

CAPITAL COMETS DOG SPORTS CLUB. COVID-19 GUIDELINES.

The Capital Comets Dog Sports Club (Comets) is a Member Run Society registered under the British Columbia Societies Act. The club exists to support responsible dog ownership through the sport of Canine Agility. The club was founded in 1990 and operates under the rules of the Agility Association of Canada (AAC). Comets is a long term tenant of the Saanich Fairgrounds. The club rents space for training and practice on a weekly basis, and holds sanctioned agility trials on several weekends throughout the year.

The following outline describes the processes in place to ensure Covid safe behaviour during both weekly practice sessions and upcoming trials.

These protocols are current at the time of writing but may be subject to change. The principles guiding the protocols however, remain the same.

Safety is always the first priority. The protocols will reflect the most current Public Health Orders and recommendations in regard to masking, social distancing, hand and equipment sanitizing etc. and will be adjusted as required

PRACTICE NIGHT

Practice night will be held outdoors, either in the Wallace Ring or on the field immediately adjacent to the Agriplex as negotiated with the Fairgrounds.

The number of participants will not exceed the number permitted to gather outdoors as per the current Public Health Order. If

required (i.e. if the number permitted is less than the number of Comets members) pre-registration will be required and managed by the club.

In all cases a list of participants and contact information will be available if required.

Members are reminded ahead of time, by email, to practice safe Covid behaviour.

Members must check in on arrival and confirm their status regarding COVID-19 risk. This can be in the form of verbal question and answer managed by the Agility Coordinator. The confirmation includes the members' agreement to comply with the practice night guidelines.

Specifically: Do not attend if you are experiencing any Covid symptoms, if you have been in contact with anyone who has recently tested positive for Covid, if you have been asked to quarantine or if you have been outside of the province in the past 2 weeks. Members must err on the side of caution if they are experiencing any respiratory symptoms and will be asked to leave if the Agility Coordinator has any concerns.

Members must wear a mask at all times except when on the practice course running their dog (note: at this time no one else is within 6 - 12 feet minimum). No other exceptions.

The club provides hand sanitizer and an appropriate bleach solution for cleaning equipment.

Members set up the agility course(s) using the club's own equipment which is stored in a locked compartment at the

Fairgrounds. The agility equipment is at relatively low risk for transmission of the virus provided members are diligent with hand hygiene. The surfaces are not especially hospitable and the equipment is used only on a weekly basis. The principles of safe distance, good hand hygiene, wearing a mask, minimizing the touching and handling of common surfaces and items and using good common sense should be sufficient to ensure a safe environment. When building a course, or adjusting the bars during use, members are directed to hand sanitize immediately before and after touching the equipment. Work gloves are not a substitute for hand washing or sanitizing and if used they should be stored in the members own crating area between use.

The Fairground washrooms will be open and the fairground will be maintaining cleanliness and supplies.

The default is a physical distance of 6 feet at all times unless engaged in an activity that makes this impossible - e.g. setting the (heavy) contact equipment, building the ring. During those times members will minimize close contact to the extent possible and it can be noted that the activity takes less than 5 minutes on average.

Cars will be parked 6 feet apart and dogs are to be crated in or near the car and 6 feet away from any other crate.

TRIAL PROTOCOL

Capital Comets hosts AAC sanctioned agility trials on the grounds of the Saanich Fairgrounds. An agility trial is an opportunity for handlers and dogs to test their skills within a set of rules and

procedures. An obstacle course is set by a judge, dogs are directed around the course by their handler and must complete the obstacles with no errors and within a pre-determined time.

Safety is always the first priority.

The BC Ministry of Health's guidelines—*COVID-19: Going Forward*—identify physical distancing as the primary control measure along with hygiene/hand washing, followed by engineering controls and lastly the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Trial Entry

Trial entry will be as follows:

Entry will be limited to comply with the number of people allowed to gather outdoors under the PHO orders current at the time of the trial.

Entry will be online, and electronic payment is preferred.

Two to three days before the trial, entrants will receive from Comets an email confirmation of their entry. They are required to reply to the email indicating that they agree to follow Capital Comets' COVID-19 precautions, guidelines, rules, and regulations, are free of COVID-19 symptoms, and have not been in contact with any person known to be infected with COVID-19 or who has travelled outside the province in the preceding 14 days. (See appendix A.)

The following information will be on the premium, which will include a statement that applying to enter the trial implies the entrant's acceptance of the guidelines.

Safe trials depend on everyone following the guidelines—no exceptions.

You must not attend the trial if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or feeling unwell. You will be asked to leave the trial site immediately if you are visibly unwell.

COVID-19 symptoms mimic those of other respiratory ailments, especially in the early stages. The Provincial Health Officer has been very clear that individuals must err on the side of caution, and that anyone with respiratory symptoms must be assumed to potentially be infected with COVID-19 unless proven otherwise. This means that even if you are sure you have a common cold or seasonal allergies, if you are coughing persistently or have upper respiratory symptoms, you may not attend the trial.

Entry fees will be refunded for any individuals who cancel their entry due to illness.

However, anyone who attends the trial and who is visibly unwell or showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection will be asked to leave the trial site immediately and will not receive a refund.

Everyone attending the trial must comply with all COVID-19 precautions, guidelines, rules, and regulations developed by Capital Comets and in place at the trial. These are intended to ensure the safety of all participants. It may be a challenge to

break old habits, and every effort will be made to be calm and be kind, but we must also be safe. Anyone who is consistently failing to comply may be dismissed from the trial and will not receive a refund of fees.

Only registered competitors, registered volunteers, and judge(s) may be on the trial site. No friends or family may attend.

All participants must wear a mask unless they are in their own socially distant crating area or in the ring running their dog. You may remove your mask when you set up to start your run, and you must replace your mask before you leave the ring. You may remove your mask when you enter your crating area and must replace your mask when you leave that area. You may eat or drink only in your crating area.

Participants will bring their own masks and sufficient hand sanitizer for their personal use during the trial. Sanitizer will be provided for volunteers' use before and after volunteer assignments.

Physical Distancing

The default physical distance is 6 feet at all times unless people are engaged in an activity that makes this impossible (e.g., setting the contact equipment, building the ring).

Vehicles must be parked 6 feet apart.

Shade tents are permitted but must have 6 feet of space between them and may not be shared except by a family unit, that is,

registered entrant(s) or registered volunteer(s). The tenting area will be marked off to assist with setup.

The trial will consist of one agility ring set up in the Wallace Ring so that there is ample space for the required physical distancing.

General information usually covered in the “general briefing” will be emailed to entrants with the trial confirmation. A very short briefing update will be provided on the day, during which people must stay 6 feet apart as they gather to listen.

Course maps will be available via email on each day of the trial. In addition, maps will be posted at two stations. Only one person is allowed to be at a map station at a given time.

Walk throughs will be adjusted depending on the number of entries per class to limit the number of people walking at one time.

Competitors will receive a running order for the trial by email.

When a dog is in the ring, two dogs 6 feet apart may wait in line on the marked spots near the gate (or at a greater distance if your dog requires it).

Volunteers

There will be no sign-up sheets. A call for volunteers will be emailed ahead of the trial. Additional volunteer roles will be necessary to maintain safety at the site. This includes periodic sanitizing of equipment and additional sanitizing of the Fairground washrooms.

Volunteers will wear masks during their assignments.

All volunteers will hand sanitize immediately before and after their assignment. Sanitizer will be available to them in several places around the ring.

Course builders must hand sanitize immediately before and after the course build. Work gloves are not a substitute for hand washing or sanitizing, and the crew should remove their work gloves and ensure that they store them at their own crating area between course builds.

The gate, timer, and scribe should use their own writing implements.

The gate volunteer will continue to be responsible for calling out names from the list and ensuring that dog-and-handler teams enter the ring in a timely manner. The gate volunteer will be positioned 6 feet away from the gate and will have a copy of the running order. No gate list will be posted at the gate.

No one may enter the 6-foot bubble around the gate person.

The timer and scribe will be seated 6 feet apart from each other.

Ring crew volunteers will be seated at a distance apart (as usual). At the beginning of their assignment, they should determine who will be responsible for each piece of equipment and handle only “their” pieces. Two people who wear masks while adjusting the A frame can be considered to be at low risk since the task takes a minimal amount of time. Ring crew members who choose to wear work gloves must adhere to the guidelines that apply to the course builders.

As far as possible one person—a volunteer head timer—will be responsible for managing the timing equipment for the duration of the trial or at least for a given day. This will include all instances which require touching the equipment during course builds and trouble shooting.

Judges

A judge's table will be set up with a 6-foot buffer from the scorekeeper and from a second judge if one is present. One designated person will ensure that the judge has food, snacks, etc. Judges should be asked to bring their own masks and office supplies (pens, calculators, etc.) Comets will supply hand sanitizer, and the trial runner should ensure that the judge has sufficient downtime to access the washrooms for hand washing at reasonable intervals (e.g., between events).

Scorekeeper

The scorekeeper's seating will have a 6-foot buffer zone. Competitors may not enter the scorekeeper's bubble. Anyone who wants to ask the scorekeeper about scores or results must stand 6 feet away from the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper is asked to ensure that equipment brought onsite is kept to a minimum. Comets will provide sanitizing spray.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing

Frequent hand washing and sanitizing have been identified as the most important way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, together with physical distancing and refraining from touching your face.

The Fairground washrooms will be open, and Fairground staff will ensure that they are cleaned and well stocked. Comets volunteers will sanitize door handles and taps in the washrooms at frequent intervals throughout the trial.

Competitors are asked to bring sufficient hand sanitizer for their own use throughout the weekend. Comets will provide sanitizer for all ring crew before and after each assignment.

The timer pad will be sanitized after each event. Pens will be sanitized as necessary (i.e., if the volunteer is not using their own pen).

The scoring binders will be wiped down after each use. Scribes should handle the score sheets as little as is practical.

The scorekeeper should be especially vigilant in handling score sheets as little as possible, and hand washing or sanitizing immediately before and after each episode of entering scores. Completed score sheets can be placed in a resealable plastic bag before filing them for storage to facilitate further handling.

Results

The option for electronic notification of results is being explored and will be in place if possible.

As a default practice, the results binders will be located on three separate tables—one each for Starters, Advanced, and Masters. Hand sanitizer will be available on each table. People must hand sanitize before and after handling the binder and should not linger at the table. Only one person may be at a table at any time. The

results binders and sheets will be wiped down at intervals throughout the trial.

Ribbons

Ribbons will not be self-serve. They will be handled by one designated person, who will hand sanitize before doing so. A title sheet will be available on a table, at which only one person at a time may be present. People should hand sanitize before and after handling the title sheet. If competitors wish to defer receiving a ribbon, it can be claimed at a later date.

At all times avoid unnecessary or inadvertent touching of equipment on course or surfaces anywhere on the trial site.

If any person consistently disregards the guidelines, whether inadvertently or intentionally, it is everyone's responsibility to make sure that unsafe behaviour is not permitted to continue, since it places everyone at risk. People not complying with the trial protocols and measures may be asked to leave the trial.

APPENDIX A

Capital Comets will email the following confirmation of entry (or similar) to registered competitors and registered volunteers 2 to 3 days before the trial:

Greetings. Thank you for entering the Capital Comets trial. We are excited to gather together as a club and celebrate with our friends and our four foots!

These are not usual times, so as part of our “new normal” we need to hear from you **before** the trial.

Looking forward to a great weekend!

Please reply to this email. Your reply indicates your agreement to the following:

I confirm that I have read the “Capital Comets—Trialling in the Time of COVID-19” guidelines and agree to comply with them.

I am currently free from any COVID-19 symptoms, including sore throat, coughing, sneezing, fever, and chills.

I have not been in contact with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms in the past 14 days.

I have not travelled outside of BC nor spent any time in contact with anyone from outside of BC in the past 14 days. (Persons from outside of BC who have completed a 14-day isolation period are exempt.)

I have completed and returned the volunteer sign-up email.

