



Representatives of the RSPCA and the Dept of Primary Industries' Bureau of Animal Welfare inspectorate will be present at the 2005 Royal Melbourne Show to check that there are no contraventions of the regulations. Should your dog's tails be docked you are advised to ensure that you have all the necessary documentation on hand at the Show to present to inspectors if requested to do so."

For those who felt we were a bit lacking in Australian content last month, this time we are full to overflowing! Special thanks to the Bullmastiff National, the Collie National and the NSW Gundog Society for taking advantage of our Special Events promotional rates (cost of printing only) to reflect the success of their shows. Unfortunately, budgetary constraints only allow us to provide extensive coverage of Royal Shows for no income, or an exceptional event for its geographical region such as the NT Expo. We do offer the \$40 Communic8tor pictures for anyone who would like to publicise a major win for very little cost.

Speaking of publicity, excellent PR for "our world" was provided in The Sun-Herald Magazine, Sunday Life (14 August), following the North of the Harbour double. Titled Beauty and the Beast, the spread managed to avoid most of the boring clichés and provided some basically useful background to introduce newcomers to what goes on at a major international show.

And in the interest of communication, the RASV published this notice in their excellent pre show booklet, advising exhibitors "Tail Docking - Exhibitors are reminded that the docking of dogs' tails was legislated against in April 2004.

We phoned Chairman of the Dog Section, Robert Bell for comment, and Bob told us they felt it was essential that exhibitors were made aware of this, once the Society had been told. He also assured me that the office would be following the protocols of the Privacy Act and representatives of these bodies would not be provided with any information on exhibitors other than that published in the catalogue. If they wish to pursue further enquiries, they need to use their own channels to do so, including taking action in other States if they wish to do so.

On Queensland's Gold Coast, a big change of direction re BSL, see story this page, and make sure you read Bella's story on page 36 - then attempt to comprehend the incomprehensible! Dogs that are labeled Pit Bulls now but as we keep saying, this is the thin edge of the wedge, and could so easily spread to other breeds. It is our considered opinion that complacency at both Controlling Body and general dog owner/breeder levels LOST us the tail docking fight. Please, people, don't LOSE this BSL one also. WENDY SLATYER, Editor

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From THE LOCAL SUN 31ST AUGUST 05 - Merilyn Mackenzie

COUNCIL ABOUT-FACE ON EXILED DOGS.

In an embarrassing about-face, the Gold Coast Council has told dog owners whose pit bulls were exiled that their best friend can return to the city.

But the apology comes too late for dog owners whose dogs were destroyed under a restricted dog identification system that critics say was flawed and cruel.

Animal control officers have told the Council that staff needed further training before they could identify restricted breeds, including the American Pit Bull terrier.

The Council has now ruled that dogs exiled from the city could come home, provided they were registered in 2003 when dangerous dog permits came into force.

But Cr Dawn Crichlow lambasted the Council for even enforcing a flawed and cruel law. "Since we have brought this law in, in 2003 there have been over 60 dogs that have been euthanased or asked to leave the city at enormous expense to the owner - this should never have happened," said Cr Crichlow.

"Quite a few dogs have been put down because they were identified by this council as American Pit Bull terriers and now we certainly, each and every one of us, must have doubts in our minds as to whether they were identified correctly."

She said Council, in its duties of care, should contact owners whose dogs were exiled.

"It's only right we get in touch with these people who have suffered through this cruel law and let them know that their dogs can come back in," said Cr Crichlow.

The QLD American Pit Bull Association president Andrew Richards said while the Council had finally admitted its laws were wrong, the "sorry" was too late for three owners that had committed suicide.

"Certainly my father and I will be seeking compensation for the mental stress and duress we have been put under," he said. "Certainly people whose dogs have been destroyed, even neutered, are due for compensation."

Health and community services committee chairman Cr Bob La Castra said the dangerous dog law was introduced after the State Government urged Councils to get tough following a number of dangerous dog attacks.

The Council, he said prohibited the breeds with the exception of existing dogs, whose owners were to be required to obtain a restricted dogs permit by the September 11th cut off date.

"From that time on, no new restricted dogs were permitted to come to the city and the council was unable to issue any new permits for a restricted dogs," said Cr Bob La Castra. He said the change of heart was due to the fact that when the prohibition became law, there were some dog owners who were unaware that their pets were a restricted breed.

PLEASE SEE BELLA'S STORY, PAGE 36.

Oscar

You may well ask - who is Oscar?

Well, this is a very surprising story that unfolded a few weeks ago.

Our 4-year-old Goldie Tweed was mated for the third time after having absorbed twice before. When she was due we went to our vet for a check up, suspecting that there was nothing there. He confirmed that she had nothing inside, yet she had put on weight across her back and had all the signs of pregnancy. Several days after her due date, she woke us at 4am, whining and pawing up her bedding. I piled all 5 Goldies into the car to go for a ride to the vet to have her checked. He gave her a needle to bring on contractions, so that if she had anything in there it would come out - within an hour, he said.



I started to drive home and 5 minutes later, caught in heavy traffic, I heard a thud and there in the back of the car she had given birth to a lifeless little pile with all the other Goldies standing around and gazing in amazement. I could not get out of the traffic and was panic stricken. As the traffic moved, I turned into a side road and flew around to the back door and grabbed him. He was cold and dead. I immediately turned him upside down and gave him mouth-to-mouth. Oh joy, he started to splutter! I quickly drove back to the vets and he checked him out; he still had more fluid on his lungs. So I drove home with him on my lap, now wriggling and squirming and very much alive!

This is our "O" litter and a one pup litter is referred to as an Opal - One Pup A Litter (we had Patrick our Irish Setter many years ago and were asked to join in on a survey for these Opals). If it had been a girl, we would have called her Opal but he is a 550gram boy, big and boofy and gold, and called Oscar.



Tracking Champion of Champions

On 13/14 August, the Tracking Club of Victoria held its inaugural Champion of Champions run-off for Tracking Champions. This prestigious event enables Tracking Champions to track once again at competition level. It was held at Shepparton in central Victoria. 16 Tracking Champions competed.

The event is judged and scored under various categories with points being awarded for corners, article indication and general tracking. Two judges are used and their scores are combined. The winner with 190/200 pts was T Ch Fernamber Talisman CDX, Paddington, a Golden Retriever who was the 2004 Tracking Dog of the Year.

Paddington was owned by Clive and Cheryl Gibson. Clive died suddenly earlier this year, so Paddington is now trained and handled by Dawn Howard of GSDCV.

JEANNIE JOHNSTON



T Ch Fernamber Talisman CDX with (left-right) Kim Houlden, Lynn Klecka, Cheryl Gibson and Dawn Howard

WA's amazing discovery advances in search and location techniques

Always innovative, Western Australia seems to have achieved yet another amazing leap into the future of S&R operations.



Air lifted Tracker Dogs cut search time in half!

To understand the principles behind this new approach to the search, you need to think back to very early classroom science lessons and the old 'floating needle on water' demonstration that showed students the almost instantaneous formation of a 'skin' on water, even when drawn from a municipal water supply tap. To refresh your memory, a sewing needle is balanced on a piece of thread. The thread is then carefully lowered into a glass of water and allowed to soak up the water. If done with patience, the thread will sink, leaving the needle floating on the skin.

The connection between this old experiment and scent lying on water was made when zoologists saw tigers hunting deer in deep swamps. The swimming tigers were following the scent of their prey carried on the skin of the water. Later it was found that dogs have the same ability and this has been used with surprising results, more recently in finding victims of drowning on the bottom of lakes.

From these discoveries and the knowledge that hot air rises and carries scent upward, the local S&R group in Perth persuaded the Police air section to research the practicalities of using dogs suspended from slow, low flying helicopters in the location of people on the ground. The results have astounded even the greatest sceptics.

Trials are now planned for the coming summer to test the results of scent rising on hot air and the increased efficiency of using dogs in what was previously thought to be impossible weather conditions. It seems that WA has once again forged into territory as yet untried by others.

RICK RICHARDSON

