
Lure Coursing With Basenjis and Some Other Activities

by Mia Lowbeer, Yulara Basenjis, Sweden

I started coursing my Basenjis in the 1980's and in those days it was just for fun. We could not have competitions. Then the sighthounds started with a more serious approach to it all and it was accepted as an official activity for the sighthounds. The Basenjis came in late and in 2003 we were accepted to compete here in Sweden, but for a trial period before we can run for CC's. We hope we will be accepted to compete full out in a short period of time.



Splash and Taimi

I think lure coursing is a great sport for our Basenjis and they really enjoy it. I can imagine mine in the dense vegetation in the jungle as well as on the open plains. To see them running in and out of the bushes to hunt a rabbit or small deer really is "music for the eyes". Their agile bodies turning and jumping very fast and ending with the kill. Or to see them on an open field stretching out in every step to follow the game.

The training and the ability to course goes hand in hand. My experience tells me that Basenjis which are allowed to run free are better coursers. They practise their agility in the play, the run, the chasing and the turns in every way when they are free with no lead to distract them or stop them in a negative way, as well as their overall condition when running at full speed. I also think their courage is improved when they know how to run away from their owners as well as finding the way back if they lose the game.

For many Basenjis the muzzle seems to be the biggest problem; just to accept wearing it. I start practising with my pups to chase a plastic bag and when they are really interested I put the muzzle on and try to encourage the puppy or the young dog to continue attacking the bag/lure. Sitting in front of the TV is also a good time to practice wearing a

muzzle. You can talk to the dog in a soft and encouraging way and when it is not trying to take off the muzzle you give it a goodie, through the meshes of the muzzle.

To course the Basenjis they need to be fit. Running beside a bike, jogging with the owner, long walks on the lead, running free and coursing practice, are all good activities to get your Basenji in good shape for coursing.

My own dogs get a 5-8 km long walk in the forest in the morning when they can run free, and that is good practise for mobility and explosiveness, then they get a 4-5 km walk on the lead in the afternoon and that is good for the long muscles. Some days I jog with them and they trot or gallop, this is also good for the endurance. I realize when I jog with inexperienced Basenjis that they get tired very quickly, they are not used to keeping up a higher tempo for longer periods of time. Biking is a good activity for getting them in good condition as well as giving them very strong backs. They should trot most of the time. 2-5 km is enough distance to get their hearts working and also if you put in a few 100 metres at full speed (a gallop).

It is very important for the dogs to warm up before running and have relaxation time afterwards. They need a 10-15 minute brisk walk before the run to get all the joints working and especially the back. After the run they need a walk to cool down and perhaps also some stretching. A drink and a small high energy meal is also very effective. We are still in the beginning of our Basenjis lure coursing careers but already I have heard of dogs getting back problems. We don't know if it is due to the running of course, but it has shown up after running.

Some dogs perform better in the second run of the competition and I think this is because they were not warmed up properly for the first run. Or perhaps they need to see a few dogs running before they run themselves to get to know what it is all about for that day.

The dogs I have who are running are Fagge, Ch. Yulara Fulared Fagus, who is now too old for

competitions but still loves to run. He did compete for two years and did very well. He qualified for an unofficial Champion title, finished every competition, and always placed among the first four. He did win three events.



Fagge, Ch. Yulara Fulared Fagus

Taimi, Ch. Reveille Thyme Share To Yulara, is 4 years old and a very nice runner and has done very well with two unofficial CC's. My two youngsters, Yulara Itichika and Yulara Jarrah are on their way to get their licences so we hope to start competing at the end of this season or next year. Here in Sweden we need to have the dogs practise and run to get a licence before they can enter a competition.

Other activities for Basenjjs are skiing and hiking in the mountains. I ski with mine and it is just fantastic. I have a harness for them which is attached to a belt around my waist and they pull me. Also skating on the lakes is great fun for them, sometimes we need to bring a blanket to keep them warm when we have a break but otherwise they are happy to run with you.

In the summer we used to take them to the mountains and it is one of the most spectacular things you can do with your Basenji. They enjoy it so much to be out with you all day and share your food and your bed. To see them run free like that, so relaxed, are very memorable moments.

So I really think a Basenji is a dog for many activities if you just give them the chance. We also do obedience and agility but I guess others will write about that.

This article first appeared in the 2nd edition of the Finnish Basenji Club newsletter, 2005. Printed with permission.

BOOK REVIEW

by Migz Parkes

Animals in Translation

With this past summer being so hot it was a good time to just sit and read! One book that I found interesting was *Animals in Translation*.

Author: Temple Grandin
with Catherine Johnson
Publisher: Scribner
ISBN 0-7432-4769-8



Temple, who is autistic, appears to have special insights into animal's behaviour. The book cover states Temple studied animal science at university and went on to become an associate professor at Colorado State University.

Although much of the author's work and the book relates to cattle and horses and humane management of feedlots, there are a lot of ideas about other animals including dogs.

Chapters include, "Animal Aggression" and "How Animals Perceive the World".

The style is easy to read and you don't have to read cover to cover. You can pick a chapter and put the book down for a while without losing a thread.

You might not want to buy it but check with the local library.



lynu (front) and Dene (back) are making sure they don't miss their next meal!

Photo submitted by Tracy Lee

Vaccine Stops Food Allergy in Dogs, Study Provides Hope for Human Sufferers

By Karen Pallarito, Health Day News

Dogs with allergies to peanuts, milk and wheat experienced sharply fewer reactions after being vaccinated for those specific food allergens, researchers in California report.

Peanut-allergic dogs, after receiving the vaccine, were able to eat many more of the legumes without developing an allergic response. On average, they went from tolerating a single peanut to eating more than 37. Similar reductions in allergic responses were observed among milk- and wheat-allergic dogs after receiving the vaccine.

“Although we clearly have to do studies in humans, this study suggests [that] vaccine strategies can be developed to treat food allergies successfully,” said study author Dr. Dale Umetsu, a professor of pediatrics at Stanford University and chief of the allergy and immunology division at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital in Palo Alto, Calif.

The study, said to be the first to reverse food allergies in an animal other than a mouse, appears in the November 12, 2004 online issue of *Allergy*.

An estimated 11 million Americans suffer from food allergies, for which there are no cures, according to the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN), a Virginia-based advocacy group. A food allergy occurs when the body’s immune system overreacts, treating a particular food as if it were a foreign invader. The body reacts by releasing chemicals that trigger a range of symptoms, including itching, swelling, hives and difficulty breathing.

Some food-induced reactions can be life-threatening, accounting for about 30,000 emergency-room visits and as many as 200 deaths each year, FAAN reports. Eight foods in particular – milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, soy and wheat – account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions.

While there’s a lot of research being done in the area of food allergy, particularly peanut allergy, it may be five to 10 years before effective treatments are available, said Anne Munoz-Furlong, FAAN’s founder and CEO.

Umetsu’s vaccine uses heat-killed *Listeria*, a food-borne contaminant, mixed with peanuts, milk or wheat, to stimulate a protective immune response.

While study results are based solely on animal testing, “the fact that this looks very promising means that we can look forward to it moving to human trials in the future,” Munoz-Furlong said.

To test the vaccine, researchers used dogs that were both prone to allergies and treated to have very severe food allergies. Four of the dogs in the study had peanut allergy; they also were allergic to cow’s milk and ragweed. Ten weeks after receiving a vaccine that combined heat-killed *Listeria* and peanut, the presence of allergic skin bumps was dramatically reduced. In addition, the dogs tolerated more peanut in their diet. Three of the four dogs, in fact, could eat a handful of peanuts – about 57 of the legumes – without developing symptoms.

Only their peanut allergy was treated, which shows that the vaccine is antigen-specific. “In those dogs, their peanut allergy got much better, but their milk allergy did not,” Umetsu said.

Similarly, five dogs with milk, wheat, beef and ragweed allergies were tested for symptoms and skin reactions. Three were vaccinated for milk and wheat allergies; two served as controls. The vaccinated dogs had a 60 percent reduction in diarrhea and a 100 percent reduction in vomiting compared with reactions prior to vaccination. Likewise, skin tests showed marked reductions in allergic reactions.

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“This study shows that by using a vaccination protocol, you can, in fact, get a protective type of response – and we’ve showed this in an animal that is much closer to humans than, say, mice, on the evolutionary scale,” Umetsu said.

More animal studies are needed that demonstrate, more specifically, the mechanism of this suppressive effect on the immune system, he added. Plus, researchers need to show what specific components of the heat-killed *Listeria* vaccine make it so effective.

Until there’s an effective vaccine for treating symptoms, Munoz-Furlong urges food allergy

sufferers to read food labels carefully and carry epinephrine, an injectable drug for treating severe allergic reactions.

Check out the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network for advice on preventing serious allergic reactions.

Sources: Dale Umetsu, M.D., Ph.D., professor, pediatrics, Stanford University, and chief, allergy and immunology division, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, Palo Alto, Calif.; Anne Munoz-Furlong, founder and CEO, Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, Fairfax, Va.; Stanford University press release; Nov. 12, 2004, Allergy online

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Home Sweet (Re)Home

by Mary Gunter

Here is a picture of my two dogs: Maggie (top) is now 14 and a half – still well, healthy, and active, if somewhat hard of hearing – with her new “baby brother”, Vincent, who arrived July 28th.

Vincent is a “re-home” who, as I understand it, was shuffled off to the Basenji Rescue and Transport (BRAT) group in Kentucky some months ago after living with one family for over a decade. Go figger. Other than that, I know little about him... except that he is handsome, adorable, and incredibly well-behaved. (I keep wondering when the “real” basenji will come out of hiding.)

I’d been looking for a companion for Maggie for over 3 years, one who met all the criteria: boy-dog, old enough to be compatible with couch-loving Maggie, definitely not dominant, likes cats, and so on... in short, a good fit for the household.

And lo and behold, now he’s lying beside me here in the den. Maggie loves him to bits, the cats are snuggling him, and he is behaving like he’s always been here.

Vincent, Maggie, and I (along with cats Nutmeg and Robert) thank the BRAT folks who sheltered, fostered, coordinated, and ultimately popped crate-shy Vincent into the family van and drove him all the way to Toronto: Kathy Ambrose, Deb Tipton, and Linda Webb Hilliard. They are amazing, caring people.



New Genetic Study Gives Nod to Basenjis As One of Few Remaining Ancient Breeds

By Karla Schreiber

A recent study by top canine and human geneticists* supports the premise that Basenji fanciers have believed for many years: Our dogs are different from most other breeds, and have a unique and ancient genetic origin that is revealed through a careful study of canine DNA..

The study, published in May, 2004, compared the DNA of eighty-five purebred dogs to one another, and determined that contrary to prior belief, individual members of each breed cluster together in the vast majority of instances. Modern breeds are, per the study, more genetically distinct than previously believed. In fact, the degree of genetic diversity across all breeds included in the study was as great as the genetic diversity of the human population as a whole. However, genetic diversity within breeds is very limited due to closed gene pools, or what the study calls “the breed barrier rule” – which discourages out-crossing between breeds. As a result of years of inbreeding on common ancestors, most breeds existing today can be specifically identified as distinct from any

other breed by virtue of current canine DNA testing.

Of greatest interest to Basenji fanciers, the study also compared the DNA of purebred dogs (including Basenjis) to an amalgam of DNA samples of eight gray wolves from China, Oman, Iran, Sweden, Italy, Mexico, Canada and the United States in an effort to determine which breeds are most highly related, genetically, to existing wild canids. The results of this aspect of the study were surprising. The breeds with DNA most identical to the wolf DNA are Shar-Peis, Shiba Inu, Akita, and Chow Chow. These four breeds clustered together and are genetically similar. The next “break out” breed was the BASENJI, standing alone. Following the Basenji, are the Alaskan Malamute and the Siberian Husky, clustered together, followed by the Afghan and Saluki, clustered together. Other ancient breeds, according to the study, include the Samoyed, Tibetan Terrier, Lhasa Apso and Pekingese.

All other breeds included in the study are significantly different, genetically, from these “ancient” breeds, and are more similar to one another than to any of the breeds with DNA more closely resembled wolf DNA.

A quote from the study puts these findings into perspective:

“A subset of breeds with ancient Asian and African origins splits off from the rest of the breeds and shows shared patterns of allele (genetic) frequency. At first glance, it is surprising that a single genetic cluster includes breeds from Central Africa (Basenji), the Middle East (Saluki and Afghan), Tibet (Tibetan Terrier and Lhasa Apso), China (Chow Chow, Pekingese, Shar Pei), Japan (Akita and Shiba Inu) and the Arctic (Alaskan Malamute, Siberian Husky and Samoyed). However, several researchers have hypothesized that early pariah dogs originated in Asia and migrated with nomadic human groups both south to Africa



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Four-Legged Dog Jog a Success

Dorothy Westerman

Northern News Services – Yellowknife dogs are jumping for joy after tallying the annual North West Territories SPCA dog jog Sunday.

The four-legged jog throughout the city raised almost twice the amount it did last year, says Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals president Janet Pacey.

“We raised \$6,503.75 – almost \$3,000 more than last year,” Pacey said.

Despite rainy weather, more than 100 people and their pooches gathered at the Yellowknife Community Arena for the event.

Prizes were rewarded in various categories.

The waggiest tail went to Tuk the rescue dog; friendliest dog was Matilda the Fort Smith border collie spaniel mix; Cowboy performed the best dog tricks; Pierson the Boston terrier had the best snout; the best dressed dog was Aurora the Yorkshire terrier, and Buster the pitbull had the sexiest dog legs.

People, too, were recognized for the efforts they made collecting pledges.

Shauna Miller raised the most money: \$1,1014.50. 2nd was Marianne Wasylcia who raised \$710 and 3rd was Karen Lajoie – \$310.

During this year’s event, money was also collected by participants for hurricane Katrina victims.



Kennedy Weber had Kinein, a Basenji, well dressed for the dog jog in a bright red raincoat.

and north to the Arctic, with subsequent migrations throughout Asia.”

The study also provided some startling information about breeds that, until now, have been considered ancient – the Pharaoh Hound, Ibizan Hound and Norwegian Elkhound. DNA analysis does not support this conclusion. These breeds have been “...recreated in more recent times from combinations of other breeds. Thus, although their appearance matches the ancient (hounds), their genomes do not.”

As Basenji fanciers have known from the outset, our little native African dogs are ancient and

unique – and now the science of genetics shows us just how ancient and unique they are. It is a privilege and a challenge to act as guardians of an ancient breed – a breed that pre-dates the vast majority of “purebred dogs” and harkens back to the earliest years of human civilization. And with that privilege and challenge, comes increased responsibility, for breeders and owners alike.

*Genetic Structure of the Purebred Domestic Dog, Science, Vol. 304, Issue 5674, 1160-1164, 21 May 2004, by H. Parker, L. Kim, N. Sutter, S. Carlson, T. Lorentzen, T. Malek, G. Johnson, H. DeFrance, E. Ostrander, and L. Kruglyak.

***Read the Science article in its entirety at:<http://www.akcchf.org/news/press/releases/2004/dogbreeds.pdf>*