

FAIRY TALES

Are for grown up girls as well as little ones!

The “grown up girls” are Mary Bates of the Marsalland kennel and Sarah Whittaker of the Bramatha kennel, who have known each other for many years. Mary, as a child, accompanied her Mother to purchase a family pet, which just happened to be a yellow labrador from Philip Whittaker of the Stonemeade kennel (Sarah's Father). Over the years the family were to return for another and another!

When Mary was of age, she too went to Philip for a dog, but wanted something “different” and had a flatcoat puppy, then subsequently went to Sarah for a puppy. Gail Taylor bred a litter from her Galleywood Merton Beauty and Mary purchased Galleywood Rosy Blenheim, a bitch going back to the Bramatha lines.

After careful consideration Mary decided to breed from Rosy Blenheim and asked Sarah to use Bramatha Back to the Future (Dennis), sired by Sh Ch & Nor Ch Cariena's Thirty-four Four, coincidentally he actually went back the sister of her original dog from Philip. This was to be the first litter for Dennis, born on the 25th April 2005. Mary excitedly phoned Sarah with the arrival of 11 puppies. Rosy Blenheim had given birth on the due date, unlike Sarah who was still waiting to give birth! Sarah had the pick of litter which was Marsalland Special Edition (Beate).

The success of this litter, encouraged Mary to repeat the mating and this time to keep the pick, Marsalland Roseagain (chosen with a little help from Sarah). This litter was born on Mary's husband's birthday which coincided with Good Friday. Mary was closely following the success of Beate and suggested that perhaps Sarah could show Roseagain, otherwise known as Ravishing Ruby. Diaries were consulted and Roseagain was entered for LKA, this was her first ever show and it would be nice if she could qualify for Crufts. It was a very strong minor puppy class and when Ruby and Sarah were picked out first by the judge, Bob Allen, it was a dream come true. To win a first prize at a show is a great achievement, but to do it at a championship show, with high quality competition it is something really special. Mary was too nervous to be a spectator and Sarah was delighted to walk back to the bench with Ruby and give Mary the first prize and say “Happy Birthday”, one of the most memorable birthday presents Mary has had!

This win then meant they were off to Crufts. Ruby had matured and of course had been to the NEC before, but it was still only her second show, so they went into the ring, like everyone else full of hope that they might just make it in the line up. Again the competition was very high, Ruby put in a fantastic performance showing like a “real pro” and really enjoying it, to their delight they were pulled out first, by the judge Mr Moray Armstrong. Mary was ecstatic. Ruby had now equalled what her uncle, Bramatha Back to Reality (brother to Dennis) had done five years previously, by winning minor puppy at LKA then going on to win puppy at Crufts. Sarah went in the ring again this time with Beate and won Post Graduate. This created a problem, as Sarah could only handle one bitch in the challenge and suggested that perhaps Mary's daughter, Rosie who had never shown a dog before would like to go in the ring, which is exactly what they did, another dream come true. Could Ruby then go on to win best puppy? Sarah and Ruby went into the ring to challenge the dog puppy for Best Puppy, the crowds cheered – something Ruby had not experienced before, Sarah just kept talking to her hoping that she could put in another classy performance and the dog judge, Mrs Murray agreed with Mr Armstrong that Marsalland Roseagain should be the Best Puppy at Crufts 2008. An incredible achievement for all concerned. Our grateful thanks have to go all involved, especially the three judges.

Like all fairy tales they have to come to an end and this is no exception. On Ruby's birthday, Mary and Sarah were travelling to the Flatcoat championship show, but decided that the weather

conditions were against them and they were not prepared to take unnecessary risks to attend a show and turned around and went home. A historic event for Mary and Sarah to take the sensible option! But never fear there will be further outings and who knows if the luck can continue? I certainly hope so!

Sarah Whittaker
May 2008

PS

On 31st May at Southern Counties Canine Association Championship Show history repeated itself. Marsalland Treacle Pud (a brother to Beate) bred and owned by Mary Bates went into the show ring for the first time, at the tender age of three years, and won Post Graduate Dog under judge Mrs Rudin. Incidentally this was on another birthday, this time Mary's daughter Sally.