

IRISH **TERRIER**

BREED MAGAZINE

Let's Talk Breed Education!
SHOWSIGHT



Official Standard of the Irish Terrier

Head: Long, but in nice proportion to the rest of the body; the skull flat, rather narrow between the ears, and narrowing slightly toward the eyes; free from wrinkle, with the stop hardly noticeable except in profile. The jaws must be strong and muscular, but not too full in the cheek, and of good punishing length. The foreface must not fall away appreciably between or below the eyes; instead, the modeling should be delicate. An exaggerated foreface, or a noticeably short foreface, disturbs the proper balance of the head and is not desirable. The foreface and the skull from occiput to stop should be approximately equal in length. Excessive muscular development of the cheeks, or bony development of the temples, conditions which are described by the fancier as "cheeky," or "strong in head," or "thick in skull" are objectionable. The "bumpy" head, in which the skull presents two lumps of bony structure above the eyes, is to be faulted. The hair on the upper and lower jaws should be similar in quality and texture to that on the body, and of sufficient length to present an appearance of additional strength and finish to the foreface. Either the profuse, goat-like beard, or the absence of beard, is unsightly and undesirable.

Teeth: Should be strong and even, white and sound; and neither overshot nor undershot.

Lips: Should be close and well-fitting, almost black in color.

Nose: Must be black.

Eyes: Dark brown in color; small, not prominent; full of life, fire and intelligence, showing an intense expression. The light or yellow eye is most objectionable, and is a bad fault.

Ears: Small and V-shaped; of moderate thickness; set well on the head, and dropping forward closely toward the outside corner of the eye. The top of the folded ear should be well above the level of the skull. A "dead" ear, hound-like in appearance, must be severely penalized. It is not characteristic of the Irish Terrier. The hair should be much shorter and somewhat darker in color than that on the body.

Neck: Should be of fair length and gradually widening toward the shoulders; well and proudly carried, and free from throatiness. Generally there is a slight frill in the hair at each side of the neck, extending almost to the corner of the ear.

Shoulders and Chest: Shoulders must be fine, long, and sloping well into the back. The chest should be deep and muscular, but neither full nor wide.

Body: The body should be moderately long. The short back is not characteristic of the Irish Terrier, and is extremely objectionable. The back must be strong and straight, and free from an appearance of slackness or "dip" behind the shoulders. The loin should be strong and muscular, and slightly arched, the ribs fairly sprung, deep rather than round, reaching to the level of the elbow. The bitch may be slightly longer than the dog.

Hindquarters: Should be strong and muscular; thighs powerful; hocks near the ground; stifles moderately bent.

Stern: Should be docked, taking off about one quarter. It should be set on rather high, but not curled. It should be of good strength and substance; of fair length and well covered with harsh, rough hair.



Feet and Legs: The feet should be strong, tolerably round, and moderately small; toes arched and turned neither out nor in, with dark toenails. The pads should be deep, and must be perfectly sound and free from corns. Cracks alone do not necessarily indicate unsound feet. In fact, all breeds have cracked pads occasionally, from various causes. Legs moderately long, well set from the shoulders, perfectly straight, with plenty of bone and muscle; the elbows working clear of the sides; pasterns short, straight, and hardly noticeable. Both fore and hind legs should move straight forward when traveling; the stifles should not turn outward. "Cowhocks" - that is, the hocks turned in and the feet turned out - are intolerable. The legs should be free from feather and covered with hair of similar texture to that on the body to give proper finish to the dog.

Coat: Should be dense and wiry in texture, rich in quality, having a broken appearance, but still lying fairly close to the body, the hairs growing so closely and strongly together that when parted with the fingers the skin is hardly visible; free of softness or silkiness, and not so long as to alter the outline of the body, particularly in the hindquarters. On the sides of the body the coat is never as harsh as on the back and quarters, but it should be plentiful and of good texture. At the base of the stiff outer coat there should be a growth of finer and softer hair, lighter in color, termed the undercoat. Single coats, which are without any undercoat, and wavy coats are undesirable; the curly and the kinky coats are most objectionable.

Color: Should be whole-colored: bright red, golden red, red wheaten, or wheaten. A small patch of white on the chest, frequently encountered in all whole-colored breeds, is permissible but not desirable. White on any other part of the body is most objectionable. Puppies sometimes have black hair at birth, which should disappear before they are full grown.

Size: The most desirable weight in show condition is 27 pounds for the dog and 25 pounds for the bitch. The height at the shoulder should be approximately 18 inches. These figures serve as a guide to both breeder and judge. In the show ring, however, the informed judge readily identifies the oversized or undersized Irish Terrier by its conformation and general appearance. Weight is not the last word in judgment. It is of the greatest importance to select, insofar as possible, terriers of moderate and generally accepted size, possessing the other various characteristics.

General Appearance: The over-all appearance of the Irish Terrier is important. In conformation he must be more than a sum of his parts. He must be all-of-a-piece, a balanced vital picture of symmetry, proportion and harmony. Furthermore, he must convey character. This terrier must be active, lithe and wiry in movement, with great animation; sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure, but at the same time free from clumsiness, for speed, power and endurance are most essential. The Irish Terrier must be neither "cobby" nor "cloddy," but should be built on lines of speed with a graceful, racing outline.

Temperament: The temperament of the Irish Terrier reflects his early background: he was family pet, guard dog, and hunter. He is good tempered, spirited and game. It is of the utmost importance that the Irish Terrier show fire and animation. There is a heedless, reckless pluck about the Irish Terrier which is characteristic, and which, coupled with the headlong dash, blind to all consequences, with which he rushes at his adversary, has earned for the breed the proud



epithet of "Daredevil." He is of good temper, most affectionate, and absolutely loyal to mankind. Tender and forbearing with those he loves, this rugged, stout-hearted terrier will guard his master, his mistress and children with utter contempt for danger or hurt. His life is one continuous and eager offering of loyal and faithful companionship and devotion. He is ever on guard, and stands between his home and all that threatens.

Approved December 10, 1968

Irish Terrier

Origins

BY BRUCE PETERSON

Bruce Peterson passed away in 2017. We are grateful to be able to share his research into the origins of the Irish Terrier for the benefit of new and long-term fanciers. A version of this article originally appeared in the July 2012 edition of SHOWSIGHT Magazine.

The existence for centuries of an Irish sporting Terrier is referenced in ancient manuscripts archived in Dublin Museum. One old Irish writer refers to these dogs as the "poor man's sentinel, the farmers friend, and the gentleman's favorite." Dogs were an important part of life in ancient Ireland. The Baerla laws, recorded in the first centuries of the Christian era, included detailed provisions for the control and responsibility of hunting hounds, shepherd's dogs, earthdogs, vermin killers, and watchdogs.

Early Irishmen did not keep accurate breeding records. As a result, the origin of the Irish Terrier is subject to conjecture. The first reference to the breed is an article authored by Richard Ridgway in the 1878 Edition of Stonehenge's *Dogs of the British Isles*. Ridgway, a founder of the first Irish Terrier Club, provided a breed description and stated that the Irish Terrier was a purebred widely known and remembered since the early 1800s.

A generally accepted theory traces the origins of the breed to the wire-haired black and tan Terriers that existed in Great Britain more than 300 years ago. Appealing to people of all classes, the black and tan Terrier grew in popularity in the 19th century as a working dog. Efficient ratters, they controlled vermin in buildings, were used to bolt fox and otter, and hunted rabbit for food and for the sport of rabbit coursing.

F.M. Jowett, author of *The Irish Terrier* (1907), wrote: "In the early history of the Irish Terrier as a show dog, it was a very common experience for a bitch to have two or three broken-coated black and tan puppies in nearly every litter." Jowett points out



The Irish Terrier, from Stonehenge's *The Dog*, Fourth Edition, 1887.

that as late as the early 1900s, an occasional black and tan puppy appeared in well-bred litters. Even today, many Irish Terriers are born with black hairs in their puppy coats.

Regardless of origin, the Irish Terrier emerged as a recognized breed in the 1870s. Breeders emphasized working qualities and "gameness" rather than looks. As a result, there was a wide variety of sizes, ranging from under 10 pounds to dogs as big as 40 pounds. Colors included black and tan, gray and brindle, wheaten, and red-wheaten.

Separate classes for Irish Terriers were first provided at a Dublin dog show in 1873. Classes for Irish Terriers over or less than 9 pounds were offered. In 1879, the first Irish Terrier Club was founded in Dublin and the breed standard was adapted. Irish Terrier breeders finally had an ideal to aim at. This ideal appeared the same year in the form of the bitch, "Erin."

William Graham, a prominent Irish Terrier breeder of the era, discovered Erin at a Dublin show. Mr. Graham immediately recognized her quality and bought her even though Erin had no recorded pedigree. Graham pronounced her the best Irish Terrier bitch he had ever seen and his opinion was widely confirmed by the fanciers of the day. Graham eventually sold Erin to J.J. Pim.

In an 1891 article, Mr. Pim reflected on Champion Erin: "I think everyone will agree that the mother and star of the breed was found by Mr. Graham in her hamper before being benched at a Dublin Show... beautiful long lean head, cropped, with that game-looking eye and expression peculiar to the breed that we are fast losing; nice neck with perfectly placed shoulders; good legs and feet; wonderfully perfect body, stern and hard dark red coat; not heavy in bone or forelegs, which were not low, but forming a perfect symmetry." Brimming with type and character, Champion Erin was only defeated once in her show career and retained her quality until her death in 1890.



Ch. Kilvara Magic Master was a strong producer. Grandson of Jerry O'Callaghan's Ch. Hunter's Moon and Ch. Kilvara Madrigal. Best of Breed winner at the Irish Terrier Club of America 1948 Specialty Show. Bred by Judith E. Taylor and owned by Martha G. Hall.



ROCKLEDGE IRISH TERRIERS

Bred & Owned by Linda Honey, Eduardo Fugtwara & Sean Mansfield

GENERATION
after
GENERATION



McCALLEN

AMERICA'S #1 IRISH TERRIER 2012-2013*
MULTIPLE BEST IN SHOW WINNER
MULTIPLE NATIONAL SPECIALTY WINNER
MULTIPLE SPECIALTY WINNER

GCHG ROCKLEDGE MCCALLEN OF MEATH



MCTAVISH

AMERICA'S #1 IRISH TERRIER 2022*
MULTIPLE GROUP WINNER
MULTIPLE SPECIALTY WINNER

GCHB ROCKLEDGE MCTAVISH OF MEATH



MURPHY

MULTIPLE BEST IN SHOW WINNER
WESTMINSTER BREED WINNER 2018
NATIONAL SPECIALTY WINNER
MULTIPLE SPECIALTY WINNER
MULTIPLE GROUP WINNER

GCHG ROCKLEDGE MR MURPHY OF MEATH



TEAK

AMERICA'S #1 IRISH TERRIER 2023*
MULTIPLE BEST IN SHOW WINNER
NATIONAL SPECIALTY WINNER
MULTIPLE SPECIALTY WINNER
MULTIPLE GROUP WINNER

GCH ROCKLEDGE KNOCK ON WOOD AT THORNTON'S


IRISH TERRIER

*AKC STATS

About the same time that Erin entered the Irish Terrier scene, Howard Waterhouse of Dublin acquired "Killiney Boy." The dog had several previous owners, including one who left him behind after an estate sale. In *The Irish Terrier* (1907), author F.M. Jowett describes Killiney Boy as a "rare good, game little Terrier with a hard coat and grand Terrier head, but rather low on the legs." Killiney Boy did some winning in the show ring, but his claim to fame was earned as a sire.

Matings of Champion Erin and Killiney Boy, planned by William Graham, produced outstanding offspring. The first litter produced Ch. Playboy, the best show dog of his day, and two other champions.

The influence of Erin and Killiney Boy was broadly stamped on the breed with very close breeding among their offspring. As a result, twenty-five years after the first breeding, ninety percent of the Irish Terrier show dogs were descended from the pair. The bitch found in a hamper at a show, and the once-deserted dog, became the mother and father of the breed.

Irish Terriers arrived in the United States in 1878. Two years later the first one was shown, James Watson's "Kathleen." The following year, the Westminster Kennel Club offered Irish Terrier classes for the first time. In 1897, the Irish Terrier Club of America was formed and the original members adapted the breed standard of the Irish Terrier Club of Great Britain and Ireland.

Over the past 100 years, Irish Terriers have been influenced more by one individual than any other: Jeremiah J. O'Callaghan. Noted Irish Terrier author George Kidd fondly referred to him as the "Dean of the Irish Terrier fancy." Jerry bred his first Irish Terrier in 1902 and continued a breeding program until his death in 1973. With a keen instinct for breeding the right dogs, his Kilvara bloodlines became highly influential. Jerry outlived his early Irish Terrier breeder rivals, and the new breeders chose to found their kennels with his Kilvara dogs. As a result, a majority of today's winning dogs trace back to Kilvara stock.

Born on September 27, 1886 in County Cork, Ireland, Jerry O'Callaghan came to Boston at age 11. In 1902, his uncle, Father O'Gorman, gave him his first Irish Terrier. Later that year, his uncle returned to Ireland and purchased Celtic Badger who became the foundation dog of the Kilvara Kennel. Ch. Celtic Badger provided the blood link between Ireland's top dogs of the day and the American Kilvara line.



Killiney Boy (sitting) and Peter Bolger. Photograph of 1885 oil painting by R. Waterhouse, a relative of H. Waterhouse who owned the dogs. (Copyrighted by Marg G. Best and may not be reproduced without her permission.)



Ch. Mile End Barrister, pictured in a 1903 painting by Maud Earl.



Aroostook Aviator at 9 months, bred and owned by Jeremiah J. O'Callaghan.

O'Callaghan felt that the bitch, Crow Gill Patricia, purchased by Father O'Gorman from F.M. Jowett, also played a key role in the development of the Kilvara strain: "Jowett's dogs had good coats. Patricia was bred to Celtic Badger and produced Celtic Dream. She was bred to Ch. Thorncroft Sportsman, a great dog but with a poor coat. They produced Kilvara Lily. She was smooth-coated. Meanwhile, I had seen Andrew Albright's Reprieve, an import from Mile End Kennels. Reprieve had an open coat but he was assertive. I bought him and bred him to Lily to try to give his puppies an undercoat. It worked. A bitch from his mating, Aroostook Meg, was bred to Aroostook Historic and this produced Aroostook Aviator, a great sire."

Lewellyn Powers founded Aroostook Kennels in 1912. In 1917, Jerry O'Callaghan joined forces with Powers. All of the dogs other than those of O'Callaghan's breeding were sold. The frequent show ring success of the Aroostook dogs during this period was curtailed by Jerry's 22 month of service in the U.S. Army during World War I. While Jerry was in France, hard times forced Powers to sell most of the Aroostook dogs. Upon O'Callaghan's discharge, the Aroostook partnership was dissolved and the Kilvara prefix reactivated. He acquired Aroostook Aviator from Powers and began to rebuild.

Aroostook Aviator became an outstanding sire and a major player in the intense linebreeding of the Kilvara program. Bred to a wide variety of bitches, even smooth and kinky-coated ones, he almost always seemed to correct their faults. Aroostook Aviator appears in the extended pedigrees of most strictly American-bred Irish Terriers. Most would agree that he has influenced American Irish Terriers more than any other individual dog. ■

JUDGING THE IRISH TERRIER

A DISCUSSION OF SOME IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE BREED STANDARD

by RONALD HOH

You walk into the Best in Breed show ring where 20-25 handsome Irish Terriers stand before you with carefully groomed coats, beautiful level top lines and erect tails. All of them demonstrate the self-confidence in personalities that the breed demands. They pose majestically when noticing each other and show strong interest and anticipation as the judging occurs.

What parameters do you use in deciding the winning dogs and bitches? The Official Standard of the Irish Terrier provides judges with a blueprint of an ideal Irish Terrier and additional information in this area may be found elsewhere, including *The Irish Terrier Club of America 1997 Handbook, Centennial Edition*.

This article, however, will focus on certain conformation and temperament features that are major elements of the Breed Standard and key components of breed type—the total of all characteristics by which a dog is recognized as a member of its breed. The areas discussed herein include overall appearance, temperament and expression, size, headpiece and eyes, neck and shoulders and movement.

I. OVERALL APPEARANCE

The Irish Terrier Breed Standard relating to "Overall Appearance" stresses the importance of such an element and specifically provides that:

"The overall appearance of the Irish Terrier is important. In conformation, he must be more than the sum of his parts. He must be all-of-a-piece; a balanced vital picture of symmetry, proportion and harmony; ...convey character; ...be active, lithe and wiry in movement, with great animation; sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure, but at the same time free of clumsiness, for speed, power and endurance are most essential. He must be neither 'cobby' nor 'cloddy,' but should be built on lines of speed, with graceful, racing outline."

COMMENT

The Breed Standard in the area of "Overall Appearance" immediately contains one of only two uses in that Standard of the term "important," and then makes repeated reference to the importance of very similar terms: "balance," "symmetry," "harmony," "graceful" and "free from clumsiness." The general impression must therefore be one of balance and moderation, with symmetrical lines and no exaggerated features. The breed should also be neither cloddy (thick, low set, comparative heavy), nor cobby (Significantly short bodied or compact); but instead should be formed on lines of speed, with a graceful racy outline. As a judge first looks at the Irish in the ring, his/her eye should focus upon those with the best balance and symmetry, whose profiles are upright with heads held relatively high and not severely forward, with deep muscular chests and no noticeable prosternum, arched necks seemingly flowing into well laid back shoulders and strong straight toplines. The tail should be set rather high on the back, generally straight, with plenty of "dog behind the tail."

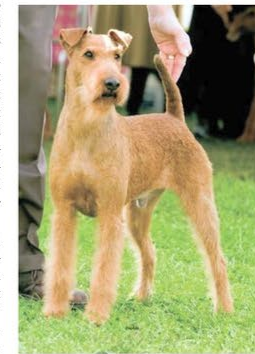
In marked contrast to the breed standards for many other terrier breeds, the Irish Terrier Standard contains no specific indication of the preferred length of the dog between the withers and the tail set, nor any comparison of that length with the measurement between the withers and the ground. It only states that the "short back is not characteristic of the Irish Terrier and is extremely objectionable," and indicates that the body "should be moderately long," without any indication of what constitutes a "short back" or "moderately long."

Given those definitional absences, how should a judge make a determination of whether the dog or bitch which he/she is examining does or does not have the "extremely objectionable" short back? It would seem that a judge, in making decisions in the above areas,

should return his/her emphasis to the repeated references in the Standard to "balance," "proportion" and "symmetry," and not penalize an Irish Terrier for having a "short back," unless it is clear that such a back renders the dog not in balance, out of proportion, or asymmetrical. So long as a possible "short back" does not inhibit the dog's movement or impact any of the above standards, those elements generally should trump any objectionable nature of a perceived "short back."

Similarly, so long as the Irish Terrier has the elemental values of balance and related matters set forth above, he should not be judged to be "short backed" if it is nonetheless apparent that he is "built on lines of speed, with a graceful, racing outline," where "racing" should be defined as strong, powerful yet limber, without being too sturdy or heavy. Certainly, Irish Terriers should not have the short backs characteristic of Fox Terriers; at the same time, they should not be penalized in that area if the other above-cited elements contained in Breed Standard exist, in view of the relative ambiguity of the Standard in this area.

Finally in this Overall Appearance area, the Breed Standard calls for an Irish



Terrier to "be all-of-a-piece," "balanced," symmetrical and "sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure," but at the same time his most essential characteristics should be "speed, power and endurance." This Breed Standard combination of balance, strength, power, endurance and speed are indicative of the elements of a well-rounded terrier, who on first appearance should fill your eye and simply demand that you look at him. The Irish Terrier should make his own any ring into which he enters and should clearly show "fire and determination"—elements which the Standard indicates are of "utmost importance."

II. TEMPERAMENT AND EXPRESSION

The Breed Standard for Irish Terriers describes "Temperament," and its importance in the breed, as follows:

"Temperament—The temperament of the Irish Terrier reflects his early background; he was family pet, guard dog and bunter. He is good tempered, spirited and game. It is of the utmost importance that the Irish Terrier show fire and animation. There is a heedless, reckless pluck about the Irish Terrier which is characteristic and which, coupled with the headlong dash, blind to all consequences, with which he rushes at his adversary, has earned the breed the proud epithet of 'Daredevil.' He is of good temper, most affectionate and absolutely loyal to mankind. Tender and forbearing with those he loves, this rugged, stout-hearted terrier will guard his master and children with utter contempt for danger or hurt. His life is one continuous and eager offering of loyal and faithful companionship and devotion. He is ever on guard and stands between his home and all that threatens."

COMMENT

The subject of temperament takes up one of the largest elements of the Breed Standard and is a highly important element in the judging of the breed. Additionally, that "Temperament" section also contains numerous references to the proper "Expression" of the Irish Terrier. Indeed, the Breed Standard states in this area that "It is of the utmost importance that the Irish Terrier show fire and animation."

But how does one measure such "fire and animation," temperament and expression within the controlled confines of the show ring? In addition to the usual ways of such measurement via the judge's walk down the line of entries and upon the dog's return in judging from the "down and back," there are at least three other ways for a judge to make such an assessment. First

and clearly best in pursuit of that goal, a judge should not hesitate in sparring at minimum what he/she views as the competition's top dogs and top bitches as an aid in determining temperament and expression and thus his/her breed placements. Sparring allows the dogs to show on their own and to react to the other dogs. It allows the Irish to demonstrate "spirit, fire and animation" and his "on guard" nature, while at the same time showing his "good temper" (twice mentioned in this element of the Standard), his "heedless, reckless, pluck," and his devotion to his master and family.

Generally, sparring of Irish Terriers should be conducted separately by the gender of the dog, with the judge calling out two or three at a time from each gender, telling the handlers to "let them look at each other." Dogs in sparring generally should be facing each other and should not be less than three feet away from each other.

The judge should also leave room in the ring to allow his/her observation of all of the sparring dogs from all angles. The judge should allow the sparred dogs time to look at each other and to provide the desired reaction. Neither overt aggression nor shyness is the proper reaction during the spar. The Irish Terrier should present a commanding presence in the ring during the spar and be willing to stand his/her ground when facing a competitor. The dog should appear comfortable and confident and show the necessary fire and animation in the spar.

Sparring is the best way to test temperament and proper expression and other stacking, baiting or cajoling can't best show such elements in the dog. He can only do that on his own and the spar provides him the best opportunity to do so.

A second way of measuring Irish Terrier temperament is to allow the dogs when initially lined up in the ring to decide which direction they wish to stand vis-a-vis their fellow contenders; i.e., not require them all to face in the same direction. The judge has a better opportunity to see the real dog when the Irish are able to face and watch each other while in the ring.

A third way to measure temperament—and in my view the least effective—is for the judge to regularly but occasionally watch the other dogs in line in the ring for short time periods while he/she is judging another dog. Since dogs not being judged at a particular time have the ability at such times to watch and sometimes interact with other dogs in the ring, that action likewise may help a judge make determinations in the area of temperament.

Certain elements contained in the Irish Terrier Breed Standard also address the subject of Expression. The eyes are to be dark brown and not prominent and "full of life, fire and intelligence, showing an intense expression." The ears are to be moderately thick, small and V-shaped, set well on the head with the top of the folded ear well above the skull level and with the ears dropping forward close to the outside corner of the eye. These elements, as well as the length, depth and breadth of the head discussed further below and the black coloring of the nose, should fully accentuate the fearless, spirited, reckless nature of the Irish Terrier expression and should be demonstrated to the judge at a first glance.

III. SIZE

Although the size of the Irish Terrier has been debated for many years, the actual language of the Breed Standard in that area is relatively clear. The height at the withers should be about 18 inches and the "most desired" weight is 27 pounds for the dog and 25 pounds for the bitch. Despite the relative clarity of these elements of the Breed Standard, most of the Irish shown today are larger. This may be due in part to the Standard's recognition that as the guide height and weight figures "serve as a guide to both breeder and judge," and "weight is not the last word in judgment." Certainly, so long as the overall appearance of the oversized (or undersized) dog or bitch remains "strong and sturdy," sets forth a "balanced, vital picture of symmetry, proportion and harmony," maintains a "graceful, racing outline," and is neither "cobby nor cloddy," that dog or bitch likely meets the standard, given the "wobble room" provided by inclusion of the above height and weight language in the Standard.

At the same time, however, judges should keep in mind that Irish Terriers were never intended to be big dogs. With an ideal height of 18 inches, they are intended to be only 2½ inches taller at the withers than the Smooth Fox Terrier and Wire Fox Terrier and a full five inches shorter than the male Airedale Terrier. The words "most desirable" and "approximately" contained in the Standard concerning weight and height should be viewed as advisory and it would be improper to penalize an otherwise outstanding Irish Terrier in the ring because he/she was an inch or two or a pound or two above the standard. That said, dogs and bitches now measuring to the standard appear relatively somewhat small and it would be improper for the breed to become universally over-sized.

In general, the height and weight elements of the Standard, while not determinative, should be strived for by judges and breeders. Irish Terriers should come as close as possible to these height and weight standards. But so long as the other elements of the Standard are met, those advisory Breed Standard elements should not alone be the determinative factors in judges' decisions.

IV. HEAD AND EYES

Among the categories it addresses, the Irish Terrier Breed Standard devotes the largest amount of Standard description to the breed's head. The Standard also briefly addresses the Irish Terrier eyes. The Standard provides in those areas as follows:

"HEAD—Long, but in nice proportion to the rest of the body; the skull flat, rather narrow between the ears and narrowing slightly toward the eyes; free from wrinkle, with the stop barely noticeable except in profile. The jaws must be strong and muscular, but not too full in the cheek and of good punishing length. The foreface must not fall away appreciably between or below the eyes; instead, the modeling should be delicate. An exaggerated foreface, or a noticeably short foreface, disturbs the proper balance of the head and is not desirable. The foreface and skull from occiput to stop should be approximately equal in length. Excessive muscular development of the cheeks or bony development of the temples, conditions which are described by the fancier as 'cheeks', or 'strong in bead', or 'thick in skull' are objectionable. The 'bumpy' bead, in which the skull presents two lumps of bony structure above the eyes, is to be faulted. The hair on the upper and lower jaws should be similar in quality and texture to that on the body and of sufficient length to present an appearance of additional strength and finish to the foreface. Either the profuse, goat-like beard, or the absence of beard, is unstylish and undesirable."

"EYES—Dark brown in color, small, not prominent; full of life, fire and intelligence, showing an intense expression. The light or yellow eye is most objectionable and is a bad fault."

COMMENT

Although much of the above language is both self-explanatory and definitive, a few areas in my view require comment. The first concerns the requirement that "the foreface and skull from occiput to stop should be approximately equal in length" between the nose and the stop

and the stop and the end of the skull. Too short a foreface produces an inelegant and unbalanced look and limits the desired "good punishing length" of the jaws; too long a foreface upsets both balance and expression and produces a look that the foreface is too weighty. The foreface likewise should not fall away to any significant degree between or below the eyes and should be delicately modeled. There should be no visible deviation between the cheeks and the foreface. The balance called for in the Standard is also best achieved where a stop is hardly visible, even in profile. The head itself should be balanced, like the body.

Second concerning the eyes, the eyes make substantial contributions to the Irish Terrier's expression and should be full of intelligence and fire. The correct eye expression is determined by the size and color of the eye and how it is placed on the head. The eyes must be relatively small and deep-set, must not be too far apart, should be dark brown and must be almond shaped, with dark eyebrows and dark brown skin around the eyes accentuating the desired spirited and animated expression.

V. NECK AND SHOULDERS

The Irish Terrier Standard calls for a neck "...of fair length and gradually widening toward the shoulders," and for shoulders that are "...fine, long and sloping well into the back."

Under these standards, the Irish Terrier shoulders should be fine, long and well laid back and should present to the touch an uninterrupted flow from the ears to the neck through the shoulders, strong and straight in elegant, continuous lines that flow into each other all the way to the dog's tailset. There should be no appearance of slackness behind the shoulders. The connection between the neck and shoulders should present a clean line between them and the shoulders should be properly laid in at the shoulder muscle convergence. The shoulders should not approach the neck a ninety degree angle, in that this would negatively affect the lithe, graceful racing outline and symmetry called for in the Standard.

The elegance of the neck defines the preferred proud carriage of the Irish Terrier head. The neck should be long and run in an arched continuous line blending into the back and shoulders, united in strength and elegance.

VI. MOVEMENT

The Irish Terrier Breed Standard does not directly address Movement as a separate category. It does, however, make indirect reference to that element in other Standard categories. Movement

under the Standard should be "active, lithe and wiry ...with great animation; ...free from clumsiness, ...built on lines of speed;" not "cobby or cloddy;" with "legs moderately long, well set from the shoulders, perfectly straight; ...both fore and hind legs should move straight forward when traveling" ...with "elbows working clear of the sides."

Under those Standard elements, it is clear that Irish Terrier movement should involve full freedom of action, straight and far-reaching, with a steady even gait involving substantial reach and drive. The breed should cover ground with minimal effort and maintain a level top line while doing so. When moving at a trot, the legs should be parallel to each other, the front legs should reach at minimum to the level of the front of the dog's head and the back legs should push out strongly—indications of balanced angulation front and rear. Forelegs and hind legs should be carried straight and parallel. Weaving, bouncing, sidwinding, or stilted and irregular movements are not appropriate in the Irish Terrier.

CONCLUSION

This article has generally not highlighted the perceived faults of the Irish Terrier breed, in that I believe that we as breeders and judges often spend too little time on the positive qualities of any breed and too much time on perceived faults. Breed type should be more important than minor individual faults. That said, the best dog should be the one closest to all of the elements of the Breed Standard, the one who most impresses us when viewed against elements of that Standard and the one who convinces us that he/she is the best based upon his/her actions and bearing. It is hoped that the above discussion of some of the most important elements of the Irish Terrier Breed Standard will assist judges and breeders in determining and producing the best possible Irish Terrier—whether it be in conformation competition or in breeding and raising this wonderful breed. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ronald Hob is the Vice President of the Irish Terrier Club of America and a relatively new Terrier judge from Sacramento, California. He is also an active member of several regional Irish Terrier clubs and one all breed club. The views expressed in this Article are those of the author; they do not necessarily represent the views of the Irish Terrier Club of America.

TO JUDGE AN IRISH

By Cory Rivera

How overwhelming is it, to walk into a breed ring with 20 handsome Irish Terriers and decide on a winning line-up? What parameters do you use in your decision making process? Yes, the breed standard is there for us to interpret, but to judge an IT, you need to have a "feel" for the breed. It means owning a terrier or two, in order to better understand them. This statement is basically true for all breeds, but terriers do stand out from the other groups. Temperament is paramount, especially for the Irish, as well too structure, movement, coat, overall appearance and expression. Thankfully, there are a few different approaches in judging an Irish line-up that will help you decide. Most are methods of conducting and controlling the Irish Terriers and their handlers in your ring.

If you have not owned an Irish Terrier or any other terrier breed, what do you base your decisions on in the ring to see temperament? According to the Irish Terrier Club of America, (ITCA) "it is of the utmost importance that the Irish Terrier show fire and animation." Temperament is referred to more often than any other feature of the breed. What do you do to see this incredible "temperament"? First is

the way the IT's are lined up in the ring. It is not necessary they be exactly head to tail in a perfectly straight line. Most Irish like to look at each other and prefer not to be overly handled. This allows you to see them acting natural, not a push-button dog. IT's should be able to watch the other dogs or bitches in the ring, and let them face the direction they want. Then you can see the real dog.

Another method to seeing temperament is sparring; allowing you to see any number of dogs or bitches separate from the line-up and closer together. This can help you in making easier eliminations and final decisions. Sometimes it is at these moments where a dog might "pull themselves together" and really make a big impression. Start with dogs then bitches, sometimes if there is a larger number of IT's, you can mix the two sexes. Direct the handlers where you want them to stand, allowing yourself room to be able to walk around the sparrers. Clearly instruct the handlers to not get close, as "running up" happens frequently. "Running up" is both dangerous and distracting, as sometimes you might have a novice handler in the ring, who is unsure of how to control their IT if another dog gets too close. Allow the dogs time to look at each other. It might take a few moments, but it is worth the effort. The dogs should

maintain control, no fighting. Handlers should not string up their dogs either. Outbursts do occur, but growling and lip-curling is acceptable.

In evaluating an IT line-up, often it is easiest to eliminate the obvious. Most essential, is the over-all appearance, which is "all-of-a-piece, a balanced vital picture of symmetry, proportion and harmony. Furthermore, he must convey character. This terrier must be active, lithe and wiry in movement, with great animation. The breed should be sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure, but at the same time free from clumsiness, for speed, power and endurance. The IT must be neither "cobby nor cloddy" but should be built on lines of speed, with a graceful racing outline," by ITCA. So, any obvious undesirable structural formations should be easily identifiable. This can include a low tail set, uneven topline, low joining of the neck into the shoulder and whether it is properly layed-in at the muscle convergence, low ear position, short-back, lacking angulation, etc., as all of these faults are easily identifiable in looking at the over-all appearance of the Irish Terrier.

The head of an IT is very important, in the days of the point system (not now in use) the standard granted the Irish head 20 points, the most of any other part of

"THE SIZE OF THE IT HAS BEEN A CONSTANT CONTROVERSY. The standard says about 18 inches and 25 to 27 lbs., but now many Irish are far larger."

the dog. It is long, but balanced, not full in cheek or bumpy over the eyes. The ears are set high, and the tips fall to the outside corner of the eye. The teeth are not overshot or undershot. The eyes are dark brown. The beard should present finish to the forehead and a goat-like beard is undesirable. This describes the construction of the head, but the important part is the expression. When the Irish is looking at a person or at food or a toy, he is happy and has a kind expression. In the show ring, he will pull himself up and show a characteristic of a true Irish, with all of the "devil-may-care" attitude and expression, which is so necessary and desirable in this breed.

The body of the Irish is different than most other terriers. They are not short-backed, like a wire-fox, but have length and a distinct tuck-up at the loin. The neck is of fair length, gracefully arched, and blend into the shoulders. The shoulders should be layed back, sloping into the back. The chest should be deep but not wide or well-sprung and curve upward from the lowest point of the tuck-up. The chest should not be lower than the elbows. The back must be strong and straight, and free from an appearance of slackness or "dip" behind the shoulders. The loin should be strong and muscular and arch slightly as it curves over the thighs and not the back or topline of the dog. This muscular curve gives strength to the lon-

ger back. The croup should be straight and short, giving the tail an upward set, with plenty of rear extending beyond the tail, (known as the back porch). The thighs are strong and muscular, hocks near the ground and moderate bend of stifle. Feet should be moderately small, toes arched and turned, neither out nor in. The legs straight and moderately long and more straight forward when moving. The stifles should not turn outward. "Cowhocks" are intolerable.

The coat should be dense and wiry in texture, having a broken appearance. At the base of the stiff outer coat there should be soft hair that is lighter in color. Almost all colors are acceptable, but many dogs are colored unnaturally for the ring. The IT coat is banded and is not a singular color. On hair convergent lines, as on the neck and rear, there should be variations in color, usually they are lighter in these areas. A patch of white on the chest is permissible. The furnishings should be dense and wiry, without being so full as to hide the shape of the legs. There should not be excess hair anywhere on this breed. If you see an area of an IT that has more or longer hair, examine the structure closely, as this can be a deceptive grooming practice.

The size of the IT has been a constant controversy. The standard says about 18 inches and 25 to 27 lbs., but now many

Irish are far larger. Wickets are no longer in use either, so it is a personal choice to include the element of desired size.

So by using these methods, it should assist you in seeing these important elements of the Irish Terrier. The judges are the true gate-keepers of the dog society. Judges issue their evaluations of dogs based upon the order of the awards given in a ring. It is a public statement of their opinion of the dogs they are judging that day. This is why breeders show their dogs, to get opinions for their value of breeding purposes. So spend some time with a terrier or two and get to know the real personality of the different breeds. I hope some of that time can be spent with an Irish.

BIO

Cory Rivera has been active in Irish Terriers since 1962. A member of ITCA since 1966. Served as secretary and many years on the Board of Governors. She has bred or co-bred over 70 champions. Most were shown and groomed by her. Other breeds that she bred and groomed were Kerry Blue Terriers, Smooth Fox Terriers, Australian Cattle Dogs and Louchen, all under the kennel name of Trackways.



"WE SHOW OUR DOGS TO GET OPINIONS ON THE VALUE FOR BREEDING.

Some breeders only breed the dogs that get their championship and are deemed worthy by the judges."

"THE COAT SHOULD BE DENSE AND WIRY IN TEXTURE, HAVING A BROKEN APPEARANCE."

THE CHALLENGE

Judging Your First Large Entry of Irish Terriers on a Specialty Weekend

By Bruce L. Petersen



It's a big challenge for a judge -- your first opportunity to judge a large entry of a somewhat rare breed. The bad news is you're not going to see a great deal consistency in the entry. The good

news is you're going to have a chance to sort through a large entry of 30 to 60 Irish Terriers and find some good ones.

Take a deep breath and watch your first large class enter the ring. Set up your entry and take the time to carefully study them

in profile to identify those with the proper graceful racing outline. Remind yourself an Irish Terrier is not short-backed like most of the other terriers you judge. Repeat in your mind -- "an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired fox terrier ... an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired fox terrier ... an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired terrier." Good. You've put your mind in the right space.

The time you take judging the breed in profile will be the most important of the day. An Irish Terrier has a raciness of build and great freedom of action that does not exist in a good fox terrier where cobbiness is highly desired. The graceful, racing outline is the key breed characteristic and promoting its preservation is now in your hands.

Some attractive headpieces stand out as you study each dog in profile. The exaggerated forefaces and the noticeably short forefaces disturb your eye. You're drawn to the dogs with properly balanced skulls -- the foreface and the skull from occiput to stop approximately equal in length and the stop hardly noticeable.

You see a difference in necks and shoulder construction. You appreciate the dog with a shoulder placed far enough back that in profile you see a bit of the breastbone in front. The same dog has an elegant neck of fair length.

As you look at your entry you see some short-backed dogs and then some with the moderately long bodies. But wait. You note the longer-bodied dogs have differing rib to loin proportions. The good ones have long rib cages and short loins. The shorter-ribbed, long-loined entries lack



the well-defined tuck-up that is so pleasing to your eye.

Tail sets. Some have them. Some don't. The properly constructed Irish Terrier hindquarters include level hips, a high tail set and moderately bent stifles. The dogs with a steep pelvis exhibit low tail sets and can be straight in the stifle. Now take a stroll around the ring and look for that breed defining keen wicked expression. You'll like the dogs with that exhibit the varminty look of devil-may-care recklessness.

There you have it. You haven't moved or put your hands on any Irish Terrier yet and already the good ones are standing out. That first long look at the dogs set up in profile is really paying off.

You're ready to move the entry around the ring and view their movement in profile. A dog with well laid-back shoulders will reach to the ground directly underneath his nose, moving his legs straight-forward in a parallel track, enabling him to stay in suspension until the drive created by the hindquarters is expended. A dog with moderately bent stifles will exhibit good rear extension.

Unfortunately, most of the dogs will have straight shoulders with reduced reach which forces them to compensate by moving their front legs in a semi-circular arch



to stay suspended until the force created by the hindquarters is expended. This inefficient front movement increases the impact

on the front shoulders and legs, thus wasting the drive created by the hindquarters. You will see an up-and-down motion at the withers.

It's time to get your hands on the dogs. Both the scissors and the level bite are correct. Look for dogs with long balanced heads that are clean in the cheek. The correct skull is flat with a strong brow to protect the small dark eyes. There should be no ridges or bumps behind the eyes. The eyes appear small and not prominent because they are set moderately deep into the skull with good bone underneath them.

The distinctive ear set adds the finishing touch to the keen expression. They are set high, well above the level of the skull, with the tips falling over and approaching the eye corners. Because the ears are set so high on the head, there is an illusion of the skull being rather narrow between the ears. As you examine the shoulders and body you'll notice some dogs have excessive coat built up to create the illusion of good laybacks and level toplines. Soft toplines are a serious fault. The Irish Terrier Breed Standard is very clear on this point: "The back must be strong and straight, free from an appearance slackness or 'dip' behind the shoulders."

The best coat is dense and wiry with a distinct broken appearance. The broken coat hugs the body creating a tight water-resistant jacket. Underneath the stiff outer coat is an undercoat of softer, finer hair.

The furnishings should have a similar texture to that on the body. Coat colors can range from wheat to red.

Feel for the last floating rib so you can determine the ratio of rib to loin. It should be a 2/3 rib to 1/3 loin proportion of the overall length of the dog from shoulder to hip. Rib to loin proportion is of the utmost importance to endurance and movement. A long rib cage and short loin serve a working Irish Terrier well. The long rib cage protects the vital organs and a short loin



and slam their tails forward -- ears button down on heads and small dark eyes flash the breed's characteristic fire.

Sparring is not about dogs out of control. It's about dogs standing their ground, alertly prepared for challengers. Keep your show ring under your control. Set the dogs up at a reasonable distance apart -- three feet or more. Do not let handlers move their dogs in closer and go nose to nose.

During sparring, an Irish terrier should never back away from another dog. But don't be surprised if the young class dogs are more interested in playing with each other than sparring. Also, after you spar dogs, their "blood is up" and they will not exhibit their best movement.

The Irish Terrier Club of America encourages the proper use of sparring. It

allows the dogs to show themselves, providing an excellent opportunity to fully evaluate and appreciate attitude, expression and the breed defining "graceful racing out-



or reward aggressive behavior. You're looking for assertive dogs that show fire and animation in the ring.

It's time for the "down and back." Both fore and hind legs should move straight forward when traveling and will naturally converge at a faster gait. Keep in mind that a dog with straight shoulders can move toward you clean because movement is severely restricted by the upright shoulders. That's why profile movement is a better gage of a properly constructed Irish Terrier.

Let's spar some dogs! When Irish Terriers are allowed to look eye to eye in the show ring, the full beauty of the breed springs forward. The good ones rise up on their toes, beautifully extend their necks



efficiently transmits the drive of the rear quarters forward along the spine. A very slightly arched short loin keeps the spine from bouncing when the dog moves and the topline remains level. The long-loined Irish Terriers are not efficient workers. As they move, their bodies sway from side to side and the top line bounces.

Tails should be carried high. An Irish Terrier should not fear other dogs, strange people or strange places. You can't put up a dog that stands or moves with its tail between its legs. Likewise do not tolerate

line" described in the Breed Standard.

It's the night before your first big Irish Terrier judging assignment. Relax; you're going to have fun judging the "daredevils." Read the Illustrated Study of the Irish Terrier Standard one more time. Close your eyes and drift off to sleep saying to yourself: "an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired fox terrier, an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired fox terrier, an Irish Terrier is not a red wire-haired terrier ...

zzzzzzzzzzzz ■

THE IRISH TERRIER

THE IDEAL MID-SIZED DOG

by RONALD HOH

With a spring in his step, an eternal twinkle in his eye and attitude in every fiber of his body, the Irish Terrier very well qualifies as "one of the most magnificent of God's creatures in the dog world." Devoted, yet free-spirited, fierce sentries yet gentle with children, Irish Terriers have enraptured their owners and breed enthusiasts for generations. They are energetic, courageous and adventurous dogs who are affectionate, loyal and sweet to their family owners; are bold, inquisitive and intelligent; and make terrific and entertaining companions. They are playful and relatively easy to train; and despite their spirited nature, still want to please their owners. They do well with active children and are curious, bold and ready for action or adventure.

Because of their strong protective and watchdog natures, the Irish Terrier requires an owner who is dominant, calm and firm; yet gentle in training and approach. Irish Terriers are also full of terrier energy and normally need at least average amounts of exercise. When in public, they should be leashed and generally kept away from small non-canine animals. Additionally, the Irish Terrier has a tendency to explore and to chase such animals as squirrels or mice and thus should be prevented from running off-leash in open, unsecured areas.

HISTORY

Irish legend has it that the Irish Terrier was created by leprechauns, but what is known is that the Irish Terrier is one of the oldest of the terrier breeds. The breed



"Once you get to know an Irish Terrier well enough to get acquainted with his personality, to recognize the depth of love, to behold his proud almost swaggering carriage, his catlike grace of movement, blinding speed and coordination of muscle and his magnificent courage and heart and to see his unnerving intelligence displayed again and again, you will be convinced that the Irish Terrier is one of the most magnificent of God's creations in the dog family."

—*Long-Legged Irishman, Biography of a Terrier* by Byron N. Martin

is about 2000 years old, but the earliest images of it are found in paintings from the 1700s. Although originally developed in County Cork as one of the terrier breed hunting dogs, the breed later evolved largely into a farm dog, whose primary function was to serve as a ratter and guard dog, although they were still used to flush and retrieve game. While prized in Ireland for its courage, hardiness, unsurpassed speed and skill as a ratter, the Irish Terrier was also famed for its ability to work in virtually any climate and for its ideal temperament for life in close proximity to people. Irish Terriers are referred to in Irish manuscripts as “the poor man’s sentinel, the farmer’s friend and the gentleman’s favorite,” and were originally bred more for their working qualities of pluck and gameness than for their looks. At that time, they were of many types and colors—black and tan, grey and brindle, wheat and red. Color or size apparently did not matter at that time, so long as they were hardy and game.

It was not until 1873, when showing in the Dublin Ireland dog show, that the breed first became popular and that any form of standardization of the breed was deemed necessary. The first Irish Terrier breed club was established in Dublin in 1879 and Irish Terriers were the first members of the terrier group to be recognized by the English Kennel Club as a native Irish breed, shortly before the end of the nineteenth century. By the 1880’s, the Irish Terrier was the fourth most popular breed in Ireland and England. They became somewhat popular in the United States when brought there for the first time in the late nineteenth century, achieving a popularity ranking of thirteenth among 79 then recognized AKC breeds in the 1920s. Prior to

World War I, they were taken to all parts of the British Empire. The Irish Terrier Association, founded in England in 1911, included as Vice Presidents members of English, German and Indian royalty, including the Hapsburgs and England’s King Edward VII, as well as high ranking military officers.

During World War I, Irish Terriers achieved significant acclaim serving as message carriers between troops on the front lines, largely in France and showed great courage as sentry dogs, messengers, guards and ratters in the terrible conditions of trench warfare that existed on the Western Front. Their bravery and spirit, as well as great tenacity as shown in that situation, led to the following quote from the Commandant of the British War Dog School, where Irish Terriers were trained for their wartime service:

“My opinion of this breed is indeed a high one. They are highly sensitive dogs of fine mettle and those of us who respect and admire the finer qualities of mind will find them amply reflected in these Terriers. They are extraordinarily intelligent, faithful and honest and a man who has one of them will never lack a true friend.”

Famed author Jack London’s books *Jerry of the Islands* and *Michael, Brother of Jerry* written in 1915 and 1916—shortly before London’s death—were about Irish Terriers that, according to the bloodlines described in the beginning of the books likely were based on real Irish Terriers. The breed has also been featured in art by several known British and American artists, including Maud Earl, Thomas Blinks, Margaret Kirmse, Morgan Dennis, Ric Chasoudian and current Irish Terrier breeder and exhibitor Ellis West. The Walt Disney Company also loosely based the character of “Tramp” in the classic *Lady and the Tramp* upon an Irish Terrier.

Former Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon King also owned several Irish Terriers—all named Pat—and apparently had seances to “communicate” with the first Pat after that dog’s death. Irish Terriers also served as long-time mascots for the University of Notre Dame Fighting Irish football team providing, among other things, halftime entertainment for enthusiastic crowds. Finally in this arts and culture area, the Irish Terrier breed was featured in the 2007 movie *Firehouse Dog*, in which an Irish Terrier was cast as a canine hero—a designation not surprising given the breed’s wartime heroics.

Although the Irish Terrier is not now as popular a breed as it was in the 1920s and 1930s, those of us who are active in breeding and raising Irish Terriers generally prefer it that way, since there is currently little or no danger that the Irish Terrier will be improperly overbred, as can occur in many of the current most popular U.S. breeds.

THE BREED’S WIDE-RANGING FUNCTIONS

The Irish Terrier is in my view one of the few AKC recognized breeds that can still be termed both a work and a show dog. Versatility should be the middle name of the Irish Terrier. Although not primarily an earth dog, there is much to commend the breed in many sporting contexts. Formal activities engaged in by Irish Terriers include bird flushing, lure coursing, livestock protection, barn hunt, land/water retrieving, therapy work, ferretting/ratting, tracking and hunting of vermin and den animals, police and military work, 4-H activities, agility, rally, obedience, conformation and canine good citizenship.



In addition to such more formal activities, Irish Terriers are also more than willing participants in virtually every outdoor activity, including among other things mountain climbing, boating, swimming, sled pulling and skateboarding.

The breed will heartily adapt to virtually any situation. Not only will Irish Terriers be an enthusiastic, sturdy, tolerate and forgiving playmate for children, they will guard children and the home with fierce determination, devotion and dependability, aided by their strong

ability to assess people and situations. They are bold, fearless and courageous dogs who are affectionately referred to as “the daredevils of the dog world” by breed fanciers, due to the reckless fire of their personalities.

Although they are energetic, the Irish Terrier does not need tons of exercise. A good brisk daily walk and a weekly trip to the dog park or similar function will suffice. Because the breed tends to chase small animals, Irish Terriers should generally be kept on a leash

when not inside a secured area and generally should always have a fenced yard or fenced dog run. In the company of people they love and with adequate exercise, they will be calm and content living in either the city or the country.

The Irish Terrier is playful and will happily spend hours in the yard engaging in numerous play functions. After a tough day of play, you can anticipate that your Irish Terrier will snuggle up with you on the couch and expect his tummy to be rubbed until he falls asleep.

“IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1873,
WHEN SHOWING IN THE DUBLIN IRELAND DOG SHOW,
**THAT THE BREED FIRST
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"IN CONTRAST PARTICULARLY TO MANY OF THE LARGER BREEDS, IRISH TERRIERS ARE ONE OF THE MOST HEALTHY BREEDS AND THERE ARE NO KNOWN HEALTH CONDITIONS OR PROBLEMS THAT ARE SEEN CONSISTENTLY IN THE BREED."

IRISH TERRIER BREED FEATURES

Irish Terriers when full grown stand about 18 to 19 inches at the shoulder and normally weigh 25 to 28 pounds—small enough to be carried for short distances when necessary. They are double coated, with a coarse, wiry topcoat and a softer, fine undercoat. They do not shed. While no dog breed is entirely non-allergenic, Irish Terriers produce less dander than the vast majority of other breeds and people with low to mild allergies often have little or no allergic reactions to them.

Although the Irish Terrier coat can be clipped, that coat maintenance method is not recommended, since doing so impacts the water resistant element of the breed's double coat, makes the coat grow softer and can negatively affect the depth of the breed's natural red color. Instead, the preferred method of grooming is called "stripping"—plucking out the dead hair of the outer coat using the forefinger and either the thumb or a dull stripping knife. Stripping should be done on a pet coat about three times per year, starting at about six months of age. With practice, it is possible to maintain the Irish Terrier coat by weekly raking it with a stripping knife. Otherwise, daily brushing and some maintenance is

needed between the times when the dog is stripped, in order to keep the coat clean. The breed should be bathed only infrequently, in order to preserve body oils necessary for the sheen of the coat.

Although certain not required, it is recommended that the ears of the Irish Terrier be glued down into the proper place on the head by the breeder or other breed expert for at minimum a six to eight month time period immediately prior to the dog's first birthday. Such "training" of the puppy ears produces a significantly more aesthetically pleasing look for the remainder of the dog's life than does the absence of such "training."

The normal life expectancy of the Irish Terrier is between twelve and sixteen years. In contrast particularly to many of the larger breeds, Irish Terriers are one of the most healthy breeds and there are no known health conditions or problems that are seen consistently in the breed. Most Irish Terriers do not show signs of allergies toward food.

CONCLUSION

Irresistible, irrepressible, unforgettable, loving and high spirited, the Irish Terrier is the perfect companion and truly a dog lover's dog. Those of us in the Irish Terrier breed consider ourselves fortunate to regularly interact with dogs in this breed who have hearts warm and

generous, their souls intact and the personality and fire of their terrier ancestors. We are indeed highly blessed by the presence in our lives of a breed with such great charm and character.

In closing, the writer Albert Payson Terhune, in a short story about an Irish Terrier contained in Terhune's *Real Tales of Real Dogs*, wrote a tribute to the Irish Terrier that many in the breed believed to be the finest description of the Irish Terrier in print. I am pleased to be able to share it with you. It reads:

"The Irish Terrier is perhaps the finest dog on earth. He does not throw away his priceless devotion and loyalty on every stranger who may chirp to him. But to the death, he is the comrade, protector and exuberant playmate and sympathizing comforter of the human who has won his heart and respect. He is an Irish gentleman of the deathless old school; a fiery gentleman, from the tips of his braced toes to the rough thatch of his crown. He is more. He has a heart three sizes too big for his shaggy body; a heart that is as white and clean as that of a knight-errant. He is no bully, but will flinch not one-hundredth of an inch from the fight that is forced on him, be the odds ever so impossible against him. There is a psychic side of the Irish Terrier, too, found in almost no other dog—a tinge of the mysticism of the land of his ancestry." ■

The views expressed in this Article are those of the author; they do not necessarily represent the views of the Irish Terrier Club of America.

"WE ARE INDEED HIGHLY BLESSED BY THE PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES OF A BREED WITH SUCH GREAT CHARM AND CHARACTER."

BREED FEATURE

TAKE A LOOK AT THE IRISH TERRIER TYPE

By Hans E. Gruettner
Emsmuehle Kennel

Let me start with: there is a saying, "To know Paddy is to love him". Dogdom has many breeds but only one Irish Terrier. Here is a dog full of blarney, fire and the ability to charm you out of a house and home. His loyalty only ends, with the breaking of a great heart. Here is a dog that has inspired writers such as Jack London the author of *Jerry of the Islands*.

All dogs possess the ability to listen to your tales of woe, but the Irish Terrier is quite capable of understanding and talking back. Is this too much to ask of a dog? Not of an Irish Terrier, for in this heart beats an old soul.

The Type

Type is not only the shape of the head or the ear carriage or the colour or shape of the eyes. Type is more. We need to look at the length of neck and back, the structure and colour of coat, the way the head will turn in balance when the dog moves, how the dog shows himself in the show ring and the temperament especially within the family home and with children. But what is the correct type?

This is so much more difficult to describe. For this it is helpful to look back at the history of the breed. Study old pictures and sculptures, look at the origins of the standard, proportioning this to the time it was written bearing in mind the kind of work the breed was bred for at that time.

Talking about type, it should always be remembered in the words of the late Mr. Gerry Sweeney (Telton Kennels, Ireland): "If you lose the type you lose the breed". For this article the focus will be on the expression of the Irish Terrier, the notorious "D'hurty look". It is the most important point for correct type.



Far too many Irish have lost nowadays the right look and at their angriest only look mildly angry. Once you have seen the D'hurty look it is never forgotten. It is a trademark of the Irish and should be guarded carefully.

When judging and examining Irish Terriers over the world experience has shown how important it is to look for the following essential points in the standard.

The length of the foreface approximately equals the length from the hardly visible stop to occiput. Any deviation and the head will lose all proportion resembling "Pinocchio". The under jaw must be strong with no sign of weakness. It should have good width otherwise this could create

problems for correct teeth placement. No slackness between the cheeks and foreface. The area under the eyes must be well filled. Skull must be falt, contracted or bumpy heads are unacceptable. The head should resemble a cigar box. Heads that are too fine and small are definitely wrong. The nose must be black as it is written in the standard. There is no other colour.

The eyes should never be close together as in the Wire Fox Terrier. They should be set moderately apart looking straightforward. The triangular shape as found in the Bull Terrier is wrong, the correct form is more between almond shaped and round. The colour should never be dark black as this will not allow for any expression of the



soul of the Irish Terrier. Dark brown with dark pigment is most acceptable but never yellow or light eyes.

A further important point is congruency of the ears. Incorrect placement of the ears will destroy the whole picture. Of great importance is the ear set which should not be set too high on the head or too close together. The erect or heavy hound ear is undesirable. By drawing a parallel line over the head of the Irish Terrier from the inner edge of the eye you will come to the place where the inner edge of the ear should be set. The ears are dropping closely forward to the cheek with the tip to the outer edge of the eyes. The top of the folded ear should be well off the level of the skull max. 1.5 cm. The upper edge (the fold) of the ear should not be horizontal and must be slightly dropped to the outside. The hair must be darker in colour than the rest of the body and give the contrast and points more effort to the right expression.

The beard and eyebrows should be from a good hard structure. The wiry and dense texture is preferable. Not too

long so they make the expression soft. Not too short so the expression looks fragile. Even "moderately" is the secret word in the standard. Everything about the Irish Terrier is moderate, exaggerated is not acceptable. ■

BIO

In the world of show dogs I have been very actively involved since 1972 when I got my very first Irish Terrier.



“EVERYTHING ABOUT THE IRISH TERRIER IS MODERATE, exaggerated is not acceptable.”

My first litter was born with the “Emsmühle” prefix in 1977. Since then I have bred more than 120 Champions in different part of the World. It’s include English Champions, International Champions, World Winner and some Crufts Winners as well.

I have been still faithful to the breed and hope that will follow some excellent examples. Together with my wife, I published in 1998 and 2011, two books about the Irish Terrier.

In 2007, the VDH awarded me the Baron von Gingins-Memorial-Medal. This is the highest cynology honors, the Association award for outstanding contribution to the promotion of the breed.

In 1992, I got my judge license for the Terrier breeds. I am approved as an All Breed Judge (Allrounder) from the German Kennel Club (VDH) and the Federation Cynologique Internationale (FCI) in 2012.

BREED FEATURE

OH THE GREAT BREED OF IRISH TERRIERS!

By Katherine “Kitty” Warner

Oh the great breed of Irish Terriers. Everything is true of their majestic courage, wicked intelligence, curious and clown-like antics and loyal companionship. The Irish we see at dog shows is certainly not the dog we see at home. Outside and in the ring, they show their requisite fierceness with snarling lips, dagger eyes, and vocalizations that discuss their mom’s and each others’ questionable lineage. As soon as they are done in the ring, the show ends and a different dog emerges.

For Irish Terrier enthusiasts, we know the Irish is great, but what made them great? I believe it is their humble origins. Long before they went to their first dog show in 1873, they were the Irish farm family dog. They were responsible for keeping predators away from livestock, killing small and medium rodents, specializing in rats. They can go after a badger and be victorious. They also had yet another bigger job, and that was glorified babysitter. The Irish farm families were usually large in numbers, so the Irish looked after the children too. This explains their ability to be extremely tolerant of teasing, badgering and general chaos.

I know they are tolerant, as they too were my siblings, nursemaids and babysitters. Our girl “Mitch” taught me how to

walk, allowing me to hold onto her hair on her back for balance, never moving faster or away from me. She often withstood my sitting on her back and pulling her ears like a pony, when my Mom put her in my playpen. Our Irish Terriers and other terrier breeds allowed me to dress them in clothes, attending tea parties with hats and clip-on earrings, (the earrings never lasted more than a couple of seconds before they were hurled into the air from the dogs shaking their ears.) They never growled or bit me, not even a well-deserved warning. They are definitely pack oriented and many Irish can run together, provided the pack is well-established and there is a strong human alpha presence. At home, they want nothing else but to be next to you and the family during any activity.

According to the history of Irish, one of the reasons the Irish spread in popularity from Ireland to England, Western Europe, Americas and points beyond so quickly was their definite “racy and elegant appearance.” The desired bright red color and fearlessness was well-liked and their numbers grew quickly. These attributes led to their involvement in WWI, where they delivered messages in extremely hostile conditions, throughout the trenches of the allied forces.

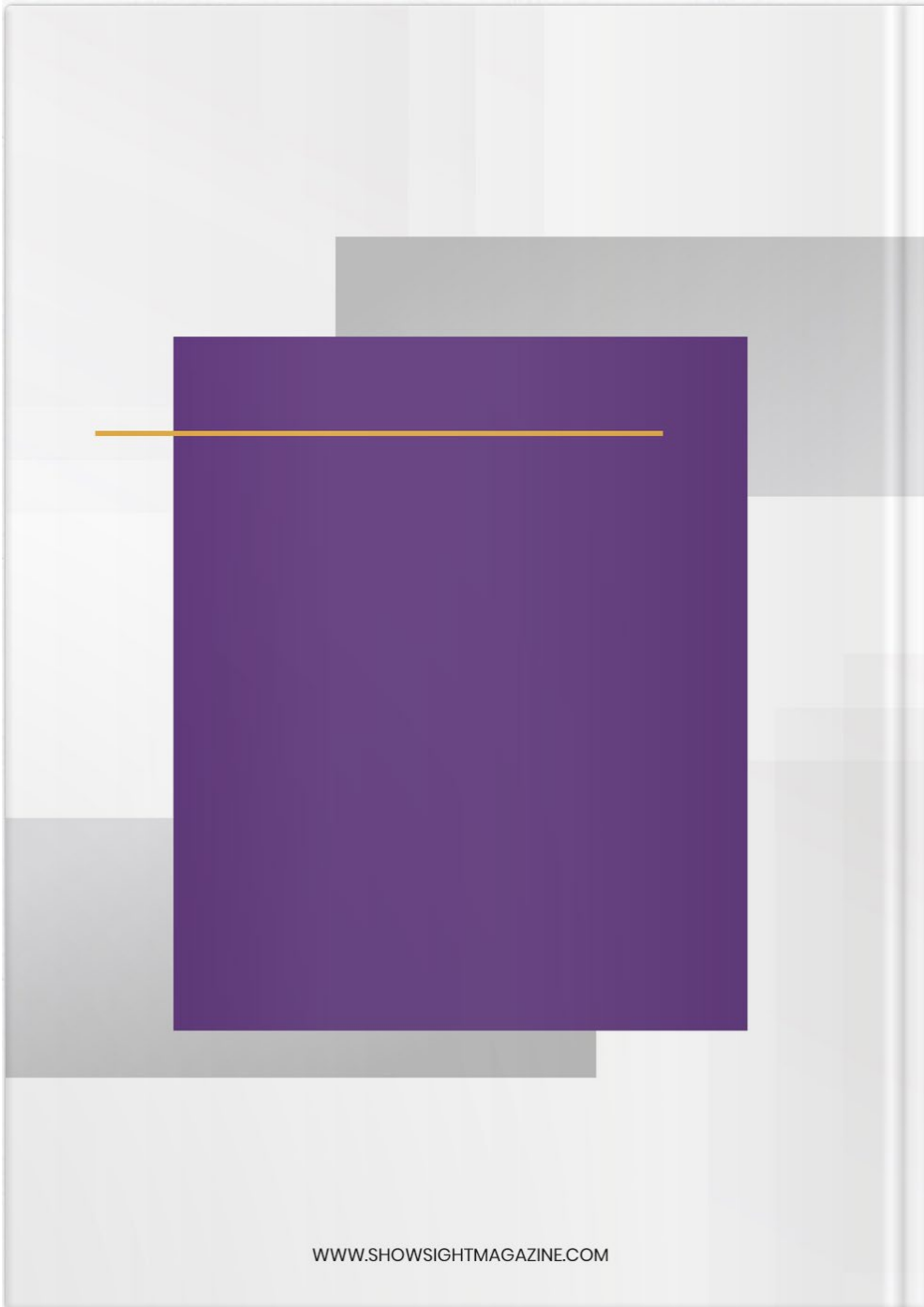
Personally, I have sold my pet Irish Terriers to people all over the world,

where they have and live with amazing people and do incredible things. To name just a few Irish activities: bird flushing, mountain climbing, boating, swimming, therapy work, dog training, sled pulling, tricks, skateboarding, lure coursing, 4-H, agility, rally, obedience, strong dog, ruffing for ratings, etc.

The downside of the breed is stubbornness, obstinacy, food theft and chewing of tissue or paper towels. Also, you might find an occasional Irish who thinks there is not much separating him from human counterparts. For example, my dog Bear (now age 11) decided to leave our tent during one weekend of camping at a renaissance faire many years ago. He evidently made friends with both neighbors and after a couple of hours of “partying” he came back to bed with me in the tent. The next morning I find out Bear had been eating venison and drinking beer and fine brews late into the night. This dog has more friends than I do.

Their ability to assess people and situations allow them to make wonderful body-guards too. It is a breed that either gets to you or does not. There is no wishy-washiness about the owners either. Most have pretty strong personalities, just like their Irish. Having grown up with them, I can’t imagine living with any other breed of dog. ■

“THE DESIRED BRIGHT RED COLOR AND FEARLESSNESS WAS WELL-LIKED and their numbers grew quickly.”



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