



Challenge Class Course Guidelines.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Challenge class is to provide a class that tests the handling skills as well as the speed of the agility team. The level of this class is to reflect a similarity to World Level courses in its difficulty and handling requirements. This class is to be judged by a Masters level judge.

Eligibility

Only those dogs competing in AAC Masters Standard class are eligible to enter Challenge.

Method of Play

The dog and handler team must navigate the course as set by the Judge.

Scoring:

All the current AAC Masters Standard Performance Rules shall apply with the exception of the table performance. The dog's position on the table is optional as long as the dog stays on the table, (can be a sit, down, standing or moving or any combination), the 5 second count starts as soon as all 4 feet are on the table. If the dog leaves the table before completion of the 5 second count, the regular penalties apply.

Course Time and Qualifying:

Course time is based on the fastest clean run time in each jump height in each division. Teams finishing within or equal to a 1.2 multiplication of that fastest time in each jump height will qualify. Times will be rounded up or down to the closest **second** decimal place.

Example: fastest clean run time in that division and height: 45.23.

The SCT for that height will be set at: $45.23 \times 1.2 = 54.276$

This rounds off to: SCT 54.28

All dogs running in that division and height with a clean run and within that SCT, earn a Qualifying score.

Regardless if there is a pause table on course, the SCT calculation is 1.2 times the fastest clean run course time for that height.

Equipment:

- Number of obstacles allowed 20 – 23.



- Single jumps – both winged and wingless will be necessary. One bar jumps allowed
- Spread jumps: out of the three types of spread jumps available: double, ascending and broad jump, a selection of two different spread jumps **MUST** be on the course, the third variety spread jump is optional. A Minimum number of spread jumps to be performed is two, with a minimum of two different types, a maximum number of spread jumps to be performed is 4, made up of two or three different spread type jumps .
 1. Double jump: Winged double preferred. To be replaced by single jump for Specials and Veterans. May be used more than once. If a club offers two double jumps, they could both be placed on course. Please avoid use of double jumps with solid wood ends that block the dogs vision on even the slightest angled approach.
 2. Ascending spread: Winged ascending preferred. To be replaced by single jump for Specials and Veterans. May be used more than once
 3. Broad jump: Strongly encouraged. To be replaced by a single jump for Specials and Vets. **May be used once only**. Both the Oxer and Ascending broad jump formation allowed. The Ascending style broad jump is preferred as it is more visible and the variety used at World events. **Attention:** the 4 corner marking poles for the Broad jump should be freestanding or easily displaceable for safety reasons.
- Tire jumps – Mandatory, single use only
- Tunnels – mandatory, a minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 entrances allowed.
- Chute – mandatory, single use only.
- Dog Walk – mandatory, single use only
- A Frame – mandatory, single use only
- Teeter totter – mandatory, single use only
- Weave poles – mandatory – to be used only in 1 x 12 pole configuration, single use only.
- Table – optional



Course Design Guidelines

The Course must follow all the safety regulations currently in place for AAC Masters Standard course with some exceptions as noted below;

- Limit the use of straight on jump approaches. Closed and moderately closed jump approaches are preferred. These closed approach, could result in minor to major challenge (see notes)
- Use of wraps, threadles, serpentines, pull throughs, pushes, 270 turns, and 180's are strongly encouraged. These are considered handler challenges and depending on the approach, could result in minor to major challenge (see notes)
- A serpentine or threadle, with a closed approach, is usually a familiar configuration. Wingless jumps could be used in this situation, but winged jumps are preferred.
Distance between outside to outside jump wing or upright for serpentine or 180 degree turn should not be less then 5 feet clear space.
Distance between outside to outside jump wing or upright for a threadle should not be less then 10 feet clear space.
- Placement of 2 or 3 handler challenges in a sequence is strongly advised. This would usually require a sequence of 4 to 5 obstacles to fit the needed handler challenges. (see notes)
- It is recommended that winged jumps be used when very flat (closed) approaches are used, especially in situations where the approach might make the jump hard to see. An example of this would be a closed approach jump out of a tunnel or a single jump to be taken on a closed approach.
- The tire, broad jump, double jump or ascending spread jump can not have more than 30 degree angled approach in the last 10 feet to obstacle.
- All contact obstacles can have no more than 30 degree angled approach in the last 10 feet to obstacle.
- Side by side Tunnel/Dog Walk or Tunnel/Aframe obstacle discriminations are to be kept to a maximum of 1, and preferably not to be used at all.
- If a tunnel is under a contact there shall be no tunnel to contact or contact to tunnel performance – another obstacle must be taken in between. (see notes)



- Maximum of 3 tunnel entrances, not including the chute. Minimum of 1 tunnel entrance, not including the chute.
- Weave pole approaches are recommended to be moderately challenging to very challenging.
- The last two obstacles on course are to be free of major challenge and should create a fast finish.
- Up to 2 dummy jump(s) or tunnel(s) can be used. This is not mandatory.
- Off course jumps and tunnels may be as close as 12 ft, ONLY if preceded by a Handler controllable section. (see notes) The idea being that the handler must handle to create flow that will move the dog away from the wrong obstacle.
- The distance between obstacles to be taken in flow is the same as Masters standard guidelines, minimum of 15 feet, and 18 feet before and after spread jumps.
- There should be a mix of speed sequences to control sequences. Keeping in mind that we don't want to create poor or unsafe flow as we apply the control.
- There must be 4 - 6 major challenges. Handling challenges are more encouraged than discrimination challenges.
- Unlimited minor challenges allowed.
- There must be multiple side changes. (4 -5 at least)

Some Examples of MAJOR Masters Challenges.

1. Tunnel entrance close to the up ramp of a contact, preceded by a jumping sequence facing the obstacle not to be taken next. In Challenge game this type of major is discouraged and if used can not exceed one instance per course.
2. Tunnel used in straight configuration followed by a jump not to be taken.
3. The dogs path passing closely to an obstacle not to be taken.
4. Obstacles set in close proximity to one another (5 feet) after a jumping sequence
5. Two up ramps of contacts set in close proximity (4 to 6 feet) to one another, preceded by a jumping sequence facing the obstacle not to be taken



6. Weave poles preceded by several jumps with an entry angle of 60 degrees or more.
7. A section that would be best handled from away. This cannot be more than 15 feet away from the handler.
8. A repeat section, where the dog repeats at least two obstacles in sequence and then has to be redirected in another direction than original flow, while the logical flow of the course would take the dog to the same flow as previously performed.

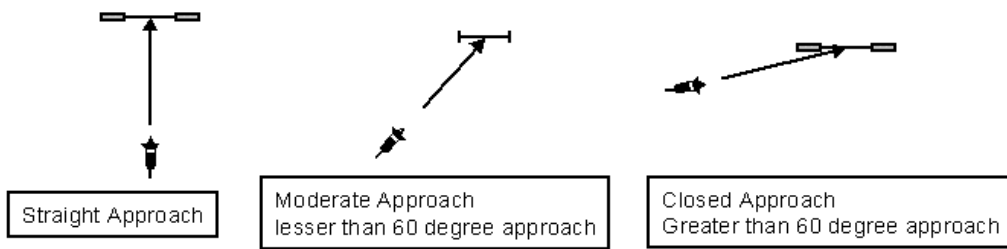
Some Examples of Handler Challenges.

There are many ways create a handler challenge, here are a few examples.

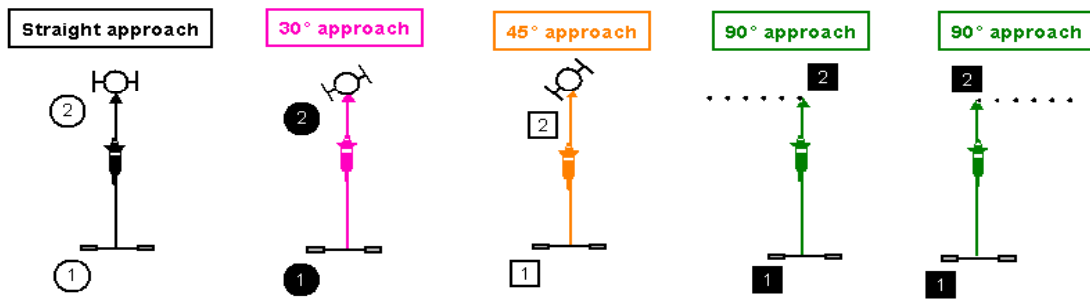
1. Forced side change.
 2. Multiple forced side changes in sequence.
 3. A threadle.
 4. A serpentine
 5. An offset serpentine.
 6. A pull thru.
 7. A speed sequence to a control sequence or obstacle (eg weaves).
 8. A sequence where the line of obstacles can put the handler in a poor position forcing the handler to plan ahead to be able to place themselves in the correct position.
 9. A situation where the handler has to manage the dogs approach to a jump so to take an off course obstacle out of the obvious line.
 10. A sequence where the handler has to curve or adjust the dog's line in order for the dog to see the next obstacle or get a clean obstacle entrance.
-



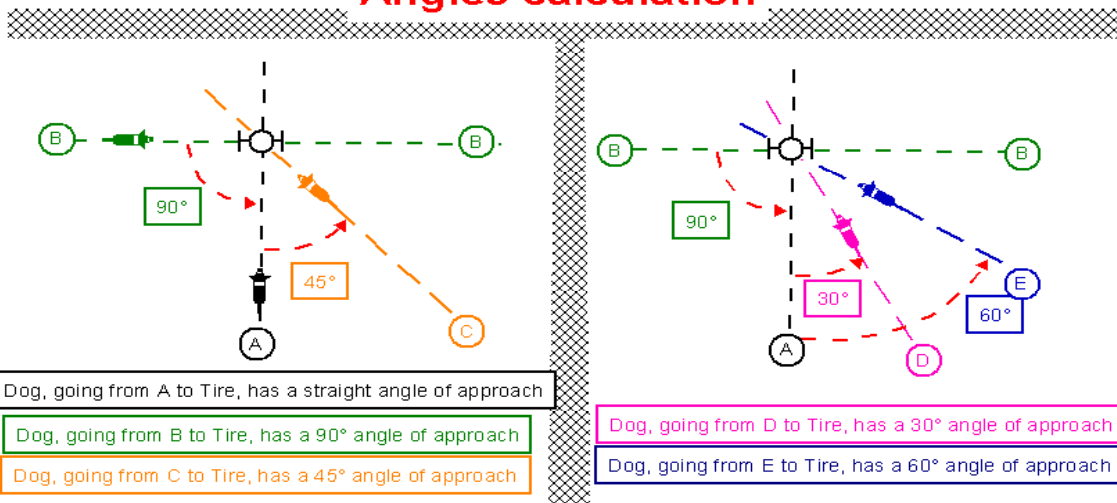
Explanation of terminology for approach angles:



Angle Calculation chart

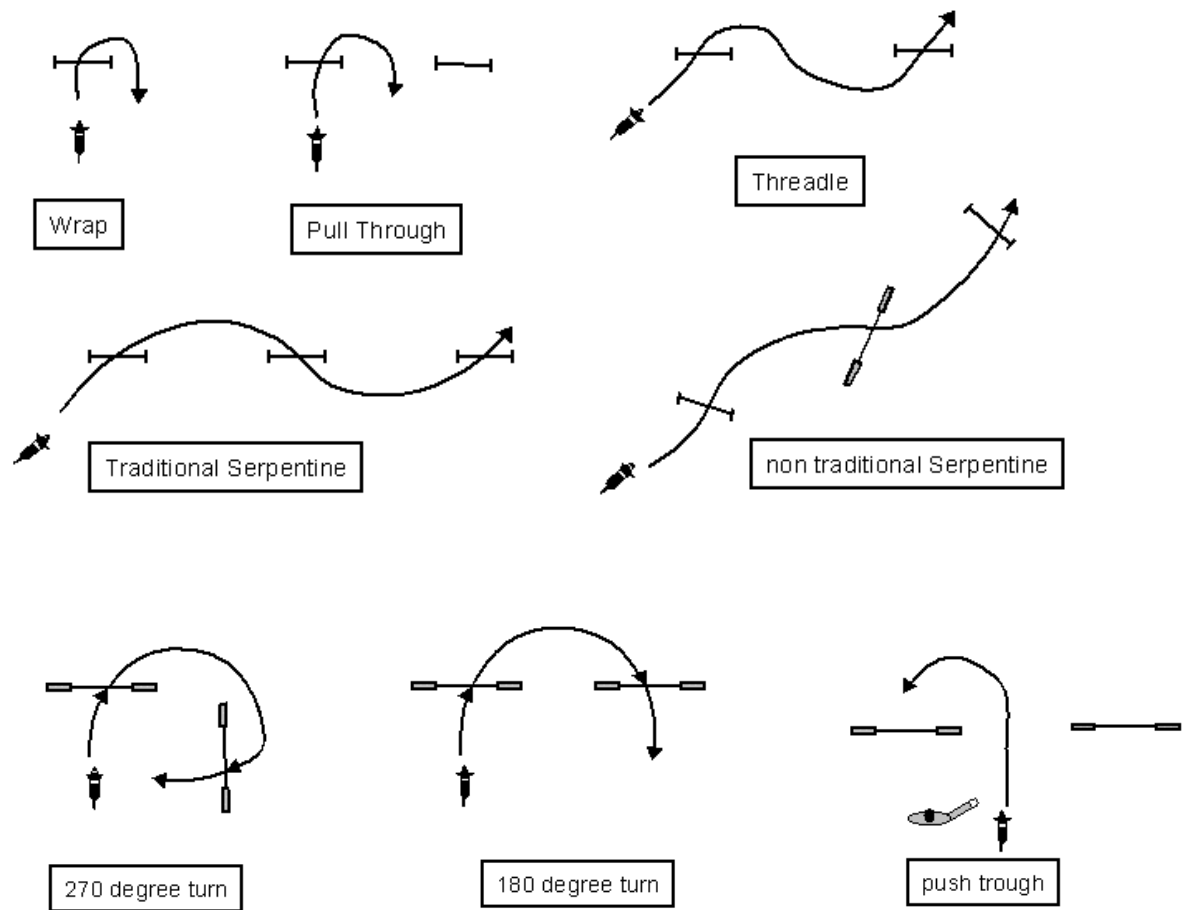


Angles calculation



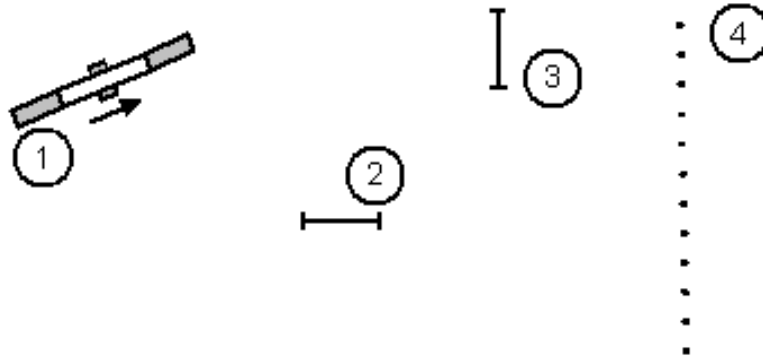


Samples of handling challenges

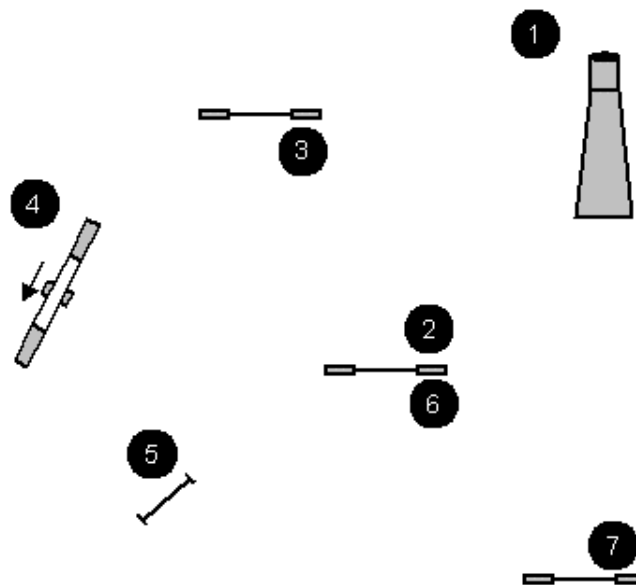




Examples of multiple handler challenges in succession



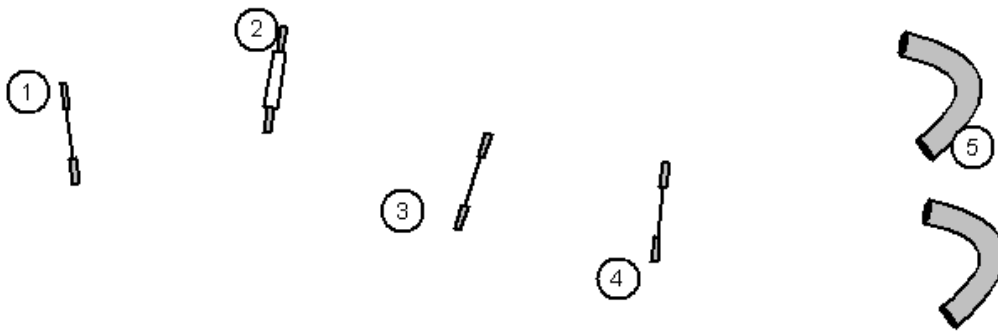
This challenge with one front cross between 1 and 2, followed with a 270 turn from 2 to 3, a wrap at 3 to a 90 degree weave pole entry, represents two changes of side minimum and at least to be considered one major challenge overall , with several minor challenges



This sequence has one challenging approach out of blind chute to 2, wrap at 2, wrap at 3, wrap at 6 to 7. It represents at least two changes of side and at least to be considered one major challenge overall, with several minor challenges



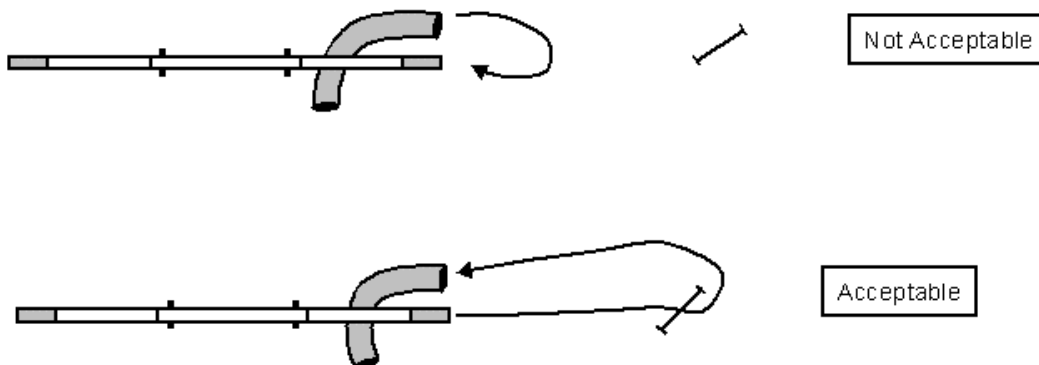
Challenge example recommended NOT to be presented in a challenge course:



In this case there is a serious speed section preceding the discrimination between two tunnel mouths. The handler does not have much chance of being able to position in time to assist the dog toward the correct tunnel, since the handler will need to support transition 2 to 3.

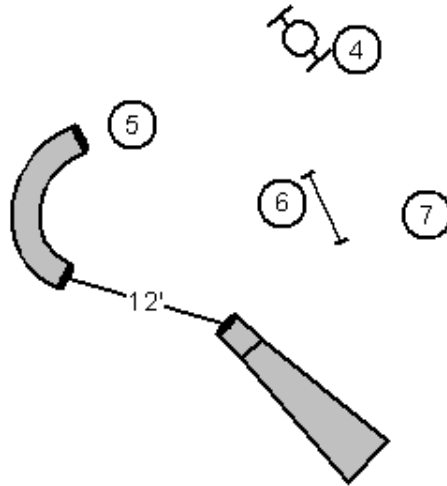
The dog's natural flow is feeding him directly into the incorrect tunnel mouth at great speed.

If a tunnel is under a contact there shall be no tunnel to contact or contact to tunnel performance – another obstacle must be taken in between. Remembering that tunnel/contact discrimination is discouraged, and if used cannot be used more than once per course.





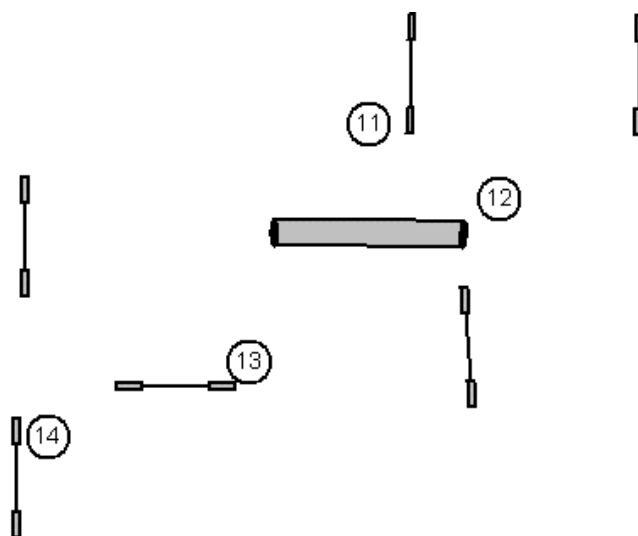
Example of 12 feet distance allowable to a wrong course obstacle.



Major and Minor Challenge definition.

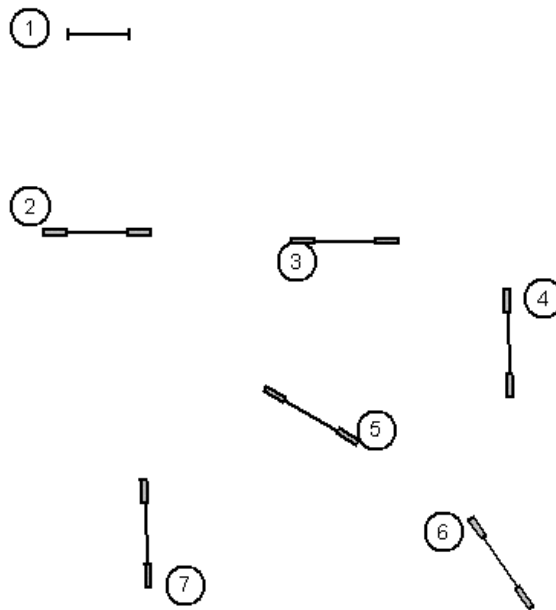
a major handling challenge can occur :

- when due to the direction and speed of the course flow, the handler would be in a **severely disadvantaged** position to handle the dog.

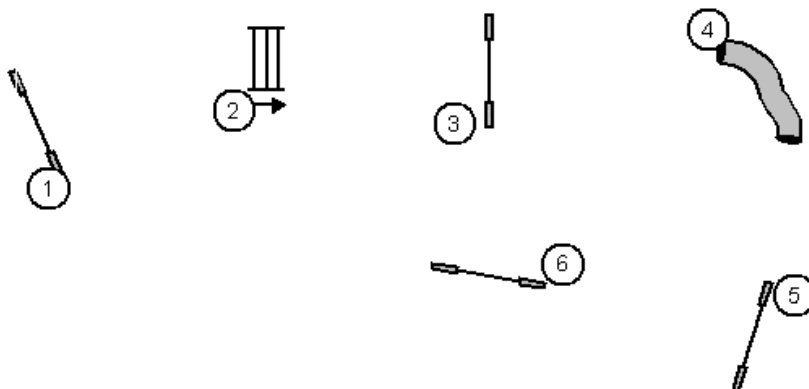




- when there are multiple changes of side **directly** following each other in **rapid** succession (3-4 changes)

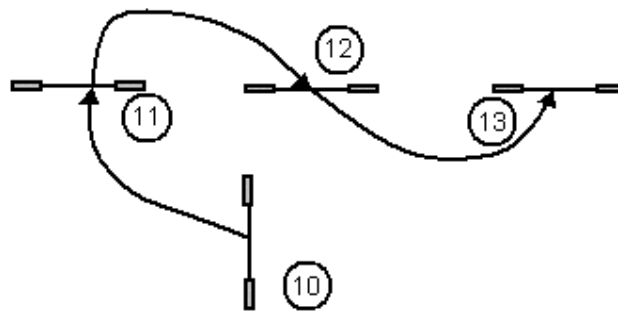


- when the approach to an obstacle is hidden due to angle of approach and the hidden approach is **preceded by a speed section**.

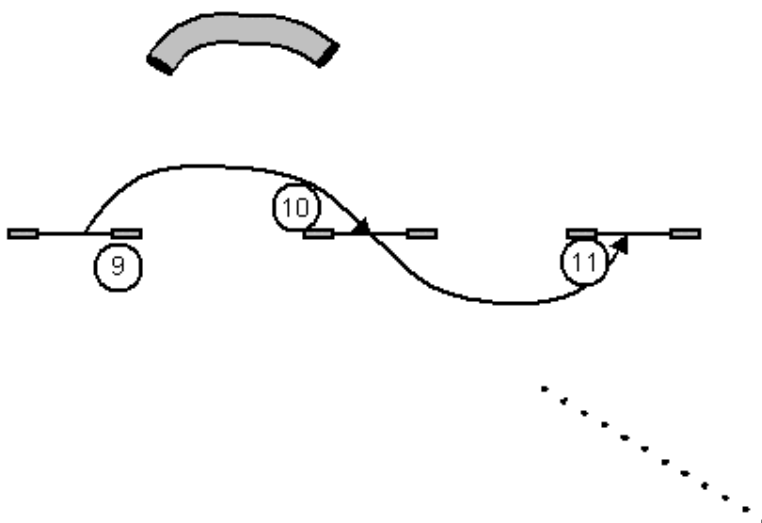




- when the first obstacle of a technical section such as serpentine, threadle or 270 degree turn is approached from a severe angle of 60 degrees or more.

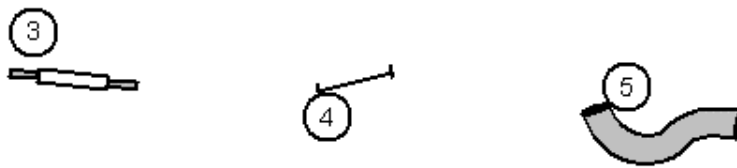


- when a technical section such as serpentine, threadle or 270 turn is closely surrounded by other equipment, which has the potential to draw the dog off course.

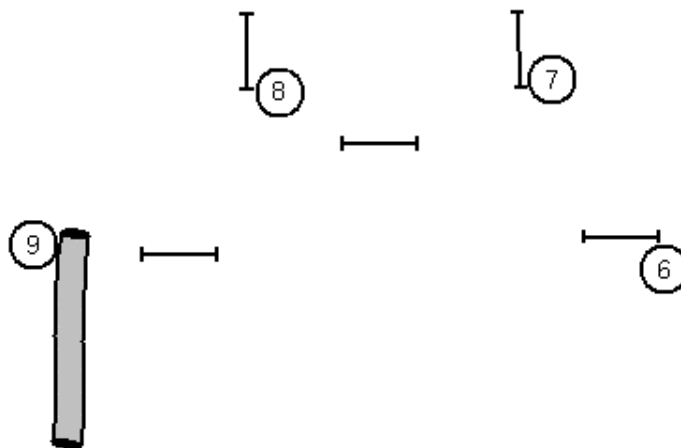




- when a serpentine has a **non traditional, more severe, obstacle angulation.**

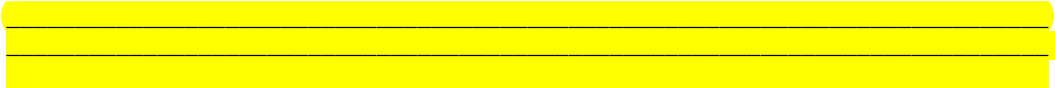
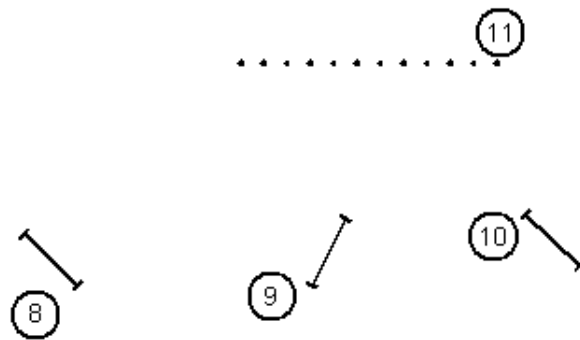


- when the dog needs to bypass an obstacle **at speed** and the **best handling position would be to layer** the obstacle.



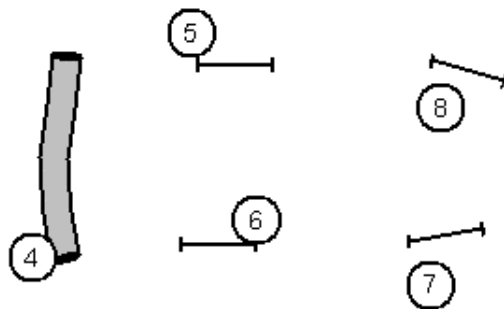


- when entry to weaves is more severe angle of approach (60 degree or more) **at speed**.



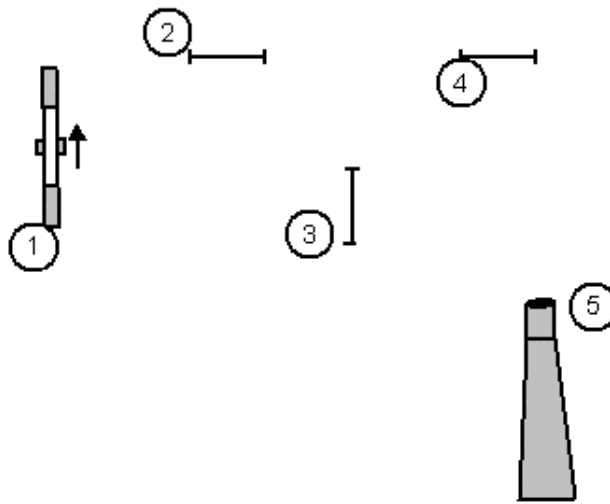
a minor **handling** challenge can occur :

- when due to the direction and speed of the course flow, the handler would be in a **mildly disadvantaged** position to handle the dog.

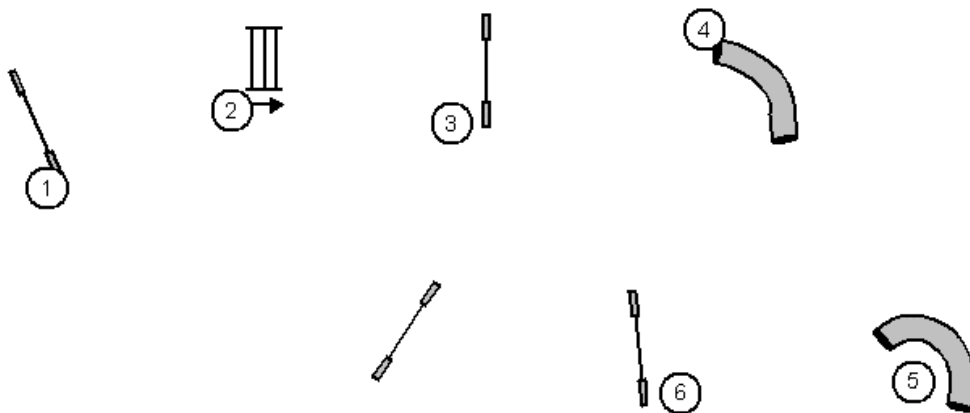




- when there are multiple changes of side following each other in succession (2 changes of side)

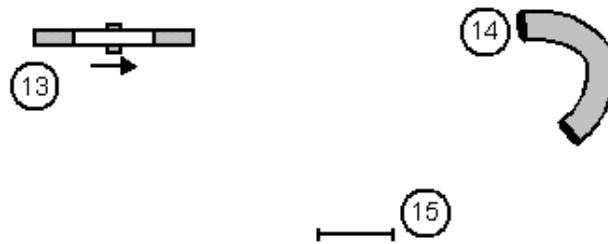


- when the approach to an obstacle is **somewhat hidden** due to angle of approach and the somewhat hidden approach is preceded by a speed section.

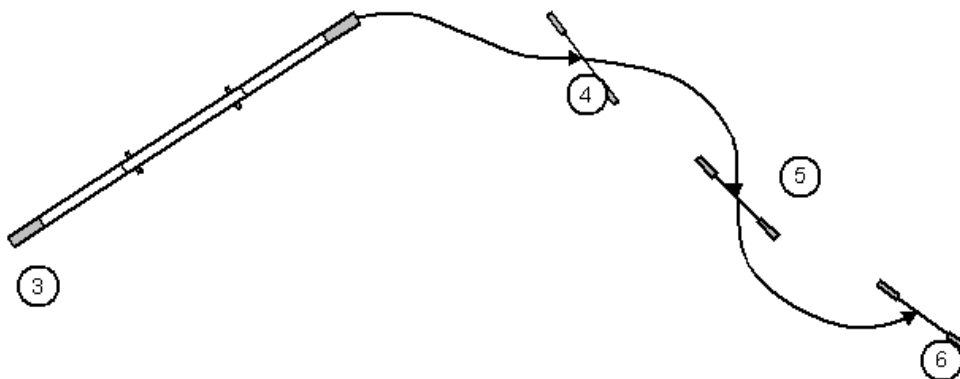




- when the approach to an obstacle is hidden due to angle of approach and the hidden approach is **not** preceded by a speed section.

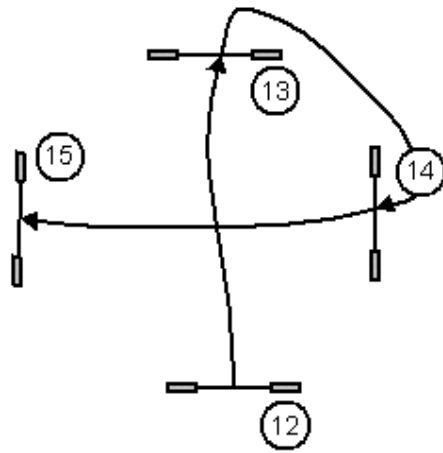


- When the first obstacle of a technical section such as serpentine, treadle or 270 degree turn is approached from a **mild** angle which is less than 60 degrees.

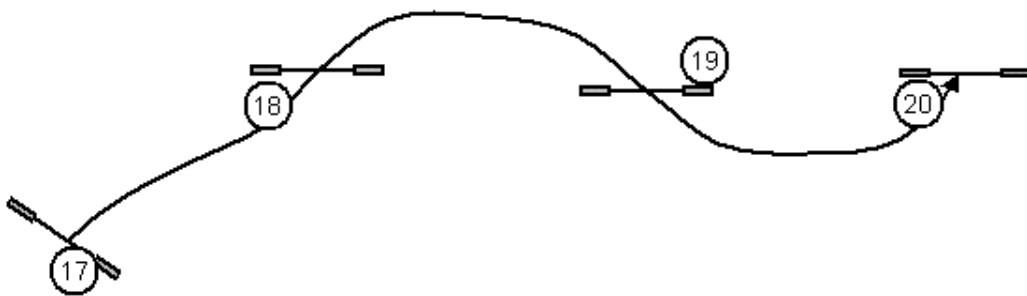




- when a technical section such as serpentine, threadle or 270 turn is **free standing** with ample room to maneuver

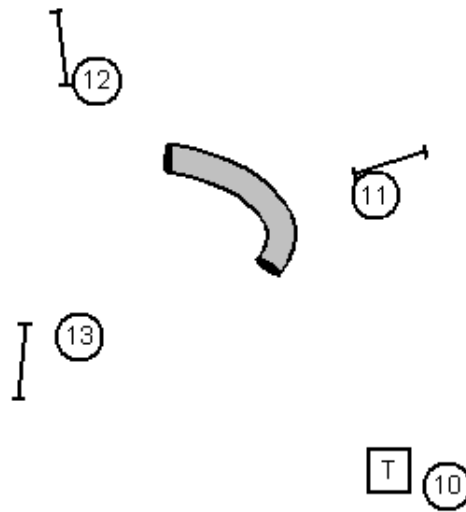


- when a serpentine has a traditional obstacle angulation.





- when the dog needs to bypass an obstacle and the best handling position would be to layer the obstacle while this is preceded by a table or section where the **handler has time to position themselves** better for handling purposes.



- entry to weaves is more severe angle of approach (60-90 degree) preceded by a control section, where handler **has ample time** to position for handling

