

# Recipe for a Quadruple Champion

By Anne Tyson with help from "Diesel" aka

TC CT Can VCh Can OTCh Regen's Rip Stop VDC2 UDX4 MH AX Can TD Can FDX SDX RDX VX6 NAVHDA NA1

So how do you go about earning tracking, field trial, obedience and bench championships on your Weimaraner? First you need the right ingredients. Then follow four simple instructions.

## **Ingredients\*:**

1 cup intelligence  
1 cup athleticism  
1 cup drive  
1 cup natural field ability  
1 cup sound conformation  
5 cups work ethic

\*see definitions on page two

## **Basic Instructions:**

*Step One:* Search for a puppy from parents with the above ingredients to maximize your chances of getting a puppy with the same abilities.

*Step Two:* Start training your puppy early for every venue; the earlier the better.

*Step Three:* Learn from many different people and use what works for you and your dog.

*Step Four:* Challenges and roadblocks must increase your resolve to succeed.

## **Detailed Instructions:**

*Step One:* Puppy selection.

Choose a puppy from a breeder who tests their breeding stock for working ability because work ethic, drive, intelligence and athleticism are just as hereditary as conformation. Ideally, the breeder will perform some type of training and/or testing on the litter between the ages of four and eight weeks and should have an idea of which puppies show the most working potential. Things to look for in a puppy – attention span; boldness; eye contact; coordination; pointing ability; natural retriever (meaning bringing things back, not just carrying them around); balanced & moderate angulation; problem solving.

*Step Two:* Early training.

Start right way with all training including shaping behavior for stay, recall, crate training, eye contact, tracking, retrieving, heeling, signals, stake-out; restrained handling, etc. Pups should 'learn how to learn' by ten weeks and the more they know before six months the better.

*Step Three:* Ongoing training.

Take advantage of learning from many different people in all different venues. Lessons, seminars, club training days, fun matches, books and DVDs are all great places to learn new skills and new training methods. Keep an open mind. I learned some very valuable training skills from a Schutzhund trainer and learned a ton about variable surface tracking from a Police dog trainer.

*Step Four:* Resolve.

Do not let small challenges along the way derail your long-term plans. There will be issues that come up; training issues, time issues, resource issues, motivation issues and just about all other issues you can name. Use each challenge as a reason to be creative in thinking up solutions. For time issues, learn how to train in small incremental amounts – 10 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes after work, and 15 minutes before bed, etc. For training issues, get advice from others, read lots of books, experiment with different training methods until you find something that works. For motivation issues, find a friend to train with and/or set incremental goals to make the overall goal seem less daunting. Celebrate the milestones. Don't let the negative opinion of others sway your confidence in yourself or in your dog. Most of all don't quit! If you don't quit you can't fail.

**Definitions (as they relate to this recipe):**

*Intelligence* – ability to master training exercises with little repetition; propensity to generalize; problem solving skills

*Athleticism* – ease of movement, coordination, power. Relates to stamina, speed, flexibility, jumping ability and strength. Not related to show ring gaiting.

*Drive* – internal motivation. Not to be confused with work ethic.

*Natural Field Ability* – includes pointing style, intensity, nose, range, ground speed, retrieving, honoring, tracking, water love, etc.

*Sound Conformation* – structurally sound; within the breed standard

*Work Ethic* – desire to please; inclination to work for the handler. Not to be confused with drive. Some dogs excel in areas where they have tremendous drive but resist when asked to shape that behavior. This occurs sometimes in successful puppy/derby dogs that resist the breaking process. It also shows up in dogs that get ‘ring wise’ because they are not getting their reward (food/toy/praise) in the ring. Notice that the recipe calls for five cups of work ethic! Desire to please is the most important ingredient in the recipe because a dog with a great work ethic never quits.