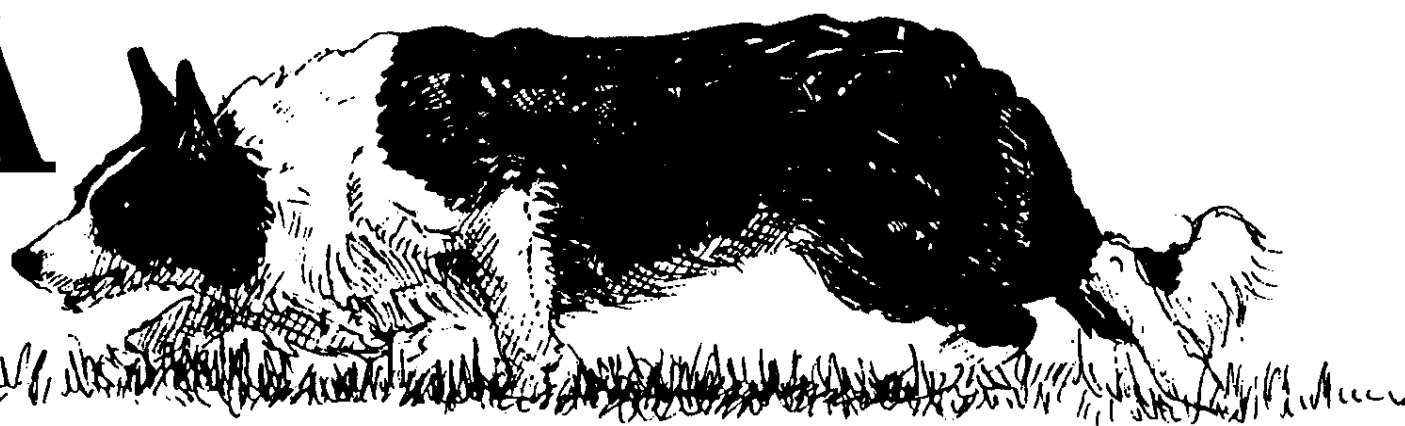


# NEBCA News



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Supplement

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## 1994 Trial Supplement

### Conditioning the Working Dog

*We would like to thank Mary Gessert for allowing us to reprint this article which appeared in last years Working Border Collie magazine. Much of the following information has been taken from a presentation by Hilary M. Clayton, BVMS, PhD, MRCVS, on conditioning sport horses. The presentation was given at the 54th annual conference for veterinarians held at Ohio State University, January 9-12, 1993.*

The principles of conditioning are the same whether we are talking about human athletes, performance horses, or working dogs. After many observations of herding dogs, both my own and others, concerns that handlers have about their dogs are related to lack of proper conditioning. These problems include some obvious ones such as lack of endurance, overheating, lameness and incoordination. Some more subtle ones are a lack of concentration (looking away from the stock or not responding to commands), and a decrease in the willingness to work. Many of us have a limited amount of time to spend working our dogs, yet we expect them to be at their best when we take them out. Just as human "weekend athletes" are more prone to injuries and are typically in poor condition, so too are our "weekend working dogs." A conditioning program must be tailor made to each individual dog. You should take into consideration factors including the type of work and the level of expected performance, the dog's age, its present condition, any past injuries, the local climate and the terrain. The program needs to address three areas. These are: cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and suppleness.

Cardiovascular conditioning improves the dog's ability to produce energy. Strength training develops the power or endurance of specific muscle groups depending on the requirements of the

work to be done. Suppling exercises maintain or increase the range of motion in the joints and help to prevent injury. A conditioning program works by gradually increasing the amount of exercise in order to stimulate adaptations in the body tissues. Cardiovascular fitness improves rapidly, whereas ligaments, tendons and bones adapt slowly. If the workload is increased too rapidly, lameness can develop.

#### Warm-Up and Warm-Down

During the warm-up, the temperature of the muscles rises slightly, increasing muscular power and efficiency. The tendons and ligaments become more pliable and less susceptible to tearing. The warm down is just the reverse. During the warm-down, the body removes the lactate which has built up in the muscles and allows a gradual redistribution of blood flow away from the muscles. In general, it is wise to allow 5-10 minutes for the warm-up and warm-down periods. In cold weather the warm-up takes longer and in warm-down is faster. In hot, humid weather, it may be difficult to warm down and external cooling is helpful. Sponging or spraying the dog with cool water will assist in the cooling off phase.

#### Fatigue

This is a common problem and is seen commonly in trial dogs that have not been properly conditioned. Fatigue is defined as the inability to maintain the level of performance. It is usually due to the depletion of the muscular store of glycogen, an energy producing compound. In addition to the loss of glycogen, high intensity activity results in the build up of lactate. Lactate accumulation lowers the pH in the muscles inhibiting energy production. The result is a reduction in the rate of energy production and the rate of performance. Fatigue predisposes a dog to injury, especially tendon strain. Warning signs of fatigue include a

reduction in speed, an increased heart rate, incoordination such as stumbling and wobbling, and a decrease in the response to commands.

#### Cardiovascular Conditioning

Conditioning exercises should simulate the intensity and duration of the expected performance. A frequency of three to four times a week with a progressive increase in the intensity and/or duration is used to increase fitness. The initial conditioning is based on a period of low intensity aerobics known as the Long-Slow-Distance. This involves periods of walking and jogging three to four times weekly. Young dogs and those in poor condition should start out with an exercise period of 10-15 minutes and over a period of weeks to months work up to 45 to 60 minute workouts. Usually the work load is increased gradually at weekly intervals. It is important to watch carefully for signs of fatigue. Reduction of duration and intensity will be necessary during hot weather and other times of stress (injury, pregnancy, lactation, etc.).

#### Interval Training

Dogs which have been properly conditioned through the use of LSD work can progress to the use of interval training. The purpose of it is to allow the dog's system to become accustomed to the build-up of lactate that occurs during high intensity activity. This is accomplished by using gradients to increase the cardiovascular workload without the risk of injury to muscles and tendons. The principle of interval training is that the work period is broken up into a number of short bursts of high intensity exercise separated by periods of low intensity exercise. The ratio of work-rest should be approximately 1:1 or 1:2. The length of the high intensity workouts depends on the goal. Dogs that run in the open class should eventually work up to 15-20 minutes of high speed work followed by

(Continued on page B)

# NEBCA Guidelines

1. Trials must be held in the North East region which will be as follows:  
New England States (ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI), New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the Canadian provinces of Quebec, Atlantic Maritime and Ontario.
2. Trial dates and intentions to be known before the start of the trial season. The season usually starts in April or May. The trials must be an organized and advertised event.
3. First-time trials will be up to the trials committee to approve or disapprove as qualifying trials. All trials will be the responsibility of the trials committee to approve or disapprove.
4. The trial must have an individual (a manager) who must contact a NEBCA trials committee member in advance to help ensure a successful trial.
5. The class may not have a limit of the total number of dogs entered, but may have a limit of dogs per handler. If a high limit does exist, the trial may remain a qualifying trial so long as no member of NEBCA is turned away before the entry deadline. A trial must have a limit of 12 open dogs competing in the open class to be a qualifying trial.
6. The class will be judged by a qualified person approved by NEBCA. A list of qualified judges is available from the association.
7. Judges to judge on a suggested system of 100 points. Some points may change according to certain course changes. A judged trial is preferred, but points trials may be accepted. **(The judging method, ie, judged or points trial) must be announced at the beginning of the trial season (April). The trial will be judged and scored as advertised or sanctioning as a qualifying trial will be removed. As in a judged trial, grips will not be allowed in a points trial, nor will retrievers be allowed at any fetch-gate or drive-panel.**

Outrun	20 points
Lift	10 points
Fetch	20 points

Drive	30 points
Pen	10 points
Shed	10 points

Total=100 points.

It is suggested that a dog retiring from or being called off for any reason other than running out of time, be given a score of "0".

8. The running order should be drawn as follows: **The order of handlers will be drawn. No handler should run twice before any handler has the opportunity to run once. Handlers running less than two dogs should have the opportunity to choose the heat in which they will run. Handlers should have the privilege of choosing the order in which they will run their dogs.**
9. If a trial is scheduled to rerun the top 10 qualifying dogs, then this should be stated at the handlers meeting. If this is the case, any handler qualifying 3 dogs for the top 10 may choose which 2 dogs he will run in the final round.
10. It is suggested that ties for first place be broken by a run-off at the conclusion of the trial. The method of breaking the tie should be stated at the handlers meeting.
11. Trial managers are requested to post scores of all completed runs at intervals of every 3-5 dogs.
12. The NEBCA Trials Committee has the power to suggest changes in a course and can decertify a trial if conditions appear not to be conducive to the health and welfare of the livestock or the dogs. Two members of the trials committee and /or a NEBCA officer must be present. ♦

## **(Conditioning, continued from page A)**

20-30 minutes of walking or jogging. These sets should be repeated two or three times during the workout.

### **Strength and Suppleness**

Specific muscle strength and suppleness are developed during the actual training or work of the dog on livestock. The recommended for strength training is three times a week for improvement reducing to twice a week if the desired level of performance has been reached. The duration of the training episode depends upon the level of development of the dog, ranging from 5 to 10 minutes for the young dog to 20 to 30 minutes for the mature trained dog.

### **Suggested Conditioning Program**

**12-24 months of age**—gradually work up to 20 minutes of jogging three times weekly, and daily or every other day training sessions of 10 minutes each.

**2 years to 8 years of age**—gradually work up to 30-45 minutes of jogging, two to three times weekly. Include intervals of 15 minutes of high speed

once or twice weekly, and training sessions of 20-30 minutes 2-3 times weekly.

Aged, pregnant or lactating dogs—continue LSD work, reduce the amount of high speed work, training sessions once or twice weekly.

The key to success is the **GRADUAL** approach to the conditioning process. Remember that any period missed in the conditioning schedule will necessitate starting at a lower level. This is especially true of older dogs as they are quicker to lose their conditioning and take longer to regain it.

In most cases, a simple program of jogging for 20 to 30 minutes three times a week will make a tremendous difference in the condition of your working dog. This is easily accomplished if the handler is willing to exercise by rapid walking (during which the dog must trot to keep up), jogging or bicycling. Handlers who are unable to exercise may find other willing family members or a neighbor to help. Those

who already exercise must be careful to watch for fatigue in the dog as it may tire before the handler. (If you have the opposite problem, you would do well to start gradually!) This is especially important if you are bicycling, as your speed may be too fast for the initial phase of conditioning. During hot weather, schedule your sessions for early in the morning. If you are working on a pavement, be sure your dog's paws are not being burned or worn excessively. Those who travel a great deal with their dogs will find that there is always an opportunity for LSD training, even if you have no access to sheep.

Taking the time to properly condition your dog will pay off in improved performance. You will notice an increase in endurance, better coordination, fewer muscle strains, greater keenness and quicker responses. Whether you compete in sheepdog trials or depend on your dog to help you on the farm or ranch, you and your dog will both benefit from a conditioning program. ♦

# Trial Results

## Connecticut Nursery Trial-April 23rd & 24th

The 1994 season got off to a great start with the Connecticut Nursery Trial held on April 23rd and 24th in Portland, Connecticut. With the weather being the nicest we'd seen in at least 6 months, the turn-out was better than expected and it was nice just to see each other once again. Considering how little most of us got to work our dogs due to so much snow this winter, the dogs ran surprisingly well.

The event was preceded by a one day training clinic with Bruce Fogt. Those who have taken part in Bruce's clinics know how invaluable these are, especially as a starter to the season, and this is the forth time that Bruce has judged this trial and instructed this clinic.

The field offered a 150 yard outrun for Ranch, 125 for Pro-Novice and 75 for Novice. The wear for novice and the drive for pro-novice were about 50 yards with the cross drive roughly 75 yards. Tim and Lynette Milleville's Cheviot-cross ewes moved easily and were ideal for this nursery event.

A total of about 35 nursery dogs ran each day with time being left for an open jackpot late each afternoon. On Saturday, 16 open dogs ran in this event and 10 on Sunday. The open course kept the same outrun as for Ranch, but the drive was moved back about 30 yards and the cross drive lengthened. It proved to be tricky late in the day as the course was reversed and the sheep were used to breaking for the exhaust at a certain point. They were pretty tired with all of this and were hard to drive away from the post as well as being difficult to keep on line for the cross drive.

Saturday night we all met at a local restaurant for dinner and talked dogs and more dogs. A birthday cake was presented to Lin Reuther of Vermont and then Maryanne Fallon stole the show with her "Fishing Song". It was a great weekend for the season's opener in the Northeast! ♦

### Novice

Saturday			Sunday		
1. Maria Mick	Annie	69	Joanne Krause	Meg	69
2. Joanne Krause	Meg	66	Maryanne Fallon	Faith	61.5
3. Margie English	Jack	65	Barbara Levinson	Tess	57
4. Margie English	Sally	64.5	Maria Mick	Annie	54
5. Roger Millen	Tripp	55	Maryanne Fallon	Jas	50.5
6. Heather Millen	Lark	47	Heather Millen	Lark	39

### Pro-Novice

Saturday			Sunday		
1. Maria Mick	Fly	74	Mike Canaday	Glyn	76.5
2. Warren Mick	Tara	72.5	Beverly Lambert	Meg	75
3. Gene Sheninger	Gail	69	Gene Sheninger	Gail	73
4. Jean Kennedy	Max	66	Sally Lacy	Bob	69
5. Roger Millen	Tripp	64	Maria Mick	Fly	59
6. Mike Canaday	Glynn	64	Jean Kennedy	Max	57.5

### Ranch

Saturday			Sunday		
1. Tim Milleville	Roy	84	Carol Champion	Queen	84.5
2. R. C. Gilbert	Ring	82.5	Gene Sheninger	Gail	82.5
3. Rich Seaman	Cleo	81.5	Tim Milleville	Roy	82
4. Larry Champion	Ky	81	R. C. Gilbert	Ring	78.5
5. Carol Champion	Queen	77	Tim Milleville	Loch	77.5
6. Mike Canaday	Bill	76	Rich Seaman	Cleo	76.5

### Jackpot

Saturday			Sunday		
1. Beverly Lambert	Lark	94	Mike Canaday	Robin	96
2. Beverly Lambert	Jet	93	Tim Milleville	Roy	94
3. Carol Champion	Dave	90	Beverly Lambert	Jet	93
4. Mike Canaday	Glen	89.5	Bruce Fogt	Molly	91
5. Linda Kelly	Mac	88	Carol Champion	Dave	88

*Below are pictured additional Border Collies from the Northeast that have died in the last 6 months. Others are shown on page 3. They were all trained dogs that are irreplaceable and greatly missed by their owners. Aside from Lady, all of these dogs were hit by cars.*



*Gene Sheninger's Robin*



*Sally Lacy's Kip*

July 2, 3, & 4, 1994  
**Northeast Independence Day  
Sheepdog Trial**

**Altamont, NY**

**Judge~Ralph Pulfer**

**Nursery, USBCHA and Open Daily  
Cash Prizes for Open**

**Prizes to Top Ten in Novice, Pro-Novice & Ranch**

**Fees: Open: \$26.00 per day, Nursery: \$16.00 per day, USBCHA: \$5.00 per day**

Return Nursery form to: Warren Mick•RD •5750 Meadowdale Rd. •Altamont, NY 12009•(518) 861-5854

Nursery Classes

(Dog's Name)	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Fee
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Novice				
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Pro-Novice				
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Ranch				
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USBCHA				
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Handler's name				
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Handler's address				
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Handler's telephone #				
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I, the undersigned, will take full responsibility for any damages incurred by my dog to property or person. I do not hold responsible the managers of the trial or owners of the property for damages to my family, dog, self or property while attending this trial.

Handler's signature				
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Return Open form to: Mike Canaday•RD #2, Box 365•Meadowdale Rd. •Altamont, NY 12009•(518) 861•6049

Open Class

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Fee
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Dog #1			
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Dog #2			
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Dog #3			
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Handler's name			
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Handler's address			
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Handler's telephone #			
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I, the undersigned, will take full responsibility for any damages incurred by my dog to property or person. I do not hold responsible the managers of the trial or owners of the property for damages to my family, dog, self or property while attending this trial.

Handler's signature			
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