

National Association of Canine Scent Work, LLC®



To: NACSW™ Members

From: National Association of Canine Scent Work, LLC (NACSW™)

Date: February 20, 2018

Re: Consideration of dog fitness for the rigors of competition events

It is widely recognized that the activity of K9 Nose Work® is a benefit for all dogs, enriching their lives and providing mental stimulation.

The activity of K9 Nose Work® is different than the sport/trial side of NACSW™. Trialing, at any level, may not benefit dogs with health, stamina or age-related issues. The trial environment requires stamina and can be unpredictable and include hills, steps, long walks between searches, along with plenty of time spent waiting crated in the car. The NACSW does not want to see any dog at a trial that is experiencing significant distress, overt pain, and physically or mentally unable to handle the trial environment. The rule book allows for a dog to be excused if the dog is under undue stress or is in obvious pain.

We hope that an official does not have to ask a handler to end a search because a dog is physically not up to the challenges of trial day. We want to make all aware of this possibility so that handlers can make the best decision possible for their dogs.

A level of physical fitness is required from dogs participating in NACSW ORTs and trials. NACSW and Trial hosts cannot make special accommodations at NACSW trials for dogs not able to physically traverse the trial location, such as; rides to search areas, special consideration to run order, alternative path to search area, or additional time to help your dogs acclimate. Strollers/carts are allowed, as is carrying a dog.

The activity of K9 Nose Work® at classes or sessions with an instructor can create an environment that is helpful and accommodating for a dog with limitations due to age or illness to enjoy this empowering activity. This activity was created for dogs and is about the welfare and safety of dogs. We just want to enhance awareness for the benefit of all dogs and handlers.

NACSW recommends that all handlers consider the rigors of the trial day when evaluating if the trial environment is appropriate for their dog.

Thank you for your continued support of NACSW!