

AGILITY ON WHEELS QUESTIONNAIRE

Your Name _____
Mailing Address _____ Town _____
State _____ Zip _____ Country _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Url: _____

DOGS:

How did you discover the sport of agility?

Did you have your “agility dog” prior to discovering agility?

How many dogs do you have? _____ Do all do agility? _____
Is any one of your dogs both an agility and a service dog?

Which came first, your dog’s agility or service dog training?

Are you considering getting another dog with whom you would only do agility? Would you choose a different breed (from that of your service dog) to become your agility-only dog?

CROSS TRAINING: AGILITY AND SERVICE WORK

If you had to choose between your dog giving you a great performance as an agility dog, or as a service dog, which would you choose? Why?

If agility training seemed to be interfering with your dog's service dog behavior, would you quit doing agility with that dog? (Agility tends to bring out a dog's prey drive, which can be problematic for some service dogs).

YOUR PHYSICAL CHALLENGES:

Did your awareness of and/or participation in agility predate your being limited by physical challenges?

Please describe whatever you feel comfortable sharing about the nature, extent, and limitations imposed by the physical challenges you experience.

Do you use a manual wheelchair, power wheelchair, or a scooter, a cane, crutches, or other mobility aide while training and or competing in agility?

Do you find the mobility aide you use sufficient?

If you could change it, or trade it for another, what would you choose and why?

How physically independent are you?

How do you handle setting up at trials, transporting gear to hotel rooms, etc.?

Do you depend on a single or group of travel buddies? What ways have you found to get the help you need if you travel alone?

Have you found specific trial gear that assures you the greatest possible independence? Please be specific about the type of tent you use, crates, how do you move your gear from car to tent, etc.

How have changes in mobility aides, e.g. upgrading from one power chair to another changed how you train or handle your dog(s)?

PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDES

Has anyone (mentor, teacher, fellow competitor) inspired or encouraged you to pursue your interest in agility?

Have teachers, agility enthusiasts, family members or others, discouraged you from participating in the sport? If so, how have you responded?

If you have an invisible disability (fibromyalgia, arthritis, heart condition, asthma, etc) have you chosen to make your disability known to your fellow agility club members, teachers, or trial organizers?

How do you respond to comments from fellow exhibitors such as “you need to move faster, to speed up your dog”; “you should volunteer more”; “you can’t have special parking privileges” etc.?

CLASSES AND SEMINARS:

Have you found seminars and/or classes that have worked for you?

Were the seminar instructors willing to adapt their ideas and techniques to accommodate your physical limitations?

Did you feel comfortable asking them to consider how their ideas might or might not work for you?

Did you find “able” handlers resentful of the additional time or additional attention such adaptations to your needs might have required within a class or seminar group?

Are there instructors or seminar presenters you would specifically recommend for handlers with physical challenges? Please say why.

SAFETY AND LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES ON COURSES AT COMPETITIONS:

As a competitor, have you encountered course layouts that were either dangerous or physically impossible for you to execute because of your physical limitations (ex. Jumps too close together for a chair to pass between them; angle of the high end of the teeter relative to the neighboring obstacle posing a collision risk)?

How have you handled the above situations? Did you approach the judge? Was s/he willing to make adjustments to the course?

SPECIFIC AND SPECIALIZED HANDLING TECHNIQUES:

Are you able to do effective front crosses, and other handling maneuvers that require nimble footwork? If not, what do you do instead?

How have you trained your dog(s) to compensate for your general physical slowness on course?

How have you trained your dog(s) to compensate for your inability to turn quickly in front of the dog?

Do your dogs do running contacts, two on two off, other styles?
Please describe their competition performance and how you trained for it.

Do you use contact obstacles as a place to “catch up with” your dog?

Do you train primarily in classes or at home on your own equipment?

Do you have a “training partner” who has helped you safely train basic obstacle performance? If not, how have you accomplished this alone?

Do you train for “independent obstacle performance”, if so, please describe.

Are you able to leave your dog for a lead out at the start line?
By how many obstacles can you confidently lead out?

Can you send your dog ahead of you to complete a series of jumps or other obstacles on his/her own? If so, how many obstacles will s/he do before turning back to look for you?

If you are unable to keep pace with your dog on a course, how have you trained your dog to maximize his/her speed?

Have you ever created “speed circles” for your dog to do in training sessions? What other specific techniques do you use to build drive and speed?

Have you trained your dog to turn left and right on cue? Do you use these cues on a competition course?

What other directional signals does your dog know (such as: wrap behind you, come in close, go out in a straight line, go around a jump, etc) do you use those directional cues when handling in competition?

WALKING COURSES, PLANNING HANDLING STRATEGIES, CONSERVING ENERGY :

What are your strategies for “walking courses”? Please describe these in detail, including such issues as having to limit the number of times you can walk the full course to conserve your own physical energy or the batteries in your chair or scooter.

How do fatigue, brain fog caused by pain, or other physical factors affect memorization of courses and how do you compensate?

Do you volunteer at trials? How do you balance the pressure to volunteer with the need to care for your dogs and yourself? Does volunteering at trials interfere with a need to conserve your energy in order to feel well enough to compete?

Please feel free to add any information about you and your dogs and your participation in agility that you think might be relevant to this project. Thank you very much for being willing to take the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Please indicate here if you are willing to be quoted and have your information included in this book/video project. Yes_____ NO_____.

In addition, please sign and mail or fax the attached release to Barbara Handelman, 24 Bullock Road, Norwich, Vermont, 05055. Phone 802 649-5213, Fax 802 6495240.