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The SAMOYED QUARTERLY



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SAMOYED PEOPLE



The Samoyed Quarterly Talks With
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This interview was taped at the home of Lila in September 1977.

How did you get started in Sams?

When J.B. and I were first married we had seen the Samoyeds of Bernice Cooper at Four Star Kennels in Maple Valley. She had the kennel up next to the road and as J.B. rode by on his motorcycle he happened to see them. After we were married we had a Springer Spaniel - who was nasty. J.B. always wanted a Sam and I wanted a Dachshund. So we went out one time to see the Sams at Bernice Cooper's and she had this huge dog, Ch. Taku Boyee. I said if we could get one just like that (realizing now that he was a lousy specimen) great! But he was huge, right?

I had a habit of saving dimes and quarters in those days. As a matter of fact, we bought our first Siamese cat with my fifteen dollars of dimes and quarters.

Anyway, when we were out at Silver Lake (I think Mark was about a year old, so it would be about 23 years ago) and I had about \$35 saved. I'd seen Sam puppies advertised so I wrote to this ad which was out in Auburn. She wrote back and said they were \$35 without papers and \$15 more if you wanted the papers. The sire was Ch. Stormy Weather of Betty Blue, which meant nothing to me, at that time. We were going out to Enumclaw to buy meat so we casually stopped by, and gee whiz, they had this little male puppy. Well, it just so happened I had that many dimes and quarters. (Laughter). So J.B. brought that one home - that was "Happy." We had him as a pet, strictly as a pet. Then we met up with (J.B. did, at the vet) a lady by the name of Corbin (she's no longer in Sams). She had some Four Star Sams originally, and she said, "You ought to show that dog because that kind of head you just don't see." So fine, time went on and eventually we heard of a match in Marysville. Went to the match and, of course, "Happy" was an absolute idiot. He tried to bite the judge. I mean he was a dog that had no idea of what was going on - he didn't know how to bite, let alone bite a judge! So then we went to another match, in Whidbey Island, and Janet Wilcox was judging (she was a handler at this time). She told us if we just taught that dog some manners he'd go. So, J.B. ended up going to George Payton's handling classes. George

is now a judge and Janet is also a judge - a lot of time has gone by. Actually, he went to handling classes hoping to teach the dog some manners and ended up learning an awful lot himself.

At the second match is when we saw Nan-Nuk who was owned by Goldie Klein and Marie Mueller. At that point we just fell in love with her. She was about eight months old and we said when we got another Samoyed, a female, we'd get one from Billy Tucker. We just assumed they were like these cookie cutters, we'd just write to Billy and say, "We want one just like her." Of course we'd get one! Talk about green! (Laughter)

Nan-Nuk was two years old when they decided to sell her and she'd had two litters. One was accidental and the other was sired by Ch. Polaris Pan, owned by Terry Rimbe. Then the mother had a heart attack so they had to get rid of Nan-Nuk. They knew that we had liked her so they called us and asked if we'd like to buy her. At that point we were ready to sell the kids, if necessary, to buy Nan-Nuk (Laughter).

That's how we started and a couple of years later we had a litter of puppies from Happy and Nan-Nuk.

We had already made up our minds, at that point, that we weren't going to be breeder breeders, we weren't just going to have puppies. It's too much work! Especially the way we raised them - in the house! There were nine puppies in that litter and at that time we didn't realize that the mama dog could handle nine puppies. We gave one to a client of our vet's. A Pomeranian had lost it's litter so it raised the Sam pup. We didn't see him again until he was four or five. We raised the other eight, four of them became champions, one needed one point to finish and we never finished her. We were off and running!

We bought Binky from Billy and eventually we bred Binky to Ch. Joli Fang, C.D. from our first litter who was owned by Dick & Diane Ross. There were two champions from that litter and we kept Bingo Baby. She was worthless but we loved her.

In all I think we bred five litters with eight champions, two of which we owned ourselves.

At one time you had eleven Sams here?

Yes. We tried to keep them in the house as much as possible. Sams don't get along all that well so they ended up out in the kennel where they would bark. They were unhappy. I don't like barking dogs so I was unhappy. As they more or less just died-off we didn't replenish the stock, so to speak. We had a policy, which with only one exception we followed all the way. A female was bred once, we keep what we want from the litter, and that's it. If it doesn't turn out, tough! We don't try again and again just to see if we can do better. The only exception was one of the Siberian litters. We did breed a female back to her sire, only because the females from the first litter all died or had been hurt or killed. I wasn't overly thrilled with that litter - I've got four of those still here.

I think J.B. and I are what you have to call "animal lovers." We were going to breed nothing but champions, of course! Doesn't everybody? (Laughter).

As time went on we ended up keeping dogs from litters that weren't champion quality and they just lived out their lives here. We never had any luck finding good homes for adult dogs. In twenty-three years I've found two good homes for adult dogs. One Sam and one Siberian and that's it. So they just live out their lives with us. We used to have thirty dogs here - I'm down to twenty now. I have a number of older dogs, too.



In lead, Ch. Joli Nantu. Left is Am. & Can. Ch. Tod-Acres Fang, right is Am. & Can. Ch. Kobe's Nan-Nuk of Encino. 1962.

What are the breeds you have here now?
Siberian Huskies and one Welsh Corgi, which we don't count, he's just here.

How many years has it been since you had your last Sam?
A year and a half.

When did you start with the Siberians?
Fifteen years ago, I think. Our first Sam was bought in October 1954 and our first Siberian was bought in October 1962.

Why after eight years in Sams did you decide to get a Siberian?

Fell in love with the breed. At that time they were just starting the Northwest Sled Dog Club. For some reason we were invited with our funny looking sled dogs to join the group. We ended up going with our three Sams and kiddie sled and went from there.

Of course, we saw all the Siberians. A fellow in North Bend had one and, of course, Martha Lake Kennel had them. I think the fascinating part to us was after having all white dogs for so long then seeing all the different markings. No two ever marked alike it seemed. That was what we really enjoyed.

We went out to Ruby Thompson's Martha Lake Kennels.

We were beginning to realize that getting good gait on Sams wasn't that easy. We, having started out with two excellent moving dogs, just assumed there was nothing to it. Right? We were automatically very tuned to movement.

At Martha Lake Kennels there was one dog, Ike of Bow Lake, who looked just like Nan-Nuk, only he was a Siberian. We fell in love with him, naturally! They had a likeness of movement, they absolutely bounced. Every one of them had a beautiful gait. Now, of course, I realize this is not true, but at that time they certainly looked good.

We talked Ruby Thompson into letting us show her dogs. At that time there were no Sibes being shown in the area. She had Dutchka who she'd shown at a couple of shows. A cute little bitch puppy came along and we talked her into showing her. We brought Dutchka home with us and trained and showed her. She went BOB, took five points. That was with eight Siberians but no sex division. When they bred her a year later, back to her sire, we had first choice of the litter. We thought it would be kind of nice to have this color of dog running around. When you're in dogs it seems easy to gather up a lot more dogs than you need.

The next two were, more or less, given to us. One was a champion. The original Siberian we got was an American and Canadian Champion. Those two are the background of our stock now. As time went by, we found it was easier to get along with a bunch of Siberians than Sams. To my way of thinking, a Sam is a house dog, he needs to be with people. He doesn't really enjoy the companionship of another dog that much. Someday I'm going to have "that" Sam. Unfortunately I know so much about them now, I can't find "that" Sam that I want! Until I am able to have a Sam as a house dog I don't think I'll have any more Sams. A Siberian is happy to have a companionship with other dogs, they love people but they aren't quite as demanding upon a person's time.

As time went by we weren't as happy with our Sams and the quality we were getting - it seems like we had lost that quality we had. We didn't do enough breeding to prove or disprove. I wish I could start over again. Maybe I will with Sams. I wish I knew then what I know now and maybe we wouldn't have made the errors on some of our breedings. Like I said, we had two litters that really didn't have anything in them. By that time we had learned genetics and were line breeding. Now I believe that the best litters we had, both Sams and Siberians, were breeding dog to dog. This dog and this bitch look good together - lets breed them. Not saying, this one's got the same grand-sire, etc. I realize I'm about the only person who thinks that way. Our first litter was that way and actually our last litter in Sams too. In Siberians our first litter and the last two have been strictly that way - dog to dog. I'm not ignoring the pedigrees, however.

Then you're saying the phenotypes are much more important than the genotypes?

It has been, at least to my way of thinking. Yes. In other litters that I have seen and watched over the years different people have come up with the best combinations when it's been dog to dog - as you say, phenotype rather than geno. I think perhaps in the Sam breed there are some breeders, Doris McLaughlin for instance, who has hers relatively closely line-bred. She is able to pretty well say what she's going to get from a litter. Most of us haven't been in dogs long enough and bred enough litters successfully to be able to really use genetics. I think that's an awful lot of it. Line breeding to an excellent dog is fine if you also know everything there is to know about his background. When you're line breeding or inbreeding to a specific dog you're not breeding to just that dog - you're breeding to everything behind him (or her), as the case may be. We had some lovely



Happy and chickens. Summer 1956.

surprises in line breeding. I'm firmly in favor of genetics. I'm firmly in favor of pedigrees. Obviously since I put out the pedigree book. I'm very much in favor of paying attention to the pedigree and I'm sold on genetics. I'm sold on line breeding and yet I turn right around and say that my best ones come from dog to dog. Part of that, I still think, is in the back of ones mind. When you've been into dogs for a number of years you automatically look at a dog and you see his pedigree. Maybe when I say I'm breeding dog to dog I'm actually breeding dog to dog; yes - but I'm also seeing the connection in the background. Maybe that would be a better way to speak of it.

Have you seen many examples of people in dogs that say they would much rather have a very poor specimen with an outstanding pedigree than another dog with poor pedigree that was, himself, an outstanding specimen?

I prefer the outstanding specimen. I have seen very very few dogs with an outstanding pedigree that produce nothing but junk. There are exceptions. I think one of the biggest disappointments can come when you see a pedigree of a dog and you say, "Oh, this dog has got to be good," and when you see the dog and it's "eh." Everything you didn't want is in that dog. Well it's going to produce it. You end up with a cow hocked dog and it's probably going to produce those cow hocks, regardless of how good their background was behind it. It has to come from some place.

I don't consider myself a breeder - I consider myself an exhibitor. I love to show dogs and this is my whole life. Once I walk into that ring with a good dog I don't care what his pedigree is. At the same



Ch. Joli White Knight - "Shanny" - 7 years, Feb. 1966

time, naturally, I'd like to produce nothing but the very best. I have to say that I really think that a pedigree isn't that important if the eventual outcome is poor. If the dog itself is not a good specimen I don't think the pedigree matters at that point. I've often said what many people do, and I firmly believe in this - that the poorest pup from a good litter is better than the best pup from a poor litter, if that makes sense. This is quality of the animals. You have one outstanding puppy from an otherwise lousy litter; I would rather have the poorest puppy in an outstanding litter to work with. And that's excluding pedigree at that point. Not too often, from a not-so-hot pedigree are you going to find an outstanding litter. So there you go again, right? It's kind of a "play it by ear" sort of thing. I can be completely turned off by a specific dog in a pedigree, knowing too much perhaps, about the dogs. I wish I was a novice again. It really was a lot more fun. You learn too much I think. You tend to think of the bad things rather than the good.

Is part of the problem your being burned because people haven't been entirely honest about the faults of dogs in the pedigree?

Not in recent years, of course. I would say actually, that when we first started in getting the true facts about dogs in the background was practically impossible. I feel this is still a newcomer's problem. For instance, if you're inquiring about "Ch. Fluff Fluff," and you start asking (as all novices do and we who aren't novices too) things about specific dogs, good and bad. If they have that particular dog in their pedigree you're going to hear all kinds of good things about it. If they don't, and they are competing against it, then you're going to hear everything lousy. So, it's a matter of separating the wheat from the chaff sort of thing. I think that we all get kennel-blind. We don't really want to tear our dogs down, we don't want to say, "Hey, look, you're gonna double up on these two dogs. I know you think they're great, they're my dogs, but please don't." I will say that I do that now. I tell people, "Don't double up on those two dogs, please, just don't." I may not tell them why - it depends on the people. Other I might say, "Yes, I'd like to see you double up on those two dogs." Part of it is now knowing many generations back. Today in Sams I have to say I'm not as familiar with the present group of dogs. There are some beautiful dogs! Oh! There are some beautiful dogs!

I'm very pleased with the breed as a whole right now. Five years ago I thought the poor breed was really in trouble. I think the breed, as a whole, is very healthy. I thought this eye thing was really going to kill the breed for all time the way it was going. Now it seems to be well on it's way to a comeback.

Did PRA affect the lines you were working in?

Yes. We were out of Sams when PRA hit, basically. I think we had our last litter prior to that and so actually none of our dogs' eyes were ever checked. Some of the get were checked so we know that some of our dogs were obviously carriers because it has come down the line. It's a real shame. I feel about PRA as I did about hips. There's an awful lot of dog between the eyes and the hips. I was afraid it was going to get to the point, which it didn't really, where if the dogs hips were clear and the dogs eyes were clear - Breed It. Regardless of what's between them. But I don't see that, I'm really glad that it doesn't seem to be happening. Some people are still breeding their quality animals to somewhat faulty animals if those animals are clear. Of course the eye thing we can tell, but the last one I heard of the animal was 9½ years old before it cropped up with PRA. How can you possibly wait till then to do any breeding? I think the general attitude that I



John Weir and Joli Rainie. February 1964.

picked up on in PRA, especially in Sams, is that people are illuminating in their breeding programs. They are checking, a goodly number of them are, eyes on a yearly basis. They're not breeding those animals which are cropping up with eye problems. Unfortunately there are alot of us who still aren't checking eyes.

We never had any eye problems, with the exception of Rainy who had glaucoma. That was the only one who ever went to an eye man and he did not have anything except the glaucoma which was caused from an injury. We fooled around with our local vet, a lousy one I might add (not the current one) for two weeks. He had a little puncture in the right eye and we took him in. If we hand't fooled around for two weeks he probably would never have had glaucoma because it went from one eye to the other, infecting the other eye. He did not have anything else wrong with his eyes and he was five years old then. None of our

dogs ever went blind. All of our old dogs lived until they were thirteen years old. Maybe some of them did have it, I don't know. If I were to do it over again I would certainly have eyes checked but at that time nobody checked eyes. We had hips x-rayed, of course, from our very first dogs, before OFA. As a matter of fact, even the last ones we x-rayed were prior to OFA. We have our Siberians eyes checked and their hips are x-rayed but I don't bother having eyes checked on dogs I'm not breeding. I have more dogs around here I'm not breeding than dogs I am. Although with eyes we took all of our old stuff in and had eyes checked to see where we were at - whether or not they were being bred. Now I'm to the point where the young stuff will be checked. The males will be checked on a yearly basis and the females will be checked before they're bred and probably not again until they're older, unless I suspect something is wrong. If I had Sams they would be going in for a



Ch. Joli Knika, Best in Show winner. Owner Cliff Cabe
April 1963.

yearly check because it certainly is a problem.

Some people have said they consider that PRA in Sams has been a problem affecting a few breedings in the country. Do you agree with that?

Well, all they have to do is buy my pedigree book and start chasing their dogs back, and those dogs they think are affected, because they're going to find they all go back to the same dogs. As far as I'm concerned most every Sam in the United States has the potential possibility of a carrier. Granted, not all. The problem was intensified by line breeding to dogs who had PRA without knowing it. This is the reason, from my viewpoint, that they cropped up. But when you start looking through your pedigrees you're going to find the same dogs that are in the background of the affected dogs are in the background of everybody's Sams. If not within the first three or four generations, further back. Since PRA did not start with this generation of dogs you have to go back. It did, of course, hit the Northwest area. And, again, there was no secret about it. It was line breeding to an affected animal which, who knew? This ended up a real mess. But the potential is there in everybody's dog, as far as I'm concerned. If I had Sams they would jolly well be checked out. At the same time, I feel if you find an affected animal in your stock this is not the time to throw everything out and start on someone else's. Getting rid of your current stock and going to someone else's isn't going to solve the problem. Number one, you may find that

you have compounded your problems. The local people had to go out because of the turn-around. Everything they owned was affected, practically, or they were pretty sure they were carriers. It was a very bad thing. Some of the best dogs who ended up being affected were definitely carriers. Being gung-ho on pedigrees as many years as I have, I always laugh when someone says, "It isn't in my line." Stick around, it will be! I always think too, if you breed long enough you're going to run into everything.

If you had an outstanding dog, an OUTSTANDING Samoyed, and he was a confirmed PRA carrier, or say, he was a confirmed carrier of hip dysplasia; would there be any circumstances where you would use him at stud?

On my own stock, perhaps. He would never be an outside stud. You're speaking of a really outstanding specimen, not just a good dog, but really a special dog. I would very probably use that animal on one of my own bitches and keep everything in the litter. I would discard the pet stock as it cropped up by finding good homes for them, or, like I say, most of my dogs just live here the rest of their lives.

I would be much more leary of a PRA carrier or the eye problem than I am of the hips. Having gone into that for many many years. If the dog was producing hip dysplasia I would not be too concerned with a clear animal from that dog. In other words, we would go the palpation route, looking for a pup from him which did not have HD. But I'm more worried with

PRA because if he was a carrier and the female was a carrier, even if the pup didn't have it it would probably be a carrier and you just go down generation after generation with it. As far as we know at this point it's a recessive. There doesn't seem to be any other solution. What has happened is a goodly number of generations have just now cropped up and the right combination came out. This is the reason I say there is no one line anyone can say is clear of it.

In some breeds they've done test breedings. Like breeding a blind dog, who would obviously be carrying, to a bitch (if it's a recessive they'd both be carrying) and seeing if any of the puppies are blind. Clearing the bitch. Do you know of anyone in Sams who's done test breeding? Do you think people should do test breeding?

No. Of course Dr. Dice is doing test breedings for research - strictly for research. I don't think any of us can afford to do this type of thing. As it's now turning out, PRA is not showing up in some dogs until, like I said, the one was 9½ years old and she had been checked every six months. They knew this particular dog had to have it since, as I recall, all the litter-mates had it, or the sire and the dam had it. What good would test breeding do? So they're clear for the first two years - that still doesn't mean anything. Like dwarfism in Malamutes - they can tell at six weeks of age. If they could do this for eyes, yes, maybe I'd go with it but they really can't prove it. The only thing they can do is if they breed an afflicted male to a clear female and if anything showed up within six months then they'd know the female was not clear. They still wouldn't know until the litter was nine years old perhaps if they were ultimately clear. I don't think test breeding, for the breeder, is going to do a thing on PRA - it's not going to get them anywhere.

In a lot of cases aren't you able to detect PRA at like six months of age?

This is what I understand is now cropping up in the Sams. For some reason it did seem to intensify.

What about the case of a person that has a stud dog that has been bred to ten, twenty or thirty bitches? Does he have the responsibility to the breed to test breed his male?

No. He has the responsibility to have that dog's eyes checked. He also has the responsibility to keep track of the puppies, not only for PRA or HD, but what kind of pups he's producing. Is there some fault that's cropping up here? Temperament, for instance, that you can only lay back at the door of that stud? That, to me, is the responsibility of a stud owner. I don't feel that he should have to test breed. When it comes to PRA I just don't feel it's going to do any good. If it could be definitely proven at six months that would be one thing. So we're asking people to produce an awful lot of worthless animals. Maybe some people can put them down - I can't. That's what happened with the Malamutes with dwarfism. They ended up flooding the market.

The reason I ask this is that in the last six months the top producing Borzoi of all time has gone blind. He's bred over fifty bitches and so we're seeing reverberations you wouldn't believe throughout the entire breed. I'm wondering if perhaps a little care might prevent a similar instance?

Yes. The only thing is - I really think in the case of PRA in Sams it cannot be detected young enough, as of now. This is the reason Dr. Dice is using the experimental breeding. These are afflicted animals to afflicted animals so he knows everyone's going to have it. He's been checking them weekly from the time they were three weeks of age trying to find some way to say, "This dog is going to have PRA eventually." So far they haven't come up with any



eye changes until it actually shows up. Like you say with the Borzoi, perhaps if the dog's eyes had been checked a couple of years ago it might have helped.

Do you think that potential puppy purchasers should make sure that both the sire and dam have certification numbers before they buy them? In other words, how much care should people take? Same with OFA.

I'm not sold on CERF. I don't mean that I'm against them. I don't think, at this point, that my own dogs will be certified. My stud dogs probably will be but it is strictly a registration thing. The certificate you get from your V.O. is all you need. In other words, if I go to someone and say, "I would like a puppy from this litter. Please show me your certificates from your Veterinarian Ophthalmologist that clears the eyes of the sire and dam." That's all I need. I don't need a CERF number. At the same time the CERF is, of course, very beneficial. For instance if I want a puppy from someone in Miami.

Isn't it kind of a universally recognized standard, just like the championship?

Yes. It will become eventually, and I'm sure it is coming. A CERF number is easier to put down on the end of a pedigree rather than going out and Xeroxing copies of the original certificate. I, myself, to buy a puppy from anyone would insist upon eye examinations - with proof. Either a CERF number or a copy of the certificate which, of course, has the date on it.

I would also insist on OFA. I feel anyone going out and looking for top quality stock that they plan to show and/or breed should also insist on it. But, if a breeder doesn't have to do it and can get away with selling puppies without it then I guess more power to them. In fact, when I've had a litter of puppies, even when people buy pets, I've told them that the dogs were OFA'd. I explained it to them and showed them the eye certificates on the dogs simply because I feel this is a breeder's responsibility.

In regards to your research with the pedigree book. Has the research shown that the PRA carriers today go back to any specific dogs or group of dogs?

No. Not actually. There's no way we can tell going back but it's obvious that it's something that didn't crop up from underneath a log and that some of the very first imports had to have been either carriers or had PRA. Since all of our dogs go back to the same dogs - every dog in the United States, Canada, England, anywhere, is a potential for PRA.

When you say the same dogs do you mean dogs from the Samoyede people?

Originally the Sam people in England. There were about 15 imported into England, maybe a few more, but

actually about 15 who were used extensively in breeding. With the exception of about 4 or 5 Sams here in the United States every one of our Sams goes back to the English Sams. There were about 4 who were imported directly from Russia into the United States. All the rest of our Sams were originally imported from England. England imported from Russia so they are all related, many generations back, but all related. Everyone went off on different tangents so that's why we have different types. Well, they started out with different types, as such. I hate that word! We used to use that word when you couldn't think of anything nice to say about somebody's dog. We called it "typey." I've had this thing ever since. I just don't like the word because it really doesn't say what you want to say.

Are there some lines which are related to just a portion of these fifteen?

I believe that every single Sam goes back to every one of those imports, eventually, because the 15 were crossed back and forth in England so many times. By the time we imported dogs over the years from England they were carrying every single one of those imports. Now I say every one - there are dogs like Pedro. I think I was able to trace back and found him in the pedigree of my original dogs. He was the black Sam. Everybody's always delighted to trace back to the black Sam. (Laughter). They got that out of there as quickly as possible!

Why do you think PRA showed up in some areas of the pedigree and not others?

More intensive breeding to an affected animal. I think it has lain hidden for many years. It has been occurring over the years but it has not been occurring with a great amount of frequency - enough for anybody to realize it was a problem. A dog has gone blind or it's eyesight impaired, maybe it's gotten hit by a car, so who knew? Now, of course, I have a feeling that (maybe I'm wrong) in maybe ten years it will be hidden completely again, waiting to come leaping out at the unsuspecting person.

They are finding the carriers now and the affected dogs are being eliminated from programs (that is of the people who are really dedicated breeders). But you also have zillions of puppies being born every day to people who don't know any of these things. Eventually they end up in someone's pedigree. So who's to know? Not everyone is going to check eyes - not everyone checks hips. As long as it's been kicking around there are still an awful lot of people who don't. According to the OFA representative for the Siberian Husky Club of America, we have 2500 OFA'd dogs now but there have been close to that many registered in a month. It's the same with Sams. I think there are 3500 now, which I don't think is even a half year of registrations. I think they were registering over 10,000 a year. Right. So approximately less than one-third of what has been produced in one year has been OFA'd. Obviously there are a lot of unx-rayed dogs running around. Probably that many again have been x-rayed and cleared by their local vet. It still leaves an awful lot of dogs that have not been cleared or ever been near an x-ray machine.

We used to hear, when we first heard of HD 20 years ago, "My dogs don't have any problem." And yet I remember one specific dog that they called Chuchu because his hips clicked. That was 20 years ago, nobody KNEW about hip dysplasia, right? You could actually hear that dog's hips click. Now we know, of course, that the dog was obviously badly dysplastic. We knew of a number of crippled dogs in the rear. We had dogs that were finished for their championships that had lousy rears. They never went under an x-ray machine but we can assume that they were probably dysplastic, at this point. Who's to know?

I think this is a very very difficult problem for

people who are really dedicated to doing what they can to produce top stock. They are x-raying and having eyes checked and in the meantime they are trying to get rid of the faults that are cropping up in the line. That's a very small minority of people, very very small for the number of dogs that are being bred and the number of puppies being produced. Don't get me started on over-breeding. Screaming bloody murder! These people that are having any more than one litter a year are over-breeding, in fact in some cases, one litter a year is over-breeding. And using studs right and left. Oh! Uh! But, I guess everyone has their own ideas.

Do you feel people should just breed for their own?

Yes. I feel, very strongly, that they should produce a litter to keep something for themselves - and that's the only reason. Think of it. There wouldn't be the dog problems if everyone had done that. In fact, I would imagine that one could probably sell their puppies for five, six, even seven hundred dollars apiece if everybody did that. We certainly wouldn't have the problem with the numbers, would we? Siberians are now in 15th place. They were 38th when we started 15 years ago. They're breeding them like a bunch of bunny rabbits.

I can't blame people in the respect that they start out, they have a female about a year and a half of age, they breed her and they have people waiting at the door for the puppies. They've got from six to eight pups that they're selling for \$150 to \$200 each. I can't really blame people for making money. At the same time I feel that if you've got to make money in dogs you should be in some other business. I don't feel there's any need to continually breed and breed and breed - unless you want something for yourself. Deep down that's exactly how I feel. I keep saying, "Well, O.K., so you got a great litter, well, O.K., repeat it," but deep down I don't feel they should. In fact, my last litter of pups was a tremendous litter - I'm so delighted with that litter. Kennel-blind I may be, but I'm just delighted with it. I don't think there was a bad one in the whole litter, a number of them should finish their championship if they're shown. Somebody asked me not too long ago if I was going to breed Misty to Ace again. I said, "Whatever for? I have Hurry!" I don't need to breed, people had their chance if they wanted one of the pups. Tough! I just don't see any reason to bother. I spend so much time with my pups it's a full-time project. I love pups. The next litter won't be bred for at least another year or maybe two. This female was four years old when I bred her. I also found that doesn't really matter. We've bred them up to four and a half years for their first litter.

What special upbringing should a puppy have?

Lots of love and lots of attention. Mine are raised in the kitchen and they're underfoot constantly from the time they're old enough to climb out of the whelping box. I guess just because I love the little monsters. I couldn't stand to have them in a kennel situation where I went out a few times a day and fed them. It's probably the reason why we don't have very many litters. Trying to cook a meal with eight puppies chewing on your ankles is a little difficult! (Laughter). I'm sure they don't require as much as I give them, it's just that I enjoy it. I enjoy watching them grow, watching them change, their personalities as they develop, and each little quirk that a specific dog will have.

I think it makes it easier to place the right puppy in the right home. A quiet couple comes in to look at a puppy - you don't want them to take the hellion. There are people who obviously shouldn't have a pup like this. Someone else comes in with a couple of rambunctious kids (who have also been taught how to handle a puppy) who'll want to run and chase



the puppy - they can handle the hellion. Somebody with a very small baby shouldn't have a yippy-do puppy - they should have the quieter puppy. Some people can handle the dog which is shy, reserved, not scared shy, but a little more reserved, but other people - no way. They have to have the dog that's the most outgoing in the litter.

I think, maybe, I learn a little more about my puppies having them underfoot. I'm very happy to see the first ones go at eight weeks of age but I hate to see the last ones go - even when I'm keeping one, or a dozen! (Laughter). I think I've kept up to four puppies from a litter, which is too much, you shouldn't. I feel you shouldn't keep more than one puppy. It's unfair raising litter-mates together. We have done it, and probably will continue to do so, but I do notice a very definite difference. Seems like every single time we have kept two from the same litter we have one shy pup and one outgoing pup. Now this maybe just happened to be, but every single time there is one shy and one outgoing. Now if I should end up with two puppies from the same litter I would separate them as soon as possible and put them with other dogs. Maybe that would work, I don't know, I haven't tried it. Other people I know have had like litter sisters, especially, and one is very outgoing and one tends to hang back. You don't seem to get that when you have two puppies from different litters.

Many years ago the "great kennels" frequently had 100 dogs or more. Some of those people I'm sure would tell you that one of the reasons they produced the dogs they did was because they bred as much as they did. In other words, the theory being that if there's a great quantity of dogs you're just bound to come up with more good ones.

In some kennels this was true. Not just in Sams or a particular breed. Knowing different breeders of the past, in different breeds, and having done a certain amount of reading, it seems that it is quite possible that this is true, in some cases. They were turning out a hundred puppies a year or more. They had good stock, surely some of those puppies were going to be good. You see ads, even now, "So many champions sired by this dog." I want to know how many puppies did they produce to produce that many champions? I would like to know the percentage of quality, in other words, when I see these ads. Now I see, occasionally, some will put in how many litters and how many champions. I've done this myself. I still think you can produce umpteen-dozen puppies and you're going to have some good ones if you've got basically good stock. It doesn't matter what breed you're in. It's much harder to have a select few dogs and continue producing quality, generation after generation.

I understand what you're saying but I think there

are still some people who are maintaining that really what we're interested in, no matter how you get it, is the improvement of the breed. So if you have to go to quantity to get it, what's wrong with that?

Except do you improve the breed if you're breeding quantity? Again your percentage. If you have to produce 25 puppies to produce one very good specimen, what about the other 24? Since they're not an improvement aren't you going backwards? I still think that a person should be able to produce outstanding quality with few dogs. But you have to be a lot harder-hearted than I am. If I get a puppy which does not turn out to be, in my estimation, quality - and this doesn't mean it's going to agree with someone else's estimation - I won't breed that dog or bitch. At the same time, I have bred bitches which were not the quality, going by heart instead of head, and generally I found I was right in the first place - I shouldn't. But I don't think I ever did that much damage to the breed. If one could breed strictly by head and not by heart. I happen to know one particular breeder, who is not in Sams or Siberians, who raised 100 litters of pups in ten years. He's producing some of the best stock you've ever seen. He started grading them at three weeks and put them down. He's a veterinarian. He, himself, did not handle the puppies - somebody else took care of them. He went in and graded those pups and as the bad ones cropped up he put them down. Which really would be the way to do it, if you could. Eventually, and it took him just about ten years, he produces some of the top dogs in the country.

And yet you called that wrong just a few minutes ago.

I think it's wrong. To me animals aren't an object - they have feelings. I'm an animal lover! I can't do it. I could no more raise a litter of puppies and take half of them to the vet to be put down. I just couldn't do it. So this makes me a lousy breeder, in that respect. I still think a person could produce quality without going to that length, but it's going to take longer. Seems to me that too many, and I figure myself as one of them, first start out to set the world on fire. Invariably too many of them start breeding puppies before they have the knowledge and background. Again we go back the opposite way - to do perhaps the most sensible job of breeding. If feel we did this ourselves. Our first litter was strictly a female we thought was just gorgeous to a male who we adored, who had no faults (eventually I learned what his faults were but even then I refused to admit them out loud - we always said he was faultless and so was the bitch), we ended up with a beautiful litter of pups. Strictly luck! We didn't have any more idea what we were doing than anything! And, actually, I think we produced better by not knowing anything.

Are there any instances where you've actually culled puppies?

You mean actually put them down? Only if there was something wrong with that puppy. Really wrong! Such as something like a leg that is funny. It is not good breeding practice. If you're really out to produce top quality dogs you have to be more hard-hearted. I can't do it. I can say this is the way it should be done.

I saved a little Siberian pup who is now 3 years old. He's not quite all there. I spent hours saving that little monster, mama hated him, she'd have nothing to do with him. He had, we assume, by the time I got to about three weeks, not been able to assimilate milk. I started feeding him ground round when he was five days old out of my hand. He would drink milk like he was starving to death. He apparently suffered brain damage somehow. He thinks I'm his mommy, of course. Absolutely worthless, but I love him. This is one that would have died had I

not interferred. I did have one Sam in the last litter that would have died and we tube fed him. He's the one in the Mid-West who could very easily be a champion if he was just shown properly. OFA clear, I don't know about his eyes, I don't know whether they've checked them. I have saved several dogs from different litters that have turned out to be awfully good dogs. I think this last one was the first, really, that I kept alive who turned out to be absolutely worthless. Except to me, he's cute, that's Tuffy Titmouse - Mr. Bootiful. He was the ugliest pup I'd ever seen so I called him Mr. Bootiful.

I, myself, could not cull. In other words, I could not put down puppies which were, I felt, lesser in quality. When do you cull? I have seen too many puppies that at one, two and three weeks of age I thought were "yuck" and have turned out to be the best ones in the litter. I don't think I would be qualified to cull a litter. I've seen some of the best looking puppies turn out to be monstrosities when they grew up. Unless it was a health problem.

How do you select puppies?

By guess and by gosh! I almost, invariably, select the puppy I'm going to keep the instant it's whelped or within a very short time. Obviously I don't always guess right. Oh, I won't say that. I think I have guessed right in that I have kept what was turned out to be as good as anything in that particular litter and that probably was a litter that just wasn't all that great. We kept Smudge from our very first litter - she was the first female whelped. When she was being whelped the first thing I saw was this head that came out with this little black spot and I said, "Here comes our female." That was it. She was equally as good as the other female in the litter. When they were shown, later on, they went 1-2, 2-3, or 3-4. They were always side by side and they changed places back and forth. As far as selecting the right one - it was the right one for us.

The second litter is where we really goofed and I learned a lesson that I've never forgotten. We wanted a female from that litter. We had the first and second choice males already sold before the litter was whelped. There was only one female and she was a buff. We kept her - she was a good-for-nothing but we loved her. We kept the third choice male who wasn't as good as the first two choices. So now in a litter neither first choice puppy is for sale, either sex, until we have made our choice. This last litter I was going to keep a black female and I ended up with a black male. People say, "Which are you going to keep?" I say, "I'll wait until the litter is here."

So are you still grading at birth or grading at like eight weeks?

I grade all the way along. But almost, invariably, my first choice remains my first choice right straight through.

Is it a gut feeling or are you looking for things like conformation?

I think a gut feeling. The last few litters, including the last Sam litter, it will be the pup my eye goes to - even in an all-white litter. I'll reach down and pick it up (I have them marked with fingernail polish) and say, "Ah, by gosh, that's the same pup." It's something but I don't know what it is. Like I say - I goof. Yet I help other people pick puppies. I do a great job picking out puppies for other people from their litters. I can walk in and watch the litter for awhile and say, "I'll take that one right there." This can be at one, two, six or eight weeks and almost, invariably, it has turned out to be a good one. I really do better on someone else's litter because I'm too involved with my own.

Here again is it a gut feeling?

Yes. There will be something I like and I

couldn't tell you what.

Do you feel that it's an "eye" for a dog?

I would hate to say I have an "eye" for a dog. I'd like to think I did, let's put it that way, but I don't really know.

Tell us about your Best in Show Sam that you bred.

Knika, yes. Knika was sold, of course, as a puppy to some friends of friends in Portland. They kept him almost a year and then their son ended up with asthma and they had to get rid of him. Cliff Bade came by. Cliff had his own Tartar Prince whom he had bought. He was, I think, about 15 then, maybe even younger, because when Knika took his Best in Show Cliff was 17 and I think that Knika was four. That, of course, was out of our first litter - beginners luck again.

I always feel and still believe that in order to get a Best in Show dog you have to be in the right place at the right time and you've got a real quality animal. I've seen many quality animals that never made it to Best in Show that really were deserving but they just didn't cross the right combination.

Anyway, Cliff bought him and he started showing him off and on. I think that Knika was two years old when he finished him. Of course we knew Cliff and helped him out. I always referred to Cliff as a "sponge" because he was always asking questions and would listen to every answer. It was marvelous having someone like that around, really did wonders for your ego. It still does, by the way. (Laughter).

I was supposed to go to Denver, they had asked me to be guest of honor at that particular specialty. Suddenly at the last minute I couldn't make it but Cliff went with Knika. Dolly Ward was the judge and she, of course, put him to Breed after which she had to fly home. She's never forgiven herself for that but there was no way she could stay for Best in Show. At that time I believe there were 830 entries which was a huge show in 1963. Which, of course, is nothing now. What's an 800 dog show? But at that time it was bigger than any show in this area. That was a thrill! I don't know who was more thrilled - Cliff or me!

Was he campaigned extensively?

Not really. Cliff was going to high school and he showed him locally. The only other was Denver and after he returned from Denver in California. It seemed as though, I'm not sure of his record, every time he took breed he placed in group. Cliff was an adequate handler. He was showing at a time when kids, per se, often didn't get a look from the judges. He was a very young seventeen but he did a nice job with handling. Certainly not on a professional level and yet that dog invariably got a good look if not placed in group. I think he had a couple of first in groups besides that. Knika died at a very young age. I always felt that if the dog had been professionally handled and campaigned he could have been right up there at the top as far as winning Best in Shows, etc. At the same time I don't think that's all that important. I think that the fact he took Best in Show with a boy of seventeen was just great. Better, really, than if he'd been campaigned by a professional. Being a Best in Show handled by the owner is a much bigger win than a dog that's professionally handled.

You are a licensed handler?

Yes.

For what breeds?

Everything but a few terriers. I never got around to it. I never get out of the Arctic ring anyway so it doesn't matter.

Do you handle many dogs?

No. The most dogs I take to a show is five,



one being my own. The only reason I ended up as a handler is that I love to handle and I figured I might as well get paid for something I like to do. It also, hopefully, would help pay for my dogs because, obviously, we don't make any money breeding them when you keep all these surplus animals. So it actually has. I pay for my own way to the shows. I've been able to stay at a little fancier motels and eat a little fancier meals when the showing is over. I don't eat a thing before a showing - even after some 20 years of handling.

Like I say, I don't get out of the Arctic ring. I'm trying to limit my Siberian handling because I've ended up cheating my own dogs. The whole reason for becoming a handler was to be able to get out with my own dogs and be able to go on circuits and feel like I wasn't taking the money out of the kitty. I would be able to earn my own way, so to speak, and to help pay the dogs' way.

I like the competition. I'm a very competitive person. I was very sports oriented when I was in high school, many years ago, so to me showing dogs is not necessarily "the best dog wins." I wish it was, but it's an idealistic sort of thing.

You have three minutes to show a judge what your dog has. That's part of the fun of it. It's trying to outsmart the judges and your competitors. I've won a good many when I shouldn't have and also lost a good many when I shouldn't have. I've never gone into obedience since my father used to say you had to know more than the dog to teach it anything. With Sams and Siberians you have to be awfully smart. I feel that if I can get a dog around the ring and get them stacked and have a dog that behaves himself - well, I'm money ahead. I'm an animal lover to start with so being able to combine it and pick up a few schekles - great!

I've handled as many as eight at a show and I don't enjoy it when I have too many. I really enjoy a show more when I've got like two Siberians, and maybe a Sam and a Malamute - as long as they're not all run at the same time. I love to handle sporting breeds. I didn't think I would but I've handled Golden Retrievers and an Irish Setter and I really enjoy the sporting group. I think maybe because it's more of a stylized type of handling. Your Arctic dogs you more or less let them do their own thing and hope they do it right. You try to get them trained well enough that you have a natural showman which you don't have to touch - you just stand in front of him and he looks gorgeous. With the sporting breeds there's much more stacking and holding heads or tails. I didn't think I'd care for it but I do like big breeds and I like a dog I can move with.

Do you turn down many dogs for handling?
I have.

Do you handle to win?

Oh yes. That's the only reason I go. I go to dog shows with one purpose - to win. But this doesn't mean that I don't enjoy seeing someone else win. After all, I lose a lot more than I win. I don't get angry too often any more when I lose. I really feel that the whole purpose of a dog show is to win. Now when you say win sometimes a second in a class is a win. Perhaps because on that particular day your dog at last decided he was a show dog. You had been fighting that problem all the way along and all of a sudden that problem just disappeared in the ring. So the dog took second or third? It's still a win to you. It's not the prize I consider a win, necessarily, it's how the dog behaves on that day. Other times I have shown under judges so lousy I felt I won when I lost because I really didn't want to win under that judge anyway.

As a handler do you like to take only dogs that will win?

Yes. I feel, as a handler, that I owe this to a client. I don't feel I should take money from someone to take a dog in the ring that is not a good dog. I have taken dogs in the ring that I did not feel were good specimens partially to keep from hurting the owner's feelings. Every single time, after three shows, they themselves have seen that the dog is not going to win with the competition and it's been their idea (with hints from me, of course) to stop showing the dog.

Most of my clients are friend's dogs, people that were friends before or became friends as we went along. If this is their first dog and they are a novice I try to point out to them why their dog might not win under such-and-such a judge. I think any professional handler owes it to a client to be honest. I don't like to take people's money for nothing. Actually I feel kind of guilty taking money for handling anyway because I enjoy it. (Laughter).

What do you charge for handling?

\$25. Many handlers do charge more.

Most breeders seem to think that their lines are the greatest on earth.

Of course. Naturally, just because not everyone recognizes that. (Laughter). We're all kennel-blind. I always feel that people in dogs go through various stages. Your first dog is perfect. Usually you never see the faults of your first dog but from then on all you see is faults. When people at last outgrow that stage of faulting a dog and start being able to see the whole dog I think you've arrived. You have to be able to see the whole dog and like the whole dog or not like it. Myself, I have a preference for a specific type which you probably couldn't describe in the Sam ring but I think I could recognize a good one in another type.

Do you feel a handler would be a good person for a novice to take a dog to that they're considering purchasing?

By this you mean, say for instance, someone was buying a Samoyed and called me for an opinion? Yes. I think most people who have been in the breed for a length of time who have become handlers or judges have gotten over their intense dislike of other lines. I can think of several people who you could take a Sam, of any line, to and they would give you an honest opinion of the dog - as they saw it. Regardless of what it's pedigree was.

I have been asked to look over litters of puppies. Like Dobermans. I won't do that - I don't know enough about Dobermans. I have done this for people in Malamutes, Siberians and Sams that have asked me what I thought. When I thought there was something very basically wrong I showed them what that

was - and once again it is finding that one fault. It depends on the individual whether or not you should go to him.

What should a person breed for? Should a person breed toward a dog much like the picture in the Standard or should they breed to win?

I contradict myself alot but I want to breed a dog that's the Standard - my interpretation of the Standard. At the same time I want to win. I feel that if I breed an animal that fits the Standard and is pleasing to me - that's what it's all about, especially in Sams. My ideal in a Sam would win right now, not always but it would win. I think that I would not want to breed for the current trend. I find this very prevalent in the Siberian breed more than in the Sam breed (although the bigger the bone the better in Sams). This was a trend and I still see legs that look like tree trunks which to me are not correct. In Siberians black & white with blue eyes was the "in" thing. They kind of got over that kick and now it's red & whites. I don't care for red & whites nor blue eyes so most of our stock is brown eyed. In Sams we bred for ourselves. We didn't breed to produce an animal with green eyes. Which naturally fits the Standard. (Laughter). In Sams every dog fits the Standard, you can interpret it differently. (More laughter). You have to learn. Two Sams are standing side by side and look so different. You have to have the ability to tell one white dog from another; and yet both fit the Standard according to their owners. By the time you read the Standard and look back and forth, yes, they both fit.

Do you think the Sam Standard is efficient?

I think it's an excellent Standard, very good as it is. Especially the section on gait which, I think, is the best of any Standard written.

Do you think Samoyeds are efficient in gait in comparison to other sled dogs?

I think both Malamutes and Samoyeds are dogs that have lost some of their soundness.

What do you think is deficient about the Sam gait? Is it reach or balance?

I see every type of front going - from the out-at-the-elbow to the pinched front to the lack of shoulder to the lack of upper arm to down in pastern to the too upright pastern and sloppy pasterns. To me a good front is awfully important. I think with more concentration on that overall the rest of the dog isn't bad. You've got to have that balance. You have to have that good rear angulation if you're going to have a good front. I see better rear angulation now than when we started years ago. Straighter stifles was not considered to be normally correct. It's the very very good moving dogs with straighter stifles.

Do you feel a proper Samoyed should carry his head level when trotting? Some dogs carry their head high and others low.

I feel they should carry their head a bit low. They should not carry their head up. If you watch your dogs moving out in the yard their head will be slightly down. I don't mean to the ground. Their head actually reaches out. When you see them strung up, watch that front, it's going every which way. I've seen dogs that were strung up in the ring and, good grief, they have terrible fronts. Then I've seen the same dog out moving in the yard where he can get his head down where it belongs and he has good front movement.

Do you think there might be a tendency for judges to put up dogs that have maybe not ideal fronts, perhaps with a slightly shorter upper arm, which might give you more high-stepping, eye-catching sort of action? And in corresponding with

that, you have a dog that may carry his head a little higher than in other circumstances, when in the ring he looks flashy.

Yes, it's very flashy. That dog with his head up and arched with his chin practically touching his chest, prancing around that ring looks gorgeous. Unless you like a good gait (Laughter). And, of course, that dog might have a good gait if that head was released. Most of the time when a dog is covering ground, going from here to there, I find, especially Sams (they're a trotting breed), his head is going to be out and down. He looks like he could go all day in that position. A dog carrying his head up isn't going to get there.

How do you think a Samoyed should move in the rear?

I think for a time breeders were going for wider and wider rears and the dogs were wide-tracking. They were trying desperately to bring those feet under the dogs but they just weren't making it. I haven't seen so much of that anymore. If I were judging I would probably tend to put up a dog who was close in the rear a lot quicker than one who was too wide. It's just a thing I have seen with working animals. The animal who is closer in the rear can keep going all day while the one who is wide can't.

Why do the Samoyeds fair so poorly as compared to the other Arctic breeds in sled competition?

I think of the Arctic breeds a beautiful Sam with that glistening white coat and gorgeous head is flashy. If people were to see the three common specimens of the Arctic breeds together - invariably they would go to that white dog. I think that the glamour was there to the point that soundness was kind of ignored. It wasn't necessary for the dog to lay on the couch.

A lot of Agnes Mason's dogs were used but you look at the pictures of the White Way Sams. They were very efficient machines. They were good looking dogs but they didn't carry all this glorious coat (they had lovely heads) and they were working dogs.

I think what attracts most people to the Sam is not his ability as a working dog but his appearance. So actually soundness and ability to move correctly hasn't been all that important. My husband and I had a discussion about it years ago. There's a big race, the IDITAROD, from Anchorage to Nome that is run every year. I think if I had the opportunity I could go around the United States and I could get a team of Sams to compete. I think there are good ones which could run, especially the long distance race. I don't think Sams are sprinters. They don't fare too well in sled racing on these nice beautiful tracks (of which there aren't too many). I think where they do best is on some lousy track where they're belly-deep in snow and they'll keep going when other dogs quit.

Do you think there's too much emphasis on coat?

There has always been too much emphasis on it. Nobody admires a beautifully groomed, beautifully coated Sam more than I do but there can be too much. In fact, there is a champion that finished about a year ago whose coat was trimmed on his belly. The first time I saw him I couldn't tell what he was because his coat hung clear to the ground. I don't know what his bone looks like under that coat but it looks like he's trotting around on tree trunks. Way too much coat. To me it just detracted from the dog - all you saw was coat.

I have a feeling about that anyway. Whether it's a Sam, Siberian or any dog of any other breed, if there's one thing that you see - that hits you in the eye - whatever it is it's too much. If you look at a dog and say, "Good grief, look at the bone on that dog," or in some cases I've heard, "Oh, isn't that marvelous. Look at the bone on that dog," he's got too much bone. The Sam shouldn't be overdone on

anything. If you look at him and say, "Oh, look at his head," well, he's probably got a head like a Chow. (Laughter). Siberians are a dog that is similar to this too. They are a dog that shouldn't be overdone on one thing - if that is what you see then it is probably overdone. If you look at a Sam and say, "Gee, that's a nice looking Sam," and then you notice his head is lovely, the coat is nice and the tail carriage is right. Well, obviously that's a good dog. I hear people say, "Look at the marvelous bone," and that's all they see. And I'll look at the "marvelous bone" and say, "Yeah, that's overdone."

Is there too much emphasis on head?

Well, being a "head-hunter" myself. (Laughter). I have a problem looking at a Sam. I tend to look at a head first. I'll see a Sam and I either like him or I don't but right after that I'll look at the head - then I'll look at the gait. Now, for my own preference, I want a good head and a good gait. I'm interested in coat, tail carriage and all those other things, but if I can have those two things; a pretty head and proper gait, I'll settle for just about anything else in between. (Laughter). Of course, pretty heads are a touchy thing. What is pretty to one person is not to another. I want a gentle head - one that looks sweet.

What do you mean when you say gentle? What's your ideal head?

I suppose it goes back to Happy's. That dog, showing all his teeth, couldn't look mad. He COULDN'T look mad! It's a sweet look. I see it in the Siberians too. Basically their heads are shaped alike. I don't like too heavy a head - I intensely dislike too heavy a head. Which we refer to (which I hate) as the Chow head. This almost always has a short, broad, thick muzzle. This dog doesn't have that sweet look. They do as puppies but not when they become an adult.

Do you like the "wolf" type head or the "bear" type?

I like halfway between. I can't stand what I really would call the "wolf" type head (a wolf has a gorgeous head - on a wolf) but what I refer to as a "wolf" type head doesn't really look much like a wolf if you were to put them side by side. I don't like too big an ear in a Sam. Neither do I like a long and narrow head. Again, I like that in moderation. I don't like a tiny ear either. I will say that if you went down one of these extremely heavy-coated dogs you would be very apt to be surprised at what you would find underneath there. There's a lot more ear there than one would think. (Laughter). There's also a lot less dog there, so again, bone - you can only tell by feeling. Sometimes the coat sticks straight out and in other places it tends to go downwards - so you have to feel.

Back to heads. I guess I like a pretty head. I hate the word when referring to the males. A male shouldn't be pretty but should be handsome - but there's always that gentle one. They look like they could never be mean and you don't find this in what I call the "wolf" type head. I don't find it in what I see as a heavy, heavy Chow head.

When we first started in Sams (of course there weren't nearly so many, some, but they weren't as popular as they are now) it seemed as though every other person we ran into had dogs with heads like a Chow. We had Happy and we had quite a hang-up on him. I was taking all the magazines at that time and I ran onto a picture of a white Chow which I cut out (my husband is still carrying it in his wallet). People used to say, "Is that a white Chow?" He would pull out the picture and say, "THAT is a white Chow! Does my dog look like that?" No way did he look like a Chow! "Bear" like is probably a little bit closer, still I don't like "bears." I hate the terms but I

think everyone knows what everyone else is talking about using those terms. Again, I think I want that head in moderation. If I had my 'druthers I would probably take the "bear" type.

How about missing teeth?

I haven't known that many Sams that have had missing teeth.

Do you prefer a "leggy" dog?

I don't want a short-legged dog. At the same time with all the coat on a Sam he just about has to have a little more leg in order to not look short-legged. The very extreme, long coat is going to shorten the legs of a dog that has legs like a giraffe.

What do you think a Samoyed puppy should sell for?

I think the prices have gone up tremendously over the last few years. In this area I think you'd be lucky if you could get one for \$150, for a good dog. I now get \$200 for my Siberian pups and this is just this last litter. Every place else you get \$350 to \$400. I think, from what I've been able to determine, there are people that are getting \$300 for show potentials.

It probably costs you \$100 to \$125 to raise them to eight weeks, if you raise them like I do. But who's trying to make money? (Laughter). I would rather sell a puppy to someone for \$150 or \$200 and have them be delighted with it and feel they got a bargain, than sell one for \$350 or \$400 and have them feel like they had gotten taken because it didn't turn out perfect. I feel there's quite a lot of this. People go out and pay a big price for a puppy and they expect that puppy to be perfect. They find a lot more wrong with that puppy than if they paid a lesser price and they still love that puppy regardless. I've sold puppies that were show potentials but they didn't turn out to be show quality and the people really didn't mind. They didn't sink their life savings into it either.

Do you ever sell on a puppy-back arrangement or on terms?

Cash. I think that anyone who doesn't have the money to put out \$150 or \$200 for a puppy, speaking in general now, doesn't have the money to take proper care of that puppy. I have co-owned and I have sold on a puppy-back agreement and I've come out on the bottom end of the deal every time. One particular one was killed - accidentally got shot. Another one, a puppy-back, I ended up with the dog back. I don't like to do it. I would, at this point, do it for someone I know - and know quite well. I've gotten a reputation. People say that when you buy a puppy from Lila you never really own it anyway. (Laughter). You're "adopting" the puppy and the mother is still around. (More laughter). This is true. I kind of hover over them so when I'm a co-owner it's even worse. Terms - yes, again with people I know but not with the person who comes in the door looking for a puppy and they don't have the \$150 or \$200 to pay for it. I generally say, "There's those people who will."

You've talked about gaiting a dog in the ring with a loose leash and letting him pick his own speed. Are there any other tips you can give for handling?

When I talk about a loose leash I don't mean it's so loose you can't control the dog. I see a trend to let the dog out to the end of a six foot lead with the dog going every which way. To me a loose leash is not actually holding the dog back but if the dog should veer you have control to bring him back into position. I think that's the hardest part, really, to be able to gait a dog properly. Especially when

you've been around the ring six times and you're not getting any younger. (Laughter).

I think the novice is afraid of being left out, they aren't as aware of what's going on so they often stand very close to the ring. The classes going in and out have some problems when these people are standing in the way. I will say that some of the old pros do it too.

How important is the handling in a show?

Very. The whole idea of a dog show is for the judge to look at your dog as he can best be presented. If the judge, in the three minutes he has per dog, never sees that dog standing four-square, never sees that dog doing anything (except maybe laying on his back or leaping on his handler) how can he find anything out? You, as a handler, have only three minutes to present that dog. That's three minutes where it's highly important that he only sees that dog at it's best.

I think the novice handler tends to be all over his dog like wet paint. They haven't learned yet when to relax and let the dog do it's thing. They're constantly after the dog and stacking it so at the last few minutes, when the judge is looking over the whole class, this dog that has constantly been put here and there, goes to pieces. Well, that's the precise time when the judge is making his final decision. Handling is important.

Do you feel it's fair when a good handler wins with a poor specimen?

I would say that if a good handler takes a relatively poor specimen in the ring and he is up against five people with better dogs, but those better dogs don't look better because they're never standing properly, very possibly the poorer dog will win. It's unfortunate because I don't really go for that but, again, it's part of the game. I also believe that most anyone can learn to do a presentable job of handling and if he's a good specimen he should win. I firmly believe that a good specimen will win his share.

Do you believe the "game" is honest?

The game is mostly honest, yeah. When you get into groups and Best in Show then you're in a different ball game. I'm speaking of class dogs. When a person starts out with a good dog by the time that dog is mature (in Sams it is going to be about three or four years) he or she should have learned how to handle that dog well enough to present it to the judge. If they can't perhaps they should seek a handler. When I speak of handlers I'm thinking of people who aren't necessarily licensed handlers but perhaps a breeder/handler. Many breeder/handlers are better and more competent than the professional handlers in their breed.

I've known of some people who have taken their dogs through 50, 75 or 100 shows. How many shows do you think reasonable to expect a championship in, under a point system such as the Samoyeds?

There are so many factors involved. Coat, condition of the coat, conformation, the ability to handle the dog and the judges. It used to be, twenty years ago, if you didn't win one out of three you might as well forget it. I would say that anyone now that had taken their dog (a mature animal, a good one) in the ring and hadn't won one out of ten perhaps they'd better start looking for the reason. Either that dog wasn't as good as they thought or maybe they are fouling up themselves. Maybe they had a time when there were just super dogs in the ring and their time will come. Of course by the time a person has been to ten shows and opened their eyes and looked at the competition in comparison to their own dog they should have a pretty good idea of what to expect. The number of shows to finish a champion depends a lot

upon the area. Up here it's almost impossible. There aren't any majors. California is a real fun one because of the amount of dogs. I think that as far as being able to finish a good dog in the least number of shows back East has the best chance. I think the numbers there have also built up tremendously. It stands to reason that if you go in to compete against 50 dogs, compared to 10, your chances of winning are going to be more remote. I know people that have shown a dog for three years. Why? What's the point?

What training do you give you puppies and at what age?

Practically none. (Laughter). I think with a Sam it's very important to start early. They are more bull-headed and have the ability to pull with their head in any position. With the Siberians once you get his head up he loses most of his ability to really go. With the Sam you can arch that neck up as far as it will go and he can still pull you off your feet.

I don't think it would hurt at all to put a collar and leash on an eight week old puppy. But again, I don't want to see them rigidly trained then. I want to see them get used to the collar and leash and going for walks with you - but not in the heel position. I don't think formal training should start too early. It should be fun training all the way through. I've had equally good luck leash training a Sam and/or Siberian for the first time at a year and a half. Part of it is know-how. I say this after 20 years of experience. You know when to correct. You correct automatically, quickly and without a great deal of thought. You just don't think about it. Some of my dogs haven't been leash trained until they were almost two years old. However, most of my Sams were leash trained by the time they were six months old - as far as not jerking me off my feet. The Sams I've had trouble with were the ones that were allowed to pull at some time in their life. I think that the younger they are started, but without yanking them off their feet, the better.

Was there any other reason for your decision to get out of Sams?

We never really decided to get out of Sams. We just ended up being without them, if that makes sense. We didn't really make a decision, it was more or less made for us. We had nothing to show or breed and we just never went out and bought them. We felt we had lost the quality of our first Sams.

What kennels do you think are the best today in Sams?

I think Harold & Doris McLaughlin, Silveracres Kennel in Colorado; Lyn & Jean Schermerhorn with Snow Country Kennels in New York and Lee & Sandy Wacenske with Pinehill Kennels in Washington. This doesn't take into consideration some of the newer breeders that are producing good quality stock which I might go to.

If you ever started back in Sams how would you go about it? Would you contact these people?

Yes. I'd probably write to them and say, "Hey, no hurry, but I'm thinking strongly of purchasing a Sam. What can you tell me about what you might have in the future and what you might have now?" They could go from there. They would be people I could trust and people who know me and know what my dogs looked like. They would be more apt to say that out of a particular litter they would have something that looked similar to the type of dogs I liked. I would very probably go into something that had some of our bloodlines in it.

(Due to technical difficulties with the tapes portions of the interview were inaudible).

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