

Meet Your Breeder



Russella Bowen-Wilkerson

(Registered)



Q *How did you get started in Basenjis?* I bought my first Basenji in 1988. I have always been an avid runner, and, while in college running 5-7 miles a day, I wanted a running partner that could keep up. I decided a dog was the answer. While researching dog breeds I came across this small, athletic African dog that doesn't bark. Because I live with migraines, "barkless" caught my attention. That was it. A Basenji was perfect for me!

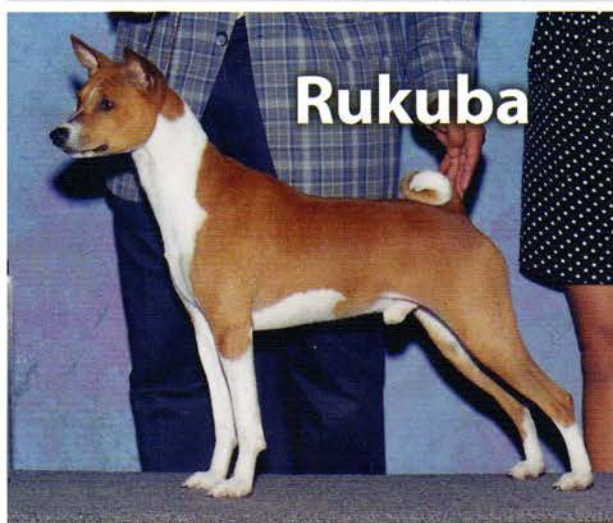
I didn't know anything about dog shows or breeding purebred dogs.

I just wanted my "perfect" dog, a Basenji. Like so many newbies before me, I began my search in the newspaper. As luck would have it, the very first paper I looked at featured an ad for a litter of Basenji puppies ready to go. Several days later I brought my first Basenji home and named him Scribbles.

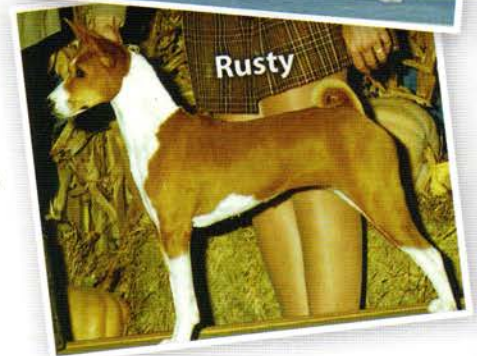
Q *Why did you start breeding?*

In 1995 I got my Rukuba, Ch. Sir Red Rukuba Thunder-boomer, SC, CGC, TDI. I had been getting The Basenji magazine since 1988 and had been following many show dogs and their careers but really still not aware of what showing a dog entailed. I decided I was going to show Rukuba. His first weekend out he won 3 out of 4 days, picking up 12 points and both majors!

Needless to say I had "caught the fever".



I met Gale Whitehurst at a show and she gave me a Basenji named Molly, Ch. Undercover Texas Two Step. I put every point on her and completed her championship. When we decided not to breed Molly, Gale and Steve Berry then gave me Ch UnderCover Starlet Rusty to breed to Rukuba. Rukuba won the Stud Dog class at the 2002 National Specialty from 2 offspring out of this breeding. That was the beginning of Jokuba Basenjis.



Q *What advice do you have to a new breeder getting started?* Read the standard, interpret the standard, and paint a picture in your head of your interpretation. Study photos and pedigrees of the old dogs in the magazines and the Zande Pedigree Website. Learn why dogs look the way they do. Stick to your vision regardless of what is winning. DO NOT breed to a dog because it is winning. Breed to the dog that best complements your breeding program and the bitch you are breeding. Be patient; it takes time to put pieces of dogs together, one generation after another. Always breed forward and don't stay stagnant. I am not a fan of repeat breedings, they don't contribute anything new to your breeding program or the gene pool and you aren't moving forward. It takes confidence to try something different. Plan your breedings in advance. Cindy,

Kristen and I talk for hours about hypotheticals and generations down the road. Surround yourself with a good team!

MOST IMPORTANTLY, be responsible for your pups. Place the pets in great homes and be willing to take them back at any time for whatever reason!



Meet Your Breeder - Jokuba

Q *What dogs you've seen or owned stand out as outstanding examples of the breed and why?* I have not been in the show world long enough to have seen all the "great ones!" The dogs from the past seemed to be more balanced and possessed the finer details of what make up a Basenji.



The pictures I have seen of Ch. Blucrest Bound for Reveille and Ch. Kazor's Dandy Deerstalker are my idea of a Basenji!



Dogs in my time that stick out are:

Ch. Calaz Executive of Embasi:

At my very first dog show I witnessed an amazing ring performance from Boss; he made a tremendous impression on me and I feel he never received the credit he deserved. His length of neck and shoulder assembly were exceptional for any breed. He was the correct size, a very BIG mover and a great showman!

Ch. Undercover Barnburner: Brandon had such an air of quality! He was a beautifully made dog, elegant, typey, and, again, wonderful on the move.

Ch. Jasiri Sukari Juri Maguire:

I always think of Tommy every breeding season. I love his outline and type. He is a dog that you could make a silhouette of his outline and know exactly what breed he is. He is another dog with beautiful length of neck and shoulders and balanced angles front and rear.

Ch. Eldorado's Ooh La La:

Monroe is my favorite brindle Basenji. I own 2 of her offspring from 2 different litters. Her topline and movement should be rewarded every time she walks in the ring, as it was at the 2010 National Specialty where she was First Award of Merit from the Veterans class. Another BIG mover!

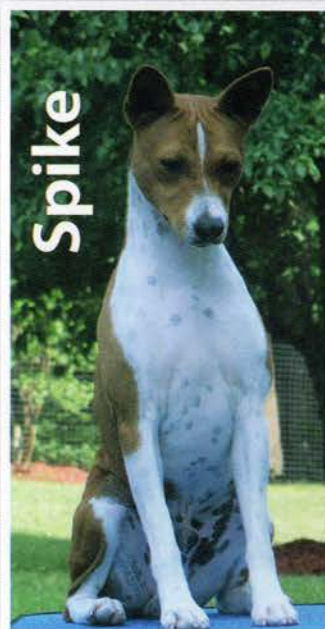
Ch. Akuaba In Corduroy:

I feel very fortunate that Roy wound up with me. He is such a sweet, loving dog and has been a marvelous producer. Roy is the total package! He has the correct outline and is one of the most balanced Basenjies I have had my hands on. His topline is rock solid, he is square and makes the silhouette of a Basenji.



DC Jokuba-Aisa's The Reign of Freedom, SC:

Of my own dogs, Spike is a special favorite of mine. He possesses and produces my idea of beautiful breed type. Spike's temperament is solid and he passes that along to his offspring. Spike also passes on his love of chasing bunnies. Many of his offspring are Dual Champions. Included among his champion children is Hunter, DC C-Quest's Jokuba Sneak Attack, SC, CGC, Best of Breed winner at the 2009 National Specialty.



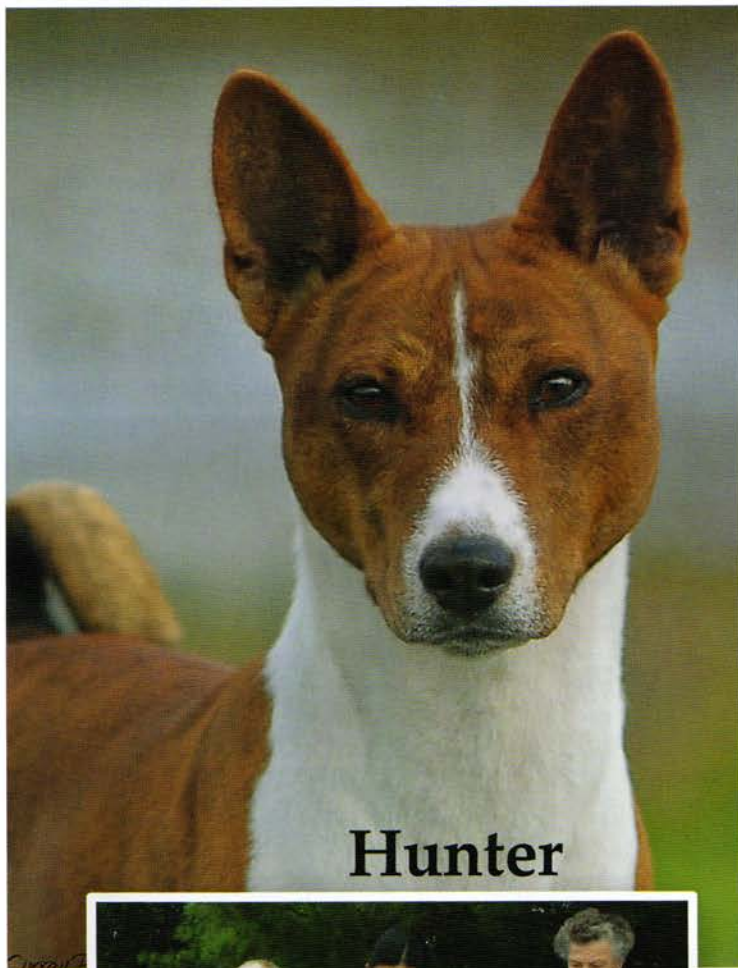
Q *What do you think today's Basenji breeders need to pay special attention to?*

The outline and structure of the Basenji! The Basenji is a moderate breed, with a short back, level topline and square outline. Too many dogs are long and low with terrible toplines. Correct carriage requires correct structure. Many dogs are set forward in the front and run with their heads behind the vertical. This is a structural problem that is misunderstood for carriage. It is a problem when you can drop a plumb line from the ears straight down to the feet. Many of these dogs with straight fronts are over angulated in the rear. Remember a Basenji should be MODERATE and BALANCED.

I believe that one should be able to make a silhouette of any breed, remove the head and tail and still be able to tell what breed it is.

Meet Your Breeder - Jokuba

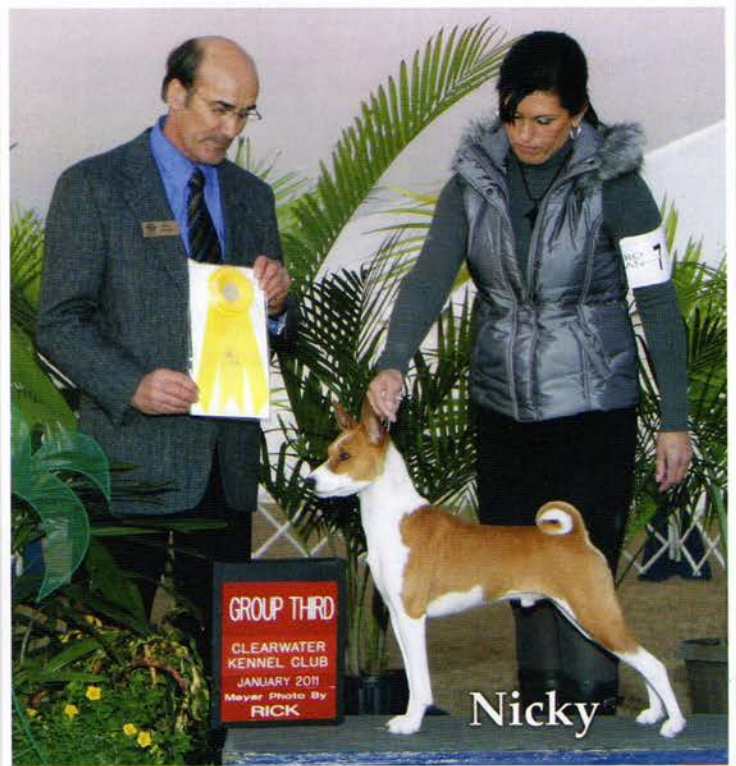
Q *What do you feel are your most significant achievements in the breed?* 15 years is not enough time to have made a huge impact in the breed. For now, Hunter winning the 2009 National under breeder judge Teresa Gavaletz would have to be a highlight. He is only the 2nd Dual Champion to win the National. He was bred by Cindy Russell, Kristen Marshall and myself.



Hunter



Ch Kazor-Jokuba's American Treasure, Nicky, has had an exciting career winning all over the world under many well respected judges. He was Select Dog at the 2010 National under Judge Kent Delaney. Nicky was co-bred by Carol Webb and me.



Nicky

It was so exciting to win Best of Breed at the 2006 National Specialty with Klassy- DC Klassic's Ms Mata Hauri, SC under breeder judge Cheryl Myers Egerton. It was the first time I ever showed her; it was, in fact, the first time I'd ever had my hands on her! We may have been strangers to one another in Rhode Island, but Klassy and I got to know each other very well over the next two years: Klassy was #1 Basenji 3 years in a row, twice Best of Breed at Westminster (making the cut in the Group under Judge Pat Trotter!), retiring with 7 All Breed Best In Shows. Klassy is the all time top winning Basenji bitch!



Klassy

Meet Your Breeder - Jokuba

Q *Your chosen Kennel Name is. How did you choose this name? Why? Does it have meaning?* JOKUBA - My first show dog's name was Rukuba and that was being used already. His littermate's name was Jock. I combined the 2 names to make Jokuba. It is very sentimental to me since the 2 boys got me through a very difficult time in my life.

Q *What have you seen improve in Basenjis over the years?* TEMPERAMENTS AND TRAINABILITY!!! I handle many Basenjis and it is VERY rare to get a bad temperament. I can't even remember the last Basenji I have been around with a bad temperament. More and more Basenjis are competing on the field, in obedience and in agility where solid temperament is essential.

Q *What person influenced you most strongly and why?* I have learned valuable lessons from so many people that have been in my life. I learned kennel management and animal husbandry from Rukuba's breeder Katherine Sullivan. Gale Whitehurst of UnderCover Basenjis taught me to welcome newcomers and share my time and knowledge. Damara Bolté taught me, by example, to be a good sport and to be kind to your competitors. Steve Berry of Escapade Basenjis encouraged me to show my own dogs and to develop my handling skills. I love showing the dogs; it's hard for me to believe that I used to hire other people to show them for me! I am so grateful to Carol Webb of Kazor Basenjis. When the heartbreak of Fanconi made it almost impossible for me to continue breeding and showing, Carol kept me going.

My biggest influences are Davida Roof, DVM of GNR Dobermans, Cindy Russell of C-Quest Basenjis and Kristen Marshall of Redmarsh Basenjis. Davida has deepened my understanding of structure and anatomy. What I understand instinctively, Davida is able to articulate. In clear, concise language she can paint a "word picture" of conformation, movement and breed type. We can sit for hours discussing various breed standards. Davida will bring out medical texts and show me skeletal outlines of

different breeds to show me how structure affects function and locomotion. Cindy Russell, C-Quest Basenjis, has been a great influence on my way of thinking, helping me to look outside the box when breeding and looking at pedigrees. Cindy always stresses the importance of looking for a dog's virtues before his flaws; too many breeders, exhibitors and judges engage in fault judging! Cindy has also taught me the importance of PATIENCE! Kristen Marshall, Redmarsh Basenjis, pushed me into lure coursing. Kristen had to really twist my arm to start running our dogs but it's been a terrific adventure. Thanks to her, Jokuba has produced 4 generations of well-rounded Dual Champions, many of whom are also group placing and group winning Basenjis.

Finally, a gifted handler and true dog man who has been such a huge influence and inspiration that I married him; Aaron Wilkerson!



Russella Bowen-Wilkerson 2010



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