Concordia Parish sheriff's Deputy Jay Sandifer, right, tries to halt 'Rudy' as the dog charges BR police Cpl. Bobby Glaser during training at a K-9 seminar. Glaser was playing a cooperative DWI suspect, and Rudy was not supposed to attack.

**K-9s show their stuff at seminar at Angola**

**By JAMES MINTON**
Baker-Zachary bureau

ANGOLA — A group of "bad guys" shot Deputy Jay Sandifer here Friday, stole his car and filed lawsuits against him, but Sandifer escaped with valuable lessons about his line of work.

The Concordia Parish sheriff's deputy joined about 50 other police dog handlers in the 10th annual seminar at the Louisiana State Penitentiary sponsored by Angola's Corrections Canine Association.

The seminar gives K-9 officers a chance to learn from their mistakes, said Maj. Bobby Oliveaux, association president. On the streets, an encounter with a dangerous criminal could have a very different result, he said.

Sgt. Lester David and Cpl. Bobby Glaser of the Baton Rouge Police Department, assisted by Bilexi detective Brad Jones, played the part of criminals as they ran Sandifer and his Belgian malinois "Rudy" through several traffic stop scenarios Friday afternoon.

"We're not trying to embarrass you, but I'm going to sue you for everything you own," Glaser told Sandifer after one encounter on a remote prison farm road.

"You let your dog bite me in front of all these witnesses after I had already given up," said Glaser, who was wearing a padded suit and playing the part of an armed robbery suspect.

"And I was videotaping the whole thing," said Oliveaux, panning an imaginary camera.

The two were half serious, half joking.

Glaser and David also took a few minutes to explain Sandifer's errors in each encounter and ways to improve his control over Rudy, who also bit Glaser when he was playing a drunken, but cooperative, driver.

In Rudy's defense, David said the dog reacted to Glaser's body suit, which is used in training sessions. If Glaser had not been wearing the suit, Rudy probably would have been less aggressive, he said.

Sandifer's most embarrassing moment came when he stopped Glaser, who was driving a "stolen" truck.

Glaser jumped out and started running, with Rudy and Sandifer behind him. The dog quickly brought Glaser to a halt, but Sandifer was shocked a few moments later when his patrol car reared to life and the driver fired blank rounds at the deputy.

David said the scenario tested whether Rudy could quickly apprehend the fleeing driver, whether Sandifer would take his keys when he got out of his car and whether he would think to check the "stolen" truck for a passenger.

Sandifer, as it turned out, left the keys in the ignition and didn't notice Jones hiding in the truck.

"I learned not to go past the other vehicle to go help my dog," Sandifer said later.

In addition to the instruction that the seminar's 13 trainers offer, the canine officers learn from each other, said Gerry Lapham, owner of K-9 Sentinel Inc. of Fayetteville, N.C.

"Just the common, everyday talk among each other carries a lot of weight," said Lapham, who's trained police dogs since 1959.

Lapham trains handlers and dogs for a variety of duties, but concentrated on drug detection work during the four-day seminar.

The number of canine officers in Southern law enforcement agencies is increasing as sheriffs and police chiefs overcome the stigma attached to police dogs for their use against demonstrators in the civil rights battles of the 1960s, Lapham said.

"Now we can have dogs for multiple purposes," Lapham said, noting that a drug dog can search a house or vehicle at least three times faster than people without disturbing property.

Lapham said an officer's job is not over when his dog finds drugs. "Everything an officer does he has to justify by presenting his case to a judge and jury," he said.

For that reason, Lapham emphasized the legal requirements for using drug dogs in searches and preparing for court.

"I help the handler teach the dog, but I also teach the handler the proper ways to present his case," he said.