

PBGV CLUB OF AMERICA NATIONAL SPECIALTY AND WORLD CONGRESS

The first World Congress was held here in England in 2000. At that time we threw down the gauntlet and invited another country to host a similar event in five years time. America took up the challenge and the amount of forethought and work going into its organisation was readily apparent - although there were the few inevitable hiccups along the line. The Congress took place at the end of May at Warwick, Rhode Island in conjunction with the 2005 PBGV National Specialty. John and Adele Walton Haddon made their overall stay longer to combine sightseeing and golf before and after the event, while Jolanda Huisman flew from Holland to join the remaining UK contingent of Gavin and Sara Robertson, Diana Sadler, Viv Phillips and myself to travel from Heathrow, arriving just in time to miss the evening Welcome Reception, which for some reason finished at 8pm. Very strange, when people were arriving from all over the world.

Forewarned of high winds and heavy rain, along with lower than average temperatures, we went prepared. We arrived under thundery skies and, on the first day, arose to even blacker skies and high winds. With judging outside, organisers were busy in the early hours attaching side flaps to the tenting. These afforded only little protection as, with wind ripping through the tenting and the lovely trophies being blasted regularly from the table, we sat huddled together, in several layers of clothing, wearing two pairs of socks and raincoats to watch Jolanda (du Greffier du Roi) judge the Mid New Jersey PBGV Association Sweeps. The dogs moved up and back under cover and fortunately the rain held off for moving in a circle outside. Her choice for Best in Sweepstakes went to Ingher's Ch Charlen's Gin Fizz (Ch Charlens Make Mine A Double ex Première de Fin Renard). BOS was Helmer's Ch Celestial Star at Tip-Top's (Ch Tip-op's Little Big Man ex Ch Ivytree Virtue). BV was Ingher's 11yr old Ch Charlen's Paradox (Ch Morebess Sur-Moi de Fontenay ex Charlens Bulkhr Hollywood), whose show career included National BOB in 1998.

Dr Robert Indeglia judged the Regular classes, with Winners Dog and AOM going to Ingher's Australian-bred Rokeena Parfaire Crème (Rokeena Alyons Amusement ex Am Ch Chouan Pret a Porter). From 6-9mth PD, RWD and BP was Moore & Barth's Gebeba Texas True Grit (Ch Gebebas Wave Runner ex Ch Gebebas Sandpiper). Winners Bitch & Best of Winners was Bruzzzone & Oxholm's Polygor's Webe Divine-Diva (Ch Polygor des Rocs du Plessis ex Ch Polygor Sensation), RWB Zigich & Litman's Mirepoix's La Petit Ingenue (Ch Joie de Vie's Vous et Nul Autre ex Ch Mirepoix Un Dans Une Million). BOB Ch Polygor's Très Jolie (Ch Charlens Paradox ex Toundra des Rocs du Plessis), BOS Paradox. Awards of Merit went to Barth's Ch Gebeba's Yours Truly, Garrett's Ch Chien Blanc l'm a Travellin' Man, Zigich & Zupancich's Ch Mirepoix's Maximum Mischief and Dorsey & Bustin's Ch Crepu Visage Jolly Mon Sing.

In 2004 the GBGV was accepted into the AKC Foundation Stock Service and, with a club in embryo form and interest in the breed growing, the PBGV World Congress gave those owning a Grand a wonderful opportunity to meet and learn more about the breed. Late

that afternoon, Gavin Robertson gave constructive criticism on each GBGV present. With breed experts Viv Phillips and Jolanda Huisman joining in to answer specific questions, this proved to be a most successful session and doubtless was the largest ever gathering of GBGVs to be seen in the States.

That evening, despite a nearby gas station attendant not knowing where he was, let alone being able to direct us to where we wanted to go, a convoy of cars including us Brits, accompanied by Canadians and Danes and much laughter, finally managed to find our way in heavy rain to a renowned harbour restaurant. There, in the dark, we watched boats tossing on choppy seas set against a background of sheet lightning overhead. But, as we tucked into the recommended lobster, we conceded that we were there for dog matters, not the weather. That night I worked out how to fix the toilet in our room, which refused to stop flushing. Four men came during our stay but none actually mended it. I considered taking the cistern top to the front desk as I remonstrated with them that it needed mending, not just fixing. All to no avail - and I heard later that others had also had plumbing problems.

By day two the wind had dropped slightly for the Eastern Regional Specialty but temperatures remained at an all time low, forcing Gunnar Nymann to wrap towels from the hotel room round his legs. Australian Robyn Wallis (Rokeena) awarded Best in Sweeps to Gebeba Texas True Grit and BOS to Koprovic's Ch Westwinds Just Wanda Have Fun (Ch Avant-Weavers Westwinds Duncan ex Ch Westwinds Sharlies Petit Ange). Nick Frost (Dehra) judged Regular classes and his WD was Rokeena Parfaire Crème, RWD Helmer & Hurty's Celestial Bihar CJ's Top Gun (Ch CJ's Greatest Show on Earth ex Ch Bihar's Panache). WB and BOW Lacey-Black's Jubilee's Speed Demon by Lacey (Laceys State of the Art v Jubilee ex Balmar's French Kill v Jubilee). From 6-9mth Puppy, RWB & BP was Haberstock's Rokeena Belle Etoile (Rokeena Alyons Amusement ex Rokeena Brillante).

BOB Ch Polygors Très Jolie, BOS Dorsey & Perrott's BV Ch Nestor de Fin Renard (Igor d'Iparla ex Hawai de FR). AOWs went to Moore's Ch Pine Edge J Joli Luxuex, Zigich & Zupancich's Ch Mirepoix's Maximum Mischief, Skerritt, Neuschaefer, Bruce and Lacey-Black's Ch Monkams Famous Grouse, Nymann, Busk and Taranto's Ch Chouan Fish n' Chips and Ingher's Ch Charlens Paradox.

At the evening's clam bake buffet, we were heartened to hear how truly privileged we were to experience the worst weather in north-east America since 1872. The evening ended with a magnificent auction where, despite Adele's evil eye, John Walton Haddon continued to give the nod, determined to win a decorated Australian boomerang.

For National Specialty day the sun finally shone as Gavin Robertson (Soletrader) judged the Sweeps. His winner was Jolanda's day one BOS, Helmer's Ch Celestial Star at Tip-Top's, with BOS going to the previous day's AOM winner, Ch Monkams Famous Grouse. Gavin's BV was Ch Charlens Paradox. Kitty Steidel (Sanchu) judged the Regular classes and her principal winners were: WD Rokeena Parfaire Crème, which gave the young

dog his American title in 3 straight shows. From 6-9mths, RWD Nizborski's Centrestage Marquee (Sidekick's Hunka Burnin' Love ex Ch Centrestage Honey Bunny). WB and BOW Oxholm's Polygors Webe Devine-Diva, from 6-9mths, RWB was a repeat win for Mary-Em Haberstock's Rokeena Belle Etoile. Having recently lost her husband, Roy, Mary-Em confided that she shed a few tears in wishing that he could have been there to share in her success.

BOB went to Helmer's Ch Celestial CJ's Jolly Fairchild (Ch CJ's Greatest Show on Earth ex Ch Pepperhill Razzle Dazzle), BOS Dorsey & Bustin's Ch Jombri's Hot Shot LeChasse (Ch Nestor de Fin Renard ex Ch Sohapy After Our Chardonnay). AOM winners were: Ingher's Paradox, Zigich & Zupancich's Maximum Mischief, Barth's Yours Truly, Dorsey & Perrott's Nestor and a further one to Jolly Mon Sing, son of the BOS winner.

The evening saw yet another wonderful buffet meal, with awards being presented to top dogs in the breed and long time club members and those who have contributed greatly to the breed, followed by judges' brief views of the dogs they had gone over.

Some of the other sessions during the event were agility and obedience, a DNA blood draw and Jeff Pepper's judges seminar. This included mention of the revised breed standard, followed by mentoring ringside. There was also the PBGVCA general meeting, where future selection process of National judges was discussed, and a seminar on ticks given by Dr Joyce Login a field vet from West Windsor, New Jersey. This was a fascinating, if somewhat off-putting, subject accompanied by magnified photos. Surprisingly, the advice was not to try and smother the tick with anything like nail polish remover before removing, as this encourages it to disgorge contents in its body back into the host, including infections. Don't twist it when removing with tweezers, just grip the body and pull gently and firmly.

With sales on and Memorial Day discount of 65% off sale price, several of us weakened at the local malls. John Walton Haddon, encouraged by a bevy of ladies, came away with a large carrier bag from Macy's men's department and Diana Sadler acted obligingly as my clothes rack as I kept adding to clothes to buy.

Saturday morning dawned to sunny skies - and we were inside for the start of the congress. The timetable boasted speakers from many countries. If I have any criticisms, it would be that it didn't allow time for group discussion in between talks, to add variety. Also, with speakers absent from Japan, Finland, France and Italy, and despite Gunnar Nymann establishing that most present were show people and not into hunting, the timetable ended up rather top-heavy on hunting or Hunting Instinct Test details and even on GBGVs. Granted though this was a wonderful opportunity for the few American Grand owners to meet up with breed experts and, hopefully, with their new club under way, five years down the line will see them hosting their own successful events.

Following a talk by Nick Frost on the influential Clipperdown forerunners and how line-

breeding can play a useful part in any breeding programme, also a talk by James Scharnberg of the Skycastle pack, day two ended midday with a question and answer session, the only time everyone could offer their opinion. During the congress, and indeed after it had finished, important issues were discussed, such as eyes, epilepsy and neck pain, also the importance of correct coat texture and method of presentation. We all left with a feeling that there was a unity of mind on protecting the PBGV's health and future around the world and I am sure a positive stance is emerging with much common ground on health issues, where many will work together in the future.

Arrangements are already under way for the next National, which I will be judging in Sacramento, April 2006. With people from as far afield as Australia and Europe already planning to be there, this gives an opportunity to progress the good liaison already formed at this year's successful event.

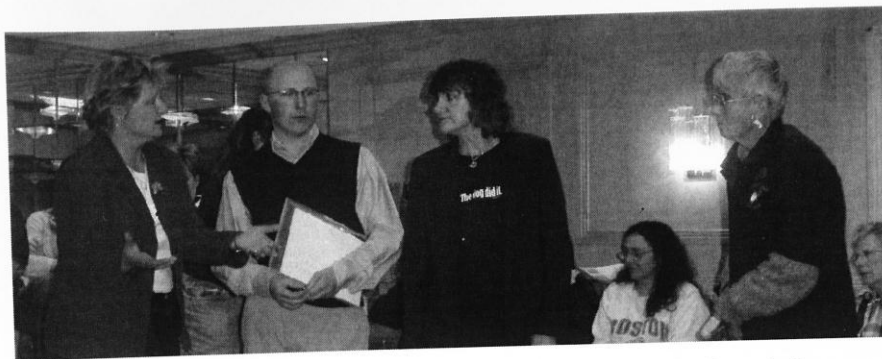
Linda Skerritt



GBGV Group at the meeting



**Left - BOS Ch Jombris Hot Shot Le Chasse and
Right - BOB Ch Celestial CJ's Celestial Fairchild**



Jolanda Huisman, Gavin Robertson, Vivien Phillips and Debbie Perrot discuss GBGV



**Am Ch Monkams Famous Grouse,
AOM Eastern Regional Speciality.
Judge Nick Frost**



**Robyn Wallis (Australia) Gunnar Nymann (Denmark)
and Gavin Robertson (UK) - speakers at the Congress**