



The USDAA®

OVERview™

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Love Agility, Will Travel By Staff



*Guillermo and Fritz, Ana and Moxie,
and Maria and Essie.*

Photo by Emily Snider

Often competitors travel for several hours to get to a weekend's agility trial. Road trips, hotel stays...it's part of the game for many. What about traveling to another country? Seems difficult, doesn't it? But that's just what a few competitors did, leaving Central America to trial at the Pensacola Agility League's event in Florida.

Ana Quiros brought her three-year-old Australian Shepherd, Moxie, from Costa Rica

and her husband **Guillermo E. Rudin** came with his four-year-old Border Collie, Fritz. Guatamala resident **Maria M. Johanis** also made the trek with her 23-month-old BC, Essie. The three are all USDAA judges who attended judging clinics with

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Off the Leash

It might seem too early to plan for the 2009 Cynosport World Games in Scottsdale, Arizona, from November 11–15, but now is a great time to secure hotel rooms and make other travel arrangements. A NASCAR event will be in town during the same weekend so book your rooms before their spectators do! And who knows, this could be the last year in Scottsdale for a while.

We also will need many volunteers for the Games. It takes a lot of workers to make such a large event go smoothly. Don't think you need to have special skills or vast experience to be a good volunteer. Most jobs require only "on the job training" and some can be done by people who have never competed in agility. Volunteers say there are many benefits to working at the Games, including getting the best seats in the house for the best agility in the world. If you'd like to join us as a worker in sunny Scottsdale in the fall, contact Cynosport Games volunteer coordinator **Karen Gloor** at rysaroni@cox.net.

The rules for making Team USA for IFCS 2010 competition have been outlined so that competitors can now learn how they might earn a trip to Europe to compete in this prestigious World Agility Competition. The event will be in North Somerset, England at the Hand Equestrian Center, May 14–16, 2010. An increasing number of countries have committed to attend from around the world. Visit <http://www.usdaa.com/binary/files/2010ifcs.pdf> to access the rules and Intent To Compete/Measurement form. If you have questions, contact **Heather Smith** at **972.487.2200, Ext. 102**.

Ken Tatsch, *President, USDAA*

USDAA's First 4-Star Event

By *Marla Friedler-Cooper*

It was almost like a regular local trial, but not.

The very first USDAA 4-Star Event was held April 18 and 19 at Chaffey College in Southern California. This event, which offered team selection points for those hoping to represent the US at the 2010 IFCS World Championship, was fabulously run by DART (Dog Agility Racing Team).

Saturday was a lovely day with some challenging yet fun courses designed and judged by Scott Chamberlain. The day started with a nice team gamblers course. We also had lovely Grand Prix, steeplechase, and team jumpers courses. Little did we know that Scott was luring us in for "that" Standard course on Sunday. Don't ask.

Sunday, not only were we greeted with a very, very challenging standard course, we were also overcome with strong winds and record heat. After standard, there was team snooker and relay. It was an exhausting day, to say the least. At one point, one of my dogs was stuck inside his soft crate, which caved in on him while my pop up tent collapsed on top of that. I had to fight the wind to get him out. Everyone remained in good spirits despite the record temperatures and unkind winds. As Scott Lovelis (President of DART) said, "It just wouldn't be a DART trial without a weather anomaly."

This was a two-ring/one-judge trial, requiring no breaks for walk-throughs. The next course was open for walk-through while a course was being run in the other ring. What I would personally like to see in the future is a ring just for Performance and a ring just for Championship. There was a lot of down time at this event because of the one judge and hopefully in the future there will be a greater number of entries so the club can afford a second judge.

This event was special because it was one of the places where someone wanting to earn a spot on the World Team

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Love Agility... *continued from page 1.*

USDAA President Kenneth Tatsch and Raphael Quinones in Costa Rica in 2007 and with Tim Laubach in 2008. Recently, they told us about their experiences in agility in and out of the United States.

What inspired you to travel all this way to compete in an agility trial?

Ana (AQ): We have just four trials a year in Costa Rica and wanted to compete in the States at a USDAA trial to get more experience.

Guillermo (GR): Vacations combined with [a more] challenging experience in agility. [Plus] having the opportunity to compete in two [back-to-back] weekends...

Maria (MJ): To experience a trial in USA. It is a challenge for me to compete at this level, shoulder-to-shoulder with famous agility people that I have always heard of.

How is competing in Florida different than competing at home?

AQ: Bigger trials, less work to do here, more chances to get Qs.

GR: You can combine and compete one weekend after the other while we only have just four competitions per year.

MJ: The number of dogs; this is my fourth competition since I started competing, so I really don't have experience at all.

How did the trial site differ from ones you are used to?

All: We don't do trials on arenas, [we run] on soccer turf (grass).

What was your overall impression of this weekend's trial?

AQ: Very organized, nice people, made me feel like at home, on-time schedule...

GR: Organization, resources and competition levels. In our countries competitors have to compete, build the course, judge, and organize the events at the same time.

MJ: Very organized, on time, very nice people, good dogs competing.

Central American agility instructors are few and far between, but Ana, Guillermo, and Maria manage to do enough training, on their own and otherwise, to be able to compete successfully in the US. The three enjoyed their trip to the States and perhaps Maria best expressed their sentiments on their experience by concluding, "I really hope to be able to come back and enjoy agility the American way. It was very nice to be here and get to know and make new friends that are hooked like me [on] this wonderful sport—agility."

Thanks to Sylvia Calcano for her assistance with this interview.

Trash Talk

Turn trash into treasure by allowing Pam Meeks and her husband, Jason, to convert your old and unused PVC into agility equipment. The couple donates the labor and some fittings and the finished equipment is sold at Ft. Worth Agility Sports Team (FAST) trials with the proceeds benefitting Australian Shepherd Rescue. Jumps, weaves, training tires, contact hoops, and tunnel cradles are just some of the items that the Meeks family has made from unused PVC and sold at low prices to the benefit of both homeless Aussies and frugal competitors. If you or your club wants to donate extra PVC to this cause, please contact Pamela Bryant-Meeks at bonfire5@hotmail.com.

USDAA's Own Heather Smith

As part of an ongoing series of articles, USDAA has asked staff, judges, and competitors to share 10 things about themselves that don't have anything to do with dogs. **Heather Smith** agreed to share a little about herself with us. Heather heads USDAA's Public Relations & Communications department, which means she deals with media relations, sponsorships, Web site content, subscriptions, rules and regulations, championship event planning, and more. What does she do when she's not working with USDAA or running agility? Find out now!

Name: Heather Smith

Dogs: Two Miniature Schnauzers ages 7 and 2; one Border Collie aged 13

Home: Richardson, Texas

Occupation: Wearer of any/many caps at USDAA

Special Accomplishments:

My Gordon Setter was the first of his breed to earn the Agility Dog title in USDAA and the first in Texas to be awarded the *Beauty, Brains & Birdsense* award by the Gordon Setter Club of America.

I learned to dance real dances, not just juking around.

10 Non-Dog Things...:

1. I love the water, being around it, in it, sunning and boating.
2. Favorite TV shows are *Medium*, *Lost*, *Life on Mars*, *Gray's Anatomy*, *The Mentalist*, *Pushing Daisies*, *Jon & Kate + 8*, *Dog Whisperer*, *Ghost Hunters*, *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?*, *CBS Sunday Morning*....I'm sure there are more, but that's enough. I don't watch nature shows where animals are killed or suffer, etc.
3. I enjoy dancing with my hubby—West Coast Swing, Two-Step, Progressive Double Two-Step, Waltz (Country Cha-Cha soon).
4. I love New Orleans—the people, the food, the architecture, the culture/patois (terms unique to the area) including the bad stuff that goes along with it. Katrina really did a number on the city and the Mississippi Gulf Coast—please don't forget them.

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From the Editor

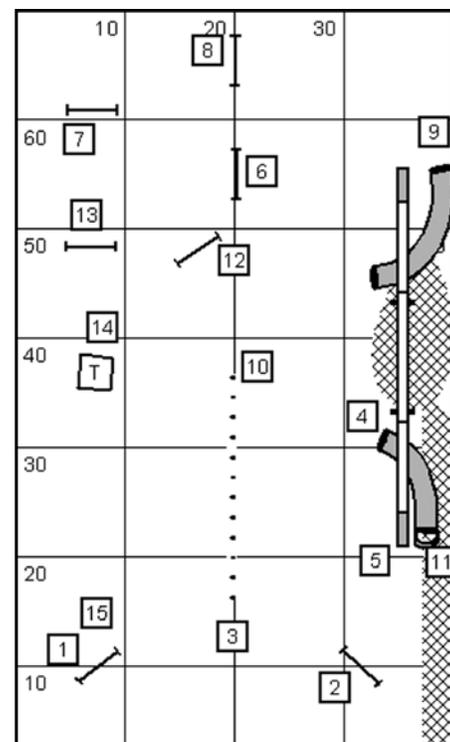
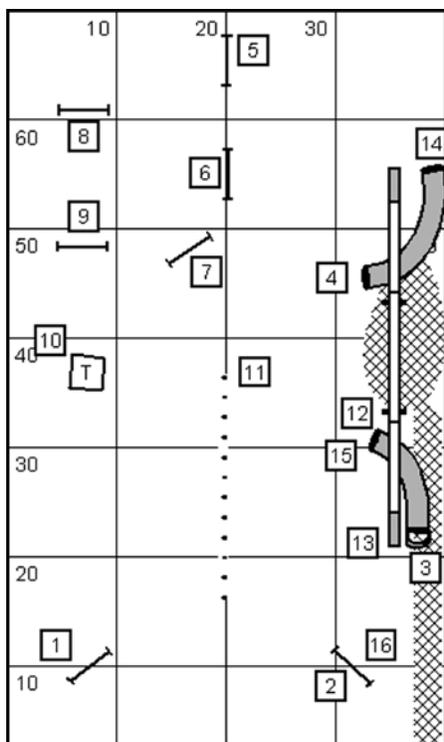
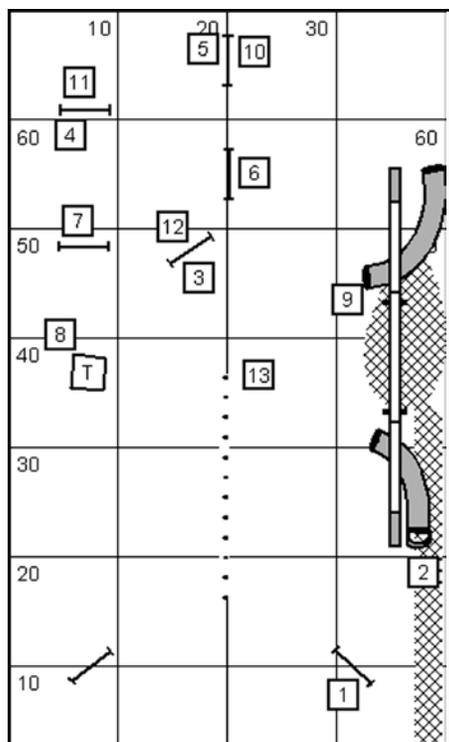
Those of you who don't visit www.usdaa.com frequently should check out the news page, which boasts not only the basic USDAA news, but also some great general interest stories. Articles about big USDAA happenings, like the first 4-Star event, are often available to all readers, not just those who subscribe. Our news page also has a variety of stories, including a report on a touching tribute that one club hosts for its retired canine athletes, the latest news for the upcoming 2009 Cynosport World Games, and advice to help you become a healthier handler. If you missed any of these, or you want to check out older offerings on our public news page, click on the archives at the bottom of the news page at <http://usdaa.com/news.cfm>.

Subscribers can look forward to new articles approximately four days a week on their own news page, where exclusive content is titled in green font. Recent articles have included an ongoing series from successful competitor Emily Snider chronicling the training of her Border Collie puppy, a description of a club's first USDAA trial, a series of articles showing the non-doggie side of well-known judges and competitors, practice courses, training sets, course analyses, agility league reports, articles about the mental game of agility, book and DVD reviews, and much more. Subscribers also have many other benefits as well—visit <https://usdaa.com/subscribe.cfm> for more details.

The subscriber news pages are for the USDAA community and largely by that community. If you'd like to contribute a story about your club's last trial, a course you analyzed from a recent event, a training set, or something else, please contact me at bfender@usdaa.com for more information about the requirements and benefits of contributing.

Thanks! Enjoy this issue of the *OVERview*!

—B. Fender



Set-up 1:

- Have your arm pointing toward the next obstacle to keep driving ahead at #1-#2-#3 to avoid a look back by the dog.
- Set a good line to avoid a wide turn from #5 to #6.
- Set a good line at #10-#11-#12 to avoid an off-course to #7 after #11.

Set-up 2:

- Be in position to pick up your dog as he exits the tunnel so you can direct him to the next tunnel.
- Get to a good position for the weave entry and to work #12.
- Be sure to stand up straight at #12-#13 to avoid sending the dog back to the tunnel.

Set-up 3:

- Try walking #1-#2-#3 in reverse order to see the best approach to the weaves.
- A change of hands at the end of the dogwalk may ensure a smoother line to #6.
- If you're approaching the weaves with the dog on your left, try a rear cross at the weaves for a better position to #11.

Ten Random Things... *continued from page 4.*

5. I love our house on Lake Texoma and treasure the people in that little community where we hope to retire some day.
6. I have been married to a wonderful character for almost 20 years. I have two sons (from my first marriage): one married with two children living in Springfield, Missouri, and the other attending BYU-Rexburg in Idaho.
7. My brother is a pilot for NW Airlines and he flies

almost exclusively to Europe and the Far East. My mother is 91 years young (it's hard to keep up with her) so I hope I can follow in her footsteps.

8. I love food.
9. Least favorite movie: *Shane* (It's my husband's all-time favorite, and he thought we should name our puppy Shane!)
10. Be flexible and try not to sweat the small stuff—it usually takes care of itself.