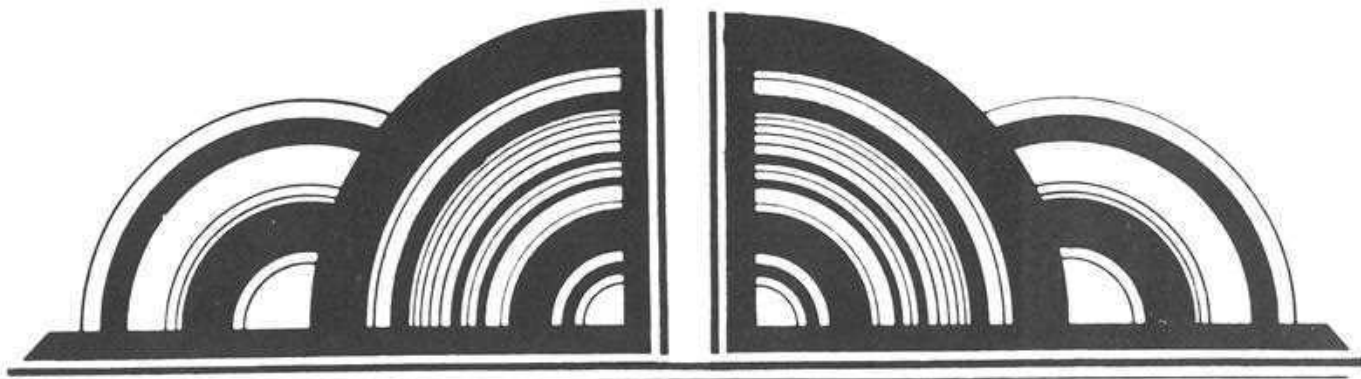


The
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QUARTERLY



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SAMOYED PEOPLE



The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
Gretchen Raymond
WILLIWAW KENNELS
Riverside, California

*Ms. Raymond was interviewed
by Lyn Snyder Hoflin,
September 27, 1980.*

*Tell us how you got started in
dogs.*

I was raised with Samoyeds and I like them. After I got married, I wanted to find one. When I lived in Northern Canada, I'd seen a dog sled

team bred by the Keepers and that's where I picked up my first dog.

What year was that?

It was in 1959. And that's where I found Buddy Boy of Williwaw, who was my first show dog. He was out of Ch. Timan's Williwaw, C.D. and Frosty Princess of Wilform. They were going to sell him to a pet shop because they couldn't find a home - not the Keepers, but the lady. They were an elderly couple and they couldn't keep him, so I picked him up.

You showed Buddy Boy and did well.

Yes, I showed him when we moved

up to Fairstone. He was two years old. A lady down the street had shown Boxers and I used to take Buddy out and run him and move him and all this - and she told me that I really ought to show that dog. He was a good moving dog. I asked, "Do you really think so?" And she said, "Yes." So I started showing him. His first show was at San Fernando and he went Best of Breed. So, I guess he was a good dog.

You had a good beginning with him.

He went on from there and completed his championship.

Did you special him at all?

No, because I didn't know too much about coat. His coat kind of went bad. And that's when I started getting into nutrition. I'd take him to the vet, thinking there was something the matter with him because his coat was bad. The vet would check him out and tell me there wasn't anything wrong.

So, I went down to the library and I got a vet book and started looking for everything that could go wrong with coat. And there is a condition, a low-grade kidney infection that can't be detected through urine tests, but can be detected through blood tests. So I took him back to the vet and told him I wanted his blood checked for a low-grade kidney infection. The vet thought I was a hypochondriac with this dog. But I really knew there was something the matter with him because he'd never been like that. And, sure enough, that was what it was. But this went on for several years; four to five years. This coat thing. But he was healthy and active and everything else, but the coat was bad.

Were you able to treat the infection?

Yes. And after a while, he looked really pretty.

Why do you think you were

attracted to Samoyeds?

Oh, gee. They're a friendly dog, a happy dog and most of them that I've had, are loyal dogs. Of course, they're a beautiful dog and if you enjoy pretty things, you enjoy the Samoyed. They always have a smile on their face! Where did you go after Buddy Boy?

I bought my first brood bitch from Billy Tucker. It was Kobe's Ronda of Encino. I bred Buddy Boy with her and kept Ch. Truschka of Williwaw. I also, through Tony, a friend of Evelyn James who used to raise dogs for her, acquired a puppy. I went to Evelyn's and Tony wanted me to take one of these puppies. I took one and I traded Evelyn James for a dog, Ch. Anastasia of Frost River. And those were my two brood bitches. I never kept lots of dogs, ever. Only about four to five dogs; I had more fun with it as a hobby and never bred a whole lot. But I bred more for quality than quantity. So those dogs did all right, for as little as they were bred.

How many litters have you had, all totaled?

I think I had about seven altogether. I didn't breed that much, in fact I never used my stud dogs that much unless it was a really good bitch. But Evelyn and I bred back and forth quite a bit.

Did you finish several champions out of these litters?

Yes, quite a few of them, but I can't remember how many. Most every dog I've put into a show home has finished. I'll put it that way. A lot of them went to homes where they weren't interested in showing the dog.

You're pretty fortunate, though, because often homes that say they are going to show dogs don't always come through; they just "sit" on a beautiful dog.

A lot of them you have to take out and show them yourself. I showed a dog for Ann Edgerly, a few times, before she got started in it. I showed Teddy of Williwaw.

What would you consider to be your best litter?

My best litter? I would say, out of Anastasia and Buddy Boy ... they had some nice puppies, real nice puppies who produced well, too. Ch. Mister Williwaw was one of them. Ch. Williwaw's Czar Nikkolos was one of theirs, too. Nickolo's Minkette, the one Ann Edgerly owns, was one of them. We bred Mister and her and got five champions out of that litter. So when they produced, they did very well.

Would you consider Mister to be the best dog you've ever bred?

I don't know; Czar Nikkolos was a very good dog. Nikkolos was Mister's brother. Mister and Nikkolos were two really great dogs, but Czar Nikkolos didn't have the chance Mister had because I had Mister; I think Czar Nikkolos could have gone a long way, if he had been really campaigned. But

he was owned by one who wasn't really interested in campaigning. He was a beautiful dog.

How did you come up with your kennel name?

Kenny O'Brien owned Buddy Boy's father, Timan's Williwaw, C.D. And I named Buddy Boy after him. I asked Kenny if that were just a name to him or if he was going to do something with that name because I liked it and wanted to use it as my kennel name. He said, "No, it's just a name." He told me to go ahead and use it. The word "williwaw" is the name for a storm up in the Aleutians, or something. They call them williwaws. That's kind of why I liked that name. I thought I'd try to cause a storm. A Williwaw storm.

Do you feel that you were successful?

Yes. I had a lot of nice dogs, or I wouldn't have continued with them.

So you created a storm?

Right. It's a line I kind of wanted to develop myself, and breed it.

When you bred a litter, did you help your bitches whelp or did you pretty much leave them on their own?

I leave them on their own. If they needed help, I was there.

I mean as far as cutting cords, and so on.

No. I let them do it, unless they

needed help. I've had few that needed help; you know, if there was a puppy with too broad shoulders and needed help getting out ... I'd give it a little tug.

My bitches never really had much of a problem. When they had babies, they had a lot of them. My average size litter was twelve and that was out of Truschka. We lost two of them, out of that litter. That was one litter that I did help feed.

Yes, I was going to ask you if you supplement your puppies...

I give them vitamins. But most of the bitches can handle it themselves. With one litter of Truschka's, she got a little infection so I tube-fed the babies until she got better.

Did you usually let the bitches decide when to wean the puppies, or did you have a particular program that you followed?

I would start to feed them a little bit when they were about three weeks old. And I would take the bitches off, so they wouldn't get too run down. I'd probably let them stay on the mother until about eight weeks, something like that; but, you know, the momma dogs... When they're ready, they'll get away.

What did you feed the young puppies?

I'd mix them up some baby food



Teddy

and give it to them. I'd stick their little faces in a bowl and let them lap it up. They learned fast. Started out with that baby oatmeal powder. Then I'd give them some little pieces of raw hamburger. When they got to be about five weeks old, I'd mix cottage cheese with the hamburger. Plus their vitamin supplement.

How many dogs do you have here now?

Just one.

Are you going to show it?

I might end up showing her; she's a pretty nice bitch. I think she could finish.

Who is she out of?

She's out of Tommy, one of Ann Edgerly's males. The reason why I grabbed this bitch is because she has Mister behind her, four times. So if I ever want to go in and breed her, I still have my type. But if I breed her, it ought to be a very nice litter.

Why did you get out of dogs?

I don't know. After Mister got old, I felt kind of bad - we lost him. You feel kind of bad when you lose your old dogs that you've been around a long time. You know, you're afraid to raise another one and get too attached to it. I don't know, I just got busy working and things like that. I finished Mystique and then I just kind of layed off for a while. Of course, I've been known to do that, too. Lay off for a while - and then come back.

Are you going to cause another storm someday?

Yes, maybe someday.

When you showed the dogs, did you show them yourself?

I showed them, mostly, myself. Jim Manley helped me with Mister because I was showing Trinka at the time, too. So he showed Mister and I showed Trinka. He got a few Group places and I got a couple of Group places on him, myself. But he really liked that dog and he liked showing him. I really liked the dog, too and I liked showing him, too!

So you had to alternate?

Lou Torres showed him once, also. He went out with him one day when I was really nervous - that dog used to make a nervous wreck out of me.

How do you mean?

Well, you know, when you own your own dog and you're showing your own dog, you get real excited and real nervous about it because you want it to go up. Sometimes, you can goof your own dog because you're attached to him. It's different than showing somebody else's dog. When I've shown other peoples' dogs, I don't have that feeling. But, with your own dog, you want it to be perfect.

Do you feel like an owner-handler has a disadvantage because of that attachment to the dog and the desire for it to go up?

With some, probably ... with some, it probably is. That's probably why some use handlers.

Do you think a dog has a better



Ch. Buddy Boy of Williwaw

chance of going up if it has a handler?

No. No way. I've done too much winning with my own dogs. If you have a good dog, they're going to see it. Unless a person just can absolutely not handle the dog.

Do you think judging is fair?

At any show I've been in, yes. I've thought it was fair. There are a lot of people who get their feelings hurt. Everybody is in that ring to win. They aren't there for the fun of it. Everyone wants to win at that show. I'm a judge myself, so I know, and I really try to give everybody a fair chance.

Are you licensed to judge Samoyeds?

Yes. I judged the Samoyed Specialty in Colorado and there were some nice dogs there. And being a judge, I know the judges are giving them a fair chance; a lot of people get hurt, when they think their dog should go up and it doesn't. Everybody feels that way. Because everybody works so hard for a dog to be in shape for that one particular day. I feel the shows are fair.

Do you feel that judges are influenced at all by advertising?

I'm one that's not!

So you really think that just because the number one dog is plastered all over the magazines that it's not going to have a great influence?

Well, it might help. It depends on the individual person. Maybe a lot of them are afraid to do their own thing in judging; they might go along

with something that's been winning regularly, to be on the safe side. It could be, but I'm not saying that for a fact...

When I'm judging, I don't care what anybody thinks; I put up what I personally feel is the best, even if the dog's never won before - of course, I don't know that, at the time.

Sometimes that takes a lot of guts, to put up something that may not necessarily be a big winner.

Right. Well, it could be... There are a lot of people that do say, "Well, they have a handler, that's why their dog is winning." But a lot of times, if they really take a good look at that dog that is winning, it is a good dog!

So, in your book, it really doesn't make that much difference if it's a handler or an owner on the other end of the lead?

No way. As long as that dog is where it's supposed to be. That's the way it should be.

Going back to breeding. When you conducted a breeding, did you usually help the mating along ... help with the male?

No. My males did very well. They didn't need any help.

You never had a problem with a bitch deciding to take off in the other direction?

Oh, I always held the bitch. I think you should always hold the bitch. But, if the bitch is ready, they don't really give much trouble. If you have a smart male, he'll know when she's

ready, too. Some males will breed a fence post!

Have you ever refused to breed a bitch that was brought to you?

Oh, yes. I've refused lots of bitches. Mostly because people were breeding just to be breeding. They weren't going any place with it. I always feel there are enough puppies running around. You know, without homes and in bad homes. I always kind of did it as a hobby. I guess some people do it for a living. So, if I ran into anybody like that - no.

Even if the bitch were an outstanding specimen?

Well, it would depend on what they're going to do. It depends on the bitch's background and all.

But there is a possibility that you would turn someone down that had an outstanding bitch just because of some particular facet, their character or what you felt they were going to be doing with the puppies?

Yes. If they were going to sell them to pet shops or something like that, sure. Because I was never in it for the money. It's always been kind of a hobby, so it really didn't mean that much then. I didn't breed every bitch that hit the door. You want to make sure that people know what they are doing; if they really take good care of the puppies; if their dogs have been X-rayed and they know about hip dysplasia and all that - they know the background of their pedigree. So there's a lot to it, more so than just breeding dogs. If they weren't too interested in that and didn't want to get their dogs X-rayed, then they weren't interested for the betterment of the breed. So, I'd just say forget it...

What do you think is a fair stud fee?

A fair stud fee? I don't know; people put their prices on their own studs. I don't know what people are asking. What are they asking, \$200 to \$300?

It varies. If you had a big winner today, a champion, proven stud, what do you think you would feel would be a fair stud fee to charge?

It would depend on what he had been producing. That's another thing, a dog can be a top winner and can't produce anything. It depends on what the dog produces. Because some of them are kind of like prepotent; you breed them into any line and they really produce, you know, for these bitches. Then you have some that are big winners and their get is nothing. So that's one thing you have to look at, too.

So you wouldn't suggest that someone run off to the current winner to breed to?

No, that really never meant that much to me. Even when I got into dogs that didn't really mean that much to me - who was the big winner at the time. Because I had an eye for a dog and I knew what I liked and how I wanted it to look. So, that really didn't mean that much to me. You can



Ch. Mister of Williwaw

cover up a lot in a dog; I found that out from judging dogs. Some people will move them real slow, going away and real fast coming back at you. And I just stand there with a grin on my face: "I know what you're doing!"

Have you ever done that?

Have I done that with a dog? No. No, a dog that I didn't feel could make his championship, I never even showed. I just say forget it. Because I have to be really proud of that dog and know I really have something in that ring. No, I like a nice, free moving dog that you don't have to cover up nothin'. You can just take it out ... if it is the conformation ring, it's supposed to be nice. You are only fooling yourself when you do try to cover up something. You get nowhere because everybody else knows what you're doing. People know.

What do you think a nice, show quality Samoyed puppy should go for?

Well, that's another thing; you can say a dog has show potential, but you can't guarantee it's a show dog until that dog grows up. I mean, through your breeding and all, you can pretty much say, "Well, both parents are champions; they're producing nice ..." So you can be pretty sure it's going to be show quality. But you can't say, "This IS a show quality dog." It depends on the age; if you're selling them

at eight to ten weeks... People put so much time and money into these dogs, too. Getting them their reputations, showing them; there's a lot of work that goes into it. So, I imagine you could sell a puppy for between \$300 and \$350, for a little puppy. But you would say it's show POTENTIAL, not a Best-in-Show dog. I've had people ask me, "I want a Best-in-Show dog." They want a champion. If I could predict that when they're little, I'd keep it myself!

But there's a lot that happens to dogs, too; you know, they could have an accident, hurt their foot. So you can't guarantee anything like that. I've had people say, "Can you guarantee a bitch against having any infection?" Well, you can't do that either. That's not bred into them; it depends on how the person takes care of that dog. They can't guarantee you, how they're going to treat that dog or feed that dog either. There's a lot more to it.

At what age did you like to evaluate your puppies?

I liked to evaluate them right when they're born. They're all lying there on their sides and you can't see their movement, but you can see their conformation. They don't have puppy coat on them or anything, but you can

see their type, just lying there; their necks and things like that. I've had pretty good luck picking them like that.

So when they're a day or two old, you can pick out your big winner?

Yes. I haven't been too wrong. Now, the only thing, like I say, that could go wrong is movement, picking them that early. Usually, if they're put together right, they ... a few other things, maybe, like bite. But I never had any problems with bite. I don't think Samoyeds have too much problem with bite. I haven't seen too many Samoyeds with bad bites.

When you sold puppies, did you always sell on a cash only basis? Did you ever sell on terms?

Cash only. I never had any strings attached. When people bought a dog from me it was their dog. Because if I bought a dog from somebody, that's the way I want it to be, too. No long contracts.

No puppy-back or stud service or anything like that?

It's their dog to do with what they want to do. I know a lot of them have a lot of stipulations. I've never really had that much problem with people, with selling dogs.

At what age did you sell your puppies, place them in homes?

Eight weeks. I think that's a nice age for them to leave their mother. If you keep them any longer than that, you wind up keeping them yourself.

So you sell them at eight weeks before you end up with all of them?

Right.

How about Samoyed pedigrees. Do you think they can be trusted for accuracy?

I would say so. Most people I know, as breeders of Samoyeds, are pretty honest. I don't know why they'd want to change the pedigree, in the first place. But I would say they are pretty darn accurate.

What are your feelings on inbreeding, linebreeding, outcrossing?

I've done quite a bit of inbreeding. I like it. If it's with the right dogs, you know. You have to do it with the best you have, when you do it, or forget doing it. I've bred a lot of half-brothers and sisters.

So you advocate inbreeding?

Well, are you talking about father-daughter?

It depends on the individual.

Some people define the words differently.

There are different degrees of inbreeding. Father-daughter, is first degree or mother-son and I would say brother-sister is first degree, too. And then, I'd say half-brother and sister. I think if you got something going, you should keep it going. This bitch I have out here now has missed her grandfather four times, so you know that's a little heavy! (Laughter)

So you feel you've been successful with that particular combination?

Yes, as long as you don't run it into the ground. Then you can have a

nice outcross, too. I've had nice outcrosses. But then you can get into a different, you know... If you want a certain type, I'd say you linebreed and not drastically inbreed, but inbreed a little bit and linebreed, if you're after a particular type of dog. Otherwise, you'll lose it; you lose what you like.

Would you breed to a dog that had a serious fault, but had other very outstanding qualities?

It would depend on what the serious fault was. What kind of serious fault are you talking about?

What would you consider to be a serious fault?

I like movement awfully well. Hip dysplasia would be the most serious fault going, as far as I'm concerned. I've heard a lot of breeders say they would breed a dog with HD because they feel it had a lot to offer, but I don't feel that's getting rid of the problem, if you go ahead and breed it. I think a lot of people get caught up in hip dysplasia for that reason. I would say that a really bad front would maybe turn me off, too. Or a really bad rear. Those are things I consider serious faults. Or a super bad head.

All dogs have faults; some are worse than others. No dog, to me, is perfect. Some of them move super

good, but they're on the small side and don't have any coat, you know, so what do you do? You just kind of weigh and balance it out. No dog's perfect, so no matter which way you go or you breed, you're going to be breeding into kind of a little fault.

So it's a matter of degrees?

Right. The degree of the fault or if you're breeding... The dogs have to complement one another, too. The one might have a little bit of a bad front and the other one has a super front; so one might correct the other. But you wouldn't double up on it. Because then you would really be in bad shape.

How many litters do you think a bitch should be allowed to have?

Since I showed my bitches, I probably let them have a couple of litters each. But, like I say, if I were into it really heavy and breeding a lot maybe I would have bred more. But I was more into showing. And the betterment of the breed, hobby-wise, more than anything... Some people go into it really hot and heavy and have twenty dogs, which is fine if they have the time. I don't know how many times people breed their bitches. Three times? Two or three times? I don't know.

You don't think there's necessarily a risk from the standpoint of the



Ch. Williwaw's Czar Nikkolas - 8 months old.
This is the best looking pup I ever showed.

bitch's health?

Oh, yes. If I think they're running a puppy factory with a bitch, sure. It'd just tear her up. I know I'd hate to have a baby every six months or so. (Laughter) I'd feel terrible, especially six or seven at a time!

Did you ever cull your litters, that is, put puppies down?

No.

What did you do if you, say, had a puppy that you didn't think was a good specimen of the breed?

I don't think I ever had one that was one that I had to put down. Usually, if I thought they were going to be a little small, or something, I'd just place them in a pet home. But they were good sound dogs and I saw no reason to put them down. I've never had anything weird. Like a two-headed dog or a five-legged dog. Of course, I don't think the Samoyed breed's that messed up. I don't know, I never had one that I had to put away.

When you sold pet puppies did you sell with spaying and neutering agreements or try to do something to keep the people from breeding the dog?

Yes, I'd tell them to have it spayed or neutered, or bring it back in a year... Some of them turned out pretty nice. Just because I'd say they are pets and maybe I was keeping the best one out of the litter. There might be three that were good. I had one come back with a male he wanted to show and I said, "No way! That's a pet puppy." There was nothing drastically wrong with it; it was just that I didn't feel it was up to par.

How would you describe the perfect Samoyed? Conformation-wise.

Conformation-wise? Mister! (Laughter)

Would you describe Mister?

Well, a Samoyed male is just all square. I like a good neck. A very proud dog, not ashamed of himself. A very alert dog. It's like they're saying "Here I am!" And that's mostly what I tried to breed for, too. Good movement. Of course, I know all dogs don't move perfectly - not even mine. Close to perfect maybe... A nice tail. A proud dog carries its tail up over the back and has that happy look on its face; ears alert, coat standing straight off, not limp, you know, lying down on the back. One that has a natural stance and you don't have to be stacking them constantly. They just stand there. Stifles, nice hocks. Good feet, good legs.

What is a good foot?

Not one that is broken down or down in the pasterns. One that, you know, they're kind of up on their feet. Not really up, like a Terrier, but one that has not too long and not too short, nice thick pads; not splayed.

Should it be a cat-shaped foot or a hare-foot?

Well, I think you want it to be cat-shaped.

How would you describe good movement?

A Samoyed is supposed to be a single-tracking dog and when there are no breaks, they bring those feet right in there. And they come in straight, just like that; no breaks this way or that. No toeing in or out. And then back the same way. Of course, a lot of people think single-tracking is when the dog is narrow in the rear, but that's not true. You know, they're really close.

How important is temperament?

I've run into dogs ... I mean in the show ring you have dogs that don't like other male dogs or there might be a bitch in season; but I've never run into one that was absolutely a vicious dog. At least, not in my own personal experience.

Would you breed to a Samoyed with a shy temperament if it were an outstanding example of the breed?

It would depend on where that shy temperament came from. If it



Ch. Anastasia of Frost River - one of 1st Brood bitches.

Very important. Samoyeds don't have bad temperament. What I've found in a Samoyed, though; if you need their protection, they'll give it to you. But they seem to know people! They're a good dog, temperament-wise, with kids and cats.

Have you ever run across a Samoyed with a shy or aggressive temperament?

There are probably a few around. I think most of them are that way for a purpose. It could be the way they are raised. People have a lot to do with dogs' temperaments. Or, if they're hurting someplace, that has a lot to do with temperament, too. If they have hip dysplasia or something like that, that will affect a dog's temperament. And with people's temperaments, too. I haven't run into any nasty Samoyeds.

was bred into it, no. I'd be definitely afraid of coming up with a difficult dog. Like I say, I like a happy-go-lucky dog.

So how intelligent do you think the Samoyed is compared to other breeds?

I can't really answer that because I haven't had the other breeds. I feel the Samoyed is an intelligent dog, but there are other breeds that are very intelligent, too. So you really can't go by that. I can't say because I'm not that familiar with other breeds. I've never raised other breeds, so it would be hard to answer... I had a Cocker Spaniel once that was awfully smart.

Have you ever had any problem with what they call "winter nose" or "snow nose" where the pigment fades

out?

I have had that, yes. I don't know if it's just because it's cold out. I've had it when they start rooting in the dirt. If they are out in the dirt, and I'll notice it does something to them.

So you would breed to a dog with missing pigment?

With what? I don't call that missing pigment, if their nose is a dud. If their mouth isn't black all the way around and they have a pink lip or if you have a dog that's fairly dominant and throwing black points you could breed it out, if the dog were a very nice specimen. There are some breaks in their lips and some with eyes lighter than others. Some eyes are darker than others, but if you have a beautiful dog it would be kind of silly not to breed to that dog. Unless it was an albino, which is something altogether different; you don't breed to that. That would be a dog you could see never had any pigment. No eye rims, no black mouth. You can see their nose is just naturally that way.

But you can tell when it's been a chemical reaction. And I think most of that is a chemical reaction of some sort - it's really crazy...

Do you feel the Samoyed Standard is a good one?

I don't see too much the matter with the Samoyed Standard.

You don't feel there are any changes that should be made?

The only thing they worked on one time was raising the height. Most of the bitches here in California were bigger than the Standard. I showed bigger ones and smaller ones.

So you don't feel that size should be a disqualification?

No ... well, if they're too big, maybe.

What would you consider too big?

A twenty-six-inch male at the withers, which I did have, at one time. I never showed him. He was a big son-of-a-gun. Most of the males I've shown have been twenty-one, twenty-two and a half, twenty-three and a half. And there are some that I know that have been in the ring, about twenty-four, but when they're really huge, you don't see them in the ring. But you know they're around, but are not being shown.

Do you think the Top Ten, Top Twenty rankings mean anything?

You mean in each breed? I think they go mostly on show record for that. There might be a pretty darn nice dog that doesn't get out that much and isn't shown very much. If you go strictly by it, no. I'd never go strictly by something like that. Those are just show records. A lot of people can't get out there and show. So you really can't say they're the best around. It does mean a lot; it's really good for the breeds, to have them out there like that.

So you think the rat-



Ch. Nikkie's Nikole of Williwaw

*(by Ch. Czar Nickolos of Williwaw x Ch. Truschka of Williwaw)
Breeders - Dennis D. & Gretchen Raymond, Owner - Ann Edgerly.*

age people to special their dogs more?

I would say so. It's nice to have a rating like that. I'm not taking that away from anyone. I'm saying there are other nice dogs that could never be pushed like that. A lot of these people are really going strong for their dogs, from state to state, circuit to circuit. And there's a lot of good dogs that are at home. Where the owners can't afford to show their dogs. The way times are now, it's harder and harder...

I notice a lot of shows seem to be down in entries.

Oh, yes.

Do you think the popularization of the Samoyed, which has become a fairly popular dog, more so than it was ten or twenty years ago, has hurt the breed?

It can hurt breeds. We've seen it happen in Shepherds. There are lots of them. That's hard to say, too. Everybody thinks they're doing right. But then, you get into too many and outsiders might sell dogs that are show quality and you might get a lot of junk in the ring, by lack of knowledge, due to ignorance of new people. A lot of people, new breeders or new people just showing dogs, might have a ten-

dency to be a little kennel-blind. They think their dog is the best.

You always seem to think that first dog is the best...

Right. Not only in our breed, but people in other breeds, too. The breeds can get into trouble that way. You can change the whole look of a breed, if too many people like this crop up. Of course, it's good for the people who know what they're doing, to have some pretty tough dogs.

So you really don't think Sammies have been hurt too much by the fact they have become more popular in the past few years? What I'm getting at is: Have you noticed a decrease in the quality of Samoyeds?

It seems like there are a lot of good bitches out there, more so than the males. This from the last time I was at a show. There was a tremendous difference in movement and all. That's like trying to find a good stallion. There are very few good stallions and it's the same way with stud dogs. There's a lot of brood mares in horses and a lot of brood bitches that are good, but I think quality males are hard harder to find. I've found that to be true in all the years I've been in Samoyeds.

So it's not necessarily something new.

No. It's easier to find a winning bitch than a really top male. And when you have one, it's something you don't want to let go of. Not only producing-wise, but intelligence-wise.

Do you feel bitches win their fair share in the breed ring?

I think if you really have a good bitch in there and it's better than your Winners Dog or a bitch that's better than the champion dog, I see no reason they shouldn't be put up all the way.

Do you think this is the case with most judges?

No. I've seen some where I've thought (just my own personal opinion), sometimes, the bitch was better than the dog and the bitch should have gone up and didn't.

Going back to puppies. At what age did you usually start training, that is, show training?

Probably at about six months or so. I did very little training of my dogs; they were kind of "natural." People could tell by the way they acted in the ring. I don't think Sammies require that much training. You want to get them well leashbroken and not afraid of new things or people, stuff like that. They're pretty intelligent and learn very quickly. I think leash breaking, you can start very young. I never had problems with that.

Did you ever take your puppies to matches?

Very seldom.

Most of the time, you just went straight into the ring?

Right into the ring - and what happened, happened!

At what age did you usually start showing?

A lot depended on how they looked. Czar Nikkolas, I started at eight months. That was the first time he was in the ring, at eight months. And he did very well. Then, some, not until age two. Very seldom, I'd go to a puppy match; I just more or less had them as my pets, no extensive training. They can get very bored by that, especially if you want a conformation dog.

Do you think Sammies should be obedience trained?

Yes. They're good obedience dogs. I did train Buddy Boy for obedience. Of course, every dog you have, you kind of train a little bit in obedience, especially if you have them in the house. They should learn to stay, sit and all that other stuff. They make nice obedience dogs.

Have you ever put any obedience titles on your Sams?

No, I never went into that. There are a few that I bred that became obedience dogs and won their titles. But I never was too interested in strictly obedience.

Buddy Boy was pretty much obedience trained. I took him to several classes. He got really good, but I never took him through. In fact, he

won top honors in obedience class.

You were saying earlier that you saw Samoyeds racing. Did you ever get involved in racing Samoyeds?

When I was in Fresno, I was out in a car and starting to train them. They catch on to that really well, but I never went any further with it. I decided that wasn't for me.

Why is that?

Too much work! (Laughter) No, they're good at that - they like it, too.

What did you feed your Samoyeds?

I always fed them meat, cottage cheese, Purina or a sturdy meal. And high-protein powder with their vitamins.

What type of vitamins? The same type as the younger puppies?

No, these are human vitamins I give them. I give them vitamin A and vitamin B, vitamin C - the whole range.

Do you feel diet is very important?

Oh, yes. It is important. It shows on their coats and their readiness and alertness and they feel good. You can tell when a dog's feeling good.

Did you condition the dogs at all?

No, they'd keep themselves pretty much in condition. I just turned them loose. Let them do their own conditioning. If they're active, they condition themselves. You don't need to run them for miles.

Did you let all your dogs run together?

Some of them get along, but when you have bitches come in season, I don't let them. It will cause a problem.

So you tend to keep the males separated?

Right.

What advice would you give to someone who is aspiring to become a breeder?

They should talk to some of the top breeders and get started in the right direction; someone who has been really successful. Doris McLaughlin is one of them too. She's very successful so she must have a darn good breeding program. That is what I would advise them to do is to talk to somebody who knows what they're doing. Especially someone who is up on diet and hip dysplasia and find a sincere one and they'll come along just fine.

Is there any trick to finding a sincere one?

I don't know. You just talk to people and you can tell how sincere they are. Or you can look at what they've done, what they've accomplished, their record, articles they write and stuff. They're pretty sincere, most of them.

Who do you feel influenced you the most when you were just getting



Ch. Truschka of Williwaw
Ch. Buddy Boy of Williwaw x Kobe's Ronda of Encino

started?

I don't know. I think I was kind of a loner and kind of influenced myself.

My dad and I had horses, so I knew what I liked in horses and I knew what I liked in a dog; one that was well put together, conformation and stuff like that. I was never swayed much by people. I kind of wanted to do my own thing. But I was lucky, in doing it.

You felt you ended up in the right direction?

That was kind of a challenge for me, to do it myself. Get the dogs and do what I wanted.

Do you have any advice about grooming Samoyeds for showing? And how much do you think should be done?

Well, if they're kept up, they aren't too hard to do. I always used a comb more than anything. When you do go down to the skin, part their hair and go right down to the skin. Get every little bit of dead hair you can. Then their coats really look good, but if you don't get down to the skin, it will get lumpy and separate. If you get down there, they'll really look good; it's a lot of work.

Do you feel there should be any trimming done?

I don't like to trim. At Santa Maria, a handler came back and told me to do some trimming on my dog and I had a fit - I don't like that. You have to trim a little bit, you know, around their feet because the hair can get a little long, but as far as shaving their legs, the hocks, I don't like that at all. They're so heavy-coated in the first place on top and they do that to their legs, they look like little peanuts, you know, it makes them look out of balance. They can trim them up to even them out, but not take it all. A clean face looks good, you cut the whiskers; although I've shown dogs with whiskers on and it never hurt them. They still finished AU NATURAL! Right.

What advice would you give to a new Samoyed person? Someone just starting out and wanting to show their own dog, as far as handling is concerned?

Well, they should get some advice on handling. I know, judging shows, it's kind of sad to see a novice ... some of them ... of course, I've judged puppy matches. But I always try to help them. They just walk in there grinning, but they really don't know what to do! They can go to a few shows and watch, too. You learn a lot by watching. Every handler - everybody has their different style. They just have to kind of pick up what's right for the way they want to show their dog. They should definitely watch otherwise, they may make a fool of themselves. A lot of breeder-handlers help people; I have helped a lot of people with showing. Different things to do with their dog, what looks good and all that. They turned out really well.

You have a really beautiful place

here. How much land do you have?

There's an acre and a half.

How long have you been here?

I've been here for four months.

Do you like it?

Yes, I like it. I wouldn't be here, if I didn't. I'd move on down the road!

Have you ever been married?

Yes, everybody knows that. I've been divorced for a year now. I have two children.

Are they both grown?

Yes. They never did take much interest in the dogs. Some do and some don't.

Can you tell us a little about your background, like where you came from, originally? Your educational background?

I don't have any education. I'm dumb! (laughter) I was born in Minnesota, but I've been out here ever since I was three, so you might as well call me a native Californian. Most of my relatives are in Minnesota. My folks are here in California. That's about it ... I didn't go to college.

How do you feel the dogs have influenced your lifestyle?

I've really enjoyed them, but I don't know whether they influenced it at all, or not.

You don't feel you bought a bigger car or house or a bigger lot because of

the dogs, anywhere down the road?

No. I think I'd live in a bigger house, anyway. That's kind of a hard question because I've always had dogs. Since I was little, I've always had animals around. So it's a hard question for me to answer.

So what are the benefits of having been in dogs?

There are BENEFITS? Well, you really meet a lot of nice people. Of course, a person in dogs has to like to travel and I love to travel. If you don't like to travel, you wouldn't like dogs. You do a lot of traveling, see a lot of new places and meet new people. It's really a lot of fun.

How about the drawbacks?

I really haven't had any drawbacks. I think you make your own drawbacks, if there are any drawbacks. I can't think of any, except it's kind of sad when you lose a dog.

Sometimes people tend to think that by being in dogs it has curtailed their activities in other areas.

That's their own problem, if they're letting the dogs rule their lives. They can really do what they want; they must enjoy it or they shouldn't be doing it. Right?

When you were in dogs and had, say, four or five and wanted to go off on a show weekend or vacation, you



Nickolo's Mistique Williwaw
Ch. Misti of Williwaw x Ch. Nikkie's Nekole of Williwaw

apparently had someone you could trust to take care of the others when you were gone.

I had some GOOD neighbors. I never had any problems with not going anyplace just because I had animals, that would be a terrible feeling, if you couldn't go someplace.

So has it been worth it?

Sure, it's been a lot of fun. It's all in what you make it, really. That's the way in anything you do. If you enjoy it, you do it. If you don't enjoy it, you wouldn't be doing it. I've never become a slave to my dogs. But I think that's what you were talking about. Some people feel really tied down.

Can you think of anything we haven't talked about that you'd like to discuss? Do you have any pet peeves?

I'm a peaceable person, I don't talk about peeves! (Laughter) No, I can't think of anything. Especially about people. People are people - we all have our faults. If you go around looking for people's faults, you will be very unhappy.

So you're not seeing any distressing trends in Samoyeds in the ring today, faults or anything, that you think should be corrected?

There's always something that should be corrected.

Do you think there's a trend toward anything, like poor angulation, poor heads, or anything like this that you feel there's a tendency toward?

Some are good and some are bad. It just depends, like I say, on what people are breeding for. Some people might like a certain type of head; I might not like it, but they do so that's okay. People like their own type of animal. Everybody looks for something different in an animal. They might not like what I have and I might not like what they have. So, that's kind of hard to say because there are some people who really like a certain line. Everybody ought to be happy in what they want, right? If they like cow-hocked dogs, they should breed for cow-hocked dogs! (Laughter) But it is true, it's hard to say. You're a breeder; you know what I'm saying. Some people might not like your dogs and you might detest somebody else's dogs. But you like what you have and that's what counts. A lot of people might go toward your type of dog and there might be a lot of people who might go toward another type of dog, too.

Don't you think it's important to maintain the type?

You're right. Because after a while, it might not look like a Samoyed anymore. A lot of people think that that's the way they're supposed to look. You get down to different opinions on something like that - like head type, coat, body. I think they should breed more for a happy-go-lucky dog than a standout coat. Because it's not supposed to be limp. They're losing the standout coat. No undercoat.

If you were ranking type and

soundness, which one do you think you would rank first?

You definitely don't want to lose your type. We'd have a whole different breed. I feel type and soundness go along together. Because you have your head Standard so if you lose head type, you've lost your head. Type and soundness do go along together. Especially through the Standard and what it describes as what the dog is supposed to be doing, if you lost the type in it, it wouldn't be able to do it anymore. They were originally a herding dog. If you get too big a bone, too heavy a Samoyed, clumsy; they are not going to

be able to go out there and do that kind of work, they wouldn't be fast enough. So I feel type is very important. And very definitely should be preserved. I think most of the breeders would have to feel that way, in order to preserve the type. I think there's too much animosity between breeders. Instead of working together, they're too busy going the other way.

Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Not a thing.

Thank you very much.

Oh, you're welcome! 11



Duster - January 16, 1972, Ventura - two points.