

## **Judges games training day, and handling Games day.**

### **By Karen de Wit**

Thankyou to the South Rangitikei Club for the loan of equipment/grounds and to Sandra Mohekey and Liz Tolhurst for helping organise the day. We had 6 judges and two judging observers at the judging session, and there were a total of 20 people at the training session.

#### Attendees.

Judges: Chris Moody, Robyn Fargher, Ron Frater, Sharon Wagener, Kevin Burnette, Karen de Wit.

Handlers: Penny Nalder, Ann Packer, Lynda Cummins, Sandra Mohekey, Sue Willis, Bev Thomson, Syliva Rizzi, Annette, Liz Tolhurst, Arnie, Juklia Crouch, Daria, Sue Honeywell, Brian Hogg, Bronwen Burnette.

The plan for the judges session was:-

1. Talk about the rules and regulations.
2. Discuss course design.
3. Look at the course laid out and determine it meets criteria. Discuss what other options there are.
4. Turn it into a B grade course.
5. Decide what judges would tell handlers, and what questions they might be asked.

#### **Things to consider**

##### **1. Course design**

- a. Nesting. Is the course to be nested with another course, or is it a stand-alone class? Where it is nested with another standard agility course, extra obstacles will need to be brought in for gamblers and blackjack, whereas obstacles will need to be removed for Snooker.
- b. What equipment can be used (for each grade).
  - i. Contacts
  - ii. Combination obstacles
- c. Flow in and out of the ring. You should consider this as the same rules apply as for standard classes (distance between start/finish obstacles, edge of ring etc). Ideally the gamble should finish near the exit etc.
- d. Start and finish. This can be a dummy non-scoring jump/obstacle, or it can be an obstacle that is part of the game. You will need to specify to handlers what the status of the start/finish obstacle is. If a jump is used it doesn't have to be at the standard height for the dog.
- e. What direction do you want the obstacles done in the opening/closing?
  - i. This should be specified and may differ.
  - ii. Any direction in the opening
  - iii. A number placed in the middle of an obstacle (tunnels/weave/contacts) denotes the obstacle can be done in any direction at any time in the game.
  - iv. Note that the long jump can be set up to be bi-directional, or unidirectional.
- f. Determine the qualification criteria for the grade and design a course to meet this in terms of time/course length and obstacles used. Ie. For Snooker Grade C the CL must be such that a dog travelling at 2.5 m/s can score 10 points in the opening, and finish the closing sequence, under the time set (there is a 50 sec maximum).
- g. Gamblers – lots of obstacles gives people lots of choice and chance to gain lots of points. Placement of the higher scoring obstacles is important. They would usually be further away or more difficult to get to.
- h. Snooker – One method is to plan the closing sequence and then add the reds, (placement depends on level). Be mindful of angles of approach to collapsible tunnel/contacts. For Grade C it should be a smooth flowing sequence, and become harder as you go up the grades.

##### **2. Putting the course on the ground.**

- a. It will be crucial to ensure the course is set up as per the plan and that the length of the path for qualification is as per the course design. (The judge will have to measure the path).

- b. A Line for the gamble needs to be clearly marked and safe, and you need to be in position to be able to see if the handler goes over it. A line of jump poles pegged in, or a rope pulled tight at each end are good lines.
- c. Check approach lines to obstacles.

### 3. Ring personnel

- a. Scrimer.
  - i. We advise that you have the scrimer in the ring close to you so they can easily hear your calls. They will need a pad of scime sheets and may have to move back and forth to get dog numbers.
  - ii. Obstacles can only be scored twice (might be good to call what they are???)
  - iii. Need to get scime sheets to outside of ring (Runner??)
- b. Timers.
  - i. If you have horns you need to set them up for each game. It is essential to have a sound that ends the time allowed as then points accumulation stops (and handler runs to finish line)
  - ii. Snooker and Blackjack have a maxm time.
  - iii. Gamblers needs a sound at end of PAP and end of gamble time.
  - iv. Jumpers pairs is like a std class with a total time taken.
  - v. Timing console placement. This may be best placed near the end of the game eg. Near the gamble or finish jump, or last judged obstacle, so that the scrimer can easily add the time to the scribe sheet.
  - vi. No horn/manual timing – the timer person will need close access to the timer and a strong whistle.

### 4. Timing details

- a. Need to learn how to set up the horns if available, or if not need to talk to the timer and clearly explain what they must do and when.

### 5. Judging.

- a. Making calls. You need to clearly call out the points gained or not gained as the dog negotiates the obstacles. Best idea is not to be too quick on the calls!
  - i. Weave mistakes. If these are corrected during the opening the weave can be scored.
  - ii. Snooker closing sequence and The Gamble– any **fault** counts as end of game.
  - iii. When is the dog committed to an obstacle? (Use refusal definition eg. Nose in tunnel etc)
- b. Keeping track of which obstacles have been repeated. In most games an obstacle can only be scored twice, a third or 4<sup>th</sup> execution does not attract any points.
- c. Your position should be such that you can get to see contacts and weave entries etc.
- d. Refusals and Faults.
  - i. Refusals apply in Jumpers pairs, and Snooker closing sequence.
  - ii. Gamblers and Blackjack – no refusals
  - iii. Faults apply in all games at all times and may indicate end of game.
- e. Gamble line – the handler cannot go over the line but what about the dog? The dog can be brought back over the line and redirected.

### 6. Qualification criteria – to obtain a qualification certificate.

- a. This is clearly laid out in the regulations.

### 7. Rates of travel (minimum). Starters and Novice 2.5 m/s, Intermediate 2.75m/s, Senior 3.25-3.75m/s

## Games training day.

### 11am. Competitors.

#### Plan.

Short talk about how to plan a course and training for Gamblers and Snooker.

Over to the judges to explain the course and answer questions.

Run course/judge it.

More questions and answers.

#### Things to consider.

##### 1. Things you need to know about your dog.

###### a. **Your dog's strengths and weaknesses.**

Most Games require a bit of knowledge about your own dog to do well in them. The obvious things include their current level of training, ability to reliably perform certain obstacles, etc. Your dog may have great contacts but be a slow weaver. If you own this dog you would decide a course to do that aims to complete as many contact obstacles as you can and leave the weaves out!!

###### b. **Your dog's speed around a course.**

###### i. **Rate of travel.**

It is important to have an idea of your dog's rate of travel (ROT) as this will determine how many obstacles/what distance you can cover in the time set by the judge. ROT is the m/s rate for your dog. You work this out by dividing the Course length by your dog's time. Eg. 150m/50 secs = 3 m/s. You can do this for the different classes/levels that your dog competes and this will help you work out your course when playing games. For example if your dog does 3m/s on agility courses a game where the time given is 50 secs means you can cover a distance of 150m.

For games classes the judge will use ROT's as a guide to set a game at the appropriate Standard for issuing Qualification Certificates. Generally, the strategy involved in games usually requires you to be in a certain place at a certain time, or achieve a certain amount of points within that time. For you to successfully work this out you will need to do a bit of preparation in advance.

###### ii. **Or work out how many obstacles your dog can do per second.**

Using a standard agility course, of 20 obstacles if your dog can do this in 40 seconds on average then  $40/20 = 2$  seconds per obstacle. If you have 50 seconds then you can do approx 25 obstacles.

NOTE: Where there is a large distance between obstacles, such as more than 6m, or a tight turn, or the obstacle is slow (like the weave) you need to add in obstacle-equivalents.

##### 2. Preparing your plan.

a. The judges debrief. It is a good idea to listen as the judge may specify a direction to negotiate some obstacles – they may be one-directional, or bi-directional, and this may change for opening/closing especially for Snooker. They may also mention other important details about the start/finish etc.

b. Create the BEST PATH for your dog. Ideally this path will be smooth, and when the dog lands or completes an obstacle the direction that he must run in next will be obvious. Sometimes a longer course is faster because it is smoother. Dogs that like to work close may be better off taking a tighter course cf running around the edge of the ring. If the dog chooses a different obstacle to your plan then go with it, and get back to the plan afterwards.

c. Gamblers.

i. The gamble is set, so walk this and make sure you know where it goes. Work out what is the best angle to approach the first obstacle in the gamble. Work out how long it will take you to do the Gamble, and therefore how much time you have for the rest of the course.

ii. How many points do you need in the opening points accumulation period (PAP) to qualify? (Grade C= 20, Grade B= 25) You have 30 seconds to do this.

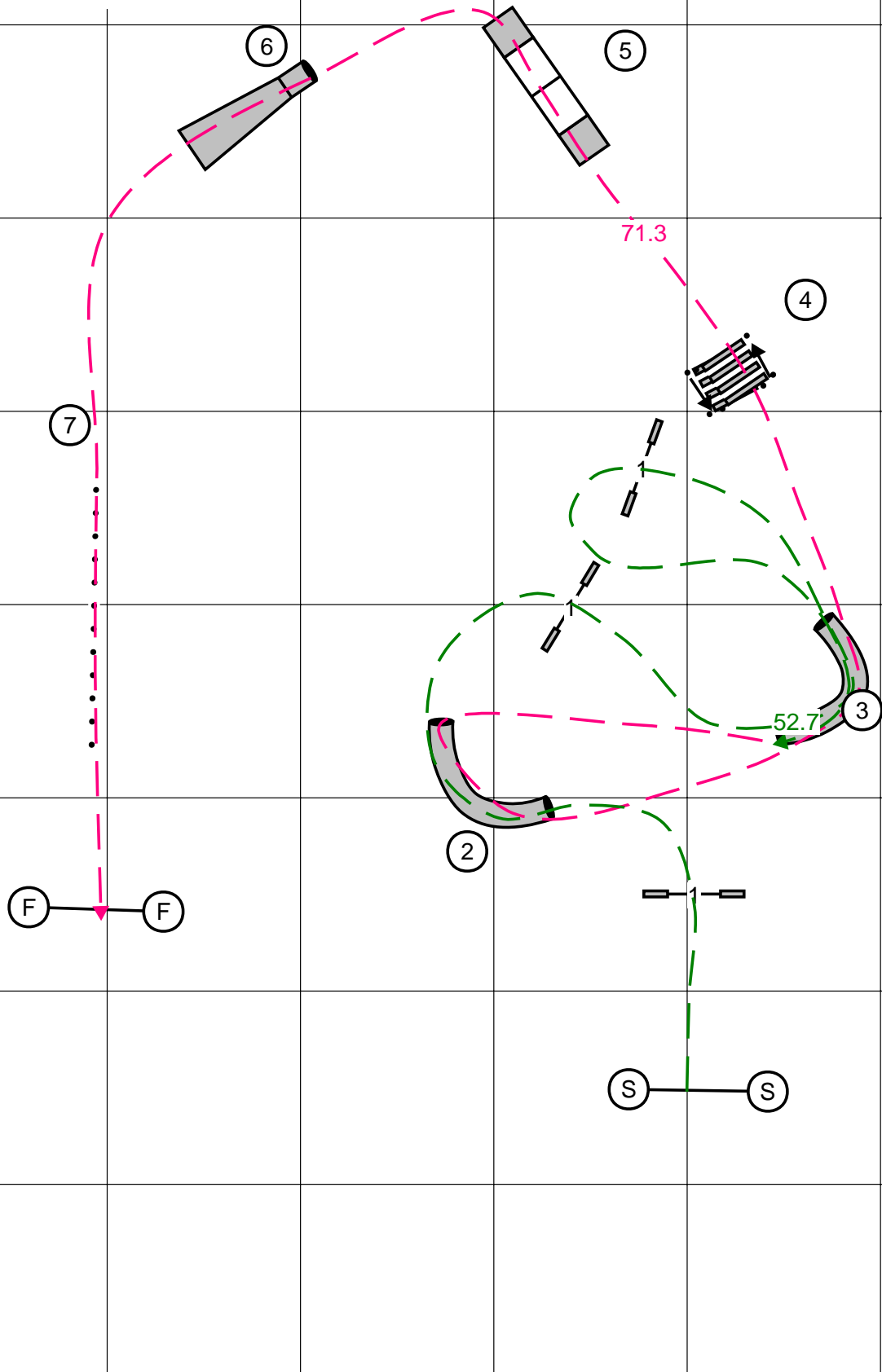
iii. If you have calculated you can do 25 obstacle-equivalents over 50 seconds then you need to come up with a plan that achieves this (This may actually mean that the dog does fewer than 15 obstacles depending on the distance between the obstacles or the types of obstacles you choose (eg. Two weaves is slower, whereas tunnels and jumps will be faster.) Put in an imaginary obstacle approx every 6m and on really tight turns,

- iv. Work out a plan for the PAP that finishes close to the gamble. Ideally the dog will be facing the first obstacle in the gamble.
  - v. Keep some obstacles close to the gamble spare in case you have time to do them.
- d. Snooker
- i. What time allowed has been set by the judge?
  - ii. Determine how long the closing sequence will take, and then you can work out how long you have for the opening.
  - iii. Large distances between obstacles count as extra obstacles (in a standard course obstacles would usually be 4-6m apart)
  - iv. Walk the closing sequence and make sure you know it really well.
  - v. Ideally the dog will finish the opening sequence and be facing the #2 obstacle.
  - vi. Choose to do the hardest/most distant red jump first. Do not line your dog up so he sees two red jumps in a row.
3. How about qualifying and winning.
- a. Gamblers.
- i. You must complete the gamble under the time to qualify.
  - ii. You must also gain a specified number of points in the PAP. Make sure you choose to do more points than you need just in case you get faulted on an obstacle.
  - iii. Avoid any gamble jumps in the PAP just in case you knock them down.
  - iv. dont do any gamble obstacles in sequence.
  - v. Do the high scoring obstacles early, and score them twice if possible.
  - vi. Handle to support the gamble (a rear cross is less likely to support a send)
  - vii. Give yourself room to move towards the gamble line if needed.
  - viii. Don't stand on the line waving arms around - move away and then move back to direct the dog.
  - ix. Aim to be close to the gamble at the end of the points accumulation period (PAP)
  - x.
- b. Snooker
- i. You must complete the closing sequence under time to qualify, so make sure you know it well.
  - ii. You must also gain a specified number of points in the opening, so choose slightly higher points in the opening plan in case you knock a jump.
  - iii. If your dog knocks the first red jump, make sure you can get him to the second one.
  - iv. If your dog knocks the last red jump, make sure you can get to the #2 obstacle to start the closing.
  - v. Opening sequence. To qualify you need 10 pts (Grade C) and 15 points (Grade B). The reds are worth 1 point each. If you choose slightly higher points in the opening you will still qualify even if a jump is knocked down.
4. Training skills required.
- a. Snooker.
- i. Leadouts
    - 1. long leadouts without doing obstacles to a red in the far end of the course
    - 2. long leadouts doing a red and colour on the way to handler
    - 3. Come to handler's side and don't cut behind.
  - ii. Recalls - to self, or over an obstacle
  - iii. Run with me – in snooker you may have to run past an obstacle without doing it.
  - iv. Tight turns
  - v. Obstacle cues
  - vi. Handling to call dog off obstacles
- b. Gamblers
- i. Lateral distance
  - ii. Independent performance
  - iii. Going ahead.

## References

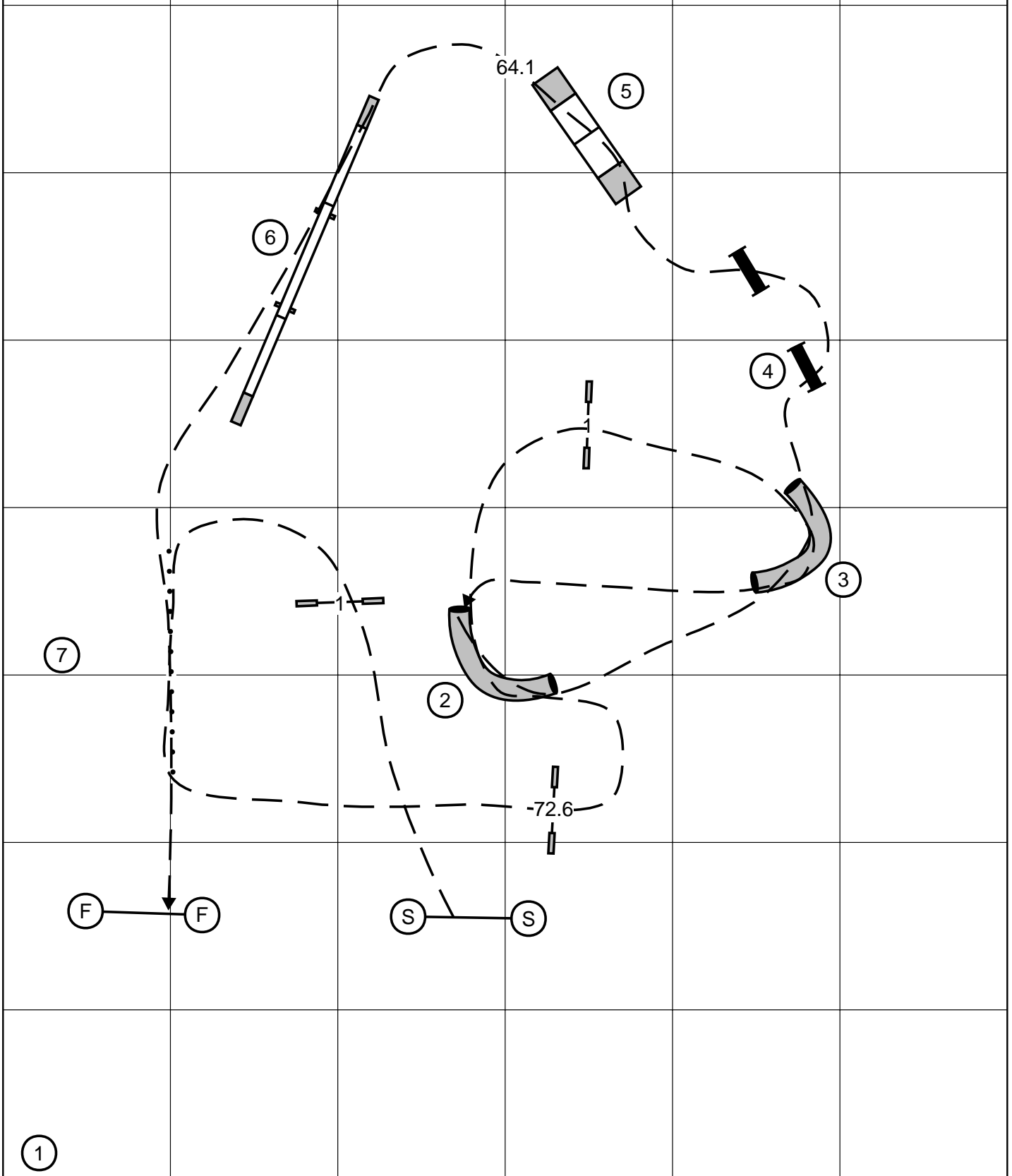
“How to win at gamblers and snooker “Terry Smorch DVD (NALA Library)  
 NZKCAC Regulations.

Snooker Grade C  
50 secs maxm  
ROT= 2.5 m/s  
CL= 50 x 2.5 = 125m  
Points = 10 +27



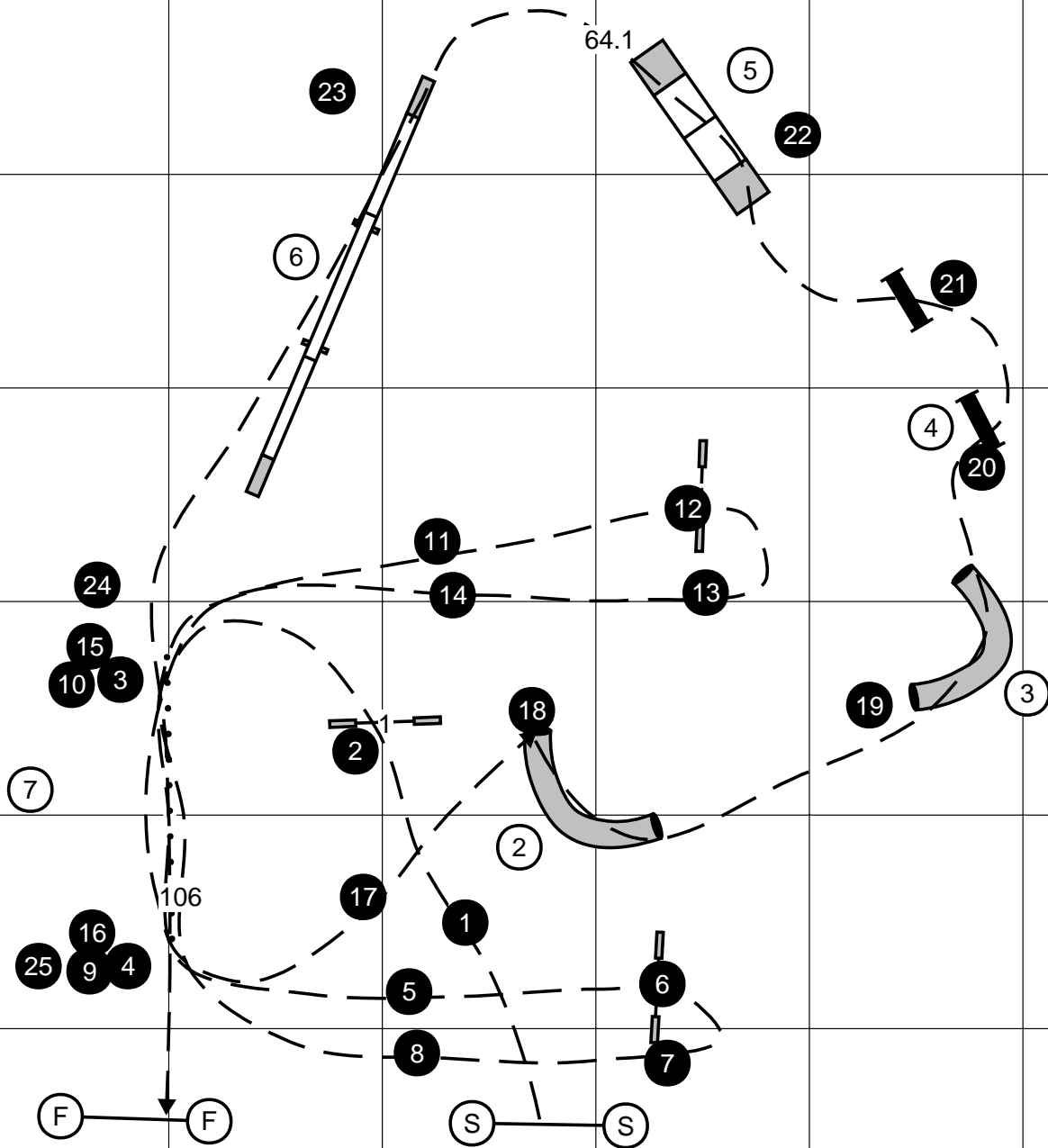
Snooker Grade B  
50 secs maxm  
ROT= 2.75 m/s minm  
CL= 50 x 2.75 = 137m  
Points = 15 +27

What obstacles are permitted?  
2 x contacts = dw afr  
one combination obstacle (2 obstacles) = #4



Snooker Grade B  
 50 secs maxm  
 ROT= 2.75 m/s minm  
 CL= 50 x 2.75 = 137m  
 Points = 15 +27

What obstacles are permitted?  
 2 x contacts = dw afr  
 one combination obstacle (2 obstacles) = #4



if you can do 1 obstacle/2 secs then you can do 25 obstacles over 50 seconds.  
 Try to do 3 x sevens.  
 It is 4 weaves altogether, and as they are slower they probably add up to 8 obstacles.  
 This plan works out at 25 obstacle-equivalents = so can you do it??

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