

## MASCA Nose Work Rules and Regulations

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of a Nose work trial is to exhibit your dog's natural scenting abilities and to have fun. Nose work is a sport and should be governed by the principles of good sportsmanship both inside of and outside of the ring. The objective is for the dog to find one of the prescribed scents in each of the specified search areas. Placings are based on the length of time needed for the handler and dog team to successfully find the scent in each search location, and with minimal faults. The dog must clearly find the scent, and the handler must clearly identify that the dog has found the scent, by calling "Alert".

Nose work is a sport that is friendly to reactive dogs. At a Nose Work Trial, all dogs must be given adequate space. Dogs must be crated in a car when not searching, or walking to a search area.

**Equipment.** Dogs must be run on a flat buckle collar or harness. Any length leash can be used while searching. When walking to and from search areas, the dog must be on a 6 foot leash. No retractable leashes are allowed outside of the search area.

At the judge's discretion, Interior searches MAY be run off-leash. During the Handler's review prior to the trial, the judge will specify if any of the search areas can be run off leash. Containers, Vehicles and Exterior searches will always be run on leash.

### **Holding a trial**

A trial can be held as a stand-alone event or it may be held in conjunction with another dog event. Clubs or groups wishing to hold a trial must submit a request to the MASCA board 30 days in advance of the trial. Please submit the MASCA sanctioning form.

### **Eligible dogs**

Any dog at least 6 months of age and MASCA registered on the date of the trial is eligible to compete. Clubs may elect to open trials to dogs not registered with MASCA. Any dog not registered with MASCA may compete in a MASCA trial and receive points and titles through MASCA with a MASCA tracking number. Clubs may also offer exhibition only classes where a MASCA registration number or MASCA tracking number is not required, but no titles will be earned by these entries.

Female dogs in heat may compete, but will run last and will be required to wear panties.

### **Judging criteria**

Judges must have experience judging Nose Work, handle/handled certified detection dogs, or be an experienced trainer and clinician for Nose Work.

### **Trial Levels:**

**Novice-** The dog must have passed a scent recognition test for Birch before entering a Novice trial. Birch is the only scent used at the novice level. There will be 4 search areas, Containers, exteriors, vehicles and interiors.

**Open-** The dog must have passed the scent recognition tests for both Birch and Anise, and must have also a Novice level title. There will be 4 search areas, Containers, Exteriors, Vehicles and Exteriors. Scent

hides can be either Birch or Anise, or both. For the container search, some containers may contain either food or toys to test the dog's scent discrimination and obedience. There may be more than 1 scent hide in any of the search areas. The number of hides in each search area will be provided during the judge's review/competitor walk-through.

**Advanced-** The dog must have passed the scent recognition tests for Birch, Anise and Clove and must have both Novice and Open titles. There will be 4 search areas, Containers, Exteriors, Vehicles and Exteriors. There may be from 1-3 scent hides in any of the search areas. The number of hides in each search area will not be provided.

### **Pre-Trial Scent identification test**

Before competing in a Nose Work trial a dog must pass a scent identification test for each of the recognized scents, birch, anise and clove. The purpose of the test is to assure that the dog recognizes the target odor before competing in a trial which uses that odor.

The Pre-Trial Scent identification test may be held at the beginning of a Nose Work Trial, or as a stand-alone event. Dogs can compete on the same day that the scent recognition test has been passed. All dogs completing this test will receive an ORT (Odor Recognition Test) Certificate.

### **Rules for Pre-Trial Scent identification test**

The test will consist of a container search where 10 identical closed boxes are set in a pattern of one or two rows, with a minimum of 36" between all boxes. One of the 10 boxes will contain the prescribed scent for that test

The scent test begins when the dog's nose crosses the designated start line. The timer will start the clock at this time. 3 minutes are allowed for each scent recognition test.

The box containing the scent cannot be moved during the test. The Club can determine if a handler can run multiple dogs for the same odor. A new scent test area, with new boxes will have to be set up, as boxes will not be reset or used in the same test area. The handler must call alert and point at the box their dog has alerted on. The Judge will acknowledge if the handler has identified the correct box.

The judge may stop the scent test if the judge deems the dog to be under stress, or unable to compete due to lameness, pain, or other issue that affects the dog's well being

Each Pre-Trial Scent test requires a judge and a timer. The time will stop when the handler calls alert. The handler is not allowed to continue the search once Alert has been called.

Trial organizers will decide if a handler can run multiple dogs in a test for the same odor. Since each search area requires a separate working space, a trial site may not have sufficient space for multiple scent areas.

The Judge will hold a handler's review prior to the scent test. A walk-through of the scent area will be done. The walk-through is for handlers only. Dogs must stay out of the search areas until they are running.

### **Description by Level**

Each trial leg is worth a total of 25 points. Total points for each level are listed.

Novice: 100 points

Open: 100 points

Advanced: 100 points.

**Legs earned at a trial will carry over to a future trial so you do not need to earn all legs at the same trial in order to achieve a title. The dog will be awarded the title once all 4 legs have been completed.**

Points: Each leg is worth a total of 25 points. 1 find is worth the full 25 points. 2 finds are worth 12.5.

Multiple finds and areas: total= number of finds + clear + number of finishes

Divide into 25 total points

Level	Finds	Scents	Distractions	Container Number	Indoor Search areas	Outdoor search areas	Vehicles	Height accessibility	Time
<b>Novice</b>	1 in each search area, announces	Birch	0	10 Boxes only	1	1	2-3 vehicles	3 feet	3 minutes
<b>Open</b>	1-2 per search area, announced	Birch or Anise	1-3	10-20 Can be boxes, backpack, or luggage	1-2	1	3 vehicles	3 feet	5 minutes
<b>Advanced</b>	1-3 per search area, not announced	Birch, Anise or Clove	1-5	15-25	2-3	1	3-4 vehicles	5 feet	10 minutes

## Faults

**Qualifying Faults** are given for the following reasons. You can continue with the trial if you have faults, but they may impact your ability to **achieve your Nose Work title for that day, and may impact your placement in the trial.**

**Damage to the search area- 1 fault.** Excessive pawing or damage to containers, excessive pawing or damage to vehicles.

**Handling errors-1 fault.** Any action or cue that causes the canine or dog team to perform incorrectly. Pulling a dog off odor, intentionally blocking an odor, or calling "alert" on a hide that has already been found would all be examples of handler errors. Faults will not be given to minor infractions or poor handling such as tangling leash, mistakenly blocking odors, etc.

**Non-qualifying faults** accumulate 5 points. You will not be able to continue searching the area when a non-qualifying fault occurs. Non-qualifying faults include the following:

-Dogs cannot urinate or defecate in the search area. You will be immediately eliminated from that leg of the trial, and will not gain any points for that leg. You will be able to continue with the next element of the trial.

-Judge stops the search for the dog's well-being.

-Absent from the search. If you are not ready to search when it is your turn, you may be disqualified for that search element.

-False alert.

### **Disqualifying Faults**

No points are given and you are disqualified to continue with the nose work trial.

- Unprofessional conduct
- Dog displays aggression to other dogs or people anywhere on the trial grounds.
- Any handler confirmed to be cheating

### **Titling**

Titles will be awarded to dogs that have earned all legs at a level. Dogs may not advance to the level for a leg prior to getting a level title.

Novice (SCT-1)

Open (SCT-2)

Advanced (SCT-3)

Placements- Certificates, prizes or ribbons may be given for each level. Placements will be determined by the total number of passing legs earned at a trial

### **General rules**

If the general rules are not followed, the handler/dog team may be excused from the leg or trial at the judge's discrimination.

- While in line to run, dogs will wait in either in the handler's car, or in a designated crating area.
- IF a dog appears to be injured or ill, the handler will be eliminated. Examples of injury include open wounds, limping, bandages, etc.
- Dogs must be kept on a 6' leash when not in a designated search area.
- Electronic collars, choke collars, prong collars, head halters are not allowed.
- Handlers are not allowed to watch other competitor's compete.
- Results of the searches will not be discussed or posted until the entire Nose Work Trial has been completed.
- Handlers must show respect to other competitors, judges and staff.
- Handler will provide adequate shade, water for their dogs.
- Judge's decision is final.

**Nose work trial committee- A Nose work trial committee shall include, but is not limited to:**

- A trial chairperson
- A Trial secretary
- A Timer

The trial chairperson may also server as the trial secretary.

**The trial chairperson is responsible for:**

- Obtaining the trial location. The location must have sufficient space to hold a trial at the level(s) that will be offered.
- Securing sanctioning from MASCA
- Arranging for a judge or judge
- Arranging for a table steward and timer
- Arranging for other volunteers, as needed.
- Ordering ribbons, prizes, certificates, etc.
- Making sure all required equipment, including scent is available at the time of the trial
  - Other equipment to have ready:
    - Traffic cones, signage, tape to set start lines
- Preparing and disseminating the trial premium
- Assuring that all paperwork is correct and submitted to MASCA.

**The Trial Secretary is responsible for:**

- Accepting entries and fees
- Preparing numbered armbands or stickers for competitors
- Assigning numbers to competitors and writing them on score sheets.
- Acting as the contact person for exhibitors
- Tracking requests for refunds
- On the day of the show the Trial Secretary will be responsible for
  - Checking in competitors
  - Preparing score sheets for the judge
  - Adding day of show entries for the judge
  - Ensuring all paperwork is complete and signed by the judge.