



Ch. Tylko Ty Viking's Pride, born in Poland and sire of several litters in North America, with handler Joanne Boudreault and judge Bo Bengtson.

Republic. Center Piece's young son Ch. Gone With the Wind High On Emotion was Best Dog at the Swedish Whippet Club's big specialty in 2008 under American breeder-judge Claire Newcombe, and Call the Shots's breeder in England even chose to breed her own Ch. Candy's Delight of Cobyco to him.

RUSSIA

Although it's difficult to believe that no Whippets existed in Russia before 1988, according to available reports, the first Whippets arrived that year when ten puppies were brought to the Elita Kennel Club from Poland. The puppies were from four different litters: two five-month-old bitches named Indian Lady Dakota and Ifigenia Dakota; three three-month-old bitches named Sonia Nela, Selli Nela, and Sendy Nela; two dogs named Cygan Wasia and Ceazar Wasia;

and one dog named Alap z Rezidencji Jaxy and two bitches named Amka z Rezidencji Jaxy and Aksamitka z Rezydencji Jaxy. Two additional males arrived a bit later: Olaf Dandelion from the Czech Republic and Ennio el Schiras from Germany. All of these provided a nucleus for the first Russian-bred litters.

Beginning in the 1990s, as western-style dog shows became more popular and Russia joined the FCI, a number of Whippets were imported from other countries, frequently from Europe and more often from the United States than from England. These imports included several from Sharon Sakson of the Paris kennel in the United States. Sakson traveled to Russia to judge Whippets at an all-breed show in 2008, the same weekend as the specialty organized by the Russian breed club. There was an entry of thirty-one Whippets. Ms. Sakson and the specialty judge, Nina Kharatishvili from Moscow, both found their Best of Breed winner in the red-and-white bitch Ch. Anahita Arva S Zarita Zolotaya, who was born in Russia but of all-American breeding by Ch. Andauer Best Laid Plans out of Ch. Paris Anahita Moonlit Night. After the show, a conference was organized with the participation of Ms. Sakson, Ms. Kharatishvili, and Swedish breeder-judge Åke Cronander of the Albican prefix. The development of the breed in Russia, Europe, and the United States was discussed.

Exact registration figures are difficult to find, but sources indicate that about 200 Whippets are registered per year with the Russian Kennel Federation (RKF) in the twenty-first century. The specialty alternates each year between Moscow and Saint Petersburg, usually employing exclusively Russian judges.

One international success for Russian Whippets occurred in 2009 when the young Song Sung Blue Golddust and his owner Marina Slepneva flew from

their home in St. Petersburg to California and, just a couple of days after their arrival, took major wins three days in a row at the big Ventura show weekend. "Dandy" was already a Russian champion, and he returned home with an AKC title as well after just a few weekends of shows in the United States. However, although living in Russia, this dog was born in Belgium and bred from an American Bohem sire out of an American Starline bitch. No Russian Whippet breeder has so far emerged as internationally dominant, but seeing how quickly Russian breeders have succeeded in conquering Western dog shows in many other breeds, it is no doubt just a matter of time before Russian-bred Whippets will become well-known outside the borders of their own country.

OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Modern-day Whippet activities in Lithuania started in the early 1990s with two Danish imports from Bynkemarken to the Fantastika kennel. Although there have been almost no direct imports to Lithuania from Great Britain or the United States, numerous dogs brought in from Sweden, Finland, Belgium, France, and other countries in Europe guarantee that most of the best-known international bloodlines are represented. One of the top winners in all-breed competition in the early twenty-first century was the blue male Ch. My Blue Angel Romantika, owned by the Dominiya kennel. The kennel's young owner, Asta Simonelyte, spent two summers at Airescot in Sweden learning about the breed and then brought international bloodlines home with her in the form of the red-and-white male Ch. Airescot Bridgewater Bobbie.

The American Kennel Club now holds what is called a "national championship" show, in which

the top dogs in each breed from other countries are invited to participate. At the 2007 show in California, two Whippets traveled from Europe to represent their home countries: the previously mentioned Ch. Daydream di Mahana from Belgium and a white-and-blue-brindle bitch from the Czech Republic, Ch. Madeleine Z Uplnku. The latter was among the top dogs of any breed in her country and, despite having an American sire from Hasue, represents several generations of homebred champions from the Czech Republic on her dam's side. Both of the European competitors generated interest among American fanciers—Daydream in fact received an Award of Excellence and was Best Bred-by-Exhibitor in the breed.

English Nevedith exports have done particularly well in Slovenia. One of the many English champions from this kennel, which are spread around the world, was Ch. Pardee Appy Arry of Nevedith, owned by the Karstia kennel, who followed a successful show career in Great Britain with even more wins in Europe, becoming a multi-titled champion and top dog of all breeds in Slovenia in 2001. The My Camelot kennel breeds along similar lines; homebred Greyhounds have done extremely well in North America, and through the great English winner Ch. Nevedith Eefa Empira, the Whippets have also attracted international attention, including an AKC championship for Ch. My Camelot Forever Fire. Owner Zoran Sordjan has not yet judged Whippets in the United States but has presided over the Sweepstakes Classes at the Greyhound Club of America specialty in California.

One Eastern European Whippet breeder wrote that he thought photos of a current American Best in Show winner were "the most beautiful" he had ever seen, so obviously the modern western Whippet can appeal even to an eye not used to seeing dogs of this type.