



Using Non-Traditional Titles To Advance Your Dog's Skills - Part 2

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U-OCH February's Endless Love OMAX, UDX2, RAE, UD-C, TD1, TT, CGC ("Febree") performing the CDSP Utility scent discrimination exercise. In CDSP, this exercise is performed using 5 identical articles. Febree was the first dog to earn the CDSP utility title in the Minnesota area.

A really exciting part of the optional titling classes is that there is no prerequisite for entering them. A dog can enter them in any order and does not need any titles in order to do so. Thus, a dog with zero titles can enter and earn, for example, the Graduate Open (GO) title as long as it can perform up to qualifying standards! Additionally, a dog with a Utility Dog (UD) title can even go back and earn the Beginner Novice (BN). Whatever the dog and handler are capable of, need to work on, or desire is possible.

Handlers and dogs that have always wished to avoid the Group Stays can now do so and still earn a high level title (GO, VER). Handlers and dogs working through particular training issues and stages can have a class to have a chance to succeed in. There is now a more gradual progression of skill sets and mental readiness levels that did not exist before.

See the AKC rule book for full details
<http://www.akc.org/pdfs/rulebooks/RO2999.pdf>

Yet another exciting venue possibility is the Companion Dog Sports Program (CDSP)
<http://www.companiondogsportsprogram.com/> (formerly the St Hubert's obedience program). This program has been taken over by a new group and tweaked into something very exciting. Their titling classes are similar to the AKC/UKC programs with interesting twists.

There are no group stays at any level and small treats are allowed between exercises (see rules for details) as well as limited amounts of praise. While I know some will say that this makes the program too easy, take a look at the exercise

details on their website, because the levels are harder that you might think!

CDSP offers an OTCH as a pinnacle of achievement just like the AKC/UKC/CKC do. Additionally, dogs can earn Championships at the CD and CDX level by earning 10 scores of 185 or above after earning the title for that level. CD-CCH, CDX-CCH and a UDX title is also possible.

If this program is available in your area, it would be a great new venue to compete in as it enables you to earn titles in a relaxed atmosphere with slightly harder exercises but a bit more communication allowed than AKC/UKC/CKC does.

Dogs with obedience or rally titles from any other venue must enter the B classes. Dogs jump 3/4 of their height (broad jump is twice the dog's height) and there is a special allowance for veterans as well.

The CDSP classes, titles and exercises are:

- Novice (CD-C): heel on lead, figure 8 off lead, moving stand for exam, recall over bar jump, and an honor sit or down (handler's choice) on lead in heel position.
- Open (CDX-C): heel off lead, running broad jump, drop on recall, retrieve on the flat, retrieve over high jump, go out, turn and sit
- Utility (UD-C): signal exercise, scent discrimination (five articles only, one scented retrieved), directed jumping, directed retrieve (repeated twice - six gloves total), moving stand and examination, seek back (only in Utility B), and the Baseball bonus exercise which is a combination of a go out and directed retrieve (à la Retriever dog tests). A UDX-C can be earned after earning the UD-C by earning another six qualifying scores above the UD-C requirements.

The OTCH-C can be earned by accumulating 100 points based on scores earned from the Utility B class. I encourage everyone, regardless of their primary sport of choice, to take a look at the above programs from AKC and CDSP as a fun and interesting way to earn titles while working on increasingly difficult obedience skills!



Febree performing the CDSP Utility directed jumping exercise. In CDSP, dogs jump 3/4 their height for high & bar jumps and twice their height for broad jumps.