

# Watchdog!

WALLINGFORD DOG TRAINING CLUB

July 2007

## From the Chair

Apologies for the delay in this newsletter - but since the end of February, preparation for our agility show took over, and then we were into the agility season!

Our show this year turned out to be a large, two-day, 12-ring affair. It made enough profit for us to organise some agility training workshops and some guest trainers. It will also fund the club's anniversary bash this Autumn. See the article on page 2.

Club members have been doing very well indeed at agility shows, with too many successes to mention everyone. I have set up a Wiki website for the club so that all members can post their boasts, check out training details, keep their training notes up-to-date and have a chit-chat. I think I have sent details to everyone we have an email id for, but please see me if you don't have the details, or want some help using it.

Sadly a couple of members have said a final goodbye to their four legged friends, and they have written up their memories for us in this newsletter (see pages 4&5). But life goes on and there is a flurry of new dogs

around. After an operation on her knee, Wendy's Pyrenean Sheepdog Bambi has started agility training - and I've been training my new merlie collie Stig and hope that he'll be starting soon. And waiting in the wings are Fell (Kevin's new collie), and 2 rehomed dogs - Jacky's lurcher Kip and Karen's new monster - no! sweet little lad Rupert. It's anyone's guess what mixture of breeds he is!

Sammie and Alison have decided not to continue training for a while - but Sammie qualified Dylan for Crufts in March and has written up her experiences on pages 6-7. And Yvonne (who is also taking a break, but we're delighted is keeping in touch) has written up her trip with Shankley to the World BSD Championships on pages 6-7.

Wendy has already organised some demonstrations this year. Incorporating training, and joining up with flyball has been very successful. The Knights have posted a couple of new best times this year so their flyball training is obviously paying off too. Read about these, and from the flyballers, in this 'Super Summer edition'.

Ian Hutchinson

Members with access to the web should checkout the club's new interactive Wiki website for team information, training notes, boasts and general chit-chat.

See Ian for information



## New committee

The Club's AGM took place on 28th March and members voted in a new committee. Unfortunately there has already been a change, with Lu Potter taking over Flyball rep from Tim Webber.

**Chairman:** Ian Hutchinson

**Treasurer:** Kevin Pearce

**Secretary:** Jason Bruce

**Agility rep:** Jacky Hutchinson

**Flyball rep:** Lu Potter

**Demo rep:** WendyBotto

**Members:** Louise Crone  
Carolyn Davies  
Julie Morgan

Kath Rayson  
Pete Sanderson  
Jo Tidmarsh



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News, boasts,  
letters, articles,  
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Jacky or Ian by  
Thurs 26 July.  
The next  
Watchdog will be  
published early  
in August.

# Agility news

I am delighted to report that agility is thriving at Wallingford. Members in groups 2 and 3 are benefiting from Tasha's training. Tasha is our first guest trainer - more are being organised, and they will be taking different classes. And because the show was so successful we are able to offer all members a free session at one of the special one-off agility workshops being organised this Autumn.

I'd like all members to use the training notes. These are available from the new interactive Wiki website, and a copy of them will be kept in the folder at club. Please use this file to note your aims and goals - and trainers will add their comments on how you're doing, training methods that have been suggested, and list any that worked, or didn't work. It helps the trainers tailor their exercises to help you achieve your goals.

The training weaves in the centre has already helped members get more consistent, or faster weaves. So many dogs pick up 5 faults in competition because their dog doesn't pick up the weaves, or goes wrong during them, that it is worth spending time ensuring you have good weaves. Ask your trainer if you'd like to use them. There is a 'weave monitor' on most evenings to help you with your weave training.

I am sounding out a few people on how we can get more trainers, so that we can invite some of those on our waiting list to join the club, so that we can train up more trainers. The classic chicken & egg dilemma. If you have any suggestions for this - or would like to comment about anything agility-related, please pass your comments on to me.

Jacky Hutchinson

## Snippets

From an email from Val Phillips:

*<< Just to warn anyone who feeds 'Greenies' - green toothbrush-shaped dog chews to their dogs. (These are often handed out free at Crufts and Discover Dogs.) My friend's dog has just died as a direct result of eating these. He had two blockages caused by undigested 'Greenies' and the vet found his stomach to be full to overflowing with a green rubbery-like gunge (the 'Greeny'). Since this we have been told of several dogs both in UK and USA that have died from blockages caused by 'Greenies'. Despite claimsthat they are 100% digestible it turns out they are in fact very undigestible. >>*

And from an email sent to Yvonne:

*<< Here is a good way to remove ticks from you, your children, or your pets. It works in those places which are difficult to get to: between toes, on a very hairy dog, etc. Apply a glob of liquid soap to a cotton ball. Cover the tick with the soap-soaked cotton ball and leave it for a few seconds (15-20). The tick will come out on its own and be attached to the cotton ball when you lift it away. Unless someone is allergic to soap, this should not be damaging in any way. >>*



## Wallingford Show

I'd like to thank everyone who worked so hard and put so much effort into making our April show such a tremendous success.

We had a couple of incidents - the most spectacular was the arrival of the air ambulance to whisk a competitor who was suffering from a heart attack off to Swindon hospital. Thankfully he has since recovered and is back at agility.

Here are a few facts and figures:

<i>Dogs entered to compete:</i>	<i>2495</i>
<i>Competing handlers:</i>	<i>1291</i>
<i>Individual runs</i>	<i>8948</i>
<i>Team entry</i>	<i>223</i>
<i>K/O Pairs entry</i>	<i>259</i>
<i>Camping units</i>	<i>330</i>
<i>Judges</i>	<i>28</i>

The show has made a significant profit. The Committee has already agreed to give £1,000 to charity (£500 to the Air Ambulance - a charity which relies on donations) and £250 each to our local Dogs' Trust near Newbury, and to Valgray's Border Collie Rescue, a charity who rehomes collies and other breeds to agility

homes. Val Phillips, who runs this charity, always presents her 'Valgray's dog of the year' at our show.

Some of the rest of the profit will be used to help agility. This includes:

- guest trainers for the rest of the year
- agility training workshops

As a thank-you for all your help at the show, every agility member of the club will be able to attend one of these workshops free of charge. And every trainer who has taken a course this year will have another free training workshop as a thank-you.

Another chunk of the profit will be used to organise an event this Autumn to celebrate our 30th anniversary. Planning is still in the early stages, but if you have any ideas, or wish to help out, please contact Louise Crone who is coordinating the event.

The Show committee has already met to consider our 2008 show. This will take place on **Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th April** at Newbury Showground. We agreed to run a smaller show next year, but somewhat larger than that in 2006.

Please put these dates in your diary now - we'll need everyone's help to run the show next year.

Jacky Hutchinson



# Flyball news

The Easter holiday started well for the Flyballers with a Starters tournament at Frimley. The team of dogs ran in netted lanes and were not required to work the box properly. Our team, the Knighties, consisted of Sir Willow (in his second tournament) and 3 rookies, Rico, Jake and Bree. They all ran very well, winning 3 of the 5 races and coming 3<sup>rd</sup>, with a creditable best time of 22.91 sec.

In contrast, the Knights ran below their normal standard, losing all 5 races, due to too many mistakes. However, on the bright side, Bronwen forgot her previous problems and developed into a reliable Start dog, and Jade gained her Flyball Dog Intermediate award. Unfortunately, this was the last tournament for Jasmine with Jon Cleaver and Millie with Kim Webber; we will miss both dogs.

After some practice at a demo at Harpsden Village fete, the new team of Bronwen with Jo, Rico with Linda, Tonto with Lu, Flicker with Luce and Jade with Gill (see photo below) took on the task of improving The Knights performance in a tournament at Frimley in June. We were the bottom seed in Div 3, which did not bode too well. We started off slowly and lost against the top seed, 2-3. We also lost against the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> seeds, but with faster times, including getting a new fastest time of 19.97 sec. After lunch and a lot of rain, we dropped Flicker and the large dogs ran with full height jumps, winning both remaining races, so we ended 5<sup>th</sup> overall - a creditable effort, especially for Rico in his first real tournament.

In the last couple of months we have acquired a new group of Beginners, some of whom are already showing promise. Archie with Erica, Jazz with Clare and Megan with Liam all came to a demo at Abingdon, gaining useful experience. In addition, Sky and Buzz, both second dogs of experienced handlers Linda and Katie, are doing well. Buzz is a Jack Russell and should make a height dog eventually.

The Flyball section has just gained a new Rep, Lu Potter. Her dog, Tonto, runs in The Knights team and has previously done agility with the Club. Lu will work on the Committee with Jo Tidmarsh, who does both agility and flyball. We are all looking forward to continuing cooperation between the Agility and Flyball sections, which is already happening with respect to demos and applications to the Club.

Jean Hatchard, Team Captain



## Flyball Dates

**No Training on June 26<sup>nd</sup>, July 3<sup>rd</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>:**

**Except: July 10<sup>th</sup>, starting at 7 pm:** Jo and/or Lu will organise practice for the teams. These are:

**Starters Team:** Buzz, Jazz, Archie, Meg and Sir Willow.

**The Knights:** Rico, Flicker, Jade, Tonto, Jake.

If you are unsure about the weather please contact either: Lu 0118 972 3043 or Jo 01235 851 661.

### July

Tues 17<sup>th</sup>: Training for Beginners, 6.30 pm: Everyone else, 7 pm

Sat 21<sup>st</sup>: The Knights at Capstone tournament. Team as above.

Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>: Starters (Knighties) at Capstone. Team as above.

Tues 24<sup>th</sup>: Training for Beginners, 6.30 pm: Everyone else, 7 pm.

Tues 31<sup>st</sup>: Training as above.

### Aug

Tues 7<sup>th</sup>: Training as above.

Tues 14<sup>th</sup>: Training as above.

Tues 21<sup>st</sup>: Training as above.

Tues 28<sup>th</sup>: Training as above.

### Demonstrations

These are worth attending if you can for fun, extra training and a chance to show the public what we can do.

Sat 7<sup>th</sup> July: Didcot.

Sun 15<sup>th</sup> July: South Moreton.

Contact Jo (01235 851661) for details of these.

**Tournaments: Don't forget to sign up for these.**

Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>: Paws in the Park, Paddock Wood, Kent.

Oct 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>: Rose & Crown, Portway.

Oct 14<sup>th</sup>: Maidstone, Kent.

Nov 18<sup>th</sup>: Maidstone, Kent.



**Remember: Training is on  
Tuesday at Harwell  
Recreation Ground**

## Goodbye gentleman Gibson

You will all be aware by now that just a couple of weeks off his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday Maureen and I said goodbye to a wonderful friend aptly described by Jacky in the last Watchdog as 'a laid-back, easy-going Golden Retriever.' As word has spread of his passing, we have been taken aback by the phone calls and cards we received. We had no idea how popular he was – one card sent by a local dog owner described him as 'a Gentleman of Dogs' - a sincere tribute.

His illness was very short, he was sick for just 3 days. Tests at the vets where he was caringly looked after for 2 days concluded that he had kidney failure. He was devotedly looked after by his nurse with the wonderful name of 'Gentle' and it was of great comfort to us that when we said goodbye and he closed his big brown eyes for the last time, he had his dignity and quality of life right to the very end. Thank you Gentle.

Gibson was an offspring of our daughter Debbie's Retriever Gracie. My family had decided that it was time Dad had another dog. Debbie arrived at our house carrying a bucket with Gibson and his sister Della on board – the bucket and Della returned home and Gibson began a memorable life with us.

I named him Gibson, as a thank you tribute to the nurses and staff of Gibson Ward at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital Oxford. I was, unfortunately, one of the percentage of patients whose hip replacement had on-going problems and over a period of time I walked 'like a penguin' into Gibson Ward six times.



*Gibson's impersonation of a polar bear - and with Jennie.*

Our association with WDTC began when we attended the Kennel Club Good Citizen classes where, despite clowning around with sister Della, they both sailed through the tests. Della then went on to appear on the Children's TV series Blue Peter with our granddaughter Gemma.

About this time Maureen decided to have a go at showing Gibson and entered him in a show at Oxford. Not only did he win his class but also 'Best in Show' – the judge was a Retriever Girl. He was beginning to develop into quite a handsome young man and attracting some local Breeders. Following medical checks - hip scores, eyes etc. I was satisfied that he could start a family. His hip-score was well below average for the breed and I made sure his partners were compatible. Despite me being very choosy about his girl friends he sired 32 dogs and 20 bitches, all were conceived under the apple tree at the bottom of our garden and where we lay his ashes.

He had a crack at Agility of course and along with Della became efficient enough to compete. At our very first show I experienced the great thrill of running my own dog, brushing against each other through the weaves shattered our hopes of a dream start with the coveted clear round rosette within our grasp. Stopping to admire Concorde fly overhead, at our next outing, prompted a lecture from me about time faults.



His wonderful laid back attitude to life was beginning to kick in. I could see he was giving this agility serious consideration. "Where was the point in charging round a field full of obstacles only to finish back almost where you started from". We decided that agility was not one of his favourite pursuits! But what he did have was an aura about him which made him very approachable by everyone and why he became so popular. He was ever present at our club's many demo displays at fetes and schools socialising with children and people of all ages. He decided this was his contribution and became, what I would like to think, a true ambassador for his dog world and Wallingford Dog Training Club.

His calming presence was evident, when my elderly mother was admitted into Didcot Hospital for a short time and on my very first visit she asked "Where's the dog?". That request by mum inspired me to get in touch with Rosemary Tappin who pointed me in the right direction and we were soon being welcomed by Matron onto the wards, having been registered as a PAT (pets as therapy) dog. For the next couple of years he did his rounds making many admirers. Visiting each patient was very tiring and time consuming, but he never got bored.

As a youngster he developed a 'sit and beg posture' – his polar bear imitation, I called it; he could hold it for ages. This became his bedside routine, which never failed to lure his admiring victim into surrendering their very last favourite biscuit or goody. Needless to say he didn't need his evening meal that day. Recalling memories of their own dogs to the nurses following one of our visits was very satisfying to hear. Apparently even the quietest of patients, who sadly showed little interest in life, flowered into voice.

Our 4 year old grand-daughter knows she will never see Gibson again, but tells me ' he has gone up in the sky to be a star – a deserving place to go; his Kennel Club name being Star of Gibson Ward.

Thank you Jacky for prompting me to put pen to paper; Maureen and I were very proud of him.

*Pete Sanderson*

# In very fond memory of Henry (Big 'H')

## aged 14.75 years

Henry will never be forgotten by us as he had such a very strong personality.

At the age of six months he was only given a 50/50 chance of surviving an operation to remove a cancerous growth on his shoulder. We were very lucky that it was discovered at an early stage. He always rushed around everywhere and knocked his shoulder on a tree stump. Within a couple of hours it was the size of a large orange, so we had an emergency appointment with the vet (Mr Terry White). At first he thought it was a burst blood vessel and so it was drained. Unfortunately by the next morning it was back to the same size, so an emergency operation was carried out.

Mr White rang to tell me that he had removed a growth, he was sure that he had removed it all, and that it had been sent for analysis. The result came back that it was malignant. He had regular checkups for the next few months and luckily all was well.

From that time onwards we always let Henry live life to the full.

He achieved all the Good Citizen awards up to gold.

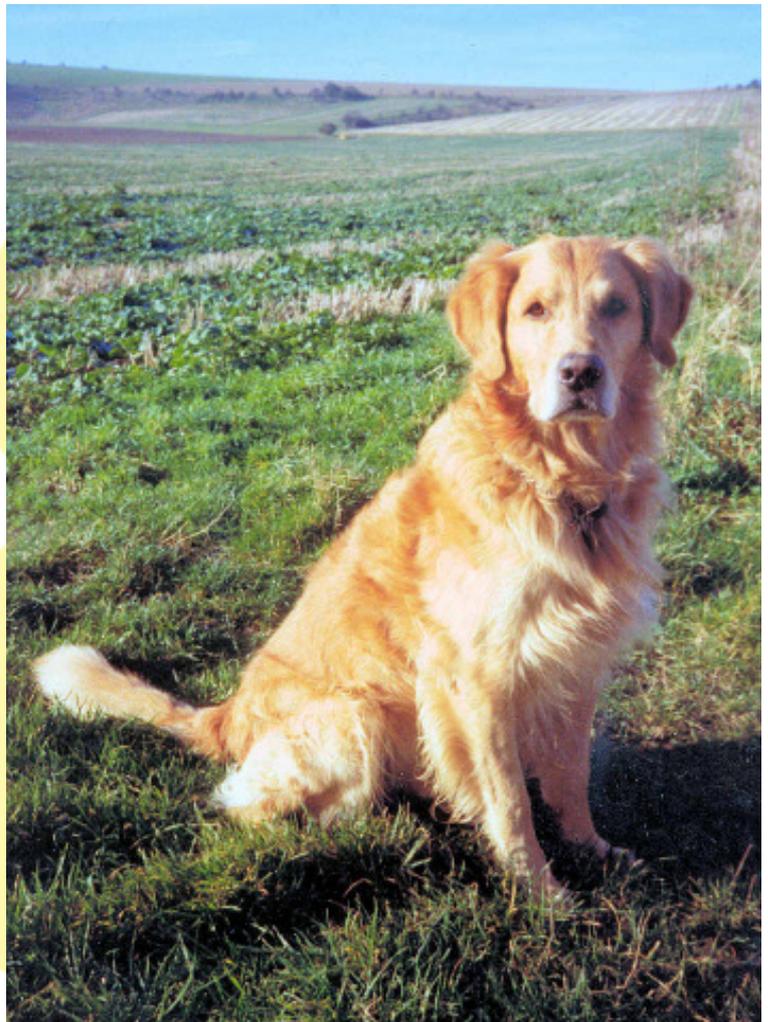
He thoroughly enjoyed agility and was always a good team dog – we very rarely came away from an agility competition without a place of some sort.

Henry was so full of life and enthusiasm I decided to try and train him for working trials. He thought this was absolutely brilliant, especially the tracking and searching. On one trial he had the judges completely bemused – there are 4 articles to be retrieved out of a marked square for the search test. The dogs are expected to bring these articles out, one by one, but Henry had hoovered all 4 up without anyone noticing. When I waited for Henry to give me the article we were all amazed to find he had retrieved all 4. He was very powerful on the tracking and sometimes I had a job hanging on to the end of the tracking lead. We actually got up to WDX level before I stopped as he fell off the 6 ft scale and I did not want him to harm himself.



*Showing off an impressive scar*

One day, whilst competing at an agility show, we were asked if we would like to try flyball. The team from the New Forest wanted another breed dog to join their mixed team in the indoor championships at Luton in 3 weeks. I was petrified as I did not want to let the other team members down. I should not have worried as Henry took to it like a duck to water



and the team won the Championship. Henry was so quick and powerful that the box loader ended up with bruised knees and sometimes Henry would get his ball and still have time to nip across and steal the ball from the other team. He achieved Advanced Flyball dog very quickly. He was certainly good entertainment value.

We have a small holiday home in France and so when the Pet Passport scheme was being trialled we immediately put Henry on the scheme. He loved coming on holiday with us as there is a lovely large lake nearby and several rivers. Last October when we came back from France all the staff at the DEFRA building at Customs came to see Henry as they believed he was the last surviving dog from the original trials.

*Pat Hillier*

## Dylon E do well at Crufts?

Having competed with Dylon at Crufts twice before, I had mixed feelings about qualifying for Crufts 2007!. On the one hand I felt proud of Dylon for qualifying, but I also knew from past experience how he struggles on the slippery carpet at Crufts!. However he had earned his place so there was no question that we would not be attending, good or bad he deserved his "glory" at Crufts!.

### Friday - Crufts Senior Singles

To qualify to compete in this final, you have to collect points from special qualifying classes held throughout the year and the 17 dogs with the most points go forward to Crufts for the much contested final. So it was that Dylon, myself and Alison, who had agreed to come with me to act as my groom (actually she wanted to do the whole Crufts shopping thing!!), set off in Wilma, my new shiny car (she's great but that's another story!).

We arrived early but as usual were directed to car parking 1000 miles away from the arena, so we trudged our way towards the building armed with dog, bags, and cage, of which Alison had to carry most, as I needed a spare hand to smoke the million fags I needed to calm my nerves!. On arrival we obviously got lost and walked the length of 4 halls before retracing our steps to find the main ring, where we were to be based, just to the left of our original entrance point!.

The agility benching had been moved this year, with mixed opinions. We had what looked like an aircraft hanger to ourselves which was much less stressful for dogs and handlers, though the lighting left a lot to be desired – it was so dark!, and the air conditioning really didn't need to be on as it was freezing, and its continual humming sent us to sleep!. Anyway we set up "camp" and waited for the competition to start.

This year all the major agility competitions were to be held in the main ring, as the popularity of the sport had outgrown the previous special event ring, and as I stepped through the curtain and saw the never ending rows of seating, I nearly wet myself!. I stood on the start line trying desperately to remember the course – the gods were with me

however as not only did I take the right course, Dylon waited on the start line, stopped on his contacts and left all the poles up!, We finished 3rd, - even with held contacts!. What a good boy!. This however meant that he had to run again in the afternoon as the top 8 go through to the grand final. However, we were determined not to let this ruin the real reason for Crufts..... SHOPPING!, So we left a Dylon safely caged at the benches with other competitors looking after him and went off to spend some money!.

The afternoon final course looked fine and I saw no problems when I walked it but – whether it was nerves or the slippery surface, or Dylon was angry at me for going shopping all morning, we ran atrociously!. I lost count of the different variations of the course he took as I completely lost control and it didn't help that everybody packed into that huge arena found it hilariously funny! How I got to the end and out of the ring is a mystery to me!, it must have been the most embarrassing moment of my life! - Mercifully it is now a blur, blocked from my memory thank god for ever!!!!. Still all in all it had been a good day – loads of shopping and a third place, excellent!!!!.



### Sunday - Championship Class

To qualify to compete in this competition the dog must have won a Championship Agility Challenge Certificate within the year, and as Dylon had somehow done the business at the Chippenham show back in September, we were one of the lucky few!.

The day started out the same as Friday – million mile walk to the arena, cold dark but quiet benching and a friendly security guard that kept letting me out the fire door for a quick fag, every few minutes!! This competition is run in 3 sections, a jumping round, an agility round and the final (which consists of the dogs who have the best combined score of the 2 previous classes).

The jumping round came first, and as I walked the course I couldn't help but dread running it, as although the course was nice and suited Dylon, I couldn't help remembering the complete mess we made of Friday's final!

We had a late draw so the tension was really setting in, everyone seemed to be going clear and coping well with the fast course on the carpet, so I decided to relax and "go for it"! We got on the start line and all the nerves evaporated – Dylon ran his little heart out, listening to every command, and even though he slipped on the carpet a couple of times resulting in some widish turns – we crossed the line in FIRST place! The presentation was an amazing feeling, it was such a buzz to have 6000+ people all clapping and cheering whilst we received a lovely crystal engraved tankard for winning. This was an experience I will never forget!

The agility round was in the afternoon, but I decided I wanted to stay with Dylon this time, as I was concerned that he might have been stressed on Friday by our mammoth shopping escapade!, so I sat with him whilst Alison and Shauna went off to buy up Crufts!

The agility course was tricky and I was convinced that we would be eliminated at the dogwalk – tunnel trap, but apart from a very naughty leap over the A-frame contact he ran the rest lovely and although he finished with 5 faults, the combination of his score from this class and the

win from the morning's jumping class placed him in the evening's Grand Final!!

So back we went to the dark cold aircraft hanger, and once again I sat with Dylon, whilst Alison and Shauna made the most of the extra shopping time!. As the final grew nearer I started to get worried as there was no sign of my "groom"! Then news started to filter through that security had closed off the main arena from the rest of Crufts, ready for the evening performance, meaning that nobody could get through – Alison included!!! I had to laugh though when Alison rang, as she forgot to hang up afterwards and I was treated to 20 minutes of her shouting and swearing at a very flustered security guard! Her persistence paid off, however, and they arrived just in time!

The final course was definitely not suited to Dylon, there were lots of tight sharp turns and angles that powerful dogs like my Mr Dylbert just can't negotiate on carpet, so I knew before I ran that it wasn't to be..... and I was right! Apart from the once again naughty stride over the A-frame contact he tried his best but just could not get a grip on the carpet which unfortunately gave us an "E" as he skidded past the long jump and took it sideways!. Oh well it didn't matter I was still buzzing from winning the jumping in the morning!



So overall I enjoyed Crufts 2007. Dylon had 5 runs in all, and of which 2 were brill, 1 was good, and 2 were completely cr\*p!..... but that sums us up. As a partnership Dylon and I are "all or nothing"! Dylon to me is my "one in a million" and owes me nothing. I worship the ground his "fluffy paws" walk on..... and he knows it!, which is probably why he is so naughty sometimes!, but I wouldn't have him any other way!!!!!!!

*Sammie Stevens*

# Shankley's trip - to France

**Well I didn't expect to be packing Shankly's passport and Euros at the beginning of May this year. But that it exactly what I had to do when Shankly was selected to represent Great Britain at the Belgian Shepherd Dog World Championship which took place at Le Touquet, France between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May.**



*Shankley getting in some training.  
Photo courtesy Lynn Sheridan*

A squad of 9 individual dogs and handlers competed against BSDs from at least 15 other countries, with 4 of the squad also competing in the team event. We ran over 4 courses (2 agility and 2 jumping) using FCI rules (these do differ to the Kennel Club ones we are familiar with). The top 10 dogs from each of these courses competed in a final on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May along with the best unqualified member from each country.

In order to be selected for the squad we attended a qualifying event where we had to compete over 4 courses to FCI standard. Cazz came along to give moral support - and to keep me sane - and she also videoed all my runs. The courses were set and judged by Steve Croxford. Our best 3 runs were

allocated points and the top 9 dog and handler combinations were selected for the squad.

I have never been more surprised than when our names were called out for the squad. Cazz and I thought we would be making a discreet exit before the team talk - but had to stay. It was a relief the pub sold cider - I certainly needed it to calm my excitement.

Over the next few weeks some training events were arranged so that we could get together and practice over FCI style courses. This was really useful in building team spirit and gaining experience of what to expect in France.

Once we arrived in France it was non-stop. We had to book the squad in on the Wed before checking in at our 'dog friendly' hotel, which was right on the beach - great for dog walking. On Thursday we had a practice session and in the afternoon had the opening ceremony. This was quite an emotional experience - walking in behind your flag with the spectators cheering was a really great feeling.

The competition ran over 3 days, Friday for individual classes, Saturday for individual and team classes then Sunday was for both the finals. Three squad members made it to the finals, we were very proud of Andy and Skye, Julie and Razzle and Diane and Inka. Once all the competitions had finished there was a closing ceremony and the presentations for all the events taking part - including obedience, agility, etc. There had also been a breed show on the Sunday for all varieties.

As a 'first timer' it was a wonderful experience and not really as I expected. All the competitors cheered each other on and when we had to move the ring on Saturday morning to a more suitable piece of ground - everyone picked up fencing and equipment and carried it to the new ground a little way away. It was like a team of worker ants marching about.

A few thanks are required: the BSDA of GB (Belgian Shepherd Dog Association of Great Britain) and the WBSDS (the Working Belgian Shepherd Dog Society) who agreed to sponsor the squad with our transport, accommodation and tracksuits. Without their support this trip would not be easy. TuffStuff sponsored the team by providing leads. Thanks must also be given to all the people that have attended the fund raising events, taken time to set up training sessions and for WDTC for allowing us some training time at the show in April.

But special thanks must go to Mike Bacon, our team manager, who made sure we were always in the right place at the right time. I'd also like to thank Helen Brown and Louise Challis for their help in course walking and handling advice and to all members of the Squad, grooms and spectators for the mutual support over the whole event.

Yvonne Horner & Shankly

## Demonstrations

Thanks to Jill Lowe, the demonstration at **Dalton Barracks** was thoroughly enjoyed by both crowds of onlookers and club members alike, in fact was a bit of a knockout! I am sure Chris enjoyed challenging Mick (looked on by a jeering Harley supporters club – not sure those leathers were exactly club clothing!) As well as the knockout there was a chance for some useful training plus unlimited access to the channel weaves, (now available at every demo), and a slightly more challenging course in the afternoon. It was great to work in unison with the flyball squad, allowing each section to try their hand at either agility or flyball as well as impressing the public with the alternative 'doggy' sports on offer at WDTC. Jill will be organising a similar format at South Moreton Village Fete on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The knockout course will be tweaked so all size dogs will be able to compete against each other and will not overlap on any equipment.

### Rush Court Nursing Home

'Come and meet Wendy and her agile friends, today 3.00pm' was the announcement facing me as I entered Rush Court Nursing Home lounge. To whom were they referring? Jose, Jacky & Gio-Gio (my daughter) - or Bambi, Poppy, Honey, Laser & Kip? It was requested that as a prelude to the demo at their Garden Fete, a few members of the club would give a small talk about agility and introduce some dogs, and enjoy afternoon tea with the residents. The 'old folk' (plus relatives and staff) obviously miss the company of furry friends and loved having us there - I would imagine it is a similar rewarding emotion felt by Pat dog owners. The bunch of scruffy-mutt-looking dogs behaved impeccably.

The subsequent demonstration was also well received, the odd hiccup included Roxy's first encounter with a brass band (eventually deciding the musicians cream cakes were more interesting than Annette's

treats) and Gypsy did not let us down by finding the entrance to the refreshment lounge, but it was all taken in good spirit and was an invaluable experience for some of our younger dogs. It was nice to have some new club members, including a few veteran dogs who clearly still enjoy the experience. As the band played 'Raindrops keep falling on my head' the heavens opened, so thunder and lightning forced us to 'leg it' for tea and cake (shame?!).

All members are welcome to attend demos, if you email me I will forward details, alternatively please give me a call or watch the noticeboard. Please remember to practise what your trainers teach you and work within your dog's capabilities. I am keen to utilise the venues provided so if anyone has any specific requests, or sequences etc. or is able to assist with training or setting courses etc. please advise. At all demos I now request a dedicated ring for the entire event. We are currently looking into a PA system if anyone happens to be an expert in this field.

I am currently arranging a specific training slot for juniors at one of the forthcoming demos. Please provide names and ages of anyone interested. Even 4 year olds can start to follow numbers and learn names of equipment etc.

Wendy Botto 01235 817932, or [thebottos@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thebottos@tiscali.co.uk)

(You do not have to let me know if you are attending but it makes it less stressful for me if I know you are coming and I can plan relevant courses.)

*Jose with Honey & Poppy at Rush Court Nursing Home.  
Jose - Have you got a poo bag for Honey?!*



## Future demonstrations

**Saturday July 7th - Ladygrove Park School Didcot.** Follow the signs to Didcot Town Football Club on the Ladygrove area of Didcot and you will see the school just before the roundabout. I will provide precise directions nearer the time. We have entry from 10am for set up and training. Show opens 1pm. We have one display at 2pm but actually have the ring from 10am - 4pm. I will try to get a trainer and will again include competitions.

**Sunday 15th July - South Moreton Village Fete.** On the recreation ground at South Moreton. South Moreton is between

Wallingford and Didcot. We have our own ring throughout the afternoon. Arrive about noon.

**Saturday 25th August, Binfield Heath Flower Show and Fete.** Kiln lane, Binfield Heath arrive 12.30pm. Details to follow.

**Sunday 2nd September East Hendred Family Show.** Details tba.

Wendy Botto

## Agility boasts

Members had better watch their waistlines this season, as successful members bring in cakes and sweets to celebrate their wins! The following have won out this year:

**Louise & Spangle** won grade 3 agility at Chippenham in March, then, to show this was no fluke, won grade 3 agility AND jumping at WBSDS in April.

**Sue & Sky** won grade 4 agility at Easter Celebration in April.

**Deborah** is determined to show that whatever her son John can do, she can do, and won out of grade 2 with **Tay** at our show in April.

**Jenny & Deke** had a brilliant day at Chippenham in May, winning both grade 3 jumping and agility - winning into grade 4.

Deborah's win obviously rattled **John**, who responded by winning into senior (sounds better than grade 6) with **Quest** with an agility win at Lansdown last month.

And after a very successful year with lots of consistently high places, **Jose & Poppy** won out of grade 4 with an agility win - also at Lansdown.

We could fill a few pages with all the places that members have had this season. Congratulations to everyone.

But behind all the successes - don't forget that the most important thing is that you and your dog enjoy agility.

Roll on the second half of the season!



## Agility places mean points For you and the club

If you compete at agility, there are two schemes which tally up points and compile national tables. If you subscribe to Agility Eye, top 15 places are automatically (without you doing anything) gathered into a league, and if you elect for your points to go to Wallingford, then the club also benefits.

However, we would encourage members to subscribe to the Agility Club, who run a similar scheme. This takes top 10 places - and you have to send in your points. However, there are additional benefits in being a member of the Agility Club, including reduced entry to their show and the opportunity to compete in their training schemes (eg for instructors and judges). The Agility Club runs a Starters' Challenge for those in grades 1 and 2. Heats are run throughout the year and the top 2 (who were members **before** the show - you can't join **after** your 2nd place and qualify!) are invited to the final - which is held at their show in July (at Newbury Showground).

Both schemes include a monthly magazine - the Agility Club's Agility Voice is a rather more glossy affair, but both include interesting articles, show news and training features.

If you'd like to join the Agility Club - see a member of the Club who is already a member. By introducing a new member - they would get 3 free month's worth of subs!! I'm very happy to introduce anyone, and will bring application forms on Thursday evenings!! (And don't forget to nominate Wallingford as your club.)

Jacky Hutchinson

## Dates for your diary

**Saturday July 7<sup>th</sup>** - Ladygrove Park School, Didcot. Agility & Flyball demonstration. Entry from 10am for set up and training. Show opens 1pm.

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July** - South Moreton Village Fete. Agility and flyball demonstration.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> & Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July** - Knights teams competing at the Flyball tournament at Capstone.

**Thursdays 9<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> August** - no agility training - Summer break.

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August** - competition night at agility.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August** - Binfield Heath Flower Show and Fete. Agility demonstration.

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** - East Hendred Family Show. Agility demonstration.

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December** - last agility training before Christmas.

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008** - Wallingford's Open Agility Show at Newbury Showground.

## And finally

*Honey showed what a star she is when she had a successful audition earlier this year as Sandy in Annie. Honey performed impeccably in 5 of the shows in April at Maidenhead. This followed her successful stage debut in Newbury last year.*

*Congratulations to Jack Hodgkins who won the class for Most Adorable Puppy at Condicote Village Show with his new puppy Elly, 13 weeks, getting her well socialized ready for agility!!*