**Best in Show**

Directed by Christopher Guest  
Produced by Gordon Mark, Karen Murphy  
Written by Christopher Guest, Eugene Levy  
Starring Christopher Guest, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara,  
John Michael Higgins, Michael McKean, Michael Hitchcock,  
Parker Posey, Jennifer Coolidge, Jane Lynch  
Music by Jeffrey CJ Varston  
Cinematography Roberto Schaefer  
Editing by Robert Leighton  
Studio Castle Rock Entertainment  
Distributed by Warner Bros.  
Release date(s) September 29, 2000  
Running time 90 minutes  
Country United States  
Language English

*Best in Show* is presented as a documentary of five dogs and their owners destined to show in the Mayflower Kennel Club Dog Show, held in Philadelphia. The documentary jumps between the owners as they prepare to leave for the show, arriving at the hotel, and preparing backstage before their dog takes the show. The owners and their dogs include:

- **Gerry and Cookie Fleck** (Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara), with their Norwich Terrier Winky. They are a middle-class couple from Florida who run into monetary problems and are forced to sleep in the hotel's storage room when they finally arrive. Throughout the film, they encounter men that Cookie had slept with during her youth.

- **Meg and Hamilton Swan** (Parker Posey, Michael Hitchcock), with their Weimaraner Beatrice. An upper-class, stereotypical yuppie couple from Chicago, they think they are taking great care of Beatrice (although really they are just confusing and upsetting her with their neurotic behavior), going as far as taking her to a therapist after she saw Meg and Hamilton have sex. At the show, the Swans believe that Beatrice will become unnerved without her favorite toy, the "Busy Bee", and frantically search for a replacement for it before the show.

- **Harlan Pepper** (Christopher Guest) and his Bloodhound Hubert. Pepper's family has raised a variety of hounds for generations, and Harlan continues the tradition by raising bloodhounds (though he has aspirations of becoming a ventriloquist).

- **Sherri Ann and Leslie Ward Cabot** (Jennifer Coolidge, Patrick Cranshaw) with their standard poodle Rhapsody in White (a.k.a. Butch), a two-time winner of the show in the past. Sherri Ann is a luscious big-breasted blonde, having the elderly Leslie as her sugar daddy (a parody of the marriage between Anna Nicole Smith and J. Howard Marshall II). She is primarily worried about giving Rhapsody a makeover; however, trainer Christy Cummings (Jane Lynch) makes sure the dog is ready for the show, while Leslie stays utterly oblivious and apathetic. Over the course of the film, the fake couplehood between Sherri Ann and Leslie crumbles while Sherri Ann's romantic involvement with Christy becomes apparent.

- **Scott Donlan** (John Michael Higgins) and Stefan Vanderhoof (Michael McKean) and their Shih Tzu. The couple takes great pride in their dog, and are confident that she will win the competition.

The owners and their dogs all arrive in time for the show, which is hosted by dog expert Trevor Beckwith (Jim Piddock), and oblivious "color" commentator Buck Laughlin (Fred Willard). During the first round, Beatrice is disqualified when Hamilton cannot control her, but the other four dogs advance to the final round. Just before the finals, Cookie dislocates her knee and insists that Gerry take over for her. Though the audience is initially awed by seeing Gerry's "two left feet" (the result of a birth defect), ultimately Winky takes Best in Show.

Afterwards, the film explores what each character is doing after the competition. Gerry and Cookie returned home to Florida and were overcome with attention after the victory. They go on to record, in amusingly bad style, songs about terriers but discover to Gerry's frustration that the recording engineer is yet another of Cookie's ex-boyfriends (Steven Porter). Sherri Ann and Christy have entered into a partnership and publish a magazine for lesbian owners of purebred dogs, called *American Bitch*. Harlan fulfills his dreams and becomes a ventriloquist, entertaining sparse crowds with a honky tonk song and dance number. Stefan and Scott are in the process of designing a calendar featuring Shih Tzu dogs appearing in scenes, with appropriate costume, from famous classic films, such as *Gone with the Wind* and *Casablanca* (and *McMillan and Wife*, for some reason.) Hamilton and Meg Swan seem to have given Beatrice away, allowing them to a calmer, more loving partnership as well as a new dog that they claim enjoys watching them make love.