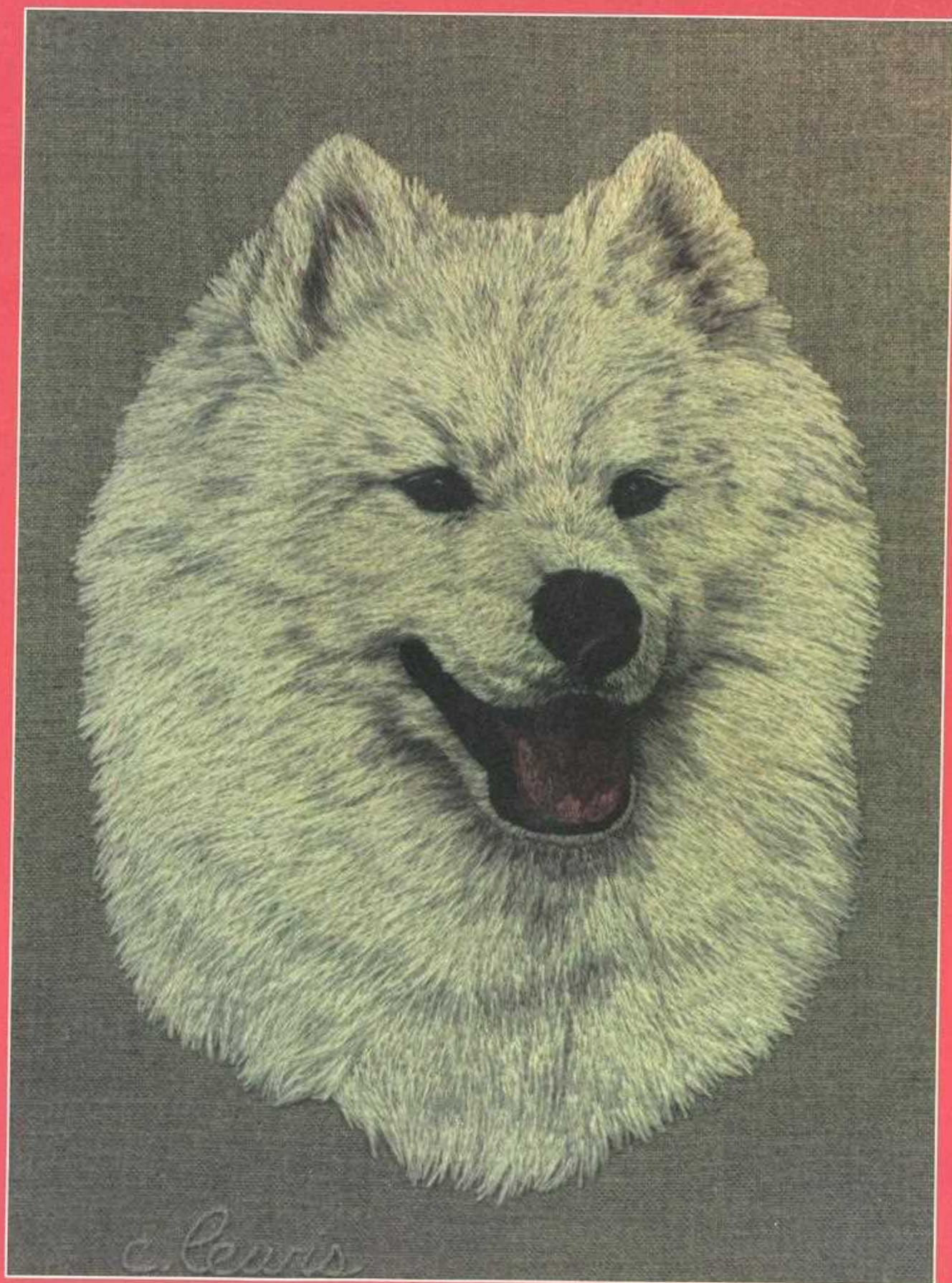


THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY

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Donna R. Pagel-Yocom

Samoyed People

The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
Donna R. Pagel-Yocom
TSIULIKAGTA
Shelton, Washington

This interview was conducted at the home of Donna R. Pagel-Yocom in July of 1992 by Katie LeCour.



How and when did you first become involved with Samoyeds?

In 1954 I got a non-registered Samoyed with a lot of biscuit. I lived in Puyallup at that time and I don't know who the breeder was.

Why did you pick a Samoyed?

I didn't particularly pick it. It sort of picked me. I had a Springer Spaniel. Although the yard was fenced, he would climb anything and get out. He was a bird dog, and he'd go out and get people's chickens, bring them back, break their neck and leave them on your doorstep. Talk about embarrassing moments. One day he came back with about six feet of wire around his neck that somebody had tried to kill him with. We had him on a chain then for a while, which made me unhappy. Finally, he seemed like he was settling down, I let him loose again and he never did come back. It was bird hunting season at that time, and whether some hunter saw him rambling around and picked him up, or whether somebody killed him, I never knew.

We had milk delivered at the front step and one morning I heard something and went out. I heard the milk bottle being upset and wondered what in the world was going on. Here was this Sam puppy, only I didn't even know it was a Sam then. I found out a couple of weeks later what it was. I took it in and fed it, and we watched for ads in the newspaper, but nobody advertised or anything else. He just stayed with us and we gave him the name of Lucky. Then we moved to Denver and rented an apartment for a while until we could find a house we wanted to buy, so we had to take Lucky back to Nebraska to my folks. They lived in a semi-rural area. We left him there, and the dog always rode in the truck with dad anytime he ever

went anyplace. Dad forgot about him one morning, started to back up and killed him. So, that was the end of Lucky. He just wasn't so lucky.

In 1957 I lost my second son. Before he died, he'd always wanted another dog. When he came home from school, he'd saved his sandwiches and would hold them behind him and the dogs, of course, would follow him, and he'd say, "But, mom, it just followed me home." He saw these Sams one time and kept telling me about these beautiful white dogs. I hadn't seen one yet at that time. After he died, I almost cracked up and had a real rough time of it for about six months. When I started coming out of it, I thought I would hunt for one of those dogs. I bought one from a fellow. He was supposed to be registered. I didn't get the papers and he kept saying she was from up in Medicine Bow, which, of course, is up in Wyoming. But it turned out she was really from Broken Bow, which was only fourteen miles out of Denver.

When I finally ran into the source, I had written to practically every notable breeder in the United States, trying to find out where this kennel was, because I was going to run down those papers one way or another. These very nice people, Glen and Naomi Crosley, explained to me the reason he didn't get the papers is that he'd never paid for her dam. I paid for her dam and we sent in her registration and they put her in my name temporarily because this fellow hadn't paid for her. Then, we sent in the litter registration, and I was so angry by that time that we registered it as a litter of one. He'd never be able to register the rest of them. I found out that her sire had never been registered. Well, he had been given the papers on him, or at

least he'd paid for him, but he never paid for his registration, so I paid for his registration and got that bitch registered. In the process I became very well acquainted with the breed, but it cost me quite a bit! (laughter)

Was she the start of your kennel?

I bred her once. Let's say for attributes, she was everything people had been telling me you should have in a Sam, structurally. She had a beautiful front, very strong rear, she had a nice curve of stifle, a stark white coat and plenty of it, nice black eyes and black pigment, but she was the laziest bitch I ever knew. I tried to train her for her CD and she tried through eleven trials. She was very well trained, but she was so lazy she always lay down on the long sit. (laughter) Finally, I had to put Sally Terroux on her to get her CD.

What was her name?

Arctic Kinak. I bred her once, but didn't keep anything from that breeding. I think there was only one bitch in the litter that went to a friend of mine. I bought a male first that had been trained for obedience, and he had his CD and he'd been trained for CDX, but never gotten a leg on it. Finally, we got all three legs on his CDX, then started training him for conformation. It took a while to finish him, because my son was wanting to show him. He'd work in obedience just fine, but the minute he got into the conformation ring he'd drop his tail. We finally figured out it was because Mike would yell at him and he was expecting that and so he would always drop his tail. I took him for rides in the car. He rode in the front seat with me. I finally ended up having to finish the dog, and he finished in nothing flat, because he would go in like he was having a happy lark as long as I had him on the leash. He was Best of Breed in the 1964

National Specialty in Denver. He was always a very happy fellow as long as I had the lead, but let anybody else handle the lead and ... Like when Barry went in to take the picture - that was the mistake because the dog just wilted. His name was Ch. Kenny's Blazer Boy of Caribou CDX.

Tell us how you developed your line from there.

In developing a line, what I had done then was I bred another bitch that belonged to June Brown from Oklahoma. She had Tinka of Tindak. I bred her to Blazer. I kept a bitch from that breeding. She was bred to Ch. Joli Fang, and I got quite nice get from that breeding, one of them, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Kara Fang, quite a consistent winner. He ended up going to Texas. I put him on a circuit, and he absolutely knocked them dead. He got out in '67 and just went like crazy. He was really a nice one.

Tell us about some of the dogs you had over the years up until 1992.

I bought a bitch who became Ch. Chu San's Princess Ghajar from Betty Selsor. I so admired her sire, Ch. Chu San's Silver Folly, and I later bought him. It was from those beginnings, really, though not so much from Ghajar herself, though she is behind my present champions, but through a half sister of hers, Tsiulikagta's Chu Tu. This was Ch. Chu San's Silver Folly bred to Snipperty Sue of Caribou, who was a litter sister to Blazer. That was really the foundation of my line as it is today. I bred Snippy to Chu San. That was the year my house burned. There was only one puppy that resulted from it. I think with all the upheaval and everything it was upsetting Snippy, and that was Chu Tu. I bred Chu Tu to Polar Prince's Honey Bear, who, of course, was a Ch. Joli Knika son. I had also bred Ch. Summer Snow Tamorine, who was Mike's bitch, to Ch. Joli Knika. I had things coming through for linebreeding that way. Many champions came from Ch. Tsiulikagta's Pepe San who was Chu Tu's daughter. Pepe had several litters of four and five pups, where all but one became champions in each litter. She produced so well. Even on the East Coast and many other areas, her get comes through in pedigrees. They are also in Italy and the Dominican Republic and Holland. So, they got around. It's still coming through strong. Almost every litter will have something in it where I can see Pepe coming in there. That means quite a lot.

Of course, I never could have done that if I hadn't had some excellent guidance along the way. Most of my guid-

ance came in the early days from the late Agnes Mason. At that time, there were so many different factions pulling at you and sometimes some would almost suggest that you didn't know where you were going unless you did it such and such a way. Everybody was after big dogs. I was raised with horses and I was still looking for quality. It was getting to be confusing, because if I had a smaller one and I liked her real well, I'd be told, "You'll never get anything for her. Put her in a pet home." They were so hung up on rears, which is fine because you have to have good rears. I found out, though, that person after person, who was so free with advice, didn't even know what constituted a good front. As long as they could stretch out and run someplace, but if they were coming head on at you, you couldn't stand all too many of them. Anyway, I wrote to Mrs. Mason and asked her, "Is it true that you can't use small dogs on a sled?" because that was another thing I'd been told. She wrote back and said, "By all means. Small dogs can pull a sled just as well as the bigger ones, it just takes more of them." (laughter) I'll never forget them. She had imports too, and she definitely knew. She sent me some sketches, which I wish I still had, but when my house burned, those things disappeared. They were sketches of how the shoulders should go and how to feel for them, because she knew I was a novice.

What really climaxed things for me was at the March Portland bench show in 1965, the late Cliff Collins took his time talking to me that day. He must have spent three hours. I'd finished about eight champions at that time, but I still didn't know what I was doing and he knew it. I was breeding dog to dog, as too many people do - they breed to a winner or something, and if they don't get what they want from the first dog they breed to they don't know why. He was the one who taught me how to go back to grandparents and great grandparents, and if I couldn't get movies of them to get stills of different views - front views, side views, rears - and try to get some when they were moving, watch those and see what the grandparents and great grandparents, in particular, were doing. That, too often, in a linebreeding was what would come through, and you had to know which grandparents dominated the present generation before you bred to it. It was the most valuable session I ever had and I've never forgotten it. It really straightened me out and showed me how to do things. So I started taking movies of



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Kara Fang.

dogs and asking for other movies and things as I went along.

Where did you go from there?

This was before I had Pepe. I had definitely changed course. In fact, before the year was up I had done something different. I had Chu Tu along with me, but I would have bred her absolutely wrong if I hadn't benefited by this talk with Cliff Collins. He was one intelligent, very knowledgeable man. Everybody else was just going along having a good time, and if you asked them questions, all they ever did was laud the present dog they were showing and you weren't really finding out a confounded thing. They'd show you pedigrees, but they didn't make any sense to you if you didn't know the dogs. He didn't tell me who to breed to or anything of that sort, but how to go about researching it. It was just invaluable. If I ever have any doubts about anything I go back and run old movies



Ch. Kenny's Blazer Boy of Caribou CDX, April 1961 (completely out of coat and a very happy dog).



Eng/Can/Am Ch. Delmonte This Is It.

that I took years ago and it sure tells me plenty.

You said that Pepe produced quite a few champions?

Yes, as I said, she had several litters. Her litters were never big litters. I think the most she ever had was five in a litter, and there were a couple of litters where there were just four, but in litter after litter, there was at least all but one that finished, and, usually, that one was never even shown, so it is hard to tell what might have happened.

So your present day dogs have come down from Pepe?

That's right. I shipped clear to Montreal for one breeding, but it didn't turn out. That was to Demitrio. Five bitches were bred to him that spring and not a one conceived. We never did know what the story was on it. Then I shipped her to Ontario and bred to Sunniray, Shirley Curzon's dog, and Anoka, who is behind so many champions through the Midwest, was from that litter. Then I bred to Ch. Kara Sams of Misty Way and there were two that finished from that litter. A grandson of hers from that breeding was a Best in Show winner, Ch. Tsiulikagta's

Nordie Sunni-Glo. Here again, he's behind a lot of them. Then she was bred to Gertrude DiCarlo's Chekov of Silver Flair. She had my all-time favorite bitch of them all, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa, from that litter, and her sister, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Mai-Kai-Shek, and she had a brother, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Padre Vladimir in Yukon, Oklahoma. He was a very showy dog. He ended up with Judy Hinkle who bought him from Father Robinett and did very well with him. One went up to Peggy McCarthy and she's behind many Northwest dogs. I saw a pedigree recently and was surprised to see she went into that background. Then I bred her to another English import, who didn't become a champion. Ch. Tsiulikagta's Pepe II was from that litter.

Were you in Denver at this time?

No, I was in New Mexico.

How long did you live in the Denver area?

Ten years. I lived there from July 1954 until January 1965. With the exception of a few years, I lived in New Mexico for eighteen years, so I was down there a long time. Pepe's last

breeding was to Ch. Kiskas Karaholm Cherokee and there were three champions that finished from that litter.

Were you keeping puppies out of each of her litters?

I kept two from the breeding of Chekov of Silver Flair because I liked that especially. Then I bred her to Koshka of Kobe. There were so many people at that time who were wanting puppies, and who'd had reservations in for a long time, and I didn't keep any except Pepe Tu for a while. Then, Gary Sharp, who had bought several from me before, wanted Pepe Tu, so she went there. Then she came back to New Mexico to be finished, because he'd let her get too fat. (laughter) I put her on a diet. Then she was bred to Am/Can/Eng Ch. Delmonte This Is It and that produced Tahkloma, which I kept some strings on so I could use him, and he was the sire of my old thirteen-year-old that's out here. According to how they gauge dogs' ages with people, he's 91 years old, so no wonder he's falling down every once in a while. (laughter) He has arthritis. He was running and following the other dogs in the snow and hit a rock at seven months old, and absolutely sheared off every bone in his foot right straight through. I put him in a cast when he was just about seven months old, and now he has arthritis in that foot. But he did pretty well over the years. He goes back to Koska but he also goes back to Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa. Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa was also bred to Delmonte This Is It, and her son Kabloona, another champion, is behind a lot of the dogs I have here. I was able to work between the two of them. Mai-Kai-Shek was Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa's litter sister. I bred her to Kabloona, her nephew. She had two bitches, so I hung onto both of them for quite sometime. They had dovetailed, the genes from both of them, as to how I bred them and that's what's kept the pigment good and strong, the eyes dark and kept the fronts good and everything.

A lot of people liked Mai-Kai-Shek, personality wise, better than they did Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa, but nobody else ever tried to come and buy Mai-Kai-Shek. She was a winner. She was shown twelve times and won nine and she did all right. But there were more people who tried to buy Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa. All they had to do was lay eyes on that bitch and watch her move and they were right on you. When she was a four-year-old, I thought I set her price sufficiently high. It was \$3,500. A couple came up to visit me from down in Corpus Christi, and the woman finally came to me and said, "Bert wants to sell

the pickup camper so we can buy Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa. I bet you'd raise the price." I said, "I probably would." (laughter) So she went out and told him, because he was all set to go home and sell that rig he had to buy that bitch. (laughter) But they were just so sold on her. People came from Wisconsin - the Tausends were back there - and everybody who came to New Mexico and saw that bitch wanted her, but I never sold her. She was part of me. She always moved clean whether she was going or coming and she had so much personality and she'd really turn it on in the ring. She had such a pretty face that when people saw that face they just didn't forget it. Judy Muggia hadn't seen her for several years when she came back from Boston to visit in New Mexico, and she walked out to the kennel and said, "Oh, that face!" She just never forgot it, but she had one of her pups, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Khatali. She was something special.

Did you get some good stock out of Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa, too?

Yes. You see, Khatali and Nakor-saq, her two sons, were both Am/Can champions, and they were probably my first ones that finished in Canada. Now I have quite a few Canadian champions.

Do you still show your dogs?

I don't show them personally. I have a bad heart with a leakage in two valves. I was in an auto accident in 1966, and since then I have a very unstable knee. I've had surgery on it, and since then I've had to have a handler. But the dogs are still being shown, oh, yes. I have one now that's a Canadian champion, Can. Ch. Tsiulikagta's Na-To-Si, who has ten points towards his American championship, one major, and, hopefully, some judge that likes a big dog... He's too big. He's one of those that just happen once in a while. In his background, he goes back to some of the early dogs that Jean Blank had. He dovetails in rather sharply through his granddam's sire, which goes back to Jim Manley's dogs. Of course, that came in from the early ones that Jean Blank had. They were all big fellows.

Two years ago I finished Kyta in Canada. It took two years to get the championship issued. I think that Pat Cummins wrote more letters to the Canadian Kennel Club to try to get it through. They were just dragging their heels and not doing anything. The whole thing was, she had won some points and I took her home and she had a litter and then she came back up to finish after that. Apparently, they weren't connecting the things or some-

thing. She finally wrote to them and said if she didn't hear from them right away, they'd hear from her attorney. That did it. They sent it through. (laughter)

What other dogs that you've owned would you like to mention?

I think, perhaps, structurally and showmanship and everything else, the best all-around bitch that I ever produced was Pepe San. The one that was closest to my heart, because she was so laid-back, was my Sa-Kh-Ste-Wa. Of the males, it would be between two as to which were the best males: Ch. Tsiulikagta's Kara Fang, who was a regular Houdini that could get out of anything, and two of Pepe San's sons, Ch. Tsiulikagta's Aput and Ch. Tsiulikagta's Skagit. Skagit had the better front, Blazer had the strongest rear. Blazer had more neck length, but Skagit had the prettier head. My nephew had one of them and my friend in Corpus Christi had the other and each one wanted the best dog and it would be awfully hard if I had to sit down and really choose between the two. Blazer was a Group dog consistently and Skagit also had a Group first, but Skagit also won the first Samoyed specialty in Houston under Tom Mayfield. There was quite an entry there and it was a hard win. Tom was nearly run

to death. (laughter) But he won.

What's the largest number of dogs that you've kept over the years?

At the time we were doing sled work. There was a total of 22 dogs, but there were 17 males on the place with two sled teams going. If you think that didn't take dog food! And it was cheaper then. (laughter) We fed Kasco and you know what it cost me then? \$4.80 per 50-pound bag. I kept some of those bills to show people occasionally because they wouldn't believe it.

How many dogs do you have now?

I have ten on the place. I take care of them myself. There isn't anybody else to do it. I co-own three others with people. There are five Elkhounds and five Sams.

When did you get into Elkhounds?

In 1970. It was a matter of helping a friend who had a bitch that was breedable and I helped her locate the stud. When she had the pups in Albuquerque, she hit the panic button when they were nine weeks old and people weren't ringing her doorbell. There was a very striking little bitch in the litter, which I preferred, but the other one that she preferred was too long in back and I wasn't even interested in her. She called me and said, "Some people are going to come over and see Dukken. I told them they could have her for \$90."



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Aput.



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Pepe San.

I hung up the phone and walked outside and didn't get even as far as the kennel and went back inside and called her back. I said, "Dukken isn't for sale. I'm coming in to get her." (laughter) So I bought her. I sent her up to Bruce Holland in Ogden, Utah to be trained and she about trained Bruce. She got away from him and he had a heck of a time with her. Pat, her breeder, didn't even know she was being shown. Pat went over to the shows in Arizona with her sister, and when she got there, she found that Dukken was in the entry with a handler. When she got through over there I had her flown to another handler in Texas who met the plane in Dallas and picked her up. She won on the Texas circuit. She went from there into Colorado and got her first major in Colorado. She came down to the New Mexico circuit and she finished right there in front of Pat, and HER bitch hadn't even taken any points yet. (laughter) She finished at ten months and one week.

Have the Sams and Elkhounds gotten

along?

They tend to be in different areas and see each other through the fence. They adapt. If anything, the Elkhound will go to a show and see the Sams and he figures they ought to be friendly with him and, of course, they have their hackles up (laughter) and the Elkhound can't understand why.

While you lived in Denver, weren't you the founder of the Rocky Mountain Sled Dog club?

Yes.

Tell us a little bit about how you became involved in sled dog racing and how you came to start that club.

Glen Crosley and a chap from New York, Guy Madden, had been around Bob Wood from Woodsam Kennels in Syracuse, New York, and he had spent vacation time up there when he was in college. He had watched the sledding operation from that area. Glen had always rather wanted to get into it. He had made a few harnesses to attach to carts and wagons to fool around with for one

dog. They had a little trading post there with some driftwood and ceramics and things in it, and he said we could have meetings there. The three of us met there, and Guy Madden brought in a chap by the name of Don Ewing, who I think is up in Canada now. He was also present. We started drawing up the articles as to what we wanted for laws, and by the time we had the next meeting, there were three or four more people who had come in - Fred Bradley, for one, and later on, Mays came in, and I've forgotten who else, but there were quite a few eventually. It went by word of mouth and they started coming in.

It was only about a year after that they started in having some small races. At first, it was more a thing at the different ski centers, mainly to get attention and get a little sponsorship started. They went up to Winter Park and into Loveland Valley ski basins and even the McLaughlins came over to Loveland Valley. It seemed like every time there was a litter of dogs everybody wanted one and it almost got out of hand. Mike was driving from seven to nine in most races and Barry was trying to manage five. He had a bitch that was spayed and she was the one that Mike really liked the best to have for a lead bitch. Then he had three littermates, one of them I'd sold to Bill Cale, an engineering student, and he called him Alosha, which, I think, means horse. He was a great big dog, whopping big at 24 and a half inches and weighed 86 pounds. Then there was Takla, his litterbrother, and the one I liked, because he had a stark white coat that was so coarse and he was a very pretty fellow. Thunder had gone to El Paso, Texas, and my brother couldn't get over the dog. As he got bigger he figured he was too big for the yard and he kept coming back. So, he was the lead dog.

At these small races, like the exhibition things they had up at Georgetown, Mike would take in three on the go-cart. It was really a fun thing, because he'd go in there and win in nothing flat. They were big dogs, but for a short distance they could just about outrun anything. They found out real quick that the heavier boned ones on a real long trek was difficult for them because they tired more, and that the medium boned ones lasted much longer. Even when they tried to have 25-mile races over at Breckenridge Mike would come in fourth when they had some veteran drivers coming in with dogs. Gary Gunkle came in with his Irish Setters. There were a lot of movies taken at the time and it was fun

to watch it afterwards for those of us who couldn't go, to see what was going on. It was interesting. I have no idea how many members are in that club now, but I know it really grew after we left there.

Did Mike continue to run dogs when you moved down to New Mexico?

No. He went into the Navy and when he came out he got involved with other things. His interests changed. Once in a while, we'll talk about Na-To'Si. He was too big. He was fine unless somebody came into the yard. If I would have him on a leash, he would give a lunge and if I wasn't careful I would end up on the ground. Then he would turn around and lick my face and wonder what I was doing down there. I couldn't keep my footing, because I can't move that fast. I co-own him with Pat Cummins now and told Pat to keep him up in Canada, because he was too much dog for me anymore. I love the dog and whenever he sees me he just goes ape. But he was just too much for me anymore, too big. "Reggie," Ch. Tsiulikagta's Sleigh Regent, is the one for me to love now. He's a small dog, not over 21 inches, and he finished nicely up in Canada. He's very English with the heavy English coat that goes with the older English dogs. He's linebred heavily on White Wisp, and I would like it if he was a couple inches bigger, but he is one of the sweetest things and very gentle.

Tell us how you came up with your kennel name, Tsiulikagta.

The g is pronounced like h. I'm a retired registered nurse, and was on the staff at National Jewish Hospital in Denver, and had an Eskimo patient there. One day, when I was going someplace that had something to do with dogs, I brought one of them with me in the back of the car. Oh, I know, I'd come over to get my paycheck and decided to bring him along for the ride. She looked up and saw him and nothing would do but she called down to the office to try to have me come up there. I got him out of the car so she could look through the window and see him. The next day when I came to work, she kept saying, "Tsiulikagta, tsiulikagta." I asked her what it meant and she said, "Great one." I had her print it out for me. I had a heck of a time at first learning how to pronounce it. For a long time, after I decided to use it for a kennel name, I didn't even tell anybody what it meant. It was pretty cheeky. (laughter) But I found out that people would forget my name, forget the dogs' names, but they never forgot that kennel name. If they saw it in a show, and the dog won, it stuck in



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa (very down in coat).

their heads and they remembered that name. As a result, I use it on the Elkhounds, too. It's all the same.

I notice that some of the names of your dogs are unusual.

They are either Eskimo or Indian. A lot of them are Navajo, Zuni names. I have a friend in Gallup, New Mexico who is with a library and she'd get things out for me and photocopy these names and their meanings and send them to me. She was a teacher there. That helped quite a bit. Except for the ones which are in direct descent from England, the names are mostly Indian or Eskimo. Of course, Sa-Kie-Ste-Wa was Hopi and that meant little flower of the valley. Anoka meant night wind and in New Mexico we had a lot of night wind so he went with it and that's what he became.

When you have litters of puppies do you name them by any sort of theme or scheme?

No, I can't say that I did, except those that came from the direct English descent, particularly the ones that were linebred back to Sleigh Ladd. There

were a lot that had Sleigh on them. With Genia Cox, I imported Can. Ch. Colleda Cabal and he's with Shawna Brummett and Jeff Skinner now. The main reason I bought him is that he was linebred on Sleigh Ladd. I used Sleigh a lot with his produce. Kyta's sire is Am/Can Ch. Novaskayas Silva Snow Blaze, and he also is linebred on Sleigh Ladd. I kept Kyta, and her daughter is up here trying to get bred, but I don't know if we are going to succeed or not. I might have to keep her until next season. She's too fat. I told Kay on the phone last night that she was at least ten pounds overweight and I have to get it off of her.

Have you done mostly linebreeding?

Well, you have to outcross every so often. But if I'm going to outcross I try to outcross to a linebred dog that has a virtue that I want to hang onto or intensify. Pepe San was an excellent vehicle for carrying in genes that I wanted, because she was pretty much of an outcross. Ch. Chu San's Silver Folly was completely remote to the rest

of the bloodlines. While there is some English in the background somewhere, it is back several generations. When you've got a good quality outcross bitch, if you breed her to a very linebred male that has the virtues you want to incorporate or hang onto, that's the way to go. When she produces, she will pick up on that part and she has her own characteristics and can contribute, but you are going to bring in that way. If you take a linebred bitch and breed her to a linebred male, you don't know what you are going to get there. She might dominate and you might not get anything you are trying to get from the male.

Do you feel you have established a distinguishable line?

I think pretty much so.

How would you rate type, temperament and soundness in the Samoyed?

In the way that I have bred you have pretty ideal temperaments and soundness. I had one a few years ago that didn't have that kind of temperament. I won't say who it came from. I had a bitch from it that produced some champions, but I pulled the entire line

because I never had so many con-founded bitch fights in my life as I had then. They were all right around people, but it made a problem in the kennel all the time. I don't have one thing that goes back to that line anymore, and I don't want anything from it. They were good moving dogs, and they had good pigment, but I had torn ears. They would grab another dog's ears through a chain link fence and everything under the sun and I had more vet bills than you could shake a stick at. I don't have that problem as long as I keep them pretty much English, particularly with the English strains that I have used. People always say you can't have one bitch around another one, but if I bring dogs in here and there can't be two or three of them by themselves and get along, something is wrong. That isn't typical. It's just like I had a different breed, this other bloodline. Not only the females but the males. You couldn't walk two of them at the same time to save your neck. It was just no go.

Temperament is pretty important to you, then?

Certainly it is. Temperament is part of type, to me, and if something isn't typical, then you'd better do a complete right-hand turn and get away from what it is and do something different.

Going back to your time in Denver, you mentioned you had a fire. Did you lose any dogs?

We had just moved into this place and they hadn't delivered the propane yet. I started a fire in the fireplace and it was only a matter of minutes before I saw smoke coming out from under the eaves, and almost as quickly the ceiling was on fire. We got out. I got my sterling silver out, and my box of trophies. Chu Tu was a puppy and I got her out, and went back into the house to get something else and realized that Ch. Chu San's Silver Folly was still in his crate. I got that dog out of the crate, and I couldn't even see where the crate was by that time, the smoke was so heavy. I found it, got the thing unlatched and he just bolted down the stairs and got out. I called to Mike and got Ghajar's portrait and he took it down and laid it on the hood of the car and started it and tried to get it away from where the propane tank was, for the tank might explode, and he forgot about the portrait. The fire trucks came and went backwards and ran right over the thing. It was face down in the snow and all they did was break the frame. All the clothes I had was a pair of western boots, pants and a leather jacket. I was running around in my gown and robe. That was a nightmare.

Did you own a dog by the name of Princess Ghajar?

Yes, Ghajar, who was named for a Persian princess. That's her portrait over there on the wall. She was my first champion. She went in the ring the first time at eight months and one day old, and she had Best of Breed over a special. There were nine big Open males in the Open male class, and three of them already had Group first and she went Best of Breed. She never took less than Best of Breed, she never took less than a major again, she finished at nine months and six days old. At the age of finishing, the last I knew that record still had not been equaled in Sam bitches at AKC. She also had a Group placement in that. She got that from Judge Langdon Skarda. Her first Best of Breed was under Bob Waters. Mike was seventeen handling her and he went up and asked Mike, "How old did you say she is?" and Mike told him. The other spectators had left the other rings and come over, because they knew something hot was going on.



Ch. Tsulihagta's Skagit.

Bob Waters backed up from her and stood with his hands on his hips and she cocked her head and barked at him. He said, "That's it. She said, 'Give it to me.'" (laughter) That was back in the days when bitches just weren't doing that. She kind of opened the way. She finished under Charles Hamilton, but there were all majors in just five weeks, five consecutive shows. As Gene Benet told me in 1976, "You didn't even know what you had." And he was so right! (laughter) When you have a winner like that, the only way you can go is down for a long time afterwards. (laughter) You just don't come up with those every day, that's for sure.

What are your plans now and where are you going to go from here?

At the moment, I am hoping to breed Kyta to a dog that a friend brought in from England. He lives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I'm hoping to achieve that breeding this fall. Outside of that, I really don't have too many plans for the future yet. The dog I want to breed her to is the grandson of that late top winning stud in Scotland, Ch. Hurkur Jingles, that died between the Group and Breed ring a few years back. He was a very popular Scottish dog. But there are other things behind Kyta that will dovetail with that very well. I want to keep this British line. They have the more compact bodies and the same general style heads. Heads are important to me, but if you don't have a good front, it doesn't matter what kind of head you have. I also like a good coat. I don't like them too short. I don't feel they are typical. If a person wants a real short coat, I think they ought to go to Siberian Huskies or something else, because it's not typical to breed Sams that have such a short coat, and I'm uncomfortable looking at them. In New Mexico, it was very hard to get a good heavy coat on a dog, because it was dry air and there was enough heat that they don't grow it. Ch. Tsiulikagta Aput went in under Judge Katherine Taglia Ferri a few years ago, and the dog was actually in full coat, and she said after judging, "I would have liked it so much better if you'd been in coat." (laughter) They have humidity in Louisiana, so you can grow coat, but with no humidity in New Mexico, you just don't grow much.

Is Mike still involved with the dogs at all?

No. It's been just me for quite some time.

If you could have the perfect Samoyed, could you describe your interpretation of what the perfect dog would be like?

If it was a male, he would be about



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Owmok Anoka.

23 inches tall, quite short in the loin, good layback of shoulders, deep chest, medium bone, broad skull and shorter foreface, but not a coarse face, he'd have a very coarse, weather resistant coat that once he was mature would not be less than five inches in length. I say not less than, especially over the back and the rump areas. I would expect him to weigh about 58 pounds. He'd have a good high tailset, a well carried tail that was very heavily furred and an almost black eye. I like a small ear with plenty of space between them, not a little bear ear, but a small ear, heavily furred.

A bitch would be about twenty inches. They are the ones I like best. And she'd be about 38 pounds at maturity, but she'd also be shorter in loin. I don't necessarily go with this thing that says bitches may be longer in back. I don't like a long backed bitch. I'm uncomfortable with them. I've seen too many of them that other people have that end up with pyometria and so forth, and I just think if they have the shorter loin, they stay healthier. But, of course, I also give vitamin C to every one of my dogs. They have it every day of their lives, and it starts from the time that a bitch starts a season where she is going to be bred, and the puppies are started at 24 hours of age, and it goes right straight on

through their lifetime. I wouldn't be without it.

What are the benefits of vitamin C in dogs?

It keeps the collagen in the muscles and ligaments even, you might say at status quo, so they are not having a laxity in one ligament and a tension in another one that causes a lot of the hip disease. I believe that the vast majority of hip problems could be avoided if everybody kept their dogs on vitamin C. They get a thousand milligrams a day from the time they are four months old on. I start the puppies out at about 50 milligrams and gradually build it up so they are up to taking 500 by the time they are five weeks old.

Is there any particular type of vitamin C you use?

I prefer the sodium ascorbate over the ascorbic acid, because it's easier on the dog's stomach. I use a powder and sprinkle about one-fourth teaspoon on the top of their food so they get that first.

What do you like to see as far as movement in the Sams?

I like to see the rear feet meeting the front ones as they move out. I also want to see both their front and rear legs converge towards the centerline as the dog picks up speed. I want good reach and a strong rear that can drive. A lot of dogs rears will look very nice



Ch. Tsiulikagta's Willapa (sister to Aput).

standing still, but when they move out, while they might move evenly, you might say the rear end just follows them, but they don't drive with it. I like a rear they can push with. All my dogs have steps going to their houses inside their shelter. They can get done differently, but the simple way to do it is by using these concrete building tiles. There are two at the bottom, the next one, and then onto the top of their dog house. I put their food pans on top their houses deliberately, so they have to run up the steps to get to their food. Dozens of times a day, they are running up and down those steps and it's a great rear end builder. It also teaches them reach, because, nine times out of ten, after they've learned how to climb up there, they are just springing off the top and jumping straight out and it helps exercise them, too.

You mentioned that you like a nice deep chest. What should the chest depth be in relationship to the rest of the dog?

I think it's supposed to be about five eighths of their height, from the top

of the withers to the bottom of their chest. I don't like a dish-shaped chest, a rounded chest. A lot of people feel a chest from the side, I feel my chest going between the front legs. If that chest doesn't come down heart-shaped, sort of like a V, I don't want that dog. I check that even in the young puppies. By the time that puppy is ten and a half to eleven weeks old, I know how that chest is going to be, and I know how that dog is going to move later. If it's rounded, it may end up getting a withers separation later on and the shoulders coming down straight, because they have to make space for that rounded chest.

Has it been your experience that coat is very important to winning in the show ring?

The condition of the coat is. It depends on how they are groomed and how the texture of the coat is. You don't want a soft coat, you want a good, weather-resistant one, but if that coat isn't a good healthy coat, and it isn't groomed well, a judge sort of has to be blind or very political to overlook

it. (laughter)

What is an ideal front on the Samoy?

I can say this: If you know horses and you know Thoroughbreds and you know how the front goes on the horse so he can move, that's the way a good Sam should also be. You want a good layback to the shoulders, but you also have to have sufficient length to the upper arm. If you have a short upper arm, you are going to have a short strider. Your dog will come out and bend the wrist as it extends the front leg. You want that leg to be able to go out straight. There is another thing that has always been a pet peeve with me. I like to pick my dogs up by the sides of their neck and drop them. A dog with a good front drops clean, his legs come down parallel and straight. If that front isn't good and you drop it, the legs are going to go out.

Are you talking about in puppies and adult dogs?

That's right. In fact, one of my best handlers, whenever she sets up a dog, she doesn't hand stack it in front. She'd pick up the dog and drop it the same way I did. A judge can see it and knows immediately. He doesn't even have to examine that front. He knows what that front is when that dog is dropped.

How about dentition in Samoyeds?

Have you noticed bite problems?

I've seen one bite problem, but that was when there was an accidental breeding of littermates. While the dam and the sire both had good bites, this one product turned out with an under-shot bite, and that's the only one I have seen.

To be continued ...

