

# AGILITY DOG CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES

LEVEL 4

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 student and valued club member.

Here's to 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 further dedicated to those who started the Agility Dog Club and those who helped the club (past and present) achieve its status today.

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

# Acknowledgement

ADC NSW extends its thanks to **Vicki Case** for her contributions to this manual along with **Robyn Jones** for the inaugural Purple Training Class manual, from which this manual has been modified and Robyn's recent edit of the manual in 2023.

We also thank **Leanne Davis** for her thoughts and contributions towards this manual.

# CONGRATULATIONS

ON PROMOTING TO

## LEVEL 4 PURPLE CLASS!

### GOAL:

Purple Class aims to help dogs and handlers learn the essential **skills** needed for the team to complete agility confidently or the jumping course. Most importantly, to practise and reinforce their start line stays and continue their proficiency in the weave poles.

In Purple Class, you will:

- Be introduced to more equipment, short courses and verbal commands.
- Remember, you still need to practice and continue to practice foundation exercises that you learnt in the Beginners Classes (i.e. circle work, stays, recall to the side, send out to a target, and nose touches).
- In Purple 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.
- Importantly, in Purple Class, you will learn directional changes on a course. This aspect of handling is generally referred to as 'Flatwork' and comprises the Handler changing sides whilst on the course (i.e. Front Cross (F.X.), Rear Cross (R.X.) and the Blind Cross (B.X.).
- 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 courses on your own.
- 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.

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# Week 1

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

<p><b>Exercise 1 Tight Front Cross</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequence 1, 2 x wing jumps and a tunnel</li> <li>• Sequence 2, 2 x jumps and two tunnels</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise 2 Weavers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 x weave poles with a jump</li> <li>• Several 2 x 2 weave poles, at an angle, with a jump.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise 3 Dog Walk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog walk (on its own); at a lower height.</li> </ul>
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## Exercise 1 – Tight Front Cross

### DEFINITION:

Frequently on the course, the Handler will be required to indicate to their dog that they need to decelerate (Decel) and turn and then accelerate.

### SITUATION:

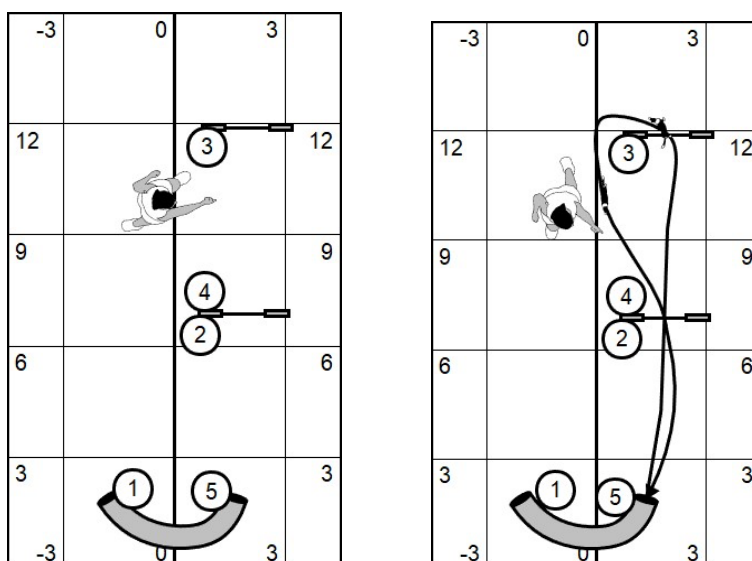
The objective in Purple Class is for the Handler to assist their dog in learning to work independently whilst the Handler is performing a tight front cross.

### OUTCOME:

1. The objective of Purple Class is for both the Handler and the dog to understand the **Decel** manoeuvre and for the Handler to be able to confidently indicate it to the dog prior to the dog taking off for said obstacle. If the dog is not told earlier enough before taking the obstacle in front of it, it will generally knock the bar.
2. The second objective of this exercise is to build drive around a course but then show 'Decel' at one of the jumps for the Handler to do a **Tight Front Cross** and reverse the forward direction of the team.

### Part 1:

### TRAINING: Figure 1



- As per Figure 1, set up two entire wing jumps plus a tunnel.
- Execute/practice the tight front cross exercise, making sure you give the dog advanced warning of the turn. I.E., decel, VERBAL and turn toward the dog before the dog takes off.
- Experienced handlers can perform this exercise from the tunnel entry. Meaning the Handler must turn on the move to face the dog as it jumps the second jump.
- Inexperienced handlers can start standing near obstacle 3, already in position
- After several attempts, reduce the lead-out distance so that the Handler has to turn on the move to face the dog as it jumps the second jump (the same as the experienced handlers).
- Then include the tunnel.
- Ensure you undertake this exercise from both sides (you will need to flip the tunnel or set up two sequences). As both dogs and handlers are right or left-handed, this ensures you are practising on your / their good and bad side<sup>1</sup>.

### **IMPORTANT:**

- Indicate with your dog's side hand/arm and leg that you want the dog to perform a tight front cross.
- Ensure your eyes remain on the middle of the jump bar until you are sure that your dog has "committed" to the obstacle.
- Use a tight turn command. – VERBAL.

### **Part 2:**

Course:

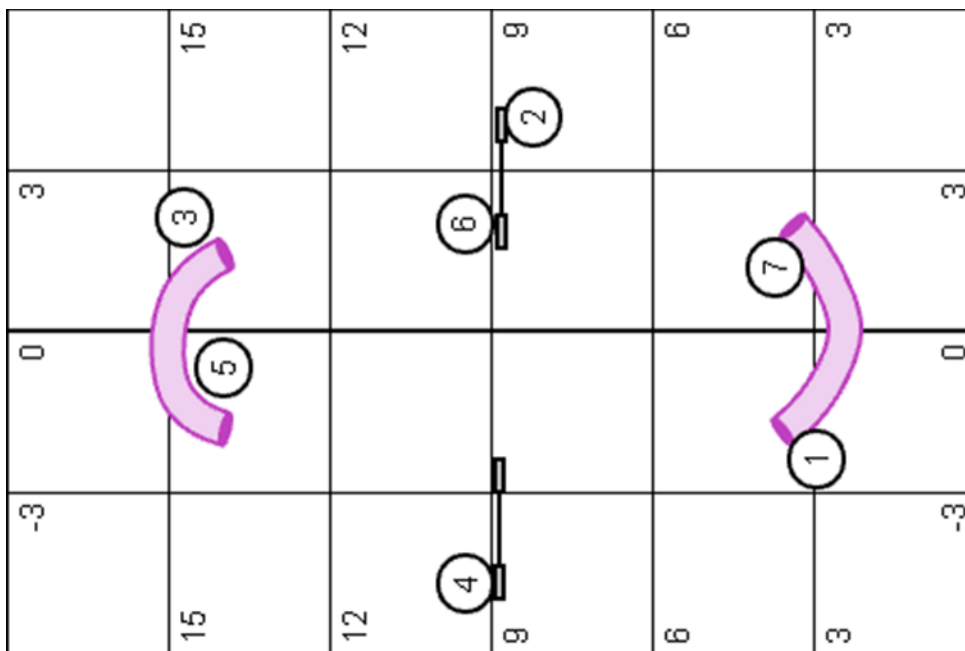


Figure 2

<sup>1</sup> According to the largest-ever study of canine handedness, most dogs are right-handed. Male dogs are more likely to be left-handed than female dogs, and younger dogs are more likely to be left-handed than older dogs – 04/04/2021 [www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com). Additionally, about 10.6% of humans are left-handed (Papadatou-Pastou et al., 2020).



## **IMPORTANT:**

- i. The sequence can be performed as a simple speed circuit (without the T.F.C.) to assist the Handler with sends to the tunnel.
- ii. Handlers need to understand and appreciate the need for their ability to "send to a tunnel."

## **Exercise 2 – Weavers**

1. Set up a complete set of 12 weaves (as they would be on a course); with a jump before them.
2. Set up 6 poles, using 2 x 2's, which are slightly angled: also, with a jump before them.

**NOTE:** it is imperative that you continually change the location of the jump so that the dog is asked to enter the weaves from different angles (i.e., 45 degrees, 90 degrees etc.). Adding the jump gives the dog speed to enter the weaves.

Keep these sessions short<sup>2</sup> (i.e., 10 minutes) at a time.

The **different coloured jump icons** indicate the location the jump should be moved to during the weave training session

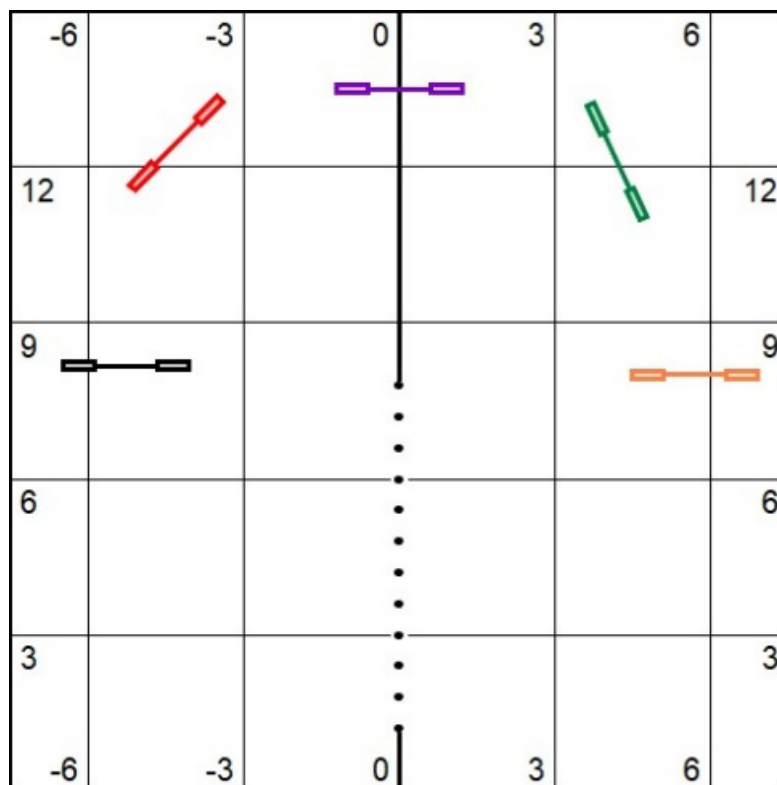


Figure 3

<sup>2</sup> When teaching a dog a new behaviour, practice sessions are important. You can't build muscle doing one repetition of an exercise, right? You need multiple repetitions to build and sculpt muscles, and this holds true when teaching a new behaviour. Practice does make perfect! [www.dogtrainingnation.com](http://www.dogtrainingnation.com)

## Exercise 3 – Contact – Dog Walk

On week 1, the dog walk is being trained on its own.

### IMPORTANT:

- i. Exercise caution and listen to your Instructor, as this could be the first time your dog has seen a large dog walk.
- ii. Don't rush your dog – take it slow.
- iii. Remember your contact Criteria.  
**NOTE:** Handlers should have decided on whether they will do the A.D.C. preferred method of 2 on – 2 off<sup>3</sup>; or if they will be doing running contacts<sup>4</sup>.
- iv. Handlers should move laterally from the dog walk to ensure they do not crowd the dog.
- v. By this stage (Purple Class), dogs should be independently performing the 2 on – 2 off method.



Images depicting the perfect 2o2o

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<sup>3</sup> The ADC preferred method of contact training is 2o2o. In this behaviour, **the front two feet are on the ground while the back two feet stay on the obstacle** (on the nominated yellow section). The dog is expected to hold this position until it is verbally released by the handler [www.clickertraining.com](http://www.clickertraining.com)

<sup>4</sup> Running Contacts is a form of learning on contact equipment where the dog is taught to **run up/along/down the contact at full speed, hitting the nominated yellow contact section with two paws as they go**. Running contacts is by far the fastest way to execute a contact obstacle, however it is also the trickiest for the dog to learn [www.allinagility.se](http://www.allinagility.se)

# Week 2

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

<p><b>Exercise 1 A-Frame plus Dog Walk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A-frame</li> <li>• 1 x tunnel</li> <li>• 1x wing jump</li> <li>• Broad Jump</li> <li>• Dog walk at full competition height plus 1 jump</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise 2 Serpentine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to serpentine</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise 3 Weaves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 x weave poles with a jump</li> <li>• Several 2 x 2 weave poles at an angle</li> </ul>
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### Exercise 1 – A-Frame and Full-Height Dog Walk

**NOTE:** This is possibly the first time a dog has seen a competition height A-Frame. Please **Do NOT** rush your dog.

Full-height Dog Walk plus one jump.

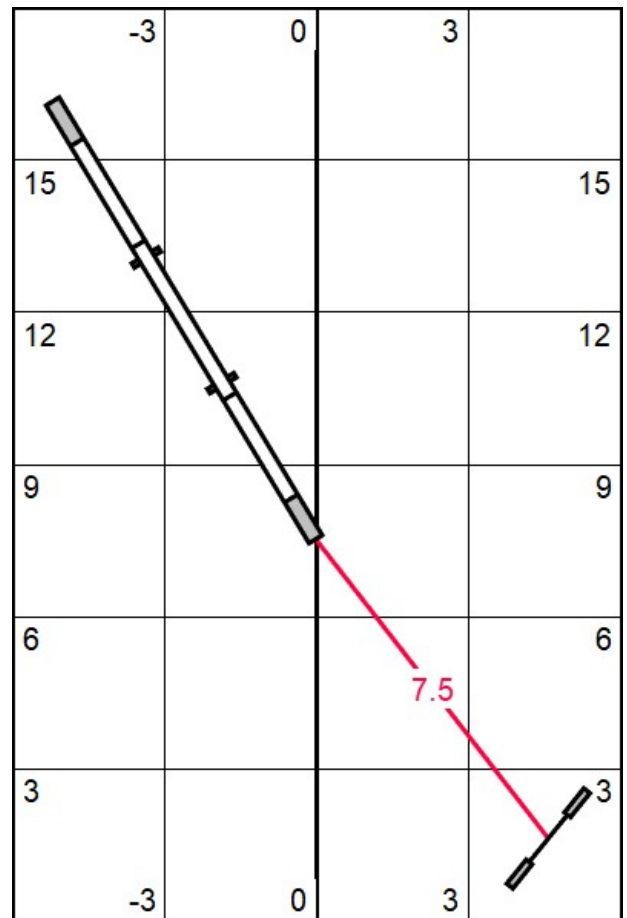
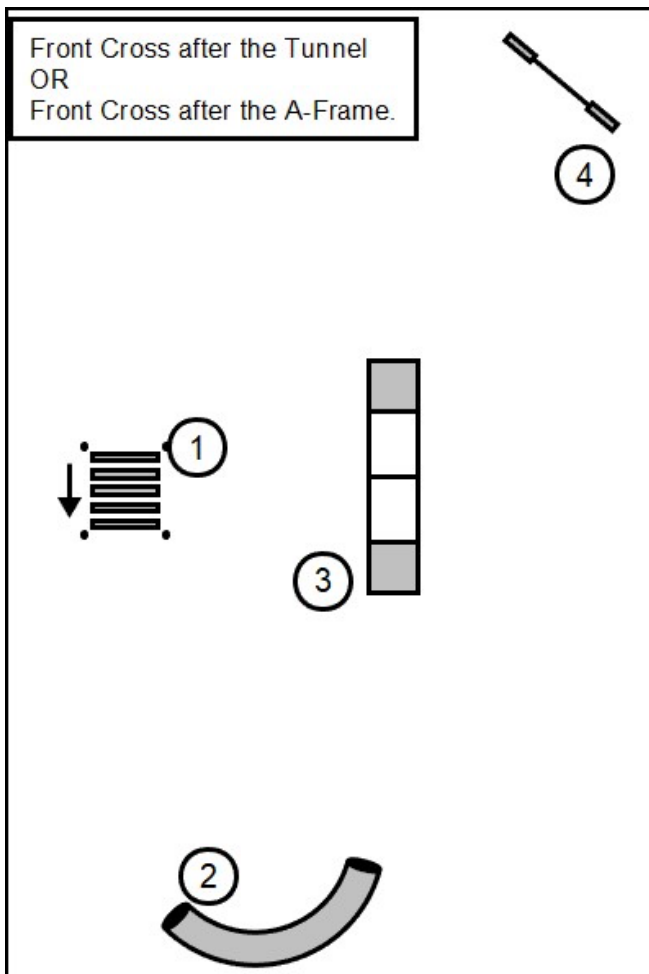


Figure 4

## Exercise 2 – Jumping Sequence; Introduction to Serpentine

### **DEFINITION:**

A Serpentine is a sequence of three obstacles the dog takes in a 'wave' pattern (over one jump, 180 degrees over one jump, and 180 degrees over one jump)<sup>5</sup>. Although the obstacles' spacing, rotation and arrangement can vary significantly, the key feature is the dog's taking each obstacle in the opposite direction from the previous obstacle.

The term '*Serpentine*' comes from the snake-like shape of the dog's path<sup>6</sup>.

### **SITUATION:**

The objective in Purple Class is for the Handler and dog to become accustomed to the Serpentine sequence.

### **TRAINING:**

- Set up the Serpentine sequence as per the diagram hereunder.

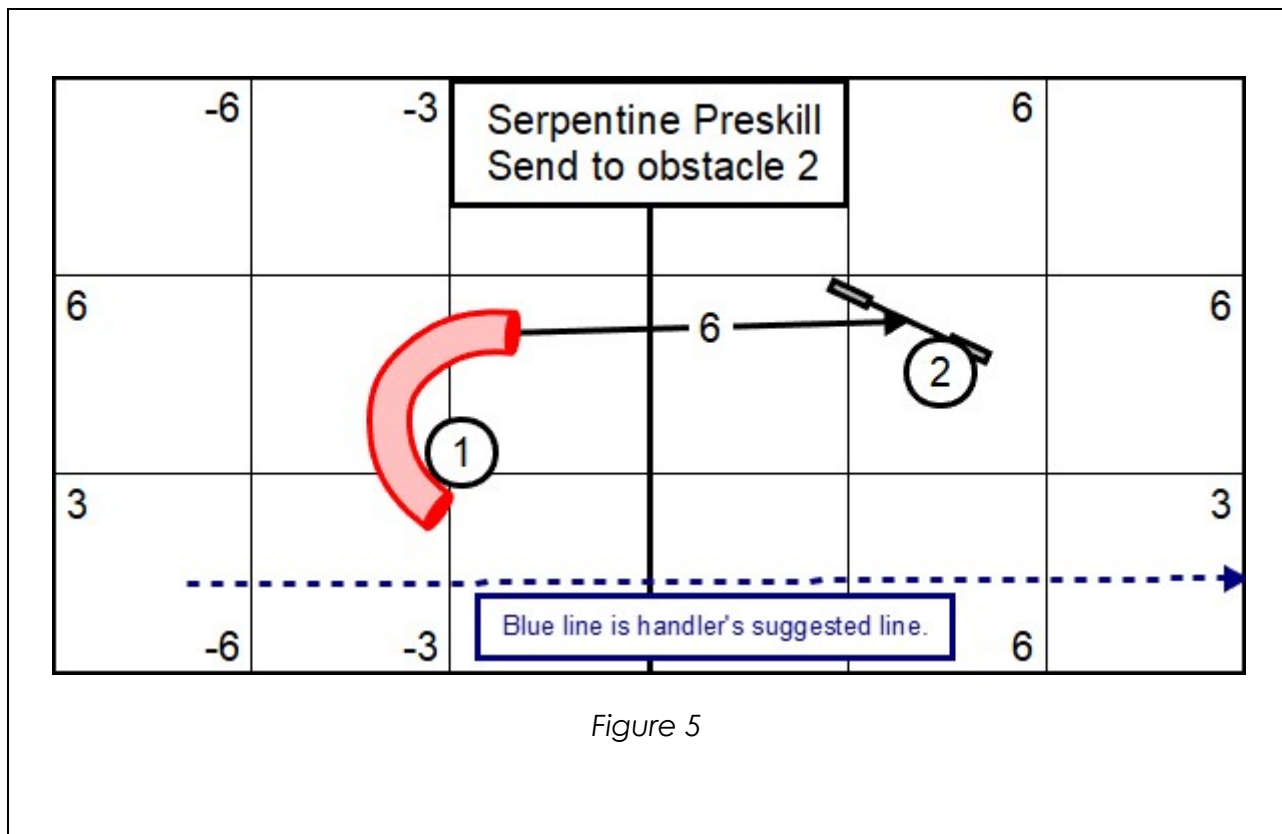


Figure 5

<sup>5</sup> [www.baddogagility.com](http://www.baddogagility.com)

<sup>6</sup> [www.agilitynewd.com](http://www.agilitynewd.com)

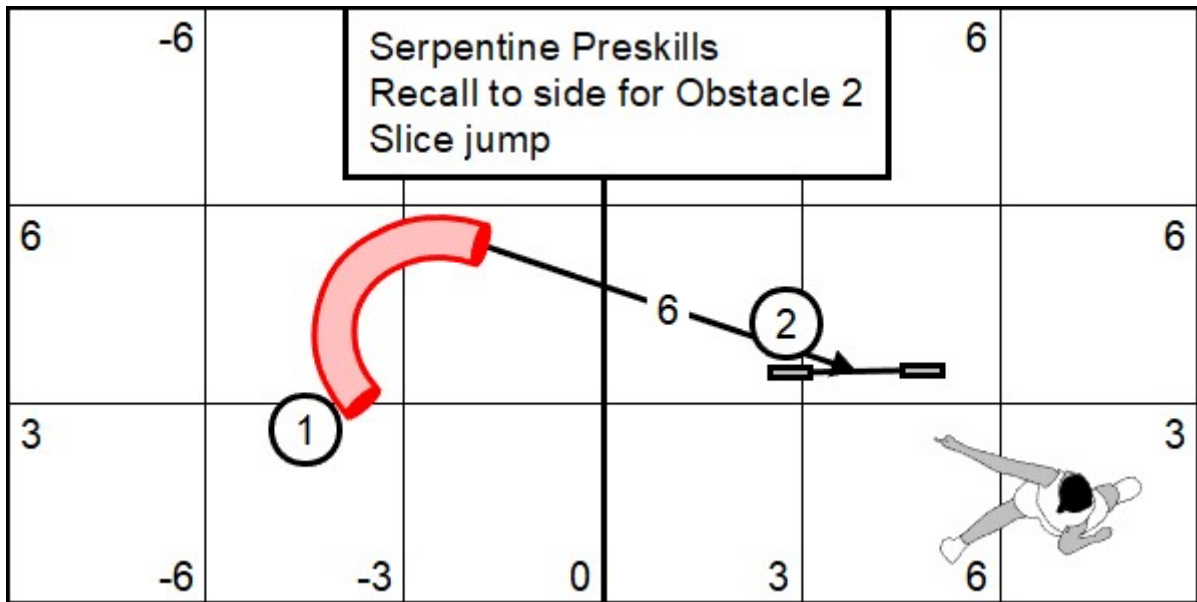
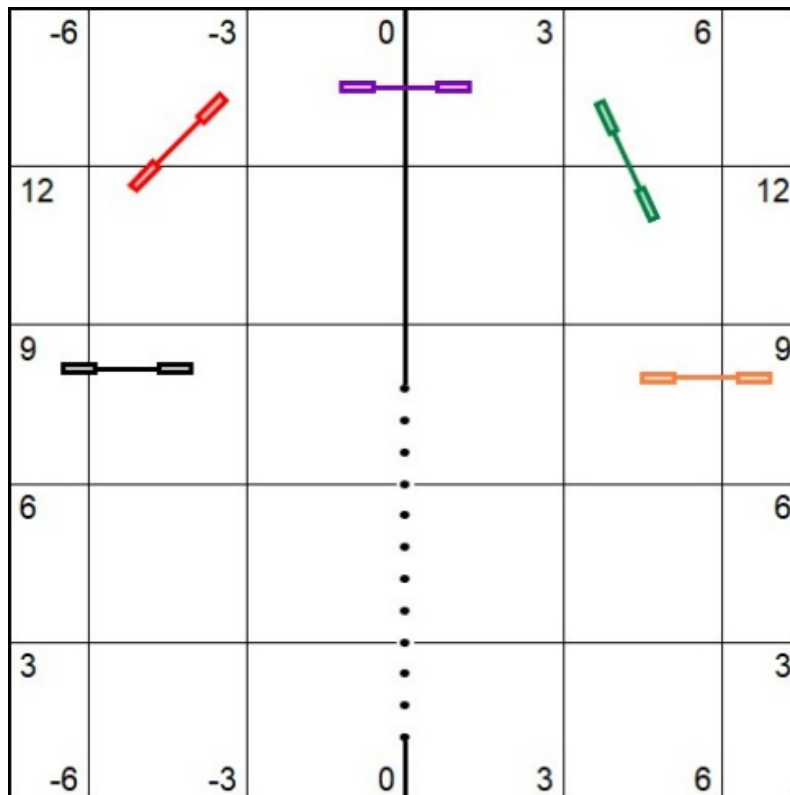


Figure 6

### Exercise 3 – Weavers

As per Week 1 Weavers section.



# Week 3

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

Exercise 1 Serpentine	Exercise 2 See-saw	Exercise 3 Weaves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x tunnel (curved)</li> <li>2 wing jumps</li> <li>Duplicate above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Saw (at full competition height)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 x weave poles with a jump</li> <li>Several 2 x 2 weave poles at an angle</li> </ul>

## Exercise 1 – Jumping Sequence; Introduction to Serpentine

### DEFINITION:

A Serpentine is a sequence of three obstacles the dog takes in a 'wave' pattern (over one jump, 180 degrees over one jump, and 180 degrees over one jump)<sup>7</sup>. Although the obstacles' spacing, rotation and arrangement can vary significantly, the key feature is the dog's taking each obstacle in the opposite direction from the previous obstacle.

The term 'Serpentine' comes from the snake-like shape of the dog's path<sup>8</sup>.

### SITUATION:

The objective in Purple Class is for the Handler and dog to become accustomed to the Serpentine sequence.

### TRAINING:

- Set up the Serpentine sequence as per the diagram hereunder.

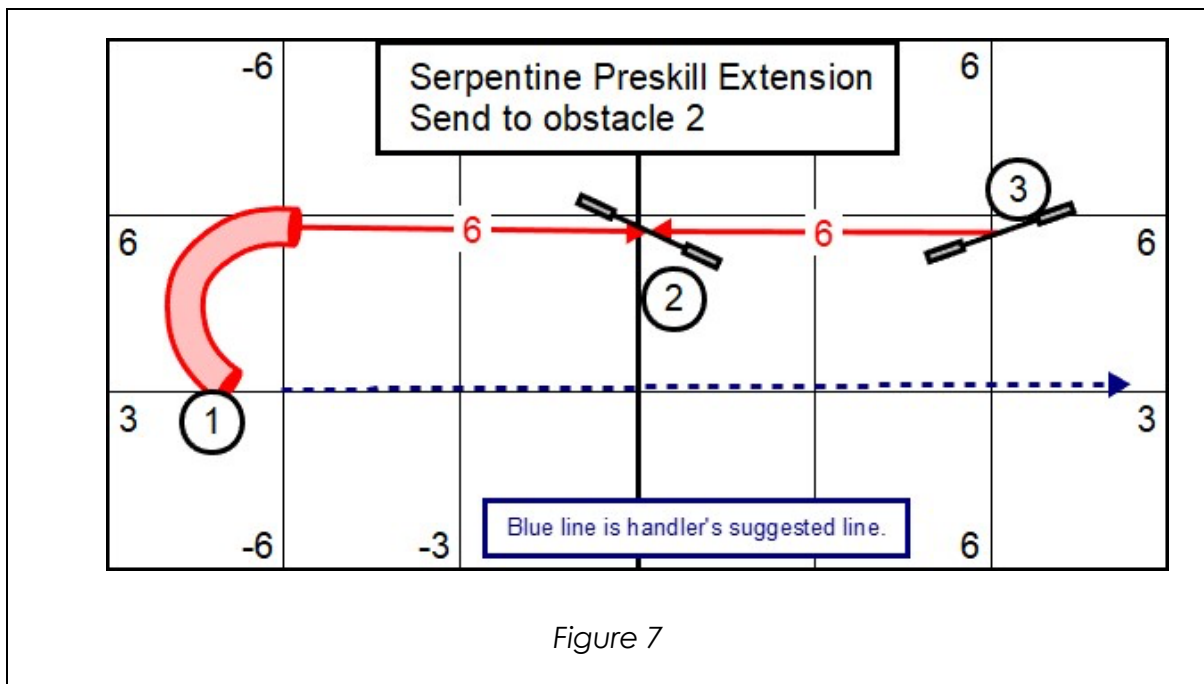
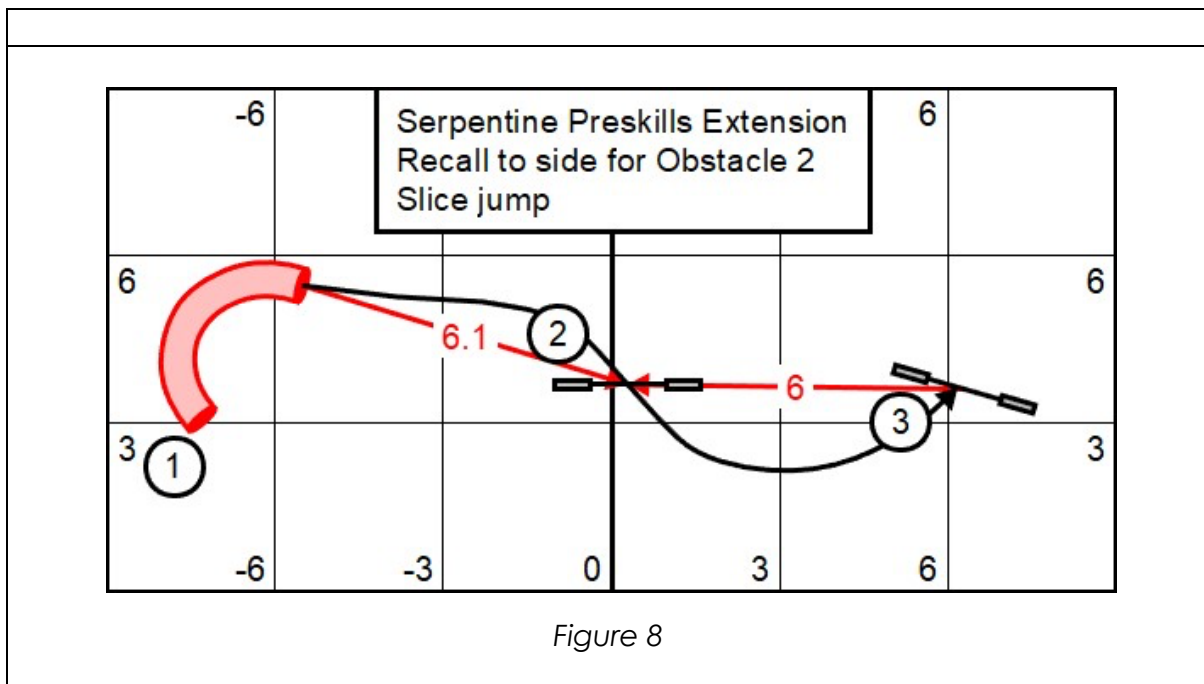


Figure 7

<sup>7</sup> [www.baddogagility.com](http://www.baddogagility.com)

<sup>8</sup> [www.agilitynewd.com](http://www.agilitynewd.com)



## Exercise 2 – See Saw

### DEFINITION:

The See Saw 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, 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.

### SITUATION:

Purple class members will now get to do the see Saw obstacle at full competition height.

### OUTCOME:

**NOTE:** Some dogs will still be somewhat nervous or apprehensive of the obstacle, generally due to not having correctly played the 'bang it' game. If this is the case, be patient and support your dog by; keeping them on the lead, asking the Instructor to hold the down end for support and dropping it slowly.

The long-term goal is to teach your dog to run quickly up and over the See Saw before stopping at the very end, in the 2o2o position.

### TRAINING:

- Initially (for the first few repetitions), ask the Instructor to support the end and encourage the dog to walk all the way to the end. In the end, reward heavily (whilst the dog is still in place). Lower the end slowly.
- Dogs do NOT have to do 2 on 2 off on the See Saw – BUT they should pause at the end of the plank and await a verbal release word (i.e. okay, break).

## Exercise 3 – Weavers

As per Week 1 Weavers section.

# Week 4

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

Exercise 1 Rear Cross	Exercise 2 See-saw, Spread, Tyre	Exercise 3 Weaves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tyre</li><li>• Tunnel</li><li>• 3 x wing jumps</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See-saw</li><li>• Spread</li><li>• Tyre</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 x weave poles with a jump</li><li>• Several 2 x 2 weave poles at an angle</li></ul>

## Exercise 1 – Rear Crosses

### DEFINITION:

The **Rear Cross** is one of the building blocks of Agility handling. It can be utilised on almost every Agility course. Like the Front Cross, the **Rear Cross** can change from one side of the dog to the other or change the dog's lead leg to initiate a turn.

A key point to remember about the **Rear Cross** is that it requires the Handler to be patient enough to let the dog pass before turning the dog or changing sides. A handler that initiates the **Rear Cross** too early will just **Push** the dog away from them without getting the dog to pass across the Handler's path<sup>9</sup>.

### SITUATION:

The objective in Purple Class is for the Handler to assist their dog in learning to work independently whilst the Handler is crossing behind the rear of the dog.

### OUTCOME:

Your dog will successfully negotiate a jump obstacle whilst the Handler performs a **Rear Cross**.

### TRAINING:

- The Instructor will explain the uses of the Rear Cross.
- A verbal directional command (i.e. right, left, turn) can also be added.
- In the figure below, several different handling options are available in several other places.
- Discuss with your Instructor.
- We are practising the rear cross.

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<sup>9</sup> [www.agilitynerd.com/blog/agility/starting/LearningRearCross/](http://www.agilitynerd.com/blog/agility/starting/LearningRearCross/)



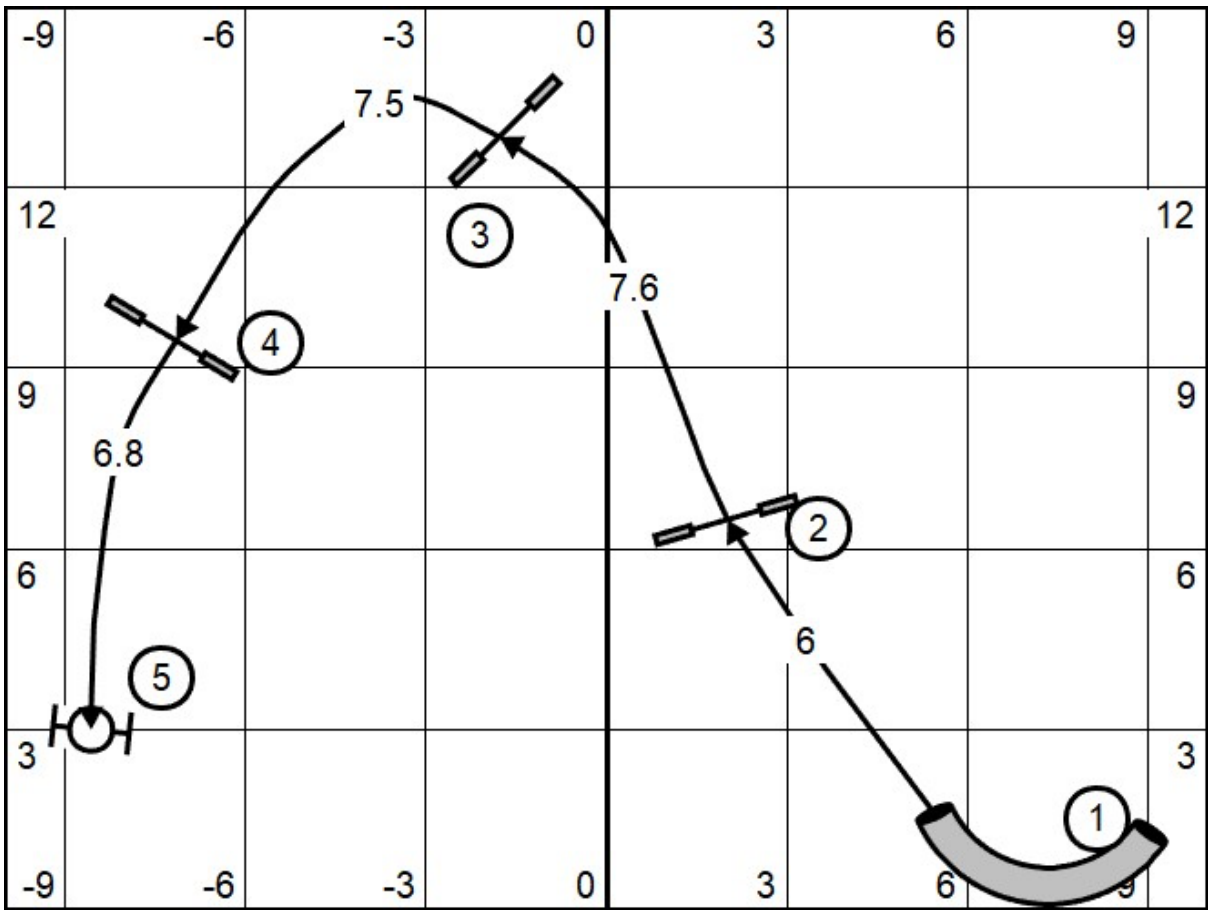


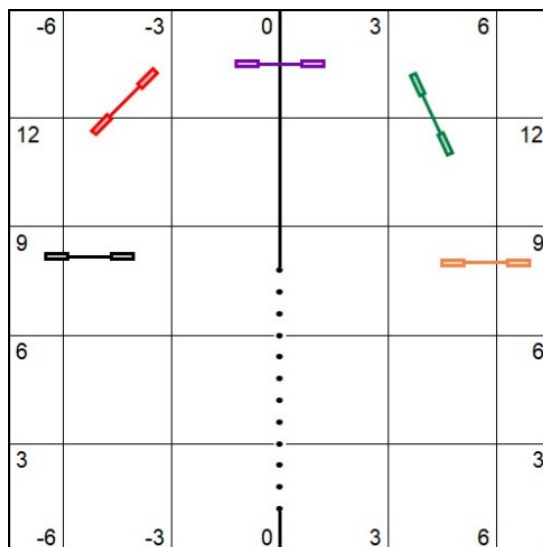
Figure 9

## Exercise 2 – See-saw, Spread, Tyre

- Set each of these obstacles up separately.

## Exercise 3 – Weavers

As per Week 1, Weavers Section.



# Week 5

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

<b>Exercise 1 Speed week</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 x wing jumps</li><li>• 2 x tunnels</li></ul>	<b>Exercise Dog Walk plus spread</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 x wing jumps</li><li>• Dog Walk</li><li>• Spread hurdle</li></ul>	<b>Exercise 3 Weavers at speed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 weave poles</li><li>• 2 jumps</li></ul>
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### **DEFINITION:**

Agility is a team competition that requires the dog and Handler to complete a series of strategically placed obstacles successfully whilst doing so within the Standard Course Time (S.C.T.)<sup>10</sup>, which the Judge has calculated. Accordingly, speed is an essential component of a successful agility team.

### **SITUATION:**

The first objective in Purple Class this week is for the dog to develop the confidence to go ahead of the Handler.

The Spread Hurdle is introduced.

The second objective is for the dog to learn to (1) enter weaves at speed and; (2) enter weaves at speed after taking another obstacle.

### **OUTCOME:**

1. The dog will negotiate a course at speed.
2. The dog will enter a weave pole set up (1) at speed and (2) at speed after negotiating another obstacle.
3. The dog will learn the spread hurdle as part of a sequence (**NOTE:** this may be the first time your dog has seen a spread hurdle).

## Exercise 1 – Speed Jumping Sequence

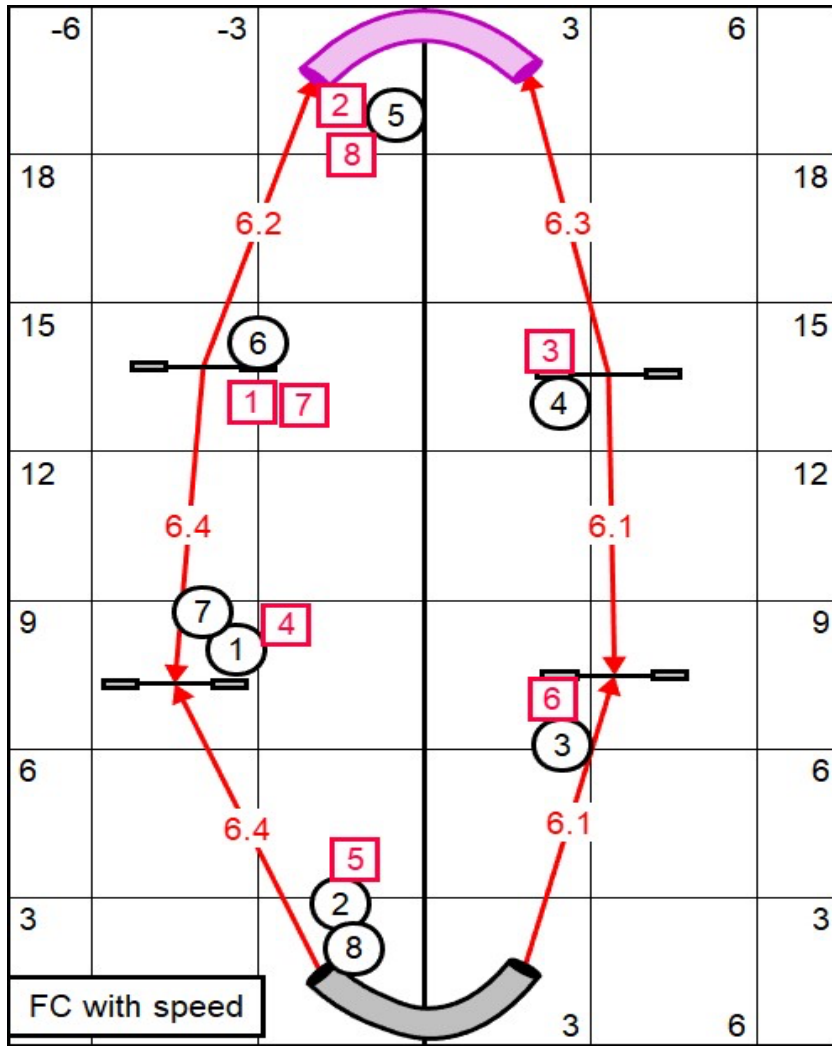
Set up the course as per the illustration hereunder. The course has been designed so that it can be negotiated in two different versions.

The course also allows you to review the Front Cross on a second repetition.

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<sup>10</sup> The Rates of Travel (in meters per second) are used to calculate the SCT for Agility / Jumping tests. The RAT differs per class (i.e., novice, excellent etc.), the dog's height and the course length.

Figure 9

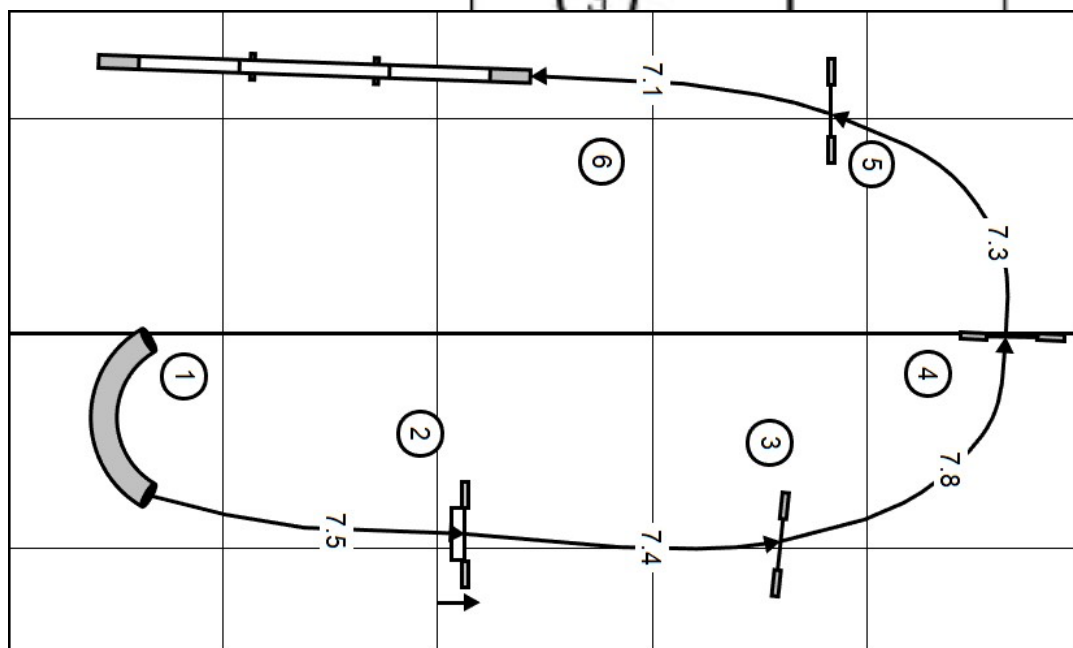
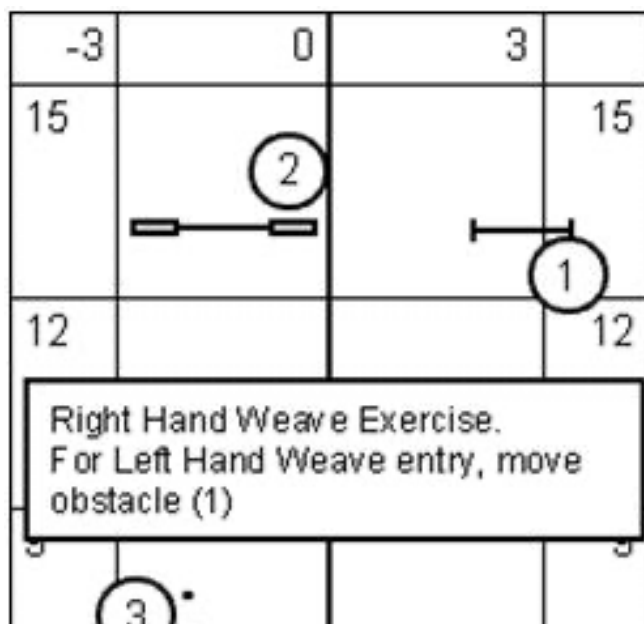


## Exercise 2 – Dog Walk Plus, Spread

## Exercise 3 – Weavers (increase in the level of difficulty)

This week jumps will be added to the weaves to get the dog at speed as they enter the weaves Week.

*Lil negotiating the weaves at speed*  
 Photograph Courtesy Michael TURNER



# Week 6

## Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

<b>Exercise 1 Contacts plus pinwheel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 x Wing Jumps</li><li>• Dog Walk</li><li>• See Saw</li><li>• Tunnel</li></ul>	<b>Exercise 2 Tyre plus jump</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tyre + Jump</li></ul>	<b>Exercise 3 Weaves</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 x weave poles with 2 jumps before them +</li><li>• 3 x 2 x 2 weave poles (6) at an angle</li><li>• 1 x wing jump before the weaves</li></ul>
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### SITUATION:

The first objective in Purple Class this week is to continue to build confidence in your dog to go ahead of the Handler.

The second objective is for the dog and the Handler to learn to successfully negotiate a Pin Wheel<sup>11</sup> set of obstacles in a course comprising contact equipment.

The third objective is for the dog to learn to (1) enter weaves at speed and; (2) enter weaves at speed after taking another obstacle.

### OUTCOME:

1. The dog will continue to build confidence in its weave entries.
2. You get to practice your lead out utilising the tyre as an obstacle and
3. You learn how to successfully negotiate a Pin Wheel in a sequence that includes contact equipment.

## Exercise 1 – Contacts with a Pin Wheel and See-Saw in a Sequence

The most common handling for a Pin Wheel is to get “into the pocket” or “inside the box” (centre of the jumps) and pull the dog around the circle of jumps. The Handler must give the dog good physical cues by “squaring the corners” of the Pin Wheel. If you treat the Pin Wheel as made up of several turns, you’ll always get the dog to turn appropriately before each jump. So the Pin Wheel isn’t a circle of jumps; it is a triangle or a square<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The Pin Wheel is a commonly seen Agility course element. It is generally made up of 3-4 jumps arranged so the dog's path is roughly circular.

<sup>12</sup> [www.agilitynerd.com](http://www.agilitynerd.com)

Set up the course as per the diagram hereunder.

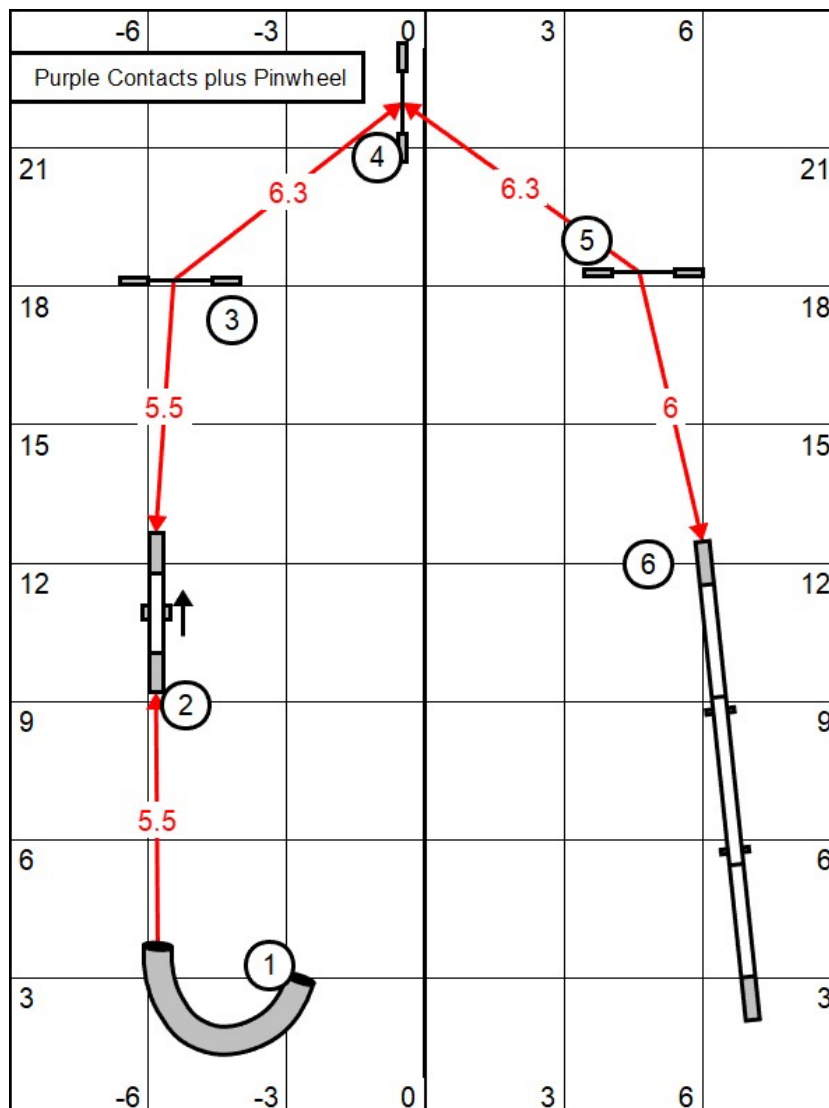


Figure 12

**IMPORTANT:**

- Discuss handling options for the Pin Wheel component (3, 4 & 5) of the course with the Instructor.
- Attempt to complete the course with the Handler NOT going all the way out to obstacle 4.
- Discuss how you could utilise different handling options.

**Exercise 2 – Jumping Drill including Tyre**

Place a jump after the Tyre obstacle and practice your lead out.

Again, this exercise can be practised on the side whilst other class participants are engaged in different exercises.

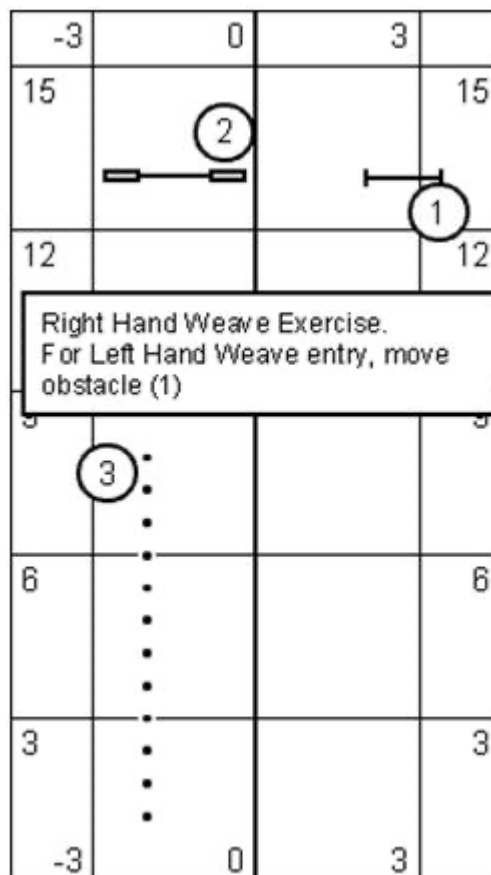
### Exercise 3 – Increase Difficulty of Weave Entries

- a. Set up several 2 x 2 weave bases (from the beginner's room) – **DO NOT utilise them all.**
- b. Set up 6 weave poles, using 2 x 2's (angled slightly) and place a Wing Jump before and after them.
- c. Set up 12 weave poles with T.W.O. jumps before and after (as per diagram).

**IMPORTANT:** Remember the Reward Line – straight ahead after the last obstacle.

As per Point 'C', set up the obstacles as per the diagram hereunder.

This exercise can be practised on the side whilst other class participants are engaged in different exercises.



# Week 7

## See Saw, Dog Walk and Spread in a sequence

### Equipment Required for 3 x Setups

<b>Exercise 1 Course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 x Wing Jumps</li><li>• Dog Walk</li><li>• Broad Jump</li><li>• See Saw</li><li>• Spread Hurdle</li></ul>	<b>Exercise 2 start line stay</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1x wing jump</li></ul>	<b>Exercise 3 Weaves</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 x weave poles with 2 jumps before them +</li><li>• 3 x 2 x 2 weave poles (6) at an angle</li><li>• 1 x wing jump before the weaves</li></ul>
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### SITUATION:

Purple Class, this week's objective is to continue building confidence in your dog over a sequence of obstacles where Contact equipment is now included.

The second objective is for the dog to learn to (1) enter weaves at speed and (2) enter weaves at speed after taking another obstacle.

### OUTCOME:

- The dog and Handler build confidence in their team whilst undertaking a jumping sequence that includes contacts.
- The dog learns to perform the See saw obstacle with more speed as it comes off another obstacle.
- The dog will continue to build its confidence and momentum on the weave obstacle.



Lil performing the Dog Walk obstacle (at speed)  
Photo courtesy of [www.pinnacle.com.au](http://www.pinnacle.com.au)



## Exercise 1– Jumping sequence with Contacts

Set up the course as per the diagram hereunder.

Discuss different handling options with your Instructor before attempting the course (especially the likes of 7 & 8).

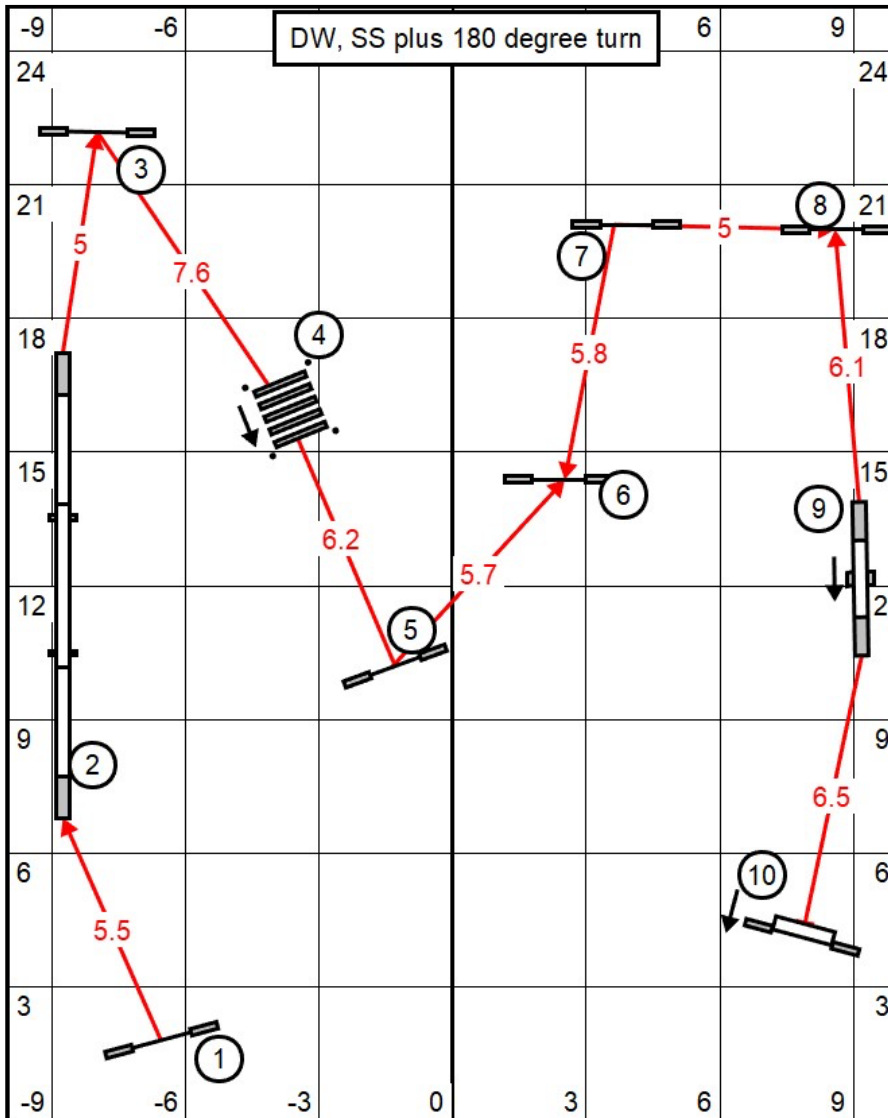


Figure 14

## Exercise 2 – Start line Stays

- Set up several single jumps and practise your start line stays.

### Exercise 3 – Increase Difficulty of Weave Entries

As below.

**IMPORTANT:** Remember the Reward Line – straight ahead after the last obstacle.

This exercise can be practised on the side whilst other class participants are engaged in different exercises.

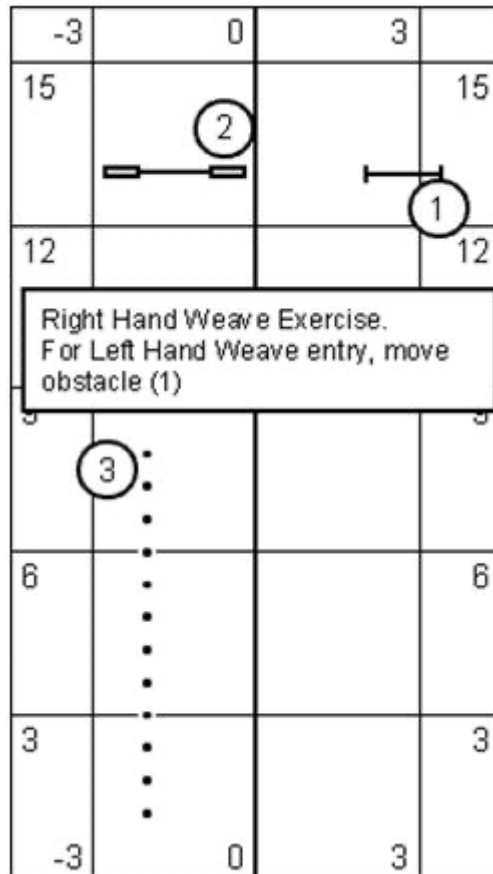


Figure 15

# Week 8

## Jumping Sequences with Weaves

### Equipment Required

Exercise 1 Course	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tyre</li> <li>• Broad Jump</li> <li>• 3 Wing Jumps</li> <li>• Tunnel</li> <li>• 12 weave poles</li> <li>• Spread hurdle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

### OUTCOME:

- You are now at a point in your training where you will be required to complete a mini-course, utilising the skills and knowledge you have acquired over the preceding weeks.
- It is suggested that you break the course down into smaller parts (i.e. Pin Wheel) before attempting the entire course.

### Exercise - 1 Jumping Sequence

Set up the course as per the diagram hereunder.

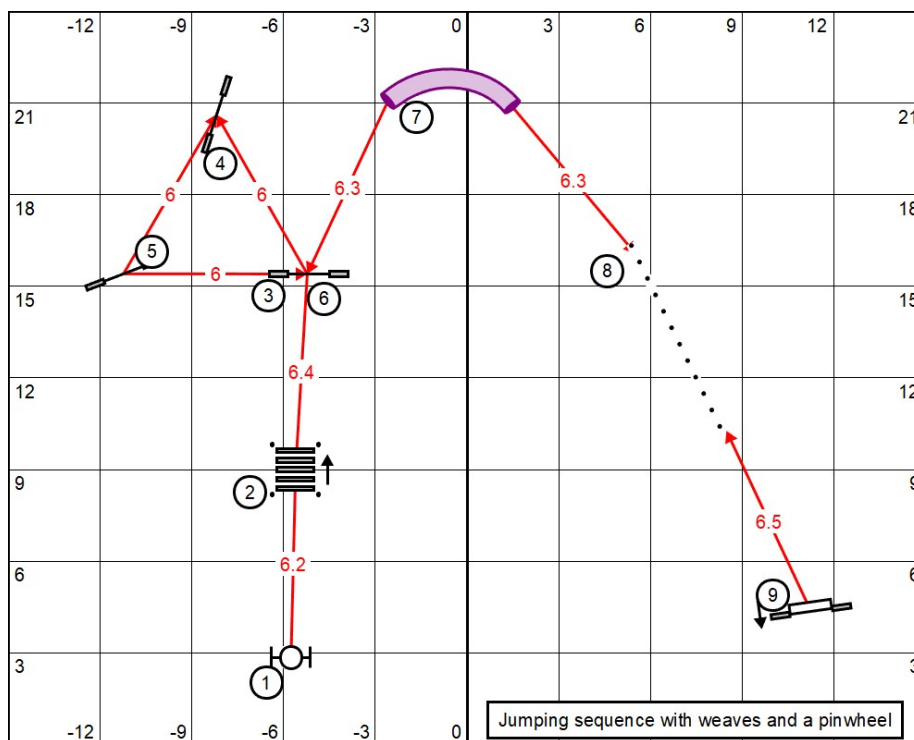


Figure 16

# Week 9

## Equipment Required

Exercise 1 Course	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Wing Jumps</li> <li>• Broad Jump</li> <li>• 12 Weave Poles</li> <li>• Tyre</li> <li>• A-Frame</li> <li>• Spread Hurdle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

### OUTCOME:

- You are now at a point in your training where you will be required to complete a mini-course, utilising the skills and knowledge you have acquired over the preceding weeks.
- It is suggested that you break the course down into smaller parts (i.e. 3 to 4 & 6 to 7) before attempting the entire course.

### Exercise – 1 A-Frame and Weavers

Set up the course as per the diagram hereunder.

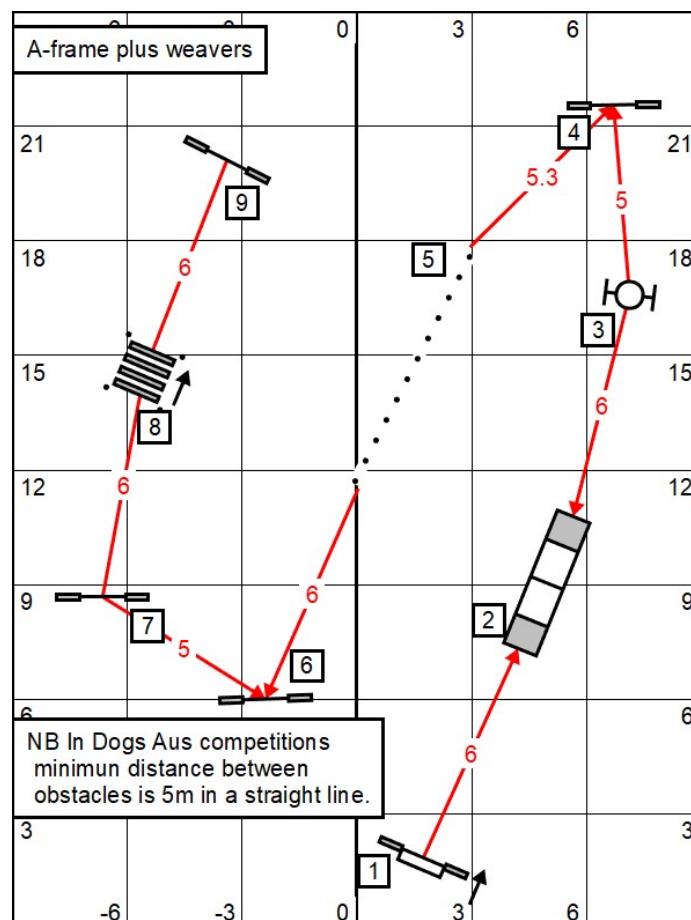


Figure 17

# Week 10

## ASSESSMENT FOR PROMOTION TO PRE-TRIALLING BLUE CLASS

Before a Purple Class handler can be promoted to Blue Class, they must demonstrate they can confidently perform the skills they have learnt over the previous 12 weeks.

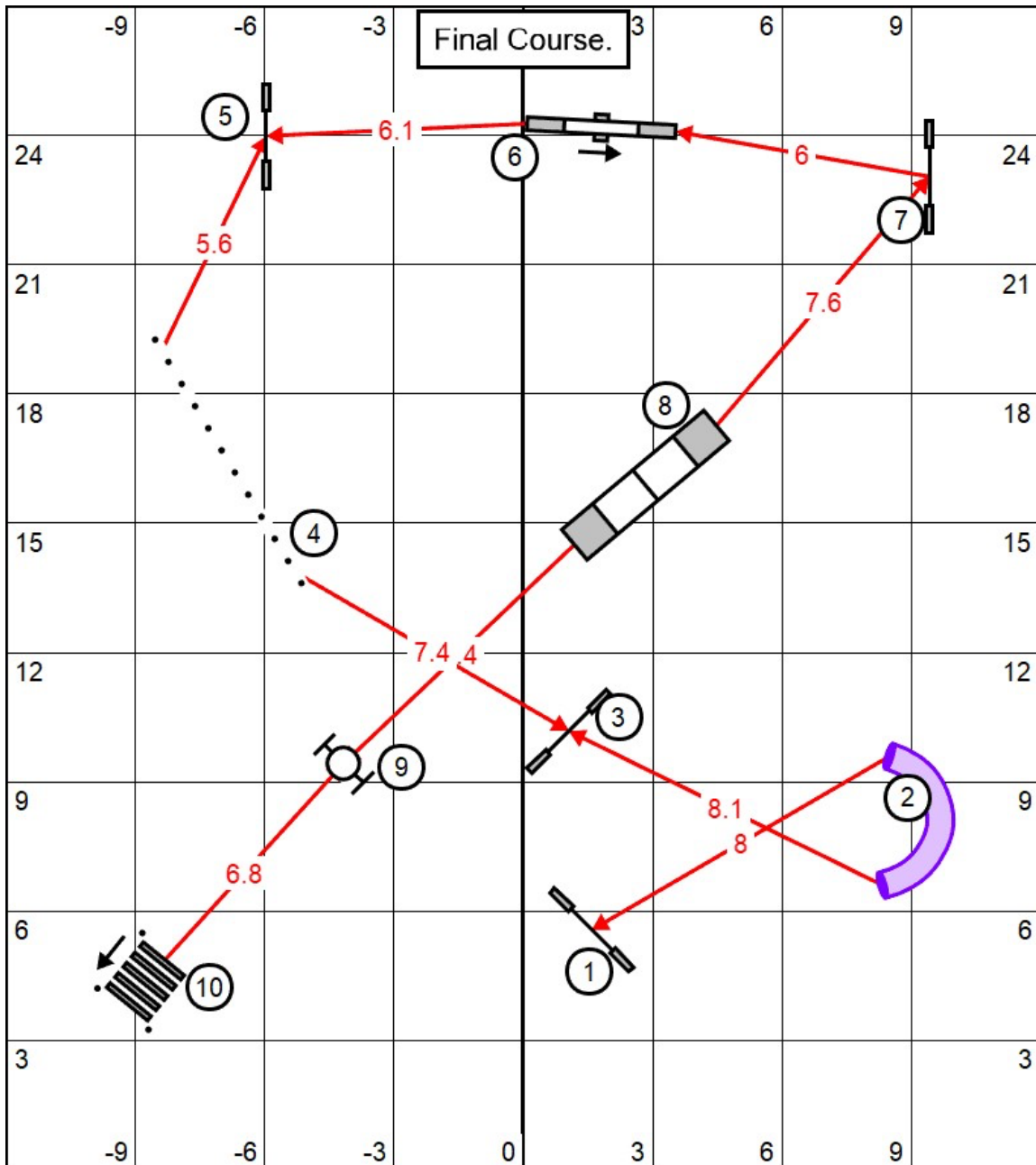


Figure 18

Finally, before progression to Blue Class, a discussion will occur between the Purple Class Instructors and a member of the Instructors Committee.

# ANNEXURE

## Weave Pole Training

**NOTE:** These notes summarise the 'Susan Garrett's Weave Training' DVD.

Each member is encouraged to purchase this DVD training video,

Alternatively, the A.D.C. has copies in the A.D.C. Library for members to borrow.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 the dog moves 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 reliably moves through 2 poles (remember 80% success rate), move on to the next level. The 2x2 base is now 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 accessible 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 they are offering the behaviour of confidently driving through the poles from different angles. Add the 2<sup>nd</sup> set approximately 4 metres from the 1<sup>st</sup> set at the same angle. Reward the dog 50% of the

time after the 1<sup>st</sup> set before asking them to enter the 2<sup>nd</sup> set. Gradually reduce the percentage and wait for the dog to enter the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 clearly. Both sets are at the 2 & 8 o'clock position/s.

4. Move the 2<sup>nd</sup> set closer. Again, work the arc from both the left- and right-hand sides.
5. Move the 2<sup>nd</sup> set of 2x2s 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 2<sup>nd</sup> set of 2x2s closer still and reduce the angle slightly. First, build confidence with easy entries before working the arc.
7. Straighten the poles. To build confidence, handlers must stay at this level for a little while. Now is also a good time for Handlers, if they have their own poles, to change training locations (i.e. take it on the road).
8. Add the 3<sup>rd</sup> set of 2x2's at 1 & 7 o'clock – about a metre away from the 4 poles. Gradually bring it closer and straighten it. Dogs should continue on 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 gets different approaches correct 80% of the time, add the 2<sup>nd</sup> set of 6 poles about 4 metres away from the 1<sup>st</sup> set. As 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.

## Verbal Commands

They should be clear and not sound the same as another word you use for another piece of equipment. e.g. "Hup" for Hurdles sounds the same as "Up" for the Dog Walk, which could confuse the dog.

Action:	Your Verbal Cue	Examples
Start Line		Stay, Sit, Wait
Release Word		Go, Now, Break, Yes, Okay, Dog's Name
Hurdle		Over, Jump, Hup
A-Frame		Up up, Scramble, A-up
Dog Walk		Walk on, Walk it, Walk, walk
See-saw		See-saw, Bang it, Bang bang
Tunnel		Tunnel, Through
Tyre		Tyre, Through
Broad		Over, Jump, Hup, Big one
Spread		Over, Jump, Hup, Big one
Weaving Poles		Weave, Poles
Threadle (Blue class)		Come, Here
Go Ahead		Go on, Get out
Left		Left
Right		Right



