

The Invitational Week 86: Call Your Dog

Give us creative names for various pets. Plus winning 'improvements' on sports.

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and

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Hello. Just the other day, we woke up in the Invitational treehouse at 4 in the morning, and, with a barely coherent thought, decided: A funny name for a dog would be Honus Wagger

Pleased with ourselves, we wrote it down, and went back to sleep. Soon, in this indistinct state of quasi-consciousness, we woke up again to realize that a funny name for a pet goat would be

Baa-baa-ber-anne

And a parrot named

The Pittsbird Pirate

And, most importantly, that a funny name for an entire breed of dog would be

The Needlenosed Buttsniffer

That's when it became obvious to us, bleary-eyed in the treehouse, that we had a brand-new, never-before debuted, contest. It occurred because it also occurred to us that "the Needlenose Buttsniffer" was an entry from Erica Magram, in an unrelated contest from 1998. We hereby urge Ms. Magram, whoever and wherever she is, to become a paid subscriber to The Gene Pool, which allows her to enter, because we need her. And you. Subscribed

Okay, so.

For Invitational Week 86: Suggest a creative name for a pet — and any kind of animal can be a pet — as in the examples above. It can be a name for a specific pet, or a name for a breed. The field is open. You can add elaborating information if it makes your entry funnier.

Formatting this week: Start each of your entries — up to twenty-five in all — with the kind of animal, (e.g., "Dog:," not "A dog:") and, as usual, write each entry in a single line; i.e., don't push Enter in the middle of one entry. This will let us push a magic button and sort all the Dog entries together, all the Hedgehog entries, etc.

Deadline is Saturday, Aug. 31, 2024, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Sept. 5. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form.

[Click here for this week's entry form.](#) or go to tinyURL.com/inv-form-86.

This week's winner receives the stylish eyewear modeled below by some woman whom Google Photos [immediately identified correctly](#). Well, yeah, it's *Google*.



She can read a thousand limericks and her eyes don't glaze over! This week's prize. Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [eight nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

Jest a Game: Sports 'improvements' from Week 84

In [Week 84](#), in the midst of Olympic fever, pennant races, and the like, we asked for ways to make various sports more exciting or just funnier. But even the wackiest Loser ideas are

challenged to top one real-life fad, which is [this vomitous thing](#). We would like to remind you all that while this fad takes wings — and withers — people are starving in Yemen.

Third runner-up:

Auto racing: When they take pit stops, drivers should have to haggle with their mechanics over the cost of replacing the tires. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

Second runner-up:

Darts: Add a goalie. (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

First runner-up:

Cricket: This would be brilliantly smashing if we had everyone biff a googly and duff a squiffy widdershins, what? Good show! Bob's your uncle! (*Duncan Stevens*)

And the winner of the [Loserville sign](#):

Men's pole vault: Now the *aim* is to knock over the crossbar with your dick. (*Daniel Galef, Cincinnati*)

They Wuz Robbed: Honorable mentions

4x100 relay racers have to pass a one-pound beef jerky stick to one another and collectively consume it before the finish line. (*Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.*)

Chess: After every move, players switch sides. (*Neal Starkman, Seattle*)

Olympic swimming: Whenever **swimmers** pee in the pool – [and they regularly do](#) – the water around them turns the colors of their country's flag. (*Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va.*)

400-meter hurdles: Instead of carefully spaced hurdles, use ones that pop up randomly around the track at the last second. (*Terry Reimer, Frederick, Md.*)

Add a dunk booth to the **shot put**. (*Cheryl Davis, Pawleys Island, S.C.*)

All **boxing** must be done pantsless. — J.K. Rowling (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)

Make **the Olympics** great again by reverting to the traditional ancient Greek rules:

Compete naked, award leaves instead of medals, and sacrifice the losers to Zeus. (*Daniel Galef*)

Make routines on the **pommel horse** be done on an actual horse. (*Mark Morgan, Bethesda, Md., a First Offender*)

America's Cup: Add grappling hooks and cannons for Sail Like a Pirate Day. (*Kevin Dopart, Naxos, Greece*)

Raise the **balance beam** several feet and put a trampoline underneath it, so if the gymnasts fall, they can boing right back onto it and pretend that was the plan all along. (*Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.*)

Baseball: All runners must literally take a short stop when running from second to third. (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

Baseball: Before the game, a guest of honor yells at the umpire in a ritual known as the ceremonial first bitch. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

Baseball: Just put a football game on the Jumbotron. (*Diana Oertel, San Francisco*)

Basketball: No more squeaking shoes! Make players wear hospital socks instead. (*Pam Shermeyer*)

Bobbing for apples: Replace red apples with live blue crabs. (*Kevin Dopart*)

Soccer players are positioned *outside* the pitch, using long metal rods to slide and spin life-size replicas of themselves. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

Chess: Electrodes are hooked to each player’s brain and connected to a theremin, which plays the eerie sounds of their thought patterns. *(Marni Penning Coleman)*

Combine the **discus and shot put** into a new Olympic event, the shot putz, in which competitors whirl their unfortunate partners, the “putzes,” by their legs and toss them for distance. *(Howard Walderman, Columbia, Md.)*

Competitive eating: Use foods even grosser than wet hot dogs, like [live giant beetle larvae](#). *(Kevin Dopart)*

Competitive eaters must eat one and only one Lay’s potato chip. *(Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)*

Curling: Instead of brooms, players use leaf blowers. *(Neal Starkman)*

Replace the **baseball** with a tennis ball, and all the outfielders with golden retrievers. *(Sam Mertens)*

To maximize time for **Super Bowl** commercials — which are what millions of viewers mainly tune in for — change the 15-minute quarters to 60 one-minute segments. *(Jesse Rifkin, Arlington, Va.)*

Give Olympic **breaking** whole new meaning by holding the competition in an antique shop. *(Gregory Koch, Falls Church, Va.)*

Make **hockey** pucks three times as big — those little ones are almost impossible for fans to see. *(Mark Asquino, Santa Fe, N.M.)*

Horse racing: Races are over too fast. Change the rules to say the *second* horse across the finish line is the winner. *(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)*

NASCAR: To truly test their driving skills, have half of the racers drive clockwise and half counterclockwise. *(Pam Shermeyer)*

On **track relays**, the runners have to pass the baton while jumping through a hopscotch grid. *(Neil Kurland, Elkridge, Md.)*

Pickleball: Release a brood of cicadas to drown out the annoying sound of the paddles. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

Have **show jumping** contested by humans dressed in those two-person horse costumes. *(Jesse Frankovich; Tom Witte, mountain-climbing in California)*

Hockey: Put bars and a lock on the penalty box and allow players to attempt to escape before their two minutes are up. *(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)*

Soccer: Get rid of those invisible stinging spiders on the field, or whatever it is that’s causing players to suddenly writhe in agony for exactly five seconds and then recover. *(Duncan Stevens)*

Simplify the **triathlon** by having the competitors run through two feet of water while carrying a bicycle. *(Jesse Frankovich; Leif Picoult)*

Water polo: Players hit the ball with pool noodles while riding inflatable horses. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

100-meter dash: The athletes run on top of twenty balance beams laid end to end. *(Stephen Dudzik, Olney, Md.)*

The headline “Jest a Game” is by Jesse Frankovich; Neil Kurland wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, Aug. 24: our Week 85 contest to write limericks featuring words beginning hu- to hy-. Click on the link below.