

# FunQuest's Shimmy Shimmy Ko-Ko Bop

*In Memoriam, by Pritamo Kentala*

Shimmy, Mr. Shim-Shim, Ko-Ko Bop, The Shimster... light brown furry little dog with amazing talent and heart who has survived so many health challenges in the past few years.... too too many for a little 11 pound shaggy dog to have on his little doggie plate.



In September of 2007 Shimmy suffered a major brain hemorrhage and I thought I would lose him for sure. The tough little guy went from being paralyzed and on the edge of losing his life to returning to the agility ring in 2008 at the veteran level and earning a few more blue ribbons to add to the collection. It truly felt like a miracle to have him back from the brink of death, feeling good and enjoying life.

Barely six months after his miraculous recovery from the effects of the stroke, Shimmy developed an unusual bump on his muzzle. May of 2008 was a whirlwind of trips to four different vet clinics, multitudes of tests and surgical procedures (each of which are life threatening for Shimmy as he suffered from high blood pressure which spiked when he had anesthesia). (Thank you ACCESS in Seattle for taking such good care of him night after night).

Shimmy had a (very serious) grade three mast cell tumor removed from his muzzle (just between his eye and his nostril). They were unable to surgically get "clean margins" around the tumor because of the location.

Next stop was the WSU vet hospital in Pullman, Washington for his radiation treatments. He was there for three weeks and won the hearts of all the docs and future docs that were involved with his case. When I drove back to WSU to pick him up, everyone came out to say good bye and wish him well.

Following his stay at WSU, Dr. Gillings his oncology vet in Seattle started him on a three month course of chemo therapy. The hope was that the combined treatments would stop the cancer from progressing and that Shimmy would be able to live out the rest of his normal lifespan without the affects of mast cells gone wild.

Shimmy sailed through all of his treatments and in October 2008 he was given a clean bill of health after an ultrasound and blood work. It was fantastic news and a great relief. What a little fighter he was. I entered in him in an agility trial here and there once a weekend and he won some more blue ribbons which we passed on to his cancer docs locally and at WSU with a big THANK YOU!



For those of you that are familiar with dog agility, Shimmy has ALWAYS given me 110% each and every time he crossed the start line. He ran his heart out in cold, wet, windy weather, very HOT weather and pouring down rain. Many times one or the other of my dogs would throw in the towel and not want to continue, or markedly slow down and lose enthusiasm due to the conditions. But not Shimmy, not once – not EVER – he always did his best and ran with all he had right to the finish line.

Shimmy was truly what is affectionately known as a "diaper dog" – meaning he covered MY butt on multiple occasions if I zipped when I should have zagged, he often figured out what the heck I wanted and made me look good so

many times when I really was blowing it from a handling standpoint. His recovery and redirect skills were amazing and he only rarely let me know that I as a BOZO by grrrrring or barking his protest at me as he figured out where I actually wanted him to go.



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"Shimmy" continued:



After Shimmy's illnesses he was more or less retired but every now and then I would enter him in a class here and there. I will always hold dear in my heart the vision of him walking around the show site with me in a sort of "ho-hum" attitude. AND THEN – we walked into the ring and his demeanor started to change & perk up .... AND THEN ... I took his leash off at the start line - and he instantly was transformed into a professional dog with a job. I like to say he put on his (all) business suit and was ready to go to work. I was thinking to myself....we will have a nice little slow and easy jaunt around the ring together ... HELL NO – he'd take off like a shot and be grrrring at me to keep up!

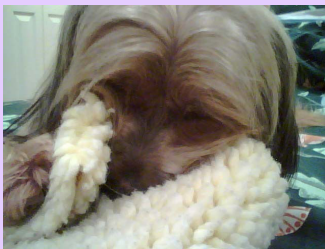
The last time we ran together was at the Mega-Dogs Memorial Day trial. It was warm, so we only ran one tunnelers run. Same thing...I'm thinking... "let's go easy and just get around the ring" – OH NO – he took off through the first tunnel and looked back at me barking--- "could you PLEASE tell me where we are going so I get this right – right now!" I felt proud and humbled by this little dog who so clearly knew his job and wasn't going to let his handler get in the way of him doing it right. Just like his very first blue ribbon agility run when he began his career back in 1998, we picked up another blue on our last run on 5/25/09.

Barely two weeks following that trial, Shimmy started getting very picky about his food ... blood tests showed some high kidney values so I got him into the ER docs for IV fluids and support. Every time I went to visit with him at the emergency vet, all the techs and front desk folks commented on how sweet and good a patient he was – oh yeah and cute too! Don't I know it! After four days at the hospital, his blood test results were much improved, ultra sound showed no cancer in his abdomen or kidneys, and he was ready to go home. He would not eat at the hospital but was on iv nourishment.

I learned how to administer subcutaneous fluids for him and he seemed to be feeling pretty good. He was still quite picky, but eating and not losing weight. We tried some holistic care and he seemed to be going in a good direction... for about ten days. Then he started getting pickier and pickier about his food and I ordered another blood test which had nothing but bad news for my little guy. The time to say goodbye to him had finally come and I still can't seem to wrap my head around the idea of it. How can I sleep at night without him next to me doing his favorite bedtime activity – sucking on his "blankie"

I could go on about all of Shimmy's accomplishments – Incredible Dog Challenge in St. Louis when he was 2 years old. Winning NADAC Nationals in 1998 and 1999. Winning the Columbia Cup high in trial several times. Multiple (local and regional) Grand Prix and Steeplechase wins, Finalist in USDAA Grand Prix & 2nd place in the Performance Grand Prix, Power and Speed winner, ADCH, APD, NATCH 4, ATCH, MX, MXJ – and who knows what else! All those memories... dipping in the Atlantic Ocean when we travelled to Boston for NADAC Nationals, going to Indianapolis for the Pupperoni finals, hanging out with dear friends at Bay Team trials, many unforgettable summers spent training in St. Maries, Idaho, spending time with agility pals in Phoenix and LA in the winter, the very first Power Paws camp... Oh MY GOD – HOW HOW HOW do I say goodbye to this incredible little being that changed my life in so many ways?

After all he has survived these past few years – Now the sand has run out of the "hour glass" for my sweet little dog. His spirit was so BIG and he touched so many over the years with his talent, speed and spunkiness – the little dog that often had a faster YPS (yards per second) than any other dog in his class Border Collies or any dog of any type or size – he was truly amazing in the ring. I always said that Shimmy was my "gift from the agility gods". So true, so true – there will never be another dog quite like him.



At home Shimmy's presence was always obvious – "throw the toy, throw the toy, throw the toy..." was his mantra – in fact he was chasing balls up until a few days ago. God love him and when he gets to heaven, please be sure to throw the ball for my little brown bundle of fur over and over and over again – forget all the ribbons and trophies. Shimmy had the sparkliest little scamp eyes and biggest heart of any dog you will ever know. - his spirit will always live on in the hearts of those that knew and loved him.

Shimmy Shimmy Ko-Ko Bop – June 6, 1996 – July 11, 2009

**God bless you – hug all of your loved ones – of whatever species ! ☺**

~ Pritamo Kentala

photos submitted by author