

Belconnen Dog Obedience Club

Newsletter August - November 2008

Volume 1. Issue 1



Corner Flemington Road and Sandford Street, Mitchell, ACT

BDOC Commitee

President	Barbara Brown
Vice President	Elaine Temby
Treasurer	Maki Koyama
Secretary	Jan Horley
Assistant Treasurer	Max Darvill
Committee Member	Ray Leckie
Committee Member	John Riley
Committee Member	Jenny Stott
Committee Member	Karl Newport
Committee Member	Dai Thomas
Committee Member	Lucy Williams
Committee Member	Cliff Brock

Contact Details

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Office hours: 7-9pm Thursdays and 9-11am Sundays

Training times:

Obedience

Thursdays: levels 1 and 3 at 7pm, level 2 at 8pm, Novice, Primary Companion and Open - TBA

Sundays: levels 1 and 3 at 9am, level 2, Novice and Primary Companion at 10am. No open class

Agility

Mondays and Wednesdays 6:30 – 8:30pm

Flyball (TBC)

Tuesdays 6:30 – 8pm and Sundays 8-9am

Session 5 starts 9 Oct (there will be no training on 2 and 5 Oct) and ends 30 Nov 08 (annual presentation day)

The Club will be closed over December and January.

Message From the New President



Above: Newly elected President of the BDOC, Barbara Brown.

Welcome fellow dog lovers. We are so lucky to have our wonderful facility with its extensive grounds and beautiful clubhouse. We are also lucky to have a dedicated and enthusiastic group of people who nominated to join the BDOC Committee for this year. Their names are elsewhere in the newsletter and their photos will soon be on the notice boards together with their responsibilities. It takes a lot of work to keep the grounds and clubhouse operating and arranging for all the club activities. If you can assist in any small way by assisting with an hour or two of your time, please get in touch with a Committee member.

Apart from the Committee members, we are also lucky to have a small band of members who work for the club on a regular basis. They are not on the Committee but they dedicate many hours to ensure that we all benefit. I will be profiling these folk in coming Newsletters. We all owe them a big thank you.

Finally, how could we do without our instructors? What ever dog activity you undertake at the club, whether it be training your dog in life skills, formal obedience, flyball, agility, trick training or dog dancing, our instructors turn up for every class. They are a wonderful asset.

We hope to be running another Obedience Instructors course early next year. Please talk to your instructor or a Committee member if you are interested. We also have three members attending an agility instructors course at the Companion Dog Club. This will allow us to conduct more entry level agility classes and reduce the waiting list.

I will leave you with my favourite quote, 'I might live with little people in fur coats, but I train dogs.'

Happy dog training.

Congratulations...

well done dogs and trainers who took part in the July/August (Session 3) Assessment days. Photographs taken by Beth Charles.

Thursday night (31-07-08)

Results from the level s 1, 2 and puppy Trick competition:

1st – Sally with Maggie (roll over)



2nd Adam with Hurly (play dead)



3rd – Fiona with Sollie (wait)



Results from level 3 assessment

1st – Jenny with Junior

2nd – Nick with Brandy

3rd – Susan with Buster

Sunday morning (03-08-08)

Results from the level s 1, 2 and puppy Trick competition

1st – Dennis with Ben (shake)



2nd – Kathy with BJ (spin, jump & weave)



3rd – Greg with Rippley (leave it/ take it)



Results from Level 3 assessment

1st – Elizabeth with Sydney

2nd – Jenni with Frankie

3rd – Rachel with Verve



Training & Trialing Tips

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Teach your dog to 'toilet'on command. Being able to get your dog to at least urinate on command is very useful not only for trialing but also for everyday living. If you can get your dog to toilet before getting into the car, especially when youre going on a long journey, it is more likely that your dog will settle down happily because he wont be thinking of his bladder or bowels.

♥ Choose a word or phrase that you will use to mean 'go to the toilet now. Make sure this is a command that you are prepared to use in public - you could be very embarrassed if you have to use it at a stop on a long journey or at the vets to collect a sample if your word/phrase is very silly or worse not fit for everyones ears!

♥ Now, every time you see your dog begin to pee or pooh, give your command followed by quiet praise. Something like "piddle . . . good boy . . . piddle . . . good boy". These are commands that its OK to keep saying while the dog is still in the process. Give your dog a treat as soon as hes finished, not when youve walked

back inside.

♥ If you do this often, and especially if you can give your command as you see your dog preparing to 'perform' as well as during the 'performance, your dog will associate the action with the command and pretty soon you will be able to get your dog to 'perform' whenever you give the command.

Practice your obedience skills in lots of different places. Once you have taught your dog a skill, whether it be a practical skill such as 'wait for dinner' or a competition skill such as retrieving the dumbbell, you need to practice it in as many different localities as possible.

Dogs dont generalize well. That means that you need to teach and practice each exercise in a number of different places before your dog will get the message that 'sit' means sit in the house, in the backyard, at dog school, on the path, at grannys house and so on.

Its the reason why your dog can probably do lots of things at home that he then wont do at the dog club, or will do at both these venues but wont do when youre out for your walk. So if you want an instant response to your commands you need to make

sure you practice in all sorts of places, not forgetting to mark and reward your dogs responses. And to all you trialers who have dogs that go to pieces away from BDOC, try doing your exercises in at least ten different localities on a regular basis (and they don't have to be dog clubs, a friends back yard, the local off-lead area etc are still different for your dog). Youll probably find that your dog copes much better at the next 'away'trial.

Below: Terry, K Tzyu, and senior instructor and renowned judge Mary Delgado enjoy the rain.



The BDOC



The Belconnen Dog Obedience Club (BDOC) was formed in 1975 to provide dog training instruction and facilities for people living in North Canberra. BDOC moved to its current location in Mitchell in May 1997.

The Club's main activity is obedience training but many other activities are also provided such as flyball and agility.

The club is administered by a committee of volunteers elected at the Annual General Meeting held in August each year. This year the AGM was held on Wednesday 27 August at the clubhouse in Mitchell.

The committee comprise of eleven members, the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer and seven committee members.

Committee responsibilities include, among other things, training instructors, organising assessment days and trials and liaison with other clubs.

BDOC is supported with much appreciated financial assistance from Sport and Recreation ACT.

Chaos at the Door - Part 1

Daniel Estep, Ph.D. and Suzanne Hetts, Ph.D.

www.AnimalBehaviorAssociates.com
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During our in-home consultations with our clients, we observe that many owners have problems with their dogs when people come to the door. These problems can range from dogs who are just overly friendly and demand attention by jumping on people; to those that are threatening or aggressive when someone unfamiliar enters their territory. Other dogs see this as a chance to dash out the door and enjoy a brief run through the neighborhood.

The first step in changing these behaviors is to not add to them by becoming overly excited yourself and yelling or grabbing at your dog. This only adds to the tension and arousal level of the situation, and makes it more likely your dog will continue to be out of control. Instead of focusing on disciplining your dog for undesirable behavior, it is much more effective to concentrate on teaching her what you want her

to do instead. For example, rather than yelling "off" if your dog jumps on people, instead, tell her to sit.

This may be more successfully accomplished by using a special tidbit to lure her into position initially. When you know visitors will be arriving, place a few tidbits right outside the front door so the visitor can also deliver the treat when your dog responds to their requests to 'sit'. If the dog jumps instead, everyone should turn and walk away from her. She is jumping because she wants attention, and this technique quickly teaches her that the only way she can get it is to keep her paws off of people. As soon as all four feet are on the floor, she can be petted.

When dogs threaten visitors by barking or growling, they must be conditioned to think that visitors mean 'good things'. Visitors can be asked to assume non-threatening behaviors – avoid eye contact with the dog, don't face him, don't lean over him or reach out toward him. Instead, they should be instructed to drop a number of small tidbits on the floor for the dog. They should continue to ignore the dog until he stops barking and displays calmer behaviors –

perhaps being willing to sit for a treat that is offered from an open palm. If there is any concern the dog may bite, he should be muzzled during these greetings. Most threatening dogs however, are much better if visitors ignore them initially rather than attempt to interact with them.

It can also be helpful to habituate your dog to the sound of the doorbell. This is done by ringing the bell frequently, but no visitors arrive. This helps to break the association in the dog's mind that bell means visitors. When the dog is less reactive to the sound of the bell, it is usually easier to teach him alternative behaviors, such as staying in designated location when the doorbell rings rather than rushing to the door.

While chaos at the door can be managed by putting the dog outside or in another room when the bell rings, this approach never teaches him how to be better when visitors arrive.

Part 2 will appear in the next issue of the newsletter

Cleo and Lucy model the latest winter-wear for small dogs.



The Newsletter

Contributions, articles and photographs, to the newsletter are welcome. It is hoped to produce an issue of the club's newsletter at the beginning of each training session and post it on the BDOC website. Until this arrangement is in place a *.pdf copy can be obtained from daiathome@iimetro.com.au. or by leaving your e-mail address at the office counter.

The committee is looking for a more jazzy title for the newsletter and will award a prize to the member who suggests the title adopted.

Disclaimers

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this newsletter and information in this newsletter is made available on the understanding the The Belconnen Dog Obedience Club (BDOC) is not engaged in the provision of professional advice. Users should independently verify the accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance of the material in this newsletter, or information contained in it. In particular, users should seek appropriate independent professional advice before making any investment or business decisions. The (BDOC) disclaims to the extent permitted by law, all liability (including negligence) for claims of losses, expenses, damages and costs the user may incur as a result of information contained in this newsletter.

Obedience Training

Puppy and Obedience classes are held on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings.

Each training class is held over several weeks, with five sessions each year.

Puppy classes

Puppies must be three months (12 weeks) to participate in puppy classes.

Puppy classes focus on socialisation, basic manners, behavior and using behavioral 'markers' as well as learning the principles of training (lure/reward/ repeat/cue/randomise/generalise).

Initial Life Skills (Levels 1,2 3)

Dogs must be at least six months old to participate in obedience classes and a handler at least twelve years old.

Training courses commence with the Initial Life-Skill classes, which has three levels. Readiness for promotion through levels 1 and 2 for the handler and dog team is

assessed by your instructor and is based on continual assessment and your attendance at class. A fun competition day is also held at the end of levels 1 and 2, at which the handler and their dog get to the skills they have learnt during the session into practice. You don't have to have a wonder-dog to have a lot of fun and perhaps leave with a ribbon!

By the time a dog completes Level 3 it will have learned to walk beside its handler, to sit beside its handler when its handler stops unless told otherwise, to stand or lie down beside its handler on command, to come to its handler when called, and to stay in sit, down or stand position until released.

Transitional Class (Primary Companion / Novice Trialling)

Level 3 of the Initial Life-Skills course is followed by a Transitional Class which is designed to give handlers a preview into the more advanced fields of dog training activities that are available at the Club such as trialling. (The competitive class is known as the Novice Trialling Class, whereas Level 4 of the Initial Life Skills Class is known as

Companion Class.) Handlers and dogs who have completed this class are invited to participate in the Novice Encouragement class held on Assessment Day.

Trialling class

This class is intended to teach handlers the more formal requirements that are needed to enter their dogs in officially sanctioned Dog Obedience Trials and Shows conducted throughout Australia by clubs and organisations similar to BDOC. The rules and regulations for the

proper conduct of these trials are agreed and laid down by delegates from all States and Territories in Australia.

Very Old Joke

"My dog's got no nose."

"How does he smell?"

"Awful."

Below: A view of the BDOC Training Area on a cold winter morning. Training is seldom abandoned because of the weather.



Trialing Tidbits

Obedience Trials?

Obedience Trials are official competitions where handlers and their dogs demonstrate their skills in performing set obedience exercises. Performances are scored against the Australian National Kennel Club (ANKC) standard set out in the official rule book.

There are five levels of difficulty starting with on-lead heeling and steadiness, a short recall and short stays at the first level and progressing through to complicated heeling patterns, retrieving and scent work at the higher levels.

Gaining a pass (called a qualifying score or Q) earns a 'leg' towards the dog's title, just like gaining passes in various subjects towards a diploma or degree. The titles are all those letters that some clever dogs have after their names.



Anne & Alvin (above) and Leslie & Archie (right) demonstrate their heel-work skills at recent trials.

Photographs and article by Patricia Looker

Obedience trialing is a great way to spend some constructive time outdoors with your dog and other 'doggie' people. If you want to know more, talk to your instructor.



Blake is checking out the rolled up cloths looking for the one that has the judge's scent on it. This is the one he'll pick up and take back to Werner. UDX is hard!



Trialing isn't all hard work and nervous tension! Elaine, Liz and Charlie relax in the sunshine. (If you look carefully you can see Honour, a cocker spaniel, sharing Liz's chair and paying close attention to Charlie's comments.)

Pupcakes

From the RSPCA ...
Here's a special occasion sweet treat for your pups. Remember to serve up these doggy cup cakes in moderation. We don't want your poodle addicted to strudel!

2 3/4 cups water
1/4 cup unsweetened apple sauce
1/4 teaspoon vanilla
4 cups wholemeal flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 egg, beaten slightly
4 tablespoons honey

Preheat oven to 175 degrees.
Spray muffin tin with cooking spray.

Mix all wet ingredients thoroughly. Combine dry ingredients in separate bowl. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients slowly, scraping well to make sure no dry mixture is left.

Pour into muffin tins.
Bake for 1/4 hour. Insert a toothpick into the centre of a pupcake and if it comes out dry, they are ready to come out of the oven.

Wait until cooled to serve.
Store in a sealed container.

Makes around 12-14 pupcakes.
Visit <http://www.rspca-act.org.au/pages/page173.asp> for information on pupcake fundraising.

Nice Heel-work boys!

John and Gus

Leo and Jack

Werner and Max



Agility News

Members have managed to keep training through the Winter months, brushing the frost off our fingers as we put the equipment away. At least the running around the practice sets and courses keeps us warm but we are looking forward to Spring training.

BDOC held a Ribbon Agility Trial on the evening of 8th September and most of our triallers entered. We managed to get four qualifications under Judge Reg Dwyer. Lucy Williams and Duke came first in Novice Agility, Jenny Drake and Beth came first in Excellent Agility, Lucy Williams and Stella, and Barbara Brown and Jilly both qualified in Master Agility.

Three members have volunteered to undertake the Agility Instructors Course to be conducted by the ACT Companion Dog Club. This requires theoretical training, a good deal of practical training, and then many weeks of assisting in the different levels of agility classes. This is a big commitment for these people but when they have completed their work BDOC will be able to offer more level 1 agility classes.

Flyball News

BDOC is the proud home of the "Belconnen Bullets". The club is affiliated with the Australian Flyball Association (AFA). The Bullets train throughout the year on Sunday mornings (during the winter) or on Tuesday nights (October to June). Dogs must be over 12 months of age before being allowed to race.


Flyball is an athletic game for dogs of all abilities. Basically it is a relay race for dogs where closely matched teams of 4 dogs compete, in a round robin format, against each other team in their respective division. Dogs are required to first run over four hurdles to retrieve a ball from a specially designed box at one end of the track and return over the same four jumps, with ball in mouth, before the next dog starts its run. Races are timed electronically with the winner on the day being decided on the number of winning races.

Each dog is also awarded points for a winning run and/or a fault free run which count towards AFA defined award categories.

The game originated in USA during the 1970s and began in Australia in 1982. More details at www.flyball.org.au

Calendar of Events

Session 5



Week 1	9 October 2008 12 October 2008
Week 2	16 October 2008 19 October 2008
Week 3	23 October 2008 26 October 2008
Week 4	30 October 2008 2 November 2008
Week 5	6 November 2008 9 November 2008
Week 6	13 November 2008 16 November 2008
Week 7	20 November 2008 23 November 2008
Week 8	27 November 2008
Annual Awards Presentation Day	30 November 2008

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