

As seen in the Fall 2002 Labrador Quarterly

Some Comments

I would like to make some comments on one of the feature columns in the latest LQ. It is the column "Consider This," written by Mary Wiest. My comments are as follows:

I have read Mary Wiest's column several times and while I disagree with splitting the breed, there is one paragraph in her article that stands out among the rest. It contains the following, "THIS IS NOT A FIGHT. This is a group of people who feel their dogs are not described correctly by the standard, wishing to make their own breed. This doesn't hurt anyone, it doesn't pit any group against any others."

To me personally, if I found that my dogs were not correct according to the standard I would be rethinking my breeding program. I would not be setting out to invent a new breed. If people in every breed felt the standard didn't describe their dogs and decided to invent a new breed, can you imagine how many breeds there would be? We complain enough as it is now in having three American Cocker Spaniels in the Sporting Group.

It is also my opinion that some breeders are going to get hurt if the breed is split. Those breeders who are striving to achieve Champion Master Hunters or MORE, may very well have litters that do not fall solely into one group or the other. What are these breeders going to do?

Although Mrs. Wiest does say in the paragraph I quoted that making their own breed doesn't hurt anyone, she does say in another paragraph that those who are, using her terms, breeding between the three types, will have a problem.

Mrs. Wiest also states that splitting the breed is not about the standard change yet then says that she will approach the AKC to start a new breed because some people feel that they were disenfranchised by the current Labrador standard. Am I the only one who is reading this as a contradiction? Am I attempting to read between the lines? I don't think so.

Not just to Mrs. Wiest, but those who say this has nothing to do with the current standard makes me wonder why, when talk of splitting the breed does come up, so does the current standard?

What I do find intriguing is the fact that other than adding the disqualifications and wording to comply with AKC's request, the standard is basically the same thing it was in the standard effective April 9, 1957. So where and when did the dogs change? I think they must have somewhere along the way if with only an enforcement of what the standard said prior, there are breeders who have dogs that no longer fit the description.

Just another viewpoint.

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via the internet