

## SITE PREPARATION FOR A DALMATIAN ROAD TRIAL

*(Updated 04/15/22)*

The Host must provide score sheets for the recording of scores and/or observations for the judge. The host must also provide an official judge's book (as described in the Regulations) in which the judge may record the scores. After the trial is completed, the official judge's book is sent to the DCA Road Trial Committee chairman.

*For more details on the responsibilities of the Host Club, please request a copy of the document "Responsibilities of the Host Club".*

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

#### **STARTING LINE:**

- A "starting line" should be designated at the start of the "course", ¼ mile before the judged exercises. The required ¼ mile warm-up may be conducted in a circular or repeat format, if necessary. The starting line may be indicated in any one of several ways, such as: flags, posts, cones, a line on the ground made with white flour, etc. (WARNING: wire flags are not suggested, as they will "repel" dogs that have been trained to electric fencing.)

#### **JUDGED EXERCISES:**

- The Judged Exercises may not be held in an arena. They must be held in an open area, pasture, or trail. If a fenced area is used, the fenced area must be approximately 100 yards by 100 yards (300' x 300'; or approximately 10,000 square yards) or larger, with side fencing at least 150 feet apart.
- All classes require at least ¼ mile of "warm-up" distance before each team is judged. This ¼ mile is to be counted as part of the total distance in the classes with a distance requirement.
- The same area may be used for more than one exercise
- All entered dogs (CC/CCC, RD/RDC, RDX/RDXC & Optional classes) must perform the exercises on the same course.
- The CC/CCC entries will be judged after the completion of the judging of RDX and RD teams. Alternately, at the discretion of the Host Club, the CC/CCC class could be held on the previous day.
- Optional Classes (when offered) will be judged after RDX/RDXC and RD/RDC, or at the discretion of the Host Club, they may be judged on the day before.
- Judge's steward must be provided.
- Method of recording scores must be provided (clipboard and score sheets, pencil, cell phone for recording comments, etc.)
- Timepiece (watch, cell phone, etc.) for judge to record "time out on course" of each exhibitor.

HOCK (CC/CCC and RD/RDC & Optional Classes): *(color of markers is optional, but must be highly visible from horseback & from a distance).*

- Length: 200 yards, preferably in a straight line.
- Visible markers set about 10 yards before start.
- Visible markers for start of 200 yards
- Visible markers for end of 200 yards
- The 200 yards used for the Hock should be mostly level, straight, and without holes.
- Grass or weeds should be cut low for a width of about 20 feet, if possible.

HOCK (RDX/RDXC): *(color of markers is optional, but must be highly visible from horseback & from a distance).*

- Length: 200 yards, preferably in a figure 8 shape around 2 markers set 100 yards apart.
- 2 posts, markers, obstacles, or natural landmarks set approximately 100 yards apart
- Visible markers for start
- Visible markers for finish

#### HOCK WITH DISTRACTION:

- Distraction dog and handler
- Distraction dog should be non-aggressive, medium or large sized.
- Distraction dog & handler should have a waiting area (preferably out of sight) away from the judging so that they are not a distraction during the other exercises.
- Length: approximately 20 yards.
- Distraction dog approaches on horse's right, at least 15 feet away.
- If possible, set this exercise up near a tree to provide shade & near a hiding place for distraction dog/handler between exercises.
- It is *NOT* advisable to provide shade in the form of a canopy (frightens the horses).
- If a chair is provided, it should be dark in color, set well off the course, and blend well with the surrounding terrain.
- After the exercise, hiker and distraction dog must remain on the down-side of course until after the Judge has completed judging the remaining exercises.

#### LONG SIT OR DOWN:

- If a shade tree is available, this exercise can be performed under the shade of a tree.
- Can be performed at any location on the course.
- All dogs should perform the stay at the same location on the course
- Distractions should be kept to a minimum.
- Grass/weeds should be cut/cleared.
- Should be conducted in an area AWAY from any unnatural, "spooky" objects.
- Distraction dog must be a distance away and/or out of sight from the Stay exercise.

RECALL:

- Should be conducted in an open area where the judge can view the dogs and handler moving forward for at least 30 yards.
- Distractions should be kept at a minimum.

SPEED/CHANGE OF PACE: (*color of markers is optional, but must be highly visible from horseback & from a distance*). Some dogs that have been trained to an electric fence will shy from flags, so cones are preferred.

- Should be free of obstacles (on the ground AND overhanging), distractions, holes, rocks, "spooky" objects, etc.
- Length: 100 yards
- Visible "warning" markers 10 yards from start.
- Visible markers for start.
- Visible markers for finish.
- Steward must be present.
- **CC/CCC & Optional classes:** The Optional class of CCN/CCNC has no "Change of Pace." For the CC/CCC and the Optional class of CCI/CCIC, the team must perform the "Change of Pace" Exercise while traversing 100 yards. (see RT Regulations). The Change of Pace Exercise should be held on the same 100 yards as the RD/RDX Speed.

**START OF ENDURANCE/DISTANCE PORTION for classes with distance:**

- The timing of the endurance portion begins immediately after the completion of the judged exercises unless directed otherwise by the judge. The judge and the start/finish steward record the "start time". The judge will transfer the start time to the score sheets.
- An exhibitor may not request that his judging time be "bumped up".
- For safety, an exhibitor's time may be "held" so that s/he may ride with another exhibitor

**DISTANCE PORTION OF the COURSE (the TRAIL):**

- May be a repeated "loop" or series of loops.
- Must include a rest stop area or areas.
- *Must be measured.* RD/RDC trail must add up to 12.5 miles, including judged exercises and ¼ mile warm-up. RDX/RDXC trail must add up to 25 miles, including judged exercises and ¼ mile warm-up. Most trails can be measured with an accurate GPS device. Cell phone GPS apps are not reliably accurate. GPS devices made for trail measurement are preferred. Additional suggestions for measuring include using a four-wheeler with odometer, car or pickup, using known trails which have been measured and recorded previously (by local horsemen, forest service, etc.), or measuring the trail on horseback using rate of travel and common sense. Whichever method of measurement is used, it is suggested that a representative of the Host club ride the trail in advance, while being timed, to verify the trail length.

- Suggested length: 6 mile to 6 ¼ mile loop. This allows the mid-point rest to be located near the start/finish, and allows the mid-point rest for the RD dogs to be located at the same point as the mid-point rest for the RDX dogs. NOTE: with a ¼ mile warm-up, and a Judged Exercise course distance covered of about ¼ mile, the remaining distance required for the RD would be 12 miles. With a 6 mile loop, another ½ mile would have to be added for the RDX course.
- Two separate 6 to 6 ¼ mile loops, which meet at the starting point (i.e., a figure 8), have also been successful.
- Course must be marked (Chap. 3, Sec. 3).
- Markers must be bright, legible, and tamper resistant.
- Minimum of one directional marker per mile, 2 directional markers per every crossroad, fork, or path.
- Must include distance markers (Mile 2, Mile 4, etc.) a minimum of every 2 miles.
- Water must be available for dogs at a minimum of every 2-3 miles
- Avoid busy roads and parking areas. Stewards must be provided at road crossings.
- The Host Club must set up a method on the trail to verify that each team has completed the required distance. Method of verification is at the discretion of the Host Club. Suggested methods include having each exhibitor take a “selfie” next to the furthest mile marker; or a sign-in sheet; or steward; or trail camera posted at the furthest point on the trail to record the passing of each exhibitor.
- Water must remain available on the trail until after the last exhibitor has passed for the final time.

### **REST STOPS:**

- The judge may choose to observe or examine dogs/horses at the rest stop for soundness.
- Dogs/handlers that refuse to stop at a required Rest Stop will not receive a qualifying score.
- Leashes should be available if needed.
- Should be conducted in an area with enough room for the judge to view gaiting of dogs and horses if the judge chooses to examine the animals.
- Stewards (1 is acceptable; 2 are preferred). The Start/Finish steward or the Rest Stop steward must record time in/time out at the rest stops.
- Lead ropes
- Hoof pick
- Water for dogs (buckets, pans, and/or kiddie pool)
- Water for horses (trough and/or 5 gallon buckets)
- Water for exhibitors
- Hand washing items
- Shade and seating for judge and stewards
- Snacks/lunch for judge(s), and stewards
- Score sheets (plus clipboards, pencils, etc.)
- Clock/watch/stopwatch (for timing and recording of time in & out)
- Emergency care kit (human and animal)
- Rest room nearby

**OPTIONAL SEPARATE TRAIL FOR CARRIAGES** (Chap. 3, Sec. 3):

- Carriages/carts must perform the Judged Exercises on the same field or location as the mounted exhibitors. The CC/CCC test must be conducted on the same field.
- If possible, the carriages should use the same trail for the “endurance” portion as the mounted exhibitors.
- If the chosen mounted trail is not suitable for carriages, another trail may be designated for carriages. This trail may consist of a shorter, carriage-appropriate loop. Carriage exhibitors will still be required to complete the required distance.
- **Verification of distance is required (see previous section).**

**FINISH LINE:**

- The finish line is usually at the same location as the start. It should include the required distance for both the RD/RDC and RDX/RDXC.
- The location of finish line for the Optional classes will be at the completion of the required distance for that class, with the location to be determined by the Host Club.
- It is the responsibility of the Start/finish steward to record the time each team crosses the Finish Line

**SPECTATOR AREA:**

- Should be well marked.
- A steward should be assigned to direct spectators.
- Spectators must be kept out of judging areas and away from horses.
- Cars/vehicles should not be allowed into the spectator area.
- Cars/vehicles should not be near the judged exercises if possible.
- Spectators should be reminded often to keep quiet & limit movement during a judging.

**STEWARDS:** some jobs may be combined, but it is suggested that the following areas be covered by volunteer stewards:

- Start/finish steward
- Rest Stop steward
- Judge’s steward
- Distraction dog handler
- Spectator area steward
- Distance verification steward (not required if a different method of verification is used)