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Finland
Wallaby's salukis

Hefur réttindi til að dæma tegundarhóp 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 ásamt tegundum innan tegundahóps 1,3,7 og 9.

Already in my childhood I was used to live with dogs, because my grandparents had a couple of Rough Collies and later a Welsh Corgi Pembroke. In the late 60's we lived in Helsinki, where I met for the first time a Sighthound – the borzoi male 'Leo' who was owned by our President Urho Kekkonen, which he had got as a present from the Soviet Union. Later at our next door was the famous Finnish borzoi kennel *Korotai*. My parents bought their first dog in the early 70's – a Carelian Bear Dog which they used also for elk hunting and we also had a Bear Dog litter, with seven puppies at home. My first really own dog was a black&tan Pincher bitch *Qesia of Leijliden 'Skippy'*, and I bred my first own litter with seven puppies in the July 1979. The first Saluki came into my life 1980. I was really attracted by Afghan Hounds, and wanted to have one, but my family didn't agree with me because they already knew how much work it would be with a huge coat. The other breed I liked very much was Greyhound, but at this time it was not easy to buy a puppy from Finland. So, we asked for a chocolate feathered bitch from Mrs Pirjo Grönfors - kennel *El Hamrah* - from her next litter, and what did we get - a pretty smooth grizzle [El Hamrah Charata](#) called 'Västäräkki = Wagtail'. She was a very lovely bitch with a superb temperament - whose character nobody could resist. Maybe this 'first love' was reason to my interest in smooth salukis. For her show results we can count one CC and several CQ's, but her real qualities she showed as nice track-racer; at eight years she was very popular racing-company for test runs to other salukis. She had 72 starts at track and speed at 280m at time 19.65 sec (track-record at that time), 480m at time 33.76 sec, 680m at time 49.44 sec and 880m at time 65.18 sec. Västäräkki was the dam to Wallaby's B- and D-litters. Before we got our own smooth saluki, I had never heard about two different coat qualities and now I had such a unique saluki at home – usually people

thought that she was a small Greyhound or a big whippet... But anyway – smooths are lovely – they are more intelligent and clever than feathered – just like foxes or cats... and funny! I am always delighted to meet so many smooths when visiting or judging abroad – it is very important for the breed to save both coat qualities. Hopefully new saluki judges will have enough knowledge also to understand smooth salukis. I have noticed, in the years passing that it is better to show my smooths only to the breeder judges – unfortunately! Hairy & wild 'Rina' [El Hamrah Golondrina](#), came to our home two years later in the June 1982. Easily she gained her International Champion and Scandinavian Champion titles, but at the race track only thing than counted for her was winning. Especially proud I am of Rina's success in Veteran classes - at over thirteen years old (year 1995) she was BIS-veteran, in both Finnish Saluki Speciality and Saluki Show. She was placed in BIS-veteran competitions over twenty times in Specialities & all-breed shows. She also had many placements in BIS-progeny group-competitions with her offspring, including 13 BIS-1 wins! Golondrina was our lovely companion for almost fifteen years and she is the mother to Wallaby's C- and F-litters and El Hamrah M-litter – 21 puppies and 15 champions! At the moment we have two salukis – a bitch and a male - at home: Golondrina's great-grand-daughter 8-year old black&blue [Wallaby's Ra-mes Riinah](#) (2 CC's) and our "baby" is his smooth and wild and most lovely grand-son [Wallaby's Yarman Yazz](#) called "Rex". 2001 we imported [Edisova Be-L-Axass](#) from Slovenia, she is co-owned with kennel Larelinan. Besides Salukis, we have one American-import Labrador Retriever lady called '[Fanny](#)' – [Blackamoor's Finlandia at Big Foot](#). Thanks to my family and good friends help, I have bred 24 litters of smooth and feathered Wallaby's Salukis and my first saluki-litter was born in August 1984 - read more from [Litters](#) -page. Normally I can use almost all bitches that I have bred to mate – so, I have lot of material to use but the most difficult problem is how to find a suitable male to use! When I choose a male for my bitch, I prefer the right type and sound construction, also, the nice temperament is very important for my breeding. In my opinion, our Salukis are quite healthy, as a breed – of course we have a few of the same problems as the other breeds have – allergies, cancers, heart problems and autoimmune diseases. The most important to the breeder and to the male owner is to be honest, and use only health dogs to breeding. Try to avoid mate two dogs which have the same problems! Usually I have had only one litter per year, I will tend not to breed very frequently and will only breed from my bitch once or twice during her lifetime. We spend much time with our puppies, as I believe happy temperaments are of the utmost importance, and we like to think that when a puppy leaves us, it is friendly and well-adjusted, able to cope with all turns of life. Our priority is to place puppies in permanent homes and to retain contact, with them and their owners, throughout their lives. When looking for homes, we try to find those who will love the Salukis as we do and will treat them as members of the family, and who will be kind and gentle towards them. If people want to show, race or course them we're delighted but if not as long as the dog is a pet and has a happy home and sleeps on the bed, that is more important. We don't have a separate kennel building - all our salukis and dogs live in the house with us, completely sharing our lives, beds, chairs... They go out in the garden for free exercise as often as they like, and of course they are able to go walking on leads daily. We feed our dogs with high-quality dog food and home cooking food too. I believe that it is important they are treated as members of the family and for me the Saluki is truly a friend. Saluki is suitable for showing, racing, coursing or being just your lovely companion. Finland is not equipped for open coursing, but we can participate in lure coursing which is great fun like racing too! I look, as a breeder and a judge, for balance and the right combination of strength and elegance. The standard says - the whole appearance of Saluki should give an impression of grace and symmetry and of great speed and endurance coupled with strength and activity. Salukis are hunting dogs and should have typical movements. The Standard asks for moderation on many points and we should to keep that in mind as breeders.

We must be on our guard against the temptation to breed 'extremes' which can result in very showy dogs who are no longer true Salukis. During my saluki life and judging, I have seen a lot of beautiful salukis – but only half of them, have been Top quality... When I got my first saluki over twenty years ago, the breed was more similar here in Finland and it was easy to travel to the other Scandinavian countries to show our salukis, because the quality was so much better in our country, than for example in Sweden – today, there is another situation... To the late 80's we had a quarantine to the Scandinavian countries, and since the rules changed, it has been really easy to import different type salukis around the world to Finland. In my opinion, it is very important to the new saluki owner and breeder and judge to learn the standard very carefully and try to understand different variations, which are desired and typical for the breed. The reason for the variation, is the special place held by the Saluki in the Arab tradition, when each tribe have bred Salukis best suited for hunting in its own area for thousands of years and Salukis are not bought or sold, but presented as marks of honour. Our responsibility is to preserve not to improve this breed! I have been very much involved in the Club activities, as secretary, show committee member, a ring steward and the President of the Finnish Saluki Club during 1995-2003. I have visited in kennels and shows in Scandinavia, Great Britain and on the Continent, Canada and USA. I judged Salukis for the first time in 1997 in Sweden (Club Show) and since summer 1999, I have judges salukis on CC level.