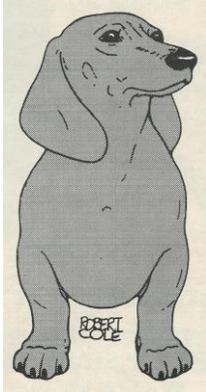


# YOU BE THE JUDGE

By Robert Cole

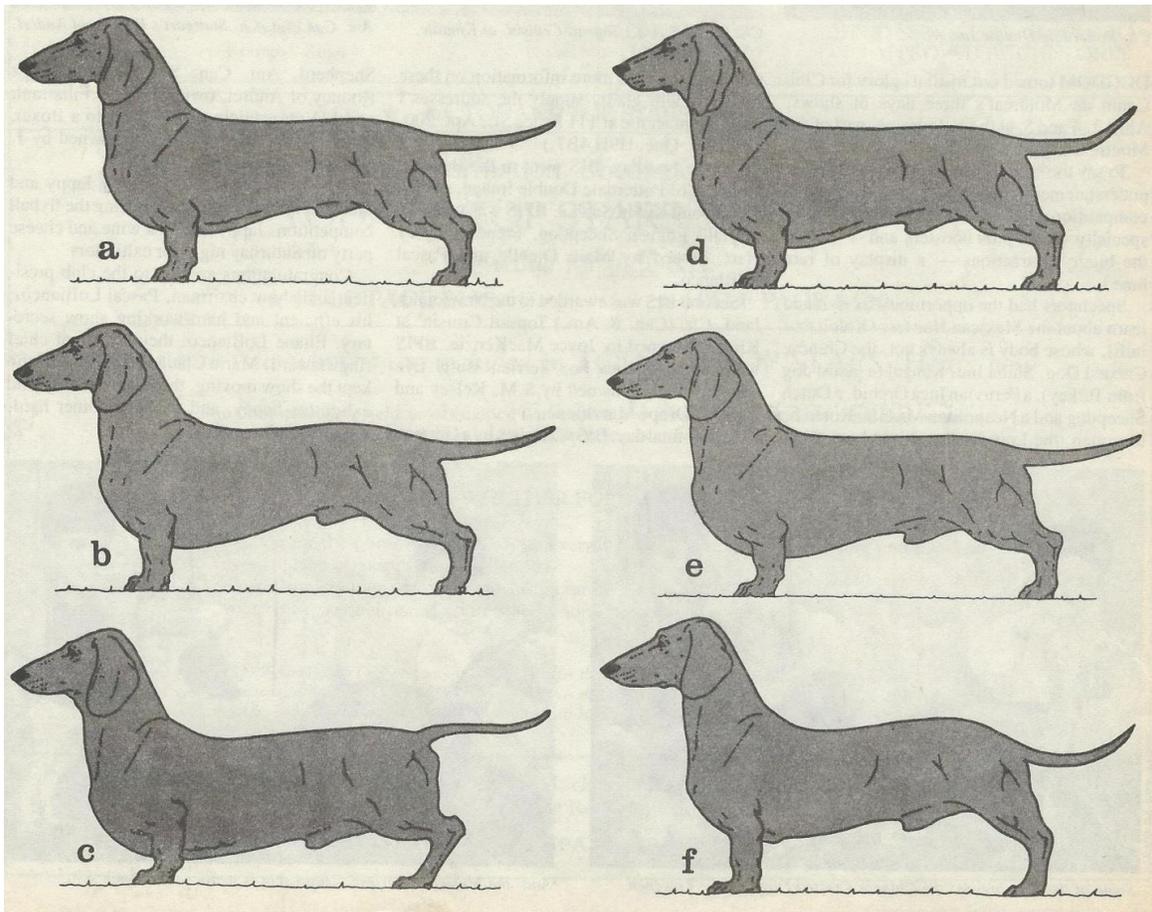
From *Dogs in Canada*, June 1987

## THE DACHSHUND



All six are Standard Smooths, their average weight about 26 lbs. (12 kgs). Choice of the Smooth is because their outlines are more discernable than the Wire-haired or the Long-haired. All three varieties should conform to the same virtues and faults discussed here. As for colour, all six are one colour Dachshunds. Within the 10 lb. (4.5 kg) limits imposed, the Miniature Dachshund also conforms to all points discussed.

Posed in profile in much the same order they might position in the showing, you might first consider optimum proportions as depicted in 1983 and adopted by the American Dachshund Club the following years. They are: "One head length equals neck length; tail length; and body depth. And, three head lengths equal length of the body from breastbone to hock." The optimum length of body from breastbone to buttock is also twice as long as height. The best three of these six Dachshunds possess these optimum proportions.



## **FIRST PLACE**

Would go to Dachshund E. This is the illustrated ideal I formulated in 1983 to describe optimum proportions. Care at that time was taken to include and make obvious those characteristics deemed important by breeders, such as the head. The skull is only slightly arched; the less stop the better (the pronounced bridgebones over the eyes should not be confused with stop); the muzzle is slightly arches; the skull and muzzle taper towards the nose. Ears are set near the top of the head; ears of correct length, not pointed or folded. The size of the head is in balance with the body.

The example is correctly “Low to ground, short-legged, long-bodied.” For those more familiar with less unorthodox breeds, this excerpt complimented by my drawing still requires elaboration. It helps to be aware that unlike orthodox breeds where the elbow is level with the bottom of the chest, the Dachshund’s elbow positions well above the bottom of the chest. The foreleg is short, but the Dachshund is also low to the ground because its body is brought down between the elbows and rests over the curved inner surface of the upper arms.

Describing part of the Dachshund’s foreleg in profile with emphasis on the above-the-bottom-of-the-brisket position of the elbow increases appreciation but it is the shape of the front leg viewed head-on where there is most confusion. Perhaps it is the description in the Standard “... So the front leg does not appear absolutely straight”, which, although true, is the cause. A half dozen different interpretations here and abroad (some promoting a perfectly straight leg) have only added to the mix up.

Correct interpretation is better understood depicted than described. The foreleg of the illustrated ideal, also shown here, viewed head on is straight not from elbow down, as is the case with most breeds, but is instead (because of the high position of the elbow) straight only from the wrist down. The forearm between the wrist and the elbow curves around the body.

## **SECOND PLACE**

A young dog, Dachshund A still lacks depth of body which in all likelihood will come with maturity. Even if depth never fully comes, this Dachshund is very sound together with excellent proportions. Perhaps because of immaturity, the arch over the loin is a bit more pronounced than the first place dog, but where the back should be level – between the withers and the arch – the topline is all it should be. The good tail set is a continuation of the spine above sound hindquarters. This dog is also sound in front, the slight slope to the pastern bringing support directly under its forequarters.

## **THIRD PLACE**

Goes to Dachshund D. Structurally, this example resembles the first place dog with the exception of four minor faults. The ears are folded, a minor fault that often goes unnoticed. The short head is more noticeable, disturbs many, as does this dog’s dewlap, yet the Standard labels them both as minor faults. The fourth obvious fault is the kink in the tail. The Standard makes no mention of a kink. Kinks occurring in Longhairs have been known to upset some breeder judges, but until it is identified as a serious problem, it continues to be considered a minor fault.

## **FOURTH PLACE**

Dachshund B has many good points to offset its obvious faults. Virtues of head, neck, body, shoulder, bone, pelvis and feet are some. Four obvious faults are: a short upper arm, no slope to pastern, overly long rib cage, and ... oh, yes ... low set ears (a minor fault).

A short upper arm, one which brings the elbow forward on the body, reducing forechest and straightening (makes vertical) the pastern is not uncommon. The long body (rib cage not loin) changes the length-to-height ratio. The front leg in conjunction with this vertical pastern often lacks a typical curve in forearm, the front leg head on is often straight, and because there is no necessity for the feet to incline slightly outwards, to obtain maximum static support, this incorrect Dachshund assembly often has appear. It is unlikely this dog would ever receive championship points.

## **FIFTH PLACE**

Not worthy of championship points, Dachshund F exhibits a number of serious and minor faults. To begin with, the head has a stop, whereas, in the case of the Dachshund, the less stop the more typical the specimen. The ears are too high. Both of these faults are minor.

The shoulders are steep, so is the upper arm (notice the low and forward position of the elbow). Notice also the front pastern is vertical and the feet are poor. This open forequarter assembly has lifted the body upward, forcing a departure from the required low to the ground appearance. The breastbone is too low (in relation to withers and brisket) and carried down ends too abruptly under the body. The loin is long.

Here, we have a dip in the topline because the shoulders are steep. This dip is magnified by a steep pelvis. The steep pelvis causes a reduction in hindquarter angulation at stifle and hock, raising the rear and lowering the tail set.

## **SIXTH PLACE**

Not worthy of championship points, Dachshund C possesses a very nice head (less dewlap) but, because of departures elsewhere, the head does not balance with the body. The most obvious departure is too much body depth. The body is deeper through than the optimum, appearing clumsy and incapable of work.

This example is steep in shoulder but manages to retain a degree of forechest because the elbow has not been forced forward on the body as usually happens when the shoulders are steep. Instead of positioning forward the elbow remains the midpoint of the forearm. This causes the upper arm between point of shoulder and elbow to position parallel with the ground.

This dog lacks the required tuck up and possesses a flat and perhaps also short pelvis. Unlike some breeds where this high tail set would cause the tail to flag, it is often only at the base of the tail that this departure is noticeable.

An overly long rear pastern causes this dog to adopt a sickle-hock position to bring support more under the rear end, a problem not uncommon among short legged, low to the ground breeds.

All of these examples had good scissors bites. If they hadn't, it could have changed the placements because the Standard for the Dachshund advises that overshot or undershot jaws are serious faults. Another serious fault listed in the Standard but not exhibited among these six is knuckling over. The example most susceptible to knuckling over would be the fifth place dog.

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By Robert Cole

From *Dogs in Canada*, July 1997

## DACHSHUND PROPORTIONS

### YOUR TASK

You are presented with three sets of three drawings each, for a total of nine. Of the nine, only one Dachshund has optimum height at withers to length of body proportions. The Dachshund possessing optimum height to length is in the last set of three. He is the example I produced in 1983 for the Dachshund Club of America's 35 millimeter slide package. Your task is to identify the reasons why each of the first eight examples departs from the correct Dachshund proportions. If you have problems, you can always sneak a peek at Figure 9.

### FIGURE 1

This form of graphic license, whereby the Dachshund's body is raised until the elbow is level with the brisket – the norm for most breeds – is a dramatic departure from type and correct height to length proportions.

This norm for most breeds is not the norm for the Dachshund. The standard advises that “the body should extend downward to the mid-point of the forearm.” In other words, the elbow position is above the brisket to allow for freer digging action underground.

### FIGURE 2

This dog's foreleg is too short. The standard informs that the forearm between the elbow and the wrist is short in comparison to other breeds. A moderate or average length of foreleg from the elbow to the ground measures the same length as the body is deep from the withers to the brisket. Slightly less would be considered moderately short. Less than moderately short is called short. Short for a Dachshund is three-fifths depth of body.

### FIGURE 3

The foreleg on this Dachshund is the correct length. However, the elbow position is too far forward on the body because the upper arm is short and steep.

The standard states that “the upper arm is the same length as the shoulder blade, and at right angles to the latter ...” A short upper arm positions the elbow above the brisket but too far forward on the body and at a more open angle to the shoulder blade.

### FIGURE 4

Optimum proportions, as adopted in 1983 by the Dachshund Club of America, are based on the length of one main part as a unit – the length of a head serving as a base for that unit. All nine Dachshund examples in this article have the same length of head. The ideal body is one unit deep.

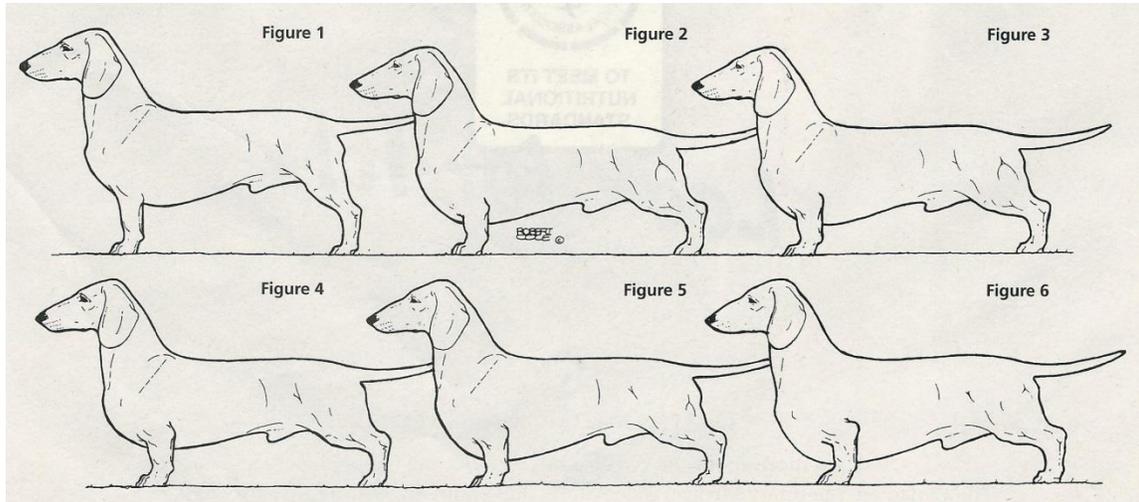
### FIGURE 5

Again, based on the head as a unit of measure, this dog's body is much too deep. The body extends lower than the required midpoint of the forearm. To endure arduous exertion underground, the front must be correspondingly muscular, compact, deep, long and broad, but not as deep as this dog's front.

## FIGURE 6

Some Dachshunds are far too heavy and, like this example, the overweight body has dropped so low between the front legs that the upper arm is forced to adopt a horizontal placement.

This horizontal placement of the upper arm can also be caused by a steep shoulder; often in combination with too heavy a body.



## FIGURE 7

This dog's body is too long. The distance from the point of the forechest to the point of the hock should measure three units. This dog's body measured to the point of the hock is longer than the ideal by the thickness of the rear pastern at its narrowest part. When compared to the ideal, even this small amount of surplus length affects proportions.

## FIGURE 8

The same can be said when the body is too short. The amount that this dog's body is shorter than the ideal is equal to the thickness of the rear pastern at its widest part just below the hock joint. The whole trunk should be long and fully muscled.

## FIGURE 9

This dog possesses the optimum proportions adopted by the Dachshund Club of America in 1983. Based on the head as a unit, the neck is one unit, the depth of body is one unit and the body from forechest to hock is three units.

## SLIDE

In the 35 millimeter Dachshund Club of America slide produced here as a final illustration, arrows work well to divide head units.

To complement these optimum proportions, Paull Tiller wrote in the *Dachshund Reporter* that: "While each Dachshund will differ in size and proportion, miniature and standard, give or take an inch here or there, the above requirements (listed on the slide) are a good gauge for the breeder to keep in mind in molding the ideal Dachshund. This guideline may also serve the judge in sorting out his classes and in selecting winners."

