

Pioneer Dock-Jumping Dog Dies

Kiki, a famous dock-jumping Labrador Retriever, helped popularize the dog sport through numerous TV appearances.

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World champion dock jumper Kiki, an 8-year-old black Labrador Retriever who helped popularize the dog sport through appearances on ESPN, Animal Planet, and "The Late Show with David Letterman," died last week after being struck by a car after escaping the backyard at his home in Stamford, Conn.

"We're absolutely distraught," said owner Chris Litwin in an interview with the Stamford Advocate. "But we're fortunate for a couple of things. He didn't see it coming and he didn't suffer."

Kiki set a world record twice, first in 2001 when he jumped 25 feet, and again in 2002 when he jumped 26 feet, 9 inches. Kiki held the world record for four years.

Mourners continue to post comments on dockdogs.com.

"I am at a loss for words," Tom Dropik wrote. "The first thing that comes to mind when something like this happens is the events, the scores, and all that, seem a bit insignificant."

"It's about our relationship with our dogs. It's about the time we spend with them."