

KILLYKEEN KENNEL

Looking to find the articles and all the material needed for this presentation I always come to the same conclusion: "Irish Wolfhounds are in my blood".

I never met a breeder with more experience and knowledge of this breed than Tony. Of course his background is the best you could dream of: his grandmother Catherine Fitzpatrick Richardson-Smith already had/bred ?? Irish Wolfhounds. But he was also so fortunate to be allowed to spend much time in the kennels of the most reputable breeders we can imagine: Delphis Gardner, Florence Nagle, Dr May, Sheelagh Seale and many others.

I could spend hours listening to what Tony can tell us about Irish Wolfhounds. Fact is that he always has the same type of old fashioned hounds and that these hounds are healthy and long living. When you come to Tony's house, you always can see some four generations in his kennel. In June, I saw one of his old bitches that was approaching its 11th birthday.

But I think that the most important thing is the message that he wants to give us: Now, some thirty years later (par rapport à quoi?), the breed is at another crossroad and showing signs of degeneration and lack of true type. This negative evolution is due, in part, to commercialisation and to the will to win at any cost in the show ring. Litters are being bred from unsuitable stock by people who lack an in-depth understanding of this unique breed and its inheritance.

The future depends on us. Let us continue to remember and work to the legacy of the great breeders of the past. We are only the custodians of this noble breed which origins are lost in the mist of times and which very survival has been so precarious. Let us look forward to the twenty-first century and strive to breed hounds that conform to the ideals and standards set by previous generations in producing magnificent hounds of great size, commanding appearance and nobility; all those wonderful characteristics that have made the Irish Wolfhound the King of the canine world.

Tony always tries to be honest about, and loyal to his vision of the true Irish Wolfhound. He often is invited as a judge to national and international dog shows. When you get the honour of his presence your show, you will always see him with a little comb in his pocket. When he looks into the face of an Irish Wolfhound he is going to judge, he will always take out his comb and go over the furnishings. Even when you are at his home, you will see him doing the same when one of his hounds comes to him: the first thing he will do is grabbing his comb and go over the furnishings.

Monette Daubenfeld



Editor's Note: Monette was kind enough to send me the 1977/78 publication of "The Irish Hound" which included a wonderful interview with Tony conducted by Miss Elizabeth Murphy. Unfortunately, my typing skills are not good enough to transcribe the article, but I may be able to include it in a future issue.

