

# Sheep herding skills on display

**Michelle Daw**

JOURNALIST

FANS of sheep dog trials will have two opportunities to watch more than 100 working dogs and their handlers in action on Yorke Peninsula this month.

The Dogpro Plus Maitland Trial will be held at Maitland Oval from Thursday to Saturday, September 21 to 23, followed by the Dogpro Plus Paskeville Trial during the Yorke Peninsula Field Days, Tuesday to Thursday, September 26 to 28.

Merv Simmonds from the South Australian Working Sheepdog Association said both events would be three-sheep trials, requiring each competitor and their dog to put three sheep through a series of obstacles.

He said he expected about 25 competitors and more than 100 dogs at each event, including teams from Western Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales.

“We have attracted more handlers and more dogs this year because it’s been boosted by the fact the Supreme Australian Working Sheepdog Championships are being held in Strathalbyn from September 9 to 17,”

Merv said.

“For example, at the 2022 Maitland trials we had 19 novice dogs while this year we have got 35 novices, and in 2022 we had 45 open improver dogs but this year we have 75.”

Merv said sheepdog trials were becoming more popular with the general public as a spectator event which could be partly attributed to the success of the ABC TV series, *Muster Dogs*.

The judge at the Maitland trials will be former state champion, Anthony Ireland, Mundoora.

The Paskeville trials will be judged Milton Cross, Strathalbyn, who was a member of the Australian team which won the Wayleggo Cup in the 2022 in a trans-Tasman dog trial series against New Zealand in 2022.

The Maitland trial will be held between 7.30am and 6pm both days. Admission is free and lunch and refreshments will be available.

The trials at the Yorke Peninsula Field Days will be held between 9am and 4.30pm in the arena on the corner of West Road and Dowlingville Road.

For more information, go to [sasheepdogtrials.com.au](http://sasheepdogtrials.com.au).



**STEADY...** Ben Simmonds puts Gramer Dizzy Gillespie through his paces in the lead-up to sheepdog trials at Maitland and the Yorke Peninsula Field Days, Paskeville, later this month.