

Beauty and Benevolence

The Leonberger. Mador... Tears in my eyes as I no longer can touch his beautiful red-and-black fur. Everything one could expect from a dog. Elegance, power, kindness, positive energies. Pictures in my head on the disabled children he helped... My daughter brushing his coat... Obedience exams where he performed best... A cupboard full of cups, ribbons and prizes from dog shows. Pride. Warmth. My heart is melting. Mador. Beauty and Benevolence.



(Click pictures to enlarge them)

She was 12. Adolescent in body but only rocking back and forth in the same place for hours. Her own world. Paying no attention to anyone. No one can approach and develop her: the teacher, the therapist, the special education teacher. Autism.

The dog is huge and even terrifying at first glance but shows such gentle and fine behaviour that in a few minutes everyone has the urge to touch it. At first the girl pays no attention to him either. But on the longer term, she cannot ignore this huge mass of fur, smell, and yes, weight on her thighs. In three months' time, she responds to the dog: approaches him and tries to touch. I can start her development by specialized exercises where the prize is the dog.

Miracle, they said. Mador, I said.

I wanted to have a large dog which would be nice to my future child. After searching the internet and visiting dog shows and a German-type special breeding test (ZTP) with special judge, I was convinced that the Leonberger breed would perfectly meet my expectations. I was looking for a type with excellent head, great proportions and expressions, with a rather compact short nose and muzzle, reddish/darker colours, strong bones but elegant, great movement – and exceptional temperament. I found these characteristics at the Vom Matthiasberg kennel.



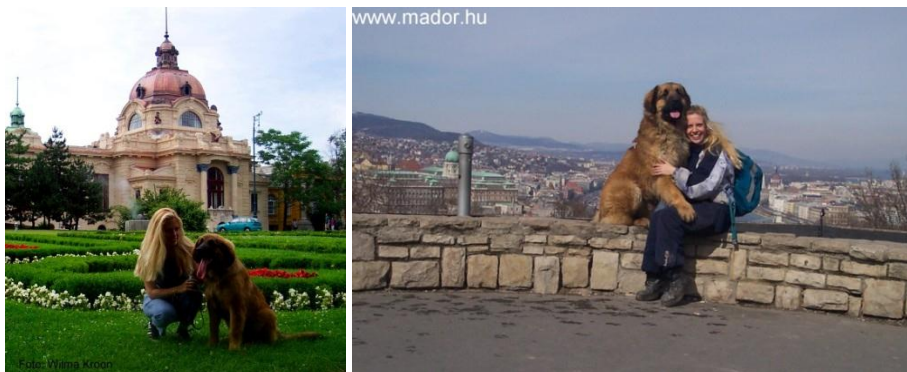
I was so keen and interested that I was provided with the right to choose first from the males. Interestingly, all owners received their first choice puppies from that litter.

He immediately fit into our family. He was very easy to train with positive methods, responded to vocal and hand signals. He was eager to get touched and petted even by strangers. He loved everybody. He was very tolerant with children.

He loved the water, we swam together many times. He would 'save' me from the water instinctively.



We truly shared our lives. We went everywhere possible together.



We went to dog shows as well. He was only 15 months old when he first won BOB. And at last, at the Champion of Champions show, he won BOB from Veteran class.



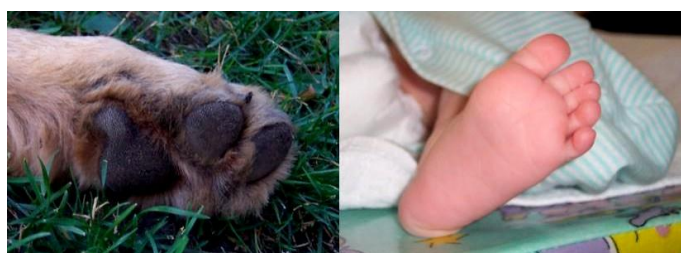
Some citations from judges' critiques:

- "Very good proportions, correct well-built male. Good head proportions, expressive eyes, very good back line, very good impulsive gait, parallel movement."
- "Good size and bone structure. Typical head. Correct front legs. Correct hind legs. Good movement. Good color. Correct angulations. Good handling."
- "Good size and substance, very good head, dark eyes, good mask and pigmentation, good upper and under line, wide back, good angulations and bone structure, good movement, very good hair quality."
- "Powerful, masculine, well-proportioned head, dark eyes, well held ears. Dark pigmentation. Masculine male. Excellent upper line. Tail well held. Well-proportioned body, good rear angulations. Deep chest, pulled up abdomen, parallel front. Powerful bone structure, well developed muscles. Excellent hair quality. Closed paws, dark claws. Space gaining movement from side, correct movement from front and rear. Excellent condition."
- "Fully developed male. Complete dentition. Strong head. Typical representative of the breed."

With this wonderful dog, I built beautiful friendships with Leonberger breeders, owners and lovers all around the world, from Canada to New Zealand. His picture was used for an international leo calendar as the symbol of peace and harmony.



They were the best friend with my daughter. He tolerated everything but of course both the child and the dog knew the borders, the limitations perfectly. She involved him into her plays just like a brother.





When I was at home I was able to spend more time on pet therapy: I tried to learn as much as possible. I created [Mador's therapy profile](#) and after our successful exam, we started the work in practice with healthy, retarded, disabled, autistic, Down-syndrome etc. children. We were invited to a local club to allow toddlers to gain their first positive experiences with dogs with Mador's help. Finally we were invited to hold presentations on Stress Management With Dogs (for a private corporation) and in the Budapest Congress Center, on Enhance Artistic Skills at Canine Assisted Activities.



Very often, people stopped us at the street and begged to pet him. He would participate at everything I came up with. We even entered into the world of the models and photographers, and participated at the Next Top Dog Model competition: we were selected into the Final.



He had a very positive personality. He always brought joy and smile to people.

International Champion of Beauty, Hungaria Junior Champion, Hungaria Champion, Hungaria Grand Champion, Romania Champion, Central and Eastern European Champion, Top Junior Leonberger, Veteran Of Veterans 2011, Certified Therapy Dog. But these titles all disappeared when I watched him interact with people, children, and especially when I looked into his eyes.

Marzipan Vom Matthiasberg "Mador". I always miss you...

Text and photos:

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