

## Back to Basics

Contributed by Tom Dropik at SportMutt April 2010

The Basics are the foundation for Fast, Effective learning throughout the life of our friends.

What are the basics? Sit, Stay, Come, Heal.

It's these basic skills that allow us to focus on the task at hand when working more advanced skills.

Take a look at the sport of Dock Jumping and the skills needed for Big Air, Extreme Vertical, and Speed Retrieve.

**Big Air:** Start Position, Stride, Speed, Lift and Hitting the End of the Dock.

**Extreme Vertical:** Mark the Object, Start Position, Stride, Lift, Extend, and Grab.

**Speed Retrieve:** Mark the Object, Start Position, Strong Dock Start, Lift, Swim, and Grab.

Each may seem fairly easy or insignificant, but when trying to bring them all together, it can be a challenge. So why complicate matters when working these disciplines. Why struggle with the Sit and Stay in Big Air when trying to work the Start Position on the dock. We all know that Hitting the End of the Dock takes a Start Position on the Dock that will allow your dog to stride hard and still hit the End. So make it easier for your pooch. Work the Start Point and Strides, Not the Sit and Stay.

Extreme Vertical and Speed Retrieve require a solid Mark on the object, you know, that object that is suspended out from the end of the dock and up off the water and was not put there by you tossing it there. Ya, that object. We all know that effectively training a Mark takes some repetitive ground work. Do your dog a favor and let him focus on the Marking and not weather he's bringing the object back to you or not.

See where we are going with this?

Don't let the Basics get in the way of Fast Effective Training. Allow a solid focus on the task at hand by having a solid grasp on the basics.

