



www.belgiandogs.org

Belgian Dogs & Malinois Worldwide

International Association without lucrative purpose
Approved by Royal Decree of 10 August 2001

Canine Control Council
of Queensland
Registration Department

November 3rd 2004

Mrs President,

**Re : Intervariety mating Groenendael x Laekenois
Letter dated 22nd July 2004 written by Alan MacAndie**

Let me present our International Association - Belgian Dogs and Malinois Worldwide, which is a **Documentation Centre** about the History, Genealogy and Genetics of the Belgian breeds. Most of the website is in English.

Some time ago you received a letter from M. Alan MacAndie. I would like to discuss with you this letter, especially more completely on the history, some more objectives and with more 'light and shade' than the ones of Mr McAndie.

For your information, please find two main parts of a work called '**The Belgian Shepherd's colours - History and Genetic**', published in February 2003. The first article is about the matings of the hard coat, and the second discusses the usefulness of intervariety matings.

Intervariety Groenendael x Laekenois

There was a similar case - well known in the Laekenois world (although Mr McAndie does not seem familiar with it!). Dr Y Surget discussed it in his book 'The Belgian Sheep Dog' (page 158). **Quina-Quarteronne** was born from a *Groenendael* mother and a *Laekenois* father. She became a lice recommandée, due not only to her excellent type, but also she had a very good quality of coat. She in turn reproduced very well her qualities! Two pictures on pages 157 and 159 show the wonderful head and body as well as her nice marks of charbonné.

Hard fur dominance

Now - as well as the 4 Laekenois (fawn charbonné hard coat), the litter contained also a black hard coat and a black short coat. This mating confirms the dominance of the hard coat gene over the smooth coat (long or short) gene. But this interaction is not always complete. Short coats can appear in a litter of hard coats and reciprocal. This is the case in this litter.

Black short coat and black hard coat

The black short coat already existed and still exists today. The Club du Chien de Berger Belge (created in 1891) undertook in 1898 the way of homogeneity **by selection of a specific colour for each of the coat types**. The Black short coat and the fawn charbonne hard coat (Laekenois) and the fawn long coat (Tervueren) were left out. Only few years after, they reappeared at dog-shows with the help of another club, the Berger Belge Club. During the years between the two big wars, the

"Livre d'Origine Saint-Hubert (L.O.S.H.)" registered more black short coat than fawn charbonné hard coat or fawn long coat.

Regarding the black hard coat, examples while not non-existent, are very rare. It was only on from the **1st February 1974** that the black short coat and the black hard coat were no longer recognised!

Breeding Commission

During a trip, in summer 2002, in Greece, I saw a dog really of Belgian Shepherd type in the garden of the house behind my hotel. I rang and asked the origins of this dog. Without any doubt, the son of the house, who spoke English, told me it was out a mating Malinois x Groenendael. The all last paragraph of the FCI standard says the intervarieties are managed by the breeding commissions of each land. Procedures are different from land to land. I don't know the Australian rules but I hope it takes care of the original land distance!

Final recommendations on Berger Belge Breeding by M. Alan MacAndie

Last year, our Association published a compilation of all of the articles written in French or Dutch, by F.-E. Verbanck. Like Charles Hüge (1865-1948), he was an erudite who conducted a large number of experimental breedings. He was also very active in the Belgian Cynology with a very high post in the hierarchy.

The sentence borrowed by M. MacAndie would make M. Verbanck turning round in his coffin! It's absolutely false and completely out of context. More of it, the sentence in intense black: '*To proceed in this way should not be the action of a breeder*' is completely invented. **This sentence is not in the article of Verbanck!**

Even if this kind of intervariety was not intentional, this accidental litter (how many times doesn't it happen in breeding multi-varieties or multi-breeds?) could be revealed, contrary to the opinions of M. MacAndie, as a chance or an enrichment, especially for the rare variety of our breed (Laekenois) in Australia, a huge land very far away from Europe.

Indeed, where does the charbonné of the Malinois and the Laekenois come from? The tendency of palishment (paling or lightening), wrote Charles Hüge, has made admitting that, in breeds with variable colour, it's necessary to keep the black variety to reinvigorate the pigmentation to not lose the colour by degeneration. It's like that, for example, on the Griffons Belges (black) et Bruxellois (fawn charbonné).

With all the problems the Laekenois have these days (extremely tight gene pool, limited numbers and no uniform type), M. Verbanck, who deplored the disappearance of the other varieties (like short hair light-grey with mask and black velvet ears), would make, I'm certain, all the arrangements to use this litter, with probably, some supporting measures.

Suggestion

The only and unique point on which Mr. MacAndie is right, is the wrong registration of the 2 black puppies as Groenendael. If it's true one is a **"black hard coat Belgian shepherd"** and the second a **"black short coat Belgian Shepherd"**, **it's under these terms they have to be registered.**

By another way, their registration as Groenendael could be also an obstacle for a future intervariety of the black hard coat with a Laekenois and of the black short coat with a Malinois.

The black being the main colour of the Belgian Shepherd, with the fawn charbonné, could I suggest you to put it all in order so as to be able to use these puppies in breeding under the respect of certain guidelines to define in function of the characteristics of your big land? For the fawn charbonnés, I think they should only be bred to a Laekenois with a complete pedigree (L.O.S.H. in Belgium). For the "black hard coat" and the "black short coat", matings well thought out under the control and the following of the Australian Breeding commission could help to reinvigorate the black pigmentation in the fawn charbonné. These kinds of matings could avoid the need to make other inter-variety crossing (long hair/short hair) and especially will avoid the production of middle hair

(quantitative genetic). (If the cost of the shipment wasn't so expensive, at least the two blacks would find quickly some dog-fanciers in the original land).

Especially to Mr. MacAndie, I want to say this: ONE ONLY KNOWS A BREED WELL IF ONE KNOWS ITS HISTORY.

I hope, Mr President, I bring you some interesting points on **historic and genetic**. If you want further information or more precisions, we would be very happy to help you.

Best regards,

Jean-Marie Vanbutsele
Président.

www.belgiandogs.org

P.S. : A copy of this document will be send also to all those persons who received the letter from M. MacAndie