

I came with a plan. I had it all figured out. Then I got into the ring and saw all of those fantastic Labradors and my plan fell apart. How do you choose from near-perfect labs? In most shows you are lucky if you get one or two really nice Labradors. And here I stood with a ring full of ones I would be honored to have in my kennels.

My ring steward - Rebecca Surratt, just smiled and said we can do it. What a special lady! Not only is she really nice, but she is the most organized person I have ever meet. Thank you, Rebecca for all of your help. I could not have done it without you.

My plan gone, I fell back on what I would want if I was looking for a hunting companion. I had a mental picture of what I considered a perfect Labrador. I looked for a Labrador that was not only balanced front to rear, but also one that was balanced body to bone and head. He had to be built like a row boat, not a barge. One that was built to retrieve. A front that would cut through the water or bush and a rear that was powerful enough to drive him through it all. His leg not too short and his body not too long. His head a master piece in engineering. The skull and muzzle should be on parallel planes. The head should not have big, heavy apple cheeks or flews that are pendulous. The head should have a neat, clean appearance. The muzzle should be strong. The nose wide and well developed. The length of muzzle sufficient to hold a large goose, eyes facing forward to see where they are going when holding a bird, chiseling under the eyes, and that wonderful, melting Labrador expression. And above all, one that moves cleanly and with power. I found that dog in Ch Time Square Ulysses.

He had a near perfect head that I could look at forever. His expression was melting. He stood four square. His body was compact - good length and depth of rib, short powerful loin, powerful rear with angulation matching the front, good feet and bone, good length of neck and upper arm, masculine head with parallel planes and good length of muzzle. He also had good shoulders and upper arm. He moved cleanly and with power. And he showed! He said here I am, look at me, I am special!! I agreed.

BW was a very nice yellow male - new Ch Wiscoy's Tony. Very pleasing in outline. Beautiful topline and tailset. Good balance, very pleasing head and movement. Definitely a dog to watch. Would like a harsher coat.

My BOS was a beautiful black bitch - CH Gallivant Big Pine Sarafina on Broadway. She and my select bitch Ch Everso's Elephants & Flowers JH just took my breath away. Beautiful cobby bitches with depth of body, beautiful movement, great angles front and rear, great coat and beautiful heads with proper angles and length of muzzle. They caught my eye from the moment they walked into the ring. They just had the misfortune to come up against Ch Time Square Ulysses. Sarafina won on her coat. I prefer less wave.

My select dog was GCH Shalimar's The Animator. He is a beautiful black male that demands attention. He has a beautiful masculine head, good coat, balanced front and rear, good topline, good bone, nice rib spring and wonderful movement. He shows beautifully and is so in tune with his handler. He just gave to the BOB dog on body length and ears.

I also want to mention my wonderful veteran dogs. I love seeing how well the really great dogs

age. They just stay together and look great no matter their age. I was honored to give GCH Saddlehill Late Night Scramble WC first in his class and a JAM. He looked wonderful and still moves so beautifully. Another veteran Ch Canvasbacks GotitGoin' On At BrkHvn RN won first in her veteran's class and she received a JAM. I remember her as a young girl. I gave her a BOS at the 2008 Raleigh Durham LRC Specialty. She retains all of the qualities that I admired in her younger self. She has aged beautifully.

My JAM's were all excellent representatives of the breed and a joy to have in my ring. They had compact bodies, great toplines, good balance, good bone and feet and moved true and with power. Thank you for showing them to me.

I cannot thank the members of the Potomac LRC enough for honoring me with this fabulous assignment. Thank you for giving me this honor and taking such good care of my family and me. You are the best.