



General Appearance

The Collie is a lithe, strong, responsive, active dog, carrying no useless timber, standing naturally straight and firm. The deep, moderately wide chest shows strength, the sloping shoulders and well-bent hocks indicate speed and grace, and the face shows high intelligence. The Collie presents an impressive, proud picture of true balance, each part being in harmonious proportion to every other part and to the whole. Except for the technical description that is essential to this Standard and without which no Standard for the guidance of breeders and judges is adequate, it could be stated simply that no part of the Collie ever seems to be out of proportion to any other part. Timidity, frailness, sullenness, viciousness, lack of animation, cumbersome appearance and lack of over-all balance impair the general character.



“In the creation of my line I wanted to develop a picture of a dog which goes against nature. If all Collies were allowed to breed freely with no human selection involved, the result would be commonness. The opposite of commonness is elegance. To me the elegant ideal has a long clean head, combined with a well rounded body and sturdy bone. The real and wonderful trick is to get a combination of elegance and substance.”

Patricia Starkweather, Glen Hill



“No quality in the parts, however great, can make a superior specimen of a dog markedly out of balance. Each part of the Collie must seem to ‘belong’ to the picture presented by the entire dog. The importance of this point cannot be overemphasized. The general picture of the Collie must be characterized by harmony, and anything that creates disharmony is a serious flaw.”

Alan Harper



“The overall picture of our breed is its most basic characteristic, since without it, none of the elements that make up the whole dog, however correct or beautiful they may be, are sufficient to make it a true Collie. I am an ‘outline person’ and the picture of a Collie posing majestically, showing me that picture of balance, elegance, and beauty still can take my breath away. We want the Collie to be proud and impressive: an elegant, arched neck, well laid back shoulder, level back, gently sloping croup... a picture of curves rather than angles.”

Judie Evans, Clarion

“All the truly great Collies I vividly recall had one attribute in common - class! Maybe it is that undefinable element so often repeated (seven times) in the Collie standard - expression! Class, expression, elegance, and balance distinguish the really great ones that transcend beyond equal technical perfection of type and soundness as defined by any standard, written or pictured. The best Collie judges, whether all-breed judges such as the late Alva Rosenberg, or our better specialty judges of the past century, have not only adhered to the standard but have had the ability to recognize class and beauty. As a result, perhaps the most beautiful breed of dogs has evolved in the modern Collie.”

Stephen J. Field, Parader

“Type pertains to the entire dog, because a Collie head, no matter how good it is, if placed on a Saluki’s body or a Mastiff’s body would rule him out as a good type of Collie. If one look at a dog shows him to be too long in body, or entirely too high on leg, or legs too short like he’s standing in a hole, he is not correct in type. Body structure, therefore, is part of type.

Soundness is not enough and a good head is not enough.”

W.R. Van Dyck, Honeybrook

“In the Collie Standard and Collie tradition, there is no irrepressible conflict between type and soundness. One flows naturally from the other. The correct Collie body provides the foundation and framework for both, while the whole structure presents an impressive proud picture of true balance.”

Oren Kem, Lodestone

