



Ice



Heidi & Ice

**MACH2 IvanLee Glacial Reflection OF
Breed: Shetland Sheepdog**

Sex: Male DOB: 9/3/04

Owner/Handler: Heidi Vania

Ice has always been “spring loaded,” making serious efforts to defy the law of gravity. He loves to jump straight up into the air, as high as his little body can get, and his attempts sometimes seem to go on endlessly. Add to that a good game of tug, snuggling with Mom and finishing off her cup of tea, and you have the perfect day.

Heidi Vania has lived in Anchorage, Alaska since 1969 and works for an Alaska Native Corporation as a records manager. In 1989, her husband surprised her with a sheltie puppy as a wedding gift and since that fateful day, life has never been the same. Who could predict that this precious gift would mark the beginning of a life-long love and passion for training dogs that would evolve into obedience, herding and ultimately agility?

Alaska winters are the biggest challenge for agility training. Adequate facilities are limited, which reduces training to an indoor arena two nights a week, and daily training sessions take place in a single car garage that is shared with a snow machine. It is amazing how one can adapt for training and how much can be accomplished in a small space when that is all that is available.

Agility, with all its endless challenges, was the perfect fit for Heidi and Ice. Reading everything she could find on the subject, attending seminars and watching other handlers run were instrumental in increasing Heidi’s knowledge about the sport. The positive support and guidance from other competitors are constant reminders of the friendships that are made. Agility is totally addictive and Heidi is hooked!.

Even when Ice was just a little puppy, struggling to stay on his four feet (paws), he exemplified a wonderful attitude of what “love of life” looks like. Ice exhibited a more-than-typical puppy-quest for exploring new possibilities. What sets him apart are his dedication and confident determination to succeed, just for the fun of it, and just to “please” Heidi or whomever else is watching. At times, Heidi became aware of the fact that Ice was teaching HER more than she was teaching him!

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(Photos by Black Dog Photography.)