

السلوقي
كلب الصيد الشرقي
جِيلُ جُودٍ مَكَانَ

THE SALUQI
Coursing Hound of the East
Edited by Gail Goodman

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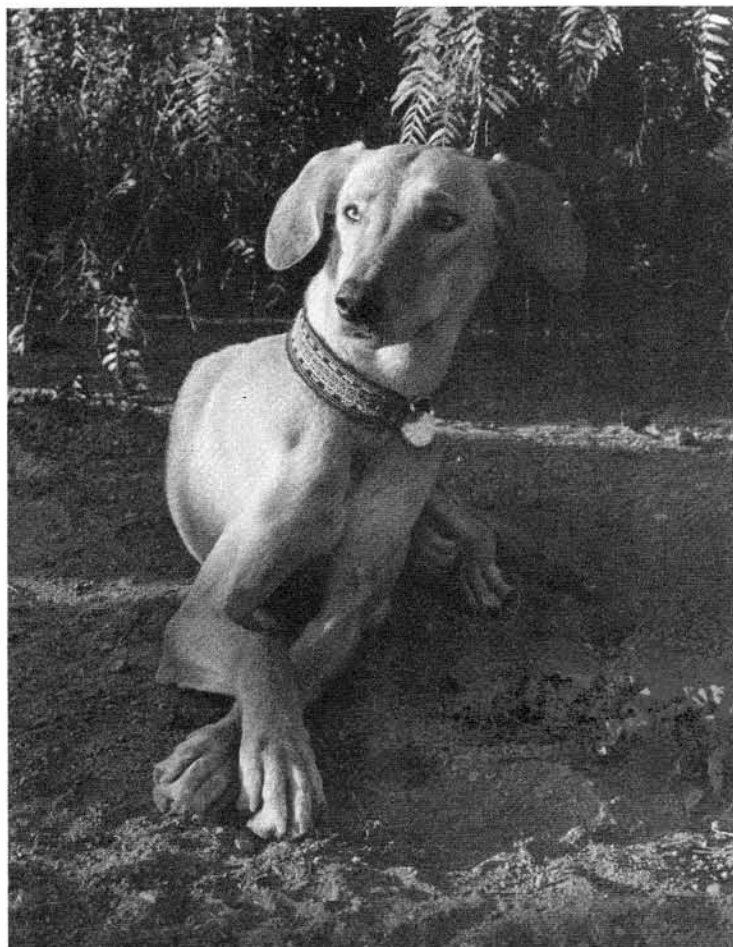
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Dar and Div Tarabin

Gail Goodman



Div Tarabin May 27, 1982 – April 27, 1994.

Having met the Saluki in the Middle East, the idea that Eastern hounds are in any way “inferior” to Western-bred stock has always been a ridiculous idea to me, but I must admit I was not immediately smitten by the Eastern Saluki. The first one I met, Shahaff, was a charming, heavily feathered, white-ish dog who would jump up, put his paws on my shoulders and grin whenever I visited his owners. He was certainly “pretty” but at that time, like all novices, I needed something extreme to engage my fancy, so my first sighthound was an Afghan. She and Shahaff played regularly together in the park in Jerusalem but she was hit by a car and Shahaff’s owners left for the States. It took me awhile to learn to see that beauty is a quality not a shape or color.

I got a second Afghan but decided one sighthound just wasn’t enough. There had to be two for them to enjoy life, but I didn’t want any more hair to brush. I took my puppy to the International Dog Show in Ashkelon and there stood a Saluki that took my breath away. Sandstorm Nimrod was a black and white heavily feathered grizzle of English and American breeding. To my eye he was gorgeous, he was exotic! Nimrod was booked for two litters in the near future, both to Israeli bitches of direct Bedouin descent. I reserved a grizzle bitch puppy on the spot.

From both litters there was only one grizzle bitch so my choice was made. Nimrod’s owner brought me a teeny-tiny deer grizzle puppy, not a day over six weeks old, I’m sure. I named her Isis and she was a precious little soul. Not only was she pretty, she had the most

loving, sweet temperament. I was absolutely hooked on Saluqis. She was tragically poisoned and died close to our departure date to return to the United States.

While I lived in Israel I visited several people who had Saluqis and was “imprinted” with the diversity of type in the breed. I saw Bedouin hounds and Western hounds, smooth and feathered—they were all just Saluqi to me. Diversity was the breed and I was a sponge. The only controversy I remember from those earliest days was whether Bedouin hounds should be “mixed” or bred to Western imports into Israel. The name Igal Sella was always mentioned in this context. He felt the Bedouin Saluqi was a precious gene pool, a valuable animal that was indigenous to the Sinai Peninsula and areas frequented by Bedouin tribes and this Saluqi should be “protected” just as all the wildlife of the area was protected. He begged Israeli Saluqi owners not to breed their bitches to “imported” hounds unless they were imported from another Eastern country. Igal Sella’s plea went unheeded for the most part. Israelis, like all people who live outside of the international mainstream, seem to value “imported goods” over what is available in their own environment. Hence, any import from the West had great appeal as a stud dog and everyone wanted to produce a big show winner. The treasure Igal Sella recognized was of no interest to most cosmopolitan Israeli Saluqi fanciers. Since Israelis do not hunt with their hounds, dog shows are the only activity and winning is everything.

Meanwhile, I returned to the States Saluqiless. I rescued a bitch of American show breeding but decided I would import a “desert bred” that I could enroll with the American Kennel Club. Israel belongs to the F.C.I. so I knew eventually I could get a puppy with a four generation pedigree which would be acceptable to the A.K.C. I also decided there was absolutely no point in importing a Saluqi with American and English bloodlines; if that’s what I wanted, I could select my own pedigree in the States. What I wanted was 100% Bedouin genes and there was only one name I knew who had that—Igal Sella. I wrote to him and he agreed to inform me when a puppy with a four-generation pedigree was born. I paid for the puppy up-front, as an act of good faith, and I waited, for five years!

During this period Igal Sella sent me some photos of Saluqis in Sinai as well as hounds of his breeding, and a few words in very brief letters; he did not enjoy writing English though he could speak well. He did tell me, however, when I asked him why he had focused on breeding “smooths,” that the Bedouin believe smooths are the “fastest and strongest.” At that time I did not realize there was a bias against smooths in the West. I was very used to seeing them from the beginning. The years passed. Finally, I got a postcard: “Your puppy is born, when are you coming to get it?” As if it were that easy! I called and was told there were three puppies in the litter and I should take two, a dog and a bitch. I said I only wanted a dog.

I knew an American Saluki breeder and A.K.C. judge who visited Israel periodically and I called him. When he heard puppies with a four-generation pedigree were born, he made arrangements to take the bitch and agreed to transport my male. Dar and Div Tarabin arrived in the U.S.A. in the fall of 1982. A dear friend, Terry Herbert, picked Dar Tarabin up and shipped him to me. We arrived a few minutes after Dar, whose call name is Yahkar (which means something rare and precious in Hebrew) was unloaded in the airfreight warehouse. The whole building was reverberating with a shrieking, howling sound. I jumped out of the car, said to my children, “Our puppy must be here” and had no trouble locating a very determined red puppy howling his head off while trying to dig his way out of a small plastic crate. The five year wait was over.



Yahkar at 4 months old with my daughter, Dyah.

Yahkar was a wonderful puppy. He looked absolutely nothing like a show-bred puppy and he did not look like anything I had expected. I had vaguely remembered show critiques in Israel, poor fronts being common. Yahkar had a massive little head and was totally sound. He had huge feet and enormous thick pads. He was also pensive and calm in the yard or house. I'll never forget, when he was just four months old or so, somehow he rolled over and slid down into the rather large crack between the dog couch and the wall. There he stuck,

all four legs straight up in the air like a turtle on it's back. He had the most astonished expression on his face but rather than struggle, he looked at me calmly as if to say, "Well, get me OUT of this!"

When he was young and we lived on the Navajo Indian Reservation in northern Arizona he would never lose sight of me on our walks. He used to run a few feet in front then run back, run up and back; as he got older, he would run farther up the path and back but he never followed the older dogs into the gullies or away into the Juniper forest. It was as though he knew he was not yet strong enough to keep up. This is in stark contrast to the behavior of a Western bred import I received a year or so before Yahkar was born. The first walk I took with her (off lead) she ran out onto thin ice and fell into a lake! Fortunately it was shallow and she could climb out; I had to rush her to the car because she was soaking wet in the freezing cold.

We moved to the area outside of the city of Phoenix when Yahkar was nine months old. When we moved here the whole area around our house was scrub desert and the Saluqis and I got to see jackrabbits on a regular basis for the first time in any of our lives. It was exciting but since we walked in scrub, catching those wily speedsters was nearly impossible. Only on the rarest occasions did the hares make fatal errors and end up in the jaws of a Saluqi. On one occasion, while walking in the scrub shortly after moving to the area, we heard the roaring sound of all-terrain-cycles approaching and suddenly—out of nowhere—three men on A.T.C.s appeared. The adult Saluqis fanned out in back of me but Yahkar planted his skinny-puppy-body between me and the men, and lowered his head as if to say, "Don't come any closer or you'll have to deal with me." The men noticed his behavior and so did I. I was overwhelmed by this demonstration of valor. From that moment on I realized Yahkar would willingly put his life on the line to defend me. Clearly there are extremely brave strains of Saluqis.

The Saluki breeder who had imported Div Tarabin (Div means wolf in Arabic, also brown sugar) was not happy with her. Since neither of these youngsters looked anything like West Coast show Salukis, it was difficult to envision that Div could ever produce anything worthwhile. He had lots of Salukis and while talking at a dog show, he mentioned he'd like to place her. I was so happy with Yahkar because of his marvellous personality, it seemed sad that his sister should go unloved. I said I'd ask my children about taking her and I'd tell him



Dar Tarabin (in Arabic, the land of the Tarabin.)

the next day. My children agreed we should take Div. It took a few weeks to arrange transport, but Herb Wells and Dan Belkin were coming to Phoenix for a desertbred event and agreed to bring Div. I had never seen her.

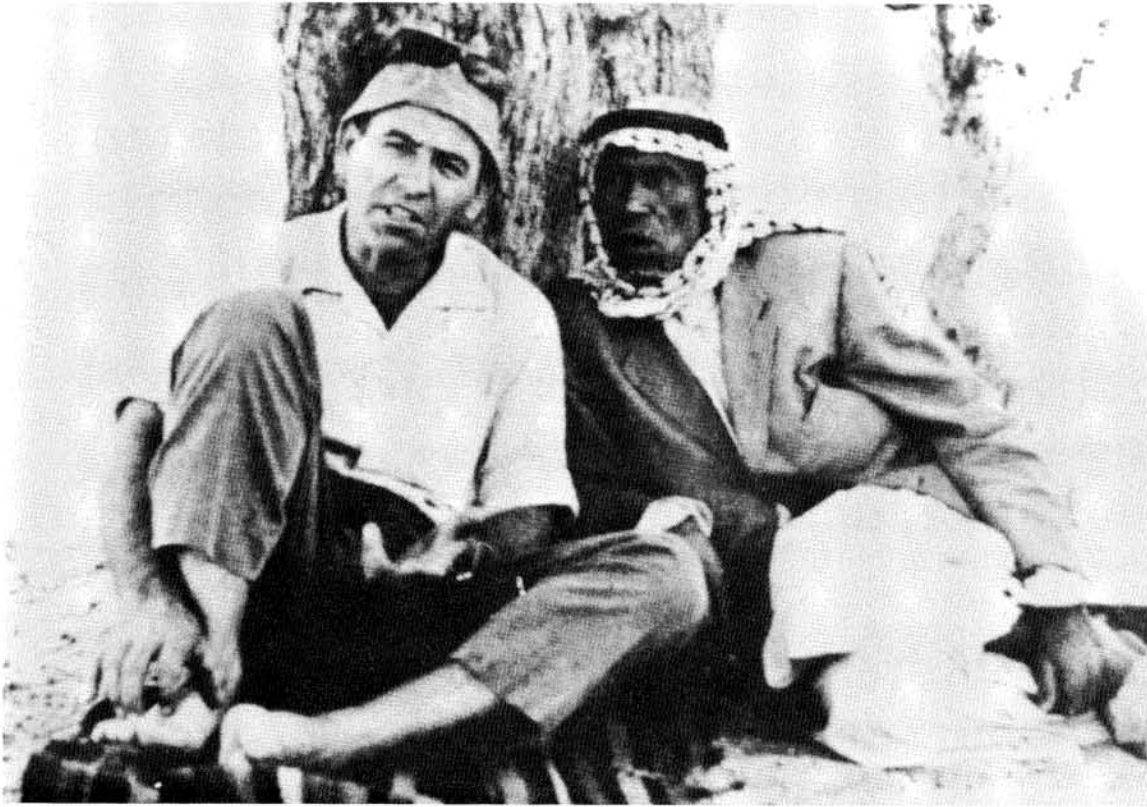
Herb and Dan arrived and I went to pick Div up. She jumped out of the car and the first thing I saw was enormous feet spread out like chicken toes! Every toe was pointing in a different direction and they were all perfectly flat. I was horrified—what kind of surface had she been kept on? And, of course, she had the same head and look as Yahkar. Herb and Dan joked that we all knew whose

sister this was. Yahkar and Div recognized each other almost immediately and they have never been separated since. In truth, they are not very tolerant of unrelated Saluqis. It turns out there was nothing wrong with Div's feet; whenever she got very frightened she would flatten her feet as if trying to stick to the ground for dear life. Yahkar would do the exact opposite; he would tighten his toes into claw-like balls. This he would do particularly on strange surfaces or in the bathtub. They have spent every day of their lives with me, devoted to me. They follow me everywhere in the house or yard, lie down wherever I am working and watch my every move. They demand attention and give devotion. As their faces whiten, every day with them becomes more precious.

It was always an enormous pleasure to go into the field with Yahkar and Div. They were completely tuned-in to hunting with me. They never ran off; they seemed to know hunting was something Saluqis do with people. They always stayed just far enough in front of me to hear my voice if I spotted a hare or to benefit from whatever I flushed from cover. They were an excellent team, not extremely fast but extremely clever, agile and terrific recovery capacity after a run. In moments they would be recovered from an unsuccessful chase, ready to try again. Yahkar had a tendency to run cunning, especially in an area he knew well and knew the direction the hare would take; if he estimated he could catch the hare, he gave his all. Div was more willing to run any and all hares that she flushed; she had a marvellous nose and was a prodigious scavenger, occasionally opting for the remains of a kill, rather than the effort of a course. This only happened as she got



Dar Tarabin (Yahkar) at one and a half years old.



Igal Sella with Sheikh Salim Ibn Jazi, Sinai, 1960s. Photo: R. Trainin.

older. Yahkar never mutilated or ate a hare; he always carried it to me. Div, I hate to admit, ate everything she caught, or found. After a course, when they panted it was clear they had enormous windpipes to suck in oxygenated air. And they were so happy in the field.

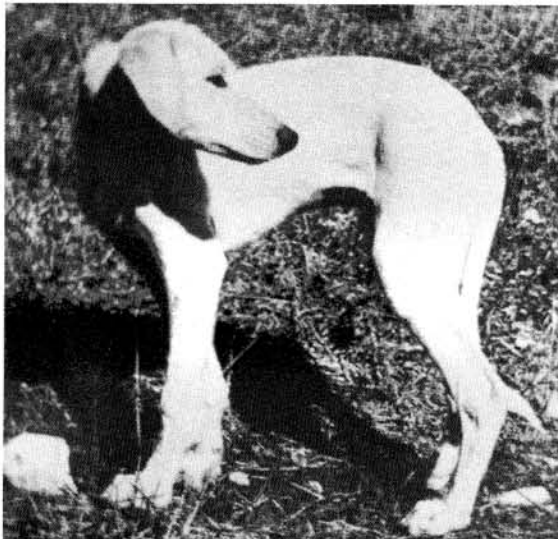
By chance, Sherrán Smith found a copy of Burton Bernstein's book *Sinai: The Great and Terrible Wilderness* (1978, Viking Press) which she gave me as a gift. Bernstein chronicles his travels through Sinai, whose silent and majestic landscape has borne witness to century upon century of great human drama. A visit is paid to the oasis of Ein El Furtaga, eighteen kilometers from the Akaba coast road and Wadi Watir junction. Wadi Watir is described as "a meandering, erosion chiseled notch running from the gulf to the inland mountains, a strapping stepchild of the Grand Canyon, with granite walls rising almost vertically on either side of a boulder strewn floor, sometimes as narrow as fifteen yards, sometimes as wide as two hundred" (p. 96). As one approaches the oasis of Furtaga a rivulet appears then disappears underground and suddenly "a large oasis in a broad plain, studded with clumps of palms, small bustans [gardens] fed by diverted water channels from the main stream, scattered booths and tents, and prowling camels and Salukis" meets the eye (p. 99). This is the tribal seat of the Tarabin Bedouin. Here one finds the tents of Sheikh Salim Ibn Jazi, from whom Igal Sella received his foundation bitch, Ruah Tarabin. As his Saluqis gave a howling serenade, Sheikh Salim told his guests of the origin of his strain. In the 1940s he owned a bitch named Rashrash "and one day he met some Saudi merchants coming up the wadi herding horses to sell in Egypt. They had a hunting falcon and a male Saluki with them, too. The Saluki hung around to mate with Rashrash, and that was the beginning of Salim's noisy kennel" (p. 100).



Ruah Tarabin



Lobo



Peng Tarabin



Sali Tarabin

The original Ruah Tarabin with the Jordanian Lobo and two of the puppies from their litter, the smooth Peng Tarabin and the feathered Sali Tarabin. Photos: Igal Sella.

Yahkar and Div were inbred for three generations. Igal Sella made an original outcross of the smooth Ruah to Lobo, a feathered male of Jordanian Bedouin origin. These are the only foundation Saluqis in Yahkar and Div's pedigree. All subsequent breedings were brother-sister from the original outcross. Yahkar and Div are extremely healthy and sound. Their temperaments are unlike most modern Western Saluqis but they are totally stable and Div is friendly. Their genetic makeup is that of hounds from a different world. That world made different demands on "survivors." There was nothing "kind and gentle" about the environment that forged the Saluqi. It takes many generations to dilute or change temperament.

Everything that had to do with Div was as if mandated by fate. She was offered to me as a baby but I didn't want her. Her registration papers were sent to me but I forwarded them. Finally, she came to me as a pet but I had no intention of breeding her. Fortunately, yet again, fate had something else in store.

It never occurred to me to breed "coursing dogs." I thought I'd breed "dual purpose" Saluqis, valuing "pretty" far more than fast and determined. I had a ten year old male of early American breeding who had been a marvelous, determined runner; he had cancer and was nearing the end of his life. We knew Azal was terminally ill. I had always thought he was a wonderful Saluki but "show people" found him too plain and too muscular. At that time I was naive and influenced by such comments. But Div had always loved Azal; she saw what my arrogance (I knew how to breed "good" Saluqis) was blind to. Fortunately, while I was away at a fun-hunt in California, leaving my son to watch the dogs, he conveniently left the door separating Div from Azal open—on the 22nd day of her season. Only a five foot barrier separated Div from her very willing heart's desire. Azal, of dauntless spirit, was able to meet the occasion and a breeding took place. When I arrived home my son greeted me, "Well, mom, I hope you want puppies." "No, I don't want any puppies! What happened?" "Div got out and Azal bred her. He was so tired after that he had to lie down."

Since Azal had been ill for several years, I was again naive and believed he was sterile. I had also been told that bitches tended to produce litters the size of the ones they come from. Big deal, three puppies—I could deal with that. Fate steered events and I did not make any attempt to disrupt them.

All the backyard wisdom was wrong, wrong, wrong! Div Tarabin presented me with an endless stream of round, healthy puppies ranging from cream to pale golden to pale red with one red and white: all smooth, all ten of them! Azal died when his litter was just three weeks old. Little did I know then how Div and Azal had blessed me.

Briefly let me state that this litter was and remains a handful. They proved to be the beneficiaries of hybrid vigor. They are all extremely intense, extremely strong, powerful, fast runners. Individually each is intelligent, eager to please and deeply affectionate. As a pack they are a lot to handle. They—with Yahkar and Div—have enabled me to learn what the breed Saluqi really is. They changed my whole understanding of the essence of our breed. Each and every one of these Saluqis is a great-hearted athlete. To the end of my days my memory will be full of their incredible courses—most run only for my son and me because we took them into the field frequently when they were young. But they also gave many fine performances in National Open Field Coursing Association (NOFCA) hunts and they earned the respect of both coursing people and hunters. As Kathy Leyba put it, they had everything: they were fast, agile and could maintain speed for a long course; they could do it all.

Eastern hunters who saw their photographs all commented favorably on them, some even wanting to buy them. Our best offer, and a great honor, was three camels for Bedvi. When Ahmed Al Maktoum, a Saluqi breeder and hunter from Dubai, U.A.E., visited me, after studying Div's litter carefully and making the comment, "These Saluqis are beyond excellent," he added, pensively, "They should not belong to you. They should belong to someone who would really work them—but I guess it is all right, because you don't hurt them." He was adamant in his feeling that I never actually brought the dogs into peak condition. He was sure had I conditioned them properly, they would never have been beaten in coursing competition. I must say, Ahmed's visit and comments were a great pleasure. He had a wonderful sense about Saluqis and falcons.

In the running condition I was able to keep the litter and the 500 to 700 mile drive to get to any hunt site, I cannot claim they blew everything out of the field; the competition often beat individual litter members. But as a litter, on occasion, they dominated the field. They were all good. They are the most titled single litter of any breed to run in NOFCA hunts.

Seven out of eight competing littermates won NOFCA Coursing Championships, four also earned Courser of Merit titles. Four won American Saluki Association coursing cups at various hunts over the years. Bosem, the eighth competitor, was pointed and would certainly have gained her title had we lived closer to the hunt areas.

Div's puppies were considerably faster than Yahkar and Div. However, speed was not the only thing the Sinai Saluqi was bred for, though Yahkar and Div had some success with jackrabbits. Yahkar's most memorable performance was in the Salt River bottom in Phoenix. One morning I met some people who regularly coursed there. A hare was flushed and they slipped their Salukis. I didn't slip Yahkar. We walked a few feet further forward, watching the dogs that were already running, when another jack popped up right in front of Yahkar. I slipped him and he flew off over the most rugged terrain I have ever seen a Saluqi run on: big, round, waterpolished river rock! At any moment a toe or foot could snap, caught in the crevices. Yahkar ran over those rocks gaining on the hare with each stride. They disappeared into the scrub and Yahkar came out with the hare! He brought it directly to me and dropped it at my feet. He certainly demonstrated his fine heritage with that course.

Placed in a group of modern, Western show-bred Saluqis, Dar and Div Tarabin look nothing like them. Placed in a group of Eastern-bred hounds, they look "normal." They also blend well with photos of foundation and early Western stock. Most modern fanciers have no visual sense of our breed heritage and are unable to assess smooths. I will share with those of you who are interested what my litters from Yahkar and Div have taught me; maybe some of the information will be useful to Saluqi lovers in the future, particularly those considering using Eastern-bred hounds.

As a fancy, we know almost nothing about transmission of health related characteristics because anyone who dares talk about them publicly is crucified. This must stop if people are ever going to be able to evaluate the seriousness of various characteristics and whether they are genetic or congenital. In 1992 I had fifteen Saluqis ranging in age from thirteen years to under a year and I did no open field coursing. I visited my veterinarian twice for a total expenditure of under one hundred dollars. I am writing about a basically healthy family of Saluqis. Since I do not cull/kill puppies at birth and have been fortunate with the high quality of care people who have my puppies have given them—most of the dogs from these breedings are alive. Their health histories are known.

Eastern wisdom states: "blood will tell." Dar and Div Tarabin were unusual imports because they had a known, accurate, recorded pedigree and they were intensively inbred. Any Saluqi will produce what is in its genetic makeup. In the case of Yahkar and Div, each inbred generation seemed to have become a little coarser than the one before, but they are healthy, stable tempered hounds. At this writing they are approaching twelve years old. Div is 24 inches tall, Yahkar 26 inches tall. Everything is in proportion as far as muscle-to-bone ratio and their feet are very large and they have enormous, healthy pads. The front feet are noticeably larger than the rear.

Even when one member of a breeding pair is inbred, though the puppies may seem to resemble that parent more, inbred Saluqis contribute only half of the genes. All of the size and "heaviness" of Div Tarabin's litter was originally attributed to the "desert" side of the pedigree. Subsequent breedings have demonstrated that this was not the case at all. Line breeding immediately showed "a regression towards the mean," or average for the breed.

For some reason the Azal x Div litter produced heterosis, or hybrid vigor. The smallest

puppy grew to be 26 inches, the tallest almost 29 inches; as mentioned, Div is 24 inches and Azal was 26 inches. Inbred smooth seems to produce all smooth. "Airplane ears" occurred on several puppies, apparent only at three months; several others have lop ears. One puppy was born with a congenital heart murmur. All of the others were fine and no heart murmurs have occurred in any subsequent litter. Two of Div's puppies suffered from cramping, one if allowed to run hard without warming-up during cold weather, the other cramped in the heat, as described in Dr. Yocham's contribution on overexertion. The most powerful, most determined runner in the litter experienced the most severe cramping and eventually could not run on hot days. One bitch had severe false pregnancies and should have been bred before she was three. I was unable to do this and it seems the increased stress of the false pregnancies pushed her into an autoimmune reaction. She stabilized promptly and was spayed. She has had no recurrence of any autoimmune problems. Ehrlichiosis (tick fever) is now believed to have been responsible for her original problem, the symptoms resembling hemolytic anemia. There are no other veterinary problems in this litter from such an intensively inbred bitch.

Bedvi was the first of Div's puppies to be used at stud. He was bred to a feathered American bitch, bred and owned by Joy Randel, from whom we received Azal. Bedvi is on the small side of his litter in bulk. His puppies are surprisingly refined with several resembling the American side of the pedigree overwhelmingly. The litter is a rainbow of colors; half are feathered. Bedvi has airplane ears but all his pups have lop ears which they can fold back against their heads. The dam had a curly (gay) tail and several puppies have gay tails. The size, along with the bone mass, totally regressed towards the mean.

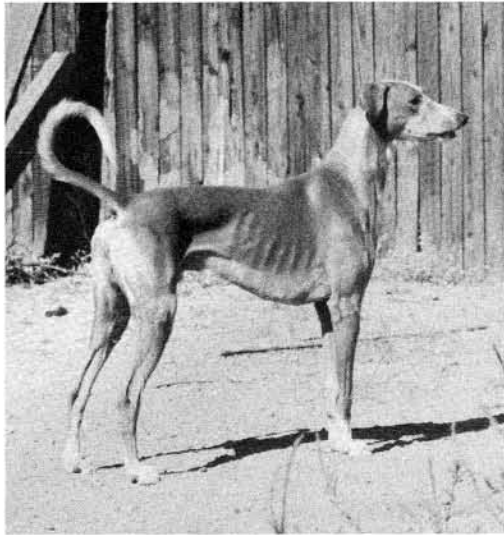
Yahkar was bred to Galit, Bedvi's daughter, Div's granddaughter. All hearts are good. The most surprising thing about this litter is, again, the overall refinement—particularly of the bitches' heads. Yahkar is rather "coarse;" his daughters (a line breeding on Div) are "refined." This litter made it clear that the "bigness," massiveness of Div's litter was the result of the genetic background of the particular American sire and hybrid vigor. Yahkar's off-



The Archives Azal of Davijoya, the Navajo Reservation, age 5.



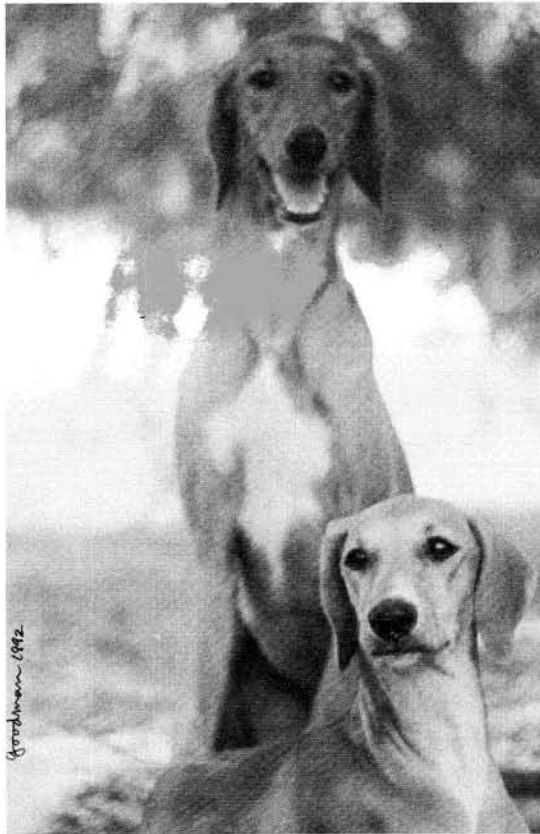
The Archives Azal of Davijoya, at age 2. Photo: Joy Randel.



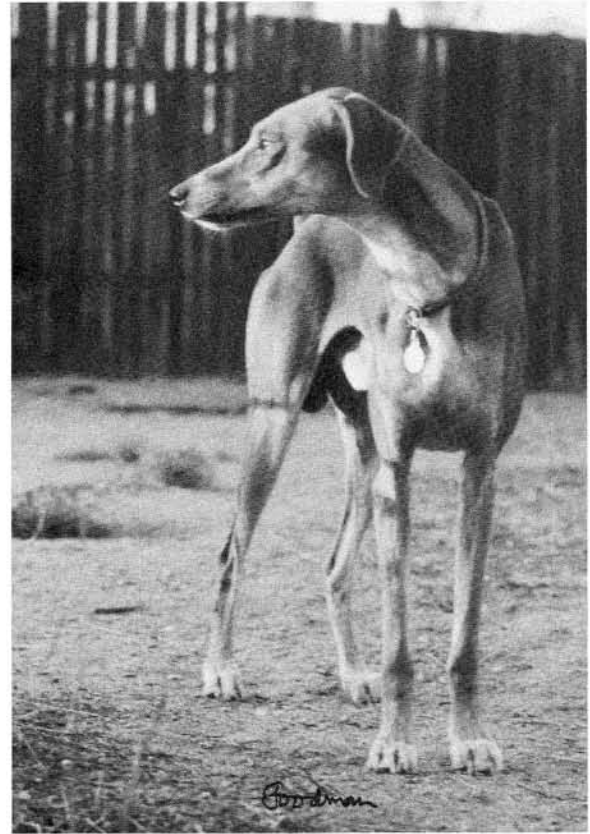
Bedvi, C.C./C.M., from the Azal x Div litter, 5 here.



Bedvi's daughter, Galit, bred by Joy Randel.



Pilpel and Shovov as puppies, offspring of Yahkar x Galit, 1992.



Rishone, the only male of the Yahkar x Galit litter, 1994.

spring have nice muscle, bone, and balance, and are the average size of the Tarabin Saluqis in Israel. Eastern Saluqis “body up” with age; this has been true for both Yahkar and Div’s litters. Galit’s daughter, Ritzy, owned by Susan and Bill Schroeder of Kansas, was bred to an American male, Moondog, also acquired from the Randels. His pedigree is similar to Azal’s and again there were several substantial puppies—broad but not as tall, overall, as the Azal x Div litter—but there were also several refined puppies. Like the Azal x Div litter, they dwarf

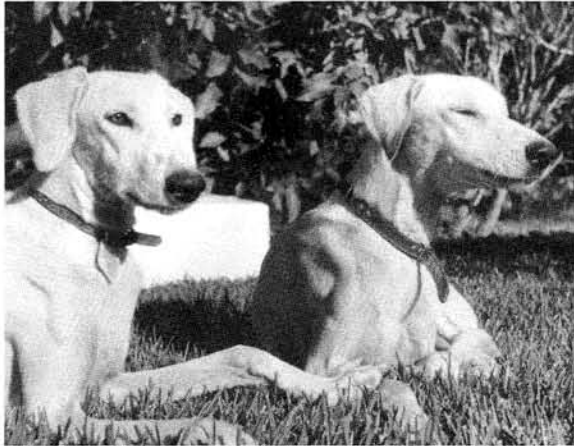
their dam. Two of these puppies, Zamira, owned by CynDee Hahn and Haludi, owned by the Schroeders, have been awarded placements on their first appearance in a specialty sweepstakes. Breeding for elegance and refinement through Western outcrosses is not the real challenge, however. The challenge is to maintain that marvellous, sound desert frame, perfect muscle to bone ratio, and the physiology which creates speed, agility, endurance and soundness—all combined with an intensity and intelligence to hunt. This remains my personal goal as a breeder.

Apart from the challenge of maintaining athletic ability, I see a subtle threat, a serious, possibly insurmountable problem—"type." It is clear that there is great diversity in the various Eastern lines being bred in the West—some look far more like Persian Greyhounds or show dogs than others. To me there seems no point in breeding direct desert descent Saluqis if one must attempt to transform them into the generic show dog. My males have distinctly Eastern, distinctively masculine heads, short deep chested bodies, long limbs with dry, chiselled looking muscle definition and prominent veins. No breed in the world looks like an Eastern Saluqi from the southern regions. I find the look exquisite, yet show people puzzle over what breed they are looking at. I certainly can't take such Saluqis into today's show ring where most entries are angulated to move like German shepherds; and most puppy buyers want hounds they can enter competition with. Open field coursing has limited accessibility. So, how can we, as people who recognize, appreciate, even cherish the diversity of type in our bloodlines, perpetuate them unless there are responsible homes for our puppies and a public which shares our appreciation? To transform exotic Saluqis into generic show dogs is not a breeding option for me. I have no idea what the future holds for truly distinctive strains or family groups like the Tarabins.

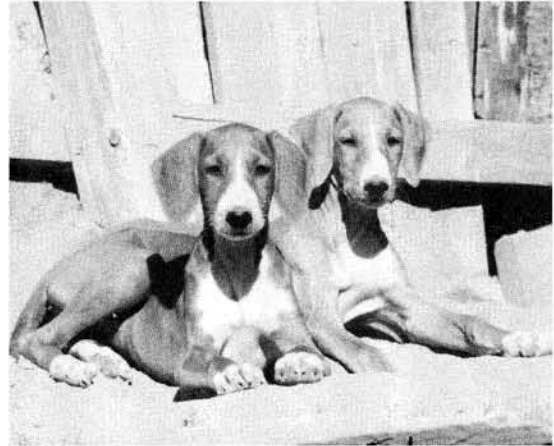
Div and Yahkar, in most people's eyes, are not pretty. Several of their puppies are absolutely beautiful. Many of these hounds do not move like show Saluqis but they catch rabbits so they move correctly. Neither Yahkar nor Div has liver pigment; Azal, Div's mate, did and several of her pups have liver pigment. Two of Yahkar's pups have liver. Yahkar is missing one premolar, all his pups have full dentition. Div has full dentition, one of her pups is missing both premolars. My Western bred Salukis are also missing a tooth here and there. Yahkar, Div and all pups from all litters have perfect bites. Their teeth and gums remain clean and healthy with only good diet and raw marrow bones monthly. Yahkar has an environmentally induced allergy which affects his eyes; none of Div's pups, Bedvi's pups, or his own pups have it. Yahkar's only male offspring, Rishone, had summer itch which he outgrew; the bitches in the litter have no allergies. The overall soundness and speed of Yahkar's pups remains to be tested in the field. Bedvi's son, Simha, died as the result of a fall coursing—I have been unable to course regularly since this heartbreaking tragedy.

A brief comment on temperament. By Western standards Yahkar and Div are fierce but absolutely stable and predictable. They are highly territorial and Yahkar is a capable, brave guard. In other words, he is not afraid of people. Div is not afraid but not aggressive toward people. Yahkar, Div and Div's puppies wag their tails whenever we interact with them. It is as though they are always telling us how happy they are to be with us. Their exuberance is a joy. Every litter bred—outcrossed and linebred—has been less aggressive. Div was bred to a very aggressive American dog. Their pups have typical hunting-dog temperaments but would be useless individually as guards. Bedvi's puppies do not guard and several are extremely friendly; the same is so for Yahkar's puppies. Only Div's litter was capable of hunting coyote or jackal. Only Div's litter had the size, strength, speed and aggressiveness necessary to

Generations of Tarabin and Midbar breeding,
descendants of Lobo x Ruah



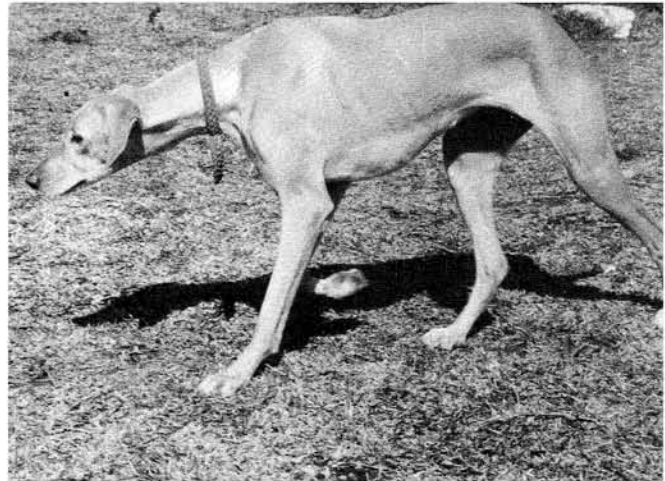
Blanca and Peng Tarabin, Bustan ha Galil, Israel, 1970s. Photo: I. Sella.



13 week old male pups from the 1994 litter of the Azal x Div son, Beersheva C.C./C.M., bred to Galit, U.S.A.



Div Tarabin, 1980s, in her prime, happily coursing, U.S.A.



Laila Tarabin, 1970s, Israel; photo is captioned on back "The best." Photo: I. Sella.

tackle a "fighting" prey. It appears two aggressive, powerful Saluqis are necessary to produce a litter capable of engaging other canids. All other breedings from this desert line have produced "rabbit dogs." All of these Saluqis are supersensitive. They are so sensitive and intelligent, so responsive, all one has to do is talk to them and they respond. Any day now I expect a verbal exchange. None can tolerate harsh treatment.

I have gone into detail because I think the results of these breedings are not very different from what others might experience using Eastern stock. Dar and Div Tarabin, had they not had an absolutely accurate, recorded, pedigreed history, might not have been "certified pure-bred" by so-called "breed experts." No one in the West is familiar enough with the various Eastern strains to have recognized that they are absolutely typical of the Sinai Saluqi, which has been known to Westerners since the 1800s. Though not a glamorous strain to some, it is certainly an ancient, valuable, and identifiable one. Though whelped generations apart, the Bedouin hounds and the inbred Israeli hounds all look like litter-mates—the same face, the same structure, generation after generation, after generation. To

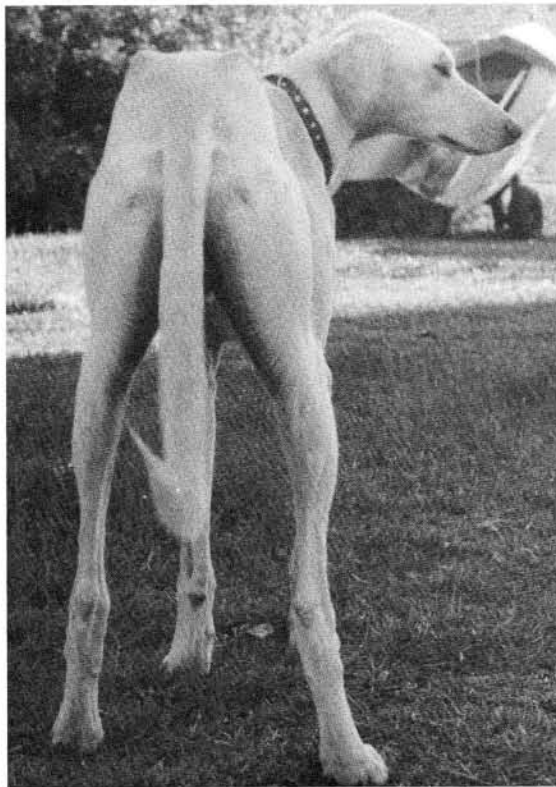
Generations of Tarabin and Midbar breeding,
descendants of Lobo x Ruah



Spookey and Watir, Israel, 1970s. Photo: I. Sella.



Dar Tarabin, U.S.A. 1980s.



Blanca Tarabin, Israel, 1960s. Photo: I. Sella, courtesy of D. Wright.



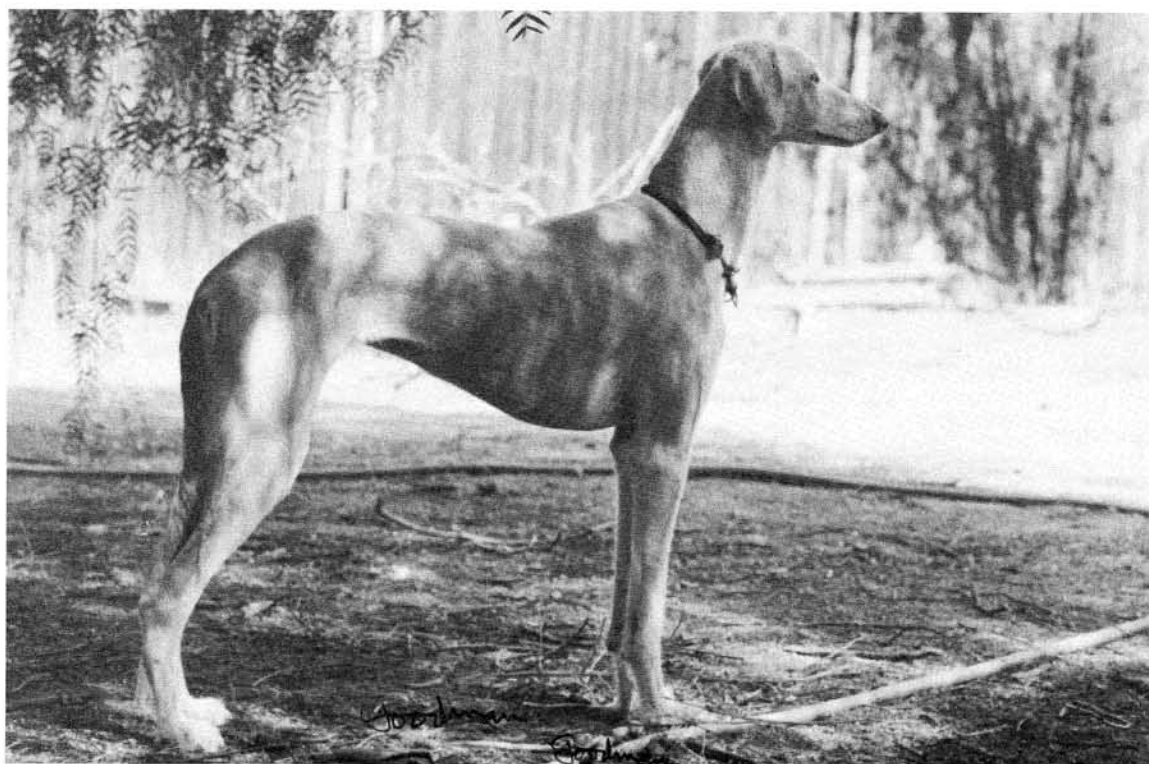
Midbar MishMish bot Tarabin, C.C./C.M., U.S.A., 1990s. Photo: S. Schroder, courtesy of D. Imre.

me, their look is the essence of the East. However, the treasure is not in how the Eastern imports “look,” it is in their genetic makeup. One can only tap this by breeding them. In every case that I am aware of, the results are spectacular. When I think how many Eastern imports to the West have not been used for breeding because they were “coarse” or diverged in some way from Western “know it all” expectations, I feel sad. We have certainly squan-

All the beauty of the breed is carried in the genes of even the plainest imports. . .



Yonah (Azal x Div)



Ofira (Moondog x Ritzy), granddaughter of both Yahkar and Div, pictured at 10 months old; bred by S.L. and W.B. Schroeder.

dered many genetic treasures. The truth is, had it not been for a fateful accident, I might have squandered mine, too.

Let me add a word about the choice of Western outcrosses for Eastern lines. Though there is variation in both type and quality of Eastern imports, I have never seen a “desert” x Western breeding where the quality and consistency of the litter was not improved through

the outcross or blend. Soundness and moderation predominates in most cases. However, the Eastern gene pool is quickly diluted; desert genes aren't "super-hero" genes—they're equal contributors but only that. If the Western line used is full of structural exaggeration or health problems, these quickly resurface. If the Western line was carefully bred with an eye on history and essence, the results are often superb. Eastern imports are healthy and sound for the most part. However, since the desert-bred is the "outsider," all problems, all faults, all difficulties are blamed on that side of the pedigree. I have learned this is absolutely erroneous reasoning demonstrated by the extreme differences in the litters I have had from Dar and Div Tarabin. The differences can only be due to the Western member of the breeding pair.

I have also learned that all the beauty and quality of the breed Saluqi is in the genes of even the plainest Eastern hound. Beyond beauty, however, is the heart, mind and frame of a great athlete and a devoted companion. There is nothing that excites me in the idea of creating tired pedigrees with no genetic diversity. What on earth for? More of the same in ever decreasing vitality? No, I look to the East and I am very satisfied with what I see and deeply grateful for what I have received. It seems both natural and exciting to look to the source for the future.



Winning! March, 1988, our best coursing season. The author with Barbor, C.C. and Bedvi, C.C./C.M. and their ribbons. The cup was won by Azal ben Azal, C.C. in strong competition. Photo: David Goodman.