

Is There a Wolfhound in There?

Linda Ross

One of the original historians of the Scottish deerhound standard was Mr. G. W. Hickman. He had a constant dispute going with Capt. G. A. Graham, the founding father of reviving the Irish Wolfhound. Both argued over the origins of the deerhounds and wolfhounds. Capt. Graham used the deerhound to recreate the extinct Irish Breed. In the Captain publication "The Book of the Dog" he said deerhounds did not exist until modern times and that " he always considered the deerhound a degeneration of the Irish Wolfhound." This did not help relations between the two breeds.

As the duel continued, in a letter to the editor of The Livestock Journal " of 1881 Hickman wrote," I showed from Pitscottie"s History (written 1600 AD) that the Earles of Huntlie, Argyle, and Athole brought thair deirhounds with thame," proving that more than 250 years ago the term deerhound was used and existed as a breed.

This battle of origins of the Scottish Greyhound or Wolfdog began in the late nineteenth century. The mélange of Celtic greyhounds, staghounds, and Sighthounds in general are still being researched as to origin and history. The debate continues even today.

Now I am not a historian or scholar on this subject. I live with both breeds, and frankly the difference between the deerhound and wolfhound makes me wonder about how there was any connection at all! When I got my deerhound, Dag Wabbit, I thought there would be great kindred spirit between the two breeds. We would be a cohesive household. Well, this is what I have discovered:

Deerhounds	Wolfhounds
Eat one kibble at a time	Gobble food
Dig holes and cover holes	Dig only
Ears not need much stripping	Ears need constant maintenance
Pretzel positions possible	Stiff body with resistance
Never starts a fight	Fierce when provoked
Bites underbelly	Fights with head and neck
Jumps off all fours	Jumps off two legs only
Protects toys	Destroys toys
Likes cozy dog beds	Likes queen-size mattresses
Laps gracefully	Drips water from furnishings

Greets strangers quickly	Slower to greet strangers
Doesn't chew on bones	Loves marrow bones
Butts always clean	Butts always dirty
Hates rain	Likes rain sometimes
Yelps	Howls
Keeps fit	Needs to be worked
Never fat	Can have weight issue
Faster	Slower
30"	36"
Licks human chins	Licks human hands
Hates collars	Loves collars
Difficult to train	Easy to train
Begs for attention	Begs for food
Provokes chaos in household	Promotes serenity
Peter Pan	Orson Wells

I'm sure I could even add to this list as time goes on. The conclusion is that it is a wonder how either one could be connected. When I go to the All Breed shows and I hear comments like, "That wolfhound looks like a deerhound" or "That deerhound is so big it could be a wolfhound," I just want to say, "Mister, you have no idea how much they are NOT alike!" I love them both but they are definitely two separate breeds. If you have any doubts just start reading Graham and Hickman and you'll see where the argument began, and justifiably so.

L.S.Ross