

NOMAD Practice Philosophy, Format, and Guidelines

Philosophy

Practice is an opportunity for handlers and dogs to train specific skills that the handlers feel need polishing, as they develop into smooth-running teams.

The Practice Committee recognizes that NOMAD provides “themed” classes and seminars (usually in fall and winter) that are designed for constructive feedback and encourages all club members to attend these classes for this level of critique. The Committee respects that each handler may have developed her own training plan on how to specifically accomplish her ultimate handling goals; therefore we encourage fellow NOMADers to withhold any constructive feedback unless prearranged or the handler specifically asks for input.

Format

- Practice should always have a pre-identified facilitator.
- The facilitator will communicate with the attendees to best organize the practice groups.
- The facilitator’s responsibility is to develop a training sessions that best meets the needs of all in attendance. A typical practice session will usually include two phases.
- **Phase I** will consist of two to three small training sequences that include a vast range of obstacles.
 - Training sequences will be separated within the arena, utilizing maximum distance between the setups.
 - Two to three dog/handler teams will train simultaneously.
 - Dog/handler teams will have approximately two minutes at each sequence. Handlers may use their two minutes however they want. For example: practicing only one obstacle or working the start line.
 - The facilitator will communicate allocated training times and when to move to the next training sequence.
 - Typically the facilitator will ALSO be training, so it is imperative that the training group nearest to the facilitator help communicate when it is time to rotate.
- **Phase II** will consist of a typical course.
 - The facilitator will provide a course that will allow dog/handler teams to adjust their run based on their skill level or specific training needs.
 - At the completion of the sequence phase of practice, the facilitator will direct the attendees on the course adjustments and number the course.
 - During this phase of practice there is to be ONLY one dog off leash in the arena and all handlers should respect the training team as one would during a trial.

Guidelines

The Practice Committee feels that ALL club members should re-visit our NOMAD practice guidelines as they prepare for a practice season.

- Dogs must be leashed, crated, or in the car when they are not working sequences or running the course.
- Handlers are expected to help with course and sequence set-up, change jump heights (jump bars, tire, a-frame, table height, spread jump), set knocked bars, and physically assist post-practice equipment organization.

- Summer practice typically requires closing tunnels and any pre-mowing equipment moving that Roberta may request.
- Handlers are expected to clean up after their dogs. Carry in, carry out!
- Handlers working two dogs can pay double for two training slots in order to work their dogs equally OR pay for one working position and share that position between their two dogs.

Additional Information

- The first practice of each month will be Novice Dog Days and will offer contact obstacles at low heights for dogs not ready for full-height contacts. Advanced dogs are still welcome and encouraged to come and be role models.
- Channel weaves will be available at every practice.
- The facilitator may practice cost free on the day that she/he facilitates.
- Handlers who have special concerns regarding their dogs' ability to work sequences while other dogs are also working or in the ring (leashed or in crates) should make their concerns known to the other handlers. Special arrangements may be made, however, it is important that everyone recognize it is not feasible to sequencing only one dog at a time due to time constraints.