



Wanaka Extravaganza

By Kirstin Graves

The idea for the sequel to the Reefton show was born during dinner in the evening of the Waimakariri indoor show in June last year. When Louise Marsh organises a show, you know it is going to be good! So when she asked me if I would come to the Wanaka Show and judge a class, I said “hell yes!”

After those carefully hatched plans, well plans hatched under the influence of alcohol, Louise got together with Michelle Jopson and Karen Grant to organise what became known as the **Wanaka Extravaganza**.

On Friday 21st January we turned up to the Wanaka A&P Showgrounds to find two rings set up for agility, flygility in the process of being set up, a bunch of the usual agility suspects helping set up the show and the Highlanders. Yes, the Highlanders! They were in Wanaka for a training camp. Didn't see them do much training, but they did sign things for the kids, and a couple of them even took their shirts off... Yes right, back to the agility... Louise, Phil, Wayne, Graeme and a few of the team ran their dogs around a starters course to show the Highlanders what we did. They looked pretty impressed! They were even more impressed when Graeme Lawson loaned a couple of them Troy to run and they couldn't keep up with him!!

Well after that bit of excitement, there was time for some lunch and the show officially opened at 3pm for some Flygility. Now I am no flygility expert, but there looked like there were some pretty awesome runs! There were quite a few members of the public around watching and they really enjoyed the spectacle of fly.

Once the fly finished, two very large convoys of people headed out to some private property for the dock jumping. Now this truly was an awesome sight! First the convoy of over 30 cars and trailers travelling together through Wanaka, then the sight of all the cars parked in what was basically the middle of nowhere. A pond surrounded by an incredibly scenic view of the mountains. The atmosphere was just electric! Dogs were beside themselves, barking and eager to be in the water and handlers running around with no idea what they were doing, but having a good laugh doing it. The jumping ranged from the truly spectacular (check out the Boxer in the photo) to the truly hilarious – several dogs just wouldn't jump in and some were carried in by their owners. At one point some of the lads decided Tim needed a proper AgCh wetting and tried to throw him in the pond. That didn't work out quite as planned did it Paul? There was a bit of an exciting moment when a helicopter decided to shoot some rabbits in the paddock next door – luckily they understood Louise's sign language and decided to go and shoot somewhere else.



The Highlanders

Big thanks to Michelle for organising this fun event, to Quenton for paddling around in his kayak and ensuring dog safety, and to Brian Godfrey for sitting through the whole event, with his feet in the water, judging the distance of all the jumps.

Saturday morning dawned sunny and cool – a perfect day for agility! (The temperature rose into the 30s in the middle of the day.) Really, it was a case of “what more could you ask for?” Beautiful weather, hanging out with your dogs and great people, with some incredible views and a lake just over the road for swimming. Just magic!!

The Show was fantastic – a triple agility, triple jumpers feast that was superbly organised. There were loads of generous sponsors, and some pretty awesome spot prizes for people as a result. Louise plans these shows to be “by the people, for the people”. This means that everyone pitches in to run the show. This includes judging, every judge that was there judged at least one class. Instead of judges expenses we were given a goodie bag filled with wine, dog toys and Rosie's world famous brownie. Yum!! With different judges for almost every class there was a variety of courses and challenges on offer. This went down pretty well with both the competitors and the judges. The teams event was held over the “2nd show” and extra points were awarded for the costumes. I somehow managed to miss the costume parade, something to do with having a wee nap in the shade under the tree... I heard that it was a good laugh though, and some of the costumes I saw people running in were very entertaining! There were loads of public stopping by and having picnics while watching the agility, lord knows what they thought of us in our silly costumes! It was expected that with a double agility and double jumpers being held on the Saturday that things would run late into the evening, so a meal was organised and provided by the local sponsor Mcgreggors. To top this off, Louise, Michelle and Karen baked dessert for everyone. And I can tell you it was pretty yummy!!! Those people lucky enough to get placings received either blue, yellow or pink ribbons, and the clear round certificates were specially designed with a picture of Michelle's Shepherd Shilo in a d-fa coat on the background surrounded by the words “Wanaka Extravaganza”. Every detail was cleverly planned by the organisers.

A panoramic view of the incredibly picturesque grounds



Sunday involved more of the excellent agility we experienced on Saturday - with quite a few tired dogs and people at the end of it. I didn't hear any negative comments during the show, but did hear a lot of people talking about how much of a good time they were having. Kelly and I had an awesome time, and it was well worth the trip from Auckland!

On behalf of all the competitors I would like to thank the following:

- Sponsors – K9 Natural, d-fa, Allprint, Yealands, Radio Wanaka, Dynamic Eyewear, wYes Photo & Digital, On Paws, Hamill's Sports Shop, Justice Kennels, Rosie's World Famous Chocolate Brownies, Sarah Wisson Osteopathy, Wanaka Veterinary Centre, McGreggors, Wanaka Medical Centre and Quality Presentations.
- Judges – Libby Ellery, Kirstin Graves, Carole Logan, Joanne Rennell, David Cook, Heather Drewitt, Irene Lock, Paul Taylor, Paul Remon, Graeme Lawson, Sallie Remon, Roy Thorndycraft and Nic Furby.
- Special helpers working hard all weekend (the ones that I saw) – Kate Butler, Quenton Johnston, Wayne Grant, Sheryl Vincent and Lewis Gearing
- And of course the organisers – thanks for some fun times and great memories Louise, Michelle and Karen!!

We are all looking forward to the equivalent show next year – Louise has hung up her organiser's hat, but I believe that Phil Johnson and the boys may have picked it up??? There has been talk of Hamner Springs and Kaikoura, but wherever it is, I am sure it will be well worth the trip!



Tim carrying Radar into the water



Charlie showing how the jumping should be done



Karisma jumping with the incredible backdrop view of the lake



One of the Highlanders running Troy and not keeping up



Paul in the Pond



Anne Godfrey and Radler

Photos - Kelly Daniel

Judges Profile...

Carl Ranford

I first became involved in dog training at the age of 18 when I joined Hawera Dog Training Association in 1995. I began with obedience and moved on to agility where I fell in love. I started competing with my Fox Terrier and gained ADX, later on I obtained my border collie, Kohi.

I first applied to be a Judge around 2000, not long after passing the exam my foxy unexpectedly passed away and with various reasons, I fell away from the sport around 2002.

In 2006 I was ready to come back... "Well I felt I had never left" A few things had changed in the few years I had been gone, but the basics was the same, having fun with your dog! Also it was great to see the rise in popularity and good to see a few familiar faces around the place. In 2008 I decided become a judge again, this time completing what I started all those years ago.

I am engaged to my partner Catherine and we have a beautiful baby daughter, Kyra. Between us we have 5 dogs. I work in sales and also run my own computer repair and support business. Also in my spare time I am a Poker tournament director and like to play when I can.

I am currently competing in Novice and Starters with my young border Khan, having recently retired Kohi and I am training Civo our new heading dog pup.

I love working with dogs, Instructing, training and competing. It's all good fun and I find judging very rewarding. I enjoy watching great team work both dog and handler alike. Above all safety on the course is my first priority. I like a course to flow but to be a challenge suitable for the level at the same time. I often joke with competitors... "You can only walk the course once!"

