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Animal Crackers

M. Josephine Deubler
University of Pennsylvania

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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, bite 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 AKC:

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 hernias.
6. The removal of tumors or cysts.
7. Gastric torsion/bloat surgery.
8. Splenic torsion surgery.
9. Tonsillectomy.
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.
9. Surgery for hip dysplasia, O.C.D., patellar luxation, and femoral head resection.
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. AKC'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 third 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

Tracking, Hunting and Herding Tests as well as Lure Coursing.

The Pomeranian was the most popular Toy Breed in 1993, ranking 11th. Miniature schnauzers, in 14th place, led the terriers.

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. ■

American Eskimo Dog

The latest breed to be admitted to registration in the American Kennel Club's Stud Book is the American Eskimo dog, nicknamed the Eskie. The breed is shown in the Miscellaneous Class and upon full recognition will be in the Non-Sporting Group with the other Nordic breeds (keeshond, Finnish spitz, chow chow and Shiba Inu).

The spitz breeds are characterized by double coats, erect pointed ears, curled tails and wedge-shaped heads. The AED is always white or white with biscuit cream. There are three distinct sizes (measured by height at withers): toy (9 to 12 inches); miniature (over 12 to 15 inches); and standard (over 15 to 19 inches). Sizes under 9 inches or over 19 inches are disqualifications.

The breed standard describes the 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, sounding a warning bark to announce the arrival of any stranger. It is protective of 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.

The American Eskimo dog has been a favorite among circus performers. For many years, the only pedigrees some Eskie owners had were for their dogs' circus lineage, including the tricks they performed.

The Non-Sporting Group is a cross-section of breeds whose one important trait is that they are bred to be members of the family. The AED can be considered an ideal all-around family companion. ■

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. Choose the right size for capabilities. The advantage of neutering dogs and bitches is discussed. A chapter emphasizes the importance of confinement. A crate can be used in automobiles or in the home. The amount of grooming required for different breeds, as well as expense, is discussed. All

breeds require some regular grooming.

Veterinary care, especially for vaccinations, is covered. Many problems can be avoided by daily pick up and disposal of feces - plastic bags are suggested (use like a glove to pick up, turn inside out and tie the top into a knot). For accidents in the house, use detergent to clean the area and pour on white vinegar to control the odor. Never use ammonia on dog urine because the scent encourages the dog to use the spot again.

A chapter on "When Is It Time To Give Up?" covers common reasons people get rid of their dogs, including the dangerous dog, moving, personal or family problems and health problems.

Training and the Canine Good Citizen Test are important aids in making life better for your dog, your neighbors and yourself.

The book is an excellent guide to help safeguard a person's right to enjoy dogs in our contemporary culture. It 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, VHIUP, 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 the 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. ■