

THE LEADER

The Newsletter of the Banbury & District Dog Training Society

Spring 2020

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

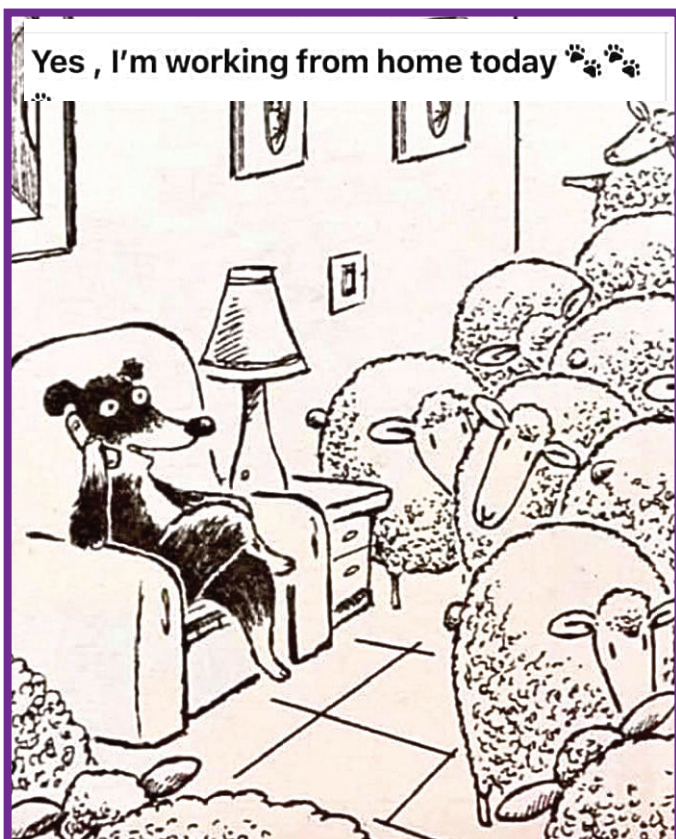
What happened?! One minute we are busy planning our Open Working Trial Competition, a Rally Weekend and all the summer events and then next we are told by the Kennel Club we can no longer organise any events including training classes at least until the end of June!!

So here we are at home wondering and waiting with the rest of the world to see when and how life is going to resume after Lockdown.

In the meantime, I decided to run the March puppy course online via the Zoom App and this has become quite an adventure for me, never having organised any kind of online classes before. So being a rookie it took the first session to make me aware that I could not run these sessions by just meeting and talking to people and giving information. I had to learn to create PowerPoints and make little video clips to show people how to start training their pups. It has been quite a challenge and Olive has been claiming overtime!

Mind you, it hasn't harmed her in any way to go back to basics and practise puppy recalls again, as well teaching her to leave things and calling her away from anything undesirable (desirable for her!). Today in our woods, I noticed she was busy scenting something which she then retrieved, but just before she did so, I blew the whistle and she immediately dropped the carcass and returned to me!

Continued on page 3



COVID POEM by Shirley Simpson

Our dogs don't care about Covid
Care nought for the rules of lock-down
Don't fret about social distance
Or shortage of glove, mask or gown

They love that we are home more
Don't mind just the one walk a day
Cos we play in the garden or kitchen
Still having fun, come what may

They have learnt to sit at the whistle
To go out and retrieve a whole egg
To clear up their toys from the lounge floor
To "Hi Five" with either leg

They've learnt to put feet on a bucket
To go over a jump and wait
To "bow" low when instructed
To not barge straight through a gate

There's more time to get on with grooming
Ensuring they all look their best
Then watch all the birds in the garden
Collect dog hair to put in their nest

They sometimes sit and look pensive
Or gaze wistfully over the gates
Maybe dreaming of going to dog club
And socialising with their mates

The world may have changed forever
Our lives may never be the same
But our dogs' tails will carry on wagging
Cos their life is just one big game.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN FOR SOME OF OUR MEMBERS

How ever did we have time to do all the things we did when life was normal? I've gone from being out most days and evenings during the week to being at home 24/7 like everyone else and still don't have time to fit everything in!

I had a list as long as my arm with jobs to complete, but still have some considerable way to go before it's done. It all started with clearing out the garage to fit in a new freezer, years of 'I'll keep that just in case' had accumulated and been buried in dust. Signs of the wildlife we had been accommodating was endlessly discovered, little piles of dog food kibble and a welly boot with the whole foot filled with sunflower seeds, brought in from elsewhere and stored for future snacks. I felt quite mean sabotaging all their little sanctuaries. It was very therapeutic tidying and chucking out, but the novelty soon wore off after completing various rooms, cupboards and drawers.

I have started two on line Dog Training Courses and feel quite guilty having not yet completed either. Other things take over to inspire me, like sewing, cooking, eating and the treat of a glass of wine which seems to arrive earlier by the day. My latest cooking challenge was to master the art of making Sourdough and finally succeeded a couple of days ago, actually making something edible.

Our village had a lovely project for us to make scarecrows for VE Day, all to be dressed appropriately for the celebrations. Over 88 households took part, the creativity and humour was just wonderful. We made Gorgeous George who sat on our garden wall drinking beer, was lit up at night and even went internet dating to meet Busty Bertha and Lockdown Laura, who knows what they got up to and we may even have some little scarecrows arriving in a few months...

The dogs have been endlessly walked, the garden weeded, planted and mown to within an inch of its life, but still need to set about reading books on how to use Pages and Numbers, how to cut your hair, decorating, cycling, T'ai Chi, more gardening, more Zooming, catch up on all those Box Sets and Oh Yes! finish those on line Dog Training courses. Onwards!

Ann Ferens



Echo will not be taking up Flower arranging as one of her creative arts during the lockdown – Sharon says

Bella hasn't heard of social distancing!



Michelle has bred quails which might be good for recall training!



Steph and Kessie have been keeping busy on a Thursday night showing their appreciation for the NHS workers.

Poppy helping with the VE day decorations.





Never any harm in training your dog at any age!!

I had one strange, albeit very funny incident whilst setting up my stuff for the Grooming Demo video one day. I had cut off some cheese from a newly bought piece of cheese and put this in my treat bag. I then put the bag together with the grooming tools on the box outside, ready for the video session. Normally Olive would be following the treat bag and me out of the house and be up on the box ready for her grooming session, but for some reason she had not followed me out of the house. So I called her and no response, then on the

second call a very sheepish Olive came out of the house with the 200 gram lump of cheese in her mouth, which she was trying to swallow in one go! Shock & horror is the only way I can describe my feelings as in the 2+ years Olive has lived here, she has never stolen any food, not even when my treat bag has been on the ground! So I was totally aghast that she must have taken it off the kitchen unit where I had left it after cutting off the treats for the session. I had done this many times before and she had never even given the left over cheese a second glance.

Anyway, I am now looking at a dog that is heaving and puffing whilst trying to digest this big lump of cheese and I am wondering if she is going to vomit it up again! I still have to do the demo for the puppy course, but I can obviously not give her any more treats!!

I decide to go for it and plan to abandon the session if she does start to vomit, but thankfully there were no ill effects. In the meantime, my face during the demo is a mixture of shock, perplexity and anger but somehow I manage to struggle to the end of it. I intended to create another more cheerful video the next day, but as it rained all day I had to use it. There were no complaints, only questions, but at least nobody appeared to be aware of the gritted teeth and if they did, they were too polite to say!

Carla

Rally News

INTER-REGIONAL RALLY COMPETITION CRUFTS 2020 by Karen Kendall (Assistant Team manager and Coach for the Midlands)

Crufts 2020 seems a long time ago now, when in fact its only been a few weeks! Looking at all the photos again has reminded me what an adrenaline-fuelled and amazing day the Rally Inter-regional competition was. Even though numbers attending were down we were delighted to see our supporters in the crowd, so thank you for cheering us on.

There are 6 levels of Rally Obedience, with Level 1 the easiest and Level 6 the hardest. Each of the regional teams have 7 competitors, one for each level and a reserve, just in case. Our own Lizzie Lang and Yogi were representing the Midlands Team at Level 3. Points are awarded at each Level for the places eg first place 8 points, second 6 points, third 5 points etc. The region with the most points win. If there is a tie, then the Level 6 handlers and dogs have a run off!

By lunchtime Levels 1 to 4 had competed and, like last year, the Midlands team were lying in first place, with 2 more levels to go after lunch! Nail biting stuff! The Level 5 competitors went, and we were still in first place, but the lead was reduced to 1 point; so, all rested on Kate Wykes and Star who were going last! After all had finished, the written points on the score board in the collecting ring showed we were in second place, but when the electronic scores were posted it was a dead heat! Kate and Star had to go again in the run-off. They did an even better round than their first but were just pipped by the better team on the day. We were so proud that they were brave enough to go twice, as once is nerve wracking enough.

So huge congratulations to everyone in the Midlands team for coming so close, and a special congratulations to Lizzie and Yogi for a well deserved and fantastic first place at Level 3!



Ernie's Story by Richard Makin

Hi Friends!! My name is Ernie and I have been asked to tell you a bit about myself. You may have seen me about at dog club. I am in gold class and you don't get to gold class without learning a few things, so I would like to share with you some life lessons that I think are quite important.

1. Two is not always better than one

I am a very important type of dog because I have two names. One is lurcher and the other is Bull Greyhound, so that means that I am two kinds of dog in one body! AWESOME! I am half greyhound, so love to run and run and the other half is Staffordshire Bull Terrier, so I can be very stubborn at the same time. I'm not sure which half of me is which though. Unfortunately, sometimes two is not always better than one and my breed don't always get treated very nicely. I did not have a very good start in life as I was bred by cruel humans who treated me very badly and separated me from my mum when I was just a few weeks old, they just wanted to sell me to make money. I was saved by kind humans at a dog rescue centre and then spent a week in the vets when I was only four weeks old. I was very poorly and no one thought I was going to make it! They all forgot how stubborn my Staffie side could be and I refused to give up! I was lucky and got better, but I still don't like going to the vets!



2. You cant please everyone all of the time!

When I got better I went back to the rescue centre to live with lots of other dogs. I made tons of friends and spent most days running and playing until some kind humans said that they would like me to live with them so I picked my favourite bone, some toys and my blanket, wrapped them in my spotted hanky and started my new adventure with them and their two greyhounds, Jinny and Mumbles. Jinny was kind to me and would let me sleep on top of her but Mumbles was a bit of a grump and found me a bit annoying so I tried to keep out of her way, she was quite old though! I have two new friends now, Finn and Josh. Finn and I are best buddies and we love to play together in the garden. I sometimes bicker with Josh, because he's a little dog with a big attitude and he steals all my food, my bed and shreds my toys. AND HE DOESN'T EVEN LIVE HERE!

3. Sticking power is very important

When I came to live with my humans they realised how excitable I can be. I just love EVERYTHING and I want to play with EVERYTHING and I love running and jumping, but

**"DOGS ARE NOT OUR WHOLE LIFE
BUT THEY MAKE OUR LIVES WHOLE"
- Roger Caras**

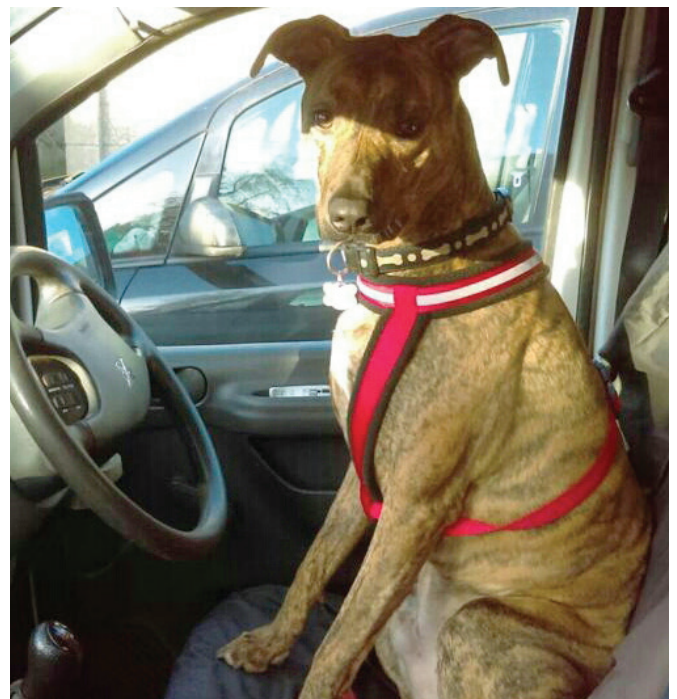
because I am quite big I can be a bit clumsy, so the humans decided to take me to puppy school. I was really excited to see all the other dogs and thought I would just get to play the whole time. I wasn't very happy when I realised I would have to do some work and do as I was told! I decided I didn't really like school anymore... doing as your told is such a bore! But when I found out I got lots of treats when I did well I decided to stick at it and that school was ok after all. Now I am an expert and I have recently passed my Kennel Club Good Citizen's Gold Test so just goes to show when you put your mind to it you can do anything!

4. Never judge a book by it's cover!

Sometimes people can be a bit nervous of me because I am so big and strong and because of my brown stripes I look a bit like a tiger, which I think is like a big cat. Which is silly really because cats aren't scary! I can also bark REALLY LOUDLY when the humans start singing, but it's only me singing along, I'm just not very tuneful. However, I am a big softie at heart and I love nothing more than a good back scratch! Sometimes if my human hasn't noticed me I will sneakily climb on the armchair with him for a snuggle and watch TV! Heaven!

5. Expand your mind!

Now I am an expert in gold class (did I already mention that?) I have decided to take on some new challenges. It's very important to expand your mind and learn new things. As you can see, most recently I have taken up driving lessons. My human says I should be ready for my test very soon! VROOM VROOM!!



Thursday Nighters

With our classes being suspended for the time being, we hope that you are all managing to keep up with some training and follow on from ideas given to you in your classes. You may need to be inventive as facilities will be limited. We are lucky to have the company of our dogs in these challenging times and getting out for fresh air and exercise is a wonderful mood booster.

Before our enforced closure, we were pleased to welcome a good flow of new handlers and their dogs, progressing on to the Bronze Class from the Puppy Course. The Silver and Gold classes have been combined, thus giving handlers a longer class and thereby more time to work through the exercises.

We have had the benefit of Guest Instructors coming along to the Silver/Gold class. Sarah Maclaren provided a fun evening with different ideas and new games and Jane Webb got everyone started with Clicker Training. Handlers and instructors were equally inspired with all their training tips.

The Kennel Club Good Citizen Tests were held in February, four candidates took their Bronze, two Silver and five Gold. I am delighted to report that everyone passed, congratulations and well done. Thanks to our judges on the day, Gill Culliford for the Bronze and Gold and Liz Noble for the Silver.

We look forward to seeing you all and your dogs again before too long, in the meantime keep well and keep training.

Ann

CLASSES DURING LOCKDOWN

We shall be starting meetings on Zoom on Thursday evenings soon. If you would like to join us, please drop me an email and I shall be sending you the link to the meetings. Timings are likely to be from 7 to 8pm. The Zoom App is free to download, and it can be downloaded at the same time as joining the meetings. It is extremely easy to use, but you will have to be near a Wifi connection and preferably near the Router. You can join on your smartphone or tablet too.

We hope to see you all there!

Carla



KENNEL CLUB GOOD CITIZEN TESTS RESULTS FEB 2020



Congratulations to:

BRONZE: Lucy and Oberon, Liz and Pippa, Stacey and Bunty, Sharen and Winnie

SILVER: Angela and Duke, Lucy and Oberon

GOLD: Sheila and Forti, Richard and Ernie, Vicky and Bess, Kathy and Luna, Andrea and Maddie

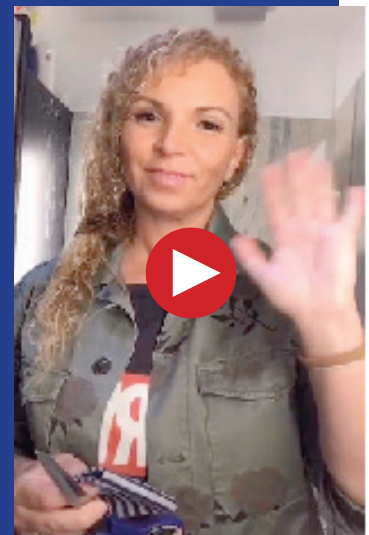


"HEALTH IS THE GREATEST GIFT,
CONTENTMENT THE GREATEST
WEALTH, FAITHFULNESS THE BEST
RELATIONSHIP." - Buddha

MASKS

It is beginning to look like we shall all have to wear masks when visiting public places in the not too distant future, which makes me think that perhaps we should all now get our dogs used to seeing a few humans with masks! Some young dogs in particular might freak out at not seeing a 'complete' face and seeing only eyes peeking out above a piece of cloth. So why not get them used to a mask now, by occasionally wearing one around the house or when playing with them in the garden. If your dog is really worried put it on during feeding time first. If there are a few of you at home, try progressing to everybody wearing a mask at the same time! Even if it is just for 5 minutes, so your dog won't be worried when you first take him to a public place when lockdown is over.

Here is a fun and simple way to make your own mask:



Becoming a 'Golden' Golden! by Andrea Harding-Smith



On 22nd February this year Maddie was awarded her Kennel Club Good Citizen Gold Award. I think I can honestly say no one was more surprised than me!!

You see, although she is willing, bright and generally attentive, things had kept 'getting in the way'. She was a bold puppy from the start, always exploring and unafraid of the new.

We enrolled in Carla's puppy class in the autumn of 2016. Although Keith has owned five Golden retrievers previously, Maddie's 'sister', Lydi, was not an easy dog and we knew we needed help. When we completed the puppy class we began the Bronze class, and I brought the puppies to the class alternately. This slowed training down somewhat! Then when we were beginning to get closer to the reliability you look for before taking the test, we found that the test dates kept coinciding with times we were at our house in France – or vice versa! (Maddie is a well-travelled pooch already – she is on her second passport and is only just four. If you want to know anything about the paperwork and procedures to do with Pet Passports, just ask me!!) I think we missed three test dates because of clashes, and because I was not very clued up about looking at the website for advance information!!

Things came to a head with Lydi in May 2018, and sadly we had to say goodbye to her. After that I was able to focus exclusively on Maddie, and by February 2019 I decided we would try taking not only the Bronze award but the Silver as well.

Bless her – she passed both without any problems. I was delighted! Keith was in France (!) so I rang and told him the news and he was totally disbelieving, although he had to change his mind when he got home and I showed him the rosettes and certificates. Well done Maddie!

So then we moved up to the gold class, and were once again out of our depth and floundering for a while, although we made steady progress. July 2019 was too early to try the test – and we were in France again anyway.

Maddie's life took a dramatic turn in the autumn. While we were at our house in France in early November (yes, we do go there a lot – and can't at the moment. And don't even mention Brexit!!) I was stroking Maddie as she slept beside me and

"HAPPINESS STARTS WITH A WET NOSE
AND ENDS WITH A WAGGY TAIL"
- Anon

thought 'Funny - that feels like a little lump on her ribs.' I continued to find it, so booked to visit the vet straight after we got home in the middle of the month. It felt about the size of a chick-pea. A biopsy confirmed that it was a malignant mast-cell tumour. The result came back on a Friday, and she was immediately booked for surgery on the Monday. Thank goodness the surgery went well and all the necessary margins were successfully removed. The vet decided the stitches should stay in longer than usual, though, because as she said – tongue in cheek - 'Maddie's now three inches shorter on one side than the other!' Maddie was picking up after the anaesthetic when three days later she was badly and persistently sick (and she never is, normally!!) and then would neither eat nor drink. We were at various branches of the vet partnership three times in 24 hours, going wherever would offer us an appointment. The final diagnosis was gastro-enteritis, and on the Saturday morning we were told 'If she doesn't start eating within 24 hours she will have to come in on a drip'. Thank the Lord she began lapping some water from a plant tray on the patio within that time and then accepted a little chicken.

She took two weeks off from Dog Club to heal from the surgery, and we were back just in time for the Christmas Party – fun, but no training. Then there was the Christmas holiday. Then we had one week back in January before once again heading for France for two weeks. The first week after that was a 'Now for something different' week, so come 22nd February I felt Maddie had not had any real chance to get back into routine or to 'revise'. Still, I thought having a go would be good practice and would show me what we would need to focus on.

She's my little star!! She pulled out all the stops and on the 'go to bed' exercise – which I was sure she would flunk – she cantered straight for her mat, lay down and said 'Ooo-ooo-oooo', as if to say 'Aren't I clever; I know just what I have to do and I've got it right, haven't I?!' It made us all laugh! So to my delight and astonishment we passed and came home with another rosette and certificate.

And now we need to think about what comes next! This C-19 'time out' gives us a pause to consider just that. We don't yet know what it will be but watch out – we could pop up anywhere!!



'Boris wants you to continue in your role, Dilyn, but he's taking over your stick fetching duties'

Working Trials News

Little did we know that our Progress Tests in March would be the last event of the season! Or maybe even longer, who knows.

These tests now seem light years away, but I do remember that we had a really great day in the sunshine which was a bonus after months of heavy rain.

The entries were higher than normal as there were lots of newbies having a go at the Elementary Tests. Big thank you to Steph Gordon for judging these and being so helpful and encouraging, setting everybody up for success. Big thank you also to our other judges: Rita Banfather, who judged the Control & Agility, and John Turtill who stood in for Shirley at the last minute, judging the Search Squares. We had our team of regular helpers, Colin Bricknell doing all the scoring again and our stewards: Di Ashbow, Lynn Bricknell and Nicky Downes looking after all the competitors in the field.

We ended up in the Rose & Crown in Charlton for our usual lunch and presentation and to think that there were 27 of us in their special party room seems an amazing feat now. We very much hope that this wonderful pub will soon be fully open again as they deserve to be successful, always working all hours putting on great meals.

For the results of the day, see our judges' reports. Videos and photos have been posted on the website.

Since the tests there have been no training sessions or other events to report but our beginner group have been busy challenging each other via their WhatsApp group and had lots of fun in the process. Here is the result:



I would like to thank my nephew, Adrian Carranza in Spain, for creating the above compilation. Adrian has been a terrific support to me during this Lockdown, helping me out with my online puppy course as well.

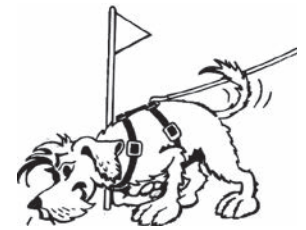
It would be nice for other groups to set each other challenges. Kaye Littlehayes did suggest sending in tests via video links, like they do in Rally, but the committee decided that for Working Trials this would be too difficult as not everybody has access to jumps and other exercises would be difficult to film.

However, it won't hurt to challenge ourselves, like the beginner group have done, and if you would like to set any group a challenge, please let me know and I can set it up for everybody. In the meantime, we can continue to meet on Zoom, which is better than nothing and a bit of a laugh and a nice way to keep in touch.

Keep safe everyone!

Carla

WORKING TRIALS ACHIEVEMENTS WINTER 2019/2020



This is a bit of a lightweight report as due to the Covid-19 virus all trials have been cancelled, therefore there is not a lot to tell you about.

However, before all this madness began, we did have some exciting results.



Nicky Downes and Poppy and Steph Gordon and Kessie have more or less kept pace with each other right from the beginning of the "twins" careers. I am delighted to say that they have both now qualified to compete in Championship TD Stakes by qualifying Open TD at the following trials:-

Nicky and Poppy: Surrey with 4th, Wessex with 2nd and South Beds with 1st.

Steph and Kessie: Surrey with 3rd, South Beds with 2nd .

Poppy managed to work one Ticket stake before everything shut down and, although not qualifying, put on a performance that bodes very well for the future.

John Simpson and Foster achieved their 33rd TDX qualification at Essex, but I fear that it may be his last if this situation goes on for a while as time is against him. However, he is still extremely fit, active and willing, so who knows. (I am referring to Foster, but the same applies to John).

At the other end of their career, **Lyndie Lothian and Pixel** got it together and qualified UD Open at Enfield in 2nd place.

At Lincoln Trial, **Ann Clarke** and Ember qualified TDX again and new member (but not new to trials) **Anne Thorpe** and **Hati** qualified UDX in 2nd place.

Well done all. Keep up with the training and I hope to see you all achieving "on the other side"

Shirley Simpson



"YOUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES
DON'T DETERMINE WHERE YOU CAN GO;
THEY MERELY DETERMINE WHERE
YOU START." - Nido Qubein

Progress Tests

JUDGES REPORTS

LEVEL ONE TO FIVE - CONTROL

by Rita Banfather

After a wonderful day catching up with friends and a delicious pub lunch, I must firstly give my sincere thanks to Carla for inviting me to Judge at Banbury.

It was a pleasure to judge the control rounds at 5 different levels, including heel-work (which was of a very high standard by all entrants), recall, send-away and the agility elements along with the stays. A variety of breeds and experience levels made for a fascinating day.

The conditions were favourable and the grass long and lush...

As many of you will know, I am passionate about bringing new people in to Working Trials to keep this sport alive and thriving and so it was a joy to be able to encourage those who are new to trials as well as advising those with more experience. The highlight was issuing all of the certificates and rosettes!

I honestly can't think of a better way to spend a day and a heartfelt well done to all competitors! I will look forward to seeing you all again in the near future.

LEVEL ONE TO FIVE - NOSEWORK

by John Turtill

It has been a while since I have been to the Progress Tests, so I was very happy to accept Carla's SOS to take over from a poorly Shirley Simpson (hope the knee has been sorted now, Shirley).

I forgot to thank my square steward when the rosettes were being given out. SORRY Lynn: you did an excellent job; many thanks. When judging it is very reassuring to have a steward who knows exactly what to do, and gives each competitor the best chance to qualify that particular test.

The grass was longer than I expected & I was a little concerned that the selected articles would be too small; but I was wrong, as Lynn only had to collect one that was left in the square. The entrants in levels 1 to 3 should be very pleased as their dogs work was as good as you would see in a CD Ch or UD open competition. The result of good training with the dogs motivated to find articles.

Only minor marks were lost, if any, on the retrieve; but one comment I made to a few handlers is that unless the judge tells you to throw the dumbbell a certain distance, there is no need to "chuck or hurl it into the next county", especially if the grass is long! Give your dog a chance especially if he/she is on the small side.

Thank you for allowing me to judge your dogs: and good luck in the future.

1st: Kate Wilton & Finn (ESS) Level Two – Q 95½ /100 pts

2nd: Anne Shepherd & Ben (BC) Level Four – Q 93½ /100pts

3rd: Angela Howe & Sabre (GSD) Level One – Q 92/100pts

4th: Ann Ferens & Rosie (Cocker) Level Three – NQ 82/100pts

"EVERY MORNING, I DO 10 MINUTES OF MINDFULNESS, WHERE I DO MEDITATION, AND I USE THAT IN COMPETITION AND EVERYDAY LIFE." - Tom Daley



ELEMENTARIES - CONTROL & NOSEWORK

by Steph Gordon

Thank you Carla for allowing me the pleasure of judging the elementary, and to Colin for his usual Efficiency taking all the scores. A big thank you to Nicky for stewarding and help with the competitors and your company.

What a turn out we had it was brilliant to have so many entries. Both handlers and their dogs worked so well. The only thing that a few could not resist was the long grass to munch on.

The Results were as follows

1st: Kathy Godfrey & Luna – Q 77. A lovely round Kathy, Luna is a super girl and works well for you.

2nd: Sharon Lord & Echo – Q 76½. Just ½ point in it Sharon you should be so pleased with her.

3rd: Sheila Smith & Forti – Q 73. Again a lovely round Sheila, Forti was a joy to watch in the search square

4th: Annie Roads & Zara – Q 69¼. Well done Annie I know you were very nervous, but Zara worked well you should be so pleased.

Sue Lawrie & Joe – Q 66 ¼. Joe worked so well Sue it was just the sit stay, you should be so pleased with your scores.

Julia Edwards & Joshua – Q 65. Josh is so enthusiastic and really enjoyed himself. You should be pleased with your round.

Thank you to all of the handlers for entering and excepting my marks. I hope you enjoyed your day.

Sheila Smith writes -

"Really enjoyed the Progress Tests, I learnt that Forti loves finding articles even when it was somewhere new with new articles laid with a new scent on them! Only started with the dumbbell in the week before so very pleased with him on that, obviously working on refining the retrieve.

I also learnt that I need to wait until I have his FULL attention in the heel work.

I thoroughly enjoyed the day, lovely bunch of people, dogs and judges!

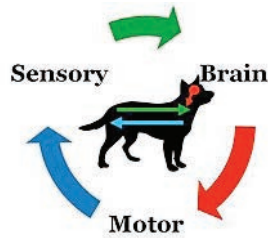
Thank you for all your time and patience, it must take a lot of effort to organise and set up."

Importance of Proprioception

This article is taken from a talk by Carol Ann, a veterinary physiotherapist, at a conference for Veterinary Physiotherapists, but it is also useful information for dog owners, in particular those of us who are training their dogs to jump.

So, what is proprioception?

Proprioception is term given to describe the body's ability to sense and interpret stimuli arising within the body regarding position, motion, and balance. It is a complicated multi-component feedback system made up of a range of receptors in the skin, muscle, tendons, ligaments, and joints, sensory and motor nerves, parts of the brain, and components of the visual and vestibular systems.



Proprioception allows us to know where our body parts are in space without having to look, and lets us, for example, walk and move without watching our feet constantly. It is important in all everyday movements, but especially so in complicated movements where precise coordination is necessary, such as jumping correctly over a jump. It allows for appropriate actions to be taken in a multitude of different situations.

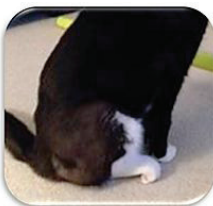
If we, or our dogs or cats, suffer from a loss of proprioception it can have a number of negative effects on how we move and react to changes in our environment. For example, your dog may not be able to react and adjust their body in time if they land incorrectly over a jump, or after jumping to catch a ball which can then lead to injury.

What causes proprioceptive loss and what does it look like?

Proprioceptive loss can happen due to whole variety of reasons, such as neurological conditions (e.g. degenerative disc disease, spondylosis), disease (e.g. diabetes), trauma/injury or due to surgery.

Deficits in proprioception can be acute or chronic depending on the cause. If your dog or cat experiences some type of injury/trauma it can cause the deficit to appear suddenly. However, if your pet has a degenerative condition, the symptoms may be subtle to being but then worsen as time progresses.

Signs of proprioceptive loss can vary from subtle signs such as a slight loss of precision movement or loss in performance to more obvious ones such as knuckling over of the paws (image 1), scuffing of the paws, wounds or calluses on the top of the paws (image 2) or abnormal nail wear (image 3) resulting from the knuckling/scuffing. More severe signs are altered body awareness, lack of balance, staggering or even loss of function.



**"THE FIRST WEALTH IS HEALTH."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson**

What are the aims of proprioceptive rehabilitation / training

1. Increase sensory awareness
2. Improve neuromuscular responsiveness
3. Improve control and learning of movement patterns

These can all lead to improved function, better coordination, balance and flexibility, which all allow for quicker reactions to changes in body position and movement, therefore reduced the risk of injury / re-injury.

Proprioceptive training can also lead to an increase in mental focus and confidence thus improving mental well-being.

Proprioceptive rehabilitation / training techniques

In my therapy sessions I use a whole range of techniques and exercises that are aimed at improving proprioception. These include manual therapies, sensory integration aids and proprioceptive exercises.

Manual therapies and the use of sensory integration aids are both aimed at increasing sensory awareness and increasing the input of a whole variety of sensations into the body in order to stimulate as many of the proprioceptive receptors as possible. Examples include tapotement (light fast rhythmical massage techniques), passive joint exercises, paw squeezes, using different grooming brushes, using heat and cold techniques, and using vibrating massagers to stimulate the nerves.

Proprioceptive exercises are slow, precise, controlled exercises that either require an awareness of limb position in space (e.g. bending and turning exercises), involve walking over difference surfaces, challenge the body's balance or a combination of all three.



The exact treatment options chosen will depend on the cause of the proprioceptive loss, how much function your pet has, if your pet has any other medical issues and your pets temperament.

Can healthy animals benefit from proprioceptive training?

Yes! Puppies can benefit from doing proprioceptive exercises as they develop, helping them to learn control over their body movements, reducing the risk of injury and improving their confidence.

Similarly, adult sporting animals such as agility dogs can benefit from the ability to react faster, the reduced risk of injury and the improved confidence and mental focus that comes from proprioceptive training.

Noticeboard

THE KENNEL CLUB IS HERE FOR YOU AND YOUR DOGS

- Coronavirus FAQ, advice and support can be accessed at <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/press-releases/2020/march/statement-on-kennel-club-events-and-coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Kennel Club hub with fun games to keep your dog occupied during the crisis can be accessed at <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/health/for-owners/coronavirus/fun-games-to-keep-your-dog-occupied-during-coronavirus/>
- The Kennel Club is monitoring the situation as it evolves, information and advice will be amended accordingly. Check for regular updates on the Kennel Club home page <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/>

AND THE WINNERS OF THE FESTIVE FUN PHOTO COMPETITION WERE...

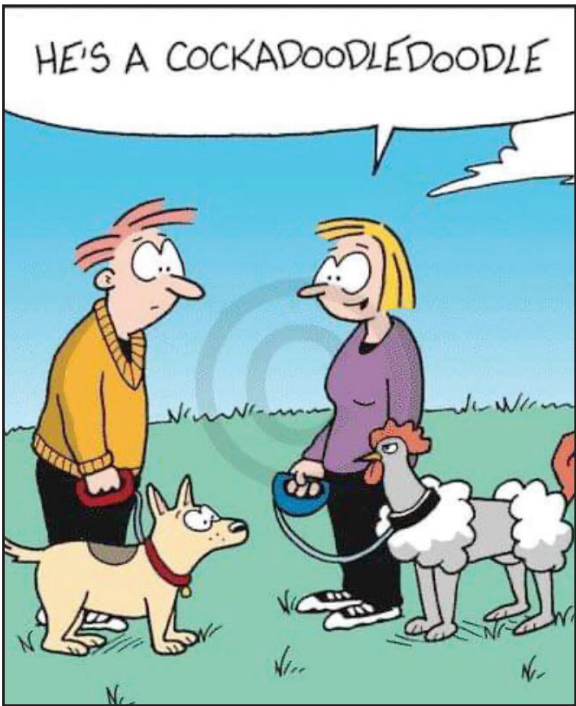


1st Mustard and friend (above left), 2nd Ritchie (above right).

PHOTO COMPETITION: DOGS IN QUARANTINE

Don't forget to send us your favourite photos of any activities that you are doing to keep you and your dog, both entertained. Please send your photos to: bddtsphotocomp@gmail.com.

N.B. If you have sent a photo already please can you check that you have used the above email address - thanks Nicky.



Your Committee

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Carla Nieuwenhuizen | 01869 810646 |
| Ann Ferens | 01869 277398 |
| John & Shirley Simpson | 01869 346942 |
| Stephanie Gordon | 01869 346881 |
| Colin Bricknell | 01295 712180 |
| Nicky Downes | 01869 346788 |
| Gill Cooke | 01295 720055 |

DOG ANAGRAMS

All the answers are a breed of dog with its letters scrambled up.

1. Tandoor Paddles
2. Eat Danger
3. Eel Bag
4. Rib Zoo
5. Crumple Lesbian



Anagram Answers: 1). Standard Poodle 2). Great Dane 3). Beagle 4). Borzoi 5). Clumber Spaniel