

YOU BE THE JUDGE

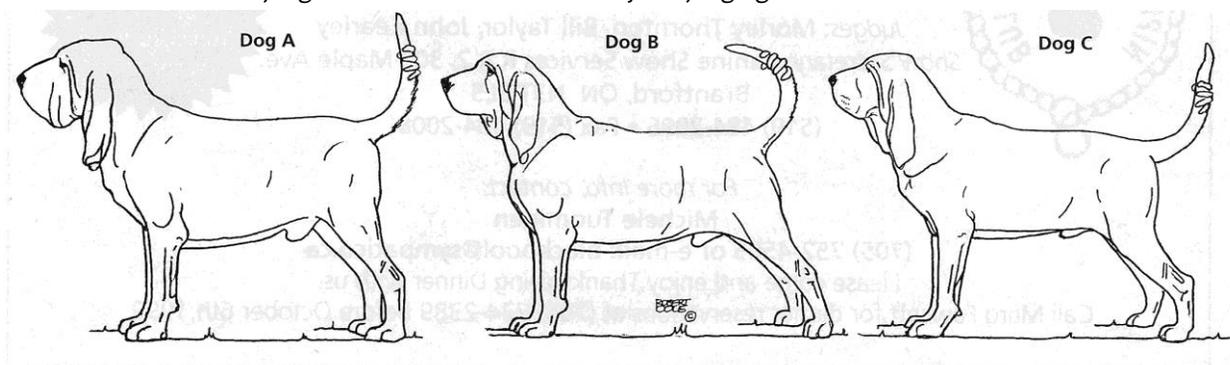
By Robert Cole

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THE BLOODHOUND

Based on the CKC standard (July 1994)

Before we begin, there was a piece of advice in the American Bloodhound Club judge's education packet that was also stressed verbally at the 1993 Bloodhound seminar, and is worth repeating. It reads: "We have a big sloppy dog – if you are concerned about your clothing and hands – don't judge this breed. Nothing is more evident than a judge who dislikes the breed they are judging."



DOGS A, B AND C

Place this first class of Bloodhound champions in order of preference. Each has won at least one group placement. Normally they would be competing for Best of Breed as Specials; however, judging them as a class involves thinking in terms of first, second and third.

THE IDEAL

The general appearance of the ideal Bloodhound is well described by Charles Henry Lane, a breeder, exhibitor and judge, in his book *All About Dogs*, written in 1900.

"The points associated with the Bloodhound are as follows: Skull; long, narrow and very much peaked. Square, deep muzzle. Ears thin, long, set on rather low, hanging in shapely folds close against the face. Eyes, dark in color and deep set, with lustrous lids, triangular in shape, showing the red haw. Flews, long, thin and pendulous, the upper overhanging the lower lips. Neck, rather long, and slightly arched toward the base of skull. Plenty of dewlap, wrinkled skin of the face very loose and abundant. Short, close-lying coat, thick skin, sloping and deep shoulders; broad muscular loins, well let down in the brisket, powerful thighs and second thighs. Strong, straight legs, feet round and hocks well bent, stern tapering and carried high. The general appearance should be that of a high-classed, aristocratic and very dignified animal, who looks as if he considered himself fit company for emperors and would not care to associate with any except those belonging to the upper circles."

DOG A, B OR C?

Which of these three Bloodhounds comes closest to fulfilling these requirements? The foregoing description helps to formulate a word picture of the ideal and I am sure you have found the best of these three; however, there is more. For instance, the standard advises that "the chest (brisket) is well let down between forelegs, forming a deep keel." This would position the elbow slightly above the bottom of the

brisket. What appears to be a deep brisket on these three Bloodhounds (and seldom included in artists' drawings) is actually a loose roll of skin on the underbelly, which can be lifted off the body from above. The true brisket on these three dogs is level with the elbow, and their forelegs are either too short or their bodies are not deep enough.

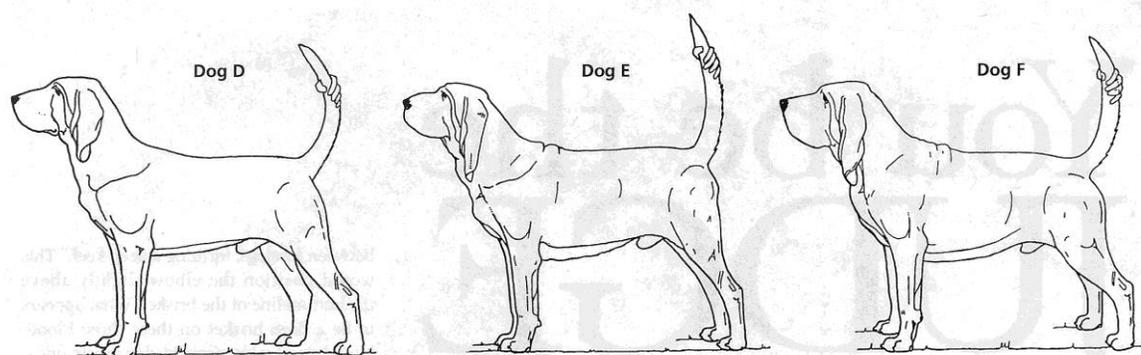
The outline of the skull should be on nearly the same plane as that of the muzzle, divided equally by the stop. The occipital peak should be very pronounced and the head should be in proportion to the body. All three of these Bloodhounds fall short in this area.

The forechest doesn't receive mention in the standard but is described as pronounced in the ABC judges' packet. The neck must be long in order to bring the nose close to the ground. Dog B could have more forechest and a longer neck.

Short upper arms are a problem in this breed, but not with these three. However, Dog A could have better shoulder layback and Dog B a longer shoulder blade.

Dog A and Dog B lack bend at the stifle, a current fault breeders want judges to note. Dog C's hind legs depart in another direction: the second thigh is too long. A line dropped down from the point of the buttocks should line up with the front of the rear pastern. Speaking of buttocks, there should be a shelf projecting out beneath the rather high set tail.

This class of champions introduces more faults than virtues, which demonstrates their effect on balance. I placed Dog C first, Dog A second and Dog B third.



DOG D, E OR F?

These three Bloodhound champions have all placed at the group level more than once. One could be said to represent typical; the other two provide, by departure, further appreciation for correct Bloodhound balance.

Based on the discussion up to this point, place these three dogs in order of merit.

Dog D is a sound young Bloodhound champion that appears to stand high on the leg because his keel (brisket) hasn't fully developed. When it does, the chest should drop down well between the forelegs. Until that happens he is balanced, but not balanced as a Bloodhound.

I selected this example because, at first glance, Dog E appears impressive and you have to look closely to see where his front has gone wrong.

Usually in most breeds where the upper arm is steep, the forequarters position forward on the body and reduce forechest exposure. This hasn't happened here. His shoulders are good and his upper arm has good length but the latter has steepened, forcing the body to rise up above the elbow. If you ignore the loose skin under the body, you will see that the deepest part of the true brisket is three inches above and rearward of the elbow. The point of the forechest, although pronounced, is low on the body. It should be half the distance (height) to the withers, approximately level with the point of the buttocks. The topline is level because the bones of the hind legs have also steepened and are sufficiently long to balance with the raised front.

Dog F represents the typical Bloodhound. Everything that was wrong in the first lass is right on this dog.

I placed Dog F first, Dog D second and Dog E third. Winners went to dog F. For Reserve you have a choice of mature Dog C or young Dog D.