



The USDAA®

# OVERview™

A quarterly publication "promoting competitive excellence in dog agility.™"

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3

A publication of  
**United States  
Dog Agility  
Association, Inc.**  
300 S. Kirby St., Suite 101  
Garland, TX 75042  
972.487.2200

President  
**Kenneth Tatsch**

Communications  
**Heather Smith**

Sales  
**Merlene Stiles**

Event Administration  
**Tev Brannan**

Editor  
**Brenna Fender**  
BrennaFender@gmail.com

Contributors:  
**Brenna Fender**  
**Leona Hellesvig**  
**Emily Snider**

Visit us at  
**www.usdaa.com**  
for more expanded news  
and information on  
the sport of dog agility.

©2008 United States  
Dog Agility Association, Inc.  
All rights reserved.  
No portion of this  
publication may reproduced  
in any form in any media  
without the express written  
permission of United States  
Dog Agility Association, Inc.

## An ADCH in No Time

### HOW JOSIE EARNED THE TITLE OF CHAMPION IN ONLY 231 DAYS

*On May 18, 2008, Emily Snider and her Border Collie, Josie, earned the ADCH, becoming the 11th dog to accomplish that title in less than a year's time and the youngest one to do so. She went from Starters to ADCH in a little over seven months time, finishing the title only 231 days after the day she turned 18 months old. Emily and Josie finished the title at the Tyler Obedience Training Club in Tyler, Texas under judge Eric Bruce. Emily Snider tells Josie's story:*

Josie turned 18 months old on Sunday, September 30, 2007, and we found ourselves at a USDAA show in Georgetown, Texas. She went four for four in Qs on her debut day! She earned her AD after two more shows and her AAD only two shows after that. By the end of November she was in all Masters classes.

While earning her Gamblers Master, Snooker Master, and Relay Master titles she went five for six in each class. For her Jumpers Master she went five for eight, and her Tournament Master was earned in 10 Qs out of 12 tries. I held her up, with my nerves, in Standard. It was always "one little thing" that kept us from qualifying in Standard along the way. I think we ran the gamut of every possible little thing that could go wrong! After earning all of the required games titles in what seemed like



Photo by Tom Bridge, [www.fastclicksphoto.com](http://www.fastclicksphoto.com)

no time at all, she had only two Standard Qs, and that was entirely my fault.

Josie earned her third Standard leg mid-February 2008, thus earning her MAD at only 22 months old. I then realized how close we were to ADCH, and I wondered how old the youngest dog to earn the ADCH had been up to this point. Earning Josie's ADCH at such a young age was never the goal of our early training or trialing; coming within reach of the ADCH was just something that happened to us.

It took us two months between Standard leg number four, earned mid-March, and leg number five because I was defeating us before we went in with my

*Continued on page 4...*

# Off the Leash

The 21st annual Grand Prix of Dog Agility World Championships in October mark the beginning of USDAA's third decade of tournament competition. Six head-to-head tournament series showcase the "best of the best," culminating in the longest running tournament series in the Americas. Everyone is welcome to join us in Scottsdale, Arizona, from October 29 to November 2, 2008, to watch top competitors in dog agility, flyball, flying disc, and dock jumping battle it out in the USDAA's signature event, the Cynosport® World Games. USDAA draws top competitors from the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Bermuda, Central America, Southeast Asia, and parts of Europe.

West World of Scottsdale provides the perfect setting for this Olympic-style event. The polo fields offer lots of space, excellent footing for athletes, and ample seating for spectators. But if you can't get away for the long weekend, we invite you to visit the USDAA website at [www.usdaa.com](http://www.usdaa.com) in the days leading up to and during the event to stay abreast of the highly charged competition and fun happenings ringside through extensive coverage by USDAA and *DogSport Magazine*. Share the passion and the fun with us in Scottsdale.

Ken Tatsch, *President, USDAA*

## A Conversation with Dave Hanson *by Leona Hellesvig*

When meeting Dave Hanson for the first time, many people are surprised by his accent. Dave, who has served for many years as a USDAA judge and course reviewer, is originally from Hessle in Yorkshire in the Northern part of England. He now lives in Kerrville, Texas with his wife, Caroline, three dogs, several cats, and many other interesting critters.

Dave first saw agility demonstrated in 1988 at a benefit for the Dallas SPCA. His Golden Retriever, Airlie Morning Lover, was about six months old at the time. David was inspired to begin her training and joined Dallas Working Agility Group (DAWG).

Recently after a local trial, I had an opportunity to sit down with Dave Hanson over dinner. Here is some of what he had to say:

*LH: What is it about agility that captures your heart and keeps you involved with*

*running your own dogs in this sport?*

DH: I like the challenge of being on the course with the dog, meeting new people, and seeing different parts of the country. Each part of the country has different styles, and handlers. I have been to Guatemala, Mexico, and England to watch or judge agility events. Each of them has a different style, and different ways of doing things.

*LH: What is the motivation that keeps you judging?*

DH: To give back to the sport, and for the education it gives me. You learn from each course, and each time you judge. You meet new people each time, and similar sequences will be run in different areas of the country differently. I like to believe I am a good representative for USDAA as well.

*LH: Do you have a particular course design philosophy or particular "goal"*



**Dave and Nimbus**

*Photo by Caroline Hanson*

*in your own course designing? Is there a particular quality or skill you want to bring out in the competitors who show under you by way of the specific challenges you put into a course?*

*Continued on page 4...*

# Steeplechase Round I

*A Course Analysis from the Buckeye Regional Agility Group June 7 Trial by Leona Hellesvig*

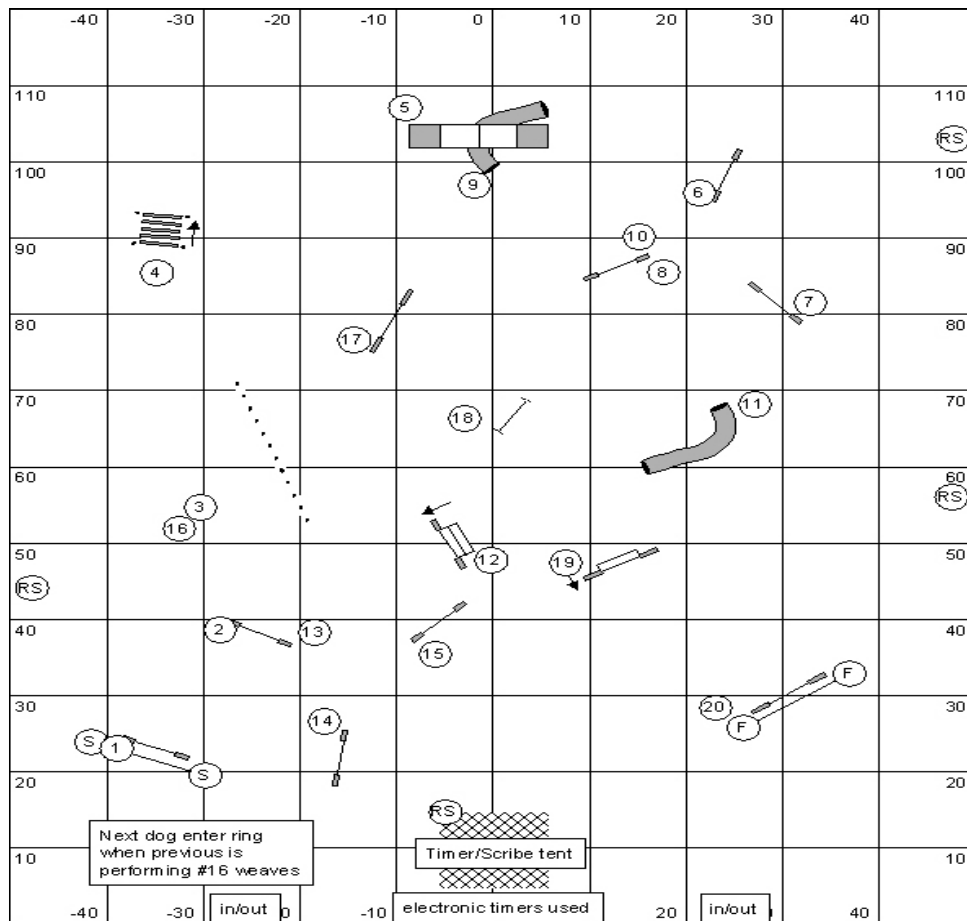
The fastest time for a clean run on this course was just a fraction over 30 seconds. Many times were in the 40–43 second range.

Bar 1 fell a few times as handlers led out past jump 2 and moved to a strategic handling position to deal with the weave poles. Those weave poles were perhaps the greatest challenge on the course for many dogs and handlers. Much time was taken with needing to correct for a wrong entry or skipped poles. Most handlers whose dogs missed a pole took the time to fix the problem before continuing (since failing to fix the issue would mean an E, and dogs eventually correctly completing the poles are not faulted in Steeplechase).

Several dogs faulted the long jump. I wondered if it was a case of not performing many long jumps on standard courses, or if it was the handler's moving to turn toward the A-frame that was causing the recurring issue here.

A few dogs took a wrong course from jump 7 to tunnel 11. Only one or two dogs took the wrong course from 13 to 1. The weaves were as much of a problem on the second pass as they had been on the first time through them. Perhaps three or four dogs had difficulty with the turn from weaves 16 to jump 17. A few dogs took a wrong course from jump 18 to the wrong end of tunnel 11.

I had so very much fun judging this class! It was so exhilarating to watch the flow and fluid performances of so many truly fast dogs. This was the first time I have ever designed or judged Steeplechase, and it was quite the experience. I absolutely loved it.



## From the Editor

Some agility competitors have recently realized that they have more in common with each other than just a love of dogs and agility—they also want to get in better shape. In many cases, agility has motivated the desire for greater fitness. Being able to run fast, give verbal cues without huffing and puffing, and maintain momentum throughout a course is certainly advantageous in this sport.

USDAA competitors are finding support for their quest for fitness by banding together with others on the internet and reading articles from the new fitness series that is available to all readers of [www.usdaa.com](http://www.usdaa.com), free of charge. It's exciting to think that a fun hobby like agility could lead to changes in eating and exercising patterns to help develop a healthier body. Keep checking the main page or the subscriber news page for more information on this topic. If you have any fitness-related information to share, including tips and personal stories, please contact me at [brennafender@gmail.com](mailto:brennafender@gmail.com).

As summer comes to a close it's time to focus on the exciting fall agility season, which leads to the **2008 Cynosport Games** in Scottsdale, Arizona. Subscribers should watch for training exercises to help them prepare to succeed on the challenging types of courses they might see at the Championships. Of course, the news page will continue to bring you event reports, human (and canine) interest stories, book and DVD reviews, interviews, practice courses, and more.

Enjoy the end of your summer, and happy reading!

—B. Fender



# Dave Hanson

...continued from page 2.

DH: I like to keep courses moving forward, fluid and fast with challenges that meet the level of the competitor. In Masters titling class, for example, different handlers have different goals. Some people will be pushing their dogs but the course should be doable by both that competitor and the handler who just moved up from Advanced. There needs to be a potential for different course handling strategies to be adopted. I don't sit down with a list of challenges and design around those. It would be OK with me if every dog in the class Qs.

LH: If there was one piece of advice or encouragement you could give a new agility handler, what would that advice be?

DH: When you go to a show, watch the level above yours. Watch the handling; get to understand the challenges presented at that level and the pace of the class. There is no better place to watch than the position of ring steward.

For the rest of the article, subscribe and visit [http://usdaa.com/sub\\_article.cfm?newsID=921](http://usdaa.com/sub_article.cfm?newsID=921) and [http://usdaa.com/sub\\_article.cfm?newsID=922](http://usdaa.com/sub_article.cfm?newsID=922).

# An ADCH in No Time ...continued from page 1.

lack of proper mental management. Thanks to some literature given to me by my wonderful instructor, Elizabeth Evans, many, many pep talks by my friends, and lectures by my great friend and trainer-by-proxy, Renee King, I was able to talk myself into the game, not out of it!

The weekend Josie earned her ADCH was a phenomenal for us as a team. Josie won the Grand Prix on Saturday on a very challenging course against a very competitive field, thus earning her second voucher for 2008. I wondered aloud, "Why can we go out there and win Grand Prix, yet not Q in Standard?"

I vowed to go out there and run Standard on Sunday as if it was Grand Prix round two and I had nothing to lose and the results were just what I had hoped!

I attribute all of our successes thus far, and everything that will come to us in the future, to the wonderful relationship Josie and I share. She is my best friend, my constant companion, and the basis for so much joy in my world.

Condensed from the original article at [http://usdaa.com/sub\\_article.cfm?newsID=919](http://usdaa.com/sub_article.cfm?newsID=919) and [http://usdaa.com/sub\\_article.cfm?newsID=920](http://usdaa.com/sub_article.cfm?newsID=920).

## Trainer's Corner *Designed by Leona Hellesvig*

Advanced dogs can work on the course below left. If you change things just a little (below right), Starters dogs can practice too!

