

DSA Sanctioned Scent work Competition & Titling Guidebook

What is DSA Scent Detection?

Dog Scouts of America Scent Detection (DSA- SD) refers to a dog that has been trained to locate and indicate a specific useful scent. It should be an uninterrupted performance by the dog and handler without direction from the judge after being given permission to begin the search. The performance of the search should convey an image of a dog and handler having fun, showing enthusiasm and a solid working partnership. The handler is allowed unlimited verbal and visual communication with the dog and should strive to have their dog work on a loose leash throughout the search (off leash is permitted in most tests). Each team is judged on a pass/fail basis with completion time being used for placements if offered. Each qualifying run will earn a ribbon and title certificates will be mailed from DSA upon completion of a title. This program and set of titles is separate from the DSA program/titles the DSA program/titles in which the dog locates scented oils.

Dog Scouts of America's Scent Detection tests

Because DSA believes in helping dogs learn new things and to be more helpful, the organization hosts Scent Detection tests for any dog with a DSA Competition Registration Number. **DSA tests are open to dogs of all breeds/mixes and dogs/handlers with disabilities are welcome.** Any club or group of individuals may apply to host a sanctioned Scent Detection trial after hosting at least 1 Sanctioned "Practice" test. A practice will allow judges, future judges and competitors a chance to go through a test just for practice. Hosts can hold a practice in which fun awards are given (fastest dog, youngest handler, etc.) but it is intended to be similar to a fun match or show-n-go that is offered as a trial-like practice run. Rules may be more relaxed for a practice and some training in the search area may be allowed as outlined by the host.

DSA also offers free Scent Detection training information on their website: www.DogScouts.org

Dogs are used in a myriad of ways using their sense of smell to help humans locate a specific scent or item. The DSA-SD program refers to a dog finding a scent that is hidden or something humans can't detect as easily or as efficiently.

Some of the ways dogs are used in scent work include:

- Arson dogs- trained to locate the presence of and biggest concentration of accelerants after a fire in which arson is suspected as the cause.
- Drug dogs- trained to locate illegal drugs in houses, cars, on people, in luggage, in schools, etc.
- Pest control dogs- these dogs may be trained to find one or more potential pests in homes or businesses such as termites or bed bugs
- "Beagle Brigade"- while these dogs are not always Beagles, the group of Beagles is most well known for protecting the U.S. from potentially invasive or dangerous organic substances by locating people carrying (or luggage containing) meats, fruits and other items not allowed

to be transported into the US.

- Human Remains Detection dogs- These dogs are trained to find the remains of humans that may have gotten lost before rescue was possible or been the victim of a crime or victims of disasters. These dogs have also been used to locate unmarked graves dating as far back as the Civil War! Some can even detect bodies that are deep underwater.
- Disease detection dogs- these dogs are trained to detect the first signs of disease in humans, like cancer, and can help other species as well. Some dogs are trained to detect deadly diseases that affect honey bee hives.
- Service dogs- For people who have extreme allergies to things like smoke or peanuts, these dogs are trained to detect these odors and prevent their person from getting any closer or preferably moving the person away from the source.
- Others- dogs have been trained to find evidence of endangered species (plant and animal), pin hole gas leaks from pipes deep under ground, cell phones in prisons and to detect traces of many other odors to dilute for humans or their man-made sensors to detect.

So basically, if it has any odor at all, a dog can detect it!

For the DSA Scent Detection titles, one or more of the following useful scents may be chosen by the handler (these are described in further detail later in this guidebook):

- Accelerant “half gas” (simulates an arson dog). Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Gun powder ¼ tsp. (simulates a bomb dog). Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Human remains (Simulates a Cadaver SAR dog). Preferred that the alert be passive.
- Dead Termites (simulates a pest alert dog). Alert may be active or passive.
- Dead Bed bugs (simulates a pest alert dog). Alert can be active or passive.
- Mercaptain -natural gas odor (simulates a gas leak detection dog). Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Pseudo drugs (simulates a police K-9) Alert can be active or passive.

Passive alerts may include sit, down, stare and point. Only very light contact may be made, such as a chin rest or very light nose/paw touch. For gun powder, the dog may hold his nose/paw near the item as long as contact is not made.

Active alerts can include barking that is directed at the hiding place, scratching and hard nose bumping.

Disclaimer:

While the training to be certified as one of the dogs listed above may be quite intensive, the goal of the training information on the DSA website is for recreational use only. It is for people who want to teach their dog a fun new skill that is also useful. If you are interested in getting your dog certified to perform one of the jobs listed above, you'll need to find the organization that does that sort of testing and certification (if certification is available). Regardless of the level of training you have put into your dog, please do not attempt to use your dog for a job that requires a certification if you have not gotten your dog officially tested for that line of work. ***The DSA***

tests and titles do not qualify you or your dog for any line of work involving Scent Detection.

General Rules

All persons and dogs present on the grounds of a DSA event are subject to the jurisdiction of DSA and its representatives as outlined in this rulebook. In addition, jurisdiction extends off the grounds and outside event hours, provided that the misconduct is related to the event. This includes misuse of local lodging by persons attending the event. DSA reserves the right to investigate any misconduct and to impose such sanctions and penalties as deemed appropriate.

Equipment:

All equipment and accessories used by the handler should be clean and in good condition.

Collars/Harnesses: Electronic training/collar devices are not allowed on the grounds at a Scent Detection test or practice. This includes electronic training devices worn by the dog such as, shock collars, and bark collars that shock or spray a dog. Dogs may not participate in the test with training devices/collars that would aid loose leash walking or heeling, or inflict punishment on the dog (to include choke collars.) The premium must list if a host organization does not allow other collars or leading/tethering devices.

During the test, flat buckle collars are allowed. These include any collar that fastens at a stationary point rather than tightening. Properly fitted limited-slip/martingale collars are allowed (when tightened fully, the collar is only snug and does not press into the dog's neck muscle.) Properly fitted harnesses are allowed as long as a stationary leash attachment is on the dog's back. No-pull type harnesses are not permitted while testing. All equipment is subject to review by the judge.

Anything that hangs down from the collar, such as collar tags, which could get snagged on something are prohibited. It is recommended that identification for the dog be riveted to or embroidered onto the collar, or attached to the back of the harness in a way that prevents jingling.

Training aids, such as head halters and no-pull harnesses, are permitted on competition grounds, but not during the team's testing. Using the equipment worn by the dog in a way that aides their performance of the test is prohibited.

Leashes: Scent Detection testing may be done on or off leash at the handler's discretion. Long lines may be used unless the judge or test hosts determine that your skills at managing such line poses a safety risk to you, your dog or others. Flexi-leads or any other retractable leads are not

permitted. Leashes should remain loose as much as possible and should not be used to guide the dog (handler may use pointing, verbal cues and body movements to direct their dog to search). During the test, the dog should be on a leash at least 4' long.

Clickers: Spectators and waiting competitors may not use a clicker within earshot of the dog being tested. A clicker may not be carried into the testing area by a competitor.

Yellow Bandannas: Dogs brought to trial sites where other people and dogs are present should be temperamentally sound enough or well managed so as to be safe for all other attendees. Each handler is responsible for managing their dog and its proximity to other dogs in order to keep that dog from feeling the need to react. In an effort to aid this, dogs that need more space may wear a yellow bandanna as a way to communicate this need to others. Even with the bandanna, it is the responsibility of the handler to make sure their dog has the space it needs to feel safe.

Accessories: Accessories for dogs are allowed if they are deemed to be for the wellbeing, comfort, or safety of the dog – for example boots, jackets, sweaters or hair pins. If the Judge deems that the equipment interferes with the search, is a safety concern, or exhibits inappropriate advertising, you may be asked to remove the accessory from the dog before the search begins. Accessories that emit an odor (for example DAP collars) are not permitted in the search area.

Handler's gear: Handlers may wear special clothing or equipment such as a vest, hat, gloves, cargo pants, boots or sunglasses. Handlers clothing and equipment should have a neat and clean appearance. Bags and pouches otherwise known as “bait bags” may not be worn (rewards need to be hidden in a pocket). Wheelchairs and other assistive equipment should have the minimum amount of accessories needed to safely perform the test.

Food/rewards in and around the test area: Attendees may not eat near the testing area and food should not be prepared near the testing area in such a way that it would pose an unnecessary distraction for Novice level dogs. Competitors may have a food reward hidden from view in a pocket during the test as long as it is in a sealed plastic bag or other sealed container and only made visible to the dog (and opened to reward the dog) after the handler has located the hidden scent container. Rewards may not be in the handler's mouth or in a pouch that is attached to the waist or visible to the dog. A toy reward may also be used in the same way- completely hidden from view in a pocket or waistband until after the handler makes the find.

If the food or toy pops out accidentally before it is allowed, the run may be an NQ if the judge felt this significantly affected the performance of the dog. This is to ensure that the dog is performing the exercises as requested based on a solid working relationship with the handler and foundation skills the dog has already learned.

Reward method: Handlers may give food rewards directly to their dog, taking care not to drop any on the floor. Toys may be tossed for the dog to catch. Only clean toys that will not leave anything on the source location may be thrown at source as a reward. Judges may request that

all toys be approved prior to the start of the class. If a handler has any question about their reward, be sure the judge approves it before the class begins.

Control of dog:

Handler is responsible: The handler (even a person temporarily holding the leash) must have the dog safely under control at all times, and must not allow their dog (or their dog's vocalizations) to interfere with another dog's performance. Each handler is responsible for their dog(s) safety and mental well being. Dogs brought to trial sites where other people and dogs are present should be temperamentally sound enough or well managed so as to be safe for all other attendees.

Leashes required: All dogs must remain on a leash no more than 6' in length or in a crate while on the trial grounds unless permitted to be off-leash during testing. A dog that gets loose and causes a significant disruption may be excused from the grounds, even if the dog was competing off-leash when he/she got loose.

No dog areas: Exhibitors must attend the judges briefing for their class and may not have their dog with them. Exhibitors are responsible for providing a way to contain their dog during times when they need to be without their dog. This could be a crate, another person (over 18) to hold their dog and be responsible for that dog's actions while in their care, their car (if weather permits) or some other arrangement. Unless the dog is being judged or is next in line to enter the ring, dogs are not allowed within 50' of the testing area. It is requested that people with Service Dogs observe this rule so as not to distract a dog being tested that needs additional space from other dogs, but it is understood that Federal Law prohibits their Service Dog from accompanying the handler into areas where the general public is allowed. Hosts may establish areas that are off limits to dogs, such as food service areas and bathroom facilities on site.

Dogs that need more space: Due to the "one-dog-at-a-time" nature of the testing and relaxed atmosphere, DSA Scent Detection is a great activity for dogs that may not like other dogs in close proximity. Hosts are encouraged to help handlers that express the need for assistance in getting a dog-free path to and from the testing area. This should be done as expeditiously as possible to avoid undue delays. Handlers of a dog that needs space from other dogs should notify the gate steward and be ready as close as possible for their turn in the ring. Be sure to remind the gate steward (and if possible, the handler of the next dog) to keep the next dog away from the exit of the testing area until you and your dog are away from that area. See the "yellow bandannas" section.

Greetings: The owner/handler has full responsibility to have complete control over the dog (and any children they have brought) while attending a Scent Detection test or practice. Handlers may not allow their dog or child to freely roam, and should not allow their dog or child to approach/greet another dog without the permission of that dog's handler—this is both as a

courtesy and in order to encourage only positive interactions between dogs and safe interactions between dogs and kids.

Fighting/aggression: Any judge or host club/organization has the authority to dismiss a dog/handler from the “test area” or the grounds controlled by the host. A judge may disqualify any dog for fighting or attempting to bite another dog or person. The judge may disqualify a competitor for unsportsmanlike action.

Destructiveness: If the judge observes a dog destroying or damaging equipment, facilities, or supplies used in the test, or engaging in unsafe behavior, the judge will ask the handler to stop that behavior. The exception would be for an active alert that involves scratching and possibly ripping with teeth. The judge must know in advance if the dogs being tested have an active or passive alert as that may affect the hiding spot that is chosen.

Barking: Within reason, dogs may bark or otherwise vocalize while participating in the test or practice. However, if the judge determines that the dog has ceased working and is continually barking in frustration or for other reasons or doing some other disruptive behavior; the judge will give the competitor a warning. If the handler is unable to get the dog to stop the disruptive behavior and/or get back to work within 10 seconds of the warning, the test will be judged as an NQ.

Leaving the working area: If a dog leaves the working area and will not immediately return to the handler the test will be scored as non-qualifying. A handler may request to withdraw themselves from a test for any reason before completion of the allowed time.

Out of control: The Judge must excuse a dog whose behavior in the testing area is so unruly (not under the handler’s control) that it indicates to the Judge it poses a risk to itself, others and/or the test equipment. After 3 excusals for out of control behavior, the dog will be suspended from competition until such time as a Judge deems the dog under control as observed at a practice test.

Other:

Clean Up: Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up anything that comes out of their dog. Trial hosts are responsible for providing means to clean and disinfect surfaces from odors. Failure to responsibly clean up after your dog while at the event will result in excusal from the trial or match without any refunding of entry fees. Dogs that eliminate in the test area will be excused with an NQ. While it is certainly preferable that dogs do not urinate on any belongings or test items, whenever possible the items in a Novice or Intermediate test that have been urinated on by a dog will be removed and/or the area cleaned prior to the next dog being tested. If this is not possible (in grass/dirt) then the hiding location may need to be moved at the judge’s discretion. For dogs above the Intermediate levels, the area will be cleaned as much as possible,

but these dogs should be expected to work around that distraction.

Age/ in-season: Canines under 16 weeks of age may not compete. Bitches in season may compete in a level that will not be used again for another level as long as they go last and are contained at the test facility/grounds in such a way as to not cause a scent distraction to the other dogs (such as; in a vehicle (if safe temperature to do so) well away from the test/warm-up area or in a closed room well away from the test/warm-up area). Handlers of a bitch in season must take every precaution when moving their dog around the test site that they do not cause a distraction to the other working dogs. They must notify the test secretary of their dog's condition upon arrival and before taking their dog out of their vehicle so they can be advised of where they will need to contain their dog. They must also be sure their dog wears "panties" at all times while at the test site. Owners have the option of pulling bitches in season from the trial for a refund.

Vaccinations: All dogs on the grounds of the event must be vaccinated or have titers showing immunity from Distemper, Parvo, Canine Hepatitis and Rabies.

Who may be the exhibitor: Dogs should only be handled by a member of the dog's household or their immediate family members during the test. The dog may be handled by different family members at different tests or practices but must be handled by only one person during each trial. A judge may excuse a dog at any time if he/she believes the handler is unable to control the dog and the judge's decision is final. Children (under 18 years of age) that compete must be able to adhere to the rules set forth in these guidelines without additional aid from an adult. A trial official may insist that an adult take over the handling of a dog outside the trial area if he/she believes the junior handler is unable to control the dog.

By entering any event, the owner and handler of any dog agree to accept the decision of the judge as final.

Exhibitors and Spectators: Exhibitors and spectators are expected to display good behavior and good sportsmanship in and out of the ring. Judges may excuse from their test area any exhibitor in violation of these rules or for conduct that interferes with the event and/or participants and/or the spectators. The trial Secretary or Trial Manager may excuse from the grounds any exhibitor or attendee in violation of these rules or for conduct that interferes with the event and/or participants and/or the spectators.

Handicapped handlers: DSA encourages those with handicaps or debilitating diseases to participate in this sport. Handlers may use a wheelchair, scooter, crutches, cane, walker or other assistive equipment in the search area, but must be able to move around without assistance from others. The judge may modify the exercise to the extent that it assists the handler, provided that no modification may give any advantage to that handler's dog or that changes the dog's portion of the required exercise in any way. Only handlers with a disability that does not allow them to speak may use noise making devices to give their dog directional cues in a manner similar to the

verbal cue of the other handlers. The judge may use a visual means of communication with handlers who are unable to hear. Visually impaired handlers may participate if they are able to locate the specific area their dog is indicating and may be allowed to use light touch to point to the location of the hide as their indication.

Volunteers: Volunteers filling the roles required for the running of a trial or practice must be 18 years old or older and able to handle the responsibility of the duties assigned. Exhibitors may not volunteer to assist with duties involving an area in which they will be tested.

Multiple dogs: If a handler has multiple dogs to enter, a separate entry form is needed for each dog. It is recommended that person's with multiple dogs have their dogs in different levels, but not required. Run order is set by the host and the order in which a person's dogs are run for a particular level may not be changed. Adjustments may be made to allow additional time between the dogs if needed. Handlers will have extra scrutiny placed on them by the judge for their second round regarding any cues or body movements that might be a cue to the dog regarding the location of the hide. The judge also has the discretion to have handlers with multiple dogs have the second dog go last in the class with a new hiding placement that would not aid that dog's search time. If the judge feels the handler helped the dog make the find in any way, the test can be marked as NQ.

No alcohol or illegal drugs: The use or display of alcohol or illegal drugs during DSA events is prohibited. Violators may be excused from the ring or trial/practice site by the Judge, Chairperson, Trial Secretary or any person with authority to enforce the rules of the property. Decision of any of these officials is final. The Chairperson must notify DSA in writing of any Judge who is in violation of this rule.

Participate at your own risk: Competitors entering tests that are not held in completely indoor locations do so with the understanding that wind, rain, snow, heat, humidity levels, etc. can all affect the dog's ability to find the scent. Even while indoors, the air currents of the HVAC or from the movement of individuals within the space can affect the scent. Testing will take place regardless of the weather unless conditions are unsafe.

Test area off-limits: No exhibitor, spectator, or their children and/or dog may be in a testing area, which is currently not in use, for any reason, without the host club or judge's permission. Any such instance will result in an excusal from the balance of the trial without refund of any fees; spectators will be excused from the trial site. Dogs not entered in the test or practice may not use any equipment on site without the host club/organization's permission and the owner signing a liability release form. Allowing a competing dog to sniff the containers to be used or to be in the actual testing area once it is mostly set-up for the trial prior to that dog's test is not allowed and can result in the dog being excused from the test. The judge may opt to have their briefing in or within view of the testing area at the start of the class. Entry of participants (without their dogs) into the test area for familiarization and safety checks prior to the start of the

class is at the judge's discretion.

Once a test area has been prepared for use, ONLY the judge, current competitor and any helpers the judge deems as needed may enter the test area until all testing of the level(s) using that area is complete.

No dogs near test site: In order to accommodate dogs that might need extra space from other dogs, no dogs will be within view or 50' of the testing area while it is in use.

Exhibitor Guidelines

An exhibitor's behavior and attitude while attending a trial should not cause anyone to think badly of their experience of the event. Your attitude should be one worth emulating. DSA Scent Detection trials are family friendly events.

Disclosing the location of the hide: Exhibitors and spectators are prohibited from discussing or communicating in any way regarding the set-up or layout of the area used for the testing, the location of the hide or anything that might provide any advantage to competitors. Violations of this policy can range from verbal warning, to excusal from the site, to suspension of trial privileges for any exhibitor involved.

Double Handling: Persons outside the test area and any volunteers inside the test area are prohibited from any intentional actions designed to positively or negatively affect the performance of the dog being judged. The Trial Secretary or designee may expel from the property any person they reasonably believe is in violation of this rule. The Trial Secretary must be able to articulate what caused this action to be needed. Judges may excuse exhibitors whose dogs they reasonably believe have benefitted from double handling.

Interference: No person may interfere with the judge in any way that affects his/her ability to fairly judge all competitors. No person may interfere with the trial committee members in any way that affects their ability to smoothly host the trial or practice.

Excusal: The judge may excuse any handler who exhibits poor sportsmanship. That person's dog will not be allowed to compete in the trial with a substitute handler. If the competitor has already qualified, their score may be changed to "excused" prior to the completion of the trial day. The Judge's decision in these matters is final. This could occur for:

- a. Handler misconduct- A handler who abuses his/her dog shall be immediately excused. The judge must mark the judge's sheet with "excused" for that handler along with the reason for excusal.
- b. Poor Sportsmanship- Poor sportsmanship that rises to the level of misconduct is unacceptable. The judge must mark the judge's sheet with "excused" for that handler along with the reason for excusal.

Any handler or exhibitor that is excused from the grounds for misconduct must be reported to DSA by the Trial Secretary with a detailed written report of the incident. Depending on the severity of the incident, the handler may be prohibited from competition for a defined period of time and would be notified in writing should that occur.

Accept the judge's decision gracefully: There will be no snatching of ribbons, loud negative comments, or a display of disagreement of the Judge or his/her decisions, either in the ring or out. Exhibitors should not appear confrontational when discussing events or the judging.

Exhibitors clothing should be neat and clean: Exhibitor's apparel shows the respect that they have for the sport, the event and its proceedings. Exhibitors are not required to be in their best dress but what they wear should be neat and clean.

Dogs should be clean: Dogs should be clean and present a neat appearance without tracking dirt or mud into the trial area (weather and trial site conditions permitted). Dogs should be brushed and excess loose hair removed prior to arriving on the grounds. Any accessories worn by the dog should be clean and in good condition.

Help your fellow exhibitors: Everyone was new to the sport at one time. Without giving prohibited information (location of a hide, gossip, etc.), help new competitors learn the sport and set a good example for them to follow. If you are able, lend a hand wherever you see that it is needed and welcomed.

Keep the site clean: Exhibitors should always leave the trial site as clean and tidy or more so than how they found it. Putting on a trial is hard work and no one wants to have to clean up messes at the end of a long day. If you make a mess, clean it up. If you have trash, throw it away properly. If anything comes out of your dog, clean it up. Exhibitors are at the trial because of the hosts. In order to ensure future trials, exhibitors should do whatever they can to assist the host in promoting and running the trials.

No gossip: Exhibitors should not promote or spread rumors or negative comments about dogs or any person.

Registering with DSA, Entry Eligibility

Registration with DSA required: All dogs entering in a Scent Detection test must be registered with DSA prior to the host club's closing date for that trial. If the trial has Day of Show (DOS) entries, a printed email or online registration confirmation from DSA with the assigned DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN), must be presented at the trial. See the Forms section in the rulebook for a DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Form, or the Scent Detection page on the DSA website.

Mailing forms: Initial DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Forms must be mailed with the proper fee payment, or if available, purchased and submitted online. Allow at least 2-3 weeks for the form to reach DSA and to be processed.

Notification of your CRN: DSA CRN numbers are emailed to legible email addresses for all forms, after being processed. If there are any questions regarding filling out DSA CRN forms, contact DSA (See the Contact Us page on the DSA website for Scent Detection and DSA Competition contact info.)

Eligibility for registration: Any healthy dog, 16 weeks or older on the day of the trial, may enter a Scent Detection test or practice—and thus is eligible for a DSA CRN. Mixed-breeds, purebred dogs, deaf and/or blind dogs and dogs missing limbs are equally eligible for entry. Wolves or wolf-hybrids and Coyote hybrids are not eligible for CRN registration. Dogs brought to trial sites where other people and dogs are present should be temperamentally sound enough or well managed so as to be safe for all other attendees.

Updating Your DSA Registration Information:

Send address, phone, email, or other changes to DSA by mail or email.

*** See the Contact Us page on the DSA website to find contact information for the staff handling Scent Detection inquiries. ***

Trial Entries

Eligibility for entry: Dogs that appear to have not recuperated from surgery or medical procedures may not participate in a trial or practice. Dogs that are limping or appear to be in any pain must be excused. If a dog has a permanent limp, a copy of a letter signed by their veterinarian, on official letterhead, clearing the dog for Scent Detection activities may be presented with the entry form as a waiver. The original letter should be brought to each trial/practice by the handler and must be presented for review if requested.

DSA respects a judge's ability to be fair and impartial in determining if a dog/handler have or have not made a find. For this reason, there are no restrictions on who may enter a trial under a specific judge.

All qualifying searches may be obtained under the same judge.

Official Trial or practice: Exhibitors are responsible for ensuring that any DSA Trial or practice trial/test they enter has been approved by DSA. Listing of the trial on the DSA website constitutes approval of the trial and/or practice. Anyone may inform DSA of a non-approved DSA Scent Detection trial or practice.

Official Entry Form: All trial entries must be submitted using the most current official DSA Scent Detection Entry Form. Entries must be complete and legible and must include a valid CRN. Incomplete, unsigned, and/or illegible form and/or forms not accompanied by proper entry fees are invalid and must be refused by the trial secretary. If a person has submitted the proper form and payment to DSA for CRN registration, but has not yet gotten their CRN number, a note may accompany the registration form advising the secretary that the CRN is pending and the date the form/payment was submitted to DSA.

Liability Waiver: A general liability waiver will be a standard part of the entry forms for DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests. It is highly encouraged that organizations and groups holding practice tests also require participants to sign a general liability waiver in order to protect those organizing and hosting the practice, and to encourage participants to be responsible for their own, and their dog's, behavior throughout the practice.

Entry form submission/bounced checks: The entry form must be completed, signed and mailed or otherwise conveyed to the Event Secretary for the event. The host will determine if day of show entries may be accepted and set a specific time for those entries to be collected. The Secretary will create a running order once all entries have been received. If an entry has been accepted by the host group and a payment rejected by the bank, the competitor shall be required to pay a \$40 rejected payment processing fee. Entry is considered complete only after proper entry forms are submitted and full payment is made; if the test fills before that happens, the person loses their spot in the test.

Cut off for entries: A host must state in the premium the acceptance dates for entries, if the show will be pre-entry only or if day of show entries will also be accepted and if the entries will be on a first received basis or random draw. No judge may judge more than 45 dogs per day and a judge or host may set lower daily limits. If the maximum number of entries is received, the host has the option to return the overflow entries or start a wait list.

Wait listed shows: If the host has elected to do a wait list, handlers on that list may be used to fill cancellations of no-shows. An entry may be marked as a "no show" if the handler or owner has not checked in at the designated location at the show site within 15 minutes of the start of that class or level. No show entries forfeit their entry fee and search time and may be replaced with the next available person on the waiting list.

Day of show entries (if offered) may fill any open spots on a first come, first entered basis.

Refunds: If offered, refunds are the responsibility of the trial or practice host.

For additional details, see the "Hosting a trial" section

What class to enter: All dogs, regardless of titles from DSA or other venues, will begin at the Novice level.

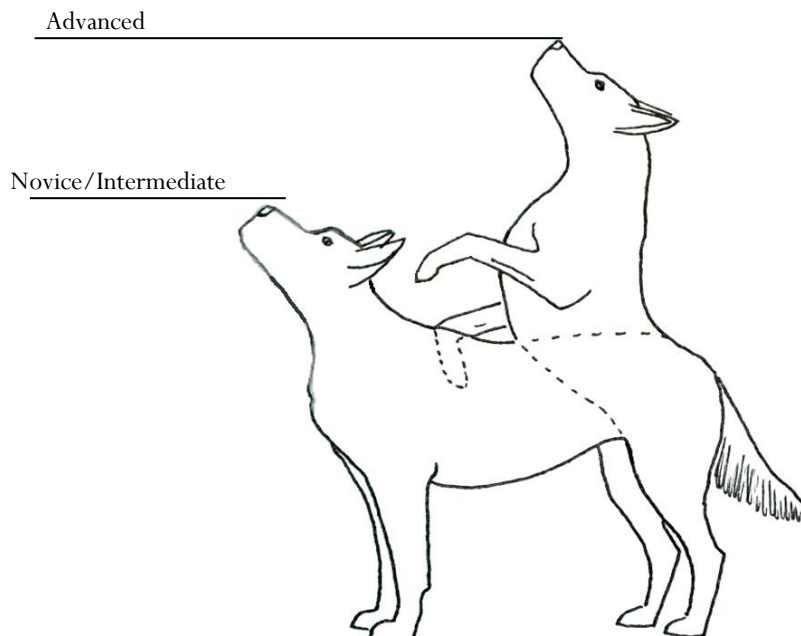
- ❑ Once a dog earns the Novice level title (as recorded by DSA) that dog is eligible to compete in Intermediate. The dog may also continue to enter Novice level to work on their Excellent title.
- ❑ Once a dog has earned the Intermediate level title (as recorded by DSA) that dog is eligible to compete in Advanced. The dog may also continue to enter Novice and/or Intermediate to work on their Excellent level titles.

NOTE: No dog may enter more than 2 levels per trial. No dog may be entered more than once per level.

Alert noted on entry form: The entry form must be marked appropriately to indicate the type of alert your dog will perform in response to the odor and the handler has the duty to be certain the score sheet (prepared by the trial secretary or designee on the day of the test) has the correct info including the correct specific alert (sit, down, scratch, bark, etc.) on it before the test.

Dogs that do not perform their specified alert without help or cues from the handler will be marked as an NQ. The alert signal from the dog should be in response to the odor (the odor is the cue) not in response to the handler. The alert should also be well practiced enough to be consistent. Anything in the handler's actions that might be construed as a cue or signal for the proper alert will cause the score to be an NQ. If the dog does an alert other than the specified alert, the handler may wait to see if the dog will do the proper alert, or may call the dog away from the hide and cue the dog to search again, careful not to cue the proper alert.

Dog's nose reach: To aid the judge in placing the scent in such a way as to be within reach of the dog being tested, the height the dog is able to reach with it's nose needs to be noted on the entry form. Novice and Intermediate dogs will not have the scent hidden higher than the height to dog can reach without their front feet coming off the ground. Advanced level dogs may have the scent hidden up to the height the dog can reach with its nose while standing with its hind legs on the ground.



Arrival at the trial

BE ON TIME: Out of respect for the hard working judge and trial hosts and your fellow competitors who did arrive on time, it is the handler's responsibility to ensure they leave plenty of time to get to the trial site on time for check in. Upon arrival, the exhibitor should check in, get their dog's number and any pertinent information from the secretary and if available, view the order of judging. Handlers will need to present their scent item to the designated person in an orderly fashion. Handlers will need to accommodate the host volunteer in getting through this process. Said volunteer should not need to disrupt their routine and/or other exhibitors to accommodate you. Please arrive as early as possible to allow for processing time. **Any handler not present at the trial site and checked in with the designated person at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their class may be marked as absent and will forfeit their entry fee and search time.** If the trial is wait listed, their spot may be assigned to the next person on the wait list that is present on site. Exhibitors are responsible for knowing the scheduled start time of their class and being ready when called.

Collecting your scent items: The judge or designated representative will verify and collect each person's container and put it into a small brown paper lunch bag marked with the entry number of the participant, the scent being used, the specific alert the dog will give and (for Nov./Int.) the maximum height the dog can reach with its nose without the front feet coming off the ground. For Advanced level dogs, the maximum height the dog can reach with its nose while on its hind feet should be noted. This measurement can be verified by the judge or designated representative if there is a question. If a dog is physically unable to stand on its hind legs due to age or impairment (and a vet has submitted a letter stating such), the Nov./Int. height will be used. The scent containers and appropriate info all need to be collected prior to the start of the test level

Move ups: Owners who move their dogs to the next level of competition prior to receiving their title certificate do so at their own risk. If the owner's records are incorrect, all qualifying searches earned while showing at the higher level shall be invalid.

Ring conflicts: Any exhibitor handling more than 1 dog must notify the ring steward of possible conflicts BEFORE the class starts so that accommodations may be arranged. The Judge may allow the person to show out of order, however, Judges are not required to wait for dogs/handlers that are not ready for their turn. A reasonable amount of time will be allowed for moving a dog that needs space directly from their crate to the testing area without stops.

Substitutions by an owner/handler: An owner or handler may not substitute any dog for a dog already entered. The handler may be changed to another eligible family member if the secretary is notified at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the trial.

Judge's briefing: The judge will hold a short briefing session prior to the start of the class, but

no more than 5 minutes prior to the start time for the class. This will allow the judge to review the rules and/or explain any variables in the search area, state the maximum course time and point out the start line and area boundaries. The Judge will also allow time for questions and will address any concerns the exhibitors may have about the test or area. It is the Judge's discretion if he/she chooses to allow handlers into the testing area (without their dogs) to more closely view the search area. Once the class has begun, any questions must be directed to the stewards. Judges may clarify answers between dogs if needed.

Trial at your own risk: Test areas are intended to simulate a real life area search. Search areas may not be perfect or pristine and there may be hazards unknown to the host or Judge. It is the responsibility of the handler to determine if the area is safe for their dog. No refunds will be issued if the handler chooses to withdraw from the test or trial.

No peeking: Exhibitors may NOT observe other participants runs in any area they will be using for their own test(s). Any exhibitor viewing the testing area while in use (including a recording) prior to the completion of all their runs in that area may be excused from the testing for that class and/or trial.

Description of exercises, tests, courses, etc.

Passes needed to title and order of entry: There are three levels of Scent Detection. A dog must pass 3 Novice level tests before entering at the Intermediate level. Once a dog has earned the Novice level title, it can either continue to compete at the Novice level, or move up to the Intermediate level. A dog must pass 3 Intermediate level tests before entering at the Advanced level. Once a dog has earned the Intermediate level title, it can continue to compete at the Novice or Intermediate level, or move up to the Advanced level. A dog must pass 3 Advanced level tests before earning the Advanced title. Once the Advanced title is earned, the dog may compete in any or all of the Scent Detection levels at future tests.

Testing area:

- Novice level- indoors only (container search and interior search)
- Intermediate level- outdoors only (area search and vehicle search)
- Advanced level- (adv level container, interior, exterior & vehicle)

The testing area may be indoors or outdoors (based on level and areas available). It must have sufficient hiding places at different levels/heights to test the dog's skills and be safe for dogs of all sizes and handlers of all mobility levels. Hiding places must be large enough to accommodate a standard scent tin in such a way as to hide this item from the view of the dog and handler. The dog should not be able move something to uncover the hidden container as a way to visually verify that he/she found it. Drawers, closed boxes, opaque containers, zipped suitcases, behind

immovable objects, etc. are examples of good hiding places. With the exception of the container search, the hiding places/objects used to hide the scent tin should blend in and not look out of place in the surroundings. Hosts will need to ensure they have enough containers and hiding places for the trial.

General Search Area: It is preferred that the area(s) used for general searches be equivalent to a large cluttered room of a house or office (between 12' x 12' or 144 sq ft. and 40' x 40' or 1600 sq ft). Areas with excessive distractions are discouraged for Novice and Intermediate, and the entire competition area must be safe for participants. Ring gates and/or fenced areas are encouraged as a safety measure for outdoor areas and to delineate the test area from the spectator areas and the competitor waiting areas. Search areas may be the combination of two adjoining rooms if more square footage is needed.

Container Search Area: It is preferred if the area is set-up for the container search on a clean floor, in a low distraction environment, with a series of 20 normal household containers which can be arranged in any pattern (lines, circle, square, etc.). This pattern should be about 30' across or in diameter or the equivalent. Examples of acceptable containers include, but are not limited to, boxes, plastic bins with holes, zippered cloth sided suitcases, zippered cloth or leather shoulder bags and briefcases. Items should be at least 6" x 6" x 6" (or 216 cu inches) and no larger than 24" x 18" x 16" (or 6912 cubic inches) such as a standard plastic storage bin. Dogs may walk on or paw at a container, but the Judge may ask the handler to stop a dog that they feel is compromising the equipment or exhibiting an aggressive alert. Replacement containers of the same size and shape as the ones being used for the testing should be available in case of damage, fouling or other contamination.

Vehicle Search: Vehicle search will consist of three to seven vehicles. At the higher levels, some vehicles may be modes of transportation other than automobiles (motorcycles, trailers, semi-trucks, boats, ski-doo's, etc.). Vehicles must be set in a scattered pattern and may face front, back, or sideways. All vehicles must be at least 4 to 6 feet apart. Any area except the interior may be utilized on the vehicle with the height of the hides taking the height of the dog into account.

Outdoor Search: This can be any area that is outside or under a cover at least 8' high and open on at least 3 sides and has sufficient hiding places at various heights. Dogs will be required to search in all weather conditions (if unsafe, the test will be postponed or cancelled). The Judge may determine that the area is not safe for off-leash searches or for a certain dog to be tested off-leash. The area will be identified by visual markers or barriers. Hides must be within the designated area, but handlers may choose to briefly move outside the designated area as part of their search pattern. Maximum search time will be determined by factors that include, but are not limited to, weather conditions, size of the area, difficulty and distractions. Grass in areas used for testing or areas commonly crossed by competitors should be mowed short.

Test area/containers: The judges will always strive to present test areas that are safe for the

average, under-control dog to participate in. However, due to the variability of hiding locations and possible set-ups, and the variability of canine behavior, it would be impossible to predict all outcomes. The dog's handler is responsible for the safety of, and control of, their individual dog. If there is an item or action within the test/practice's exercises that would present a safety issue due to the behavior or lack of control of that particular dog, the handler must not allow the dog to perform that task, or must stop the dog from continuing any unsafe behavior. The leash or voice controls may be used to prevent a dog from doing something that poses a risk to himself or others, but it cannot be used as a correction, only prevention/management.

Areas used for levels: Variation in the competition area contributes to the varied contexts in which the dog-handler team should be able to perform the test. It is expected that different areas will be used for Novice vs. Intermediate/Advanced, but all test areas should be on the same property and readily accessible.

USEFUL SCENTS FOR ALL LEVELS DESCRIBED:

- Accelerant (arson dog)- This can be made by allowing an amount of gasoline to evaporate until it is half of the original volume. The result is called "1/2 gas". So for example, if 1 cup of gas is left to evaporate, it is ready when there is only 1/2 cup remaining. Once it reaches the proper state, it can be stored in an airtight container. When using it for practice, wet a cotton ball or small piece of cloth with the 1/2 gas and let it air dry. If you indicate on your entry form that your dog is trained to detect gasoline, the judge should be able to verify the odor on your sample with a quick sniff. Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Gun powder (bomb dog)- Gun powder can be obtained from most sporting goods stores that sell ammunition. The sample (1/4 tsp.) must be taken from the original container in front of the judge or an approved representative and placed in an approved container on the day of the test. Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Cadaver (SAR dog)- Obtaining suitable material for this may be more difficult, but if you know the right people and can document where the sample was obtained or otherwise help the judge determine that the sample is legal Human Remains or 1/4 tsp. pseudo remains, this scent may be used. Use of your own scent or that of people living in your home, (such as from a removed growth or body part) is discouraged. Cremains/remains may be used if the source can be verified. It must be human, not animal cremains/remains. Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert. Use latex or non-latex gloves when handling. Extracted teeth, small bones like vertebra, blood sample on cloth/fabric, hair/fingernail clippings, and a piece of clothing from decomposed human remains are all acceptable.
- Termites- In some areas of the country, locating these is as easy as turning over a log in the woods. Pest control companies may also be a source of dead termites. Just be sure they were not killed with chemicals or pesticides that could harm your dog. Using live termites is not allowed due to the risk of escape, no matter how small said risk may be. Most hosts would want to be assured that an accident would not affect the well-being of their structure. The

termites must be large enough and in such condition that they can be identified as termites. Alert may be active or passive.

- Bed bugs- Pest control companies may be your best source for these. Be sure they were not killed by chemicals/pesticides. Using live bed bugs is not allowed due to the risk of escape, no matter how small said risk may be. Most hosts would want to be assured that an accident would not affect their well-being and that of their guests. The bed bugs must be adults large enough and in such condition that they can be identified as bed bugs without needing magnification. Alert can be active or passive.
- Mercaptain (natural gas odor)- If you go to your local gas company, odds are good they will have scratch and sniff cards with a mercaptain odor on them. Mercaptain itself is harmless and is added to odorless natural gas as an identifiable scent. Using natural gas is not allowed! The judge or designated representative should be able to identify the mercaptain with a quick sniff. Dogs using this scent must do a passive alert.
- Pseudo drugs (police K-9)- These are very expensive, but can be purchased on-line. A receipt and original packaging will need to be shown to the judge or designated representative. The sample (1/4 tsp.) used for the test will need to be removed from the original packaging in front of the judge or designated representative on the day of the test and placed in an approved container. For obvious reasons real drugs, no matter how tiny the amount will not be allowed and could cause you to be arrested, so don't try it. If you do choose to use/carry pseudo drugs, it is recommended that you keep it in the original packaging and keep the receipt with it just in case you are stopped by police who may have a reason to search your vehicle (such as impoundment after an accident or during a traffic stop). A drug dog will indicate that what you have is real. So you can hope the officer has a field test kit to show otherwise or that he/she believes your proof and reason for having/transporting such an item. Any liability or trouble with the law you may encounter if you choose to use a pseudo drug scent is your responsibility. If you are worried about this risk, choose a different scent.

NOT allowed:

While we recognize fruit and meat inspection dogs as valuable assets, having the dog search for food items will not be allowed on the test. At the Advanced level, a meat product may be used as a distraction scent. There are many other odors dogs may be trained to detect, but are excluded due to the difficulty in obtaining or verifying the scent or because the response from the dog is opposite what is desired (as would be the case of a service dog trained to keep their person away from a certain odor). Cell phones would be easy to obtain, but may also have other odors on them, so they have been excluded.

Containers and proof of content

Each competitor will need to provide their own scent, an approved container and proof of content or purchase. Approved containers include clean (not used for drugs) small pill bottles or film canisters and small sterilized baby food jars. The container must have a means of allowing the scent to escape without risk of the contents spilling, even if the container is jostled or accidentally dropped. If desired and to prevent risk of spilling, the contents inside the approved container may

be placed inside a cloth pouch, on a cotton ball or be a 2" x 2" piece of cloth that has absorbed the scent (can be used in lieu of the ¼ tsp. listed above). The scent container may NOT be used as the dog's reward item. When hidden for the test, the container will not be visible to the dog or handler.

Alerts:

Passive alerts may include sit, down, stare and point. Only very light contact may be made, such as a chin rest or very light nose/paw touch. For gun powder, the dog may hold his nose/paw near the item as long as contact is not made.

Active alerts can include barking that is directed at the hiding place, scratching and hard nose bumping.

The alert is not cued by the handler. However, after the dog gives the alert behavior, the handler may ask the dog to repeat it, or gently try to get the dog to move away to be certain the dog has found the location.

Alert noted on entry form: The entry form must be marked appropriately to indicate the type of alert your dog will perform and the handler has the duty to be certain the bag with his/her scent (prepared by the trial secretary or designee on the day of the test) has all the correct info including the correct specific alert (sit, down, scratch, bark, etc.) on it before the test.

Dogs that are marked as a "passive" alert, or that use a scent that requires a passive alert, will not pass if the dog does an active alert.

Arrive on time:

Please arrive at the test location at least 1 hour in advance of your test time to allow the judge or designated representative enough time to collect the needed information. Any competitor that has not turned in their container/scent by the designated time for their level will be marked absent. If they arrive late, it is at the judge's discretion whether or not the competitor may still compete. If the competitor arrives after the judge's briefing for their level has begun, the competitor may not compete in that level/test.

After the alert:

Once the dog indicates, the handler's body language and tone (if speaking) should not change for a moment. If the handler has been pointing and encouraging, they should continue to do so as if they haven't seen the dog. If the handler has been quiet and relatively still, they should remain that way for a moment. The Judge wants to see that the dog commits to the alert and that the dog is 100% certain before the handler goes in to try to locate the scent item. If the handler chooses to encourage the alert (mostly in the case of an active alert) they may do so for a few moments (within reason). It should be very clear by the dog's alert exactly where the scent article is located. The handler will need to verbalize the detailed location or point to the hiding spot without touching. An example would be "Behind the wheel in the 4 o'clock position" or "Behind the dictionary" (if using a book shelf). Saying "behind the wheel" or "on the second shelf" would not be detailed enough. If the dog truly understands his job and how to alert, even a non-dog person should be able to tell exactly where the item is hidden.

TEST DESCRIPTIONS:

NOVICE TEST

At the novice level, the dog will need to find a useful scent, hidden out of sight (without the handler's knowledge of its location), somewhere in a location with potential hiding places. No distraction odors are added and unintentional distraction odors should be minimized as much as possible. The dog must perform a clear passive or active alert in a way that allows the handler to locate the hidden scent. The handler may carry a reward item hidden on their person, but may only produce it after they have located the hidden target.

For the Novice test, a location that is at least 12' x 12' and no more than 40' x 40' will be used. This area will have various possible hiding places but fewer than for the upper level tests. The hiding locations should not have previously been used (within 1 month of the trial) for training or as hiding places for any of the approved scents. These hiding locations should be a mix of various sizes and shapes of items that can include boxes, plastic containers, suitcases/bags, small chests of drawers, file cabinets, etc. Scent may be hidden anywhere from ground level to the maximum height the dog can reach with its nose without the front feet coming off the ground. Boxes may be stacked to add height, but nothing heavier than an empty cardboard box or harder than a cloth duffle bag should be stacked. Each competitor's scent will be placed inside a container (selected by the judge or helper) and that container will be waiting - away from the test area. Containers may be marked with the competitor number and scent in such a way so that the marking can be removed during the test (like with a post-it note) or in a way that is only visible if the container is opened). Before entering the test area, that competitor's container will get hidden within the test area and the previous competitor's container gets removed. These containers should blend in with the area and not stand out as unusual for the area. Cardboard boxes are easiest, but the area should have multiple boxes of similar size/shape in the testing area. Bags, suitcases, drawers for plastic storage bins, etc would all work well.

When the judge is ready, the handler will enter the test area and signal the dog to search. Within 5 minutes, the dog needs to perform a clear alert that matches the alert the handler stated on the entry form. If there is any doubt about whether or not the dog performed the behavior clearly, the judge can indicate with a shake or nod of the head to the handler. It is up to the handler to be sure the judge accepts the alert before proceeding to find the hidden container. Once the handler locates the hidden container, the handler may reward the dog. When the handler/dog are finished, the judge or a designated representative will remove the container used to hide the jar/bottle (marking it in some way to identify the type of scent it held) and then hide the next scent/container.

Timing for placements:

Dog may be timed to determine placements if desired. Time starts when the dog crosses a designated start line and stops when the handler verbally calls “stop” or “time” after finding the container their dog alerted to. If a team exceeds the 5 minute allowance, the timer will call “Time!” loudly enough for the judge to hear and the judge will excuse the competitor.

Non-Qualifying:

- If the dog exceeds the 5 min. allowed or stops working for over 20 consecutive seconds
- Failure to perform the indication behavior the handler noted on the entry form
- Handler cueing the dog to do the alert behavior
- Performing the indication behavior on the wrong container/handler not able to locate scent on first try
- Failure to locate the target odor
- The handler helps the dog make the find
- Any harsh or abusive handling or verbalizations are used during the test (the dog’s body language may be used to determine if something was too harsh for that dog)

INTERMEDIATE TEST

In the intermediate level, the dog will need to find a useful scent, hidden out of sight (without the handler’s knowledge of its location) somewhere in a normal assortment of potential hiding places. The only other distraction scents will be the lingering odors of the other items used for the novice dogs. The dog needs to perform a clear alert that matches the alert they stated the dog would do and the handler needs to locate the hidden container in the specific area indicated by the dog. The handler may carry a reward item hidden on their person, but may only produce it after they have located the hidden target.

For the Intermediate level, all the containers used for Novice level (now empty) get added to the other normal contents of the testing space. The judge or designated representative will need to keep track of which containers were used for which scent. Containers that were used at the Novice level for the same scent as the dog being tested at this level need to be removed so there is no risk of a faint lingering odor of the dog’s target scent being detected. The containers should be marked after they are used for Novice level to indicate which scent they held. The scent may be hidden anywhere from ground level to the maximum height the dog can reach with its nose without the front feet needing to come off the ground.

After the scent item is hidden, the handler will enter the test area and signal the dog to search. Within 5 minutes of the start of the testing, the dog needs to perform a clear alert that matches the alert they stated on the entry form and the handler needs to locate the hidden scent jar/bottle in the specific area indicated by the dog. Once that is accomplished, the handler may reward their dog. When the handler/dog are finished, the tester will hide the next scent and repeat the

process. Be sure the Novice containers are added/removed as needed based on the target scent being used by the next competitor. The same hiding place may be used for each type of scent. So for example, all the gun powder scent will get hidden in the chest of drawers, all the accelerants will get hidden in the box in the corner, etc. This is why it is critical that competitors not discuss the hiding place with competitors that have not yet gone in for their test at the Intermediate or Advanced level. If the same hiding place for each type of scent is not used, the containers previously used for that scent must be removed.

Non-Qualifying:

- If the dog exceeds the 5 min. allowed or stops working for over 20 consecutive seconds
- Failure to perform the indication behavior the handler noted on the entry form
- Handler cueing the dog to do the alert behavior
- Performing the indication behavior on the wrong container/handler not able to locate scent on first try
- Failure to locate the target odor
- The handler helps the dog make the find
- Any harsh or abusive handling or verbalizations are used during the test (the dog's body language may be used to determine if something was too harsh for that dog)

ADVANCED TEST

At the advanced level, the dog will need to find a useful scent, hidden out of sight (without the handler's knowledge of its location), somewhere in a normal assortment of potential hiding places. To add to the challenge, there will also be a hidden food item and a hidden tennis ball or rubber toy somewhere in the same search area. If the Intermediate search area is used, there will likely be active or lingering odors from other dog's items as well. If the test is performed in another location, the empty containers from the previous tests should be added to the search area. The dog must perform the pre-designated specific passive or active alert in a clear way that allows the handler to locate the hidden scent. The handler may carry a reward item hidden on their person, but may only produce it after they have located the hidden target.

For the Advanced Level, all the containers used for Novice and intermediate level remain in or are added to the space along with the other normal contents of the testing space. In addition to hiding the target odor, the judge or helper will also hide one of the other acceptable odors as a distraction. The judge or helper will also hide ONE tempting meat based food item such as an open jar of meat-based baby food, a cooked hamburger patty or hotdog, open baggie of smelly high value dog treats, etc. and ONE tennis ball or rubber toy in different areas of the search space. These items should not be accessible to the dog (in a closed drawer or zipped bag, etc.) The food and toy will remain in the same location for each dog. The handler may verbally cue the dog to "leave-it" (with the word or sound of their choice) if they suspect the dog is going for a distraction odor. The verbal cue should not have a threatening tone or an "or else!" tone. A

non-contact visual cue may be used for deaf dogs. A quick, light tap may be used for deaf/blind dogs. The handler may not physically move or block the dog from the distractions. Due to potential allergies, an open jar of peanut butter may not be used as a distraction scent.

The first handler will enter the test area and signal the dog to search. Within 5 minutes, the dog needs to perform a clear alert that matches the alert they stated the dog would do and the handler needs to locate the hidden jar/bottle in the specific area indicated by the dog. Once that is accomplished, the handler may reward their dog. When the handler/dog are finished, the judge or helper will hide the target odor and change the distraction scent if needed by removing the container holding the previous distraction scent. The same hiding place will be used for each type of scent, but it may be a different location than what was used in the Intermediate test if handlers are competing in both levels. If changing the location, it's best to remove the previously used container to reduce false alerts on any lingering odor.

Non-Qualifying-

- The dog may sniff the locations of the distraction items, but if the dog performs his/her alert on or persists in attempts to get to a distraction item, the test is scored as an NQ. The judge may excuse the team in order to preserve the integrity of the hiding place of the distraction from damage. The distractions and the target odors need to be far enough apart that it would be clear which the dog is indicating.
- After 1 warning from the judge about the tone, handler continues to use an implied threat when cueing the dog to ignore a distraction.
- Handler has to physically stop the dog from trying to get a distraction item or uses body blocking to discourage the dog from getting to a distraction.
- If the dog exceeds the time allowed or stops working for over 20 consecutive seconds
- Failure to perform the indication behavior the handler noted on the entry form
- Performing the indication behavior on the wrong container/handler not able to locate scent on first try
- Failure to locate the target odor
- The handler helps the dog make the find
- Any harsh or abusive handling or verbalizations are used during the test (the dog's body language may be used to determine if something was too harsh for that dog)

Competition and Titling

Titles are awarded only in DSA-sanctioned trials. Scent Detection practice runs may be held either as “just for fun” without any pass/fail rating, or using some fun scoring rules, like “fastest time” with optional placements and prizes. Passing a practice test does not count toward a title.

Titles earned shall be placed after the dog's name.

Titles

Novice: DSA-SD/N

Earned by a dog that has passed 3 Novice level tests in DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests

Novice Excellent: DSA-SD/NX

Earned by a dog that has passed 30 Novice level tests in DSA sanctioned Scent Detection Tests (including the first three earned for the Novice title)

Intermediate: DSA-SD/I

Earned by a dog that has passed 3 Intermediate level tests in DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests

Intermediate Excellent: DSA-SD/IX

Earned by a dog that has passed 30 Intermediate level tests in DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests (including the first three earned for the Intermediate title)

Advanced: DSA-SD/A

Earned by a dog that has passed 3 Advanced level tests in DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests

Advanced Excellent: DSA-SD/AX

Earned by a dog that has passed 30 Advanced level tests in DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection tests (including the first three earned for the Advance title)

Note about DSA titles: If a dog has multiple titles from DSA competitions, they should be listed as such DSA- PDX, SD/AX, IMPROV-NCH, DX

Hosting a Scent Detection Trial/Practice

Practice tests can be offered by any group after contacting the Dog Scouts of America Scent Detection contact person for approval (see the Contact Us page on the DSA website for current contact info). If desired, dogs can compete for “fastest time” per level and placements given but passing the test will not be recorded by DSA for titling.

After hosting at least 1 practice for Scent Detection, any group can apply to Dog Scouts of America to hold a sanctioned trial. Once approved, the organizing group (“host”) will need to follow the below guidelines for their trial. Fees will be paid to Dog Scouts of America from the host.

Photos submitted with application: Photos of the testing area must be sent to DSA for approval of the space when applying for trial hosting. The judge should also approve of the potential locations to be used. If using a canine or equine training center, the test should take place in such a way as to include areas such as the office/reception area, kitchen, bathrooms, storage areas, etc. to provide for additional hiding places. Areas/property not owned by the test host may be used if the “Property Use waiver” is signed by the property owner. This could apply to locations such as warehouses, barns, offices, etc. The location and conditions of the testing site must be stated in the premium for each level (completely indoor, climate controlled or not, under cover but exposed on X number of sides or outdoor/no cover).

Scheduling the trial: If additional events will be taking place the same day as the trial in the same area used for the testing, the Scent Detection testing must occur prior to the other event(s) in that ring or area. Clubs may use their best judgment with practice tests as to the order/area of each activity.

Mileage conflicts: DSA will not license two events with the same classes on the same day to be held within 100 miles of each other. Distance is calculated by the shortest driving route, not straight line. Scheduling an event is 1st come, first reserved. Reservations for trial dates may not be made more than 1 year prior to the desired date. Only complete applications with proper payment are considered for reservation of a specific date.

Checking availability of date: Any person may contact the DSA Scent Detection director or designated person by phone, email or written request to check on the availability of a certain date. Requests must include the date, classes being considered and the event site city/state.

Deadline for applications: Complete applications and appropriate fees to host a trial or practice must be RECEIVED by the DSA Scent Detection department no later than the 1st of the month that is 2 months prior to the trial/test. Incomplete or illegible applications or applications without the proper fees are not considered complete and may be rejected if not corrected by the deadline.

Month of trial/test:	App. received by:
January	November 1st
February	December 1st
March	January 1 st

April	February 1 st
May	March 1 st
June	April 1 st
July	May 1 st
August	June 1 st
September	July 1 st
October	August 1 st
November	September 1 st
December	October 1 st

Fees:

\$25 per class/level offered (paid with application) plus \$1.50 per entry (paid with submission of Trial/practice forms after completion of the event.

Premium List: The host must make a premium list available to prospective entrants at least 8 weeks prior to the event date. The Premium List will list a limitation for the number of handler/dog teams per trial (45). Part of the Premium will be the DSA Scent Detection test entry form, which must include a liability waiver all entrants will be required to sign.

Exhibitors need to contact the host club for any questions regarding the trial, do not contact DSA. The premium must have the chairperson and the trial secretary email addresses and phone numbers, and the trial secretary's mailing address.

Emergency Veterinary Clinic and Emergency Medical Assistance should be listed in the premium and be readily available onsite at the trial. ** A sample premium that can be edited to fit your trial can be found on the DSA website in the Scent Detection area.*

Confirmation: Entry confirmation must be sent to the participating exhibitors. Final confirmations must be emailed or postmarked at least 7 days prior to the first day of the trial. The confirmation must include check-in start/end time for each level, and the dog's entry information. Additional information may be included. **Exhibitors must verify their entry information and report any discrepancies to the trial secretary prior to the trial. The show secretary is not obligated to make changes at the trial if it is the exhibitor's error.**

Opening/Closing date: The host must clearly state in the premium the opening date and closing date/time of entry form acceptance. A discount may be offered for pre-entry. Any entry forms arriving after the cut off date/time must either be rejected or considered a “day of trial entry” (if the host is accepting day of trial entries).

Day of trial entries: If the host chooses to accept day of trial entries, a specific time frame with a specified cut off time must be stated in the premium for the acceptance of these entries. No new entry forms may be taken within 15 minutes of the start of the first search. A host may choose to delay the start of the trial, for a reasonable amount of time, to allow more time for day of trial entries in the event of bad weather or other emergency conditions.

Entry limits: Entries may be accepted on a first received basis or may be random draw, but the method must be stated in the premium. Entries are limited to a maximum total of 45 dogs per judge per day. Hosts or judges may limit the judging to no less than 20 dogs per day. Entry limits may not be put on any individual class, level or division.

Exceeding entry limits: If more than the stated limit of dogs is reached, the club may either bring in an additional judge to judge an entire class or classes or the host may choose to start a “wait list” in case of cancellations or no shows. An entry may be marked as a “no show” if the handler or owner has not checked in at the designated location within 15 minutes of the start of that class or level. No show entries forfeit their entry fee and search time and may be replaced with the next person on the waiting list.

Refusing an Entry:

A host may refuse the entry of an otherwise eligible dog and/or handler only with good reason. Clubs that choose not to accept such an entry must notify the owner/handler in writing with their reason why the entry(s) will not be accepted by the host and must immediately forward a copy to the DSA Scent Detection director. DSA reserves the right to overturn the refusal of the entry if just cause is not found for the refusal but will not get involved in disputes between the host and owner/handler.

Classes to offer: Hosts may choose from the following options when deciding what classes to offer in their trial or practice. A host is encouraged to hold a practice test at least once for each new level they chose to offer to be sure they have what they need to hold the trial and that volunteers understand their roles.

- Novice trial
- Novice, Intermediate trial
- Novice Intermediate and Advanced trial
- Advanced, Elite and Masters trial
- All levels

Awards and Ribbons: The host club is required to award each qualifying score with a qualifying ribbon or rosette. The Qualifying ribbon or rosette shall be red. Each ribbon or rosette shall have a card attached to record score information. Each Qualifying ribbon or rosette shall be printed with the following (order may differ, Logo must be first):

DSA Logo, Name of the host club, Scent Detection Test (or practice, if ribbons are awarded at a practice run), “Qualifying Score”, City and State of Host club or organization

Other awards may be given, which may or may not be included in the Premium List. These include but are not limited to, ribbons or rosettes indicating finishing a title, special prizes (leashes, toys, dog treats, etc), special awards – non-trophy (youngest handler, fastest time, etc). If an award is given that could be considered a Trophy (e.g.: statue, pewter, crystal, etc), that award should be listed in the Premium List. Cash awards, gift certificates and gift cards are not permitted. Awards or prizes should not be given that are inconsistent with the positive training approaches of DSA.

Judge Changes: If the published judge cancels their assignment prior to the day of the event, the host must make every reasonable effort to notify the pre-entered exhibitors of the judge change and offer refunds to any entrant who submits a written request. If a replacement judge is not available, the trial will need to be cancelled and refunds issued. On the day of the event, if a judge is unable to start or complete his/her assignment, the event chairperson must appoint an emergency replacement judge. If none is available, the trial will need to be cancelled. Issuing partial or full refunds or applying entry fees to a new trial is at the discretion of the host.

Show committee and officials

The following officials are required at each Scent Detection trial:

Judge: The Judge shall be chosen from the approved DSA-sanctioned Scent Detection Judges list. Each judge is required to judge all competitors in the class they are assigned to judge.

The Judge's duties are as follows:

Designing/designating test areas appropriate to each level

Select and inspect equipment/containers to be used following requirements for safety

Instruct timer about timing and maximum test times

Briefing exhibitors prior to each class

Recording final test results in the Official Judge's book, verify all test results are correct and sign the book before awards are handed out.

All decisions of the judge are final.

A Judge may enter his/her own dogs if another approved judge is available to officiate their test(s), and the hiding place is not known to the handler. The judge would compete after all other competitors have run in the level. Their own scent must be turned in at the same time as all other competitors in that level and be checked by the alternate judge.

The Chairperson is responsible for planning and conducting the event in accordance with the rules. This person may not also be the Trial Secretary or Judge except in emergency situations.

Duties include but are not limited to:

- Event committee- The Chairperson may appoint additional committee members to assist with delegated duties.
- Trial site and equipment- The Chairperson is responsible for procuring a suitable trial site, including such duties as contracts and permits that may be required and ensuring the site and equipment meet the requirements as outlined in the rulebook.
- Hiring Judges- The Chairperson must ensure that the Judge is properly certified by DSA and in good standing. The Judge must agree to judge the trial or practice before he/she may be listed on the application sent to DSA.
- Submitting the proper forms and fees to DSA for trial sanctioning. The Chairperson will be notified if/when the application is approved and the listing of the trial or practice on the DSA website constitutes approval of the trial or practice.
- Complaints and issues- The Chairperson is the official contact person for complaints or infractions. The Chairperson is also the back up for the Show Secretary in an emergency situation.
- Volunteers- The Chairperson for ensuring that the trial has sufficient volunteers to run

smoothly and meet the minimum requirements.

- Veterinarian- Where local laws require a veterinarian to be in attendance, the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring the attendance of a veterinarian.
- Local lodging- The Chairperson is responsible for making sure there is a representative for the local lodging establishments and for notifying local lodging managers about how to contact the rep with complaints about exhibitors.
- Trial Premium- Ensure that the Trial Premium created by the Trial Secretary has all the required information and that all information is correct.

The show secretary is responsible for the paperwork involved in a trial or practice and communications with exhibitors. This person may not also be the Chairperson or Judge except in emergency situations. Duties include but are not limited to:

- Obtaining the required forms and having plenty on hand
- Creating and distributing the Trial Premium
- Answering prospective and registered exhibitors questions
- Emailing/ mailing premium lists to prospective entrants
- Reviewing and accepting proper entry forms and entry fees
- Assign a number to each dog and ensure that number is associated with that dog on all paperwork
- Ensure that each competitor gets an armband, sticker or other means of wearing the number(s) for their dog(s)
- Email/ mailing confirmation notices
- Prepare and post running orders for each class at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the class.
- Ensuring that each volunteer understands the procedures for the tasks they are assigned
- Having a current copy of the rulebook on hand
- Judge's book- ensure that the original Judge's books get submitted to DSA with the trial records, that the Judge gets a copy of each book he/she judged, and that the host keeps a copy of said books for at least 1 year.
- Submitting all paperwork and fees associated with the trial, including submission of trial results forms and test sheets and \$1.50 per entry to DSA and the host club within 15 business days of the event. Failure to do so will result in fines of \$20 per month for late reports.
- If trial is cancelled- The Secretary must:
 - a. notify DSA immediately with the reason (failure to do so may result in being unable to host future trials)
 - b. ensure scheduled Judges are reimbursed for all expenses incurred on behalf of the host
 - c. ensure that all pre-entry fees are returned
 - d. ensure to the best of his/her ability that a cancellation notice is sent to anyone that was known to have received any advertisement for the Trial or Practice

Course Builders/Judge's Assistants: The course builders are responsible for the set up of the levels as designated by the Judge. Changes are not to be made to the physical layout without authorization from the Judge. An assistant's job is to assist the Judge as needed. This may

include holding the leash of an off-leash competitor, moving equipment as advised, getting the next score sheet for the judge and delivering the completed score sheet to the Table Steward. At least 1 person should be assigned to this position that is not also assigned to other duties during the test.

Table Stewards: The table stewards should be positioned as close to the test area as practical. Minimum of 1 person assigned to this position may not have other jobs. If more than 1 Table Steward is available, the extras may also be timers. The Table Stewards are responsible for:

- Paperwork to and from the Judge and to/from the trial Secretary.
- Running order- ensure that the score sheet the Judge gets is for the next competitor. The table steward will check with the gate steward to be sure the next dog is ready and if not, make adjustments as needed.
- Bring errors to the attention of the Judge and be sure to clarify anything that is not clear. Recording the class information for the results catalog. Information to be recorded in the results catalog must include:
 - Date
 - Location
 - Judge's name
 - Dog's name
 - Handler's name
 - Test timeResults of the test using only these designations:
 - WD- (Withdrawn)- Handler chose not to complete the test
 - EX- (Excused)- Judge ended the test. The reason for excusal must be noted.
 - AB- (Absent)- Handler/dog did not arrive in time for their class.
 - NQ- (Non-Qualifying)- Test was not completed correctly
 - Q (Qualifying)- test was completed correctly
- Upon completion of a class/test, the Table Steward will turn in (to the Trial Secretary) any paperwork related to that class/test. At the end of the trial, the Table Steward will turn in (to the Trial Secretary) all paperwork.

Timekeeper: A timekeeper is required for all levels to be sure no competitor goes over the maximum time or exceeds the "non-working" allowance. The Time Keeper may also be a Table Steward, or be positioned at the Steward's table. Time starts when the competitor's dog crosses the start line. If there is a problem with the stopwatch, the timekeeper shall notify the Judge and start a stand-by timer as quickly as possible and make every effort to ensure the dog does not exceed the allowed time. The timekeeper shall sound a whistle, bell, or buzzer (or other easily discernible signal) or call "time!" in a loud clear voice when handler and dog teams exceed maximum time allowed. The Timekeeper must be clear on when time stops. This will be determined by the Judge. If the trial is using an electronic timer, the Timekeeper is to monitor that equipment and be ready to use a stop watch if there is any malfunction. The same timekeeper should perform this duty for an entire class to ensure consistency.

Gate Steward: A gate steward is responsible to keep the test area running smoothly and helping the Table Steward have the correct score sheet ready for the Judge. This should be his/her only job for the test, with the exception of Exhibitors Assistant. The Gate Steward has no

responsibility to find dogs, however all attempts will be made to keep the waiting competitors apprised of their place in the cue since they are not allowed to watch the prior competitors. It is preferred to have at least 2 dogs ready to enter the test area at all times. The Gate Steward has authority to change the order of teams to be judged (as allowed) as long as they inform the Table Steward of such a change far enough in advance that the dog's score sheet can be arranged in proper order. The Gate Steward may assist handlers by checking that they do not have any unauthorized equipment, but this is ultimately the handler's responsibility.

Exhibitor's Assistant (optional)- If the gate steward is not also able to assist handlers with dogs that need additional space, a volunteer should be assigned to this task. This person is responsible for helping clear the path to/from the exhibitor's crating location and the testing area. They will walk ahead of the exhibitor to advise any nearby dogs to please step back.

SCENT DETECTION Trial Site

Considerations for selecting a site: Sites chosen for a Scent Detection trial will need to meet the guidelines set forth in this rulebook for the levels/classes being offered. Areas used for each level should be on the same site and within walking distance (1/2 mile) of each other. Each area must have sufficient hiding places at different levels/heights to test the dog's skills and be safe for dogs of all sizes and handlers of all mobility levels.

The test area should be free of excessive distractions for the lower levels, including scent distractions like cooking food. It is preferred to have the test area enclosed by a fence, gating or ring flags to separate the test area from spectators. Areas must be provided that are big enough for all competitors to wait out of sight of the test area, it's helpful if this is also the crating area. A designated area for dogs to relieve themselves is needed out of view of the test area. When possible, a spectator area should be available, preferably away from the crating area.

Notes on equipment (including safety considerations)

Containers and other items in the area used for testing must be safe for dogs and handlers to navigate. Dogs must be allowed to put their feet on items in the test area to conduct a complete search. Nothing in the area should have a risk of falling on a dog, even if the dog jumps up on it or pushes it with his/her paws. Anything that "appears" to be sturdy or could be assumed by the average person to be sturdy enough for a 150 lb person to sit/stand on should not have a risk of collapsing. Judges can push on, jostle and/or sit on items to test them for their safety prior to testing and hosts should have already done this before suggesting an area or equipment for a test.

Any hiding place used for dogs with an active, scratch alert should be sturdy enough to withstand such actions without risking harm to the dog or worry about damaging the container. Sturdy cardboard boxes may be used for scratch alerts. Damage done by scratch alerts is not considered damage the dog owner has to pay for. It is up to the judge and the host to determine which containers may be used for active alerts when choosing the hiding locations.

Everything should be as clean as possible, but not smell of cleaning products. Handlers should not need to worry their dog will sniff up a hairball or nose full of dust during the search. Nothing in the test area may contain strongly scented, harsh or hazardous chemicals or products.

If these have been recently removed from the area, their lingering scent should not be detectible by a sensitive human nose. It is strongly recommended that areas used regularly to store items like this not be used at all for Scent Detection tests. But if it's one small cabinet in an otherwise perfect area, these items should be removed from the area as far in advance of the test as possible. If the judge determines the lingering odor is detectible and/or too strong and another area is not available, the test could be cancelled. The host would still owe all fees agreed upon to DSA and the judge. And competitors would get the option of getting their entry fee back or applying it to an alternate date/site provided by the host.

Exhaust from gas motors, including cars and golf carts should be kept as far from the test area and crating area as possible. Gas engine exhaust can negatively impact the olfactory senses of a dog.

Test areas must be navigable by all participants and a handicapped assessable route from a parking area designated for handicapped handlers to the test area is required. If needed, have any participants in question test the area to be sure they can navigate with wheelchair, crutches, etc. as needed. The dog should not need to get more than 6' from the handler's path to sniff the hiding locations.

Judge's Guidelines

Judges are the backbone of any sport and their actions and opinions influence conduct beyond the performance ring. A set of standards for judges has been developed to improve the standards of adjudication. Persons meeting these qualifications may be added to the "Approved Judges List."

Standard for Judges

Qualified individuals shall have met the following requirements before being placed on the Approved Judges List:

- Have sufficient experience to competently perform the judge's responsibilities, as may be evidenced by active participation in the sport, being an active member of a training group that routinely encourages training methods involving operant conditioning and positive reinforcement

- Have satisfactory attendance, participation and completion of an approved DSA judging clinic, demonstrating sufficient understanding of Scent Detection *and/or* judge candidates may submit videotape of their setup and administration of Scent Detection practice tests in which they sufficiently demonstrate all judges' responsibilities (see information on DSA worldwide certification program on the DSA website.) If pursuing certification via videotape, candidates must include the judge's briefing in the video, and submit score sheets.

- Be of good character and in good standing with DSA

In order to maintain a position on the Approved Judges List, each Judge must:

- Be a current member of DSA (both at the time of trial application by the host and during

the trial)

When requested, periodically pass a short form examination dealing with rule changes
Have satisfactory attendance, participation and completion of an approved DSA clinic
once every three years *and/or* submit a sample of their judging via videotape if they
do not judge at least 1 trial per year.

Maintain an active role in the sport

Be of good character, setting forth a professional image for the sport

At all times when representing DSA or Scent Detection, or on site at a Scent Detection
event, will utilize and promote only positive training methods that are in accordance
with DSA's position on punishment, which can be found on the DSA website

Persons on the Approved Judges List:

During a trial or match, are expected to uphold an image of integrity and as a competent
professional, both on and off the course. An integral part of this image is appropriate
attire consisting of slacks with a coordinating shirt. A judge shall not wear any
apparel bearing business, sponsor or other organization insignia (other than DSA.)

Shall recognize their role as a judge is a privilege not a right

Shall diligently fulfill all responsibilities with regard to judging assignments

Shall seek to assist fellow judges when needed in fulfillment of judging responsibilities
when viewed in the best interest of the sport

Disciplinary Actions

A person on the Approved Judges List who shall violate the standards in fact or in spirit shall be
subject to disciplinary action in the form of reprimand, probation, suspension or removal from
the Approved Judges List. All disciplinary action proceedings shall be conducted by the DSA
Board of Directors in "closed session" and shall remain confidential, except that the decision to
suspend or remove a person from the Approved Judges List shall be published.

Scoring Guidelines

Scent Detection tests are scored on a pass/fail basis. The dog should enter the test area and go to
work as soon as (or even before) it is cued by the handler to do so. Judges that are adept at
reading dogs will easily be able to tell when the dog is actively searching and when it is not. It is
preferred that the dog be actively looking until the target scent is located. The handler may
verbally encourage/direct the dog and/or point to areas where the dog should check. If the
handler has been through the course before with a different dog, the judge will need to use a keen
eye to be sure the handler does not help the dog locate the scent in any way. If the handler
knows the location of the scent, it is suggested that they not point at it or look at it just in case it
could be perceived as a signal to the dog. But if body language and tone are consistent during the
search, the handler may continue to act as though the dog has not yet found the correct spot.

The alert:

Once the dog indicates, the handler's body language and tone (if speaking) should not change for a moment. If the handler has been pointing and encouraging, they should continue to do so as if they haven't seen the dog. If the handler has been quiet and relatively still, they should remain that way for a moment. The Judge wants to see that the dog commits to the alert and that the dog is 100% certain before the handler goes in to try to locate the scent item. If the handler chooses to encourage the alert (mostly in the case of an active alert) they may do so for a few moments (within reason). It should be very clear by the dog's alert exactly where the scent article is located. The handler should not need to be searching around. If the handler cannot find it by opening a single hiding place (one box, one drawer, etc.) then the search would be scored as an NQ. If the dog truly understands his job and how to alert, even a non-dog person should be able to tell exactly where the item is hidden.

How to determine running orders

Running order will be tallest dog to smallest dog in each class. After that, the order will primarily be determined by the scent the dog will be finding. In Novice, because a fresh container is used for each scent, the running order can be in any posted order that the judge sees fit or approves. For Intermediate, it may be easiest to group all similar scents together in the running order. For example, do all the gun powder runs, then all the termite runs, etc.) For advanced, the running order gets more tricky because there needs to be a distraction scent in the test area, but obviously it can't be the same scent as what the dog being tested is looking for. So if you can, you'll want to stagger the different scents.

Sample Script for Judge's Briefing

TBD

Forms

Score Sheet

Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Form

Sample Entry Form

Score Tracking Sheets

List of Useful Definitions

Requesting a DSA Sanctioned Trial / Test / Etc.

Trial Recap Sheet

Trial Score Reporting Form

DSA Judge Evaluation Form

Judge Compensation Guidelines

Sample Judge Confirmation Letter

Bag information form (include hiding place description)