

TO REGISTER, OR NOT TO REGISTER: THAT IS THE QUESTION

LUA DALMATIAN FACTS AND FICTION

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This question has bedeviled the purebred Dalmatian community for decades. After nearly a year of debate on it at the AKC Board level, the question was kicked back to the DCA parent club to conduct a vote of its members on the issue.

That vote is scheduled for this June 2011, or thereabouts.

What side will you take?

How will you vote?

Based on what information?

How will I vote?

YES – Register them.

Why?

Read on.

Let's dissect the key question first – AKC Registration.

The AKC runs a registry, a studbook, which documents parentage and pedigrees. An entry in that registry documents a specific breed, sire and dam. And that is really it! Oh yes, of course other information such as breeder, owner, date of birth, coat color, and a host of other data are collected, but the key elements are BREED, SIRE and DAM.

If one knows (or can prove) the Breed, Sire and Dam, the dog is registered or registerable. Period. End of story.

What about the LUAs then? Do we know the Breed, Sire and Dam of the dogs to be registered? UNEQUIVOCALLY and emphatically YES!

From the first cross done with a Pointer, through generations of backcrosses using Dalmatians, to current day matings done with LUA Dalmatians, every single LUA dog has a proven pedigree –

100% correct documentation of Sire and Dam.

How can I say that? Was the record keeping really accurate over 35 years? YES! In fact, using sophisticated molecular genetics and DNA testing techniques, Dr. Danika Bannasch demonstrated 100% accuracy to the pedigrees (name of dog, sire and dam) for every single one of the LUAs that she tested. So the bottom line is that the LUA Dalmatian pedigrees are proven beyond a shadow of a doubt – even to a level that exceeds modern day registered Dalmatians – to be error free.

What about Breed? After 12 generations of backcrossing to Dalmatians, and after extensive DNA testing, the LUA Dalmatians are proven to within a high degree of scientific confidence to be 99.998% Dalmatian. The percentage is even higher with current day 14th generation LUA Dalmatians. Anyone who has had their

hands on these dogs can say beyond any shadow of any doubt, "they look like a duck, they walk like a duck, & they quack like a duck" – so they must be a duck" – er, Dalmatian that is.

So, we know the Sire, we know the Dam and we know the Breed for each one of the LUA Dalmatians. Should they be registered? YES, YES, YES!

Now a whole host of other questions surround the LUA Dalmatians. Naysayers use them to support their position, but all they really do is raise unfounded smoke and mirror doubts.

For example, "No one knows whether the LUA Dalmatians will have less <clinically evident> stone disease". Huh? Current day AKC registered Dalmatians produce uric acid stones at a rate 9 times higher than the general canine population, and the vast majority of those stones are urate / uric acid related. If you take away the urates,

you cannot make urate / uric acid stones. No bricks – no brick house. No urates – no urate stones. Period.

Or, "Stone disease is really no longer a problem in Dalmatians. It affects 1% or less of the population." Huh? Registry after registry documents a high predilection for Dalmatians to form urate stones. The DCA's own health survey (DCAF – Bartges) showed a rate 10 times higher than the general canine population, and approaching 20% or higher amongst male Dalmatians. The Canine Health Foundation supported study done by Dr. Dorn showed a 9 times higher rate in Dalmatians. Don't believe these results? Call your local vet and ask about urate stones in Dalmatians. I'll bet they give you a litany of patients and experiences.

Indeed, for almost two decades a primary role of the DCA Health committee was to promote information about the occurrence,

treatment and prevention of stone disease in the Dalmatian. Common sense here; if this weren't a significant problem in the breed, why on earth would so much time, energy and financial resource be devoted to it?

And, "their spots are horrible". Huh? Have you had your hands on the current day LUAs? Or, with all due respect, have you looked at our current day AKC registered Dalmatians? On the whole, in my opinion, the breed has a real problem with spotting patterns. They have gotten way too big – larger than the size of a half dollar – way too intermingled looking like giant splotches of color, not "spots", and way too indistinct like "torn patches" of color.

The spot size and character of the current LUAs are much more correct in size and color. They may actually help the breed in this regard! But then, I have had my hands on the

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dogs, photographed and filmed them, and studied them intently. Most of the outspoken naysayers cannot credibly make the same claim.

Or, "if we allow the LUAs into the breeding programs, we will bring in those 'Pointer' diseases". What Pointer diseases? As far as I can tell from research of Pointers, Health Registries and reports, the Pointers – unlike the Dalmatians – do not have any distinct health problem otherwise rare in the general canine population. Besides, and with all due respect, it is genetically and scientifically impossible to point to a single ancestor as the source of a health problem when all members of the genus – canine – share that problem. Said another way, if a LUA develops thyroid disease for example, and that is a known problem in all other breeds, how on earth can one point to the Pointer (pun intended) as the source and not the hundreds of Dalmatians in the pedigree? Answer – you can't!

Finally, and this is the one that is really outrageous – "Well Dr. Schaible had horrible dogs. We don't want to bring that into the general Dal population". Double Huh Huh?? My goodness, have any one of you every sat ringside at a dog show? I have. In fact, I have personally attended several hundred – that's right, hundred

– National Specialties spanning dozens of breeds over the last several years. Know what? Every single one of the breeds has exhibitors/owners/handlers who rip the dogs to shreds ringside, pledge to never breed to that "awful line" and bemoan those horrible dogs bred by so-and-so. Get over it! It is meaningless chatter.

So what is the bottom line here? The LUAs are Dalmatians, simple as that. The AKC should register them as Dalmatians because they have met, and indeed far exceeded, any documentation requirement for Breed, Sire and Dam of any registry any where in the world! Their pedigrees are 100% accurate, and their Breed – Dalmatian – has been proven scientifically through DNA testing that far exceeds any other purebred dog!

Will the LUAs prove to be "the cure" for urate stone disease? With a high degree of confidence, YES! Why? It is simple. You just can't make urate stones without the urates. You don't believe me? Well look at over 150 other breeds with normal urinary uric acid levels for proof. How is it that 150 other breeds do not have a problem with uric acid stones and obstructions? Simple answer – they don't have the urates!

Do I have to breed these dogs? NO, of course not. You can make your breeding choices just like any other breeder. Don't like "those awful dogs"? Don't like their spots? Don't like their breeder? Fine, no problem. Don't get involved. Don't breed to them.

BUT, and this is my final comment, don't DENY the opportunity of others to breed them, show them, and to develop their breeding programs using them. Please, let common sense prevail. Register the dogs and move on. It is time to put this issue to rest.

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