

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE AKC...



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™

Press Release

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AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB ANNOUNCES TULSA, OKLAHOMA WILL HOST 2008 NATIONAL AGILITY CHAMPIONSHIPS

--Three Day Competition Slated For Newly Renovated Facilities at Expo Square --

New York, NY— Today the American Kennel Club® announced that the National Agility Championship will be held at Ford Truck and Mustang arenas in Tulsa, Oklahoma on March 28-30, 2008. This is the second time the state will host the AKC® National Agility Championship, which will feature teams competing for top titles in the AKC's fastest growing canine sport.

The Ford and Mustang arenas are located adjacent to one another in the Built Ford Tough Livestock Complex, and will be able to accommodate up to five agility rings. The 13th annual AKC National Agility Championships will award six National Agility Championship titles to dogs in the 8", 12", 16", 20", 24" and 26" jump height categories.

Agility allows dogs and handlers to demonstrate their agile nature and versatility by overcoming a challenging course of obstacles, such as weave poles, tunnels, jumps and seesaws. Teams who have earned at least 6 double qualifying scores and 400 speed points will be eligible to compete in the national championship.

"We are thrilled to be holding the nationals at the Ford and Mustang arenas in Tulsa. With over 1,000 teams likely to compete, these venues will be ideal for competitors as well as spectators," said Sharon Anderson, AKC Agility Director. "We look forward to working with all agility enthusiasts in the state of Oklahoma who will help us put on a top notch event."

For more information about the 2008 AKC National Agility Championship, visit:
http://www.akc.org/events/agility/national_agility_championship/index.cfm

The American Kennel Club, founded in 1884, is a not-for-profit organization which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world and oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its nearly 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. More than 20,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred dogs are held under AKC rules and regulations each year including conformation, agility, obedience, rally, tracking, herding, lure coursing, coonhound events, hunt tests, field and earthdog tests. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Companion Animal Recovery and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit www.akc.org.



Healthwise

MONITORING EARS FOR INFECTION IS GOOD PREVENTIVE MEASURE

Owners who take time to regularly check their dogs' ears for signs of infection or inflammation are likely to catch an ear problem before it can develop into a more serious condition. Ear problems account for an estimated 6 percent to 20 percent of canine veterinary visits.

Some breeds are more susceptible to ear problems because their long ears can trap moisture and harbor yeast, bacteria or parasites. Others have upright ears that allow good air circulation, making them less vulnerable to ear problems. Yet all dogs can have ear infections related to underlying health problems, such as food allergies or hypothyroidism.



Bella

Signs of Ear Infection

Experts recommend checking the condition of a dog's ears weekly for signs of an ear infection, which include:

- Unpleasant odor;
- Scratching of the head or ears;
- Head shaking;
- Moaning in pain;
- Ears that are warm, swollen and red;
- Discharge that is black or yellow;
- Excess of dark brown wax or bleeding;
- Resistance to being touched on the head;
- Head tilting to one side; and
- Lethargy, depression or irritability.

Canine ear infections can start with water in the ears from swimming or bathing. Dogs that go swimming in the summer should always be checked for ear infections, especially when they have been exposed to water from a lake or pond. Mites, foreign objects such as foxtail grass, tumors, or polyps also can trigger infections, as can aller-

gies, autoimmune disease or endocrine system conditions such as thyroid disease. Of these, allergies are the most common cause.

Dogs can be allergic to the same things as humans: trees, grass, house dust mites, weeds, flea saliva, foods and even other pets. An accurate diagnosis and treatment of the underlying condition is necessary as well as treating the ear infection. An owner should take a dog with signs of an ear infection to the veterinarian for proper diagnosis and treatment.

Red, swollen ears are the first signs of a dog with an ear infection. A dog's ear canal is lined with skin. When it becomes inflamed due to infection or inflammation, the canal reddens and swells due to increased blood flow. The swelling narrows the canal, reducing the ability of fluid and air to move through as it normally would. As a result, bacteria and yeast lie in the ear canal, causing an infection. The ear canal returns to normal after the primary condition is resolved.

Veterinarians typically diagnose an ear infection by evaluating an ear smear under the microscope, which might reveal an abnormal number of certain bacteria or yeast or an abnormal number of white blood cells or other cell types, or taking a culture of fluid from the ear. If an infection is diagnosed, owners must clean the dog's ear, using a veterinarian-recommended ear-cleaning solution, and treat with medication for the length of time prescribed by the veterinarian.

Some cases may require a deep ear flush under anesthesia. If the inflammation is severe, a veterinarian also may prescribe oral antibiotics and steroids to help reduce swelling. Most patients will need to be rechecked by the veterinarian who will look into the ear with an otoscope to ensure that the infection has resolved.

Preventive Measures

To help prevent inflammation and ear infections, owners should check their dogs' ears weekly. Ear cleaning helps

to remove wax and debris that could obstruct the ear canal. It also helps to remove small foreign material and toxins that if left in the ear could damage cells and cause infection and inflammation.

Owners should clean ears by filling the ear well with a cleaning solution. Place a paper towel under the ear to catch any spillage, and gently massage the solution into the ear, working it down the side of the head into the ear canal holding the earflap away from the dog. Visible parts of the ear can be wiped gently with cotton, but one should never probe deeper into the ear. Never use a cotton swab or other probing instrument. Be sure solution does not run into the dog's eyes because cleaners contain detergents that could damage the cornea. If solution gets in the dog's eyes, flush them with water. Ears should be cleaned no more than once every 48 hours.

Dogs with a tendency for wax buildup may require a special cleaning solution to help break down the wax. Normal canine earwax is a yellow-brown glistening material found in the external ear canal. If there is wax but no odor or redness, owners can clean the ears using an ear cleaner recommended by the veterinarian.

Veterinarians generally do not recommend using hydrogen peroxide for cleaning dogs' ears. Hydrogen peroxide breaks down into water and oxygen and typically leaves water behind. Avoid harsh concentrations of white vinegar or isopropyl alcohol in the ear. As some medications and ear cleaners can cause deafness, especially if the eardrum has been punctured, it is important to check labels and read instructions and to consult with your veterinarian.

Ultimately, preventing ear infections require careful monitoring to be sure the ear is healthy. A healthy ear should be dry and pink inside the ear canal. It also should be soft, pliable and cool to the touch, but with no odor. A dog with healthy ears feels well and will allow petting and stroking on the head.