



**National Association of Canine Scent Work, LLC®
(NACSW™)
OFFICIAL RULE BOOK
FOR THE SPORT OF
K9 NOSE WORK®**

Version 12.0aa, June 2, 2023

NACSW™
K9 NOSE WORK® RULE BOOK
Version 12.0a, June 2, 2023

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Preface

What is K9 Nose Work®?

The sport of K9 Nose Work®, created by the founders of NACSW™, was inspired by detection style training for working K9s and has elements that are founded in that type of training and work. K9 Nose Work® is the term that specifically defines this detection-inspired sport that is governed and sanctioned by the National Association of Canine Scent Work, LLC®.

One of the many challenges faced by working K9s and their handlers is encountering new environments and scenarios daily. This challenge will be reflected in the sport through differing search environments and requirements of each location. Additionally, the environment may change throughout the day due to uncontrollable factors such as weather. **Therefore, the general rules and guidelines will apply, but handlers and dogs may encounter variations at each trial.**

NACSW Trials

Trials may be held for the purpose of competition, titling, or both. Only NACSW sanctioned trials however may award the official nose work titles (ORT, NW1, NW2, NW3, L1C, L2C, L3C, L1E, L2E, L3E, L1I, L2I, L3I, L1V, L2V, L3V, NW3 Elite, NW3-C, NW3-E, NW3-I, NW3-V, ELT1, ELT2, ELT3, ELT-CH, SMT). Additionally, the trials and prerequisite Odor Recognition Testing must be sanctioned by an NACSW Certifying Official with an NACSW approved judge.

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

The National Association of Canine Scent Work, LLC® (NACSW™) sets the standards governing the sport of K9 Nose Work®. NACSW is the only official organizing body for K9 Nose Work® titles and instructor certification (CNWI™). NACSW sanctioned events are open to any participant who is a current NACSW member in good standing.

Mission of NACSW

To create opportunities for dogs to develop their natural scenting abilities, and to conduct competition design and trial sanctioning, official instructor certification, and education in an ethical, enriching canine-centered environment.

Contact Information

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANINE SCENT WORK, LLC®
7190 Sunset Blvd., #1180
Los Angeles, CA 90046
Email:
For information about
membership@nacsw.net
trial@nacsw.net
ort@nacsw.net

For general information please visit the website:
www.NACSW.net

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Rule Book

The current official version of the rule book is always available on the NACSW website.

NACSW Rule Book Version Number System

The numbering system for identifying the edition of the NACSW rule book is as follows:

- If there are significant changes to trial structure, scoring, or title definitions, then a new numbered edition of the rule book will be issued (i.e., 5.0, 6.0, 7.0).
- If there are only small language changes, typos, changes to the guidelines, wording clarifications, or other changes that do not affect titling or training the version number will be added under the existing version (i.e., 6.1, 6.2, 6.3).
- Major revisions to the rule book especially those that affect training will be announced with consideration for the time allotment for training adjustments.

NACSW welcomes input in the development of this rule book. Please email any questions, comments or corrections to trial@nacsw.net with the subject heading, "NACSW RULE BOOK."

Eligibility Requirements and Equipment

Target Odors

Target odors for competition in NACSW Trials are made using 100% cotton swabs, cut in half and scented with one of the three essential oils: Birch, Anise, and Clove.

Birch (“Sweet Birch” aka Betula Lenta)

Anise (“Aniseed” aka Pimpinella Anisum variety – NOT Star Anise, Illicium Verum)

Clove (“Clove Bud” aka Eugenia Caryophyllata or Syzgium Aromaticum)

Our scented swabs are prepared using a very low volume of oil. Competition hides typically have 3 half swabs. For information on how NACSW Trial odor is prepared, please visit <https://nacsw.net/ort-trial-information/target-odors>.

Please do not allow your dog to ingest the oils or other parts as they are not for human or animal consumption. If you have any other health concerns, please consult your Veterinarian.

Eligibility Requirements of Dogs

- Dogs participating in an Odor Recognition Test (ORT) or a Skills Achievement Challenge must be at least six months of age.
- Dogs participating in a trial must be at least one year of age.
- All dogs must appear to be healthy on the event day and should be current on all vaccinations required by law. Any questions about medical or health conditions should be cleared by your veterinarian in order to participate.
- Wolves, wolf-hybrids, coyotes or coyote-hybrids, foxes or fox-hybrids are not eligible for registration or participation in NACSW events.
- Lactating bitches are not eligible to compete in ORTs or trials but are eligible for Skills Achievement Challenges.
- Bitches in season are eligible to compete in ORTs and trials and also to participate in Skills Achievement Challenges. They will run at the end of the run order at ORTs and trials and will be required to wear panties. Participants should contact the event host at least 72 hours prior to the event if they anticipate that their dog may be in season at the event.

Age and Physical Requirements of Handlers, Volunteers and Spectators

ORTs and Trials: Minimum age requirement for handlers is thirteen (13) years of age. An adult must always accompany all handlers under the age of 16 at official events. This adult may not be participating in the trial with another dog.

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Skills Achievement Challenges: There is no minimum age requirement for handlers for Skills Achievement Challenges. There must be a responsible adult accompanying all handlers under the age of 16.

For minors who are not handling a dog, but will be attending an event, either as volunteers or spectators, the following policy applies:

- Volunteers must be at least 13 years of age.
- Anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- All minors must have a waiver signed by their legal parent or guardian. Adults supervising minors at the trial are responsible for the actions of the minor.
- Anyone aged 16-17 is not required to be supervised by an adult, however, must have a waiver signed by their legal parent or guardian.

Please note that the Age, Health and Physical Requirements for Dogs and Handlers apply to all participation in events. Dogs/Handlers that do not meet the requirements above are not eligible to participate as FEO (For Exhibition Only) entries.

The fundamental nature of the sport is to expose the team to real-life search scenarios with varying terrains and environments. Every team must navigate the same conditions, entrances, exits, start lines, etc. Trials frequently require covering extensive distances to get to and from the parking area to each of the search areas and movements are frequently done across natural, uneven surfaces depending on the trial location. Handlers and dogs therefore should be prepared for the physical demands and must be able to navigate the terrain accordingly. Participants should expect to spend most of the day outside or in their vehicles as there are rarely indoor crating options at ORTs or trials. Skills Achievement Challenges may be performed in the environments of your choice including at home, training buildings or other locations.

NACSW Membership

Handlers must be current members of NACSW in order to participate in Skills Achievement Challenges or compete in an NACSW sanctioned trial or ORT event. Dogs must be registered with NACSW. Registration and membership is available online at <http://www.nacsw.net>. All members agree to abide by the NACSW rules and event policies. Membership may be suspended or revoked for violation of the rules or policies.

Note: Potential Hosts wishing to sponsor an NACSW sanctioned event should contact the organization directly to review location parameters and other hosting details for all trials and ORTs. Please visit our website at: <http://www.nacsw.net> for more information.

NACSW Officials

- **NACSW Certifying Official** –The NACSW Certifying Official is responsible for ensuring that the event is run to NACSW rules and standards. They are also responsible for all hide placements at the event. NACSW Certifying Officials are hired by the Trial Host from the list of eligible Certifying Officials provided to the Trial Host by the NACSW.

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- **NACSW Judge** – The judge is responsible for determining if the team has correctly called the 'Alert' and for making decisions relating to faults and conduct during the actual competition search. NACSW Judges are hired by the Trial Host from the list of eligible judges provided to the Trial Host by the NACSW.
- **NACSW Trial Representative** – The Trial Rep is responsible for helping the Certifying Official to ensure that the event is run to NACSW rules and standards. This is an optional position and is assigned to an event by the NACSW.

Equipment for Dogs and Handlers

Handlers

Handlers should wear comfortable clothing with safety in mind. Athletic footwear appropriate for navigating uneven terrain is highly recommended. Handlers may also wear special training clothing and equipment, i.e., vests, hats, bait bags, etc. Handlers may wear visible head or chest cameras as per the guidelines in the Video Taping & Photography section. Refer to the video submission requirements for each Skills Achievement Challenge for acceptable video methods.

Dogs

- **Leashes/Collars:** When performing an on leash search, leashes may only be attached to the following equipment: flat collars, martingale collars, limited slip, and harnesses. Leashes may be of any length and Flexi leashes are allowed. Refer to the leash requirements for each Skills Achievement Challenge for any specific leash requirements for a given Challenge.
- The dog must wear a collar (non break away) or harness at all times when out of your vehicle for safety reasons.
- Accessories for dogs are allowed if they are deemed to be for the wellbeing, comfort, or safety of the dog – for example boots, jackets, sweaters, hair pins. If the Certifying Official or Judge deems that the equipment interferes with the search or is a safety concern, you will be asked to remove the accessory from the dog before the search begins. If the Certifying Official or Judge deems that the equipment exhibits inappropriate advertising, you will be asked to remove the accessory from the dog for the entirety of the trial.
- Accessories that emit an odor (for example DAP collars) are not permitted in the search area at ORTs and trials.
- Muzzles are not permitted to be worn on trial grounds.
- Calming caps and other accessories that block the dog's vision are not permitted outside of the vehicle or crate at official events.
- No electronic or remote training devices may be worn or used at any time while on trial grounds. GPS and tracking devices are allowed including during searches. You may be required to present the device to the official for verification.
- Dogs may not wear cameras during ORT or trial searches.
- **ORTs and Trials:** Panties are required on bitches in season at ORTs and trials and they will run at the end of the run order. Please note that panties/belly bands on dogs are not permitted in any other situation. Participants should contact the event host at least 72 hours prior to the event if they anticipate that their dog may be in season at the event.

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- Skills Achievement Challenges: There are no requirements for panties on bitches in season. Panties, belly bands and diapers are also allowed for any reason, however will not exclude a dog from disqualification for eliminating during the search.

If you have a specific concern or question about a particular piece of equipment, email trial@nacsw.net at least 14 days prior to the trial date.

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NACSW ORT and Trial Regulations

Prior to participating in an NACSW event, it is the responsibility of each competitor to read and understand the current NACSW Rule book.

Sportsman-like behavior is expected from all attendees, towards each other, and towards the judges, volunteers, and trial organizers. NACSW rules are in effect during the entire trial or ORT from the time you arrive until the time you leave the trial grounds at the end of the trial day. All attendees are expected to follow the officials' instructions and show respect to the official and their decisions. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Minor rule additions or adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances may apply on the day of the event. Handlers will be notified of any day-of changes at the handler's briefing before the start of each trial.

Any questions or concerns regarding anything that happens at a trial, such as dismissal or disciplinary action, should be directed to the Certifying Official on trial day, or to the Trial Committee at: trialCommittee@nacsw.net after the event. Please note that anyone may ask to speak to the Certifying Official at any time during the trial with any concerns relating to the current event. An incident report may be filed, if applicable, with the NACSW by a Trial Certifying Official, an ORT Certifying Official or Judge, or the NACSW Trial Disciplinary Committee. All incidents must be reported within 7 days of the event.

- Details of the event must be clearly stated - date, location, extenuating circumstances, necessary contact information, etc.
- The NACSW Trial Disciplinary Committee will respond to appeals in writing within 15 business days.
- The decision to uphold, reject, or modify the dismissal or disciplinary action will be final.

No entry fees will be refunded if the trial or ORT cannot open or be completed by reason of riots, civil disturbances, fire, Act of God, public emergency, act of a public enemy, strike or any other cause beyond the control of the organizers.

Entry fees shall not be refunded in the event that a dog or handler is disqualified or excused by the NACSW official or judge.

ORT and Trial Entry Process

Entries for NACSW Skills Achievement Challenges are completed on the NACSW website. There are no title requirements to submit an entry for a Skills Achievement Challenge.

Entries for NACSW sanctioned ORTs and trials are done through the event host. All NACSW trial entries are done online from the event host's site and are then directed to the NACSW entry tool which verifies current membership, appropriate titles and ORTs prior to the completion of entry. Any questions about entering an ORT or trial should be directed to the event host. This contact information is available from the NACSW ORT or Trial calendars. All members entering

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a trial should read the information in the trial or ORT entry premium prior to entering and agree to the terms in the premium upon submitting entry.

In the case of ORTs, entries are accepted as specified on the entry premium provided by the host and are typically done first come, first serve or by random draw. In the case of trials, entries are typically done as a random draw. The draw period is typically a 48-hour period.

It can take up to 14 days to process ORT and trial results. Trial entry requires that you have earned your ORT and any titles required for entry at least 14 days prior to the trial entry open date to be considered for the primary draw.

Dismissals and Disciplinary Action

At an NACSW Sanctioned event (including, but not limited to, Trials or Odor Recognition Tests), the Certifying Official or NACSW Trial Representative has the right to ask any person, whether they are entered in the event or not, to leave the event grounds, without any expectation of refund of any fees associated with the event (Dismissal). Such Dismissal can be for any just cause, such as where the handler and/or dog is behaving in a manner that is against the rules of the Host or NACSW, or for other reasons that may cause a safety hazard.

The just causes for which a Dismissal may be issued to a person on the trial grounds include, but are not limited to:

- Abuse towards another person or dog.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct including but not limited to disrespectful treatment of volunteers, officials, or fellow competitors and intentional disclosure/knowledge of the hide locations prior to the competitor completing the search.
- Acting in a manner that could endanger another person or dog, including not having control of their dog(s).
- Dog(s) acting in a manner that could endanger another person or dog.
- Acting in a manner that could cause the loss of an event site or hotel including pretrial visits to or contact with the location, and excessive/sustained vocalization in the parking and/or crating areas.
- Not following NACSW rules or event rules set forth in the premium.

Any aggressive act by a dog towards a person or another dog may result in the offending dog being dismissed from the event at the Certifying Official's or Trial Representative's discretion. Any physical contact made by the offending dog to a dog or human may result in dismissal from all future events.

If a dog or handler is dismissed, the results for that ORT or trial will be recorded as a disqualification.

Aggressive acts, including verbal abuse and harassment, by a person towards dogs or other people may result in the offending person being dismissed from the event at the Certifying

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Official's or Trial Representative's discretion. Any physical contact made by the offending person to a dog or person may result in dismissal from all future events.

If a dog or person is dismissed from the event, the Certifying Official or Trial Representative will fill out an "Incident Report Form" and the handler or dismissed person will receive a copy of the form. The Certifying Official will notify the NACSW of the incident within 48 hours of the report of the incident and a copy of the incident report form will also be submitted to the NACSW within 7 days of the incident. If the person leaves prior to receiving a copy of the form, the form will be sent via email to the email address on record for membership with the NACSW. All dismissals will automatically result in a 10 day suspension, effective the day of the dismissal. The NACSW Disciplinary Action Trial Committee will contact the person via an email sent to the email address on record for membership with the NACSW within 10 days of the dismissal to let the person know if there will be any additional disciplinary action beyond the 10 day suspension.

Any dog or handler with multiple incidents on record may result in the dog or handler being suspended or permanently barred from entering any future NACSW sanctioned events.

Any aggression by a dog or person may result in the dog or handler being suspended or permanently barred from entering any future NACSW sanctioned events.

If a dog is suspended or barred, the handler will maintain their membership and may compete with other registered dogs.

Multiple Dogs

- ORTs may offer a second dog per handler option depending on location and time constraints. Please check with the ORT host to see if this applies for each individual ORT.
- A handler may not handle multiple dogs in the same trial. Handlers may be permitted to enter multiple dogs on different trial days of a multiple day event if the trial host is offering that option or in different Element Specialty Trials held on the same day. Owners may enter multiple dogs in the same trial provided there is a different handler for each dog. The entry must be submitted under the handler's account in this case. **All handlers must be current NACSW members and all dogs must be registered with the NACSW.**

For Exhibition Only (FEO)

When there is space available in the trial after all eligible entries are accommodated, a host may opt to take FEO entries which allows the teams to participate in the trial while not competing for a title at that trial.

Teams that might participate as FEO include:

- The dog has already earned that title level (for example the dog has earned their NW1 title, and the handler would like the dog to repeat the NW1 level to gain additional experience)
- The dog has not completed the requirements to compete at a higher title level (for example the dog has earned their ORT title and the handler would like to participate in an NW2 trial).

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- If one handler participates with two dogs in the same trial, for example two dogs handled by the same handler competing in the same NW2 trial on a single day.
- A handler wants to practice with a dog who is eligible for the event (this is ONLY an option if the host is accepting FEO entries)

The FEO option may be offered by trial hosts if space remains in their trials once all eligible entries have been accommodated. Refer to the event's trial premium for specifics on whether a host is accepting FEO entries. FEO entries may be submitted during the trial entry period listed on the trial premium through the trial entry link. It is recommended including a note of the FEO request in the comments section of the online trial entry.

FEO entries must meet the Age, Health and Physical Requirements for Dogs and Handlers which apply to all participation in events.

Dogs participating as FEO are not eligible to receive titles or earn placement ribbons. FEO results will not be included in the posted trial results.

When participating as an FEO entry the handler may ask the search judge to provide verbal information regarding the number and location of the hide(s) in a search. This information sharing should not delay the start of the search. For NW3/Elite/Summit, handlers must ask for this information prior to or during the search. Information will not be given after the completion of the search. The completion of the search is defined as timing out, the 'Finish' call, or reaching the limit of False Alerts. It is not an option to have the judge coach or provide feedback during the search.

If a handler who is competing that day (Not FEO) opts to ask for information about the number of hides and/or location of the hide(s) for a search, then that search will be scored the same as "Absent".

Video Taping and Photography

- Videos and photos of trial competition are only allowed by photographers/videographers who have been contracted by the Trial Host and by competitors wearing visible head or chest mount cameras.
- Video/Photography may not be allowed based on facility restrictions.
- Any competitor video should not delay the start of the search. Please have your camera ready prior to approaching the search area.
- Videos of searches should not be shared until the completion of the trial day.
- Spectators and volunteers may not video trial searches at this time.
- Videos and photos taken by contracted video services/photographers will be made available to the competitors to purchase, per the NACSW photographer and video service guidelines.
- It is not permissible to video or photograph the Dog in White searches or the CO briefing.
- ORT participants may have a friend or family member video/photograph their test or handlers may wear a visible chest or head mount camera. ORT participants may not video/photograph one another.

As a condition of entering a trial or ORT, handlers agree to allow NACSW, or their agents, to video both the handler and their dog, during the entirety of the NACSW event. These videos are

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the property of NACSW. All competitors, through entry at any NACSW event, waive any and all rights relative to video broadcast or photography of such event.

Search Area Regulations

- Handlers must be current members in good standing with NACSW.
- The same handler must handle the same dog for all the searches in a single trial. At an ORT, a single handler must handle a dog for a single test. Each odor is an additional test and you may utilize a different handler for another test.
- Double handling is not permissible, i.e., someone other than the designated handler giving the handler or the dog instructions or assistance during the searches.
- Each handler/dog team should be on deck before their turn for each search.
- Handlers may talk to, touch, and/or communicate with their dog throughout the competition or test.
- Any questions for the judge or Certifying Official or concerns about the search should be addressed in the handler's briefing.
- The time starts when the dog's nose crosses the plane of the start line or threshold. Handlers may have a moment at the start line to acclimate and collect themselves. You may be prompted by the judge to begin if the time is excessive. If the dog does not enter the search area by crossing the start line, the team may receive a fault.
- The timer may be instructed to give a 30 second (time remaining) warning for all levels and at ORTs. The timer will make every effort to give this warning, but situations may occur where the warning is not given. At Element Specialty Trials, 30 second warnings will only be given when the time limit for the search is longer than one minute. At Summit League trials, 30 second warnings will be given as defined by the Certifying Official for each search.
- Handlers may carry the dog's reward with them at all times (food, toys, etc.). Handlers should take care not to contaminate the search areas with their rewards. At a trial, faults may be assessed at the judges' discretion if the handler has compromised the search area. See the Scoring Section for more details.

Safety and Location Regulations

- There should be no training or non-official use of odor on trial or ORT grounds during the event. Nor should training take place on trial grounds preceding the trial once the event is approved/announced.
- It is not appropriate to visit or contact the trial location prior to the trial date. Our locations are real life search environments where people work, go to school, etc. Pre-trial visits risk the host losing the opportunity to use the location in the future. Even when a location is public property, the NACSW does not condone practice at the trial location within 6 months of the trial date. The purpose of a K9 Nose Work® trial is for a dog to walk into a novel situation and search. Additionally, practice at the trial site will result in contamination that

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may adversely affect the competition. Unauthorized visits to or contact with the location prior to the trial may be subject to disciplinary action.

- No alcohol or recreational drug use. Public intoxication is not allowed on trial grounds.
- All attendees must adhere to safety regulations of the NACSW, the host and the trial location.
- Smoking may be restricted or prohibited based on location restrictions. Please show consideration to other participants if smoking is allowed at a location.
- Dogs should use the **designated potty area only** so as not to interfere with any search areas and respect the requirements of the trial location.
- Handlers are responsible for cleaning up after their dog and may be dismissed if they do not.
- Handlers should ensure that their dog keeps a safe distance (minimum of eight feet) from any other dog unless there is express consent from both handlers that the dogs may interact.
- **Dogs must be on leash at all times** unless they are conducting an official off leash search as part of the event. Dogs must be on a 6' or shorter leash when not in the competition search area. Handlers on their way to the competition search area may have their dogs on a longer leash, but must maintain a leash length of 6 feet or shorter. Flexi leashes are not permitted except during ORT or trial searches. This applies to event participants, trial organizers, volunteers, and spectators. Note: If changing leashes or other equipment before starting an on leash search, you must keep your dog under physical control at all times. This means keeping a hold of your dog by a leash, harness, or collar while switching gear.
- No dogs may be left unattended except when properly kenneled or in secured vehicles.
- Competitors should expect to keep their dogs confined when not competing. NACSW trials do not allow for dogs to hang out on leash in between searches. Competitors should plan to provide their own shade using canopies or shade cloths. In the event of extreme weather conditions, participants should be prepared to keep their dog adequately warm or cool in their vehicles or in crates adjacent to their vehicles. In the case of high air temperatures, dogs must be confined with adequate shade, ventilation and access to water. Dogs may not be loose in vehicles with open windows or tied to a vehicle or other stationary object. Please show consideration of others if running your car for heat or air conditioning as the exhaust may be disturbing and dangerous to those around you.
- Dogs may be dismissed from ORTs or trials for excessive/sustained vocalization in the crating/parking area as it may disturb trial location neighbors, as well as the trial participants.
- It is the handler's responsibility to ensure the safety of their dogs working in the search areas. There will be no deliberately dangerous obstacles, but NACSW is not responsible for unforeseen hazards. It is up to the handler to determine if they feel it is safe for their dog. No refunds will be offered if a handler chooses to withdraw from a trial or ORT.
- Bitches in season are allowed to compete in NACSW trials. Bitches in season may be allowed at ORTs depending on location logistics. Please check with the ORT host if this will apply to you.

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They will run as last dog of the search at trials, and as last dog of the day at an ORT. They will also be required to wear panties. Handlers of bitches in season will keep the dog confined in their car and out of the general crating/parking area until their turn as the location permits. They will also potty the dog out of the vicinity of the other dogs when the trial location allows for a secondary potty area.

Trial Logistics and Guidelines: (Preceding the start of competition)

- Handlers must check in with the check in/registration desk to confirm their entry and running order as applicable before the handler walk-through begins.
- There will be a handler's briefing to review rule updates for the trial location and search areas.
- There may be virtual walk through videos posted at <https://walkthrough.nacsw.net> the evening before your trial or the morning of the trial. These walk through videos are intended to give you a sense of the type of space and understand the boundaries. Element Specialty Trials will typically not include a walk through. Elite Select trials may have virtual walk throughs in the event that a search area is not easily viewed from the startline. Competition search areas are meant to mimic real life situations. We will remove gross hazards that we are aware of (for example: rat poison); however, the environment may not be pristine and there may be unidentified hazards. It is the handler's responsibility to determine how to safely navigate each environment with their dog. No refunds will be offered if a handler chooses to withdraw from a trial.
- A warm-up area will be designated at all ORTs, NW1/NW2/NW3,L1/L2/L3 Element Specialty and Elite Select Trials. There will be one identified hide among 3 ORT type boxes. One handler/dog team at a time may use this area. Dogs on deck will have priority. The area may only be available to those teams en route to a search area depending on logistics. This may also serve as a recovery area for dogs post-search. Elite and Summit level trials may have a single recovery box with an identified hide available to the dogs as they return from their searches.
- The number of hides per area or search will be specified during the handler's briefing or prior to entering a search area in the case of the Element Specialty Trials if applicable for that title level. Exceptions would include those that are competing for higher title levels which may require areas to be finished.
- Handlers will be informed of the total time for each search area at the handler's briefing or prior to entering a search area in the case of the Element Specialty Trials. For NW1, NW2, and Level 1 and 2 Element Specialty Trials, handlers will also be informed of the number of hides per search area.
- A running order will be posted in the handler staging area.

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General ORT and Trial Regulations

- Hide locations will not be known to the handler and will not be readily visible to the handler.
- Handlers may reward their dog in the search area including food or toy rewards. Noise making toys such as squeaky toys may only be used as a reward in a search area and may not be used elsewhere on trial grounds.
- Hides will not be in the search boundary markers or start line markers (i.e., boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides will not be outside of search boundaries.
- Our search areas are real life search environments where people work, go to school, etc. The only area we intentionally add distractors is in containers, however all the areas will contain “distractions” according to the real life environment. We do not “clean up” environments to remove these distractions. You might find things like food in open desks or crumbs on the floor, toys in classrooms, dog crates in offices, animal smells in barns, etc.
- Searches should not be discussed by anyone (competitors, volunteers, spectators) until all dogs have completed a given search.
- Handlers may not touch items/objects/furniture/vehicles in the search area without the judge’s permission or unless other circumstances are specified by the CO at the handler’s briefing.
- Most searches will be conducted on leash. Interior searches are the searches most likely to offer an off leash option. If other searches include an off leash search, the location will dictate the circumstances for the dog’s safety.
- At NW1 and Level 1 Element Specialty Trials the time will stop when the handler calls the alert by saying ‘Alert’. At NW2 and Level 2 Element Specialty Trials the time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls ‘Finish.’ For NW3, Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, Elite Select, Elite Division, and Summit League trials the time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls ‘Finish’. The ‘Finish’ call must be made before time expires.
- **Alerts** – Handler must call ‘Alert’ when the dog has communicated that he has found a hide. The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behavior for the alert to be valid. However, the judge will be looking for a change of behavior in the dog.
- The time does not stop between hides when there are multiple hides in a given search area.
- For NW2 and NW3, each search area will have its own time limit including when there are two or more searches of the same element. The time for each search is independent of the times for the other searches. However, any element with two or more searches will have a score that is the total of the combined search area times for all searches.
- If the dog alerts (by offering an indication) it is not valid until the handler calls alert.
- An alternate way to call the alert may be defined by the Certifying Official on trial day if the conditions do not make it conducive to hearing the word ‘Alert’ or if there are other mitigating circumstances. Additionally, the Certifying Official may require an alternate nonverbal way to

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call the alert such as a hand raise in order to allow for locations that may have audibility concerns due to search areas in proximity to the parking lot or staging areas,

- The official time will be based on the time displayed on the timing device and not based on the timer verbally indicating that time has expired.
- The judge must hear (or see if the CO has designated an alternate alert behavior) the handler's call for the call to be scored.
- The handler may not call 'alert' in reference to a location that the dog is not currently indicating.
- Search Area etiquette: Faults may be given at the judges' discretion if the team has compromised the search area. Compromising the search area includes, but is not limited to, contaminating or damaging/destroying boxes or other items in the environment, dropping/leaving food/toy rewards in search areas, moving or touching objects without permission, etc.
- Handlers may not observe other participants' runs in the same trial.
- Dogs may be excused or dismissed from a search if any of the following apply:
 - Dog is under undue stress during a search, subject to the judge's discretion.
 - Dog is in obvious pain during a search, subject to the judge's discretion.
 - Extreme disruption or disrespect of a search area.
 - Any dog viewed out of control, which may include leaving the search area.

Note: Handlers may opt to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing at any time.

NACSW Skills Achievement Challenge Regulations

Prior to participating in an NACSW Skills Achievement Challenge, it is the responsibility of each participant to read and understand the current NACSW Rule book and all posted details for that specific Challenge.

Skills Achievement Challenge Entry Process

The searches for a Skills Achievement Challenge will be performed at location(s) of your choosing, videotaped, and submitted online for judging.

Submission for an NACSW Skills Achievement Challenge is done through the NACSW website.

You will sign up for a Skills Achievement Challenge and submit your videos and any required hide location information for the challenge at the time of sign up.

It can take up to 30 days to process your Skills Achievement Challenge submission. Upon completion you will be notified of your score and any titles earned.

Multiple Dogs

Handlers know the locations of the hides in Skills Achievement Challenges, so a handler may run multiple dogs in the same Challenges. Dogs may be run on the same setups.

Video Taping

Videos will need to meet specified parameters for each search in a given Skills Achievement Challenge. The videos will need to be uploaded to a specified site and links/access provided as directed during submission. Please refer to the details provided for each Skills Achievement Challenge for specific submission requirements.

Title Designations
Levels of the Working Titles

Odor Recognition Title

ORT

This title is earned by successfully passing all three odor recognition tests (Birch, Anise and Clove). There is no requirement to pass all three odors at the same event, but the ORT title will not be earned until all 3 odor tests have been passed

Pre-qualifier for Trial Entry:

ORT Title required for eligibility in NW1 and Level 1 Element Specialty Trials

Element Specialty Trial Titles

L1C (Level 1 Containers)

L1E (Level 1 Exteriors)

L1I (Level 1 Interiors)

L1V (Level 1 Vehicles)

L2C (Level 2 Containers)

L2E (Level 2 Exteriors)

L2I (Level 2 Interiors)

L2V (Level 2 Vehicles)

L3C (Level 3 Containers)

L3E (Level 3 Exteriors)

L3I (Level 3 Interiors)

L3V (Level 3 Vehicles)

For the Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 Element Specialty titles, the team must qualify in all the searches at the same trial or earn a qualifying score with no more than 3 faults at two separate trials for the same level/element (See Scoring for details on qualifying scores).

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NW1, NW2, NW3 Trial Titles

NW1

NW2

NW3

NW1 and NW2 titles are earned by successfully passing all four elements (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle) at the same trial with a score of 100 and no more than 3 faults. NW3 titles are earned by either achieving a score of 100 with no more than 3 faults in a trial or by achieving two qualifying scores at two different NW3 trials. Teams will not be eligible to earn additional NW3 titles after their third NW3 title.

NW3 Element Titles

NW3-C (NW3 Container)

NW3-E (NW3 Exterior)

NW3-I (NW3 Interior)

NW3-V (NW3 Vehicle)

Prior to August 1, 2023: These titles are for successfully passing an NW3 element at three different trials. They are not the equivalent of the NW3 title. NW3 Element titles may be achieved individually and/or before achieving the NW3 title. If there are multiple searches of the same element at a trial, the team must pass all searches of that element at that trial to earn a pass for that element.

Effective August 1, 2023: These titles are for successfully passing three searches of a given element at an NW3 trial. They are not the equivalent of the NW3 title. NW3 Element titles may be achieved individually and/or before achieving the NW3 title.

NW3 ELITE

This title is awarded for achieving the NW3 title three times and demonstrating competency in all four elements.

***PRONOUNCED**

(not a title, but see designation explanation on page 20)

Elite Division Trial Titles

ELT1

ELT2

ELT3

ELT-CH

The ELT1 Title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials.

The ELT2 Title is earned by accumulating 400 points at Elite Division Trials.

The ELT3 Title is earned by accumulating 650 points at Elite Division Trials.

The ELT-CH Title is earned by accumulating 1000 points at Elite Division Trials.

Summit League Trial Titles

SMT

The SMT Title is earned by placing in the top 20% overall of competing teams at a Summit League Trial.

A team may achieve the SMT Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the SMT designation i.e., SMTx2, SMTx3, etc.

No. of Competing Teams	No. of Titles to be Awarded
0 to 4	0
5 to 9	1
10 to 14	2
15 to 19	3
20 to 24	4
25 to 29	5

In the event of a tie for the last titling placement, both teams would receive a title. For example, if there are 25 competing teams and there was a tie for 5th place, both teams would receive a SMT title for a total of 6 titles given at that trial.

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Elite Select Titles

ELT-S

The ELT-S Title is earned by accumulating 350 points at Elite Select Trials.

A team may achieve the ELT-S Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the ELT-S designation i.e., ELT-Sx2, ELT-Sx3, etc.

Skills Achievement Titles

NSA1 *(Nose Work Skills Achievement 1)*

NSA2 *(Nose Work Skills Achievement 2)*

NSA3 *(Nose Work Skills Achievement 3)*

NSAM *(Nose Work Skills Achievement Master)*

Each Skills Achievement Title is achieved by earning the designated minimum number of points for a given Skills Achievement Challenge and by completing all skills at a minimum of Level 1. Each Skills Achievement Challenge will have a total of 120 possible points.

- *NSA1 requires a minimum of 40 points.*
- *NSA2 requires a minimum of 70 points.*
- *NSA3 requires a minimum of 100 points.*
 - *NSAM requires 120 points.*

A team may achieve each Skills Achievement Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the NSAX designation i.e., NSA1x2, NSAMx3, etc.

All Skills Achievement Title Certificates will be available for download through the NACSW website.

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NACSW ORT and Trial Title Guidelines

Titles may only be achieved at NACSW sanctioned events. A NACSW Certifying Official must be present at every trial and sanctioned events must be judged by NACSW approved judges. The title requirements described in this edition of the rule book are subject to change and will naturally evolve with competition. Competitors should make sure they have the most current version of the rule book before trialing. The rule book is available on the NACSW website at: <http://www.nacsw.net>.

Eligibility for each title level is determined by a successfully completed NACSW ORT Title and successful completion of the previous title level and other entry requirements. Those trialing for a title level must meet the title requirements as outlined below.

The ORT title is earned by successfully passing the Odor Recognition Test for all 3 target odors – Birch, Anise, and Clove. There is no requirement to pass all three odors at the same event, but the ORT title will not be earned until all 3 odor tests have been passed. Titles will be granted retroactively for all teams previously achieving the requirements for this title.

NW1 and NW2 titles are earned by successfully passing all four elements at the same trial with a score of 100 and no more than 3 faults.

NW3 titles are earned either by achieving a score of 100 with no more than 3 faults in one trial or by achieving two qualifying scores at two different NW3 trials. Teams will not be eligible to earn additional NW3 titles after their third NW3 title.

NW3-C, NW3-E, NW3-I and NW3-V require three qualifying performances (a perfect score for all searches of that element at a single trial) for title achievement.

The NW1, NW2, and NW3 titles must be achieved in succession.

NW3 Elite is achieved by earning three NW3 titles and by demonstrating competency in each of the four elements. Competency is defined as earning either the NW3 Element title or the Level 3 Element Specialty title for each element. For example, a team may demonstrate competency in all elements by earning the L3C, L3E, NW3-I and NW3-V titles.

Dogs must have earned the NW3 Elite title to be eligible to enter an Elite Division Trial. The ELT1 title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT2 title is earned by accumulating 400 total points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT3 title is earned by accumulating 650 total points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT-CH title is earned by accumulating 1000 total points at Elite Division Trials. Note: Effective October 1, 2017, Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

Dogs must have earned an ELT3 or ELT-CH title to be eligible to enter a Summit League Trial. Those with an ELT-CH title will be given spaces in the Summit League Trial before teams with an ELT3 title as per the trial premium. Please refer to the trial premium for other entry limitations. The SMT title is earned by placing in the top 20% of teams overall at a Summit League Trial. A team may achieve the SMT Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the SMT designation i.e., SMTx2, SMTx3, etc.

Element Specialty Titles may be achieved by either achieving a perfect score in one trial, or by achieving two qualifying scores at the same level and element at two different Element Specialty

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trials. Starting April 1, 2015, unless the dog has earned an Element Specialty Trial (EST) title or qualifying score in a specific element, the dog will be required to start at Level 1, regardless of their NW1/NW2/NW3 title status. For example: if the dog has earned a L2C title and a L2I qualifying score, the dog is eligible for L3C and L2I, but is only eligible for L1V and L1E.

Elite Select Titles are earned by accumulating 350 total points at Elite Select Trials. A team may achieve the ELT-S Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the ELT-S designation i.e., ELT-Sx2, ELT-Sx3, etc.

Results will be posted at the completion of the trial.

The titles are awarded to the dog, but the handler/dog team is judged overall in the competition. Each level of ORT and title may utilize a different handler as long as the handler is a member of NACSW.

Competitors must wait a minimum of 3 days after earning an ORT Title or after earning a title for the previous title level before competing in another trial for the next title level. Please note that if the required title was passed less than 14 days prior to the event, it will be the competitor's responsibility to provide proof of the title to the event host in the form of a photo of the official results. Note: This does not apply to the Elite Division.

Pronounced

The judges may 'Pronounce' handler/dog teams demonstrating exceptional technique and/or teamwork at each NW1, NW2, NW3, Elite, and Summit League trial. This is not part of the title, but rather an acknowledgement of exceptional teamwork on that particular trial day.

The judges may consider any of the following in their evaluation of a pronounced team:

Professionalism, handler and dog safety, observational skills, leash handling technique, off leash control, speed and efficiency, accuracy, stamina, enthusiasm, odor obedience, clarity of alert and dog/handler communication. Pronouncement will be solely at the discretion of the judge(s) for that trial.

The 'Pronounced' designation is not automatically awarded due to the score or comments. The nature of NACSW trials include the participation of several judges, each with their own interpretation and opinion on the teamwork they view in the search they are judging. Judges will note a "P" on search score sheets when they wish to recognize the technique and/or teamwork for that team, so that handlers may receive feedback and have understanding about areas of their searches that were most notable to that judge. At the trial end, all of the score sheets will be reviewed. Any handler/dog receiving a "P" on all searches completed in that trial will receive the 'pronounced' designation for the trial and receive a 'pronounced' ribbon. The 'P' is not considered part of a title.

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NACSW Skills Achievement Title Guidelines

Titles may only be achieved by completing a NACSW Skills Achievement Challenge. Competitors should make sure they have the most current version of the rule book and have reviewed the full requirements for a specific Skills Achievement Challenge before sending their submission. The rule book is available on the NACSW website at: <http://www.nacsw.net>.

There are no pre-requirements to participate in a Skills Achievement Challenge. You are not required to have passed any ORTs or earned any other NACSW titles. Each participant is eligible to complete any level of a specific Skills Achievement Challenge. There is no requirement to have completed a lower level Skills Achievement Title to be eligible for the higher level Skills Achievement Titles.

If you complete a Skills Achievement Title, you may resubmit at a future date for the same Challenge to earn a higher or lower level title for that specific Challenge. You may not earn the same title multiple times for a single Challenge.

Each Skills Achievement Challenge will consist of 4 skills with three possible levels per skill. The team must complete all 4 skills at a minimum of Level 1 to be eligible for a title.

Level 1 will be worth 10 points, Level 2 will be worth 20 points, Level 3 will be worth 30 points.

To earn NSA1, you must earn a minimum of 40 points.

To earn NSA2, you must earn a minimum of 70 points.

To earn NSA3, you must earn a minimum of 100 points.

To earn NSAM, you must earn 120 points.

Odor Recognition Test (ORT)

Purpose of the ORT

The ORT verifies the dog's recognition of the odor used in trial and the handler's ability to correctly call the location of the source of odor. In order to enter a trial, a dog must have earned the NACSW ORT (Odor Recognition Test). The NACSW will verify all required title completions for each trial entry.

Please note that the ORT is not a measurement of trial readiness but rather only recognition of the odor to be used at trial. Successfully passing an ORT requires a dog to identify the location of the target odor and the handler to correctly call an alert (or equivalent) within a three-minute time period. The Odor Recognition Test must be conducted by an NACSW appointed judge and sanctioned by an NACSW Certifying Official. The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors as approved by the NACSW.

The ORT is a pass or miss test within the time limit. No scoring, faults, placements or times are recorded as they are for trials.

It can take 14 days to process ORT results. Trial entry requires that you have earned your ORT and any pre-requisite titles at least 14 days prior to the trial entry open date to be considered for the primary draw.

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Trial Readiness

The ORT is not necessarily a measure of trial readiness. Though a dog still fairly new to training may pass the odor recognition test, they may not be ready for the rigors of a trial. The trial takes place over the course of a full day and may present many environmental challenges to the team. The average time frame for training to trial readiness is about one year. Most handlers and dogs by that time have learned all of the elements of competition and have practiced those elements in many locations, under time pressure with the guidance of an instructor. The NACSW offers this guideline in the hopes that handlers will provide a long enough training period for the dog. This will allow for both dog and handler to have a more enjoyable and successful experience at trial.

ORT – Test Specifications

The Odor Recognition Test is a type of container search exercise. The ORT requires 12 closed cardboard boxes set up in a pattern of one or two rows with each box set a minimum distance of 4' apart from box edge to box edge. The NACSW official may approve adjustments depending on space and location limitations. The ORT is to be conducted on leash and no deliberate distractors should be included. One of the boxes will be the 'target box', which will contain the target odor being tested. If multiple odors are being tested at an event, each odor will be tested individually. All of the other boxes should be reasonably new, and uncontaminated by odor, food, or other distracting smells. The target box should contain scented cotton swabs that are not visible to the handler and are secured to the inside of the box. Handlers should prepare for variation in strength and quantity of cotton swabs. The test uses three, half-swabs scented with the target odor. The recommended standard box should not exceed 6" in height but may otherwise have variation of the dimensions.

The target box shall remain in the same place for all of the dogs participating in the ORT for that particular odor, except for handlers running a second dog where allowed, or ORT events where multiple odors are being tested. The ORT shall be conducted out of sight of all entered dogs and handlers who have not yet tested. Once all handlers/dogs have completed the ORT, handlers may run a second dog on the ORT after the target box has been moved to a new position. The same applies to ORTs for the second and third odors to be tested. There may be lingering odor in the case of multi-dog or multi-odor tests depending on space limitations. The Certifying Official will make the best effort to eliminate or minimize these conditions, but handlers should be aware that the possibility exists. The number of dogs per handler per odor is set by the ORT host based on location and time restrictions, within NACSW guidelines.

People approved to be in the testing area during an ORT include NACSW officials, approved NACSW guests, required ORT volunteers, adults accompanying a minor, approved officials for training purposes, or immediate family members/friends of the dog/handler team being tested. Participants in an ORT may not be spectators for other participants regardless of relationship (with the exception of a minor testing after the accompanying adult tests). The ORT Certifying Official has the right to limit spectators at their discretion. ORT participants may have a friend or family member video/photograph their test. ORT participants may not video/photograph one another.

The NACSW Certifying Official will provide a 'handler's briefing' to review the test and location parameters. A start line (threshold) will be indicated. Handlers may have a moment at the start line to acclimate and collect themselves. You may be prompted by the judge to begin if the time

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is excessive. The time starts when the dog's nose crosses the start line. The dog must enter the search area by crossing the start line. The handler and dog may pass up and down the rows in any pattern as many times as they choose. Handlers may direct the dog to the boxes but may not touch the boxes. When the dog indicates the target box the handler should signal the judge by saying "ALERT" loudly and clearly. Once the judge has confirmed that the alert is correct, the handler may then reward the dog and the dog will pass the ORT. If the alert is not correct, the judge will direct the handler to the correct box* for the dog's success. In this case the dog will not pass the ORT for that target odor. Dogs may not retest at that event even on an alternate day. ORTs are scheduled as needed by NACSW and trial organizers.

The test may be stopped at the discretion of the judge or Certifying Official if at any time the judge deems the dog to be under undue stress.

* *The goal of directing the dog to the correct box quickly is to avoid any possible stress for any dog due to prolonged searching in the event they either don't know the odor or are having difficulty that day and to help maintain the integrity of the search area.*

ORT – Summary

- The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors.
- 3-minute test.
- On leash (any length leash).
- 12 closed cardboard boxes in a line-type pattern – minimal variation may be necessary due to location specs (11-1/8" x 8-3/4" x 4 is a typical size).
- Boxes may not be touched by handlers during the test.
- 1 target odor per test.
- Each additional odor at the test event will be a separate test.
- Handlers with a second dog will have a separate test.
- Time begins when the dog's nose crosses the start line.
- No formal, final response is required, only the handler's ability to read the dog's indication.
- The time will stop when the Handler calls 'Alert', indicating their dog has located the box with the target odor.
- Handler may reward the dog when the judge has confirmed the correct target box. Handler should reward next to the box to minimize contamination and should minimize food dropped on the floor or toys disturbing the search area.

ORT – Required odor for trial entry

The ORTs may be achieved in any order and may be done on the same testing day in separate tests if so organized by the host.

Must earn the ORT Title for all three odors (Birch, Anise, and Clove); required for all trial levels.

Element Specialty Trial Guidelines

Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials

Element Specialty Trials may be held for each of the individual elements. The elements include **Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle**. These trials and titles are separate from the NW1, NW2, and NW3 titling and trial options. Element Specialty Trials will include Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 titling options that will correspond to NW1, NW2 and NW3 as far as training skills required to be successful. However, titles are earned separately and are distinct from the NW1, NW2 and NW3 titles.

At an Element Specialty Trial, there will be 4 searches for each trial. Difficulty will be adjusted by the Certifying Official through selection of areas, hide placement, etc. Search areas will tend to be varied in environment for each trial. For example, for a Level 1 Container search you might have container searches in large spaces, small spaces, inside, outside, with elevation, etc. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. That time limit cannot be exceeded if points are to be awarded. The searches may be presented in any order. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors. All teams will complete all the searches for that trial on a single half day.

Note: for Element Specialty Trials you may see more time pressure, and time limits will typically be between 1 minute and 3 minutes. This may vary based on the location and areas available.

Container Element Specialty Trials

Container Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a group of containers in a specified area. Container Trials will have 4 searches of groups of containers set in any pattern. Please refer to the container guidelines document available on the Rule Book page located at: <https://nacsw.net/trial-information/trial-rule-book> for details on allowable containers at each level. There are no minimum spacing distances at any level. Additionally, the container searches for Level 2 and Level 3 may also include distractors, such as food and toys. Only one box (or container) will contain odor in each Level 1 Container Search. Level 2 and Level 3 Container Searches may include multiple or combination odors. The odor used will correspond to the title level requirement. The searches may be conducted **on or off leash** as specified by the Certifying Official at the trial, but any length leash may be used. Handlers are not permitted to touch the containers. The container search may be conducted indoors or outdoors. Level 3 Container Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odor).

Exterior Element Specialty Trials

Exterior Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a variety of exterior areas. Exterior Specialty Trials will have 4 Exterior Searches of varying environments. Examples of areas previously used include the exterior of a building, a parking lot, grassy field, courtyard, etc. Dogs may have to search while coming across doggie odors, other animal smells (cats, gophers, rodents and other critters), litter, food trash, and simply the smells of the great outdoors. Additionally, the dogs will have to search under all weather and wind conditions on trial day. The searches may be conducted on or off leash and are set by the Certifying Official based on safety. The off leash option

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is rarely offered and would only occur if the search took place in a secured area (Like a fenced in tennis court for example). The exterior search area will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape or other identifiers marking the perimeter of the search area. The hides will only be within the designated search area. However, dogs and handlers may move outside of those areas as part of their search pattern. Handlers may choose to enter the search area from any angle after the dog has crossed the designated start line, but the clock will begin once they cross the designated start line. The search area and search time limit will be determined on a number of factors including, size, weather conditions, complexity, distractors and title level and will change with each trial location. Level 3 Exterior Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odor).

Interior Element Specialty Trials

Interior Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a variety of interior areas. Interior Specialty Trials will have 4 Interior Searches of varying environments. These are of varying environments and sizes and have included environments such as kitchens, bathrooms, conference rooms, offices, classrooms, hallways, and warehouse spaces. A single search area may include contiguous 'rooms' (For example: a master bedroom with adjoining bathroom). Often this portion of the competition is not open to spectators because the search areas may be small such as bathrooms and kitchens. The building could be any type of building such as a warehouse, school, church, restaurant, house, etc. The search may have on and off leash areas, depending on the particular trial environments. Level 3 Interior Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odor).

Vehicle Element Specialty Trials

Vehicle Element Specialty Trials require dogs to complete a variety of vehicle searches. Vehicle Specialty Trials will have 4 Vehicle Searches that may offer differing environments. A search may be of a single vehicle or multiple vehicles. Any type of vehicle may be used (car, motorcycle, truck, trailer, semi, etc.). The search is of the exterior of the vehicles only. The handler will never need to open a vehicle door for their dog to locate the hide. Hide locations will take into account respect for the property and dogs should not put their feet on the painted surfaces of the vehicle to locate the hide unless otherwise specified by the Certifying Official. The search is typically conducted **on leash**, but any length leash may be used. Handlers may be assessed a fault if their dog excessively paws or damages the vehicle at the judge's discretion or if the safety of the dog is compromised, for example if the dog disappears from view under the car. For Level 2 and Level 3 Vehicle Trials more than one hide may be placed on any vehicle. Level 3 Vehicle Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odor).

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Level 1 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

Level 1 Element Specialty Title Requirements

Level 1 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two “qualifying scores”. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have a score of 75 and no more than 3 faults.

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each Level 1 Element Specialty search are typically around one to three minutes.

The titles are as follows:

L1C	Level 1 Containers Title
L1E	Level 1 Exteriors Title
L1I	Level 1 Interiors Title
L1V	Level 1 Vehicles Title

Level 1 Element Specialty Trial Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in all three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- One hide per search area at this level. Any of the 3 odors (or a combination) may be used in each search.

-
- **No Blank Areas.** (Search areas without odor that must be searched and deemed clear of odor).
 - **Height and accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The location of source will be identifiable by the dog.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location as long as the dog would be able to gain access to it with the handler's help.

Level 1 Element Specifications

- **Container Searches**
 - On leash or off leash as specified by the Certifying Official for each search.
 - No intentional distractors.
 - Container searches will be boxes set in any arrangement with no distance specifications.

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- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.
- **Exterior Area Searches**
 - On leash; may be off leash option if specified by the Certifying Official, but only if area is secure.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail.
- **Interior Building Searches**
 - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail.
- **Vehicle Searches**
 - On leash or Off Leash as specified by the Certifying Official.
 - May include single vehicles or multiple vehicles.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail.

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Level 2 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

Level 2 Element Specialty Title Requirements

Level 2 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two “qualifying scores.” A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only one “error” and no more than 3 faults. Errors include the following: a False Alert or a missed hide,

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each Level 2 Element Specialty search typically do not exceed 3 minutes.

The titles are as follows:

L2C	Level 2 Containers Title
L2E	Level 2 Exteriors Title
L2I	Level 2 Interiors Title
L2V	Level 2 Vehicles Title

Level 2 Element Specialty Trial Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in all three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
-
- No Blank Areas. (Areas without odor that must be searched and deemed clear of odor).
 - Number of hides will be stated on all elements. This information will be communicated to the handlers at the briefing or upon approach to the search area. There may be multiple hides in a search area.
 - In each area the time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls ‘Finish’. The handler should not say ‘Finish’ until all the hides in an area have been located and called (‘Alert’). In the event the handler has correctly located all the hides and has not said ‘Finish’, the handler will still pass the search, but will be given the full time allotted to the search.
 - Level 2 Element Specialty Trial scoring will be based on points earned and “errors”. Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search. An error will accrue for each missed hide and each False Alert. Each False Alert will result in a deduction of one hide worth of points from the score.
 - If a judge’s response to a handler’s ‘Alert’ call is ‘No,’ then a False Alert is assessed. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first False Alert. A second False Alert will end the search and the team will be given the full time allotted for the search.

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- Individual search scores may be negative to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative.
- **Height & Accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The odor will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.

Level 2 Element Specifications

- **Container Searches**

- On or Off Leash as specified by the Certifying Official.
- Distractors may be included (i.e., food, toys). Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
- Containers may be any combination of boxes or alternate non-fabric containers set in any arrangement.
- The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.

- **Exterior Area Searches**

- On leash; may be off leash option if specified by the Certifying Official, but only if area is secure.
- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on exterior search areas.

- **Interior Building Searches**

- May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on interior search areas.

- **Vehicle Searches**

- On leash or Off leash as specified by the Certifying Official.
- There may be single or multiple vehicles in a search.
- There may be multiple odors on vehicles.
- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on vehicle search areas.

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Level 3 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

Level 3 Element Specialty Title Requirements

Level 3 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two “qualifying scores.” A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only 1 “error” and no more than 3 faults. Errors include the following: a False Alert, a missed hide, or a time out (i.e., failure to call finish before time expires).

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each Level 3 Element Specialty search typically do not exceed 4 minutes.

The titles are as follows:

L3C	Level 3 Containers Title
L3E	Level 3 Exteriors Title
L3I	Level 3 Interiors Title
L3V	Level 3 Vehicles Title

Level 3 Element Specialty Trial Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- Each search will have an unknown number of hides, you will be given a range (for example: 1 to 5 hides, or 0 to 3 hides). Any one of the searches may be a Blank Area with no hides. In the event of a Blank Area, the ‘Finish’ call will be worth one hide.
- In each search the handler must locate all hides and call ‘Finish’ before the time runs out to achieve full points for that search.
- Level 3 Element Specialty Trial scoring will be based on points earned and “errors”. Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search. An error will accrue for each missed hide, each False Alert, and each “timed out” (didn’t say ‘Finish’ prior to time elapsing). Each False Alert and each “timed out” will result in a deduction of one hide worth of points from the score.
- If a judge’s response to a handler’s ‘Alert’ call is ‘No,’ then a False Alert is assessed. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first False Alert. A second False Alert in the same search will end the search and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- If a handler times out (i.e., does not call ‘Finish’ prior to time expiring), the team will accrue an “error” and a deduction of one hide worth of points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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- Individual search scores may be negative to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative.
- **Height & Accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately six (6) feet high. The odor will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.

Level 3 Element Specifications

- **Container Searches**
 - On or off leash as specified by the Certifying Official for each search.
 - There may be multiple distractors (i.e., food, toy). Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.
 - The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on container search areas.
- **Exterior Area Searches** (on leash; may be off leash option as determined by the Certifying Official)
 - If an off leash option is available, it is up to the competitor to determine if the area is secure and the situation is appropriate for their particular dog to be off leash.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on exterior search areas.
- **Interior Building Searches**
 - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on interior search areas.
- **Vehicle Searches**
 - On leash or Off leash as specified by the Certifying Official.
 - Searches may include a single vehicle or multiple vehicles.
 - There may be multiple odors on vehicles and a variety of vehicles may be included.
 - Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on vehicle search areas.

NW1, NW2, and NW3 Trial Guidelines

Trial Elements for NW1, NW2, and NW3

Following are the elements that must be included in any K9 Nose Work® competition for NW1, NW2, and NW3 title purposes. There will be a total possible score of 100 points overall. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each. The time limit for the search cannot be exceeded if full points are to be awarded. The elements may be presented in any order. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors to allow for no total time differences in the search.

Note: for most trials, the time limit for each search area is typically between two and four minutes.

ELEMENTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION (100-point total score)

- ◆ **CONTAINER SEARCH**
- ◆ **EXTERIOR AREA SEARCH**
- ◆ **INTERIOR BUILDING SEARCH**
- ◆ **VEHICLE SEARCH**

Container Search

A container search consists of a group of containers set in any arrangement with no minimum spacing distances. The container search may be conducted indoors or outdoors. For NW1, containers will be boxes of any shape or size. Please refer to the container guidelines document available on the Rule Book page located at: <https://nacsw.net/trial-information/trial-rule-book> for details on allowable containers at each level. The container search for NW2 and NW3 may also include distractor odors, such as but not limited to food and toys. Container searches at Elite may also include distractor odors of any type including food, toys and other novel items. The search is typically conducted **on leash**, but any length leash may be used. Handlers are not permitted to touch the containers.

Exterior Area Search

Each competition includes at least one outdoor search area. Examples of areas previously used include the exterior of a building, a parking lot, grassy field, courtyard, etc. Dogs may have to search while coming across doggie odors, other animal smells (cats, gophers, rodents and other critters), litter, food trash, and simply the smells of the great outdoors. Additionally, the dogs will have to search under all weather and wind conditions on trial day. The search may be conducted on or off leash and is set by the Certifying Official based on safety. The off leash option is rarely offered and would only occur if the search took place in a secured area (Like a fenced in tennis court for example). The exterior search area will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape or other identifiers marking the perimeter of the search area. The hides will only be within the designated search area. However, dogs and handlers may move outside of those areas as part of their search pattern. Handlers may choose to enter the search area from any angle after the dog has crossed the designated start line, but the clock will begin once they cross the designated start. The search area and search time limit will be determined on a number of factors including, size, weather conditions, complexity, distractors and title level and will change with each trial location.

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Interior Building Search

Each competition includes at least one interior building search. These are typically room-sized environments such as a kitchen, bathroom, conference room, office, or warehouse space. A single search area may include contiguous 'rooms' (For example: a master bedroom with adjoining bathroom). Often this portion of the competition is not open to spectators because the search areas may be small such as bathrooms and kitchens. The building could be any type of building such as a warehouse, school, church, restaurant, house, etc. The search may have on and off leash areas, depending on the particular trial requirements.

Vehicle Search

There may be up to five vehicles in the vehicle search, depending on the title level. Any type of vehicle may be used (car, motorcycle, truck, trailer, semi, etc.). Only the exterior of the vehicle is searched. The search is typically conducted **on leash**, but any length leash may be used. The handler will never need to open a vehicle door for their dog to locate the hide. Hide locations will take into account respect for the property and dogs should not put their feet on the painted surfaces of the vehicle to locate the hide unless otherwise specified by the Certifying Official. For NW2 and NW3 vehicle searches more than one hide may be placed on any vehicle. Handlers may be assessed a fault if their dog excessively paws or damages the vehicle at the judge's discretion or if the safety of the dog is compromised, for example if the dog disappears from view under the car.

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NW1 Trial Specifications

NW1 Title Requirements

The NW1 title is earned with a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each NW1 element are typically about three minutes, but generally do not exceed four minutes.

NW1 Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in all three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- One hide per element at this level. Any of the 3 odors (or a combination) may be used in each element.

-
- No Blank Areas. (Search areas without odor that must be searched and deemed clear of odor)
 - There is no requirement to call 'Finish' at this level.
 - **Height and accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The location of source will be identifiable by the dog.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location as long as the dog would be able to gain access to it with the handler's help.

NW1 Element Specifications

- **Container Search**
 - Typically on leash.
 - No intentional distractors.
 - Container search will be boxes set in any arrangement with no distance specifications.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.
- **Exterior Area Search**
 - On leash; may be off leash option but only if area is secure.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail.
- **Interior Building Search**
 - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
 - One search area.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail.

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- **Vehicle Search**
 - On leash.
 - Up to three vehicles.
 - Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail.

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NW2 Trial Specifications

NW2 Title Requirements

The NW2 title is earned with a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. The maximum time for each search area, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each NW2 area generally do not exceed four minutes.

NW2 Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in all three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
-
- Number of hides will be stated on all elements. This information will be communicated to the handlers at the briefing. There may be one, two or three hides in each search area. There will be no Blank Areas. (Areas without odor that must be searched and deemed clear of odor).
 - In each area the time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls 'Finish'. The handler should not say 'Finish' until all the hides in an area have been located and called ('Alert'). In the event the handler has correctly located all the hides and has not said 'Finish', the handler will still pass the element, but will be given the full time allotted to the search.
 - If a judge's response to a handler's 'Alert' call is 'No,' then a False Alert is assessed. The handler will not be given the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that search area but will keep the points for hides correctly located in that search area prior to the incorrect call. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. For the element with two searches, if the incorrect call happens in the first search, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching that search area but will be allowed to perform the remaining search of that element.
 - **Height & Accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The odor will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.

NW2 Element Specifications

There will be five searches at each NW2 trial. There will be at least one search of each element (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle). The remaining search may be of any one of the elements. For example, there may be 2 Container searches, 1 Exterior search, 1 Interior search and 1 Vehicle search.

- **Container Search**
 - Typically on leash.

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- There will be at least one distractor (i.e. food, toys). In the event of multiple container searches, there will be at least one distractor in one of the searches, however there may be distractors in both searches.
- Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
- Please see “Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials” for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.
- Containers may be set in any arrangement.
- The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
- Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail on container search areas.

- **Exterior Area Search**
 - On leash; may be off leash option but only if area is secure.
 - Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail on exterior search areas.

- **Interior Building Search**
 - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
 - Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail on interior search areas.

- **Vehicle Search**
 - On leash.
 - Up to four vehicles. There may be multiple odors on vehicles.
 - Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail on vehicle search areas.

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NW3 Trial Specifications

NW3 Title Requirements

NW3 Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults at a trial, they will earn a NW3 title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two “qualifying scores”. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only 1 “error” and no more than 3 faults. Errors include the following: a False Alert, a missed hide, or a time out (i.e., failure to call finish before time expires).

Qualifying scores will accumulate even if a perfect score is earned in between. For example, at the first trial, a team earns a qualifying score, at the second trial, a team earns a perfect score and their first NW3 title, at the third trial, a team earns another qualifying score which would give them their second NW3 title achieved by earning two qualifying scores.

Teams will not be eligible to earn additional NW3 titles after their third NW3 title.

NW3 Requirements and Parameters

- **Proficient in three odors** (*Birch, Anise, Clove*); must have ORT Title on file with NACSW. Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- Number of hides will not be stated on any of the search areas or elements. There may be zero, one, two or three hides in any of the search areas. However, there will be no more than one Blank Area (search area with zero hides) per trial and it is possible a trial may not have a Blank Area. In the event of a Blank Area, the ‘Finish’ call will be worth one hide.
- In each search the handler must locate all hides and call ‘Finish’ before the time runs out to achieve full points for that search.
- NW3 scoring will be based on points earned and “errors”. Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search. An error will accrue for each missed hide, each False Alert, and each “timed out” (didn’t say ‘Finish’ prior to time elapsing). Each False Alert and each “timed out” will result in a deduction of one hide worth of points from the score.
- If a judge’s response to a handler’s ‘Alert’ call is ‘No,’ then a False Alert is assessed. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first False Alert. A second False Alert will end the search and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- For any element with more than one search, if a second incorrect call happens, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching that search area but will be allowed to perform any remaining searches of that element.

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- If a handler times out (i.e., does not call 'Finish' prior to time expiring), the team will accrue an "error" and a deduction of one hide worth of points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- Individual search scores may be negative to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative.
- **Height and Accessibility of hides** – Should be no more than approximately six (6) feet high. The odor will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.

NW3 Element Specifications

- There will be 6 searches at each NW3 trial. There will be at least one search of each element (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle). The remaining two searches may be of any of the elements. For example, there may be 2 Container searches, 1 Exterior search, 1 Interior search, and 2 Vehicle searches.
- Any one of the 6 searches may be a Blank Area with no hides. Handlers must, in this case, call 'Finish' without calling any alerts.
- **Container Search**
 - Typically on leash.
 - There may be multiple distractors (i.e., food, toy). Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
 - Please see "Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials" for more detail on the types of containers you may encounter.
 - Containers may be set in any arrangement.
 - The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on container search areas.
- **Exterior Area Search** (on leash; may be off leash option)
 - If an off leash option is available, it is up to the competitor to determine if the area is secure and the situation is appropriate for their particular dog to be off leash.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on exterior search areas.
- **Interior Building Search**
 - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official.
 - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on interior search areas.
- **Vehicle Search**

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- Typically On leash.
- Up to five vehicles.
- There may be multiple odors on vehicles and a variety of vehicles may be included.
- Please see “Trial Elements” for more detail on vehicle search areas.

NW3 Element Title Requirements

Prior to August 1, 2023: Requires three passes of a search in each of the elements at NW3. the same NW3 search qualifying NW3 element. The NW3 Element titles are awarded to competitors who have successfully passed the same NW3 Element three times. A pass is defined as full score and no more than 3 faults. If there are multiple searches of an element at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass all searches of that element to earn a pass for that NW3 element title. For example, if there is 1 interior search at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass that search to earn a pass towards their NW3 Interior Element Title. If there are 3 exterior searches at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass all 3 exterior searches to earn a pass towards their NW3 Exterior Element Title.

Effective August 1, 2023: Requires three passes of a search in each of the elements at NW3. The NW3 Element titles are awarded to competitors who have successfully passed 3 searches of the same element. A pass is defined as full score and no more than 3 faults. If there are multiple searches of an element at a trial, a team may earn additional passes for that element title. **For example:** if there are two interior searches at a trial and a competitor passes both searches, they will have two of the required three passes towards their NW3-I title. For trials prior to August 1, 2023, passes will still be based on passing all the searches in an element at a trial. The change is not retroactive.

The titles are as follows:

NW3-C	NW3 Container Search Title
NW3-E	NW3 Exterior Search Title
NW3-I	NW3 Interior Search Title
NW3-V	NW3 Vehicle Search Title

NW3 Elite

The NW3 Elite title is awarded to competitors who have successfully passed the NW3 title level three times and have demonstrated competency in all four elements. Competency is defined as earning either the NW3 Element title or the Level 3 Element Specialty title for each element. For example, a team may demonstrate competency in all elements by earning the NW3-V, L3E, NW3-I, and L3C titles.

Elite Division Trial Guidelines

Trial Searches for Elite Division

Elite Division Trials will not be broken out by element. Trials may contain any combination of interior, exterior, vehicle, and/or container searches. For example, a trial may have an exterior search area that also includes vehicles, or it might consist of all interior searches.

At an Elite Division Trial, there will typically be 3-5 searches for each trial. This number may vary however to allow for more locations to be obtained for trials. Difficulty will be adjusted by the Certifying Official through selection of areas, hide placement, etc. Search areas will tend to be varied in environment for each trial. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors.

Elite Division Title Requirements

Each title is based on earning the total required points for the given title level at Elite Division Trials. The points earned at a trial are the total score earned for the trial. Note: Effective October 1, 2017, Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

See the scoring section for details on how the score is calculated. The ELT1 title will be earned when a dog has earned 150 points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT2 title will be earned when a dog has earned 400 points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT3 title is earned by accumulating 650 total points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT-CH title is earned by accumulating 1000 total points at Elite Division Trials. For example, if a dog competes at one Elite Division Trial and earns a score of 80 points and then competes at a second Elite Division Trial and earns a score of 70 points, then the dog will have earned the ELT1 title.

Elite Division Requirements and Parameters

- Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- Teams must have earned their NW3 Elite title to be eligible to compete in an Elite Division Trial.
- Each search area will be clearly defined, and a time limit will be given for the area. **Timers will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning** unless otherwise defined prior to the search.
- **Searches may have an unknown or known number of hides for the area.** This will be information given to the handler prior to starting the search. For an unknown number, you may be given a range – for example: 0 to 5 hides. If no range is given and it is an unknown number, then there may be any number of hides (or zero hides) in the area.
- The team will accrue points for each hide found (or call made in the case of an area with no hides). The total possible points will be 100. The points for each hide/call will be equal to 100 divided by the total number of hides/calls. For example, if there are 10 total hides/calls then each hide will be worth 10 points. If there are 14 total hides/calls, then each hide will be

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worth 7.14 points. In the case of a search with no hides, a correct 'Finish' call is worth 2 hides. Points will be deducted for each False Alert call and also for each timed out (failure to call 'Finish' prior to time elapsing). There will also be a 1-point deduction for each fault.

- A Blank Area at Elite trials will be scored as 2 hides worth of points. Scoring will be as follows:
 - Finish correctly called = 2 hides.
 - No points are earned if there is a False Alert prior to the Finish call.
 - Each false alert will result in a ½ hide deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'Finish' will result in a score of -1 hide worth of points.
 - Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.
- The score for an individual search may be negative. However, the minimum overall score for a trial will be zero and will not be negative.
- Time will stop when the handler says 'Finish'. This is the case even if there are a known number of hides in the search area. If the handler does not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, the team will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of half of a hide.
- If the handler calls a False Alert during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of ½ hide for each False Alert. For example, if there are a total of 10 hides and no Blank Areas at that trial, each hide is worth 10 points. The team will lose 5 points from its score for each False Alert call. See below in the scoring section for details. There will be a limit of 3 False Alert calls in each search area. If you call a 3rd False Alert in a single search, the search will end at that time and you will receive full time for that search.
- For each fault that is assessed, there will be a 1-point deduction from the score for that search.
- **NW1, NW2, and NW3 hide parameters do not apply.** Anywhere in the search area is fair game for hide locations. Hides will not be in the search boundary markers (i.e., boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides will not be outside of search boundaries.
- When there are vehicles located in the search area, searches are generally of the exterior of the vehicles only unless otherwise specified by the Certifying Official, for example, the interior of a bus or a plane. Hide locations will take into account respect for the property, however with some vehicles such as farm equipment or industrial equipment, hides may be elevated and it may be permissible for the dog to put their feet on the equipment. You may clarify the parameters with the Certifying Official at the briefing if needed.

Summit League Trial Guidelines

Trial Searches for Summit League

Summit League Trials will not be broken out by element. Trials may contain any combination of interior, exterior, vehicle, and/or container searches. For example, a trial may have an exterior search area that also includes vehicles, or it might consist of all interior searches.

Summit League Trials will be a two day event. The number of searches will typically be 3-5 searches per day for each trial for a total of 6-10 searches over the complete trial. This number may vary however to allow for more locations to be obtained for trials. Difficulty will be adjusted by the Certifying Official through selection of areas, hide placement, etc. Search areas will tend to be varied in environment for each trial. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors. Searches may be run across multiple days (i.e., half the teams run the search on day 1 of the trial and the other half run the search on day 2). Additional search parameters that may involve strategy decisions by the handler may be included.

Summit League Title Requirements

A title will be earned by placing in the top 20% of teams overall at a Summit League Trial. A team may achieve the SMT Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the SMT designation, i.e., SMTx2, SMTx3, etc.

Summit League Requirements and Parameters

- Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- Teams must have earned their ELT3 or ELT-CH title to be eligible to compete in a Summit League Trial. Teams that have received their ELT-CH titles will receive places in the trial before teams that have received their ELT3 title as per the trial premium. Please refer to the trial premium for other entry limitations.
- Each search area will be clearly defined, and a time limit will be given for the area. **Timers will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning when designated by the Certifying Official.**
- **Searches may have unknown or known number of hides for the area.** This will be information given to the handler prior to starting the search. For unknown number, you may be given a range – for example: 0 to 5 hides. If no range is given and it is an unknown number, then there may be any number of hides (or zero hides) in the area.
- The team will accrue 5 points for each hide found. The total possible points will vary from trial to trial. Points will be deducted for each False Alert call and also for each timed out (failure to call 'Finish' prior to time elapsing). There will also be a 1-point deduction for each fault.
- A Blank Area at Summit trials will be worth 10 points. Scoring will be as follows:

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- Finish correctly called = 10 points
 - No points are earned if there is a False Alert prior to the Finish call.
 - Each false alert will result in a 2.5 points deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'Finish' will result in a score of -5 points.
 - Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a 2.5 points deduction.
- The score for an individual search may be negative. However, the minimum overall score for a trial will be zero and will not be negative.
 - Time will stop when the handler says 'Finish'. This is the case even if there are a known number of hides in the search area. If the handler does not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, the team will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of 2.5 points (half of a hide).
 - If the handler calls a False Alert during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide) for each False Alert. There will be a limit of 3 False Alert calls in each search area. If the handler calls a 3rd False Alert in a single search, the search will end at that time and full time will be assessed.
 - For each fault that is assessed, there will be a 1-point deduction from the score for that search.
 - **NW1, NW2, and NW3 hide parameters do not apply.** Anywhere in the search area is fair game for hide locations. Hides will not be in the search boundary markers (i.e., boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides won't be outside of search boundaries.
 - When there are vehicles located in the search area, searches are generally of the exterior of the vehicles only unless otherwise specified by the Certifying Official, for example, the interior of a bus or a plane. Hide locations will take into account respect for the property, however with some vehicles such as farm equipment or industrial equipment, hides may be elevated and it may be permissible for the dog to put their feet on the equipment. You may clarify the parameters with the Certifying Official at the briefing if needed.

Elite Select Trial Guidelines

Trial Searches for Elite Select Trials

These trials and titles are separate from the Elite Division titling and trial options. Elite Select Trial skills will correspond to Elite Division Trials as far as training skills required to be successful. However, titles are earned separately and are distinct from the ELT1, ELT2, ELT3, and ELT-CH titles.

Elite Select Trials will not be broken out by element. Trials may contain any combination of interior, exterior, vehicle, and/or container searches. For example, a trial may have an exterior search area that also includes vehicles, or it might consist of all interior searches.

At an Elite Select Trial, there will be 4 searches for each trial. Difficulty will be adjusted by the Certifying Official through selection of areas, hide placement, etc. Search areas will tend to be varied in environment for each trial. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors. All trials will complete all the searches for that trial on a single half day.

Elite Select Title Requirements

The ELT-S title is based on earning a total of 350 points at Elite Select Trials. The points earned at a trial are the total score earned for the trial. Teams must score a minimum of 50 points at an Elite Select Trial to accumulate points for that trial. A team may achieve the ELT-S Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the ELT-S designation, i.e., ELT-Sx2, ELT-Sx3, etc.

See the scoring section for details on how the score is calculated.

Elite Select Requirements and Parameters

- Each search area may contain odor #1 (Birch) and/or odor #2 (Anise) and/or odor #3 (Clove) or a combination odor of any of the three odors or multiples of the same odor.
- There are two paths to be eligible to compete in an Elite Select Trial
 1. Earn a minimum of one NW3 title. Note that teams with higher titles (Elite Division and Summit) are also eligible to compete.
 2. Earn any one L3 title (L3I, L3E, L3C, or L3V)
- Each search area will be clearly defined, and a time limit will be given for the area. **Timers will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning** unless otherwise defined prior to the search.
- **Searches may have an unknown or known number of hides for the area.** This will be information given to the handler prior to starting the search. For an unknown number, you may be given a range – for example: 0 to 5 hides. If no range is given and it is an unknown number, then there may be any number of hides (or zero hides) in the area.

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- The team will accrue points for each hide found (or call made in the case of an area with no hides). The total possible points will be 100. The points for each hide/call will be equal to 100 divided by the total number of hides/calls. For example, if there are 10 total hides/calls then each hide will be worth 10 points. If there are 14 total hides/calls, then each hide will be worth 7.14 points. In the case of a search with no hides, a correct 'Finish' call is worth 2 hides. Points will be deducted for each False Alert call and also for each timed out (failure to call 'Finish' prior to time elapsing). There will also be a 1-point deduction for each fault.
- A Blank Area at Elite Select trials will be scored as 2 hides worth of points. Scoring will be as follows:
 - Finish correctly called = 2 hides.
 - No points are earned if there is a False Alert prior to the Finish call.
 - Each false alert will result in a ½ hide deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'Finish' will result in a score of -1 hide worth of points.
 - Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.
- The score for an individual search may be negative. However, the minimum overall score for a trial will be zero and will not be negative.
- Time will stop when the handler says 'Finish'. This is the case even if there are a known number of hides in the search area. If the handler does not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, the team will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of half of a hide.
- If the handler calls a False Alert during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of ½ hide for each False Alert. For example, if there are a total of 10 hides and no Blank Areas at that trial, each hide is worth 10 points. The team will lose 5 points from its score for each False Alert call. See below in the scoring section for details. There will be a limit of 3 False Alert calls in each search area. If you call a 3rd False Alert in a single search, the search will end at that time and you will receive full time for that search.
- For each fault that is assessed, there will be a 1-point deduction from the score for that search.
- **NW1, NW2, and NW3 hide parameters do not apply.** Anywhere in the search area is fair game for hide locations. Hides will not be in the search boundary markers (i.e., boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides will not be outside of search boundaries.
- When there are vehicles located in the search area, searches are generally of the exterior of the vehicles only unless otherwise specified by the Certifying Official, for example, the interior of a bus or a plane. Hide locations will take into account respect for the property, however with some vehicles such as farm equipment or industrial equipment, hides may be elevated and it may be permissible for the dog to put their feet on the equipment. You may clarify the parameters with the Certifying Official at the briefing if needed.

Skills Achievement Challenge Guidelines

The Skills Achievement Challenges will be available via the NACSW website (<https://nacsww.net>) and will be announced on the NACSW membership google group.

The Skills Achievement Challenges are focused on demonstrating the dog's competency and understanding of each specific skill. The handler will know the location of the hide(s). We will not judge the handler's ability to read the dog's behavior. We understand that in many situations, the handler would be able to read the dog's changes of behavior and successfully navigate a challenge at a trial, but in the Skills Achievement Challenges we are looking for a dog who fully understands the skill without the handler's interpretation of the behavior. We understand that occasionally a dog will have the odor information from the start line and may go directly to a hide. However we are evaluating the dog's competency of the skill which should generally show the dog actively searching/seeking and also include behavior changes as they locate the hide.

There is no requirement for a team to have passed an ORT or have earned any titles to participate in a Skills Achievement Challenge. The dog must be registered with NACSW and the handler needs to be a current NACSW member.

The searches for a Skills Achievement Challenge will be performed at location(s) of your choosing, videotaped, and submitted online for judging.

There will be two Skills Achievement Challenges posted each calendar year. Each Skills Achievement Challenge will be open for entries for 1 year.

Each Skills Achievement Challenge will consist of 4 skills. Each skill has three level options. You will accumulate points towards an overall score based on your success at a given level for a skill. The team must complete all 4 skills at a minimum of Level 1 to be eligible for a title.

If you successfully submit a skill for Level 1 you will earn 10 points, a skill successfully submitted for Level 2 will earn 20 points, a skill successfully submitted for Level 3 will earn 30 points.

You may submit at varying levels for each of the 4 skills for the same challenge to accumulate points.

As an example, you may submit:

- Skill 1 at Level 3 for 30 points
- Skill 2 at Level 1 for 10 points
- Skill 3 at Level 3 for 30 points
- Skill 4 at Level 2 for 20 points

If your submissions were judged as a 'Pass' for each of the 4 skills, you would have earned a total of 90 points in this example.

Each submitted search will be judged as a 'Pass' for full points or a 'Miss' for zero points.

Skills Achievement Challenge Requirements

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- Handlers must be current members in good standing with NACSW. Dogs must be registered with NACSW.
- The same handler must handle the same dog for all the searches in a single Skills Achievement Challenge.
- Double handling is not permissible, i.e., someone other than the designated handler giving the handler or the dog instructions or assistance during the searches.
- Since the Skills Achievement Challenges are looking at the dog's competency without handler involvement, handlers should limit interaction with the dog to reward/praise upon successfully finding hides or to direct the dog back to the vicinity of the search area.
- Handlers may carry the dog's reward with them (food, toys, etc.) and may reward during the search.
- These searches may take place at any location. At home, your training facility, etc. They may be inside or outside.
- Individuals and businesses may offer the opportunity to run Skills Achievement Challenge setups at their facilities. However, these opportunities are not sanctioned by NACSW and are not guaranteed to meet the Challenge requirements or NACSW standards for event protocols.
- It is the handler's responsibility to ensure the safety of their dogs working in the search areas and the safety of others in the vicinity.
- The challenges should be done using NACSW odors (Birch, Anise, and/or Clove) - there is no requirement as to which of the 3 you should use for any given challenge, and you may opt to use combination of the odors. The hides should not be paired with food or toys.

If you live outside of the United States and Canada, you may submit a request to trial@nacsw.net for approval to use alternate essential oils or hydrolates as a target odor. Hide locations will be known to the handler.

- There will be a designated time limit for each search. There must be a visible start line designated in the area (cones, tape, doorway). Time will start when the dog's nose crosses the start line. The time will stop when the last hide in the search is located.
- The time does not stop between hides when there are multiple hides in a given search area.
- It is recommended that all searches are done off-leash. We are evaluating the dog's competency at a skill without handler involvement. Handlers should not be directing the search or leading the dog into productive areas. Handlers may step in to support a dog in their process.

Please ensure that the area you are using is appropriate for the location and for safety of the dog to be off-leash. If you opt to run a search on-leash, it must be very clear that the handler is not influencing the search. The leash should only be used to keep the dog in the search area.

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- **Alerts** – Since the handler knows the hide location, there is no need for the handler to say ‘Alert’.
- The dog needs to clearly demonstrate that they understand the location of the hide and/or show persistent attempts to access the hide prior to the handler marking/praising/rewarding the dog.
- You are encouraged to reward your dog after each find.
- The video you submit should be the first time the dog is running that particular search. If you need to rerun, you will need to reset to another location or use an alternate hide placement. For any searches involving containers where the hide placement is set, if an alternate location is not an option, please wait at least 4 hours before rerunning the search. You may want to practice with alternate hide locations prior to doing your search for submission in this case.
- The dog’s understanding of the designated skill is being judged. We are not judging the handler’s ability to read the dog. It is possible that a dog may demonstrate communication while not at the hide. We will allow for the dog to give one preliminary communication/false alert not at a hide location during a search as long as the dog resumes searching without cues from the handler. For example: a dog may look back at the handler, which may be perceived as an alert. Any additional communication from the dog that they have located a hide at an incorrect location will result in the search being scored as a ‘Miss’.
- For multiple hide searches: Since we are evaluating the dog’s competency at each skill, in the case of a multiple hide search, the dog should be able to locate all the hides with minimal return to already found hides.

For the purposes of judging, we will define what qualifies as a “Return to Hide” below. Dogs may “Return to Hide” once during the search and still pass. Additional “Return to Hides” will not be a pass.

A “Return to Hide” is counted if a dog returns to an already found hide in the following cases:

- If the handler rewards the dog upon return
- If the handler physically helps the dog move on
- If the handler uses repeated verbal assistance to move the dog on
- If the dog offers repeated communication behavior or communication behavior at more than one already found hide.

If a dog revisits a single already found hide while working the problem and moves on with minimal assistance from the handler this will NOT be considered a “Return to Hide” unless any of the conditions defined above apply.

- For any searches using containers, the containers should be closed and should be cardboard or plastic, square or rectangular containers, of any size. (Folding flaps on 4 flap cardboard boxes is OK). The containers may be of varying types in a single search.
- Any search where a dog is causing extreme disruption or destruction of the search area or containers will not be given a pass.

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- Additional parameters may be specified for each specific skill.

Skills Achievement Title Requirements

The team must complete all 4 skills at a minimum of Level 1 to be eligible for a title.

Each skill at Level 1 will be worth 10 points, each skill at Level 2 will be worth 20 points, each skill at Level 3 will be worth 30 points.

To earn NSA1, you must earn a minimum of 40 points.

To earn NSA2, you must earn a minimum of 70 points.

To earn NSA3, you must earn a minimum of 100 points.

To earn NSAM, you must earn 120 points.

The maximum time for each search, as specified in the Challenge details, must not be exceeded.

The titles are as follows:

NSA1	Nose Work Skills Achievement 1 Title
NSA2	Nose Work Skills Achievement 2 Title
NSA3	Nose Work Skills Achievement 3 Title
NSAM	Nose Work Skills Achievement Master Title

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Trial Scoring

Element Specialty Trials

- Element Specialty Trials will be based on four searches of the same element combined for a total of 100 points. All trials will complete all the searches for that trial on a single half day.
- Each hide will be worth an equal number of points. We will take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides from all the searches for that trial to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 5 hides total, each hide would be worth 20 points. If there are 8 hides total, each hide would be worth 12.5 points.
- Competitors will earn their title if they have a score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. Competitors may earn a qualifying score if they have met the criteria for a qualifying score for that level and no more than 3 faults. Two qualifying scores at the same level and element will earn a title.
- At Level 1, a qualifying score is at least 75 points with no more than 3 faults. At Levels 2 and 3 a qualifying score is earned by having no more than one “error” and no more than 3 faults.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved. Results will be posted on our website after the trial for those who wish to know where they placed for each search and overall. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then faults (low to high), then time (low to high).

NW1, NW2, NW3 Trials

- NACSW trials will be based on several searches combined for a total of 100 points.
- Each hide will be worth an equal number of points. We take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides from all the searches for that trial, with a Blank Area counting as one hide. to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 10 hides total and no Blank Areas, each hide will be worth 10 points. If there are 8 hides total (or 7 hides and a Blank Area), each hide (and a correct finish call in the Blank Area) will be worth 12.5 points.
- Competitors will earn their title if they have a score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. At NW3 a qualifying score may also be earned by having no more than one “error” and no more than 3 faults. Two qualifying scores result in a NW3 title.
- All titling events must include at least one search in each of the four elements: container search, interior building search, vehicle search, and exterior area search on the same trial day. All trials will complete all searches on a single day.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for individual element placements of the trial (i.e., 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle) and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by score (high to low), then faults (low to high), then time (low to high). For elements with more than one

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search, placements will consider the combined score, faults, and time for all searches of that element.

Elite Division Trials

- Elite Division Trials will be based on several searches combined for a total of 100 points.
- Each hide/call will be worth an equal number of points. We will take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides (a Blank Area will be worth 2 hides) from all the searches for that trial to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 5 hides total, each hide will be worth 20 points. If there are 8 hides total plus a Blank Area, each hide will be worth 10 points and the Blank Area will be worth 20.
- Competitors will earn titles by accumulating points based on their score at each Elite Division Trial. Note: Effective October 1, 2017, Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for placements in each search, and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then time (low to high).

Summit League Trials

- Summit League Trials will be based on several searches combined across multiple days for a varying number of points.
- Each hide will be worth 5 points and a Blank Area will be worth 10 points.
- Competitors will earn titles by placing in the top 20% of teams overall at the trial.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for placements in each search, and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then time (low to high).

Elite Select Trials

- Elite Select Trials will be based on four searches combined for a total of 100 points. The searches may include any of the elements or combination of elements. All trials will complete all the searches for that trial on a single half day.
- Each hide/call will be worth an equal number of points. We will take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides (a Blank Area will be worth 2 hides) from all the searches for that trial to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 5 hides total, each hide will be worth 20 points. If there are 8 hides total plus a Blank Area, each hide will be worth 10 points and the Blank Area will be worth 20.
- Competitors will earn titles by accumulating points based on their score at each Elite Select Trial. Teams must score a minimum of 50 points at an Elite Select Trial to accumulate points for that trial.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved. Results will be posted on our website after the trial for those who wish to know where they placed for each search and overall.

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Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then faults (low to high), then time (low to high).

Terminology

- **Alert : FULL POINTS AWARDED**

The **dog has correctly indicated the source of the odor**, the handler has called the alert and without question the judge can easily confirm both are correct.

In the event the judge asks “WHERE?” the handler should identify the location of the source by pointing to the location without touching the location. If **correctly** identified the team will receive credit for the hide. This scenario is most likely with a dog that has a subtle final response that is not as easily identifiable or if the judge wants confirmation that the handler knows the location based on the dogs change of behavior. NOTE: Once you say “Alert”, if the judge asks “Where”, you must respond promptly. This is not an opportunity to re-cue your dog to continue searching to clarify the hide location.

- **Blank Area:** In NW3 trials, Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, the Elite Division, and Summit League Trials, handlers may encounter a search area that is blank (not containing any odor). Handlers must, in this case, call ‘Finish’ without calling any alerts in the area. At these levels, any search area may be blank. Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, Elite Division and Summit League may also include multi-part searches where there may be a portion or segment that has no hides. For example, there may be a container search that has 3 segments where 2 of the segments have hides and 1 of the segments is a Blank Area. In a multi-part search, there will only be one ‘Finish’ call after completing all segments.

- **False Alert:** A false alert may be one of the following two situations:

1. The dog offers an indication but does not correctly identify the location of the source and the handler calls the alert. The dog may be offering a false response, or the handler may have inadvertently cued the dog.

Ex. #1: Room A has no odor, but the dog offers an indication and the handler calls Alert.

Ex. #2: Room A has odor at the door, but the dog indicates at the window, six feet away from the source and the handler calls Alert.

Note: If the dog indicates but handler does not call it, it is not considered a false, and there is no deduction of points.

2. The dog does not offer an indication, but the handler misreads the dog and calls an alert.

In the case of a False Alert:

- NW1/Level 1 Element Specialty Trials: The search ends and the team is typically given the opportunity to reward the dog at the hide location. The team receives 0 points for this search and their time will be the full time for the search.
- NW2: The competitor will earn points for hides found and their time will be the full time for the search.
- NW3/Level 2 and 3 Element Specialty Trials: The competitor will earn points for hides found. Each False Alert results in one “error” and a deduction of one hide

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worth of points. A second False Alert in the same search will end the search and result in full time for the search.

- Elite Division: Each False Alert will have a point deduction equivalent to one half of a hide. For example, if you are at a trial where each hide is worth 10 points, 5 points will be deducted from that team's score for each False Alert. Three False Alerts in the same search will end the search.
- Summit League: Each False Alert will have a point deduction of 2.5 points (equivalent to one half of a hide). Three False Alerts in the same search will end the search.
- **Faults:** Faults are given for various infractions. At NW1, NW2, NW3, and Element Specialty Trials, a handler/dog team may accrue up to 3 faults and still earn their title **if they have a score of 100**. They may also earn a qualifying score at Level 1 Element Specialty Trials if they have earned 75 points and have no more than 3 faults. At NW3, Level 2 and Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, they may earn a qualifying score if they have no more than one "error" and no more than 3 faults. Faults will affect placements in the competition. In the Elite Division and Summit League, each fault will result in a 1-point deduction from the score for that search.

Faults may be given for the following reasons:

- **Lack of respect for the property** – such as pawing or digging that may be perceived as damaging to the property or disrespectful of the property.
- **Compromising the search area** – A fault may be issued if the judge deems that your reward delivery may have jeopardized the integrity of the search area by damage or possible contamination.
- **Safety issues, minor rule violations and other infractions at the judge's discretion.** For example: taking your dog off leash in an on leash search, allowing your dog to go completely under a vehicle in the vehicle search, placing your dog in an unsafe situation, the dog not crossing the designated start line, using an alternate alert signal (such as a hand raise) in lieu of 'Alert' without prior approval or direction by the CO, etc.
- You will not earn more than one fault per search area for each type of fault including: disrespect of the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infraction at the judge's discretion. For example, if the dog excessively paws at 5 boxes in a container search, only one fault may be given. However, if the dog excessively paws at a box and the handler drops food, then two faults may be given.

Faults are also used in other situations to ensure that the overall scoring ranks competitors in the appropriate order. These include excusals, elimination, absences and dismissals. See the scoring section for more information.

- **Finish**
 - At NW2 and Level 2 Element Specialty Trials, the 'Finish' call will be used to stop the time. There will be no points associated with the 'Finish' call at NW2 and Level 2 Element Specialty Trials.

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- If the handler calls 'Finish' prior to locating all the hides, the search is over, and the team will receive the points for hides found to that point but will not have the opportunity to locate any remaining hides.
- At NW2 only, in the event that the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'Finish', and continues searching and then has a False Alert, the team will be given a one point penalty in their score.
- In the event the handler has correctly located all the hides and does not say 'Finish', the handler will still pass the element, but will be given the full time allotted to the search.
- At NW3 and Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, the 'Finish' call will be used to stop the time. There will be no points associated with the 'Finish' call at NW3 and Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, however failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring will be considered one "error". In this case the full time limit for the search area will be assessed and there will be a deduction of one hide worth of points for the score for that search. In the event of an area with no hides, the 'Finish' call will be worth one hide.
- At the Elite Division and Summit League levels, the 'Finish' call is used to stop the time. There will be no points associated with the 'Finish' call except in the case where there is a Blank Area. If you do not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, you will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of half of a hide found. In the event of an area with no hides, a correct 'Finish' call will be worth 2 hides.

- **Timed Out:**

The total time for the search has run out and not all hides have been located (or 'Finish' called at NW3, Level 3 Element Specialty Trials, Elite Division, and Summit League).

- NW2/Level 2 Element Specialty Trials: The competitor will earn points for hides found, and their time will be the full time for the search.
- NW3/Level 3 Element Specialty Trials: The competitor will earn points for hides found. Timing out results in one "error" and a deduction of one hide worth of points, as well as full time for the search.
- Elite Division: If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, the team will have a point deduction equivalent to one half of a hide. For example, if you are at a trial where each hide is worth 10 points, and the time elapses without the competitor saying 'Finish', 5 points will be deducted from that team's score.
- Summit League: If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, the team will have a point deduction of 2.5 points (equivalent to one half of a hide).

- **Elimination:**

This refers to urination or defecation at any time during the search (either inside or outside of the search boundaries) or in the search area boundaries after the search.

- NW1/NW2/NW3/All Levels of Element Specialty Trials: Any dog that eliminates (urinates or defecates) during a search or in a search area will lose all points for that search and be given 4 faults. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- Elite Division: Any dog that eliminates (urinates or defecates) during a search or in a search area will lose all points for hides found in that search and be given a 1 hide penalty. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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- Summit League: Any dog that eliminates (urinates or defecates) during a search or in a search area will lose all points for hides found in that search and be given a 2 hide penalty (10 points). The score for the search will be -10 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

- **Excused from a search: all points towards that search are lost and 4 faults are given.**

- Dog is under undue stress during a search, subject to the official's discretion.
- Dog is in obvious pain during a search, subject to the official's discretion.
- Extreme disruption of a search area.
- Any dog is deemed to be out of control may be excused.

Note: If a handler opts to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing, the search will be scored as 'Timed Out'. If the judge stops the search, then it is scored as "Excused".

Note: The 4 faults only apply at NW1/NW2/NW3 and Element Specialty Trials. For Elite Division and Summit League Trials the team will receive a score of 0 with full time.

- **Dismissed (from the trial).**

Competitor will be asked to leave the trial grounds. No points awarded. The competitor will receive 0 points for all searches for that trial, 4 faults per search area, and is not eligible to participate in remaining trials during that event.

- Any unprofessional conduct towards officials, volunteers, host, other competitors, or any attendees.
- Any aggressive act by a dog towards a person or another dog.
- Dog is under extreme stress, appears to be in significant pain or experiencing significant discomfort, subject to the certifying official or judge's discretion.
- Any harsh corrections or undue pressure put upon the dog by the handler, subject to the official's discretion.
- Any handler confirmed to be cheating will be dismissed and suspended from NACSW events for one year.

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Scoring Details

Points Accrual

Points: Points are accrued by correctly calling alert when the dog finds the hides (and for blank areas at Level 3 Element Specialty Trials and for NW3/Elite/Summit/Elite Select Blank Areas).

For NW1/NW2/NW3, L1/L2, Elite, and Elite Select, points per hide are determined by taking 100 points and dividing by the total number of hides. For Summit League, each hide is worth 5 points.

- **NW1/L1:** Each hide will be worth 25 points. There are 4 search areas with one hide each for a total of 4 hides.
- **NW2/L2:** If there are 8 hides total at the NW2 trial, each hide will be worth 12.5 points.

Note: At NW2 in the event that the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'Finish', and continues searching and then has a False Alert, the team will be given a one point penalty in their score.

- **NW3/L3:** If there are 9 hides, plus a Blank Area at a NW3 trial, there are 10 hides worth of points to be accrued. Each "hide" (including the 'finish' call in the Blank Area) will be worth 10 points.

At the NW3/L3 level, competitors will not know how many points each hide is worth as they do not know the number of hides in advance. This information is provided to help them understand the score assigned to them after they complete the competition.

- **Elite Division:** If there are 23 hides, plus a Blank Area at an Elite Division trial, there are 25 hides worth of points to be accrued. Each "hide" (including the 2 hides worth of points for a correct 'finish' call in the Blank Area) will be worth 4 points.

At the Elite Division level, competitors will not know how many points each hide is worth as they do not know the number of hides in advance. This information is provided to help them understand the score assigned to them after they complete the competition.

- **Summit:** Each hide is worth 5 points. If there is a Blank Area, a correct 'Finish' call in the Blank Area is worth 10 points.
- **Elite Select:** If there are 13 hides, plus a Blank Area at an Elite Select trial, there are 15 hides worth of points to be accrued. Each "hide" (including the 2 hides worth of points for a correct 'finish' call in the Blank Area) will be worth 6.67 points.

At the Elite Select level, competitors will not know how many points each hide is worth as they do not know the number of hides in advance. This information is provided to help them understand the score assigned to them after they complete the competition.

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Scoring Deductions

Please note that effective January 1, 2020, scores for an individual search may be negative at NW3, L2, L3, Elite Division, Summit, and Elite Select. Overall scores will have a minimum score of 0 and will not be negative. This is to ensure that teams who find the same number of hides and have the same number of deductions end up with the same overall score and not have the scores dependent on which search the hides are found and deductions occurred.

Faults: Faults are given for various infractions related to respect for the property, safety, and minor rule violations. Please see Terminology section for more details on faults.

- **NW1/NW2/NW3 and Element Specialty Trials:** A handler/dog team may accrue up to 3 faults and still earn their title if they have earned 100 points. For Level 1 Element Specialty Trials they may earn a qualifying score if they have a score of at least 75 and no more than 3 faults. At NW3/L2/L3 Trials, they may earn a qualifying score if they have no more than one “error” and no more than 3 faults. Some faults are given in situations where it is not possible to earn 100 points (such as an elimination, absence, dismissal, or excused).
- **Elite Division, Summit, and Elite Select Trials:** Faults result in a 1-point deduction from the score for that search for each fault earned.

False Alert:

- **NW1/L1:** The competitor will lose the opportunity to continue searching for the hide in that search area. This means that full points for that search are not possible after a False Alert so a title cannot be earned in this situation. The judge will typically direct the team to the hide to allow the handler the opportunity to reinforce the dog. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search.
- **NW2:** The competitor will lose the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that search area. This means that full points for that search are not possible after a False Alert so a title cannot be earned in this situation. The judge will typically direct the team to a hide to allow the handler the opportunity to reinforce the dog. They will keep the points for hides correctly located in that search prior to their False Alert. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **NW3/L2/L3:** The competitor will be allowed to continue searching for additional hides after the first False Alert in a search. Each False Alert is scored as an “error” and there will be a deduction of one hide worth of points. The search will end if there is a second False Alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the second False Alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** If you have a False Alert during a search, you will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of ½ hide for each False Alert. For example, if there are a total of 20 hides at that trial, each hide is worth 5 points. The team would lose 2.5 points from its score for each False Alert call. The search will end if there is a third False Alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the third False Alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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Timed Out

- **NW1/L1:** The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **NW2/L2:** The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **NW3/L3:** The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. Not saying 'Finish' prior to time expiring will result in one "error" and a deduction of one hide worth of points.
- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. The team will receive a point deduction of ½ hide for not saying 'Finish' prior to time expiring
- **Summit:** The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. The team will receive a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide) for not saying 'Finish' prior to time expiring.

Elimination (this refers to urination or defecation during the search or in the search area):

- **NW1/L1/NW2/L2/NW3/L3:** 0 points for that search and 4 faults. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth 5 points, the score for that search will be -5 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Summit:** The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Absent:

- **NW1/L1/NW2/L2/NW3/L3:** 0 points for that search and 4 faults. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.
- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth 5 points, the score for that search will be -5 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Summit:** The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Excused:

- **NW1/L1/NW2/L2/NW3/L3:** 0 points for that search and 4 faults. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth 5 points, the score for that search will be -5 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Summit:** The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Dismissed:

- **NW1/L1/NW2/L2/NW3/L3:** 0 points for the entire trial and 4 faults per search area.
- **Elite Division and Elite Select:** The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth 5 points, the score for that search will be -5 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **Summit:** The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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NW1/NW2 and Level 1 Element Specialty Trial Scoring Matrix

This matrix is provided as a guide to show you how rankings are determined and how placements are affected by various conditions.

Ranking Order	Scoring Conditions	Points	Time	Faults applied
1	All hides with no faults	Points earned*	Time earned	0
2	All hides with faults	Points earned*	Time earned	Faults assessed (other faults, i.e., pawing, contamination, etc.)
3	Timed Out	Points earned*	Total time limit for search area	0 Faults + any other Faults assessed
4	False Alert	Points earned* prior to False Alert	Total time limit for search area	0 Faults + any other Faults assessed
5	Elimination/Excused/Absent	0 points	Total time limit for search area	4 + any other Faults assessed
6	Dismissal	0 points for all searches	Total time limit for each search area	4 faults per search area

* Points earned:

- At NW1 the points earned can only be 25 or 0 because there is only one hide.
- NW2 – Refer to the “Points” in “Scoring details” for more information.

At NW2 where there are multiple hides, points are earned for the hides found up to the point of a time out or False Alert.

- If more than 3 faults overall are earned, then the title is not earned.
- You will not earn more than one fault per search area for each type of fault including: disrespect of the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infraction at the judge’s discretion. For example, if the dog excessively paws at 5 boxes in a container search, only one fault may be given. However, if the dog excessively paws at a box and the handler drops food, then two faults may be given.
- False Alert – only one False Alert per search area will be allowed. Once a team False Alerts, they are not allowed to continue to search for additional hides in that search area.

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NW3 and Level 2 and 3 Element Specialty Trial Scoring Information

Points Earned: The competitor will be given points for each hide found in a search area. A Blank Area also counts as one hide. Points per hide are calculated by dividing 100 by the total number of hides for the trial.

Errors:

- **Missed Hide:** If a competitor does not find a hide in a search area, they will not earn the points for that hide and will accrue an “error” for each missed hide.
- **False Alert:** The competitor will be allowed to continue searching for additional hides after the first False Alert in a search. Each False Alert is scored as an “error” and there will be a deduction of one hide worth of points. The search will end if there is a second False Alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the second False Alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- **NW3 and Level 3 Missed ‘Finish’ Call:** If the competitor does not say ‘Finish’ prior to the time elapsing, they will accrue an “error” and there will be a deduction of one hide worth of points.

Level 2 missed ‘Finish’ call: If the competitor does not say ‘Finish’ prior to the time elapsing, they will receive full time with no other deductions.

Please note that points may be deducted beyond 0. A negative score may occur for one or more searches. However, a negative overall score will not occur.

Faults: If more than 3 faults overall are assessed, then neither the title nor a qualifying score is earned. You will not earn more than one fault per search for each type of fault including: disrespect of the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infraction at the judge’s discretion. For example, if the dog excessively paws at 5 boxes in a container search, only one fault may be given. However, if the dog excessively paws at a box and the handler drops food, then two faults may be given.

Blank Searches: The ‘Finish’ call will be worth one hide worth of points in a Blank Area at NW3 and Level 3. A team that has one False Alert and then calls ‘Finish’ will earn one hide worth of points for calling ‘Finish’ but will lose one hide worth of points and accrue an “error” for the False Alert.

Elimination/Excused/Absent: 0 points earned for that search area. Full time assessed. 4 faults.

Dismissed: 0 points for all search areas. Full time for each search area. 4 faults for each search area.

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Elite Division and Elite Select Scoring Information

Points Earned: The competitor will be given points for each hide found in a search. The points per hide are calculated by dividing 100 by the total number of hides for the trial plus 2 for any Blank Areas.

Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

Teams must score a minimum of 50 points at an Elite Select Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

Point Deductions:

- **Missed 'Finish' Call:** If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide.
- **False Alert:** For each False Alert call, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide. A maximum of 3 False Alerts may be called in a search. The search ends at the 3rd False Alert call and no more points may be accumulated. Note: If a competitor has 3 False Alert calls, they will be given full time for the search, but not the ½ hide penalty for not calling 'Finish.'

Please note that points may be deducted beyond 0. A negative score may occur for one or more searches. However, a negative overall score will not occur.

Faults: Faults result in a 1-point deduction from the score for that search for each fault assessed. Faults may be given for safety concerns, respect for property, minor rule violations, and contaminating the search area

Blank Searches:

A Blank Area at Elite **Division and Elite Select** trials will be scored as 2 hides worth of points. Scoring will be as follows:

- Finish correctly called = 2 hides.
- No points are earned if there are any false alerts prior to the Finish call.
- Each false alert will result in a ½ hide deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'Finish' will result in a score of -1 hide worth of points.
- Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.

Elimination/Excused/Absent/Dismissed: The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth 5 points, the score for that search will be -5 points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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Summit League Scoring Information

Points Earned: The competitor will be given 5 points for each hide found in a search.

Point Deductions:

- **Missed 'Finish' Call:** If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide).
- **False Alert:** For each False Alert call, there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide). There is a maximum of 3 False Alert calls in a search. The search ends at the 3rd False Alert call and no more points may be accumulated. Note: If a competitor has 3 False Alert calls, they will be given full time for the search, but not the ½ hide penalty for not calling 'Finish.'

Please note that points may be deducted beyond 0. A negative score for a single search may occur. A negative overall score will not occur.

Faults: Faults result in a 1-point deduction from the score for that search for each fault assessed. Faults may be given for safety concerns, respect for property, minor rule violations, and contaminating the search area

Blank Searches: A Blank Area at Summit trials will be worth 10 points. Scoring will be as follows:

- Finish correctly called = 10 points.
- No points are earned if there is a false alert prior to the finish call.
- Each false alert will result in a 2.5 points deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'Finish' will result in a score of -5 points.
- Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'Finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.

Elimination/Excused/Absent/Dismissed: The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

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Trial Job Descriptions

The following are descriptions of the roles for NACSW volunteers at NACSW trials.

Volunteer Roles

- **Score Room Lead** – Responsible for taking the results from the score cards and entering them into the scoring system. Also generates final results and placements after verifying data. This role is chosen by the host from a list of eligible score room leads who have met the requirements set by NACSW.
- **Volunteer Coordinator** – Person responsible for coordinating all the volunteers. Assigns each volunteer to a role. Gives direction to each volunteer as to their duties and where their assignments are physically located. Ensures all required roles are filled and running smoothly.
- **Judge's steward** –The steward is responsible for ushering each competitor into the area where the search will take place. They answer any questions from the competitor and ensure that the judge has the proper score sheet. After the competitor has completed their search, the judge's steward directs the handler/dog team out of the search area and also ensures that the score sheet has been completed. The judge's steward also assists in the search area as needed and fields any competitor questions on behalf of the judge.
- **Timer** – The timer is responsible for recording the official time as they compete on a search.
- **Gate Steward** – Gate stewards help get handler/dog teams on deck prior to their turn at an search. The gate steward also directs traffic from staging areas to each search. Gate stewards are responsible for keeping competitors calm and keeping the flow moving while not adding undue stress to reactive dogs and nervous competitors.
- **Score Runner** - Take 2-3 completed score sheets at a time from a search to the score room.
- **Videographer** - Video tape a sample of competitors' runs of a search, moving as directed to capture the footage while staying out of the way of the competitor and judge and not distracting the dog.