

Welcome to our Keegan's Magic student newsletter! Each month, we will share training tips, training philosophies, student achievements, general announcements, and other great information. We hope you enjoy!

Trial Behaviors: What Is a Q to You?

This is the first in a series of articles that address what I consider proper trial behaviors, such as earning personal Qs, entering trials, supporting your fellow competitors, being a good volunteer, and balancing your own competitive nature. This month's article focuses on what I call a "personal Q."

I honestly don't remember when I first heard the term "personal Q," but it is an important part of my agility vocabulary. Put simply, a personal Q is unique for every team. I consider a personal Q to mean that I accomplished a goal I set for me and my dog.



Hart and I earn personal Qs when he nails his weave entry on the first try or I connect with him between every obstacle on the course. Clever and I earn personal Qs when she runs happy and fast or stays fully engaged with me when we enter and exit the ring.

Personal Qs have little to do with running the course correctly or earning a qualifying score toward a title. They might even mean that you sacrifice your "real" Q to earn a personal Q. Personal Qs are for you and your dog, and no venue, organization, or judge can take them away.

As I've mentioned before, Hart and I have difficulty with weave poles at trials. At a recent USDAA trial, the Steeplechase course we were running had two difficult weave pole entries. Hart not only nailed both weave entries on the first try, he ran so fast that I barely kept up with him! This was the first time he performed both sets perfectly at a trial, and I was incredibly happy about this personal Q.

As we were exiting the ring, another competitor approached us and said, “Great run, but he missed his A-frame contact.” Earlier that day, I told that same competitor that Hart’s running A-frame performance was about 90 percent accurate in trials. Since I was so happy about our personal Q at the weave poles, it really didn’t matter to me that we didn’t earn a qualifying score. And because I had no idea that he missed his A-frame contact, I appreciated that she told me before I saw the score.

Years ago, I can remember feeling discouraged while running Keegan, my Border Collie. We were having a lot of handling problems and, in many runs, one little mistake kept us from qualifying. I remember telling someone back then how I felt, and they told me to stop complaining. In their opinion, if I couldn’t consistently run clean, I shouldn’t be competing at all.

I thought about that conversation many times over the next few years. I decided that person’s attitude was a reflection on the venue – that maybe its qualifying requirements were too strict, and I would qualify more often and go home with more ribbons if I tried a different venue. That was when I realized I needed to set personal goals for me and my dog instead of blaming the venue or measuring my success with ribbons.

By setting achievable goals, I feel like I’ve accomplished something significant with my dog. Now, those personal Qs are a critical part of my agility career and the ribbons are just icing on the cake.

So, go out there with the best dog in the world and gather up those personal Qs!

[Class Schedule](#)

The next 4-week session started the week of June 26. Class dates may be adjusted due to unforeseen circumstances.

- **Advanced Agility:** Tuesdays 8:00-9:30 am and Wednesdays 8:00-9:30 pm (\$68/session or \$22/drop-in)
- **Intermediate Agility:** Tuesdays 6:15-7:15 pm, Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 pm, Thursdays 6:30-7:30 pm & 7:45-8:45 pm (\$60/session or \$20/drop-in)
- **OneMind Dogs Inspired Handling:** Thursdays 8:00-9:30 am (\$68/session or \$22/drop-in)
- **OneMind Dogs Foundation:** Tuesdays 7:45-9:00 pm (\$136/8-week session, no drop-ins)

Private lessons available on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Ring rentals are also available for students. Please contact Maren directly for scheduling and availability.

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Accomplishments & Brags

This is YOUR section of the newsletter – where our students can share their accomplishments with their dogs, including titles, placements, breakthroughs, etc. Please send us an email at keegansmagic@gmail.com so that we can celebrate your achievements with all our students!

Congratulations to the following students:

- Maren Baldwin and Hart earned their Open Agility Preferred (OAP) title in AKC Standard in Arcadia.
- Elaine Rinicker and Jaxs earned their PAX (Preferred Agility Excellent) title in AKC in May.
- Diane Gailit and Skylar attended Papillon Agility Nationals in Punta Gorda and earned 7 out of 9 Qs. They earned Qs in Excellent JWW, Open Standard, Time 2 Beat, and FAST, with multiple placements and high in class. They also earned Open High in Trial both Saturday and Sunday.
- Lauren Gomez and Dancer Qd in 8 out of 9 runs at CPE Nationals, with eight 1st placements and one 2nd placement. They also went High in Trial in their category for both Standard and Games classes.
- Ellen Kurland and Lauren Gomez both ran Magic at CPE Nationals, and earned 6 out of 9 Qs with two 3rd placements and one 4th placement.
- Lisa Chavez and Ebony qualified in 5 out of 9 runs at CPE Nationals.
- All the Keegan's Magic students who attended CPE Nationals in Ohio: Ellen Kurland and Magic, Lauren Gomez and Dancer, Heidi Pitts and Molly, Sarah Follstad with Tango and Keno, and Lisa Chavez and Ebony.

Training Tip

What does connection mean? Connection means that you are looking at your dog. You aren't looking at the obstacle, your feet, the judge, the timer, etc. Looking at your dog can range from a sideways glance to full eye contact. However, because your dog has great peripheral vision, he doesn't always need to look at you to respond to your handling. Your dog will still see you even if he spends most of the time looking at the obstacles instead of toward you.

Do you have an article suggestion for our newsletter? Please [send us your suggestion](#) and we might include it in a future newsletter.

We recently had a suggestion to occasionally include short biographies of our canine students, so we will be contacting students at random to feature in an upcoming newsletter!