

“SHOW DOGS AND STUD DOGS”

by Richard G. (Rick) Beauchamp



A STUD DOG IS NOT SIMPLY A MALE DOG. Neither do show records or championships have anything to do with a dog's producing ability. Winning in the show ring proves the dog has the quality necessary to win. Siring outstanding offspring is the only thing that proves a sire's ability. These are two entirely different qualities.

A dog can be a truly great show dog and a poor sire. A dog can hate the show ring and never win a point and be an outstanding sire. It is just as simple as that. The biggest mistake breeders, novice or veteran, can make is to confuse their show dogs with their breeding dogs. They can be the same. We hope they will be the same. Often they are not.

There are those who say show wins are the indicator of a dog's value to the breed. In other words, if many judges agree a particular dog is the current ideal in its breed, the dog should be bred to. I agree - but only to a degree.

You can get every judge in the country to agree that the dog of the hour is the dog of the hour, but that same dog can be a complete disappointment in the breeding department. If a dog's quality is not realized in the whelping box, all we have is a box full of ribbons and nothing more.

This is not to say a winning dog cannot also be an outstanding producer. Records prove otherwise. But I cannot stress strongly enough that it is the producing ability that must be looked to and not the show record!

Even the outstanding sire can be misused. Most breeds have had those truly wonderful show dogs who develop records that become the envy of one and all. Unfortunately, they become the envy of too many who feel if a dog is good enough to win every award in sight, it must be good enough to breed every bitch in sight.

In a way, the popular stud dog that produces well only with certain bitch lines can be very destructive to a breed. A few excellent youngsters emerge from the right combination and the parade begins. Every bitch that can see lightning and hear thunder is bred to the dog, but the percentage of quality produced is minuscule. The breed takes a big step backward.

This is actually not the fault of the sire, but of the owners of the many bitches who follow the parade to the popular sire, regardless of the fact that he would in fact be the last choice for their particular bitch.

Truly great sires are really few and far between. There's an old saying I heard somewhere along the way that goes something like, "You can breed that one to a fence post and you'll still get good pups." They are the rare ones, the ones that any breed is lucky to have, but it is highly doubtful that any breed will have such a dog any more than once in any breeder's lifetime.

This no doubt all sounds perfectly logical, but I could write whole books on the excuses young breeders make for not breeding to the correct dog for their bitch: snow storms, rain storms, typhoons and earthquakes; the correct dog's third cousin lives down the street; it's just her first season and I'm "proving" her; etc., etc., etc.

There is only one breeding worth making - the right one. When it comes time to breed your quality bitch, stop and think, what if this turns out to be the only litter she will ever have!"