

Freestyle, Food Delay, Attention Heeling, Rally Coursework (Jan-Jun 2009)

Please save this e-mail. Print it and put it on your refrigerator, make a folder in your e-mail system and file it there, save it to your hard drive (remember where you save it!), or do whatever you need to do to keep this schedule. If you happen to be away from your usual computer, the dates are also on the DKC calendar; mouse over the calendar entry to see a link you can click on for class times. Feel free forward this e-mail to others.

All classes are held at the Durham Kennel Club building on Guess Road, in Durham, NC. Because these classes are not series in the usual sense and each day stands alone, preregistration (via e-mail or phone) is required for each date and class. You are welcome to sign up for multiple dates and classes in advance. The number of participants for each class is limited, so early preregistration is recommended. Descriptions follow the schedule and the dates.

Pay for each day on that date. All money goes to DKC. Exact change or a check (to "DKC") is greatly appreciated. The first 15 minutes of each time is for check-in and payment (and walking the rally course for rally).

When you preregister, please include the following information in your e-mail (whippets@nc.rr.com) or phone message, (919) 596.0613:

- Your first and last name
- Date(s)
- Activity(ies): freestyle 1, freestyle 2, rally, food delay, attention heeling
- Indicate if you are willing to judge rally (rally judge gets her or his runs at the beginning and/or end of the class for no fee)
- Number of rally RUNS (if registering for rally nested coursework)
- Your phone number

Dates

- Jan 25, Sunday
- Feb 15, Sunday
- Mar 1, Sunday
- Apr 12, Sunday
- Apr 26, Sunday
- May 23, Saturday
- May 31, Sunday
- Jun 21, Sunday
- Jun 28, Sunday

Classes and times

- Freestyle 1, 10 am
- Freestyle 2, 11 am
- Food delay 1:30 pm
- Attention heeling 2:45 pm
- Rally 1:30 pm (a 2:45 session will be added if the 1:30 session fills)

Additional freestyle sessions

- Saturday, March 7
- Saturday, May 2

Freestyle 1 at 2 pm, or to follow show n go;
Freestyle 2 at 3 pm, or to follow Freestyle 1

About CFF freestyle. In routines for Canine Freestyle Federation (CFF) shows, the handler's attire is similar to what a person would wear for obedience competition, and the dog, not the handler, moves to the music. CFF is all about the dog. Music is selected where the rhythm of music matches the rhythm of the dog at the trot, and routines are designed to showcase the dog and the dog-human partnership.

Getting started in CFF freestyle is not as hard as some people might think. A dog that knows rally novice moves knows everything it needs to know to develop a level 1 routine. A level 2 routine can be built from rally novice moves plus right-sided heeling.

CFF has four levels of competition and titling, plus a championship. A description of the levels of CFF competition and the performance criteria for each level can be found at this link: http://www.canine-freestyle.org/about_competitionlevels.asp

To see some routines that will give you the "flavor" of CFF freestyle, see the link to the CFF Hall of Fame at the following URL (all of these routines are level 3 or level 4): <http://www.canine-freestyle.org/index.asp>

So, if you enjoy training your dog and are interested in a sport that is similar to but different from obedience and rally, consider CFF freestyle.

**** Freestyle 1.** This class is for handlers and dogs who are new to freestyle or new to CFF freestyle, and for those who are not yet ready to develop a routine. This class will present the fundamental concepts of CFF and introduce behaviors that are unique to freestyle. Each class will have exercises designed to help participants learn how to identify what behaviors enhance their dog and how put behaviors together into the elements of a CFF routine. Participants are welcome to stay and observe the Freestyle 2 class for no additional fee. Class size is limited. Fee: \$10 each day (see the note about treats later in this e-mail).

**** Freestyle 2.** This class is for people who are developing, or are ready to develop, a routine for exhibition at CFF trials. Participants will receive individual assistance at whatever level is needed, including determining the dog's rhythm (essential for appropriate music selection), suggestions for types of music that would be suitable for the dog, feedback from instructors and other participants on routines and parts of routines, and proofing for various distractions. Class size is limited. Fee: \$10 each day (see the note about treats later in this e-mail).

Instructors Shari Bryant and Adele Monroe have exhibited in AKC obedience in the past. They are currently training their whippets for and exhibiting in CFF freestyle. In November 2008, Shari and Sky earned the CFF-IV title, and Adele and Journey earned the CFF-II title.

**** Food delay training.** Teaching a dog to work when the reward is delayed is the key to exhibiting a dog trained with positive training techniques. The process is analogous to teaching a leash-trained dog to work off leash. The goal of this class is to teach participants how to develop steps in food delay training that are appropriate for their own dog. This is essential for developing reliability and maintaining enthusiasm and a happy working attitude in the ring. Participants who have started food delay training and want help to take their training to the next step are welcome. The class is open to anyone who uses food in training, whether or not you use a clicker. Class size is limited. Fee: \$10 each day (see the note about treats later in this e-mail).

**** Attention heeling.** Heeling is the foundation for all obedience-type dog sports including all variations of rally and traditional obedience and CFF freestyle. Handlers will learn how to develop a happy-working, attentive dog that loves to heel. This class is for dogs just starting their training and for previously trained dogs that do not enjoy heeling. The mark-and-reward techniques presented in this class are 100% positive—handlers are welcome to use a clicker, but handlers who do not want to use a clicker may use a word or sound to mark the correct behavior. This approach establishes and maintains enthusiasm about training for the dog (and the person), and develops heel position as a default position for the dog. Repeat attendees will get individual coaching to take their training to the next level. Each session will be limited to ~5 to 6 people, so preregistration is important. Fee: \$10 each day (see the note about treats later in this e-mail).

**** Rally nested coursework** is for handlers who already know the signs and for dogs that are being readied for exhibition (dogs should know all the behaviors for at least the novice level). Each course will have all three levels: excellent, advanced, and novice. When multiple signs appear at a station, handlers will choose which to perform (white background = novice; yellow background = advanced; blue background = excellent). The course may not meet all the specifications of a regulation course (for example, the course may not have two jumps as required by excellent courses), but is meant to provide a realistic ring setting and a valuable run-through experience.

Depending on volunteer participation, some, perhaps all rally sessions, will have a "judge" providing feedback, but I will not be able to announce in advance which sessions will have a judge. Preregistration is required; participation is limited. Sign in and walk-through (without dogs) is the first 15 minutes of each session. Fee: \$5 per run.

Treats. For food delay training, attention heeling, and freestyle, bring at least 1 cup of soft treats for EACH class one a single day. (For food delay training, be sure to bring both low-value treats, something the dog likes, and high-value treats, something the dog absolutely loves but will get only for food delay training.) I like to use 1-cup plastic containers with lids that fit tightly; I keep one such container in my refrigerator, so it's handy, and more containers of treats in my freezer. Treats the size of a green pea work for most dogs. Stick cheese or hot dogs cut lengthwise twice (in quarters), then crosswise, work very well (you can get 80 treats from 1 hot dog). Beef heart boiled in garlic-flavored water, cut in thin slices, then cut to size is a favorite at my house. Shari's dog Sky loves thin-crust cheese pizza, so use whatever works for your dog.