

Bracco Italiano Society Health Report 2008-2009

The following information is to provide the members, committee of the BIS and the Kennel Club relevant information regarding why I Dorne Carr have agreed to undertake the role of Health Co-ordinator for the BIS.

Resume Dorne Carr B.Sc PGCE

My scientific background which incorporates the following information:

- Batchelor of Science, dual honors degree in:
 - Biochemistry
 - Microbiology

- Currently teach in a successful secondary school of 1,850 students:
 - Biology
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
 - Responsible for the development and implementation of new vocational science courses.

- I keep abreast of new developments within the world of science to enhance my teaching and learning, to be informed of new developments in the world of medicine:
 - Stem cell therapy
 - Genetic engineering, liaising with Professor Anne Moir of Sheffield University who allows me laboratory time during the summer holidays to undertake my own investigations.

- Independent research of GDV in dogs/Irish setters, with a published article of my theory of the cause of GDV. Worked in collaboration with the ISAE and the AHT during this time.
- It is my intention to resume this research with the assistance of Professor Moir when funds and time allow.

I have an unquenchable thirst and passion for science and my dogs. More importantly I have enthusiasm, determination and commitment to make a difference to the health and well being of the Bracco Italiano.

Dorne Carr

Bracco Italiano Registrations in the U.K 1996-2008

The following data from the Kennel club has seen a steady increase in the number of puppies born in the United Kingdom, the actual number of registered and non-registered Bracco Italiano alive is unattainable.

Any reference to the number of Bracco Italiano in the U.K. will relate to the total figure of puppies registered from 1996-2008 (335) when calculating percentage of affected dogs with relation to health issues raised prior to this report date. This is because I have been unable to identify the actual number of registered dogs with the KC at this present moment but will endeavour to obtain this and present the findings in the quarterly report.

Table one

YEAR OF REGISTRATION	PUPPIES REGISTERED
96	17
97	0
98	11
99	20
2000	11
20001	25
2002	15
2003	23
2004	23
2005	51
2006	31
2007	51
2008	57
TOTAL	335

From this data taken from the Kennel Club archives we can see a gradual increase in the number of puppies registered in the U.K.

Health Issues 2008-2009 Bracco Italiano

The following data is a true account of the health issues presented to the committee of the BIS during 2008-2009. I have received only one source of documented evidence to uphold this data which was submitted to me in May 2009. All other sources of evidence will be requested from the owners of affected dogs where possible.

Disease conditions by organ system/category for the Bracco Italiano breed.

Table two

DISEASE CONDITIONS	NUMBER	%/365	MOST COMMON SPECIFIC DISORDER IN DESCENDING ORDER
Ocular	3	0.82	Glaucoma, Cataracts
Gastrointestinal	2	0.55	GDV
Renal	1	0.27	Acute kidney failure
Combination	1	0.27	E.coli, Acute kidney failure
TOTAL /365	7	1.9	

Causes of death by organ system/category for the Bracco Italiano breed.

Table three

CAUSE OF DEATH	NUMBER OF DEATHS	%/365 DEATHS	MOST COMMON SPECIFIC CAUSES IN DESCENDING ORDER
Combination	1	0.27	E.coli, Acute kidney failure
Renal	1	0.27	Acute kidney failure
TOTAL/365	2	0.55	

Ocular

Glaucoma

Sadly two dogs have been confirmed with the disease and have subsequently lost sight in both eyes as reported by Mrs Lois Atkins in her Secretary's report 01/03/09.

The two dogs affected from the same litter were born 20/11/000:
Homstar Argento exported to France owner Mrs J Hill
Homstar Angelina owner Mrs Lois Atkins

Veterinary recommendations

As there is a **Suspect inheritance of Glaucoma in this breed** he has **Suggested, Gonioscopy is performed in the related dogs.**

From data obtained from the kennel club survey there have been no other reported cases. This is not to say the issue should be ignored as although Glaucoma is not as far as we know a life threatening condition it is sadly very debilitating especially for a breed such as the Bracco Italiano who is such an active breed.

During the following three months I shall make enquiries as to how the veterinary surgeons recommendations have been followed up by the owners and breeder of these dogs and obtain copies of the documented evidence to support subsequent data where possible.

Sincere and heart felt sympathies to the owners and breeder of these two lovely dogs, hoping they adapt sufficiently to their disability to go on and enjoy a long happy life.

Cataracts

One documented case of cataracts in the breed this year. This is an imported bitch brought in to specifically increase the small gene pool we have at present in the Bracco Italiano in the U.K.

The veterinary surgeon has stated the cataracts are in the early stages and may never progress any further to cause her blindness. If this did occur she could have simple surgery to remove the cataracts and replace the lens with a plastic one as seen in remedial surgery in humans.

Jan Hayward who imported this bitch from Italy is obviously disappointed with the development of this non life threatening condition, which is inherited. Jan has decided to withdraw Izzy from the breeding programme, a sad loss to the much needed diversity of genes within the gene pool.

A brave decision Jan considering all the hopes you had for her and her progeny, you will however take great pleasure in the love she will bring to your household which is more important to you all.

Gastrointestinal

The data contains two cases of Gastric Volvulus Dilatation (GDV); both of these dogs are alive and recovering well from the ordeal. One confirmed case of a bitch owned by Mr and Mrs M Jacques, the second owned by Mr P March.

The number of cases of GDV in dogs in general is relatively low in comparison to some other life-threatening conditions on the Kennel club's survey results, but this a life-threatening condition and one that must acted upon immediately if the dog has any chance of survival. An area of health that is close to my heart, having lost my first beautiful Irish setter 'Orstone Delightful Dolly'

A difficult decision to decide to breed or not to breed from a dog affected by the condition or with related dogs having suffered from it. Extensive research has still not provided the definitive answer to the condition being an inherited predisposition, Acquired or a combination.

All we can do as owners at this present time is make informed decisions and follow recommended guidelines for the general husbandry of our dogs.

It is hoped the affected dogs go on to live a long healthy life, many do and I have proof lounging on the sofa in the living room my 14 year old Irish boy who had a partial torsion at three, was successfully treated and has had a super life active full life since then. May we have a few more years of him singing for his meals and doggie treats?

Renal

This year has seen two cases of acute renal failure, one case manifesting complications of e.coli infection which was the cause of death and not renal failure.

Case one

Was brought to the attention of Mr J. Abraham when the owner informed him, his dog, would not be attending the pointing test as he had died from acute renal failure.

The dog in question 'Indijazz Bonanza' born 08/06/06, shares the same Dam: 'Homstar Carezza' but not the same Sire.

Documented evidence has not been received for the actual cause of death by the BIS.

Case two

Contacted the chair of the BIS Mrs K Parris, his bitch was very ill at the veterinary surgery with suspected acute renal failure. The bitch sadly died from complications of e.coli toxemia due to a weakened state of health.

The bitch in question 'Indijazz March over for Pacolito' born 08/04/05, Dam as above but different Sire.

An autopsy was not carried out to determine the cause of kidney failure, no further documented evidence has been submitted.

Archives

Jo Norman of the Gunstrux affix reports on her very informative website about her first imported Bracco bitch from Italy. Lydia sadly died of a rare inherited renal disease at 2.5 years old.

Research by Jo showed several of the litter died as did several from a subsequent repeat mating. All stock was removed from any breeding programme.

Further information regarding this case can be found on Jo's website:

<http://www.gunstrux-bracco-italiano.com/HealthandWelfare2006.html>

As Jo rightly states on her website it is hoped this disease is never seen again. Acute renal failure is a life threatening condition, as the body becomes overwhelmed with the toxins accumulating because filtration and excretion of the toxins is minimal. Toxic shock syndrome can occur rapidly resulting in death.

Further research is needed in this area of health to confirm if there is a problem with acute renal failure in the Bracco Italiano. Documented evidence from the recent cases may not shed much light on the situation but contact with owners of related dogs may assist in concluding if this is a major health concern for the current population of Bracco Italiano in the U.K.

Research into testing for hereditary acute renal failure will also be explored.

Muscoskeletal / Hip & Elbow Dysplasia

Elbow Scores

Although the current data available suggests there are no cases of any of the four types of abnormal development of the elbow joint in puppies during 2008-2009, this is not to suggest that it is or is not a problem within the breed. No documented evidence has been received by the BIS during the past year.

An informative report is available on the BIS website dealing with ununited anconeal process. The report highlights two cases of this disease in puppies from the same litter, Jan emphasizes the need to keep the BIS informed of any cases so we can keep a good record of cases that will serve to benefit the breed and breeders in planning their breeding programme.

As the breed develops and the numbers increase, the implications of: Healthy Dogs Fit for Function from the KC. becomes further embedded into any breeding programme.

Elbow scoring will become an automatic health screen test just as hip scoring has become. Both scores can be obtained at the same time so the dog only has the one anaesthetic.

Earliest documented elbow score for the Bracco Italiano is Braccanza Mazzo Di Fiori in Feb 2004 with a score of 1.

The BVA recommends only stock with an elbow score of 0 or 1 (ideally 0) be used as breeding stock.

Data for elbow scores is available in the BIS yearbook for 2008-2009, on the KC website for the past ten years and data from the archives will be made available on the BIS website.

Hip Scores

The scoring of hips is becoming the done thing prior to breeding from a dog, there was a time when only certain known susceptible breeds had the hips scored, if we look at the KC or BVA recommended breeds for hip scoring we will find more than 50% are now routinely hip scored.

This is not to say this is a bad thing, anything that assists in breeding good sound stock that can move freely is a benefit. Still however the inheritance factor of hips is still to be determined so we must listen to those experts and follow the best course of action possible.

Data from 1992-2008 has seen a mild fluctuation of the Breed Mean score of:

- Lowest 14.2 Feb 92
- Highest 20.83 May 2000

2008-2009 Results

- Lowest 16.12
- Highest 17.49

We have however seen a significant increase in the highest score combined with a significant decrease in the lowest score.

The data I have used for the above report will be available on the BIS website but can also be accessed via the KC and BVA websites if you have the kennel name of the dog you are researching.

The BVA recommends dogs with hip scores well below the median should be the ones to breed from.

Further to my report I will analyse the data to identify these and any other trends in the hip scores.

Allergies

I am aware that some dogs have been affected by some form of skin disorder ranging from mild to severe, without confirmed, documented evidence I am unable to make any worthy report on this health issue.

To say this is a problem specific to the Bracco Italiano is incorrect. So many breeds are becoming badly affected by skin disorders that it is becoming a worry. It is hoped the surveys will bring forth further evidence to uphold any report that may be required on this area of health.

On this note I do urge you to complete and return the survey as soon as possible, this will assist greatly when I meet with the Kennel club to discuss any health issues within the breed and how to move forward to reduce the occurrence and eliminate them from our breed.

Action Plan 2009 – 2010 BIS

Phase one

Collate all evidence currently available to the Bracco Italiano Society from:

- Archives of the BIS
- Health survey data the Kennel Club
- Health survey data 2008 – 2009 BIS

Analyse the said data, present findings to:

- Members of the BIS
- Committee of the BIS
- The Kennel Club

The analyzed data will reflect the degree of severity of health issues in the breed in the U.K.

Phase two

Liaise with the afore-mentioned at an informal seminar. Non attending members can voice their opinions using a proforma for inclusion at the seminar.

Discuss and develop informed strategies.

Move the health and welfare of the breed forward in a positive manner to address:

- Major health issues that are life-threatening
- Health issues that are Debilitating (quality of life is reduced)
- Occurrence of health issues within the breed
- Size of the gene pool

This can however only be successful if the following are maintained:

- **Members inform and provide documented evidence of any health issues to the health co-ordinator.**
- **Complete relevant health surveys: BIS, KC, AHT and any other breed health related survey.**

Phase three

Health issues within the breed recognised and appropriate strategies to eliminate them from the breed embedded into the ethos of the BIS:

- Genetic screening
- Eye testing
- Hip scoring
- Elbow scoring

Continued vigilance and monitoring of the health of the breed is vital as the Bracco becomes increasingly established within the U.K.

This will enable the health co-ordinator, the Kennel club alongside other health organizations to act immediately on the health issues occurring in the breed so they can inform:

- Members BIS
- Committee BIS
- Kennel Club

Appropriate action plan developed and implemented to ensure the best possible health of the Bracco Italiano in the U.K.

Working together in line with the Kennel Club is a positive way forward for everyone involved in the breed and ultimately the general health and well-being of the Bracco Italiano.

Summary 2008-2009 Health Report Bracco Italiano Society

It is always a difficult task to summarise the Health of a breed especially when some dogs have sadly become statistics (prematurely) and are either no longer with us or have some debilitating health problem that reduces their quality of life.

With any living organism we can never predict too far in advance how things will turn out especially when we are dealing with nature which has its own way of doing things and is unpredictable.

We as intelligent humans! are fortunate in that we do have some tools to try and alleviate health issues in our own species and in our dogs. We need to become more pro-active in addressing any health issues that result from screening, with all this advanced technology and documented knowledge we can utilise these to our advantage for the benefit of our dogs.

There are so many specialists out there willing to inform and guide us to developing a breed that is not only successful in all aspects of dog activities but is also renowned for the good overall health of the breed. This will, ensure our breed the Bracco Italiano is 'Fit for Function'

My aim is to ensure members are kept updated with any developments relating to Health issues within the Bracco Italiano. Initially this will involve:

- Quarterly health updates
- Bulletins of any breaking news
- Yearly Health report
- Kennel Club reports
- Screening results
- Health surveys
- Health related seminars

Together we ACHIEVE. With your support we can meet our objective of owning one of the healthiest breeds in the U.K.

Dorne Carr

For interest

Breed Health Plans Issued

05-Dec-08

The Kennel Club has sent out to all breed clubs and councils, the first stage of the health plan for their breed. The plan will be based on three separate areas - the conformation of the breed, the prevalence of certain conditions and diseases within the breed (once priorities have been agreed, the steps to tackle these will be formulated), and the diversity of the breed's gene pool.

All Kennel Club Breed Standards have been reviewed to ensure that the guidance given therein leads to the breeding and exhibition of healthy dogs. In some cases no changes have been made, in others there have been very minor changes and in some the amendments are more extensive.

The revised standards will of necessity become fully effective in January 2009 as 'Interim' Breed Standards, pending further feedback in the first six months of 2009 from breed clubs and the veterinary profession. Thereafter the final versions will be published.

In addition to any revisions, all standards will include the following introductory paragraph from January 2009:

A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Kennel Club website for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure.

In future it is the intention of the Kennel Club periodically to request feedback from breed clubs and judges on 'conditions or exaggerations' which they consider may have the potential adversely to affect each breed. These will be considered and if thought significant and relevant will be published regularly as a further guide for judges and breeders.

Information regarding the presence and prevalence of certain diseases and conditions within each breed has also been included. This information has been obtained from three separate areas:

- The prevalence of conditions affecting certain parts of the dog, as documented by the KC/AHT/BSAVA Scientific Committee's Pure Bred Dog Health Survey, completed in 2004.
- An analysis which has been compiled using data provided by Agria Pet Insurance and covers all purebred dogs covered under the Kennel Club Healthcare Plan for the past 5 years.
- A list of conditions included in published material in peer-reviewed scientific literature.

Once Clubs have had the chance to provide their views on the prioritisation of these conditions, final plans to tackle them will be developed by the Clubs and the Kennel Club.

The third part of the health plan is to examine genetic diversity. This matter will be addressed on a breed specific basis once the health plans have been issued and feedback has been received on the information provided regarding breed health issues.

All breed clubs are being asked to review the amendments to their Breed Standard and respond regarding any fundamental issues at this stage. The standards will come fully into force as 'interim' breed standards from the beginning of January but further comments will be accepted until the end of June 2009. Feedback on the health information is requested by the end of the month and every breed is asked to nominate a health representative for the breed if none is yet in post.

Report from the Kennel Club/
British Small Animal Veterinary Association
Scientific Committee
Summary results of the
Purebred Dog Health Survey
For the Bracco Italiano breed

Warning: The results of this survey and particularly the breed-specific analyses

Should be interpreted with caution. The overall response rate was

Only 24% with breed-specific response rates from 4.5% to 64.7%.

The Bracco Italiano breed

A total of 43 forms were sent out and 11 were returned, representing 19 live dogs.

This breed had a 25.6 % response rate (11/43) and it represented 0.08% of all returns

(11/13,741).

Causes of death by organ system/category for the Bracco Italiano breed.

Table 1

CAUSE OF DEATH	NO. OF DEATHS	% OF DEATHS	MOST COMMON SPECIFIC CAUSES IN DESCENDING ORDER
Urologic	1	100.0	Acute kidney failure
Total	1	100.0	

Mortality data

A total of 1 death was reported and this represents 0.01 % of all deaths reported in the

Survey (1/15,881). The median age at death for the Bracco Italiano breed was 2 years and 8

Months (min = 2 years and 8 months, max = 2 years and 8 months) and this was lower than

The overall median of 11 years and 3 months Table 1 shows the causes of death For the Bracco Italiano breed. Age at death is presented for the most common causes of death.

Disease conditions by organ system/category for the Bracco Italiano breed.

Table 2

DISEASE CONDITION	N	%	MOST COMMON SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN DESCENDING ORDER
Benign neoplasia	3	33.3	Histiocytoma; haemangioma; unspecified
Gastrointestinal	2	22.2	Gastric dilatation/volvulus (GDV); unspecified
Cancer	1	11.1	MCT
Reproductive	1	11.1	Prostatic disease
Respiratory	1	11.1	Kennel cough
Unknown	1	11.1	
Total	9	100.0	

Morbidity data

The median current age of the 19 live dogs with a reported age was 2 years and 6 months

(Min=8 months, max=7 years and 6 months, Figure 3). Health information was reported for

19 live dogs of which 13 (68%) were healthy and 6 (32%) had at least one reported health

Condition, resulting in a total of 9 reported conditions with a median of 1 condition/dog

(Min=1, max=3).