

Even a Laid Back, Pensive Dog Has Makings of a Champion

Pritamo Kentala

(Editors Note: I noticed a post on the Agiledogs list about Pritamo Kentalo of Washington state and her mini rescue dog Zita earning the last Gamble leg needed for their USDAA Agility Dog Champion title (ADCH) last month. I contacted Pritamo by e-mail and simply inquired "I wonder if you could tell me a little bit about your new ADCH dog?" Following was her response. I think it makes for a pretty interesting and inspiring read.)



Zita with sun on her face as she soars over a hurdle somewhere on her way to becoming a double champion.

She was adopted from Seattle Animal Control in 1993. She had been picked up as a stray (in raging heat) and was not claimed by her owners. I don't know why I took her, it was a heart connection, as I was not allowed to take her out of the cage and play with her or even touch her until the day I took her home. I talked to her through the cage door and fed her treats through the wire. I went home and thought about her and went back the next day to make it official.

They guessed her age at about one and a half years (but they ALWAYS say that I have found!) and they thought she had already had one litter previously. This dog was so filthy dirty, that I convinced the Animal Control officer to allow her a "cinderella day pass" to be bathed BEFORE they spayed her. I brought a size 100 crate, opened the kennel door, stuffed her in the crate and drove her to the groomers. She was FULL of fleas. The groomer took her and put her in one sink, took the crate to another sink and cleaned it with steaming hot water. Then he started working on her with flea soap and a comb - what a mess! He said she probably had never been groomed in her life. Then, I took her back to the pound and they were nice enough to put her in her own run with an actual blanket to lie on (no blanket in the previous run). This was a Saturday, she had to stay 'till she was spayed on Monday, and I picked her up on Tuesday.

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"Zita did not know how to play at all and over the years I have watched the layers peel away and seen the more lively, imaginative, funny side of her emerge."

I took her to my vet and she had lots of superficial problems; ear infection, eye infection, dry-ucky skin, tape worms, I can't remember what else! But with two weeks of meds, good food and brushing, her condition improved dramatically.

She was not housebroken, did not even know "sit". I guessed she had been a backyard dog that didn't cause much trouble (she is very quiet and pensive), and was easy to ignore. I remember teaching her to "sit." You could see the gears turning in her brain as if she were thinking, "Okay, now how does this go? She makes this sound, and then I am supposed to do something.... now what was it I have to do to get the cookie?" It was amazing. She is a very sweet, low drive dog and it takes her awhile to put two and two together.



