

***It was my privilege to compete in and judge the agility portion of the Canadian Australian Shepherd Nationals, 2005.***

I appreciated that they chose to include all breeds of dog in their agility trials as this meant that I could run my Labrador Retriever on the Friday of the competition and had a chance to watch all the Aussies run too. I was frustrated that I had so many things on that weekend that I did not get more time to watch the herding and the duck "herding". That concept fascinated me but I only saw it from a distance. It amazed me that a large dog could be gentle and patient enough to herd ducks. (This is coming from an individual that chooses to live with dogs that are trained to carry ducks around).

The Friday of the competition was cool but otherwise pleasant and we had a great turn out for the agility. I was very impressed with how many Aussies were multi-tasking; in that they were rushing from agility to herding or obedience or the conformation ring, demonstrating the versatility of the breed.

On the Saturday I was in the ring judging; of course that day had to dawn with pouring rain and very cold temperatures. But those same tough agility people still showed up to run their dogs - even, I must add, dogs that were also competing in the



## Freezing my toes at the First Australian Shepherd Nationals

**By Kiersten Lloyd**

**2005 National Agility Judge**

conformation ring. Wet Samoyeds and Aussies don't look quite as stunning in the conformation ring as dried and fluffed ones do - but again agility people are tough and they still pulled up to the start line with their hardworked coiffures' drooping more by the minute. Hopefully the conformation judges understood.

Then again it was interesting to watch some handlers run around the ring in the boots they obviously just wore in the herding ring. I always wear soccer cleats when I compete, the tough Aussie handlers made it around very effectively in their boots.

I really enjoyed watching all the dogs run even though it was soaking wet and so cold that I started to worry for the muscles and limbs of both the dogs and the handlers. As I rapidly lost communication with my hands and feet due to the cold and wet, the agility field also began losing its resemblance to a field and became more like a bog.

Dog after dog (or I should say Aussie after Aussie) began to slip in the tunnels or on the turns and my worry increased. After the first trial

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# Conformation



## *agility continued*

of that day was done the committee very wisely approached me about cancelling the second trial, I concurred as did most of the half frozen handlers (I was completely frozen). Part of me was not sorry but part of me was having fun watching all the different styles of Aussie do their thing and show their versatility. But it was the appropriate thing to call off the trial before someone fell and became injured.

Overall I had a good time and the preparation that was put into this event was evident in the organisation and the great prizes given out during the awards presentations. I really appreciated the opportunity to be part of this event.

Thanks Aussie people from the Lab person.

Kiersten Lloyd.

**By Sheila Polk**

**2005 National Breed Judge**

## ***Judging the Canadian National Australian Shepherd Associations first National Specialty was an honor and privilege.***

I was very impressed with the effort put forth by your Show Chairman and Committee. Everything was covered: the hospitality was superb, the show itself ran like clockwork, and the awards were definitely outstanding. I've always liked awards that are useful and all your awards were just that. You had a wonderful tasty banquet and such a fun raffle...we wanted so many of the items.

The quality in your Aussies was very good throughout the entry making many of the decisions very difficult. I enjoyed being a part of your National and if this first effort was an example of what you are going to do in the future I can predict you will have many very successful Nationals.

Thank you again for the trust and privilege of judging your show and I wish you much success with future endeavors.

Sheila Polk