

THE AMERICAN CHESAPEAKE CLUB PRESENTS

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY RETRIEVER



This guide was produced by the American Chesapeake Club to give a broader, more detailed understanding of the breed and its standard for the education of judges, breeders and fanciers.

All text in italics is explanatory wording.

The cooperation and assistance of members of the ACC and fanciers in the production of this presentation was greatly appreciated.

2018 Illustrated Guide Evaluation Committee - Chair, Betsy Horn Humer - Ron Anderson, Charlene Cordiero, and Linda Harger

To accept the 2018 Illustrated Guide Revision. Motion 18:43 Approved 09/22/2018

2012 Guide Committee - Chair, Dyane Baldwin - Audrey Austin, Jo Ann Colvin, Sally Diess, Nat Horn and Joanne Silver

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Equally proficient on land and in the water, the Chesapeake Bay Retriever was developed along the Chesapeake Bay to hunt waterfowl under the most adverse weather and water conditions, often having to break ice during the course of many strenuous multiple retrieves. Frequently the Chesapeake must face wind, tide and long cold swims in its work.



The breed's characteristics are specifically suited to enable the Chesapeake to function with ease, efficiency and endurance. In head, the Chesapeake's skull is broad and round with medium stop. The jaws should be of sufficient length and strength to carry large game birds with an easy, tender hold.

The double coat consists of a short, harsh, wavy outer coat and, a dense fine wooly undercoat containing an abundance of natural oil and is ideally suited for the icy, rugged conditions of weather the Chesapeake often works in.



In body, the Chesapeake is a strong, well-balanced, powerfully-built animal of moderate size and medium length in body and leg, deep and wide in chest, the shoulders built with full liberty of movement, and with no tendency to weakness in any feature, particularly the rear. The power though should not be at the expense of agility and stamina. Size and substance should not be excessive as this is a working retriever of an active nature.



Distinctive features include eyes that are very clear, of yellowish or amber hue, hindquarters as high or a trifle higher than the shoulders, and a double coat which tends to wave on the shoulders, neck, back and loins only.

The Chesapeake is valued for its bright and happy disposition, intelligence, quiet good sense, and affectionate protective nature. Extreme shyness or extreme aggressive tendencies are not desirable in the breed either as a gun dog or companion.



SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

SIZE

Height- Males should measure 23 to 26 inches; females should measure 21 to 24 inches.

Oversized or undersized animals are to be severely penalized.

Weight- Males should weigh 65 to 80 pounds; females should weigh 55 to 70 pounds.



SIZE

Under the height section, to be severely penalized means the dog's height must be considered a serious fault. This penalty is assessed on males under 23 inches and over 26 inches; females under 21 inches and over 24 inches. There may be instances when the dog's virtues of conformation, coat, head and movement are superior to the rest of the competition. In this circumstance, these merits should outweigh the height penalty. Breeders must take care in their overall breeding program to select for dogs in the listed size ranges.

In regard to weight, please note that the severe penalty is assessed only on the height range. While some Chesapeakes' will fall within both the size and weight range for their sex, dogs and bitches at the higher limits of the height range will most likely exceed the suggested weight limits. What is most important to keep in mind is the proportional look created by both the size and weight of the dog. The dog should not appear excessive (too much bone or substance) as the breed is never ponderous and clumsy but athletic and agile.

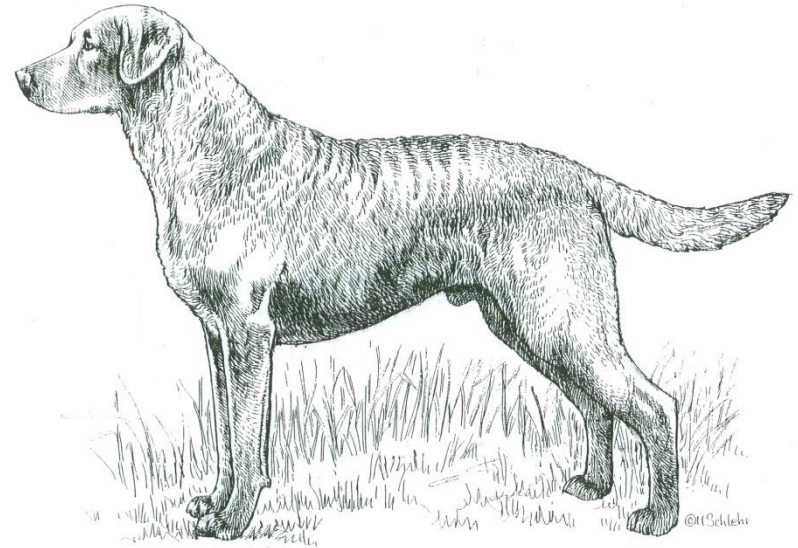
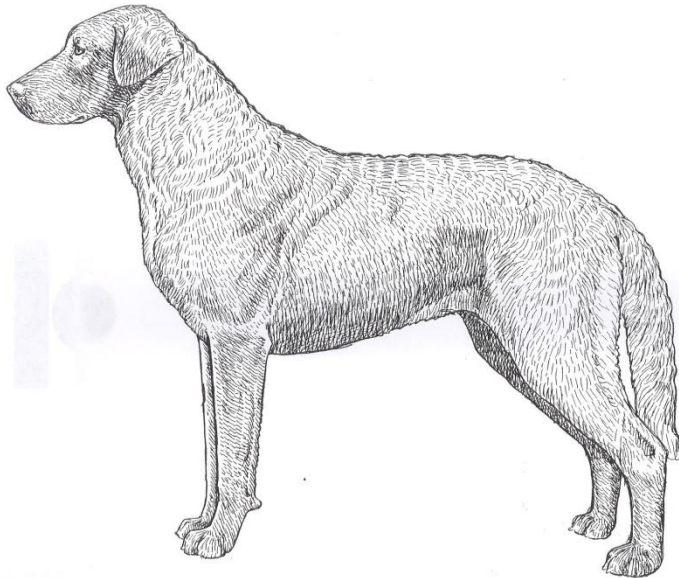
Since our size range is considerable, moderate means moderate for the size of the dog. You are not comparing sizes to each other but the moderation of an individual dog. The breed has a large size range to encompass all the different hunting conditions in which a Chesapeake might work.



SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

PROPORTION-SUBSTANCE

Proportion- Height from the top of the shoulder blades to the ground should be slightly less than the body length from the breastbone to the point of buttocks. Depth of body should extend at least to the elbow. Shoulder to elbow and elbow to ground should be equal. **Dog on left** has the *minimum depth of body-just to the elbow*; **Dog on right** has *depth of body below the elbow*.
The dogs below also illustrate slightly different “styles” of type.



PROPORTION and SUBSTANCE

*When viewing the Chesapeake from the side, the breed should appear just off square in body height to body length proportions. It is important to note the words “**at least to the elbow**” in the description of body depth proportions. Some dogs with the deep and wide chests described in the standard will have depth of chest below the elbow. This may at first glance make them appear shorter in leg length, so care must be taken to gauge these proportions carefully- top of shoulder blade to elbow; elbow to ground. The Chesapeake is not measured to the brisket, but as noted to the elbow, when determining length of leg.*

The dogs below ALL show correct proportions and substance within the style variations of the breed.



PROPORTION & SUBSTANCE

The outline of the Chesapeake should not be low on leg or lacking in tuck-up in the flank area. It should not have substance beyond that of a good sporting dog and should not approach the look of some of the heavier working breeds.

The dogs below illustrate again the correct proportions for the breed within the variations in style for the breed. Note all have sufficient length of leg (keeping in mind the dog's size) as required in the standard; substance that is balanced with their size and bone.



PROPORTIONS & SUBSTANCE

Proportions that give the dog the appearance of being long in body and/or short in leg (with due consideration to the chest depth as mentioned previously); high on leg (depth of body from shoulder to elbow less than from elbow to the ground) or square (body length and height from shoulder to ground equal) are all incorrect and should be faulted.

Left to Right- too short on leg & long in length; high on leg-not enough substance; square-not enough substance .

Lower-not enough substance.



HEAD

The Chesapeake Bay Retriever should have an intelligent expression. Eyes are to be medium large, very clear, of yellowish or amber color and wide apart. Ears are to be small, set well up on the head, hanging loosely, and of medium leather. Skull is broad and round with a medium stop. Nose is medium short. Muzzle is approximately the same length as the skull, tapered, pointed but not sharp. Lips are thin, not pendulous.



HEAD

The head is clean. The ears are triangularly shaped, small, and are set high on above the eye level on a skull which rounds from ear to ear. Ear leather should not be too thin or too thick with the ear hanging loosely and forward. The color of the eye is specified as of yellowish or amber. Amber takes in darker shades of yellow which include orange, gold, and light brownish shades of yellow.



HEAD

The standard provides specific head measurements for guidance regarding width of top skull, width of muzzle below eyes, width between eyes and length of head. The proportions described by these measurements give an understanding of the head components. The overall size of the dog will affect exact measurements but as long as these proportions are maintained, the head is correct.

*Width of top skull just below set of ears and width at muzzle below eyes should be **2:1**
Both dogs below show the correct proportion of skull width to width at muzzle below eyes.*



HEAD Historic



The dog on the left is a Chesapeake from the 1890's; the dog on the right is the original Newfoundland.

Note the differences-the Chesapeake has a longer muzzle length, the stop is not as pronounced and the skull rounds from ear to ear over the top (not from the stop to the occiput).

The amount of length of muzzle, proper stop and rounding from ear to ear over the skull contributes to breed head type that distinguishes the Chesapeake from the other retrievers and its Newfoundland ancestor.

HEAD Function



While the Chesapeake is not a head breed per se, correct shape and length of muzzle, thin lips and small ears set high are all important to its function.

The dogs above illustrate how length of muzzle and thin lips are important for retrieving birds, while a small high ear keeps the ear canal out of the water.

HEAD

Muzzle Length and Shape



DOG A



Dog A

CORRECT-Muzzle length is approximately equal from nose to stop; stop to occiput. The muzzle shape is pointed but not sharp.



DOG B



Dog B

FAULT-Muzzle length is too short from nose to stop in comparison to length of skull from stop to occiput. Square shape. Topskull also rounds from stop to occiput.



DOG C



DOG D

Dog C

CORRECT- Muzzle pointed but not sharp.

Dog D

FAULT-Muzzle square.

HEAD Stop and Lips



DOG A

DOG A-*The stop is correct and the skull rounds from ear to ear.*

DOG B-*The stop is much too pronounced and the skull is domed-rounding from stop to occiput.*



DOG B

DOG C-*Correct ear set, shape, leather and size; correct amount of lip.*



DOG C

DOG D-*Ears set too low, too long, leather is heavy and the lip is excessive.*



DOG D

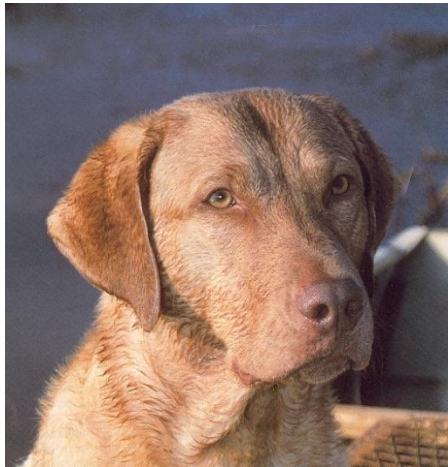
All heads are males-a small amount of lip on a male (as in A and C) is acceptable.

HEAD

More examples of correct heads-front on



*Three various **female** heads **top**; three various **male** heads **bottom***



HEAD

And More Examples-Side View



Various heads on bitches-all correct



Various heads on males-all correct

HEAD BITE



Scissors



Level

Bite- Scissors is preferred, but a level bite is acceptable.

*The standard calls for scissors or level bite.
Teeth overshot or undershot are a disqualification. The standard does not mention full dentition. Examination for full dentition is not required.*

NECK

Neck should be of medium length with a strong, muscular appearance, tapering to the shoulders.

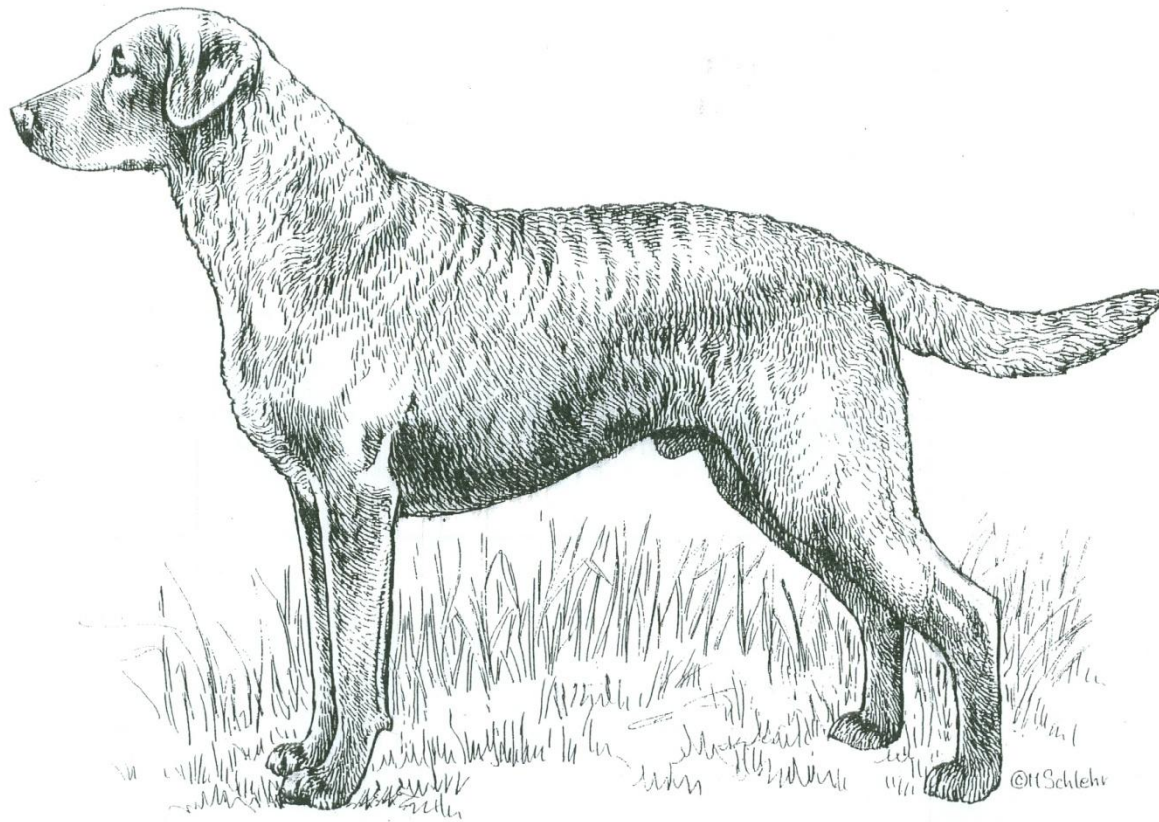
There should be sufficient length of neck to allow the dog to pick up and carry large game birds easily.



BODY

Body is of medium length, neither cobby nor roached, but rather approaching hollowness from underneath as the flanks should be well tucked up. Back should be short, well coupled and powerful.

Chest should be strong, deep and wide. Rib cage barrel round and deep.



BODY

When viewed from the front, the chest should look muscular with width and depth. Elbows should not be forced out nor should there be a gap between the chest wall and the foreleg. Viewed from the side, the chest should reach **at least** to the elbow, if not below, giving plenty of room for heart and lungs. There should be some forechest for ice breaking ability but it should not be overly prominent.

Forechest alone **without depth, fill of chest and sloping shoulders** is not correct conformation.

Dog on left shows correct width and depth of chest with no gaps at the elbows; **Dogs on right** show acceptable amount of forechest and chest depth below the elbow.



BODY

The tucked up look in the flank of a Chesapeake is a distinctive look created by the combination of a deep chest and well-sprung ribs. This tuck is part of the flexibility that gives the dog the athleticism needed for leaping into the water and the ability to make quick turns. Feel for the tuck up when examining the dog. Ribs are barrel shaped for buoyancy in the water and are critical for swimming in rough conditions.

The dogs below show the correct “underline” for the breed.

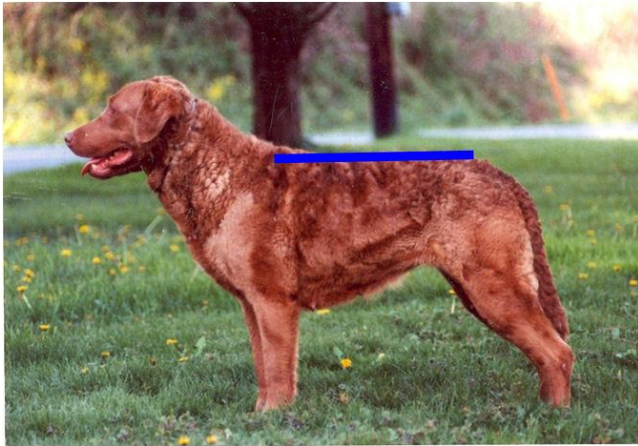


TOPLINE

Topline should show the hindquarters to be as high as or a trifle higher than the shoulders.

The Chesapeake Bay Retriever's topline is one of the most misunderstood and at the same time, an extremely important feature of the breed. Neither one top-line is to be preferred over the other. As illustrated by the dogs below, a line is drawn from the shoulders to hindquarters, the topline should be either level or show a gradual slight rise to the rear. There should not be a dip in the back. An exaggerated rise to the rear hinders the dog's forward movement and restricts the free motion of the hind legs - affecting the dog's reach and drive.

Dog on left - level or as high as shoulders; **Dog on right** – trifle higher rise to the rear.



LEGS

Front legs should be medium length, showing good bone and muscle. Pasterns slightly bent and of medium length. The front legs should appear straight when viewed from front or rear. Dewclaws on the forelegs may be removed. Rear legs should be medium length and straight, showing good bone and muscle. The hind legs should look straight when viewed from the front or rear. Dewclaws, if any, must be removed from the hind legs.

Dewclaws on the hind legs are a disqualification.



TAIL

Tail of medium length; medium heavy at base. The tail should be straight or slightly curved and should not curl over back or side kink.



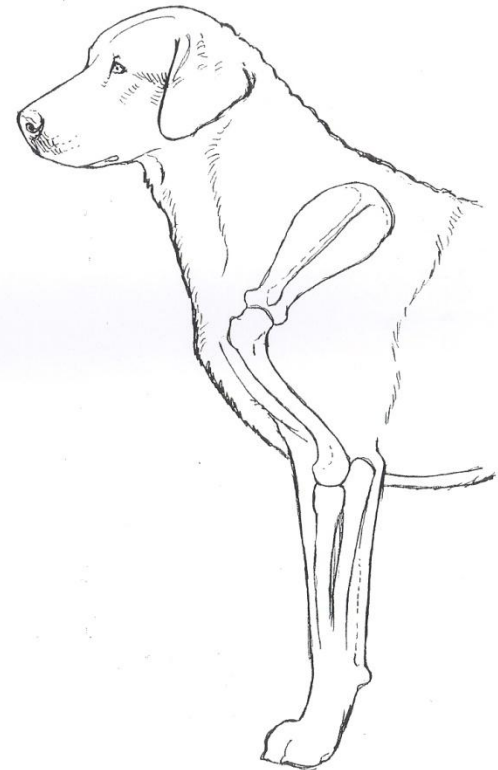
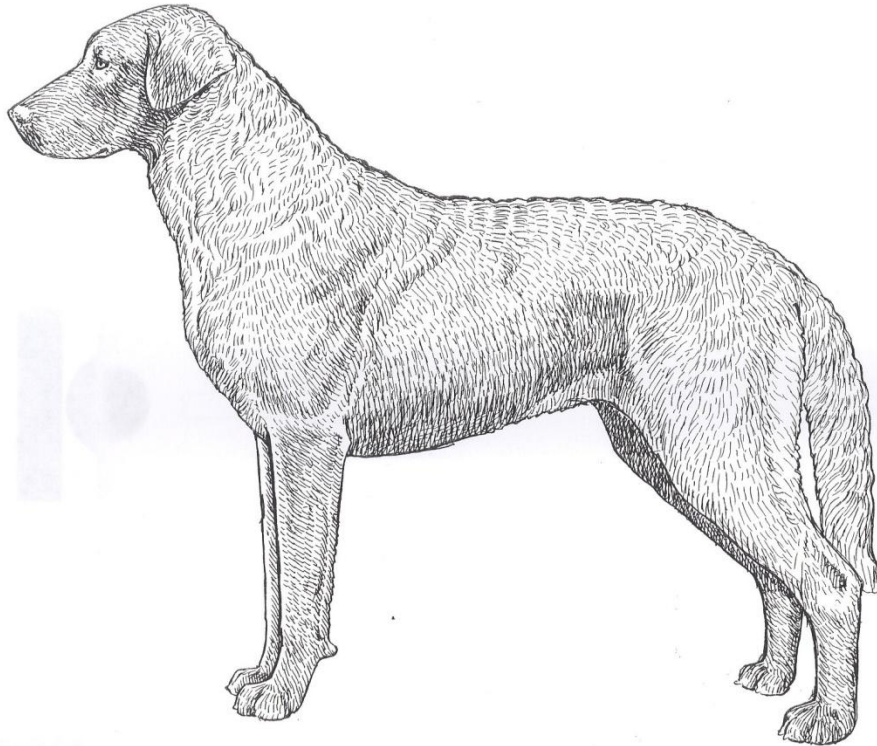
The tail length should be in proportion to the size of the dog and should appear balanced to the overall dog as well. The tail is often carried high when the dog is excited and down when relaxed.



The tip of the tail may curl over slightly, but the tail, even in this situation should not curl over on itself, or touch the back.

FOREQUARTERS

There should be no tendency to weakness in the forequarters. Shoulders should be sloping with full liberty of action, plenty of power and without restrictions of movement. *The shoulder blade and upper arm are approximately equal in length.*

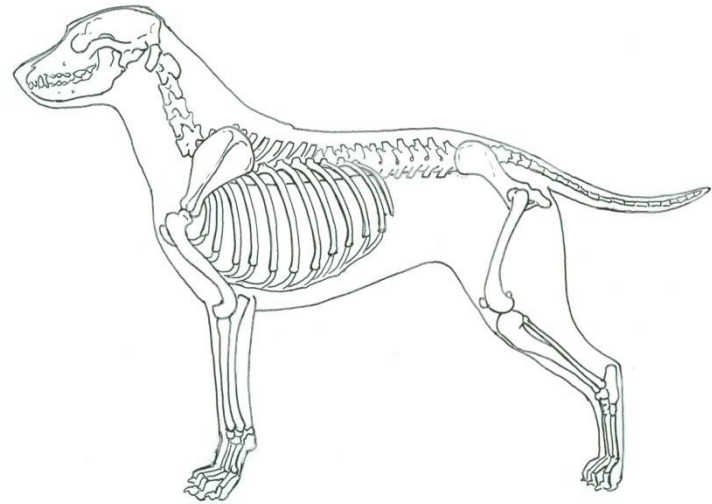


HINDQUARTERS

Good hindquarters are essential. They should have fully as much power as the forequarters. There should be no tendency to weakness in the hindquarters. Hindquarters should be especially powerful to supply the driving power for swimming. Stifles should be well angulated. The distance from the hock to ground should be of medium length.



HINDQUARTERS



The hindquarters of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever must be in balance with the forequarters. The angles in the joints of both fore and hindquarters should be nearly equal. However, this balance must be achieved by the virtues of sloping shoulders and well-bent stifles.

FEET

Well webbed hare feet should be of good size with toes well rounded and close.



Feet on the Chesapeake are well webbed and large for swimming. The foot shape is a hare foot, with the two middle toes longer than the two outside toes. The toes are close, with well-rounded ends of the toes. In no case should the foot be widely splayed or flat. Pasterns are slightly bent and of medium length.



COAT

Coat should be thick and short, nowhere over 1 and a half (1½) inches long, with a dense fine wooly undercoat. Hair on the face and legs should be very short and straight with a tendency to wave on the shoulders, neck, back and loins only. Moderate feathering on rear of hindquarters and tail is permissible. The texture of the Chesapeake's coat is very important, as the Chesapeake is used for hunting under all sorts of adverse weather conditions, often working in ice and snow.



The oil in the harsh outer coat and wooly undercoat is of extreme value in preventing the cold water from reaching the Chesapeake's skin and aids in quick drying. A Chesapeake's coat should resist water in the same way that a duck's feathers do. When the Chesapeake leaves the water and shakes, the coat should not hold water at all, being merely moist.

COAT



The length of coat varies from ½ inch to 1 ½ inches and this can create quite a difference in the appearance of the coat.

Photo on LEFT- is a 1 ½ coat.



Photo on RIGHT is a ½ coat.



BOTH coats are correct as both are double coated and dense. You do not see the skin on either of these dogs.



COAT

The predominate and defining feature of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever is the distinctive, oily double coat. The wave in the coat varies from a loose wave to a tight, close wave from neck to tail. The waving can also take on a kinky appearance. **No one coat variation is preferred.** Coats should also have a natural oil which produces a slight oily feel to the coat. The following photos show some the acceptable variations in coat waving styles.

There are two coat disqualifications:

Coat curly or with a tendency to curl all over the body.

Feathering on tail or legs over 1 3/4 inches long.

A further detailed explanation of these coat disqualifications can be found under the section Disqualifications.



COAT



The waving tendency is not restricted just to the top of the shoulders, back of the neck, or the top of the back and loins. A coat can show a tendency to wave on the complete shoulder and neck assemblies and to a midpoint on side of the back and side of the loins. Or, it can be just on the top of neck, shoulders, back and loin in all cases the coat must be thick and short, showing evidence of a double coat.

COAT

Even though the waving patterns vary, all of these coats styles meet the standard. They have undercoat & texture.



COAT



Again, though the waving patterns vary, both of these dogs' coat styles meet the standard. No one coat variation is preferred.



The main requirements of coat are a dense undercoat, harsh texture and oil.

COLOR

The color of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever must be nearly that of his working surroundings as possible. Any color of brown, sedge or deadgrass is acceptable, **self-colored Chesapeakes being preferred. One color is not to be preferred over another.**



COLOR

"Self color is defined as of one color all over, with or without lighter or darker shadings of the same color. Three basic colors are generally seen in the breed: Brown which includes all shades from a light cocoa to a deep bittersweet chocolate color; sedge which varies from a reddish yellow through a bright red to chestnut shades; deadgrass which takes in all shades of deadgrass, varying from a faded tan to a dull straw color. Historic records show that some of the deadgrass shades can be very light, almost white in appearance, while darker deadgrass colors can include diluted shades of brown..."



Left to Right- All these dogs are “self-colored” – brown, sedge and deadgrass. Deeper tones on ears and muzzles for the sedge and deadgrass colors are normal and acceptable.

COLOR

Right - *The range of color in the Chesapeake. These dogs illustrate but a few of the shades of brown, sedge and deadgrass in the breed.*



COLOR

Other variations are acceptable because they are **“any color of brown, sedge or deadgrass...”** Here are other patterns which are acceptable. You may see “masking on the top skull, striping effect of light and dark through the body and on the legs, distinct and indistinct saddle markings, agouti coloring and tan points. While these patterns are not preferred, they should not be disqualified.” Other qualities important to function should be considered when judging.



Left-masking and collar marking; Upper Right-stripe markings; Lower Right-tan point markings.

COLOR - WHITE MARKINGS

A white spot on the breast, belly, toes, or back of the foot (immediately above the large pad) is permissible, but the smaller the spot the better, solid colored preferred.

The color of the coat and its texture must be given every consideration when judging on the bench or in the ring. Honorable scars are not to be penalized.



COLOR

A correct coat and its texture and the physical qualities of the dog are more important to its function than the color of the coat. As long as color is an acceptable color, color should be a minor consideration when evaluating the breed.



GAIT

The gait should be smooth, free and effortless, giving the impression of great power and strength. When viewed from the side, there should be good reach with no restrictions of movement in front and plenty of drive in the rear, with good flexion of the stifle and hock joints.

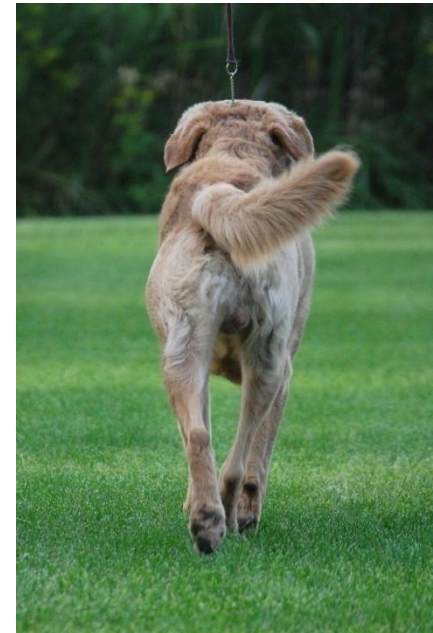


*The Chesapeake Bay Retriever, while primarily a water dog, is also capable of retrieving birds all day on land as well. The overall picture in motion should be one of smooth power, with the dog traveling effortlessly. The trot seen in the ring is a similar movement to that which the dog uses in swimming. To be efficient on land and in the water, the dog must have good reach in the front with equal drive in the rear without restrictions. **The dog should also have back reach of the front leg - the leg should be pulled back under the body equally as far as its front reach.** A strut, a fancy front foot-raising gait or reaching only from the elbow, while showy in the ring, is a detriment to a working dog particularly for swimming. Without this back reach of the foreleg, the dog will tire quickly when swimming. When viewed from the side, the rear drive should not show any signs of sickle hocks or straight stifles. Sickle hocks decrease the efficiency of the rear movement as they do not allow good flexion of the hock joint as required in the standard. By the same token, straight stifles, too, do not allow good flexion of the stifle joint. Both these structural faults restrict the rear movement.*

GAIT

Coming at you, there should be no signs of elbows being out. When the Chesapeake is moving away from you, there should be no sign of cow-hocking from the rear. As speed increases, the feet tend to converge toward a center line of gravity.

The picture on the side and coming and going should be one of smooth, effortless power.



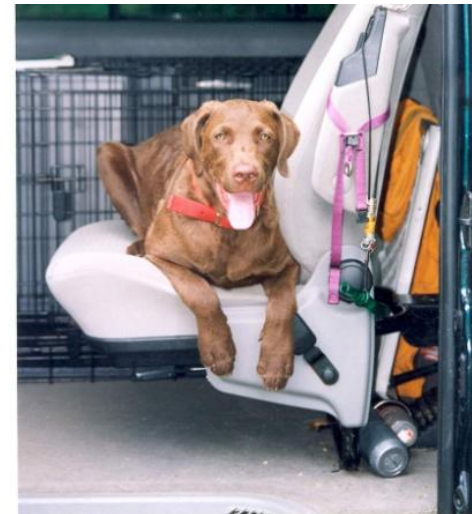
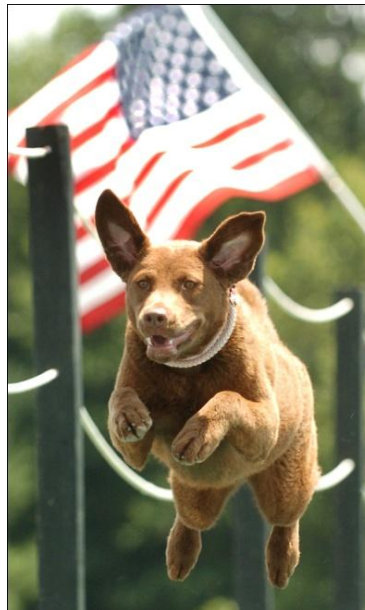
GAIT



"Movement should be evaluated by giving every consideration to the entire view of side gait and down and back".

TEMPERAMENT

The Chesapeake Bay Retriever should show a bright and happy disposition with an intelligent expression. Courage, willingness to work, alertness, nose, intelligence, love of water, general quality and most of all, disposition should be given primary consideration in the selection and breeding of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever.



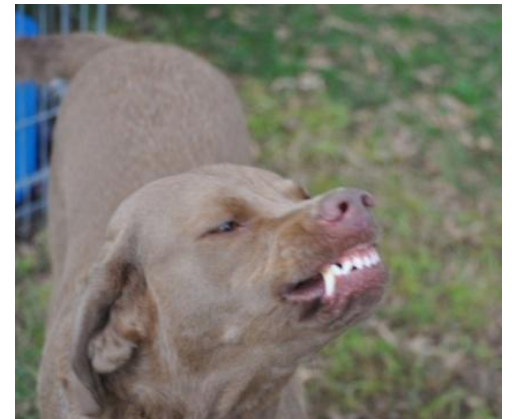
TEMPERAMENT

The breed has an inherent quality of self-respect and their own worth. They are intensely affectionate, sensitive and perceptive. They know when they are liked and when they are not and respond in kind. While reserved and cautious with strangers, Chesapeakes who have been mentally as well as physically prepared for the show ring, should show they are willing to work in the ring with some of the keenness and alertness they show in the field. When a Chesapeake perks up his ears and cocks his head a bit in response to a noise, voice or anticipation as a reward, one can't help but wonder at the intellect behind those amber eyes waiting to be channeled through training. The Chesapeake would love to hunt down crippled birds in heavy cover or rough water.



TEMPERAMENT

They also “smile”. Smiling or snickering is a grin that a Chesapeake uses in a variety of situations. It is a friendly gesture and should never be mistaken as a snarl. His courageousness is best shown when needed to protect his family and property.



DISQUALIFICATIONS

1. Specimens lacking in breed characteristics.
2. Teeth overshot or undershot.
3. Dewclaws on the hind legs.
4. Coat curly or with a tendency to curl all over the body.
5. Feathering on the tail or legs over 1 3/4 inches long.
6. Black colored.
7. White on any part of the body except breast, belly, toes or back of feet.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

DQ #1 Specimens lacking in breed characteristics.

Please Note- A specimen that lacks in breed characteristics is one that lacks **several characteristics**. A Chesapeake that falls under this DQ will highly resemble another breed or a mongrel with traits such as semi-prick ears, smooth single coat, ring tail, a houndy dewlap, or misaligned teeth to cite a few. Again, the dog would have to have several off traits to be disqualified. For specimens lacking merit but clearly appearing like the Chesapeake breed, it is appropriate to withhold a ribbon. "Lack of merit" is used in all breeds as an excusal and is not as severe as a DQ.

DQ#2 Teeth overshot or undershot

Chesapeakes love to chew rocks, logs, etc. and lose teeth because of this. The standard makes NO penalty for missing teeth. However, you should be able to determine if the bite is correct. If so many teeth are missing that you can't determine bite to your satisfaction, please weigh that before awarding points.

DQ#3 Dewclaws on the hind legs

You are unlikely to encounter a dog with dewclaws on their hind legs as they are removed shortly after birth. Scarring evidence from dewclaw removal should not be cause for any penalty.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

DQ#4 Coat curly or with a tendency to curl all over the body.

Since the standard allows a coat length up to 1 ½ inches (coat should be thick and short, nowhere over 1 1/2 inches long) and does not stipulate what type of wave is best, the waving tendency varies-some tighter and some looser. A curly coat is tight curly ringlets like the Curly-Coated retriever. At times **portions** of a good coat can have a tendency to be curly (but not a complete ringlet) but it is **only** a disqualification if this tendency occurs all over the body.

The standard specifies that hair on face and legs should be very short and straight with a tendency to wave on the shoulders, neck back and loins only

A tendency to curl or a curly coat on other areas that could include the lower legs or below the mid-point of the flanks **indicates all over the body and should be disqualified**. See photo (right)



DISQUALIFICATIONS

DQ# 5 Feathering on the tail or legs over 1 3/4 inches long

Feathering refers here to back of rear legs or pantaloons. Hair should not be straightened out to assess length. Dogs out of coat will have longer appearing feathering on tail due to the fill of undercoat missing.

DQ# 6 Black Colored

Black Colored means black all over which would include a black nose. At times, Chesapeakes may have darker hair in their coat especially on their tail. Unless the dog has a black nose, those hairs are just very dark brown. Do not disqualify the dogs for these darker hairs.

DQ# 7 White on any part of the body except breast, belly, toes or back of the feet

White should be viewed in terms of spots. White hairs due to aging or from scars should not be faulted. As stated in the standard, honorable scars are not to be penalized. Pre-mature graying as seen on the face below should not be penalized.

The anatomical definition of foot, chest and belly should be used when determining if the white is permissible.



SCALE OF POINTS

Scale of Points

The question of coat and general type of balance takes precedence over any scoring table which could be drawn up. The Chesapeake should be well proportioned, an animal with a good coat and well balanced in other points being preferable to one excelling in some but weak in others.

Positive Scale of Points

Head, including lips, ears and eyes	16
Neck	04
Shoulders and Body	12
Hindquarters and Stifles	12
Elbows, Legs and Feet	12
Color	04
Stern and Tail	10
Coat and Texture	18
General Conformation	12
Total	100

APPROXIMATE MEASUREMENTS INCHES

Length head, nose to occiput	9 1/2 to 10
Girth at ears	20 to 21
Muzzle below eyes	10 to 10 1/2
Length of ears	4 1/2 to 5
Width between eyes	2 1/2 to 2 3/4
Girth neck close to shoulder	20 to 22
Girth at flank	24 to 25
Length from occiput to tail base	34 to 35
Girth forearms at shoulders	10 to 10 1/2
Girth upper thigh	19 to 20
From root to root of ear over skull	5 to 6
Occiput to top shoulder blades	9 to 9 1/2
From elbow to elbow over the shoulders	25 to 26

APPROVED: NOVEMBER 9, 1993

EFFECTIVE: DECEMBER 31, 1993

ADDENDUM

The following information is intended to supplement the explanations given in the preceding slides. While not official parts of the standard, they provide further insight into the breed ; address areas not specifically covered in the body of the standard and provide a reading list for further research.

BRIEF HISTORY

While the breed's roots can be traced to Sailor and Canton - two Newfoundlands in the oft told story of the breed's beginnings - infusion of various hound and Irish Water Spaniel blood certainly played a part in the Chesapeake's development.

Whatever the exact ancestry of the breed, by the late 1800s, a distinctive dog known as the Chesapeake Bay Duck dog was recognized as a breed. The breed was not only being entrenched in the Eastern U.S. but in the pothole shooting areas of the Midwest and Canada.

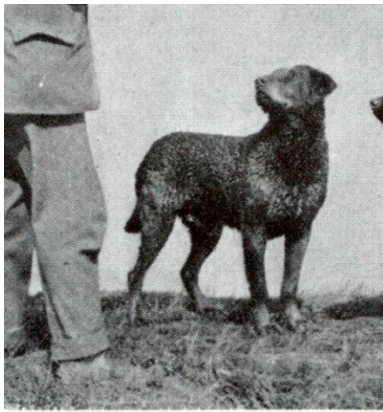
Often thought of as only a brown dog, the Chesapeake has always been found in all the colors and color patterns seen today- brown, sedge (red) and deadgrass. The deadgrass color was favored in the Midwest to meet the shooting conditions there but stories of the color being developed there are not correct. Light colors were seen in Maryland as early as the 1840s.

The majority of the early breeders were sportsmen and hunters. They selected animals with the physical strength to work a full day in harsh conditions. The characteristics they prized were thick coats, a love of the water, deep broad chests, yellow eyes and an independent thinking ability. John Hurst, writing in 1924, perhaps best describes the conformation traits most desired. He wrote "The first thing to consider is the coat of the dog. This, of course, after disregarding physical faults, is the premiere characteristic of the dog The very nature of his work places this foremost after physical soundness. The true type Chesapeake, even with his yellow eye and almost too close coupled body, is a most impressive animal when shown properly. Soundness, size, conformation, in fact every characteristic which pertains to the dog's physical perfection should precede the item of color."

BRIEF HISTORY (CONTINUED)

The swayback appearance that many think of as a hallmark of the breed is not and was not ever a desired feature. In 1933, a major revision of the standard was made to achieve more uniformity in the breed and to address the exaggerated sway backs that had occurred. “Back should be short, well coupled and powerful.” Committee chair Tony Bliss also added “...let the straight back and the slight sway be given equal preference, and let the extreme sway be done away with entirely”.

Chesapeakes were prominent participants in field trials and obedience competition from the start. Today sees them competing in these areas and in consistent numbers in hunt tests and agility. The breed remains the only one of the retriever breeds still capable of making a dual champion. The same physical and mental traits that are so important to its functional role allows the breed to excel in search/rescue, drug/bomb detection, therapy work and as a family companion.



“BEAVERS’ REX”
(27790, F. D. S. B.)



GROOMING

In keeping with its dual purpose, the Chesapeake Bay Retriever is a from the field to the show ring dog. He should be presented in a clean natural state. Clipping, shaving, or sculpting the coat should be penalized as it makes it impossible to determine the natural coat. Remember, there is a disqualification for excessive coat length and these grooming methods may be disguising an improper coat.

The Chesapeake double coat is to protect the dog working in all sorts of adverse weather conditions. The oil in the harsh outer coat and woolly undercoat is of extreme value in preventing the cold water from reaching the dog's skin and aids in drying. The Chesapeake coat should have a natural oil which serves to keep the coat waterproof.

Blow drying and fluffing the coat is detrimental to the coat's purpose. When blown dry, the woolly undercoat is open to the elements or removed completely by this grooming method, thus exposing the dog to the cold water. **A coat that is blow dried to increase the volume of the coat should be penalized as this interferes with the coat's function in the breed's working environment.**

There should never be any foreign substances used to enhance the coat. A stiff blow dried fluffy coat, sculpted and trimmed is not in keeping with the purpose of this working breed.



All dogs in natural coat

EXAMINATION PROCEDURE

Approaching the dog- You have been standing in the center of the ring evaluating the dog from the side.

As you approach, come in at an angle towards dog's front. Do not stand and stare from a position in front. Wait until the exhibitor is prepared before stepping into the dog. Approach and pause, greeting the handler and the dog. Take the dog's head in your hands and evaluate the proportions of the skull to muzzle, ear set and eyes. Ask the handler to show the bite (bite only, full dentition is not required while judging).

Bite- It is the judge's choice to examine the bite or have the exhibitor show the bite. If examining the bite yourself, be gentle. Please note that there is not a penalty for missing teeth in this standard and most dogs are not trained to have their mouths opened wide to count teeth.

Coat- Feel the coat on the back and sides of the dog for density, texture, as well as appropriate under and outer coat specifications. When dogs are going out of coat, check the portion of his coat that is remaining to assess the quality. In the case of dogs coming into coat, check the newest part of the coat to assess quality.

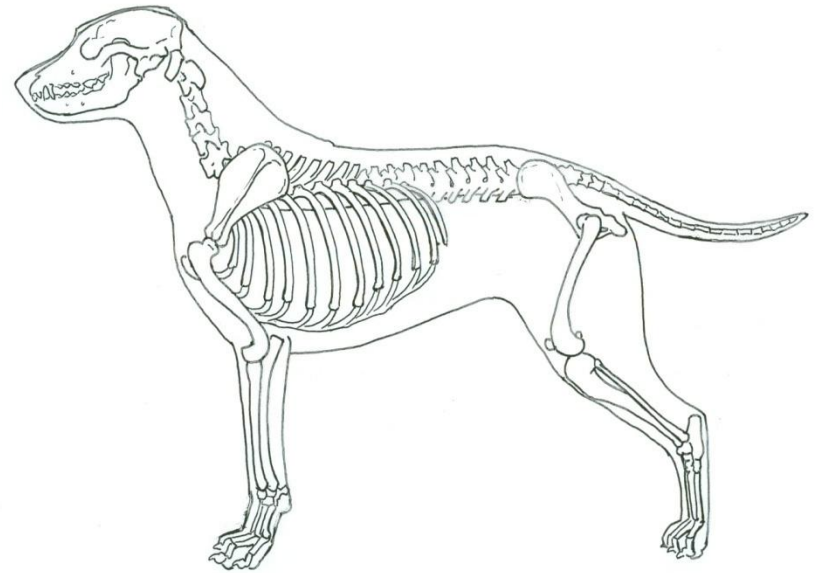
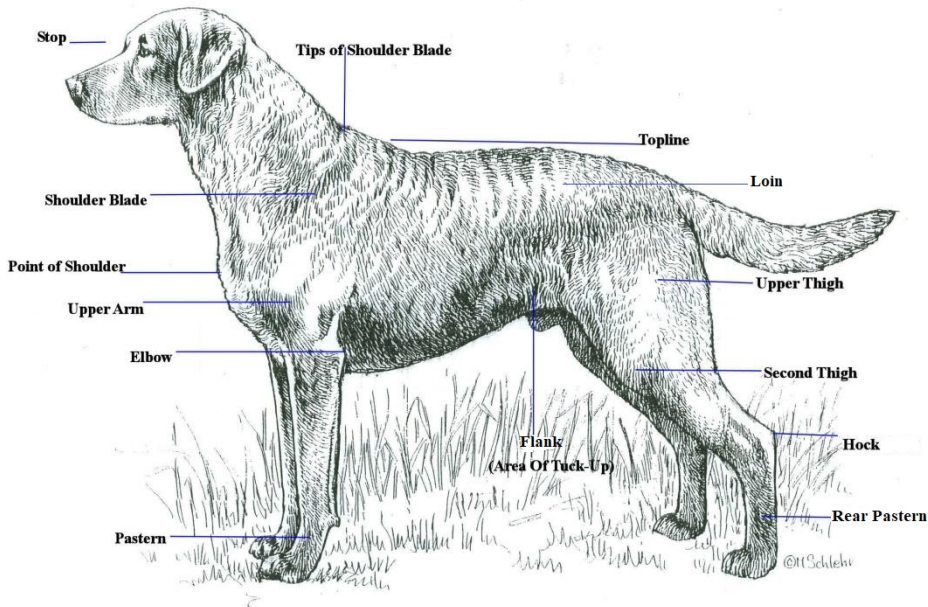
Body- Feel for the rib spring and tuck up. Run your hands from under the dogs chest starting at the elbow to its belly under the flank. There should be a gradual rise to the flank area. From the top, there should be a "waist" in the loin area.

Webbed Feet- Some judges check the feet for webbing. If you choose to do this, do it after you have completely examined the dog. Return to the front of the dog and gently lift the foot to examine webbing. Lifting up a dog's foot and feeling between the toes can often unsettle a dog. This is why it is best to do it last.

Heavy Handedness- There is no excuse for a judge to be rough and heavy handed while examining a Chesapeake. A gentle touch is appropriate. One must remember that this is a shorter coated breed and much can be seen during movement and by sight. There is no need to lift the tail or pull it back. It is inappropriate to prod and feel every inch of the dog.

Brief Anatomy

This information is intended for CBRS breeders and fanciers.



Final Review

A pitfall of judging is judging by preferences rather than by the standard. The Chesapeake standard specifies flexibility such as multiple colors, ranges of sizes and weights, heads, waving styles of coat and variance in acceptable toplines. It is very easy for a judge to prefer a type that is one color, a head style, a certain size, one specific topline or a coat style. To do so is totally unfair to the dog, the exhibitor and the breed. This dismisses dogs that may fit the standard very well.

The key to good judging of the Chesapeake is to judge the whole dog, weigh all virtues and faults and then come up with placements. Relevant to this are gray areas. While some aspects are black and white, for example a hare foot is a hare foot. Coats vary in quality and waving style. Some judges make the mistake of using the black and white approach and only give the dog with the best coat credit. If there is evidence of adequate coat to provide protective purpose, then the judge should give credit to those competitors as well. The final placements should be based on the "judging the whole dog" concept including soundness of movement.

Always keep in mind the job this breed is meant to do !



READING LIST

Breed Information

- The Chesapeake Bay Retriever** Eloise Heller, ACC. 1959

This book and the following three books written by Eloise are quite extensive. The photographs are excellent. The chapters are written by guest authors, which frequently give a cross section of opinions and insight into the character and makeup of the breed.

- The Chesapeake Bay Retriever** Eloise H. Cherry, ACC. 1967

- Our Chesapeakes** Eloise H. Cherry, ACC. 1977

- The Complete Chesapeake Bay Retriever** Eloise H. Cherry, Howell House. 1981; Chapter 4, a commentary upon by the breed by Anne Rodgers Clark is especially valuable.

- The New Complete Chesapeake Bay Retriever** Janet Horn & Dr. Daniel Horn, Howell 1994 Of interest here are the chapters on breed history, Mrs. Horn's personal commentary on the standard, and the section from various breeder judges on standard interpretation.

- The Chesapeake Bay Retriever** editor Dyane Baldwin ACC 1997

With chapters written by club members- Audrey Austin, Dyane Baldwin, Emelise Baughman, Mario Beauregard, Lorraine Berg, Janet Cole, Susan Cone, Sally Diess, Shirli Hayes, Eleanor Hill, Janet Horn, Betsy Humer, Les Lowenthal, and Mary Nelson. The book is 360 pages long with 14 chapters and includes over 190 black & white photographs.

- The Dog Book** James Watson Doubleday & Co. 1916; pgs. 320, 325-331 Good information on early development of the breed.

- Hutchinson's Dog Encyclopedia** Walter Hutchinson, Hutchinson & Co. 1935; pgs. 289-291 Good photos of working type note size.

- Iron Men and Their Dogs** Ferdinand Latrobe, Horn-Shafer Co. 1941; chapter 3 Information on hound & spaniel crosses; lists the three classes of CBRS. Good photos of working settings; head photos pg.32 shows longer coat & correct stop.

READING LIST

- ***Born To Win*** by Pat Craig Trotter
- ***Solving The Mysteries of Breed Type*** by Richard Beauchamp
- ***Structure In Action-The Makings of a Durable Dog*** by Pat Hastings
- ***Dogsteps: A New Look*** by Rachel Page Elliott
- ***Other Piece Of The Puzzle-Puppy Development*** by Pat Hastings & Erin Ann Rouse, Editors
- ***ABC of Dog Breeding*** by Claudia Waller Orlandi

***Additional list of books can be found on the ACC website
amchessieclub.org***