

# The Blue Weimaraner

by Homer Carr

The warm slate-gray color, otherwise known as "blue", in the Weimaraner dog is the result of what the science of genetics knows as a mutation. Available evidence appears to indicate that this same mutation has appeared at rare intervals during the entire history of the breed. So far as is known this blue mutation has occurred only twice in the last quarter of a century, both times in Europe. In Austria, a single blue puppy appeared, in the 1940's in a litter of silver gray parents owned by Robert Pattay, past president of the Austrian Weimaraner Club. In Germany, a single blue puppy appeared in a litter of silver gray puppies, whose parents were owned by Ludwig Gaul of Gaiberg, a village near Heidelberg. This puppy, born February 25, 1947, is Casar von Gaiberg, who is the progenitor of the blue Weimaraner in America.

During the second World War, Captain Harry J. Holt was connected with the American Army's automobile tire rebuilding establishment in Germany. In the course of his duties, Captain Holt, who is an experienced dog fancier, travelled extensively through all parts of occupied Germany. Mr. W. A. Olson of Minneapolis, Minnesota, an old time friend of Captain Holt, requested the Captain to be on the lookout for an outstanding Weimaraner and to purchase such a dog for him if he could find one. In the course of this search Captain Holt visited many of Germany's most prominent Weimaraner breeders, but it was not until he saw Casar von Gaiberg that he found a dog which he considered to be basically sound. Captain Holt purchased Casar von Gaiberg from his breeder Ludwig Gaul, and shipped him to Mr. Olson in Minneapolis, who still owns Casar. Casar von Gaiberg was registered by the German Weimaraner Club, and his official pedigree was signed by the president of the German Club.

After Casar von Gaiberg arrived in the xxx United States, Mr. Olson entered the dog and showed him at American Kennel Club dog shows until Casar had won ten points towards his bench show championship. When this requirement had been fulfilled and the American Kennel Club had checked and approved the dog's German pedigree, Casar von Gaiberg was registered by the American Kennel Club under the number S-390759. When bred to AKC registered or approved bitches, Casar's progeny are eligible for AKC registration as purebred Weimaraners.

Genetically the blue color in the Weimaraner is dominant over the more common silver gray color. The blue color is definitely not a recessive trait as stated in error in the present (1957) Weimaraner Standard. The silver gray color is recessive to the blue. The blue color is not a "throw-back", an unscientific term which is sometimes applied to the reappearance of a long-buried recessive trait.

The chances against the appearance of another blue mutation are almost astronomic, barring such a chance, it is genetically impossible for a blue Weimaraner to be produced from a breeding of two silver-gray dogs, regardless of the color of the parents or other ancestors of the dogs being bred. Barring a mutation, the only way that a litter

can be produced which has one or more blue puppies in it, is for one or both parents to be blue.

In the determined effort to smear the blue Weimaraner, which has been going on steadily since 1950, many deliberately false and malicious statements have been made, verbally and in print, regarding Casar von Gaiberg. Most of these statements either hint that his German registration and pedigree were falsified (a charge rejected by AKC) or that there was a prohibition against breeding endorsed upon Casar's official German pedigree, which was signed by the president of the German Weimaraner Club. I have personally seen the original of that pedigree and I have in my possession a certified photostatic copy of it.

A certified translation of the endorsement on the pedigree reads as follows: "Use for breeding permissible only if the qualifications for first or second prize under the regulation of the organization for Jugendprüfung (youth trial) are subsequently approved. Since Casar von Gaiberg has a black nose, blackish tinge on his back, relatively proportionately short ears and his eye color is not pure amber, one should be careful concerning his descendants, and in doubtful cases, inform the office of the keeper of the stud book." The first sentence of the above endorsement appears on the official German pedigrees of many of the Weimaraners imported from Germany. I have a copy of Ch. Burt v.d. Harrasburg's German pedigree and several others which bear the same first sentence endorsement. The provisions of the endorsement are no more affective against Casar von Gaiberg than against any other dogs, who, like Casar, were brought to America before they could be entered in the German youth trials.

Casar von Gaiberg, the progenitor of America's blue Weimaraners has been bred to a very substantial number of silver gray bitches here in the United States. Such breedings have produced litters in strict accordance with the Mendelian law of genetics for simple dominance and recessives - taken as a whole, the litters have averaged close to 50% grays and 50% blues.

When a blue Weimaraner is bred to a silver-gray Weimaraner, there is no mixing or blending of colors. The two colors are two distinct and separate entities or units, and they remain so. It is not like the mixing of cream and coffee, but rather like the mixing of 50 blue marbles and 50 gray marbles in a bucket. When you grab out a handful you will, on the average, get some blues and some grays, but no intermediate colors. If you grab out enough handfuls you will have 50% blues and 50% grays, just as you do if you breed blue Weimaraners to gray Weimaraners enough times to permit the law of averages to operate. These blue Weimaraner puppies will carry genetic factors for both the blue and the gray colors and they are known as "blue dominants".

When the blue offspring, of one blue and one gray parent, is bred to another blue offspring of one blue and one gray parent, the genetic expectation will be for a litter of 25% grays and 75% blues. These grays will

be pure grays; they will carry no blue factor and if bred to grays they will never produce blue offspring in future generations. The 75% of the litter which are blue in color are, genetically, two different kinds of blue - pure blues and blue dominants. 25% of the 75% will be pure blues; they will carry no gray factor and regardless of whether they are bred to blues or grays they will produce litters having nothing but blue puppies in them. The remaining 50% are blue in color, they are blue dominants; they carry factors for both blue and gray and if bred to greys will produce litters of 50% pure grays and 50% blue dominants.

Every gray Weimaraner, regardless of whether his parents and his ancestors are blue or gray, is a pure gray and carries no blue color factor. If he did carry a blue color factor, his color would be blue and not gray. However, there are, genetically, two kinds of blues - pure blues and blue dominants; they can be identified or separated only by letting them grow up and by breeding them to grays.

An unusually large number of the silver-gray descendants of the blue dogs have won top honors as American bench show and field trial winners. Among them are; Ch. Lottie von Ton-teich, Ch. Von Gaiberg's Fricka, Ch. Von Gaiberg's Esta, Ch. Von Gaiberg's Xavier, Ch. Von Gaiberg's Edda, Ch. Von Gaiberg's Olga, to say nothing of Ch. Von Gaiberg's Ord the second dog in Weimaraner history ever to win the Best Dog in Show award at an all-breed AKC show in the continental United States. Ord, the grandson and great-grandson of blue dogs also went Best of Breed at the 1957 National Specialty Show of the Weimaraner Club of America, the largest Weimaraner show ever held with 114 entries. Ord also went Best of Breed at the 1957 Show of the Westminster Kennel Club, held at Madison Square Garden, New York City. A truly remarkable record. He is an outstanding hunter and retriever.

The blue descendants of Casar von Gaiberg have also distinguished themselves for their excellent physical conformation and superb hunting ability. They have received less public acclaim than their silver-gray brothers, not only because of the vicious smear campaign which has been conducted continually against them, but also because the present Weimaraner standard classifies the blue color as a fault. Among the outstanding blue descendants of Casar von Gaiberg are Ch. Casar's Jabuc and Grete von Grafenstein who now has to her credit one 5-point, one 3-point and two 2-point show wins, all of which have been awarded to her within the last two years, by some of America's most respected, famous, and competent all-round judges, such as Isadore Schoenberg, Percy Roberts and Hans Oberhammer. The respected all-round American judge, Dr. A. A. Mitten, has stated in correspondence that during the years 1912-1914 he acted as judge at several dog shows in Germany and that at those shows he saw several highly regarded Weimaraners of the same general shade as Casar von Gaiberg, whom he judged at Waterloo, Iowa in 1950.

Ever since 1950, rumors have been circulated, constantly, in America that blue puppies have been born in litters whose parents have both been silver-gray but one or both of

whom were descendants of Casar von Gaiberg. Zealous efforts have been made to authenticate such rumors, but so far every one of them was proven false, as was to be expected under the Mendelian law of genetics. There is not an authentic record of any blue puppy ever having been born in America, whose parents were both silver-gray. Every silver-gray Weimaraner, regardless of the color of its parents or ancestors, is genetically a pure silver gray and (barring a mutation) can not produce a blue offspring unless bred to a blue. In other words, the breeder must deliberately try for the blue color.

Any Weimaraner whose parents are both registered with AKC regardless of whether it is blue or gray, is eligible for registration by AKC. An AKC registered blue Weimaraner is eligible to be entered and shown at any AKC dog show. Under the present standard, the blue color is considered as a fault in the show ring. However, it is entirely within the discretion of the judge to place the blue dog ahead of any of the gray dogs whom he considers to be more faulty than the blue. The blue color is definitely not a disqualification in the show ring, regardless of the fact that powerful interests tried unsuccessfully to make it so at the time that the present standard was approved by AKC.

The blue Weimaraners in America are direct descendants of one of Germany's most renowned Weimaraner families. Casar von Gaiberg's grandsire, Nelson von Bangstede, was awarded the highest title in European Dogdom in 1935, that of "Sieger der Weltaustellungen" (World Champion). Nelson von Bangstede's daughter and Casar von Gaiberg's dam, was Cilly von Kreuzgrund, herself an International Champion. Cilly von Kreuzgrund was also the dam of Casar's half sister Aura von Gaiberg, one of the original four Weimaraners brought to America by Mr. Howard Knight. Aura von Gaiberg was one of the most distinguished members of our American foundation stock. Her color was silver-gray.

In the early 1950's I actively championed the cause of the blue Weimaraners in America. I did so because my studies of the breed had convinced me that the progenitor of the American blues, Casar von Gaiberg, and his illustrious ancestors, carried certain characteristics of physical conformation (other than color) and intense natural hunting instinct which were badly needed to correct or eliminate serious faults widely prevalent in our American Weimaraners. My breeding program over the last seven years has been based upon that premise; its correctness appears to have been amply confirmed by the judges at the many showings of my dogs, bred in accordance with that premise.

If, in order to obtain the desired characteristics, it had been necessary to take the blue color also, I was prepared to do so. However, as breeding progressed it soon became definitely evident that the blue color is dominant to the recessive silver-gray. We then know and have since proven that Casar von Gaiberg or any of his blue offspring, when bred to silver-gray dogs, will produce gray offspring which is genetically pure for the silver-gray color. In that gray offspring we are obtaining the desired characteristics of physical conformation, and hunting ability, with the blue color completely eliminated.

To me the matter of the blue color is now

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one of little importance. It is purely a matter of personal preference, one which, if desired, can be completely eliminated from the breed in one generation and still retain the other desirable traits of Casar von Gaiberg and his illustrious ancestors. Personally, I do not care for the blue color. It is brilliantly beautiful in the puppy state but, as the dog matures, the early color becomes darker (as it does in the grays) and, to me, less attractive. For this reason alone, in my own breeding, all blue puppies are now being destroyed. I do not breed any of my gray males to blue bitches without an agreement that all resulting blue puppies be destroyed. I own no blue Weimaraners. People who like the blue color should certainly have it. Blue Weimaraners are just as pure bred as any gray that ever lived; their continued existence constitutes no threat to the future of the breed, other than the possible continuing defeat of other bloodlines by his offspring either blue or gray.

(note - the above article was written in 1957 by Mr. Homer Carr, one of America's early and renowned Weimaraner breeders. He was the owner of the Von Gaiberg Kennels, Registered, of Santa Monica, California.)

## First American Standard

We thought it might be interesting to publish the first official Weimaraner Standard (Adopted by AKC July 11, 1944). This standard has been changed many times since then and can be changed again, but it will require plenty of UNITED effort to bring back to our blues the equality in the show ring they shared with their silver brothers and sisters back in the '40's. Here it is!

### INTRODUCTION

Weimaraners are of the sporting group of German origin. They have been pure-bred for 135 years. They are by nature hunting dogs with natural instincts for hunting Wolf and Coyote, Mountain Lion, Wild Cat, Deer, Bear and Wild Boar.

The same natural instinct causes them to hunt upland game and pause before stealthily following a scent or upon sighting their quarry.

Their natural instincts are readily developed into the type of hunter desired.

The breed is extremely intelligent - affectionate - dependable - loyal - and a courageous protector.

They are perfectly at home in the water and will retrieve Wild Fowl under any climactic conditions.

With these attributes, we look for the following standard points in conformation as basic. It is not the purpose of the Weimaraner Club of America to sacrifice the basic hunting instincts of the breed to bench performance. The objective in breeding is the maintenance of those qualities which have made the Weimaraner outstanding as a hunting dog.

### STANDARD

#### General appearance

Color Gray (Silver, Bright, Dark, Yellow); the Dark Gray may be either ash or blue, often blending to a lighter shade on head and ears. A white star on the chest is allowable but at no other place on the body. Any yellow tinge in such star is a definite fault.

Look for individuality and class in carriage as an indication of character and breeding and indicated by the head, eye and stance. There should be every indication of a good hunting nose well balanced over a business-like muzzle with reasonably deep flews. There should be a strong, clean neck gracefully joining muscular shoulders separated by a well-developed chest - all supported by staunch legs. The back should be moderate in length, strong, and straight over well-developed ribs. The hindquarters should slope gently over muscular legs with low stifles and firm feet. The whole should sum up to the maximum of power, speed, grace and endurance, absolutely sound fore and aft.

#### Weight and Height

Dogs 65 to 85 pounds; Bitches 55 to 75 pounds. Height at Withers - Dogs 24 to 26 inches; Bitches 22 to 25 inches. Oversize should not be considered a too serious fault if conformation is correct and instinctive character is outstanding.

#### Head

Fine featured and aristocratic. Somewhat narrower than the pointer, or at least giving that effect because of the long muzzle and rather prominent occipital bone and trumpets which set well back but beginning at the back of the eye socket. The flews should be quite deep, enclosing a powerful jaw. The foreface should be perfectly straight, delicate at the nostrils, and the hair slightly darker than the hair on the body, with the skin tightly drawn.

#### Ears

General characteristics of the hound, slightly folded and placed rather high - soft coat.

#### Eyes

Color - Blue-gray or amber, appearing amber to gray, dependent upon light - quite prominent when alert - and if the pupils are dilated the eyes may appear almost black. Should be well set apart to indicate good disposition and intelligence.

#### Teeth

Well set, strong and even. Must be well developed and proportionate to jaw with powerful scissors bite. Teeth undershot or overshot is a serious fault.

#### Tail

Cropped to 1½ inches when a puppy (within three days). Approximately 6 inches at maturity - tendency to be light rather than heavy and carried expressively.

#### Legs

Fore - Straight, muscular and well-boned. Hind - Muscular and evidence of driving power. Stifles well let down.

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