

"No matter how little money and how few possessions you have, having a dog makes you rich" --- Louis Sabin

Hi Everybody!

This month is the annual Dog Agility Competition of Florida (DACOF). It is a competition among the agility clubs and organizations in the state. It's a lot of fun, and an opportunity for groups to have fun together as a team. Cool Critters is taking two teams.

The Cool Team: Steve Quinn and Boxer Pedal, Kim Floyd with Australian Terriers Trixie and Tivo, Donetta Myers and Papillon Dixie, Marina Gushshina and Papillon Kite, Allee Marie Bilancione and Aussie Beau, Kristy Loman Chiodo and Havanese Willow, Tiffanie Ivins and Boxer Tessa, and Ileana Nadal with Cavalier Divot.

The Critter Team: Don White with Boxers Bullet and Oliver, Adrienne Swisher and Sheltie Brogan, Donna Butler and Boxer Raisin, Jackie Royce and Boxer Rocky, Kelly Randall and Shelties Rafa and Ladybug. Diana Miller and Cocker Chica, and Kristy Loman Chiodo and Papillon Gypsy.

All the team members have worked hard all year to get their dogs ready for competition. In order to be on the team, the dogs have to be ready for competition and have gone to several shows. I require that they have entered AKC shows because the DACOF tournament is run basically under AKC regulations.

The DACOF competition will be held at the Silver Spurs Arena in Kissimmee on June 25 & 26. The arena is a beautiful air conditioned facility with very comfortable seating for lots of spectators and some really cool vendors. We always decorate our crating area and we are always on the second floor. Our theme this year is Star Wars, and of course the Force will be with us.

DACOF starts at 8AM both Saturday and Sunday. The address is 1875 Silver Spurs Lane, Kissimmee, Florida 33815. Admission is free.

No Classes

There will be no class on **Friday, June 17**. I will be showing at the State Fairgrounds

There will be no classes **Monday, July 4, through Friday, July 8**. I will be going to Perry Georgia for the July Agility shows

Rule Changes in NADAC

All 4 divisions – Junior Handler, Veteran Dog, Veteran Handler, and Standard are now available for all classes. In the past, the games classes did not have Junior Handler and Veteran Dog categories.

Also, Numbered Hoopers is just Hoopers...evidently, the Strategy Hoopers is no more.

Finding the Best Crate for your Dog

There is an amazing amount of dog crates in the market today to fit any dog, purpose, and lifestyle. Let's examine the steps in choosing a crate for your dog:

Step One: What will you use the crate for? Will it be for traveling? If so, will it be used for the dog to travel safely in your vehicle? For this purpose, it needs to be either a plastic airline type, or a sturdy metal wire crate. In case of an accident, your dog must be protected from injury, so the crate door must latch safely. Metal crates can either open from the front or the side (some feature both front and side openings), therefore it's best to measure the area where the crate will fit, and decide where the door should be, as that will influence your decision of whether to buy plastic or metal. The plastic crates only open at the front. Your crate must also be attached firmly to the floor of the vehicle, so that it will not move when the car is in motion or on sudden stops. If you have an SUV, some companies actually have a recommendation for dog crates to fit the vehicle!

If you will be traveling by plane, then you must purchase an airline approved plastic, fiberglass, or solid metal crate that can be latched securely, and large enough so that your dog can stand up and turn around comfortably inside. If you are planning to travel with your dog in the cabin under your seat, the crate must be lightweight, portable, but no more than eleven inches in height. Your dog must be small enough to turn around inside it.

Step Two: Decide what material will suit you best. We already talked about the metal and plastic crates for travel, but what if you need a crate for the home? Will the crate be placed permanently in one part of the house? Then you should choose the sturdiest crate you can find, and if used daily, one that will last many years. The plastic crates have a more confined “den-like” feel, while the metal wire crates are more open. The one drawback of plastic crates is that they tend to get hot during warm weather. There is now a line of crates for the home which are covered in wood or wicker and resemble an end table or a night stand. These can get pricey, but are very strong and trendy enough for any upscale décor.

Step Three: Decide on what features you are looking for in a crate. Do you need a folding crate for traveling? These crates can come in plastic or cloth with mesh material. If your dog is an escape artist and scratches on the mesh material, then a better choice would be the plastic or metal fold up crates. These will fold up to resemble a suitcase and are pretty durable. If your dog is fairly quiet and non-destructive, the cloth crates are really nice, and come in a variety of colors and styles. Some even open at the top, have storage pockets for leashes and treats, and are easily washed. I do need to point out, however, that the more lightweight the crate, the more flimsy it will be. Some crates can actually collapse on your dog or roll over if the dog is too restless. If you have a toy dog, then check out the stroller type crates which are becoming very popular among the small dog owners. These are baby strollers that are actually cloth and mesh crates. Really cute, and you can walk your dog in it!

Step Four: How do you size your dog crate properly? The dog must be able to turn around comfortably inside the crate and stand up without having to lower its head. If you are using your crate as an aid to housebreaking, it should be just large enough for the puppy to stand up, turn around, and lie down. If it's too large, the puppy can eliminate at one end and then lay down at the other end, clean and dry. If your puppy is going to be a large dog, you can buy a bigger crate (adult size) and use a piece of plywood or other material as a divider to make the crate smaller.

To decide on the correct size for your dog's crate, measure the dog from the ground to the top of its head standing comfortably, and from the chest to its tail (height and length). If your dog resists getting measured, stand it next to a wall and mark the height and length. So, a dog that measures 16 inches from ground to head and 20 inches in length, would be comfortable in a crate size Medium, 30 inches long by 22 inches high.

Step Five: Cost is another factor to consider when purchasing a crate. Cheap crates will be less durable and consequently more expensive in the long run because you will have to replace them periodically. For owners of large dogs, purchasing a strong crate is a must. A good, well built, sturdy crate will last for many years. The high quality, folding cloth crates will even come with a carrying storage case, perfect for travel.

In conclusion, doing a search on the Internet, will yield a myriad of crate styles to suit any need. I do recommend that if you travel often with dog, you have a crate permanently installed in your home for daily use, and use a portable crate for traveling with your pet.

Class Schedule:

Monday:

6:00 to 7:00 PM - Super Puppy (Next class starting **July 18, 2016**)

7:00 to 8:00 PM - Basic Agility (Next class starting **July 25, 2016**)

8:00 to 9:00 PM - Intermediate Agility

Tuesday:

9:00 to 10:00 AM - Advanced Agility

10:00 to 11:00 AM - Intermediate Agility

7:00 to 8:00 PM - Distance Class

Wednesday:

10:30 AM - Advanced Rally

6:00 to 7:00 PM - Super Puppy (New class starting **August 3, 2016**)

7:00 to 8:00 PM - Intermediate / Advanced Agility

Thursday:

7:00 to 8:00 PM - Basic Obedience (Next class starting **July 28, 2016**)

8:00 to 9:00 PM - Rally Obedience

Friday:

9:00 to 10:00 AM - Advanced Agility

10:00 to 11:00 AM - Intermediate Agility

Congratulations to Our Latest Graduates!

Super Puppy:

Holly Latiolais & Cupcake (Aussie)

Sharon Hunter & Jackson (Labrador)

Robin Enoch & Sadie (All American)

John Frady & Finnegan (Labrador)
Megan Morrison & Rusty (Golden)
Henry Ebert & Ike (Parson Russell)
Paul Arrington & Gryphn (German Shepherd)
Sherry Leffers & Kopper (Coton de Tulear)

...and now, time for a paws...

Ileana