

HEALTH REPORT 2009

Registration numbers remain a concern with the first 3 quarters of 2008 published so far at 35, show us holding our own against last year's figure, but we are not gaining any ground.

I have not heard of any major problems over the last year, particularly happy news is that there have been no fresh reports at all of fitting hounds over the past 12 months. However we do need to look seriously at our breeding policies in relation to hips and elbows. Attending the Kennel Club Breeder's seminar towards the end of the year, the Head of the Hip & Elbow Scoring Board was absolutely adamant that we should not breed from hounds that had elbow scores of 2 or 3 or hip scores higher than half the breed mean score. We are living in very different times and can be certain that there will be new Kennel Club rulings regarding breeding and health issues, so we need to be very aware of them now. The Kennel Club has reviewed all breed standards and I think we can consider ourselves very fortunate that in respect of our standard changes were not considered necessary. The KC health report on our breed was also very satisfactory, but that does not leave us any room for complacency.

There is good news, our members have been asking for a follow-up Health Survey for some years now and it was decided to undertake a Global survey of the breed in conjunction with the Otterhound Club of America, sharing costs which the Otterhound Trust has also assisted with. Surveys in the past have not always had maximum response so it was decided to try and get an independent analyst. Jeff Sampson at the KC was contacted and he very kindly arranged for our survey to be analysed by the experts at the Animal Health Trust, the Surveys were planned throughout the year, printed in November and went out early in December to be returned by the end of January. We hope to have a first report from the AHT by the middle of the summer and they will be analysing the results "globally" and separately by country, so we will be able to see any differences that may arise in an individual country from the global health of the breed. I would like to thank all of you who took the time and trouble to fill out the survey forms, especially those breeders who of necessity had to put their thinking caps on and complete the forms in respect of several hounds and also send forms on to their puppy buyers.

There is also exciting news, we were given the opportunity in the summer to take up an offer to have the Otterhound SNP-gene mapped for epilepsy by experts in this field in Finland. The high cost of this project will be shared equally between The Otterhound Club and the Otterhound Club of America. In order to be able to play our part in this project the Club applied to the Kennel Club Charitable Trust for assistance. They very generously immediately sent us £2,500 with the offer of a further £2,500 if the Club agreed to match the first amount. We really could not let this opportunity pass by so we agreed and immediately set forth on money raising for this and our Treasurer set up a special account to keep these moneys ready for when we will have to pay. Your Treasurer's Annual Report & Accounts shows the moneys raised in 2008 for epilepsy research and to this will be added the proceeds of our raffle drawn at Crufts.

The latest news I have from Finland on the project is "we have genotyped 24 cases and 24 controls and currently analysing the data to see if we are able to map the epilepsy locus. Will let you know when the analysis is ready". The Club's help is needed to carry this work through so that all breeding hounds hopefully may eventually be DNA tested and we can rid our breed of this overwhelming hereditary genetic disorder.

With regard to the previously agreed circulation of all health information, now that the Club has a website serving our members and everyone interested in Otterhounds everywhere, it seems to make sense for all health information to go up on a dedicated health section of the website.

2008 Hip Scores

Elbow Scores

Houndville Ariel	R6	L5	Total 11	0
Kingstree Rascal	R10	L19	Total 25	0
Kingstree Reiver	R15	L21	Total 36	0
Teckelgarth Urania	R45	L47	Total 92	2
Cairo's Munkybizniz	R20	L31	Total 51	
Cairo's Mystery to Nolmacdon	R14	L14	Total 28	0
Keepcott Dainty	R16	L18	Total 34	
Keepcott Duchess	R11	L10	Total 21	0
Kingstree Rambler at Otteryx	R15	L22	Total 37	2
PCOH Harriet	R30	L27	Total 57	
Uisneach Lilly at Otteryx	R23	L26	Total 49	1

There is still time to complete and return Health Survey Forms, if you have an otterhound and have not received a form, or you know anyone else who has an otterhound who would be willing to complete a form, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will arrange for the a form to be sent to you. Please help to make this the most representative Health Survey of the breed possible, Thankyou.

JUDITH ASHWORTH.
[Health Coordinator](#)