

largely focused on introducing our "rare" breed to the public. That has changed a bit over time, but the one question that invariably persists is "Why do you show your dogs?"

Good question.

For interviewers from the "mainstream media," I've often sensed the question is tinged with a certain degree of puzzlement and cynicism. Our endeavors in the show ring appear curious to them, even ripe for satire. Indeed, what we do has been satirized to great success on film and television. But good satire is born of truth.

We all know that in its purest form, a dog show is meant to be an arena for evaluating breeding stock, and our best breeders and exhibitors still hold this as their primary motivation, even if the system does not at all times appear to be on the same wavelength in that regard. The satires usually miss that one, however. Instead they tend to focus on the now well-worn clichés—that for some of us the dogs are our surrogate children, or that the competition is more about satisfying our own ego-driven needs. And, I am sure, there are as many other motivations as there are people who show their dogs.

I have been asked the question so many times now that I have given it long and deep thought. Yes, many of the above factors might contribute, consciously or not, to my own reasons for showing my dogs, but there is one overriding motivation for me: I like to spend "alone time" with my dogs. Yes, I could do this without going to a dog show, but in my busy life, that trip to the dog park often gets back-burnered while more pressing matters prevail. But once I commit to going to a dog show, pesky annoyances such as career and family obligations vanish.

There's a lot of downtime at a dog show, especially if you are fortunate enough to win Best of Breed and have a several-hours-long wait for the group. In the most extreme case, if you have a 9 a.m. ringtime for breed, and groups commence at 3 p.m., yours being the last of seven, well, you have the better

part of a day to fill.

And fill it we do. I have the good fortune, by virtue of where I live, to have numerous local shows that are held on historic sites, arboretums, botanical gardens, and picturesque parks. Once our few minutes in the breed ring are over, off we go to explore. The dogs love it. I love it. And for those shows held in less than picture-postcard settings, we hop into the car and find a place to play for a few hours. And yes, sometimes we just all take a nap together.

I have often wondered what the dogs make of all of this. My best guess is that they think it's the dog park but with fussy rules and liver treats. But unlike cynical interviewers, the dogs don't ask questions. —Bruce Susman, [BLUEKAFKA@aol.com](mailto:BLUEKAFKA@aol.com); Glen of Imaal Terrier Club of America website: [glous.org](http://glous.org)

## Irish Terriers Temperament Testing PART THREE

In our last article we addressed the various elements of the temperament test. In this final segment, we assess the significance of the various test results. The observed behavior will help determine puppy placement—whether for show, performance, or companion. (For purposes of this assessment, references to "show prospect" refer to either the conformation ring or obedience/rally/agility activities and simply differentiates from companion-only.)

### 1. *Alone in the ex-pen.*

Ideal reaction for a show prospect would be tail up, ears up, alert and looking around. As the tester approaches, social engagement (tail wagging, feet up on sides of pen) is desirable. A show prospect can be outgoing or aloof but never show shyness. A companion prospect might demonstrate less dominance or self-confidence, such as having a lower body posture or tail wagging lower, but should still want social contact.

### 2. *Dropping bag, sock-cam, or whistle.*

It is desirable for any Irish to show fearless curiosity, and playfulness is a plus. Evidence of sight or noise sensitivity, as we said before, should be addressed with positive exercises.

### 3. *Tester holds puppy (checking for degree of social attraction).*

Eye contact is preferred, as it shows a desire to interact with/work for people, and a relaxed, accepting attitude showing trust is most desirable.

### 4-5. *Tester calls puppy and encourages him to follow (checking for degree of social attraction vs. independence).*

Coming eagerly and following readily is preferred to more independent behavior such as going off alone to explore or ignoring or showing indifference to the tester.

### 6-7. *Elevation and restraint (checks for degree of dominance and willfulness).*

The most dominant puppy will resist vigorously and never settle. The less-dominant puppy will simply accept these positions. A companion pup should exhibit moderate struggle, then acceptance, or no struggle at all, but he should never struggle vigorously without settling. A show prospect can exhibit some dominance; how much depends on the skills of the future handler.

### 8. *Pain tolerance.*

Low pain tolerance is desirable to most trainers. The Irish Terrier (like most terriers) shows a higher tolerance, so in selecting a puppy for a show home I would look for the lower end of the scale for the breed. However, for a pup destined for a family with young children, higher pain tolerance might be useful.

### 9. *Forgiveness.*

In all cases it is desirable that the puppy shows forgiveness by licking the tester's face or hands. Sulking or turning away would indicate an unforgiving nature, which is very difficult to work with. Accidents can happen, and you want a puppy who can shake it off and move on.

### 10, 11, 12, and 13. *Retrieve/tag/prey drive/food drive.*

All of these are highly desirable in the show prospect, whether for conforma-

tion or performance. A family with older children might enjoy a pup with these qualities. However, this type of pup might be "too much" (that is, prone to jumping up, chasing, stealing food or toys, and so on) for a family with young children. Lack of interest in these activities would indicate an undesirable level of independence or disengagement.

Remember: Training can moderate innate behavior, but it cannot change it completely, so it behooves the breeder to take the results of the temperament test seriously and use them to get the right puppy into the right home.

So there you have it—Temperament Testing 101. Give it a try!

Many thanks to Dale Gordon for all her work on this series. Helping us find other ways to judge the outcomes of our breeding choices and help assure customer satisfaction is very much appreciated! —Marianne Kehoe, [m\\_akehoe@verizon.net](mailto:m_akehoe@verizon.net); Irish Terrier Club of America website: [ita.info](http://ita.info)

## Kerry Blue Terriers Did You Know?

I love to collect old books, articles, and pictures on the Kerry Blue Terrier. Internet searches on eBay or out-of-print sources like [allibris.com](http://allibris.com) have added to the material found at dog shows. There is a wealth of information on the breed that gives you an interesting perspective on the history and development of the Kerry whom we see in the ring today.

In Ireland, Kerries earned the reputation for great courage and intelligence in all forms of field and water work, and for the breed's unusual color and texture of coat. This created interest in the breed in other European countries. Did you know that Mrs. Casey Hewitt, owner of the Munster prefix, convinced show secretaries to put on classes for this rather rough-looking terrier? She succeeded, and in England at Crufts in 1922, 10 Kerries were benched. Most of them belonged to Mrs. Hewitt.

Shortly after, the KBTC of England

was formed, and one of its three aims was to popularize the breed at home and abroad. It is reported that the first Kerry litter born in America may have been bred by James McCashin of Morristown, New Jersey, in 1925. It was that same year that the KBTC of America was formed, with B. Jerome Megargee elected as president. The club's name was later changed to the United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club.

Through those early years, Kerries had many enthusiasts promoting the breed. Did you know that Mrs. E. A. Kelly, in a 1939 *Dog World* article, expounded on the reason she preferred a Kerry? She reminded all, "You do not have to be Irish to like a Kerry." I especially liked her comment that a Kerry responds to kindness with a depth of affection rarely found in any breed and is devoted to children. She wrote, "He will guard his home with courage and determination and will lay down his life for his master—and do it with his tail wagging."

There are many wonderful stories told of a Kerry's devotion. A Kerry owned by Jeremiah Leen of Ireland in 1924 became great friends with a little girl of 10 who used to deliver milk daily from her home a quarter-mile away. The Kerry would always meet her at the gate, but he never would leave his property. One morning, a bunch of hogs on the road surrounded the little girl and scared her. The Kerry immediately left his property and ran around the little girl, scaring away the hogs in all directions. Of course, he escorted the little girl all the way home.

Another confirmation of a Kerry's devotion to man appeared in a 1936 <1>Western Kennel World<1> article. It described a situation of a little boy who wanted to go swimming. When the Kerry saw the boy in the water and realized that his owner was really not going to do anything about it, the Kerry rushed into the water and pulled the boy to shore. The Kerry then felt it was his responsibility to patrol the beach between the water and any young children, until he finally had to

be restrained so people were allowed to swim.

As you wash, brush, and scissor your Kerry, do you know who changed the style of the first scraggly and unkempt-coated terrier exhibited at shows early in the 20th century to the neater-groomed dog we see today? Mrs. Violet Handy was the lady who started the trend—much to the dismay of many other exhibitors. Well, wouldn't you know that in 1956, Botho Lilienthal said that in the dog show game, nothing can ever be expected to find unanimous approval? —Carol Kearney, [heritagekerry@optonline.net](mailto:heritagekerry@optonline.net); United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club website: [uskbtc.com](http://uskbtc.com)

## Lakeland Terriers A Pet Peeve

Having on occasion taught biology to liberal-arts majors, I get that many journalists have minimal understanding of science. But there is really no excuse for the media's use of the terms *bacteria* and *virus* interchangeably. The readers of this publication would never tolerate hearing a German Shepherd called a Poodle, or vice versa!

Understanding the difference between *virus* and *bacteria* matters because we all harbor these tiny creatures in our bodies; in fact bacteria normally in and on our bodies outnumber our cells by 10 to one.

Knowledge about bacteria and viruses matters to us as dog breeders and pet owners because we can make better decisions about treatments and disease prevention, as well as have a better working relationship with our vet if we have a good grasp of the concepts of competing microbes, infectious disease, and the immune system's interaction with them.

A few definitions might be helpful:

*Microbe*. Any living thing that is too small to see with the unaided eye (that is, requires a microscope to visualize).

*Bacterium* (singular), *bacteria* (plural). A primitive type of single-cell life form that reproduces by simple division into