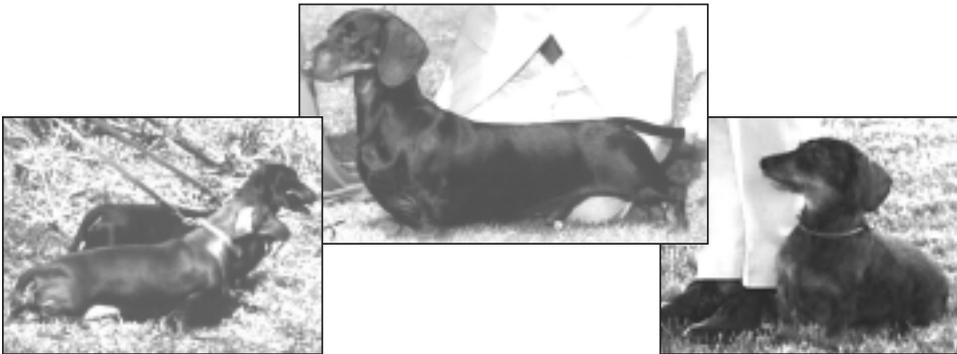


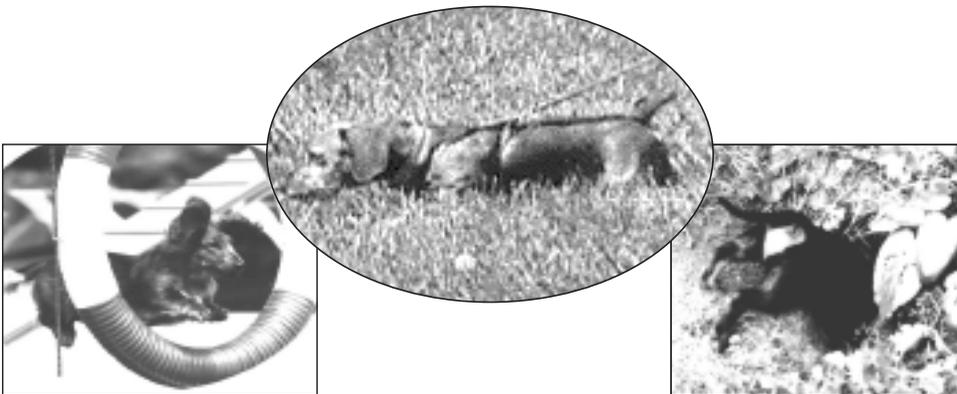


Dachshund Club of American, Inc.



Introduction to the

The Versatility Certificate



Revised - January 2007



(Catharine A. Haake, Photographer)

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INTRODUCTION

The Versatility Certificate is awarded to Dachshunds who have proven their abilities in the various areas of activities described in this booklet. Since the first Versatility booklet was produced in 1988, new areas of competition have been added and the Schedule of Points updated.

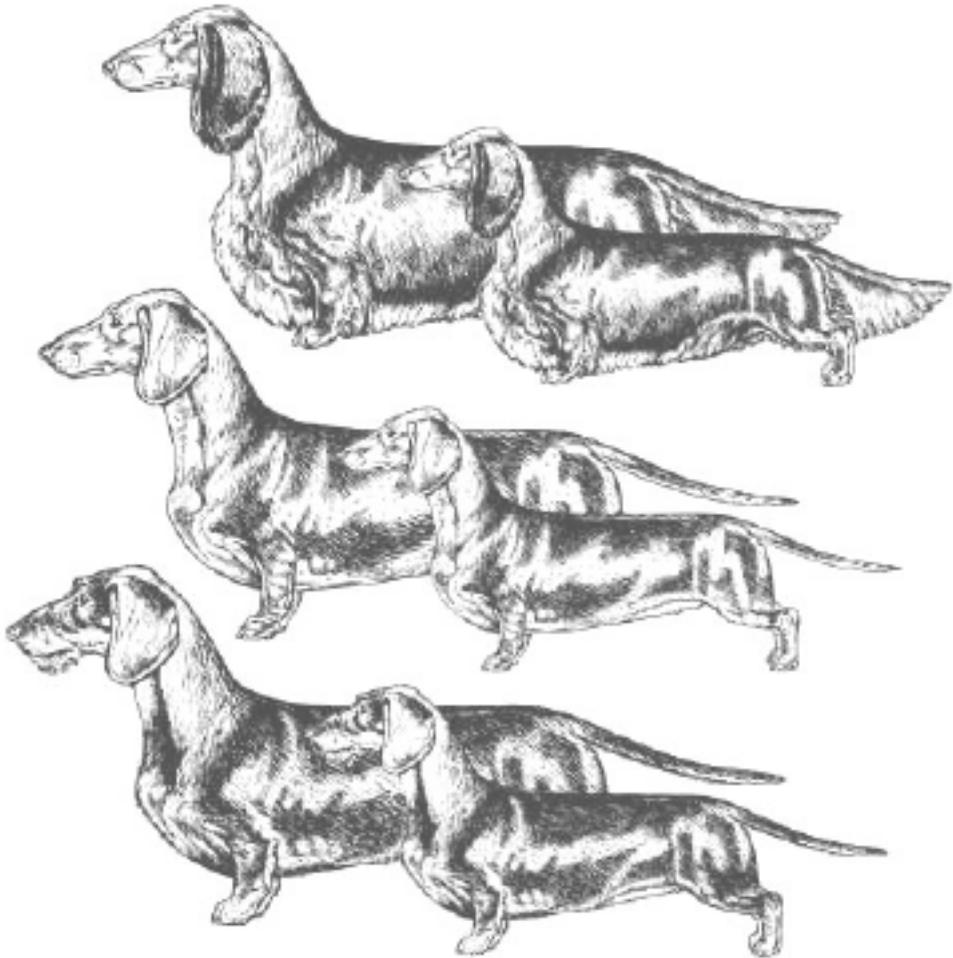
We would like to thank those dedicated fellow Dachshund exhibitors for their contributions to this booklet. The following articles explore each author's experience and knowledge. They are eager to help you explore your Dachshund's talents.

This booklet is produced on behalf of the Dachshund Club of America, Inc. We hope you enjoy the booklet and invite you to join us in the pursuit of Dachshund Versatility.

VERSATILITY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

1. A total of 18 VC points.
2. VC points must be obtained from Bench Group and at least three (3) of the other five (5) groups.
3. Points may not be accumulated in any one group (i.e. a UD entitles a dog to points; his CDX and CD cannot be added).
4. A Triple Champion (Bench, Field and Obedience Champion) qualifies a dog for the Versatility Certificate.
5. CGC is a mandatory requirement for the VC and counts as one(1) point.

CHAPTER 1 - CONFORMATION



WHY CONFORMATION

by Ann Gordon

Why is it important to have participation in Conformation competition as part of the requirements to earn a Versatility Certificate?

The Dachshund's unique body structure was designed so that he could hunt badgers and other earth-dwellers. He needed to go into a badger den effectively, efficiently, and as safely as possible. Each part of the Dachshund, as it is described in the standard of perfection, reflects these qualities.

Let's begin with the Dachshund's overall structure and appearance. He is long-bodied and low to the ground. A leggy or tall dog would have a more difficult time getting into a badger hole. A short-bodied dog, even though he may be low, lacks the body mass and leverage to face fierce game below ground. Besides enabling him to get into a hole or tunnel, the Dachshund's low stature allows him to go through brush and thickets more readily than a dog with longer legs. A taller dog risks getting caught in dense growth, whereas the Dachshund can slither below the most dense level of the vegetation.

The Dachshund's front and chest are designed for maximum effectiveness below ground. The Dachshund front is quite different from the fronts of most dogs. It is referred to as a "wrap around" front in that the front legs literally wrap around the fore-chest so that the legs are as close to the body as possible. Thus the legs take up a minimum amount of space and produce maximum power. In addition, the strong shoulders and short front legs are especially effective for digging. The deep chest and the well-sprung, rounded ribs allow ample room for heart action and lung expansion, which is necessary as the air supply diminishes in an underground den. The after-chest and keel should be long and merge gradually into the abdomen. A short keel that merges abruptly into the abdomen offers little protection to the vulnerable inner organs.

Likewise, the hindquarters are constructed in a manner that is conducive to working in close quarters. The thigh (femur) and the calf (tibia and fibula) are to be equal in length and set at right angles where they meet at the knee, often referred to as the stifle. This assembly provides a driving force from the rear and allows the hindquarters to fold compactly as the dog burrows into a badger hole. Both the forequarters and the hindquarters should be muscled and compact, producing a great strength in this relatively small hound.

The proper assemblage of these parts not only enable the Dachshund to

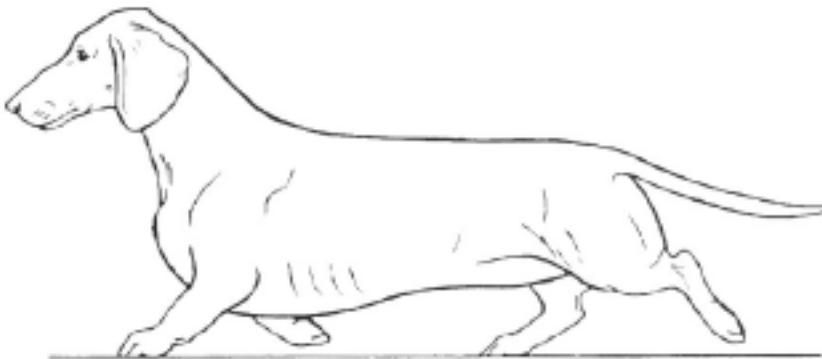
be a proficient hunter, they define the appearance of the Dachshund as a breed. A dog who lacks a close adherence to the standard may, for various reasons, be a good field dog, obedience dog, tracking dog, or earthdog. However, if his construction is such that he is not readily recognizable as a Dachshund, then the whole purpose of the standard has been defeated.

It is in Conformation competition that dogs are judged on how closely their appearance conforms to the ideal or perfect Dachshund. Thus it is important that, as part of the requirements to earn a Versatility Certificate, a Dachshund participates in this competition and experience some measure of success. By so doing, it indicates that not only is this candidate proficient at doing well in various performance events, but that he also possesses the qualities that make him a good representative of his breed.

In reference to temperament, the standard states that the Dachshund is “courageous to the point of rashness”. The Dachshund temperament is much like that of a terrier, who is also an earthdog. The terrier is not afraid of a fierce animal that may outweigh him and neither is the Dachshund. The badger is a fierce animal and can be bigger than the Dachshund who is pursuing him. Thus a Dachshund who is shy would be of little use in hunting, whether the prey be badgers, woodchucks, or rabbits. Participation in conformation competition is one way to evaluate the dog’s basic temperament.

Dachshunds as a breed are remarkable. Not only do many acquire the necessary conformation points to achieve the Versatility Certificate, but there are Dachshunds who are conformation champions and regularly compete and do well in performance events. This is not always true in other breeds where performance and conformation lines are often two different entities.

This unity of form and function shows how truly versatile the Dachshund is and how truly dedicated Dachshund enthusiasts are to promoting, rewarding, and maintaining that versatility.



PREPARING YOUR BENCH CHAMPION

by Arvilla Mayhall

If meeting people who share your love of the dachshund, and traveling to new places is of interest to you, consider the realm of exhibiting show dogs. In showing dogs for points and ultimately their titles, you share in a sport that has attracted thousands. As with any other sport or competitive event, success only comes with hard work and dedication to the ultimate end – A Bench Champion.

Begin with a quality representative of the variety dachshund in which you are most interested. Many resources are available to you in this quest – breeders, exhibitors, local breed clubs, the Dachshund Club of America and a great amount of published material. Seek an established breeder who has had a margin of success in breeding structurally sound, functional champions. Ask all the questions you may have regarding the dachshund, its structure, and the functional aspects of the breed. Absorb this information and begin your search for the dog you feel is as close to the standard as possible. Attend licensed bench shows and observe. Select the type that you prefer and then consult show catalogs for the breeders of these dogs. Contact the breeders and spend time looking at various litters and don't jump at the first puppy you see. Remember, all puppies are "cute" but they go through many stages of growth and do not always mature into a "show quality" animal. This alone may be good justification to purchase an older puppy. Incidentally, if you believe that you would like to breed quality dachshunds, begin with an excellent female, as she most likely will be your foundation bitch. Do remember that "show dogs" can also be loving pets and companions!



Once you have chosen your puppy you must ensure that a proper diet is maintained. A dachshund, whether it is to be a bench champion or field champion or both, is likened to an athlete. An athlete always has the proper food on his training table and the dachshund

should be no different. Proper food containing all necessary nutrients

produces sound bone and muscle tissue. A diet lacking in the basic quality nutrients can adversely affect your puppy's growth.

A very, very important need for your puppy is proper training and socialization. Because he will be called upon to interact with various shapes, sizes and types of strangers, socialization must begin as early as possible. Most commonly this begins when the puppy opens his eyes for the first time. Positive interaction with littermates, along with the breeder's family and friends, lends to a very stable show prospect. Along with the socialization goes the initial training from lead



breaking all the way through "show dog finishing school". Does your breed club offer handling classes? If not, check with the all-breed clubs in your area. It is crucial that the puppy have fun through all these phases! The old adage of "all work and no play" is more fact than fiction in the dog world. A dog that has been trained and has not experienced "fun" will most assuredly be an unhappy show dog.

Once the puppy is at a stage where he/she can effectively move on a lead and stand still for more than two seconds at a time, enter some matches in preparation for the conformation ring. Matches give the handler and the puppy a feeling of what to expect at the real thing – the licensed show.

The big day has arrived, your first show. Your anticipation has been mounting for months awaiting the day when you can unveil the next bench champion in dachshundom. Prepare all the "things" you will need at the show and get an early start. Being rushed and forgetting half of the items you need will not help to make your puppy's first show a pleasant and memorable experience. The self-imposed stress and anticipation you experience will undoubtedly travel right down the lead to the puppy and be cause for some unexpected behavior.

Once at the show site always see to it that your dog is comfortable. This includes providing adequate and timely exercise, shade or warmth (climate prevailing), adequate ventilation or cover from the elements, and a good supply of fresh water.

After the comfort of your dog has been taken care of, go to the assigned ring and observe the judge's ring procedure. By observing his/her routine, you may get just the edge you need over an equally qualified competitor. Where is he setting the class up, what pattern is he using when moving the individual



dog? Check out the condition of the ring, are there any holes in the ground that could cause a break in the dog's gait or an injury? Is the slope of the ring such that it could cause the dog to appear structurally incorrect?

It's now time for your class to be judged, you and your show prospect enter proudly

into the ring for all to see. Months of preparation and training have been paramount and now you experience not only unprecedented pride but a little anxiety as well. For the first time you gently stack your puppy in the show ring and soon the anxiety is replaced by a warm feeling of confidence and pride. While waiting for your puppy to be judged individually he may become restless and the best way to handle it is with controlled play. Remember, the time you spend in the ring with your puppy must always be a pleasant and fun experience. There isn't anything a puppy loves more than attention from the one he has grown to depend on and love.

The time has come for the judge to select the class winner and subsequent placings. Your puppy has placed first! Time must pass before you compete with the other class winners and the comfort and attitude of your pup should be your prime concern during this waiting period. The ring steward calls the competitors back into the ring where the judge, usually following the same judging procedure, selects the Winner. He pointed to you and on this day your dog has been awarded the championship points!!

The first steps have been taken toward your ultimate goal – Your Bench Champion!

CHAPTER 2 - FIELD TRIALS



FIELD TRIALS

by Author unknown

Since DCA's initiation of the Versatility Certificate Program in 1982, the interest in fieldwork with our breed has mushroomed. In 1985 AKC accepted the breed's own Field Trial Rules and Procedures. 1987 gave birth to the DCA Trial Advisory Council to coordinate and support field trial affairs. From a handful of field trials primarily held in the east, the number has dramatically increased to 47 in 1999 held from coast to coast.

Dachshund field trials are usually held on Beagle Club grounds, primarily because they have plenty of space, are fenced for safety, have correct kinds of cover, and an abundance of rabbits. This last can be a handicap when there are so many rabbits that the hounds can split and pursue different ones, or start out on one and veer off after another when it jumps up in front of them. Since the Beagles that are run in these fields have been developed to trail very slowly and methodically, this does not present a problem for them. The judges likewise are challenged to know when the hounds are on the original line and when they are not.

What's Happening

Braces are run in the first series in the order they were drawn. At the option of the judges, the Dachshund's may be cast to search for game, or they may be put down on the line of scent when a rabbit has been sighted. Under the latter method, which was used on this day, the cry of "tallyho" goes up when a rabbit jumps from cover. If the judges can get a clear line on it, i.e., know precisely where it went, and where, therefore, the scent trial must be, the first brace is called to this point.

The hounds are brought to the line on slip-cords so that they can be quickly released on the judges' order. From this point on, the Dachshunds are on their own, and the handlers must stay back behind the judges and may neither encourage nor correct their hounds.

The Rules and Procedures for Dachshunds clearly and exhaustively describe what the hounds should do, how they should do it, as well as what they should not do on the trail. The object really is not to catch the rabbit, but to demonstrate the burning desire and wherewithal to do so. This requires the nose to track it accurately; the intelligence to work out the "checks" where the rabbit has turned and the forward scent trail abruptly disappears; the stamina and perseverance to stay with the job no matter how long it takes or what obstacles are encountered; and the instinct to give tongue when real progress is being

made. In addition, the rule clearly describe the way the correct Dachshund will relate to its brace mates – working independently for the most part but still hark- ing to and cooperating with them when it is most efficient to do so.

How long a brace of hounds works the line depends on a variety of fac- tors. The judges need to see enough to score the dogs on their work. If the rabbit is lost before the result is conclusive, the judges will call for another rab- bit. This can be repeated until the judges are satisfied. Then the next brace is called up and the process is repeated.

When the first series is complete, meaning all the braces have run once, the judges pick out those hounds they want to call back for a second series. These dogs are those that scored highest in the first series and are braced again, this time according to their scores although never with a hound they ran with earlier. Out of this series, or additional series if needed, the top four placements are found.

Placements are made first through fourth on both dogs and bitches; with points going to each, according to a formula based on the number of starters. A total of 35 points, won at a minimum of three trials and including at least one first placement, is required to make up a field champion. The first placed dog and bitch at this field trial earned 23 points toward their championships.

Field Champion Stake – After completion of the stakes, the field trial champions compete. Field Champion Stake is the showpiece of the field trial, where the crème de la crème competes for honors. The winner then moves on to the finale, the ...

Absolute Winner Competition – Comprised of the winner of the Open All- Age Dogs Stake and the winner of the Open All-Age Bitches Stake and the Field Champions. The Absolute Winner receives points set on the basis of the number of total starters of each individual trial. These points eventually deter- mine the DCA top ten.

If your Bench Champion becomes a Field Champion or visa versa, you are the proud owner of a Dual Champion.

Preparing A Dachshund For Field Trials

At a field trial a Dachshund has the opportunity to demonstrate the scent hound aspect of this character by trailing wild rabbits together with other Dachshund brace mates. Strictly speaking you do not train a Dachshund to do this sport of hound work, but if you can provide the circumstances in which the Dachshund trains himself to do what comes naturally.

Ideally, start with your puppy at seven weeks, by going for walks in brushy or wooded areas. It is best to take the puppy alone, for you wish the puppy to relate to you as its handler and point of orientation in the field. The

puppy should learn to use its own nose to investigate tantalizing new smells, to track it's way back to a patch of long grass to familiar ground, or to find you. If you have a self-confident puppy, hide from it and praise it when it finds you with its nose. The puppy will become "brush wise" developing a natural sense of how to pick his way through rough cover. Because he is alone and undistracted by romping puppy companions, he will more easily come when called. It is much easier to establish the handler/dog relationship with a small, submissive puppy of ten weeks than with a ten month old, adolescent outlaw that can run five times faster than you can.



The introduction to wild rabbits (or hares) is best accomplished between the sixth and twelfth month. At an earlier age there is some risk that the puppy will become an over excitable sight-chaser, after the first year it may be more difficult to motivate your dog to follow game by scent. But there is no fixed timetable of hunting

development for all dogs; individual Dachshunds vary enormously in the ages at which their hunting desire begins to burn bright, and in the ages in which unfed fires die down to cold ashes. The important thing is to bring your dog up in an enriched environment so that he comes to serious rabbit work confident, curious, and reasonably obedient. If he has fallen into the habit of solving mysteries with his nose, so much the better.

Wild rabbits are most active early in the morning and just before dusk. This is the best time to start your Dachshund on game. With him on a leash, walk along the edges of fields, golf courses, bridle paths or fire-lanes. Rabbits prefer to feed on short green grass next to dense brush cover. When you see a rabbit feeding in the open, pick up your Dachshund and hold his head so that he sees the rabbit as you walk toward it. When the rabbit flushes and disappears in cover put the Dachshund down exactly on the course of the fleeing rabbit, and release the dog from the leash when he shows by whining, barking or tugging that he had the scent and wants to follow. You may have to repeat this procedure several times before the Dachshund begins to trail

successfully for a few yards. If you have a good relationship with your dog, your enthusiasm will be infectious and the starting process will go that much faster.

There are many variations on this theme. Another dog may be used to flush the rabbits out of heavy cover so that you can place the beginner on the hot line and encourage it to follow. However, once a rabbit is started grab the experienced dog before he races up to take command of the scent line. You want the beginner to become an independent worker who figures things out for himself rather than becoming a dependent follower of a more experienced brace mate. Monkeys and raccoons may learn through observation and imitation. Hounds learn their natural work by doing.

Some Dachshunds learn well if they are allowed to roam off lead in heavy cover, flushing rabbits for themselves. This may work for you. However, be aware of what your hound is doing and do not let him drift aimlessly from one short sight chase to another. A small bird dog bell on his collar will help and also preserve your peace of mind.

The “trainer’s” main role at this point is to let the Dachshund do what comes naturally while preventing the development of undesirable habits. For Dachshunds a most common fault is to leave a difficult part of the scent line where he has “checked”, to go bounding off in search of that rabbit, or another one, in a hit or miss fashion. If the Dachshund stops working systematically around a point of loss, it is better to leash him or pick him up. If you allow the dog to drift out into a random search from the point of loss, you will develop what judges call a rough, sloppy hound, which will cover much ground at a field trial but seldom finish in the ribbons. It is not enough for the hound to hunt with enthusiasm; he must drive efficiently so that he keeps the rabbit moving, as he follows its every twist and turn by scent. By imposing some structure on your Dachshund’s learning experience, you can influence its working style and efficiency up to a point. Unfortunately, working style, like physical conformation, is to a considerable degree an innate part of the individual dog.

Giving tongue on the line (that is barking on the scent trail) is “desirable” according to the current Field trial rulebook. Some Dachshunds have natural tendency to give tongue on scent, while others trail silently even when in the company of open-trailing dogs. Research and breeding experiments have determined that the open-trailing tendency has to be genetically programmed. The hotter the scent and the better the tracking conditions, the more hound music you will hear.

Some of the best field trial performers have been slow to start trailing. Many promising puppies seem to regress and lose motivation in those adolescent months after the first birthday. The best traits that you saw in the naïve

puppy days will come back in the mature adult. You cannot “train” the hound or force the pace of learning. Working with hounds is like sailing. Sense how the wind blows and steer with the tide of development.

SOME DACHSHUND NEED TO SING **A Reflection on Spurlaut**

by Dr. John R. Jeanneney

Few dachshund owners lead rural lives, but there is still an urge for long walks with dachshunds that hunt. The pleasure of those outings may depend upon how you and your dachshund communicate. There is much to be said for the dachshund that sings on the trail of game.

Consider the scenarios with a silent dachshund. Along a bridle path in the September twilight, a cottontail leaps away at your dachshund's rush. Your dachshund yelps once and is swallowed up in the dark undergrowth. After twenty minutes of silence, your dachshund is back panting and happy. But how do you feel? Anxieties about a lost dog probably gnawed away all sense of your own peace and relaxation. At best you had a boring time. On the most basic level, communication between Man and dog broke down and you could not share in the joy of the chase.

The October scenario has a narrower focus. Desiring a more versatile and obedient hound than a beagle, a hunter tries a dachshund. A dachshund flushes a rabbit in an overgrown field, gives a few yelps on the sight chase and then drives the rabbit silently. The dog gives the hunter no guidance, no idea where to take his stand and wait for a shot. Even if the hunter does see the rabbit, he wonders where his dog is and dares not shoot.

There are solutions; among them is belling the dog, or going back to beagles. The sound of a dog's bell does not carry far, and it carries nothing of the vicissitudes and excitement of the chase. Admittedly, the beagle is best as a rabbit specialist but the dachshund is a more trainable and versatile dog. To hold his place in the hunting field and as an outdoor recreation dog, the dachshund must demonstrate all the potentials of the breed. He must be what the Germans call “spurlaut.”

Spurlaut (literally loud on the trail) is the demonstrated aptitude to bark on the scent trail of game. In English we call a spurlaut dog an open trailer, or a dog which gives tongue.

Individuals of most scent hound breeds are naturally and fairly consistent open trailers. The dachshund is an exception. If you go to field trials you will see a large majority of dachshunds fall mute once they begin to trail by scent.

The Germans believe, on the basis of extensive collective experience, that the spurlaut tendency has a genetic basis. If the aptitude has not been genetically programmed into the dachshund's psycho physical make-up, he will remain silent or virtually so when trailing by scent no matter what the training or stimulation.

No one really understands the genetic mechanisms by which the spurlaut trait is transmitted. The process operates somewhat as if it were the product of several recessive genes, but undoubtedly it is more complex than this and involves the interaction of a larger number of genetic factors. My personal experience confirms that two spurlaut parents will not necessarily produce all spurlaut offspring. I have given silent offspring of spurlaut parents the same training and environment as their more vocal siblings, all to no avail.

The spurlautpruefung (Voice Test) in Germany is now the first and most basic aptitude test given to dachshunds. Hares are flushed by beaters, much as we flush cottontails at field trials. Then one dachshund is placed on the scent line and is judged against an objective standard as to how he follows the scent and uses his voice. Unless a Deutscher Teckelklub member is exclusively show-oriented, he will be very reluctant to breed a dachshund unless it carries the "Sp." Leistungszeichen, the official designation of a spurlaut dog.

If a dachshund gene pool is to produce a high percentage of open trailers, the silent dachshunds must be weeded out of each generation. The spurlaut tendency has been given high priority among breeders of the Deutscher Teckelklub, but understandably this has not been the case among Americans who have seldom bred their dachshunds for hunting purposes.

The spurlaut tendency does seem to be a "volatile" trait which is easily lost. It is also complicated and unpredictable in some of its manifestations. Some dachshunds begin to bark on trail before five months of age while others do not declare themselves until they are almost a year old. The norm is about seven months. In my experience, running a young dachshund with a strong-voiced beagle is more likely to inhibit the dachshund than to stimulate it to "open".

We have no idea why dachshunds and many mixed breeds are open trailers on rabbit but silent on the trail of a barefooted, strong-scented raccoon. A spurlaut dachshund, incidentally, will also tongue when tracking pheasant, quail, healthy and wounded deer, etc., when scenting is difficult, as in a bare field, many open trailers fall nearly silent. Their music begins as they move

into cover that holds the scent better. Open trailers have a tendency to be somewhat “tight-mouthed” on snow, particularly when they encounter it for the first time.

If the spurlaut proclivity should become better understood in this country, a few breeders interested in field trials might decide that voice is a sufficient plus to warrant breeding for it and this would certainly be possible. At present, many field champions are actually silent, but in the past the George Goodspeeds, David Mullins and the David Lambersons had open-trailing field champions with superior conformation. Twenty-five years ago a German import of field breeding was bred to Ch. De Sangpur Hey Boy to produce a spurlaut dual champion.

Spurlaut is a highly desirable trait for hunting and field trail dogs, but it would be a mistake to make it mandatory at today’s field trials. Too many field trailers would feel their dogs rejected in advance. The AKC Field Trial rules for dachshunds have been amended to make giving tongue desirable, though it is not the only decisive factor for placements.

A discussion of spurlaut is part of a broader problem. The concern for dachshund quality should not end with what can be observed in the show ring. For example, gait can reveal only some aspects of function, albeit tremendously important ones. But stability, trainability for obedience, nose, even the spurlaut tendency, should be a part of the total conception of the breed. The Versatility Certificate, which recognizes excellence of function in this broader sense, will also increase the interest in and understanding of the breed.

CHAPTER 3 - OBEDIENCE



OBEDIENCE TRAINING: THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

A Great Reward: The Companion Dog Title

by Barbara Axel

So, the two month old dachshund you eagerly welcomed into your home, who was quickly housetrained, and ran lickety-split into your arms when called, has grown into a six month old terror who gets into trouble and won't listen at all. Why, just yesterday the clever little rascal stole Tommy's socks, and before you could count to three, he had run outside, shaken them to pieces, and buried them.

NATURALLY!

Puppies start learning at three weeks of age and reach the full adult capacity for learning by the time they are forty-nine days old. During this period the instinct to remain close to their dam and littermates is of great importance, for without it they would not survive.

As the pup matures, other instincts "click in" at the appropriate times while the dachshund explores and learns in his differing environments. By the time he has reached his sexual maturity, his hunting, territorial, and dominance challenging instincts have appeared. Instincts cannot be obliterated. They must be channeled. That is where dog obedience training can be applied.

Training gives an owner the ability to communicate successfully with his dachshund in language the dog can understand.

However, you've got to make it worth his while to listen! Channel his natural abilities so the times spent with him become positive learning experiences. Establish your leadership immediately. Put him on a schedule. Be consistent so he learns to trust. Crate him when you can't observe him to prevent bad habits from forming. Use his name only to give commands or to praise. **PETTING ISN'T A RIGHT!** He must **EARN** his petting by doing something for you.

When the little rascal runs away with Tommy's socks, don't chase. Instead, drop down to your knees and praise. Yes, praise! He'll come back to you every time, especially if you exchange a soft, smelly treat such as cheese or liver, and some petting for the socks. Put a collar and leash on your dachshund when you go out of the house. Teach him to sit and stay as you, the leader, open the door and go through first. Keeping him standing still as you groom him. Command, "Pretzel, Come!" each time you feed him as you set the bowl of food on the floor. Let him chase the ball only on leash so he is taught

to return to you. Crouch down low, keeping your hands close to your body, and don't reach out for him. Gently remove the ball from his mouth and pet/praise only after he comes in close enough to touch you. Tug of war and wrestling games are destructive to your relationship.

He's ready to be trusted off leash as soon as your voice is all that's needed to control him.

When he has completed his full series of inoculations take him to a group obedience class. Here, in new, distractive situations, you can practice the skills you have taught him already, but with greater precision. Choose your classes carefully. A competitive obedience instructor will know how quickly dachshunds learn. Your dachshund should be expected to walk quickly, run swiftly, and sit straight. If excuses are made for your dog's unique physique find another teacher.

As you and your dachshund feel more secure with the obedience routine, start going to match shows to observe and practice. After you get qualifying scores at these practice shows, it is time to enter some point shows. Of course, by this time you've written to The American Kennel Club, 5580 Centerview Drive, Suite 200, Raleigh, North Carolina 27606-3390, and read your free copy of their booklet "*Obedience Regulations*". Now all that's left is to get three qualifying scores.

You've done it! You've earned your C.D.
CONGRATULATIONS!



IT'S TIME TO GET STARTED

by Larry Sorenson

You have obedience trained your dachshund and you thought it would be just for fun. (And maybe, just maybe Bones would come when called) But, now you've had so much fun you would like to show in an obedience trial. This is just great, I will tell you how to get started. It's easy.

First, is to obtain information about the obedience trials. Most show giving clubs offer obedience along with their breed shows. There are obedience clubs which hold obedience specialties. Either of these will get you started towards your first Companion Dog Degree (CD).

How do you find the information about shows? If you attended classes the instructor will know about the shows and should be able to give you an entry form. Just about anyone showing dogs can help you with this. Now...with entry form in your hand, fill it out. Most of it is standard information which is on Bones' official AKC papers. You will need to know what class to enter. Enter NOVICE A, this is the class for first time handlers. Mail the entry and money to the proper address. Make sure the form is complete or it will be returned.



Second, prepare for the show. During the week before the show, do not over work your dachshund. Train, but do not drill the same thing over and over. Dachshunds are stubborn, but smart. Many trainers mistake stubbornness for lack of intelligence, we dachshund owners know the difference!

Third, once you get the information and judging schedule, start planning your trip; allow plenty of time, don't rush. Try to keep Bones' day as routine as possible. Don't drag your dog around the dog show. You may enjoy talking to people and looking around, but you are wearing Bones out. Don't let your nerves get to you, because it will affect Bones too. Relax, have fun and be ready to collect in the ribbons.

To earn your dachshunds CD degree, you must obtain three qualifying

scores. A qualifying score must be 170 points out of a possible 200 points, and having completed at least 50% of each exercise.

The exercises are as follows:

Heel on Leash and Figure Eight	40
Stand for Examination	30
Heel Free (off leash)	40
Recall	30
Long Sit (1 minute)	30
Long Down (3 minutes)	30
Total Maximum	200

Now, wasn't that easy? It really is, now it's time to move on into the other areas, breed showing, field trials, den trials, and tracking. You and Bones still have more points to earn to obtain the DCA's Versatility Certificate.

DACHSHUNDS IN COMPETITIVE OBEDIENCE

To Dream The Impossible Dream?

by Gail E. Binder and Sharon Smith-Jordan

When you went to obedience school and told them that you wanted to put an obedience title on your dachshund, did they suggest that you consider another breed or did they just laugh? Everybody knows that a dachshund is an opinionated, independent, brave little critter who excels in the field but rarely does anyone talk about dachshunds in obedience. It's one of the dachshund's best-kept secrets. They work hard at keeping this secret. It certainly would be contrary to their image if the word got out that they lead the Hound Group in obedience and that they really can do their master's bidding.

Perhaps it was the well known author, E.B. White who started this whole myth that dachshunds not only can't but shouldn't be trained when he wrote that he would rather train a Zebra to balance an Indian club than ask a dachshund to heed his simplest command. E.B.White wrote a lot about his beloved dachshund, Fred, and if you read more about Fred you realize that Mr. White had a great respect for Fred's intelligence. White claimed that no one understood so much of what he, White, said nor held it in such contempt as did Fred. Fred was always thinking and getting in trouble as a result. Dachshunds are intelligent dogs and it's this intelligence that presents us with the challenges

that make an obedience title seem like an impossible dream.

It's not an impossible dream! The words dachshund and obedience can be uttered in the same breath! Our Fred's and Frederica's have proven it in the ring and in the field. Any dachshund with a reasonably stable temperament can earn an obedience title. If you are motivated to do it, there is no reason why you cannot succeed. It's not easy but nothing worth doing ever is and this is definitely worth the effort. Training your dachshund to earn an obedience title is a wonderful process in which you and your dog will develop a close relationship and explore new dimensions of the human and canine bond.

You have probably already taken your dachshund to puppy manners class or trained him for the breed ring. Maybe you even tried the Canine Good Citizen Test (CGC). Your Fred did pretty well, didn't he? Well, he didn't like you leaving him on the stay but that's because he wanted to be with you. The important thing is that you both enjoyed it. With some breed ring training or the CGC experience under your belt, your dachshund is already on his way to an obedience title. Don't stop now!

WHAT MAKES OBEDIENCE SO SPECIAL?

It is Canine/Human Team Work: Obedience is canine and human teamwork at it's best. It is an activity where the relationship between you and your dachshund can develop to it's fullest. In obedience, both you and your dog are scored. How well you know each other, how well you cooperate with each other and how much of a real team you are is what matters. That team relationship can be a joy to develop and joy to behold.

It Enhances All Competition Skills: Obedience will enhance any other kind of competition you do with your dachshund. A trained dog performs better in the show ring, in the field, in agility and in all the many other events our versatile dachshunds can do. You will be more successful in all of these activities, if your dog is responsive to you and you are responsive to your dog. Developing this responsive relationship is the primary goal of obedience training. In time, this responsive relationship grows into a special "language" that you and your dog share and can use in everything else that you do together. Both of you will be enriched by this.

The myths that an obedience trained dog will sit in the breed ring or that the field dog shouldn't be trained to get his nose off the floor are just that.... old wives tales. A dachshund knows the difference between these activities and if a dog is confusing one activity with the other, it is because he is not yet trained or experienced enough in either activity. Think how much better you could perform in the breed ring, if your dog knew the difference between a sit and stand and could do either on command or signal. Wouldn't you like to see

your dog stack on command for the conformation judge, come when the judge tells you to pick him up in the field, take that agility course with a little more control...doing obedience will help.

It Is A Learning Experience: You will discover talents and problem solving abilities that you never knew you had. You'll have to! Nobody is saying that dachshunds can be trained by the book. They never do anything exactly according to the book! You will learn how your dog thinks, reacts and learns. You will learn to recognize when he is confused and figure out why. You and your dog will learn to perform as a team oblivious to all around you except each other.

It Uses Motivational Methods: Obedience training is a lot more fun than in the past. Methods are now based on motivation and reinforcement and are no longer limited to the old tug and jerk methods of old. Since a dachshund highly resents being forced to do anything, motivational methods are ideal for our dogs. Dachshunds need to think it was all their idea in the first place. With the new methods, if your dog's idea has some similarity to your idea, Bravo!...it gets a reward!

It Has Something For Everyone: Obedience has something for everyone. Some people don't plan to compete for a title in the ring. Their goal is to enjoy training their dog and the camaraderie of the sport. Others want to compete and obedience competition has levels to suit everybody. Your goal may be a title while others may also want to be in the ribbons. There is room for all of us in obedience. Chances are, however, that you will be bitten by the bug and want to go all the way.

It Feels Great: You will experience great feelings of accomplishment as you and your dachshund work through the obedience exercises. Imagine the thrill of accomplishing something that at first seemed hard, the camaraderie of your fellow obedience handlers and the reaction of your dog when he knows he's got it right! Have you ever seen a really proud dog? That's one of the best experiences!

It's Easy To Get Started: Almost anyone can participate in obedience no matter where you live, what your physical condition, what time constraints you have, etc. It requires very little equipment. At the beginning level it requires only a collar, leash and a lot of love..... well, maybe a few treats! It is very helpful to go to a class but it is not absolutely necessary. What it does require is a love and respect for your dog and a commitment to your goals.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

Build Drive: Your dachshund probably has very strong prey drive and if

he is a true hound, very strong food drive. This is to your advantage because you will be able to use his favorite furry squeaky mouse to motivate him and when all else fails.....Food!!!! Start by building those natural drives. They will be valuable motivators all through obedience. Pair your motivators with other good things like petting, praise, funny noises that make your dog take notice or physical play that releases tension. Play with a furry squeaky mouse on a string. Stop the game while your dog still wants more, hide the mouse and then pet and praise.

Reward Attention: Any time your pup gives you eye contact, reward the eye contact. Play a game where you have food hidden in one hand and not in the other. Don't let your dog have the food. He'll nudge the hand, bark, and jump up and down.... his nose tells him you have food in your hand. When he (probably out of frustration) gives you eye contact, let him have the food. Also play games where you are the center of the activity. Most hounds are not natural retrievers but try this. Get two identical toys that are your dog's absolute favorites and that get played with only when you play too. Get your dog interested ... don't let him have them ... just tease him... throw one a short distance and then tease him back with the second one. He gets to chase the second one only if he brings you back the first one. Having both toys on a string helps at first...you can reel it back in if your dog starts to make up his own game! Make interacting with you your dog's favorite game. Don't be afraid to be silly!

Build Confidence: Confidence is an important quality in a good obedience dog. Start early to build confidence. Lots of socialization in controlled safe environments is imperative. It's OK to stress your dog a little bit by new situations and new learning experiences, but not too much too soon. If your dachshund is shy or submissive, contrary to most advice, do play tug and do let him win once in a while. Shy dogs with a basically sound temperament can and should do obedience. Learning to be with other people and dogs, and having something to do that he knows well and can do well helps the shy dog feel secure. That sense of accomplishment and pride in a job well done does wonders to help boost the confidence of a hesitant, insecure dog.

Choose Your Trainer Carefully: If you can, attend obedience classes. Try to find classes that teach competition skills along with the basics. Ask about the methods used. A good instructor should be able to explain why they use certain methods. You should be looking for an instructor who uses motivational methods for beginner classes. Observe a few classes before you decide if you will be comfortable with this trainer. Be fussy about who you choose to instruct you.

Be Innovative: Dachshunds can do obedience. It's not the long and low that is the problem training a dachshund for obedience. It is their active and innovative brains! You will need to be even more innovative than your dog. Dachshunds often have their own agenda and their own idea of how a particular exercise should be done. This is only an indication of their intelligence. They will offer you behaviors that a Golden Retriever couldn't even imagine! Reward the behaviors you want! While some breeds accept your way of doing things and will do it for you over and over again, dachshunds are constantly thinking up new variations in the obedience exercises and hate repetition. Your dog will also want to know why? Why should he go pick up that dumbbell that you just threw away? You must not want it, if you threw it away. You will need to keep obedience training fun and interesting for your dog. So, heel backwards, heel to music, throw that dumbbell behind you and through your legs for a change. Have fun and so will your dog.

Be Prepared For The Snags: Don't give up! People sometimes give up in obedience because they are not prepared for the minor setbacks. Dogs have learning plateaus. One day your Fred knows sit, down, stand and he's a star pupil. The next day Fred doesn't even seem to know his name. That's normal. Back up and repeat some easier, earlier exercises while Fred's brain catches up processing and storing away all the new things he has been learning. These plateaus are normal and don't last forever.

It will also be important to recognize when your dog is confused and when he is just not trying hard enough. When Fred is confused, you will need to use all your creative ability to show him what's expected. But, there will also be the day when Fred just decides his agenda takes priority at that moment. He's not trying hard enough! You will need to have a planned reaction ready to let Fred know that he has made a mistake and how he can fix it. It's just as important to be ready to address Fred's errors, as it is to address his successes. You will develop a full bag of tricks to motivate your dog but it is equally important to have ways to correct him as well. A good correction will immediately let the dog know he is wrong, will show him how to fix it and will be motivating as well. A correction is information and motivation. A correction is not punishment. A correction could be as simple as a verbal "Eh, eh!" followed by praise when your dog corrects himself or it could be a collar pop in heeling followed by release to a treat when he is back in position. You and your trainer will need to decide what kinds of corrections will work best with your dog.

Go Slowly And Have Fun: It's never too late to start working toward an obedience title. You can teach an old dachshund new tricks. Your retired breed dog probably would love to get off the couch and start doing something with you again. Obedience can be a fun way to keep that couch potatoe mentally

and physically active and in good physical condition. You can start a pup in a class at 12 weeks but go slowly. At this early age building drives, playing, learning to focus on you and a little following you in heel position while targeting your finger or a treat are appropriate. Most dachshund puppies are too silly to expect much self control at an early age. Leave the stay exercises until later. Save the precision work for much later. Short sessions and just a few good steps in heel position are the way to start. Make it fun!!! Make yourself the most interesting and wonderful thing in your pup's life.

Use Every Possible Resource: Ask questions! Don't be afraid to ask for help. Attend seminars. Watch good obedience dogs and their handlers in the ring. Read and watch videotapes prepared by the experts. Some books and videotapes that you may find helpful are listed under obedience on the DCA web site.

DREAMS CAN COME TRUE

In obedience it's the journey that matters most. Along the way you and your dog will develop a bond that will be stronger and closer than you can imagine. You will experience a wonderful sense of accomplishment and create lasting memories. You'll get that title too and it will be a special tribute to your dog and to your relationship with your dog.

The dachshund obedience community is very supportive. Never hesitate to introduce yourself to another dachshund obedience handler. There is good information on the DCA web page that was specifically written about dachshund training. The DCA Obedience Committee members welcome questions and want to hear from you about your experiences in training. Information on how to contact the committee members is on the DCA website.

So don't just dream! A dachshund's intelligence and strong drives can be used to your advantage in obedience. The right qualities are there in your dachshund. You need to put them to work. Obedience titles for dachshunds are not impossible. Dachshunds lead the Hound Group in obedience. Enjoy the training and revel in the results. It will be one of the most rewarding activities that you ever do.

**The authors have both put Utility Dog (UD) titles on a dachshund and compete in a variety of other dachshund activities.*

CHAPTER 4 - RALLY



LET'S GET READY TO R.....R.....R.....R.....RALLY

by Betsy Fortman

Give it a try!!!! Your dog doesn't have to heel perfectly! In fact your dog doesn't even have to heel at all! And, you can TALK to your dog, constantly if you want! You can clap and pat your leg too! Enthusiasm is allowed.

OK, you'll have to follow a set course, but hey, you'll be given a map (sorry, no one can walk next to you and read the directions, but there are signs along the way). If your dog can sit and down, you've got most of it covered. Yeah, you'll have to do a little training, but there is no better way to build a bond between you and your dog.

On January 1, 2005 Rally Obedience became an official titling event. It's not obedience as we currently think of obedience and it's not agility either but it does have courses and course maps. It is scored like both events but scoring is not as rigorous as obedience and like agility you can talk to your dog (touching them is still a no-no). The AKC rules can be found at: <http://www.akc.org/events/rally/index.cfm>

The AKC defines Rally as a sport in which the dog and handler complete a course that has been designed by the rally judge. The handler and dog begin when instructed by the judge and proceed at their own pace through a course of designed stations (10-20 depending on the level). Each station has a sign that gives instructions as to the exercise that is to be performed at that station. There are 50 exercises that the AKC has defined (including start and finish). You can find a description of these exercises on the AKC web site at: http://www.akc.org/events/rally/descriptions_and_signs.cfm

Rally is a scored competition. A perfect score is 100 points with 70 points the minimum required to qualify. You must earn three legs under at least two judges for each of three titles: Rally Novice (RN), Rally Advanced (RA), and Rally Excellent (RE).

The Rally Novice class is done entirely on leash. The leash can be made of fabric or leather and only needs to be long enough to provide enough slack. The course will have between 10 and 15 stations (not including start and finish).

Rally Advanced will be done entirely off leash, but the dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash. It will consist of 12-17 stations. There must be one jump used in this class and can be any jump used as standard equipment in obedience. The height the dog must jump is based on the height of the dog at its withers.

In Rally Excellent the dogs will again be off leash (but must enter and leave on leash). There will be between 15 and 20 stations. At this level the handlers will not be allowed to pat their legs or clap their hands – but verbal encouragement, multiple commands, and/or inaudible signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed. Two jumps are required to be used in this class (as used in obedience).

Like obedience each exercise is judged. Unlike obedience precision is not necessary. For example in the Halt-Sit exercise you can tell your dog to sit when you halt without any penalty. If the dog sits in a fashion that would be at least a 1-point deduction in obedience then a 1-point deduction will be assessed. The rules and regulations define the deductions that the judges are to make.

If all this leaves you feeling confused, you may be able to find classes that will help you to understand the rules and regulations and what is expected of your dog. Come on, don't sit back, get out there and experience something new! You may like it!!

Rally Obedience

Question 1: What is the latest sport to gain AKC approval that isn't obedience and isn't agility?

Question 2: In what AKC titling performance event is unlimited communications from the handler to the dog encouraged and not penalized and where handlers are permitted to talk, praise, encourage, clap their hands, pat their legs, or use any verbal means of encouragement while performing things like sits, downs, and about-turns, and still qualify?

Answer: Rally Obedience

On January 1, 2005 Rally Obedience will become an official titling event. It's not obedience as we currently think of obedience and it's not agility either but it does have courses and course maps. It is scored like both events but scoring is not as rigorous as obedience and like agility you can talk to your dog (touching them is still a no-no).

The AKC defines Rally as a sport in which the dog and handler complete a course that has been designed by the rally judge. The handler and dog begin when instructed by the judge and proceed at their own pace through a course of designed stations (10-20 depending on the level). Each station has a sign that gives instructions as to the exercise that is to be performed at that station. There are 50 exercises that the AKC has defined (including start and finish).

The AKC considers Rally as a link from the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) program to obedience or agility competition, both for dogs and handlers.

Rally is a scored competition. A perfect score is 100 points with 70

points the minimum required to qualify. You must earn three legs under at least two judges for each of three titles: Rally Novice (RN), Rally Advanced (RA), and Rally Excellent (RE). As in obedience and agility each class is split into A and B classes. Rally also has a title equivalent to the UDX, Rally Advanced Excellent (RAE), where the team must qualify 10 times (from the B classes) in both Advanced and Excellent. The team can continue to compete in the Advanced and Excellent B classes and a numeric designation is used to indicate the number of times they have met the RAE requirements, i.e. RAE2, RAE3, etc. Unlike agility there is no course time but all dogs are timed. Time is used only to break ties among the top 4 scoring dogs in each class.

The Rally Novice class is done entirely on leash. The leash can be made of fabric or leather and only needs to be long enough to provide enough slack. The course will have between 10 and 15 stations (not including start and finish) with a maximum of 5 stationary exercises. (A stationary exercise is one that has a “Halt” in it or no forward motion – these types of stations are so indicated in the AKC rules describing the stations.)

Rally Advanced will be done entirely off leash, but the dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash. It will consist of 12-17 stations and have no more than 7 stationary exercises. There must be one jump used in this class and can be any jump used as standard equipment in obedience. The height the dog must jump is based on the height of the dog at its withers.

In Rally Excellent the dogs will again be off leash (but must enter and leave on leash). There will be between 15 and 20 stations with no more than 7 stationary exercises. At this level the handlers will not be allowed to pat their legs or clap their hands – but verbal encouragement, multiple commands, and/or inaudible signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed. Two jumps are required to be used in this class (as used in obedience).

Like obedience each exercise is judged. Unlike obedience precision is not necessary. For example in the Halt-Sit exercise you can tell your dog to sit when you halt without any penalty. If the dog sits in a fashion that would be at least a 1-point deduction in obedience then a 1-point deduction will be assessed. The rules and regulations define the deductions that the judges are to make. They range from 1 to 10 points with no half-point deductions (as found in classic Obedience). There are also non-qualifying events defined. The following is from the AKC regulations:

- 1-point deduction for each of the following:
 - .. tight leash
 - .. dog interfering with handler’s forward motion
 - .. poor sits

- .. slow, delay, or resistance to respond
- .. touching or ticking a jump, pylon, post or person
- .. out of position

3-point deduction for each of the following:

- .. repeat of a station
- .. pylon/post knocked over (on Figure Eight, Spiral, and Serpentine)
- .. lack of control
- .. loud command or intimidating signal
- .. excessive barking
- .. handler error

10-point deduction for each of the following:

- .. incorrectly performed station
- .. hitting the jump
- .. handler error

1- to 10-point deduction:

- .. lack of teamwork

Non-qualifying (NQ) scores shall be given for:

- .. minimum requirements not met
- .. dog unmanageable
- .. station not attempted
- .. consistently tight lead
- .. substantially out of position/not completing the honor exercise
- .. elimination in the ring during judging
- .. bar knocked off the uprights/using a jump as an aid in going over
- .. handler error

All Rally courses will begin with START and end with FINISH. The timing will start when the judge says “forward” and will stop when the team passes the finish sign. In between these two signs will be 10-20 different stations. Each station will have a number and a sign. For complete information on these exercises you can go to the AKC web site at: http://www.akc.org/events/rally/descriptions_and_signs.cfm

Here is an example of a few of the exercises from the web site:

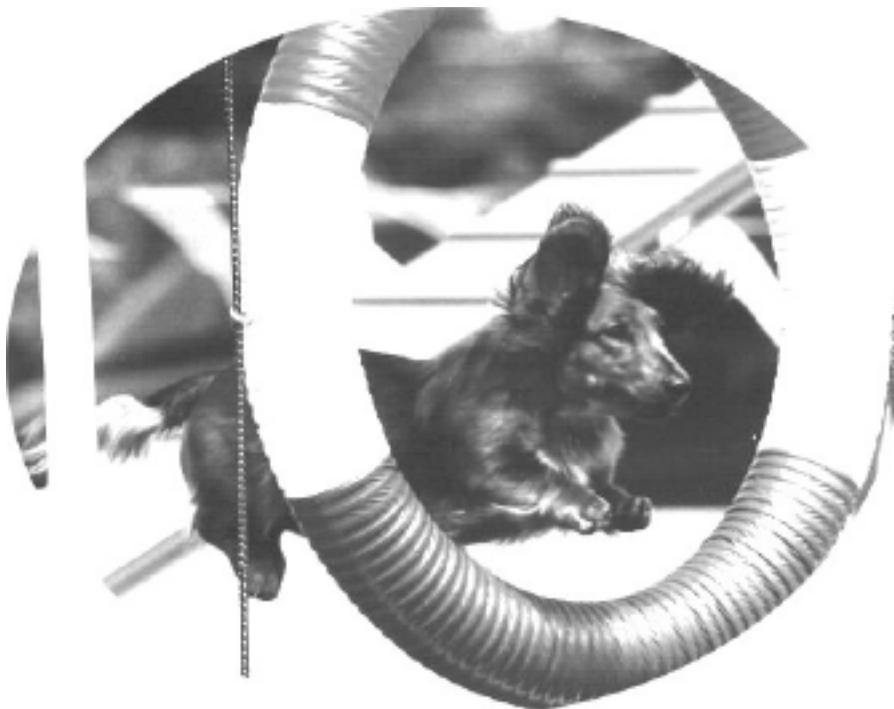
3. HALT - Sit. While heeling, the handler halts and the dog comes to a sit in heel position. The team then moves forward toward the next exercise

sign (station), with the dog in heel position. (Stationary exercise)4. HALT - Sit - Down. While heeling, the handler halts and the dog comes to a sit. The handler then commands the dog to down, followed by the command to heel forward from the down position. (Stationary exercise)5. * Right Turn. Performed as a 90° turn to the right, as in traditional obedience. 6. * Left Turn. Performed as a 90° turn to the left, as in traditional obedience. 7. *About Turn - Right. While heeling, the team makes a 180° about turn to the handler's right.8. * About "U" Turn. While heeling, the team makes a 180° about turn to the handler's left.

For more information on Rally you can go to the AKC web site at:
<http://www.akc.org/events/rally/index.cfm>.

When I first heard about Rally, I wasn't very enthusiastic about it. Having participated in both classic Obedience and Agility for years, I just didn't see the appeal. This year I entered a number of Rally events (it has been offered as a non-regular class in conjunction with Obedience trials). I was surprised at how much fun I had. I really enjoyed being able to talk to my dog and encourage his performance. If you have the chance to enter a non-regular Rally event or the chance to watch one, I would encourage it. For those that find the stiffness and precision found in obedience to be a "turn-off", I think they may find Rally fun and enjoyable

CHAPTER 4 - AGILITY



AGILITY

by Dan and Debby McNamara

Where it Began - The idea of agility was born in 1977 when Crufts Dog Show needed something to fill up spare time in the main arena between the end of the obedience championships and the start of the group breed judging. Various dog-training demonstrations were held over the years, some of which included dog jumping. The new demonstration had to be a nice to see test and it should be suited to the hard Olympia floor. The main idea of a dog jumping competition is based on the show jumping of horses. Some people put their heads together and they came out with a test based on vast practical dog training knowledge and experience in working trials. Main factors that had to be kept in mind were: that it should be fun, without being dangerous and it should have to amuse spectators. They built the equipment. Another club was contacted to form a second team of four dogs and they all helped each other with training ideas and modifications to equipment. And so the base was laid for the agility we know now.

The American Kennel Club entered the world of agility competition in August of 1994 offering titles in standard agility. In January of 1998, Jumpers with Weaves became a titling event.

The exciting sport of Agility is an event where a dog demonstrates its **versatility** in negotiating a variety of obstacles in a specified sequence and within a given time limit.

It can be one of the most enjoyable activities for you and your dog. The agility ring allows the handler and their dog to run full speed while performing accurately and safely on obstacles such as an A-Frame, a Dog Walk, a Teeter-Totter, Weave Poles, and a variety of jumps and tunnels.

Adding to the challenge of agility is the variety of sequences of obstacles you and your dog will encounter. The combinations are endless! You will never run the same course twice! Each judge designs their own courses based on the size and shape of the building or field to be used for the course. Therefore, a handler must analyze each course and come up with a strategy on how to successfully negotiate the obstacles.

Agility is truly a team event. **Handler and dog both must negotiate the obstacle course together.** The handler is a very integral part of this team. The handler must think and act quickly on their feet; by use of verbal commands and especially body language, they must help guide their dog thru a course. Timing of commands is crucial. Your dog is depending on you, the handler, to know which direction to go and what obstacle is to be taken next.

And when you have finished running an agility course, both you and your dog share in the success!



AKC Agility – Standard Titling Class:

Novice Agility: this class is divided into two divisions:

Division A – for persons and dogs that have never acquired an agility title

Division B – for dogs that have acquired the Novice Agility title or persons that have handled a dog to an agility title, and for agility judges.

Open Agility: Open to dogs that have acquired the Novice Agility or Open Agility titles but which have not acquired the Agility Excellent Title.

Excellent Agility: Open to dogs that have acquired the Open Agility title and to dogs that have acquired the Agility Excellent title.

The following titles may be earned in standard titling in AKC agility:

Novice Agility – NA

Open Agility – OA

Agility Excellent – AX

Master Agility Excellent – MX

Master Agility Championship - MACH

A dog must earn a qualifying score in its respective class on three sepa-

rate occasions under two different judges in order to acquire an agility title. The maximum attainable score is 100 points. To earn a qualifying score a dog must pass with a score of 85 points or better, and not receive any non-qualifying deductions.

To earn the Master Agility Excellent title, a dog must first earn the Agility Excellent title and then earn ten (10) more qualifying scores in the Agility Excellent class level.

In 1999, the AKC introduced its **Master Agility Championship (MACH)** title. To earn this elite title, a dog must have earned the Agility Excellent title, and then continue to earn perfect scores (100) at the Agility Excellent level and accumulate 750 points in the process. Points earned are based on a system of how many seconds you finish under standard course time and if you have a placement of first or second in the event.

To level the playing field so that all dogs may participate, agility has several jump height classes defined. They are:

8 inches: for dogs 10 inches and under at the withers.

12 inches: for dogs 14 inches and under at the withers.

16 inches: for dogs 18 inches and under at the withers.

20 inches: for dogs 22 inches and under at the withers.

24 inches: for dogs over 22 inches at the withers.

Dachshunds, of course, will compete in either the 8-inch or 12-inch height classes.

The difference, and increasing difficulty, between the classes is based on course size, standard course times, the number of obstacles to be performed, and the difficulty of “traps” occurring in the course.

In the Novice Class, the minimum course area is 5,000 square feet. This class will have 12 or 13 obstacles to be performed, and course times are determined based on covering two (2) yards per second. The obstacles you will encounter are the A-frame, dog walk, pause table, open tunnels, a teeter-totter, closed tunnel, broad jump, panel jump, double bar jump, tire jump, and bar jumps. The Novice Class will not use the weave poles or the triple bar jump.

The Open Class must have a minimum course area of 6,500 square feet. The 8-inch and 12-inch height divisions will be required to cover the course at 2.25 yards per second. At this level, a dog will encounter from 15 to 17 obstacles. These obstacles are the A-frame, dog walk, pause table, open tunnels, a teeter-totter, closed tunnel, broad jump, panel jump, double bar jump, and the tire jump. In addition, the weave poles are now a required obstacle, and the triple-bar jump may be used. Other bar jumps may be used to compete the minimum obstacle requirement.

In the Excellent Class, the minimum course area is 8,000 square feet.

The 8-inch and 12-inch height divisions will now be required to cover the course at 2.50 yards per second. Here a dog will be expected to maneuver thru 18 to 20 obstacles. These obstacles are the A-frame, dog walk, pause table, open tunnels, a teeter-totter, closed tunnel, panel jump, double bar jump, the tire jump, and the weave poles. The triple-bar jump now becomes a required obstacle, and the broad jump becomes an optional item. Other bar jumps may be used to compete the minimum obstacle requirement.

Take notice that each level increases with distance to be covered, number of obstacles to be performed, and the amount of time given to cover the course. As you go up in levels, your dog will be expected to maneuver more obstacles over a greater distance and at a faster rate of speed.

A course will be designed for each level of competition based on the above requirements. Dog and handler will be expected to maneuver the course in the proper sequence and within the allotted time.

Running errors performed in executing the course will be deducted from your initial score value of 100. For example, if your dog goes off course, you will have 5 points deducted. If you have 3 wrong courses in any one run, you will be eliminated. On the pause table, a dog is required to stay in a sit or down position during a count of 5 by the judge; if the dog jumps off the table before the count is completed, it will be a 2-point deduction.

Contact obstacles (A-frame, teeter-totter, and dog walk) have zones a dog “must” make contact with. These zones occur on the up side and down-side of each obstacle. For the teeter-totter and dog walk, the contact zone must be touched by any part of one foot on both the up- and down-side of the obstacle. The A-frame only requires the downside contact zone touched by any part of one foot. Failure of the dog to touch these required contact zones would result in mandatory elimination.

But, there is even more to challenge you to attain a qualifying score. This brings us to “refusals” and “run outs”. A refusal, for example, may occur when a dog starts toward an obstacle and then turns back on its path. A run out occurs when a dog passes the plane of the next correct obstacle. Depending on what level you are competing in determines the effect on your score. At the Novice level, two refusals/ run outs are permitted with 5 points deducted for each occurrence. At the Open level, only one refusal/run out is permitted, with a 5-point deduction. At each of these two levels, if more refusals/run outs occur than the specified limit, it will mean elimination of your dog. At the Excellent level of competition, no refusals/run outs are permitted. The dog would be eliminated if this occurred.

If you and your dog take more time to run the course than what the judge has allotted, deductions occur for each full second over time. At the

Novice level, a 1-point deduction is made for every second over time. In Open, a 2-point deduction is made, and at the Excellent level a 3-point deduction is made for every second over time.

AKC Agility – Jumpers With Weaves (JWW)

PURPOSE: This agility class is intended to be a fun yet competitive way to demonstrate a working relationship between dog and handler. In this class dogs are not slowed down by the careful performance and control required by the contact obstacles and pause table. Dog/handler teams can therefore race through a course composed primarily of jumps demonstrating a dog's speed and jumping ability.

Novice Jumpers With Weaves: The Novice JWW Class is to be divided into two divisions. Division "A" for persons and dogs that have never acquired an agility title, and division "B" for dogs that have acquired any agility title, persons that have handled a dog to any agility title, and for agility judges. Whenever the Novice JWW is offered both "A" and "B" divisions must be offered.

Open Jumpers With Weaves: The Open JWW Class is open to dogs that have acquired the Novice JWW title or the Open JWW title but which have not acquired a qualifying score towards a Excellent JWW title.

Excellent Jumpers With Weaves Class: The Excellent JWW Class is to be divided into two divisions. Division "A" for dogs that have not acquired the Excellent JWW title and Division "B" for dogs that have achieved the Excellent JWW title. Whenever the Excellent JWW class is offered both "A" and "B" divisions must be offered.

Agility Titles For Jumpers With Weaves: The titles earned for the Jumpers With Weaves Class are as follows:

Novice	JWW	NAJ
Open	JWW	OAJ
Excellent	JWW	AXJ
Master Excellent	JWW	MXJ

In order to acquire a Jumpers With Weaves agility title a dog must earn a qualifying score in its respective class on three (3) separate occasions under two (2) different judges.

To obtain the MXJ title a dog must acquire the AXJ title and then earn ten (10) additional qualifying scores in the Excellent Jumpers With Weaves class ("B" division).

This may seem overwhelming, but with proper training, patience, and especially teamwork, you and your dog will become successful in the sport of agility. It is a lively, entertaining, and enjoyable sport for both you and your dog.

Training⁽¹⁾: Some basic obedience training is necessary before commencing agility training. At a minimum, the dog must be able to sit, down, promptly come when called off-leash, hold a brief stay, maintain control around other dogs, and accept handling by strangers. Off-leash heelwork is a big plus but not required. In addition, a trainer/handler that has encouraged their dog from puppy hood to play fetch will have a distinct training advantage over someone who has not.

Initial agility work begins by introducing the dogs to low and/or smaller versions of the obstacles. The height and/or length of the equipment is slowly extended over several training sessions to their full competition forms. Dogs at this stage of training require physical 'spotting' similar to gymnastics training while they develop the necessary skill and confidence on the obstacles. Leashes are usually quickly dispensed with as they may become entangled on the dog and/or equipment. Techniques or collars that apply physical corrections of any type should not be used; they are disruptive to maintaining balance & physical coordination (and may therefore lead to injury) and will slow down the dog's opportunity to become physically and mentally confident in his ability to negotiate the equipment safely. Physical handling and spotting techniques are often supplemented with food, praise, and fetch/tug type objects that both lure and reward the dog to perform the equipment.

Once the basic obstacle work is learned, the dog enters the next phase of training. During this time, the handler works to gradually condition the dog to higher jumps and obstacle heights, and to develop a working 'command vocabulary' of both verbal and body signals necessary to direct the dog off-leash around an agility course. A well-trained agility dog learns to respond instantly to commands directing him to perform specific obstacles (when obstacles are placed immediately adjacent to one another) as well as commands causing him to run faster/slower, turn left/right and veer away from/closer to his handler. At the highest levels of agility competition, it is possible to see dogs that are able to perform these commands and maneuvers instantly and accurately even when working at full speed several yards away from their (much slower) handlers.

Training – group classes as well as private instructions. Find a club/or private instructor that will take the time to work with small dogs. Training small dogs is much different from larger breeds. Be happy with the quality of instruction you are getting. Safety should be your first concern with a fun, positive reinforcement environment also important. If you have the option take advantage of both of them. They both have their place in forming your training routine. Also, have your classmates, traveling partners, club members watch your runs and offer suggestions/critiques. Attend fun matches,

corrections and guest train at other facilities. The variety of training venues you can get your dog to will only help in competition. If it's the first time you have entered an outdoor trial, I would hope it's not the first time your dog has ever done a course outdoors.

Volunteer to help at a trial. It's amazing what you can learn by watching people handle their dogs at trials. Everyone can set bars and straighten chutes or tunnels. While these may be considered boring jobs, they offer the best opportunity to really watch the competition and learn.

Health Considerations⁽¹⁾: Not every dog should be doing agility and may become injured or aggravate a pre-existing condition if the owner does not perform some pre-screening before entering the phase of intensive training. The pre-screening should at a minimum consist of hip, elbow, and eye checks.

Veterinarians should be informed what is planned for the dog and the dog should be radiographed for both hip & elbow dysplasia. The owner should reconsider their plans for agility if the dog is rated anything less than 'Fair'. Unobstructed vision is also critical.

Because agility is a fairly new type of dog competition, it is not unusual for a veterinarian to be unaware of the requirements for agility. In this case, it is very helpful for the owner to have available a short video (2-3 minutes long) of a dog performing the equipment, this will give the veterinarian an idea of the physical requirements necessary for the sport. Both the owner and veterinarian should be particularly sensitive to the dog's weight. What is a good healthy weight for a pet dog with normal activity expectations may be too heavy for agility training and competition. Poor performance or injuries, which can include muscle strains and other soft tissue injuries, are nearly always due to the 'weekend athlete syndrome' -- i.e. the dog is overweight and/or not conditioned properly.

On-going conditioning separate from the equipment training is vital to keeping the dog's agility performance high and injury-free. Weight bearing exercise is the most appropriate; for example walks interspersed with short sprints condition both the dog and the handler. Long distance, low to the ground games of ball are particularly helpful for building the dog's cardiovascular and/or muscular capacity. Swimming can also be beneficial for improving cardiovascular & muscular capacity.

The agility obstacles that require the most conditioning (particularly for international style agility) are the jumps. In order for a dog to be able to safely engage in the amount of jumping required for both agility training and competition, the dog must not only possess the proper cardiovascular and muscular structure, he must possess the necessary skeletal structure as well. Skeletal

conditioning is performed slowly over time by spending at least 6-9 months of training at low jump heights; this minimizes impact to the bones and yet induces the rather slowly growing bones to thicken and develop the strength needed at the correct points to withstand the impact of landing after jumping. These months of low jump training are a good time for a handler to work on developing the dog's command vocabulary. Once this conditioning period is accomplished, the jumps can then be systematically raised in training until the dog's full jump height is reached and actual competition can be considered.

Some on-going physical maintenance of the dog is necessary as well in order to prevent injury whether in training or competition. In particular, nails must be kept trimmed back at all times so that they do not catch on the equipment or impede the dog's traction. Some sacrifice in dog appearance must be accepted in those breeds which have a lot of hair over or about the eyes; this hair must be kept trimmed or tied back so as not to interfere with the dog's vision.

It's important to warm your dog up before an agility run. Stretching exercises and massage techniques are all part of the "agility run". Also, cool down exercises are just as important to help prevent any muscle or tendon injury. An agility run is more than the 60 seconds on course. It takes course strategy, warm up of your dog, running the course, cool down of your dog and of course lots of praise, love and a little liver never hurt anyone.

Dachshunds and Agility:

Running a dachshund in agility requires some special considerations. First of all, you have to realize your running a dachshund. Dachshunds are not the



first breed that comes to mind when people think about agility. But dachshunds have made great strides and have had numerous successes in agility. The numbers of dachshunds competing in agility are increasing every year. It's a great activity to share with your dog and provides lots of fun and confi-

dence between the handler and dachshund.

Sniffing - being a hound, this is a natural tendency. As we work field trials and earth dog where we emphasis use of the nose, attention work is sometimes needed to overcome this.

Outdoor trials – grass that is not cut short. This really makes a difference for a smaller dog. It really slows them down. It would be the same as a larger breed running through grass that was to its chest.

Weather – while weather is a problem for a lot of dogs/breeds, I've noticed it seems to effect small dogs more drastically. Rain and muddy conditions end up being very hard to navigate. While a club may put down straw/hay to help footing, you may loose your doxie on the course somewhere. Also, the material on the chute gets to be to heavy for the smaller breeds to push open.

Weave poles – usually are the hardest obstacle for handlers to master. Weaving is the one thing that dogs do not do naturally. They jump, crawl, climb, run, but weave is not a natural ability. 24" weave poles pose the greatest problem. Each pole is almost like a separate obstacle. This size of weave pole makes a natural cadence through the weave poles impossible. Also metal bases tend to get hot and most small dogs end up touching/stepping on the bases more than longer legged breeds. They do get to be very hot and you will find a lot of dogs popping out of the weave poles.

Body Language – you need to be more animated in your use of it. Just turning your shoulders doesn't help a dog that can't see above your shin. Working body language with a smaller dog takes a longer time to become a team than a larger breed. You need to work within your dog's site limitations. It is the handler's responsibility to make the signaling as effective as possible for the dog.

Distractions – Dachshunds are dachshunds. They are very prone to distractions both scent and movement related. This especially noticeable if a piece of treat as fallen out of someone's pocket or there is something very attractive on the course. Their noses are only a few inches from it and it does get their attention. Overcoming this will come from good obedience foundation and really working on attention commands and cues. The "leave it" command has become an integral part of handler's trailing vocabulary.

Inexperienced Handler - this is a team sport. The handler plays a very integral part in the success of the team. The dog can only perform as good as the direction from their handler. It takes time to develop teamwork and timing on the agility course.

Jump heights - with age, jump heights became a concern. With short legs and long back, jumping for a dachshund is a concern anyway. Owners

need to be very concerned with this aspect. If you are starting a young dachshund in agility, make sure that they are not overweight. In fact, being on the lean side is a plus for agility dogs. As your dog ages, you need to carefully judge your dog's performance and find out if you are asking too much of your dog. No title is worth injury.

Small Dogs – as a handler of a small dog you need to be aware of the crowd around you and your dog. Little dogs get lost in the crowd of the start and/or finish line. All jokes withstanding on carrying in your little dog, it has become a safety issue foremost.

Miscellaneous – at any time, your dog may have their own agenda. You need to realize this and be able to be humble. Remember you own a dachshund.

Videotape – this is a great tool to use in analyzing your runs. If you have someone that can tape your runs, take advantage of it. It's amazing on how your perception of how your run was is different from the one you watch on tape. This can be a handler's greatest learning tool.

1 – Training and Health Considerations adopted with permission from an article by Janet Gauntt at www.dogpatch.org

CHAPTER 5 - EARTHDOG



DEN TRIALS

by Teddy Moritz

There are currently two types of den trials for Dachshunds to enter. Your Dachshund is a breed that was created to go to ground so he/she should soon learn to succeed at trials. There are training clinics available and many trials are held throughout the country, year-round. The Dachshunds often earn titles at these trials after just a few tries. Their ancestors were go-to-ground dogs so your hound is already programmed to follow a scent into a tunnel. You and your dog will enjoy these trials with just a little training and handling.

The American Working Terrier Association started holding den trials in 1971. Both Dachshunds and Terriers are welcome at these trials despite the name of the Association. The AWTA also offers Working Certificates for actual underground hunting and encourages the members to take the dogs hunting. The den trials are run according to rules promulgated years ago and include three steps: Novice, Open and Certificate. A dog can progress from the Novice through Open and Certificate in one (1) day. Novice A is for dogs under 12 months of age who have not previously earned a score of 100% in this class. Novice B class is for dogs over a year old who have not previously earned a score of 100% in this class. When a dog has earned 100% in the Novice class it can move up to the Open class, and again with a score of 100%, can then be entered into the Certificate class.

In order to earn 100% in each class, the requirements are as follows:

For Novice A and Novice B class, the dog has one minute to reach the quarry from the time the tail disappears into the den. It can back out a few times but when the dog reaches the quarry it must stay with the quarry and start working it. Working is defined as barking, digging, growling, lunging, etc. The dog must work the quarry for 30 seconds without stopping.

In the Open class the dog has 30 seconds to reach the quarry, from time of release. It must go straight to the quarry and not go in and out once it reaches the quarry. Then it must work the quarry for one minute.

The Certificate class has the same requirements and is basically a "High Scoring in Trial" class where awards are given for the fastest times to individuals of each breed.

The dens are made of plywood, with an opening of nine inches by nine inches. The dens are buried about a foot deep. The Novice earth has one ninety-degree turn and is ten feet long. The Open and Certificate earths are thirty feet long and have three ninety-degree turns. At the end of the liner are bars which prevent the dog from getting at the cage of rats. Laboratory rats are the

standard quarry at AWTA trials. The rats are not harmed at the trial, only barked at.

The AKC does not acknowledge the AWTA trial certificates but the Canadian Kennel Club does. However, it is an accomplishment for any Dachshund to earn his/her Certificate of Gameness at an AWTA trial.

The AKC offers Earthdog tests countrywide. There are four classes currently offered: Introduction to Quarry, Junior, Senior and Master. Titles are earned in the last three classes. Introduction to Quarry simply allows novice dogs and owners the opportunity to see if the dog is willing to enter a tunnel. The tunnels are the same dimensions as the AWTA liners in all the classes, although in Master class there are two obstacles added inside the tunnel.



EARTHDOG TESTS

by Gordon Heldebrant

The Dachshund's potential for earthwork is acknowledged in the Official Breed standard with the statement, "His build and disposition qualify him especially for hunting game below ground." The history of the breed is full of example of the Dachshunds use and value as a subterranean hunter. In Europe, the Dachshund was developed for use primarily on badger, but also for fox and similar den dwelling game. While we lack the opportunity to test our Dachshunds on Badger, the American Kennel Club offers modern American Dachshund owner a program in which their hounds may be tested in a go to ground setting.

The AKC Earthdog Tests for Small Terriers and Dachshunds were first recognized in 1994. The purpose of these non-competitive Earthdog tests is to offer breeders and owners a standardized gauge to measure their dogs natural and trained hunting and working abilities when exposed to a hunting situation. Developed out of the American Working Terrier Association den trial program, the current AKC program offers four test levels, which lead to 3 performance titles.

The Introduction to Quarry class (for which no titles are offered), as the name implies, is the starting class for many of the dogs. It is a first chance for dogs to become initiated to entering an underground den and for most, the first chance to work live quarry. In all the classes, the quarry used are adult rats, which are securely caged and protected by permanently affixed bars at the end of the artificial tunnels. The basic den is a 9-inch by 9-inch wood liner set into a trench and completely covered with earth. The den in the Intro class is 10 feet long with one 90-degree turn between the entrance and the quarry end. The judge views the dog's performance by way of trap door at the quarry end. In the Intro class, the dog is released 10 feet from the entrance and the handler may give the dog one short command to enter. The dog has 2 minutes from the time it first enters the earth to reach the quarry. One the dog begins working the quarry, it must work continuously, without encouragement for 30 seconds. In this class, the dog first learns that it can enter a strange underground tunnel and can exercise his natural abilities when confronted with a live "enemy". While many dogs never earn a passing score in the Intro class, it gives them the tools and confidence to go on to the title earning classes.

The preface of the Junior Earthdog test in the AKC Earthdog Regulations states, "The evaluation of a dog's agility can never be precise. However the primary purpose of the Small Terrier and Dachshund is to pursue game to

ground, hold the game, and alert the hunter where to dig, or to bolt. Whether the dog is successful in its primary purpose is determined by its possession of a unique set of natural abilities. This test is designed to help evaluate the natural abilities.” The Junior earthdog den is 30 feet long with three 90-degree turns. The handler releases the dog 10 feet from the entrance and may give the dog one short command at that time, after that, the dog is on its own and can receive no further encouragement from the handler. The dog has 30 seconds to reach the quarry. The judge allows the dog 30 seconds from the time it reaches the quarry to begin working. Work is defined as digging, barking, lunging, growling, biting at the bars, or any other activity which indicates to the judge that the dog is trying to get to the quarry. Once the dog starts working it must work continuously for 60 seconds. After the time limit expires, the handler is asked to retrieve the dog by way of the trapdoor at the quarry end. If the dog reaches the quarry and starts working within the time limits, and works the quarry for the specified time the dog earns a leg towards its Junior earthdog (JE) degree. Dogs which earn two legs under two different judges are awarded a Junior Earthdog title by the American Kennel Club.

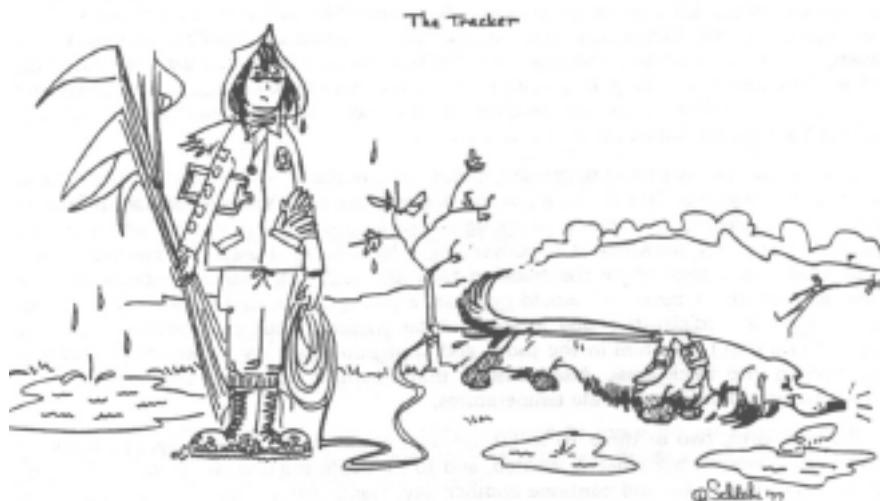
The Senior Earthdog test, (open to dogs with a JE degree) forces the dog and handler to face a new set of challenges to overcome. The Senior class den is the basic 30-foot den to which a dead end tunnel and an unscented exit/entrance has been added. In the Junior class, the entrance to the den is a horizontal, visible entrance. For the Senior class, the entrance is a steep vertical entrance which is not visible to the dog at the point of release. The handler releases the dog on a scent trail, 20 feet from the entrance. The dog must follow the trail to, and into the den, and make its way through the maze to the quarry. To do this, the dog is allowed 90 seconds. Once at the quarry, the dog must stay with the quarry and must begin working within 15 seconds. Once the dog begins working, it must work continuously from 90 seconds. After the dog reaches this time, the judge seals the viewing area and removes the quarry from the den, simulating the game bolting (escaping). At the judge's signal, the handler has 90 seconds to recall the dog from the main entrance. If the dog passes the 4 parts of the test, it earns a Senior earthdog leg. When the dog has earned three legs under at least two different judges, he is awarded the Senior earthdog (SE) title by AKC.

The Master Earthdog test is the closest test to an actual hunting situation. The Senior earthdog den is used for this test, but is modified by adding two internal obstacles. One is a constriction, which narrows the 9-inch tunnel to 6 inches; the other is a 6 inch simulated root that the dog must climb over. Before the start of the test, the entrances to the den are blocked to prevent the dog from entering the den before the judge allows it. The dogs in this class

are run two at a time, in randomly drawn braces. This means that the dog must work during the 100-yard approach with a strange brace mate, usually not another Dachshund. During the hunt up portion of the test the dog is expected to work under control of the handler and to work with its brace mate without interfering. Once the dogs have reached the den area, the dogs are judged on their ability to find and to strongly indicate the scented entrance to the den. Once both dogs have been given the chance to indicate the entrance, the second dog to indicate is placed in an honoring position to await its chance to enter the den. The first dog to indicate is released at the entrance and has to reach the quarry in 90 seconds. This is a complex and challenging test of the dog and handler and in order to earn the Master earthdog (ME) title, the dog must earn 4 qualifying legs.

The Earthdog Tests are held in all parts of the country. The first AKC earthdog test was held by the Greater Portland Dachshund Club in October 1994. Since that time, Dachshund clubs have been in the forefront of hosting tests. Santa Anna Valley, Badger, Northern California, New Jersey, Madison Area, Columbine, Dallas Fort Worth and Hudson Valley, are some of the Dachshund club currently holding earthdog tests. Most clubs offer training sessions and practice tests for beginners to learn the ropes. It is a challenging and enjoyable activity for any Dachshund and its owner. For more information, contact DCA, your local Dachshund Club or the American Kennel Club.

CHAPTER 6 - TRACKING



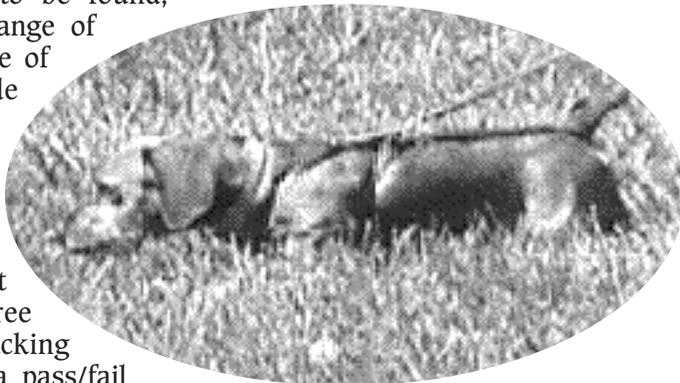
WHAT IS TRACKING?

By Lois Ballard

Tracking is a non-competitive outdoor activity. A dog and handler team follows an invisible trail of human scent left by a person walking earlier in the day. The scent includes body scent, soap, perfume, clothing scent and crushed vegetation, depending on the age of the track. If you enjoy spending time outdoors with your dog, tracking is an ideal activity for you. A good handler will have endless patience, since you cannot force your dog to track, the dog must want to track. Most Dachshunds love food, and once they associate tracking with a food reward, they will be hooked.

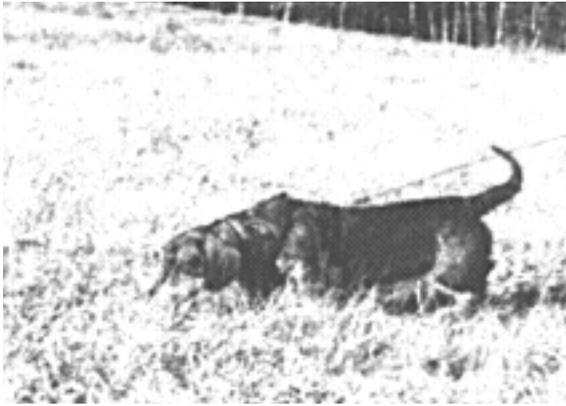
THE AKC TRACKING TITLES

Currently, the AKC offers three tracking titles - Tracking Dog (TD), Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX), Variable Surface Tracker (VST), and the prefix Champion Tracker (CT). A TD track is 440-500 yards in length, has 3-5 turns, one article (a glove or wallet) at the end of the track that must be found by the dog/handler team, and the track scent is 30 minutes to 2 hours old. The start of the track will be marked with a flag and there will be another flag to show the direction of the start placed 30 yards out. The TDX and VST tests are considerably more difficult than a TD test. They are longer in both length and scent age, have only one start flag so the dog must determine direction of the track, more articles to be found, include obstacles, change of cover, and in the case of VST tracks, include non-vegetated surfaces, such as concrete and blacktop. The Champion Tracker (CT) prefix is given to dogs that have earned all three tracking titles. Tracking tests are judged on a pass/fail basis. In order to earn a tracking title, your dog will need to pass one test judged by a pair of judges. Before entering a Tracking Dog (TD) Test, your dog will need to be certified as being ready by an AKC Tracking judge, and be at least 6 months of age.



HOW TO GET STARTED

To begin tracking training, you need a dog sound in mind and body, a tracking harness, a lead, food or toy that your dog LOVES, a few cloth gloves, some tracking markers (survey flags or wooden dowels), and a place to track. A field of 6-12 inch high grass is ideal to start. The first time you lay a track for your dog, it should be very short, and easy for the dog to master the objective. Leaving your dog in the car, crate, or tied, walk out to the field bringing flags, gloves, and food (or toy). Stop, place a flag in the ground at your feet and a small piece of food directly in front of your feet. Taking small steps, place another piece of food after each step or two, and continue this for about 10-20 steps, always trying to walk in a straight line. Stop, place another flag in the ground, the glove in front of your feet with LOTS of food or his toy on it. Continue to walk in the same straight line for another 20-30 normal steps, put in a starting flag and lay another track of 10-20 feet in the same manner. After the second track has been laid, continue on for another 20-30 steps past the glove. Circle back to get your dog taking care not to walk within 30 feet



of where your track has been laid. Immediately take your dog close to the start and put the tracking harness on with attached lead. Walk or carry the dog to the start flag, point to the ground and food and give the dog a command in an upbeat, happy voice, like “find the glove”. At this early stage, you will be right behind, or beside your dog and may have to point out each piece of food and give

encouragement. When the dog reaches the glove at the end, give enormous praise and play with the dog and glove for a while. Walk or carry the dog to the next start flag and do the same thing.

You may be doing the same exercise a few times or for a few days before the dog is ready to move on to more difficult tracks. As the dog begins to learn that there is food out there on the glove, you will gradually lengthen your stride to normal, and gradually use less food along the track, until the only food is on the glove. You will then begin to lengthen and age the track a few minutes before running it and begin to add turns. When teaching turns, the first turn should be an open turn, not more than 45 degrees. Take small steps

for a few yards before and after the turn, place a flag in the ground at the turn, and leave food at the turn and for a few steps after the turn. Once the track is longer than 50 yards or has turns in it, you should use a second flag 30 yards out from the start flag to help with beginning direction.

Gradually you will increase the scent age of the track, length, number of turns, tightness of turns, and the distance between you and your dog. When your dog is tracking a 5 minute old, 100 yard, one turn track with enthusiasm, then you should begin to apply light pressure on the tracking lead to make the dog pull you on the track. Following these steps should get you off to a good start in tracking. Now it will be up to you to do some reading and learn from other trackers.

Some Suggestions

Tracking is excellent training for field trials.

Draw a map of your track so you don't get lost.

Always use the same command to find the glove.

The dog's harness should only be worn during tracking.

Practice in all types of weather—hot, rain, wind, and snow.

Run blind tracks laid by other trackers as often as possible.

Get permission from landowners; don't trespass on their land.

Track in different fields, dogs will get bored with the same place.

Never scold the dog, always encourage him to do the right thing.

Take baby steps to concentrate the scent, don't "double lay" tracks.

Keep the lead off the ground, make the dog pull you down the track.

Don't use a flexi-lead, any jerk will be considered a correction to the dog.

Be extremely happy when your dog finds an article, to the point of being silly.

Don't overdue it, tracking twice a week to start is great, once a week will work.

Dachshunds are well equipped for tracking, being close to the ground, and do very well at it. Many have earned TD titles, and to date, 15 Dachshunds have earned the TDX title. The VST title is a relatively new title with only 25 dogs (all breed total) having earned that title to date. No Dachshund has earned a VST title as yet.

TRACKING WITH YOUR DACHSHUND

by Penny Wimer

Your Dachshund has probably already shown he can follow a scent. His has used his nose from birth to find and follow any scent that seemed interesting. The American Kennel Club states that “The purpose of a Tracking Test is to demonstrate the dog’s ability to recognize and follow human scent . . .” Now you will be teaching your Dachshund to follow this human scent, as you learn to “read” the messages from your dog that tell you when he is on the scent, has lost it, is at a turn, or goofing off and mousing. As you track together, you become a working team – your goal: the Tracking Dog title!

WHAT IS NEEDED TO START? A dog in good health of almost any age can learn to track. 10 and 11-year-old Dachshunds have passed the TD test and the advanced Tracking Dog Excellent Test. It is probably to start a puppy – they are not as “hung up” with other things they have learned, but Dachshunds with many titles have earned the Tracking Dog title. The handler needs to be able to go long distances – the TD track is 440 to 500 yards long, with several turns.

Beginning tracks can be done with a buckle collar and a 6-foot leash, but you will need a non-restrictive harness (coming to a “V” over the chest). A tracking line is usually 40 feet long; lightweight parachute cord or mountain rope works well.

Flags or stakes will be needed to mark the track – you need to know where it is. These can be anything that will stay in the ground and be visible from 100 feet – 6-8 surveyor flags, wire with bright tape, etc., work well.

Your Dachshund will need something to “find” at the end of the track – a cotton or leather glove is usually used at a test and these or a favorite toy are good for training. Most trackers use small bites of food to reward the dog – sliced up hotdogs are great!

A pencil and paper are needed to draw a diagram of tracks as they grow longer and include turns. Plan also to keep a tracking “log”, with maps of each track and your comments on how your dog did on each. A review of these can help in planning the next tracking session.

HOW TO START TRACKING: You cannot force a dog to track! Use only positive reinforcement – food, praise, and a game at the end. You will be teaching your dog there is one scent to follow and a reward at the end. The only commands you will use are “track” or “find it”. You will use encourage-

ment and praise as your dog works the track. Tracking can be done alone, but it is more fun with a group – chances are already “trackers” in your area.

Your first track will be 10-12 steps out. With your dog on his leash and held by a helper (or crated at the start point) plant a flag in the ground. Show your dog the glove you will leave at the end and the food treats you have already. Walk a straight line out 10-12 steps, put a second flag in the ground. Show the dog the article and put it down in front of the flag, adding a “jackpot” of treats. Walk back to the dog, dropping a small piece of food every 3-4 steps. Show the dog the start flag, give your track command, and encourage him as he figures out this new game. Some dogs will run out to the glove, others need more encouragement to go out and “find it”. Your dog is learning that following the track leads to something to “find”. Three short tracks, two or three times a week, are enough to get your dog started. You will be gradually increasing the length and then the “age” – the amount of time elapsed between starting the track and having the dog run it.

WHAT IS YOUR DOG FINDING? The scent is likely that of the person who walks the track, and any crushed vegetation – but dogs can follow scent on any surface. Low grass is usually best for starting a dog – it “holds” scent well. Weather conditions affect scent. It is closer to the track on a cool, damp windless day, blown around on a windy day, harder to find on a hot, dry day.

A TRACKING TEST: A Tracking Test is not like any other dog event! The team of dog and handler go out into a field, empty except for two flags. At the first flag, you give your dog his “track” command. As he finds and follows the track, you let out 20 feet of tracking line and go with him. The two judges follow behind. Your dog circles and changes direction – he has found the first turn! 440-500 yards later, he stops and noses something on the ground. You and your Dachshund have just earned a Tracking Dog title! You hear the cheers from everyone who is watching as the judges come up to congratulate you and your Dachshund team.

There are no scores in tracking and no competition. You need to pass only once to earn your title. You will have to pass a “Certification” track before entering a test, however. A Tracking judge will observe your work on a track similar to that in a test and certify that you are ready to pass at a test.

There are many books, videos and web sites devoted to tracking, and more than one way for you and your dog to learn what it is all about. There are also other Tracking Tests to work towards – AKC offers the Tracking Dog Excellent Test and the Variable Surface Tracking Test. Passing both of these leads to the Champion Tracker title!

INFORMATION SECTION

The following reading materials may be helpful to obtaining your goal:

AKC brochures *(single copies at no cost)*

Obtainable from: The American Kennel Club
5580 Centerview Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606-3390

Rules Applying to Registration and Dog Shows
Registration and Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedures
for Dachshunds
Obedience Regulations
Tracking Regulations
Agility Regulations

DCA Books and Videos

DCA Educational Brochures:

Contact: Jan Oswald
P.O. Box 670
Cabazon, CA 92230

- *Breeder's Notebook*, a discussion on genetics
- *Breeding To Type*, by J.P. Sayer
- *The Dachshund*, compiled by Judy Goulder
- *The Dachshund Club of America Handbook*,
compiled by Dee Hutchinson
- *The Illustrated Standard of Points of the Dachshund
of all Varieties*, by J. P. Sayer
- *Visualization of the Official Standard of the Dachshund*,
compiled by Kaye Ladd, Gina Leona-Middings,
Phyllis Rosinsky and Ann Gordon
- *Introduction To Field Trials*,
prepared by Carrie Hamilton and David Kawami

General Dachshund Books

- *Cox on Dachshunds*, Herman G. Fox
- *Dogsteps*, Rachel Page Elliott (also available in video)
- *The Complete Dachshund*, Milo G. Denlinger – Washington, D.C. 1947, 1954
- *The Dachshund or Teckel*, Herbert Sanborn
- *The Dachshund: A Dog for Town and Country*, Ann Gordon – IDG Books 2000
- *The New Dachshund*, Lois Meistrell (with special chapters by Jeannette Cross, Dr.C. William Nixon and Peggy Westphal) – Howell Book House, NYC, 1976
- *This Is The Dachshund*, Leonore Loeb Adler – T.F.H. Publications, 2nd Edition, 1975
- *The New Owner's Guide To Dachshunds*, Kaye Ladd -T.F.H. Publications, Inc., Neptune City, NJ, 1996
- *The Complete Dachshund*, Dee and Bruce Hutchinson – Howell Book House, NYC, 1997
- *Canine Structure and Terminology*, Gilbert and Brown
- *The Dachshund. An Owner's Guide to a Happy Healthy Pet*, Ann Carey – Howell Book House, NYC. 1995

Psychology and Training

- *Dogs behaving Badly*, Nicholas Dodman - Bantam Books
- *Don't Shoot the Dog*, Karen Pryor - Bantam Books
- *Dog Behavior*, Ian Dunbar - Howell Book House
- *Why Does My Dog..?*, John Fisher - Souvenir Press
- *Culture Clash*, Jean Donaldson - Laser Multimedia Productions

Obedience

There is an abundance of obedience books available on the market. Choose authors who advocate praise, reward, motivation and fun.

- *Off-Lead Magazine*. Various articles, including those by John Cree (British Judge) in the January 1981 and April 1982 issues. - Arner Publications, Inc.
- *Smart Trainers Brilliant Dogs*, Janet Lewis - Canine Sports Productions

Field Trial Training

American Beagling, Glen Black. The most embracing book on hound-rabbit work in the English language. Though written in 1940, it lends itself well to our breed. - Out of print but may be available through dealers of used/antique books.

Specialized Fields of Work “*The Dachshund and the Hunt*.” Chapter from the out of print, “*This is the Dachshund*”, Dr. Fritz Engelmann/Leonore Adler – T.F.H. Publications, 1966. This book is available only like the one above.

Training for AWTA Den Trials

- *Sport with Terriers*, Patricia Adams Lent – Arner Publications, Inc.

Earthdog

- *Earthdog Ins and Outs*, Jo Ann Frier-Murza - OTR Publications

Training for Tracking

- *Advanced Tracking: A TDX Field Guide* – The Tracking Club of Massachusetts, 438 Lowell St., Wakefield, MA 02880
- *Bring Your Nose Over Here: Tracking Training & Advanced Tracking*
- *Training. One Step at a Time*, Wentworth Brown- order from author directly, Wentworth Brown, 6816 Carlton N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87107
- *Go Find!*, L. Wilson Davis – Howell Book House
- *Pearsall Guide To Successful Dog Training*, Margaret Pearsall – Howell Book House (only a short section on tracking)

- *Practical Tracking for Practically Anyone*,
Julie Hogana and Donna Thompson
- *Enthusiastic Tracking*, William “Sil” Sanders
- *Following Ghosts*, Suzanne Clothier and John Rice
- *Scent and The Scenting Dog*,
William Syrotuck, Arner Publications, Inc.
- *Scent*, Pearsell and Verbruggen, Alpine Publications,
1901 S. Garfield, Loveland, CO 80537
- *Tracking Dog, Theory & Methods*, Glen R. Johnson –
Arner Publications, Inc.

Dealers in out-of-print and rare dog books:

Robert B. Williams Books
57 Lacey Road
Bethany, CT 06525

Other excellent sources:

Dog Wise Books - www.dogwise.com 1-800-776-2665

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