

Perseverance wins the Crown

PAT SMITH and GSD HERDING

At this year's GSDCA AGM a motion on behalf of the GSDL NSW was put forward requesting that at future Nationals the sport of Herding be included in the Schedule. This motion was passed. There were some delegates who stalled the process because they wanted the phrase 'sheep herding' rather than the general term 'herding' because they could not envisage that GSD could herd ducks or goats or cattle.

This year a double Herding Trial was held at Erskine Park in conjunction with the National: one for All Herding Breeds and the other was Restricted to GSDs only.

All of this was due to the drive and determination of one person, Pat Smith of Bhuachaille Kennels NSW. Here is Pat's story:

"Last year I saw a real need for German Shepherds in herding in NSW and in fact Australia, so I decided to try in a small way to do something about it. With a great deal of help from John Hugo, GSDL President, I was finally successful in getting allocated training days at Erskine Park but when the roster came out, I discovered that because of herding trials being held throughout the year, we only actually had 3 days allotted to us, so I bought some sheep, cleared our property (a bush block, now a dust bowl), sheep fenced all 11 acres, built a round yard and am now in the process of building a fenced in area suitably large enough so we may hold trials here in the future. All this with my husband Tom's blessing (he's tremendously supportive of all I do) and I've opened up my place to the German Shepherd Dog League people and in fact anyone else who wishes to train."

Pat started breeding German Shepherds in 1968. She acquired her foundation bitch Limberville Kirsty in September 1967 and all of her dogs go back in an unbroken to this bitch. Pat's first venture into the Specialist ring was in 1973 and the following year at the Victorian National a Bhuachaille GSD was placed 14th in the Junior Bitch Class. Although never really at the top, over the years Pat has bred dogs that have been consistent placegetters. The highlight of her association with the breed ring was in 2005 when Bhuachaille Jazz Leader [Iwan Lechtal x Bhuachaille Expectations] won the Gold Medal at the Brisbane National and then went on to be Reserve Siegerin at the Main Breed Evaluation the same year. Pat's wish is to be able to breed a Gold Medal winning dog but as it took over 37 years to breed a Gold Medal bitch Pat can't see herself being around for another 37 years to fulfil that dream

Bhuachaille Eaga Beava aka Chance, her first herding dog, is now almost 8 years old. He is a multi-Excellent show dog and Breed Survey Class One, A & Z stamped for Hips and Elbows and at the recent GSDL 'National' Herding Trial gained his PT title. Her other Herding dogs did well also -Bhuachaille Power O One aka Conan and Bhuachaille Seraphim gained their HT while Bhuachaille Ramblin Rose completed her HIC. Two other dogs bred by Pat but trained by others, Bhuachaille Quetzal and Bhuachaille Over Drive were also HIC. Pat



is now on the hunt for a German Shepherd Herding trainer, someone who understands the drives and instincts that characterise a herding German Shepherd Dog.

In 2003 Pat fulfilled another dream – she imported a dog of full German breeding from Julie and Tom Bridge, Astana Knls in England, Astana Ywo- Mr Frodo' to his friends. His half-brother Astana Alfons was fourth in the Junghund Class [Intermediate] at the Sieger Show last year.

The German Shepherd Herding fraternity owes a debt of gratitude to Pat for her determination in seeing that Herding took its place beside Conformation and Obedience at the most prestigious event in the GSD Calendar, the National. Herding was a great success this year. It is up to the rest of us to see that it continues to be a regular National event. Thank you, Pat, for your vision and your determination. Well done.

Jeanie JOHNSTON

