

take off the muzzle as soon as you have a leash on the pup. With a rag that you brought with you, not the club's expensive lure, play some tug with the pup, give him his reward for the run and praise him for a good job. Then get off the track so the next people can go up the track.

An alternative method, which has many adherents, is to put the muzzle on at home and during walks 'til the pup ignores the muzzle when it is being worn. Both methods work. I use the first method and find that my dogs get excited when they see the muzzle because it means they are going to race! Some will even try to put their face in the muzzle they are so eager.

Three sources of muzzles are:

1. The National Greyhound Association, P.O. Box 543, Abeline, KS 67410, phone (913) 263-4460.

The number five muzzle fits most 20 to 22.5 inch Whippets. These are leather muzzles with a white plastic front. They are quite sturdy and allow sufficient air for racing. They are hotter because they are more closed in than the plastic basket type. However, some dogs will break a plastic basket type at every meet or every time they wear one.

2. Sam and Sue Banks, P.O. Box 419, Mattaponi, VA 23110. Phone (804) 785-7208. e-mail: ssbanks@inna.net.

Sam & Sue sell the plastic basket type of muzzle. These supply lots of air, are cooler than leather types, and most dogs seem to resist wearing them less than the leather muzzles. Many dogs who fight the leather muzzles wear these without protest. Sam & Sue also sell leashes, collars and racing blankets.

3. Janet Stigum Trowbridge, 18105 NW 11th Ave., Ridgefield, WA. 98624. Phone (360) 887-4912. Janet carries both the plastic basket type of muzzle and the wire basket type. She also carries leashes, collars and artwork.

RUNNING WITH OTHER DOGS

By this time, when your dog is on the track it should have its mind only on racing. The pup should be trained to the lure, muzzle trained and ready for the next phase of his training – running with another dog. The dog you start your pup running with must have certain characteristics which, in my mind, are absolutely not negotiable. These are: running absolutely clean with other dogs, NEVER interfering with another dog intentionally and dead keen on the lure. Nothing else matters when it is running. The dog should be about the same speed as the pup. This gives the pup maximum exposure to running with

another dog. If the other dog is much faster or slower, it is much like running alone.

This is a very important time in the pup's training. If it is run with a dog that interferes with the pup, one of four things will happen. At best, the pup will ignore the bump and continue after the lure. Worse, it will get spooked and hang back from the lure when other dogs are around. Sometimes you can retrain the dog but sometimes this behavior persists for life. The third thing possible is that the pup will retaliate and learn to intentionally interfere with the other dogs with whom it runs. This is very hard to train out of the dog. Number four is that it will figure that "IT'S PLAY TIME," and interfere with the other dogs in the race.

This is easier to correct with more running alone, but it slows down the pup's progress and leaves a question about whether the pup will run clean for many race meets. Some people have found that the first time a pup runs with another dog it can be startled if they are run from the starting box since the pup does not know the other dog is there. Make the first run with another dog from a hand slip rather than the starting box. One time is enough. After that, subsequent work should be done from the starting box. Run from the starting box several times the full 150, or 200 yards of the puppy distance, depending on the sponsoring organization. Assuming the pup runs clean with one competitor, run it with two dogs. Again, these must be absolutely honest dogs. Put one on each side of the pup, with an empty stall in between, and run them twice. Next, move up to three other dogs, again keeping an empty stall between the pup and the others. Run them two times.

Next, move the other dogs so there is no empty stall between the pup and the other dogs. When this has worked out satisfactorily, you can progress up to a full starting box. During this time it will prove harder and harder to find dogs the same speed as your pup. It is all right to mix faster and slower dogs with your pup at this time. This more closely resembles a real race and you can see how your pup handles the situation when dogs are in front of it and when it is passed.

At this point, I like to test my pups to be sure they will run clean when passed. I choose another dog which is faster than mine and hand slip them, with the faster dog slipped late so it has to catch up and pass. Watch very closely for head turning; this is OK if that is all the pup does. Moving over to bump the other dog, whether contact is made or not, must be corrected before the pup can run in competition. At this time you are not being a foul judge and applying the rules for disqualification, you are attempting to see if your pup is TRYING to commit a foul. Ask someone experienced to help you with this; it is very important. I also like to be sure that my pup will pass another dog and will set it up with



a dog that is slower and late slip the puppy so that it has a chance to pass the slower dog. If the pup does not pass, then we run alone and try again with a smaller head start for the slower dog. Eventually it will learn to pass the slower dog because it wants the lure too badly to hang back.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PUP FAILS AT ANY OF THESE STAGES

Frequently a pup fails because it has been moved along too fast and was not ready to progress to the next step; i.e., it was not sufficiently on the lure. Return to running alone and work to increase intensity on the lure. This usually corrects the problem. There are some lines that seem to be genetically predisposed toward intentional interference; I had two dogs with this problem in years past.

Sometimes more work will help, and sometimes it will not. It is the first thing to try and should not be rejected until tried very thoroughly over a rather long period of time. With dogs that never seem to learn not to intentionally interfere, sometimes it will work to teach them that the price of interference is high by running them with a late slipped Greyhound. When it