



## OUR BEGINNING

It all started with a sheltie named Casey who lived with Michael and Sherry Porter. Casey loved to do agility and couldn't get enough of it from a weekly class. He convinced his owners to build him his own playground in his backyard.



Word of Casey's playground spread and more and more people started showing up asking if their dogs could join in the fun. So Sherry, along with Morene Brown and Terry Casey, organized Tucson's first agility club – then known as “Desert Agility Dogs” – in January of 1994. In preparing to organize its first show a year or so later, the club learned that “Agility Dog™” is a registered trademark of the United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA) and could not be used in the club name. Hence, the name was changed to “Saguaro Scramblers”.

The success of the club can be measured by its growth in terms of both membership and the number of shows it sponsors each year. Membership has increased from the original 12 to about 100 members by the end of 2005, while that single show per year has increased to six. Clearly, while the name may have changed, the club has remained true to its goal “to promote the sport of dog agility in Tucson through training and competition.”

So as you enjoy the club's many agility events and activities, as you and your dog finish each run, stop and picture a sheltie joyfully prancing along with you. While sadly Casey's death coincided closely with the club's first meeting – it was Casey's love of agility that gave this club its start.



## AGILITY'S ORIGINS

The idea of dog agility was first conceived in 1977 by John Varley, a member of the Crufts Dog Show Committee.

He was asked to organize entertainment in the main arena in the gap between the obedience championship and the group judging at Crufts. Varley imagined a canine version of horse show jumping due to his experience with horses. He asked his friend Peter Meanwell, a renowned Working Trials competitor and judge, to develop a fun dog agility event based on his working knowledge of dogs.

As it continues today, dog agility was intended to be a fun event without being dangerous, and that it would provide spectator appeal.

The dog agility event was unveiled in February 10, 1978 at the Crufts Dog Show in London, England, the first day of the show. It consisted of two teams headed by Peter Meanwell and Trevor Jones respectively, with four handlers/dogs each. Each team also had one reserve.



The event was such a success with the crowd that it was followed up in 1979 at both Crufts and the International Horse Show at Olympia.

As soon as 1986, the sport of dog agility jumped “the pond” to the US when the United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA) was formed. In the short period of time since then, several other organizations have come into being to support this evolving, fast-growing and fun dog sport, which now encircles the globe in many countries.

As a final note, John Varley emigrated to Sydney, Australia in the 1980's, continuing in the sport until he died a few years later. Peter Meanwell later died in 2002.