

Changes to the Breed Standard

There are dozens of Poms in the Stud Books of the 1890s registered with two colours, like Kitsey, but without the modifying term 'parti-colour'. More confusingly Poms described by eye-witnesses as real parti-colours are also sometimes registered simply as brown and white or black and white. So it is impossible to determine in most cases which ones were mismarks and which ones were parti-colours. However, there are quite a few described like Gluck with a very detailed account of where they had white markings so from this we learn that mismarks were common and often exhibited.

Obviously breeders attempting to perfect whole colours would object to the fruit of their expensive and planned breeding programme being upstaged by a mismarked version of the colour at a show and also those exhibiting properly marked parti-colours would also be unhappy. As the breed became more popular and colours developed breeders became increasingly fussy hence the frequent attempts to alter the Standard to define what was a mismarked whole colour and what was not a parti-colour.

In 1898 The Pomeranian Club revised the Breed Standard (of 1892) to clarify the difference between a mismark and a parti-colour. The sentence 'a few white hairs in any self-colours shall not disqualify, but should be discouraged' was strengthened to 'a few white hairs in any self-coloured dog shall not absolutely disqualify, but should carry great weight against a dog.' The definition of a parti-coloured dog was added 'in parti-coloured dogs, the colours should be evenly distributed on the body'. Leaving no stone unturned (until the next clarification) this was added 'whole coloured dogs with a white foot or feet, leg or legs, are decidedly objectionable and should be discouraged, and cannot compete as whole coloured specimens'. For good measure in 1901 further changes included 'a dog with a white foot or a white chest would not be a parti-coloured.'

In 1906 Mr Hicks wrote that if mismarked dogs were entered in a parti colour class they should immediately be disqualified and so should a white dog with just a streak or two of dark markings. His opinion was that 'dogs with false markings make very good pets and should be sold by breeders for this purpose'.... this statement does seem ironical though after looking at the photograph of his wife's Pom Kitsey!

By 1911 Miss Ives noted in her book in the chapter on Parti-colours 'A dog with white chest and white feet is not a parti-colour, but a mismarked dog.' adding 'judges would do well to remember that whole-coloured dogs in whole-coloured classes should take precedence of light shading and white hairs, however profuse the coat may be'.



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