

SPORTING GROUP

the base, tapering to a fine point. Length no greater than to the hock." I find this to be fairly self-explanatory. You would be amazed at those who miss this point. It does not mean that the tail must come to the hock. It means what it says: "no *greater* than to the hock." Again, a shorter, or "bee-sting," tail is better than a long tail, and it will likely be straighter. Long gives a multitude of problems. They hang, as in an unhappy Bloodhound or, as they are often set on too high or level, they curl—or worse, stick straight up at 12 o'clock. All are equally offensive.

The standard says, "Croup falling only slightly to the base of the tail." This clearly means that the croup falls off "only slightly to the base of the tail." The tail therefore should not come off level with the back.

As he stands there, the picture of what you believe to be a good Pointer, you become concerned about his topline—it isn't level. Well, good! It isn't supposed to be. If it were, he couldn't do the job he was bred to do. The standard says, "slight rise from croup to the top of the shoulders. Loin of moderate length, powerful and slightly arched." This "slightly arched" gives him his powerful drive and the ability to do his work effortlessly for hours on end.

So, now we have a moderate-sized dog who is compact—all over—and has an attitude!

Now we pray that when he moves, he is basically sound coming, going, and on the go-around and doesn't pick his front feet up too high—that is, hackney.

The standard says, "A good Pointer cannot be a bad color." This does not mean that he can be purple! He can be liver and white, black and white, orange and white or lemon and white, with associated points to match—black noses and eye-rims on the blacks and oranges, self-colored on the livers and lemons. He can even be solid colored of any of the four colors listed previously. I will say, however, that I have never seen a solid-colored Pointer that I feel would fit into my above description of a good Pointer.

In my opinion, they may never be tricolored. Most of the oldest books now available warn frequently about tricolored Pointers carrying "too much of the Foxhound blood."

Again, muzzle too long, ears too long, tails too long. Now, look at his feet. This is a working dog. Oval feet, not round, with well-arched toes, allowing him to work all kinds of ground effortlessly.

So, now what do we have? We have a moderately sized dog who comes into your ring with his head held rather arrogantly. Your first impression is head, tail, and attitude. Next, he appears to be balance, and he is in fit condition. We know now that the standard says he can't

be a bad color, and he is one that is acceptable.

Always look at a Pointer from all sides—coloring or patching can easily deceive, and for some reason his "off-side" is often more pleasing to the eye. He moves around your ring with power and grace. His tail, we hope, will lash somewhat from side to side as he moves soundly on four good legs. When he stops, he looks at you with a soft, trusting expression. Lucky you ... you've just judged a good Pointer. The others just won't measure up. Enjoy. —T.B.

Thank you, Tom, for this informative column. Please visit the APC website (below) for information on our wonderful breed. Your suggestions and comments are welcome.

—Helyne E. Medeiros,
seasydehm@aol.com
American Pointer Club

Curly-Coated Retrievers

This month, Mary Kay Morel shares with us just what Meet The Breeds events are all about. Some dog shows sponsor these events, and spectators really enjoy meeting and asking questions about the various breeds of dogs recognized by the AKC.

MEET THE BREEDS: FUN FOR ALL!

Very few dog shows of today are benched,

during which spectators could see the variety of breeds and talk to owners and handlers of the different breeds. Therefore, Meet The Breeds events fill a need and give spectators a chance to touch the dogs and talk to the owners who are all willing to share information about their breeds. If you would like to participate in one of these events, here are some tips that may make the experience pleasant for all involved. First, if showing, wait until after ring time to have your Curly on display. Second, it is wise to take only a Curly that you are certain is extremely well socialized and can handle the stress of meeting hundreds of strangers. Some Curlies may be a bit more aloof but, as long as your Curly will stand or sit quietly, people will appreciate the chance to talk about our breed. Third, be alert and anticipate any problems before they arise.

Be sure that your outgoing Curly is well mannered, with all the different age ranges of the people who visit your booth. With very small children (infants and toddlers), it might be a good idea to hold the dog's head and allow them to pet the back or rear end to feel the coat of the dog. Some Curlies love to kiss babies on the face when they are in their strollers. Not all moms appreciate or want this, so respect their wishes too. Even if you have the friendliest Curly in the world, it is really not a good idea to let any dog get that close to

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a strange child or baby's face.

You might engage well-behaved older children by asking if they know the best way to meet a new dog. First, remind them to always ask permission before approaching a strange dog. Show them each the method of touching their tongue to the back of their hand before quietly extending it (palm down) for the dog to sniff. To a dog, smelling the saliva on the back of your hand is like "touching noses"—only without the need to jump up in your face.

Be aware that children or handicapped people may make unusual noises or act unpredictably around your dog. A crying baby held on a parent's shoulders or a handicapped individual with a wheelchair, walker, or mobility cart might appear strange and frightening to your dog. People can accidentally drop items on or near your Curly or even step on your dog's foot or tail. Babies will often drop their bottles or toys unexpectedly. People trip over metal chairs and bump into tables. This can easily startle a dog.

Be prepared to patiently answer the same basic questions over and over again—and do it with a smile. Remember, you are goodwill ambassadors for the breed, and act accordingly. People often will remember the first time they meet a Curly and will relate the experience (good or bad) to other people whom they meet. If you wear a shirt that says "Curly-



Curly-Coated Retriever

Coated Retriever" on it or have a sign that you can point to may help people remember the name of our breed.

Some frequently asked questions are: Is that a real breed? Do they shed? How much do they weigh?—and many others. Be a good Curly ambassador, and use this opportunity to share some good information! Know your facts, and be prepared to share some basic

information about the history of the breed, the breed standard, and other aspects of Curlics. —M.K.M.

Attending a Meet The Breeds event with your Curly-Coated Retriever is well worth the time spent sharing our breed with the public.

Thanks, Mary Kay, for sharing this very worthwhile information.

—Ann Shinkle,

annshinkle@aol.com

Curly-Coated Retriever Club of America

Golden Retrievers

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Cancer is a heart-stopping word. In canines, that dreaded disease has many frightening names, with hemangiosarcoma, osteosarcoma, lymphoma, melanoma, and mast cell tumors being the five most common. About 60 percent of all Golden Retrievers will die from one of these cancers, a statistic that has remained steady for the past decade. Hemangiosarcoma, a cancer of the blood vessels, affects one in five Goldens, and lymphoma, a cancer of the lymph nodes, affects one in eight. These two cancers represent about half of all the cancers in the breed.

Osteosarcoma is the most common bone tumor cancer in dogs, affecting primarily large and giant breeds, with 8,000 to 10,000 cases diagnosed each year. Melanoma is the most common malignant tumor found in the dog's mouth. Melanomas are very aggressive cancers and tend to metastasize elsewhere in the body. In one unusual case, an 8-year-old Golden Retriever developed a melanoma between her toes, which quickly spread to her lungs, resulting in death four months later.

Mast cell tumor is a type of skin cancer that

DAVID WOOD/BAKC