

This is an exact copy

6215 Mulholland Highway
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Dear Reid:

May 6, 1971

We are sorry you are declining Club membership and we feel that you may be under some misunderstanding as to the ideals of the Club.

The provisional By-Laws starting the Club in 1967 had as its aims the recognition of the breed by AKC and the promotion and development of the true type of Stafford.

The whole idea was to follow the English Standard and methods of breeding and selection where the Club was able to "Legislate" these points. As in England, we cannot control bad breeding, either for show or courage, unfortunately.

In the Standard of the Staffordshire Terrier there is wording, "His courage is proverbial". In the English and SBTC/USA Standard we say "From the past history of the SBT the modern dog draws his character of indomitable courage."

1 As far as is possible, the judges in the ring look for this character, which is shown by a spirited gait, an eagle eye, etc., etc., i.e. the judge should do his best to downgrade any shy or cowardly tendencies.

2 John Gordon's new book, which we have available for \$6.00 (retail \$6.95) is interesting. He explains the Standard in a way that indicates that breeding, if in conformity to the Standard, should maintain the correct bone structure, muscle, feet, tail etc. that are necessary in a fighting dog.

Quoting from Page 170 -

"Whether we like the idea or not, if we like the SBT and want him to do well in dogdom, we must consider him physically and temperamentally as a fighting dog. The fact that we do not fight dogs sick them on bulls and bears these days matters little. We have to breed the dogs as though we do. We must preserve the right conformation (as well as temperament) to suit the work for which the SBT was originally required."

3 This indicates to me that no test, either than actually fighting the dog can prove gameness. If the Club aims to obtain AKC recognition, the Club cannot condone any fighting.⁴ Individually, a member can do what he wants outside the Club as a non-member, and⁵ presumably when the Club secures full recognition he will then be able to register his dogs at AKC.

Your proposals are well taken, but⁶ shyness of itself may not indicate lack of gameness.⁷ How do you determine if the dog is shy or merely aloof. In the show ring dogs act in strange ways. We have a small bitch that attacks coyotes and shepherds many times her size and is full of courage.⁸ She will not show however, and descends into a mass of blubber at the thought of standing in the ring. We do not show her any more.

⁹ As for tests, the experts in England haven't yet devised a way of doing this. Ireland used to insist on a dog being barred from Championship status until he had dealt with a badger. (Teastas Mór Trials) These trials have now been abolished.

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10. As to barring breeding for any fault, whether it be something in the Standard or shyness etc., the Club cannot tell free men what to do; there are good breeders and bad breeders. A buyer makes his selection as he will; if the bad breeder is ejected from the Club he will still breed dogs and UKC will probably give him a certificate.

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If he is in the Club we do have a chance to communicate on a personal basis giving our advice as to breeding. However, breeding still remains an art rather than a science and "One man's meat is another man's poison."

We were accused, in the recent forays, of attempts to belittle or malign dogs and breeding.¹¹ We had excellent reasons, we were offering advice that was not taken. And, there is nothing more fierce than a breeder who has his dog or breeding subject to any critique.

12 We all here have stopped open and concise replies to specific requests unless we know the breeder well enough that after he has asked us and we, in good faith and intent, have answered, then we are not abused for being honest. It is very hard to please people, each has his own idea of what a SBT should look like and act like.

We are doing our best for the breed in so far as our powers permit us.¹³ The main nucleus of breeders here is dedicated to retaining the correct temperament as well as conformity with the English Breed Standard.¹⁴ We follow what the experts do in England and Australia.

To specifics that you mention "Apparently you feel that the breed temperament will remain undamaged, regardless of breeding practices."

¹⁶ This is absolutely not true. Breeding practices can damage not only temperament, but also produce other bad traits. Again, we can't order a breeder to do thus and so; we try.

Then in the item "Now if you think that persons desiring a spirited dog should buy an Amstaff or APB, then it seems to me that you miss the point."

Our statements did not say that at all, or we didn't make our point well enough.¹⁶ We say if you want a tried game fighting dog, then go to an APB,¹⁷ which is a magnificent dog developed specifically in many instances for pit work. To take a modern day SBT from England and expect him to do well in the pit may cause¹⁸ you a lot of grief. They have not consistently fought dogs there for a long time. We do not say certain SBT's could not do very well. We would hope that the SBT retains enough of his old ability to do justice to his name, however we cannot, in a magazine and other public utterances that reach AKC ears,¹⁹ blatantly advocate fighting.

We really come to the point, owners of SBT fall into different categories.

20. (1) Those who want to exhibit, and why shouldn't they show this fine dog and compete with him for honors in the show ring.
- (2) Others want a pet - and the SBT does make a good pet.

- (3) Some want to orient to obedience trials and SBT's have done well when tried in England.
- 21 (4) Some want a real good game fighting dog to put into the pit - and that too is their prerogative.
- 22 (5) Some want one or more of these points in combination. This is possible too.

If our epistles emphasize show dogs and family pets, it is because
 23 the majority of members do in fact want this and the Club aims, as I said, when first founded pointed the Club in that direction. We often cannot openly splash²⁴ the fighting group all over our pages and ruin the chances of the other members from securing AKC recognition as well as leaving ourselves open to inspection by Humane Authorities. Some members are in fact repulsed by any advocacy of fighting at all.

25 We say, whoever wants to do their "Thing" with their dog is entitled to do so. However I don't know how a dog club can function for long with acknowledged illegal activities in its midst.

Lastly, your quote from John Gordon is correct. We are trying to hold to that same temperament as long as we are able. John Gordon and others in England do breed to this end as we do here. But as he indicates by saying "When it goes", there are breeders who do not adhere, both over there and here, and in

each case²⁶ nothing much can be done to cover the situation.

One thing remains, bad breeding can produce bad show dogs, bad pets or bad temperaments.²⁷ In time, such breeder is recognized for having bad dogs and will not be able to sell his litters. The good breeder in all respects will always find a home for his and this tendency extends the good at the expense of the bad.

²⁸ We have a group who are keen honest breeders, who are trying to develop the "True type" of SBT in all senses and that is what the Club is about.²⁹ After all, no matter who directs activities, they can only try

Sincerely

L. G. Rant
Secretary