

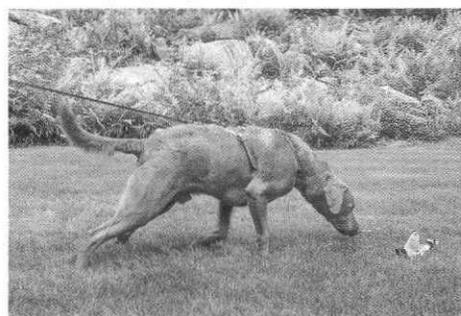
First Chesapeake VCD4

Chesapeake First! On April 7, 2012 UCDX CT Eastern Waters' Sea Zephyr, VCD4, RE, NF, WD, CGC finished his UDX to become the first Chesapeake to earn the VCD4 designation from the AKC.

A Versatile Companion Dog title (VCD) is a derived title that requires a dog to title in Obedience, Standard and Jumpers Agility and in Tracking. The number designation indicates the level that the dog has titled at. The lowest level is a VCD1. Only a VCCH (Versatile Companion Champion) is a higher level than a VCD4. To earn a VCD1 a dog must have earned a CD in Obedience, its NA & NAJ (or NAP & NJP) in Agility and a TD in Tracking. For a VCD2 the dog must earn a CDX in obedience, in agility an OA & OAJ (OAP and OJP) and a TD. To earn the VCD3 a dog needs a UD in obedience, in agility an AX and AXJ (AXP and AJP) and a TDX in tracking. For the VCD4 the dog must earn a UDX in obedience, MX & MXJ (MXP & MJP) in agility and a VST. A VCCH dog has earned its OTCH in obedience, MACH in agility and a CT in tracking.

For a dog to earn a VCD title at any level is an accomplishment. But the higher the level, the more amazing it is. It takes a remarkable dog to reach the highest levels of the VCD program. According to the AKC, as of March of 2012 only 18 dogs of any breed have ever earned the VCD4 title. Zephyr is the 19th dog to do so. To earn his VCD4, Zephyr had to earn 16 titles (4 in each of the venues that the VCD is derived from). He truly is a remarkable dog!

The VCD4 title requires a dog to work consistently at the highest levels of competition. While the VST title requires only one pass to earn it, it generally takes several attempts to pass a test. The pass rate at each test is very low, quite often with no passes. As of mid-April of 2012 there have been fewer than 325 dogs of any breed to earn a VST. Of those, FOUR are Chesapeakes! The other titles – UDX, MX and MXJ require 10 passes (or legs) to title. The UDX Obedience title is earned



by qualifying on the same day in both the Open and Utility classes at 10 different trials. To earn a MX or MXJ leg, the dog must run the course perfectly. No mistakes or time faults are allowed.

Zephyr earned the first title needed for a VCD title with his TD in September 2006 at 15 months old. The rest of the titles needed for the VCD1 title took a bit longer as our dogs don't jump at full height in training until they are 2 years old. He ran in his first agility trial in late 2008. His VCD1 was earned in March of 2009 when he finished his Novice Agility Jumpers title, his VCD2 was earned in October of 2009 when he finished his Open Agility title, and his VCD3 was awarded in June of 2010 when he earned his Agility Excellent title.

We've had a great time working on this title. Zephyr and I have traveled all over the Country, from CT to CO to NC and most of the places



Copyright (C) 2009 by Jeremy Kezer

in between. We've met, trained and competed with many wonderful people and made a lot of friends. Along the way Zephyr was the first Chesapeake to have ever made it into the AKC National Tracking Invitational. Zephyr not only ran in the test, but also passed! He is one of the very few who have ever done so. He has earned multiple High in Trials and High Combined in Obedience. He's beaten a few Border Collies for placements in the 24" agility classes, which for a dog that outweighs the competition by 30 or 40 lbs. is pretty decent.

I've been asked which I thought was the hardest of the 4 venues to title in. I would have to say that the hardest would be whatever one is the last title that you need to earn your VCD4. For us that was the UDX. Walking into that second class of the day, usually Open, was always nerve wracking because first you had to get through the individual exercises and then the dreaded out of sight stays! Often with hours in-between classes! Luckily for me, if he was going to miss an exercise I usually knew before the stays that we hadn't made it that day. Zephyr would probably tell you that the hardest venue for him to finish in is obedience. His first love (after the field) is tracking. He loves agility and has fun in obedience.

Zephyr isn't done yet. He is half way to his MACH (Master Agility CH) and his JH, which was put on hold until he earned that UDX, as well as part way to his Obedience Master title. He gets to go back out and play in the field again, run in agility and, if this fall we are still having fun, we'll play in the Obedience and Rally rings again.

Z and I could not have done this without the help and support of my wonderful husband, Gary who has laid almost as many tracks as we've run, built and hauled agility equipment and been judge, steward and "as big a distraction" as possible for us while training in obedience. We've had wonderful trainers and mentors in many of our venues and of course we've had our own cadre of angels watching us from above – Joanne K., Janet H., and Millie B. As always our thanks go out to Betsy & Rupe Humer for breeding this incredible boy and letting us have him.

Thanks for owning us Zephyr, you are the best!



American Chesapeake Club

BULLETIN

Official Publication of the American Chesapeake Club

www.amchessieclub.org

May/June 2012

