



Standard DockDogs® Big Air™ and Extreme Vertical™ Questions

1) What is DockDogs®?

DockDogs® is the independent governing and sanctioning body for regional, national, and international dock jumping performance sport for dogs. DockDogs® establishes the rules and standards of the sport, tracks and records results, and promotes the growth of its athletes, Teams, events, spectators, and sponsors. To that end, DockDogs establish and review under committee direction DockDogs® Rules and Policies which are reviewed and updated annually. If you would like more information about these DockDogs® Rules and Policies, please see its website at <http://www.dockdogs.com>

2) How did DockDogs get started?

- a) The first year of the ESPN Great Outdoor Games in 2000, Big Air Dogs was promoted as a “filler” event. It was not an event that was expected to be very popular. But when the spectators began to number in the thousands and traffic for the event shut down a number of square city blocks, we knew we were onto something.*
- (a) In 2002, DockDogs as a company operation was established in order to develop standards and maintain credibility for our competitions. We also began developing our own qualifying events in order to maintain objective standards among the dog / handler teams who wished to participate. In 2002, we sanctioned six qualifying events. In 2005, we booked over 65 events and in 2008 we will be featured at more than 100 events and shows World Wide!*

3) Why are DockDogs Big Air events so popular?

- a) DockDogs is popular and growing fast:*
- i) Wall Street Journal published a full-length article that reported that the DockDogs Big Air competition ratings beat the X-Games*
 - ii) Jerry, the 2001 GOG Gold Medal winner, and Little Morgan, the 2002 GOG Gold Medal winner, were both voted a final nominee for the ESPY’s Outdoor Athlete of the Year.*
 - iii) Local DockDogs Clubs are being established all over the country to encourage people to continue in the grass roots of the sport and to assist in training. This continues to ensure more consistent competitors as well as bring a number of new participants to the sport weekly.*
 - iv) DockDogs habeen featured on ESPN, ABC, CBS and most local media in the markets we appear.*
- b) Why are we so popular?*
- i) People like to compete and people like to have something to do with their dog that doesn’t require loads of time and training.*
 - ii) Accessibility is key -- Anyone with a dog and a fetch toy can participate and everyone can appreciate the companionship we have with our pups. You don’t need a \$15,000 professionally trained retriever to compete at the national level.*
 - iii) Worldwide standards allow people to develop training programs that allow them to be consistent and to improve in addition to being ranked National against all other Teams across the Nation.*
 - iv) People love dogs. This is another way for people to enjoy the outdoors with their companions. There are a number of people that have told us that they didn’t do much with their dogs until they began jumping. We love it when we can get the dogs out of the back yard and become part of the family.*

4) Who can compete? Is this just for nationally competitive dogs?

- a) *“0” discrimination is our policy...to that we mean anyone can come out, register his or her dog and have a good time. We will track every official jump of all competitors in all our events and rank them nationally.*
- b) *There’s no age limits for handlers nor are DockDogs events limited to certain breeds. Any breed, from the smallest Chihuahua to the largest Great Dane is welcome at a DockDogs event. Any breed...any size...6-months or older.*

5) What does it take to become a top competitor?

- a) *Because we’re growing the sport so fast, there’s a lot of room at the top. The 2002 ESPN2 Super Retriever Champion, John Kline, came out and thought, “Hey that looks like fun, and I think my dog could do that.” So he signed up on game day and gave it shot. His dog Haley broke the existing World Record by jumping 23 ft 4 inches. Two days later, he and Haley were invited to the Great Outdoor Games in Lake Placid to compete as one of the best in world on ESPN. In 2005 a Greyhound Mix Named Country... yes Greyhound in water... jumped 28’10” and is the current World Record Holder.*

6) How do you qualify to go to the DockDogs® World Championships or other Major National Events?

- a) *The Qualifying Criteria combines consistency and distance by inviting the dogs who qualify for our National Championship Series or Tours which travel across North America including Canada and the United States and other countries. From here, each of these competitors must perform well in a format that is consistent with our Worldwide standards.*

7) How can you register for a DockDogs event?

- a) *Anyone can pre-register on our web site, www.dockdogs.com, up until a few days prior to the event.*
- b) *You can also register on-site the day of the event; please arrive at least one hour prior to start time.*

8) How is the event scored?

- a) *A certified DockDogs Judge will be on-hand to judge all events. We use a proprietary advanced digital video capture with digitally enhanced measurement systems software developed for use in Olympic events. The system very accurately scores each jump at the point where the dog’s tail-set or hind-end enters the water (where the tail connects to the hind-end).*
- b) *The system eliminates the parallax effect that can be a real problem for accurate scoring. Parallax is the distortion of your perception of an object based on your relative position to the measurement banner.*
- c) *DockDogs® has an exclusive use agreement with for the sport of dock jumping and has yet to have this technology matched anywhere else on the planet.*

9) How can people get started training their dogs?

- a) *The sport of Big air is a natural extension to having fun with your dog. We also introduce a new sport in 2005 called Extreme Vertical which is the “high jump for dogs. And then again in 2008 we have introduced the sport of Speed Retrieve which combines a run...jump...swim environment. No matter what your preference, you can play at home or participate in a DockDogs event in one or all of the disciplines.*
- b) *It’s like anything else in when training your dogs. You start simple and with one concept at a time. We don’t recommend that people jump young dogs on the land before they are a 12 to 18 months. You can begin water work much earlier.*
- c) *You start by getting the dog really driven for your chase object and get them used to driving into the water for it. Then you add a little platform a couple of inches off the water and work your way up to a 40 feet dock that is two feet off the surface.*
- d) *The keys to distance are just like a long jumper:*
 - i) *Speed or momentum*
 - ii) *Ability to hit the end of the dock, or optimal launch zone. Ideally you would like the dog to wrap his toes around the end of the dock.*

iii) Launch angle

- (a) The speed and angle of launch really work together. We've seen dogs use less of the dock; get slower speeds, but increase their distance because they are able to get the height that way.*
- (b) Other factors include: accurate throws of the chase object, keeping the dog on a straight run, distance of the throws, etc. Top trainers will take all of these things into consideration.*
- (c) Because of the explosive nature of the sport, dogs generally only have two or three full out jumps in them per day. So, we've begun working developing training techniques to have the dog change leads (like horses) in order to use slightly different muscle groups to get them through tough competitions.*

10) Where can I find more information about Big Air Dogs?

- a) Check out www.dockdogs.com for additional articles about training and getting started, a message board for additional tips and tricks, and much, much more.*
- b) Pick up an issue of DockDogs Magazine*