Capital District Agility Fun Group Rules and Guidelines
Fall 2006 – Winter 2007
October 3, 2006

Overview
The rules and guidelines presented herein are designed to provide a framework for evaluating the performance of each team. In the spirit of providing a training and learning opportunity, the rules were written to provide appropriate guidance while allowing handlers to train their dogs on the courses without dismissal from the ring.

The rules and guidelines of the Capital District Agility Fun Group reflect typical practices of many agility-sanctioning organizations and are not meant to represent any particular one. Flexibility is encouraged. Standard courses should emphasize handling skills while games courses should emphasize strategy skills. Games courses may be selected from those used by AKC, CPE, and other organizations, or may be selected from sources such as The Clean Run Book of Agility Games by Bud Houston, or may be created by CDAFG members. The idea is to challenge the ability of all members and prepare them for a variety of experiences in agility trials.

All rules are subject to change upon agreement of all Team Captains and the CDAFG Coordinator. Rule changes will be communicated to all CDAFG participants in a timely manner.

1.0   Administrative Matters

1.1   Capital District Agility Fun Group Overview

Purpose: To provide training in an agility trial-like environment, specifically, to simulate the competition environment, increase the competitive ability of club members, and have some fun at the same time.

General Description: An agility competition for a designated period, held one evening or day per week, consisting of two runs per session. The training consists of one standard course and one game course each week. Two hours or less is the time goal for each session. Scoring will be on an individual and on a team basis.

1.2   Eligibility
The Capital District Agility Fun Group is open to any member of a participating agility club or training center who has completed a Novice Competition training class or equivalent, or who has entered an agility trial, at any level, in any agility sanctioning organization. Any agility handler who is not a member of a participating agility club or training center may participate in the CDFAG at the invitation of a participating member, provided the non-member meets the eligibility requirements.

Dogs must be at least 15 months old to compete and must be able to perform all obstacles safely. A handler may substitute another dog they own on different days, but the same dog must compete for all of that day's session. Bitches in season and dogs that are aggressive, disabled, or ill should not compete.

A handler may only be on one team. Handler substitutions will be allowed if appropriate for training.

1.3   Competition Level
The Standard Courses will be designed to an Intermediate level (e.g., CPE Level 3, USDAA Advanced, AKC Open) with 14 to 17 obstacles. There will not be separate courses for different levels. If the majority of participants are currently at the Novice level, course designs should be such that these participants can be successful. In the event the preponderance of participants are at the Novice level, courses should be designed to reflect this level of experience; scoring of higher level dogs will be adjusted accordingly.

1.4   Time Frame
The Capital District Agility Fun Group will meet for eight sessions, nominally held one evening or day every week

or two. Each match shall consist of two events: one standard course and one game course. The goal is to keep each week's competition to two hours or less.

1.5   Organization of the CDAFG
Host clubs are those agility or training organizations that will be responsible for facilitating the training within the CDAFG. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- Arranging for a judge and for all required workers;
- Designing the courses to be used during the session;
- Providing course maps, instructions, and scoring sheets;
- Establishing standard and maximum course times;
- Ensuring all equipment is properly put away at the completion of the session; and
- Scoring all runs and providing all scores to the CDAFG Scorekeeper.

Host facilities are those venues where the CDAFG will meet for training. In some cases, host clubs may not have a facility large enough to accommodate the CDAFG and will host training sessions at other host facilities.

The *CDAFG Coordinator* (or his/her designee) is responsible for the following:
- Arranging for times and dates for CDAFG meets;
- Recruiting Club Representatives;
- Maintaining rules of competition;
- Obtaining prizes and awards;
- Collecting registration forms from participants; and
- Coordinating notification of schedule changes and cancellations with the club representatives.

An *Assistant CDAFG Coordinator* should be identified to help administer the CDAFG if necessary.

A *Club Representative* is required for each participating club/organization in the CDAFG. When their club or organization is acting as the Host Club, the Club Representative shall:
- Schedule people for officiating, hospitality, and course building;
- Accumulate all scores and send the weekly results to the *CDAFG Scorekeeper* in a timely manner*;*
- Resolve any problems at the site;
- Ensure breakfast is provided; and
- Coordinate supplies for the events.

In addition, the Club Representative is responsible for providing information to his/her club members, for assigning teams for his/her club members, and for communicating with the club on matters pertaining to the CDAFG.

If small teams are organized within the CDAFG, each team shall select a captain. The *Team Captains* will:

- Organize and guide their teams;
- Identify team members to act as judge, scribe, and timekeeper on assigned weeks; and
- Inform team members of schedule changes and event cancellations.

The *CDAFG Scorekeeper* will:

- Receive the weekly scores from the *CDAFG Coordinator;* and
- Post the accumulated scores at the end of each week, on the announcements-only email list or on an appropriate group site.

The *CDAFG Treasurer* will:

- Collect all registration fees and deposit them in a separate checking account; and
- Disburse funds to host facilities and for CDAFG activities as required.

1.6   Team Organization
It is possible, but not required, that small teams may be formed from within the participants in the CDAFG. These teams will consist of 4 handler/dog pairs. Qualification is the handler, not necessarily the dog, but the dog must be able to do all obstacles safely. To form a team, at least one of the team members must be a current member of one of the participating agility clubs or training centers. Teams may be formed upon registration for the CDAFG. Teams shall consist of no more than one handler competing at the highest level of any agility sanctioning organization and at least one handler on each team must be competing at no higher than the Novice or equivalent level of any agility sanctioning organization. In the event this distribution of experience cannot be met, exceptions may be made with the agreement of all team captains and the CDAFG Coordinator.

Those who register for the CDAFG without indicating team membership will be assigned to a team via a random drawing. All CDAFG participants will be informed of team membership prior to the first CDAFG meeting. Non-members of participating agility clubs or training centers may participate in the CDAFG upon the invitation of a participating member of a participating agility club or training center. The maximum number of teams will be ten unless all Club Representatives and the CDAFG Coordinator agree to more teams. The CDAFG Coordinator, the Assistant CDAFG Coordinator, the CDAFG Scorekeeper, the CDAFG Treasurer, and all Club Representatives shall automatically be allowed to be members of the CDAFG with the automatic right to enter one dog upon payment of the appropriate fees

1.7   Communication
Registration for the CDAFG will be managed by the CDAFG Coordinator. All entries shall be mailed to the CDAFG Coordinator or his/her designee in accordance with the registration instructions.

The participants will communicate via an email list or other system as appropriate. The courses, rules, etc. will be posted on club and other websites as available. The scoring results and special updates will be posted on a special "announcements only" email list.

1.8   Course Preview and Practice
Because one of the purposes of the CDAFG is to promote learning and trialing experience, the courses will be available as soon as possible for review and practice. The courses may be set up for training, except practicing is not allowed at the competition site on the day of the event. A practice jump shall be provided off the regular course.

2.0   Design, Performance, Rules

2.1   Course Design and Performance
The following rules are generic in nature and reflect typical rules for the variety of agility sanctioning organizations in existence. If Club Representatives and the CDAFG Coordinator agree, these rules may be superseded by those of specific agility sanctioning organizations as appropriate. All CDAFG participants shall be informed of the rules in effect at each session at least one week prior to the event.

2.2   Selection of a Judge, Scribe, and Timer
Each session will have a team or teams providing the officiating. They will provide a Judge, Scribe, and Timer. The host club will be responsible for selecting members to meet judging and participation restrictions. Non-participants may fill any worker role if desired.

Anyone may stand as a judge so long as he or she has the confidence of the participants. A judge may show his/her own dog at the session. The restriction is that another entrant must judge the competing judge's entire jump height.

The judge's word on any call is final and only the judge may assess course faults. The timer and scribe may provide opinions to or ask questions of the judge, but the judge has the final say.

2.3   Jumping Standards and Course Times
Each handler may choose the jump height at which his/her dog performs and must continue to jump at this height

throughout the season. This may be any height that the equipment can accommodate and is agreed on by the participants, although it is recommended that the jump heights be limited to 4", 8", 12", 16", 20", and 24" to minimize time required to reset bars. It is not necessary to measure dogs.

There normally will be a Standard Course Time (SCT) and a Maximum Course Time (MCT). (See the Course Time section for details.)

For handicapped handlers, their actual time in the standard course will be reduced by 5 seconds for scoring purposes. For handicapped handlers, appropriate adjustments to required points or allowed time shall be made at the discretion of the judge. Handicapped and veteran dogs are accommodated through the use of handler-selected jump heights and therefore do not receive additional consideration in scoring.

2.4   Agility Obstacles
Below is a list of equipment that may be used for all courses: Substitutions are allowed if equipment is not available. There are no specific requirements for the obstacles that must be used on any course.

> Dogwalk
> A-frame
> Seesaw
> Table
> Pipe tunnels
> Collapsed tunnel (chute)
> Tire
> Weave poles
> Bar jumps
> Panel jump
> Wall
> Double spread jump
> Triple spread jump
> Broad jump

2.5   Obstacle Performance
Safety is of vital importance. All course setups may be adjusted to allow safe performance due to site restrictions. The four-paw safety rule shall be in effect for all courses for all dogs.

Contact Equipment
Safety zones shall be painted in accordance with the rules of any of the major agility organizations. It is preferred that the ramps on the dogwalk and on the A-frame be slatted. In the event that a slatless A-frame is used, the height of the apex shall be adjusted downward. Contact heights shall be consistent with typical agility-sanctioning organizations; in the event of parallel titling programs with different contact heights, the lower height should be used. In no case shall the A-frame apex height exceed 5'6" nor shall the dogwalk be higher than 4 feet.

Contacts shall be judged on the down ramp only unless the dog enters the obstacle from the side, in which case the up contact will be judged. If the dog does not hit the upside contact zone after a side mount, a missed contact fault shall be assessed.

The Four Paw Safety Rule is in effect for all dogs in all Standard courses and may be invoked by the judge for a games course if deemed appropriate. If a dog commits to the obstacle with all four paws, and then leaves the obstacle, the judge shall instruct the handler to go on without a retry. This will result in the assessment of a Failure to Perform (FTP) penalty. If the handler directs the dog to reattempt the obstacle, this will result in the elimination of that handler and dog for that course. This is allowed as a training exercise, but means that handler and dog will not received a score.

Making contact with all four paws on the incorrect ramp will be assessed as a wrong course.

Flyoffs on the seesaw are assessed only if the dog leaves the obstacle in a blatantly unsafe manner or if the

seesaw fails to hit the ground on the downward stroke. This is a judge's call.

There are no specific requirements or limitation for the number of times a contact obstacle may be used in a standard or in a game course.

Table

If used, the dog must jump onto the table and assume a position of the judge's direction, either a down or a sit, for a period of five seconds. If performing a down, both elbows must be touching the table. If the dog leaves the position or leaves the table, the count is restarted when the dog returns to the correct position on the table. Failure to achieve a 5-second count shall be assessed a failure-to-perform fault.

Since some teams do not participate in venues requiring the dog sit on the table, requiring a sit may not be consistent with their training and experience. Therefore, if the handler informs the judge prior to beginning the course that they will be doing a down when a sit is required, the team may do a down instead of a sit and they will not be assessed a failure-to-perform fault for the different performance.

A minimum of two table heights should be available. Dogs jumping 16" or less should perform a table of about 12" or less. Dogs jumping greater than 16 inches should perform a table of between 16" and 24".

Weave poles

For standard courses, weaves shall be limited to 6 poles per set. The maximum number of weaves to be performed on a standard course is 12. There are no limits on the number of poles or sets of poles for games.

No refusals or missed entry penalties shall be assessed. However, the obstacle must be completed in its entirety in order to avoid an FTP penalty. This means that the dog should eventually enter and exit correctly, and weave in and out of each pole.

Missed poles ("pop-outs") will be faulted, but only once per set of weave poles, and only after a correct entry is made. It is up to the discretion of the judge whether missed poles may be corrected at the point of error ("pop out") or if the dog shall re-attempt the weave poles from the beginning. The former is preferred. The judge must announce how poles will be judged at the course briefing.

Back weaving will be assessed a wrong course, and will be judged the same as other agility organizations.

Spread Hurdles

If used, the double and triple may be ascending only.

Hurdles and Jumps

These must have a displaceable bar or plank. Bars may be set in the traditional method with two bars or crossed in the middle to provide a lower jump height.

Broad Jumps

Broad jumps may be used, with the jump distance approximately twice the dog's jump height. Corner poles shall be used to denote the obstacle.

2.6   Course Layout

Course layouts must fit safely within the confines of any building used to hold CDAFG matches. Ring gates or other barriers shall be used to prevent dogs and handlers from interacting with any material stored around the edges of the ring.

Obstacles may be placed no closer than 10 feet apart and no more than 18 feet apart; however, a spacing of 12 to 15 feet is preferred.

In Standard Courses, normally, the first and last obstacle will be the start and finish line, respectively, due to space constraints. This will be used to start and stop the time, once any part of the dog crosses that line. If the dog goes around the last obstacle, the timer is not stopped unless the handler and dog stop working, in which

case the timer will be stopped and a FTP fault will be assessed. If there is a fault on the last obstacle, it is counted as a normal fault.

The table or other obstacle may be used to start and/or stop time in games. Handlers should be encouraged to have their dog do the expected performance on the table in this case.

If practical, host clubs should consider designing courses that meet the requirements of a specific agility sanctioning organization with which the host club is associated. That is, one club may choose to design courses more consistent with AKC rules while another may choose to design courses in line with CPE rules.

While competing, a dog must either be without a collar, or may wear a flat buckle collar with no hanging tags. No leashes or leads are allowed except as noted below.

2.7   Course Handling Standards

Participants in the CDAFG represent a variety of experiences in different venues. Consequently, scoring may differ slightly from week to week based on that experience. Participants should be flexible with this, and judges should be consistent.

To earn a score, no food or toys may be taken onto the course. Food or toys may be taken onto the course if desired for training purposes, but the team will receive an elimination. Handlers shall use all necessary care not to leave food or toys behind after their runs.

Harsh handling, either verbally or physically, is not permitted, and neither is outside assistance in Standard courses. Good-natured team support is expected with the Games courses.

The handler may not touch the dog or obstacles, except for incidental contact, which is viewed as accidental contact that does not benefit the dog's performance. This includes the handler knocking off a pole after the dog has cleared the jump. A bump which results in the dog changing direction towards the correct obstacle, even if accidental, will result in penalty.

A dog may be penalized or eliminated for continually nipping or for showing some other form of aggression towards the handler. If the handler is actively working to stop this behavior in a training manner, the team shall be allowed to continue, but may be eliminated at the discretion of the judge.

A dog should work steadily throughout the course. If the dog ceases to work, is out of control, or is performing obstacles unsafely, the dog and handler shall be dismissed from the ring and eliminated, except as noted below.

No refusals or run-out penalties shall be assessed, unless after having committed all four paws to a contact obstacle, and dismounted the obstacle.

Dogs fouling or leaving the ring will be eliminated and dismissed. Leaving the ring is defined as when the dog is no longer working, and its attention is not on the handler.

Off-course shall be assessed when a dog has committed with all four paws to the incorrect obstacle, wrong end of a contact obstacle, or tunnel, or for performing the obstacle in the wrong direction.

Non-punitive training is allowed in the ring, but will result in elimination. However, the handler is allowed to complete the course. Non-punitive training includes: picking the dog up and gently placing it back on contact equipment, moderate verbal reprimand, and touching the dog to assist it in assuming position on the table. It is preferred that dogs start the course without a lead/leash, and that after successfully starting a course, the handler may put the dog on a leash and lead the dog through the course if the handler deems this necessary to complete the course. Running with a collar and lead or leash is permitted in a "For Exhibition Only" manner, but will result in elimination. Non-punitive training does not include hitting or striking the dog, shouting or swearing, shaking, or throwing anything at or near the dog, or any other action that the judge may interpret as abusive. Should the judge determine such behavior as being inappropriate, the dog will be excused from the ring immediately.

2.8   Course Times and Time Faults
A Standard Course Time (SCT) shall be used as needed. The SCT will be calculated by multiplying the number of obstacles by 3.5 sec. for dogs jumping 16 inches and higher, rounded up to the next second (Example 1: 15 obstacles x 3.5 seconds per obstacle = 52.5, rounded up to 53 seconds. Example 2: 20 obstacles x 3.5 sec. = 70 seconds). Dogs jumping 12 inches and below will receive 10 % additional time added to the SCT, again rounded up to the next second. Time faults are assessed by deducting any full seconds over SCT from the 100 points available. If the pause table is used in a standard course, 5 seconds shall be added to the course time calculated above.

In all courses, a maximum course time (MCT) shall be applied. This is the longest a participant may remain in the ring. In standard courses, the MCT shall be 1.5 times the SCT. In games courses, an MCT consistent with the timing of the game shall be used. The MCT may not exceed 3 minutes for any course.

2.9   Standard Scoring
The team members are scored for the Individual runs using the following fault system. The fault points are deducted from 100.

Missed contact zones	5 faults
Fly-off on see-saw	5 faults
First occurrence of jumping off table prior to end of count	5 faults
Anticipation of end of count on table	5 faults
Displacing any poles or planks from hurdles	5 faults
Knocking part of broad jump over	5 faults
Wrong course	5 faults
Missed weave pole (only once per set)	5 faults
Handler touching dog or obstacle (other than incidental)	5 faults to dismissal
Failure to Perform (FTP) obstacle	15 faults
Failing to correct a missed entry or weave pole	15 faults
Walking over broad jump	15 faults
Refusals or runouts	Not penalized
Dog fouling ring	Dismissal
Harsh or abusive behavior/language	Dismissal
Dog aggression	Dismissal (see Section 2.7)
Dog ceasing to work	Dismissal (see Section 2.7)
Outside assistance	5 faults to dismissal
Food or devices on course	Elimination
Poor sportsmanship	Dismissal

Multiple faults should not be called for any obstacle. Note that elimination does not require the team to leave the course. In the event of a dismissal, the team must leave the course.

Additionally, any full seconds over Standard Course Time (SCT) will also be deducted as time faults in standard courses.

The judge should instruct the scribe on what signals will be used by the judge. One method is as follows:

> One raised open hand for any 5-point fault.
> Two raised open hands for any 15-point fault.
> Crossed arms for Elimination.
> Hands held in the form of a T for No Time.

If small teams are formed within the group, the team score is the accumulated total of the best three of the four team member's individual scores. In the event of a final competition, special scoring may be used. Club scoring shall be done on a weighted basis to account for variations in skill levels among the participants.

2.10   Game Course Scoring

The Game event may have a SCT, but it is anticipated that most runs will have accumulated points. It is the intent to allow various methods to add points to the team's score and the scoring method will be detailed on the course-briefing sheet. For the Game Courses, the best three of four team member's Individual scores are added to the accumulated total, except if it is a team of two or more accumulating a score, then all scores are added to the accumulated total. In the event of a final competition, special scoring may be used.

2.11   Prizes, Awards, and Awards Ceremony

Prizes, awards, and CDAFG commemoratives will be available. Prizes and awards shall be given for team and individual accomplishment. The CDAFG members will propose and agree upon appropriate awards. Awards will be presented after the two events on the last meeting of the CDAFG; some awards may require performance of the last two courses, while others may be determined based on the first seven weeks of the CDAFG. The award ceremony may include a party (e.g., lunch purchased with CDAFG funds, a potluck meal, and so on). Awards and prizes will be purchased with CDAFG membership fees. Awards and prizes should be considered for both famous and infamous accomplishments. Examples might be highest team score, most consistent team, MVP (Most Valuable Puppy), Best Silly Handler Trick, and Most Creative Judging.

2.12   Misconduct

The host facility's Dog Aggression Policy and Handler Policy shall be in effect at all CDAFG competitions. These shall be communicated to the CDAFG participants at each match. Violations of these policies shall be grounds for dismissal of the handler and dog from the grounds for that match, or, in the case of very serious violations, removal from the group.

3.1   Extra Supplies for CDAFG play (arranged by CDAFG Coordinator and Club Representatives)

        2 Whistles
        2 Stopwatches
        Scribe sheets and weekly scoring sheets
        Courses with briefings for the week ((Downloaded from web site)
        Rules and guidelines with scoring system (Downloaded from web site)
        Tape to mark ground boxes.

4.1   CDAFG Fees

The fees for participating in the CDAFG shall be determined by the CDAFG Coordinator and the Club Representatives. These fees will be used to compensate host facilities in the form of training fees for the use of their property and for awards, commemoratives, and other expenses as deemed appropriate by the CDAFG Coordinator and Club Representatives. Unused funds will be returned to the participants. In no case shall any collected fees be retained.

5.1   Just For Fun (JFF) Sanction

The Capital District Agility Fun Group will apply for recognition by the Just For Fun (JFF) agility organization. If accepted by JFF, CDAFG match information and results will be submitted to JFF for consideration. Acceptance of the Capital District Agility Fun Group and its results by JFF is not guaranteed, nor is it a prerequisite to the conduct of the Capital District Agility Fun Group.

Revised October 3, 2006
JRB