

Excerpts from Mrs. Florence Nagle's talk after judging the 1974 IWCA Specialty.

HER COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT AND PERTINENT TODAY. IN MY OPINION, SHE EXPECTED THE BEST OF HERSELF AND OTHERS AND THIS, ALONG WITH AN INCREDIBLE TALENT AS A BREEDER, TOOK HER TO THE HEIGHTS OF BREEDING FOR MANY YEARS, REALLY GREAT DOGS.

“...To get a good kennel of Wolfhounds, you have got to line-breed or in-breed. But in-breeding has its dangers as well as its good points...and you are going to emphasize the bad just as much as the good...But I do think you have got to remember that an IW is not just a big, sound dog. It should have graceful lines, curves and not be too long. I know that the standard says a long back but if you get too long a back, you are apt to get a gay tail and a dippy back. You want the loin to be strong and wide and the tail to be fairly low set and then it will probably hang in the right place.

“Now the bitch is in my opinion probably 85% to 90% and it is from the bitch you get (probably) your conformation...and you want to get that right back because the most difficult thing to get right is the hindquarters. You can get a good head, a good eye, a good ear in probably one mating...but you are not going to get good hindquarters unless you have it way back with your bitches. The dog will probably put in the presence...and by the way, that is one thing I rather missed today. I don't know that if you know what presence is...it is the Hound's ability to hold up its head and move proudly without being tugged along like a fish on a string....And the whole thing of presence is something...is the same as Quality. You cannot just define it but every great dog has it. And the thing to aim at, is breeding a great dog. Good dogs are much more difficult to breed than good bitches...With your great dog, you want to get good bitches because although he can sire and possibly get one good puppy out of a mediocre bitch; out of a good bitch he will probably get...most of the litter will be good ones and you will have a reputation of being a good breeder....

Read your standard and get it into your head what you are aiming at because to be a good breeder is partly a gift but it is like painting a picture with living animals which is a very interesting occupation. To be a good breeder you must know what you are trying to achieve and you must see the good points in other peoples' animals and the bad points in your own. The worst disease in the dog world, and it is very prevalent, and it is catching ...is Kennel Blindness... This ghastly explosion of dogs bred by people who in many cases do not know what they are doing, and just put one dog to a bitch and this is it, is doing the breed a lot of harm. Just breed when the bitch is worth breeding from and try and find the best dog you can breed it to.

It is much easier to breed good ones if you only have a few and just breed from the best.