

BREED COLUMNS

SPORTING GROUP

must manage it effectively. I recognize that this is easier to recommend than to practice. Our scores were stronger at the Master level than in Excellent or Advanced. It reinforced the need to maintain full concentration at every level and never take any station for granted.

“On the sign ‘Sit, Pivot Right, Forward,’ I failed to execute the pivot and was unaware of the omission at the time. On the ‘Sit, Front, Left Finish, Sit,’ Lania did not sit, and I did not observe the fault during the run.

“The positive aspect of each experience is that these mistakes occur only once and provide a valuable lesson for future performances. It remains noteworthy that the mind can introduce unexpected challenges during competition, even when one believes that stress is absent.

“We deeply enjoy this sport. It demands continuous focus, sharpens my skills, and fosters a unique and meaningful connection

with my dogs.”

Thank you, Kim and Heike, for your contribution and thoughts when completing the RACH with your Chesapeake Bay Retrievers.

Congratulations to the fourteen Chesapeakes and their owners who have earned the RACH as of this writing.

—Betsy Horn Humer,
tiderunr2@verizon.net
[American Chesapeake Club](#)

Curly Coated Retrievers

TRIMMING NAILS

Ann Shinkle wrote in 2023: “When I acquired my first Curly, I learned that nail grooming is an exceptional challenge with our breed. I tried to clip my young bitch’s nails and could not do it. I took her to the vet, and the vet said, ‘We can handle this.’ However, shortly after taking her back to do so, he said, ‘You are right. We cannot. So she has to be sedated for the ordeal.’

“This went on for a few months. Then I started my

Curly girl in a basic obedience class. Fortunately, the team next to me in class was a groomer with her dog. I mentioned my challenge, and she observed that my bitch’s nails were longer than they should be. She advised me to trim or file one nail per day until the dog accepted the situation in a more relaxed manner.

“The quick is quite close to the end of the nail, and it is easily nicked, which causes bleeding. And Curlies, being sensitive dogs, become quite concerned with it all. Gradually my first Curly did accept this gentle approach to nail grooming. Ever since that time, I have used different nail-care routines for each of my dogs.

“With my two current adult Curly girls, one lies on her side on the couch for nail care. I am able to clip each nail, and I give a treat after each foot. My younger girl lies on the grooming table on her side, and I clip just the very tip of each nail. When I’ve finished each foot, I give a treat and

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*Curly-Coated Retriever Ryedale Wag,
1952 (Evelyn Shafer photo)*

then move on to the next foot. When I've completely finished with all eight feet, everybody gets cookies!"

Jenny Dickinson added:

"As Ann describes, many of our Curlies come to their owners with no experience of nail care, and a window of teaching opportunity has passed. I work with service dog trainers who anticipate that disabled folks might not be able to have a wrestling match every time they need to shorten their dog's nails. Service dog breeders start

trimming nails in the whelping box—not just handling the feet, but letting the pups feel some pressure and hear the sounds of the clippers and the grinding tool while they are being fed yummys by an assistant. They do this every few days.

"Whatever early developmental procedures our breeders are following—and I hope it is Puppy Culture, or a protocol equally science based—*please* add a nail care protocol to it. We do no harm in adding this extra

step, and it prevents a lot of panic and misery for our dogs." —Ann Shinkle and Jenny Dickinson

[Curly-Coated Retriever Club of America](#)

Golden Retrievers

THE NOSE KNOWS

A Golden paradox: We humans smell what we see, while our Golden Retrievers see what they smell. Goldens interpret the world around them through their ultra-sensitive sense of smell, be it a downed duck in a heavy marsh, a landmine buried in a roadway, skin cells filled with cancer, or the sadness of an unhappy child. It's that amazing scenting ability that has spawned the term "that famous Golden nose." The ability to identify specific odors is greater in Goldens and other retriever breeds than in many other dogs. An estimated 300 hundred million scent receptors inside the nose allow them to interpret and identify the infinite variety of smells

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