



2015

November 14th

On Top Dog day, November 14th, we first began feeling Fall in the air.....dark and crisp in the early morning hours,....but it was a trick! Just when we think relief from the blistering heat has at last blessed our doorstep, we find ourselves peeling off layers as the day brightens and jackets swap with sunscreen as the covering of choice.

So it was for our Top Dog team at Pikes Peak Park! There's something so comforting about pausing in the rush to set up canopies and crates - our little home-away-from-home - to watch the sun rise over the mountains in Norco. Camaraderie, excitement and anticipation fill the air as 14 Southern California Dog Obedience Council member clubs converge in the sunrise. The day begins and off we go!!

The first round of competition in Top Dog determines club standings. There are two rings for each level of obedience (Novice, Open and Utility). The top four highest scores in each ring are called back after lunch (in sunscreen mode!) to compete for individual placements.

Valley Hills was once again well represented by our members!

Serena Marshall and her Sheltie, Tru, had truly beautiful heeling in the Novice ring. Tru was so proud of himself that while he was set up for the recall, he forgot to listen for his recall command! Silly boy! Nevertheless, he finished 10th in his ring of 14, and 22nd overall out of 28 Novice dogs competing. Pretty darn nice!

Patti Rovtar and her Rottweiler, Pippi, were supposed to be the alternate Novice dog, but when Jinny Chow broke her arm, they were moved to a working spot. Gulp. Pippi worked hard to get

ready in the days leading up to the event, her green dog social butterfly mentality being her biggest obstacle! She only tried to visit a couple dogs that were outside the ring during her run....hahaha! She did a great job on exercises that were in the center of the ring! We are very proud of her effort. She came in 6th in her ring of 14, and 11th overall out of 28 Novice dog competing. She's "back in school" now!

Joyce Davis and Caper the Golden Retriever competed in Open. Her heeling was wonderful, her drop on recall excellent! There was just a small matter of going around the high jump when coming back with her dumbbell, but she is such an awesome working girl that this was just a momentary lapse and she is just as cute going around as going over! Caper finished 7th in her ring of 14 Open dogs, and came in 15th out of 28 Open dogs competing!

Laurie Burnam and Australian Shepherd Super Star Scusi really brought the goods! Beautiful heeling and other than Laurie's super powers, tossing the dumbbell all the way out of the ring... haha...all the exercises were done very, very well! Scusi even took a power nap during the group down - she must have known she would get a call back for the second round - and she DID! Scusi had an itch she just had to scratch during the long down in the second round, and sat up to scratch it 10 seconds before Laurie was back to her that kept her out of the individual placements - but when you have an itch you gotta scratch it! Scusi finished 2nd in her Open ring of 14 dogs, and an amazing 4th overall out of 28 Open dogs! Very good work indeed!

Paddy Warner and Kimber, an Australian Shepherd, were our alternate dog/handler team for Open, so she only got to do the group exercises. That was okay with Kimber, she's a grand old dame, and she did them impeccably! Good work, Kimber!!

Sharon Clarke and Standard Schnauzer Flynn were on our Utility team. Flynn is a joy to watch work. He's a beautiful jumper and heels very business-like - very appropriate for the working dog that he is. He was having so much fun he was a little too quick on the draw after his signal down and popped up into the sit. Sharon and Flynn were oh-so-close to a call back for the second round, coming in 5th in their ring of 14 dogs and 12th overall out of 28 Open dogs competing!

Paddy Warner and Stetson were our second team in Utility. Stetson had a beautiful and very consistent run, that is until he decided that pesky glove was just-too-darn-heavy and dropped it like a sack of rocks on his way back from the directed retrieve. No matter! The rest of their work was stellar and earned them a call back for the second round! Now any of you that know Stetson are aware of how much he loves to hunt down a buffet of any kind, and well, he ate half of Paddy's lunch when she wasn't looking. He may have had a little too much mayonnaise before going back in the ring and had a few hazy moments, bless his heart. Stetson finished 4th in his ring of 14 dogs and a super dog 5th out of 28 Utility dogs!!! Way to go, Stetson!

Last but not least, we have Patti Rovtar and Chili. As Utility alternate, Chili got to sit around all day. She snoozed, she ate treats, got a massage....and put a great effort into each of those things! She says the best part about the whole day is that she started the day with a 200, and went home with one, too!!

When all was said and done, Valley Hills came in fourth out of 14 clubs competing! Cindi and I are very proud of the team effort that gave our club this placement!

Until Next Year,
Patti Rovtar and Cindi Malchose
Top Dog Co-Captains