



**Best in Show
Ch Rocky Tops Sundance Kid (Bull Terrier)**

Well, what does WWW mean to me now?

Wet, wild and Westminster of course! I could also add a fourth “w” - that would stand for “WAY too many people”!

It was indeed wet and wild with NY experiencing the worst snowstorm in a decade. At first, I thought this somewhat exciting after experiencing the recent hot, hot Sydney weather but after nearly landing on my butt six times, I got over it!

I arrived in NYC having had 2 hours sleep on the plane, followed by another 4 horizontal hours. And then bang, it was all go, go, go.

Madison Square Garden is America’s sports Mecca. Pictures of sports stars and celebrities hang from every spare inch of wall space. But today, the place is alive with different sorts of celebrities: 96 of America’s Top 100 dogs are there – amongst others - to compete for Best In Show at the Garden.

There’s something for everyone here and, believe me, it almost seems like everyone’s here!

The grooming-come-vendor area is jam-packed and to get a grooming spot, one has to be in-line, at the door by 5am or you can forget it.

In fact, one exhibitor of a Standard Schnauzer – Liz Hansen – fell and broke her wrist whilst trying to maneuver a place in “the grooming line”. But dog owners never say die, Liz showed her dog and won the breed for the fourth year in a row.

The production of this Westminster Kennel Club event is first rate. The National anthem was great, the P.A. announcer was at his best, and the lighting was truly superb. In between the Terrier and Toy Group competitions, there was a touching tribute to the dogs and dog lovers that helped in the Katrina rescue effort. You’d be hard-pressed finding a dry eye in the place and all rose to give these volunteers a standing ovation.

The lines to get a beer were horrendous, as were those for the bathrooms and food vendors. But hey, this was definitely the place to be. Boy, was I impressed.

But you’ve all heard the hype before. Just how good is it when you break it down.

Attendance – I can’t be sure just how many sports events are sold out at the Garden. But Tuesday night was. Not a vacant seat to be seen. (Now remind yourselves, this is a DOG SHOW we’re talking about here.)

Audience – the crowd support was amazing and, sometimes, right on the money.

Dogs - Some breeds were stronger than others of course. That’s true everywhere. I heard lots of talk about “talented Aussie breeders” and of course, you’ll be well aware of the Dandie’s Group 4. Additionally, a Gordon Setter from Victoria (Brodruggan) got BOB. The Airedale “Margaret” was in attendance, as was an ACD from Kombinalong. Additionally, a Beagelee Beagle was competing. And of course, you’d be aware of the Marechal American Cocker who won her Variety.

Of course, that all-important crowd doesn’t always agree with the judges. (Fancy that!) And they’re not afraid to show it with a few hisses and boos amid the cheers.

The “tradition” that is Westminster – Everyone knows it’s the second oldest sporting event in America’s history and whilst one can’t place a bet on it (hmmmm, now there’s a thought for someone) and there’s no football boots, jockstraps, shoulder pads or liniment in sight, there’s no doubt it’s a sporting event; just ask all the people who packed into MSG on Monday & Tuesday February 24 and 25, 2006.

It was a knockout!

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

PS Don’t forget to buy next month’s edition of **National Dog** to read interviews with a couple of the Group judges.

**Best in Toy Group
Ch Kendoric’s Ricersong Mulronev (Pug)**



**Best in Sporting Group
Ch Chuckanut Party Favour O Novel (Golden Retriever)**



**Best in Hound Group
Ch Thistlelglen Margot (Scottish Deerhound)**



**Best in Herding Group
Ch Bugaboos Big Resolution (Old English Sheepdog)**



**Best in Working Group
Ch Carter’s Noble Shaka Zulu (Rottweiler)**



**Best in Non-Sporting Group
Ch Merry Go Round Mach Ten (Dalmatian)**

