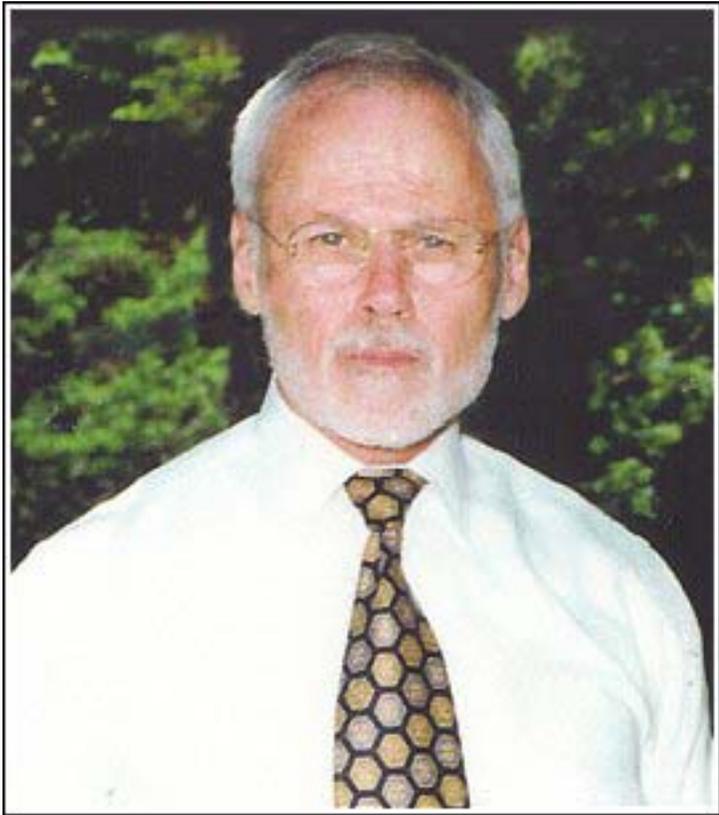


**Esteemed Breeder Judge Edd  
E. Bivin Interview**  
Interview Of A Breeder \_ A Teacher  
By Naida Coburn



**Introduction:**

First to some who may not know Edd Bivin is a very popular and respected Judge in all the breeds he Judges.

Some of you may recall the 1999 Westminster Best In Show dog, the nine-year Old Papillion, Ch. Loteki Super Natural Being. The Judge who put him up was Edd Bivin. This was a very popular choice and may I add, the Pap asked for it all the way. Edd Bivin judges with style and finesse, quick and decisive, which are hallmarks of the finest judges. He is always very focused. The dogs seem to be drawn towards him, and as it should be, you see the judge and the dog, with a good handler fading into the background. We who have shown under him know what he likes and does not like. If you don't know those things, you will quickly be told.

Edd started in Pomeranians at age 12 years, Ch. Edwards Reddy Teddy was his first top Winning Champion. As Edd describes Teddy as a dog born before his time. This dog would be a top winner today as well. Teddy was the sire of Ch. Edwards Reddy Career. Puddin', as Joy Brewster fondly Nicknamed this winning Pomeranian, won the APC 4 times, shown by Ann Rogers Clark and Joy Brewster. Puddin' was sold to Mary S. and Joy Brewster, of Robwood Kennels in New York. He went on to sire many Champions. Keep in mind here we are speaking Of Edd as a very young man.

From the time he was 12 he had a kennel with runs where his Poms were Allowed to run in all types of weather and get plenty of exercise. He chose the Pomeranian because his parents said, your choice must be small, is our only requirement. Edd felt the Pomeranian breed was a little dog with a big attitude. Attitude still means a lot to Judge Bivin in the ring today, and do not be surprised if He remarks, "I would rather have THIS one pull MY sled". He believes the

Pomeranian should move as a diminutive of a Northern dog. Poms should cover ground, tend to single track, and move in an efficient manner, as befits a diminutive of a much larger, very functional group of dogs.

Edd's main mentor, friend and handler, with whom he traveled in his younger Years, was AKC handler (now AKC judge) Maxine Beam. Maxine taught Edd to line brush a Pomeranian (not with a comb) and do it well. With Reddy Teddy's Coat, this was no easy job, as in those days trimming was very limited. Besides, correct coats like Teddy's needed very little, if any, trimming. Edd also learned to trim feet (which he says he is VERY good at---If you need help ask!!) and ears. You trim all ears to suit each particular Pomeranian. Edd left for school, and for a college chose Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, his lifetime home. Edd never returned to breeding except he feels as a Breeder Judge he IS still breeding Poms as he puts up the very best of what is at that show, and if he can, the type of Pomeranians he would want to be breeding today. As a young man being over looked by some judges because of his age, he vowed some day he would become a judge and ONLY judge the dogs. His peers voted Edd Bivin as Judging Legend 2002, a real honor.

He is still at TCU, but as Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services. (He retired in May 2003) His wife Irene Bivin is a wonderful, well-known and loved Judge, in her own Right. Her daughter Teresa is a very talented handler. Irene is "the chosen One" for Best In Show 2003 Westminster Kennel Club. Edd will be judging the Exclusive Golden Gate Show in Ca. Jan. 30-Feb. 2.

**N:** This is an interview with Edd Bivin. It is September 7, 2002  
By Naida Coburn.

**N:** Back in 1996 you gave an interview for the Pomeranian Registry. I have that here. So my first question would be this: The new Pom standard went into effect January of 1997. Do you feel it has improved the understanding of what a Pomeranian should be or not? Any comments?

**Edd:** You have to understand that I am a purist about a lot of these things, and I go back in this breed for a long time. I remember when there was tremendous pride taken in colors, in coat texture, in coat, in soundness, and in balance and proportion. And I'm sorry, while there were people who called to ask me about the standard, while it was being talked about and being considered, there were some things in it that I really feel have been detrimental to the breed. I do not like the way that it deals with coat. But it is more than that. You see, in my opinion standards have to be very strict. When standards are permissive people have liberty to do things to violate things about breeds that are basic and essential to the quality of the breed. For example, Coat: We have people who show Pomeranians today who trim all the guard hair off of them. They show them basically down to the undercoat and do not understand that that is a defiance of breed type and character. They do not understand that if you put that kind of dog, that trimmed dog, out in weather and conditions, which make the coat desirable, and necessary, they freeze because they have no protection. They have no guard hair to catch the moisture of the snow or whatever it is. Years ago you would put them outside, and they would play in the snow and the weather, you would bring them in and they would shake off and they were dry to the skin, because they had something to keep the moisture out of the short webbing, which was the undercoat down next to the skin. Traditionally Pomeranians were shown in somewhat of an oval outline. Today it's almost become a funnel whereby they trim all the skirt off, they trim the entire bib off, and they take them straight up to their neck. So you no longer get that oval appearance. I don't know what possesses people to trim tails like they do today.

**N:** Speaking of tails, how are you finding the tails? Are you finding them correct tail sets, which are straight up over the back?

**Edd:** There again, Pomeranian tails were really flat to the back and they were high set. They had long brush on them that came, in many instances, up to the ears. We've always had some crooked tails, dogs that did not have absolutely flat tails; but I think we had better tail sets and better croups a number of years ago than you have today. That business of a tail being on top of a back, with a very, very short back, has somewhat been lost.

**N:** If you had a dog in the ring that was really good, had the head, had the coat, had everything but had a curled tail, and you left that tail alone and let it grow out, and the dog's tail was curled but it was up on its back, would you still consider that dog?

**Edd:** Yes, sure, but you can't put situations of "What if you had..." "What if..." You have to be there on the day, seeing what you had to deal with, and go from there.

**N:** Right, but you wouldn't just disregard the dog

**Edd:** No-- but there again, the more coat you can grow on the tail the more you get to weight it up on top of the back, the better the look.

**N:** OK, but why, when they have the curled tail, do they fan them out and get down there and hold them up?

**Edd:** (with a smile) I don't know.

**N:** Now on the eye situation. The shape of the eyes. Are you finding that they are getting any better, or are they getting worse?

**Edd:** Years ago we had a lot of big bugged eyes, in a lot of lines. I think that some of the eyes and expressions are better today.

**N:** What about the size of the dogs?

**Edd:** Size has never bothered me as much as it has some people. The old standard talked about dividing it ... I think it was five to seven, or whatever it was, up to seven pounds. If you walked in today, for a lot of people, with a seven-pound dog or bitch, you wouldn't do too much. And a seven - pound dog does not have to be a gross dog. If the dog is properly balanced and proportioned, it can be very nice. Size has never been a major factor with me. Shortness of leg has been a factor.

**N:** How is that coming along? Is that getting any better?

**Edd:** One of the things you have to understand is that I may not see them because they know I don't like them and I don't change on that kind of thing.

**N:** You would feel that a Pom had to have some leg in order to move correctly.

**Edd:** Yes. They have to have some leg. Certainly if you blew them up fifty pounds and put them out in the snow in a natural environment, they would have to have length of leg to get through the snow. There again, if they are very small dogs, they can do with less leg. But they have to again be in balance and proportion. You get dogs with a great big body and a little bitty short stubby leg, that's not balance.

**N:** You know, APC is redoing the standard again.

**Edd:** Of course, any color is allowed in THIS standard.

**N:** The way the standard is written, you could bring in a dog with white feet or other miss-marks. Would you feel better if they corrected that?

**Edd:** I think it's a step in the right direction. They don't even define the sable dog anymore. Most people do not know what a sable is. They need to go back and look at the old standard and define the colors, which are allowed.

**N:** Now, I have a question for you about legs. It's confusing to me. I raised and showed Pekingese for twenty years, and I am interested in learning. Most of us hang around you whenever you are telling something. People really are interested in learning, and they know you know. Now we would like to know your opinion of the legs, where they pull them back sort of like a Morgan horse, where they set back more like that.

**Edd:** The Pomeranian should not be over-angulated, but he should not be straight. He should be functionally angulated. Hocks should be stood perpendicular to the ground. When you pull those hocks back so the hock is not perpendicular to the ground, you overstretch them. What they try to do in a lot of instances is to pull them back too far, to make them look shorter over the top.

**N:** I was wondering if you think this is correct: When they do have the over-angulated leg, a little over-angulated to more of a straight leg, they find that they tend to be cow-hocked but they are very sound in the stifles.

**Edd:** I don't know that to be the case. I wouldn't agree or disagree. I don't really know. I would tell you that a lot of dogs that are over-angulated behind cannot handle the angle and they may appear to be cow-hocked. Now again, a lot of people do not put Pomeranians out to exercise. So they never build any muscle or anything to form and to hold the leg where it is supposed to be. They put them in exercise pens and let them stand and jump all day instead of getting out and get some exercise.

**N:** How do you feel about the new judges? How do you feel they could be best educated? APC has suggested breeders as mentors. Would not seminars be the best way, seminars with the older judges, rather than just breeders mentoring?

**Edd:** Since I am no longer a member of the American Pomeranian Club after all these many years, I can't really say what they should do I would tell you that the American Kennel Club has suggested in many instances that mentors be designated, that breed seminars be held, certainly in regard to national specialties and things of that nature. It is my opinion that the American Pomeranian Club has never been as proactive as it needed to be in the business of education.

**N:** That is my opinion, also .We do need seminars on Pomeranians at The APC Nationals. Do you ever see the correct double coat in the ring today?

**Edd:** Yes. Rarely, but you see it. There are still people who show to me dogs that are not over-trimmed, that have the correct coat, because they know what I like.

**N:** I think the coat might be coming back a little bit, do you?

**Edd:** The breed has always been tidied up. We operated under the premise that the best trimmed dogs were the dogs that you were least aware of their being trimmed and today they butcher them .

**N:** When you enter a ring, and you see all these sculptured dogs, how do you really feel?

**Edd:** Sad. It's saddening to me because the breed was for many years a rather natural, kind of happy little sharp breed. And it saddens me to see what people do to them without any concern for the evidence, so to speak, of what they have done. They shave them under the tail. They trim all the hair out from under the tail. They ring the tail. And what they do is that when they trim the tail, they accentuate the bad set. So you go in and you deal with what you have to the best of your ability, and I guess that in those instances, you deal with the things that are less offensive to you.

**N:** So, in some instances for example, you might put up a sculptured dog, for the simple reason...

**Edd:** Because we have nothing else. Now, knowing me, I would probably admonish them for having sculptured them to that degree.

**N:** You mentioned that dogs are shown earlier now and finish in puppy coat. What would you think if a pup had to win that last point after one year? Like in Europe?

**Edd:** I have advocated that for years. I am strongly in favor of no dog receiving his final point toward championship until after he is eighteen months of age.

**N:** In the 1996 interview, you mentioned muddy color. Are they improving?

**Edd:** There are some lovely colored dogs out right now. And there are some lovely colored top winning dogs as well as some nice Pomeranians in the classes. The thing that concerns me is that people don't know how to use colors in the breed. They don't know what sables do. They don't know that a red dog or an orange dog with a black tipping is not a sable. True sable dogs are very good and strong for pigment. Cream dogs, on the other hand, were very good to clear out smutty faces in red, orange, and whatever. It's very tough to breed a correctly colored sable dog with a clear face and bib. It's really tough. But gosh, it's gorgeous when they do it! (He sat back, as if he was remembering a special sable dog, and his eyes really smiled)

**N:** In 1996, you stated that until we find the reason why or where the black skin comes from, we should not breed from these dogs. Do you still feel that way?

**Edd:** Certainly I do. And it distresses me when people think that dogs with this condition are suitable to come into the ring.

We have dogs that have early evidence of the disease. The judging of dogs is the evaluation of breeding, for breeding. If it is hereditary, which most of us think that there is a hereditary factor, but we do not know for certain? We had dogs with black skin disease fifty years ago. There were not as many of them, and they were not nearly as prevalent.

**N:** What would be your pet peeves on judging Poms?

**Edd:** Most of the things we've talked about. I am a purist about type, and I'm sorry, while I respect any standard, which is in existence today, it does bother me when you trim all the guard hair off the dog.

**N:** For the people who have never had the privilege of reading this 1996 interview, do you think professional handlers win more under you than other handlers?

**Edd:** No. I have long had a reputation for not caring from what class they come, or who has them, or whatever. I don't care. It's a process by which I elevate those things about which I feel most positive about and I keep it that way.

**N:** Do you mind my putting in what she says in there about your not liking the baiting, or over-baiting? (Edd Bivin 1996-"It bothers me that people over-bait dogs in the ring today. You should be able to get a dogs attention, and maintain that attention with out having to stick food in its face the whole time the Judge is going over it").

**Edd:** No, I don't.

**N:** You do not like tight leads?

**Edd:** I do not like real tight leads. I do not like dogs over-baited and overfed in the ring. And I do not like toy dogs running in the ring. They need to move without running.

**N:** You mentioned that you look for type first.

**Edd:** Yes. Type, balance, proportion, carriage and outline and character.

**N:** Can you recommend for newbies any grooming tools from the past?

**Edd:** It's hard to beat a good pin brush on a correct, textured coat.

**N:** You mean like the Mason Pearson Brush?

**Edd:** Yes.

**N:** What is your opinion on the Pomeranian's muzzles?

**Edd:** I think that one of the things that happened to Pomeranians is that we started getting these short muzzles then called "baby faces". When you shorten that muzzle you shorten the strength of the jaw and the ability of the jaw to hold teeth. Or even get them. And you also do something to the sizes in the eye bed. You shorten the muzzle too much, and you pop the eye to make the eye big. So what I have always said was that if you breed those short little faces up to a dog that is fifty pounds and you put them out in the snow, they literally will freeze to death because they

do not have enough muzzle to warm the air before it hits the lungs. I do NOT want a long muzzle. But I don't want those little bitty smashed up faces. Sometimes that is all that you have. Judging is compromise, a system of compromise.

**N:** That must be hard to do.

**Edd:** It is part of judging dogs.

**N:** Now, Judge Bivin, I have heard many people say that you chew people out in the ring, sometimes loudly, and you have intimidated many a person to tears. Yet most of these same people will travel many miles to show under you. Why?

**Edd:** Well, let me say first that I hope I don't chew them out. I do admonish them for either bad handling when they could do better or improper presentation of the breed. I hope they come to show dogs to me because they think I know what I am doing.

**N:** Because a Pomeranian has a certain personality, one thing you like to see is that Pomeranian walk right into the ring, not carried like a Pekingese?

**Edd:** That's right. I mean people make them spoiled rotten. And then they come into the ring and they don't show for you. They don't gait. They don't do anything.

**N:** What's your favorite part about judging?

**Edd:** Being with the animals.

**N:** There are some older breeders who feel that they can't learn new grooming tricks and a lot of newbies who want to learn them. In general conversations on the Pomeranian list, Mr. Bivin, most would prefer to learn how to groom a Pomeranian correctly without over-trimming. Do you want to respond to this question?

**Edd:** You know I don't really know what the question is. If the question is would I help the people learn, I have helped people for years. I am happy to help them if I can. I will give them hints or suggestions from time to time in the ring. There are places that I might trim a dog a little bit more than a lot of people do today. We were very good to trim feet. I can trim feet like you wouldn't believe. < Smile > it's hard to do and get it right. Ears are tough to trim. Tails are tough to trim. What you do if you want to do those things is to trim each dog per how the dog is made. You don't trim them all alike. And you start out with a little. Look at them well ahead of a show, and then if you need to, take off a little bit more.

**N:** In the interview that you had, Judging Legends, 2002, I really was overwhelmed and touched by what you said when you became human and not just the Pro- Judge you are. When you said you never know what that person has gone through to get to that show. They may have slept in their car, sold their lead to get home, or what they went through. (<http://www.thedogplace.com>)

**Edd:** Yes. We stand in the ring, and we are a bit isolated from a lot that goes on in and around dog shows. We don't know whose car broke down getting here. We don't know who had a flat tire. We don't know who didn't have time to trim the dogs. We don't know those things. I am very business-like in the ring and very serious about it. And as a result of that, there are a lot of people who really are kind of spooked. I don't ever want anybody to be afraid or whatever. I

want them to come in, show the dog, enjoy it, be challenged, and rise to the occasion. We are all competitive generally speaking, or we wouldn't be here.

**N:** So you want people not to be so intimidated that they can't do what they know to do.

**Edd:** But back to the question about what people go through, I learned down through the years that people make all kinds of sacrifices, sometimes not very wise ones to come to show their dogs. I think I've become more cognizant of the fact that different people come to and from the dog show with different experiences, and I've hoped to maintain a greater understanding of what people are about in the business of showing dogs. I hope that they all love dogs. I will be frank and tell you that some love them and some do not put the dog first as much as others. Some of them are not as involved, as immersed in the business of dogs as some other people are. And sometimes that is healthier. Sometimes they have a better perspective on the SPORT of purebred dogs because of their other involvement. I have never limited my involvement and myself simply to the business of purebred dogs. My family insisted that I do some social things, that I do some cultural things, certainly be involved in education. As a result of that, I have spent a big part of my life professionally, all my life, in education. And that's helped to keep things in balance. I have seen people make what I would call "foolish" sacrifices to show dogs. And I don't think that is what dogs were intended for. We forget that people living in a specific locale to do a specific job or purpose in their lives created breeds. Sometimes that was pulling. Sometimes that was hunting in pack. Sometimes that was running. Sometimes it was to fetch game, or to hunt down and kill predators. And sometimes it was simply to hold, as little toy dogs are gorgeous to look at and hold on our laps.

**N:** But you wouldn't say that because they were little to hold, does that mean that they shouldn't have muscles?

**Edd:** Certainly not. There was a time when miniature things were in great vogue, so miniature dogs were in great vogue and if you go back and look at things in the Renaissance and various periods of history in Europe, there were different toy breeds that were in vogue and fancy.

**N:** Ch. Rider's Sparklin' Gold Nugget was very famous, bred by Lee Johnson, and was owned by Blanche Rider prior to the Washington's purchase. Owned and shown by Porter Washington (Campaigned for about 3 years, had 159 Best Of Breed, 119 Toy groups, and 41 Best In Shows). Would you like to tell the newbies why you bred to the SIRE of Sparky and not to the famous winner? (This breeding produced Ch. Edwards Reddy Teddy.)

**Edd:** The sire of Sparky WAS BIS Champion Toppers Little Corkie, owners, Jack And Shirley Woodall. I wanted to breed to what could produce Sparky--- And I bred to him two or three times.

**N:** Do you have any pictures of your dogs?

**Edd:** They are all packed away. I did all of this when I was from 12 to 21 years of age. So those things I did early on. I was a kid and had a kennel house. I had other things I did, like education and whatever. So I never bred that many dogs. You have to understand that 40 years ago these things were harder than they are today.

**N:** Yes and there was only one show each town---And you became a Judge at age 20.

**Edd:** It was more expensive to go to dog shows, unfortunately. And I had other things I had to do. Yes, I became a Judge at 20.

**N:** I know you and Irene went on in your life together, to breed many top Dobermans. But your love still is strong for the Pomeranian?

**Edd:** Yes.

**N:** I could sit here and ask questions for many days, but I know you are tired. I want to thank you for taking this time and tell you these hours have been a real learning experience for this novice breeder. For the love of the breed. I thank You Judge Bivin.

**Edd:** You are certainly welcome.

By.....Naida Coburn



**BIS Ch. Edwards's Reddy Career**

Breeder/Judge:  
Col. James Arima  
Breeder: Edd E. Bivin  
Handler: Joy Brewster  
Owner: Robwood  
Kennels  
Picture from The New  
Pomeranian, By Sari Tiejien