

DOG TRACKS

2023
Back to Training



The Year of the Rabbit

Presidents Report

Hi Everyone and welcome to our 2023 training year. I hope that everyone has had a great break and are looking forward to returning to training this week. I am hoping that the weather gods are much better to us this year and we get to do lots of training without the aid of gumboots and floaties. I will be keeping my fingers and toes crossed for that.

I would particularly like to welcome back our hard-working ground staff and instructors. I hope you have all had a good break over the summer and are rejuvenated and rearing to pass on all your knowledge and skills to our new members who will be joining us this year.

There are a few changes to our training this year.

1. Firstly, just a quick reminder that Thursday Obedience will not recommence until mid-March 2023.
2. Secondly, from February 9th , Flyball training will only be held on a Thursday night between 6pm & 8pm.
3. There will also be some training times changes to Saturday Agility from March, so please keep an eye out for those changes. Calendar will be updated shortly.

Pre-registration will continue for Agility this year. The link will be found on the front page of the website. You will not receive a class confirmation email, so please, if you have registered, then you are good to attend. Emails will still go out for the first week of New Beginners Agility (to confirm class positions and wait list), along with the Obedience Introduction Classes. Links for these classes will be emailed directly to new members to Register.

That should be it for important information about training this year. All this information can be found on the website www.manlydogclub.com.au

On a final note, if you have some spare time and would like to help out at the club and you think you have some skills that we could use, then please let us know. We are always needing that extra helping hand across all aspects of the club.

Here is to a wonderful 2023 and lots of fun at training with your furry friends.
Enjoy!!!!

Cheers

Jo Comber, Gus, Moose, Caddy and the fast growing Lyric.



Why the MDKDTC does not permit the use of choke/check chains/collars and slip leads



In the past check chains were the collar of choice for dog training, for many dog clubs including MDKDTC it was the only collar permitted. However, research has shown that check chains/collars and slip leads can cause several physical and emotional problems for dogs.

Many myths have been perpetuated about check chains and their use.

1. **Myth:** Sometimes the choke chain is referred to as a "check" chain. There is no difference between a choke chain and a check chain or a slip lead. Handlers who use choke chains often refer to them as check chains - possibly referring to the action used by the handler to "check" the dog.

Myth: "A choke chain is fine, in the hands of experienced handlers" Wrong! Choke chains always choke and they are responsible for a number of medical conditions including:

- *Injured ocular blood vessels
- Tracheal and oesophageal damage
- Severely sprained necks
- Cases of fainting
- Transient foreleg paralysis
- Laryngeal nerve paralysis
- Hind leg ataxia



Myth: "Choke chains prevent dogs pulling" Nothing could be further from the truth. Dogs pull on choke chains because they haven't been trained not to pull.

Myth "The dog learns not to pull because he hears the warning "chink" of the chain before it is jerked."

The dog learns how to avoid pain - it's as simple as that. And do we really want to train dogs using pain and fear, not to mention the high probability of injury? Fearful dogs are unreliable and training through fear and pain does nothing to help the dog/handler bond."

2. The reason why the experts are so weary of collars is that when dogs pull, they can cause a lot of damage. **The neck and cervical spine are one of the most important "energy channels" in the body.** It contains the spinal cord for supply to the whole body, is where the front leg nerves originate from and it is the energy channel where the nerves controlling the internal organ function pass through. The thyroid gland that regulates the whole body metabolism is also located in the neck.

If the flow of energy in the neck is interrupted or restricted, a whole array of problems may arise including lameness, skin issues, allergies, lung and heart problems, digestive issues, ear and eye conditions, thyroid gland dysfunctions to name a few. It has also been suggested that the patients that have severe energy flow congestion in the neck area have a higher cancer rate."

What to use instead?

Harnesses are the preferred choice. Harnesses that have the leash attached at the front of the chest are the best solution because they distribute the pressure of tugs and jerks throughout the whole body and keep the neck and throat free.

Many harnesses on the market have the leash attached on the back and pulling still restricts the front portion of the neck thereby pressing on veins, arteries, nerves and energy channels.

When you choose the right harness, make sure that your dog's harness is the right fit. Use the harness only when leash walking and take it off when your dog is off leash. Ensure that the harness is not pressing or rubbing anywhere and that it is washed regularly.

Martingale collars can also be used, but only when fitted correctly. They will not choke your dog, however if the dog is a real "puller" it can still cause damage to the neck and throat.

Where can you buy the correct equipment?

The club has a small selection of harnesses for sale at the ground, however a greater selection of harnesses are available at any of the larger pet stores.



References:

¹ Debbie Berriman - Professional Dog Trainer and Behaviourist

² Dr. Peter Dobias (Vet) – Natural Healing for Dogs

² "Here are a few examples cited from Dr Peter Dobias to help you understand how important the health and alignment of the neck is to the general health of your dog.

Hypothyroidism (low thyroid gland hormone) may be related to collar related injuries.

For the longest time Dr Dubois was puzzled about the high rates of thyroid issues in breeds that frequently pull on the leash, such as Labrador Retrievers and German Shepherds. It seems obvious that the collar actually pushes on the throat exactly in the area of the thyroid gland. This gland gets severely traumatized whenever a dog pulls on the leash, it becomes inflamed and consequently "destroyed" by the body's own immune system when it tries to remove the inflamed thyroid cells.

The destruction of the thyroid cells leads to the deficit of thyroid hormone – hypothyroidism and because the thyroid gland governs the metabolism of every cell. The symptoms may be low energy, weight gain, skin problems, hair loss and a tendency to ear infections and organ failure.

Ear and eye issues are frequently related to pulling on the leash.

When dogs pull on the leash, the collar restricts the blood and lymphatic flow to and from the head. Owners are often perplexed when all the ear and eye problems disappear after switching their dog from a collar to the right harness.

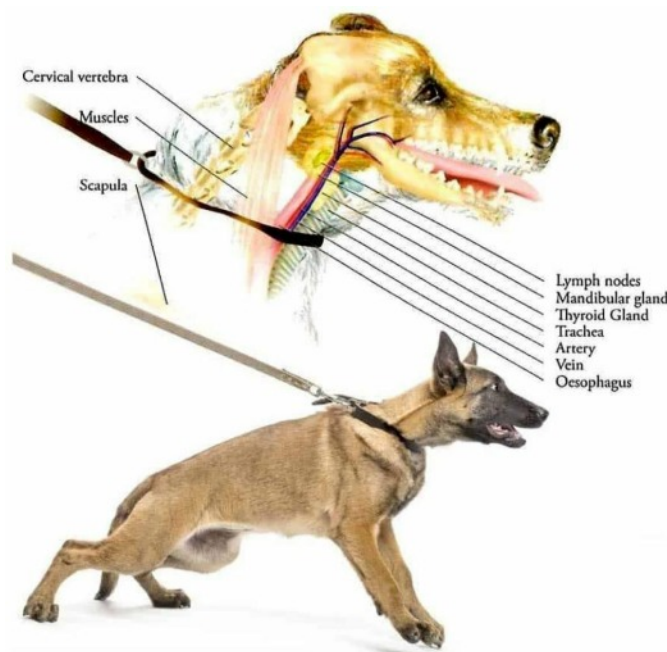
Excessive paw licking and foreleg lameness can also be related to your dog's collar

Leash pulling impinges the nerves supplying the front legs. This can lead to an abnormal sensation in the feet and dogs may start licking their feet. These dogs are often misdiagnosed as allergic and all that needs to be done is to remove the collar and treat the neck injury.

Neck injuries can cause a variety of problems.

Some dogs suffer severe whiplash like injuries from being jerked around. Extension leashes do not help because they encourage dogs to pull. They are faced with the imminent jerk when they get to the end of the line.

Most people do not know that leashes and collars can be at the core of many problems and that just one incident of pulling or running fast to the end of the leash can be serious."



Raising a deafie dog

Dog breeders call hearing impaired pups “deafies” and often they are put to sleep to preserve the pure breed line but also some of these pups can’t cope well with a full hearing world. They can be terrified of their surroundings akin to a dog living in a thunder storm, only part of which they are aware.



My young dog Merchant of Venice, I call him Vennie, is an English Setter which has an inherited hearing disability. Vennie has a little hearing at certain times like a click of a pen, sometimes a very deep loud voice and even a dog howl on TV occasionally prompts a response but other sounds like a slamming door, a car engine or horn and even those dog whistles are not heard at all. It makes the dog easily startled when a few random sounds get through to him and often it causes barking and a panicked running response. Obviously off lead must be under fenced control and meeting other dogs is cautious as Vennie can’t hear growls.

Communication is the difficulty but there are plenty of good times to balance the challenges.

Vennie exhibits fast bonding with people and friendly dogs, sometimes a little in-your-face but I certainly never fail to have an attentive and super-affectionate shadow when working from home.

Visual cues are clearly the main training method with a smile and a thumbs up plus a deep loud GOOD (unlike the YES that we use when training a hearing dog) but I'm not sure when he hears my voice. Food rewards are much appreciated and like all Setters the nose responds instantly to luring.

The hearing impaired dog seeks communication by touch and sight. I supplement those with an experiment to establish distance communication with the use of a vibration collar. This is not a shock pain device; rather it vibrates with the press of a car key fob type unit. It starts with press and feed and gradually he is aware to look at me when he feels the vibration. Ultimately I want him to seek me out when he feels the vibration when out of sight and maybe even across a park.



Is the hearing impaired dog an easy choice? No, it is an ongoing learning experience for both me, trying to figure out how best to communicate with him, and Vennie who is slowly progressing with more stable behaviours.

A question I am often asked is, does he appear happy?

My answer is that he obviously loves the world, albeit muffled, and I have no regrets welcoming a deafie into my pack!



Peter Coulthart



Interesting Dog Facts You May Not Know



Dogs have eighteen muscles to move their ears.

A dog's nose is unique like a human fingerprint.



Dogs only sweat through their paws.

Small dogs can hear sounds in higher ranges than big dogs.

Dogs dream, puppies and old dogs more so.



Dogs can be right-pawed or left-pawed.



A dog is as smart as a two-year-old child.

Australian Shepherds are actually an American breed.

Dogs are not colour blind but see shades of blue and yellow.



All puppies are born deaf.

Greyhounds can beat cheetahs in a race.

Dogs have a sense of time and can predict routines.

Your dog can genuinely get jealous when they see you display affection for another creature.

Your dog can smell your feelings.



Dogs have wet noses because it helps to absorb scent chemicals.

Dogs can be trained to detect cancer and other diseases in humans.

A dog's sense of smell is forty times greater than a human.

Dogs have three eye lids.



Most dogs don't like being hugged.

Dogs are direct descendants of wolves.



Peanut Butter Macarons

Yummy treats your dog will love

- 1 1/4 x Cups of Flour
- 1/2 x Teaspoon Baking Powder
- 1/2 x Cup Creamy Peanut Butter
- 1 x Large Egg
- 2 x Tablespoons Honey
- 1/2 x Cup Milk

Additional peanut butter for sandwiching

Preheat oven to 180°.

Place flour, baking powder, peanut butter, egg, honey, and milk and beat until ingredients are well combined and a soft dough forms.

Give the surface you are going to pat the dough out on a light dusting of flour. Pat the dough out into a rectangle 1/2" deep then use a small cookie cutter to cut out circles of dough.

Place them on a lined tray and bake for 10-15 minutes.

Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool.

When ready to give to your dog, put some peanut butter in between two cookies.

To store, place cookies in an airtight container keep in fridge.



Always ensure that the peanut butter does not contain xylitol which is toxic to dogs.





Training Time

Things to Remember

No breakfast before training (your dog, not you!)

Bring high value treats such as roast chicken or sausage.

Use an appropriate collar and lead.

Don't wear clothes that flap in your dog's face.

Always wear a treat pouch.

Use a happy, enthusiastic voice.

Use your dog's name to get their attention.

"Shape then name" teach the action without speaking, once your dog is performing the action then name it.

Use short single words "Sit" "Drop" "Stay"

Use the marker word 'Yes' as soon as the action is performed.

Don't repeat a cue, if your dog fails to drop take a step forward and repeat the cue.

Don't reward mistakes.

Keep your hand signals clear and precise.

Jackpot treats occasionally for perfect performance.

Do not reprimand a failed exercise; just move on and repeat.

Don't pull on the lead or push your dog into position.

Eliminate the word 'No' from your vocabulary.

Use a release word such as "free" or "relax" at the end of an exercise.



Do not flap your arms when you walk.

Learn to walk in a straight line!

Give your dog 100% of your attention if you expect them to give you theirs.

If you get frustrated, take a deep breath, smile and move on.

Enjoy your training, it is so worth it in the end.



Last Laugh !!

