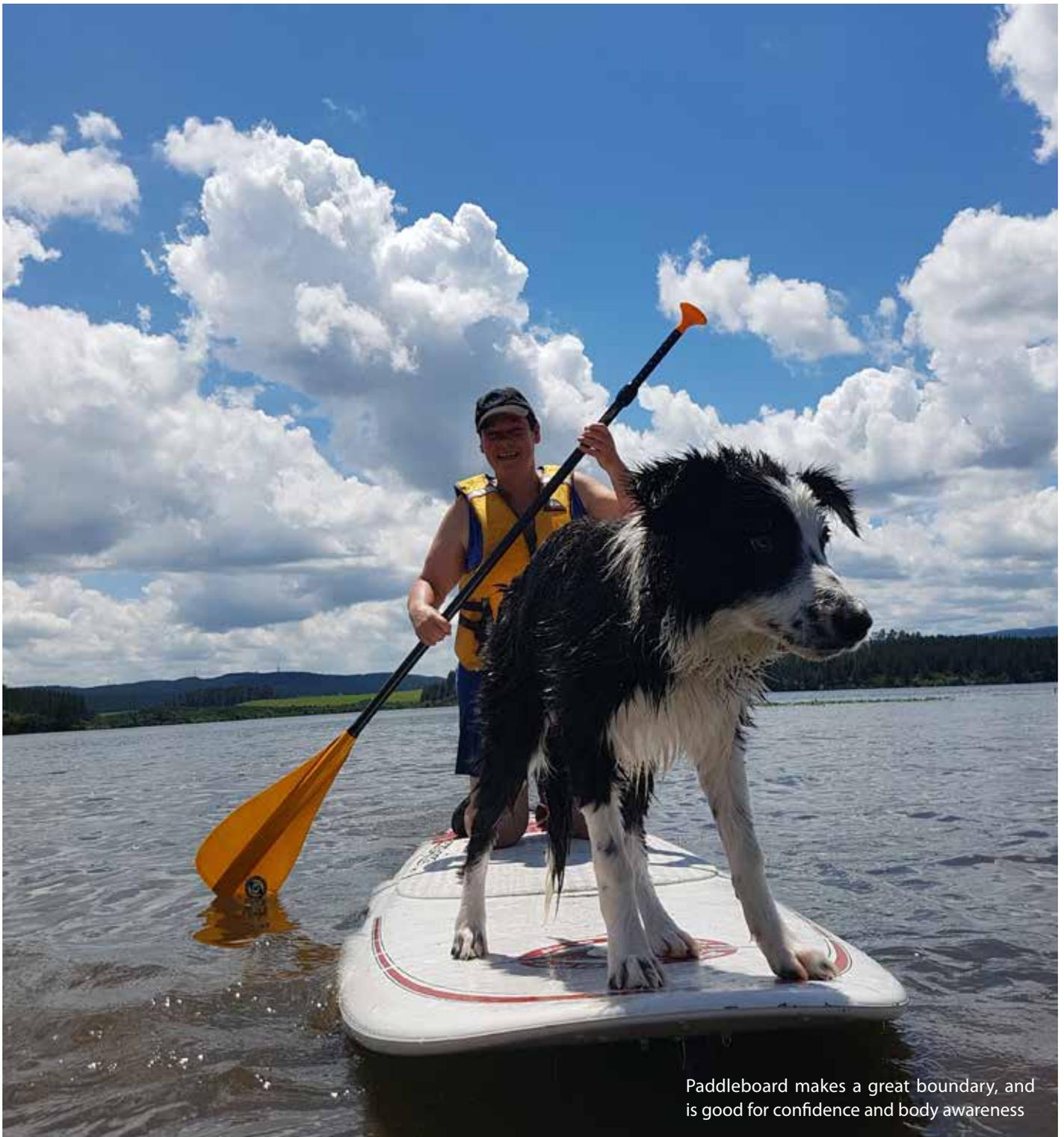


Agility

Importance of good Foundation Tricks and Boundaries

by Fiona Ferrar



Paddleboard makes a great boundary, and is good for confidence and body awareness

Loki had a huge amount of socialisation at an early age while with Donna Tofts, and also with me over the first few months. I would normally attend a lot of shows, but didn't go to any between NZDAC in October, and Tokoroa in January, so Loki had not experienced the intensity of a large show for a while. He had been out and about, particularly at rivers and lakes so had been around people, children and dogs. I was a bit surprised when I got to Tokoroa show in January to find him a bit worried about the people and particularly the small dogs. But I was very pleased that he was not so worried that he couldn't work through his little repertoire of training tricks for a toy or food. Over the weekend he had several training sessions in different areas and was less and less worried about things around him. At prize giving on the Sunday, he was very relaxed.



Rubbish bins also make great boundaries

The tricks that we were doing were: sit, down, stand, bow, left, right, beep beep (backing up), and also positions and releases after beep beep. So, these are standard things that he has been doing from a young age, and pretty much my default if he is looking active, and I can't think of anything else to do with him. Having some really ingrained trained tools was so wonderful in helping him overcome this slight fear issue as well as him being both food and toy motivated, and happy to ignore anything else around him so he could get some training time with me.

I had a weekend off, and then went to Taupo show where I thought he was just a little angel! He was very confident in a fairly close environment, happy to watch dogs doing agility without being overly excited by it and was very good at his little training tricks.

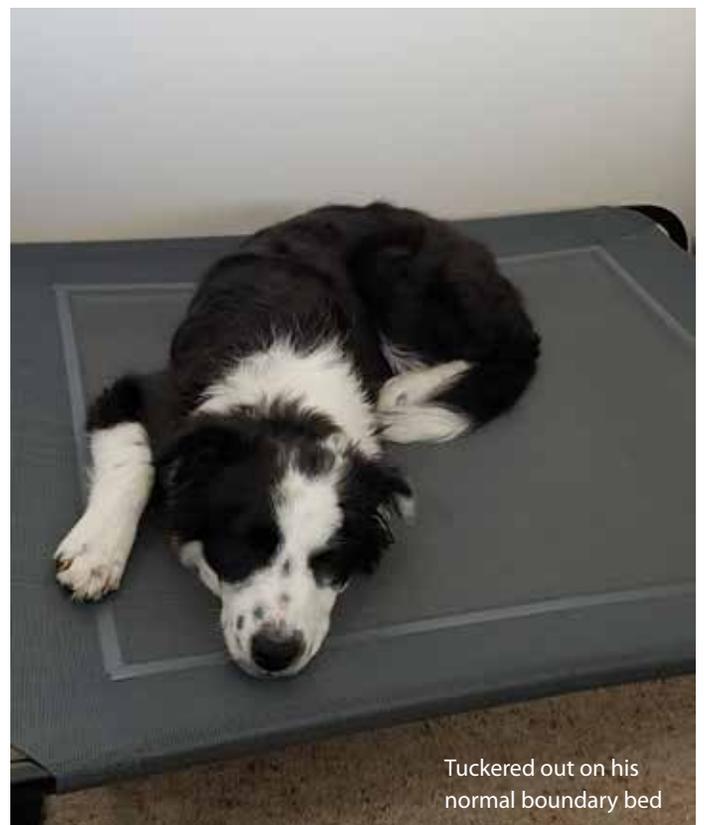
I am looking after his brother Joss for a while and have had him at both of these shows as well. Joss has been rather excited at the shows, and much more so than when he last went to a show with his owner. He was not great on lead around the rings, but as soon as I went into training mode with his default tricks he was fine. On Sunday I took a dog bed to the show and used that as a boundary. It worked really well with Joss as he was much less focussed on dogs in the ring – again, he has had so much reinforcement for

good behaviours on the bed that it was easy for him to revert to training mode.

I have always said that great foundation is so very very important, and I spend a lot of time in early months ensuring that my dogs are both food and toy motivated and consider training to be the most fun times of their lives. I haven't really experienced a pup being a bit nervous like Loki was, but this experience truly showed me how important the foundation was just for every day life. I was talking about this to someone who asked me if I was worried about it. My answer was that I needed a kick up the backside for not recognising that I had an issue earlier, and that it was just something that I needed to work through.

In October last year I attended a seminar with Lauren Langman which was great, and I took away a lot of tips. The most useful one for me was "magic hands". I use this a bit differently to what Lauren suggested, so don't just reward when dog is in heel position but throw the food and expect the dog to catch it, which I had never done before. They need to concentrate on where the food is coming from to be able to catch it, and it is another very useful tool to use at shows to get dogs to worry less about what is around them. Of course you need to do this in less stressful environments first so they get keen to catch the food, and understand the game. I used to have an issue with my multiple dogs sprinting away when released from control positions, or when they are going to the back of my property. Armed with "magic hands" now, I rarely have any issues as they are all hanging around waiting for their turn to catch the food. And of course they are not always successful, so it takes time for them to find the food in the grass.

So Loki is now eight months old – puppies just grow so quickly! We have done a few training sessions on tunnels, but they are pretty irregular, and I am just concentrating on him having a good tunnel send on a verbal. I have been doing quite a lot of flatwork for jumping with recalls to heel from a stationary position as this is another default training thing that I can do quickly and easily. Loki has a really good recall, and this is something I reward often. I pretty much always have some food in a pocket so I can reward good things when I see them, though that is a pain having to empty them out when I compete.



Tuckered out on his normal boundary bed



Agility Certificate of Appreciation

by Chris Richardson (Dogs NZ Agility Committee)

As you all know, volunteers are a very important part of our sport, and a few years back the Agility Committee started up a volunteer award initiative to thank those members of the agility community who put countless hours of their own time into our sport.

Last year, Canterbury Canine Agility Training Society (CCATS) put forward a nomination for a person that they thought deserved some recognition for all the work they put in so I think it's quite fitting that I got to present this award at this show.

On behalf of the Dogs New Zealand Agility Committee, it was my absolute pleasure to present this year's volunteer award to a very deserving Dot Mote.

Dot does so much for CCATS and also for agility as a whole.

Every year Dot and her family make and donate zillions of cheese rolls to Waimak and Cats to help raise money at their shows.

Dot helps run a kid's training class at club and is there at every show helping to set up rings.

One of Dot's biggest talents is the ability to sit in a little tent all day long, putting up with Judges like me flapping my arms about the place and being able to decipher what I'm going on about.

Not only does she scribe at a lot of the shows while her family attend around this area, she has scribed at most of the DAC's in the last few years, including in the North Island.

And just in case she doesn't already sound like Wonder Woman, while doing this, she is still able to achieve possibly the biggest



task of all, and that is keeping Helen, Ian, the two kids and all those crazy dogs under control.

Dot is a true marvel, and we would like to say a HUGE thank you to you Dot for everything you have done, still do, and I am sure will continue to do for many years to come.