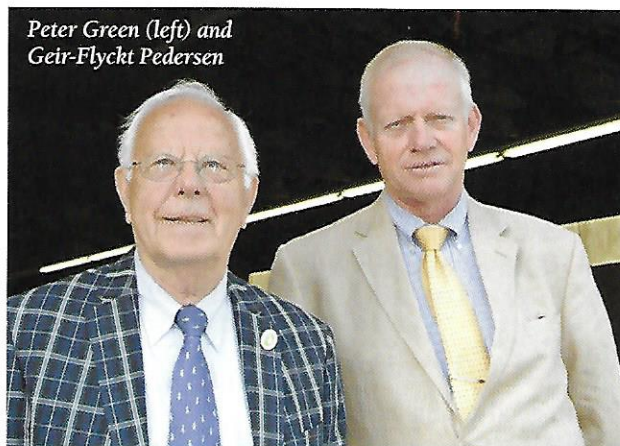


NTC FORUM: A DISCUSSION ON BITES AND TAILS

By Beth Sweigart

On the Thursday evening of MCKC weekend the Club held a forum at the Holiday Inn to discuss how the membership felt about undocked tails and the question of amending the standard to allow for a level bite. Leading the discussion were Peter Green, Geir-Flyckt Pedersen and Lydia Hutchinson.



Peter Green (left) and Geir-Flyckt Pedersen

The question of tails was the thornier one as many felt undocked tails were inevitable but didn't want to help the process along, while others seemed to ready to embrace the concept of an docked Norfolk There were several Norwich breeders in attendance with their undocked dogs, perhaps to inspire acceptance. While Peter and Geir both disdain an undocked dog, they both agree that we would be seeing more of them and we do need to prepare some sort of directive. Though Lydia's breed has a natural tail she was also of the opinion that we will see more and more undocked tails as time goes on.

In the end it was agreed that perhaps the Club, rather than change the standard at this time, should send out a directive to judges explaining that while a docked tail is called for in our standard an undocked one is to be judged as a man-made fault and not just simply discarded. I pointed out that before we change the standard to allow

the option of a natural tail we need to decide how the tail should be described. Do I see another committee in the offing?

As to the question of mouths, I think everyone in attendance was unanimous in not wanting to change the standard regarding it calling for a scissor bit. I do think many felt that a few teeth out of line or a couple

of dropped incisors should not be cause for discarding an otherwise quality dog. Again, the consensus seemed to be a directive to judges from the Club regarding bites to be judged as a fault and not so severely as to eliminate a dog from consideration. Most everyone thought that changing the standard to allow a level bite would open the door to even more questionable mouths.

In the end, I think those in attendance were enlightened by hearing several judges discuss these issues from their perspective and to hear from people who have been exposed to dogs internationally for many years. In closing, I would like to add that, in my opinion, the idea of a forum to discuss issues relevant to the breed is a good one which I hope the Club continues to embrace. I think having the opportunity participate and have a voice in Club affairs will inspire more people to take an active role in our Club.