



# KiwiDogAgility

## WAG CELEBRATES 21 YEARS

Waikato Agility Group (WAG) was one of the first clubs in New Zealand dedicated solely to agility. Operating in Hamilton, the club started in 1993 from small beginnings with trainings being conducted with borrowed gear and has grown into one of the more well-known clubs in the country. The first competition was held in 1994, and so it was an honour to be the event manager for the club's 21st anniversary event this year, held recently in Hamilton.

As with any milestone event, a large amount of planning went into the weekend in the weeks and months leading up to it. As well as the usual offering of prizes, the club had special commemorative prizes to give out to winners and place getters over the weekend and we created a Facebook page and encourage people to share their memories of shows gone by. The club has a rich history with a multitude of champion dogs being trained at the club. Being based in such a central part of the North Island, WAG attracts large entries to our events. We do, however, have the unfortunate distinction of having two of the wettest and rainiest events in recent history – including the cancellation halfway through of a jumpers show in April 2013, as well as similar flash-flood like conditions earlier in

2015. However, the weather for the anniversary event seemed to be playing its part and other than a few spots of rain, the event was conducted in dry if not sunny conditions.

To celebrate the event, WAG literally went to the ends of the earth to find judges, with Joanne Rennell from Invercargill and Sallie Remon from Dunedin flying up to join us. We were also lucky to have Martin Bush from Ohope and Justine Dale judge at what was her first championship event for WAG. In order to try and get better weather, the event was moved a little further back in the year and this put it in much closer proximity to the NZ Dog Agility Championships. This saw a spike in entries and we closed in on nearly 200 entries in some classes. WAG has a well-earned reputation of running efficient shows and we would be tested in this area to get through so many entries. Luckily we have a great team who all pulled together to keep things running smoothly. As an event manager, I always know how well things are running by the frequency that I hear people calling my name to come and sort out a problem. I proved to be fairly unpopular over the weekend, which was a great indication that everything was running well. Out on the course, there were a number of very successful competitors over the weekend that seemed unwilling to share the wealth by winning multiple events over the weekend. Chelsea Marriner, Dyson Beasley, Graeme Jefferies and WAG's own Karen Botting had multiple wins, often with more than one dog and Hayley Rhode gained her last challenge to make Charm up to an Agility Champion, with the customary buckets (and additional ice cream plonked on her head) to celebrate. But the weekend really belonged to our very own Caitlin Frater. WAG



was very proud of her achievements as she took out every top dog trophy on offer to her with her mini Poodle Geuse. If this wasn't impressive enough, Caitlin also stepped in for an injured Fiona Ferrar, running her dogs on Sunday and placing with all of them too. The club gave away commemorative wine glasses and dog leads to winners and I think after all her success, Caitlin may be able to



start her own dog walking company, or bar, with all her winnings.

It was great to talk to people over the course of the weekend about their memories of WAG, our club members and events in days gone by. It doesn't seem that long ago we were celebrating our 10th anniversary and I'm sure before we know it, we will be



getting ready for a 30th celebration too! The weekend was a great reminder to me that whilst competition will always be intense, the social side of our sport is just as important. I look forward to many more years of welcoming competitors back to WAG to create more history.

