

Watchdog!

WALLINGFORD DOG TRAINING CLUB

November 2013



Above: Guido (left) and Rossi (right) with their winnings from the Winter League (and mascot!)



GOOD LUCK

to all club members competing at the

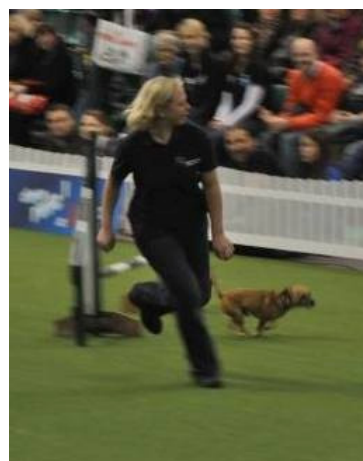


30th November – 1st December at the Hand Arena, Bristol

Editor's corner

The leaves are brown and the sky is grey.... yep, November has arrived! Basil and I made the trip to Discover Dogs last weekend to take part in the Rescue Agility Display (*right*), and I confess to a slightly teary moment as it was his first event since he was so desperately ill. He got a bit worried queuing up, but as soon as he was in the ring he was fine and did a lovely round at a good speed. It was nice to see some familiar agility faces there – competing, organising, and watching.

Results of the first winter league match are included in this issue, and in the next issue I hope to have results from the second match. Also coming up this month we have the away match against Andover, and the UKA Grand Finals which I know several club members have qualified for – GOOD LUCK EVERYONE! If you are going to the Grand Finals to compete or to watch, would you consider writing something for Watchdog? Or taking a few photos?



There was also a committee meeting recently; minutes below. If you have any burning issues you wish your committee to address, and you don't know who to talk to, please ask at training on a Thursday.

Alison Pearce



Wallingford DTC Committee Meeting Wednesday 23rd October 2013

Minutes from last meeting were accepted as read and those with outstanding tasks reminded.

Treasurers Report

- Accounts have been audited. Final copy being drafted and duplicated.
- £28.5k in the bank, down nearly £10k on last meeting due to remainder of cheques from show, Agility1st, Olympia, new equipment. Will be reimbursed for Olympia and Agility1st.
- Club to pay £200 towards the Olympia coach.
- Kevin looking at amalgamating the accounts – esp deposit account that pays interest.
- Agility just about paying for itself at the venue when considering cash payment.
- Need to review cost vs expense to check we are covering expenses.
- 2013 show approx £3.5k profit. Kevin to provide details at next meeting.

Agility Report

- The club has had a very successful summer with cakes and choccies appearing almost every Thursday evening. We've had several dogs in various finals and doing very well there.
- Juniors have also been successful with Gio-Gio travelling to Holland representing GB in the AFJ European Cup and finishing in 1st place. Crufts – Team, Gio-Gio, & Rory individual.
- Looking forward to December when Carolyn and Jenny will be going to Olympia.
- Rosie has bought tickets and is investigating a coach which will be subsidised by the club as it was last year.

- To help Carolyn and Jenny it would be good to set up a big course in the arena if we can decide when and how to do this. Suggest Wed 27th Nov before UKA finals and Olympia. Ian to organise for 2hrs – invitation only.
- More new members will be starting at the end of the month to fill the drop-out gaps from the last intake. Thanks to Dawn for organising the waiting list and liaising with new members.
- Aileen undertook the organisation of our entry to the Winter League (WL) where we finished last of the five clubs but had a lot of fun and some good results too. Thanks to Aileen for organising, club members who helped on the ring and congratulations to Jenny who did a very good job at her first judging appointment.
- Before the next WL outing on 30th November we have our away match against Andover (23rd November) to look forward to – thanks to Jenny for organising this.
- We had a new set of contact equipment delivered last month – thanks to Ian & Kevin for the splendid colour choice.
- Container – need sorting in January.
- Trailer – Discussion on do we need an extra set of equipment on the trailer? Wendy to action rubberising of 1 set of equipment with Francis. Can take the trailer down to Francis Bugler.
- Pegs – Wendy says Tony can fix them. Wendy to take and fix.

Survey Results – see separate report for detail

- Actions – Equipment monitor in the container directing the dispatch, an instructor at each end directing the layout. Carolyn to allocate 'Dispatchers and Directors' with Aileen as her deputy.
- Instructors to meet regularly – date of next meeting – 13 Nov proposed.
- Agility First – all to complete first module by next trainers meeting.
- Aims and objective – set out individually and discuss with the trainer.
- Twice per year extended competition night – beginning April
- More guest trainers – Wendy organised Barrie James, Jo organising grids for beginners.
- Attendance register needs completing weekly, can be a self-sign in.
- Instructors contact details to be distributed so that they can be notified if people can't attend.
- Newbies to be invited to join now to cover 2014. Jacky & Dawn to coordinate
- Aileen thanked Jenny for the 6 week training plan
- Also thanks to Jenny to organise the competition night.

Demo Report

- Demos need to be a bit more organised.
- Potentially teams or circular knockout?

2014/5 Show

- 2014 show has been cancelled, trade stands contacted.
- 2015 need to decide who is Show Sec. 18/19 April. Aileen volunteered with proviso that she gets help.

Winter League

- Recent result – came 5th but results close.
- Very enjoyable day
- Learn strategy for points and to allocate runs accordingly.
- Learn lessons from this event for the next.
- Thanks to Aileen for coordinating

Match – 23rd Nov

- Entries coming in
- Return match 9th Feb
- Caz and Yvonne judging

External Web

- Ian thinks Wetpaint (now Wiki Foundry – WF) is the best option, the servers have been updated and it all seems to work well now. New link to wiki – in Watchdog.
- Ian has mocked up some web-sites and distributed to Web team. Still awaiting feedback. Gill and Kathryn will look at templates and will send around the committee.

Venue

- Electrics
- Ian to chase Jane and offer to use her electrician.

AOB

- Gills Jacket – Karen organised, need to action, have received email from Gill asking about progress. Carolyn to contact Karen and get the information.
- Jacket – need to get Carolyn and Jenny jackets. Jo to email contact for Crazydogs.
- Facebook – compare members list to members on Facebook. Jacky to give list to Gill R. Gill to review current member list and propose policy. e.g. Guest trainers could be added temporarily. No more than 2 admins – Gill and Jo?
- Christmas party – Carolyn to organise.
- DONM – January 15th at Jo's.

Thanks to Jo for venue and cakes



Feedback from the Questionnaire ***– and what we are going to do about it...***

We were tasked to review the club and its training, and we started by carrying out an anonymous questionnaire (thank – you Kathryn for organising this) which was completed online by 25 members. The club currently has 35 active club members (of which 16 are instructors), so this represents about 75% response.

Background from the charts

Throughout this report, when referring to ‘members’ this refers to members who took part in the questionnaire.

Most members (19) train just one dog – three train 2 dogs and one trains 3 dogs. The majority (19) compete – with three members hoping / planning to in the future, and three who don’t compete. Just under half of those who completed the questionnaire (12) are instructors.

The majority of members (15) didn’t want to swap class times more often than once a year. The majority (14) felt that the length of the training sessions is about right.

The response to the number of dogs who regularly train in their group is rather puzzling – as 2 members stated 6, but we haven’t had 6 in a group for years. Maybe they were counting the

two groups together? 11 members were regularly in sub-groups of five, 8 in four and 5 in groups of three. Twice as many (16) felt that the number in the groups was about right as opposed to either too few (1) or too many (7).

There was a resounding yes (21) to the question of whether members should have training targets – with 4 saying they didn't want them. The majority (19) wanted to train on courses (as opposed to shorter exercises) more often - with half wanting them every 4 weeks, and the other half wanting them less often (the majority of the rest - 7 - voting for 8 weeks).

All but one said that they would like extra training workshops. When asked how they rated the training they received at the club, 1 rated it poor, 6 said it was satisfactory, 14 rated it good and 4 said the training was excellent.

Venue

Almost a dozen comments referred to problems with the venue (mainly the task of putting equipment out & away, and the dirt). The committee reviews this from time-to-time, but currently we aren't able to change the venue.

However, we should be able to make getting out the equipment easier if there was an 'equipment monitor' who stayed in the container while members were taking out equipment. They would have the 2 exercise plans, and as equipment was taken out – would be able to tell members which end the equipment should go. The instructors would be in the arena giving more specific location directions. The equipment monitor could be someone who isn't able to carry equipment, and could be more than one person who worked on a rota.

Carolyn & Aileen will coordinate equipment monitors. If you find carrying equipment difficult, can get to the venue at 7.30pm and would like to help – please let Carolyn know. Instructors need to include Carolyn & Aileen when they circulate their exercises. Also all members training in the first sessions need to get to the venue in time to start getting the equipment out at 7.30pm.

Instructors

Many comments were voiced about the importance of consistency across our instructors, especially for the newer members. Most of the instructors are working on the Agility1st course, which should help when they have had a chance to complete it. Groups may find that they have the same instructor for 8 weeks at a time.

8-week courses

We will run 8-week courses. Exercises will be designed in advance for 7 weeks – and sent to all instructors and equipment monitors. They will be designed with aims in mind (when members have agreed their aims & objectives, these would be incorporated into the exercises) so that skills can be built on. Week 8 of each course would be a course (oh dear – too many courses!) for the combined groups - as opposed to exercises. Twice a year (Spring & Autumn) we will hold a competition night. Members will be invited to come along for the whole evening, and each would do a jumping and an agility course, the aggregate worked out and rosettes & trophies awarded.

More guest trainers / workshops

These are always popular, and we will continue to organise these when & where possible.

Other stuff

Equipment: A small working party will hold an equipment 'renovation' day to stock take and fix broken equipment. If you have any carpentry or DIY skills – or you'd just like to help out -

please let Ian, or your instructor, know. Any excess equipment after the renovation day will be sold / offered to members. A new set of agility equipment has been bought. I'm sure you'll all appreciate the colour choice (made by Ian & Kevin!).

A register will be available in the kitchen area for members to tick themselves off each week as they attend. Instructors should double check that everyone from their groups has signed it. Members need to let instructors know when they aren't able to attend; if several members don't come on an evening instructors may merge groups. A list of instructors' email & mobile numbers will be made available to all members. New members would get their instructors' details highlighted so they knew who to contact.

All members will be encouraged to set themselves goals & aims. Long term goals (e.g. 6 months or a year – e.g. to qualify for the Agility Club Starters final) and any aims they need to achieve their goals (maybe to tighten up turns and speed up their weaves). These would be discussed with their instructor to ensure that members aren't being too ambitious, or not ambitious enough, and agreed. The instructor would then have the aims of the members in their class which would help them set exercises for the individual members in their group. We will start this in the new year – but everyone who wants to set their own aims can start to think about what they might set.

Training at a club will always be a compromise, with a range of experiences of both handlers & dogs, and volunteer instructors. And of course, there were sometimes opposing views on some topics from members. However, there was an overwhelming vote of confidence in the club. This included the friendliness of the members, the support & camaraderie, the willingness of members to help each other, the success (and the cakes!), the show, the newsletter (Watchdog), the good mix of experienced & inexperienced members, the demonstrations, the fact that it's a KC registered club, the mix of dogs, the Wiki & Facebook, and much, much more.

Wendy Botto, Kathryn Brocklehurst, Dawn Graham, Jacky Hutchinson, Jenny Kimber



Show Results



North Downs (KC) 9th Nov

Jill & Cass 2nd C4-5 Agility (149)
Gill & Mindy 3rd C3-5 Jumping (53)
Gill & Bertie 5th C3-5 Agility (50)
Jenny & Tess 8th G5 Jumping (72)
Jenny & Guv 8th C6-7 Jumping (136)
Annette & Maze 9th C4-5 Agility (149)
Gill & Mindy 10th C3-7 Agility (80)
Jenny & Guv 17th C6-7 Agility (136)
Tanya & Tess CR C4-5 Jumping (154)

GT (UKA) - 3rd Nov

Annette & Maze 1st Nov St I (36)
Annette & Maze 1st Nov St III (16)

Fox Agility (Ind) - 26th Oct

Annette & Maze 1st C1-7 Jump (26)

Annette & Maze 2nd C7 TF&O (18)

Annette & Maze 2nd C1-7 H/S (26)

BHC (KC) - 20th Oct

Aileen & Ozzie 1st C1-4 Jump (120)

Pam & Martha 2nd G3 Agility (77)
Sarah & Merlin 6th C1-4 Jump (120)
Aileen & Ozzie 8th C1-7 Jump (131)
Sarah & Merlin 8th G3 Agility (137)
Aileen & Rockett CR C1-4 Jump pt2 (119)
Sarah & Merlin CR C1-7 Jumping (131)

Bincknoll (Ind) - 19th Oct

Jose & Pera 1st G3-4 Steeplechase (13)

Jose & Pera 2nd G3-4 Jumping (13)
Dinah & Cinders CR G3-4 Jumping (13)

Winter League Match Results

Match 1 – 19th October

8am Saturday morning and already a flow of equipment being taken into the indoor arena. Very quickly the rings (3 of them) were set up for the first classes of the day. Each club provided one judge for half a day and also ring partied for that judge.

Our very own Jenny Kimber had set a lovely nursery agility course and it was not long before we were up and running (once the timing gates had arrived!) It was lovely to watch our nursery people make an amazing effort at the course. Many congratulations to Kayleigh - our first winner of the day with Guido and then 2nd with Rossi – wow (*right*)!

The way the rings are set up and the running orders work, it means that as a club we can watch others run and cheer every clear round. The atmosphere at the match was warm, supportive and competitive. The mixture of courses meant all grades were catered for. The whole day was completed with equipment all away and presentations done by 5pm!

As a Club we came a very creditable 5th (only 7 points behind Diamond Dogz who came 4th!). It is fascinating to see how handlers/dogs with faults or even with eliminations still managed to gain points for the club, provided they made a good effort to complete the course. A full set of the results are available on the WDTC Facebook group, well done everyone! Clear rounds and places went to the following:



Kayleigh & Guido 1st Nursery Agility

Gill & Mindy 1st G1-3 Agility

Wendy & Foxie 1st G2-5 Jumping

Jill & Cass 1st G2-5 Agility

Kayleigh & Guido 2nd G1 Jumping

Pam & Martha 2nd G1-3 Jumping

Kayleigh & Rossi 2nd Nursery Agility

Carolyn & Ollie 2nd G3-7 Agility

Pam & Martha 3rd G2-5 Agility

Dawn & Daisy 3rd G1 Jumping

Maria & Belle 3rd G1 Jumping

Gill & Bertie 3rd G3-7 Jumping

Wendy & Tatti 3rd G6-7 Jumping

Ian & Dino 4th G3-7 Agility

Debbie & Blix 4th G1-7 Agility

Carolyn & Ollie 4th G3-7 Jumping

Ian & Ozzie 5th G3-7 Jumping

Ian & Dino 6th G3-7 Jumping

Carolyn & Ollie 6th G6-7 Jumping

Aileen & Rockett CR G1-3 Jumping

Wendy & Bambi CR G3-7 Jumping

Aileen & Rockett CR G3-7 Jumping

Jill & Cass CR G3-7 Jumping

Gill & Shade CR G3-7 Jumping

Dawn & Daisy CR 1-3 Jumping

Pam & Martha CR G1-3 Agility

Wendy & Tatti CR G1-7 Agility

Gill & Tess CR G3-7 Jumping

Next match is 30th November. Unfortunately this clashes with the UKA finals, but at the same time as wishing all those who have qualified for the finals well, I am hoping that those who are free will come and join us. Let me know if you would like to take part on the 30th – we really need some more G1 dogs – dogs jumping at full height (there were no weaves in the G1 courses!) – something to aim for maybe?

Aileen Watson

Loki stars as Mr March

Welcome to the latest calendar-boy in the Scruffy Mutts 2014 calendar from “The Little Dog Laughed” collection:



Left: Loki in the calendar drawing



Right: The original photo

We have regularly used these cards within our family as they always make us laugh with the beautiful drawings and the funny captions. I saw the call earlier this year for entries for the 2014 calendar, and thought I'd give it a go...

This photo was taken just after Loki's first ever village dog show, where he won first prize in the 'scruffiest mutt' class. At the time I wasn't sure whether to be proud or offended – I'd actually groomed him before we went and personally I thought he looked quite smart! Anyway, despite my misgivings, you can see how Loki felt 😊. So this was the photo I sent in, and I'm proud to say... Loki was selected for the 2014 calendar!

I am so impressed with how Anna has captured his personality from a picture – the caption just makes it! Not only is he a calendar-boy, but actually he stars in the card collection too, and there are even Loki sweet tins! Guess what the family are getting for Christmas this year...??

Fame at last!

From his very proud Mum, Kathryn Brocklehurst

Lazer - 4 April 2000 - 6 October 2013

"The closest I'll go to getting a collie is a poodle - collie cross" I replied - when, after 2 standard poodles - neither of whom were great at agility - friends urged me to get a collie. I ended up with Lazer - a second generation poodle x collie who was more poodle than collie. He was just what I wanted - and we became the best of friends.

However, he wasn't easy in those early years. I remember realising that I may never be able to do agility with him when the first time I took him to Blewbury he went NUTS. He could never 'do nothing'. In an agility queue he was either yelling and pulling to have his turn - or I was having my shoulders pulled as I played tuggie with him.

The first 4 years before I had him castrated were difficult. He was pretty macho - he didn't exactly pick a fight - but he was very fast to react if a dog looked at him. When camping at shows I used to get up at silly-o' clock in the mornings to walk him when there were few other dogs round. However, I learnt that if I took a ball or a tuggie - and played with him throughout the walk - he was focused on me and was more manageable. And for the rest of his life - I always had a toy with me when we went for a walk.



When he was castrated, I got the vet to X-ray his hips as he very occasionally showed slight lameness on his hind legs. There was bad - and good news following this op. The bad news was that he had pretty bad HD - Hip Dysplasia. I didn't get them scored, but when the vet showed me Lazer's X-ray image - and contrasted it with one of healthy hips - the difference was very noticeable.

I got advice from vets who did agility (including Simon Tappin) - should I give up agility? The overwhelming advice was to continue with agility, and apart from the occasional lameness, it never ever really bothered him. On the contrary, I believe that the agility kept his muscles toned, and helped keep him mobile and active. The good news was that he became a much more chilled, easy-going dog after the op.

His agility career started off really well. Carolyn & Max, Rosie & Daisy and me & Lazer were all competing at about the same level. All three of us won out of Starters over one great year. Lazer had the ability to do better and keep pace with Max & Daisy up past grade 3 if he'd had a more agile handler. However - we both enjoyed our agility and had great fun!

Lazer was very enthusiastic - if a tad clumsy - falling off the dog walk more than a couple of times. Ian posted his most spectacular fall on Vimeo - and if you Google 'Vimeo Hutchinson

Lazer' keywords – you can see it. Or go to <http://vimeo.com/1363170> (this sometimes doesn't seem to work for us at the moment, but has done).

Lazer had a great sense of smell – and he loved 'find it' games. I'd sit him by the back door in a wait (which was good in that situation – not so good at the start of agility competitions) and I'd hide the ball somewhere out of sight in the garden – then I'd send him to find it. He rarely needed any clues from me before he'd bring it back – very pleased with himself. If we lost the ball on a walk I'd ask him to 'Find it' – and he'd scoot off in search mode. I noticed that if this was on our usual walk down the lane – he'd canter off downwind. That is – if the wind was blowing left to right – he'd canter down the right hand side of the track – so that he would pick up scent from across the whole lane. What a clever boy!

Lazer just loved doing things – and everything we did together he did with great enthusiasm. I do miss my big, grey, scruffy, rather noisy boy.

Jacky Hutchinson

The Agility Warrant

The Agility Warrant is awarded by the Kennel Club to any dog that consistently does well on courses, regardless of the grade. Well maybe it's not quite that easy – or is it?



Have you ever wondered why, when listening to announcements of placed dogs some have the addition of Agility Warrant Bronze AW(B), or Silver AW(S) or Gold AW(G) after their name. This is something that anyone competing at KC shows could be working towards. Did you know that every time you do a **clear** round in a standard course at a KC show you can claim 1 point (jumping) or 2 points (agility)? And if you get a top 10 place then points are awarded accordingly. All the details of numbers of points can be found in your KC agility record book.

Left: Dee Jays Ozzie Turbo Rockett AW(B) achieved in August this year.

How do you achieve your Agility Warrant? Simply keep a record of every clear round your dog achieves – you will need to record the date, the show, the class, the place and the number of points achieved. Once you achieve 200 points (25% of which must be gained from agility rounds) you can download a pdf form AW07 from the Kennel Club website www.thekennelclub.org.uk and start listing your successes! Send it off and 'hey presto' you too could have a certificate!

To achieve silver a dog needs to have gained 400 points; for gold - 800 points. Each achievement must consist of at least 25% points gained from agility classes.

The recording of dogs' points can also be useful if you want to move your dog through the grades 1-4. At the handler's discretion a dog may progress up to Grade 4 by winning 100 points at each grade. If this method of progression is selected, the handler must ensure the Show Secretary signs the dog's Agility Record Book at the

first show entered at the higher grade. There is no time limit on this progression, however, once a dog has progressed, it cannot return to a previous grade.

Why an Agility Warrant? Kudos? What does it take? Persistence, determination and a willingness to keep records – possibly over years!

Jaysali Young Rockett AW(G)

Rockett finally gained her 800th point and achieved her gold warrant on 25th August 2013. Definitely a moment to celebrate. Her first point was gained with a clear round on 25th April 2009. Her 800 points have included:

85 jumping clear rounds (less than 10th place)
31 agility clear rounds (less than 10th place)
And by no means least:
87 top 10 places (agility/jumping)

Right: Rockett with her Gold Warrant certificate.



Bertie Russell and Hope's Messenger

Many congratulations also go to Gill Rhodes and her dogs: Bertie Russell AW(B) who attained over 200 warrant points at the Wallingford show in April this year and Hope's Messenger AW(B) (Mindy) who attained over 200 points at the Wellingborough show this year. They both received their Agility Warrant Bronze certificates in the summer (*pictured above*). At Southdown's this year (end of September) they both reached over 400 warrant points so their Silver agility warrant certificates have been applied for too.

Aileen Watson

“Pup 2 Perfection” DVD review

Pup 2 Perfection from Lauren Langman and Devon Dogs promises to guide you through raising a focussed, happy, well-balanced puppy with all the skills to be a great pet and a great sports dog. As I have previously been on a couple of training days with Lauren, I know that I enjoy her training style, and I was looking forward to seeing this dvd.

The dvd does unfortunately suffer from the curse of so many agility dvds, that the volume balance between voices in the clips, voice-over and music is often not quite right. You have to be prepared to overlook this, and concentrate on the content.

Despite the blurb, this is not a dvd on raising a pet puppy. Things like housetraining, chewing, walking on the lead, car travel are never mentioned at all. Lauren does mention having a well-balanced pet a lot, and some other dog activities e.g. heelwork to music, obedience, but to be honest it all comes across on screen as a dvd for someone who wants to train an agility dog.



The dvd is in two parts. Disc 2 covers all the same topic headings as Disc 1, but progresses it all on to the next level. There is a massive focus on play, particularly tugging, but also retrieve. The dvd does also show the pup being able to switch between food and toys, and between different toys, and working with toys as distractions, which I liked as it is a skill many dogs lack.

There also sections on recall, life skills, confidence and creativity (hands up all those whose dogs will walk on bubble wrap?!). The dvd does work better for someone with prior knowledge of dog training and agility training, as not all the steps are explained in every clip. The clips are not all pre-planned and mistakes happen, so you do get to see how Lauren works through this and gets the pup back on track if she disengages, but sometimes this all happens so fast it is not talked through. I honestly think Lauren does some things automatically without really analysing it!

For me, as I like the trainer, this dvd is like having a little pocket-sized Lauren to motivate me and inspire me whenever I need a boost, and I have dipped in and out of it many times since the original watching. The thing I really like about Pup2Perfection over other dvds such as Crate Games or Q-Me is that so many of the training sessions are less than 2 minutes, you see the whole thing, and you really can fit it in without being in a certain place with certain equipment or planning a particular training session.

This dvd doesn't look at teaching your pup any agility body language, or any behaviour with equipment, or any other specific agility skills. The main things this dvd covers are play, self control, dealing with distractions, and being confident and happy in different environments. So many dogs struggle with trying to learn agility purely because they are in a new place with lots of distractions, and I feel this dvd offers the foundation to the foundations!

Alison Pearce

Don't forget to send your pictures, successes, stories, show reports, judging reports, demo reports and anything else you think might entertain us for the next issue