



# KiwiDogAgility

by Karen de Wit

## Tunnel training

The tunnel is an obstacle that many dogs like, perhaps because it is often the first obstacle they see as puppies and it is associated with lots of rewards. Here are some tips for tunnel training.

When starting tunnel training a short tunnel is better than a long tunnel. A light tunnel is better than a dark tunnel. A tunnel with a smooth running surface is better than a normal one shortened so the surface is uneven. In conclusion a 'Beginner' tunnel should be shorter than a competition one and light coloured.

You can get a dog through a tunnel using a number of ways including luring (throwing food or a toy into the tunnel, watching other dogs go through the tunnel and then being allowed to follow them, being held at one end and have the owner calls from the other end (the owner may need to climb partially into the tunnel). You can also shape tunnel performance using the clicker – start with a tiny puppy or child's tunnel, and click for interactions with the tunnel such as poking a head in etc.

You want to make sure that a dog leaves the tunnel at speed and does not come out slowly looking around. You can do this by throwing his toy as he exits the tunnel – he needs to be able to see it as he gets to the end of the tunnel. If he has to look back at you then you are throwing it too late. You could leave a baited target like a plate a few metres past the end of the tunnel, or a remote treat device. You can also make sure that your movement encourages the dog to race out of the tunnel.

Once your dog is keen on straight tunnels start to curve the tunnel. A more sensitive dog might find the look of a dead-end a bit off-putting, so don't make the bend too hard to start with.

Once your dog becomes really good at finding the tunnel, start working on sending him to the tunnel from different locations around the clock. As he goes through the grades the entrances to tunnels won't be so obvious, and on occasion he might not even be able to see an entrance but he has to go and seek it out.

Tunnel exits are also another good thing to practice. It is good if your dog checks in with where you are coming out of the tunnel. The dog can hear whilst in the tunnel, and the timing of your name call will impact on which direction your dog runs in when exiting the tunnel. Put a few jumps in different positions around the tunnel and practice by doing a different one after the tunnel. You could build up quite large sequences this way, and even do this with a puppy (Just don't have the bars up)

Make sure you start to use variable reinforcement as the dog starts to enjoy the tunnel. This will ensure he keeps doing great tunnel performances.

More complex tunnel exercises involve the use of other obstacles, such as for obstacle discrimination. At first make the choices really easy and then harder. This is a situation when your verbal cues are the only thing that differentiate a tunnel from a ramp for example.

Have fun training tunnels!

## Recycling at competitions

The Agility Committee thinks it would be a good idea if clubs could provide separate bins at their events for glass, cans and other recyclables. Further, if you are typically a recycler at home then please bring an extra bag/box so that you can take recycling home with you. Just one small way Agility can help the environment which we cherish so much!

## Grant for YKC

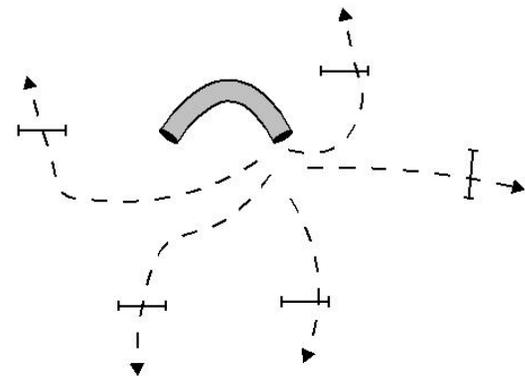
The Agility Committee approved a grant for \$1500 to the YKC to assist with providing agility instruction for the camp attendees. We hope they all had fun doing agility with their dogs.

## Future meetings of the Agility Committee

Teleconference: Wednesday 29 January at 7:00 pm.

Full meetings: Sunday 23 March, 22 June, (ACOD 21 June), 13 September, 13 December.

### Tunnel exits examples



Tunnels are so much fun!

## taieri canine training club



On Saturday, 30 November six Taieri Canine Training Club committee members packed up the agility equipment and headed down to the A&P Show being held in Balclutha. We had been invited to put on a display by their organising committee.

We arrived in time to set up while the Show Queen contestants gave their contest speeches to the crowd in the grandstand. While setting up the wind turned into a minor gale and the rain pelted down. It was touch and go for a while whether the poles on the jumps would stay in place or take off and end up in Invercargill. The speeches over, the frozen Show Queen contestants were ushered into their waiting vehicles and driven from the ring.

Just like magic the wind dropped and the rain stopped, our lucky day. Bronwyn took Ccino out to show off his prowess at agility (or lack there-of), it was more about his barking with excitement attracting the crowds attention as he charged around the ring. He did not let her down and announced to everyone that he was out there having fun.

Rae Leckie took to the PA system and announced the dogs as they took to the course and showed off their skills to the watching crowd. Rae explained the sport of agility, how runs were scored, how nearly any dog can take part and what training TCTC offers.

Rae explained while Don and George took to the course, that George was a young dog still learning agility and how she was being trained to get her contacts and building her confidence. Then Richard's Mellow astounded on-lookers with the speed at which she raced through the weaves. Let's not forget Roy and Sto, who gave Rae a moments hesitation as she tried to remember whether lovely Sto was a Hunter X or something else X.

At the conclusion of our hour and a half entertaining the crowds Rae let the crowd know of our upcoming championship show and invited anyone who wanted, to come along and have a look.

Taieri also took part in the Green Island Expo back in October, which was run to promote schools, businesses and clubs that operate in the local area. This was another fun day out for the club and we look forward to doing it all again at the Otago Taieri A&P Show in January 2014.

