

Tuohi-Tikan Kennel

PIRKKO & RAISA KONTTINEN, FINLAND ■ INTERVIEWED BY VICTORIA SPENCER

The Tuohi-Tikan kennel is the oldest still-running Afghan kennel in Finland. It began in the mid 1950's by Anna-Leena Konttinen and her two daughters, Pirkko and Raisa. Both daughters were closely involved in the kennel from the very beginning.

The Tuohi-Tikan kennel was one of the top Afghan kennels in Scandinavia in the 1960's and 70's. After their mother's death in 2003, Pirkko and Raisa carried on the legacy, maintaining the high quality, classic bloodlines they had created together. The sisters are also respected judges who have judged in numerous countries.

At Pirkko's home in Finland, I sat down with Pirkko and Raisa on a rainy, summer afternoon to talk with them about the kennel and their lives with Afghans. They had so many memories of their journey, including dog shows, puppies, countries visited, friends made and knowledge gained along the way.

Their future plans are to possibly continue on with the kennel, although Raisa now has a few Whippets with her daughter. Both are very committed members in the Finnish Kennel Club (the Sighthound Union in Finland). Raisa is also a member of the Finland Whippet Club and is involved in educating judges on the Whippet standard and is a consultant for breeders regarding eye tests, breeding plans, pedigrees and health concerns in the breed. Pirkko is also a member of the Finland Afghan Hound Club and teaches new judges the Afghan standard and how to judge Afghans in the ring.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE KENNEL'S PAST:

- The Afghan of the Year in Finland was awarded for the first time in 1973 and was won by Panameric son, Eduardo del Flamante.
- Tuohi-Tikan Soolo was awarded Afghan of the Year in Finland in both 1974 and 1977, with his sister, Tuohi-Tikan Sinisukka winning it in 1975 and 1976.
- Tuohi-Tikan Tuulihattu went Best in Show at the Helsinki International show in 1965.
- Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko won Best of Breed with Winners Title at the Helsinki International Show in 1967 and 1969, with Tuohi-Tikan Sinisukka winning the same some years later in 1975.
- In 1977 and 1979, Tuohi-Tikan Soolo won Best in Show at the Finland Afghan Hound Specialty.
- In 1982, Tuohi-Tikan Talismanni won Best in Show at the Finland Afghan Hound Specialty.
- Tuohi-Tikan dogs have been exported around the world to such countries as Sweden, Denmark, Norway, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Switzerland, Japan, Australia and the U.S.



ABOVE: Tuohi-Tikan "T" Litter, 1961 with Raisa at left, Pirkko and friend.

LEFT: Tajmahal Anja

When did your kennel start?

Tuohi-Tikan Kennel was started by my mother, Anna-Leena Konttinen. I think the kennel prefix dates from 1955-56.

Did your mother, Anna-Leena, have a breeding plan when she began? What was her goal as a breeder?

I don't know what her plans were with Cocker Spaniels (her first breed). We had one bitch and she was bred to a very handsome and successful male. We kept a male from the litter, Tuohi-Tikan Tossu, a very handsome male, but too big.

As a young girl, when did you get involved with the kennel?

We, meaning me and my sister, Raisa, showed "our" dogs (Afghans) as teenagers from the very beginning. I am four years older than Raisa, so I was nearly 20 years old. We shared the kennel prefix from 1965.

What made your mother decide to buy an Afghan puppy in the summer of 1959 instead of the English Cocker Spaniel you had waited for?

My mother founded, together with another Cocker Spaniel breeder, Dr. Irma Löfröm, a club called "Hännänheiluttajat", literally translated to English "The Tailwaggers Club." This club welcomed everyone, young and old, owner or admirer of an animal with a tail. There, my mother met Mrs. Inger Westerlund, who had the Afghan male, Tajmahal Abdul-Ul Djari. Djari was a domino male, a true domino with black "make up" around his eyes. His father was U.S. Ch. Tanjores Domino, a male who gave the original name to the color. Djari was by half-sisters, the grandfathers being on both sides Int. Ch. Xenos van de Oranje Manege, a domino male. Djari was the second Afghan Hound I had ever seen; the first one, was a black and tan, whom I thought was a baboon.

When our Cocker Spaniel female died, my mother decided to travel with Inger to the Stockholm International dog show and bring back a Cocker Spaniel female from England. That did not happen.

What influenced her decision to buy a puppy from the Tajmahal kennel?

The Tajmahal breeder, Dolly Christensen, (later Mattson), was originally from Finland and Inger's classmate. Inger



ABOVE: Tuohi-Tikan Yly, 1980 [exported to Australia].

phoned to tell that she had arrived with Djari. In the hotel room, Djari came over to my mother, put his head on her knee and looked at her as if to say: "There are hundreds of Cocker Spaniel bitches in Finland, but no Afghan bitches for me." So, my mother asked Inger to ask Dolly if she had a bitch puppy suitable for Djari. My mother came home without a Cocker Spaniel bitch, but Tajmahal Anya came six weeks later. On Midsummer 1959, Anya became a Finnish and Swedish champion.

Your very first litter in April of 1961, by Tajmahal Abd-Ul Djari x Tajmahal Anya produced 10 champions, with 4 international champions. Were you surprised by that? Was it beginner's luck?

It was our very first Afghan litter, so of course we were surprised when we showed and won abroad, but there were



ABOVE LEFT: Tuohi-Tikan Hurmuri with Raisa, 1964. ABOVE RIGHT: Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko, born 1963.

at first no other litters in Finland.

Anya had three litters with Djari: the "T" litter (3+2), "H" litter (2+4), and "O" litter (2+6). Two of the bitches died under 1 year old. Four became International champions, Tuulihattu, Tuulentrilli, Huupakko and Opaali, three Finnish and Swedish champions, Tuulihuiske, Hurmuri, Hellerei and three Finnish champions, Tuulihumma, Huihai-Hani and Orri. From the first litter, Tuohi-Tikan Tuulantei, was the mother of Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Kekäle.

We were very interested in the shows. Tuohi-Tikan Tuulentrilli won bitch CAC from juniors at the Stockholm International show in 1962 and we decided to show her and her brother, Tuohi-Tikan Tuulihattu at the Oslo International show. I wrote to a breeder friend in Sweden of our plans and got an answer: "You don't need to bother to come. The BOB will come from Stockholm and it will be my bitch." So, we traveled with a charter flight for showdog owners to go to Oslo. How proud we were to return with BOB and BOS winners from that show. Before that, the Swedes always came to the Finnish shows just to take all of the wins – now we had something to compete with.

Were you happy with what Tajmahal Anya produced? What was she like – temperament, structure, pedigree, etc.?

Anya was cream with a black mask. She had a wonderful head and wonderful tail. We did not know how to take care of the coat and she never had a show coat like today's coats. She was very gentle and aloof. She had a very interesting personality. When she had her first litter of puppies, Anya's good friend, the guard from the local park in Helsinki, came to visit and see them. Anya let him admire them a while, then she came out of the whelping box, took his hat and gave it to him, as if to say goodbye. He was so





and our Cocker Spaniel puppies had their puppy fence around birch trees. Woodpeckers came and tapped in those trees and hence, it became our kennel name: Birchbark-Woodpeckers.

How did you meet Karin Fonsholm (El Kamas Kennel, Denmark)?

My sister, Raisa, and my mother traveled to Denmark in the summer of 1961 with Anya and the Fonsholm's attended the show that weekend with their young Horningsea Jamussah. I met Karin a little later.

The famous El Kamas Wazira was used for a litter with Tuohi-Tikan Tuulihattu – how did it turn out?



TOP: Tuohi-Tikan Pundjab (exported to France).

BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Panameric of Stormhill, born 1966; Tuohi-Tikan Naskali at 13 months; Tuohi-Tikan Kekäle, born 1976.

offended, he abruptly left, never to return again!

I am thankful that Anya had such a nice pedigree. Anya's father was Fin. Swed. Champion Crown Crest Kaejorg by US Ch. Taejon of Crown Crest (Kay Finch's kennel). Kaejorg's mother was US Ch. Crown Crest Kristal (Int. Ch. Ophaal of Crown Crest x US Ch. Crown Crest Tae-Joan). Anya's mother was Tajmahal Yasmine by Nord. Ch. Tajmahal Ab-dul Karam x Kashmir of Ladson (bred in Finland). There are no Tuohi-Tikan Afghan litters without Anya in the pedigree farther back.

How did you decide on your kennel name?

We had our summer cottage in Nuksio, Espoo (just outside of Helsinki)

Both El Kamas Wadia and El Kamas Wazira had litters with our male, Tuohi-Tikan Tuulihattu. They were born in Denmark, so I never saw all of the puppies. The one I liked the best and was absolutely beautiful was a bitch named Ch El Kamas Nazadha. The El Kamas N-litter was from Wadia, and the El Kamas P-litter from Wazira.

Did you show a lot in Denmark at this time?

We showed once or twice a year there. The journey, at that time, took 4 days of travel and was a very long trip. First, we went by ship to Sweden and then south by car down to Denmark. And so it is also today.

Tuohi-Tikan Kekäle. Kekäle was one of your most famous dogs. What was so special about him? How many titles did he win?

He was an International, Nordic, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish Champion. An International Championship means winning a championship in three different countries.

Tuohi-Tikan Kekäle won as a youngster Best in Show under judge Wally Pede at the first Finnish Afghan Hound Specialty. He had an excellent head, carriage and long legs. He was the King when he entered the ring.

Kekäle was the sire of the very famous El Khyrias Hazztafer. How many other litters did he produce?

Kekäle's first litter with Anya produced Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Pundjab, owned by Jacqueline Bernard, Kennel de Khadidja, France.

Kekäle had five litters in Sweden and seven litters in Denmark, where he moved as an adult dog. His most famous Danish puppies were by Ch. El Kamas Marakesh and Ch. Wahadi. He also was the father of Boxadan El Achika Crown Crest, bred by Hanne and Finn Lassen, who was imported to the U.S. by Kay Finch of Crown Crest. (Note: The Boxadan prefix was originally owned by Hanne and Finn Lassen and later transferred to Ulf and Lotte Jørgensen of Denmark). Achika was the mother of the last Crown Crest Champion, US Can Ch. Crown Crest Dansk King.

His Swedish offspring include Norwegian Ch. Caruba's Cantari and Nord. Ch. Goats-Wool Djazira, Ch. Goats-Wool Erohsima and of course, Int. Ch. El Khyrias Hazztafer and Int. Ch. El Khyrias Iquila. Hazztafer and Iquila were the result of artificial inseminations, due to the quarantine between Sweden, Finland and Denmark at the time.

A very funny story, when Kekäle won BOB in Stockholm, I think it was in 1966, the judge was Italian Paolo Contini. I went to Crufts the following year. After the show, I visited Mrs. Marna Dods, who told me that the same Italian judge was coming to the next Crufts show, and asked which dog should she enter? I looked around and saw a young, handsome black and tan male who reminded me of Kekäle. It was clear to me who to choose and I pointed at him: The dog was Ch. Horningsea Mustagh Ata and he won Best of Breed!

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Please tell me a little bit about your litter with Panameric of Stormhill x Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko. How many of the puppies in this litter were champions and international champions?

From the beginning, our Afghans were shown at shows and we also raced them. Wally Pede visited Finland and our Sighthound Union President wrote in an article that Wally Pede had brought the idea of racing back to the U.S. Since our foundation bitch, Tajmahal Anja was a daughter of Ch. Crown Crest Kaejorg, I knew that Afghans had run in the U.S. before. So, I wrote a letter to the secretary of the American Afghan Hound Club and asked about racing in the U.S. She answered me, saying that on the east coast, they did not have racing, but in California, the Withingtons knew everything about the races. So, I got Virginia Withington's address and we started to send letters to each other. Finally, Panameric arrived in the summer of 1966 at the age of four months. I had admired his mother, US Mex Ch. Pandora of Stormhill for years and Afghan people called this puppy an "American Dream." Panameric's father was US Ch. Holly Hill Black Magic.

Int. Ch. Panameric of Stormhill and Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko litters were then planned and they had three litters together. In the first litter, the "N" litter (2+4), International champion titles were won by Naskali, Naava, Nirvana, Noita and Finnish, Swedish champion titles by Nuoli. Nalja was exported to Denmark and she became a Danish and Swedish champion. In the second litter, the "S" litter (2+5), the International champions were Soolo, Sinisukka, Seita (Norway), Finnish champion, Solina.

In the last litter, the "U" litter (1+4), was International champion Ultra (Norway), Nordic champion, Uhma (Sweden) and Swedish Norwegian champion, Ultima (Sweden). For many of the owners of these dogs, they were their foundation dogs, including the Chapeau Claque kennel in Sweden.

Panameric bred many litters throughout Scandinavia in his time. Christina Jernberg (El Khyrias kennel) even said in an interview that the most successful litter that she ever bred was her "D" litter by Panameric of Stormhill x El Kamas Nahrimah in 1971.



TOP: Tuohi-Tikan Talismanni, born: 1976.
BOTTOM: Pirkko in Australia with Alaquadar de Fauves in 1979.

"FOR ME, THERE IS ONLY ONE TYPE, THE TYPE THAT IS TRUE TO THE STANDARD. IF A MALE HAS A NARROW BORZOI HEAD, IT IS NOT A "NEW" TYPE, IT IS AN INCORRECT HEAD."

Did he produce himself in his offspring?

Yes, he did produce himself. Panameric had many litters in Scandinavia. He produced good bone, heavy coats and excellent temperaments. His best puppies, in my opinion, were with bitches who had the same Crown Crest lines, though not very close in the pedigree, such as Huupakko and Int. Ch. Tajmahal Kenya II. They were half-sisters, both by Djari and mothers by Crown Crest Kaejorg and also Int. Ch. El Kamas Nahrimah, who was by Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Tuulihattu. With pure

English or American lines (without Crown Crest), the result was not similar with the others.

There were no brindles in Scandinavia at that time. Panameric was the first.

Please tell a little bit about Tuohi-Tikan Naskali.

When Huupakko was pregnant with her first litter, I had an order for a puppy from Sweden. When the puppies arrived, the puppy buyer phoned and asked "Is there a brindle male? Is he a star?" I could not promise him a star from a litter of puppies 6 hours old and he canceled. But later the same day, he phoned again and confirmed his order. With that, Naskali was exported to Sweden and he became a star. He won BIS in the Copenhagen International show in 1969 from the youngster class under judge Mrs. Mary Scott from Great Britain and was the youngest champion in Nordic countries. He was a lighter brindle color than his father, Panameric.

What litter or dog would you consider your best and why?

My best dog was my own dog, Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko. After the first litter, we had so many successful litters that I cannot say which was the best. Many Tuohi-Tikan dogs have been very successful in their new home countries. It was also very nice when the Panameric x Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko puppies won at the Stockholm International show 1974:

1. Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Sinisukka, Best of Breed and Group1 Winner (Finland)
2. Int. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Ultra (Norway)
3. S N Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Ultima (Sweden)
4. Int. Ch. Ismailis O'Naskali (Sweden)
5. Fin. Ch. Tuohi-Tikan Metka (Finland)

How did you decide to import Dur-i-Durran's Fracas?

All my imports were chosen by pedigree. Chandhara's Wild Willow, born 11/13/65, was an exception, because she was nearly pure Grandeur, or perhaps that's just why!

What traits do you consider important when breeding? How do you select a stud dog?

In breeding any breed, you have to be true to the standard, know it inside and out, with your personal touch. As for a stud dog, I look for excellent head, good bones, good angulation, structure, excellent

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Just published!

A new book, *Afghan Hounds of Scandinavia and Europe from the 1970's, 80's and 90's (Vol. 1)* is complete.

It's a coffee table book containing beautiful photos of Afghans from three decades by various photographers. The book is a reminder of the classic style of Afghan from years past. Many of the dogs are famous and some are not so famous, but all left their indelible mark on the breed. This is a book for hound lovers who enjoy beautiful dogs, creatively photographed by people who know the breed and have truly captured their unique souls. Anyone with a genuine love of the breed will love this book!

The author is Victoria D. Spencer of Beshka Afghan kennel, a breeder and exhibitor for over 20 years.

Cost is \$65.00 (+ S&H)

It's available at www.blurp.com, then click on Bookstore.



The Pix 5 N Nordic NIV-85, W-87 Nodiphan Tull, 34 Laimou
(The 3 NIV Musher a 2nd Pix 3 NIV Ch Nodiphan Nodiphan) Born: 1984, Finland



3 Pix Ch. Tullu Tullu Tullu
(The 3 Pix Ch. Tullu Tullu Tullu) Born: 1978, Finland

Afghan Hounds of Scandinavia and Europe from the 1970's, 80's and 90's (Volume 1)



By Victoria D. Spencer



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LEFT: Tuohi-Tikan Sinisukka, 1975; RIGHT: Tuohi-Tikan Soolo, born 1970.

temperament and of course, a suitable pedigree. An Afghan must be true to the standard.

Both parents must be eye-checked before mating. They must have valid veterinary statements. In Finland, we do not have cataract problems, but we have had generations checked, also brothers and sisters of the parents.

What was it like showing and breeding in the 1960's and 1970's?

Showing was, of course, our passion when we were young and very interested. The shows did not have the big entries that we have today, but the competition was often higher. In breeding, the new breeders-to-be were very interested in buying puppies. We were young and we traveled by train through the night to a show and returned the following night. The showing was exactly the same as now, the entries vary and the trimming horrifies me.

Do you plan to continue breeding?

I currently have three Afghans at home: Tuohi-Tikan Karamelli, bitch, 7 years, Tuohi-Tikan Taituri, male, 6 years and Karamelli's daughter, Tuohi-Tikan Pilvyt, born on 10/7/2009. So maybe, maybe not.

Does the pedigree influence your breeding decision?

Of course, the pedigree influences me and I look back through the pedigree several generations, although I don't think it weighs heavily in my decision to breed. My sister, Raisa and I know all of the old Scandinavian dogs who have been shown. I used Ch. Bondor Indian Summer, but, he

"WHEN I HAD MY LATEST LITTER, SOME BREEDERS SAID TO ME, 'THEY LOOK OLD FASHIONED.' IT WAS THE BEST COMPLIMENT."



LEFT: Tuohi-Tikan Jolly Finn; RIGHT: Tuohi-Tikan Lapponia, 1982.

also had the same Crown Crest dogs in his pedigree. I knew many of the English dogs in his pedigree and had liked them.

I tend to linebreed only. Inbreeding is good if you want to duplicate your dogs. They can be very nicely built if their parents are excellent. Unfortunately, all faults and bad temperaments will also be duplicated, not to mention the hereditary diseases. I want to keep in my litters the "old blood." As I know all of the dogs, I

can use line breeding, outbreeding can be so surprising!

When did you get your judging license?

I got my judging license in 1965 and judged for the first time in the spring of 1966. In this ring, I judged only Afghans, all of whom I knew. Oh, how I was nervous before entering that ring!

Here is a list of the breeds I am licensed to judge:

FCI Group 10: Afghan Hound, Borzoi, Scottish Deerhound, Saluki, Whippet, Italian Greyhound, Greyhound, Azawakh, Spanish Greyhound, Polish Greyhound, Hungarian Greyhound and Sloughi.

FCI Group 8: American Water Spaniel, Clumber Spaniel, English Cocker Spaniel, Spanish Water Dog, Irish Water Spaniel, Lagotto Romagnolo, Portuguese Water Dog, and Sussex Spaniel.

FCI Group 5: Basenji, Cirneco dell'Etna, Pharaoh Hound, Ibizan Hounds, Canaan Dog, Podenco Canario and Podenco Portuguese.

Countries where I have judged: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Estonia, Russia, Slovakia, and Australia. All judging trips have had their own charms. I cannot name any more interesting than the



others. I have met many famous and many not so famous judges.

What do you look for in the ring?

First, the attitude - when the Kings come into the ring. I hate baiting Afghans in the ring, they start to look like Spaniels, saying "Give me more!" Then, I look at the movement, then the topline and the reach. But, every dog, especially the coated ones,

must be thoroughly examined. My "weak" points are the hocks. Long ago, Wally Pede showed me how the hocks should be examined and I always examine them this way for correctness. The head should not be too narrow or too heavy. The expression should be good – it's hard to find a good one!

What is your opinion of the Afghan Hound of today? Are there any faults that have become more common?

Nowadays, they say that the judges should understand the different "types." For me, there is only one type, the type true to the standard. If a male has a narrow, Borzoi head, it is not a "new" type, it is an incorrect head. And the trimming today – I would not tolerate trimming in my Afghan ring. When I had my latest litter, born in October 2009, some breeders said to me when looking at the puppies: "They look old-fashioned." It was the best compliment I have ever heard!

One of your last litters was with Exxos Crusader x Tuohi-Tikan Umbra, which I have personally admired. What was your opinion of this litter? Why did you choose Crusader as a stud dog?

Crusader was very similar in type to my Umbra and he had a lovely temperament.

You also used Machir as a sire in your litters. What influenced your decision to use him?

Machir was a lovely male! In all parts! I wanted to use him mainly because of his excellent pedigree. There were the old lines strongly presented in him.

I have always been impressed with your "U" litter. The entire litter was very nice. Can you tell me a little bit about this litter (Ben Hur x Dur-i-Durran Fracas)? What influenced your decision to use Ben Hur as a stud dog?

Ch. Ben Hur was a gentle, very handsome black and tan male by Unjan's Pallawan (Norway) x Tuohi-Tikan Valsi. The pedigree was the main reason. Of course, he was also a very beautiful dog.

Here are some important Tuohi-Tikan Afghans who resided outside of Scandinavia:

Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Pundjab (Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Kekäle x Tajmahal Anya), Kennel de Khadidja, France

USA Ch Tuohi-Tikan Jolly Finn (Ch Immerwach Klaxon x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko), USA

Tuohi-Tikan Siniparta (Int Ch Panameric of Stormhill x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Huupakko), Kennel Pachacumac, Germany

Aust Ch Tuohi-Tikan Yty (Ch Bondor Indian Summer x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan

Sinisukka), Kennel Transwind, Australia
Jap Ch Tuohi-Tikan Hitti (Ch Scaramis Mocador x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Tulitukka), Kennel Afghan Arg, Japan

Engl Ch Tuohi-Tikan Loiske at Mirsamir (Ch Ismails Uffah x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Tulitukka), Kennel Mirsamir, Great Britain
USA Field Ch Tuohi-Tikan Lapponia (Ch Ismails Uffah x Int Ch Tuohi-Tikan Tulitukka), USA

More information can be found at www.debi.fi/Tuohi-Tikan/Tuohi-Tikan_frontpage.html



LEFT: Current Tuohi-Tikan dogs, left to right: Tuohi-Tikan Pilvyt, Taituri, and Karamelli; TOP RIGHT: Tuohi-Tikan Simasuu, born 1999; BOTTOM RIGHT: Machir.