

YOU BE THE JUDGE

By Robert Cole

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THE SALUKI

You are judging a sanction match. Two of the four Salukis in your Open Dog class may never compete at a championship show but the selection for third place between these two provides an interesting and perhaps difficult choice.

Selection of first place is less difficult once you are aware that the Saluki hunts by sight and is extremely fast at the sighthound double suspension gallop. (The Saluki moves well at the trot but is not specifically designed to excel at this show ring gait). This hunting requirement suggests a particular type of conformation, one where speed, as well as soundness, is a major factor. Among the four, a number of important virtues and faults relating to both soundness and type come under discussion, many in the form of questions. These questions draw attention to individual features and the effect on the whole. The answers provide a further appreciation for the example you select for first place.

DOG A

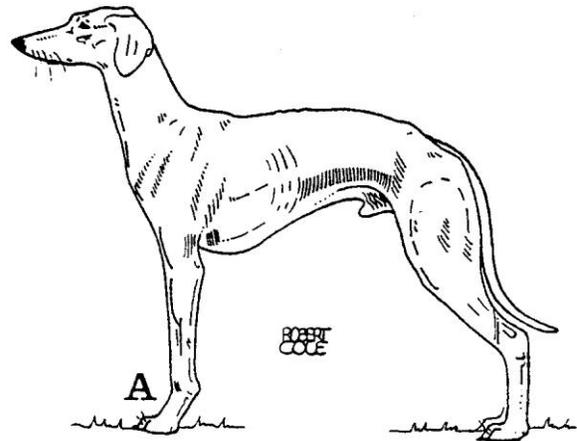
The owner is aware that this dog is steep in shoulder. He wonders if you will find the four things wrong with the head. He wonders if the lack of furnishings will weigh heavily against this dog in your mind, and if you will find the body shallow.

So you find this example balanced front with rear? Do you find the body too square or the legs too long? What is aside from steep shoulders that causes this dog's lumbar region to roach? What is wrong with the front pasterns? What is wrong with the rear pasterns?

Dog A's muzzle is snipey, as well as lacking underjaw; the skull is lumpy and there is too much stop. You did not penalize this Saluki's lack of furnishings because you are aware there are two varieties, this one being a correct smooth. Note that the smooth variety coat texture is soft and silky but slightly coarser than the feathered variety, due to the smooth having a shorter, thicker coat.

The body is not shallow. It appears shallow because the steep front has forced the body to rise above the elbow. The body is not balanced front with rear – the hindquarters are superior. The body is not too short or the legs too long – they are made to appear so by the steep shoulder blades and steep upper arms. Faulty long rear pasterns contribute to this imbalance.

The lumbar region roaches because this example's long and narrow loin arches excessively in order to gain strength. The weakened front pasterns slope at too great an angle.

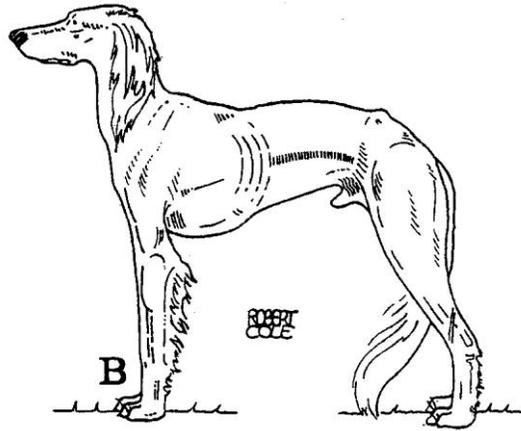


DOG B

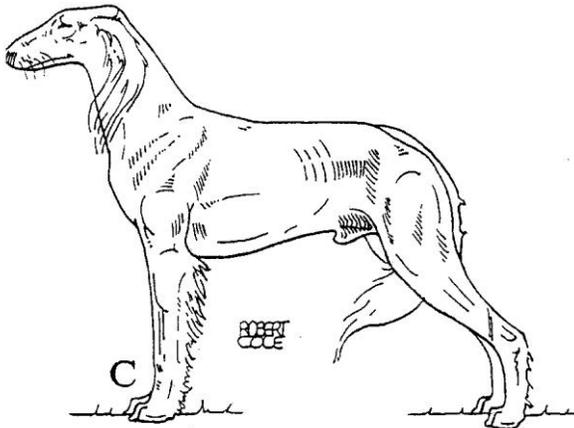
This dog's shoulder blade and upper arm are steep, causing the body, like Dog A's, to raise above the elbow. What fault in the rear causes the hind pasterns to be equally steep and the tail to set low? What three things are wrong with the head – three serious and one superficial? What two things are wrong with the neck? Why does this Saluki lack forechest? What do you find wrong with the body besides the roached topline?

The muzzle is coarse, the lips are loose, the eyes are small and the whiskers have been removed. The neck is a short, faulty swan neck. This Saluki lacks forechest because the steep upper arm has moved forward on the body, covering the forechest and creating a hole between the front legs. The body (ribcage) is too short and too round. The loin is too long.

This dog is balanced front with rear, each end being equally faulty. This dog's pelvis is also steep and the upper and lower thighs have followed suit, raising the rear to compliment the steep, high front. This, in tur, forces the tail to set on too low.



DOG C



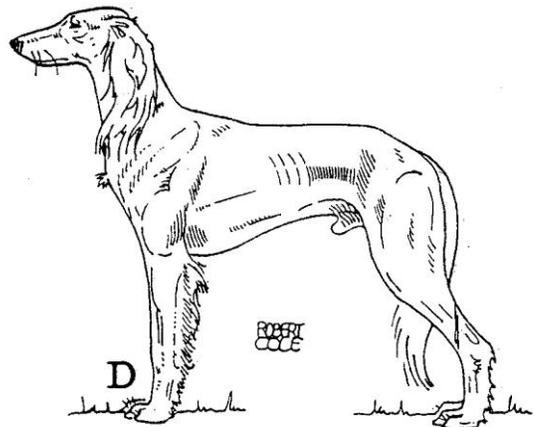
The owner of this Saluki is aware his dog is both strong and sound. What he doesn't know is why the head lacks appeal. He wonders what is wrong with his dog's neck, the topline, the body, the feet.

Soundness takes many forms depending on the breed. This example is both strong and sound, but inappropriately so for a Saluki. His neck is too thick and powerful. His body is strong, but there are four things wrong with its appearance. First, the body is too deep (thick throughout) – this includes the degree of forechest. Second, the ribcage is carried too far back. Third, the loin is too short. And fourth, this powerful Saluki needs more

tuck up. Its cat foot is impressive, but, unfortunately, a cat foot is incorrect for a Saluki.

DOG D

This graphic representation approaches typical. He has a correct long, narrow head, the skull moderately wide between the ears; in profile, the stop is not pronounced. The planes of skull and muzzle are basically parallel. The inner corner of the eyes is half the distance between nose and occiput. The nose is black (can be liver), the dark eyes (can be hazel) are oval and the rims are one solid tone.



The teeth and jaws are strong, with a perfect, regular and complete scissors bite. “Level” in the CKC standard is intended to ensure the mouth is not wry, not to describe a pincer bite.

The neck has been drawn long and strong without being heavy. The withers have been given height. The FCI Saluki standard is the only one that includes, “withers well accentuated.” I have drawn the back level and given the muscles over the strong loin a slight arch. The pelvis has a slight slope (hip bones are set wide apart); the long tail, covered on the underside with long silky hair, is set on low.

Angulation is moderate and balanced front with rear. Long forearms are straight (not round boned) with a slight slope to the long, strong pasterns. All four feet have long, well arched toes, the two inner toes considerably longer than the two outer toes. The hind pasterns (hocks low to the ground) are set vertical, the toes directly under buttocks.

There is a degree of forechest, and the elbow positions close to and level with the deep, moderately narrow chest. The upper arm slopes rearward. The ribs angle rearward to a loin of sufficient length and width, complimented by good tuck up.

PLACEMENTS

Dog D is the soundest and most typical of the four, so it's my first place. Dog C is second place. The choice between Dog A and Dog B is an interesting one ... you be the judge. How about Dog A for third?