

## Crufts 2008

### **Giant Schnauzer Wins Giant Show**

*Simon Parsons*

So many great British dogs have won practically everything there was to win — except Best in Show at Crufts. One such dog seemed to be the Giant Schnauzer, Ch. Jafrak Philippe Olivier. As a youngster he was Top Dog of all breeds in 2003, taking Best in Show six times at general championship shows. Six more such wins were spread throughout 2004 and 2005, when he was Number 3 and Number 2 of all breeds, and both years he won the Group at Crufts but progressed no further.

At the beginning of 2006 'Philippe's' retirement was announced, a decision which surprised many as he was still very much in his prime. Perhaps his owners, Kevin and Sandie Cullen, began to regret this decision, since Philippe reappeared at Crufts 2007 and was runner-up in the Group. He was shown twice more in regular competition that year, taking another Group 2nd and then his 13th BIS at Midland Counties.

Now Philippe was approaching his 7th birthday, and it seemed to his owners that Crufts 2008 would be "now or never." The breed, Group and BIS judges had all given him Group wins, but anything can happen at Crufts. But all went well, and Philippe took the breed under Ann Arch, the Group under Stuart Mallard and BIS under Clare Coxall, who judged the top award 42 years after winning it, in her very early days as an exhibitor, with an apricot Toy Poodle. Philippe was in magnificent form, and as always the rapport between the dog and his owner-handler Kevin was a pleasure to see.

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