

Search:

[Classifieds](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

October 31,

THE TRIBUNE

- [Local News](#)
- [National News](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [UNC Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Food](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Viewfinder](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

SPOTLIGHT



- [Special Sections](#)
- [In-Depth Reports](#)
- [Tribune Awards](#)
- INTERACTIVE**
- [You Pick The News](#)
- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Trib Blogs](#)
- [Media Center](#)
- [E-Edition](#)
- [RSS Feeds](#)
- [Grealty Blogs](#)
- [Grealty Boards](#)
- MARKETPLACE**
- [NC Yellow Pages](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [Coupon Book](#)
- [Top Jobs](#)
- [On The Lot](#)
- SERVICES**
- [Weather & Alerts](#)
- [Road Work Map](#)
- [Dining Guide](#)
- [Movie Listings](#)
- [TV Listings](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Public Notices](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Subscriber Services](#)
- [Email Headlines](#)
- [eNewsletter](#)
- [News Tip](#)

Dogs flash across track

Chris Casey, (Bio)
ccasey@greeleytrib.com
October 30, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Print](#) [Email](#)

The trill of a whistle occasionally slices through the cacophony of yips, yowls and ruffs. That's the first thing noticed when you step into a building hosting dog flyball, the newest canine sport sensation.

As you move closer to the action, the visuals take over: boards, balls and blurs. The blurs commence at the sound of the whistle.

Flyball, you come to learn, is a most egalitarian sport. All it requires is modest leaping ability -- the hurdle boards are about 8 inches tall -- and canines with a passion for the chase.

There was no shortage of either inside the Livestock Pavilion at The Ranch on Sunday. Twenty teams from Colorado and New Mexico competed in the two-day event, a prelude to the inaugural national flyball meet in Arizona next weekend.

Most of the 100-some dogs competing at the Ranch were border collies, which when released at the start of the course took off like springloaded shots. That was the case for Puzzle, a 3-year-old border collie owned by Dana Nichols, 37, of Greeley.

Similar to a track meet for humans, two teams of four dogs run head-to-head relays. The pooches cover 100 feet of track and leap over eight hurdles in about four seconds, including a rapid-fire pivot -- they grab a tennis ball from a platform -- at the halfway mark.

As Puzzle's race leg approaches, Nichols puts the dog's back legs on her feet as she crouches behind th

Dana Nichols, 37, of Greeley shouts before letting go of her dog, Puzzle, during a dog relay race in Loveland. The flyball Sunday included a variety of dogs from four states and 20 teams competing in the relay races.
XIAOMEI CHEN /
xchen@greeleytribune.com
[Browse Our Galleries](#)



[Click to Enlarge](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

Budget

Blinds

a style for every point of view

970.330.8844

FREE In-Home Consultation

Budget Blinds of NE Colo

[VIEW FULL AD](#)

Write the EditorAnnouncement
FormsNewspaper in
EducationNEWSPAPERSWindsorNEXTncThe FencepostAspenAvonCarbondaleFriscoGlenwood SpringsGrand JunctionLeadvilleRifleSnowmass VillageVail

starting line. When it's her turn, Puzzle is off in a flash. She and her race mates posted a team-best 17.3 seconds on the course today (the national record is 15.22).

"She runs a 3.9 (second split) consistently, which is pretty darn fast," Nichols said. "Most dogs will run close to a four."

While Puzzle comes from rarefied running stock, any dog can compete.

"Dogs don't have to be registered (as a breed) to do it," Nichols said. "Any dog from pounds or rescue can compete."

Nichols got into flyball after doing Labrador-oriented sports such as retriever hunting tests and obedience competitions. She said flydog's fast pace makes it exciting.

"It's the only dog competition that's a team sport, and I think that's a really fun part of it. You're obviously pulling for your own dog, but also for every dog on your team to do well," she said.

Not that the dogs need encouragement. Nichols said her dogs eye the competition in the next lane and more excited the tighter the race.

"They really kick it in if they're going against a fast dog," she said. "They like it when they have a challenge."

If you live here, you get it!

For the most up to date news and information in Northern Colorado, subscribe to The Tribune.

[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

[← BACK](#) [▲ TOP OF PAGE](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Code of Ethics](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Archives](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) [XML](#)

Visit our other [news and portal sites](#).

All contents © Copyright 2006 greeleytrib.com
The Greeley Publishing Co. - P.O. Box 1690 - Greeley, CO 80632