

# Sisters pooch wins dock diving competition

By Jodi Schneider  
Correspondent

High-flying dogs and loud music are what you get when you have a dock-diving dog competition at the Deschutes County Fair, presented by Xtreme DogSports (XAD) aka DogTown.

Mike Allen, emcee and known as mayor of DogTown, founded the competitive dog sports creation in 2003 and the company has gained momentum at fairs all over the West. Xtreme DogSports hosts dock diving, disc games, and K9X, which is a fast-paced run, jump, and grab ground-based sport for dogs with high energy to have a blast.

Allen said, “Our mission is to improve the lives of canines and our human XAD family and fans.”

Brian Fowler, Sisters resident and assistant superintendent at Aspen Lakes Golf Course, signed up his 3-year-old dog Benny, a chocolate Labrador retriever and Chesapeake Bay mix, last year with XAD in their “Give it a Try” program in Susanville, California. Benny “leaped” into the Pro Dog status and has excelled at rapid disk, speed disk, speed retrieve, and holds the record at 7 feet 6 inches in the dock diving high jump. Neither had experience with dog sports competitions and Fowler thought it would be a great activity for his high-energy pooch.

“I’ve been watching dog diving on ESPN for years,” Fowler said. “And one day Benny and I were hanging out at the Deschutes River with

family and I threw a ball out into the water off the dock for the heck of it and he really took off after it.

“I found Xtreme DogSports online in Junction City at a fair,” he added. “We went there and that’s where it all started. It was that first toss and jump that he showed a natural talent for water sports.”

Fowler grew up in Bend, graduating from Bend High School in the early 1990s. He joined the Navy, then had a variety of jobs until he landed at Crosswater Golf Course in Sunriver. He’s been with Aspen Lakes Golf Course for the last five years, and in the golf industry for nearly 20 years.

Allen noted, “Brian and Benny came in at the tail end of last season. It’s absolutely amazing for a dog to dock jump like that without any training at all. He’s a natural.”

Dock diving is an exciting canine sport that grows in popularity each year. All breeds are welcome, but many dock dogs are Labradors. It’s been around for a while and there are shows worldwide.

Dock diving, also called dock jumping, first appeared at the 1997 Purina Incredible Dog Challenge.

Xtreme DogSports revolutionizes dock diving by using a bumper. The event requires jumping out for length, jumping up for height, and racing from one end of the pool to the other and back (speed retrieve). During the high dive and long jump into the pool, the use of a bumper is important for reaching height and distance. To complete the high dive the bumper is moved higher over the water



Benny is ready to jump and grab the bumper.

PHOTO PROVIDED

after each dog succeeds in either catching it in their mouth or at least knocking it down off the magnets into the water and retrieving it.

Kristin Airoidi, marketing director for XAD, grew up in Central Oregon. She earned a degree in international affairs and has had various positions in the past from nonprofit to large corporations.

Airoidi said, “These dog handlers are competitive yet caring of their dog’s health and safety. Mike is inspirational, he’s all about motivation and praise. Mike emcees all the events and there’s a whole team who helps set up, take down and keep score.”

Last weekend, Fowler and Benny competed throughout the day at the Xtreme DogSports competition held

at the Deschutes County Fair.

Benny geared up for the 6 p.m. hi-jump competition held at the XAD’s big pool — and won first place jumping up to seven feet after his opponent was ruled out. He went on for fun and nearly made it to seven feet six inches.

Learn more about XAD at [www.xtremedogsports.com](http://www.xtremedogsports.com).

# Paving project resumes on Hwy. 20

Travelers using U.S. 20 over the Santiam Pass are reminded that a paving project resumed last Sunday evening. Paving is scheduled on Sunday nights from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. and Monday through Thursday nights 6 p.m. to 10 a.m.

Two-way traffic will be controlled with flaggers and a pilot car. Travelers should expect up to 20-minute delays. The project will be completed by October 31.

The project covers almost 14 miles from Santiam Junction in Linn County (milepost 74.5) to Jack Lake Road in Jefferson County (milepost 88.2).

Stay informed and know before you go by checking the latest road and travel conditions and traffic alerts at [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com) or call 5-1-1.

Motorists should stay alert and watch construction signs and construction workers in the work zone.

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