



Profile....200

by

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I received a very beautiful, touching tribute from Dee Dee Anderson to her beloved "Tess" for my "Great Dogs of the Past" series. Am & Can OTCH Splashdown Tess of Culywood WCX,OD was Dee Dee's companion for a short 7.5 years but during that time she made her mark on the Obedience world through her accomplishments, her intelligence, and the puppies she left to carry on her legacy. As you'll see, she also left her mark in Dee Dee's life. Dee Dee's account of Tess's life brought tears to my eyes and I'm sure it will do the same to you. Tess is definitely one of the great ones who deserves to be remembered. I feel honored to be able to recount her story here:

"Great Dogs of the Past"

"It is very difficult for me to write now about a dog that it was so hard for me to say good-bye to. I wrote about Tess when she was winning, losing, dying, and shortly after she died, but that chapter in my life is now closed. I have put her in my past, but will always, always remember her.

When you asked me to write an article about Tess for the **Great Dogs of the Past** series, it was hard for me to think of Tess in those terms. To me, all dogs are "great" in some way. I think greatness has more to do with opportunity, understanding, luck, and timing in life. I've always wondered what makes a dog great in someone's eyes, whether it is their own dog or someone else's. What is the criteria we use to elevate a dog to that standard? Just typing this right now brings tears, not just because of Tess, but because of other dogs that were close to me and will always be special, or "great", in my eyes.

My first Golden, OTCH DD's Nuggett of Gold TD, WCX (Nuggett) had to put up with me while I tried to teach her things I had never taught a dog to do before. If it weren't for Nuggett, Tess would not have been as trained as she was. Then there was OTCH DD's Tagalong Thumper TD, JH, WC, OS, one-time 200 winner

(Thumper), who brought me out of my depression after Tess died.

So back to my thoughts about what makes a dog great. I don't choose a dog because I'm looking for greatness, or the "best". I choose a dog for its personality. Its willingness to work and be with me, and how it fits into our family. I don't go through dogs until I find just the right one. When I pick a dog to come into our family, it's here to stay. I know of dogs that have earned OTCH's, 200's or national rankings, and yet the owner gives the dog away because it does not live up to a "great" standard in their opinion. It seems as though, for those few people, the dog is like a piece of furniture. When it is worn out, or not "perfect", it is discarded. I can't do that, regardless of how well or how badly a dog does in competition, it is a member of our family first. It is loved and here to stay.

As a breeder, I'll take back any dog for any reason, and keep it as long as it takes to find the right home. A couple of years ago, I took back a dog whose owner was dying of cancer. This experience put a lot of things in perspective for me. The dog was trained through Open and had been with its owner for a year and a half. When I got the dog back, I felt obligated to put a CD and CDX on him myself before I placed him in a pet home. (Which I did, letting the original owner know what he did in each show.) This dog was very good and could have been "great" in competition, but his owner, Nancy Gary did not want him to go to a competitive home. She was afraid that he would not be loved. That he would just be considered property and not a member of the family. Nancy lived in Oregon, so we spent a lot of time talking on the phone

about dogs and competition. Talking with someone like her, facing the illness she was dealing with, reaffirmed my convictions about what is important in my life. I miss our talks. Her dog Scooter is very happy living with his new family, and he is definitely loved.

Am. & Can. OTCH Splashdown Tess of Culywood WCX,OD

2-10-81 to 11-8-88



Tess was flown out from Massachusetts at six weeks of age. Lynn Fletcher (Culywood Kennel) had pick of the litter, but could not keep Tess so she placed her in a Field Trial home. Tess's father was NAFC & FC Topbrass Cotton. Tess stayed 10 days in her new home before she was given back to Lynn. The owners said "She will never make a field trial dog, she is too sensitive, and we can not keep her confined". She was an escape artist who couldn't be confined to a crate or pen. (She climbed four foot exercise pens at eight weeks old).

About the time Tess was born I started looking for my second Golden. I had met Lynn at a picnic trial where she told me about Tess. I went to Lynn's house to see her. Tess, at eight weeks old, came running to me with her tail in her mouth. She was very creative, she could not find anything to bring me so she brought herself. At first I did not like Tess but my mother had come with me to see her and she wanted me to take her. I guess there was something special about this dog. I was just finishing high school and could not afford the price Lynn was asking so Lynn offered me a co-ownership and I took Tess home. I have to say that, so far, Tess is the most intelligent dog I have ever owned. She learned things very fast. I could show her something once and she would remember it. This was our only training problem. I had to make sure that I showed her how to do things the right way the first time.

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Tess earned her UD and WCX at 20 months old. Despite the gloomy predictions, Tess completed a licensed derby with me handling her. This was, Tess's love, the field work, and she was very good at it. When Tess was about 8 months old a field trial lab owner saw Tess run and offered me \$2500 for her. He said he had never seen a golden with a memory and marking ability like her's.

Field work stopped in 1983 because I did not have the time to do field and obedience, plus I got married and had to work more. I did not show Tess much in 1983 or 1984 because I was trying to finish my first dog's OTCH. I admit I am not good at showing two dogs at the same time. In 1984 Tess had her first litter of puppies, and we moved into our new home. By 1985 she had 69 OTCH points.

1985: The year Tess became the top Golden and the Super Dog. In 1985 Tess was shown 56 times, plus three times in Canada, and the three times at Gaines. She earned her Am. & Can. OTCH, 19 High in Trial's, 21 High Combines, two 200's, 610 OTCH points, and won the Gaines Classic Super Dog Division. I guess she was one of the few dogs to be campaigned all year, and in December when she should have been burned out, she went on to win the Gaines Classic. Tess ranked as the top golden in all systems that year. In all-breed she ranked number two in OTCH points, and number three in the Shuman and Delaney systems. All at the age of four.

Winning the Classic was very exciting. At the time we were the youngest team to ever win it. The Classic was not something I wanted to enter, especially after showing Tess all year. But a good friend talked me into it and I am glad she did. This was the first Super Dog competition I had ever been in.

After arriving home from the Long Beach competition, we got a call from the David Letterman Show. They wanted us to fly to New York the next day to be on the show. So Tess, my husband Billy, and I flew out to New York. They had told me that all arrangements would be made and that a limo driver would pick us up and would know where to take us. The plan was that we would arrive at 1:00 am, be taken to a hotel and then would be called in the morning. We arrived in New York on schedule and found the limo driver, but he had a such a small limo we barely fit into it. (I had brought jumps and the crate with us.) After we squeezed ourselves, Tess and all of the equipment into the car, the driver asked us where we were staying. Oops, I thought he was supposed to know! He radioed into the station but they had no more information than we did. So, since it was the middle of the night, we were taken to the limo garage in Queens, where we were shown into a wired office (like the one on Taxi). As we waited for them to find someone who would be able to direct us to the right hotel, (one that would take a dog), the limo drivers were checking out to go home. One of them offered to take Tess home with him so we could find a place to stay. Another said he could take Tess to where they kept the circus animals. (This was already becoming a circus!) Of course, I thanked them but would not let Tess out of my sight. We figured we would just spend the night in the garage. Well, they finally found someone who knew where we

were supposed to stay and by 5:00 am we were in a suite.

"We were called the next morning and told when to meet the limo driver. This time the limo was huge and Tess jumped in and laid on the floor. The driver said she could sit on the seat so she sat on the middle seat, all by herself, looking straight through the front windows to see where we were going. I can still see her sitting there, very poised and perfectly content, enjoying the luxury. This seemed like a dream. Of course, everything Tess did seemed like a dream.

"We were dropped off at the TV studio, rode up the elevator and met with a Letterman show staffer, who said we had a few hours before taping. We decided to go for a walk, remember it's December and we were from California. We were freezing, but Tess needed to find a place to relieve herself so we walked to central Park and back. When we arrived back at the studio, we were taken to the green room to wait for rehearsals. This was a nice comfortable, carpeted room with a couch. We were in this room for about 10 minutes when a security guard came by and told us that no dogs were allowed in the green room. She took us to the prop room where animals were to wait. In the prop room we found some metal chairs to sit on and a cold dusty floor for Tess to lay on. This was an interesting room, however. We watched props being made for the show and Tess really had a good time when a lady came in with her two cats. She was confined to the prop room too.

"We stayed in this room about two hours before someone found us. They had been looking for us but did not know where we were. I guess it's a good thing they found us, or we'd still be there. The security guard who put us in the prop room thought we were there for the Stupid Pet Tricks. We, of course, were there for the Smart Pet Tricks, and smart pets were allowed in the green room. We were taken back to the green room where we stayed until the taping.

"During the show, which was taped live, I was amazed at how well Tess handled the entire episode. There were considerable distractions. The music was very, VERY, VERY loud, the floor was slippery, and there were cameras, lights and people all around. She performed the signal exercise with her back to the audience, which clapped loudly after each signal. With all of this going on, she never took her eyes off me.

"At the end of our performance we were rushed to the waiting limo to take us to the airport. We arrived at the airport only to find out that our flight had been canceled. We were sent to another airline, which was on the other side of the airport. The flight was going to leave in 15 minutes. We grabbed the jumps, crate, and Tess and ran as fast as we could. At one point we had to get on a bus to get to the other side of the airport. We managed to catch the plane, (how I don't know) and had a nice flight home. (We had spent less than 24 hours in New York!) We arrived home just in time to see the show live in California. It was a weird feeling. What an experience! Tess took everything in stride and was the center of attention from our family.

"In 1986 and 1987 Tess was shown six times and had two litters of puppies. I had my first child, Christopher, in 1986 and finished Thumper's OTCH.

"In 1988 my husband and I thought we would campaign Tess one

more time. She was better than ever, and between January 23rd and her last show on April 17th, she was shown 18 times in 36 classes, flunking only once. In less than three months she earned 203 OTCH points, with seventeen firsts, six seconds, six thirds, three fourth placements, and six High in Trials. During her lifetime she earned 29 High in Trials and 964 OTCH points. (Remember in those days there were fewer OTCH points given per win than there are now.)

"On April 15, 1988 I found three lumps on Tess's neck, and on April 18th she was diagnosed with Lymphoma Sarcoma. I strongly believe that Tess got this cancer from a pesticide that was being sprayed on the lawns at our city parks. The parks were the only place I could train at that time, because I did not have a big enough yard. About three years after Tess died, an article appeared in the paper about a weed killer that was being sprayed in the parks, that was going to be discontinued for fear that it was harmful to children. The article stated that the chemical had been proven to cause cancer (Lymphoma Sarcoma) in dogs, and that a dog only needed to come into contact with the chemical once to be exposed. Scary isn't it! If only I had a yard, would Tess still be with us?

"In the three litters that Tess produced, there have been seven OTCH's, six UD's, two of them OTCH pointed, one MH, one SH, one TD, one JH, and one more CDX. Out of 24 puppies, 15 of them were titled.

"Thank you for letting me write about Tess. Below is my farewell to her that I wrote for Front & Finish in 1988:

"Tess you have been by my

side for seven and a half years. I thank you so much for picking me to spend your life with. I wouldn't be where I am now if it wasn't for you. I would do anything to save your life, but there is nothing I can do. Through your puppies there will always be a piece of you here, and of course, there will always be a piece of you in my heart. You can't die completely Tess, you have definitely left your mark on this earth. You have touched a lot of people.

(Your Are A Dream Come True!)
I Love You TESS, Good Bye.

"I'll leave you on a more cheerful note, with something my nine year old son wrote recently for a school project. (Unbeknownst to me)

"My Dogs -- by Christopher Anderson

"My dogs are very frisky. They like to play with each other. Their names are Cookie and Chance. Chance likes to jump on people, like ring stewards and Cookie likes to eat cookies. Chance goes to lots of dog shows and Cookie is retired. I love my dogs."

Thank you, Dee Dee, for the very moving tribute to Tess. It must have been hard to stir up those old memories and feelings but I, for one, am grateful to be able to know a little more about her. May she always be remembered among the great dogs of obedience.