

FRONT & FINISH[®]

January 2014

The Dog Trainer's News

Quadruple Champion Rick!

owned by Gerianne Darnell

CH OTCH MACH HC UUD URO3 C-ATCH ARCH Skyland Ricochet UDX6 OMB
VER RAE HXAsd HXBsd MXS MJB MFB T2B, EAC OJC WV-n TN-N NCC, RL3
RL1X RLVX

Photo by Pix 'n Pages, Photography

In This Issue:

Catherine Zinsky

Move-up or Transfer?

Marilyn M. Miller

STress - Part 2 Dillon, Rally Excellent

Lori Drouin

Duration



Cover Story

Quadruple Champion Rick!
by Gerianne Darnell

copyrighted American Kennel Club



Rick is my fourth Border Collie. I got my first Border Collie in 1979 (OTCH Schuyler King TD, Can CD, 1979-1992). I had seen a little blurb in "Front and Finish" about a sheepdog trial at Living History Farms near Des Moines, Iowa, and my husband and I were completely enthralled watching the Border Collies herd that day. I couldn't wait to get a Border Collie! Skye was followed by Riva in 1999 (CH CT OTCH MACH HC VCCH UCD UAg1 Outburst Chasing Butterflies UDX RAE TDX VST HXAsd HIBd HSBs MXB NAP MJB OJP, STDsd, PDI, EAC EJC OGC TN-E WV-O TG-N ASCA RS-N, CL3-SFH) and Raymond (Rick's sire) in 2001 (DC UROC URX UCDX ARCH Ettrick On Edge UDT BN RAE VCD1 HXAsd HXBd HIBs NA NAP NJP, RL3 RL1X RLVX).

Rick was born in 2004. I knew he was going to be special before he was born, as he was the son of my beloved Raymond. I am Rick's co-breeder, and I was there the day he arrived. I remember as Rick came out I thought, "There he is!" Rick's puppy name was "Baby Ray", as he looks a LOT like his dad. That said, he has an entirely different personality than his dad. He is much sweeter, much more easy-going as a pet, and he actually has a conscience, something Raymond never really developed! I must say, early on I made many comparisons of father to son, and as a youngster, I didn't think Rick measured up to Ray, as I wanted him to BE Ray. I will always be grateful to my herding trainer Kent Herbel who straightened me out one day when I was whining "But he isn't like Ray." Kent told me I had three options: get rid of him, send him off for training, or accept and embrace what RICK brought to the party. It was the best training advice I think I ever received. From that day on I trained RICK, not Raymond's son, but RICK.

My first Border Collie Skye was only able to herd a few times in his life, as herding opportunities were few and far between back in the 1980's. When I got Riva in 1999 I knew that I wanted to herd, but I had NO clue what was involved (it was a Border Collie, didn't they just "do" it? HA!). When Riva was about ten months old I was able to have a lesson with Kathy Knox, and then I began many years of private lessons and seminars with both Kathy Knox and Kent Herbel. Raymond (bred by Kathy) came along only a year and a half after Riva, so I was a beginner trying to herd with two VERY different types of Border Collies. Riva had a nice natural outrun, but she didn't like to stop in the pressure. Raymond had more natural "moves" than Riva, but he was SO much dog, really too much dog for a beginner. I'd so love to have him NOW as a young dog. Rick was my third herding dog, and he would have been the perfect dog for a beginner, it's a shame I didn't get him first! Rick was always very quiet and kind to his sheep, and he has a beautiful feel for sheep and pressure; he is a fabulous farm dog. But sometimes Rick didn't have enough push and bite for some sheep, although he really did suit me more than Raymond did. I finished Herding Championships on all three dogs, and also got in to raising sheep.

Rick did all of his training in the various sports simultaneously. But the only two Championships that we showed for at the same time were the OTCH (2012) and the MACH (2013). Rick had more than one weekend where he picked up OTCH points and a Double Q at the same time. As Rick got older, I rarely trained him in agility, but we trained in obedience a LOT (still do!). He needed virtually no maintenance training in agility, which was a plus as far as keeping him sound. Rick's first Championship was in conformation in 2007, and he earned

his Herding Championship in 2008. I started training Rick in tracking this past summer and he shows TREMENDOUS promise, he may be my best tracking dog yet! I really do think tracking is my favorite dog sport.

My greatest training obstacle with Rick is probably also his greatest asset: his extreme desire to WORK WORK WORK. Rick has been described as a "lot of dog" when it comes to obedience and agility, and sometimes all of that drive and desire does not translate in to a precise obedience performance! Rick is the most consistent, qualifying obedience dog I have ever had; his qualifying rate is just amazing. That said, I have never been able to get a consistent heeling performance from him. If you looked up "forged heel position" in the dictionary it would say "See Rick" :-). As Rick can usually front and finish quite well, there were many obedience runs where we would get a 197 ½ with two points off on heeling, sigh. I also always found it interesting that the exact same performance could be scored a 192 ½ by one judge and a 197 ½ by another judge the next day! Rick seems to frighten some judges ;-). There would have been a whole lot more 199 performances if Rick and I had ever agreed on what "heel position" really meant! And, as he gets older and our time together becomes even more precious, I find I don't care all that much; just being in the ring with him is the best reward.

I think the most incredible week I had with Rick was at the 2010 Border Collie National Specialty. Ever since I had heard of the Janet Larsen Versatility Award, offered every year to the most Versatile Border Collie at the National Specialty, I wanted to win it. I have always loved to crosstrain in lots of dog sports, and I thought a competition like that was right up my alley. Rick had an AMAZING week at the National. In the earlier part of the week he placed in Advanced A sheep, qualified in Advanced A ducks, had several Q's and placements in Excellent agility, and he won the Advanced B Rally class. We also competed in the Top Twenty Agility Competition. As the week went on, Rick just got stronger. Saturday at the National was also the first time I ever showed Rick in utility, and he darn near qualified, having a lovely run while only missing an article. Rick was also entered in Open B, but I really had no expectations, as it was only his fifth time ever in the Open ring, and there were at least ten OTCH dogs in the class. I thought I had had a pretty good run, but I was amazed and overwhelmed when Rick won the class with a 199, and then went on to win High in Trial. Later in the day, Rick won the Herding Titled class in conformation, meaning he placed in every venue available that weekend. Rick went on to clinch the Janet Larsen Versatility award, and I will always remember that wonderful week.

Rick NEVER has a bad day. Ever. He lives to work with me, no matter what the venue. He is completely and totally devoted to me. And I'm quite devoted to him as well! Rick also loves to snuggle. He is just a wonderful, mellow, sweet dog in the house; I think anybody who watches him work would never guess that, as his performances can be so over the top. I am also now very much enjoying watching Rick's eight kids excel in herding, obedience, rally, and agility.

Rick just turned nine years old. We are playing around in AKC preferred agility with no particular goals, just because he loves to show so much. In AKC obedience, I hope to finish Rick's Obedience Grand Master; he is currently working on his OM9, so I think that is realistic. In UKC obedience we are working on both his obedience and rally championships, and I am also working on various WCRL rally titles. And, our biggest plan is to continue to work on AKC tracking. Could lightning strike twice as Rick follows in the paw prints of my Quintuple Champion Riva? All I know is that I want to continue working with and showing Rick for as long as possible, as we both enjoy it SO much. I never want it to end.

I would like to thank Rick's co-breeder Sheryl Day, as without Sheryl there would have never been a Rick. I can not believe how fortunate I have been to have this incredible dog in my life.



FFX Applications Are Available

Write or email us to receive yours today!

FFX Application

P.O. Box 333
Galesburg, IL 61402-0333

Email: mailbox@frontandfinish.com

A thumbnail image of the 'Front and Finish Excellence Award Official Application' form. The form is titled 'Front and Finish Excellence Award Official Application' and contains various fields for personal information, contact details, and a section for 'My dog's achievements'. It also includes a section for 'My dog's training' and a section for 'My dog's personality'. The form is a standard application form with a header, a main body with multiple sections, and a footer.