



The USDAA®

# OVERview™

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## You Can Teach Old Dogs New Tricks



Not one to brag,  
MAD Kramer lets  
his ribbons  
do the talking.

**Stacy Bols** is MAD about her Miniature Schnauzer, **Kramer**, who recently reached that awesome agility milestone (Master Agility Dog.) Ten-year-old Kramer, who is Bols' first competition dog, didn't even start doing agility until age eight!

Bols lives in Keller, Texas, with Kramer as well as two-year-old Miniature Schnauzer **Krusher** the **Braveheart**, nine-year-old pet Miniature Schnauzer **Dee Dee**, and Giant Schnauzer **Lord Nikon**. In her non-doggie life she is an administrative assistant.

*BF: How did you wind up getting into agility with Kramer?*

*SB: I started agility because my mom got her Australian Shepherd into agility and*

it looked like a lot of fun. I knew that at the age of eight-and-a-half Kramer was much older than most of the other dogs in class. But I knew that he loved to learn new things and it would give us more time to do things together. So I started in class at Gold Medal Agility taught by **Linda Knowles** and was instantly hooked. Kramer learned very quickly and we entered our first show eight months after we started classes.

*BF: How did Kramer's age factor in to your training and trialing?*

*SB: Kramer's age has factored in my training and trialing because I have to be aware of his limitations. Even though most people that know him are shocked when they find*

*Continued on page 3...*

# Off the Leash

A celebration of the 30-year history of dog agility began in September when the Lincolnshire German Shepherd Dog and All Breeds Training Society, recognized as the founding club of dog agility, hosted a special event in England. Highlights of the festivities included a special awards ceremony, and a running of the original course from the 1978 Crufts Dog Show competition—the first official competition of dog agility as we know it today.

It was an honor and privilege to be invited as one of the special guests, in recognition of USDAA's leadership and success in the sport in North America. It was particularly moving since USDAA's own history tracks back to the British standards, and we attribute much of our base knowledge and training expertise to trainers from England during our first decade.

Meeting some of the people who were on the first competitive teams thirty years ago, and seeing the original site where the first obstacles were built and training ensued was fascinating. I found my conversations with those who played a key role in history to be enlightening, and have posted an article about them on the USDAA Web site *Subscriber News* page. A video report is also in the works and will also be posted soon.

Interestingly, USDAA also has a special celebration this year with the running of our 20th *Grand Prix of Dog Agility*<sup>®</sup>, recognizing the establishment of the sport of dog agility in this country. Just as the British celebrated 30 years by running the original Crufts Dog Show course from 1978, we will be running our original Grand Prix course from 1988 in a special class at this year's Cynosport<sup>®</sup> World Games. The parallels in the evolution of the sport continue, and gladly, so have the cordiality and spirit of its people.

Ken Tatsch, *President, USDAA*

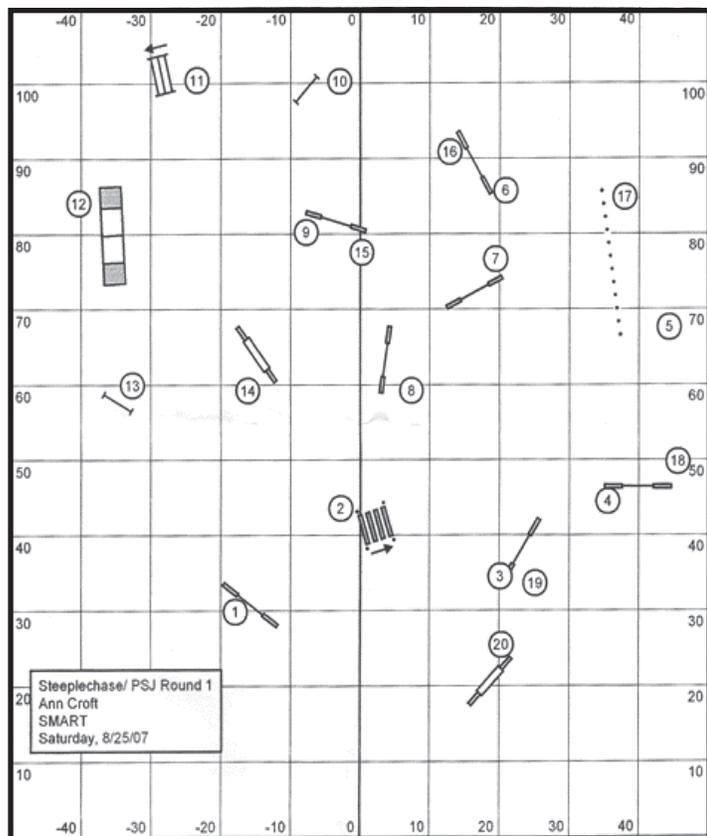
## From the Editor

This year's Cynosport<sup>®</sup> World Games is going to be amazing—and we will be providing coverage of the event for readers on the *News* page at [www.usdaa.com](http://www.usdaa.com). Our team of regular writers and reporters will be providing pre-event coverage, multiple daily reports during the event, periodic blog entries, and post-event coverage. We will be joining with the good folks from *DogSport Magazine* to get reports on the non-agility competitions, exhibitions, and events like flying disc, flyball, dock diving, rally, and much more. Extra details in post-event coverage will be available on the *Subscriber Services* news page as well, so if you haven't signed up for this service, this is the time to do it.

Even if you can't take the trip to Scottsdale, you can feel like you are almost there by keeping up with all the events online. And Cynosport competitors can check out the web every night to see what they missed while they were competing with their own dogs. This year's event is bigger and more exciting than ever, and so is our coverage!

—B. Fender

# SMART Steeplechase Round I



The Southwest Regional warm-up trial was hosted by **Salinas-Monterey Agility Racing Team** in Prunedale, California. The first round of Steeplechase/Performance Speed Jumping was designed and judged by **Ann Croft** of San Diego, California. The straightforward and speedy course revealed two tricky areas: the weave pole entrance at #17 and the final closing sequence from #18 to #20. Handlers who tried to get ahead at the weaves by crossing behind the #16 jump pulled their dogs off the pole entrance and others just had trouble getting the right-arcing approach.

The final serpentine sequence tested those who chose to run along the right side of the set of jumps while trying to pull the dog in towards them over #19. Some couldn't indicate the turn to #19 quick enough and dogs ran by #19 completely and then kept going past #20, or the timing was late and there were many near collisions on the landing side of #19.

Results of the event are available in the *Subscriber Services* section of the USDAA Web site.

—T. Chadwick

## Old Dog, New Tricks

...continued from page 1.

out his age, he does need plenty of rest and quality nutrition prior to a long show. I am selective about how many runs he does in a day knowing that he needs more energy for some runs than for others. Also I try to give him at least two days of full rest prior to training after a long show. We only train once a week and I make sure that he is in good shape by warming up and stretching before and after every run. Knowing how his body works is key in understanding

any problems that might arise. Because he gets quite a few massages and stretching sessions (plus I groom him myself), I notice quickly if something is not quite right. This is important because at his age if he is running with an injury he can take much longer to bounce back than my two-year-old Schnauzer.

*BF: What advice do you have to people who are starting agility with older dogs?*

*SB: My advice to anyone wanting to start their older "pet" in agility is that age is no limitation. Make sure that your dog is structurally*

sound before starting any program and approach everything with excitement and fun. Allow them to make mistakes and know that you will make plenty yourself. Everyone learns from them. Agility builds a bond between dog and handler that I never thought possible and I am so grateful to this sport for that. Kramer is getting older every day as we all are but we are moving forward with excitement for what the future holds for us. Kramer just wants everyone out there to know that "old dogs *can* learn new tricks."

# Hoop It Up!

## How to build hoops for contact training

For many years, competitors have used hoops to help dogs hit their down contacts on the A-frame and the dogwalk. Multiple sighthound owner **Karen Selbert, DVM**, discovered that using hoops helped her dogs learn to consistently hit their up contacts as well.

The problem with using hoops is in the logistics. How do you make a hoop that you can easily transport to different training locations? Selbert did some thinking and came up with a plan using a basic Hula Hoop.

### You need:

- Hula Hoop (ones that are 24" in diameter work well)
- Wood plank approximately 2' L x 3" W x 1/2" H
- Dowel rod 10" or longer that fits snugly inside the Hula Hoop
- Wood screws (2)

### How to:

1. Cut the dowel rods into 5" long pieces. Angle one end of each rod so that it can attach to the base.
2. Use a wood screw to attach the angled end of the dowel a few inches from the end of the board that will be used at the base. Sink the head so that there is no raised surface. Repeat on the other end.
3. Remove an approximately 4" section of the hoop (use your own judgment, you may have to remove less or more) to get the angle and tension right so that the hoop fits smoothly over the dowels. Take into account your dog's height.

Selbert said, "In the end, I have hoops that can be used indoor on mats, because the base sits flat, but can also be used outside by jamming the base just under the end of the dogwalk, where the weight of the plank on the base keeps the hoop from falling over. I've used them everywhere, including show-n-gos."



The base and the two wooden dowels angled and screwed into it.

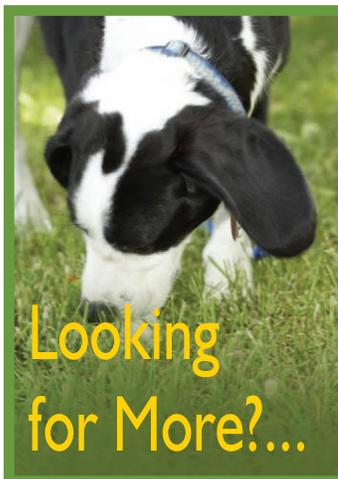


The rods fit inside the Hula Hoop.



The finished product.

Photos by Karen Selbert



Looking  
for More?...

Articles included in this edition of *OVERview* are condensed versions of just some of the news available through USDAA's *Subscriber Services* area at [www.usdaa.com](http://www.usdaa.com).

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USDAA Judges share...

## Their Favorite Moments

**Dave Hanson:** "A lot of best moments—too many to really recall; some embarrassing, some just plain funny. The best thing is a chance to see old friends around the country, and dogs that you saw starting out that have gone on to become champions. I did have a couple get married in my ring at a show once. The bride called me a few days before the show to ask if it would be OK. They said their vows at the base of the A-frame."

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