

The K Locus in the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon – Debunking a Myth with Genetic Analysis

Amazing that one small portion of genetic material has caused such a wide and vocal range of reactions with Griffon owners and breeders; as facts were virtually absent and much of the clamor based on speculation and conjecture.

Some believe the ky allele has the potential to have always been in the genetic recipe for the Griffon, some believe that it may be a mutation, and others believe this is the spot light shining on an infusion of setter blood at some point in the past. This last group has conceived the notion that any dog testing other than clear (KBKB) is a mixed-breed and therefore inferior. The lab at Vet Gen had the following to say regarding using the K Locus as an indicator of mixed breeding:

“While the presence of the ky allele at the K locus makes for a good test with respect to the ability to predict tan points, in our opinion it says nothing about the origin of the allele in the breed. It is present to varying degrees in many, many breeds. If the American Wirehaired Point Griffon Association intends to assert that this is indicative of setter heritage, they would be best served by doing a breed identification test on several of these dogs and looking for the presence of any setter markers. Short of that, we can make no assumptions about the k locus.”

Some contend that other genetic material accompanying this allele carries untold health issues. Furthermore, individuals have attempted to lobby various registries to recognize a new breed, the Korthals Griffon, and allow only those Wirehaired Pointing Griffons who test clear and have clear ancestors allowed to be registered as such.

We may never know what the reality is but we, the Board of the AWPGA, must make educated decisions and statements based on fact. Genetic science has

made huge leaps in knowledge in the last several years. There are now scientific tests that use a dog's DNA to test for a variety of traits. We are fortunate these are all available to the public at a modest cost. There is a test for the K Locus and the AWPGA encourages all breeders to use this test to certify all of their breeding dogs. The Board, with the help of knowledgeable club members, developed a protocol to guide Griffon breeders to minimize the impact of the ky color allele on the gene pool in the near term and to ultimately eliminate it over time.

CANINE HERITAGE BREED TEST

Certificate of DNA Breed Analysis

KANZAKAWS BIRDIE BELLADONNA

Female
Birthdate: 7/23/07
Reported: 3/12/2010
Owner: JAY HOIH

Breed Composition Analysis

Primary { Wirehaired Pointing Griffon
Secondary { No secondary breeds
In the Mix { No in the mix breeds

Dennis Funtin
Dennis Funtin, Ph.D., M.B.A.
Executive Vice President/Chief of Operations

VXL090836 XL Test 042075K

Kanzakaw's Birdie Belladonna – Breed Analysis – KBKB

Some factions have also stated that tan isn't allowed within our breed standard. As Dr. Sheila Schmutz pointed out in her original paper sent to the AWPGA on this topic; orange and tan are phaelomelain colors in the red family. With orange being an allowed color, technically tan is allowed as well. However, to eliminate the potential change in the normally expected phenotype or outward appearance of the Griffon in the future, the protocol discussed above discourages the use of carriers/transmitters (KBky) for breeding and the spaying/neutering of affected (kyky) dogs.

CANINE
HERITAGE
BREED TEST

Certificate of DNA Breed Analysis

MARQUIS AIMING FOR GOLD

Female
 Birthdate: 5/29/02
 Reported: 3/12/2010
 Owner: JAY HOTH



Breed Composition Analysis

Primary { Wirehaired Pointing Griffon

Secondary { No secondary breeds

In the Mix { No in the mix breeds


 Dennis Fantin, Ph.D., M.B.A.
 Executive Vice President, Chief of Operations

VXL090857 XL Test 042074K

Marquis Aiming For Gold – Breed Analysis – KBky

Some of you may have heard about the DNA test is available to determine the breeds found in the genetic make-up of suspected mix-breed dogs. The primary lab doing this test is MMI Genomics, a subsidiary of MetaMorphix, Inc., based in Calverton, Maryland. This company is the primary DNA service provider for the American Kennel Club. What better lab to use to determine if a Griffon that tests other than KBKB is a purebred or a mixed-breed.

In the search for factual information, the AWPGA has conducted a breed analysis on Griffons with the three potential K Locus test results, KBKB (clear), KBky (carrier/transmitter), and kyky (affected). Interestingly, the resulting breed analysis came back with all three dogs being determined to only have the genetic make-up of Wirehaired Pointing Griffons; nothing else secondary or “in the mix”.

This does not tell us without a shadow of a doubt that NO mix ever occurred, but if it did, the impact is so genetically diluted that it cannot be detected by the most advanced scientific techniques available. So, where does this leave us? As stated many months ago, we don't know where this marker is coming from and most likely never will. We need to look to the

future and do all we can within our abilities to prevent a change in the phenotype of the Griffon by responsible breeding. Working together, we can continue to improve our breed while still keeping it the best kept secret in the Sporting Group.

Your Board has tried hard to listen to the fears and concerns of Griffon owners and breeders alike. We have tried our hardest to maintain a steady course with an emphasis on factual/scientific information to guide that course. Regardless of the factions, often with other agendas will continue to decry the ky allele as the source of “all evil”. We cannot help these folks, but we will not let them slight our wonderful breed.

We are fairly sure we have not heard the end of concerns regarding the ky allele, but rest assured, your Board will continue the effort to bring to light factual information as we sort through this issue over time.

At the end of the day, give your dog/s an extra treat, hug or throw them another bumper. Enjoy them every day because they really don't care what their genetic make-up is; they just live to please you.

CANINE
HERITAGE
BREED TEST

Certificate of DNA Breed Analysis

SWITCHGRASS TRIPLE THREAT

Male
 Birthdate: 3/14/07
 Reported: 3/12/2010
 Owner: JAY HOTH



Breed Composition Analysis

Primary { Wirehaired Pointing Griffon

Secondary { No secondary breeds

In the Mix { No in the mix breeds


 Dennis Fantin, Ph.D., M.B.A.
 Executive Vice President, Chief of Operations

VXL090858 XL Test 042076K

Switchgrass Triple Threat – Breed Analysis – kyky