

THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY
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Barbara Wilson

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Samoyed People



Betty McHugh and Ch. & O.T. Ch. Nepachee's Snowdrifter

The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
Betty McHugh
NEPACHEE KENNELS
Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

Part II

You mentioned that one of the problems with Sams was poor angulation. What are some of the other faults that you see as a breeder?

Some of the things I see are a little bit different from the average breeder. Start with the head. There are too many down faces, which would lead to a different eye placement, the eye is

rounder, more prominent. I think they are breeding too short a muzzle, which leads to bite problems. I don't think the Sam was meant to have a Chow head. It should be more moderate, slightly short in muzzle, shorter than the length of the skull. It gives a sounder head, a better eye set, a better bite. So many have lost the nice arched neck. They have very flat necks, their necks seem to be sitting on their shoulders. You have to have a nice broad arched neck, which makes the ruff stand up. It is just gorgeous, especially on the male. Many of the shoulders are so straight, but the breed hasn't progressed to the point that you can't breed angulation. It's around. You can find bloodlines that are

still well-built. In many breeds, that is impossible. They have gone the whole way so the structure has been lost completely. But not in the Sams, it is still there. If you want to breed good ones, you can still do it, but you have to look hard. There are so many short upper arms in the breed. It is a big problem. And short legs. They are getting so short-legged. There is a big scare over dwarfism now. There is a lot more research needed, but I think we are going to find that it is related to breeding shorter legs. How did they breed the Dachshund? They are not crippled and they have short legs.

Short legs are a problem. In the hind end, hip dysplasia is still with us too much. There are long femurs. There aren't a lot of short pelvises, which affects a lot of other breeds. A lot of the sighthounds have short pelvises, but the Sam's pelvis seems to be a good length. The femurs are long, fib-tibs are too short, and we are getting too many rearends that look like they belong on Chows. With all due respect to Chows, a Sam is not supposed to be a Chow. Those are the major problems I see.

There are many coat types. I don't care what color the dog is, if he is good. I like a nice biscuit dog and a nice pure white dog. I can get past poor eye color and poor pigmentation, if it is on a dog who is well-put-together, because it is so easy to correct pigmentation and eye color, but it is hard to breed a sound dog. I like a nice tail carriage, but I can overlook that too, if the dog is sound. I like a coat that is easy to work with. I like a coat that sheds quickly, but is stand-offish and the guard hair stand off well and is thick. I don't like long flowing coats on Sams, they weren't supposed to be that way. It is not a working coat, it is a deterrent to the breed. They are getting so long and flowing that they are being cut and shaped.

Do you see long hair?

Not up here, but you see some of it in the States, which is too bad. Anybody that works with a Sam would realize that coat just isn't proper.

There is a lot more effort involved in showing one of them.

Yes. A male Sam, who has a proper coat should look nice even out of coat, because the guard hairs will stand up. It won't be as full, but it is the type of coat that will shed dirt and snow, it won't get all balled up in the wintertime. A lot of people like a lot of hair on feet, and it is



Ch. Gol'Chikha of Nepachee and Can. Ch. Nepachee's Stormy Silver Flair, Can. CD.

definitely an asset in the North, but to work in this area with wet snow, you would have to trim it. This is what a lot of breeders don't understand. You have to cut it back, and you have to vaseline the feet, otherwise, they snowball.

That's painful.

It is very painful on the trail, because you can't stop every time they get a snowball and take it out. So, hair on feet, I don't worry about. Most of the Americans trim it off anyway. They trim the nicest little cat feet on Sams that aren't supposed to have cat feet.

What is the foot supposed to be like?

It is a flatter foot. I hate to say splayed, because it is an awful word, but it sometimes gives the appearance of being slightly that way. But that is a Sam's foot.

Is it a functional foot?

It is a functional foot for what they are supposed to do. But they are not supposed to have cat feet, like many of the show dogs do.

It looks so much nicer, doesn't it?

It really does. It is pleasing to my eye.

How much grooming do you do for your show dogs?

I don't feel I ever do enough. They should be brushed. I am not a campaigner; I am more of a breeder than

an exhibitor. They should be brushed daily, which is ideal. If we get ours done thoroughly once a week that is done well. Sam coats are not hard to look after. They don't mat, if you can get to them once a week. They are a double coat. Of course, preparing for a show is a little bit different. You have to brush them daily, and bathe, etc. It is not hard.

How often do you bathe the dog?

Only when it was really necessary, when they are showing. They have to be clean, there is nothing worse than a dirty Sam.

Do you have any special shampoo?

We make our own.

Do you want to share your secret?

I think the Sam world knows it, it has been published a number of times. It is the one with the Ivory liquid, vinegar, glycerin and water. It's very effective. I have seen the recipe a number of times in the Quarterly, so I am sure that everybody knows about it. It

really works. It gets them cleaner than anything I have ever been able to buy.

It does a nice white job?

Yes.

You were saying before that you personally didn't object to a biscuit dog; the color wasn't important.

The majority are white but I have a six-year-old biscuit dog. Biscuit fades as the sun bleaches it. It is not obvious, but when he is coming in new coat, he has big splotches on his side, and it is a gorgeous color. I got one Group placing on him. I specialed him a couple of times. Most of the time if there is a white dog the judges will give it to a white dog. He is pretty. He has great pigmentation, nice coat, and he produces white dogs. The funny thing is that they produce white dogs and the next generation we will get biscuit. But I don't object, it doesn't matter to me if they are biscuit.

Non-breeder judges think Sams are white. It is a rare dog that is totally white as most of them have biscuit some place on them. We have had



Ch. Gol'Chikha of Nepachee, CD

great biscuit dogs in the past, but it is hard to special them. Color doesn't bother me when I am judging. A lot of people have color preferences. Among judges there are color preferences. But after having only white dogs, for so many years, a good dog can't really be a bad color, unless it is a color not allowed in the standard.

What are some of the other things you think breeders need to work on?

They really should make a genuine effort to breed soundness if they can. What happens with a lot of people is (this is all breeds not just Sams), when they first come in, within a number of years they get a dog who is usually mediocre to good, and they sink everything into him, go whole-hog right to the top. They can't ever be totally honest about what that dog is because of the record they made for him.

Investment is a good word. They keep trying to turn him out, to repeat, to breed everything to look like him. He wasn't that great. It takes a long time to learn what is good. If we are going to succeed we must continue to learn. We must be prepared to change and to admit that he was good for his time, but I don't want to reproduce him. It is idealistic but I think you have to be totally honest with yourself. You don't have to tell everybody that he was weak here and weak there, but realize it and breed it out. Many never get beyond one dog and don't stay long. In the mean-time, people coming in read that dog's record, read his press and all his ads. He has influenced judges and breeders and done damage to the breed.

The biggest winner is not necessarily where you go for stud service?

No, never. If he is the best dog, fine. The majority of people do go there, don't they? But I have never done that, and I never will. If he is the best, I will do it if he is available. But if I found a litterbrother, and this happens often, maybe tucked back in the kennel someplace, and he is truly what I want, and he has the genetic characteristics that I want, I don't care if he is unfinished.

A championship is not necessarily a guarantee.

It is not a measure of the dog. It is nice to have. I like them on mine, too, but it is not the measure of the dog. Most top dogs are pleasant "middle-of-

the-road" dogs. They have something that will please everybody. Don't you find that?

By everybody, you are talking about people who aren't that familiar with the breed.

Right. Judges who are not familiar with the breed.

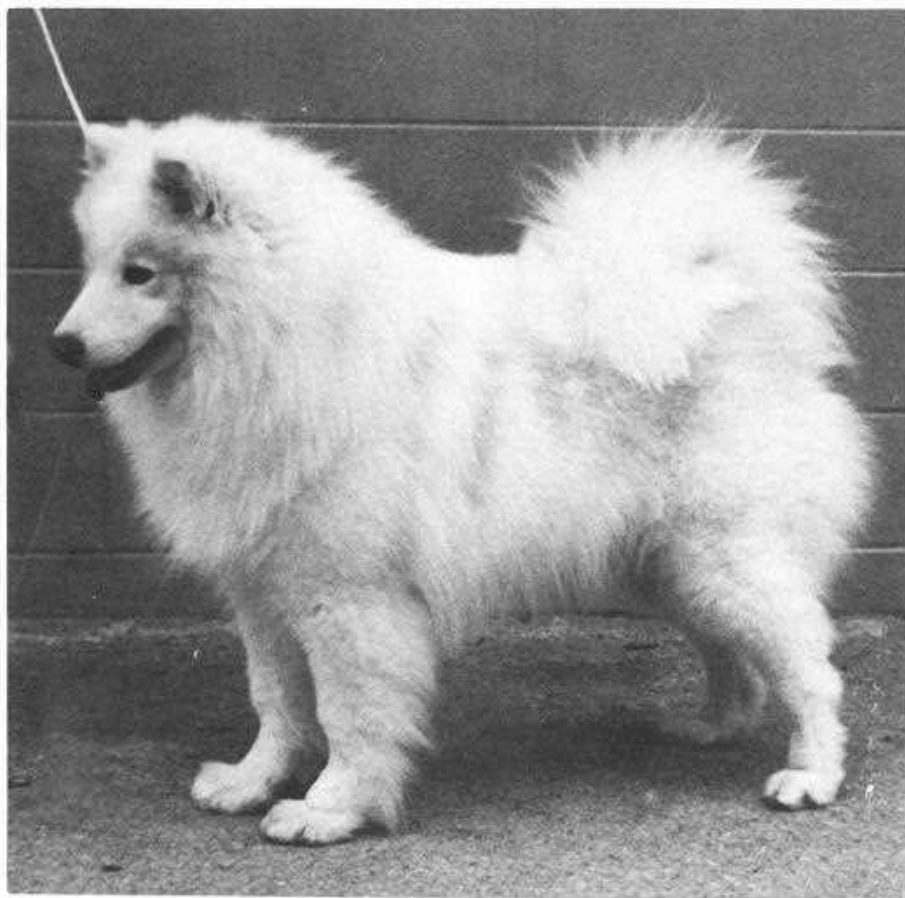
No glaring faults.

choose is the one I would take home, and that is the dog I have to put up.

I think that is a good attitude. The people are at least concerned about breeding.

It is not just the breeding.

Earlier you had mentioned different types within Sams. Do



Ch. Nepachee's Star Sailor

Coat is the right color and texture to suit everybody. That is what it is all about. But when you are breeding it is a different game. Unfortunately, though, most people don't separate the two, and you have to.

Your comment that as a judge you would try to pick the dog that you would take home to breed...

Yes, I do. I find my Groups are sometimes different than other people. Although the last show I did, the Group was not that different. It was a three-day show, but one day was totally different. It is hard to explain to people, but that is the way I have to judge it, if I'm doing all-breeds or Sams. The dog I

you want to talk a bit about your Sams and how they differ from some of the other "types" that you are seeing?

Mine have, first of all, probably a little more leg length. There has to be a certain ratio of leg length when you start breeding shorter stock, as it creates a lot of problems, not only with the front, but with the rear, to topline and the back legs. We start with the fact that it has to be well-angulated, not perfect, because we can't breed perfect dogs. We just aim for perfection. Next, we have good bone, not too short in the leg, and of course, the rear usually follows along. You have a fairly respectable rear usually on a dog with a good front. Then

I would like the prettiest head I can get. I will take one that is not as pretty over a littermate who isn't built as well, but I like a pretty head, and a good coat. That is just about all there is; the structure and breed type. People don't realize, but when you talk about breed type, what is it? It is what you see, it's the coat, the outline and the head. In class, we have done dissections on dogs. When the coat is off, you can't tell what breed it is. Did you know that? You can't tell if it is a German Shepherd, Siberian Husky or a Sam without the outer shell.

That is type?

That is type. Actually type is structure, too. The outline of a dog with ideal structure as opposed to the dog with poor structure is a very different thing. To me, type is that outline, plus shell and the coat, etc.

What are you seeing that you don't like in terms of type?

Short legs, poor heads, necks sitting on shoulders, loss of elegance. Dogs that are so straight, front and rear, just a totally different picture. I don't like the poor movement that we are seeing. No reach and drive. You don't see Sams with unbalanced fronts to rear usually, as much as you see it in some of the other breeds. Coming and going, it is not a huge problem, but reach and drive is. I don't like to see Sams that are long-legged dogs and look like they are white Shepherds. That is the extreme to the other side.

You talked about angles. I know you have taken the Canine Science course, are you aiming for a 35-degree layback?

I have passed that, I am aiming for 45, but we haven't got it yet. You have to have an ideal. So many people, when they go out and start looking for the ideal, and can't find it, feel they should lower the standard, to cover what they find. They are never going to progress anyplace by lowering it. Know that it is an ideal, that it has been accomplished.

We have found a number of breeds that have a 45, but it is rare. If you don't aim for it, you are not going to upgrade what you have. Most of what we are breeding now, is consistently 35 to 40, but there are so few good ones. Somebody said that poor shoulders are dominant, and I don't think of it in that respect, but yes, the theory is right. It is tough. It isn't just shoulder, it is other things, too, that are related to it. Thirty-five degrees are what you are finding. That is a good

average in the shoulders, but you can do better. The majority's are 30's, up and down. As I said, you can still find good Sams, you can still find good Siberians, you can still find good Dachshunds, but some of the breeds are totally ruined. You must breed what is there.

You have traveled and judged, would you say that there are particular parts of the country, where you see better Sams?

Definitely. I haven't traveled over the whole U.S., but there are definitely some areas where they are better. That is true of all breeds. I can name you some breeds in the Working and Sporting Groups where there are outstanding specimens and kennels, and they are spotted across the country. I am thinking more of Canada because I am just getting into judging in the U.S. There are areas where you find outstanding specimens of a breed. There are areas that are noted for good Sams, and there are areas that are noted for poor Sams.

Do you dare to let us know?

No, I am not going to say. When we are exhibiting and it is an American judge, I will support them, but we like to know what area of the country they are coming from and that gives us the type of dog that judge will like. There are some judges from certain areas that will see a definite type, a certain leg length, a certain body type, or a certain head type. It is what they have been shown, so it's what, whether they realize it or not, is the first pick. If it is somebody from the East Coast, I don't think they are going to appreciate long legs. That is as far as I will go, I still haven't covered the entire United States.

What do you look for in a bitch before you breed?

First of all, they don't come unless they have been X-rayed. They must have an X-ray. I prefer eyes done. All mine are done. They must be okay. I want to know the pedigree and if it is compatible, I want to see her. I want to see what her faults are, and then I will pick the stud that will compliment her, and not just him, but what he is from. I don't turn down bitches unless they are really bad. They will only go someplace else. I think I have put enough into mine to know that they will help. When we bought our first Dachshund stud, I said to the fellow that we got him from, "I guess we should be selective." He

said, "Well, to a point, because this dog can't do anything but help." Which is true, no matter what I breed him to, it looks like him. He is so linebred, the fifth generation of his pedigree has only one dog. Somebody must have put some work into that. We have put enough time into breeding these Sams, to be sound, but unless the bitch is a total write-off, our studs will help these people.

What would you consider a total write-off?

If it is a disaster, both ends and head, and everything. Of course, if it's dysplastic, that is that. You don't breed her. Most of the bitches that come, even from pet homes, could be shown, and I don't think that is a compliment. But they are as good as what is being shown, and these dogs are being bred. But if I thought she was totally bad then I wouldn't.

You have to remember that these people will look someplace else.

We have told some people, "No, please don't, there is nothing to offer there." On the other hand, when I sell my own I don't tie them up with litters back, and they must breed, etc. If they buy something and it is a pet then it goes on a non-breed contract. If they want it open they get something that is good, and I don't force them to come back here. I just don't believe in a lot of strings.

What about any other congenital or hereditary defects?

The eyes. It's not a big problem, at least it hasn't been a big problem with us, but the dog should be officially tested for PRA. There are visionary problems showing up in the States, not because the problems are there, but because they have more dogs. We haven't run into it. An occasional case of hip dysplasia, and a couple of dogs that they wouldn't clear the eyes. But I do know that there are eye problems showing up, and I think sometimes they are regional, too.

What is your breeding program based on in terms of pedigrees? Do you linebreed?

I am now. I went around for a long time looking at a lot of different lines trying to pick what I thought was the best, and breeding to dogs that I really admire structurally. We ended up doing total outcrosses for quite a while. I gradually got what I wanted, none of it



Ch. Nepachee's O'Henry

was perfect, but carried good qualities. Now we are starting to line them with several different lines.

This is many years later.

Yes, after gathering all these bloodlines, and finding out the faults in them the hard way. We are going to try to come out with a dog that says "Nepachee" when you look at it. They will say, "Oh, you must have gotten this from Betty McHugh," because it is different than the other types being shown, but they don't say that because it looks like a Nepachee dog, they say that because of the way it's built. It has soundness, and moves well. It is probably taller than the rest of the competition with more leg. I want to combine several bloodlines which I totally respect and come up with a dog that is my ideal. I hope I have enough time left to do it.

I'm sure you do.

The more I judge, the less time I have here.

When you increase the leg length are you also getting good back?

Backs are subjects in themselves. A dog should be longer than he is tall.

No dog was meant to be square. If he is square then he has problems, usually in the back. If you make him tall, he is square, if you add angulation, then they are longer than they are tall. If you add leg length, they don't appear to be longer. If you think of a Dachshund, who has very short legs, he can be very well-angulated, but he is very long because he has very short legs. If you put normal legs on this dog, he would be Sheltie size. I don't know how to describe the type of dog I want to breed. He is elegant with a good head, good legs, a neck, good angulation, laid well-back in the body. He has adequate angulation in the rear, so the dog can propel himself, even just trotting around the ring or trotting down the driveway, with good reach and drive. There is a totally different look to a well-built dog, and to me, that is type and that is what I look at and say, "That is the type I want." Regardless of the breed, it is a look that's correct in any breed.

If you have a short-legged dog, and I am talking about any breed, and the legs are shorter than they should be, then the pelvis is usually flatter. One goes with the other. The Dachshund

pelvis tends to be 10 degrees flatter than Sams. If you flatten it you add length, so it is not only an illusion of length of back, which is part of it, the shorter the legs, the longer the dog looks. Actually he is compared to height, because when you shorten the legs you reduce the height. When the pelvis flattens, the lumbar area flattens out, also. You don't have the arch, you have a very flat lumbar area, which is longer also. So, everything is relative, you can't change one thing, you change a series. This is what people don't realize. They breed for one thing, and it changes a whole spectrum. There are physical changes and illusions.

What about bite in Sams?

They haven't generally been a problem in the dogs I'm dealing with. If they continue to breed the real short muzzle, then yes, we are going to have problems. The mandible and the maxilla don't shorten at the same rate. That is why you have Boxers heads that are undershot. They have to be, it is the only way, if you are going to push that nose in, so that they can function. The Sams are shorter in muzzle than they are in skull. I find it a more acceptable head, but I don't want them extremely short, because then you are asking for problems with their bite.

You can see that in the pictures on the wall.

I like well-furred, very strong ears. I have some dogs who have larger ears, and they are not as well-furred and they are thinner. Once again, I like what is behind the ears, so I keep them, but they are not my ideal. The bigger ear is usually set on the side of the head, and that is not nearly as pleasing to look at. It changes the expression. Those small ears, Mother Nature designed, to survive. Probably, the blood circulation is stronger, and not so prone to frostbite.

And tails?

I like a nice tail over their back. I had to sacrifice that in some to get good structure, which doesn't mean that they go together, it just happens. I like it nicely over the back, not a double hook.

What are some of your favorites?

Bai, of course, years ago. That was a big thrill bringing in that dog. He was a good dog. And Darby, in his day, did a lot for me, too, although I have nothing from him. The first one was Whitey, that I couldn't get papers on, then Darby, and Bai. My Dual Ch.

Nepachee's Snowdrifter UD was with me for ten years. I did tracking with him. Sams are great tracking dogs. He did fairly well. He was acting smart one day. Somebody laid a track, and he did the most perfect job. However, he wasn't anywhere close to the track. But he was outstanding. Chikha is, too. He is the one that was tops. He has done an lot for me. He is the one dog that I have speacial a little. He was for two or three years in the Top 10 in Canada. He was only being shown in the fall, which was the only time he was in coat. Roger is not a great show dog, he only has nine points. He has a CD. He is a terrific sled dog. He is just an all-around nice personality. When I was cutting back, I considered selling him, in fact, I advertised him. I think before the ad got in the magazine, I had changed my mind. I just couldn't, there is something very special there. But probably, I am the only one who thinks that. He really is a very sweet dog.

Are there others?

No, those I think probably are the outstanding ones.

Do you like your dogs better than your bitches?

Yes. You can tell I like dogs in Sams. I get more out of dogs than I get from bitches. Some of the bitches can be sulky. That doesn't suit me, whereas the males are straighter and more affectionate. They are not smarter, the bitches are smarter. There is a difference. But they are straighter and I find them easier to work with. When I run, most of our teams are males. A lot of people run only bitches.

Do you help your bitches when they are whelping?

Usually I don't. Not the Sams.

How do you handle the breeding?

I supervise. Sometimes, I hold the bitch. It depends on the male and bitch. None of my bitches will turn and bite, or anything like that. The males are quite capable. I don't think I have a dog who couldn't accomplish it. Sometimes there is a size difference and that is a problem. They usually do fine. Whelping is the same thing, I find the Sams, generally, are quite capable. I haven't had to call the vet for a long time. I sometimes clear the mouth of the pup if I think the bitch is a little bit slow getting around to the head. I let them take care of the rest. When they are finished, then I towel the puppy, and get it dry as quickly as possible.

There is nothing worse than a cold, wet puppy. That is when we lose them. We don't lose many, usually what is born is what is raised. I try not to disturb the mother a lot, but that doesn't mean I don't handle the pups. I will not have a bitch, that I cannot handle the puppies from the time they are born. Usually the bitch knows that before we even get that far. I think puppies should be handled every day, not only to just inspect them, but if you are going to make them people dogs, they must be handled and be familiar with people. Beyond that I think you should leave the mother to her chores. I have never had one that wouldn't feed a puppy, or clean them. I worm shortly after three weeks then I start feeding the puppies. I let the mother wean at her own speed.

But if she is fed-up by then, it gives her more time away from them. If she wants to stay with them, then she is given the opportunity to be with them. We usually set it up so she can get in and get out, but doesn't have to be with them all the time. That is just not fair. Puppies will drag a bitch down very fast if she can't get away. You should help them. And let them wean at their own

speed. The worst thing you can do is to decide, "Well, tomorrow I am going to wean these puppies," and just take her away. That is traumatic for her and it's hard on the puppies. It should be very gradual. If she wants to go see them, let her go see them. The one thing that I don't do that I wish I could, due to lack of time, is let the bitch play with her puppies after they are weaned.

What do you start them on?

Pablum and canned milk, and we get them very quickly onto Puppy Chow. I put the Dachshunds on Science Diet. For the Sams I use Sure Gain. They learn to lap it up, and once they get on to that and are feeding well, I go to Puppy Chow. We do feed puppies, of course, that consume less milk. I think it was Pfaffenberger who said years ago, how much influence bitches have on puppies, and how bad it was. He did us a great disservice. I think it has been very detrimental to the dogs. Up to twelve weeks the bitch can have a certain amount to do with the puppies, and the puppies need to react to each other and her. They need to be individuals. Pfaffenberger was too rigid. I do think the mothers can



Ch. Nepachee's Excaliber

discipline the puppies, and teach them many things that are better coming from her. We have had puppies that we have had to take away earlier, and we find they act like bad, undisciplined kids. They are erratic, and hyper. It's very hard, and you end up being quite severe with them until you get them into a normal state of mind. If their mother has done it, it is not relative to you, they are more normal. That is why I think we take the bitches away much too soon when they have a lot to teach the puppies.

You obviously let them handle the puppies.

Yes. We measure them at seven or eight weeks. When we tattoo, we measure. I have a chart made so the dog's measurements are put down with the tattoo number, so he is always identified. I have a book of puppy measurements. Someday I might get the time to do some things with them.

Do you remeasure them as they grow?

Yes, if we still have them. They may not be as well-angulated. In the case of the some Siberian lines, once they reach old age they are better. The best, structurally, at that age remains the best.

How does the measurement compare in terms of angles?

The angles are pretty accurate. The thing that we have difficulty in predicting is short upper arms on some lines. If it is present at seven weeks of age I won't keep that puppy as it will always be there. It sometimes appears as a growing phase in some lines and it disappears at two to three years. However, if one puppy is shorter in leg at that age, it will be shorter in leg than its littermates as an adult. If it is short in fib-tib, it will be short in fib-tib as an adult. The thing that we are having trouble with, even more so than short upper arm, is a long femur. It simply does not show up at that age, but it will as an adult. There are some lines that are long in the femur. It changes the rear angulation and is not nearly as efficient. If you are talking about show dogs, they gait parallel, hocks are parallel, which judges don't like to see. It is not desirable.

Is that when you do your evaluation in terms of what you are going to keep?

Yes. I have had the Sams so long that usually the litter is sold by then. Rarely do we have them beyond seven or eight weeks. This is why I have to be

able to evaluate, and be able to keep the best for somebody who wants something for breeding and show. I have a litter now. There are three puppies. I already have an order from Alberta, preferably for the bitch. She is the best structurally, but pigmentation is going to be liver, so he is going to have to decide whether he wants her or the males, who aren't good structurally, but have good pigment, good heads, heavy bones, good shoulder, and good angulation. You have to be able to evaluate them when you are selling them young. We never have enough for the inquiries, or the orders, so you have to know which is best. If you are keeping one, then you have to keep what you want.

How old are the puppies when they leave home?

Eight or nine weeks. If somebody isn't in any hurry, I keep them. But eight weeks is the minimum age.

What do you feed your adult dogs?

It varies. We are feeding dry now, and I make stew. I cook meat, vegetables, and a bit of garlic. I ladle it over the dry food. It has extra fat and a few more vitamins. I don't know that there is a lot of nutritional value, but they like it better and it makes me feel better. We are feeding a pet-valued food right now, which is adequate, but I want to change before winter. I like Science Diet, but we can't afford it for the big dogs, it is too expensive. Other prices have gone up, too. What we are using for the Sams now is fine, they are in good condition, and their coats are good.

Do you use any other supplements?

No. I use vitamin C once in a while. I think it is good. We use vitamins for the bitches that are having puppies. But, no, I don't generally add a lot.

What kind of vitamins do you use, or do you use just a multiple?

Just a multiple vitamin from the vet.

You don't have any special diet?

No. I think food manufacturers do balance the foods pretty well. If we are going into heavy running, then we have to make a change. It has to be pure meat.

Do you cook the meat?

No, it should be raw. Along with local racers we are getting meat now from storage down by Windsor. It is

mink meat, but apparently it is good. You have to worry about that sort of thing. Many of them eat it in combination with dog food. They feed it half and half. If you are going to get performance from the sled dogs, you have to feed meat. They will not do it on just commercial dog foods. They hit a certain point, in the winter, when all of a sudden they drop weight. They seem to be able to go so far on commercial food, and no further. If you want an edge, you must go to meat.

Do you feed once a day?

Yes. They get biscuits and fresh water at night. The main meal is in the morning.

They seem happy.

They are. Then they sleep all afternoon.

Do you think the Samoyed standard is a good one?

As far as it goes, I think it is good. If you read it carefully (I am thinking more of the Canadian one now, than the American), the American is much more explicit, and it's better. The Canadian is a copy of the English, and I don't think it has been changed. It says what I want it to say. Interpretation may be the problem. Anybody can interpret differently. As far as I am concerned, the reference to a Working dog means a dog capable of working, whether he ever does or not. The Americans get actually into leg length and some of the angles, which makes it easier. Maybe we should change our standard. There is a size difference between here and the States. The people should take a long look at that. Once again, now is the time to review the English standard. Even though the size is smaller, not all the English dogs are small. I have a 19-inch bitch and everybody thinks she is undersized. She is right in the middle of the standard. But compared to what we see, she seems tiny.

What is the American Standard?

Basically 21 inches in bitches. Most of my bitches run 20 inches to 21 inches, and I like a 20-inch bitch. To me, it is an ideal size. All I am saying is, that we are not being realistic in Canada. We are not breeding to the standard. We are breeding toward the top or slightly over. Perhaps we should take a look at it and change. We can't now because there is a moratorium on standards but eventually, maybe.

How important is size in terms of quality?

It is important. You don't want extremes either way. Middle-of-the-road is the safest in all aspects. You don't want a square dog. Usually he is that way because he is straight and cumbersome. You want them agile and the ideal is in the middle, always, I think. Moderation is the key.

Do you prefer the American standard because it is more specific?

Yes, but they could add to it. It would be easier for people coming into it to understand. Everybody interprets things the way they want them to read, and even though I think the Canadian one, if you truly read it, says the way the dog should be, it can be twisted.

What do you think makes a good breeder?

That is a hard question to answer. They should be knowledgeable. They should truly understand the purpose of the breed. You can't expect every dog produced to do the job he was meant to do. However, he should be capable of doing it. They should understand functional anatomy. They should be selling dogs that are going to be problems; that are going to be cripples and break down and have problems. You owe it to your customers to produce the best you can, not just for the show ring, BUT FOR THEM. You have to like your dogs. There are people that have no affinity for their dogs. I don't know why they are in dogs. Everything is done from a distance. They don't want to be close to them, they don't really want to be involved with them. They want to stand back, and look at them, and talk about them. You should truly like dogs. Otherwise, why breed dogs? You have to be totally objective. If a breeding doesn't work then there is no point going on with it.

I am not a great one at studying pedigrees, per se. I don't go back six generations and say so-and-so is in it this many times. But you have to honestly assess the quality of the dogs that are behind yours. Know as many dogs personally as you can. Don't use them just because they won so many Groups or many Bests in Show. Know what they were, how they were built and what they produced. Study the dogs and get to see as many as you can, before you breed into a line.

Are specialties a good place to see them?

Yes, they are excellent places. Look at the dogs and if the best one



Ch. Gol'Chikka of Nepachee, Can/Am CD and Ch. Chiendar's Nepachee Avenger

wins, then that is great. It is the judge's opinion. I have only been to two American specialties for Sams. I went to a number of Dachshund specialties, and I was totally destroyed because they are so political. The best dogs just don't win. I can't face that in Sams. I went to two and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I disagreed with some of the judging, but I agreed that the judges put up what they thought was best. I don't mean to put any dogs down, however, I probably would have found another dog that would have suited me better. It wasn't political. They put up what they thought was best and that's great. The people were a lot friendlier. I just thoroughly enjoyed them both. I wish I had gone to more. The Dachshund specialties made me sick. I can't see that. It is not for the betterment of the breed. But specialties are good places. I still go to the Dachshund specialties and look occasionally. The Sam specialties I enjoyed, and I will go to others. This is definitely the place to see the dogs, to see the bloodlines and try not to pay too much attention to the placements.

How have dogs affected your life style?

Absolutely totally. You can spend a lifetime studying dogs. Maybe it is not the best way to spend my time, but it is the way I must. However, I wouldn't give up my family for dogs.

You have two daughters?

And a son. And a husband! The girls are interested, but I don't think it is going to be life-long occupations for them. My son is totally uninterested. He is going to be an airplane mechanic. He doesn't think anything is worthwhile unless it is run by motors and that is fine.

How involved is your husband with the dogs?

He likes the dogs. I don't know how he has tolerated my total involvement over the years. He doesn't like dog shows. He put one CD on a dog and trained another one, but didn't title it, I did. He is a hunter. He likes hunting game. He only hunts deer now. His Lab is not doing well, she is getting old. He feeds and does some of the cleaning and fills in when I am not here. He used to put on the local obedience trials. He was trial secretary, so he has an interest in them.

One of your daughters has her own breed?

Yes. Shelly has Shelties. She handles professionally, but as I said, I don't know if it will be a lifetime thing with her. She has the talent. Karen is talented also, but she is going to be married in a year and a half, and I think she is more family oriented. She is interested in Siberian Huskies. Karen seems to prefer an individual dog. She takes a liking to a dog, then she is totally devoted to that particular dog.

How long have you been

Way too much. We probably have 30 to 40 on the premises now, and that is still too much. We are cutting it down, but you can't put them down because you want to cut the numbers. You have to let them live their lives, but they won't be replaced. I want to get them down to something that is a little more manageable. I'm still interested in the Siberians as a breeder. I have been trying to do a certain thing with them, and it is going well, so I really hate to

ideal Sam?

I have got a long way to go, yet. I am pleased with the way it is going. I guess I am a perfectionist and probably will never reach my ideal, but if I can get closer with each breeding, that is great.

Have there been any drawbacks for you?

No, I don't think so. It is what I wanted to do. I have tried other things. My husband is a curler and he wanted me to curl with him. I did for a couple of years, but it wasn't as interesting as dogs. Everything I seem to be interested in is animal-oriented.

What are some of the highlights? What are some of the things you feel you wouldn't have missed?

The people I have met. Places I have been. Travel is great, it is just super. Meeting people and seeing other dogs in other areas. My husband is a homebody, he just won't travel. I don't think I could have coped with just four walls, I really don't. It is probably the best thing that I could have done for myself. Maybe I would have been interested in other fields, something in the work field, but I don't know what it would be. I spent seven years in an office and I was glad to get out. I really don't regret it. I can't think of anything else I want to do. If it wasn't dogs, it would be horses or something similar.

Is there anything you would like to add?

It is difficult, you meet people along the way, and I have had a number of bad sessions lately. When I am involved with somebody and I'm talking about associations in the dog world, I am totally loyal to them. When petty jealousy happens it is hard to cope with. I guess this is general, not just me. I find it very hard to cope with at the time. However, I guess with change in progress your friends and acquaintances change. That is the way it is.

What advice would you give to somebody just starting?

Take your time, don't be in a hurry to get into a breed. I know that people just don't pay attention. They rush out and buy. There was an article in one of the Dachshund magazines a while back, about a woman who had taken five years before she brought her first Dachshund. She spent that time going to shows, talking to breeders, reading books, researching, and she ended up producing some of the best



Nepachee's Music Man, CD

here in this location?

Twenty-five years. Where we are sitting is an addition. It seemed adequate when we moved in, but you know how that goes. The kids all grew up and are still at home. Neither of us wanted to move, so we increased the size of the house.

What is the most dogs you have ever kept?

Forty or fifty at one time. Is that too much?

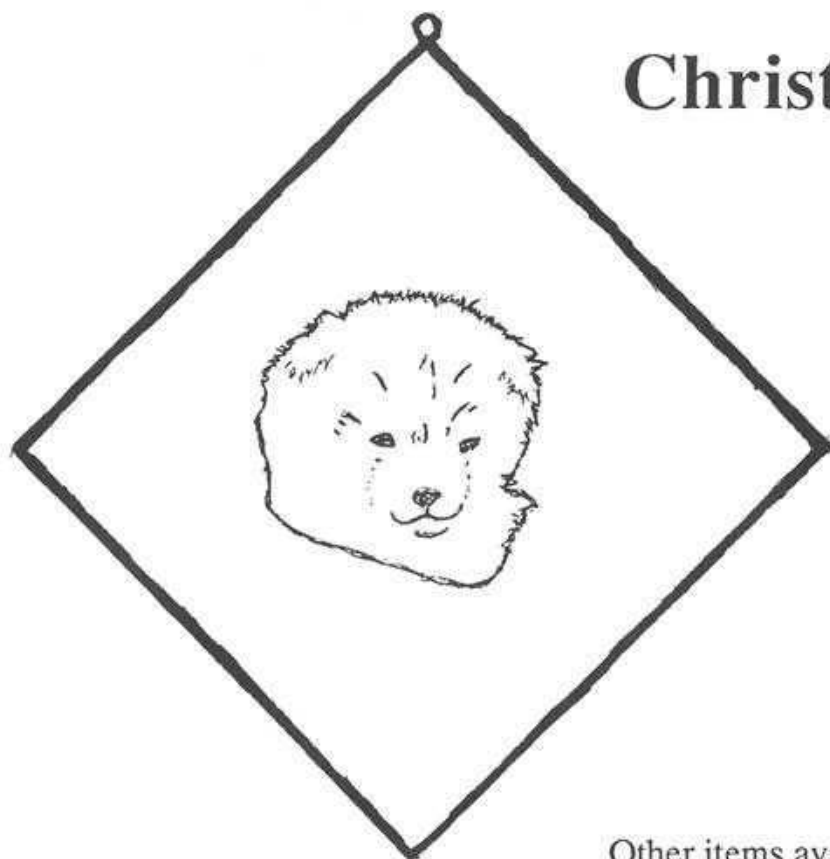
give it up, but I may have to. The Dachshunds are my retirement breed. They are easier to carry, easier to do things with. But when I show them I spend all my time on my knees.

When I get to be an all-breed judge, and that is what I am going for, I will not judge in the area because of conflicts. It's hard. I am not going to quit breeding. There are too many things I want to do.

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Dachshunds I have ever seen. The courses that we teach at Durham College are great. They want to learn before they go out and make the mistake of buying something that isn't for them. Look around, find a sincere breeder, somebody who is totally

interested in the breed, not in individual dogs. Get to know them. I think every good breeder likes to find people with whom they can teach and are willing to share. If you are sincerely interested in a breed, they will share everything with you. Stick with it long enough to learn

it all. It will save you years and years of frustrations. Listen and pay attention. Something that somebody has learned over twenty years has got to be right. Don't argue. Stick with that person, and learn all you can from him. They know they can't continue forever, and they know if they want to continue the breed, they want this knowledge to go on. Find a good breeder and stick with him as long as you can.

That's great, thank you. •



BOY - IN THE
DOGHOUSE
ACROSS ALL
I DID WAS EAT HIS
DUMB OLD NEWSPAPER

