



Rhodesian Ridgeback World Congress Great Britain May 1992

Delegates summary – 122 delegates

Canada 5	Finland 3	Sweden 4
Germany 8	Switzerland 1	USA 1
Holland 8	Australia 6	Columbia 2
Gibraltar 1	Republic of South Africa 4	Israel 2
Italy 1	Ireland 7	UK 69

Summary Report of the 1992 Rhodesian Ridgeback World Congress

The congress started with an introduction by the Chairman of the United Kingdom, Mr Dennis Hick. He welcomed the delegates to the Congress and described the format each day of the Congress. This was followed by 'Rhodesian Ridgebacks in the British Isles', a talk by Mr Jack Selby, a well known and renowned figure in the Ridgeback world, on the dogs which were first introduced into Britain and the development of the breed since then.

'The Origins of the Ridgeback' was a very informative and thought provoking topic put forward by Dr Cyril Hromnik of South Africa. It centred on evidence of Ridged dogs being prevalent in other parts of the World, namely the Far East, and the movement of the peoples who owned these dogs towards Africa and not of Africa being the start point of the expansion. This was a different angle and opinion on that which is usually accepted and created quite a lot of discussion. There was no hard evidence to support either point of view and the delegates were supplied with information on which they could make their own decisions. This made for very lively debates in the coffee breaks!

Carol Dobson BVMS, MRCVS a Nutritionist from Pedigree Petfoods talked on 'Nutrition and the Problems Caused by Imbalance'. This centred on the need for a well balanced diet for dogs, and the varying needs of the animals throughout their lives. The problems which could be caused by either a lack or an over feed of nutrients were highlighted and the advice was to use the products which had been developed by reputable companies, unless a diet tried and tested by the breeder/owner was available.

'Temperament' is a very relevant subject in the present times. Mr Graham Mabbutt presented the topic with demonstrations and in-depth analysis of reactions of varying breeds of dog to different environments and circumstances. He made it clear that in his opinion the Temperament of the Breed of dog was one of the basic constituents of its type and that all breeds should display 'typical' temperamental reactions under set circumstances. The topic was enthusiastically received by the delegates with great interest shown in the demonstration videos. Mr Mabbutt had previously analysed Ridgebacks and was hoping to continue in the future to provide the clubs with members trained in Temperament Assessment. He has also provided analysis sheets for the delegates to read and use as a base for their own stock.

'The Standards World Wide' – this was a compilation of the Standards of various countries following the last World Congress 4 years ago, and was used as a basis for discussion only. It became clear that many countries had updated their Standards since then but it had been explained to the delegates that this would be the case. In the end there were only 2 Standards to compare. The British Kennel Club Standard and the revised K.U.S.A. Standard which was in the process of being revised. The

K.U.S.A. had been willing to accept the Standard approved by the delegates at the World Congress. As there was no consensus at the meeting the delegates voted that both sets of Standards should be presented back to their own Clubs/Governing Bodies and that they should then contact the K.U.S.A. direct with their decisions. In the event of there being no recommendations forthcoming from other countries the K.U.S.A. would press ahead with their own recommendations, this would then be adopted by the F.C.I and would therefore be the Standard used by those countries affiliated to it. It was decided that any discussions regarding the Standard would need far greater time than was available and that no progress could be made at present.

There followed a presentation by the Overseas Clubs of the dogs in their countries. This proved to be very popular and was greatly appreciated by delegates as it gave them an insight to the standards of stock around the world. Some details of the dogs shown on the slides provided by the countries and these were available for delegates.

On the first evening there was an outstanding display of Scottish Dancing and Singing along with Traditional Scottish Fayre provided by the Rhodesian Ridgeback of Scotland. This event was a great success and was heartily supported by the delegates all of whom have their own tales to tell (and in some cases the photographs to prove it!)

The second day began with talks on Ridgebacks and Agility, Obedience and Racing. The Agility talk was presented by Mr Ken Wright, who has been involved with Ridgebacks for approx. 30 years. He provided videos and details of the equipment needed and of the most successful ways he uses to train his dogs. Obedience was tackled by Mrs Margaret Southall who had obtained her first Ridgeback in 1965. She gave us her insight into the best approach to training such an intelligent dog as a Ridgeback in the most entertaining manner. Ridgeback Racing and Coursing was presented by Mrs Anna Lane of Australia. This was a video presentation showing how the dogs were raced in Australia and of a coursing set up which showed how the dogs worked when hunting out a sometime visual sometimes scented prey.

Mr A Duffy BVSc MRCVS presented a very in-depth talk on breeding, with information on all the modern technical aides available to breeders. He was able to answer many questions that had concerned breeders over the years.

Mr Robin Searle then treated us all to a most entertaining talk on the lighter side of the Show scene. He delighted the delegates with his amusing descriptions of some of the happenings behind the scenes and his witty portrayal of his career in showing and judging. The half hour break from the serious content of the Congress was appreciated by all the delegates, who heartedly applauded his speech.

'The Purpose of the Standard' was presented by Mrs Ann Woodrow who used diagrams and photographs to explain the requirements of the standard. This most informative speech gave the delegates the opportunity to discuss individual points of confirmation and the reasons behind them. It provoked in-depth discussion and was aimed at encouraging the delegates to be constructively critical as possible when assessing their stock. The requirements of the standard were presented in a way in which all were able to grasp the main points.

The Congress was concluded with an open discussion involving a panel of Breeders, Judges, Show People and other experts. This was designed to get a cross section of opinion from all areas of the dogs world on varying points of the standard and the overall dog. Unfortunately this could have

continued through the night and had to be cut short due to lack of time. The points which were discussed sparked quite different points of view, and gave delegates food for thought.

Mr Hick brought the Conference part of the Congress to a close at approximately 6.30pm on the second day and gave the delegates information regarding the Show at Birmingham on the following day.

The show, in conjunction with Birmingham Championship Dog Show was held at the Perry Barr Show Ground and was well attended by both Delegates and UK showing enthusiasts. The dogs were judged by Mrs June Mimms, and her Best of Breed was the bitch Ch Gavenda Rhiann owned by Mr B & Mrs C Davis with the Best Opposite Sex being Mrs G Regler's Shabani Kana, Best Puppy was Mrs Regler's Shabani Kuli.

There followed a reception in a Hospitality Room provided by the Birmingham Council. Unfortunately although refreshments had been requested from the council the caterers failed to provide them. The Irish Whiskeys and Liquors supplied by the Irish Rhodesian Ridgeback Club were to supplement these refreshments, but in the even were a very welcome substitute. Refreshments were provided at very short notice by the cafeteria supplying the athletics meeting in the adjacent stadium, and these were greatly received. The reception was a well attended affair and gave delegates further chance to discuss their favourite topic – Ridgebacks! Everyone entered into the swing of things and there were many friendships cemented at this gathering. Many photographs were taken to remind those present of this most enjoyable 3 days, and there were many promises to meet up in Australia in 4 years time for the next Congress. I for one hope not to miss it!

Written by Mrs Sue Wheeler, Nyassa Kennel, May 1992.