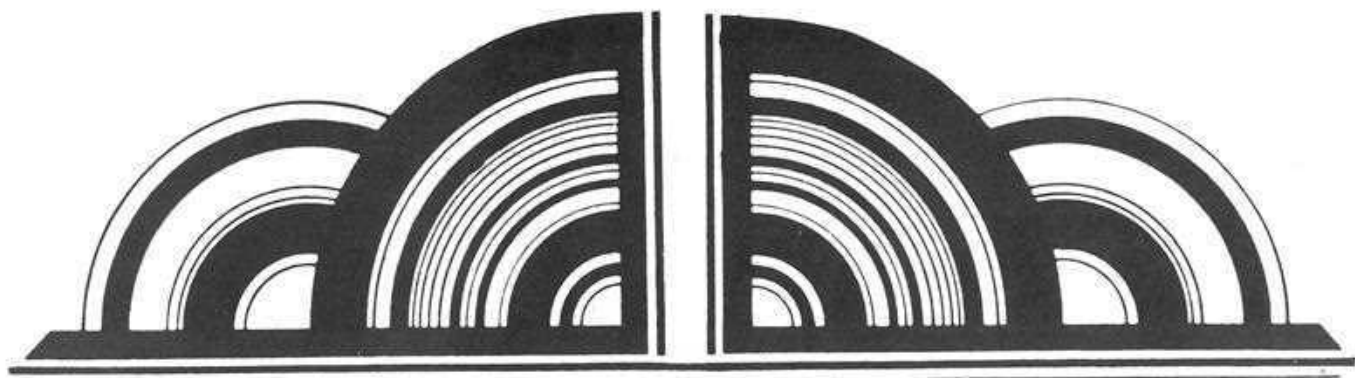


The  
**SAMOYED**  
QUARTERLY



Summer 1985

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# SAMOYED PEOPLE

The Samoyed Quarterly  
Talks With  
**Betty McHugh**  
**NEPACHEE KENNELS**  
Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

This interview was conducted at the home of Betty McHugh by Jocelyne Ivanovskis on March 4, 1984.

**How long have you been in Samoyeds?**

I have had them about 30 years. I haven't been breeding them that long, of course.

**How did you get involved with dogs?**

When I got my first job, the first thing I wanted was a purebred dog. I didn't go out and pick the Sam, there just happened to be one available, and I bought her. I liked the breed so much that I have been in them ever since. I have tried other breeds but, with the exception of the Dachshunds, I still like the Sams the best.

**What happened to your first Samoyed that turned you on to the breed?**

She was just a nice dog, easy to train, easy to live with, a very pleasant dog to have around. She just seemed to be what I wanted. Unfortunately I couldn't get her papers, which is a very old story. So, being in the city, in order to have another one I had to place her. She ended up on a farm, which was a nice home, and I went out and got one that was registered.

**Where did that one come from?**

He was Realea Darby Knowlton. I got him locally from a breeder. She was cutting down on her stock, and he was a three-year-old male.



We finished his championship and got his CD. He was an equally nice dog.

**Did you use him in your breeding program?**

He was used, but I don't have anything from him now. My third, which was a male, I imported from the States. I have stock from him. Not intentionally, but it just happened.

**Who was your foundation dog?**

Can/Am. Ch. Bai of Lucky Dee. I bought him at thirteen months from the Dawes of California. He was a finished American champion, and he finished his Canadian championship in three shows up here. He did very well, he was a very nice dog. He is in the pedigrees of some of the current dogs that I have now.

**Where did you go to get your first bitch?**

She actually was a daughter of Bai's. Somebody used him on stock that came from the Maritimes, and I got pick bitch. We went on from there.

**How many litters have you bred over the years?**

I would guess at least 50.

**Are there any litters that are particularly outstanding for you?**

One of the last litters that we had out of Ch. Nepachee's's Vanilla Parfait and Ch. K-Way's Tabor Revellie, an Omen son. They are quite nice. They are bigger than we usually see here, but they are doing very well. Two of them are pointed, one finished, two of them have at least one leg on their CD, and the third is being trained. There were eight in the litter, the rest went to pet homes. They are very well-built. They are going to be, when they mature, gorgeous animals. They will win both sides of the border. Good moving and working dogs, which is what I think is important.

**When you are breeding, what do you look for in your stud dog and your brood bitch? How do you go about deciding these are going to be the ones?**

They have to be sound and well put together from good sound stock. They have to look like Sams, of course; you must have the coat. You must have the pigmentation, tail carriage, etc. Sometimes it doesn't come through, but at least you breed for it. I have to look in the pedigree, and know what is behind because what we are going to get is the grandparents, not the parents. We will get the parents the next generation, so you want at least two sound generations to base a litter on.

**Is that from your own experience?**

Yes. It is not from textbooks but from my own experience. We measure all the puppies, and we



Can/Am. Ch. Bai Lucky Dee in the lead. Can. Ch. Realea Darby Knowlkon CD. Pictured hauling supplies to cottage. Winter, 1955

know structurally that we will get a combination or maybe an individual from the four grandparents. We can go back because the grandparents have been measured. Then we know that in the next generation we will get the parents plus the parents of the other dog.

**You really look at the pedigrees.**

Oh, yes. I just did a breeding, a double on a dog who was particularly well put together, but he lacked fib-tib, which meant he was straight in stifle. We got three puppies, two of the three have the father's fault. The bitch in the litter is just gorgeous, she has all the good points, so the breeding was worth it.

**Do you worry about placing your puppies in show homes? Or, are you content to find good pet homes?**

I hope to get show homes, but they are very difficult to find. People come and they want the best in the litter because they are going to do tremendous things in obedience and conformation, and they are going to run it. Nine out of ten never accomplish it. It is not something I lose a lot of sleep over. I hope that they will carry through, and if they want the best, then I give them the best unless I want it. Some days I get discouraged and I think I'll sell only to pet homes then nobody else can have my stock to breed.

**How many Sams do you keep now?**

We have about ten. I have just placed a lot of my stud dogs. There is just too much work here, and I'm not here enough to do it. I have placed most of my stud dogs with co-owners, who are at least breeding them. Some of them are being shown, some of them are being worked.

**Most of what you have are brood bitches?**

My bitches and older dogs that I won't place.

**You were saying how one was a gift to you.**

Yes. That is a bitch, and my male was twelve in May, and he is still active.

**That's great.**

Yes, it is great. In my mind, he is still happy. I would like to get down to even less, as I said, some of the older ones will be here until they go. Three or four or maybe five good bitches is what I would like because I have good dogs available. At one time I felt I had to keep them myself because there are always accidents, you know, and nobody will look after them like you will; but you have to get over that, you have to trust people when you put dogs with them.

**Plus you have the memories.**

Yes, plus I have the memories.

**How many Dachshunds do you have?**

About twenty.

**And your daughter's dogs are here?**

Yes. I have the day-to-day



Ch. K-Way's Tabor Reveille. Co-owner - Islay Aitchinson, 1981.



Ch. Nepachee's Vanilla Parfait, a top producer. Typical of our brood bitches.

care of them, so it is a lot of work. We still have all the original Mini Dachshunds, too.

**You are a busy lady. You teach, you judge, you show dogs, and you breed them. Is there anything else you haven't covered?**

No. I try to keep house.

**Lovely.**

Thank you.

**You have mentioned obedience a few times, do you want to talk a bit about that? You have done a fair amount of obedience, haven't you?**

Yes. I was counting for an article, and I think I have eighteen CD's. Three of them are American. This is more than just the Sams. And, four CDX's, which were mostly Sams, and Utility which was a Sam. Most of the obedience has been done on the Sams. They have been my major breed over the years. But I have taught all classes for a long time. I taught obedience classes for twenty-five years before I retired. I still free-lance for people, but I don't run classes now. I don't have time to do the paper work. If somebody wants a Utility or Open class taught, I'll do it for them. I am doing a utility this fall for a local school. My involvement has been in obedience for many years. Sams came first, then came obedience, and then conformation.

**How did you get involved in obedience?**

Just because I was interested in dogs. I have always been interested in animals, even when I was at home. I always had something around, guinea pigs, rabbits and there was always one dog, one family pet.

When I got into a position where I could financially support more, then it was dogs. I like working with them. The fact that we drive teams and all this type of thing is because I enjoy working with them. It was a natural progression into obedience.

**Did you take your first obedience class at a local kennel club?**

Locally, with Whitey, that was the one I couldn't get papers on. We earned two legs, and decided it was a waste of time to finish her, so we went on to Rowdy. Bai was trained but didn't get a title. Rowdy got his CD.

**That was your first title?**

Yes, and then the kids started coming along. I kept teaching, but I didn't do a lot of showing. I got a number of titles. Then, a grandson of Bai's, Nepachee Snow Drifter, went through his U.D. It was a real thrill. He was a very intelligent dog. He was also a lead dog. We used to have pleasure teams. We would just run them around here for the fun of it. He finished his championship. He wasn't a great show dog although he was well put together.

**Do you have any interesting obedience stories?**

One with him that I will never forget. I don't think we really know how much they understand. We were doing Utility training with my friend, Marie. When we teach the go out, we put a little piece of meat, it is something for them to go to. You start out by putting food on it, which is the motivation. I guess we had it about two or three yards out. We were working in Marie's backyard. I sent him out. He went out just

fine, and he sat when he was told, so I went up and praised him, and brought him back. Marie said, "I think he could go further," so she picked the meat up and moved it a yard. I sent him out again, and he went to the spot where I had put the meat, and sat down, reached over and picked it up and plopped it down in front of him. In other words, that was where I had put it, and she wasn't to move it.

**That is funny.**

I don't know how he figured it out. Another time we were showing at the Sportsman Show in Utility and he didn't like it. It was so crowded around the ring. He wasn't happy at all about it, and we were doing the scent articles. I sent him out, and he knew that he had to do something. He found the right one but he didn't know what to do with it, because he didn't want to bring it back. He just didn't want to do it, so he rolled it to me with his nose, all the way back to my feet. The crowd thought it was great, but we failed.

**You didn't think it was all that great!**

People were so deep around the ring you could hardly get in and out. It just wasn't his thing. He was used to the country.

**Was he usually a clown, or was it just that one time?**

He was usually pretty straight. He usually did it as he was supposed to do it, but that one day he was looking for an out. He couldn't quite find an honest one, so he did it his way.

**That was his protest to having been brought to a crowded place.**

I guess that is a good way to put it.

#### **How are Sams in general in obedience work?**

They are terrific if you know what you are doing with them. Unfortunately the Northern dogs have had a lot of poor press in obedience, or been in the wrong hands. If they can figure a way around what you want them to do, they will. Most of the obedience instructors are not versed in Northern dogs, and they just cringe when you come in. They tell people, "You are not going to get any place." We had it happen last weekend. One of my customers has her first obedience Sam, and the judge said to her, "Oh, well, they are not known as good heelers." This is the opinion people have of Northern dogs. But if you know them and know how to work with them, they are very capable of high scores. I have had a lot of High in Trials on a lot of different Northern dogs. It is possible, but you have to get the psychology right. Unfortunately, if your customers go in classes, and the instructors say "You are not going to accomplish anything with that dog," you're handicapped at the start.

#### **The wrong attitude.**

Yes, they are put down right off the bat. They have nothing to aim for. When I had classes here, local instructors would, if they got a phone call and the people had Sams, they would say, "Call Betty McHugh." They would send them to me because they didn't really want them. It wasn't that the dogs were cross or biters or anything like that, it was just that the people weren't smart enough to out-think them. They didn't realize the way these dogs can get around doing what they are supposed to do.

#### **What is the special psychology, what is the difference in approach?**

Sams and Siberians vary a little bit. With Sams, in the beginning you insist they do it, and do it your way, and then lots of praise. With Siberians it is a little different, you have to do that, and then give them back a bit of dignity, because they really are primitive, and you can't be quite as hard. If you really harm a Siberian, he never forgets and never forgives you. A Sam can take discipline, and forgive you. He will be mad at the moment, turn his head the other way, then he will turn back and say, "Oh, well." They are more doggy.

#### **Do you have Siberian Huskies?**

Yes. We have them now. How long, I don't know, because my daughter is not going to race anymore. She was the one that wanted the extra speed they gave her. The extra incentive to run. They really like to run, whereas the Sams don't see any point in extending themselves any more than they have to. They will get there, it may take them a little longer. They figure, why gallop when we can trot?

#### **How did you get involved in racing?**

We started here just fooling around with the dogs. All our friends said, "Why don't you race with them?" This is weekend mushing, not professional, believe me, I am not into that, as it is a full-time job. We kind of got interested. When I lost Rowdy, who was my lead dog, several friends lent us their lead dogs which they weren't using, and that is how the Siberians came on the scene. Of course, we had to have one. It wasn't good enough, so

we had to breed a better one. It is a lot of fun to go on a weekend race. The races are exciting, especially when you have a team in them. It is a great way to put a winter in. It takes a lot of time because you must put miles on your dogs, you must run them at home. The more miles you put on, the better they will do. If you take them out with under a hundred miles on them, you are not really going to be competitive. They won't run six to eight miles consistently well. They get tired. So, to be competitive, if you really want to win, you have got to put two to three hundred miles on them before the season starts. That takes a lot of time, because you must start fairly short runs, under a mile, and gradually build up.

You start with a real rig, especially here when there is so little snow. You pray for snow because the dogs' attitude changes completely once they get on snow. Dragging the big wheeled rig is a pain. But you have to build up the cardiovascular system, you have to build up muscles. It is a long process.

#### **How do you get a good lead dog?**

You have to have a dog who is born to go ahead, they won't all do it. I don't think, sometimes, the most intelligent are the ones that are lead dogs. It has to be a dog that wants to get out ahead, and to stay ahead. A lot of dogs are great team dogs, but you can't put them ahead because they won't keep going. You take one that is a natural, that will go out, and then you begin to teach him commands. Turn right and left, go past, and things that he has to know. Of course, you give him a lot of miles so that he has con-



L.to R: Ch. Wobiska's Tanya, Nepachee's Extrovert CD, Ch. Gol' Chikha of Nepachee CD (group winner), Ch. Nikki's Silver Trelawy, Ch. Glokon's Starfire, and Nepachee's Snow Cruiser CD.



Ch. Glokon Starfire and Friend.

fidence. He has to know how to follow trails, he has to do as he is told, he has to pass teams. Sometimes there is head-on passing. Imagine two teams passing head-on. He has to have a lot of ability with a lot of self-confidence, and a desire to run because he has to set the pace. He doesn't have to pull the load, he has to set the pace.

**That is a lot of investment in time, isn't it?**

Yes.

**What age would you start a dog, say you picked one, at what age would you look?**

Actually, it goes the other way around. You put them in a team and look for the one. One of the most successful racers in our area, the majority of his dogs can run lead. He has a few that can't stand the pressure, they can't stand the stress and he races competitively. When he is running and training the dogs, he switches them around, and each one has a chance. Most of us, when we find a dog that will go out, we just leave it in front.

**You've got one, hurray.**

Yes, we got one, hurray. But, they come up through the team. When we started racing, we had a young dog who, when he was nine months, we stuck him up front. He

stayed there, it was his thing, and he was a super little dog. He took commands well, he could pick the trail, he could find the best part of the trail. The last dog that we used, if there was bad places in the trail, he always ran through them and slowed the team down. He just couldn't pick the right parts of the trail, but this little dog always picked the most solid places. He always knew where to go. If you were running through the fog, and he came to a puddle, he would get around it. Some dogs hate water and you have great pileups over puddles. He always got the team around with no problem. They are born and you find them and you develop them if you are lucky and make a great dog of them. This dog, unfortunately, as we became more competitive, wasn't fast enough. He would start out leading the team in the fall and then they would over-run him. We would have to drop him and put him back to three dog. The dog that succeeded him had all the desire in the world, but not the brains. Right now, we don't have a good lead dog. We have a bitch, who is seven, who sets great pace, but absolutely does not take any commands at all.

**She goes where she wants to**

go?

She puts you at a big disadvantage, so we are looking for something young coming up.

**Nine months isn't too young to run?**

No. To race, it's young.

**But just to run?**

Just to run, if you don't put too much stress on, nine months is okay. A lot of people in competitive racing feel that yearlings are pretty young. They will run them around home to give them experience and if they are outstanding, they will use them.

**How many dogs do you have on the team?**

Five is the most we have run. We have run seven around here to exercise and condition, but five is the biggest number to race. It is just too much force to control. You wouldn't believe their strength. If they decide to go one way, it is almost impossible to stop.

**You were saying before that you had Siberians and some Sams. Do you run a mixed team?**

We have been. Shelley is not going to drive any more. She is tired of it, and I don't blame her a bit. It is the training, not the actual races that is hard. The actual races are difficult, too. If you are competitive you will spend a lot of time off that sled, running or peddling or helping the dogs. I am going to try to put together a Sam team and go back to Sams again. I don't expect to win races, but I do want to go out and just prove to people that Sams can do it.

**Why is that? Wasn't that their original function?**

That is a bone of controversy within the breed. I am not much on history, but when it comes down to origins, I know the purpose of the dogs. A lot of people feel they were originally herding dogs. In fact, someone once said that since they were herding dogs, why did they have to be well-built? Anybody who has ever worked a herd would know, especially reindeer, but I think probably they were used for everything like most Northern dogs were. They were used to hunt, to herd, to haul, to carry, they were eaten and the fur was worn. That was what they were there for. As I said, there is a lot of controversy. The people that are wrapped up in sledding, they say they were sled dogs, and the people that aren't say they were herding dogs. There are some people that are using Sams for herding, and I have had enough experience to know the instinct is still in the occasional individual.

**Do they try to herd your Dachshunds?**

No, we have a lot of cattle around us. We used to have more

than we have now. There used to be a lot of dairy herds. When I had more time I did a lot of walking. I would take six or seven dogs and go across the hills, and you would see the occasional puppy that had the eye. Do you know what I mean by the eye?

**Yes.**

There is nothing more dangerous or curious than a herd of young cattle, especially when they see a strange dog. I have seen several of my young Sams hold them, head down and hold them. So, it's there in some individuals.

**What would you say that people today basically breed for in Sams?**

Companions and show dogs. There are not that many people working them anymore.

**Do they make good indoor dogs? I have heard people say that Northern dogs prefer to be outside, that they are more comfortable.**

I think they are very people oriented. I think they want to be where people are. A lot of people keep them indoors. They don't get the coat that the dogs get outdoors, but I don't think they are uncomfortable. I think they probably find the coldest area in the room. They want to be where you are. A lot of people find them good house dogs. I have some people buy them because they want to keep the dog outside. If you can't, for some reason, have a dog inside, then a Northern dog can cope outside as long as they have adequate housing. We sell them both ways, as a pet in the house, and pets outside. But there has been a change the last couple of years. People are looking for dogs that they can cross country ski with. A lot of them will ask, "Can they go with me on the trail?" I say, "Sure, they will love it." This winter sport has become so popular now that they are looking for a dog that can go out. Whatever you want your Sam to be, he will be. They are very adaptable.

**What about temperament?**

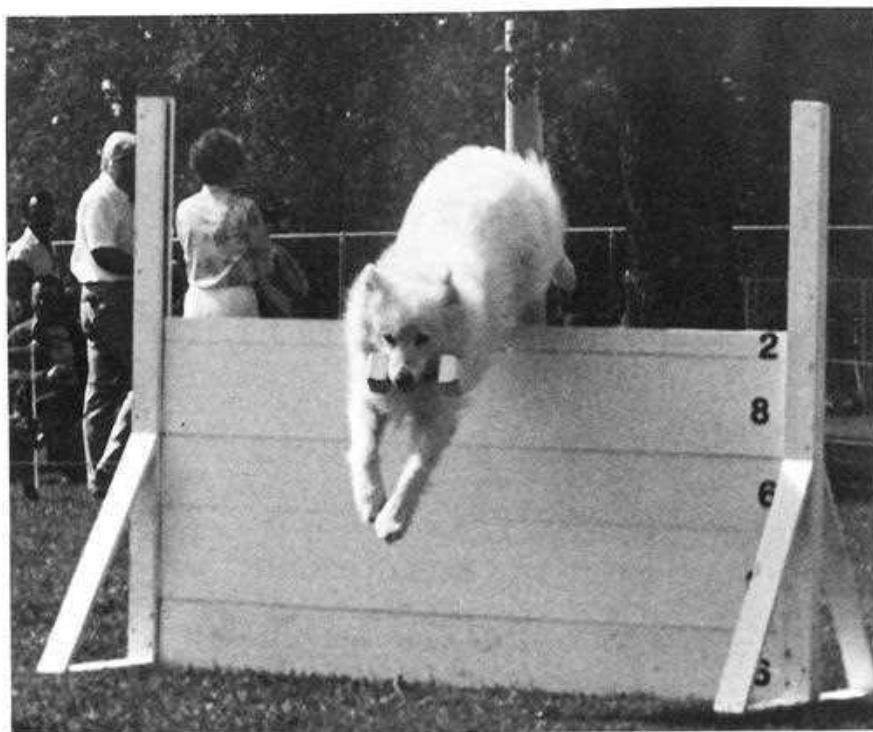
Sams are pretty well-suited as family dogs. There is the occasional line where the temperament is not great, but the majority of lines, they are great in the family. You will get the occasional one who is smart enough to take over a family. Most of ours go to families.

**You were talking about certain lines, do you see that as a genetic problem?**

Yes. I think it's tied in with other things, physical problems, too. There are some lines that I would definitely worry about.

**Would you expand on that physical problem?**

Basically, structure. People don't relate this to temperament, but



Silk Tassel of Nepachee CDX; Top Samoyed in Canadian Obedience twice.

dogs are meant to be well-angulated. This is the way the bones should articulate, and when they don't, then you start getting calcium deposits, and arthritis at a relatively young age. If you have had arthritis or are familiar with it, it is annoying. I have seen a number of older dogs who are extremely straight and when the children just happen to push them sideways, they turn quickly and growl, like they are saying, "Don't do that, it hurts." This is what I mean. They are more prone to arthritis. Not just in the hip area, that is another problem. They just can't take the jostling around from the kids, and when they retaliate, many times it is in pain. People don't stop to think about the fact that the dog is uncomfortable. He doesn't mean to bite just to be biting. He is saying, "That hurts, don't do it."

**They are miserable because it hurts.**

Yes. So this is another reason I think we should really breed as sound a dog as we can. Sound dogs are not as prone to these problems. They seem to last longer, like this twelve-year-old. He still cuts up when the team goes out. He used to be one of my better dogs, and he still wants to go. He goes in the Veteran's classes now. The dog has worked all his life. He worked in harness, he did obedience, and he just loves to go to dog shows. It gives him such a lift to get out. We take him to the Veteran's classes when we can. At the specialty in

May, I entered him in the Specials class. He moves better now than he used to because he is more settled down. He used to act up in the ring, he would throw his legs all over, and now he moves pretty balanced. He blew his coat so I took him out of the Specials class. When he goes around the ring, and everybody says, "Good lord, he still moves like a specials dog and he is over twelve." He gets so excited that we had to make him lie down at the last one because he couldn't catch his breath, and his tongue was getting a bluish tinge to it. That is the way a dog should be. He gets depressed in the kennel and every once in a while we take him out and then he just feels great.

**This attitude is important when you are showing a dog.**

Yes. It is the difference, I think. Unfortunately, I hate to admit it, but it does make a difference whether a dog shows himself off. You can have the best dog in the world but if he crawls around the ring and looks miserable, nobody is going to find him.

**You have experience as both a judge and an exhibitor - how important is handling?**

It's important. It's not as important to me, because I don't judge on that. I try to put up what I feel is the best dog for the breed on that day. There are judges that can be pressured, and there are handlers that are very, very good at it. It is very difficult when you have a

number of dogs in the ring, and you have a handler who is really pressuring you and wants to win desperately. It is very hard to ignore them. I am not saying you should give it to them, you shouldn't if they don't have the best dog, but if you are easily influenced, it works. Handling can be important.

**What about winning presentation aside from handling?**

It's important. If you have winning points, you want to be able to show them. A judge doesn't have very long to make up his mind. If you are trying to show him a picture, especially when the coat is dark, that is extremely important. You must be able to do it quickly, and do it well. It does help, there is no doubt about it.

**When you have people that don't know a lot about shows come to you with their show puppy, what do you tell them?**

We say, "You need to have the intestinal fortitude to take some of the things you will have to take such as politics and criticism because you have a Nepachee dog and not somebody else's." It's not just me, I mean it happens.

**If they bought from somebody else it would still be the same thing?**

It would still be the same thing. "Go for it, do it, it's great, there is a lot of satisfaction, but if you can't take this sort of nonsense, than don't consider it." It would be the same if they were going into horses, or cattle or goats or anything. It is just the competition. Everybody believes they have the

best, otherwise they wouldn't be in there. Losing brings out the worst in people, so bear in mind that this is what it is all about, but if you are competitive and you want to do it, do it.

**If the people feel they can live through that nonsense, what do you suggest they do to try to prepare their dogs?**

If this is their first dog, they will prepare it, simply by having it as a pet; that is the best background for a show dog. I wish they could all be pets. I wish I could farm out my puppies and bring them back when they are ready to show. We would have it made. Go to handling classes, exercise the dog, feed him well, and walk him a lot. The best show dogs are well leash-broken. It will help you with judges who like your type. Each judge has a mental picture of the ideal. There is no point of entering under a judge whose mental picture is not my ideal, so we will help you pick judges that will appreciate your dog. We suggest that when your dog loses his coat around a year of age that you get into an obedience class and work with him. Do obedience until he grows up and becomes a mature dog. Our dogs don't mature until they are three or four. We suggest that people don't show them between one year and two, because they are very gangly adolescents, and they are carrying the poorest coat they will ever carry in their lifetime. So, basically exercise, training and getting yourself out to learn how to do it. If you find that showing is not your thing, then the girls will show

your dog for you.

**The girls, you mean your daughters?**

My daughters both handle. If you want to end up being an exhibitor, then get in there and take your lumps, because it takes a long time to get noticed.

**You have to pay your dues.**

You have to pay your dues, that is a good expression. If you have the type of personality to talk to judges after they have judged you and talk pleasantly, do it and they will remember you. I have never been able to do that, but I have sold to some people who can. They can be very pleasant and have a little chat with the judge, and that judge will remember them the next time. It is not a guarantee that they will put you up, but they will remember you.

**What about asking a judge about why they do certain things in the ring?**

Sure, if you can do it nicely. Don't hassle judges because they have the right to charge you if you get really bad, and here is one that will. I don't take any nonsense, because if I do, I will end up being trampled. Any judge worth his salt is willing to discuss your dog with you, point out things that he likes and doesn't like about the dog, and then if you don't agree, don't say anything. You asked his advice and you are getting it - so take it. If you don't agree that is fine, you can't agree with everybody. You have paid for his opinion. The only recourse, if you don't like it, is don't give him another entry.



Nepachee's Cream of the Crop - 9 months.  
6 points in one weekend.  
Fall, 1983.



Ch. Nepachee's Ultra Ice, at 11 months.  
Went Group 4th and  
Best Puppy in Group.

What about obedience, what do you tell people about the fact that it is a different psychology. Do you prepare them for that?

Yes, we say, "If you are going into a class, you will probably be told that you can't train the dog." I just say, "Show them." I finished Roger last year. I haven't, unfortunately, exhibited anything so far this year, but I have a bitch ready for Open. A Sam that is so fast and accurate, she is really good. She already has High in Trial for Novice. So, just do it. If they live close, I try to get them into a class that knows me and my dogs, and will help them along. But I think the best piece of advice is to say, "Show them." I gave that advice to somebody in Hamilton. Sure enough he registered in a class and the instructor took one look, and said, "You'll never train that dog." But when graduation came, he won. He was so proud, he said, "I showed them!" Sams are very intelligent. Rarely do you run into a stupid one. There are a few, but it is very rare.

**Are they stubborn?**

A little. They can't touch the Dachshund for stubborn. Talk about singleness of purpose, I mean, WOW.

**They are stubborn, aren't they?**

They have other things on their mind. To try and change that mind is very difficult, but I don't think Sams are particularly stubborn dogs. They are perceptive, they like to do their own thing. Some people don't even realize that they are being taken. Conned is a good word for the Sam.

**They're smart.**

Very smart. I think they are one of the most intelligent of breeds, I really do.

**What attracted you to them?**

As I said before, it was rather an accident that the first dog that I got was a Sam.

**Obviously you liked that first dog.**

Yes. I liked the intelligence. I like a challenge. I don't like some of the dogs that are commonly thought of as obedience dogs, they just don't suit my personality. I find myself angry and disappointed with them and I shouldn't be, but the reason is that they are not for me. I like the Sams' intelligence and the challenge I have with them. I like the results that I can get working with them. They are quick, and I guess I am quick too. I find they suit me. I find the Dachshunds do too, which is odd. People say, "How can you be interested in two breeds that are so different?" I think they are physically more different than they are mentally. Sams are affectionate, they always greet you with a smile and a tail wag, which is nice



l-r: Nepachee's Music Man CD, Ch. Nepachee's Excaliber, Ch. Nepachee's Star Sailor, Ch. Gol'Chikha of Nepachee, Can/Am. CD. Summer, 1983.

and very flattering.

**That is very doggy.**

Yes. But it is nice. It is, as I said, very flattering to be greeted pleasantly. They are always nice to be around. They are not usually depressed, they are usually up.

**That's nice.**

Yes. Especially if you are having a down day. They are so up, it helps you.

**What about exercise? Could you mention some of the different kinds of conditioning?**

I think any supervised free running. We now have one paddock, I would like more. The dogs that we are going to do a lot with have a lot of free running, ideally with another dog or dogs, because then they will chase. I find the muscle tone on dogs that we have done this with is good. The agility and movement is good, so they need free running. If you have the time (I can say this more than I can do it), walk your dog on leash. The more you walk, the more it will help you end up as a unit, which is what a successful show dog and handler are. A unit that works together. The dog and you find a pace that is flattering to the dog. It always has to be to the dog. He learns to trust you and walk straight with you, he doesn't side-wheel, he doesn't swing out or swing in, and you don't bang together. The more miles the two of you put on together, the better you will coordinate when you are in the ring. Just taking him out and running and walking with him on the leash is the best training for the

show ring.

**A lot of people don't think about conditioning through obedience. Do you think it is important?**

They don't. You are so right. They think any dog can go in and do it, and they can to a certain extent. I think the thing that really taught me that was years ago we had a very prominent American obedience trainer come up here, and he suggested that even though the method was quite different than any we had ever used, we should try to find a dog or use one of our dogs that had never had any training, and try to totally block out in our minds, if possible, a method that we had used previously. I hadn't anything here that I hadn't worked with, so I borrowed a dog. He was kept in a pen in the basement, and had very little running. He was totally out of condition. I found he couldn't last any more than 5 or 10 minutes when I first started training him. Just simple heeling really tired him. By the end of the course, when we graduated, he was a lot stronger and in much better condition, and could do the work. I hadn't really thought about conditioning an obedience dog, up to that point, because our dogs all had a certain amount of free running. A 10-minute heeling pattern to them is nothing. But to this dog, it was more than he could do. It is definitely important. If they are going to jump, even more so. They need conditioning, they need agility to be able to get over that jump, and have the balance and have a

mental attitude that they can do it. They are not going to fall. Teaching jumps is a whole subject in itself.

**What about structure in terms of obedience? People say, "You can't show the dog, so you may as well take him to obedience."**

Yes, I know that people do. It's terrible. It is something that I have been arguing about for years. I think when people go to buy obedience dogs, they should ask for the best in the world. It shouldn't just be for a show dog. If a dog is going to do obedience, he has to be a good dog if he is going to last. You see so much poor structure. There is a little "Westie" that was in obedience this spring. The dog would walk up to the jump, stop, and gather itself up, and then propel itself over the jump. Some people were getting upset because the judges weren't generally hitting it for the way it jumped. It stopped and went over, and I don't think what anybody realized was that was the only way it could jump. It had no bend of stifle, the back leg was absolutely straight up and down, and the only way it could get any spring, was take time to get down, and then shoot up. Isn't that something? Nobody had realized why that dog was doing that. It began to get very poor scores in the heeling exercise. He couldn't keep up. He didn't have the structure to heel properly. He was probably getting sore, because they insisted on campaigning him. Keeping on with it in all exercises, I don't know how much time they were spending at home on him. It didn't have a front or hind end to work with.

**The dog was literally tired.**

Tired, probably getting arthritic, sore, but nobody ever thought to realize that it was the actual structure. A lady, years ago, had a Toy

Poodle and it never jumped. Same reason. It had nothing to jump with. The hind end was absolutely straight up and down. There wasn't an angle in it. It would walk up to the jumps and just not go over. She thought it was disobedient, everybody thought it was disobedient, and it wasn't. It was physically incapable of doing that. I have seen Sams being campaigned, who just barely made the jumps, actually almost scrape their tummies. Many, many Sams are very straight. It is a breed problem. It is the same reason. That, and the fact that they are too heavy in the body, and many times just plain too fat.

**It just becomes too much.**

Much too much. Now that the jumps are lowered, it is less of a problem.

**Oh, they are lowered?**

Yes. As of July first, they're down. I don't know if they will come back up or not. I think most of us have just given up. The board lowered it. They don't know anything about obedience. The obedience council didn't give them a clear mandate on it, so they started counting votes. What I mean is, who is going to vote for them in the next election? So, it is done.

**Some obedience people will use the old rules.**

The people with poor dogs, the dogs that could not jump one and a half times their height. They would get another dog, like you could or I could, out of the kennel. They don't want to give up their pet, they want to be able to do everything with this one dog. So, there were enough of them that wrote letters, and the jumps came down. They lobbied and they won. Now, all the judges are upset, most of the professional trainers don't like it, but it's people with one or two dogs that got it done. I can understand. Many of

the dogs they are bringing back are dysplastic, they make no secret of it. "Oh, yeah, he is grade three, now that you dropped the jump, I can bring him back." Isn't that something? You wouldn't believe how common it is.

**It must anger you because you do have such an interest in obedience and it shouldn't be just for dogs that can't do anything else.**

Yes, it angers me. It really shouldn't be. I think people that do conformation and obedience, most of them do it with the same dog. There is a period in a dog's career that is suited to both. That is what they do. If he is being campaigned heavily, then he shouldn't be doing obedience. When he is either finished with conformation or if he is a coated dog when he is out of coat, then do obedience. The dog likes to work year around. Once he is used to going out, he doesn't want to stay home, he wants to be doing something. There is always something for him to do. I think it is great when they take old dogs who have been campaigned in conformation, and are past their prime, and do obedience with them. You see so many Americans do that. They are so far ahead of us in this respect. The dogs do very well. They are half-trained, they are used to the ring. They do the stand for examination which they have done for years. They just enjoy it.

To be continued...

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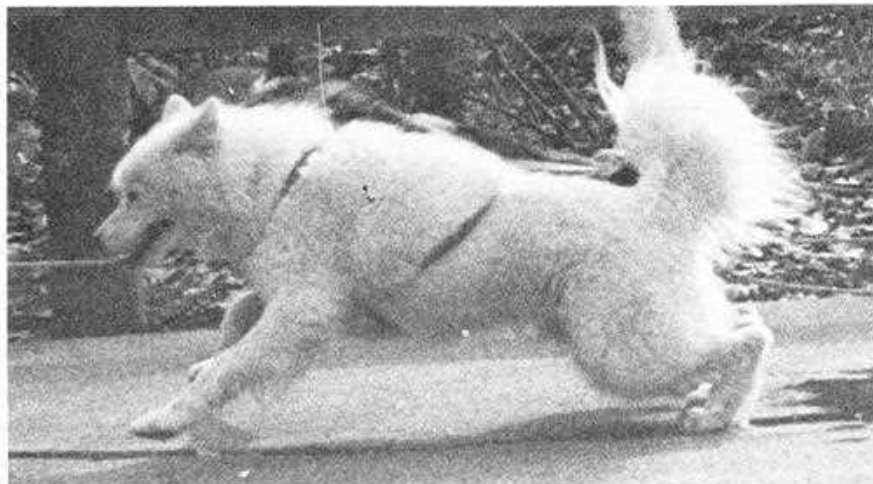
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