

## Meet the Top Dogs from 2010...

In this issue we'll focus on two of our Top Dogs from last year – the Top Herding Dog and the Top Obedience Dog, both from Tucker Creek HOF Kennel III. Our thanks to Tanya Wheeler for providing us with this closer look at two amazing Aussies!

### Top Herding Dog ~ Asti

WTCH HCHA Tucker Creek's Bows and Arrows RD HX PATDsc, OFTDsd - Black Tri female, DOB April 1, 2002 (HOF HOFX WTCH CH Las Rocosa Tom's Thunder HA CD RA HTDIIIIsd x HOF HOFX Diamondair Tucker's Grace HI OTDsc ATDd)

Asti belongs to Jack Hansen, my partner in life and my adversary in the ring. Jack bought Asti from us years ago, for the purpose of working his herd of purebred Simmental cattle at his farm in rural Thunder Bay. A picturesque spread of just under 200 acres in all, Otter Creek Farm is a beautiful old, well kept farm settled in the Slate River Valley at the base of a section of the Nor`wester Mountains.



Photo credit Cathy Bishop

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The feedlot area nearest the converted, and now rather luxurious dairy barn, boasts a steep ravine where the cattle cross to come in from further pastures. One of the most breathtaking scenes on the farm is watching the dogs bring in the cattle up over the fields and eventually down into the ravine on one side and up the gradual climb on the other side. It's just a pretty sight to see with water splashing, calves turning back on the high ground and a reliable aussie making sure the group stays together. It simply takes your breath away.

Asti is a brilliant shining star on this farm where she, along with brother Flash, last year both earned what is called their RD or Ranch dog titles. This is an independent evaluation of dogs whose job it is to demonstrate their day to day work on a modern working ranch or farm. Not a competition, but an individual assessment of a dog or dog team, and their daily work on a livestock operation.

Over the course of the year, jobs change on the farm whether we are calving, worming, castrating or fixing gates or fences. The dogs job is to be useful when moving stock, holding stock, sorting, penning and other general everyday chores. Often managing cow calf pairs or holding cattle off a feeder or gate until the job is done, requires a dog with confidence and the ability to demonstrate this confidence along with the ability to assure the stock they will be reasonable as long as the stock are cooperative.

Asti is a neat dog in this respect and works among the cow calf pairs with ease. She knows not to bother the calves and can frequently be found in the pens with the mothers who have learned to trust her as a working part of the farm.

In only a very short time, Jack and Asti have accomplished great things, coming off the farm to make a hit in the competitive trialing venues. In 2010 Asti was top herding dog in Canada and was invited to the first Canadian Championship event held in Niagara Falls. She was among the top 20 in the stockdog finals last year in 2010 in Waco Texas and she and Jack delivered a wonderful performance barring Jack's crossing the handler's line at least twice costing him two beautiful runs – sorry Jack – we know how hard these lessons are. Asti will be among the top dogs again this year for stockdog finals and hopefully heading to Wisconsin to compete once again at Nationals.

Congratulations Jack and Asti for *a lotta jobs well done!*