

Breeding Statistics

By David Post, DVM,MS 2007 Texterterriers.com

From September 2004 to August 2005, the AKC registered roughly 2700 Airedales and 750 litters. If the average litter size for the breed is 8 pups, that means that approximately 6000 AKC registration eligible puppies were produced, but less than half were registered. In the 1970s there were approximately 10,000 Airedale registrations, but their rank in breed popularity (around 40th) was similar to today. Is this a reflection on the AKC crackdown on puppy mills and the subsequent advent of alternate registries and the general reduction in AKC registrations or a reduction in the population of the breed? I am unaware of any quality breeders of Airedales that do not register dogs with the AKC.

If we use their recent numbers, we can make some population estimates about Airedales in the US. If we say that 6000 pups were born and the average life expectancy (including early deaths from accidents, etc) is 10 years, the US population is around 60,000 Airedales. This also assumes that "alternate registry" numbers are not significant in Airedales. If we use ATCA breeder listings to quantify quality breeders, there are about 750 ATCA members, of which about 400 list breeding as an activity. Many are not active breeders or breed quite infrequently, once every few years. If on average the 400 breeders, produce a little less than one litter a year, ATCA breeders are responsible for less than half the Airedales in the US.

The AKC reports that about 120 Airedales attain an AKC championship each year, which is about 2% of the Airedale population. Roughly 20 Airedales obtain a CD obedience title, 8 get a CDX, and 3 get a UD each year. Roughly, two get tracking titles, and 10 get novice agility titles. If we compare these statistics to other terriers, the numbers are similar to American Staffordshire Terriers, but behind Miniature Schnauzers and Jack Russell Terriers. The ratio of obedience titles to conformation titles is much higher in working breeds like Dobses and Rottweilers and popular obedience breeds like Border Collies, Labs, and Golden Retrievers.