

‘Absolutely gorgeous’ dog to compete in AKC/Eukanuba championships

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LA CRESCENT, Minn. — Westminster is within reach of Vlassic’s paw.



The No. 11 nationally ranked lowchen will compete Dec. 12-13 in the ninth annual American Kennel Club/Eukanuba National Championship in Long Beach, Calif.

The top 25 ranked dogs in each breed advance to the competition that serves as a qualifier for the Westminster Kennel Club show in February, said Vlassic’s owner and Coulee Kennel Club President Lorrie Jergenson.

The 2-year-old canine must first defeat the other lowchens at the event to compete against all the dogs in the nonsporting group. If he wins group, Vlassic can compete for best in show.

The overall top five dogs at the championships qualify for Westminster.

Jergenson is confident Vlassic will come out on top in breed to advance to the nonsporting

group.

“His chances are good,” she said. “He has done so well in the puppy ring.”

Vlassic practices proper walking, standing and ring behavior to prep for the competition, Jergenson said. He must also stick to a strict diet and maintain the breed’s distinctive “lion cut” coat — long and shaggy in front, like a lion’s mane, but shaved from the ribcage to halfway up the tail.

“He’s absolutely gorgeous,” Jergenson said.

Vlassic and his show handler will leave Monday for the three-day drive to California. Jergenson has not decided whether she’ll travel to the event. It will air at 8 p.m. Feb. 6 on Animal Planet.

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