



Nov/Dec Newsletter

Issue #1 | Nov / Dec 2018 | Sure they like to walk, but they LOVE to RUN!

Issue #1 – Yep!

This is it! The first Canicross USA newsletter! Welcome to the grass roots effort to introduce the exhilarating sport of running with your dog here in US. It's not just a pass time anymore. It's the sport of chasing tail. It's CANICROSS!

The rapid formation of the many chapters is very exciting and proves the dog running community is ready! We will look to you as ambassadors of the sport. This newsletter will provide pertinent developments and information about the sport and its community.

Please be patient as we move forward. Your contributions will help this grow! Ask questions, share experiences, contribute where you can. We can build this together!

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This Canicross journey started unknowingly five years ago...

Before I start this edition of our first newsletter, I want to acknowledge the time, effort and passion Mark Franco has and is demonstrating to make this a reality. Mark is also heading the design of our website.

My Canicross journey start December of 2014, when we allowed our first runner to run with their dog at one of our trail events. Over the next couple of years, we would have between 10-15 runners and walkers with dogs, I was completely ignorant of such a thing called Canicross. Then in May of 2016, I got an email, then a phone and a meeting with Rich Kisseloff. He shared his passion for Canicross and asked if I would host an event.

So, in December of 2016 we hosted that first event, then again in January and February and in March! We were hooked! Our 2017-18 Canicross season will consist or seven events and our 2018-19 season will consist of eight events. We run exclusively on the trails, mass start and distances for 3 miles to 14.5miles. To learn more about, visit <http://www.traildogrunners.com/>

Then in December of 2017, Kurgo asked if I would take over the FB page Canicross USA and I happily accepted. April of 2018, I announced that I would attempt to start Canicross USA chapters across the country, which we have started. Things got off to a very fast start and honestly due to several mishaps and not enough time, things have fallen off track. Over the next month, our website should be up, we will be able to offer insurance for Canicross events, Canicross USA gear, and we will create a membership and chapter directory and our monthly newsletter.

Please support Mark's efforts and send him your photos and stories. We would love to share them with everyone. (Mark Franco - mark.franco.jr@gmail.com)

Those that are new to Canicross and Canicross USA, welcome!

Please contact me if you would like to be involved in a more direct way, as I am looking for communication assistance to reach out to our chapters. briant@kenosharunningcompany.com or call/text 414-719-4771

Best of fun with your pup on and off the trails,

Brian Thomas



Canicross USA Chapters (so far)

Chapter Location/Name	State
Northern Alabama	Alabama
Mesa, AZ	Arizona
Prescott, AZ	Arizona
San Diego	California
San Francisco	California
Southern California	California
NO CA	California
Bay Area, CA	California
CO	Colorado
Denver	Colorado
Central FL	Florida
Florida	Florida
Georgia	Georgia
Northern Illinois	Illinois
Iowa	Iowa
Kansas	Kansas
Frederick	Maryland
Boston	Massachusetts
Mid-Atlantic	MD/VA/DC
Minnesota	Minnesota
New Hampshire	New Hampshire
New Jersey	New Jersey
Albany, NY	New York
Buffalo, NY	New York
Binghamton	New York
Central North Carolina	North Carolina
Columbus	Ohio
SE OH	Ohio
Toledo, OH	Ohio
Oklahoma	Oklahoma
Philly	Pennsylvania
Western PA	Pennsylvania
Florence, SC	South Carolina
South Dakota	South Dakota
East TN	Tennessee
San Antonio	Texas
Dallas-Fort Worth	Texas
Vermont	Vermont
Mid-Atlantic	Virginia
Northern Virginia	Virginia
Central VA	Virginia
Port Hadlock	Washington
SE WI	Wisconsin
Green Bay	Wisconsin
Madison	Wisconsin

Cover Photo

Go Canicross USA - Northern
Wisconsin!

You and your pups look great!

Photo courtesy of

Niina Baum

“If your
dog is fat,
you’re not
getting
enough
exercise.”

10 Tips for Returning to Training

Erica C. Boling, PhD

Now that summer is coming to an end, many of us are getting excited about cooler days and finally being able to return to some regular training. As I look at the weather for the week wondering when I'll be able to do some canicross with my Malinois, I thought this would be the perfect time to reflect upon what it takes to get our dogs back into shape for fall events and races. So here you go!

1. **Start Slowly.** Recognize that even though you might have been active and cross training over the summer, your dog's body is not necessarily conditioned to handle the demands of canicross if you have taken significant time off. Remember that canicross combines cardio with resistance training, and it places unique demands on your dog's body that are different from most other sports.
2. **Give it Time.** Your dog's body needs time to adapt to the demands of canicross and increased distances. If you only do sport specific training once or twice a week, you're not giving your dog's body much time to adapt to exercise. If your goal is to build strength and endurance, I recommend building up to at least 3 days of sport-specific exercise per week. Be patient. Your dog will need a number of weeks to get back into condition.
3. **Beware of the Temperature.** As fall weather approaches, we can still have big jumps in temperature. No matter the temperature, always be aware that a dog can die of heat stroke even in cooler weather. Make sure you're familiar with the signs of heat stroke and always keep your dog well hydrated. Even the slightest bit of dehydration can put your dog at a much greater risk of heat stroke. Don't take your dog out for a training session if you think it might be even slightly dehydrated.
4. **Keep it Short.** Gradually return to sport specific training and begin with shorter sessions and more rest periods. Intensity level and length of time working/training should be less than what you do mid-season. Build your foundation first and build up your miles before adding hills and interval training.
5. **Warm Up Your Dog.** One of the quickest and easiest ways to help prevent injury is to ensure that your dog is properly warmed up before engaging in exercise. A warm up can be quick and easy such as having your dog trot around you in circles while on a leash or playing a game of tug.
6. **Don't Forget to Cool Down.** A dog that is out of shape or not in peak condition will take longer to cool down. A proper cool down aids in exercise recovery. Make sure your dog's body temperature has returned to normal before crating and confining him. Research studies have shown that core body temperature can continue to rise for 8 minutes (or more!) after exercise has stopped. Watch your dog closely for signs of heat distress and do not crate your dog immediately after exercising. A simple cool down can actually save lives.
7. **Keep Hydrated.** I'm stating this again because it's so important. Even the slightest bit of dehydration will be detrimental to your dog's ability to regulate body temperature. Dehydration also puts your dog at a higher risk for heat stroke. Be aware of how much your dog typically drinks throughout the day so that you can recognize when there are changes.
8. **Don't Forget Rest Days.** Your dog's body needs time to adapt to the increased demands of work. Time for rest and recovery are essential!

Continued next page.

9. **Have Realistic Expectations.** Don't expect a perfect performance and have realistic expectations if you've had a break from training. Treat your dog like a beginner. (Don't worry! You will progress much faster than a "real" beginner as you get back into your regular training routine!)
10. **Measure Your Progress.** Document and keep track of your training so that you can monitor your progress (or lack of progress). Keeping written documentation of how things go will help you recognize when changes need to be made to your training and fitness program.

Finally, don't forget about your own fitness! These tips can apply to you too!

Happy Training!!

Erica C. Boling, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Education at Rutgers University and the owner and founder of Northeast K9 Conditioning, LLC and Northeast K9 Conditioning Academy. Erica helps sport and working dog handlers create peak performance, canine athletes by teaching them how to integrate canine fitness into their training programs. Erica is a Certified Canine Fitness Trainer (CCFT), Certified Canine Massage Provider and member of the United States Federation of Sleddog Sports (USFSS).

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Congratulations!

Sarah Kassing

Canicross USA - Arizona

1st Place

GoPro Mountain Games Vail
ROCKY DOG TRAIL RUN

Winning the race is only half the story.
Check out her FB post!

Trail Etiquette Basics

What trail runner hasn't scared the daylight out of an unsuspecting, daydreaming hiker who thinks they are the only ones on the trail? Some of the reactions are quite amusing, but I know my gitty pup Lulah and I cause a little panic from time to time. And we feel bad about it, at least until the next stream crossing.

So, until the entire US of A knows about canicross, we should all be on the same page about being considerate to all who participate in trail stuff.

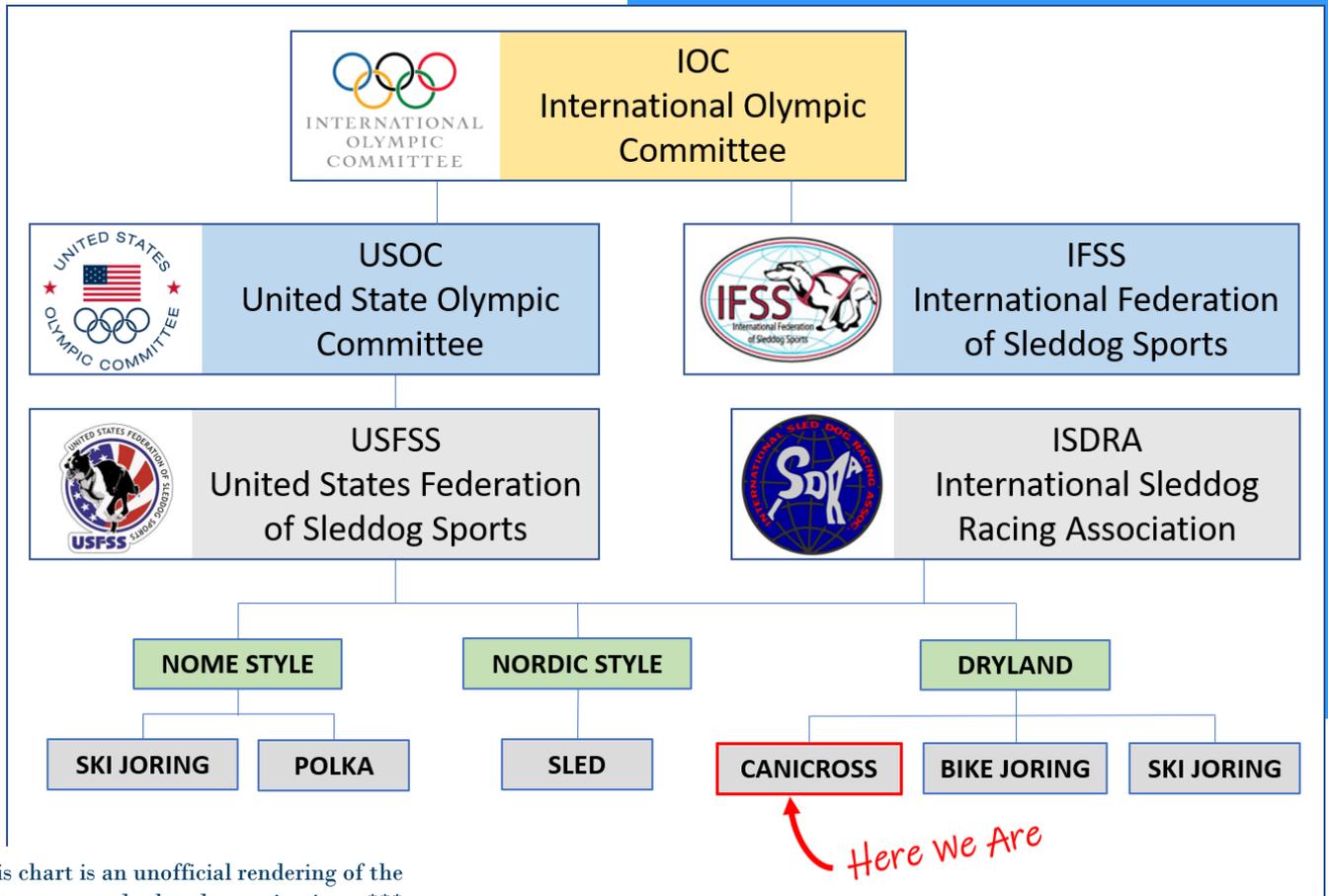
1. Pay attention to the rules and warnings. Most public trail systems have some sort of guidelines posted somewhere. Sometimes it's at the trailhead, and sometimes you can find them online. If you are not familiar with an area, you don't have to look like it. Don't be the guy who runs the wrong direction on a loop trail, and if the sign says the boardwalks are slick after rain, just get back on the dirt. Mud is soft.
2. Announce your approach. "On your left!" or "behind you!" are a couple of options. "On your left!" is a standard, but I've found that the daydreamers don't quite understand me when I'm panting, and they usually just go any random direction in their confusion. I try to announce myself early enough for them to move one way and we just go the other. Works for us.
3. Leave only your footprints (and dog pee is OK). You know what I mean.
4. Yield to the uphiller. Those traveling downhill should yield to those moving uphill. The uphiller will often waive you on down when they notice the eager leading member of the team, but if not just be patient. If you are in a group of Canicross USA chapter members, they'll move. 😊
5. Stay on the trail, please. It helps reserve the natural environment and reduces the chance of an accident or injury.

Some quick USFSS dryland standards, specifically for Canicross racing...

- The driver shall not pace the dog by running ahead of the dog or force the dog to run in any way.
- Pulling the dog or forcing the dog to move forward by any means is strictly forbidden.
- If a dog becomes unfit or refuses to advance for any reason, the competitor is not permitted to finish the heat.



Where does Canicross in America stand?



United States Federation of Sleddog Sports (USFSS)



United States Federation of Sleddog Sports was established to present representation for US mushers to the International Federation of Sleddog Sports (IFSS) and the US Olympic Committee (USOC).

USFSS is involved in all dog powered sports. This includes Nome style (sled), Nordic (skijoring and pulka) and dryland (canicross, scooter, bikejoring), and weight pull. **Recreationalists as well as the elite of the sport are equally important.** Competitive racers and weekend sled dog campers are all part of USFSS.

The mission of the United States Federation of Sleddog Sports is to promote, support, coordinate, and develop mushing activities in the United States, to promote and encourage the welfare of sled dog and human athletes and to foster appreciation for the traditions and history of the sport. As the national governing body of sled dog sports in the United States, the United States Federation of Sleddog Sports is further committed to the ideals and guidelines of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).

November/December Events

The following is a list of dog friendly events for the months of November and December. The list consists of canicross events and dog friendly trail runs and races. Most of the list came from [RunRepeat – The Dog Race Database](#) and only includes events in states where we have existing Canicross USA chapters.

A very special THANKS goes out to Bethany D. Lavins-Merillat who has spent over half a year researching dog friendly events around the country and manages the [Dog Race Database](#) which consists of 1511 dog friendly events. She has been very helpful in working directly with us on the listing below.

Event Name	Location	Date
Redpaw Dirty Dog Dryland Derby	Auburn, NH	11/3/2018
Spokane Dirt Rondy	Spokane, WA	11/3/2018
Barktoberfest by Nashville Paw Magazine	Whites Creek, TN	11/3/2018
Camp K Dryland Challenge	Cle Elum, WA	11/10/2018
Ethan Howard Memorial Charity Rig Race	Auburn, NH	11/10/2018
Bobcat Trail Marathon and Half Marathon	Glouster, OH	11/10/2018
Lost Pines Lodge Dryland Race	Harrietta, MI	11/10/2018
Willow Springs Round Barn Fall Sleddog Rally RB	Wausau, WI	11/10/2018
Veteran's Day Fantastic 4-Mile	Kansas City, KS	11/11/2018
Trail Dog Distance Classic -- An Exclusive CaniXC Event	Burlington, WI	11/11/2018
Wolf Pack Trail Run & Relay - Kansasville	Kansasville, WI	11/11/2018
Alternate Chill Trail Run	Kansas City, KS	12/1/2018
Fair Hill Challenge	Elkton, MD	12/1/2018
Bigfoot 50K, 20 & 10 Miler	Lore City, OH	12/8/2018
Hateya Trail Run CaniXC	Kenosha, WI	12/8/2018
Deception Pass 25K - Deception Pass State Park	Deception Pass State Park, WA	12/9/2018
Schneeflocke Trail Adventure	Burlington, WI	12/29/2018

Always consider the race course and conditions when choosing an event, and how it will impact your team mate. Running your dog on unnatural surfaces can be more harsh than natural surfaces and should be limited by your dog's conditioning and ability. Always consult with your veterinarian when participating in sporting events.

If you would like to add a dog-friendly walk/run to [The Dog Race Database](#) or would like any changes/updates made to your event, email Bethany at lavins.l@buckeyemail.osu.edu.

Canicross Terminology

Driver (Musher): A person who drives a dog team

Sled Dog: A dog, irrespective of the breed or type, capable of being harnessed and of competing without a potential of harming the dog's well-being.

Harness: a webbing of fabric that fits a dog snugly, to which the tug line attached.

Belt / Runner belt: Waste or hip belt worn by the driver, and attached to the tug line

Tug Line: Line that connects dog's harness to the tow line.

Booties: A type of sock that is made to protect the dog's feet from small cuts and sores.

Common Mushing Commands

Ultimately you and your team mate should develop your own method or vocabulary. There's no right or wrong if the commands of your choice work. Here are some of the commonly used mushing commands:

“Gee” - turn right

“Haw” – go left

“Forward” – go forward

“On by” – ignore and keep going

“Hike” – use more pulling power

“Let's go” – speed up or starting to go

“Steady” – slow the pace

“Whoa!” - halt the team

“Trail” - Request for right-of-way on the trail, to pass another team.

Chapter Involvement

This is a grass root effort off to a great start. Each chapter has the opportunity to grow their group and increase local interest in canicross. Here are some ideas:

- Meet with your chapter members. Group runs are great opportunities for like minds to discuss your chapter's initiatives.
- Participate in local trail and dog related clubs. Help with trail maintenance events, pet charities, and any event that will get your chapter recognition.
- Sponsor dog friendly and trail running events – For a small sponsorship fee, you can set up a table/tent/display to let the community know about canicross and chapter.
- Join your local trail running groups. You know some of those members are already running with their dogs.

Let us hear how you are getting the word out!

Links/Resources

[XC Thrilllogy Trail Events](#)

[Kenosha Running Company](#)

[USFSS
United States Federation of Sleddog Sports](#)

[IFSS
International Federation of Sleddog Sports](#)

[ISDRA
International Sled Dog Racing Association](#)

[RunRepeat – The Dog Race Database](#)

[Northeast K9 Conditioning](#)