We are happy to have been asked to do an article for your club magazine.

As the majority of you already know, our exterior judge Bo Lasthein Andersen has retired from judging and therefore also as our exterior judge. Although we understand and respect his decision, we will miss him and his knowledge about our breed.

Broholmerselskabet and the DKK have appointed 4 new exterior judges – in random order:

Helene Riisgaard Pedersen, Toke Lasen, Lars Christiansen, Svein Erik Bjørnes.

In May this year we had a meeting with Bo Lasthein and the 4 new judges to harvest some of Bo's experience with the breed and also his advice for the future. As the exterior form had not been thoroughly revised for many years, the first task for The Breeding Committee and the new judges was to revise the exterior form using the breed standard as guideline, and to rewrite it using reader friendly terminology. We are very proud of the new exterior form, and we hope that it will be received well.

All 4 judges are very experienced both as breeders and judges of different breeds, and for some years all of them have shown a special interest in – and love for – our breed. We have had 2 exterior descriptions with the new judges already and are very happy with the cooperation and engagement of all of them.

For some time, we have actively used Dogs global (www.dogsglobal.com) as a breeding tool to include the genetic variation in the breed in our breeding counseling and in our work with the breed. Dogs Global is a very good tool for both breeders, male owners and also potential puppy buyers, as you can do test matings and find out if a dog or a combination is valuable for the breed genetically speaking.

In the latest newsletter from Broholmerselskabet, we touched on the so-called popular sire syndrome and repeated matings, both breeding methods are very damaging for our breed, and both are strongly advised against in our breed, due to the very limited genetic variation in the breed.

The DKK calculates the number of puppies that each breeding animal can produce based on the number of puppies born in the breed. At the moment the limit is 38 puppies pr. breeding animal. The DKK also keeps track of the number of puppies each breeding dog has. If this limit is exceeded, the owner will receive a warning from the DKK.

Sometimes we see a tendency that the same males are used for breeding over and over again. Often these are males that do well at dog shows or males with owners that are actively posting and promoting their dogs on social media, or even owners that are pushing breeders to use their male. Some males produce 4 – 5 litters in a very short amount of time, without knowing what they are passing down to their offspring. In a breed like the Broholmer, this is very much advised against.

Other times a breeder chooses to repeat a mating using the same male and female for a second litter, and sometimes breeders even repeat a mating with dogs that are marked as red in Dogs Global. Producing 2 litters with the same genetic profile do not contribute positively to the gene pole or to the survival of the breed.

Some argue that in the case that not many dogs from either popular sires or from repeated breedings are used for breeding, there are no problems with these methods. Unfortunately, this is not correct. When deciding to produce a litter in our breed, one of the most important aspects is to make sure that the puppies potentially can be used for breeding, otherwise the breed cannot survive in the future. If many breeders start to repeat combinations or use popular sires, too many dogs in the coming generations will be closely related, making it very difficult finding suitable breeding partners for those dogs.

Remember, that each time you select a male for breeding, you automatically exclude other males from being used and passing their valuable genetics down to the future generations.

So, what can YOU as a breeder, male owner or puppy buyer do about this?

As a breeder you can actively decide not to use popular sires in your breeding programme and of course avoid repeating combinations. As a male owner, remember that you have the right to turn down requests for breedings and that you, as well as the breeders, are contributing factor to the way that Broholmers are bred – and finally, as a potential puppy buyer, you can avoid buying puppies from combinations with popular sires/repeated breedings.

You are always welcome to contact us in the breeding committee: avlsraadet@broholmeren.dk