

Tally-Ho! - Lure Coursing

Traditionally reserved for sighthounds, lure coursing is a high speed, fast paced sport that can be enjoyed by many breeds, particularly the Staffordshire Bull Terrier. What could be more enjoyable to the highly prey driven Stafford than the pursuit of 'game'? Okay, not live game but plastic strips used to simulate live prey.



Ready was introduced to lure coursing at a young age. When I was able to find a coursing club that would allow us to participate during their 'fun days', we were there! It was quite clear she enjoyed it. So when I heard the AKC had started an all breed lure coursing titling program with the very first trials just a state away, I was very excited! We packed up for a long weekend and headed to the trials.

After the first day of running my two Staffords I became known as the 'Tasmanian Devil Lady' because of the screaming monkey noises that only a Stafford could make, as I carried my dogs to the lure for their chance to run. Each course consists of 600 yards which include 90° turns and hills, to be completed in an allotted amount of time were the dog must stay in pursuit of the lure with out interruption. Three Coursing Ability Test passes and three days later I headed home with the very first AKC lure coursing titled Stafford. There are higher levels of coursing titles to be earned and I think we have just begun!

Lure coursing is an excellent form of exercise for the Stafford. Of course you'll want to make sure your dog is in good health and can endure a moderate amount of exercise. Expecting a 'sofa dog' to run 600 yards at full speed is foolish and can also be dangerous. Your dog will be inspected by members of the field committee before it is permitted to run to ensure it is in good health and you will be asked to gait your dog to inspect for lameness. Females in season are not permitted to run. It's extremely important to walk your dog out after each lure coursing run, encouraging them to urinate so they do not get tied up and then offer a small amount of water. It is also a good idea to equip your dog with a lure coursing slip lead/ quick release collar. We were able to find someone to give us a quick lesson on how to use one. The dogs run singularly but without collars so it is very helpful to have a lure coursing lead as trying to contain an insanely mad, screaming Stafford in place before the judges release command of 'tally-ho' can be quite tricky!

The Staffords athletic abilities know no bounds. Why not get out there and let your Staffords have fun and 'get the bunnies'?

Lisa Luksa



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