

## Health Update AGM 2018

From the 1<sup>st</sup> of July this year, a pilot scheme was launched to change the way in which gonioscopy results are reported. In the past a dog was deemed to be either **AFFECTED** or **UNAFFECTED**, but from July of this year results are graded 0-3, with 0 unaffected, 1 mildly affected and so on. If a dog scores a 2 it is recommended that further breed specific advice is sought before breeding. If a 3 is recorded, breeding is not recommended at all. This is very useful information to have when planning a litter.

At the start of the Pilot Study there was no way of recording grades on the Kennel Club database, so the previous method of recording results was retained to run parallel with the new grading system. Dogs which have undergone gonioscopy since the pilot study began on 1st July will now have their 'G' 'UNAFFECTED' or 'AFFECTED' result removed and PLA (Pectinate Ligament Abnormality) grade (0,1,2,3) will be added to their record. These changes will be implemented in the next few weeks and should be up and running from January 2018. Results on dogs tested after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 will now be graded and recorded accordingly.

The oncology team at Cambridge University has received funding to further their research into histiocytic sarcoma. This form of cancer is prevalent in flatcoats and we are very fortunate to have such research available for our breed. They are calling on the flatcoat owning public to make vets aware of the programme and in turn, for vets to make the team at Cambridge aware of patients who could participate in the study. They want to collect blood and tissue samples from affected dogs and are happy to advise vets on the management of the condition.

To add to this the Give a Dog a Genome project has progressed. After considering all the evidence put to them, the team has decided to sequence the whole genome of a flatcoat with histiocytic sarcoma. DNA from a suitable dog has been obtained and the process will now begin. The team will continue to update us as new information becomes available. This will be passed on to you as and when we receive it.

Links on all of the afore mentioned are on the website. Thanks go to Liz Branscombe, our Health Coordinator for the breed for keeping me up to date on all the relevant information.

We have been informed that the KC is going to include our breed in their Breed Health and Conservation Plans. They are currently developing the evidence base of the BHCP document for the Flatcoated Retriever and when this is complete they will arrange to meet with Liz Branscombe, possibly myself and other breed club health representatives to discuss the evidence base and collaboratively decide upon priorities for the breed. This will then be formalised into an agreed action plan. Data will be collected on known diseases within the breed, suspected and emerging inherited conditions, visible conditions and population structure and inbreeding risks. Data will be collected from breed health surveys carried out by the breed clubs, from the KC breed survey of 2014 and from official KC DNA tests, scientific literature and KC/BVA screening schemes to name but a few.

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media/1159270/bhcp-booklet-v1.pdf>

We are pleased to say that Tony Wall, the veterinary ophthalmologist will once again be carrying out eye testing at our championship show in April. Again details and booking forms are available on the website if required.

Dorothy Gray

Health sub-committee FRCS