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October 31,

Fur-flying weekend

Nearly 100 dogs compete in Speedwaggin' Flyball Tournament

By Bryan Gallegos
Free Press Staff Writer
September 4, 2006

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Bryan Gallegos/Free Press
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Lady eagerly yipped and squirmed to break free from her master's hold before the fur started flying at the DEO Speedwaggin' Flyball Tournament at the Orchard

Mesa Fairgrounds park complex on Saturday afternoon.

As a gentle breeze blew through the complex, the 5-year-old Toy Fox Terrier looked up at her master with her dark eyes as if to say, "I'm ready to run the wind."
She was set to run against a larger dog Tramp.

It was Lady and the Tramp. And in this race, Lady was no lady.

She was the last of four dogs to run for a team from the Front Range. When it was her turn, the little dog with short black and white fur broke loose from her master.

Though she had short legs, she ran with confidence. She easily cleared the hurdles, running as if she was the center of attention.

She was.

She blazed through 51-foot course like a school boy running for the last recess of the day.

And the little dog seemed to have little grin curled on her face, as if to say, "I told you so."

In this race, Tramp was no match for the little Lady. Though the bigger dog was faster, she held ont



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lead her team had built had built and crossed the finish line first just ahead of the fast-closing Tramp.

When she crossed the finish line, she leaped into her master's arms and laid her head on his long gr beard.

"We've been doing this for a while," said Dave Ginnow of Westminster.

She was one of nearly 100 dogs to compete in the three-day competitive dog tournament, sponsored DEO Speedwaggin" West club out of Palisade. There were 18 teams from Colorado, New Mexico, U and Wyoming for the tournament.

Flyball races match two teams of four dogs each, racing side-by-side over a 51-foot-long course. Ea dog must run in relay fashion and jump over four hurdles, trigger a flyball box, releasing the ball. The dogs must retrieve the ball and return back to the starting point over the same course.



Bryan Gallegos/Free Press
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The next dog is released to run the course, but can't cross the state/finish line until the previous dog has returned over all four jumps and reached the start/finish line. The first team to hall all four dogs complete the course without error wins the heat.

Dogs of all ages, shapes and sizes competed in the canine extravaganza. Some dogs ran with grace while others lumbered lil an old pickup in need of a tune up. They yelped and yapped while their masters clapped and cheered, doing whatever they could to h

Some dogs got special treats at the end. One owner gave her po a pouch of pet food. Another gave her puppy a shot Cheez Whiz.

"What ever works," said Steve White of Denver.

White wore a black pirate's hat as his 2-year-old collie, Arrghie, completed a successful run. He use rope-like toy to slow the pooch down. When Arrghie clamped onto the end of the rope, White playfull spun his dog in the air.

Lady got a hug. That was just fine with her.

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