

Pedigrees and the First Few Weeks

Protect your breed by raising the best litter you can.

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So in that space of a few months, your work is to train your beautiful puppy for some of the following: to walk on a lead, to be trimmed and bathed, to fetch a toy or a ball, to know its name, to eat and sleep in a crate or pen and to come when it's called (rewarded with a treat), to ride happily in a car not just to the vet for shots, but to do fun things, to be praised and enjoyed. If the above is not done religiously you will lose the game of breeding and then training a wonderful show dog.

Separate the "good puppy" from its mother at weaning and separate the puppy important from its brothers and sisters! You must be its focus from now on until it starts to teethe. Watch the teeth as they loosen and fall out any abnormality, have your vet take a look. Many a promising pup has become a house pet when the mouth housekeeping was overlooked! This can be caused by teeth not shedding at the correct time, the second teeth coming in incorrectly and cramped, etc. Once a week, for sure, peek in there.

I will reiterate you have from weaning to tooth change to do all the things that will assure you of an intelligent, correctly raised show puppy. If you do not do this within that time frame, you will never have another chance!

Now let's look at the litter, or better still, have a very good breeder look at the litter with you. Unless the best dog in the litter is solid gold with diamond eyes (and both testicles), sell him to an interested party, and help the buyer do the best job with him that he can. You want the best bitch, and hopefully she will have inherited the good traits that her dam has; you may hope also that she has inherited good traits from her father, whom you chose carefully, because he had behind him (and has produced for others, previous to you using him) the traits that you wanted to change in your bitch... This, after all, is why you breed.

Yes, there have been some very dominant bitches that just needed to be bred to any dog that would not mess up the bitch's good points. Yes, we have had some stud dogs that would reproduce themselves if bred to the lowest bitch on the totem pole. However, we are going to look at your litter to see if you have improved, in this generation, prevalent faults in the breed. You want to breed for balance and proportion (type), show temperament, and dogs hopefully free of heritable disease. Remember that in all breeds there is the "drag" of that breed, i.e. long and low in a breed meant to be square, bent front legs in a breed meant to have straight front legs, incorrect mouths for that breed, flat feet when they're not supposed to be, etc. The list goes on...

This brings me to my point: learn to research your breed carefully, and to spend time in raising your hopeful as well as you possibly cannot just trusting to luck, as so many do. Become a breeder, and with it, a protector of your breed!