



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

1. SNIFFER DOGS SPORT: DETECTION DOGS

Scent detection sport is a canine activity widely practiced in the United States and Northern Europe. It enhances a dog's natural scenting ability while engaging the dog-handler team in a fun, game-like activity inspired by the work of professional detection dogs trained to locate substances such as narcotics, explosives, and more.

Beyond its recreational purpose, scent detection—like other scent-based activities—has significant educational and rehabilitative value. It is well established that engaging a dog's sense of smell can support behavioral improvement, helping dogs manage issues related to aggression, fear, hyperarousal, poor focus, and more.

In scent detection sport, dogs are trained to locate target odors hidden in a variety of settings, including indoor and outdoor environments, vehicles, luggage, containers of different shapes and materials, and even on people.

There are no breed restrictions in this discipline. All dogs are naturally guided by their sense of smell and can fully enjoy and benefit from this activity, regardless of age or size.

The certifications achieved by dogs and handlers in scent detection sport are not intended to replace or serve as an alternative to the technical training required for professional detection dog teams. Anyone who is passionate about this discipline and wishes to join professional K9 units must follow a separate, specialized training path. Similarly, qualifications obtained by scent detection sport trainers and judges do not substitute or shorten the training required to become certified professional detection dog instructors.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

2. DOGS

The following dogs are not allowed to participate in trials:

- Females in gestation (pregnant dogs);
- Females in heat (estrus);
- Dogs showing clear signs of illness or injury

Dogs with docked tails may only participate in competitions held in countries where tail docking is legally permitted.

3. DOG HANDLERS

- Participants must have a valid Sniffer Dogs Sport Card for the current year.
- Competitors are required to demonstrate proper conduct.
- Any act of brutality toward one's own dog or another dog by a handler will result in immediate disqualification. Additional actions may be taken against the individual involved.
- All dog owners are responsible for any damage caused by their dogs and must present valid insurance coverage at the time of registration.
- Any damage to property or persons caused by activities initiated independently is not the responsibility of the event organizers.
- No actions may be taken without authorization from the event organizers.
- All participants must adhere to the specified arrival times, or risk exclusion.
- All communications and updates are available on the Discipline's website.
- During the event, participants must respect the environment and the host administration.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

4. EQUIPMENTS

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED TO THE HANDLER

- The on-leash search work must be performed by the dog using a leash that is 3 meters long, attached to a harness or fixed collar. Failure to comply will result in the team being expelled from the competition.
- If the search trial is conducted without a leash, the dog must perform the work with a harness or fixed collar.
- Each handler must bring their own personal water bowl.
- Each handler must carry a leash no longer than 1.5 meters and a fixed collar, different from the one used during the trial.

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE ORGANIZATION

- Target odor (Red Kong).

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION FOR TRIAL ACCESS

The handler presents the dog to the judge, ready to begin the trials. The judge will assess the dog's sociability; if the dog does not pass the test, it will not be allowed to participate in the trial and will be excluded from the event.

5. CATEGORIES

Basic: The dog must be at least 6 months old. The Basic category includes all dog-handler teams that are new to the discipline and have not yet passed any level.

Class 1: The dog must be at least 9 months old. Teams that have successfully completed the Basic level but have not yet achieved the required score to move on to the second level are placed in Class 1.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

Class 2: The dog must be at least 12 months old and have successfully passed all previous levels.

Class 3: This category is for dogs aged 18 months and older that have passed the previous level.

Elite Class: This category is for Class 3 dogs whose handlers choose to compete in additional challenges, including remote detection and functional obedience trials.

6. SCORES AND EVALUATIONS

Trials with more than 10 participants will be evaluated by two judges appointed by the National Management. Each judge will mark their evaluation separately. In case of differing opinions, the average of the two scores will be taken.

Judges have the authority to cancel or suspend a trial in the event of improper behavior by the handler. Any form of coercion on the dog is strictly prohibited. The judgment is final and non-negotiable.

Evaluations will be recorded in the Qualification Booklet, which is provided at the time of registration for the first event. The booklet will include the team's details and all the scores achieved.

- The Basic level is considered passed after achieving an Excellent rating 3 times within 24 months.
- Class 1 is considered passed after achieving an Excellent rating 3 times within 24 months.
- Class 2 is considered passed after achieving an Excellent rating 5 times within 24 months.

At each competition, participants will be divided into categories based on their level. A ranking will be created based on the score achieved in each trial.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

CATEGORY	TOT. SCORE	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	ENOUGH	NOT ENOUGH
Basic	100	85-100	75 -84	60-74	0-59
Class 1.	200	170-200	150 – 169	120-149	0-119
Class 2	200	170-200	150 – 169	120-149	0-119
Classe 3	250	213-250	188-212	150-187	0-149

Penalties

The performance of both the dog and the handler will be evaluated. The penalties listed below are merely guidelines, at the discretion of the judge, who will assess the overall performance of the team.

Penalties for the dog:

- Lack of concentration
- False indication
- Inability to detect the odor due to lack of concentration and motivation
- Inadequate sniffing
- The dog ignores the handler's instructions
- Damaging the location where the target odor is found
- Leaving the target odor after indicating it
- Poor formal indication (where required)

Penalties for the handler:

- Inability to read the dog (e.g., leading the dog away from the odor)
- Poor control of the dog and/or leash
- Inconsistent handling of the search
- Contaminating the search area or discovery
- Moving objects without the judge's consent

Non-Qualified (NQ)

If a Non-Qualified (NQ) score is given in a trial, the competitor may still continue with other



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

trials they are registered for.

NQ will be given for:

- Exceeding the time limit without finding the odor, or the handler's inability to declare the area as empty.
- False indication.
- The judge deems the dog to be in an excessive state of stress.
- The dog does not return to the handler's call.
- The handler creates anxiety or stress in the dog with inappropriate commands.

Elimination (Applicable at any point during the process)

Elimination will occur with no refund of the registration fee for:

- Inappropriate and violent behavior towards the dog (at the judge's discretion)
- Harassment or abuse of staff members or other competitors
- Revealing the location of the target odor to other handlers
- Aggressiveness and uncontrollability of the dog
- Use of non-official target odors

6. COMPETITION ORGANIZATION

The approval of trial programs is the responsibility of the Organization, to which they must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the event. If approved, they will be published on the official website at least 5 days before the event.

The program must include:

- the scheduled days for the trials and their order;
- the type of categories and prize money allocation;
- the names of the Trial Secretary and the Judge.

The Judge:

The Judge is responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules set forth in this



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

Regulation, as well as those established in the event program and any regulations approved by Sniffer Dogs Sport organization. The Judge shall make decisions in cases of disputes or uncertainty.

They are responsible for designing and measuring the search areas, constructing any relevant obstacles, and drafting the diagrams of the search layouts.

The Judge is also responsible, for the duration of the event, for the suitability of the competition grounds and the search fields.

Trial Secretary:

The Trial Secretary is in charge of verifying the correctness of competitor registrations, ensuring the accuracy of the results, and correctly distributing and assigning any prize money.

Handlers must check in to confirm their dog's registration number and receive their randomly assigned running order, drawn after the close of entries.

Before the start of the event, there will be a briefing with all registered handlers to review the rules. Upon request, judges may summarize the evaluation criteria.

A walkthrough of all search areas without dogs will be held before the competition.

Hazards such as broken glass or trash will be removed by the organizers prior to the start of the event.

The running order will be posted in the secretary area.

Use of non-official training odors is strictly prohibited.

Only the judge, the timekeeper, officials, and the official photographer are allowed in the search area. Exceptions are made for the assistants of handlers with disabilities and for parents/guardians of underage competitors.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

7. REGISTRATIONS

The registration application for the handler-dog team must be submitted using the specific form provided by the Organization and delivered within the established deadlines. Registration is considered valid only when the form is accompanied by the required participation fee.

The registration forms must mandatorily include the following information:

- Dog's name, sex, date of birth, and identification code (tattoo and/or microchip);
- Handler's full name and date of birth.

8. TRIALS

1) BASIC

Target odor: red Kong size XS.

The Basic level includes three types of searches:

1. **Indoor straight-line lineup search** – one hidden target odor, 11 distractions, time limit: 3 minutes, indoor.
2. **Indoor circular lineup search** – one hidden target odor, 11 distractions, time limit: 5 minutes.
3. **Outdoor randomized lineup search** – one hidden target odor, 11 distractions, time limit: 5 minutes.

To advance to the next level, each search must be passed with an **"Excellent"** score within a 12-month period.

The handler must raise their **right hand** to indicate the find and stop the timer.

A formal alert behavior from the dog is **not required** to indicate the odor.

Empty lineups and food distractors are not allowed.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

Once the judge calls the team to the start area, the handler has **10 seconds** to begin the search. The search begins when the handler raises their **right hand**, which will trigger the start of the timer.

Lineup Search

The target odor will be placed inside one of 12 ventilated containers, with ventilation located on the lid.

The containers will be **opaque boxes**, made of any material, all identical, and arranged in a random pattern (straight lines, circles, squares).

Each box must be placed no more than **10 cm apart** from the others. In the case of **parallel lines**, the lines must be no more than **90 cm apart**, and the boxes within each line must remain within **10 cm** of each other.

Boxes must not exceed **30 cm in height**.

The target box must contain **a single red Kong size XS**.

The placement of the target odor is **randomly selected** using **digital software**.

2) CLASS 1

Target Odor: 5 cm piece of Red Kong

A **formal alert** is required from the dog, and the type of alert must be declared by the handler **before the start of the search**. All types of **passive alerts** are allowed.

Odors **must not be placed higher than 95 cm**, and must be hidden **out of sight** in a **fully enclosed container** (e.g., a closed drawer or suitcase).

Food distractors are permitted.

The search area will be **clearly marked with tape**, and the **start line** will be indicated with cones or adhesive tape. Once the judge calls the team to the start area, the handler will have **10 seconds** to begin. The search officially starts when the handler raises their **right hand**, which starts the timer.

Class 1 Level – Test Types

1. **Wall Search** – two hidden odors, time limit: 3 minutes
2. **Indoor Search** – two hidden odors in two rooms, time limit: 5 minutes
3. **Outdoor Search** – one hidden odor, time limit: 5 minutes



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

Wall Search

The dog must perform **two separate searches**, each containing **one hidden odor**. The wall must be made of **bricks**, at least **2 meters long** and no more than **120 cm high**. The dog has **3 minutes per search**, and the search **must be conducted on leash**.

Indoor Search

Each target odor is hidden **out of sight** in an easily accessible area inside a room or enclosed building with approximately **15–20 potential hiding places**.

There will be **one odor per search area**.

Objects may include furniture (tables, chairs, etc.), suitcases, clothing, or various containers.

The odor remains **in the same position for all dogs**, unless a handler is running a second dog. In the event of contamination, the judge may choose to relocate the odor.

Outdoor Search

One target odor is hidden **out of sight** in an easily accessible location within an **outdoor area** containing approximately **15–20 potential hiding places**.

Objects may include outdoor furniture (picnic tables, patio chairs, etc.), vegetation, fences, retaining walls, or planters.

The odor remains **in the same location for all dogs**, unless a handler has a second dog. In case of contamination, the judge may choose to move the odor.

3) CLASS 2

Target Odor: 1 cm piece of Red Kong

A **passive indication** is required from the dog, and the type of alert must be declared by the handler **prior to the start of the search**.

The dog must **maintain the alert for at least 5 seconds**.

Odors **must not be placed higher than 130 cm**, and must be hidden **out of sight** in a **fully enclosed container** (e.g., closed drawer or suitcase).

Food distractors are permitted.

The search area will be **marked with tape**, and the **start area** will be indicated with cones or adhesive tape. Once the judge calls the team to the start area, the handler has **10 seconds** to begin the test.

The search begins when the handler **raises their right hand**, which starts the timer.



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

Test Types – Class 2 Level

1. **Systematic Wall Search** – two target odors, time limit: 4 minutes
2. **Systematic Indoor Search** – four hidden odors (configuration drawn at random), three rooms (one blank), time limit: 15 minutes
3. **Systematic Vehicle Search** – two hidden odors, time limit: 5 minutes
4. **Free Outdoor Search** – one hidden odor, time limit: 3 minutes

Systematic Wall Search

The dog must search **two wall sides**: one will definitely contain a target odor; the second may contain a target or be blank.

The wall, made of **hollow bricks**, must form a **corner**, be at least **2 meters long per side**, and not exceed **120 cm in height**.

The dog has **3 minutes per side**, and the search must be conducted **on leash**, with the handler **leading from in front**.

Systematic Indoor Search

Each target odor is hidden **out of sight** in an **easily accessible area** within a room or enclosed building containing approximately **15–20 potential hiding spots**.

- One room contains **one odor**
- One room contains **two odors**
- One room is **blank**

Search items may include furniture (tables, chairs, etc.), suitcases, clothing, or various containers.

The odor remains **in the same location for all dogs**, unless a handler runs a second dog. In case of contamination, the judge may change the odor placement.

The handler must work **on leash, in front of the dog walking backwards**.

Systematic Vehicle Search

Each target odor is hidden **out of sight** in an **easily accessible location on the exterior** of a vehicle.

- One vehicle side contains **one odor**
- One side contains **two odors**
- One side may be **blank**



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

(There appears to be a repetition with the indoor structure; please confirm if it applies to multiple vehicles or sides.)

The odor remains **in the same location for all dogs**, unless the handler has a second dog. In case of contamination, the judge may choose to move the odor.
The handler must work **on leash, in front of the dog**.

Free Outdoor Search

One hidden odor placed **out of sight** in an easily accessible **outdoor area**, such as a lawn or open field.

The odor remains **in the same position for all dogs**, unless the handler is working with a second dog. In case of contamination, the judge may relocate the odor.

The dog must work **off-leash**.

4) CLASSE 3

Target Odor: A piece of Red Kong measuring between **0.5 cm and 0.3 cm**.

A **formal passive indication** is required from the dog, and the type of alert must be declared by the handler **before the search begins**.

The dog must **indicate the odor for at least 10 seconds**.

Odors **must not be placed higher than 130 cm**, and must be hidden **out of sight** in a **completely enclosed container**(e.g., closed drawer or suitcase).

Food distractors are permitted.

The search area will be **delimited with tape**, and the **start area** will be marked with cones or adhesive tape.

Once called to the start line by the judge, the handler has **10 seconds** to begin.

The search officially starts when the handler **raises their right hand**, which triggers the timer.

Test Types – Class 3 Level

1. **Off-Leash Lineup Search** – 2 to 4 hidden odors, randomly selected size, time limit: 4 minutes
2. **Off-Leash Indoor Search** – 0 to 5 hidden odors, randomly selected size, three rooms, time limit: 15 minutes
3. **On-Leash Outdoor Search** – 0 to 3 hidden odors, randomly selected size, time limit: 10 minutes
4. **Off-Leash Vehicle Search** – 0 to 2 hidden odors, randomly selected size, time limit: 5 minutes
5. **Off-Leash Systematic Wall Search**



SNIFFER DOGS SPORT

5) ELITE

Dogs that have received **at least two “Excellent” ratings** in **Class 3** will be eligible to participate in themed **Special Contests**.

The specific regulations for each contest will be published **at least 30 days prior to the event**.

Examples of themed contests include:

- **Remote Detection with Laser**
- **Remote Detection with Verbal Directionals**
- **Special Building Contest:** historic or unusual buildings
- **Special Vehicle Contest:** unusual or specialized transportation vehicles
- **Functional Obedience Proofing**

9. ANTIDOPING

Both handlers and participating dogs may be subjected to **anti-doping controls** organized by the **Organizing Committee**, aimed at preventing and sanctioning any form of doping.

10. TRAINING OF INSTRUCTORS AND JUDGES

The training of technicians and expert judges will be managed by the National Secretariat of the discipline, which will establish the annual training programs in accordance with the relevant regulations.