

## FINDING YOUR PERFECT PUPPY

by Celeste Macleod

### **GOLDEN RULE: Never buy in haste!**

#### **Some pointers to consider before buying a puppy:**

1. Buy your puppy from a reputable breeder. Talk to people locally who you can trust – your vet or dog trainer or your Staffie Club – seek their advice and recommendations. Be wary of breeders who specialise in a whole range of breeds. Never purchase a puppy through the newspapers, pet shops or from your “next door” breeder.

Remember, there's no rush to find your perfect puppy and good puppies from good breeders are often snapped up very quickly. Be prepared to put your name on a waiting-list if necessary.

2. Once you've pin-pointed a likely breeder, give them a ring and explain exactly what you are looking for. That initial contact will give you a good idea of the sort of person you're dealing with.

Ask lots of questions. A good breeder will be happy to answer these and will be knowledgeable and informed about the breed they are selling.

3. Arrange to meet the breeder. You should try to see the puppies at least twice before taking one home. The age at which the breeder will allow you to take the puppy home may vary from 6 to 10 weeks. Make sure that the puppy is weaned and has started its program of vaccinations and de-worming.
4. During your visit ask to see the parents of the litter. It may not be practical to see the sire, but the owner can still fill you in on the details and give you a contact number. Insist on a good quality photograph. The mother should be easier to view. Check that the bitch is healthy and observe her temperament around you, the breeder and her puppies. Spend some time with her, see how she interacts with you. The temperament of the mother is very important, and will give you a very good indication of what kind of adult dogs the puppies will grow into.
5. Check the puppies themselves very carefully. They should be healthy, bright, alert and enjoy human contact. Examine the puppies carefully for any signs of illness. If you are selecting a puppy and would like it to have show-qualities, express these requirements to the breeder. He may be unable to guarantee what the puppies will look like as an adult, but he should be able to give you a good indication of which puppies are exhibiting the most desirable features.
6. When you visit, observe the surroundings and the conditions that the dogs are kept in. Some breeders will have their dogs in their homes, where they get plenty of stimulation and human contact. Some will keep them in a kennel, but will ensure that



## For the betterment of Staffords

### **NORTH WEST SBTC**

T 012 253-2057  
E riefra@absamail.co.za

### **FREE STATE SBTC**

T 083-251-5927  
E wims@medi.co.za

### **KWA ZULU NATAL SBTC**

T 031 762-1352  
E tengeenie@mweb.co.za

### **PRETORIA SBTC**

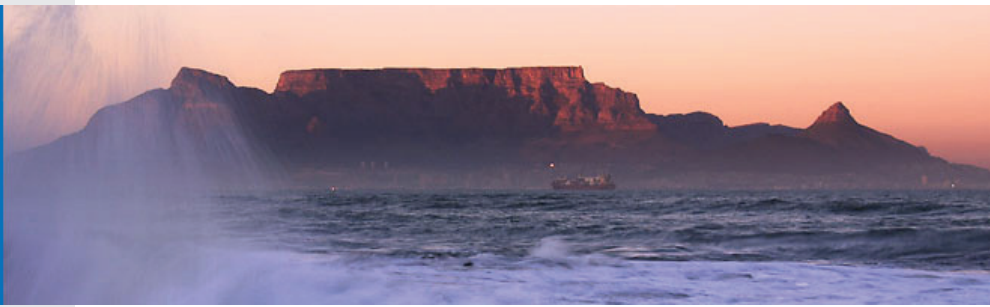
C 079-614-0669  
E club@psbtc.co.za

### **SBTC OF TRANSVAAL**

C 083-650-8030  
E petergrek@discoverymail.co.za

### **WESTERN CAPE SBTC**

C 078-432-954  
E staffieclub@gmail.com



## For the betterment of Staffords

### **NORTH WEST SBTC**

T 012 253-2057

E riefra@absamail.co.za

### **FREE STATE SBTC**

T 083-251-5927

E wims@medi.co.za

### **KWA ZULU NATAL SBTC**

T 031 762-1352

E tengeenie@mweb.co.za

### **PRETORIA SBTC**

C 079-614-0669

E club@psbtc.co.za

### **SBTC OF TRANSVAAL**

C 083-650-8030

E petergrek@discoverymail.co.za

### **WESTERN CAPE SBTC**

C 078-432-954

E staffieclub@gmail.com

they are stimulated and socialized.

7. Research your breed. Contact your local club or club secretary about the most common complaints affecting the breed and find out from the breeder if the puppy's parent's have the relevant condition.
8. Make sure that the relevant paperwork is available when you visit the puppy. This will include:
  - a six generation pedigree
  - the registration papers
  - the inoculation records
  - the veterinary certificate
  - photographs of the parents
  - list of what the puppy is eating
  - possibly a sample of the food or pellets

### **BE INFORMED:**

The Club wish to highlight that not all breeders are equal. This might become as a surprise to you but breeders basically fall into 2 categories:

1. **Breeders who breed to uplift and improve the breed and**
2. **Breeders who make a living off selling dogs.**

It's the second kind of breeder you need to be careful of. These people will try and influence you that they have the 'best' dogs, that they 'do the best in the show ring' and some of them even serve on Stafford Club committees. They are expert lairs and you will not easily know the difference between one that's honest and one that might take your for a ride.

**The Western Cape SBT Club's advise to you is to research the breeder and the 'show scene' before you spend any money.**

Don't believe EVERYTHING you hear. Talk to as many people as possible. There are several breeders of Staffordshire Bull Terriers. This is a 15 year commitment you are making - you need not rush into it, so don't feel you must make a rushed decision. A respectable breeder wants the best for the dogs they breed and want the 'right family' for them, in fact some of them can be quite hard to impress.

**No matter what advice you get - the final commitment is yours. Make it an informed one!**