

## Dancing with Mudi

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Hungary is one of those few countries, which can take pride in having nine native dog breeds, more or less ancient ones. But there probably is only one among them, which still has the possibility to become a modern sport and working dog, capable of serving all needs of agility, dog dancing, obedience fans and people who simply want an intelligent and versatile canine companion. This is undoubtedly, the Mudi.

Many breeders like talking a lot about the glorious history of the breed, but there are voices louder and louder, saying that it is high time to think over the Mudi's future! Luckily enough, our favourite breed has not yet fallen prey to the money guided fashion, so, apart from some sad cases, the Mudi is still a highly viable breed.

In our country, there have been some promising attempts to find new jobs for the Mudi such as herding sport and a local competition series called „Age-group Working Competition for Hungarian Herding Dogs”. But many of the Mudi owners think that they should also take part in modern dog sports already existing, such as agility, obedience, (possibly IPO or Search and Rescue) and of course dog dancing.



Dog dancing is a very young sport and even younger in Hungary. The very first competition was organized by two enthusiastic agility fans in May, 2003. The call for the first Hungarian DD championship claimed that we are all beginners, so everybody is invited, whose dog can do any tricks. Eighteen determined competitors took part in that championship among which there were two of us Mudi owners, sporting five wonderful specimens of the breed, our “most loved kids”: Csikómajori Táncos, Szélvigyázó Garabonciás Cseles Tajna, Baromállási Nille Íjász, Szélvigyázó Garabonciás Cseke Tilk and Szélvigyázó Garabonciás Botond Dart.

I dare say, we defeated nearly everybody, only the Musical Freestyle category favorite, a talented bearded collie could get more points from the judges than we did. So the first Hungarian DD championship became a celebration of the Mudi, but also made us draw some consequences. (Statistics and DD competition results updated see below in Appendix)

According to the first experiences we found that the Mudi is probably one of the most perfect breeds for DD, mainly because he:

- basically is a herding dog, so he can not live without work
- is keen on listening to, and understanding his master
- has a very high motivation level (optimal case) – it is so easy to make him cooperate
- reacts very fast
- loves challenges
- has a very nice and funny way of learning – when you think you failed to make him understand a new exercise, next day you will

notice that he is doing extremely well, as if he had “jotted down ” the main points and then practiced secretly

- middle sized



Besides the advantages of the breed we also found some weak points, or simply points, which need a lot of care and attention:

- Today, the Mudi is becoming rather a soft dog. Although as a herding breed he was to deal with attacks by predators or robbers (certainly not on his own, but the Mudi should not run away in panic and look for shelter when there is some “action” around) his strong heartedness necessary for this job seem to be fading (or even getting lost in some lines) through the descending generations.

A few Mudi owners still describe their dog as someone who is unaware of his “moderate” size and thinks himself a huge and powerful pasha, but the tendency is definitely not that. This is not necessarily a problem, because a hyperactive, workaholic dog is impossible to live with but the balance between working abilities and the adaptability needed for city life is very delicate. In connection with DD, this means that the handler has to be extremely careful with training methods, because the Mudi often gives a very bad reaction to any “par-force” element in teaching. A strict

handler can make him lose his motivation and he finally gives up cooperation.

- Some Mudis with expressed fighting spirit (described above) tend to get overexcited during the training and a soft handler could have very serious problems in gaining control over the dog.
- As a herding dog working mainly with his “voice”, the Mudi tends to respond to frustration with barking. A fully developed barking habit distracts the dog’s concentration and is very difficult to cure

On the basis of the experiences we have gained so far, we could claim that dog dancing is one of the sports that definitely fits the Mudi. Of course careful and responsible breeding and determined, enthusiastic owners are all needed to make the Mudi an easy going pet, and at the same time a healthy, competitive and popular sport dog breed.

Piroska Hanga

Appendix: Scores and results of Hungarian DD competitions.

**Appendix I:**

## **1st Hungarian Dog Dancing Competition** **Budapest, 24. May, 2003.**

**CATEGORY: PAIRED FREESTYLE (two handlers-  
two dogs):**

Number of competitors: 3

WINNER:

Group: „**Raging Balkan**”

Handlers: Piroska Hanga, Ágnes Kovács

Dogs: Dart, Táncoş

Breed: Mudi

Technical score: 6,325

Artistic score: 7,725

Sum: 14,05

SECOND PLACE:

Group: „**Pepita**”

Handlers: Szilvia Tóth, Ágnes Pintér

Dogs: Cherry, Chicago

Breed: Border collie

Technical score: 5,625

Artistic score: 5,875

Sum: 11,5

THIRD PLACE:

Group: „**Wolf and Lamb**”

Handlers: Eszter Aczél, Nóra Karlyk

Dogs: Roger, Barney

Breed: German sheperd, Bobtail

Technical score: 4,85

Artistic score: 5,675

Sum: 10,525

CATEGORY: HEELWORK TO MUSIC (one handler-one dog, close work):

Number of competitors: 5

WINNER

Handler: Piroska Hanga

Dog: Tilk

Breed: Mudi

Technical score: 7,225

Artistic score: 8,3

Sum: 15,525

SECOND PLACE:

Handler: Veronika Reisz

Dog: Luca

Breed: Vizsla (gundog?)

Technical score: 5,55

Artistic score: 6,875

Sum: 12,425

THIRD PLACE:

Handler: Eszter Aczél

Dog: Brigi

Breed: Mix

Technical score: 6,15

Artistic score: 6,225

Sum: 12,375

CATEGORY: MUSICAL FREESTYLE (one handler-one dog, close and distant work):

Number of competitors: 5

WINNER:

Handler: Nóra Karlyk

Dog: Sherlock

Breed: Bearded collie

Technical score: 8,575

Artistic score: 9,1

Sum: 17,675

SECOND PLACE:

Handler: Piroska Hanga

Dog: Íjász

Breed: Mudi

Technical score: 8,25

Artistic score: 8,75

Sum: 17,000

THIRD PLACE:

Handler: Ágnes Kovács

Dog: Tajna

Breed: Mudi

Technical score: 8,025

Artistic score: 8,375

Sum: 16,4

## **3rd Pestújhely Dog Dancing Championship**

**Budapest, 22. May, 2005**

The 4th Hungarian DD competition, interesting because of the new category

**CATEGORY: MORE THAN SIX LEGS (two handlers-  
two dogs or tandem: one handler-two dogs)**

Number of competitors: 3

WINNER:

Style: tandem: one handler-two dogs – first time in Hungarian DD competitions

Handler: Piroska Hanga

Dogs: Dart, Íjász

Breed: Mudi

Score: 14,57

SECOND PLACE:

Style: Paired freestyle

Group: „Manfred Weis Dogtraining Danceclub of Csepel ”

Handlers: Eszter Aczél, Nóra Karlyk

Dogs: Brigi, Sherlock

Breed: Mix, Bearded collie

Score: 12,20

THIRD PLACE:

Style: tandem

Handler: Ágnes Kovács

Dogs: Saru, Beste

Breed: Mudi

Score: 11,45

**CATEGORY: HEELWORK TO MUSIC :**

Number of competitors: 3

WINNER:

Handler: Piroska Hanga

Dog: Dart  
Breed: Mudi  
Score: 13,14

SECOND PLACE:  
Handler: Anita Szilágyi  
Dog: Blondie  
Breed: Labrador retriever  
Score: 11,00

THIRD PLACE:  
Handler: Kata Kerényi  
Dog: Brandy  
Breed: Border collie  
Score: 10,82

CATEGORY: INTERMEDIATE MUSICAL FREESTYLE:

Number of competitors: 3

WINNER:  
Handler: Nóra Karlyk  
Dog: Sherlock  
Breed: Bearded collie  
Score: 18,72

SECOND PLACE:  
Handler: Ágnes Kovács  
Dog: Tajna  
Breed: Mudi  
Score: 14,39

THIRD PLACE:  
Handler: László Ormos  
Dog: Orci  
Breed: Schnauzer  
Score: 19,22

**Appendix II:**

## Statistics:

Four dog dancing championships have been organized in Hungary.

Number of handlers: 23  
Number of dogs: 32  
Number of mudis: 7  
Number of routines: 54

### Breeds:

- mudi
- pumi
- malinois
- mix
- german sheperd
- bobtail
- bearded collie
- border collie
- german gundog
- pincher
- kelpie
- schnauzer
- groenendael
- labrador retriever

### Mudi results:

#### Paired freestyle:

First place: 1  
Third place: 1

#### More than six legs:

First place: 1 (tandem)  
Third place: 1 (tandem)

#### Heelwork to music:

First place: 3

Musical freestyle:

Second place: 2

Intermediate musical freestyle:

Second place: 1