

DOGS IN REVIEW TALKS TO

Dee with her daughter Sandy at the Greenwich KC show.



Dee Hutchinson

ROSE FARM DACHSHUNDS

By Hazel J. Kelly



Editor's note: We were thrilled to be able to do this in-depth interview with Dee Hutchinson several months ago. Dee gave generously of her time and in addition, went through her photo albums to share pictures of great dogs, iconic judges and unforgettable handlers of the past with our readers. Given Dee's devotion to the Hound Group as a second-generation Dachshund breeder/exhibitor, we felt it fitting to save the interview for this issue. We regret that she didn't live to see it in print; Dee passed away on May 15. We extend our profound condolences to her daughters Sandy and Nancy; her grandchildren and great grandchildren; and her innumerable friends and admirers in the sport.

Dorothy O. Hutchinson of Rose Farm Dachshunds began showing dogs at the age of 10 and breeding dogs in her early teens. Begun by her mother, Nancy Onthank, in the 1950s, Rose Farm produced more than 200 champion Dachshunds in all coats and both sizes. An American Kennel Club judge since 1973, Hutchinson was approved by the AKC to judge all breeds. Although she no longer actively bred, Hutchinson continued to co-own Dachshunds that kept the auspicious Rose Farm kennel name alive and well. She lived in Westbrook, Conn., and had been widowed for some years.

DR: How did Rose Farm begin?

DH: My mother and father started to purchase show-quality Dachshunds. They went down to the Bronx and bought two quality Standard Smooth brood bitches/show dogs from FreDelsa kennel. They were Debutante of FreDelsa ("Debby") and Red Velvet of FreDelsa. They were shown and finished, then bred. Debby became my mother's favorite little pet and she ended up being the brood bitch foundation for Rose Farm. At this time we lived in Belhaven, part of Greenwich, Conn. Then in about 1950 we moved to Peckslan Road in Greenwich, and my mother named the property Rose Farm, and so it began. In the late 1960s, when my husband Bruce and I moved to Pound Ridge, N.Y., we kept the Rose Farm name. At about the same time, my parents moved to Vermont but had basically stopped breeding at that point. So Rose Farm continued in Pound Ridge for the next 33 years until Bruce and I moved to Westbrook, Conn.

DR: Why did your mother choose the name "Rose Farm"?

DH: My mother just loved roses and grew many of them in her garden, so it was a natural choice for her.

DR: Please tell us a bit about some of the

Nancy Onthank with twin daughters Katie and Dee, and son Johnny.

noteworthy dogs your mother bred. What dogs or lines did she retain to carry on?

DH: My mother met John Cook who then introduced her to Jerry (Jeanette W.) Cross (Hardway) and Dorothy Pickett (Herthwood). John spent a lot of time at Rose Farm and gave my mother several lovely bitches from his famous Kleetal kennels. Red Velvet, mentioned above, was bred to Ch. Hardway's Welcome Stranger and the result was Ch. Venture of Hardway, who was Ch. Herthwood's Mark of Rose Farm's sire. Jerry Cross took Venture as a stud puppy. Venture and Jerry didn't mix well. He wasn't easy, so he came back to Rose Farm. I was given the job of making Venture a show dog so wherever I went that summer, Venture went with me. I was about 16 and he was always in my car with me. We worked hard and he became socialized and learned the ropes.

Winnie Heckman gave my mom a Standard Smooth champion bitch. We called her Winnie. I can't remember her registered name but she was just beautiful.

We bred successfully and I showed the dogs in Juniors and in Bred-By. One funny story was the day I showed a puppy dog to Peggy Westphal at a Greenwich Kennel Club show. I got the dog up on the table and Peggy said the dog had only one testicle and disqualified me! I always checked after that embarrassing moment!

We got started with Miniature Longhairs when Mother was in England and came home with Ch. Mighty Fine von Walder. He is behind almost any Mini Long you will see now. Two years later, Mother returned to England with Frank and Dottie Hardy. Frank snuck up to my father, pointed to a heavy-set woman and said, "Pete, go buy that dog!" Daddy went over and bought him on the spot for 50 pounds! His name was Pondwick's Hobgoblin and he came back with them to the States and of course, became the top stud dog in Wires. (He was a Standard.) He eventually sired more than



100 champions and is in most Wire pedigrees today.

DR: When did you begin showing?

DH: I began showing in Juniors when I was 10. I would also show the dogs in BBE since the rules then and up until a few years ago said that a close relative could show in BBE.

DR: Who were your mentors during your younger years as a breeder?

DH: John Cook, Jerry Cross, Dorothy Pickett and Ramona Van Court were always at my house and, of course, I listened in to all the conversations.

DR: When did you breed your first litter?

DH: I basically took over the breeding decisions for my mother when I was in my teens. You can





The Onthank girls, twins Dee and Katie, each holding a Dachshund.

tell which dogs my mother made the decisions about and which breedings I determined in the dogs' registered names. If you see Rose Farm's _____, that was a breeding I planned. When you see _____ of Rose Farm, that was Mother's breeding decision.

DR: Have you been involved with any breeds other than Dachshunds? If so, which ones, and what was your involvement?

DH: I have had Golden Retrievers and did have a few litters. We also had Schipperkes, a Cattle Dog and an Australian Shepherd. The Cattle Dog, Blue, and Daisy the Aussie guarded the Dachshunds from harm when they were out hunting. I just lost Daisy last year.

DR: Why did you decide to follow in your mother's footsteps?

DH: I just took to the dogs when I was young whereas my twin sister loved the cooking that my mom did as a caterer. As with all children, some get interested in some things their parents do and not others.

DR: What do you enjoy about breeding?



Dee showing Ch. Rose Farm's Xavier L to Best of Winners at the AKC Centennial Dog Show under breeder-judge John Cook, a mentor to both Dee and her mother.



Dee's parents on holiday in Bermuda, with Dachshunds.

DH: It is a joy to watch the puppies grow up day to day and see which ones grow into those beautiful dogs that we all want to see in the ring. I enjoy whelping and everything surrounding the process of raising the dogs.

DR: What is your most memorable achievement as a breeder?

DH: I am very proud of Rocky, a Standard Wire. On paper, my mother bred Ch. Rose Farm's Moon Rockette W, but I actually made the decision which produced her. Daddy was going to bank me to go to Texas to the Dachshund Nationals if I'd take some of Mother's dogs. Of course I said, 'Yes.' Off

to Texas I went thinking that I would have a good shot at doing something with Rocky. I won the Wire variety! Afterward, I threw her up in the air and started to pull out her coat right on the spot so she would never have to go in the ring again. We probably could have won the next day as well but she had done everything I ever could have wanted from her. She went on to prove herself in the whelping box as well.

DR: Are you still breeding?

DH: I have made the decision to no longer actively breed here in Westbrook, but dogs I co-own and have connections with will continue the Rose Farm name.

DR: Do you continue to show dogs yourself?

DH: I no longer show dogs myself. I hire a handler when I want a dog shown.

DR: What are the primary health concerns for Dachshunds, and what impact have they had on the breed?

DH: Raising happy, healthy puppies is a goal of all good breeders. I have been fortunate to have basically healthy lines. Of course, IVDD [Intervertebral Disk Disease] is of great concern to Dachshund owners and breeders. With my breeding, I have found that my Miniatures have few if any problems with disk disease. I do know that in Standards, this can be a devastating disease. I also know that some Dachshunds, especially Mini Longs, have been found with PRA. Other Minis on occasion have luxated patellas of varied degrees. I have been fortunate to not have these problems

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Family mentor Jeanette ("Jerry") Cross showing Ch. Herthwood's Mark of Rose Farm at the Newtown KC in 1963 under judge Sterling Brown.

Dorothy Pickett (Herthwood) showing a Standard Wire to BOV under judge Nancy Onthank, Dee's mother, at the Putnam KC in 1970.



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with my dogs. One of my best producers is still actively hunting every day at age 13! All we can do as responsible breeders is to be honest with ourselves about our dogs and breed to make future generations better than those that came before.

DR: How many Rose Farm champions have you and your family bred?

DH: Well over 200. I've lost count!

DR: Any dogs in particular you'd like to mention?

DH: (L=Long; S=Smooth; W=Wire; if there is an M in front, it means Miniature. I have always included these designations as an official part of their registered names.)

Ch. Rose Farm's Moon Rockette W — BV at the Nationals in 1973.

Ch. Venture of Hardway S — this was my first BIS win at Greenwich Kennel Club in June 1957.

Ch. Rose Farm's Xavier L — all-breed BIS,

first for a black and tan Standard!

Ch. Rose Farm's Marrakesh Express L — I personally showed him to his many wins. He was a wonderful dog and I learned a lot from my experiences with him.

Ch. Rose Farm's Smurfette ML — in many, many pedigrees of Mini Longs today.

Ch. Harmo's The Murf of Rose Farm ML — in many, many pedigrees of Mini Longs today.

Ch. Rose Farm's Slam dunk Aces High L — recent BIS winner, also a black and tan, shown by Aaron Wilkerson.

Ch. Rose Farm's Calcide W — Ben won the Nationals, Winners Dog and retired the challenge trophy offered. Great fun in competition with Bill McFadden who then went on to show Ben to many Group wins. He was also a terrific sire.

Ch. Rose Farm's Chunky Monkey L — shown to 19 or 20 BIS under the guidance of Carlos Puig. He was a singleton puppy at my daughter Sandy's house. I rushed down and got him and his mother. Night-and-day care, and he made it! As he got older, he always had a toy monkey in his mouth and was rather chubby, so he became Chunky Monkey. (We did not know about the Ben and Jerry's flavor at the time. Pure coincidence.) I sold him so he could be shown to his full potential.

DR: Which Dachshunds not owned or bred by Rose Farm have you particularly admired?

DH: Bayard's Great Scott (Miniature Longhair) and the breeding in general of Mary Howell.

Ch. Charlamar's Noah (Standard Wire), owned by Peggy Westphal.

Ch. Vantebe's Draht Timothy (Standard Wire), owned by Peggy Westphal.

Ch. Farmeadow Light Up the Sky (Standard Smooth), belonging to Charles Baris and John Hart.

DR: What prompted you to become a judge?

DH: When I was 35, I was grown up enough to go into the ring as a judge. I went to Bill Schmick and asked if I could apply for my judging license and he said, "Absolutely!" I wanted to apply for Bloodhounds and Dachshunds, but he said, "No, Dee. I want you to apply for just one breed, Dachshunds." So that is what I did.

DR: What do you enjoy about judging?

DH: Walking in the ring at 8 or 9 in the morning and judging with the thought of finding that super young dog. Sometimes you do and sometimes you don't. I am in seventh heaven on those days in the ring.

DR: When did you become approved as an all-breed judge?

DH: I'm not really sure of the exact year. It was down in Sarasota, Fla., and everyone was congratulating me and I didn't know what for. They said I was the youngest all-breed judge thus far approved. I replied that I had not had my final interview with Michael Sauve and I kept asking him when it would be. He said, "When I have time." He would schedule it and then he would all of a sudden be busy. He did this several times and kept me waiting. Then finally he said he'd meet me on Friday for this final interview. He asked, "Do you want to be an all-breed judge?" I said I did. He said, "Then you are!" That was the final interview and he made me wait for a whole week. You have to remember that we were very good friends and he was just joking around with me.

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Dee winning her first BIS with Ch. Venture of Hardway at the Greenwich KC, June 1957. Shown are Nancy Onthank, club president Joe Quirk, judge Mrs. Augustus Riggs and owner-handler Dee.



Dee winning the Ladies Handling class under judge Winnie Heckman at the Dachshund Association of Long Island in June 1962.



Dee handling Standard Smooth Dachshunds to Best Brace under the late Canadian judge Ted Gunderson.



Rose Farms got its start in Miniature Longhairs by importing Ch. Mighty Fine von Walder from England, a most influential sire who is behind almost all Mini Longs today.



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DR: What were some of your most memorable moments as a judge?

DH: Judging at Westminster is always one of the biggest honors and one of my biggest joys. The other assignment that gave me much joy was doing the Herding Group at Eukanuba in 2002. I also judged at the World Show in Poland in 2008. I judged a huge entry of American Staffordshire Terriers. (I don't really know why they chose me for that particular breed.) I've also judged all three varieties at the Dachshund Nationals (1985: BOB and Smooths in Seattle; 1989: Wires in Jacksonville; 1991: Longs in Minneapolis).

DR: How many shows do you attend a year, on average?

DH: I used to go to 50 or 60 a year. Now due to my health, it is very limited. I miss going to shows very much.

DR: Which dogs that you've judged during your career do you consider most memorable, and why?

DH: 'Robert,' the Springer Spaniel (Ch. Salilyn's Condor, 1993 Westminster Kennel Club BIS.) He was close to the most perfect dog I had seen to that point. Of course, there is no perfect dog but he was close to perfection.

The Brittany, shown by one of the Wilkerson brothers. I saw him at Hatboro Dog Club in Pennsylvania as an exhibitor and knew he was special. He was the epitome of what the breed should be.

Leslie Potts' Scottish Deerhound [Ch. Thistleglen Margot, Group First at Westminster in 2006. — Ed]. She exemplified breed type in every way until Taffe showed up with her bitch [Ch. Jaraluv Ouija]. Both bitches are what anybody would want for breed type in this breed.

DR: How do you feel the Dachshund breed is doing today as a whole, with regard to quality? Positives and negatives?

DH: Where do you start? The Mini Longs are doing well with certain breeders who have been breeding a long time and really know their pedigrees. The Standard Wires are also doing well with those same kind of breeders. I feel Standard Smooths are in trouble but there is an excellent breeder on the West Coast who is doing good things for this coat and size. Many Standard Smooths are lacking bone and under-jaw and are belly scratchers. Standard Longhairs are doing OK and are within reach of achieving excellence. I'd like to see the belly scratching addressed, and they should be elegant. They should be, sorry to say, "pretty."

There are some nice Mini Wires out there and some excellent breeders doing nice things with this coat and variety. There are also many wonderful Mini Smooths. The progress in that coat and size is dramatic when compared to those of the past.

Now, let's get back to breeders who are crosscoating and doing great harm to our breed. We have three wonderful varieties and we should only breed Longs to Longs, Smooths to Smooths and Wires to Wires. Each variety has its own personality. Breeders should try to keep pedigrees honest to coat variety. Color is another factor. There are some lovely dapples, especially in the Mini Longs, and a nice dapple is fine. Brindles are also fine. When you get to piebalds, there seem to be mostly Minis. I think there might be a "Beagle in the woodpile," since there has never been a

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Dee showing Ch. Pondwick's Hobgoblin, an English import who became the top stud dog in Wires and eventually sired more than 100 champions. He was purchased on the spot at the recommendation of the Onthanks' friend and handler Frank Hardy for 50 pounds.



Ch. Venture of Hardway winning under the esteemed Dachshund breeder-judge Ramona Van Court in 1957 at the Bay Colony Specialty, shown by Dachshund handler extraordinaire Frank Hardy.



Fred Heying handling a Standard Smooth under Nancy Onthank.



Ch. Harmo's The Murf of Rose Farm ML appears in many Mini Long pedigrees today.



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Standard to breed down from. Now they are the high-priced ticket item and everyone wants one of those "strange colored ones." Double dapples are likely to be deaf and blind and are truly dangerous to our breed.

DR: What goals do you have for Rose Farm Dachshunds and the breed in general?

DH: I am no longer breeding here in Westbrook, but I do co-own dogs and am associated with people who own my dogs so my lines will continue. I have always enjoyed helping other people get started. Somehow I inherited creams in my pedigrees, from my Australian imports. I have been bound and determined that I would breed top-quality creams and I have been very proud of what my program has produced.

DR: Any advice for other Dachshund breeders, exhibitors and handlers?

DH: For a breeder, go to the shows, watch the dogs and go to those breeders of the dogs you like and try to get the best possible brood bitch from the lines you like best. As an exhibitor, remember to be patient, watch good handlers and try to get to know your fellow exhibitors. Try to find a mentor, hopefully the breeder you got your dog from, and follow their advice. Be patient. Winning comes with having a good dog, groomed well and handled as well as the professionals can do. To all Dachshund handlers, don't run with your dogs. When I am judging, I won't allow it in my ring and other judges shouldn't either!

DR: How do you feel about the state of the sport in general, and of the American Kennel Club today? Do you have any particular concerns or issues that you'd like to mention?

DH: We are in a whole new era now. It is not like the old times. The judges today can just click off boxes, go to specialties and pass tests, but they have never been in the trenches to see what these breeds were bred for, to see them in the fields or whatever their work was supposed to be. They apply for breeds, they've met the requirements and AKC gives them their breeds. People need to have mentors, ask questions, arrive at 6 in the morning and leave only after BIS. Some judges today don't feel they have to get their hands dirty and approach the breeds they wish to judge on a more sterile level. They do the paperwork, they attend the seminars, etc. I spent one week following Annie Clark on all of her assignments in Arizona, from the time she entered the ring until she left. I asked her "Why?" over and over and really listened to her answers. This is a vivid memory. As an exhibitor, it was so important to be able to talk to the breeders of the great dogs I would see. This seems less and less possible to do today. People are in a rush and most don't stay longer than they have to to show their own dogs. Then they want to apply to judge. The AKC should be able to take away a judge's license if necessary. The AKC needs to listen to their representatives in the field who see judges at work every day.

DR: Aside from dogs, what do you do for fun in your free time?

DH: I was fortunate to have a wonderful husband who was fully supportive of my life in dogs. We loved to sail and ski and I love to raise plants. We even have a greenhouse.

DR: Any additional comments you would like to make?

DH: We have no other choice but to go forward. I feel sorry for the dog-show people today. Many judges have not really done



Dee showing Ch. Rose Farm's Xavier, the first black/tan Standard Longhair to win a BIS.



Dee awarding BIS to 'Mick' the great Kerry Blue shown by Bill McFadden.



Ch. Rose Farm's Calcide W going BOW and Best BBE at the Dachshund Club of America. He went on to become a top sire as well as a multiple Group winner shown by Bill McFadden.



Ch. Graedon's Pretty Woman going Group 1 under Dr. Edna K. Martin, owner-handled by Dee.



Multiple BIS winner Ch. Rose Farm's Chunky Monkey L, winning BOV at Westminster 2005 under judge Michael Dachel, shown by Carlos Puig.



Bruce and Dee Hutchinson swimming with a dolphin in Bermuda.



Ch. Rose Farm's Chunky Monkey L going BIS at Minnesota River Valley KC in 2003, handled by Carlos Puig.

the work they need to do. I wish they could go back and rethink the breeds they have applied for and ask themselves if they are truly capable of understanding the breed standards and the purpose of those breeds. Do your homework. Watch Animal Planet and other programs that show dogs at work. Watch how they move while they are working. Watch other animals in the wild move and apply this to the dog. If you don't understand them, don't judge them.

Be honest when you apply. It is not a numbers game anymore, or shouldn't be. I don't like to see generic show dogs without true type. We see too much of this today. I care too much about the sport of dogs. I follow what is going on through the Internet and reports I get from friends. This should not be a money game, but it does seem to be that way more and more. Go back to the trenches. Good breeders work hard to bring the best their breed has to offer, but then they lose to a generic dog. Generic dogs can be show dogs but not breed dogs. 🐾