

Jupiter's Story



Ernie and I got married on 1st June 1984. Three weeks later, on June 21st in the early hours of the morning, Jupiter made his appearance into the world. The reason I mention about us getting married is because this litter was the first in our marriage and consequently the reason for Ernie's input into Jupiter. It also happened to be Ladies Day at Ascot so after being up all night I spent the whole day at Ascot. Kim, my daughter, was left in sole charge of the litter of nine.

As the weeks went by it became increasingly obvious that there was something special about one of the three males. He was a stunning puppy with only one thing I wasn't sure about. Audrey White who was the owner of the sire also said the same. She had a good eye for a puppy. It was decided we would keep this puppy and we named him Doyle as his counterpart Bodie had gone to live with Kim who was living

with my parents at the time. His kennel name was applied for as Jetset, but the Kennel Club in their wisdom decided that JimBob would be better. No way!! So I kept Jupiter and gave JimBob to the pet dog.

In his early career he did reasonably well with a few Best Puppy in Breed and on one occasion Molly Collins gave him Best Opposite Sex at Salisbury Open Show. She said to me after judging "You'll have some fun with him". Ken Bullock judged our Club Show and gave him 3 firsts and 1 second. He went on to become a great admirer of Jupiters.

At 14 months old at Birmingham City where Cathy Sutton was centre ring I had reasonable hopes but alas this was not to be. It was at this show that a very prominent exhibitor, and now breeder, told me that he wasn't up to my usual quality and I should think about rehoming him. Indeed at that time Ch Neradmik Illusion owned by Bill Allen was really making his mark and was a hard act to follow. I never really paid much attention to the recommendation at the time as I had a promising puppy at home whom I had not bred, but was from my breeding on the bitch side. I concentrated on him and left Doyle at home. He became the guard at home protecting the property.

January the following year when Doyle was 19 months I decided to let him go. A suitable home was found with a very good friend of mine but Ernie stepped in and said NO! (he doesn't say no very often but when he does he means it). So Doyle stayed, as a pet at home. That was the year to change my life in dogs completely in more ways than one.

We decided to get a caravan. It was a really old one but it was just to try and see if we liked it. We decided to go to SKC in May where Ken Bullock was judging. I was also at the time campaigning Ch. Neradmik Keepsake for Mike Stockman. She was just a puppy at the time. I also had the nice young dog puppy. We entered them and as we were taking all the dogs with us, I decided to enter Doyle. The time came to get ready for the show. Doyle was bathed, groomed and all the necessary bits tidied so he would be all ready for the show. I stood back and thought surprisingly Yeah! you look nice. That was a super show. Neradmik Illusion got the Dog CC, Keepsake Bitch CC, I won the puppy dog class and Doyle won Limit Dog. I hadn't entered him anywhere else but as soon as I could I started to enter him.

Paignton show with Harry Jordan was the first show he went to and yes, he won the CC, with Scarlett O'Hara winning BOB. He was on his way. His second was under Margo Emerson at South Wales and the third, Jean Hardcastle at Driffield. I thought that was it but the next year at WELKS and again Ken Bullock was judging he won his 4th CC. His daughter Larny won the bitch CC and Doyle went on to win Res. Group. On to Birmingham National with Tom Horner, where he pulled out all the stops and won BOB, BIG and BIS. What a thrill.

It was during this year that Ernie's input again became apparent. The one thing I wasn't sure about as a baby was his back movement and at this time it was still not as I would have liked it. After a conversation with a jockey he told us what we were doing wrong. With Ernie's dedication to Doyle and the local pub it was rectified with regular and correct road work.

1987 saw a total of 10 CCs all with BOB, 2 Res CCs, 8 groups, 2 Res groups and 2 Best in Shows. To top it all, Doyle finished it by winning the Dog World Top Utility Dog award. What a year!!

Doyle had an eventful show career with some rather nasty things happening to him and some very nice ones. Always when something nice happened, something awful happened afterwards. It got so that

sometimes I dreaded winning. One such disappointment was after he won the Pedigree Chum Champion finals in 1988. It used to be held in December, as Crufts was in January. The thrill of winning the stakes finals is something I'll never forget and he was one of the favourites for Crufts. The group judge and Best in Show judge were very favourable but it was not meant to be as the breed judge only gave him a 4th place in Open. I was very disappointed as you can well imagine. In what seemed like 10 minutes flat the whole of Crufts knew that Jupiter was out of the running. But that's what dog showing is all about.

Doyle went on in leaps and bounds and was never very far from the top. 1989 saw him win 6 more CCs all with BOB. 2 more Groups, 2 Res Groups and 2 more BIS. Doyle went on to win the record of CC wins in the breed only to have it taken back again by Nighthawk that same year.

It was in this year another nasty thing happened to him. I came home one day and saw what appeared to be a lump of fur stuck on a tree which I thought was strange. On closer inspection I realised it was not just fur but the end of a tail with two ligaments hanging from it. Horrified, I found Jupiter in a very distressed state and blood dripping from his tail. No one to this day knows how it happened we can only assume. My vet said it had been deliberately cut. We shall never know!! It was only through Expert Veterinary help that he recovered well enough to carry on showing. In 1991 Doyle reached the pinnacle of his career and won the group at the Crufts centenary show and guess who was the judge of the group? Ken Bullock again. Words cannot describe my feelings as I took the gold trophy but the pictures tell the story. As I have said before something always happens to knock me down to size and 3 days after Crufts, Doyle was kicked by a horse and smashed his leg.

Again, expert treatment brought him back. Careful nursing and the fact that he was a very good patient made sure he was able to come back into the ring and win back the record at SKC in August 1991 under Gina Marsh (nee Weedon). It was there I announced that Doyle would retire from Open competition. He went on and won another 2 Res CCs in Veteran, one being at Crufts. He also won a Veteran Stakes round and had an overall 3rd at the finals. His last appearance in the ring was at Darlington in 1993 where he won Best Veteran under Denise Tookey when he was nine. After that a tumour developed in his testicles so he had to be castrated.

In the ring, Doyle was a true star. He matched every occasion in the only way he knew; he took it on and carried me with him to heights that I had never dreamed possible. With him at my side I felt we were capable of anything and we did have some truly fantastic times. At his peak, he was the one to beat; something that rarely happened.

Some of the best-known names in the judging world fell to his charms; including the late great Bobby James who gave him a Crufts ticket whilst on the move around the ring. I remember that show so well because, not only was it his first ticket at Crufts but some of my secret dialogue with Doyle was made public. BBC South Today were following us that year and had arranged to do a feature; win or lose. To help in this. I was wired with a radio mike and the crew could hear every word I was saying. When we got to the big ring at the end of the day and found ourselves in the last six of the Utility Group they heard me say to Doyle, "If you win this, I'll get you a fillet steak". Of course they wasted no time in holding me to my promise. Doyle did get his fillet steak, Ernie made sure of that, and the picture of him and his trophies at the local pub with Ernie, was taken just after it he had polished it off at high speed.

Whenever I got home, he was always the first to greet me. The memories of the chemistry that we shared through all his wonderful wins will always remain with me. In the ring he gave me nothing less than his best and I tried to return his loyalty by giving him the very best of treatment. Amongst the other dogs in the kennel, Doyle was the undisputed head and rightly respected a such. I have been so lucky to have owned two such outstanding dogs. After Lysander I never thought that I could get another one; but I did, and even better, I bred him myself.

I treasure every memory I have shared with my faithful friend and will forever mourn the day when he left us in 1999, aged 15. I will always remember looking into his lovely eyes and sharing with him all the wonderful times we had together. I will always be grateful that I've had them with him.

Whoever comes along and takes away his CC record will find it hard to beat his overall performance in the dog business. He'll always be my record holder. Doyle - The Professional - Simply the Best.

Jean Sharp-Bale