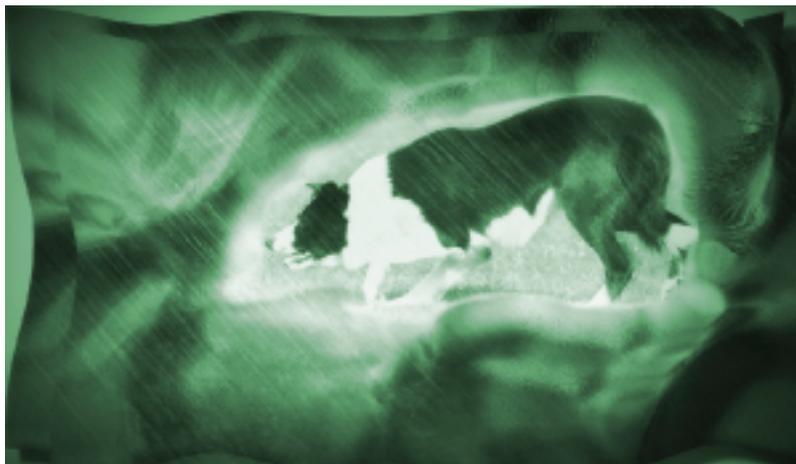


Outruns



I've had a few students that are having outrun issues so thought I would "touch" on that.

When you are working on an outrun be prepared to do a lot of walking (or running if you are of that "age group" :@). The minute a dog LOOKS in on an outrun – prepare yourself for a correction. If he looks in and then releases – allow him to continue on his path (assuming it was wide enough). If he looks in and casts out that's even better (assuming he's not a dog that runs too wide). BUT if he looks in and COMES in he's WRONG ... even if it's just a step or two. Why you say ... because if he comes in a couple of steps every time he looks at the sheep – it won't be long until he's pushing them sideways and not covering.

Also, If he looks in and KEEPS looking in even if he's still going on the same path ... he is putting PRESSURE on the sheep. This is the opposite of what an outrun is "all about". The purpose of an outrun is to get to the other side of the sheep with as little pressure as possible – while staying in as close of contact as he can without upsetting his sheep (so, not running too wide). Looking to see where the sheep are in relationship to him and you is GREAT ... looking trying to connect with the sheep before the outrun is completed is a problem.

So, if he looks in – and doesn't look out again – correct him – BEFORE he gets closer to his sheep. The widest part of an outrun should be around 9 and 3 on the clock (so when he is even with the sheep) because that's the spot that puts the most pressure on the sheep. It's not how he starts out (although that does matter) but how he finishes that's important. Wide on the bottom and tight on top is a lot more destructive than the other way around. Although with some dogs if they don't break wide at the bottom (not backwards ... just casting out wide from your feet) they tend to be tight at the top. You need (as with everything else in training) to know your dog.

If I'm having outrun "issues" I will start walking toward my sheep the minute I send my dog ... watching him out of the corner of my eye. I'm looking for a smooth easy running style (less tension) and if I see he's "getting tight" – I get ready to stop him. However, before I stop him ... I give a correction (some dogs listen to a "growl" others it's "hey" ... play around with it

until you get one that “fits” your dog). Then I lie him down (AFTER the correction) and tell him to “get out of that”. You have to give a correction NOT just a down. The reason being that if done enough and correctly all you will have to give is a “growl” to get him to bend off (or later on a redirect whistle on the run).

I personally have a correction down and it’s a HARD lie down (they KNOW they are in trouble and so when they stop they are receptive to actually HEARING what I say) ... then I wait and give a re-direct. I want him to KNOW he was wrong — not just down him and sent him on “his merry way”. However, “keep this in perspective” you don’t want them thinking a down is a correction or they will start to hesitate every time you say down (which is not what you want).

The biggest problem I see with students and outruns is two-fold. They wait too long to give the correction (dog is already tight NOT just thinking about it) and they don’t walk far enough out to correct the dog. So, catch him when he’s THINKING about coming in (not after he’s done it) and walk ALL the way out to make sure the top end is correct.

“Keep in the back of your mind” training dogs = walking and you will get more out of your dog.