

## CUVANA IRISH WATER SPANIELS WORK, SHOW AND PLAY

I was first introduced to IWS by my wonderful partner and soulmate Arnie Hempstead. He bred and showed Cocker Spaniels and his daughter Judy had owned an IWS since she was 13. When Judy gave birth to her son Oscar 13 years ago Arnie agreed to show her IWS Reg at two shows she had already entered. Spending time sitting on the bench with Reg at these two shows I was hooked and asked Judy if she was planning on having another litter from Reg's Mum Flo and if she was I would like a puppy and I would learn about the working side and Arnie could show him. In 2005 I got my first IWS who I called Zac. From day 1 all he wanted to do was retrieve objects which was a good sign. In England IWS are classified as retrievers in the Gundog world so I set about finding a gundog trainer for retrievers. The majority of these owned, bred and trained Labradors and knew nothing about IWS! I was not deterred and kept going to group classes which consisted of all Labradors but in the end Zac's enthusiasm for retrieving and his remarkable ability to mark exactly where the bird had fallen and go straight out pick the bird and come straight back earned him the respect of the trainers. When it came to his first show Arnie announced that he thought Zac would show better for me as we had formed such a bond so I was thrown into the show world as well. I very quickly had to learn how to groom and trim for showing and then 1 ringcraft class and we were awarded best Puppy in Show at our first show and qualified for Crufts.



Zac was an amazing dog and by the age of two he had been placed in a gundog test and awarded a reserve CC at Crufts. He was used at stud in 2007 and from that mating we got our lovely Caz.

In 2008 Zac won a Novice and Open Gundog Working test and was awarded Best Overall Dog by the judges and in 2009 at Crufts he won Best Any Variety Sporting Spaniel in the BASC Gamekeeper Class (you can only enter these classes if you have a signed declaration from a gamekeeper that you and your dog have been picking up on his shoot all season).

Sadly we lost Zac to cancer in 2011 which left a very large hole in my life.

Thankfully I did still have Zac's daughter Caz who has always been by my side. A faithful constant companion who has excelled in the shooting field picking up on 3 shoots a week with me. She has also had success in the show and working world. She was awarded a Reserve CC in 2011 and placed 1<sup>st</sup> in various working gundog tests.

In 2014 she won the Best AV Sporting Spaniel at Crufts in the BASC Gamekeeper class and Judy's dog Quill won Best AV Sporting Spaniel Dog. So both Zac's daughter and son did him proud and then to top off the day we had also entered the BASC shooting team competition with Caz,

Quill and Czar and we were thrilled when we won that as well especially as my beloved Arnie was showing Caz. This wonderful breed has totally taken me over and I could not imagine life without an Irish Water Spaniel by my side. They are so loving and loyal and when they sit and look up at you – you just melt.



I am very lucky at the moment to have 3 Irish Water Spaniels in my life. My wonderful Caz who is now 9 years old, Malachi who is 15 month and Anoushka who is 12 month now.

