

# TERRIERS IN PORTUGAL

by Luis Gorjão Henriques

Portugal is a country where hunting is still a very popular activity, and so we have always used Terriers for hunting purposes.

At dog shows, Terriers were also always present, although not very popular, as grooming was never a main priority for Portuguese breeders. Still nowadays grooming is a big problem for Portuguese exhibitors, and even for pet owners.

Even so, since the foundation of the Portuguese Kennel Club in 1897, then just named as the Portuguese Hunters Royal Club (Real Club de Caçadores Portugueses), Terrier breeders took an active part on the organized canine scheme in Portugal. In 1908 the first Portuguese official dog show took place in Lisboa, and some Fox-Terriers were shown. And in 1931 there was founded a special section of the Portuguese Hunters Club, called Secção de Canicultura, that became so important in the structure that in 1959 became the Clube Português de Canicultura (CPC) and latter absorbed the remains of the Clube dos Caçadores Portugueses.

In 1988 a group of Terrier breeders founded the Terrier Clube de Portugal, who's first President was Rui Caldas de Vasconcellos, a FCI judge, former President of the CPC and breeder of Smooth Fox-Terriers under the kennel name "De Azambuja" that produced some Portuguese Champions.

Another founder of the Club, and board member since the foundation is the acting President, Mrs. Maria José Cavalleri Martinho, breeder of Cairn Terrier since de 60's and Border Terrier since the 90's under the kennel name "Da Urca" with many Portuguese Champions bred under her affix.

As I guess it happens in most countries, hunters do not register their dogs and their litters, and puppy mills do register. And in Portugal the only rules for breeding are regarding age and limit of litters per female, so it happens that the breed that is and has been in the last 17 years on the CPC Top Ten registry book, the Livro de Origens Português is the Yorkshire Terrier, followed by distance by the West Highland White Terrier and the Wire Fox-Terrier, and more recently by the Jack Russell Terrier.

From the several hundred of Yorkshire Terriers bred in our country every year, the Terrier Club can only recommend, when asked for puppies, 3 breeders

that are members of the Club and doing a good work regarding conformation to the standard and health, and showing regularly their exhibits. But these ones have had very good results at dog shows not only at national level, as well as international level.

The same has happened with Westies and Wire Fox, and is now happening with Jack Russell Terrier. The popular breeds lead to an increasing number of registries and a lower quality level, although for example in Jack Russell Terrier, Portugal can be considered one of the countries with top quality if we consider the breeders that are looking for quality instead of quantity. Since the recognition of the Jack Russell as a separate breed from the Parson in 1999, Portuguese Jack Russell had obtained several Interra, European and World Winner titles, the first one in 1992 at the European show in Barcelona, and the more recent ones at the European in 2015 in Oslo, or at the World Show in Moscow 2016 or European in Brussels in 2016, this one the Junior title, so still aiming for the future. Portuguese Jack Russells have obtained titles all over the World, but the breeders that have achieved this have bred about 5% of the more than 200 JRT registered in Portugal in 2015.

Other breeds where it is possible to find some nice quality in Portugal are Wire Fox, also with some Interra titles won by a Portuguese breeder during the years, Smooth Fox, and more recently also with Bull and Mini Bull although in both these breeds the quality even at dog shows has a lot of up and downs. Also Parson Russell Terriers, with very low number of registries, have obtained several Interra and European Winner titles, and national titles all over Europe.

The dangerous breeds law has also affected a bit the Portuguese Terriers, as both American Staffordshire and Staffordshire Bull are considered to be dangerous and the registration of litters and imports of new dogs is controlled by the Government. Although in Portugal there was never a big amount of Staffordshire Bull, we had some good numbers and even quality in American Staffordshire, that dropped down dramatically. Fortunately, and thanks to our neighbours from Spain, one of the leading countries in the World for both breeds, we are able to see at our dog shows big entries with high quality in both

breeds. Unfortunately, the Portuguese Show Rules was changed by the pressure of the animal rights activists on our Government, and from the Government over the CPC, so from January 2016 it was forbidden to show cropped dogs, and that lowered the number of American Staffordshire show at our shows.

The Terrier Clube de Portugal organizes the National Specialty (Monográfica) every year on the last weekend of July in Sintra, and always have Terrier breeders as our judges. The fewer exceptions were just 3 or 4 all-round judges highly considered by the Terrier community, but there is always a preference for Terrier breeder-judges.

The Interra show was organized two times in Portugal, in 2003 and 2014, and there was noted at both shows a big increase in entries and on the overall quality. On both show, the Terrier Clube de Portugal has

arranged the Seminar. In 2003, it was held a seminar on the standard of the West Highland White Terrier, by Mr. Jesus Pastor, worldwide famous breeder under the kennel name "Alborada". In 2014, the subject of the Seminar was the "Ears in the different Terrier breeds" held by Mme. Monique Van Brempt, President of Interra and breeder of Scottish Terrier under the "Limecourt" kennel name.

The Terrier Clube de Portugal is a member of Interra since 1998 and a big supporter of this organization. The Terrier Clube de Portugal believes that only united under the same umbrella the different Terrier Clubs can join forces to defend the type, temperament and the working abilities of the Terrier breeds, and the work done by Interra until now has proved to be very valid, in spite of the difficulties.

