

## NOODGE: Small Ambassador Into the Great World of Agility

*Pritamo Kentala*



**O**N MARCH 6, 2003 AN AGILITY PIONEER left this world for the Rainbow Bridge.

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since the day I spent the last few hours of companionship with my one and only "roadside special," The Noodge Dog NATCH, V-MAD. It is a time that all of us dog lovers know we will face someday, but we always hope that somehow, someday, it will never come.

Noodge's life was one of those Cinderella stories. I found her 15 years ago wandering on a busy Seattle street, dodging traffic and dragging a chain behind her. I quickly pulled over and caught up with her, put her in my car and took her home. She was very stinky and dirty, so the next step was a bath in the kitchen sink. After a struggle, I managed to

get the collar off her neck. It was so tight, that I figured she must have "grown" into it. Then I waited for my husband to come home to see what I had found! We spent a few days looking for her owners without success. We quickly came to the conclusion that since she was not spayed or house broken, it was probably fortunate that she had broken her chain and wandered away.

Noodge got her name because she never stopped pestering me to pet her. A few days after I had found her, she was bugging me while I tried to put on my shoes. I thought to myself "Oh, you are such a noodge!" and the name stuck. For those of you that don't know, Noodge is a Yiddish word that basically means a pest. There were numerous derivations of her name such as — Noodgala and Noodgarina.

Eventually we concluded that she was most likely a Jack Russell - Chihuahua cross. She was nine inches tall and weighed about ten pounds. She had a rough coat that could be stripped, mostly white with red patches and a tail that wagged constantly like a little metronome.

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"I feel indebted to Noodge for her willingness to hang in there with me and learn these new skills in spite of my being totally clueless, klutzy and confused!"

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Noodge spent her first year or so with us as a much loved and pampered pet. Going on trips to the beach to run on the sand, sleeping in our bed at night — she clearly had found a good spot for herself!

Then one day, I saw a dog Agility event on TV. I think this was back in 1990 or so. Having competed in Obedience for years starting as a teenager, I was fascinated by this new activity to do with your dog. I started asking all around and then one day ran across a little index card on a bulletin board at a pet store. It said Agility classes would be forming and to call for information. Well, I don't have to tell you



Noodge shows her style in the weave poles.

*(Photos courtesy of Pritamo Kentala)*

