

Plans for the March Madness Obedience and Rally Trials March 14, 2021

COVID-19 GUIDELINES:

Please keep in mind – the State rules on the day of the trial take precedent. This club will comply with ASCA guidelines and Massachusetts State Law. Please be sure you are aware of all guidelines in effect on the date of the shows.

As of July 1, 2020, this is the plan:

Everyone will be required to wear masks if you are on the grounds. Please provide your own PPE. Competitors showing any symptoms, or who have someone that they are in regular contact with, showing symptoms must stay home and not participate in events. People who test positive, or have someone that they are in regular contact with who tests positive, for coronavirus should follow state and local quarantine rules. If you enter and decide to cancel for these reasons – your check will be shredded

Social distancing will be practiced at all times:

Dogs can be crated in the building at all times, but if your class is not running, please remain outside. When your class is in the ring, you may be in the building – this will keep the number of people in the building, at any one time, at a minimum. Please bring your own chair for inside the building, and space yourselves at least six feet from your neighbor. You may want to bring shade cloth or some sort of e-z up for outside.

This is the link to the complete document of the ASCA Guidelines as of July 1, 2020:

<https://www.asca.org/covid-19-related-guidelines-for-asca-sanctioned-events/>

These are the specific guidelines under the heading of “Obedience” or “Rally”

Obedience Specific Guidelines

These temporary measures were developed to enact procedures for safely holding ASCA obedience trials during the Covid-19 pandemic. Regulations differ across the many jurisdictions where ASCA trials are held, and it is the host club’s responsibility to know the laws affecting the trial site. Judges and stewards are the most at risk of exposure (handlers are only in the ring for a short time). These measures are in effect immediately, until further notice.

Ring Conditions:

- 1. The judge will ensure that a 6’ distance is maintained between themselves and the handler, including when welcoming a team into the ring, and between all handlers in the ring at the same time.*
- 2. A chair will be placed inside the ring. Handlers will place their own dumbbells, directed retrieve gloves, and article bags on this chair; leashes will be placed by the handler either on the chair or at another designated location. Stewards and judges are not required to handle leashes and dumbbells and may use tongs or wear gloves to handle directed retrieve gloves and scent articles. Handlers will be allowed to enter the ring (with or without their leashed dog) to lay their*

dumbbell, articles and/or gloves on the specified chair or table, then exit the ring to prepare to enter with their dog for judging.

- 3. For all classes not concluding with the Sit Stay – Get Your Leash, Stand Stay – Get Your Leash, or Beginner Novice Recall, after performing the last individual exercise, the handler will pick up the leash and attach it to their dog's collar. After leashing their dog, the handler will gather all personal belongings from the chair before exiting the ring.*
- 4. Stewards should each carry a slip lead at all times in the event that a dog is out of control.*
- 5. Stewards should maintain their distance while setting jump heights, bringing jumps in and out of ring etc. Host clubs should consider arranging armband order by jump height, to minimize jump changes.*
- 6. Stewards may prefer to have only one person touch a piece of equipment (Beginner Novice signs and holders; ODX cone etc.), and/or to wear gloves when touching equipment.*
- 7. Judges may announce scores from inside the ring, with class entrants remaining outside the ring, spaced 6' apart. If handlers enter the ring for awards, they should remain 6' apart. Awards may be self-serve after scores are announced.*
- 8. Judges may choose to disallow win photos to be taken inside the ring.*

Beginner Novice:

- 1. Walkthrough: only 2 handlers are allowed in the ring at a time, maintaining a 6' distance at all times; judges may limit the number of times each handler gets to walk the course, especially for large classes. Host clubs should consider the additional time needed for walkthroughs when determining entry limits.*
- 2. Figure 8: Tall cones (minimum 18" height) should be used as posts, instead of stewards. Cones will be set out prior to the Beginner Novice classes and left in the ring until the end of the Beginner Novice classes.*
- 3. Sit for Exam: The judge is to ensure that the handler walks the full 6' away from the dog. The judge will approach the dog from an angle between the dog's side and its front, maintaining 6' from handler at all times but allowing the dog to see the judge approaching. The judge may wear a glove to examine the dog.*

Novice:

- 1. Figure 8: Tall cones (minimum 18" height) should be used as posts, instead of stewards. Cones will be set out prior to the Novice classes and left in the ring until the end of the Novice classes.*
- 2. After the Figure 8 and the judge's order "Exercise finished," the judge will direct the handler to place their leash at the specified location before setting up for the Stand for Exam.*
- 3. Stand for Exam: The judge is to ensure that handler walks the full 6' away from the dog. The judge will approach the dog from an angle between the dog's side and its front, maintaining 6' from handler at all times but allowing the dog to see the judge approaching. The judge may wear a glove to examine the dog.*
- 4. Group exercises: handlers should maintain 6' spacing at all times, including when lining up to enter the ring, and when exiting the ring.*

Open:

- 1. Figure 8: Tall cones (minimum 18" height) should be used as posts, instead of stewards. Cones will be set out prior to the Open classes and left in the ring until the end of the Open classes.*
- 2. The ODX ring should be designed so that the dog does not confuse the Figure 8 posts with the Directed Open Exercises (DOE) cone. An alternate ODX ring set-up is to use one of the two Figure 8 cones as the DOE exercise cone, and to remove and replace the other Figure 8 cone during the DOE exercise; if this option is chosen, then the placement of the cone to be removed*

should be marked on the ground. If this option is used, then an 18" or taller cone is to be used in the DOE exercise.

3. Handlers are to pick up their own dumbbell from the chair by the ring gate and place it on the chair after the retrieve exercises. Preferred orders for Open B classes are those in which the two retrieve exercises are consecutive (Orders I, II, and IV).
4. Only one steward should set each jump height. Only one steward should place and remove the ODX cone.

Utility:

1. *Scent Discrimination:* stewards may wear gloves and/or use tongs to set out and pick up scent articles and to handle the article container, and/or may use hand sanitizer after handling each set of articles.
2. *Directed Retrieve:* stewards may use gloves and/or tongs to set out and pick up gloves, and/or may use hand sanitizer after handling each set of gloves.
3. *Moving stand and Examination:* The judge will approach the dog from an angle between the dog's side and its front, maintaining 6' from handler at all times but allowing the dog to see the judge approaching. The judge may wear gloves to examine the dog. Should the dog travel forward toward the handler such that the judge cannot maintain a 6' distance from the handler when approaching the dog, then the judge should give the order "Call your dog to heel" without approaching and examining the dog, and a non-qualifying score will be given for the exercise.
4. Only one steward should set each jump height.

Rally Specific Guidelines

These guidelines were developed with the most stringent requirements, to account for regulatory differences between different jurisdictions where ASCA trials are held.

General:

1. All maps should be available outside in the crating area. When also posted, each should be 6 ft apart, only 1 handler at a time may review or take a picture of the map.
2. Judges are encouraged to provide sufficient maps so that there is no sharing needed.
3. Ring armband order should be strictly observed at all times.
4. In the case of indoor trials, the affiliate should determine the maximum number of handlers, with their dogs, that may be in the building at one time, according to the size of the building and the need to maintain the six feet social distance. Handlers may remain in the building only until their score is announced or posted. On exiting the building, the handler should notify the next handler that they may enter the building.
5. Separate entry and exit gates are required for all classes, with a minimum of 40 ft between. Judge will not greet handler upon entering the ring, they should only ask "are you ready?"
6. If the building is large enough to accommodate crating, there should be 6' between set-ups, and handlers should maintain physical distancing at all times.
7. Social distancing should be maintained outside the building, and in parking area.
8. When establishing entry limits, extra time for multiple walk-throughs should be allowed. 10 minutes per group of 3 or 4 should be observed. An area for waiting to walk should be designated, but sufficient to allow proper social distancing.
9. Judges, stewards, and competitors should wear masks within 10' of the ring and the judge/steward table; club should provide judge and stewards with masks; handlers should bring their own masks and gloves. Judges and stewards are the most at risk of exposure (handlers are only in the ring for a short time).

10. *Only one person should fill out the judge's books. To save time, the table steward should complete the judge's books.*
11. *Calculators, pens, and pencils should only be used by one person, and should be sterilized after use by one person.*
12. *The steward table should be set perpendicular to the ring to maximize distance between judge & table steward.*
13. *All judges score sheets should be given to the judge at the beginning of each class, including A, B & C scoresheets. Score sheets should be given to the judge in run order & only the completed scoresheet at the end of each run will be passed to the table steward. Only one clip board will be used and only handled by the judge. The table steward should wait until the judge moves away from the table to retrieve each score sheet.*
14. *Scores should be given verbally to the handler by the table steward at the end of the run and should be called out to the person writing scores on the board.*
15. *Clubs should limit the supplies at the table to only those required. Extra items should be kept in a separate location to avoid contamination.*
16. *Judges books for A, B & C classes should be kept by the trial secretary until all runs are completed before returning to the judge to announce. The judge will announce winners, then leave the sheets in the middle of the table to be picked up by the table steward.*
17. *The timer should remain 6 ft from the table steward, times shall be called out orally.*
18. *If more than 1 timer is used during the trial, the stopwatch should be thoroughly disinfected.*
19. *Powder-free nitrile gloves should be provided for judges and stewards.*
20. *Hand sanitizer, soap, spray disinfectant and disinfectant wipes should be provided each day.*
21. *Judges should plan their ring to minimize jump changes.*
22. *Only one steward can touch a piece of equipment (signs, cones, etc.). Gloves should be worn.*
23. *Only 1 person may pull and change signs.*
24. *Gloves worn by stewards should be changed if the steward leaves, then returns to the ring area, or as often as the steward feels necessary.*
25. *Judges should nest all courses to eliminate the need to move numbers between classes.*
26. *All equipment should be sanitized at the beginning and end of each trial on each day by one designated club member.*
27. *Judge will announce scores at the end of each class. The class will be called back into the building for the announcements. Exhibitors will remain outside the ring, spaced 6 ft apart, and should wear masks.*
28. *Ribbons and awards are to be placed on a separate table at least 6' from the judge/steward's table; awards are self-serve after scores are announced.*
29. *Score sheets will not be available for review at trials where these rules are be utilized.*
30. *A chair, leash holder, or designated location on the ring gating is required for leashes. Handlers should place their own leash at the designated location, while maintaining control of their dog, either in a stay, or at their side. Stewards and judges are not to handle leashes items.*
31. *Judges are encouraged to design courses that eliminate the need for a leash runner for all classes.*
32. *A stay exercise is encouraged.*
33. *A club member/volunteer should disinfect all surfaces using an EPA approved disinfectant in the immediate ring area, or inside a building, on a regular basis.*
34. *Non-aerosol disinfectants should be used to eliminate the possibility of particles spreading into the ring where dogs are working.*