

## Recommendations on Agility Course Measuring and Setting Course Times

### Report by Dave Jolly, Judges' Working Party

Back in 2010, the Agility Liaison Council asked the Judges' Working Party to look into updating the Course Times Matrix. This is published in the Guide to Agility Equipment booklet which is used on the Judges training seminars and is also available to download from the KC website. This matrix was first produced in the mid 1980's and it was felt it no longer provided relevant course times – some too generous and others unachievable.

This subject was brought to the attention of the Accredited Judges' Trainers where it was revealed that some research into this had already been started by one of the trainers along with a couple of other judges keen to assist. This research was presented at the Annual Seminar for Accredited Trainers for discussion in February 2011.

Courses were being measured, the judge's course time recorded and the times of the places along with notes about the complexity of the course, e.g. how many pull throughs, pull rounds, weaves etc.

The first discussion was how to measure a course? There have never been any guidelines published on how a course is measured. The accepted practice was to measure along the dog's anticipated path but this has only ever been carried out by a small percentage of judges. However, under tests conducted by the researchers it was found there was too much difference in length when different people measured the same course. The measured length at times was different by several metres – therefore a way of measuring was sought to provide a more accurate course length. The researchers found that measuring straight lines between the centres of each obstacle provided an accurate length of the course no matter who did the measuring.

*(Figures 1- 3 show how a course length can vary by as much as 20 metres using dog's path)*

To date some 650+ courses have been recorded using straight-line measuring and some 150+ using dog's path measuring.

It has been found that the lower grade dogs are now travelling faster than 25 years ago, probably due to better training methods used today, and that the higher grades are travelling slower, probably due to courses being more complex. What has also been revealed is that there is a difference in speed between Large dogs and Small/Medium dogs. The matrix being put forward reflects all of this.

Whilst gathering the data on some courses the researchers sought to test their findings giving suggested course times to the judge based on dog's path and straight-line measuring. In almost all cases the judge chose the time based on the straight-line measurement and was happy with what then transpired in the ring.

The intention is to continue the research to gather more data and, if any changes are found in the analysis of this increased amount of data, to bring this to the attention of the Accredited Trainers at the next Annual Seminar. Any recommendations would then be made to the Judges' Working Party and then on to Council.

Once again this subject was discussed at the Annual Seminar for Accredited Trainers in October 2012. A vote was taken by the 14 trainers present on which measuring system should be recommended. There were no votes for measuring based on anticipated dog's path. There were 13 votes for straight-line measuring with one abstention. This was taken forward to November's Judges'

Working Party meeting where the following recommendation was agreed to be returned to the Liaison Council:

**Agility courses should be measured by the judge using a surveyor's measuring wheel prior to the start of the class. The measurement should be based on the straight-line/centre-to-centre method detailed below. The judge will then use the Course Times Matrix to arrive at a course time for that class.**

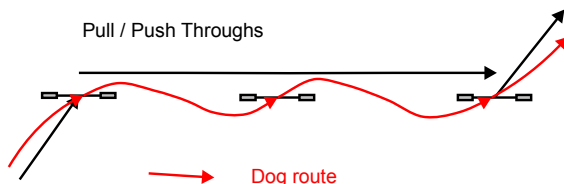
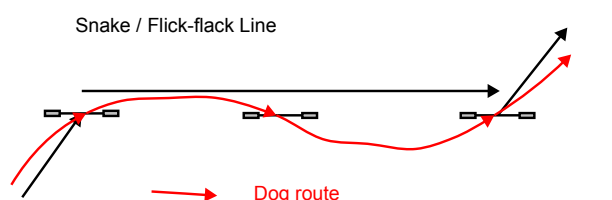
### **Straight-Line/Centre-to-Centre Course Length Measuring**

Measure from the centre of one obstacle in a straight-line to the centre of the next.

Curved tunnels should be measured around the outside.

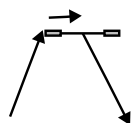
Contact obstacles should be measured on the floor alongside the obstacle.

Lift the wheel and reposition as necessary.



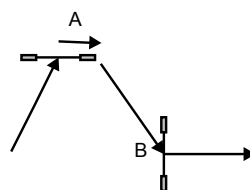
#### **Pull Throughs and Snakes**

To lift the wheel and reposition to other side of jump is pointless.  
Just use a straight line from centre of 1st pole to the centre of the last pole



#### **Go Round**

To wing edge  
To pole centre  
To next obstacle



#### **Pull In**

To centre pole [A]  
To wing edge [A]  
To centre pole [B]  
To next obstacle

If an approach to the next obstacle (jump) is obscure, then measure to the wing edge then pole centre.

## Agility Course Times Matrix

metres per second

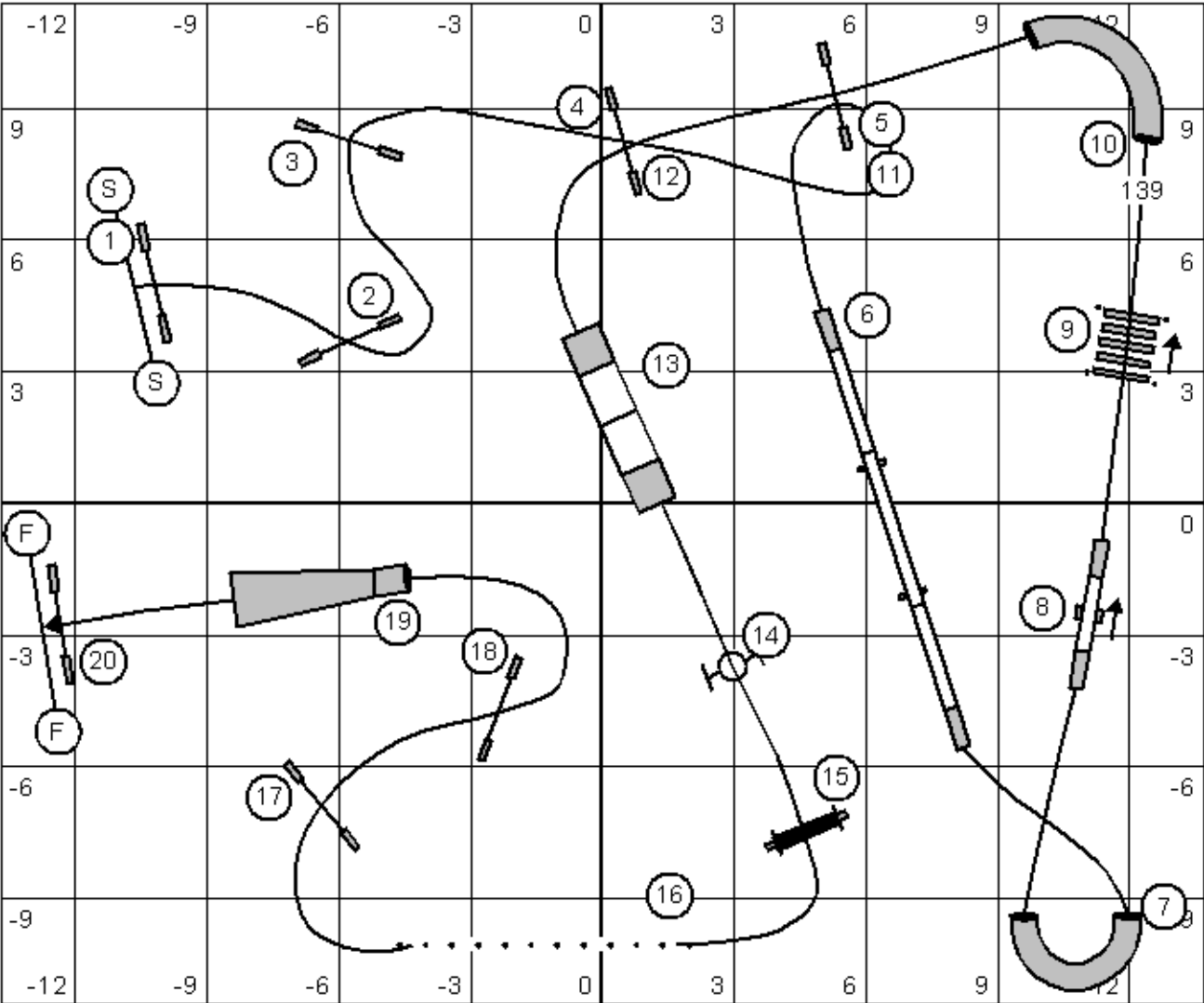
Course Length ↓	Dog's Speed	2	2.25	2.5	2.75	3	3.25	3.5	3.75	4
115		58	51	46	42	38	35	33	31	29
120		60	53	48	44	40	37	34	32	30
125		63	56	50	45	42	38	36	33	31
130		65	58	52	47	43	40	37	35	33
<b>Agility</b>	<b>Large</b>			G1,2	G1,2,3	G3,4,5	4,5,6,7	7,Ch		
	<b>Small / Medium</b>		G1,2	G1,2,3	G3,4,5	G6,7	7,Ch			

Course Length ↓	Dog's Speed	2	2.25	2.5	2.75	3	3.25	3.5	3.75	4
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125		63	56	50	45	42	38	36	33	31
130		65	58	52	47	43	40	37	35	33
135		68	60	54	49	45	42	39	36	34

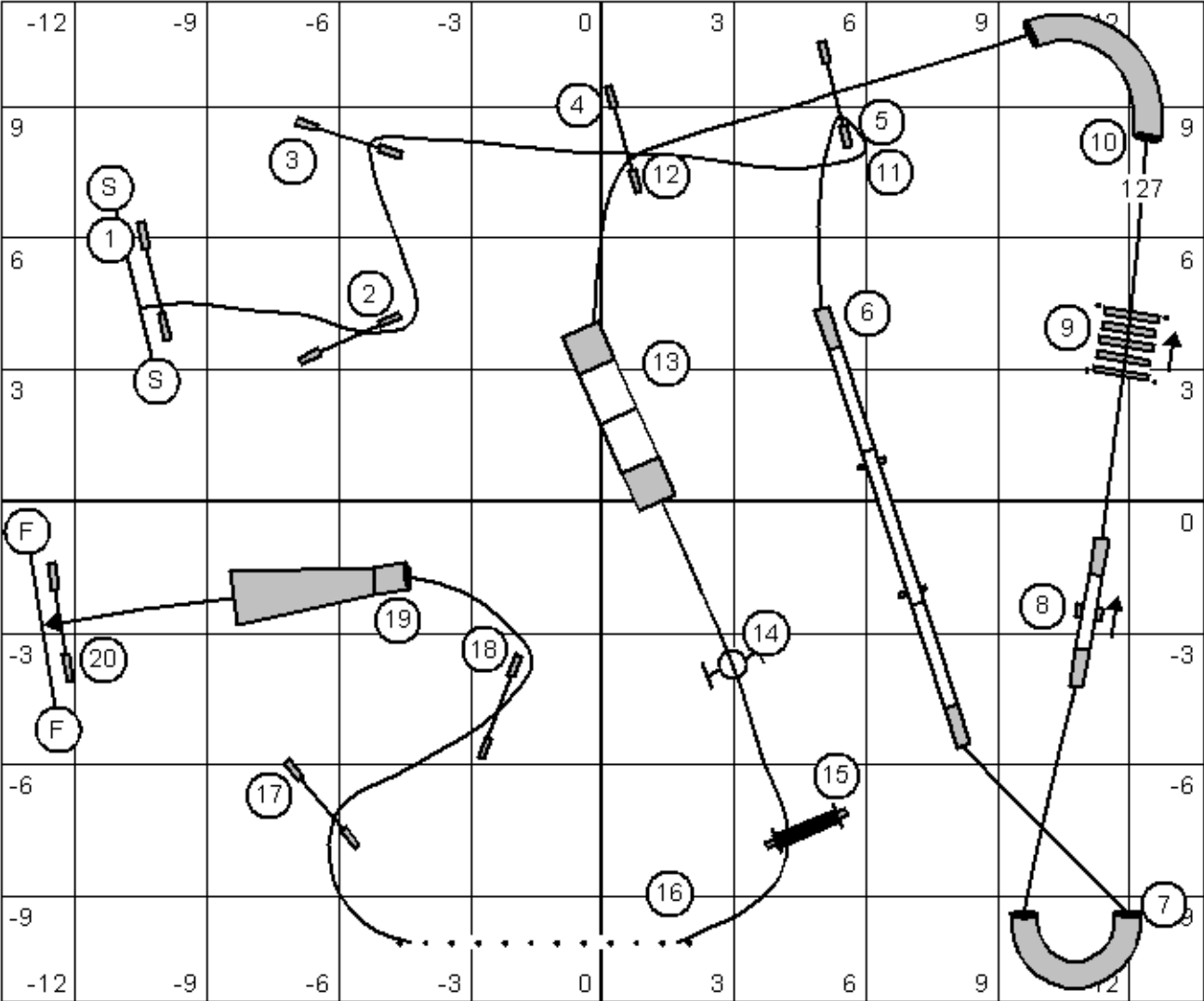
<b>Jumping</b>	<b>Large</b>				1	2	3,4,5,6	3,4,5,6,7	7,Ch	
	<b>Small / Medium</b>		1	2	3,4	4,5,6,7	5,6,7,Ch			

**Example:** Large G1 Agility - course measures 115m - course time could be between 42 and 46 seconds  
More complexity in the course slows the dog so choose towards the higher time in the range

Figure 1: Standard course length as produced by Clean Run Course Designer



**Figure 2:** This judge likes their dog to work tight – now 12m shorter!



**Figure 3:** This judge allows for a more generous path and gets an 8m increase in length, making a possible 20m difference measuring the same course!

