



# Classic Bull Terrier Journal

## Judging Bullterriers

by Bill Lambert

I think that there is far more honest judging and far less political or dishonest judging than some people would like to believe.

Before every show there is speculation about which dog is going to win. This is quite natural and normal. It is human nature, and quite accurate guesses can often be made based on

1. The quality of animals likely to be at the show
2. The dogs that are currently at their peak and that are successful
3. Knowledge of the judge and their particular "likes & dislikes".

What is not natural and what I personally do not like (though it can often be quite amusing) are the reasons sometimes given, and the conspiracy theories that would appear to accompany some of this speculation.

*We have received some phone calls and the response to the Bully Walk is great. We have decided to shorten the walk. We will be walking for 1 hour and not 2 and a half hours as advertised. By doing this we give more people and Bull Terriers the opportunity to take part.*

*Hope to see you soon.*

The same is true after judging. The comment that "well we all knew what the judge was going to put up" is often made with a great deal of hindsight. It is often interesting to compare the speculation before a show with the comments that are made afterwards – they can be quite different!

Most judges want to go out and judge well, place the animals in the order that they prefer them, and then look at the same dogs the following week and still be happy with the placements that they made on the day. That doesn't always happen, as some dogs



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look better on one day than they do on another; good dogs and even good judges have an "off" day. Whilst the expression "every dog has his day" was not originally attributed to dog shows, it certainly can be used.

Of course there is bad judging and even dishonest judging from time to time, but in my experience it is far less common than some would have you believe.

So why do you hear so much comment and complaining from a minority of exhibitors? Well it is preferable for some to try and justify a defeat rather than accept that on that day, at that show, the judge preferred the other dog.

The truth is that we all have times when we expect to win and others when we expect to lose. Sometimes we are right and sometimes we are wrong, but again, in my experience, the wins often happen when you are least expecting them.

If we really "all know what is going to happen" very few of us would bother to show our dogs at all. Most exhibitors are simply proud of their dogs and want to compete against the best and winning is not the only motivation. But we all go with the chance that, on that day, at that show, the might judge actually like our dog as much as we do.

That does not mean that we do not care; most of us are quite passionate about shows, but part of showing dogs is learning how to lose as well as learning how to win. Your own temperament as an exhibitor is just as important as the temperament of your dogs.

### Inside this issue:

Embarrassments	2
BT Deafness	2
Dog Birth Day	3
BT Heart Problems	3

## Bull Terriers and their ability to put you in an embarrassing situation

One summers weekday morning, about 3 years ago, I was going through my normal daily ritual of showering, when while in the shower, I heard my 2 Bull Terriers growling, barking and fighting like hell. I hastily got out of the shower and at speed wrapped a towel around my waste and headed through the back door to get into the yard where my 2 Bull Terriers were still involved in a major fight. We all know when Bullies fight all hell break loose! I somehow managed to get my hands on the 2 Bullies but in the process the towel which were around my waste came loose and there I was trying to get the Bullies apart. You can only imagine the site.....A stark naked man trying to stop a Bull Terrier fight. At the best of times a most awkward situation to be in. In the meantime my neighbour's wife Alta heard the commotion and she then

peeped over the wall to see what on earth is going on. Her eyes then met the sight of a naked man, 2 Bull Terriers still "jaw locked" and a towel on the ground. While all of this is going on I hear her screaming "Ag Shame.....Ag Shame".

I in the meantime being pretty vain and self centred at times, then try to work out why Alta the neighbour is shouting "Ag Shame.....Ag Shame". Is her remarks aimed at the dogs or at me? This really was now a cause for great concern and the thought of trying to work this out almost caused me to forget about the Bull Terriers for a split second or two.

Still stark naked and after what felt like a lifetime I managed to get the Bull Terriers apart with the echo

of "Ag Shame....." still ringing in my ears.

That same morning I drove to work wondering what Alta is going to tell her colleagues when she arrive at her work place? To this day I still do not know at whom the "Ag Shame" was directed. At me or the Bullies? I hope like hell the Bullies!!

The thought of Alta telling this story over to her work colleagues really had me feel rather embarrassed for quite a long while after this incident.

*To conclude this incident served as a catalyst and a week later I had my yard split into 2 camps in order to keep my Bull Terriers apart.*

## Deafness in Bull Terriers

Deafness in Bull Terriers has been recognised since the inception of the breed. Recent studies in the USA have concluded that as many as 18% of white Bull Terriers may have less than perfect hearing and there is reason to believe that a similar number may exist in South Africa. For many years it was thought that inherited deafness was restricted to White Bull Terriers, however it is now known that coloured Bull Terriers can also be affected, though this is far less common and research has shown that less than 2% of coloureds may be affected. Deafness can occur in either or both ears.

For many years, breeders have avoided breeding from deaf animals, and yet there are still a number of Bull Terriers that are born deaf. One possible reason may be that until recently it has not been possible to accurately identify animals which are partially deaf, and that breeders may have inadvertently been breeding from animals with less than perfect hearing.

Bull Terriers deaf in one ear are referred to as being "unilaterally deaf" and are sometimes referred to as "Unilaterals". Unilaterals make perfectly good pets and it is often difficult to recognise that the animal has a problem, as it will soon educate itself to tell where sounds are coming from. A tell tale sign of a Unilateral puppy may be that it runs in the wrong direction when called, or "scans" the horizon when hearing a sound looking to see where it came from. However, this is not always the case and many unilaterally deaf Bull Terriers will have lived long and happy lives without their owners having the slightest inkling that they cannot hear per-

fectly. Whilst this is the case, unilaterals should not be bred from, as it is considered likely that they may pass on this gene to their offspring, and may produce either totally or partially deaf puppies.

Totally deaf Bull Terriers are usually a different matter altogether. They often find it very difficult to adapt to a normal life, are extremely difficult to train and will often not make suitable pets. They can also become defensive if woken suddenly, or startled in any way and for that reason should not be sold or bred from. There are documented cases of deaf Bull Terriers living happy lives, but these are very much the exception rather than the rule and for every happy tale there will be 10 disastrous ones. An experienced and reputable breeder would not knowingly sell a deaf Bull Terrier.

Luckily, it is now possible to test Bull Terriers electronically, to establish exactly how well the animal can hear. This test, known as the B.A.E.R. (Brain Auditory Evoked Response) Test, can be carried out from about 5 weeks old and is a fairly simple and straightforward procedure. The test does not hurt or distress the animal in any way, though adult dogs may require a light anaesthetic to ensure that they keep still and enable accurate results to be obtained. Many breeders now have their puppies BAER tested prior to selling them, and we would recommend that anyone purchasing a puppy should insist on a certificate to certify the puppy's level of hearing. Not many veterinary surgeries are equipped to carry out this test; however, there are a few institutes such as Onderstepoort in Pretoria where this test is available.

## Cradle And Birthday Of The Dog Identified: East Asia 16,000 years ago

*ScienceDaily (Sep. 2, 2009) — Previous studies in the field have indicated that East Asia is where the wolf was tamed and became the dog. It was not possible to be more precise than that. But now researchers at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm have managed to zero in on man's best friend.*

"For the first time ... it is possible to provide a detailed picture of the dog, with its birthplace, point in time, and how many wolves were tamed," says Peter Savolainen, a biology researcher at KTH.

Together with Swedish colleagues and a Chinese research team, he has made a number of new discoveries about the history of the dog.

These discoveries are presented in an article in the scientific journal *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, where it is claimed that the dog appeared 16,000

years ago, in Asia, south of the Yangtze River in China.

This is a considerably more specific date and birthplace than had previously been put forward.

"Our earlier findings from 2002 have not been fully accepted, but with our new data there will be greater acceptance. The picture provides much more detail," says Peter Savolainen.

The time for the emergence of the dog conforms well with when the population in this part of the world went from being hunters and gatherers to being farmers, which was 10,000 to 12,000 years ago.

According to Peter Savolainen, the research indicates that the dog has a single geographic origin but descends from a



large number of animals. At least several hundred tamed wolves, probably even more.

"The fact that there were so many wolves indicates that this was an important, major part of the culture," says Peter

Savolainen.

He adds that the research findings provide several exciting theories. For example, the original dogs, unlike their later descendants in Europe, which were used as herders and guard dogs, probably ended their lives in the stomachs of humans.

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## Cardiac Valvular and Vascular Disease in Bull Terriers

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### Abstract

The hearts of 27 Bull Terriers and six control dogs were evaluated. Heart murmurs were auscultated in 14 (52%) Bull Terriers. At necropsy, 25 Bull Terriers (93%) had myxomatous degeneration of the mitral valve or abnormalities of the left ventricular outflow tract. Small ves-

sel arteriosclerosis in the myocardium and fibrosis of cardiac conduction tissue were common histological findings in Bull Terriers with clinical cardiac disease. These lesions were also detected in dogs without clinical evidence of cardiac disease and only mild murmurs or structural valvular disease.



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