

Airedales and Agility

I (David) had wanted to get involved in agility for some time, but my schedule prohibited the opportunity. Finally, I forced the issue and took our Airedale Ruth off to classes. As a pup, Ruth had been evaluated in a temperament evaluation as being very subpar for obedience and agility training by an experienced dog person who evaluated the whole litter. We disagreed with the outcome of the evaluation and by the time she went to agility class, we knew we were correct. When I arrived at class, the instructor turned out to be the same person that had evaluated the litter. She didn't remember and I didn't remind her.....until later. Ruth took to most of the equipment with ease and was competent fairly quickly. Except for weave poles. She thought they were stupid. Pointless.

One day, after a full class we went to the weave poles and sent her. After a few struggling runs, it was time to repeat again. Ruth said, "Naw!". She went through a few poles, turned, looped around, went behind a building, and went and stood by the gate, next to the car. I immediately recognized what she was up to, the instructors were puzzled at the behavior, until I pointed out where we were parked. They didn't want to end the session on a failure. So they had me go get the car, pull it around to the end of the weave poles! We got Ruth, opened the back door of the car, and sent her through the weave poles, and on to jump in the back seat. We got her out, repeated it once, and went home! Ruth is a favorite of the kids any time there is agility equipment around. She patiently lets them guide her on the equipment, over and over. Until she is done. Then they stop.