

## HUMBERSIDE HOUND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL 'TEACH IN' May 2016

The Humberside Hound Association is grateful to the Speakers who gave their time to assist in the education of Hound Exhibitors - and future Judges - by demonstrating The Kennel Club Breed Standard using their own dogs as 'breed models'.

It was a very interested audience and there were many diverse questions from the 'floor' - all of which, each speaker was able to answer and demonstrate the correct conformation in order to clarify the points raised.

The first Speaker was Molly Head speaking about the **Whippet**. She advised that the breed is getting somewhat 'on the large side', there being a lot of big dogs about at the present time. Better nutrition might have had impact on size but the breed has improved over time and now has a better length of loin.

The Whippet is a very robust breed and also a very healthy breed - probably originally bred for rabbiting and, although they look like small Greyhounds, they are definitely not small Greyhounds - the Greyhound is not only larger but is also flatter in the top line.

Molly explained that overall 'balance' is the first thing to look for - with a good lay-back of shoulder proportional to the good return of the upper arm. A good return of upper arm is necessary for good movement and, equally, good hind extension is necessary for power from behind. Whippets need good bone and good legs.

The 'bite' is the normal 'Scissor Bite' - which is the most suitable for catching and holding a quite large rabbit - in the days when such activities were allowed of course!

There is nothing in the Breed Standard regarding eye colour but most people prefer a dark eye (though eyes must blend with coat colour for most people's preference) the expression is 'soft' not 'staring' at all.

As for coat colour, any colour or mixture of colours is acceptable.

The length of skull to foreface is about equal - if there is not enough foreface at puppy-hood then the grown dog can be a bit snipey; the ear is not one that stands up, but is a 'drop ear' that folds over and back - known as a 'Rose Ear'.

The Whippet should not have a keel like a Dachshund - a deep chest could be prone to bloat; Molly said she likes to see a waist - though not a *lot* of waist.

The tail, in length down to hock is about right, it is carried away from body in a slight curve but not high (a lifted 'teapot handle' tail looks as if it's not part of the body).

Feet and pasterns - a tight foot but not a 'cat' foot and a *slight* slope to pastern. The Whippet moves with forelegs straight and low over the ground. A 'hackney' movement is not needed at all.

They are a breed that is excellent with children and are not, generally, Cat chasers.

Diseases - tests? Nothing really - they may *not* look a robust breed but they are in reality.

Pam Marsden Pollock spoke about the **Ibizan Hound** - the Spanish Rabbit Dog - a Primitive Breed which traditionally hunts rabbits in 'hard country'. The Breed matures at around 4/5 years; they are very intelligent, very inquisitive and very social - just one *slight problem* however - the Hunting instinct is so very strong that they don't always come back as they should!

An Ibizan must be light on his feet and agile, Pam explained that it is important to understand the Breed Standard requirements by knowing what the dog does - and advised that those who need further information look on 'U' Tube' to see the 'rabbit dogs' hunting in groups of 5.

The terrain is very steep with lots of undergrowth and the dogs hunt by scent and sight and hearing.

The ears are a feature of the dog, they are very mobile and can be seen listening for the movement of prey. The base of ear set is 'on' the line of the eye. Ear problems are rare - some can have a 'soft' ear - teething can cause problems but they do recover.

Ibizans have a lot of white on them - other pigmentation is only red/brown - no black. The head gives the breed type - it has to be streamlined with head and foreface of equal length - the nose is flesh coloured and stands further forward with plenty of nostril. They have the standard scissor bite (with a full set of teeth) strong enough to catch and hold a rabbit.

Eyes are amber in colour, an Oval shape is better than a round eye. The skull is flat and the ears are big - but yet not too heavy - they are of good texture which is needed to a degree, in order for them to stand upwards - a drop ear is not acceptable. Sometimes the ears can fold from the top (see U Tube).

The breed has long neck - but it is also a strong neck - a 'crested' long well muscled neck with the arch here needed for strength to kill and hold a rabbit on difficult terrain. An overlong neck can be a weak neck.

The shoulder blade is short and rather steep - though with some lay-back. This breed has a long length of upper arm and long length of leg with 'medium bladed' bone The upper arm is straight and the elbows should *always* be just below the ribs. An upright pastern is required because of the lack of angulation.

The breast bone is prominent and the ribs appear long and flat with not too much depth of brisket - yet there is a good tuck-up. There is a slight spring of rib in depth - *slab* sided is NOT a requisite. Ribs are carried well back

There is a slight arch to loin - the loin needs to be long to support the twisting, turning and manoeuvring during the hunt, therefore the coupling has, also, to be strongly muscled. This breed does not need a great bend of stifle - look for long bones and fairly high hocked at the hindquarters. Potential owners are advised that the breed has strong muscle and can jump 8 ft from standing - so owners need high fences!

The Ibizan appears to almost 'Hover' (like a helicopter) as there is a slight hesitation before putting the foot down - think of a dressage horse! This breed is hunted over predominately stony ground - 'open' toes cope with stones better - though well padded feet are still a requirement. Tail set is low, it slopes from the back and is thin and of good length - the traditional ways of measurement are:- down to the hock; or measured in the same way as for a Saluki - i.e. passed between the hind-legs and carried up the flank in order for the tip to reach the spine

There is no width in the back or at the shoulder.

The colour is predominately white, chestnut or a 'yellowy' fawn and the skin is fine with a protective strong haired coat. We mostly see smooth coats in this country - though there can be varying coat types in a litter; there are some Broken Coats and Wire Coats, and 'heavy' coats similar to that of the Otterhound - all coats 'strip' naturally.

Tail carriage - sabre preferably, but can be a ring tail in some cases (though not preferred)

The tail is the rudder and 'sabre' helps better in twisting and turning.

Jennifer Taylor spoke about the **Asawakh** explaining that they are a VERY active dog - a 'sighthound' who works well - even at 11 (or more) years old. Currently, there are about 20 of the breed in the UK. They are very 'one on one' dogs - though early socialisation (for at least 4 years) does 'pay off'. In temperament they are a guarding dog - *but not an outdoor dog* - he likes his comfort!

Their purpose is twofold i.e. Hunting and Guarding - consequently they can be very 'wary' and are likely to 'back off' from people. Not a dog for everybody as they *think* first - though if the handler puts 'work' into the dog, he gets 'double the work' back.

In temperament, they may be more guarding dogs rather than hunting dogs - though, by preference, they are not an outdoor dog as they like their comfort. They will sleep with legs folded up under the body. The Asawakh will take as much exercise as you can give them, and they do not 'pant' no matter how hot; however they do not cope with the cold very well. What you see is what you get!

The breed is like looking at a 'walking Anatomy Lesson' as the Asawakh is a naturally thin dog - but they *are* dogs and not made of porcelain. The judge can see the structure and so doesn't *really* need to put 'hands on' at all! Judges are advised "don't grab them" but be sure to speak to the handler before examining the dog.

The head is long and fine, with skull and muzzle of equal length; there is a slight 'stop' and the cheeks are flat. The eyes are very dark and of oval shape - a round eye is not so good for the traditional (sandy) working conditions. They can have a 'blaze' but not a white collar (FCI).

The Asawakh is shorter in body than one expects and, having longer legs 'stands' in a high rectangle. There is some forechest but not *so* much. This is a 'Primitive' breed with prominent hip bones - they are a 'well rounded dog' and should not have any body fat. Many people would think they have been starved - though not so!

Greyhounds have bunched muscles - Asawakh have flat muscle. The skin is 'fine', the coat is strong - though never harsh or long; there may be no coat on the belly. Feet not well padded and toes are long. Web feet are a requirement for sandy Desert conditions

Colours - all 'sand' colours to dark mahogany; light or dark brindle, with white 'socks' (or just white on the toes - FCI requirement) and tip of tail - but in the Desert 'home' one can find 'pied' markings too.

The tail length is down to the hock or measured in the same way as for a Saluki - i.e. passed between the hind-legs and carried up the flank in order for the tip to reach the spine.

The 'speakers' also answered many further questions from those attending the event and at the end of the evening the Chairman thanked the Speakers on behalf of the attendees.