock wins)

The agility game Rock, Paper, and Scissors is comprised of three nested and numbered novice courses. One course is named Rock, the second Paper, and the third Scissors. Each handler will be given course maps of all three courses to review. Each course should be clearly named on the course map. No one is allowed to walk the course at this time. After each handler has reviewed the course map, each handler must play 'Rock, Paper, and Scissors' with the scribe.

If the handler wins the game of Rock, Paper, and Scissors (for example, handler chooses paper and the scribe chooses rock), the handler will run the paper course and have the opportunity to walk the course prior to running it. However, if the handler loses the game (for example, handler chooses paper and the scribe chooses scissors), the handler will run the paper course but will not be able to walk the course. The handler can watch others walk the course from behind the start line but cannot ask any questions of others either prior to, during, or following walking any of the courses. The handler can only observe people's handling strategies.

Handlers also have the option of handling the entire course from within the containment area. If the handler remains in the containment area throughout the dog's performance fifteen points will be deducted from the dog's score.

If a handler has chosen to use the containment area, the handler must stay within the containment area for the entire run. If the handler crosses the containment area line, no faults are assessed, but the dog will not be eligible to earn the higher games score. Time will stop when the dog has crossed the finish line.

The scribe will need to note if the handler won or lost the Rock, Paper, and Scissors game for scoring purposes. The scribe may also want to write down what course each handler will be running (not needed for scoring, but rather, to assist the judge).

Scoring

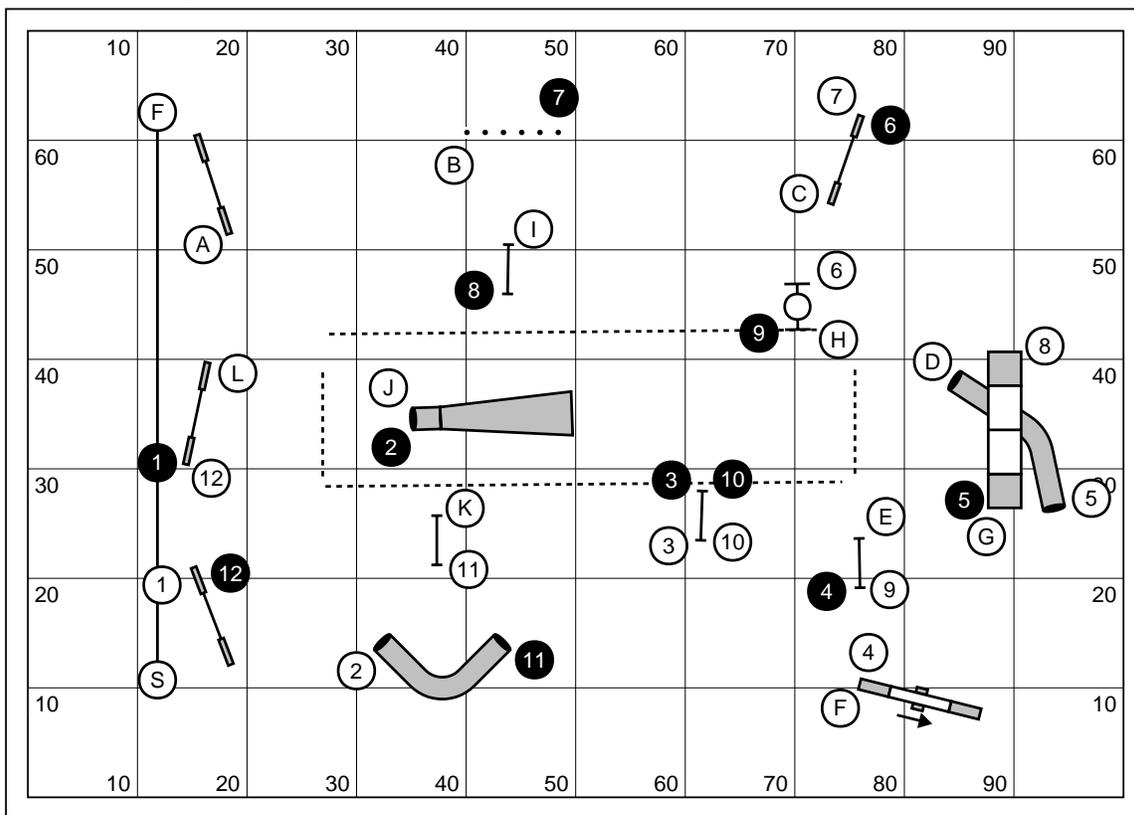
Rock, Paper, and Scissors is scored Time, Plus Faults minus the bonus.

The bonus (deducted for the total score) is earned if the dog does the sequence while the handler remains within the containment area. The bonus may be earned whether or not the dog earns faults on the sequence, so long as the handler remains within the

containment area.

The judge may specify that all teams run on one course (Paper, for example) before moving to the next course (Scissors, to continue the example). The judge might also determine the running order within a course, for example specifying that all handlers who walked the course run before those handlers who were not allowed to walk the course.

Course Design



This is an example of a Rock, Paper, and Scissors course designed by Becky Dean of Columbus, Ohio.

The Rock, Paper, and Scissors course will consist of three unique sequences nested on the field. The complexity of the three sequences should be appropriate to the skill level of the participants.

A containment area must be clearly defined on the course. This area should be centrally located to allow the handler to manage any of the three unique sequences.

Qualifying and Titles

Rock, Paper, and Scissors is an eligible titling game for the TDAA.

- Games I – 0 faults on the course the team walked
- Games II – 0 faults on the course the team did not walk, or 0 faults on the course walked and handled within the containment area
- Games III – 0 faults on the course the team did not walk and handled from within the containment area

Premium Blurb

Rock Paper Scissors is a sequencing game using three short-courses that are designated Rock, Paper and Scissors. Exhibitors will walk all three but won't know which they'll run until they walk into the ring and play Rock Paper Scissors with the scribe. This game allows for a bonus earned for working the dog at a distance. *Rock, Paper, and Scissors* is scored Time, Plus Faults minus the bonus. ER7

Rondo

Rondo is a fun dog's choice game invented by Dede Fitch for play in the TDAA. The game is based on an obscure musical notion in which the dog makes music by the selection of obstacles performed.

Briefing

Rondo is a handler's choice game which requires the handler to design a course which conforms to a specified pattern.

The pattern is the musical form of the Rondo. A rondo features three themes: A, B, and C, and in a rondo form, the themes appear in this order: A B A C A B A

A specific type of obstacle or series/combination of obstacles will correspond to each theme. The handler will have multiple versions of each "theme" to select from, but must choose a course which performs each theme at the right time.

If the team interrupts a theme with an obstacle that doesn't belong, they must re-start the theme. Likewise, extraneous obstacles taken "between" themes – e.g. in Games I, a third Jump after Theme A - will be counted as an off-course and require repeating of Theme A. The judge will call "fault" when these off-courses occur, to cue the team to repeat the theme. Off-course faults will not be scored as deductions – they just incur the time penalty of repeating a theme.

The game starts and ends at the finish line.

The judge will call out the letters A, B, and C as the themes are completed (Note on judging: don't make call until dog has committed to qualifying obstacle for the next theme, in order to call "between theme" off-course faults.)

A knocked bar or missed contact does not require repeating the theme. The team will get credit for the theme along with the faults.

A jump with a dropped bar cannot be used in performing any subsequent theme.

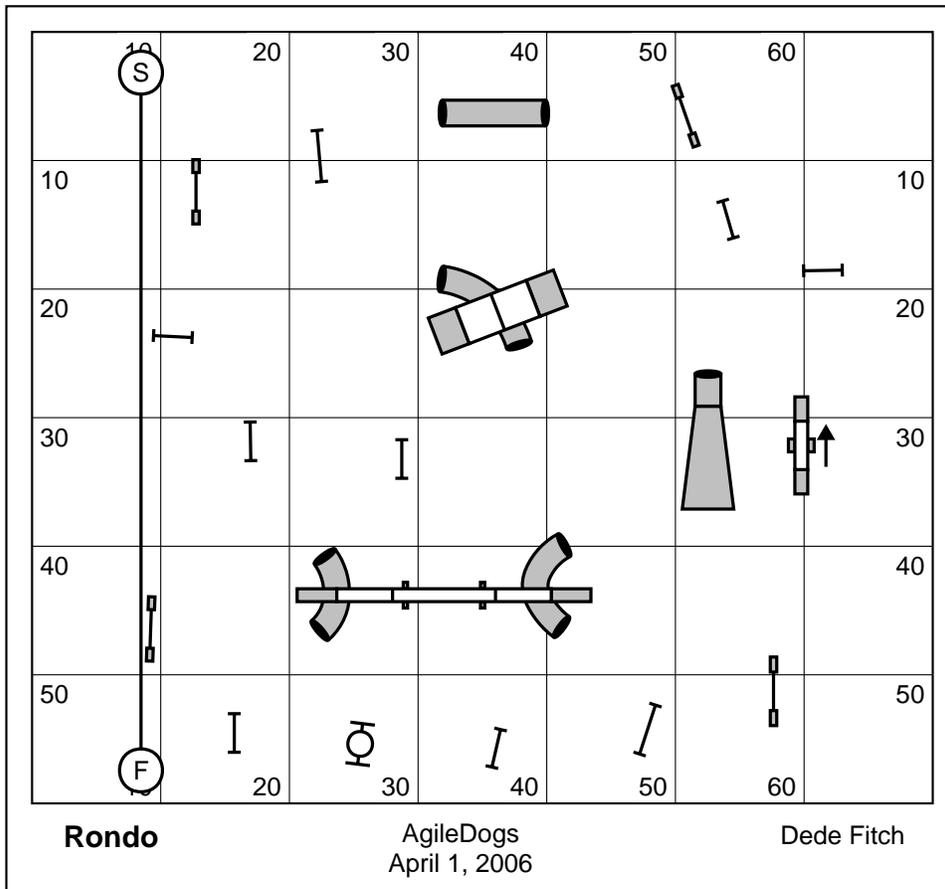
An obstacle can be used as many times as desired during the run, but only once per theme. So, multi-jump themes must use different jumps, and the C theme of contact, tunnel, contact must use two different contacts.

Theme	Games I	Games II	Games III
A	2 Jumps	2 Jumps	3 Jumps
B	Something Round (tire, tunnel, chute)	2 Round things	Something Round
C	Contact, Tunnel or Tunnel, Contact		

Scoring

Rondo scored Time, Plus Faults.

Course Design



This was the original Rondo course designed by Dede Fitch for play in the TDAA. Note that the distribution of obstacles contrived to allow the dog to perform the continuing themes without being trapped on the floor, having run out of options.

Qualifying

To qualify, a team must complete all themes in the right order within the standard course time.

Exhibitor Notes

The following is an alternative explanation for the theme-challenged:

For Games 1, create a course which follows this pattern:

Sequence	Obstacle	Theme
1	Jump	A
2	Jump (different from #1)	
3	Tunnel, chute, or tire	B
4	Jump	A
5	Jump (different from #4)	
6	Contact	C

7	Tunnel or chute	
8	Contact (different from #6)	
9	Jump	A
10	Jump (different from #9)	
11	Tunnel, chute, or tire	B
12	Jump	A
13	Jump (different from #12)	

Judging Notes

The difficulty in this game will be making the mental transition between the differing requirements between levels. What might be a practical approach to playing this game is to settle on identical themes between levels and making the only differential between levels (and jump heights) the Qualifying Course Time (QCT).

Premium Blurb

Rondo is an agility game patterned after an obscure musical notion. It is a dog's choice game in which the handler must direct the dog to perform obstacles which describe a series of "Themes" which form the Rondo. *Rondo* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Rodeo

Rodeo is a game invented by Joyce Yaccarino for play in the TDAA. This agility game is based on the events in a rodeo: barrel racing, pole bending and bronco riding.

Briefing

This game is based on three traditional rodeo events. The events may be taken in any order and in either direction, but once the dog commits to a specific direction, it must be completed in that direction. For pole bending, if the dog passes between two weave poles in the same direction, that's the selected direction.

- Barrel Racing uses three tunnels set up equidistantly so that the dog follows the path normally taken by the horse around barrels.
- Pole Bending is a set of 6 weave poles. **The Pole Bending event may be taken in either direction.**
- Bronco Riding is a short numbered Jumpers course. The obstacles are set so that there are turns in the course to mimic the path the bronco would take trying to throw the rider. **The Bronco Riding event may be taken in either direction.**

Each completed event will earn the dog 10 points.

Small dogs will have 44 seconds; big dogs 40 seconds.

The schedule of faults shall be based on the performance faults for the host organization. Course time starts when the dog crosses the start line and stops when the dog crosses the finish line. Time is a tie breaker.

If the dog takes an obstacle in an event other than the one in progress, it will be counted as an off-course for the event in progress. If the handler directs the dog to the first obstacle in another event before completing an event, then the team will get no credit for the event not completed plus will be assessed any faults incurred during that event. Therefore, negative scores are possible.

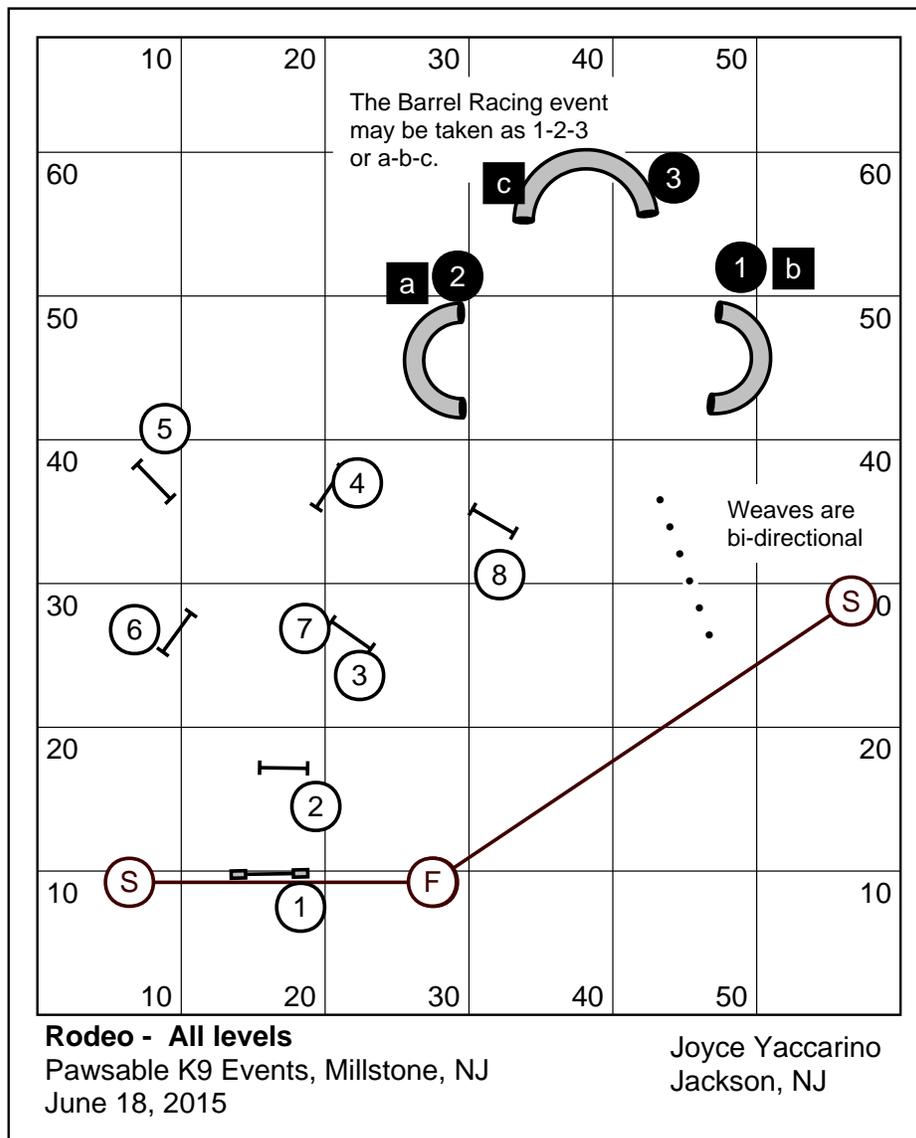
An event will be assessed faults only after the first obstacle of the sequence is taken. For example, if a tunnel is entry is taken that is not a designated 1st tunnel entry, it will not count as a off course. It will only waste time until the correct first tunnel is taken.

Weaves only need to be completed. Missed entries or pop-outs simply waste time.

Scoring

Rodeo is scored Points, Less Faults.

Course Design



This is the original *Rodeo* course designed by TDAA judge Joyce Yaccarino.

Although the bronco/jumpers event is short, the jumps should be set so that there are turns in the course to mimic the path the bronco would take trying to throw the rider. The three events should be arranged so to allow a reasonable flow in the transition from one event to another.

Allotted time – point accumulation time should be based on a reasonable rate of speed for each level including the distance between events and the required point accumulation for the level with the goal being all small dogs having the same time and all big dogs having the same time.

Qualifying

In order to qualify the dog must earn specified points for his level:

- Games I = 20 points

- Games II = 25 points
- Games III = 30 points

Premium blurb

Rodeo is a three-part game consisting of events held in a rodeo: Barrel racing using tunnels, pole bending using the weaves, and bronco riding which is a short Jumpers course. *Rodeo* is scored Points, Less Faults with time as a tie breaker. ER6

Roulette

Roulette is an agility game patterned after a gambler's roulette! The handler (or dog) will bet on a color and then spin the wheel! Roulette is the invention of Greg Brasen.

Briefing

Roulette is a dog's choice game in which the handler needs to navigate a series of randomly numbered obstacles (similar to what's my line).

Play begins when the handler (or dog) declares what color they are betting on. This is indicated by the performance of one of two start tunnels. One tunnel will have a "red" number on it and the other will have a "black" This first tunnel determines which obstacles earn points (and which negate points).

Once a dog enters the first tunnel, the roulette wheel (the four tunnels) is spinning. In order to proceed to earning points, two least full laps must be made. Points will start to be earned once the dog leaves the wheel (assuming two full laps have been made, if not the handler needs to get the dog back in the wheel and finish the remainder of the laps.

After leaving the wheel, the handler should seek out obstacles with the color that matches their start tunnel. Obstacles may be performed in any order. Note that the cone only applies to that side of the obstacle (with the exception of the a-frame as noted below). In fact, many obstacles are "red" on one side and "black" on the other. Obstacles are worth the number on the cone.

Each obstacle may be performed once for points. The obstacle may be repeated to aid in flow, but no further points will be earned

If the dog performs an obstacle of the opposite color (regardless of if the performance was correct), "fault" will be called, and you lose the points from the last obstacle performed correctly.

If a dog knocks the bar during the performance of a red, and you are trying for blacks, and the other side of the jump was a black, then the black is out of play for that jump.

Big dogs will have 60 seconds; small dogs 65 seconds. Time begins when the dog crosses either start line, and ends when the dog touches the table (no specific performance is required on the table)

Special points

- On a roulette wheel there are two spaces that are neither red nor black. These are the green 0 and 00. These spaces are represented in the game by the aframe.
- The A-frame is bi-directional for both 0 and 00. A team may earn points once for 0 and once for 00.
- If the handler remains outside the ring of tunnels and directs their dog onto the aframe, and remains outside the tunnels until the dog touches the yellow on the decent, 100 points will be earned (for the 00).
- If the handler enters the tunnel area the A-frame becomes the (0 space) and is worth 50 points. However, the dog may not go from 0 to any tunnel openings (1,

2, 3, and 4). This restriction is only in play for 0 and does not apply to 00 (handling from outside the tunnels).

- 0 and 00 may be done regardless of what color was chosen.

The table is live after the dog has completed the two laps and stops scoring

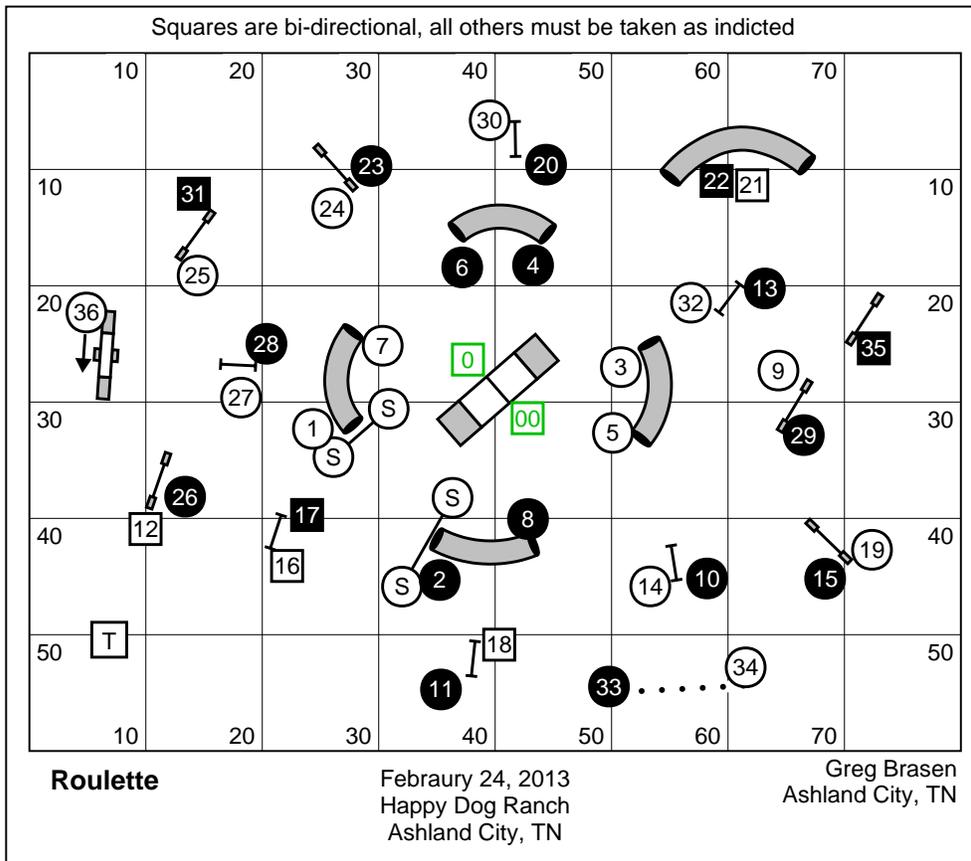
Weaves will only be faulted for the following:

- not completing the weaves
- Entering the weaves from the wrong colors side
- Entering in the middle of the weaves and making an attempt at weaving (makes three changes of direction while in poles) in the direction indicated by the wrong color.

Scoring

Roulette is scored Points then Time.

Course Design



This sample *Roulette* course is closely based on the original *Roulette* designed by the games inventor, Greg Brasen.

Qualifying

To qualify a dog must earn a number of points, according to level:

- Games 1 125 points
- Games 2 180 points
- Games 3 250 points

Judging Notes

In the conduct of the class the judge should make sure to give the score-keeping table a thorough briefing:

Scan the scribe sheet for any duplicate numbers and cross out any but the first instance. Then scan for F's. If any are found, cross through the previous score (ignoring zeros and anything that is crossed out). Add up the remaining points.

Example: 2-8-17-26-0-F-6-35-10-29-F-F-8-100-4-6-F -50

After the adjustments: 2-8-17-X-0-F-6-35-X-X-F-F-8-100-X-X-F -50

Total of these numbers is 226. Good enough to qualify at G1 or G2 but not G3.

Premium Blurb

Roulette is a dog's choice game in which the handler (or dog) will bet on a color, and then spin the wheel to accumulate points based on that color. The game features a modest distance challenge for bonus points. *Roulette* is scored Points, Then Time.

Run 'til You Drop

Also known as "Ralphie's" Run 'til You Drop this game is a variation of Just In Time with a grand bonus for correctly estimating the dog's rate of travel. Run 'til You Drop is the invention of Wayne Van Deusen.

Briefing

The objective of Run 'til You Drop is to score as many points as possible the time allotted. The obstacles can be taken in any order and direction. The teeter has no point value and must be performed as the last obstacle; hence the name of the game. If your dog drops the plank of the teeter before time expires, then all of the dog's points will be doubled. Otherwise, there's no penalty for going overtime, except that the dog cannot earn the bonus.

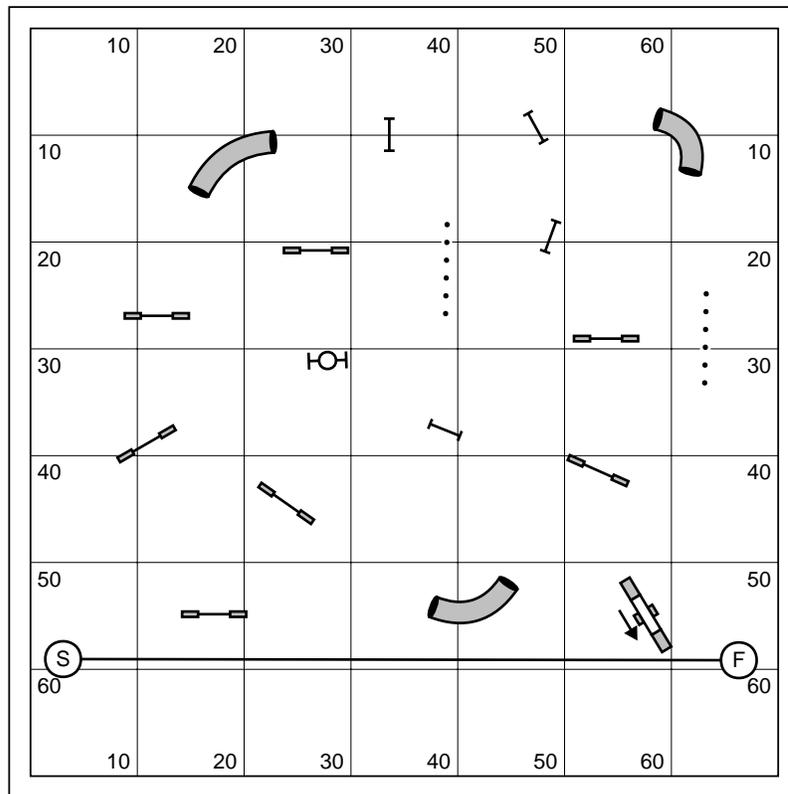
Obstacles can be taken only twice for points. Back-to-back is permitted. If the dog drops a bar, that jump is out of play. Point values for obstacles performed without fault are:

- Jumps – 1 point
- Tunnels and tire – 2 points
- Contacts and Weave Poles – 3 points

Your job is to determine how many obstacles your dog can successfully complete within the time allotted. If you complete the teeter before the whistle blows, your score will be doubled.

Big dogs have 26 seconds; small dogs have 30 seconds. [These times are an example only. Qualifying Course Times (QCT) are set by the judge.]

Course Design



This Run 'til You Drop course is based on a TDAA course designed by Marsha Nix for play at Happy Feet K-9 Agility, June 12, 2010.

This Run 'Til You Drop course consists of jumps, tunnels, weave poles; and the teeter. A course designer may elect to use whatever obstacles, making this game a good option for nearly-perfect nesting with a standard course. Note that the weave poles should be positioned on course so that the dog dismounts to the front of the ring.

Scoring

Run 'til You Drop is scored Points, Then Time.

Qualifying

To qualify a dog must earn a base number of points:

- Games III – 24 points
- Games II – 23 points
- Games I - 22 points

Note that these qualifying scores are based on the sample times for point accumulation established in the briefing, above.

Judging Notes

The judge should be very clear about the performance of the teeter and what will be the consequence of any fault of the teeter. The judge's preference should be included to the exhibitor's briefing. There are two possible approaches:

1. The teeter has no actual performance value. Consequently, if the teeter plank touches the ground time and scoring come to an end. If there is a fly-off the real question will be whether the plank actually touches the ground. If it does not, the handler would be obligated to retry the performance to end time (and hopefully earn the bonus).
2. The value of the teeter is the accumulation of all points scored. Consequently any fault of the teeter will negate any bonus. This will include a missed contact or a fly-off; but would *not* include any sort of refusal.

Variations

- **Gamble Variation 1** ~ In this variation the game is run as a gamblers class. A distance challenge is specified on the field which should be performed by the dog as the final bit of scoring before ending time by the "drop" (performance of the teeter. What makes the variation different from traditional gamblers is that there will be no time-keepers whistle to separate the point accumulation period from the gamble period.
- **Gamble Variation 1** ~ In this variation Ralphies Run 'Til You Drop is run in the traditional sense *except* that there is a distance challenge of exceptional value which can be attempted at any time during the dog's run.
- Thanks to Dennis Vogel for both of the Gamble Variations.

Premium Blurb

Run 'Til You Drop challenges the handler to correctly estimate the dog's working speed, accumulating as many points as possible within the allotted time. Scoring and time ends on the teeter as the last obstacle (the drop!) doubling the dog's score only if time has not expired. *Run 'Til You Drop* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Scamper

Scamper is the invention of Wayne Van Deusen. Wayne has been for some time an inventor of new games for dog agility. Now in retirement we can probably expect him to continue to imagine and visualize. The game (Scamper) was tested on his own students who might be considered in today's world, truly, the crash test dummies of dog agility.

Briefing

The run starts any where behind the start-finish line. The team begins with any obstacle and *then the tunnel*, followed by another obstacle, a different obstacle, and so forth until all obstacles have been taken. The choice of which obstacle to take at any given time is left up to the team.

Big dogs have 45 seconds to complete the task; small dogs have 50 seconds. Time starts when the dog crosses the start line, time stops when the dog crosses the finish line. Note that two sides of the ring have been designated common start and finish lines.

Scoring

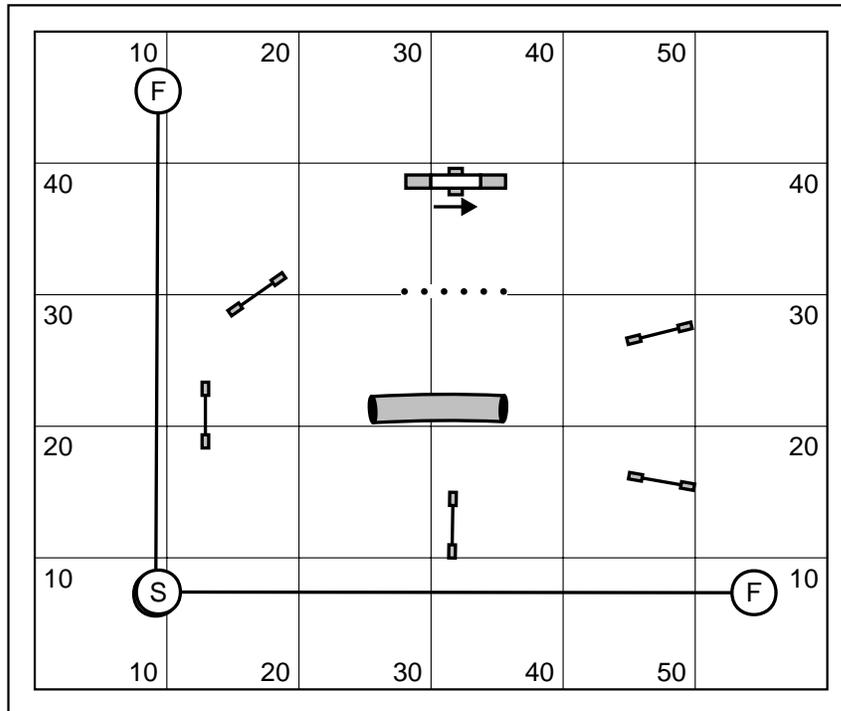
Scamper is scored Time, Plus Faults.

5 faults for any of the following:

- Taking two obstacles in a row without doing the Scamper tunnel in between;
- Repeating an obstacle
- Dropped bar; missed contact; weave pole error
- Starting with the scamper tunnel without taking a jump first

10 faults for each obstacle that was not performed

Course Design



Judging

The difficulty in a dog's choice game with numbered obstacles, like Scamper, is *ever* how the judge will conduct the job of keeping track of which obstacles the dog has or has not performed. The judge might use the "mind like a steel trap" method. That means the judge mentally keeps track and will report any repeated or missed obstacle faults after the dog's run. This method is only practical when there are a small number of competitors and when the judge actually *does* have a mind like a steel trap.

The other method is for the judge to call out the numbers as the dog performs them, allowing the scorekeeping table to sort out the bodies. The downside of this method is that any game that requires the judge to call out numbers naturally introduces the possibility of scribing errors.

When the dog is faulted for taking two obstacles in a row the performance of the second obstacle will *not* count towards the overall performance. That means that if it has not otherwise been performed yet, then it will have to be. If it has been performed the dog does *not* additionally earn another fault for repeating the performance of an obstacle.

Qualifying

The dog earns a qualifying score based on the established Qualifying Course Time (QCT); qualifying when Time, Plus Faults is equal to or less than the QCT.

In order to establish time the judge should measure the dog's path for a reasonable strategy to the game; and then using the rates of travel from the standard classes establish the QCT for the respective level and jump height for dogs playing the game.

Seek and Ye Shall Find

Seek and Ye Shall Find is the invention of Mary Jo Lavin. This is a training game that focuses not on how to execute a particular movement but on the more elusive conceptual skill of “when” to use a particular movement. This game originally appeared in the Clean Run Magazine in July of 2000.

Briefing

The following is taken verbatim from Mary Jo Lavin’s description of this game:

I have been looking for ways to encourage my students to read sequences to find the best handling strategy for their teams. Although I hope to continue offering insights, I think it is invaluable practice for the handler to plan a strategy of managing a sequence without an instructor’s guiding hand. Have you ever had students tell you that they wish you could have been there with them telling them what to do? If so, there is something missing from their training plan! To this end, I designed a course plan where various handling elements might be used and asked students to look for ways to implement them.

In some cases, I offered a grab bag of skills written on bits of paper. Students could pull from a hat which skill they would try to do. In dealing with larger groups or more novice handlers, it might be best to work as teams. Combine their brainpower and come up with an example. With each opportunity, another member of the team shows the skill. Some examples of these skills were:

- *Front cross*
- *Rear cross*
- *Blind cross*
- *Reverse flow pivot*
- *Lead-out pivot*
- *Counter-hand turn*
- *Get Out*
- *Go On*
- *Distance handling*
- *Serpentine handling*
- *Take a jump, skip a jump*
- *Threadle*

Can you think of more? Great! Get the class to offer their ideas! Be realistic and don’t ask everyone to perform each skill at the same level. One person’s sizzling Sheltie and another’s Velcro dog won’t be looking for the same solutions to challenges on the course.

Senility Agility

Senility Agility is the invention of the agility staff Camp Gone to the Dogs in Vermont. It was quite a challenge to come up with a game that could be played by beginner dogs and handlers with only five days of agility experience. The game also had to allow the dogs to work on lead. After giving dogs and handlers a positive and motivational introduction to agility, the last thing the staff wanted was handlers dragging their dogs over obstacles in the heat of competition. Film highlights from this game have appeared on CBS This Morning, Good Morning America, FX Pet Department, and Animal Planet.

Briefing

As on a standard agility course, the dog is required to perform each of the obstacles on the course in the order indicated by the judge.

Here's the catch, if the dog refuses to perform an obstacle, the handler must perform the obstacle. If the dog significantly hesitates or if the handler, in the view of the judge, is being too forceful, the judge will indicate a refusal by blowing a whistle. Either the judge or a ring steward will take the dog (on leash) from the handler. The handler must then perform the correct obstacle.

Often the dog will immediately decide to follow his handler and perform the obstacle. The judge or steward, at his discretion, is allowed to release the dog to follow its handler.

If the handler thinks that the dog will not perform the obstacle, he can decide to not have the dog attempt the obstacle and immediately do it himself. This can be an important strategy in achieving the best time.

The handler can also strategically plan for an assisted performance of an obstacle. For each tunnel on the course and at the weave poles, there is a ring steward who at the handler's discretion may hold the dog on leash at one end so that the handler can go to the other end and call the dog through.

The judge will have an assortment of toys and goodies in his pockets in case a dog needs extra motivation.

An instructor or the judge must demo the course and rules with a green dog!

Scoring

Senility Agility is scored time only since no faults are assessed and every obstacle must be performed. Fastest time wins. However, it is suggested that prizes be awarded to all participants.

Course Design

The course should be a simple circle using no more than six obstacles. All obstacles used on course should be training obstacles with which the dogs are very familiar. There should be a start and a finish line.

Because the handler must be able to perform any obstacle on course, the obstacles used must all be examined to ensure they're safe and sturdy. When using the collapsed tunnel, for example, put a piece of carpeting inside the barrel for the handler's comfort. The A-frame should be opened up completely and its apex be rested on a low table so that the handler can walk over it safely, if necessary.

Some typical obstacles include:

- A straight or gently curved 15 foot pipe tunnel
- The agility ladder
- A tire in a stand on the ground or a tire in a frame set at 6"
- A weave pole chute of some type (only 6 poles)
- The A-frame set at about 2' high
- The collapsed tunnel with a 6 foot long chute (held open by helpers if necessary)
- Two 12" wide by 8 or 12' long planks resting on a 6" high table (like half of a crossover)
- A low, non-winged jump

Variations

- Relay – This game can be run as a Relay. Set a figure eight course with a box as an exchange area at the intersection of the circles. In *Senility Pairs Relay*, the watch starts with the first dog leaving the box and stops with the second finishing in the box. No more than 6 obstacles should be set for each dog.
- Crowd rule – In the spirit of fun, it is permissible for the crowd to offer the judge suitable bribes to blow the whistle and require the handler to perform a particular obstacle.

Premium Blurb

Senility Agility is a game intended for a fun agility outing and is probably not suitable for a game of titling competition. In this game if the dog refuses an obstacle the handler has to do the obstacle himself. *Senility Agility* is scored Time Only. ER5

Simul-Match

The Simul-Match game represents agility unconstrained by geographic boundaries. It is a game of cooperation and camaraderie that joins disparate regions of the country or of the world. Anne Smith and Bud Houston introduced and popularized the game in the U.S. in the early 1990s. The National Dog Agility League (NDAL) exists today solely to coordinate Simul-Match competitions around the world.

Briefing

A standard agility course will be run in two or more different locations. The course will be identical in each location as will the rules for judging.

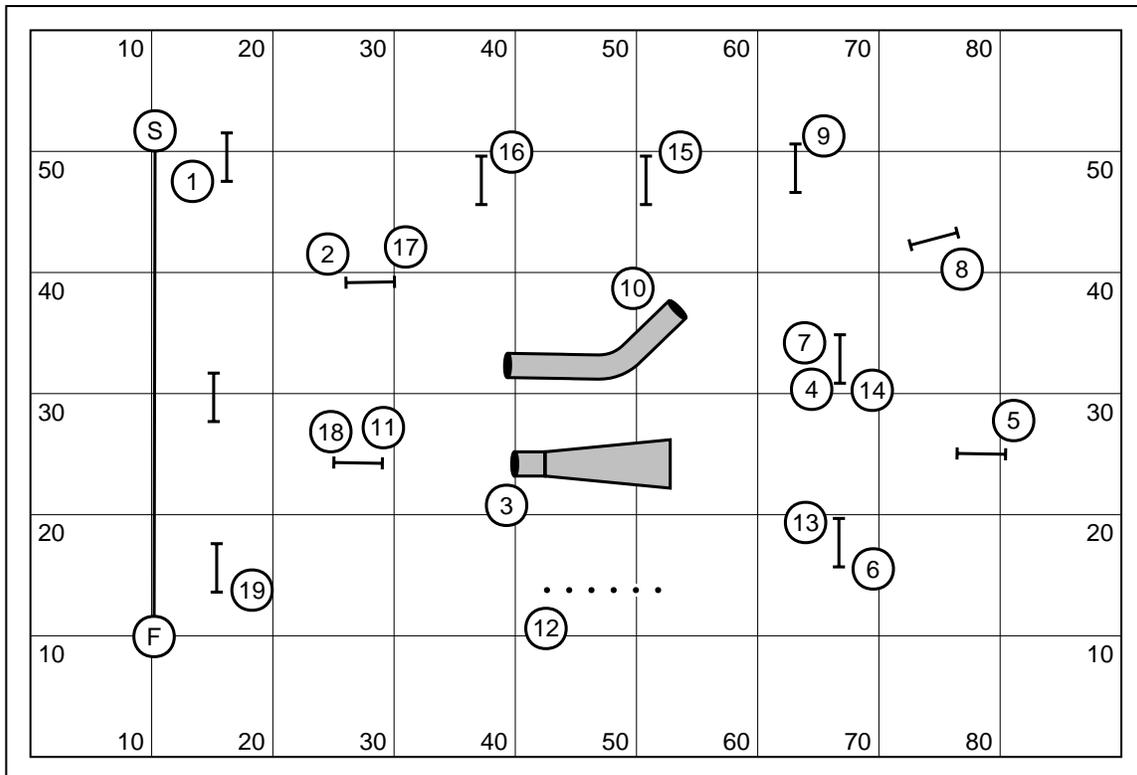
It is considered a courtesy to videotape the course runs to exchange with the other clubs or organizations that are also running the course.

Scoring

Simul-Match scoring is based upon agreement between the groups that are participating in the competition. Any agility game may be used. The rules used are agreed to by the participating groups.

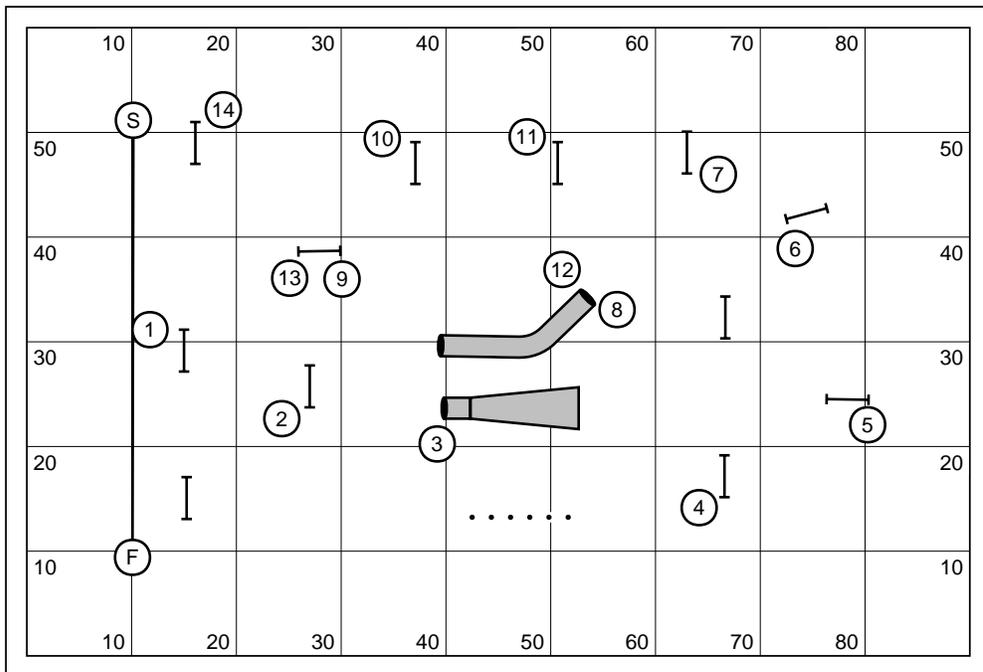
The results will be compiled with the results of other locations running the course. Overall placements are made for individual dogs. Scores can also be combined to rank how each group did as a whole on the course.

Course Design



This is the advanced course in a simul-match run by Just For Fun Leagues around the country in December of 2001. The game was won by Tiffany Osborn and her Shetland

Sheepdog Tanner an advanced competitor at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.



This is the nested Novice course in the simul-match. A simul-match competition may use virtually any course or game or even stipulation of rules. So the design criteria should come from that required for a specific game.

Premium Blurb

A *Simulmatch* is a competition run by different clubs in different regions, with the results rolled up as it were a single competition. Today Simul-match competition is hosted by the National Dog Agility League, inviting teams from around the world to compete on the same courses and games each month: <http://natldogagilityleague.com/blog/>

Sinking Ship

Sinking Ship is a game invented by Sheri Rasmussen for play in the Teacup Dogs Agility Association.

Briefing

You are on a ship (not a boat – boats are to what you abandon when your ship is sinking), but not as a passenger. You are the ship’s telegraph operator. Suddenly, you hear a muffled explosion, the ship lurches, and you have that “sinking feeling” in the pit of your stomach. Alarms are sounding, the ship is listing, and it is up to you to send out the international maritime distress signal, “SOS”. There is not much time to type the SOS (your dog performs the correct obstacles as dots and dashes, to transmit “SOS”) grab your life preserver (dog through the tire), and get to the launching lifeboats (cross the finish line). The key is accuracy and speed, completing only the exact dots and dashes for the SOS: three dots, three dashes, three dots. Any misplaced or extra dot and/or dash, and the message will not be received as “SOS” (you will not have a qualifying run). Depending on your level, you may also need to help launch lifeboats by swinging out the booms (dog takes the dogwalk) and lowering the lines (dog completes a series of three jumps), and even send two SOS messages before racing for your lifeboat.

Round obstacles – tunnel, chute, tire – are the dots, and are marked with a red circle or red cone. Contact obstacles – teeter, dogwalk, A-frame, and possibly a designated sequence of jumps to give Games I dogs are better chance – are the dashes, and are marked with a yellow rectangle or yellow cone. If a series of jumps is included, these should be designated with letters, “A”, “B”, “C” as an example for a pinwheel of three jumps. The jumps will only count if all the jumps are completed successfully. Jumps are bi-directional and any order, as long as all three jumps are completed successfully. If the dog knocks down a bar in this jump sequence, the handler may replace the bar, and the dog can re-attempt that jump (only the jump with the knocked bar needs to be completed) to get credit for the dash. No obstacle may be taken back-to-back, including the final tire required for all levels. So you cannot use the tire as the third “dot” in the second “S”, and then run to the tire, as this is back-to-back. Any obstacles taken back-to-back will not get a call as a completed obstacle upon the second completion by the dog. Obstacles may be repeated as many times as desired. Refusals are not faulted. A dog can re-attempt faulted obstacles in the “SOS” portion of the course, e.g. missed contact zone, as many times as desired. However, any numbered tire, dogwalk, jumps in the final portion of the course may not be re-attempted if faulted.

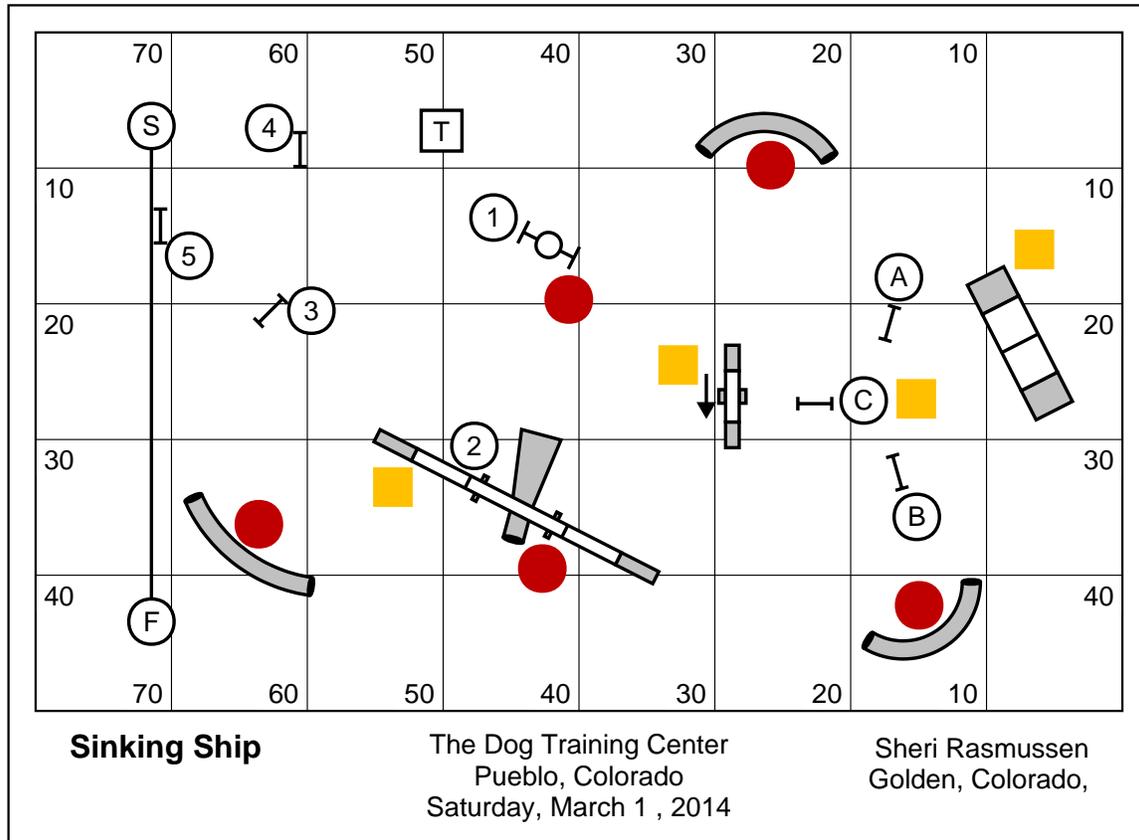
If a dog chooses an incorrect obstacle in the sequence, e.g. for the third dot of the first “S”, the dog takes the A-frame, the message is lost. If the handler feels there is enough time, the dog can be sent to the table (in Morse code, transmitting eight dots erases the previous message) to restart, and all previous points are lost (all previous dots and dashes) and the team is starting over. The dog only has to get on the table for the restart (no position or duration is required). However, there is a limited course time, and time continues even if the team uses the table for a restart.

The dog earns one point for each obstacle that is completed without faults and in the correct order. Sinking Ship is scored points, then time. The tire must *always* be completed to get any points for qualifying or placement; omitting the tire results in a

score of “E” (elimination).

For non-qualifying runs, placement and ribbons will be based on the number of points in correct succession, prior to making a mistake in the SOS or final sequence and tire.

Course Design



This is the original course designed by Sheri Rasmussen for play in the TDAA.

Scoring

Sinking Ship is scored Points, Then Time.

Qualifying

Games I must complete the following for a total of 10 points, under course time:

- 3 dots
- 3 dashes
- 3 dots
- the tire, marked with “1”

Games II must complete the following for a total of 14 points, under course time:

- 3 dots
- 3 dashes
- 3 dots
- the tire, marked with “1”

- the dogwalk, marked with “2”
- the three jumps numbered “3”, “4”, “5”

Games III must complete the following for a total of 19 points, under course time:

- 3 dots
- 3 dashes
- 3 dots
- 3 dots
- 3 dashes
- 3 dots
- the tire, marked with “1”

Judging Notes

Scribe Briefing ~ The judge will call a “Red” or “Yellow” as a dog completes obstacles that are dots and dashes, regardless of whether the obstacles are in the correct order. The scribe will write down “R” for red, and “Y” for yellow, and record all calls from the judge. If a series of jumps is used for a dash, the judge will only call the “Red” if all the jumps are completed successfully. The judge will not call out anything for an obstacle that is taken back-to-back on the second completion of that obstacle. For the tire, dogwalk, and jumps at the end of the “SOS”, the judge will call out the number of the cone next to each obstacle, and the scribe will record that number.

Trial Secretary Notes ~ The dog only qualifies if the correct sequence is recorded for the appropriate Games level. For example, for a Games I dog, the correct sequence on the scribe sheet would be: R, R, R, Y, Y, Y, R, R, R, 1. Any extra “R”, “Y”, or number in the series of Rs and Ys, will result in a non-qualifying score. However, each correct obstacle counts for one point, so it is possible to earn a placement ribbon without qualifying. Do not count anything after an incorrect obstacle on the scribe sheet, except the tire. The tire must be included in any qualifying or non-qualifying run to get placement and a ribbon.

Premium Blurb

Sinking Ship is a dog’s-choice point accumulation game requiring dogs to spell out an “SOS” using performance of the obstacles as morse code. *Sinking Ship* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Sixty Weave Pole Challenge

The weave poles represent the most technical obstacle performance in agility. Imagine a line of weave poles 60 long and no other course, just the weave poles. To the dog's point of view and perhaps the handler's, this line of weave poles must seem as though it will go on forever. The 60 Weave Pole Challenge has been played at Clean Run Camp, at Susan Garrett's "Say Yes" Camp and at Bud Houston's Camp Dogwood.

Briefing

This is a simple game. The dog is required to do all of the weave poles. There are no faults for missing the entry to the weave poles or for missing a pole. However, any error must be fixed for the dog to receive a score.

The current world record holder (unofficial) did the Sixty Weave Pole Challenge in 9.54 seconds. The dog was Quicksilver Ready Aim Fire MX, MXJ, AAD "Mayhem," a Border Collie.

Scoring

The *Sixty Weave Pole Challenge* is scored Time only.

Course Design

A starting line must be fixed 10' from the first pole and a finish line 10' from the last. A jump may be used at the finish to focus the dog forward.

The official spacing of the weave poles is 20". Spring based poles are not allowed. The poles should be flexible only to the extent that 3/4" PVC is a flexible material.

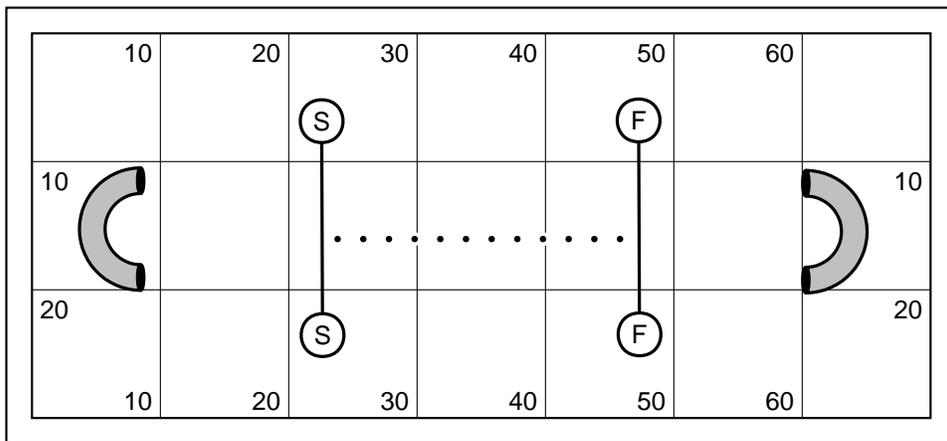
Qualifying and Titles

The 60 Weave Pole Challenge is an eligible titling game in the TDAA.

- Games I – Complete the weave poles within 35 seconds
- Games II – Complete the weave poles within 25 seconds
- Games III – Complete the weave poles within 15 seconds

Variations

If either space or the number of available weave poles is limited, there might be other ways to measure the performance of 60 weave poles. For example



In the **12-Pole** variation the dog will perform the set of 12 weave poles five times, using the tunnels to turn around. Qualifying criteria should add about 12 seconds for the performances of the four turn-around tunnels.

The tunnels are bi-directional.

Premium Blurb

The Sixty Weave Pole Challenge is just as simple as it sounds. 60 weave poles are arranged in a long line and the dog is timed on the overall performance. *The Sixty Weave Pole Challenge* is scored Time only. ER5

Slither

Slither is a game invented by Deb Auer for play in the National Dog Agility League. This game combines the qualities of the already-existing games “Minuet” and “Handler’s Choice,” into a game that tests handling skills and dog training.

Briefing

The objective of slither is to score as many points as possible in the time allotted by the judge.

Play Begins with either end of the tunnel marked “A”. After the tunnel the handler directs his dog through the line of winged jumps using either a serpentine or by a series of threadles.

When the third jump is successfully completed the dog scores. From this point the handler must direct the dog to the tunnel marked “B”. The team begins the sequence again; ending alternately with the opposite tunnel.

Play continues in this manner until time expires, marked by the time-keeper’s whistle. No points may be earned after time expires. Points are given for the successful completion of a full sequence only. Time stops when the dog successfully performs either tunnel. The tunnel must be repeated if the dog is caught in the tunnel when time expires.

Earned Points

- 10 points for a simple serpentine
- 15 points for a series of threadles
- 20 points a simple serpentine with the handler behind the containment line
- 25 points for a series threadles with the handler behind the containment line

The handler may work the same sequence using the same handling on each repetition, or they may use a different handling skill on each pass. When the handler attempts to work behind the containment line, stepping on or over the line will negate the increased value of the sequence earned for working at a distance.

Fault “Reset”

If the dog goes off-course (defined as not working the jumps in sequential order, taking a dummy jump, starting the sequence as either a threadle or serpentine but not completing the sequence with that handling option, or entering a tunnel prior to the completion of the three winged jumps) the dog must be directed back to the tunnel that started the sequence (a “reset”), and start again. Either tunnel entrance may be used on a reset.

Course Design

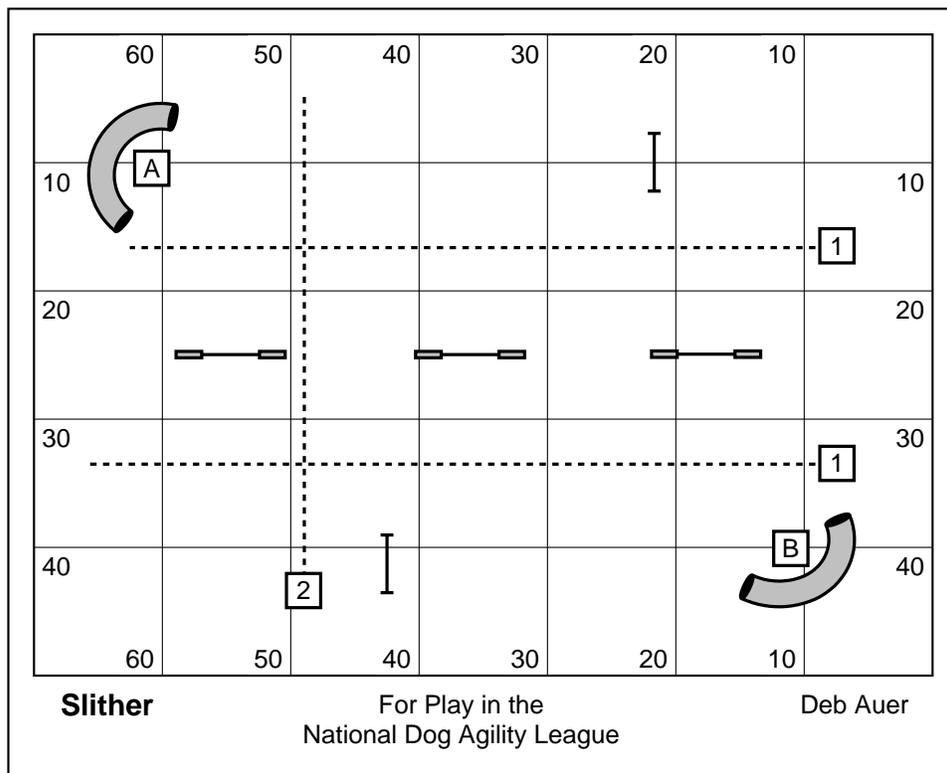
The sample course below was closely based on the original game designed by Deb Auer.

These times were defined for play of this game:

- Small dogs 55 seconds
- Big dogs 16" 50 seconds

The designer of this game should *not* be lulled into believing that this sample course is

the only shape the game can take. The basic sequence is a few obstacles; and there might be several different handling approaches to take to the performance of those obstacles. What could you do with a pinwheel? What might you do with a Hobday Box?



Scoring

Slither is scored Points, Then Time. The judge will call points to be recorded and the scribe will record them on the scribe sheet. The scribe will record the dog's time in seconds to the hundredth's place. The winner is the dog with the highest score. Time is a tie-breaker only.

Qualifying

To qualify a dog must earn a minimum number of points specified for each level. Note that these qualifying points are based on the sample course, above. A different course might call for a different schedule of points to qualify.

- Games I ~ 50 points
- Games II ~ 60 points
- Games III ~ 70 points

Premium Blurb

Slither is a point accumulation game that resembles a minuet. The dog earns points for the performance of a simple sequence repeated until the expiration of time. The value of the sequence on each performance is based on advanced challenges specified by the judge (like working from a distance). *Slither* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Snooker

Snooker is a game of strategy and teamwork. Of all the agility games, Snooker confuses handlers and spectators the most, despite the fact that it uses the least number of obstacles. Indeed, spectators rarely have a clue as to how Snooker is played, let alone scored. This confusion is due to the fact that the rules appear to be constantly changing, even while the dog is on the field.

Briefing

Snooker is a two-part game. Each part is played and scored on a different basis. The parts are described below.

The judge will establish a time limit for Snooker. This time limit is usually in the range of 45 to 60 seconds. The time is related to the complexity of the Snooker course and the number of obstacles used. Points can only be earned within the allotted time. The handler must direct his dog to the designated finish when the timekeeper blows the whistle to stop time.

Opening Sequence

The game begins with an opportunity for the dog and handler team to earn points by successfully performing red obstacles, always jumps, valued at 1 point each. A successfully performed red earns the team the right to attempt one of the colored (non-red) obstacles on the course, valued at 2 to 7 points. The team earns those points if the dog successfully performs the selected colored obstacle.

If the dog faults a red—by knocking down the bar—the dog cannot go on to a colored obstacle. Instead, the dog must perform another red correctly. If a dog faults two of the three reds, he will only be eligible to perform a single colored obstacle. A dog could even fault all three reds. In this case, the dog would not receive any points for the opening sequence. After faulting the third red, the dog would have to go directly to the closing sequence.

The order in which reds are performed is up to the handler. Which colored obstacle is performed after a red is also up to the handler. The handler can choose to take the same colored obstacle after each successful red.

Each red may be taken only once.

The opening sequence ends when the team has performed or attempted all of the red jumps specified by the judge and has performed a corresponding colored obstacle after each.

Refusals are not faulted in the opening sequence. If the dog commits to an obstacle and then refuses, he is obligated to perform that obstacle, not another. A run-out type of refusal does not signify commitment.

Performance faults (such as missed contacts) for colored obstacles are not faulted in the opening; the dog just won't receive points for that obstacle. Even if an obstacle is faulted it must be completed, despite the fact that no points are earned. The dog should then continue the opening sequence by performing another red. If the faulted colored obstacle is the last obstacle in the opening sequence, the dog should start the closing sequence.

At the judge's discretion, two or more obstacles can be combined for a single color. This

is called a combination obstacle or an angel. The combination obstacle must be performed in the order and direction specified by the judge. Once a combination obstacle has been committed to by the dog all of the obstacles in the combination must be performed, regardless of any fault earned on any of the obstacles.

During the opening, scoring will cease if any of the following occurs:

- The dog commits to a colored obstacle without first successfully performing a red.
- The dog performs a red immediately after successfully performing another red.
- The dog performs a red which has already been performed.
- The dog faults a colored obstacle and then attempts to perform the same or another colored obstacle.

Closing Sequence

After the opening sequence, the team will perform all colored obstacles in the numerical sequence indicated by their point value (#2, then #3, then #4, and so forth, through #7). The dog and handler team will earn the value assigned to each of these obstacles as long as the obstacle is not faulted.

If the #2 obstacle was chosen as a colored obstacle for the last red/color combination in the opening sequence, the #2 must be repeated to begin the closing sequence. This is the only instance where an obstacle can be taken twice in succession.

At the close of scoring the dog must be directed to a finish line or point (sometimes the table) designated by the judge in order to stop the clock.

During the closing, scoring will cease when any of the following occurs:

- An obstacle is faulted
- An obstacle is taken out of numerical sequence
- The #7 obstacle is performed
- The allotted course time expires

Scoring

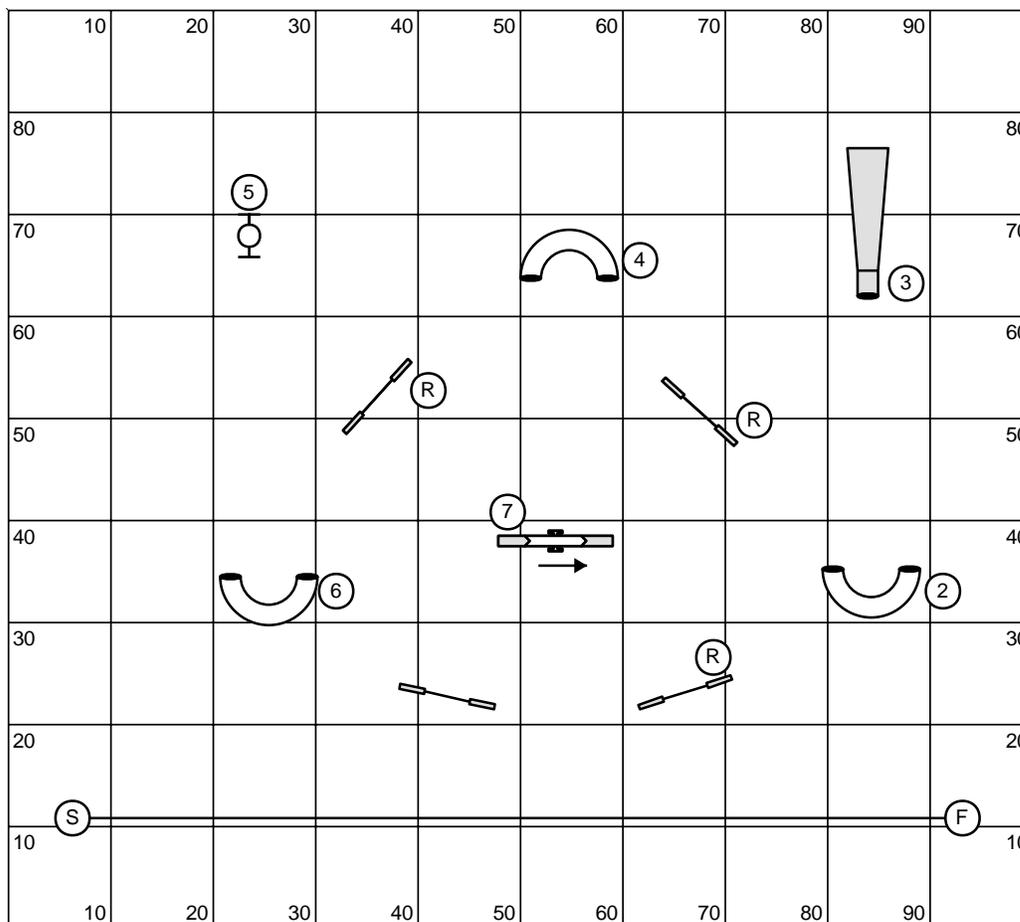
Snooker is scored Points, Then Time.

The judge will typically call out the point value of each obstacle performed correctly for points. The judge will also whistle to end point accumulation if the dog faults during the run.

The timekeeper whistles to signal the end of scoring time. Time does not stop, however, until the dog reaches the designated finish point.

The time the judge gives to perform the course represents the time allowed for scoring, not to get to the finish. Time will not stop until the dog reaches the finish. Any obstacles performed after the allotted time expires are not counted. The dog keeps all points earned before the whistle was blown. If the dog fails to go to the designated finish, he will retain his points but no time will be recorded.

Course Design



This Masters Snooker course is the design of Mary Jo Sminkey. The #7 obstacle is featured as the central obstacle and will probably result in the winner being the fastest dog to do the three 7s in the opening. Note the interesting transitions between obstacles.

A Snooker course consists of a minimum of nine obstacles or obstacle combinations. Each obstacle or combination is assigned a sequence number and corresponding value. A course will have at least three red jumps and may contain more.

Each number on course corresponds to a traditional color (usually indicated on a flag) for that number: 1 is red, 2 is yellow, 3 is green, 4 is brown, 5 is blue, 6 is pink, and 7 is black.

The judge assigns obstacles a color and number based on the difficulty of performance or the distance from a certain point on the course. Any obstacle, except the table, can be used.

All reds must be single jumps.

The table may be used in lieu of start and finish lines.

Strategies

When planning the Snooker run, it is important to know how long it takes your dog to perform equipment and to move in transition from obstacle to obstacle. With that in

mind, the closing sequence should be the first thing that a handler evaluates. Estimating how long it will take you to complete this sequence will indicate how much time is available to accumulate points in the opening.

Pick the smoothest way to go from one obstacle to another.

Evaluate the obstacles on course. If a dog habitually misses contacts, multiple attempts at contact obstacles increase the chance of missing a contact, losing precious time, and earning no points for the effort. It may be better to try an obstacle that takes longer to perform but one that the dog performs reliably.

Play to win if a win is required in the titling program.

Qualifying and Titles

Snooker is an eligible titling game in several agility organizations; just in the United States: CPE, TDAA, and the USDAA.

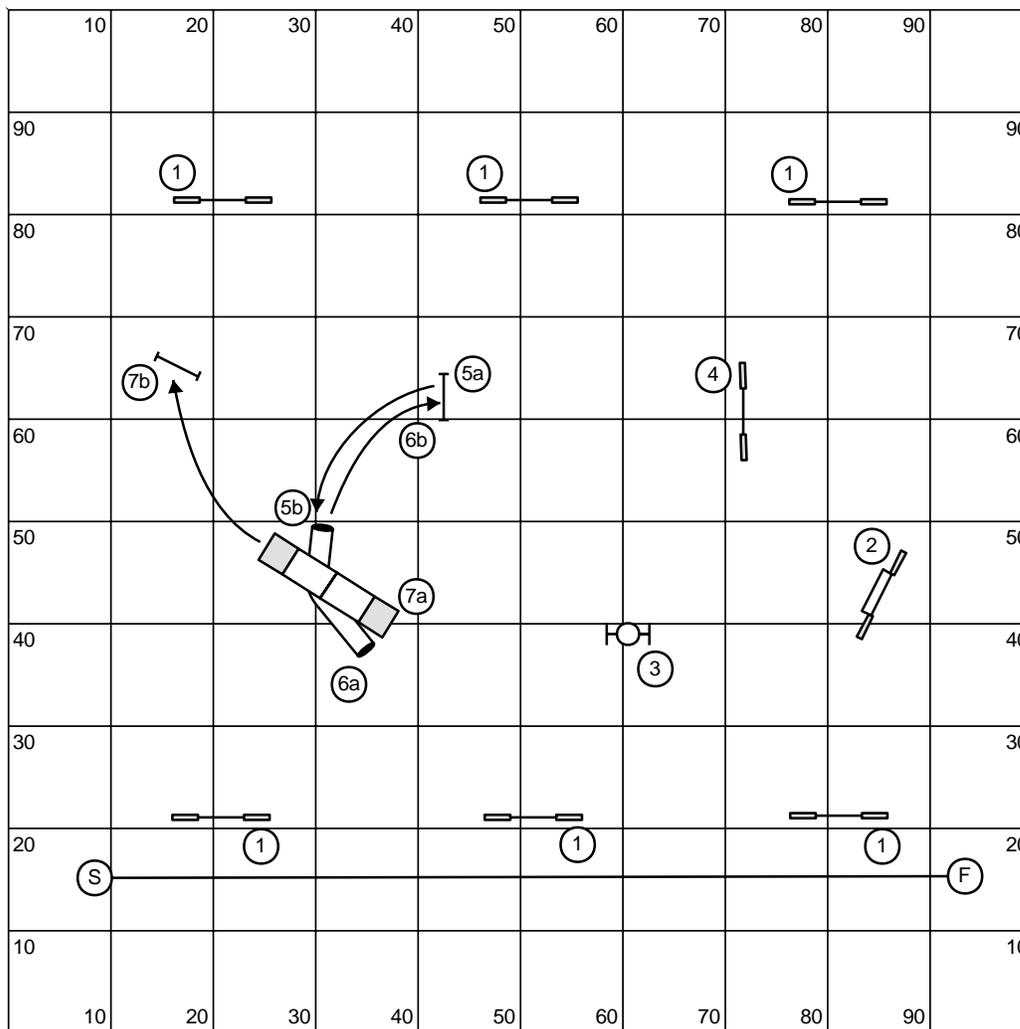
Variations

- Number of Reds – Several variations exist in which the judge has broad latitude in specifying the number of reds the dog must attempt in the opening sequence. For example:

Four or more reds must be performed, rather than the traditional three reds.

Three reds out of four or more available reds must be performed. In this variation, there might be as many as six red hurdles placed throughout the course.

Three *or* four of four or more reds.



This Masters and PIII Snooker course was designed by USDAA judge Darlene Woz for play on Saturday September 1, 2001 at Bay Team in California. This is an example of a variation of Snooker that requires four or more reds must be performed, rather than the traditional three reds. This course calls for six reds to be performed.

The judge stipulated that:

The dog must use all 6 reds in the opening

#3, #4, and #7 are bi-directional obstacles in the opening

Jump to tunnel is #5

Tunnel to jump is #6

All three combinations must be done with flow across (from one end to the other, and may not be done “inside-out”)

In the closing, the approach/performance of #7 can be jump then A-frame if the dog turns left after the jump 6b or A-frame then jump if the dog turns right after jump 6b.

Premium Blurp

Snooker is a two-part game. Each part is played and scored on a different basis. The first

is dog's-choice in which the dog earns the right to score three "colored" obstacles by doing a red hurdle before each. The second part is a simple sequence. *Snooker* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Snooker Scramble

Snooker Scramble is the invention of Darlene Woz. The game debuted at the USDAA Dog Agility Masters tournament in Fair Hill, MD in October of 1998, potentially representing a new approach to the team concept for the USDAA DAM tournaments. This game originally appeared in the Clean Run in January of 1999.

Briefing

Snooker Scramble is intended for teams of three dogs and three handlers.

Advanced rules are used, except that refusals on contact obstacles are not faulted at any time in the opening or closing sequence. In addition, 10-point penalties will be added for any improper baton exchanges. Time allowed will generally be set between 75 and 90 seconds.

All three dogs and handlers will start and exchange within the designated area. There may be two different jump heights used. If a team has mixed heights, the smaller height dog must start. If there are two smaller dogs within the team, these dogs will run first and third. If all three dogs are of the same height the team may pick their running order.

The game is comprised of two opening sequences and one closing sequence. The maximum points available for each team on the course is 102 (three reds each with a color, three reds each with a color and a closing of #2 through #7 that has a double point value).

The first dog begins with an opening sequence of red-color, red-color, and red-color. He returns to the exchange area and with a reverse baton exchange, the second dog does a second opening sequence using the second set of red jumps, along with the second side's colored obstacles. The second dog may be of a different jump height.

After properly performing the second opening sequence, the second dog returns to the exchange area and after another reverse baton exchange, the third dog begins. Dog #3 runs a closing sequence of #2 through #7, all worth double point value for scoring!

The Scramble

If the first dog should break the opening sequence, it shall immediately return to the exchange area and the second dog has the chance of saving some points by picking up where the first dog erred. The second dog will use up any reds unused by the first dog but must perform the colored obstacle at its proper height. A dog need not do the same colored obstacle the first dog was attempting if the break occurred at that point; the handler may choose any available colored obstacle. After completing the first opening sequence, the second dog will then continue to earn points on the second opening course. Examples of a break include any of the following: dog does red-red, red with fault then color, color-color, or repeats a red. A break does not include standard faults on a colored obstacle, such as missed contacts, knocked poles, or missed weave poles. With standard faults, there will just be no points awarded for the obstacle.

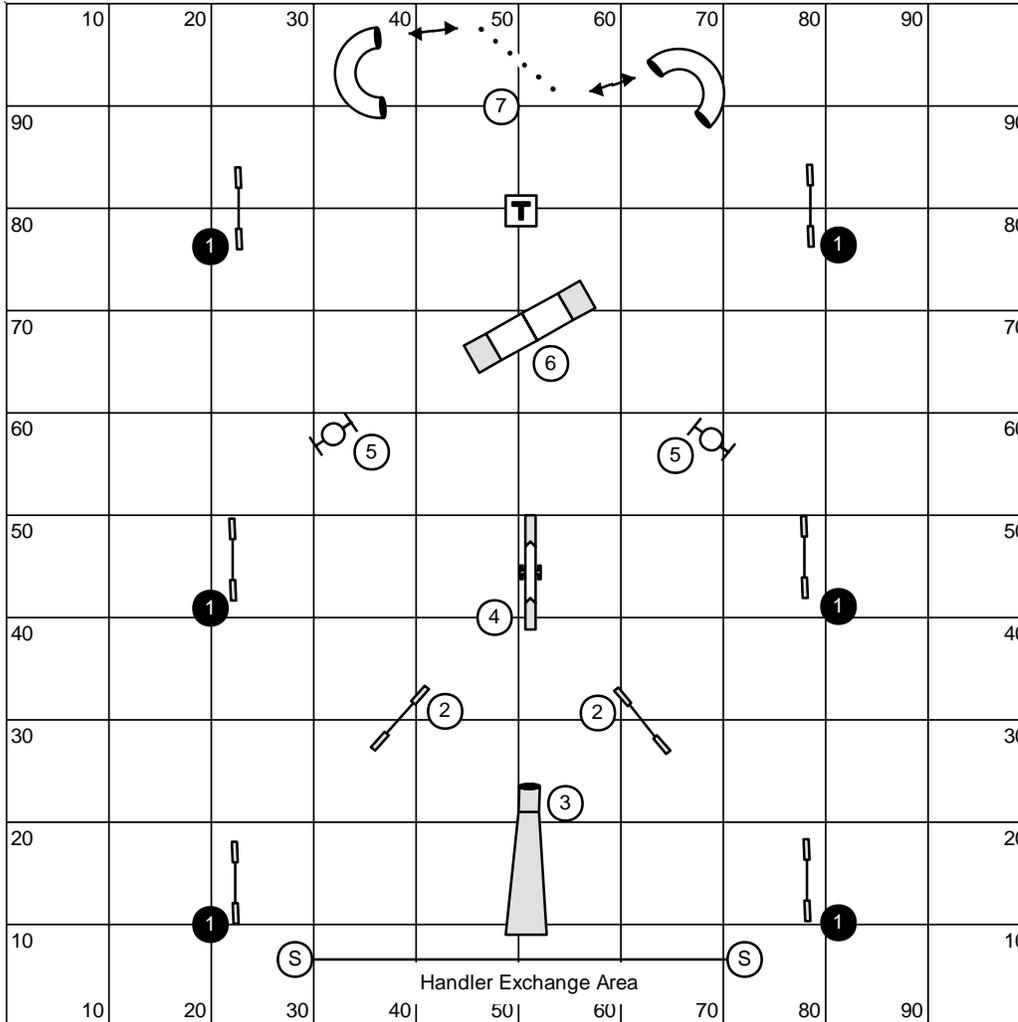
If the second dog breaks the sequence, he must be directed back to the exchange area and the third dog will begin the closing sequence.

Scoring

Snooker Scramble is scored Points, Then Time. Unlike traditional Snooker, the opening point accumulation will be run twice, and the point values for obstacles in the closing will be doubled. Snooker Scramble has 102 possible points while only 51 are possible in traditional Snooker.

If the first dog breaks the opening sequence, there will be no “second” opening sequence to be run. The second dog has only the ability to salvage points and possibly pride.

Course Design



This is a slightly edited representation of the original Snooker Scramble course designed by Darlene Woz for the USDAA Dam tournament in 1998. In this course, the #3, #4, #6 and #7 colored obstacles are shared by both heights.

The #7 is a combination of tunnel-weaves-tunnel to be done in the direction of flow starting with either tunnel. Besides the correct three reds, only the #2 and #5 obstacles are height specific and have duplicate obstacles for each height. Each dog must jump its colored obstacles at the proper height.

The Snooker Scramble course should be designed so that the colored obstacles (those numbered #2 through #7) are balanced on either side by two rows of three red hurdles.

Unlike the normal Snooker course, more than one option for a colored obstacle may be included on the course. These are typically duplicated obstacles presented on either side of the center line of colored obstacles.

The course should include a clearly defined handler exchange area.

Premium Blurb

Snooker Scramble is a team snooker game. The team will run two opening sequences and one closing sequence. *Snooker Scramble* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Snooklers

This is a fun game that combines elements of two of the favored games in the sport of agility: Snooker and Gamblers. Rather than the traditional “red hurdle” the dog must do a modest distance challenge in the opening sequence. The rest is pure Snooker!

Briefing

Snooklers is a point accumulation game with elements of both Snooker and Gamblers. Like Snooker, there is an opening and a closing sequence. Like Gamblers, there are on course challenges that require the dog to work away from the handler.

The jokers or gambles are the red obstacles. The Snooker enthusiast should understand this language: Do a red; then do a color.

During the opening period, the team must successfully do the gamble sequence of choice in order to earn the right to attempt a colored obstacle, numbered 2-7. The team must attempt all three gamble sequences before starting the closing sequence.

As in the traditional game of snooker the red gamble sequence is worth only a single point. And each may be taken only one time. If the sequence is faulted (ie, missed down contact, leaves the containment area and commits to another obstacle before completing the gamble, knocking a bar, or the handler stepping over the line) then the team must move on to another red gamble sequence or begin the closing sequence.

After successfully completing a red gamble the team is required to do one of the colored obstacles which have values corresponding to their sequence numbers in the closing. Faulted colored obstacles earn no points.

After attempting all red gambles and earned colored obstacles the team begins the closing sequence and may continue to earn points until: they are all done, or an obstacle is faulted; or time expires.

Small dogs have 60 seconds

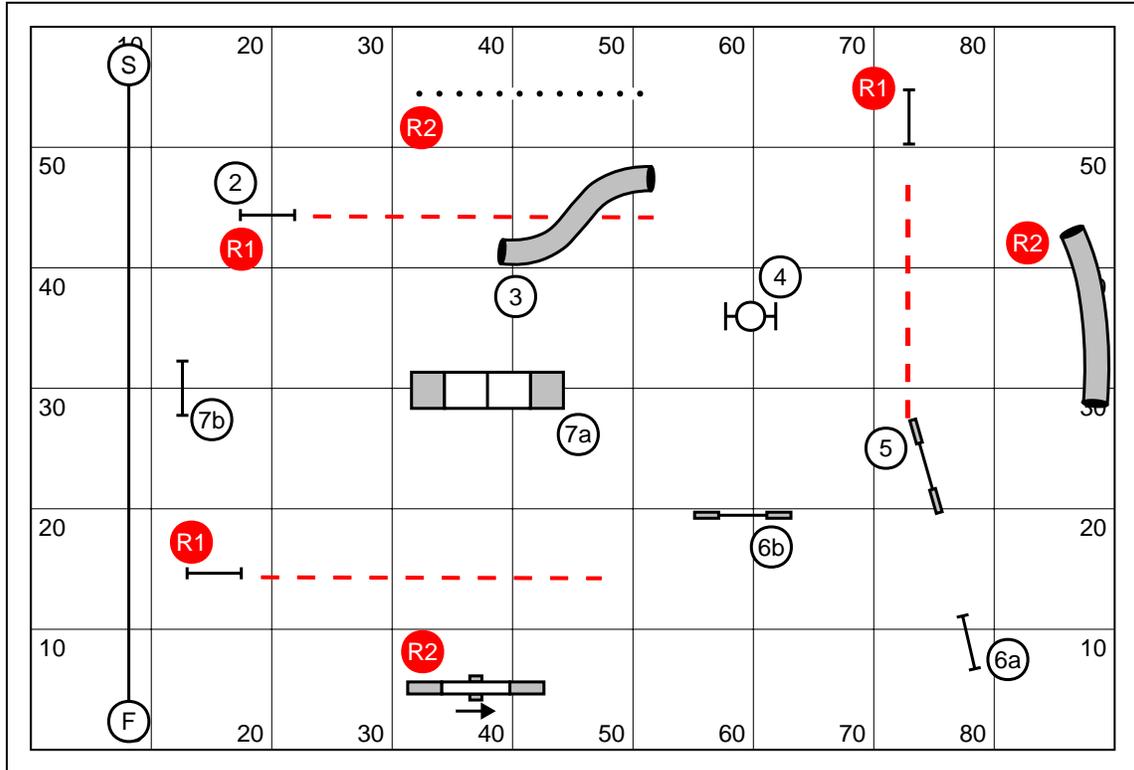
Big dogs have 55 seconds

Time begins when the dog crosses the start line and ends when the dog crosses the finish line. No points may be earned after the time whistle blows.

Variations

- Legacy variation ~ as the game was originally defined gamble sequences may be repeated. The value of the gambles might have a weight that reflects the difficulty of each. For example, there might be a 5 point gamble on course, a 10 point gamble, and a 15 point gamble.

Course Design



There aren't a lot of examples of Snooklers courses out in the world except maybe in the TDAA. I'm usually disappointed by TDAA "distance challenges" because the line might be 18" away from the obstacles in the gamble as though that were a "challenge".

I'll let this course of my design sit as a placeholder for awhile. I'll have to sleep on whether I actually like the design. It seems somehow *tougher* than the traditional Snooker course; Admittedly, the course was designed for a relatively small space feels a bit crowded.

Qualifying

Game I – 35

Games II – 37

Games III - 37

Scoring

Snooklers is scored Points, Then Time.

Premium Blurp

Snooklers is a point accumulation game with elements of both Snooker and Gamblers. Like Snooker, there is an opening and a closing sequence. Rather than the traditional "red hurdle" the "reds" are modest distance challenges. Otherwise the game works just like Snooker. *Snooklers* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Spaghetti Junction

This game is the invention of Kim Brewer. It debuted at a TDAA trial in Atlanta, GA in November, 2010. Spaghetti Junction was inspired by those monstrosity multiple major highway interchanges motorists encounter in large urban cities, each of which seems to have a unique local name. What's called Spaghetti Junction in Atlanta would be called The High Five in Kim's hometown of Dallas.

Briefing

As anyone who has navigated traffic congestion in an urban area knows, entrances and exits on a monster interchange can be tricky. Mistakes can cost a significant loss of time on the way to one's final destination.

The object of the Spaghetti Junction is to maneuver as quickly as possible through multiple sets of obstacles that are arranged in a star-like shape on the course. There is a "mixmaster" interchange of center obstacles that allow one to change directions to get from one of the sequences to another. To earn points for a sequence the team must complete one of the five star points and a center obstacle.

There is a catch – each sequence completed must be unique and if the team repeats a previously used center obstacle on the way to the next sequence it is a fault and no points will be earned for the sequence just attempted.

Center obstacles in the course today are four tunnels and the dogwalk, all bi-directional.

The five star point obstacles may be taken in any order

- Starpoint 1: A-frame
- Starpoint 2: Weaves
- Starpoint 3 : Teeter
- Starpoint 4: Tire
- Starpoint 5: Jump

Center obstacles may be taken only once, so no tunnel may be used more than once and the dogwalk may not be used more than once. If the dog takes the same tunnel or the dogwalk a second time, it is a fault and no points are earned for the obstacle sequence. The team may then reattempt the obstacle sequence for points using a previously unused center obstacle.

The game is a reflection of big and confusing traffic interchanges that can be found in most large American cities. *Spaghetti Junction* is scored Points then Time. ER2

Stay Out of Jail

Stay Out of Jail is the invention of Mary Wroth, a TDAA judge, who invented the game for play at a serial TDAA trial in Northern Michigan. We all drive our dogs around the course, so drive safe, and stay out of jail!

Briefing

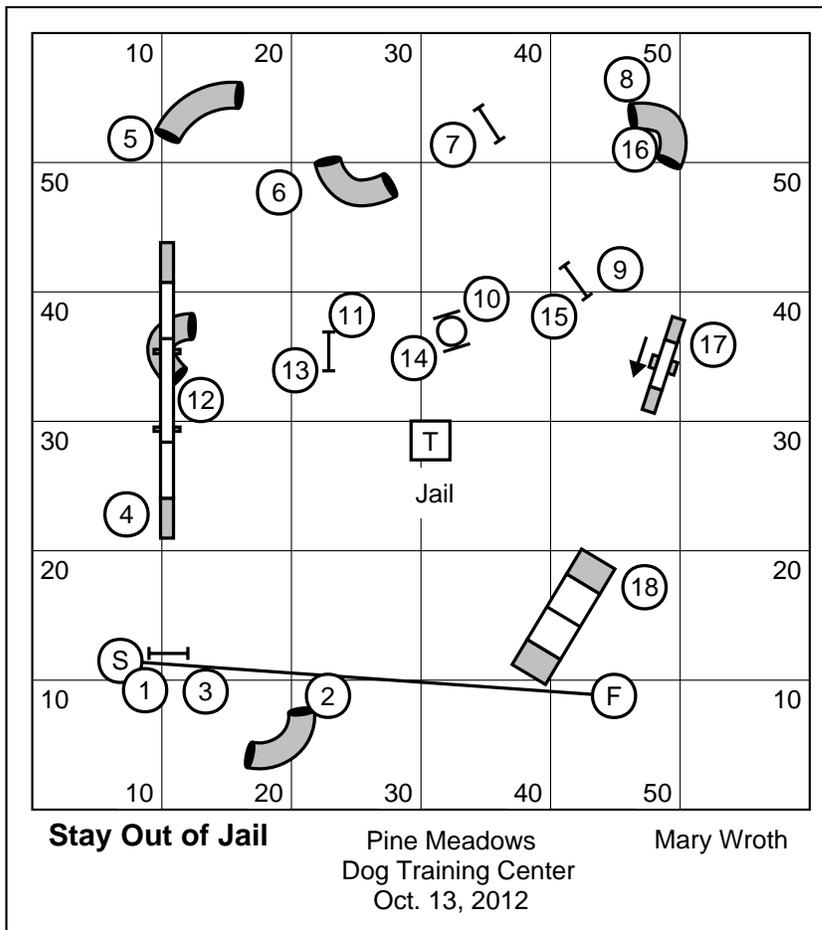
Stay Out of Jail is a numbered course, but for driving mistakes, your dog must spend some time in “jail”. For every driving infraction you must proceed to “jail”(the table) to “serve your time”. The bigger the infraction, the longer you must “serve”. After serving your time, continue where you stopped.

The judge will yell “JAIL” for faults, and dog runs to the table. Once the dog has assumed the correct position(determined by the judge) on the table the judge will call out the time, then “go”. After “go” the dog/handler team will continue where they left off.

Infractions:

- Drunk Driving (off course): 5 seconds
- Fail to Stop(missed contact): 3 seconds
- Crash (bar down): 1 second

Course Design



This is the original *Stay Out of Jail* course designed by the game's inventor, Mary Wroth.

The important design element is likely to position the "jail" (table) so that it is easily accessible from most elements of the course.

Scoring

Stay Out of Jail is scored Time Only.

Qualifying

Games 1(Probationary Driver): Standard Course Time, plus 5 seconds

Games 2(Commercial Driver): Standard Course Time, plus 5seconds

Games 3(Race Car Driver): Standard Course Time

Premium Blurb

Stay Out of Jail is a simple sequencing game in which the dog is sent to jail (the table) for any performance fault. *Stay Out of Jail* is scored Time Only. ER5

Steeplechase

In Ken Tatsch's words, "The Dog Agility Steeplechase was actually devised with spectators in mind for USDAA's Spring Festival of Dog Agility. We had been asked two years in a row to put on a mock competition before the stadium jumping finals at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event and I decided for a third year, why not make it a meaningful competition? To select the dogs to perform in front of the stadium crowd, we ran round one on Saturday, with the finals to be in the stadium on Sunday. The thought was, for the demo's that the dogwalk, teeter, and table were a nuisance. The A-frame and weave poles were hot items for spectators, along with speed. And of course, they love jumping. So I set the criteria for the Dog Agility Steeplechase course design and decided it needed to a time-plus-faults basis to let speed rule. As fate should have it, on the Sunday, they ran behind schedule and cancelled our slot in the stadium time schedule. So we held the class anyway and it met with wide acceptance among competitors. We tested it at GP and at Fair Hill later that year and announced it would be a tournament the following year."

Briefing

The dog is required to perform each obstacle at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge.

Steeplechase will be run in two rounds. A dog must place in the first round to advance to the second and final round. The final round will stand on its own. Everyone starts with a clean slate in the final round.

The competition is between dogs at a given jump height.

Scoring

Steeplechase is scored *Time, Plus Faults*. The winners of each round will be the dogs that have the lowest score.

The number of dogs that advance from the first round to the final round depends largely on the number of dogs in the field. The distribution should reflect the overall distribution of dogs entered in each jump height.

In the final round, dogs run in reverse order of their placement in the first round of competition.

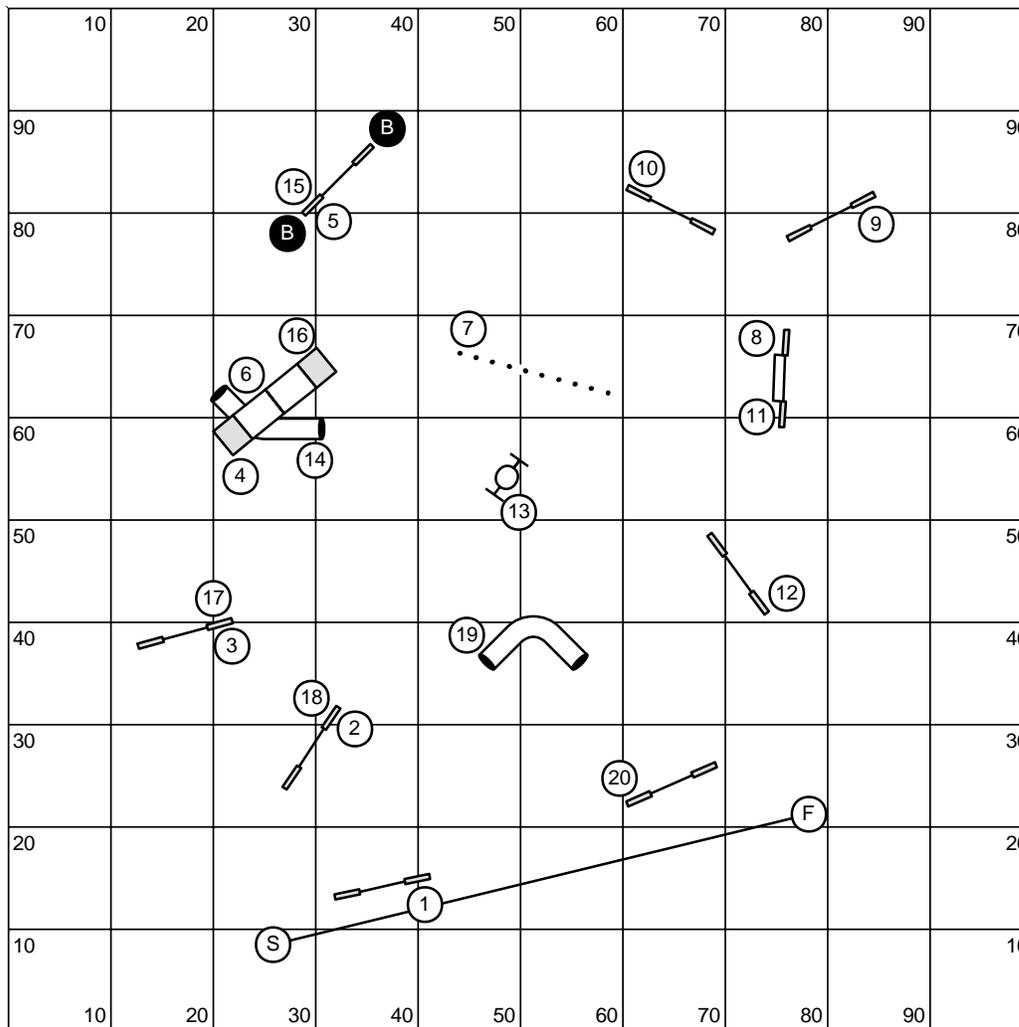
Steeplechase is judged under a special subset of rules. Faults are assessed as follows:

- Off-course (one paw constitutes an off course), 20 faults
- Missed contact zone, 5 faults
- Knocked jump bar, 5 faults
- Failure to perform, Elimination
- 30 or more faults, Elimination

Refusals are not faulted, even on contact obstacles.

Missed weave poles are not faulted as long as they are re-attempted and completed correctly.

Course Design



This Steeplechase course was designed by USDAA judge Darlene Woz for Round 1 of the Lexington Spring Festival on April 23, 1999. The Circled B's on the course map represent large bushes that hedged the #5 and #15 jump.

The design of the Steeplechase course seeks speed and flow. The A-frame and weave poles must be used on a Steeplechase course and can be used two times. Other obstacles may include any of the obstacles permissible in a standard USDAA Jumpers class. The teeter, dogwalk, and table are not permitted.

Strategies

On the surface this class seems easy, since it is basically a Jumpers course with one contact obstacle. The difficulty is that the A-frame is often placed in the second half of the course and may be taken twice. After running at full tilt for at least 10 obstacles, many dogs won't slow down for a solid contact performance. Those handlers that establish control will have better results.

The handler that places first in round one has the advantage of knowing whether his final run can be conservative or whether he must go for broke. He should pay attention to how other dogs perform before him.

Qualifying and Titles

While the Steeplechase is not a titling game in the USDAA, finalists at the regional level are eligible to enter the Dog Agility Steeplechase Championship event, carrying prize money totaling \$10,000 in 2002, which is split among top national finalists in the four separate height classes based upon a pre-approved distribution table.

Steeplechase courses are eligible for qualifying Games scores in the TDAA. The course should be designed appropriate to the level of competition. The TDAA shall observe a standard course time comparable to the standard course times used in the standard agility classes. Typically, no standard course time is used in Steeplechase competition.

Premium Blurb

The *Steeplechase* is a numbered sequence typically featuring the A-frame and the weave poles (once of which must be taken twice). The design of a *Steeplechase* course should lend itself mainly to speed rather than technical challenges. A *Steeplechase* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Sticky Wicket

<http://wp.me/pmSZZ-FW>

Sticky Wicket is a training game aimed at teaching a special skill that most dogs in agility need to learn... getting measured.

Briefing

Sticky Wicket is based on a numbered course. Near the middle is a table upon which sits a measuring device. When the dog gets up on the table the required performance will be a stand. The measuring judge will swing the bar of the measuring device and drop it down at the dog's withers. When the measurement is done the judge will give the handler the measured number and say "Okay". When the measuring judge says "Okay" the dog may leave the table and continue the sequence.

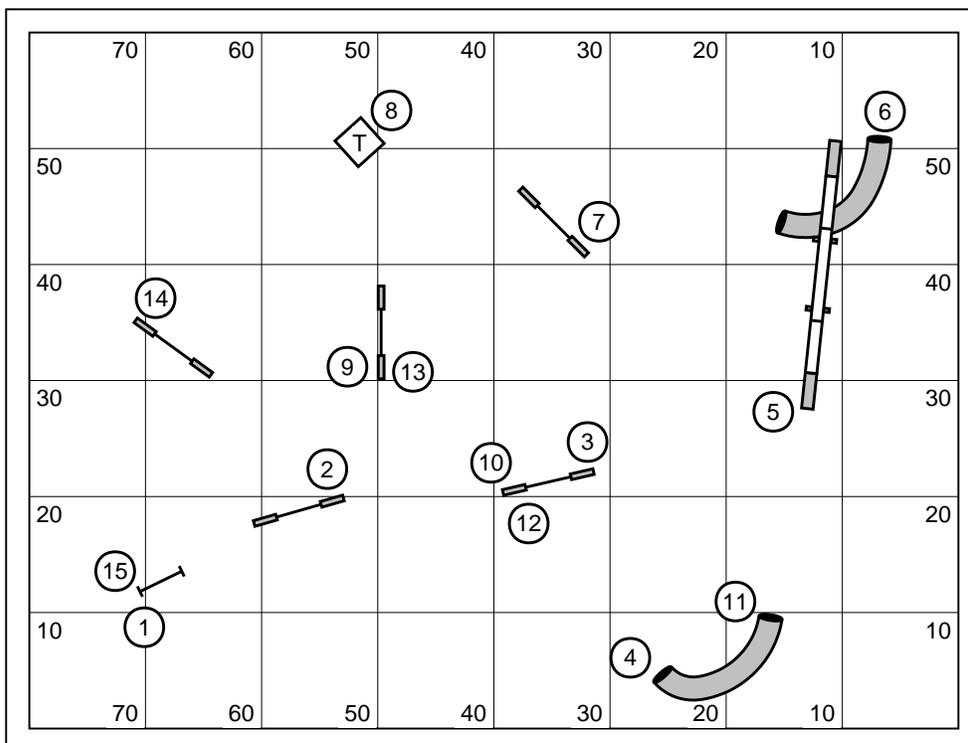
Please note that the measuring judge may say other things to the handler while the dog is on the table; things like "your dog needs to stand!" or "he needs to be close enough to the pole that the arm will reach his back!" or "make him look up, not down!" The measuring judge will patiently wait to get a correct measurement. But the dog's time continues to run no matter how long it takes.

On and off the table faults will *not* be assessed in this game.

Scoring

Sticky Wicket is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Inches; (I like this scoring basis because my dog jumps 8"). The dog with the smallest score wins.

Course Design



The course used for this game is a combination of two training sequences that are bridged together with the table. The game can be played either before or after the practice of the two sequences. It's more interesting if you play it before.

Note: Wickets can be used for measuring dogs. Some agility venues don't require a true measurement and use wickets.

Premium Blurb

Sticky Wicket is a fun training game that requires the dog to be measured either with an official measuring device or by wickets when he arrives at the table. This is probably not an appropriate game for titling competition. *Sticky Wicket* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Inches. ER5

Stop on the Contact

Stop on the Contact is a training game played at Bud Houston's Camp Dogwood. The Game is intended for trainers teaching their dogs a two-on and two-off method on the dogwalk. This game requires the handler to put the dog back on the ramp if he steps off without the handler's release. This game might not be for everyone.

Briefing

This is a game of progression. It will go eleven rounds. Whoever has the most progress in the eleven rounds will be the winner. There will likely be a tie for first place.

In the first round, the handler should stop at the bottom of the contact while the dog assumes a two-on and two-off position; then the handler moves to the dog's opposite side.

In the next round, the handler will leave the dog in position, walk around cone #1 and finish by returning to and releasing the dog.

In the next round, he'll walk around cone #2 and so forth, until the eleven rounds are finished. If the dog is perfect in the eleven rounds, the handler will be walking around the tenth cone in that round.

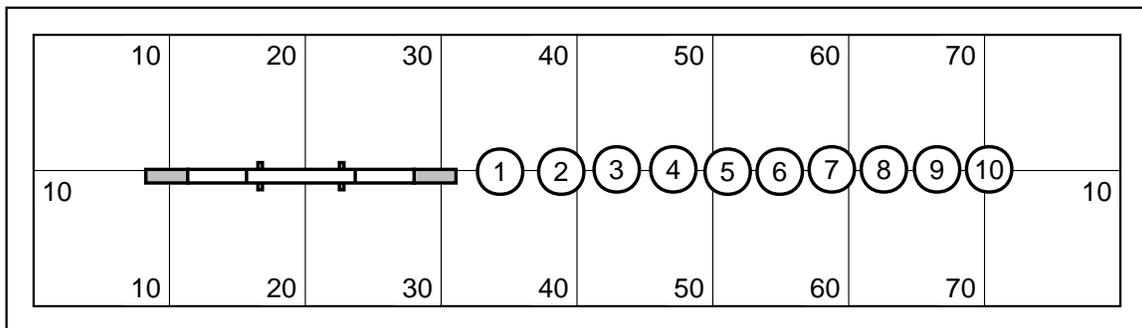
If the dog leaves the two-on and two-off position during any step, the handler will put him back into position and then do the required step again. In the next round, the dog and handler must repeat that same step.

If the dog actually stays in position during the step, the dog and handler will go on to the next step or cone in the next round.

Scoring

After the 11th round, the handler will earn the number value of that step as the dog's score. The highest number wins the game. If more than one dog has the same high score, the dogs share the win.

Course Design



This is the Stop on Contact training game. Cones mark the extent of the handler's progress as he goes away from and returns to his dog who sticks patiently on the contact until released.

There's not much to the course design for Stop on Contact. The game needs a contact

obstacle (preferably set in a low training position and ten cones space about 3' apart straight away from the end of the obstacle.

The dog's score is a point value equal to the number of the final cone.

Scoring

Stop on Contact is scored Points Only.

Strategies

Don't play this game if your dog is "soft" about you physically putting him back in place. It might not even be a good game for a dog with a running contact or a natural stride through the contacts. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Always reward your dog with enthusiastic praise for each step completed.

Premium Blurb

Stop on Contact is strictly a training game in which the handler goes progressively farther away as the dog holds a 2o/2o position on the dismount of a contact obstacle. This game is not appropriate for titling competition. *Stop on Contact* is scored Points Only. ER2

Stop the Clock

Stop the Clock is an interesting (and probably time-consuming) point accumulation game in which the dog can stop the progress of the clock in order to obtain a stragical new starting position on the field. This game was apparently invented by TDAA judge Dennis Vogel. This is the first game Dennis invented. He was interested in designing a game that required both strategy and handling.

Briefing

Stop the Clock is a point accumulation game. All obstacles performed without fault add to the point total. Obstacles can be taken twice for points and can be taken back-to-back. Time starts when the dog crosses the start line.

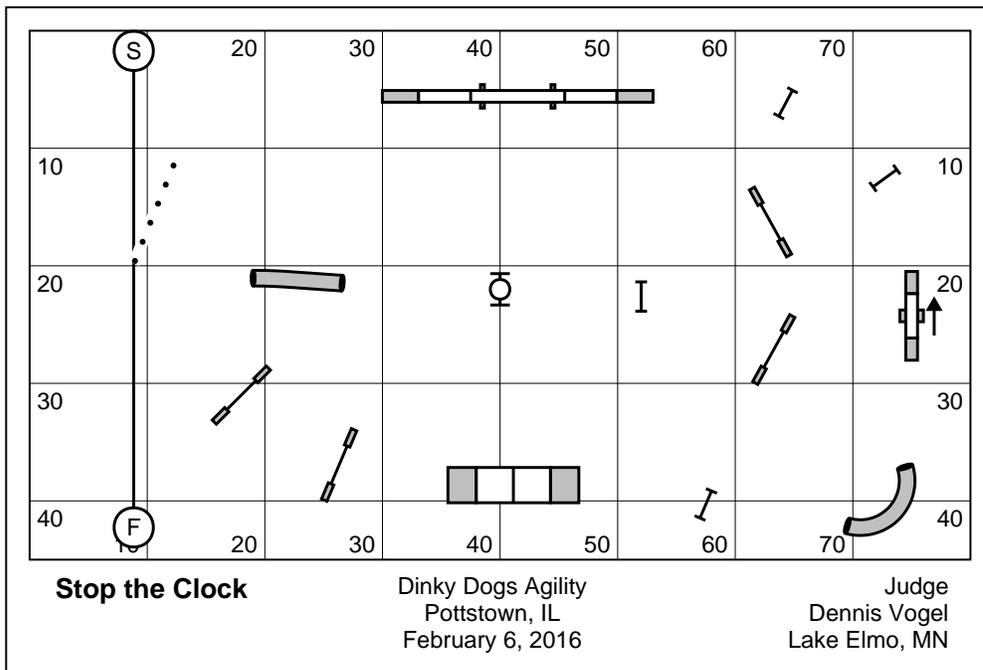
The twist of the game is that the dog can *Stop the Clock* with each performance of the tire. The time resumes once the dog commits to another obstacle. Each obstacle attempted whether completed or not counts to restart the clock.

There are no run out refusals; however, an attempt is commitment to an obstacle by a single paw. The point accumulation time for big dogs is 23 seconds and small dogs 25 seconds.

Point Values:

- Tire - 0
- Jumps - 1
- Tunnels, Chute - 3
- Contacts, weaves- 5

Course Design



This course is loosely based on the original *Stop the Clock* course designed by Dennis Vogel.

The design of a *Stop the Clock* course should accommodate flow to the tire. Of course that accommodation might work against the handler's interests after the dog has performed the tire. The handler doesn't want the dog using a lot of time in the performance of low value obstacles, but would like to line the dog up for an approach to higher scoring obstacles.

Scoring

Stop the Clock is scored points then time.

Qualifying

Games 1	18 points
Games 2	21 points
Games 3	24 points

Note that points-required-to-qualify is a bit more aggressive than most dog's-choice point accumulation games. The presumption is that the handler will take advantage of the stopped clock and set the dog up for a run at a high scoring sequence.

Qualifying points should be adjusted depending on the amount of time allowed by the judge.

Premium Blurb

Stop the Clock is a fun point accumulation game with a *twist*. On each performance of the tire the dog can stop the clock and reposition the dog on course for scoring purposes. Time resumes when the dog begins the performance of another obstacle. *Stop the Clock* is scored points then time. ER2

Strategic Pairs

Strategic Pairs is the invention of Linda Mecklenburg. This is a fast-paced and sometimes hectic relay. It is a game of wit and daring in which both advanced and novice handlers express themselves uniquely. Communication, quick thinking and cooperation between teammates are essential elements of the game. Strategic Pairs is entertaining for handlers and spectators alike.

Briefing

Strategic Pairs is a pairs relay; two dog and handler teams are on the course at the same time. It is run on a single course, numbered #1 through #20 or whatever the judge chooses. The course must be completed in numerical order by either dog.

Dogs must be of the same jump height.

One dog is considered the active dog. The other team is free to move anywhere on course; the inactive dog is not judged. There is no marked exchange area on the course and there is no baton. The teams choose where exchanges will occur and execute each exchange simply by one dog assuming the course from the other. The judge will usually specify a minimum of one or two exchanges, so that both dogs run more than one segment of the course. However, the teams can exchange as many times as is necessary or is strategic.

If the active dog faults an obstacle, the judge whistles to signal the fault. The inactive dog becomes active and must successfully perform that obstacle before the course may be resumed. In the event both dogs fault the same obstacle they must continue, alternately, to attempt that obstacle until it is successfully performed. The course may then be continued.

If the dog drops a bar, one of the dogs must again perform that obstacle, even if the performance is simply to send the dog through the jump standards.

There are no off courses. The judge will only be watching each obstacle in its sequence. For example, the judge will watch #1 until one of the dogs successfully performs it, then #2, then #3, then #4 and so on. If a dog performs #1 and #2 successfully but then goes off course, it doesn't matter. The extra obstacle just wastes time. The judge is looking at #3, waiting for a dog, either dog, to perform it.

The inactive dog can do any obstacles it likes without penalty. In some cases, there may even be an advantage to taking a jump on the way to get set up for the next exchange.

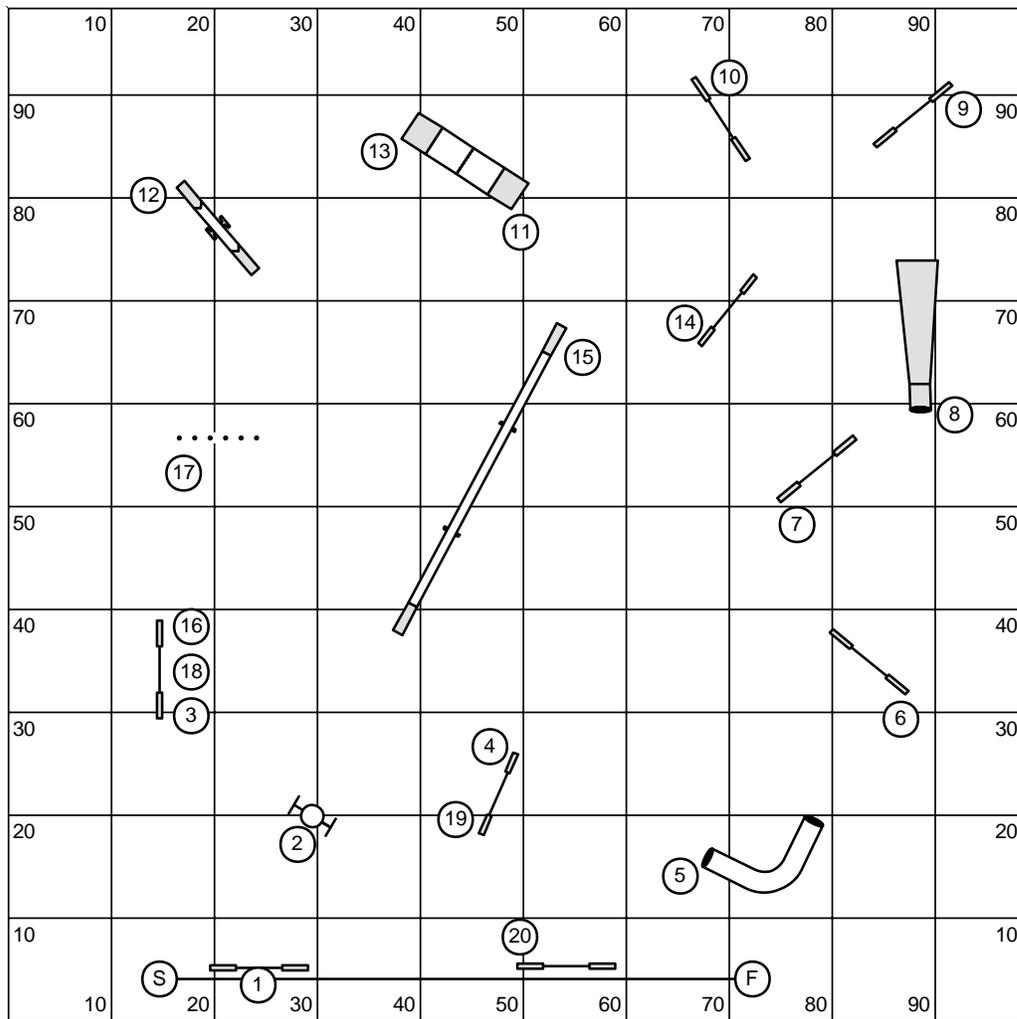
Handlers may talk to each other during the run. Outside assistance from the crowd is encouraged.

Scoring

Strategic Pairs is scored Time Only. The team with the fastest time wins. Faults are penalized by the time it takes to switch dogs. The only number on the scribe sheet should be the total time. There is no standard course time. It is a good idea to set a maximum course time so that teams aren't on the course for any excessive amount of time.

Strategic Pairs is generally judged under modified USDAA Advanced rules. Refusals are not faulted.

Course Design



This is a representative example of a Strategic Pairs course.

The course should not be flowing in design and actually should be somewhat disjointed with lots of 180° turns and variable distances—some of them very long—between obstacles.

However, the course should not be so disjointed that it completely dictates the transitions between the dogs. A lot should be left to the imagination and wit of the competitors.

Strategies

The idea is for two handlers to come up with a plan whereby their two dogs can complete the course faster than would be possible for one dog.

How the two handlers communicate with each other is critical. Poor communication results in wasted time. When a dog faults an obstacle, that dog's handler has to quickly convey to his teammate where to resume the course since that handler is intent on positioning his dog for the next segment of the course and is not likely to be prepared to take over.

Each handler must be conversant with the other parts of the course. In case of a fault, an

inactive dog has to switch to the active dog. It won't do the team much good if the new active dog doesn't know where to resume the course.

Variations

- Knocked bars – A judge may specify that if a dog knocks a bar, the handler must reset the bar before it can be jumped again. This variation should be used only when Strategic Pairs is intended to be a fun, silly game.
- Bi-directional obstacles – A judge may specify that an obstacle can be taken in either direction so long as it is taken in the designated sequence. Judges must have a firm grasp of the rules before attempting this variation.

Premium Blurb

Strategic Pairs is a unique relay in which handlers on the team choose where on course to swap the active dog, and how often! The strategy of *Strategic Pairs* is to slice and dice the course in the most economical manner. The plan of the team is only upset by any faulted obstacle, requiring the *other* dog to resume the course at the point of the fault. *Strategic Pairs* is scored Time Only. ER5

Strategic Teams

This variation is used by Bud Houston as a training game at Camp Dogwood. In Strategic Teams, the course will be run by teams of three, four, or five dogs and handlers.

Briefing

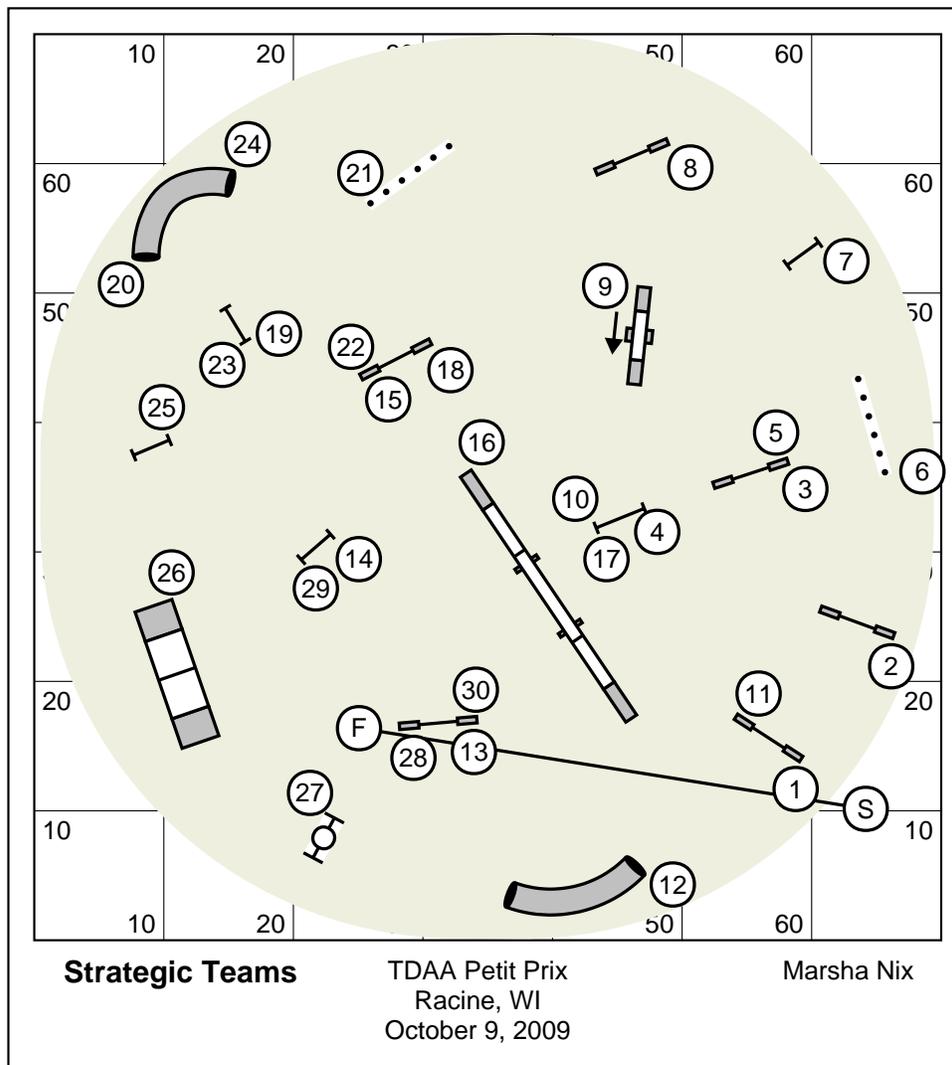
In Strategic Teams, a course is laid out that the team must run. Each member of the team must do at least one segment, more if desired or necessary. Where the teams switch dogs does not matter. That's why it's called "Strategic" Teams.

A team will walk a course and predetermine who will run which parts. This is complicated by faulting any obstacle. On a fault, a different dog than the one that incurred the fault must resume at the faulted obstacle (on a jump, the jump bar must be reset first). Off-courses are not faulted. However, if the "active" dog takes an obstacle out of sequence after starting any segment of the course, another dog must resume the course at the next correct obstacle.

Scoring

Strategic Teams is scored time only. The team with the fastest time wins. Faults are penalized by the time it takes to switch dogs. There is no standard course time.

Course Design



The sample course was used in the TDAA Petit Prix in 2009, designed by Marsha Nix.

The method for creating the “course” is also unique. Each team will get a number of cones and is instructed to set up a challenging sequence on the field. They are directed to an area or quadrant of the course in which to set up their challenging sequence. The teams actually aren’t told that they are going to be playing Strategic Teams or that all of the cones will ultimately determine the order and direction of the overall game. This creates a randomness that is as spontaneous as the moment and almost always creates very challenging Strategic Teams courses.

Variations

- Play it Again Sam! – At Camp Dogwood the game is always played a second time. Indeed, all of the teams get to walk the course again and refine their strategies. This nearly always results in vast improvements in time on course and performance. The score that won the first round will typically be eclipsed in the second round.

Premium Blurb

Strategic Teams is a relay featuring from three to five dog and handler teams. Handlers on each team choose where on course to swap the active dog, and how often! The plan of the team is only upset by any faulted obstacle, requiring any *other* dog to resume the course at the point of the fault. *Strategic Teams* is scored Time Only. ER5

Strip Pairs

Strip Pairs was dreamed up by the Dallas Agility Working Group (DAWG). This is a game played for the fun of it. It's a great mixer and allows dogs and handlers of all levels to compete on a level playing field. It's really not as bawdy as it sounds but it is a lot of fun.

Briefing

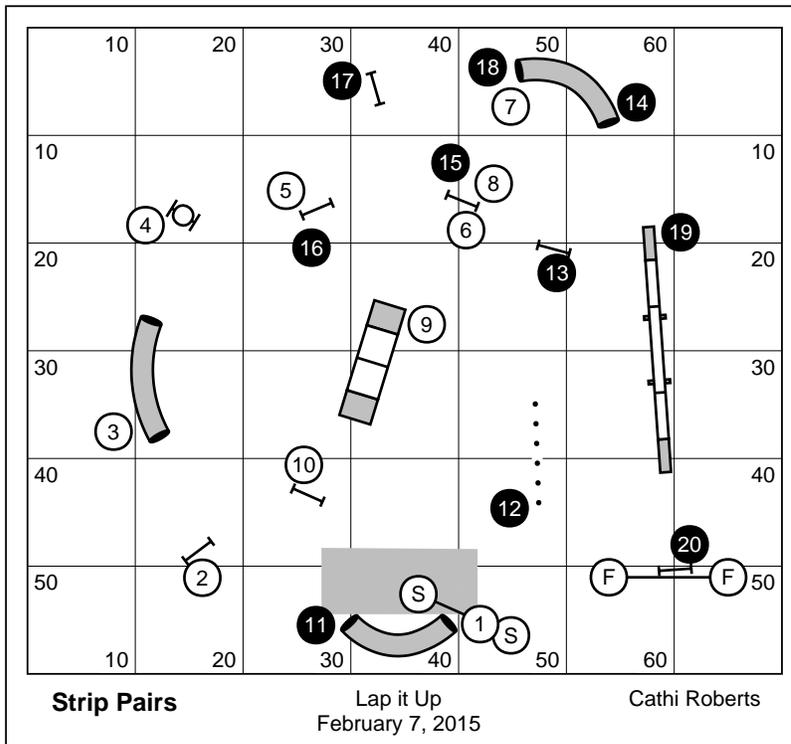
Strip Pairs is run on a standard relay course. Everything about it resembles a standard relay except for one small detail. Instead of exchanging a baton, handlers must exchange an article of clothing. Sometimes this article takes the form of an extra piece of clothing such as a vest or hat. Most of the time, however, the article takes the form of some appropriately strange piece of clothing such as clown pants with suspenders (usually about size 100).

The objective (aside from the relay itself) is to exchange the article of clothing as fast as possible. As most people know, baggy pants and suspenders are very difficult to get into, let alone remove. This means that very frequently the first handler must get help (often a lot of help) from the second handler. This can make for some amusing gyrations as well as snide comments. Occasionally, the dogs will even get into the act.

Scoring

Strip Pairs is scored Time, Plus Faults. The team with the lowest score wins.

Course Design



The sample course is closely based on an actual *Strip Pairs* course put up by TDAA judge Cathi Roberts. Note that the judge has indicated the exchange area in the crook of the tunnel that starts both courses.

The layout of a Strip Pairs course is similar to that of a standard agility course. Typically, however, no teeter or table is used.

Premium Blurb

Strip Pairs is a fun variation of the traditional pairs game. In lieu of exchanging a baton the handlers must exchange an article of clothing! *Strip Pairs* is scored Time, Plus Faults.
ER5

SuperDog

SuperDog is the invention of Ilze Rukis... and so naturally qualifies as another Crazy Ilze game. SuperDog is a strategic point accumulation game based on the old PACMAN computer game that if the smiley ate a "power pill", it could move faster and gobble up things in its path.

Briefing

SuperDog is a strategic point accumulation game. In concept it is based on the old PACMAN computer game that if the smiley ate a "power pill", it could move faster and gobble up things in its path. The point accumulation period is 50 seconds for 12/16 and 55 seconds for 4/8. Time starts when the dog crosses any point of the start line at handler's choice. Point accumulation ends with a whistle. The team must touch the table to stop time. The table is live at all times. Fastest time decides any tie points.

- Jumps – 1
- Tire/tunnel/chute – 3
- Contacts/weaves – 5

There are two Power Pills on course. This course features two nearly identical Power Pill sequences which are two jumps with an intervening tunnel. The jumps can be taken in any order, in any direction. After the performance of the first jump the dog *must* take the next jump (and nothing else) to activate the Power Pill ten-fold multiplier.

Each may be used once successfully. A Power Pill may be completed at any time during the run. When the dog has successfully completed all of the obstacles in the Power Pill sequence (in any order but only once per obstacle) then the next four obstacles taken by the dog have a ten fold point value (50 – 30 – 10). Once the four obstacles have been taken, the scoring reverts to 5 – 3 – 1 until the dog retakes the other Power Pill sequence. Power Pill obstacles may NOT be scored for ten fold values. If the dog intentionally or unintentionally takes Power Pill obstacles while the Power Pill is in effect, they count as one of the four obstacles but given only the regular point value. The Power Pill is in effect ONLY when the 3 obstacles have been correctly performed. If one of the bars on a Power Pill obstacles is dropped, then the handler must replace the dropped bar before reattempting the Power Pill sequence. At no time may obstacles be repeated back to back (including a contact or tunnel if the dog mounts/enters with four feet and bails). All obstacles (except Power Pills) may be used twice for points.

No points are awarded for missed contacts or dropped bars, etc. Non-Power Pill jump bars are not reset. While the Power Pill is in effect, an attempted obstacle counts as one of the four obstacles even if points are not awarded (an attempt is defined as four paws on a contact or in a tunnel, crossing the plain of the weaves, launching for a jump). The judge will call ZERO.

Scoring

SuperDog is scored Points, Then Time.

Qualifying

As this is something of a new game the qualifying criteria needs to be reasonable. It's always a SWAG when finding precisely the correct litmus for determining whether a dog has been working at a reasonable speed and under the control and direction of his handler. Sometimes we learn over time for individual games what might "skunk the field" and what might "give away the farm" we want something between.

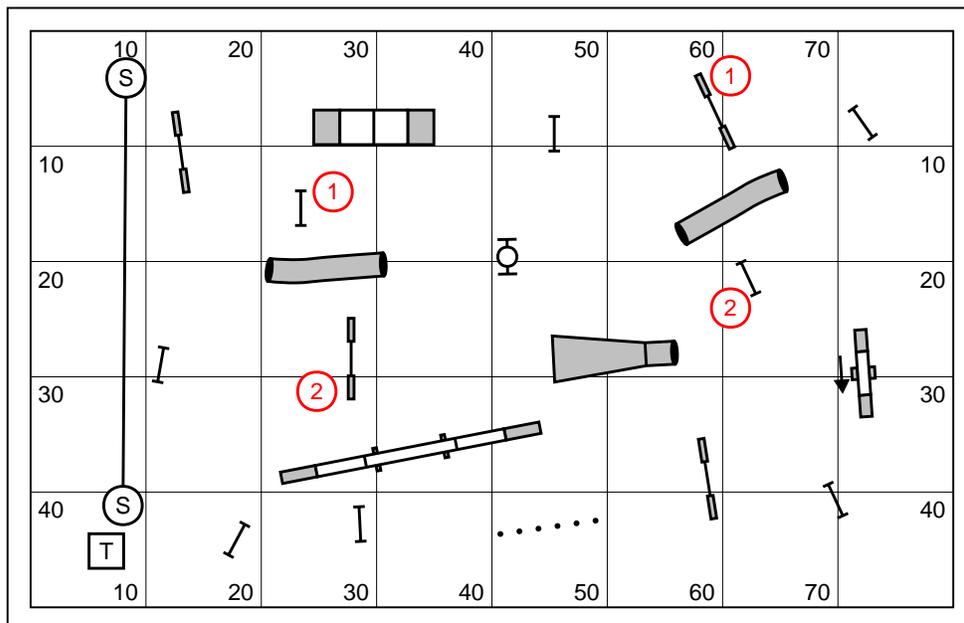
To establish qualifying criteria I figured that most dogs would *not* earn the second power pill and so the qualifying should really be based upon a single power pill performance.

Follow along with this logic:

- GI will require a 1-3-5 introduction to the first power pill and a 10-10-10-10 performance in the Power Pill sequence: **48 points to qualify.**
- GII will require a 1-3-5 introduction to the first power pill and a 10-30-10-30 performance in the Power Pill sequence: **88 points to qualify.**
- GIII will require a 1-3-5 introduction to the first power pill and a 30-50-30-50 performance in the Power Pill sequence: **168 points to qualify.**

We'll leave the second Power Pill to the brave and the bold.

Course Design



Judging Notes

The other agility organizations with their tiny suites of well tested games really have it easy compared to the TDAA (and the National Dog Agility League). When playing new games the judge and designer have to imagine everything that might happen. Here are a couple of observations on rules and nuances of the game that mightn't be terribly clear to the judge before assuming the field.

- The power pill jumps are eligible for routine scoring *only when* it is not eligible to

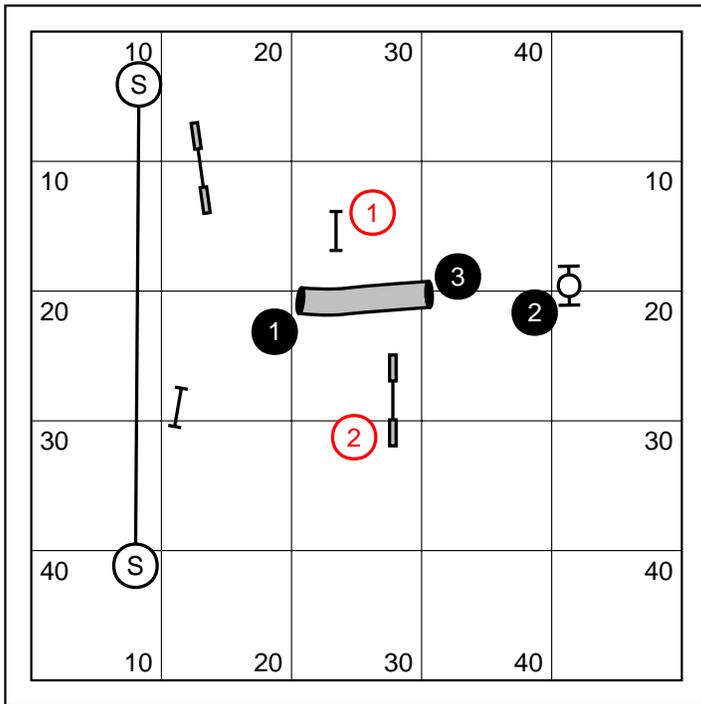
activate the power pill ten-fold multiplier. For example, as the dog is performing three obstacles to activate the Power Pill one of the power pill jumps may be taken at the 1-point value; however, the judge must remember the prohibition against taking obstacles back-to-back just in case the handler thinks he can turn his dog around to retake the power pill jump to activate the multiplier. Also, the dog may be directed over a power pill jump while the multiplier is in effect; though note the rule that a power pill obstacle will *never* be accorded a ten-fold value.

- The discussion above is important to understanding when the power pill is eligible to be *burned* (faulted, thus losing the ten-fold multiplier). If a) the three obstacle sequence has been finished and b) the ten-fold multiplier is not in effect **then**, when the dog commits to the first obstacle of the Power Pill sequence, it must be finished without fault.
- The judge should call fault for any obstacle faulted, or a repeat performance of any obstacle that has already been performed twice. And the fault should be recorded as an “F” in the linear scribing of the game because the faulted obstacle, while yielding no points, will count as a performed obstacle... one of three to charge the power pill or one of four when the ten-fold multiplier is in effect.
- The judge should declare “you burned it” if the dog faults a power pill sequence. This is to advise the handler that he’s wasting time if he thinks he can save it... and should head for the other power pill sequence.
- It doesn’t seem to be completely clear in the first draft of the rules whether the handler should, if the dog burns the first power pill sequence, direct the dog to perform another three obstacles at simple value before attempting the second power pill. We decided to make an executive decision.... No, the three-obstacle requirement has already been met. The handler should direct his dog straight-away to the second power pill sequence and hope that he doesn’t burn that one... because you can’t qualify without at least one Power Pill.
- It’s pretty silly to make the stipulation that the table is “live at all times”. It serves no real purpose to make the table a “land-mine” that punishes the team to the extent that it ends the game. Since this punitive rule serves no practical purpose it is better to say that the table is live after the time whistle. The judge might otherwise stipulate that when not “live” the table is a) a part of the floor or b) a zero value obstacle (that will be counted in a string of three obstacles at simple value or string of four obstacles when the ten-point multiplier is in effect.

Strategy

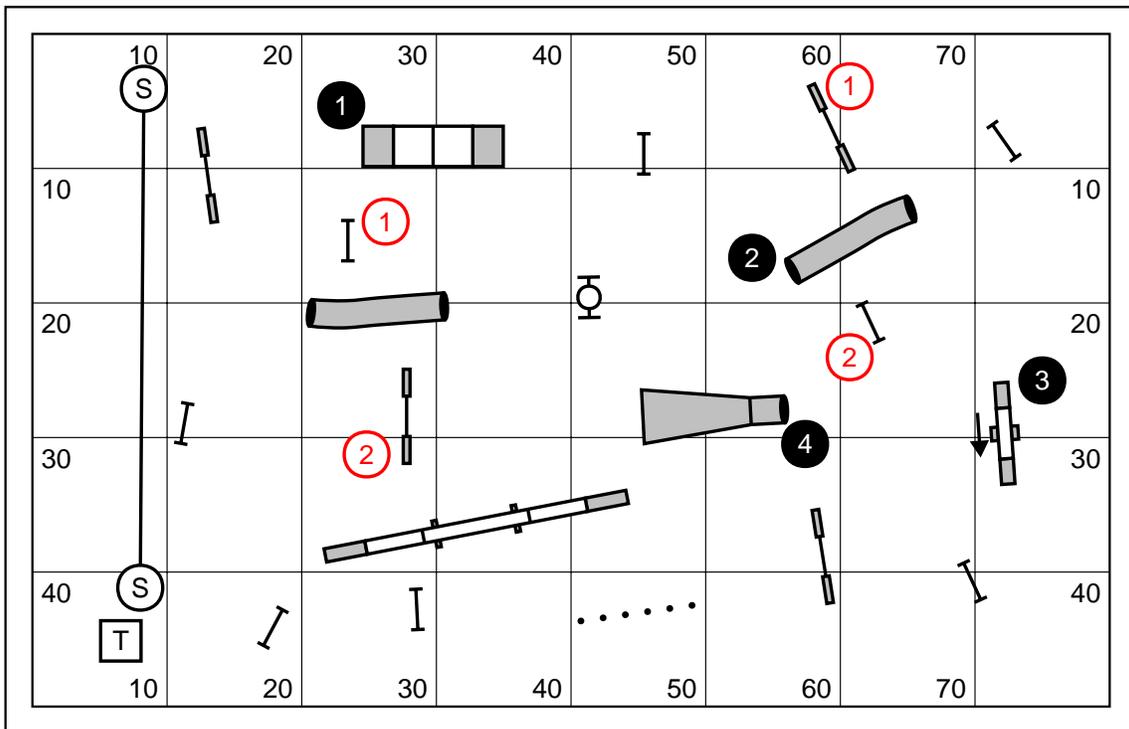
This is the kind of game that is won by efficiency of path and cool unhurried technical handling. The three point sequences to *activate* the Power Pill sequence need to be neat and concise, with modest “area under the curve”.

It just doesn’t make any sense to start the game with a big sweeping sequence of 6 or 7 obstacles. Those little simple value obstacles don’t mean much when accounting towards a qualifying score or placement in the game. Indeed, the handler should also be keen to keep the dog away from time consuming obstacles like the dogwalk or obstacles with which the dog has performance *issues*.



Note in this opening the handler picks up 9 quick points with his dog and has a very efficient distance transition to the Power Pill sequence (yeah... the dog is right there!)

When the Power Pill ten-fold multiplier is active... **be greedy**. There's no reason to use up the multiplier on ten point jumps when there are obstacles worth 30 and 50 points on the course... even if those higher value obstacles are a few more seconds away.



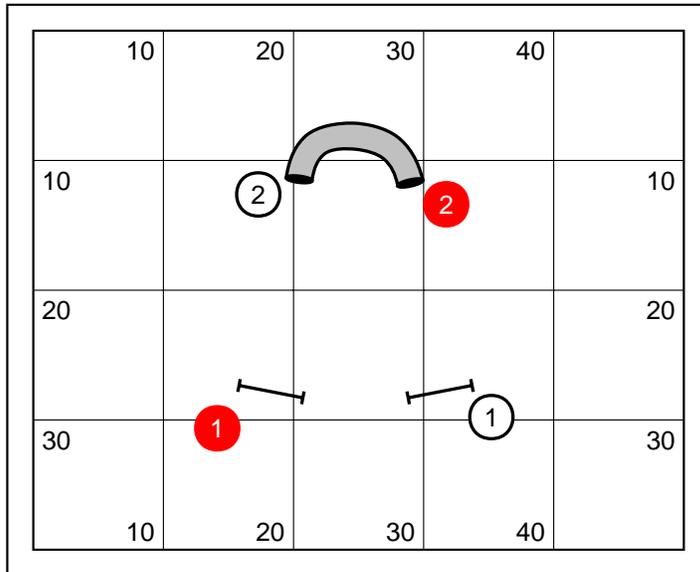
Note in this scoring sequence (which fits nicely with the Power Pill opening illustrated above) the handler is careful to avoid performance of 10-point obstacles, preferring

instead to go for the money.

Variations

Conroy's single Power-Pill ~ In this variation only a single Power-Pill is available on course; that can be repeated. This variation is a trade off for putting up the game in a very small space that would have the Power-Pill obstacles using up too much floor space.

If the dog "burns" the first performance of the Power-Pill for dropping a bar, then he has burned any subsequent attempt. The workaround might be to design a Power-Pill that doesn't include jumps; *or* is designed so that it employs alternate jumps. For example:



Note that this complicates the rule: "If the dog intentionally or unintentionally takes Power Pill obstacles while the Power Pill is in effect, they count as one of the four obstacles but given only the regular point value." Even the alternate jump should be considered a Power-Pill obstacle for the implementation of this variation.

The downside of the variation is that because both Power-Pill performances are in the same location on the field then the subsequent ten-fold value performances will have less variety.

Premium Blurb

SuperDog is a strategic dog's-choice point accumulation game. In concept it is based on the old PACMAN computer game that if the smiley ate a "power pill", it could move faster and gobble up things in its path. *SuperDog* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Qualifying

Each dog on the team qualify when Time and Faults are equal to or less than the course time established by the judge.

Premium Blurb

Swinger's Relay is a fun relay game for three dog and handler teams. After a spin of the bottle the two handlers indicated by the bottle will swap dogs to run the relay. The third handler will run his own dog. *Swinger's Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Table in the Middle

This is a delightful training game invented by Carrie Cockerham. The game is designed to reward the dog for a fast down on the table, building a fast and happy down on the first verbal cue. The table is made a very rewarding place for the dog, teaching him that the faster he lies down, the quicker he gets the reward. This game was invented in an attempt to get certain students—with a strong bent for compulsion—to reward their dogs! There are the students that have to be reminded often to give the dog a treat.

Briefing

Each obstacle must be performed in sequential order. However, the table must be performed after each numbered obstacle, except the last obstacle on course.

Time starts when the dog crosses the start line and ends when the dog crosses the finish line.

The required table performance will be a down. Only one verbal cue and signal (treat in closed hand down on table) is allowed. There will be no table count. When the dog is in a down position the judge will say *go* to cue the handler to open his hand and reward the dog. The team may then proceed to the next obstacle.

To finish the course: as soon as the dog dismounts the final obstacle, the handler is encouraged to toss the dog's favorite toy or a food tube across the finish line and race the dog to get it, with a game of tug or food from the tube as a jackpot.

Faults are assessed for any of the following:

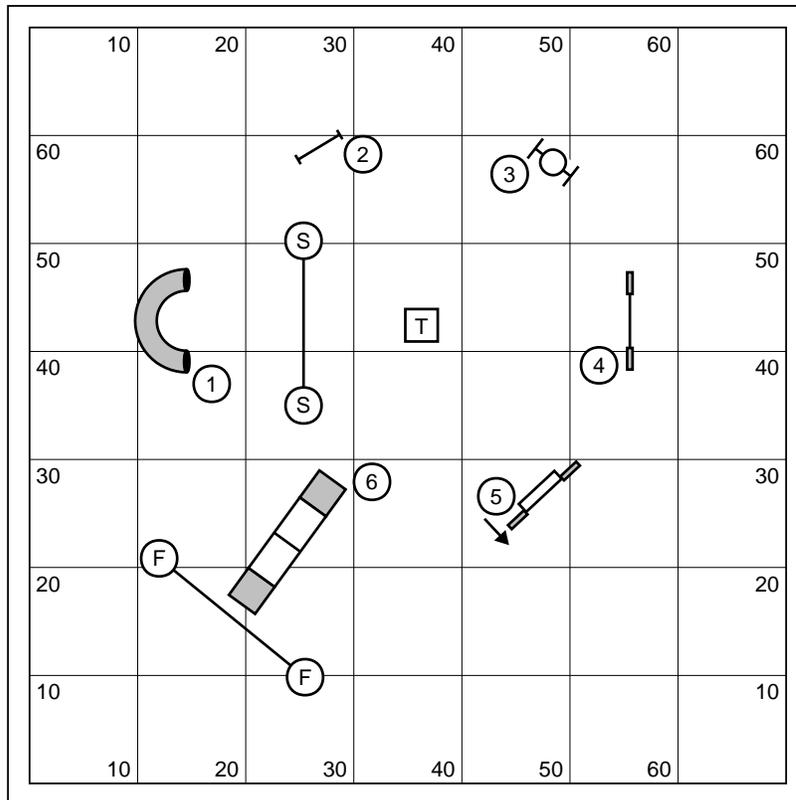
- 10 faults for each additional verbal *down* cue given. It would be beneficial for the handler to wait the dog out rather than reissue the down cue as the dog will likely lie down before 10 seconds have passed. If dog has not assumed position after 10 seconds, the instructor will ask the handler to take the dog off the table and reattempt with the same rules applied. There will be no faults incurred for the reattempt.
- 10 faults for failure to reward the dog while on the table or failure to reward the dog at all.
- 5 faults for failure to toss reward across the finish line as the dog dismounts the final obstacle.
- 5 faults for each off course obstacle taken.

It is advisable that the judge have a stopwatch to monitor the 10 seconds accurately.

Scoring

Table in the Middle is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Course Design



This is the original Table in the Middle game designed by Carrie Cockerham.

Six obstacles are set in a circle with the table in the middle. When beginner teams are playing this game obstacles should be limited to jumps, tunnels, and very low-set contact obstacles. No weave poles should be used. Enough space should be allowed between obstacles to make off courses unlikely and to set the beginner teams up for success. More advanced teams may opt for other obstacles with variable spacing.

Strategies

The handler should be prepared with a handful of small, soft treats to reward on the table as fast as possible. The handler should also have the dog's favorite toy or a food tube tucked away for fast access at the finish line.

Clearly, the handler should be careful to issue only one down cue and wait the dog out. The training goal is for the dog to figure out what will get the reward. The handler should take care to reward the dog while in a down position on the table rather than after the dog jumps off the table.

Premium Blurp

Table in the Middle is a fun training game intended to proof a dog in the performance of the table and to teach the handler good dog training habits. This game is not intended for titling competition. *Table in the Middle* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Table Tag

Table Tag is the invention of Laura Manchester who trains with Valley Agility Sports Team (VAST) Agility in Turlock, California. This is a training game used to work on quick and happy table positioning, Snooker skills, quick thinking, and quick side changes while on the table. It's a fun game and the class really gets into it. It is also a fun crowd pleaser, as the spectators find themselves frantically trying to get oriented with the dog and handler from the table.

Briefing

The dog starts and ends on the table. Time starts as soon as the dog leaves the table. Time ends when the dog gets on the table and assumes an obedience position after completing the last obstacle. The judge will specify the required obedience position.

Each short sequence must be completed correctly from #1 to #4, in order. After each, the dog must get back on the table and assume an obedience position dictated by the judge; at which time the judge will immediately release by saying "Go!" No other obstacle may be taken while coming or going from the table. The judge will not award points until the dog completes the obstacle and then correctly assumes the required position on the table.

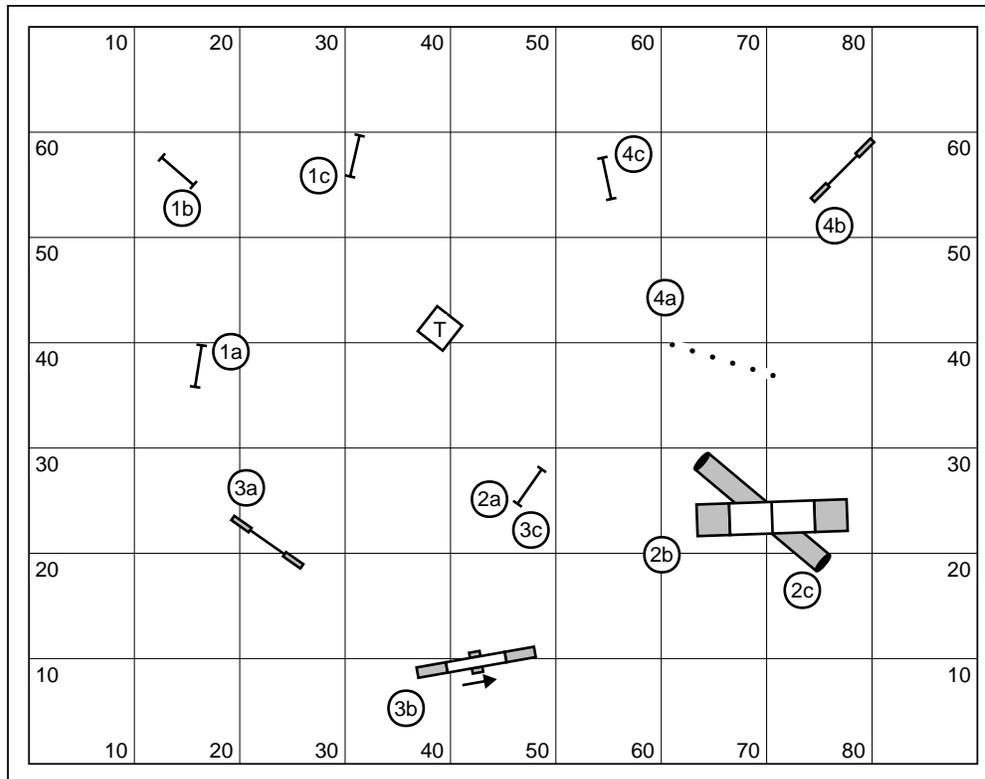
The dog will earn a a point for each sequence performed without fault.

The maximum course time is generally sixty seconds. If a dog goes off course or misses a contact, they must run back to the table and assume the position. The team may then continue on to the next obstacle in order. The dog just does not get the points for the previous faulted obstacle. Refusals are not faulted.

Scoring

Table Tag is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tie-breaker only.

Course Design



This is an example of a Table Tag course.

In Table Tag the table is placed on the field with five to six obstacles around it. The obstacles may be made up of combinations. Traps may be placed depending on the level of competition.

Premium Blurp

Table Tag is a training game in which the dog performs a number of short sequences and must be directed to the table after each to offer an obedience performance. This game is not intended for titling competition. *Table Tag* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Tag 10

Tag 10 is the invention of Martin Gadsby and Lisa Brownschilde as a game of strategy for pairs. The game described here is an adaptation of the original set of. This game was played for the first time with Dogwood's agility league on April 16, 2001. Tag 10 was submitted to satisfy a homework requirement for Dogwood's Instructors' Certification Camp.

Briefing

The purpose of Tag 10 is to accumulate points in 10-point blocks and to accumulate as many of those 10-point sets as possible. Sixty seconds are allotted for play.

The team starts with the first "Tag", the performance of one of the two tires on course, and then proceeds to gather a 10-point set. Upon successfully securing the 10-point set, the team must again Tag and seek to accumulate another 10-point set. The team continues in this fashion until time expires.

The team may not repeat a scoring sequence at any time, either forward or in reverse. Each scoring sequence must be unique. Dogs can *not* take the same obstacle back-to-back. However, they can take the same obstacle twice (and only twice) in a sequence as long as a different obstacle is taken in between. An obstacle can *only* be used twice in a single 10-point set.

Upon the 60-second whistle the handler is to direct his dog to Tag the nearest tire. When the dog hits the ground on the landing side of the tire, time will stop.

Scoring

Tag 10 is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tiebreaker only.

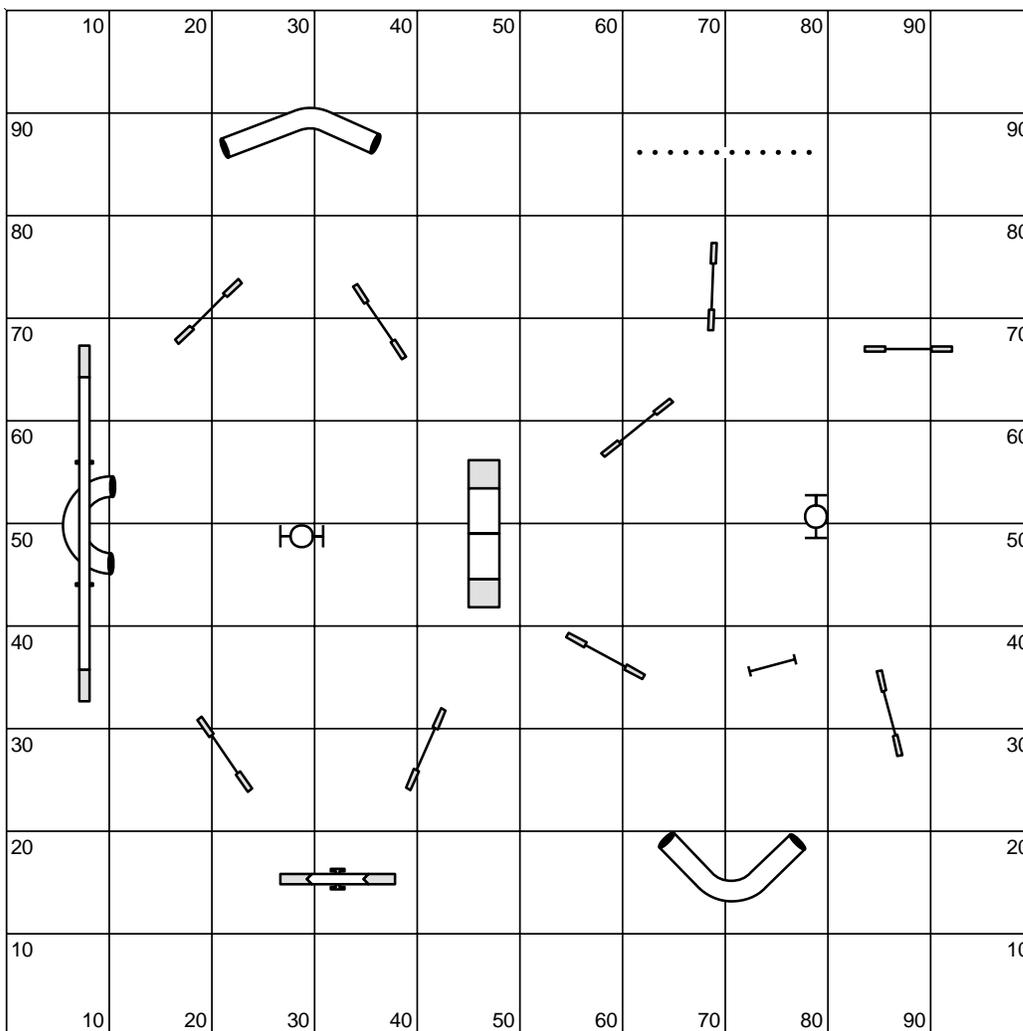
The schedule of points shall be:

- Jumps – 2 points;
- Tunnels – 3 points;
- Contacts and weave poles – 5 points.

If a dog faults an obstacle, no points are awarded for that obstacle. The handler must go on to another obstacle before repeating that obstacle. If a bar is dropped on a jump, that jump is out of play for the remainder of the course run.

If the dog Tags with more or less than 10 points, no point for the set shall be awarded. If the dog is in the middle of accumulating a set when time is called, the points earned in that set will be converted to a decimal score. For example, 4.6 points are earned for the fourth attempted set in which 6 obstacle points were accumulated.

Course Design



This Tag 10 course designed by Bud Houston was played July of 2001 in agility league at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

The Tag 10 course should be designed somewhat symmetrically. The obstacles are distributed around the position of the tagging obstacle (usually the tire). Obstacles of different values should be somewhat evenly distributed in the distribution of obstacles.

If two tires are used the tires will both be ringed with obstacles and some thought should be given to providing a transitional path between the two.

Strategies

The handler must understand very well how to put together the blocks of 10 points. The stipulation against repeating a sequence or running a sequence already used in reverse does not adversely limit the handler's ability to score points. It just keeps things from being repetitive and boring. For example, the handler may do the A-frame, a tunnel, and a jump, and may repeat this point collection strategy so long as a different jump or tunnel is used in each repetition.

Also, the prohibition against running the same sequence in either direction does not limit handler from doing the same three obstacles in different sequences. For example, the

handler could do A, B and C. He's not allowed to repeat with C, B, and A. But he could do B, A and C and then he could do B, C, and A.

It is strategic to conclude 10-point sets as close as possible to the "tagging" tire to minimize wasted time.

Qualifying

A dog qualifies by earning a number of 10 point sets:

- Games I – Two set points
- Games II – Three set points
- Games III – Four or more set points

Variations

The *scratch-a-point* variation allows the course designer / judge to set aside an obstacle that is worth -1 points. This obstacle might be a jump but could be another obstacle. The *scratch-a-point* obstacle could be used by the handler to trim an unwanted point before banking 10. This variation is the invention of Paul Jensen.

Premium Blurb

Tag 10 is a dog's choice game in which the dog and handler are challenged to collect points in 10 point blocks. Faulting any obstacle erases unbanked points! *Tag 10* is scored points, then time. ER2

Tag Team

Tag Team is the invention of Mary Mersereau from Mystic, Connecticut where the game was first played in June of 2002 at My Dog's Place training center. This game was inspired by a wonderful English couple, Simon, and Deb Dominey that both run their Boxer, Laurel. Deb was running Laurel and was having a little trouble so she called dad and he took over running Laurel. Because both handlers can play, this is particularly a fun game for people who share the handling responsibilities of their dog.

Briefing

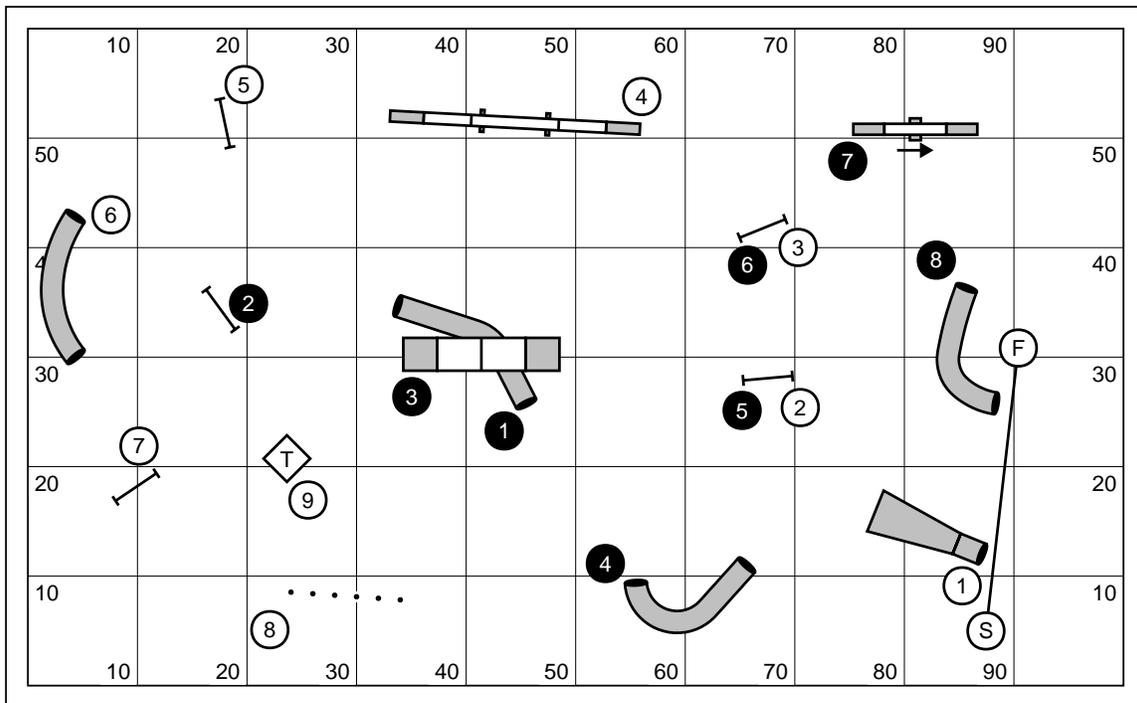
One handler starts with the dog and the second handler must sit (not down) on the table. The first handler runs the course until the table. The second handler gets up and the dog gets on the table into a down. The second handler finishes the second half of the course.

The first handler must immediately sit on the table when the second handler is underway with the dog and must remain on the table for the finish of the course.

Scoring

Tag Team is scored Time, Plus Faults. There will be no standard course time.

Course Design



This is an example of a Tag Team course.

The course can be designed either like a relay course or like a standard course that uses a table somewhere approximately in the middle of the course. The table will be the designated “exchange” area where one handler adopts the task of handling the dog from the other.

Premium Blurb

Tag Team is a fun variation of a relay. At some point in the course the exchange shall be... a change of handlers. This probably is not a game intended for titling competition. *Tag Team* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Team Relay – Mixed Levels

This variation of the traditional relay game is the inspiration of Anna Carr, who trains with Winston-Salem Dog Training Club and Leaps and Bounds. Anna wanted to develop a relay consistent with the USDAA's Dog Agility Masters relay but one that can be played by dogs and handlers of mixed levels, allowing the more novice handlers more success.

Briefing

In Team Relay – Mixed levels, the relay is divided into four loops that are designed to take into account players of different skill levels. The course is designed with four loops, ranging from 4-10 obstacles per loop. The teams consist of four dog and handler teams with one pre-Novice dog, one Novice dog, one Advanced dog, and one Masters dog per team. Each dog and handler team runs a different loop depending on their level. Faults are assigned for different errors.

If the teams don't work out perfectly evenly, a more advanced dog might run a simpler element of the relay. However, that handler will be handicapped in some manner. For example, the handler might be required to run without arms (hands in pockets or behind his back) or he could be required to run without using his voice.

A dog must finish all obstacles correctly. If a dog misses the dogwalk contact, the handler must redirect the dog to the dogwalk until the dog correctly performs the contact. If handicapped handlers use their voice or their arms, they must redo all obstacles performed with the illegal aid.

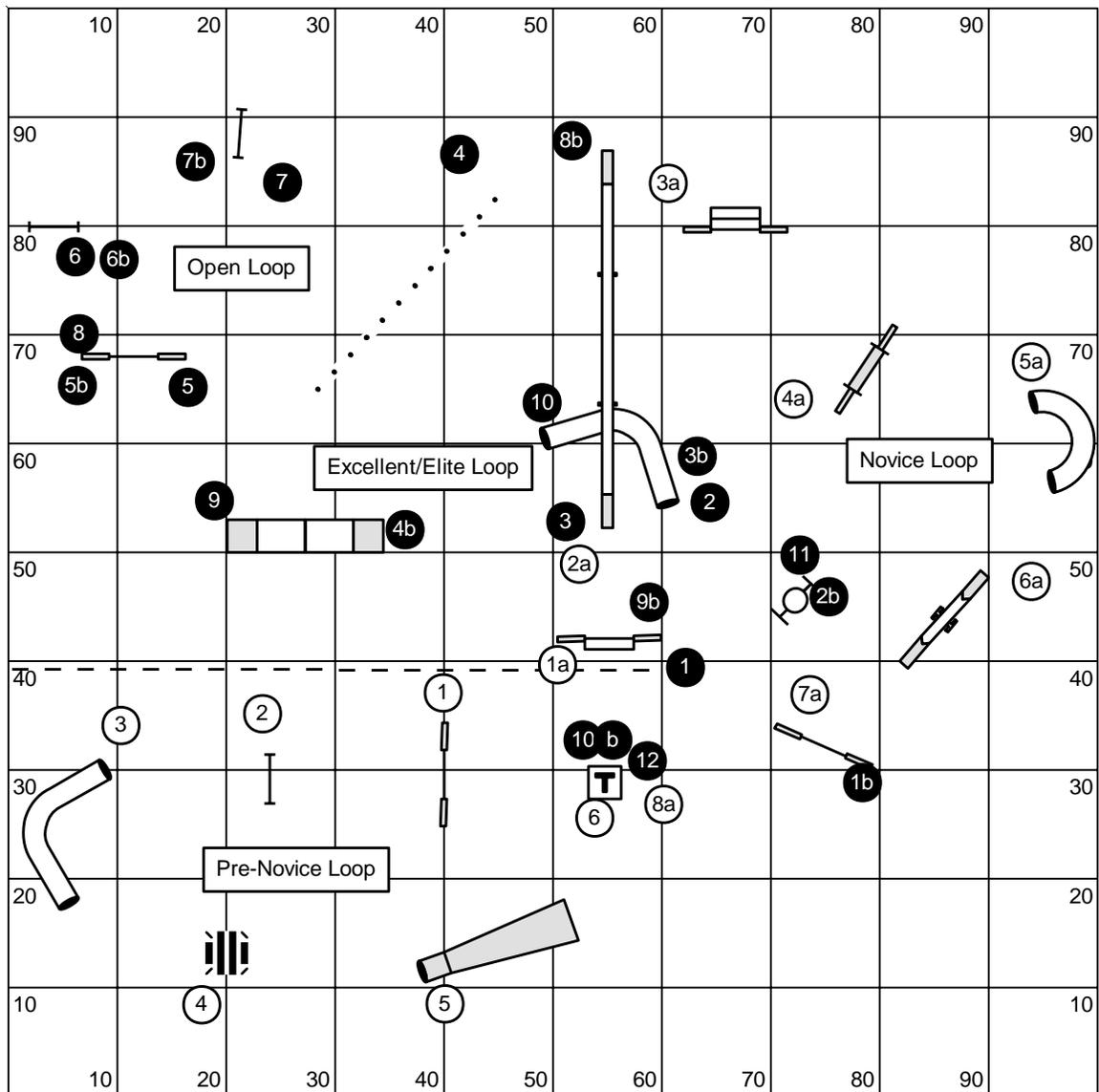
There is no set order in which loops must be run. Teams can decide the most efficient transfers and organize accordingly. The clock starts to run when the first dog leaves the line and stops when the last dog hits the table.

Scoring

Team Relay – Mixed Levels is scored as Time, Plus Faults.

Any rational system of scoring faults can be used for Team Relay – Mixed Levels (if there really is such a thing as a rational system of scoring). It might make the game more interesting to recognize the differences in faults in a USDAA scoring system, so that the different levels of play required in the “loops” are judged using slightly adjusted scoring systems. An off course at the Novice level would be 5 faults while an off course at the Advanced level would be 20 faults. Obviously, the judge must be well versed in the rules used and aware at what skill level a dog is performing.

Course Design



This course shows a design for the Team Relay – Mixed Levels, developed by Anna Carr. It seems a bit confusing and complex on the surface. But, since each dog is running a discrete loop, it shouldn't be too difficult for the individual handler to figure out his path.

The design of the Team Relay – Mixed Levels course is not the typical relay which usually strives to present sequences of roughly equivalent complexity. In the Team Relay – Mixed Levels course the different sequences are intentionally designed for “mixed levels,” and so are of varied complexity.

Premium Blurp

Team Relay – Mixed Levels is what it sounds like... a relay of two or more dog and handler teams that mixes levels from Novice to Masters with course segments appropriate to the level of each dog running. *Team Relay – Mixed Levels* is scored as Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Three-Day Eventing

Three-Day Eventing comes to us from the U.K. It actually combines three games: Dressage, Show Jumping, and Cross Country. These rules were related to us by Eleanor M. Thomas of Guildford in the U.K.

Section A: Dressage

Dressage is a preset test that handlers must perform from memory. The judge will allocate points for each movement. These points are added up and then deducted from the overall mark allocated to the test. This leaves penalty points, which is the score given to the dog.

The dog with the lowest score (the lowest number of penalty points) at the end of the class wins.

The test is judged on accuracy (carrying out movements at the markers), harmony of dog and handler and the overall impression given.

The arena is 20 metres long and 10 metres wide and is marked out using letters as for horses.

- A Enter at walk, 10 points
- X Halt, sit, salute
- Proceed at trot
- C Track right, 10 points
- B Turn right and at E turn left, 10 points
- A Circle left 10 meters and on, returning to A walk, 10 points
- B Turn left and at E turn right, 10 points
- H Trot 10 points
- C Circle right 10 meters and on, returning to C walk, 10 points
- B Halt, sit, remove lead, and proceed around the arena to A, 10 points
- A Turn down center line, 10 points
- G Halt, salute, leave arena at A, 10 points;
- Overall impression, 10 points
- Harmony of dog and handler, 10 points
- Accuracy of test, 10 points

Section B: Show Jumping

A dog is required to run, at the handler's directive, a course of approximately 15 agility obstacles, including the long jump and the collapsed tunnel. No contact obstacles may be used.

Faults will be assessed for the following:

- Fence down, 4 faults
- Refusal, 3 faults
- Wrong course, 10 faults

Section C: Cross Country

The dog is required to run, at the handler's directive, a course of approximately 15 rustic

obstacles. An optimum time or standard course time is allocated to the course. However, the competitors are not informed of the time until after the competition is finished. The dog with the time nearest the optimum time wins (as in Time Gamble), not the fastest dog.

The height of the fences is 24" maximum except for dogs under 15" when the maximum height of fences is 15".

Dogs will not be penalized for jumping on the fences.

Premium Blurb

Three Day Eventing is a bit of dressage and a bit of agility. Alone it would make an excellent sport for dog training enthusiasts. However, as it is not purely agility this game is NOT appropriate for agility titling competition. *Three Day Eventing* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Think Inside the Box

Think Inside the Box is an interesting game that combines jumping and strategy. The game was invented by Dennis Vogel for play in the Teacup Dogs Agility Association.

Briefing

Think Inside the Box is a dog's-choice game of strategy requiring the handler to direct the dog over various jumps to enter and exit the boxes on course and to accumulate points for each time the dog enters and exits a box without fault.

To score points the dog must take a jump without fault to enter box A, B, or C and then leave that box by taking a different jump without fault. If either jump is faulted the corresponding box is faulted. If the same jump is used to enter and exit the box, the box is faulted. Each non-faulted box earns one point. When a box is faulted the team must attempt a different box before re-attempting the faulted box. Each box can be used as many times as desired including faulted boxes for points following the above rules.

Faults

No points are deducted for faults; however, if the dog drops a bar on the way into a box or on the way out of a box, or if the dog takes the same jump twice in a row, the corresponding box is considered faulted and no points will be earned until a different box is attempted. A jump with a bar down will not count as an entry or exit to that box for the rest of the game. If the bar of a jump that is shared with two boxes is knocked down, both boxes are faulted and the dog must attempt to enter the third box before scoring can resume.

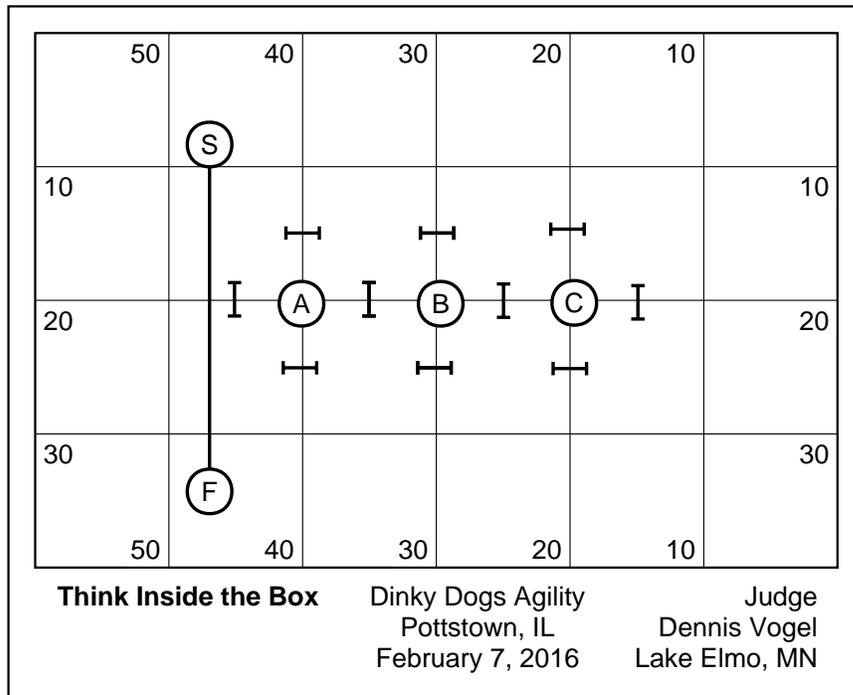
Any entry or exit into or out of a box by avoiding a jump does not count as a proper entry or exit and does not earn a point. The corresponding box is considered faulted. Any time a jump is taken back to back, the corresponding box is faulted. The dog must attempt another box before scoring can resume. If a jump that is shared by two boxes is taken back to back, then both boxes are considered faulted and an attempt to enter the third box must be done before scoring can resume.

Bonus

The dog earns a two-point bonus for each combination of boxes A, B, & C taken. The boxes don't have to be taken in any particular order or combination to receive the bonus points and the bonus can be received for each set of boxes A, B, & C taken, for example, taking boxes in the following order: A, A, B, C, C, B would result in four bonus points.

When the dog has entered a box and left the box without faulting either jump, the judge will call out the box letter (A, B or C). If the dog faults a box, the judge will call out the fault.

Course Design



This sample course is closely based on the original *Think Inside the Box* course designed by Dennis Vogel.

For this course the judge specified that: Small dogs will have 35 seconds to accumulate points and tall dogs will have 30 seconds.

The course designer should not be lulled believing that this is the only possible design for a *Think Inside the Box* course. The course designer might explore the interesting relationship between pinwheels and boxes that lead to unique design variations.

Scoring

Think Inside the Box is scored Points, Then Time. The dog with the most points wins. Time is the tie breaker.

Qualifying

A dog will qualify if he has scored the minimum points established for each level:

- Games I – 12 points
- Games II – 14 points
- Games III – 16 points

Premium Blurb

Think Inside the Box is a game of skill in which the dog is tested in a jumping grid while the handler is tested in his ability to shape a complex dog's choice pattern of performance. *Think Inside the Box* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Three Strikes

Three Strikes is a game invented by Fran Seibert. The JAZZ Agility Club meets once a month and has playtime after each meeting. They are always in the market for a good game, especially one that moves quickly (they only have about an hour) and that lends itself to a mixed group with different skill levels. JAZZ has played Three Strikes at several meetings. The members of JAZZ declare it a lot of fun.

Briefing

The traditional Three Strikes game is played by a fairly large group, members of which are at about the same skill level.

Two teams are formed by drawing numbers (1 or 2) from a hat. All those drawing #1 are on Team #1, those drawing #2 are on Team #2.

Team #1 is at bat first and continues at bat until three outs have been incurred or until every one on the team has run. Then Team #2 takes over, and so on. Play continues until everyone on both teams has run. And the game may be played for a fixed number of innings.

The same dog will make the “pitch” and then run the “batter’s” course. Each play begins with a “pitch.” The handler directs the dog through a pitching sequence; and then, as the batter/base runner must perform each obstacle between bases. The dog must put all four feet on each base in order to continue.

Scoring

Three Strikes is scored Points (Runs), Then Time. Time is kept cumulatively for the team. The team with most runs wins. Time is used as tiebreaker.

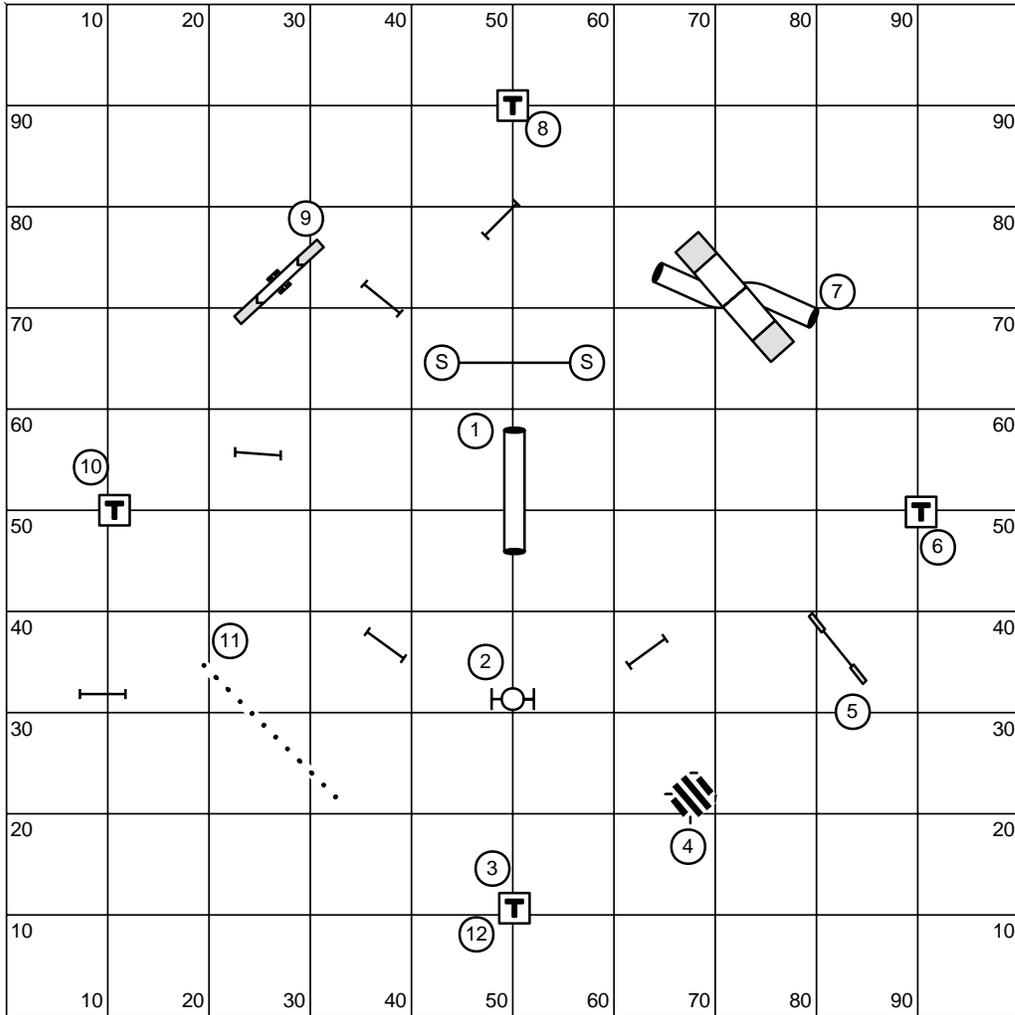
The umpire (judge) calls strikes and outs. The timekeeper records time from start line to the “home base” table at completion of run. The scorekeeper records runs scored and times.

The pitcher gets a strike for any wrong course or a refusal. On a strike the pitcher must start over. Three strikes puts the pitcher out.

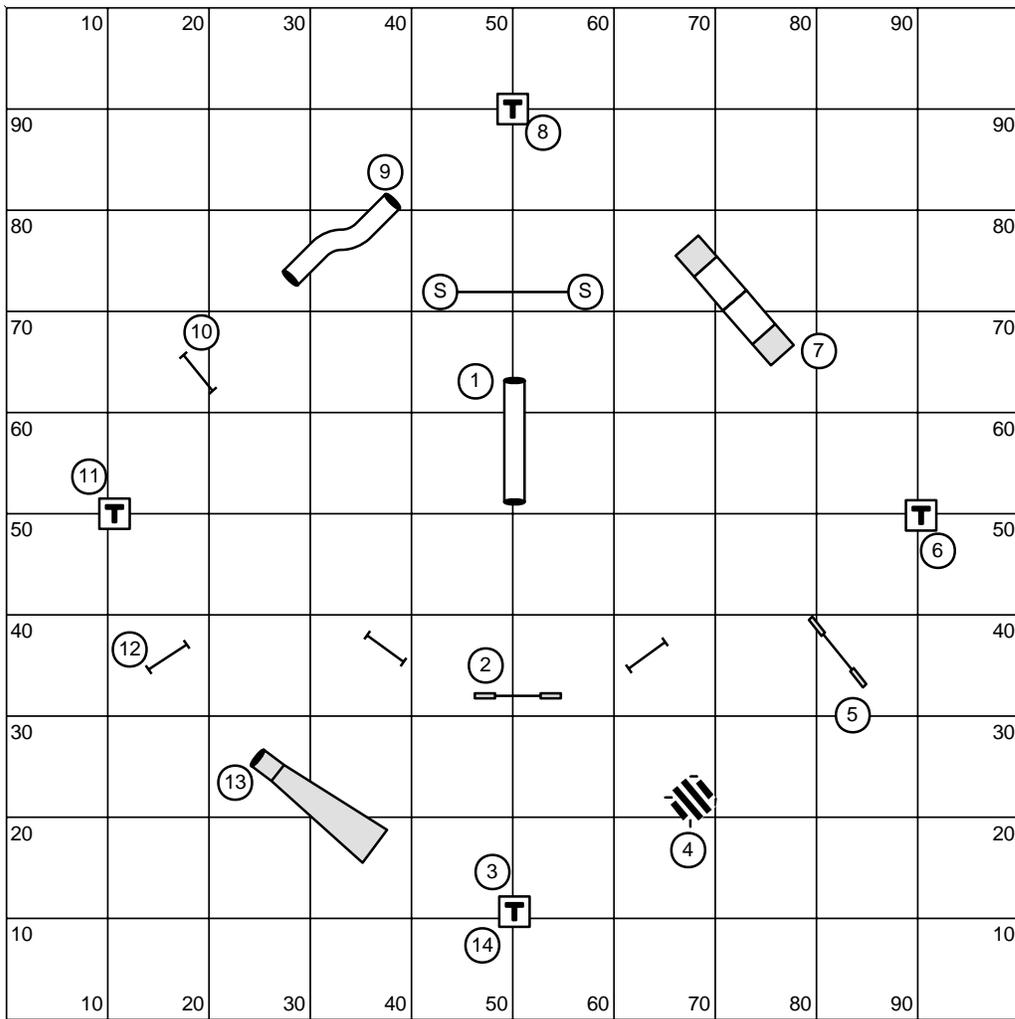
The batter gets strikes for wrong course or a refusal. On a strike the batter must return to last base and continue from there. Three strikes puts the batter out. Any strikes earned by the pitcher are carried over to the batter.

The batter is out for any missed contact, dropped bar, or a refusal at a table.

Course Design



This is an example of an advanced Three Strikes course, designed by Fran Seibert. In this course, the pitcher's course is obstacles #1 through the table at #3. The batter's sequence will be obstacles #4 through #12.



This is an example of a novice Three Strikes course, designed by Fran Seibert. Aside from the two jumps alongside jump #2, the dog and handler aren't faced with a lot of discrimination problems.

The Three Strikes course should be set up baseball-diamond-style with a table for home plate the bases. Alternatively, pause boxes may be used. The pitcher pitches through the tunnel, through the tire, or over a jump to the "home base" table. Other obstacles may be placed nearby to cause the pitcher to incur a strike. The base runner portion of the course begins with the dog and handler in the pause box. Two or more obstacles should be placed on a straight line between the bases. Dummy obstacles should also be present.

The difficulty of the obstacles should be appropriate for the skill level of the players. If weave poles are part of the course and a dog cannot perform them, handler must perform them.

Strategy

Think of the batter's run as a slow motion swing of the bat. If the batter misjudges during the swing, he'll probably get a strike and then another pitch. If he executes his swing perfectly, he'll probably hit a home run. The batter's base run is three chances to score a run.

The only strategy, other than handling to avoid off courses or refusals, is to try to stay cool under the pressure of trying to make the best possible time. The more often a handler has to return to the last successfully attained base, the more frantic the handler is likely to get.

In the traditional team variation of the game, time becomes a tiebreaker. Indeed, time may win the game. The team should be thinking about working briskly and not making a big production of each dog and handler moving into position to begin the next pitch and base run.

The batter's chances for success might be enhanced by taking a modest lead out. This is true of the initial pitch and when resuming the course from any of the bases.

Variations

- **Mixed Levels** – This variation is for a fairly large group, members of which are at different skill levels. Beginning dogs and handlers are paired with more advanced dogs and handlers. Teams are formed as in Method #1 with one member of each pair drawing a number to determine the pair's team placement. The beginner in each pair has a baton and runs the first three obstacles (the pitch) and passes off the baton to the base runner in the pause box. The beginner and dog must all have all feet in the pause box while passing the baton to the runner who will be standing to the right of but not in front of the box. Play continues as above.
- **Sandlot** – The Sandlot variation is for smaller groups. Each dog and handler team runs as an individual, achieving an individual score. For those that score a run, the winner is determined by time. The game can be set to go for one, two, or three innings at the discretion of the group. When everyone has had one chance to score, the inning will be over.
- **Alternate timekeeping method** – Time is kept individually for each dog in one-inning games. The fastest time for completed run wins; in multiple-inning games, highest number of runs wins; time is used as tiebreaker.
- **Different Pitcher** – The game can be played with a separate pitcher. The pitcher is finished as soon as he hands off the baton to the runner. At Jazz Agility, the split team is used to accommodate beginning dogs and family members who want to play. This variation might also be used as a round-robin rotation so that the pitcher becomes the base-runner/dog-on-deck.

Premium Blurb

Three Strikes is a sequencing game that is based on the game of Baseball. Though this is an excellent game of competition it is probably not suitable for the typical titling competition as all dogs in attendance are organized into two teams for the event. *Three Strikes* is scored Points (Runs), Then Time. ER2

Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing

Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing is a game invented by Nancy Creel this for the annual Gallatin County Summer Fair Competition in Bozeman, Montana where there are plenty of horse people around. This game is modeled after the rodeo-style Barrel Racing game. In the barrel race, the horse and rider run a cloverleaf pattern around three barrels.

Briefing

The dog is required to run the clover leaf pattern of tunnels.

In the equine barrel race the horse and rider run a cloverleaf pattern around three barrels. In Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing the dog must do the same. There are no specific performance faults; but the dog must complete the pattern.

A 10% reduction in time will be given to dogs less than 13", junior and veteran handlers, small and veteran dogs and dogs that meet the NADAC 3:1 ratio.

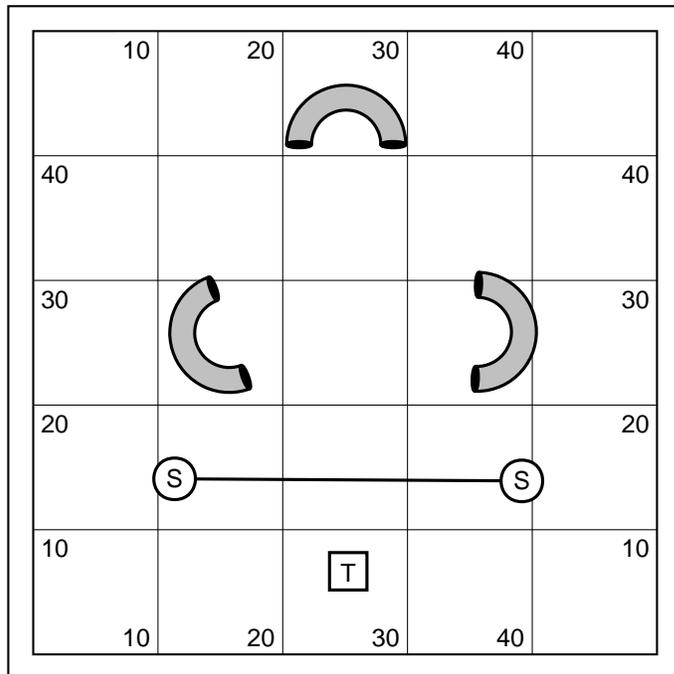
Scoring

Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing is scored Time Only. Off courses and refusals usually add so much extra time that it is not worth the effort to score them and in effect, represent elimination. With only three obstacles, an off-course adds enough time that even the fastest dog will place out of the awards but ahead of plodding inattentive dogs that are looking for resident gophers. Dogs do need to finish all three tunnels in the correct direction to get a time. Usually, this game is won in 10-12 seconds when just three tunnels are used.

Teams will be handicapped using the following system:

- small dogs = time multiplied by .90
- veteran dogs = time multiplied by .95
- heavy bodied dogs = time multiplied by .95
- veteran handlers = time multiplied by .90
- junior handlers = time multiplied by .95

Course Design



This is the essential Three Tunnel Barrel Racing course. In the sample course shown here the course is numbered.

In the Three Tunnel Barrel Racing course the pattern around the three tunnels is the same pattern used in barrel racing for horses. In traditional Barrel Race, the horse can start on the left or right. It is easier to number the course than to explain this rule. No faults apply.

Premium Blurb

Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing is a game that approximates rodeo-style barrel racing using agility pipe tunnels. *Three-Tunnel Barrel Racing* is scored Time Only. ER5

Time and Score

Time and Score was one of three games introduced in the U.S. by Kenneth Tatsch and Jean MacKenzie in the early 1990s after they returned from an agility trip to the U.K. Time and Score likely inspired the Steeplechase game played today because of its frantic pace and reliance only on the A-frame to slow and test a dog on contact obstacles. Time and Score is played rarely in the U.S. today.

Briefing

Time and Score is run like a standard agility course. The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge. However, the dog may start the course over again if there is time remaining on the clock after his first time through. The dog will accumulate points for each obstacle successfully completed.

A fixed course time will be assigned by the judge. This is usually sixty seconds. At the end of course time, the timekeeper will blow a whistle. From wherever they are on course, the handler and dog must go directly to the finish line to stop the clock. No points are awarded for performance of any obstacle after the whistle.

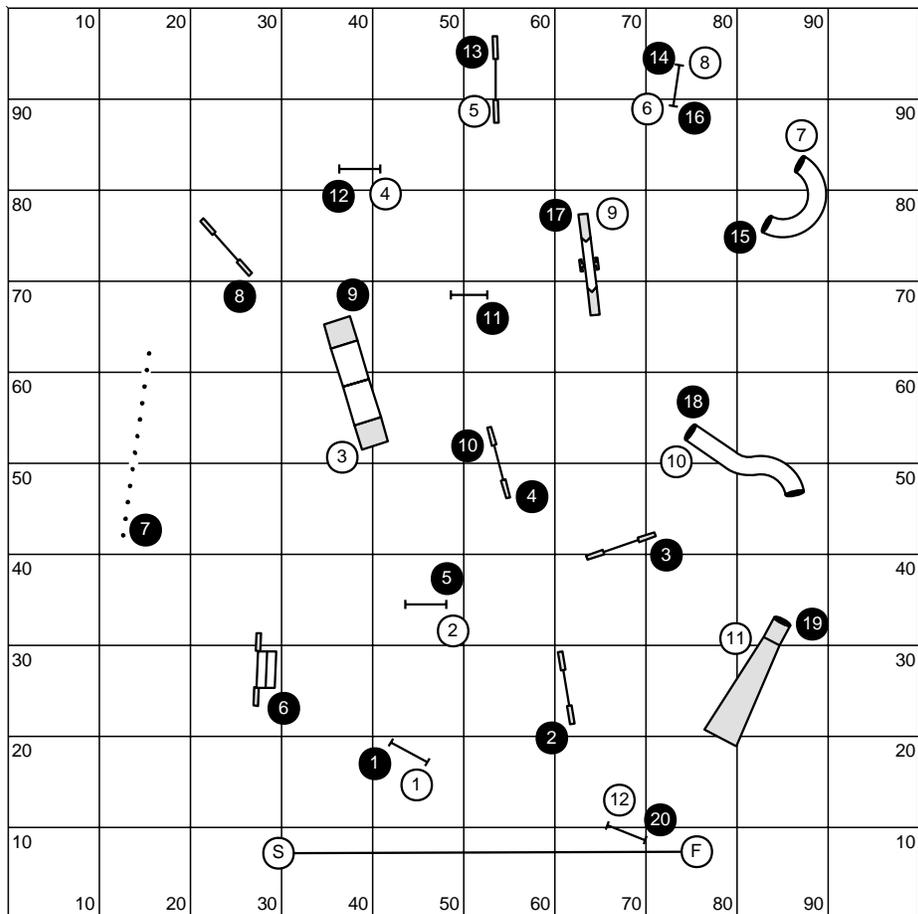
Scoring

Time and Score is scored Points, Then Time. The dog and handler team with the most points wins. Time is used as a tiebreaker only.

Points are awarded for obstacles on the following schedule:

- Hurdles, 1 point
- Tire and tunnels, 3 points
- Contact obstacles, 5 points

Course Design



This is a “nested” Time and Score Course. The white numbers represent the course to be run by Novice competitors. The black numbers represent the course to be run by Advanced or Masters competitors.

In the beginning, Time and Score courses were usually just circular and fast. However, as dogs and handlers have become more skillful competitors in this country, Time and Score courses should be designed with elements that challenge the dog and handler team for control, as well as speed.

Scoring

Time and Score is scored Faults, Then Time.

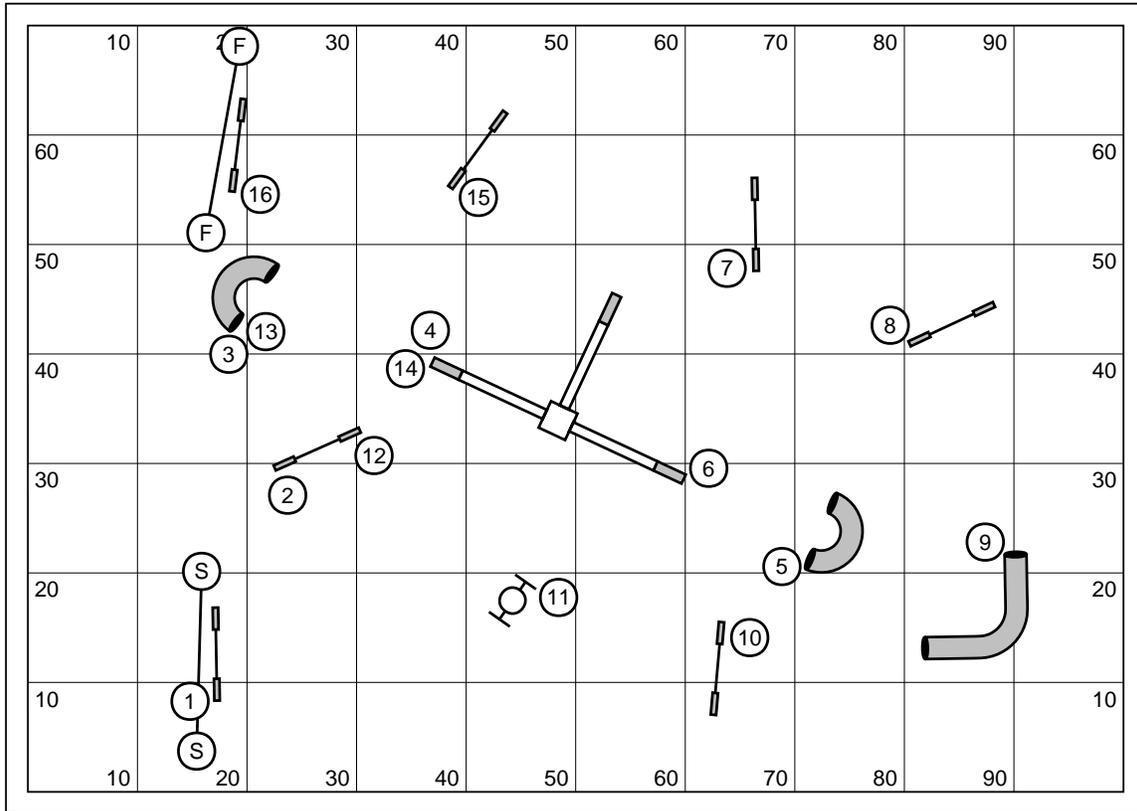
Qualifying

Time and Score and the variation Triple-Cross are eligible titling games for qualifying in the TDAA. The qualifying score for this game is left to the judge’s discretion.

Variations

- Time, Fault, and Out – This is a variation of the game from the U.K. In Time, Fault, and Out, the dog continues to run until the time expires or the dog faults an obstacle. A faulted obstacle results in the immediate end of point accumulation. The handler must direct his dog to the finish line for a time.

- Triple Cross – This variation uses the crossover at the center of the course. Triple Cross is the invention of Brian McGunigle, who was asked to create a “silly” game for the Long Island Agility club. This is what he came up with. Brian writes of the game “Apologies if this is not silly enough. I am a new judge, and I will undoubtedly become sillier as I gain more experience.” Amen to that.



This is the original Triple-Cross variation of Time and Score designed by USDAA judge Brian McGunigle for play at Contact Agility on June 8, 1997.

This course is an excellent artifact of a bygone era. The course uses a three-legged crossover.

Premium Blurp

Time and Score is a sequencing game in which when a dog is finished with a course, he may elect to begin it anew, and may continue to work until time expires. The dog earns points for each obstacle completed without fault. *Time and Score* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER6

Time To Beat

The American Kennel Club continues with innovations in the sport of agility by offering a new opportunity for exhibitors with the launch of the Time 2 Beat (T2B) titling class. It's the most interactive class to date where the most accurate, quickest dog sets the pace and all levels – Novice, Open and Excellent – compete against each other on the same course in the same class according to jump height.

Briefing

In T2B all levels run a single course that will be challenging for the excellent level, yet still fun for the novice team to run. The single course concept make it a very time efficient class to run for clubs to add to the day.

Courses will be built with obstacles from Jumpers With Weaves (JWW), with the option of having one to two contacts included on the course. The setting of the time by exhibitors is different than the current AKC classes (Standard and JWW) where the Standard Course Time (SCT) is set by the course yardage as wheeled by the judge.

In T2B there will be no refusals or run-outs called. Displaced jump bars, wrong course faults and missed contacts will result in a non-qualifying run. [Venues *other* than the AKC should choose to score performance based on their own schedule of faults.]

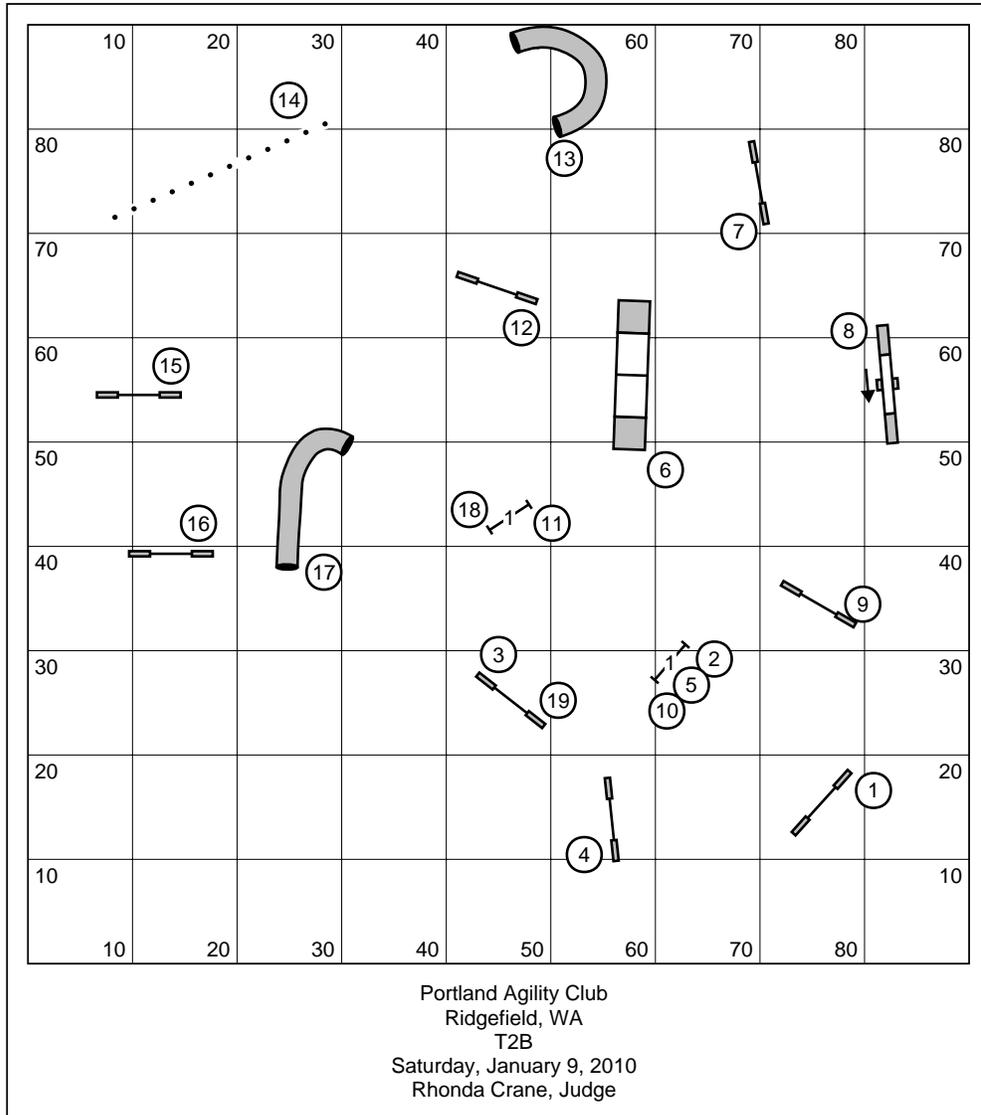
The dog that posts the quickest time in each jump height sets the T2B for that jump height. Maximum Course Times (MCT) are preset for the T2B class. They are as follows for each jump height:

- 50 seconds for the 20, 24 & 26 inch jump heights
- 55 seconds for the 16 inch jump height
- 60 seconds for the 4, 8 & 12 inch jump heights

Scoring

Time to Beat is scored Faults, Then Time.

Course Design



Qualifying

If a dog has no course faults and is under MCT for that jump height it will earn a Q and points. The dog within a jump height with the fastest time and no course faults will earn first place and 10 points. All dogs within that jump height with no course faults and are within 10% of the first place dog's time will earn 9 points. All dogs within that jump height with no course faults and are within 20% of the first place dog's time will earn 8 points. This will continue down in 10% increments all the way to dogs who are within 90% or greater, but under the MCT with no course faults, will earn 1 point.

A dog will need to earn 100 points and 15 qualifying legs to earn a title. Once a dog is awarded a T2B title, points and qualifying legs will reset to zero. The next title would be T2B2, then T2B3 and so on. T2B titles are not tied to any other AKC agility titles.

Premium Blurb

Time to Beat is a numbered sequence designed for flow that allows the dog to work at full

extension. *Time to Beat* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER6

Time Gamble

Despite having Gamble in the title, Time Gamble has nothing to do with distance work. The gamble is that the handler must guess the time it will take his dog to run the course. This game was played regularly at the USDAA Nationals since 1993. Although it started as a familiarization exercise, it evolved into a regular class that handlers take some delight in playing, and if everything goes right, in winning.

Briefing

Time Gamble is played on any standard agility course. The dog is required to perform each obstacle on the course at the handler's direction in the sequence designated by the judge.

What makes Time Gamble different from standard agility is that the course distance and standard course time are not given. The purpose of this game is for the handler to guess how much time it will take to do the course with his dog. The class is scored Time, Plus Faults so that the handler's guess must also include any faults he thinks the dog might pick up on course.

After the course walk-through, and before the class is started, all handlers are required to give the scribe (or another specified ring official) the guess of their final score.

Scoring

Time Gamble is scored Time, Plus Faults, Minus the handler's guess. The difference between the dog's actual score and the handler's guess is the dog's final score. The winner is the handler with the lowest difference.

If two handlers guess 40 seconds as a course time, and the first team runs the course in 35 seconds while the second team runs 39 seconds, the second team would win despite the first team being faster through the course.

If one handler guesses sixty seconds and runs the course in 59 seconds while a second handler guesses 45 seconds and runs in 40 seconds, the first team would win as they are closer to their estimated time.

Faults are added to the dog's time. The fault schedule is unique:

- Missed contact, 3 faults
- Knocked bar, 3 faults
- Refusals, not faulted

If one handler guesses 50 seconds and runs the course in 47 seconds with 3 faults while a second handler guesses 45 seconds and runs in 40 seconds, the first team would win as they are closer to their estimated time (the 3 faults are added to the running time of 47 seconds) even though the second dog was faster and had no faults.

Course Design

A Time Gamble course will typically consist of at least 11 obstacles and no more than 14 obstacles. Only two contact obstacles are used. No table is used.

Strategies

- Before playing this game, figure out how fast your dog works by keeping track of your dog's yards per second in standard classes. To determine this, divide the course distance by the dog's actual time on course, less 5 to 7 seconds for the table performance. This will give you the yards per seconds that your dog works. Knowing how fast your dog works means all you have to do is estimate the length of the Time Gamble course.
- In addition to knowing how fast a dog runs, the handler might anticipate incurring any faults and add those into the estimate for the guess. Good teams often come within 1/10th second of their estimated times.

Qualifying and Titles

Time Gamble is an eligible game for titling in the TDAA. Qualifying is based on how close the guess is to the dog's actual score:

- Games I = Guess within 15 seconds
- Games II = Guess within 10 seconds
- Games III = Guess within 5 seconds

Variations

- Pre-novice – This variation is by Elizabeth Evans. The course is designed as a very simple circular course with a table, wingless jumps, a very low A-frame (4' or so) and a tunnel. Handlers have to guess how long it will take for their dogs to do the course. Dogs will start and end on the table. Whoever is closest (over or under) to their actual time will win. Folks with puppies can just run the circle without doing all the obstacles, or they can do the ones the puppy knows how to do, like the tunnel, low table, or run between the wings of the jump. It can also be done on-leash if necessary.
- Elimination for overestimating – At the 1997 USDAA Nationals, the judge specified that if a handler's guess was over the dog's time, then the team was eliminated.

Premium Blurb

Time Gamble is based on standard numbered course, requiring the handler to guess how much time it will take to do the course with his dog. *Time Gamble* is scored Time, Plus Faults. The handler's guess can and should also include any faults he thinks the dog might pick up on course. The score closest to the guess wins! ER5

Time Stands Still

This is a game originally designed as a training protocol, specifically to teach and proof a 2-on/2-off contact performance. The training game has been elevated to a gritty game of competition.

Briefing

Ostensibly Time Stands Still is a simple follow-the-numbers game. However, the game has special rules for timing. When the teeter has tipped (and is touching the floor) the time will stop. Once the dog leaves the ramp time will begin again.

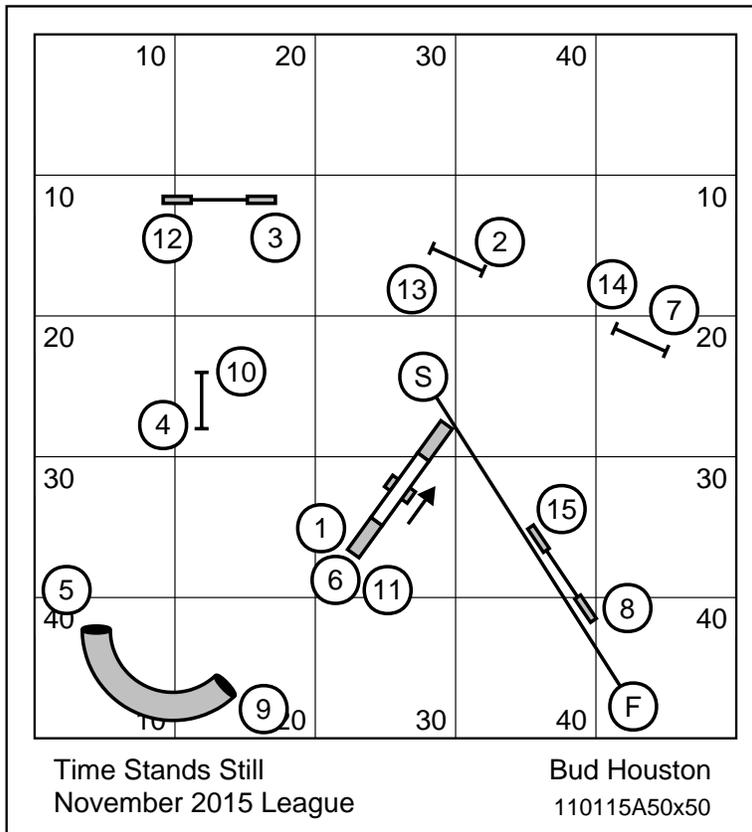
Note that initially time begins when the dog *first* dismounts the teeter.

Since time is essential to the conduct of the game, the judge should personally carry and operate a stopwatch in order to use his own judgment in measuring the dog's time to complete the course, and determine to what extent time stands still.

Scoring

Time Stands Still is scored Time, Plus Faults. The dog with the lowest score wins.

Course Design



This is a course that was run in the National Dog Agility League in November of 2015. The NDAL provide a data field for Youtube recordings of the performances of this course. You can find that scoresheet (and look at the YouTube recordings) at this link: [Nov 2015 Results](#).

The sample course was designed to test *International skills* in dog agility. The game could certainly be played with modest challenges. But the nature of the game suggests that something *interesting* should follow the performance of the teeter.

Strategies

The obvious question about this game is whether the handler should rely on a two-on/two-off (2o/2o) performance to move to a control position on the course. If the dog doesn't have a 2o/2o, then the handler will have to race from control position to control position.

Qualifying and Titles

Time Stands Still is eligible for titling in the TDAA.

Qualification is based on a measured course, applying the appropriate rates of travel for dogs at different levels and different jump heights. Once faults have been added into the time if the sum is equal to or less than the established QCT, then the dog will qualify.

Premium Blurb

Time Stands Still is based on a numbered course. The game has special rules for timing: When the teeter has tipped (and is touching the floor) the time stops. Once the dog leaves the ramp time begins again. *Time Stands Still* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Time Warp

Time Warp is the invention of Ilze Rukis. She writes, "Thirty seconds are taken off the final time if weaves are successfully completed with the handler behind the line. Therefore, there is a possibility for negative course times, hence my name for the game. My Border Collie Zuzu has proven this time warp theory. She did this game in minus 4 seconds!!"

Briefing

The objective of Time Warp is to run all of the obstacles in a numbered sequence as fast as possible without faults and to turn back the clock by performing one or more Time Warp distance challenges.

The performance of the table will be judge's choice. Traditionally the dog will be required to demonstrate both a sit and a down, in either order. The handler simply continues when the dog has done these two performances.

Thirty seconds are taken off the final time for each Time Warp distance challenge successfully completed with the handler behind the line. Therefore, there is a possibility for negative course times, hence the name of the game.

Scoring

Time Warp is Scored Time, Plus Faults Less Bonus. Performance faults are identical to those in the standard classes with this exception: traditionally the wrong course fault is waived during the attempt of the Time Warp Bonus.

A 30-second reduction in the dog's time is awarded if the dog performs the Time Warp distance challenge while the handler remains on the opposite side of the containment line.

Note: Avoid any convention that calls for a 5-point fault for stepping over a containment line. The dog is already penalized for failing the Time Warp distance challenge. There's no good reason to punish him a second time.

Strategies

The handler should be very aware of the capacities and limitation of the competition. The game might be won by a dog that does not attempt the distance challenge but it is unlikely unless there is no dog in the field of competitors that will do the distance challenge without the attendance of the handler alongside. Moreover, the handler should trust the dog's understanding the performance of the work at a distance, even if this performance has not been intentionally tested in the dog's training program.

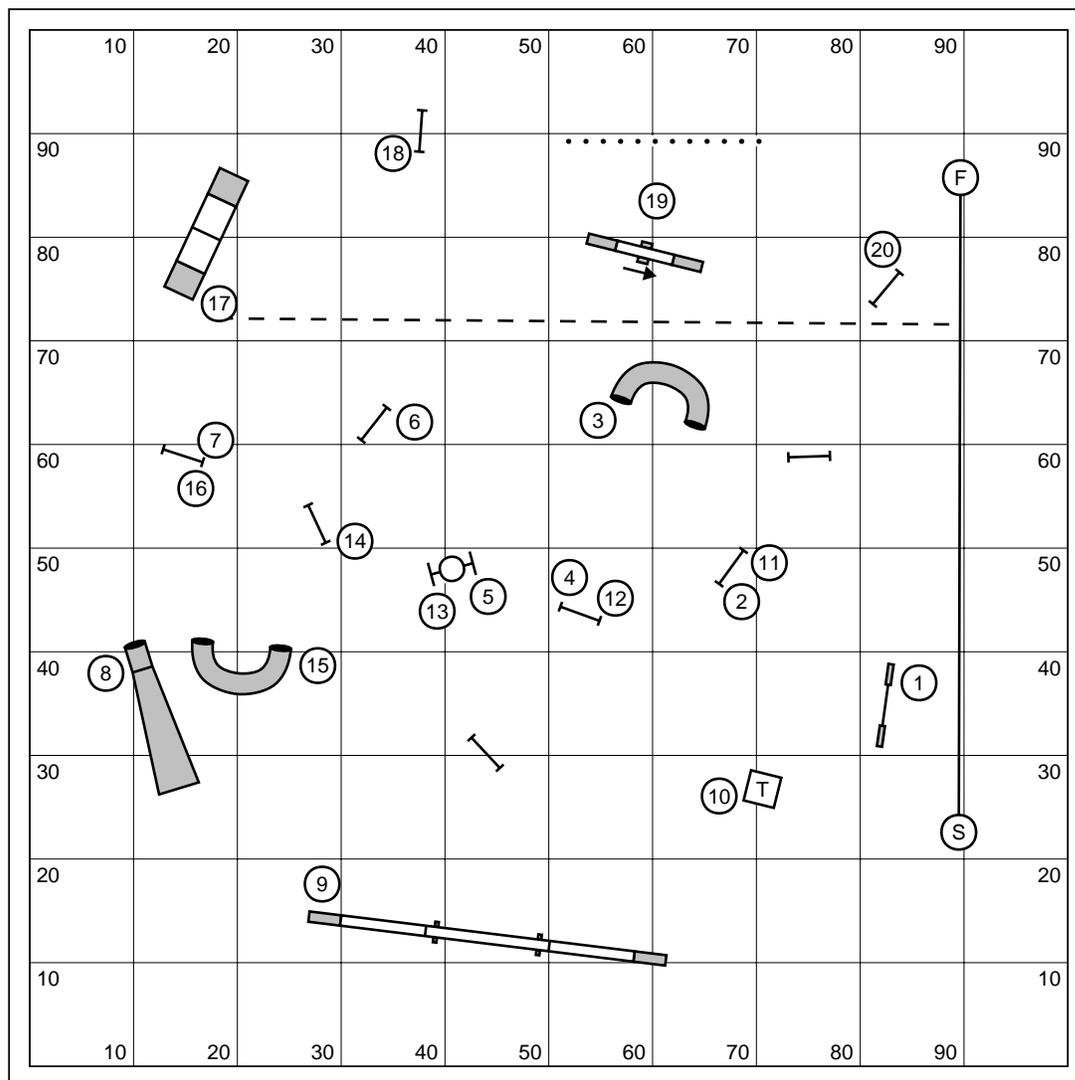
The handler should be aware that a dog will nicely work in a parallel path to the handler's path. The handler should seek a path of movement complimentary to the dog. The biggest mistake a handler can make in lateral distance work is to come to a stop and rely on the flapping of arms and jaw to direct the dog.

As refusals are not faulted, the handler should not get mental if the dog should happen to refuse an obstacle. It is possible to recover from such an error and still place highly in this game.

If the handler knows that his dog will not perform the Time Warp obstacles from a

distance, it makes more sense for the handler to draw step over the line, run with the dog, and never mind making the attempt for the time warp bonus.

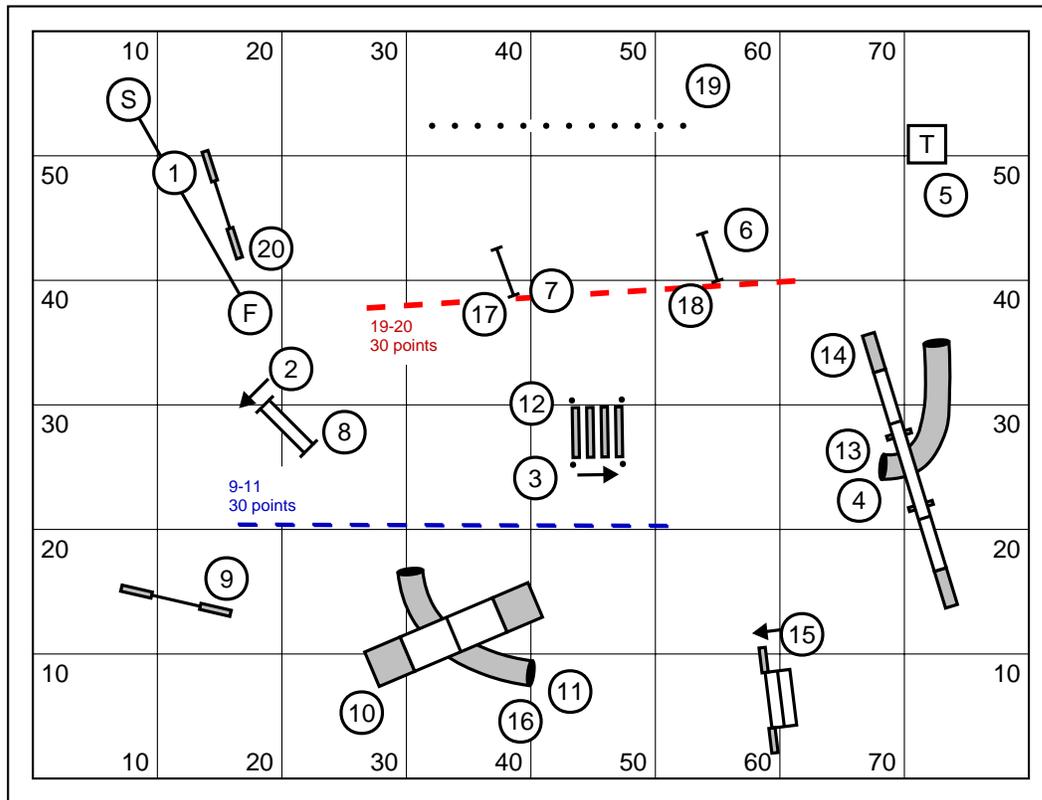
Course Design



This is a Time Warp course for Advanced competitors. This course was designed by Bud Houston for agility league at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio.

In a course like this the judge might specify special performance rules for the Time Warp Distance challenge. When this game was originally played the performance rules were: “If the dog comes out of the poles, it is permitted for the handler to switch performance to the teeter. If the dog puts a single paw on the teeter, the handler must finish the course via the teeter. This is to keep handlers from pulling their dogs off the contact obstacle. If the teeter is chosen, no time bonus is granted and there is no handler restriction. “

Multiple Time Warp Opportunities



The Time Warp course is based upon a numbered course; and so the course might also be designed as a Jumpers course. The course designer should consider giving the exhibitor multiple opportunities, as in this example, to warp back the clock so that if one failed the other would offer redemption.

The Time Warp obstacle does *not* have to be the weave poles. However, the distance challenge posed should allow the agility team to demonstrate substantial technical merit.

In the traditional Time Warp course the designer will seek a closing challenge offering a performance of the weave poles to the dog at a lateral distance from the handler.

Qualifying and Titles

Time Warp is an eligible titling game for qualifying in the TDAA. Qualifying criteria for this game is left fairly to the judge's discretion.

Time Warp is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. The simple qualifying criteria would be to set an aggressive SCT based on the rates of travel for each jump height from the standard classes. This raises the sticky issue that a dog might earn a qualifying score without any Time Warp bonus, and indeed, without even attempting the Time Warp bonus.

Variations

- **The Clean Round variation** – In this variation, the dog will earn an additional Time Warp bonus (something modest, like 10 points) for completing the numbered sequence without a performance fault (dropped bar, missed contact, etc.)

- **The Multiple Challenges variation** – In this variation more than one Time Warp distance challenge will be included in the numbered sequence.

Premium Blurb

The objective of *Time Warp* is to run a numbered sequence while attempting one or more distance challenges for which *Time Warp* bonuses can be earned. It is possible to have negative score with the Time Warp bonuses! Time Warp is scored *Time, Plus Faults Less Bonus*. ER7

Touch 'n Go

The goal of the Touch 'n Go class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to perform contact obstacles at speed on a course comprised of tunnels and contact obstacles.

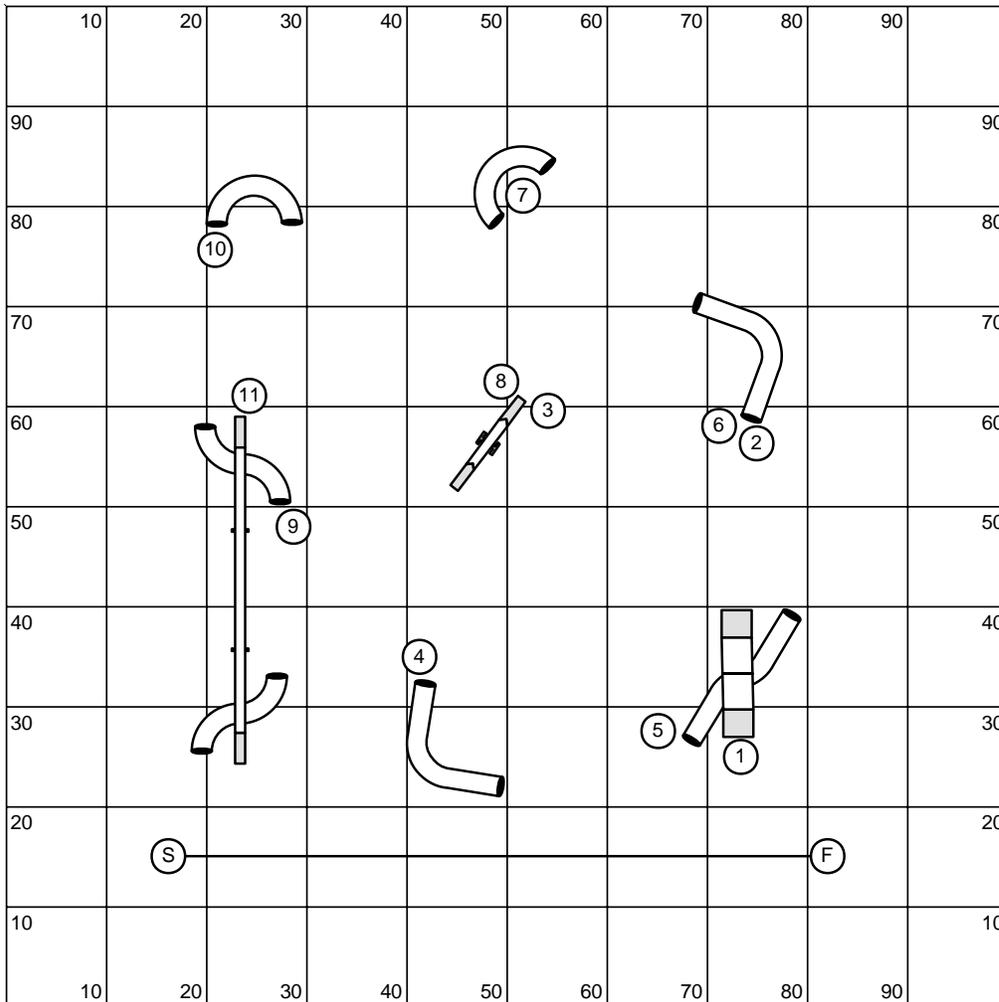
Briefing

This course consists of contact obstacles and tunnels only. The handler must direct the dog to perform the obstacles in the order specified by the judge.

Scoring

Touch 'n Go is scored Faults, Then Time. The dog with the fewest faults will win. Time is a tiebreaker only.

Course Design



This Touch 'n Go course was designed by judge Lora Del Page for Ace Agility on April 8, 2002.

The Touch 'N Go course is made up exclusively of contact obstacles and tunnels. No weave poles or hurdles are allowed. The course should present challenges appropriate to the level of competition.

Qualifying and Titles

Touch 'n Go is an eligible titling game under NADAC and TDAA rules. A qualifying score is earned for a clean run under the standard course time. Typically dogs at each of the levels run an identical course. Only the qualifying time changes from one level to the next based on the respective rates of travel for each level.

Premium Blurb

Touch 'n Go is a numbered course consisting of tunnels and contact obstacles only!

Touch 'n Go is scored Faults, Then Time. ER12

Triathlon

This is a game concocted by Bud Houston and intended as a team game that emphasizes the various skills and games of USDAA-style agility: Snooker, Jumpers, and Gamblers. It is a very advanced game. Only the most intrepid and advanced handlers and dogs should undertake to play this game. To our knowledge this game has been played only at Camp Dogwood in Ostrander, Ohio.

Briefing

This is a three-handler and three-dog team game. Each handler in his turn will send his dog over the release jump and play the game indicated by which tunnel the dog elects. These games/and tunnels have no set order and can be taken in whichever order the handler (or the dog, as the case might be) prefers.

One tunnel is designated as the start of a snooker course. As the dog emerges from the tunnel, the dog will have sixty seconds to play. On the timekeeper's whistle the handler must direct the dog to the table to stop time.

Another tunnel is designated the start of a gamblers course. As the dog emerges from the tunnel, the dog will have 40 seconds to accumulate points then 20 seconds to perform the gamble. On the second, whistle the handler must direct his dog to the table to stop time.

The final tunnel is designated the start of a jumpers course. Weave poles may be used in this course. The dog's time stops on the table.

When the first dog gets to the table, the second dog may be released. When the second dog gets to the table the third dog will be released. The team's time will stop when the last dog gets to the table.

Each team may report only one score for each of the three games. However, a dog electing a tunnel and a game that has already been played may finish by playing the game elected by the tunnel. The team will keep whichever is the better of the two scores but will lose the scoring opportunity for the game not played.

Scoring

Triathlon is scored Points, Then Time.

The Jumpers course will be scored on a 100 point deduction system. The dog begins with 100 points. Both time and faults will be deducted from these 100 points. No standard course time shall be specified.

The Gamblers course will be scored points only and judged under USDAA Advanced rules. This is significant as refusals will be faulted on contact obstacles. Twenty-five bonus points will be given the team for a successful performance of the gamble in time.

The Snooker course will be scored points only and judged under USDAA Advanced rules. Taking an obstacle that is not a part of the Snooker course will result in immediate end of scoring (and the judge's whistle).

The three scores will be combined and the overall time of performance noted for tie-breaking purposes. This course requires three timekeepers: one to keep overall time, one to keep snooker time, and one to keep gamblers time.

Each handler should be completely familiar with all three of the games and courses on the field. It's not just a matter that a handler might send his dog to the wrong tunnel. Either of the first two handlers to run might send the dog into the wrong tunnel. The handler on deck should be prepared to run the course that the prior handler had intended. With this in mind, the dog designated to be the Gamblers dog probably should go last, because he's more likely to have the directional control to get into the tunnel not taken (even though it might not be the Gamblers course).

Variations

U.K. Triathlon – In the U.K. an agility Triathlon is run a single dog in three events: standard, jumpers, and gamblers. The three are separate classes. After all classes have been run, and three winners decided, an overall winner is computed from the three classes.

Premium Blurb

Triathlon is a combination game incorporating Snooker, Jumpers and Gamblers. *Triathlon* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Trigility

Trigility is a fun combination game incorporating a standard numbered course; a jumpers course; and a gamblers course. This game comes to us from DOCNA agility.

Briefing

Trigility is a game of strategy and daring in which three dog and handler teams are faced with three agility tests in a single game: A standard numbered course; a jumper's course; and, a gamblers course. Teams may be composed of dogs of mixed height, but competing at the same level.

For more information on Trigility go to: www.docna.com

Handler Rules

- The first member of the team does a mini *Jumpers* course. When the dog has cleared the last obstacle on this course and crosses the finish line, the second dog and handler team may start their course.
- The second member of the team does a mini *Standard Agility* course. When the dog has cleared the last obstacle on the course and crossed the finish line, the third dog and handler team may start their course.
- The third member of the team will complete a *Traditional Gamblers* course. Once the dog has cleared the final obstacle and crossed the finish line, the course is complete.
- In this team event there are no batons to pass. The next run starts as soon as the previous dog has crossed the finish line for his part of the course.
- If a dog crosses the start line before the previous dog has finished his course he will be penalized 10 faults.
- If the previous dog skips the last obstacle in his course the next team may start without fault when it is obvious that the previous team has decided not to correct.
- All obstacles must be attempted. Deliberately skipping an obstacle will result in Elimination.
- For the team to earn a qualifying score the gamble must be completed without fault.

Ring Administration for Trigility

- If a substitution is needed for an absent team member the replacement team member may not run the same section of the course that they previously ran.
- The SCT will be based on the *Select* Standard Course Time plus some additional time for the exchange between teams.
- Should the team consist of dogs of multiple jump heights the highest height will be used for SCT calculation and team placement.
- Gate stewards may adjust the running order to limit the amount of pole setting

Scoring

Trigility is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Qualifying

Trigility is an eligible qualifying game for play in both Dogs on Course in North America (DOCNA), the Teacup Dogs Agility Association (TDAA).

Any team that has completed the gamble and is under course time with any faults they might have earned added to the time, each member of the team will receive a Qualifying Round.

Premium Blurb

Trigility is a game of strategy and daring in which three dog and handler teams complete three types of agility tests: A standard numbered course; a jumper's course; and, a gamblers course. Teams may be composed of dogs of mixed height, but competing at the same level. *Trigility* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Trim the Tree

Is your agility club looking for some new games to play at your annual Christmas party? Here's one to try. Trim the Tree is the invention of John Ostrowski. It is the perfect seasonal game for Christmas.

Briefing

Trim the Tree is a dog's choice game. This means that obstacles are performed in the order and direction of the handler's choosing.

The objective of the game is for the dog and handler team to accumulate as many points as possible in a specified time. However, in Trim the Tree, the handler must hang a Christmas ornament on the tree after each obstacle is successfully completed for points. The proper sequence would be obstacle–ornament–obstacle–ornament–obstacle and so on. The handler will also receive points for each ornament that is hanging on the tree at the end of the run.

Each obstacle on the course may be performed only once for points.

A fixed course time will be assigned by the judge. This is usually around 45 seconds. At the end of course time, the timekeeper will blow a whistle and the handler will go to the finishing point designated by the judge.

Scoring

Trim the Tree is scored points plus ornaments, then time. The dog with the highest score wins. Time is used only as a tiebreaker.

The point system used for assigning values to obstacles is at the sole discretion of the judge. Obstacle performance faults will result in the team not earning the points for that obstacle.

Scoring will cease when any of the following occur:

- The handler fails to hang an ornament between the performance of two obstacles
- Two ornaments are hung in a row without an obstacle being successfully performed in between
- Course time expires

When any of the above occurs, the dog cannot receive any additional points but will keep all points accumulated to that point.

Traditionally, special awards are given for odd circumstances such as most broken ornaments or most ornaments falling from the tree. Awards for watering the tree are optional.

Course Design

This is a great game to play as a pick-up game. You can take whatever course was on the field for the last class, tweak the angles of a couple of obstacles and then add a Christmas tree and a box of ornaments.

Obstacles should be arranged on the field in a random fashion without any discernible flow. High-point obstacles should be placed some distance from the Christmas tree.

Safety note: It's better not to use breakable ornaments!

Premium Blurb

Trim the Tree is a dog's choice point accumulation game that requires the handler to hang a Christmas tree ornament for each obstacle the dog performs. While it's not a completely appropriate game to play in titling competition... it has been done. *Trim the Tree* is scored points plus ornaments, then time. ER2

Triple True Team Baton Relay

Triple True Team Baton Relay is the invention of Linda Northrop. The game was originally submitted for the Clean Run magazine games contest in 1995. This is a fun twist on the standard relay, perfect for novice dogs and advanced dogs alike.

Briefing

Triple True Team Baton Relay is an up and back team relay with multiple legs. Teams are comprised of three dogs and three handlers.

The course layout consists of four straight lines of obstacles, each of which contains an equal number of obstacles. The flow of each line of obstacles goes in the opposite direction as the line before it.

Handler A directs his dog over the first line of obstacles and passes the baton to Handler B. This handler and his dog run the next line of obstacles before passing the baton to Handler C. Once Handler C and his dog complete the third line of obstacles, all members of the team must perform the final line of obstacles. Any running order for the final sequence can be used. No baton exchange is required between team members for the final leg.

Time stops when the last dog and handler of the team complete the final line of obstacles and cross the passing line.

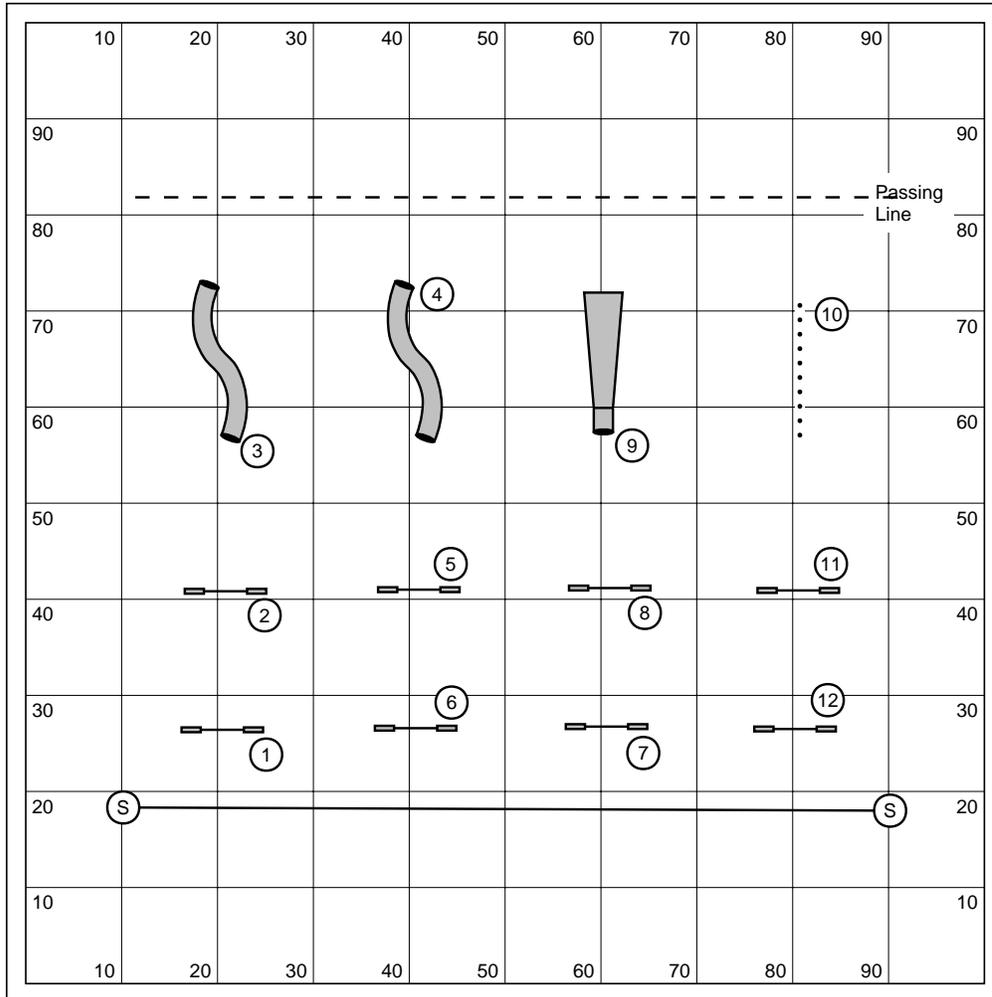
All baton exchanges must occur behind the appropriate passing line.

Scoring

Triple True Team Baton Relay is scored Time, Plus Faults. The team with the lowest score wins.

According to traditional relay rules, faults should be assessed for dropping, throwing, kicking, or beating someone with the baton.

Course Design



This is a representative example of a Triple True Team Baton Relay.

For a novice Triple True Team Baton Relay, no more than 12 obstacles should be used. These 12 obstacles must be arranged in four lines of three obstacles. Each set of three goes in the opposite direction. No contact obstacles should be used. Obstacles should be restricted to weave poles and other obstacles that are permissible in Jumpers. Set the height of all jumps to 12".

For more advanced handlers, more obstacles, including contacts may be added each line. In addition, jumps in each of the first three lines of obstacles could be set at the regulation jump height of the dog running that leg and jumps in the final line could be set at the height of the smallest dog on the team.

Qualifying

Qualifying scores are based on rates of travel from the standard class. To qualify, the combined scores of the dogs must be equal to or less than the established SCT.

Premium Blurb

Triple True Team Baton Relay is an up-and-back team relay with multiple legs and in which each member of the team will run twice. Teams are comprised of three dogs and

three handlers. *Triple True Team Baton Relay* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER5

Truth or Dare

Truth or Dare is the invention of Jeffrey Boyer with valuable input from Bob Domfort. The game was played for the first time in December 2008 in agility league play hosted by the Capital District Agility Fun Group.

Briefing

The purpose of this game is to provide the team with the opportunity to run a course that plays to the strengths of the team, with elements of strategy, course planning, and time gambles. *Truth* – The team runs either the numbered course, or *Dare* – The team runs a dog's-choice course. The objective is to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allowed.

In both the *Truth* and *Dare* courses the dog will earn points for the performance of obstacles, using this schedule:

- Jumps = 1 pt.
- Tunnels, tire = 3 pts.
- Contacts, weaves = 5 pts.

The handler must inform the judge and scribe whether the course will be *Truth* or *Dare* before beginning the run. However, the default is *Truth* if the dog begins with obstacle #1; and *Dare* if the dog begins with any other obstacle.

The Standard Course Time (SCT) is based upon the length of *Truth* course. Time begins when dog crosses start line and ends when the dog puts a paw on the table. The Timekeeper will blow the whistle at end of SCT. After the whistle the dog can earn no new points for obstacle performance and must be directed to the table. The table is live at all times.

Truth Scoring

The *Truth* course is scored: Points - Faults + Bonus, then Time. A bonus of 1 point is awarded for each full second the dog is under SCT (up to a maximum of 10). Each team starts with 28 points, the points available for the *Truth* sequence.

Standard fault apply for the *Truth* course. The schedule of faults is amended from the standard classes so that penalties are not quite so severe. These include:

- 3 faults for: dropped bar; off course; missed contact
- 6 faults for: failure to perform
- *Elimination* for more than one failure to perform
- The weave poles earn no performance faults aside from failure to perform
- Refusals are not faulted; the 4-paw safety rule is *not* in effect

Dare Scoring

The *Dare* course is scored: Points - Faults, Then Time. A fault of 1 point is assessed for each full second the dog is over SCT. The dog may take any obstacle twice for points; and back-to-back is permitted.

No performance faults will be assessed in the *Dare* course; but points will not be awarded for faulted obstacles. The four-paw safety rule is *not* in effect.

Combined Scoring

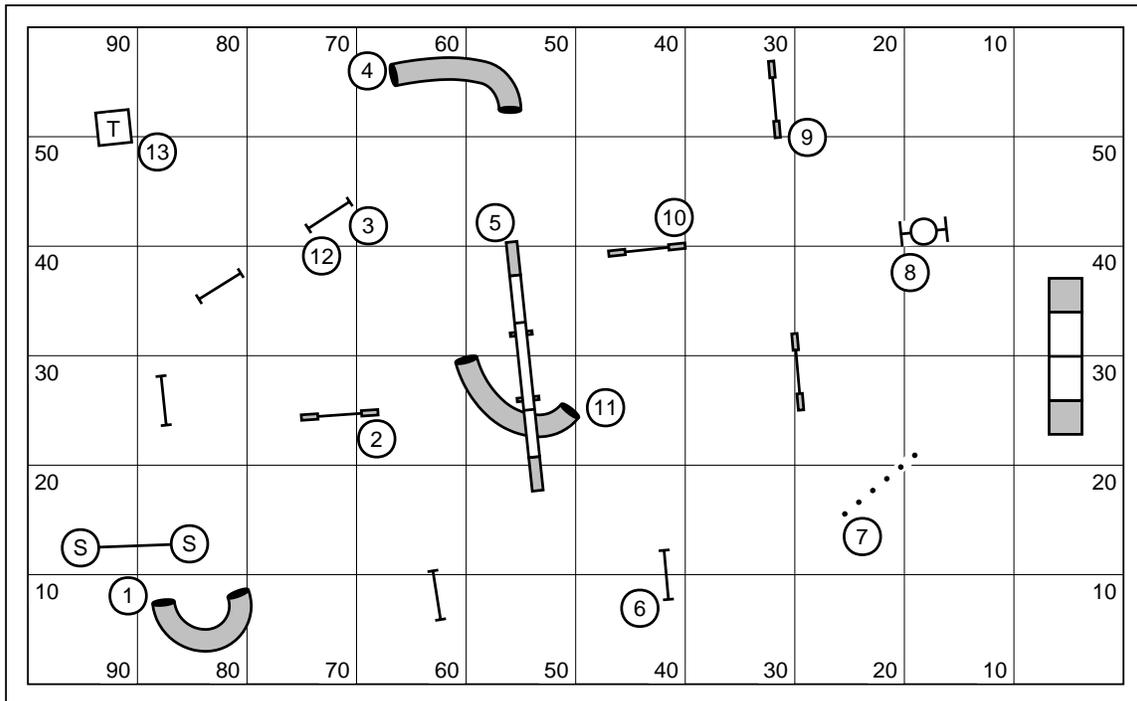
Although the two dogs have essentially played different games both the *Truth* and the *Dare* dogs' scores will be compared for the purpose of placement on the basis of Points, Then Time.

For Truth, the game is scored points minus faults plus bonus. For T (Truth), the team starts with 31 points. Subtract faults as follows: 3 fault points for each S, 6 fault points for each F. For each full second that the team's time is under SCT for their level, add 1 point. This is the team's final score.

For Dare, the game is scored points minus time faults. For D (Dare), add all the point values. Subtract 1 point for each full second the team's time exceeds the established Qualifying Course Time (QCT). A whistle will mark the end of QCT.

After computing all of the points, ties are broken by time, regardless of which course was chosen.

Course Design



This is a good representative sample of a *Truth or Dare* course. The idea of the game is to comparing the scores of a dog running dog's-choice with a dog running a numbered course. It's difficult to have true parity in the course design. If the standard course is too technical, then the advantage goes to the dog's choice dog. Even if the numbered sequence is simple and flowing, the dog's choice dog might have advantages which could be offset, possibly, by denying back-to-back performances.

In any case the course designer and judge should be a student of the game, and learn from whatever the design yields.

Qualifying

To qualify, a dog must earn at least the sum of the value of all obstacles in the numbered course.

Premium Blurb

Truth or Dare is a fun game in which the handler has the option to either run a course as a standard numbered course; or earn points for obstacles by performing them in the order and direction of his choosing. *Truth or Dare* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Tunnel-Crossover Game

The Tunnel-Crossover Game or Tunnel Game was created by Darlene Woz for a USDAA event held in Detroit, Michigan in 1994. This game is great fun and frequently hilarious as handlers find their dogs sucked straight through the crossover of tunnels when they're supposed to turn. The game can be played by dogs and handlers with a minimum amount of experience but it takes a handler of some experience to do well. When the Tunnel Pretzel obstacle was added the game was renamed The Ultimate Tunnel Game.

Briefing

The Tunnel-Crossover Game is run on a course consisting only of tunnels and weave poles. The main "obstacle" is a crossover area consisting of a 10' square marked on the ground with a straight pipe tunnel placed on each edge of the square.

The obstacles must be done in the numerical order specified by the judge, and the dog must do each of the obstacles correctly before going to the next obstacle. There is no penalty for an off course (the handler is just wasting time) as long as the order is eventually completed correctly.

The 10' center zone of the tunnel crossover will be treated like any other obstacle on the course in that handlers cannot touch the obstacle without penalty. If at any time the handler steps into the center zone, intentionally or by accident, the handler must do three jumping jacks before he is allowed to leave and continue on course. It is recommended that the judge have all handlers practice jumping jacks during the briefing so that proper form can be demonstrated.

There's one special bonus in this game. If the handler starts and stays in the center zone of the crossover, directing his dog through the entire course from there (start line to finish line), a 25 second bonus is subtracted from the dog's course time.

The judge will set a standard course time. This is generally in the range of sixty seconds. At the end of course time, the timekeeper will blow a whistle. This is an all-or-nothing game so that dogs must complete the course before the whistle blows to receive a score.

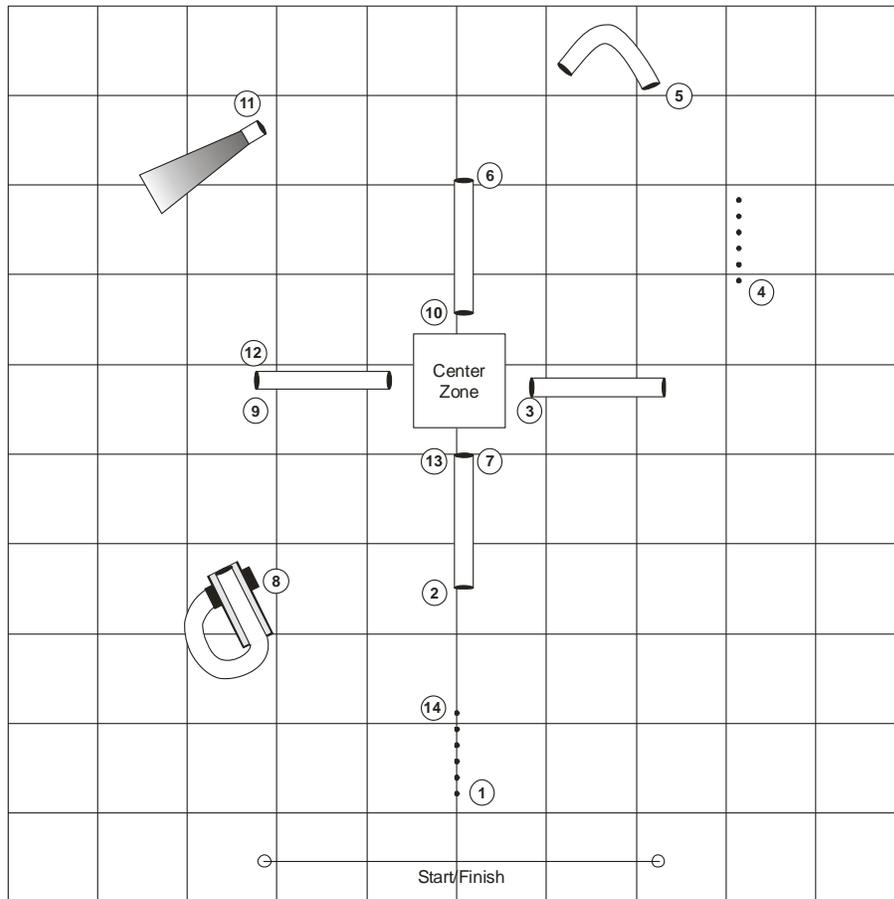
Despite all the silliness of the game the Tunnel-Crossover Game actually has the profound effect of teaching the importance of handler body position and movement on course.

Scoring

The Tunnel-Crossover Game is scored Time Only. The winner is the dog with the fastest time.

There are no faults because each obstacle must be completed correctly before proceeding. The only adjustments to a dog's actual running time will be the application of the 25 second bonus if earned.

Course Design



This is the original Tunnel Crossover Game designed by Darlene Woz.

The course layout must consist of only tunnels, both open and closed, and weave poles. Contact obstacles and jumps may not be used. Generally, the course should contain no more than 14 obstacles.

An elevated ramp forming a tunnel pretzel may also be used.

Note: Plans for building the base for the tunnel pretzel are included in the Appendix.

Strategies

The goal of this game is to get through the course as smoothly as possible. This is very difficult. As the only objects are tunnels, the handler must rely more on body language and posturing rather than verbal commands to direct his dog.

In order to handle a dog from the center zone of the crossover and earn the 25-second bonus deduction a dog and handler team must have exceptional distance control and communication.

Variations

- Scoring option – The game can also be scored Points, Then Time. The number of the final obstacle performed before the whistle blows represents the points earned. For example, if the dog completes the course up through #12 when the whistle

blows, the dog's score would be 12 points. Time is used as a tiebreaker, if more than one dog has the same number of points.

Premium Blurb

The Tunnel-Crossover Game is a follow-the-numbers game with a touch of distance work. Four tunnels creating a crossover effect create a zone through which the handler is not allowed to move. Consequently the handler must work the course from outside the crossover arrangement. *The Tunnel-Crossover Game* is scored Time Only. ER5

Tunnelers

The goal of the Tunnelers class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to respond quickly to directional commands from the handler while rapidly negotiating a course comprised of only tunnels.

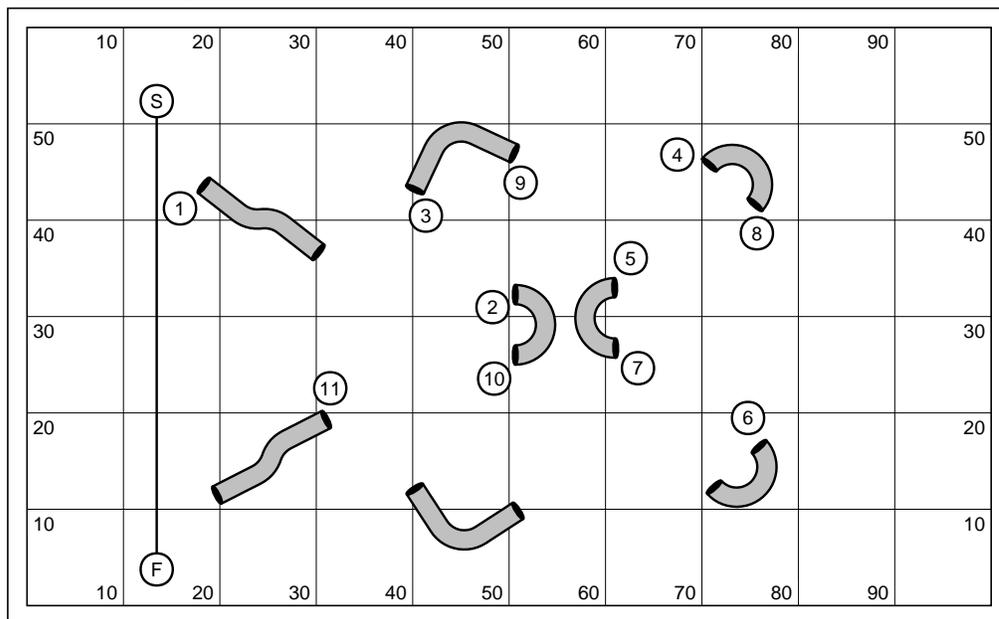
Briefing

This course consists of tunnels only. The handler must direct the dog to perform the obstacles in the order specified by the judge. Under NADAC rules, refusals are not faulted, and there are no jump bars to drop. All the handler has to worry about is staying on course.

Scoring

Tunnelers is scored Faults, Then Time.

Course Design



This Tunnelers course was designed by NADAC judge Lora Del Page for Agility Junkies on April 13, 2002.

The Tunnelers course is comprised solely of tunnels. The tunnels can be reused to make the most of only a few tunnels. The complexity of the handling challenges and number of tunnels should be appropriate to the level of competition.

Qualifying

Tunnelers is eligible for titling game in NADAC and the TDAA. A clean run under the standard course time is a qualifying score.

All dogs at each of the levels run the identical course. Only the qualifying time changes from one level to the next as shown in this table:

Premium Blurb

Tunnelers is a numbered course consisting only of tunnels. Dogs at all levels run the same course. *Tunnelers* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER12

Tunnel Jacks

Tunnel Jacks is a variation of Pole Jacks, using tunnels instead of weave poles. It is a game clearly intended for novice players.

Briefing

Tunnel Jacks is played like the childhood game of Jacks. The performance of a tunnel is equivalent to the bounce of the ball. All other obstacles on the course represent jacks and have specific point values.

After completing the bounce, the team picks an appropriate number of "jacks" by scoring an equivalent number of points. The handler and dog team will bounce "onesies", bounce "twosies", bounce "threesies", and so on. The judge will call out the total number of points gained after the bounce – it is the handler's responsibility to take a path with obstacles which add up to the appropriate number. Obstacles may be completed multiple times for points, but not back to back. The judge will call out "Bounce" when a tunnel is completed. Points: Jumps = 1 point, Chute/Tire = 3 points, Contacts and weaves = 5 points.

Time begins when a dog enters a tunnel and ends after the dog crosses the finish line. The finish line is live when time expires or when the handler has completed "sevensies". The whistle will blow at 60 seconds for large dogs and 65 seconds for small dogs. The game is scored points, then time.

If a dog faults during a pickup sequence, the judge will call out "zero" and the handler must do a bounce and start over on the pickup sequence. Faults will be judged as in Standard agility, and called as a zero. Completing back-to-back obstacles is a fault. Refusals are not faulted. Any obstacles taken between the faulted obstacle and the bounce are not counted. Obstacles taken on the way to the finish line will count and may negate the jack's sequence if the resulting score is greater than what was required.

On the scribe sheets, the bounces and jacks will be recorded. If the jacks' totals between bounces are not the next required sequence, then the points do not count. However, the competitor may restart with a bounce and accumulate the correct number of jacks.

Scoring

Tunnel Jacks is scored Points, Then Time.

Tunnel Snooker

Tunnel Snooker is a variation of Snooker, using tunnels for the red obstacles instead of jumps.

Briefing

The object of the Tunnel Snooker is to collect as many points as possible by successful completion of opening and closing sequence in allotted time as determined by the judge. There will be set start and finish lines.

Tunnel Snooker is a two-part game consisting of an opening sequence and a closing sequence; each of which have their own unique rules for performance.

Opening sequence

The objective in the opening sequence is to gather as many points as possible before moving into the closing sequence.

Tunnels will be set in u-shape and the right side must be taken for successful completion. If a tunnel is taken in wrong direction, it is considered faulted and may not be used again. Each tunnel may be attempted only one time.

The dog must successfully complete a tunnel, for 1 point, to go on to collect points off one of the numbered obstacles 2-7, point value as numbered. Only one numbered obstacle can be attempted for each successful tunnel. If the obstacle is faulted no points are awarded. If the dog goes to another numbered obstacle or takes a used tunnel scoring stops.

Once all the tunnels are used and the last point obstacle is attempted, the team must move into the closing. Example= tunnel, 4, tunnel, 5, tunnel, 6, 2-7.

Closing sequence

The closing sequence is a mini course taken in sequence 2-7. If the dog faults an obstacle or goes off course, scoring stops.

The team is given a set time to complete both the opening and closing sequence. The timer will blow a whistle if the time is reached. The judge will blow a whistle if a fault occurs that stops scoring. When scoring is stopped or full sequence completed dog must cross finish line to stop time.

Scoring

Tunnel Snooker is scored Points, Then Time. Time breaks a tie for placement.

Times can vary from 45-60 seconds according to the challenge of the course; and should be set to accommodate dogs of different levels and jump heights. For the sample course (below, a TDAA Tunnel Snooker sample) the times might be:

- Games I Small dogs 60 seconds; Big dogs 57 seconds
- Games II Small dogs 57 seconds; Big dogs 54 seconds
- Games III Small dogs 54 seconds; Big dogs 51 seconds

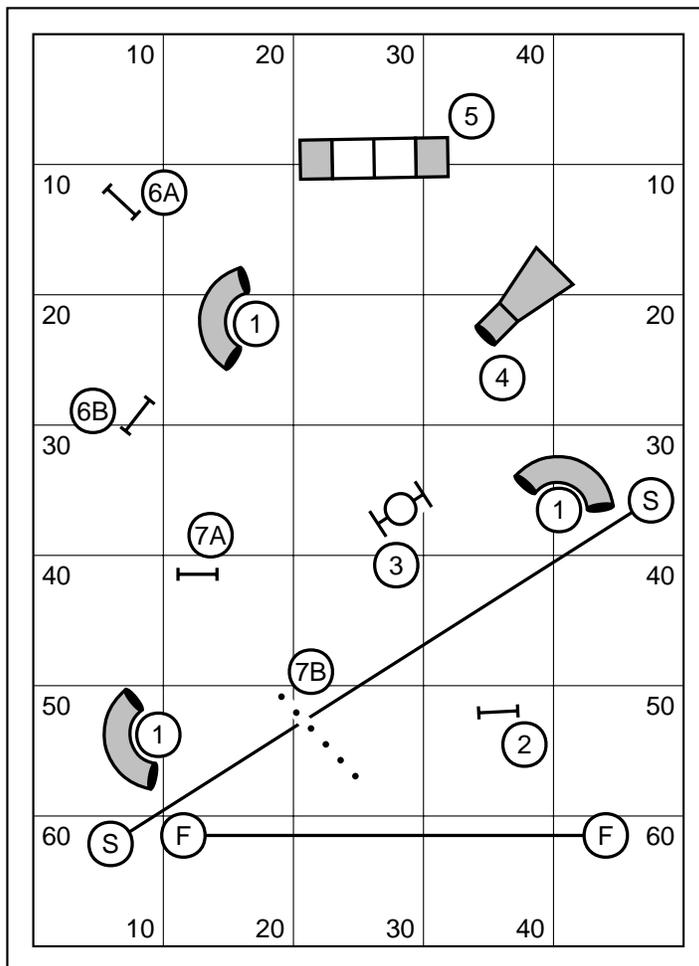
Qualifying

- Games I 35 points
- Games II 37 points
- Games III 37 points

Judging Notes

Tunnel Snooker might be considered a dumbed-down variation of the traditional game of Snooker because there is no bar to drop as there would be on a red hurdle. However, it is common for judges to specify rules for performance and direction that make the tunnels an obstacle that can be faulted. For example... the judge might specify that only the indicated side of a tunnel can be taken; the other side would be a fault. Also, judges often create a refusal rule for the red tunnels: if the dog goes into a tunnel with all four paws and then comes back out the same end, the tunnel will be considered faulted.

Course Design



Design of the snooker course might be that the easier obstacles 2-4 are closer to the tunnels and the harder obstacles 5-7 are further away so that there is risk for scoring the higher numbers comparable to their value.

In this course example the higher valued obstacles are combinations and are a bit more difficult in terms of performance.

Premium Blurb

Tunnel Snooker is a two-part game. Each part is played and scored on a different basis. The first is dog's-choice in which the dog earns the right to score three "colored" obstacles by doing a *red tunnel* before each. The second part is a simple sequence. *Tunnel Snooker* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Tunnel Vision

Tunnel Vision is the invention of Darlene Woz, one of the foremost innovators in the field of agility games development. This is the perfect game for clubs that are rich in pipe tunnels and want something really fun and really different to play.

Briefing

Tunnel Vision is played on a course consisting of only pipe tunnels, jumps, and weave poles. The obstacles must be done in the numerical order specified by the judge with these caveats:

- All obstacles can be taken in either direction.
- Each clump of tunnels may be performed in any order and in any direction, so long as each of the tunnels is ultimately performed. This could mean that the handler has to adapt his running strategy on the fly if the dog selects a tunnel other than the one intended by the handler.
- The handler must remain behind the indicated containment line for each group of tunnels.

The judge will specify a separate standard course time for each different skill level competing, for example:

- Masters, 30 seconds
- Advanced, 35 seconds
- Starters/Novice, 40 seconds

If the closing whistle hasn't blown by the time the dog reaches the jackpot jump (#15 on the sample course), 100 points will be awarded. The dog may then attempt to complete the inner circle of obstacles (sans tunnel groups) for an additional 100 bonus points.

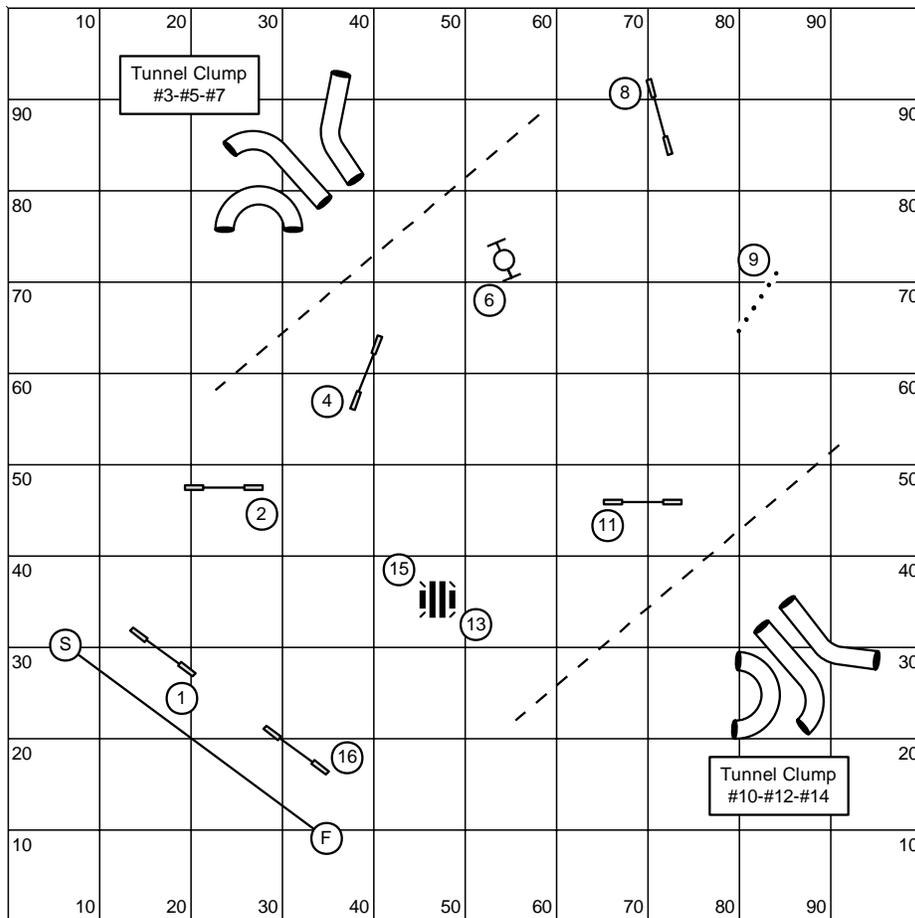
As long as the whistle hasn't blown by the start of the dog's inner circle run, the turn may be completed although the dog will finish with some time faults.

Scoring

Tunnel Vision is scored Points, Minus Faults, Then Time. The winner is the dog with the highest score.

Any time faults (whole numbers) will be subtracted from the dog's total score. Any time remaining on the clock (whole numbers) will be added to the dog's total score.

Course Design



This is an example of a Tunnel Vision course.

Tunnel Vision uses only tunnels, hurdles, and weave poles.

The course is based on an inner, roughly circular, sequence of obstacles. The tunnel clumps are positioned on opposing sides of the inner circle.

Premium Blurb

Tunnel Vision is a sequencing game that features only jumps and tunnels. The tunnels are arranged in “clumps” of and must be performed with the handler at a modest distance. The tunnels can be performed in any order, making that order a matter of strategy. *Tunnel Vision* is scored Points, Minus Faults, Then Time. ER13

Twelve-Tone Row

Twelve-Tone Row is the invention of Becky Dean, a musician. The game is modeled after an obscure musical analogy. You'll have to ask her if you're really curious. Otherwise, just read the rules below and have a good time with this game.

Briefing

The purpose of Twelve-Tone Row is to accumulate as many points as possible. Each obstacle has the value of its number on course. The same obstacle may have different values, depending on the direction in which it is performed.

The handler may direct his dog to perform the obstacles in any order he chooses. If the dog chooses the obstacle to perform, the handler will have to live with it. Only 12 obstacles may be performed. The 12th must be the weave poles, in either direction. The dog and handler team will earn the assigned point values of the obstacles taken. No points are awarded for a repeated obstacle.

- If the dog faults an obstacle, he will not earn the points for that obstacle. Further, the obstacle may not be repeated. It will *not* be counted as one of the dog's 12 required obstacles.
- If the dog repeats an obstacle, he will not earn points for that obstacle. It will *not* be counted as one of the dog's 12 required obstacles.
- For each obstacle more or less than 12 total obstacles, the dog will be penalized 20 points. Any obstacle taken after the twelfth obstacle, on the way to the finish, will earn the extra obstacles penalty. The dog will be penalized 20 points if the weave poles is *not* the 12th obstacle performed; however, this fault will negate one (and only one) fault for performing more or less than 12 obstacles.

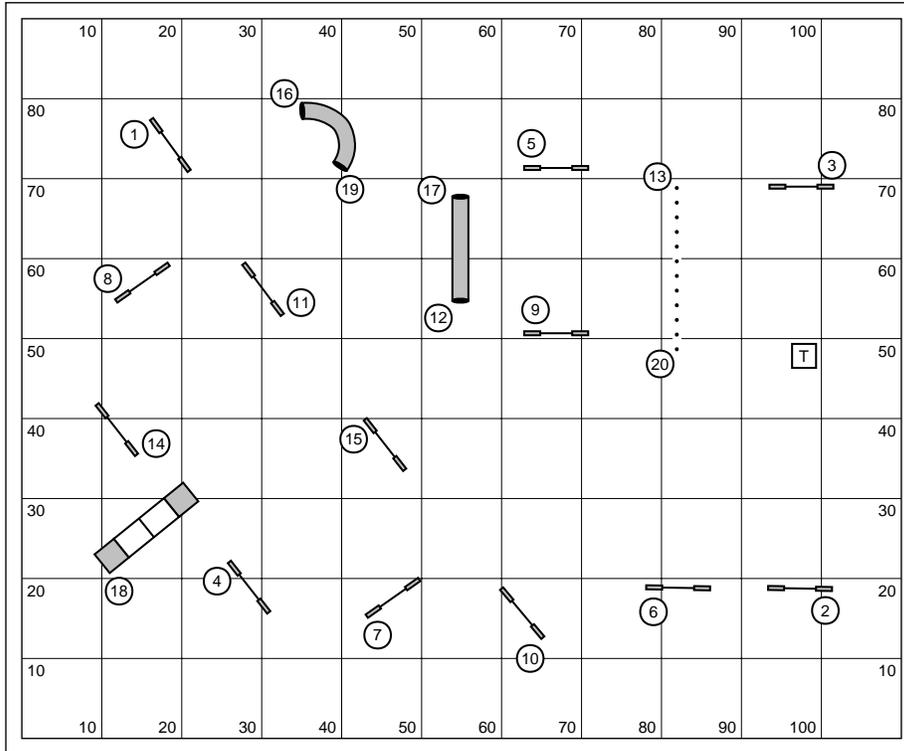
Scoring

Twelve-Tone Row is scored Points, Minus Faults, Then Time.

The judge will call out the value of each obstacle as the dog performs that obstacle. It will be up to the score-keeper to determine if the dog has performed the correct number of obstacles and that the value for the weave poles is earned in the 12th obstacle position.

Faults are deducted from the points earned by the dog. No standard course time is used.

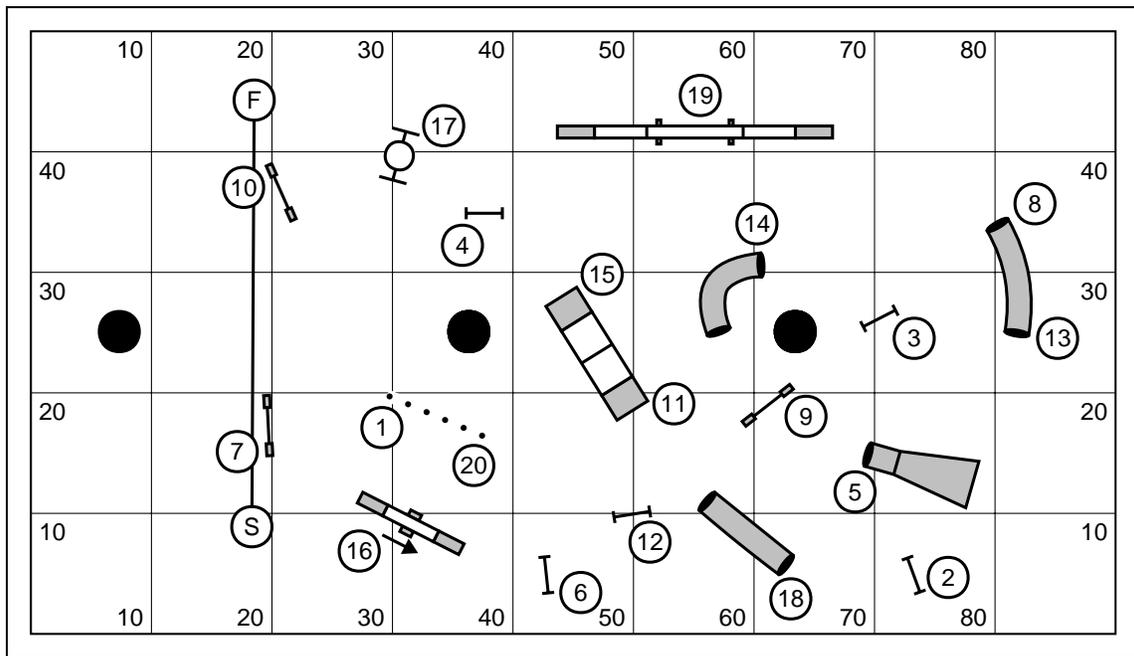
Course Design



This Twelve-Tone Row course was designed by Becky Dean for play in agility league at Dogwood Training Center in Ostrander, Ohio. The table was designated the start and stop obstacle.

In Twelve-Tone Row the numbers are randomly assigned to the obstacles on the field. Obstacles may have different values if performed by the dog in different directions, at the discretion of the course designer.

The weave poles (the last obstacle to be performed) should be placed in close proximity to the table or other designated time-stopper.



This is a Twelve-Tone Row designed for play in the TDAA at Medina Swarm (featuring columns that run down the center of the building). Note that the judging position will be somewhere central. And so the number cones should be arranged to face back to the judge's position. They aren't there for the convenience of the exhibitor.

If an obstacle has numbers on either end, for the purpose of play of the game it constitutes two different values and so two different obstacles. If the obstacle has only one number associated with it, then it is (if possible) bi-directional, and should be taken only once.

Strategies

The greedy man's strategy will be to seek the most possible points. It's a simple matter to figure this out. If only 12 obstacles can be performed, the handler should seek the performance of the 12 with the highest value. In a 20-obstacle course, that would be #9 through #20. Once this is known, the approach to these high-point obstacles becomes a bit of a "What's My Line?" problem to determine the best approach to pick each of them up in some kind of logical flow.

The handler should remember that taking an off course obstacle is not a tragedy. It just means that the handler will have to balance the accumulation of points by omitting an obstacle that was in the plan to make up for taking the one that wasn't. Note that an obstacle already performed may be taken for *flow* with no real down-side, except the time required to perform the obstacle.

Qualifying

Twelve-Tone Row is an eligible qualifying game for the TDAA. A dog qualifies with a number of points specified for each level:

- Games I – 78 points or better
- Games II – 114 points or better

- Games III – 138 points or better

Note that this system is based on a course of 20 numbered obstacles. It is impossible to get such high values with a course numbered with only 15 obstacles. Indeed, the most points that could be scored in a 15-obstacle course would be 114. And so, for a 15-obstacle course the qualifying criteria might have to be redefined as:

- Games I – 78 points or better
- Games II – 90 points or better
- Games III – 102 points or better

Variations

- Start and stop method – The method for starting and stopping the game can be adapted by the judge. For example, the judge may allow the exhibitor to begin on any obstacle he likes. Time would begin when the dog commits to that obstacle. This allows handlers to develop more diverse strategies for solving the course.

The method of stopping time could be changed from the table to a finish line. The judge may also stipulate that the dog's time stops as the dog makes his exit from the weave poles.

In the original rules for the game the start & stop was defined in this manner: "The game starts and stops on the table. Time starts when the dog leaves the table. Time ends only when the dog gets into a down position on the table." A judge may return to this original variation at his own whim. However, it should be noted that when a specific obstacle is used for start or stop (or both) the number of possible strategies to solve the overall course.

- A different 12th obstacle ~ While traditionally the 12th obstacle is the weave poles, the judge might designate another specific obstacle to be the twelfth. This might be useful when a course is carefully nested and the judge wants to designate an obstacle near the finish line other than the weave poles.

Premium Blurb

Twelve Tone Row is a dog's-choice game in which exactly 12 obstacles must be performed for points. Each obstacle has a different value; and sometimes a single obstacle has different values depending on the direction taken. The 12th obstacle is required to be an obstacle designated by the judge (usually the weave poles). *Twelve-Tone Row* is scored Points, Minus Faults, Then Time. ER6

Twister

Twister is a game invented by Ilse Rukis. The game has a strong element of strategy and will be, once underway, a test of extension and collection. The game can be highly motivating to some dogs.

Briefing

Twister is a point accumulation game on a circular course consisting of inner and outer tracks. The game begins at the Start line *and on the outer track* in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction or either side of the Start line. After successfully completing five obstacles, the dog must turn and take four obstacles going in the other direction on the inside track; then reverse back to the outside for five obstacles; and reverse back to the inside for four obstacles. This dizzy twister continues until time ends.

Knocked bars are not reset and the jump is not counted as part of the outer or inner track required to be completed prior to a turn. Consequently, the dog must continue in the correct direction until the required points are earned for that track.

A wrong course shall be defined as: a) taking an extra obstacle on the current track (going over the allowed count); b) taking any obstacle after a missed/skipped obstacle; or c) reversing direction to the alternate track before the scoring track is finished.

On the time-keepers horn the handler must direct the dog to cross the Finish line.

Note: The Rascal Bonus is so named for a little poodle run by Brenda Douglas at the TDAA Western Petit Prix in Castle Rock, CO in 2016. Rascal scored a single point but earned no performance fault and therefore qualified for the 50-point Rascal Bonus. Rascal scored 51 points!

Twister is easier to judge than it might look. Basically the judge will simply count out loud for each obstacle performed without fault in the correct direction. It doesn't really matter which obstacle in the current loop the dog performs.

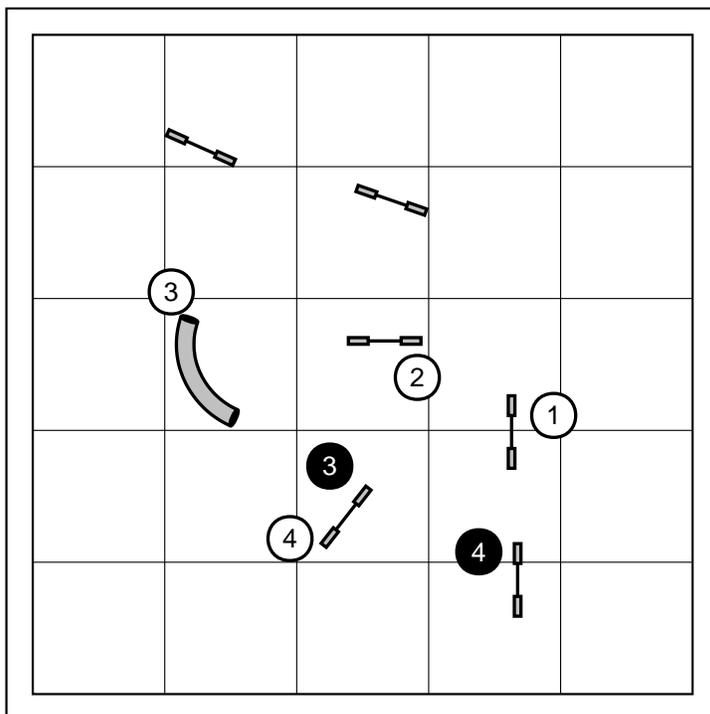
A fault basically negates the *Rascal Bonus*, and needs to be called only once. Please note that there is a fault called for the dog skipping an obstacle. But the skipping fault isn't called until the dog has taken the first obstacle in that direction; so the handler may skip an obstacle or two after changing loops and directions, without fault. Once the first obstacle has been performed, the dog must take the obstacles in flow and without fault to keep the bonus.

Some handler's will depend on your timely count to figure out where they are in each loop. The judge is put in the awkward position of being required to make timely calls... and possibly giving credit for a jump before noting that the dog has dropped the bar. At the end of the day, it's not really the judge's responsibility to count for the handler. The counting is for the benefit of the scribe. Be prepared to forgive yourself for confusing the handler.

Strategies

The handler should study the implications of the starting line; and maybe even go to one side to site down that line to be sure of which obstacles are on what side of the line. The game will be a lost cause for a handler that begins his dog with an obstacle (thinking that it will be counted) that is in front of the starting line.

It is probably desirable to find an overall sequence that can be repeated until the expiration of time. The handler might consider the implications of doing a pull-through in the transition between loops or a flat 180° turn. To illustrate:



In this transition after jump #2 the handler had a choice of either turning the dog in a level 180° turn to the pipe tunnel (white #3), or tighten the turn into a pull-through to the

jump (black #3). Essentially the handler is choosing the start of the next series of 5 obstacles on the outer loop.

The exhibitor should note that, although the judge is counting cadence of the loops, that counting is more for the benefit of the scribe than the exhibitor. In a fast-moving game requiring timely execution of handler movement in the transitions between loops, a slow counting judge should *not* be blamed for the handler's head exploding.

Scoring

Twister is scored points, then time ~ ER2. The team with the most points wins. Time is tie breaker. Points are earned in a doubling manner:

- First 5-set of outer obstacles: 10 points
- First 4-set of inner obstacles: 20 points (total 30 points)
- Second 5-set of outer obstacles: 40 points (total 70 points)
- Second 4-set of inner obstacles: 80 points (total 150 points)
- and so forth ...

A run with no faults earns the dog a 50-point *Rascal Bonus*. Points are awarded for partial completion of a loop if the whistle blows before a loop is completed: 1 point for each obstacle in the partial loop.

Qualifying

To qualify a dog must earn a score respective to level:

- Games III 150 points or better
- Games II 120 points or better
- Games I 70 points or better

Variations

Legacy scoring ~ The original rules for the game included this interesting (but often confusing rule): A wrong course will restart the count of obstacles in the direction chosen by the dog: 5 if the wrong course is on the outside loop; 4 if the wrong course is to the inside loop.

Premium Blurb

Twister is a point accumulation game in which the dog earns points for sequences of obstacles arranged in two concentric loops. The dog is required to change the direction of play between scoring sequences, alternating between the inner and outer loops. Bonus points are awarded for a faultless performance. *Twister* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Two by Two

Two by Two is the invention of Deb Auer... with respectful nods to all the other relay-type games out there. This is a team relay game that can be played by any number of teams and two or more members on a team.

Briefing

The objective of Two by Two is for the team to perform all the obstacles on the course in sets of two, without repeating obstacles.

Dog and handler teams start anywhere behind the start line. Jumps are set for the shortest team member. Time starts when the first dog on course crosses the start line. All handlers may lead out. The table stops time.

Each dog is directed to cross the start line and perform no more than two obstacles. Once the first dog has re-crossed any of the three start lines, the next dog may start, performing only two obstacles and crossing any of the three start lines. Play continues in this manner until all of the obstacles have been performed once. When all obstacles have been performed the last dog must be directed to the table to stop time.

The inactive dog may be repositioned anywhere outside of the containment lines while the active dog is on course.

Big dog teams will have 50 seconds; small dog teams 55 seconds.

If a dog faults an obstacle the handler may either accept the performance fault (eg. 5 faults for a missed contact) or can retry the obstacle to erase the fault; for a dropped bar the handler or one of his teammates may reset the bar so it can be reattempted.

Two by Two is judged using the guidelines for performance faults as defined in the rules for standard classes. Refusals are not faulted.

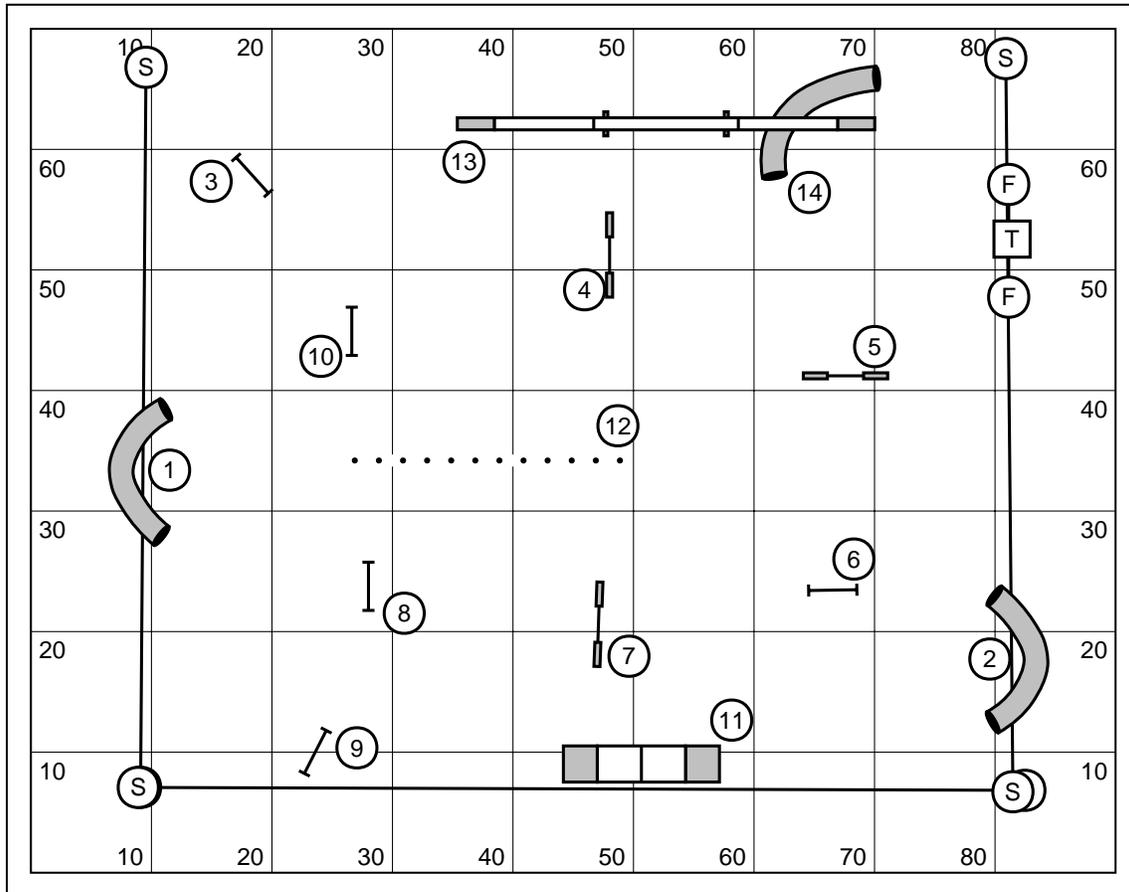
Additional faults:

- 5 faults ~ Performing an obstacle that has already been performed; note that a repeated obstacle *will* count as one of the two a dog is entitled to perform, vastly complicating the strategy of the team.
- 5 faults ~ Performing more than two obstacles; additional obstacles are *not* counted as performed
- 5 faults ~ Crossing the start line before the active dog has completed his turn; unless the dog has not taken any obstacles and the handler takes the dog back behind the start line before restarting.
- 10 faults ~ Failure to perform an obstacle.

Scoring

Two by Two is scored Time, Plus Faults.

Course Design



Two by Two begs for a random arrangement of obstacles on the field. It is reasonably impossible to practice skills from any other course or game: so this is a great game for using the set of the floor from a standard course or nearly any other agility game without equipment movement or tweaking.

The discussion in the rules above mentions *three* start lines; but the game might be played with only two start lines or maybe as many as four. There may be some difficulty in defining lines that judge can see from a mostly stationary position. However the judge could loosely define the confinement of the inactive dog by stipulating “out to the side” or “beyond” without scrupulously drawing lines around the field.

Strategies

Teams should collaborate on which dog is going to take what obstacles and the order of that taking. It is probably to the team’s advantage to have the more novice dogs do the sequences on the outside edge, as there will be fewer off-course possibilities. However, even the best-laid plans often go awry. If a dog goes off course (takes an unintended obstacle), it will surely affect his teammate’s plans.

All things being equal this game is likely won by the team that devises a plan that minimizes both the transitional distances between obstacles, and the distance between the start line and the obstacles to be performed.

It would be a good idea to devise a plan that reflects each dog’s relative strengths and

weaknesses.

Variations

- Redux ~ The rules of the original version required any faulted obstacle had to be repeated until successfully completed.
- Consider playing the game with teams with more than two dogs. It could be played with three dogs, or seven. It's not really necessary for the number of obstacles on course be a strict multiple of the number of dogs on a team; but it wouldn't hurt.
- Also, consider each dog doing more than two obstacle on his turn. It might just as well be three.

Judging Notes

The real difficulty in this game is how to pass good information to the score-keeping table. How does the judge indicate that an obstacle has been repeated? The *mind like a steel trap* method is really quite difficult in this game. The judge would have to keep track and count of performance on every obstacle.

In the illustration above obstacles have been numbered for the convenience of the judge. So all the judge really has to do is call out the number for each obstacle performed. The score-keeping table will sort out the bodies. Though be aware, any game that requires the judge to call out numbers raises the possibility of scribing errors.

Qualifying

The team qualifies when the final score (Time, Plus Faults) is equal to or less than the Qualifying Course Time (QCT).

The QCT should be based on a reasonable estimate time for the team to get the job done. An easy way to establish QCT would be for the judge to measure a course reflecting a reasonable strategy and then using the rates of travel from the standard classes.

Premium Blurb

Two by Two is an odd pairs or team game in which all of the obstacles on the course are performed two at a time. The dog's exchange after each two obstacles; and the game continues until all obstacles have been performed. *Two by Two* is scored Time, Plus Faults. ER2

Warped Helter Skelter

Warped Helter Skelter is a fun combination of the games Time Warp and Helter Skelter. We have a spiraling Helter Skelter course that includes a distance challenge that subtracts a substantial bonus from the dog's time+faults score... creating a Time Warp. It is a fun romp of a game. Warped Helter Skelter is the invention of Bud Houston.

Briefing

This game is a bit of a combination of *Helter Skelter* and *Time Warp*. The course is designed as a Helter Skelter spiral, testing a handler's instincts for knowing when to have a foot on the gas, and when to have a foot on the brakes! The Time Warp element, of course, is a subtraction from the overall score for working the dog at a distance.

This is a simple numbered course. The course shows two bonus lines. If the dog can perform #8 through #12 *without fault* with the handler remaining behind the containment line at 30', the bonus will be 10 seconds. If the handler stays on the other side of the 40' line, the bonus will be 20 seconds.

Scoring

Warped Helter Skelter is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus.

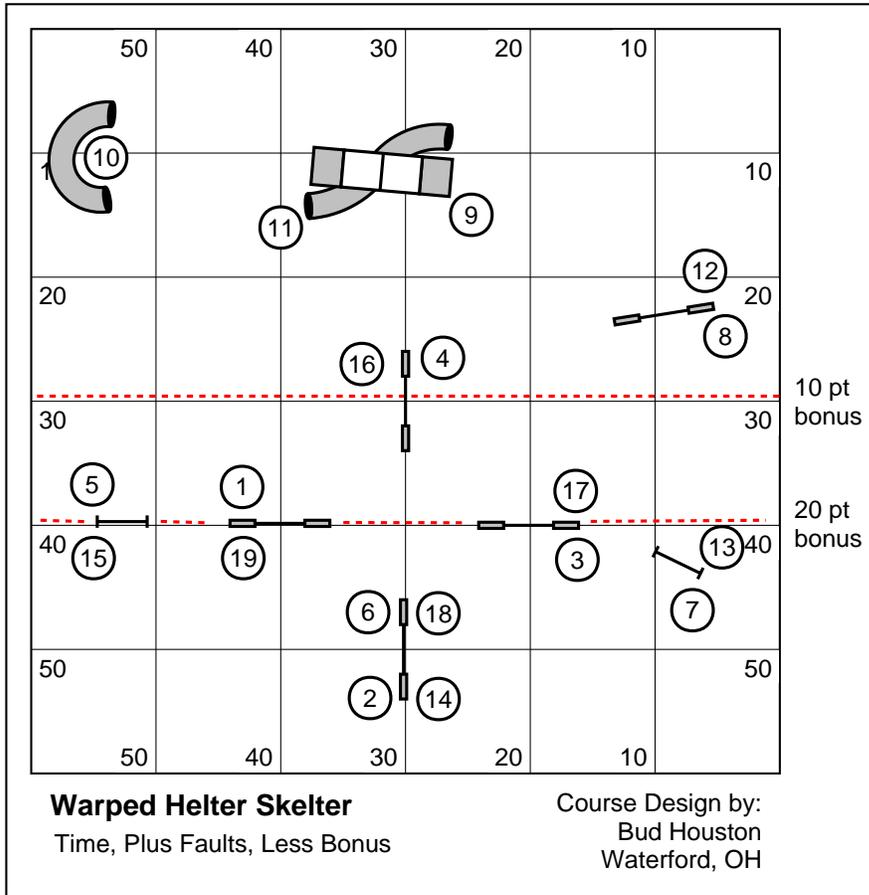
Qualifying

Warped Helter Skelter is eligible for titling in the TDAA.

A dog earns a qualifying score so long as that score is less than or equal to the established Qualifying Course Time (QCT):

Games I	4" / 8 "	63
	12" / 16"	58
Games II	4" / 8 "	54
	12" / 16"	47
Games III	4" / 8 "	37
	12" / 16"	35

Course Design



This was the original *Warped Helter Skelter* course set up for play in the National Dog Agility League. Here's a YouTube of the run made by the game inventor:

<http://youtu.be/1DTGoFIG0Tg>

Premium Blurb

Warped Helter Skelter is a mixture of the games *Time Warp* and *Helter Skelter*. It is then, a game of speed and skill and distance, played on a numbered course consisting of obstacles arranged in a spiral that builds speed. *Warped Helter Skelter* is scored Time, Plus Faults, Less Bonus. ER7

Weakest Link

The Weakest Link is a game invented by TDAA judge Tara Choate for a Teacup Dogs judging assignment. Tara is a member of Columbia Agility Team in Portland, Oregon.

Briefing

The objective of The Weakest Link is to score as many points as possible in the allotted time. Only “banked” points will count toward the final score.

The dog and handler team have 60 seconds to accumulate the best score possible.

The handler starts the round by directing the dog to any obstacle to earn points. Each obstacle taken by the dog must be worth *as much as or more than* the previous obstacle taken. The dog’s potential score will increase as each obstacle value is added to the overall total. Points earned for the performance of obstacles earned will be credited to “potential” points. But the dog can’t keep or count on these points until they are “banked”.

Points are banked when the dog gets on the table (or other obstacle specified by the judge as the “banking” obstacle). When the dog banks his points they are kept secure toward the final score and cannot be lost. On the table no obedience position is required and there will be no counting. All the dog has to do is get onto the table to bank points. When points are banked the potential points score is set to zero.

After banking points the dog and handler team start over so long as time remains.

Each sequence banked must be unique. That means there must be at least one difference from any sequence previously banked. This stipulation is optional and up to the discretion of the judge.

Back-to-back performance of obstacles is permitted, but *only* back-to-back. A third performance shall constitute a fault.

If a dog faults, all potential points are lost (banked points can never be taken away from the dog). Faults include:

- Dropped bars
- Missed contacts
- Taking an obstacle of a lesser value than the previous taken
- Taking an obstacle out of sequence in the gamble (only faulted if the cumulative sequence violates the points rule)
- Failing to bank points before the final whistle

When a dog faults the judge will call “fault”. The handler is obligated to direct the dog to the first obstacle in a new sequence to earn potential points.

If a bar is dropped on a jump, that jump is out of play for the remainder of the game except when that jump is in the gamble sequence. Every attempt will be made to reset the bar on a gamble sequence; if it has not been reset, the dog must be directed between the standards of the jump.

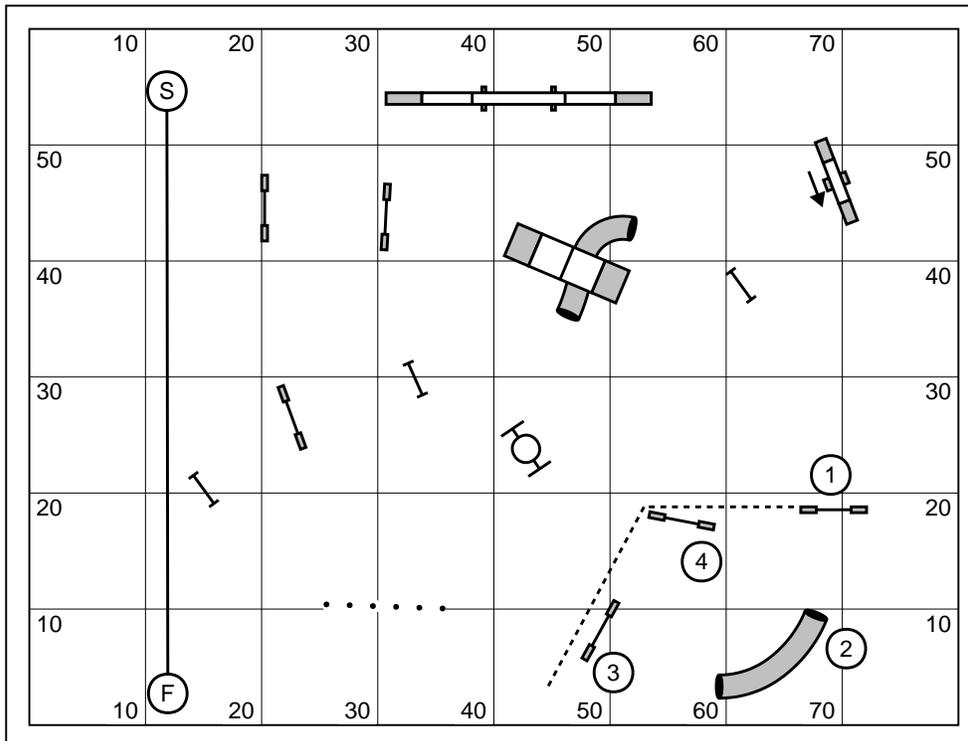
Scoring

Weakest link is scored points, then time. Time is a tiebreaker. The point values are:

- Jumps, 2 points
- Tire or tunnels, 4 points
- Contact obstacles, 6 points
- Weave poles, 8 points
- Gamble, double the usual value of the obstacles in the gamble

In the dog's score each number earned is added to the potential points until the dog "banks" those points. Points that are not banked are lost on a fault or when time expires.

Course Design



This course is based on the original Weakest Link course designed by Tara Choate. As the course was designed for the TDAA the transitional distances between obstacles is considerably shorter than for the big dog venues.

The design of a Weakest Link course is much like the design of a gamblers course in that the obstacles are arranged with no discernable flow. All standard obstacles should be used. And a gamble should be marked with the containment area clearly defined.

A thoughtful design for *The Weakest Link* should allow approaches to the banking obstacle (the tire) from the high value obstacles on the field.

Judging

When using an on-course distance challenge or gamble the judging task can be a slightly complicated matter.

continuous performance while being sure to score on each obstacle value in succession, 2 point obstacles, 4 point obstacles, 6 point obstacles, 8 point obstacles, and the gamble; then to bank the points earned and begin the process again.

It is better to do the longer sequences first, and then finish with shorter sequences in anticipation of the expiration of time. It is better to be caught short of finishing a three obstacle sequence than it is to be caught short on a fifteen obstacle sequence.

If the dog has a tendency to drop bars, the handler might want to minimize the number of two-point obstacles. If the dog doesn't work reliably at a distance, it would be better to bank points after the last eight-point obstacle.

Qualifying and Titles

Weakest Link is an eligible titling game under TDAA rules. A qualifying score is earned for a 55/60 second QCT might be:

- Games I – 30 or more points
- Games II – 40 or more points
- Games III – 50 or more points

If less time is provided for the game, then the points required for qualifying should be proportionately less.

Premium Blurb

The Weakest Link is a dog's choice point accumulation game that requires a handler to "bank" points to keep them; or lose points that are not banked. In this game points earned must be worth as much as or more than the last points earned; and are safe only when banked. Often there will be a distance challenge accorded an extraordinary bonus value. *The Weakest Link* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Weavers

The goal of the Weavers class is to demonstrate the dog's ability to correctly enter weave poles at a variety of angles and weave accurately at speed on a course comprised solely of tunnels and weave poles.

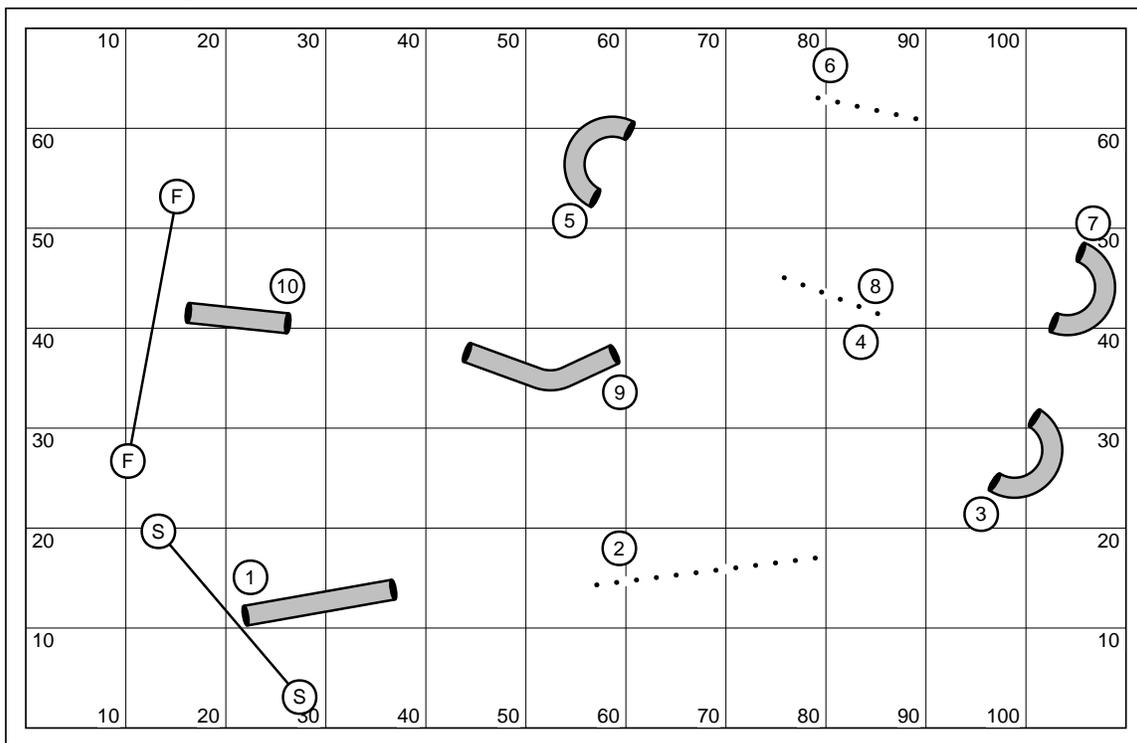
Briefing

This course consists of weave poles and tunnels only. The handler must direct the dog to perform the obstacles in the order specified by the judge. Under NADAC rules, refusals are not faulted and there are no jump bars to drop. All the handler has to worry about is staying steady in the weave poles and staying on course.

Scoring

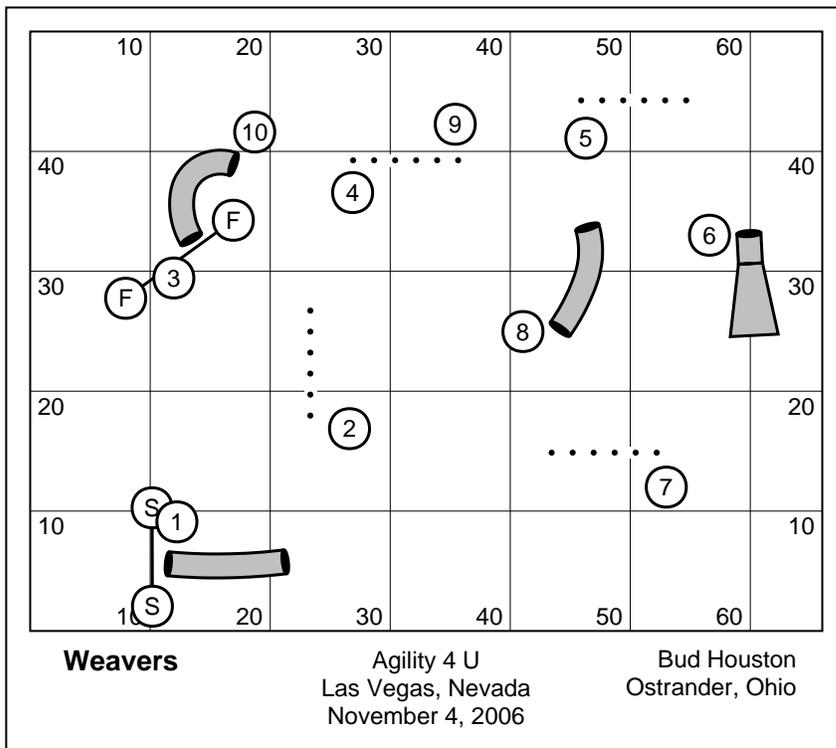
Weavers is scored Faults, Then Time.

Course Design



This is a Weavers course designed by NADAC judge Ilze Rukis. This course was played at A-1 Training Club, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota on March 30, 2002. This Weavers course is a good example of the flowing and logical lines that are so characteristic of NADAC courses.

A Weavers course is made exclusively of pipe tunnels and weave poles. No contact obstacles or hurdles are allowed.



In the TDAA any game is eligible for games titling. This is an example of *Weavers*, a solid NADAC game, made for play in the TDAA.

Qualifying and Titles

Weavers is eligible for titling in NADAC and in the TDAA. A clean run under the standard course time earns the dog a qualifying score.

Premium Blurb

Weavers is a sequencing game that features only weave poles and tunnels. *Weavers* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER12

What's My Line?

Named after the old television game of the 50s and 60s, What's My Line? presents the obstacle course in the form of a puzzle. The game provides all handlers the opportunity to come up with a strategy for running the most efficient course possible. In the U.K., this game is known as Take Your Own Line.

Briefing

The objective of *What's My Line* is to perform all of the obstacles on the field without repeating or omitting any or omitting any, as quickly as possible.

The handler earns one point for each obstacle his dog performs successfully. Each obstacle has the same value, regardless of the difficulty of performance and regardless of the number assigned to the obstacle.

If an obstacle is performed twice, the dog will lose a point for the performance.

If an obstacle is faulted, the team will receive no point for that obstacle. Further, the obstacle will be counted as used/completed. So the dog would earn an additional fault if the obstacle is repeated.

A four-paw commitment to a contact obstacle will commit the dog to the performance of that obstacle. Under this rule, if a dog commits to a contact obstacle with all four-paws, then bails off, he has committed to that obstacle. While the on-and-off *refusal* will not be faulted, the dog must be directed to finish the contact obstacle.

Time will be started and stopped at points designated by the judge. A maximum course time can be applied at the discretion of the judge.

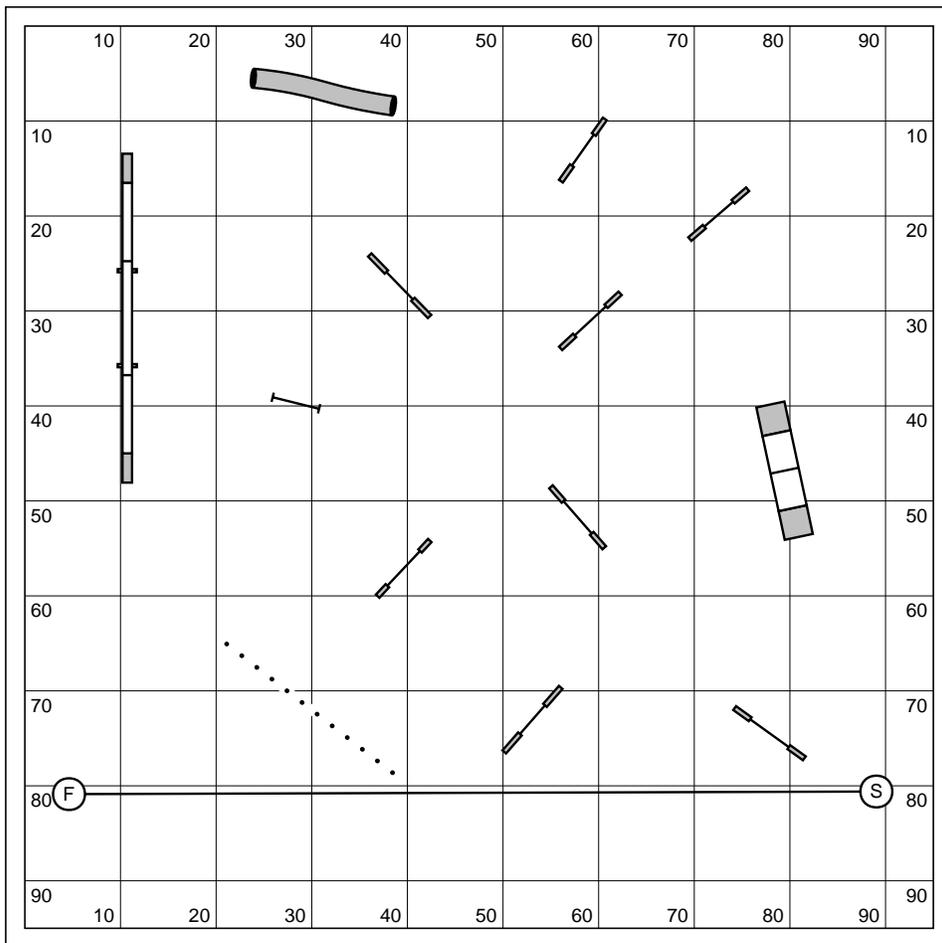
Scoring

What's My Line is scored Points, Then Time. Time is a tie-breaker only. The team with the most points will win.

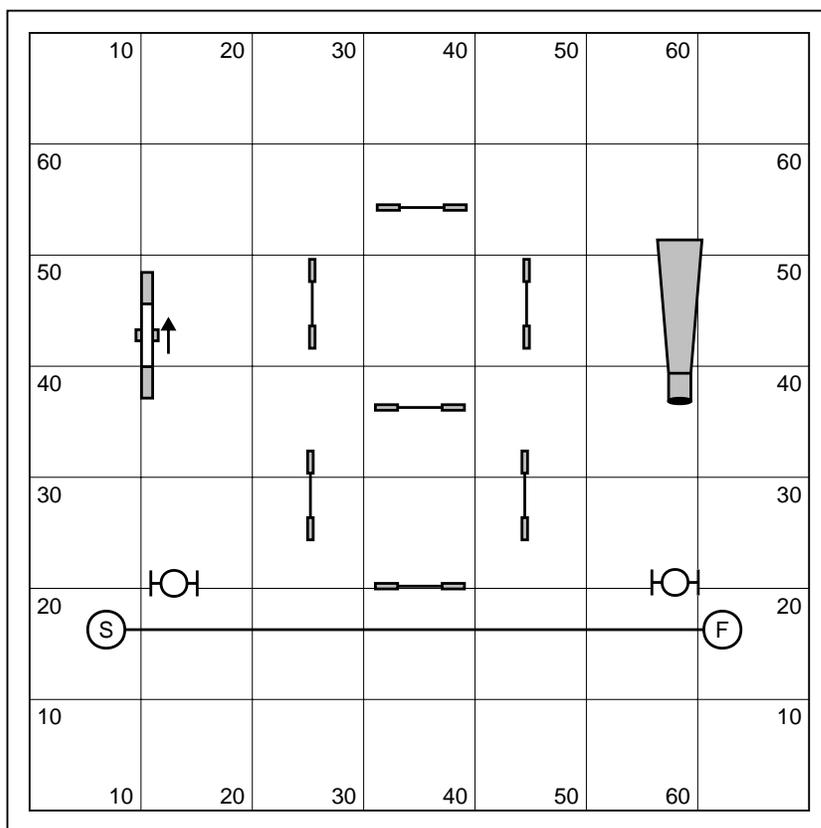
Performance faults might be based on any rational system.

Course Design

What's My Line uses obstacles laid out in a random pattern on the field, without numbers, and with no suggested course flow. *What's My Line* can be played on virtually any configuration of obstacles. It is an ideal game to nest with another game or standard course so that only a minimal amount of tweaking of the obstacles is required.



This *What's My Line* course is based on an existing numbered sequence. You can see it here: <http://wp.me/pmSZZ-15p>. This set of the field has a nice elegant solution, or two. Note that neither the start of the finish is constrained to a small area or single obstacle. This allows for a variety of possible solutions.



Course design may also be approached as a puzzle intentionally designed for *What's My Line*. This design challenges the participants to see the lines and flow that might be less obvious.

The course designer should avoid big obvious loops that solve the riddle of order and direction. The riddle should be more like a puzzle.

Qualifying

Qualification should be based on the number of obstacles on the course. At the Masters/ Superior level the dog should earn all points; and only slightly fewer points should be required for lower levels.

For example on a field with 16 obstacles (and consequently 16 points) the qualifying criteria might be:

- Games 1 ~ 14 points
- Games 2 ~ 15 points
- Games 3 ~ 16 points

A kinder judge might back these point requirements down by a single point.

Judging Notes

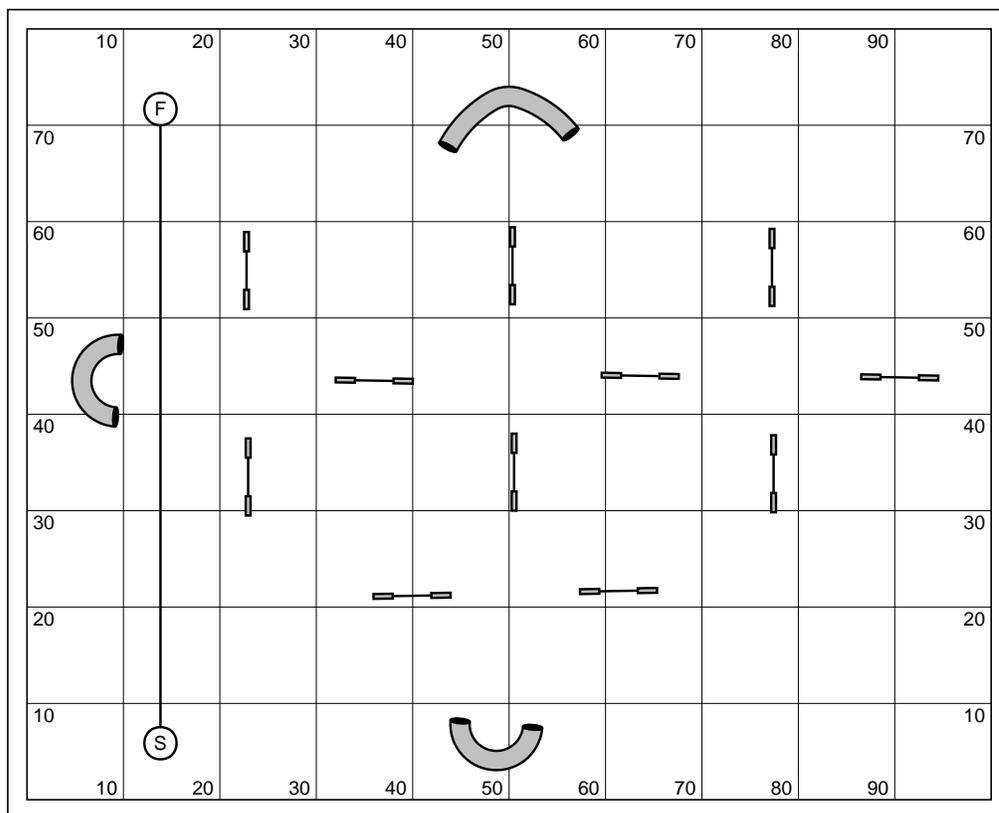
Obstacles may be numbered at the judge's discretion. These numbers are for the judge's reference only and in no way suggest a sequence for running the course. The advantage of numbering the obstacles is that the judge simply accounts for each obstacle performed; the bodies will be sorted out at the score-keeping table (meaning that the score-keeper

will analyze the numbers for completeness of the mission, repeated obstacles, and so forth). Note that any game that requires the judge to yell out numbers lends itself to scribing errors.

Rather than numbering obstacles the judge might use the *Mind Like a Steel Trap* method for keeping track of accounting for the dog's path. In this method is the judge's responsibility to call the fault when an obstacle is repeated. The judge could signal one point for each obstacle performed *or* could inform the scribe of the total number after the dog has run.

Variations

- *Never Cross the Line variation* – In this variation, invented by Helix Fairweather, in addition to the stipulation that the dog cannot repeat any obstacle, he is not allowed to cross his own line (meaning, no crossing patterns).



This is an example of Helix Fairweather's "Never Cross the Line" variation. The dog is required to do all of the obstacles without repeating any, with the additional stipulation that he's not allowed to cross his own path.

- *Zero Value Obstacle* – The judge mentions the zero value of the obstacle in the general briefing. Whether the handler directs his dog to perform the obstacle depends upon whether he was paying attention in the briefing or whether he wants to give the dog time on the obstacle as a warm-up for a later class. There is no penalty for the dog performing the zero-valued obstacle. Frequently, the valueless obstacle is the dogwalk.
- *Scoring variation* – Another scoring variation is to award the obstacle point values

as in Gamblers, instead of just 1 point. More difficult numbers are assigned to the more difficult obstacles. The more obstacles on course, the higher the maximum possible score. This assignment of numbers might affect the handler's strategy, as the handler might attempt the higher point values earlier in the solution to the course.

- *Original rules* ~ If an obstacle is performed twice scoring will cease immediately. The team keeps points earned and must be directed to the time-stopper to stop the time.

Also the original rules stipulated that if an obstacle is faulted "The handler may choose to retry the obstacle until it is performed correctly."

Competitors Analysis

The handler's job is obviously to find the most economical path for the dog to perform all of the obstacles. The handler should be ingenious in looking for lines through the course, which should not be limited by vertical and horizontal lines. Diagonal lines in the course should also be considered.

As important as finding *a solution* to the riddle is to find the *shortest path that solves*. Distance from the start line to the first obstacle and distance from the last obstacle to the finish line should be taken into consideration.

Whenever possible use your handling skills and training foundation to steal a second or two from the competition. For example, if there is a moment in the course that requires a hard-aback turn after a jump, use your ability to pre-cue the turn or get an efficient wrapping turn to gain an advantage.

Premium Blurb

What's My Line is a game of strategy in which the handler is required to direct his dog to perform every obstacle on the field once, but only once. The dog earns one point for each obstacle performed *What's My Line* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Which Way Do I Go?

Which Way Do I Go? is a team game concocted for play at the NADAC Nationals in 2002. Not much is known about how this game is played as the description comes from the premium for the NADAC nationals. No NADAC enthusiast has ever stepped up to explain how the game played out.

Briefing

Which Way Do I Go is a team competition comprised of three dog and handler pairs. One pair of the team will compete at the same time in the ring against two pairs of other teams. Of the three dog and handler pairs on each team, one will run as the tunnelers specialist, one pair will be the weavers specialist, and one pair will be the contact specialist. The tunnelers specialist performs only tunnels. The weavers specialist performs only weave poles. The contact specialist performs only contact obstacles.

Time begins when the tunnelers dog crosses the start line to perform their numbered course. A visual cue will be given to the weavers and contact dog handlers who then attempt to accumulate as many points as possible while the tunnelers dog runs. Judges for the scoring dogs on weave pole and contact obstacle sequences will count the number correct performances on those courses.

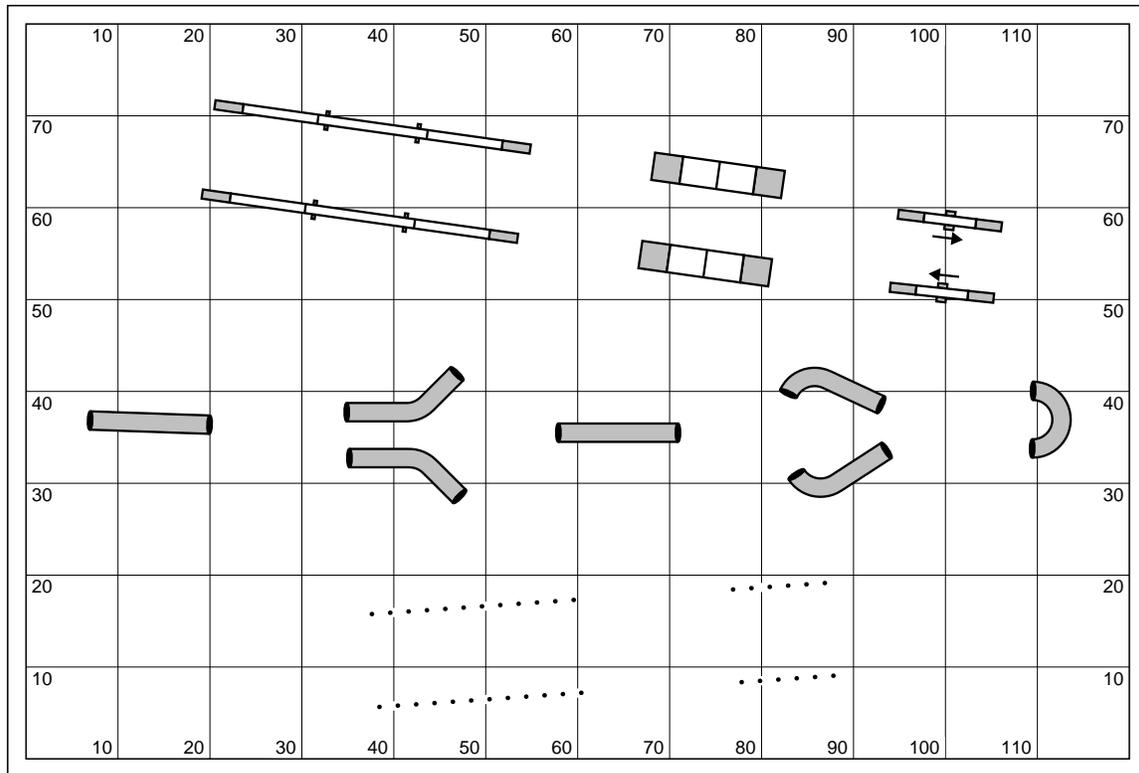
Time stops when the tunnelers dog finishes the tunnelers course.

The handlers will draw out balls with the word “in” or “out” printed on them. The order in which the balls are drawn will determine which tunnel of the side-by-side tunnels is to be taken. If two “ins” or two “outs” are drawn in a row, then the next direction will automatically be the opposite. In other words if a handler were to draw the word “out” two times in a row, then the next tunnel choice would be an “in”. So, if the handler were to draw two “outs”, then an “in”, then an “out”, the dog would begin with the single tunnel, then perform the outside tunnel in the first set of side-by-side tunnels, a single tunnel, then an “out” in the next set of side-by-side tunnels, a u-shaped tunnel, then an “in” in the third set of double tunnels, a single tunnel, and then an “out” in the fourth set of double tunnels, followed by the last single tunnel. The dog will perform a total of nine tunnels. If the dog performs an incorrect tunnel, then the handler may choose to bring the dog back to perform the correct tunnel, or continue on and receive a penalty for not performing the correct tunnel.

Scoring

Which Way Do I Go is scored Time, Plus Faults. The team with the highest score wins.

Course Design



This is a Which Way Do I Go Course designed by Bud Houston in an attempt to carefully follow the stipulations for course design in the rules that were published by NADAC for this game.

The Which Way Do I Go course is comprised of a tunnelers course, a weavers course, and a contact obstacle course.

The tunnelers course consists of one tunnel, followed by two tunnels, side by side, then one tunnel, then two tunnels, side by side, then a u-shaped tunnel to turn the dogs back down the line.

The weavers course consists of two sets of ten weave poles, side by side, followed by two sets of six weave poles, side by side. Sets will only be counted that are weaved from beginning to end correctly, without any missed poles. The handlers may choose to go from set to set, perform only long sets, perform only short sets, or any combination thereof. They will receive points for each set of weave poles performed correctly.

The contact obstacle course will consist of two dog walks, side by side, followed by two A-frames, side by side, followed by two teeters side by side. One teeter will face each direction. The handler may choose to go from dog walk to a-frame, to teeter, or to perform only dog walks, or only a-frames, or only teeters, or any combination thereof. They will receive points for each contact obstacle performed correctly.

The A-frames will be lowered to five feet for this game.

Premium Blurb

Which Way Do I Go is a three-dog team game consisting of three specialty short sequences: Weavers, Tunnelers, and Contacts only. The game was played as a fun event

at the NADAC Nationals in 2002, and probably could be resurrected for play; though the course design requires two each of all contact obstacles. *Which Way to Do I Go* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER12

Who Dares Wins

This game was invented by Francis Harvey to satisfy a judging examination for the Australian Dog Agility Association (ADAA). This is a game of daring in which the handler must understand the capabilities of his dog.

Briefing

The object of Who Dares Wins is to accurately estimate how many points your dog can score in the standard course time (50 seconds).

After walking the course all handlers must estimate, using a 3-2-1 scoring system, how many points they can score in the standard course time. The handler and dog can complete more than one circuit of the course and may start anywhere on the course providing they run the course in the correct order.

- 3 points for contact obstacles and the long set of weave poles
- 2 points for tunnel, tire, and short set of weave poles
- 1 point for jumps

Handlers must report their estimate to the scorekeeper prior to any dog running the course. Handlers are not to use their wristwatches or stopwatches to gauge their time. Neither spectators nor timekeeper are to indicate time to any handler while running the course.

The handler and dog proceed to their chosen starting point on the course.

Dogs are started with the timekeeper's whistle and will not accumulate points before the whistle. Dogs are not faulted. They just do not accumulate points for an obstacle faulted or out of turn. A dog must attempt every obstacle in turn. There are no refusal faults. Jump bars are not replaced. However a dog must run between the uprights if attempting a hurdle with a dropped bar a second or subsequent time. Weave poles have no refusal and a dog must complete 50 % of the poles before continuing.

There are no specific faults associated with the weave poles. However, the handler must correct an improper entry or a missed pole in order to earn points for that obstacle. No points are awarded for any partial performance of the weave poles.

The timekeeper will signal the end of scoring at 50 seconds. The dog may not earn additional points after the whistle and the handler must direct his dog to the table.

Scoring

Who Dares Wins is scored Points Only. The dog with the most points earned wins. In a tie, the dog with the most points scored wins. If an additional tiebreaker is required, the dog with the highest estimate wins.

Errors – At the end of each run, errors are calculated.

- Points error – the difference between the estimated points and the points scored for the run.
- Time Error – The difference between the dog's time and the standard course time is calculated. The dog's time is rounded down to the nearest second.

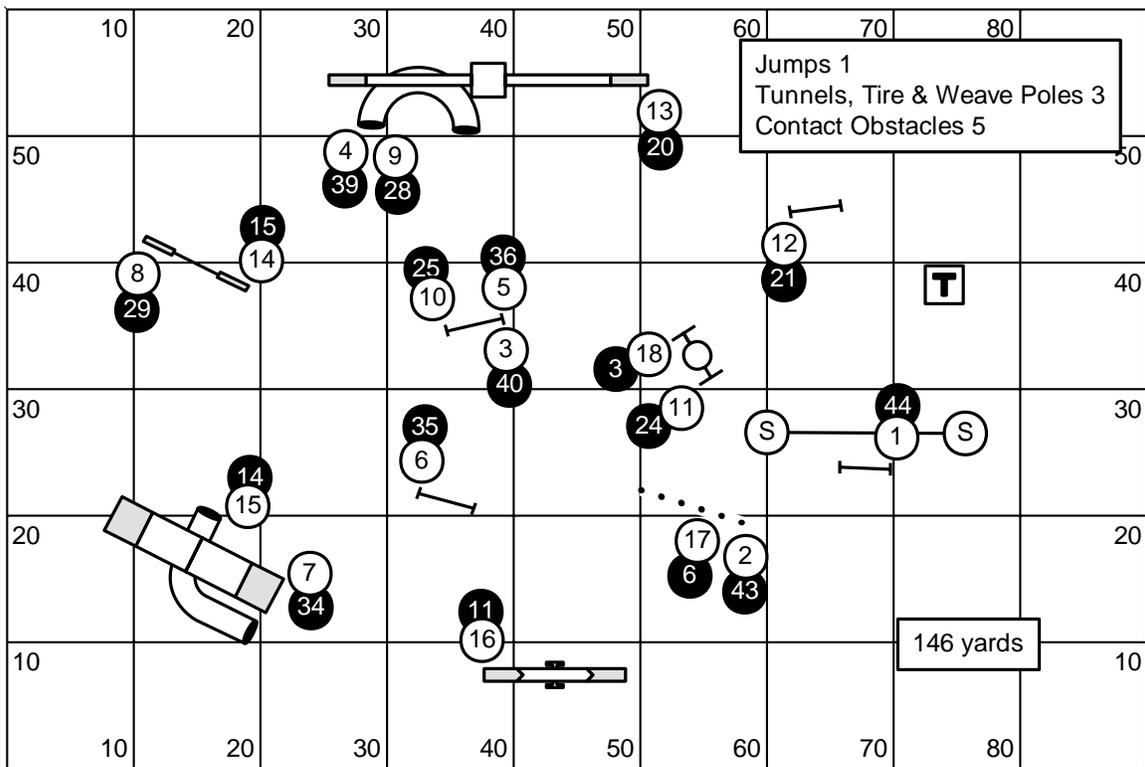
Total Errors – Time errors are added to the point errors.

Points Scored – Points the dog earned for successful performance of obstacles on course.

Points Earned – Total errors are deducted from the points scored. This total score determines placing.

Scoring Example

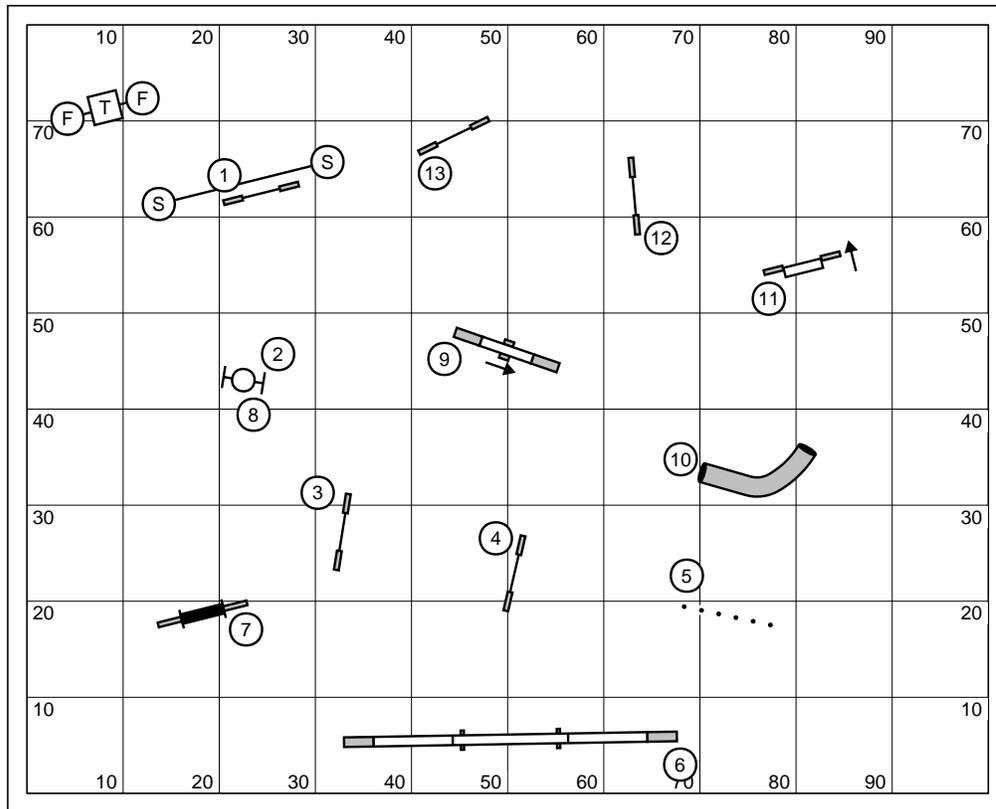
In Who Dares Wins the handler must make a reasonable estimate of how much course he can do in 50 seconds. This course measures 146 yards. If the handler figures his dog will cover 3.5 yards per second that means they'll have 8 seconds to play with. Going directly to the table would create an unacceptable time error. So the handler might be bold and begin his run at the teeter (#16) with the expectation that his dog might do #16 through #18, and then run the entire course without fault and before the whistle blows (can't earn points after the time whistle).



Using the key (for this very bold exhibitor) you would take the value of the starting obstacle (11 points) and add it to the value of the entire course (44 points) for the value of the dogs run (a total of 55 points). The dog would have deducted from his score the difference between 50 seconds and the actual time to the table.

That sounds simple enough, but it's not all that simple at all. Using the same plan, let's say that the dog faults the A-frame at #7. The judge will call out "Fault!". So the handler, after running his entire plan turns and does jump #1 after the tire at #18. He does this to make up points; *and* his dog enters the weave poles, but the whistle blows and he has to take his dog on to the table. For this scenario the calculation will be the same 55 as in the previous example; You have to deduct 5 for the A-frame that was faulted (giving 50) and then add one back for the jump that was not a part of the plan... making a total of 51 points. Since the handler's guess was 55 he'll get 4 points errors, and whatever time error.

Course Design



This sample Who Dares Wins course was designed by Bud Houston for play at Dogwood's agility league in June, 2002.

The course should be one of simple complexity with a table as an obstacle that can be used to finish the dog and can be run past safely. The course should be fast and flowing and should form a continuous simple or complex loop. Different courses could be designed for different standards.

Strategy

The handler's estimate should calculate for the course to end at jump #13 in order to proceed to the table. If the handler believes he can do four additional obstacles than are in the course, for example, the handler would bid 26. That's 21 for the course and five for the last four obstacles. The handler would begin his dog on obstacle #10.

If the dog faults an obstacle during the performance of the sequence of obstacles that was bid, the handler may direct the dog on to the first obstacle or two (or more) at the beginning of the course to try to make up the points not earned, providing that the time whistle has not blown.

Alternatively, the handler might also anticipate faults and omit points from the bid.

Qualifying

Who Dares Wins is an eligible titling game in the TDAA.

Qualification should be based upon the number of obstacles a dog might be required to

do in a standard titling class and given a leeway of about five seconds for the dog's time to the table. Using the sample course as a baseline, the qualifying criteria would be:

- Games I – 16 points or higher
- Games II – 19 points or higher
- Games III – 26 or higher

Judging Notes

If I were to change a thing about the game it would be the verbal start. The traditional rules call for the handler to declare "Ready" and for the timer to respond "Set Go!" Upon saying "Go!" the timer will start the time. In Racine there was no verbal exchange between the timekeeper and handler. The timer would simply yell "Go" when they approached the first obstacle... which became a matter of "ready or not, time has started."

We probably should change the start criteria to the dog committing to the first obstacle so that there is no awkwardness in the exchange between the handler and the timekeeper.

Another consideration for play is the judge calling the values of obstacles aloud. Requiring a verbal call from the judge introduces the possibility of scribing error. And so another method of reporting the score is the "mind like a steel trap" method. The judge will know, for example that the overall course is worth (say) 32 points; and so he or she will report 32 for a complete circuit (less the value of any obstacles faulted). The judge might also precalculate certain partial course values (based on both the natural course and the alternate exit strategy) to have a given number firmly in mind. When I used to judge this game in league play I'd have a cheat sheet with overall values calculated from start point and end point. It made the job a lot easier; saved my voice; and eliminated scribing errors.

Variations

- Least errors wins – At the end of each run, the difference between the estimated points and the points scored for the run is called the points-error. The difference between the time the dog took and the standard course time is called the time-error. The time errors are added to the point errors to determine total-errors. The dog with the least total errors wins. In the event of a tie, the dog with the highest points scored wins. In a further tie, the dog with the highest estimate wins.
- Penance – Arranged around the table are four jumps allowing the dog and handler to make up points for point errors earned. Points earned in excess of the points estimated are also point errors. That is, if a handler estimated forty points and accrued forty-one points, the dog has one point error.
- Suicide variation – Going over time or under points knocks the handler out. This variation is suitable only for the very bold.
- Team play – When running in a team format, each dog earns individual time errors. Before the final dogs in each team runs, the total points that the dog and handlers must earn are posted. The final dog in the team can attempt to reach the total estimate for the team or can run for minimum time faults. The winning team has the least total of time-error plus points-error. In a tie, the team with the highest estimate wins.

Premium Blurb

Who Dares Wins is an exciting game of competition. Every dog works with a fixed amount of time on a numbered course; the handler must guess how far he will progress with his dog on the course which loops back on itself (so the dog can continue working if the guess requires it). The dog earns points for each obstacle performed without fault.

Who Dares Wins is scored Points Only. ER2

Wildcard

Wildcard is a titling game in CPE and in the TDAA. Wildcard includes an element of strategy and daring. Wildcard is the invention of Linda Eickholdt.

Briefing

A Wildcard course is run like any standard agility course. The dog is required to perform a sequence designated by the judge. However, Wildcard is different from standard agility in one important way. At three designated points on the course the handler, or possibly the dog, will have a choice of which obstacle, out of three obstacles, to perform for that number in the sequence. This is called a Wildcard. The dog must take one of each number (a 1, a 2 and a 3), in the order of his choice, from the three Wildcards on the course. Repeating a number already taken from an earlier Wildcard will be ruled an off course.

The three obstacles for the Wildcard are placed approximately parallel to each other. The Wildcard obstacle nearest the natural flow of the course will be valued at 1 point, the Wildcard obstacle furthest from the natural flow of the course will be valued at 3 points. The middle obstacle in the line of three will be valued at 2 points.

A standard course time will be established by measuring the course using the path for the obstacle in each Wildcard that is easiest to perform.

Time faults will be assessed on a 1:1 basis; that is, one second equals one fault. Fractions are dropped for scoring. The timekeeper shall report time in 1/100th of a second for placement.

Scoring

Wildcard is scored Faults, Then Time. The highest score wins. Time is a tiebreaker only. Repeating a number already taken from an earlier Wildcard will result in an off course penalty and a non-qualifying score.

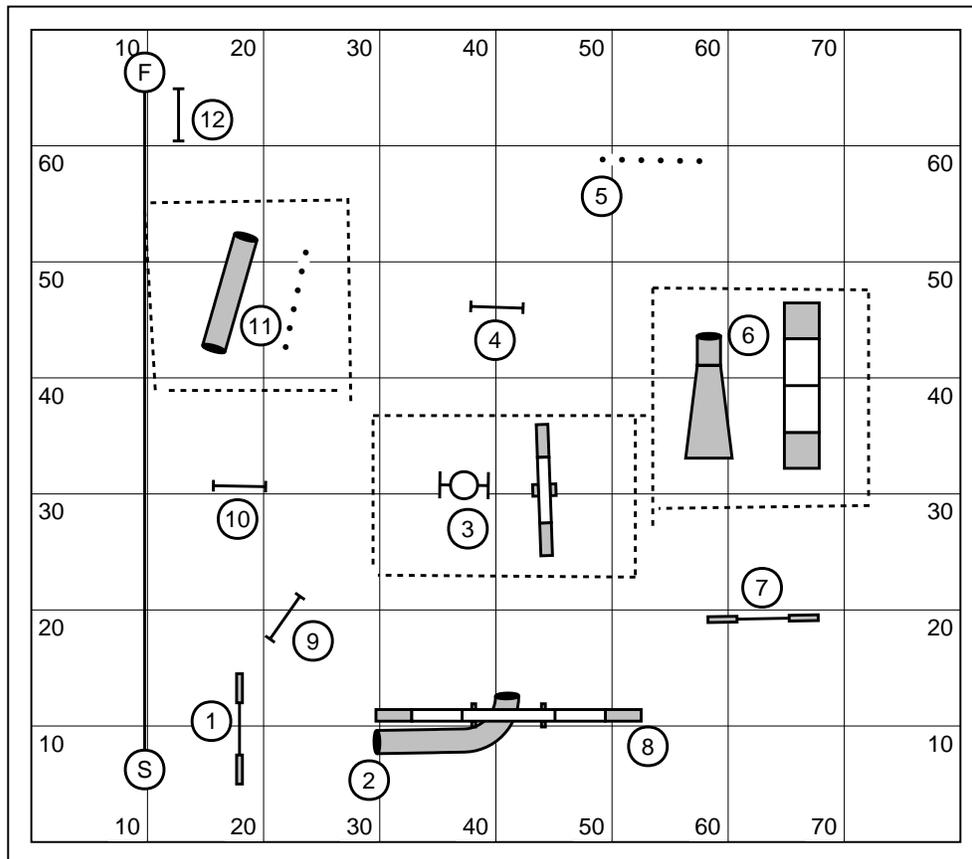
For scribing purposes, the judge will call 1, 2, or 3 when the dog performs the respective Wildcard obstacle.

Faulted Wildcard obstacles can only be corrected if it is an open or collapsed tunnel, tire, window jump, or weave poles. A 5-point fault for off course or other faults may be assessed. Any other wildcard obstacles that are faulted cannot be corrected and will be scored as 15 faults (failure to perform) and will result in an NQ due to not having completed all three wildcards. A handler cannot change the wildcard obstacle once a dog has touched or started an obstacle (such as the tunnel, collapsed tunnel, weave pole entry, contact obstacles), whether the handler instructed the dog to that obstacle or not. If the handler does so, the wildcard will be scored as 15 faults (failure to perform).

- 1 point – bar jump, tire, broad jump, pipe tunnel, collapsed tunnel, ascending double jump
- 2 points – teeter, A-frame, dogwalk, triple spread, weave poles and two-obstacle combinations comprised of single bar jumps, tire, tunnel (open or closed)

Course Design

There will be three Wildcards on the course. One of the obstacles in each wildcard is included as the regular course obstacle. The Wildcards are two obstacles placed approximately parallel to each other.



This is a Wildcard course designed by Ray Wheeler for play in the TDAA. It has nice organization and smooth flow. For the course designer, designing rational flow is the most difficult task.

Qualifying

Wildcard is a qualifying game for CPE and the TDAA. A dog must have the correct number and type of wildcards respective to its level to qualify. It is possible to NQ within \the fault limits if the correct wildcards are not collected.

Strategy

The handler's choice of path must be based upon his dog's performance strengths and weaknesses, balanced by the risks and advantages imposed by the selection of a given path.

Premium Blurb

Wildcard is a sequencing game in which at several intervals in a numbered course the handler must make a choice of multiple obstacles. *Wildcard* is scored Faults, Then Time. ER12.

Wild Strategic Tunnels

Wild Strategic Tunnels is a Pairs game that is closely related to Strategic Pairs, with a touch of Dare to Double! Wild Strategic Tunnels comes to us from Marion Allen of the ADAA (Australia).

Briefing

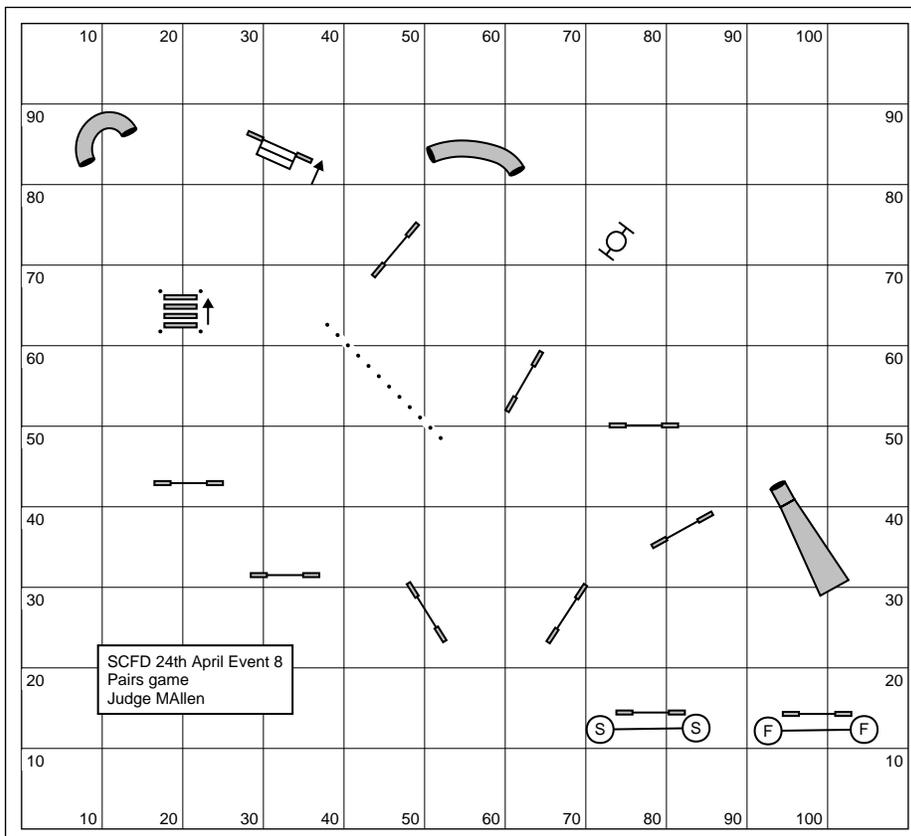
The aim of the game is to score the maximum points within the time allowed. If you exit over the finish before the hooter you will get a bonus of 5 points. If hooter goes while you are on the course you simply cease scoring and must cross the finish hurdle to stop time.

Each tunnel must be taken once and scores no points but doubles your points accrued that far. You must change dogs after doing a tunnel. Each dog must run twice.

All other obstacles earn 1 point if correctly performed. Refusals do not count. Knocked bars remain down. If you make an error on the weave poles you may recommence the obstacle immediately, fixing in the middle will not score points or you may carry on and simply not get that point.

You must do the tyre, weavepoles, long jump and spread . You may do them more than once, and it does not matter if you do not do all of the single hurdles. If the spread is taken backwards the team will be eliminated.

Course Design



Scoring

Wild Strategic Tunnels is scored Points, Then Time.

Qualifying

To earn a Qualifying card you must reach the Benchmark of 80, within the time allowed.

Debriefing

At this competition, non AAD dogs were permitted to participate. One needed a game they could participate in and have fun, but keep the Standard to Open level, so any cards earned were well earned. Hence I decided on a strategy game, as I thought that by having to start to think about game strategy, in a game other than Gamblers or Snooker.. would pay dividends eventually in these more complex games.

The team had to take the long jump, spread, weavepoles and tyre during the course of the game. It was not compulsory to do all the single hurdles. Tunnels scored no points but doubled the points earned that far. It was interesting to watch and judge as very few tackled the same course. Some teams with one novice dog left the tricky stuff like weavepoles and tyres to the more experienced dog, a good strategy. Some simply did the obvious line of jumps that lead to a tunnel, then their partner did the next obvious line to the next tunnel etc. Some did some serious thinking about the strategy required, and realised that the less hurry they were in to do the first doubling, and the more points they scored before the first doubling, the easier it would be to get to the benchmark of 80.

If one jumps eg 5 obstacles, then double...to get 10 then another 4 and double to get 28 even doing 10 before the 3rd tunnel would make it close impossible to get the 80. Whereas if you did 10 or 12 obstacles, then doubled to get 24... then you need only do 1 obstacle, double 1 obstacle double then you are easily at 102 points, having done many less obstacles than in the previous example.

The last dog was required to then either continue taking obstacles until the hooter sounded, or to take one obstacle and exit the course, and if they did so before the hooter sounded they scored a bonus of 5. One or two teams scored the bonus, but most were still busy on the course at end of game.

Where this game differed to normal strategic pairs was that if a dog made an error, there was no changeover of active dog... points were simply not scored for that obstacle. One team did a really great run, and I am sure must have had enough points... but neither tackled, let alone completed the weave poles. What I really enjoyed was the pairs where an inexperienced dog was able to get the confidence of working with a more experienced dog, leaving the tuff stuff to them or even tackling some of the more tricky obstacles as the aim of the game was to play not to win. For some anyway!! What was great to see was the spectator involvement, cheering the teams on. It was a great way to end a Double Header competition.

Premium Blurp

Wild Strategic Tunnels is a pairs game in which handlers can choose when to hand off between teams when a tunnel is performed. The tunnel also doubles the team's score. So it is a game of both strategy and skill. *Wild Strategic Tunnels* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Wild Weavers

This game is named in homage to the “Wild Weavers” an agility franchise in central Ohio that burst onto the scene early in the century and is since winked from existence as those who ran the franchise pursue other opportunities.

So here’s to the *Weavers* who burned so brightly and so briefly. I am reminded of a famous passage by Jack Kerouac (*On the Road*):

“But then they danced down the street like dingedodies, and I shambled after as I’ve been doing all my life after people who interest me, because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn, like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes “Awww!”

Briefing

Wild Weavers is scored Points then Time. Jumps are worth 1 point and the weave poles are worth 1 point for each pole if the handler is between the curl of jumps and the weave poles; or worth 2 points for each pole if the handler is on the outside of the curl of jumps while the dog weaves away. So... a complete set of weave poles is worth 12 points if the handler is inside; and 24 points if the handler is outside.

The Qualifying Course Time (QCT) shall be:

- 20"+ dogs 45 seconds
- 16" dogs 48 seconds
- 12" dogs 53 seconds
- 8" dogs 57 seconds
- 4" dogs 60 seconds

Scoring does *not* end after the completion of the 15 obstacle set; instead the handler should direct the dog to begin again. And so the dog and handler continue to work the sequence until the whistle marks the end of scoring. To stop time the dog must be directed over the #15 jump (in either direction).

The dog will be awarded the points for his greatest forward progress through the weave poles should the time whistle sound while he is engaged in a performance of the weave poles.

A Note on Faults

If a dog drops the bar on a jump he will not earn the point for that jump and may *not* earn a point for that jump on subsequent performances. However, the dog must be directed to go between the standards (complete the jump) on each successive numbered occurrence of that jump.

If a dog goes wrong course there is no fault. However the dog may not earn new points until he resumes the correct course.

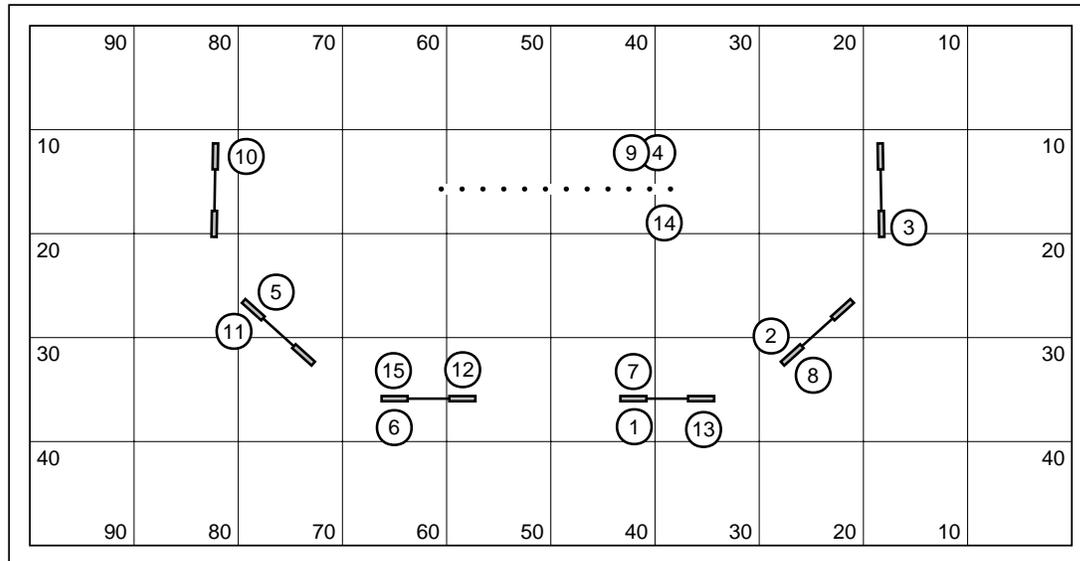
Refusals are not faulted.

There are no specific faults in the weave poles. However if the dog misses the entry or pops out of the poles at any time he must be directed back to the beginning of the weave poles to resume the performance. *However*, the dog will be awarded the points for his greatest forward progress through the weave poles should the time whistle sound while he is engaged in a performance of the weave poles.

Scoring

Wild Weavers is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



Qualifying

The dog is required to earn 48 points to qualify.

Discussion

This game is truly a variation of “Time and Score”; a game invented by Kenneth Tatsch and Jean MacKenzie in the early 1990s after they returned from an agility trip to the U.K. By evolution we suspect that Time and Score was nudged aside by another game invested in speed and foundation training for technical obstacles... the *Steeplechase*.

You’ll note that it’s possible to qualify without earning the bonus points for distance handling. We’ll leave the bonuses to the bold and the brave and those who want to distinguish themselves by higher placement.

Is cheating to make the game of the week out of a foundation exercise I’ve been doing with my dog in my two-a-days? Let’s just call it an advantage. As I always say “it ain’t showing off if it don’t work.”

Premium Blurp

Wild Weavers is, as it sounds, a weaving game in which dogs demonstrate their skill and degree of training by progressively tougher approaches and performances if the weave

poles. *Wild Weavers* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2

Wild West Pinball

Wild West Pinball is the invention of Ilze Rukis one of the preeminent agility games inventors in the world. The game was designed as a qualifying game in the TDAA for play at Decatur Dog Training Club in Warrensburg, IL on April 12, 2003.

Briefing

The purpose of the Wild West Pinball is to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted: 50 seconds. All dogs start at Slingshot Tunnel. Tunnels have no point value.

Obstacle point values are as follows:

Jumps and the tire are worth 10 points and may be taken any number of times (not back to back). If the dog drops a bar, then 10 faults are assessed. The bar is not reset and the jump is out of play.

“Gold Nuggets” are 50 points and may be taken no more than two times (not back to back). The Gold Nugget weaves must be completed in their entirety (no pop-out fixes). Multiple attempts to correctly complete the weaves are allowed.

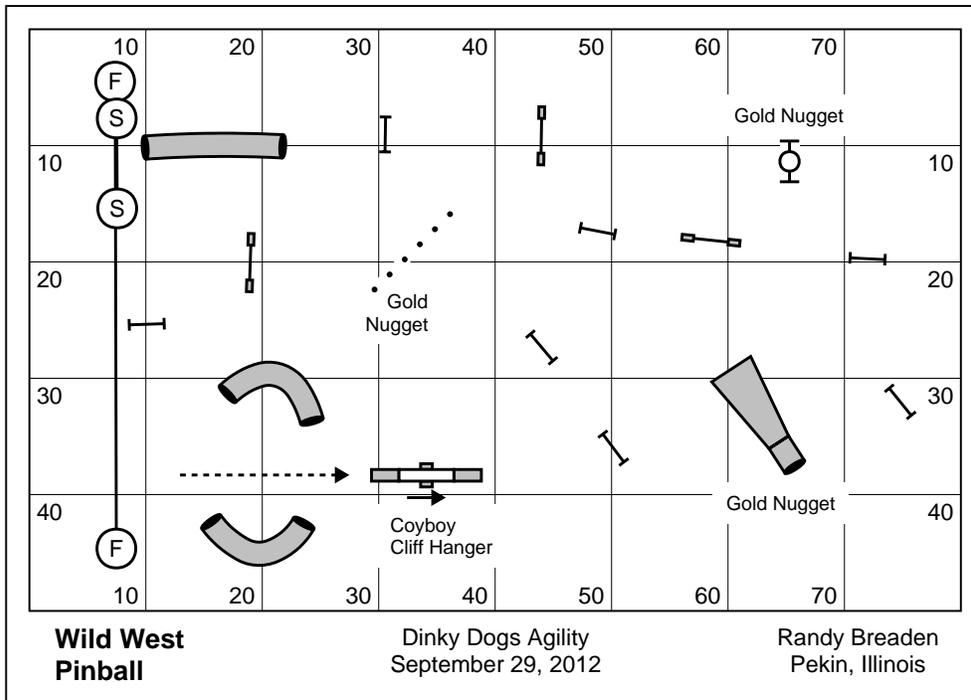
The “Dog Bone Bonus” consists of 6 weaves and is worth 100 points. The Dog Bone Bonus may be taken no more than two times (not back to back). It can only be approached by passing through Doggy Run-a-Round. If the dog enters either one of the Doggy Run-a-Round tunnels, they must repeat the tunnel before moving on to attempt the weaves. Weaves must be completed in their entirety (no pop-out fixes). Multiple attempts to correctly complete the weaves are allowed.

At the whistle, point accumulation stops and team must cross the finish line to stop time.

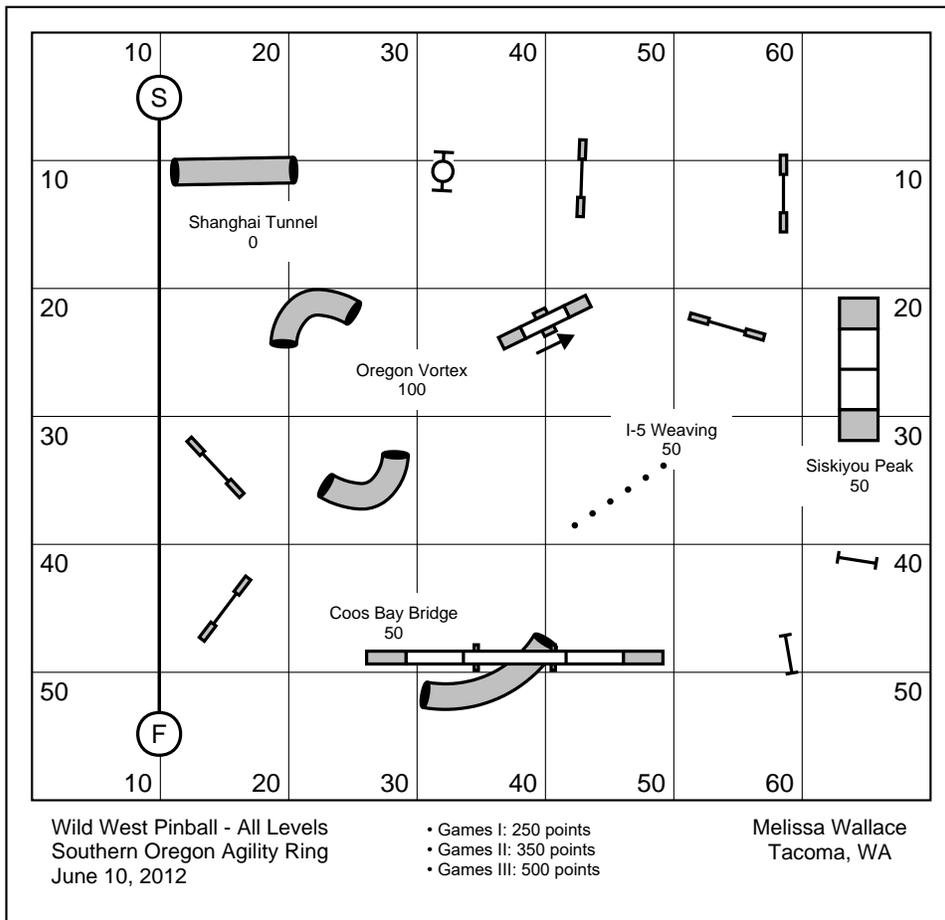
Scoring

Wild West Pinball is scored Points, Then Time.

Course Design



This is the essential *Wild West Pinball* course, designed for play in the TDAA by Randy Breaden. This course contains the very basic scoring elements of the game.



This variation of Wild West Pinball is worth showing. Also designed for the TDAA, this course by Melissa Wallace demonstrates the use of “local color” in the naming of the elements of the course. It’s basically the same game, but the course designer had a bit of fun with it for the local exhibitors.

Qualifying

To qualify, a dog must earn a benchmark number of points, which differs by level:

- Games I: 300 points
- Games II: 450 points
- Games III: 600 points

Premium Blurb

Wild West Pinball is a dog’s choice point accumulation game. A number of obstacles are set aside on the course with extraordinary value. The handler is obliged to direct his dog to score and pick up as many of those high value obstacles as possible. *Wild West Pinball* is scored Points, Then Time. ER2