



2017 NEW ZEALAND
DOG AGILITY
CHAMPS
TE AWAMUTU | 20 - 23 OCTOBER | KIHIKIHI DOMAIN



“It always seems impossible until it’s done” – Nelson Mandela



Kihikihi Domain played host to the Black Hawk NZ Dog Agility Champs 2017 over Labour Weekend. Wikipedia very unkindly refers to Kihikihi as a “human settlement” as opposed to a town; but plenty of humans and canines alike settled there for the event in record numbers – almost 400 human competitors entered nearly 700 dogs and competed in well over 5,000 individual runs at the event. Like any NZDAC, competitors travelled from almost every corner of the country to take part in the premier agility event of the year. All of this led to the 2017 NZDAC being the largest ever agility event held in New Zealand.

As the only major national event to take place outdoors, the weather forecast was carefully watched by competitors and the Waikato ended up serving a bit of everything – from blistering heat on Friday, to wind that took up the odd gazebo on Saturday to a decent dumping of rain on Monday. Luckily the main arena is a sand-underlaid polo field which provided a soft running surface but also drains well to prevent muddy tracks. Competitors commented to me all weekend about how impressive the venue was in general – from

the competition surface to the expansive paddocks for exercising dogs. I had seen the potential of the venue for some time, and it more than lived up to it over Labour Weekend.

Like any large event, my team and I had plenty of sleepless night and worrying moments, but these all paid off as the event went off





without a hitch. The opening quote may seem a tad melodramatic, but at times it did feel like we were trying to pull off the impossible – nine competition rings, 133 campsites and classes in excess of 300 entries made for some logistical challenges but the team came through in fantastic style. I want to say a big thank you to my team of Rosemarie, Bevan, Janette, Laura and Debbie for all the work they have put into this over many months. Also a massive thank you to all the clubs and volunteers who gave up so much time to help make the event a success.

And to the competition itself. It's would be fair to say that there was an incredibly high calibre on display. With so much going on, it was impossible to take everything in, but some of the highlights for me included:

- The amazing sponsorship from Black Hawk. We were incredibly fortunate to receive this level of support and competitors clearly loved the product (my dogs particularly recommend the kangaroo!)
- The huge work of our Judges who set up some fantastic courses and judged some long hours. Senior and Jumpers A tipped over 200 dogs which made for long stints out in the middle of the ring but our judges all did an awesome job.
- The strength of our Junior handlers that was on display. This included running our Junior Dog Training Handler of the Year finals as part of our premier events on Friday. Chelsea Marriner won both the agility and jumpers Champion of Champion classes. And the average age of our handlers of the four top dogs must have been around 22! Congratulations to Fiona and Carly, Caitlin and Guese, Jessica and Rapid and Erin and Mist.
- Saturday morning when six rings were running simultaneously for our first set of agility classes. A lot of planning had gone into making this happen but actually seeing it in action was quite something!
- The Interzone team event. Having both competed and judged in it, I can say the pressure of managing it and ensuring the rules and procedures were followed correctly was by far the most





nerve wracking of all! It was great to have an up-close view of the event, and I could empathise with some of the nervous faces I saw before it started! Congratulations to Zone 4 on a comprehensive victory.

- Social events on Saturday and Sunday night. Its always great to see competitors relax and enjoy the social aspect of NZDAC – the Kiwiana themed party was a lot of fun, and some great costumes were on display too.
- The very high standard in all our finals events. Just making a final is a huge achievement, so my hat is off to all those who push through the nerves and perform so well when the pressure is on and everyone is watching. Special mention to Aaron and Sonic who won both the A Jumpers and Senior finals – an impressive achievement indeed.
- The generally positive attitude of competitors. With many members of the public turning out to watch, competitors put their best foot (and paw) forward and showed the very best of agility and Dogs NZ.

I am sure all our competitors have their own memorable moments, and I hope you all enjoyed the event.

Nick Chester – Event Manager

Top left: Senior Overall Winner – Aaron Gaitau & Sonic

Top left: Intermediate Overall Winner – Rochelle Jager & Zeke

Novice Overall Winner – Chelsea Marriner & Dirt



Photos by Emily Taylor Photography, Hayley Rohde and Caitlin Frater



Senior Final Winners



Jumpers A Final Winners



Intermediate Final Winners



Jumpers B Final Winners



Novice Final Winners



Jumpers C Final Winners



Starters Final Winners





Thanks

The Agility Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Zone 1 NZDAC Committee for their hard work that resulted in one amazing show this year. It is a sign of a dedicated crew that the show seemed to run so effortlessly and everyone had a great time. The efforts of Nick Chester and his crew made the show into what it was meant to be – the premier Agility event in our Calendar and raises the bar for every NZDAC committee to follow.

Thanks also goes to our three amazing photographers – Emily Taylor, Hayley Rohde and Caitlin Frater – they were running multiple dogs and managed to get photos of almost all the action of nine rings over the four days.



Christmas and New Year Holidays

The last day of business at the Dogs New Zealand Office will be:

Wednesday 20th December 2017

The office will re-open:

Monday 8th January 2018

**Dogs New Zealand
wishes all its members a
safe and Happy Holiday**