

Tracking





It is important to insist on the fact that the purpose of the tracking exercise for rescue dogs **is to save a victim** ... therefore very different from the sport tracks that we can meet during IGP events such as the FH for example. Too often we find that **our tests are evaluated the same way**, but that is not correct! The level of difficulty and the final goal are different. In addition, for our exercises we are not talking about corners but about changes of direction, a very important nuance in the layout of our tracks. The latter, whatever the level, must absolutely be feasible both by the nature of the terrain and the climatic conditions. The layout of the tracks must absolutely be adapted accordingly. A common error is that we penalize faults as in IGP side .

The discipline of tracking is played less and less and why?

1. The organizers have more and more difficult to find fields to organize tests and trainings, a lot of problems at this level!
2. Secondly ,and this is not the least, the lack of success of the competitors during tests and championships, both FCI and IRO...It's not very motivating at this level! I think that at the level of the Utility Dogs commission of the FCI they understood and tried to form track layers by insisting on the factors of success in tracking. We must realize that our dogs , at level A or B, are not yet professionals, these levels are simply a step in the final training.

The tests or competitions are organized to evaluate the progress and the quality of training **and not to succeed in impossible missions**. Given the few tests organized in tracking, there are unfortunately often entrusted to people with little experience in this matter.



Evaluation criteria for tracking

General:

- A dog must during his apprenticeship that he is 100% responsible for the decision he makes during on a track, he must work as a leader with confidence. He must have the « will » and the « wish » to track...
- The level of training can be seen in particular in the behavior in search of the identification article, at the start of the track, at the changes of direction, in committing to the legs following corners, at the designation of articles and at the discovery of the victim and the quality of his designation..
- The overall impression must be the deciding factor.
- Superficial behavior, help of diverse forms must result in appropriate deductions.

NOW:

- The tracking speed or tempo is not a criterium for evaluation if the dog works out the entire track with the same tempo. It is not to apply if the difficulty of the terrain changes during the course of the track.
- We must also take into account differences in tracking grounds, nature of the soil, height of the vegetation, possible cross-tracks of people or animals (game) and the weather conditions...
- We must not forget that the end goal is to find a victim at the end of the track! That's the most important in the evaluation.

The different levels

- 1. Level V: Handler track of 400 normal steps, 2 changes of direction at a right angle 3 handler articles, age of the track: 20 minutes, search time 15 minutes.**
- 2. Level A: stranger laid track, 1000 steps, 4 changes of direction, right or obtuse corner. 5 articles, age of the track: 90 minutes, search time 20 minutes including the maximal time of 3 minutes to find the ID article. At the start of the track 1 ID article is placed not visibility in an area of 20X20 m. The baseline of this area is marked to the right and the left.**
- 3. Level B: stranger laid track, 2000 steps, 8 changes of direction that can be acute, right angled or obtuse, 8 articles, age of the track: 180 minutes, search time 45 including the maximal time of 3 minutes to find the ID article. At the start of the track 1 ID article is placed not visibility in an area of 30X30 m. The baseline of this area is marked to the right and the left**

RECOMMENDATIONS



It's important to remember that we must do everything in our power to ensure that the tracks are not only feasible but also carried out in a way that it's fair for all. This why we advise:

- If the soil moisture content is very low, provide track fields with a minimum of vegetation.
- Make sure that the track layers have hardened the articles (+ ID article) for at least 30 minutes before laying the track.
- Ensure that the track layers wear their shoes with which they will lay the track at least 30 minutes before their departure. Check that all the track layers wear the same type of shoes.
- Remind the track layers that they must walk at a normal pace so for a track level A (1000 steps) 14 minutes and for a B level (2000 steps) 28 minutes!

This is rarely the case!



Identification article

See the video

Determinants for a positive evaluation

The dog should search the search area with conviction, be focused and diligent. Leaving the search area slightly is not to blame as long as the dog remains under the control of his handler. The manner of designation the ID article must be convincing. The dog must remain calm until his departure on the track.



START and legs

Determinants for a positive evaluation

Intensive, active, calm tracking. You should feel the dog desires to track, the start has to be taken into confidence and with confidence for a high behavior of intensity The dog handler follows his dog and has to maintain a distance of 10 m even when tracking off leash.

Slight deviations from the track are not not faulty as long as the dog independently follows the continuation of the track.



Changes of direction

Determinants for a positive evaluation

The changes of direction are to be worked out confidentially and with a deep nose. The dog must work by himself! It's not faulty if the dog checks to the left or to the right, without circling or leaving the track line, when the wind direction changes near a corner, as over running a corner by one step is not faulty.

ARTICLES



Determinants for a positive evaluation

Must be convincing, the speed of indication is not a criteria , it must be consistent with the tracking tempo.

Must indicate convincingly in a straight line to the track.

Indication without hesitation, remains calm until being restarted, restart must be done on the side where the article was picked up.

Retrieve/ picking up the articles:

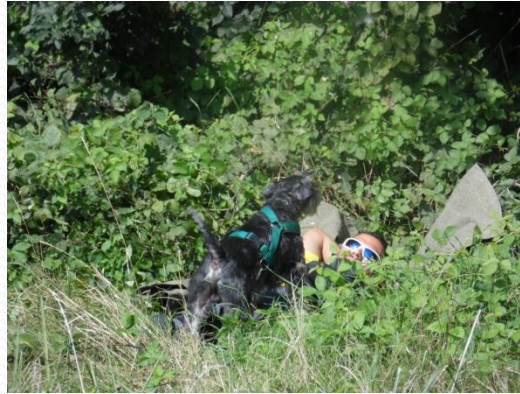
Immediately, must hold the article calm and firmly in his mouth.

Brings directly to the handler in case of retrieve or remains calm until the handler comes to pick up the article, permitted:down,sit,stay.

Remains calm until the restart (at the place where the article is taken)

DISCOVERY AND DESIGNATION OF THE VICTIM

LEVEL A and B



Determinant for a positive evaluation

The DH has to inform the TJ of his alert style when the dog found the victim. The discovery must be clear and meaningful. The dog has to independently, clearly and intensively alert until the DH has reached him after authorization from the JT. For a correct finish of the alert a drive transition has to be shown and contact has to be established to the VP. During the contact period the D should behave calmly at the designed place.



Despite the possible differences between the tracks, it's up to the judge to make the balance with all the elements in his possession for all competitors are on the same level of equality .

Let's not forget that the main purpose of tracking is to find a victim and therefore save a life.

Thank you!