

CANINE Academy



WHERE LEARNING IS FUN... AND THE GRADES ARE ALWAYS Q'S!

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www.CanineAcademy.org



Training Tip of the Month

When training a new behavior, refrain from adding the verbal cue to your dog's first random attempts. Only when the dog is consistently performing the task, in a manner that meets your established criteria, should you begin to add the verbal cue. Remember...

“Don't name it... until you love it.”

✧ Are You A Gambler? ✧

Agility is so much more than just Standard and Jumpers courses. In fact, most agility venues offer a variety of games to play with your dog. Are you ready to explore the realm of Gamblers agility?

By Teresa Robinson

GAMBLERS CLASS... SHOW ME THE MONEY!!!

Okay, now that I've got your attention... let's settle this money matter right up front. You will not win money in the Gamblers Class. Just like most other agility adventures, you will pay to play. But, at the end of your Gamblers run you will leave thinking that it was well worth the price and wishing you could go for another spin around the course.

So, what is Gamblers? In general, Gamblers is a game where

handlers get to choose a course of their own design. They earn points for each obstacle that their dog performs correctly. And, at some point during the game the handler will direct their dog to take obstacles at a distance... while the handler stays confined behind a designated boundary line! This is referred to as the Gamble (ASCA, USDAA), the Joker (USDAA) or the Send (AKC).

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CAUTION

CAUTION: Dogs and People At Play

CAUTION

Please remember to drive with caution upon entering or exiting the Canine Academy driveway. It would only take a brief moment for a dog or youngster to dart out from the parking area into the path of an oncoming car. Please help us all to be safe by driving **slowly**.



Driveway Speed Limit 5 mph. Thank you!

Canine Academy Student Spotlight:

Meet Elise Smith

Occupation(s):

Professional Beagle Mom and Bookkeeper.

Dogs:

Berrie, Beagle, 9
Abby, Beagle, 6
Strider, Beagle, 5
Faith, Beagle, 2

How did you come about owning four beagles?

All of my dogs have been re-homed from breeders. They've each come to me at between ages one to two years. Beagles are a great size, very smart dogs, and so lovable.

Does running hounds in agility present any special problems?

The NOSE...Smells are always a challenge. Strider recently left the top of the A-frame during a course run, to go find the Panda Express that the trial volunteers were having for lunch!

What are your proudest agility accomplishments?

Abby recently earned her AKC MACH title. She is one of the top beagles in the nation and has been invited to compete at the AKC Invitational this December.

Do you have some agility advice to share?

Never believe anyone who says your dog can't do agility. If I can do it with hounds; anyone can!



Third Annual Interclass Challenge!



It's that time again! Come join us for the most exciting sporting event in North County! Handler and dog teams will demonstrate their current agility skill progress, as they compete along with their class teammates. Don't miss this agility fun free-for-all!

THE COMPETITION BEGINS...

November 7th at 2 pm.

Spectators are welcome!

Who will have
the Best Team
Spirit?

Who will be the
Best Dressed
Team?

(*Herein referred to as the Gamble.*) What kind of distance are we talking about? This will vary depending on the level of competition that you are competing at, and on the venue you are competing in. The Gamble may require distances from three feet to twentyfour feet! The obstacles in the Gamble will vary and must be completed successfully, in the order prescribed by the judge, to earn a qualifying score. You must also complete the course within an established course time.

Beyond this general overview, the scoring and judging of the different forms of Gamblers vary in each agility venue. Links to Rule Books are provided below.

Rule Book Links:

[AKC Rule Book](#)

[ASCA Rule Book](#)

[USDAA Rule Book](#)



**A new USDAA Rule Book will be published in late 2009.*

Training Factors:

Obviously, the key training factor to be successful in Gamblers is distance. You can help your dog by beginning to reinforce distance work in your training:

*Reward your dog for working away from you. Throw your toy or treat container. Refrain from calling your dog back to your side for a reward.

*Develop a confident dog. Help them to be “right”, especially when working at a distance. You may initially want to eliminate “wrong choices” and keep to the obstacles that your dog loves to perform.

*Train in increments. Add a little more distance each time they perform a set of obstacles.

*Develop a consistent handling system. This is the communication code between you and your dog. Say what you mean and mean what you say with both verbal and physical cues.

*Work on developing strong “send” and “out” commands. Later, more advanced skills may include: specific verbal discrimination cues and directionals (“left” and “right”).

Gamble Strategies:

Ready to try your hand at Gamblers? Here are some great game playing tips:

*Review the rules for your chosen venue. Plan on attending the Judge’s Briefing. Ask questions to clarify your understanding of the game.

*Plan a course strategy. Many competitors like to work backwards from the Gamble starting point. That is, they plan their point accumulation path in such a way that their dog will end up near the start of the gamble when the whistle blows. (*AKC FAST allows the handler to perform the Send at anytime during the game.*)

*Consider how many obstacles your dog can perform within the given course time. Each handler has a different formula. Experience and a stopwatch will help you begin to estimate how many obstacles your dog can perform within a specified time.

*Remember to maintain your obstacle performance criteria. You’ve worked so hard on this; don’t let it slide just to earn a few extra points.

*And, by all means, if your dog becomes confused during the distance segment... go in and help them be successful. Reward for a job well done!

Need a little Gamble inspiration?

Check out Susan Garrett’s Gamble win at the 2009 AAC Nationals.

Click Here!

