

Staffamania

NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2016

NORTH WEST STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER CLUB

Affiliated to KUSA



NWSBTC: CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW - 13 AUGUST 2016

CC DOG & BEST IN SHOW: MARCONN BLACK JAQUAR
RESERVE BEST IN SHOW: CH DELU HE'S THE MAN

JUDGE: LOUIS VISAGIE (SA)

STAFFAMANIA

43rd Newsletter of the

NORTH WEST STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER CLUB

(Affiliated to the Kennel Union of Southern Africa)

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DISCLAIMER

Articles, letters and advertisements are always welcome but it must be pointed out that the views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those held by the Editor or the Officers and Committee of the North West Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club.

From the Chair – September 2016

To all our Members,

THANK YOU, for a great 3rd quarter of 2016. We had an excellent 2nd Championship show, with a super judge, Mr Louis Visagie. What an exciting day! With great dogs and last but not the least, a shout out to all our exhibitors, who gave us a super entry of 76 dogs. Without your support, this day would not have been possible!

I'm sure we can all agree that the show was well run and a huge success, thank you to my committee, everyone worked very hard together. Thank you to all who have made this possible.

Thank you also to our Judge, Mr Louis Visagie (Visstaff) all the way from the Western Cape. Under very difficult circumstances he still kept his appointment with our club. A big thank you for also presenting us with an excellent and well prepared breed seminar, the information was extremely useful to old and new in the breed.

Furthermore, most of the exhibitors also received a jubilee booklet, compiled by Mr Visagie, allowing us a glance back in time to consider the work done before us by previous generations. This provided ample opportunity for us to realise the great responsibility we have as the custodians of the breed today.

Now, we look forward in anticipation to the combined "Charity show" in October. This show is hosted by Stafford clubs around the country and the aim is to raise

funds, benefiting our Breed. We believe that it will be yet another success. All the best to the steering committee!

The NWSBTC of SA's committee is already hard at work to ensure that this will be a beneficial and profitable event for its members!

We want to take this opportunity to once again thank our main sponsor, Montego, as well as all our other sponsors, for their continuous and valued support. Without your support and sponsorships, our shows and events would not have been successful! We hope to continue this wonderful relationship well into the future.

We look forward to see you all in October!

Kind Regards

Johann Pretorius

Chairman

---oooOooo---

Because of unforeseen circumstances we are sad to have to inform you that this will be the last printed copy. As from 2017 the Staffamania newsletter will be emailed only to all our members.

Thank you to my son Willie Steyn, who lives in London, and who was responsible for the neat and colourful newsletters that were handed out three times each year.

Rielle Steyn

Editor

**NORTH WEST STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER CLUB's
CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW
HELD 13 AUGUST 2016
Some notes by the judge, Louis Visagie (Visstaff)**

Congratulations to the Show Committee of the NWSBTC for managing a show of this magnitude to perfection. It is really showing dedication and full commitment.

General comments

The Breed Standard for SBTs was changed twice, departing from the original 1935 standard based on Jim the Dandy. Below are the changes that took place:

1948 standard

- * size down to 16 inches
- * prick ears out
- * close coupled instead of short back
- * well bent stifles introduced
- * blue introduced as a colour (From the Blue Paul Terrier of Scotland)
- * no judging scales for the various dimensions

1987 standard

- * movement clause introduced
- * light in the loins explained
- * desirable" size clause

These changes may be debatable, but they are recorded and one must view it as mandatory. What I observed was that variances of the past were no longer on display, making it tough to choose a winner amongst good show exhibits.

Further notes on observations:

1. Type: What I could clearly see that true *type* was present. In the main, most of the exhibits were well balanced.
2. The Stafford being a head-breed as a trademark, it is important to look for heads fitting the description in the standard; and there were plenty of those.
3. Teeth: Should be large, set square to the jaws. This was the best I have seen in my show career of 31 years. The pioneering/ foundation stock we had many years ago did not display the standard well; however, what was on show was world class. Although the standard does not say bone-white colouring of the teeth, it was there! What I often find is that the stronger teeth display that pure white (alias Colgate) bite. 95% bites conformed to the scissor description.
4. Eyes: the eyes of 90% of the exhibits conformed to the standard. As the colour of the eye could have correlation with coat colour, one would expect lighter coloured eyes to emerge, but this was not observed. It is a wonderful accolade that the past "yellow" eyed breeding stock was eliminated.
5. About 90% of the exhibits had an acceptable level topline.
6. Movement: The movement was acceptable and well handled by their owners. One must please remember to walk the pace that suites the dog and not the other way around.

Congratulations by breeding out the mincing/ crossing/ toe in movements of the past. Be careful not to offer a titbit to your exhibit whilst walking it in the ring. If the dog looks up, the movement will become faulty by starting to lift the front legs (no economy of effort) and then also deviating of the parallel movement clause.

7. Hindquarters: The standard calls for *well muscled* hindquarters. If one is to fault any aspect of the exhibits, I would mention this one. Although one may not stereotype, in my view, the muscles of the hindquarters were found to be rather soft. This usually happens if the dog is not exercised/ walked regularly.
8. The exhibits were all well controlled with no snapping or barking dogs in the ring. Fantastic showmanship.
9. Last comment: The general standard of breeding, in my view, is of world class. With my daughters staying in London and Sydney, I often compare our breeding to the standard and do the same at their shows abroad. Our best dogs will certainly do well overseas. Due to work obligations, I visited Germany in the recent past; and I would frankly say that in my view the exhibits of the NWSBTC are of a higher standard that I have seen there.

I sincerely hope that the Club, as represented by their leadership and proud members would remain to operate on this high level. My best wishes for the future.

Kind regards

Louis Visagie



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CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW - 13 AUGUST 2016**

Judge : Mr LOUIS VISAGIE (SA) – 76 ENTRIES

BEST IN SHOW	MARCONN BLACK JAQUAR	Taljaard MMD
RESERVE BEST IN SHOW	CH DELU HE'S THE MAN	Lurie DA
BEST PUPPY IN SHOW	BOLDWIN SASSY GIRL	Vermeulen A
RESERVE BEST PUPPY IN SHOW	RAMINARTUS SAY HEY KID OF BEZT	Bezuidenhout PHS
BEST JUNIOR IN SHOW	EUKLEIA MOYO BASTIAN	Du Rand JP & Van Heerden E
BEST SA BRED IN SHOW	BRONXTON NILDA	Pretorius J
BEST VETERAN IN SHOW	BEZT THOMA HAWK	Bezuidenhout PHS
BEST BABY PUPPY IN SHOW	CRAVONMARK TIM MCCOY	Kingham MW
CC DOG	MARCONN BLACK JAQUAR	Taljaard MMD
RCC DOG	WANDRASKI BLIKSEM WENPRO	Nagel AR
CC BITCH	CH CRAVONMARK ELLA-MAE OF MONETROUGE	Matthys D & Matthys M
RCC BITCH	BRONXTON RENAISSANCE RUBY	Pretorius J
Photos @ Frank Schoeman		

DOGS

1ST BABY PUPPY BBP



Cravonmark Tim McCoy

1ST MINOR PUPPY DOG



Larumo Gentleman Jack

2ND MINOR PUPPY DOG



Jumarcha Solitary Man

THANK YOU !!!

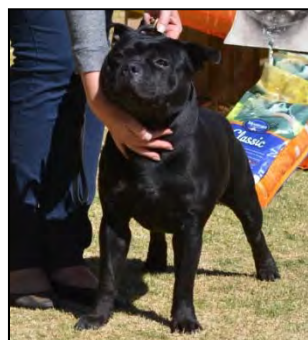


1ST PUPPY DOG RBP



Raminartus Say Hey Kid of Bezt

2ND PUPPY DOG



Boldwin Maximus

3RD PUPPY DOG



Maupa Oliver

4TH PUPPY DOG



Bezt Chaka's Impi

1ST JUNIOR DOG BJ



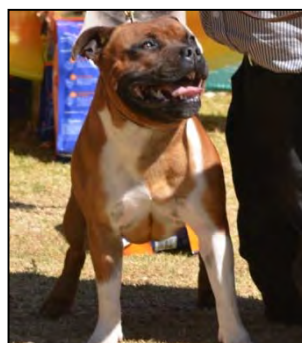
Eukleia Moyo Bastian

2ND JUNIOR DOG



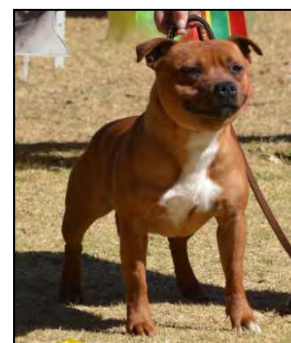
Storm Blackstaff Rogue at Sharrazar (Imp Spain)

3RD JUNIOR DOG



Eukleia Kumi Tyson

4TH JUNIOR DOG



Larumo Mr White House

1ST GRADUATE DOG



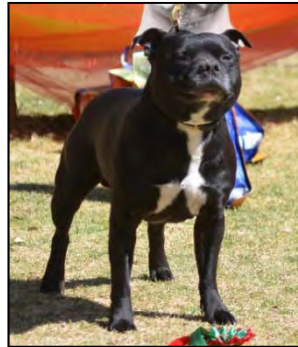
Boldwin Captain

1ST VETERAN DOG **BV**



Bezt Thoma Hawk

2ND VETERAN DOG



Lewon Black Thundur
Of Kavuki



1ST SA BRED DOG



Cravonmark Billy The Kid

2ND SA BRED DOG



Sharrazar Demon Walker

3RD SA BRED DOG



Kelev Chasin' Rainbows

4TH SA BRED DOG



Eukleia Nonus Conor

1ST OPEN DOG **CCD + BIS**



Marconn Black Jaguar

2ND OPEN DOG **RCCD**



Wandraski Bliksem
Wenpro

3RD OPEN DOG



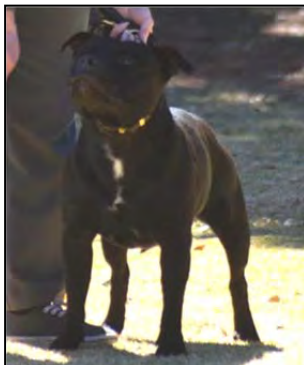
Kelev Morning Star

4TH OPEN DOG



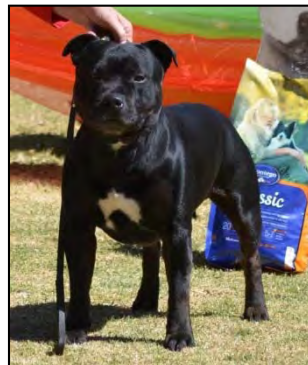
Rosswar Milo

1ST CHAMPION DOG **RBIS**



Ch Delu He's The Man

2ND CHAMPION DOG



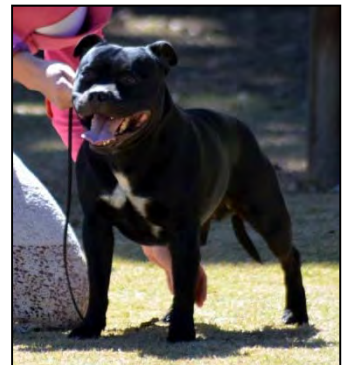
Ch Delu Von Diezel

3RD CHAMPION DOG



Ch Eukleia Aurora Sparkle
of Sivhana

4TH CHAMPION DOG



Ch Kelev Gipsy Boy



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Photos @ Frank Schoeman		

BITCHES

1ST PUPPY BITCH BPIS



Baldwin Sassy Girl

2ND PUPPY BITCH



Bronxton Bullas Beauty

3RD PUPPY BITCH



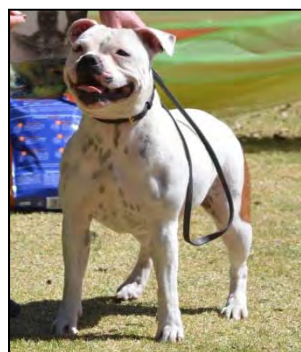
Larumo Running Blaze

4TH PUPPY BITCH



Sharrazar No Doubt

1ST JUNIOR BITCH



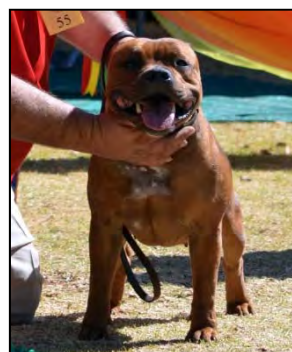
Eukleia Kumi Bailey

2ND JUNIOR BITCH



Kizus I-Patchy

3RD JUNIOR BITCH



Kavuki I Iz Gaby

4TH JUNIOR BITCH



Wandraski Skye Chorirot

1ST GRADUATE BITCH



Kavuki Black Betty

2ND GRADUATE BITCH



Delu Ruby Royale



1ST SA BRED BITCH **BSAB**



Bronxton Nilda

2ND SA BRED BITCH



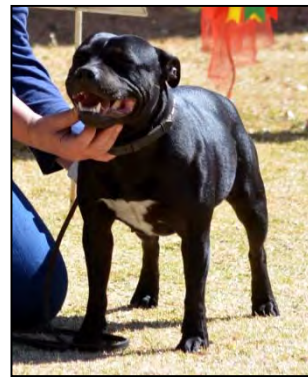
Princess Cleo

3RD SA BRED BITCH



Amdel Tish

4TH SA BRED BITCH



Baldwin Arabelle

1ST OPEN BITCH **CCB**



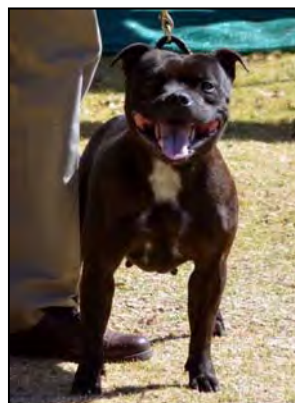
Ch Cravonmark Ella-Mae
of Monetrone

2ND OPEN BITCH **RCCB**



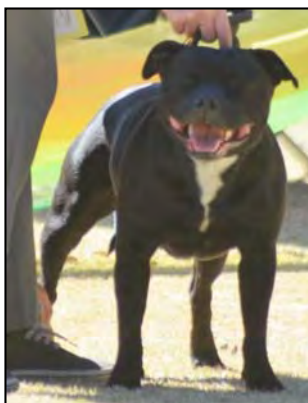
Bronxton Renaissance Ruby

3RD OPEN BITCH

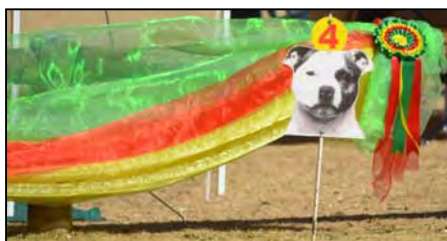


Ch Rosswar Shiloh

4TH OPEN BITCH



Delu Cool Kid Casey

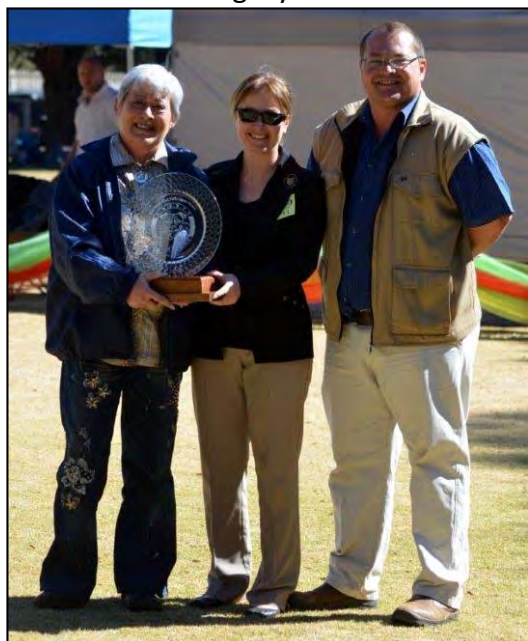


NWSBTC Legacy Award 2016

THANK YOU



There were lots and lots of prizes



Riette Steyn – Thank You Guys!

Winner of the Raffle



Lauren Mallet-Veale – Enjoy your prize!

67 Minutes for Madiba

By Joyce Dos Santos (Proud Grandmother to Abiegail)



Little Abiegail, 5 years old, decided to join "Mommy Lauren", our club's Vice Chairman, by giving back of her time and love on Mandela day.

This was an extremely busy and fun filled 67 minutes at the Randburg SPCA. The two of them started off with walking a beautiful and most energetic "Little Miss Piggy" (cross-breed terrier). This extremely high spirited little girl proved to be so full of energy, that the only way Miss Piggy could be calmed down, was by the beautiful singing and reassurance of little Abiegail.

On the safe return of a now "calmer" Miss Piggy, Abiegail then started with the collecting of the dog's feeding bowls. They had to first be emptied of any remaining food and, once that

was done, she was tasked with washing, rinsing and returning each bowl to its respective owner. The bowls would then be used again for one of the 3 meals that are fed daily.

Abiegail was then afforded the opportunity to socialise with two young Daxie's, only to find out that the two youngsters didn't have names. True to Abiegail's nurturing personality, she decided it was imperative to name the two before moving on. As a family Lauren and Abiegail had lost two remarkable dogs who played an instrumental role in the growth and development of Abiegail's passion for animals. Abiegail therefore thought it only fitting that the little shy female be called Storm and the dapper male be called Hurricane; this was done in loving memory of two of her closest "friends".

The two of them then spent their remaining time loving and talking to all those poor dogs that have been abused by the very hands that were supposed to love and protect them.

On behalf of Lauren and little Abiegail they would like to thank each and every one of the remarkable staff working at the Randburg SPCA who give of themselves so tirelessly and continuously plow back and fix the damage that is done by humans.



Last year NWSBTC and SBTC of the Tvl sponsored party packs, made up by Lauren, at the **'Cupcakes for Kids with Cancer'** function, where they used the opportunity to interact with and communicate Staffords as the "nanny breed" to the public. Abiegail (middle) in pink. Other Club members appearing on this photo are Stefanie, Juan, Lucius and Joani Pretorius, Lauren Uffindell and Joyce Dos Santos.

We salute you!

In Loving Memory of Stella Visagie



*God saw you getting tired, when a cure was not to be.
He wrapped his arms around you, and whispered "Come to Me"*



The North West Staffy Legacy Award

A legacy isn't just about what you accomplish in your life, it's about what you inspire others to do.

"The choices we make about the lives we live determine the kind of legacies we leave behind."

– **Tavis Smiley, The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates**

The NW Legacy Award recognizes and affirms those who have made significant and tangible contributions in the success of "the club" (North West Staffordshire Bull Terrier). The recipient must be a paid-up member or life member of the club.

Criteria:

- a. "Do the Correct Thing" – 'Passion to live life with honesty and integrity
"Honesty isn't just a recommendation." you earn your reputation by the things you do every day by being true to your word.
- b. "Treat People and Animals with Respect" – Both Riette and Frans love animals and people equally; this is reflected in the way they have opened their hearts and their home over the years. They look each person they meet squarely in the eye and listen intently while people talk to them. They treat everyone with respect.
- c. "Giving Back" – With success comes an obligation to share it. "The more you help others, the more you really help yourself." Be the best role model you can be both in the arena and out. – Someone is always watching.

Summary: The North West Staffy Legacy Award recipient should display personal characteristics of each of the criteria listed above. The key attributes are honesty, integrity, respect for others and the breed as well as a desire to give back to the community/ club and help others.

Friendly	–	<u>Approachable, welcoming and available. Willing to give of themselves and of their time</u>
Affectionate	–	<u>Caring and thoughtful, puts others before themselves</u>
Reliable	–	<u>Consistent and unwavering, always the same one day to the other</u>
Loyal	–	<u>Dependable and trustworthy, always gets the job done and to a high standard</u>
Courageous	–	<u>Spirited and determined, someone that you can always depend on</u>
Fearless	–	<u>Intrepid and resolute, stands by what they believe in and believes in what they stand for</u>
Intelligent	–	<u>Bright and optimistic, looks for the silver lining in everything</u>

CONCISED GLOSSARY OF CANINE TERMS

(Showing and Judging Dogs written by Hillary Harmar)

ABDOMEN:	The portion of the body that lies between the chest and the pelvis.
ACHILLES TENDON:	The tendon and muscle that extends along the lower thigh between femur and hock
ALBINISM:	Hereditary deficiency of colour pigment.
ALMOND EYES:	Narrow eyes shaped like the almond nut.
ANGULATION:	Front A at the hock, shoulder and upper arm. Rear A at stifles and the hock.
BACK:	The five vertebrae between the withers and the loin.
BACK LINE:	The top-line from neck to tail, including withers, back and croup.
BALANCED:	Well proportioned, referring to the whole.
BAT EARS:	An ear which is erect with a wide base and rounded tips.
BEEFY:	Over heaviness of hindquarters.
BITE:	Refers to the set of the teeth when the mounth is closed.
BLADE:	Shoulder.
BLAZE:	A white mark running up the face between the eyes.
BRAZE:	Two dogs of a kind exhibiting together.
BRISKET:	The lower part of the body below the chest and between the forelegs.
CANINES:	The two upper and two lower long, sharp, pointed teeth.
CAT FOOT:	A short round foot with the third digits short.
CHEEK:	Side of face below the eye.
CHOREA:	A nervous jerking of the muscles, generally affecting the legs.
CLOSE-COUPLED:	Short in loins.
COLLAR:	A marking around the dog's neck. A chain or leather band for means of restraint.
CONFORMATION:	Structure of the dog.
COUPLING:	The part of the body joining the forehand with the hindquarters, loin and the flank.
CREST:	The upper part of the neck.
CRABBING:	Moving like a crab. The hind feet step past the fore feet without clipping them.
CROWN:	The top part of the head.
DENTITION:	The number, arrangement and type of teeth in a dog's mouth.
DEWCLAWS:	The extra rudimentary claws found on the inside of the lower portion of a dog's leg.
DEWLAP:	Loose skin under the throat.
DOMED:	The round part of the skull.
DUDLEY NOSE:	Flesh or liver-coloured nose.
ERECT PASTERNS:	With little angle at the knee joints.
EVEN BITE:	Incisor teeth meeting without overlap. Incorrect in most breeds.
FACE:	Front of the head.
FAULTS:	Inconsistency with standards.
FIDDLE FRONT:	Crooked, bandy front legs. Out at elbows, pasterns close together and turned feet.
FLANK:	The fleshy part of the side between the ribs and the hip.
FROGG FACE:	An excessive undershot jaw.
GAIT:	The manner in which the dog moves.
HACKLES:	Hair on the neck and back, which is involuntarily raised when frightened.
HAM:	Well developed hind leg muscles.
HAUNCHES:	The rear part of the thigh on which a dog sits.
HEIGHT:	The measurement from the top of the withers to the ground.
HIND PASTERNS:	The group of bones between the hock joint and the foot.
HOCKS:	The joint between the pasterns and the upper part of the hind legs.
INBREEDING:	The mating of close relations.
INCISORS:	The upper and lower front teeth between the canines.
INTER BREEDING:	The breeding between varieties of the same breed.
KINETIC BALANCE:	Balance when in motion.

KNEE:	Manus, wrist or pastern joint.
KNUCKLE OVER:	Weak pastern joint. Double jointed.
LAYBACK:	An undershot jaw with a receding nose.
LEVEL BITE:	When the upper and lower front teeth meet.
LEVEL GAIT:	Even movement.
LINE BREEDING:	The mating of related dogs.
LIVER:	A red-brown colour.
LOINS:	The part of the body between the last rib and the croup.
MASK:	A dark muzzle.
MATE:	To breed a dog and bitch.
MATRON:	A proved brood bitch.
MONORCHID:	A unilateral cryptorchid. A dog with only one testicle descended in the scrotum.
MUZZLE:	The part of the head between the stop and the tip of the nose.
OESTRUM:	The period of ovulation. The season or heat.
OUT-CROSSING:	The mating of unrelated dogs of the same breed.
OVERBUILT:	A dog whose hindquarters are higher than the fore hand.
OVERSHOT:	The front teeth of the upper jaw projecting those of the lower jaw.
PADDLING:	Moving with the fore feet wide apart.
PASTERN:	The part of the leg below the knee or hock and above the feet.
PIED:	Two colours of unequal proportions, generally unequal in shape.
PREFIX:	A kennel name, which identifies the dogs belonging to one owner or owners.
PRICK EARS:	Erect, pointed ears.
RAM'S NOSE:	A slightly convex muzzle.
RIBBED UP:	When the ribs are neither too long nor too wide apart; should appear compact.
ROAN:	White hair mixed equally with red or blue hair.
RUDDER:	The Tail.
SADDLE:	A solid area of colour extending over the shoulder and back.
SCISSOR BITE:	A bite where the lower incisors touch the inside of the upper incisors.
SEASON:	Another term of oestrus or heat in the bitch.
SECOND THIGH:	The bones between the stifle and the hock.
SEPTUM:	The division between the nostrils.
SICKLE HOCKS:	Hocks sloping backwards, a serious fault in all breeds.
SNIPY:	A long, narrow muzzle.
SOUND:	Moving and standing correctly on all four legs with static and kinetic balance.
SPECTACLES:	Markings around the eye.
SPRING OF RIB:	The extent to which the ribs are well rounded.
STANCE:	Manner of standing.
STANDARD:	A description of an ideal dog of a breed, as a pattern for judges and breeders.
STIFLE:	The joint in a dog's hind legs between the upper and lower thigh.
STILTED:	The uneven movement of a straight-hocked dog.
STOP:	The depression at the junction of the nose and skull.
STRAIGHT-HOCKED:	Lacking in angulation of the hock joint.
SUBSTANCE:	Refers to strength in bone.
SUFFIX:	A breeder's kennel name attached to a dog's name to identify it as its owner.
TOE IN:	The feet turning in.
TUCKED UP:	A dog not looking well.
TYPE:	The quality of conforming to the breed standard.
UNDERSHOT:	The lower incisor teeth projecting beyond the upper teeth.
VARMINITY:	A bright alert expression particularly in Terriers.
WELL SPRUNG:	Well rounded ribs.
WITHERS:	The eight vertebrae between the neck and the back between the shoulder blades.

Congratulations!

To the owners of the following Champions which have been gazetted since the January 2016 edition of the Staffamania newsletter:

CH SHARRAZAR AFRICAN SPIRIT
CH SHARRAZAR SEEK N DESTROY
CH DELU DIEZEL
CH CRAVONMARK ELLA-MAE OF MONETROUGE
CH LARUMO DUKE MASTER OF SHAKINAT
CH EUKLEIA NONUS BEULAH
CH RAMINARTUS LA MORRIGAN
CH LARUMO BACK TO BLACK
CH EUKLEIA NONUS BIANCA
CH YARDSTICK CAPTAIN OF CRAVONMARK
CH RAMINARTUS GUZEN KONA
CH NORTHPOINTS MAN ON A MISSION



To Adrian Austen, the proud owner of CH STAFFYFRIENDS FANTASMA NEGRO DE SHARRAZAR (Imp Spain) for achieving the title of KUSA NATIONAL STAFFORD as well as KUSA NATIONAL TERRIER of the year 2016.



To Lourens & Marieta Ten Napel, the proud owners of CH & INT CH EUKLEIA AURORA SPARKLE OF SIVHANA for achieving yet another title and that of GOLDFIELDS DOG OF THE YEAR 2016.



BLOU STAFFORDS

Riette

Jammer mense, ek weet hierdie onderwerp is al deur die jare holrug gery en van die artikels wat hierna volg is al deur 90% van julle gelees, maar aangesien daar nou onlangs twee Blou Staffords ingevoer is en een blykbaar nog op pad is, het ek dit goed gedink om al die vorige artikels in een nuusbrief te plaas, net as waarskuwing. Die laaste twee is onlangse artikels.

Toe ek meer as 30 jare gelede begin belangstel het om Staffords aan te skaf en te begin teel en skou, het ek die boek 'The Staffordshire Bull Terrier' geskryf deur John F Gordon aangekoop, om meer oor die ras te lees en leer. Daarin het ek gelees van die Blou Stafford (King Stafford) en dit het by my 'n obsessie geword om sulke honde te kon teel en skou, net omdat dit iets anders was. Ek het gou geleer Blou Staffords in SA is so skaars soos hoendertande en toe maar vir my 'n rooi tefie gekoop deur Alf van Zyl en later Chandler by die Grabies gekoop.

Eendag loop ek toe vir Wynand en Ria van Staden raak in die winkels en Ria vertel my dat hulle 'n werpsel gehad het, maar dat een van die hondjies 'n silwergrys hondjie was en dat hulle die hondjie ongeregistreerd en verniet weggegee het aan iemand in Natal. Ek het die persoon se telefoonnommer by hulle gekry en gepleit by die nuwe eienaar om die hondjie aan my te verkoop (Ria sou die hondjie laat registreer) maar hy wou niks weet nie.

'n Ander keer het ek saam met Charles en Suki gaan kyk na 'n Blou reuntjie wat iemand in Pretoria-Wes toevallig geteel het. Die hondjie was al 6 maande oud en die teler wou niks weet van verkoop nie. Toe ons daar weg is het Suki gesê ek moenie sleg voel want die hond het eienskappe soos blou oë en 'n 'putty' neus gehad wat glo nie aanvaarbaar is nie.

Toe later verskyn die artikel 'The Blue Dilemma' deur Norman Berry in die Ring en nadat ek dit gelees het, asook Alec Waters se skrywe, was ek dankbaar dat ek myself nie in so 'n situasie bevind het nie. Ek was heeltemal genees van my obsessie.

Hou asseblief hierdie nuusbrief op julle komputers en stuur dit aan mense waarvan julle hoor wat dieselfde "Mission Impossible" idee het as wat ek gehad het, sodat hulle die feite ken en besin voordat hulle in hierdie rigting gaan. Stuur dit net as leersame inligting.

Feit van die saak is – Blou Staffords is deel van ons 'Breed Standard' en mense kan nie belet word om Blou Staffords in te voer, te teel of te skou nie. Maar as hulle weet waarvoor hulle hulle inlaat sal hulle dalk twee keer dink voor hulle daarmee begin, of as hulle reeds dié kleur honde het, sal hulle ten minste gewaarsku wees om nie aanhoudend Blou op Blou te gebruik nie, met ander woorde – hulle moet versigtig teel.

Ek moet sê ek was beïndruk met die pelskleur van die een ingevoerde blou Stafford (het nie die ander een gesien nie) die dag met ons Mei kampioenskapskou, maar dit was op 'n afstand van buite die ring. Gehoor by andere dat die neus swart is en die oë bietjie lig, maar darem nie geel nie. Ligte oë en toonnaels is 'n algemene probleem in ons rooi en brindel lyne ook. Almal weet dat dit raadsaam is om wit in te bring in jou teling om donkerder oë te kry en swartbrindel om pelskleur te verbeter, so met selektiewe teling hoop ek dat dit vir die eienaar van die blou Staffords sal uitwerk ... Sterkte!

“ THE BLUE DILEMMA ”

Norman Berry “Rendorn” (UK) – THE RING 1998

“BLUE”! – What great fascination this colour seems to embrace in the corner of many fanciers minds Why?

Let us consider the facts. Undoubted this shade of brindling is permissible according to the Breed Standard. Certainly a recessive trait, together with Black and Tan and Liver colours of which the latter two are totally condemned. How was this anomaly proposed, passed and sanctioned during the 1948 meeting convened to formulate the change of Breed Standard? Is it possible that it was motivated (as I have been led to believe) by emotional overture performed by some dominant character wishing to support the inclusion of this colour, after much altercation threatened to stop play and leave the proceedings, taking his bat and ball with him unless the meeting succumbed to his wishes?

Great interest is aroused in the show ring at the appearance of this unusual coat colour. I find this situation quite understandable when considering the premium of its presence and the difficulty of producing an acceptable shade of blue, particularly if the animal is blessed with dark eyes and deeply pigmented coloured toe nails.

If the situation arose during a judging engagement and I was confronted by a dog blessed with this anomaly, I would be obliged to observe the circumstances, apply the usual guidance described by the Breed Standard and adjudicate accordingly, considering the severity of any associated faults, the possible lack of pigmentation, light eyes, etc, which would almost certainly be evident.

Browsing through a recent magazine I discovered an advertisement which urged me to pen this epistle. I was rather surprised to find a breeder contemplating an attempt to breed for this colour. I feel they may be rather disappointed with the results of their proposed breeding programme and gives me cause for grave misgivings.

To offer some credence to my scepticism let us consider the retrospective past of our breed. In the last edition of this publication an article relating to colours appeared which disclosed that during the early nineteen seventies Mr Richard Curtis, in one instance, bred this particular colour with the desired pigmentation etc. (to quote the ‘Real McCoy’). Older members of the North/West SBTC repeatedly refer to a similar coloured specimen, exhibited in

the North/West area (circa 1957). Also present day fanciers may recall a more recent bitch from the Midlands, a beautiful representation of this incongruous colour. In all, three credible examples have been recorded over a period of fifty years. Hardly welcoming facts for further inspirational breeding activities.

For further evidence, there have been other attempts to produce 'Blues', without a great degree of success. During the sixties, I recall witnessing quite a number of them and cannot recall any example of the desired "Blue Stafford".

Various shades of washed out brindles were quite common, dark pigmentation was evident in some, alas, not the full combination of the three virtues in unison. Washed out shades of brindles began to appear, putty coloured diluted reds, brindles with pale fawn under colour and numerous animals with light eyes and poor pigmentation. In consideration of this synopsis, it would seem detrimental to breed by carrying out such experiments to achieve the true blue/brindle coat and should offer little incentive for anyone setting forth on such a venture. It would seem prudent to consider the options and resist the seemingly hopeless temptation of these deliberations.

Let us consider the instance of a kennel inadvertently blessed with a blue bitch and plot the course of events for procreation of a true blue coloured specimen carrying the necessary attainments. Perhaps a mating could be arranged with a densely pigmented black/brindle stud, who (here comes the dilemma)..... after much investigation to accretion to the value of his genotype (background inheritance) would be carrying the gene to allow for the dilution of the black/brindle breeding 'quite a task indeed'. It is established that the blue colour is a diluted black/brindle, the pigment granules being much less numerous than they are in the dense brindle coat making a dog in which the pigmented granules are weakly concentrated appear to be blue. Concisely it seems blue is not a colour, therefore the mating of two blues is hardly likely to produce a litter of blues, in all probability washed out shades of brindles would result. I offer this as a purely hypothetical instance simply because the Mendelian principle of mating carrier to affected would apply to the theoretical off-spring of four, resulting in two carriers and two affected. Perhaps with some degree of extreme luck, one of the affected or possibly both could be the jewel in the crown which the breeder has been seeking.

This hypothesis may appear to be a panacea to the problem of breeding blues. Unfortunately it would seem the odds are loaded against the phenomenon manifesting itself and consideration should be exercised to the dire consequences of a further four carriers being inflicted on the breed.

Let us return to the comments of the correspondent in the latest publication. His observations record the lack of various shades of brindling, white nails, colours without depth, also specimens with light eyes. With regard to the eye colouration it would seem to be a different gene or a polygenic situation which controls the colour of the iris. However, I endorse his recommendations to mix the brindles with reds and also suggest introduction of white, hereby producing delightful shades of brindle offset with the odd patch of white thus being a more beneficial progression, rather than pursue futile speculative blue matings to the detriment of the breed. If the lines are proved free of undesirable traits over many generations of breeding, experimental matings between the black/brindles and reds should have little chance of resulting black/tans or livers as many breeders wrongly fear.



EXTRACT FROM THE RING 1995

Alec Waters "Ashstock" (UK)

The blue colour is a fairly rare colour, and opinions to whether or not it is a REAL blue can be controversial. Many people, over the years have claimed or believed that their Stafford was a genuine blue, but usually on examination by people who really understood this colour, found that most of them were smokey grey, or grey with a hint of blue. Of course, smokey greys are NOT a good colour and SHOULD NOT BE ENCOURAGED, but in any case many of these smokey greys or whatever, lacked the essential part of the real and genuine blue, the VITAL PIGMENTATION. The real blue will and must have a black nose, black claws and dark eyes. The majority of the so-called blues that I have ever seen have had light eyes, off-black noses and lightish coloured claws, so without the necessary ingredients they cannot possibly be blue.

The best ever blue that I ever saw was a bitch called MOUNTAIN ASH CHRISTMAS EVE owned by Richard Curtis of MOUNTAIN ASH fame, around 1965 period. She had a rich blue slate coat, very dark eyes, bags of pigmentation, black nails and nose, etc.

Let no-one ever try to kid you that their smokey grey is a blue or that a light eyed, grey-nosed, grey is a blue - when one has seen the real McCoy, the difference stands out!

BLUES – SHOULD THEY BE DISCOURAGED?

By Archie Bryden

We all know that blue in Staffords is quite acceptable but that liver is not. Does this not highlight a marked inconsistency as both blue and liver are recessive traits of genes (D and B respectively) which cause a dilution effect of black pigmentation in the hair?

Most Staffords are homo or heterozygous for the dominant “D” and hence of normal pigmentation whether brindle, red or even black and tan. Occasionally carriers of the recessive “d” may be mated together giving a 1:4 chance that any offspring will be blue, i.e. three quarters litter normal colour on average, and one quarter blue. Most noticeable are blue brindles which tend to be steely grey, but blue fawns may also be encountered. These show the blue effect principally on the dark hair around the muzzle but may also have a hint of blue over all the body as any concentration of dark pigment at the lips of red hairs is also affected. Blue and tan is also possible but is undoubtedly very rare.

Some years ago the late Bob Salisbury of Northern Counties SBTC tried to breed blue Staffords. This may be done by mating blue to blue as only blues can be produced but I am informed he encountered loss of pigmentation problems resulting in a washed out colour which was most unattractive.

It is impossible to estimate how many normal coloured dogs carry the “d” gene but I do know of one or two well used stud dogs suddenly throwing a blue after many litters. This suggests the carriage rate is not particularly high as these dogs were clearly mated to bitches most of whom were not carriers.

Liver is produced when a dog is homozygous for recessive “b” getting it from each of its carrier parents. This is the only way it can be passed on as livers (I hope!) are never bred from unlike blues. Because of this, livers may be less common than blues but it may be that they occur more frequently in some lines than others. However, as very light line breeding is not common in the UK, the introduction of any new blood will usually tend to reduce the incidence of “b” in the line.

So why allow blues but not livers? Clearly this is a glaring anomaly but I suspect that those who allowed blue did so on a whim and not by carefully considered rationale. But did they make a mistake by including it or did they make an equally great mistake by not permitting liver? After all both colours are purely cosmetic and do not affect a dogs function!

EMAIL RECEIVED FROM ALAN SMALL (BETHANE)

Riette, don't forget that the coat colour Blue is an excepted colour. It's not the colour that's a problem. It's a recessive gene and in the past it was not seen that often. Certain lines produced them if you doubled up on those lines. So they were unusual and not seen that often. Because of this rarity they became a commodity for certain people to exploit for financial gain. There are good breeders who produce good stock in all colours, reds brindles, peds as well as blues.

A good blue should have the best of pigmentation. Dark eyes, black nails, black nose. We have had blue Staffords in the UK winning up to Res CC level. After all a good dog is a good dog! In saying that I don't think any have won a CC and certainly none have been made up.

Of late some people have jumped on the band wagon, breeding and selling blues for a lot of money. The public at large is as much to blame in their willingness to pay grossly inflated prices for what, after all, is only an ordinary Stafford puppy.

The 'Blue's' we used to see were generally produced from black brindle lines. You didn't breed for them and as they generally came from good stock, they were, in turn, of good quality themselves with good pigmentation, dark eyes and were totally reliable with excellent temperaments.

A lot of the present day Blues are of indiscriminate breeding. The colour blue is a recessive and the coat, I feel, has become wishy washy. You get lemon eyes, blue eyes, poor pigmentation points that we don't want.

You must stress the point that a puppy is a puppy be it red, brindle, pied or blue. They are the same and should sell the same. These guys who want to breed a selective type of dog only want to for financial gain. If there is NO gain they will not go down this path. We don't want puppy farmers ruining the breed!

Educate the guys who want to buy this colour Stafford that they should only pay the normal price and these "would-be" breeders will disappear.

If you ban them from being registered they will go underground, the price will escalate and they will carry on with unregistered stock. Educate people that they should only pay normal prices, keep control of the situation.

Regards, Al

Health Bulletin No 24, March 2015

Archie Bryden (UK)

Discussion about blues and the numbers being registered is seldom off the various social internet sites. Like everyone else, I deprecate the actions of those who breed blue Staffords (or French Bulldogs etc.) purely for money without due regard for the quality of their dogs, whether in relation to the Standard or to their health. The topic has become so emotive that clear thinking has become very cloudy in many instances. As one who simply wants the scientific truth in this matter (and all other such topics) I have sought the comments of the academic experts, as well as trying to get reliable information on any associated problems.

I will assume that readers will understand the workings of the 'D' (dilution) gene and its recessive 'd', of which there are at least two alleles or variants, one of which is more common in dogs in general and is the only one to be found in some breeds; it is not known if both are present in Staffords or not. It is 'd' when homozygous, i.e. a dog carries two copies, one from each of its parents, that produces 'blue' by causing the eumelanin (black) pigment in hairs to clump rather than be evenly distributed throughout.

Firstly a question – 'Is there any difference, in respect to 'd'(assuming it is the more common allele involved), between a blue dog produced by two brindles that carry it or one which is the result of blue to blue matings over several generations?' The answer is simply 'No'! If you tested each dog, either by DNA sequencing or by the DNA tests for 'd' offered by some companies, you would get exactly the same result, which in turn means that the expression of 'd' in both would also be the same. In the course of correspondence regarding blue to blue matings, Prof Schmutz of Saskatchewan University, who is regarded as the queen of colour genetics, simply stated that **you can't get "more homozygous"** by the process and did not see why it would matter, thus supporting what has been pointed out above. Prof Tosso Leeb of Bern University, whom I also consulted, responded in a similar vein

seeing **'no rational reason for a ban on blue x blue matings'**

Some confusion may have arisen by using the term 'dilution' for the gene which in scientific literature is now referred to as the MLPH gene in accordance with its function at the molecular level. It was the American geneticist, Clarence Little, the father of coat colour genetics, who coined 'D for dilution' in the 1940s on account of its recessive 'd' 'diluting' black to blue (actually a slate grey) as he put it and nothing more. Some however may have the impression that when you mate two blues or dilutes together you are then 'diluting' further and further with each generation, which is simply untrue. Once the initial 'dilution' has occurred to produce the blue dog which is homozygous 'd/d', then that is the dilution process complete!

There are of course anecdotal reports of blue to blue matings producing coat and other problems, plus comments that many blues are different from other colours in build and appearance. Should this be considered so, **it is almost certainly a question of 'bad' breeding rather than 'blue' breeding**. If you breed for one particular aspect, in this case a colour, without regard for the whole dog (or other animal) then you are asking for trouble. This is something that has been seen in other species, for example in cattle where breeding for milk production solely has had serious adverse effects on cows' health.

The big problem is a virtual total lack of data, i.e. peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals, and there would need to be several to ensure that any finding was corroborated. I am aware of some papers of a histological or molecular nature but none on the incidence of coat colour-related conditions in dogs in general or in specific breeds. (If anyone comes across any, please let me know.) Hearsay and anecdote have been the basis for so many opinions when firm data is essential. In fact a vet I was talking to very recently at a seminar highlighted this lack of facts and figures.

In Staffords we must be very aware that perceived coat problems may not be confined to blues. I know we are again forced to rely on anecdotal opinion, but if one goes back thirty years or so you may have heard of certain stud dogs being associated with progeny with poor coats and I do recall seeing brindle dogs, supposedly from a certain popular line, with 'spectacles' of hair loss round their eyes. Some may recall I asked vets from a large canine charity (Health Bulletin 14), plus others along the way, for their thoughts and clearly the body of opinion was that blues were no more affected with skin and coat conditions than other colours, in fact some vets consider that whites may be at greater risk.

Currently the greatest hope of getting meaningful data is the VetCompass project which receives information, including coat colour as well as the usual parameters, from many veterinary practices on all 'patients' being seen. I have spoken to Dr Dan O'Neill the veterinary epidemiologist in charge about our concerns. At the moment no data has been extracted in relation to coat colour but, having asked the right questions, it is on the 'to do' list. However, even if health conditions were found to be more prevalent in blues (or any other colour), thus showing a correlation, that would not be the end of the matter. **Correlation does not equal causation!** Further studies would be necessary see if the colour genes were actually involved and to rule out co-incidental findings such as inadvertently selecting genes for other conditions.

To appreciate why great care is needed with 'correlation' we only have to look at the hereditary cataract cases that emerged in the late 'nineties'. There was a correlation with the red breeding, with a few saying to keep away from the 'reds', but no one with the least understanding ever claimed it had anything to do with their coat colour or the genes that produced it. It was just chance that it came to the fore in reds.

The one condition that is associated with blue dogs is colour dilution alopecia (CDA) where the blue hairs become fragile and break off. It can vary in severity and may lead to extensive bald areas where the skin may be affected by dryness and infection requiring long term topical

treatment. White areas, if present, are not affected and in blue fawns CDA is likely to be much milder simply because of there being much more phaeomelanin (red) than eumelanin (black) in their hairs. However many blues (of many breeds where the genes are the same, as well as Staffords) have good, even excellent, coats with no problems **so one cannot say that, although only blue hair is affected, the d/d genotype is specifically the cause.** Expert opinion now considers that **some other, as yet undescribed, genetic factors are involved**; these will also be carried by non-blues but have no effect because of the different coat colours. There have been attempts to understand CDA but sadly very little progress has been made and there would seem to be no current research. Prof Leeb does have a call online for case reports plus specimens; I have no idea what the response has been but one suspects it has not been overwhelming. This may simply reflect a low incidence of CDA but perhaps VetCompass will shed light in due course. In addition, only one of the vets surveyed from the large canine charity referred to above reported seeing a case of CDA. Furthermore if a blue dog does have hair loss, all other possible diagnoses, such as demodex, allergy, etc., must be eliminated before considering CDA and if there is reasonable recovery, CDA can almost certainly be excluded. In the course of discussions, it was suggested that if breeders of blues were concerned about the possibility of CDA or similar coat and skin problems, then they ought to ensure they used only dogs with visibly good coats. This of course is common sense and constitutes 'good' breeding.

Of course the absolute way to eliminate all risk of CDA would be to discourage or prohibit breeding for blues as the colour is essential for the expression of those genes that may be the real cause. As far as we in UK are concerned, this would mean changing the Standard by deeming blue to be 'highly undesirable' along with liver and black and tan.. In fact some years ago I wrote an article to this effect pointing out the anomaly of permitting blue but not liver or black and tan, bearing in mind that black and tan is a perfectly normal coat colour and liver is produced by black eumelanin being replaced with the brown variety, without any hair abnormality, which the eumelanin clumping in blues undoubtedly is.

As many know, there was no mention of 'blue' in the original 1935 Standard, being only added in the 1948 review. There is no documented evidence of why this was done to my knowledge. It may be that blues pre-1948, were included with brindles and fawns but added after the genetics had been described by Little as mentioned above. Thus if a change in the Standard to discouraging blues, because of perceived health issues, were to be proposed, the inevitable question is why has it taken well over sixty years to be raised? And more importantly, where is the evidence, in

the form of peer reviewed papers, which will withstand scientific scrutiny?

Even if the KC were persuaded to implement such a change, the greater threat of legal action is a possibility. A commercial breeder, all above board and licensed with the local council, might sue the KC (or other KC's or similar bodies that have implanted colour breeding restrictions for registration) as their business might be adversely affected. Unless I am greatly mistaken (the legal experts will correct me I'm sure) the KC would back down rapidly as they would know that it was a lost cause.



Health Bulletin No 28 May 2016

COI Musings

I was just turning things over in my mind when I asked myself the question 'Is there any difference in the co-efficient of inbreeding (COI) between the blues and non-blues?' This was prompted by several issues. Firstly there is the concern about the apparently large numbers of blues being bred, secondly there seems to be several popular blue sires producing more litters per year than the most popular of non-blue sires especially any on the show scene, and thirdly some of these blue sires have, themselves, extremely high COIs well in excess of 30%, or, to put it another way, they are more closely inbred than father x daughter, or brother x sister, progeny. To help answer the question Dr Tom Lewis, who is now the geneticist on the Kennel Club Health Team, very kindly dug out all the relevant data and some is surprisingly interesting.



Fig 1, Registrations of blues and non-blues on a yearly basis from 2000 to 2014.

Before we look at any COIs, it is worth looking at Fig 1 which shows the number of registrations, by year of birth, of blues (i.e. all dogs where blue is mentioned in registration) and non-blues (i.e. all other colours) annually from 2000-2014 (certain 2015 data are not yet available at time of writing). This is based on the colours being registered and does not differentiate blues from all blue litters from mixed litters of different colours or the odd unexpected blue from 'out of the blue', but this does not distort the overall picture.

From this we can see that non-blue registrations peaked at over 12,000 in 2005 after which there was a steady, and rather remarkably sharp, decline to less than 2000 in 2014. On the other hand the number of blues being registered was very small until 2004 after which they increased steadily until peaking at less than 4000 in 2013. It is claimed that non-blues are being swamped by the increasing number of blues being bred but this graph clearly shows that there is only partial truth in this at most, and certainly not the whole story. It may be that the increase in blues has resulted from some breeders, who are not associated with the Clubs or the show scene, switching colours from brindle or red etc. to blue, but this does not account for the massive decrease in non-blue.

Any switching of colour preference can only account for less than 4000 dogs of the total decline at most, but this leaves about 6-7000 registrations (in the region of 1000-1500 litters per annum) to be accounted for when comparing with peak numbers. Thus over half the decline in the numbers of non-blues being bred is simply due to there being fewer breeders, breeders having fewer litters or a combination of both.

Unfortunately we tend to look at colour ratios on a comparative percentage basis, so if one goes up as a percentage then another must go down, but in this instance the basic totals of each present a truer picture. Thus, despite the increase in totals of blues, the major problem is the numbers of brindles and reds etc. that are not being bred! A contributory factor to this may be breeders being made to feel guilty through the repeated claims of more and more dogs in rescue (and I mean all rescues including the large national charities) or feeling they may be called 'puppy farmers' if they have more than the occasional litter.

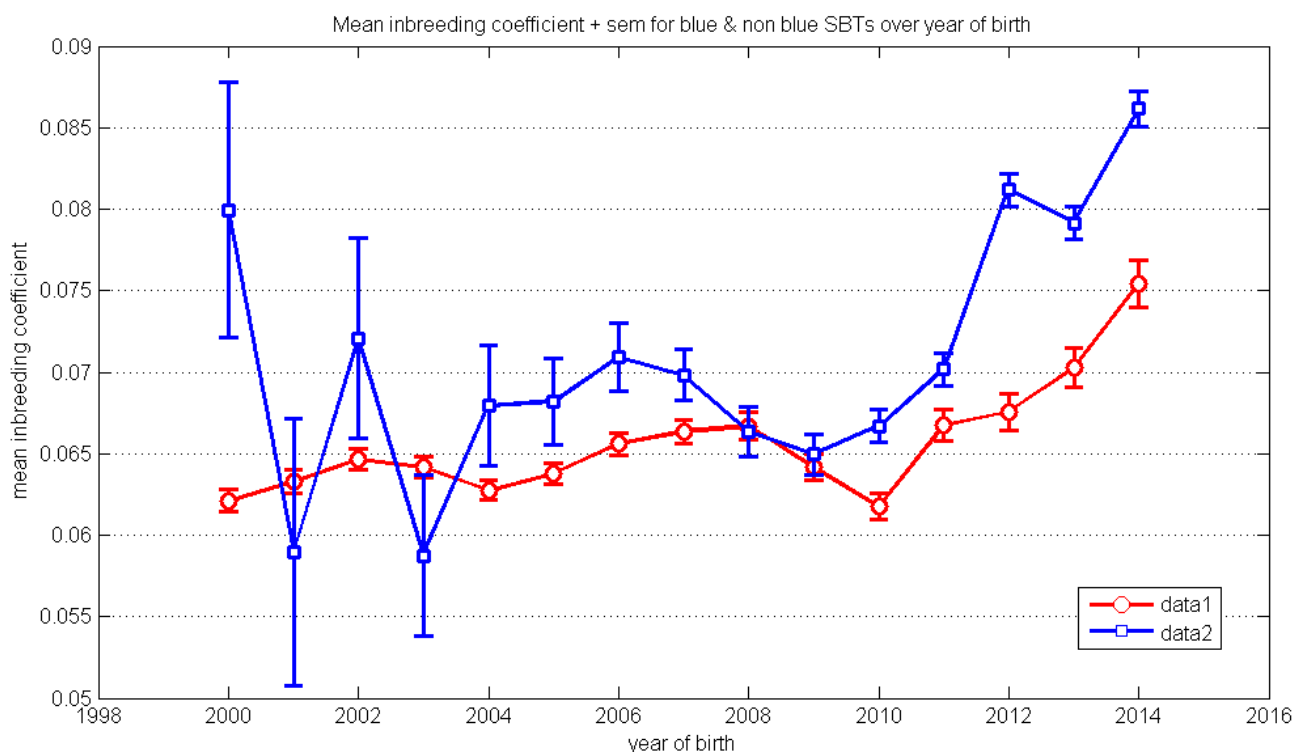


Fig 2 Mean (average) COI for blues and non-blues by year of birth

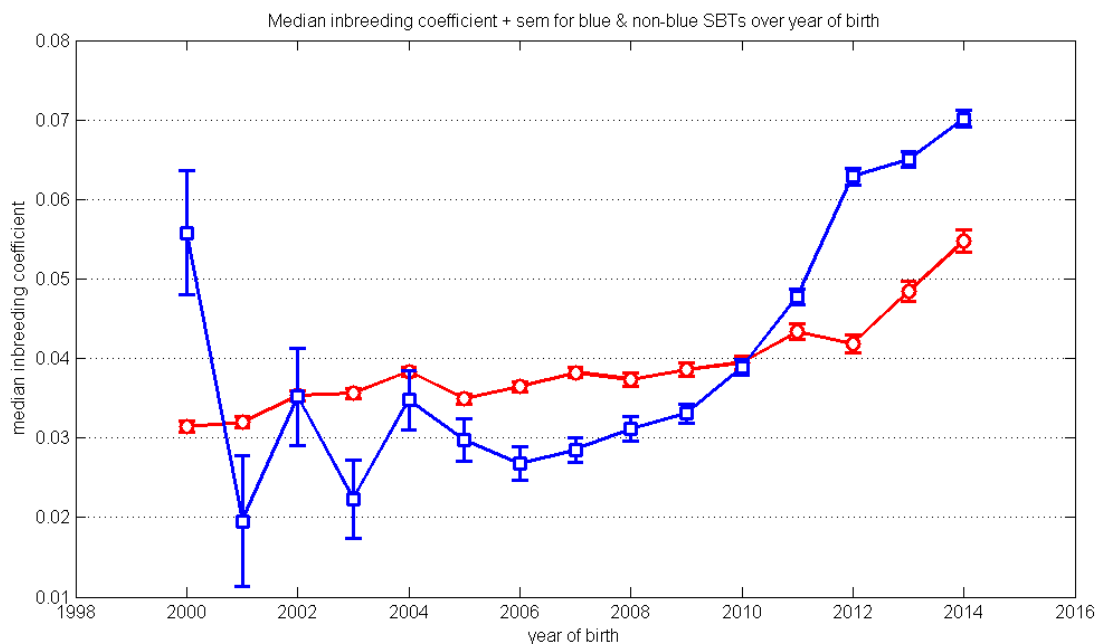


Fig 3 Median COIs for blues and non-blues by year of birth.

Figs 2 and 3 give the mean (average) and median (value of dog in the middle of the whole range) COIs, respectively, by year for blues and non-blues. Firstly may I point out that the COI values at the left hand side (y axis, to be technical) are given as a proportion and not percentage so 0.02 equates to 2%, 0.04 to 4% and so forth, plus the values on each graph are not identical. The error bars should also be ignored but more importantly we should also ignore any data given for blues prior to 2005 when their numbers really started to increase. Prior to that time their totals were very low hence results tend to be erratic from year to year.

Whether it is the mean or median values that are being considered, it is clear that the COIs of both blues and non-blues increased between 2006 and 2014, although the median values possibly give a better picture overall. The mean values may be affected by dogs with extremely high COIs which increase the average to a greater or lesser degree. There are also the frequently used blue stud dogs with COIs of over 30% and each will almost certainly have siblings with the same COI, hence it is easy to see how they might affect the average. Of course it is possible to have non-blues with high COIs but any of over 30%, as with blues, do not seem to occur often, if at all. On the other hand any shift in the median value shows that the group as a whole has shifted and is unaffected by dogs with high values well outside the main range. It is also clear that the mean and median COIs of blues show a greater increase over the period than that of non-blues.

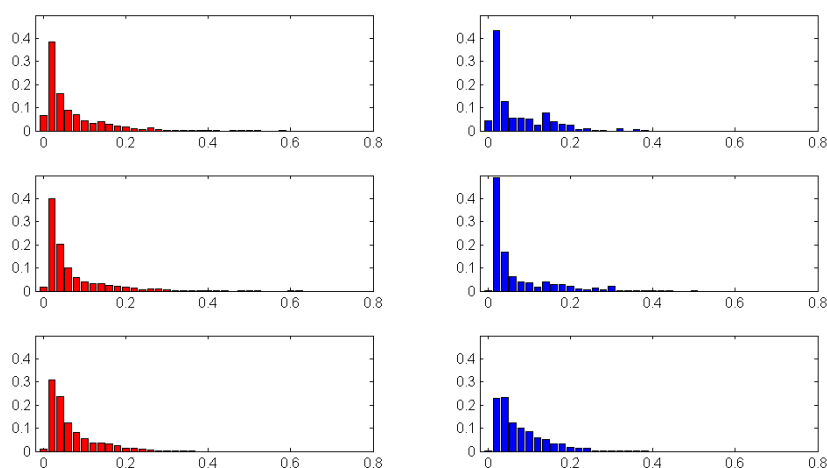


Fig 4, Histogram covering three five year periods, 2000-2004 top, 2005-2009 middle, and 2010-2014 bottom, giving proportion of dogs on left and COI values increasing from left to right on bottom

Fig 4 is interesting as it shows changes from a slightly different perspective covering three time periods: 2000-2004 in the top two graphs, 2005-2009 in the middle two and 2010-2014 in the bottom ones. The left hand side (y axis) gives the proportions of registrations and as before 0.1 equals 10% etc. and the bottom line (x axis) gives the COI value and again 0.2 equals 20% and so forth. Looking at the first two time periods, 2000 to 2004 and 2005 to 2009, the column denoting the COI value of the greatest proportion of dogs in each group (this is technically known as the modal value or simply modal) shows that almost 40% or greater of dogs born, blue and non-blue, in the period had low COIs of 3-4%. Of course there were some with greater COIs mainly in the region of 5-10% and, perhaps inevitably there were odd ones with very high COIs but these may just be blips as you move to the right of the graphs. However if you look at the bottom two graphs, covering 2010 to 2014, it will be seen that the modal for non-blues was still 3-4% but had decreased from almost 40% of registrations in the period to about 30%. With blues the proportion in the 3-4% group had dropped from about 50% during 2005-2009 to just over 20%, and modal for the group was now 5-6%. It is also evident that the columns representing COIs greater than the modal in the region of 7-20% had increased. This shift to the right in the graph denotes a general increase in COIs and is consistent with the increasing mean and median COIs shown in Figs 2&3.

One might wonder of the increase in the average COI of non-blues was related to the dramatic decrease in litters and thus births. This is not illogical, asking if the lesser numbers being bred led to greater inbreeding and perhaps gene loss. This however conflicts with the position in blues where the increase in average COI has occurred in association with an increase in numbers. The most likely explanation, according to Tom Lewis, is the popular sire effect, which may be more obvious in blues as there are several sires in this group whose use at stud far exceeds that of any current non-blue sire.

The effective population size (N_e , as it is usually expressed) must be considered along with the COI. The N_e is the theoretical number of ancestral individuals that are contributing to the current generations of a breed. It has no relation to the actual population size, hence a breed may be numerous with thousands being born annually but have a very small N_e and *vice versa*. (I am sorry if I have difficulty in explaining this briefly but complicated mathematics are involved which I would not attempt to understand). The N_e for SBTs is 98, which means that all the dogs being bred are the equivalent of 98 dogs breeding randomly from a genetic perspective. If a breed has a N_e of over 100 then it should be able to manage its genetic diversity and a balance between selective and inbreeding; between 50 and 100 could mean genetic diversity is being lost or previously high inbreeding has stabilised; and below 50 a breed could be heading for serious trouble. (Please see attached KC literature for a fuller explanation.) With a N_e of 98, the Stafford is on the borderline but this should not cause any real problems if breeders are sensible.

So what is the way forward? The good news is that the Stafford does not have the problems that some breeds face, such as those with high average COIs considerably greater than that of grandfather x granddaughter matings but with no sources of 'new blood' to go to. With non-blues while the average COI has increased over the past few years it is not very high and there are still sufficient non-blues being bred to make this sustainable. With blues, the COI has risen a bit quicker than non-blues but is still within sustainable limits although the various popular blue studs with COIs greater than 30% suggests that some extremely inbred litters are being produced with possible adverse effects in the long term. In this discussion I have treated blues and non-blues as basically two sub-populations despite any crossover and common ancestry, but while the N_e for the breed as a whole is 98 as stated above, this could in theory vary a little between such sub-populations.

From a practical point of view, the one thing we must try to avoid is doing anything that might damage the gene pool, while at the same time we ought not to be obsessed with COIs, as some in a few other breeds may be. Common sense should prevail. If your bitch has a significantly higher than average COI, let's say 15-20% or over, then it is obvious one needs to choose a dog that will give a litter with a COI that is around the average or lower, and not a closely related one that might produce even greater COIs in the litter.

On the other hand if a proposed mating would produce puppies with a COI that is greater than that of a dam (or sire too) with a low COI, that is not sufficient reason not to go ahead but with the knowledge care may be required with the next generation. It is a case of balancing selective versus in-breeding, by selective we mean choosing a partner that will enhance the virtues and correct any faults or weaknesses but with no specific regard to pedigree. When I started in Staffords over thirty years ago, we were told the best breeding practice was 'in' for two generations and then 'out' on the third. I have mentioned this to several of the geneticists and, guess what, they all thought this might not be a bad way to go! And now, unlike these 'olden' days, we have Mate Select on the Kennel Club's web site so it is easy to find out not only what any dog's COI is, but also the COI of litters resulting from any proposed matings.

We do not know what the future may hold and while we would all hope that we are not faced with problems associated with too much inbreeding, we can never be totally sure that we will never need to look for 'fresh blood'. If such problems did emerge whether in non-blues or in blues, then the answer may be to cross one with the other, should the two apparent sub-populations still exist. I have no doubt a population of brindles, reds etc. will be to the fore in the future but the comparative popularity for blues could easily decline. There have been suggestions for some time that 'white' could be the 'new blue' but this has not yet come to pass. I realise all too well that such suggestions are anathema to many who would never contemplate using a blue stud or, more likely, allow their dog to mate a blue bitch, but I am simply pointing out the possibility although it is taken for granted the quality of the dogs would be paramount if going down this route. It would be a 'get out of jail' card in time of need.

It may have been noticed I have not mentioned overseas dogs so far. The reason is that, on this occasion, you cannot extrapolate the data based on UK dogs to those in other countries with substantial numbers of SBTs, notably South Africa, Australia, New Zealand or Northern America. Of course Staffords in such countries did originate from British dogs initially but inevitably the breeding of subsequent generations would lead to inadvertent gene selection that could differ from back in Britain. In addition a number of stud dogs, which were widely used and had a significant effect on local populations, have been exported over the years, thus their genes are lost to the British pool but could persist at comparatively high levels in the local pools or regional sub-populations.

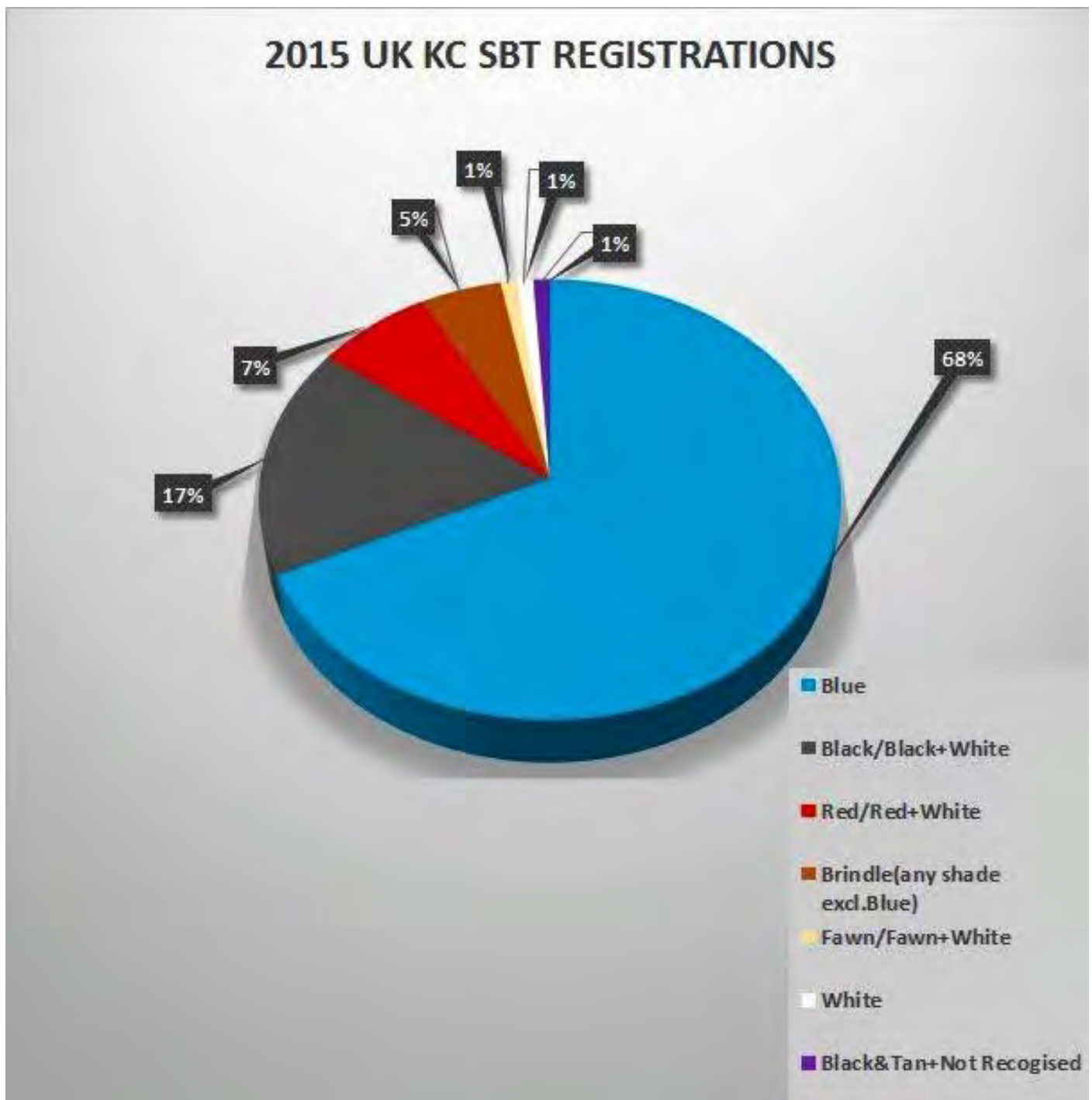
I have not mentioned Europe either in this respect but here too we could find the existence of sub-populations although defining these is not so easy with pet passports and increasing ease of travel. This makes it so much easier not only for our European friends to use stud dogs in the UK but also for British bitches to be taken to some of the top class dogs now gracing the European show rings. A further bonus is that it may be easier to import dogs from overseas through Europe as British quarantine regulations do not apply. And lastly, but far from least, is the comparative ease we now have in storing and exporting or importing semen which may enable fresh 'blood' to be introduced should the need arise.

Thus as far as the Stafford is concerned, we are nowhere near any crisis point regarding inbreeding, the mean COI or effective population size. But we cannot be complacent. If the average COI for the breed continues to show an upward drift or if the currently borderline Ne declines then action may be required. Fortunately we do have somewhere to go, unlike some breeds that are extremely inbred. With the Stafford now being popular all over the world, the option of using of using unrelated dogs or bitches by importing or exporting stock, or semen, is always available. Breeders do need to exercise care to ensure they do not inbreed excessively but perhaps sticking to 'in for two and out on the third' might suffice.



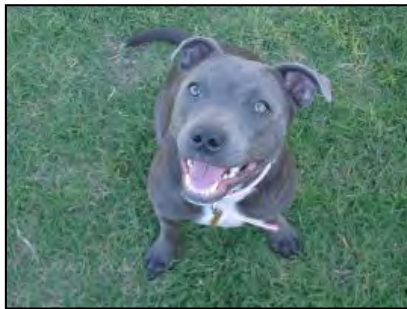
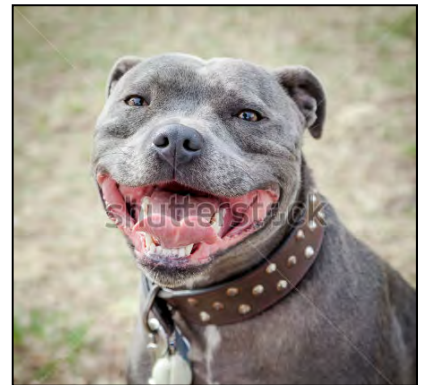
PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN IN SA!!

Although Blue is a recognised colour in our Breed Standard, you will hardly ever see a TRUE Blue Stafford. Their coat should be a dark denimish colour, the eyes should be dark brown and the toe nails should be black. 90% of these so-called registered Blue Stafford's photos on the Internet have a light grey slate, washed out denim or ash colour, yellow eyes and bad pigmentation – Riette.



[Robert du Plooy](#) (Facebook comment) Blues were very rare in the early 70's in South Africa and were not intentionally bred to either. They now seem to have a serious problem in the UK? Staffordshire Bull Terriers is the ONLY breed with such a beautifully rich variety of colours ... why not keep our diversity?

Google Blue Staffordshire Bull Terriers and select Images to find different shades of **Blues**?



?

Staffmania



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RESERVE BEST PUPPY IN SHOW: RAMINARTUS SAY HEY KID OF BEZT

