

# THE AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOG





# **OBJECTIVES**

- ♥ INCREASE KNOWLEDGE OF /APPRECIATION FOR ACD**
- ♥ ENHANCE LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN JUDGING THE ACD**
- ♥ HAVE FUN**



**NOW FOR A TEST....**

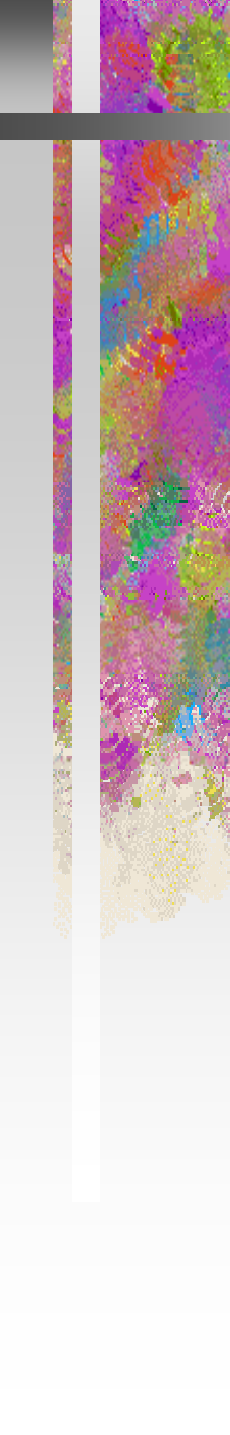


**1. At birth the ACD's color is:**

- A. Light blue or light red (with or without black or dark red markings on the head) that darkens with age.**
- B. The same color as the adult ACD.**
- C. White, with or without black or dark red markings.**
- D. None of the above.**







**2. The white mark usually found on the ACD's head is called:**

**A. A blaze**

**B. A Bentley mark**

**C. A streak**

**D. A Daimler dot**







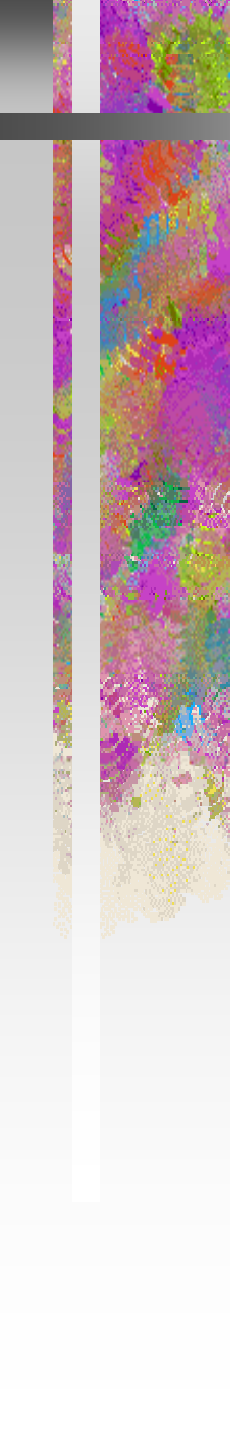
**3. The Four Breeds That Are Generally Believed to Have Been Crossed to Produce the ACD Are:**

**A. Black & Tan Kelpie; Dalmatian; Blue merle, smooth collie; Dingo**

**B. Black & Tan Kelpie; Border Collie; Dingo; Bull Terrier**

**C. Black & Tan Kelpie; Blue merle, smooth Collie; Dingo; Bull Terrier**

**D. Black & Tan Kelpie; Blue merle, rough Collie; Dingo; Bull Terrier**



**4. The coat of a blue ACD is a mixture of white and black hairs with lighter dogs having relatively more white hairs than darker dogs. How many times is the word “white” mentioned in the description of the blue ACD?**

**A. Zero**

**B. One**

**C. Two**

**D. Three**



**5. Correct Proportions Between Length of Body and Height at Withers Are:**

- A. As 10 is to 9**
- B. As 11 is to 9**
- C. As 9 is to 10**
- D. Square**



**6. According to the official AKC standard for the ACD: Blue ACD's are blue, blue speckled or blue mottle and red ACD's are Red, Red speckled or Red mottle.**

**A. True**

**B. False**



**7. The ACD is a double coated dog:**

**A. True**

**B. False**



**8. A scissors bite and a level bite are equally acceptable in the ACD:**

**A. True**

**B. False**



**9. The correct ACD foot is:**

**A. A “cat” foot**

**B. A “hare” foot**

**C. Between a hare and cat foot**

**D. None of the above**



**10. Docked tails on ACD's are:**

- A. Not permitted in the conformation ring**
- B. Frequently found on pet ACD's in the USA**
- C. Not generally found in Australia**
- D. Allowed by AKC in performance events**
- E. All of the above**
- F. None of the above**





**11. The requirements for the ACDCA Register of Merit (ROM) are:**

- A. Offspring including five conformation champions and five herding titleholders**
- B. ROM dog/bitch must have CH, HS and CD. Must have offspring with each of these titles.**
- C. Offspring including 10 champions of record for sires and 5 for dams.**
- D. None of the above**



# Harold Spira once wrote:

- **Picture a Noah's Ark situation**
- **Place an imaginary breeding pair of each one of the world's presently recognized 300 plus breeds into a large communal enclosure**
- **The end result after a few generations of such hypothetical random reproductions, in my opinion, is likely to resemble an ACD in outward appearance except, perhaps, for colour**
- **An animal designed entirely within the concept of moderation and orientated toward exercise tolerance without physical exaggerations**



# **The Working Australian Cattle Dog Standard**



## **Introduction**

**Developed to control wild cattle in groups of several hundred on drives through inhospitable wilderness of Australia**

**Drives sometimes lasted weeks and crossed from the vast grazing lands of the outback, over the pass in the great dividing range, and through the streets of Sydney to the stockyards.**

**The wild cattle and extremely harsh conditions were such that traditional working breeds were of no use.**







## **Crossings Begin**

**Smooth-coated, blue merle Scottish highland collies crossed to selected dingoes in the 1840's by drover Thomas Hall**

**Developed a cattle dog that combined hardiness of the dingo type, and herding abilities of the highland collie**

**Cross reinforced the heeling instinct of the collie and eliminated their tendency to bark at the head**

**About 1860 some dogs were brought to the Homebush sale yards in Sydney by butcher Alexander Davis, they "attracted much attention" and were taken by various drovers and butchers.**



## **Even More Breeds Introduced**

**Two brothers, Jack and Harry Bagust, purchased some of these dogs**

**Continued to improve breed, introducing select Dalmatian bloodlines and later, black and tan Kelpies**

**Succeeded in "advancing their working ability to intelligent controllable workers whilst retaining the silent biting of the animals heels."**





## **Intelligence**

**Independent thinker and once trained, capable of carrying out routine tasks without supervision**

**Highly intelligent, making them self directed workers capable of complex problem solving**

**Adept at picking out and punishing trouble makers, while being gentle with calves, lambs or ducks**

**This rating ability makes the ACD versatile enough for different classes of cattle as well as trial or farm work with sheep, hogs and fowl**

With newborn lambs





Moving a stubborn Ram





## **Trainability**

**Can be trained to perform various functions on the farm or ranch**

**They possess high trainability coupled with a strong desire to please**

**Most Cattle Dogs can perform routine jobs after just a few exposures**

**A well trained Cattle Dog can replace two to three good men on horseback**



## **Posture**

**Considered an upright breed**

**Head carried at shoulder level while working, enabling the dog to read stock and to easily slip in and heel**

**When confronting stubborn animals at head, some ACD's drop to a crouch, preparing to nose bite, others raise their heads to challenge and come straight on**

**Most dogs will experiment with different postures or approaches to win stand-offs with stubborn stock.**

**ACD's perfect combination of size, angulation, balance, agility and instinct enables him to continuously heel low and avoid being kicked.**



## **Approach**

**ACD's approach to stock is calculated and deliberate, and directed at the animal or animals to be moved.**

**Naturally wears on larger groups of stock, but can walk straight in at the balance point on singles or smaller groups of cattle or sheep.**

**Whether an individual dog predominately fetches or drives is due not only to heritage, but can be affected by the dog's age, training technique, and the livestock the dog is started on.**

**Cattle Dogs that fetch usually exhibit very keen natural balance.**







## More on Approach

**Regardless of individual style, the Australian Cattle Dog is considered a close worker.**

**There is however variation, with some dogs working and flanking very close and others working and flanking moderately wide and closing the distance to heel**

**Most can be taught to work wider if required**





## Eye

**ACD's are a loose to medium eyed breed**

**When heading, turning or otherwise challenging stubborn livestock, some individuals exhibit moderately strong eye, but return to a looser approach once challenge is won**

**Loose approach enables the Cattle Dog to see and react to a herd of hundreds of cattle and give attention to just those requiring it, allowing him to work effectively, day in and day out**

## Grip

**Best known as a "heeler"**

**Stubborn or wild stock may require forceful hard biter until trained, whereas dairy cattle may just require dog's presence**

**Typical technique is for dog to time grip to occur on foot of weight bearing leg, and to duck to miss ensuing kick**

**Correct "heel" is low on the leg at fetlock or coronet.**

**ACD should not only heel, but use force at head when turning or stopping livestock.**

**All gripping should be quick with an immediate release.**

**Gripping should be appropriate and not excessive**













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## **Bark**

**The Australian Cattle Dog was developed as a silent worker**

**Force barking when heading or otherwise challenging stubborn livestock is acceptable if it is not excessive**

**Continuous barking, barking while working at the heels or more than just a few force barks is undesirable**

**Approved by the ACDCA, 1996**



# **THE AUSTRALIAN CATTLE DOG AKC STANDARD**



## **General Appearance**

**Strong, compact, symmetrically built working dog**

**Able and willing to carry out tasks however arduous**

**Substance, power, balance and hard muscular condition convey impression of great agility, strength and endurance**

**Any tendency to grossness or weediness is a serious fault**



Ludwig



## **Characteristics**

**Prime function, and one in which he has no peer, is the control and movement of cattle in both wide open and confined areas.**

**Always alert, extremely intelligent, watchful, courageous and trustworthy**

**An implicit devotion to duty making it an ideal dog**







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## **Temperament**

**Loyalty and protective instincts make it a self-appointed guardian to the Stockman, his herd and his property**

**Naturally suspicious of strangers but must be amenable to handling, particularly in show ring.**

**Any feature of temperament or structure foreign to a working dog must be regarded as a serious fault.**



## **Head and Skull**

**Strong, in balance with other proportions of dog, in keeping with its general conformation**

**Broad skull--slightly curved between ears, flattening to slight but definite stop.**

**Cheeks muscular, neither coarse nor prominent  
underjaw strong, deep and well developed**

**Foreface-broad, well filled in under eyes, tapering gradually to form medium length, deep, powerful muzzle**

**Skull and muzzle on parallel planes**

**Lips are tight and clean**

**Nose black**

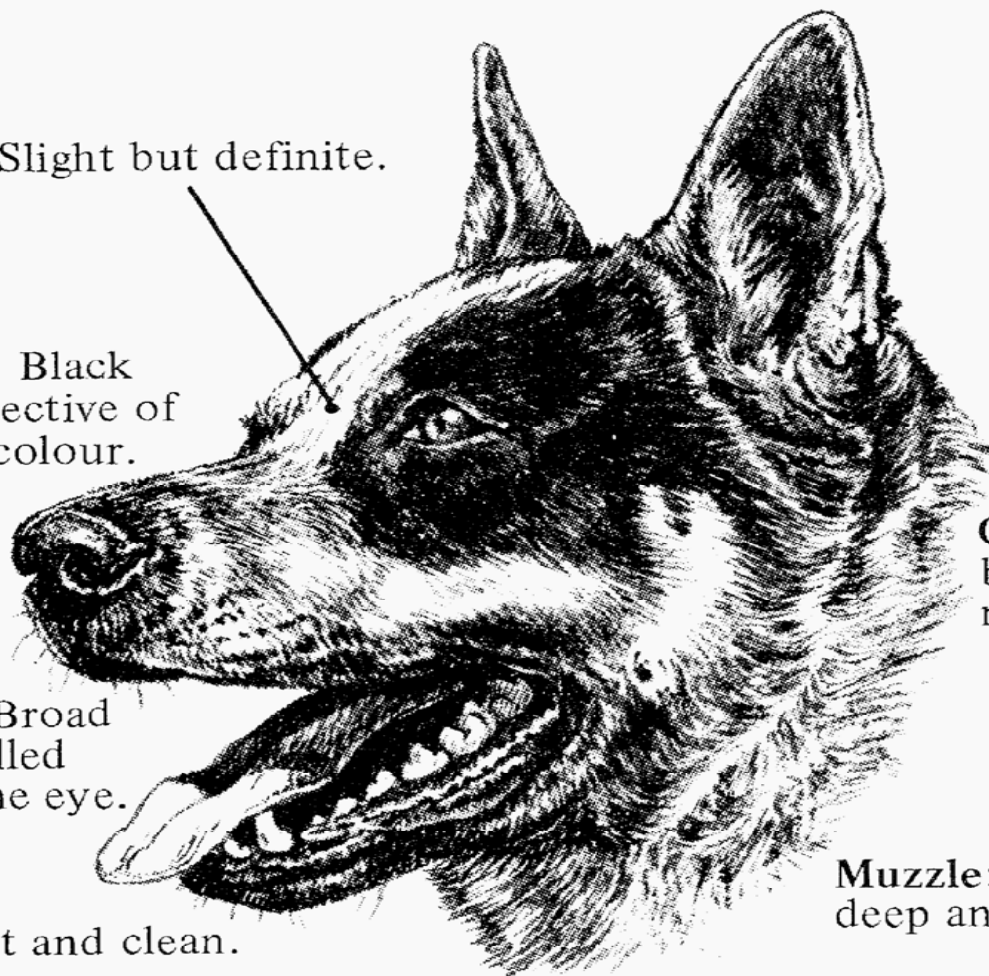
**Stop:** Slight but definite.

**Nose:** Black  
irrespective of  
dogs colour.

**Foreface:** Broad  
and well filled  
in under the eye.

**Lips:** Tight and clean.

**Under Jaw:** Strong, deep  
and well developed.



**Cheek:** Muscular,  
but not coarse  
nor prominent.

**Muzzle:** Medium length  
deep and powerful.

**Teeth:** Sound, strong and regularly  
spaced, gripping with a scissor like  
action, the lower incisors close  
behind and just touching the upper.  
Not to be undershot nor overshot.









## **Eyes**

**Oval shape, medium size**

**Neither prominent nor sunken**

**Must express alertness and intelligence**

**Warning or suspicious glint is characteristic when approached by strangers**

**Eye color, dark brown**





## **Ears**

**Of moderate size, preferably small rather than large,**

**Broad at base--muscular, pricked**

**Moderately pointed-neither spoon nor bat eared**

**Ears set wide apart on skull, inclining outwards**

**Sensitive in their use, pricked when alert**

**Leather--thick in texture**

**Inside of ear fairly well furnished with hair**





## **Mouth**

**Sound, strong and evenly spaced**

**Gripping with a scissor-bite, lower incisors close behind and just touching the upper**

**As the dog is required to move difficult cattle by heeling or biting, teeth which are sound and strong are very important**



## **Neck**

**Extremely strong, muscular**

**Medium length**

**Broadening to blend into body**

**Free from throatiness**





## **Forequarters**

**Shoulders strong, sloping, muscular and well angulated to upper arm**

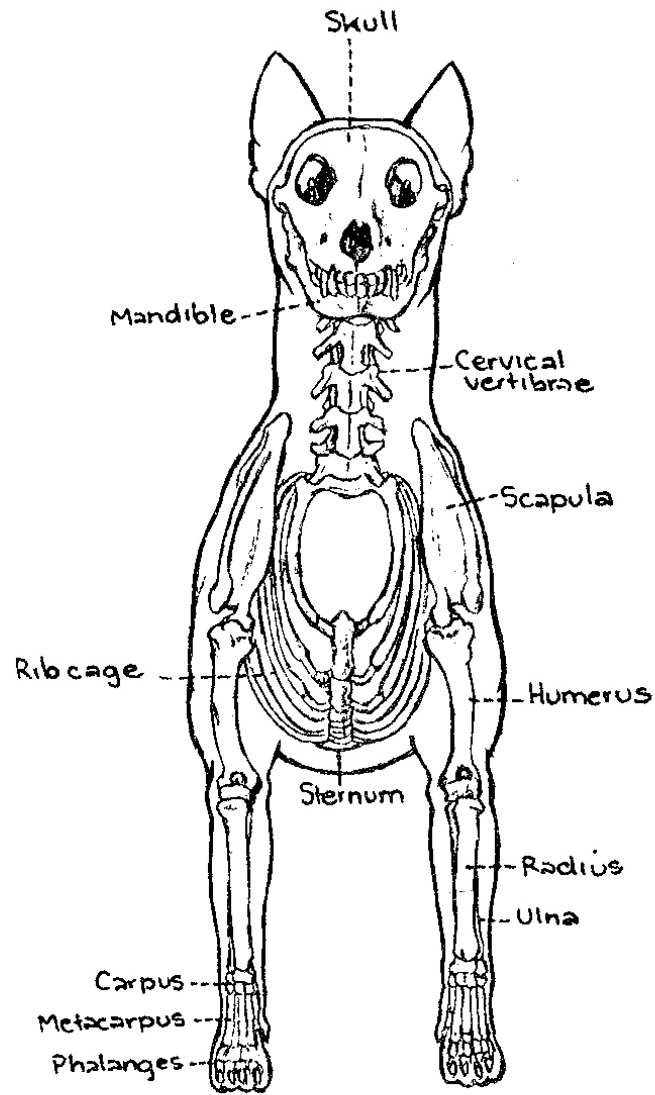
**Not too closely set at point of withers**

**Forelegs have strong, round bone, extending to feet, straight and parallel when viewed from front**

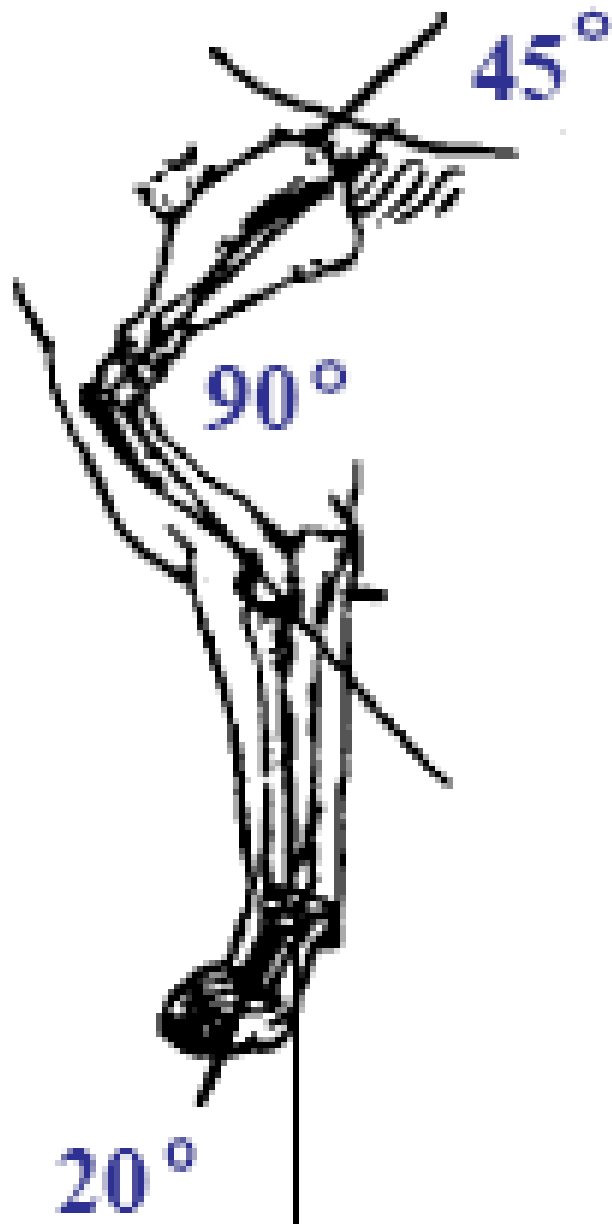
**Pasterns show flexibility with slight angle to forearm when viewed from side**

**Although shoulders are muscular and bone strong, loaded shoulders and heavy fronts hamper correct movement and limit working ability**





FRONT VIEW



*Forequarters  
(Thoracic Limb)*





Jeff Jayush



## **Body**

**Length of the body from the point of the breast bone, in a straight line to the buttocks, is greater than height at withers, as 10 is to 9**

**Topline is level**

**Back strong with ribs well sprung and carried well back not barrel ribbed**

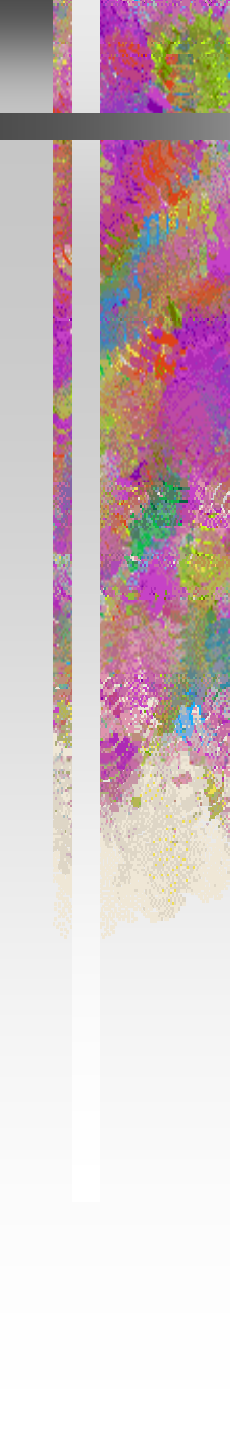
**Chest is deep, muscular and moderately broad**

**Loins broad, strong and muscular and the flanks deep.**

**Strongly coupled**







## **Hindquarters**

**Hindquarters are broad, strong and muscular**

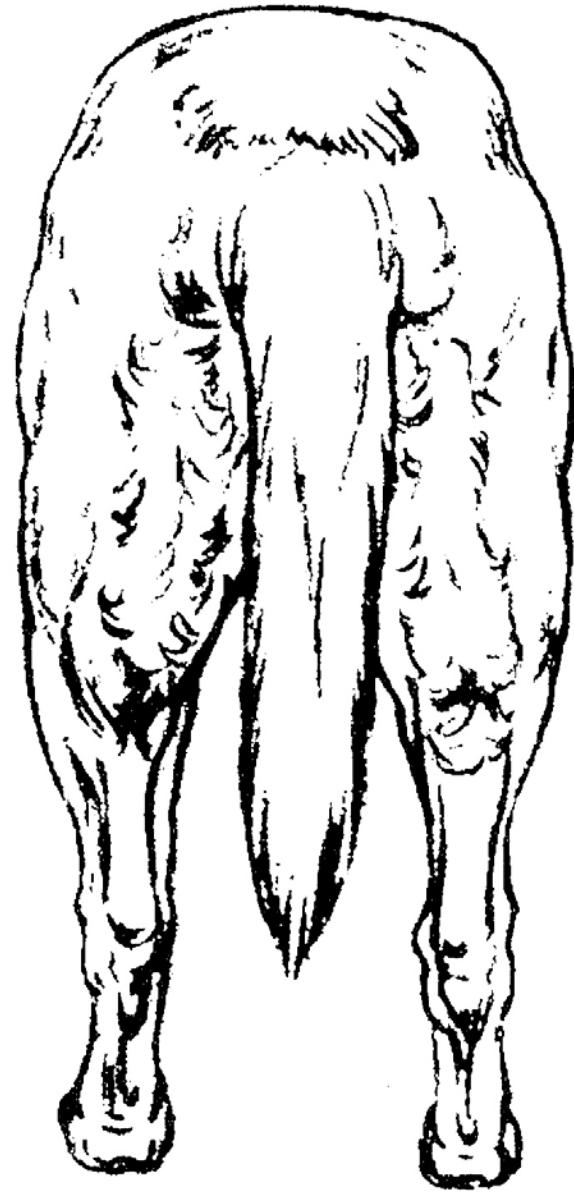
**Croup is rather long and sloping**

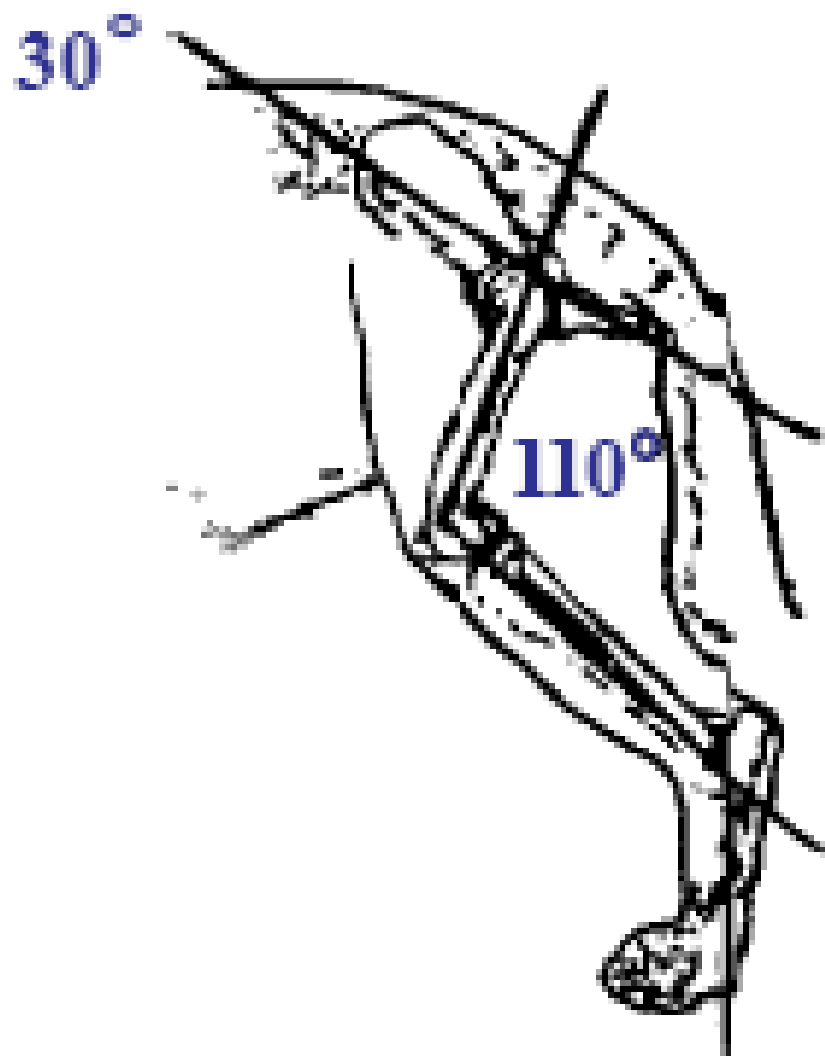
**Thighs long, broad and well developed**

**Stifles well turned and the hocks strong and well let down**

**When viewed from behind, the hind legs, from hocks to feet, are straight and placed parallel, neither close nor too wide apart**







*Hindquarters*  
*(Pelvic Limb)*





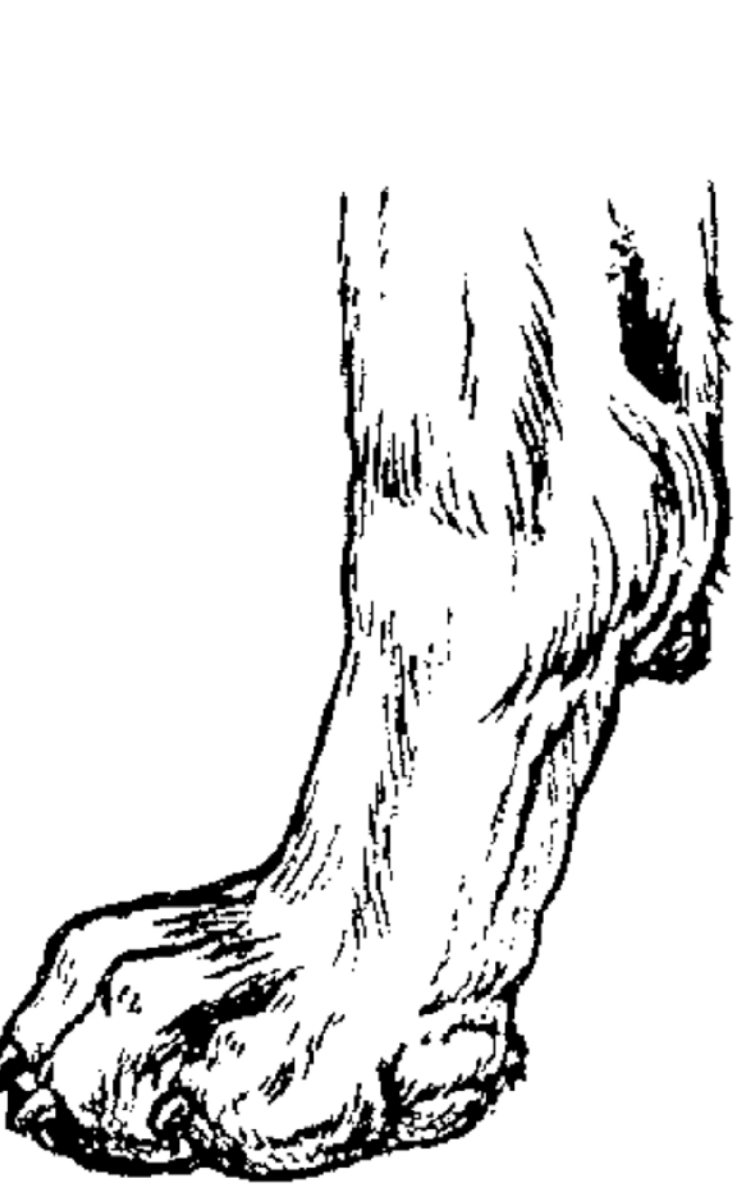
## **Feet**

**Feet should be round**

**Toes short, strong, well arched and held close together**

**Pads are hard and deep**

**Nails must be short and strong**



Foot





*Sudwig*



## **Tail**

**Set on of tail is moderately low, following contours of sloping croup**

**Length to reach approximately to hock**

**At rest it should hang in a very slight curve**

**During movement or excitement tail may be raised**

**Under no circumstances should any part of tail be carried past a vertical line drawn through root**

**Tail should carry a good brush**





## **Gait/Movement**

**Action is true, free, supple and tireless**

**Movement of the shoulders and forelegs is in unison with the powerful thrust of hindquarters**

**Capability of quick, sudden movement is essential**

**Soundness-paramount importance**

**Serious faults--stiltiness, loaded or slack shoulders, straight shoulders, weakness at elbows, pasterns or feet, straight stifles, cow or bow hocks**

**When trotting feet tend to come closer together at ground level as speed increases, but when dog comes to rest should stand four square**





## Coat

**Smooth, double coat with short dense undercoat  
outer-coat close**

**Each hair straight, hard, lying flat, so rain-resisting**

**Under body, to behind the legs, coat is longer and  
forms mild breeching near thigh**

**On head (including the inside of the ears), to the front  
of the legs and feet, hair is short**

**Along neck--longer and thicker**

**Either too long or too short-fault**

**On average, hairs on the body - 2.5 to 4 cms (approx. 1-  
1.5 ins) in length**



## **Color (Blue)**

**Blue, blue-mottled, or blue speckled with or without other markings**

### **Permissible markings--**

**Black, blue or tan markings on head, evenly distributed for preference**

**Forelegs-tan midway up legs, extending up the front to breast and throat, with tan on jaws**

**Hindquarters-tan inside hindlegs, inside thighs, showing down front of stifles, broadening out to outside of hind legs from hock to toes**

**Tan undercoat permissible on body providing does not show through blue outer coat**

**Black markings on body not desirable**













Creeping Tan



## **Color (Red Speckle)**

**Should be good even red speckle all over,  
including the undercoat**

**Undercoat-neither white nor cream**

**With or without darker red markings on head**

**Even head markings are desirable**

**Red markings on the body are permissible but not  
desirable.**









## **Size**

### **Height:**

**Dogs 46-51 cms (approx. 18-20 ins) at withers**

**Bitches 43-48 cms (approx. 17-19 ins) at withers**





## **Faults**

**Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault**

**The seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree**

# Remember

 **The ACD is a dog without exaggeration...**

**Moderate, moderate, moderate**

 **When making close calls--remember that the ACD**

 **is a working dog, bred to herd cattle**

**But it is not a Cow!**



THE END

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