



• BREED FEATURE • AFGHAN HOUND



They answered.....

"The majority of judges do understand and know how to approach them, but there is a minority that do not understand how to approach any sight hound, they approach them face on instead of approaching them ¾ on."

A.1. We have been breeding Afghans for 34 years, and they are our chosen breed because they are such a unique beautiful breed.

A.2. There is not the depth of quality in Afghans as there was 20 years ago, back then 8 out of 12 shown were Best In Show winners.

A.3. Yes we do, a lot have lost the nearly triangular eye shape they should have.

The pronounced occiput is lost to a flat skull in many Afghans.

And not many dogs have the correct spring in their movement.

A.4. Yes I think the majority of judges do understand and know how to



Brett Hamilton

approach them, but there is a minority that do not understand how to approach any sight hound, they approach them face on instead of approaching them ¾ on. Then they proceed to take their hands on and off the dog.

A.5. High style of order.

Correct movement.

Head is important as you want the nearly triangular eye, pronounced occiput, and punishing underjaw.

Level topline.

The great length from hip to hock.

A.6. Our pet hate is long body with short legs plus we think this is the hardest fault to breed out.

Colin, Helen & Brett Hamilton
Kjavu

"When I have seen most of these candidates eventually judge, they disappointed me so much that they had judged the breed without regard to the 'essence' of proper breed type, disregarding hallmarks, breed character and correct movement, rewarding the generic show dog with the best presented coat that flies around the ring at break neck speed"

A.1. I have been breeding Afghans for 35 years, and held a keen interest in the breed for 52 years!! I grew up "in the Hound Group", my parents were breeders of Dachshunds since the late 50s. My long term interest in the breed precedes the population explosion that happened in the late 60s early 70s. I was always fascinated by them when I was a child, always "hung around" the Afghan people, I was destined to be an owner (1973) and then a breeder (1977). I was hooked from an early age, like a drug addict, never to be cured. I have no plans to "downsize" to a smaller, more easily handled breed as I grow older either!

A.2. These days, we have far fewer Afghan Hounds in the ring than we had even 10 years ago. The top dogs of today, or 10 years ago or 20 years ago are on a par but the depth of quality through the placings has diminished incredibly and is just not there today. Currently, the top dogs are still top dogs and can win anywhere in the world but the ones that stand further down the line fall a long way short of ideal. There has been a trend towards extremes, fewer truly sound dogs, incorrect movement and generic showdogs.

A.3. Most emphatically yes!! Top of the list is movement. We see way too many dogs which span the spectrum of German Shepherd extreme flat extension to the bouncing up and down, moving from the elbow movers, and almost without exception they are moved too fast.

Typical topline with a level back, prominent hip bones and a fall away to the set on of tail (which gives the signature angular topline of this breed) are so few and far between, it is a travesty.

And then there are tails. So few have a ring, and many are carried incorrectly over the back. When you think about it, these three aspects are ones which set the Afghan apart from other Sighthounds. Picture them in the distance, either standing still or moving. ALL of these aspects tell you in the blink of an eye that this is an Afghan

We asked breeders

Q.1. How long have you been breeding Afghans? Why are they your chosen breed?

Q.2. How do you feel the standard of Australian Afghan Hounds today compares with say 20 years ago?

Q.3. Do you think the modern day Afghan is losing any of its hallmarks?

Q.4. Do you feel the majority of judges understand the Afghan Hound, and how to approach them?

Q.5. Could you list in order of priority the 5 most important points you think a judge should look for in the Afghan?

Q.6. What is your 'pet hate' when looking at an Afghan, and what do you think is the hardest fault to breed out?

Hound, without them you can be left wondering what breed it is.

A.4. Having been involved in the Judges Training Scheme in 2 states and giving the breed lecture to candidates in 3 states, I sometimes wonder if the time we put into a presentation is re-

dog. The Afghan Hound is not your best friend and don't expect him to like you. You are beneath him!

A.5. Typical movement with spring, effortless, powerful, light on the feet.

Angular outline with level topline, prominent hip bones and fall away to the set on of tail.

Temperament. Aloof AND dignified. The Afghan Hound is NOT a Poodle.

Balance. Height to length of body and length of leg to height. Front and rear quarter angulations balance.

Expression and correct head shape.

A.6. My pet hate? LACK OF BALANCE. This encompasses the proportions, angulation and basic structure. All the parts must fit together to complete a harmonious whole. When there is lack of balance in any of the departments, the function is severely impaired.

The hardest fault to breed out? SHORT LEGS. No sighthound, the Afghan Hound included, should ever have short legs. The leg length from elbow to ground is ALWAYS greater than the distance from elbow to wither.

Ros Bacich Aviva

"Correctly ringed tails seem to be disappearing, especially overseas, and that does have its influence here in Australia. While judging larger numbers overseas than we currently see here, we were horrified at the number of straight tails."

A.1. We have been in the breed since the very early 70's. Taejon bred its first litter in 1976, we bred our second litter in 1980, and in total these two litters only produced 4 puppies. While we

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Ros Bacich

ally worth the effort. I have thought that candidates have begun to understand the breed (and others who I have heard lecture, thought they had done the same) but when I have seen most of these candidates eventually judge, they disappointed me so much that they had judged the breed without regard to the "essence" of proper breed type, disregarding hallmarks, breed character and correct movement, rewarding the generic show dog with the best presented coat that flies around the ring at break neck speed.

As far as approach to the dogs when judging them is concerned, EVERY breed lecturer explains the proper way to approach any sighthound. I would take a conservative guess that 75% of candidates don't do it correctly and this includes qualified judges too. They approach from the front, take too long to examine, hover over and crowd the

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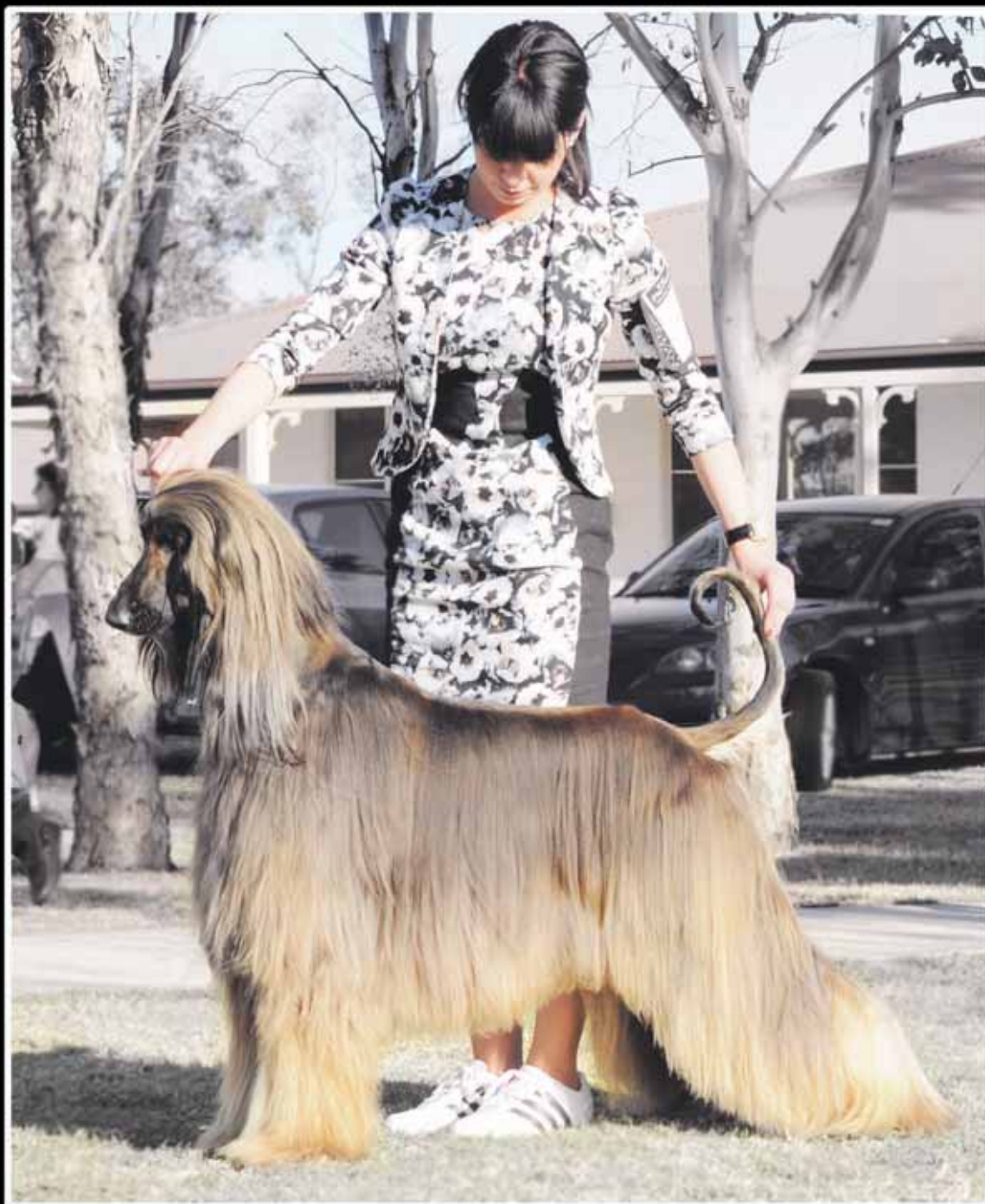
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*Adjective: Showing
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Raffa clearly displays Breed Hallmarks being lost in many modern Afghan Hounds



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The Hound Specialist's Choice

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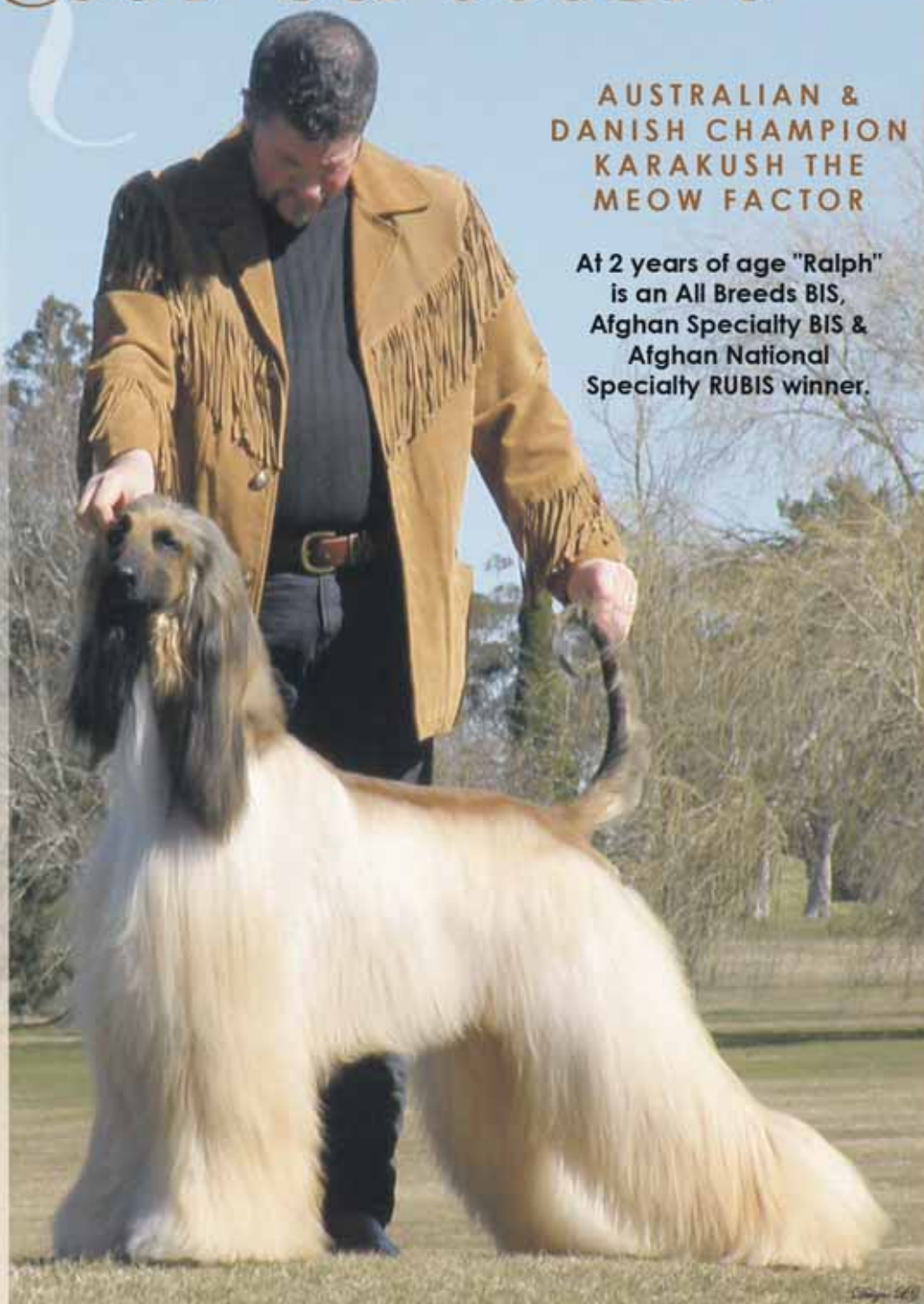
33 individual Best in
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- SBIS AHC of Victoria 50th Specialty (L Shelling, Vic)
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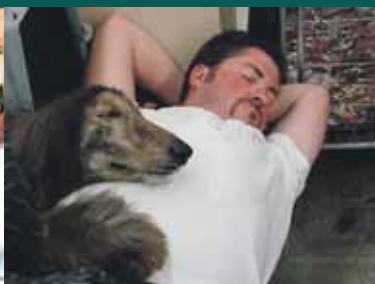
Krystal has had an amazing year in the show ring and is a Multi Best in Group winner and is highly acclaimed by breed specialists within Australia and overseas.

"Gold with glowing copper saddle. Stunning head shape, totally feminine. Quality bitch with proud head carriage and excellent movement"
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THANK YOU!..... For Talking Afghans



• BREED FEATURE •
AFGHAN HOUND



MERLIN

KEYWEST SMILING ASSASSIN



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Close to his much deserved title.
Multi in group & BOB winner.
Proudly owned by Veronika Harris
Bred & co-owned Paul & Gaille May.



• BREED FEATURE • AFGHAN HOUND



They answered.....

Continued from page 61

were quite active in the show scene in these early years, we did become more active in breeding from the mid 80's after we moved to Sydney from Adelaide. I think the Afghan Hound became our chosen breed because it was a matter of love at first sight – the pure beauty and elegance of this ancient breed can capture your heart with one sighting – why would you not choose this breed!!!

A.2. A lot of breeders, exhibitors and dogs have come and gone in the last 20 years but there is a small band of breeders still out there breeding to keep the Afghan as close to the standard of the good ones of yesteryear. Although we may all interpret the standard a little differently to each other we pretty much do the right thing by the breed. Generally it is the 'Johnny Come Lately' that wants a quick winner and never gets to know the essence of the breed, where it came from, where it is now and where it should be going in the future that stuffs things up in breeds. However while today we have fewer numbers, the best of today would still compete with the best of those of 20 years ago, and probably come up trumps!

A.3. In some cases yes - correctly ringed tails seem to be disappearing, especially overseas, and that does have its influence here in Australia. While judging larger numbers overseas than we currently see here, we were horrified at the number of straight tails. However other than that a great number of "Afghan" hallmarks seem to be present in many dogs.

A.4. Probably not - most all rounders seem to approach Afghans the same as they do for other breeds. Over and over I see judges getting in the dogs face - Sighthounds hate that. A big mistake is a judge talking to the owner when they are going over the rear of the dog, then they pick up and squeeze feet saying they cannot see that they have large feet unless they do - rubbish!! I have never seen an Afghan that likes their feet being picked up.

A.5. 1 - The gait of the Afghan Hound should be smooth and springy with a style of high order - the first words in the standard so I interpret these as most important.

2 - Ringed tail (not curved) and raised in action.

3 - The eastern or oriental expression is typical of the breed. The Afghan looks at and through one.

4 - Dignified and aloof with a certain keen fierceness

5 - Coat (yes coat) - the standard requires a long silky "top knot" with ears, body and legs well coated, with short hair on foreface and back. It also says coat must be allowed to develop naturally - this should be interpreted to mean that they are not Poodles, yes certainly stripping and cleaning up to better present their outline but scissoring and clipping - really!!

A.6. Pet hate is any Afghan that does not exhibit all of the above hall-



Paul & Lyn Britza

marks. In particular flat moving dogs with no style of high order, straight tails or tails bouncing on backs, bad toplines (dip behind withers) and the lack of balance (long and low).

Maybe bad tails are a hard thing to breed out in a single generation and bad toplines may require a bit of thought for a couple of generations but most faults can be bred out in a single generation if you choose the right sire and you keep only the best from your litters for breeding on with.

Paul & Lyn Britza & Julieanne Laws Taejon

"The other most obvious breed hallmark disappearing is the triangular eye. Of course all eye balls are round, but it is about the framing of the eyes by the eye rims, eye lids and pigment. Without this, the Afghan lacks that all important keen fierce expression"

A.1. We have been showing Afghans since 1983, starting with Afghans purchased from other breeders and then breeding our first litter in 1989.

The beauty of Afghans is essentially what maintains our interest in the breed. That combined with the challenge of producing animals that display all the breed hallmarks that we feel are so important in making an Afghan hound, AND trying to capture the type, movement and balance that is our ideal

We asked breeders

Q.1. How long have you been breeding Afghans? Why are they your chosen breed?

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within one animal.

A.2. By standard you mean quality? We feel great improvements have been made over the past 20 years. The most obvious being much better temperaments both as show dogs and dogs to live within the community. Clearly presentation and handling has improved universally. While we see more Afghans that are "ok" movers, the number of really special movers has not increased along with the "nice" movers.



Helen Gibson

We think breeders have made a great effort to produced Afghans that are better constructed animals, but in doing so have somewhat created a more generic dog - lacking in detail of the very specific breed hallmarks. Right now bad top lines would have to be the biggest problem within the breed.

A.3. Absolutely. Wide open side gait has become the all-important, with some putting so much emphasis on reach and drive at the sacrifice of spring.

The other most obvious breed hallmark disappearing is the triangular eye. Of course all eye balls are round, but it is about the framing of the eyes by the

eye rims, eye lids and pigment. Without this, the Afghan lacks that all important keen fierce expression.

A.4. Yes we do. There are very few judges these days that "freak out" an exhibit based on their approach and examination. More often it is handlers blaming judges for less than stable exhibits, but even this is few and far between today as breeders really have made great strokes in the improvement of soundness of both body and mind - as cliché as it may sound.

A.5. Sorry we could not get it down to just 5... 1) The coat. Long and Silky over almost all of the dog, combined with the unique coat patterning that is the short hair that forms the saddle and neck patches. - This is primarily what makes this dog recognisable as an Afghan Hound!



Le Gibson

2) A style of high order (arrogance, attitude and air) is apparent from the instant you see the Afghan - moving or standing.

3) Spring on the move, with the gait being effective in forward population, not just up and down on the spot.

4) Eye shape and expression in a well detailed head. This is the foreface and the skull area - neither being less important than the other.

5) Hard top line with prominent hip bones and fall away of croup. These details are so important to the balance of the Afghan.

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**E
L
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Y**

**Ch Karakush
EllyMay
Clampett**

Bred by L & H Gibson.
Presented and handled
by Shane Avery &
Tiffany Ross.



**BIS Ch
Karakush
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**"CHAKDARRA" New Zealand
Graeme & Bev Campbell
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• BREED FEATURE • AFGHAN HOUND



They answered.....

Continued from page 74

6) Long ringed tail, ALWAYS carried up!

A.6. Afghan move with its tail down or even "half-mast" would be our pet hate. Typically this can also go with bad top lines. This is only exacerbated for us by seeing such Afghans rewarded anyway - for one reason or another.

We would think that a longer length of back and poor top lines are very difficult to breed away from. Although they don't unanimously go together, an Afghan with a shorter back will carry itself stronger and harder through the top line.

**Le & Helen Gibson
Karakush**

"Afghan Hounds have some exclusive characteristics, Springy gait (not bounce), level top line with the legs effortlessly passing the ground under them, head held proud with High style and order. It is becoming more common for young Afghan Hounds to be awarded when this is a slow maturing breed, to be rewarded with the elegant swan one has to be patient. Flash and dash is not the breed of 4000years ago"

A. 1. 45 years. Initially because of the mystique, Persian romanticism and back then, they were like no other dog we had seen before. There is no other breed that starts out looking like a monkey dog and matures into a magnificent swan. This is why they are known as the "King of Dogs".

A.2. There are still some that compare with the quality that was around twenty years ago, but sadly today there is not the depth.

A.3. Hallmarks of any breed are what distinguish it from every other breed. We feel the quality Afghans of today certainly do not lack any of the distinguishing features of the breed.

A.4. Some certainly do not, which they illustrate by how they place and award Afghan Hounds. Afghan Hounds have some exclusive characteristics, Springy gait (not bounce), level top line with the legs effortlessly passing the ground under them, head held proud with High style and order. It is

becoming more common for young Afghan Hounds to be awarded when this is a slow maturing breed, to be rewarded with the elegant swan one has to be patient. Flash and dash is not the breed of 4000years ago and many are judging with this as an acceptable concept. It seems they now want a



Peter & Cathy Frost

"generic dog".

Afghan Hounds are no different to any other dog when being approached; it should be forthright, front on with an out stretched hand held below the eye line of the dog. This illustrates a non-threatening signal to the dog. So many approach from the side and dilly dally with talk and god knows what else!

A.5. Style of high order.

The impression of strength and dignity combining speed and power.

Aloof with a certain keen fierceness.

Refined, long balanced head surmounted by a long silky top not.

Effortless smooth gait with spring.

None of these points can be taken individually, Just because a dog has style of high order, its head and tail up and flies around the ring, does not necessarily constitute a quality Afghan Hound with all the required characteristics. It is the some of the total that counts.

A.6. Bad top lines is our pet hate, i.e.; Bum in the air, goose rump, sway back, extreme high wither and sloping. The standard calls for "Back Level", everything hangs off the back and without a true backline all else fails to be constructed in harmony with itself.

In our opinion fronts are the hardest to obtain and maintain and the easiest to lose.

**Peter & Cathy Frost
Dzum**

"I feel we don't see as much spring in the gait today because the dogs are run too fast in the ring and if they went at a normal

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speed and had powerful drive behind; many would display the correct gait"

A.1. I have always admired the beauty of an Afghan from as far back as a young child. When I started work



as an adult, I purchased my first show Afghan in 1973 and I started breeding in the early 80's. To stay in the breed this long it HAS to be, and is, my passion!

A.2. I think there are some Afghans that are outstanding today and better than twenty years ago. Today we have a lot more dogs that have great breed type but I feel we need to get some of the strength back into the dogs and concentrate on balanced front and rear angulation. Heads have also improved with a longer head which is less broad in the backskull, giving a correct oblique eye placement which enhances the oriental expression. Afghans today have a freer side gait and this has certainly made Afghans of today a more exciting breed to watch in the showing.

A.3. The correct springy gait with a style of high order would have to be the most debated hallmark as to what is correct and what is not. I feel we don't see as much spring in the gait today because the dogs are run too fast in the ring and if they went at a normal speed and had powerful drive behind; many would display the correct gait.

A.4. No. I think the majority of judges examine all dogs in a generic way. Afghans being a sighthound need to see the judge coming and not be approached from behind or the side and they should not be physically crowded by the judge during examination. Judges need to realise an Afghan pulling its head back when first approached, is not because they are apprehensive but to be able to focus on the judge as Afghans are longsighted. I also recommend judges do not speak during the examination, especially if the Afghan is young and unsure.

A.5. Oriental expression on a balanced clean through chiselled head

Smooth springy gait with a style of high order

Silky coat (bare pasterns NOT to be penalised, must have a saddle in adults)

Ringed tail
Prominent Hipbones

A.6. Really you need to look at any dog as a whole picture and what you may not want to breed in your kennel, you may award as a judge because overall the dog may be better.

Rather than pet hates...I would like to say a LOVE a beautiful head with strength and chiselling

**Kerin Hutchings
Suliman**

The Breed Standard

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

The gait of the Afghan Hound should be smooth and springy with a style of high order. The whole appearance of the dog should give the impression of strength and dignity combining speed and power. The head must be held proudly.

CHARACTERISTICS:

The Afghan Hound should be dignified and aloof with a certain keen fierceness. The eastern or oriental expression is typical of the breed. The Afghan looks at and through one.

TEMPERAMENT: The Afghan Hound should be dignified and aloof with a certain keen fierceness.

HEAD AND SKULL:

Skull long, not too narrow with prominent occiput. Foreface long with punishing jaws and slight stop. The skull well balanced and surmounted by a long "top knot". Nose preferably black, but liver is no fault in light coloured dogs.

EYES: Should be dark for preference, but golden colour is not debarred. Nearly triangular, slanting slightly upwards from the inner corner to the outer.

EARS: Set low and well back, carried close to the head. Covered with long silky hair.

MOUTH: Level.

NECK: Long, strong with proud carriage of the head.

FOREQUARTERS:

Shoulders long and sloping, well set back, well muscled and strong without being loaded. Forelegs straight and well boned, straight with shoulder, elbows held in.

BODY: Back level, moderate length, well muscled, the back falling slightly away to the stern. Loin straight, broad and rather short. Hip-bones rather prominent and wide apart. A fair spring of ribs and good depth of chest.

HINDQUARTERS:

Powerful, well bent and well turned stifles. Great length between hip and hock with a comparatively short distance between hock and foot. The dewclaws may be removed or remain at the discretion of the breeder.

FEET: Forefeet strong and very large, both in length and breadth, and covered with long, thick hair; toes arched. Pasterns long and springy, especially in front, and pads well down on the ground. Hindfeet long, but not quite so broad as forefeet, covered with long, thick hair.

TAIL: Not too short. Set on low with ring at the end. Raised when in action. Sparsely feathered.

GAIT/MOVEMENT: The gait of the Afghan Hound should be smooth and springy with a style of high order. The head must be held proudly. The tail is raised when in action.

COAT: Long and very fine texture on ribs, fore- and hindquarters and flanks. From the shoulder backwards and along the saddle, the hair should be short and close in mature dogs. Hair long from the forehead backward, with a distinct silky "top knot". On the foreface the hair is short, as on the back. Ears and legs well coated. Pasterns can be bare. Coat must be allowed to develop naturally.

COLOUR: All colours are acceptable.

SIZES: Ideal height: Dogs 68-74 cms (27-29 ins)
Bitches 5-8 cms (2-3 ins) smaller.

FAULTS:

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

Any appearance of coarseness.

Skull too wide and foreface too short.

Weak underjaw.

Large, round or full eyes.

Neck should never be too short or thick.

Back too long or too short.

NOTES:

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum

