



Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2010 Issue 6 PATRON: Katie Boyle www.italiangreyhoundrescuecharity.org.uk

HELLO TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

Welcome to the sixth edition of our Newsletter which we hope you will enjoy reading. On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank all our Friends and supporters for their continued support which is greatly appreciated. Enclosed is a "Friends" Renewal Form for 2011 (unless you have set up a standing order) which we hope you will complete and return to continue your valuable support of the Charity. This issue we have included some photographs of recently departed IG's. We have also reprinted a copy of a report of a Kennel Club Adjudication published on the Dog World web site.

Update from our Chairman - Helen

It is six years since the inception of the Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity and sadly, one of our founder Trustees, Tom Mather JP, has been unable to offer his services for a third term, due to his work and Kennel Club commitments. We thank Tom for his valued contribution, he brought a wealth of sound canine advice to the Charity, combined with his HR skills; we were sad to see him go.

The economic crisis the country faces does nothing to help Charities' and we are no different to any other. Our Treasurer has worked hard to ensure our investments are best placed in the event of another Bank collapse. Sadly, these investments are only earning a meagre rate of interest, so please support our ongoing work with purchasing from our Christmas Mailer. You will read from our Coordinator that we have re-homed twelve dogs this year so far; some required extensive and costly veterinary treatment in order for them to live a pain free and happy life with their new adopters. Any donations are always gratefully received which help us to continue our work in treating unfortunate IG's. We are also ever grateful to Mary, our nimble fingered lady who continues to spend hours making vests, rats and new for this year, Christmas Bow ties for IG's which are sold to raise funds.

The sharp increase in the number of Italian Greyhounds and Italian crossed breeds continues to rise at an alarming rate, the bulk of these coming from 'commercial, back street breeders'. People who decide to make money from their IG's without any prior consideration as to the availability of suitable homes, or to health issues affecting the breed.

The Charity is actively lobbying the newly formed **Advisory Council on the Welfare Issues of Dog Breeding**, which is an independent, non-statutory advisory body established to provide advice to governments and other parties in the United Kingdom. The Council's main role is to provide independent, expert advice and make recommendations on methods and priorities for improving the welfare issues of dog breeding with particular regard to: surveillance, research and development, breeding strategies, legislation and regulation and education and publicity. We are aware that these 'backstreet breeders' are a target area for the Advisory Council and we are able to provide evidence in the steep rise of IG's being bred during the last ten years from these sources, coupled with the increasing number of dogs coming into rescue.

This issue of the newsletter brings a number of tributes from our Rescue Adopters who have sadly had to part company with their beloved rescue IG's and we thank you all for giving these IG's a happy life right up to the end.

***Remember you may feel distinctly average.
But to your IG you are exceptional, wonderful, the one and only***

Update from our Rescue Co-ordinator - Shirley

As in previous years the Charity Trustees have been busy assisting Italian Greyhounds, cross breeds and owners with numerous welfare issues.

Statistics to the end of September, 2010

12 dogs re homed so far during the year

50 dogs have been re homed since the Charity was formed in 2005

103 dogs have been re homed since my involvement with re homing IG's in 1997

27 dogs have sadly come to the end of their lives.

So far this year up to the end of September, 2010 there have been **23** situations for the Charity to deal with. We have rehomed **12** IG's, and sadly **5** of our rehomed dogs have come to the end of their lives.

21/01/2010 rescue "**Sparkie**" died, he would have been twelve years old on 17/02/10. Our thanks go to Ros and Mike for giving this special boy so many happy years of life. I know how much they miss "Sparkie" and their tribute follows.

03/02/2010 rescue "**James**" died, he was fourteen and a half years old. He had been the apple of his adopters eyes since April 1998. Sadly for Hazel & Terry they also lost James' pal Suzy soon afterwards. Thanks for all you did for "James" and "Suzy".

21/02/2010 rescue "**Fern**" died at the wonderful age of sixteen and a half. She had been with her devoted family, Jane & Pops since June 2000. Initially she was with her Dam "Sorrell" and we thank you both for all the care you gave to both IG's. We also appreciate that "Fern" had so many special needs following the hind leg amputation which was required prior to her being adopted. What a brave little girl she was, and a tribute to "Fern" follows.

04/08/2010 rescue "**Grace**" died. She had just celebrated her eighth birthday six weeks before she was found to be suffering from terminal cancer. Elaine & Richard were devoted to this dear little IG who required so much help from them when they first had her. "Grace" was unsocialised and terrified of everything and everybody but her family helped her through this and enabled her to have a wonderful, if short, life. A tribute to "Grace" follows.

09/08/2010 rescue "**Sapphire**" died age 14 years and 4 months. She, along with her brother "**Jazz**" had been with Yvonne & Mike since 31/05/1998. I initially collected these two IG's who were in very poor condition, after treatment they went to their forever home and have had a lot of very happy years. Thank you both for all you have done for "Sapphire" & "Jazz" over the years.



We are delighted that the **12** rehomed dogs so far this year are all settled into their new homes and enjoying being thoroughly spoiled. Some were relatively easy to rehome as they did not have physical or psychological problems, others have not been so easy. Indeed one little IG was advertised for sale on the internet at a few weeks of age. She had no pedigree papers as her parents were unregistered IG's and she has ended up in rescue at less than 2 years of age. She is so untypical of the breed being vicious towards almost every stranger she encounters, so she is still at home here and fortunately for my dogs she gets on with other dogs fine.

It is saddening to see what is happening to the breed by these unscrupulous breeders. We all love the breed for its gentle, loving and affectionate nature. Seeing one so young who is so mentally disturbed is heart breaking, but she is trying hard and responding very well to some TLC and lots of cuddles and so far I have been spared her teeth!!!



We have also rehomed "**Lucy**", a 12 week old puppy into her **fourth** home!!! Most responsible breeders would just be thinking about a first home for a puppy of 12 weeks of age. These first weeks of life are crucial to a puppy's psychological development so it is to be hoped that this baby does not end up like the little one above.

Another of the twelve rehomed dogs is a 13 month old puppy. Despite breeders' internet flowery adverts of forever homes, in fact many do not care where their puppies go and they end up passed round on the internet for huge sums of money, and sadly enter the puppy farming chain themselves. Thanks to all of you who watch out for IG's suffering at the hands of these breeders.

Another little one required major orthopaedic surgery to correct a very deformed leg and we are indebted to Chris Henshall and her Mother who saw this IG through her treatment. The leg is now corrected and she has settled in with her new family.

Thanks to all the "Friends" of the Charity who have offered their assistance with home checking, transportation and fostering of this year's rescues, it has been a busy time but without your help my role rehoming IG's would be impossible, I really so appreciate your help.

Thanks also to those of you who have donated beds, coats, toys, leads, collars etc for those arriving without anything. Some generous donations have been made to the Charity which are greatly appreciated and Margery Hall is still collecting your used stamps to make money for the Charity. Margery's address for you to forward used stamps is:- Miss M.D. Hall, Tolgallow, St Day, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 5PD.

On the "**Welfare**" front we have again been busy with owners being distressed to discover that at 5/6 years of age their beloved IG develops epilepsy with all the problems associated with this nasty condition. The Charity continues its research into epilepsy in conjunction with the Animal Health Trust and anyone wishing to participate should contact **Helen Lister** on **015394 43343** for further details.

In March, 2010 we were contacted by the RSPCA to say that two Italian Greyhounds had been removed from breeding premises adjacent to the M25 Motorway, along with 30 other dogs of different breeds. All were kept in terrible conditions outside on a small holding. This breeding pair of Italian Greyhounds were known to us and the male IG had been sold there by a Kennel Club Accredited Breeder of IG's.

In August, 2010 the RSPCA removed a number of dogs from Travellers on the South Coast of England and one of these was a fawn I.G. Do these breeders never check out the homes that they are selling their IG puppies to? They do not seem to care how much suffering they put the dogs through just keen to line their pockets!!

To conclude I will share with you the parting words of an owner to his IG when our "Friend" went to collect 7 year old "Millie" for me after she had come to the end of being any more use to her owners:

"Go and see whose carpet you can pee on now"

"Millie" was collected from the garden shed in her urine soaked bed. I am delighted to inform our readers that this dear little IG does not pee on the carpets where she now lives, she is loved very much by her new family and little Yorkshire Terrier pal. She has, for probably the first time in her life, got a regular routine and a forever home with an abundance of love for her.

Not all the dogs we are requested to rehome come from unfortunate back grounds, many are re homed due to unavoidable change in the circumstances of their owner/s. We are here to help them all.

My Very Best Wishes to you all, your families and pets for Christmas and 2011. **Shirley**

In memory of our beloved Sparkie (Cervetes Fermente) who passed away 21st January 2010

Another I G for the Angels

By Mike Vesey

You angels have another one we send him with our love.
Let him run with our Pepe who's already up above.
He was our friend and soul mate and Sparkie is his name.
Without him by our sides life will never be the same.

Please treat him kind and feed him well he loved his food so much.
He loves to snuggle up real close and feel a gentle touch.
And when he's tired he loves to sleep with pillows everywhere.
He snores and dreams of running after rabbits or a hare.

But gentle was his nature and kindly was this loving friend.
He gave such joy and happiness until the very end.
Sparkie always lived to love and spread it all around.
Cherish him and love him well and keep him safe and sound.

You have him now so treat him good he's earned it every day.
A Sparkling star to shine above and show us all the way.



SPARKIE and MAISIE



FERN

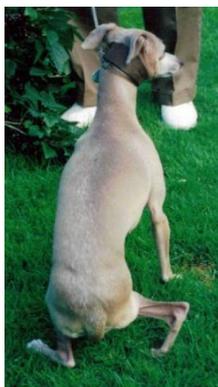
13th January 1994 - 21st February 2010

Fern with her mother Sorrell came to Pops and I through the Rescue in July 2000. From the start Fern was a "special girl" not only that she coped being on three legs but everyone who met her loved her.

In her later years with her eyesight failing Davenport and latterly Masefield took Fern under their paws to be her minder, letting Pops or I know if Fern wanted to get into her chair or needed help coming from the garden.



For nine and a half years Fern gave all who knew her fun, laughter and joy. Her greatest gift was the abundance of unconditional love she gave to all, a gift no money can buy. To our special darling girl, thank you. **Jane Freeman.**



Shirley writes:-*"Occasionally we get an IG into rescue who really is a sorrowful case and Fern was one of those unfortunate little girls. She had lived for about six years with an untreated fracture of her hind leg which stuck out like a wing on her rear. She cried if another dog knocked it and she lived with her dam and a number of whippets, or if she tried to jump into a chair and caught it. The only thing the Vet. could do to help Fern was to amputate the limb.*

This was way back in 2000, Fern made a good recovery from the operation and then her luck changed. She was adopted by Jane & Pop's who tended to her every need. She discovered what TLC was, what a warm safe and secure home was and until she was able to walk unaided again, she went on her walks with Jane and her pals being carried in a papoose!! Quite a shock to those they met on their walks who may have expected to see a baby up front to find it was a dog in the papoose.

The TLC and special care continued for ten years; Fern was the boss in the home I am told and she went on to live happily until at sixteen and a half she came to the end of her life in February, 2010.

The Charity Trustees thank you both for all that you have done for Fern over the years, it has always been nice to hear her stories and receive photographs of her, I shall miss this very much. I also know how much you miss Fern, that special little character who I am sure tried to re pay you both for what you did for her."



OUR LITTLE GRACE

By Elaine & Richard



Grace came into our lives five years ago, she arrived like a Tornado a whirling bundle of energy! Like a lot of IG's she came with a host of problems, the difficulty for us was we had the strange behaviour without knowing the cause. In the early days it was like trying to put pieces of a jigsaw back together without the picture on the box!

She was frightened of almost everything the kettle, the steam iron, the telephone, outside the hose pipe, any cables, cars, dogs, people the list was endless. We took her to dog training classes where she learnt quickly, but she refused to sit. The trainer was adamant you could train any dog to sit, he had obviously never come across an IG! The funny thing was she would sit all the time when she wanted to but

never when asked. After 6 weeks she was banned because if she had to wait for her turn she would start howling, then all the other dogs would join in, we were asked to leave politely!

We got George about 10 weeks later he is a Whippet / Bedlington cross, he was tiny at first but gradually became about three times bigger. She was always the boss, as he is tall (when on his hind legs) he soon became skilled at stealing food from the worktops. They were like Bonnie and Clyde he would make a grab for it and she would excitedly join him polishing the titbits off quickly. They slept in the same bed, ate together, loved running together, and she cleaned his ears several times a day!

When she was refused anything she would tap things with her paw in protest. If we told her to go in her bed she would grin and start sneezing! These were just 2 of her 'party pieces'. For all her problems she was very loving and much loved by the whole family. So it was a huge shock (after becoming ill only a week before) to be informed by our Vet she had Cancer, to remove it all would be too much for such a little dog to survive.

She was only just 8years in June and we lost her on the 4th of August. It's impossible to say how devastated we feel, she has left an enormous hole in our lives not least for George who is lost without her too. Writing this 3 weeks later I wonder if we will ever recover, some days I just long to hold her close, but I know its early days. I still feel angry that having overcome so much she only had five years with us. However remembering all the fun and joy she brought does help to comfort us. So if you have a traumatised little IG persevere, they get there in the end and I hope you enjoy 'the journey'.

JAMES

January 1996 - February 2010

By Hazel and Terry

On February 3rd we lost our dear little friend James after much suffering, patiently borne. James was brought into our lives by Shirley and Helen in April 1998 after a rather traumatic start to his young life.

He had previously lived outside in a shed but quickly settled in and was house-trained almost immediately by Suzy, also a rescue IG whom we had acquired from Julia Smith 16 months earlier.



James was a happy, laid-back little soul, who loved his walks, his toys and all of us but, most of all, he loved his food, which he would scoff up almost in one gulp! Sadly, his last two years were clouded by ill-health. He developed a mast cell tumour in his left ear canal - supposedly of low malignancy. It was removed but recurred a year later, so that this time he had to have his whole ear removed. Amazingly, he quickly adjusted to this, but then a few months later developed a melanoma within his eye also on the left, but quite a different cancer this time. He had to have his eye removed and again managed to bounce back cheerfully from this new setback. Then his heart started to fail and he could no longer walk very far. Finally, he had a series of fits which caused him to pass away. We were grief-stricken and our friends, family and his vets were all also deeply affected.

All the vets who treated him were struck by his bravery and co-operation with whatever unpleasant treatment they had to give him; it was as if he knew they were trying to help him. After his death, Suzy wouldn't go for a walk anymore, she could no longer eat and sank into depression. A long-standing kidney condition rapidly worsened and she too died, exactly two weeks after James. We are still trying to come to terms with our great loss.

HERE IN THIS HOUSE / a poem from a grateful dog

HERE IN THIS HOUSE: An animal's prayer

Here in this house...

I will never know the loneliness that I hear in the cries of the other animals 'out there.' I can sleep soundly, assured that when I wake my world will not have changed. I will never know hunger, or the fear of not knowing if I will eat.

I will not shiver in the cold, or grow weary from the heat, but rather, I will nap in the sun's warmth, and play in the rain's coolness, and be allowed to smell all that can reach my nose. My fur will shine, and never be dirty or matted.

Here in this house...

There will be an effort to communicate with me on my level. I will be talked to, and, even if I don't understand, I can enjoy the warmth of the words spoken to me in kindness. I will be given a name so that I may know who I am among many. My name will be used in love and joy, and I will relish the sound of it!

Here in this house...

I will never be a substitute for anything I am not. I will never be used to improve peoples' image of themselves. I will be loved because I am who I am, not someone's idea of who I should be. I will never suffer for someone's anger, impatience, or stupidity. I will be taught all the things I need to know to be loved by all. I will be praised for my successes, instead of punished too harshly for my mistakes. If I do not learn my lessons well, they will look to my teacher for blame.

Here in this house...

I can trust arms that hold, hands that touch... Knowing that, no matter what they do, they do it for the good of me. If I am injured or ill, I will be doctored. If I am scared, I will be calmed. If I am sad, I will be cheered.

Here in this house...

No matter what I look like, I will be considered beautiful and known to be of value. I will never be cast out because I am too old, too ill, too unruly, or not cute enough. I will not be left behind because my humans moved - I will move with them. If a new human baby joins my family, it will not 'replace' me, but instead will be one more human for me to love, and to love me. I will not be treated as disposable. My life is a responsibility, and not an afterthought. I will learn that humans can almost, sometimes, be as kind and as fair as other animals.

Here in this house...

I was BROUGHT, because I was WANTED! I will BELONG! I will be home - FOREVER! AND I WILL BE LOVED!

Until one has loved a dog, part of their soul remains unawakened.

Kennel Club -v- Rosie Marston
7th October 2010

Exhibitor faces year's ban

AN ITALIAN Greyhound exhibitor who was seen 'dragging' her reluctant puppy around the ring at Birmingham National championship show in May has been banned for a year by the Kennel Club.

After hearing the result, Rosie Marston said she had decided to give up showing.

A few people who saw what happened went to check on the puppy afterwards and found her lying on a small piece of soiled bedding on a bare wire cage, the KC Disciplinary Sub-Committee heard. Several people were so upset that they made an official complaint, and this became the subject of an A42 disciplinary complaint against Mrs Marston at the KC's London offices last week.

The KC's case was presented by Counsel Robert Dalling. Mrs Marston, of Barton Seagrave, Kettering, North Hampshire, did not attend.

Three witnesses were present to support the KC's complaint that Mrs Marston had behaved discredibly and prejudicially to the interests of the canine world in that she harshly handled and mistreated her Italian Greyhound by dragging the dog forcibly around the show ring causing the dog distress. Later, the complaint continued, she placed the dog in a crate with soiled bedding and no protective or solid flooring, which allowed the dog's paws to slip through the crate floor exposing the dog to risk of injury.

Chairing the KC's Disciplinary Sub-Committee was Wilson Young, who sat with Ian Kettle, Roy Page and Simon Luxmoore.

Eight-month-old

Mr Dalling opened proceedings by describing what led to the complaint. The class in which Mrs Marston was competing was minor puppy bitch, judged by Nick Bryce-Smith who was awarding CCs in the breed for the first time, and the puppy in question was eight-month-old Aermachi Miss Molly Mandy.

"Several people present saw Mrs Marston dragging the puppy around the ring using the lead," Mr Dalling said. "The puppy was obviously reluctant to move and didn't move her legs at all, according to those present. Notwithstanding that, Mrs Marston was seen to drag her for a prolonged period around the ring, leading to obvious discomfort."

Mr Dalling explained that the other part of the KC's complaint related to the conditions in which the puppy was seen to be kept by Mrs Marston after she had come out of the ring. "The puppy was seen in the cage, and as well as soiled bedding there was no protective or solid flooring, which made its legs exposed to the mesh floor and exposed her to the risk of injury," he said. "That risk was obvious because of the delicate legs of the breed."

The first witness was the chairman of the Italian Greyhound Club, Jo Amsel, who was watching the class.

"I watched the class from the beginning, and I immediately noticed Mrs Marston literally dragging a puppy on the first go round," she said. "The puppy made no attempt to put one foot in front of another. It's not unusual for a puppy to occasionally stick their feet in the ground, but Mrs Marston made no attempt to stop and encourage her. The puppy's feet were firmly planted as she was dragged around what is not a small ring. "The lead was tightening around her throat."

Mrs Amsel said the judge sent Miss Molly Mandy around the ring once and then each puppy was examined on the table before going around the ring again and then up and down. "In this puppy's case it did a second up and down," she said. "It was being dragged, so you couldn't see it move, so she dragged it again. At no stage did it move its legs. The puppy was patently very distressed because the lead was so tight. Its feet were planted and it was a hard ring, not carpeted."

Mrs Amsel said Mrs Marston was bending and pulling the puppy towards her, and smiling all the time as if the situation was amusing. "We were keeping a close eye on things because as chairman I had been asked to watch it," she said. "People were saying, 'Can't you do something about this?' There was nothing I could do physically because it was not my ring. The class ended and the puppy was placed third out of three. The judge had a few words with Mrs Marston when he took her number, but I'm not sure what he said. The class took about four minutes and the puppy was being dragged for probably about 90 seconds of that."

Afterwards, Mrs Amsel went to Mrs Marston's bench. "She wasn't there but the puppy was in a cage with a minute piece of dirty bedding which had been rucked up," she said. "Her lead was still attached, which is dangerous. You would expect to see a cage with a solid bottom, not wire, and more than a tiny piece of bedding. I spoke to her about the condition of the puppy in the cage and the way the puppy was dragged, and she just kept saying, 'Thank you very much for telling me, I appreciate that'. I said, 'Rosie you need to do something about the dirty bedding', and she said, 'I'll get more bedding, and thank you very much for telling me' again."

Mr Luxmoore asked if the puppy really made no attempt to take a step. "No," Mrs Amsel said. "That was what was making people start to tap me on the shoulder. I don't know how the dog managed to be dragged like that. The dog was patently terrified. Mrs Marston was standing facing the puppy and smiling. I don't think she really aware of what was happening to the puppy, and the feeling I got was that she thought it was quite funny - funny embarrassed, I think. It was a very small puppy too."

Mrs Amsel said she thought the puppy had been eight months old. "It certainly was a very small, fragile puppy and very immature," she said.

Mr Young asked her how she thought Mrs Marston should have handled the situation.

"She should have stopped when the puppy wouldn't move and tried to encourage her," she replied. "When it was obvious she was not going to she should have withdrawn. It wasn't a case of a few steps - it was so very frail, and on a very tight lead. The puppy was very distressed and you shouldn't have a distressed puppy in the ring."

Mr Page asked if Mrs Amsel had noticed any damage to Miss Molly Mandy's feet. "Rosie took the puppy out of the cage when I got there, got hold of the feet and said there was nothing wrong with them," she replied. "I think she turned its feet up and I said I really don't care, you should have taken the puppy out, and she said, 'Thank you very much, I know I haven't trained her enough'."

The next witness, Pat Spencer, was competing in the same class. "The puppy was totally unsocialised, very nervous and very frightened," she said. "The concrete floor was very rough. She was dragged around the ring and then on a triangle and would not stand on the table for Mr Bryce-Smith. It looked like it had never been on a lead before. Mrs Marston was not communicating with it at all and the puppy was terrified."

She said she would have expected the plastic tray to be on top of the open mesh in the cage. "And some form of bedding and comfort, and at least cleanliness. The puppy was balancing on the wire." She said there was no sign of injuries to the puppy's feet.

Jan Doherty, the next witness, told the panel she had been watching the class. "(Mrs Marston) should have said it's not my day and just backed out of the ring," she said. "I've never seen so many people upset; people were in tears and were turning their backs on the ring."

Unable to attend

Written statements supporting the KC's case came from Helen Lister of Italian Greyhound Rescue, Cecelia Boyle and Sheila Tiley-Davies.

Mrs Marston had written saying she was unable to attend the hearing.

"I receive only benefit and a small widow's pension which makes a return journey to London beyond my means," she wrote. "My income is reserved for the welfare of my dogs. I enclose a copy of a letter received from a satisfied puppy owner as a character reference. I stand by my previous correspondence with yourself, and trust the KC will accept that this incident was a one-off misdemeanour."

The letter she produced was from Liz Kinder who said that Mrs Marston had shown enormous interest and concern about the puppy when it left her to live with Mrs Kinder, and the pair had spoken weekly about the puppy's progress. In the letter to Mrs Marston, Mrs Kinder wrote: "... we can see that you just live for your Italian Greyhounds. They are the most important part of your life. You eat, sleep and drink Italians."

In a letter written to the KC in July, Mrs Marston said that in hindsight she sincerely regretted showing Miss Molly Mandy at Birmingham National.

"Due to personal circumstances, I had been unable to prepare adequately for this, her first show," she wrote. "She was nervous and lacked lead training. However, I vehemently reject allegations of cruelty or uncaring behaviour. The complaints against me are grossly exaggerated to the point in some cases of being libellous. A friend, a journalist, accompanied me to the show and took photographs. These clearly show, contrary to the allegations, (the puppy) being examined by the judge, walking in the show ring and being cuddled and comforted by me both in the show ring and in the benching area."

The panel was told that these photographs had not been produced to the KC.

"In the 12 years I have owned Italian Greyhounds my dogs have won many show awards, and their welfare and happiness is of paramount importance to me," Mrs Marston wrote. "My vet would provide testimony to that effect." She refuted Mrs Amsel's written statements that 'At no time did the puppy take or attempt to take a single step', and that the puppy was 'dragged along, gagging and chocking'. "Both these allegations are completely untrue," she wrote. "The puppy lacked ring craft and was indeed nervous at her first appearance in front of a large crowd. I coaxed her and was perhaps, in retrospect, too enthusiastic in that respect."

Mrs Lister had written that, 'The poor puppy never once tried to walk in the three times it was dragged round the ring'.

"If this was true, the puppy's paws would have been red raw," Mrs Marston wrote in response. "They were not injured in any way. When Mrs Amsel confronted me with this allegation at the show I tried to show her the puppy's paws but she was not interested in listening or looking, and walked away."

Mrs Lister also alleged: "It was obvious from the ring side that the puppy's left leg had been fractured, as the leg and foot turned out markedly'.

"This is absolute nonsense," Mrs Marston wrote. "(The puppy) is an attractive and healthy puppy in peak condition. She has no injuries of any kind." She said she had not left Miss Molly Mandy in soiled bedding. "It is a fact that she

relieved herself in her cage in the benching area when I was away having a cup of coffee," she wrote. "I was confronted with this allegation on my return to the benching area even before I had reached her cage. "I changed the bedding immediately and would have done so anyway."

She said there was no tray on the bottom of the cage because she had forgotten to put it in when she hurried to pack for the show that morning. "If my conduct has been appalling as alleged, the judge or his steward would have acted on the day," she wrote. "In fact, the judge had no misgivings against my treatment of the puppy but merely, after placing me third in the class, commented that she needed 'more dog socialisation', a comment I fully accept." She concluded: "The puppy did not have the training or social experience to compete on this occasion, and I regret showing her. However, I deny all allegations of mistreatment. "I am a genuine enthusiast and love my animals. I always have their best interests at heart and would do nothing to their detriment."

DOG WORLD phoned Mrs Marston the following day. She said she had heard the result of the hearing and had decided to stop showing. "I had already given up breeding," she said. "I will have to go and find myself another hobby. I haven't got many dogs and they're not very young. It's hard work breeding and I've come to the point in my life where I don't want to do it anymore; I just want to enjoy my little ones as pets. To be perfectly honest, having pets is very expensive when you're on a widow's pension. Breeding was just a hobby side of things, not a serious thing. I've always kept to the right side of the KC's rules, or so I thought."

Miss Molly Mandy went to a new home in June, she said. "I thought she would be all right (at Birmingham National) unfortunately," Mrs Marston said. "I tried to coax her round, and people on my side say that is what I was doing. People not on my side say the opposite. Life moves on and it's all water under the bridge now."

Penalties

After deliberation the sub-committee upheld the complaint, and these penalties were imposed: she was warned as to her future conduct A42j(1); censured A42j(2); fined £200 A42j(3); disqualified from exhibiting at, taking part in, attending and/or having any connection with any event licensed by the KC A42j(4); disqualified from being or becoming a member of any canine club or society registered with or affiliated to the KC, A42j(5); disqualified from acting as an officer or on the committee of any canine society, A42j(6); disqualified from taking part in the management of any event licensed by the KC, A42j(7); disqualified from judging at any event licensed by the KC A42j(8); disqualified from effecting registrations of any or all dogs and/or progeny of such dogs owned and/or registered by her (whether or not jointly owned and/or whether or not owned and/or registered in the name of a nominee) A42j(9).

The disqualifications are for a period of a year.

Mr Luxmoore, speaking on behalf of the sub-committee, said: "It is exhibitors' responsibility at all times to ensure that the welfare needs of their dogs at shows are fully met 'in all aspects'. "The dog should be well adjusted to the stresses of the environment, handled well both in and outside the show ring and otherwise housed properly in appropriate accommodation," he said. "To fail in that responsibility is not acceptable."

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Benson is getting into Festive mood and trying on his new Winter scarf. He invited a couple of his pals over to discuss his 12th Birthday Celebrations for next year. "Hello" and "OK" magazines are very eager to cover the event and vying against each other for the Sole Rights. Benson and his pals wish all his I.G. Friends and their Owners a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

TRUSTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Coordinator of Rescues - Shirley Penrose-Hansell tel: 0161 428 0142

Secretary - Adrian Bickers tel: 01462 731567

Treasurer - Jean Lambie-Logue tel: 01484 602755

Chairman / Fundraiser - Helen Lister tel: 01539 443343

Stuart Dunham tel: 01803 712714

Pam Heap tel: 01751 476956