

HANDS UP



The info letter for NZ Agility JUDGES

Issue 8

This issue:

The Start line

Lead-out challenges.

Number of contacts in agility courses

Tunnel huggers

Making courses easier to judge

Hi there,

This is an information letters for Agility judges. The aim is to provide some information and stimulate some discussion, and any/all response will be welcomed!! The info-letters are now on the website, so feel free to read them and to pass them on to anyone else who might be interested.

Also on the website are a range of quizzes and articles of interest to judges. Go take a look!!

We will soon have a few sets of short courses that you can complete as part of the requirements for going up a level and maintaining Senior Panel status.

Regards,
Karen de Wit
NZ Agility Committee (Judges)

JUMPERS GUIDELINES.

The NZKC Agility Committee recently endorsed the Jumpers guidelines. Although these are not regulations, Judges are expected to design their courses around the Jumpers Guidelines.

What is in the guidelines?

Mainly the general outline of what a Jumpers C, B and A courses should look like, a range for number of challenges and a description of the types of challenges.

Where can you find them?

They are on the Website, under the Judges page, under Articles
http://www.dogagility.org.nz/judge_articles.html

An example of what is there.

Course Design Standards– Grade B

Course design at this level shall begin to shift emphasise toward Directional Control through utilisation of fundamental handling skills to progress fluidly through the course while working with greater speed than at the previous level. Better Response Control is more apparent, but still not necessarily strong. Dogs should be able to demonstrate increased confidence and speed on the obstacles without incurring a fault while moving within the natural flow of a course which utilises moderate-length flowing lines between challenges.

Course Challenges: Grade B should include 3-4 challenges.

- Obstacle Discrimination is permitted but should be set no closer than 1.5m from closest edge of one obstacle to the closest edge of the other
- Wrong Course Potential is permitted and encouraged - wrong course obstacles should generally require that the dog deviate more than 3m off the course flow.
- Changes of Side are encouraged
- Spacing Variations the space between obstacles throughout the majority of the course should be in the range of 5m to 7m.
- Serpentine are permitted - Obstacles used in a serpentine at this level should have no more than moderately-closed approaches.
- Pull Throughs -. Pull Throughs with a moderate gap between the obstacles are permitted.
- Layering – the placement of an obstacle such that the handler path is separated from the dog's path, is permitted. etc

NZ AGILITY JUDGES EMAIL LIST.

To subscribe to this group, send an email to:
AgilityJudgesNZ-subscribe@yahoo.com



THE START LINE.

It is interesting that in NZ we have very few guidelines as to the start (and finish) of the run. In some other organisations the start line is more rigorously controlled. For example, you may have a set time period to get ready and commence your run. If you return to your dog, or delay your start you may be faulted, or eliminated.



In NZ we have some regulations at the start such as -

- 1. what type of collar the dog wears**
- 2. what the handler is allowed to carry into the ring**
- 3. what the handler can do in regard to the electronic timers.**
- 4. course set up/course design.**

COURSE SETUP. The distance between the first and last obstacles is regulated, as is the distance from the edge of the ring to the first/last obstacle. The dog must commence its run from inside the ring. This was done for a few reasons

- 1. safety of the dog at the start and finish (assembly area regulations also help with this)**
- 2. ease of judging**
- 3. Fairness in distance to first obstacle.**

Regulation. 5.4.8.1 The first and last obstacles must be placed to allow a minimum of a 5m run-up within the ring and at least a 5m run-out within the ring. The first and last obstacles must be at least 6m apart. All dogs must commence their runs from inside the ring proper.

Handlers.

- Will be faulted if they break the start or finish beam of an electronic timer
- Will be disqualified if the handler uses or carries into the ring in any class food, manufactured whistle, clicker, squeaky toy or other related training aid (that applies to a lead, see below) other than those required to complete the class
- No lead may be carried (whether visible or not) by the handler or be attached to the dog while running the course. Leads must be removed and discarded prior to commencing the round.

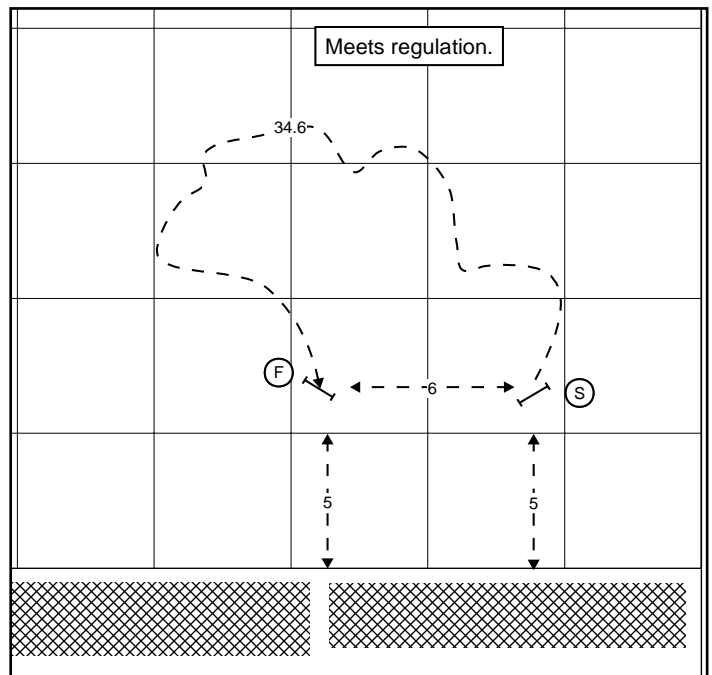
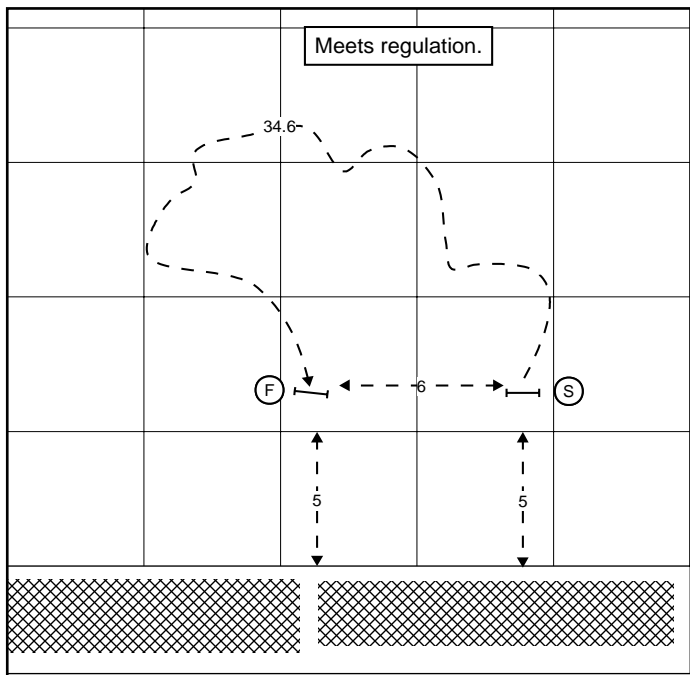
Dogs.

- Eliminated if the dog commences its run from outside the roped ring area.
- Eliminated if the dog starts the course wearing a check chain or any collar other than that allowed under the regulations. (No check chains are to be worn while a dog is training or competing. Flat collars which may have a D ring but no other attachment may be used while competing.)

If the dog finishes its round, and then rushes out of the ring and grabs its toy and brings it into the ring it cant be eliminated under the existing regulations.

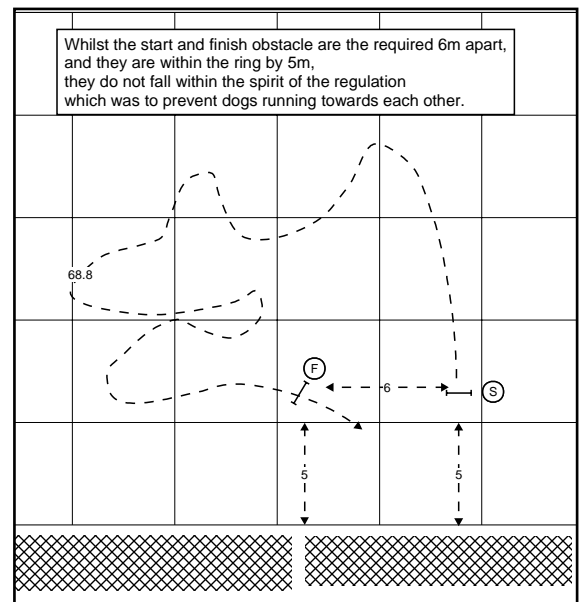
START LINES.

Both diagrams on this page show start lines that meet the regulations.



The diagram right shows poorly positioned start and finish obstacles.

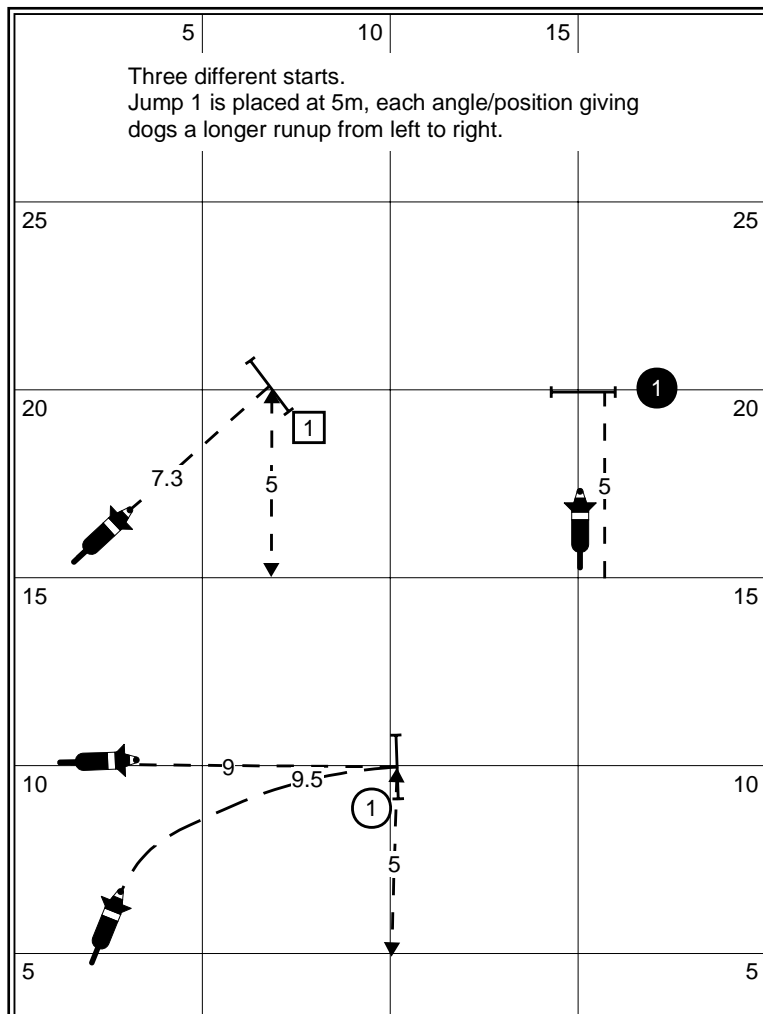
Whilst they might meet the regulations, they do not meet the reason for the regulations. A dog finishing the course will be running straight towards a dog lining up at the start. This obviously has the potential for direct confrontation. It is likely that the person who is next in line will NOT be waiting on the start line ready to run, so it also affects the time taken for the event to run, meaning the judge will be standing in the ring longer, waiting and not judging!



PLACING JUMP #1

As you can see in the diagram right the placement of jump 1 can affect the run-up that the handler can give their dog. Be mindful when placing your first jump that some clever handlers might want to do an angled start, and it would be good to give them space to do this. For the third option below, depending on how close the jump is to the edge of the ring, the handler could give the dog more than the 9-9.5m shown.

The jump placed directly 5m from the edge of the ring (black circle) does not give a large dog much room to get up, get into stride and clear the jump.

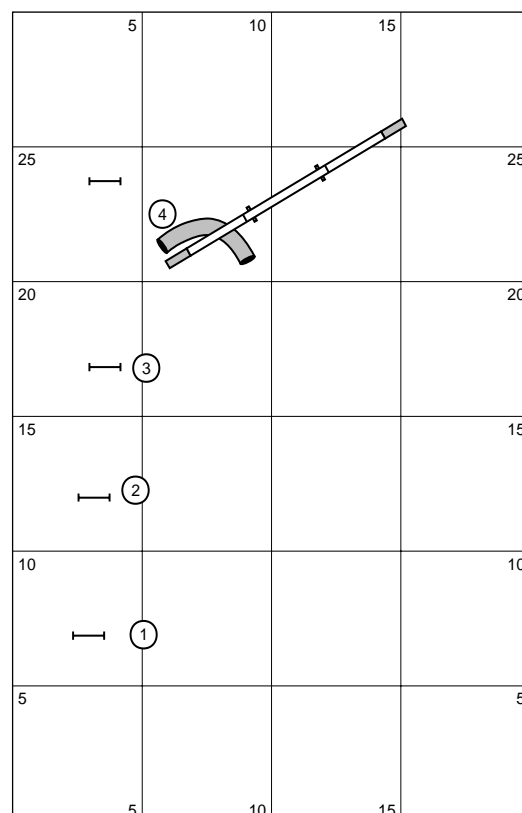


Leadouts.

A lead-out advantage is one of the challenges that you can give handlers. However, be mindful of how long a lead-out you are giving handlers because a very long lead-out can

1. be boring to judge!
2. increases the time taken to run the course (and ultimately the length of time the event takes!!)

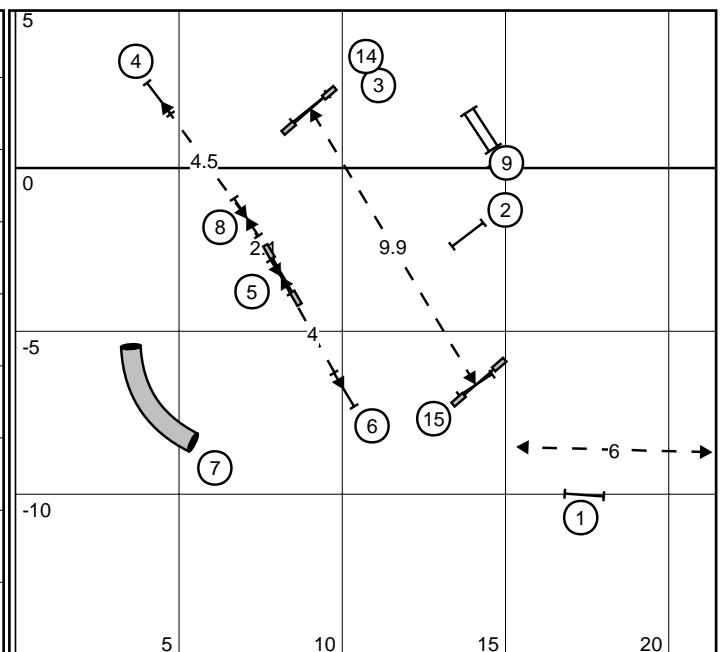
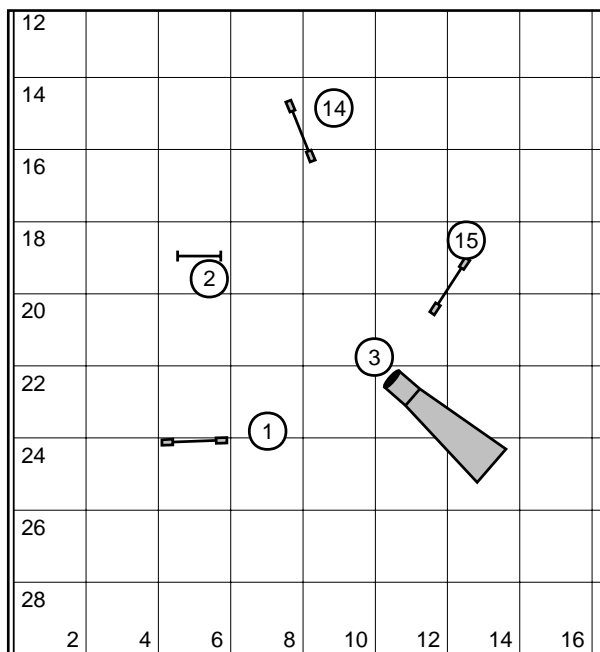
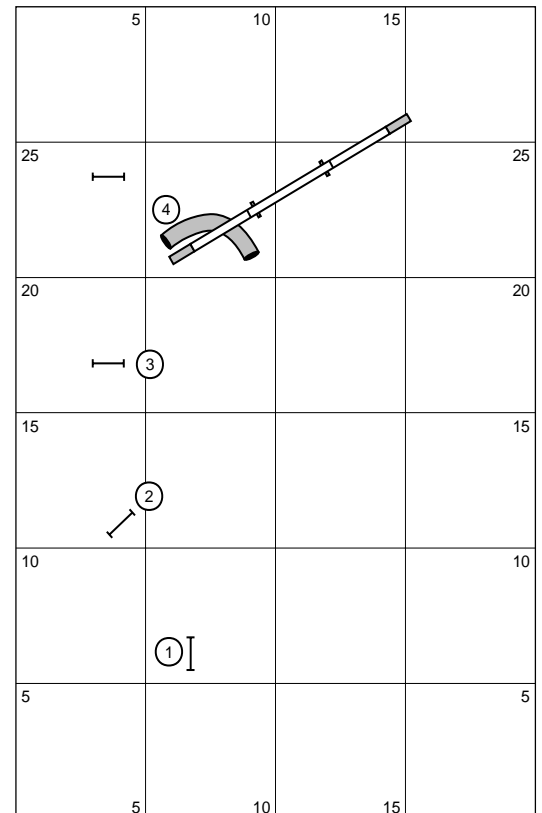
SEE the course right. A person who has a solid lead-out may walk all the way from the start line to the tunnel/dog-walk discrimination. Do you really want that to happen?



Course right. An alternative option, by altering the orientation of the first jump you can negate the long lead-out advantage!

Requiring a lead-out is a justifiable challenge. Below are some examples of courses where a lead-out is an advantage.

In both these examples a leadout would be an advantage, but the handlers wont take long to get to the ideal start point!!



Have a look at some of your recent courses and decide if -

- 1. you have presented a lead-out advantage challenge**
- 2. the lead-out would be too long**

Leadout penalties????

Have you ever been in the situation where a person leaves their dog in a lead-out and then comes back repeatedly to either re-set it, or tells it to sit/stay over and over again. The dog might even break and the handler takes it back and resets it.

Penalties could be:-

- faults for handling the dog,
- disqualification for practicing on the course.

13.11 Practice

No practice is to be allowed on the course prior to judging. If the host club allows practice in the ring after the completion of the class, no food may be carried into the ring during the practice time or at any other time until the completion of the Event.

6.7.4 Judge May Stop Judging

A judge may ask a competitor to leave the ring if in the opinion of the judge the competitor is not competing seriously.

Touching on the Regulations.

A new set of regulations has been published. It might be a good idea to print off a new copy.

While you are doing that you could check and add to your Judges bag the following items:-

- a) Jumpers Guidelines
- b) Jumpers rate of travel
- c) Specs for equipment such as spread jump/long jump if you cant remember them!
- d) Golf tees for marking long jump lengths
- e) Tape measure
- f) Calculator for working out SCT
- g) Pen and pencil for writing!!

What else could be in that Judges bag??

- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Panadol
- What else?

**Comments and Questions to
Karen de Wit**

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Or on the Agility Judges list.

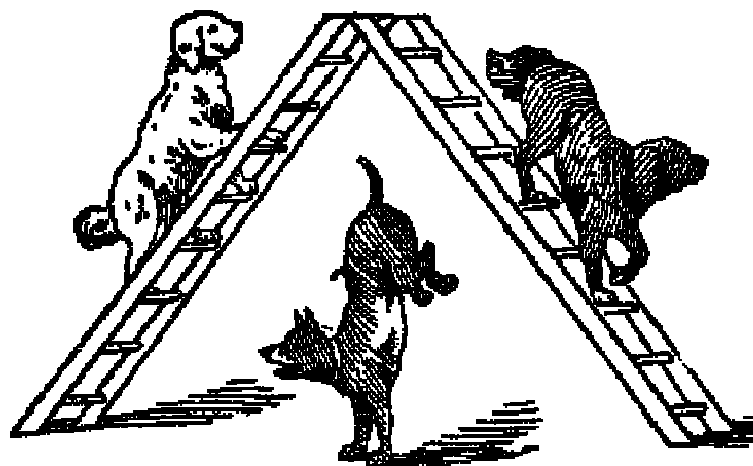
NUMBER OF CONTACTS in COURSES.

The available agility obstacles are:-

- Weave
- Dog walk
- Aframe
- Seesaw
- Crossover.

There are restrictions on their use ie.

- Starters – weave only.
- Novice– weave, A-frame, crossover and dog walk can be used.
- Senior and Intermediate – all the above and additionally the seesaw.



The difference between Jumpers and Agility is the presence of the weave and contact obstacles so it follows that an Agility course should have a number of contacts in it.

We already regulate the type of obstacles that can be used. Should there be a recommendation to Judges about number of contacts they use in courses?

A poll has been opened so you can voice your opinion on this topic.

Tunnel huggers – check the tunnel huggers are correctly padded.



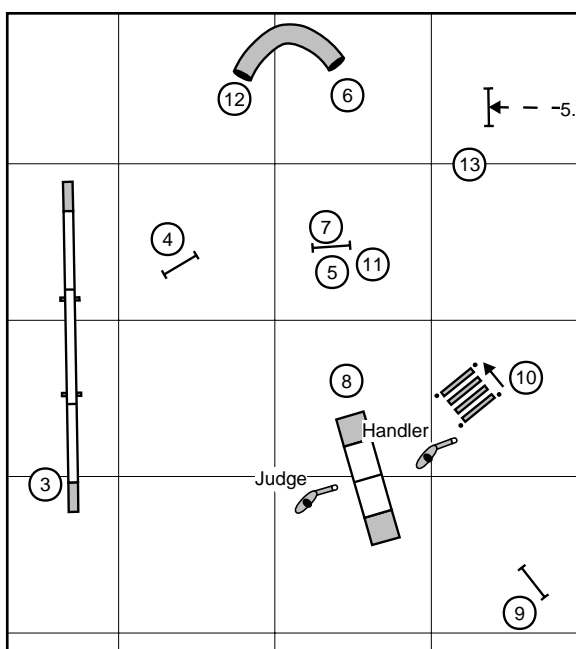
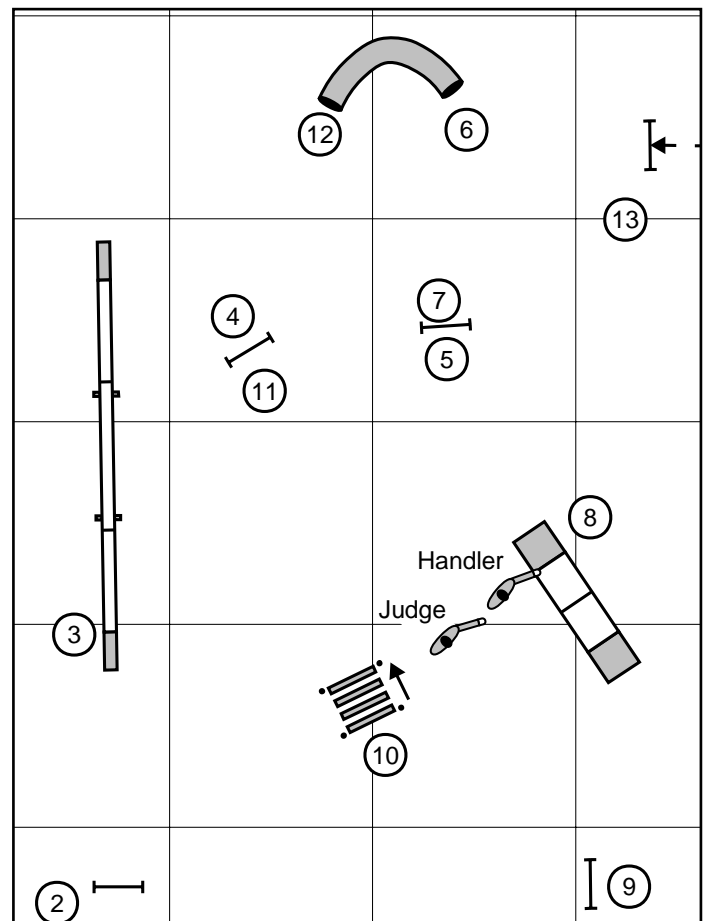
in

This applies not only to those at the beginning and end of the tunnel, but also any used the middle of the tunnel. You might even want to consider if you need any in the middle. Dogs will often run the edge of the tunnel when it is placed on a curve, so any unprotected piece of metal/obstruction is a potential to cause injury.

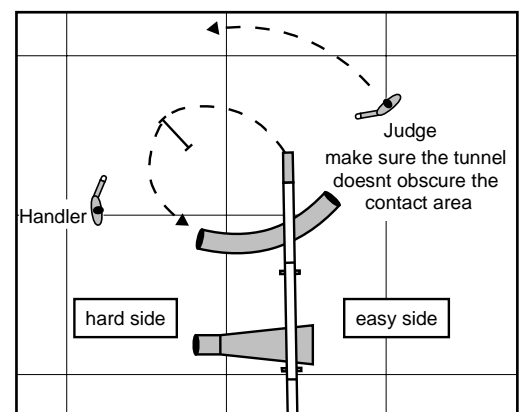
EASE OF JUDGING

One of the essentials of course design is to put up a course that is easy to judge. If you cannot get into position easily, if your view is obstructed by equipment or handlers, then your chances of getting a call right start to diminish, and what we want to ensure is as much accuracy as possible.

Here is a course (right) I put up recently where my view of the A-frame was obscured. By altering the course slightly (below) I could have had a much easier time of it!!



If you put tunnels under contact gear and have them stick out a lot, your judging line will be impeded. If you and the handler are both on the same side that makes it worse. My advice would be to ensure you can be on



the other side and ensure the handlers want to take the hard side!! (bottom right)