

## “Pure bred from Championship Lines”

(Submitted by Bonnie Black)

How many times have we all seen ads that read something like, “Pure bred puppies from Championship Lines for sale”? In most cases, these ads are technically expressing the truth, but what does that really mean?

The ads don't tell us how many generations removed from their 'champion ancestor(s)' these puppies are. Obviously, there is significant difference between puppies whose parents are champions vs. those whose great, great, great, great, grandfather back in the 1960s was a champion.

The ads don't tell us if the breeder actively shows their AKC potential breeder dogs to determine if they conform to breed standards or if the breeders are actually puppy mills (breeding for greed!) or back yard breeders who bred their dogs because they just want the experience of having some puppies to raise. Some extra cash is nice too! Obviously, there are big differences.

The “Pure Bred puppies from Championship Lines” ad doesn't say anything about how those puppies have been raised in terms of health care or socialization. I think we can agree that puppies whose parents have been professionally screened by vets for genetic health issues prior to breeding, have been fed the best foods and raised in an enriched environment vs. puppies raised in cages in a puppy mill are very likely to be very different yet buyers will often pay about the same regardless. Many buyers are actually tricked into thinking higher prices = higher quality.

Of course the puppies raised by back yard breeders or born in puppy mills still can be wonderful loving pets worthy of love and the best care, but which ones are most likely to be healthy, emotionally sound and conform to breed standards?

Now consider how many times you've seen ads for "Pure bred Waterslagers from Championship lines" or found breeders names off of a list somewhere. How can you tell which ones have been raised in conditions similar to those puppy mills, backyard breeders, or by breeders who constantly have their birds professionally evaluated to make sure they are breeding canaries consistent with the song and type standards of the breed? **BUYER BEWARE:** *Non-evaluated Waterslagers without pedigrees and/or judge's score sheets may be sold at a similar price to judged birds with papers.*

The answer is basically the same as with the puppy analogy. Seek out breeders with excellent reputations that can provide score sheets and who have their birds evaluated frequently by professional judges for consistency to the Waterslager breed standards whenever you can. It also helps to educate yourself about the breed standards of song that makes our waterslagers so special.

The annual show is a great place to start!