

## **Transition (Marks & Drills) Yardwork Hunter/Intermediate/AKC Senior**

### **Change in Cover Marks (land)**

Changes in cover from short to tall/heavy can visually present an obstacle to your dog – some dogs will hit cover and stop as if they've hit a wall.

Teach changes in cover by:

- Setting your dog up close to the change in cover (no more than a foot or two)
- Toss a white or black and white bumper a short distance into the cover.
- When your dog picks up the bumper, run backwards and call your dog to you.
- Gradually add distance to your set up point but always keep the bumper close to the change in cover.
- When your dog is running a good distance to the change in cover and charging through it, start to add distance to the throw.
- When you are adding distance to the throw and the dog is running through more cover to the mark, it's a good idea to have a helper with you. The helper should throw without any duck call or 'hey hey' (this will distract the dog)
- A helper should be ready to throw another bumper to where the first bumper landed if your dog starts to break down and show signs of not knowing where the first bumper landed. This is something you should discuss with your helper before you start. A well timed second bumper can be of great help.
- If necessary, have your helper be ready to throw a third bumper.

### **Cross Winds Marks (water)**

Wind that blows right to left / left to right across the line to a water mark will easily push a dog off line. When this happens your dog may lose sight of where the bumper or bird landed in the water.

- If you're training alone keep marks thrown into a cross wind nice and short.
- If you're training with another person or group, have someone ready to toss a second bumper or bird as you did in Changes in Cover if your dog loses sight of the mark because of fighting the wind.
- A second throw from a helper may require a 'hey hey' from the helper.
- When you first start this, always use a white bumper as they are highly visible in the water.

### **Wagon Wheel Drill**

While this drill may seem relatively simple at first, there's a lot to be learned by running it:

- It's a lining drill.
- It teaches your dog to move with you ('heel' when you move to the left, 'here' when you move to the right)
- It's a confidence builder.
- It's a teamwork builder.

Start with the Four Bumper Wagon Wheel and work your way up to a Sixteen Bumper Wagon Wheel.

***Refer to pages 69-71 of Carol Cassity's "Building a Retriever Drills and More" third edition for a complete description and diagram.***

You should consistently run this drill throughout your dog's career.

### **8 Handed Casting**

- Set up the Eight Bumper Wagon Wheel.
- Instead of putting your dog at heel, place your dog in the middle of the wheel, facing you.
- To begin, take one or two steps back away from your dog.
- You will now begin to use your "Back", angle 'Back', "Over" and 'Come In' casts to direct your dog to the bumper you want him to pick up.
- Each time your dog returns with a bumper put him back in the middle of the wheel and put the bumper back where it came from, step away and cast to another bumper.

### **No-No Drills**

A No-No Drill is any drill that is attrition based and does not rely on collar corrections. When you are running a No-No Drill and your dog makes a mistake, interrupt your dog immediately and instead of repeating the whole sequence, take your dog back to the spot where he made the mistake and start from there. It minimizes the probability that your dog will make the same mistake again. It will also prevent you from confusing and demoralizing your dog.

- Rule #1 when running No-No Drill: don't yell. It's not the end of the world.
- Rule #2: when dogs make a mistake it's because they are asking for more information. Stop and think about how you can provide the additional information your dog needs to be successful.

### **Obstacles**

Obstacles can be changes in cover, logs, ditches, roads, lily pads – anything that interrupts a straight, flat line to the mark whether it be land or water.

When introducing obstacles on land:

- Set your dog up close to the obstacle.
- Walk over the obstacle, turn and call your dog to come to you. (this shows him the path you want him to take)
- Set your dog back up close to the obstacle and toss a bumper over it or have a helper throw.
- Gradually add distance as your dog becomes comfortable going over obstacles and not around them.

When introducing obstacles in water:

- Set your dog up close to the obstacle.
- Keep your throw short.

## Happy Marks

A happy mark is a short mark thrown either by you at the line or from the field that you know your dog will be successful at. Happy marks relieve the stress and pressure of drills and keep your dog's attitude positive. Happy marks are not a 'throw and let the dog go'. Your dog needs to sit until released and deliver to hand.

## Upland

Quartering a field for birds comes naturally to some dogs but not to others.

To teach your dog how to do this you will need a long line, your whistle and several dead pheasants (this is because pheasants or chukkers are always used in an upland test). You need to teach your dog three commands: "Come Around", "Too Far" and "Hunt 'Em Up" or whatever vocabulary you decide on. The best way to do this is to back chain them.

In this section you will look at how to control a dog's natural desire to forage and look for scent in a field. The important word is **scent** and not birds because the dog should be searching the field using his nose and not his eyes.

There have been many great hunt test and trial dogs that can work a perfect windshield wiper pattern in the field but have no idea what they are looking for because they were taught quarter and not to seek scent. There are also many handlers that run through a field and have no idea how to read their dog's body language and will forcefully call dogs off scent just because the dog is going somewhere that is not within the windshield wiper pattern.

Upland hunting and training require you to have the ability to read your dog's every action and to learn what changes in behavior your dog will show when he gets on scent. Dogs will indicate they have found good scent in many ways, including but not limited to: increased tail movement, sudden and abrupt changes of direction with their head and nose in the air, slower and more deliberate pace with their nose on the ground. These are only a few of the ways a dog will indicate they are on scent, it is your job as a trainer to understand what your dog's body language is telling you.

Training for upland is broken down into a few key skills your dog needs to master.

- Quartering with passive casting
- Staying within gun range
- Steady to flush
- Steady to shot and fall



## QUARTERING

Quartering is the pattern you want your dog to work while they are in the field. This can be best described as the dog working in a WINDSHIELD WIPPER pattern from left to right, in front of you.



## DOGS PATTERN

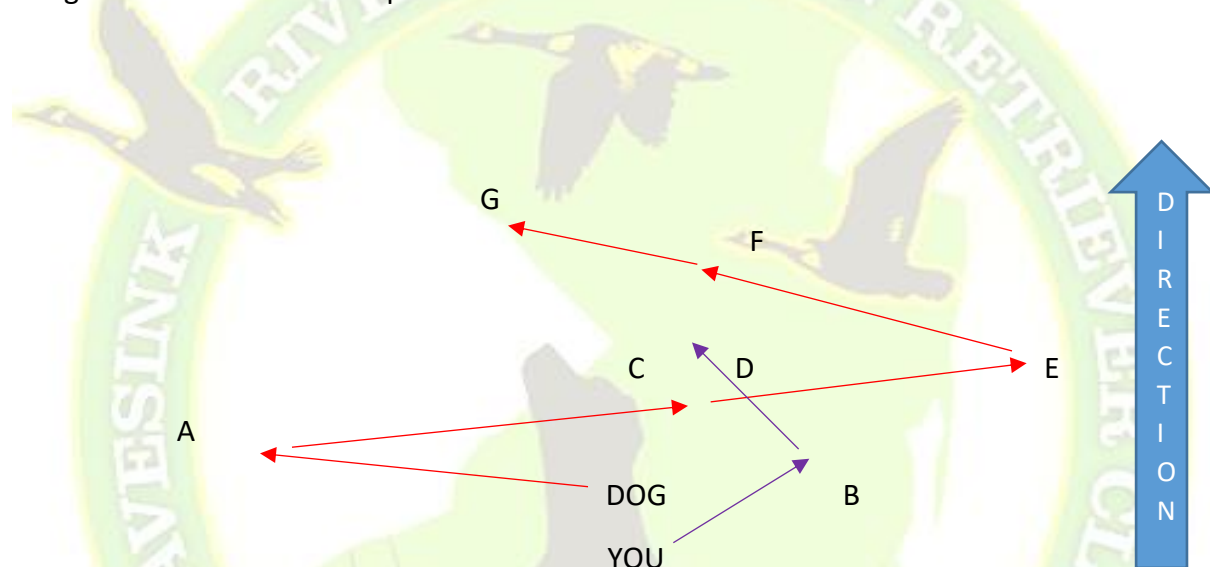
### YOU

Teaching a dog this pattern is something you should start as soon as get your pup home. Start by taking the pup for a walk in a large field with little cover or terrain change. Have a whistle and the pup on a long line. Your long line at this point can be something as simple as 30-40 feet of mason cord, just make sure you are in a field without cover that it can get snagged on that it is not so heavy as to impede the pups movement. Before you let your pup explore the field at his own pace give him a cue, HUNT EM UP, he will quickly associate that cue with a fun romp in the field. We want the pup to think he is on his own having a grand ole time. Your job at this point is to always keep the pup in front of you, if he walks to your left then you go with him, but always keep him in front of you. If you have to turn around to look for your dog you are not in the right position. HE SHOULD ALWAYS BE IN FRONT OF YOU. This may mean you are constantly turning to keep him in front, just make it happen. For these first few walks this is all you will be doing, let him explore, on a long line, with you always following him. You will notice after a few walks that your pup will start to turn and look for you. Your pup has a natural desire to forage and explore but he also has the strong desire to be with you so he will turn to look for you.

After a few days of HUNT EM UP walks you will start to control the pup's range. This is done with the use of your long line, whistle, and your dog's desire to be with you. Once you give your pup the HUNT EM UP cue and he is starting to explore, you should have the long line in hand and whistle at the ready. With your pup out in front of you, and just about at the end of the long line's length, give a TOOT – TOOT with the whistle. When pup looks to see what he sounds was apply light pressure to the long line, turn 90 degrees and command COME AROUND., while holding your arm out to point the direction you will be going. Some people choose to use the HERE command at his point. COME AROUND is a much clearer command. You do not want the dog to come to you, you want the dog to change direction and move with you. Big difference, and your dog should learn what you want. If you use the here command and every time your dog makes a turn in the field, he runs back to your side it will be a long miserable day in the field.

Once the pup has made a change of direction let him explore again, chances are he is going to run back to, and past you to continue his exploring. Now you will repeat this process and use the same mechanics: TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, LIGHT LONG LINE PRESSURE, ARM HELD OUT IN THE DIRECTION YOUR'E GOING, every time the pup reaches the end of the long line.

You are not teaching range at this point, you are teaching the concept of turning with you when he hears the TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, command. Once the dog understands the commands increasing range is a non-issue. You will be very surprised how fast your pup learns the length of the long line and starts to turn on his own. When your dog does turn on his own you will still give the TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, ARM CAST IN THE DIRECTON you will be going. Do not apply any long line pressure if your dog turns on his own, he chose to do the right thing so there is no need for pressure.



A: End of long line, give TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, LINE PRESSURE, ARM CAST, you go toward B

C: When dog is running past, give the HUNT EM UP, ARM CAST, and let him keep going

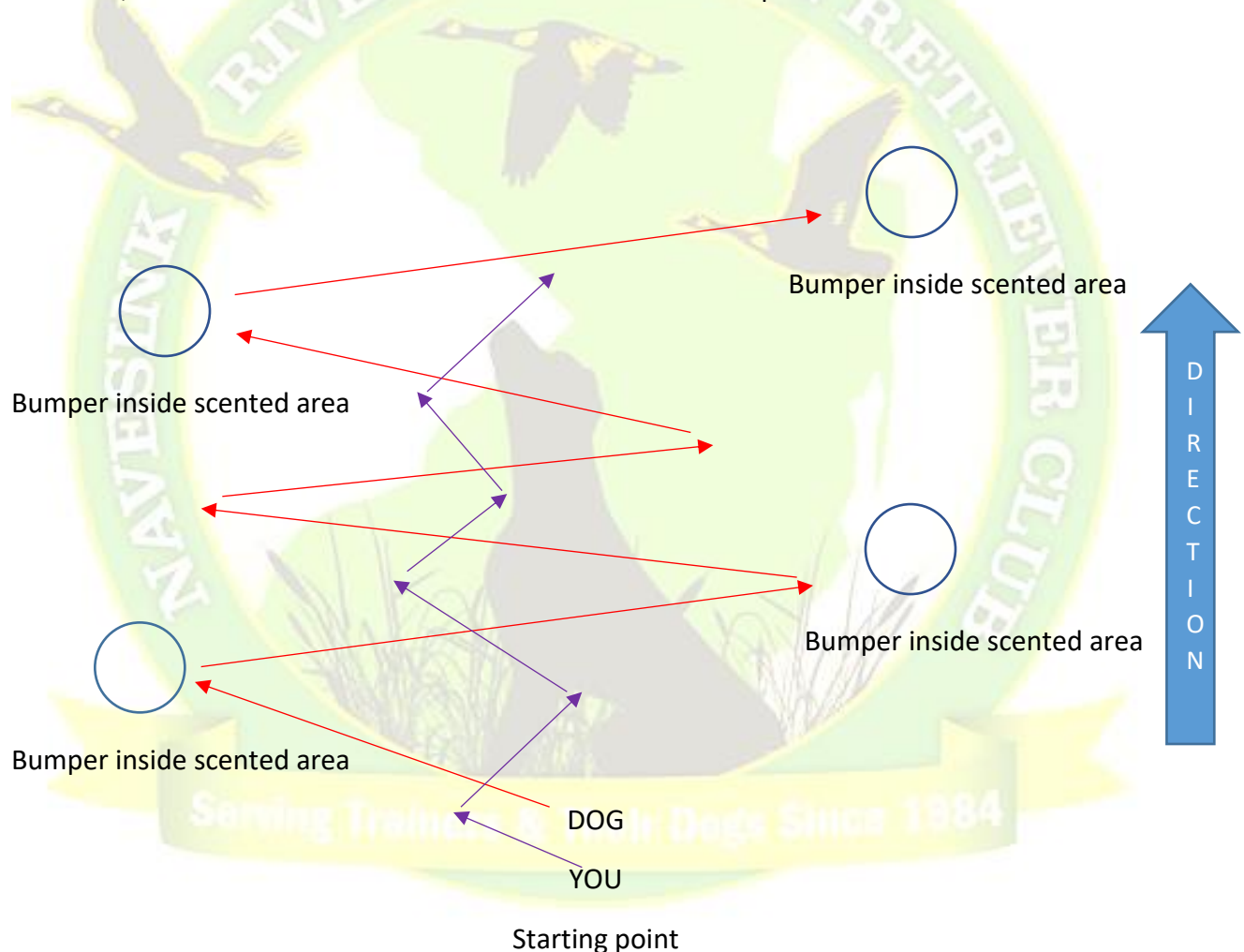
D: End of long line, give, TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, LINE PRESSURE, ARM CAST, you go toward D

F: When dog is running past you, give the HUNT EM UP, arm cast and let him keep going.

Now that you have a pup willing to stay in front of you and turn with you when asked and still thinks this is just a fun walk in the field. You will increase his level of fun by introducing bumpers. You are not worried about the pup making a perfect retrieve, you are just going to reward him for doing a good job and you will also be increasing his desire to work the field because he now knows there is a reward out here.

You will need four 2-inch canvas bumpers with duck or pheasant wings attached, 4 small flags, a bottle of duck or pheasant scent and a field with about 4-6 inches of cover. Keep your scented bumpers inside plastic Ziploc bags when you are at this portion of upland training. Those bumpers are only used for seeding the field and are re-scented and placed back in the bag at the end of each session.

Before you bring your pup out to HUNT EM UP you will place your bumpers in the field, do not have them visible to the pup. Place your flag or marker so you know where they are, do not use a marker so large or a white one since those will get the dogs attention. Scent a 12-15-foot area around the bumper with the scent from your bottle. This should all be done before you bring out your pup. Set this up so that the pup will find the first 2 bumpers quickly. Then set your next 2 bumpers far enough down the field so you can get at least 2-4 TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, ARM CAST commands before he finds another bumper



Now that the field is seeded, you will start your HUNT EM UP walk. Remember to use all the same mechanics and cues you have been using. Do not change the mechanics and cues, be



consistent every session. Guide your dog in the direction of one of the planted bumpers and scented area.

This is where you need to pay close attention to your dog's body language. If, as your dog gets closer to the scented area you see a sudden change in his behavior, take note and remember what he did. If he appears to have an extra little bit of excitement in his step give him the HUNT EM UP command again. If he finds the bumper be excited and praise him for a job well done. We are not worried about a perfect retrieve at this point, if he picks it up and brings it to you show him some love. If he is standing at the bumper picking it up or playing with it, walk over tell him good job and pick it up. DO NOT THROW THIS BUMPER BACK IN THE FIELD, place it in your plastic bag and put it in your pocket.

Now he should be excited and want to play this game. This is still a game to him, he has no idea he is learning and you are controlling him. Give the HUNT EM UP and start moving toward the next scented area. Remember what he did to indicate to you that he was on scent at the prior bumper and watch for that body language when you get closer to the next scented area. So now that you have let him find two bumpers, you need to make sure you get at least 2-4 TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND commands and changes of direction before he gets a third scented area. Continue this set-up for a few sessions, mixing up when he gets a scented area and making sure you get several TOOT-TOOT, COME AROUND, ARM CASTS between scented areas.

During his first phase of upland training you introduced the HUNT EM UP cue to let him know you expect him to work and quarter the field. You taught him to stay in front of you and established a distance he can be away from you by using the long line. He now understands the TOOT-TOOT COME AROUND command to get him to change direction. Most importantly you showed him that there is a reward in the form of birds and bumpers in the field.

#### GUN RANGE

This can be a hot button topic among hunters. Some people think that because their firearm can reach out 75-100 yards that is the gun range for your dog. However, if you are invited to an upland hunt and your dog is working and flushing birds at 75-100 yards you will not get a second invite.

A working dog in the field should be kept at a 25-35 yard range; this allows you to see and control your dog and be presented with better shots when birds are flushed.

***For those of you that do not hunt but run tests where an upland portion is included here is a little tip. Train your dog to stay within a range equal to the distance you can toss a bumper. It is easier to keep your dog at close range and allow him to increase his distance than it is to try and reel in a dog that has no concept of how far he should be from you.***

## Honor

If you are training alone:

- Set your dog up at heel, have a bumper in your back pocket
- Throw a bumper or launch one from a winger.
- DO NOT send your dog for it.
- Walk out, pick up the bumper or bird and return to your dog.
- Reward your dog by letting him grab the bumper and heel away from the line with you.
- If you're not sure your dog will sit when you throw or launch the bumper, put a leash on him and loosely hold on to it or place him on a platform
- If your dog breaks tell him No, walk or run out and take the bumper from him.
- Once your dog is steady and sits still while the bumper or bird is launched and you walk out and pick it up, throw or launch one for him.
- When your dog is reliable on sitting while two bumpers are thrown or launched, have him sit when two are thrown or launched, then three. Make sure you reward him by throwing or launching a bumper/bird for him to pick up.

If you are training with a partner:

- It's the same sequence as above only have your partner pick up the bird/bumper he has thrown/launched.

***When you practice honoring with a group and you're not absolutely positive your dog will be steady when another dog is sent, make sure you have a leash on your dog.***

***And always ask the handler of the working dog if you can honor while they run!***

NOTE: You must always reward your dog for sitting through a throw or two or three. You can have him heel off the line in the opposite direction with a bumper in his mouth, you can heel him off the line and throw another bumper for him when you are well off the line, you can drop a bumper on the way to the line and when you heel your dog away from it tell your dog he is going to get a 'dead bird' and send him for the bumper you dropped or you can be creative like some handlers and teach your dog to grab your baseball cap from your hand as you walk off the line.

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## **Transition (Marks & Drills) Training Session Hunter/Intermediate/AKC Senior**

### **MARKING PROGRESSION**

#### **SIMPLE RETIRED/HIDDEN GUNS**

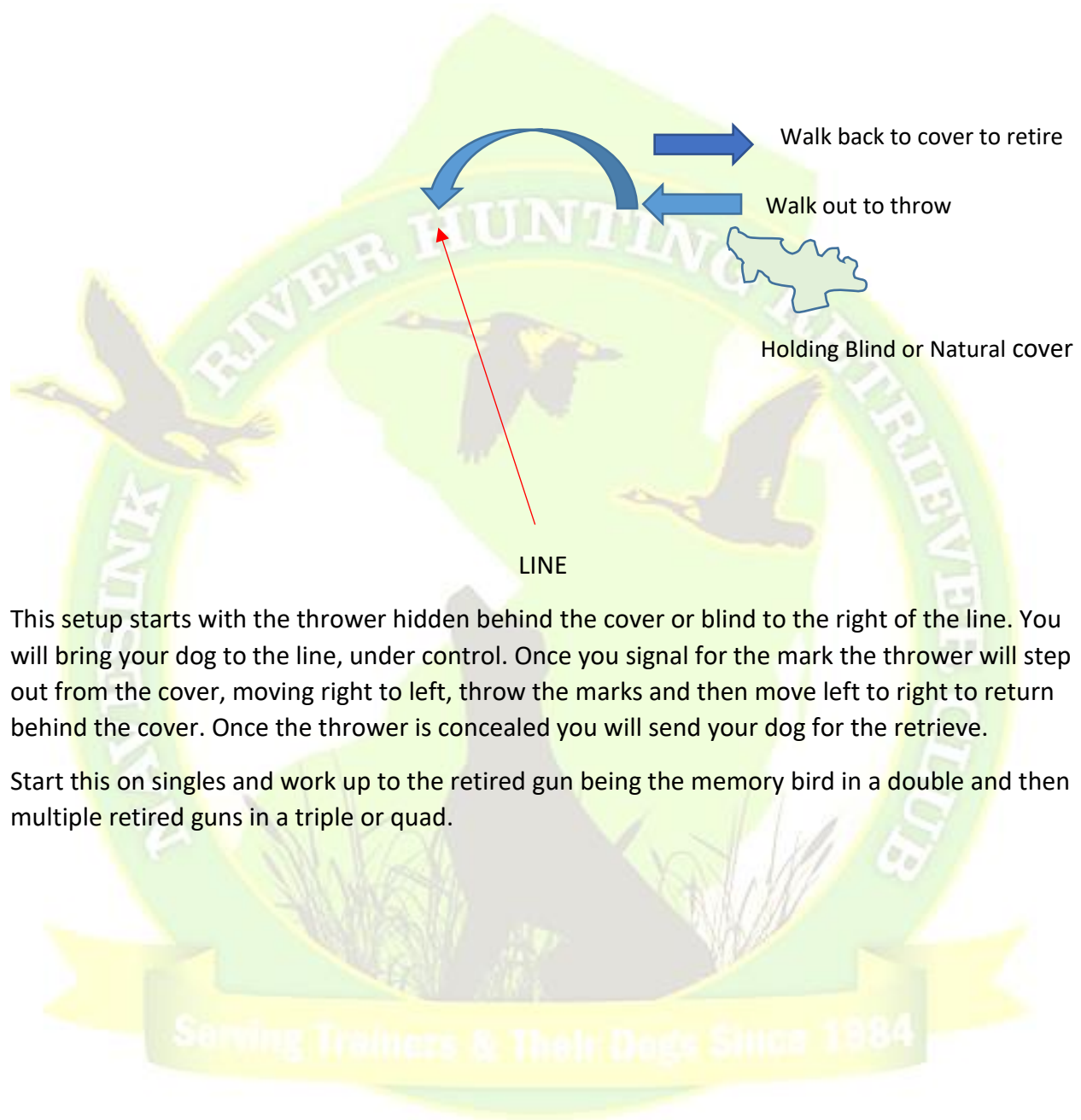
Up to this point your dog has been seeing what are called exposed gunners. This is when the person throwing the mark is not concealed in any way. The thrower is visible to the dog from the time he approaches the line, sits at the line and is making the retrieve. This scenario acts as an aid for dogs while learning to retrieve and while learning new marking concepts.

You are now going to increase the difficulty for your dog by introducing RETIRED/HIDDEN guns. In this scenario there will be no visible thrower in the field while your dog approaches the line and sits waiting for the marks. When you are ready and call for the marks the thrower will step out from behind some type of concealment like a holding blind or some natural cover, and make the throw while he is visible to the dog. Once the throw has hit the ground, and BEFORE YOU SEND YOUR DOG, the thrower will return to the area he was concealed behind; at this point you will send your dog.

Introduce this concept as singles.

This may not seem like a difficult task for a dog that has been doing well with his marking but as you progress into multiple marks at greater distances with memory birds and retired guns, it will be difficult for your dog.

On the next page is a look at a simple retired gun set up.



This setup starts with the thrower hidden behind the cover or blind to the right of the line. You will bring your dog to the line, under control. Once you signal for the mark the thrower will step out from the cover, moving right to left, throw the marks and then move left to right to return behind the cover. Once the thrower is concealed you will send your dog for the retrieve.

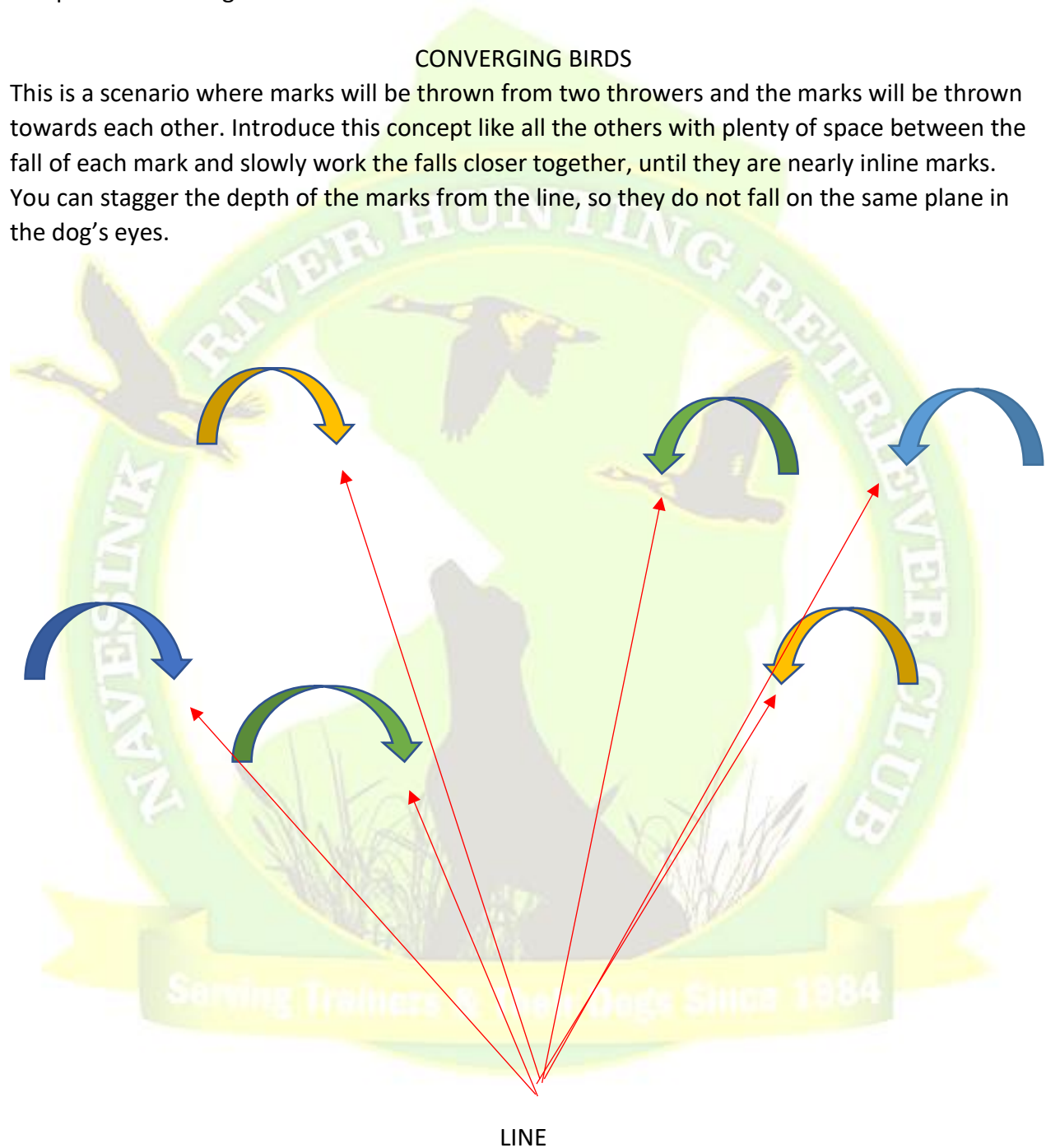
Start this on singles and work up to the retired gun being the memory bird in a double and then multiple retired guns in a triple or quad.

## MARKING CONCEPTS

Once your dog is comfortable running singles off multiple guns and he is doing basic multiple marks with the marks having a large angle of separation you will start to introduce more complicated marking scenarios.

### CONVERGING BIRDS

This is a scenario where marks will be thrown from two throwers and the marks will be thrown towards each other. Introduce this concept like all the others with plenty of space between the fall of each mark and slowly work the falls closer together, until they are nearly inline marks. You can stagger the depth of the marks from the line, so they do not fall on the same plane in the dog's eyes.



This image shows how you can introduce converging marks.

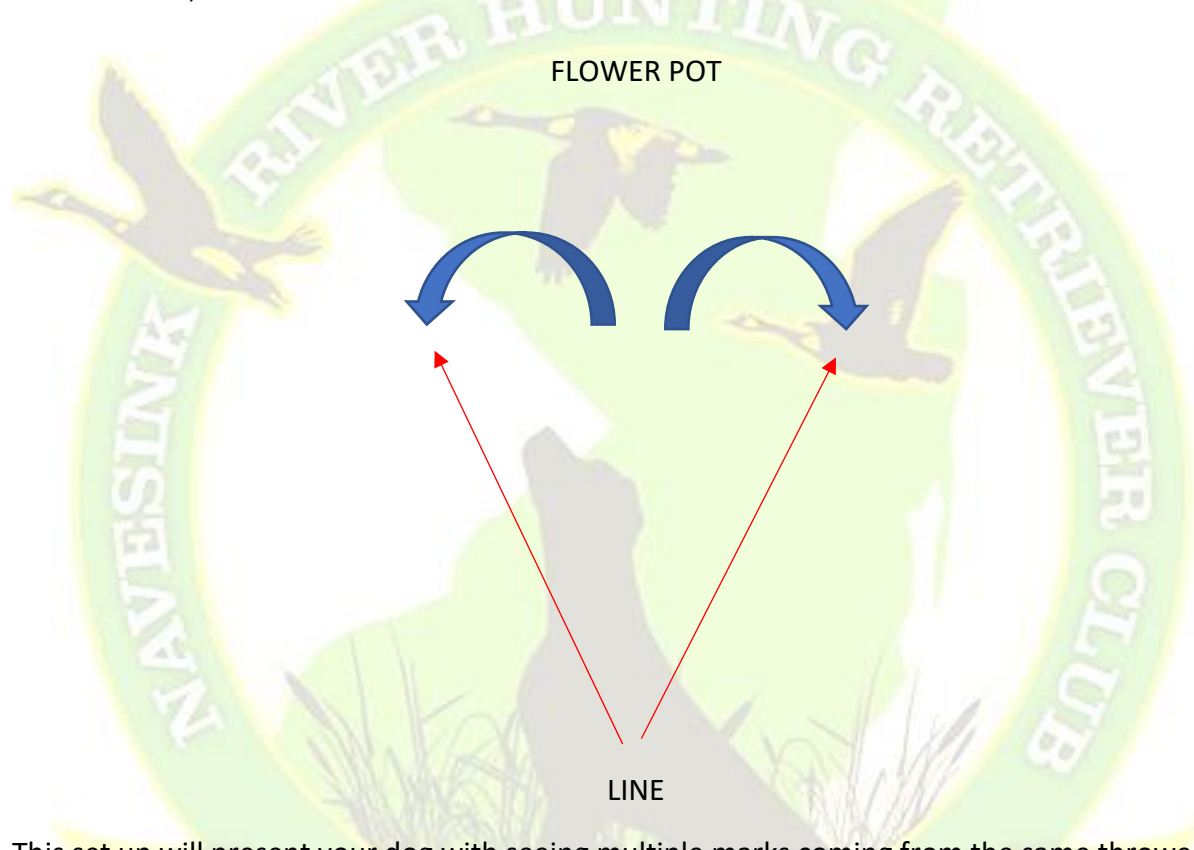


BLUE arrows would be first set thrown

GOLD arrow would be second set thrown. Notice the gap between marks is smaller

GREEN arrows would be the third set thrown.

While this diagram shows three sets of converging marks in the same spot, do not run all three sets from the same line back to back. If your dog has success on the first set of marks turn around at the line or move to a different location to expose him to the second and third set. If your field is big enough you can turn 90 degrees and run all three sets in one session. If you have to move, then move and run the next set of marks.

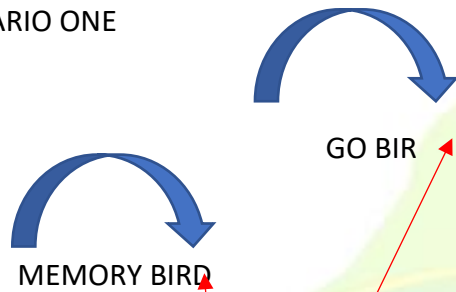


This set up will present your dog with seeing multiple marks coming from the same thrower but in opposite directions of each other. The throws can be flat, angle back, or angle in. If you have worked on the X drill with your dog this set up should be easy for him to handle. Just keep the marks during the introduction thrown with a good distance of separation so the dog is not tempted to switch. This can be introduced as single and work up to running multiple marks thrown from the same location.

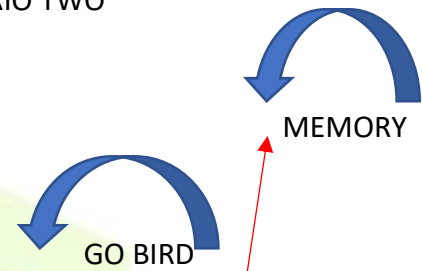
As your dog's marking ability advances this set up can present your dog with inline marks or wipe out birds all coming from the same location. You have the ability to make this set up as hard as you want moving forward.

## HIP POCKET MARKS

### SCENARIO ONE



### SCENARIO TWO



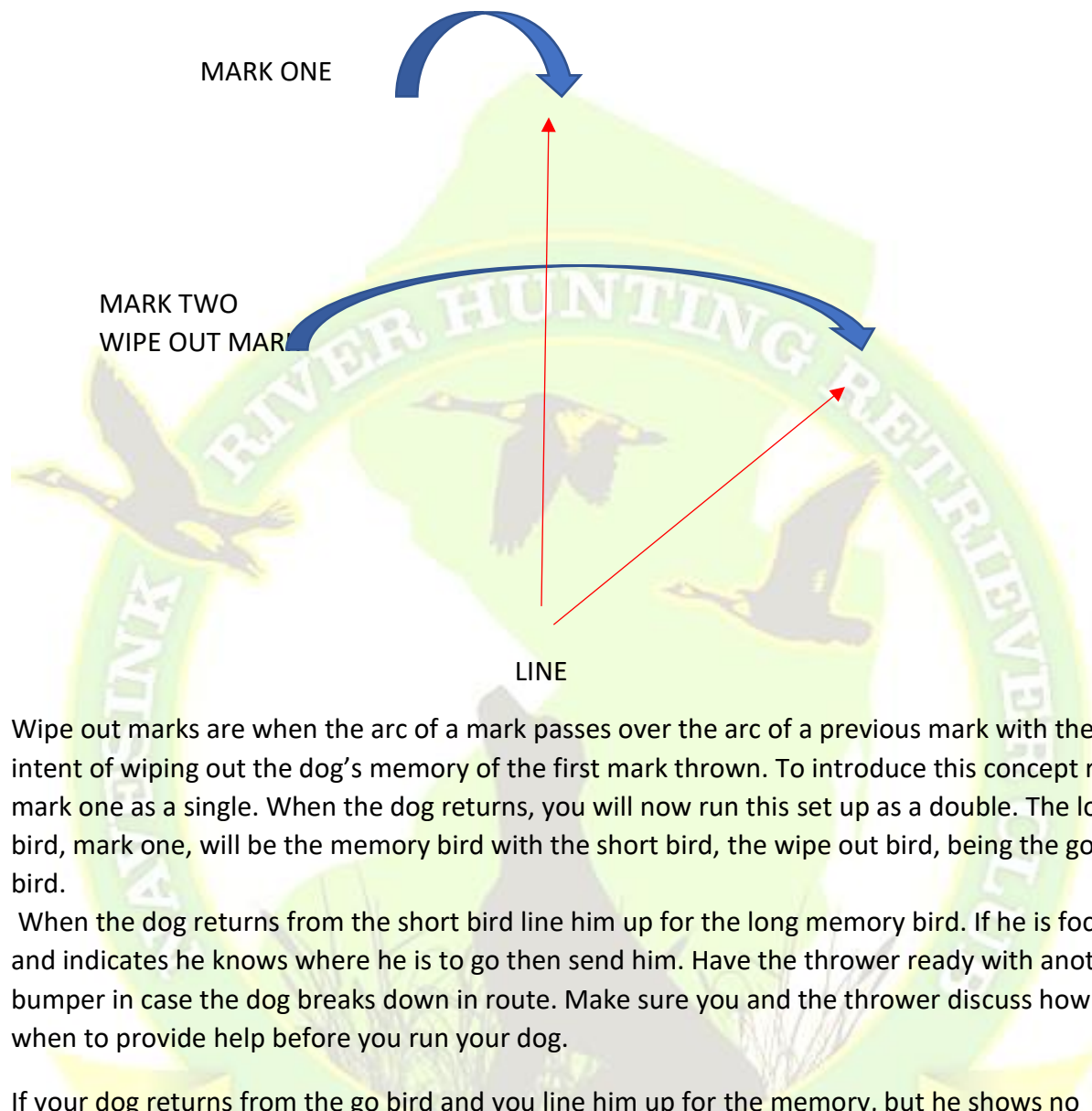
This scenario presents a picture to the dog where the memory bird appears to be thrown to the back side of the area that the go bird comes from. Back side does not mean deeper, behind the first thrower but to the side of the thrower opposite the direction he throws his bird.

Scenario one shows the short memory bird thrown as a hip pocket to the long go bird.

Scenario two shows the long memory bird thrown as a hip pocket the short go bird.

Most dogs will handle the short memory bird without any problems. The long memory bird, depending on how close the dog is required to run past the thrower may present a bigger challenge for the dog. When running the long bird as memory have the thrower be prepared to help if the dog starts to break down and has issues running past him.

## WIPE OUT MARKS



Wipe out marks are when the arc of a mark passes over the arc of a previous mark with the intent of wiping out the dog's memory of the first mark thrown. To introduce this concept run mark one as a single. When the dog returns, you will now run this set up as a double. The long bird, mark one, will be the memory bird with the short bird, the wipe out bird, being the go bird.

When the dog returns from the short bird line him up for the long memory bird. If he is focused and indicates he knows where he is to go then send him. Have the thrower ready with another bumper in case the dog breaks down in route. Make sure you and the thrower discuss how and when to provide help before you run your dog.

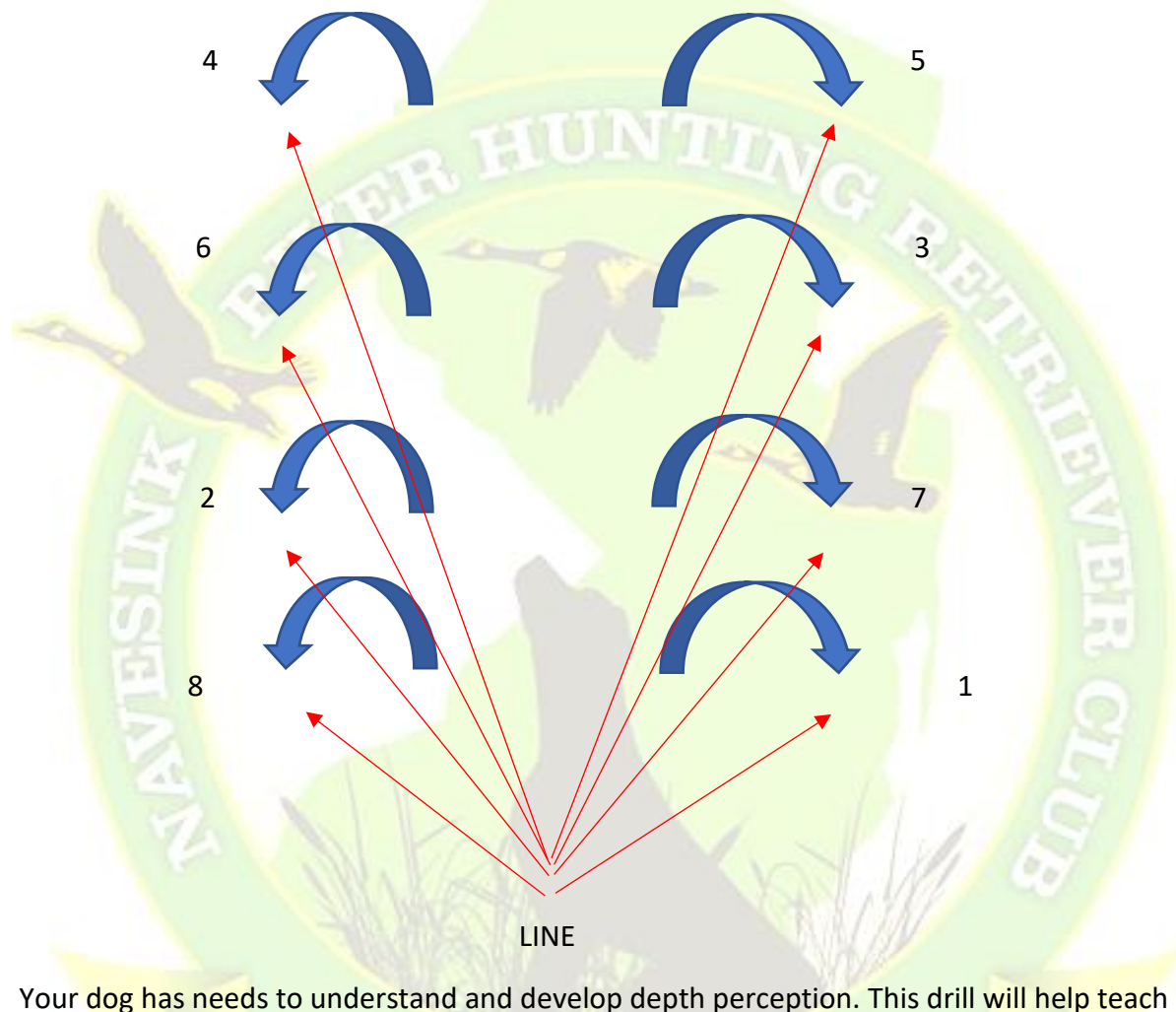
If your dog returns from the go bird and you line him up for the memory, but he shows no indication he knows where he is going then have the thrower step out, give a HEY HEY , and make a fake throw. The thrower will go through the motion of throwing but does not actually throw anything. You just want to get the dog's attention to see if it helps jog his memory. If he shows focus, send him. The thrower should have a bumper ready to toss to the area of the fall if the dog breaks down.

Introduce this concept in a field with little to no cover or factor. Some dogs will handle this well the first time they see it and some will need help and a few more sessions to grasp the concept.



Do not over-do it with this concept. This can be very stressful for some dogs and if that's the case with yours then slowly work it into his training.

### INLINE THROWS/DEPTH RECOGNITION



Your dog has needs to understand and develop depth perception. This drill will help teach him to trust his eyes, learn to determine depth of a fall, and to not always mark a fall off the thrower or gun station. If you set this drill up the right way there are actually several additional concepts your dog will be presented with: running close to and past the thrower, running under the arc of previous falls, and understanding and handling small degrees of movement at the line to run the marks clean.

To set this up you will need four holding blinds set up in a straight line from the running line. These blinds should be 10-15 yards deeper than the previous blind with the only holding blind

visible from the line being the closest one. Basically, hide the second, third, and fourth blinds behind the first one. If you have only one helper, they can walk from blind to blind as the dog is returning. Do not let your dog see the thrower moving.

Start by throwing the closest mark; you choose the right or left side. When the dog returns the thrower will now throw the mark from holding blind number 2 and to the opposite side as mark number one. Do not throw marks back to back on the same side during this introduction. You can work your way up to that later.

When you have run the first four marks, the thrower should be at the furthest holding blind from the line; you will now run the marks from longest to shortest. This drill has plenty of benefits for your dog, and can be set up and run at any distance your dog is capable of handling.

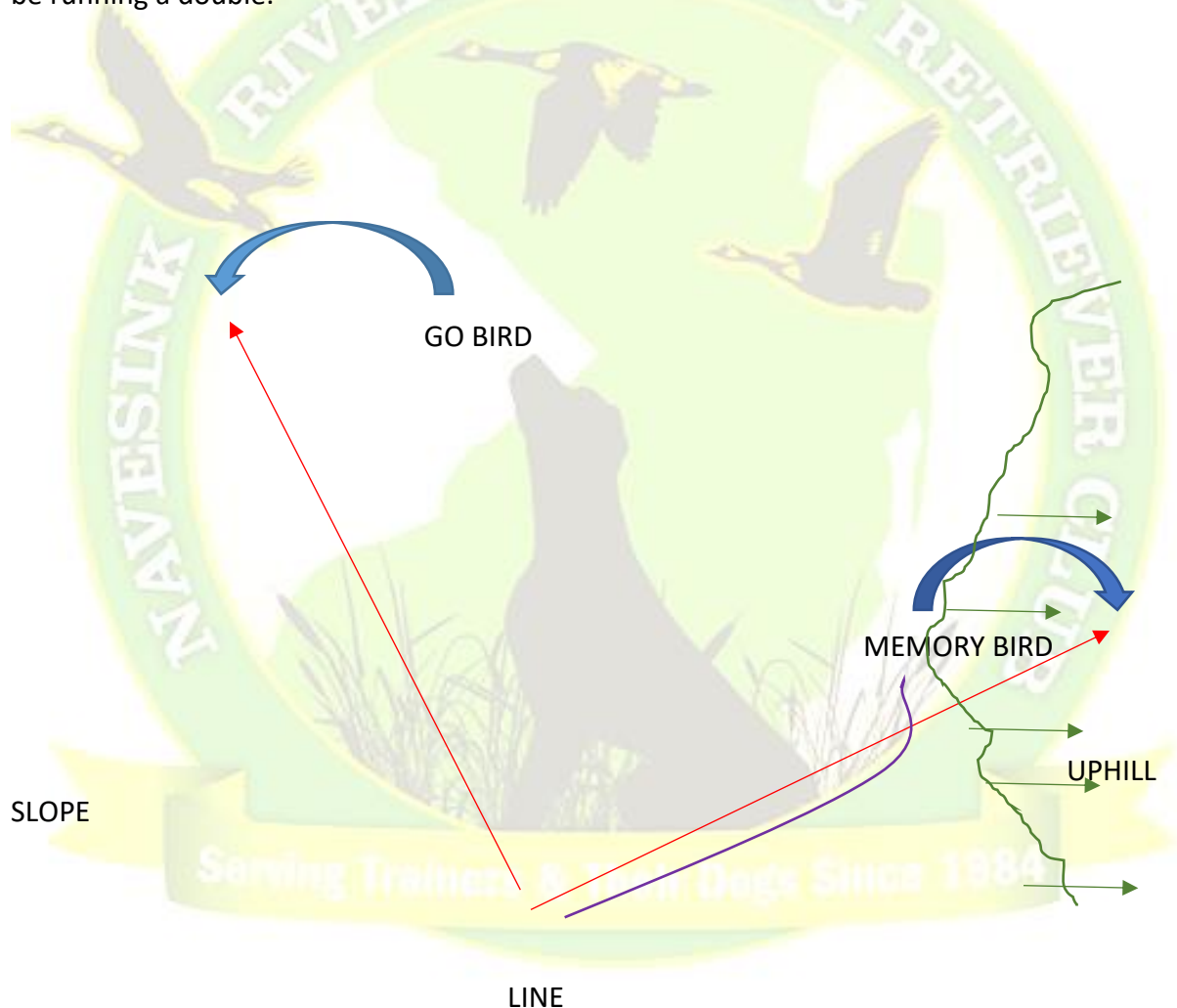


## HANDLING ON MARKS

While you want your dog to mark and make clean retrieves without your help there will come a point where the concept of the mark or factors such as terrain, old falls, or a possible switch will require that you help your dog.

Before you attempt to handle on marks be sure your dog is capable of the task. If you try to handle your dog off a mark he has seen fall and he is not handling crisply during your handling drills you will be creating a bigger problem than you will be trying to solve.

When to handle on a mark? That is the million-dollar question. In the example below you will be running a double.



In this example the terrain to the go bird is flat. The terrain to the memory bird is uphill along the green line and in the direction of the green arrows.



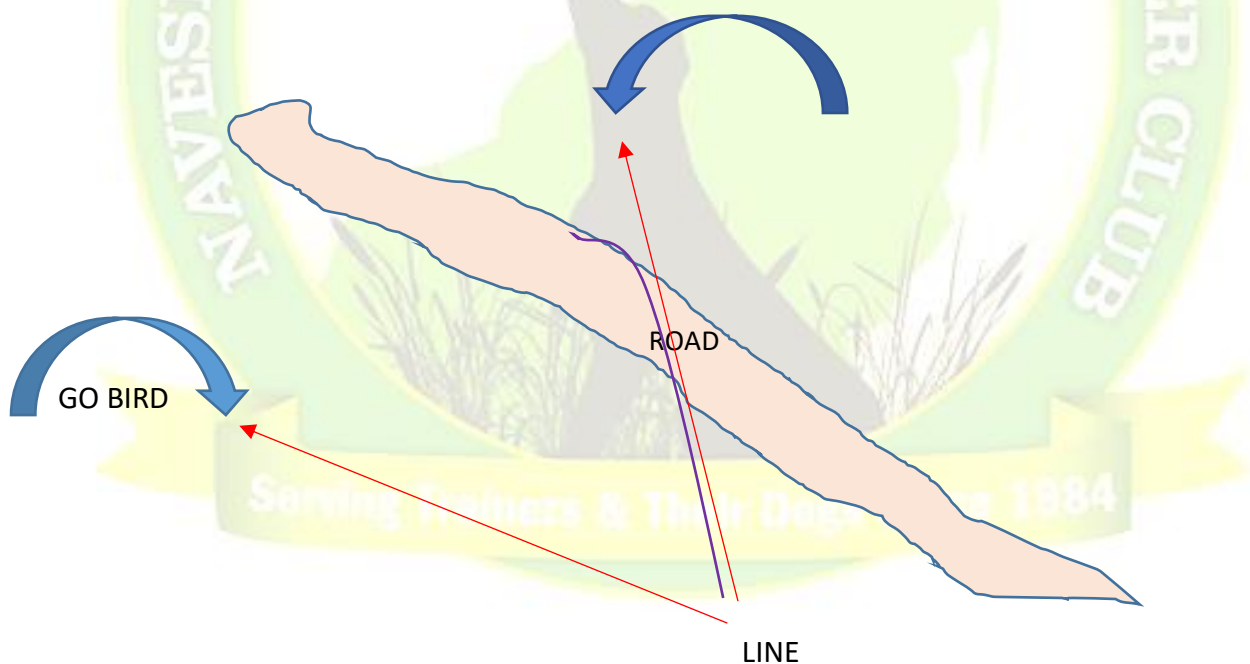
The red lines are the true lines to each mark, the line you want your dog to take.

The purple line to the memory bird shows the line the dog chooses to take.

You can see that as he approaches the incline, he fades to the left to avoid the hill. He gave in to the factor. When he chooses to do this, you need to be able to show the correct line. This is an example of when to handle on a mark. Once you know your dog is going to avoid the slope blow the SIT whistle. Make good eye contact and call him back to where he decided to get offline and give in to the slope, then SIT him. Let him wait for a few seconds, he may be confused why he was stopped on a mark. When you have good eye contact give the CAST that will put him back on line to the bird. If he takes the cast, great. If he fails then let him go a few feet and blow the SIT whistle again, tell him NO, HERE, bring him back to where he failed and repeat the cast. You will need to show him the correct line and teach him how to not fade to factors.

During your pattern blinds you should be introducing your dog to all these factors as they progress through more difficult pattern blinds you are building.

In the next example you will also be running a double. The factor this time will be a road your dog has to cross for the memory bird.



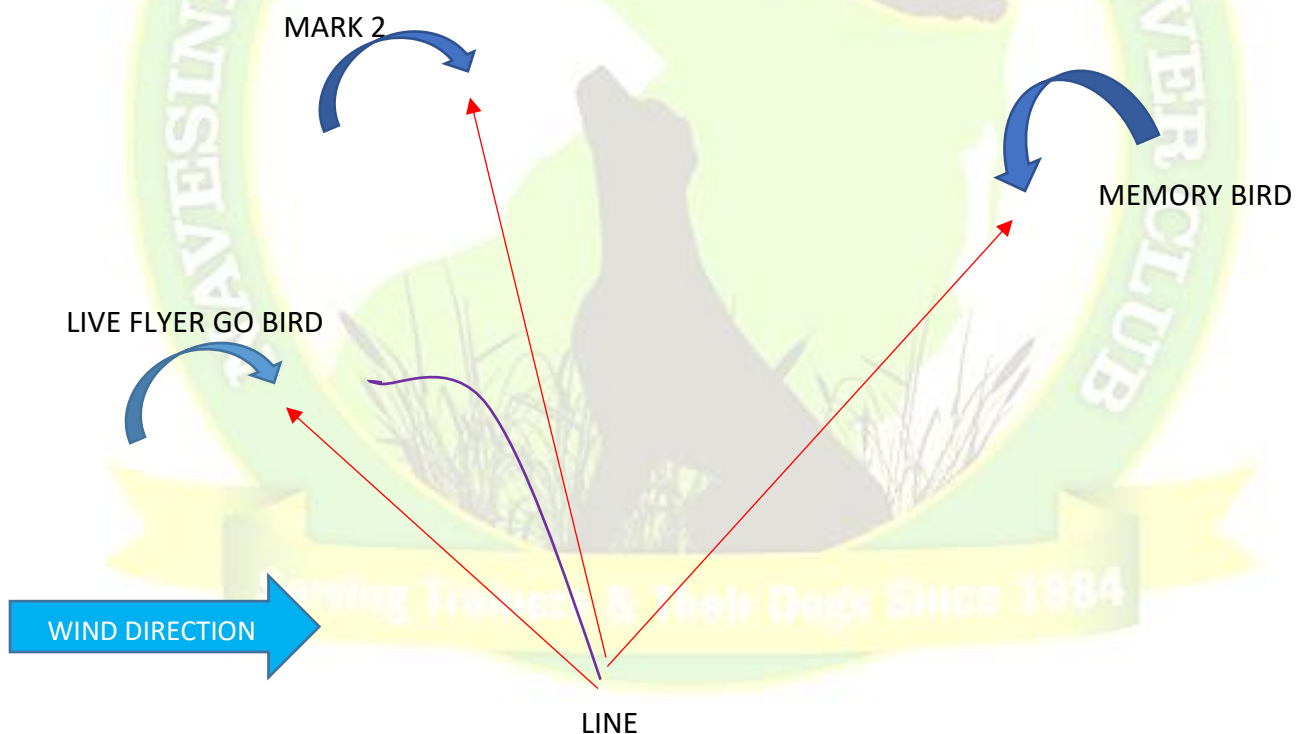
In this example the terrain is flat with mild cover. The dog will be faced with crossing a road at an angle when going to the memory bird.

RED LINES are the route you expect your dog to run.

PURPLE line to memory bird show where the dog fades to the factor and chooses to run up the road instead of crossing it at an angle. As in the last example when you are sure your dog has faded to the factor blow the SIT whistle. In this scenario be very careful of what cast you are going to give your dog. If he has made enough progress up the road, he may be in a position that a simple right over would put him on the bird, DO NOT DO IT. We are teaching him the correct line that he needs not just looking for the easy cast to the bird.

After you blow the SIT whistle, wait a second and bring him back to where he choose to get offline, SIT him. Wait until you have good eye contact and give him the cast that will get him to the bird on the line he failed to take originally.

The next example will be a triple with a flyer where the wind is the main factor your dog can fade to.



In this example you are running a triple with the marks being thrown in a right to left order, live flyer being the last bird down; the GO BIRD.

This scenario will show a dog that wants to return to the area of a previous fall.

RED lines are the lines you expect the dog to take.

PURPLE line shows the dog succumbing to the wind and scent while going to bird two and wanting to return to the area of the fall at the flyer station.

If your dog has retrieved the bird thrown from the flyer station and he will be going for bird two next be prepared that he may try to return to that area due to the wind and scent that is being carried over the line to bird two. If he commits to returning to the live flyer area stop him and handle as you did in the previous examples. This may require a little more work since your dog knows there was a bird in that area and his nose is telling him there are still birds in that area. Take your time and work slow, move up if he is not taking your casts, but get him out of that area and to bird two.

***Remember to bring him back to where he made the mistake of getting off the correct line to bird two. You need to teach the correct line and not just give him the cast that will get him to bird two quickest.***

There are many situations where you will have to decide if you will handle on a mark with your dog. The thing you really need to think about is that if your dog gives into a factor you need to recognize that error as soon as it happens. Remember that when you handle on a mark your main concern is not getting your dog to the bird as quickly as possible; you are teaching the correct line and showing him how not to fade to factors. This is how you would accomplish that in training. If you are in a test situation then you would give your dog the literal cast from the point you stopped him to get him to the bird ASAP. Some judges treat a Sit whistle and then bringing your dog in to give a cast as, NOT MAKING PROGRESS TO THE BIRD. Tests are different than training so in training always teach the correct line.

***Word of caution about handling on marks. Do not be quick to handle and correct your dog on his line to all his marks. You need to have a confident dog, one that is not looking for help every time he goes out into the field. If you can introduce the factors that may affect your dog as singles, or in your pattern blinds, and at shorter distances, by breaking the concept down in smaller pieces you will be better off than resorting to constant handling on marks.***

## UPLAND STEADY TO FLUSH, SHOT AND FALL

If you have done your yardwork properly, your dog should be able to quarter a field as outlined in the Yardwork section. If you have not, then you need to go back before you progress to teaching your dog to be steady to flush, shot and fall.

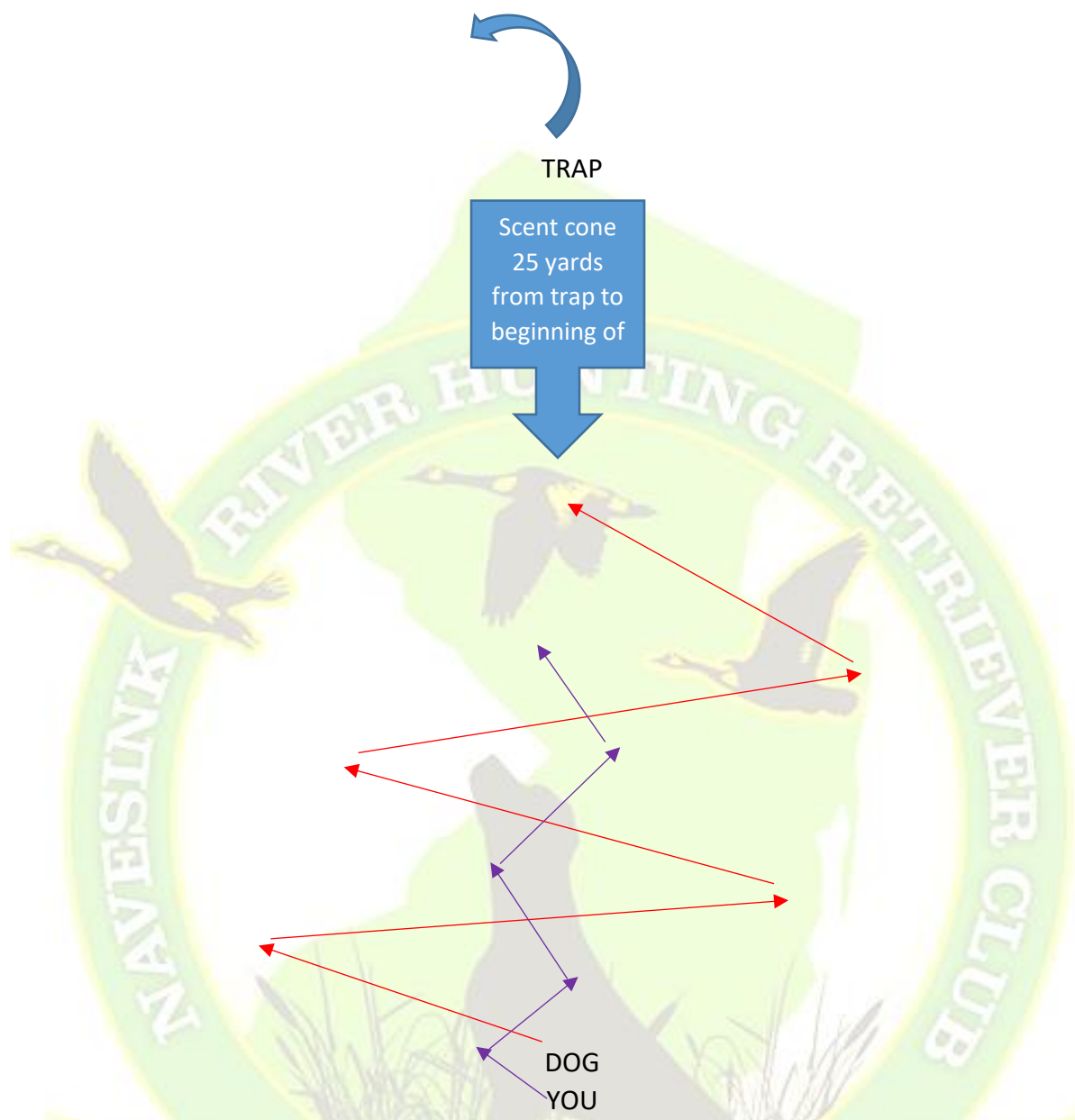
Before moving to this next portion of upland training your dog needs to have a solid understanding of the sit command, both verbal and whistle, be obedient at a distance away from you, have been introduced to gunfire and be quartering the field with enthusiasm. If he is not familiar with the sit whistle you can use the verbal command and transition into the whistle once he understands it. You will need help in the form of a thrower or release trap. A trap is preferred so that your dog does not become wise to seeing a thrower in the field and failing to quarter, just running to the thrower to get his retrieve. If you must use a thrower try to position them in a location that provides cover, so your dog does not see them. Behind some trees or bushes would work.

Set your field up the same as you have been when seeding the field. This time only place two bumper birds in the field, marked so you know where they are. The third bird will come from your thrower or release trap. The location of the thrower or release trap should have a larger scented area that will funnel the dog to the trap and should be **at least 25 yards** from the trap.

Set the 2 planted bumpers so your dog gets them first then the thrown bird will be third. This should be the last time your dog gets planted bumpers in the field. Moving forward your dog should not be rewarded for just finding the planted bumper but he now must locate the bird and sit when it is flushed to get his reward. The diagram below shows the placement and mechanics of the thrown bird. You should have a good grasp on setting up the planted birds by now. You can use bumpers to introduce this and then move to live birds.

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As you approach the scent cone from the trap pay attention to your dog's body language; when he indicates he is on the scent and looks toward the trap location, give the SIT, WHISTLE, SIT command. The second he sits release the trap and repeat the SIT, WHISTLE, SIT command, with pressure on the long line. Do not fire a shot for the first few sessions, until you know he is steady. The extra excitement of a shot is a distraction you do not need at this point. If he sits tell him good boy, do not take pressure off the long line and do not release him for the retrieve. With pressure on the long line walk to your dog, repeating the verbal sit command as you move up to his side. When you are at his side you can now release him for the retrieve. For the first few session make sure to release the bird as soon as your dog indicates he is on scent and he is

seated; this should be at least 25-30 yards away from the trap. From now on your dog will be required to sit and be steady for every flush you present to him.

Now you will start to delay the sit command in relationship to the release of the bird. With the field set up bring out your dog and start to HUNT EM UP. This time when your dog gets into the scent cone of the trap and indicates he is on scent, still 25-30 yards away, release the trap **before** you give the sit command. Once you release the trap and the bumper is in the air give the SIT, WHISTLE, SIT command with pressure on the long line. If you laid the groundwork properly, he should sit; if he does not then repeat the SIT, WHISTLE, SIT command and stop him with the long line. **DO NOT LET HIM GET THE BUMPER.** With pressure on the long line and repeating the verbal sit command walk up to your dogs' side. Reinforce the sit command and walk out to pick up the bumper. Do not reward him for breaking and being disobedient. Putting your dog through this for a few sessions should drive the point home and he should be sitting to the flush and waiting until you are at his side and send him for the retrieve.

Next step is to add the gun fire. Go through the same mechanics as you have been but this time when the trap is released, and the bumper is in the air fire a shot from a starter pistol. The shot may turn your dog's attention away from the bumper and he may look at you. Do not worry about that at this point, as long he is steady be happy. After a few sessions with the gun fire, your dog being steady and waiting for you to send him and you can move to the final phase of this training.

The last step for your dog is introducing live birds, and a flyaway into the mix. A flyaway is a live bird that is flushed but is not dispatched by the gunners. Pigeons are great for this part of training as they are usually cheap and readily available. Before you bring your dog out have your field set up, place a live pigeon in your trap this time. Start your HUNT EM UP walk. When your dog gets into the scent cone, and indicates to you he is on scent, release the live pigeon. This may be enough to cause your dog to break so be prepared with your long line. Release the bird, command SIT, WHISTLE, SIT put pressure on the long line, fire a shot. If your dog attempts to break stop him with the long line and repeat your sit command. If your dog sits, tell him good boy and walk up to his side, with pressure on the long line. When you are next to your dog, he should be looking in the direction the bird flew away; tell him NO BIRD, turn him 90 degrees from the direction the bird flew, heel him away from about 10 yards and start your HUNT EM UP walk in another direction. If he turns to go back in the direction the bird flew away stop him, tell him NO BIRD, HEEL and walk him further away before your HUNT EM UP again. This will take a few sessions and your dog will have a solid understanding of what you now expect from him while upland hunting.

Now that your dog will HUNT EM UP, quarter, indicate he is on scent , sit to flush, shot and fall, wait for you to send him for a retrieve and not chase a flyaway you can start to decrease the distance between your dog and the trap

## HANDLER WITH GUN

When you are required to handle a gun at the line the judges are looking to see if you can handle it safely. This means you cannot point it at the judges, marshal or your dog. You are expected to shoulder the gun before the judge calls for the marks and you are expected to swing it in the direction of each mark as it falls. You are not allowed to point out the gun stations to your dog with the gun before the marks are thrown. After you have sent your dog you will place it in a gun stand. Some clubs use wooden guns and others use shotguns that are NOT loaded. If you are given a shotgun you will be expected to 'break it' before placing it in the gun stand.

As you approach the line with the handler's gun keep it in an upright position with the barrel pointing skywards.

As simple as this sounds it does require practice; you need to get into the habit of handling the gun safely and your dog needs the practice of seeing you with the gun.

## WALK UPS

A walk up is when you and your dog approach the line, the judge calls for the first mark and a shot is fired and the mark is thrown without benefit of a duck call. You and your dog must stop moving as soon as the shot for the first mark is fired and you both must remain in position while the second mark is thrown. You are allowed to blow your whistle and/or tell your dog to sit when the walk up shot is fired. You must stop where you are and may not move into heel position next to your dog.

Steps to teach steady with a walkup

- Make sure your dog is already steady at heel position.
- Put a slip line through your dog's collar and heel from the holding blind to the line.
- As you approach the line have a helper fire a shot and throw a bird. Hold on to the slip line.
- If your dog does not automatically sit, tell your dog to sit/blow your whistle. If your dog has been properly collar conditioned to sit to the whistle you can then reinforce the sit with the collar and repeat 'sit'.
- If your dog is sitting and steady, release your dog to pick up the mark.
- Go back to the holding blind and repeat the sequence of approaching the line, etc. THIS TIME have your helper throw a second mark in the typical fashion, using a duck call first. Your dog must sit for both marks.
- If your dog sits and remains steady, release for the go-bird and then send for the memory bird.
- When your dog can reliably sit while walking to the line and remain in a sit while both marks are being thrown, you can proceed to this process with your dog off-lead.
- After your dog is reliable walking up to the line and sitting for two marks, add a third.



You are teaching your dog to sit to the sound of a gunshot. This is an exciting situation for your dog so remain calm and patient.

If your dog should break, blow your sit whistle and reinforce with the collar. Then call your dog back to heel, have your helper pick up the mark and heel off the line for several minutes to allow your dog to calm down. Then try again.

## **SEND FROM A BUCKET**

The usual visual picture your dog has at the line has you standing next to him. Sending your dog while you are sitting on a bucket can sometimes confuse your dog so it's good training to teach this scenario.

Step 1 – teach your dog to sit next to a bucket.

- Have a bucket at the line.
- Heel your dog to the line and have your dog sit to the left side of the bucket.
- Then sit yourself on the bucket. This may cause your dog to move. If this happens, remain seated on the bucket and call your dog to heel.
- Your dog may not want to sit right next to the bucket. Don't allow this and simply call your dog to heel again while you're sitting on the bucket or take out a treat and lure your dog into heel position while you are sitting on the bucket.
- DO NOT throw a mark – you are simply teaching your dog to sit next to a bucket. Repeat this sequence until your dog is quickly sitting and comfortable sitting next to a bucket.

Step 2 – adding a mark

- Have a bucket at the line.
- Have a slip line through your dog's collar.
- Heel your dog to the line and have your dog sit to the left side of the bucket.
- Then sit yourself on the bucket.
- Hold on to the slip line and call for a mark.
- If your dog is steady while you are sitting on the bucket, send your dog.
- Your dog may try to break because this is a new scenario. Hold on to the slip line and have your helper pick up the mark.
- Heel your dog off the line, wait a few moments and try again.
- Stay calm, be patient.

Step 3 – multiple marks

- Have a bucket at the line
- Have a slip line through your dog's collar.
- Heel your dog to the line and have your dog sit on the bucket.
- Hold on to the slip line and call for one mark, then a second.
- When your dog is reliably steady for the second mark, add a third.



## REMOTE SEND

A remote send occurs when your dog is NOT at heel position next to you. Some judges will have you set your dog up in front of a holding blind and have you return to the blind and some will have you stand well off to the side of your dog. Either way, your dog needs to be rock steady in this situation. Just like Send From a Bucket, this can create confusion for your dog.

### Step 1 – adding lateral distance to heel position

- Set your dog up at heel position (this is where a platform is a great training tool – have your dog sit on the platform)
- Take a GIANT step to your right.
- Call for a bird. Remind your dog to sit.
- Watch your dog's body language! If his shoulders or head move forward – even slightly – he's getting ready to break. Remind him to sit again but don't say his name before you remind him to sit.
- If he is steady, send him for the mark.
- Gradually progress until you can get to a distance of ten feet off to your dog's side while one mark is being thrown.
- When your dog is reliable and steady at this distance, add a second mark, then a third before you release your dog.

### Step 2 – stepping behind your dog

- Again, use a platform because you are now going to step behind your dog.
- Have your dog sit on the platform.
- Take a GIANT step behind your dog.
- This may cause your dog to turn and look at you. Remind your dog to sit. If necessary, remind him to 'mark'.
- Watch his body language as in Step 1.
- If he is steady, send him for the mark.
- Gradually progress until you can get to a distance of ten feet behind your dog while one mark is being thrown.
- When your dog is reliable and steady at this distance, add a second mark, then a third before you release your dog.

### Step 3 – adding a holding blind

- Place your dog on a platform in front of the holding blind.
- Step inside the holding blind. Again, this may confuse your dog so be ready to remind him to sit and look out for his mark.
- Go through the same sequence you did in Steps 1 & 2; your dog must remain steady for multiple marks.

NOTE: have a radio handy so you can communicate with your thrower(s) in case your dog breaks and you want them to pick up the marks. Discuss this with your thrower(s) ahead of time.