

# THE JET'S TALE

Anna Szabó tells the story of one of the world's most successful kennels

**W**ith more than 740 homebred champion titles in 62 countries, the Jet's Greyhounds in Norway are among the top kennels of all breeds of all time.

Kari Engh started with the breed in 1955. Her son Espen Engh has bred more UK champions than any other overseas breeder and is at the same time one of the world's most travelled dog judges.

"When people ask how I got my first dog, I say that I didn't get the dog. The dogs got me!" is the customary answer Espen would give when asked how he got involved in his lifelong passion.

He was literally born into the dog world, and he and his mother, the late Kari Engh, started breeding in 1975 and thus the kennel's success saga began.

This remarkable story demands an experienced chronicler, and even though I don't qualify as such, I shall give my best attempt to cover every aspect of mother and son's unprecedented co-operation that yielded one of the world's most successful kennels.

In these pages, we analyse the kennel's history that has now spun for more than four decades and honour those individuals, whether two or four-legged, thanks to whom its engine has not shown any signs of slowing down.

Kari is said to have had a knack for getting people to do things and quickly got her mother to develop a keen interest in the sport, after having bought her first Greyhound at the age of 16 in 1955. The puppy was of half show, half coursing breeding with no kennel name and of no consequence in the show scene, as despite extensively showing him, Kari never managed to make him a champion. Nevertheless, he left his mark by siring the first litter for the later influential Dogcastle kennel of Ingebjørg Stenhaugen in Norway.

Kari, unable to breed at the time, continued to focus on keeping and exhibiting Greyhound males whom she showed to much greater success. Along the way, she



Kari Engh with six champion bitches in 1996.

PHOTO ELISABETH ESPEDAL-HOOGSTRAATE



Kari's son Espen Engh with one of his puppies at home.

PHOTO ANNA SZABÓ



Helga Knudsen with her daughter Kari Engh and Ronnie King, 1955. Mrs Knudsen later owned her own Greyhound champion.



Kari Engh with her first Greyhound, Ronnie King, 1955.

gained ample experience, graduated from 20 years of rearing, training and competing with her males and got to know the breed inside out before she even started to look for a foundation bitch. Espen believes this to be the key to their immediate success in the first years of their breeding.

Kari got herself involved in obedience and ring stewarding, which served her well when she began to pursue her judging career, making her championship show debut in 1968. She quickly rose to the ranks and was the first woman in Norway

to become an all-rounder judge.

She courted much respect as one of the leading all-breed judges of her generation and took pride in appointments such as the famous Santa Barbara show, the Greyhound Club of America specialty and the Greyhound Club championship show in the UK.

She was appointed to judge her breed at Crufts in 2003, but to her great disappointment, she had to withdraw due to health reasons.

She was also passed to award CCs in the UK in Borzois, Irish Wolfhounds and Whippets.

Ingebjørg's UK imports left a substantial legacy: Nord Ch Running Partridge and more importantly his uncle Int Ch Treetops Rising Pheasant (a Ch Treetops Hawk son) – these dogs took the breed to a whole new level in Scandinavia. They figure prominently when visiting the roots of Jet's pedigrees.

Kari's first truly successful show dog was a Norwegian-bred grandson of Rising Pheasant, **Int Ch Jet Commander**, a three-quarter RP-bred dog whose breeding boasted strong crosses between two great British strains, Jessie Prowse's Carnlanga from Cornwall and Judy de Casembroot's Treetops.

She co-owned him with her then barely school-aged son Espen, who inherited her deep fascination with the sport. He has been very actively involved in dogdom from a very early age, as his mother took him along to shows after he was just a month old and actively supported his interest in dogs.

According to his own account, his favourite pastime at that time was writing out circular ten-generation pedigrees. He read everything he could find about dogs, including DOG WORLD, kept an extensive collection of pedigrees and corresponded with some of the top breeders in other countries.

He made a team with his mother from the start and always counted each other's council to be equally important. They were very rarely at variance with each other's views, and Espen claims his ideals and priorities are still heavily influenced by his mother, even years after her death. He exhibited great skills in handling as well and is still proud of having piloted another well-titled male they imported from Britain, **Int Ch Gayside Solomon Grundy**, to RBIS at Bergen international when he was only ten years old. Solomon Grundy was a tremendous success in Norway where he was runner-up Dog of the Year in 1973. He was, in fact, the first dog to carry Brenda Rowe's affix.



The Jet's foundation bitch Int Ch Gulds Choice Cimone (standing) and her son Int Ch Jet's White Christmas. Cimone won BOB at the Norwegian Greyhound Club show as a veteran under Barbara Wilton Clark (Shalfleet) in 1978 and White Christmas under Brenda Rowe (Gayside) in 1984.

PHOTO ESPEN ENGH

Meanwhile in Sweden, Ann Gustavsson established her own kennel which she named Gulds after her foundation bitch, Int/ Nord Ch Guld, bred by the breed's doyen Göran Bodegård with Bo Bengtson in Sweden, whelped in 1966 (the same year as Jet Commander).

Mrs Gustavsson outcrossed her to her English import Int Ch Croswolla Nova. Even though the two were not closely related, behind both of them were several of the already proven Treetops/ Carnlanga crosses.

This produced the famous Gulds BB litter, which later left a significant mark on the breed throughout the world, particularly in Scandinavia and the US. Kari judged several of the Gulds BB dogs and was their ardent admirer.

Mrs Gustavsson was planning to repeat the combination which seemed would produce just the brood bitch Kari and Espen had been long searching for, in order to start their own breeding. Hence, they acquired **Gulds Choice Cimone**, their foundation bitch, and events began to unfold. She taught the mother and son twosome what traits make a brood bitch worth gold. She was to

**All-Champion Litter of 12**  
**Jet's Greyhounds**  
 We are celebrating this all champion litter of 12, sired by UK Int.Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered out of Int.Ch Jet's Take It Or Leave It.

Representing our 25th anniversary celebration of imported all champion champions, this last litter bred with the late Karl Erik and Mrs. Inge in May 2011.

Congratulations to the owners and many thanks to Ann and Espen for their support!

**Espen Engh**  
 espengreynhounds.com

A two-page DOG WORLD advertisement honouring the all-champion litter of 12, born in 2011, by Int/UK Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered ex Int Ch Jet's Take It Or Leave It.

DESIGN BY ANNA SZABÓ

provide the ideal base for the today ten-generation strong Jet's bitch line. We'll come back to this later.

Cimone turned out to be an exceptional show dog as well, winning BIS at international shows both in Norway and Sweden and ending up number two Top Dog all breeds in Sweden in 1973 and in Norway in 1975. She was Top Bitch all breeds both years.

When Kari and Espen started to breed in the '70s, there were a number of Greyhound breeders who had established their own strains and served as mentors, tutors and friends. To name some: des Saintes Croisades in France, Aroi and Kingsmark in the US, Gulds, Dogcastle (as stated above) and Sobers in Scandinavia and Shalfleet, Shaunvalley, RP and Solstrand in the UK.

This created a more than ideal climate of inspirational competition and access to excellent breeding stock for any wannabe breeder to have the chance for a solid start in the breed.

Kari and Espen applied for the prefix Jet's (after Jet Commander) in 1971, and their first homebred litter was born in 1975.

They regarded Jet Commander to be more compatible with Cimone in type and pedigree over their initially more attractive Solomon Grundy. As far as Solomon Grundy was concerned, he produced litters for numerous breeders, but never one for his own owners. Probably for the best, as Espen tells me he didn't quite fulfil the expectations of those who used him for their bitches.

Commander and Cimone weren't that closely related, but both their breeding go back to a series of crosses between the Treetops and Carnlanga lines.

The mating produced a litter of outstanding quality. From this first litter came **Int Ch Jet's Elegant Negress**, a champion at ten months old, BIS winner at international all-breed show level and Top Bitch all breeds in Norway 1976.

The combination was repeated to produce a number of champions, including **Int Ch Jet's Stardust** and **Int Ch Jet's White Christmas**, but repeats have hardly ever been done at Jet's since then.

Greyhounds produce large litters and breed true, and according to Espen you either get what you hoped for in the first combination, or you are not likely ever to get it. Thus, repeats are considered a waste of time when there are new possibilities.

Cimone also had a tightly inbred litter to her own son, White Christmas, if only to produce another quality litter with no serious health problems, confirming that Cimone could be heavily in- or line-bred on. Several constructional faults showed up, though, which gave Kari and Espen and indication about what they had to work with in generations ahead.

Negress came forth as the best bitch of her generation, as did her dam. She was to provide the link to the future generations. Unfortunately, she was bred only once, but certainly with a most favourable outcome to the closely related Int Ch Psykotic, who was Scandinavia's outstanding dog of the time.

He proved to be a particularly good stud dog, and Negress produced an exceptional litter to him, with the next prominent bitch to continue the bitch strain, **Int Ch Jet's Pink Panther**. She won the Nordic Winner title four times in a row and won FCI international show BIS in both Norway and Sweden.

One of my favourite stories Espen told me is about the time they showed her at the 1984 Helsinki international, which best illustrates the wonderful presence Pink Panther possessed. The breed judge excused Espen and Panther from the ring, for he was convinced she was double-handled. Espen refused to leave the ring and luckily managed to reassure the judge, with the support of the ring steward and the student judge, that there was no breach of rules. He not only agreed to judge Panther, but awarded her BOB in a very competitive entry, and later even best of group.

Her breeders considered her exceptional for conformation and temperament, and significantly better than her parents or siblings. In many ways she was the cornerstone bitch whom Espen



*Int Ch Jet's Elegant Negress was born in the first Jet litter in 1975. She was the first Jet's champion (at ten months) and Norway's Top Bitch of all breeds in 1976.*

*Int Ch Jet's Pink Panther and her daughter Int Ch Jet's Kerrs Pink, both important early brood bitches for Jet's and who figure in most Greyhound pedigrees around the world.*

PHOTO ESPEN ENGH



recalls as one of the best Greyhounds they ever bred.

Then came the task of breeding from her, which didn't quite prove to be a straightforward one. There were great expectations for what Pink Panther could produce in the whelping box. She had litters to four different dogs and produced a number of top winning champions. However, none of them turned out to be as good as herself in the opinion of the breeders.

They arrived at a point where they had to realise the only way to progress in later generations was to take a step or two backwards. There were no stud dogs as good as Panther at the time, so it was hardly realistic to expect her to improve on herself or produce an offspring equalling her right in the first generation.

So, Kari and Espen embarked on a project to line-breed heavily to her. Each of the four males she was mated to was chosen to improve on her in one trait or another.

Then, they spent the next generations line-breeding to her without doubling up on the males she was bred to.

One of her most significant offspring was **Int Ch Jet's Kerrs Pink**, mother of two internationally influential sires and top winners by **Int Ch Dogcastle Peacock**; **Int Ch Jet's The Sting** in Finland and **Int Ch Jet's For Your Eyes Only** in Denmark.

Notwithstanding, the representative bitch of this generation was another daughter of Panther, by the Swedish-bred Ch Honey Classic White Elephant: **Int Ch Jet's Coco Chanel**, BIS at both the Swedish and Norwegian Greyhound Club specialties. She was bred to her nephew, For Your Eyes Only, to produce what her breeders call 'the brood bitch per excellence'.

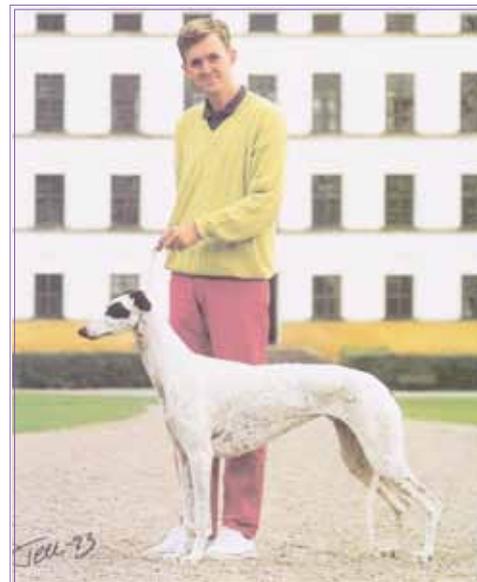
In order to have a better understanding of the next high-profile episode of this breeding programme, let us analyse the 'Jet's code' first.

When observing Jet pedigrees, it becomes obvious in an instant that their structure is based on careful planning and a unique system the dogs are bred within.

Since the foundation, the very best bitch of each generation has been chosen to become what Espen calls the alpha-bitch, the bitch that goes into the bitch tail line of the pedigree. Ideally, this bitch is bred three or four times to three or four different males that are closely related to her, in order to keep the alpha bitch line



*Int Ch Jet's Coco Chanel, the fourth alpha-bitch, pictured winning BOB under Ralph Parsons at the Norwegian Greyhound Club specialty in 1988. Mr Parsons provided a significant part of the Jet's foundation stock in the 1960s.*



*Int Ch Jet's Headed Like A Snake, winning BIS at the Skokloster Sighthound Show, shown at the age of 15 months with Åge Gjetnes.*

PHOTO TELL

line-bred at all times.

At least two daughters from each of these litters stay at home until it becomes completely clear which one is superior to the other(s). This is usually around the age of 12-15 months. This has been a very effective practice to ensure the potential breeding stock is fed, exercised and socialised to the best possible degree to allow them to fulfil their potential.

From the six to eight selected bitches, one emerges as the next alpha-bitch from this new generation to carry on the bitch line. She will then in her turn have three or four litters to closely related males. Sometimes those males will come from other breeders, such as males out of the Jet's bitches or males who were sold to others, but recently, more often than not, Espen has had to breed the males himself.

Owing to the disappearance of the great strains, it is no longer possible to depend entirely on other breeders producing males. So, the second best bitches of their generations, the beta-bitches, are picked to produce males.

Ideally, the beta-bitch should be a half-sister to the alpha-bitch. The beta-bitch is normally outcrossed to try to bring in traits that need improvement with the Jet strain.

Needless to say, quite a few outcrosses do not work and do not produce anything that would be wise to breed on from. These combinations are much less predictable, which is precisely why only the beta-bitch is outcrossed to incorporate wanted traits from other strains, but do not run the risk of ruining the tail bitch line while doing so.

Fortunately, some of the outcrosses to beta-bitches do produce males that can be mated to the alpha-bitches later on. This method keeps the bitch line line-bred at all times with about a quarter of something else. This also serves as a perfect system for the small-scale breeding (one litter per year on an average) Jet's has always been run on.

It goes without saying that for this theory to successfully materialise as a strong, predictable strain in the practice, it is crucial to be absolutely objective about your dogs and recognise their qualities and weaknesses in view of fair light.

Espen says: "If you are not able to assess your dogs objectively, you cannot expect to be able to improve on them. So people who are kennel-blind are simply their own worst enemies.

"Selection is the key to breeding excellent dogs. The stronger you are able and willing to select, the more you can advance. In a large breed, as indeed in most breeds, standardising the

environment to make your selection based on inherent or genetic difference is crucial. Therefore we keep on to all our potential alpha-bitches until they are fully grown.

"And we have never ever been tempted to sell or export any of our key dogs, and it has not been for lack of offers. Still we have made several mistakes with our selection over the years, selling Ravishing Redhead is an obvious example."

Espen does not rule out that being a veterinary surgeon and having taken his doctoral degree with genetics as one of his major topics has played some part in forming the Jet's breeding philosophy.

The next anchor of the kennel was **Int Ch Jet's Headed Like A Snake**, 'Hildur'. It was just before her birth that Espen's life partner Åge Gjetnes came into the picture. Himself a well-established Afghan Hound breeder, he has been a huge support to Espen and has done more than his share of all the daily practical work, especially with raising the litters. They have both bred and did the brainwork on combinations separately from each other with regard to their own breeding. That said, breeding is, nevertheless, a joint effort and much discussion goes into it.

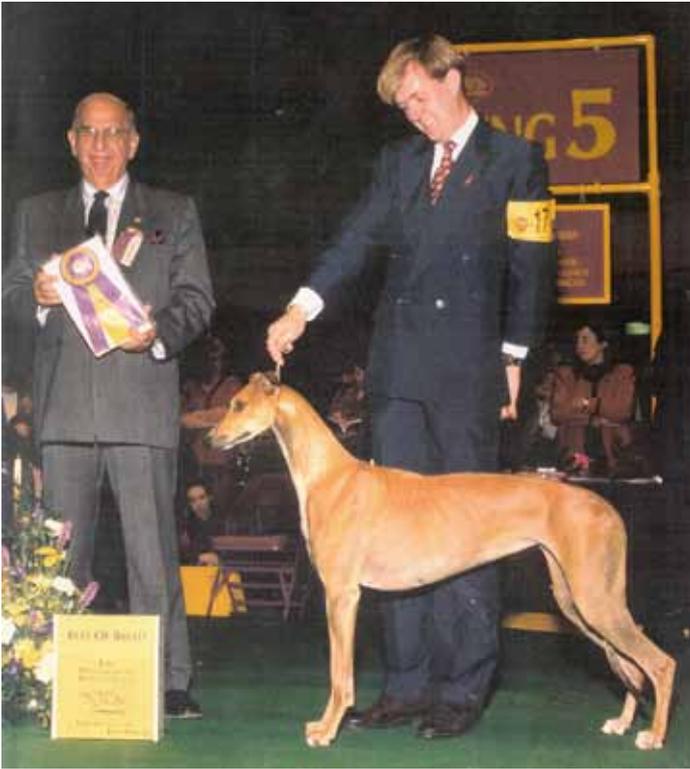
Having somebody to discuss potential matings and evaluate puppies and grown-up dogs with has been most valuable. Åge is an exceptional handler, too, and has piloted many Jet dogs to some of the kennel's greatest wins for 26 years now.

A star in the show ring, Hildur won BIS at the largest one-day all-breed show ever in Norway, Biri international, BIS at Skokloster, which was considered to be the world's most highly esteemed sighthound specialty at the time, and BIS at both the Norwegian and Swedish Greyhound Club specialties, as did her mother.

Espen describes her as 'having the ideal combination of substance and elegance', with a rare star quality about her. In fact her qualities were such that her breeders felt they were facing the same situation with Hildur as they did with Panther two generations earlier. But Hildur turned out to be an outstanding producer.

You will be surprised to find, though, that the breed's all-time top brood bitch had a rather controversial start to her career. Her mother, Coco Chanel, needed a caesarean to whelp her four puppies, two of whom were monorchid males and a sister with a double-kinked tail. It would give even the most experienced breeders doubts whether to breed on from the fourth puppy of such litter.

Hildur, however, proved to be more than sufficiently appropriate for the commanding position of the next alpha-



Åge handling Int/Am Ch Jet's Ravishing Redhead to BOB at Westminster 1998. She was also World Winner 1999, the only Greyhound to hold both titles. Owner was Geri-Ann Hendricks.



Int Ch Jet's Some Like It Hot, owned by Lise Olesen and an important brood bitch for Jet's.

PHOTO ZAFRA SIRIK



Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dream, the sixth alpha-bitch. Scandinavia's top winning Greyhound of all time and one of the top winning dogs of any breed with nine FCI international show BIS, including the Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki international shows. She was Norway's Top Dog all breeds in 2001 and twice World Winner.



Int/UK Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered, owned by Lise Olesen, a World Winner and current top sire in the breed.

PHOTO LOTTE EVERS

bitch. In four litters, all her sons were entire, and she had only one daughter with a kink in her tail. She stamped her progeny with her thoroughbred quality, and threw exceptional movement in them, something which she herself actually didn't possess to the same degree.

A record of 30 champion and 13 international champion offspring hasn't been broken since. Her progeny revelled in enormous success internationally. The temptation to commemorate all their wins and records is quite strong, so it'll be difficult to mention only a handful of them.

A notable daughter was **Int Ch Jet's Ravishing Redhead**, who was the only exception to the Jet's philosophy of keeping females potentially suitable for the roles either alpha- or beta-bitch at home, or at least within a reasonable distance in Norway, as she was sold to Geri Ann Hendricks of Gerico Greyhounds in the US.

Fortunately for Kari and Espen, she turned out to be a most generous puppy buyer. She entered the young Nicole, already an American champion and in immaculate condition, at the 1998 Westminster show, where Åge handled her to BOB, a moment Espen recalls as one of the most stirring experiences he has had.

The fact that BOS to Nicole was an **Am Ch Jet's The Voyage**

**Out** son, Am Ch Shazaam The Journey Begins (top producing Greyhound male in the US of all time) certainly added to the thrill of the day.

By Geri Ann's kind permission, Nicole produced a litter for Jet's to Am Ch Crestfield Sky Salute O'Gerico, the father of her most reputed homebred Greyhound, Am Ch Gerico Chasing The Wind. Eventually, four puppies were sent to Europe, two of them to become classic sires in their respective countries: **Int Ch Jet's Skyline O'Attimo Fuggente** in Italy and the handsomely titled **Int Ch Jet's Pie In The Sky** in Finland. The latter's significance in the puzzle figures eminently later on.

Among Hildur's offspring, the best-known is **Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dream**, 'Vera'. She was most definitive; an exquisite while very functional Greyhound bitch, an embodiment of extreme star quality supported by flawless breed type.

She would leave you breathless just by standing still, that is until she started moving. She would then stop your heartbeat, legions of the sport's fanciers claimed. She was equipped with the motor that made her an exceptional mover.

A personal highlight in the show ring to Espen will always be winning BIS with 'Vera' at Stockholm international: "The



*Int Ch Jet's Something In The Way U Smile, on his way to RBIS at the World Show in Dortmund 2003.*

immaculate Pamela Cross Stern judged BIS at Stockholm international that year, and she was just made for the razzmatazz that has made this show legendary. The judge was faced with the line-up of a lifetime which included the respective Dogs of the Year of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. To win that BIS was the thrill of a lifetime. I was also truly proud that Mrs Cross Stern put Vera over the dog she was later to award BIS at Crufts, the white Norwegian Standard Poodle."

Vera was Dog of the Year in Norway in 2001. She took BIS at three of Scandinavia's (and among the world's) most prestigious shows: the Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki international shows, beating some 17,000 dogs at those three shows alone.

She also won the FCI World Winner title twice and was a champion in 12 countries. Her remarkable career made her the hallmark of Jet's and earned her pages not only in different kennel and breed club's publications, but in highly esteemed dog literature as well, including Bo Bengtson's comprehensive book entitled *Best in Show*. Not so surprisingly, she took over the torch from her mother as the next alpha-bitch in line.

Vera's full sister, **Int Ch Jet's Some Like It Hot**, was a particularly important beta-bitch, in fact a very fine brood bitch who more than sufficiently fulfilled the expectations any breeder could have from her. She was owned by Lise Olesen in Norway, who has been a major support for Jet's over the past decades.

Her beta-bitch daughter by Int Ch Jet's Pie In The Sky, **Int Ch Jet's Red Hot'n Blue**, had two classic sires among her progeny; **Int Ch Jet's Magnet'n Steel**, prominent in Russia, and **Int Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered**, a UK champion and sire of the famous 'all champion litter of 12', including the ninth alpha bitch.

Mated to Ch Sobers Tarquin, Some Like It Hot produced the next immortal male for her kennel, **Int Ch Jet's Something In The Way U Smile**, 'Gustav'.

Over the years, it became almost a rule not to keep males at Jet's – Gustav was the exception.

You can imagine what exceptional traits and charisma this puppy must have possessed for the traditionalist Espen to decide to keep him, so that they would ensure he would be raised to his full potential and be promoted to his rightful place.

An unexpected climax came in his very early show career when he won RBIS at the FCI World Show in Dortmund in 2003. To win the breed was cracking the nut in itself, for he had to triumph over Vera to win BOB from the record highest entry an FCI event of this (or most probably any) kind ever drew.

Following in her footsteps, he was Norway's Top Dog all breeds in 2003, a champion in ten countries and a multiple specialty BIS winner.

I well remember that even at a very old age, he had a beautiful expression to die for. His most appreciated traits were his lordly



*Littermates Int Ch Jet's Something In The Way U Smile and Int Ch Jet's Somewhere In Your Heart are two of several Jet Greyhounds to win their championship titles in lure coursing as well as in the show ring.*

PHOTO ELISABETH ESPEDAL HOOGSTRAATE

stature, his movement and eagerness to move – which, on the other hand, didn't make him particularly patient when it came to being stacked, I'm told.

His glorious account of show wins was crowned by his becoming an International lure coursing champion. One of Espen's proudest days was when Gustav was best in field on the first day of the famous Skokloster Sighthound Festival, beating 90-plus competitors.

He and Kari have always been keen to preserve the functional abilities in their Greyhounds. In the start, Jet dogs competed not only at shows, but also in racing. The dam of Commander even won the Norwegian racing championship.

Believing the lure coursing is a better, if not perfect, test for functional abilities, generations of Jet's Greyhounds have been competing successfully at lure coursing. Vera was also a lure coursing champion in two countries, while one of the top show dogs in Scandinavian dog history.

Several other Jet's dogs have won their titles in the field, proving the accusations the racing Greyhound folk raised of non-racing Greyhounds being unable to do a day's job out on the field, calling them 'Show Greyhounds', to be false. Espen believes this term to be but an illegitimate modern definition that deceitfully reduces the original function of specimens bred to the Standard that requires great stamina, the all-important suppleness (as opposed to being stiff and flexible) – something that Vera, for example, had to the extreme.

She had an extreme ability to manoeuvre. "Appearance is a consequence of fitness, and confidence is a consequence of capability," concludes world renowned mountaineer and trainer of actors Mark Twight. His very valid statement is much reflected in the Standard. Espen, therefore, created and introduced the term 'Standard Greyhound' in his writings and interviews.

The current star, **UK Ch Jet's Man In The Moon**, is showing excellent promise in the field and I predict, in answer to baseless criticism, that it will be his very good pleasure to finish a title or two in lure coursing competitions.

As the Jet's foundation sire was three quarters RP breeding from Ralph Parsons, another cross to Int/UK/Am Ch Rebukys Poth was tested in the early '80s, but did not produce anything exceptional.

For the last 35 years, the Jet's have only once used an English outcross, the blue UK Ch Baldrey Not So Smart with Buebezi. Vera produced her first and very pleasing litter to him which yielded her beta-bitch daughter, **Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dark Night**, BOB and G2 winner at the Stockholm World Show in 2008.

This outcross is now firmly incorporated in the Jet strain, very appropriately via her UK champion daughter (the current beta-bitch).

Vera's third litter, to Int Ch Eikica Keep-on Kio (a For Your Eyes



Espen with four of his homebred World Show BOB winners, Int Ch Jet's Something In The Way U Smile, Int/UK Ch Jet's It's All Up To Me, Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dream and Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dark Night.

PHOTO WOJTEK LAZAR



Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Dark Night, owned by Aslaug Ness, won BOB and runner-up in the group at the World Show in Stockholm. She was an important beta-bitch for Jet's, producing the next Jet's beta-bitch, who was the UK's top Greyhound 2015.

PHOTO ELISABETH ESPEDAL HOOGSTRAATE

### Jet's Just Take Me Home Tonight, 'Harriet'.

She represents the ninth consecutive generation of BIS-winning international champion bitches. She was Norway's Top Dog in 2013, won the Norwegian Greyhound Club specialty that year and is a champion in six countries. She has been bred twice, but the identity of the next alpha-bitch has yet to reveal itself with time.

With her second litter barely a few weeks old at the time of writing and younglings of her first litter slowly making their debut, but still too green to take on with a serious show campaign, the role of keeping spirits high in the ring fell on **UK Ch Jet's Man In The Moon, 'Henry'**, for the time being. He is owned by Stepanka Horakova in Norway.

I think of his story as a lesson to learn a lot from. I well remember recently reading an interview Espen gave to a leading dog publication more than ten years ago, where he basically describes giving up with utter surety on aforementioned Gustav as a stud ever to be used for Jet's. He even drew a correlation between him and the long dead Solomon Grundy, whom as you remember never sired a litter for his own owners.

In Gustav's case, this was partly because he was a carrier of the neuropathy gene (an inherited progressive neurologic disorder), and partly because just no bitches seemed to be lacking enough where he excelled – until it came to deciding what traits to focus on when breeding Harriet's contemporary beta-bitch, **Int Ch Jet's Moonlight Serenade, 'Prudence'**.

Agreed upon was that it was absolutely necessary to breed Gustav's movement back to the main bitch line and subsequently Prudence had a litter to him, producing the happily non-carrier Henry, an exceptional mover, who did throw his movement in his

Only son), brought about the first homebred Jet's Greyhound to become a UK champion (soon to be followed by her son and half-sister), who was at the same time the next alpha-bitch to carry on with the Jet's strain: **Int Ch Jet's It's All Up To Me 'Suzie'**.

She was fabulously thoroughbred, and had that royal demeanour about her. These traits were beautifully enhanced by her colour, which was pure white with a distinctive brindle marking on her head (as well as one on her croup, but not on her show side).

A World Winner and G3 at the 2006 World Show in Poznan, she too accomplished an incredible feat of winning. Despite her rather short show career, she won all-breed BIS in three countries.

Mated to her half-brother Int Ch Jet's Once Upon A Time, she had her sadly one and only litter, from which **Int Ch Jet's Take It Or Leave It 'Mina'** emerged to take the reins.

As a brood bitch, she could be counted upon to imprint her beautifully crested neck and overall quality into her progeny, and whelped her first litter by Int Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered in 2011.

Sadly, 2011 also marks the year of Kari Engh's death, leaving behind her last litter, the '12', only one week old at the time of her death.

Since then, it's been up to Espen and Åge to keep the Jet flag flying for years to come. This latest litter courted tremendous reputation as the 'all champion litter of 12', referring to the fact that all 12 offspring in the litter completed their titles. If only Kari could have seen what a glorious era of never before hoped-for achievements and setting up new records this has been for Jet's.

The '12' consists of a World Winner, a European Winner, four FCI international all-breed BIS winners, seven international champions and two UK champion sisters, one of them a BOB winner at Crufts and the other, present alpha-bitch, **Int Ch**

Int/UK Ch Jet's It's All Up To Me, the seventh alpha-bitch and the first Jet to win her title in England. She was an all-breed BIS winner in three countries, BOB at the World show, but sadly died young, leaving behind only one litter.

PHOTO PAULINE OLIVER



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Int Ch Jet's Take It Or Leave It, an international show BIS winner and the dam of the 12 champion litter. She won BIS at the Norwegian Greyhound Club specialty this year at the age of nine over the present Jet's star, Norway's Top Dog 2016.

PHOTO ELISA HONKALA



progeny with Harriet.

This most fortunate turn of events, of course aided by a deep sense of consciousness from Espen's side, is a splendid example of how breeding can spring surprises for even the most experienced master breeders, and that breeding truly is based on long-term plans over several generations.

At this moment, the Norwegian Kennel Club is polishing its sword to anoint its new Dog of the Year, often referred to as Bamsevinner in this country. With three BIS, a RBIS and more group placements at the major Norwegian international shows of the year, Henry has taken his post as Norway's Top Dog all breeds 2016 and his country's representative at the next Eukanuba World Challenge. He will be officially 'knighted' at the year's last and most splendid show, the Lillestrøm international.

His recent and more than successful campaign in Britain is just one of many testimonies to Espen and Åge's attraction to and utter respect with British dogdom. I have encountered few overseas people who were more able to appreciate its fascination, and for them this lies in the deep knowledge of the sport's history the Brits possess, the British traditionalism, their charming manners and unprecedented politeness, the superior quality and numbers of entries, Crufts, the most delightful ring stewards one can possibly wish for, the critiques, the beautiful showgrounds, the green rolling hills, and a cup of tea.

They make no secret of the fact that this is their favourite country as far as both showing and judging are concerned. Offer Åge invitations for a splendid holiday at the Galapagos Islands in conjunction with a South American appointment, and judging in rough English weather at an outdoors UK show on the same dates, and it will be his honour to turn down the former in favour of the latter.

In view of this, it's not the least surprising to find that Jet's, at the time of writing, is the one overseas kennel to hold the record of the number of homebred dogs to be made UK champions, a title they find gratifying above almost everything else.

In chronological order they are: **Int Ch Jet's It's All Up To Me**, 'Suzie', the sixth alpha-bitch. Her crowning CC was sweetened by a G4 at Leeds 2007.

Her son, **Ch Jet's It's Been A Hard Day's Night with Ransley**, 'Higgins', owned by Rita Bartlett in the UK was the first homebred Jet's to win the CC and then BOB at Crufts in 2009. He was the UK's top Greyhound in 2009.

Suzie's half-sister was the third, **Ch Jet's Walk On The Wild Side with Boughton**, 'Zebra', owned by the UK's Clare Boggia of Boughton fame.

Fourth was the little Griffon **Ch Jet's Moulin Rouge**, 'Yvette', shown to her title by her co-owner, a British authority of the breed, David Guy of Donzeata.

**Int Ch Jet's Signed Sealed'n Delivered**, 'George', was the fifth Jet's to gain his UK title, owned by Lise Olesen in Norway. He sired the sisters to complete their titles next: the ninth alpha-bitch, **Int Ch Jet's Just Take Me Home Tonight**, 'Harriet' who had two group placements, followed by another Griffon, **Int Ch Jet's Smart Single'n Stunning**, 'Tarjei', shown and co-owned by David, and to finish the year 2014 came Denise Isaac's black Greyhound bitch **Int Ch Jet's Take A Bow with Blakeskerra**, 'Agathe', who won BOB at Crufts in 2015.

The present beta-bitch, **Int Ch Jet's Moonlight Serenade**, 'Prudence', made her short presence in Britain felt much more intensively than did her predecessors, not simply through the splendid winning she accomplished, but through her son and grandchildren as well.

Going beyond everyone's hopes, Prudence not only won her first CC at her first UK show, but won the group and BIS at Windsor 2015.

Soon, the second and crowning CCs followed with a BIS at the Greyhound Club championship show and RBIS at Scottish Kennel Club. She was the UK's top Greyhound that year.



*Jet's Be Just And Fear Not at Azrams has two parents, Int/UK Ch Jet's Man In The Moon and Int/UK Ch Jet's Just Take Me Home Tonight, who have both won Dog of the Year all breeds. In addition his paternal grandfather and his maternal great-grandmother won the same title! This latest Jet's UK export is owned by Jerry Robertson in Scotland.*

PHOTO ANNA SZABÓ



*Int/UK Ch Jet's Just Take Me Home Tonight, the ninth and present alpha-bitch, was Norway's Top Dog all breeds 2013 and a UK champion in four shows with two group placements. Pictured by Ove Larsen on the day she won best in show at the Norwegian Greyhound Club's national specialty in 2013.*



*Int/UK Ch Jet's Moonlight Serenade won BIS at Windsor 2015 and was the top Greyhound in the UK the same year. She was BIS at both the UK and Swedish Greyhound Club championship shows.*

PHOTO ANNA SZABÓ

Her son, Man In The Moon, had a similar march through to the tenth Jet's UK champion title. He was made up in three shows with two group wins and a G3 placement at Welsh Kennel Club, City of Birmingham and Richmond respectively. He is also gaining credibility as a stud by having sired several very promising offspring to today's alpha-bitch.



*Int/UK Ch Jet's Man In The Moon, Norway's Top Dog all breeds 2016, a UK champion in three shows, with two group wins and a group 3 with his crowning CC. He is shown moving his way to his Danish title earlier in the year.*

PHOTO BARBARA ZEMLA



*Int/UK Ch Jet's Take A Bow With Blakeskerra, BOB at Crufts 2015, owned by Denise Isaac.*



*Int/UK Ch Jet's It's Been A Hard Day's Night with Ransley, owned by Rita Bartlett, won BOB at Crufts 2009 and was top greyhound in the UK the same year.*

PHOTO PAULINE OLIVER



*Int/Am/UK/Norb/Sw/Dan/Est Ch Jet's Moulin Rouge is the only Griffon bitch and the only smooth Griffon ever to become a UK and American champion.*

PHOTO PAULINE OLIVER



*Ch Jet's D'Artagnan of Donzeata gained his crowning CC at Midland Counties '16 and thus became the 11th homebred Jet's UK champion. He is pictured by Anna Szabó on his way to group 3 at Birmingham National.*

*Int/UK Ch Jet's Smart Single'n Stunning, pictured at home.*

PHOTO ANNA SZABÓ



These are records Espen deems as truly honourable and is certainly planning to return with representatives of his later generations. The 11th homebred Jet's champion was made up just before we went to press: **Jet's D'Artagnan at Donzeata**, the Griffon male owned and adored by David Guy, gained his crowning CC at Midland Counties.

As you might have concluded, the latest endeavour of Jet's is Griffon Bruxellois. This breed has attributes that are just absolutely complementary to Espen's personality, so this match is far more compatible than you would ever think!

Inspired by the grand breeders of this most charming breed such as the late Tessa and Deborah Gaines (Gaystock) and Morwenna Marshall (Menwinnion), Espen set out to find good breeding stock to lay down his foundations. Little did he know how much harder was the tree trunk he swung his axe into, than in the case of Greyhounds.

Espen says: "Griffons have the greatest personalities and are very addictive; you cannot have just one or even two. I have been most fortunate to benefit from the great knowledge and generosity of David Guy of the famous Donzeata Griffons when

getting seriously involved with this wonderful breed.

"But even with the best possible foundation stock, I have found Griffons much more difficult to breed than Greyhounds. The main reason is that the Griffons have small litters, resulting in very limited possibilities for the strong selection that I am used to being able to do."

We're certainly looking for the day when Espen manages to break the Griffon code.



*Espen judging the Greyhound Club of America national specialty in 1991 with his BOB Ch Lochinvar Leaps And Bounds, owner-handled by Maureen Lucas.*

PHOTO JOHN ASHBEY



*Espen judging the sighthound group at the World Show in Herning in 2010. His winner was the Afghan Hound, a championship show group winner in the UK, Int/UK Ch Al Nacira bint Roula von Haussman, owned by Elisabet Leven in Sweden and bred by Ramon Podesta in Chile.*

Let us have our fancy wander now into the records Jet's have so far set up. It is with the intention to provide a testimony of unparalleled cooperation between breeders and their very talented puppy buyers to the readers that these paragraphs were written, an interpretation of these records a world apart from the presumable bragging of superficial show-off.

At the time of writing, and for an unforeseeable length of time, these records include (all boiled down to homebred Greyhounds only) 202 champions in 62 countries making 737 champion titles in total, 97 international champions, eight UK champions (making 11 with the three homebred Griffon champions, which is the record among overseas breeders), two Crufts BOB wins, 44 individual all-breed BIS winners, 37 parent club or national specialty BIS wins, four times Dog of the Year in Norway (including 2016) and 41 times Greyhound of the year in several different countries, including the UK.

"The wins themselves do not carry that much significance. What is important is the quality and individual traits of the dogs and what they may contribute to that slow puzzle that is breeding towards an ideal. But I have a somewhat simple mind and need some rewards for all the work and sacrifices that comes with keeping and breeding dogs. Thus competing, whether at shows or in the field, keeps me motivated and focused," notes Espen.

When it comes to measuring a breeding programme's value, however, these records are certainly not the units to be weighed when trying to establish the importance of the Jet's strain.

Generations after generations of dogs bred with the same ideal and priorities have after all these years resulted in a family of dogs with (mostly) a certain set of qualities or traits.

Jet's dogs have always been available to those who fancied and believed could benefit from using them. Neither Kari nor Espen have ever been exclusive or elitists when it comes to breeding.

Several kennels in Scandinavia are based on Jet's stock, notably Eikka in Denmark, Taikutassan and Rantalaukan in Finland, and Moyens, Schotborg and Azravi in Norway. Further away Attimo Fuggente in Italy, Gerico in the US, Nicesteps in Latvia and Quom in Australia have bred several litters much influenced by their dogs.

This has been most rewarding for Kari and Espen over the years, especially as this enhanced the number of possibilities to do more line-bred combinations without having to breed all these dogs themselves. Almost all standard Greyhounds in the world now trace back to Jet's dogs.

Espen combines all this with being probably the world's most widely travelled dog judge. His judging has been defined by

dedication, passion and a deep love of dog history and tradition, ever since he made his championship show debut in 1987 in his early 20s.

He was authorised to judge all breeds by the Norwegian Kennel Club and FCI in 2011.

He has, from the beginning, understood that a judge's position is an office defined by duties to the breeds, breeders and exhibitors he is asked to judge. The solemnity, dedication and above all talent he exhibits during his judging have taken him to 94 countries so far – which I believe to be the world record – to carry out countless appointments.

He has been invited to judge BIS (at all-breed championship show level) in 60 countries. Appointments include more than 20 FCI title shows, including 13 World Shows and several FCI European, Asian and Americas and Caribbean shows.

In 2011 Espen had the great honour of judging at all the five major all-breed shows in the world; Westminster in New York, Crufts in the UK, the FCI World Show in Paris, the FCI European Show in Leeuwarden, Holland as well as the FCI Centenary Show in Dortmund, Germany. He is at judging Westminster for the third time in 2013.

He is approved to judge 83 breeds with CCs by the Kennel Club (London), all groups and BIS. Appointments include more than a dozen breed club championship shows over three groups, BIS at the Houndshow and at Welsh Kennel Club and all groups and BIS at Leeds 2014, this being one of his very favourite shows – and at Bournemouth this year. He is honoured to have been invited to judge BIS at the forthcoming Belfast show. He will be judging at Crufts for the sixth time in 2017, something he is extremely proud of.

Espen remarks: "I find judging dogs absolutely fascinating. I can get almost shocking emotional thrills out of feasting my eyes and hands on great dogs – Göran Bodegård aptly describes this as an almost-erotic experience. But I also find it quite wonderful simply to meet up with and connecting with many of the dogs in the ring – and that goes for both the beautiful, for the downright ugly and for the mediocre.

"Judging is however also a great responsibility that should not be taken lightly. I prepare by reading a lot before every appointment.

"I feel that our sport has a very definite potential for improvement when it comes to the quality of judging. Fortunately we have quite a few clever Greyhound judges around, especially in the UK and Scandinavia and some in other countries too."

Espen doesn't tiptoe around things and once he sets his sights



Espen awarding BIS at Welsh Kennel Club 2012 to the Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen Ch Soletrader Peek A Boo. She was the UK's Top Dog the same year and BIS at Crufts 2013.



Espen judging Greyhounds at Crufts 2016. His BOB was Int Ch Sobers Vagabond at Decuma, bred by Bitte Ahrens and Pierlugi Primavera in Italy and owned by Pavlina Lorencova Nowacki in the Czech Republic. BCC was UK Ch Epic Incredible, bred and owned by Anna-Lena Almgren and Johan Rosengren in Sweden, who won her crowning CC at South Wales. PHOTO GÁBOR SZÁLANCZI

on something, he goes at it with full commitment. Gifted he is with the unique skill – of which I do not think he is aware – to inspire those around him to devote themselves to the perfection of whatever they pursue. To a degree, I find this to be one of the key elements to his successes.

When called upon, he gratefully serves as a mentor to the inexperienced and the young, and has been an inspiration to many of his fellow dog fanciers, whether judges, breeders or exhibitors. He has drawn much praise for his encyclopaedic knowledge of the sport that transcends the comprehension of the average dog person. Regardless the breed you come from, you'll easily find yourself on the same wavelength with him.

On the backside of this bright medal we've been observing are decades of hard work and an intriguing person who dedicated his life to the sport and his dogs. We can all conclude now that success in the dog sport, as in any walk of life, is hard earned, and fortune does not favour the lazy or unwilling.

Competitors in the sport, whether exhibitors, breeders or both, are highly interdependent on each other. Applauding and embracing mediocrity are a threat.

You'd be wrong to presume Jet's are planning to show any signs of slowing down. Quite to the contrary; at the time of writing there are two new Jet's Greyhound litters on the ground. With nine consecutive generations of BIS bitches, the tenth generation has just made its show debut with excellent results.



Int/Nord Ch Dumbrition Emotion, one of several top winning Whippets owned and shown by Jet's. She was bred in the UK by Danny Gilmour. She won BOB twice at Skokloster and was a BIS winner at international championship show level.



Espen's best in show at Helsinki international was the Standard Poodle bitch, Int/Sw/Fin/Norw/UK Ch Da Maya Huffish Copyright Woman, who won BIS at Welsh Kennel Club and Bournemouth in 2015.



Åge Gjetnes, Espen's life partner and a major support in the Jet's success saga, is himself, an accomplished breeder of Afghan Hounds and more recently of Miniature Poodles having bred 36 Afghan champions. He is pictured winning the utility group at Crufts 2015 with his homebred UK/Norw/Sw/Fin Ch Montserrat Caballe, who became a UK champion in three shows, unbeaten in the breed and with a BIS at the Miniature Poodle Club's 70th anniversary championship show.

PHOTO OLEG BOCHKOV (HOTDOG)