

spurious advertising in favour of the microchip. In future dogs will be identified by their individual DNA. It will mark the end of irresponsible breeders like puppy farmers both small and big. Don't worry, it will not be the end of the skills of the Stockman/woman, even though the scientific knowledge will be greater it will still need the expert eye to decide which dog to mate with which

I have no doubt, that due to the great importance of this decision, it will be reported heavily elsewhere but I don't think it is possible to overstate the case.

Now is the time to welcome this new epoch with open minds, because it brings the future closer to the time when genetic anomalies will be a thing of the past. Epidemiology is the study of mortality at all ages,

**MY BRAIN has been challenged by the latest talk on Challenge Certificates. In Letters to the Editor last week Anne Arch, a well-respected dog person, told us what it was like to be on**

Ms Arch did not appear to like that idea, she preferred democracy. That's a bit of a laugh in itself, how could a private club with a closed membership be a democratic?

Another letter in the same issue discussed what he considered to be problems in the same area.

The KC chairman, Steve Dean,

All funds raised will go directly to Justice for Dogs and Mrs Ann Harwood, one of the main organisers, will be there in person.

Ann will be bringing along the Staffordshire Bull Terrier bitch Kodi, badly burned in a fire at a Veterinary Practice. The medical cost for her recovery amounted to £3,500 and that is what the day is aiming to raise money towards.

The Breeds Clubs attending will be The Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club (Parent Club), East Midlands SBTC, North West SBTC, and a team from the East Anglian SBTC

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## And another thing...! by Ronnie Irving

# Fortnightly or bi-weekly? That's the question!



**I SEE that I have been taken to task elsewhere for something that I wrote in one of my fortnightly articles in the US weekly magazine *Dog News*.**

Actually I shouldn't use the word 'fortnightly' in an American context as they don't ever use the word, and scarcely understand it on the other side of the Atlantic. When we lived in the USA I had to delete it from my vocabulary. I have only used the word 'fortnightly' on this particular occasion because I don't know whether the correct way to describe something you do every second week is 'bi-weekly' or 'two weekly'?

In fact my copy of *Fowler's Modern English Usage* says that bi-weekly can mean either twice a week or every two weeks. It goes on to say 'Because ambiguity is usually present and cannot be resolved by the devising of rules, it is always better to use unambiguous equivalents, e.g. every two weeks or fortnightly.'

So that means my American *Dog News* articles are written every two weeks - rather than bi-weekly!

### Luddites

So where was I? Oh yes - I was being taken to task elsewhere by a certain Mr Lee Connor for something I wrote in *Dog News* in the USA. Apparently I was defending

the KC's statement that it might consider helping the breeders of so-called 'Labradoodles' by allowing them to take part in the KC Assured Breeder Scheme; thus requiring them to carry out the relevant health tests for Labradors and Poodles.

I must have said that I thought this made sense because 4,000 Labradoodles were recorded on the KC's Petlog system last year. Mr Lee Connor (he calls me Mr Irving which makes me feel very old - so I'd better call him Mr Connor) seems to think that a 4,000 dogs figure is no good reason to let such breeders join the ABS system. Mr Connor seems to find it odd that I should brand anyone who 'dares to resist the acceptance and registration of such 'designer dogs' as 'Luddites'.

In fact he thinks this is 'offensive and unfair' to purebred dog breeders and goes on to say: 'The more cynical of us say that all talk of designer dog registration is down to revenue.' I've got news for Mr Connor and that is that as far as I'm concerned it has nothing to do with revenue. It is just a simple fact that if at least four thousand of these animals are being produced annually it would be totally daft not to try to influence those who breed them.

It would be especially daft for any organisation whose primary objective is: 'To promote in every way the general improvement of dogs.' After all, if all of those dogs were registered as a breed they'd be in the top fifteen registered by the KC. Surely that alone should demand that they be given some attention by the KC.

### Thundering

Mr Connor goes on to pour scorn on my statement that: 'The most important issue for modern day kennel clubs to consider is their ability to influence public opinion and legislation.'

Apparently, according to Mr Connor, 'The KC appears to have distanced itself from defending the show scene and the pedigree world.' What nonsense! The KC is simply keeping itself in the forefront of speaking for all dog owners. For the KC to deliberately exclude itself from talking about or influencing the breeders of dogs outside the 211 formally recognised by it as 'breeds, would be totally stupid. The KC would end up here in the UK - like the AKC has in the USA - virtually a boutique registry only caring about show dogs and show people.

The other subjects on which Mr Connor seems to have become a self-appointed expert include CC allocations, the KC's relevance to politicians, cheap champions, KC

appearance on chat shows and so on. Mr Connor finishes by thundering in a fairly melodramatic way that he hopes that: 'the KC listens to the concerns and worries of its staunch supporters before its 'jack of all trades' stance leads to a revolution and renewed calls for the formation of a new governing body' - something that apparently he: 'and many others really would hate to see.' I'm sure that the KC General Committee is quaking in its boots at the originality of thinking and the profound reasoning of the good Mr Connor! Has he perhaps any positive new thoughts to present us with - or is he just capable of recycling all the old comments we have heard before on many other occasions? Or is he perhaps related to Mr Steven Seymour?

And by the way Mr Connor - when will you and others learn that the articles I write in the USA are actually meant exclusively for American consumption? British readers are not meant to read them!

### CC allocations

A subject which is often being raised these days is that the withdrawal of CCs from various breeds and therefore from individual shows, is going to cause serious problems to the dog game in this country.

One argument amongst others is that giving CCs for every breed at

every show is the answer. I guess that there must be some muddled thinking here by those who complain. The way that CC allocations are determined by the KC depends on average entries at existing shows.

It is these entries which have already reduced and are thus causing the problem - not the fact that CCs have been taken away. It's the falling entries that come first - then the number of CCs go down - not the other way around. Entries at each show are not reducing because there are not enough CCs available - they are reducing for other reasons - sometimes simply because there are in fact too many CCs available for the number of people who are actually showing dogs. In fact if anything, the number of CCs has actually marginally increased more than would normally happen.

### You scratch my back..

Some shows complain that it is everyone's fault but their own that their entries are going down. They really ought to ask themselves whether or not they are doing a good job of selecting their judges?

Time and time again whenever surveys are carried out and whenever opinions are sought, it is the choice of judge that is seen as the primary factor when people are arriving at a decision on whether or not to enter at a dog show. I can tell

you that even if the show was being held in the exhibitor's own back garden with free catering laid on and free entries, there are some judges that some people would never show their dogs under. Shows really need to ask themselves are they putting enough effort into the task of appointing judges?

Or are there other factors coming into the equation when committees come to make their selections? Are judges always chosen because they will get a good entry? Or are they sometimes chosen because members of the selecting committee are going to be invited back to officiate at that judge's championship show as a thank you? Are there reciprocal arrangements going on between some of the members of some championship show committees to further their own judging careers? Are there occasions where it is easier, especially for the numerically smaller breeds, just to add the breed on to someone's list to save the bother of finding someone more likely to get a good entry? Do committees actually look carefully at where and when people last judged the breeds for which they are being appointed? Do they try to find out whether or not they get good entries? It is only when shows can answer those questions in a positive way - hand on heart - that they can begin to blame anyone else for their falling entries.

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