

*Goal: To provide information for the safe use and handling of CATS agility equipment and to prevent damage and abuse to the equipment.*

## ❖ STORAGE

- Wood Components
  - Store equipment so that wood is NOT in contact with the ground.
    - ◆ Majority of the wood components are NOT pressure treated.
  - Even leaving the edges (sides) of the plywood in contact with the ground will enable moisture to enter the wood and accelerate deterioration!!
  - Woods blocks are in the ring to be used to raise wood equipment off the ground when stored.
- Non-Skid Surfaces
  - Do not store (*even short term!!*) any equipment with the non-skid surface (wood or metal) in contact with the ground.
    - ◆ Grass and mud become embedded into the non-skid material and are difficult or impossible to remove.
- Pause Table
  - Place on edge or right side up. Do not store upside down.
- Teeters
  - Do not store upside down (including the full aluminum teeter).
  - Place on the side or right side up. Keep wood up and off the ground.
- Aframe
  - Do not store (*even short term!!*) the aframe with the non-skid surface (wood or metal) in contact with the ground.
  - If stored folded and on the side, place boards under the aframe to raise the plywood off the ground.

## ❖ NON-SKID SURFACES

- CATS' equipment (like agility equipment in general) has a variety of non-skid surfaces and textures.
  - Recognize the differences and performance when using other equipment.
  - Adjust training & performance strategy to match equip & surface conditions.
- Weather
  - Rain/dew/frost/mud affect the grip of the non-skid surfaces.
  - Practice and plan to match the conditions.
    - Approach angles and speeds to the equipment become critical when there is reduced traction.

## ❖ HARDWARE

- Hardware is one of the critical parts of agility equipment and they are susceptible to wear & failure.
  - Always check all equipment hardware prior to a training or practice session.
  - If you find a problem with the hardware or equipment, move the item from the center of the ring and mark it so it is not used by others until repairs are done.
    - ◆ Make sure you let a member of the equipment committee know about problems with any equipment.
    - ◆ There is yellow warning (barrier) tape in the ring kit to mark any equipment with a problem and to warn others not to use the item.
- Quick Links (threaded chain link fasteners)
  - Must be fully threaded together
  - Must not be bent or threads damaged
- Carabineers (look like the mountaineering clips often used for keychains)
  - Spring arm must move freely and the toothed end must fit into the main body.
    - Must not be deformed or bent
    - Tooth and slots must be fully engaged together for strength and safety.

- Some carabineers have a retaining barrel (threaded nut) on the spring arm.
  - The spring arm must be engaged to the main body and the barrel is twisted (turned) down until the tooth and slot engagement point is totally covered by the barrel.
- Retaining Clips - Several types of retaining clips are in use
  - Circlips – open clips that are placed through the end of a shaft or pin
    - Clip should be inserted from top to bottom and the open end should be pointing down
    - Clip must be inserted through the pin far enough that it locks into place.
  - Safety Pins – Pins or clips with a retaining device to keep them in place
    - Pin should be fully inserted and retainer in place.
- Stakes
  - Always pick up stakes and return to the ring kit.

## ❖ EQUIPMENT CONCERNS AND PRECAUTIONS

- PAUSE TABLE
  - Legs fully inserted into frame.
  - Place extra legs under table or out of the way to prevent a tripping hazard.
- TEETER
  - Always check the chain hardware (quicklinks and/or carabineers).
  - After adjusting height, ensure legs are fully spread apart on the ground.
  - Watch hands and fingers around the pivot point – possible pinch hazard
  - Ensure retaining clip is in place on pivot pin.
    - Ensure pivot pin and retaining clip are pointed down (toward ground)
  - Teeter will be staked down for competition.
- TUNNELS
  - Do not drag tunnels, particularly indoors in the training center.
  - Stake down or weight the tunnels so they remain in place for training.
  - Do not allow dogs to play or pee in the tunnels.
  - Easy way to move tunnel with two people is to place jump pole through the tunnel and carry.
- COLLAPSED TUNNEL (CHUTE)
  - Barrel should be staked down for larger dogs and for competition.
  - Take twists out of the fabric chute.
    - Check frequently during use.
  - Check chute attachment to the barrel.
  - Tuck chute into the barrel when not in use.
  - Check that the foam pad is in place at the top of the entrance to the barrel.
  - Barrel Storage (long term)
    - Place the end caps into the barrel to prevent the barrel from deforming.
- WING/DOUBLE/TRIPLE JUMPS
  - Wing and jump panels are susceptible to damage if mishandled or abused.
  - Do NOT store the wing or jump panels on their side.
    - The jumps should remain in the normal upright position when not in use.
- AFRAME
  - *Moving the aframe is NOT a one person job!!!*
    - Do not tear up the floor of the training center or the ground in the ring by dragging the aframe.
  - Adjusting Height
    - Ensure both chains are adjusted equally.
    - The tension on the chains should be equal.
  - Use at Lower Heights four feet or less)
    - The frame is not designed to take the stress of use at very low heights while being held by the chains.

- ◆ Place the wooden sawhorses under the pivot point of the frame and lower the frame so that the frame weight is on the sawhorses.
- ◆ Do NOT use the chains for support in this situation.
- Hardware
  - The chains and hardware are under great tension and stress during use
  - Always check the chains and carabineers carefully prior to each use.
- Pivot Hinge
  - Hinge pin must be fully inserted through the full width of the top hinge.
  - Hinge pin handle should be pointing down (toward the ground).
  - The hinge pin retaining clip must be present at the end of the pin and pointing down (toward the ground).
- DOGWALK
  - Always check all of the hardware (each dogwalk is different).
  - Amigo Dogwalk (blue frame).
    - All planks are two piece construction & must be fully assembled together.
      - ◆ Each plank assembly has retaining pins to hold the sections together.
    - Check to ensure ramps (end planks) are fully connected to the top plank.
      - ◆ Pins are not used and the weight of the ramp holds it in place.
    - Cable system needs to be connected and taut.
  - Paw-Z-Tracks Dogwalk (white frame)
    - Ramps are connected to the top plank with pins.
      - ◆ Ends of the pins should be pointing down and retaining clips should be on each pin and pointing down.
- WEAVE POLES
  - Use care when moving long weave pole bases to prevent bending & damage.
  - Weave bases shall be staked down for competition.
  - Don't use spring based weave poles ever (CATS does not own any).
- TIRE JUMPS
  - Ensure the base is set flat to the ground and stable.
    - Base will be staked down for competition.
  - Retaining pins in the frame should be fully inserted with the retainers in place.
- ❖ **Destructive Testing** - NEVER, EVER, run across any of the contact equipment, even if you have a large dog and you think the equipment needs to be human tested!!! The weight distribution for a two legged handler is far different than the four leg member of the team. If human tested, the equipment is likely to be damaged and you risk injury.