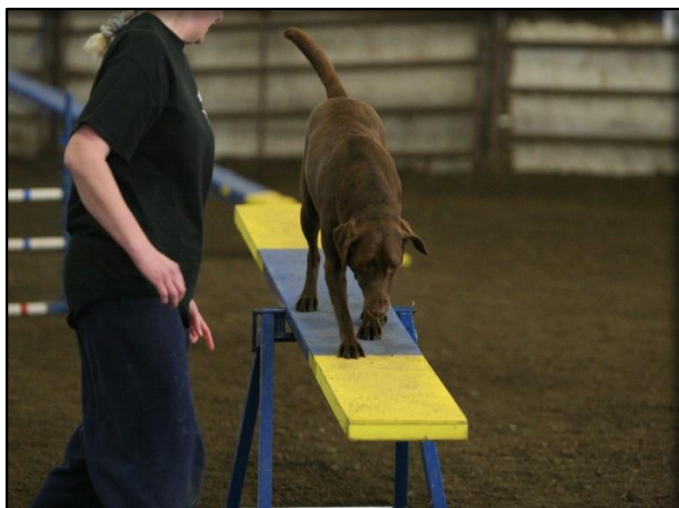


My Agility Debut – CPE Agility Trial – 18 April 2009

By Ella Gamley

On Saturday my Mom and me ran in our first agility trial together. My sister, Molly, my Dad and my Gran were there to support us. I was just a little nervous – not because of the competition – but because I was in a new place with so many people and dogs. I stayed close to my Mom because she had been here before and knew where to go for the events.

Our first event was Colours which is a mini course and has only ten obstacles. I was so excited to start the run and when I saw Mom walking away from me, while telling me to wait behind the start line, I crept forward a bit, misjudged my first jump and my leg knocked a bar down. After that I sprinted as fast as I could to reach Mom. There were two tunnels on the course, and boy do I love tunnels! I aced the tyre jump at the end and then got a tight congratulatory squeeze from Mom. That was my debut run!



Our second event was a Standard course. It was the longest course I have ever run and had over fifteen obstacles. I had to concentrate really, really hard. The numbers on the cones were difficult to read, especially when running at full speed, so I had to rely completely on Mom to make sure I went the correct way.

I stopped at the end of each piece of contact equipment just like we do at training, but before I had a chance to get a treat like I normally do, we had to start sprinting again.

Wow, my heart was beating so fast! Just as I took a jump, Mom called me over to the weave poles. Oh dear.... They were so difficult. I tried a few times to wiggle through them but could not make it all the way through. I was a little confused and began getting distracted, but then I heard Mom clapping her hands and calling me back to her..and then we started sprinting again and I headed into a tunnel. Yeah! A tunnel!





All of the concentrating and running was wearing me out! I was glad when I got a chance to rest while under the watchful eye of my Gran.

I am very happy that she lives in Portland now because we can visit her often. She helps train Molly and I and feeds us yummy treats from her magic pocket.

There were so many unfamiliar dogs in the arena. Most of them just ignored me but I was really excited to see a chocolate dog who looked just like me. It was like I was looking in a mirror! Lots of people wanted to touch me but they scare me a bit so I always try to back away a little before they reach me. I saw this squat white and brown dog that seemed to have a very short nose. He was making silly snorting sounds while he walked towards me. I think Mom said he was a bullfrog.... Err... maybe I heard her wrong.... On second thoughts I think it was a bulldog. Yes, that sounds right.

The final event for the day was Jumpers. There were fifteen obstacles - only jumps or tunnels. I was still a little sleepy so did not run at full speed. Actually, Mom was a little worn out too from the running, so I went slower to make sure that she could keep up with me. We had a good run and I flew over those jumps and whizzed through the tunnels (yeah, tunnels!) as fast as my little legs could carry me. At the end I got another one of those tight squeezes from Mom. I like those!



We headed home before all of the results were published so I'm not sure if I won any prizes, but for me the real prize was that I could spend the whole day with my sister, Molly, as well as my most favourite humans in the world, Dad, Gran and Mom.