



# SOUTH WHIDBEY RECORD



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LIFESTYLE

## Langley dog Mr. Jones still riding high on show circuit



Sandi Smith of Langley (center) shares the victory stand with Mr. Jones and show officials after Jones placed second in group competition and won \$1,000 at the American Kennel Club/Eukanuba National Championship in Long Beach, Calif. earlier this month. — Image Credit: Photos Courtesy Of Sandi Smith



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Dec 25, 2010 at 8:00AM

Langley's celebrity pooch has another plaudit for his pocket, if he only had a pocket.

"We finally beat the poodle," Sandi Smith of Possession Point said this week. "I can't believe it. It was the highlight of all the shows I've been to."

Smith's dog Mr. Jones placed second in his group at the recent American Kennel Club/Eukanuba

National Championship in Long Beach, Calif., after winning the show's best-of-breed category at the event for the third straight year, a record for the category.

"No Shiba has done that," she said. "We're breaking records."

It's the highest Mr. Jones has scored in his show career, Smith said, and just a step away from the pinnacle of canine competition, Best in Show.

"It's his biggest win yet," Smith said. "And he's just getting warmed up."

Mr. Jones is a 3-year-old, 22-pound Shiba Inus, a Japanese breed originally raised for hunting in the mountains. He's been knocking them dead on the international dog show circuit for the past two years.

In Long Beach on the first weekend in December, he joined about 2,500 other show dogs competing for \$225,000 in prizes. He earned \$1,000. Mr. Jones bested all the other Shibas in his class, then placed second in the Non-Sporting Group competition, just losing out at a shot at the big time to a perky little Bichon Frise, Smith said.

No poodle finished in the top four in group, she added. It was the first time Mr. Jones had finished ahead of one of the poofy pretenders at a major show.

The victory was his third straight best-of-breed showing at Long Beach. In the past year, he also won best of breed at the FCI World Dog Show in Herning, Denmark in June, finishing ahead of 90 other Shibas for the crown.

Mr. Jones' Danish showing followed strong outings at the Crufts Dog Show in London and the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York, where he also won best of breed.

The Smith and Jones act will go back on the road in January, Smith said, for a major show in Palm Springs, Calif., and a show in Portland, Ore. that's expected to attract 3,500 competitors. Then it's back to Westminster in February.

Meanwhile, Mr. Jones' exploits in California can be seen on national television when the Eukanuba event is broadcast Sunday afternoon, Jan. 23, on ABC, local Channel 4. Check local listings for the time.

"Jones definitely has the capacity to cope against the heavy-hitting dogs in his group," Smith said. "He has a personality that can endure all that stress. He doesn't let down."

Mr. Jones, whose pedigree name is CH. Dragonhouse Mr. Jones, is about 2½ feet long and 15 inches tall. Shibas reach their prime at about four or five years, and can live to 15 or 16, Smith said.

Smith has been raising and breeding Shibas for more than 17 years, and Japanese Akitas before that.

She also takes in rescued dogs. And she runs a "doggy daycare," where customers can drop off their pets for socialization, or for short-term dog-sitting.

She credits her socialization techniques with helping Mr. Jones cope with the noise and confusion of the show ring.

Although Mr. Jones remains her current focus, Smith owns other adult Shibas and several puppies.

It looks as if her next show star will be one of Mr. Jones' daughters, That Jones Girl!, who won top honors over 100 other Shibas at this year's National Specialty show in Kelso in October.

"It was her very first show," Smith said, adding that the victory only adds luster to Daddy Jones' already brilliant reputation.

"It proves he's a valuable stud," she said.

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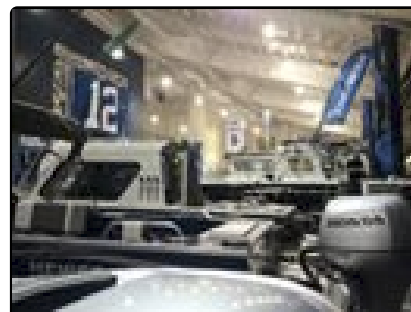
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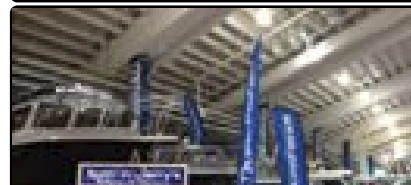


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