

Sometimes You Want To Quit

There comes a time, I am sure, when nearly every breeder or show person say to themselves, "WHY do I keep doing this?" And it is any number of reasons that can trigger this self-doubt. Cause God knows we are not in it for the money! Perhaps it is the devastating loss of a litter of puppies, or the realization of exactly what it costs each year to show even one dog and pay the entry and travel costs, or maybe even the cost what you pay to a handler each month. Perhaps it is your own bloodshot eyes that look back at you in the mirror on a Monday morning after a grueling weekend of showing and driving. Perhaps you have reached your limit with the same people week after week, year after year who whine and complain or get ugly if they are not the ones who are the big winners. Even the chat lists become tiresome because those same people bring their nastiness to the internet. Maybe it is just the constant fight with the morons who invent new laws every week to make it more difficult to keep dogs at all, let alone guaranteeing a future for the sport of showing dogs and purebreds.

These are some of the things that just make some people say, "I've had enough". Sometimes they quit for good, sometimes they just take a break away from showing or breeding for 6 months or even a year. Breeding and showing dogs is not for the faint of heart. It is a grueling expensive "hobby". But the strong people are the heart and soul of purebred dogs and the sport of showing, whether it is for confirmation, hunting, obedience or the other trials that are held for sporting dogs.

These people are not the commercial breeders. It is the "hobby" show/breeders that are the people who are contributing to the quality of our gene pool and the future of our breed. They are the people to put forth more than their fair share in working with their parent breed club, or their local kennel club. These are the people who work to rescue and find homes for dogs that are not their own.

Sometimes, it is taking your older dog to the vet for the last time, and a final goodbye. Sometimes you wonder if your heart will ever heal and all you want to do, is cry. Sometimes, you want to quit.

And then your other dogs say, "Mom, WE need you!" And your friends put out a hand and say, "WE are there for you!" Or you get an email from another show person who says, "Where have you been? We have missed you." Or you get an email from a family that got their pet from you, and they tell you how much your "fur-kid" means to their family.

The strong people, the people that are committed to their breed and the sport, come to realize that the heart does heal. The tears dry up and our dogs are what keep us going and for many of us, they keep us whole and grounded. It is not about the ribbons. It is about the DOGS.

So you fill out yet another entry form and think about the future and what it will bring. You think about how rich you are for the friends you have made at shows and the loving families that have your pet puppies. You think about the wonderful dogs you have at home and the prospects of yet another show puppy that may set the world on fire. You re-evaluate what is important to you. Sometimes what you love, breaks your heart. Then you realize that doing what you love, IS your heart.

As I write this in December, we are have having a major winter storm and I could use a good National Specialty right now. But I'll settle for the first local show of the year in January right after the holidays. And I'll wish all who are going to Westminster the best of luck there and at the Nationals in 2008.

I'll sit glued to the TV to see which Min Pin gets breed at Westminster and the Eukanuba Classic and keep my fingers crossed for them to get a Group win, or Best In Show. And I'll make plans to do another breeding. There will be more babies, more dog shows and the sun will again shine.

Miniature Pinschers, I just can't quit you.

For more information about our wonderful Miniature Pinschers please visit the MPCA website at: www.minpin.org

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