

What does HOF *Really* Mean?

Most breeders of Patterdale Terriers like to see the suffix title of HOF in the pedigrees of our brood stock. That goes for old timers as well as the Pepsi generation. Most of us know HOF means Hall Of Fame and it's inclusion in the pedigrees is seen as a good thing. It helps guide our thinking as we consider an upcoming litter. It once meant the dog was a proven producer of good working stock. Now there are other possibilities.

In recent years HOF has begun taking on a different meaning. This is as a direct result of the people who think the show ring is where the *good dogs* can be found. That's only true for dogs that were bred to "Look Good." Patterdale Terriers were never bred for their looks. They were bred for their superiority at earthwork. Appearance is not a deciding factor for breeding real Patterdale Terriers. That is, until recently.

A bit of historical reference is in order here. In the days of old breeders and terrier men of prominence got together now and then to deliberate on the goodness of various individual dogs. This was in regard to the named individual's tenancy to produce good working stock. All breeders had (and still have) an interest in knowing where the better producers were. In those days Patterdale Terriers were a relatively unknown breed. Only people that had interests in getting certain types of animals out of the ground (for whatever reason) knew of them at all. This served the interests of the entire earth working world in a positive manner. It was the late & great Nancy Swertferger who first told me of these dogs in the mid-late '80s and in the next several years information dribbled its way to me so that I was quite ready when opportunity found me. A couple decades later a pair of Patterdale Terrier pups were placed in my hands. In the natural course of things I grew to understand the important meaning of HOF. I've also come to frown on the recent changes for its meaning.

After a bit of scrutiny on the newer names showing an HOF suffix it became clear that the proud old title was being assigned to dogs for producing offspring that were winning show dogs. As is commonly known, there is no history of the show ring *improving* the performance of any working breed. In fact, the show has ruined every working breed that got the attention of *the show crowd*. Now the show crowd is focused on the world's premier earth working dog, the Patterdale Terrier.

Everyone I've talked with seems to see this as I do. Think on awarding the HOF with an -S or an -F to denote the specific reason for the title, (-S for Show and -F for Field.) This subject needs to come to prominence before the Patterdale Terrier breed is brought to ruin without getting a fair start. Talk to your friends and the various registries. Start talking about getting the HOF title out in the open so the real meaning is not lost.