

JUDGING THE WEIMARANER

by JUDY COLAN

Judges have the future of any breed in their hands when they judge. Having said that I will add that, in my opinion, as a breeder with a limited breeding program, who has produced the two All Time Top Winners in the breed and the All Time Top Producer and a Breeder Judge I have been sorely disappointed in the quality of judging in the past few years. 25 years ago if you gave me a list of 10 judges and asked me who I thought was a good judge I would say 9 out of 10 were good judges. Today, my response would be much different. What is the difference? Again, in my opinion, it is that many judges do not know breed type. I look out into a ring of 8 dogs, 1 or 2 have breed type and the rest are generic. Not bad dogs, but they lack breed type. The 2 that have breed type look different from the generic dogs and are often times ignored.

I am hoping that this article will encourage judges to understand breed type in the Weimaraner.

BREED TYPE

I think the easiest way to establish breed type in your mind is to view silhouettes of Weimaraners and Vizslas, two VERY different breeds.

FRONT ASSEMBLY

The Weimaraner has a deep forechest... Although both standards call for the chest to the elbow, the Weimaraner standard calls for a well angulated front end assembly as opposed to the Vizsla standard which calls for a moderately laid back front assembly. This gives the Vizsla a straighter front and less forechest.

REAR ASSEMBLY

Again the Weimaraner standard states well angulated while the Vizsla standard reiterates moderate angulation.

TOPLINE

There is a significant difference in the topline. The Weimaraner "set in a straight line sloping slightly from the withers". The Vizsla "slightly rounded over the loin".

Now that you have type set in your mind, it is time to think about movement. I won't bore you with the down and back which should be sound. The Weimaraner should have an effortless, ground covering movement. No wasted motion, it should be smooth and effortless.

Balance is of the utmost importance. Front and rear angulation should match.

Problems in the breed: Straight fronts, lack of balance front and rear, lack of forechest. Too short backed, low tail sets, snipey muzzles, lack of underjaw. Lack of rear and drive.

Following is my interpretation of the Standard: The Standard of any breed is a specification or blueprint for that breed. The writers of the Standards were interested primarily in working ability and they wrote the Standard to describe the ideal temperament and conformation needed to perform the purpose for which the dog was bred.

Anyone who is going to own, breed or judge any breed should be familiar with the dogs purpose and what conformation characteristics enable the dog to perform, with ease, the tasks for which he was bred. An excellent reference is *K-9 Structure and Terminology* by Gilbert and Brown. The book is a study in anatomy and locomotion as applying to all breeds and explains the working parts beneath the surface with the mechanical laws governing them.

When interpreting the Weimaraner Standard, it is important to know that the Weimaraner is both a pointing dog and a retrieving dog. When we have the background knowledge of anatomy and the Weimaraners purpose, reading the Standard gives a clear picture of what the dog should look like.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

A medium-sized gray dog with fine aristocratic features. He should present a picture of grace, speed, stamina, alertness

and balance. Above all, the dog's conformation must indicate the ability to work with great speed and endurance in the field.

HEIGHT

Height at the withers: dogs, 25-27 inches; bitches, 23-25 inches. One inch over or under the specified height of each sex is allowable, but should be penalized. Dogs measuring less than 24 inches or more than 28 inches and bitches measuring less than 22 inches or more than 26 inches shall be disqualified.

Interpretation: A Weimaraner should convey the impression of grace and style, a dog who can work in the field all day. He should be of medium size, not too coarse, nor too fine as a coarse heavy boned dog or a fine boned weedy dog could not endure a day in the field. Medium size with regard to height needs no explanation as it is clearly defined with a disqualification for those who deviate from this size.

HEAD

Moderately long and aristocratic, with moderate stop and slight median line extending back over the forehead. Rather prominent occipital bone and trumpets well set back, beginning at the back of the eye sockets. Measurement from tip of nose to stop equals that from stop to occipital bone. The flews should be straight, delicate at the nostrils. Skin drawn tightly. Neck clean-cut and moderately long. Expression kind, keen and intelligent. Ears Long and lobular, slightly folded and set high. The ear when drawn snugly alongside the jaw should end approximately 2 inches from the point of the nose. Eyes: In shades of light amber, gray or blue-gray, set well enough apart to indicate good disposition and intelligence. When dilated under excitement, the eyes may appear



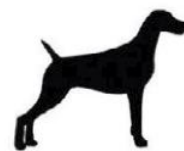
Vizsla Dog



Vizsla Bitch



Weimaraner Dog



Weimaraner Bitch

almost black. Teeth: Well set, strong and even; well developed and proportionate to jaw with correct scissors bite, the upper teeth protruding slightly over the lower teeth but not more than $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch. Complete dentition is greatly to be desired. Nose: Gray. Lips and Gums: pinkish flesh shades.

Interpretation: To complete the picture of grace and nobility, the head should be pleasing with a kind, intelligent expression. The head is similar to a Pointer head with the exception of the stop, which should be moderate as opposed to the pronounced stop of the Pointer and the ear set, which should be high rather than at eye level as in the Pointer. The trumpets, which are comparable to temples in man, give the head a chiseled appearance. The flews should be straight, not pendulous and taper to the nostril. They should not give the appearance of being snippy. Again the key word is aristocratic. Although it is not mentioned in the standard, any good bird dog needs large nostrils to better enable him to scent birds.

BODY

The back should be moderate in length, set in a straight line, strong and should slope slightly from the withers. The chest should be well developed and deep with shoulders well laid back, ribs well sprung and long. Abdomen firmly held; moderately tucked-up flank. The brisket should extend to the elbow.

Interpretation: A Weimaraner should not be short-backed; he should have a long rib cage with well sprung ribs, not slab-sided. The long rib cage gives the back its moderate length. The back should be straight (no rise over the loin, no sway) and should slope slightly from the withers to the tail, which is high set, a low set tail being a major fault.. The chest when viewed from front and side should be well developed and deep as this is what gives the dog lung room when he is running in the field. The well sprung ribs and deep chest also enable the dog to perform his duties as a retriever. The shoulder assembly is comprised of the scapula and humerus. The shoulder blade should mold smoothly into the contour of the body and be well laid back. The scapula and humerus should be of equal length. When viewed from the side, the dog should have a well laid back shoulder blade and equally angulated humerus (upper arm); this sets the elbow directly under the tip of the top of the shoulder blade and well under the dog. The forelegs should not come straight off the front. Elbows should lie close to the body. This correct front-end assembly is important to a dog who must run in the

field, as it is the shoulder assembly and pastern that absorbs most of the shock when a dog is moving. Well laid back angles of the shoulder assembly give the dog the ability to reach and cover more ground with less effort.

COAT AND COLOR

Short, smooth and sleek, solid color, in shades of mouse-gray to silver-gray, usually blending to lighter shades on the head and ears. A small white marking on the chest is permitted but should be penalized on any other portion of the body. White spots resulting from injury should not be penalized. A distinctly long coat is a disqualification. A distinctly blue or black coat is a disqualification.

LEGS

Forelegs: Straight and strong, with measurement from the elbow to the ground approximately equaling the distance from the elbow to the top of the withers. Hindquarters: Well-angulated stifles and straight hocks. Musculation well developed. Feet: Firm and compact, webbed, toes well arched, pads closed and thick, nails short and gray or amber in color. Dewclaws: Should be removed.

Interpretation: The lighter shades on the head and ears are referred to as the "Grafmar Cap" and tend to become more prominent with age. The white mark on the chest may be in the form of a spot or a blaze and should be small. When evaluating length of leg it is important to remember that the dog is also a retriever. The distance from elbow to the ground and elbow to the withers should be almost equal.

TAIL

Docked. At maturity it should measure approximately 6 inches with a tendency to be light rather than heavy and should be carried in a manner expressing confidence and sound temperament. A non-docked tail should be penalized.

Interpretation: As mentioned previously, the tail set should be high, a low-set tail being a major fault. It should be carried up or straight out when the dog is in motion, expressing confidence.

GAIT

The gait should be effortless and should indicated smooth coordination. When seen from the rear, the hind feet should be parallel to the front feet. When viewed from the side, the topline should remain strong and level.

Interpretation: Again, to insure that the Weimaraner can endure a day in the field,

his gait should be coordinated and effortless. If his front angulation is correct and his rear angulation is equal to the front, there should be no wasted motion. Padding, restricted movement, or fast, choppy movement is incorrect. A Weimaraner should cover ground with reach in front and drive in rear and this movement should be effortless and coordinated. If shoulder angulation is correct, the back should remain level in movement without excess rise and fall of the withers. This indicates that the dog is put together correctly and is not putting undue stress on the shock absorbing mechanism, the shoulders.

TEMPERAMENT

The temperament should be friendly, fearless, alert and obedient.

FAULTS

Minor: Tail too short or too long. Pink nose.

Major: Doggy bitches, Bitchy dogs, Improper muscular condition. Badly affected teeth. More than 4 teeth missing. Back too long or too short. Faulty coat. Neck too short, thick or throaty. Low set tail. Elbows in or out. Feet east and west. Badly overshot or undershot bite. Snippy muzzle, Short ears.

Very Serious: White, other than a spot on the chest. Eyes, other than gray, blue-gray or light amber. Black mottled mouth. Non-docked tail. Dogs exhibition strong fear, shyness and extreme nervousness.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Deviation in height of more than one inch from the Standard either way. A distinctly long coat. A distinctly blue or black coat.

REMARKS

It is impossible for a gray Weimaraner to have a black mottled mouth. Weimaraner color is a dilution and therefore it is impossible for a dilute dog to have black markings.

Our local club holds Hunting Tests, WCA Rating Tests and Field Training Seminars. It is always amazing to me to see dogs who have never been exposed to birds go out in the field and hunt, point and retrieve. You can actually see the point at which their brain clicks on and they start hunting. If nature has seen fit to maintain the natural instincts of bird finding and retrieving ability, we as breeders and judges should strive to produce and reward a dog whose structure and temperament enable that dog to perform these duties. ■

Hallmarks of the WEIMARANER

Cheryl Lent, former WCA Judges' Education Chair

BREED CHARACTER

Weimaraners should present as friendly, fearless, alert and obedient. They were bred in Germany to be a close ranging gun dog on the hunt and the devoted protector of family and hearth at home. Weimaraners are extremely intelligent and aristocratic in nature. Unique to this sporting breed is their ability to hunt and track fur and feather as well as a natural love of water and retrieving. Simply put, a Weimaraner is a pointer and a retriever. Substantial in bone to perform these varied functions, you will see a dog that is supremely confident, with grace and nobility. He is calmly waiting for his next adventure to begin. Weimaraners require your respect and attention and reward you with complete devotion and constant vigilance of your safety and welfare. The devotion these grey dogs share with their owners is legendary. Weimaraners do not adapt well to a kennel environment or separation from their family. They thrive as a fully involved family member.

SILHOUETTE

The Weimaraner's silhouette is uniquely its own. Looking at the make and shape of this breed one should immediately see the stylish outline of an athletic, noble gun dog. Your impression should be of a medium sized* gun dog that could work in the field all day. The height at the withers should be of equal proportion from elbows to ground. Slightly longer than tall, the Weimaraner should never give the appearance of a square body or one of excessive length. The Weimaraner has a visible pro sternum and keel. The scapula is well laid back with equal length and return of upper arm presenting a front set well under the dog. The chest should be deep and blend into a strong smooth body with length coming from the rib cage. The topline is smooth and flowing with a neck blending into a straight slightly sloping back line and tail set on high. A low tail set is a major fault. No rise or sway should be seen in the back line. The underline should be firmly held by the abdomen, and the tuck up should be moderate. The body blends into a strong and angled rear assembly conveying the impression of strength and driving power.

Balance is essential to perform the Weimaraner's varied tasks as a pointer and a retriever. Substance is a must, but never coarse nor too fine. Grace, speed, stamina, alertness and balance should be apparent immediately.

HEAD

The Weimaraner head should be aristocratic with parallel planes and moderate stop compared to a Pointer, with a slight median line extending over the forehead. There should be a rather prominent occipital bone with well set back trumpets (temple area in humans) beginning at the back of the eye socket. The eyes are a unique color of blue gray, gray or light amber. They are set well enough apart to indicate intelligence and a good disposition. This presents a pleasing, chiseled aristocratic look.

The measurement from the tip of the nose to the stop and

from the stop to the occipital should be equal. A strong under jaw is needed to carry large game. Depth of muzzle should never appear snipey. Straight tight flews, never appearing pendulous, should be delicate at the nostrils. The nose is large with open large nostrils, which serve the Weimaraner well in the field or track. The ears are set on high, the leather is medium and the shape long and lobular with a slight fold. When measured along the muzzle the ear tips are approximately two inches from the point of nose.

Ears should never give a houndy appearance. Teeth should be strongly developed with a scissors bite. More than four missing teeth is a major fault. As in all sporting dogs, full dentition is greatly desired. Looking at a Weimaraner, the head should convey a kind, keen, alert expression; never harsh or fearful.

MOVEMENT

Gait should be smooth, effortless, elastic with no wasted energy or motion. A properly built Weimaraner should exhibit ground covering reach and drive. A Weimaraner on the move should mimic a finely tuned athlete in peak physical condition. The topline should remain straight and level on the "go-round". Remember, this is an aristocratic gun dog that should be able to work the field all day long. Wasted motion or stilted reach and lack of drive will not portray balance and serve our dogs in the field. One should expect a clean down and back with a natural convergence to the center of gravity as speed increases. When in doubt, judge them on the go around.

COAT

The Weimaraner coat can vary from shades of mouse grey to silver grey. It often blends to lighter shades of grey on the head and ears. A small white spot is permitted on the chest. White hairs resulting from injury should not be penalized. Coat should be short and sleek with sheen to indicate good health. A distinctly long or a distinctly blue or black coat is a disqualification.

*Weimaraners have a DQ for height at either end of the standard, and we encourage judges to measure if there is a question on height. We recognize the phrase "medium size" means different heights in different Sporting dog standards. The Weimaraner's height is clearly stated in our standard, and there should be no prejudice at either end of the height range."

Below are outlines of a Weimaraner, German Shorthaired Pointer and Vizsla.



JUDGING THE WEIMARANER

By Judy Colan, Colsidex Weimaraners

Weimaraners are a breed that has been near and dear to my heart for over 45 years. I have been fortunate to have bred and owned our breeds All Time Top Producing Bench Register of Merit sire, Ch Colsidex Standing Ovation. The Bench Register of Merit is based not only on number of champions but what those champions have accomplished. Ovation sired 148 champions and has held the title of #1 BROM sire for close to 25 years. I have also owned the two All Time Top Winning Weimaraners; Ch Colsidex Seabreeze Perfect Fit with 33 Best in Shows and Ch Aria's Allegra of Colsidex with 27 Best In Shows.

When I first became involved in the breed I thought the dog I owned was a perfect example of the Standard. One year and six points later and after sitting ring-side and watching the breed I realized that my perfect dog was not perfect. I acquired my foundation bitch from a breeder whose dogs I admired. I spent many nights sitting and talking with experienced breeders and learned some very valuable lessons. To this day I look at my dogs with a critical eye, know what is right with them and know where they need improvement. I believe this is the reason my very limited breeding program has been so successful.

I think judges have to realize that the dogs in their ring belong to old timers and newcomers. Lifestyles have changed and I don't see the newcomers sitting around watching and talking to experienced breeders. So the future of the breed is in the judges hands.

The most important part of judging is to know breed type. What is correct breed type in a Weimaraner? It is the combination of the silhouette and the effortless, ground covering movement. To get the picture in your mind of breed type train your eye to see the horizontal "wedge" in the dog's body. The straight, gently sloping top line

and the depth of chest rising up to the well angulated rear. The overall impression should be a dog slightly longer than tall with the length of body coming from the length of rib with a short loin. Balance is of utmost importance, well angulated front showing good shoulder lay back with length and return of upper arm set under the shoulder to match the well angulated rear. A long arched neck which fits smoothly into the shoulder. Tail set right off the back. All should flow together to give a picture of style and balance. Since the Weimaraner is well angulated, the proper front angulation is what give the breed the obvious forechest.

The other important part of breed type is movement. It should be effortless, no wasted motion, not choppy and should be ground covering smooth and coordinated. The down and back should be sound.

Ask yourself, if I saw a black and white silhouette of this dog would I know it was a Weimaraner. Do not reward mediocrity or a generic dog. Reward the dog with breed type.

The problems we see in the breed are; straight shoulders that don't match angulated rears, forward set on shoulders, low tail sets, lack of rear drive and choppy movement.

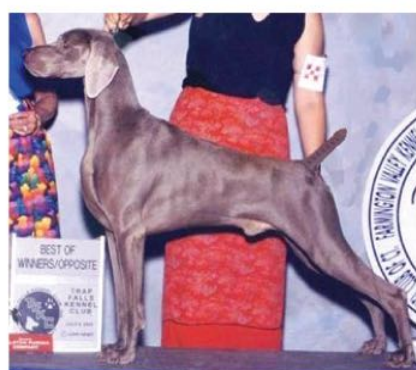
I have included the Weimaraner Standard with my interpretations. Also included are some photos of dogs and bitches which show excellent breed type.

The Weimaraner Standard

Interpretations by Judy Colan

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Ears: Long and lobular, slightly folded and set high. The ear when drawn snugly alongside the jaw should end approximately 2 inches from the point of the nose.

Eyes: In shades of light amber, gray or blue-gray, set well enough apart to indicate good disposition and intelligence. When dilated under excitement, the eyes may appear almost black.

Teeth: Well set, strong and even; well developed and proportionate to jaw with correct scissors bite, the upper teeth protruding slightly over the lower teeth but not more than 1/16th of an inch. Complete dentition is greatly to be desired.

Nose: Gray.

Lips and Gums: Pinkish flesh shades.

Interpretation: To complete the picture of grace & nobility, the head should be pleasing with a kind, intelligent expression. The head is similar to a Pointer head with the exception of the stop, which should be moderate as opposed to the pronounced stop of the Pointer, and the ear set, which should be high rather than at eye level as in the Pointer. The trumpets, which are comparable to temples in man, give the head a chiseled appearance. The flews should be

straight, not pendulous and taper to the nostril. They should not give the appearance of being snippy. Again the key word is aristocratic. Although it is not mentioned in the standard, any good bird dog needs large nostrils to better enable him to scent birds.

Body: The back should be moderate in length, set in a straight line, strong and should slope slightly from the withers. The chest should be well developed and deep with shoulders well laid back, ribs well sprung and long. Abdomen firmly held; moderately tucked-up flank. The brisket should extend to the elbow.

Interpretation: A Weimaraner should not be short-backed; he should have a long rib cage with well sprung ribs, not slab-sided. The long rib cage gives the back its moderate length. The back should be straight (no rise over the loin, no sway) and should slope slightly from the withers to the tail, which is high set, a low set tail being a major fault. The chest when viewed from front and sides should be well developed and deep as this is what gives the dog lung room when he is running in the field. The well sprung ribs and deep chest also enable the dog to perform his duties as a retriever. The shoulder assembly is comprised of the scapula and humerus. The shoulder blade should mold smoothly into the contour of the body and be well laid back. The scapula and humerus should be of equal length. When viewed from the side, the dog should have a well laid back shoulder blade and equally angulated humerus (upper arm); this sets the elbow directly under the tip of the top of the shoulder blade and well under the dog. The forelegs should not come straight off the front. Elbows should lie close to the body. This correct front-end assembly is important to a dog who must run in the field, as it is the shoulder assembly and pastern that absorbs most of the shock when a dog is moving. Well laid back angles of the shoulder assembly give the dog the ability to reach and cover more ground with less effort.

Coat and Color: Short, smooth and sleek, solid color, in shades of mouse gray to silver-gray, usually blending to lighter shades on the head and ears. A small white marking on the chest is permitted but should be penalized on any other portion of the body. White spots resulting from injury

should not be penalized. A distinctly long coat is a disqualification. A distinctly blue or black coat is a disqualification.

Legs and Forelegs: Straight and strong, with measurement from the elbow to the ground approximately equaling the distance from the elbow to the top of the withers.

Hindquarters: Well-angulated stifles and straight hocks. Musculature well developed.

Feet: Firm and compact, webbed, toes well arched, pads closed and thick, nails short and gray or amber in color.

Dewclaws: Should be removed.

Interpretation: The lighter shades on the head and ears are referred to as the "Grafmar Cap" and tend to become more prominent with age. The white mark on the chest may be in the form of a spot or a blaze and should be small. When evaluating length of leg it is important to remember that the dog is also a retriever. The distance from elbow to the ground and elbow to the wither should be almost equal.

Tail: Docked. At maturity it should measure approximately 6 inches with a tendency to be light rather than heavy and should be carried in a manner expressing confidence and sound temperament. A non-docked tail should be penalized.

Interpretation: As mentioned previously, the tail set should be high, a low-set tail being a major fault. It should be carried up or straight out when the dog is in motion, expressing confidence.

Gait: The gait should be effortless and should indicate smooth coordination. When seen from the rear, the hind feet should be parallel to the front feet. When viewed from the side, the top line should remain strong and level.

Interpretation: Again, to insure that the Weimaraner can endure a day in the field, his gait should be coordinated and effortless. If his front angulation is correct and his rear angulation is equal to the front, there should be no wasted motion. Padding, restricted movement, or fast, choppy movement is incorrect. A Weimaraner should cover ground with reach in front and drive in rear and this movement should be effortless and coordinated. If shoulder angulation is correct, the back should remain level in