

Breed First - Working Dog Champion (WDCH)



WDCH Mar-Wils Markus V Hyden CD, CDX, TD, DD

John Cox

By John Cox

The 100th Birthday of the Saint Bernard Club of America (SBCA) marked the beginning of its Working Dog Trials. At these events the Saint Bernard is being promoted as a working breed to show their skills in the various fields of dog working with man. New titles were developed by the SBCA in the fields of carting, obedience and weight pulling. A dog earning THREE DIFFERENT working titles becomes a Working Dog Champion. For example, a dog has to earn THREE of four different titles available. The choice of the three earned titles is up to the owner. The choices are:

[DD] Draft Dog – carting and Novice obedience skills

[WP] pulling a weighted cart a timed distance

[TD] Tracking Dog – an AKC title. Dog follows a scent at least ½ hour old ¼ mile and indicates the glove at the end of the track

[CDX] an advanced AKC title which requires jumping and retrieving

Markus went from no titles to WDCH UDT DD in 10 months (not 10 months of age but in 10 months of showing). Besides the one-hour obedience class I had him entered in, he was only worked 15 minutes a day. The key was 15 minutes EVERY day. Not much time out of a day but it really adds up and progress is made.

After Kindergarten Puppy Class Markus was about 14 weeks old and ready for a little more advanced work, so we enrolled in a regular novice obedience class. As Markus was learning basic obedience, I also introduced him to Tracking as a pup. Puppies rely on their noses a lot at this stage of life and tracking is almost a natural. I laid short tracks of about 20 yards and put a leather glove at the end with a hotdog inside. On leash I would point to the track and guide him to the glove. He would find the glove and be rewarded with the goodie. As time went on the track was lengthened and aged, and the corners introduced.

News of the National Centennial Show was published, and along with the show would be the **first** working dog trial for Saint Bernards. Day one would be the **FIRST** Saint Bernard Specialty Tracking Test. The next day would be the **FIRST** Saint Bernard Draft Test and the third day would be the National Obedience Trial. I decided to get Markus ready for his Companion Dog (CD) title. My goal was to get two qualifying scores before the National and be able to try for the third and final score at the National. In January of 1988 Markus entered his first trial as the SBC of Puget Sound's Winter Specialty. He was working great in practice, but at the time of the show things fell apart. He qualified but not with a very good score. So it was back to the drawing board. I did not enter him in another trial until May. During the off time I went to fun matches and got him used to the show ring and what was expected of him. In May, we entered the SBC of Puget Sound's Summer Specialty, and he earned Highest Scoring Dog In Trial with a 194 for his second score.

Between January and May I stepped up his tracking practices to twice and sometimes three times a week. In late May Markus was certified and off went the entries to the SBC of America's Tracking Test.

Three weeks before the National I started asking questions about what the Draft Test involved. It was all new to me. Pulling a cart and basic obedience were the skills required. Markus had the obedience down so we tried the cart at a couple of practices. In three lessons he mastered the Draft work. This is where all that foundation of obedience was starting to pay off. The only "new" thing to learn was to walk with a cart behind him and back up. Once he got used to that, everything else fell in place. So we sent off our entries for the Draft test.

In the two weeks before the National I extended the practice sessions. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were two 15-minute sessions of obedience work a day. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays were tracking sessions and a little carting thrown in here and there. I do admit doing three things at once was a bit much, BUT this was the Centennial National and the FIRST Working Dog Trial. Things were looking good so I sent off the obedience and conformation entries.

We drove from Seattle to Denver, taking about three days, and arrived the day before the Tracking Test. We arrived early and I got Markus into the room to rest. With the next three days of work ahead and each event different, he was going to be challenged.

The first day of the National (June 15, 1988) arrived and I got Markus up and just gave him a dog biscuit for breakfast. I wanted a little something in his stomach to make him feel good but not a large meal to make him sleepy. It was off to the test where he did a fine job of tracking and became the **FIRST** and **ONLY** dog to pass a SBC of America Tracking Test, plus earning his first "leg" towards his WDCH title. It was back to the room for more rest and naps for tomorrow was the first Draft Test.

June 16th dawned and we were off to the first Draft Test. In a Draft Test one can talk and give extra commands in the obedience portion of the test. Knowing the SBCA Obedience Trial was the next day; I took advantage of this and gave lots of extra commands. Also, I poured on the praise to keep his attitude up. Markus was one of only two that passed the Draft Test this day and he placed first. He now had earned his second leg towards the WDCH. Two days and two titles. Life is good! It was back to the room for more rest and naps.

June 17th was the National Obedience Trial. I knew the obedience score would not be the best as he had had two days of work in the heat. I was just after a qualifying score and not concerning myself with the precision of the work. Markus came through once again earning his CD title. He became the **FIRST** and **ONLY** Triple Crown winner earning **THREE titles in THREE days!** Now only a CDX title and he would be a WDCH.

After returning to Seattle, Markus started class again for his Companion Dog Excellent (CDX) training. Four months later he earned his CDX title in three straight trials. The CDX was his third and final leg for the WDCH title. He was now the **FIRST** WDCH Saint Bernard just 5 months after the title was introduced. How proud I was of my dog!

Six months later he earned his Utility Dog (UD) title in 5 shows in 3 weekends. All scores were at all-breed shows with two Seconds and one Fourth prize.

Markus' conformation career was cut short when one testicle inflamed and had to be removed.

Markus' Statistics:

Born July 15, 1986

Sire: CH Opdykes Bo Jangles

Dam: CH Mar-Wils D-D

Breeder: Camilla Thorne

Triple Crown: 1 year 11 months old

WDCH: 2 years 3 months old

UDT: 2 years 9 months old

Lived to be 10½ years of age

WDCH
Mar-Wils Markus Von Hyden
CD, CDX, TD, DD

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**First Saint Bernard to Earn The Saint Bernard
Club of America's Working Dog Championship
(WDCH)**

October 8, 1988

First Saint Bernard To Earn SBC of America's Working Dog Championship Title (WDCH)

Saint Bernard National Archive's AKC Obedience/Performance Record For:

WDCH Mar-Wils Markus Von Hyden CDX TD DD

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CH	Titles	Date	Trial or Test	Track	NA	NB	OA	OB	UA	UB	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	UD	X	HIT	A	N	S	#	ME	
1988-WDCH		January 10, 1988	SBC of Puget Sound, WA			172.00																	
1988-WDCH		May 22, 1988	SBC of Puget Sound, WA			194.00					1						1			1			
1988-WDCH	TD	June 15, 1988	SBC of America # 1 CO Tracking	TD (1)																			
1988-WDCH	CD TD	June 17, 1988	SBC of America #15 CO			181.00																	
1988-WDCH	CD TD	September 17, 1988	Ephrata Moses Lake KC, WA					185.00														1	
1988-WDCH	CD TD	September 18, 1988	Wenatchee KC, WA					183.00														2	
1988-WDCH	CDX TD	October 08, 1988	Timberland Valley DFA, WA					188.00														3	
Class score averages and placement totals:					ERR	182.33	ERR	185.33	ERR	ERR	1	0	0	0	##	1	0	0	1	3			
Qualifying Scores:					7	1	0	3	0	3	0	0											m

Code A = All Breed Trial; N = SBC of America's Trial; S = Saint Bernard Independent Specialty
 # = Number of Qualifying Scores in the Classes of Open and/or Utility

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