



Expression

Expression is one of the most important points in considering the relative value of Collies. Expression, like the term character is difficult to define in words. It is not a fixed point as in color, weight or height and it is something the uninitiated can properly understand only by optical illustration. In general, however, it may be said to be the combined product of the shape and balance of the skull and muzzle, the placement, size, shape and color of the eye and the position, size and carriage of the ears. An expression that shows sullenness or which is suggestive of any other breed is entirely foreign. The Collie cannot be judged properly until its expression has been carefully evaluated.



“No other factor contributes as greatly to the beauty of the Collie head as the expression. One quite naturally looks to the “face” of the Collie and what he sees there sets the foundation of thought - good or bad?”

Trudy Mangels, Brandwyne Collies



“True expression is the sine qua non of every typical Collie. In fact, a dog may be ever so characteristic in other ways but if he has not this correct expression he is not a typical Collie. It is quite true that expression cannot be described, but when once seen and appreciated, it is then afterwards easily recognized. It is only obtained by a perfect combination of the various head sections - skull and muzzle, also the shape, size, color and placement of the eyes, and the correct shape, position and carriage of the ears.”

Dr. O.P. Bennett, Tazewell



“Some of us head-hunters consider the head the most important part of the Collie but to justify this, the part INSIDE must be considered equally important with the outside. It is this revelation of the inside by the expression which gives it the great importance it holds.”

Oren Kem, Lodestone



“Smoothness, symmetry and balance are the significant words in head quality, and ‘balance’ is the most important. Expression is the sum total of the head qualities, and you’re not going to find out what expression is without seeing it.”

Steve Field, Parader



“The most important thing to think of when judging Collies I would have to say is ‘expression.’ I come to that conclusion after many years of careful study and observation. The characteristics which create the desired expression of intelligent inquisitiveness, are the same characteristics that I feel create a correct head. I believe it is impossible to have correctly set eyes on a head that flares or which does not have a flat frontal bone. When stops are misplaced or there is a lack of correct chiseling of foreface, it is also impossible to have correctly placed eyes, which is detracting. Ear set and carriage also have a direct impact on the desirability of correct expression as well. I find, therefore, that most dogs that really do have the correct expression generally have at the very least, a moderately correct head. Because I feel a good expression is generally the result of correct head structure, I feel that judges who know good expression generally know proper head structure. It is definitely something I consider a hard-to-get virtue.”

John Buddie, Tartanside

