

ShowSight
presents

THE ENGLISH
COCKER SPANIEL

HOW FORM SHOULD FOLLOW FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

by GENELLE JOSEPH

“*In Sport as in ladies' hats, fashions have changed with each decade, yes, though fashions may change, we find that the merry little Cocker has always maintained his place in the esteem of the public and sportsmen alike, by dint of his extreme adaptability and courage and, let us face it, also by his hardiness to withstand the rigors of our English climate. He should never have been allowed to become a pampered pet, although the vast majority are, nowadays just that. Again blame his adaptability and lovable nature: but anyone who has ever seen these game little dogs working in the field must admit that this is their rightful heritage and the place where they are truly happy. A Cocker that has once tasted the delights of bustling in and out of the hedgerows and thickets and has had the scent of hare, pheasant, partridge, or the humble rabbit in his nostrils is lost forever to the drawing room. He will, on the slightest invitation, leave the cream cakes to follow the guns.”*

Quote from the *Dual Purpose Dog* by A.W. Collins, circa 1950 (Collinwood Cocker, Kent, England).

Judges faced with the prospect of evaluating a ring full of English Cockers today might find themselves feeling slightly overwhelmed by the task. In this day and age, the breed can be presented in many shades and colors, various types and with luxurious, often sculpted coats which can hide the structure beneath. To successfully sort out the classes and reward the proper type, you would do well to remember the purpose for which the breed was developed.

From the opening paragraph in the standard, you get a sense of what the English Cocker was developed for:

“The English Cocker Spaniel is an active, merry sporting dog, standing well up at the withers and compactly built. He is alive with energy; his gait is powerful and frictionless, capable both of covering ground effortlessly and penetrating dense cover to flush and retrieve game. His enthusiasm in the field and the incessant action of his tail while at work indicate how much he enjoys the hunting for which he was bred.”

The essence of type of any breed should lie in the original purpose. Looking at some aspects of the standard,

we can decipher the important traits and characteristics developed by the breed's founders that make up the foundation for a distinctive and correct English Cocker Spaniel.

Substance: “The English Cocker is a solidly built dog with as much bone and substance as is possible without becoming cloddy or coarse.”

Historically bred to hunt in the thick cover and underbrush of the English countryside, the Cocker needed stamina, endurance, power and strength. Originally the breed was used only to find and flush the game, however in more recent times they were required to also retrieve, which in turn demanded a larger, more robust dog. Therefore, Cockers needed to possess a sturdy body capable of carrying the muscle and bone necessary to push through the thicket, hunt, flush and retrieve whatever game was afoot, often comparatively large fowl or hare. It was essential for the breed to be capable of working all day with their master, being moderate in size, with bone, rib, depth of brisket, forechest and a broad, muscular rear. Through careful breeding we now have the veritable “Jack of all trades”, a steady, biddable,





hardworking and determined companion, flushing as well as retrieving game, even from water.

Proportion: "Compactly built and short-coupled, with height at withers slightly greater than the distance from withers to set-on of tail."

Slightly taller than long by the measurement listed in the standard, this breed should appear neither leggy nor low on leg. The correct, symmetrical make and shape of a cocker allows them to penetrate the type of dense cover that taller, leggier animals could not. They have just enough neck to comfortably reach down, pick up a bird and carry it without interfering with their gait. This is a breed of moderation and balance by necessity, as exaggeration of any characteristic could cause them to tire easily and therefore be incapable of fulfilling the task for which they were bred.

Coat: "On head, short and fine; of medium length on body; flat or slightly wavy; silky in texture. The English Cocker is well-feathered, but not so profusely as to interfere with field work. Trimming is permitted to remove overabundant hair and to enhance the dogs true lines. It should be done so as to appear as natural as possible."

An often overlooked essential of breed type, the correct coat on a Cocker works as a protective shield from the weather and unforgiving terrain. It should be silky, with a topcoat jacket of longer, protective guard hairs and enough undercoat to keep them warm. The feathering should not be too profuse, nor over groomed. A correct coat will

self-strip in the field, allowing the dog to work while avoiding mishap. A poor, cottony coat will cause a dog to snag and tie them up at the first bramble. A Cocker should also have supple, pliable skin, with enough give to allow them to hunt in the most difficult countryside without injury.

Head: "Strong, yet free from coarseness, softly contoured, without sharp angles."

The characteristic head and expression of an English Cocker sets them apart from all the other Spaniel breeds. They have a soft, melting and endearing expression, with tight eye rims to keep them free from debris. The skull: "Arched and slightly flattened when seen both from the side and from the front. Viewed in profile, the brow appears not appreciably higher than the back-skull."

The skull is arched and slightly flattened (not flat) to allow for the well-muscled jaw. They must not drop off too much in the backskull, as this will inhibit their ability to hold the bird in their mouth and retrieve in water; a down faced dog will be looking up into the sun.

Muzzle: "Equal in length to skull; well cushioned."

Their muzzle is well cushioned to protect them from the thorns and thickets they work in, as well as the talons of the birds they hunt. They have strong jaws and teeth the size of a much larger breed. This breed is meant to do heavy lifting!

Gait: "The English Cocker is capable of hunting in dense cover and upland terrain. His gait is accordingly

characterized more by drive and the appearance of power than by great speed."

Bred to be a steady hunting companion, they should cover ground soundly and efficiently. However, this breed is not one of exaggeration and a moderate stride is desired. The English Cocker should reach to the end of his nose, without wasted motion or restriction. Their ever-wagging tail and the darting action they show while seeking game has led to the descriptive term of bustling.

In summary, this merry, active breed has won the hearts of many and deserves his place in history. Never let the window dressing he may be found sporting detract from the hardworking little hunting companion he was bred to be.

"He is an ideal companion & housedog; a great sportsman in the shooting field and is capable of doing all the work his bigger brothers can do, putting that joy into the task which has earned him the epithet 'The Merry Cocker', his actions denoting the pleasure he derives from his hunting".

Quote taken from the introduction to "Cocker Spaniels" by H.S. Lloyd, of Ware Cocker, Middlesex, England.

To see the English Cocker Spaniel breed standard, go to www.ecsca.info/index.php/breed-info/breed-standard.

For more information on the English Cocker Spaniel, please visit ecsca.info. ■

THANK YOU JUDGES + DR. STEVE KEATING
& MRS. MARY ANN ALSTON



Savannah

GCHS FOXWOODS IVYWOODS FUSION

Soaring INTO 2018

- #1 ENGLISH COCKER ALL SYSTEMS 2017*

- MULTIPLE ALL-BREED BEST IN SHOW WINNER

- MULTIPLE RESERVE BEST IN SHOW WINNER

- A TOP FIFTEEN SPORTING DOG**

*ALL SYSTEMS AS OF 11/30/17

**SHOWSIGHT ALL BREED STATS AS OF 11/30/17

Tiffany Hunter © 2017
ARTIST'S DESIGN

© Diana Han

Breeder-owner-handled by • Kristin Lyons • Co-owned by • Deborah Mauterer DVM

SHOWSIGHT MAGAZINE, JANUARY 2018 • 263

MRBIS, NBISS, GCH Edgewood Devilish Design



Rocki

Best of Breed

2017 NATIONAL
SPECIALTY

Breeder-Judge Mr. Andrew Jones (UK)

Top Winning

BLUE ROAN & TAN
ENGLISH COCKER

in breed history*

Jeffrey Hanlin
© 2017

Breeder/Co-Owner:
BONNIE P. THRELFALL
EDGEWOOD REG.

Owner/Handler:
SHANNON LORITZ

*ECSCA all-breed statistics

Introducing Rocki's grandson...

CH Sapphire Barricade

Kade

Kade completed his championship with three 5 point majors including his pictured win under respected breeder-judge Delores Burkholder at the ECSCA Winter Regional Specialty. Watch for this exciting young dog in 2018.



BEST OF WINNERS
BEST PUPPY
SPECIALTY
ECSCA
English Cocker Spaniel Club of America
Regional Specialty
January 13, 2017
© Jeffrey Burkholder

Breeder/Owners:
SHANNON LORITZ & MARGARET WILSON
SAPPHIRE ENGLISH COCKERS

Handled by:
SHANNON LORITZ

MODERATION

THE BREEDER'S PERSPECTIVE



EXPLORING MODERATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN RELATION TO CORRECT ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL BREED TYPE

by THE ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL CLUB OF AMERICA

MODERATION IN AN ENGLISH COCKER, WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?

Webster's Dictionary describes Moderate as: "The quality of being moderate; avoidance of extremes or excesses."

HOW DOES THAT DEFINITION TRANSLATE TO OUR BREED?

The word "moderate" appears five times in our AKC Breed Standard. It is

also implied numerous times throughout. In the opening paragraph: "He is, above all, a dog of balance, both standing and moving, without exaggeration in any part, the whole worth more than the sum of its parts"

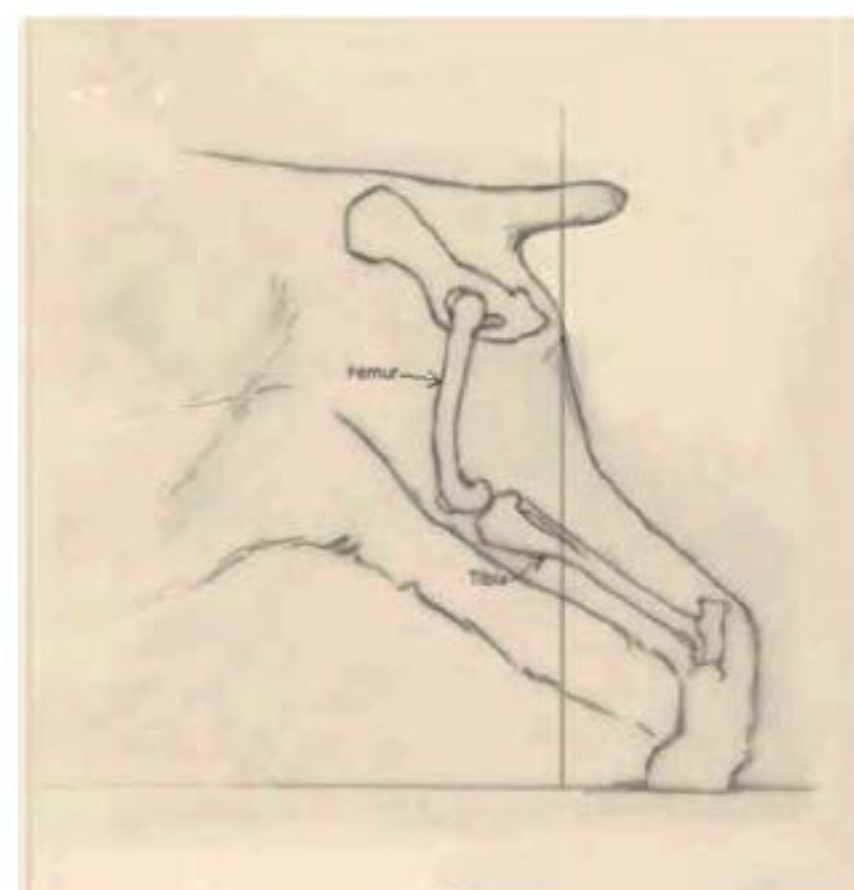
As with any breed of dog, form should follow function. He is alive with energy; his gait is powerful and frictionless, capable both of covering ground effortlessly and penetrating dense cover to flush and retrieve game. His enthusiasm in the field and the incessant action of his tail while at work indicate how

much he enjoys the hunting for which he was bred.

The English Cocker is a dog of balance, with no one feature overpowering another. He has a round, softly contoured appearance, with no sharp angles or lines.

CAN YOU TRAIN YOUR EYE TO SEE A MODERATE DOG?

The ability to identify the correct balance and type for our breed requires an understanding of the essential points of measurement.



Moderate rear angulation



Exaggerated rear angulation



MAJESTIC

A TRADITION OF SUCCESS



BO

CAN, AM, GCH. MAJESTIC
KEEPING THE DRAMA

National Specialty BOB Winner
All Breed BIS Winner

SIRE OF: PINK & COACH



GCH MAJESTIC SHE'S
GOT WHATEVER

"IT" IS

Pink

National BI Sweeps, WB, BOW | American Spaniel
Club BOB, Westminster BOB | Multi Group Winner



Coach

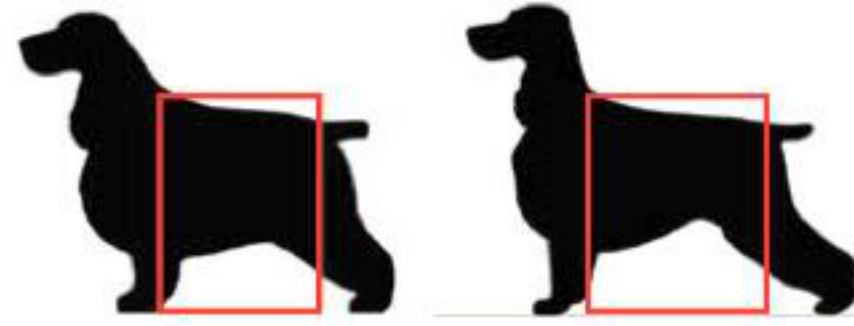
Just starting with
Specialty BOW and
Supported entry WD

MAJESTIC SWEET APPLE
KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE

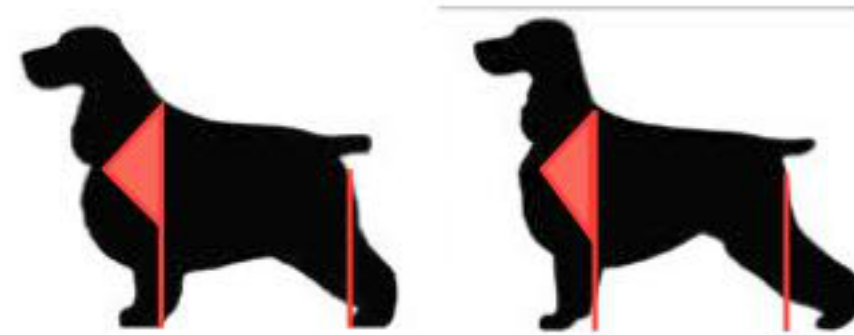
Bred & Owned by Kay & Doug Belter | Hastings, MI
"Coach" is Co-Bred & Co-Owned with Nancy Sweet | "Sweet Apple"
Handled by Kay & Doug Belter



Moderate English Cocker Spaniel (left) versus the exaggerated (right).



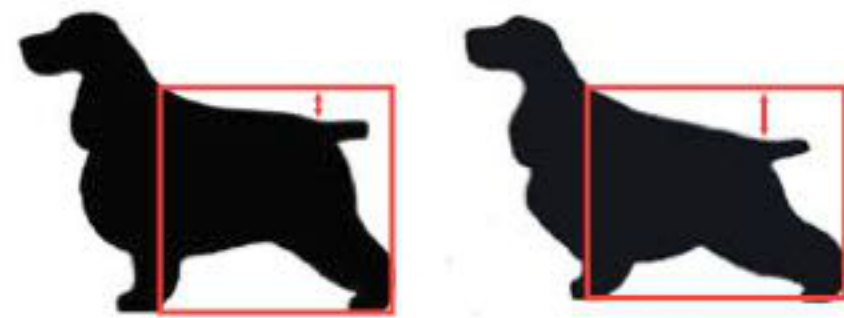
Correct length (left) versus a leggy English Cocker Spaniel (right).



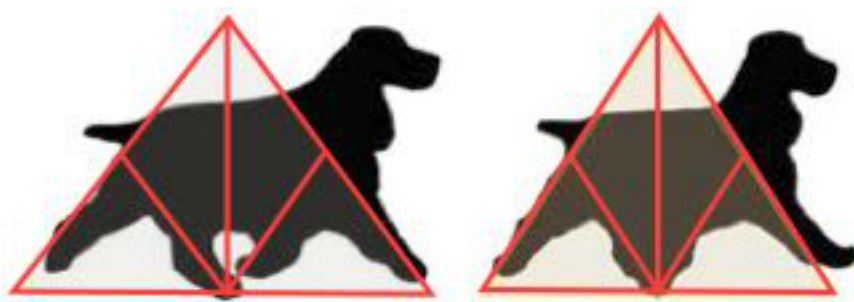
Moderate shoulder angles (left) versus exaggerated angles (right).



Moderate rear angulation (left) versus exaggerated angulation (right).



Slightly sloping topline (left) versus exaggerated slope (right).



Effortless movement (left) versus overreaching movement (right).

THE ENGLISH COCKER IS SLIGHTLY TALLER THAN LONG

This is a short-backed, compact, cobby breed. From the points of measurement, the withers to the set on of the tail, he is slightly taller than long. The elbow is midpoint between the withers and the ground. The breed is neither “leggy” nor low on leg.



WHAT ARE MODERATE ANGLES?

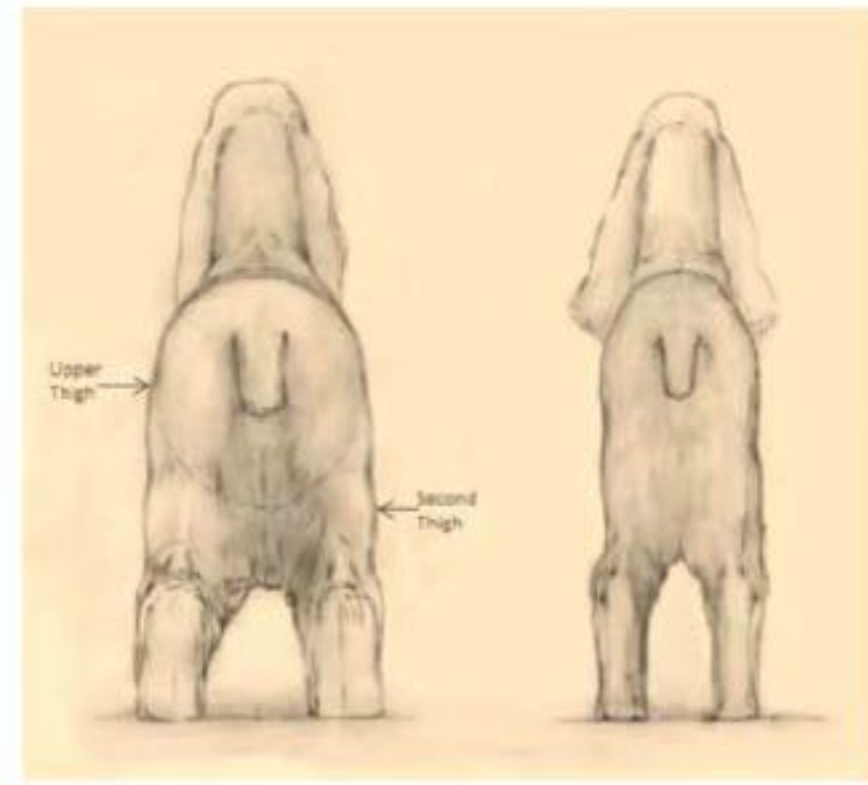
With the ideal 90 degree shoulder, formed by the scapula and the upper arm, the front legs are located under the body, rather than on the forward most end of it. The rear angle and length should match the moderate angles of the front, with the rear foot located under the dog to support its weight. “Rear angulation moderate and, most importantly, in balance with that of the forequarters”

REAR ANGULATION IS MODERATE.

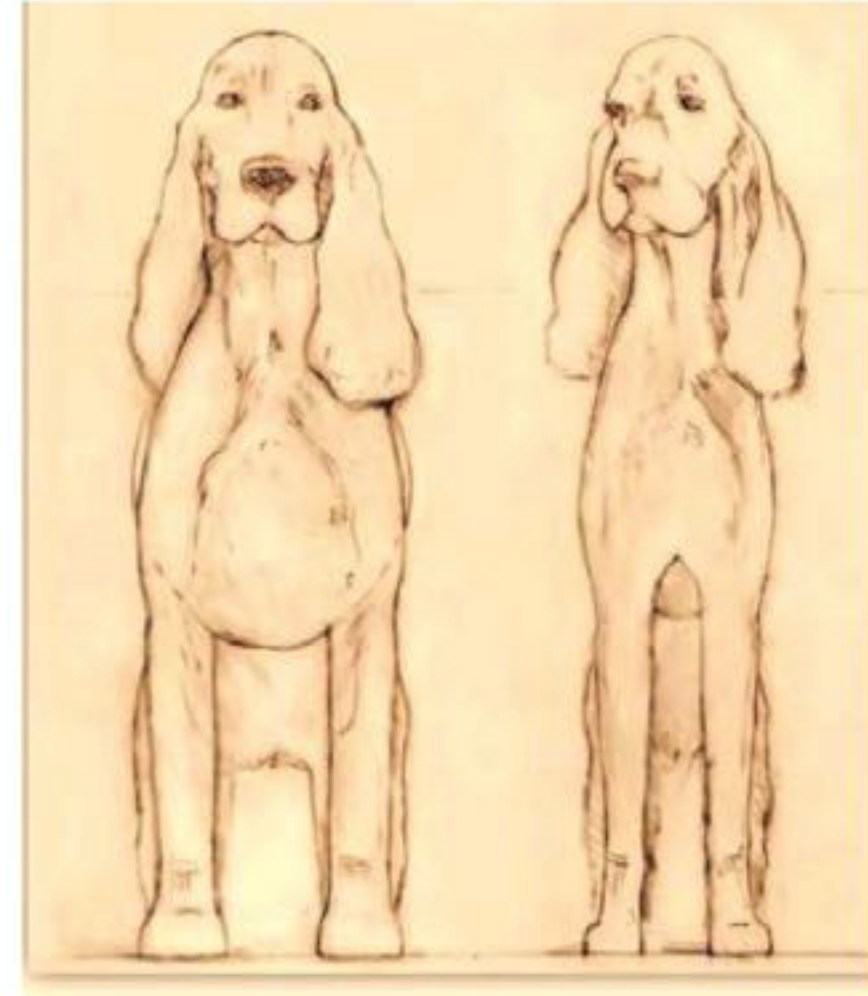
A perpendicular line dropped from the furthest projection of the buttock to the ground, should land directly in front of the rear foot. The femur and the tibia are equal in length.

THE STANDARD CALLS FOR A SLIGHTLY SLOPING TOPLINE

Exaggeration of any characteristic will throw off the balance of a compact, well-knit dog. He has a slightly sloping



Proper substance (left) versus insufficient substance (right).



Proper substance (left) versus insufficient substance (right).

back, with a tail that is carried level off of a gently rounded croup.

“He covers ground effortlessly and with extension both in front and in rear, appropriate to his angulation.”

Here again, the standard is referring to the breed’s moderate angles, effortless and appropriate to his angulation. If a dog is over-extending front or rear, overreaching underneath, it is indicative of unbalance, causing wasted motion that will tire a dog in no time. Note the flipped front foot, the curled hind toes and the crossed feet underneath on the right.

The amount of substance for height contributes to the overall harmonious make and shape of a correct Cocker.

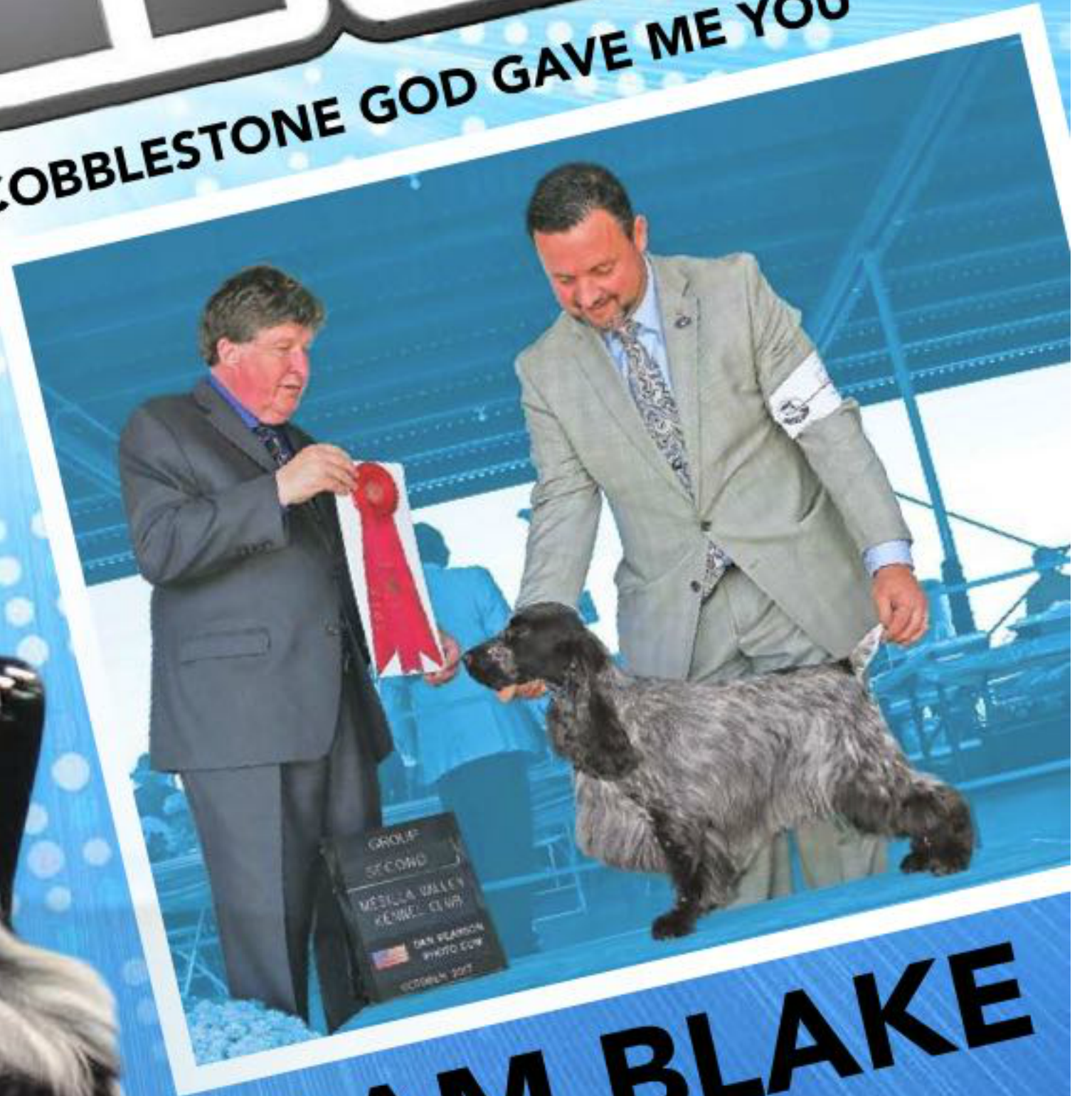
This breed has the frame and carries the muscle of a weight lifter rather than that of a long distance runner. “The English Cocker is a solidly built dog with as much bone and substance as possible without becoming cloddy or coarse.”

Remember they were developed to hunt in dense cover and retrieve heavy game. That requires strength, balance, moderation and no Extremes. ■



BLAKE

GCHS MUCKCROSS COBBLESTONE GOD GAVE ME YOU



TEAM BLAKE

coached by **TEAM LIVINGSTON**
owned and bred by **REBECCA PARCHMAN,**
MUCKCROSS ENGLISH COCKERS
co-bred by **SUSAN KARSCH,**
COBBLESTONE ENGLISH COCKERS

©NOR CAL
BULLDOGGER

STEWART

GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde'

(CH Carachelle Casablanca X Jarde' No Boundries)

Producing sound, typey, good bone, big rib puppies.
Whelped 06/03/2012, PRCD/Normal Clear, Cerf/Clear,
BEAR/Normal, Thyroid/Normal, OFA/Excellent, Patella/Normal



NICHOLAS

CH Jarde' Winter Storm

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
GCH Jarde' N Manderley's Chocolate Bliss)

Finishing with four majors and two Best of Breed wins
from the Bred By Class at just 10 months old.

DOB 12/14/16



PEBBLES

Jarde' Winter Essence

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
GCH Jarde' N Manderley's Chocolate Bliss)

Co Owned with Shelley Gilliland
Major pointed | DOB 12/14/16



BLUE

Star-Vue's Brown Is The New Blue

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
CH Star-Vue's Dance Till Dawn)

Bred by Star-Vue, Nancy and Anna Praiswater
Two 5-point majors from the 6-9 class

MORGAN

Jarde' Winter Holiday

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
GCH Jarde' N Manderley's Chocolate Bliss)

Co Owned with Kathleen Guzman

DOB 12/14/16

Pointed from the 6-9 month class



ASPEN

Manderley Winter Bliss

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
GCH Jarde' N Manderley's Chocolate Bliss)

DOB 12/14/16

Major pointed

RONJON

Star-Vue's Brown Bayou

(GCH Manderley's Calypso Spirit of Jarde' x
CH Star-Vue's Dance Till Dawn)

Bred by Star-Vue, Nancy and Anna Praiswater,

Owned by Lisa Ross, Whelped 11/15/16

Both majors from the 6-9 class



MANDERLEY

Dr. Bruce Barrett, DVM | bbdvm2@aol.com

JARDE'

Debbie McClelland | jarde1@sbcglobal.net

ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

COURTESY THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

General Appearance: The English Cocker Spaniel is an active, merry sporting dog, standing well up at the withers and compactly built. He is alive with energy; his gait is powerful and frictionless, capable both of covering ground effortlessly and penetrating dense cover to flush and retrieve game. His enthusiasm in the field and the incessant action of his tail while at work indicate how much he enjoys the hunting for which he was bred. His head is especially characteristic. He is, above all, a dog of balance, both standing and moving, without exaggeration in any part, the whole worth more than the sum of its parts.

Size, Proportion, Substance: Size-Height at withers: males 16 to 17 inches; females 15 to 16 inches. Deviations to be penalized. The most desirable weights: males, 28 to 34 pounds; females, 26 to 32 pounds. Proper conformation and substance should be considered more important than weight alone. Proportion-Compactly built and short-coupled, with height at withers slightly greater than the distance from withers to set-on of tail. Substance-The English Cocker is a solidly built dog with as much bone and substance as is possible without becoming cloddy or coarse.

Head: General appearance: strong, yet free from coarseness, softly contoured, without sharp angles. Taken as a whole, the parts combine to produce the expression distinctive of the breed. Expression-Soft, melting, yet dignified, alert, and intelligent. Eyes-The eyes are essential to the desired expression. They are medium in size, full and slightly oval; set wide apart; lids tight. Haws are inconspicuous; may be pigmented or unpigmented. Eye color dark brown, except in livers and liver parti-colors where hazel is permitted, but the darker the hazel the better. Ears-Set low, lying close to the head; leather fine, extending to the nose, well covered with long, silky, straight or slightly wavy hair. Skull-Arched and slightly flattened when seen both from the side and from the front. Viewed in profile, the brow appears not appreciably higher than the back-skull. Viewed from above, the sides of the skull are in planes roughly parallel to those of the muzzle. Stop definite, but moderate, and slightly grooved. Muzzle-Equal in length to skull; well cushioned; only as much narrower than the skull as is consistent with a full eye placement; cleanly chiseled under the eyes. Jaws strong, capable of carrying game. Nostrils wide for proper development of scenting ability; color black, except in livers and parti-

ors of that shade where they will be brown; reds and parti-colors of that shade may be brown, but black is preferred. Lips square, but not pendulous or showing prominent flews. Bite-Scissors. A level bite is not preferred. Overshot or undershot to be severely penalized.

Neck, Topline and Body: Neck-Graceful and muscular, arched toward the head and blending cleanly, without throatiness, into sloping shoulders; moderate in length and in balance with the length and height of the dog. Topline-The line of the neck blends into the shoulder and backline in a smooth curve. The backline slopes very slightly toward a gently rounded croup, and is free from sagging or rumpiness. Body-Compact and well-knit, giving the impression

of strength without heaviness. Chest deep; not so wide as to interfere with action of forelegs, nor so narrow as to allow the front to appear narrow or pinched. Forechest well developed, prosternum projecting moderately beyond shoulder points. Brisket reaches to the elbow and slopes gradually to a moderate tuck-up. Ribs well sprung and springing gradually to mid-body, tapering to back ribs which are of good depth and extend well back. Back short and strong. Loin short, broad and very slightly arched, but not enough to

affect the topline appreciably. Croup gently rounded, without any tendency to fall away sharply. Tail-Docked. Set on to conform to croup. Ideally, the tail is carried horizontally and is in constant motion while the dog is in action. Under excitement, the dog may carry his tail somewhat higher, but not cocked up.

Forequarters: The English Cocker is moderately angulated. Shoulders are sloping, the blade flat and smoothly fitting. Shoulder blade and upper arm are approximately equal in length. Upper arm set well back, joining the shoulder with sufficient angulation to place the elbow beneath the highest point of the shoulder blade when the dog is standing naturally. Forelegs-Straight, with bone nearly uniform in size from elbow to heel; elbows set close to the body; pasterns nearly straight, with some flexibility. Feet-Proportionate in size to the legs, firm, round and catlike; toes arched and tight; pads thick.

Hindquarters: Angulation moderate and, most importantly, in balance with that of the forequarters. Hips relatively broad and well rounded. Upper thighs broad, thick and muscular, providing plenty of propelling power. Second



ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

CONTINUED

thighs well muscled and approximately equal in length to the upper. Stifle strong and well bent. Hock to pad short. Feet as in front.

Coat: On head, short and fine; of medium length on body; flat or slightly wavy; silky in texture. The English Cocker is well-feathered, but not so profusely as to interfere with field work. Trimming is permitted to remove overabundant hair and to enhance the dog's true lines. It should be done so as to appear as natural as possible.

Color: Various. Parti-colors are either clearly marked, ticked or roaned, the white appearing in combination with black, liver or shades of red. In parti-colors it is preferable that solid markings be broken on the body and more or less evenly distributed; absence of body markings is acceptable. Solid colors are black, liver or shades of red. White feet on a solid are undesirable; a little white on throat is acceptable; but in neither case do these white markings make the dog a parti-color. Tan markings, clearly defined and of rich shade, may appear in conjunction with black, livers and parti-color combinations of those colors.



Black and tans and liver and tans are considered solid colors.

Gait: The English Cocker is capable of hunting in dense cover and upland terrain. His gait is accordingly characterized more by drive and the appearance of power than by great speed. He covers ground effortlessly and with extension both in front and in rear, appropriate to his angulation. In the ring, he carries his

head proudly and is able to keep much the same topline while in action as when standing for examination. Going and coming, he moves in a straight line without crabbing or rolling, and with width between both front and rear legs appropriate to his build and gait.

Temperament: The English Cocker is merry and affectionate, of equable disposition, neither sluggish nor hyperactive, a willing worker and a faithful and engaging companion.

Approved October 11, 1988
Effective November 30, 1988

Next month:

ENGLISH SPRINGER SPANIELS

IRISH WOLFHOUNDS

STANDARD SCHNAUZERS

SOFT COATED WHEATEN TERRIERS

HAVANESE

SHIBA INU

ADVERTISING RESERVATIONS

AJ ARAPOVIC
Publisher
512-541-8128
aj@aramediagr.com

BRIAN L. CORDOVA
National Sales Representative
Customer Relations
949-633-3093
bcordova@aramediagr.com

TAMMY GINCEL
National Sales Representative
Customer Relations
201-747-8569
tgince@aramediagr.com

BOBWHITE'S RAINY DAY LOVER, "RAINY"

Blue roan bitch,
whelped 12/31/2014.

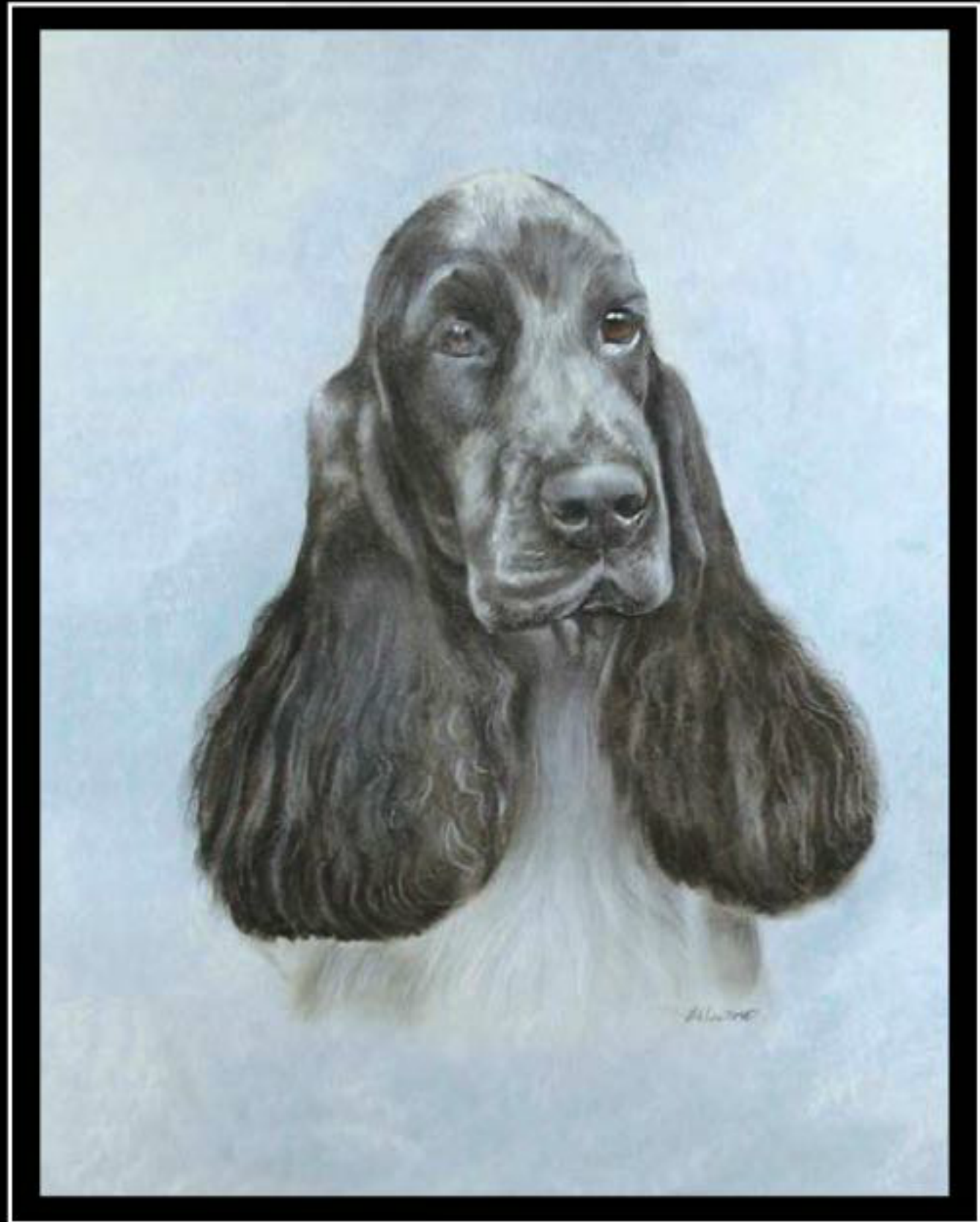
Pictured finishing his
Championship

Bred by Eileen Weston



**CH BOBWHITE'S RAINY DAY LOVER, SHOWN TO HER
CHAMPIONSHIP BY MY FRIEND AND HANDLER, MS. JULIE KAY.**

I am an AKC Breeder of Merit having bred and finished over 25 champions as well as many other titled dogs. I am also licensed to judge the breed and American cockers, and judged the ECSCA National in Sturbridge, MA, in 2005. I did the drawings for the ECSCA Illustrated Standard and thank the dog show world for the opportunity to contribute my artwork to dog fanciers of all breeds.



EILEEN WESTON

AKC BREEDER OF MERIT

45 years in the sport & 42 years in English Cockers

AND CANINE FINE ARTIST

ShowSight
presents

SELECTED ARTICLES
FROM OUR
PREVIOUS ISSUES

HOW FORM SHOULD FOLLOW FUNCTION IN THE ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

by GENELLE JOSEPH

In Sport as in ladies' hats, fashions have changed with each decade, yes, though fashions may change, we find that the merry little Cocker has always maintained his place in the esteem of the public and sportsmen alike, by dint of his extreme adaptability and courage and, let us face it, also by his hardiness to withstand the rigours of our English climate. He should never have been allowed to become a pampered pet, although the vast majority are, nowadays just that. Again blame his adaptability and lovable nature: but anyone who has ever seen these game little dogs working in the field must admit that this is their rightful heritage and the place where they are truly happy. A Cocker that has once tasted the delights of bustling in and out of the hedgerows and thickets and has had the scent of hare, pheasant, partridge, or the humble rabbit in his nostrils is lost forever to the drawing room. He will, on the slightest invitation, leave the cream cakes to follow the guns."

—*The Dual Purpose Dog* by A.W. Collins, Collinwood Cocker; Kent, England; c. 1950

Judges faced with the prospect of evaluating a ring full of English Cockers today might find themselves feeling slightly overwhelmed by the task. In this day and age, the breed can be presented in many shades and colors, various types, and with luxurious, often sculpted coats which can hide the structure beneath. To successfully sort out the classes and reward the proper type, you would do well to remember the purpose for which the breed was developed.

From the opening paragraph in the standard, you get a sense of what the English Cocker was developed for:

"The English Cocker Spaniel is an active, merry sporting dog, standing well up at the withers and compactly built. He is alive with energy; his gait is powerful and frictionless, capable both of covering ground effortlessly and penetrating dense cover to flush and retrieve game. His enthusiasm in the field and the incessant action of his tail while at work indicate how much he enjoys the hunting for which he was bred."

The essence of type of any breed should lie in the original purpose. Looking at some aspects of the standard, we can decipher the important traits and characteristics developed by the breed's founders that make up the foundation for a distinctive and correct English Cocker Spaniel.

SUBSTANCE

"The English Cocker is a solidly built dog with as much bone and substance as is possible without becoming cloddy or coarse."

Historically bred to hunt in the thick cover and underbrush of the English countryside, the Cocker needed stamina, endurance, power and strength. Originally the breed was used only to find and flush the game, however in more recent times they were required to also retrieve, which in turn demanded a larger, more robust dog. Therefore, Cockers needed to possess a sturdy body capable of carrying the muscle and bone necessary to push through the thicket, hunt, flush and retrieve whatever game was afoot, often comparatively large fowl or hare. It was essential for the breed to be capable of working all day with their master, being moderate in size, with bone, rib, depth of brisket, forechest and a broad, muscular rear. Through careful breeding we now have the veritable "jack of all trades",



Alf Collins with Eng Sh Ch Collinwood Silver Lariat



Photo © Melody Carranza Photography LLC

"THE ESSENCE OF TYPE OF ANY BREED SHOULD LIE IN THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE."

FOXWOODS & IVYWOOD ENGLISH COCKERS

THE PAST...



**BIS, BISS, GOLD
GRAND CHAMPION
FOXWOODS
DUBLIN DIVA**

**Number 1 English
Cocker Spaniel
All Systems
2013 & 2014***

**all systems 2013, 2014*

THE PRESENT...

**MULTIPLE GROUP
WINNING, GRAND
CHAMPION FOXWOODS
ROCK OF CASHEL**

**Westminster 2015
Best of Breed Winner**

**Currently the Number 1 English
Cocker Spaniel All Systems****

***all systems as of 4/30/15*



Breeder: Kristin J. Lyons | Foxwoods English Cocker Spaniels | www.foxwoodskennel.com
Owners: Kristin J. Lyons & Deborah Mauterer, DVM | Ivywood English Cocker Spaniels | www.ivywoodecs.com

FOXWOODS & IVYWOOD ENGLISH COCKERS

THE FUTURE...



**CH. FOXWOODS
TONI MORRISON**

*WB, BOW, Best Puppy at The English Cocker Club
of America National 2014 from the 6-9 puppy class!
WB & BOW at English Cocker Club of Southern Wisconsin
WB, BOW, Best Bred By In Show at American Spaniel Club*



**IVYWOOD
FOXWOODS UNLIMITED**

*Lonestar English Cocker Spaniel Club 2014
Best in Sweeps
Major Pointed*



**FOXWOODS IVYWOOD
EVA PERON**



**FOXWOODS IVYWOOD
CHARLOTTE BRONTE**

Breeders/Owners: Kristin J. Lyons & Deborah Mauterer, DVM
www.foxwoodskennel.com | www.ivywoodecs.com

GOLDEN GAIT ENGLISH COCKER SPANIELS...

Hope

MBISS AM CAN GCH GOLDEN GAIT'S NEVER LOSE HOPE



English Cocker Spaniel Club of America

2012 NATIONAL SPECIALTY BEST IN SHOW

Thank You Breeder Judge Virginia Lyne

A Breeder/Owner/Handler's greatest honor...

GOLDEN GAIT ENGLISH COCKER SPANIELS | DEBBIE OWCZARZAK | CEDAR LAKE, IN

...HOME OF TWO NATIONAL SPECIALTY WINNERS!

Lumba

MBISS RBIS GCH GOLDEN GAIT'S DANCE TO THE GROOVE



English Cocker Spaniel Club of America

2015 NATIONAL SPECIALTY BEST IN SHOW

Thank You Breeder Judge Barbara Heckerman

...not once, but TWICE!

GOLDEN GAIT ENGLISH COCKER SPANIELS | DEBBIE OW CZARZAK | CEDAR LAKE, IN



Photo © Karen Fremouth



“AN OFTEN OVERLOOKED ESSENTIAL OF BREED TYPE, THE CORRECT COAT ON A COCKER WORKS AS A PROTECTIVE SHIELD FROM THE WEATHER AND UNFORGIVING TERRAIN.”

a steady, biddable, hardworking and determined companion, flushing as well as retrieving game, even from water.

PROPORTION

“Compactly built and short-coupled, with height at withers slightly greater than the distance from withers to set-on of tail.”

Slighter taller than long by the measurement listed in the standard, this breed should appear neither leggy nor low on leg. The correct, symmetrical make and shape of a Cocker allows them to penetrate the type of dense cover that taller, leggier animals could not. They have just enough neck to comfortably reach down, pick up a bird and carry it without interfering with their gait. This is a breed of moderation and balance by necessity, as exaggeration of any characteristic could cause them to tire easily and therefore be incapable of fulfilling the task for which they were bred.

COAT

“On head, short and fine; of medium length on body; flat or slightly wavy; silky in texture. The English Cocker is well-feathered, but not so profusely as to interfere with field work. Trimming is permitted to remove over-abundant hair and to enhance the dogs true lines. It should be done so as to appear as natural as possible.”

An often overlooked essential of breed type, the correct coat on a Cocker works as a protective shield from the weather and unforgiving terrain. It should be silky, with a topcoat jacket of longer, protective guard hairs and enough undercoat to keep

them warm. The feathering should not be too profuse, nor over groomed. A correct coat will self-strip in the field, allowing the dog to work while avoiding mishap. A poor, cottony coat will cause a dog to snag and tie them up at the first bramble. A Cocker should also have supple, pliable skin, with enough give to allow them to hunt in the most difficult countryside without injury.

HEAD

“...Strong, yet free from coarseness, softly contoured, without sharp angles...”

The characteristic head and expression of an English Cocker sets them apart from all the other Spaniel breeds. They have a soft, melting and endearing expression, with tight eye rims to keep them free from debris. The skull: “Arched and slightly flattened when seen both from the side and from the front. Viewed in profile, the brow appears not appreciably higher than the back-skull.”

The skull is arched and slightly flattened (not flat) to allow for the well-muscled jaw. They must not drop off too much in the backskull, as this will inhibit their ability to hold the bird in their mouth and retrieve in water; a down faced dog will be looking up into the sun.

THE MUZZLE

“Equal in length to skull; well cushioned.”

Their muzzle is well cushioned to protect them from the thorns and thickets they work in, as well as the talons of the birds they hunt. They have strong jaws and teeth the size of a much larger breed. This breed is meant to do heavy lifting!

GAIT

“The English Cocker is capable of hunting in dense cover and upland terrain. His gait is accordingly characterized more by drive and the appearance of power than by great speed.”

Bred to be a steady hunting companion, they should cover ground soundly and efficiently. However, this breed is not one of exaggeration, and a moderate stride is desired. The English Cocker should reach to the end of his nose, without wasted motion or restriction. Their ever-wagging tail and the darting action they show while seeking game has led to the descriptive term of bustling.

In summary, this merry, active breed has won the hearts of many and deserves his place in history. Never let the window dressing he may be found sporting detract from the hardworking little hunting companion he was bred to be.

“He is an ideal companion and housedog; a great sportsman in the shooting field, and is capable of doing all the work his bigger brothers can do, putting that joy into the task which has earned him the epithet ‘The Merry Cocker’, his actions denoting the pleasure he derives from his hunting”.

—Introduction to *Cocker Spaniels* by H.S. Lloyd, of Ware Cocker; Middlesex, England

To see the English Cocker Spaniel breed standard, visit www.ecsca.info/index.php/breed-info/breed-standard.

For more information about English Cocker Spaniels, please visit the ECSCA website at www.ecsca.info/ ■

MULTIPLE SPECIALTY WINNING AND GROUP PLACING TOP 15 ECS*
GCH Rosecliffe's Scenes From A Memory

Lucy



Flash

© Nor Cal Bulldogger

BEST OF BREED WINNER ALL 4 DAYS AT MISSION CIRCUIT!

Owner/Breeder/Handler: Kim Estlund, Kennel Rosecliffe, KimEstlund@aol.com

**ShowSight breed stats as of 4/30/15*

UNDERSTANDING THE ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

by PATRICIA JANZEN

(photos and illustrations courtesy of the author)

The front defined: “the forepart of the body as viewed head on or from the side, to include forelegs, chest, brisket and shoulder line.”

We should be breeding for correct type and an overall dog; but without a basic understanding of correct structure (which is also part of correct type) we may end up with something pretty that isn't functional. While structure is basic dog knowledge, fronts are the hardest to understand.

The front is possibly the most important part of the four-legged mammal, including dogs. To understand why the front is so important, we need to consider some important facts.

Like all parts of the skeletal system, it includes scaffolding upon which everything hangs. It provides locomotion. It is also housing that protects the vital internal organs. Each of these is of extreme importance on our smallest of gun dogs, which have to be stronger for their size than any other gun dog.

The front bears more weight than the back half of the animal (even more when the dog carries game, prey or other objects), so it must prove to be strong.

During movement, the dog is actually falling forward and downward on its front after propulsion from the rear; the front

also aids the rear in propulsion. Because the animal does fall forward with each stride, it must not only be strong enough to catch the weight but also be well cushioned for impact. Since the front houses the heart and lungs of a hardworking and athletic hunting animal, it needs to have adequate space within the ribcage to accommodate well developed organs.

The Cocker needs to take fewer, more efficient steps. In this way it travels farther with less effort and can do more work in a day.

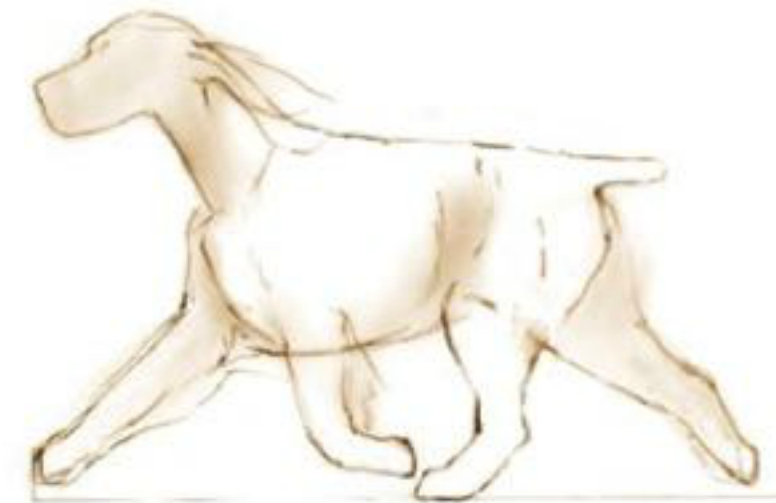
FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION

On an English Cocker, a good front is not just a pretty-coated, well-feathered piece with withers that are slightly higher than the rear, only ever viewed from the side.

The Cocker must push through heavy cover carrying game larger for its size than any other sporting dog. Historically it has been used for pheasant and other game birds, as well as hare.

There is a reason our beautiful breed's front needs to be as the standard calls for. The standard states: “The English Cocker is a solidly built dog with as much bone and substance as is possible without becoming cloddy or coarse.”

Bone needs to be significantly strong in order to carry heavy muscle. The muscle



“THE COCKER NEEDS TO TAKE
FEWER, MORE EFFICIENT STEPS.
IN THIS WAY IT TRAVELS FARTHER WITH LESS EFFORT AND
CAN DO MORE WORK IN A DAY.”

WHAT'S UP?

Bac!

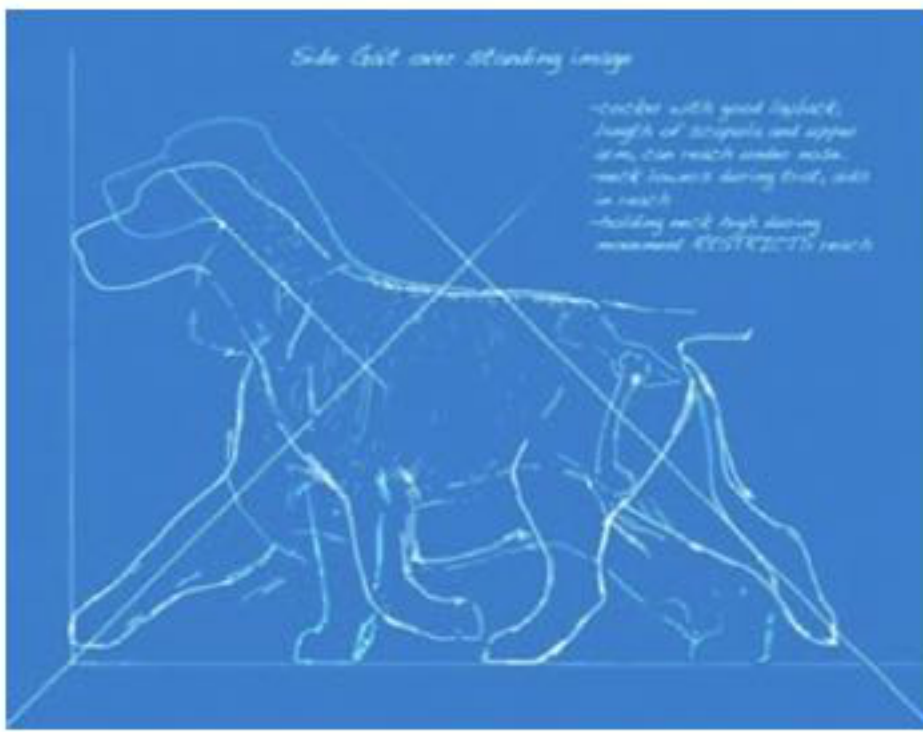


GCH EBONWOOD MEDICINE HAT

(GCH Dawnglow Knight Rider x CH Eden Hills Warbonnet at Ebonwood)

Thank you Breeder-Judges Sandi Olsen and Marlin Kvamme
for these memorable first specialty Best of Breed wins!

Breeder: P. Janzen & J. Kaul | **Owner:** P. Janzen, J. Kaul & G. Joseph



is more typical of a weight lifter, capable of pushing through dense cover and carrying heavy game, as opposed to the type of muscling found on a gun dog that runs over large, open fields.

The amount of trappy terrain a dog needs to go through is in proportion to the amount of bone and muscle a breed needs. In human form, think of a runner's build as opposed to a weight lifter's. This is why we say the Cocker is rounded and contoured and is not made of angular planes with long, flat muscle type.

The standard states: "His gait is characterized more by drive and the appearance of power than by great speed. He covers ground effortlessly and with extension both in front and in rear, appropriate to his angulation."

To carry the dog, his front needs to move efficiently. We want strength and endurance, not speed. The ideal, efficient stride allows the front foot to reach forward to a line dropped vertically underneath the nose, landing just behind the nose, in order to push off when it is underneath the dog. This allows the dog to take

fewer, more efficient steps; therefore he can work for longer periods of time.

The standard calls for a dog's withers to be well laid back and the upper arm to return, or lay back, the same distance and at the same degree as the scapula. The ideal angulation is for the front to form a 90 to 100 degree angle, with the highest point of the shoulder (withers) to be directly above the elbow, which is also directly above the back of the front foot when properly stationed. The reason for this is mechanical advantage: the front legs can reach forward in a projected line that follows the degree of layback of scapula. The upper arm needs to be same length as the shoulder. An upper arm of equal length coupled with length and layback of shoulder makes for optimal length of stride and propulsion.

The bottom left photo is our Cocker's standing outline with an image of balanced movement over it. Note the 45 degree angled lines over the front and rear legs. This illustrates equal reach and drive. To allow freedom in front and correct front reach, the head also drops to about a 45 degree angle. In the show ring, when a Cocker is "strung up" with the lead held

vertical and taught, the head stays in a more upright position, which doesn't allow the Cocker opportunity to show correct, sporting dog movement.

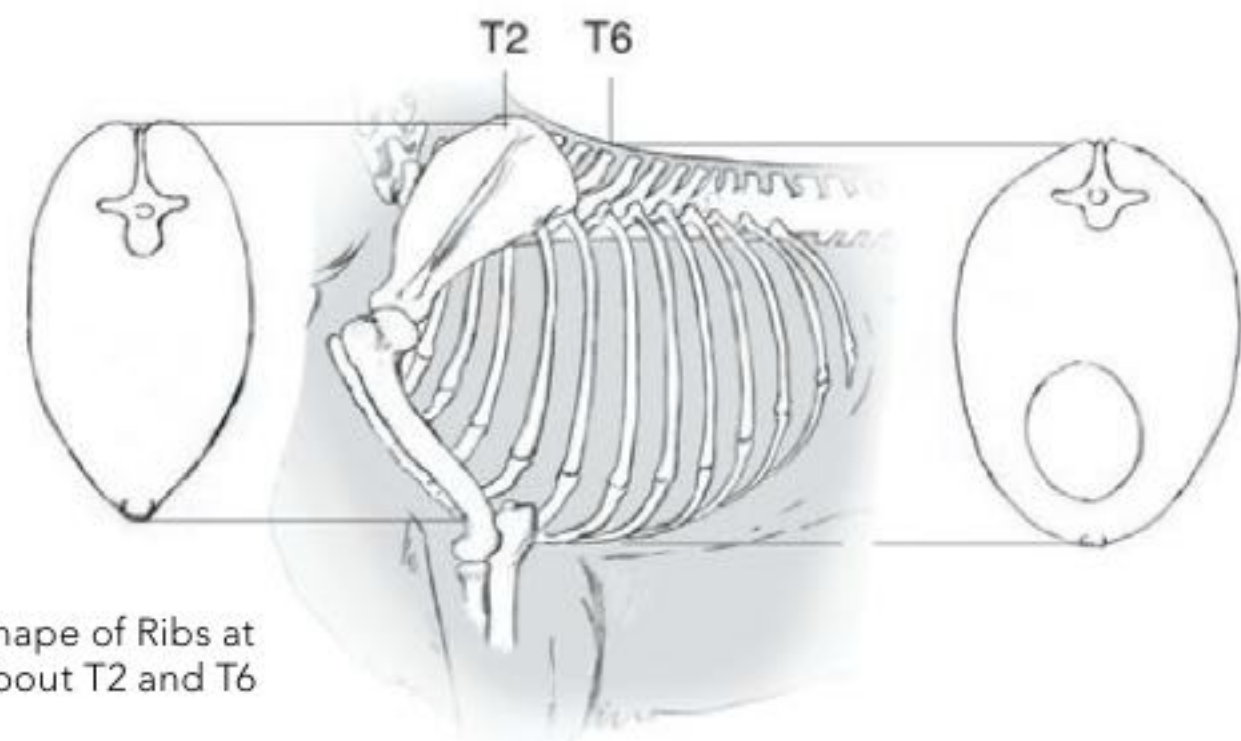
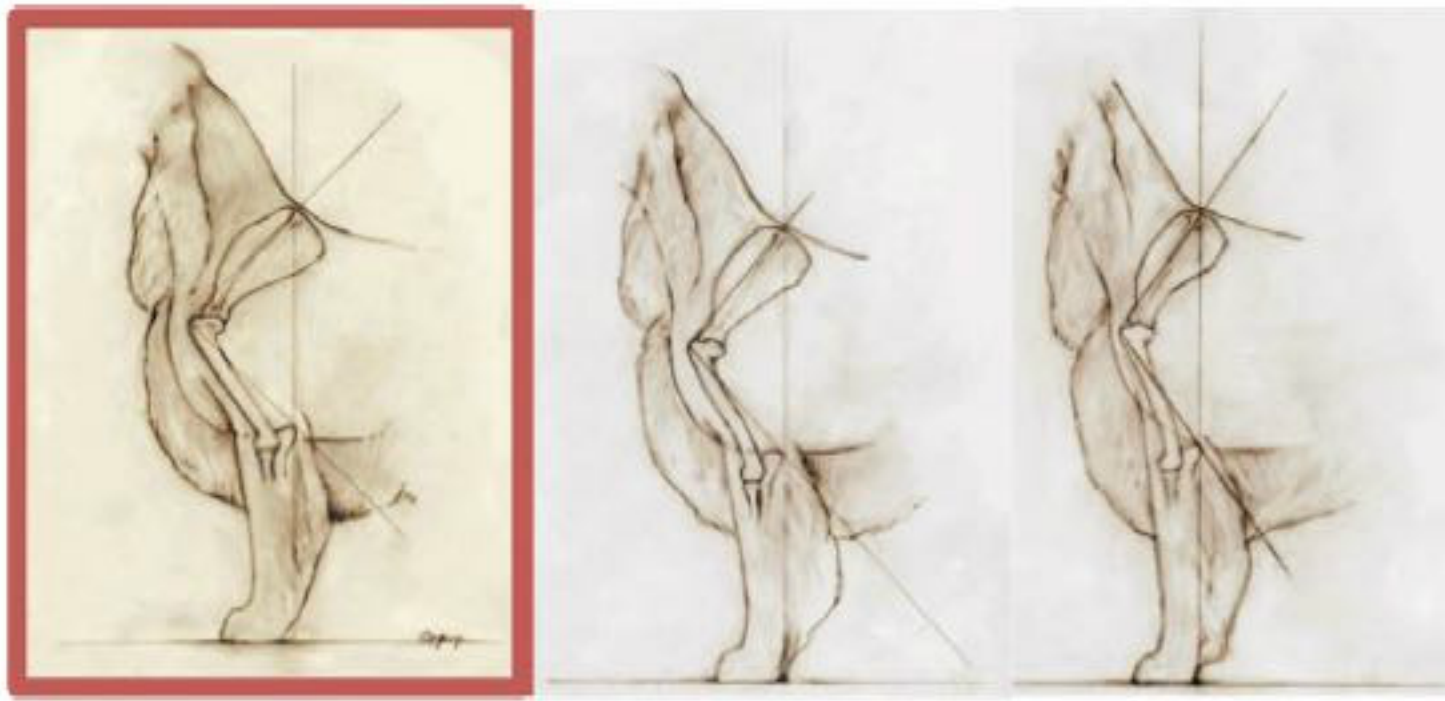
The dog with an inadequate front cannot reach to its nose. It is completely wrong for a gundog to be short strided in front. If the scapula is more upright, the upper arm and foreleg cannot reach to vertical line dropped from the nose of the dog, causing a shorter stride. Neither can the dog with a shorter foreleg have a stride of sufficient length, or have ideal leverage to propel the dog forward. Also, a dog with a more upright foreleg does not have the ability to have an ideal range of motion and it tends to have a more upright pastern as well. Any of these faults cause the dog to take more steps during the course of an hour, a day, its lifetime.

Neither does the dog have any need to reach past the nose. Anything more than the described ideal creates wasted motion, wasted energy.

While flashy and eye catching, this type of movement is atypical of a correct Cocker and is of no use in the conditions under which the breed works in the field. It should no more be rewarded in the ring or

CALLING ALL TOP PRODUCERS

SHOWSIGHT MAGAZINE is compiling a registry of the sires and dams who have earned their place in the record books by the puppies they've produced. If you have one of these distinguished dogs or bitches that were recognized by their parent club, let us know. Please include dog's registered name, achievement, breeders, owners, email and phone, and a photo of the dog or bitch if available. Send to: editor@dmcg.com.



Shape of Ribs at about T2 and T6

“THE DOG HAS TO HAVE GOOD SPRING OF RIB IN ORDER TO HOUSE HEART AND LUNGS OF SUFFICIENT CAPACITY.”

incorporated in a breeding program, than any other movement fault which inhibits the Cocker from functioning correctly.

Here is a dog that is unable to extend its front to its nose, yet is kicking way too far behind with the rear. This is a compensation caused by a straight front (upright scapula and short upper arm), combined with an over angulated rear.

Additionally, a dog with ideal angulation has more area for muscling. Imagine a 90 degree triangle and that of one with shallower angles and you can see that it leaves less space for carrying a well-developed musculature.

This shoulder is tipped forward, instead of being laid back towards the rear of the dog. It places the withers well forward of the elbow. When in motion, the dog will look as if he is falling over his front, which is exactly how he is made to move. Due to the incorrect placement of the scapula, the neck juts forward and is very restricted in its range of motion, a true detriment in the field.

That standard states: “Chest deep; not so wide as to interfere with action of forelegs, nor so narrow as to allow the front to appear narrow or pinched.” The dog has to have good spring of rib in order to house heart and lungs of sufficient capacity. The rib needs to extend downward to at least the dog’s elbow. A shallower ribcage crimps space for heart and lung expansion. From the front, the rib needs to be heart-shaped at its widest point.

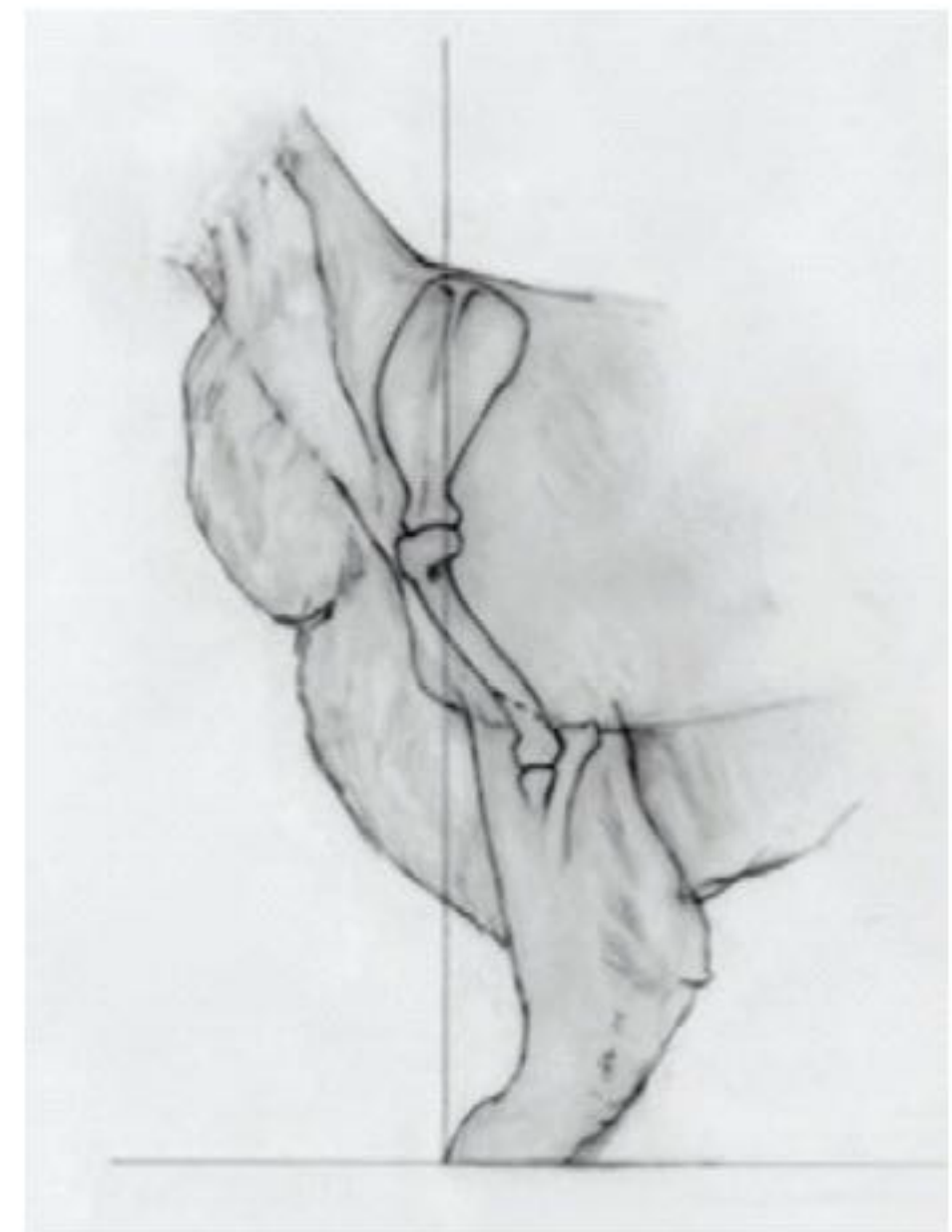
If one were to take sliced transverse images from the elbow forward, the shape is significantly narrower than a slice taken from its widest part, farther back. This is because as the dog reaches forward, the legs should begin

to converge. This aids in smooth, more forward movement. Think of yourself if you try to run: when you begin to move faster, make an effort to keep your legs as they hit the ground as wide as they are when standing. That causes a stilted, side to side movement, not conducive to good running. Same with a sporting dog!

Consider that a Cocker is a smaller, wider breed than other sporting dogs. If its width is sufficient, its front legs will never converge on the same line (single tracking), or even come close to it because it is a wider breed with wider muscle for its size than other, taller, dogs.

Pasterns: the standard states “pasterns are nearly straight with some flexibility”. The pastern needs to have enough angulation to “give” upon landing. An absolutely upright pastern will act more like a post, with no natural give. A pastern with too much bend will not have enough strength and will cause more strain to ligaments and tendons. Compare the greater slope of the front pastern with that of the rear. This is because the front has to deal with more concussive forces and needs to be more shock absorbing.

In the words of Anne Rogers Clark, second generation English Cocker breeder and ECSCA Past President, “In any breed, the whole dog is hung on its front end. How the neck is set, how its topline is, all go to the front. Must have forechest out in front. We’re getting a lot of English Cockers whose fronts drop straight down, a so-called Terrier front where they’re laid back in shoulder, are short in forearm and their fronts are way out in front of them with no forechest—it’s totally incorrect for a Cocker. Got to have some forechest!” ■



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Patricia Janzen is an artist/illustrator and English Cocker fancier who grew up drawing and enjoying the company of cats, dogs and horses. Her first show dogs were Gordon Setters, where she also tried her hand at field trials with them. She settled on English Cockers in the early 80s, breeding and showing under the Ebonwood prefix. She has always bred in a limited way but not without a share of success. Having studied painting and medical art, she now combines her love and learning of animals and art. At present she paints and is working on two AKC illustrated standards.

Introducing our Chocolate Star....

"Savvy"

Jardé' N Manderley's Chocolate Bliss



BISS QCH Jardé' Ever Present Past X QCH Jardé' Chocolate Truffle



Two Best of Breeds & a Group 2
before her first Birthday

Breeders/Owners
Manderley & Jardé'

Dr Bruce Barrett, DVM & Debbie McClelland

"Truffles"
GCH Jarde' Chocolate Truffle



LIST OF
BREED OR VARIETY

SUNSET BAY
PENNEL CLUB
SAN DIEGO

PHOTO



Owner

Manderley

Dr Bruce Barrett, DVM

Breeder/Co-Owner

Jarde'

Debbie McClelland

"Travis"
BISS GCH Jarde' Ever Present Part



Breeder/owner

Jarde'

Debbie McClelland

WELCOME TO STUMPTOWN



by GENELLE JOSEPH

The English Cocker Spaniel Club of America's 79th annual National Specialty, along with the obedience trial, rally, tracking test, hunt test and working test was held May 2nd through 8th in the beautiful city of Portland, Oregon. The show was held at the Holiday Inn Airport Conference Center, which proved to be a beautiful venue for the Obedience and Rally, as well as the conformation events. Our Show Chair, Maureen Mybeck and her hard working show committee members put on a lovely week filled with everything English Cocker. There were several other special events held along with the show, including a Stud Dog Showcase and a Breeder's Education Seminar and Panel Discussion on Moderation in the English Cocker Spaniel.

Three days of English Cocker-only agility were held at Brigand's Hideout in Battleground, WA. 32 English Cockers competed with about 130 runs per day. Winner was MACH 20 Prairie fire Dusty Rose, owned by Julie McGuire of Racine, Wisconsin.

The obedience trial was held at the Holiday in venue on May 5th. High in Trial went to NOHEA R SCHUMANN'S OPUS BN GN with owner/handler Shelley Gilliland.

The Puppy Sweepstakes was judged by Carol Collins of Gwynllyn English Cockers, hailing from Pennsylvania. From an entry of 53 puppies, Carol found her winner in the 15-18 month bitch Majestic She's Got Whatever "It" Is, bred and owned by Kay and Doug Belter, handled by Kay.

The Veteran Sweepstakes was held as separate evening gala event this year. Mrs. Carol Collins presided over her lovely entry of 21 seniors. She selected her winner from 7-9 bitch class, an orange and white, GCH Oldwest Change Of Hue handled as always by her breeder/owner Christine Dooley.

This year, the English Cocker Spaniel Club of America took the American Kennel Club's new option to invite a person to judge

who is not an AKC approved Judge for the breed. This great honor was bestowed upon Barb Heckerman (Wyncrest English Cockers) of Swanton, Ohio. Barb has been in the breed since 1967, in that time she has owned, bred and handled some of the top English Cockers in the US and Canada.

Barbara found her Winners Dog and eventual Award of Merit winner in the orange and white Bred by Exhibitor Dog, Ragtime North By Northwest, bred owned and handled by Susan Peterson. Her choice for Winners Bitch, Best of Winners and Best Bred by Exhibitor went to our Best in Sweepstakes winner, Majestic She's Got Whatever "It" Is, bred and owned by Kay and Doug Belter, handled again by Kay.

From the 55 champions entered in Best of Breed, Barbara's selection for Best in Specialty was the black bitch, GCH Golden Gait's Dance to the Groove, bred, owned and handled by Debbie Owczarzak. Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed went to a blue roan and tan dog, GCH Bellflower XLI MVP, bred, owned and handled by Karen Roth.

Barbara Heckerman was kind enough to share her thoughts on the entry with us:

"Being asked to judge the 74th National of the ECSCA under the recent AKC change to ask a long time breeder/handler to officiate was a high point in my life with the breed. Having judged the sweepstakes several times in English Cockers as well as many other breeds, the actual judging procedure was already familiar. The fact that it was THE NATIONAL itself added another dimension of responsibility to the whole endeavor. Evaluating bloodstock is probably the most important facet of this sport, whether as a breeder, handler or judge. Quite an honor to be sure.

"Good depth of quality in the entry of 170+, with many choices to be made. The mantra of compact, moderate, one piece cocker every in mind, my WD and eventually one of my AOM winners was a very mature red and white dog with the above stated essentials. Big ribs, short



Winners bitch, Majestic She's Got What "It" Is, bred and owned by Kay and Doug Belter, handled by Kay. (Photo by Betty Ganung)



Judge Barb Heckerman judging. (Photo by Betty Ganung)



(Photo by Arthur P. Steward)

Muckross PRESENTS

CH Muckross Cobblestone God Gave Me You

GCH Cobblestone's Cosmopolitan x CH Cobblestone Hearts On Fire



Blake

DOB 5/29/14

Best of Opposite in Sweeps at the National & Blake finished easily with 4 majors before his first birthday. Both his brother and sister are major pointed as well. We are very excited about the future with these pups.



Teddy's pic 15

Breeders: Rebecca Parchman & Susan L. Karsch

Owner: Rebecca Parchman **Expertly Coached By:** Kristin Lyons



Best of Breed winner, GCH Golden Gait's Dance to the Groove, Zumba, bred, owned and handled by Debbie Owczarzak. (Photos by Arthur P. Stewart)



WB, BW, BBE and Best in Sweepstakes, Majestic She's Got What "It" Is, bred and owned by Kay and Doug Belter, handled again by Kay. (Photo by Arthur P. Stewart)



Barb judging and Carol Colins our sweeps judge. (Photos by Betty Ganung)



(Photo by Linda Green)



Our president and our Kate

loin, bone, rock hard topline... cocker essentials. WB and BW to a beautiful black bitch of quality. Compact, good quarters on both ends... sweet head and eye... wouldn't change anything on her. BB to another black bitch which stood out for her overall quality. Feminine with big ribs and in lovely condition. The flow of her parts made for a lovely one piece cocker. BOS to a handsome blue roan and tan dog. Again, well balanced with good substance and muscle, he's moderate throughout with big quarters and much to offer the breed.

"These were hard decisions to be sure as there were several others who warranted making cuts, which I would have been pleased to own and show. Attention still needs to be paid to overlong ribbing and lack of spring of rib so basic for a cocker. Also many lacking in width of thigh muscle, for cockers are overall chunky rounded spaniels, not exaggerated decals. Our breed is in good hands to be sure, as most breeders are working towards this."

Debbie Owczarzak, the breeder/owner/handler of the Best in Specialty Show winner, GCH Golden Gait's Dance to the Groove had this to say about winning:

"As a breeder, when deciding which puppy to keep from a litter, I always ask myself 'does this puppy have potential

to be competitive at Specialties under Breeder Judges?'. If I believe it does, that is the puppy I keep. This is the most important thing to me...to be respected by my peers...that is, Breeders. Winning the 2012 ECSCA National Specialty with my red bitch 'Hope' under respected Breeder Judge Virginia Lyne (Ranzfel ECS) felt like an accomplishment and honor of a lifetime! And now to win the 2015 National Specialty with my black bitch Zumba under another very respected Breeder Judge Barbara Heckerman (Wyncrest ECS) is well, just beyond words... only tears of joy and gratefulness remain."

Kay Belter, the breeder/owner/handler of the Winners Bitch, Best of Winners, Best Bred By and Puppy Sweepstakes winning Majestic She's Got Whatever "It" Is, shared what this special week was like for her:

"The members who put on the national did a wonderful job. The show venue was extremely exhibitor friendly. They did not miss a detail from hospitality down to the lovely trophies. Portland is a pleasure to visit with many outlying areas to visit being 'dog friendly.'

"For myself personally it was a true honor to have our young bitch recognized by respected long time breeders, Barbara



The high in trial winner. (Photo by Linda Green)

Heckerman and Carol Collins. It is a rare occasion to win both Best in Sweepstakes and Winners bitch/Best of winners/best bred by exhibitor. As breeders/owners/handlers, Doug and I are extremely grateful for these awards. And of course 'Pink' enjoyed every minute in the show ring and her visit to the coast after the show was completed!" ■

JUDGING THE ENGLISH COCKER SPANIEL

The Breed Education Committee for the English Cocker Spaniel Club of America selected the following well-known, respected, Breeder/Judges to answer several questions and share their thoughts and insight on judging the breed:

David Flanagan, Decorum (NY) exhibiting/breeding for 50+ years, judging since 1998.

Bonnie Threlfall, Edgewood, Reg. (NC) exhibiting 50+ and breeding 40+ years, judging since 2000.

Virginia Lyne, Ranzfel, Reg. (Canada) exhibiting/breeding for 53 years, judging since 1969.

Andrew Jones, Shenmore (UK), exhibiting/breeding since 1985, judging since 1991.

Doug McFarlane, Merimac (WA) exhibiting/breeding since the early 1970s, judging since 1998.



Bad vs. good dog silhouettes.

Please explain what you are looking for in your first impression of a class of English Cockers as a whole?

D.F. The idea of examining and judging a dog, comparing it to the ideal and placing it accordingly with the other dogs in the class can seem daunting when you first judge, and the tick-tock of the “two-minute-per-dog” clock can be overwhelming. The more experience one has, the more of a routine you develop.

When a class lines up in the ring, I look for animals that have proper balance with regard to size and proportion. I then move from the front of the line to the back of the line getting my first impression of head and expression. Next, I move from the back of the line forward looking down over the animals to see the shape of the dog with regards to neck set, roundness of rib, length of loin and roundness of rear. Finally, I send the class around to observe ease and fluidity of movement, balance and topline.

B.T. From across the ring I am looking for compact, one piece dogs with balanced angulation at both ends. I am already mentally eliminating the long dogs that appear shelly and narrow, with

dramatic toplines and rears extending way out behind them. I want to see the entire dog as a package without my eye being drawn to one or more exaggerated features. The correctly-made dogs will appear rounded all over, with no sharp angles or lines.

V.L. My first impression is always a check for balance and overall proportions. I am looking for an alert, moderate dog with nothing exaggerated and showing a confident, merry temperament. Generally my first impression comes when the dogs are doing their initial move around the ring.

A.J. First impressions are the chance for the dogs to grab my attention. As I walk down the line I’ll be drawn to those that have shortness, balance and most importantly, angulation. As I send them once round the ring those with character and drive on the move will demand attention. In a large class after first impressions I should have a handful in my mind who will be the contenders and maybe even one that already stands out as the likely winner.

D.M. When I am first looking at a whole class I look at each dog to determine proper breed type and assess their overall balance and conformation. I ask myself, ‘Does the head match the rest of the dog; does the neck flow smoothly into the shoulders; is

the backline level; do the angles front and rear match; is the dog square; and are there any extremes or exaggerated parts, like a long back leg or long loin?’ These all make up the characteristics that help me form that first impression.

What are absolute necessities for correct breed type?

D.F. The absolute necessities with regard to breed type are balance and proportion, proper bone and feet, roundness of rib and rear, a short, hard back and a properly balanced head with a sweet, melting expression, and a tail with never stops wagging, all on a sound animal.

B.T. There are five necessities to correct cocker body type, which enable the dog to do the job for which he was bred, that being pushing through thick, very dense cover most often higher than the dog. They are of equal importance, so in no particular order: 1) A protective forechest for pushing into cover. The forechest will only be present if the dog has the correct fore-hand assembly, the shoulder being well laid back with equal length and return of upper arm, placing the front legs well under the dog. 2) Thick bone. The amount of bone should almost seem too much for height of the dog, but is necessary to support the correctly made body. I have yet to see an

English Cocker with what I would consider too much bone. 3) A very well-sprung ribcage, which is deep and carried well back towards the dog's rear. 4) a SHORT, broad loin. This is a compact, cobby breed. 5) A "hammy" rear, with thick muscling on both upper and lower thighs. The thick muscle only accompanies a MODERATELY angulated rear. A line dropped from the point of the buttock should land immediately in front of the rear toes.

V.L. My breed essentials are a compact dog, with a good spring of rib, moderate bone, width in hindquarter and a merry temperament. A pleasing head piece that has the look of a Cocker and never that of a Setter is a determinant of true breed type.

A.J. Put simply, the English Cocker should be a lot of dog in a small package—meaning substance, compactness, width of front, strong ribs and a wide well-rounded back end, all of this with that essential merry character and driving movement displaying the breed's love of life.

D.M. Well let's start at the front of the dog. Expression: I put a lot of emphasis on expression. I don't get hung up on head planes as long as they are not exaggerated and don't affect the expression, but the dog must have that melting expression the standard calls for so eye placement, eye shape, eye color and proper chiseling under the eye are all important to me along with muzzle length balanced with the skull. Body: Since the Cocker is built to plough through thick brush, that dictates the body structure which must have well-sprung ribs, deep chest, ribs well back with a short loin, wide hip bones to support a strong muscle mass on the rear with well-developed first and second thigh. Tail set should be off a slightly rounded croup. When viewed from above, the roundness of body must be evident. The angles front and rear should be balanced and with good bone and substance, without being coarse or cloddy.

Attitude: The standard starts right off with "merry". That tail action must display that characteristic and be in constant motion. Proper carriage is important. A gay tail is not desirable and you will see it in the ring. Balance: While in motion all the parts have to come together for a

smooth effortless gait with a firm slightly sloping topline.

Describe what you hope to find when examining a dog—on the table as well as moving.

D.F. The table examination lets your hands confirm or deny what your eyes have told you. This is when you feel for proper bone, fore-chest, flat shoulders, round ribs, short loin, tail set, proper stop and chiseling, bite, etc. This is also when you feel for muscling, proper condition, coat quality and proper trim. Let's not forget that English Cocker exhibitors are masters of illusion, it's your job to figure out what is real and what is not.

On the move I look particularly at the side gait as proof of proper construction and balance. This to me is the true test of what your hands have felt on the table. I am not known as a down and back freak—I use it as a tool, and it is very useful for optical illusion tan points can give. Watch the pads of the feet! A tip for judging this breed, if you feel you need to reexamine a dog, be sure to put it back on the table and to not attempt to go over it on the ground.

B.T. When examining an English Cocker, do not "blow by" the head once the bite is checked. The body gets the dog to the bird, but the head has to do its job, too. Looking at the bite you will notice that the teeth can be considered rather large for the size of the dog. Although developed to flush and retrieve woodcock, he is also perfectly capable of working pheasant, if necessary. With that in mind, I look for a strong, full muzzle equally balanced in length to the backskull. The sides of the backskull should not be rounded (coarse). Still looking at the head straight on, the top skull should have a noticeable arch to the sides with only a slight flattening at the very top. The arch is necessary to anchor the jaw muscles. A thoroughly flat top skull is incorrect. Correctly placed eyes of correct shape and color, together with the requisite chiseling under the eye, and the grooved stop, and ear set, complete the exam from the front. I then evaluate the head from the side. Holding the muzzle parallel to the ground, I check to see where the eyes are looking. For function they must look forward over the



muzzle and not into the sky. The neck is just long enough to comfortably reach down to pick up a bird and to carry the bird without interfering with front movement, but not too long as to be out of balance with the rest of the dog. A giraffe neck would not support a heavy bird for any distance. I then examine the rest of the dog hopefully finding the five requisites mentioned in the above question. Feet should be an extension of the bone, and be deep, round, and cat-like. As part of the exam, this breed has to be looked at over the top. The ribs are the widest part of the dog, followed closely by the rear. This is a broad, round dog. He is not narrow and angular—that is "Setter" type and should never be rewarded.

When moving, a balanced English Cocker keeps the same outline as standing. He should show equal reach and drive in moderation. He has a SLIGHTLY sloping topline, and not the extreme topline of the

American Cocker. Because of his roundness and considerable width, this breed cannot single track.

V.L. On the table I am looking for soft roundness—in the rib, the skull, the firm width of thigh and strong hindquarter. This is never a breed of sharp angles. I want to find forechest and depth of body at least to the elbow. I want to feel quality of bone that is proportionate to size. I expect to see a soft expression from a dark, slightly oval eye that looks straight at me. The head will have a moderate stop and good width over the muzzle with a soft curve of lip without excess flews. I also assess coat quality—never excessive and of correct protective texture, not barbered severely. There is meant to be a jacket with protective hair and some undercoat. I want to find a thick, tight foot for this sporting Spaniel.

On the move, I expect to see a firm, hard topline, reach in front matched by a rear that steps under and pushes back to provide balanced reach and drive. I look for correct carriage of tail that is carried off the end of the croup without being pegged up like a Terrier. Hocks are short. I want my dog to hold the same shape on the ground moving that I saw on the table during the examination. I place a considerable emphasis on the side movement as I feel it is at this point that balance and correct proportions are confirmed.

A.J. On the table is the chance to go ‘hands-on’ and assess real quality. I hope to find a melting eye and expression (looking into the eyes of a top rate Cocker should be like looking into heaven—kind, warm eyes looking straight back at you, saying, ‘Love me’); with that I want strong bone, straight legs, most important good width of front; layback of shoulder and deep well sprung ribs, short loin, strong and wide back end, well-angulated and finally a good, well-presented coat. On the move, confidence, merry character, sound and driving movement, happy ever wagging tail. In short, “all Cocker”.

D.M. On the table I’m looking at the finer points: eye shape, eye color, bone, feet, coat condition, depth of undercoat, muscle mass and condition, ribs well sprung and back, with a short loin, and correct set on of



the tail. I’m hoping to confirm the impression I formed as the dog moved in the class. When the dog is moving again I want to see how all the parts fit together. I watch the down and back for soundness, again to confirm what I feel on the detail table examination. When I send the dog around I want to see nice balanced extension front and rear. The gait should indicate power and look effortless, no pounding or choppy front movement. I hope to see the dog floating across the ground with head slightly forward, exhibiting the proper topline and outline, and all at a moderate speed.

What do you find the most challenging about the breed when you judge?

D.F. We have some really beautiful dogs in our breed, but I wish there were more. I suppose the biggest challenge is trying to stay focused when faced with a mediocre entry.

B.T. I really find nothing challenging about judging the breed. If you understand the function of the breed and learn what constitutes correct “Cocker” type vs. incorrect “Setter” type, you will reward the right dogs.

V.L. Without focusing too much on negatives I think that there are some common faults I see in the English Cocker in the ring today. Lack of a Cockery shape—too often we see the long necked, longer bodied, narrow, fine-boned dog with an over-angulated rear that races at great speed. This is not a Cocker. Too many of our dogs do not have the bone and rib-spring the standard calls for.

Dogs that are not in hard muscle and athletic form are challenging to judge. Dogs that are emulating the drag of the breed, the Field Spaniel with a longer body and different proportions are challenging to judge. Dogs with incorrect toplines,

high rears, dips and rises and pegged tails are challenging to judge. Narrow fronts and the resulting bad front movement are challenging to judge.

Keep coming back to look for the moderate, balanced, firm topline and happy temperament Spaniel that could do the job it was bred to do. Understand the differences between the Cocker, the English Springer and the English Cocker. You will have a much better appreciation of the three breeds if you are clear on their differences as well as their common heritage.

A.J. For many these days, seeing past the hairdressing is the biggest challenge. On both sides of the Atlantic showing this proud historic gundog breed is turning into a grooming contest, so to be a good judge you will need to use your head and your hands to see past the sometimes stunning coiffure. Trust your hands and your eye for balance and you’ll find the good ones!

D.M. I am not sure the challenges are that much different from most breeds, at least the Sporting breeds. There is a lot of variation of type. Sorting through a class of dogs where none look similar can be quite a challenge. I also find with our breed that they can look wonderful while stacked, and you see a dog that fits your mind’s eye for what you like and then they move. Toplines go off, the tail is down and the attitude may be less than “merry”. This breed is very intelligent and can decide not to show off their merits on any given day. When that happens, my advice is to choose the best “Cocker” not necessarily the fanciest mover. When you get both, that’s a good day!

And finally, from Anne Rogers Clark, second generation ECS breeder and ECSCA Past President...

A.C. In any breed, the whole dog is hung on its front end. How the neck is set, how its topline is, all go to the front.

Must have forechest out in front. We’re getting a lot of English Cockers whose fronts drop straight down, a so-called Terrier front where they’re laid back in shoulder, are short in forearm and their fronts are way out in front of them with no forechest—it’s totally incorrect for a Cocker. Got to have some forechest! ■

AT YOUR SERVICE

By Elizabeth Neff & Sandy LaFlamme

One of the most endearing traits of the English Cocker Spaniel is not how much we love them but how much they love us.

This breed does love to be worshiped but it is their love, loyalty and total devotion to their human that makes them so irresistible. This is why I tell people who are considering adding an English Cocker to their family that they are like potato chips—it is very difficult to just own one. They move in, take over, and we could never live without them again.

English Cockers do enjoy having a job, although they are not obsessed with it like other breeds. Some love to do agility, some love obedience, others have a great aptitude for tracking or hunting and even the best show dogs often exhibit a great aptitude for hunting and have a natural birdiness. The pet parakeet is never safe when an ECS shares their home.

One of the greatest jobs and most rewarding for dog and owner is Therapy work. The English Cocker is a naturally empathetic creature and there are countless cases of ECS Therapy dogs being able to bring the people they visit to a much happier place.

Megan Belle, a beautiful blue English Cocker owned by Stanley and Gerry Pajkos, is a big hit at Nursing Homes. She always appears in costume and the residents can't wait to see what her latest attire will be when she and her owner arrive for a visit. She brings great joy to the residents as a Certified Therapy Dog, a job she has been doing since she was just 18 months old.

One lovely black girl named Daphne specialized in Alzheimer's and Dementia patients. She was on the floor of a nursing home visiting the Dementia unit and the nurses asked her human to stop by to see a gentleman with MS who had slipped in to such a depression that he had not communicated for months. They lifted Daphne on



Courtesy of the Family Resource Center, Macdonough Elementary School, Middletown, CT.





Daphne's niece, Natalie, continues a family tradition.

to his bed and he reached up to pet her when tears began running down his face and he said, "You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen." His whole outlook was improved by this little dog and he could not wait for Sundays when "his Daphne" was coming to see him.

English Cockers visit hospitals, nursing homes, and especially love to visit children's hospitals. Beverly Craft, who visits Hospitals and Nursing Homes with her ECS, MeMe and Rita along with their "honorary ECS" Peach, is also a Tester/Observer for her local Therapy Dogs Inc. Beverly says that along with bringing joy to the residents Therapy work is truly rewarding for the dogs and owners and she highly encourages owners to give it a try.

ECSCA past Junior member Zena Brenner has been doing Therapy work with

her ECS Cruz since she was a High School student. They especially loved visiting the students in the local school districts Special Education classes. Zena is a perfect example of how getting kids involved in dogs through Junior Showmanship can lead to great things in life as Zena has been awarded multiple scholarships and is now on her way to Graduate School in Australia. We are all very proud of her success and continuing service to her community.

English Cocker Spaniels also make outstanding Reading Assistance Dogs. When a child is having problems with reading, and is reluctant to read out loud, the kind face and loving look of an English Cocker helps the child read to the dog with no trace of judgment. This often gives the child the confidence to eventually read out loud to their teacher and class. Robin



MeMe the ECS and her friend Peach entertaining a friend.

and Juno are two very special Reading Assistance Dogs who have been featured in their local newspapers for their service to the local students. The kids at Juno's school have even dedicated books to the library in Juno's name and Juno's owner brings special bookmarks and stickers with her photo on them which the kids love to receive.

There are also quite a few English Cockers who work with psychologists and therapists. Tucker, Myrtle, Annie and Sid all live with therapists and not only go to work with their humans but also have patients of their own. It turns out that English Cockers are very good at keeping secrets, and sharing something deeply painful with a canine therapist is the first step in the patient being able to share their pain with their human therapist.

English Cockers also have an affinity for working with children on the Autism Spectrum. Several ECS are constant companions and best friends to these children and their canine companions are invaluable to their communication with the world and in learning how to relate to another being.

To sum it all up, English Cocker Spaniels are truly captivating creatures and those of us that have the great pleasure of sharing our lives with them are among the luckiest people on earth. ■