



339 County Highway 106
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July 8, 2006

To: The Membership of the American Rottweiler Club

Subject: IFR Member Status

The recent IFR Congress in Mexico City (July 6-7) resulted in significant changes to the IFR Convention of the IFR. The changes have changed the nature of the IFR from an independent association of Rottweiler parent clubs from around the world to membership based on acceptance of the dominance of Germany as the sole authority in any and all matters pertaining to the Rottweiler.

At some point in the future, the Board of Directors and the membership of the American Rottweiler Club will have to decide whether the American Rottweiler Club wants to remain as a member of the IFR.

What is the nature of the IFR?

In 1968, representatives of the Rottweiler clubs from Germany, Denmark, England, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States joined to form an organization to make a coordinated effort to promote the Rottweiler breed on an international level.

The sole function of the organization was to provide a forum for discussion between the member countries, organized around a Congress every 2-3 years. The host country of the Congress provided a venue of educational presentations and dog events that demonstrated the Rottweiler in their country. The United States hosted the IFR Congress in Philadelphia in 1985.

In 1991, the IFR adopted the concept of the Rottweiler World Festival, which specified a Congress that included a world Schutzhund championship (IPO) and a world breed championship show. The United States hosted the World Rottweiler Festival in 1998. Belgium hosted the last one in 2000.

Today, the IFR sanctions a World IPO Championship and a World Breed Championship each year. In 2005, the United States hosted the World IPO Championship.

Is the IFR an active organization?

At the 2006 Congress, 10 of the 24 members attended the meeting and another designated a representative from an attending country. In 2003, 9 of 21 members attended the Congress.

The IFR has never initiated or developed any program in any area of interest in Rottweilers. Not in countering Breed Specific legislation or Rottweiler Health or Temperament evaluation or Judges' Education or Dog Sports.

In 2002, the IFR initiated a web site at <http://www.ifrottweiler.com/>. Entering the 2006 Congress, this web site showed 24 members, although South Afrika has not paid its dues in several years. Only half of the 24 members even bother to list information about the Rottweiler in their country. Of the original members, neither Germany, Austria, Norway, nor Sweden post any information about the Rottweiler in their country.

What are the Changes to the IFR Convention? (For all details, please see my Delegate's Report.)

1. The IFR changed its constitution. The most important change for ARC is:
Item 3.5.d: "The membership is terminated, if deviation from the FCI standard is tolerated in the organization.
Temporarily exception is made for the docking of the tails as member clubs are given a period until the end

of 2011 to take all necessary measures to see to it that their members no longer dock the tails of the Rottweiler and/or no longer buy dogs with a tail in the unnatural state.”

Before the congress, the Constitution read: “The membership is terminated if essential deviations from the standard is tolerated in the organization, that endangers the health and/or the character of the Rottweiler.”

NOTE: The United States, England, Canada, and Australia all have their own version of the Rottweiler standard.

2. Germany (ADRK) will host all future Congress of the IFR, unless they decide not to.
3. All world championship breed shows will be conducted under the show rules of the FCI.
NOTE: This would prohibit the United States, England, Canada, and Australia from ever hosting this event.
4. The IFR will apply immediately for a formal association with the FCI.
NOTE: The change to the IFR convention is against the FCI policy that in countries where cropping and docking is allowed, regardless of the breed standard, with docked or cropped breeds, the docked or cropped form of the dog should be judged on an equivalent basis with the undocked or uncropped version.

Why did the ADRK initiate these changes?

The President of the ADRK, Ulrike Gruber, stated that this is a strategy to “deal with the IFR” that had been formulated by the Board of the ADRK. What do I think influenced that decision? There are many points to consider:

- The ADRK only registered 1500 puppies last year.
- Breed specific legislation against Rottweilers continues to be more and more restrictive in Germany.
- The 2000 revision of the standard has not been well accepted. When the ADRK was confronted with EU legislation on docking, instead of courageously fighting for the heritage of the Rottweiler as a docked breed, the ADRK rolled over and changed the standard to an undocked tail. The President of the ADRK refused to discuss or defend this decision at the 2006 IFR Congress. Her only comment was that “this is now the standard and everyone must accept it”. This is in spite of the FCI policy that in countries where docking is allowed, the docked tail shall be judged to have equal value with the undocked tail.
- It is important to recognize that implementation of government restrictions on docking has not been as strong as expected by the ADRK. For example in Austria, it is illegal to dock dogs. It is not illegal to own a docked dog.

Was the “tail” the only reason for the change?

No. That issue could have been addressed directly and was discussed at the Congress. The issue appears to be those countries that allow their own wording to express the Rottweiler standard. It is important that we recognize that the IFR moved from not tolerating variations from the FCI standard “that endangers the health and/or the character of the Rottweiler” to not tolerating any variation from the FCI standard. This is about converting the IFR from an association of independent countries to a formal control structure of the „Ausland“ clubs of the ADRK.

What would be the impact on the members of the American Rottweiler Club and Rottweiler owners in America, if the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member?

- #1 The ARC would stop paying dues to the IFR (.30 Euro/ARC member)
- #2 America could not field a team for the IFR IPO World Championship.

If the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member, could another American Rottweiler organization become the IFR member club?

Any member of the IFR must be the Parent Club of the breed in their country as recognized by the national dog registry as recognized by the FCI. The FCI has stated that they neither recognize nor have any

association with any breed club in the United States in a breed that is recognized by the AKC. (This is often referred to as the „gentlemen’s agreement between the FCI and the AKC.)

If the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member, would this impact the registration of imports with the AKC?

Absolutely not, if the dog is properly registered in the FCI country and the transfer of paperwork is correct.

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If the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member, will the „motherland“ and the other large exporters of Rottweilers to America stop sending their dogs?

As long as Americans have money, we will continue to see Rottweilers flow into the United States. The limitation seems to be finding customers with money and not an unwillingness to send Rottweilers into a country with a different standard. After all, we see internet postings on Euro web sites bragging about Rottweilers imported, docked, and shown in America. (As objectionable as this practice is!)

If the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member, will AKC judges be allowed to judge at IFR events?

The FCI regulations allow this, as the FCI has a “gentlemen’s agreement” with the AKC.

If the American Rottweiler Club stopped being an IFR member, what would be the impact on the membership numbers of the American Rottweiler Club?

Only time will tell.

If the American Rottweiler Club continues with a different standard than the FCI, will we eventually see two different types of Rottweilers in the world?

That is a very good question. One would expect that as one group breeds for the tail and the structure to support the tail and the other group breeds to replicate the historic Rottweiler, over time we will see a separation in the two dogs. That is the bad news. The good news is that 10 years from now, when the Europeans want to buy a Rottweiler that still looks like a Rottweiler, they can come to the United States, where the standard has been preserved.

Sincerely,



Peter Piusz

Delegate of the American Rottweiler Club to the International Friends of the Rottweiler