

GCH AVIATORS LUCK BE A LADY "LADYBUG"
Top-Winning Portuguese Water Dog in History

By Michael Dugan, mtdugan@comcast.net

Born on St. Patrick's Day (a good omen) in 2006, GCH Ladybug demanded attention almost immediately. Although Cathy and Mike Dugan have operated Aviator Kennel in Shingle Springs, California since 1987, it was rare that a four-week old puppy attracted Cathy's eye so quickly. Ladybug was not to be denied.

Ladybug was shown by Cathy in the Bred by Exhibitor class and won her first Major at the Southern California PWD Specialty when she was seven months old. She finished her championship with BOS over specials at the Northern Cal Specialty at 18 months. She was already demonstrating her unusual power and effortless drive in the ring.

In 2008, Ladybug campaigned on the east coast and won her first group placement, a Group One, under Judge Houston Clark when she was less than two years old. She won her first Best in Show under Judge Ken McDermott, May 10, 2008. Ladybug placed as the #2 PWD in 2008 to CH Pouch Cove's Monkey See Monkey Do on the last show of the last day of 2008, trailing by only 24 breed points.

In 2009-2010, Ladybug campaigned on the west coast, superbly handled by Amy Rutherford and her career took off immediately. Against the toughest working dog group in the country, Ladybug was able to become a dominant competitor for Portuguese Water Dogs and the Working Group. For her career she won over 300 Best of Breeds and won that title 80% of the time in competition. She won 20 Best in Shows, 88 Group 1s, and 175 Group placements. She set all-time records for every category of conformation competition.

In 2010, she finished as the #3 Working Dog, #15 Dog All-Breeds and was the #1 Portuguese Water Dog, All Systems in 2009-2010.

She finished in January, 2011 as the #1 Working Dog and #7 Dog All-Breeds. In the month before Westminster, Ladybug won Group 1 at Eukanuba and popped two Best in Shows; a great way to come into the Garden.

Among her big wins were:

- Westminster: Group 1, 2011, Group 3, 2010, Best of Breed 2009, 2010 and 2011.
- AKC/Eukanuba National Championship: Group 1, 2010.
- Best of Breed, PWDCA National Specialty, 2010
- Best of Breed Breeder's Showcase, 2009, Best of Opposite Breeder's Showcase, 2010.

For any breeder, the goal is to produce consistent, outstanding dogs that exemplify breed standards with excellent temperaments along with competitive drive. Although Aviator Kennel has been honored to have produced over 50 PWD champions and multiple top ten dogs, Ladybug is truly the dog of a lifetime. Many judges have described her as the epitome of what a Portuguese Water Dog should be; powerful yet feminine, with a reach and drive full of power and grace, and an enthusiastic love for the ring.

Special thanks are due to Owners Victor Malzoni, Jr. and Jerson Valle and Breeder/Owners Mike and Cathy Dugan, as well as "Team Ladybug", Matthew Davis and Bill Waters, ASTA PWDs, and Paul and Judy Archambeau, Bela Vista PWDs. It really does take a team effort to accomplish what Ladybug has done.

Ladybug is now back home at Aviator Kennel in the Sierra Foothills for her next great adventure.....

Ladybug...always on the job - has already come in season and is being bred to the very handsome "Pele" GCH Spyglass Legend of Bahia...who was her BOW at 2010 PWDCA/ 2010 Eukanuba/ 2011 Westminster and finished as the #2 PWD in 2010....Perfectly Wonderful Dogs expected in May 2011.