

## Dog show! Canines vie for top prize at Longview Kennel Club's annual competition

By CHRISTINA LANE  
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To the untrained eye, Ebony might look like an average wired-haired dachshund, but she took the top honor Saturday at the Longview Kennel Club's 2009 AKC Licensed All Breed Dog Show.

"I feel numb. I'm so thrilled," said handler Cheri Koppenhaver of St. Hedwig, Texas.



Almost 900 dogs of various breeds competed Saturday at the Longview Kennel Club's 2009 AKC Licensed All Breed Dog Shows at Maude Cobb Convention and Activity Center. Dog owners traveled to Longview from as far as Canada for the American Kennel Club competition, said Kathryn Beard, show chairman.

Eight judges also traveled to Texas from several states to judge the dogs on standards for each breed that were developed by the American Kennel Club, Beard said. Dogs typically are judged on their head, body type, color and coat, movement and attitude in the ring, she said.

"A dog that doesn't look happy doesn't win very often," Beard said. Best of each breed took the ring a final time to be judged by class — from sporting breeds to the toy group — and the seven winners from each group were judged a final time to determine best in show. This was the first best in show win for 1-year-old Ebony, who goes by the name Champion Rivendell Dark Side of the Moon when she's in the show ring, Koppenhaver said. It's Ebony's fifth group win.

Koppenhaver got Ebony in November 2007 and said she frequently grooms her and practices stacking and baiting, a process that involves training dogs how to stand while their in the show ring and look at bait. "I really think she gets into this, too," Koppenhaver said. "When she gets in the ring, she sees the other dogs and their handlers, and she'll bark and try to talk to them." About 900 more dogs are scheduled to compete in another show today, starting at 8 a.m. at Maude Cobb.