

From the Chair

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2023 which is also my inaugural one after commencing as the chair for the new committee.

I am honoured to be the face of AC9, and I am supported by great people who have the common interest of progressing agility into the future.

Since our first meeting we have conducted a club survey to understand areas where clubs are excelling and what they find challenging and we have planned considerable investment into the areas of clubs and judges.

Planning is well underway to hold the first agility club conference which will be packed with great information for clubs to support and grow agility and look after their members. Information has been sent out to your committee contacts so please get your club involved.

Also, we are supporting our judges to attend online or in-person seminars to enhance their course design skills, with the main emphasis on safe course design and understanding how dogs negotiate challenges.

Paul Taylor
Agility Committee Chairperson

In This Newsletter:

- Survey of Agility Clubs
- Inaugural Agility Clubs' Conference
- Judges' Training



Survey of Agility Clubs

The 43 clubs who are Registered Agility Societies were recently invited to take part in a survey about club membership, training and shows. At the time of writing, we have received 32 responses (the survey is still accepting responses). A detailed report of the 32 responses received to date can be found [here](#).

The first questions were demographic, asking about club structure, membership numbers, the types of training on offer and how many shows clubs run. The survey then asked a series of open questions about what challenges clubs face, areas they think they excel at and what initiatives (if any) they had put in place to attract more competitors to their shows, attract more people to their training classes and encourage people to continue training with the club after their initial training.

Training and people issues were mentioned most often in the questions we asked about challenges.

The responses to the questions relating to what clubs think they excel in and the initiatives they have put in place were many and varied and it was great to see so much positivity.

The survey has provided a great snapshot of where clubs are at and has clarified what areas clubs are struggling with and where more support is needed.

Agility Clubs' Conference

The Agility Committee are excited to announce the inaugural Agility Clubs Conference. To be held at the Dogs NZ Exhibition Centre in Auckland over the weekend of 19/20 August, the Conference will be a weekend of informative and interactive sessions designed to help agility clubs thrive.

The Agility Committee is investing in the Conference because we believe that clubs are the life-blood of our sport, and we are committed to supporting their growth and success. We are looking forward to welcoming representatives from all 43 Agility clubs to the Conference, where we will have the opportunity to share ideas, best practices, and insights with one another. We believe that this event will be a fantastic opportunity to strengthen our community and to collaborate on ways to continue advancing our sport.

Planning is well underway, delegate registrations are rolling in, and we are putting together a busy and exciting programme of presentations and workshops for the two days:

Saturday will focus on club training and membership including topics such as puppy/domestic/foundation training, senior handler training, training the trainers, using social media for club promotion and communication, and attracting and retaining members.

We will also have presentations from Miranda Stevens from Purina Pro Plan on Pro Plan's support of Dogs NZ and the Take the Lead programme, and a talk from Rhea Hurley, Dogs NZ Canine Health and Welfare Officer, on Canine Health and Welfare from an Agility perspective. Dogs NZ Director/Secretary Steven Thompson and members of the Executive Council will also be in attendance.

Sunday will focus on shows, with presentations and discussions on various aspects of show management, looking after judges and the Dogs on Report process.

The weekend will include workshops and discussion sessions where delegates can share their ideas and experiences. Each delegate will receive resources and notes to take back to their club.

Judges' Training

The Agility Committee has recently sent an offer to all judges on the Trainee, Ribbon Trial, Agility and Senior panels for subsidised training with international judges and educators Jan Egil Eide and Petr Pupik. Judges can choose to attend in person training with Jan when he visits NZ in September, or online training with both Jan and Petr.

The training will focus on safe course design and understanding dogs' lines to create a course that is fun, safe, and challenging.

Jan is a professional trainer, educator, and an international FCI judge with over two decades of experience. He has travelled far and wide to teach dog agility and judge competitions.

He enjoys an active role within the agility community contributing in a multitude of ways by teaching workshops and seminars, judging, course design, organising competitions and competing and is member of the Agility Committee in the Norwegian Kennel Club.

[Read an interview with Jan here.](#)

Jan is passionate about designing creative, open, flowing courses that prioritize safety for dogs and handlers while offering an enjoyable and challenging experience for teams to run.



Jan Egil Eide



Petr Pupik

Petr lives in a small village in the Czech Republic. Like Jan, Petr is an international FCI judge who has judged and taught around the world. As a judge he likes designing fast fluent courses with technical parts, on which you can see a real connection between handlers and their dogs. Besides Agility he also likes math and geometry.

[Listen to an interview with Petr here.](#)

Have you checked your details on the website recently?

Go to <http://www.dogagility.org.nz/> choose **My Profile** from the menu and check and update your details.