K-9 Co-op
KEEGAN'S MAGIC

Welcome to our Keegan's Magic student newsletter! Each month, we will share training tips, training philosophies, student achievements, general announcements, and other great information. We hope you enjoy!
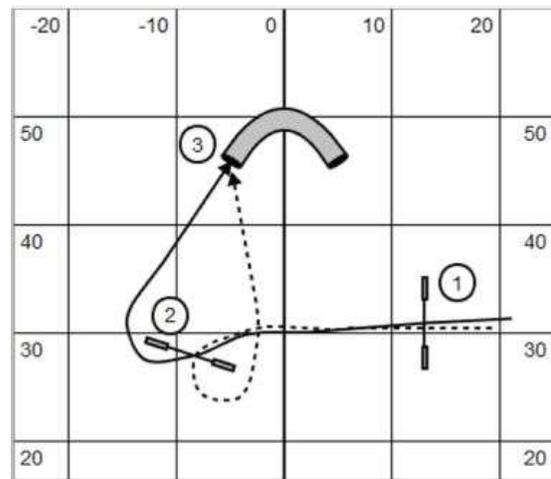
Why So Many Options?

One criticism I often hear from agility handlers is that the OneMind Dogs method has too many techniques. Hopefully, I can help make that a positive note by showing why it's good to have lots of options available to help your dog successfully maneuver the course.

When I walk a new course for my dogs, I do it three ways. The first time, I find each obstacle on the course and make sure I know the correct sequences. Next, I find the best running line or path for my dog. On the third walk, I choose the handling techniques that will help me direct my dog around the course.

Finding Each Obstacle

The first walkthrough is simple. I make sure that I know where each obstacle is on the course and that I know the correct sequence of obstacles. I admit that I have occasionally walked the wrong obstacles and missed entire sequences. Thankfully, fellow competitors have corrected me while I was still walking the course. Most people are genuinely good-hearted and helpful even though you are their competition. Don't be afraid to help others, even if you don't know them. You never know when you'll need advice too.

Determining the Best Line

The second walkthrough is much more challenging. If I have a printed course map, I can plan and decide the line I want my dog to take. Sometimes, however, the built course looks different

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from what I envisioned on paper, so I might need to change my plan. I've learned how best to find my dog's paths at OneMind Dogs seminars with the help of their coaches.

There are two main choices in this example sequence. On the solid line path, the dog continues straight over #2 and turns right to the tunnel. On the dotted line path, the dog wraps #2 to the left and continues to the tunnel. For me to figure out the best path for my dog, I consider the following: where my dog is coming from, where my dog is going, and which path is faster and/or shorter for my dog.

The first consideration, where my dog is coming from, helps me figure out which path is easiest or closest. In this example, the dog will first approach the left wing of jump #2. So, does this mean that wrapping that wing, as shown with the dotted line, is the best path?

Next, I consider where my dog is going. In this example, the dog is going to the tunnel, and the second wing of jump #2 is closest to the tunnel. This might indicate that slicing the jump (the solid line path) is the best option.

My last consideration, deciding which path is faster and/or shorter for my dog, is the tie-breaker. Which path is the fastest? Which is the shortest? Sometimes, distance and speed on a path are the same, but not usually. In our example, slicing jump #2 is faster than wrapping the jump.

If you aren't sure which path is shorter, walk over the jumps and count your strides. Keep in mind that dogs jump in straight lines and, in many cases, wrapping a jump can actually be longer than slicing a jump. Because two out of three considerations indicate that slicing the jump is best, I would direct my dog along the solid line path.

For this sequence, notice that I didn't consider potential off-course obstacles. For example, imagine there is a tunnel entrance just past jump #2. I would still choose the solid path because, based on my criteria, it is the best choice for my dog and I would handle the possible off course as best as I can.

Selecting the Handling Techniques

Now that I have figured out my dog's running line, I can use my third walkthrough to decide how to handle the course. This is where my "handling toolbox," and especially the OneMind Dogs techniques, help me come up with different options.

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For our example, if I plan for my dog to be on my right side as we head toward jump #2, I could do a rear cross at #2, or maybe I could stay on the landing side of the jump and do a German turn. If I want my dog to be on my left side as we head toward jump #2, I could decelerate to cue the turn to the tunnel, or perhaps I could do a reverse spin to the tunnel.

In choosing my handling techniques, I need to know if I can get to where my dog needs me to be on the course so that I can correctly place and time my cues. It is also important to know the cues that work best with my dog.

For example, I would handle our sequence differently with two of my dogs. If I plan for my dog to be on my right side, Clever, my Border Collie, reads rear crosses well and I will most likely be behind her to cue that correctly. However, I tend to run in front of Hart, my Australian Shepherd, and we do German turns easily, so that would be the best choice for us. If I plan for my dog to be on my left side, Clever turns beautifully when I simply decelerate on the approach to a jump, while Hart usually needs more turning cues, so a reverse spin would be best for him.

The essential point here is that there are many ways to handle a course correctly. The "correctness" depends on your skills as the handler as well as your dog's preferences and abilities. The more tools there are in your handling toolbox, the more options you have available to help your dog run the course. Your job as the handler is to help your dog be successful by making the course easy for them to understand.

Class Schedule

The next 4-week session begins the week of April 2. A handout with class dates for this session is available at the training field. Class dates may be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances, such as inclement weather.

- **Advanced Agility**: Tuesdays 8:00-9:30 am and Wednesdays 8:00-9:30 pm ($68/session or $22/drop-in)
- **OneMind Dogs Inspired Handling**: Thursdays 8:00-9:30 am ($68/session or $22/drop-in)
- **Intermediate Agility**: Tuesdays 6:15-7:15 pm & 7:45-8:45 pm, Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 pm, Thursdays 6:30-7:30 pm & 7:30-8:30 pm ($60/session or $20/drop-in)
- **Handlers Only**: Thursdays 5:00-6:00 pm ($60/session or $20/drop-in)
- *NEW* **OneMind Dogs Inspired Foundation**: Wednesdays 5:00-6:15 pm ($68/session or $22/drop-in)

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Private lessons available on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Ring rentals are also available for students. Please contact Maren directly for scheduling and availability.

Accomplishments & Brags

This is YOUR section of the newsletter – where our students can share their accomplishments with their dogs, including titles, placements, breakthroughs, etc. Please send us an email at keegansmagic@gmail.com so that we can celebrate your achievements with all our students!

Congratulations to the following students:

- Ellen Kurland and Magic (pictured) earned their C-ATE in CPE.
- Lisa Chavez and Ebony (pictured) earned their C-ATCH in CPE.
- Victoria MacVicar and Sterling qualified 3 times at the Tampa Bay German Shepherd Dog Club AKC Agility trial, earning their MX title.
- Helen Yettaw and Buddy qualified in 4 out of 5 runs at the Sonlight Ranch CPE trial. They also qualified twice at the Cool Critters TDAA trial and earned 1st place both times.
- Helen Yettaw and Ty went Reserve High in Trial on Saturday at the Cool Critters TDAA trial.
- Monica Gobeli and Rocky earned their AKC Achiever Dog certificate.
- Lisa Schmeling and Neo earned their AKC Achiever Dog certificate.
- Jan Casey and BT earned their BCAT title in AKC Fast CAT, earning the title with a time of 26.98 mph. BT also earned his AKC Achiever Dog certificate.
- Diane Gailit and Skylar earned their AKC Canine Good Citizen title and Achiever Dog certificate. At the Sonlight Ranch CPE trial, they earned 9 out of 10 Qs. At the Cool Critters TDAA trial, they earned 8 Qs and went High in Trial both days.

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- Elaine Rinicker and Charm passed their AKC Canine Good Citizen and earned their Novice Trick Dog title.
- Yuko Otazako and Forrest have had a month of firsts, earning their first Qs in AKC Novice Preferred JWW (Agility), Novice Preferred FAST (Agility), and Intermediate Rally Obedience. In February, they also earned their first Qs in AKC Scent Work, qualifying in Novice Interiors with a 2nd place and Novice Containers with a 1st place.
- Jill Baker and Kipper earned their NADD DS Dock Diving Senior title at their first ever trial.
- Jan Casey and Zoey, along with Monica Gobeli and Rocky, represented Pet Partners at the Global Pet Expo in Orlando.

Training Tip

Try to look slightly at the ground while running your dog. Doing this helps you stay connected because you can still see your dog in your peripheral vision while also letting you see the obstacle you are heading toward.

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