



Many things to discuss in this editorial.

Firstly interesting items in our notes from correspondents, well done to the English Springer Spaniel Club of Old who on same day as their Specialty and Open Shows, conducted a significant first for the breed in Australia in relation to PRA testing by facilitating a DNA draw through Genetic Technologies in Melbourne and subsidizing the cost of testing members' dogs on the day, as a way of contributing to the future health of the breed.

Also see the story of how two GSDs with a display of protective instinct scared off two would-be molesters of their young mistress who although they responded instantly to the command to stop and drop, when sensing danger both defended their young mistress and possibly saved her life. Also read about the Sieger Show with a difference because on the Saturday is the Amateur [Family] GSD Show for all family pets aged 4 mths - Veterans with a full panel of Judges who critique them irrespective of whether they are long coats, white Shepherds or black/gold normal coats. The rings are set up, those wishing to have their dogs critiqued wear bright orange tabards with catalogue number and the dogs are presented to the Judge. Later they collect their critiques which are in a folder embossed with the Sieger Show Logo.

From Victoria, Shepparton KC committee has had to work really hard to gain access to enough room at the recently redeveloped showgrounds. They have promoted microchipping, and council registration at their last shows using radio, newspaper and television advertising.

In Tasmania, once again the committee of this show thought of the exhibitors, awarding BIG with weatherproof vests and BIS prizes with weatherproof jackets; and congrats to our Tasmanian correspondent Cindy Gangel who tells us she became a grandmother on 15 June!

In Sydney, at a recent show, an amazing co-incident occurred in the Best In Show lineup, where ALL but one of the handlers had

Afghan Hound which included at least some association with Afghan Hounds.

Toys Anu Lummevaara, brief but certainly a learning curve, Terriers Derek Hyde, Gundogs Graham Kellett, Hounds Stuart Slatyer, Utility Corinne Kelly, and Non Sporting Garry Dryburgh. Only exception was the Working Dog handler, Caryl Garvey. When Stuart later mentioned it to the judge, she said "Well I am not surprised, after growing up in those days of Afghan Hounds, it was good grounding!"

On the same day, it was fun to see three of our talented young junior handling girls holding their own competition in the lunch hour as it was not a day when there was a club sponsored event. A very kind lady from the Gundog Group came to their area and spent a good hour putting them through their paces, making them change dogs - we almost ran out of breeds to supply them - and complete testing exercises. What a great thing it is to have our young people at the shows with us, and what a relief for their parents to know exactly where they are and what they are doing - not off somewhere unsupervised and possibly getting led astray or into mischief or even tragedy as the newspapers and radio and TV seem to be full of these days. This is a side of our sport that must never be overlooked.

That brings me to a brief comment on the shows that have opted for the BIS/BIG 1-4, Baby and Puppy in Show only formats, while holding a regular show on the first day of their double headers. On the first weekend, we are told entries were down by about 40 for the Sunday. On the second weekend, they were up - but only by about 100 overall, which is surely less than Sunday shows usually draw compared to Saturday events. We are told Toys made their disapproval obvious at the first show and Dachshunds at the second event, where the Saturday entry was 40 and the Sunday entry 11. Both events had International judges, which of course are a drawcard anyway. Strangely we understand that the new format did not greatly speed up the judging timetable but as we were not present for either of the Sunday shows, we cannot state this categorically. Apart from the lack of breeds for the public to view should they turn up in the afternoon, and the fact that the stallholders, both food suppliers and product outlets, will presumably suffer as people pack up to go home midmorning once they are finished and did not win Best of Breed or a Baby or a Puppy class, will parents finished before lunchtime be prepared to hang

around to wait for Junior Showmanship? And even if they are, the young people will in all probability have trouble sourcing dogs, as so many of them regularly "do the rounds" of the regular exhibitors to seek dogs of different breeds with which to compete and on whom to further their skills - invaluable experience.

The results of the Dogs NSW Board elections are now public.

Five positions were vacant. Elected were  
John Mulcahy votes 316 (re-elected)  
Christine Mann votes 314  
Peter Nordstrom votes 279 (re-elected)  
Christina Raton votes 276 (re-elected)  
Marilyn Parker vote 267

However, considerable concern was expressed that each individual (ie not dual) member received TWO ballot papers. This probably accounted for the very slow start to the counting of votes on the day, as each ballot paper had apparently to be checked against the member's signature, presumably to make sure nobody used the two ballot papers they had been sent in error. In this respect, it seems lucky so few members bothered to vote. The result is tallied traditionally on the day of the Junior Kennel Club show and many members from the Metropolitan area who should have received ballot papers told others that they had not done so.

And speaking of that day, exhibitors in the Hound ring were absolutely astonished to see late in the day the unfortunate first exhibitor in the ring in each class was handed the ribbons for that class and asked to hand them to the judge when they reached the other end of the ring, where the judge, most kindly, had moved the table into the sun so that the Whippets who were freezing in the chill biting wind could stand in the sun. This judge is an internationally renowned gentleman and his consideration and understanding of the breed's reaction to cold were greatly appreciated. However the steward remained under the canopy. Several people heading the class took the ribbons to deliver them but obviously reluctantly, one very experienced exhibitor was disadvantaged when her Whippet jumped onto the table as soon as she placed the ribbons there for the judge to collect and she had then to jump her down again as he wanted the class around the ring (again, thank heavens for his understanding of Sighthounds and for following the correct procedure for judging them). Another lady

was totally confused and said to the steward "But I haven't even be judged yet, why are you giving me the ribbon?" When she handed the ribbon to the judge, he said "What class is this please?" as the steward's voice could not be heard at that end of the ring, so he had no idea what age group he was assessing, something that is important in a breed like Whippets where oversize can be a problem.

When it came to my turn to lead a class of two into the ring and the steward came to me to hand me the ribbons, I refused to take them and said "No, we are not taking the ribbons to the judge, we are here to show our dogs to the best of their advantage, and that can't be done running into the ring with ribbons to hand to the judge". The steward replied "Well it will take a great deal longer then" and my reply was "So be it, we have been here all day, as has the judge, and I am sure a few moments more will not kill us".

When we got to the warm end of the ring, the judge did ask "Who has the ribbons?" and we both said, "Neither of us, sorry". He then had to walk the full length of the ring to get them from the steward, who remained standing under the canopy and did not advance a single step towards him. He placed them in his pocket, and when the time came to hand them out, dug out three red ones and a yellow one, somehow left over obviously and had to hunt to find the blue one, which he finally did and all three of us had a chuckle. However, I would think the steward's lack of consideration for the judge, and failure to follow normal procedure, might well be the topic of some unfortunate publicity for Australian stewards, a very sad situation, as traditionally they are praised by all overseas judges, and deservedly so. Fortunately he has been here before and officiated at some of the major shows in this country, so he probably just shrugged it off. Had he been a first timer though, I am sure he would have wondered at any judge, much less a visitor, being so rudely treated.

We were sad to learn of the passing of Fred Price, a man who did such great things in the early days of the Pal International following on from Dennis Holmes and also much for The Animal Welfare League. We would welcome a tribute to Fred next issue please.

Wendye Slatyer EDITOR

## PROBLEMS OF REGISTERING SEMEN (CHILLED & FROZEN)

In the context here "to register" something means to record its existence, type, condition, ownership etc. Registration of things of transient value is not normally done.

Firstly consider the ANKC requirement that Chilled Semen be registered.

Chilled Semen is collected and shipped to the end user almost immediately because it has a very limited storage life. It is best used within twenty four hours of collection although the use of modern diluents and extenders can extend that somewhat.

Chilled Semen has such a short life span that its registration becomes ludicrous. The semen would have long been used before registration could be achieved.

This fact alone emphasizes how little the administrators who introduced this concept knew about the subject and further proves that the idea was a confidence trick to extract money from members while giving them no benefit whatsoever.

\* The person doing the insemination of Chilled Semen does not have to be a veterinarian which may well raise questions about the integrity of the Dog Register. (see also transcervical insemination below.)

Now to the question of the Registration of Frozen Semen.

Arguments previously advanced against such registration are briefly:

(a) There is much doubt that Dogs NSW had the constitutional power to establish such a register

(b) Other countries do not register semen and do not recognize the registration of semen in Australia.

(c) The system introduced in NSW over thirty years ago is simple, requires minimal paperwork and has maintained the integrity of the Canine Register.

(d) Registration of Frozen Semen makes no contribution whatsoever to the integrity of the Canine Register.

(e) A reliable (but not exhaustive) survey of owners of Frozen Semen indicates that not more than 20% of semen currently stored in Australia will ever be used.

To date Canine Administrations have relied on veterinary surgeons to ensure the integrity of the Canine Registers throughout the world in verifying the use of Frozen Semen (and usually Chilled Semen) because veterinarians have been the only persons doing such inseminations.

However with the development of reliable transcervical techniques of insemination a new problem arises which has the potential to affect the integrity of the Canine Registers. Since no surgical intervention is required and the insemination techniques can be learned in a couple of hours of practical experience anybody can do such inseminations.

Immediately the integrity of the Register can be questioned, so this is an area that the administration should be looking at instead of the futile registration of Frozen/Chilled Semen

The solution to this is to require the DNA profiling of both parents where Artificial Inseminations are performed by non - veterinarians.

Despite the advances in Frozen Semen technology there is absolutely no reason to require the registration of Semen although there is good reason to require DNA profiling in certain instances and it is in this direction that Canine Administrators should turn their attention instead of the useless Registration of Semen which is costly and adds to paperwork.

Fourteen years ago when this Idea was first advanced it was proclaimed that other countries would follow Australia's lead. Well that has not happened and is never likely to happen. It is time we stopped being so stupid.

JIM HICKIE

(see page 23 for more on this topic, which now has relevance Australia-wide)