

The Benefits of Controlled Breeding



There are a number of dog breed clubs throughout the world that follow controlled breeding systems. The basis for selection of breeding candidates is multi-factorial and objective in that not just one criterion is used to determine suitability of a particular dog for breeding; most particularly decisions are not based on emotion.

In October of this year TopperLyn Kennels was formally approved as breeders by the Club für Bretonische Vorstehhunde, e.V and has subsequently agreed to follow the C.B.V. Breeding Rules.

Some might look at this action as “giving up your freedom to breed your own dogs.” Why did we elect to do this? The reason is simple – this system has been proven to be successful not only in Europe (for over 100 years) but here in North America as well. Prime examples are the *Verein Deutsch Drahthaar – Group North America (VDD-GNA)*; *North American Deutsch Kurzhaar Club (NADKC)*, the *Pudelpointer Club of North America (PCNA)* and the *Large Munsterlander Club of North America (LMCNA)*.

The parent organization of the VDD presently has over 10,000 members throughout many countries, including Canada, and the United States. Group North America (GNA) has been in existence since 1971. They say, “Verein Deutsch Drahthaar is a breed organization dedicated to the development, breeding and continuous improvement of the versatile hunting Drahthaar. Its organizational objectives are achieved by means of *stringent breeding regulations, practical field tests, and high standards of conduct*” [emphasis added]. Likewise, the NADKC states “The German testing system functions as a guide to determine those dogs most fit for breeding and to help format a consistent way of producing dogs through use of *testing, temperament evaluation, and conformation standards*. This performance based testing structure has proved successful and beneficial for over a century to both breeder and individual owner.”

The Club Für Bretonische Vorstehhunde, e.V. Breeding Rules states, “The breeding goal must be the preservation and promotion of purebred Bretons in accordance with the FCI standard and the performance examinations of the JGHV. The temperament of both parents carries special weight. The highest requirement for the breed is; ‘Refinement, not propagating!’”

You can see the common theme among each of these (and other) clubs. In addition to these principles, all of these organization put heavy emphasis on the health of the dogs. The minimum standard for all groups is passing scores by a recognized authority for Hip Dysplasia. Some organizations take it even further such as the LMCNA which documents and tracks over 35 genetic issues within their breed. Through selective breeding the PCNA has almost completely eliminated the incidence of hip dysplasia in PCNA registered dogs.

So, if you take these basic factors – *performance* – *conformation* – *temperament* – and *health* into consideration when determining what dogs are the best candidates for breeding, the likelihood of producing superior dogs increases.

The reason this kind of system works is because the dogs are evaluated by an objective breeding committee, which takes the emotional factor out of the equation. “Suzie is such a great little dog, I think I’d like to breed her so I can get a puppy just like her.” Why doesn’t that work? Not all breeding animals are “prepotent.” What they are is not always what they produce. The famous race horse Seabiscuit was a prime example. As great as he was – he never produced a single horse that possessed his abilities.

Bob Wehle (1964:138), the originator of the Elhew Pointer, wrote: "There are few true dog breeders in the country today. Many so-called breeders are not breeders in the above sense. They have no preconceived plan and, in many cases, do not even have a clear cut objective. Their matings are not carefully planned and little consideration is given to the pedigrees or bloodlines. They fly by the seat of their pants into some short range program merely because they may have one good individual - and some friend has another. They conclude that by breeding the two they should get a litter of above average dogs. If an outstanding prospect results from such a mating, it is largely accidental."

This is where “controlled breeding” truly demonstrates its merit.

