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PHOTOS © KRISSEY DAY, NANCY GYES, JTPAWPRINTS



The Canine Vision Project

A study of the vision in 210 agility dogs to see what kind of refractive errors and binocular vision skills were present, and determine if there was a difference in the visual skills of good jumpers versus poor jumping dogs. By Gina Day, O.D.



Early Takeoffs: History, Research, and Testing

An examination of the development of our collective knowledge about ETOs in agility and studies that shed light not just on ETOs, but on how vision abnormalities can impact our dogs and our sport. By Nancy Gyes



About the Dog's Jumping Arc

The jumping arc is the dog's trajectory over the bar as viewed from the side at ground level. The takeoff and landing points, and the height of the bar, determine the amount of curvature in that arc; that is, how round or flat the jumping arc. By Linda Mecklenburg

Features

5 Editorializing: Understanding How Vision Problems Affect Our Agility Dogs

There aren't nearly enough handlers, or even instructors, who recognize ETOs or know how to counsel handlers who run ETO dogs. It's time to increase awareness and understanding of ETOs in the agility community. By Nancy Gyes

30 ETOS: It's Not Just Border Collies

Shelties and BCs may seem to have a higher frequency of ETOs, but the actual incidence is difficult to estimate because these breeds are very popular in agility. All dogs, and therefore all breeds, are susceptible to the risk factors associated with ETOs. By Linda Mecklenburg

46 My Journey with Multiple Related Dogs with Early Takeoffs

A Sheltie breeder and successful agility handler discusses her personal experiences training three related dogs that all demonstrated ETOs, as well as her observations about related dogs with ETOs in her breeding program. Jean Lavalley, DVM

50 Early Takeoffs Can Dash Dreams

Lori shares the heartbreak of seeing a young, talented dog go from a confident jumper to struggling with a task that used to be effortless, and the frustration of not being able to find a training solution for the problem. By Lori Michaels

52 Not My Dog?! From Denial to Acceptance

Discovering that your new puppy has a vision problem is hard to face. An experienced instructor and competitor shares how she went from denial to finding ways to help her dog play agility in a safe and enjoyable way. By Sherry Kluever

55 Talking About ETOs

Talking about ETOs can be a difficult and charged topic. Here are some suggestions for handlers, instructors, and breeders on having those discussions. By Nancy Kemna

58 Breeding Concerns Regarding Early Takeoffs in Jumping Dogs

Most breeders are unaware of the risk factors for ETOs and that they are presumed to be inherited. For those not breeding performance dogs and selling them as agility prospects, it probably doesn't matter. But it is critical that performance dog breeders understand what ETOs are and the impact they might have on the future of their puppies. By Linda Mecklenburg, DVM.

61 Record Keeping for Dogs with Early Takeoffs

Each dog with ETOs is an individual so you need to keep complete records about your successes and failures in order to help you determine how to help your dog the most. By Nancy Kemna

63 Rating Dogs with Early Takeoff Symptoms

Some general guidelines to help handlers and instructors evaluate dogs and recognize some of the subtle signs that actually indicate ETOs.

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4 Themes Like a Good Idea By David Bozak

64 Backyard Dogs By Mia Grant

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7 Everything You Need to Know About Early Takeoffs

Early takeoffs, or ETOs, are not caused by inadequate training, physical pain, lack of confidence, or poor structure. ETOs are caused by vision impairment. This in-depth discussion of ETOs is intended to raise awareness in the agility community and help educate agility handlers, agility instructors, and breeders of dogs that need to jump, on this very important subject. Hopefully, it will also inspire veterinary ophthalmologists to expand their knowledge of testing for visual function. By Linda Mecklenburg, DVM

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Cover

We took a photo of an actual triple-bar jump and modified it based on vision simulations of human myopia to show what that triple might look like to a dog with myopia. Note that this illustration differs from true canine vision in regards to actual visual acuity, field of view, and the color spectrum perceived.

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