

CHAPTER 10—INTRO PROGRAM (EFFECTIVE 8/1/2011)

Purpose: The Intro program is designed to help new competitors and dogs get started in dog agility by measuring accomplishments in the early stages of training. Performance standards in the Intro program are based upon those in USDAA's other classes with adjustments to equipment configuration and course times provided in this chapter.

Eligibility: Competitors with dogs that are at least fourteen (14) months of age and upon which have not earned titles in the Championship, Performance or Veterans Program are eligible to earn titles under this program.^{10.01}

Titles & Awards: The Intro program provides title qualifications in a single level of competition in Standard, Jumpers, Gamblers, and Snooker, and will count toward the following individual Intro class titles:

TITLE	QUALIFYING SCORES REQUIRED	REQUIRED NO. OF JUDGES
Intro Standard Dog*	3	1
Intro Jumpers Dog*	3	1
Intro Gamblers Dog*	3	1
Intro Snooker Dog*	3	1
Intro Versatility Dog	3 Standard, 1 Jumpers, 1 Gamblers, 1 Snooker	1

**Bronze, Silver and Gold designations may be earned on each of the class titles above by earning a total of 6, 9 and 12 qualifications in each class, respectively.*

Events: Affiliated Groups have the option of offering the Intro Program at regular sanctioned events (i.e., those where Championship and Performance Program classes are offered) or by holding separate Intro Program Only ("IPO") events. Intro Groups may be licensed to hold IPO events.^{10.02} (In this Chapter, reference to "Group" or "Groups" means either an Affiliated Group or Intro Group, or both).

When held in conjunction with regular sanctioned events, rules and policies relative to those events shall apply *except that competitors may enter the Intro Program classes "For Exhibition Only" (FEO) provided they are not entered in the same class in another program on the same day. Any toys used must not be a potential distraction to other rings either audibly or by throwing or tossing it in vicinity of other rings.*

When held as a separate IPO event, rules and policies for conduct of an event may be relaxed as follows:

- The minimum square footage for an Intro Program performance ring is 3,200 square feet with no side of the ring less than approximately 40 feet.^{10.03}
- The rule for training within 24 hours of an event is waived.^{10.04}
- "Day of show" entries are allowed at the option of the Group; a signed entry form and fee must be submitted upon entry and the entry listed on the official running order list for each class entered.
- Numeric entry limits may be applied, except when the IPO event is held the day before a sanctioned event on the show site.
- Competitors with dogs that have earned one or more titles in the Championship, Performance and/or Veterans Programs may enter the Intro classes FEO and are ineligible for qualification, prizes and awards. Competitors running FEO dogs may use toys in the ring (no food or treats of any kind are allowed).
- The event may be judged by a USDAA® approved judge or alternatively by a USDAA "approved" person who has sufficient experience to enable them to competently perform judging responsibilities. Such a person should –
 - be active in USDAA events for a period of three years or more,
 - have titled in the regular agility program at one or more levels,
 - have attended a USDAA judge's clinic, or

- have such other experience that would indicate a working knowledge and ability to fulfill judging responsibilities
- *Intro Program classes may be offered the day before or during a regular sanctioned event on the event grounds and equipment provided:*
 - *the judge for the Intro Program classes is not judging in the Championship or Performance classes (inc. tournaments)*
 - the Intro Program class courses are not derived from any courses from other programs
- No official height measurements shall be recorded for dogs under the age of 18 months.^{10.01} Measurements made at an IPO event shall not be recorded and are for that event only.
- Groups must apply for an IPO event at least thirty (30) days prior to the event date. The IPO event test schedule shall be published at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the event date, though earlier filing and publication is strongly encouraged.
- The event is exempt from USDAA Policies on Establishing Event Dates, Establishing a Slate of Classes, and Engagement of Judges, unless otherwise provided in this Chapter or as may be published in these USDAA Official Policy Statements for the Intro Program.

SECTION 10.1—MINIMUM OBSTACLE REQUIREMENTS:

The Intro program shall be conducted on a Starters level course with the following modifications:

- The obstacle standards shall be the same as in the Starters class, except that the course shall include a minimum of eleven (11) and a maximum of fourteen (14) obstacles to be performed.
- Three contacts are required to be performed, with a minimum of two different contact obstacles required. The host group may designate what contact obstacle may be omitted, if any.
- Obstacles shall be set according to the following levels:

DOG'S HEIGHT @ WITHERS ^{10.07}	MINIMUM JUMP HEIGHTS ^{10.07}	A-FRAME SETTING ^{10.06}		TABLE HEIGHT
		TITLING CLASS	OPTIONAL FOR FEO	
12" (30.58cm) or less	4" (10cm)*	112.5 degrees (approx. 5'0" or 152cm)	104 degrees (approx. 5'6" or 170cm)	12" (30cm)
16" (40.64cm) or less but more than 12" (30cm)	8" (20cm)			12" (30cm)
21" (53.34cm) or less but more than 16" (40cm)	12" (30cm)			12" (30cm)
Over 21" (53.34cm)	16" (40cm)			16" (40cm)

**If a jump or hurdle does not accommodate setting of a 4" (10cm) bar, then the bars may be set with one end of each pole at 8" (20cm) and the other end resting on the ground, to form crossing bars wherein the mid-point of the bars is approximately 4" (10cm); the tire jump should be set at the lowest height possible or may be replaced with a single hurdle (or removed) at the discretion of the judge.*

The following additional heights shall be offered unless otherwise disclosed in the test schedule for the event:

OPTIONAL JUMP HEIGHTS	AVAILABLE A-FRAME SETTINGS ^{10.06}		TABLE HEIGHT
	TITLING CLASS	OPTIONAL FOR FEO	
22" (55cm)	104 degrees (approx. 5'6" or 170cm)	98 degrees (approx. 5'11" or 180cm)	24" (60cm)
26" (65cm)			

- Spread hurdles shall be set as a single hurdle, or may be replaced with a single hurdle at the discretion of the judge.
- One set of 5 or 6 weave poles.
- Jump wings are optional.
- Long Jump (see Appendix A for presentation standards)

SECTION 10.2—OBSTACLE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The obstacle performance standards shall be the same as in the Starters classes in Chapter 5.

SECTION 10.3—COURSE HANDLING STANDARDS & “FEO”

The course handling standards shall be the same as in the Starters classes in Chapter 5.

A competitor who has entered to run for title who engages in training activity in the ring shall be eliminated and may continue their round for the remainder of the Standard Course Time as an entry For Exhibition Only (FEO), unless otherwise instructed by the judge. In FEO runs, the competitor is allowed a maximum of three attempts at any one obstacle and the competitor must be making an effort to follow the numbered sequence of the course or the judge may elect to dismiss the competitor from the ring.^{10.08}

SECTION 10.4—STANDARD COURSE TIME & FAULT LIMITS

The standard course time (SCT) and fault limits (if any) shall be established as in the Starters classes in Chapter 5, except that rates in determining SCT for all heights shall be as follows:

STANDARD COURSE TIME RATES (IN YARDS & METERS PER SECOND)	
Operating Range	Absolute Minimum
1.60–2.10 yds/sec	1.60 yds/sec
1.46–1.92 m/sec	1.46 m/sec

In any case, the maximum SCT shall be 75 seconds.

SECTION 10.5—STANDARD SCORING

The same standard scoring rules shall be followed as in the Starters class (see Chapter 5), except as may be set forth in this Chapter.

SECTION 10.6—NON-STANDARD CLASSES

Non-standard classes offered shall conform to the description of the Starters level as set forth in Chapter 6 for each class, except for special rules set forth in this section.

Intro Gamblers Class

- To receive a qualifying score, the handler must successfully complete the gamble/joker within the time allotment as well as accumulate the number of points in the opening period for point accumulation as shown in the following table:

COURSE TIME	MINIMUM POINTS REQUIRED	
	1-3-5-7 Point System	1-2-3-5 Point System
25 Seconds	15 Points	11 Points
30 Seconds	18 Points	13 Points
35 Seconds	22 Points	16 Points
40 Seconds	25 Points	18 Points
45 Seconds	29 Points	21 Points
50 Seconds	32 Points	23 Points

- The distance between the handler and key elements of the gamble/joker shall be no less than five (5) feet and no greater than ten (10) feet.
- The weave poles shall not be utilized in the Joker.

Intro Jumpers Class

- The course shall include a minimum of eleven (11) and a maximum of fourteen (14) obstacles to be performed.
- The SCT shall be determined utilizing the following rates:

JUMPERS STANDARD COURSE TIME RATES (IN YARDS & METERS PER SECOND)		
Jumping Height	Standard Course Time Rates	
	Operating Range	Absolute Minimum
4"	2.50–3.00 yds/sec	2.50 yds/sec
10cm	2.29–2.74 m/sec	2.29 m/sec
8"	2.75–3.25 yds/sec	2.75 yds/sec
20cm	2.51–2.97 m/sec	2.51 m/sec
12" & 16"	3.00–3.50 yds/sec	3.00 yds/sec
30cm & 40cm	2.74–3.20 m/sec	2.74 m/sec

The following additional heights shall be offered unless otherwise disclosed in the test schedule for the event:

JUMPERS STANDARD COURSE TIME RATES (IN YARDS & METERS PER SECOND)		
Jumping Height	Standard Course Time Rates	
	Operating Range	Absolute Minimum
22" & 26"	3.25–3.75 yds/sec	3.25 yds/sec
55cm & 65cm	2.97–3.43 m/sec	2.97 m/sec

- Spread hurdles shall be set as a single hurdle, or may be replaced with a single hurdle at the discretion of the judge.

Intro Snooker Class

- The weave poles shall not be utilized.
- The course shall be constructed with obstacles placed in one of three (3) different general configurations as shown below:

STARTERS SNOOKER COURSE CONFIGURATIONS
Standard snooker configuration (3 "reds" positioned near the "black" and "pink")
Modified snooker configuration (3 "reds" positioned near "yellow", "green" and brown")
Only jumps and tunnels are used

SECTION 10.7 – INTRO PROGRAM HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH REGULAR EVENTS

A dog may not be entered in both the Intro Program level of a class and the Championship, Performance or Veterans level of that class when the Intro Program is offered at a regular sanctioned event.^{10.05}

CHAPTER 10 FOOTNOTES:

10.01 Dog registrations under 18 months of age are issued with an age restriction designated by an “A” prefix to the number. Under age dogs may still be measured for the event, but these measurements are valid for that event only. Dogs 18 months of age or older may be officially measured and recorded by a Certified Measuring Judge. Also, dogs under 18 months of age are not eligible to compete in Championship, or Performance classes, including tournaments.

10.02 A club, private training center or other organization (collectively referred to as organizations) may affiliate with USDAA or internationally through USDAA’s affiliate World Cynosport Limited (WCL), through the execution of an “Affiliation Licensing Agreement” for the purpose of promoting USDAA and dog agility in their community as an athletic sporting event and to encourage family involvement in promoting responsible pet ownership. Three separate group licenses are available—Affiliated Group, Junior Handler Group, or Intro Group.

As an “Affiliated Group”, organizations may apply for sanction of USDAA/WCL events for all programs covered under these regulations, and must comply with all policies and procedures established by the USDAA Competition Standards Board.

As an “Intro Group”, organizations may apply for sanction of USDAA/WCL Intro Program events established through these regulations. An Intro Group must comply with policies and procedures applicable to Intro Program events established by the USDAA Competition Standards Board. An IPO Group may affiliate with USDAA without first conducting a sanctioned match. The Group may upgrade their status to Affiliated Group in order to offer Championship and Performance Program classes after conduct of one or more IPO events where each of the Program classes – Standard, Jumpers, Snookers and Gamblers – have been conducted with at least ten (10) dogs entered in each class.

10.03 The provisions for course areas have been modified in this rule book addition, with this provision added. A variance of 10% is generally viewed as reasonable. Other exceptions should receive USDAA office approval before announcement.

10.04 To provide optimum objectivity, it is advised that a judge of the IPO event not be a trainer that will be likely to offer training to students who may be entered in the event.

10.05 This does not preclude competitors with dogs at least 18 months of age from entering a Championship, Performance or Veterans level class at a regular sanctioned event and entering a different class in the Intro Program. Also, it does not preclude the dog from being entered in Intro classes at an IPO event offered the day before a sanctioned event held at the event facility and then entering the same classes at the regular sanctioned event.

10.06 The group may designate that A-frame may be set at one height higher when offered For Exhibition Only. Competitors would select the appropriate height on the entry form based upon the options available..

10.07 Competitors may enter a dog at their minimum height or higher, by designating the height on the entry form.

10.08 Defined sequences are provided in Standard and Jumpers classes.

CHAPTER 11—LEAGUE PLAY

In order to foster responsible pet ownership and recreational and educational-based competition within the community, dog training groups, whether they be USDAA “Member Groups” or otherwise nonaffiliated groups, may apply for participation in USDAA League Play.

SECTION 11.1- DEFINITION & ENROLLMENT

Typically, League rules will stipulate—

- the dates each week that league competition will be held;
- the types and definitions of classes to be held;
- that individual dogs may be only on one team during the term of the league;
- a handler may have more than one dog entered in the league so long as each dog is on a separate team.
- a team may be comprised of two or more individuals, and such team shall be static for the duration of league play.
- team alternates may be named as temporary substitutions, a list of which shall be maintained by the league secretary from the start of the league.
- rules shall be set for accumulation of points from week to week to determine an overall league team winner
- rules related to scoring, such that all scores on a team shall be counted or that the best three of four scores of a team shall be counted, etc.
- list of awards that may be made for weekly results
- the manner in which points shall be awarded from week to week and the manner in which ties shall be resolved -- runoff or other methodology
- criteria may be set to name an overall “MVP” (Most Valuable Player)
- that the results of the overall league play winning teams and MVP shall be submitted to for recognition through award of official League certificate. A league shall be defined for a period of four (4) to no more than thirteen (13) weeks and can have rules with variations from those contained within these Rules & Regulations. A separate competition shall be conducted each week in which league players must compete. Standard and nonstandard classes may be held, with scoring according to any rules basis stipulated by the designer of the game. Any class or game may be used as long as rules and basis for determinations of placement winners are clearly defined in the league rules.

Such rules must be well-defined in the League Announcement Bulletin or other official announcement of League Play. Guidelines for League Play may be obtained directly from the USDAA office and League Registration Forms and Fees must be paid at least 30 days prior to commencement of play in accordance with instructions provided on the registration forms.

SECTION 11.2 - RESULTS REPORTING & AWARDS

The League Secretary shall maintain a list of scores throughout the term of the League and shall report the winning teams and name of Most Valuable Player to USDAA for issuance of a recognition award.

CHAPTER 12—MASTERS CHALLENGE CLASSES (Effective 1/1/2012)

The following are preliminary regulations for the new Masters Challenge Classes, which are based in part upon the International Handlers Challenge classes conducted for IFCS World Team qualification trials. These are to be part of the Championship and Performance Titling Programs effective January 1, 2012.

The upcoming Program has been announced for comment through July 1, 2011. Final regulations will be published on or before December 31, 2011.

Purpose: The Challenge classes are designed to provide different challenges in the Masters level for competitors working toward their Champion titles in Standard and Jumping in the Performance or Championship Programs. Challenges in these classes are more technical in nature, placing more emphasis on control while having to work at a high rate of speed. Courses may include a sequence of varied technical challenges along with shifts in speed to effect an efficient course performance run against a demanding standard course time, as compared with the more fluid style course seen in the regular classes at the Masters level and Performance Level III.

Eligibility: Competitors who have completed the Masters titles in Standard or Jumpers are eligible for entry to the Masters Challenge class. They may also continue to enter the regular classes in Masters and Level III classes, unless stipulated otherwise in the Agility Test Schedule.

Titles & Awards: Qualifications in the Masters Challenge classes are equivalent to other Masters qualifications for Champion title purposes and are accumulated for Lifetime Achievement Awards as outlined in Chapter 1.

The Challenge classes provide opportunity to earn additional title designations at the Champion level and above in Standard and Jumpers.

CHAMPIONSHIP PROGRAM	PERFORMANCE PROGRAM
MC Standard Agility Champion	MC Performance Standard Champion
MC Jumpers Champion	MC Performance Jumpers Champion

Competitive placements in the Masters Challenge Standard and Jumpers classes accumulate points for annual ranking for Agility Top TenSM and Performance Top TenSM.

SECTION 12.1—MINIMUM OBSTACLE REQUIREMENTS

The same minimum obstacle standards in the Standard and Jumpers classes shall be followed as in the Masters (Level III) classes, except that the Table shall not be required. The Long Jump and viaduct as optional obstacles are strongly encouraged.

A course shall contain eighteen (18) to twenty (20) obstacle elements, with combinations^{11.01} permitted, and each combination considered as one element. A course shall be limited to a total of twenty-five (25) total obstacles when combinations are used (i.e., when counting each obstacle on course, including the individual components of any combinations). The Jumpers class shall include a minimum of ten (10) weave poles.

The course design for the Masters Challenge classes will have greater variance in spacing and more challenges than seen in the Master (Level III) program class. For more details, see USDAA Official Course Design Guidelines.

SECTION 12.2—OBSTACLE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The obstacle performance standards shall be the same as in the Masters class.

SECTION 12.3—COURSE HANDLING STANDARDS

Course handling standards shall be the same as in the Masters class, except that a handler may encounter restrictions in flow along the handler path that might place varied distances between handler and dog.

SECTION 12.4—STANDARD COURSE TIME & FAULT LIMITS

The standard course time (SCT) and fault limits shall be established as in the Masters Standard and Jumpers classes, except that the SCT shall be set utilizing the rates as provided in the following tables:

MASTERS CHALLENGE STANDARD CLASS – SCT RATES (IN YARDS & METERS PER SECOND)		
Jumping Height	Standard Course Time Rates	
	Operating Range	Absolute Minimum
12”	4.00–4.50 yds/sec	3.75 yds/sec
30cm	3.65–4.11 m/sec	3.43 m/sec
16”	4.25–4.75 yds/sec	4.00 yds/sec
40cm	3.89 - 4.34 m/sec	3.65 m/sec
22” & 26”	4.50–5.00 yds/sec	4.25 yds/sec
55cm & 65cm	4.11–4.57 m/sec	3.89 m/sec

MASTERS CHALLENGE JUMPERS CLASS – SCT RATES (IN YARDS & METERS PER SECOND)		
Jumping Height	Standard Course Time Rates	
	Operating Range	Absolute Minimum
12”	4.25–4.75 yds/sec	4.00 yds/sec
30cm	3.89 - 4.34 m/sec	3.65 m/sec
16”	4.50–5.00 yds/sec	4.25 yds/sec
40cm	4.11–4.57 m/sec	3.89 m/sec
22” & 26”	4.75–5.25 yds/sec	4.50 yds/sec
55cm & 65cm	4.34–4.80 m/sec	4.11 m/sec

The SCT for Performance Level III Challenge classes shall be determined by adding three (3) seconds to the SCT determined for the related Championship Program Masters Challenge class.

Send comments on the foregoing proposed provisions to USDAA at rules@usdaa.com.

CHAPTER 12 FOOTNOTES

12.01A “combination” is a series of two or three obstacles that are to be performed and scored as a single obstacle. Each element (i.e., obstacle) in the combination shall be scored individually. In the Challenge classes, combinations are permitted in Standard and Jumpers, which is different from course design standards for the Masters (and Level III) classes where combinations are only permitted in Snooker and Gamblers. See USDAA Course Design Guidelines for more information on use of Combinations in both the regular Masters and Masters Challenge classes.