

Orchid Isle Dog Agility (OIDA) Presents



Workshops by Stefan and Alecia Elvstad

Of Washington State

Friday May 3 – Sunday May 5, 2019

At Karen's Field in Hawaii

Entry deadline: April 19th.

Stefan Elvstad has 25 years of experience training dogs. He has been teaching agility in regular agility classes, private lessons, and agility workshops for the last ten+ years. Actively competing in both agility and nose work, he has qualified and competed in North American Championships (NADAC Agility), and has attained over twenty elite runs in the top 5% in NADAC. He also competes with two dogs in K9 Nose Work®

Alecia Elvstad has been training dogs for over five decades. As a scientist and animal behavior student, understanding a dog's abilities and skills has been her passion. Working with dogs to use their keen sense of smell has been part of her daily training for the past ten years. Alecia is a nose work instructor certified by the National Association of Canine Scent Work. Alecia shares her home and life with Stefan and four dogs. Together the family explores agility, scent work, and much more.

OIDA is offering four workshops capped off by a NADAC-style video trial or fun run. The three agility workshops build on each other but also work as stand-alone classes. Handling teams at any experience level are welcome at these sessions; auditors are also welcome. Handling spots are limited to 8 teams for the Scent Work and 10 teams for the Agility Seminars; priority will be given to OIDA members.

Friday 4pm – 6pm, Alecia: An Introduction to Scent (Nose) Work:

"Scent (nose) work takes on many different forms for dogs. In general, it is allowing dogs to be guided by their noses to identify things we (humans) want them to find or they want to find.

Things for which dogs can use their noses for can be as simple finding a piece of food or a bone or as complicated as identifying cancer, mold, or seizures. A canine's olfactory system is made up of several components. We will be going through these components of a dog's olfactory system and how they come into use, depending upon the target for which the dog is searching.

Working dogs during the session will be introduced to using their noses to find what we hide. This will allow handlers to learn to watch their dogs and the changes in body language that results, as well as listen to the sounds of our dogs as they search. This builds a strong team and provides an excellent complement to the agility team. In scent work, the dogs are in the lead and the humans learn to watch and listen to their dogs. (As opposed to agility and obedience where the dogs has to watch and listen to their handlers.)"

Saturday 8am – noon, Stefan: Let your Body Language Present your Dog's Path

“Dog agility for many is an activity centered around dogs performing obstacles in a set course. While that is certainly true, I view agility first and foremost as a bidirectional communication between a human and a dog. If the communication is clear enough that the dog understands what it is you want him to do, chances are very good that the dog will do what you are asking. That communication can take many forms. For instance, you may call a verbal command to your dog. This works because dogs are able to learn the meaning of verbal commands.

But remember – your spoken language is, at best, a second language for your dog. Another option is to essentially guide the dog to the obstacle you want her to perform by your near presence to the dog. This works too, but it takes a slow dog and very fast human for that to work without slowing the dog down, something that is exhausting for handlers, and not very motivating for the dogs.

If you observe dogs interacting with each other, you will notice that postures, movements (or lack thereof), expressions, and actions of one dog clearly means something to the other dog. If you take enough time to observe this communication, you will realize that they have a very extensive “vocabulary”. They may bark at times, but their primary communication is through body language. If we can learn to express what we are asking our dogs to do using our body language in a manner that feels natural to them, speed and accuracy will improve, as will our ability to direct our dog at distance.

On day 1, we will work on body language and also cover the other side of communication, the input from the dog. I have had many great agility instructors. They have taught me a lot, but none of them has taught me as much as my dogs have. The input from your team mate will tell you how he best receives directions from you.

There is no particular experience level prerequisite for this session. Most important is that you have the tools to reward your dog for success. Which tools work best for your dog is individual. Treats, toys, play are all things that tend to work. The stronger the bond between handler and dog, the easier it gets, and also the stronger that bond builds. We will use setups that can work for whatever experience level the teams have.”

Saturday 1pm – 5pm, Stefan: Course Analysis

“A thorough review of an agility course will help the handlers make good choices about what handling tools will be most helpful for the different sequences of a course. It will also help you identify particular challenges on the course, both those specific to your team, and those course elements that were included in the design for the purpose of testing specific skills. Identifying points where the dog will need to change leads helps determine the locations where extra input is needed for the dog, and also gives the handler criteria for timing of lead change cues. Generally, determining the efficient path the dog should take is fairly straight forward, but there are situations when the handler may want to shape the dog's path outside the most efficient path in order to avoid some specific challenge. Examples may be making the correct choice in a discrimination test more obvious to the dog, shaping the path to limit slicing of jumps, or letting a smother curve between two obstacles allow for greater speed than the shortest efficient path would allow. This level of analysis allows the handler to design the desired path for the dog.

At this stage of analysis, the handler has a planned path for the dog, knowledge of where challenges have been identified, and also has an understanding of where the dog particularly needs directive input. Based on this information, the handler can design his/her path, and relate that path to the dog's path. In this stage, the handler needs to consider where the dog is located at different points in the

run, and where as a result, the handler needs to be in relation to the dog in order for the handling cues to be most effective. For instance, when the handler is behind the dog, (s)he may be in the dog's blind spot, making visual cues ineffective. At other times, handler placement relative to the dog needs to be such that the dog can easily understand what the handler is asking her to do. For instance, many dogs find changes of direction away from the handler (aka "switches") challenging, and a less efficient but more likely successful front/rear/blind cross may be chosen. Courses with distance challenges require thorough consideration. In NADAC, the gamble line is typically designed such that handling close to the line is difficult. Terms such as "handler jail" describe some such situations, but generally, the situation is a bit more subtle. The line may be drawn such that it angles away from an obstacle discrimination where the correct obstacle is the farther one away. Following the gamble line will then likely draw the dog to the incorrect obstacle.

Another example of distance challenges are Bonus boxes/lines and designated Distance Challenge areas. That type of distance challenge is never obligatory, and only a minority of handlers choose to handle from within such areas. Nonetheless, making note of the location of such areas can be very helpful also to handlers who do not intend to handle the course from within the bonus/distance areas. Often, those areas are located such that they accentuate an intended course challenge. Thus, these areas can help identify where a perhaps not so obvious challenge was placed by the course designer.

We will work through the above analysis steps, both on paper with the actual course maps, and on the ground. Handlers will have the opportunity to try their handling plan with their team mate, then consider how, given how the run went, they can adjust the plan for even better results."

Sunday 8am – noon, Stefan: Distance Handling Techniques

"Day 2 will build on the skills practiced the previous day, but will have a more pronounced focus on the ability to direct your dog at some distance from you. The word some is key here. If your dog is used to you running very close to him, some distance may mean incrementally extending that distance by a few feet. For others, it may mean directing their dog to an obstacle 30 or more feet away that requires a directional change and perhaps an obstacle discrimination. Many will be somewhere in between that. The NADAC bonus program even tests the skills at much greater distances. I don't expect to see that level of distance handling at the workshop, but it serves as an illustration of what is possible.

Body language will be your primary handling tool also in day 2. Nonetheless, there are situations where body language just isn't enough. For instance, there are situations where you are located behind your dog where she can't see your movements or postures. We will go over the use of verbals as reinforcing the body language and as the tool to use when your dog can't see your visual cues. We will use setups that support handling at increasing distances. To accommodate varying levels of proficiency, they will be modified versions of NADAC Chances courses, potentially combined with elements of Hoopers which also provides distance incentives. They will be modified such that appropriate distance opportunities will be available to teams that have limited distance experience."

Sunday 1pm – 5pm: Video Trial Runs and/or Fun Runs

We will set up courses from the current catalog of VT eligible course sets. The first attempt on a particular course, if successful, can (if the handler so desires) be submitted to NADAC for review and qualifier points. Stefan will be available to coach runs by helping identify challenges and determining handler paths to the extent that is desired.

Mail the registration form and payment by April 19th to:

Sandy Leggett, Attn: OIDA May Workshop, 152 Kimokimo Place , Hilo HI 96720.
Checks should be made payable to "Orchid Isle Dog Agility".

Fees – circle the event(s) you wish to attend:

Event	Handling, OIDA Member Per Dog	Handling, Non-Member Per Dog	Audit
Intro. To Scent Work	\$40	\$50	\$15
Body Language	\$65	\$80	\$25
Course Analysis	\$65	\$80	\$25
Distance Handling	\$65	\$80	\$25
VT/Fun Run	\$15	\$20	free
All 3 agility workshops	\$165	\$200	\$60

Total amount enclosed: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Dog's Name _____ Dog's Jump Height: _____

Dog's Name _____ Dog's Jump Height: _____

Dog's Name _____ Dog's Jump Height: _____

Waiver, Assumption of Risk, and Agreement to Hold Harmless

In consideration of and as inducement to the acceptance of my application for this training seminar I agree to waive and release Stefan Elvstad, Alecia Elvstad and OIDA of any and all liability of any nature for injury or damage which I or my dog may suffer.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Location: **Hawaiian Acres, 16-1094 Koloa Maoli Road 9**

- Take Volcano Highway 11
- Turn Left at Kuauli Rd (opposite Kurtistown Assembly of God)
- Turn Left onto A Road, then
- quick Right turn on Koloa Maoli Rd 9
- 16-1094 is on the Right,
- Look for an agility sign by the driveway