

## Showing Spayed or Neutered Dogs

**Altered dogs are allowed to compete only in certain situations and certain clubs.**

*By Allan Reznik*

Q. Are neutered animals permitted to compete in dog shows?

A. Only in certain situations. Since the original purpose of dog shows was to provide a venue for evaluating breeding stock, thus bettering our breeds, registries such as the American Kennel Club question the value of showing dogs that cannot reproduce. Other countries, such as England, do have an "Altered Class," where animals that have been spayed or neutered can compete with other altered animals. Hair growth and texture changes in altered animals and that often means having to clip or shave an altered dog you want to show, even if that is prohibited in its breed standard. Showing altered dogs against other altered dogs levels the playing field.

As for those "certain situations" I mentioned earlier. Many single-breed or "specialty" shows have classes for veterans (over 8 years of age). The show-giving club may offer these as "unofficial" or "official." If official, the winner of the class may go on to compete with other intact champions for Best of Breed.

Responsible breeders produce a litter to keep the best puppy for their ongoing breeding program, while encouraging their puppy buyers to neuter their pets and not contribute to overpopulation.

Of course, the AKC rules excluding altered dogs from competition apply only to conformation. Altered dogs may compete in obedience, agility, flyball, and all other performance events.