

A Tribute to a Dog Who Dared to be Different!

WOOTTON ALASKA CDX

The dog who dared to be different!



The White German Shepherd Dog who defied the odds, dispelled the myths and is rewriting the history books!

I first met Wootton Alaska as an 8-week-old pup, a BIG 8-week-old pup. He was to be picked up from a GSD breeder in the outskirts of Sydney.

I had had very little experience with the German Shepherd Dog breed and was slightly apprehensive at meeting his full-grown relatives, whoever they were.

I was happily surprised. Even though the reception from the dogs was a tad reserved, the breed exhibited a loyalty towards their owner and such a strong but gentle and discerning role of guardianship, that I was impressed.

These were the Arrgold dogs of Peggy Davidson.

Wootton Alaska has inherited these traits; exhibiting a love of working with his owner and handler, Heather Scott, that I have rarely met before. What is so intriguing about their relationship is that this dog, being the wrong colour for the GSD Standard, is lucky to have made it this far.

White is a disqualifying fault and highly undesirable according to the Breed Standard, which was rewritten in 1994, and whites were able to shown prior to the change over. In 2008 the white GSD is not allowed full registration since the Standard was amended. They dismiss them on the basis of colour.

As this big Shepherd matured, Heather and I were confronted with the most appalling and hateful comments about his colour and what it represented.

Comments were made that were akin to a type of racism, with pseudo scientific allegations about how the colour white was linked with the most horrible congenital abnormalities, the least of which was their FERAL, unbiddable temperament.

AOC Strathclyde White Fang was a white German Shepherd Dog, owned and handled by the late great dog man, Jack Goldstein. This dog was the first to obtain an AOC (Australian Obedience Champion) title in NSW in the mid 1950s and Wootton Alaska CDX is the only white ever to trial in NSW since White Fang's passing in 1969.

Wootton Alaska CDX was bred by Sue and Chris Harris of Wootton Kennels, Wauchope NSW and represents the old style GSD, rarely seen today.

He is the only white GSD in the NSW and ACT trialing in the Obedience ring today, competing and qualifying consistently.

The white GSD is a most controversial figure! I am amazed at the reception he and his handler, Heather, receive at some competitions.....ranging from extreme opposition to negative curiosity but that is before the crowd see this team work!

More and more people are coming in to bat for them as they weave their presence into the Obedience scene.

The results speak for themselves:

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- 1st place Sutherland Shire
- 2nd Place ACT Obedience State Titles
- Qualifying score with Bega Valley Kennel Club
- Qualifying score with ACT Companion Dog Club

CDX

- 3rd Place ACT German Shepherd Association
- Qualifying score with ACT German Shepherd Association

Association

- Qualifying score with Shoalhaven Dog Training Club
- Since gaining their CDX Title in the latter part of 2007 they have since gained further success out of 6 outings 5 qualifying scores.
- 2nd Place South Coast Dog Training (AM)
 - Qualified in the afternoon South Coast Dog Training

- 1st Place Southern Highlands
- 1st Place German Shepherd Dog League NSW (winning a Gold Medallion with a score of 194/200)
- 2nd Place ActewAGL 2008 Canberra Royal Show (score of 192/200)

This big, imposing white male GSD, with the most fabulous of temperaments, is rising 8 and still shows a wonderful focus and joy of working.

This dog's temperament has endeared me to the breed.

Wootton Alaska CDX has a wonderfully gentle nature, is always welcoming to people and a variety of situations—indeed, a true 'gentle giant' and a credit to his handler, Heather. He and Heather have formed a remarkable bond. Heads turn when they are working.

I have witnessed on several occasions this team getting a standing ovation at trials, a feat that is rarely seen but very much appreciated within the obedience/trial scene.

At this stage he is leading the point score (Obedience, Open Dog) with the German Shepherd Dog League NSW, the only white ever to do so (Results can be found here <http://www.gsd.info/> under Points Scores and Results).

Chris and Sue Harris gave this big white dog a chance and his owner/handler Heather Scott has made that chance come alive.

Despite his maturity (and he is one of the oldest GSDs still working in the ring) Wootton Alaska's (CDX) journey has only just begun.

Look out for this big white boy.....he is an inspiration.

"The Shepherd dog is a service dog and must be bred as a service dog AND must only be judged as a service dog. With service dogs, suitability ranks higher than beauty: indeed their real beauty and their only nobility consist in their complete adaptability in the arrangement, balancing and coalescence of each and every part." Max Von Stephanitz, breed founder.

"The colouring of the dog has no significance whatever for service; our shepherd dog accordingly is not bred for colour" Max Von Stephanitz, breed founder.

JILL FOWLER Merrifox Kennels

FOOTNOTE

Heather is a member of the following organizations German Shepherd Dog League NSW, Dogs NSW. She has no allegiance to any associations that are promoting White Shepherds in Australia or overseas.

Photo taken by Mr Axel M Scott

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