

Fast track

Margaret Keast explains the three tests a dog must pass to earn its Tracking Dog title.



laid 20 to 40 minutes before you set out on it. At some trials, you will have the choice of keeping the tracklayer at the end of the track or at an article.

Often, the club makes this choice based on the terrain and the ease of getting a tracklayer out without fouling the track, or on the need to use tracklayers again in other capacities. Note that all the articles on the track must smell of the tracklayer, so you can't just hand your dirty socks over.

Test two

The dog must follow the scent of a person known to it over a track of 800 metres, including through two turns. There will be an article at the start of the track to give your dog the scent, as well as two more articles on the track, one of which has to be indicated by the dog to obtain a Pass.

The track will be aged between 30 and 60 minutes before you set out on it. Again, you will have the choice of leaving a tracklayer at the end of the track or an article and, again, the club may make this choice for you.

Test three

This test is almost the same as the Test two, except that the tracklayer is unknown to the dog. This means that the dog can't have tracked this person at a trial in the past six months. 📌

In August, Margaret will introduce the three variables in these tests (articles, corners and age) and how to train for them quickly and simply.

Dogs competing for their Tracking Dog (TD) title are graded on their performance on three tracks.

A Fail is obvious, but the judge also has the choice to award a Pass, Good, Very Good or Excellent.

A dog needs to gain at least a Pass in the three tests, then you can apply to DOGS NSW for the Tracking Dog title.

The three tests

Each level of test in the tracking title is slightly more difficult than the previous.

As they progress, dogs will be expected to track over greater distances, follow older tracks, stop and acknowledge articles left

along the track, follow a track through corners and follow the track of a stranger.

Test one

The first test involves your dog following the scent of a person known to the dog over a track of 400 metres with two turns.

There will be an article at the start of the track to give your dog the scent – this is where dirty socks come in, as they are the most used article. There will also be another article further along the track, but in this first test, the dog does not have to stop and indicate the article.

This track will be aged between 20 and 40 minutes; that is, the track will have been

Upcoming trials

Start training now – there are Tracking Trials in Glenfield, Fineflower, Camden, Wallaroo State Forest and Grafton in June and July.

For more information, download the DOGS NSW Show & Trials Guide 2010.
W: www.dogsnsw.org.au/shows-trials