

“K O B E”

JULY 17, 1998 – AUGUST 13, 2010

MBISS CH TIGRIS NOTHING BUT
NET FROM MASAI, RN, SC, NA,
NAJ, NAP, NJP, HIT, CGC, ROM

by Lisa Ganje-Patterson, Tigris

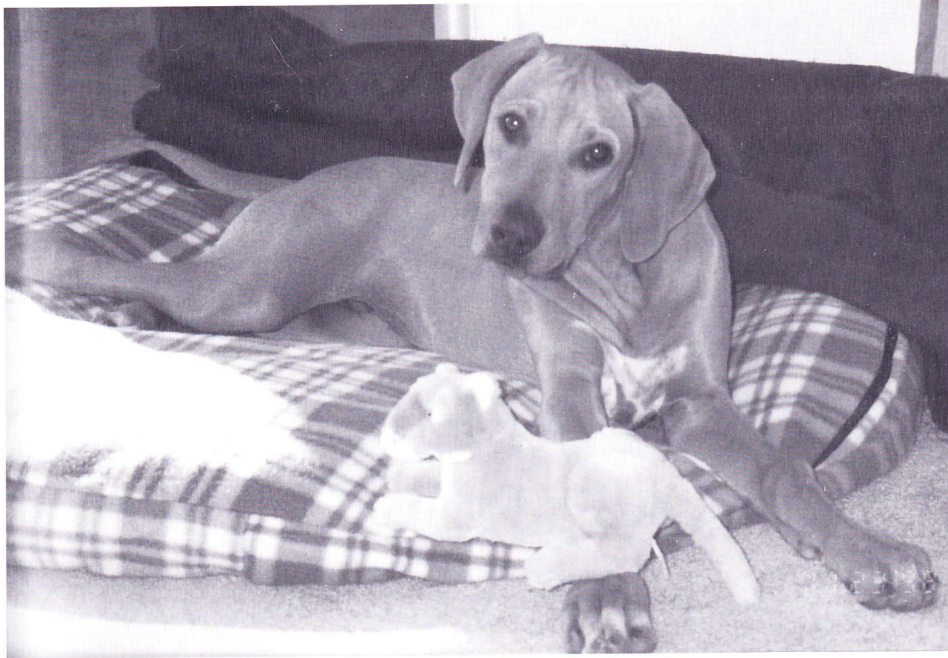
Life changing moments often occur when you least expect them. Such was the case for us one November evening in 1998 at an Orange Coast Rhodesian Ridgeback Club (OCRRC) meeting. The meeting had already been called to order when two late arrivals walked through the door: Rebecca Eastman, accompanied by 4-month-old Farley (short for Afarensis, an early human ancestor), the last unplaced puppy from her Bidoux/Genna litter, nattily attired in a burgundy collar bedecked with tiny airplanes. Farley happily snuggled next to Rebecca on a sofa across the room, calmly viewing the proceedings with great interest. We were immediately captivated by the handsome little fellow – one of those rare love-at-first-sight moments! The very next day, we headed south to pick up our new puppy. Despite his close bond with Rebecca (which remained throughout his lifetime), he eagerly hopped in our van, snoozing contentedly until arriving at our home – scratch that, his home, as this puppy was unquestionably destined to be our boy. His registered name would be “Nothing But Net,” a basketball term meaning the ball goes through the net without touching the rim or backboard... the Perfect Shot! The call name “Kobe” was a natural fit.



Kobe 2001, photo by Theresa Lyons

In our wildest dreams, we never could have imagined the amazing journey on which we were about to embark. At five months of age, Kobe was entered in his first puppy match to gain some ring experience, as he'd never been to handling class, much less worn a show lead. To our surprise and delight, he won Best of Breed and the Hound Group over older, more

seasoned competition. He duplicated that feat at the next match, on the day before his six month birthday. The winning streak continued at his first AKC show: on the day he turned 6 months old, he won Winners Dog, Best of Winners *and* Best of Breed! Kobe finished easily, always Best of Winners, earning most points from the puppy classes, including a California



Baby Kobe at 4 months, 1998

5-point major and two more Best of Breeds from the classes.

By that time, Mike was showing another top male Ridgeback special. So Kobe was handled by Lisa on his first foray into the specials ring during the 2000 OCRRC specialty weekend. In a ring loaded with top Ridgebacks and

handled by his novice Mom, there was no expectation of winning with our not-quite-2-year-old boy. We were thrilled when he made the cut at the specialty and ecstatic when he received an Award of Merit at the hound show and also made the cut at the first all-breed show. On the morning of the final all-breed show, Mike jokingly



On Rally course with Mom, 2009

the line, giving him the nod for Best of Breed. True to her word (but nervous as all heck!), Lisa did handle Kobe in the group, where he won a Group 3 over top hounds in the country, creating another unforgettable memory for the Patterson Pack.

Shortly after completing his conformation championship, Kobe was enrolled in agility class. Learning the obstacles was a breeze. (Ultimately, he was handicapped by two inexperienced agility handlers who couldn't quite grasp the body language necessary in agility. Boy, if we knew then what we know now...!) He'd only trained for a few months prior to entering his first agility trial, where Mike handled him to an NAJ



Winners Dog, Best of Winners and Best of Breed on 6th month birthday. January 1999



Mt. Palomar 2003, Best of Breed Monica Canestrini/Group 1 Jerry Watson

leg, placing first in the class. Kobe continued to compete in both conformation and agility as time permitted – sometimes on the same day! On more than one occasion, Kobe successfully navigated agility courses handled by Mike dressed in a shirt and tie, then raced over to the conformation ring to compete as a special. We'd

saved the last legs of Novice Standard and Novice Jumpers in hopes of earning the NA and NAJ titles at the 2001 RRCUS National Specialty. Again, our "Boy Wonder" wildly exceeded expectations, not only earning both agility titles...but also winning High in Agility Trial and an Award of Merit in conformation. At the end of 2001, Kobe was ranked #6 in con-

formation and Mike was the #1 RRCUS Owner-Handler.

Kobe was campaigned in conformation for two more years, ranking #8 in 2002 and #3 in 2003, always owner-handled by Mike. In the Western region loaded with top hounds handled by well-

Among Kobe's personal highlights are:

2001

Ranked #6 in Conformation
RRCUS National Specialty AOM
RRCUS National Specialty High in Agility Trial

2002

Ranked #8 in Conformation
OCRRC Regional Specialty AOM

2003

Ranked #3 in Conformation
#6 RRCUS Stud Dog (tie)
RRCUS National Specialty AOM
Westminster Kennel Club AOM
OCRRC Regional Specialty AOM/Best Stud Dog
TVRRCOT Regional Specialty AOM

2004

#1 RRCUS Stud Dog (tie)
OCRRC Regional Specialty Best in Specialty Show/Best Stud Dog
World Congress Show (TVRRCOT Regional Specialty) Best Stud Dog
Earned Register of Merit title

2005

#1 RRCUS Stud Dog
OCRRC Regional Specialty Best Stud Dog
SDRRC Regional Specialty Best Stud Dog
BARRC Regional Specialty Best in Veteran Sweeps/Best Veteran Dog/Best Stud Dog

2006

#4 RRCUS Stud Dog
SDRRC Regional Specialty Best in Specialty Show (from the Veteran Dog Class) /Best Stud Dog
OCRRC Regional Specialty AOM/Best Veteran Dog/Best Stud Dog

2007

#5 RRCUS Stud Dog (tied)
OCRRC Regional Specialty AOM/Best Veteran Dog

2008

#5 RRCUS Stud Dog (tied)

2009

OCRRC Regional Specialty Best Stud Dog

2010

#10 RRCUS Stud Dog (tied)
OCRRC Regional Specialty Best of Opposite Sex in Veteran Sweeps (from the 11+ class)



Chesapeake 2003, Best of Breed Barbara Sawyer-Brown/Group 1 Helen Lee James



OCRRC 2005, Best Stud Dog backed by CH Boomer & CH Olivia, Judge Jay Hyman

known breeders and professional handlers, Kobe still placed in the group with relative frequency, including winning seven Group Ones, which was absolutely thrilling for an unknown owner-handler. He also won Awards of Merit at Westminster, two RRCUS National Specialties and several regional specialties, plus at least seven medallions from RRCUS supported shows. In 2004, he came out of retirement to win Best in Specialty Show at the fourth largest OCRRC specialty. And in 2006, in what was one of his most memorable, thrilling and unexpected victories, he won Best in Specialty Show from the Veteran Dog class at the San Diego Rhodesian Ridgeback Club specialty... with his daughter winning Best of Opposite Sex and his grandson winning Best of Winners!

Kobe caught the lure coursing bug a little later in life. As a young dog, his first attempt was great

entertainment for spectators, if nothing else. He charged off the start line, down the straightaway and around the first two turns, but the lure of the crowd gathered along the edge of the field proved to be stronger than the plastic bag...tail wagging, he had to slow down for a meet “n

greet. When he spotted huntmaster John Rodgers (Masai Warriors), his co-breeder, he couldn’t contain his enthusiasm, turning into a big wiggly puppy complete with “love ears,” leaping with excitement at discovering one of his favorite people in an unexpected place. While that attempt at



Lure coursing 2004

a Junior Courser leg failed, his “run” was certainly the most amusing of the day!

He was middle-aged when we tried coursing again and by then he was absolutely crazed for the lure, ultimately earning points and his Senior Courser title. He continued to passionately chase the “bunny” until he was nearly 12 years old at fun runs and with our own portable lure coursing machine. At the ripe old age of 11, he attended two Rally-O classes, and then proceeded to earn his Rally Novice title in three consecutive trials handled by his proud Mom, winning first and second placements along the way.

We couldn't be more proud of Kobe's accomplishments in the show ring and performance venues, but his enduring legacy is as an influential sire of his generation. With limited, carefully considered breeding, he was a RRCUS top ranked Stud Dog for seven years, including #1 in



Showing off some trick dog skills!

2004 and 2005. The combination of Kobe's sire, BIS/BVIS CH Ridgelea's Shakar Viken, ROM, himself a top sire, and his dam, NBISS CH Masai's African Genesis, JC, TT, ROM, created a pedigree with a unique blend of classic dogs from renowned bloodlines including Ridgelea, Kimani, Rob Norm, Kwetu and Calico Ridge. But that would mean little without the outstanding quality of the bitches whose owners chose to use Kobe with their special girls, for which we are sincerely grateful. His progeny generally share his kind, empathetic temperament, strong work ethic, sound, fluid movement, lovely outline presenting the same picture standing and in motion, and beautiful head type, while retaining the unique strengths of their dams. They have excelled in every venue: conformation, obedience, agility, lure coursing, rally, tracking, triathlon and endurance trial competitors - even working therapy dogs.

Several have also shown herding aptitude by earning their herding instinct certificates.

AMONG THE MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS GET TO DATE ARE:

- 51 Conformation Champions;
- The first Triple Champion in breed history, who is also a MACH3 and #1 in agility;



Above: On the go, photo by Theresa Lyons

Left: Multitasking with Dad – agility, then conformation Scottsdale 2001



- Approximately 10 AKC Dual and Field Champions, including Best in Field winners, plus at least 4 ASFA Field Champions;
- At least four Versatility titled offspring;
- Two RRCUS Top Twenty Winners (2006 & 2007);
- Top Ten/Top Twenty ranked offspring in conformation, lure coursing, obedience and agility;
- Top Ten ranked bitches, including a #1 Bitch;
- Multiple group winners and placers;
- National Specialty winners, including: Winners Dog/Best of Winners; Best in Puppy Sweepstakes; Reserve Winners Bitch; and Awards of Merit;
- Regional specialty Best in Specialty Show winner;
- 5 regional specialty Winners Dogs;
- Register of Merit offspring, including a RRCUS top ranked stud dog and top ranked brood bitch; and numerous Grand Champions.

KOBE'S GRANDCHILDREN AND GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN EXTEND THIS LEGACY:

National Specialty winners, including: Best of Breed; Best of Opposite Sex; Best in Triathlon; Top Twenty People's Choice Award; Reserve Winners Dog; and Best of Opposite Sex in Puppy Sweepstakes.

And the story continues, with Top Ten/Top Twenty ranked grandchildren; Grand Champions; Dual Champions and Field Champions; Register of Merit; and obedience and upper level agility titled dogs... including a grandson rapidly approaching his MACH and Triple Champion titles!

While none of this would have been possible without the dedicated breeders and

owners of Kobe's progeny, undoubtedly Kobe himself contributed much toward the aptitude and work ethic necessary to achieve these remarkable accomplishments. We owe those breeders and owners a debt of gratitude for allowing us to share in their journey.

Kobe was a consummate gentleman – a wise old soul encased in a dog suit. He was incredibly intelligent and very social with people, dogs and other animals, and extremely sensitive and empathetic, always striving to please. His one and only attempt at counter surfing



Above: 4th Birthday celebration, 2002

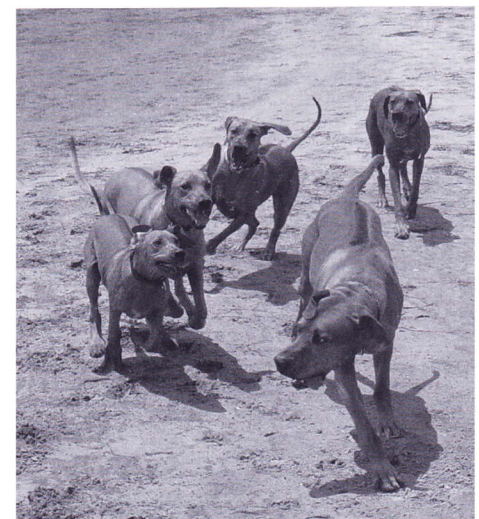


Left: Handsome Prince, 10th BD 2008

resulted in a shattered cereal bowl. The shock of debris flying everywhere and his Mom's verbal response to said debris was enough to prevent him from ever trying again. He had a goofy streak, coupled with a great sense of humor. A notorious ladies man (human and canine), he once ran headlong into a tree as he trotted around our yard with a toy in his mouth, because he was too busy flirting with our house sitter to pay attention to his surroundings. He loved to vigorously rub his head on



Right: Playing with daughter Kaysi, 2002



Far right Beach romp, 2007



Bunny chasing at age 11, 2009

us while wiggling in place, a big smile of doggy joy on his face. At Christmastime, he always enthusiastically unwrapped his presents using his paws and teeth, paper flying everywhere, then exuberantly raced around the yard, cheerfully tossing his new toys in the air.

His trick repertoire was impressive – in addition to the typical obedience and agility commands, he could wave, beg, hop, bang (flop to the ground and play dead), roll over, commando (crawl), twirl, spin, high five, other high five, both high fives, “What do you gotta say” (bark on command), take a bow, touch target with his nose...when it came to teaching him new skills, our imagination was the only limiting factor. One of his favorite tricks was called “spanking machine,” which entailed squirming through our legs from front to back, almost catlike as he rubbed against us, or “reversers” if he popped

through from behind. He attempted to do spanking machines or reversers with everyone who visited our house. Trouble was, not everyone appreciated having a 90+ pound dog force his way through their legs...plus, he could lift shorter folks off their feet!

He had numerous nicknames over the years, eagerly responding to each of them: Mr. Puppy, Young Man, Pup Daddy, Dog-E, Doggerman, GoodBuddy, Dogboy, T-TogglerMan, among others. He never failed to excitedly greet us at the door, even if we’d just stepped outside momentarily to get the mail. Perhaps the thing I miss most is the way he watched over me till I went to bed, no matter how late. He would patiently follow me from room to room, perpetually on duty until the lights finally went out.

We hadn’t fully appreciated Kobe’s impact on the breed until the 2010 National Specialty, which took place about

a month after his passing. At that point, his loss was still so raw, we’d contemplated not attending, even though the show was practically in our own backyard. Lots of tears were shed – after all, this was our first specialty show without him. Yet somehow he *was* present...as his progeny placed in obedience, agility, lure coursing, completed the endurance trial, and competed in the Top Twenty competition. Many of his Veteran kids either won or placed in their classes in both conformation and sweepstakes. Six of the fourteen Best Ridge finalists were Kobe descendants. His grandkids and great-grandkids were represented among the winners and placers of almost every class in puppy and junior sweepstakes, including a great-grandson winning Best of Opposite Sex in Puppy Sweeps. The extraordinary streak continued in the regular conformation classes, as his son won Winners Dog and his grandson won Reserve Winners Dog.

More Kobe progeny placed in Stud Dog, Brood Bitch and Brace. His granddaughter earned Best in Triathlon. All culminating in the Best of Breed competition – with his granddaughter winning Best of Breed and his sons winning Best of Winners and an Award of Merit! While Kobe’s physical presence was no longer with us, the link to our fine Young Man was clearly visible right before our eyes.

We still miss him dearly, but because of the influential traits he instilled in our own pack, he continues to play a significant role in our lives. Our home and breeding program are populated by Kobe’s descendants, and we proudly co-own and show many of his progeny. He truly was our life-changing heart dog and we treasure every memory of him...Nothing But Net...indeed! •

