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My Bilov is World Champion (2006)

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SANICA ... Mujaga Selman, breeder of Bosnian shepherd dogs from Sanica, Bosnia Herzegovina, crowned his long-time breeder's work with first place in the World Dog Show, held recently in the Polish city of Poznan. Selman's Bosnian Tornjak named Bilov was declared the most beautiful dog in its competition. This passionate dog breeder said that the award is extremely significant considering that this was the first appearance of Bosnian shepherd dogs at an international exhibition after it was recognized by World Canine Association as an indigenous breed. The Bosnian national team in this competition was represented by the two growers and guarding dogs, the other one was from Travnik, with a female dog named Mrvica (Crumbs). Selman said that the competition in Poznan was very strong, considering that in this exhibition, the world offered its most representative dogs. The exhibition was attended by about 22,000 dogs from all continents and many countries, and 350 recognized breeds participated in the competition. "In Poznan, we went without significant competing ambitions. However, as the contest wore on we realized that we can achieve a historic success." Selman shares his impressions of the Polish exhibition. He added that the competition in the competition Tornjak attracted thirty dogs, of which the largest number were from Slovenia and Croatia. "Mrvica (Crumbs), unfortunately, was eliminated in the quarterfinals, while my Bilov (White) outperformed all its competitors. In the finals we beat the Croatian guarding dogs who, admittedly, were great opponents", says Selman. The delegation from our country, tried to present to Poland the original costumes of Bosnian people as well. "We were carrying costumes of Bosniak, Croatian, and Serbian people of Bosnia, and we gained the sympathies of the other participants, who were from all over the world." Selman adds with satisfaction. He points out the lack of support from local governmental institutions. "The competitors from our country had to use its own funds to pay the costs of travel to Poznan. "When we returned after we won the awards, everything was different. We were unable to fight off the same government officials, we were flooded with their greeting cards and invitations from those who have previously ignored all our calls for help," says this fellow from Sanica. He added that during the whole stay in Poland, in order to to save money they slept in their cars. Material support to this small delegation was provided, within their limits by "Bosnian Breeder Club Tornjak" from Travnik. Selman said that he invested tremendous effort and energy in the creation of his world champion. He said that he bought Bilov as a puppy, three years ago from a nomadic sheep herder who came from central Bosnia. He points out that Bilov won the sympathy of all Kennel Club judges and audience for his beauty, grace, and character

in the competition in Poland. The victory, as he says, finally served the full affirmation of the Bosnian native dog, considering that a few years ago there was a real danger that the Tornjak will be appropriated by Croatia. “Thanks to enthusiasm of few and involvement of local enthusiasts, it fortunately did not happened. Our dog Tornjak was added into the global encyclopaedia of dogs and now we have a world champion,” says Selman proudly. This Bosnian breed of Shepard dog Tornjak is more than a thousand years old. Chroniclers have recorded its existence nine centuries ago under the name Canis montanus. Special credit for popularizing Tornjak and its dissemination to all areas of Bosnia and beyond goes to the Bosnian Franciscan friars. When members of this Catholic order first came to this region 800 years ago, they spotted the Bosnian Tornjak. The Franciscans were the first who recognized its value and they started to take care of this breed. Mujaga Selman says that it is high time that the relevant state institutions support local growers of this indigenous breed because, he says, “The Tornjak is a national treasure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it should be protected.”

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