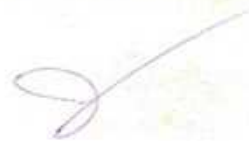


THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY

Summer 2005 • \$13



Samoyed people

The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks with
Mardee Ward-Fanning
HOOF 'N PAW
Wilsall, Montana

This interview was conducted at the home of Mardee Ward-Fanning in August 2004 by Alona Robison.

How did you get started in dogs?

I was born into them! My folks, Bob and Dolly Ward, got married in 1942, and my sister was born in 1945. Her name is Lindy, and then I was born in 1948. So they had dogs before they had their children. My dad was interested in both sledding and showing, and he started with a dog called Starchak, who they did obedience and conformation with, and he was ultimately their lead dog on teams of anywhere from six to ten Sammies. They didn't own all the Sammies they ran; back in those days people would combine their dogs for teams. That was in southern California in the Cluver City area. We practiced on wheels; back in those days they didn't have the fancy rigs like they have today. They would put the sleds they actually used on a tripod kind of wheel configuration and I would sit in the basket, and we'd go around Washington Boulevard with dog sleds.

When did you get into showing?

I actually started sledding before I started showing, doing single dog races where they told you to stand on the runners and hang on for dear life. They would call the dogs to the finish line. That's how I got started, and then eventually we had two or three dogs. I started showing when I was seven or eight years old (now days kids have to be ten). Back in those days you could start as long as you could control the dog.

So you continued on with your mom and dad's starts?

Yes, I would help with some of their dogs, and then I tried pursuing obedience, and that was a challenge. I think I was in the seventh or eighth grade when I trained my first Sammy, named Clancy. He was a challenge as Sammies can be. He

was fine until it came time for the recall and then he had his own ideas of where he wanted to go. Then I wanted to pursue other breeds too, as a contrast, I wanted to do something different so I trained and showed Pembroke Welsh Corgis and enjoyed them. But I always have and always will have a Sammy or two ... or three! (laughter)

What was the first dog you had of your own that you showed seriously?



His name was Almost Christmas Chatter, and he was a Ch. Kazan of Kentwood son, which was Clancy. I was going off to college, actually, when I got him in 1966. He met with an unfortunate accident with a car, and it set us back, so I pursued his obedience while he was rehabbing. He never got his championship because of that injury, but he was able to get a CD.

Where did you go from him?

I stayed with Corgis for awhile in obedience and conformation. Then I'd have to say my next dog that had success was a dog called the White Knight. They called him Knavi-

oux. Again, in that period of early '70s up through the '80s I was doing a lot of sledding. I was using offspring from the English dog my mom and dad imported, Painter. I had a great deal of success with some five- and six-dog teams that Painter was behind. But the White Knight was my first Best in Show winning dog. He was born in 1974, and I think he got his Best in Show in 1981 or 1982. Meanwhile, I did some nice winning with some of his

hound crosses. I was true-blue in wanting to run with Sammies, however, I did on occasion run a dog of a different color. I ran some Siberians with my Sammies, I ran a couple of Irish Setters, and naturally they were very helpful but it is nothing like a team of Sammies to run. They are easy to manage and dependable. We weren't always the fastest, but quite often we weren't the last, either. (laughter)

I would think that would be beautiful, a whole team of Sammies.

Yes, I quit my teaching job to do some substituting so I could devote more time to showing and sledding in the mid-'70s. I made the rounds; I ran in California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and then I spent about a month in Colorado running races there. That is one of the last few areas that is still doing some sprint racing. So many people have gone to middle distance and long distance. But I quite enjoyed that and I'd usually run the five- and six-dog class.

So you ran in sledding and competed in conformation at the same time?

It taught me great appreciation and understanding for how a dog should move and why they can or they can't; what makes them successful in harness can be carried over to what they do in the ring.

It sounds like you believe a dog should be bred or able to do what he was intended to do whether you are doing it or not.

Absolutely. You know, you don't have to compete to find that out. You can do fun sledding or training, because it teaches the mind as well as the body. Like I said, I learned from many hours of training and racing that some dogs overcame certain physical limitations or abilities that - if they had been built better, they might have done better. But they either had the heart and the soul or the mind, or they found a way to compensate for their shortcomings. Then there were those dogs that were built right, that had everything, and those were the really outstanding dogs.

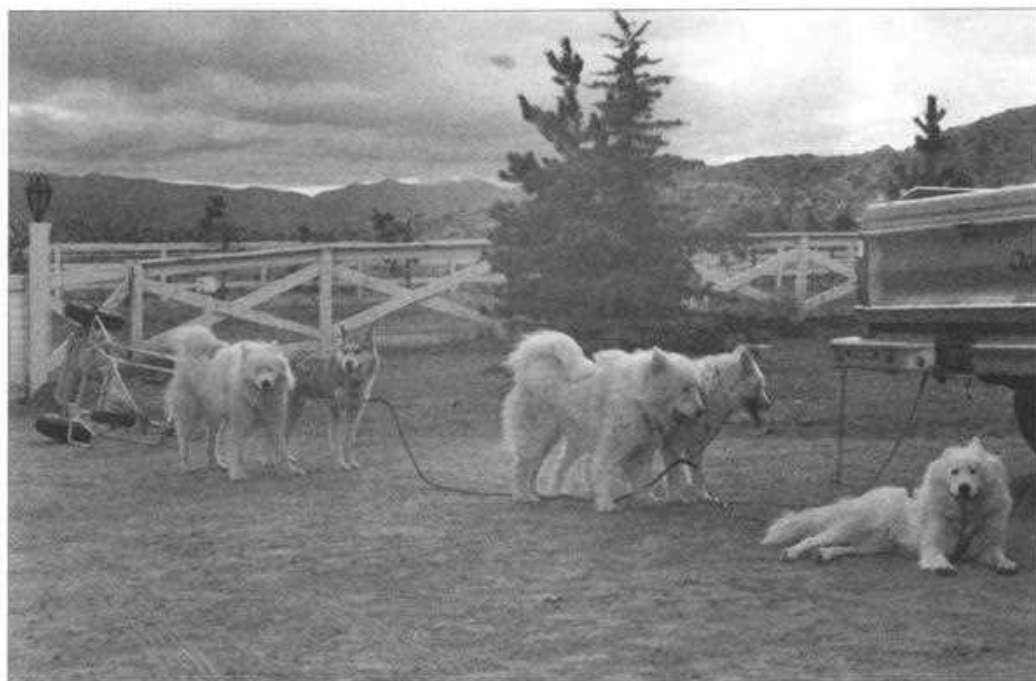
daughters, Ch. Tasha of Sasha's Knight, which we called "Tekka." She was a top-winning bitch, she won numerous Groups, I believe eighteen or nineteen Groups before the Group was split, and she was my first Westminster Best of Breed winner. Since then I've had four bitches and one dog go Best of Breed at Westminster since 1982.

When you were sledding, were you competing?

Yes, I competed, but it was a bit of a bone of contention with the other people who raced because they didn't think that some of the purebred dogs could fare as well, especially against the Husky crosses and the



Ch. Kazan of Kentwood, "Clancy," first place over 28 entries, Santa Ana KC, 1962.



Sunshine Mardee, lead; Pistol Pete - Kachina; White Knight - Feldspar, Aqua Dulce, California, Thanksgiving 1975.

Did you do much breeding throughout your career?

Compared to some, no. I have been doing this for close to 40 years now, and I think I've had not quite 40 litters. I would breed for myself, to improve

where I am, so if I wasn't interested in doing a particular combination, or I needed a dog to fill in within the breeding program as I looked down the road, then I didn't breed. So I haven't had a great volume of numbers, I

tried to keep it down to the quality.

Which was the best litter, whether from a show or working standpoint?

From a breeder's standpoint, based on producing puppies that

then take you to the next level, I would have to say - this is difficult! As an example, it took a number of breedings to get to the sire and dam that produced A Rose is a Rose, which is Ana, and her full brother from a different breeding, Wild Rose Knight, which is Pop - their sire and dam was a bitch named Hoof 'N Paws Ramblin Rose and a dog named Hoof 'N Paws Knight Shadow. I guess if it is based on career and record and abilities, they would have to be the sire and dam that gave me the most in a very few number of puppies. Pop was from a litter of three, named Snap, Krackle and Pop, but there were no girls so that's why I did it again, and I got Ana, who was from a litter of four, and she was the only bitch. Ana, of course, is now the all-time winning record holder for a Sammy bitch with nine Bests in Show and nine specialty wins. But she is also eleven and a half and still bouncing around here on the ranch and chasing and catching gophers and rabbits. So she has staying power from a physical standpoint as well as in my estimation probably one of the prettiest bitches ever. Her brother Pop, who had a nice career of



Mardee at Tahoe with lead - Sunshine Mardee (Cubie's litter sister), point, left and right, Painter daughters; wheel, left - Knavioux and right, Pete (K's brother), both Painter sons. March 1975 or 1976.

his own, is so well built that at thirteen and a half, he is out following Mike on the tractor. He caught a rabbit this summer, it might have been an old one like

Show winner, has produced some nice puppies. So I was able to take a little of that on the sire's side through Knight Shadow, and produce some puppies

How many champions have you produced in all your litters?

It would be a guess - a ballpark figure would be 50 or 60. I might be off, I don't really know

Ana has a record, but hopefully somebody will work really hard and surpass that sometime. It was just nice, during her career, that she was so well received



Ch. The Hoof 'N Paw White Knight, "Knaxious," son of Ch. Kiskas Karaholme Cherokee, January 1977. The beginning of Mardee's Hoof 'N Paw.

him, but he still caught it. From his progeny he has three Best in Show sons. So he was very prepotent in producing the good qualities that he got from both his mother and his father. Sadly, I didn't get any puppies out of Ana. But her half sister, Proud Mary, who is a Best in

out of her that are just starting to come into their own.

It is sad when you have a really good dog or bitch and you can't get puppies from them.

Yes, but sometimes it is nature; they are just not meant to produce. We tried everything, but it just didn't happen.

those numbers. Some of the dogs that I have been very instrumental in their careers, I can tell you when they went Best in Show or Best in Specialty under who, but I haven't kept track of that. It's not as important - I'm not really into the numbers game. It's nice that

and appreciated by not only Sammy breeders and fanciers but the dog fancy in general. She was really a good ambassador for the breed. People still ask me today how she is. Ever bouncing! (laughter)

Who is the best dog that you have ever owned or bred, and in what

way?

From a records standpoint, of course, it would have to be Ana, but that's because time and money was spent to achieve that. I like to think that she had the quality that took her to the level she did. She defeated more Sammies in one year than any Sammy ever - over 2,200. She finished the highest any Sammy bitch has ever finished in the Working Group for a year at number six. But that takes time. As far as liveability and enjoy-

ableness as soul mate, I would probably say her mother, Ramblin Rose. She actually helped me herd the cows. She was good at that. We kind of fell into that because I had to move cows from one place to another, and I had a road to cross, and I put her on one side and tell her to wait there, and the fact that they saw her - they would run across and go through the gate. She realized that she was actually contributing, so it was fun to watch the process. I knew early

on (Rosey was born in 1985) that she had this innate ability to herd and we worked well together.

I never would have thought of a Sammy as a herding dog.

Oh, yes.

Do you have any favorite stories about any dogs that you have to share?

One was a sledding incident when I was still in central California. I'd go up to the Sierra mountains to train. I was up there one day with a group of

six dogs (I was teaching in Tulare, California at the time). There was a teacher who had a Sammy bitch and he said, "Why don't you take my bitch and see how she likes sledding?" So I said okay, and I took her up there. I ran my dogs for a while to wind them down a little bit, and then thought I'd add this bitch. I can't recall her name. So I hooked her into the team. I was running six dogs. I had a lead a bitch called Sunshine Mardee. She was named after





Ch. Hoof 'N Paw Rambling Rose, "Rosy," winning Best of Breed in 1987 at Yakima on the Washington circuit. Gini Addamo accompanied Mardee.

me because I gave her to a friend of mine, and she was actually the litter sister to Cubie, who was herself a lovely bitch

and produced some nice puppies. So we started off, and we hadn't gone a half a mile and this bitch I borrowed just went

down in the snow. So I thought, "This isn't working." I hooked the team down, and I went to take her out of the team

and put her in the basket. The team, of course, was still ripping to go, and they felt the sled give a little bit, and here I



Mardee at Starwind Teepee Village campsite, December 1987, Montana.

am standing with this bitch and off goes my team down the trail. There was no way to catch it, so I took the bitch and walked her back to the truck, and I started following the trail. Fortunately, it was a well-plowed trail. I must have walked for twenty

minutes when all of a sudden, around a turn, here comes my team. The sled was upright, there were no tangles, and I was thinking, "Thank you, God." I attribute that to the fact that the lead dog, Sunshine Mardee, realized I wasn't on the back yelling

at them, so she turned the team around and came back home. It could have been a major disaster; they could have run into wildlife or gone over the edge or whatever. But that was pretty phenomenal.

It is good to know if you fell off

and was hurt they would come and get you.

You would always like to think so, yes. (laughter)

Who was your biggest character or had the best sense of humor?

It would have to be Shaddy, Hoof 'N Paws Knight Shadow. He is Ana, Pop and Miree's father. My husband Mike and I called him the Big Goof, because he would just do silly things. He would toss his head, he'd wiggle his butt, he'd jump in the bucket of the tractor before my husband was maybe going to do something; it was like, "Okay, I'm ready to go." He was a real comedian, a lot of fun. And he passed it on to his kids, too. It made them so nice to live with. A sense of humor does make them so nice to live with.

Do you think pedigrees can be trusted for accuracy in this breed?

Sad to say, no. I think there has been some juggling on occasion. It's just a suspicion. The integrity of the gene pool is only as strong as the people who are the wardens of it. I believe over the years some dogs have been substituted, especially prior to the use of frozen semen. With the advent of DNA testing, and frozen semen, those few persons who thought that they had to do something to either keep a particular line going, or a dominance if you will of a certain stud dog will rely on actual stud dogs and brood bitches. I think there was an area of probably fifteen or twenty years before we got into this when people were wanting to clamor for a top stud dog, top this and top that, that it made perhaps a few people compromise. One thing about the Sammy being as resilient and as natural a breed as it is, that just like things that are man-made, you can create a stability in a pool that hopefully time will take care of it and we can get back to where we can really feel that it is fairly accurate.

How have you used inbreeding, linebreeding and outcrossing, and when should they be used?

Of course, I base a lot of my early learning on what my mom and dad did, and my dad was particularly fond of the uncle theory, which can also be the aunt theory. That is breeding a nephew to an aunt or an uncle to a niece. Like they always say, if you like the stud dog, look at his father. We do put a lot of emphasis on the male for the

dominance because they can produce more in their lifetimes and you can tend to see a pattern. The bitches – I would like to think – don't have that luxury. I rarely ever bred a bitch more than three times. In fact, I don't think I ever have. Repeating a litter with the same sire, I have done that once, and that is what produced Ana for me. Which by the way, was an AI and I did it because Shaddy was off being shown in southern California and I am in Montana. He was home for a winter vacation, and Rosey was in season. I wanted to do this breeding again, so I just got the Ziploc bags out and did it myself, so I am kind of proud of that. But you need to know your line, and whether you linebreed, inbreed or outcross – outcrossing is good sometimes, but you are also bargaining for things you don't know about or understand, or how they are going to combine with what you have. I learned to do a lot closer breeding because of Pat Craige Trotter and her Elkhounds, and I don't think I would be where I am today as a result of Ana and Pop, the three Best in Show boys, Sky, Seager and d'Kota, if I had not done what she does, and that is – a lot of people call it inbreeding, but I call it particularly close linebreeding. Inbreeding to me is a brother and sister. Depending on what is behind the father or the daughter or mother and son, that to me isn't inbreeding. It's very close linebreeding. You have to be prepared for the very good and the very bad, and the in between. But you only need one really great or outstanding puppy to carry on. You don't need a whole litter of them. An all-champion litter can be a litter of mediocrity but they are all champions. I'm more interested in the extra special puppy that has everything and hopefully, in time, proves to be a very predominant producer, whether it be a dog or a bitch.

Who or what else has influenced your breeding the most, aside from Pat?

Many would think my mom and dad, but that's not true because they didn't do that much breeding themselves. Once I really started doing this on my own, I was away from home and they really weren't doing that much breeding any-



Ch. The Hoof 'N Paw White Knight winning BOB at Cabrillo KC (judge Louis Harris); he went on to Group 2 under judge Edna Travinek.

more. It was just watching pedigrees, watching other breeds, seeing certain dogs with their dominant traits, and then looking at my dogs and seeing what I had and what I considered to be the most important things to maintain. I've never been a proponent of parts shopping. I think when you start shopping for parts in a stud dog, that is exactly what you get. You know, it's like a car that somebody put together from an assembly line, and they kept taking home parts over the years, none of them really went together, but it was still a car. That is what happens if you say, "I love that dog's head," or "I love that dog's rear." You have to take the good and the bad, and you have to find the best package. I have always tried to develop that package. My motto for my kennel for years has been "for work and show." They ought to be able to do both, whether it be herding, weight-pulling, sledging, packing, conformation, obedience or agility. Many of my dogs, thanks to many people who have worked hard, have done all of the above. It is important that they be a very versatile and utility type of animal, not just pretty, not just sound, but all of it together.

How many dogs do you have now?

I have a geriatric group, I have d'Kota, Pop and Ana, they are all eleven or better. Then I have three youngsters that are Miree and d'Kota's kids, I have Fats and Rushmore and Edee, so that is six Sammies. The rest are a variety. I have an Australian Shepherd named Lily, and she helps me with the cows, and she helps raise puppies. I have four Shiba Inu - I got into Shibas in 1991, after seeing my first one in Taiwan in 1989. I've had a reasonable amount of success with them and I enjoy them. They are a smaller dog, so I consider them my retirement dogs. They are about 25 to 30 pounds; you can put them under your arm, they are less grooming and easier to manage to a degree. Their temperament is different, they are a primitive dog but they are entertaining and they are kind of like having cats that can bark. (laughter) That's exactly what a Shiba is like. Then I have a Siberian Husky, too. I had one years ago, Burt, I finished him, and

this is a frozen semen puppy of his. His name was Frostbite. He was a Group and specialty winner. I have a daughter of his who I call Yogo because of her beautiful blue eyes. She is sort of a mutual effort with a friend of mine in Colorado, Brenda Valletta, who has Wildestar Siberians and in the past has had some of my Sammies.

So you still have a full house?

Yes, it is about thirteen or fourteen (seven Sams, four Shibas, one Siberian, one Aus-



Wild Rose Knight, "Pop," in 1992.

tralian Shepherd, and one Labrador).

What's the most you have ever had at one time?

About sixteen or seventeen, but that is too many. I start getting nervous when I get to double digits. As I get older I find that instead of grooming six dogs in a day I'm lucky to do two or three. So the upkeep and all - it's not fair to them. I would like to have somewhere in the neighborhood of six to eight. Through attrition and all we may be there, I don't plan on adding too many in the near future. The old ones are very special, I like to have them around.

Do you name your litters with any type of a theme or scheme?

Oh, yes, I drove the Sammy world crazy with my Knight dogs. I had a dog named Captain Midnight, so all of his puppies were "Midknight" something. Sometimes a theme such as call names, like Snap, Krackle and Pop. I haven't started with the alphabet and gone from a to z. It is just whatever strikes me at the time, or a name that I think might look good in "neon" down the road. The name

body who has been in the breed for less than ten years), and some of them have even been in it longer and they are still thinking his way. For the most part the very new people whose first dog is still alive, they want to do their own thing. Well, how do you do your own thing when we are based on a standard that was written back in the 1920s, and the breed dates back to being pure in breeding only white for years - you can still find them in Russia and Siberia. Yet they want to do something different. That absolutely boggles my mind.

First off, you need to read the standard, and if you don't understand some of the words, get out your dictionary, because some of us are envisioning things in the standard that aren't there. It has come down to many people want to breed winners. If you are breeding a good dog according to the standard, emphasizing certain things that you yourself like, then you should be rewarded in the ring. Now, yes, that is based on education, but if I look at pictures of dogs, since I grew up with them in the late '40s, '50s, and '60s, and there are still some dogs out there today that look like the dogs 45 or 50 years ago. The ones that don't have some semblance to dogs of years ago, are probably one-time occurrences. They may not have the angles that the breed calls for because some are trying to make the head prettier, or trying to make more bone, for example, when it is a medium-sized dog. So why do some people do this?

Some characteristics are hard to improve or change that have been established in the breed for years. Too many "breeders" try this in hopes of creating a name for themselves. Well, they might with one dog, but then we aren't going to see them anymore. Or the dog isn't going to be able to produce itself because it is such an enigma in itself that it doesn't have any basis for passing on what it had.

I have dogs today, like d'Kota (Three Dawg Knight), who actually reminds me a lot of a dog that my folks had called Starctic Storm, back in the '50s. There is nothing wrong with that. The big change in the look of our dog, of course, is the way we groom them, and the grooming products and that sort of

doesn't necessarily have their call name in it, either, which is difficult for some people. But no, it is just a whim, or the time of year, or the mood I'm in.

Do you think you have established a distinguishable line?

Yes, I do. I have been thinking about this, and there are only a small handful of breeders in this country who have stayed true to their convictions and can say that. The new people coming up who are trying to establish a line, too many of them have the idea they need to "reinvent the wheel." We have all had to start from someone before us, but I'm hearing things from "newbies" (which is any-



Am/Can Ch. Tasha of Sacha's Knight, "Teka."

thing. But too many breeders are trying to create in their own minds a new breed. I'm kind of boggled by it.

While my mom and dad were still alive, we talked about this, and talked about why this is happening and what the long-term plans are for the breed. The diehard breeders who have been doing this for 30 or 40

years are out there, and yes, you can notice their dogs. The ideal is to establish a line that you're known for, and you have certain strengths, and they do it with a well-planned breeding program.

Back to getting Ana and a dog like Pop, they were truly a fifteen-year plan. I planned that far ahead. I didn't know which dog I was going to take to get to

there, but I knew the general pedigree, and there were several father-daughter breedings in that, and eventually I got Shaddy and Ramblin Rose, and those two gave me my Pop and Ana.

Some people are only planning for the next litter. I don't plan for just the next litter; I am planning two, three or four litters ahead. You don't have to

have the luxury of keeping lots of puppies to achieve this. Some people say it is easier, actually if somebody else helps feed them, raise them, and keep them up, and then you go back to that dog if it worked out at two or three years of age, and then bring it back into your lines, it is something you produced, but you don't have to have a death

hold on everything. So that's why I say the numbers game is not necessarily one that makes you a success. Some people say a certain dog has bred x number of champions. How many times was it bred as compared to another dog that had equal number of champions but he was bred far less. Who is the more successful stud dog? Statistics are a very tricky thing, and you can make them work for you, but they don't necessarily tell the truth.

How would you rate type, temperament, and soundness in order of importance?

First and foremost our breed has to have the temperament to do what it does, which is live with people, work for the people, work for their families. Generally, the females are better guarders than the males, but they have to have a temperament that makes them first and foremost family members. They have to look like a Sammy, and there is a range that involves that. So unless they are very Shepherd or Chow like, which means your proportions are all wrong, that is a no-no. It is hard to separate all these because a dog has to have the soundness to be able to do the work it was meant to do. They make good service dogs, they do as I mentioned all the other activities, including conformation, obedience, weight-pulling, sledding and more. So I think the three are pretty well connected. It is hard to differentiate how one is so much more important than the others. It is a tightly knit association between the three.

Describe your interpretation of the perfect Samoyed.

When you read the standard, it is very specific about proportions, so the two words that come to mind in just the overview of the dog is they have to have balance with proportion. This is an on-going battle; I think we have improved the number of dogs that are proportionate in their leg length to their overall height. The finer subtleties of the breed, the head and the expression is a very complex thing. As far as a female head, I have to date - and I see a lot of dogs - Ana in her prime was probably the most exquisite bitch I have ever seen. And I don't say that because I owned her. Even at eleven and a half years old, she is still as feminine

as the day she was three or four. Now when she was six months old at the 1993 National, I was ready to give her away! (laughter) That's the truth. She didn't show me a whole lot early on. She didn't turn the corner until she was about nine and a half months old. I thought, "Wow!" You know, sometimes you have to have a little patience. But her smile, her proportion of her head, muzzle to backskull, her ears, she just has a classic feminine head, and that is the key. To be strong in demeanor and stature, but yet feminine. That is a tough combination to get. I think it's harder to get in a bitch than it is in a dog.

Right now I'm on a tail fetish. I have been since the SCA National in 1996, I think it was in Wisconsin. The tailset and the tail carriage effect the movement of a dog. If you watch other breeds, you will notice this. We're still having problems with lowset tails, highset tails, tails that crank off the side of the body. The tail is functional (and it warms the air for the dog when it is sleeping in the snow). When they are running, they tend to trail their tails simply because they are busy working and the tail tends to relax a little bit. But the tail is a huge indicator, not only of attitude, temperament and emotion, but how it is placed on the back of the tailbone at the pelvis is important because of how they move their back legs. The length of the upper thigh bone, the lower thigh bone and the hock - they are all relative as to where the tail is set on the croup. People aren't paying enough attention to the tail. The tail balances the dog, it should balance the head when you are looking at them in profile. So I'm on a tail kick. It goes deeper than people think, so if you have a puppy with a tail that basically looks like an afterthought once it was born, it should be a bigger consideration than it is. There are a lot of things you can forgive on Sammies, and say, "I wish I could change this or that," but the tail is an important appendage of the dog and it means so much to the way they travel and the way they are feeling. So we need to pay more attention to the tail; it's not just decoration.

How should a dog move from the front, rear and from the side?

The most important gait on a dog is sidegait. You actually can see the front and see the rear, if you watch the sidegait. When I'm judging and I move a dog down and back, of course we are looking for horrendous things like cowhocks or toeing out or toeing in. So I will often watch the feet that are farthest away from me when they are moving. For example, when they are moving away, I'll watch the front feet and see where they hit, and when they are coming back to me, I really shouldn't be able to see the rear feet. You kind of teach yourself to see things and around things. But the sidegait is so important because it does show the balance of the dog. Some dogs can be stacked up absolutely fine, and move down and back like a wagon, everything foursquare. But when you take them around, you can find the dogs that run downhill, the dogs that have too much kick in back and not enough reach in front, so that is where you can see the balance and the timing of the gait.

Should you see wide rear movement with the hocks parallel, or do they tend to single track?

No, they really don't do either of those. Depending on the speed, they will come to a center line, which people refer to as single tracking, but the hocks should form a V when the rear feet hit the ground. Parallel is wrong; parallel is more correct than cowhocks, but parallel is not correct. They converge with the angling slightly originating from the pelvis and from the tip of the hock to the toe as it hits the ground. But you don't want "bowed hocks"!

What are you looking for in a head?

Our standard doesn't specifically call for this, but over the years and all the Sammie heads I've seen and measured, the head should be a 60-40 wedge. That is 60 percent backskull, and a 40-percent muzzle. In other words, if a head is closer to a 50-50, it's going to be Shepherd-like. If the head approaches 30-70, it's too Chow-like. Our standard doesn't specifically enumerate those numbers, but if you look at lots of dogs and the ones you find most appealing, they will be close to 60-40. Now what also makes a difference on that 60-40 proportion is the set

and size of the ears. But you know, when I'm judging and I have a really nice dog that is a pretty complete package but his ears are a little bit tall, I can get past those big ears. Conversely, there are some people who like to have those little, tiny bear cub ears. That is not to my liking, either, but if it is the best complete package - you know, the hardest thing is to find and breed these subtle differences that make a dog go from good to outstanding. Breeding a fairly decent dog is not that big of a challenge these days, it truly isn't. However, the shoulder is still the most misunderstood part of the dog. It is the hardest thing to breed true and correct, but the rears have improved dramatically since the '50s.

Understanding the front is more difficult and the hardest thing people have is finding a dog that is balanced front and rear, or understanding if they have a puppy or a young dog that is balanced. You can change some of that balance by the speed in which you work or move the dog. So sometimes a person will have a pretty nice dog, but they think faster is better, when in fact it may not be. The dog may actually look better at a slower pace.

As far as the head goes, it is the whole package, the smile, the lip line - I'm not crazy about lip breaks, I think it is distracting. The pigment around the eyes and lips are paramount to the pretty look of the Sammie. Eye color - our standard kind of leans everybody to the point if dark is preferred then black must be better, but black eyes are not good on a Sammie. They show little or no expression. They are very deep and hollow. A brown eye has its gradients from dark to medium to even light. We have one disqualification, blue eyes. Knowing the background our dogs come from, sometimes even I have had dogs with lighter eyes than I prefer. But you judge the whole package, don't discount a dog simply because it has one thing that you don't care for. If it has blue eyes, it is disqualified. If it has a light eye, but otherwise it is a nice dog, I'd rather do that than find one that is short and dumpy with a dark eye. Which is the one that is going to do the best for you according to what it was made



BOB at the 2004 National Specialty in Topeka, Kansas, Ch. Wolf Rivers Moonlight Ridge, "Lightning," four and a half years old. Owners, Linda von Hanneken-Martin and Kay Halberg.

You all have your ideas of what you want to do with a house, and you do that. I've built a couple of them. But when you're all done, you say, "Gee, I wish I had done this," or "I wish I had done that." But for the most part, it turned out the way you wanted. If we pick apart our standard to either make it "more clear," that is not the way to go. That's not a good thing. Other clubs in their breeds have tried it and it has just opened another can of worms.

Our forefathers in this breed worked very diligently at it. We've made a few changes lately concerning the cutting of whiskers and that was important in that it was trying to tell people to leave the scissors off the dogs. The whiskers serve a purpose, and besides, too many people would clip the lips and tongues - I have had dogs come into the show ring with blood on their lips or tongues, back when they were still clipping. And when I'm judging other breeds I really don't like to see

the whiskers clipped. If you win because you don't have whiskers it's a bad excuse and if you lose because you do have whiskers is even a worse excuse. They are part of the dog; leave them alone. They serve a purpose, they are tactile; they are like a little set of hands up by their noses.

Our standard is in pretty good shape. There is always room for interpretation. If we always had exactly the same thing it would be really tough to beat each other or there would be no challenge. There has to be some room for interpretation.

Do you think champions should be speialed?

No, I think "specials" should be speialed. There are a lot of champions that should just thank the Lord they even finished and should never see the ring again. You need that total package if you are going to "special" a dog. It needs to be a dog that represents the breed from not only the breeders' aspect and lovers of Sammies but the

dog must appeal to the fancy as a whole. If it took you forever to finish a dog or a bitch, that should be your first clue he/she is not a special.

There are a lot of things that go into speialing; people who special a dog owner/handler, that is fine, if you have the time and the abilities; or if you send a dog with a handler because you don't have the time or the ability, you as the breeder are saying, "I'm really proud of this; I want everyone to see this." Well, then you better show the best that you have. I have, over the years, finished a number of dogs and they are not all specials. Now, I have set my standards higher in the last fifteen or twenty years. As one keeps improving and one has more success, you have to "raise the bar." When I look at a puppy, I decide the criteria for keeping that puppy would be "Are you a Group, specialty or potential Best in Show winner?" Not just "Can you finish?" So you have to decide, as an owner or breed-

er, what your goals are. They change for people the longer they are in the sport. Since most people are only in dogs seven years or less, the ones who get past that time better keep raising the bar or they're not going to get any better.

Do you think if Sammies became more popular it would help or harm the breed?

I don't think they ever will, because they are too much work. Popularity for any breed has been a detriment, so I wouldn't like to see that. They have stayed around the mid-80s in popularity out of 156 breeds for years, simply because of the family aspect of the dog, but the first thing that comes to mind when anyone wants a Sammy is that the whole family agrees. (One rarely wears dark clothing and you consider a dog hair a fiber in your food.) So let's hope they never get too popular!

To be continued ...

Breeders' directory

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- p - puppies available occasionally
- d - grown dogs occasionally for sale
- s - stud service to approved bitches
- b - dog boarding available
- h - handler

LISTING is free to paid subscribers to this magazine. Just send kennel name, name, address, phone number and appropriate letters. All listings also appear on our website at www.hoflin.com.

CONDITIONS. The magazine will not accept listings from dealers who acquire dogs for resale. All listings must be for purebred dogs with the understanding that all dogs offered for sale are registered or are eligible for registration with AKC.

-Outside U.S.-

- IKILIKUJAN pds 09-275-2513
ikilikujan.kennel@kolumbus.fi
Elise Lehtinen Herne Haentie 38
04330 Lahela Finland
- JASAM pd 403-939-6489 Mr. & Mrs. John A. Post PO Box 3267
Morinville AB Canada T8R 1S2
- Arizona-**
LANDMARK pd 623-935-4214 Carl & Diane Landstrom 560 E. Campina Dr. Litchfield Park AZ 85340
- California-**
DELMAR ps 760-753-3664 Marcia Sandusky 1949 Pariva Dr. Cardiff by Sea CA 92007
- HOLLYS pds 805-482-6025 Donna Hollingsworth 877 Camino Concordia Camarillo CA 93010
- LYNTHA pds 818-349-7270 Jim &

- Marian Osborn 9112 Encino Ave. Northridge CA 91325
- SIMONOF pdsh 805-649-2877 Robert & Regina Simonof 145 Brandt Oak View CA 93022
- Colorado-**
CLOUDNINE ps 303-716-9173 Kent & Janet Cherna 2046 S. Robb Way Lakewood CO 80227
- Connecticut-**
WHITE MAGIC pds 203-740-9237 whitemagicmagicals@earthlink.net Carrie Parma-Collier 4 Candlewood Birches Brookfield CT 06804
- Florida-**
COLD SMOKE pdh 407-365-5486 dickjan@bellsouth.net Janice McGlashon 777 Bear Creek Cir. Winter Springs FL 32708
- Illinois-**

- KABERA SAMOYED pdsb 815-727-2727 kabera@prodigy.net Teresa D. Heaver 18105 W. Godfrey Lockport IL 60441
- Iowa-**
SEELAH pds 515-987-1007 Merrill & Rowena Evans 110 Terrace Dr. Waukee IA 50263
- Louisiana-**
AIMEE ps 225-695-3446 glanglois@eatel.net Marion Langlois 20230 Happy Woods Rd. Springfield LA 70462
- Maine-**
ALIYABEL pds 207-839-8378 alyssa@aliyabel.com Alyssa Dassa 77 Alexander Dr. Gorham ME 04038
- Maryland-**
DANICA pds 301-271-1811 danielcasam@aol.com Dr. John & Judy Kovitch 8040 Blacks Mill Rd. Thurmont MD 21788
- MOONSONG pdsh 410-442-0107 Bill & Cindy Faucette 15622 Thistle Downs Ct. Woodbine MD 21797
- Michigan-**
POLAR BREEZE ps 734-654-9918 Donna J. Wood 4079 Fay Rd. Carleton MI 48117
- Missouri-**
BARRON'S pdsh 636-949-9333 Barbara Cole 430 Blanche Dr. St. Charles MO 63303
- RIVER CITY psbh 636-366-4172 rivercitysam@aol.com Patricia Schuler 2747 Scott Rd. Moscow Mills MO 63362

- TALL TAILS ps 314-757-7780 barrelbanger@msn.com Debra Roesler-Hester 6533 Christopher Dr. St. Louis MO 63129
- Nevada-**
SNOWKAP pdsh 702-914-8800 Kathleen P. Martin 4850 Vicki Ave. Las Vegas NV 89139
- New Jersey-**
BARBICON pds 908-439-3114 Mrs. Barbara Brisgel 1240 Rattlesnake Bridge Rd. Bedminster NJ 07921
- New Mexico-**
BUCKROE ps 505-326-5874 blafortune@acmet.com Barbara D. LaFortune 617 Meseta Farmington NM 87401
- New York-**
MISTY MOUNTAIN ps 607-754-6275 mstmtn@aol.com William & Sandra Broskett Box 306 Vestal NY 13850
- SAMTASIA pdsh 518-642-3647 samtasia@aol.com Linda & Larry Carman 1358 County Route 24 Granville NY 12832
- North Carolina-**
NOOTKA pdsb Catherine Wilcox 329 Oak St. Forest City NC 28043
- Ohio-**
ECHO ps 440-635-0408 echo@echosamoyeds.com Jan Warner 11650 Kile Rd. Chardon OH 44024
- WHITE EAGLE'S pds 614-432-7608 Rev. Terry E. Litton 1206 Greenacres Dr. Cambridge OH 43725

- Oklahoma-**
SNOWWONDER ps 918-341-7315 snowonder@juno.com Fred & Kay Brechbuhl 15925 S. 4240 Rd. Claremore OK 74017
- Oregon-**
DOUBEK p 541-751-0603 njdoubek@aol.com John Doubek 68380 Oceanic Rd. North Bend OR 97459
- MISHKA'S p 541-350-2460 mishkas@cox.net Maria George PO Box 1729 Redmond OR 97756
- MYSTIWIND pdsh 503-255-3960 Joe & Joy Ritter 10709 N.E. Fargo St. Portland OR 97220
- POLAR MIST pd ph/fax 541-388-0913 polarmist1@aol.com Lynette Blue 64464 Collins Rd. Bend OR 97701
- Pennsylvania-**
ALPHA ps 215-966-4079 John & Lucy Ackerman 104 Fairview St. Macungie PA 18062
- CHRISTORI pds 717-761-1219 christorikennel@cs.com Vicki Roswog 7 Gale Rd. Camphill PA 17011
- WYNDSTAR pds 724-941-4347 Debbie Gebauer 255 Valley Rd. Eightyfour PA 15330
- Vermont-**
WHITECLIFF-KARU pdsh 802-422-3554 Frances Powers 231 Ledge End Rd. Killington VT 05751
- Wisconsin-**
KRAUSS pdsh Robert & Wanda Krauss W8228 Kent Rd. Poynette WI 53955