

An Unlikely Agility Dog

One man recounts a year on the agility circuit with his Shetland Sheepdog.

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When Robert Rodi first heard about agility, he was reluctant. Spending money, time and energy traveling to competitions each weekend did not sound enticing. But once he began to compete with his Shetland Sheepdog Carmen, he was hooked. And when Carmen is forced to retire due canine hip dysplasia, he was not ready to give up the sport.

In his new book “Dogged Pursuit: My Year of Competing Dusty, the World’s Least Likely Agility Dog,” Rodi chronicles his adventures with what he hopes will be his new champion agility dog.

Inspired by Carmen’s talent, Rodi hopes to find another dog to match her. With visions of an elegant Shetland Sheepdog who has skill and finesse, Rodi finds some potential on a Sheltie rescue’s website. But the dog he meets in person is not exactly blue-ribbon material. The scrawny, bug-eyed Dusty is definitely not what he had in mind, but he takes a chance anyway.

Unfortunately, Dusty’s appearance is the least of Rodi’s worries. The dog has both aggression issues on the street and serious stage fright in the ring. Still, Rodi is determined to make a happy ending of Dusty’s story – easier said than done.

From obedience class to competition, heartache to celebration, Rodi recounts their quest for glory with humor and passion. Find out how far they come and if Dusty is indeed championship material.

“Dogged Pursuit: My Year of Competing Dusty, the World’s Least Likely Agility Dog” is on sale now.