

Training Tips for a Pack Dog Event

Hike Prerequisite: The dog (bitch) must have completed at least one training workout consisting of 6 miles carrying the weight to be carried during the hike.

The suggested training program below should be enough to get you and your doggie through the 10 mile pack event.

During your training, always keep in mind the health of your dog (bitch) - be alert and in tune with his (her) well being. Start training your dog (bitch) with a pack that weighs about 5 pounds. It is essential that the weight is evenly distributed amongst the two saddle bags, and be sure that no sharp edges are against your dog's back or sides. Ziplock bags filled with sand or Platypus water containers with water work great for weight. Add 5 pounds per week until you reach 20% (or 30%) of your dog's weight. The dog should wear the pack at least 3 to 4 times a week (in addition to walks without a pack during "off" days). The daily distance should be 1 to 3 miles. Each week, at least one of the treks with a pack should be 3 miles. After the first month, a least one trek with the pack, every two weeks, should be 2/3 of the event distance or 6 to 7 miles. It is important to vary your training workouts to included hills, water crossings, as well as flat ground. As much as possible, the training workouts with a pack should be on trails or dirt roads to toughen your dog's feet.

Do NOT attempt to train or participate if your dog has an injury or disability.