

Lesley Crawley **'Breeding Winning Norfolk Terriers'**

With a talk entitled 'Breeding Winning Norfolk Terriers' on the menu, one would have been excused for having a very short lunch break. But no. Our guests were treated to a memorable three course meal with wine, served by Mrs Helena Jupp and the late Mrs Pam Harris. The rest of the hall went noticeably quiet – a sign of the timeliness and deliciousness of the lunch provided by Mrs Churchill.

Mrs Lesley Crawley, interestingly, commenced her part of proceeding by requesting a show of hands in response to three questions:

- Who has studied and understands the history and function of the Norfolk Terrier?
- Who knows the Breed Standard? And accepts that every single aspect of it is important and not to be ignored?
- Who spends time over pedigrees before selecting dogs and bitches for breeding?

The most hands went up in response to the first question. Fewer hands went up following the second question, and just a smattering went up for the third.

Mrs Crawley then proceeded with a discussion on the Breed Standard, inviting questions as she spoke. She predicated her discussion, however, by bemoaning the loss of the 'herdsman' approach to dog breeding. That is, that way of breeding that considers only the breed as a whole and its long-term future, and not the individual person's ego. Her first charge was that breeders and others tended to pick and choose parts of the Standard they liked best, while hoping the other parts of the Standard would be OK. And when this way of breeding was repeated frequently enough, she went on, distortions and problems would arise as has been seen in recent years. Bite abnormalities now abound, and the number of Norfolks with temperament problems is significant.

Lesley encouraged the audience to consider the whole Breed Standard at all times, and emphasised that it is better for the breed if we took the long view on all aspects of the Standard.

Correct breeding, even considering individual interpretation of the Standard, requires strict adherence to that Standard. To exemplify this statement, she discussed in some detail the required characteristic of the breed to have a 'lovable disposition, not quarrelsome ...'.

We should, Lesley made clear, see this as a key standard on which the foundation of the Breed rests. The Norfolk Terrier should be a companion and working dog simultaneously. Working dogs, she emphasised, function in teams, not packs, and a good relationship between the dogs (both dogs and bitches) is essential to the success of that team. It was also essential to the livelihood of their owner. We know, for a fact, that quarrelsome and aggressive dogs disrupting the working of the team (thus the earning capacity of the owner) were shot. We would not, of course, do that now, but these dogs and bitches should most certainly never be bred with.

'Not quarrelsome', Lesley reminded us, should be a characteristic that makes a Norfolk Terrier a Norfolk Terrier, and no excuses for aggression (aggressive to people and other dogs) should be made. And this aggression must not be confused with 'alert and fearless'.

At this point a member of the audience asked Lesley how she would view the word 'short' as used in the Standard. We were reminded that 'short' back was actually mentioned twice in the standard. What the Standard is referring to is a short strong back from behind the withers to the root of the tail incorporating the ribs which should be long and the loin which should be short. The body should be long which is from the point of chest to the end of the croup. The back length and body length are often misunderstood but when correctly proportioned allow for the angles of front and hindquarter constructions. This allows a dog to move correctly with long effortless strides

The next feature in the Standard that Lesley chose to discuss, as an example, was 'keen' as in 'small, low, keen dog...'. She was anxious to point out that this did not mean 'hyperactive' as seen in some breeds.

Hyperactivity is not a desired trait in our breed because such behaviour wasted valuable energy. Such dogs could not and would not work efficiently. We need to consider and breed for mental as well as physical health. Mental health is too often ignored in breeding for physical beauty.

By this time it was clear that Lesley was referring to the Breed Standard at every opportunity. She was keen for us to understand and weigh up every feature in the Breed Standard, stating that each and every word in it was there for good reason. We should not pick and choose the features we liked. She then took a moment to ask the assembled crowd how many actually went over, or checked the bite of the dog, they are interested in using. No hands went up. She reminded us that there should be no embarrassment in doing this.

‘From the history of the Breed you learn about its future’, became the theme of the next part of the discussion. Lesley stressed that ‘looks’ (conformation, or ‘phenotype’) was very, very important – but not everything, it became clear later on. ‘*Look at the dog*’, and as many of his/her ancestors as you can. Take pains over doing this – find old photographs, and speak to people who remember that dog; go back further than the usual pedigrees allow you to; always try and get a full and complete picture. Then do the same for the bitches. We must remember that a puppy is the *random* combination of genes from *both* parents. Astute selection of dogs and bitches for breeding will increase your chances of having a puppy with the desired features.

To consider ‘hidden genes’ (the genotype), one has to look very closely, and ask others about, the historical dogs and bitches in the lines you are planning to use. This requires openness, honesty, and genuine interest in the breed.

The main piece of advice that Lesley offered at this point was to say that one should breed with the whole pedigree, and the *line* in particular, in mind, rather than just the looks of individual ‘stunning’ dogs or champions. One should think in terms of what the ‘hypothetical pup’ from the combination of lines, or a line, will look like, and never breed for now or even next year, but for the future. A good way of starting this process is to look at the puppies in the show ring, and then go home and look at their pedigrees. Lesley reminded us that later on in the discussion we will be examining pedigrees.

Another important thing that Lesley was keen to encourage was this: ‘teach yourself to assess the dogs of others even if you don’t like the type or the person’. Then ‘don’t always use the dog you like – use the pedigree’. You should use a dog who is not your personal type of Norfolk if it has the right looks and pedigree for your bitch.

This part of the Lecture became quite lively, but several points were highlighted by Lesley:

- ≡ keep puppies with the feature you were after in using that stud dog, even if you do not like the puppy as a whole;
- ≡ do not keep a puppy with a fault you are trying to breed out, unless it is outstanding otherwise, though not them if this fault is the mouth;
- ≡ the breed is very much more important than the kennel – AND THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT CONCEPT; some breeders are selfish, and will think of their kennel at the cost of the breed;
- ≡ even one litter you, or a pet breeder, breed now can impact on the breed later;
- ≡ all puppies contribute to the breed, since it is sometimes hard to be sure of where they will end;
- ≡ pet puppies sometimes return to the show-ring and are used for breeding, so you must think of the hidden faults you may be passing forward;
- ≡ everybody who breeds Norfolks is important to the breed, and will have an impact on the future;
- ≡ breed with *wisdom* - this is not the same as knowledge. You must *know* dogs.
- ≡ The next part of this particular exchange provided a very important principal Lesley pointed out: ‘you *don't* breed with a dog that has a fault like aggression or a bite problem’. To illustrate she referred to her judges report from the WKC show of 7 or 8 years ago, where she made this very point. Today she used the expression: ‘cut the bad apple out at the start’.
- ≡ We need to talk honestly amongst ourselves about things like the bite problem.

- ≡ Until we have a genetic test for bites, for example, we have to do it through breeding plans and thorough review of pedigrees.
- ≡ If the same breed point problem such as bites or temperament is evident in three consecutive generations, stop breeding with that line immediately. Bring in new sets of genes from elsewhere. A member of the audience was interested in finding out where this 'elsewhere' might be. To this Lesley answered: 'Go to Sweden. There are lines there that have no bite problems, but check first'.
- ≡ Kennels must talk to each other – and use each others dogs with the express purpose of eliminating problems.
- ≡ Don't get fanatical about aiming for a particular head-shape and forget about the rest of the dog or a problem it may be hiding.
- ≡ Try and achieve a good balance while selecting against undesirable features.
- ≡ Use modern technology where available *and* old hand-books and word of mouth.
- ≡ Study old and historic judges' reports closely, looking out for the implications of what is written as well as not written.
- ≡ Identify the recurring themes in judges reports, like the 'bite problems' or 'light eyes' of recent years.
- ≡ With breeding you always reap what you sow. It might not be apparent immediately.
- ≡ Be realistic about your dog and the dogs of others. Don't make excuses, assess other dogs impartially.
- ≡ Try and cultivate a realistic and positive mental attitude. This is crucial when examining breed history and selecting dogs, don't only fault judge;
- ≡ People often fail because they have kept the wrong puppy from the litter for showing and breeding. (There was a collective sigh of recognition from several members of the audience).
- ≡ Choosing the right puppy is crucial. Always keep the best puppy without prejudice, whether it is male or female or any of the breed colours, no one colour is better than another:
- ≡ Always be realistic and always have a stockman's approach to breeding. That is, think of the breed as whole, and how, by what you do, you make an impact on it.

How to use a Pedigree in your breeding plans

At this point in the lecture, Lesley invited us to study the pedigrees we were handed when we arrived at the venue. She premised this part of the discussion by making it clear that she would not be referring to any living dog or bitch. By this stage, the delegates would have had the opportunity to examine pictures of most of the dogs that were going to be referred to.

The historical Norfolks to be included in our discussion would be:

- ≡ Champion Nanfan Heckle
- ≡ Champion Nanfan Sweet Apple
- ≡ Champion Ragus Brownd Off
- ≡ Champion Ryslip Lovebug
- ≡ Champion Gotoground True Blue
- ≡ Champion Ickworth Ready JW

Before discussing any of these dogs however, Lesley was concerned that we should be aware of some important principles:

- ≡ Good breeding is essentially line-breeding, providing you go back to good dogs only. Sometimes an outcross is needed to bring in 'new blood'.
- ≡ 'Best matings are aunt to nephew and uncle to niece. Then grandparent to grandchild as long as the grandparent is a very good dog and the grandchild does not have the same faults as the grandparent.'
- ≡ 'Cousin to cousin matings are also very good and can often provide you with excellent results. In this case, however, the same dogs will feature up and down the pedigree which means it is more difficult to control any problems there may be.'

- ≡ If, in these sets of pedigrees, there are good males available, it is better to go across pedigrees, within these lines, rather than straight down.
- ≡ But, and this is a big BUT, if you have mouth/bite problems, the above breeding protocols are not advised. The bite problem is fairly widespread in the breed, but a lot worse in certain pedigrees. Lesley recommends that these breeders use foreign stud dogs without any modern English dogs in at least their 5-generation pedigree. She mentioned Sweden as a good place to go, in particular. If you do this, choose two different kennels in Sweden, or two distinct lines from the same kennel. Saying this however, Lesley was keen to qualify that she feels the overall standard of Norfolks in general is good, except for the number with mouth problems. This, she continued, is going to be difficult to eradicate if we do not make a special effort.
- ≡ Never choose a stud simply because you like the look of him. That is, don't always choose a dog you like. Choose a pedigree that fits with your breeding, and will have a positive impact. Do not ignore the faults that have appeared in the members of that pedigree.
- ≡ Never keep more than 2 generations of a bad fault to breed with. If a parent and any of its offspring have the same bad fault, poor bites for example, keep neither.
- ≡ Always think long-term, and select breeding dogs for the future. The immediate results of your selections are not the most important. Think ahead 5 – 8 years at a time.
- ≡ Avoid using some dogs that were bred in the USA. The judging system there is forgiving of bad mouths.
- ≡ Some Swedish dogs, on the other hand, tend to have exaggerated hindquarters: over-angulated and weak, so be careful of this..
- ≡ Even with careful, considered breeding you may produce a near-perfect Norfolk only every ten years.
- ≡ Never keep just one kind of Norfolk, or just *your* type. There is the real sound working terrier type, and conversely, the very 'hyper' type. Staying within one type or the other can compound the faults, which then emerge a generation or two later. It is good to cross 'working' with 'typy'.
- ≡ Kennels that stick to their 'own' for too long will always run into problems.
- ≡ And what about repeat matings? There is no guarantee that it will work, but occasionally it does. To improve the chance of being successful an outcross, at times can be beneficial.
- ≡ Repeated 'repeat' matings done over and over and kept for breeding will concentrate problems as well as virtues and limit/narrow the gene pool of that kennel. Keep no more than one puppy or two of the best (male or female) from such litters for breeding..
- ≡ If you can, be prepared to take risks, and 'try' things, but be prepared to remove all from the breeding plans if it doesn't work.
- ≡ Be flexible in your ideas, do not concentrate on only one feature of the breed i.e. heads.
- ≡ You can learn a lot from 'fools' – that is, the mistakes made by others.
- ≡ Do not over-use particular pairings, or kind of pairings – it narrow the gene pool of the breed..

Champion Gotoground True Blue

This was a red dog born in 1960, therefore before separation, bred by Mrs Esme O'Hanlon. He won 7 CCs. Lesley described this pedigree as an example of in-breeding that had a *lucky* outcome. In her opinion, this dog was too in-bred. Its sire was Champion Gotoground Widgeon Bunny, a 'drop-ear' that won regularly against 'prick-ears'. Its dam was Gotoground Vixen, the first Norfolk bitch to win a Best in Show at an Open show. Examining the pedigree more closely, it is clear that Champion Waveney Valley Alder appears very frequently, *six* times in a five-generation pedigree.

An additional problem with this pedigree, according to Lesley, was Waveney Valley Alder's aggression. It is claimed that this dog is largely responsible for the aggression that sometimes emerges in the breed. She shared with us the anecdote of how, as a small baby, she was found crawling towards this dog, only to have the owner remove him for fear that she may be bitten. She summed Waveney Valley Alder up as 'bad tempered' but a good dog in looks.

His sire, Widgeon Bunny was a very good Norfolk, and used sometimes by Joy Taylor. The temperament problem that Alder had emerged every now and again in that kennel, and others where there was a concentration of it.

Champion Ickworth Ready JW

Born in 1967, this red dog was the result of an in-bred pedigree. He had what was referred to as an 'untidy' bite. Closer examination, however, revealed that the bite was in fact 'slightly' wry. Ickworth Ready, arguably, was the source of many bad mouths but was an outstanding dog. He was sired by Kirkby Freddy (then already implicated in producing bad mouths) and Kirkby Tresarden Curvet.

Ready's sire, Kirkby Freddy, had a bite that was just about right, but not good – and we know that his dam, Nanfan Hannah, was undershot.

Ickworth Ready, had Kirkby Freddy as sire *as well as* grandfather on his maternal side, so was inbred to Nanfan Hannah.

This was a case of breeding where a bite problem was not only ignored, but concentrated via in-breeding to Nanfan Hannah. Kirkby Freddy's sire, on the other hand, had a very good mouth. Perhaps a lesson in what happens when a serious problem in a bitch, like a bite abnormality, is ignored

Champion Nanfan Heckle

The fame of this dog goes without saying. Born in 1962, he was out of a cousin mating that included a lot of 'Alder'. Heckle, as far as we can tell, did not inherit the 'gene' for poor temperament from Alder, but his full brother did. Heckle, in Lesley's view was a very good dog and it is a good idea to get some of his genes in your pedigree. Beware of 'hidden', genes however, which were apparent in his full brother Hallelujah i.e. Bad temper, light eyes and heavy shoulders.

Champion Ragus Browned Off

This is an example of the successful crossing of two distinct lines. Born in 1973, Browned Off was sired by Champion Ragus Whipcord, who, in turn, was line-bred to Nanfan Nimble and Nanfan Heckle. Browned Off's sire is still the all-time champion sire, and, interestingly, neither of *his* parents was wonderful to look at but complemented each other.

While Browned Off's sire was the result of successful line-breeding, his dam, Champion Ragus Brown Sugar, was the result of breeding for the influence of Nanfan Nimble. This was achieved, but not without the mouth problem that came with Champion Ickworth Ready (he was good in the body and had excellent movement). Her mouth was perfect but some of her hidden genes are compounded when used in combination with other lines down from Ready but if kept away from Ready breeding was OK.

This example of cross-breeding including the line-breeding to Heckle was intended to combine the best of both Nanfan and Ragus.

Champion Nanfan Sweet Apple

This, according to Lesley's analysis, is an example of a well-structured pedigree. Born in 1974 the impact of this red bitch on the Norfolk Terrier as a breed was immense. There is considerable, but good, in-breeding in the pedigree. For example, Nanfan Heckle is her sire, as well as well as her dam's grandfather and great-grandfather. This kind of breeding will only be worth the risk if the dog or bitch around which the breeding is concentrated has good prepotency (that powerful genetic stamp possessed by some individuals, resulting in a strong resemblance between that dog and generations of its progeny) and is *free of any serious faults*. This kind of breeding used by breeders determined to ignore problems, in Lesley's view, has resulted in the mouth abnormalities we are seeing now. A similar situation arose with Waveney Valley Alder – in this case, however, his poor temperament was 'included' in his prepotency.

Champion Ryslip Lovebug

She was a red bitch born in 1976 bred by Liz Cartledge. This is an example of the crossing of two distinct kennels, namely Ragus and Nanfan, with line-breeding that goes back to Nanfan Heckle in both wings of the pedigree. The dam's breeding is not unlike that of Nanfan Sweet Apple. Careful consideration was given to the whole pedigree of both the sire and the dam.

Some questions from the audience answered

- ≡ Champion Gotoground Widgeon Bunny was an important and very good Norfolk and he was frequently used by Joy Taylor. Beware of the influence of Waveney Valley Alder however.
- ≡ Fortunately Nanfan Heckle, who was a very good sire, did not carry, or pass on, the poor temperament problem to any degree.

- ≡ A sire that produced fantastic progeny, may not look that fantastic himself but he has the right hidden genes. Look at the puppies in the ring for confirmation of his prepotency as a sire.
- ≡ Make yourself aware of the effect of 'hidden' genes. A dog that himself has two testicles, may produce many dog puppies with only one if he has picked up the gene.
- ≡ Ask people who knew the dogs in a pedigree. If they all agree on some points it was likely to be so.
- ≡ A short back is not the same as a short dog. The 'back' refers to that space between the withers and the tail set. An apparently long Norfolk can have a short back, with the correct angulations both front and back, but be long in the loin instead of short. This leads to a weak topline.
- ≡ A good Norfolk must have good shoulder angulation with a long fore-arm.
- ≡ There has to, however, be good hindquarters, again with good angulation and short hock giving correct propulsion for a long stride.
- ≡ There has to be a good balance between the hind- and the fore-quarters. The fore steers the body, while the hindquarters provide the engine. Good extension, both back and front, is crucial.
- ≡ A Norfolk Terrier must be fit and well toned.
- ≡ We need to all know about the dogs that were bred in the 60s. Look at the pictures in the newsletters and yearbooks. *Ask* those in the know about the bites.
- ≡ The individual parents do not have to be fabulous, so long as the pedigree is well-structured with a degree of line-breeding where both the paternal and maternal sides complement each other. They have to complement each other in terms of both looks and pedigrees but beware of line breeding to poor quality dogs.
- ≡ Follow your instincts about a dog. Make use of all sources of knowledge about that dog.
- ≡ *Look* at the dog and consider his/her ancestors thoroughly.
- ≡ Always run your hands over the dog you intend using.
- ≡ You must not be sentimental about your dogs. Be prepared to part with bad individuals. Keep a barrier between you and your dogs (though this may sometimes be hard) if you want to be a breeder because otherwise you will never part with them.
- ≡ What you do as a judge is *not* what you do as a breeder. In the ring you must sometimes favour a dog with an imperfect mouth if it is exceptionally good dog compared to the rest.
- ≡ A good temperament is fundamental for any breed that is meant to work in a team and to be sold as a pet.
- ≡ Small breeders are vital to the breed, because all breeding impacts on the breed.
- ≡ Key advice: Consider and pay heed to every point in the Breed Standard, including temperament and bite; when selecting dogs and bitches for breeding, consider the whole pedigree of both, rather than just the look of the sire.