

## **Genetic Black Out**

Many GSP lines in North America have suffered from not using dogs with black (Swartz) pigmentation for breeding purposes. That means that all of the traits that black pigmented dogs could produce rarely get into the GSP mix. In DKV member clubs dogs with black pigment are widely accepted, distributed and used in DK breeding programs.

It's a cold, hard economic fact that those who own and breed the GSP for the primary purpose of putting it in the show ring, or for dual purposes that include the same, do not want the added expense of keeping black pigmented dogs in the kennel just for the sake of getting some black pigment in the mix.

Even though some would like to introduce dogs with black pigment into their breeding program, it is doubtful that they would own a dog with such pigment. When they want to darken eyes and liver pigment with a black additive they simply look outside GSP lines and head for the DK. This is another example of how cosmetics are a major concern of most dually breeders and all show ring breeders and how the DK is exploited by show ring breeders for cosmetic purposes only.

The possibility of a GSP show dog producing a litter of predominantly black pigmented pups would be a nightmare for the GSP show ring breeder. After all, who will the pups go to? In breed clubs other than DKV organizations the pups can't even be registered. Black pigmented pups are of little market value to a breeder with one eye on the purse and the other on the show ring.

So due to economics and a simple lack of concern for a true versatile hunting breed; bred based on performance with conformation an important but secondary concern, i.e. the Deutsch Kurzhaar, breeders of the American GSP have denied themselves the benefit of the broader gene pool which includes dogs with black pigment since the early 1900's. On the other hand committed North American DK breeders have been able to use the entire gene pool including black pigmented dogs.

While presently the DK is significantly smaller in total number than the GSP in North America, availability of different genetic material, i.e. from performance tested black pigmented DK's, gives DK breeders at least some additional access to good genetic material rarely utilized by the common GSP breeder. It seems the GSP folks have become somewhat confused about how things work with respect to breeding.

As it goes, "form follows function" not "function follows form". To breed predominantly for form without measuring function is to stagnate if not completely undo the most important aspect of any versatile hunting breed, i.e. Function, Function, Function! Form will follow.