

## SAMOYED PEOPLE



The Samoyed Quarterly  
Talks With  
Rita Bowling  
BOWLSAM  
Virginia Beach, Virginia

This interview was conducted at the  
home of Rita Bowling on  
December 10, 1982 by  
Lyn Snyder Hoflin

How did you get started in dogs?  
Well, I read the standard and history  
of the breed in the complete dog

book that AKC puts out, and was so  
captivated by the description that I  
decided I must have a Sam, so I ran  
out and bought a copy of Dog World,  
and wrote to several of the adver-  
tisers. Most replied in time, but Mr.  
Miller of Snowflake kennels in Connec-  
ticut answered right away, and I bought  
my first Sam from him. This was  
around 1960. Anyhow, her name was  
Snowflakes Anastasia, or Stacey for  
short and she was a small, fine-boned  
bitch with a thinnish, droopy coat. Of  
course, I thought she was fabulous!

So, around three months later, I  
bought another bitch from him, and  
then, six months after that, I bought  
an 18 month old male from Mrs.  
Morony of Alamo, Texas. These dogs  
were all from the Samingo line. This  
last dog's name was Marylake's Border  
Chieftain, better known as Rady.  
Around this time, I met Pete Mediate,  
a professional handler, and he handled  
Rady for me. Pete handled all my  
dogs for many years and we remained  
good friends until his death last sum-  
mer. Pete finished Rady in seven  
shows; he went Best of Breed six days  
in a row on the Tarheel circuit. You  
have got to remember, that was twenty  
years ago, in the early '60's. Later,  
Rady won 2nd in Group, his biggest  
win. He was a very big dog, MUCH  
bigger than I would want today. I  
wouldn't dream of owning a dog that  
size today, but that's how we learn,  
you know. I didn't pursue that line; I  
gave him to a couple in Minnesota who  
lived on a farm, and he got to run  
and do his thing. I understand that he  
lived to a ripe old age.

*He was never bred?*

Oh, yes, I did breed him but I  
didn't get what I wanted. By then, I  
was starting to learn, and although I  
had never met Mel Fishback in person,  
we sort of struck up a friendship by  
mail, and she educated me little by lit-  
tle, and I was breeding now and then,  
and showing my dogs, and that's how I  
learned. Eventually, I realized that  
this line, not to put down the line, but  
I realized it just wasn't what I wanted.  
Mel found White Krystal's Luba for  
me; she was out of Ch. Tyson's Rebel  
of Snow Ridge and Ch. Nadia of White  
Krystal, and was bred and owned by  
Lenora Sprock of Steamboat, Nevada.  
The only reason Lenora would even  
consider selling her is because she had  
broken her front leg in a sledding acci-  
dent. Lenora was afraid there'd be

a weakness in the leg, but there never was. She had beautiful, true movement. She was 11 months old when I bought her, and I paid \$75 for her. Can you believe it? Best investment I ever made. A beautiful bitch, and she finished in ten shows with three majors and several Best of Breed awards.

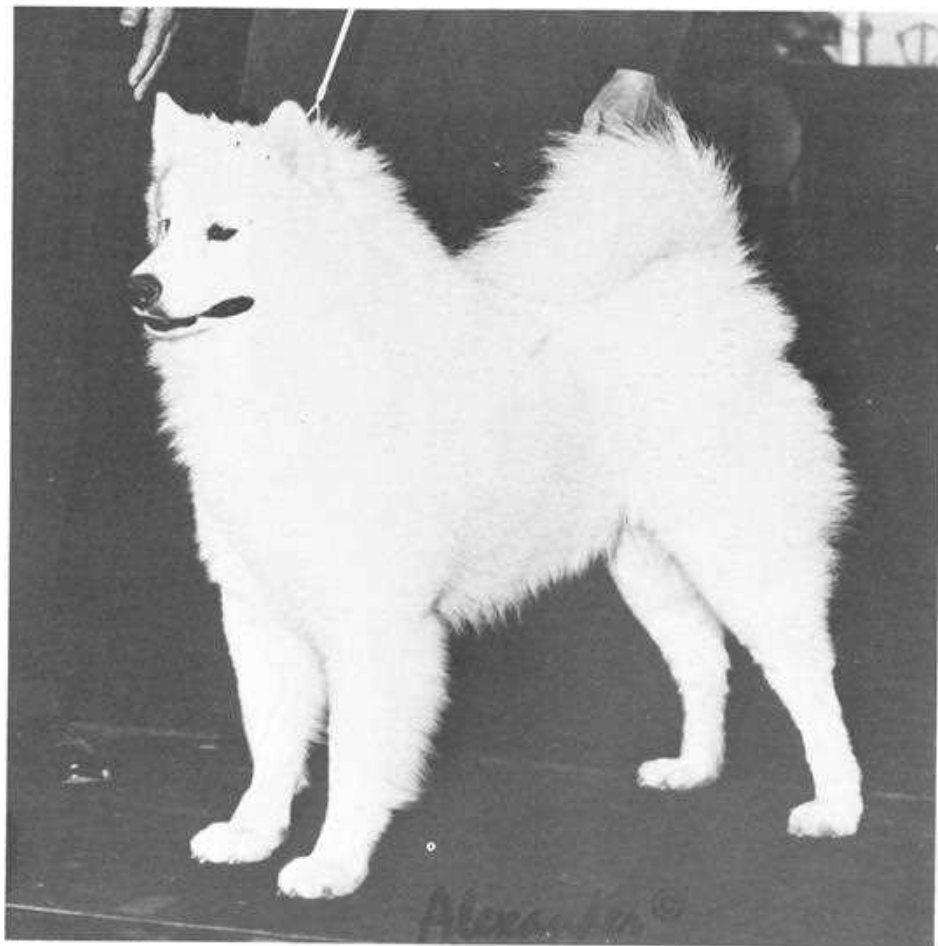
*Even with the broken leg?*

Yes. As I said, there was never any weakness in the leg, and you could never tell it had ever been broken, except for when she was completely out of coat; you could see a tiny bump at the top of the leg. I never mentioned it to Pete and he never noticed; nobody ever noticed. Anyhow, she was a medium sized bitch with marvelous bone and substance. She had a lot of dark biscuit on the ears, and she produced biscuit in most of her pups. But, let me tell you, that was one strong bitch! Just gorgeous. I've never met her equal. Shortly after that, Mel found Startinda's Rabochi for me. Lloyd Bristol owned him and Mel persuaded her to sell him to me - no easy task, as Lloyd had a reputation of never selling her adult dogs. But Mel worked on her one entire night, and next morning, she phoned me and said, "Do I have a dog for you!"

To backtrack: prior to that, I was looking for a good male to buy and I enlisted Mel's help. She was going to be guest speaker at the Sacramento Dog Club in the near future, so she wrote to the secretary and told her to put out the word that she was looking for a good male, and if any member had one for sale, for them to bring it to the meeting. Dozens and dozens showed up, and Mel examined dogs out in the parking lot until after midnight. She was rather disappointed, for the most part, and only came up with two that she would even consider. Even those two didn't measure up to her expectations - one was slightly cowhocked, I think, and I forget what was wrong with the other. Anyhow,



Ch. White Krystal's Luba  
(Ch. Tyson's Rebel of Snow Ridge x  
Ch. Nadia of White Krystal)



Ch. Marylake's Border Chieftain  
(Ch. Samingo's Prince Charming x Marylake's Vicki) He was my first champion, finished in 7 shows with 6 BOB wins; also a Group 2 win to his credit. Not my type today, but I LEARNED with him.

she wrote me all about them and sent along their pedigrees. I was sitting there, looking over the pedigrees, when Mel phoned. She said, "Hey, about those dogs I wrote about - well, forget them because I have the dog for you!"

She was very excited and said, "Wait until you see his pedigree; it's really something!" And that was Startinda's Rabochi, our wonderful "Heyboy" - and he was something to behold: around 23 inches with marvelous bone, substance and power. His front was spectacular and he had a good angulated rear. He moved a little close, as many good working dogs do, but he moved straight and true and was just wonderful. Pure White Way, he and Luba were the best dogs I ever had. They were first cousins, you know - their dams were litter sisters. So, those two dogs were my foundation stock, and six and seven generations later, I'm still using their wonderful genes. You'll always find both of them in all of my pedigrees, sometimes more than once, and usually, on both the dam and sire sides. Not always, of course, but always on one or the other side.

What did you do with the two

bitches you bought from Mr. Miller?

We spayed them and gave them away as pets. There was some dysplasia, and those were the days before OFA, and a lot of people were denying that there was even such a thing as dysplasia. Lloyd Bristol had been x-raying her dogs for years, along with a few others, too, but not many in those days. I was a newcomer, green as grass, and was very confused by all the conflicting stories. But, eventually, it was because of dysplasia that I didn't want to go on with those particular dogs.

*They weren't necessarily dysplastic themselves but you weren't sure what was behind them?*

I produced puppies by them that didn't sit right and didn't move right - I just didn't want it; I didn't feel they were sound. By that time, I had placed them all and OFA came into existence, and I did have both Heyboy and Luba certified. Heyboy, by the way, was certified when he was six years old, which is really saying something. He was five when I bought him.

What attracted you to the Samoyed besides the fact that you saw



Ch. Nadia of White Krystal (Luba's dam)



Ch. Tyson's Rebel of Snow Ridge (Luba's sire)

them in a book?

It's hard to explain, but I feel sorrow for people who don't know the breed. They're fabulous, so like people in so many ways. I live with my dogs; I enjoy my dogs. We have three acres here, way out in the country. We have a two-story, three car garage, all filled with lovely dog runs, and completely empty. When we first bought the place we spent quite a bit, fixing up the place out there for the dogs, but we've never used it, mainly because the building is detached from the house - quite a distance from the house - and I want them up here with me. We do have two runs outside the back door, one on either side of the patio door, and I keep three dogs out at a time. The other four live in the house, and I rotate them so everybody has his chance in the house. You can't have all seven running in the house at the same time, not if you want to preserve your sanity, but I consider them all house dogs as they all have their chance in the house. I do this by choice and not from necessity.

As I said, we have all those empty runs out there, and I certainly don't consider myself any less professional for raising them that way. To each his own; don't get me wrong - there's nothing wrong with raising dogs in runs. Many people do so because they work or for some other reasons, and that's fine. I just prefer to have mine in the house. Now, when it gets very cold in the winter, I bring them all in and keep some of them in cages, and rotate them that way. The same thing applies in the summer - they all come in to keep cool in the air conditioning, but there are times when I need time to myself, and then the whole bunch goes out for awhile.

I raise all my puppies in the house, and they stay in the house until they go to their new homes. I like it this way because I can observe them

better. By the time they're ready to go, I've noticed things about this one or that one that I would have missed if they had been out in the garage.



Ch. Startinda's Rabochi (Startinda's Zacusca x Tasha of Novaya Isle)



*Can. Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo  
(Can. Ch. Kombos Golshan Czar x White Snow Lady)*

They get TLC twenty-four hours a day, plenty of socialization. Everytime someone walks by, they get a pat on the head, or something. It's good for them.

*So you have seven?*

Seven that live here. Gabe, Duke's sire, lives close by. I can use him for breeding or whatever, any time I wish. I also own Lightfoot and a couple of bitches. Lightfoot is a Hey-boy-Luba son and over ten years old. One of the last of that breeding that I'll be using for breeding again this summer, perhaps for the last time, considering his age, but we've just got to keep those good genes going.

*What is your goal?*

To produce dogs that are able to do what they're supposed to do, true working dogs above all else. I want to breed Samoyeds that are not only beautiful to look at and great to live with, but dogs who could pull a sled if they had to, or who could race with the best of them, if they had to, or do anything else you asked of them.

There is very little a Sam CAN'T do, you know. I've heard of people using them for hunting - not that I approve of hunting - but I've heard of them doing it and having wonderful luck. Why, I've even heard of a Samoyed that would point! (laughter) I really have!

*I guess that's as good as the all Doberman sled team that I heard about.*  
Yes, they use Setters and many

other breeds. I just like an all-around dog; I want a dog that's tough, and my dogs are. I don't want sissies. I also want a dog that is gentle and beautiful and strong, and my dogs are. What can I say?

*Do you know how many litters you have bred?*

Really, I don't know; I've had quite a few over the years, but I do try to breed for a specific purpose



*Bowsam's Gable "Gabe", 5 1/2 months  
Bowsam's Mary Vee x Can. Ch.  
Silver Storm of Kombo*

and not just for the sake of breeding. I do it with the idea in mind that I'm going to come up with something superior to what I already have. The bitches that produce the best puppies naturally have more litters in their lifetimes than the poor producers. I've owned bitches that were never bred, but, as a rule, if I'm not going to use a bitch for showing or breeding, I just place her in a good home. Not the old-timers, of course, but a young bitch with a whole lifetime ahead of her. Let somebody else get some pleasure out of her. After all, you can only do justice to just so many, so why keep a dog you don't intend to use? A YOUNG dog, that is.

*Do you have any idea how many champions you've had?*

I've bred eight champions and owned six that were bred by other people. One Canadian champion, which I never owned, Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo, lived here with me for six months. I must say that, next to Hey-boy, he was one of the best Samoyed males I've ever been around. Stormy was owned by Islay Aitchison of Glokon Kennels in Ontario. He's sire of two of my bitches, Can. Ch. Thea's Chanel and Nepachee's Stormy Silver Flair and grandsire of a couple more. I try to put as much of Stormy into my pedigrees as possible because he has so much to offer. He came here because of a tragedy, really. Heyboy had been long deceased, and my only male

at the time was Bowlsam's Bona-Fideaux, a son of Heyboy and a bitch named Tiki. His call name was Pandey and he was my favorite of all time. He was not my best dog, by any means, but he was the sweetest dog I ever knew - my constant companion. Anyhow, one day the oil man left my gate open by accident, and even though we live out in the country, cars still zoom up the road. I let Pandey out of the house, without knowing, and the next thing I knew, I heard screeching brakes and a dog yelp. Pandey was dead. I was in total shock. I phoned Islay in Canada, to tell her what happened. She knew he was the only male I had here at the time, so she said, "Who do you want me to send?" Three days later, Stormy was on a plane.

While he was here, I bred him to Bowlsam's Mary Vee and kept Gabe from that breeding; he's Duke's sire. I also bred him to a bitch named Nickie, and when Stormy went back to Canada, he took two of his daughters along with him. Islay got one, Can. Ch. Bowlsam's Pep 'N Zip of Glokon, and John and Kit Wilson got the other, Can. Ch. Bowlsam's Breeze of Cusona. Both finished by one year and Breeze is now also close to her American title. The day they were shipped to Canada, Kit Wilson sent me Cusona's Bowlsam

Blue Crystal - we swapped puppies. They were the same age.

Crystal proved to be all I hoped for, and more. She produced Ch. Bowlsam's Midnight Sun and Ch. Bowlsam's Deja Vu, and her daughter, Bowlsam's House O'Risin Sun, who is owned by John Mullins of Richmond, only needs a major to finish. So it was a good swap for us both, to say the least. I was happy to get Crystal because she was sired by Glokon's Bowling King Pin, an Echo son. Islay bred him and still owns him; he's done some great producing.

Islay Aitchison and I became friends when she shipped her Canadian champion bitch to me to be bred to Heyboy. That was many years ago. She had once owned a Startinda bitch, so she knew the quality, and she wanted to make sure she got something from Heyboy before he got any older. So her bitch, Onnie - for the life of me, I can't remember her registered name - whelped five females and Islay was pleased. Shortly after that, she bought Bowlsam's Flamette at Glokon, an Echo daughter from me, and not too long after that, she bought Echo herself.

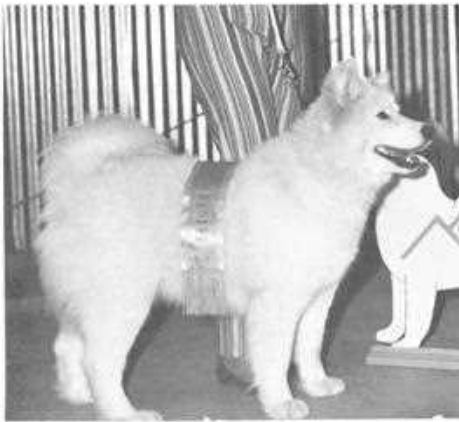
Now, that was a story in itself: at that time, I had decided I was going to cut back on my stock. We

had just bought this house and I went back to work for a short time. A lady in California kept phoning me and begging me to sell her one of my White Way bitches. She said she loved that line and had always wanted one and so forth, so I agreed to sell Echo to her. Echo was Heyboy and Luba's daughter, in case I haven't mentioned it. Anyhow, I shipped her one morning and when I got home, something told me to phone Madalin Druse in California, to ask her if she knew this woman. I know, that's like putting the cart before the horse - I should have inquired FIRST, but it never occurred to me. Well, Madalin was upset and said, "Good heavens, that woman runs a puppy mill." I nearly died and went rushing back to the airport and said, "Stop that plane!" They couldn't, of course, but the man, a sympathetic man, arranged for the dog to be removed from the plane at the next stop and returned to me. So when I told Islay about it, she said she'd like to have her, and that's how she ended up in Canada. Lucky for Echo and lucky for us. Islay and I have been working together ever since - I mean collaborating. She does her own thing and I do mine, but we swap puppies back and forth; I'll send a bitch up there and she'll breed it one day and send a bitch back, then I'll breed that bitch and send something from the breeding, and so forth. We've been doing it for years and it works out grand.

That's where all those names come from - Harmony, Duet, etc., it's so much fun this way and we're coming up with some awfully good dogs. Another Canadian breeder, Betty McHugh of Nepachee Kennels, who also happens to be a judge, sent Nepachee's Stormy Silver Flair and Ch. Thea's Chanel to me last year. Both bitches had been sired by Stormy, as I mentioned. Chanel had finished in Canada in four shows, undefeated, and Flair had run on Betty's team. I bred Flair to Lightfoot last year and produced a litter of nine. Two bitches from the breeding were sent to Canada and Betty kept one, which she named Bowlsam's Nepachee Krystal. Betty teaches canine structure up there, and measures dogs. She recently measured Krystal and got a 40 degree layback, which is awfully good. The average dog in the ring today has around a 30 degree layback and if you see a 35 degree, you're seeing a good mover. My daughter and I drove up to Canada a couple of years ago and brought Duke with us. He was under a year old at the time and Betty measured him at 41 degrees. I've never heard of any dog who was officially measured that ever came up with a 45 degree layback with the exception of Silveracres Sir Glokon. He was officially measured and that's what he was. People can say what they wish, and they can come up with all the new theories in the world, but figures don't lie. Oh, I'm sure there have been many other dogs with 45 degree lay-



*Nepachee's Stormy Silver Flair  
(Can. Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo x Kamistin's Sheena of Nepachee)*



*Bowlsam's Czarina Sasha*



*Uncle, aunt, father and dirty-face pup.*



*Tabnik, Musty and Chrinda*

back - it's possible Heyboy could have been - he was never measured, but Sir was the only one I ever heard of.

*Who would you consider to be the best dog you've ever bred?*

Oh, Duke, of course; he's awfully good structurally, very good, very correct. Pete picked him out for me at seven weeks. I was going to keep his litterbrother. Well, the family was sort of split up over it, but I gravitated toward the brother, but Pete thought Duke was best and he was so right. As Duke got older, he'd say, "See, I was right, wasn't I?" Except for his loud mouth, he's a darned good specimen, hard to fault. He reminded me so much of Heyboy that I named him *Deja Vu*; and he's around the same size as Heyboy, around 23 inches, thick-set with lots of bone and substance. You should feel the muscle on that dog! And he's as tough as nails, but very gentle; a good producer, too. One of his sons, *Bowlsam's Rochambeau*, is looking very good, and we expect him to do some nice winning this year.

*Did Heyboy do more winning than Duke?*

I didn't show Heyboy much after he finished, but he was capable of doing some really big winning. You must remember that he was nearly six when we got him, and he WAS six when he finished. Pete finished him in six consecutive shows and he was never defeated in the classes. He finished with 5 majors and it was really funny because he only needed one point to finish but Pete took him along on the Florida circuit, and I entered him in all of the shows, to be on the safe side. You know how elusive that last point can be. Well, he won the very first day, so he finished with points to spare. The other exhibitors knew he was an outstanding dog, so they were delighted he was out of the way. They asked Pete if he was going to show him again the next day, and he said no, the dog is finished, so I won't be showing him for the rest of the circuit. In the meantime, some lady asked Pete to show her bitch the next day and he said, sure. But the next day, Pete became very sick, the flu,

I think, and he asked Ray Curry to show his dogs for him. Ray was a handler friend and was glad to oblige. He asked what he had to show and Pete said, "Oh, a Dobe special, a Shepherd bitch and a Sam bitch." So Pete told the young boy who worked for him to go get the Sam for Ray. The boy didn't know that Heyboy had finished, so he brought out Heyboy and handed him to Ray, at ringside. While they were waiting, Heyboy lifted his leg on a post - it was an outdoor show - and Ray thought to himself, "Hmmm, I thought Pete said it was a bitch." Anyhow, he won the Breed with him, another major! He came back to the tent where Pete was lying on a cot and told him proudly that he had put a major on his dog. It wasn't long before the other exhibitors came storming in, demanding to know why he had gone back on his word. Poor Pete kept assuring them that it was a mistake, but I don't think they believed him. That was one show that Pete used to like to reminisce about. He used to chuckle and say, "Boy, those people wanted to murder me!" So ... you were asking about my best dog ... Heyboy was definitely the best dog I've ever owned, but Duke is the best one I've ever bred, although his daughter, *Oona*, is also nice, but, you can see her for yourself ...

*A little cougar-bear ...*

She's something else ... going to be awfully good, I think.

*How important is showmanship to winning?*

TOO important, I'm afraid. Today, that's all they want, only showmanship and that's sad. I mean, if they overlook faults and put up dogs just because it is well-trained, because he'll prance around, stand still and cock his head when some judge makes a squeaky sound, that's too bad. It doesn't make him an outstanding representative of his breed, in my book.

Sure, you want him to behave; he MUST behave, but all the showmanship in the world doesn't compensate for straight stifles, steep shoulders, choppy movement or any other fault. After all, we're showing these dogs in the

CONFORMATION ring, and if you'll look up the word conformation in the dictionary, you'll find one definition: STRUCTURE - it certainly doesn't mention showmanship, and showmanship doesn't have a thing to do with conformation.

Some of the craziest dogs I've ever known would show like a dream, perhaps because they were so well trained, but, what the heck can they do for the breed? As I said, sure, you want your dog to behave well in the ring, but certainly not at the expense of soundness and good movement.

Another thing, nowadays, you see too many sculpted, bleached, under-sized bitches being shown. Twenty years ago, it was unheard of; judges would never stand for it. Some exhibitors aren't even subtle about it and bring their dog into the ring with big grooves cut above the hock; they don't even bother to taper it. It's supposed to fool the judges into thinking their dog has proper angulation, you know. But such dogs often win because they have SHOWMANSHIP! It's really sickening.

Another darned shame is the prejudice some judges have against biscuit, something perfectly respectable, according to the standard. I simply cannot understand the prejudice against something so natural, even DESIRABLE. You know, geneticists tell us that the mutated white dog carries many abnormalities, and even in the naturally white dog, some biscuit or color must be kept in order to avoid abnormalities. As far as I'm concerned, the biscuit dog is a stronger individual; he has better hips, better muscling, better coat texture and pigment, and also, true type with silver-tipped fur. I also think the biscuit dog excels in temperament - few of them are ever aggressive. The English go so far as to claim that the biscuit dog owns more character. I have the book that makes that statement.

Remember, it's the all white dog of any breed who has the pink nose, lips and eye rims. You see many sound, well-balanced Sams with lots of reach and drive lose in the ring today,

just because they happen to have a little biscuit in their coat. I've seen a lot of that, and then, you know, you hear of this judge or that judge running down the quality of our breed today. They should realize that they themselves are directly responsible for any deterioration by putting up dogs for the wrong reasons. The cutsey type, the tiny, sculpted, wind-up-toy type, are directly responsible for the deterioration we are experiencing today.

Oh, and the extremism! Tiny, tiny bitches and gigantic males - both shown by the same handler and both put up by the same judge. I've seen bitches so tiny they'd make you gasp; they actually look like midgets, running around the ring on short, little legs and rolling their round, little eyes, and they WIN! Why? Because they're CUTE! A Samoyed should never be described as "cute" - mainly because they shouldn't BE cute - not an adult, that is. Puppies of any breed are cute, but never an adult Samoyed. Beautiful, magnificent, gorgeous or even stupendous, but never cute.

A few years ago, I was standing next to a brand new judge at a show, and we started discussing the day's entry. One of those cute little toy-type bitches came prancing and I commented to him that the bitch was incorrect. He said, "I know, I know, but Lord, she's cute as heck!" Next thing I knew, I heard that this judge had judged her at a show and had put her up for points. Needless to say, I don't show under that judge. If he realizes that something is wrong, but goes ahead and puts it up anyhow, just because it is CUTE, well, I'm not going to waste my money under such a judge. Strange, though, he'll put up gigantic males - where is the logic? These extremes, what are they doing for the breed?

I don't know - maybe if you bred them together, you'd get something in between! (laughter)

It doesn't work that way! You

should always breed to the norm; it doesn't work like that - you'd get some big and some small.

I was reading somewhere that, in the F-1 generation, you get kind of a mid-ground, but in the F-2 generation, this is when, all of a sudden, you are right back with the extremes again.

Is that right? Well, I don't see what's wrong with a good, medium-sized dog to begin with. Why does he have to be too big or too small or too cute or too anything? But, that seems to be the situation today - extremism. Don't get me wrong - there are still a lot of darned good dogs out there, a lot of them. You have to look for them, but they're there. That's the problem, too many good dogs are overlooked because they're not extreme enough. That's why I prefer to show under Shepherd judges or good working breed judges. I think you get a better shake under these judges. I always feel, or USUALLY feel, that I've gotten a fair chance under a Shepherd judge. I know, some are very political and all of that, but, generally speaking, they're not going to stand for straight stilles, for example, or poor movement. They're going to demand soundness, so unless there are politics, I usually feel that I haven't wasted my time and money under such a judge, even if I lose.

So you definitely prefer to have a Working Group judge rather than a breeder judge?

There are always exceptions, of course, and there are many very good breeder judges, but I meant that, on the whole, I prefer Shepherd judges. But, I like any judge who will judge Samoyeds as WORKING dogs - that's the way it's supposed to be. I love Bob Wills; he's knowledgeable and fair, and Lynette Saltzman is another one. She knows her stuff and has too much class to ever play politics. I love to show under her because, win or lose, you feel as if it's all been worthwhile

afterwards. Robert Slay, Eleanor Evers, Virginia Hampton, Langdon Skarda - so many good ones.

When you breed your dogs, do you help with the mating?

Yes, I'm there; I mean, I don't just throw them together. I'm there but I don't physically assist unless I have to, but, as a rule, it's a little much if you have to practically stand them on their heads or tie up their tails and so forth - forget it! (laughter) I'm getting too old for that sort of thing.

I've heard people say that if a bitch is really fighting it, that they shouldn't be bred anyway.

That's probably true; somebody made the remark once that she thought one-third of all the bitches are unbreedable. I hate to think that that is true, but she could be right. I've seen quite a few fight the breeding, even after smears indicate that they were ready. I don't own a bitch myself who is a problem breeder; I wouldn't keep one. Strong or weak mating instinct is inherited.

Have you ever refused to service a bitch?

Oh, yes. I've refused many bitches for many different reasons. If a bitch has a serious fault, I'm sure as heck not going to let them use my stud. After all, my dog's name is going to be on that pedigree.

If you had an outstanding dog that was just super, good temperament and good conformation, but he had a serious fault, would you breed to it?

If I had an outstanding dog with a serious fault, he wouldn't BE an OUTSTANDING dog. No, I certainly wouldn't!

What would be a serious enough fault to prevent the breeding?

Epilepsy, badly cowhocked, under-shot jaw, bad temperament, extreme under or oversize, eye problems, and it goes without saying that non-x-rayed dogs shouldn't be bred.

But, surprisingly, with the white dogs, your pigmentation doesn't seem to be a problem.

Sure. That's because we're not afraid to throw in a little biscuit. Believe me, it's very necessary or you'll end up with a bunch of albinos, practically.

What do you sell your puppies for?

I'm too easy, really; my average prices are \$250 to \$300.

Is that for a show puppy?

Yes, a show prospect usually sells for around \$300, at least what APPEARS to be a show prospect at 7 to 9 weeks. Now Oona, there, she is definitely a show prospect, in my book.

Would you sell her for three?

Oh, no! (laughter) Not even for six; I'm keeping her. Her registered name is Bowsam's Spellbinder, but her call name is after Charlie Chaplin's wife, Oona O'Neil - no special reason; it just suits her. No, I'd never sell her.



Left to right, Ch. Bowsam's Deja Vu, Ch. Bowsam's Midnight Sun, Bowsam's House O' Risin Sun

What do you sell pet puppies for; do you sell them with spay and neuter agreements?

I don't sell pet puppies for less than \$200. You can advise people to spay, but they seldom do as you suggest. I hear that you're not supposed to sell puppies without papers; I mean, you can't say, "This dog is \$100 without papers, but \$300 with papers."

Not unless there is something in a written contract, then you might be able to ...

Yes, but if the dog had a serious fault, I mean, a fault so serious that it should never be bred, then I think it's best to just give the dog away free, without papers. Be careful about the home, of course, but forget about the money; put the dog's needs first. When people pay money for a dog - pet or otherwise - they usually want the papers. I think they feel it gives the dog identity, just like a person and his birth certificate. Sometimes a pedigree will suffice, but not often. Now, when you talk about pets, well, you can take that down to a fine point. Just what IS a pet anyhow? I think a lot of people fool themselves into thinking that every dog they produce is show quality, and this simply is not true. If you have a litter of ten, for example, and you get two or three zingy show dogs out of it, you've really done something. As far as I'm concerned, three-fourths of most litters are pets. Some litters are ALL pets. This is not to say that those pets are not good dogs; some of them are fine and great for breeding, and some of them even end up in the ring and even win from time to time. I've sold many a pet who surprised the heck out of me by showing up at shows, and winning points. As I said, the dogs with serious faults should be put out of commission permanently by being placed without papers - that takes care of that. You won't ever have to worry about them ever being bred, and they can't embarrass you by showing up at the shows.

Anyhow, perhaps it's all a matter of terminology, but any puppy who doesn't have all the characteristics of a good snow prospect by seven or eight weeks, gets labeled PET around here. Some will fool you and turn out great, but, as a rule, you can usually pick out the super pups by that age. I'm another one of those who picks out pups during the first 24 hours following birth. You can tell a lot about a puppy when they are first born. For example, when you get a puppy who looks as if his shoulders start halfway down his back, you know, without a doubt, that he's going to have wonderful layback. You can see the various degrees of layback among the puppies, and you can see so much more. After 24 hours, they sort of blend all together, though.

What is a fair stud fee?

I'd say approximately \$250 to \$300 - the price of a puppy. That's



Ch. Bowsam's Midnight Sun  
(Bowsam's Blitzen x Cusona's Bowsam Blue Crystal)

for an OFA champion. A higher price would be wrong for a truly OUTSTANDING dog, in my opinion, because then it could perhaps be cost-prohibitive for some deserving bitch, and the breed itself would lose out. I think that owners of outstanding dogs have more of a responsibility to the breed.

What are your feelings on culling?

You've hit my weak spot! I probably don't sound like much of a professional, but I can't do it, I really can't. Many feel you should be able to put them right in that bucket! One time, I did, and it was terrible, and I'll never do it again. What happened wasn't exactly culling; it was in the middle of the night, and a puppy was born that was probably defective. The mother was very upset, very nervous, and she ripped the fur right off of it - she scalped the poor little thing and it was suffering, so I had to do it because I couldn't reach a vet. I dropped it into a bucket; they say the colder, the better - ice cold. It was awful; it took forever. I said, never again! I just can't cull and I know it's wrong and all that, but I can't do it.

I keep them alive, the poor little runts get the royal treatment around here - tube fed every two or three hours. I know, I know - it's all wrong; you've got to have a tougher attitude than I do, I guess. It's awfully hard to do. Let me add, though, that many of those poor little waifs that I saved turned out to be marvelous dogs later on.

One in particular comes to mind - a tiny, little male who cried from birth and later turned out to be a swimmer. Now, I had never run across a swimmer before; I had heard of them, but had never seen one. Anyhow, this puppy became flatter and flatter until it resembled a frisbee, no kidding. We used to joke about the poor little thing. My vet advised me to keep feeding him; he couldn't scoot up to the dam by himself; he could only lie there, screaming, with his little legs stuck out from his body. Anyhow, the vet, who also happens to be a breeder, Pointers, I think, advised me to keep on feeding him; I took his advice and, sure enough, by six weeks, he was fine. He didn't get up on his feet

until five weeks but, once he did, he made up for lost time. I gave him away without papers to an elderly couple who lived out on a farm. I did not hear anything from them for two years and then one day, they drove up, with the dog in the car, and he was just wonderful! I was tickled to death to see how nicely he turned out - a beautiful dog and, boy, could he race around! Lovely rear quarters, lovely movement and everything else you'd want. I was never sorry I had saved him. Of course, I realize that most runts or problem puppies have something seriously wrong. I realize that and I don't advise everyone to save every runt they produce. As I said, you've got to have a much tougher attitude.

*What are your feelings about co-owning?*

Never. I've never co-owned a dog and never will. If you want to lose a good friend, go ahead and do it. First of all, one party ends up doing all the work, and the other party feels that she is spending all the money. And, no matter what you do, the other person thinks you've made the wrong decision. I want to own my own dogs outright. I want to make all the decisions, right or wrong - I've made them and they are mine. I don't mind all the work and I don't mind spending all the money. Now COLLABORATION is another matter entirely; I say and I swap back and forth and have no problem at all because the puppies I send to her are HERS and the ones she sends to me are MINE. No strings attached.

*What about puppy back agreements?*

There again, everybody is going

to disagree. I don't think there should be any strings attached when you pay cash for a dog. When you pay cold, hard cash for it, then nobody has a right to say what you do or what you don't do with that dog. Now, if someone GIVES you a dog and asks for one in return, that's a different matter. I've heard of people selling a dog and getting, say, \$200 in cash and then telling the new owner that she will HAVE to give two puppies in addition and, also, she can only breed the dog to studs SHE says qualify, and so forth. What a crock! What they want is CONTROL! I don't like that one bit. Sure, they say they're only doing it for the protection of the breed. Tell me another one! (laughter) I'm cynical about that sort of thing.

*When do you evaluate your puppies?*

As I said before, you can tell a lot the first 24 hours. They change a lot between 5 and 6 weeks, but by 8 weeks, you have a pretty good idea what you've got. The rears, especially, they can stand a little hocky at 5 weeks, but straighten right up by 8 weeks - not always, but sometimes.

Of course, if you're planning to keep one for yourself, I think it's best to hold on to the best two of that sex and wait until 8 to 10 weeks before you make your final decision. When you're selling a litter, it's best to sell them as faults crop up. Always keep back the best ones, and show prospective buyers the others. Of course, if somebody wants a show prospect, that's a different story. Buyers are sometimes leery of the last puppy left in a litter. I've had them say, "Oh, that's the last one; all the good ones are gone." I try to explain that

the last puppy is usually the BEST puppy, as most breeders keep back the best until last with the idea in mind that, if they're going to be stuck with a puppy, it's going to be the BEST one in the litter.

*What are your feelings about linebreeding, inbreeding and outcrossing?*

I don't outcross, I linebreed. You will always find Heyboy and Luba in my pedigrees, and usually, on both sides.

*A lot of Startinda and White Way?*

Oh, yes. A lot of White Way. Of course, Startinda WAS White Way. As I said before, I sometimes go back six, seven generations in my pedigrees; dogs I've bred or owned, and I like that. I know the backgrounds; I know what is there. I stick with the same basic dogs. Oh, you have to introduce some new blood here and there, but you work it into your line and make it count.

In the wild, where dogs run in packs, they more or less practice natural linebreeding, I guess you could say. Some might even call it inbreeding but that's the reason so few crippled or defective dogs are seen running in the wild. The inbreeding, or close linebreeding intensifies traits, and nature takes care of the undesirables. New blood is introduced from time to time, when strange dogs join the pack. Perhaps some bitch with new pups who couldn't join the pack when it moved on, or maybe some young male who was unable to travel because of an injury, and so forth. As far as outcrossing goes, I think it should only be employed when you're trying to overcome something undesirable in your own line, more or less to improve, then go



Bowlsam's House O'Risin Sun



Ch. Bowlsam's Deja Vu

right back to your own line.

*Have you any pet peeves?*

I think I've been doing a pretty good job of expressing myself up until now (laughter), but I guess my biggest peeve is judges who put up diminutive bitches and Shetland pony males, then next comes the prejudice against biscuit.

*Is most judging fair?*

A lot of them try to be; I guess I'd say most judging is fair, but a lot of judges don't know what a Samoyed should be.

*Are you saying that some of the problem is not necessarily fairness but ...*

Ignorance - it sure is.

*What can be done to improve the situation?*

People have to complain about it LOUDLY, directly to the judges, to the kennel clubs, in articles and so forth. If your dog is dumped by some unknowledgeable judge, and you know you've gotten a raw deal, confront the judge and ask him specifically why he dumped your dog, then tell him where he was wrong.

*Do you have any biscuit dogs?*

Oh, yes, I often produce biscuit. Quite a bit sometimes, and some dogs more than others. Duke happens to be an all-white dog but he came from a biscuit litter. Most of them had biscuit. The English claim that an all-white dog that comes from a biscuit litter will produce dazzling white puppies, and this has been true in Duke's case. No matter who he's bred to, the puppies are dazzling white, so the English theory has proven itself to me. I was going to keep Duke's brother instead of him but Pete liked Duke better - not because he was all-white, but because of his exceptional rear. I was also going to keep a bitch from that breeding, but we lost her to what we thought was parvo.

*Have you had much problem with parvo?*

Only that one puppy, and we were never certain. She was the only one in the litter to become ill, at 4 weeks, and my vet suspected parvo.

*Do you have much trouble with fleas?*

We have this year. I used to believe that old saying about Sams that they never get fleas, because for many years, we never had the problem, but this year, we've had them.

*What do you do for them?*

I found something this past Summer that seems to work very well; it's called A & W Spray; really gets rid of them in a hurry, and it can be used on cats, kittens and puppies as well as adult dogs. You just have to back them into a shower to do it. When they see you coming with the bottle, they scatter in all directions. (laughter)

*How would you describe the ideal Samoyed, the perfect Samoyed?*

Before anything else, he would have to be within the standard, size-wise, but at the upper half. I like a

good sized dog, but not gigantic. I'd say 23 inches is an ideal size for a male; I like a bitch who is at LEAST 20 inches. I'd want plenty of bone without being clumsy, good substance. Strong rear quarters, well bent stifles, plenty of rear angulation. All this furor about overangulation - I sure as heck haven't seen it - in fact, the



*Glokon's Bowling King Pin at 9 yrs.  
(Silveracres Sir Glokon x Bowlsam's Echo)*



*Bowlsam's Bona Fideaux, "Pandy",  
6 months*

OPPOSITE seems to be the case - so many straight stifles! Anyhow, I want a good shoulder layback, certainly not a steep shoulder. Lots of reach, nice, long upper arm; plenty of let down - I can't stand high hocks - THEY ARE INCORRECT, according to the standard, and, after all, that's supposed to be our guide. Should have a hare foot, cat feet are not correct. Tough, thick pads; good, strong pasterns that are nice and straight but with some flexibility. A slight slope is correct. I don't like a long coat, but I prefer a thick coat. A good, stand-out coat and a nice ruff on the male. No extreme bear-type, but certainly not a rangy wolf-type, either. A good blend

of the two is best. Not a long back, but not cobby, either. Good coupling with a firm topline, lightly sloping croup, well-sprung ribs, good tuck-up, and one thing you're starting to see are thin ears. Samoyeds should have thick, triangular ears which are slightly rounded at the tips - well furred. Never a round eye - you want an almond shaped eye. If you got something like that, you'd really have something, huh? Temperament is so terribly important; if he didn't have anything else, you better put temperament on the top of the list. Beauty is as beauty does, the old saying goes.

If a dog is a kook, if he piddles all over himself every time you look at him, or if he meets all of your friends at the door with his fangs showing, then what good is he? I don't care HOW many Best of Breeds or Group wins or anything else he has, he's worthless in my book. You can't live with him, and my dogs live as members of the family. Well, I guess that's how I'd describe the perfect Sam.

*How important is movement?*

It's the whole thing, next to temperament. If the judges could only judge for one thing, it should be movement, because if a dog isn't constructed properly, he can't move properly. If he moves well, he's what he's supposed to be, and I think side movement is most important of all, because then you see it all. Oh, yes, movement is the most important thing of all - how he moves is what he is.

*Have you even encountered dogs, though, that didn't look all that sound but moved well and then dogs that looked sound but didn't move well?*

Yes; I've seen dogs that looked beautiful standing, but then moved poorly, but you'll always find that there was something wrong with that individual later on. Just the same, generally speaking, the way a dog moves is what he usually is. I don't care how beautiful a dog is, if he doesn't move well, there is always something wrong. A friend once had a dog who moved beautifully at 18 months, and won on gait, repeatedly. All of a sudden, his gait changed and he was double-tracking and every other darned thing. His front widened by the time he was three, and it turned out he was compensating for weak hips. He proved to be dysplastic. Really sad because he had started out so well, then went to pot, movement-wise.

*If you could tell from looking at the dog that he was going to be dysplastic, then there wouldn't be any point in having OFA.*

How true - nobody has x-ray vision. We have to have OFA. I'm just surprised more people aren't taking advantage of it. Oh, the real conscientious ones are, but too many have become complacent. In the early days, many breeders went overboard once they were convinced there really WAS such a thing as dysplasia. Some



Ch. Tamara Karsavina of Bowlsam (Heyboy & Luba)

were x-raying 3 month old puppies - can you imagine? No kidding, they x-rayed the heck out of them; they were just hysterical, and, you know, all that radiation in the pelvic area; bombarding the reproductive organs like that. Absurd! Then they wonder why undesirable mutations crop up. Radiation is nothing to fool around with.



Bowlsam's Nepachee Krystal & sister 11 weeks. (Bowlsam's Lightfoot x Nepachee's Stormy Silver Flair)

It's cumulative, and you should make your x-rays count. Our dogs must be x-rayed in order to control dysplasia, it's our only tool, and a necessary tool, but it must be used intelligently. Wait until the dog is the proper age, then do it.

*Do you think the Samoyed Standard is good?*

Absolutely. I wish everyone would adhere to it, and also, I wish the judges would learn it and judge accordingly. Starting with the biscuit, which the standard says is fine, and going right on to the leg length - the standard calls for moderately long legs - short legs are incorrect according to the standard, so why do so many judges put up short-legged dogs?

*Is there anything specific that you think should be done to the standard?*

No. Leave it alone! When you start chipping away at the standard, it isn't long before it's totally unrecognizable - nothing at all the way it was originally intended. Also, the current vogue dictates the changes; whoever is doing the most showing at the time - how THEIR dogs look - where the POWER lies, currently. Our standard is wonderful just the way it is. There is plenty of room for everyone to express themselves freely within the standard. We don't have to have carbon copies of each other's dogs -

we can all do our own thing and still be perfectly correct. No - absolutely not - leave the standard alone!

*Do you think that having a handler improves the chances of winning?*

I sure do, not under all judges, but a fair amount of them. Once in a while, you'll find that maverick judge who deliberately snubs the handlers in favor of the novice handler, but they're darned scarce. What the heck - the professional handler makes his bread and butter by handling dogs. He is much more proficient, naturally. However, before Pete died, he advised me to show Duke under any judge that came along, and not to worry about picking judges or hiring the best handler available. He said, "He's so good that I wouldn't back down from ANY judge, and I don't care WHO is handling, if they do a halfway decent job, they're going to win with him." But, I do think, that, generally speaking, you usually have a better chance with a handler. When I really want to win, when the competition is really tough, I usually get a handler. It's unfortunate, but that's the way it is.

*Do you think advertising influences judges?*

I guess so. I don't advertise very much myself, but I think it could influence some judges, but just because someone does a lot of advertising and you see their dog in every dog magazine that you pick up, it doesn't necessarily mean they have a spectacular dog - only a FAMILIAR one. I've seen real stinko dogs get gobs of publicity; dogs so bad that you blush with embarrassment when you see their pictures, and you wonder why the owner doesn't realize his dog is so awful. You know, some of the very best dogs today belong to breeders who don't advertise at all - people don't even know they exist. It isn't a big business with everyone, that's for sure. Many people have them and love them and show them now and then and do all the right things for them. Believe me, a lot of intelligent people are breeding who really care about the breed and just do it quietly. They may not have the money to get out to all the shows or hire handlers or anything else to make them well-known, but that doesn't mean they don't have some of the best dogs around. In fact, some of the dogs that do the biggest winning are the poorest specimens, I'm sorry to say - they're just owned by powerful people or handled by well-known handlers. Not all big winners, I'm happy to say. Most are well-deserving winners; but we've all been shocked from time to time when we've come face to face with a well-touted, big-winning dog and see that he's certainly not all that he was cracked up to be.

*Who do you consider to be some of the better Samoyed breeders today?*

That's a tough one because there are so many scattered around the country. Really, there are many, many dedicated, conscientious breeders out

there who are devoting their lives to the breed. If I can include Canada, I must say that Islay Aitchison heads the list. I know firsthand what she does for the breed, her knowledge and her aims. She really knows her dogs, also her pedigrees. Betty McHugh, up there, is also a good breeder, a stickler for correct structure and soundness. In this country, who can deny the many years that Harold and Doris McLaughlin have devoted to the breed? How about Dan and LaVera Morgan and their wonderful dogs, or Carol Chittum who had the great Ivan Belaya. Dr. Hritz, who bred and owned the fabulous North Star's Kings Ransom - what a dog! And there's Pat Moorehouse who has always been consistent in her quality, and don't forget Bob and Wanda Kraus of K-Way - always consistent, also; and Don Hodges, Lynette Hansen, Betty Moon, and the list goes on and on. I've forgotten dozens of them, I'm sure. Great breeders who have so much to be proud of. You know, it isn't necessary for other breeders to breed the type of Samoyed that you, yourself, prefer in order for you to admire their dogs.

*How do you feel about obedience training?*

Well, I don't obedience train myself, although there have been a few I've owned that I wished I had. (laughter) I do admire people who do obedience train their dogs, though. If you can show your dog in conformation and also get a CD on it, well, bully for you! I don't think it's an absolute necessity to obedience train Samoyeds, though. They can usually be controlled well enough by voice tone.

*What about Junior Showmanship - do you think it has any value?*

It is good for the kids; it should teach them good sportsmanship along with consideration of the dog and a sense of responsibility. My daughter would never do it, though; she never considered herself a kid, and she used to say, "I'M NOT getting in there with ALL those LITTLE kids!" (laughter) She always showed with the adults, but I really do think it's a good thing. I think it's fine; my kids just didn't do it.

*Do you believe in spectating and campaigning?*

Not every champion is Group material, that's all there is to it. There are those that, when they finish, thank the powers that be, that he got his title, and FORGET IT. It takes a mighty spectacular dog to compete in Group - a dog has to have a lot on the ball.

*Do you think that being in the Top Ten or Twenty means anything?*

Not always. Sometimes, the ones in the Top Ten are the ones that are owned by people who can afford to take them out to every single show, every weekend, and hire well-known handlers and do scads of advertising, and are so FAMILIAR to the judges that they do a lot of winning. But, again, some dogs

attain the status by merit and do deserve it. You have to see the dog in person and judge for yourself.

*Let's just take a hypothetical example: Let's say you take Oona out (I know you love her) and she cleans up; takes a lot of Breeds and placements and all this good stuff. The next thing you know, you are up there around number seven or eight, and it looks like you might get up there if you show a few more times; you might be able to make this dog number one. Would it mean anything?*

Well, when you put it that way ... (laughter) I guess when it's your own dog, you always feel they deserve it - that's human nature.

products don't appeal to me. My dogs are in wonderful condition, so I'll just keep on. I feed it dry; sometimes, I add a little cooked beef or leftover vegetables. My puppies get Purina Puppy Chow, and also cottage cheese.

*Can you keep male Samoyeds together?*

Lloyd Bristol did; she kept 10 dogs together, some of them males, and never had a growl among them. The old Startinda dogs had wonderful temperaments. I could keep Pandy and Heyboy together; they were not fighters but Duke, I've never tried - I'd be leery. I don't think it's a good idea to throw two males together that haven't been raised together. I think you're



*Ch. Glokon's Starfire  
Can. Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo x Bowlsam's Flamette of Glokon)*

I'd be crazy not to go for it, it's a once-in-a-lifetime sort of thing.

*What do you feed your dogs?*

For years, I fed plain old Purina with good results, and I still think it's a good product, but recently, I switched over to Ken'L Biskit - it was always my second choice, but now it's my first. The way I feel is that companies like Purina and Kennel Ration and so forth have put millions of dollars into research, and their product is the best you can get. All those newfangled

asking for trouble. Duke isn't a trouble-maker; I brought his father over here not long ago and he became upset, sort of growled under his breath, but that's normal for a male not to want another male around, perfectly normal. You can sometimes keep them together if they've been raised together and there are no bitches around, especially in heat. I have a friend who owns six of my males and only two have to be kept apart. I think that's remarkable.

*Do you groom the dogs yourself?*



Can. Ch. Bowsam's Breeze of Cosona  
(Can. Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo x  
Yuri's Princess Nicole)

Yes. When I say myself, I mean my 19 year old son, Bruce (laughter) when I can con him into bathing them. I do all the brushing myself.

What advice would you give to someone who wanted to be a breeder of Samoyeds and was just starting out?

Many years ago, Virginia Belikoff, an old-time breeder advised me, and I think it's wonderful advice: "Be honest in all your dog dealings; as honest as you possibly can and remember, nobody can make or break you. What you become is entirely up to you. You are either going to make it because you deserve it, or you'll just be nobody." I never forgot that. My own advice to newcomers would be: buy your foundation stock from a reputable breeder. Start with the very best dogs you can buy; remember, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, so start with the best material possible.

Study the books on genetics; stick to your own line; linebreed for the most part, though sometimes, you may have to outcross a little in order to overcome some problem, but then, go right back into your own line. That's why you should start with a line you admire and respect. Do it with the idea in mind that you're going to stick with it.

Have patience because if you learned it all at once, the fun would be gone, and what would you have, really? If everyone bred perfect dogs, well, there would never be a challenge and there would be no fun in it. You couldn't express yourself in your own way, so have patience and enjoy your dogs.

Show them and you'll learn. Remember, nobody can predict a dog show; you may think you've got it in the bag, or you may think you don't stand a chance, but you're often fooled. Nobody ever loses in a dog show, because in every single show, you've won something - if only experience. You'll always be learning. You know, in all the years I've been in it, I recently realized that I've learned more in the last 7 or 8 years than all the others

together. It's a continuous learning process. You can't read a book and say, "Oh, I read the book, and now I know it all." Because you don't. You have to have years of practical experience; it's ten times more important than all the theory in the world. You have to live it yourself; it takes time, but each experience you have, good or bad, contributes to the all-around picture.

Sometimes, there are those who will try to psyche you out when you first try to show, especially when you have a good dog. Virginia Belikoff told me that when she first started, she had a lousy dog, but she didn't know - she thought it was a wonderful specimen. So she entered him in some shows. The other exhibitors greeted her warmly and gave her all the encouragement in the world. She helped make points for their dogs, you see. Well, she continued to lose consistently, and the crowd continued to adore and encourage her. One day, she woke up and realized her dog was a stinkeroo, so she placed him and bought a real good one from a top breeder. When she walked into the show building with her new, fantastic dog, she was greeted with icy stares. Nobody liked her anymore. So, don't feel bad if you suddenly find yourself alone at a dog show; it means you're doing something right; you've got something good. But there are a lot of wonderful people in Samoyeds who are willing to help newcomers. Write to people; if you see a dog you like in a

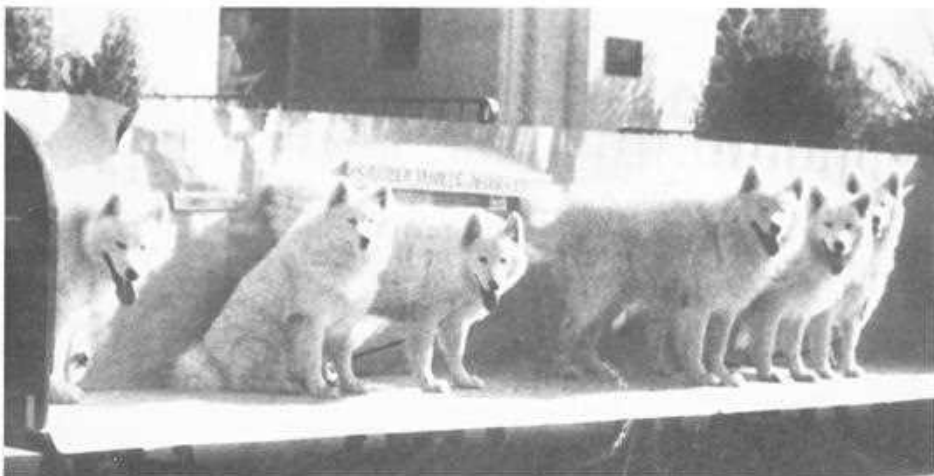
kids; they were babies, and you can't sit alone in the house, 24 hours a day, without going nuts. We lived out in the country at the time, with only one close neighbor. I knew I needed an outside interest, so I decided to get involved in dogs. I got out to some dog shows, and it gave me a chance to get away from the kids now and then. The dogs were a godsend - still are. I just couldn't imagine living without them. I enjoy dogs shows more than anything else I can imagine. To me, there is nothing more thrilling than to get up at 3 a.m. and take off for a dog show; leaving the house when it's still dark, trying to keep the dogs shut up, but they're usually screaming with delight because they know darned well where they're going. They go crazy; they love it. And hitting the Hardee's before daybreak! The steak and eggs and biscuits and coffee - isn't it grand?

There are no Hardee's in Denver.

You're kidding! You're really missing out! And then you see all those familiar faces at the show, the same dog people, no matter what the breed.

I've often said you could probably go to a show anywhere in the U.S. and meet somebody you know.

And even if you don't know them by name, most will nod and say hello. You meet some of the finest people in the world, in dogs, you really do. Even the people you don't particularly like, if you really think about it, the very



Glendale, Nov. 1955: Tilka, Cheerio, Tinda, Starch, Tally & Susu

magazine, drop the owner a line and tell her so. People love to have their dogs admired, and you might make yourself a lifetime friend.

Tell us about yourself.

There's not much to tell. I haven't worked in years; I'm a registered nurse, trained at Mercy Hospital in San Diego. After the first baby, I quit work and stayed at home. My husband was in the Navy; he's now retired so I was alone a great deal of the time. I mean, alone except for the

fact that they're in dogs makes them basically good people, because I think it takes a certain sensitivity and kindness and compassion to be attracted to this sort of life. I'm not talking about the "fly-by-nights" - but the true, dedicated dog people. Of course, you make enemies, too, because no matter how hard you try, you always manage to accumulate a certain number of people who either don't like you because of some incident that perhaps happened 30 years ago, or they just don't like you



Heidi, Jerry & Bruce, with pups at 5 weeks (Heyboy x Luba)



Mary Vee, 3 months

on general principles. As I said, it could be some silly thing that happened years ago. Remember, you're dealing with a very strong emotion here - FAMILY PRIDE! We're not dealing with good sportsmanship, but also the good name and reputation of something that is practically our own flesh and blood - OUR DOG! Good grief! They might as well criticize your kids. So it's only human nature, I guess. Sometimes people will hate you because you have a great dog; they even act as if they hate the dog, but I think they act that way because they want to win so badly themselves. Everybody wants to win, but everybody CAN'T win. I notice you become more philosophical the longer you are in it - when your novice days are over.

*The days of third place being the greatest thing in the world ...*

Oh, I won third ... whee!

*Next thing you know, all you want is Bests in Show!*

That's right. I remember the first time Pete showed Stacey for me, she was that pet bitch I told you about - well, I asked him in all seriousness if he thought she'd win Best in Show! I guess a lot of newcomers really believe their dog is the very best dog in the building. But Pete did a good job with her; he was a terrific handler - classy - and could make any dog look good. He had a wonderful eye, and was seldom wrong; he evaluated all my litters for me those first few years, until I developed my own eye. That's something that doesn't come overnight; it takes time, but one day, you wake up and find you have it - most people do.

*So you don't think that some people just naturally have it?*

It has to be developed. Oh sure, some people are better than others, and some never develop their eye at all, but I think that's because they never learned what they're supposed to learn about their breed. Even people

with a tendency toward a good eye, don't develop it right off the bat, the minute they get into dogs. They have to learn what they're doing before they can know what they're seeing.

*You have three children?*

Yes; Jerry, the oldest boy, is in the Army. My daughter, Heidi, has her degree in English, and my younger boy, Bruce, is a sophomore in college, majoring in Physics - he's the brains of the family.

*Are you still married?*

Oh, yes!

*Well, you never said anything about him, so I just thought ...*

Yes, to the same man all these years. He's retired from the Navy and works for the Navy, a hard-working man but he's never been involved with the dogs; he likes them.

*He humors his wife.*

Well ... (laughter) poor man, he practically lives in the den - the only room that is out of bounds to the dogs, so he retreats to the den, watches sports on TV and dozes. My husband likes the dogs, but he likes to relax undisturbed when he gets home at night.

He likes sports, the football games and all that stuff. He doesn't go to dog shows and has no interest in them. He doesn't groom them or feed them or let them out - oh, maybe once in awhile, but not often, because he claims he can't tell them apart. I once left a note telling him to let them out but not to let Chanel out with any of the others, but Mary could go out with Dazzle and Harmony, and Flair could go out with Duke. He was mad as heck when I got back and said, "How in hell am I supposed to know who is who?" He can't keep track of them all. When he was in the Navy, he would come home from a sea voyage and there would always be a new one, and he'd say, "Who in heck is that?" He was never quite sure if it was one of the old ones or a new one I had

bought while he was gone.

*Have you lived here all your life?*

No, only for the last 25 years.

We got stationed here and stayed after he retired. After buying a home and all, we figured we might as well just stay where we were. We had always planned on going back to California, but we never did.

*Is that where you are from?*

No, I was born in Rhode Island, but went to California in my teens, where I trained, and met my husband. He is from Missouri.

*What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being in dogs?*

The advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, I can tell you that. You are never, never bored, always there is something to do, and someplace to go, because there's always a dog show, somewhere, and you're needed - 24 hours a day, you're needed. You live an exciting and interesting life and have a hobby that the whole family can enjoy. It's wonderful for kids, and it keeps the family together. You get to travel to all the shows, and you meet people from all walks of life, people you would never have met otherwise, your paths never would have crossed if it hadn't been for dogs.

You can't say you don't have anything to do because there are always dog clubs to join, and the clubs are always desperate for workers. You also get the love of these fine animals - the kind of love that you can never get from other human beings. They truly love you and don't care if you don't have a nice house or a lot of money, or if you're homely, or you could even be the biggest crook in town - they would think you're WONDERFUL! They make you feel as if you're really somebody.

The disadvantages are: you spend every cent you have on them; there is never such a thing as having money left over, because if there IS some left over, you always need a new crate or



Ch. Startinda's Rabochi



Can. Ch. Silver Storm of Kombo

grooming table, or you're going on a circuit and want to hire a good handler and so forth. For Christmas, forget the perfume and negligees - you need a new dog dryer. You spend every cent on them and love every minute of it; and, if you keep your dogs in the house, as I do, there are going to be accidents, from time to time. You're not going to have a lot of beautiful furniture if you keep the dogs in the house; it can be very clean, but it will never be classy again. Who cares?

You're pretty well tied down and have to watch the clock when you go out, so you can hurry back home and let the dogs out ... but, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages a million to one. I can't imagine how it would be to come home to a silent house, to open the door and not have all the dogs barking greetings and whipping themselves silly with their wagging tails. Does a husband do that? Heck no!

Dog hair is everywhere, all over my clothes, in my hair - I'm practically white-headed sometimes, on my coat and in my eye lashes. My husband used to imagine there was dog hair in every dish I served - he'd stare at his breakfast eggs for a full fifteen minutes before getting up the nerve to eat it. This was in the early days, but, after a few dozen hysterics on my part, he finally quit doing it. I used to say, "So, you found a DOG



HAIR - big deal! What's wrong with a clean, white hair? Now, if it were a PEOPLE HAIR, I'd gag myself."

Anyhow, all these years with the

dogs have been wonderful, and I don't regret one cent I've ever spent on them or one mess I've ever cleaned up or any of the friends I've lost - nondog people who stopped coming to my home because they couldn't stand all the dogs around - that's THEIR loss; or any of the other so-called disadvantages. I feel that everyone should do something constructive with their life, and being in dogs and working to improve the breed helps me in that respect. you know, in all the years I've been in dogs, I've never been to a national specialty, but I'm making definite plans to attend the Denver show in 1984. I'm really looking forward to it.

Thank you very much. ¶¶

## Here's to You, Shuggs!

Elizabeth Crosby Metz  
New York City, New York  
April 2, 1983

Here's to my Sugar, our foundation mother; she's sweet, smart and lovely, a Sam like no other, She doesn't eat shingles or puddle the floor or steal chew-toy prospects from Jerry's sock drawer.

She obeys with her body and thinks with her head: Can't possibly be a pure-bred Samoyed! I don't lose my hand when I give her a pill: a sweetly put "Eat it!" assures that she will.

Says the vet, as she smiles while he rubs Panalog, "Have I told you how much I admire this dog?" (Only a thousand times since they first met; maybe he's hinting for one of her get?)

Her most useful virtue must be that this pup relieves herself only when told, "Hurry up!" She sits with me outside, and when the lead's down doesn't lead all the mutts on a romp across town,

(Unlike Frizz and Missy, who hope every day for an open gate calling, "SAMS, SPLIT TO L.A.!!") Yet like other Sams, she digs grass, dirt and sand, but unlike most others, she stops on command.

and tries to replace all the grass that she's thrown, and spits back the worms, and replaces the stone. She sleeps where she's told, and she'll stay there all night (and when she gets up, Missy poops on the site.)

But when I say "OUTSIDE!" she often asks, "FUN is to hang out with other mere DOGS in a RUN?" So she taught them the in-thru-the-Pet-Dor stampede and dismantled its lock with un-Sammy-like speed.

Now it may be a bit egocentric and tacky to brag about having a Sam that's not wacky and headstrong and hell-bent on having her druthers: a Sam to teach "noblesse oblige" to the others.

Over all, here's to Sugar, who gives proof conclusive that "Sammy" and "off-lead" aren't mutually exclusive. And now that we're breeding, "Dear Lord," I implore, "If they'd all be like Sugar, we'd like thirty more!"

With thanks to the Feinbergs, Bear and Magic, for adding Sugar to our life! ¶¶