

## Chapter 9

### SHOWING YOUR LÖWCHEN



One of the most important aspects of showing your Löwchen is presentation. This dog is superbly presented. Photo Jari Partenen

Showing dogs can be fun and frustrating, especially when you are first starting out. Hopefully your breeder will take you under their wing and help you become acquainted with the process. The Dog show world has its own culture. There are many groups that circulate in the mix. Among the people showing dogs, there are those that participate for the fun of getting out to show their dogs, others to become famous by showing a dog that will make them so and the breeders, who hopefully, are out in the show ring to show off their breeding program as well as to see what other breeders are doing. Dog showing, while characterized as a beauty pageant, is a serious endeavor for those serious about and interested in dogs. There is a language unique to this culture as well as rules and regulations, both official and unofficial. People can become as

involved as they want in the sport of dogs. They can dabble or they can become so involved the process takes over their lives. The balanced approach is recommended here. The beauty of dog showing is that it is a sport that can be continued into old age. This is an activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, races, and economic status.

If you show dogs you will meet many different people. Some are very kind and welcoming, others are cold, indifferent or egotistic. The most important thing to remember is to shrug off the ones that do not please you and get to know those that seem to know something about their breed and are willing to share it. Get to know people who are in other breeds too, since they have much to offer in the way of learning about dogs. You may find that some of your best friends are those that have other breeds rather than your own, especially if your dog wins a lot. When showing remember, as you become more involved, that while it is important to you it is not everything. Keep things in perspective and when you are confronted with some of the unpleasantness that comes with dog showing, you will not take it to heart, but consider the source.



Some dogs are instinctive show dogs. Photo Earl Marie Dingel



This promising puppy grew up to become the first American Champion, Kismet's Pearlbrook Andante. Photo Kaja Donovan.

To get started, assuming your dog is show quality, the rules and regulations must be learned. Each country has its own requirements and rules that must be adhered to and fulfilled prior to a dog winning its championship. The best way to become acquainted with a country's requirements is to contact the Löwchen national club of the country in question.

#### **American Kennel Club Championships**

The AKC has a system that tracks all championship points won by any dog competing at AKC licensed shows. The owner does not have to do anything except keep track of what was won in the case of a discrepancy. Dogs and bitches compete in separate classes for their championship points.

To win a championship, a dog must win 15 championship points. Points are awarded according to point scales, which vary from region to region. The amount of points awarded in each region is in proportion to the number of dogs and bitches shown in the years prior to realignment of the point schedule. Point schedules are listed in front of all AKC show catalogues. Point awards may differ between the dogs and bitches.

Until a dog is a champion, it is considered a class dog. A class dog must win

a combination of 15 points. The combination must include two majors. A major is an award of three, four or five points. Singles are one or two points. To win points, the dog must win over one or more dogs of the same sex. The classes the dog enters to be competitive for points are Puppy, Novice, Bred by Exhibitor, Americanbred, and Open class. The winner of each class comes back into the ring and competes for Winners Dog or Bitch. The points are awarded to Winners Dog or Bitch. If your dog wins points as a Winners Dog for example, and the Winners Bitch won more points that same day, your dog will win the same amount of points if he takes Best of Winners

#### **Show Classes**

At AKC sanctioned point shows, a dog must be six months or older to compete. The classes are divided by sex, with the dogs competing prior to the bitches. All classes follow catalog order. The classes offered are as follows:

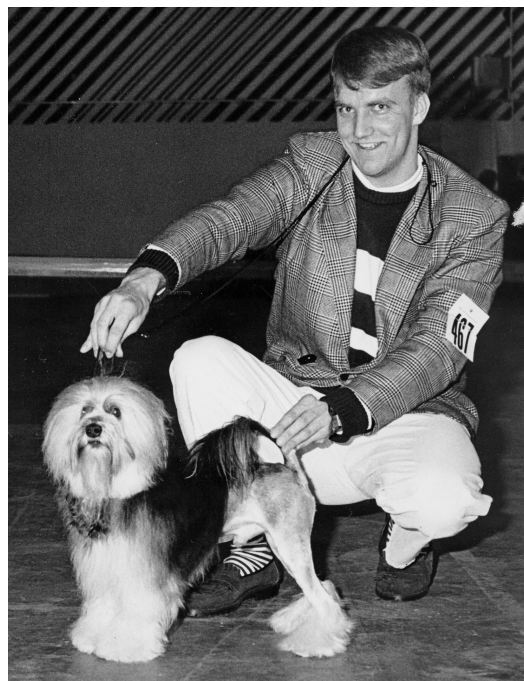
- 1) PUPPY CLASS. These are offered for dogs that are between 6 and 12 months. They must have been whelped in the USA or Canada and are not champions. The classes can be divided by age group; your dog must be within that age group when competing in the class.
- 2) NOVICE CLASS. This is open to dogs that have not won three first prizes in the Novice Class, BredbyExhibitor, Americanbred or Open class prior to the closing of entries. It is also restricted to those dogs that have not won one or more points prior to the closing of entries.
- 3) BREDBYEXHIBITOR. Open to dogs whelped in the USA, that are not champions and are owned, partially or wholly, by the breeder. The dog must be handled by this person or a member of the immediate family. Immediate family is described as: husband, wife,

- father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister.
- 4) AMERICANBRED. Open to dogs that are not champions that were the result of both a mating and whelping in the USA.
  - 5) OPEN CLASS. Open to any dog six months or older. The only exception is in a Specialty Show that is open only to AmericanBred dogs. Then the only dogs eligible to compete are bred and born in the USA.
  - 6) Once you have won any of the above classes you will go on to compete in the next level.

**WINNERS DOG OR WINNERS BITCH.** All winners of the above classes will compete further against members of the same sex to be chosen as either Winners Dog or Winners Bitch. The winner of this class is awarded the championship points. Both the Winners Dog and Winners Bitch go on to compete in Best of Breed competition and for Best of Winners.

**RESERVE WINNERS.** The Reserve Winner is decided immediately after Winners Dog or Bitch are chosen. The second place winner of the class that the Winners dog and Bitch came from are required to enter into the ring, where all the other class winners are still waiting, for consideration as the reserve winner. In the case of disqualification of either the Winners Dog or Bitch, the Reserve Winner will be awarded the points.

**BEST OF WINNERS.** The Winners Dog and Winners Bitch both compete for Best of Breed. After the judge picks Best of Breed and Best of Opposite Sex, Best of Winners is chosen from the Winners Dog and Winners Bitch. If the Winners dog was chosen as Best of Winners, was awarded less championship points than the Winners Bitch it won over, it will be awarded the same amount of points. The losing dog that was awarded a higher number of points will still retain those points while the Best of Winners will be awarded the same number of points. This makes it possible for a dog of either sex to finish its championship without ever winning a point over other dogs of the same sex. This is



Successful exhibiting requires meticulous grooming and presentation. Photo Juha Kares

useful if there are not enough dogs of one sex in a region to make up a major but there are enough of the other sex. If there is no opposing Winners Dog or Bitch competing or either Winners Dog or Bitch wins Best of Breed, then it is automatically awarded Best of Winners also.

**BEST OF BREED.** This class is limited to Winners Dog, Winners Bitch, any undefeated dogs, which have been shown in nonregular classes, and champions of record, which are known among the exhibitors as Specials. All these dogs will compete for Best of Breed.

**BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX.** This award is chosen from the dogs of the opposite sex to the Best of Breed Winner. This can be additionally awarded to the Best of Winners if it is of the opposite sex.

**OTHER CLASSES.** Stud Dog, Brood Bitch, Brace or Team Class. These classes are included in shows if the application to do so is approved by the AKC.

#### Group Judging

If your dog won Best of Breed, you do not have to compete in Group competition, but it is highly suggested you do so. It is an honor to be able to compete at



Int. Ch. Chic Choix Boris Fournier. Photo Juha Kares.

that level, especially if the breed competition was stiff. And you never know, you might win the Group and go on to compete for Best in Show. If your dog wins the Group you are required to stay for Best in Show competition.

Group and Best in Show judging are not haphazard or random. The judge is looking for the dog that best ADHERES to its OWN breed standard. This is a difficult task and requires that the judge thoroughly understand the breed standards of the dogs in front of them. The judge does not simply base their decision on which dog is their favorite breed.

#### Best In Show

To get to this point is the culmination of the day. Only one dog will win, but to be able to get this far is an honor. Doing so is a source of great pride to both the owner and breeder. When you get this far, realize any one of the dogs in the ring can win since they are usually equal in quality. Much depends on the individual dog's showmanship and judge's knowledge of intricate details of the breed.

#### Specialty Shows

Specialty shows have the same classes as described for the allbreed shows but stop at Best of Breed. Specialty shows are limited to dogs of one breed. Winning a specialty show is a great honor since the judge should be a ruthless taskmaster to holding the dogs in comparison to the breed standard. The dog that wins, ideally, best represents the breed standard, as it is interpreted by the judge.

#### FCI Affiliated Shows

At FCI shows there are many championships available to win, depending on the show. You could be competing for a "day title" such as Bundesieger and or for the CACIB and or Championship point certificates. The CACIB is a certificate needed for the FCI recognized championship. A dog has to win four of these to be recognized as a FCI champion. The CAC is the individual countries champion certificate, of which four are also needed to award a championship. If a dog goes to another country that recognizes the country of origins registry and championship process, if the dog wins a CAC, it will become a champion of that country also. This process does not apply to all countries. Beside allbreed shows, individual breed clubs also hold shows, offering points towards championship shows. To compete in an FCI show the dog must be registered with an FCI affiliated club and possess an FCI number. The classes to choose from follow:

**PUPPY CLASS.** Open to dogs aged 6 to 9 months of age.

**YOUTH CLASS.** Open to dogs 9 to 18 months of age.

**OPEN CLASS.** Open to dogs from 15 months and older.

**CHAMPION CLASS.** To enter this class the dog must be registered as such only if the recognized title has been awarded. Titles that qualify are as follows: International Champion, National Champion, FCI World Winner, FCI Europasiieger and other titles. These qualifications vary from country to country and will need to be researched when you are considering exhibiting abroad.

**HONORARY CLASS.** Open to dogs that have completed their eighth year of life at the date of the dog show. This class will be rated in reference to the breed standard by the judges. The general constitution and condition of the dog will be particularly taken in account. These dogs will be presented in the Best in Show Ring and shall also compete for Best Veteran in Show.

**CLASSIFICATIONS.** The following classifications are awarded to dogs in classes that are classified. Classes that are classified are: Puppy Class, Youth Class, Open Class and



#### CHAMPION CLASS.

Excellent (V)  
Very Good (SG)  
Good (G)  
Sufficient (Ggd)  
Not Sufficient (Nggd)

#### IN THE PUPPY CLASS

Very Promising (vv)  
Promising (Vsp)  
Not Promising (Wv)

A dog which cannot be assessed will receive the designation cannot be Judged (OB). A dog is regarded as “withdrawn” if it is removed from the ring prior to the beginning of it’s judging. A dog is regarded as absent unless presented in the ring in due time.

#### PLACEMENT

The four best dogs of a class will be placed as if graded as Excellent or Very Good. Only first through fourth place is awarded. If there are five dogs in the ring, and only two of the five rate as high as Excellent or Very Good, then only those two will be placed. Only if a dog has rated Excellent will it be given the CAC or CACIB.

#### BEST OF BREED

After competition of judgment of all classes and sexes, the judge shall select the Best of Breed (Dog and Bitches) from the Youth, Open, Champion and Honorary Classes. Dogs from the Open and Champion Classes must have been awarded the CACIB to compete in Best of Breed.

#### BEST IN GROUP

The Best of Breed Winners are given a diploma with the group's corresponding color. Only dogs with this diploma have the right to take part in Group Competition.



Niniffee von dem Lowenparadies. Photo  
Martina Fitz

#### BEST IN SHOW

All group winners compete for Best in Show.

#### The English Kennel Club Show System

To become a champion a dog must win 3 Challenge Certificates. They compete against champions to receive the Challenge Certificates. Challenge Certificates are known as CC's. Among the classes you will find at an English show are the following, all of which are segregated by sex: Veteran Dog, Champion Dog, Minor Puppy Dog, Puppy Dog, Junior Dog, Special Yearling Dog, Novice Dog, Post Graduate Dog, Limit Dog, and Open Dog

The next level contains the following classes: Best Dog, Reserve Dog, Best Puppy Dog, Best in Show, Best Opposite Sex.

#### How To Show Your Dog

Once the decision is made to exhibit your dog, you will begin a hobby which at times will be most exhilarating and at other times so disappointing. Much of your success will depend on preparation. No matter how perfect you think your dog is, if not properly prepared, you will not meet with success. A top show dog must possess a showy disposition, great structure and a dedicated owner. Your dedication involves more than stepping into the show ring. You will need to maintain the dog in show coat, keep it in



Getting your dog used to the grooming table is important for show dogs since they will spend a lot of time on the table, being groomed and when the judge examines them. This mother and daughter are left: Ch. Mia's Pretty Primrose Bumir and Ch. Bumir Boule de Neige. Photo Ewa Högberg.

condition and practice ring manners besides financing the process.

### **Early Training**

Some begin schooling puppies at the tender age of eight weeks at puppy handling classes. This is allowable if your puppy is fully vaccinated and you treat this early training as only a game.

Your first task is leash breaking. Everyone has his or her own way of doing this. You will need to work with your puppy to determine the best method of training. I put a rescue lead on my puppies and let them lead me around. Once I have established that the puppy does not mind the leash, I gently try to coax it into following me or at least begin to come in the direction that I am going. I do not turn suddenly or jerk the puppy. At this age, if the puppy does not immediately follow me, I relent and follow it while periodically asking it to come towards me as I back away from it. Eventually the puppy catches on and will eagerly follow. After a few minutes or several practice periods the puppy will have caught on and won't mind the leash. The key to successful leash breaking is to be firm when needed but not demanding. A show dog must have positive experiences while being trained since negative encounters can sour the puppy to the show ring. Do not be harsh or shrill with a puppy since it does not understand fully what you are asking of it. When he finally comes, lavish praise on him and move

forward again. Don't drag the puppy. Wait until he follows you and praise each movement forward. If the puppy sits or lies down, tug on the leash and coax it until it is up and moving forward. If the puppy catches on quickly, great! Try not to become impatient since the dog must associate the show lead with fun. After the puppy has traveled a reasonable distance, it is working satisfactorily or is at the point where its attention begins to wander, stop. Give the puppy a treat and play with it while the show lead is still on. The emphasis should be on FUN. Practice again tomorrow.

By now you will have an idea if the dog will be a natural in the show ring. Regardless if it is or isn't, be aware that incessant drilling will merely sour most Löwchen to the task at hand. They are incredibly intelligent and as such, can bore easily. Working with the dog a few minutes each day should suffice to prepare the dog.

### **Stacking Your Puppy**

Once the puppy is moving well, you can begin practicing the stack or show pose as a novice might call it. Most puppies will wiggle and squirm if asked to stand for long periods of time so plan to go slow. You will need a grooming table or a table with a rubber mat.

Place the puppy on the table concentrating on quieting the puppy. Pose it in a relative stack. Do not expect perfection at first. As the puppy begins to settle, place its feet, put your finger under the tail and position it over his back if needed and hold the head up. Give the puppy a tidbit occasionally if it is standing relatively well. Do not expect perfection until the puppy is older and able to hold its concentration. One trick to get the puppy's attention is with bait. Give him a small piece, firmly held in your fingers. Lift the bait and the puppy's head will follow, move the bait until the head is in correct position. If the puppy becomes too eager and squirms, put the bait away. Being able to stand quietly on the grooming table is a bonus for when you are the puppy grooming too. Again, do not become impatient or frustrated if the puppy is not



Dogs have to enjoy showing too. Too much rote-practice will bore your Löwchen. Make it a fun thing to keep its interest. Photo Juha Kares.

cooperating since this will be sensed and may create a sense of anxiety for the puppy.

When working with a dog in the stack, whether on the table or on the ground be careful to move your hands on the dog slowly. Don't suddenly grab the part of the dog that you are trying to adjust, run your hand on the dog from where it was to where you want to work. The dog will be less startled and will respond more willingly.

### **Exhibiting The Bite**

You must train your dog to exhibit his bite. This is best accomplished from an early age, when you first start examining the puppy for overall quality. If the puppy's dentition is exposed regularly, it will not object to standing on the table allowing its bite to be exposed. If this is all new to the dog, start slowly by holding the head firmly in your hand and running your other hand along the gum. Place one finger on either side of the upper jaw between the upper lip and gum. Pull up slowly to expose the teeth. After a few tries, the dog will usually not object too much. Practice until the dog stands quietly for examination of the upper gum. Then begin exposing the bottom jaw. The desired result is the dog standing quietly while the

judge examines the bite and possibly counts teeth.

### **Socialization**

An important step in puppy training is exposing it to strange places and people. Take the puppy to as many different places as possible and ask many people to pet, hold and play with your puppy. A dog inclined to be a good show dog will visibly enjoy this attention and it is this quality that stands out in the ring. Most top dogs practically scream: "Look at me! I am here, there is no other, the world revolves around me..." A dog with this quality, combined with great conformation and a desirous owner, can go to the top.

### **Corrections**

When correcting the dog, remember the tone of voice is more important than what you say. The leash reminds the puppy of the purpose at hand. A tug or jerk will correct overlyrambunctious behavior. But be judicious in using discipline since the emphasis should be on encouragement when the puppy does things right. As the puppy ages, you can ask more of it, but all the while you must remember it is essential that you activity be fun. If you or the puppy are not having fun, stop. You cannot force a dog to show. If it does not want to show, there is nothing you can do to make it look good. If you or the dog are uncomfortable, rethink what you are doing. Once you reach the show ring, the cardinal rule is not to severely rebuke or correct the dog. All this must be done in training sessions, if at all. Keep in mind, that severe corrections will only result in the dog no longer enjoying itself as a show dog. In all likelihood it will lose confidence and become less than stellar in the ring.

There are many ways of finding out where to show your dog. The best sources of current information are obtained through your breed club, other exhibitors or your breeder. If you are in the United States, you can also contact the show superintendents, in your region, listed in the American Kennel Club Gazette, asking to be put on their mailing list. When you receive show information, known as premium lists, note who your judge is. If you have had an



Help get your Löwchen used to crates by making them a positive part of their life. Crate training is essential for show dogs. They travel in the crates to shows and once there rest in them away from intruding crowds, both dog and human. Photo Felizitas Dylla.

unpleasant experience with that judge or know that your type of Löwchen would not appeal to them, decide if it is worth your entry money to enter under them. Once you decide to enter a show you fill out the entry form and get it into the mail or fax it before entries close. In the United States you can also take advantage of electronic entries. Information on this is available through the superintendents.

### **Show Strategy**

Once at the show, after you have set up and groomed your dog, plan to go ringside. Pick up your armband and then watch the judge. Learn how the judge communicates his demands and be aware of the pattern the judge is using that day. Once the judge uses a certain pattern, he must ask all other exhibitors to follow it. If he asks one exhibitor to do a triangle, he cannot ask the next exhibitor to a T pattern since he will no longer be judging equally. Some judges will loudly and clearly tell each exhibitor what is expected while others communicate in grunts and waves of hands. You must pay careful attention in order to not make a gaffe in the ring. Do not argue with the judge if you feel he miscommunicated with you, causing you to make a mistake. Politely apologize and do what was expected of you. Watch the judge while in the ring, but don't stare! Be ready to do what he asks immediately. Many people have lost placements because they were not paying attention to the judge, but their neighbor was and quickly sprang to action. While some judges will make the necessary

corrections, other might not! Don't lose a placement because you were talking with a fellow exhibitor or spectator. Pay Attention!

### **Ring Patterns**

You need to be familiar with ring patterns. You should practice all variations with your dog until you become proficient at navigating them. Decide where you will need to change the hands the lead is in. You should always keep the dog between you and the judge. Try not to obstruct the judge's view of the dog. A handling class taught by a professional handler is a good investment. Spend a lot of time ringside to study other exhibitor techniques or lack of technique.

### **Gait**

How the dog moves is of paramount importance. You must recognize your dog's strengths and weaknesses. It is up to you to learn how to minimize the dog's poor qualities and emphasize the strong points. Ask someone to gait the dog for you or to videotape you gaiting your dog. Preferably have yourself and the dog video taped. You may be surprised at how you and the dog appear together. If this is a painful experience, try to look beyond that and remind yourself you are doing your best to improve. Look at your performance and try to see where you need improvement. As your technique improves, you will be amazed at how much better your dog will look.

### **Holding The Lead**

The lead is usually held in the left hand, which is the side facing the judge. You should expect to switch hands in certain maneuvers depending on the pattern you are following. Practice making the transition smooth and seamless. All it takes is practice. Your dog should also be accustomed to gaiting on either side of you. Make sure the dog is not side-winding when gaiting on the right since if it is, you will need to practice until the dog no longer side-winds. If it continues to side-wind you will need to rethink your strategy. Get help from another experienced exhibitor to solve the problem.



**Löwchen are successful competitors in the group competitions. Ch. Desusa' s Radio Flyer, owned by Morgan Quirin and Sally Waltrip. Breeder Susa Terrel Williams**

#### **Ring Experience.**

Upon entering the ring, ask if the dogs are lined up in order of armband numbers. If they are, you will not be able to choose where in the lineup you and your dog will be since you are placed numerically. If you can position your dog upon entering the ring, decide where it would be most advantageous for your dog to be seen. If your dog moves out well and fast, try to be first in the ring, and go to the head of the line. If your dog follows better than leads, be in the middle or at the end. If your dog moves lazily, go last so it does not hold up other dogs and thus emphasizes his slow movement. On the goaround, position yourself so that there is some distance between you and the dog in front of you. Do this out of courtesy to fellow exhibitor and also to give the judge time to look at your dog.

#### **Comfort**

Evaluate the comfort conditions of the day, especially if attending an outdoor show. If it is really cool, be glad since most dogs welcome cold and are frisky in the ring. Other days may be hot or sunny. On days of extreme temperature, don't ask so much of

the dog that you are stressing him. Watch your dog carefully. Especially if it shows signs of fatigue, let it rest when the judge is not looking. In a large class, don't ask it to stay stacked the whole time the judge is going over and moving other dogs. Let it relax. Some judges will tell you to "relax your dogs". If they tell you that, do it! Keep the dog going and alert when the judge is looking. You need to watch both the dog and the judge.

#### **Bait**

Many exhibitors use bait when working their dogs. This is merely a tool to try to keep your dog up and alert. Try to not rely on bait too much, use it judiciously. A sign of a novice handler is one who is constantly waving bait in the dogs face. Eventually some dogs just ignore the bait, unless they are great chow-hounds. Use the bait only if it is working. Also do not promise the bait and not give a small piece of it to the dog if it performs. Take care that the dog does not have a mouthful of bait when the judge is trying to examine his head and mouth. If you toss bait while the judge goes down the lineup, looking for expression, make sure you pick it up as a courtesy to fellow exhibitors. There is nothing more annoying than ones dog breaking stride, to try to grab an errant piece of bait left by another exhibitor.

To make bait, you can use chicken, pork or beef livers. Boil the liver with salt and garlic until done through. Once drained, lay the livers on a baking sheet and bake until dry at medium temperature. Most dogs go crazy for this! You can freeze the bait in small portions and take out what you need the night before the show, place it in the refrigerator until time to leave.

#### **The Examination**

When it is your turn to have your dog gone over and moved, you will need to work efficiently and smoothly. Be courteous and attentive. Keep in mind while judges are paid to look your dog over carefully, they are at the same time thinking about completing





Clowning around at shows is fun! Ch. El Guarda Captain Starlite. Photo Richard and Jennifer Lawless.

their assignment in a timely manner. Do not use your ring time to visit and chat with the judge.

Have your dog on the table, set up in the stack, while the judge is gaiting the previous dog. Sometimes the judge will motion you to put your dog on the table but sometimes they will not, so be ready to place the dog without being told to do so. Be conscious of where the judge and prior exhibitor are and don't get in the way.

When the judge turns his attention to you, make sure the dog is looking his best. Do not fuss but subtly point out the dog's good qualities such as a nice tail set or straight top line, by moving your hand in the area you want to accent. The judge will go over the dog thoroughly. They may prefer to open the mouth themselves. They may readjust the dogs stance, do not readjust it after the judge had, unless you want to hide something but remember, if there is a problem, the judge has probably seen it already.

Once the judge has seen what they were looking for, you will be asked to take the dog off the table and individually gait it. The judge will tell you what pattern to follow. If the judge is a poor communicator, your having paid attention will pay off since you will be ready to do what is expected.

You may bring a brush in the ring to touchup the dog but if you drop it do not stop and retrieve it during the goaround. In

all likelihood, the Ring Steward will pick it up and give it to you.

### **Bitches In Season**

If you exhibit a bitch you may find yourself in a quandary when she comes in season. While many prefer that a bitch not be exhibited in season, there are countries that do not prohibit it. FCI rules do prohibit a female in season being shown while the AKC does not. If you live where this is permissible, what should you do if your female comes into season?

It depends. The best course of action if you are at the show, is to poll fellow exhibitors in your breed if you are in danger or breaking a major. It would be a shame to break the major since they are hard to come by. (Breaking the major means that if your dog were not shown, there would not be a major and only single points would be awarded.) If you opt to exhibit your bitch, carry her to ringside at the last possible minute. Enter, compete, and if you don't place, take her back to her crate. Do not stand around with a bitch in season at the end of your lead or in your arms since this may be totally distracting to the males. After placing her in her crate you can return to ringside to watch the rest of the judging. Do not allow her to breed ringside above all! Tell the judge she is in season so the judge will not come away with a bloody hand. Be prepared for your bitch to be spooky or uncooperative. Don't come down hard on her.

### **Preparation**

Packing for the show is either easy or difficult depending on how you make it. Travel as lightly as possible. Some items you might take are listed as follows:

- Folding chair
- Change of clothes
- Rain gear
- Grooming table (or crate with grooming table attached)
- Crate per dog
- Extension cord
- Cooler filled with ice, drink and food
- Tarp (for shade)
- Dog food and dishes
- Water (for the dog)
- Towels
- Paper towels

Garbage bags

Tack box filled with necessary items below:

Leads

Brush

Comb

Hair blower

Tacky paw (used when exhibiting on indoor slippery surface)

Rubber bands (one for arm band, others for topknots)

Bait

Snood (use when feeding to protect hair)

Vicks Vapo-rub (use on males noses when there are bitches in season being exhibited.)

Pad and pen

Spare change for phone calls or your cell phone.

### **Dressing To Exhibit**

Dress for both elegance and comfort. If you are a woman, wear a suit, dress or skirt with pockets. Do not wear suggestive clothing or clothing that shifts easily when you run, exposing yourself. Mini skirts are definitely out, while long skirts that brush in the dog's face are also not useful. Have the skirt be just long enough to be out of the way. Do not wear halter-tops or jeans in the ring. Note that clothes should not restrict your movement. You must be able to move freely and not hamper your dog's gait.

Wear natural makeup. The natural look is best. If you are longhaired, it would be best for your hair to be bound back in a braid or ponytail. An elaborate hairdo that falls as you run is definitely out. The simpler the style, the better. While you're not here to impress the judge, you should look as pleasant as you can.

If you are a man, a suit suitable to the season is de rigueur. If the day is really hot and your judge is a man who does not remove his suit jacket you should not take yours off. If he removes his jacket, you may safely do so too. Do not remove your tie, even if the judge does. (Most unlikely)

Shoes. Either sex should wear sensible shoes, flat or with a small heel. They



Littlecourt Victoria. Photo Kim Schmidt

should be comfortable and stay on the foot when you are gaiting. Do not wear sandals. A laceup shoe is best in a neutral color. Don't wear a bright, colorful shoe since that may distract the judge's concentration from your dog.

Jewelry. Wear tasteful jewelry that compliments your clothing. Do not wear large gaudy baubles. Do not wear jewelry that makes noise. Don't wear anything you would be sorry to lose since showing dogs is a physical sport and you may lose a valuable piece of jewelry.

Do not wear attire that is distracting as a whole or makes a political statement. Try to wear clothing that compliments your dog's coloring. If your dog is black, wear light clothing, not black or brown. Make sure your clothes are clean, pressed and reasonably in style.

Remember, if you are comfortable, your dog will be comfortable and will exhibit better! You and your dog are a team. You both must perform equally!

### **About The Judge**

Interpretation of the standard, judge's opinion and other such terms abound when discussing a judge's decision. Listen to ringside talk with a grain of salt. Remember judges are human beings. They make poor decisions and mistakes just like you or I. A judge enters the ring expecting to award the dog that BEST fits THEIR interpretation of and learned to evaluate dogs much as you



Photo Juha Kares.

the standard. Most judges began just like you do. Everybody concentrates on certain traits that they feel are definitive of the breed. Previous breeds the person was in influence areas of concern the judge has or experiences they had. For example, if the person had to pay for patella surgery, he may be prejudiced (rightly) against a dog with patella problems even if the dog is otherwise outstanding. The important thing to remember is that interpretation of the standard is individual to all persons. If several people are given a written standard without ever seeing the dog described and asked to draw it, you might be surprised at the variations. Keep this in mind before being hypocritical of the judge.

The judge is evaluating each dog to the breed standard and how it is exhibiting itself. If you dislike the way the judge judges, you will remember this and may not enter under them again. You might lose but still respect the judge's decision and be happy to enter under them again. Do not be swayed by

other exhibitors when you lose. Don't join them in declaring the judge's decision political or poor. Even if you really believe what you are saying, you are best off by not publicly advertising your thoughts. They may boomerang. Your power lies in that if you and others feeling the same way do not enter under poor judges, eventually their popularity will decline. Since showgiving clubs choose judges based on how many dogs they draw, poor judges will eventually be given less assignments. Keep this in mind when listening to complainers: Why do those who badmouth judges and shows as being political still show dogs and enter under the judges they are denigrating? If they truly believe that dog shows and judges are political, they would not throw away their money by entering. Be positive and ignore the negative aspects of the sport. Be a part of the dog show scene to educate yourself about the breed and to have fun!!!!