

Sporting Dog Enthusiasts Go From Lame to Fame With Help From Sports Medicine Veterinarians & Purina

Purina Canine Sports Medicine Symposium Attracts Top Rehabilitation Experts

GRAY SUMMIT, Mo., Oct. 6, 2016 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Agility enthusiast Amber McCue of Bedford, New Hampshire, noticed her Border Collie "Notch" had slowed down in his course time. That was three years and a pulled hamstring injury ago.

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After consulting a rehabilitation specialist and completing a rigorous rehab program to build muscle and regain strength that included underwater treadmill, chiropractic care, massage therapy and a home exercise program, the pair won the 2015 Large Dog Agility Purina Pro Plan Incredible Dog Challenge. This year, Amber and 7-year-old Notch placed second in the highly competitive event.

Going from lame to fame requires hard work, whether you're a sporting dog enthusiast or one who loves to jog, hike, walk, or run with your canine companion. Amber and Notch were on hand for the Incredible Dog Challenge Sept. 30 to Oct. 1 at Purina Farms in Gray Summit, which coincided with the Purina Canine Sports Medicine Symposium.

"Purina is proud to provide optimal nutrition for canine athletes in both training and conditioning and recovery, and to support the emerging field of veterinary sports medicine and rehabilitation specialty since its inception," says Dr. RuthAnn Lobos, Purina Senior Veterinary Communications Manager, who coordinated the event. "Together, these synergies are helping people achieve great things with their dogs. Just as Purina is a pioneer in pet food nutrition, sports medicine veterinarians are pioneers in elevating the level of care for canine athletes."

Purina invited 30 top veterinary sports medicine and rehabilitation specialists from across the country to share their knowledge at the symposium. Among the key takeaways presented by the experts were:

- Learn about your sport and what injuries can occur to help you recognize early a potential injury or problem
- Always think about your dog's safety and be aware of the stress and strain your sport puts on your dog
- Every dog should take at least a month off per year to enjoy fun exercises. This helps to protect the dog from repeated stresses and strains and helps boost attitude
- Be on the lookout for changes in your dog's performance that could indicate an injury or performance problem. If the dog seems "off," there's likely a reason

Dr. Chris Zink, a sports medicine veterinarian for over 30 years, says, "The idea is to catch a performance problem early before lameness occurs. We can help competitors learn to look for subtle signs of an injury. Watching a dog's performance in slow motion is an outstanding diagnostic tool."

"This symposium has brought together a great combination of very diverse people talking and sharing their expertise, and that really is what triggers some of the new preventive strategies and new research ideas," says Dr. Felix Duerr, a Small Animal Orthopedics and Sports Medicine faculty member at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. "This helps improve the health of canine athletes."

Sharing findings of a recent clinical study, Dr. Wendy Baltzer, Associate Professor of Small Animal Surgery and Director of Canine Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation at Oregon State University in Corvallis, reported that feeding [Purina® Pro Plan® Veterinary Diets JM Joint Mobility® Canine Formula](#) in conjunction with rehabilitation had a positive effect on dogs recovering after surgery for cranial cruciate ligament injury. "We found that the combination of this diet and rehabilitation helped to improve the force dogs exerted on the affected limb, compared to dogs in other study groups," she says. "JM is rich in omega-3 fatty acids and protein."

Purina® Pro Plan® Veterinary Diets is available exclusively from veterinarians. For more information, or if you think Purina® Pro Plan® Veterinary Diets JM Joint Mobility® Canine Formula may be appropriate for your dog, consult your veterinarian. If you've already had success feeding JM, please leave us a product review at www.proplanveterinarydiets.com/products/jm-joint-mobility-dog/

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Purina® Pro Plan® Veterinary Diets are formulated to help veterinarians nutritionally manage dogs and cats with certain health conditions. These diets have been developed through the collaborative efforts of Purina experts including nutritionists, scientists and veterinarians, working together to understand how nutrition can benefit pets with special health needs. Through proper dietary management, our goal is to help pets lead an active, healthy life for years to come. To learn more, visit www.proplanveterinarydiets.com. We invite veterinarians to visit www.purinaproplanvets.com for product information, research, continuing education, and professional resources.

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