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Improving Your Dog's Endurance with Dynamic Ball Work, Part 1

In dogs, the slow-twitch or Type I muscle fibers can be strengthened with "ball work," exercises that focus on the dog's core, balance, and proprioception. Strengthening the Type I muscles has many benefits, including improving stamina and endurance. By Dr. Debbie Gross Saunders, DPT, MSPT, OCS, CCRP



Be a Better Dog Trainer: Training Lessons from Other Species

Bringing skills and perspectives from their work with a range of species, the authors share training lessons from zoos and aquariums that have helped make them better dog trainers. By Karen B. London & Laura Monaco Torelli



Living Room Agility: Start-line Stays

Daily access to a large training space full of regulation equipment is wonderful, but not necessary to being successful. If you live in an apartment without a yard, or if your yard is knee deep in snow, you can work on most of the skills you and your dog need while in the comfort of your living room. By Frankie Joiris

Features

5 Editorializing:

Help Prevent Injuries on Jumps

Protruding jump cups, no matter what the material, are a potential hazard to the dog as he jumps—both ends of the dog are at risk when jump cups stick out. By Linda Mecklenburg

11 Busting the Myths: Let Your Weakness Be Your Strength

Embrace your team's weaknesses and make them your strengths. The more challenges you encounter in your training, the more you will learn. By Silvia Trkman

24 Power Paws Skills: Contact Land

This setup provides lots of challenges that include contacts. It also lends itself well to doing rear crosses at the teeter and A-frame, something that handlers tend to avoid and need to practice more. By Nancy Gyes

36 Motion: Biorhythms & Beyond

Our dogs crave a sense of cadence and rhythm while running agility with us. If we can move more smoothly and be in synch with our dogs, we'll find there are fewer knocked bars on course. By Susan Salo

50 Being a Good Student, Part 3

Here's the real kicker about ignoring the details that make up the big picture or being an indifferent student: There's no reason for it! There is a plethora of seminars, books, and DVDs out there on almost every agility topic you could want. By Elaine Coupé

54 Agility Angels: Agility Gives Back

Agility Angels uses the sport of dog agility to help children and teens diagnosed with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome develop social skills and self-confidence. They are a 100% volunteer organization made up of certified therapy dogs and their owners. By Jen Pinder

63 Training with the Stars: Daisy Peel

Most competitors discover the game, get hooked, and then start setting goals that will carry them up the ladder of success. Daisy Peel did it differently: the first time she ever saw agility, on TV's Animal Planet, she decided to get a dog with the goal of competing on Animal Planet herself. A few years later, that goal was accomplished. By Sally Silverman

Columns

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7 Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Agility... By Brenna Fender

8 Backyard Dogs By Marquand Cheek

38 The 10-Minute Trainer By Daisy Peel

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Cover

13 Out Spot Out! Why Every Team Needs Distance

Successful handling is a balance between working closely with the dog on technical sections of the course and working away when it provides an advantage. Well-rounded dogs have the skills to work under both circumstances. By Lorrie Reynolds



20 Picking the Perfect Performance Puppy

Our goal may be to find a puppy or dog that not only shares our passion, but also has the structure, temperament, and drive to safely do agility for a long time. But logic will only get you so far when picking the performance puppy or dog of your dreams. By Julia Kamysz Lane

29 Head-Turning Turns, Part 1

Turns are the unsung hero of the agility world. They can make or break a run, or your dog, if they aren't done well. Teach your dog to organize himself for turns so he can move smoothly, with balance and speed, over challenges in a course. By Jenni Sheley

59 Introducing the Seesaw

Whatever you teach as a contact performance on the seesaw isn't as important as being consistent with your criteria and making sure that your dog is enjoying the obstacle itself. To make that happen, the first plank a dog ever traverses should be a moving one, preferably before 14 weeks of age. By Dawn Weaver

Cover Dog

Braehead's Noble Q Bear MX, MXS, MXJ, MJC, MXF, a.k.a. Bear, a 13-year-old German Shepherd owned by Diane Sumrall of New Hampshire. Photo by Lesley Mattuchio, www.pbase.com/lesleylou.

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