



A Corgi is on the track at the Spring Tracking Test April 9, 2017.
See article on page 5.

Photo by Lisa Coggins

May 2017



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Send Us Your News!
Do you have news for the Mt. Nittany Dog Tales newsletter? Send it to news@mndtc.org. The newsletter is published every other month, before the general meeting.

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From the President

Spring has finally sprung! At least that is what my spring allergies are telling me!

Looking forward, we have many events to share with our MNDTC friends and dogs. I invite all members and their guests to attend all of the events planned for the next few months. These include the MNDTC general meeting scheduled for Tuesday 5/9/17. Normally this is scheduled for 7:00 PM. We have a special presentation of Avalanche Search and Rescue by Dr. Weikert and her dog Scout that will start at 6:30 PM. The regular meeting will begin about 7:00 PM.

Next is the agility trial running on May 12, 13, 14. This is being held at the Ag Choice Building. The trial is scheduled to start at 8:00 AM each day.

Additionally, a Rally workshop, ACT test, CGC test, Obedience and Rally Trial, and July agility trial are planned in the next three months. See the Club Events tab at MNDTC for more information.

Remember to enjoy every minute with your best canine friends.

~ Howard Etzel

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General Membership Meeting Tuesday, May 9
Avalanche Rescue Program 6:30 p.m.,
General Meeting 7:00 p.m.,
St. Paul's Lutheran, Pine Grove Mills

Reminders



Summer Class Registration is Open for members!

Open to members as of May 1 and general public May 8. Sign up now for SUMMER classes! Classes begin the week of JUNE 12.

Volunteers Needed for May 12-14 Agility Trial!

Please email Alicia Alwine at alicia@mndtc.org to volunteer.



CGC Test - CANINE GOOD CITIZEN TEST

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, Sponsored by the Mount Nittany Dog Training Club

Date: Tuesday, **May 30, 2017**, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Location: Pennsylvania Military Museum grounds, Boalsburg, PA

Cost: \$5 (will benefit PAWS)

Please bring:

1. Certificate proving current rabies vaccination (required)
2. County License (required)
3. Dog Brush (suggested)



Welcome New Member!

Judy Moore was recently voted in at the March 28th meeting.

MNDTC Event Calendar

- **May 9:** Program: Avalanche SAR Dogs 6:30 p.m., General Meeting 7:00 p.m., St. Paul's Lutheran, Pine Grove Mills
- **May 12-14:** Agility Trial, Penn State Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **May 20:** 1–4 p.m., Rally Workshop, Ag Choice Building, Penn State Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **May 21:** ACT Testing (Level 1 and Level 2), Ag Choice Building, Penn State Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace
- **May 30:** 6:30–8 p.m. CGC Testing, Pennsylvania Military Museum Grounds, Boalsburg
- **June 17-18:** AKC Rally and Obedience Trials, Ag Choice Building, Penn State Ag Progress Grounds, Pennsylvania Furnace

For more information on events, and dates of up-coming run-thrus, and Trial Premiums, go to the MNDTC events and run-thru pages at www.mndtc.org.



I Wonder Why? Questions you've wanted to ask an Agility Judge— Answered by Howard Etzel

Howard Etzel has been an approved agility judge for the American Kennel Club since 2010. The following answers are based on his experience and AKC agility regulations.

Q: Why do you make the courses difficult?

A: There are guidelines that courses must meet:

Novice courses are required to have a minimum of two off-course options, two side-switches and only six weave poles.

Novice Standard and JWW courses have 14-16 obstacles.

Open courses are required to have a minimum of six off-course options, three side-switches and require finishing through 12 weave poles.

Open Standard and JWW courses have 16-18 obstacles.

Excellent/Masters courses are required to have a minimum of nine off-course options, three side-switches and require finishing through 12 weave poles.

Excellent/Masters Standard and JWW courses have 18-20 obstacles.

Premier Standard and JWW have 19-21 obstacles.

Fast must have 15 or more obstacles. There can be non-pointed obstacles.

*Note the difference between Novice and Open: Many handlers term Open as purgatory! Also, jumping from 6 to 12 weave poles can be challenging!

Q: Why did I get two Refusals called on the table in Standard?

A: You most likely received the two Rs because your dog refused the table and also passed through the run-out plane. On the pause table, the run-out line passes across the back of the table. The back is determined by the natural flow of the course. Thus, it is possible that dogs may jump on the table from three different sides (the front and the two sides) without incurring a run-out.

Q: When does the judge begin judging me and my dog?

A: The judge begins judging when the dog enters the ring and ends judging when the dog exits the ring.



From my judge's point of view, this AKC Master Agility Championship may well be the most memorable one I will ever award. Nine-year-old Carly Kreiser and her Cavalier, Sulley, achieved their first MACH one year, plus one day after their first qualifying run. They've continued their winning ways and recently received MACH 3. Clyde Closson, left, and I had the pleasure of awarding Carly and Sulley with this very special MACH.

Q: When is the judge permitted to allow the next dog to begin running the course?

A: When the previous dog is under control by the handler and the handler is in proximity of the leash. The previous dog does not have to be leashed!

Q: When the judge is in the ring, what can she/he hear?

A: The judge can hear all the comments that are made outside of the ring—I bet you did not know this!

Q: When the judge designs the course, what is he/she thinking?

A: Does the course meet the minimum required regulations for options, side switches and equipment? Will the dog have fun on the course? Is the course safe? Can the average handler/dog team complete the course successfully?

Continued on the next page...

Q: Why do you judge?

A: I enjoy seeing the dog run and have fun on the course. The teamwork between the handler and the dog is amazing (when it works!) and I like to travel to areas of the country I have not visited. I have judged in Alaska, Florida, New Hampshire, Arizona and most of the states in between. I even judged in Bermuda!

Q: If a handler sees something on the course that he/she feels is unsafe, what should he or she do?

A: I encourage all handlers to ask me about any safety issues in a courteous and calm manner.

Q: If I think a judge has made a mistake in calling something, what should I do?

A: Very politely ask the judge about the call as soon as the conversation can happen. Do not wait until the end of the day, the judge will probably not remember your run—especially if he/she has watched 330 of them! Do not be disagreeable, yell or scream because that could lead to a bench hearing. If you do not agree with the

answer, just accept it and walk away. The agility gods give and take away. You will probably be given a gift in the future. Remember, this is supposed to be fun—it is not world peace!

Q: Could I become an agility judge?

A: Yes, and I encourage others to attempt to be an agility judge. The requirements are listed on the AKC website <http://www.akc.org/events/agility/judging-requirements/>.

Q: What part of judging do you find most satisfying?

A: When the handler/dog team is in sync. It looks just like a ballet! See the photo in this article of a junior handler who received her first MACH one year and one day after her first qualifying run!

Q: What part of judging is least satisfying?

A: When the handler blames the dog for something that happened in the ring! Remember, 99 percent of all that goes wrong in the ring is the handler's fault.

Rally Obedience Gets a Makeover

In 2005, the American Kennel Club introduced the Rally program. Since then, rally has seen very few changes. Beginning on Nov. 1, 2017, the rally program will see some major changes including the addition of classes and titles. New signs are being added at all levels.

Currently there are three classes and four different titles a dog can earn. The current rules require the lower level title in order to move up to the higher level classes. One of the new classes will change that: the new Intermediate class will be an optional titling class similar to obedience's "grad" classes.

The first new class/title will be Rally Intermediate. The intermediate class is designed for dogs who have completed their Novice title but aren't quite ready for the off-leash classes. The Intermediate class will use an advanced course without the jump and be entirely on-leash. Any dog who has completed their Novice title but does not yet have advanced legs can enter and compete in this class. As with the Rally Novice class three qualifying scores are required to earn the title.

The other new class/title will be Rally Masters. Dogs must have an Excellent title to compete in the Masters class but it is not necessary to have completed an RAE. A Masters class will incorporate signs from the lower

levels as well as a host of new signs designed to offer additional challenges to dogs and handlers who wish to continue competing in rally. Unlike the other classes, in order to earn the Masters title a dog will need to earn ten qualifying scores in the Masters class. Another difference is that no signs can be retried in the Masters class. Twenty-two new signs have been designed specifically for this level.

In addition to the new classes the AKC has also designed a championship title for rally, the RACH (pronounced "ROCK"). To earn a RACH a dog needs to earn 20 triple Qs by qualifying in Advanced B, Excellent B and Master level classes at the same event and 300 total points. Points can be earned in the Excellent B and Masters classes. At least 200 of the points must be earned from the Masters class.

Full details of these program enhancements can be found on the AKC Rally News and Updates page. <http://www.akc.org/events/rally/news-updates/>

The club will offer a rally workshop on May 20, from 1–4 p.m. to go over these changes including an opportunity to practice the new signs.

Tough Spring for all Trackers

Overall the weather for MNDTC's spring tracking test was sunny, and for the most part, pleasant. When the tracks were plotted Saturday, there was a brisk, cold wind. Sunday, however, had only a light wind. Judges Gretchen Stephenson and Sandy Roth plotted good tracks that took advantage of the Ag Progress Grounds.

All tracks were laid early Sunday morning with no problems, and all competitive teams were on hand for the drawings. We had an interesting mix of dogs for the TD and the TDX tracks. A Border Collie, Rottweiler, Australian Shepherd and a Belgian Tervuren for the TD and a Saluki, Collie, Corgi and German Shepherd for the TDX. The Saluki was the first we've had in our trials.

All dogs worked well, and several, including Carl Tier and Reign, got to the final two turns and then took a wrong turn. I'm sure there are TDs and TDXs in their futures, and I wish them all happy tracking.

Although there are only a handful of competitors in any tracking test, the event itself requires substantial behind-the-scenes volunteers. As usual, our MNDTC members pitched in to help. Mel Eng and Alicia Alwine prepared their traditional buffet both days for the hungry handlers, track layers, drivers and judges. Thanks to Andrea Minasian, Bonnie Jacobs and Janet Lewis provided transportation all over the grounds. Carol Aulick, Lois Albright, Brenda Palmgren, Kathy Huey, Helen Smith, Craig Bohren and Diane Albright were the diligent track layers, while Paul Demmert, Dan Havrilla and Jill Paige laid the cross tracks.

And more thanks to Gretchen and Sandy for walking all over APG to plot and lay the tracks. Our thanks to all who made the weekend a success.

Nanette Bohren
Trial chair and secretary

Photo by Lisa Coggins



Participant drawing for a track with judge Sandy Roth (in green) and trial chair, Nanette Bohren

Barn Hunt Fun Test

Mt. Nittany Dog Training Club held its first sanctioned Barn Hunt Association Barn Hunt Fun Test on Saturday, March 25, 2017 at Penn State Ag Progress Grounds. A fun test is similar to an agility or obedience match in that it must be approved by the parent organization and training in the ring is allowed, at club discretion. A fun test follows many of the same rules as a regular trial.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this event happen! Check out the MNDTC Facebook page for more photos.

Photos by Lisa Coggins



Judge Cynthia Rabbers looking on



Roberta Horner and Via

Building Agility Skills with Donna Rohaus

On April 1-2, MNDTC brought in Donna Rohaus, national and international-level agility handler from Pittsburgh, for a four-session seminar at the Ag Choice Building, Penn State Ag Progress Grounds.

Two Jumps and a Tunnel. The first day of the seminar was targeted toward beginner dogs. In the morning session, participants worked very short sequences of two or three jumps and a tunnel, concentrating on timing of cues for individual dogs. Donna also assigned homework to build the dogs' skills at home.



Donna, right, instructing Patty Horne

Sequencing for the Beginner Dog. In the afternoon, teams worked on longer sequences. Donna's instructions to work the sequence with front/blind crosses or rear crosses forced handlers to examine skills in both areas, including timing and footwork.



Nancy Miller beginning a start-line stay

Four Jumps and a Tunnel. Sunday morning, Donna's course was designed to create speed for advanced dogs, followed by obstacle placement requiring collection. She challenged participants to select three different handling options to run the course. With the same course, participants discussed a handling option that involved convergence of the dog to the handler, applying one of Linda Mecklenburg's recalls to heel. Donna discussed the progressive training steps required to prepare the dog for successful execution of the convergence.



Heidi Miller, Kathy Huey and Donna

Advanced Sequencing. Donna set up two courses to challenge the handler to use advance sequencing, including back-sides. Handlers then analyzed the courses and discussed a variety of different handling options, including the forced-front, reverse spin and skills developed during Donna's morning workshop.



Participants huddle to keep warm under the heaters on a very chilly day.

MNDTC Awards Banquet

The MNDTC Awards Banquet was held on March 28, 2017 at the Mountain View Country Club in Boalsburg.



Howard Etzel and Carol Crouch



Sue Williams and Karen Bettleyon



Lois Albright



Melanie Eng, Wendy Rote and Wendy's mother



Sharon Hagerty and Joan Stone



Cynthia Rabbers

Congratulations!



Zena earned MACH 10 on March 18 at the York County Dog Training Club trial in Palmyra with a QQ under Judges Pam Johnson and Oksana Syrkin.
~Tracey Doms