

# YOU BE THE JUDGE

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## THE WEIMARANER

You are invited to either select the best four of these eight real like Weimaraner bitches – three British, five North American – and place them in order of merit based on gun dog type and soundness, or take full advantage of the exercise and place all eight, as I have done.

My opinions are influenced in part by the 1990 FCI, country of origin (Germany, late 19<sup>th</sup> century) standard. Readers in Australia and South Africa will be pleased: the wording is the one they use; it's more descriptive and closer to the truth. To denote where the FCI wording differs from the Canadian, British or American standards, the text will read "(FCI)".

### THE HEAD

I have drawn a head rather than attempt to describe the Weimaraner intelligent expression, or locate 'trumpets' (Canadian and American inclusion). Trumpets are the slight hollows on either side of the skull just behind the eye sockets. (Rather than citing the hollows, the FCI standard says the zygomatic arch is easily traceable behind the eyes).

A median line extends back over the forehead, and the muzzle is slightly longer (FCI) than the skull. The head is 'dry'. The stop is moderate and the occiput is moderately prominent. The ears are broad, rather long, rounded at the tips, set on high, and folded. The round, only slightly obliquely set eyes (FCI) are amber coloured, from dark to light (the FCI standard makes no mention of blue or grey-blue, a standard colour in other countries).



The bite is a complete scissors. The nose is large, protruding (FCI) over the lower jaw and dark flesh coloured, (FCI), gradually changing to grey toward the rear. Space doesn't permit amplification, but ignore the warning in Canadian and American standards that a "mottled mouth" (rather than flesh coloured) is a serious fault. A black mouth is genetically related to a blue coat (a disqualification in the U.S.). Anything other than black mottling is an inherent part of the breed and no North American breeder even makes note of it.

### PROPORTIONS

While judges in Canada don't usually write critiques, they do in Britain and their remarks on Weimaraner body length to height proportions give one pause. The following critique comments appeared in an open letter from the club president, Gillen Burgoin, in the November 6, 1992, issue of *Dog World*: "nice short body"; "correct outline with short body"; "eye catching cobby dog"; "lost to winner who was squarely built."

How British judges read square in the Kennel Club 1986 standard is beyond me. I wrote an illustrated article entitled *Weimaraner Grottesque* and sent it to the British club in 1985, hoping to influence a body length revision because, since at least 1975, their standard's wording would give a 27 inch high dog a body 36 inches long when measured from point of forechest to point of buttocks.

The Weimaraner should be slightly longer than tall. The front leg from elbow to the *mid pastern* (FCI) is approximately equal to the distance from elbow to the top of withers. All other national Weimaraner

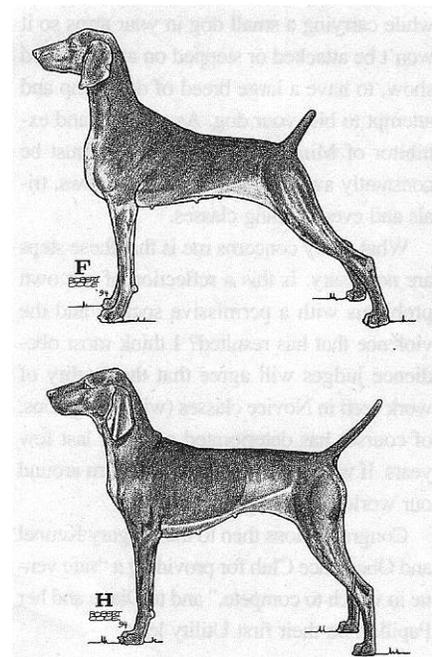
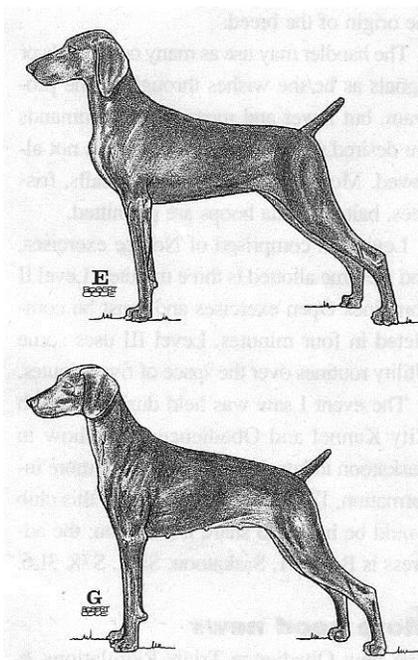
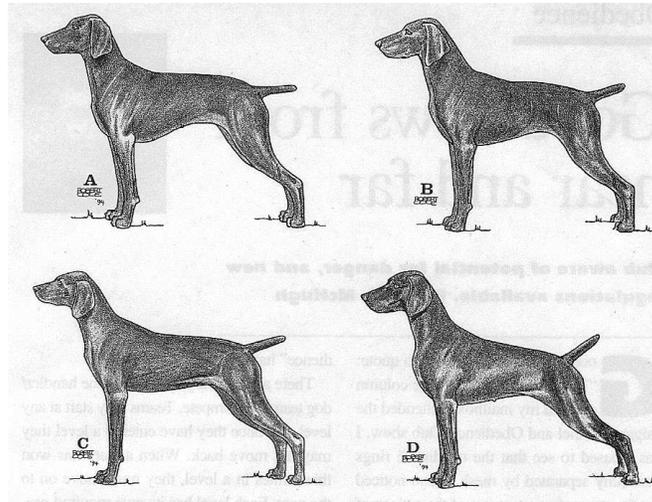
standards measure from elbow to ground, which is two inches less than the FCI length. By chance, these eight real life bitches all have the FCI front leg length.

To judge this particular class, you should also be aware that: Canadian and American toplines slope, whereas British croups slope; muzzles are often slightly arched (FCI); the forechest is well developed; the neck flows harmoniously into the withers; withers are well defined; there is good shoulder blade angulation; upper arms are set at a good angle and have sufficient length; the underline sweeps up slightly but the belly is not tucked up (FCI); dewlap is a fault; and the brisket is on level with the elbow.

## DECIDE

If you are familiar with the breed or have diligently read the foregoing descriptions, you have determined that Bitches A, B and C are the British examples, all having sloped croups, not sloped toplines; and that the best three Canadian-American examples are Bitches D, E and F. Depending on where in the world you reside, your first place choice will probably be influenced by the difference in appearance of these two groups of three. The second, third and fourth place bitches could be from either side of the pond.

Bitches A to F are champions. First, place four of these first six bitches in order of merit, then select fifth through eighth place. Then compare your selection to mine.



## **MY ORDER AND RATIONALE**

First place is between British Bitch B and American Bitch D. If I were handling Bitch B in Canada, I'm sure I could stack her to match the stretched back hind legs and sloped topline of Bitch D. Taking all into consideration, however, including toplines, tuck up and necks, Bitch D takes first place, Bitch B is second.

Third place is between British Bitch A and American Bitch E. Again, their stance and toplines differ. I prefer the American's head – her slightly arched muzzle getting the OK in the FCI standard – and I prefer her forechest and slightly sweeping underline to that of fourth place Bitch A.

Fifth place contenders are British Bitch C and American Bitch F. Although the Bitch C's muzzle appears a little short, her ears a little low set and her (young?) body could have more depth, I prefer her to the American's two angled head, long loin and light hindquarters.

Seventh place is between American Bitch G and American Bitch H. Both were photographed after being awarded first in group on different days. It probably didn't take you long to decide in favour of Bitch G. However, in addition to her steep shoulders, Bitch G has another structural fault – her steep upper arm.

Often when the upper arm and shoulder blade are steep, not only does the assembly move forward on the body and the pastern lose its slight slope, the body is also usually forced up above the elbow. Not so in Bitch G's case; the reason is that the steep upper arm is also short – a current concern in this breed.

The same can be said for eighth place Bitch H but, in addition, she has a pronounced occiput, thick lips, dewlap, a long loin, a flat croup and too much tuck up. Take note, however, that she has a good shelf below her tail and fair angulation at stifle and hock, indicating that it is a flat sacrum, not a steep pelvis, that has produced her flat croup.