



The FIRST “two” Saint Bernards to Earn the Draft Dog Excellent (DDX) Title

The Draft Dog Excellent (DDX) level of competition was first introduced (for Saint Bernards) at the Saint Bernard Club of America’s annual National Draft Test on the east coast. There were no entries at this level. The next draft test which offered the DDX level was at the Saint Bernard Club of the Pacific Coast’s Draft Test in Napa Valley California, and there were three entries at the DDX level alone! Two of the three dogs qualified for the DDX title on the same day, November 5, 2011. Since draft tests are not a timed event (like Rally or Agility), it was determined that both DDX titles would share the spotlight. Terry Popish wrote, *“Wendy and I both earned the DDX title on November 5th at the SBCPC Draft Test. There was some “fun” debating over who was first to earn the title--Wendy was entry #2 and Tundra was #3 but Tundra finished the Freight Haul first and Wendy finished second but I think that we both decided to share the title of the “first dogs” to earn the DDX title.”*

Congratulations go out to:

**Snowy Pine's Tundra CD GN RN RA RE
NAP OAP NJP OJP DD TDD DDX**

**WDCH Stones One Hit Wonder of Yixy
CD CDX RN TD DD DDX**

Their stories and photos are on the following pages...

Breed First —Draft Dog Excellent Two Title (DDX2)



**Snowy Pine's Tundra CD
GN RE AXP AJP NFP
DDX2 TDD**

By Terry Popish,

Tundra became the first Saint Bernard in history to earn the DDX2 title (Draft Dog Excellent 2) on September 26, 2012 in Midway, UT at the 2012 Saint Bernard National. At the time she earned this title it was not recognized by the SBCA, it has since been changed from "Re-Qualifying" to an additional title signified by the number of qualifications following that title level.

I was very disappointed that her qualification at the DDX level was not acknowledged at the National or by the SBCA especially since she was the only DDX qualification in the National Draft Test. So, I am glad that she is receiving the recognition now.

Tundra earned her Draft Dog Title on May 21, 2010 in Selma, Oregon. My goal had always been to earn a Team Draft Dog Title. My other Saint had already earned his Draft Dog title, so now we could take the team test. On October 30, 2010 in Healdsburg, CA we earned our Team Draft Dog title.

I was so excited to hear that the Working Dog Committee had been working on a Draft Dog Excellent Test. I had no idea what would be expected of us. I knew that we would need to carry more weight so I just keep conditioning my dogs and practicing different maneuvers. The final regulations for the new Excellent Draft Test were released on September 14, 2011.

The 2011 Saint National in New York was the first to offer the test but no one attempted it. I asked the Saint Bernard Club of the Pacific Coast if they would offer the test at their draft test in November of 2011 and they said yes. On November 5, 2011, three dogs attempted the DDX test (two of the dogs were mine) and two dogs passed. Tundra was the first dog to successfully complete the entire test earning her the very first Draft Dog Excellent title in the country.

I entered both of my Saints in the DDX class at the 2012 National hoping that my other dog "Hummer" would pass and allow us to compete in the DDX Team Division. I had both dog's using a travois instead of a cart for this test. I wanted to do something different. The judges were not sure how to judge the DDX with a travois (no one had ever attempted it before). One of the judges asked why I would want to use a travois instead of a cart? The answer was, "because I could"! I was not even sure if the "360-degree wheel spin" could be done with a travois. We learned that a very controlled side step was needed to make the spin. We worked very hard practicing the back up as well (it feels very different to the dog compared to a cart). We modified the travois to allow for the 10-foot backup and wheel spin working on different surfaces. The travois wanted to dig into the ground during the "backup" and slide sideways during the "wheel spin". Our modifications worked out great for the test and Tundra preformed all of the exercises flawlessly.

She is a true working dog and she always gets the job done. Hummer did not pass the DDX test but I am still hopeful that one day I can enter in DDX Team Division. I practice all of the time with travois and the dogs as a team. I know that we can earn the DDX Team title.

Snowy Pine's Tundra
CD GN RE OAP OJP DDX TDD
Terry Popish



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November 5, 2011