

AGILITY DOG CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES

LEVEL 2

2024
CLASS MANUAL

UPDATED: JANUARY 2023



Caveat

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Thank you for respecting the arduous work the club put into creating this manual for you, our students and valued club members.

Here's your future success in the sport of agility.

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Dedication

This manual is dedicated to the handlers and dogs that have made the sport of agility great in Australia.

It is dedicated to those who started the Agility Dog Club and those who have helped the club (past and present) achieve the status it holds today.

We would also like to thank those members who have contributed to creating the Green Class Agility Training Manual.

CONGRATULATIONS

ON PROMOTING TO

GREEN CLASS

GOAL:

The goal of Green Class is to help both dogs and handlers learn basic agility moves, commence contact equipment criterion (on larger equipment), commence Weave Pole training, practice handling moves on the flat (without jumps), sequencing (with some jumps) and, most importantly, practise and reinforce your start line stays.

In Green Class, you will:

- Be introduced to more equipment and verbal commands
- Whilst some handlers may commence Green Class, still on lead, by the end of this component, all handlers will be able to work off lead with confidence
- Remember, you still need to practice and continue to practice foundation exercises that you learn in the Beginners Classes (i.e., circle work, stays, recall to the side, send out to a target, send around a pole and nose touches)
- Your dog will continue to learn to jump at a low height. This is especially important as young dogs (significantly larger breeds) should NOT be jumping their shoulder height until they have reached the age of 15-18 months. This ensures that their growth plates have had sufficient time to develop. Puppies will only be jumping about 20 cm.
- In Green Class, you will concentrate on teaching your dog independence. This is especially important for contact equipment where the 2 on 2 off position is paramount. Your Instructor will assist you with this phase by utilising the club's mini-contact equipment.
- Importantly, in Green Class, you will learn directional changes on the mini course/s. This aspect of handling is generally referred to as "flatwork" and comprises the Handler to change sides whilst on the course (i.e. Front Cross (FX); Rear Cross (RX,) and the Blind Cross (BX).
- You will learn how to successfully change your (the Handler's) direction whilst your dog is negotiating obstacles
- By the end of this facet of your training, you will be negotiating mini-courses independently.
- Finally, you will learn how to (forward) send your dog to an obstacle.

REMEMBER:

Success does not occur overnight. It requires you (the Handler) to utilise the skills you learn at the club and continue to train them in your everyday activities and other environments.

Acknowledgements

Robyn Jones

Vicki Case

&

Jeanette Muller

ADC NSW Thanks these individuals for their hard work and commitment towards the creation of these training materials.

Disclaimer

It should be noted that:

- Agility is an active dog sport.
- Dogs are excited by movement.
- Many dogs drawn to agility are very excitable.
- Excitable dogs can behave differently in an aroused state than their normal personality or behaviour.

However, the ADC will not tolerate continued acts of 'Reactive / Aggressive behaviour' were adog:

- Lunges at other dog/s with intent to harm.
- Snaps at a human or dog.
- Runs away from the Handler to chase or attack another person or dog.
- Choose any behaviour that may be intimidating to others or their dogs.

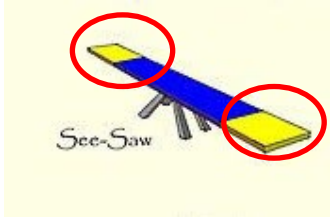
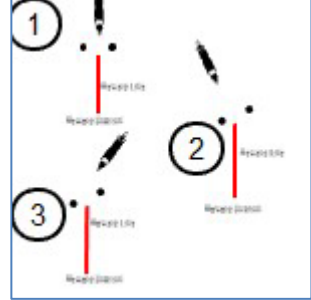
NOTE:

1. All serious incidents are recorded in a logbook and kept with club officials.
2. A Senior Instructor will counsel members with these dogs.
3. If there is no improvement and the behaviour continues, the member will be asked to muzzle the dog whilst in training classes

Additionally, it should be noted that the ACD Constitution allows the club to rescind the membership of any member if deemed necessary.

Glossary of Agility Terms

As with any sport, agility has its language. Hereunder is a glossary of words, terms, and phrases that you can/will use during your agility journey.

Skill / Task	Definition / Criterion	Diagram
Flat Work	"Flatwork" is a term used when the Handler is required to change sides whilst on the course (i.e., Front Cross (FX), Rear Cross (RX) and the Blind Cross (BX)).	
Contact Zone	The yellow portion at the bottom/end of both sides of each piece of contact equipment (i.e., A-Frame, See Saw & dog walk)	 <p>Contact Zones circled in RED</p>
"Bang Bang"	A game designed to teach your dog to become accustomed to the movement and sound associated with the See-Saw obstacle	
"Virtual Dog"	An imaginative dog that you visualise whilst learning new skills	
"The Reward Line"	An imaginary line that is straight through the weaves	 <p>Reward Line is the RED line</p>
"Take it on the Road".	Take your dog and equipment to different locations/venues and practice your skills.	

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL DOG TRAINING

In any training relationship, there are two parties – the trainer and the trainees (you and your dog). For training to be successful, both parties play a role.

You are (the Handler's role is to lead your training team (you and your dog), so you are well on your way to having a great dog.

Hereunder are some tips for getting the most from your team.

1. **Be prepared** - Ensuring you have all the necessary training equipment needed for both you and your dog
2. **Give it a go** - Teams that complete training/courses have participated fully in class. You are encouraged to listen to your Instructor's explanations and attempt the exercises.
3. **Ask questions** – You are encouraged to ask questions during and after class. If you missed instructions or don't understand what you need to do, please ask. Our Instructors are there to help you and your dog be successful.
4. **Give yourself a break** – There are plenty of distractions when working outside in a group class situation. If you are frustrated, then it is likely your dog is having a hard time too. If this occurs, we encourage you to take a break. Give yourself a break and observe your classmates. You and your dog are both still learning whilst taking a break.
5. **Train don't blame** – When our dogs don't perform, it is easy to blame them (e.g., call them stubborn) or make excuses (e.g., they are crazy because they didn't go to the park before class). Classes teach skills and train our dogs to focus and respond to us around distractions. So please use your classmates (people and dogs) and environmental distractions (e.g. smells on the ground, birds etc.) .as an opportunity to teach your dog how to behave around things that may be distracting to them
6. **Do some homework** – Practising between classes will ensure you and your dog are ready to attempt the next step in class. You are provided with this training manual; please use it.
7. **Celebrate your success** – Each week, you are encouraged to set you and your dog small, achievable goals. It may be as simple as a start line stay. If that is all you and your dog achieve at training for that night, then celebrate and congratulate yourself and your dog. Many small successes build on one another, and before you know it, your dog is performing for more extended periods and distance.
8. **Don't Compare** – We all learn at different paces, so please don't compare you and your dog with other teams. We (us and our dogs) have unique backgrounds, home and family situations, work commitments and skillsets. Comparing your progress with another team is a waste of good training time. Stay focused on YOUR team's goals.
9. **Most Importantly** - **HAVE FUN!** ¹

Week 1

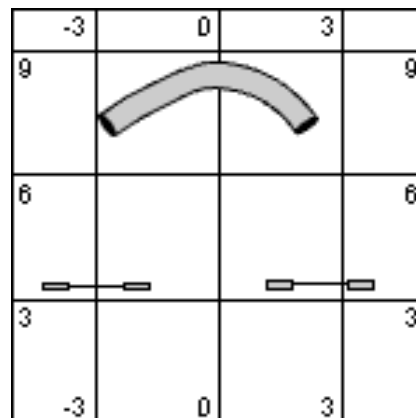
Exercise 1 – Send to Tunnel

So why do we teach "Send to Tunnel."

The emphasis of this exercise is on sending your dog to the tunnel, emphasising the handler introducing **verbal commands** to their glossary. 'Tunnel' is the most utilised verbal for this exercise.

Teaching a dog to "Send to Tunnel."

Set up a mini-course (as per the attached map).



- The handler places the dog in a sit/stay position in front of a jump.
- The handler walks a step or two past the first jump before verballing and releasing the dog.
- Whilst in a forward motion and looking at the entrance to the tunnel, the handler gives the verbal tunnel command.
- The handler then picks up the dog on the opposite side of the tunnel (remember to connect with the dog as it exits the tunnel).
- The team then completes the last jump obstacle.
- REWARD the dog (toy or treats).

IMPORTANT:

1. When sending to the tunnel, ensure the handler utilises the dog's side hand/arm and leg.
2. The handler must look at the tunnel entrance and not move away towards the tunnel exit until the dog has "committed" to the tunnel obstacle.
3. Ensure the handler reconnects (eye contact) with the dog as it exits the tunnel.
4. Ensure the handler continues running until the dog has completed the last obstacle (*if you stop or slow down, the dog will likely drop the last bar*). It is encouraged that the handler runs until they are past the last obstacle, and it has been completed by the dog.

Exercise 2a – 2 on 2 Off (2o2o)

So why do we teach "2o2o."

There are three (3) contact obstacles in agility – dog walk, A-Frame, and See-Saw. These obstacles have yellow zones (contact zones) painted on the bottom of their respective

ramps. To qualify, they must touch at least one part of one foot in the yellow zone before leaving the obstacle². This practice is commonly referred to as the 2o2o position.

The dog is taught that they are expected to stop (in the 2o2o position) at the end of the three (3) respective contact obstacles. This is a progression from those coming from Beginners, who were taught how to shape their dog to get its rear feet on a contact board.

However, some handlers may opt for a 'running contact.' If this is their preferred contact method, the above will not apply to them.

Teaching a dog to "2o2o."

- i. Use the mini A-frame. Have the dog walk slowly up and over the mini A-frame and into the 2o2o position (**DO NOT LURE THE DOG INTO POSITION!!!**).
- ii. If necessary, the handler can hold the dog's collar to ensure they walk down the offside to the contact zone at a steady/safe pace.
- iii. Once in position, the handler rewards the position by stepping into the dog after using their respective marker word (i.e., Yes) or a clicker.
- iv. The dog is not to release until the handler has given the verbal command to do so.

IMPORTANT:

- A lot of rewards for the desired behaviour now will reap the rewards in the long term.
- Dogs and handlers **MAY ONLY** progress to using the mini A-frame as an entire obstacle (rather than a 2o2o exercise) once they have demonstrated the desired 2o2o position.



www.oneminddogs.com

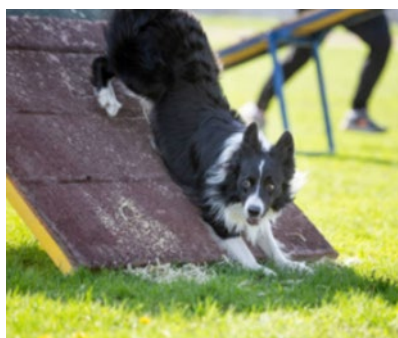
² www.wagagility.com

Exercise 2b – A-Frame (as an obstacle rather than a 2o2o exercise)

So why do we teach the “A-Frame.”

The A-Frame is one of the two more difficult contact obstacles. They require the dog to have some momentum to navigate them successfully. The A-Frame is tall and steep.

The objective in Green Class is for the handler to assist their dog in building its confidence on a mini A-Frame before moving on to the full-size obstacle. This confidence is achieved by having the dog negotiate the obstacle at a lower height.



www.istockphoto.com

Teaching a dog, the “A-Frame.”

- Allow the dog to attempt the whole mini-A-Frame. Initially, this should be attempted whilst the dog is still on a leash. This ensures the dog does not ‘rush’ at/over the obstacle.
- Set the dog and handler up at a 45-degree angle to the A-Frame – NOT straight on
- This should encourage the dog to stride onto the A-Frame as opposed to bounding onto it.
- Striding up and down the obstacle will give the dog more balance on the downward side than does bounding.
- Using the lead or collar, have the handler guide the dog up the obstacle and down the other side – at a steady pace ending in the 2o2o position and MARK and REWARD!
- Repeat the entire mini-A-Frame.
- On the way down, the handler should use their contact command (i.e., touch, stop) and allow the dog to do it.
- If the dog breaks its 2o2o position before being given their release word, have the handler say (in a calm and passive voice), ‘whoops/oops’ (which is considered a non-reward marker) and get them back onto the downward slope from the side and practice the 2o2o.

IMPORTANT:

- Handlers should be encouraged to PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!!!
- Time practising this now will pay dividends in the long term.
- The handler should remain patient and calm.
- ALWAYS reward the dog (when in the 2o2o position) from the dog's side hand and between the front legs, at ground level.

Exercise 3 – Dog Walk

So why do we teach the “Dog Walk.”

The dog walk is the easiest contact obstacle. The dog walk is navigated by walking/running across it.

The objective in Green Class is for the handler to assist their dog in building its confidence on a mini dog walk before moving onto the full-size obstacle.

Some dogs may be hesitant at first. Ensure the handler remains patient and generous with treating, as this is the best way to help them build up their confidence.

The outcome of this exercise is for the dog to run onto and across the dog walk obstacle and then stop on end, in the 2o2o position. Again, the emphasis of Green Class is on the end behaviour (i.e., 2o2o

Teaching a dog, the “Dog Walk.”

- Use the mini dog walk
- Have the dog (on leash) walk up the on-ramp of the dog walk. Reward the dog. If and when the dog is comfortable, have the dog walk along the dog walk to the top of the off-ramp. Reward. Have the dog walk down the ramp to the 2o2o position.
- Handlers are NOT TO LURE! If necessary, the handler may hold onto the dog's collar. This will assist the dog to walk the dog the plank at a steady pace.
- The dog should be rewarded when it does the 2o2o positioning at the end. REMEMBER the handler should be encouraged to use their marker word (i.e., yes, okay) every time the dog does the behaviour.
- The handler should then release the dog verbally with its designated release word (i.e., okay, break).

IMPORTANT:

- Ensure the handler does not crowd the dog.
- Encourage the handler to PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!!!
- Time practising this now will pay dividends in the long term.
- Ensure the handler remains patient and calm.
- ALWAYS reward the dog (when in the 2o2o position) from the dog's side hand and between the front legs at ground level.



Reward the dog low & between the front legs.

Exercise 4 – See-Saw (aka Teeter-Totter)

So why do we teach the “See-Saw.”

The See-Saw (Teeter-Totter) is one of the two more difficult contact obstacles. The See-Saw **can be** the scariest obstacle for a dog as the tipping point is unpredictable for them and, the slower they are, the more unpredictable it gets. The See-Saw obstacle requires the dog to have some momentum to navigate it successfully.

Teaching a dog the “See-Saw.”

Green Class members will only be playing games on the See-Saw at this stage. They will **NOT** be going over the entire obstacle at this stage of their training. Handlers will be learning the “bang” / “bang it” game with their dogs.

The game aims to get your dog accustomed to both the noise and familiarisation with the equipment's movement. This also teaches the dog that it will only tip once they have reached the contact zone. This makes the obstacle much more predictable, and they will feel safer. The long-term goal is to teach the dog to run very quickly up and over the See-Saw before stopping at the very end, in the 2o2o position.

Game 1:

- Place the plank on a jump bar (or similar) to become a micro mini See-Saw.
- Walk the dog over this several times to get them used to the movement (**NOTE:** 2o2o still applies at the easy level).

Game 2: - “Bang it.”

- Encourage the dog to put their front feet onto the up end of the See-Saw while it is in the air (the handler or the Instructor can support the plank at the down end so that it lowers gently).
- Mark and reward.
- Repeat whilst encouraging the dog to get on the plank in a jumping motion/action / lower the plank/mark and reward.
- Repeat, but allow the plank to drop a little to the ground, and as it strikes, the ground says “bang” or “bang it” in a happy voice.
- After several repetitions, ask the dog to “bang it” before you start.
- Gradually allow the plank to drop further and make more noise.



www.susangarrettdogagility.com

Week 2

Exercise 1 – Tyre

So why do we teach the “Tyre.”

The Tyre obstacle is an obstacle in its own right and needs to be taught to a dog. It should not be considered just another kind of jump. The tyre obstacle requires a dog to not jump over something but rather through something. Dogs do not generalise well, and the tyre is a prime example.

The tyre has been introduced to Beginners, so most dogs and handlers should have some experience with it

Teaching a dog, the “Tyre.”

- Initially set the tyre at the lowest height. Have a food reward or toy just on the other side of the tyre so the dog can see it and go straight through the tyre easily.
- Sit the dog very close to the hop part of the tyre.
- The handler sends the dog forward to the reward and then moves to the reward area themselves to ‘recall to side’ the dog.
- Reward the dog for going through the tyre, ensuring the handler does not lure the dog to ‘back jump’ the obstacle.
- Next, use a target or throw a toy/treat forward away from the tyre.
- Raise the hoop slightly when the dog is ready.
- Begin using a verbal cue when the dog consistently goes through the tyre obstacle (i.e., tyre).
- Remember to do LEFT and RIGHT sides.

IMPORTANT:

- Do not go too far too fast when raising the tyre to the dog's height, as this could scare or confuse the dog.
- It is also essential that you do not raise the tyre too slowly, as this can cause your dog to crash the obstacle.
- If the dog becomes confused, scared, or incorrectly completes the obstacle, go back a few steps in their training and start again.
- Keep the sessions short, upbeat, fun, and full of rewards/treats so that your dog learns to love the obstacle.

Exercise 2 – Broad/Long Jump

So why do we teach the “Broad / Long Jump.”

The broad jump (sometimes referred to as the long jump) is a common obstacle in dog agility. The goal of the broad jump is for the dog to jump long and low, to clear several flat boards placed between vertical marker poles.

The dog must jump the entire obstacle without touching or stepping on any part of the horizontal boards.

Teaching a dog, the "Broad / Long Jump."

- i. Start with fewer boards and work their way up to the number required for the dog's respective height.
- ii. Place a target at the other end of the obstacle.
- iii. Place the dog back from the broad jump and ask them to stay.
- iv. Give the dog the 'jump broad jump' command (i.e., big, broad) and encourage them towards the obstacle, over it and send to the reward at the other end.

IMPORTANT:

- If the dog is not correctly jumping the obstacle, modify the jump by placing the boards closer together or removing a few to make the jump short³.
- Repeat.

Exercise 3 – Sending around a wing

This exercise is building on the **Post Turn** (180) covered in Beginners, but this time sending the dog around the wing on the outside as well as the inside/bar side of the jump. i.e. a backside or behind and a tight turn.

1) Revise **Post Turn**

Handler sits their dog at an appropriate distance from the jump.

The handler sends the dog over the jump, giving a verbal command such as 'tight, tight' or 'check, check' and performs a post turn, arm outstretched.

The dog should turn and come around the wing, back to the handler on the side of their outstretched arm.

The handler rewards the dog.

Do this on both the left and right side.

N.B. The handler needs to use the specific verbal command as the dog approaches the jump requiring a tight turn, so they know they need to 'collect' and angle their landing to go in the correct direction.

2) **Backside/behind** – sending the dog around the outside of the wing

At first, this can be introduced to the dog using just one wing (no bar).

The handler sits the dog approx. 1 metre from the wing.

Using the command previously used for cone work, the handler sends the dog around the outside of the wing on the right, performing a post turn so the dog returns to the handler on the side of their outstretched arm.

³ www.wagwalking.com/training

Handler rewards dog.

Turn the wing (or go to the other side) and repeat the exercise, sending the dog around the outside of the wing on the left.

Once the dog is becoming used to going around the outside of the wing, the handler can start introducing the specific verbal command for a backside/behind. E.g. back, behind, push.

Exercise 4– The Front Cross (FX)

So why do we teach the “FX.”

An FX is a manoeuvre in which the handler changes handling sides in **front** of their dog. This typically occurs on a turn. The side change happens with the handler turning toward their dog. In this manoeuvre, the handler can **see** their dog throughout the side change⁴.

The FX is one of the building blocks of dog agility handling. It can be utilised on almost every agility course. It is also the foundation for several more complex handling movements. The FX is also used to change your dog's leading leg to enable it to initiate a turn on the course⁵.

This exercise aims to ensure the handler and dog can confidently perform an FX from both sides.

Teaching a dog, the “FX.”

Step 1: Start without Your Dog!

Many novice handlers are too self-conscious to practice their handling movements without their dog. But *please believe* that they'll be more successful if they get their footwork drilled into their muscle memory before adding their dog into the process.

The FX comprises four (4) literal steps. The handler will take four (4) steps – Step forward, pivot, step back, and step forward.

1. **With their ‘virtual dog,’** step ahead and slightly in towards the dog with the dog's side leg⁶.
2. Pivot on the ball of the foot that they just stepped forward on so that their body starts to turn towards the dog and take a step backwards with their other foot. Now they should be directly in front of their dog's path and almost facing their dog.
3. Lift their pivot foot; continue rotating their body, and step far backwards with their former pivot foot. At this point, they are almost facing forwards again.
4. Finally, complete their rotation and step forward with their back foot. At this point, they are facing the same direction as they started, and their dog should be on the opposite side of their body.

Practice this on both the left and right sides.

⁴ www.baddogagility.com

⁵ Steve Schwarz

⁶ Dog side leg is the leg closest to the dog.

Add Their Arms

Once they can successfully execute the footwork, they should work on / add their handwork. Essentially the handler is changing from one handler lead hand/arm to the other Handler lead hand/arm. This is the final piece of the FX where they need to consciously think about which hand/arm they "stick out" and when. In effect, they want their hand to point to their dog's nose throughout the FX.

This manoeuvre is best learnt for some handlers by passing a small ball from one hand to the other. They start with the ball in hand nearest to their dog and, as they take their second step, they start transferring the ball to their other hand. At the end of the manoeuvre, they will have the ball in their other hand, extended towards the dog but on the dog's other side.

Add Their Dog

Only graduate to adding the dog when they can successfully manoeuvre without consciously thinking about it in detail.

5. Set the dog up with a start line stay.
6. Have a very high-value treat/toy in the handler's hand closest to their dog. The handler will use the treat/toy to help them stay ahead of their dog whilst keeping its focus on their lead hand and reward their dog for following their lead hand. Essentially, the treat/toy is performing three (3) roles.
7. As they go through the four (4) components of the manoeuvre, keep their treat/toy arm directly in front of the dog. Once they have successfully performed this manoeuvre several times, they should be able to remove the treat/toy from the picture.

Week 3

Exercise 1 – Jumps – Front Cross

So why do we teach "Jumps – FX."

The objective of Green Class is to perform the **FX** manoeuvre where a jump is positioned between the dog and the handler performing the **FX**.

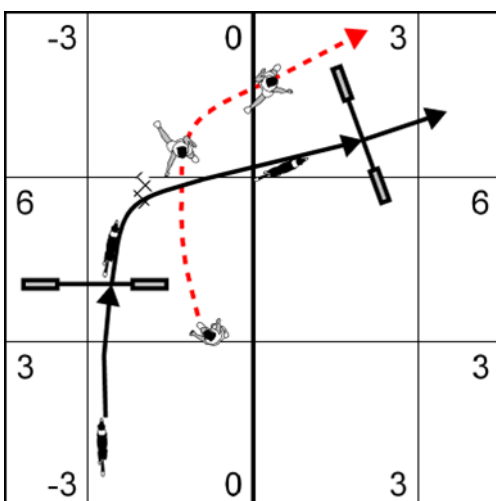
Teaching a dog, the "Jumps – FX."

Step 1:

- Start with one jump.
- The handler leads out past the jump and prepares by standing with the dog's side leg and hand/arm back towards the dog.
- Release their dog from the Sit/Stay position and begin to pivot on the ball of their foot that they just stepped forward on. Turn their body towards their dog and take a step backwards with their opposite foot (they will be directly in the dog's path).
- Lift their pivot foot; continue rotating their body and step far backwards with their former pivot foot. At this point, they are almost facing forwards again.
- Complete their rotation and step forward with their back foot. At this point, they are facing the same direction as they started, and their dog should be on the opposite side of their body.
- REWARD YOUR DOG!

Step 2:

- Add a second jump.
- The handler leads out past the first jump.
- Release their dog perform an FX and send their dog over the second jump.
- REWARD YOUR DOG!



ADVANCED GREEN CLASS DOGS

Add a tunnel to the start of the mini-course.

IMPORTANT:

- When performing an FX, ensure that the handlers DO NOT block/hinder the dog's path/progression.
- Additionally, ensure the handler DOES NOT leave too wide an area for their dog to land. This depends on the acuteness of the turn required by the jump position.

Exercise 2 – Blind Cross (introduction)

Blind Cross is a manoeuvre in which the handler moves ahead of the dog and changes the handling side. In contrast to the FX where the handler is facing the dog, for a BX the handler quickly turns their back on the dog. However, contact with the dog can/should still be maintained by the handler looking back towards the dog over the appropriate shoulder and extending the appropriate arm towards the dog.

Step 1: Recall to side with Blind Cross

- As with a regular recall to the side, the handler stands about 2 metres away from their dog with their back facing their dog but looking over one shoulder with the corresponding arm extended back towards the dog.
- The handler has a treat/toy in the extended hand
- Release the dog
- Once the dog is released, the handler turns their head and looks back over the opposite shoulder and extends the opposite arm towards the dog, while swapping the treat/toy into that hand.
- The handler remains stationary as the dog comes to their side _ so it is a recall to the side with a Blind added
- Reward dog
- Do this on the LEFT and RIGHT sides.

Step 2:

If the handler and dog perform Step 1 well, a handler can take 1 or 2 steps forward (i.e. in the same direction the dog is travelling) after the release word.

HOMEWORK

Practise, practise, practise the above Blind Cross exercises

Exercise 3 – Weaves

So why do we teach “Weaves.”

Weave poles can be the most daunting obstacle to teach their dog for anyone starting in agility. A dog must navigate 12 weave poles in a zigzag pattern, with the dog ALWAYS entering the first pole (entrance) from the left shoulder. The dog is required to complete all 12 poles without skipping one⁷.

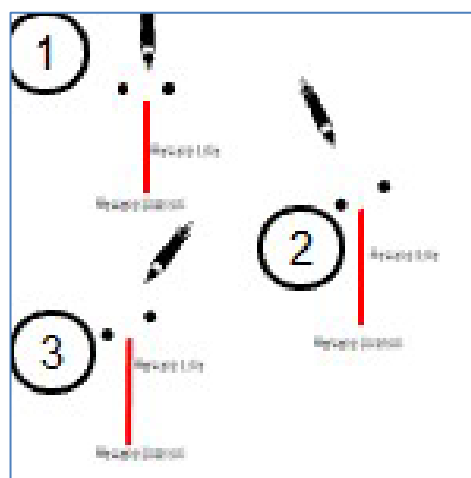
The objective of Green Class is to commence weave pole training. Comprehensive weave pole training notes (a summary of Susan GARRETT's method) are attached to the Green manual as an Annexure.

NOTE:

Weave pole training requires **DAILY PRACTICE** for 1-3 months. Remember to keep the sessions short.

Teaching a dog to “Weave.”

Step 1: - The dog must learn to go through two (2) poles. Once the dog has looked forward, between the 2 poles, have the handler throw a reward on the reward line⁸. Food is recommended for Step 1; however, a toy is highly recommended after this. The goal is to have the dog go **forward** and not turn back to the handler.



The reward line is the **red** line

1. Get the dog excited before they start. They do not have to be in a sit!
2. Allow the dog a little time to work out what the handler wants – thinking time.
3. After a mistake, have the handler stand still and calmly and get the dog back to the initial position (**BUT not by going back through the 2 poles**). This time have the handler try holding the dog's collar to help them line up and try again.
4. Step 1 is only done in week 5.

⁷ www.spiritdogtraining.com/agility

⁸ **'The Reward Line'** is straight through the weaves.

Step 2: - angle one set of 2 x 2 poles and repeat the above. The handler needs to start the action in different locations around the entrance between the 2 poles – **on both the left and right sides.**

5. The handler should vary their body position – standstill or run with their dog.

IMPORTANT:

- Know where the 'reward line' is before they start each session.
- Throw the toy/treat as the dog goes through the 2x2 poles.

6. Vary the speed at which the handler approaches the poles.

7. Remember, a mistake allows the handler to reward the correction.

8. Work on an 80% success rate – don't stay on Step 1 and Step 2 for too long.

Step 3: - set up a second set of 2x2 poles about 1 metre away from the first set. Angle it, so there is a clear channel through both sets of poles.

9. Get the dog to go through the first set, and have the handler move forward. Reward the dog and then quickly point out the second set of poles. Wait a bit to see if the dog will go through the second set of poles of their own volition.

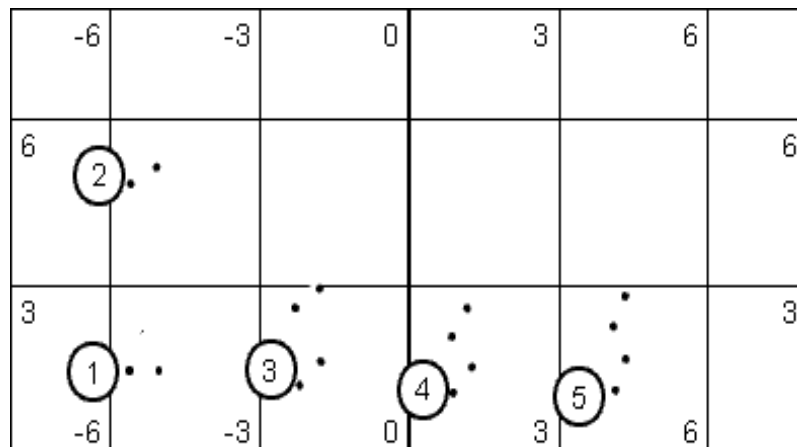
10. Have the toy reward ready. Line up the dog, get them excited and ask them to go through the first set and then wait to see if they will offer the second set themselves. Throw the toy reward (on the reward line).

Step 4: - move the two sets of 2x2 poles closer together. Remember to approach the weaves on both the left and right sides. Imagine an arc is drawn around the entry to the weavers. The dog must be sent through the poles from all spots on that imaginary arc.

NOTE: if you purchase weave poles, ensure that they are coloured white before using them for training. The rationale for this is that you want the dog to see the **same picture** when performing each obstacle. If you have purchased coloured poles, scruff them up with sandpaper and paint them with white spray paint before using them for training.

Cont. next page.

The circle's numbers depict the progression the handler should be aspiring for.



Exercise 4 – See-saw (See Wk1 Ex 4)

Week 4

Exercise 1 – Jumping Drills

So why do we teach “Jumping Drills.”

The objective of Green Class this week is to improve the dog's jumping performance by executing a sequence of jumps.

Teaching a dog “Jumping Drills.”

Using four (4) jumps and a tunnel, set up the mini-courses hereunder and have each handler attempt each course.

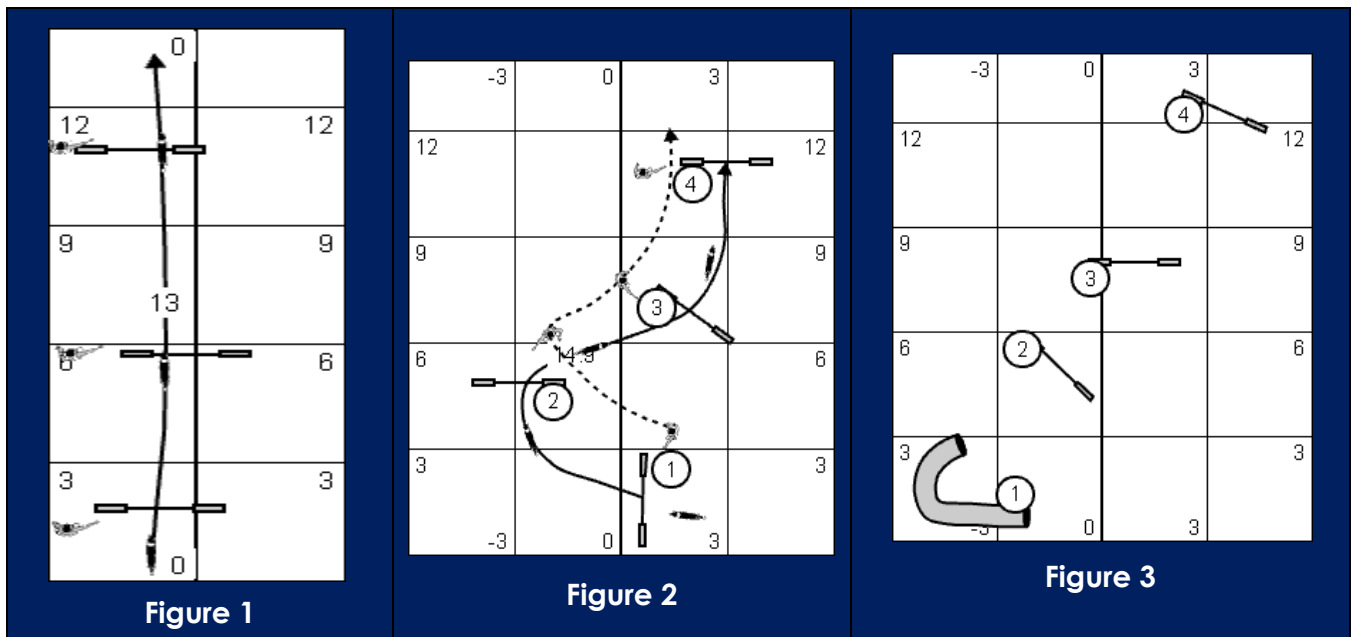


Figure 1: Arrange three (3) jumps slightly off being a straight line. From a start line stay, have the handler lead out and negotiate the three (3) jump sequences. REWARD the dog at the finish. Perform this sequence from both the right- and left-hand sides.

Figure 2: Arrange four (4) jumps in an ‘S’ shape, as indicated above. The handler is to perform an FX between obstacles 2 and 3 and continue forward to complete the mini-course.

Figure 3: Arrange a tunnel and three (3) jumps as per diagram 3. From a start line, stay, have the handler release their dog, send it into the tunnel, and perform an FX between the tunnel exit and jump 2 before continuing and completing the mini-course.

Exercise 2 – Weaves

As per Week 3 – Exercise 2.

Exercise 3 – See-Saw

As per Week 1 – Exercise 3.

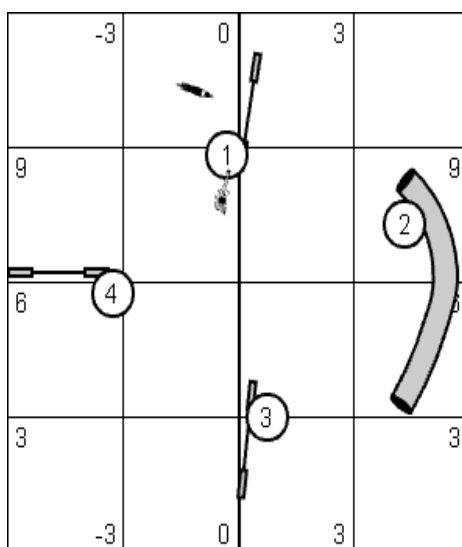
Week 5

Exercise 1 – Building Drive ahead of the handler.

The objective of Green Class this week is to build drive in the dog so that it is confident to go ahead of the handler.

Teaching a dog to "build drive and go ahead of the handler."

Set up a mini-course as per the diagram hereunder, ensuring the course forms a circle.



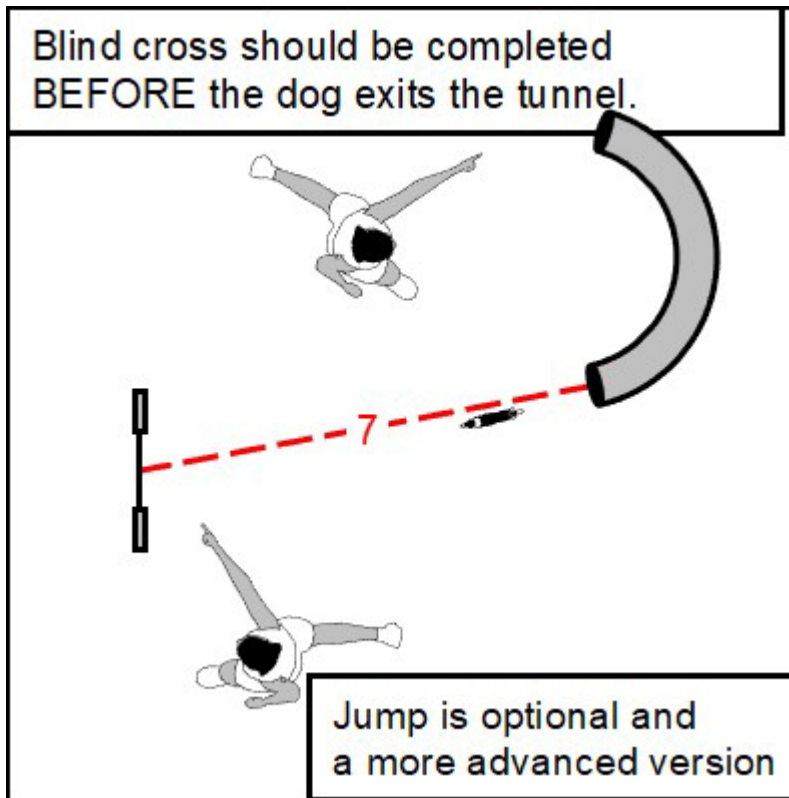
- The goal of this exercise is to create movement and speed on the part of the dog with a view to the dog beginning to feel confident enough to begin to work ahead of the handler.
- Have the handlers run the sequence twice per turn. It is hoped that this will help the dog build up speed.
- Ensure the handlers perform the sequence on both the left- and right-hand sides.
- At the end of the sequence, have the handlers recall their dogs to the side and REWARD.

Exercise 2 – Blind Cross (revision, adding a tunnel)

Use the tunnel and 1 jump from Exercise 1. Put the tunnel in a more curved shape (later the jump may be added approx. 7 metres from the tunnel exit).

- Practise Blind Cross as a recall-to-side exercise with the handler running a few steps (as in Wk 3 Ex 2)
- Put the dog in a sit-stay at an appropriate distance from the tunnel entrance.
- Handler moves away from the dog and on releasing the dog, performs a blind Cross to collect the dog at the tunnel exit.
- Remember to turn your head and use your outstretched arm to maintain contact with the dog.

Extension: If appropriate, add the jump 7 metres from the tunnel exit.



Exercise 3 – A-Frame

As per Wk 1-Exercise 2b

Exercise 3 – Dog Walk

As per Wk 1 – Exercise 3

Week 6

Exercise 1 – Revision Front Cross (Week 2 – Exercise 3)

The **Front Cross** is one of the building blocks of dog agility handling. It can be utilised on almost every agility course. It is also the foundation for several more complex handling movements. The **Front Cross** is also used to change your dog's leading leg to enable it to initiate a turn on course⁹.

You and your dog will be able to confidently perform a **Front Cross**, from both sides.

TRAINING:

Start without Your Dog!

Many novice handlers are too self-conscious to practice their handling movements without their dog. But *please believe me* that you'll be more successful if you get the footwork drilled into your muscle memory before you add your dog into the process.

The **Front Cross** comprises four (4) literal steps. You will take four (4) steps – Step forward, pivot, step back, and step forward.

1. **With your 'virtual dog'** step ahead and slightly in towards your dog with the dog's side leg¹⁰.
2. Pivot on the ball of the foot that you just stepped forward on, so that your body starts to turn towards your dog and take a step backwards with your other foot. Now you should be directly in front of your dog's path and almost facing your dog.
3. Lift your pivot foot; continue rotating your body and step far backwards with your former pivot foot. At this point, you are almost facing forwards again.
4. Finally, complete your rotation and step forward with your back foot. At this point, you are facing the same direction as you started, and your dog should be on the opposite side of your body.

Practice this on both the left and right sides.

Add Your Arms

Once you can successfully execute the footwork, you should work on / add your handwork. Essentially you (the handler) are changing from one handler lead hand/arm to the other Handler lead hand/arm. This is the final piece of the **Front Cross** where you need to consciously think about which hand/arm you "stick out" and when. In effect, you want your hand to point to your dog's nose throughout the **Front Cross**.

For some handlers, this manoeuvre is best learnt by passing a small ball from one hand to the other. You start with the ball in the hand nearest to your dog and, as you take your second step, you start transferring the ball to your other hand. At the end of the manoeuvre,

⁹ Steve Schwarz

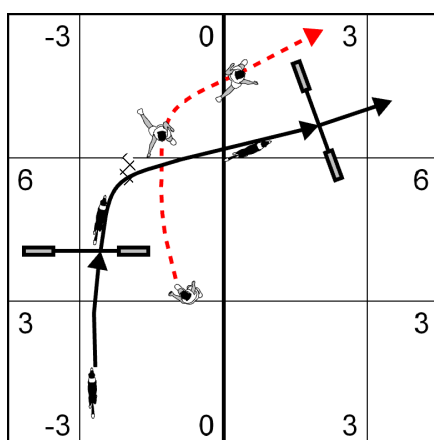
¹⁰ Dog side leg is the leg closest to the dog.

you will have the ball in the other hand which is now extended towards the dog, but on the dog's other side.

Add Your Dog

Only graduate to adding your dog when you can successfully manoeuvre without consciously thinking about it in detail.

1. Set your dog up with a start-line stay.
2. Have a very high-value treat/toy in the hand closest to your dog. You will use the treat/toy to help you stay ahead of your dog whilst keeping its focus on your lead hand; and reward your dog for following your lead hand. Essentially, the treat/toy is performing three (3) roles.
3. As you go through the four (4) components of the manoeuvre, keep your treat/toy arm directly in front of the dog. Once you have successfully performed this manoeuvre several times, you should be able to remove the treat/toy from the picture.



Front Cross extension: Add a tunnel.

HOMWORK:

Practice this drill at home frequently (on both sides). Set your dog up, walk down the yard (or similar) a short way, in a straight line, and perform **Front Crosses**. Once you have mastered the **Front Cross**, you will see how it is utilised to turn your dog easily.

Exercise 2 – Sending around a wing/take-off side front cross

This exercise is building on Sending around a wing, Wk 2 Ex 3, but instead of the handler doing a Post Turn, they will be doing a **Front Cross (FX)** on the take-off side of the jump. This **FX** is used when the dog is required to do a **Tight turn** or **Behind/backside** u-turn and the handler needs to change sides before picking up the dog.

The dog's action/execution of the u-turn is the same as with a post-turn, except it will be tighter. The main difference is the flat work performed by the handler, which will dictate the tightness of the turn.

1) **Tight turn** (u-turn)

Use a wing jump with no bar or the bar on the ground:

The handler sits the dog at an appropriate distance from the jump.

Using the tight turn command (e.g. tight, tight or check, check), the handler sends the dog over the jump

As the dog performs the u-turn, the handler performs a **Front Cross** on the take-off side of the jump, picking the dog up with the opposite arm before moving forward.

Reward with treat/tug-toy using the hand closest to the dog after front-cross (so the handler will need to swap treat/toy with to other hand)

Do this exercise from the Right and Left side

2) **Backside/behind** (u-turn)

As above, but this time the handler sends the dog around the outside of the wing, to go over the bar from the back.

Handler uses specific commands for behind (back, go round, push etc)

Handler performs a **FX** on the take-off side of the jump, to pick up the dog using the opposite arm.

Reward as above.

Do this exercise on the Right and Left side

Exercise 3 – Weaves

As per Week 3 – Exercise 2.

Exercise 4 – Revise Tyre and Broad jump

Week 7

Exercise 1 – Jumping Drills (Revision Week 4 – Exercise 1)

SITUATION:

The objective of Green Class this week is to improve your dog's jumping performance by sequencing jumps.

OUTCOME:

From a start line stay, you will release your dog and perform a series of jumping sequences – as a team.

TRAINING:

Using four (4) jumps and a tunnel set up the mini-courses hereunder and attempt each of the courses.

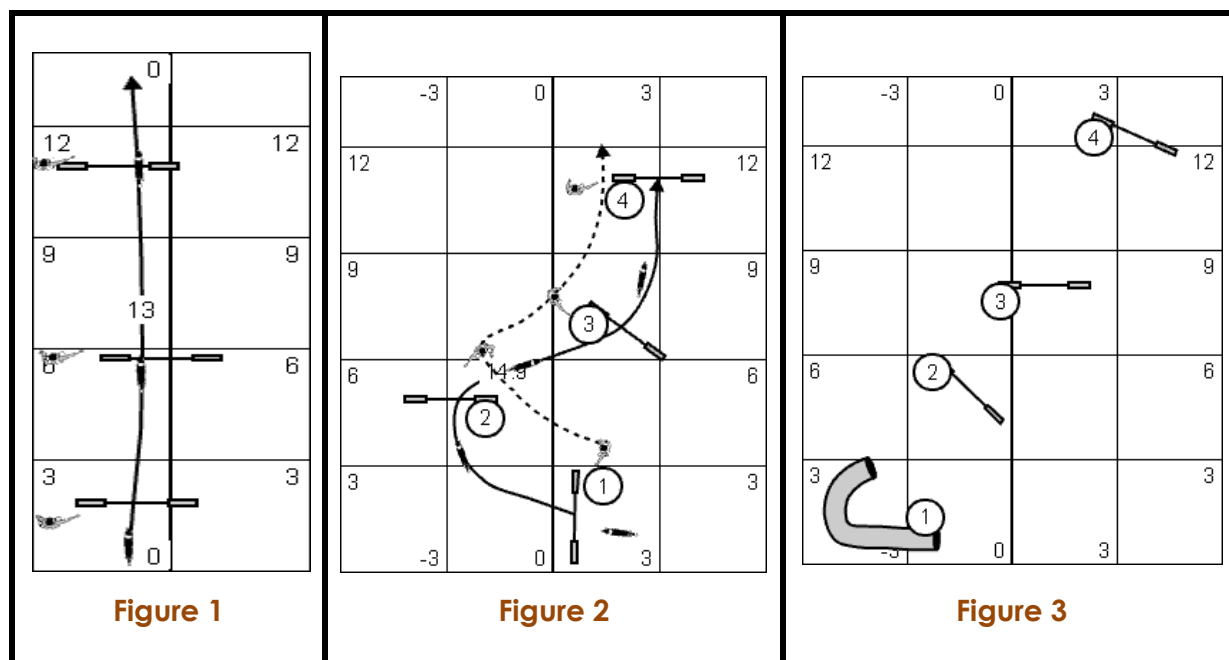


Figure 1: Arrange three (3) jumps that are slightly off being a straight line. From a start line stay, lead out and negotiate the three (3) jump sequence. REWARD the dog at the finish. Perform this sequence from both the right- and left-hand sides.

Figure 2: Arrange four (4) jumps in an **S** shape. Handler is to perform a **Front Cross** between obstacles 2 and 3 and continue forward to complete the mini course.

Figure 3: Arrange a tunnel and three (3) jumps as per diagram 3. From a start line stay, release your dog and send it into the tunnel and perform a **Front Cross** between the tunnel exit and jump 2 before continuing and completing the mini course.

Figure 3 extension: Perform a Blind Cross between the tunnel exit and jump 2

Exercise 2 – Weaves

As per Week 3 – Exercise 2.

Exercise 3 – Rear Cross

A Rear Cross is a handling manoeuvre that allows the handler to switch from one side of their dog to the other side by passing behind the dog. The dog must be able to move ahead of the handler (forward commitment). This is quite a difficult manoeuvre for many dogs to become used to. It needs plenty of practice at the basic level without any obstacles involved so the dog can become accustomed to their handler moving behind them. The dog also needs time to begin to pick up the cues that they need to turn in the same direction as the handler. Verbal cues such as 'left', 'right', and 'turn' should also be taught/used.

Step 1:

- Send to a target – Dog beside handler in a stay. Have a food treat or toy at least a metre ahead of the dog and handler.
- The handler sends the dog ahead to the target and then follows the dog. Call the dog to the side. Marker word and reward.
- LEFT and RIGHT sides

Step 2:

- The handler stands slightly behind the dog
- Send the dog to the food/toy target while the handler rear-crosses the dog's forward path.
- Once the dog has reached the target and gets a reward, use a marker word then call the dog to the side and reward again.
- LEFT and RIGHT sides.

HOMework

Practise, practice, practise Step 2 above.

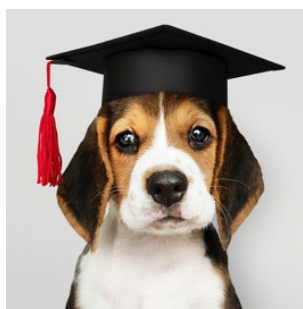
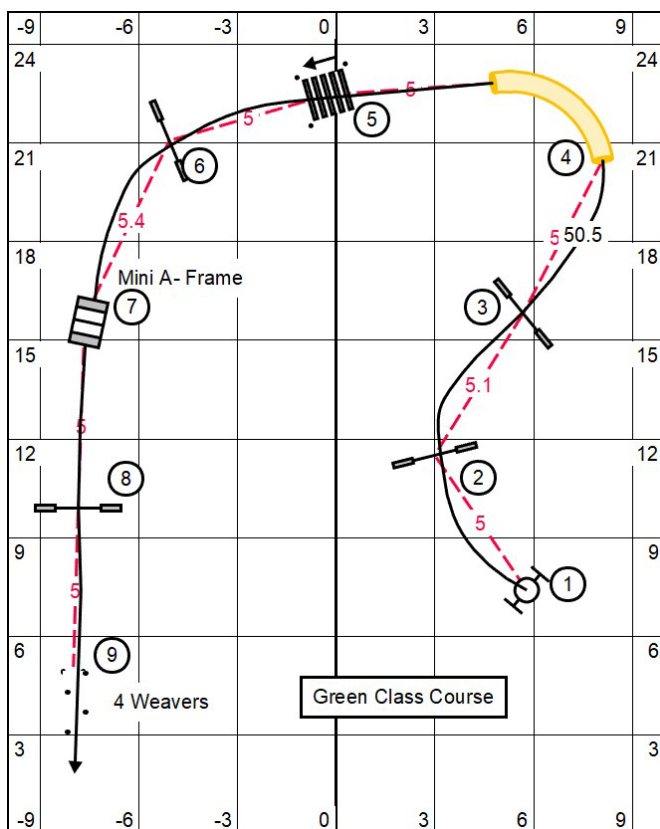
Week 8

Putting It All Together

Set up the mini-course as per the attached diagram. Handlers will walk the course with the Instructor, and then be given several opportunities to run the course with their dogs and see how well their time in Green has prepared them for **Yellow Class**.

If 2 Instructors are working with Green, extra equipment could be set up (e.g. weavers, see-saw, mini dog walk) for handlers to use when not doing the course.

NB Distances between obstacles in Trials is set at min 5m. Most judges aim for 7m+
The aim of this class is skill and control so 5m or even 4m between obstacles is better.
Jumps are low. Broad not at full length for dog height.



ANNEXURE

Weave Pole Training

NOTE: These points summarise the "Susan Garrett's" Weave Training DVD.

Each member is encouraged to purchase this DVD training video or loan a copy (limited copies) from the ADC Learning Library.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- D.A.S.H – 'D' = Develop a drive to work, 'A' = Accuracy, 'S' = Speed (which comes with accuracy and confidence); and 'H' = Habitat (i.e., changing locations / environment)
- Keep your sessions short
- Make the Reward Line very clear
- Don't let the dog go back through the Weaving Poles
- Don't use the command "Weave" until the dog is weaving straight lines. This is a general rule in dog training – that you don't label the behaviour with a verbal until it looks like the desired finished behaviour. Use a release word such as "Go" instead
- Toss the food or toy underhand, along the reward line
- Be in the action of throwing as the dog goes through the poles
- Enter Weave Poles from both the left- and right-hand sides
- When working the arc on the poles, vary the speed at which you approach the entry
- Mistakes allow you to reward the correction
- Work on an 80% success rate before moving on to the next stage of the training.
- Don't stay on the 1st step too long
- Arc – imagine a semi-circle drawn perpendicular to the Weaving Pole base at the entry point

10 STEPS TO PERFECT WEAVING

1. Build value for the 1st & 2nd poles. This step is done with the Weaving Poles at right angles to the dog and Handler. Stand right next to the poles so that any forward movement of the dog – even just a slight turn of the head movement, will result in an interaction with the poles. Reward this by "Marking" and throwing food rewards through the poles. Use food for the 1st few repetitions as it creates a thoughtful dog. Make sure the food is large enough for the dog to see. Once the dog is reliably stepping forward through the gap, change the handler position so that the dog is moving through the gap at a slightly different angle. A toy can now be used to build a drive. Make sure the reward always lands on the Reward Line. NB: Some dogs might need to be taught to move forward from the "heel" position toward a reward
2. Once the dog is reliably moving through 2 poles (remember 80% success rate), move on to the next level. The 2x2 base is now set in the "2 o'clock & 8 o'clock" position. The Reward Line is set, so the dog must go through the Weaving Poles on an angle. The Handler should move slightly around the arc – keeping the challenge simple but working on both the left- and right-hand sides. Make sure the Reward Line is easy for the Handler to see. Reward/s must be thrown along the Reward Line.

3. 2 sets of 2x2 bases – move dogs onto this step when offering the behaviour of confidently driving through the poles from different angles. Add the 2nd set approximately 4 metres from the 1st set and at the same angle. Reward the dog 50% of the time after the 1st set before asking them to enter the 2nd set. Gradually reduce the percentage and simply wait for the dog to enter the 2nd set before throwing the reward down the reward line. The Handler should not be able to see the Reward Line through both sets of poles. Both sets are at the 2 & 8 o'clock positions.
4. Move the 2nd set closer. Again, work the arc from both the left- and right-hand sides
5. Move the 2nd set of 2x2's to the 1 & 7 o'clock positions. The Handler still does not use the weave command but may use a release or "Go" "command when moving further from the poles.
6. Move the 2nd set of 2x2s closer still and reduce the angle slightly. First, build confidence with easy entries before working the arc.
7. Straighten the poles. Handlers need to stay at this level for a little while to build confidence. Now is also a good time for Handlers to change training locations if they have their poles (i.e., take it on the road).
8. Add the 3rd set of 2x2s at 1 & 7 o'clock– about a metre away from the 4 poles. Gradually bring it closer and straighten it. Dogs should continue 6 poles until they work out their rhythm. Practice easy entries until the dog is comfortable with their footwork. Add a jump before the Weaving Poles and change the angle of the approaches.
9. Once the dog is getting different approaches correct 80% of the time, add the 2nd set of 6 poles about 4 metres away from the 1st set. Like in Step 3, reward 50% of the time between the two sets, then gradually reduce the percentage. Bring the 2 sets of 6 poles progressively together. Continue to reward to keep building drive. Remember to take your weave poles to different locations.

You never stop learning!

Never give up!