

OVERSEAS NEWS

JAPAN — happy pets but expensive show dogs

I THINK there are many misconceptions in Britain about the Far East, the first being that it is all one and the same country, while in fact there are many differences, both climatic and cultural, and certainly in standards of care for dogs.

In any case, it takes time for new ideas to catch on, and the dog as companion is a new idea for many out here. Hence there are the inevitable contradictions — dog meat restaurants, together with the wonderful Samson, project in Korea, for example.

I'm always amazed to read in the British dog press about the horrors of the Japanese climate. I imagine people who go on about this were unfortunate enough to come here in the summer, though it could be that they are a little bit bazy in geography and are confusing Japan with Thailand or Hong Kong.

Well I am British, and I wouldn't for the life of me trade this climate with the British one, and when my dogs are old and arthritic I think they would agree.

We have a hot and humid summer and yes, it is uncomfortable, and one has to be careful with exercising dogs to avoid sunstroke and so on. Many areas of the United States and Australia suffer similarly, but one very rarely hears a murmur about that.

Balmy spring

My experience over 19 years of dog-owning here is that dogs' energy levels drop so much that they need very little exercise then. They more or less snooze their way through the summer, as we owners do too. Mine have a slow 20-minute walk early morning and the same late at night, and in between laze around the air-conditioned house.

When autumn comes around they leap right back into action. July, August, September are the really hot months and June is very warm, sticky and rainy. But that leaves eight months of very pleasant weather — a cool autumn, moderately cold, crisp and dry

There are some decent people involved too, of course; there are always exceptions. But overall I would say money and personal glory are the main motives behind showing dogs here.

Tuftonian mentioned in January the high demand for Miniature Dachs-

hunds from Japan. Well, I am not surprised. The Miniature Dachshund, especially the Long-haired, is the latest what they call 'boom' dog here.

Some time ago it was the Golden Retriever, then the Husky, now the Dachshund. Well, at least the Min

size-wise in the past few months, quite a lot of them have suddenly appeared at the river, and the ones I have seen have looked to be very happy little things. But the prices have skyrocketed, and I'm told that most breeders have a waiting list.

I looked in the pet shop at a local

department store and saw one there for 250,000 yen (about £1,500, Mar 13). Even given that prices for everything are higher here than in Britain, this is crazy. So there we are. The person who imported those 64 dogs you mentioned must be a rich man by now.

SHIRLEY MINAMI

Dutch GBGV makes history in France

FOR THE first time a Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen has won BIS in its country of origin, France. The bitch concerned, *Jour d'Ete du Griffier du Roi*, is bred and owned by Dutch

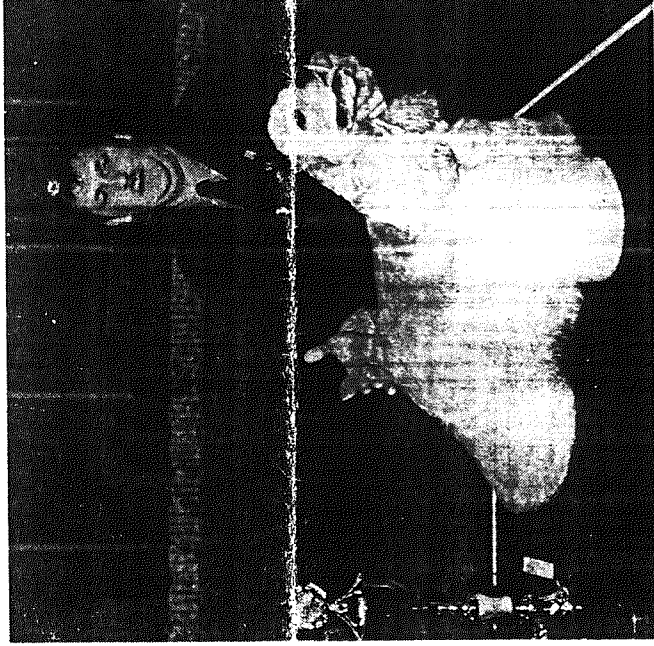
What makes this win even more remarkable is that *Jour* is in show trim, unlike the old-fashioned, workmanlike look of the vast majority of French GBGV, *Fauves de Bretagne* and other wir-haired, native French breeds for that matter.

Jour's success occurred at Lille, in the north of France where the CACI/CACIB show drew 2,800 entries in March. She was bred by Mrs J Huisman, who has exported some Grands and Petits GBGV to Britain. Her owner is another well known breeder of Grands, Mrs H Huikeshoven, whose 19-year-old daughter, Anouk handles the family's GBGV.

Jour is a Dutch champion and last year she became one of the first Dutch-bred Grands to get her international championship, for which it is necessary to pass a working test.



Anouk Huikeshoven with the Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen, *Jour d'Ete du Griffier due Roi*. photo Dalton



At the international ch show in Zuidlaren (Netherlands), 2,713 dogs were entered. BIS was the American Cocker, *Ch Midnight Power de la Vigie* (Am Ch Gazon's Starfighter ex Homestead's Windchime Vigie), bred by P L Servion and owned by F J M Brunenberg. photo van Wessem

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