

TERRIER Group

things that I felt were interesting about the breed's background. Perhaps you already know them, but here they are. Enjoy.

Did you know that in early times, foxhunters would often carry not one but two Fox Terriers with them—a large one and a small one? This was in case the larger one of the two was unable to enter the narrow opening of the den.

Did you know the first show to feature Fox Terriers was in 1862, and had an entry of 20? Did you know at one time, Fox Terriers were the foremost show dogs in England? An 1871 show in Nottingham had 276 Smooth Fox Terriers entered, with 73 entries in a puppy class, 74 in the Open Dog class, and 109 in Open Bitches.

Did you know that the only canine to win Best in Show at Westminster three times was Ch. Warren Remedy, a Smooth Fox Terrier bitch?

Did you know that Belgrave Joe, born in 1868, was an important stud dog? In fact, most Smooth Fox Terrier lines go back to him. Fox Terriers of those days were rather coarse in their appearance, with thick necks and skulls, heavy ears, and short necks. Joe was never shown because one of his ears had been tampered with, but he was ahead of his time in type and style. He had a long, narrow head and great shoulders, legs, feet, and eyes—just about everything breeders felt was needed to upgrade their stock.

In doing my research I also learned that a few handlers and breeders in those early days did things to alter their dog's appearance, even cutting the edges off of ears (such as happened to Joe), fixing tails, and so on. This was not condoned then, as it is not now.

I have always felt that everyone should research the breed they are involved in, the better to understand it and know its whys and wherefores. One way to start is to begin a pedigree search. By the time you have gone back a few generations, referring to books and paperwork, you will have come across a number of interesting things as well as learning how the old-timers developed their lines. Give it a try. I think you will really get a lot out of it.

—Billie Lou Robison, Sun Valley, Nev.;
Raybillfox@aol.com ♦



Glen of Imaal Terriers

Tale of the Tail

These days there's a lot of discussion about tails among fanciers of the docked breeds. In our breed the discussion is particularly vibrant, and the dialogue is not confined to breeders and fanciers. Judges have also been asking several good questions on the subject, particularly on one point.

The breed standard for the Glen contains exactly three sentences about the tail. They are:

Docked to approximately half-length, in balance with the overall dog and long enough to allow a good handhold. Strong at root, well set on and carried gaily. Dogs with undocked tails not to be penalized.

The first sentence is fairly straightforward. Most folks know that the tails of many earthdogs are docked, enabling us to grab onto the dog at the strong end of the tail—near the root—and yank the creature out of the hole. Grabbing onto an undocked tail, one runs the risk of grabbing the weaker, tapered end of the tail and causing serious damage.

The second sentence contains one word that we inherited from the Irish standard that might confuse: *gaily*. To many, this might suggest a gay tail, one that is snapped over the back. No. Here the word is used as the adverb it is and simply means that the tail is carried high and that it is responsive. The happy Glen will carry its tail somewhere between noon and two o'clock.

The third sentence is the most widely discussed and the one about which some judges have inquired. Given the international climate regarding docking, and the ongoing need to import undocked dogs for the sake of the gene pool, the undocked tail should not be penalized in the show ring.

The language in the standard does beg the question, though, "What does an undocked tail look like, and how is it carried?" At this time, no Glen standard in the world contains a single word regarding the characteristics of the undocked tail, which can be extremely

variable in its expression in the breed. While consensus among breeders still has a way to go, there seems to be a growing degree of agreement that the desirable undocked tail should be similar to that of the Dandie Dinmont, gently curved like a scimitar, but that the carriage should not be Dandie-like but rather as it is for the docked tail of a Glen, somewhere between noon and two o'clock.

This is also the most recently revised sentence in our standard. Prior to AKC recognition for the breed, the sentence read, *Imported dogs with undocked tails not to be penalized*. This presented a problem for judges, obviously; except for exhibits in the American Bred class, a judge should not know the place of birth of any dog. So, we revised the sentence to the current language in 2004 by dropping the word *imported*. Judges, take note: If the Glen of Imaal standard in your binder contains the words *imported dogs* in the language regarding tails, you do not have the most recent edition of our standard. Unfortunately, the effective date for the standard, September 2001 (appearing after the last sentence of the standard), did not change for this one-word revision, so one must check the actual language. —Bruce Sussman, New York, N.Y.; BLUEKAFKA@aol.com ♦



Irish Terriers

Let's Be Clear PART TWO

In our last column we addressed the meaning of the word *type*. In this column we tackle yet another concept frequently referred to: *soundness*. Neither term is referenced in the Irish Terrier standard, yet each embraces the notion of the totality of the ideal Irish Terrier. *Type*, *sound*, and *soundness* are all words frequently used by dog people, including Irish Terrier enthusiasts, in describing particular dogs.

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* (Second College Edition), *sound* is an adjective conveying "good condition; healthy, free from moral defect, upright; compatible with an

acceptable point of view." (The Irish Terrier standard qualifies as an "acceptable point of view.") *Sound* is intended to describe a whole—not just a piece here and there. While it is true that a particular aspect can be sound, the term is more properly used, especially in dog talk, to comment on the whole. It is another way to say that form follows function, that a particular Irish Terrier can perform the breed's original tasks.

Yet *sound* is commonly used to single out a specific element—most frequently, movement. It is simply said, "That dog is sound." Maybe the speaker knows what he means, so he doesn't think it necessary to say which particular aspect he finds to be sound, but this does a disservice to those who may be influenced and misled by the comment. Particular aspects may be sound without the whole dog being sound. Sound parts are nice, but they do not necessarily measure up to a completely sound whole. Perhaps the movement is sound, but what about the rest of the dog? How about layback of shoulder, headpiece, topline and tail-set, coat, feet, and proportion?

Maybe the single most critical aspect—temperament—is not sound. A handsome Irish Terrier that moves athletically, with grace and reach, but greets the judge with a down-turned tail can hardly be considered sound; an Irish Terrier must display moxie and engagement and appear full of fire and life. This lively personality is key to our standard, and it cannot take a back seat to any other attribute that the standard calls for.

Sound means properly sized (May 2008 GAZETTE); a racy outline, fairly sprung rib, moderate length of back, and strong topline, with an even tail-set (August 2008 GAZETTE); a well-balanced headpiece (November 2008 GAZETTE); keen expression (February 2009 GAZETTE); a rugged coat with plenty of undercoat (May 2009 GAZETTE); and so on. The list is long and demanding. It culminates in a statement that says, *the Irish Terrier is more than the sum of its parts.*

And so it is with "soundness"—it's a lot more than movement.

In prior columns (as referenced above), we have emphasized the relationship of the various parts of the Irish Terrier to the whole, concluding each time that the "all of a piece" notation in

our standard should be the overriding concern of all Irish Terrier breeders, exhibitors, and—let's not forget—judges.

—Robert Clyde and Marianne Kehoe,
Plainfield, N.J.; m_dkehoe@verizon.net ♦



Kerry Blue Terriers



Are You Kennel Blind?

How do you know if you are kennel blind? Well, if you think that every dog you own is perfect, and that the dogs owned by others are never as good as yours, you probably are.

Now, I am not saying that you should not love and admire all the positive traits of the dog that you bring home. The danger is if you cannot find *anything* positive about anyone else's dog. If you cannot be objective enough to see your own dog's weaknesses or flaws, how can you move forward in terms of the dogs you may own in the future? If you look around the ring and cannot honestly give credit to other good representatives of the breed, then you will find it difficult to ever learn from others. You will be at a standstill.

You should know your competition. Know what makes them stand out or excel in their particular endeavor, and learn to identify what was done to bring the dog success. If you cannot honestly assess the dogs in the ring, that task may be impossible. A basic understanding of the rules and regulations, a thorough knowledge of your breed's standard, and feedback from experienced owners are fundamental requirements to moving forward in the sport of dogs.

Everyone has something to learn, and if you think you know it all, you are at a dead end. Maybe it is how one handler loose-leads a dog that might otherwise throw his front. Another trainer always has dogs that appear to enjoy going through their obedience or agility commands. How does one owner groom his dog's neck so that it blends perfectly into its back, or groom the head so it looks long and smooth? Another highlights her dog's movement by doing something as simple as making sure that her clothes do not get

in the way of the dog and are not a distraction to the judge.

I believe you should be the toughest critic of your own dogs, your own training techniques, your own grooming, and your own breeding practices. To avoid rationalizing your way through many of the assessment issues, you may need to rely on the input of experienced dog owners and breeders who are not afraid to be honest with you. You must be willing to accept their sincere analysis. Criticism is never easy to endure, but if it is constructive, it is appreciated in the long run.

Breeders often ask other experienced owners to evaluate their puppies in terms of both conformation and temperament. Their honest assessment helps the breeder to place the pups in the most appropriate new homes. Welcoming that type of advice is a great initial way to avoid the trap of being kennel blind. Why should inviting the help of other knowledgeable dog people stop there?

The feedback you receive from experienced owners and trainers should not end with the evaluation of puppies, for it is with continued honest and frank dialogue that improvements in the breed are made. It is with unprejudiced assessment of our dogs and the dogs owned by others that *everyone's* achievements can be appreciated. —Carol Kearney, Somers, N.Y.; heritagekerry@optonline.net ♦



Lakeland Terriers

It's All About (the Color of) Hair PART THREE

Lakelands come in a greater variety of colors than any other terrier, except perhaps the Cairn. A cause of frequent confusion is the relationship between coat quality and color.

A useful rule of thumb says that *shiny, clear, bright* (not the same as *dark*) color goes with a quality coat. It is also true that the soft undercoat is usually, but not always, lighter in color than the harsh topcoat. This is why a clipped coat is not only softer in texture but lighter in color.