

International Feature:

How Do You Keep Your Afghans?

GENGALA AFGHAN HOUNDS

Jim & Mary Hickie, Williamtown, NSW

Australia

OUR INITIAL venture into show dogs was back in 1956 when Mary and I bought our first two English Cocker Spaniels — a dog and a bitch. Neither of these was particularly successful in the show ring but the bitch produced our first champion and we became confirmed exhibitors. By 1962 we had won our first Sydney Royal Challenge (and BIG) and we gradually became more involved — in breeding, in exhibiting and in administration.

These days Mary's commitments as an all-breeds judge preclude her active involvement in the exhibition of the dogs while Louise and I, the avid exhibitors, attend the majority of shows in our region and keep our judging appointments to a minimum.

In 1968 we established boarding and breeding facilities on a small acreage at Belmont North, just south of Newcastle in New South Wales. This move provided the opportunity to expand our involvement and we had soon acquired some Dachshunds, Afghans and Beagles. Along with the Cockers, success came early with the Dachshunds and Beagles but more slowly with the Afghans, where our original dogs were of a type more acceptable now but not popular in those days. They were a black and a black dilute line-bred to Ch. Shirkhan of Gradeur. Mary then purchased (through Wendy Slatyer) a very attractive black masked gold bitch, Calahorra Vesuvius, which did some useful winning for us before becoming the dam of our first Afghan All-Breeds BIS winner — the tiger brindle dog Gengala Galligaskins. About the mid-seventies we were given a young black bitch, Calahorra Sea Anenome, which

did a considerable amount of winning and later became the property of Edwina Thomas.

Around the same time we also purchased the very lovely black-masked gold bitch BIS Ch. Fermoy Holy Tribute (Ch. Coastwind Holyman, USA x Ch. Fermoy Tamara — a Ch. Mazari of Carloway daughter.) A litter sister to Ch. Fermoy Hey Look Me Over, "Donna" was a great personality and this coupled with her style and showmanship made her a big winner for us.

Then came the opportunity to purchase the black-masked blue brindle dog BIS, Ch. Dzum Bootleg Blue (Ch. Coastwind Holyman, USA x Ch. Emir Dzum Dhamma Pada). "Pasha" was a totally arrogant and undisciplined dog who obviously believed he was superior to everything else that breathed. This was my first experience of living with primitive Afghan temperament, and while I learned to control it, I never managed to master it. That this dog rarely had to be touched in the showing was more a matter of discretion than showmanship on the part of the handler!

Two more purchases from David Roche followed — Fermoy Holy Holly — an oyster brindle bitch which we showed for a time before mating her to Ch. Sanallahs Man of the Moment (USA) and then came the black-masked gold dog BIS Ch. Fermoy El Dorado, the first of the Afghans to be handled by our daughter, Louise, who up till that stage had been showing a Chihuahua, some Beagles and a Bichon Frise, all with considerable success.

Another black masked, BIS Ch. Kelzarki Xylophone, then joined the kennel co-owned with Roz Appleby (Kingstar).

Christine Anderson, from whom I had purchased Dzum Bootleg Blue, about this time asked if I would like to have Aries Gay Abandon to show. I had never seen "Fame," but as she had already won a Specialty challenge under Lois Boardman (Akaba's) I naturally jumped at the opportunity.

What this pale blue domino bitch may have lacked in conformation she more than made up for with her exquisite beauty, her graceful free flowing movement coupled with a rare and elusive combination of style, showmanship and ring presence that made her totally Afghan in attitude and outlook. In addition to all that, she was so eager to please that she almost anticipated what was required of her — in the showing — in the kennels — even being bathed and dried! She completed her title in our hands and had a number of All-



The younger generation: daughter Louise with 5½-months old Gengala Instant Review.

Breeds BIS.

Subsequent to this Christine also gave me BIS Ch. Aries Blonds Havmor Fun, a cream "Dallas" (Ch. Quom Starspangl'd Banner) daughter with an enormous body, effortless movement and a neck and shoulder combination that is rarely seen. Lauren proved that unmasked creams could win both under All-Breeds judges and under specialists, irrespective of whether they came from England, the European Continent, the Americas or Asia.

Shortly after obtaining Lauren, Christine offered me the opportunity of a partnership in two imports from the famous Kabik kennels in the USA. I guess that the rest of this story is well known. One did not come up to expectations and after quarantine in the U.K. remained there in a pet home. The other is the cream Ch. Kabik's Limelite of Aries (imp. U.S.A.) who has had a most significant influence on Australian Afghans.

It was about the time that "Hogan" was being entered for his first shows that we were building our new kennels at Williamtown on the northern side of Newcastle. As I was too



Gengala Main Attraction (Ch. Pierhelo Rough N Tough x Ch. Xebec Chrissys Gift) at 17 mo.

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Three generations:



Ch. Aries Blonds Havmor Fun
(Ch. Quom Starspangl'd Banner x
Aboukir Magic Empress)



Ch. Gengala Endless Flight
(Ch. Kabik's Limelite of Aries x
Ch. Aries Blonds Havmor Fun)



Ch. Gengala Free Flite
(Ch. Gengala Endless Flight x
Kelzarki Sheer Magic)

busy to attend shows, Louise became Hogan's handler. The combination was so successful that it continued throughout his show career.

By 1981 it was evident that we had been fortunate enough to acquire in Hogan one of those rare stud dogs that most people only ever dream of owning. We decided that if we were to take advantage of this situation we should divest ourselves of all stock that did not suit his breeding. Over a period of months those dogs were placed in pet homes, in

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show homes and with other breeders, leaving us with the scope to breed more and keep additional dogs.

That decision changed the direction of this kennel from a successful exhibitor of Afghans at the All-Breeds level to a highly competitive producer of Specialist winners, for not only has Hogan produced quality offspring, but they in turn have continued to produce quality that breeder judges have consistently recognised.

Due largely to the influence of Hogan, this kennel has in the last few years housed a total of eight Afghan Specialty Challenge winners, accounting for eleven Specialty Challenge Certificates — all under overseas breeder-judges. Today these dogs form the basis of our breeding program.

How many dogs do you keep?

Ignoring puppies under twelve months, there can be up to fifteen Afghans in the kennel at any one time. There are also some dogs out on lease or in co-ownership. There are also Cockers and Beagles.

How often do you breed?

We could have as many as five or six litters in a year, although our average over the years would be about two. We do believe that, if you are to continue to improve, it is important to breed the next generation. We have tended to use new imports of suitable bloodlines early in their careers — we sent the first bitch to Ch. Sanallah's Man of the Moment (USA) and have also sent bitches to Ch. Coastwind Holyman (USA), Timu-Ka Ben Zohar (USA), Ch. Timu-Ka Tigirgun (USA), etc.

We have also leased bitches in order to gain access to the lines we believed were consistent producers of the type we prefer. We tend to also use promising young dogs early in their careers — Ch. Gengala Endless Flight, Ch. Pierhelo Rough'n Tough, Ch. Taejon Moon Shadow, etc., all of which have been excellent producers for us.

How do you house your dogs?

Dogs over 12-14 months are kept in individual kennels with concrete runs. Puppies are kept together in large concrete puppy runs with a kennel in the middle.

What type of outdoor exercise facilities do you have?

The runs mentioned above are 50% outdoor and in addition dogs are allowed onto grassed runs where they can really stretch out.

For about two months before Specialties most of the adults are conditioned daily on a specially modified treadmill type exerciser. The treadmill is on an incline so that the dogs are moving uphill and the machine can be speeded up to a pace suitable for Afghans.

How often do you groom and how?

Bathing is usually weekly for adults in coat and some coats are kept in oil. The hydra bath is a home-made pressure unit to which is coupled a hot water service. Coats are blown dry for show but otherwise some are allowed to drip dry in warm weather.

Where and how do you whelp your puppies?

We have a block of eight indoor kennels which we call "the Nursery" in which bitches whelp and raise their puppies to post-vaccination stage. After that puppies go into the exercise runs by day and by three months are living in these runs — earlier than that in summer.

When and how do you feed?

Adults live on a complete dry food with meat fed about twice weekly — one feed per day. Puppies under three months are on three feeds per day made up of dry food soaked with minced meat and added vitamin/mineral supplements. Older puppies have one such meal per day and continuous access to dry food.

What happens to your older dogs when they are no longer used for showing and breeding?

Once a show career is finished, most dogs are clipped off (Hogan is an exception) and live out their lives in the kennels. A couple have gone to suitable pet homes and a few, like Ch. Calahorra Sea Anenome, Ch. Fermoy Holy Tribute, Ch. Fermoy El Dorado, etc., have gone to other breeder/exhibitors.

Of all the Afghans you have owned, which was or is your favorite?

If I don't like a dog I don't keep it, so everything over about two years of age is special for one reason or another. Occasionally however along comes a dog with which one establishes a very special rapport. For me that dog was Fame (Ch. Aries Gay Abandon). For Louise it must be Hogan, whom she has kept in coat long past his retirement. ●

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