

# VHOC Come Out on Top at Top Dog 2011



Arriving to rain-soaked trial grounds didn't dampen the spirits of this year's dedicated Top Dog team. On Saturday, Nov. 12, the VHOC team turned in its best overall performance to date, ending the day in first place out of 15 competing obedience clubs. This is a first for VHOC; the club's previous best was fifth place overall.

In Top Dog, two dog and handler teams compete in each of the three levels: novice, open and utility. Teams accumulate points for each exercise successfully completed, rather than the "pass/failure" nature of a traditional competition. The top four dogs (from each of two rings) in each level advance to round two. Five of the six competing dogs on our team made it to round two.

Scores in round one determine team placements. Scores in round two count toward individual placements. Following round one, our team was tied with the Labrador Retriever Club of Southern California. It was the first team-score tie in the history of Top Dog. As a tie breaker, one dog from each level was called back into the ring for a heeling pattern (plus signals for the utility team). Ann and Trooper, Patti and Chili and Sharon and Pepper did our team proud. It was a close face-off, but team VHOC came out on top!

Individual Team Stats as Follows:

#### Novice

Ann Hills and Trooper – Finished round one in second place. Advanced to round two and the team run-off. Finished the day in second place overall out of 30 Novice dogs.

Gwen Lucoff and Pasta – Won a three-way runoff for second place in round one. Advanced to round two. Finished the day sixth overall out of 30 Novice dogs.

Debbie Lang and Quila – Novice alternate. Endured the group stays in the rain!

#### Open

Patti Rovtar and Chili – Finished round one in second place. Advanced to round two and the team run-off. Finished the day seventh overall out of 30 Open dogs.

Jody Duskhes and Dickens – Finished round one in fourth place. Advanced to round two. Finished eighth overall out of 30 Open dogs.

Evelyn Johnston and Eddie – Open alternate. Happily supported the team!

#### Utility

Sharon Clarke and Pepper – Finished round one in third place. Advanced to round two and the team run-off. Finished fourth overall out of 28 Utility dogs.

Stephanie Colman and Quiz – Finished round one in sixth place out of 14 dogs competing in ring #1.

Allison Pobirs and Quinn – Utility alternate. Helped keep us organized!

Special words of “thanks” go out to:

Laurie Burnam and Allison Pobirs – Our dedicated co-captains who made it all happen.

Lindia Brown and Joyce Davis – Who volunteered to take on our team’s assigned task of feeding the judges and trial workers.

Debbie Lang and Laurie Burnam – Who trekked out to Bloomington on Friday to set up our team’s headquarters.

Sarah Sykes – Team cheerleader and paparazza.

Carole Raschella – Designed the logo for the front of our always-popular team t-shirts.

Additional “congratulations” go out to:

VHOC member Teri Chang (and Edge) who, while competing on behalf of the Golden Retriever Club, earned first place in Nov. and went High in Trial with a score of 199.5.

VHOC member Bob Trujillo (and Mondo) who, while competing with Pasanita Obedience Club, finished fifth place overall in Nov.

Congratulations to the “top dogs” of the 2011 Top Dog Team!

