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Cc:
Anja Szyszkiewicz, Avelsråd SCKCS

RE: CLARENCE AND JENS COMMENTS AT SCKCS HOMEPAGE

Hi Jens & Clarence,

According to you your comments at the SCKCS homepage regarding my survey I feel obligated to give my comments back. Firstly I have to admit that your comments are a bit surprising though I got e-mail from Jens and also discussed this via phone with Clarence.

Jens comments in his e-mail shows that your own surveys have showed the same result, although these were done from another perspective and also agree on that it's too early to draw any conclusions.

The phone call with Clarence was very fruitful for me and my summary of the conversation were that we agreed upon the overall and Clarence appreciated that I didn't include my own conclusions in the public version though this could create discussion.

We also agreed upon that Clarence would send me feedback that we could put in the webpage in order to give the readers more information and his view of the health problem. This would be done at the same time as it would be published at the SCKCS website.

Without any notification or wish to discuss further I suddenly find your comments at the SCKCS homepage, the general conclusion of your comments were that you at no points could agree to this survey and that you also thought that many wrong conclusions were made that you felt obligated to answer at.

I find it very strange to give you comments on a survey at another place than it was published. It's like my son doing a test in Kullavik School and if he doesn't pass the test this will be published at the Bukärr School that is 10 kilometres away. Also I find it very strange to publish anything in Bukärr School that was made in Kullavik School. My only conclusion must be that since November last year more than 20.000 readers visit our site and that you think that these also visit the SCKCS website.

My answer on the "wrong conclusions" that you think I done:

1. The Cavalier total population in Sweden v/s investigated Cavaliers

My survey shows clearly that it's based on checked Cavaliers with certificate that is sent to the Swedish Kennel Club, done with the regulations that are valid for the period. The only estimation I done was for getting a number of the total population in Sweden, this is also very well noted in my report as a limitation.

Our Health Program requires if you wish to use offsprings in the breeding process that they are tested without murmur for 2 years, 4 years and after 7 years in order to be seen as healthy. Therefore it's quite normal that breeders follow these rules and see to that they have necessary certificates.

My survey weren't done on the total material in age groups, but this is something that I will deep further down in to see if it's only young Cavaliers and low numbers of 7 year Cavaliers that has been checked.

I clearly showed in my report that it wasn't the total number of Cavaliers in Sweden that I did my survey on, only the ones that did their heart check for the last 10 years.

To be honest, I can't see what wrong conclusions I have made – also I showed that the positive trend of the last years that more Cavaliers has been checked.

2. Only 4% of the Cavaliers have murmur v/s earlier surveys

That only 4% of the checked Cavalier has murmur is no conclusion of mine; it's the result of the facts. I have not at any way tried to back-stack earlier studies or analysis, only showed the facts that are in our systems. I have also clearly shown the limits that I built in the presentation.

I can't see any reasons of why my study should be back-stacked or interpret. Clearly my study doesn't show the same result than earlier studies, but that doesn't mean that it's wrong, instead it should be seen as a point of discussion.

The history behind why it became 2 and 4 years instead of 2½ and 5 years if of no interest for me. To go one step further is a much bigger interest for me.

Although we seem to be sharing the same idea of there is too early to evaluate the Health Program at this point.

3. Definite no reason to increase age v/s nothing in the study that shows this

I have informed both Clarence and Anja that I am not against to increase the age to 2½ and 5 years if that could be "proofed" with facts that support this decision.

In my survey I may draw the conclusion of the facts that it's not motivated to increase the age – I do really mean this – because of the outcome shows too low figures and the variance between the two periods is too small in order to say that the regulations that we have today have any effect at all. Therefore we can't say that increasing the age would have changed the result.

I also understand that if we were living in the perfect world, saying that everyone who owns a Cavalier would have the interest and willingness to take the cost to check their Cavaliers annually during the lifetime – we of course would have the best knowledge.

To force certificates – that was mentioned in your answer – is an action that never can be fulfilled. The interest for the breed stays among the breeders. We will never – unfortunately – be able to involve Cavalier buyers to check their dogs, neither put this as a demand. It could be a clear wish – but nothing else.

4. Import of a Cavalier v/s to close breeding on lines

Something that I learned from Clarence is that our genetic multitude is the best in Europe. Although when talking to Clarence I understood that we shared the concern when it comes to the whole-colours, because of the limited number of stud dogs available.

Of two reasons I find it important to import Cavaliers to Sweden. The problem with limited numbers of stud dogs in the whole-colours and that no statistics shows that imported dogs should have a bigger problem with murmur than “Swedish” breed dogs.

I find it ridiculous that foreign breeders sell less healthy Cavaliers to us. Of course, if you see at the viewpoint that they keep the “best” for showing/exhibition, that probably would be the truth. But the second best they will export, regarding the health issue this can't be a problem though number one and two are from the same litter.

Also I find it ridiculous that foreign breeders would produce in combinations that not would be healthy just in order to export them. Foreign breeders have the very same goal as we have – you breed to keep – the rest you sell. This has nothing to do with health priorities.

5. Veterinary certificates when importing a Cavalier

For me it's obvious that we shouldn't have fewer demands on foreign/imported Cavaliers than the demand on certificates that we have for Swedish Cavaliers. Also understand that it could be difficult to find out the knowledge of the veterinaries abroad and their knowledge needs to be well documented.

Clearly I understand that the ability to discover murmur is different among all veterinaries. Surely not a problem just for foreign veterinaries can imagine the problem is the same with our veterinaries in Sweden.

Of course you shouldn't be able to clear a Cavalier just for being a vet; of course there need to be documentation that the vet has the knowledge of checking hearts.

Nothing from above I want to change – but I think that we put higher demands on the foreign veterinaries than on our own. The foreign veterinaries should be a cardiologist, something that according to my knowledge, we only have two in Sweden – you two!

But of course it's extremely important that you can document the knowledge of the veterinary that you wish to have approved – but if you have this well documented, this should be approved without any problems.

This is not the case today – you don't approve to such documentation, you just say that they need to be cardiologists. This is not a proper system I think. If you have done everything that can be done in order to “proof” that the vet has documented knowledge you should approve it.

I think that everyone that involves in breeding wants to help in order to make the Cavalier healthier, but I think it's important to establish a climate that allows everyone to participate in the discussion.

My survey was built on facts – maybe not the same facts that you work with, but never the less, it doesn't mean that my survey is less truthful than other surveys. The opposite actually, all surveys should be included in a important decision like this.

We clearly welcome more studies to our website, if you wish to share, we would be very happy.

Also I would like you to change your letter at SCKCS website, or at least add my comments to the discussion in order to give the readers a better understanding.

With best regards,

Per Wallentin