

TERRIER GROUP

Glen of Imaal Terriers

PRESERVATION

In the last year or so, I've been seeing the term *preservation breeder* a lot. It seems to be often associated with another term: *low-entry breed*.

Now, the term *low-entry breed* has a very specific definition. According to the AKC, a low-entry breed (LEB) is defined as one in which fewer than 3,500 entries of that breed were made at AKC licensed and member dog shows throughout the United States during the preceding calendar year. Glens are one of 98 low-entry breeds, and 20 of those 98 are terrier breeds. I don't know how many total conformation entries of Glens there were in 2019, but I do know that there were only 102 unique Glens being shown in conformation. This number has remained relatively constant over the last 12 years. In that period (2008 through 2019), the lowest number of unique Glens being shown was 69 (2014). Last year, 2019, saw the highest number, at 102.

Being a "preservation breeder" sounds like a great thing, but what exactly does it mean? Is every person who owns a rare breed and who produces one or more litters worthy of that title? Shouldn't there be more to it than that? In the least, I feel that breeders should complete the minimum requirements to become a Breeder of Merit, which are: (1) have at least 5



Glen of Imaal Terrier

years' involvement with AKC events; (2) have earned AKC conformation, performance, or companion event titles on a minimum of four dogs from AKC litters they bred/co-bred in each breed applied for; (3) is member of an AKC club; (4) certifies that applicable health screens are performed on your breeding stock as recommended by the breed's parent club; and (5) demonstrates a commitment to ensur-

ing 100-percent of the puppies produced are individually AKC registered.

Someone who truly cares about preserving a breed will study canine anatomy and conformation and memorize their breed standard. Does producing the minimum number of champions to be a Breeder of Merit demonstrate an adequate grasp of breed type? Sadly, this is not necessarily so, especially in situations where the owners are new to the breed and all littermates are being shown, show quality or not, until champions are made up. In these cases, it is the judges, not the breeders, who are shaping and potentially modifying breed type.

When there are on average less than 15 litters born a year and so few unique Glens being shown, then conformation judges wield a considerable amount of power to influence Glen breed type. The future of the rare breeds could be dramatically influenced by their Best of Breed and group placements.

I strongly encourage judges to reach out to GITCA Judges' Education with any and all questions about our breed. You have no control over which Glens will be shown to you, but you can help preserve correct breed type in Glens by carefully studying our standard, taking advantage of GITCA judges education and taking great care in making your placements. Preserving a rare breed relies on the

cooperation of not only breeders and owners, but terrier judges as well.

—Jo Lynn,
irishglen@aol.com

Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America

Irish Terriers

HUNTING THE ANSWER

“I screwed up,” Harold said. “I shouldn’t have become a judge.”

I looked up from my steward’s table and practically jumped backwards. “Jeez-o-Pete, you look terrible!” I said. He was ash-white and sweating like a pig on a spit. “What’s wrong, Harold?”

“I haven’t got what it takes to be a judge,” he gasped, and collapsed into the judge’s chair.

The national specialty show for Monongahela Brush and Swamp Terriers was about to begin, and Harold was listed as the judge of record, so I stated the obvious. “This is a fine time to decide that,” I rasped, trying not to shout.

Back when Harold was debating whether to apply for his judging license I had tried to warn him off. I told him he had no business besmirching his reputation as a breeder of long standing by making a fool of himself at center stage. And I let him know the old gang would be ticked at him for giving up his role as

COURTESY LYNDIA BEAM

TERRIER GROUP



Irish Terrier: cigarette card, early 20th century

ringside critic extraordinaire. Now before it all blew up on me I sailed against the wind.

“Harold, if you’re not qualified to judge this breed, then who on the planet is? Good gosh, you’ve breeding them since Saul saw the light, you know every bloodline in the country, and

every nuance in the breed, and you’re not beholding to anyone for your good reputation. You’re the perfect person to bring knowledge, common sense, and a high ethical standard to the breed and the sport.”

Harold tried to steady himself by sipping

some ice water and wiping his brow. “The problem is, I can see the choices too clearly,” he said.

“Huh?”

“At the end,” he said, “I know what will be out there. It will come down to some beautifully headed, typically coated, sound little paragon of type matched up against a big, flashy show horse begging for the win.”

“And what will you do?”

“I don’t know,” Harold lamented. “I haven’t decided. What if I can’t ever decide?”

The first class came into the ring. Now I was ashen faced and perspiring. Lamely I encouraged him, “Do your best.”

Like a lot of good judges, Harold worked his way through the classes, rewarding virtues and penalizing faults.

The wishbone-stuck-in-the-throat moment came in Best of Breed competition, when the two phantom prototypes appeared one behind the other in the first go-round.

Harold didn’t panic, however. He worked his way through the class and came up with a handy little dog who didn’t stand out too much at first, but later you couldn’t get him out of your mind.

“How did you find that dog?” I asked after the photos were taken.

“I nearly panicked,” Harold said, “but then I began to look at the class like a group of hunt-

ing dogs—the purpose for which they were created. I just asked myself which one I’d want to take out on an inclement day and trudge through the fields with, and that vision of a dog appeared.”

“You dodged a bullet today because he was there,” I pointed out.

“Yes,” Harold agreed, “but I have something to look for from now on.”

—Ellis West,

e.f.west1@att.net

Irish Terrier Club of America

Kerry Blue Terriers

THE VERSATILE KERRY BLUE TERRIER

In *The Curious History of Irish Dogs*, David Blake Knox quotes an Irish farmer who had Kerry Blues in the 1920s:

“In the morning they herd the cattle; at noon they come in and tread the wheel to churn the butter; in the afternoon they herd again; and after supper they are turned out to guard the sheep, the chickens and geese and the pigs.”

Kerry Blue Terriers have a natural desire to chase, herd, and work. These qualities make them versatile performance dogs, and many Kerry Blue Terrier (KBT) owners, especially those who perform in competitive events with their KBT, shared some of their thoughts