

GOLDEN RETRIEVER BREED COUNCIL

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Dear All

Gonioscopy / Glaucoma

Some of you will be aware that recent gonioscopy testing has resulted in many Facebook forums expressing concern on various aspects of the screening. In addition, there was some misunderstanding and some inaccurate advice. I have spoken at length to Prof Sheila Crispin and I have put together some information that you may find helpful. Please share this information with your committees and club members.

I am currently addressing concerns from those breeders who have recently attended for gonioscopy screening, and have been in touch with me. These concerns are about:

- a. Lens falling out during examination.
- b. Length of time (or lack of it!) taken.
- c. Variation of methods used.
- d. Inconsistency of advice offered.

I hope to address these concerns in more detail once I have more facts.

What I do know is:

- An instrument that provides good magnification is required, most satisfactorily from a slit lamp or fundus camera.
- The three most commonly used lenses under the Eye Scheme are:
 - Barkan Lo-vac
 - Koeppe Lens
 - Volk Aspheric Lens (usually 20D strength)
- There are several types of lens, but only one is used throughout any particular session. Does one size fit all?
- The lenses used are those used in human ophthalmology; there are no canine specific lenses available.
- The latest BRS shows that in the 1st period of this year (January – March 2020) there were 120 Goldens examined for gonioscopy and out of those
 - 24 were grade 1 (28.8%)
 - 10 were grade 2 (12%)
 - 86 were clear

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I feel we have to weigh up the facts and take a balanced view. We also need to take into account data produced for other breeds. Progression of Goniodysgenesis with age has been reported in several breeds; namely the Flat Coated Retriever, Welsh Springer Spaniel, Dandie Dinmont Terrier, Basset Hound and Leonberger,

For example, Progression of pectinate ligament dysplasia over time in two populations of Flat-Coated Retrievers

Link <https://flatcoated-retriever-society.org/images/vop12098%201.pdf>

Angle closure/closed angle glaucoma, as we know, is an extremely painful and blinding condition and is very traumatic for all concerned. However, what we do not know is why some with poor drainage angles go on to develop glaucoma and some do not. It is believed, in other breeds to be inherited in a complex manner, with the possibility that a “controlling” gene prevents expression. The simple fact is **WE REALLY DO NOT KNOW!**

When Professor Bedford offered to screen 500 Golden Oldies in a project later named “The Golden Oldie” project, we all saw this as a positive way forward. What would have made sense would be to wait until we had more data before moving onto the inherited eye diseases listed under what was previously Schedule A, but that simply did not happen. Now we have a pandemic caused by Covid 19, a particularly nasty and life threatening virus, further hampering progress, it is understandable that many breeders are frustrated, upset and confused!

I am currently looking into restarting the project, and possibly extending it, as soon as possible. Funding may be involved and I am looking at that too.

I hope this goes some way to explain, in very broad, general terms the current situation. I have much more detailed information about procedures and historic papers, which I will forward in due course. There is an urgent need to address these problems and correspondence is the only vehicle in these sad times. Health seminars and presentations may be possible in due course, when we eventually get back to normal, but in the meantime I want to give constructive advice and help steer breeders in the right direction.

I do hope you understand and your support is essential.

Many thanks

Margaret Woods

BREED HEALTH COORDINATOR

Appended - 2 documents from Prof. Crispin
