

Precision Poodle Performs

The canine's energy and agility are taking her to a national championship.



Lori Borrowman and her miniature poodle are preparing for the October competition in Missouri.

By JULIE PACE
The Tampa Tribune

TOWN 'N COUNTRY — When April, a 4-year-old miniature poodle, was young, her owner knew the energetic pup needed obedience lessons.

What owner Lori Borrowman didn't know was that those lessons would introduce the duo to canine athletics, a field that now has them preparing to compete for a national championship.

April and Borrowman were invited to participate in the Purina Incredible Dog Challenge's eastern regional competition in St. Petersburg in June.

They competed in two events: the agility course, where April placed third, and the 60-weave pole race, where she placed second.

That second-place finish won April a spot in Purina's national competition, scheduled for October in St. Louis. There, April will compete against five dogs from across the country.

The Purina competition is the first national event for April and Borrowman, who moved to the Bay area from upstate New York last year.



Tribune photos by CANDACE C. MUNDY

April won two medals in the Purina Incredible Dog Challenge regional event June 23-24 in St. Petersburg.

Canine athletics typically is dominated by breeds such as Jack Russell terriers and border collies, Borrowman said. The poodle, she said, doesn't get much respect.

"They're thought of as princesses," she said. "They don't have the best reputation as a working dog."

But April, who Borrowman calls a collie in a poodle's body, defies that stereotype. She attends training classes two or three nights a week, in addition to daily training in the backyard agility course Borrowman constructed.

Borrowman has realistic expectations for the national com-

petition, where April will compete against dogs with several years of professional experience.

"I'm prepared to come in last place," she said. "We just want to have a good time."

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