

SKILL OF THE MONTH

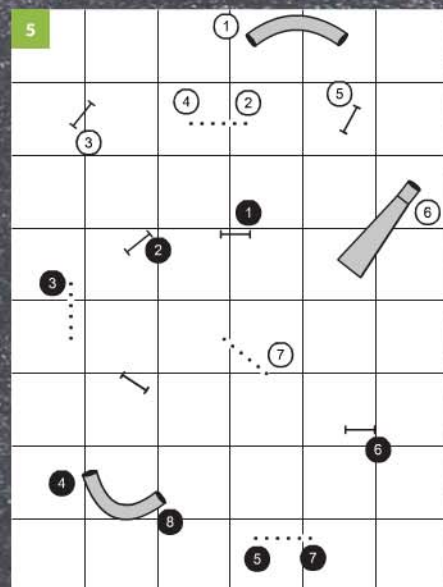
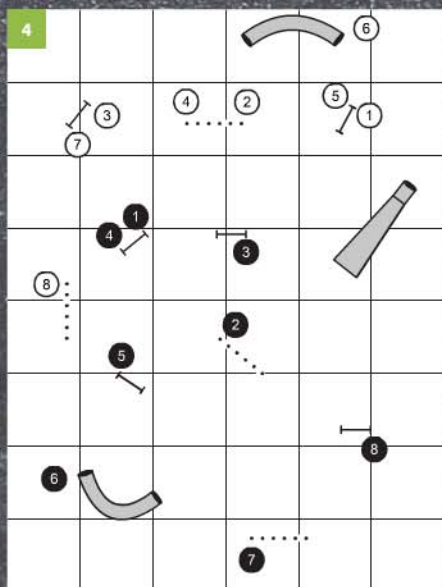
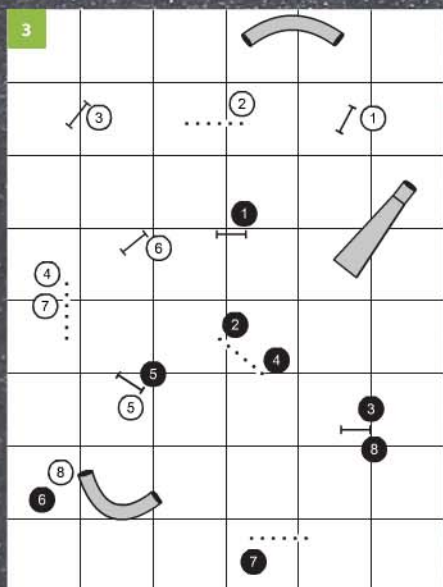
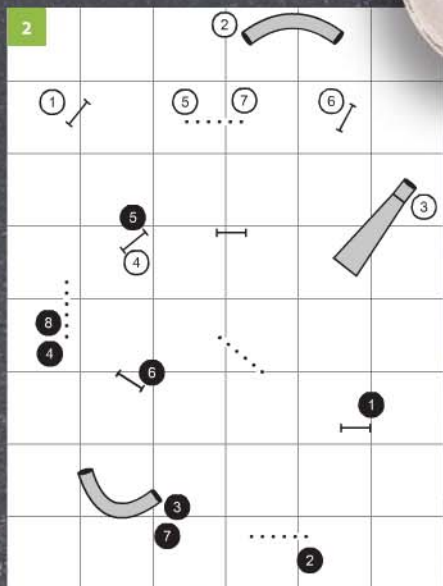
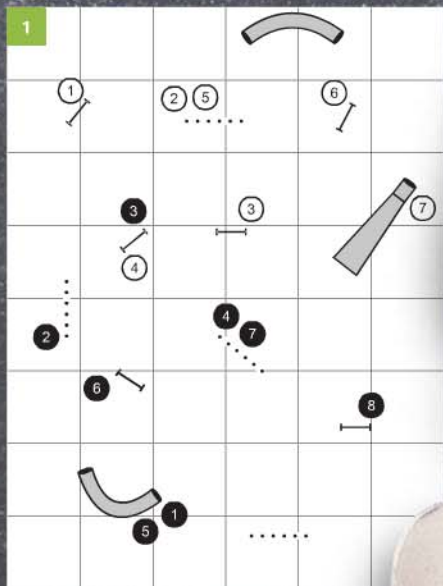
BY KAREN HOLIK

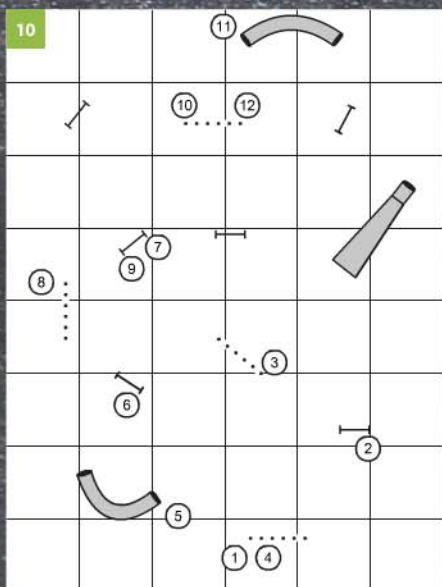
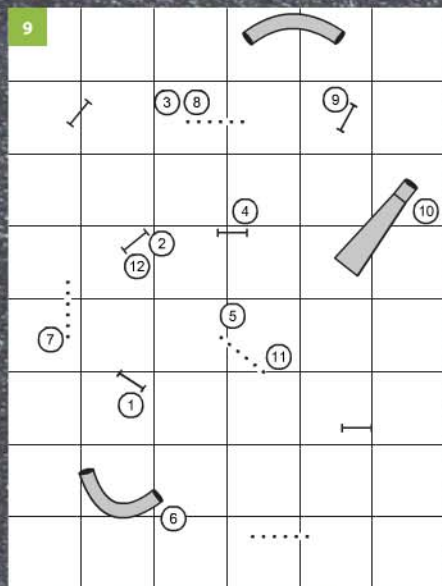
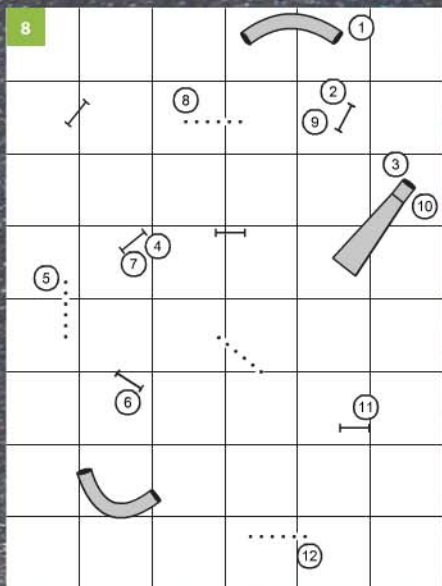
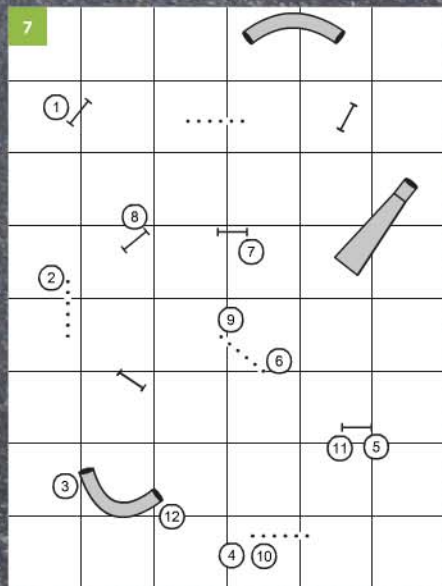
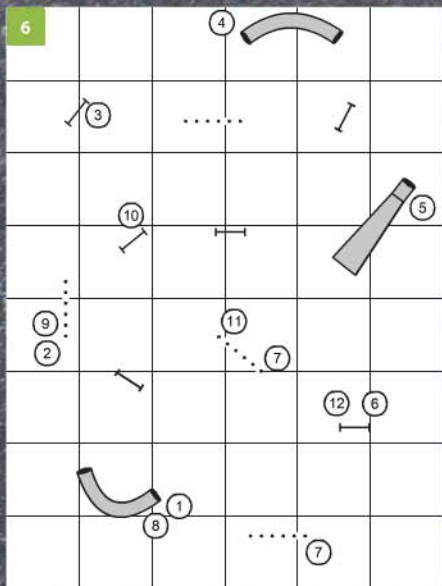
This month's exercises focus on the weave poles with many different setups and sequences. Some are very easy and some are very hard. I have found the hardest part for the dog in executing the proper weave pole performance (including entry and exit) is being proficient at the weave poles when moving at speed. All the exercises should really get your dog motivated. There are many drills in previous *Clean Run* articles to teach your dog the entry, exit, and proper performance within the weave poles. If you find you are having trouble with any of these, you might want to go back to retrain a few things and look back at some of those very helpful articles.

The first five sequences contain two different exercises. Some are better handled with you on the left and some with you on the right. Try to handle both ways whenever possible. When walking the course, you should imagine the dog's most efficient path and practice until you achieve that. Often we bring our dogs around in a wide path just to insure they get a correct entry, and we do not pay attention to the wasted time when doing so. Again, if you can't get the most efficient path, you might want to go back and train some basic weave pole entries and exits.

The last five sequences really get your dog moving fast and having fun. Remember, in any weave pole training:

- Help the dog after two bad attempts
- No harsh corrections in the poles
- Continuously vary your position to let the dog learn the performance on his own 🐾





Karen Holik, involved in agility for over 15 years as a competitor and a USDAA and AKC judge, has competed in the finals of the USDAA World Championships many times with all her dogs: two Shelties, a Border Collie, and an All-American. Her youngest dog, ADCH MACH2 Triune's Feelin Hot Hot Hot, a.k.a. Sizzle, is a three-time champion at the USDAA World Championships and a member of the AKC/USA World Team in 2003, 2005, 2006, and 2007. Karen offers private lessons and seminars; contact her at oncourseagility@comcast.net.