



**Ten Year Anniversary  
2003 – 2013 Belgian Sheepdog Club of America Messenger  
Dog Program**



**Kiska , CH UCD Black Ice's Aleutian Queen  
RE HT CD CGC FMD HIT Winner  
2006 BSCA National, Tulsa, Oklahoma**

**Future Messenger Dog Explanation of Exercises and Evaluation  
Objectives,**

**Junior Messenger Dog Explanation of Exercises and Evaluation  
Objectives,**

**BSCA Messenger Dog General Guidelines  
by the BSCA Messenger Dog Committee**

**The Message “Je SuisTaki, I am Taki”  
by Jean-Luc Cambier**

**All other text by Annabelle Cambier**

**Published by Prizniva Press April 2013**

**Welcome to the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Belgian  
Sheepdog Club of America's Messenger Dog  
Program**

***This Event and Booklet are dedicated to the BSCA's first  
twenty-one Future Messenger Dogs***

from the 2003 BSCA National Specialty

Presented by BSCA Messenger Dog Committee: Karin Andreen,  
Sue Bonness,  
Annabelle Cambier, Jean-Luc Cambier, Glenna Logan,  
Carol Morris,  
Kathleen Roberts and Nan Sanders

We'd like to thank the messenger enthusiasts who have  
supported us with mentoring, field-testing, proof reading, historical  
advisory and more: Ingrid Bahlenberg, Jona Decker, Deb Eldredge,  
Terry Brown, Maura Hogan, Linda Rorem, Merja Tornikoski and  
Jean-Marie Vanbutsele

With deepest thanks to 2013 National Show Chairs, Bonnie Leonard and  
Sue Spinhirne, for their warm welcome.



Sue Spinhirne and Lux, CH Liswyn's Night Fire of Avatar  
UDX4 PT Can CD CGC BSCA Obedience HOF BSCA WD-C HIT HC FMD  
At the 2005 BSCA National at Delavan, Wisconsin

**The Messenger Committee sends our sincerest gratitude to the Board of Directors of the Belgian Sheepdog Club of America for giving us the opportunity to work on this project.**

**We're especially grateful to our Board Liaison, Pat Snow, and her husband Hank.**

**Their heartfelt encouragement has motivated the Messenger Committee from the very beginning.**



**Hank Snow at the 2006 BSCA National in Tulsa, Oklahoma with one of his many Belgian friends.**



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*Malibu, (top left) CT BPIS Can. CH Montage Surfs Up VCD1 CDX PT FMD, wears a French soldier's kepi. Chance, Signatures' Chance CGC RL1 PT RA HTAD1s JHD TDI, is ready to race.*

**Taki's story, by John Meteer, January 1, 1930 American Kennel Club Gazette**

**The Toast of the Allies Found  
First Dog to Carry a Dispatch Under Fire During World War Honored in  
California**

Time: Late in 1914. Place: Alsatia. Persona muta: Taki.

German hordes manning the most perfect fighting machine the world had known to this date had swept across Belgium and into north central France, dominating the territory midway between Sedan and Vouziers with stronghold impregnable for leagues along the Aisne. A Franco-Belgian van was entrapped between the river and Grand Pre. Annihilation was imminent. Decimation was certain unless word from quarters could be sent to the front and that was impossible by usual means of transmission, telegraph, telephone or carriers afoot or awheel.

Taki was whelped in the spring of 1913. She was the youngest of twenty-five Grunenwaldt Belgian sheepdogs trained as carriers and enlisted into the service of the French Army soon after the outbreak of the World War. To Taki was entrusted the message to the front. The tiny document in code was envelope in a waterproof capsule which she carried in her mouth and with devout prayer vouchsafed by her master she was given her instructions and sped upon her way to the trenches. The message was delivered. The day was saved.

Until Armistice Day, Taki served the Allies. Month after month for those four years she made her way across shell-torn fields under clouds of poison gas and smoke from shrieking bombs, braving rain of shrapnel, carrying messages vital to the Cause she served and never was she scathed. Decorated by two nations for gallantry in service, Taki was presented in December of 1918, with an honorable discharge signed by the King of Belgium.

Time: Summer of 1929. Place: Long Beach, California. Persona muta: Taki.

Edward J. Newbegin, a Belgian-American residing at Long Beach, climbed the gentle grade to the Animal Shelter, more brutally familiarly known as the dog pound. Following him was Taki, now some months more than sixteen years old.

It was explained that the dog could live only a little while longer at best, though her health seemed perfect. Her owner further made it clear that he was unable to keep the dog longer and nobody would want a bitch so old. Wherefore it was requested that the Long Beach official at the Animal Shelter pronounce sentence of death and administer the deadly drug.

The official agreed and led Taki to a stall to await her turn in the death-chamber. As he turned toward his office, the official noticed that the aged Belgian furtively approached Taki's cell. Through the wire grille he addressed the bitch in French, punctuated with sobs. Sobbing still, after a time, Taki's self-immolated owner arose to leave. Sensing something unusual, G. D. Olden, manager for the Long Beach Humane Commission, gently questioned the weeping Belgian and learned something of Taki's history.

When the World War ended, the officer who had trained Taki and had charge of a troop of dispatch dogs in French service took Taki with him to southern France. Ordered to Russia, Taki's master, fearing to take the sheepdog with him, gave her into the keeping of a niece. It was from this niece, kinswoman of the Long Beach man, that Mr. Newbegin obtained custody of Taki for her remaining years.

Taki made the voyage to America and the long journey from the Atlantic Coast to California in charge of a specially detailed orderly, charged with her safety and tender care. She crossed the Atlantic aboard an American transport, landing at Norfolk, Virginia, and lived happily for years at Redlands in California, then the home of the Newbegin family, who later moved to Long Beach.

Taki, then, veteran who won the honor of being the first dog of the World War to carry a message from one regiment to another, Taki, the toast of the Allies, ace of canine heroines, was to die in a pound.

Fate, kinder than man, intervened. The Press-Telegram, an afternoon newspaper published in Long Beach, city of 160,000 population, published the story next day after Taki was taken to her tryst of death.

Nan Blake, a newspaperwoman who loves dogs, wrote the story. Nan wondered whether there might not be someone, moved by patriotism, who would give Taki a home, even though the heroine of St. Quentin and Verdun, of Laon and Soissons, of Charleville and the Marne had by now lost some of the gloss of coat and beauty of youth for which she was famed fifteen years ago, even though some of her teeth had failed and it might be necessary to grind her food. Her luster of eye endured, her hearing survived the hideous ordeals of service and her intelligence was unimpaired. She understands French and English. Maybe she doesn't like to be pestered by thoughtless children, but she adores men, and more particularly men in uniform.

Would somebody save Taki?

The population, as explained, is 160,000. Nan Blake is ready to take oath that the proffers of luxurious homes for Taki in sympathetic environs tallied just 160,000.

A committee was chosen to select the best of the homes offered. Was this denouement not just? A Long Beach battery of National Guard artillery adopted Taki. She was mustered in with all the formality and far more feeling than ever attended the welcome of a human rookie.

Artillerymen are proverbially hardboiled. Taki upset the proverb. The sergeant who essayed to tell her story to the men lined up at attention faltered, his voice failing and his eyes, too, when he made covert attempt to read his notes. If there was a dry eye in that file of guardsmen it was not visible to the perfectly composed reporter who witnessed the reenlistment of Taki.

Taki's present address is 170 East Los Angeles Street, North Long Beach, California. The lucky artilleryman chosen as best equipped to care for her is Jack Pugh of that address. Over her kennel by day float Old Glory and the Tricolor of France. At dusk, after formal retreat, when the Colors are tenderly lowered and carried into the house of Jack Pugh, Taki follows the Flag as she did in 1914, but now into a home that glows with love for the ideals she exemplifies.

Who said America is sordid in commercialism to the exclusion of all wholesome sentiment; that all Americans are money-mad, bereft of finer idealism, genuine altruism; that true patriotism, sacrificial loyalty, are myths of the past?

If ever the flame drooped to embers in Long Beach, approaching the stage of ash, it remained for one valiant spirit, bearer of the torch, to fan the coals to normal glow of lofty life.

That one spirit, long may she live, is the persona muta of this true story: Taki!

## 2003: The BSCA Messenger Program Begins

In 2002, Jean-Luc and Annabelle Cambier found the story of Taki in an old American Kennel Club Gazette. Annabelle asked the BSCA Board if she could lead a project to honor Taki and create a historical awareness of the Belgian Sheepdogs as Messenger Dogs.

The Cambiers proposed a program of short runs in a ring as a start. These initial exercises would be ones that any well-mannered Belgian could perform at a National. The Board approved as did 2003 BSCA National Specialty Chair, Sherry Hanley. In the spring of 2003, in Allentown, PA these twenty-one Belgians became the first Future Messenger Dogs.

**Addie**...Sweet Adeline CD CGC TDI FMD – Diane Long

**Athos**...Ch.MegaSpirit's All For One Sch BH CGC HIC FMD – Olga Baram

**Ember**...Meadowyn's Embers of Gold CD FMD – David and Sharon Phillips

**Foxy**...Megaspirt's Bella Fox FMD – Gail Kenny

**Gem**...Can OTCH Wildland's Jewel of Lisanne VCD2 UDX RE AX AXJ CGC FMD – Dolores Brigham

**Guy**...Ch. Liswyn Lisanne Guy Noir VCD3 UDX MX MXJ FX CGC FMD – Dolores Brigham

**Lukka**...Nordost Med Isbiter NAJ NAJ P CGC FMD – Jeanne Stevens-Sollman



**Mac**... pictured at left Ch Trouville's McCartney OA OAJ CGC TDI FMD HIC TDIRVA – Paula Vanden Boom

**Magic**...Night Magic of Geka TD FMD – Terry Vitt

**Paszku**...Liket or Not, I'm Black Too" TT HIC CGC FMD – Deb Vidaver-Cohen

**Sabrina**...Select HIT Am Can Ch Trouville's Fantasia CD TD TT HIC FMD – Robin Watson

**Smokey**...Ch Kodar's Ashes in the Wind CD CGC FMD – David and Sharon Phillips

**Sophie**...Ch Legacy's Keep a Secret Sophia UDX FMD – Wendy Reese

**Sugar**...Ch Meadowyn's Ain't She Sweet UDT PT AX AXJ VCD2 FMD – Joanne Kutsch

**Sunkiss**...Ch. Sonny De La Foret De Bizy CD CGN TT TDI HIC FMD – Mylène Paiement

**Tessa**... Am Can Ch Emmabourne's Enchantress UD OA OAJ RE TDI FMD – Tami Worley

**Treasure**... Select Ch Images Treasure of Rolin Ridge FMD – Bob McCarty

**Vynn timer**... Multi Grp placing, Multi HIT AKC/UKC Ch Sarron Sumerwynd Giovanni CD NA NAJ CGC HIC TD FMD – Andy and April Albert

**Yahtzee**...Ch Rolin Ridge's Yahtzee HIC FMD – Joyce Havens, Greg Winter

**Zen**...Am Can Ch Isengard's Instance of Zen HIC HCT CGC FMD – Joyce Havens, Greg Winter

**Zoid**...Ch Rolin Ridge's Zoid of Marchsue FMD – Eriko Sue

Tami Worley and her Belgian Sheepdog, Tessa, (photo at right), gave the gathering at Allentown a perfect demonstration of the 2003 Future Messenger Dog exercises. Completing her performance, the lovely Tessa became the Belgian Sheepdog Club of America's very first Future Messenger Dog.



Addie



Athos



Ember



Foxy



**Gem**



**Guy**



**Lukka**



**Mac**



**Magic**



**Paszuk**



**Sabrina**



**Smokey**



**Sophie**



**Sugar**



**Sunkiss**



**Treasure**



**Vynnie**



**Yahtzee**



**Zen**



**Zoid**



**Sherry's commitments at the 2003 National forced her to wait until later to enter the FMD. She is pictured above with the beloved Eli, Am & Can BISS, Am & Can CH Celebre Elijah of Hillside CD RN HT TDI FMD CGC Can CD AKC GCH mjr ptd., bringing his signature joy and enthusiasm to the 2005 FMD in Delavan, Wisconsin.**

When the 2003 Eukanuba Invitational was held in Long Beach CA; Mrs. Cambier wished to thank the City of Long Beach, the Long Beach Press Telegraph, the National Guard and Long Beach Animal Control for their part in saving the life of Taki. She organized a gathering at the BSCA's Meet The Breed's Booth and certificates of appreciation were given the honorees and a letter was read thanking the people of the City of Long Beach.

Most importantly, this group was thanked in person by one of the Belgian Sheepdogs world's most charming canine ambassadors, Rachelle Bailey- Austin's Joey. Joey's smile was the brightest of anyone's: Taki would have been pleased.



**Annabelle Cambier, Jill Miller, Sonja Ostrom, Mayor Mary Beth O'Neil, Wesley Moore and Joey, CH AM/CAN CH AM/CAN BISS BIS Isengard's Joe Cool, RA, CGC, HIC, Conformation Hall Of Fame**

Thanks to Shirley Vaughn, of the Friends of Long Beach Animals, Taki's story and other mementos from the BSCA's presentation to the City of Long Beach at the AKC 2003 Eukanuba Invitational became part of a permanent display honoring Taki at the present home of the Long Beach Animal Control in July of 2004.

Messenger Committee supporter and history researcher, Maura Hogan, is following clues to reveal more of Taki's life in Long Beach, California as well as in Europe.

## War dog remembered

*"It only takes a moment to be a turning point in a dog's life." —Annabelle Cambier*



District 9 Council Member Val Lerch (far left); Shirley Vaughn from Friends of Long Beach Animals; Wesley Moore, manager, Animal Control Service; Annabelle Cambier, holding her dog, Colette; and District 7 Council Member Tonia Reyes Uranga were among those in attendance to remember World War I messenger dog, Taki. Mark Eastman/Signal Tribune

**BY MARK EASTMAN**  
Staff Writer

first messenger dog to serve in the World War I effort.

More than 40 people were on hand to hear a highly emotional account of the bravery of Belgian Sheepdog, Taki, and of

see TAKI page 6

Colette is Jean-Luc Cambier's Toshalie's Prizniva Colette HT JHD RN NA NAJ NJC  
NAC OAP OJP CGC FMD

In 2012, the BSCA Board again expressed a desire to put energy into the Messenger Dog program and Mrs. Cambier offered to chair the Committee. At the 2012 National that year, the Committee offered the new version of the FMD with a Rally-like Basic Control Exercise and completely transformed Seeking Exercise.



Thank you, 2012 National Specialty Chairs, Carleen Wiles and Mary Grace Buckwalter for finding us a safe and green area for our Belgians to play Messenger Dog.

**Bebe**, (at left) CH Black Ice's Bebe RN CGC FMD, solves the Seeking Exercise at the 2012 Specialty

The rest of the Committee was unable to attend the 2012 Specialty, so Nan and Sandy Sanders evaluated the event singlehanded with great success. Messenger enthusiasts Terry Brown and Maura Hogan came to lend a hand and participate.



**Nan Sanders** watches as **Marion Stark** receives a message from an enthusiastic **Lucy**, CH Isengard's Z-Lucy Wagalicious RN NA NAJ CL1 CL2-H/F CGC FMD

At the 2013 National Specialty, the Committee and friends will perform historical entertainment with Belgians smuggling contraband and retrieving French soldier's kepis (hats). Join us Thursday, May 9 for smuggled chocolate and Anniversary cake!

Respected historian Jean-Marie Vanbutsele has been a generous and wise mentor. In his book, "Hundred Years of History of the Belgian Shepherd Dog" he speaks of the smuggler's dogs. He writes "In the borderland between the Flanders and the North of France, the Belgian Shepherd Dog, especially the Malinois, was used for smuggling tobacco, a very hard job that marked their character. In his novel "La Maison dans la Dune" Maxence Van Der Meersch, born in Roubaix, tells with an eye for details, the life of the smugglers and that of Tom, a Tervueren who was brought to Belgium and was loaded with 18 kilos of goods. Its death was a violent one, just like that of all the others who performed this kind of work.

In a French booklet, that could not be identified, published during the war of 1914-1918, the following passages are significant: 'In the special canine press, the starting date has been discussed for the practical utility of the dog, other than hounds and guard dogs or guides of flocks; the honor of this new usage belongs to the Belgians... It was first by sporting entertainment that the Belgians began to have an interest for the training of the guard and defense dog. It is in this land the "police dog" is born, and out of the police dog, the military dog is born, just like the guard dog, the courier dog, the track dog or the ambulance dog...'



Researching Belgians' roles as Messenger dogs lead the Committee to information about their role as Red Cross Dogs.



During WW1, Red Cross dogs were to search for fallen soldiers and return with the soldiers' hats, or "kepis", to the field medics. If there was no hat nearby the Belgians, with their keen work ethic, might improvise, bringing back any piece of material from the soldier. To lessen anxiety to dog and wounded, it was decided that the dogs should use a "bringsel" instead to tell the medics that they had found someone.



Jona Decker will give a bringsel demonstration at the 2013 National. We'll also have some Belgians doing kepi retrieving. We'll have extra kepis so your Belgian can try fetching one. The Committee also found that the Red Cross Dogs are remembered in Switzerland by an official titling event that includes obedience and tracking. The Messenger Dog Committee is conversing with Swiss clubs and researching adding this as a supplement to the Messenger Dog menu of events. Thus far, Switzerland is the only country that offers this event.

**Zia, CH Farwoods Winter Solstice  
VCD2 TDX FMD, invites you and your  
Belgian to play.**

## General Guidelines for FMD and JMD



The Future Messenger Dog and Junior Messenger Dog evaluations are open to all breeds.

Dogs do not need an FMD to enter JMD evaluations. FMD and JMD are Belgian Sheepdog Club of America (BSCA) designations, not AKC titles.

Both FMD and JMD are held in an arena or semi enclosed setting. Preferably an obedience or agility ring is used but improvisations can be made.

No leg of any run should be longer than 50 yards.

Neither the FMD nor the JMD are timed. There are no placements. Scoring for FMD and JMD is Pass/No Pass.

The FMD does not require a lot of sits and should be reasonable for many senior dogs. Please feel free to ask the evaluator if you and/or your canine partner need special accommodations.

Dogs may run on a long line in the FMD as long as it is deemed safe by the evaluator.

Females in season are welcome, but should be last in the ring.

Ideally, evaluators should be current BSCA Messenger Dog Committee Members. If a member is not available, effort will be made to provide guidelines and score sheet templates to another capable evaluator.

Local clubs may host FMD and JMD evaluations as they do HIC evaluations. The Messenger Dog Committee wishes to maintain a database of all FMDs and JMDs, so records of names of passing dogs and handlers should be accurate. No approval is needed from the BSCA board.

The evaluator should inspect the area for safety concerns, but ultimately it is the owner or handler that is responsible for their own safety and the safety of their dog. The owner or agent entering a dog does so at his or her own risk.

Evaluators must excuse dogs that present a risk or safety concern.

## **The Future Messenger Dog**

The Future Messenger Dog (FMD) designation is given by the Belgian Sheepdog Club of America (BSCA) to the dogs who pass all the components of the FMD Evaluation.

The FMD evaluation consists of three parts. Part One includes the Basic Control Exercise, an Honor Exercise and a one minute Stay Exercise. Part Two, the Seeking Exercise, shows that the dog can solve a simple puzzle to find a toy or treat. Part Three consists of two Messenger Runs with two handlers per dog.

The FMD was designed so that a well-mannered dog would find it to be a reasonable test of their social skills and recall ability. The FMD evaluation is intended to be about the level of a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) evaluation. The main differences between the FMD and the CGC will be in the length of stay and the type and length of sends/recalls done in the Messenger Runs. And of course, the fun Seeking Exercise!

### **Part One Basic Control**

The purpose of the Basic Control Exercise is to demonstrate that the handler understands and respects the dog, and that the dog respects and will obey the handler.

#### **Walking with Handler (on lead)**

Dogs being tested must wear a buckle, plastic snap or slip collar. A 6 ft leash is to be used for this portion. The team will walk a pattern designed by the evaluator; using signs similar to those used in Rally Obedience, or alternately, with commands called out by the evaluator or helper. The pattern will be the same for all teams, and must use the following signs or commands: START, FINISH, one ABOUT TURN (LEFT or RIGHT), two changes of pace (a SLOW or a FAST followed by a NORMAL), one HALT and at least one TURN (RIGHT or LEFT).

The dog may walk on either side of the handler, but may not interfere with the handler's movement. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops, but may sit if desired. The precision of competition Obedience or Rally is not required, but is allowed if the handler wishes.

The handler may not physically guide or touch the dog, but may talk to the dog and encourage him or her in a happy tone of voice or modest hand motions such as clapping, patting the leg, etc.

No loud or rough commands or motions will be allowed. This must be a positive experience for all.

### **Honor**

After a team (Team A) completes the Basic Control Exercise, they will go to the Honor station. They will remain there while the next team (Team B) completes the Basic Control Exercise. Team A leaves the test area after Team B completes the Basic Control Exercise. The evaluator will tell both teams when the exercises are finished.

The Honor Exercise is performed on a 6 ft leash, within the evaluation area but well away from the other team. The handler asks the Honoring dog to either sit or down and the dog must remain in the selected position until the other team finishes their exercise. The handler may encourage and talk to the Honoring dog and repeat the request as necessary.

Continued page 15

## **The Future Messenger Dog**

### **Part One Stay continued from page 14**

Only one team and the evaluator are in the ring for this exercise. The handler will ask the dog to stay in either a sit or down and once the dog is in position, the handler will move to the end of the 6 ft lead. The dog must remain in the chosen position for one minute. The evaluator will time the exercise. The words "return to your dog" and "release your dog" will be used by the evaluator for the benefit of the handlers who wish to perform this exercise in a more formal manner. However, for the FMD, the evaluator is only scoring whether the dog stays for one minute as originally directed. No formal style of sit or down is required. No formal manner of returning to the dog is required. The handler may encourage and talk to the dog and repeat the request as necessary.

### **Part Two Seeking Exercise**

The Test Area will contain four to six (4-6) empty boxes with the flaps cut off. The boxes may be rearranged between runs, but the same box will be used to hold the treat or toy for each competitor. The boxes should not be extremely far away, but the nearest box should be no closer than ten (10) feet from the dog.

For the test, each handler will provide a small treat or a toy that the dog is familiar with. The dog will do the entire exercise on a loose leash. Some encouragement by the handler is permitted, but the dog should clearly find or indicate the treat or toy on his or her own. Remember, no part of the FMD is timed, so feel free to take your time in allowing your dog to search and find the treat or toy.

At the start of the exercise, the handler and dog face the test area. The dog is on a loose lead next to the handler. The handler places the treat or toy on a clipboard provided by the tester or steward, who will place the treat or toy in a box. Upon direction from the tester, the handler will command and/or encourage the dog to search the boxes and find the treat or toy. The lead must be loose enough to allow the dog to work. Feel free to encourage your dog and allow them to explore with their eyes or noses at their own pace. The dog must retrieve or clearly indicate he has found the treat or toy, at which time the exercise is finished and the dog may eat the treat or briefly play with the toy.

"Encouragement" in this exercise generally means upbeat verbal communication or hand motions. Some pointing and indicating may be allowed, but the handler should not come within a foot of the boxes, or assist the dog in a manner that appears to help the dog find the treat or toy. The dog should be allowed to search and indicate the treat or toy on his or her own.

### **Part Three Messenger Runs**

The team consists of two handlers and one dog. The handlers may be people who both train the dog, or if only one handler is available, the evaluator may act as one of the handlers.

Handler A sends the dog to Handler B; then Handler B sends the dog back to Handler A: that is one run. The second run is a repeat of the first. The distance will be no greater than 50 yards. More often it will be less due to constraints of designating available safe terrain. For example, it may be performed in an empty agility or obedience ring. The dog does NOT need to carry a message or wear a collar in the FMD. The dog may wear one of his or her own, or one provided by the evaluator (usually made of survey tape) if the handler chooses.

At this level, handlers may either send or recall their dog.

## **The Junior Messenger Dog**

The Junior Messenger Dog (JMD) is the level after the Future Messenger Dog (FMD) and the level before actual Messenger Dog Trials that would take place in an open field. You don't need an FMD to enter the JMD. Your dog does need to exhibit self-control and must be under your control at all times.

The FMD elements are suited to well-mannered Belgians with basic training (sit, stay, recall, etc.) The JMD elements are more demanding. The Basic Control Exercise will use the same rally type course used for the FMD; but for the JMD, the dog must be off lead for this and for the Stay Exercise. The JMD evaluation consists of two parts. Part One includes the Basic Control Exercise and a one minute Stay Exercise. Part Two consists of three Messenger Runs with two legs per Run.

### **Part One Basic Control**

The purpose of the Basic Control Exercise is to demonstrate that the handler understands and respects the dog, and that the dog respects and will obey the handler. Dogs walk with the handler off lead. Dogs being tested must wear a buckle, plastic snap or slip collar. A 6 ft leash is to be used for the Honor Exercise only.

The team will walk a pattern designed by the evaluator; using signs similar to those used in Rally Obedience, or alternately, with commands called out by the evaluator or helper. The pattern will be the same for all teams, and must use the following signs or commands: START, FINISH, one ABOUT TURN (LEFT or RIGHT), two changes of pace (a SLOW or a FAST followed by a NORMAL), one HALT and at least one TURN (RIGHT or LEFT).

The dog may walk on either side of the handler, but may not interfere with the handler's movement. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops, but may sit if desired. The precision of competition Obedience or Rally is not required, but is allowed if the handler wishes. The handler may not physically guide or touch the dog, but may talk to the dog and encourage him or her in a happy tone of voice or modest hand motions such as clapping, patting the leg, etc. No loud or rough commands or motions will be allowed. This must be a positive experience for all.

### **Stay**

After a team completes the Basic Control Exercise, they will remain in the ring for the Stay Exercise. The sign for the Stay will be approximately 10-15 feet from the stewards' table and the dog's lead will be placed on the table. If there is no table, the evaluator will hold the lead at a marked distance away. Only one team and the evaluator are in the ring for this exercise.

The handler will ask the dog to stay in either a sit or down and once the dog is in position, the handler will step about 6-8 feet from the dog while the Stay is timed. The dog must remain in the chosen position for one minute while the evaluator times the exercise. After one minute, the handler will walk to the steward's table or evaluator, collect the leash and return to the dog. The evaluator will tell the handler "exercise finished" after the leash is placed on the dog. For the JMD, the evaluator is only scoring whether the dog stays for one minute as originally directed. No formal style of sit or down is required. No formal manner of returning to the dog is required. The handler may encourage the dog and multiple commands/signals to stay may be used. However, a cue/command or signal would not include "chattering" or holding the hand up to keep the dog in place. Continuous talking or using loud or harsh commands may result in failure.

## The Junior Messenger Dog

### Part Two Messenger Runs

Message Runs are the main focus of the JMD. Familiarize your dogs with wearing collars or vests that hold a message. No specific style of collar or vest is required; just keep your dog safe. After each leg the handlers will change the message. You will need two handlers per dog. If only one handler can be at the evaluation, the evaluator may take the role of the second handler.

During Runs, handlers may only “send” the dog, not “call” the dog. Commands such as “report”, “find” etc. may be repeated and mixed within reason. Names of handlers and dogs may be used. For example “report to Jack...go Sport”. You may wish to use a different cue than you use for obedience or agility “sends”. One old book on training Messenger Dogs used the word “Report” to send the dog. Not something you’re likely to use for anything else! Or use “Allez! French for “Go!” Be creative, have fun.

The distance for the runs will be no greater than 50 yards. More often, it will be less due to constraints of designating available safe terrain. For example, it may be performed in an empty agility or obedience ring. The dog must sit or stand calmly at each handler while the message is taken and a new one added. The dog must wait until sent. Runs are not timed. Handlers determine the time their dog needs to refocus on the next run. Dogs should be under the handlers’ control at all times.

The Basic Message Run consists of two legs. Handler A sends the dog to Handler B; that is one leg. Handler B sends the dog back to Handler A: that is the second leg and completes the Run

There will be three Runs (six legs) in the evaluation, one of which must be the simple Basic Message Run. In addition to the Basic Message Run, the following are Runs and their elements that will make up the other two Runs (4 legs):

1) Dispatch Carry. Dog carries an item by mouth that contains a message for two legs of a Run. This item could be an old checkbook cover, coin purse, small notebook (not wire bound), makeup bag or similar. It must meet evaluator approval. This item must be free of anything that could be swallowed or considered a choking hazard.

2) Unusual Ground. The dog must navigate unusual ground for the two legs of this Run. This could include available local groundcover changes such as lawn changing to sand or a pond. This could be a plastic tarp between the two handlers. The dog may choose whether to go across the obstacle/cover change or go around it. Either choice is acceptable. The dog should not refuse to be sent because of cover change.

3) Hidden Handler. This Run will have four legs with two of the legs being the Basic Message Run. After releasing the dog for leg one, the sending handler quietly moves behind an object a few feet away to hide. On leg two, the return to this handler, the dog will need to seek out the handler. After finding this handler, the dog follows the handler back to the original handler start place and completes two more legs of Basic Message Run between the two handlers.

A sunshade (with seated handler) or other suitable hiding object, such as the screens for out of sight stays used in obedience, may be utilized. The committee does not advise the use of a protection sports style of blind as it is likely to encourage the dogs who are trained in that discipline to bark.

Dogs should not be lured by treats during the test or rewarded with them after each exercise. The handlers may provide water for the dogs and the dogs may have water in between all of the exercises, including in between the legs of the Messenger Runs.

**The Messenger Dog Committee  
would like to leave you with a couple of truths  
we've learned from the Belgians...**

“Dogs don't run from handler to handler.  
Dogs run from heart to heart.”  
**Cayenne**

“It only takes a moment  
to be a turning point in a dog's life.  
Be in that moment.”  
**Taki**

Je suis Taki, et j'offre mes remerciements au Club Américain du Berger Belge et aux descendants de ceux qui m'ont sauvé d'une fin prématurée et solitaire. Je salue aussi tous les Berger Belges qui sont présents ici.

Je suis Taki, et je voudrais remercier tous ceux qui sont ici pour nous honorer; moi, et tous ceux qui se sont dévoué a sauver la vie de leur maitres. Nous sommes toujours prêts à accomplir n'importe quelle tache pour une simple caresse ou un regard approbateur. Telle est notre dévotion.

Je suis Taki, et je vous remercie de vous souvenir. Notre courage n'accomplit rien s'il n'y a pas, parmi les hommes, des coeurs qui nous aiment, et des âmes qui se souviennent.

Je suis Taki, et grâce à vous, je vis encore.

I am Taki, and I offer my thanks to the Belgian Sheepdog Club of America and to the descendants of those who saved me from a premature and solitary end. I also salute my fellow Belgian Sheepdogs here today.

I am Taki, and I would like to thank all those present for honoring us; me, and all those who devoted themselves to save the lives of their masters. We are always ready to achieve any task for a simple caress or a look of satisfaction. Such is our devotion.

I am Taki, and I thank you for remembering. Our courage accomplishes nothing if there is not, among humans, some hearts that can love, and souls that can remember.

I am Taki, and thanks to you, I live again.

By Jean-Luc Cambier