



UNITED SCHUTZHUND CLUBS OF AMERICA
Tracklayer Program

Version 2.0
2018

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Tracklayer Program is to educate and increase the number of qualified tracklayers who can lay tracks and/or coordinate tracking events to help ensure correct and consistent tracks at all USCA events, as described in the United Schutzhund Clubs of America's Official Rule Book for all Working Dog Evaluations.

SECTION 2: OBJECTIVES

The Tracklayer Program's objectives are:

1. To create a pool of educated tracklayers/coordinators to manage USCA events from the club level to international level with standardized education.
2. To promote membership involvement and participation through ongoing tracklaying education.

SECTION 3: GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. **Definition of Tracking Events:** Tracking Events are any USCA or USCA-sanctioned Tracking Event. (e.g., IPG, USCA Schutzhund Tracking, FH 1 and 2, FH V, STP 1-2-3, etc.)
2. **Tracklayers/Coordinators:**
 - a. Tracklayers do not have to be USCA members for a club level event but must be USCA members for a championship event (e.g., Regional Championship, Working Dog Championship, National Championship).
 - b. Until 2020, it is voluntary to maintain a USCA Tracklayer Book. After 2020, it will be a requirement at a championship event (e.g., Regional Championship, Working Dog Championship, National Championship).
 - c. The Judge or the Tracking Coordinator shall determine the pattern of the track. The layout of the tracking fields must be taken into consideration (The National Events Manual provides further detail for national events).
 - d. Varying patterns must be used for the tracks.
 - e. Every attempt should be made to place the articles and the corners on each track the same distance from each other (i.e. tracks should be as consistent as possible for each competitor).
 - f. A starting flag marks the start of each track.
3. **Teaching Tracklayers/Coordinators:**
 - a. Until 2020, Teaching Tracklayers will be picked by the Tracklayer Committee. After 2020, applications for USCA Teaching Tracklayer will be sent to the USCA Tracklayer Committee for approval. (See Appendix D)
4. **Articles:**
 - a. Only articles that have been in the possession of the Tracklayer for at least 30 minutes are to be used on the track. Normal scenting by Tracklayer is acceptable. Articles should not be directly taken out of plastic bags and placed onto the track.
 - b. The articles used on a track must be of different materials (leather, wood, textile).
 - c. The articles must have a size of: 4 inches (max) in length, 1.5 inches (max) in width and .38 inches (max) in thickness.

- d. The color of the articles may not stand out considerably from that of the terrain.
- e. For championships, the articles must be numbered (1-3), and the numbers must coincide with the numbers on the starting flag. For example, articles on Track 1 will be numbered 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3. Articles on Track 2 will be numbered 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3.

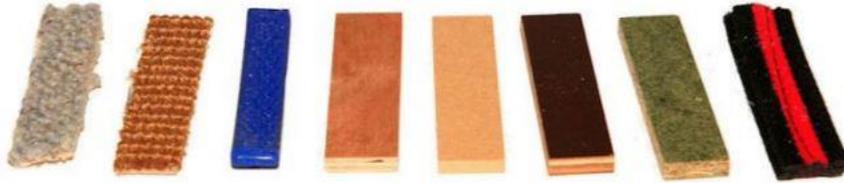


Image 1: Examples of acceptable articles used at USCA tracking events

5. Placing of the Articles:

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

6. IPO 2 & 3 Distance and Age:

- a. **IPO 2:** Stranger lays track, at least 400 paces, 3 straight legs, 2 corners (approximately 90°), and 2 articles. The track is aged at least a minimum of 30 minutes.
- b. **IPO 3:** Stranger lays track, at least 600 paces, 5 straight legs, 4 corners (approximately 90°), and 3 articles. The track is aged at least minimum of 60 minutes.
- c. **IPO 3 Layouts:** The following layouts are acceptable for IPO3 tracks.

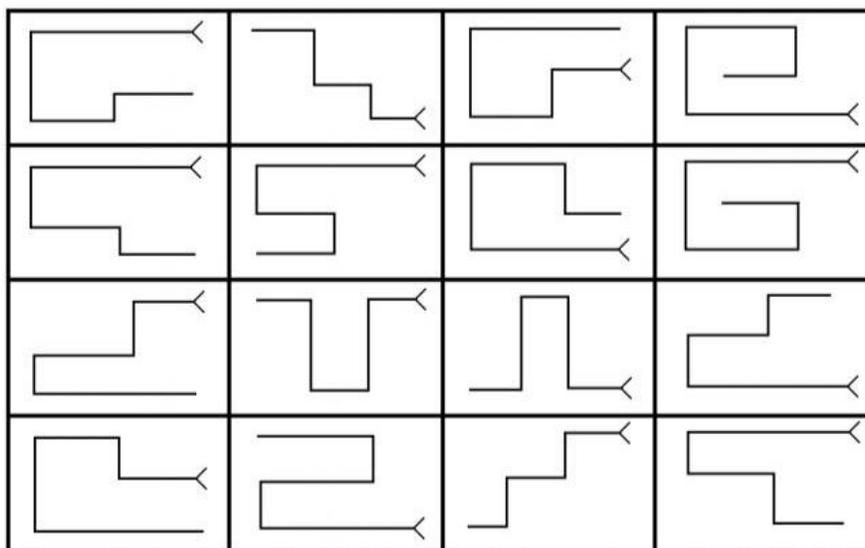


Image 2: IPO3 Tracks

SECTION 4: TRACKLAYER COMMITTEE

1. The Tracklayer Committee is appointed by the President. Per USCA bylaws, the President shall be an advisory member of the Committee.
2. The Tracklayer Committee shall consist of a minimum of five (5) Members, but not more than eight (8), as follows: USCA President, USCA Director of Judges, Tracklayer Program Director, two (2) USCA Teaching Tracklayers/Coordinators and up to three (3) USCA Members (may be USCA Teaching Tracklayers/Coordinators).

SECTION 5: TRACKLAYER COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Tracklayer Committee is responsible for assisting the Tracklayer Program Director in the development, implementation, and management of the Tracklayer Program.
2. In addition to these responsibilities, the Tracklayer Committee shall act in an advisory role, and provide support and assistance to Tracklayers that have been selected to perform tracklaying at a USCA-sanctioned event.

SECTION 6: TRACKLAYER PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The responsibilities of the Tracklayer Program Director are presented below. The Tracklayer Program Director shall:

1. Preside over the Tracklayer Committee.
2. Provide the Executive Board with detailed yearly reports that outline current activities, Tracklayer Program progress, Tracklayer status and recommendations for Program enhancements.
3. Provide general information for the USCA Magazine, website, and newsletter.
4. Direct development, written evaluations, and oversight of Teaching Tracklayers.
5. Modify the Tracklayer Program Curriculum as required to ensure the Curriculum includes the instruction necessary to develop Trial Tracklayers that meet the purpose and objectives of the Tracklayer Program.
6. Provide educational materials (e.g., books, videos, etc.) to Regional Training Directors and Teaching Tracklayers.
7. Provide assistance to Regional Training Directors in selecting Tracklayers and scheduling Tracklayer Seminars in all Regions.
8. Make recommendations to the Tracklayer Committee for the selection of Classified Tracklayers for National Events and the USCA-GSDCA WUSV Qualification Trial.
9. Organize tracklayer seminars.
10. Attend the General Board Meeting each year.
11. Issue Tracklayer Waivers, as approved by the Tracklayer Committee, for events where a Classified Tracklayer is not available.
12. Manage the Tracklayer Program Database and Tracklayer Books.

SECTION 7: TRACKLAYER PROGRAM SEMINARS

1. **Purpose and Overview:** The purpose of Tracklayer Seminars is to educate and develop Tracklayers that can properly and safely execute the tracks in the Tracking Phase, as described in the United Schutzhund Clubs of America Official Rule Book for all Working Dog Evaluations. Tracklayer Seminars provide any Tracklayer who has been issued a Trial Tracklayer Record Book (mandatory after 2020) the opportunity to receive one-on-one instruction and improve their Trial Tracklayer work.

2. **Tracklayer Seminar Curriculum:** Topics to be discussed during a Tracklayer Seminar include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Knowledge of tracklaying regulations, variations in track patterns, land division to yield the most number of tracks, orientation in the terrain, and working with variation in vegetation.
 - b. Safety, being in control, and selflessness by the Trial Tracklayer/Tracking Coordinator.
 - c. Importance of the Tracklayer’s role in assisting the Judge to evaluate the dogs entered in the Event.
 - d. To meet the Tracklayer Program objective of “standardized” education, the Tracklayer Program Curriculum does **not** include instruction to develop a Tracklayer’s knowledge as a dog trainer, since the philosophies of how to train dogs in tracking vary drastically, and thus are not “standard”.
3. Tracklayer Seminars shall be sanctioned by USCA and hosted by a Local Club and/or Region. To host a Tracklayer Seminar, the Local Club and/or Region shall complete an Event Authorization Form.
4. The Trial Tracklayer Record Book and the Tracklayer Program Database are the official record of Tracklayer’s information.
5. Tracklayer Seminars are presided over by a Teaching Tracklayer(s) or a USCA Member(s) appointed by the Tracklayer Committee who teach the Tracklayer Program Curriculum.
6. The Presiding Teaching Tracklayer(s) for a Tracklayer Seminar shall complete the Tracklayer Seminar Forms presented in Appendix B, and submit the roster in Appendix B to the Tracklayer Program Director within seven (7) days of completion of the Seminar.

SECTION 8: REQUIREMENTS FOR TRACKING AT NATIONAL EVENTS

8.1 TRACKLAYERS

1. The Tracklayer must have titled at least one (1) dog to the level IPO III or FH. Waivers are allowed by USCA Tracking Committee.
2. The Tracklayer must have good understanding of the Rules & Regulations.
3. The Tracklayer must have a good sense of direction.
4. The Tracklayer must be able to arrange tracks to the geographical area of the field.
5. The Tracklayer must be able to understand, take, and follow direction from the Tracking Coordinator.
6. The Tracklayer must be capable of making drawings of all necessary tracks with the placement of the articles and corners.
7. While the dog is working the track, the Tracklayer must be able to give the Judge the correct indications for the corners and the articles; the Tracklayer must know his/her proper position in the field while the track is being worked.
8. Electronic equipment for mapping can be used to assist in laying tracks, but must not be relied on.

8.2 REQUIRED TRACKLAYER MATERIALS

1. Paper and pencil
2. Articles
3. Starting flags
4. Time device (watch, cell phone, etc.)
5. Outerwear and footwear appropriate to terrain and weather conditions

8.3 TRACKING COORDINATOR

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

1. Recruiting numbers of tracklayers/spotters for the event (three to four Tracklayers). See Appendix A for an example on managing four tracklayers at a large event.
2. Surveying the tracking grounds
3. Plotting tracks
4. Setting a corridor to where tracks can be laid to the left or right starting with number 1 track (example: Tracks 1-3 on the right and then Tracks 4-6 on the left side, working your way back to the starting point)
5. Trying to keep the same Tracking Flight in the same field. This helps with maintaining a proper time schedule.
6. Measuring/marking tracking lines
7. Conducting a fair/impartial draw for tracks at the tracking field
8. Managing spectators so they do not disturb competitors
9. Ensuring that tracks are laid and run on time

8.4 TRACKING SPOTTER

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

8.5 THE TRACKING COMMITTEE

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

8.6 THE TRACKING JUDGE

1. Determines article placement on legs
2. Determines the laying of the tracks, in coordination with the tracking committee
 - a. Terrain and weather must be considered.

- b. The Event Chairman will settle disagreements.
- 3. Communicates with Tracking Coordinator
- 4. May suspend a trial for weather conditions

8.7 THE LAYING OF THE TRACK

1. Suitable Vegetation: In principle, all natural soils such as dirt fields, hay, alfalfa, grass/sod fields can be used.
2. The tracks must be laid in a normal walking pace.
3. A very slight pause is permitted when placing the articles IN the track. Articles should not end up outside of a footstep.
4. A slightly shorter stride at the corners is allowed (three paces before and after) followed by a return to the “tracklaying” pace. Corners should be made in a five (5)-step procedure (five (5) steps to complete a 90-degree corner, starting and ending with the right foot for a right turn or left foot for a left turn).



Image 3: Examples of a right turn and a left turn.

5. The Tracklayer remains for a brief moment on the scent pad and then proceeds at the determined “tracklaying” pace (pace defined here and throughout as 60 – 70 cm, or 24 – 28 inches in length) in the direction prescribed by the Judge/Tracking Coordinator.
6. The starting flag is to be placed directly at the left rear corner of the scent pad at the beginning of the track.
7. The distance between two legs of the same track must be longer than a tracking leash length.
8. Standing still on the track is not permitted.

SECTION 9: TRACKLAYER EVALUATION AT TRIALS AND SEMINARS

1. The Tracking Judge can, if desired, comment on the Tracklayer’s Performance in his/her USCA Tracklaying Record Book. See Appendix C for copies of the Tracklayer Book.
2. The Trial Secretary/Judges fill out Inside Pages, and Seminar Giver fills out Approved Seminar Information in the Tracklayer Book.

APPENDIX A TRACKLAYER MANAGEMENT AND TIPS

A. EXAMPLE OF TYPICAL MANAGEMENT OF TRACKS

1. Tracklayer 1 – will lay the first tracks (up to 4) with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time. (adapt for level 2 tracks)
2. Tracklayer 2 – will lay the next set of Tracks with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to the first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
3. Tracklayer 3 – will lay the next set of Tracks with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.
4. Tracklayer 4 – will lay the next set of Tracks, with 10 minutes (if possible) in between each track being laid. This will allow the Tracklayer time to walk back to first track laid to go over the tracking pattern with the Judge and to start the track at the proper aging time.

This routine can be repeated. By doing this type of schedule you will be able to track 6 – 8 dogs per hour.

B. TRACKLAYING TIPS

1. Make a drawing to plot tracks.
2. Explore the terrain and look for orientation points. Also look for any obstacles (fence rows, waterways, and change of vegetation).
3. Maintain a good distance between the tracks. A dog must have 10-15 meters beside the track before entering on another track. Notice also the direction of the wind.
4. Think about the time schedule; if you have to move to another location you must take this into consideration.
5. Be mindful of the Judges desire for a break between flights.
6. If you have to make notes while laying the track, never stand still while doing this.
7. Before placing the starting flag, walk a few paces in the direction of the track before laying the scent pad.
8. Starting flag is to be placed directly left of you at the start of the track.
9. Remain at the starting flag for several seconds to make a good mark.
10. Articles must be placed on the track. Do not drop them on the track - place them!
11. Correct corners - a shortened stride 3 paces before and after the corner with a 5-pace corner laid.
12. After finishing the track, continue walking several paces past the last article, in the same direction as you laid the last leg of the track.
13. If while laying the track you discover animal remains (carcass), or other unusual barrier to laying the track (glass, pricker bushes, any dangerous object, excessively deep water etc.) that would render the track unfair or substantially different from all of the other tracks, it is probably best to scrap the track and consult with the tracking coordinator.

14. Try not to use a major change of terrain to make a corner, e.g., a bare spot in the middle of a lush alfalfa field, or the middle of tire tracks, etc.
15. At the time the handler and his dog start on the track, the tracklayer should walk about 15 yards behind the handler and inform the Judge with hand signals about what is coming. This is clear for the Judge and also for the spectators.
16. Make a clear drawing of each track for the Judges.

B. Waiver to be filled out by attendee and saved by Seminar Giver:

INFORMED CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

I wish to participate/view the United Schutzhund Clubs of America Tracklayer Program/Seminar (hereinafter referred to as the “program”) and to use the equipment, facilities and services (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “facilities”) made available by the program. I agree that my participation/viewing of the program and the use of the facilities are and will at all times be at my own risk. I will be responsible for my actions, the actions of any minor(s) under my supervision and for any animal(s) that I choose to handle in the program.

I hereby agree to accept all risks associated with the use of the facilities made available to me as a participant/viewer of the program and that the United Schutzhund Clubs of America, the Tracklayer Committee, Official Teaching Tracklayers, _____(Region or Local Club Name, etc.) have made no guarantees or representations as to the quality and suitability of the facilities for any purpose. I acknowledge that I will seek medical advice from a doctor regarding my participation/viewing of the program or use of any facilities. I agree to report any signs or symptoms of distress or abnormalities to the United Schutzhund Clubs of America, the Tracklayer Committee, Official Teaching Tracklayers, _____ (Region/Local Club Name, etc.) and hereby consent to the administration of any resuscitation measures deemed advisable by such person.

In consideration for my participation/viewing of the program and use of the facilities, I, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, do hereby release and forever discharge the United Schutzhund Clubs of America, the Tracklayer Committee, Official Teaching Tracklayers, _____ (Region/Local Club Name, etc.) their employees, agents, successors and assigns, from all manner of actions, causes of actions, claims, demands or damages whatsoever which may have arisen or may in the future arise for or by reason of any damage, loss or injury to property or person (including death) which I have sustained or which I may in the future sustain, as a consequence of my participation/viewing of the program or use of the facilities.

I have read the foregoing, and I understand it. Any questions which have arisen or occurred to me have been answered to my satisfaction.

_____	_____
Date	Name (Please Print)
_____	_____
Witness	Signature

**APPENDIX D
USCA TEACHING TRACKLAYER APPLICATION**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

Region and Club: _____

USCA Membership: _____

Other Dog Club Memberships: _____

Training Experience:

Training Influences (people you have trained with that you credit MOST with teaching you about training):

Trial Tracklaying Experience:

Local Level: _____

Regional Level: _____

National Experience: _____

Other USCA experience: _____

Why do I want to be a USCA Teaching Tracklayer?

Respectfully submitted,

Date: