

OBEDIENCE CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS

So this is it;

today;

here and now;

the final of the obedience class championships and you are next in.

You can hardly believe it;

Here you stand in the collecting ring next to the main arena hearing the applause for the previous competitor, all dressed up in clean trousers, polished shoes, the gorgeous top you hunted for ages for now fitting perfectly, your hair washed and styled especially for the day. You glance down to your side, to your partner, all bathed and groomed for the occasion, coat shimmering in the light, eyes bright and shining with adoration and anticipation as he picks up your excitement through the lead, ears pricked and waiting for your next move, tail slowly waving as he sees your attention on him, tongue lolling out in a big happy grin. You've seen the round, you know you can achieve it and you are ready. You can feel the excitement in the atmosphere as it drifts in from the arena and washes over you.

This is it; your mind briefly drifts back to the day you won your passport to the semi finals, that glorious win back in the summer, how proud you were, how thrilled that you had both pulled it off, enjoying your friends delight and celebrations, the cakes at club and you smile at the memory.

Then the invitation to participate in the semi finals arrived, what a day that was, all the last minute training to perfect the finer points, how everyone rallied round to help you, to steward for you, to come along and support you and cheer you on. Then your elation at qualifying for the finals, how thrilled you were, how fabulous your doggy partner was, rising to the occasion and giving his all for you – it all seems so long ago, not the few short weeks it has been.

This is it, the culmination of all the weeks and months of training, the cold winter evenings, dragging yourself out to train when its so nice and warm at home, the frustration, the tears, the seeming endless practice to perfect the exercises, the joy at successes, however small, the delight and satisfaction at overcoming problems. The support of good friends and the comradeship at shows and training. The reason for driving miles all over the country, sitting in traffic jams. For getting up at 5am to get to a show for your early running order, days of soggy dogs and drenched waterproofs.....

You snap back to the present as the applause and cheering increases signalling the last competitor ending their round, they come out looking flushed and happy, hugging their dog and playing tuggy, then as if in a dream, you hear the announcer's voice announcing you and your dog and the applause starts up again, with whistles and cheers; you take a deep breath, look down into the bright, happy, expectant face of your beloved dog, tighten your hand on the lead and say "ok, lets go" and together you float into the light of the arena, your wonderful team mate bouncing by your side keyed up by your excitement and anticipation, towards the smiling steward who greets you and guides you in and you KNOW that, whatever happens, the next 5-10 minutes belongs solely and completely to you both, you are the stars in the arena.

Someone has to win and be crowned the class champion for this year and that team could be you.

Full details of the proposed Obedience Class Championships to follow very soon – watch this space!!