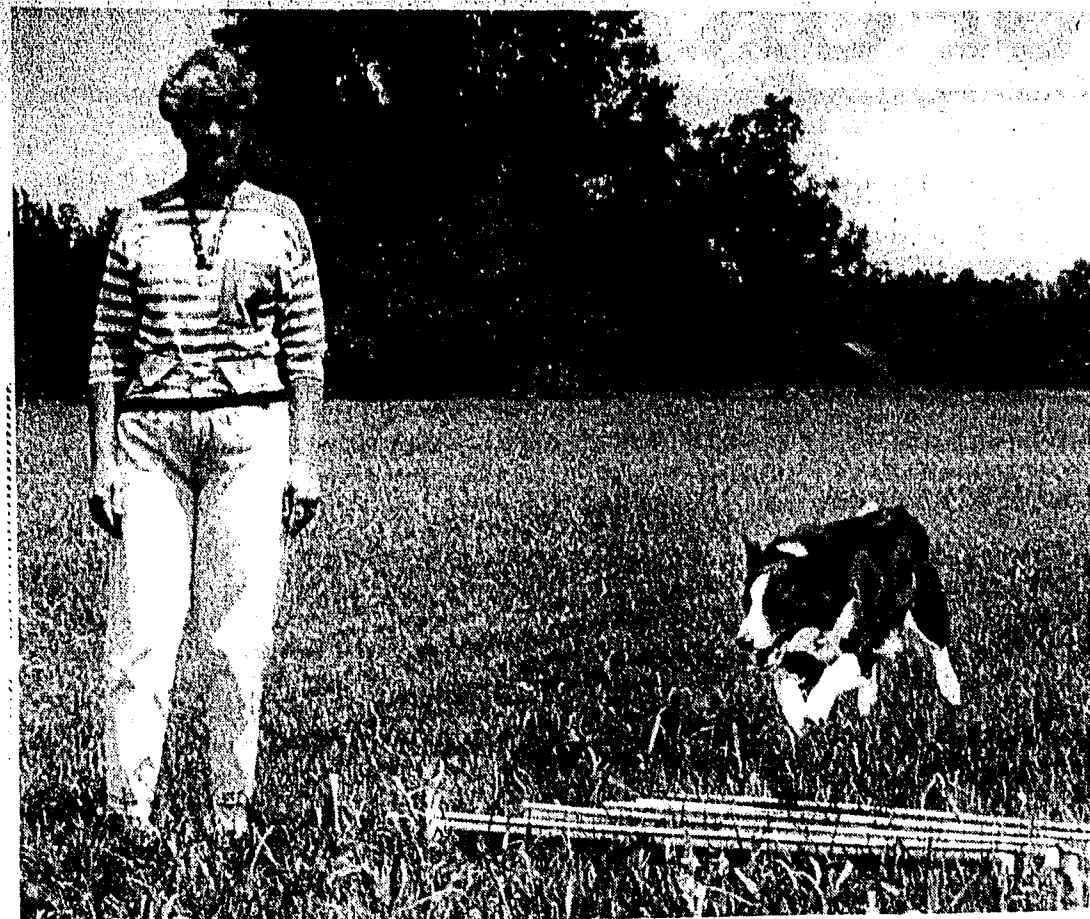


Dog Obedience Knack Features Timing, Confidence, Patience

Brenda Durbin admits she has Durbin, who lives at Mt. Ulla just inside the Rowan County line, is the first to admit that she has a knack for teaching dogs to obey. And she enjoys sharing it.



On command, Jet works on improving his distance in the broad jump

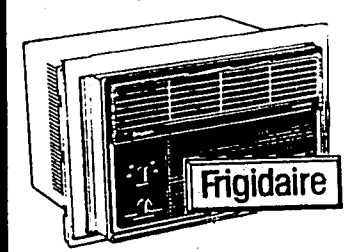


In figure eight training, Jet walks a fine line between trainer and obstacles

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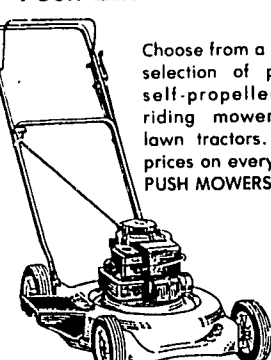
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from Greensboro, has reached the pinnacle point of her avocation by placing the highest available — the form of blue ribbons and prizes certificates — from the American Kennel Club.

And Durbin is not one to hide her talent. This week, in fact, Durbin exposes her trade secrets to any and all willing and wanting to learn when she cranks up eight weeks of dog obedience training classes in Mooresville.

"Sure," she nodded from the cool screened-in porch of her country home last Thursday morning, "there's knack involved when it comes to training pets to be obedient. But it's a knack that can be taught. With me, there are no trade secrets. There are certain procedures to follow that will make any pet a nicer pet."

Durbin will be on hand at the War Memorial Building beginning tomorrow (Thursday) night to start detailing this procedures. Classes will continue every Thursday for the following seven weeks. The eight-week session is available at a cost of \$55 per student.

Durbin will bring to the classes eight years of dog obedience experience, displaying skills that have enabled her to house one obedience class champion — retired Australian Border Collie Shep — and start another one — Border Collie Sweeps (Jet) Stream — well on its way.

Though obviously preferring her personal preference to the Border Collies, Durbin will welcome any and all breeds, including mixed, to her obedience classes.

"To me," she urged, "there is no such thing as a dog that cannot be trained to obey. Some, because of environment or lifestyles, are more difficult than others and may require some additional private instruction, but all of them can be trained for basic obedience. That's what we'll be covering in these classes."

Durbin will be setting the foundation, though, for any pet owners attending the classes to continue with training for proper showing dog procedures, if any of them so desire.

"Personally," she offered, "I prefer the show-ring method of obedience training. This way, if the owners should decide to get into competition, their pets will have the basics required. We will be specializing in simple obedience. We won't have time to get into that much detail, but after the classes, the pet owners will be able to tell a definite improvement in the behavior of their animals. We're just offering them a place to start."

Durbin has the credentials. Experienced in the competitive world of dog showing, Durbin started from scratch with her training of Shep, her in-house obedience class champion who has now accepted his role as a retired role model for others in the backyard kennel.

Initially invited to accept the Collie as a gift from her father, Durbin instead insisted on buying the animal, adhering to childhood lessons taught to her by her dad.

Durbin then guided Shep through the required show dog stages — Novice, Open and Utility — in order to reach the status of obedience class champion.

"He was a good one," smiled Durbin, "and he knows it. He kind of misses all the training now, and he really enjoys it when we go through some old routines."

Durbin does more than just rehash the good times with her current project, Jet. Still a hyper-active pup, Durbin has to curtail her excitement during the training of her dog she's now campaigning as perhaps her next obedience class champion.

It's obvious that both Jet and his trainer know their subject well. Having to perform at various levels, and under many different judges, both have passed all tests to date in flying colors.

In fact, it has taken rare perfect scores to deny Jet, named Best Dog in Trail several times, top honors in not just one of the competitions but in two.

Twice, he was awarded scores of 100% points, out of a possible 200, only to be edged out by dogs scoring a perfect 200.

retrieved based on scent alone. Durbin spends between 15 and 30 minutes, twice a day, following regular workout routines with Jet.

Also among the kennel residents behind the Durbin home is a Collie who specializes in frisbee catching, which is also quickly becoming a hot item among dog obedience enthusiasts.

But for the sake of the students attending her classes here, Durbin, who ran her own dog obedience school while in Greensboro, will restrict her level of technique to the basics. Pets will be directed on how to accomplish the basic obedient requirements. Pet owners will be instructed on the proper ways to enforce commands.

In fact, that's where the class will start.

At the initial class this week, only Durbin will have dogs to show. Students will not work with their pets in class during the latter part of the second class or until the third class.

"It's teamwork," insists Durbin. "It takes timing, confidence and patience on the part of both the dog and the owner for proper obedience. It's important that both parties enjoy what they're doing. That's the main thing I'll be emphasizing."

"I have no secrets," she added. "I want my students, some who have gone on to shows, to do well. Just like people, dogs have different personalities. We want to make them feel more relaxed."

Durbin admits she has a knack for doing that just.



Prize pup clears hurdle, poised to retrieve



For fun, Jet practices catching frisbee

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Mini Winning Streak Lifts Moors Above .500 In Southern Division

The good news is that Mooresville's American Legion baseball team enjoyed its longest winning streak of the season, to date, against Southern Division of Area III competition last week.

The bad news is that it couldn't last longer. The Moors, who entered the week having sandwiched a win between two defeats, turned things around with back-to-back, homefield victories that shot their league record above the break-even mark for the first time this young season.

Mooresville accomplished the pre-graduation ceremony feat by first jumping ahead of and then holding off visiting North Wilkesboro Wednesday night, 9-7, and then by running away from an incoming Lexington squad at together the following night to hammer out a 13-5 decision.

However, the streak was forced to come to an end as the result of an extended five-day layoff — the team's longest of the season — in order to allow its team members

and players off other SD-Area III teams to engage in their various high school graduation ceremonies over the past weekend.

As a result, Gresham-Baker Post 66 carried its 3-2 league record into the return of action this week.

Mooresville coupled last week's wins over North Wilkesboro and Lexington with an earlier-season triumph over Statesville to account for its three wins.

Those notches in the win department are accompanied by defeats so far to Concord and Rowan County.

The Moors kept their homefield record against SD-Area III opponents spotless in the process, having recorded all three divisions wins prior to this week's play within their friendly confines.

This also means that both of the team's losses so far have come in road outings.

Mooresville gloved its third homefield win in convincing

fashion over an outmanned Lexington squad Thursday night, incurring the most damage during the middle run of innings.

Trailing 2-0 entering the bottom of the third, the Moors cut the deficit in half with their first run in that inning and then unleashed consecutive four-run outbursts in the fourth and fifth frames to command a 9-2 lead.

The advantage swelled to 12-3 after the hosts tallied three runs in the sixth, and they then added a final run in the eighth to enjoy as much as a 13-2 cushion.

Lexington managed to trim the lead to its final spread by scoring its last three runs in the ninth.

Leifhander Rod Bowers of Mooresville High worked the first seven innings to pick up the win, allowing two runs while striking out 12. Matt McConnell of South Iredell, also a southpaw, hurled the last two innings.

West Rowan products Ezra Cowan and Bill McLaughlin each

pecked out a pair of his in four official appearances to lead the

winning assault. One of Cowan's hit was a bases-loaded double that drove in his three runs. McLaughlin, who also added a sacrifice fly, finished the game with a team-high four runs batted in.

Roy Frye also tagged three hits, one of them a double, while McConnell ripped a triple in his one at-bat. Bowers, Toby Tomlin and Tim Kopley each added a base hit in the winning cause.

Also at home to entertain North Wilkesboro Wednesday night, the Moors of head coach Whitney Meadows again fought back from an early deficit to post the win.

After giving up a run in the top of the first, Post 66 registered four runs in the bottom of the frame and added three more in the second for a lead it would never surrender.

Frye, who wound up going the distance on the mound for his second win, helped jump-start the offense as he belted a three-run home run to get the scoring going in the bottom of the first.

Jon Walker, Frye's battery mate, followed his pitcher's lead and hammered a solo home run in the first for the fourth run in that inning.

North scratched for a run in the top of the third and Mooresville answered with single scores in the sixth and eighth.

That allowed the hosts to overcome the visitors' comeback attempt that featured four runs in the seventh and one in the eighth.

In going the route, Frye allowed the seven run on 11 hits.

In his support, the Moors belted out 14 hits.

Leading the way was outfielder Mike Cummings, of South Iredell, who enjoyed a four-for-five night with the bat.

Frye added three hits, including his first Legion home run. Mooresville, heading into this week's fresh from five days rest, jumps into the fire of SD-Area III play by playing its remaining 11 division games within a two-week span.

The ball got rolling late last (Tuesday) night when Post 66 resumed play by hosting pre-season favorite Mocksville-Davie.

Mooresville returns to play this (Wednesday) evening when wrapping up the home-and-home season series at Lexington.

The Moors return home to close out the season series with Concord Friday evening and then do

the same when calling on league newcomer Statesville Saturday night.

The consecutive string of play-

ing dates continues Sunday night, when Post 66 plays its first of two games scheduled this season against Stanly County.

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