



## UNITED SCHUTZHUND CLUBS OF AMERICA – TRACKLAYER PROGRAM





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## SECTION 1: PURPOSE

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The purpose of the Tracklayer Program is to educate members and increase the number of trial tracklayers that can properly execute the track laying at USCA events. Further, the Tracklayer Program shall provide a consistent and reliable process for the laying of IPO tracks at championship events of the United Schutzhund Clubs of America.

## SECTION 2: OBJECTIVES

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The objectives of the Tracking Program are:

1. Provide “standardized” education.
2. Increase the number of competent Tracklayers in the United Schutzhund Clubs of America (USCA).
3. Promote membership involvement and participation through ongoing track laying education.
4. Facilitate USCA objectives of preserving the German Shepherd Dog per USCA’s Bylaws.
5. Address the interests of the USCA membership as they relate to tracklayers and trial tracklaying.
6. Provide education to tracklayers in the following areas:
  - Knowledge of tracklaying regulations
  - Variations in track patterns
  - Land division to yield the most number of tracks
  - Orientation in the terrain
  - Variation in vegetation and what to do about it

## SECTION 3: TRACKLAYER COMMITTEE

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Appointed by the President, the Tracklayer Committee shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members but not more than eight (8) as follows: USCA President, USCA Director of Judges, Tracklayer Committee Chairman, and (3) USCA members the President deems necessary to execute the objectives of the Tracklayer Program and represent USCA’s Member’s interests as they relate to Tracklayers and tracklaying.

## SECTION 4: GENERAL REGULATIONS

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1. The Judge or the Tracking Coordinator shall determine the pattern of the track - the layout of the tracking fields must be taken into consideration (The National Events Manual provides further detail for national events).
2. Varying patterns must be used for the tracks.
3. Every attempt should be made to place the articles and the corners on each track the same distance from each other (i.e. tracks should be as consistent as possible for each competitor).
4. A starting flag marks the start of each track.

**Suitable Vegetation:** In principle, all natural soils such as dirt fields, hay, alfalfa, grass/sod fields can be used.

## SECTION 5: REQUIREMENTS FOR TRACKLAYERS (CHAMPIONSHIP LEVEL)

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1. The Tracklayer must have titled at least 1 dog to the level IPO III or FH 1.
2. The Tracklayer must have good understanding of the Rules & Regulations.
3. The Tracklayer must have a good sense of direction.
4. The Tracklayer must be able to arrange tracks to the geographical area of the field.
5. The Tracklayer must be able to understand, take, and follow direction from the Tracking Coordinator
6. The Tracklayer must be capable of making drawings of all necessary tracks with the placement of the articles and corners.



7. While the dog is working the track, the tracklayer must be able to give the Judge the correct indications for the corners and the articles; the tracklayer must know his/her proper position in the field while the track is being worked.

## SECTION 6: TRACKING COORDINATOR

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The Tracking Coordinator is a key position in USCA's national working events. This person is responsible for the success of the tracking phase for the trial. The Tracking Coordinator is responsible for:

- Recruiting numbers of tracklayers/spotters for the event
- Surveying the tracking grounds
- Plotting tracks
- Setting a corridor to where tracks can be laid to the left or right starting with number 1 track (example: 1-3 tracks on the right and then 4-6 tracks on the left side working your way back to the starting point)
- Try to keep the same Tracking Flight in the same field. This helps with maintaining a proper time schedule
- Measuring/marketing tracking lines
- Conducting a fair/impartial draw for tracks at the tracking field
- Ensure that tracks are laid and run on time (This is an important "customer service" issue)
  - Need at least 3-4 Tracklayers
    - **Tracklayer 1** – will lay the first 4 Tracks of the Trial (Tracks 1-4), with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
    - **Tracklayer 2** – will lay the next 4 Tracks of the Trial (Tracks 5-8), with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to the first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
    - **Tracklayer 3** – will lay the next 4 Tracks of the Trial (Tracks 9-12), with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
    - **Tracklayer 4** – will lay the next 4 Tracks of the Trial (Tracks 13-16), with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
      - Once Tracklayer 4 has completed his/her tracks Tracklayer 1 will continue on to the next 4 tracks. The same applies to Tracklayer 1-3.
- By doing this type of schedule you will be able to track 6 – 8 dogs per hour.

## SECTION 7: TRACK SPOTTER

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1. The Track Spotter can be the Tracking Coordinator or the additional Tracklayers.
2. The Tracklayer will start laying the track - he/she will make the proper paces to the first article and to the first turn. The Spotter will pace off from the start flag and set a line up point for the second turn - he/she must also make a mark on the ground that is not visible to the dog or the handler. The Spotter will then set a line up point for the fourth corner and last article, also marking the ground that is not visible to the dog or the handler.
3. By doing this you will not contaminate other tracks that have already been laid.



## SECTION 8: LAYING OF THE TRACK

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### THE TRACKING COMMITTEE:

- Determines patterns based on terrain and space
- Determines in coordination with the tracking judge, the laying of the tracks. Terrain and weather should be considered. Disagreements will be settled by the Event Chairman.
- May pull a tracklayer for lack of competency or compliance

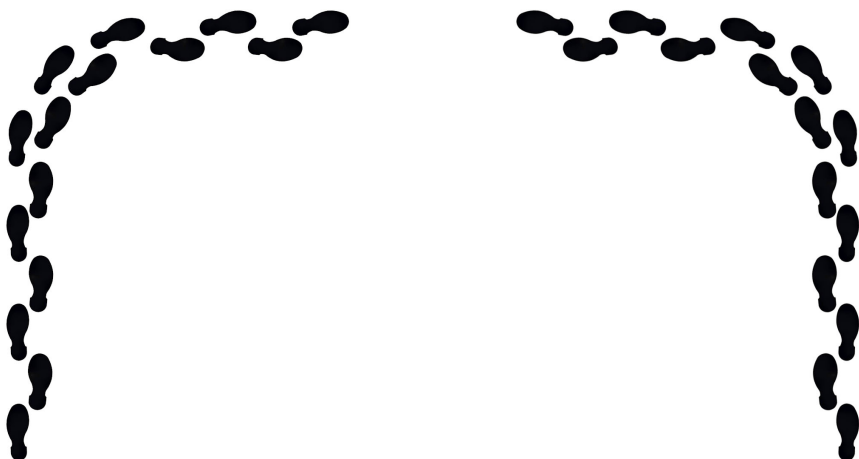
### THE TRACKING JUDGE:

- Determines article placement on legs
- Determines in coordination with the tracking committee, the laying of the tracks. Terrain and weather must be considered. The Event Chairman will settle disagreements.
- Communicates article locations to Tracking Coordinator
- May suspend a trial for weather conditions

**VERY IMPORTANT:** “Tracklaying Pace” - The trial rulebook should be followed when laying tracks. However, a variety of factors should be considered which might result in slight variations to the trial rulebook. Principally, tracks may be “kicked” harder than a natural walk. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to: space available, wind, rain, terrain type, temperature, cross tracks, ground moisture, and the like.

The tracks must be laid in a normal walking pace, unless an exception is made. A very slight pause is permitted when placing the articles IN the track. Articles should not end up outside of a footstep. A slightly shorter stride at the corners is allowed (3 paces before and after) followed by a return to the “tracklaying” pace. Corners should be made in a five (5)-step procedure (five (5) steps to complete a 90-degree corner, starting and ending with the right foot for a right turn or left foot for a left turn).

The Tracklayer remains for a brief moment on the scent pad and then proceeds at the determined “tracklaying” pace (pace defined here and throughout as 60-70cm, or 24-28inches in length) in the direction prescribed by the Judge/Tracking Coordinator. The starting flag is to be placed directly to the left rear corner of the scent pad at the beginning of the track. The distance between two legs has to be at least 30 paces. The corners can be at a shortened stride (3 paces before and after) so it is possible for the dog to continue tracking while going to the next leg. Standing still on the track is not permitted.





### PLACING OF THE ARTICLES:

The first article is to be placed on the track after a minimum of 100 paces on the first leg (250 paces for FH) and not within 20 paces before or 20 paces after a corner. The last article has to be put at the end of the track. After putting the last article on the track, the Tracklayer must walk straight ahead for a few more paces.

### SECTION 9: ARTICLES

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1. Only articles that have been in the possession of the Tracklayer for at least 30 minutes are to be used on the track. Normal scenting is acceptable (articles in hands or placed in pockets). Spitting on articles is not acceptable.
2. The articles used on a track, must be of different materials (leather, wood, textile). The articles must have a size of: 4 inches (max) in length, 1.5 inches (max) in width and .38 inches (max) in thickness. Their color may not stand out considerably from that of the terrain.
3. For an IPO III Track, the articles must be numbered (1-3) and the numbers must coincide with the numbers on the starting flag.



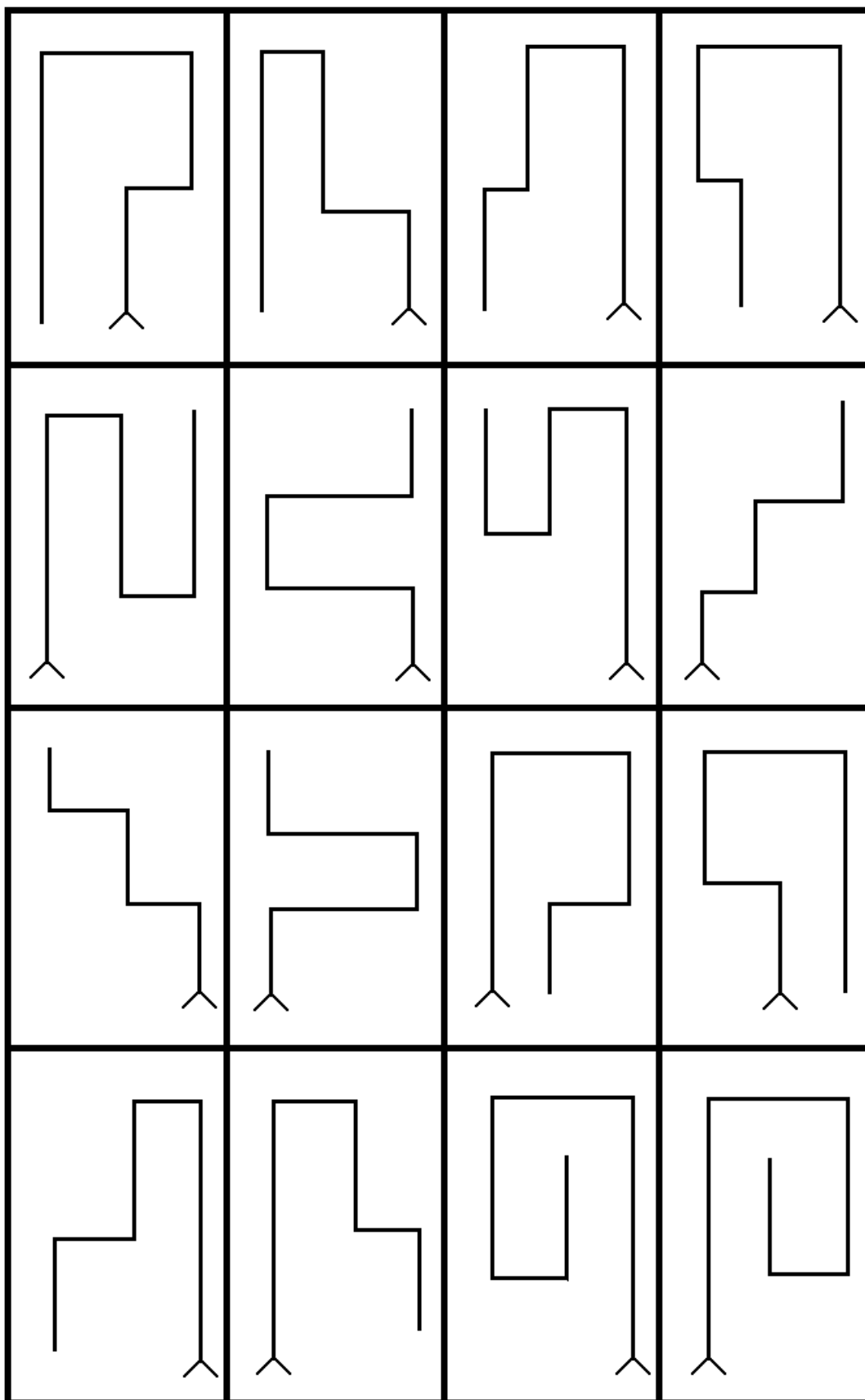
### IPO II & III DISTANCE & AGE:

#### IPO-II

Stranger lays track, at least 400 paces, 3 straight legs, 2 corners (ca 90°), and 2 articles. The track is at least minimum 30 minutes old.

#### IPO-III

Stranger lays track, at least 600 paces, 5 straight legs, 4 corners (ca 90°), and 3 articles. The track is at least minimum 60 minutes old.





## SECTION 10: PRACTICAL TIPS

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### REQUIRED:

- Paper and pencil
- Articles
- Starting flags
- Time device (watch, cell phone, etc.)
- Outerwear and footwear appropriate to terrain and weather conditions.

### TIPS:

- Make a drawing to plot tracks.
- Explore the terrain and look for orientation points. Also look for any obstacles (fence rows, waterways, and change of vegetation).
- Beware of a good distance between the tracks. A dog must have 10-15 meters beside the track before entering on another track. Notice also the direction of the wind.
- Think about the time schedule, if you have to move to another location you must take this into consideration. Be mindful of the Judges desire for a break between flights.
- If you have to make notes while laying the track, never stand still while doing this.
- Before placing the starting flag, walk a few paces in the direction of the track before laying the scent pad.
- Starting flag is to be placed directly left of you at the start of the track.
- Remain at the starting flag for several seconds to make a good mark.
- Articles must be placed on the track - **Do not drop them on the track - place them!**
- Correct corners - a shortened stride 3 paces before and after the corner with a 5-pace corner laid.
- Put the last article (if possible) on the same line as the starting flag and walk several paces in the same direction.
- If while laying the track you discover animal remains (carcass), or other unusual barrier to laying the track (Glass, prickly bushes, any dangerous object, excessively deep water etc.) that would render the track unfair or substantially different from all of the other tracks, it is probably best to scrap the track and consult with the tracking coordinator.
- Try not to use a major change of terrain to make a corner, e.g., a bare spot in the middle of a lush alfalfa field, or the middle of tire tracks, etc.
- At the time the handler and his dog start on the track, the tracklayer should walk about 15 yards behind the handler and inform with hand signals the Judge about what is coming. This is clear for the Judge and also for the spectators.
- Make a clear drawing for the Judges

## SECTION 11: THEORETICAL TEST

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1. What are the conditions for an IPO III track?
2. After how many paces, the first article has to be placed on an IPO III track?
3. Which leg should the first article be placed on a IPO III track?
4. Which way are the articles to be placed on the track?
5. What must the Tracklayer do after placing the last article?