

HERDING GROUP

dog sees it as a game, it can be more fun for them.

Performance stress is the biggest battle I have faced in the ring. To help reduce it (and keeping within the rules), I do try to act in the ring as I do when I train. Many times, our body language and tone of voice are different when we compete, and sensitive dogs can lose animation and/or accuracy because of it. I use the time between exercises to assess my dog's mood, then try to adjust it accordingly. If my dog has "gone flat," I might have her spin or touch up to my hand. If she has stressed *up*, I'll use calming words and a few pats on her head.

Another important component is to try to train in as many places as possible, where there are lots of different distractions. Incorporating some play-training in busy places can help a nervous dog handle the distractions better when they are actually competing. Take it slowly; don't ask a lot from your dog if you are at a new training area and the distractions are plentiful.

When I am warming up at a trial to go into the ring, I try to be as calm as possible. I will play a game of tug to build up attitude if necessary, or if my dog is already too "high" I will not play but instead will calmly practice some heeling and fronts and finishes.

Keep in mind that between exercises in the completion ring is a very important component of the overall performance. Read your dog dur-

ing the exercises, and try to make adjustments to their mood between exercises. Use that time wisely. —*L.C.*

Thank you, Leanne!

—Lynda McKee,

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[Permbroke Welsh Corgi Club of America](#)

Pulik

PUPPY OF ACHIEVEMENT PULIK

The AKC initiated the Puppy of Achievement (POA) program during September 2017 to encourage new owners of purebred puppies to become involved in the exciting world of conformation dog shows. POA points are earned by winning the regular puppy classes, or by going Best of Breed or Best of Opposite Sex in the 4–6 Months Beginner Puppy (BPUP) competition. Puppies that earn 10 POA points automatically receive a certificate for their accomplishment. All dogs exhibited in the regular puppy classes or in BPUP competition are eligible to earn POA points. To learn more about the Puppy of Achievement program (including the point schedule), click [here](#). The AKC website provides helpful tips to a novice owner on how to prepare for conformation showing. Topics include teaching a puppy to wear a collar, to walk on a lead on

your left side, and to be comfortable meeting new people. Also incorporated is helpful information on what to expect at a dog show.

Attending a local conformation handling class will help you and your puppy be more prepared in terms of what to expect when you're showing. You will find both seasoned and novice handlers at these classes, which makes them a wonderful working and learning experience, especially for puppies. You may contact a local dog club (often called a "kennel club") for information as to the location of those classes. (The AKC website provides a list of dog clubs all over the U.S.) One of the most important things to strive for is to make dog shows fun. However, a well-trained puppy makes it even more so.

From the start of the program in 2017 to the end of November 2018, the AKC has issued the POA certificate to six Pulik:

- Moonshadow Wonder Woman—"Diana," (female, black), bred by Barbara and Russell Pessina, and owned by Dr. Laurel S. Cain Denk, Marc C. Denk, Christian A. Denk, Ver A. Cain.
- Szentmihalyi-Szabo Cinkos—"Iceman" (male, white), bred by Katalin Szabone Ivanyi and owned by Larry Schroth Sr. and Gail Schroth.
- Applegate's Cream of the Crop—"Trump" (male, white), bred by Frances

Levinson and owned by Frances Levinson and Ronald Sullivan.

- Bowmaker Flying Solo—"Solo" (female, black), bred and owned by Sherry Gibson.

- Noe Barkaja Ragyogo Lelek—"Rags" (female, black), bred by Linda Meakin, DVM, and Cindy Boright, and owned by Linda Meakin, Cindy Boright. Brian Brubaker, and Alece Couman.

- Feketedios Csoki—"Csoki" (male, black), bred by Janos Dobstadt and owned by Valarie Cheimis and Gary Cheimis.

Each of these Pulik are proudly owned by members of the Puli Club of America (PCA). In terms of popularity as reported by the AKC, the Puli ranks 142 out of 190, making it a rare breed, as well as categorized as a Low Entry Breed. For that reason, the PCA is encouraging all of its members, novice or experienced, to show their puppies. The parent club is hopeful that reputable Puli breeders are fostering buyers of show-quality puppies to pursue dog showing.

The PCA is working also to invigorate more Puli owners to join the parent club. We all need to do everything we can to encourage participation by those new to the breed. Dog shows are a wonderful place where dog owners can meet and develop lifelong friendships.

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—Dagmar Fertl,
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Puli Club of America

Spanish Water Dogs

DOG SHOWS—WHAT'S THE POINT?

For any of us involved in showing our dogs, both in the conformation ring and performance events, we have all experienced those weekends that make us ask, “What the heck are we are doing here?” The judge put up a dog that we thought isn’t well constructed and/or isn’t true to type. The agility courses were more technical than we had hoped. The sheep in the trial were too light. The train went by outside and blew its horn in the middle of the long down. And so it goes; sometimes as exhibitors we are discouraged, and sometimes the judges or the circumstances aren’t what we might have hoped for ... so, what’s “the point”?

After a lengthy hiatus from the competitive dog world, I returned to the conformation ring and performance events about 11 years ago, and more recently breeding. Rather unwittingly, I chose the somewhat difficult path of a new and unknown breed. Although something of an uphill battle at times, the wider dog community of other fanciers, handlers, breeders, and judge-mentors has been

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