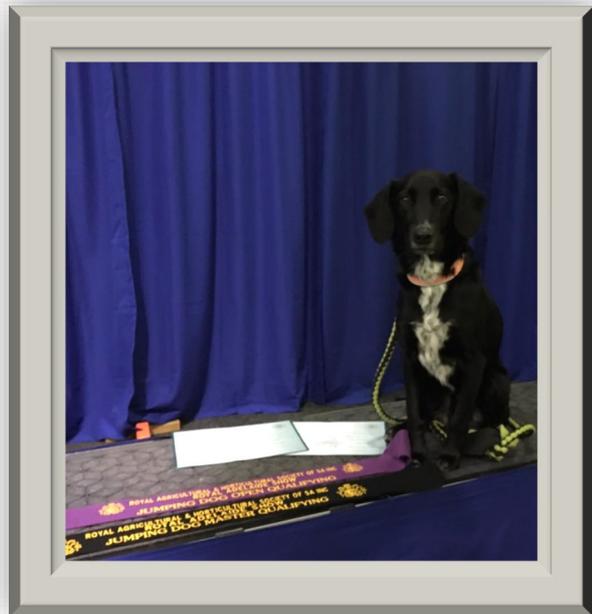


ONE JUMP AHEAD

October 2017 Edition

Some of our very own stars who did
really well at this years
Royal Adelaide Show!

Jordi, Harry, Hunter and Luna.



OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE AGILITY DOG CLUB OF SA
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NEW COMMITTEE 2017



President:	Geoff Sykes	8373 0751	gsykes7@bigpond.com	Records Officer
Vice President:	Michelle Vuaran	0417877080	msvuaran@gmail.com	Historian/ Minutes Secretary/ Newsletter
Head Instructor:	Ingrid Hanegreefs	8556 7385	ihanegreefs@bigpond.com	Public Officer
Treasurer:	Tanysha Jeffree	0421 906 527	tanyshajeffree@yahoo.com.au	
Secretary:	Rosalind King	0433 403 410	rosalind.king @adelaide.edu.au	Fundraising
Committee:	Pin Needham		vet@glenside-vet.com.au	Sponsorship
	Kathy Bannister	0400 148 674	kn.bannister@bigpond.com	Catering
	Cathy Warcup	8538 7217	KateWA440@gmail.com	Equipment
	Tam Holmes	0409 630 391		Fundraising
Sub Committee:	Jo Shirlock	8277 2271	koojar1@bigpond.com	Trial Secretary

Membership Fees 2017

Single \$60.00*

Single \$15.00 Joining Fee
(new member) \$60.00 Annual Fee

Family \$90.00

Junior (under 17) \$30.00

Social \$30.00

Committee and Instructor \$15.00

*if paid by 31st March in the
current year

Instructors

Head Instructor -

Ingrid Hanegreefs

Ass. Head Instructor -

Michelle Vuaran

Instructors

Mika Peace

Karen Moralee

Julie Brown

Ros King

Aspiring
- Kathy Brown

Geoff Sykes

Cathy Warcup

Note from the Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

Agility Advisory Committee AGM / Awards

Monday 16th November

Time: 7pm Venue: Dogs SA, Kilburn

Last Training Night for 2017

Thursday 23rd November

ADCSA Break up / Awards Night

Thursday 30th November

Time: 7pm Venue: Club grounds

Bring a plate of food to share and BYO



Happy Trialling and Training

Michelle and Skye



RAFFLE



Geoff has been busy making some fantastic jumps which will be raffled at our Anniversary Trial in November.



First prize: 2 sets of Jumps

Second Prize: 1 set of Jumps

Third Prize : 1 set of Jumps



RAFFLE BOOKS OUT NOW!!!



Training Information



2017 Training Schedule

	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
6:50 - 7:30pm	Set up Equipment			
7:30 - 8:20pm	Introductory	Beginners &	Graduate	Advanced
8:20 - 8:30pm	ANNOUNCEMENTS			
8:30 - 9:30pm	Trialling 200/300/400/500/600			
9:30 -	Pack up			

The committee appreciates our members that come regularly every week and help set up and pack up. Your help is invaluable and helps us start training on time, which benefits us all!



Reminder

Membership Fees and Trial Entry Fees can be paid directly to our club bank account.

Account: 6129 7807 BSB: 805 050

Payment by bank deposit is encouraged as it reduces cash handling, fees and is traceable.

Club Shop

Cloth Title Badge \$5.50



Dog Leads (various sizes) \$10.00



Cloth Logo Badge \$5.50

Bag of Dog Treats \$2.00

Club Metal Badge \$5.00

Sublimated Polo Shirt \$45.00



Club Sticker (round) \$4.00



Rugby Jumper \$75.00

Club Sticker (long) \$4.00

Soft Shell Jacket \$75.00

Agility Bumper Sticker \$2.00

(All clothing orders will require a deposit)

Tea & Coffee 50¢

Water & Soft Drink \$1.00

Chocolate Bars \$1.00



PLACE ORDERS NOW!!!

The club uniforms are made especially for our club so we need to place orders now!

**Email Michelle—
msvuaran@gmail.com or
ring 0417 877080**



Presidents Report 2017

The end of the year is upon us. Where did that time go and why isn't Ben Nevis trialling yet? Sometimes things don't quite go to plan, especially where dogs are concerned. Oh well, there's always next year.

November is a particularly busy month in the Club and even more so this year because we are celebrating our 25th Anniversary. There are some events that you need to put down on your calendar, or in your phones, or wherever you record such things. The first is the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 2nd November. The AGM takes the place of training on that night. It's the only formal meeting that we have so please make the effort to attend and make an input into the coming year.

The second important date is the 25th Anniversary Trial on Saturday 25th November. This is a twilight trial and we have a few surprises in store to help celebrate the occasion. As usual I am on the lookout for Stewards so please let me know if you can help at that Trial.

Lastly there's our Awards Presentation on Thursday 30th November. Once again there isn't any training on that night. We will start at 7:00pm with a fun event for your dogs. That will be followed by supper and members attending are asked to bring a plate of food to share. Mainly we need salads but tasty desserts are also very much appreciated. Please bear in mind that our facilities to keep food hot or cold are very limited and plan accordingly. After supper we will present awards to those who have excelled in Trials in the last year.

The AGM is an important occasion for the Club as the Treasurer reports to the membership and the Committee for the next year is elected. We cannot function without people to do the work of running the club. These people are the Committee Members and Instructors.

The Committee comprises a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and four Committee Members plus the Chief Instructor as an ex-officio member. In addition to the normal duties involved for each office bearer, Committee Members also take on the administrative roles of Trial Manager, Trial Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Equipment Officer, Membership officer, Catering Officer, Records Officer and Historian. However these roles can be filled by volunteers from the general membership, such as Jo Shirlock currently serving as Trial Secretary.

Please take a minute to consider whether you might be able to help your Club in one or other of these roles. I realise that this takes quite a commitment on your behalf but, as I said earlier, it is essential that these jobs are done so that the Club can continue to provide training and conduct Trials in Dog Agility. If you have any queries then any member of the current Committee would be only too pleased to discuss this with you.

Until then, enjoy your dogs and remember to have fun at Agility.

Geoff Sykes



Assistant Instructors Report

Megan Bell Seminar October 2017. Hosted by Epic Dog Agility and Gawler Dog Club.

I attended the Megan Bell seminar this month. It was an amazing opportunity to learn from a fantastic agility competitor and instructor. A number of our instructors and members attended and we all learnt so much and had fun with our dogs (in my case without, unfortunately). We went through walking and tackling courses depending on your dogs ability. How to execute front, blind crosses and I even learnt some new ones like "Flind" -Front/blind cross and "blended front cross". So one thing which has stuck in my head is, you MUST have completed your front cross by the time your dog takes off for the jump!

Michelle Uaran



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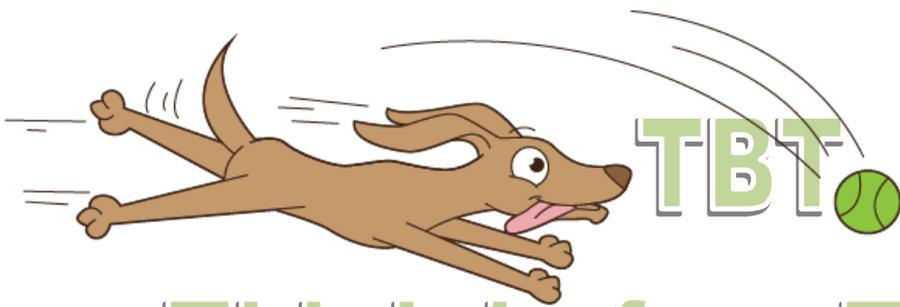
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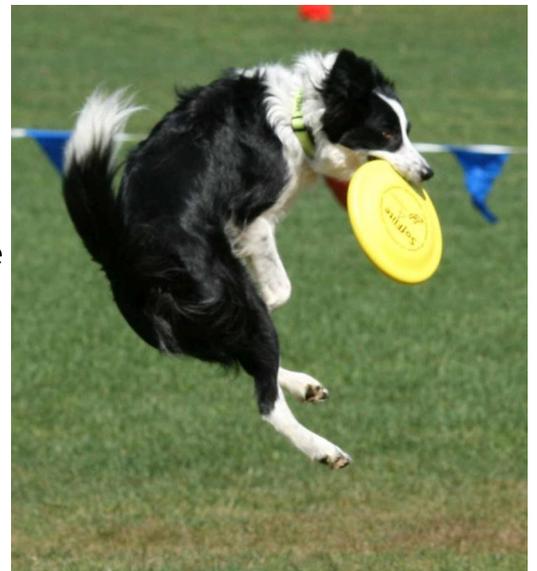
Think before Throwing

In the past two days, I have worked with two dogs injured from overzealous ball playing, fetching, retrieving at quick paces, or whatever you want to call it. When I mentioned to both owners they would need to discontinue this activity for a while to let the dog heal, they both responded in despair with questions of how would they be able to exercise or tire out their energetic dog. And there were also interjections of how much the dog loves to play with the ball and disc. The fact that their dog was injured did not appear to be a concern. The real concern was how impossible it would be to stop doing this activity.

It occurred to me that many people feel this strong NEED to continuously throw a ball or other object for their dog, have them retrieve it, and repeat until the dog almost drops from exhaustion. Nothing seems to deter people from doing this – not even lameness. In both the recent dogs I worked with, the owners admitted the ball throwing in their yard caused the lameness and pain. However, they could not give it up, even though it was hurting their dog physically because the psychological stress to the dog and owner would be too much.

I look at things from a physical standpoint first and adhere to the rule of causing no harm. So, for me, this is a no brainer type of thing to deal with. There are many behaviours that can be used to replace ball playing and many types of activities and exercise that can be used safely to 'tire' the dog out. So, I am just going to go out there on a limb and publically state – I hate this exercise and in my opinion, it is the cause of more injuries to dogs who are not fit than any canine sport out there!

Let's first look at the breakdown of a short retrieve. And by this, I mean tossing a ball or other object repetitively. The take off to retrieve the ball is an explosive movement. Many muscles are working to propel the dog forward, inclusive of the core and hindlimbs. Basically, the entire body works to move the dog forward quickly. The dog is focused on the movement of the ball and direction changes, rather than its own safe movement. Then comes the real stress of this motion — slowing down to grab the ball. The dog must use its muscles eccentrically to put the brakes on and grab the ball. The large muscles of the hips, shoulder and trunk need to work very hard to slow the dogs' body down so it can safely and effectively pick up the ball. If the dog does not have the strength to do this, we often see it wipe out completely and fall on its face or we watch the hindlimbs dangerously move in front of the dogs' body. Of course, we see this more often as the number of repetitions continues. The more fatigued the dog becomes, the less control they have over body movement.





Think before Throwing

Injuries can occur to the dog's shoulders if the forelimbs slip while they are running full out with their heads in the air. Injuries to the iliopsoas and the lower back are also very common due to the lack of control of forward motion. Injuries to the spine may also occur, and of course, additional soft tissue injuries to the face, toes, wrists and hock. Unfortunately, this type of activity is very often performed without a warm up. I hear countless stories of owners who take their dog out in the morning, stand on their back porch and throw a ball ten to fifty times to help decrease its energy. There are many alternatives to this exercise, and I am sure your dog will love them.

Core work can burn more energy than playing fetch. While drinking your morning coffee, ask your dog to perform sit-to-stands on the K9 Kore Disk. Repeating this until the dog is tired will focus on both their strength and their training. Of course, this can be done any time throughout the day because it's easy to incorporate into normal household routines. Teaching your dog to back up onto and over the Disk, BISkit or another object will also work their core and their hind end awareness. If your dog is able, you can add in side-stepping on and off an object.

Walking with exercise intervals is one of my favourite activities. If you only have ten minutes, taking your dog out for a ten-minute walk and breaking it up with intervals is a wonderful way to mentally and physically stimulate it. Bring a stop watch or set your phone and begin with a one minute fast walk. After a minute, ask your dog to perform ten sit-to-stands. Then continue for another fast minute walk. Then ask your dog for stand-to-sit-to-downs, and reverse. You can continue with this and add in walking backwards, side steps, etc. Both the mental and physical stimulation is a great way to exercise your dog.

If you **MUST** play fetch or ball with your dog, there are definitely things you can do to prepare your dog's body for the activity:

Begin with slow and controlled ball playing. Start with short distances and a small number of reps.

Always keep the throwing low and controlled.

Do not do this on a slippery surface – such as wet grass, ice or snow.

If your dog is exhibiting signs of lameness during the activity or after, **STOP!!**

Help your dog build good core strength **BEFORE** ball playing (see previous BLOGS)

Keeping it Safe!

Dr. Debbie

Posted on June 1, 2017 by Martha McCormick on the Toto Fit, LLC website





Border collie World Record Attempt 2017—576 dogs!!



Michelle Vuaran, Cathy Warcup, Geoff Sykes and Judy Magarey outside the ADCSA tent. We had number of enquiries and interest about the club, hopefully we get loads of new members as a result! Great job to all those who helped on the day (Geoff Sykes, Michelle Vuaran, Cathy Warcup, Lindsey Newton, Judy Magarey, Natalie Mudge and Carly Butler for setting up, manning the tent and participating in agility demonstrations.



Anyone find Skye????



Border Collie Owners of SA got together with their pets. This time 576 dogs were confirmed to have attended the event in Willaston shattering the old record of 503 dogs in 2013!

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Poles are made from dowel or PVC and
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Contact Cathy Warcup for
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KateWA440@gmail.com



Congratulations

Royal Show results 2017



Our Club members did an amazing job at this years Royal Adelaide Show with numerous passes and placing within the top 4 placings in many events. Well done!

Master Strategic Pairs:

- 1st - Neville Cox & Rio
- 1st - Karen Moralee & Kaisias
- 2nd - Mel Maiolo & Murphy
- 3rd - Ros King & Harry

Excellent Strategic Pairs:

- 1st - Mika Peace & Dash
- 2nd - Julie Jones & Rimini Wild Child
- 4th - Karen Moralee & Sparky
- 4th - Robyn Jackson & Reko

Novice Strategic Pairs:

- 1st - Penny Baldock & Yarrancoly Kickstart My Heart
- 1st - Kate Denman & Alaska

Master Snooker:

- 2nd - Kathy Brown & Kim
- 3rd - Tam Holmes & Hunter
- 4th - Jo Shirlock & Karri

Excellent Snooker:

- 4th - Jo Shirlock & Luna

Novice Snooker:

- 1st - Julie Jones & Rimini Wild Child





Congratulations



Master Agility:

- 1st 400 - Ros King & Harry
- 2nd 400 - Neville Cox & Rio
- 1st 600 - Karen Moralee & Isabeau
- 2nd 600 - Mika Peace & Mason



Open Agility:

- 4th - Mika Peace & Mason

Excellent Agility:

- 1st 200 - Jenny Pearson & Jazzy
- 1st 400 - Karen Moralee & Sparky
- 2nd 400 - Judy Magarey & Jordi

Novice Agility:

- 1st 500 - Marie Warming & Tookurra Seaside Serenade
- 1st 400 - Jo Shirlock & Luna
- 2nd 400 - Lyn Fuller & Donriver Rocket Science

Master Jumping:

- 2nd 400 - Neville Cox & Rio
- 3rd 400 - Ros King & Harry
- 4th 400 - Mel Maiolo & Murphy
- 1st 600 - Mika Peace & Mason

Open Jumping:

- 1st - Judy Magarey & Jordi
- 2nd - Mika Peace & Mason
- 4th - Tam Holmes & Hunter

Excellent Jumping:

- 1st 200 - Jenny Pearson & Jazzy
- 1st 400 - Nerissa Haby & Willow
- 1st 500 - Marie Warming & Tookurra Seaside Serenade

Novice Jumping:

- 1st 400 - Judy Magarey & Jordi
- 2nd 400 - Lyn Fuller & Donriver Rocket Science
- 3rd 400 - Julie Jones & Rimini Wild Child



Calendar of Events 2017

October		
7th	Noarlunga Obedience Dog Club	Agility 9am and 1pm
15th	Gawler Dog Training Club	Agility 9am and 1pm
21st—22nd	Blue Lake Obedience Dog Club	Agility 8:30am and 12pm
28th	Munno Para Obedience Dog Club	Agility 6pm
November		
11th	Southern Districts Dog Obedience Club	Agility 6pm
26th	Agility Dog Club of SA	Agility 6pm
December		
31st	Gawler Dog Training Club	Agility 6:30pm



Annual General Meeting

2nd November 7pm

Please keep this date free! Thursday 2nd November.

There will be no training on this night. Please support the club and the committee by attending this meeting at 7pm. Coffee, tea and light refreshments will be available

The committee is made up of number of important roles which help to keep the club running. If you are interested in assisting or taking on any of the these roles whether it be as a committee member, secretary, treasurer or newsletter editor, please discuss with Geoff or one of the other existing committee members.



Committee Positions

President– Manage monthly meetings and the AGM. Represent the club.

Vice President-Assist the President with their duties when required

Secretary- Record and maintain minutes, receive and sent out correspondence. Prepare and circulate documents for meetings (both committee and AGM) e.g. agenda and minutes.

Treasurer—Receive all monies payable to the club and give receipts. All money received will be placed into a bank account of the club. Present a financial balance at each committee meeting (monthly) and AGM (annually). Keep proper accounts of all monies received and disbursed.

Examples of duties– pay monthly rental on grounds, prepare monthly financial balance, bank monies received from trials and membership

Committee Member Jobs

These are NOT necessarily committee positions so attendance of meetings may not be required.

Membership Officer—Take membership enquires and process membership forms throughout the year. Membership intake is monthly.

Committee Positions

History Officer– Collate information of events throughout the year and compile into a folder. E.g. Master titles, AgCh awards,

Newsletter Editor– Publish 4 newsletters throughout the year. Newsletter can include information regarding trials, new handling techniques, administration e.g. membership, fees



Equipment Officer — Maintain Club equipment; ensures that equipment is repaired as necessary; organises new and replacement equipment; conducts Working Bees as required. Any club member is eligible to apply. Would suit someone who is handy with some tools and likes fixing things or has a willingness to learn.



Trial Secretary/Assistant Trial Secretary — Manage the entries for 5 Agility Trials per year and two Games Trials next year; receive Trial entries and monies; publish Trial Catalogues; register competitors and oversee vetting; prepare Qualifications Cards; issue Marked Catalogues.



Trial Manager – Appoint Judges and SACA Reps for Trials; prepare the Trial Schedule for publication in the DogsSA Journal; recruit Stewards for each Trial; organise trophies and prizes; set-up the rings for each Trial; manage the allocation of equipment to each ring; manage the conduct of the Trial; supervise packing up after the Trial; ensure that Judges and Stewards are paid; conduct the presentation of prizes and Qualification Cards.

Records Officer – Maintains records of Club Members' results at Trials in SA; Calculate end of year point scores; obtain trophies and certificates for placegetters; conduct the awards' presentation.

Please speak to Geoff Sykes if you are interested in volunteering.



Motivation Dos and Don'ts

By Rachel Sanders
Photos by Karen Hocker

The concept of playing with toys and frequently rewarding behaviors to increase drive and motivation is not new to agility handlers. Still, the practical application of this concept is often not so easy when attempting to increase motivation. To address the problem let's consider three major topics: handler interaction, reinforcement, and handler habits.



Handler Interaction

Handler interaction is what you do to reward the dog and includes the dog's reaction to that reinforcement. My analogy for the reactions some of our dogs give us during our attempts to reward and play with them follows (my apologies to all grandmothers out there).

Remember when you were a child and it was time for one of those family visits? You pulled up to your grandmother's house with a slight feeling of dread, and as you walked to the front door, you saw the shadow of your grandmother approaching. You winced wishing, just for once, she wouldn't give you that sloppy kiss on the cheek and remark on how much bigger you had grown!

In contrast, do you remember the excitement and anticipation of a trip to the zoo, to a theme park, or to a friend's party?

When we attempt to motivate our dogs, we unintentionally tend to send our dogs to "grandmother's house" and not to the "friend's party." When playing with and rewarding your dog, take notice of his demeanor and ask yourself: Is he at his grandmother's or at a party? Are his ears perky, his tail wagging, and is he moving around you in an excited manner or is he standing still, recoiling away with ears and tail down? Change your behavior to a party and you will get a more excited and energized agility partner.



Motivating many dogs is not as simple as revving them up at the start of an exercise and tossing a toy or dispensing a treat at the end. Motivation is much more about building a partnership of fun, while you laugh at the goofs and participate in the reinforcement. It takes effort and genuine pleasure on our part to excite the dog about agility and turn a lackluster dog into an exuberant one.

Picture this scene: The dog arrives at the training field and is placed into a down-stay, while the handler walks the exercise. The dog may move a couple of times during the walk-through and the handler must leave the walk-through to place the dog back in a down-stay. Once the walk-through is complete and questions on handling are answered, the handler releases the dog from his stay and brings him out to the start of the exercise. He may have been played

with briefly but most often, the toy or treat is wafted in front of the dog's face and he views it without much interest. The dog then is asked to sit. The handler leads out and releases the dog, wondering why the dog doesn't spontaneously combust into the fast and furious speed demon she wished she had when they walked onto the course.

During the exercise, the dog may or may not pick up speed and as he completes the last obstacle in the sequence, a toy is tossed for him while the handler turns to me and says, "See what I mean? He's just not fast enough." Or the dog completes the last obstacle and stands looking expectantly at his owner. The handler gives him a treat and tells him he's a good boy. Perhaps I have exaggerated to make a point—perhaps not!

Reinforcement

Now imagine this alternative: The dog arrives at the training field and is either tethered or put into his crate. The owner walks the exercise without distraction, asking any necessary handling questions. When done, she is ready for the dog. She asks the dog to sit and either unties the dog or opens the crate. On a release cue the dog breaks from the sit position and is rewarded with a game of tug, followed by a couple of tricks, such as left or right spins, walk back, or rollover; these tricks are again reinforced with a game of tug.

The dog and handler tug to the start of the exercise. The dog is asked to sit and the handler leads out and starts the exercise. At the end of the sequence, the handler calls the dog and engages in a brief game, allowing the dog to jump up, patting the dog's sides and the like. The handler then produces a toy or treat, continuing the play and perhaps asking for additional tricks during the game.



What are the key points in the second scenario to note?

- If you crate or tie your dog when he is waiting his turn, you won't be distracted during your walk-through and you won't need to nag your dog about not staying in place.
- Asking for some behaviors before starting the exercise gives you an opportunity to reward your dog and helps to get the dog into working mode before you introduce him to agility equipment.
- Celebrating with your dog at the end of the exercise before producing the toy or treat achieves a couple of things. It simulates the delay between finishing a course in competition and getting out of the ring to your toys and treats. The party makes you the initial reinforcement and focus for the dog, and the toys

and treats are an enhancement to your interaction. With this brief interaction you have made yourself and the act of playing the reinforcement for your dog, rather than your being just a toy or food dispenser. Remember, it is often the act of playing with your dog that is more reinforcing than just the toy by itself.

- By continuing the game long after the agility exercise is finished and by adding some additional behaviors into the celebration, you are building the rate of reinforcement for your dog and therefore increasing your dog's willingness to work.



Handler Habits

Making a mistake should be seen as a learning opportunity. Unfortunately our response to mistakes often creates anxiety in our dogs. There are several habits that we as trainers routinely display, albeit unintentionally, during training sessions that can cause our dogs to become less motivated. Following are some suggestions for better choices that will help increase your dog's motivation.

Habit that De-motivates

You are late with a turning cue and your dog spins or goes off course. You know it was your fault and you groan at your blunder. Does your dog know you're not groaning at him?

You use "Whoops" as a no reward marker during your dog's training, but you also often use it unconsciously when you make a mistake. How does your dog know you weren't addressing him?

Your dog makes a mistake, perhaps going off course, and you don't know why. You stop, turn your back on your dog, and ask your instructor what you did to cause the off-course. Your dog, however, is receiving a form of punishment with a time-out. Often dogs start to sniff and wander off.

In response to an error, you stop but your dog continues to attempt obstacles, and you let him go on autopilot. Often the dog is just going through the motions, attempting equipment to elicit some sort of response from you. Perhaps in the past you have reinforced the dog in some way. For example, when on autopilot, the dog attempts a piece of contact equipment and you either give the dog his cue for a two-on/two-off position or praise the dog for voluntarily stopping. By doing this, you are inadvertently reinforcing a dog for working without you; and perhaps more important, reinforcing the dog for not working with any speed or enthusiasm. In fact the dog is often tentative in his performance.

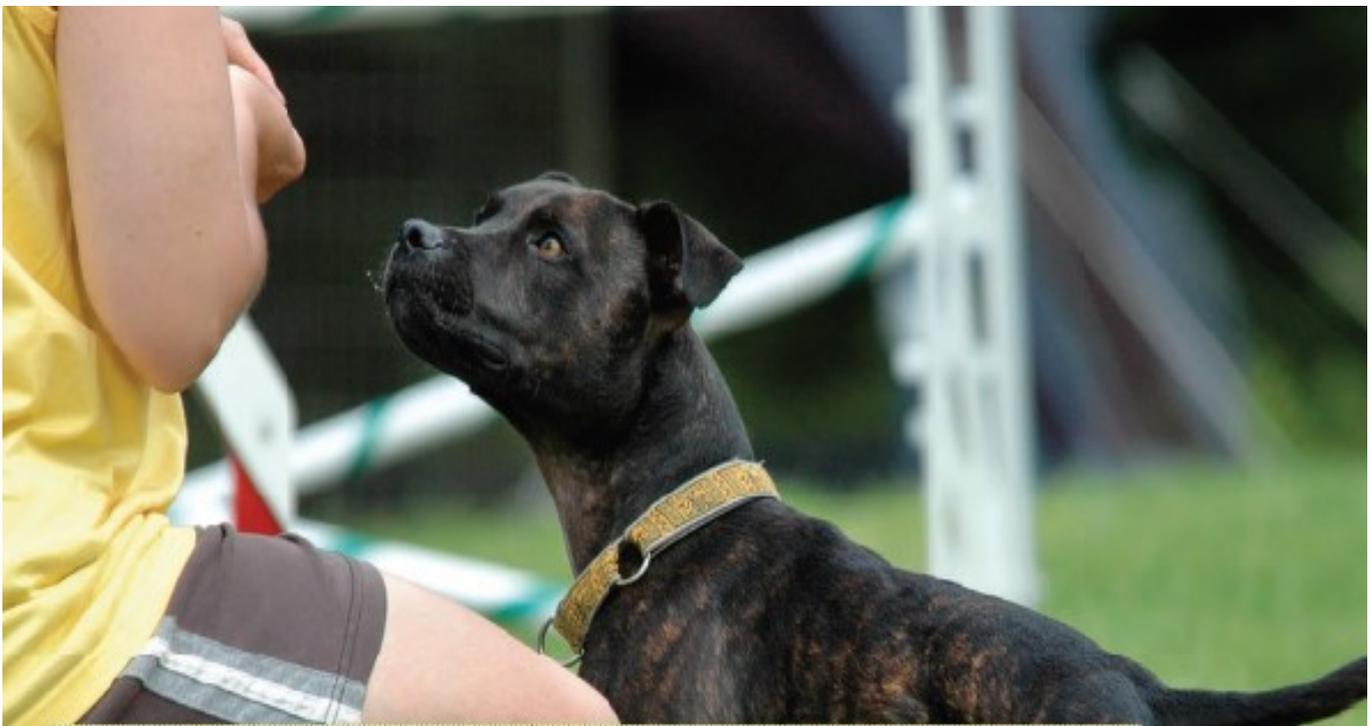
Alternative for Increasing Motivation

Call your dog to you, ask for another behavior, and reward your dog with a toy or treat. For dogs that require more motivation, I like to use behaviors that allow motion such as a hand touch or spin rather than asking for a sit.

If you need to use a no reward marker, use a phrase that you are unlikely to say in reference to yourself. For example, say "try again" so that if you do use "Whoops" to comment on yourself your dog has no understanding of the word.

You need to take care of your dog first. Yet you don't want to reward the dog for driving through the tunnel when he should have taken the jump, even if you know it was somehow your fault. Rewards should only be given if both your behavior and the dog's were correct. Do not give what is commonly referred to as a "screw-up cookie" if the dog followed your handling but your handling was incorrect. Often the next time you attempt the sequence with correct handling, the dog will ignore you and go through the tunnel again since that got a reward last time. Ask for an alternative behavior (spin, hand touch, sit) and give the screw-up cookie for that correct response. Now both of you are correct and the dog's rate of reinforcement is at a high enough level to keep him working with you.

Get the dog back to you as quickly as possible, regroup, and then continue on together. If a novice dog skips an obstacle but is still on course and has taken the next obstacle in the sequence, it causes more damage to stop and redo. You may be better off to continue. You can fix the problem next time and remember to stop and reward when the dog completes the obstacle he skipped.



Habit that De-motivates

When a handling mistake happens, you go back and try again with a sloppy restart, leading to the dog's making yet another error. Sometimes you don't restart the dog on the same side he was on when things went awry.

You make an error in a sequence. You restart the sequence several times only to keep making a mistake in the same place. The dog's rate of reinforcement has dropped and the dog is not learning what you want.

You take a long time to get back to your restart position. This can give your dog time to wander around, sniff, and become more interested in his environment than in you.

Alternative for Increasing Motivation

Take time to ensure a smooth and correct restart when redoing part of an exercise. Be certain you're setting up to work on the skill that you're attempting to train. Part of this involves backing up a step: Instead of just restarting and stuffing the dog into the tunnel end that he missed, go back an obstacle or two and approach the tunnel so that you are incorporating the original challenge of the exercise. Also ask yourself two questions before attempting a restart: *Is my dog still motivated? Will my dog learn anything?*

Suppose your dog faults a tunnel/A-frame discrimination. If you are especially aware that your handling could have been clearer, you may attempt the discrimination a second time. However, if the dog chooses the wrong obstacle for a second time, you might need to make the challenge easier for the dog. Perhaps you could start again with one obstacle before the discrimination, and the dog may be able to offer the correct response by reducing his speed.

Run to your restart position; make it fun for your dog to have a "do over."



If you believe the adage, "It's always the handler's fault, never the dog's," your actions should support that belief. Create new habits in your training to avoid these de-motivating behaviors and you'll find your dog is more excited at the end of a training session than he was at the beginning. 🐾

Rachel Sanders, owner of Fast Forward Dog Sports in Atascadero, California, conducts seminars throughout the United States. She has been a USDAA Grand Prix Championship title winner four times and placed many times in the top four at the USDAA Grand Prix, Steeplechase, and AKC Finals since 1999. Contact her at Rachel@fastforwarddogsports.com.

