

Course Design-Part 4

Level 3 A larger ring space to play with (at least a minimum of 150sqm; 12.5m x 12.5m or possibly 8m X 18.75m; or something between the two), ten additional exercises and three additional bonus exercises to choose from. Cone junctions are permissible, so we could use five cones to lay out the two Spiral exercises, in either a 'T' or 'L' configuration. Likewise, a combination of both Serpentine and Figure8 or indeed either of these with the Spiral exercises. To add to the design possibilities, we can now link exercises together, but we are restricted to only linking 2 together at any one time.

Minimum and maximum number of exercises (12 -15) are the same as for Level 2, as is the number of statics (8) and as before a third must come from the higher level and two-thirds from the previous levels. Important to remember that this is the first level dogs will compete off the lead, hence the similarity to Level 2 in some of the constraints.

Of the ten new exercises, all but two (40. LEFT ABOUT TURN, & 45. LOOP AROUND DISTRACTIONS) contain statics, so it is best to consider which exercises from Level 3 you would like to see in your course. If you want to see a recall exercise, that will use up three of your available statics. However, it could be linked with exercise 23. SIT-WALK AROUND, easier to do this first followed by the recall, as sign placement will be easier.

Another thing to consider is the fact that 6 of the Level 3 exercises will effectively about turn the direction of the handler and dog. It turns out to be quite a logistical challenge. I've managed to design a 12-exercise course with 3 statics and two pairs of linked signs, which with slight modification can be extended to a 15-exercise course with four statics. This used 4 cones, 1 recall exercise and 1 distraction exercise.

The use of junctions requires a little more thought and at Level 3, some handlers may be 'old pros' but, there is every likelihood that some will be 'newbies' having just reached Level 3. Whilst the simple use of one set of cones for two exercises, starting at different ends of

the line of cones is not too confusing; a junction with multiple signs at each end, coupled with linked exercises and the dog off lead, might be best left to the higher levels. It is possible to design a Level 3 course with a junction of 7 cones, 15 exercises (no linked ones), with only 3 statics. Great, if you want to test consistency of position, attention, motivation and if the handler knows their left and right. For the slower participants, this may be where that extra minute of course time may be useful. Yes, from Level 3 onwards the maximum course time is 5 minutes.