

## HOUND Group

If the BBE class rules change, I will most likely only enter my dogs in BBE and not bring any other class dogs since I know I will be required to stay on my BBE entries. Others I've spoken with say the same thing.

Another friend of mine, who is a well-respected breeder of a table breed, has a physically difficult time moving her dogs to their best advantage. She has no problem showing them beautifully on the table. But when it comes to moving them, her gait is such that she cannot move the dog as it should be moved. What she normally does is enter the dog in BBE, and then have a friend who is capable of moving the dog correctly take him in for Winners so the judge can see him gait at his best. A couple of times my friend has been unable to have someone do this for her, and she's had to handle the dog in Winners. Judges have even commented to her that her dog is lovely—if only she could move him to his best advantage. This BBE rule change would preclude her from showcasing her breeding in the BBE class.

From the perspective of rare breeds, where coordination and cooperation are required among breeder-exhibitors, we hope the AKC Board realizes the negative impact this change will have on us, and that they will decline the change.

—Donna Smiley-Auborn, *Inyokern, Calif.*;  
auborn@harriers.net ♦



### Ehrlichiosis: A Plague Upon Us

“At the outset, it is important to stress that the only consistent findings among the cases of ehrlichiosis is inconsistency.” —R. Lee Pyle, VMD, MS, DACVIM

I hesitated to broach this vast subject because of the space restrictions of this column. However, other brave breed columnists have come forward and I believe I have additional information. Ehrlichiosis has extreme ramifications on the health of all dogs and the lives of those who care for them. Ehrlichiosis is a tick-borne rickettsial disease. Once

considered a tropical, or at least a southern problem, it is now recognized all over the United States. Actually there are varieties worldwide; it appears anywhere there are ticks. This disease can be contracted from the bite of an infected tick or in utero from an infected dam. Ehrlichiosis can lay somewhat dormant for more than 10 years, thus confusing its origin. Other issues such as estrus, injury, stress can set it off. For instance, a dog may live in New York City for most of its life but have contracted the disease as a puppy in the suburbs of New Jersey. When symptoms emerge, the caregiver could easily miss considering a tick-borne disease. Ticks can be tiny and newly hatched at the size of a pinhead. They can hide between toes, in ears, and other places never to be observed. Symptoms often include bleeding events or bruising, small hemorrhages on the stomach or the gums, lameness, roached back, stiff neck, malaise, and anorexia. More frightening are tremors, seizures, various eye damages, paralysis, temperament changes, and death.

Living in central Virginia, I have had considerable experience with ehrlichiosis. It took years of going to various clinics before a veterinarian recognized the disease. Oddly, the patient was a Catahoula. She had become unpredictably aggressive at 8 years old and then became totally paralyzed in her rear legs. She was afflicted for several years. On aggressive and persistent treatment with doxycycline, she completely recovered to a healthy, useful, working farm dog and lived to be 15. A Whippet had similar symptoms, and a mature Ibizan had every symptom of ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease. It became clear I was living in a battlefield—an endemic area. From observation I find 50 percent brown dog ticks and 50 percent Lone Star ticks. Once recognized and treated, all mysterious health issues disappeared. Symptoms are often confused with aging, with weakness in the rear, stumbling gait, and cognitive deficits. Now my dogs live 14 or 15 healthy, active years.

Unfortunately, the symptoms are often treated without recognizing the larger issue of the disease itself. The good news is that aggressive treatment has given my dogs their health back.

Persistence in treatment is important. There are published guidelines available. Discuss this disease with your veterinarian. Encourage them to attend ehrlichiosis and other tick-borne disease symposiums.

Ticks are dangerous disease vectors. Many ticks are carrying several concurrent diseases. We owners of athletic field dogs have a daunting task protecting them to function in nature. Until we get a vaccine for this epidemic we must fight with prevention and antibiotics.

—Nan Kilgore Little, *Gladstone, Va.*;  
LWS4art@centralva.net ♦



### Never Too Early

This is a continuation from November's column in which we share Phyllis Hudson's 1930 yearbook article on ring manners and the young Irish Wolfhound.

Mrs. Hudson goes on to say that the one who shares the hound's affection should be the one to handle the hound, and writes: “Nothing looks worse than to see an animal bolt for the gangway hoping to find the one he considers should be with him, to protect him in such uncomfortable surroundings. Or to see him fidgeting about in the ring, looking anxiously round, in a sea of strange faces, for the only one who will give him a feeling of security.”

“Do not fuss over him unnecessarily in the ring, or you will make him bored and tired, and don't get between him and the judge. Having come to the necessary understanding with your hound before you attempt to show him, you will generally find that when you ask him to run up and down, you won't have to do more than call him, and he will follow the pace you set, and will only want to feel your hand on the lead to keep a straight course.”

“Never, unless in exceptional circumstances, hit or roughly handle your hound in the ring or, in other words, make a fool of him. As I have said before, don't start learning control of your hound on the day of the show.”

She concludes with mention of one of her successful winners, Ch. Fion-mac-Cumall, “which I think owes some of his success to his dignified bearing in the ring, his general air of confidence in his surroundings, and his gentlemanly behavior. Yet all the personal attention Fion gets at my hands is a small piece of cake at tea-time, and most important of all, an occasional walk with me and the children ... and just before turning in, to sleep in the house, at sundown, a good scamper in his home fields with an occasional rabbit to chase. So we are on very good terms with each other before we undertake the ordeal of a big show. And I feel, if he could speak, he says as he goes in the ring: ‘Come along, friend, we’ll see this through together.’”

—Lois Thomasson, Salinas, Calif;  
fleetwind@aol.com ♦



### What's in a Name?

I realize many of you longtime breeders of Petit Basset Griffon Vendéens, or any breed for that matter, may yawn at reading my May column because I have explained what the breed's name reveals about the PBGV many times over 25 years in pamphlets, articles, seminars, and a book. However, those of you new to the sport or the PBGV, or those who intend to judge the breed at some point, might find the following discussion of interest.

We appear to resort to acronyms for considerations of space and brevity in our hurried world. However, the entire name of a breed or an organization often tells you much about it. With the breed Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen, it actually reveals the essence of the breed.

If one researches how a breed was originally named, one finds it was common for breeds to be named after the early breeder, like the Parson Russell Terrier. Others were named after regions and jobs where they developed, like the Chesapeake Bay Retriever or the Alaskan Malamute. And others were named for their color, like the

Black and Tan Coonhound. Some combine their color, their region, and their size in their nomenclature, as Irish Red and White Setter and the Basset Blue de Gascogne of France.

Let's take the Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen as an example and analyze his name, word for word, but in context of the whole. His name notes the size, the purpose, describes his protective covering, and cites the region in which he thrived. *Petit* in French means “small.” However, it means small within the context of four Vendéen hounds: *petit* merely means the smallest of the four Vendéen hounds and specifically not taller than 15 inches at the shoulder. The other Vendéen hounds are the larger relatives: Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen, the Briquet Griffon Vendéen, and the Grand Griffon. These are all purposeful hounds bred to meet the local climactic conditions, the local terrain, and the size of local prey. *Petit* surely does not suggest cute, smallest, or daintiness in the context of a bold, robust hunting dog.

We are familiar with *basset* meaning “low-to-ground” because of our familiarity with the Basset Hound being long and low. However, again in the context of PBGV, *basset* merely means under 15 inches at the shoulder. The PBGV is not long and low like the Basset Hound; it is merely the lower to ground of the two Basset Griffons, the Grand and the Petit, and the lowest to ground of the four Vendéen hounds. *Griffon* means “rough, strong, coarse, or wirey coat” for protection against the elements and rocky terrain. *Griffon* with the PBGV also refers to a special appearance, a quality of coat coarseness that gives the breed his particular rustic appearance.

Finally the word *Vendéen* refers to an area on the western coast of France, the Vendée, where the four breeds evolved. This is a rocky, thorny, brambly terrain that required a tough, robust, agile dog to hunt. The Griffon coat was needed for protection as they traversed this rough and tumble terrain.

Knowing the basics about a breed, the inferences made solely by the name itself helps us keep in perspective what the words behind the letters PBGV actually represent. —Kitty Steidel, Scottsdale, Ariz.; ksteidel@aol.com ♦



This month we have a guest columnist: my daughter, Laurie Laventhall. She breeds and exhibits Pharaoh Hounds, works for PHCA rescue, is on the PHCA judges' education committee, and has been involved with Pharaoh Hounds only an hour less than me, which is the time it took me to bring home my first Pharaoh from the airport.

### Evaluating Your Dog's Gait

Some faults are easier to discern than others. For example, when judging rear angulation, you must imagine a plumb line dropped from the base of the tail to the floor when the dog is standing with his hocks perpendicular to the ground. If the plumb line hits or just misses the toe of the dog, he has correct rear angulation for a Pharaoh Hound.

However, it is not that simple to judge for yourself whether your dog is moving correctly. The Pharaoh Hound standard calls for the legs and feet to move in line with the body. In other words, the dog should move his feet in parallel lines. He should not single-track, as is called for in many breeds. The problem is: How do you know whether he is single-tracking or moving in line with his body? If you are moving him yourself, it is very difficult to tell. If someone else moves him for you, and if you have a practiced eye, you can tell. But if you really want hard evidence about his movement, all you need are his tracks.

Tracks aren't subject to “selective vision”—tracks don't lie. If you have a fresh dusting of snow on the driveway or live near the beach, move your dog on the firm, damp sand and then look back at the tracks you've left behind. If you see two lines of paw prints next to yours, your dog is moving correctly. If you see one, he is single-tracking. If you see three, he is most likely converging his hind feet toward the center in order to avoid hitting his front feet. This is usually caused by the dog being overangulated in rear—something you can eas-