

Westminster Winner 2001

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At just 13 months old, the 2001 Westminster Best of Breed Winner was Ch. Kimro's Rocket Man (Rocky), owned by Howard Schwell, of White Plains, N.Y., and bred by Robin Greenslade and Kimberly Pastella. A third-generation dog fancier, with a long association with Boxers, this is Pastella's second time handling the Best of Breed Miniature Pinscher at the Garden. In 1998, she handled Rocky's dam, Ch. Sunsprite Absolutely Sable (Abbey), whom she also owned, to Best of Breed at Westminster.

I asked Kim what her attraction to Miniature Pinschers is, as it is usually a larger breed dog seen at the end of her lead. She replied: "What I love about them is they are feisty and lovable and like a Boxer in a smaller package, always busy and full of personality. I know I will always have one, and they are easy to tote around."

Kim shared some of her memories of the breed. "Since the time I was 12, I wanted a Min Pin that looked like Ch. Carlee's Nubby Silk. Each year when I went on the Florida circuit, I would hound Marcia Tucker about a Min Pin. I don't think she ever took me seriously, so I kept hounding her. Then a few years later, Tucker was exhibiting in the New York area and had this cute little bitch with her. This turned out to be Abbey, who was a dream come true in more ways than one. I have a connection to Abbey and Rocky like no other. I cannot explain the feeling that came over me as they won.

"Rocky is my first home-bred male champion, and as you know, none of this would be possible without Robin Greenslade. She took an interest in these little dogs and helped me make a dream a reality. And, of course, breeders Tucker and Pam Ruggie -without them Rocky would not be here. It is really their breeding programs and years and years of hard work and breeding that made our dream a reality.

"Greenslade and I owe a lot to them and are very grateful to them for our success and fun times, including one all-breed BIS winner, two Westminster winners and a Winners Dog at the national. Our connection with these little dogs is a feeling I just cannot explain. It's a joy that comes from within, and I am smiling ear-to-ear so hard it hurts.

"This is my first home-bred BB winner at Westminster (I've won Best of Breed seven times in Boxers, and once in Giant Schnauzers), and to be able to accomplish this and share this with my friend Robin is unbelievable."

Thanks, Kim. While there can only be one Best of Breed winner, each and every entry at the Garden is to be congratulated on their accomplishments, along with the breeders behind these dogs whose years of hard work and dedication serve to maintain the quality and integrity of our breed