

Discussing *the* STANDARD

by Judy Cheshire

Traditionally, a breed standard is considered a 'blueprint' or a guideline to help define the characteristics of a breed. What it describes should give a mental image of the dog and the purpose it was bred for. Interpretation of the written word may be divergent across the minds of different people. This discussion of the standard was written in collaboration with the GWPCA Judges Education Committee to help guide the evaluation of the breed.

Standard General Appearance Discussion

The German Wirehaired Pointer is a well-muscled, medium sized dog of distinctive appearance. Balanced in size and sturdily built, the breed's most distinguishing characteristics are its weather resistant, wire-like coat and its facial furnishings. Typically Pointer in character and style, the German Wirehaired Pointer is an intelligent, energetic and determined hunter.



*The breed is sturdily built with a balanced smooth flowing outline. The functional double coat is a **very important** characteristic. The most important qualities that enable the dog to do his job are a correct natural double coat, balanced proportions and soundness in both body and mind. When judging, always prioritize by the dogs function. Traits that enable the dog to do the job it was bred for are virtues and traits that inhibit correct function are faults. The standard is a description of the ideal German Wirehaired Pointer. Any deviation from this standard should be penalized to the extent of the deviation.*

Size, Proportion, Substance

The height of males should be from 24-26 inches at the withers. Bitches are smaller, but not under 22 inches. To insure the working quality of the breed is maintained, dogs that are either over or under the specified height must be severely penalized. The body is a little longer than it is high, as ten is to nine. The German Wirehaired Pointer is a versatile hunter built for agility and endurance in the field. Correct size and balance are essential to high performance.



*Measuring from the point of the shoulder to the rear of the thigh and from the top of the withers to the ground, the body is **slightly** longer than it is high. Withers to elbow and elbow to ground should be approximately the same distance. The standard allows a large variance in size of bitches –22” to close 26”.*

Acknowledge this when judging and do not penalize a 22” bitch or one that is 25”! Balanced proportions and substance relative to size are essential qualities. Bitches should obviously have an essence of femininity regardless of height, as dogs should appear masculine whether 24” or 26”.

Head

The head is moderately long. **Eyes** are brown, medium in size, oval in contour, bright and clear and overhung with medium length eyebrows. Yellow eyes are not desirable. The **ears** are rounded but not too broad and hang close to the head. The **skull** broad and the occipital bone not too prominent. The **stop** is medium. The **muzzle** is fairly long with nasal bone straight, broad and parallel to the top of the skull. The **nose** is dark brown with nostrils wide open. A spotted or flesh colored nose is to be penalized.



Viewed from the side, the impression is of two rectangles with parallel planes. Eye rims should be tight to keep out seeds and debris in heavy cover. Eye color will darken with age. If a puppy with a lighter eye has a dark rim around the iris, eye color or will usually darken as the dog matures. Expression should be that of a cooperative companion, not “hard or harsh”. The ears should not be “heavy or houndy” and are set above eye level. Cheeks are flat.

Standard

The **lips** are a trifle pendulous but close to the jaw and bearded. The jaws are strong with a full complement of evenly set and properly intermeshing teeth. The incisors meet in a true scissors bite.

Head



Bite is scissors - even, over or undershot bites should not be acceptable. The nose is always brown, never black or flesh colored. The muzzle should have sufficient length and depth to enable the dog to grasp and carry game properly.

Neck, Topline, Body



The **neck** is of medium length, slightly arched and devoid of dewlap. The entire **back line** showing a perceptible slope down from withers to croup. The skin throughout is notable

tight to the body. The **chest** is deep and capacious with ribs well sprung. The **tuck-up** apparent. The back is short, straight and strong. Loins are taut and slender. Hips are broad with the croup nicely rounded. The **tail** is set high, carried at or above the horizontal when the dog is alert. The tail is docked to approximately two-fifths of its original length.



The neck should flow smoothly into well laid back shoulders. It should have enough length and strength to support carrying a fox or a game bird as large as a pheasant or a goose. The fore chest is defined. The brisket extends down to the elbow. Ribs are well sprung, allowing adequate room for heart and lung capacity and are carried well back to the loin. The topline is firm with a slight slope extending from withers to hips. The underline extends well back to form a gradual tuck up. The croup is gently rounded, without any tendency to fall away sharply. The tail is a natural extension of the topline. The tail is carried at or above the horizontal when the dog is moving. A vertical carriage may distract from the outline of the dog. The tail is docked to avoid injury if the dog is working in heavy cover. In some countries, docking is prohibited by law. If a dog has a natural tail, judge the tail set and carriage to the point where it would normally be docked.

Forequarters



The shoulders are well laid back. The forelegs are straight with elbows close. Leg bones are flat rather than round, and strong, but not so heavy or coarse as to militate against the dog's

natural agility. Dewclaws are generally removed. Round in outline, the feet are webbed, high arched with toes close, pads thick and hard, and nails strong and quite heavy.



The well laid back shoulders should be flat, sloping, clean and muscular, fitting smoothly into the contour of the body. The length of the shoulder blade and the upper arm should be equal in length and form an angle that sets the front legs well under the body. The highest point of the withers should be in line with the back of the elbow joint and this vertical line should strike the ground just behind the heel pad of the foot. Leg bones are more oval than flat. A heavily boned, coarse dog or a light boned dog lacking in substance are equally undesirable. Pasterns are short and strong with no suggestion of weakness. The feet are rounded to slightly oval in outline with well arched toes fitting tightly together to protect the feet from stones, sticks and sand spurs and thorns.

Standard

Hindquarters

Discussion

The angulation of the hindquarters balances that of the forequarters. The thighs are strong and muscular. The hind legs are moderately angulated at the stifle and hock and, as viewed from behind, parallel to each other. Dewclaws are generally removed. Feet as in front.



The angles of the hindquarters should balance those of the forequarters. Stifle strong with good angulation. A straight line drawn vertically from the buttock (ischium) to the ground should land just in front of the rear foot. Hocks are short, straight and parallel. Dogs should be shown in good muscular condition.

Color



The coat is liver and white, usually either liver and white spotted, liver roan, liver and white spotted with ticking and roaning or solid liver. The head is liver, sometimes with a white blaze. The ears are liver. Any black in the coat is to be severely penalized.



As stated in the standard, the coat is liver and white. 'Liver' can range from a chocolate color to a very dark seal brown. Areas covering the eyes and the ears are liver, although white blazes are perfectly acceptable. Reddish discoloration, usually seen in the beard or eyebrows, is not problematic. Currently, black and white dogs are not accommodated in the standard. If a dog has a brown nose, it is liver, no matter how dark the liver color appears. If the nose is black, the dog is black and white and will not have a liver head or liver ears as called for.

Coat

The functional wiry coat is the breed's most distinctive feature. A dog must have a correct coat to be of correct type. The coat is weather resistant and, to some extent, water-repellent. The undercoat is dense enough in winter to insulate against the cold but is so thin in summer as to be almost invisible. The distinctive outer coat is straight, harsh, wiry and flat lying, and is from one to two inches in length. The outer coat is long enough to protect against the punishment of rough cover, but not so long as to hide the outline of the dog. On the lower legs the coat is shorter and between the toes it is of softer texture. On the skull the coat is naturally short and close fitting. Over the shoulders and around the tail it is very dense and heavy. The tail is nicely coated, particularly on the underside, but devoid of feather.



Coats may be one of the breeds' most inconsistent features. Because it is a hallmark of the breed, a correct coat should be rewarded. The coat is harsh, flat lying and dense. It should be protective against rough cover and inclement weather. The head coat is naturally short and close fitting, but the hair has texture and is not "slick". Ears may have a slight "fringe".



Standard

Coat

Discussion



Eye brows are of strong, straight hair. Beard and whiskers are medium length. The hairs in the liver patches of a liver and white dog may be shorter than the white hairs. A short smooth coat, a soft woolly coat, or an excessively long coat is to be severely penalized. While maintaining a harsh, wiry texture, the puppy coat may be shorter than that of an adult coat. Coats may be neatly groomed to present a dog natural in appearance. Extreme and excessive grooming to present a dog artificial in appearance should be severely penalized.

The legs, lower brisket and area under the chest have shorter coat, but should be well covered to protect against punishing underbrush. Although the softer, downy undercoat may vary according to season, undercoat to some degree should always be present. Because both body coat and furnishings develop as the dog matures, puppies may have shorter body coats and less facial furnishings than adults. Body coat should not hide the natural outline of the dog and furnishings should be protective, but not excessive. Coats and furnishings should never be "sculpted", scissored or clipped. The impression should be of a relatively easy maintenance wire coated dog, not trimmed like an Airedale or a Giant Schnauzer.



Gait

The dog should be evaluated at a moderate gait. The movement is free and smooth with good reach in the forequarters and good driving power in the hindquarters. The topline should remain firm.

Gait is harmonious, effortless and purposeful. Correct angulation facilitates a smooth, ground covering stride and the called for balance of those angles enable correct foot timing and promotes endurance in a dog that is working. When moving in a straight line the legs swing forward in a free and easy manner and show no tendency to cross, interfere or pound. The rear legs follow on a line with the forelegs. As speed increases, the legs will tend to converge toward a more center line of travel.



Temperament

Of sound, reliable temperament, the German Wirehaired Pointer is at times aloof but not unfriendly toward strangers; a loyal and affectionate companion who is eager to please and enthusiastic to learn.



Mind, as well as body, should be sound. GWP's often have a well-defined sense of personal space that may cause them to appear aloof to strangers. However, they should also be self-confident enough to accept examination in the ring. A dog that is fearful is extremely undesirable and would not foster cooperation in the field. Aggression should not be tolerated and NEVER rewarded.