

CHICAGO OR BUST

Chicago or Bust! That's what Tina and I wrote, with our fingers, in the dirt on the pick-up truck cap, tailgate window. Ken wasn't too sure he wanted to BUST if we didn't make it but we assured him it was only an expression.

So at 9:00 am on Friday morning Tina bid us fairwell (Tina couldn't go because there were many puppies, and people, etc., she had to take care of that weekend. I think she wanted to see how we did on our own for a change, sort of like the mommy bird throwing the babies from the nest.)

We were on our way to the "Windy City Classic". Lisa (with her boy Shep), Ken & Jackie (with Sherrock, Shep's full sister, Mona, and Colby, Mona's 12 week old puppy bitch), and Me (with Trinkka).

Let me explain the Windy City Classic. This event was hosted by the Chicago Kennel Club and put on by A.R.B.A. Saturday October 10, was for Rare Breeds only. It was a benched show, which means each breed of dog has their own section, and each dog has their own space (or bench) you can decorate, display

ribbons, set up pictures, or whatever. The rings and vendor booths were on one side and the benches on the other. This event was HUGE. Sunday October 11 was set



Shilohs In The Ring

aside for all AKC breed. With them now occupying the main benches and rare breeds having a smaller section upstairs (which we didn't know until the last minute). On Sunday at noon as a special added attraction for the AKC people there was to be a "Parade of Champions", "A Rare Breed Extravaganza." Back to the story. After

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many pit stops to gas up, stretch our legs, and let the dogs out we finally arrived in Chicago at 9:30 pm. We had planned to meet Steve, Jo Ann, and their two children (Jody age 4, and Ethan 11 and one half months) at the Motel 6 that night, which we did. Steve is the Vice-President of the Club and he brought his 10 month old bitch Fantasia and Snow, Tina's all white bitch who was down in Kentucky to get bred by Sasquach (we were picking Snow up to bring back to New York). We all got settled in, ordered a pizza, and did some last minute grooming, etc. to prepare for the following day. Then one by one we passed out.

Saturday arrived with an air of panic. Were there enough towels for us all to get a shower? Did all dogs get their morning walk? Lisa wanted hair spray, I wanted coffee, Ken wanted to go home, where's the leashes, where's the show leashes, are the dogs pretty enough etc., etc., etc. Jackie in a last minute attempt to perfect her dogs gave them the traditional mist of Show Sheen. Only instead of misting them, she dosed them good not knowing that "a little dab will do ya." Next thing I know she's almost in tears saying

she's not showing her dogs. I looked at Sherrock and Mona and they were a greasy mess. Yes, the trials and tribulations of showing. We calmed Jackie down, wiped the dogs with paper towels, loaded up the truck and headed for the show. When we got there we found Herding Groups were the first to be judged. So we halfway set up the benches and all got to ring side. The Shiloh's were 5th in group to go so we had a little time to mess around. Ken found some special powder at a vendor booth to fix the Show Sheen dilemma, I promoted Trinka to some vendors (artist that said they never saw Shilohs and wanted pictures to make t-shirts, cards, etc.). Lisa was busy promoting the Breed (everybody just freaks when they see Shep he is such an awesome dog), and Colby the little big puppy had everybody cooing. Mike & Lisa who live in the Chicago area were there with their smooth coat, almost all black huge dog Gunther. So thanks to them we had a smooth coat to represent that variety.

There were some customers there who came to the show just to see the Shilohs and Steve & Jo Ann were busy with them. (At some point Lisa & I snuck back



to the benches to finish setting up the 4' x 8' banner, ribbons, color picture collages, and

lots and lots of literature.)

Finally the Shilohs were called into the ring. Colby the puppy was a natural at her first show she took 1st place Puppy. Now the girls went in, Mona & Sherrock. Sherrock took winners Bitch. Now the boys, Gunther & Shep went in, Gunther took winners dog (and got his first point towards his championship). Then for Best of Breed Sherrock, Gunther, and Trinka (she's already Championed) went in the ring. Sherrock was the winner. She is the Best of Breed that would represent the Shilohs at the Parade of Champions I talked about earlier. Everybody watching was totally impressed with our dogs, and we told them to stop by the benches for more information.

Well, since this story is starting to turn into a novel I will skip a lot of the other little quips and cut right to the quick.

From the time we got back to the benches (about 10:30 am) until we had to leave (about 4:30 pm) there were always at least 6 people at our benches asking about our awesome dogs. We heard a lot of sad stories about the "other dog" that's similar to the Shilohs. Everything from severe dysplasia at 14 months old, to vicious behavior towards their children at 8 weeks old, total disappointment in general at the outcome of the "other dog" breed. On the same note they were absolutely ecstatic with The Shiloh Shepherd, and the detail of our registry. We stole the show. Our benches had more of a crowd than any other. At least a dozen people wanted puppies yesterday!

At the afternoon show Shep took Best of Breed and finished his championship. Sunday arrived with Steve

& Jo Ann having to head back to Kentucky. We had to hang around because Sherrock was to appear in the Parade of Champions at 12:15 pm, and this was going to be televised nationwide on a Cable Sports Network. We couldn't miss that. When we arrived Sunday we found that the Rare Breeds were allowed to set up benches upstairs. And that this was the BIG day when all the AKC people would be there, our Golden opportunity to promote our Breed. Since Steve had what was left of our literature (which wasn't much anyway) we were not prepared. But we did it anyway and again we STOLE THE SHOW

Watch out everybody this Breed, Our Shiloh Shepherds are going to grow quicker than you can ever imagine. I wouldn't believe it if I didn't see it. And I saw it, EVERYBODY LOVES THESE DOGS!!

When it was time for the parade, we were ready to line Sherrock up, when over walks an A.R.B.A. official (a real "big shot" that I won't name in case any other breed gets on his case for not extending them the same honor) and tells us that we can take all the Shilohs in the Parade. So at Parade time, in trots "1" Shiba Inu, "1" Dogo, "1" Mastiff, "1" Australian Sheep Dog, etc., etc., and then you hear the Master of Ceremonies say "Born in the USA it's the Shiloh Shepherds" and in trots "5" SHILOH'S Jackie with Sherrock, Ken with Colby and Mona, Lisa with Shep, and Me with Trinka. WE BROUGHT THE HOUSE DOWN. WHAT A RUSH.

After the parade we couldn't get 2 feet without people stopping us to talk about the dogs. And these people were there to see the AKC dogs, HA!!

It was a great trip and we accomplished a lot. Hooray for Shiloh Shepherds, and Hooray for US.