



JACK RUSSELL RACING – CATCH THE FEVER !

By Bob Franklin, CT

“What’s the boss up so early for? It’s not even light yet. Oh, Oh, he is starting to load the van. Are those dog crates they are putting in the van? The are crates !!! Oh boy, oh boy, we must be going to race somewhere today !! I had better start crying and barking really loudly so they don’t leave me behind. Hey boss, don’t forget me. I feel like running today. I really like racing. Oh boy, oh boy -- let’s go !!”

I could swear that is what my dogs are saying on a Jack Russell racing day. They all recognize the preparation and unlike normal mornings, the din gets louder and louder as these preparations progress. As much as I love Jack Russell racing, my JRTs obviously love it even more. At the race track, my ripped shirt, scratched stomach and stressed ear drums testify even more to the eagerness and intensity of the dogs when races are being run. Next to hunting or running in the woods, racing is the activity my dogs love the most.

At the JRTCA National trial each year, more than 250 races are run over an 8 hour span. About 300 dogs have the time of their lives chasing a foptail lure 70 yards or so down a fenced track (sometimes over hurdles) and through a 6” wide space in the barrier used to close the end of the track.

When it is all over, 128 ribbons have been won, six JRTs are crowned National Champions and another six are Reserve Champions. Then another 12 JRTs won still more ribbons and prizes in the special stakes races. Some of these terriers will have run 13 races that day and I personally will have walked or run at least 5 miles up and down the race track retrieving my dogs after their races. Both dogs and their handlers are exhausted, but oh what fun we all had.

Nearly 100 times each year in the USA and Canada this same Jack Russell racing ritual is repeated. On top of this, literally hundreds of JRT fun days are held each year around North America -- most of which include racing.

JRT racing doesn’t just happen. Specialized equipment is required, and lots of people are needed to organize racing. Elsewhere in this Farmcliff web site there are links to other articles describing in detail what it takes to run successful Jack Russell Racing. Even if you don’t plan on ever having a trial or fun day yourself, we encourage you to read these articles so you will appreciate fully the effort someone has gone through to make Jack Russell racing available for you and your JRTs to enjoy. We also hope that all of you will volunteer to help out doing the many jobs required for successful racing.

JRT racing is great fun and is very exciting to watch. However, never forget that it is only for fun and we should not get too serious about whether our terriers win. These terriers are just as excited as we are, but most of them really don’t care whether they win or not. They are just having fun racing and we must observe and benefit from their example.