

Long way around is 1 1/2 mile run - the short way's just as long

By BOB RUTTER
Herald staff writer

"There has to be a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to People" jibed the woman at the registration table.

"That's a long way around; but not for the dogs."

That long way around was the second Canadian obstacle course for dogs held in Halton Hills Sunday by the Great Dane Club of Canada.

More than 51 entries made their way along the 1 1/2 mile course through woods, pasture and mud as both handlers and animals sought to complete the course in less than the anticipated 12 minutes.

And to make the course

effort more worthwhile and to test the stamina and the intimacy between dog and handler there was the occasional jump for good measure.

Everyone, especially the dogs, Great Danes, Dobermans, Golden Retrievers, Irish Setters and German Shepherds, managed to complete the course without major injury, although five people were treated by Frank Tyrrell, a member of the Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Service, for sprained and twisted ankles or for scrapes.

"It's not the place for timid dogs," said Great Dane Club vice-president Ralph Lay-

man. "You just have to get right into it," he added describing some of the obstacles on the course.

Organizer Jerry Mazur of Glen Williams was delighted by the turnout which doubled the number of entries from last year, the first time it is believed the event was ever held in Canada.

Mr. Mazur said he and his wife first heard of obstacle course competitions for dogs and handlers when they lived in Omaha, Nebraska. He's hoping the concept which is a departure from the traditional dog show will catch on as a fun day for socializing among dog owners.

Jackie Welch, of Acton,

who finished third in the women's category with a run of 11 minutes, 15 seconds, would also like to see the competition carried on. She says there isn't the "stress or the confirmation atmosphere" among dog owners.

"It's (a competition) that's not geared to the animal because the fast time does not mean the animal is fast, it's the handler, too."

Jo Chadburn, a Great Dane owner from Grass Ile, Michigan, came away from the competition enthused about the possibilities.

"I thought it was a lot of fun..." she said describing how her home club, The Great Dane Club of Toledo, Ohio, is interested in a report of her observations.

Describing some dog shows as "canine beauty contests", she said she endorses a move by the Newfoundland Dog Club of America seeking sanction for championship points awarded for water trials by the large dogs.

It's essentially a show in which the animals are assessed on their ability to demonstrate the activities for which they were originally bred. In the case of the Newfoundland dog, water trials competitions call for the dog to retrieve objects from the water surface and from below the surface, tow a boat and rescue a person.

The Toledo club also concentrates on obedience training for dogs. Ms. Chadburn wears an engraved pin which stated: "Obedience is commandable."

In a unique turn of events, the oldest and youngest active animals competitors finished first in the competition.

Jim, an eight-year-old Irish Setter, burned up the mile and a half course with handler Hugh Allward of Uxbridge in five minutes, five seconds to finish first in the men's category.

Patsy Kelly, of Acton, finished first for the ladies with a time of 10 minutes handling Spot, a seven-and-a-half-month-old Great Dane.

In the men's category Steve Shaw of Cheltenham finished second with a time of 6 minutes, 55 seconds while George Lewis of Ancaster finished third with a time of seven minutes, 38

seconds.

Pat Marlin ran a time of 10 minutes, 54 seconds to take second place in the ladies competition and Miss Welch of Acton finished third.

The "fun day" organized by the Great Dane Club ended with a chicken barbecue before the final prizes were awarded to handlers and door prizes of dog food went to the animals.

Dr. Sally Cleland, a veterinarian who watched over the animals during the full day's competition, said the course was not over strenuous for any of the dog breeds that participated.

"If the owner is in touch with what his own breed can handle, it's good exercise

and exercise is always good for people too," she said.

And that's what it's all about, says Jerry Mazur. "This gives some of the city dogs a chance to run... there are too many animals in the city who get kicked out the door to do their business and are lucky to get a walk around the block, he adds.

Next year he hopes entries will increase substantially. And if the competition grows in popularity, it might generate into a weekend event.

Sunday's competitions were held at Wildwood Manor on the Ninth Line. Owner Annette Milne also provided ponies for children of the competitors to ride during the afternoon.



Jackie Welch of Acton shows the strain of the run as she nears the finish line of the mile and a half competition. Spot, a seven-and-a-half-month-old Great Dane doesn't appear to be the worst for the exercise. Both handler and dog have just cleared the haystack tunnel at rear.



Patsy Kelly holds aloft the trophy she earned during the obstacle course competition as Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Service attendant Frank Tyrrell helps clean some scrapes she received when she fell on the run.

Great Dane Club holds second obstacle course for dogs, handlers



Two-year-old Chadlis, owned by Doreen McMahon of Welland is towelled down after the run by Teresa Wilson.



The oldest dog in the competition, an Irish Setter named Jim, clears a hurdle with handler Hugh Allward, of Uxbridge. They won the obstacle course run.



Mark Clare, of Ottawa, is almost literally up to his knees in mire as he tries to retrieve a lost shoe.

Varian Contract

OTTAWA (Bureau) - A federal contract worth \$31,715 has been awarded to Varian Associates Ltd. of Halton Hills to provide the fisheries and environment department with water purification equipment, the department of supply and services announced Monday.

It was one of 425 unclassified contracts worth \$10,000 or more that were awarded by the department to Canadian companies.

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of The Georgetown & District Memorial Hospital Association will be held in the hospital cafeteria at 8:00 P.M., on June 29th, 1978. Honorable life members and 1978 members are urged to attend.

REFRESHMENTS

Mrs. B. Clark Chairman of the Board
Mr. A.E. Morris Secretary of the Board

School class remains open

A decision to close the general learning disability (GLD) class at Harrison school and transfer pupils to another school has been rescinded.

Parental dissatisfaction with the move which would have seen some of the pupils enter a fourth school in four years prompted special education supervisor George Heaver to re-assess the decision.

The class and the teacher will remain in Harrison school rather than transferring to Park school as originally planned. However, the GLD class at Park school will be closed and its teacher transferred to a new special education class in Milton where a shortage of such classes exists.

Park school pupils who would have attended the

discontinued GLD class will be accommodated in an existing special learning disability (SLD) class while the others who are bus students will simply be bussed to another school.

Halton board of education trustee Barry Shepherd looked at the question of where the class should be located with Mr. Heaver and said it was a matter of "looking at the majority of kids and what is good for them."

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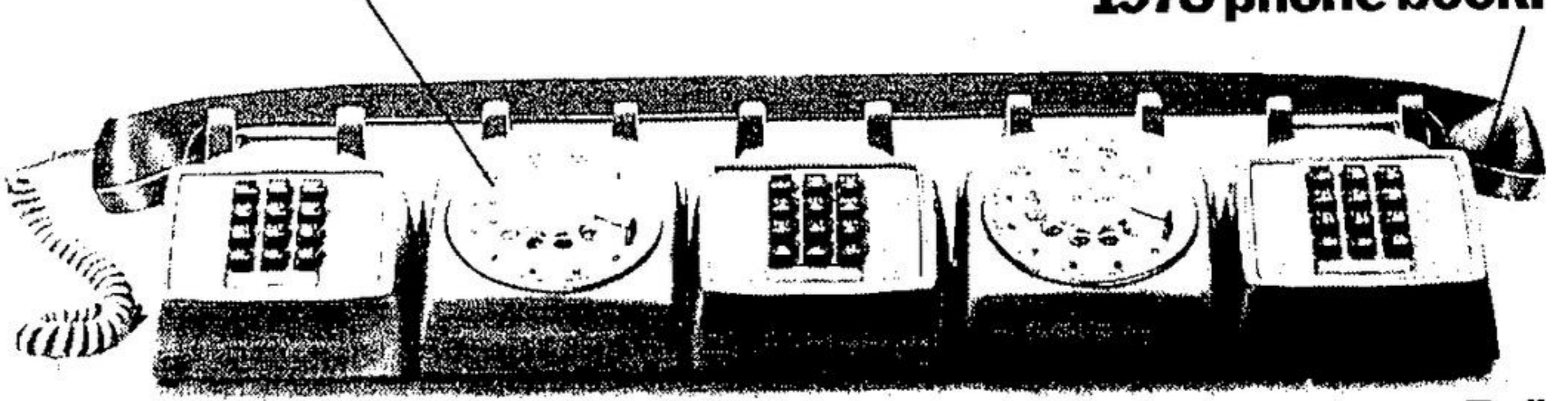
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