

YOU BE THE JUDGE

By Robert Cole

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THE KEESHOND

A member of the Spitz family of northern dogs, the Keeshond (pronounced Case-Hawnd) was bred as a companion and watch dog for both the home, and more particularly, on boats and barges. It is said this is the reason why they are able to curl up in a small space. There are six in this Open Male class; you are invited to place them in order of preference.

TYPICAL

My representation of typical has an abundant, long, straight, harsh outer coat standing out from a thick downy undercoat. His moderately long neck is covered with a mane (more profuse in the male) sweeping from under the jaw and covering the whole of the front part of his chest and shoulders. There is feathering on his front legs and 'trousers' on his hind legs.

His legs and feet are cream coloured. His coat is a mixture of silver grey to black. The hair on the outer coat is black tipped, the length of the black tips producing the characteristic shading of colour. The shoulder line of light grey is well defined. His undercoat is very pale grey (or cream).

His intelligent expression is largely dependent on his 'spectacles' – a combination of markings and shadings in the orbital area, which includes a delicate, dark line slanting from the outer corner of each eye toward the lower corner of each dark, triangular and erect ear, couples with expressive eyebrows.

Dark, brown eyes of medium size, almond shaped, set obliquely and with black eye rims, contribute to his intelligent expression. He has a complete scissor bite. His tight lips are black, while his dark muzzle is the same length as his skull and appears wedge-shaped when viewed from above. In profile, the typical Keeshond's head has a definite stop.

Hidden under profuse coat, his topline slopes slightly downward toward his hindquarters. His compact body is well sprung in rib (a narrow-chested Kees is untypical), he is short coupled, and his belly is moderately tucked up. He has a deep strong chest and a degree of forechest. His elbow is level with the deepest part of brisket, half the distance between withers and ground. His front pasterns are strong with a slight slope. His feet are well padded, round, cat-like, cream in colour, with black nails. Angulation in rear is between slight and moderate, complimenting his forequarters.

His tail is well feathered, set on high and tightly curled over his back. It lies flat and close to his body, forming part of the silhouette. The plume of the tail is light in colour with a black tip.

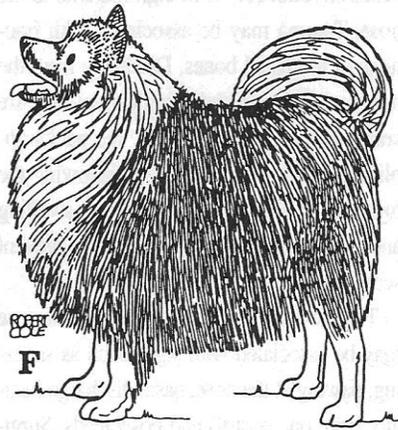
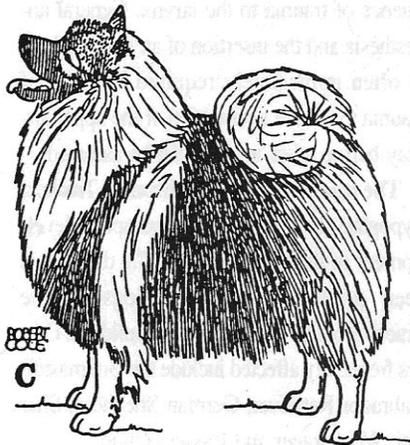
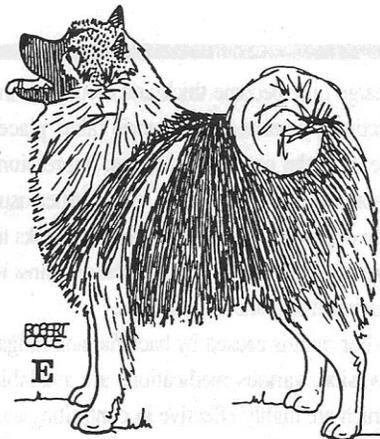
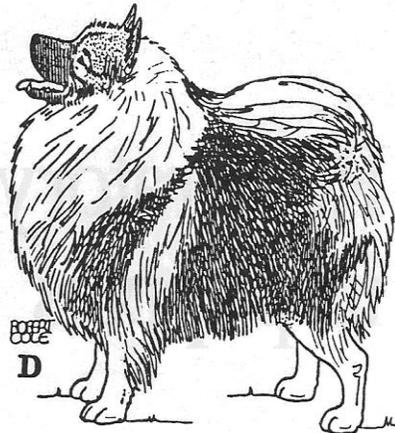
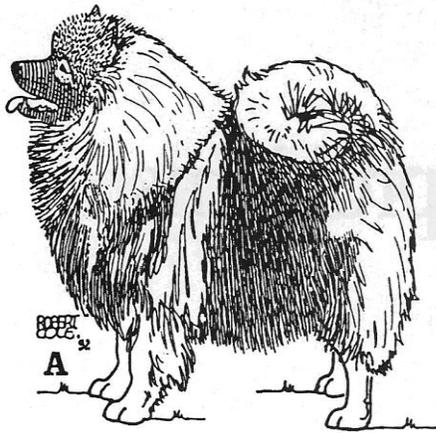
DECISIONS

In an attempt to vary format from breed to breed, I have selected examples that, regardless of which of the best three Kees you award first place, require your selection for second place to be of a different type, or to be a Kees that lacks abundant coat.

After you have placed the best three Kees, your selection for fourth place must take into consideration many current faults, such as short legs, short neck, Pomeranian tail, too much angulation, wolf head, long body, lack of spectacles, lack of light grey shoulder markings, incorrect tails, down-in-front pasterns, and steep hindquarters.

FIRST PLACE

You had three dogs to choose from. I chose Dog C for first place as the Kees closest to the description of typical. I used this particular real life big winner because of his balance. He is 45.7 centimeters (18 inches)



tall and just slightly longer in body. His harsh, off-standing coat makes him appear square in some ways, but not in others.

SECOND PLACE

My selection for second place was between Dog E, with his lack of abundant coat, and square Dog A. I chose Dog E\$, forgiving his lack of coat in favour of his type and soundness. He is the same Kees as first place Dog C, except he has less abundant coat. His same height-to-slightly-greater-length is easier to appreciate without abundant coat. (Under the old point system, 15 out of a possible 100 points were allotted to coat).

THIRD PLACE

Real life, square, third place Dog A has done a great deal of winning in heavy competition and, as he is a different type to my number one and two, I have taken pains to draw him faithfully. He appears apple headed but isn't. I was tempted to shorten his muzzle and make him more 'Pommer', but I left his large (in proportion to body) head and prominent stop as is. He is reproduced here at the ideal 45.7 centimeters (18 inches) height. Americans have added a rider (1990) that, "While correct size is important, it should not outweigh that of type." To keep it simple, I have drawn all six Kees the same height.

FOURTH PLACE

If, like me, you selected Dog D for fourth place, you had to forgive his short legs, a serious fault in this breed. His neck is also short. His hindquarter angulation is too pronounced for a Kees, and his tail lies flat without curl on his incorrectly level topline. The lips of his heavy muzzle overlap, and loose wrinkles occur at the corner of his mouth.

FIFTH PLACE

Dog B has a wolf-like head with large ears and poorly defined stop rather than a typical fox-like head with small ears. He is sound but he is long. His topline is level rather than slightly sloping downward to the rear. His tail is correctly set on high but does not lie close or curl. His wavy coat is incorrect and so are the black markings that run more than half way down his forelegs.

SIXTH PLACE

Unsound Dog F does not have required spectacles, his muzzle is light rather than dark (sometimes, as the Kee grows older, white hairs appear around the mouth starting under the chin and spreading above the lips, but that is not the same as a light muzzle) and his shoulder markings are not well defined. He has a round eye. Not noticeable from this angle, his head is too broad a wedge, making it appear coarse face on. The tips of his heavy ears are rounded.

His neck is short and, judging from his broken down front pasterns, his shoulders are steep. His equally steep hindquarters are higher than his withers, and his incorrect tail sets on low.