



# THE POODLE SCENE

**FALL EDITION—OCTOBER 2007**

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# Poodle Club of Canada

## Quarterly Newsletter

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### Up Coming Events

**Pot Luck Social  
& Meeting  
November 28, 2007  
At the home of  
Rosemary Hagen  
6:30 pm**

# AS I SEE IT

by Joanne Reichertz B.Sc., M.Sc. (Nutrition) D.V.M. Guelph

*First published in March/June 199 issue of The Poodle Review*

## ***“How I evaluate a litter of Poodle puppies”***

Each of us evaluate our dogs in our own fashion, weighing one point more heavily for or against the dog, often quite differently than the next person would do. This is perfectly natural as we all have different likes and dislikes, from what we want for lunch to what we think is essential in a Poodle.

Being a breeder of over thirty years, when I evaluate a litter of puppies or an individual, I also evaluate the pedigree. Of course you do not do this when judging, (although perhaps we should). I start with the pedigree, because most of us do not just want a show dog, of course we want the puppy to become an excellent example of the breed that we can win with, but we almost always expect to be able to breed this dog and sell or show the puppies, hoping they will win at least as much as their parent. It is also nice if the dog becomes a Top Producer, for although most of us are not dog breeders for the money! (What money? Oh, the money pit of course.) It is still easier to continue with our hobby if we can at least sell some of the puppies for a decent amount of money.

So I evaluate the pedigree behind any litter or dog first. I like a line bred pedigree, but I am not overly fond of inbreeding, except for a half sibling breeding. In a half sibling breeding if the common parent is a good example of the breed with no disqualifications or major faults, all health clearances and of good temperament, the resulting puppies are often excellent. I prefer that the other grandparents be an outcross or mildly line bred to the common parent. In addition I find it is usually helpful if the other grandparents compliment the common parent. That is - if he or she is not as pretty in the head as I would like, I prefer it if at least one and hopefully both of the other parents have nice heads. In addition, I like the pedigree to be as clear of known genetic problems as possible. Usually the affected and carrier dogs that we know about in any pedigree is less than a quarter of the number that are really there. This is especially important with regard to devastating health problems such as sebaceous adenitis, juvenile renal disease, and epilepsy to name a few.

When evaluating a litter of puppies for a breeder, I ask them why they did the breeding and what qualities they hoped to gain in the offspring that the dam did not have. I often find that a breeder who has done an outcross breeding to a dog because they admired some aspect of that dog, are disappointed when the litter does not look to be as good quality overall as they expected. They must realise that if they really wish to incorporate for example a better front into their line of dogs, they may have to keep a puppy with a good front, even if they do not really like it (as long as it has no disqualifications or major faults). Usually when they breed that puppy back into their own line, they then incorporate the improvement they originally wanted to obtain. I find that many people tend to keep the puppy from the outcross breeding that looks most like what they usually produce, even if it does not have the better front, then are disappointed with the puppies it later produces. I have fallen into this trap myself on occasion.

Then I evaluate the individual or the litter. Evaluating a whole litter gives more perspective on the future breeding worth of the individual, as a puppy from a litter where there were several puppies of almost as good quality, and no others with a disqualification or major fault, is much more likely not to produce these faults than is a puppy with mediocre littermates. I like to look at puppies when they are between seven and eight weeks of age. I find that usually the puppies are consistent at this age, that is any puppies which had a slower start in life (low birth weight, competition while nursing, etc.) have caught up to the other puppies. It is essential that the puppies have been fed and wormed correctly to give them the necessary start as a show and breeding animal. It is of course also very important for those which become pets. As a veterinarian, I tend to evaluate the puppies medically at the same time. In any case the puppies should be thoroughly checked out by a veterinarian before final decisions are made. It is important that any puppy be healthy, but doubly so for an animal kept to show or breed.

I prefer to start by letting the puppies run around on the floor, or allowing an older dog to move freely in a fenced area, or on a flexi-lead if such an area is not available. The most important quality is the temperament. The dog should be happy, confident and outgoing. I look for natural head-up head carriage and a straightforward springy trot (not a pace). I watch for natural drive, and of course mark an individual down for over-reaching and hackney-type movement. It is usually not possible to watch an eight week old puppy coming and going, but with an older puppy, if they are leash trained I like to see them moving with parallel movement, tending toward a single track at a fast trot. I don't want to see paddling, weaving or moving wide in front, nor do I want to see them moving close, cow-hocked or bow-hocked behind. Many puppies side wind when young due to high spirits, so I do not penalise them heavily for that unless it is because they are too short-backed or unbalanced.

Next I look at each puppy separately while they are standing on a table (easier on my back). First I evaluate overall proportions. I like a squarely built dog, (height at withers equal to length from breastbone to point of rump. I will forgive a slightly longer backed dog, if the same dog has excellent angulation in both front and rear and covers ground well (no side winding or overreaching). I do not like a dog which is taller than it is long. I have recently seen more of these puppies than in the past, which I find disturbing. These dogs invariably cannot move properly. Their backs are not long enough for them to get their front legs out of the way of their rear legs when they try to trot. They all do something incorrect when they move, either side winding (earlier comment), moving wide in the front or rear, and/or close in the opposite end, and often showing either hackney movement or mincing along in the rear. Occasionally if they are quite straight in angulation in both ends, they actually appear to move quite well, but show little reach or drive. I like a puppy with medium bone, fine boned dogs tend to finish up either small or narrow, while heavy boned animals are often coarse (too much dog for me) as adults.

Next are the teeth. A correct bite (scissors or level) is essential and I prefer a full compliment of teeth. A small (oval) dark eye is preferred, but I will forgive a slightly rounder eye if it is dark. I have found that parallel planes on the head with a correct stop is essential to poodle expression. I can forgive a slightly heavier head, a even a narrower head if the cheeks are clean (flat) in a Standard, but I find that a narrow head on a Miniature puppy often ends up snipey with either missing teeth, or with bite problems as an adult. Clean cheeks seem to be harder to find in Miniatures. I like low-set long ears, with a long leather but I will forgive a shorter ear leather if the set is correct. It is harder to find low set ears on Miniatures, so I usually feel a moderately set ear is good, but I penalise ear set more heavily on a Standard. Muzzle length should equal skull length. I penalise a snipey chin, but also find that especially in Standards, a puppy with too strong a chin may end up with a reverse scissors bite (technically undershot) when its adult teeth come in. In my experience this happens more rarely in Miniatures. I do not like a roman nose, and I prefer chiselling under the eyes, but can forgive a lack of it. I will also forgive a slightly heavier head more easily than one which is too fine - especially in puppies as heads tend to refine more with age and growth. I want a clean throat, but again find it not as important as the length of neck. It is very important that the neck be long and fit into the withers properly - no ewe necks allowed. Necks do not fit properly unless the front assembly is correctly proportioned. The upper arm must be approximately the same length as the shoulder blade, and the front assembly should be set on the rib cage such that you can feel the breastbone at least even with (in front of in Standards) the two shoulder points. The deepest portion of the chest should be at the elbows and there should be some fill to the chest at this point (not slab-sided or without forechest). The chest should not be so wide or round so that the elbows are forced out and the toes turned in, nor should it be so narrow that the toes can turn out. Feet should be tight, thick pads are preferred. In Miniatures I find it necessary to check the shape of the radius (leg bone) - it should be as straight as possible, without a curve between the pastern and the elbow. I have not noticed this tendency in Standards. The neck should blend into a level topline with a strong short loin.

Tails are very important. While I prefer a straight tail, set high and of course carried up, I do not penalise a tail with a small curl at the end. I do not like a tail carried flat on the back, or a low tailset. I also feel that the pelvis should be long, approximately the same length as the femur (bone from hip to stifle), thus avoiding the "apple-bum" look that some dogs have when in continental trim. A longer pelvis appears to be easier to find in Standards than in Miniatures. I also like the femur to be approximately the same length as the tibia (bone from stifle to hock). If these bones are about the same length, you usually find that the dog is not over angulated in the rear. Of course if all these bones are short in proportion to the dog, the angulation can be very straight. I like adult angulation to allow the hind toenails to be directly beneath the point of the rump. Hocks should be short. I can forgive a slightly long hock if the rest of the rear assembly is correct, but too long a hock tend to result in a sickle hocks or cow hocks. I usually find that a puppy must be slightly over angulated in both front and rear to grow to be a well angulated adult. Overall I find that puppies straighten up more in the rear than in the front.

Colour should be checked. Bad blacks or blues should not be kept if the breeder is trying to breed only for good black coloured dogs; unless that is the colour you wish to breed. In general, except in the case of mismarks, I do not penalise colour, I just inform the owner of what adult colour I feel the dog will become.

In the final evaluation, I prefer a well angulated squarely built dog, with a pretty head. In practice however, none of them are perfect. A dog must be balanced overall, and I will choose a dog with less angulation that is balanced front and rear over any dog with more angulation in the rear than in the front. I hope you find these comments useful, but I understand that many of you will have a different opinion - such is the spice of life.

# New Title Holder



UCD Bibelot's Tolka Silver Seiko AM/Can CD,  
HABAC Canine Good Citizen, AKC RN, CARO RACL,  
St. John's Ambulance Certified Therapy Dog.

**Seiko is shown at PCA earning her AM Companion Dog and her AM Rally Novice titles.**

**Vivienne Swarbreck**  
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705-435-98447728

The Editor apologizes for the mistakes in reporting Seiko's Titles in the last issue.



# New Title Holder



## **Ch. Pannovia's Chasing Hearts CGN.HIC.TD**

Chase earned his CKC Tracking Dog title Oct.14, 2007 held in Clarington, ON by the Cross Country Tracking Club, he has also earned his Canine Good Neighbour and Herding Instinct Certificates.

Owned, trained and loved by Renee Koch

[rycole@hotmail.com](mailto:rycole@hotmail.com)

519-748-0146

# New Title Holder



## CH. Cavri Reese's Peanut Butter

(Ch. Cavri Jobren Flash Dancer ex Ch. Sasnclass Cavri Lynroy's Spice)

Reese is shown here finishing at Sarnia by going  
Best of Breed and Best Puppy in Breed.

**Cathy Siverns**  
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# New Title Holder



## **Can. & Am. Ch. Sanvar Bellefleet Crispy Creme**

(Can.Am.Ch.Sanvar's Timbit ex Ch. Sanvar's Catch White Lightning)

C.C. completing her American Championship shortly after PCA 2007.

**Bellefleet Reg'd**

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