

A Blast From The Past

The New York Times
by John Bendel
February 10, 1957

Australian Terrier Will Make Debut In Show This Week Acceptance in Stud Book of A.K.C. is Breeders' Goal

Five Australian Terriers have been entered at Westminster for the first time as an opening move toward possible acceptance of the breed into the American Kennel Club stud book. They will be in the miscellaneous class and, as such, ineligible for the general competition.

This terrier is a low-set dog and weighs eight to fourteen pounds. The body is long and relation to height, the ears erect and forelegs straight, the hind legs slightly bent, the coat harsh and straight. Red or blue and tan are the accepted colors. The red ones look like lightly-built Norwich Terriers.

Steps still to be taken include the formation of a club and expansion of the breed to sufficient numbers held by enough persons so that an application can be considered by the A.K.C. At present there are only between seventy-five and a hundred of the dogs in the country and fewer than a dozen breeders.

Purchase Starts Career

The key figure in the movement is John F Harjes, American born but raised in England and France. The tall, gray-haired man owns a ninety-six acre farm in Blairstown, N.J. and maintains a New York apartment.

Turkeys are his business and the keeping of miscellaneous animals and birds his hobby. He is not particularly interested in dog shows, but has owned about thirty breeds, including Samoyeds and Pomeranians.

He saw an Australian Terrier advertised in an English publication a few years ago and sent for one. The purchase appears to have set him on a new career.



The road ahead is likely to be a long one, the A.K.C. does not take new breeds into its cherished stud book haphazardly and when it does a tremendous amount of paper work is involved.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback, the most recent breed to be accepted took five years to make the grade. At the time there were more than 400 of them in the country, owned by about 300 persons.

While there are no hard and fast rules, the A.K.C. insists on certain conditions. They include that the breed be spread widely over the country, that it have the backing of a responsible club, that the dogs be truly pure in breeding and that the pedigrees be authentic and carefully maintained.

There is no doubt of the Australian Terriers purity. It is believed to be a mixture of several of the small British Terriers fixed in type for many years. It is not common in its own country, but has gained many friends in the British Isles and Canada.

Breed is Appealing

The breed is an appealing one for which the usual virtues are claimed. They are said to be fine field dogs on fox, badger, rabbit and woodchuck, and easily converted to house dogs. Harjes' dogs hunt by themselves for hours.

The breed is the second originating in Australia for which recognition is being sought. There is a strong effort in California on behalf of the Sydney Silkie, also a terrier, that is reported to be making progress.

Harjes has eleven of the dogs among which is 4-year-old Disraeli, an Irish importation, is the special pet. Disraeli has sired about sixty puppies in this country and Canada. Other owners in the club are Mrs. Cecelia Brush of Van Nuys Calif, Mrs. Dorothy Burgh of Middleton, NJ, Mr and Mrs. Lloyd Bunda of Kenosha WI, and Tim Callaghan of New York.

Mrs. Alice Bissett of Halifax has the largest Canadian kennel, the Duke of Gloucester has done much for the breed in England and Price Ali Kahn owns two.

Harjes' livestock include pheasants, peacocks, a big old goat, a raccoon, several cats, a horse and a 40-year-old Shetland pony. The pony was used as a mine detector in France during the war. He was sent ahead, but managed to remain intact.



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