



Editorial

At this time of year things start to get very busy in terms of club and competition activities. Beginning with Crufts at the beginning of this month - quite a number of past and current members are represented this year in demonstrations, agility and breed competition. WDTC would like to wish the best of luck to them all.

At the end of the month is our AGM where this year we will hear a talk on Tellington Touch (you'll just have to come along and find out for yourself).

At the end of April (see back page) we are holding our annual agility show when **we will need all your help** setting up and on the rings - it's hard work but very entertaining and enjoyable. Everyone is needed so please put the dates in your diary.

Ian Hutchinson (Editor)



Flyball Report

Bad Dogs Tournament 9th Feb 2003

We'd just entered one team for this tournament as the mini dogs had an agility show. We had a team of 6 dogs (Gunner, Pollie, Misty, Hugo, Todd and Chi) with Jill and myself aiming to swap our dogs in and out. We were the bottom seed in the 2nd division. Our fastest time had been 20.07. The times recorded for the teams we were up against ranged from 19.17 to 19.6 seconds - so just a half second gap! Doesn't sound much, does it!

I decided to get Chi measured. With a bit of

bribery from Jill, the height judge managed to get the metal bar over her withers and surprised us by letting her run over 13" jumps. (Maximum height is currently 14".)

Our first race was against the top seeds. For this race we dropped Misty and Chi. We won the 1st leg (only because they had a mistake!) and lost the next three but our times for all 4 races ranged from 21.03 to 21.67 seconds.

Misty and Chi replaced Pollie and Todd in the next race. This was not so good with Chi not always bringing the ball back. Against the next team we put Pollie back in and took Misty out. This time Chi worked a bit better and we won 2 legs in under 21 seconds then lost the next in an even faster time (20.28).

We gave Hugo a rest for the next race and gambled with Pollie and Misty running as dogs 3 and 4 with Jenny running Misty. It worked well for the 1st leg - our fastest time of the day 20.04 seconds! Unfortunately we had more problems with Chi after that. Why did she stop between the last jump and the box before getting the ball? On closer inspection it looked like blood! All our dogs seemed OK when we checked them.

For the last race we replaced Pollie with Hugo.



Chi had another chance to redeem herself but only brought the ball back on the 2nd attempt. Now Todd had a chance to shine. We won the next 2 legs (the first in 20.24). Then the opposition changed dogs and we lost the final 2 legs still with very respectable times of under 21 seconds! Gunner was superb - only challenged by Misty for speed. Could Ian have let him go any sooner for those last 2 legs? (The saying is "You're not trying unless you get a light!") This was only Hugo's second outing in open competition and he and Carolyn proved valuable members of the team. Our box loader Kate was a star and there were no errors there.

We had a great deal of help from Simon and Lorna watching our changes and the lights for us. Lorna even managed to get me releasing Chi from much further away without her turning circles before running down the lane!

As expected we came bottom of the division but had an enjoyable day out even improving on our fastest time!

Gill Kimber

Good Luck to the Juniors at Crufts 2003

If you're going to Crufts this year it should be worth taking a look at the YKC ring.

On Sunday at 10.10am in the YKC National Agility Competition Annette Lowe will be competing with Misty and Donna with Katie for the Central England team.

On Sunday at 1.10pm Jenny Kimber will be competing in the ABC agility with Alison's dog Barney.

In the Main Ring on Thursday at 5.00pm Jenny is competing in the Agility Dog of the Year Final with Barney having qualified for this at the City of Birmingham show last August.

Other Crufts competitors you might know include: Mark Paterson and Emily Fraser in YKC classes, Heather Noddle in mini/maxi pairs, Simon Peachey in the singles final and with Lorna, Natasha Wise and Chris Kurzfeld in the WHAT team (Andy is also running Erin in mini k/o), and Sue Cuddon and Robert Tappin in Thames team.

Five points for each one you spot on BBC TV!

A Good Start to the 2003 Campaign



I set off in pouring rain on the M4 towards Wootton Bassett where Corton Agility Society were hosting their show on 8 Feb. On arrival at the showground the rain stopped but

underfoot was very muddy and wet. I carried Zoltan most of the time as he might easily have disappeared in the mud, never to be seen again!

Agility was my first round, with Honey running number 50 on a very tight course with lots of twists and turns, and as we set off, I anticipated getting caught out by some of the 'traps'. Her contacts were perfect. She did a little twist before the weaves as she waited for me to catch up but once in the weaves she legged it - the tyre, seesaw and three more jumps and we made it. Someone shouted "You're in the lead" - and we hung on until the end coming first in starters (and, with the Novice competition being run over the same course, beating the Novice winner on time was very satisfying). The competition was limited so hooray, we're still in starters.

In the Jumping round I turned too quickly, Honey followed and we got 5 faults. There you go - you can't win them all but it was nice to win one.

Jose and Honey

Reminders

Flyball

Neither you nor any of your fellow team members will be awarded points if you compete without current membership, so don't forget to renew your BFA subscription.

Agility

The Agility Eye magazine runs an agility league system, awarding points to each handler/dog partnership for places won in Open competition (1 point for 15th place up to 15 points for 1st place). Points won are also added to those of the training club you registered with the Eye, so please re/subscribe to the Eye now before the agility season gets into full swing. Ask for a form on Thursday evening.

More Good Citizens

We've had 2 bronze tests since the last Watchdog:

Congratulations to ...

Pauline Alexander & Des
Fred McDonald & Morris
Jane Davies & Jack
Carolyn Davies & Max
Dianne Towers & Milly
Belinda Davies & Bobby
Lisa Drewett & Jimmy

... who all achieved bronze level in two tests at the end of the year. Thanks to dog wardens Jenny Bromley and Kay Nisbet, and Ian Hutchinson for judging.

Congratulations also to ...

Joanna Robbins & Bramble
Helen Whittington & Domino
Belinda Davies & Bobby
Sonja Keating & Benji
Steven Keable & Jimmy

... who achieved puppy level.

We held a silver / gold test in January, which didn't run quite as smoothly as usual! Ian and Vicky were both away, leaving us two trainers short, so when Jane called in sick early in the evening, I knew we were in trouble... Peter offered to take the paperwork for the test to Didcot and hand it over to the judges (dog wardens Jenny Bromley and Kay Nisbet), leaving John and I to take the puppy class. The walking exercises for both the silver and gold tests have to take place in traffic, so we start the test with these exercises in Didcot, returning to East Hagbourne Village Hall for the other exercises. As soon as the puppy class (at East Hagbourne) finished, I joined the test class (who had returned to the Village Hall by then) to help, to discover that not everything was quite right. Jenny (who normally takes the test) wasn't there; her car had broken down and she was trying to get this fixed - leaving Kay, who normally comes along to steward for Jenny, to take the test. Kay rose to the occasion, running the test until Jenny returned, having got her car fixed. After a very inauspicious start, the test was eventually completed, and three dogs were successful.

Congratulations to:

Angela Bradley & Sky (silver)
Jackie Kington & Susie (silver)
Pat Hillier & Leo (gold)

Jacky Hutchinson

In the News

There have been several canine stories in the newspapers over the last few weeks. Some of those that caught my eye include:

A **website** containing - photographs of dogs in cars - has achieved an almost cult following, with over 400 hits a day.

Checkout <http://www.dogsincars.co.uk/>

A **lurcher pup** who disappeared from his home, turned up 100 miles away, and several months later with just a torn ear and sore pads to show for his journey. The reunion was only possible because Bouncer was microchipped. If you are amazed by the **number of dogs** some agility handlers acquire, be astounded and saddened by a report of 500 dogs being found in 'deplorable conditions' in an Oregon home. About 200 lived in the five-room house, the remaining 300 lived outside. The owner was jailed on charges of animal neglect. You might want to see if your dog can help you win the **lottery!** A dog helped his owner win £200 by selecting numbers for five weeks in a row. The numbers go up on a board and the dog 'nudges' the numbers. Worth a try! And to finish, a bizarre story which proves that sometimes justice is done. A man **shot himself** while trying to beat his dog to death with a shotgun. He had phoned his wife to say that the dog had bitten him and he intended to kill it. The shotgun had apparently gone off as he beat the dog with the stock. It was not known how badly hurt the dog was.

WDTC Agility Show

Entries for our show are increasing steadily, and if you haven't entered, you need to. Someone will be seeing you all in the near future, putting your name against the dozens of jobs to do. We need everyone to help; this is the major annual event for the club. Many of you will come down to Newbury Showground each day to help (Friday 25th April afternoon, Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th April). However, for those who camp overnight, we have a live group to entertain you. **Stray Dogs** (I like the name) will be playing their own songs on Saturday evening - offering us a relaxing break between what will be two busy days.

Limited Success (or How not to win out!)

I started competing with Bryn at agility shows in May 2001. My first show, Vyne, was an eye opener, I learned a lot from that show. The main point for frustrated beginners to note is that even experienced handlers with well trained dogs can go wrong, it only needs one half of the team to be out of sync and anything can, and does, go wrong.

That first year we did 5 shows and the best we could manage was 2 rounds without getting the big 'E'. We approached the 2001 season with hopes of doing much better. A clear round would be nice.

2001 started badly with the Foot and Mouth epidemic, many shows were cancelled and it was July before Bryn and I got into a show ring at the Rugby Show. We had a couple of good runs, the best being just 5 faults in Novice Agility with a good time. I was feeling more confident.

Our next show was the Limited show at Aylesbury. In case you don't know, most shows are classed as 'Open' and wins count towards your progress up the Agility ladder. Limited show wins do not count - the show is usually 'Limited' by numbers allowed in a class, at Aylesbury it was 300! It was a good show for me as I could enter 6 classes. We didn't start off too well but enjoyed the morning, we had Starters Agility just before lunch and I joined the queue behind a quiet Flat Coat Retriever who Bryn was taken with, it kept him quiet anyway. Our turn and into the ring, a last look round to make sure I knew my way round and off we went, it was all over before I could take a breath. It was a clear round, our first ever and boy did it feel good. Jill Lowe came over and said 'well done, check your time it looked fast'. The Scorer confirmed that it was the fastest clear of the day so far, predicting that it was a possible winning time! I was delighted with the clear round but when the class closed Bryn and I were still the fastest pair, our first clear round had won the class of 288 entries.

Two weeks later and we managed two more clears, one for 2nd place in Starters Jump-

ing which won us out of Elementary and qualified us for a National Final (where we were clear and got 2nd!). I felt I was getting the hang of it now. After two more placed clear rounds at the Cotswold show, including another 2nd place, I entered the Tuffley Limited Show (150 entries only). We had the fastest time in Starters Agility but 5 faults, good enough for 19th place though. In Starters Jumping we went clear but the Timekeeper's watch hadn't started, we would have to run again but only for a time, faults would not count as long as we tried to do it right. We won! Another win in Starters and we were still on the first rung of the ladder. Three clears at the Rugby Christmas Show confirmed that we were getting it right more often than not now.

2002 and it took us until our 4th show at Vyne before the last year's promise showed again with 7th place in Novice Jumping, and followed that up with 5 more places over the next 5 shows, including another 2 x 2nd places. We were getting great times, often fastest but 5 faults, very frustrating! The year ended with 3 x 'E' at the Rugby Christmas Show, the opposite of the previous year. Oh well, roll on 2003, maybe that would be our year.



I had entered the Corton Limited Show in February to blow out the cobwebs before the season really gets underway for us. What a start, not content with just knocking a pole down in the Agility Class Bryn demolished the 3rd fence in his eagerness. We got an 'E' for that round, but still had the Jumping class to do. We flew round, a bit bumpy but clear and the fastest Starter, a 1st rosette and a nice little trophy to take home.

Now, if we have any budding trick cyclists reading this maybe you can explain to me why we have a 100% record in Limited shows, three shows - three first places, but cannot do better than 2nd in Open shows. Is it a mental block or what? I'd like to know then I can maybe do something about it. I'd trade in my three Limited Show Winner's trophies for one Open Show winner's prize, preferably in an Agility class!

Mick Chambers
& Royal Oak Bryn Brith.

A Divine Moment

A first in agility competition? No. In a beauty show? No. Dog rescue woman in distress? No. Read on (but perhaps you should finish your meal first!). If you had looked into our garden on any of the dark and rainy mornings in December you would have seen me shuffling around wearing my nightdress, 'Puffa' jacket and wellingtons. I would be carrying a torch, bucket and pooper-scooper. This strange behaviour was part of a bizarre routine that became necessary over Christmas.

The whole sorry tale started with Bacchus - my youngest. Friday is the day the butcher brings marrow bones and is known as '*bone day*'. Bacchus did not want his bone. This was unheard of and had never happened before in his two year old life. But there is always a first time for everything and I was not unduly worried. A few days later he went off his food completely, followed by acute diarrhoea during the night. Fortunately we have ceramic tiled floors in the kitchen area and the dogs have, as beds, three thick washable blankets from the army-surplus store.

As I continued with the battle of keeping Bacchus and his surroundings clean, Milo started to cough. At this point I took Bacchus to the local vet armed with a sample to have it confirmed that his illness was a virus and that nothing was lodged in his stomach. All the dogs were still full of life and their temperature was normal so I thought this was something that had to run its course.

By this time Kimba had stopped eating and Oliver was coughing, Milo had diarrhoea, Bacchus was vomiting as well and Steve was thinking of leaving home. We were offered antibiotics but because of the dogs' normally healthy state I thought we would give their immune systems a chance for the moment and instead was referred to Jimmy Symmonds who specialises in natural and less invasive healing methods. I decided to try the herb remedies he suggested, plus acupressure massage for the time being. This was not a soft option!

Soon all the dogs were ill and I stood in the midst of a pile of dirty blankets and sorry looking animals - the garden was full of mud and it was raining - I thought, "Blow this for Christmas entertainment!"

So this was how the Florence Nightingale routine started. It included, as well as my early morning inspection rounds in the garden with the *lamp*; cleaning and drying blankets, cleaning the floors,

cleaning the dogs, distributing herbal tablets, acupressure massage as often as possible, ensuring that they walked so many circuits of the garden, cooking and feeding little and often and, later, distributing water. All this times four. I had moved into the dogs' room and slept there at night so the door could be left open to the garden. This arrangement saved my overworked washing machine. The blankets proved to be a blessing. Their only drawback was that they are bl...y heavy. To help matters I thought of adding blankets to the dogs Xmas presents and shot down to the Store. Unfortunately the Salvation Army had been in there the day before and bought them all!

At this stage I met a friend in the village as I stumbled out of the local supermarket carrying huge packets of white rice and chickens (dead ones) for this was the food the dogs were supposed to eat. "Are you having a nice Xmas?" He asked. "Eehh - ooh yeas - Xmas - so it is - yeas thankyou and I hope you are having a lovely Xmas too." I said this to avoid the *they're only dogs* syndrome - because I wasn't having a nice Xmas - my *babies* were now worse. They could no longer hold down all the water they wanted to drink. I think this was the worst development - the whole room was sprayed as the water they drunk gushed out again. I had to remove the water bowls and make sure they all had a cupful every hour as that was all they could keep down.

Christmas passed with the usual entertaining and cooking for guests, present opening and part games. I thought I was developing a split personality as I did not want to ruin others festive feelings. I tried to keep the drama unfolding in the kitchen area separate from the celebrations in the rest of the house. However Kimba did let me down. I thought the dogs were on the mend. The herbs had started to settle the stomachs and fight the virus while the acupressure massage had a relaxing and restorative effect. Kimba had been allowed in the lounge while we had coffee. Suddenly he threw up in front of the fireplace and the guests. This was like being kicked when one is down. The dogs were now re-infecting each other. Mind you, as for



the mess in the lounge, I was now so adept at cleaning up that the guests hardly blinked and all traces had vanished, including Kimba.

One night I sat on the floor next to Kimba and watched pain wrench him out of sleep time and again and I thought I was going to lose him. I was so upset I started to shake and in despair, drank a large glass of brandy. I thought I was to blame for his troubles as I had given him his normal diet that night- raw food, having been advised not to. The problem was that my dogs did not recognise boiled rice and chicken as food and had eaten nothing for days. They were so hungry they had started to steal food from the kitchen (a thing they never do). I had cooked cauldron after cauldron of chicken and rice and my dustbin was bursting with what I had to throw away. So I decided to try a little raw food which they practically threw themselves into.

Now I thought that I had undermined their recovery. But as brandy replaced the shaking with double vision I calmed down and Kimba fell into a deep sleep in my arms. From that night when I thought all was lost, things instead started to improve. Milo was the first to produce solid motions, which I nearly framed. Soon they were all back to normal - although slimmer. The only one to maintain his weight was Oliver who could easily have lost a few pounds without disappearing. Jimmy stood by us during this troubled period day and night. At times it was difficult to make head or tail of the situation and strange questions were asked; 'Is it better, as it was before it got worse - or is better as it once was after being worse and got better ...'.

The dogs were now definitely improving and I was slipping into mild delirium. One morning early in January on the dog exercise grounds at Millets Garden Centre (oh what a divine moment that was) - I picked up four lots of solid pooh! I tried hard to suppress my insane giggling and act normally. I must add that in the howling winds and freezing temperatures this vast exercise ground was not exactly packed with people to witness my hysterical happiness. In a way that was a shame because this was a moment in a dog-owners life that I would never have been without. Dog-less-people do not know what they are missing!

Happy New Year
Kath Rayson

Watchdog

Please give articles, results, letters and news items to Ian Hutchinson or a trainer to pass on, or you can email to jacian@callnetuk.com.

**Saturday 26 &
Sunday 27 April 2003
Open Agility Show**



Newbury Showground

Innocent Mistake

My friend Nelly was 90 years old in May. She has been blind since the age of 18 and in her late fifties she trained her first guide dog called Claire at Forfar in Scotland. She is now working her third guide dog and was probably the oldest person to re-train, in her eighties.

As age is now a problem she is unable to walk her dog Dolcie, a labrador, who is 'getting on' herself at 12 years, so Nelly pays a dog-walker £5 per hour to take Dolcie out.

A few weeks ago thunder and lightning frightened Dolcie who took off into the garden and did not come in when Nelly called. Poor Nelly, who's friend's dog had died in her basket aged 12 years, thought that Dolcie must be lying dead in the garden and, very agitated, she dialled 999. Two police officers duly arrived and as Nelly opened the door to them, Dolcie appeared, flew past Nelly to attack the intruders!

Oops - sorry officer.

Jose

AGM

The Annual General Meeting for the club will take place on Monday 24 March at East Hagbourne Village Hall, from 7.15 for a 7.30 start.

As well as voting in the committee for next year, all annual awards are made, including something for all KCGC silver and gold successes.

Toni Shelbourne will speak about **Tellington Touch** - intrigued? Then come along.