

doing what comes naturally.

—Virginia Matanic,
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American Fox Terrier Club website:
aftc.org

Glen of Imaal Terriers

Thinking About Hips, or
“Chic to Be CHIC”

There are two acceptable methods of hip evaluation under the Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America’s Code of Ethics. One of these is through the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA), and the other is the PennHIP method. Both entail sending radiographic images to the respective organizations, where these are then reviewed by professionals trained in the different methods.

All Glens should have their hips evaluated before being used in a breeding program. You can look to see if a Glen has a hip evaluation on file by going to the OFA website at offa.org and using the search feature “Search OFA for Health Tested Dogs” on the home page.

If your search comes up empty (make certain the registered name is spelled correctly), it could mean that the dog was never tested, or that the testing was done but the owner did not allow the results to be shared.

Dogs who have had PennHIP evaluations can have their scores entered in the OFA database by paying a small fee.

A GITCA member who uses a dog for breeding without having the required health testing performed is in violation of the club’s Code of Ethics. Regarding hip evaluations, the code does not say the hips have to meet a certain standard; they only have to be evaluated so the breeder can make an informed breeding decision.

Glens typically do not have great hip scores (OFA) or DIs (PennHIP). Looking at 160 OFA evaluations of Glens from January 1974 through December 2012, 30.6 percent were rated dysplastic. A dog passes an OFA evaluation with either an “Excellent,” “Good,” or “Fair” score. Scores of “Mild,” “Moderate,” or “Severe” indi-

cate dysplasia. Breeding a dog with a dysplastic score is acceptable, but the dog should be mated to a Glen with a much better hip score.

Here is an example from my own breeding practice. My first Glen, Ch. Rainbow Springs Long Way to Tipperary, RN, had his hips evaluated by PennHIP in 2002. PennHIP does not assign a pass or fail score as OFA does. Instead they assign your dog a “DI,” or Distraction Index, value. Tipper’s DI is 0.68, and a dog with a DI in excess of 0.70 is considered dysplastic, so Tipper has a less than desirable PennHIP evaluation—not actually dysplastic, but very close.

Tipper sired a single litter. He was bred to my Ch. Finnabair Roisin O Tipperary. Rosie had her hips evaluated by the OFA method. Her OFA score is “Good.” So, I used a stud dog with a poor PennHIP DI on a bitch with a “Good” OFA score. Three of the six resulting pups received passing OFA evaluations (the other three were never tested). Two were rated “Fair,” and one was rated “Good.” This is a very small and insignificant sample, but still a satisfying result.

One of the requirements of the AKC Breeder of Merit program is that the breeder “Certifies that applicable health screens are performed on the sire and dam as recommended by the Parent Club.”

In spite of the GITCA’s code of ethics requiring hip testing and encouraging breeders to obtain CHIC (Canine Health Information Center) numbers, it is still sadly commonplace to see litters where the sire or dam does not have a hip score in the OFA database. In most of these cases, the hip evaluations were performed but the results were less than desirable and were not shared by the owners for that reason.

In 2013 the GITCA Board approved a 2014 calendar project, which was skillfully and successfully brought to fruition by club member Lauren Cresap. Previous Glen calendars were not very successful, so for 2014 we tried something different. For this one,

every Glen featured had to have a CHIC number, and their owners had to pay a fee to sponsor a month on the calendar. The sponsorship fees covered the cost of producing the calendar, so all the sales receipts went into the club’s health fund. This project, affectionately known as “Chic to Be CHIC,” made a very nice \$920 profit for our small club. Beyond that, I hope we took a small step in educating Glen owners and breeders about the importance of testing and sharing health results.

Merriam-Webster defines *chic* as “smart elegance and sophistication.” What is more “smart” than health testing before breeding, and more sophisticated than sharing those health results for all to see?

—Jo Lynn, irishglen@aol.com

Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America website: Glens.org

Irish Terriers

Coat or Cover

“Nice rug!”

I took a couple of more steps thinking I’d load the dog in the car before attempting to deal with Ms. D’s sarcasm. I stopped, thought better of it, and brought the dog back.

“You don’t like my dog’s coat?” I asked her, knowing full well that she was on the record about this issue.

“You should show him in a rug,” she said, never looking up from her book.

“His coat’s not too bad. I think I can show him in it,” I parsed.

“So that’s what we’ve come to?”

This looked like a trick question, so I punted. “Huh?”

“So, you’re breeding just *show* dogs now?”

“Among other things,” I said, feeling uncomfortable, as I was beginning to see where she was going with this.

She glanced up briefly, then stuck her nose back in the book. “How the mighty have fallen. What ever happened to that *breed standard* business—or, better yet, *the purpose for which the breed was created?*”

I took a breath. “I’m sure you know what they say about coats: ‘They don’t

walk on them.” The words had no sooner left my mouth than I regretted saying them and felt I had walked into it.

Ms. D rolled her eyes up over the top of her book. Her gaze flickered uncertainly for a second before settling on the dog with laserlike intensity. “So, a typical, weather-resistant coat that keeps the dog dry and warm is a less important component of overall soundness than movement?”

“Well, they say structure is harder to breed ... and then a good coat can be added to a bloodline later on.”

Ms. D wrapped her hand around her glass of iced tea and stood up. She closed the distance between us and looked up. The beginning of a smile pulled at the outer corner of her lips.

“You do agree that a hunting dog needs a coat to protect him from the elements?” she asked.

Before I could even think about a reply, I could hear the ice cubes in her tea glass clink together and plunge over the lip of her glass. She moved her arm slightly, so that the stream of tea ran the length of the dog’s back. The hair parted down to his skin, falling on either side of his spine as neatly as if Moses had waved his staff over that sea of red hair.

We both looked down.

Ms. D spoke first, quoting the standard: “*The hairs growing so closely together that when parted ... the skin is hardly visible ...*”

She looked up at me. “I’d say the skin is visible!”

I agreed.

“A coat is an important thing to have,” she said. “Don’t leave home without one.”

—Ellis West, *e.f.west@att.net*

Irish Terrier Club of America website: *itca.info*

Kerry Blue Terriers

Puppy Training From the Whelping Box

Anything from a simple whelping box to a deluxe, custom-made, multi-optional, four-star whelping suite can be part of a breeder’s supply of

goods when raising a litter.

Just as with choice of whelping box, the way a breeder chooses to train her puppies varies from breeder to breeder and changes as experiences dictate. All puppy training takes time and effort, but the results are worth it.

Supplies Needed

- Fence or gate to contain the puppies. Start small, and expand as the puppies grow. Make sure the fence material could not allow a puppy’s foot or head to get caught in any opening.

- Floor covering. A piece of vinyl flooring can be used, if the current floor needs to be protected.

- Paper—regular newspaper, unprinted newspaper end-rolls, and “pee pads.”

- A small, square piece of outdoor carpeting.

- One small crate. Ultimately each puppy will have his own crate.

- A comfortable sleeping area. Do not use material or rags that can easily shred, since small puppies can get tangled in loose threads that can unravel at the ends of a cloth.

- A designated “elimination” area that is portioned off from the other parts of the puppies’ fenced-in area.

- A variety of toys and items they can climb onto or hide under.

- A food bowl. The typical round puppy-feeding bowl that has a bump-up in the middle is sometimes replaced with a skinny, long, rectangular trough, followed by individual bowls as the puppies mature.

- Small water bowl. Be careful to not leave a water bowl in with very small puppies. They can drown in something as small as a water bowl.

- Plastic bags or a covered trash bucket for all the soiled puppy papers.

Divide and Conquer

- The puppies’ area should be divided into four specific spaces, for four different purposes: sleep, play, eat, and defecate/urinate.

- Place the play area closest to the side you use when you come into the room. Since puppies usually run to that area, and you would not want them

stepping into something they shouldn’t. I also place a piece of indoor-outdoor carpeting in this area, to give the puppies better traction as they run and play. Vary their toys periodically.

- Place the “poop” area furthest away from your typical greeting area. Some people actually place a solid divider within the puppy enclosure with an opening, so puppies have to go through the opening before they poop. I allocate an area the size of an open *New York Times* newspaper and place a very thin piece of wood down to secure the start of that area. The few pages of newspaper are covered with a sheet of clean unprinted paper on top. Believe it or not, puppies learn to use that area even before their eyes are totally opened. Make the pups get used to a clean environment by cleaning out this area several times a day.

- A small, single crate for sleeping is used when the puppies are very young. Initially I remove the crate door so the puppies are free to go in and out. As they get older I will bring in two crates, then eventually one for each puppy. The crate door is then used to enclose them for short intervals, so they learn to poop only when they come out and in the correct area. The ultimate goal is to get them to sleep through the night in their own crates and to poop only outside. These larger crates go with them to their new home, making the transition and training easier for the puppy and the new owners.

Well ... that is just the start of a responsible breeder’s chores. Puppy socialization and lead training are just around the corner.

—Carol Kearney,
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United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club website: *uskbtc.com*

Lakeland Terriers

Allergies, the Immune System, Genetics, and Reducing the Variables

I received the following inquiry from another breeder:

“With all the talk of allergies and