4-1-1994

Animal Crackers

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AKC Rulings on Show Dogs

A.K.C.'s Dog Show Rules state that "A dog is considered changed in appearance by artificial means if it has been subjected to any type of procedure that has the effect of obscuring, disguising or eliminating any congenital or hereditary abnormality or any undesirable characteristic or that does anything to improve a dog's natural appearance, temperament, bue or gait."

Owners and veterinarians often must decide if a surgical procedure would disqualify a dog from competition, especially with optional surgery. A list of procedures undertaken strictly to restore the health of a dog which would not, in themselves, render a dog ineligible to compete has been approved by A.K.C.:

1. The repair of broken legs, even if such procedures involve the insertion of pins, plates or wires.
2. The removal of damaged cartilage.
3. The repair of ligaments that have ruptured or been torn.
4. Caesarian sections.
5. The repair of umbilical hemias.
6. The removal of tumors or cysts.
7. Gastric torsion surgery.
8. Splenic torsion surgery.
10. Correction of "Cherry Eye", (which involves the gland of the nictitating membrane.)
11. Debarking.
12. The removal of dewclaws if a regular practice in the breed.

The following procedures would be considered changes in appearance by artificial means and make a dog ineligible to compete in shows:

1. The correction of entropion, ectropion, trichiasis, or distichiasis.
2. Trimming, removal or tattooing of the third eyelid (nictitating membrane).
3. The insertion of an eye prosthesis.
4. Correction of harelip, cleft palate, stenotic nares, or an elongated soft palate resection.
5. Any procedure to change ear set or carriage other than that permitted by the breed standard.
6. Restorative dental procedures, the use of bands or braces on teeth, or any alteration of the dental arcade.
7. The removal of excess skin folds or the removal of skin patches to alter markings.
8. Correction of inguinal, scrotal, or perineal hernias.
10. Alteration of the location of the testes or the insertion of an artificial testicle.
11. Altering the set or the carriage of the tail.

Of course, the health and comfort of the dog should be a primary consideration. Inherited problems are a growing menace. Show dogs are considered breeding stock and should not have conditions which may be passed on to their offspring. Concealing defects by surgical intervention can only result in deterioration of a breed. A.K.C.'s Limited Registration provides for purebred companion animals.

Portosystemic Shunts

A portosystemic shunt is an abnormal vein which allows blood draining from the stomach, small intestine, spleen and pancreas via the portal vein to bypass the liver. When an animal is born with this abnormality, the liver does not receive the portal blood necessary for liver development. Liver functions, including maintaining blood glucose, protein and clotting factor synthesis and ammonia metabolism are affected. Increased blood ammonia levels and other changes associated with poor liver function result in clinical signs which include depression, "star gazing," and sometimes seizures. In addition, affected dogs and cats may show gastrointestinal signs and are often "poor doers." The condition is suspected from the clinical signs and the results of blood tests. The diagnosis can be confirmed by contrast radiography, ultrasound, scintigraphy, or surgical exploration. Surgical ligation of the shunt is best treatment. Current research at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania is focusing on the causes of the neurological signs and the accuracy of ultrasound in diagnosing shunts. Further information may be obtained from David Holt, BVSc. Dr. Holt is assistant professor of surgery at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

A.K.C. Statistics

The American Kennel Club registered 1,422,559 dogs in 1993. The "Top Ten" were Labrador retrievers (first for thirty straight year), Rottweilers, German shepherd dogs, cocker spaniels, golden retrievers, poodles, beagles, dachshunds, Dalmatians and Shetland sheepdogs.

There were 1,177 All-Breed Championship Dog Shows in 1993 and 18,989 dogs earned the title "Champion." Other A.K.C. events include
**American Eskimo Dog**

The American Eskimo dog has been a favorite among circus performers. For many years, the only pedigrees some Eskie owners had were for their dog's circus lineage, including the tricks they performed. The American Kennel Club registers 148 breeds and varieties (130 breeds and 18 varieties). There are seven miscellaneous breeds not yet eligible for championship competition.

The breed standard describes the American Eskimo dog (AED) as a loving companion dog. It is intelligent, alert and friendly, although slightly conservative - never overly shy or aggressive. It is an excellent watchdog, in its home and family, although it does not threaten to bite or attack people. The AED learns new tasks quickly and is eager to please. For show dogs, no trimming of the coat is allowed other than to tidy the hocks and pasterns.

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**Book Review**

*Responsible Dog Ownership* by Kathy Diamond Davis (Howell Book House - MacMillan Publishing Company, 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022. $20.00).

This book could be on a required reading list for every potential dog owner. Anti-dog sentiment and legislation is increasing. People don't know what owning dogs involves, but get them anyway. Too many dogs end up in animal shelters. Dogs provide many benefits and owners should know the principles of responsible ownership.

The author emphasizes the importance of selecting a dog you can handle. So many cute puppies become homeless adults. Chose the right size for capabilities. The advantage of neutering dogs and bitches is discussed. A chapter contains basic information and is the kind of book that should be available in public libraries.

**International Meetings in Philadelphia**

Drs. Biery and Harvey are both actively involved in the planning of two international veterinary meetings to be held in Philadelphia in August and September.

From August 1 to 7 the 10th International Veterinary Radiology Association Meeting (IVRA) will be held at the Wyndham Plaza Hotel in Philadelphia. The meeting is co-sponsored by the American College of Veterinary Radiology (ACVR) and the School. Following the IVRA meeting, the American College of Veterinary Radiology will have its annual forum on Sunday, August 7. The event offers three seminars: Small Animal Diagnostic Imaging, Large Animal Diagnostic Imaging, and Technical Aspects of Diagnostic Radiology.

For further information on the IVRA meeting and the ACVR forum please contact Dr. Darryl Biery, Section of Radiology, VHAUP, 3900 Delancey Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

The Third World Veterinary Dental Congress will be held September 30 to October 1 at the Penn Tower Hotel on campus. The meeting is jointly sponsored by the American Veterinary Dental College, the Academy of Veterinary Dentistry and the American Veterinary Dental Society. It will be headquartered at the hotel and use facilities of the Dental and Veterinary Schools for hands-on laboratory sessions. There will be three days of lectures, seminars, major wet-lab sessions and mini labs, covering small animal, equine and exotic animal dentistry.

For further information, please contact Dr. Colin Harvey, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, 3900 Delancey Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.