

VISUALISATION OF THE STANDARD

INTRODUCTION

The topic of the different standards for the Afghan hound seems to be a frequent subject of discussion...whether in formal settings or in groups on social media, or when a common basis for judging the breed is in question

Since the first breed standard was developed in the UK in 1906... (*Margaret Niblock The Afghan Hound A Definitive Study;1980*) using Zardin and the template...now possibly disputed...later breed standards have been produced...the first in the USA was written in 1924 and like all the others now in existence has been modified by committees; possibly to make statements clearer...or to support strong minded members individual requests.

The history of the standards has been covered in detail by Gisela.

In the early days, after it became a popular show dog, the breed appeared to develop different styles where it was possible to see a particular specimen and be confident in saying "that is a dog bred in UK; Holland; USA; Scandinavia..." Many kennels also developed their own distinctive style which was instantly recognisable...

The most prolific current researcher and writer of the history of the Afghan hound is Steve Tillotson, who like the breed itself was "exported" from the UK to USA. His presentations on the early years are worth reading and rereading...and are not part of this discussion.

The recent advances in reproductive technology, legislation pertaining to travel between countries and the ease of such travel has blurred the uniqueness of the different styles previously apparent. As perhaps an outpost in the history of the Afghan hound, Australia now has as many different dogs, bred to different standards as any other more centrally located European region

Possibly because of this amalgam of breeding practices it is time to reconsider how these changes have affected the breed...we hear frequently that the breed has changed...and yet we still breed to four (4) standards... all those who love the breed and vow to preserve and protect it are passionate about where we are heading!

We need to look at what differences in the standards we are talking about, and if those differences are major obstacles to the breeds development and fitness for function, or if they are almost purely cosmetic, and open to individual interpretation.

Gisela will tell you of the work that has been done to arrive at the presentation today; working with many people, then with a smaller group from the four corners of the world has been challenging, but rewarding.

The slides she has will show the four (4) standards in a comparison table format.

My job is to bring together the differences, as we see them and consider if they are a disadvantage to the breed welfare and fitness for function.

Line drawings are by Julie Roche Qamari Kennels USA and the photos from the public domain to demonstrate points of interest.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

As stated at the outset, it might now be time to look at how the breed is no longer insular to one region and separate standards may no longer be relevant. The single manual and the visualisation that will follow, as promised by this Congress committee, to make certain that Afghan hounds continue to be bred as functional, healthy hounds.

By working with the current standards, adding and subtracting and using words and phrases from some of the more wordy examples, a single standard might be developed which is in agreement with what is actually happening, and the dogs which are being produced.

The photos of dogs from breeders from all over the world will show how closely each country is producing Afghan hounds which are not readily identifiable as being bred to four (4) differing standards.

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