

Northwest Agility League Rules and Guidelines Fall 2009

Sponsored by the Columbia Agility Team, Inc.

Rules and Guidelines

1.1 Northwest Agility League Overview

Purpose: To simulate the competition environment, increase the competitive ability of club Members and have some fun at the same time.

General Description: An agility competition for a designated period, held one evening or day per week, consisting of two runs per session. The competition consists of one course for Individual runs, and one game for individual or teams. Two hours or less is the time goal for the competition. Two or more groups may run the same course in different locations.

1.2 Eligibility

The Northwest Agility League is open to any club member who has entered an agility trial, in any agility sanctioning organization.

Dogs must be at least 18 months old to compete and must be able to perform all obstacles safely. A handler may substitute another dog they own on different days, but the same dog must compete for a day's session. Bitches in season, dogs who are aggressive, disabled, or ill should not compete.

A handler may only be on one team per group. However, a handler may bring a different dog each week and this dog must compete on that team for both the standard and game runs. If more teams are needed in order to fill a site, a handler may run another dog for another team (allowing all those who wish to join a team to do so first). A handler may be on another team at a different group session. In either circumstance, the handler may not change dogs between team from week to week (example: week 1, team 1 runs Fluffy, team 2 runs Fido; week 2, team 1 runs Fido, team 2 runs Fluffy).

1.3 Competition Level

The Standard Courses will be designed to the Intermediate level with 15 to 20 obstacles. There will not be separate courses for different levels.

1.4 League time frame

The Northwest Agility League is for a designated period, held one evening or day per week, consisting of two runs per session. The competition consists of one Regular Course, and one Game Course. Two hours or less is the time goal for the competition.

1.5 Organization of the League

The *League Coordinator* is responsible for providing the following information about the League play:

- Arrange for sites, times and dates
- Solicit Team and Site Leaders
- Course maps, with instructions and scoring sheets
- The scoring basis for each game
- Standard Course Times, if used
- Rules of competition

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The *Site Leader* will:

- Schedule Teams for officiating, hospitality, and course building
- Accumulate Team scores and send the weekly results to the *League Scorekeeper* in a timely manner.
- Resolve any problems at the site
- Coordinate providing supplies for the events

The *Team Leader* will:

- Organize and guide the team

The *League Scorekeeper* will:

- Receive the weekly scores from the *Site Leaders*
- Post the accumulated scores at the end of each week, on the announcements only email list.

1.6 Team Organization

To form a team, at least one of the two originating members must have handled a dog at a high level in a sanctioning agility organization. The first two team members, one of which is the Team Leader, selects the team name starting with the clubs initials (such as, RAT Mighty Doggies, CAT K9 Specials, etc.) and are automatically members of the team. The remaining members of a team must have entered an agility trial, in any sanctioning agility organization and, except for the second member, are drawn at random from a pool of club members that want to join a team. Each session should have a minimum of 3 teams each with 4 members. The maximum number of teams will be determined by the facility used. Substitute/Alternate positions will be available as backup participants. Several sessions at different locations or times may be available for additional teams. Qualification is the handler, not necessarily the dog, but the dog must be able to do all obstacles safely.

1.7 Sign-Ups

Those interested in participating in league will sign-up in the manner designated (either at a show, via email, online, etc.) indicating their preferences for days and times (first and second choices will be given). A person may sign-up in more than one location with the intention of using different dogs. A person may also sign-up twice in the same location with the intention of using different dogs; however, if that site is full, only one spot will be given to that handler so that more may participate.

1.8 Communication

The teams will communicate via an email list or other system provided by individual clubs. The courses, rules, etc. will be posted on CAT's web site (www.Columbiaagility.org). The scoring results and special updates will be posted on a special "announcements only" email list or a web site.

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1.9 Course Preview and Practice

The courses are available on CAT's web site (www.Columbiaagility.org) for review and practice. The courses may be set up for training, except practicing is not allowed at the competition site, the day of the event. A practice jump shall be provided off the regular course.

2.1 Selection of a Judge, Scribe and Timer

Each session will have a team or teams providing the officiating. They will provide a Judge, Scribe and Timer. The Teams will be responsible to select members to meet judging and participation restrictions.

Anyone may stand as a judge so long as they have the confidence of the participants.

A judge may show his/her own dog at the session. The restriction is that another judge must judge the competing judge's entire jump height.

The judge's word on any call is final and only the judge may assess course faults.

2.2 Jumping standards and Course Times

The handler may choose the jump height at which the dog performs and must continue to jump at this height, throughout the series. This may be any height that the equipment can accommodate and is agreed on by the participants. It is not necessary to measure dogs.

There normally is a Standard Course Time (SCT). (See the SCT section)

2.3 Agility Obstacles

Below is a list of equipment, which may be used for all courses: Substitutions are allowed, if equipment is not available.

- Dogwalk
- A-Frame
- Seesaw
- Table
- or 3 Pipe Tunnels
- Collapsed Tunnel
- Tire
- Weave Poles
- Bar Jump
- Optional Obstacles
- Panel Jump
- Wall Double Spread Jump, Triple
- Spread Jump

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2.4 Obstacle Performance

Safety is of vital importance. All course setups may be adjusted to allow safe performance due to site restrictions.

Contact Equipment

Safety zones shall be painted in accordance with the rules of any of the major agility organizations.

Contacts shall be judged on the down ramp only, except for the see-saw, where both the up and downside shall be judged.

Leaving a contact prior to beginning the ascent will be assessed a minor penalty. The dog has to commit to the obstacle with all four paws first, and then leave to incur this fault. The obstacle must be completed in order to avoid a Failure to Perform (FTP) penalty. However, if the dog jumped off in an uncontrolled, or unsafe manner, or if the dog appears not to be confident enough to perform the obstacle, the judge may tell the handler to go on, without a retry. This will result in the FTP penalty, but will not be assessed the minor penalty in addition.

Making contact with all four paws on the incorrect ramp will be assessed as a wrong course.

Flyoffs on the seesaw are assessed only if the dog leaves the obstacle in a blatantly unsafe manner. This is a judge's call.

Table

If used, the dog must jump onto the table and assume a position of the handler's choosing, either a down or sit for a period of five seconds. If performing a down, both elbows need to be touching the table. If the dog leaves the position or leaves the table the count is restarted. Plus there is a 5 fault penalty for the first time the dog jumps off the table.

A minimum of two table heights should be available. Dogs jumping 16" or less should perform a table of about 12" or less. Dogs jumping greater than 16 inches should perform a table of between 16" and 24".

Weave poles

No refusals or missed pole penalties shall be assessed. However, the obstacle must be completed in its entirety in order to avoid FTP penalty. This means that the dog should eventually enter, and exit correctly, and weave in and out of each pole.

Back weaving will be assessed a wrong course, and will be judged the same as other agility organizations.

Spread Hurdles

If used, the double and triple may be ascending only.

Hurdles and Jumps

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These must have a displaceable bar or plank. Bars may be set in the traditional method with two bars or crossed in the middle to provide a lower jump height.

2.5 Course Layout

A minimum of 60 by 75 feet must be available for courses.

Obstacles may be placed no closer than 12 feet apart; however, a spacing of 15 - 18 feet is preferred.

In Standard Courses, normally, the first and last obstacle will be the start and finish line due to space constraints. This will be used to start and stop the time, once any part of the dog crosses that line. If the dog goes around the last obstacle the time is stopped and a FTP fault is assessed. If there is a fault on the last obstacle it is counted as a normal fault.

The table may be used to stop time in games.

While competing, a dog must either be without a collar, or may wear a flat buckle collar with no hanging Dog ID tags.

Games shall be designed so that only one dog will be on the course at any given time.

2.6 Course Handling Standards

No Food or toys may be taken onto the course.

Harsh handling either verbally, or physically, is not permitted, and neither is outside assistance in Regular Courses. Good natured team support is expected with the Games Courses.

The handler may not touch the dog or obstacle, except for incidental contact. This is viewed as accidental contact that does not benefit the dog's performance. This includes the handler knocking off a pole after the dog has cleared the jump. A bump which results in the dog changing direction towards the correct obstacle, even if accidental, will result in penalty.

A dog may be penalized or eliminated for continually nipping, or showing some other form of aggression towards the handler.

A dog should work steadily throughout the course. If the dog ceases to work, is out of control, or is performing obstacles unsafely, the dog and handler shall be dismissed from the ring and eliminated.

No refusals, or run-out penalties shall be assessed, unless after having committed all four paws to a contact obstacle, and dismounted the obstacle.

Dogs fouling or leaving the ring will be eliminated. Leaving the ring is defined as when the dog is no longer working, and its attention is not on the handler

Off course shall be assessed when a dog has committed with all four paws to the incorrect obstacle, wrong end of a contact obstacle, or tunnel, or for performing the obstacle in the wrong direction.

Non-punitive training is allowed in the ring, but will result in elimination. However, the handler is allowed to complete the course. Non-punitive training includes: picking the dog up, and gently placing it back on

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contact equipment, moderate verbal reprimand, and touching the dog to assist it assume position on the table. It does not include hitting, or striking the dog, shouting or swearing, shaking, or throwing anything at, or near the dog, or any other action, which the judge may interpret as abusive. Should the judge determine such behavior as being inappropriate, the dog will be excused from the ring immediately.

2.7 Standard Course Times and Time Faults

A Standard Course Time (SCT) shall be used as needed. The SCT will be calculated by multiplying the number of obstacles by 3.5 sec. for Open Dogs rounded up to the next second (15 obstacles X 3.5 sec. = 52.5 round up to 53 seconds, 20 obstacles X 3.5 sec. = 70 seconds). Mini Dogs, jumping 16 inches and below, will receive 10 % additional time added to the SCT. Time Faults are assessed by deducting any full seconds over SCT from the 100 points available.

2.8 Standard Scoring

The team members are scored for the Individual runs using the following fault system. The faults are deducted from 100.

- Missed contact zones 5 faults
- Leaving contact prior to beginning ascent 5 faults
- Fly-off on see-saw 5 faults
- First occurrence of jumping off table prior to end of count 5 faults
- Anticipation of end of count on table 5 faults
- Displacing top poles or planks from hurdles 5 faults
- Knocking part of broad jump over 5 faults
- Wrong course 5 faults
- Handler touching dog or obstacle (other than incidental) 5 faults
- Failure to Perform (FTP) obstacle 20 faults
- Failing to correct a missed entry or weave pole 20 faults
- Walking over broad jump 20 faults
- Refusals or runouts not penalized
- Missed weave pole entry, or missed pole not penalized
- Dog fouling ring elimination
- Harsh or abusive behavior/language elimination
- Dog aggression elimination
- Dog ceasing to work elimination
- Outside assistance elimination
- Food or devices on course elimination
- Poor sportsmanship elimination

Additionally, any full seconds over Standard Course Time (SCT) will also be deducted as time faults.

The team score is the accumulated total of the best three of the four team member's Individual scores. At the final competition, special scoring may be used.

2.9 Game Course Scoring

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The Game event may have a SCT, but it is anticipated that most Team runs will have accumulated points. It is the intent to allow various methods to add points to the team's score and the scoring method will be detailed on the course-briefing sheet. For the Game Courses, the best three of four team member's Individual scores are added to the accumulated total, except if it is a team of two or more accumulating a score, then all scores are added to the accumulated total. At the final competition, special scoring may be used.

2.10 Prizes and Awards

Prizes and awards may be available.

2.11 Misconduct

The respective club's Dog Aggression Policy and Handler Policy shall be used at this event.

2.12 For Exhibition Only

Any club member may show a dog for exhibition only, if space is available, without having previously entered a trial. Each site has a specific number of positions for teams. If there are not enough team members to fill the available slots, the positions are then made available for a member to run their dog for exhibition only. For example, if there is space for 5 teams or 20 positions and only 4 teams or 16 slots are filled, there remain 4 slots that may be used for exhibition. Exhibition handlers are not on a team and will run as individuals after team members run. The dog must be able to perform all obstacles safely or skip the obstacle. All other league rules apply.

In Regular courses, the exhibition participant will be allowed 1.5 SCT and in games the stated allowed time. There will be no judging or scoring, food or toys may be used on the course and the handler may touch the dog and use a leash.

3.1 Extra Supplies for league play (arranged by Site Leader)

2 Whistles

1 Stopwatch

Scribe Sheets, Weekly Scoring Sheets (Downloaded from web site)

Courses with briefings for the week ((Downloaded from web site)

Rules and Guidelines with scoring system (Downloaded from web site)

Tape and golf tees to mark ground boxes.