



Obichaff

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Capital Dog Training Club of Washington, D.C., Inc.



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"This is the magic secret of dog training - lose control over yourself and you at once lose control of the dog. Your strongest and most irresistible weapon is iron patience." - **Albert Payson Terhune, Gray Dawn**

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In my short time as Editor, I've noted a glaring lack of diversity of species amongst the stories featured in the Obichaff. Year after year, issue

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**New Membership
Information**

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after issue, just filled with dogs. Where is the feline representation? After all, an estimated 25% of American households are owned by... sorry, I mean, own a cat. So, here's my proposal: an issue all about cats!

Kicking off the Cat Issue with my cat, Crookshanks, during a duration sit-stay practice session. He's really getting the hang of it!

Continue on for riveting articles such as, "Who says you can't put a CD on a cat?" and "Feline Agility: Turning Dogwalk into Catwalk".

If you've pushed through to this point, I hope you have caught on to my attempt at an April Fool's joke! Though I am sure many of us are also cat lovers, this space is strictly canine focused, and always will be!

Companion Dog Sports

An Overview and Intro

Since the formation of Capital Dog Training Club in 1938, the world of dog sports has changed dramatically. Formed just two years after the creation of the sport of Obedience, CDTC has been a source for all things AKC for nearly 100 years. Since that time, Tracking split from obedience into its own sport, Agility was established, and most recently AKC Rally has become a fan favorite. All AKC recognized breeds are eligible to compete in companion sports, as well as any mixed breed dog registered through Canine Partners.

Many of our members have been involved in their sports for decades, and some of us are brand new to the game! Whether you are new to the world of dog sports, or a seasoned professional, there is always something more to learn.



AKC Obedience is the oldest of the dog sports, starting in 1936 when the first rules were introduced and the first trial was held. Created to assist owners in training well-mannered canine companions, Obedience has evolved into a competitive series of tasks and titles that truly demonstrate the bond between handler and their dog. A dog receives a qualifying score when it earns more than 50 percent of the points for each exercise, with a total of at least 170 points, up to the coveted perfect score of 200.

There are three classes in the Regular Titling Path of Obedience:

1. Novice (CD) - consisting of both on and off-leash exercises, the Novice level has six components. The exercises are heel on leash and figure eight, stand for examination, heel free, recall, sit and get your leash, and a group duration sit stay and down stay. To obtain a **Companion Dog (CD)** title, teams must qualify at three registered obedience trials under at least two different judges.
2. Open (CDX) - containing a more complex set of exercises, the Open class requires teams to complete seven tasks, all off-leash. Those seven exercises are: heel free and figure eight, command discrimination (stand, down, sit), drop on recall, retrieve on flat, retrieve over high jump, broad jump, and stand-stay and get your leash. To obtain the **Companion Dog Excellent (CDX)** title, teams must qualify at three registered obedience trials under at least two different judges.
3. Utility (UD) - though the Utility class consists of only five exercises, they are complex and truly show a team's ability to work as a unit. The five exercises are: signal exercise (stand, stay, down, sit and come), scent discrimination, directed retrieve, moving stand and examination, and directed jumping. To obtain the **Utility Dog (UD)** title, teams must qualify at three

registered obedience trials under at least two different judges.

In addition to the Regular Titling path, there are Preferred and Optional Titling paths. Full breakdowns of each can be found on the AKC website. Perhaps the most popular of the optional titles is Beginner Novice. This is a great, entry level title to work towards if Obedience appeals to you. Beginner Novice requires three qualifying runs at trials under at least two judges, and teams must heel on leash, figure eight, sit for exam, sit stay while handler walks around the ring, and recall. There is more room for repeated commands than in Novice, so Beginner Novice is often a great way to gain ring experience for beginner handlers.

Registered dogs over six months of age can compete in Obedience Trials - so it is never too early, or too late, to start training!



Eleven years after the formation of Obedience as a dog sport, Tracking was split out into its own unique sport. Tracking is a great way to harness a dog's natural ability to sniff out human odor. Unlike Obedience, a dog need only complete one track successfully to earn any given title, of which there are five.

1. Tracking Dog (TD) - To earn a TD title, a dog must follow a track 440 to 500 yards long with three to five changes of direction. Owners follow behind their dog, holding a long leash, while the dog tracks down an article left at the end of the track left by a tracklayer. The track must have "aged" 30-120 minutes before the dog begins scenting the track.
2. Tracking Dog Urban (TDU) - An optional title, the Tracking Dog

Urban tests a dog's ability to track dropped human-scented articles in an urban environment.

3. Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) - A TDX title is earned by following a track that is at least three hours old, up to five hours old. The track is to be 800 to 1,000 yards and contains five to seven directional changes, with the additional challenge of human cross tracks.
4. Variable Surface Tracking (VST) - This test simulates a more realistic human search. In the event that a human was missing and needed tracking, they may have crossed multiple kinds of surfaces, including streets, inside buildings, and over other areas without greenery. The track is three to five hours old, and covers these varied terrains.
5. Champion Tracker (CT) - This title does not require a track, but rather is awarded to any dog who successfully completes all three tracking titles (TD, TDX and VST).

Like Obedience, registered dogs over six months of age, that are in good physical condition, are eligible to compete in Tracking.



Forty-seven years after Tracking became a recognized sport, the AKC recognized its next companion sport, Agility. With over one million entries a year, Agility is fast growing and well loved.

In Agility, a handler directs their dog through a series of obstacle such as weave poles, jumps, seesaws, tunnels, and more! Agility courses typically have between fourteen and twenty obstacles, and teams are timed as they race through the course. Prior to competing, dogs are measured to determine the proper height for their jumps.

Agility has over forty available titles! These range from Novice level titles, to Grand Champion.

A great way to get started in Agility is with the Agility Course Test (ACT) Program. These are entry level Agility events designed to ease beginner teams into competition Agility, and can only be obtained prior to a Novice Agility title. There are four possible ACT titles:

1. ACT1 - to obtain this title, teams must score two qualifying legs. Courses consist of 10-12 obstacles, including the A-frame, table, open tunnel, and jumps. The course must be completed in 60 seconds or less, and cannot have any dropped bars or missed contact. Teams may not attempt obstacles more than three times, and may not have more than three wrong courses.
2. ACT2 - teams working to obtain this more difficult title must score two qualifying legs. Courses are to have 11-13 obstacles, including the teeter, tire, A-frame, table, weaves, dog-walk, spreads, open tunnel, and jumps. Teams have ten more seconds to complete the ACT2 course so it must be done in 70 seconds or less, and cannot have any dropped bars or missed contact. Teams may not attempt obstacles more than three times, and may not have more than three wrong courses.
3. ACT 1J - this title is an entry-level jumper course. It contains the same requirements as ACT1, but the obstacles are only jumps.
4. ACT 2J - similar to ACT 1J, this is the more advanced jumper course. There are no additional obstacles.

To compete for an Agility title, dogs must be at least 15 months of age and registered with the AKC.



The most recent addition to the companion dog sport world is AKC Rally. Teams work together to navigate a course of anywhere from ten to twenty different signs. Each of these signs has a specific action to complete, represented by a drawing. Unlike Obedience, Rally competitors in levels are encouraged to speak to their dog and offer praise! Touching is not allowed, but unlimited verbal reinforcement is. Teams begin with a perfect score of 100, and points are removed for any errors. As long as teams retain at least 70 of those 100 points, they will receive a qualifying leg towards a title. Rally has five levels:

1. Novice - at this level, all exercises are performed on leash. Handlers can pat their legs, clap their hands, and use hand signals. There are ten to fifteen signs in a novice course, with exercises ranging from changing speed to full 360 degree turns. Teams must receive three qualifying scores to obtain the Rally Novice title. Once a team earns this title, they may choose to advance to Intermediate, or skip to Advanced.
2. Intermediate - the Rally Intermediate title is achieved when a team obtains at least three qualifying scores. Exercises at this level are all on leash; anywhere from twelve to seventeen signs will be present on an Intermediate course.
3. Advanced - all Advanced level exercises are off-leash. Like Intermediate, there will be twelve to seventeen signs present. There is also a requirement that an Advanced course contain at least one jump. Three qualifying scores land teams with a Rally Advanced Title.
4. Excellent - at this level, handlers are no longer allowed to clap their hands, or pat their legs to encourage their dogs; they are still able to offer verbal praise and encouragement. There are fifteen to twenty signs, and teams are required to jump at least

twice. All exercises are done off-leash. Three qualifying scores are required.

5. Master - the highest Rally title comes with the steepest set of requirements. All fifteen to twenty exercises are performed off-leash. Dogs must jump at least once. teams must received **TEN** qualifying scores to earn the Rally Master title!

Physically sound dogs over six months of age are eligible to compete in AKC Rally.

Interested in learning more about any of the sports featured here? Head over to [AKC.org](https://www.akc.org) to learn more about getting started.

Dread Pirate Michael

Submitted to AKC by: Shannon Hall



The Dread Pirate Michael is now almost four years old. One of my agility friends saw him in foster with a herding dog rescue group when my cattle dog Simon, who was another AKC canine partners dog and a wonderful therapy dog specializing in memory care patients, was fading fast from degenerative myelopathy. I kept my eye on him, knowing that I was soon to lose Simon and that with the pandemic tightening its grip on all of us, we were going to end up in quarantine. Sure enough, my sweet Simon headed to the rainbow bridge in my arms not long after, and I received a positive response to my adoption request for Michael. My teenage daughter and I headed

North to New Jersey to collect Michael from his foster home just 3 days prior to Maryland shutting down for quarantine. What an eerie trip up 95 north that was. Michael joined my Purebred Alternative Listing dog Connor, a Border Collie who ended up in breed rescue at 9 weeks due to being just too much herding dog for a pet home.

I've been doing dog sports since 1996, when I moved back to the mid-Atlantic after finishing graduate school in the southwest. I came home with an intense cattle dog bitch who had been found running wild in the desert, likely lost from a local sheep and cattle ranch. Never forget what your dogs were bred to do! Having been bred to hold a job and boss livestock around, this dog NEEDED a job. I was fortunate enough to find classes with a local AKC obedience club who knew what they were about. She was my first competition obedience dog and she preceded AKC's companion dog program. I kept at it and titled her through other channels. Two dogs after my challenging bitch, AKC started the companion dog program and I was so grateful.

Michael is your typical herding breed who loves to play fetch, to hike, and to hang out with his people. What a lover he is, and finds friends everywhere he goes. This might surprise folks who have never done therapy dog work, but he is honestly too friendly to make a good therapy dog. He brings joy wherever he goes though, and is popular in our agility circles. Here he is getting his MACH with the wonderful Sherry Jefferson at the National Capital Bearded Collie Club on 30 October 2022, and being celebrated by our friends at Capital Dog Training Club with a pirate themed MACH party.



CDTC's Agility Trial

Submitted by: Benita Bottom



CDTC is hosting our annual Agility trial at Carroll Indoor Sports Center **April 7-9**, and we would love to have our members, especially Agility students, come up to Volunteer.

Email our Trial Chair [Benita Bottom](mailto:Benita.Bottom@cdtc.org) if you can come or just come and find us at the event. The trial location is about an hour and 15 min. from the club. The judging program will be published soon on <http://www.clantyre.net/secserv/Agility/CDTC-2023.html>

Trial Site:
Carroll Indoor Sports Center
515 Old Westminster Pike
Westminster, MD 21157
410-857-5098
443-952-7668

See you there!

Labrador, No Longer

2022's Top Breeds

After 31 years as the number one dog breed, the Labrador Retriever has been officially removed from their top-slot by the French Bulldog. French Bulldogs, or Frenchies, as they are often affectionately called, have been steadily rising in popularity, especially in the last decade. The beloved lab hasn't gone too far though, just moving down to second place. Rounding out the top five, we have the Golden Retriever in third, the German Shepherd Dog in fourth, and the Poodle in fifth place.



These flat-faced dogs are a fan favorite, packing a lot of personality into their small frame. Described as playful, smart, and adaptable, it's no wonder the French Bulldog is well loved. According to standard, these dogs are to weigh under 28 pounds, making them a great size for city dwellers. French Bulldogs are brachycephalic, meaning they have a broad, but short skull, so caution must be taken in hot weather as they are prone to overheating. Coming in first for a reason, these bat-eared bulldogs make great companions.



Active, friendly, and outgoing. These are the words the AKC uses to describe the number one most registered breed for the last 31 years. Although they have been dethroned, the Labrador Retriever remains a top pick for sportsmen and families alike. Bred originally as duck retrieving water dogs, Labs are high energy and eager to please. They work well with handlers, and can be seen excelling in all areas of dog sports.

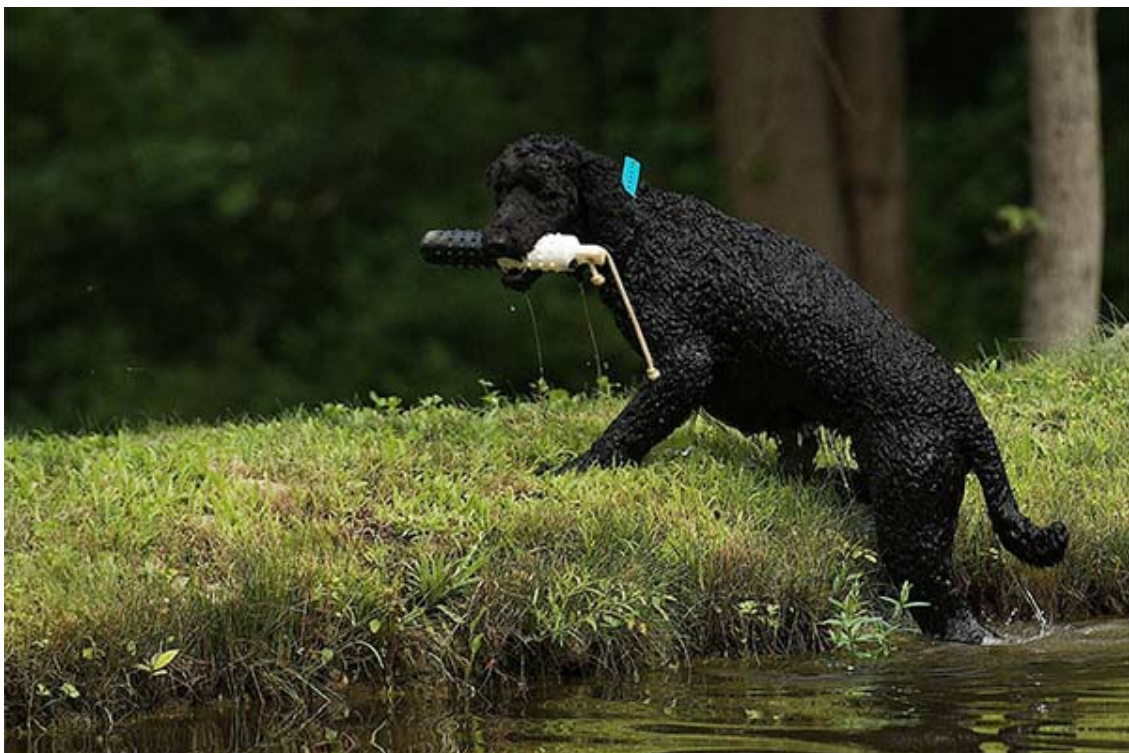


Golden Retrievers are Scottish gundogs famous for their beautiful golden coats. Intelligent, friendly, and devoted, Goldens have remained steadfastly popular since they were first recognized by the

AKC in 1925. Often seen as the quintessential family dog, Golden Retrievers shine in the ring and in the field.



The largest breed in the top five, German Shepherd Dogs are courageous, confident, and smart. This loyal herding breed is recognized for their ability to learn quickly. Though they are often associated with police work, these dogs were bred in Germany for herding work. They are great workers, often bonding quite closely with their handlers, willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish a goal.



Completing the list in the fifth spot is the active, proud, and very smart poodle. The poodle comes in three sizes: toy, miniature, and standard. Underneath their low-allergen coat and fancy appearance, the poodle is an athletic dog. This beautiful breed got their start over 400 years ago as a duck retriever. In fact, their popular rounded grooming style is not just fancy, it's practical. The puffs of fur intentionally styled to maintain warmth in the joints and vital organs while retrieving in cold water.

Curious where your breed fell on the list for 2022? Check out the complete list [here](#)!

CDTC AKC Outstanding Sportsmanship Award

Years ago the AKC started giving all affiliated clubs the opportunity to present annually to a member an award of “outstanding sportsmanship”. The following are criteria for which this award recipient at CDTC will be chosen:

1. The recipient will be **an Active Member in good standing** for at least five continuous years. The recipient will have contributed time and effort in support of club activities, for example classes, matches and trials.
2. The recipient shall have made a difference to the sport of performance dogs, for instance encouraging newcomers, promoting participation in club activities among members and furthering the knowledge and practice of dog training.
3. The recipient will have shown examples of sportsmanship in the following ways:
 - Refusing to compromise his/her commitment to the sport of performance dogs or the reputation of the club by injecting personal advantage or consideration into his/her decisions or behavior.
 - Spurning any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed.
 - Making always his/her chief responsibility the welfare of his or her dogs.
 - Refusing to embarrass the sport, himself/herself, or CDTC while taking part in activities.

The Selection Process:

1. Nominations from the membership will take the form of written supporting informative statements of 500 words or less, sent by mail or email to the AKC Delegate, Joyce Dandridge, no later than April 15th of the current year.
2. The nominations and supporting information will be published in the June Obichaff so members may vote.
3. Members will vote by written ballot at the general meeting in June. The CDTC President will select tellers to count the votes and the membership's choice will be announced at the meeting.
4. The presentation of the AKC medallion will take place at the Annual Awards Dinner in July.
5. Nominees must approve of their nomination.

If you are nominating someone, please check with them to see if they qualify and will accept the award.

Braggs

Martha Perkins reports:

Zander and Moose had a successful obedience weekend at the Maryland Sporting Dog Association trials (one of the largest in the country), March 3-5, 2023, at the Howard County Fairgrounds, which is close to the DC area. Zander earned all three Novice legs for his CD title. He performed quite well, except for his off-lead heeling, during which he was compelled to enjoy the scenery a bit. Moose performed enthusiastically and well, earning his third leg to attain his BN title. He only had a couple of points taken off, because of, well, handler error.

It was heart-warming fun to see about ten CDTC folks participating in the trial—as stewards and/or as handlers. Special shout outs to Marsha Iyomasa and Tom Tatham: Marsha served as a wonderful Co-chair of the Obedience and Rally trials; and Tom and Luna's obedience performance was an elegant, seemingly flawless sight to behold!

When I wasn't trialing, I stewarded for obedience and rally, learning a great deal about handling and the rules. The judges were attentive, professional, and kind to the teams—and the stewards. I was so fascinated by the fun, enjoyment factor of rally that I've signed up Team Zander for rally class.



Benita Bottom writes:

Antonio and Breeder Owner Handler Benita Bottom for everything we do in life earned our RN title on 3/19. This was DOTC's 80th plus Trial anniversary and we got an awesome insulated bag too for treats....Rally is fun so we will be doing more to support our Obedience heeling. Pending AKC approval Antonio is proud to be GCH TAGALONG'S SUPER MIDAS TOUCH CD, RN, NF, CGCA, TKN, WWD GROM



Pamela Ayres writes:

Last weekend Tippy celebrated her 18 month birthday by finishing her CD title. It was a battle of wills. Will she heel? Will she down? Will she follow the steward out of the ring? The only sure thing was she played the cute card as far as it would go.



Martin Goldstein writes:

Molly and I finally made our official Obedience debut with Beginner Novice on 3/19 at the Dog Owners' Training Club of Maryland trial in Westminster, Md.

We came in 2nd with a 193, missing 1st to a bumper run with a 194. :) Despite 'all the new' excitement, Molly maintained a solid modicum of attention...but forgot to sit at the end of the heeling exercise - in the same spot as all the other dogs; sniffing the spot intently. She was drawn back into the moment and sat politely when the judge said 'exercise finished'. Then, I did my part and forgot to ask the Judge how many points we lost

for that. Afterward, we happily floundered out, fumbling our gear to protect the ribbon which we have proudly hung in her display case.

It was a very nice trial, with a very nice Judge and staff, and a happy first run.



Delegate's Corner

By Joyce Dandridge

Reminder: I am accepting nominations for the CDTC AKC

Outstanding Sportsmanship Award. Rules for the 500-word essay are in this issue.

The following information was given at the Companion Events Committee meeting at the Delegates meeting in March:

- The RNC will be on June 16-17 and the NOC will be on June 18-19 in Wilmington, OH. To date there are 786 entries in RNC and NOC 117 entries.
- Rally Choice Class- All clubs licensed to offer Rally events have been notified. Clubs will be required to offer this class and it will be added to applications as of April 3, 2023, for all events occurring June 29th or later.
- Obedience and Rally High Jump Equipment was discussed by the AKC Board and voted down the recommendation that the high jump for obedience and rally be made with displaceable panels.
- The CEC voted to suggest to the AKC Board that breed parent clubs decide the jump height for their breed. They should choose if they want the three-quarters height. The AKC Board will make the final decision.
- The CEC voted to resubmit its recommendation not allowing three-legged dogs to participate in non-jumping Rally and Obedience classes. The committee documented its position on July 9, 2022 for jumping classes and that position has not changed for non-jumping classes. The CEC will send another letter to every AKC Board member and include expert comments from vets in the field of canine locomotion explaining their reasonings against allowing participation.
- The Agility Department will hold a New Judges Certification in Littleton, CO, September 15-17, 2023.

The Delegates reelected Charles Garvin, Steve Hamblin and Daniel Smyth to the AKC Board for another term.

Available Classes

[Class List and Registration](#)

Upcoming Classes/Tests/Trials

CGC Testing

CGC testing is scheduled for May 4, Aug. 5, and Nov. 4
Links to register: [May](#), [Aug](#), [Nov](#)

Classes

Register for all classes [here](#).

Puppy Kindergarten begins Sunday, May 21 at 9am.

Family Dog 1 classes start Friday, June 9 at 2pm and Tuesday July 11 at 7pm.

Family Dog 2/CGC classes start Wednesday, May 24 at 1pm and Tuesday July 11 at 6pm.

Heeling, Fronts, and Finishes
begins Wednesday, June 7 at 7pm..

Beginning Conformation starts Saturday, June 3 at 3pm.

Intro to Scent Work begins Wednesday, May 24 at 7pm.

Continuing Scent Work
Contact [Training Secretary](#)

Rally Novice/Advanced starts Saturday, June 3 at noon.

Rally Competition Class has space available.
Contact [Training Secretary](#)

We have a **Tricks** class starting Sunday, April 23 at 4pm

[Beginning and Intermediate Flyball](#) classes meet
Saturday evenings
contact [Dona Dwyer](#)

Permission is required to register for Beginner Novice, Novice, Open, and Utility Obedience classes
Contact [Training Secretary](#)

Fill out the [Agility Waitlist Questionnaire](#) to get on the wait list for the next available class.

Email [Training Secretary](#) with questions.

Training Groups

**Rally Training Group meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays
each month 1 - 2:30 pm.**

Conformation Group meets Saturdays. contact [Janice](#) with questions. Non-members pre-register and pay for dates you plan to attend [here](#).

Thursday Open/Utility Training Group (Goldstein @ 12:30pm). Contact [Burton](#).

Friday Utility Training Group (Cleverdon @ 1:00pm). Contact [Donna](#).

For information about **Freestyle Training Group**
Contact [Training Secretary](#)

Thinking of joining CDTC as a Member?

Active membership in the Capital Dog Training Club (CDTC) is available to an individual who:

- has completed no less than three (3) months as a training member paying the prescribed fees/dues, and
- whose dog has passed a Proficiency Test as prescribed by the Club with a dog that she or he has trained **or** has obtained a qualifying score toward an AKC title in any “dog companion sport” trial.

Active membership includes the right to attend meetings, vote, access to the Members Only section of CDTC’s website, access to seminars, events, announcements of the Club, the right to hold an elective office in the Club, and all other privileges and benefits of the Club (including 2 free classes per quarter). Visit cdtc.org/membership.

Email [Training Secretary](#) with questions.

Next Membership Meeting
April 11th, at 8:00pm



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