

# THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY

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*AMERICAN/MEXICAN CHAMPION*  
**Crizta's Lil Drummer Boy**

## Samoyed People

The Samoyed Quarterly  
Talks With  
**Jack and Sandra Post**  
**JASAM KENNELS**  
Morinville, Alberta, Canada

### Part II

*This interview was conducted by  
Jocelyne Ivanovskis in April, 1985.*

#### **Regarding conformation - what to you is the ideal Samoyed? What are you aiming for?**

Sandra: I'm aiming for a well-balanced, medium-sized dog. I don't like them too large. I like my males 22 or 23 inches - over that is starting to get a little bit too big. I like a well-balanced, medium-sized dog with a good-quality coat. I don't care about the length; it doesn't have to be very long, but I like a good-quality, stand-off coat. I like a nice pleasant face, a pretty kind of face. I think a Samoyed is a pretty breed and there's nothing wrong with having a pretty face with a nice, almond-shaped eye and a very broad skull. I like smaller ears, little cubby ears. I also like a really good foot on a Sammy - the long feet. I do not like these pussy paws. I think a Sammy should have the good long feet. I think we've found that out at our place, where we are out in the country, we get drifts that are six or seven feet high, and the dogs like to go on top of them. The Sams just stand on top like king of the castle, but the Chows go right through. They have the tight feet, the pussy feet. The Sams are not necessarily lighter. A big male Sam will weigh more than the small Chow bitch, and yet the Chows will go right through that snow. There has to be a reason, and I think it's the feet - the shape of the feet and the way the weight is distributed on those feet. The Chows with their little tight toes go right through - they can't get anywhere in the snow. It goes up to their stomach and they just kind of hop around out there. They have a good time hopping around, but the Sams are having a ball. They're out there on top of the snow and just galloping for all they're worth. They very seldom fall through the snow.

I also like a nice tailset. I like the tail fairly high on the back with a nice curl to it. I love the long tail - there's just something about a nice long tail! A good topline, I think, is something you really have to watch on Sammies. A nice straight topline and a back that's on the shorter side. I

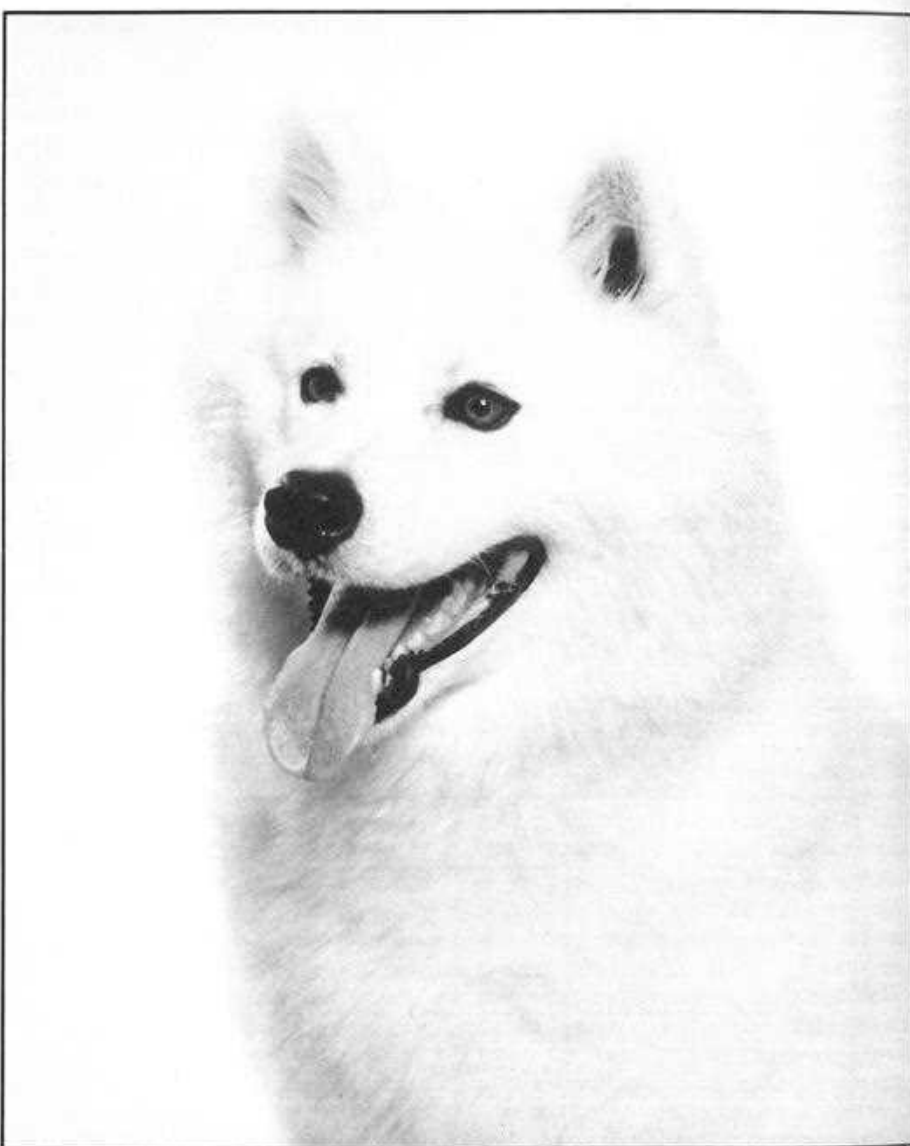
don't like choo-choo-train types. I like a fairly short-backed dog that can still move. There is a happy medium. I think Fledge can move quite well. She's got a nice short back.

So you can reach a compromise - you don't have to have a real long back to have good movement. There's kind of a medium in there, and I think that's what we should strive for. I like the good, broad rear end that the standard calls for. When the dog's going away from you, I like it to look solid. I really dislike very heavy bone - that really bothers me. I just shudder when I see these really big-boned Samo-

yeds. We live in the country where we're in snow eight months of the year and you learn the importance of being able to get through snow. Don't tell me that those heavy-boned, heavy dogs can get through snow - they can't, there's no way.

Jack: Especially the heavy, short-legged ones.

Sandra: The other thing is depth of chest. They should have a deep chest, and a good chest, but it should be the heart-shaped chest, and they have to be able to bring their elbows in tightly. Their ribs shouldn't be sticking out so far that their elbows are going out with the ribs.



Can. Am. Ch. Elsamjo's Sasha of Rurik Can. CD (Can. Am. Ch. Pinehill's Bjelkier Rurik x Elsamjo Lady Casseea), foundation bitch. Sasha was everything we asked her to be - family pet, trick dog, obedience dog, show champion and good mother. There will never be another like her.

The chest should be narrow and then wide, and the legs fit in there. The whole thing has to be assembled properly. These are things that judges or breeders can feel. You get your hands on this dog, and you know if it's right or not. Then when it moves, it proves it to you, whether it's right or not.

**What about angles? A lot of people talk about the 45° angle.**

Sandra: I'm no biologist. I've never studied biology, and I don't know that much about it. But, I would say from what I've read, that the 45° angle is attainable, and we probably should work toward that. I think that's probably close to the ideal, that this is probably what Mother Nature wanted and was working toward, and we should go along with it. I think the more reach the dog has in a Working breed like ours, the better off they are. I find with our dogs, they have the nice long reach and they cover the ground so much more efficiently. They get less tired. Those dogs with the long strides can be far into the field and back again, and not be panting. The whole thing seems to go together - the longer stride and efficiency. That's probably a word that too many breeders don't use - efficiency. The other thing that is tied in with that is the pounding you get in the ring. I hate to sit near the ring and hear the Sammies pounding as they're going around. That is bad, bad, bad. With a dog like that you can go around the show ring two or three times. But if you go out into the field with snow and pound around like that, you're not going to go very far, very fast, or very long. So, I don't like pounding, I like light-on-the-feet, graceful movement. They should just be gliding. They should look like this is no effort - like everything is fun. You just move because you feel like it - it's like you're on a cloud.

**From your own perspective in terms of a breeder, what do you think needs to be improved today in Samoyeds?**

Sandra: From what I like personally, I think we have to watch not to get too heavy bone. I think we could get as heavy as we wanted, genetically, if we wanted to. We could have Chow-looking Samoyeds. That's not what the standard calls for, and I don't think that's what we should be working toward. I think we should stay with what the standard suggests: a medium-size working dog, one that moves easily and lightly. One with a sweet expression, a nice smile. A pretty face. A very attractive kind of a dog, appealing, that catches your eye right away. Our



Ch. Jasam's Tanzer T-Beahr (Am. Ch. Tanzer's Teddy Beahr x Monzul Wonderland Wendy). T-Beahr is a double grandson of Am. Can. Ch. Jasam's Huggie Beahr of Tanzer. To date most of the Samoyeds here have been closely linebred. Photo by Hodges.

standard, I think, is very wise. I think it would be very foolish to touch it. It allows for the two kinds of coat and it describes the foot from what my experience says the foot should be. I think we have a good standard and we should follow it. We should stay within those guidelines.

Jack: Not change the standard to fit the kind of dog you're breeding. Try to breed to the standard that has been accepted over the years. There are too many people who have said, "Oh, the standard is no good." The reason it's no good is that they're not breeding to the standard they should be.

**How important is animal husbandry? The daily care, feeding, exercise.**

Sandra: We just had our first experience with torsion. Boy, do you get advice when you have experience with something like that. This business of feeding wet food, and feeding twice a day, and this kind of thing. We've changed some of our ways of feeding. I like to feed the dogs around suppertime and then let them stay

in their kennels for an hour or two while they're resting after they've eaten. No heavy activity. If they go for a run, they go before supper, not after. This kind of thing. We've started soaking the food now, and we never did before. There's a whole ritual, of course, of feeding dogs. I won't even get into that, because we just changed our dog food not too long ago, and I find that if you want to start dog people in on something, just talk about feeding. I think any kind of good, kibble-type dog food that's well-balanced and not too high in protein can be used. These aren't working dogs, most of them; they're not out there pulling a sled every day. They don't need a lot of protein.

Jack: They are a working breed, but they're not the kind of dog that lives to work! We believe the dogs should get their exercise. In the wintertime we'll take the snowmobile, when it's running. (I'm getting dirty looks from my wife for saying that - the snowmobile hasn't been running all that well.) But we'll take them out into the back acreage and have them chase



Miss Canada, 1977-1978, and Silver Man of Kalyma, ten weeks.

the snowmobile around. They'll all chase the snowmobile. In fact, one or two of them could outrun the snowmobile at full bore.

Sandra: We kennel on gravel and we've had good luck with it. We find it easy to clean; their feet seem to be nice because of the gravel. All our dogs have nice, tight feet and good toes. We can wash the gravel down and it seems to drain quite well when it's rainy out, or slushy. We keep our dogs in kennel runs most of the time. They come into the house in the evening; we usually bring all of them in at once.

Jack: When it's dry, that is.

Sandra: Some of them like to watch TV, so they come in in the evening. So far all the males we've kept have gotten along, and we've had three males until just recently. They all got along well. The bitches all get along really well. We haven't had any big problems in that direction. We try to give them some experience in the house. It's hard; the more dogs you have, the harder it is. A couple of them really enjoy the house. They get in a little bit more because they do enjoy it. A couple of them don't enjoy the house at all. They come in for a few minutes to see if anybody's there. If there's nobody new, well, this is boring. They sit by the back door and say, "Can we go out now? We've

done our little penance here, now we want to go back outside."

#### Do you feed supplements?

Sandra: I like to give a bitch who is pregnant extra calcium. When puppies are born, we're careful about what food we first introduce them to. We give them something very mild like hamburger with rice, and Carnation milk diluted with water. We give everybody just a general pet vitamin that we get from our vet, as a supplement.

Jack: Maybe we shouldn't say Carnation milk because we're promoting it.

Sandra: Canned condensed milk.

#### So you're not averse to supplements, in other words?

Sandra: No. I know a lot of breeders now are into the vitamin C thing. They feel that it helps them out with the hips. If it works for you, I say do it. You're not doing the dog any harm. I take vitamins myself, so I'm not adverse to my dogs taking them. I like to take things like halibut liver oil, and things like that. I find it helps me prevent colds, and I'm sure that the vitamins I give my dogs seem to be working. The way I look at it, if your dogs are healthy, if their coats shine, if your bitches conceive when you breed them and your dogs sire litters, then whatever you're doing is right, it's working - so stick with it.

#### So you feed a commercial dog

food?

Sandra: Yes.

#### A good-quality dog food. Do you add anything to it besides a pet vitamin every day?

Sandra: Just a scoop of canned dog food. Again, we buy a good-quality kind. When I open the can, I don't want everyone to leave my kitchen.

Jack: It has to smell reasonable.

Sandra: It has to smell like people food! (laughter) They get a scoop of that, I think it's good for their coats. The dry kibble has everything in it, but not enough fat, so a scoop of canned food seems to do the trick.

Jack: It's not a large scoop either. One can will do for six or seven dogs.

#### Anything special you do in terms of exercise?

Sandra: We like to let a dog run free. We don't like the forced exercise, the running behind cars and that kind of thing. I know some people do what they call "roadwork." I like a dog to run free, to run at its own speed and pace. We like to take the snowmobile out in the winter and the dogs love to run behind it.

Jack: But we're not forcing them to run.

Sandra: The slow ones hang behind and just trot along, and the fast ones try to keep up.

Jack: I'll circle around the field, and the main thing is that they're running at their own speed, they're free, but they're under our control.

Sandra: In the summertime I like to take them out in groups of two or three and go for a run in the fields. Basically, what they like to do is just run to the far end of the field and then run back to me wherever I am. They lap me a few times; they run back and forth and back and forth. Pretty soon we turn around and head for home. The idea is to let them run free. Let them run at their own speed and they'll find what's good for them.

#### What about grooming?

Sandra: I certainly find that I don't groom enough. Really and truly, especially the everyday grooming. Sometimes when I'm selling a pet, and every puppy goes with a brush, and I say, "You have to keep this up, and you have to do this. This has to be done at least once a week." I bite my tongue as I'm saying it, because my poor dogs - a lot of them get done only when there's a show coming. I just don't have the time to do the kind of grooming that I'd like to do on a day-to-day basis. Certainly not the kind that I did when I had



Can/Am. Ch. Pinehill's Bjelkier Rurik (Am/Can Ch. Shaloon of Drayalene x Pinehill's in the Ribbons), left, with his great-grandson on the right, Can. Ch. Triarctica's Zameric Chief (Silver Chant of Triarctica, Ch. x Ch. Jasam's Snomist of Triarctica CD). Photo by Hodges.

one or two dogs. They always looked gorgeous and they always looked great.

Jack: They look reasonable now.

**Do you have any special tips for people in terms of what you do?**

Sandra: I think you begin to learn about your own dog as you go along. I find the most useful thing is to learn by the feel of the coat when it's ready to come out in the spring. Get in there and get it out with your pin brush or your slicker brush, which is actually better when they're shedding. You just learn by experience, by doing. You learn pretty soon the feel of your dog's coat - you know when that coat is ready to come out. You learn the things that you can do with it, when you can do it.

Jack: It's also important with the grooming, to keep up on it. The shorter coat is an easier coat to groom. We check the coat over periodically, every few days. If we find any knots forming, we attack it at that point, not six months after the knots form. The worst thing I've ever seen is a Sammy that's been clipped.

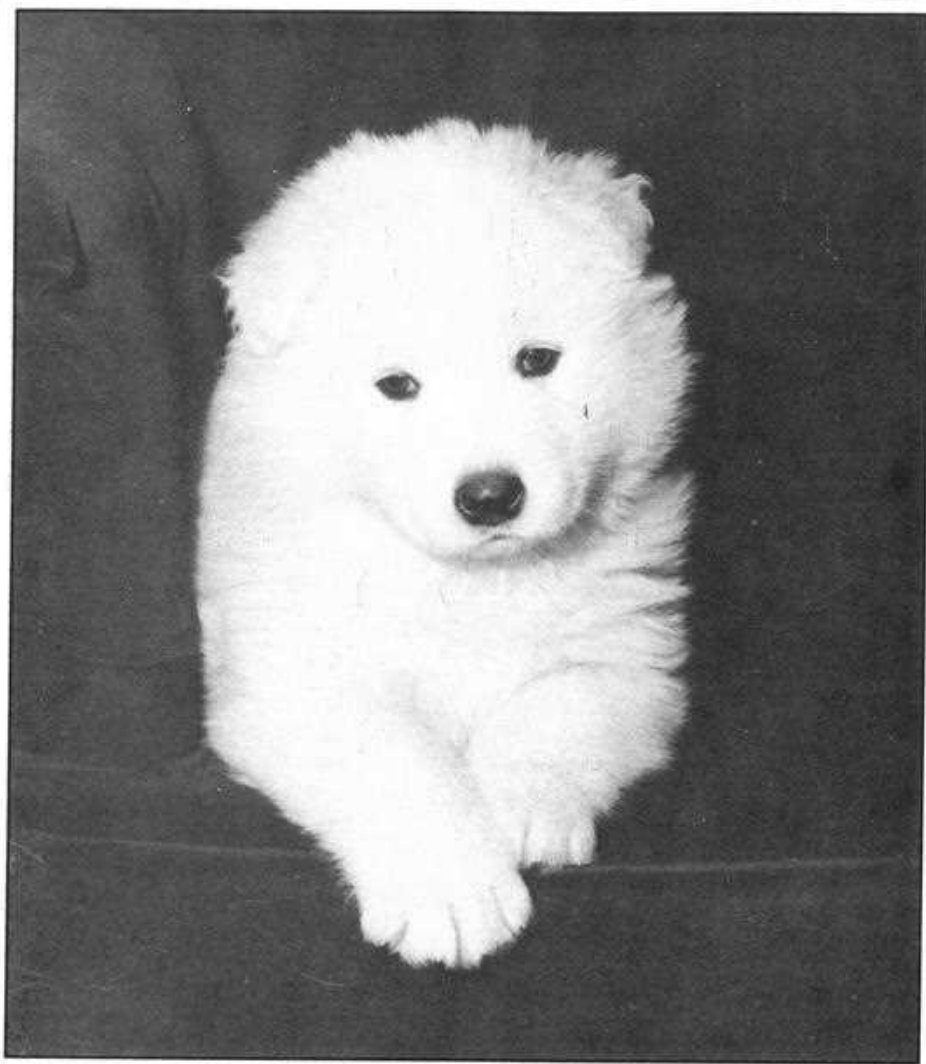
Sandra: Oh yes. We get really upset when we see people clip their Sammies. There's no reason for that. They need their coats. In the summertime, mosquitoes can hardly touch them - just a few on the nose, that's it. We have a real mosquito problem around where we are. It's terrible out here for mosquitoes. If we ever get heartworm up here, we're in real trouble, because we have a mosquito population that's hard to beat. They're not bothered by mosquitoes if their coats are looked after, and they're not clipped. As soon as you clip a dog, you're leaving it open to all kinds of things - insect bites,

cuts and scrapes that their coat protects them from. We feel that you can keep your dogs looking good, and not kill yourself. If a Samoyed is done thoroughly once a week, once it's a mature dog, your dog will look nice - you'll be proud of him and your

dog will be proud of himself. Puppies have to be done more often. The other thing is training the dog. So many dogs train their owners - don't touch my rear! I've had people hand me a dog to show for them, and I get this dog that's beautifully



Am/Can Ch. Jasam's Huggie Beahr (Am. Ch. Pinehill's Commander x Am/Can Ch. Elsamjo's Sasha of Rurik Can. CD).



The endless appeal of a Sammy puppy - Ch. Jasam's Victor as an eight-week-old puppy.

groomed up to the loin. Beyond that, forget it! There are knots and everything, because this dog has trained them and told them, "You're not grooming my rear." I tell my dogs I'm sorry, I'm grooming every part of you. Ours go up on the grooming table as soon as they can stand. They're up there for the first time, and I have a little tiny pin brush. I pin brush them, and it takes maybe three minutes. Then I put them back on the ground and tell them what good babies they are. The next time they go up, it's for a little bit longer, and the third time they have to lie on their sides for a minute while I groom them. I do it in stages. By the time they leave us, they've already been thoroughly groomed up on a table, had one or two baths, and they've had the blow dryer on them. They've gone through all these experiences - and their toenails are clipped - that's important. But the important thing to tell people is, don't

let your dog train you. Many of them do that.

Jack: I'm afraid some of the dogs are smarter than their owners. When it comes to grooming, especially.

Sandra: The thing is to start early while the dog is still small, and you can still physically make it do what you want. If you wait until it's too big, you've had it. You will not force that dog to do anything. You can't force a three-year-old Samoyed male to sit on the grooming table and be groomed if he doesn't want to. Don't capitulate when you have a puppy. Show it who's boss. Don't let it show you that it's boss.

**What about leash training? How early do you recommend that people start with that?**

Sandra: I'm the wrong one to ask. I'm the worst leash trainer in the world. I have yet to successfully leash train a puppy.

Jack: Before it goes into its first sanctioned match.

Sandra: Jack does that, or Shirley Marshall, my friend from Stettler, comes over and does that. I have never leash trained a puppy yet. I'm just terrible at it. I don't know what I do wrong. To get ready for a sanctioned match, I bathe the puppy.

Jack: She's too soft. It's one of these cases where she lets it get away with what it shouldn't.

Sandra: As we're getting ready to leave the house I say to Jack, "Well, you know, this dog doesn't really move along too well on the leash. Maybe you could do something with it." He takes it out for five minutes, and pretty soon it's running along on the lead. I don't know what he does to it. It's like magic.

**You work together as a team.**

Sandra: We're a team, that's right. I think probably it's not too early to start at eight weeks, but you shouldn't be jerking this puppy around - make it kind of a game. Puppies tend to follow you anyway at that age, and you can usually get them coming along, and pretty soon they'll get the idea that the leash and coming along go together - that this is really marvelous, to run along and have people talk to you and tell you how good you are. Really serious leash training, with stand and stay and things like that, I think probably three to six months is a good time to start.

**How important is training to winning?**

Jack: Forget winning if you don't train.

Sandra: But on the other hand, you can overtrain. I remember a Malamute friend of ours saying with her first litter, she really worked with them and taught them to stand and to stay. By the time she was done those dogs had no perk, no life. They went through everything like it was just rote. There has to be some spontaneity there. I don't really mind it if the dog just leaps into the air once in awhile, and gives you a nudge. Sometimes Fledge will suddenly stand up in the ring, put her paws lightly on my arm, and just stand there for a minute. That's her way of communicating with me. I don't really discourage her unless she does it continually over and over again. The odd time I let her do this, because she is letting people know that she's happy to be there, she's got a spark of life to her. I think you can train that out - you have to be careful. You can't have a dog that won't be examined - forget that. That's important to training, to let the judge look at its teeth, and so on. Let the judge

go over it and touch its rear. This doesn't go over too well with certain dogs. But these are things that are part of training. I think you can overtrain, too, but there is a happy medium.

Jack: Dog showing has got to be fun for a dog.

Sandra: It should be fun for the dog. When you take that leash out, the dog should be happy, jumping around.

Jack: They should be mad when you're leaving them at home and taking another one.

Sandra: This is the thing with dogs - it's attitude. The dog has to be happy, and you can train that out. Don't do it. Don't be such a stickler for all four feet to be exactly perfect and never moving. I don't think you'll get a Sam like that anyway. I remember a professional handler one time being in front of me in the Group. I guess he had a Rottweiler, or whatever. He turned around to me and said, "They never do stand still, do they?" And I said, "No, they don't." That's part of being a Samoyed, and the judges had just better understand it. If they don't, too bad for them. They're missing out on a lot, because it's the Samoyed nature. They're not a Doberman nor a Boxer and they're not going to stand there for two hours and not move a muscle. They're happy to be alive, and they know it.

#### Is judging fair?

Sandra: I think most of it is fair. Some of it is ignorant, there's no doubt about that. But generally it's fair. I think most of your judges, 90% of them or maybe even more, look at the dog. They are putting up what they sincerely believe is the best example of the breed in front of them that day. They have their own convictions based on their experiences or dislikes. I'm sure we have a lot of judges judging Samoyeds who don't really even like the breed particularly, so they're going to judge one way. Then you get others who really like the breed. They have a sincere interest in it and they are probably your more consistent judges. They like certain lines and certain things. You can go to the judges and say, "Well, I'm going to put this dog under that judge because he'll like it. But I won't put that one under him because he won't like the height, or he won't like the coat, or whatever." These are your consistent judges. They have a sincere interest in the breed. I think by and large it's fair. They're not playing little games. They're just there trying to do their job. I think judges have to be very careful about getting carried away by fads, particularly

when they don't know a breed very well. You should watch out when you're judging and picking out the heaviest-boned dog. Why are you doing that? It's not what the standard calls for. You have to be very careful if you're picking out the very tall dogs, because that's not what our standard calls for.

Jack: Or, if you put up a dog because your friend put up a dog. You don't find this all the time, but there are some dogs that have reputations. We're stewards; we sit in the backroom occasionally with the judges, and we hear them swapping stories. They say, "Oh, gee, that's a lovely dog that so-and-so's got." They don't know the name of the dog.

**But they know the name of the person who owns it.**

Jack: Or the name of the person who handles it. Some dogs get put up because of this. Sometimes that can work for you and sometimes it can work against you.

**What can be done to improve and educate judges? Because I think that's what you're really talking about, isn't it?**

Sandra: It's unfortunate that our system encourages all breed judges. I'm talking about the Canadian system now, and this is maybe why I like showing in the States. The judges are more specialists; they have more of an interest in one Group, or even part of a Group, or maybe they only have a license for two or three breeds. I think that makes better judging in the long run, because you're doing what you're interested in, and what you've taken some time to learn some of the extras about. Don't tell me one person can know everything about every breed. There are some people who can know most everything about most breeds, and some all breed judges are just fantastic and very consistent, but I think our system in Canada is bad to encourage all breed judges. I don't think there is such a thing as an all breed judge. There is the odd person who can judge all breeds, who has enough experience, but these days people don't have the background. That was fine years ago when you had these men who worked in big kennels becoming judges. In that kennel they might have taken care of German Shepherds, Westies, Chows, Sams - they might have had ten different breeds in that kennel. These people groomed them, exercised them, showed them, lived with them, whelped them, bred them and did the whole thing. You don't find that today. Most people have one or two breeds, and

that's it. They don't have the depth. There's no way you can have the depth to really understand all these various breeds. So our system in Canada is wrong, I think, to encourage all breed judges. That's what we need; we need more specialists.

Jack: You look at Britain - how many all breed judges do they have? They may have one or two, because their system doesn't encourage it. Part of the problem here is our distances. If you want to get a judge to come in, not only do you have to pay their expenses, you have to pay them \$200 or \$300 a day. Clubs find that this gets very expensive, and they want a judge that can do as many breeds as possible, i.e., the all breed judge.

Sandra: Fortunately, we have specialties and things like that. That's where we can get our specialist-type judges. I think that's what makes a specialty.

**Do you make an effort to get to specialties?**

Sandra: We sure do, but it's hard for me. I teach school, and every day I miss that's not accountable for illness, I lose 1/200 of my salary. So I just can't afford to go to most specialties. Unfortunately, I'm off in July and August, when Sammy coats are not that great and clubs tend to stay away from having specialties then. So I don't get to enough, not as many as I'd like to. When I do go, I thoroughly enjoy them.

**Do you think that advertising influences judges?**

Sandra: I doubt it. Who could read all these magazines? Certainly, everyone knows who Manhattan is, and Shannon, and things like this. In Canada we have our Shangs, and other dogs such as this - and everybody knows who they are. We have Tiki in the Samoyed ring. Everyone knew Tiki. A gorgeous dog. And why not? They're like the movie stars of the dog show world - and that's great. But no judge is going to sit and read all these magazines that come out. In fact, I've stopped all my subscriptions to those kind of magazines, because I find so much bologna in them. For example, one of the breeds I'm interested in is Pekingese - I love Pekingese. I've been kind of following along a few of the Pekes at some of the shows. This little Pekingese had a very unique coloring and I found her quite attractive. I watched her at a few shows, and she didn't do very much, because she wasn't that great. She was just pretty. Pretty soon I saw this great big ad in one of the dog magazines. She had this win, and it wasn't even that great a win. I

thought, well, that's nice to publish that win, but I've seen this dog at ten shows and I've seen it lose nine times. So it won once, and you're going to take out a full-page ad in the magazine? I've given up on a lot of these all breed review-type magazines with the full-page ads. They're a lot of baloney, some of them. They're interesting; if someone else has one, I sit there and read it, but I don't think I'll spend my money on those kind of things any more. Advertising is advertising, you know. I read the ads of "Dogs in Canada," and I find them interesting. I like to see who's winning across the country. But I take them with a grain of salt because, of course, everyone talks about the times they win, but they don't mention the times they didn't win.

Jack: Sandra spends more time

#### breed helps it?

Sandra: I think it harms it. We haven't had that trouble with Sammies; they've been pretty consistent, right in the middle of the rankings both here and in the States. With Chows, we find they are becoming far too popular. In temperament and so on, they are not meant to be for everyone. Most breeds are like that. Not everyone can cope with a Sammy - they're outgoing and lively. Not everyone can cope with the grooming. There is a breed for every person, and when a breed becomes too popular, there are too many people in there breeding, and animals get bred that are questionable. Whereas if things were very selective, if they just had a certain pet market, these bitches would never be bred from. But the demand is there, so people say, "Oh, let's do this

where we couldn't go far, we're pleased. We had a good year. It's an ego trip, it's fun, it's exciting. Now the funny thing is, you can ask someone who was top Sam five years ago, and they won't be able to tell you. There are 50 Sams entered here this weekend, and I bet not one of those owners could tell you who was top Sammy seven years ago. They don't know. You have a general idea, maybe, of what kennels have been in the top.

Jack: They wouldn't even be able to tell you who was top Sam last year.

Sandra: A lot of them wouldn't. It's an ego trip for the owners, and you're fooling yourself if you think you're being immortalized because your dog did this wonderful thing. It's wonderful, it's exciting, it's fun and it's a challenge, but don't fool yourself and think you're some kind of marvelous thing that's going to live on in history.

Jack: I feel great about this past year because the Chow Chow that finished number three, I showed.

#### And your Sam bitch you owner-handled as well?

Sandra: Yes, I usually do. I have a young girl named Paige Tesluck who helps me from time to time showing Fledge, if there are shows I can't make, or this weekend I couldn't show because we were members of the club. So she showed the dog for me. There are times she does go out with a handler, if there's a show that I think she should be at and I can't make because of work or whatever. But 99% of the time, the dogs are with us. Because it's our hobby and we like doing it. Sometimes in the States I use handlers a lot more, because I find it hard to get down there - especially when my Sams are in the best coat. I can't get away so I use handlers a lot down there. We've had very good luck with handlers. We've met wonderful, ethical, really nice people who looked after our dogs as well as we could. We've been very lucky that way.

#### What kind of advise would you give to someone who wants to handle their own Sam?

Sandra: I'd say first of all, before you start, sit and watch. Because once you start doing something you get into your own ways of doing it, and it's hard to break an old habit. Before you start showing your dog, when your little puppy is still seven or eight weeks old, you've got this marvelous little puppy and you think you want to show it, start going to shows. Go to every show you can, sit there with your catalog, and watch. Look for a person in the ring that you think is doing an excellent



Winter sports at Jasam Kennels!

going through the pages in "Dogs in Canada," the records of the wins, the results of the shows, than looking at the pictures. We've got a subscription to "Dogs in Canada" because we are members of the Canadian Kennel Club. We also have a subscription to the "American Kennel Gazette," both parts. We spend all our time looking at the records.

Sandra: You have to be careful with pictures. There's that cute old joke about somebody buying a dog from overseas, and they got sent a picture. When the dog arrived, they looked at the dog and sent a telegraph back to the seller that said, "Dog arrived. Please send photographer." Pictures can really pull the wool over some people's eyes, so we take them with a grain of salt. We've seen what I call the standing-still dogs - they're gorgeous standing still and as soon as you move them, they fall apart. Pictures in dogs don't tell a thousand words.

#### Do you think that popularizing the

wonderful thing, breed this bitch and make all this money." They're bred for the wrong reasons when a breed becomes popular.

#### What about specializing a Sam? Do you think making the top ten means anything?

Sandra: It's great. It's exciting, I'll tell you. We just got the certificate that our Fledge was number two Sammy in Canada last year.

Jack: Number one bitch.

Sandra: Completely owner-handled, we did it all ourselves, and we did it on a shoestring budget this year. Jack's been out of work for two years. He starts a new job on Tuesday, so things are kind of exciting at our place. But we did it on a shoestring, on one salary, just at local shows. We weren't able to travel very far this year, so we feel really proud of her. We're very happy.

Jack: I also finished my Chow Chow male, number three.

Sandra: We've had a year. For a year

job. When it's your turn to go into the ring, just do what they're doing. You imitate; pick out the things you like and pick out the dogs that look best to you. See what those dogs are doing, what's the common denominator. Why does that dog look good to you? Why does it attract your attention and catch your eye? And go from there. Watch and imitate, that's the way to do it. Learn what you can about grooming, don't go pestering people when they're trying to groom their dogs and get ready to go into the ring. Wait until they're done, or go early and talk to people. Most breeders will be so happy to show you a few tips, but don't milk their brain dry. Stand back and watch a little bit - then try it on your own dogs. I can tell you how to clip hocks, but until you get in there with a pair of scissors and start doing it yourself, you're not going to learn. You have to do it. It has to be an experience thing. When your dog is out of coat, or if you have a brood bitch or something like that, or a pet at home where it doesn't matter if you cut too much hair off, experiment with it. Take that dog's hocks and trim a little bit and see what you like, what looks good, and you'll get the feel of it. But don't expect people to take their brain cells out and inject them into you. It doesn't work that way. Watch, listen and imitate - and try to copy what you see and what you like.

**What about someone who wants to use a handler?**

Sandra: Well, some people just cannot handle. We have some friends that are lovely people, wonderful people, and they love their dogs, but they are useless in the



Am/Can Ch. Jasam's Rocky Mountain High (Am/Can Ch. Snowblaze Mister Pinkerton x Am/Can Ch. Elsamjo's Sasha of Rurik Can. CD).

show ring. They've been to training classes - everybody's tried to teach them.

You are born a handler, or you're not born a handler, I feel. That's the way it is and



A few months later she would be dead of cancer, but our Sasha (left) rallied the troops one last time in the summer of 1982. She led in the Brood Bitch class at the Washington State Specialty (pictured) and at the SCA Specialty. At Washington State her first born son, Am/Can Ch. Jasam's Viktor (middle), was Best of Breed; and her youngest daughter, Am/Can Ch. Jasam's Rocky Mountain High (right), was Best of Winners. Notice the grin on Sasha: she loved her moment in the spotlight.



Sasha doing what she loved best - looking after a litter of puppies.

you have to accept that. If you are not a handler, you're not doing your dog justice. If you're not having fun doing it, then get a handler. Look for someone you can communicate with, talk with, who makes you feel comfortable. Accept the fact that your dog isn't going to win all the time just because you have a handler. Be grown-up about it. You're not going to win all the time, and you pay that handler whether you win or lose.

Jack: Pay your handler up front, then when he loses you're not quite so sad because you're getting your dog back and handing money over to him at the same time. Also, you don't get the surprise bills afterward.

Sandra: Remember, too, that you liked that dog when you sent it out and you should still like it when it comes back home.

#### What makes a good breeder?

Sandra: I think probably the kind of breeder I admire is the one who sells their good stock and doesn't try to promote something to be what it isn't. They don't try to camouflage things, or they aren't into a lot of hype. I like someone who is basically honest, sincere, and who likes what they have. I don't mind someone who brags. If they've got something to brag about, go right ahead and do it. You're not going to bother me. I've got a fairly strong ego; I feel I can take this. But I like someone who sells a good dog. Basically, to me, that's a breeder. If you sell a good dog to someone else, and get them started off well, then you are a good breeder. If you

stand by your dogs, you have your health guarantees and so on, if you sell puppies that come complete with their shots, you do your homework, you do your registrations up, and get your paperwork in with the CKC or AKC, whatever you're working with, that's a good breeder.

#### You've been in Sams for awhile. Has it been worth it?

Sandra: Sometimes we wonder, because it's been a decade out of our lives. Sometimes we feel as if maybe we're shutting ourselves off from the rest of the world. But we look at our other friends that aren't in dogs, and they all have something that they do. We knew one fellow who was building a boat in his backyard. For years and years and years he worked on this boat, and finally got it finished. He moved out to the coast and hauled this boat out with him.

Jack: We're pleased overall, really. We've met a lot of nice people, we've had a lot of good times and we've spent a lot of money.

Sandra: We've liked our dogs.

Jack: We like our dogs. We've been to Europe, or England, twice because of the dogs. I went to England twice when I wanted to buy a good Chow Chow. Anything I wanted to buy wasn't for sale, and anything I didn't want to buy they were throwing at me. What can you say? The same goes for the Samoyeds over there. There was a beautiful bitch in England that, if she would have been offered to us, we would have just snapped at it. But of course, it was their prize bitch in their

kennel. You couldn't expect them to sell it. It was beautiful. It had real biscuit shadings on it - a real saddle. I really thought it was a fantastic-looking bitch.

Sandra: It's been exciting and it's been fun. It's also a lot of work. I think now, with kennel work and so on, you have to have a little bit of glamor, I guess, to go along with showing dogs. Otherwise, who would do kennel chores? It kind of ties you down. If we want to go somewhere we have to have a dogsitter, and this kind of thing. It determines where you're going to live, what kind of vehicle you're going to drive. It takes up your whole life in a lot of aspects. It's something you don't get into lightly. I think it's good to stop every once in awhile and evaluate what you're doing and say, "Is this really worthwhile?" Up to this point in time we've always said, "Yes, it is. We're having a good time and we enjoy what we're doing." We don't feel that we're hung-up; when we're with people who aren't in dogs, we don't talk a lot about dogs. At work I never ever bring up the subject of dogs. Other people come to me and ask me questions about their animals, or they ask how I did at a show if they know I was gone for the weekend - this kind of thing - but I don't bring up the subject first, they bring it up.

#### With the benefits and drawbacks, it's been worth it?

Sandra: Yes.

#### Do you have a long-range breeding program?

Sandra: Our long-range goal is to breed a Best in Show winning bitch. Fledge has some Group firsts, so she may be it. I don't know. She's coming five, so we'll see what happens there. She's in her prime right now and she has a few more good years in the show ring.

Jack: I'd like a Best in Show Chow that I have gone into the ring with personally, and won. My wife and I have been showing dogs for a number of years, and I wasn't into the showing until this past year. I was more the one to hang back and blow my horn, or whatever. But I got into showing this Chow Chow.

Sandra: He was the crate carrier and the driver.

#### Everybody has to have a partner who does that.

Jack: I started showing the Chow. The thing that frustrates my wife most is that I've gotten two Best Puppies in Show on him. She has never taken a dog into the ring personally and gotten a Best Puppy in Show.

Sandra: We've had some of our

breeding win that.

**But wouldn't it be nice if your Sam bitch goes Best in Show with you on the end of the leash?**

Sandra: Oh, definitely. This is why we do it ourselves. A truck full of trophies that you didn't earn yourself, I don't see how they can mean anything to you. They're just silver. You could go to the store and buy them. But when you go out and win it yourself, especially if you've bred that dog yourself and done all the grooming and the training, it means something to you.

**Is there anything else you want to add?**

Jack: Not really. It's been a lot of work, and a lot of hauling; a lot of cursing and swearing under our breaths at each other. We get hot under the collar for a few minutes, and everything turns out in the end. We're quite pleased with ourselves and our accomplishments, so I think we'll be around dogs for a few more years.

Sandra: Jack is interested in getting his judging license. That's not something that interests me. I think eventually I'd like to have my license for the Sams and the Chows, in case anyone should ever ask me to do a specialty show. To me that would be quite a thrill. So Jack is more interested in the judging. I'm still very interested in the showing. We've gotten away a lot from the breeding - we're not so much into it anymore. As I say, when I breed a Sammy litter, I breed it when I want to keep something for myself. I don't just breed a Sam litter.

Jack: I always think of, "From Riches to Bitches and a Cadillac for My Vet," that kind of thing. All you're doing is spending money on veterinarians when you're going crazy with a lot of your breeding programs. You don't get rich breeding puppies.

Sandra: Not if you do it right. If you do it right, with the supplements and everything else.

Jack: I'm going to get going because I have to take someone to the airport.

**Thank you.**

Jack: Do you know where Humberstone is?

**Yes, through the speedway.**

Jack: I used to live there.

**So we know where Jack is from.**

**Where are you from?**

Sandra: I'm from Alberta, born and raised. I've lived here all my life.

**It's a good climate for the breed of dogs that you have.**

Sandra: They're well-suited to Alberta, no doubt about it. I think that's why



Rurik was the foundation of all our stock here at Jasam, and a sweeter, calmer dog you could not imagine. Photo by Stoneham.

they're so popular here.

**Is there anything else you'd like to add?**

Sandra: I'd just like to say that I've really enjoyed my years in dogs, and I certainly don't have any regrets. As I say, we stop and evaluate what we're doing every once in awhile and just say, "Are we still having fun? Is this still something we want to do?" There are some weekends

you come home kind of down and say, "This was a waste of my time." But you have to have hobbies, things to keep you going, and other interests. To us this has been it, and it's been worthwhile. We enjoy it, we like our dogs and we've had some really fine dogs. As Jack said, lots of good memories.

**Thank you very much.**

Sandra: Thank you. •

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