



***Presenter Speaking Notes
(Jan 2017)***

Introduction

The IWS is a moderate gun dog, bred for endurance, with a bold and dashing eagerness to please.



- IWS is a moderate gun dog.
- Bred for all types of shooting, especially water-fowling.
- Rugged endurance.
- Balanced.
- Neither leggy nor coarse.

Form & Function

Bred particularly for waterfowling.



- You can see the balance and strength in this dog.
- The deep chest.
- Strong upper thigh.
- Head held upright as he carries the bird / indicative of a strong neck.

History

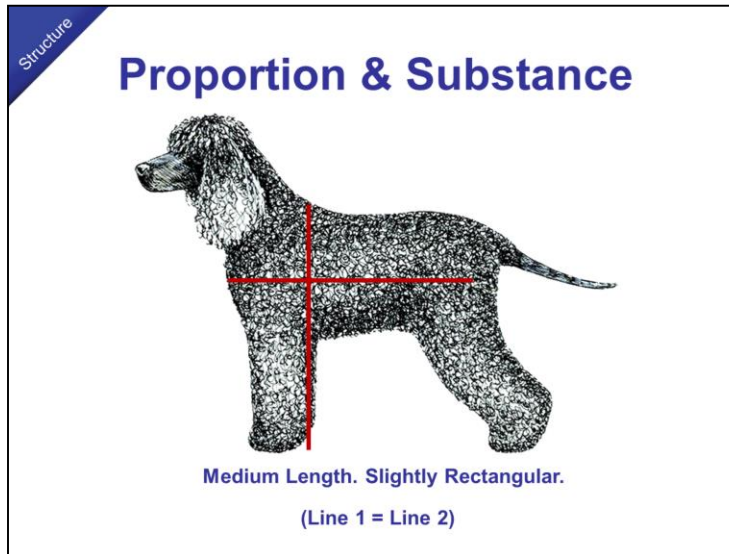
- An “ancient” dog that has existed in its present type since the 1850’s.
- Bred to hunt the severe bogs but also could handle the extreme cold of the North Sea.
- Prior to the Civil War several were imported into North America. By the end of WW1 they were the most popular retriever.
- First breed to earn an AKC Obedience Title.
- The IWSCA appreciates the continued versatility of our breed by honoring worthy dogs with the All-Around and/or the QVA titles.

- Speaker should read through the bullets on the slide.

Distinguishing Characteristics



- Unique silhouette.
- Top-knot of long, loose curls.
- Body covered with:
 - Dense;
 - Crisply curled;
 - Liver colored coat
- Smooth face.
- “Rat” tail.



- The IWS is smart, upstanding, strongly built, and well boned. But never coarse.
- Slightly rectangular and of medium length.
- They are well-muscled, long arched neck, set smoothly into the shoulders, to carry large waterfowl.
- Large webbed feet, able to tread through marsh & bog.

(Note to presenter: the two red lines are of equal length, illustrating the IWS body is slightly longer than its height.)

Proportion & Substance

Slightly rectangular bitch - Correct

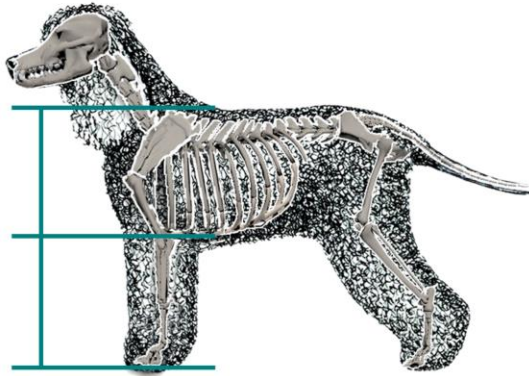


Too long in back - Incorrect



- The IWS is a slightly rectangular dog.
- Should not appear leggy or coarse.

Proportion & Substance



Not Leggy: Withers to Brisket roughly equal to Brisket to Ground.

- Withers to brisket roughly equal to brisket to ground.

Size/Weight

Dog
22-24 inches 55-68 pounds



Bitch
21-23 inches 45-58 pounds



- Bitches 21 - 23 inches at the shoulder, 45–58 lbs.
- Dogs 22 – 24 inches at the shoulder, 55-68 lbs.
- There is no size disqualification in Irish Water Spaniels.
- Oversized exhibits are often seen.
- Larger is not better, and an exhibit should not be rewarded simply because it is bigger.

Size/Weight

Dog

Bitch



- You can see the size variation between this dog and bitch
- The variation between the two sexes can be as much as 3 inches in height, and as much as 20 lbs in weight.



- The head is long and clean with a deep squared-off muzzle.
- Chiseling on the muzzle is desirable, and sometimes does not appear until maturity.
- The head never presents a short, wedge-shaped appearance. This is a fault.
- Teeth are even with a scissor or level bite.
- Lips are clean, dry, close-fitting, and fine in texture, underjaw is strong.
- The back skull is high with a prominent occiput.
- Eyes are slightly almond shaped, rather small in appearance, and set flush, never protruding.
- The stop is gradual.
- The expression is vital to breed type. It has been characterized as "direct, alert, and quizzical“.

Head

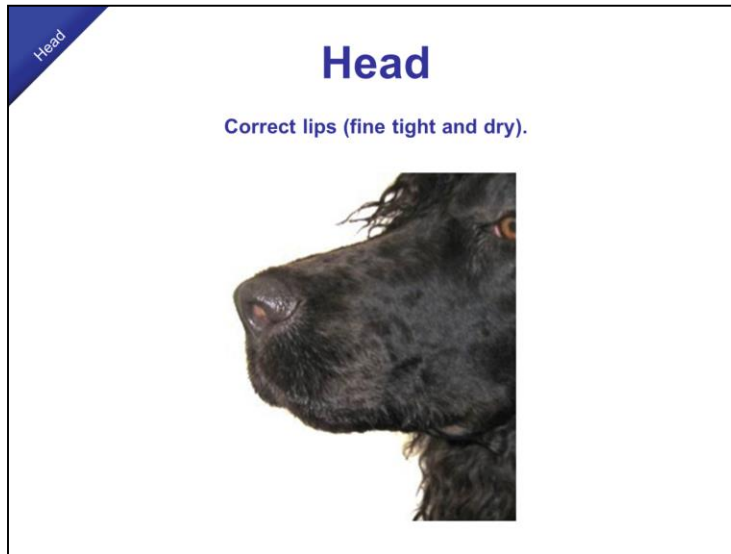
Head

Correct muzzle (long, deep and somewhat square) with strong underjaw.



Same dog - mouth closed and open.

- The muzzle is long - often equal in length or slightly longer than the back skull.
- The under jaw and the squared finish to the muzzle help to create typical appearance.
- Heads do mature with age.



- Lips are fine in texture.
- Lips are tight.
- The mouth is dry.
- Slightly more curve to the lip is often seen than in this photo.



- The throat is smooth in a “V” patch.
- The smooth patch begins at the back of the jaw and extends in a “V” to the top of the sternum, or the very bottom of the throat.
- The beard is formed of loose curls or ringlets.
- Many exhibitors choose to trim off the "sideburn" portion of the beard along the cheeks. Doing so should not be penalized.

Top-knot



- Top-Knot is an important hallmark of the breed.
- It is formed of long curls or loose ringlets.
- Grows to a widow's peak point between the eyes.
- The top-knot need not stand up in a round helmet.
- Should drape over the tops of the ears so that it blends into the ear coat.
- Should also drape over the occiput.
- Over trimming this breed characteristic into an extreme beanie shape is not desirable.



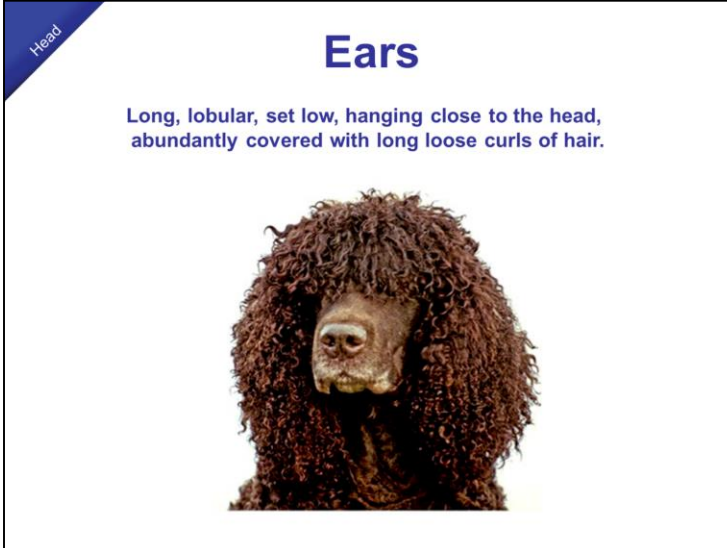
- The widow's peak is where the front edge of the top-knot forms a point.
- Need not extend all the way to the stop between the eyes, although it sometimes does.
- It is a fault for the top-knot to grow straight across the forehead like a wig, with no widow's peak point.



- A correct eye is set almost flush.
- The setting gives the eye a slight almond shape.
- The expression is alert, direct, and quizzical.
- Tight eyelids are important to protect the eye when working in the field.



- Preferred color is a medium to dark shade of amber brown.
- Eyes will darken with age.
- A light yellow eye, or a greenish yellow eye is a fault.
- Eyes lacking the warm amber tones ruin the expression.



- Ears should be low set, nearly level with the corner of the eye.
- Ear leathers should reach to the leather of the nose when pulled forward. This is seldom seen, but when it is seen it should be rewarded.
- Curls should not be distorted by excessive grooming.

Neck

Well-muscled, arched neck, set smoothly into the shoulders to carry large waterfowl.



- Neck should be long, arching and strong.
- Strength of neck is vital in order to carry a heavy bird.
- You can see the strength of the neck in both these photos, head held high.

(Note to presenter: Speaker should explain that “long neck” means long enough to carry a large bird, but not “giraffe” like)

Topline

The rear is equal to, or slightly higher than the front, never descending or showing sag or roach.

Shoulders and hips are on a level plane.



Slightly higher in the rear.



Both are correct.

- Level topline, may be slightly higher in the rear, but should never be descending.
- Strong, broad back.
- Rounded croup with tail set low enough to correlate with the rounded contouring.
- Characteristic rattail, should be carried parallel to the ground when moving.

Topline

Descending Toplines. Both are Incorrect.



- IWS should never present a descending topline.

Body

Chest is deep with the brisket extending to the elbows.
Loin is short and muscular.
Should not present a tucked-up appearance.



- Deep chest.
- Well sprung ribs to give barrel shape.
- A slight rise to underline is fine, but no extreme tuck-up.

Forequarters

Forelegs well boned and muscular, set under the withers.



- Forechest should be moderate.
- Shoulders sloping and moderately laid back, clean and powerful.
- The upper arms are approximately the length of the shoulder blades with clean elbows set close to the body.
- Forelegs are well boned, muscular and straight, **set well under the withers.**



- Forelegs are well boned, muscular and straight, **set well under the withers.**
- When viewed from the front, forelegs should be straight, toeing neither in nor out.

Hindquarters

The stifles moderately bent; hocks low.



Correct tail sets

Well developed thighs

Pasterns perpendicular to ground



- As high or slightly higher than the shoulders with powerful, muscular, well developed thighs.
- Stifles are moderately bent, never straight.
- Hocks are set low and moderately bent.
- Balance of front and rear angulation is important.

Hindquarters

Hips are wide.



- Hips are wide.
- Croup is rounded and full.
- Rounded full croup with a low tail set is an important breed characteristic.
- A “flat” croup is undesirable and often is seen with a high tail set.
- Too steep a croup, not correctly rounded, is undesirable and will often be seen with too low a tail set.

Hindquarters

Well muscled thighs. The croup is rounded.



- Strength of rear is vital for swimming and pushing through bogs and rough terrain.
- You can see the power in the rear of this dog.
- Well muscled thighs.
- Rounded croup.

Feet

Large, round, somewhat spreading.
Well clothed with hair. Pads are thick.

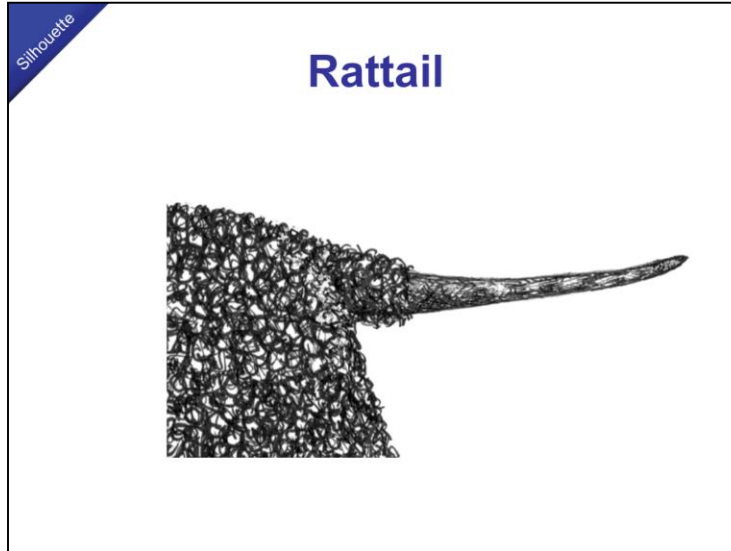


- Webbing between the toes.
- Large feet to help propel through rough waters.

Feet



- Should be large, round and somewhat spreading.
- Judges may want to pick up the foot to feel the thickness of pads.
- Should be well clothed with hair.



- The IWS' tail is unlike any other breed.
- It's has 2-3 inches of curls at the "root"/base of the tail and the rest is covered with short/smooth hair.
- The tail is straight. Both at rest and when the dog is on the move.
- The tail is not quite long enough to reach the point of the hock.
- A high tail set, or a high tail carriage are both objectionable.

Silhouette

Rattail

Tail Carriage

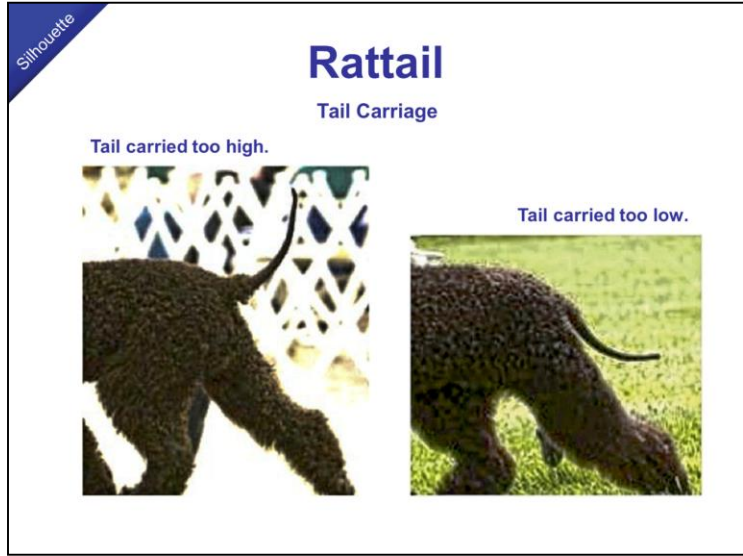
Tail is carried parallel to the ground; no higher than the back.



Tail Set

Tail-set on left is better than tail-set on the right.

- You can see the correct tail carriage on both dogs above – held straight and parallel to the ground.
- Tail set on the left is slightly better than the one on the right.



- 2 examples of improper tail **CARRIAGE**.

Rattail

Incorrect. Tail set is too high, tail carriage too high.



- This slide depicts both incorrect tail **SET** and incorrect tail **CARRIAGE**.
- Both are too high.
- This dog also has more of a curve to it's tail then we would like to see.



- There are 3 aspects to the IWS Coat which we will go over in detail:

Texture , Patterning, and Color

- Texture – ringlets or loose wave;
- Patterning – short and smooth as on the face, “V”-neck pattern and rattail;
- Color – Rich Liver to Dark Liver also known as Puce which has a purplish tinge.



- Neck, body, and base of tail is covered with dense, crisp curls.
- Crisp refers to springiness of curl, not the texture – the hair should not be soft nor brittle.
- Coat should not be wooly or open curled.
- Curls should not be obscured by grooming.

Coat

Rich liver, to dark liver with a purplish tinge, sometimes called puce liver.
No white hair or markings except for the graying of age.
Both these coats are of correct curl and correct color.



- Rich liver (left photo) to dark liver with a purplish tinge, sometimes referred to as liver puce (right photo).
- Individual breeders may have a personal preference, however **BOTH COLOR VARIETIES ARE CORRECT.**
- No white hair or markings except for the graying of age.
- Frosting or roaning behind the legs and ears are less desirable than a uniform color.

Coat

Legs

Legs are covered down to the feet with curls or waves with the exception of short smooth coat on front of rear pasterns.



- Dogs may be shown in natural coat or trimmed.
- Feet should be well clothed with hair.
- Dogs maybe shown natural or trimmed.
- Dog should not be groomed or trimmed so excessively as to obscure the curl or texture of the coat.



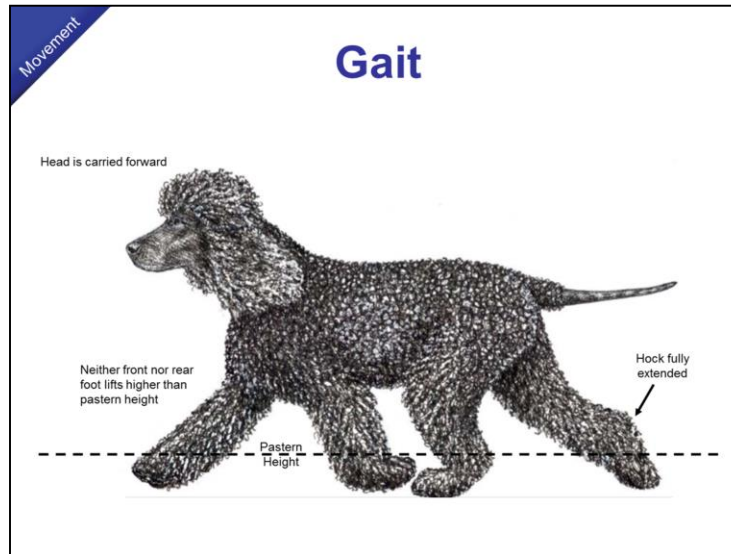
- Patterning on the front legs is undesirable.
- Patterning on the rear end; “bare butt” is also undesirable.
- The only acceptable patterning is the “V”-shaped throat patch on the neck and the front of the rear pasterns.



- Trimmed to clean up a dog's outline and/or help define natural coat texture and curl.
- Curl is not distorted.
- Not excessively groomed.



- No dog should be groomed or trimmed so excessively as to obscure the curl or texture of the coat.
- This dog has no defined curls, coat is woolly.
- Important note: this is a good example of a sun-burned/sun-bleached coat – reddish/orange. Any dog that works or spends time outdoors will have some degree of sun burned/sun-bleached coat. No dog should be penalized for this.



- Balanced and efficient.
- Moves freely and soundly with ground covering ease that has a unique balance of strength with endurance.
- Balanced reach and drive.
- At slow speeds, may exhibit characteristic “roll”.
- Rear is level or slightly higher than shoulders (both are correct).
- Gait should be true and precise, not slurring.
- Head carried forward.

Gait

Dog – Correct



- Moves freely and soundly with balanced reach and drive.
- Rear may be level or slightly higher than shoulders (both are correct).

Gait

Bitch – Correct



Form and Function



- The IWS is a moderately structured gundog/endurance retriever.
- Dogs that conform to the standard will work efficiently in the field and water.
- The large, round, webbed feet with thick pads help the dog work efficiently in marshes.

Temperament

Smart, great intelligence



- Smart and upstanding.
- Bold, dashing, spirited eagerness.
- Stability, with an endearing sense of humor.
- But may be reserved or indifferent to strangers.
 - Good description: “IWS really do not care about strangers.”
- Shyness is undesirable.

Temperament

The Irish Water Spaniel... when sent into water,
will always get its duck!



- Temperament of an IWS is one that is eager to please.
- Perseverance.

Summary

The IWS is a moderately structured gun dog, bred for endurance.

- Sound and well moving
- Distinctive head and coat
- Unique silhouette
- Bold and dashing eagerness to please



Final slide / Wrap-up

Re-state the purpose / summarize the IWS:

- A moderately structured gun dog bred for endurance.
- Strongly built / sound / well moving.
- Distinctive head and coat.
- Unique silhouette.
- With a bold and dashing eagerness to please.