



Canadian, UKC and IABCA Ch. Neigenuveaux's Ermagarde, the first UKC Best in Show winner, bred by Florence Erwin of Ontario and owned by Judy Descutner. Photo courtesy of Judy Descutner.

One of the breed's most ardent supporters, Judy recognizes that, with so few Barbets worldwide and such a small gene pool, interest in the breed must expand for it to flourish, but it's crucial that it be in the hands of people who know what they're doing.

"More than anything, the breed needs to be discovered by experienced dog people," says Judy. "The breeding decisions that are made with such a small population have far-reaching consequences, and, in the hands of novices, will be devastating to the future of the breed." Of course, owners who are interested in Barbets as companions only are also important to the breed's future, but finding responsible breeders is a pressing concern. "Low inbreeding coefficients, health clearances, balanced conformation, correct gait, excellent temperament – all of these take on even greater importance with such a small population."

The breed is fairly well-established in Canada. American exhibitors often travel north to find competition for their stock. "We travel to Canada to show because a Canadian championship is the most meaningful of our current venues," Judy says. "The breed is definitely further advanced in Canada, with many established breeders and, of course, full recognition at CKC shows."