



Popular Stud Dogs

By Dr. Carmen Battaglia

When two or more breeders get together there is almost sure to be talk about the popular stud dogs and particularly the quality or lack of quality in their pups. As the discussion continues, the term popular stud dog will repeatedly creep into the conversation without anyone in the group having a real understanding of what the term means. This is particularly true when there are both popular and unpopular stud dogs to discuss.

Understanding how and why they are used and the labels used to describe them must be addressed. One of the best ways to learn about these sires is to examine and study their pedigrees, who uses them and what they are able to produce.

Understanding the differences between the popular and the less popular begins with who chooses to use them. Of equal interest are the reasons given for using them. It can easily be demonstrated that the better dogs in any breed including the superior ones, are those that have influence over future generations. At the same time these same animals can also be shown to have contributed a disproportionately higher number of defective genes into the gene pool of their breed. In the case of a major or popular stud dog, there are four reasons to explain why they have produced higher numbers of defective traits. First, a stud dog can not become popular unless the breeders choose to use them. Their decision is usually based on the fact

that these sires have many winning offspring that have been observed by many exhibitors and breeders. Within such a large group of youngsters it is difficult to keep problems a secret and the gossip about them usually spreads quickly. On the other hand, the less popular stud dogs will be used less often and will have produced fewer litters. Their offspring will be fewer in number and they will be seen less. The less popular studs may well have produced the identical number of defective traits and health problems as the popular studs, but the gossip about them is controlled and minimized because fewer breeders are involved and they have less offspring that become competitive. A second reason persists which is related to the first.

For a genetic disease or a recessive trait to exist there must be three kinds of dogs. Those that are affected, the carriers, and the normals. Suffice it to say that a sire that is widely used has a better chance to come in contact with carrier bitches than dogs only bred a few times.

For these reasons breeders and exhibitors will always be able to point to a popular stud dog and say that it has produced undesirable traits. While this may be true, it is better to think out of the box and beyond the issue of a few pups. A better approach is to look at what they have produced when bred to different pedigrees. The facts suggest that the sires who can produce large numbers of winning progeny are the ones that generally add quality to

their breed, which again explains why they have become so popular. Anyone who doubts this should be reminded that stud dogs do not become popular until many breeders choose to use them. If their offspring are of poor quality the bitch owners will quickly learn to avoid them. This occurs because there is always a sharing of information that leaks out to others who in turn will also avoid using them. As this begins to occur these stud dogs and their offspring will soon be excluded from future breedings.

For the breeders who are interested in the better stud dogs, their first dilemma comes when they attempt to find out what they have produced. Because most breeders live in a general environment of secrecy there is little they can learn by working alone. Breeders who chose to use the unpopular or untested sires have a different problem. There is little information for them too collected with only a few or perhaps no offspring to be observed. Their decision to trial and error methods to gather little or no information before they breed their next litter. While no method is perfect those who persist in their efforts to breed better dogs have learned to make progress by asking three basic questions:

1. Were you satisfied with the puppies?
2. Did the litter have any health problems?
3. Would you repeat the breeding?

The owners of the bitches that have used a stud dog have everything to gain and nothing to lose by sharing this kind of information. The next dilemma occurs when they try to find who among the stud dogs are the carriers for the unwanted traits and diseases. Sometimes the only way to know this is to use a laboratory

or DNA test. But even if several DNA and laboratory tests were available there is not a universal place available to collect all the results. A central place for storage is needed that can link test results to pedigrees. Such a mechanism and central database has not been established. The problem is not the lack information or the willingness to share that causes the stumbling block. The real problem is the absence of a mechanism that automatically collects and links test results to pedigrees and then makes them available to the breeders. Such a mechanism involves the cooperation of a large number of breeders and an organization willing to establish an open registry. After years of breeding half blind because of this lack of information we have a situation in which it is virtually impossible to find a popular stud dog in any breed that has not produced some or all of the defects known to affect his breed. This has led many inexperienced breeders to believe that the popular well-tested sires should be avoided.

The solution to this problem may take years to solve. In the meantime breeders can do their breed a service by taking a different approach. One place to start is with the parent clubs. Some recognize their best producers (popular stud dogs) through special awards; titles and certifications based on their progeny who win, test free, certify normal etc. Many times' information about these sires and their offspring are reported in a special issue of their magazine which includes the pedigrees of the dams. The stud dog-brood bitch class is another source of important information particularly if it is a competitive class that requires a minimum number of offspring to be

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2012 Futurity Nominated Litters

- 60 - BRYMAR'S HEMI 'CUDA V KASAMAR Bred to CH BRYMAR'S DIESELHUNDE V KASAMAR. David B. Reynolds, 6303 Chickasaw, Midland, TX 79705
 - 61 - TARGET'S TROPICAL STORM HANNAH Bred to GCH. ROSEWIN ANSON'S CERVELO. Coreen Belsham, 8165 Wansa Rd., Prince George, B.C. V2N 6E5
 - 62 - CH. TARMIS AROKAT ANSONS HONOUR Bred to GCH WIN'WEIMS IT'S MY GRAY GOOSE. Jan Lowe & Patricia DeHart, 20385 41A Ave, Langley, B.C. V3A 2Z9
 - 63 - CH. SILVERSMITH SANCERRE GRUYERE Bred to CH. PIKE'S PEAK SILVERSMITH SUMMIT, MH. Melissa Hartley & Elena Smith Lamberson, 125 Sharon Rd., Wagener, S.C. 29164
 - 64 - CH. HIBOURNE'S THEY CALL THE WIND, NSD, NRD, V BROM Bred to ROSCHEL'S DAUNTLESS OF GRAYKIN. Bonnie & Steve Lane, 19 Pimlico Dr., Commack, NY 11725
 - 65 - TRAX THUNDER THIGHS Bred to CH. INDABA'S INHERIT THE WIND. Shirley Nilsson, RR#2 Site 60, Comp 74, Penticton, B.C. V2A 6J7
 - 66 - CH HARLINE WIN'WEIM IT'S MY 2ND MARTINI Bred to CH. NANI'S HAWAIIAN PUNCH. Susan Line & Dr. Dana Massey, P.O. Box 160, Valley Mills, TX 76689
 - 67 - DAROCA'S TALK ABOUT ME, JH Bred to FC OUTDOORS SPORT, NRD. Rosemary Carlson, 1705 N. Bryant Ave, Moore, OK 73160
 - 68 - FC SAGA'S J.P. GETTY VON REITERALM Bred to FC OUTDOORS SPORT, NRD. Tim Smith & Virginia Alexander, 1610 Northwood Rd., Austin, TX 78703
 - 69 - CH MOONSHINE NIGHT AT THE OPERA Bred to GCH SILHOUETTE'S LIFEINTHEFASTLANE. Barbara Cook, 460 S. Shore Dr., Sarasota, FL 34240
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entered. First hand observation of their offspring when bred to different bitches is an excellent source of what they can produce. A good way to start a breeding program is to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the bitch followed by a search for a popular stud dog that can strengthen the pedigree of the expected pups. Stud dogs that have been tested offer the least amount of risk.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmen L Battaglia holds a Ph.D. and Masters Degree from Florida State University. As an AKC judge, researcher and writer, he has been a leader in promoting ways to breed better dogs. He is the author of many articles and several books and is a popular TV and radio talk show speaker. His seminars on breeding dogs, selecting sires and choosing puppies have been well received by breed clubs all over the country. Those interested in learning more about his articles and seminars should visit the website <http://www.breedingbetterdogs.com>.

This article originally appeared in Dr. Battaglia's Newsletter, *Breeding Better Dogs* and is reprinted with permission from Dr. Battaglia © and Canine Chronicle.