

HEALTH REPORT 2015

The first point I need to make this year is that unfortunately I posted incorrect information with one of the entries on the fitters list. This relates to Teckelgarth Fabius who was born in 2009 and did in fact have his first fit in the middle of May 2013 when he was aged 3 ½ **not** 2 ½ as stated. Subsequent to Fabius fitting his breeder has abided by the agreed protocol with regard to fitting, i.e., neither parent, Fabius himself, nor his siblings will be bred from.

In addition to this Health Report you should be able to find the up to date Fitters Report, Hip scores and Elbow Scores on the Club Website Health page before the AGM.

Two sets of health information were released in the middle of last year firstly in the form of the Kennel Club reviewing the breed COIs and this shows that our breed COI has actually increased from 16% to 17.7% over the last couple of years. This is not good news, as we should be aiming to gradually decrease it, your Health Committee having set the aim of reducing it to 12.5% over the next five years.

Also I received The Kennel Club Dog Health Group Annual report 2013, and I am able to send it on to you directly if any of you are interested in reading it in full. The sections relative to Otterhounds relate to our Hip and Elbow scores, the data for Hip Dysplasia shows that we now have 235 hounds scored and over a 15 year period the Breed Mean Score is 46 with the Median being 44. Over the last 5 years the Breed Mean Score is 51.3 and the Median 51.5, so very disappointing to see that we are not actually managing to use hounds for breeding that are improving our hip scores at all.

The data for Elbow Dysplasia covers 110 hounds scored over the previous 15 years and shows 45 hounds (40.9%) with a 0 score, 65 (59.1%) with >0. Under the new KC/BVA guidelines this means that of our hounds scored only 40.9% may be bred from leaving the more than 59% which should not be bred and this does not include hounds that we may need to breed that are not scored for whatever reason. 34 hounds (30.9%) scored 1, 26 (23.6%) scored 2 and 5 (4.5%) scored 3. There is the possibility of helping our breeding position relative to hip and elbow scores once we are able to use Estimated Breeding Values for them, but I had a long talk with Dr. Tom Lewis of the AHT Genetics Centre at Crufts and although he has promised very kindly to have a look at working them out for us, unfortunately he did not hold out too much hope of being able to get us reliable data in such a small breed. Dr. Lewis now works for the Kennel Club and I will continue to discuss our EBVs with him.

During last year the Kennel Club also carried out their own Pedigree Breed Health Survey and I am extremely saddened to say that despite wide encouragement Otterhounds only returned surveys on 27 live Otterhounds and 2 deceased (since 2004).

Several other matters have come to my attention over the year such as a number of singleton litters, particularly in America, also a question of heart disease, but not in sufficient numbers or with sufficient evidence to merit in depth research. There is

also a new drug therapeutic option for canine lymphoma, the first in more than two decades, called Verdinexor but I have not explored it further as I do not hear of very many cases diagnosed in time for this treatment to be of value. One of the major benefits of this treatment is that it is a pill that can be administered at home, avoiding the need for expensive chemotherapy.

Katy Evans has very kindly worked on the World Health Survey for us for several years with no charge; however, she now has a completely new post in a new workplace which means that she is not going to be able to carry out the work for us any longer. Attached you will find her latest Mortality report and she will let us have her final overall report as soon as possible, however this does mean that worldwide we are going to have to give serious consideration to how we all wish to go forward. I am in contact with Vicki Adams who lead the original team at the AHT when we drew up the current Survey, she is now freelance and I am going to have discussions with her at Crufts about the way forward, costs that will be involved etc., and I will report to you later. In the meantime please come to me, get in touch in any form and let me have your thoughts on how you think we can best take our Health Survey forward, the responses to the Kennel Club survey above make me fear our owners may be suffering from Survey overkill so your views and ideas will be valued.

JUDITH ASHWORTH

Health Co-Ordinator,

February, 2015