

Cutting cuter canines

Pierre the poodle shows his style at the national dog-grooming competition.

Report: JONATHAN DART

According to professional dog-groomer Vanessa Pollari, Pierre's a good-looking sort – and he knows it.

Now the primped-up pooch has proved his worth, after claiming second place in the poodle class of the Pet Industry Association of Australia's (PIAA) national dog grooming competition.

Held on October 15 at Sydney Showground, the competition was part of the PIAA's PetExpo 2005.

For Ms Pollari, who owns A Dapper Dog grooming salon at Maroubra, it was the perfect opportunity to showcase her work.

She said that Pierre was one of her favourite customers and was well-suited to the straightforward approach she used to style his hair.

"A lot of people try and do pom-poms," she said.

"In the Hollywood movies they have the really shaved look and the big hairstyles. I don't personally do those trims because I think they're impractical for the pets.

"With poodle styling, you've always got to have symmetry and balance.

"It's a skill with the scissors creating the finish, but it's also a skill of the eye making sure that everything works and everything is in proportion."

The silver medal was quite an accomplishment for Ms Pollari, whose parlour was the first in Sydney to become accredited by the PIAA.

But she said that giving a dog piz-

zazz comes at a price. She said beautiful dogs were aware of their good looks, and that they tended to show more attitude than the rest of her customers.

"Dogs really do know when they look good – they get more cuddles and kisses from their owners after a good haircut and a good clean," she said.

"Years back I used to do a little Maltese terrier that, when I put little bows in its ears, used to go home and look at itself in the mirror.

"I think as humans, we judge people by their looks. But often the dogs that are visually challenged have the nicest personalities and vice versa.

"Some of the dogs that are difficult personality-wise are very cute."



Pierre shows his appreciation to stylist Vanessa Pollari. Photo: Andrew Trayner