

## TERRIER Group

character and carriage of an undocked tail. No Glen standard in the world has yet to deal with any of these issues. All in time. —Bruce Susman, New York, N.Y.; BLUEKAFKA@aol.com ♦



### Perfection = Type

Type is defined as something that perfectly represents, or in the best way, a class, a category, or a model.

The word *type* is used frequently, but often with different things in mind. It seems to be a lot like the standard-created years ago by and for people who understood what they meant—and what they didn't mean! The word *type* doesn't even appear in the standard. It is assumed that we all know that perfection equals type.

Also like the standard, the concept of type remains unchanged. It still refers to the daredevil's size, racy outline, wiry coat, and keen expression. These are the four essentials to true Irish Terrier type. Each contributes equally, and the lack in any one characteristic affects the type in a fatal way.

You might have a 19½-inch, 40-pound Irish with a nice head; an 18-inch Irish with light eyes and short legs; an Irish that is taller than it is long; or one of perfect outline with a flat, single coat. Each might be best in the ring when compared to the competition, so it wins—but it still doesn't meet the essentials that define type.

Type is the shorthand way to say that an Irish Terrier is the right size; possesses the correct outline; has a hard, wiry coat with dense undercoat; and has the requisite expression to do what it was bred to do. It is small enough to be swift and agile and to dart away from snapping quarry. It has the heart and lung functions to endure extensive physical exertion, has the nose and the eyes to find and the jaws to dispatch its foe. It has the brain to just stare down and size up those he meets along the way.

Even if you can't get your hands on that daredevil, you can assess type by observation. Look and compare what

you see to the image of the standard's correct size, outline, coat, and head-piece that you have in your mind. If you observe some but not all, you might have a perfectly nice Irish Terrier—but it is not the true type our standard calls for.

Just as there is only one standard, there is only one type. Dealing with its intricacies is not a new problem for enthusiasts, as James Watson pointed out in *The Dog Book*: "We saw one communication from an importer to the effect that the dog he was trying to sell was 'the new type that is doing all the winning on the other side.'"

"Relying on the representations regarding these dogs, good prices were paid for them, the purchasers not realizing that they did not have the correct thing until the next importation of the only genuine, correct type was received, when they realized that 'type' meant only the dog that was for sale, and varied as the dogs did."

It is our good fortune that type is something we can easily understand and apply, provided we truly appreciate our dogs and understand our standard. It is a concept we should be thinking about and talking about, but still recognizing that it is in short supply. —Robert Clyde and Marianne Kehoe, Plainfield, N.J.; m\_dkehoe@verizon.net ♦



### Kerry Blue Terriers



Guest columnist Tom Rogers is the president of the United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club. Tom is a tireless worker and supporter of the Kerry Blue Terrier, and has been involved in all aspects associated with the sport of dogs.

### Tail Docking

Proponents of tail docking are driven by misguided animal-rights groups around the world. It is a political movement, not a humanitarian concern based upon what is in the best interest of the dog. All tail-docked breeds face the possibility of the same legal restriction currently

existing in parts of Europe. We must understand the real facts of this issue and become actively involved in retaining our breed's standard and historic significance.

I evolved into dog events from a hunting background. Injuries to a Beagle's tail from tracking rabbits through briar thickets sometimes necessitated a partial amputation. This was necessary to prevent continued pain and injury to the dog.

While I respect the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), I disagree with their position in opposition to tail docking. It is difficult for me to believe any knowledgeable veterinarian, who understands the historical perspective of tail docking in terrier breeds, participated in this decision.

The AVMA seems to suggest tail docking is done for "cosmetic purposes" and ignores *why* those who developed tail-docked breeds did so. Historical references, paintings, and photos of the Kerry Blue Terrier dating back to the 1800s reflect the fact that their tails were docked; no doubt this was to save the dog pain and injury while performing its duties as a companion to Irish farmers.

The AVMA's arguments refer to "survey data," but they do not indicate who participated in the survey. They say tail docking is painful, but ignore scientific studies that refute their position. The AVMA ignored the Fritsch Report. In his letter to the German Kennel Club, Dr. R. Fritsch, leader of the Clinic of Veterinary Surgeons, Justus-Liebig University, made a well-reasoned position on the issue. (Read his entire letter at [uskbt.com/article.php/454](http://uskbt.com/article.php/454).) He cites both the Volkhof and Schmidker studies, which concluded that because of the incomplete development of the nervous system, "You therefore do not have to worry or fear that the dog will be made to suffer pain or psychological pain if the tail has been docked or the dew claws removed in the first few days of birth."

The anti-docking legislation introduced in New York (A. 7218) in April would make "Any person who shows or exhibits a dog, the tail of which has been cut, altered or operated ...