

Top Scoring German Shepherd Dog For the Year 2011

By Dalene McIntire

The Top Scoring German Shepherd Dog award has been presented for four years now and is awarded each year for the previous year—we can't get the information needed until after the end of each year - to the GSD who earns the most points for their scores in the regular classes (Novice, Open, and Utility) at AKC all-breed and specialty shows/trials.

Interestingly enough, this year's winner was in fourth place last year for the 2010 award and in fifth place for the 2009 Award. And even more interesting, she was the 2009 Obedience Victrix at the National in Ohio that year. This definitely shows a consistency for high scores over this three-year span.

The name of the winner this year is Obedience Trial Champion, Obedience Victrix Zita vom Krummenhager See, UDX4, OM5 RN, owned by Shannon Shepherd. Shannon and Zita reside in Florida so aren't planning to make it to the 2012 National to accept their award this year (it will be mailed to Shannon). Another note: When Zita won the Obedience Victrix title in 2009, she had just completed her Utility title three weeks before that National.

The UDX4 title means after she obtained her Utility title she has qualified in both Open B and Utility (A or B) at the same show at least 40 times. The OM5 stands for Obedience Master which is earned by a dog earning a score of 190 or better in Open B or Utility B classes and must earn a total of 200 points based on a point schedule that runs from 6 points for a 190-191 score to 15 points for a 197-200 score. So the OM5 title means she has reached that 200 level 5 times. The Obedience Master title will be awarded for nine levels (each subsequent 200 points is another level) and then the tenth level earns a dog the Obedience Grand Master title.

The Obedience Trial Champion in front of her name is earned by a dog that already has a Utility title that has earned a first, second, third or fourth place ribbon in Open B or Utility B. In the 100 points needed for this title there is a further requirement of having to place first in Utility B (at least 3 dogs in competition), first place in Open B (at least 6 dogs in competition) with an additional first place in either Utility B or Open B: all 3 first places must be earned under three different judges and only one of these may be won at a specialty show.

What all this comes down to is in order to win these titles, a dog must be shown at a lot of shows and be consistent about earning high scores. This propensity showed early in Zita's career when she went first in the three shows it took her to earn her Novice and Open titles as well as first place in her qualifying scores for Utility.

To recap how the points are tabulated according to the scores earned by all German Shepherd Dogs in AKC Obedience Trials, in Novice, Open, and Utility, the chart below

shows how the points are awarded. Again, a big thank you to Cynthia Van den Berge for sharing the AKC Obedience Rankings information and a double thank you to Gina and Steve Grossman who once again came to my aid with their computer program and knowledge to tabulate the winners. No additional points are awarded for finishing a title or going High In Trial...it is strictly on scores.

Score	Points
200	8
198-199.5	7
195-197.5	6
190-194.5	5
185-189.5	4
180-184.5	3
175-179.5	2
170-174.5	1

The list below shows the top finalists for the 2011 competition year.

Placing	Dog's Name	Owners	Score
1	2009 OV OTCH Zita Vom Krummenhager See, UDX4, OM5, RN	Shannon Shepherd	280
2	Yorktowne Von Konigsdorf, UDX4, OM3	Jodie Johnson	198
3	OTCH Great Oak's Jaz It Up, UDX5, OM5, VER, RAD	Anne Morrison	183
4	Dante's Vita Nuova, UDX, OM1, GN, GO	Lizanne Kaiser	158
5	Sofia Von Milnerhaus, UDX	Alexandrette Spangler	149
6	Performax Atomic Tuco, UDX2, OM1, VER, RN	Shannon Canard	142
7	Genesis Brenna, UDX8	Susan Holland	122
8	Von Hauben's Hollywood Nights, CDX	Richard Hood	108
8	Heka Shining Brightly Vom Mika-Ashmead, CDX, GN	Kristin Brooks	108

9	DeBrut's Dreams of Glory, UDX, RE	Bridget Honan	100
10	Blackthorn's Liebe of Great Oak, UD, RA	Anne Morrison	99

Compared to last year, the top score was higher, but the majority of the other placings had lower scores. There were only three repeats this year. Genesis Brenna, UDX4 moved up to the number 6 position from 7 last year; 2009 OV Zita Vom Krummenhager See, UD, RN moved from 5th place last year to the very top this year; OTCH Great Oak's Jaz It Up, UDX5, OM5, RAE moved up from 10th place last year to 3rd place this year while also going from a UDX2 to a UDX5 and an OM1 to a OM5 - plus with her Blackthorn's Liebe of Great Oak, UD, RA ending up in 10th place, this made Anne Morrison the only person to have two dogs listed in the top ten. Job Well Done to all of you.

Shannon sent me the following about Zita:

"When I drove to the airport to pick up Zita, I had very high hopes for this girl. I had already started competing in obedience with my male, Novice A German Shepherd, but I was looking forward to starting obedience work with a fresh puppy mind. She came out of her crate and her little body was dwarfed by her huge ears. Fortunately, she grew into them pretty quickly.

"Zita has always been a serious working dog, even as a puppy. She learned obedience exercises extremely quickly and rarely needed to be shown something more than once or twice. She is one of the sweetest dogs I have ever owned and, by far, the smartest.

"We entered the Novice ring for the first time when Zita was two years old and, exactly one year later, she earned her Utility Dog (UD) title. Another 10 months of showing and we had our goal, an Obedience Trial Championship (OTCH). But we could not stop there. Zita loves to train and is upset if I leave home to work another dog without her. She continues to excel in the obedience ring and is an extremely consistent dog that qualifies almost every time in the ring. Slowing down some, but always ready to work.

"Along her wonderful career, Zita has won 12 High in Trial awards, 20 High Combined awards and has accumulated over 500 OTCH points. We were fortunate to be able to compete at the 2009 German Shepherd Nationals (the only year we have been able to go), and Zita won all three awards given in the obedience venue, including High in Trial, High Combined and Obedience Victrix. She has also been invited to the National Obedience Invitational three times.

"We still have goals that we would like to achieve in the obedience ring and will continue to show as long as Zita is enjoying herself. She has been a wonderful teammate, in and out of the ring, and I am so happy she is a part of my life."

Shannon sent the following pictures of Zita working scent discrimination in Utility, sitting next to Shannon, and then a nice head shot of Zita.





Zita and Shannon will be awarded a gold Shepherd head medallion for this high honor of being the Top Scoring German Shepherd Dog in 2011.