



RENE JOHNSTON/TORONTO STAR

Monet the Chihuahua walks the red cobblestone in the Distillery District yesterday wearing Doggles and lapping up the attention. The quirky Woolfstock continues today.

Fest for pups and their peeps

Stupid dog tricks, smart pet togs at Woolfstock

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STAFF REPORTER

Tensions were riding high yesterday at the Stupid Dog Trick contest at the third annual Woolfstock festival, a schmooze-and-shop extravaganza for dogs and their humans running all weekend at Toronto's Distillery Historic District.

Humans should be so stupid as the two Round 1 finalists.

Sammy is a yellow Labrador retriever and accomplished mathematician. Milo is a mini-dachshund who can catch a ping-pong ball in a baseball cap.

Both dogs had clawed their way past the competition to arrive at this moment.

Sammy woofed nine times when his owner, Jayne Greene-Black, brought him onstage and asked him to multiply three times three.

Milo, his jaws clenched tight on a baseball cap, used it to net a ping-pong ball on its second bounce.

It was left to the audience to choose a winner.

Each dog received wild applause, but Milo won by a hair.

The dogs declined interviews after the contest. But maybe the reason Sammy got licked was, in his master's words, "He doesn't know his fractions yet."

Among the other contestants:

★ Luthor, who did an imitation of bagpipes in his owner's arms

★ Zipper, the talking dog, who said, "Ow."

★ Gracie, who did doggy push-ups.

★ Simba, who lifted his leg and pretended to pee on his owner's jeans.

★ Simon and Max, the wrestling dogs who weren't in the mood to wrestle.

The Woolfstock festival, sponsored by the Star, Citytv and Le Royal Meridien King Edward, is in its third year. Other events this weekend include the Mr. and Ms. Canine Canada pageant and a doggy fashion show.

All in all, yesterday was a day of good, wholesome crotch sniffing and genital licking.

Kierra Forwell had her poodle Kya dyed pink for the big day. Kya's pink curls, courtesy of coloured hair mousse, won her a lot of attention.

"She loves it," said Forwell.

Kya also wore a pair of glasses — called 'Doggles' — that made her look strikingly like Gloria Steinem at her '70s best.

Rayna Pearlson, 10, and her French bulldog Dexter were lapping up the festivities. "I love the doggy clothes and toys," she said.

The best thing Rayna saw all day?

"The little doggy T-shirt that said 'Bum Sniffer.'"

Doggy products being sold on the amazingly poop-free cobblestones of the Distillery area included a doggy divan, doggy Christmas stockings, and a mesh shirt for dogs who aren't afraid of showing a little fur.

Even New Age dogs could pursue their alternative lifestyles at Woolfstock.

"The Holistic Blend, it's all natural," said salesperson Danielle Pelczynski. This is dog food with "real free range meats, vegetables, flax seed, brown rice, barley flour (and) cranberries."

Over at Pelczynski's booth was a banner that read, "Need a solution for one of these problems?" and listed excessive shedding, hot spots, bad breath, anxiety, gas and bloating.

All of which afflict this reporter.

"Take Seagreens Powder," said Pelczynski. "Seriously." She promised the doggy vitamin was safe for humans and would give them increased energy and a shiny coat.

Woolfstock organizer Marlene Cook told the Star, "It's absolutely phenomenal. I've never seen it so crowded before. The dogs are totally happy."

And while vendors had collared the majority of the fairground, Cook made a dogged effort to ensure the festival had room for non-profit animal operations like the Organization for the Rescue of Animals.

"We always want that component," she said.

Cook hopes the event will put to rest



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Yoda the chihuahua finds a hydrant and fires. It was a day of good wholesome whiffing, sniffing and licking.

the bad press dogs have been getting from the human community in a year in which Ontario moved to ban pit bulls.

"This just goes to prove there are a lot of good dogs around."

Woolfstock is free and continues today from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Round two of the Stupid Dog Tricks contest is today at 1 p.m. on the fairground's mainstage.