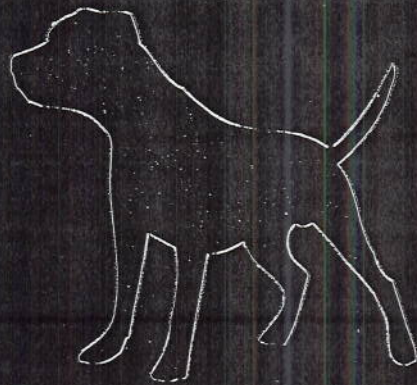


The Complete Gamedog



A Guide to Breeding and Raising the
American Pit Bull Terrier

by Ed and Chris Aaron

Chapter Eleven

The House Pit

Readers might notice that we have not included chapters on conformation shows and weight-pulling, catch dogs, hog hunting, competitive obedience and Schutzhund trial activities; we prefer to leave this to those who actively participate in these activities and would therefore know more about them. Pit Bull owners interested in getting involved in conformation and/or weight pulling should contact the American Dog Breeders' Association for information on clubs and activities in their state.

Our main goal in presenting this chapter is to help the novice American Pit Bull Terrier owner raise a dog that becomes a stable, controlled member of the owner's family rather than a menace to society! The decision to get a game-bred pit bull puppy and raise it as a housepet is not one that should be taken lightly. A bulldog is not 'just like any other dog'; there are very special responsibilities that go along with owning one.

Is a game-bred dog a good pet?

A lot of serious dogmen feel that the dogs do not belong in the hands of 'pet' people and are resentful of the people who keep the dogs as pets. Though we believe that a bulldog can be a very good companion dog under the right circumstances,

the above opinion is not without some justification. The fact is, the problems that have faced the breed over the past decade or so have been—almost without exception—caused by irresponsible pet owners. Though the Humane Societies and media always try to blame dogfighting for the Pit Bull attacks, the fact of the matter is that it is not dogfighter's dogs that have gotten out of their yards and attacked people, or ran loose in public places and killed other people's pets; *serious* dogmen keep their dogs properly confined and under control.

A game-bred Pit Bull is a fighting dog, bred down from many generations of fighting dogs; to even consider raising one of these dogs as a pet you must understand this and accept it—even if you are totally opposed to dogfighting. No matter how you raise this dog he will still be a Pit Bull, not a Golden Retriever! Time and time again we've seen people get a Pit Bull puppy with the attitude "if I raise him right, he won't want to fight" and in nearly every case we've seen the situation eventually come down to a serious problem.

One woman we knew successfully raised two female Pit Bulls together for almost five years until the dogs got into a fight over a toy one day when her ten year



Kelly's Cecil bred and owned by Mike Kelly, with Alyssa Kelly. Cecil is out of Kelly's Tazmanian Devil bred to Faron & Kelly's Young Chinagirl.

old son was home alone. The poor kid finally got the dogs separated after they had done some serious damage to each other, and after that day the two dogs got into fights continually until a new home had to be found for one of them.

A friend of ours has a stud dog that was sold as a pup to some young guys who had the dog as a fraternity mascot; this worked out real well—until the day he got into a fight with another fraternity's mascot (a Dalmatian) and killed it. We ourselves have a bitch on our yard that came back to us at nine months old after she kept attacking the dog her owners had purchased her to be a 'companion' for.

We aren't trying to paint a picture of all game-bred American Pit Bull Terriers as fight-crazy maniacs—there are a lot of bulldogs that do fine in a pet situation, even with other animals—but one must never forget that a Pit Bull is a Pit

Bull, and never get caught off guard. Owning any dog is a responsibility, but those who choose to keep a bulldog as a pet must be exceptionally responsible, even when other pet owners aren't.

For instance, if a dog running loose approaches and you know your bulldog is dog-aggressive, it is up to you to ensure that your dog doesn't get ahold of that dog, even if that means leaving the area as quickly as possible or even picking your dog up in your arms. If you live in an area where dogs are constantly running loose, you might need to consider walking your dog late at night, or in another area, or even muzzling your dog. You can pretty much guarantee that if some idiot's mutt jumps on your dog and gets torn up, everyone is going to come down on you and your 'vicious Pit Bull', not on the person who let their dog run loose.

Is this fair? Hell no, but that's the way things are. More than once we have talked to bulldog owners who had an incident where their dog got ahold of someone else's dog and maimed or killed it, and their attitude is "well it wasn't my fault because that dog shouldn't have been running loose". Whether or not you were "in the right", there's no justification to allowing such an incident to happen.

A bulldog must never ever be allowed to run loose. This is a cut and dry fact. He should be kept on a leash at all times when off your property and you should have a good breaking stick with you and know how to use it, even if your dog has never shown any inclination to be aggressive. The one day you don't have a breaking stick always seems to be the day you will need one! When your dog is on your property, he should be securely confined. Chapter Thirteen details how to use a breaking stick as well as the different methods of securing bulldogs. We would strongly recommend having some sort of chain, cable or kennel run setup for your dog even if he or she will be primarily an indoor pet.

Up to this point, we have mainly