

# Understanding the Belgian Vortex

By Linda Brady



## Vor'tex (noun)

1. *whirling mass*  
*a whirling mass of something, especially water or air, that draws everything near it toward its center*
2. *something overwhelming*  
*a situation or feeling that seems to swamp or engulf everything else*

## Belgian Vor'tex (noun)

1. *whirling mass*  
*a whirling mass that predominantly appears in the agility ring. It is described as whirling mass of black fur with smiling pearly white teeth which can execute the performance of 4-8 agility obstacles out of order in record speed as the handler stands in the of the ring helpless and feeling hopeless at any sign of a clean run or receiving a qualifying leg. It can be seen in obedience and herding also. The Belgian Vortex usually appears in the middle of an agility run after the dog has completed 4-5 obstacles with flawless execution of jumping style and speed and preceding the last 3-4 obstacles on the course that the dog also completes with flawless execution of jumping style and speed !*
2. *something overwhelming*  
*a situation or feeling that seems to leave a handler feeling like they have no control and that the dog they are watching does not belong to them. They are sure that someone switched their dog at the start line with another dog who is not trained as well as their dog.*
3. *whirlpool, Maelstrom, Whorl, Whirling Dervish*  
*-- all synonyms for this unusual behavior in such a well-trained agility dogs. Dogs that normally are steady, compliant, willing to go exactly where you want them to go, watching their owners for direction and guidance. Dogs that can run an excellent course at home or at a match with perfection.*
4. *cause of this behavior.*  
*Unknown at this time. Studies are being done in agility training centers and backyards all over the world. Drinking water is being analyzed. Vaccination schedules have been changed. Food is being served overcooked, undercooked, hard, soft and with or without supplements. Clickers are being traded in for bells and whistles. Collars are being tightened, loosened and widened. Leashes shortened, lengthened, fuzzy toys or tennis balls are being added to them. Old shoes are being traded in for new shoes with fancy names and large price tags, along with the lucky underwear and socks. Thyroid checks are being done. Astronomers are looking at the moon changes and fluctuation of the planets to see if the alignment influences the gravity of the earth which in turn pulls them into the Belgian Vortex. Club members are writing their National Clubs and asking their board members to pass a motion to donate money to the cause to find the cure.*
5. *cure*  
*At this time the only cure is taking the time to let them grow up, have patience in the process, more training and a positive approach to the game along with an extremely large sense of humor. If you can't laugh with them or at them, get another hobby!*