

Breeding Czechoslovakian Vlcak

This is not something that should be undertaken lightly. The CSV is a working breed and thus needs to be able to fulfil their original purpose if not theoretically by health, temperament and conformation, but also in reality. Many CSV benefit from having a job to do, many undertake nosework or IPO training with their dogs, others have discovered a multitude of other sports the CSV excels at such as mushing sports and agility. Ideally your CSV should show some capability of being trained in a working environment before you consider breeding it. Which brings us to the Czechoslovakian Vlcak Club's pre-requisites for approval for breeding and then being supported by the club with your breeding endeavours.

First and foremost your dog must pass the health tests to a high enough standard. Those mandatory to the club include:

- 1) HD or Hip Dysplasia testing. This can be done through the UK's BVA or any other approved veterinary practice and sent off to the relevant authority for scoring. Different bodies will have different ways to score, the UK BVA uses numbers the lower the better, in Europe they often use ratings in letters, eg A/B etc. Again the closer to the beginning of the alphabet the better.
- 2) ED or Elbow Dysplasia testing. Same as above, the scoring should be done by a relevant body that can give you correct scoring.
- 3) DM or Degenerative Myelopathy. This can be tested for with a basic mouth cheek swab and will ensure you know whether your dog is clear N/N, affected DM/DM or a carrier N/DM. The Czechoslovakian Vlcak Club recommend that affected dogs are not bred from unless there are special circumstances and that dog is only bred to a clear dog. There would need to be an exceptional reason for this to be approved however. Carriers should always be paired with clears.
- 4) DW or Dwarfism. Dwarfism doesn't just cause a dog to be smaller than expected, it also carries with it a slew of other health concerns. Like DM, DW testing will tell you if your dog is clear N/N, affected DW/DW or a carrier N/DW. It is not recommended you breed from affected DW dogs and that carriers are always paired with clears.
- 5) DNA profiling. This is basically your proof that your dog is who you say it is and will prove parentage. This helps the club and others to keep track of health issues and trace them back to any particular stud dog or dam dependent on how they are appearing. This also ensure that your dog is a pure bred Czechoslovakian Vlcak.

Not Mandatory but highly recommended:

- 1) SAS or Sub Aortic Stenosis and general heart testing. Sadly heart problems seem to be becoming more prevalent. Its important to heart test your dog and for SAS, as many conditions can cause early death or other complications. Other tests used can be echocardiograms which can check for cardio myelopathy and other heart issues.
- 2) Eye testing. Check for PRA and Glaucoma/cataracts as both are known to affect the CSV though are not as prevalent as those in the mandatory list.

Other tests which can be done are testing for the long coat gene as this can affect the breed. It doesn't come with any known health concerns but it is considered a fault in the breed and any produced should be placed into pet homes.



After the health testing, if your dog seems to meet the high standards required to become a registered stud dog or brood bitch, you are still required to temperament test your dog and your dog requires a passing grade. This is a very important test as it means your dog does not show any out of standard aggression or shyness. There is a wide range of what's expected to fall within the standard and this is tested through breed specific temperament testing called a Bonitation. This not only includes a section to test how your CSV responds to different situations, but includes measuring to ensure your dog is of the correct height and ratios within the standard. If your dog is under standard height it will get a fail. The dog can have 3 minor faults and still pass in the measuring stage. Pointing out the faults means you can select a dog without these to complement your breeding dog and ensure any future pups are to standard as much as possible this includes the temperament. Your dog may achieve a lower score in one area, so a dog with a high score in that area would be a better fit for breeding dogs less likely to have those issues in future. Temperament testing is also mandatory with the Czechoslovakian Vlcak Club UK in order to be approved for breeding.

In Slovakia it is also required that breeding dogs complete the SVP or endurance test. There are two distances, 40km and 100km which the dog must trot next to a bike at a consistent pace. The Czechoslovakian Vlcak Club are in the process of getting this established here in the UK but have not yet decided whether it will be a mandatory or recommended test.

We also intend to implement the 4 week puppy assessment to ensure breeders are maintaining the high standards we encourage for rearing and socialising litters. We strongly encourage extensive socialisation programmes such as Puppy Culture to ensure the dogs get the absolute best start in life. Our club aims to follow the great examples set by both the Czech and Slovak breed clubs so that the dogs we eventually produce here will be of the same or hopefully higher standards than those produced elsewhere across the world. We take our job of preserving the breed very seriously and so aim to meet the high expectations expected of us and that we set for ourselves.

Below one of our members relays her experience of breeding and raising csv puppies
Czechoslovakian wolfdog puppies-the truth by Anezka Hrozova of Howling Shadow Kennel

I am sure everybody loves puppy cuddles but what is it like to raise csv puppies? If you are too attached to your belongings and not ready to sacrifice your sleep then raising a litter of little pups is probably not for you. If you want to be a part of a breeding program look at getting a stud dog instead of a bitch.

Read this article if you need to know what do you need to do to become a part of our breeding plan.

All the troubles start when your bitch gets pregnant. Make sure you have some nice "den" ready for her and she is familiar with it. It's really important that you as her owner know the do's and don'ts with your pregnant bitch. You can do pretty much anything in the first half of the pregnancy. The second half is the time for rest and some extra portion of food.

If you are not sure if your dog is pregnant you can go to vets with her for a scan. Embryos are visible on scan after 22 days of age. It's better to wait a little bit longer and don't stress your bitch with the visit too early. You can expect little changes in behaviour. Some females might be calm some of them might become more aggressive. If you are lucky your dog will just become lazy.



You will notice your bitch is getting bigger by the second half of pregnancy. You can even see the movement of pups which is really exciting and I enjoyed watching the pregnant tummy move.

Before giving a birth female is more nervous, she is trying to dig a den, she is lying down and standing up again. You might see a drops of milk on her nipples. She loses hair around the nipples few days before giving a birth. Czechoslovakian wolfdogs usually have easy delivery and don't require much assistance but you should monitor the process anyway and write down the time gaps between individual puppies. The ideal time is between 5 minutes to 2 hours. Delivery is the first stage where you might feel a little bit disgusted by all the blood and weird smell. And you will be probably surprised how your female will eat all the sacs and placenta. While the new mum is cleaning new born puppy from the amniotic sac by licking it she is also helping the puppy activate the basic reflex-breathing. I find it amazing how everything is connected in nature and has it's purpose.

So if the birth went well get ready for a quiet stage now. New born puppies don't do much. They sleep, drink milk, poop, they do really funny and cute noise when they are tiny. It's not even that loud. So I call it the quiet stage. Sadly this doesn't last very long. In about two weeks of age they are becoming more loud, they require more attention and supervision. But they are still fun because they can't walk properly yet so you will have great time watching them learn. So the fun starts around 3 weeks of age. They should see and hear now so you can play with them more.

What you should do as a breeder?

Definitely monitor the weight gain every day, maybe twice a day in first two weeks. Make sure every puppy is gaining about the same amount.

Have some colourful puppy collars to tell them apart because they will look pretty much the same.

Play them some music! Or at least some noises. I used to leave ipad playing some random mix on youtube so puppies are used to some noise. Hovering is great but make sure you don't scare them poor little things! The last thing you want as a breeder is for the pups to have negative experience. So take baby steps with everything you do.

Help your bitch with cleaning. Change the vet bed (or whatever you put in your box with puppies) every day. It's hard job to keep the place clean, the mum will clean after them but we want them puppies to be clean and healthy. Especially when puppies get older and they will start eating normal food the poops are becoming your problem. And they do stink!

Buy lot of toys. They will be shredded in few minutes but puppies will have a blast and you will see their true temperaments. Be prepared to make a fool from yourself. I give you an example what I used to do with our puppies when we were on a walk. We live close to school so we have a lot of screaming and shouting around our house. So when kids were going home from school I took puppies for a walk, at first we were just watching kids from distance but every day we were able to move closer to kids and finally passing by them. It was the same with grass cutters, buses, wheelchairs, pushchairs, bins, you name it. But I had to look weird to other people when I was following mothers with pushchairs around or looking for active neighbours cutting their grass.



These are ordinary things for us but can be really scary for little puppies. They don't trust anything and if the first experience with something new is negative you or the new owner is going to have some really hard time to prove it wrong.

So as a breeder, be patient, be calm, be prepared for anything and be positive. Be prepared to have a lot of scratches, holes in your clothes, destroyed garden, room, house, they are little piranhas and they will bite everything. Be prepared to wake up during the night when they start crying because they are hungry and you have to prepare something for them because milk is just not enough anymore. They might be little headaches but they are so sweet and funny.

Everybody loves puppy cuddles and you might enjoy it even more after all the hard work they need.

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