



SHOWING & BREEDING:

Many people who become Collie owners decide that it might be fun to try their hand at showing or breeding their Collie. The world of Collies, and the world of purebred dogs in particular, is fascinating. Yet it is important to know that behind the “glory” of ribbons, rosettes and awards lies commitment, study, involvement—and a lot of hard work.

As with most things in life, one will only get out of the sport of show and the science of breeding, what they put into it. Both can be extremely satisfying, as well as challenging—even for the best “student.”

The art of breeding is a creative endeavor, as each breeder works to produce a line, or “family,” of Collies based on his own mental image of the ideal

Collie—an ideal based on **The Collie Standard** (*click to read*). A great deal of study is required before starting out as either breeder or exhibitor in order to better understand and visualize the “correct” Collie. There are several excellent books available on the Collie (*click to Resources section*). Joining both the Collie Club of America or a local Collie club is a way to meet with other serious fanciers to share ideas about your common interests and goals.

The Foundation of Breeding

Good solid foundation stock, coupled with a strong education, creates the most successful breeders. These people spend a good many years honing their skills of observation until they are absolutely positive that they are knowledgeable about what is known as “breed type.” This knowledge is then used in obtaining a good solid foundation bitch—the first step in creating a breeding program. All of the most famous kennels in history have started off with a good solid





For the serious enthusiast ...
The Ultimate Commitment

foundation. They build consecutive generations of superior individuals upon that foundation. Knowledge of genetics and heredity add to the breeders toolbox, and a breeder then employs this new knowledge to help make prudent breeding decisions to keep his breeding program on track.

The best of any breeder's stock are the dogs that are entered at the dog shows. Dog shows were established as the place where all breeders gathered to help evaluate breeding stock and that idea remains strong today. Dog shows are held 52 weekends a year throughout the country. Once per year, the Collie Club of America holds its National Specialty. This Specialty rotates throughout the country, and each year, Collies, breeders, owners, and fanciers gather in one place for the largest entry of Collies for the year. (Click to www.collieclubofamerica.org/national2006/index.html for more information.)

Getting Started in Conformation

Not everyone is able to be both a breeder and an exhibitor. Many families with just one Collie enjoy the exhibition arena, and when their one Collie becomes too

old to remain in Conformation (show) competition, they seek out a good breeder who will sell them another "show potential puppy." The excitement of the exhibition arena is a world of its own. It requires additional study beyond that of breeding. One must gain an understanding of the mechanics of dog shows (how a dog becomes a Champion—and why), as well as knowledge of grooming and handling to insure that the dogs being exhibited are presented and campaigned in a competitive manner. To learn more, click to the *Conformation* section of this website.

With an interest in both showing and breeding, there is more to it than just reading. Finding a good mentor, visiting other breeders' kennels, attending many dog shows, and talking to a variety of breeders are all key to increasing your "hands-on" knowledge of all aspects. As our website continues to grow we will be adding new pieces of information from a variety of sources to help and encourage all Collie lovers to come and enjoy... *the wonderful world of Collies.*

PART 5: RESOURCES
Your key to Collie knowledge

