



Official Standard of the Norwegian Elkhound

General Appearance: The Norwegian Elkhound is a hardy gray hunting dog. In appearance, a typical northern dog of medium size and substance, square in profile, close coupled and balanced in proportions. The head is broad with prick ears, and the tail is tightly curled and carried over the back. The distinctive gray coat is dense and smooth lying. As a hunter, the Norwegian Elkhound has the courage, agility and stamina to hold moose and other big game at bay by barking and dodging attack, and the endurance to track for long hours in all weather over rough and varied terrain.

Size, Proportion, Substance: *Height* at the withers for dogs is 20½ inches, for bitches 19½ inches. *Weight* for dogs about 55 pounds, for bitches about 48 pounds. Square in profile and close coupled. Distance from brisket to ground appears to be half the height at the withers. Distance from forechest to rump equals the height at the withers. Bone is substantial, without being coarse.

Head: *Head* broad at the ears, wedge shaped, strong and dry (without loose skin). *Expression* keen, alert, indicating a dog with great courage. *Eyes* very dark brown, medium in size, oval, not protruding. *Ears* set high, firm and erect, yet very mobile. Comparatively small; slightly taller than their width at the base with pointed (not rounded) tips. When the dog is alert, the orifices turn forward and the outer edges are vertical. When relaxed or showing affection, the ears go back, and the dog should not be penalized for doing this during the judge's examination. Viewed from the side, the forehead and back of the *skull* are only slightly arched; the stop not large, yet clearly defined. The *muzzle* is thickest at the base and, seen from above or from the side, tapers evenly without being pointed. The bridge of the nose is straight, parallel to and about the same length as the skull. Lips are tightly closed and teeth meet in a scissors *bite*.

Neck, Topline, Body: *Neck* of medium length, muscular, well set up with a slight arch and with no loose skin on the throat. *Topline* - The back is straight and strong from its high point at the withers to the root of the tail. The *body* is short and close-coupled with the rib cage accounting for most of its length. Chest deep and moderately broad; brisket level with points of elbows; and ribs well sprung. Loin short and wide with very little tuck-up. *Tail* set high, tightly curled, and carried over the centerline of the back. It is thickly and closely haired, without brush, natural and untrimmed.

Forequarters: Shoulders sloping with elbows closely set on. Legs well under body and medium in length; substantial, but not coarse, in bone. Seen from the front, the legs appear straight and parallel. Single dewclaws are normally present. Feet-Paws comparatively small, slightly oval with tightly closed toes and thick pads. Pasterns are strong and only slightly bent. Feet turn neither in nor out.

Hindquarters: Moderate angulation at stifle and hock. Thighs are broad and well muscled. Seen from behind, legs are straight, strong and without dewclaws. Feet as in front.

Coat: Thick, hard, weather resisting and smooth lying; made up of soft, dense, woolly undercoat and coarse, straight covering hairs. Short and even on head, ears, and front of legs; longest on back of neck, buttocks and underside of tail. The coat is not altered by trimming, clipping or artificial treatment. Trimming of whiskers is optional. In the show ring, presentation in a natural, unaltered condition is essential.

Color: Gray, medium preferred, variations in shade determined by the length of black tips and quantity of guard hairs. Undercoat is clear light silver as are legs, stomach, buttocks, and



underside of tail. The gray body color is darkest on the saddle, lighter on the chest, mane and distinctive harness mark (a band of longer guard hairs from shoulder to elbow). The muzzle, ears and tail tip are black. The black of the muzzle shades to lighter gray over the forehead and skull. Yellow or brown shading, white patches, indistinct or irregular markings, "sooty" coloring on the lower legs and light circles around the eyes are undesirable. Any overall color other than gray as described above, such as red, brown, solid black, white or other solid color, disqualifies.

Gait: Normal for an active dog constructed for agility and endurance. At a trot the stride is even and effortless; the back remains level. As the speed of the trot increases, front and rear legs converge equally in straight lines toward a centerline beneath the body, so that the pads appear to follow in the same tracks (single track). Front and rear quarters are well balanced in angulation and muscular development.

Temperament: In temperament, the Norwegian Elkhound is bold and energetic, an effective guardian yet normally friendly, with great dignity and independence of character.

Summary: The Norwegian Elkhound is a square and athletic member of the northern dog family. His unique coloring, weather resistant coat and stable disposition make him an ideal multipurpose dog at work or at play.

Disqualifications: *An overall color other than gray.*

Approved December 13, 1988

Effective February 1, 1989