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The Impact of Footing on the Jumping Dog

What is the perfect footing for agility dogs to perform on: grass, dirt, sand, carpet, rubber mats, or artificial turf? There is no simple answer, but there are factors you need to understand about each surface. By Susan Salo



When the Magic Is Missing: Managing the Unbalanced Class

Agility instructors often have classes that are unbalanced in terms of the students' skill, experience, talent, and dedication. These classes can be challenging to teach. Here are some ideas to help. By Sandy Rogers



Changing Consequences: Controlling Toy Reinforcement

Toy games can go far beyond fetch to become powerful reinforcers of complex behaviors. Play enhances your dog's problem-solving ability and his ability to work around distractions. By Jenny Ruth Yasi

Cover

10 When the Price Isn't Right

Dogs learn more efficiently when a trainer uses a conditioned reinforcer, also known as a reward mark. But is training also enhanced by the use of no reward marks to let the dog know when he is incorrect and will miss his reward? By Pamela Reid, PhD

47 A New Twist on Training with 2 x 2 Weaves

If you've been thinking about using 2 x 2 poles to train your dog to weave, don't wait any longer. Work through these seven steps for exceptional results. By Mary Ellen Barry



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60 Comparing the Derrett and Mecklenburg Handling Systems, Part 2: Lead-out Push versus Lead-out Pivot

During the coming months, we're comparing the two most popular and proven handling systems in the U.S.—Greg Derrett's system and Linda Mecklenburg's Awesome Paws Handling System—to try to help you understand the differences as well as the similarities. By the Clean Run Staff

71 Relationship and Motivation: Jenny's Guide to Successful Teamwork

You can train a dog that you have no actual relationship with, but if you want to go far, your relationship with your dog is one of the most important parts to consider when reaching for success. By Jenny Damm

Cover Dog

MACH 7 Winetime Racing Ravin' Maniac MAD, SAM, JM, SM, RM, TG-E, O-EAC, O-WVE, O-TN-E, O-EJC, O-ECC, AGI, a.k.a. Ravin, a 5-year-old Poodle owned by Cindy Glover of Florida. Photo by Pix'n Pages.

Features

5 Editorializing: For Our Dogs' Sake: Concerns about Weave Pole Spacing

Over the years, many otherwise healthy, athletic agility dogs in their prime are diagnosed with shoulder tendon, knee, or back injuries, some chronic, where no trauma had been observed. Could it be these injuries are due to repetitive stress and could tight weaving be the major contributing factor for these injuries? By Ann Croft

15 Handling Your Dog in Awesome Style, Part 12: Advanced Skills

The goal this month is to teach the dog responsibility for performance of obstacles within his field of view and for reading his handler's line of motion. By Linda Mecklenburg

28 K9 Kudos: Canines Competing for Charity

In 2008, many agility venues raised money for worthy causes throughout the U.S. Three agility trials, held in North Carolina, Florida, and Arizona, respectively, are profiled this month. All plan the same fundraising events for 2009 and 2010. By Martha Faulk

43 Tricks for Agility: The Shrinking Dog

There's something about seeing a dog fit carefully into a box that appears entirely too small that impresses most viewers. And it's not a bad way to work on flexibility and body awareness. By Sassie Joiris

53 Can You Handle It?

Test your skills on a USDAA 2003 Steeplechase Finals course that's been modified to fit in an 80' x 60' space. By Marquand Cheek

57 The Pieces that Finish the Puzzle

Each behavior you teach your dog is like a puzzle with smaller pieces that need to be put together correctly to achieve success. What do you do if the pieces seem to fit together, but don't give you the right result? How do you discover where you've gone wrong? Or what if a piece is missing? By Rick Parry

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