

Just Ask AKC To Remove Non-Standard Colors

- Cindy Stansell

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We have to understand the AKC registration system in order to make changes. How does the system work? What changes can be proposed and how would they be implemented?

SELECTION OF COLOR ON REGISTRATION.

Before the early 1990s the blue slips listed frequently used colors – generally, the standard colors. If an owner did not select one of the colors on the blue slip, AKC would send him an expanded list of colors used by AKC. The expanded list also contained a “fill-in-the-blank” line where the owner could list any color. Under this system any color could be listed and registered.

In the early 1990s AKC decided to “standardize” colors and to eliminate the “fill-in-the-blank.” During this two-three year period AKC contacted every parent club. The purpose was to provide a list of colors that had been registered to date and give the parent clubs an opportunity to designate which colors should be listed as standard and which should be listed as “alternate.” The BCA responded and listed the following colors as “alternate”:

- Black & White
- Black, Fawn & White
- Gray & White
- Bronze
- Black, Red & White
- Black
- Gray
- Black and Fawn

Please remember that at this time the BCA Executive Council was not aware of anyone purposely breeding non-standard colors. Occasionally a Bulldog was produced with a non-standard color, but this was not intentionally done nor was it a normal occurrence. BCA certainly did not anticipate an off-color explosion.

Since 1992 there have not been any colors added to the list of choices at AKC. The non-standard color breeders cannot select new colors for registration through AKC. They must use the existing colors set in 1992. This means that AKC does not have any registrations of “lilac,” “blue,” merle, “chocolate,” et al. I have heard Bulldoggers suggest that AKC purge all merle Bulldogs. Since there are NO merle Bulldogs registered with AKC, this is an impossible request!

Color breeders have developed a chart which advises other color breeders how to manipulate

the AKC registration colors. One such site is *rarebulldogs.com*. This site states: “Proper AKC codes to use when registering your Rare Color English Bulldog. Because of limited AKC codes for many different rare Color Combinations, we ask... Breeders, please put your dogs (sic) color somewhere in the AKC Registered name so as to preserve Rare Color Pedigrees. For example, we have been using catch phrases now for years: “Blu Dreams”, “Chocolate Sensations”, “Lilac Passions”, “Black Beauty”, “Platinum Perfection,” “Mini Mites”, “Seal Exclusives” & “Marvelous Merles”. OR you could also put the color in parenthesis at the end of the name like this: (Lilac).”

This site also suggests color codes to use when registering the non-standard colored dogs. For example:

- “Lilac Fawn” and “Blue Fawn” are registered as 082 (Fawn)
- “Lilac Merle” is registered as 105 (Gray & White)
- “Blue Trindle” is registered as 105-008 (Gray with fawn markings)
- “Black Merle Seal” is registered as 019 (Black and White)
- “Chocolate Merle” is registered as 060-014 (Bronze with white markings)
- “Chocolate Merle Tri” is registered as 060-008 (Bronze with Fawn markings)

The non-standard color breeders want to expand the list of colors available for AKC registration. However, since 1992 there can be no expansion of available colors unless requested by BCA.

“Fallow” was accidentally omitted from the list of allowable colors in 1992. It was not a frequently used color so it was not on the list that AKC gave BCA to determine which colors were standard and which ones were “alternate.” The standard revision committee has contacted AKC and “fallow” can be added to the list of available colors. After the standard revision has passed, the standard revision committee will work with AKC on the colors for registration.

WHO CAN REGISTER?

The AKC is a registry based on the honesty of breeders. AKC does not pass moral judgment on “good” breeders or “bad” breeders UNLESS they falsify records or fail the care and conditions requirements. There is no requirement to show. In fact, most of the registrations are from non-show breeders. AKC assumes the people who use the registry are honest. They deal with the bad apples on a complaint-driven system.

This means that AKC will not entertain complaints against breeders who purposefully breed contrary to the ethics of a parent club – as long as the listed sire and dam are correct. Remember AKC does not act as “breed wardens.” It is a registry.

Unfortunately, most of the colors that the non-standard color breeders are producing can occur in purebred Bulldogs. They are purposely breeding non-standard colors. They are obtaining color DNA charts for their stud dogs and brood bitches so they can maximize the recessive colors. Since these colors can occur from breeding two purebred Bulldogs together, AKC will not entertain a complaint about these dogs since they are the product of two purebred dogs.

AKC will not consider broad complaints. Complaints must be specific and must concern either falsifying records or care and conditions. BCA can file impure breeding complaints on cases where BCA reasonably believes that the dog is not a product of two purebred Bulldogs or the two listed Bulldogs. In these cases, the BCA must provide specifics: the registered name of the dog (the call name is not sufficient), registration numbers, the owner's name and address, a picture, and the reason that BCA believes that the dog is not purebred or the product of the listed sire and dam.

Cleaning up registration colors. Once the standard is clarified by passing the proposed standard change, the Standard Revision Committee will work with AKC to maximize BCA's best interests relating to registration. BCA can also educate its members and the general public about colors – which ones are desirable and how to correctly identify colors.