

DALMATIAN CLUB OF AMERICA

Topic: AGILITY GENERAL INFORMATION

From: Agility Committee (Holly Waldrop)

Date: August 2008

Agility is a sport that tests a dog's speed, dexterity, and ability to work with off lead with a handler. An agility course consists of various obstacles that must be completed in a specific order within a set time period. Qualifying scores may be earned towards various titles.

In the United States, titles are awarded by a number of organizations including the American Kennel Club (AKC), United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA), North American Dog Agility Council (NADAC), and the United Kennel Club (UKC). In each venue, dogs begin at a basic level and progress to more complex degrees of training and cooperation with their handlers. Agility handlers of all ages and abilities can be seen competing.

Agility is an ideal sport for the Dalmatian. The natural athleticism of the breed coupled with its innate intelligence make this a good choice for owners. Agility not only gives an outlet for the natural energy of the breed, but is also a well-documented confidence builder. Training also creates a stronger bond between the Dal and the owner, resulting in a better behaved dog and a happier owner.

Basic obedience should be the foundation for any agility classes. Certain behaviors, such as "come", "sit" or "down", and "stay", will be utilized in every agility run. Dogs that have competed in obedience do quite well in agility, once they learn the rules of the new "game". Many Dalmatians are titled in both obedience and agility – further confirming their adaptability as a breed.

The benefit of agility for puppies is immeasurable. Dals who begin any sort of training early in life will be preconditioned to learn more easily. Puppies exposed to a variety of objects and experiences build a greater degree of learning potential. They are mentally stimulated at a time when learning happens quickly and easily. Great care should be taken not to jump puppies too early, as damage to growing joints and bones may occur. Consult with a qualified agility trainer with regard to this question.

Competition classes with more generous times and lower jump heights are available for older dogs, as well, so that agility competition and titling can continue to be an enjoyable pursuit for many years.

For most Dalmatian owners their dogs are most importantly their companions and friends. Agility is a great way to have fun with your Dalmatian, meet new friends, and show off your wonderful spotted companion.

For more information, access the following web sites

Clean Run – www.cleanrun.com
Agility Ability – www.agilityability.com

Or join one of the many email lists devoted to agility

AgileDogs - To subscribe, send mail to LISTSERV@APPLE.EASE.LSOFT.COM with the command:
SUBSCRIBE AGILEDOGS

Clean Run – Go to www.yahoo.com to subscribe.

Dalsatwork – Go to www.yahoo.com to subscribe.

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Agility Venues:

AKC

51 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10010
www.akc.org

NADAC

P.O. Box 1206
Colbert, OK 74733
www.nadac.com

CPE

PO Box 805
South Lyon, MI 48178
www.k9cpe.com

USDAA

P.O. Box 850955
Richardson, TX 75085
www.usdaa.com

UKC

100 East Kilgore Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49002-5584
www.ukcdogs.com

