



Burlington Obedience Training Club

AGILITY TRIAL

July 23-26, 2020

PRELIMINARY TRIAL INFORMATION

May 12, 2020

The Burlington Obedience Training Club is pleased to announce our July 2020 Agility Trial at the Field House in Shelburne, Vermont. We're looking forward to the Trial Weekend and to seeing our friends. Of course we've got a ways to go before the Trial and if we've all learned anything in the past few months it's that the world has changed since last year in almost every respect.

This note is partially about the things that are the same and mostly about the things that will be different. If, after reading the following this note you need additional information – or have information that will help us all make this the fun, safe, enjoyable weekend we'd all like to have - please feel free to email us at Agility@BOTCVT.org If you prefer, you may call Tom's cell phone (802-363-9773) and leave a message (Please be sure to speak slowly, clearly and leave us your name, phone number and the time you called).

- What's the Same:
- 4 days of AKC Agility – July 23rd thru July 26th.
 - Indoors at the Shelburne Field House in Shelburne, Vermont
 - 2 Judges. Zach Davis on Thursday and Friday
 - Frank Gilmer on Saturday and Sunday
 - Class Schedules:
 - Thursday – Jumpers with Weaves and Standard (Excellent Only)
 - Time 2 Beat
 - Friday - Jumpers with Weaves and Standard (All Levels)
Premier Standard and Jumpers with Weaves
 - Saturday - Jumpers with Weaves and Standard (All Levels)
 - FAST (All Levels)
 - Sunday - Jumpers with Weaves and Standard (All Levels)
 - Time 2 Beat
 - Summer in Vermont - Warm days, cool nights, friendly people,
Lake Champlain, Church Street Marketplace, Ben & Jerry's, chocolate,
 - craft breweries and distillers using their alcohol to manufacture their
 - own disinfecting wipes.

What's Different: Just about everything else. The Covid-19/Coronavirus has become the central topic in our lives. While we're all looking forward to everything returning to normal, none of us is sure when that will be or whether we'll return to the old normal or some kind of “new” normal.

What's Up in Vermont

For our July Agility Trial, we're hoping for the boring, old normal but we're planning for the new one. Over the past weeks we've been watching, listening and trying to figure out whether we can even hold a trial. The signs here in Vermont are looking better all the time. Our virus numbers – both absolute numbers and rates of infection – are some of the lowest in the Country. Our State government is open, transparent and apolitical so we are all working together to do our part.

While we could not hold the Trials if they were this weekend, we have 10 weeks before the July Trial starts. While Vermont is cautiously easing restrictions, 10 weeks gives us the time to be optimistic, plan well and be ready.So we've scheduled the trial with the AKC and have started to outline the steps we need to do take so that we'll all have a great weekend.

We also have time to hear from you: Your ideas, your concerns, what needs to happen to let you feel comfortable in coming to Vermont, what you'd be happy to help us with and what you won't.

Here's where we stand at this moment:

Premium

The Trial Premium will be posted on BOTC's website in about a week.

Entry Period

The Entry period will start at 9 AM on Wednesday, June 24 and end on July 14th at 5 PM. This is later than usual but we're taking advantage of the AKC's temporary change in trial protocols so that we can accommodate the latest State of Vermont health and safety protocols and allow all of us to have the highest levels of confidence about our entries.

Building Set-up

The trials will take place indoors at the Shelburne Field House. The ringsize and location within the building will likely be the same as in past years.

Social Distancing & Coronavirus Precautions

While you could probably argue that the entire State of Vermont is Socially Distant, we will only be able to hold the Trial if:

Health & Safety Protocols – First and foremost, we know none of us will be comfortable if we can't do this safely. What does this mean? The answer to that question is evolving each day so won't know for sure. But we'll stay alert to the science of this as the next 10 weeks pass and we ask you to do the same and help us figure it out.

Groups - The State of Vermont needs to allow large groups to gather in one place. As of this past week, the Governor has increased the size of groups to 10 people. Not enough for us to hold the Trial but two weeks ago that number was “0” so this in one of the safety items we'll be watching.

Visitor Quarantine – Currently, visitors to Vermont are required to self-quarantine for 14 days before they are considered safe and can leave their quarantine. As the majority of our participants have typically traveled to Vermont for our trial, if the Out-of-State-Visitor quarantine requirement is still in effect, we won't be able to hold the trial.

You Have Confidence That You Will Be Safe – Obviously, agility trials need entries and people will only enter if they have confidence that they'll be safe and have a good time. While we always seem to have a good time at BOTC trials, your feeling about your own safety will be measured against a different standard this year. That's part of the reason for this notice. We want you to know what we're doing and solicit your feedback. Please let us know what you are thinking....and most importantly whether you even considering coming to Vermont. That information will help us plan better.

You Critically Assess Your Own Health and Respect Everyone Else – This is one of those moments when we each need to remember that no agility trial, “Q”, “QQ” or MACH point is worth getting sick over - or causing anyone else to become sick. The Coronavirus makes us active carriers of the illness and communicable long before we feels sick. We'll all rely on each other to stay home if we feel ill.

We all Respect Social Distancing and Other Safety Protocols – We're all well aware of “Social Distancing” as we've been living it. BOTC is assuming that it will still be a requirement by the end of July and that there might be additional health and safety protocols in place by that time based on what science and experience will have taught us by then. The following sections outline our current thinking.

Crating

As always, you'll be able to crate in your cars if you wish.

Unlike previous years, we are currently planning to expand the crating area to include a part of the “other” indoor field area AND to designate individual crating areas for each team. These crating areas will be specifically designated on the floor and we'll ask that each handler – or group of handlers if you are traveling and staying together – center their crating atop these designated spots and be sure to leave at least 6' to the nearest un-related team. Obviously, the goal is to leave as much space between crating areas as possible.

We're also exploring whether we can get permission from the Town of Shelburne to allow us to utilize the Town's existing playing fields for the use of EZ-Ups or tents to facilitate sheltered outdoor crating. (Sort of like the “old” days). Note: This is a question no one in the Town can answer for us right now.

Volunteers

We'll still need volunteers, Agility Trials can't run without them. However, we are planning to enact some new protocols to help our volunteers stay safe while helping move the trial day along.

Some of our thoughts include providing gloves and masks for volunteers, separating the Timer and Scribe (remember that we use large timer displays), daily cleaning of agility equipment.

Spectators

At the current time, we're planning to keep the event private and not open to the general public.

Food Service

We won't have a food vendor onsite. There are quite a few food sources nearby the site.

Restrooms

We've always adjusted Restroom protocols to increase their capacity. This year, we'll adjust them even further to maintain social distancing guidelines while waiting and to maintain them clean as the day progresses.

We'll also be working with the Town to see if we can get them to open the restrooms associated with the athletic fields.

Parking

As always, if we're all polite, there should be enough parking at the trial site. There will be some changes from the past however. We'll know more about that in the next month.

Trial Procedure Changes

We expect to change some of the usual trial patterns and protocols to accommodate Social Distancing and other safety guidelines. This may include: Social Distance spacing indicators for teams in the line waiting to enter the ring, designated "IN" and "OUT" doors for entering and leaving the building, limitations on the size of Walk-Thrus, hand sanitizer stations for all (assuming we can buy hand sanitizer which is not at all assured in Vermont right now), isolating the Trial Secretary and Judge work stations from unfettered competitor access, "Paperless Course Maps", how we handle Placement and Q ribbons, etc

Future Notices

As more information becomes available, we'll post it on BOTC's website (www.BOTCvt.org) and on BOTC's Facebook page (search FB for "Burlington Obedience Training Club")

We're optimistic but cautious.

We're open to ideas to promote our mutual safety while we have some fun, run with our dogs, see our friends.

Ideas? Suggestions? Concerns? Anxieties?

Email: Agility@BOTCvt.org

Telephone: 802-363-9773

(Tom O'Brien's Cell Phone)