

monitor bodily functions.

Pembroke often have yet other tests to “pass.” A herding-instinct test is quite popular with owners. This test may be done as part of a club-sponsored herding fun day, or it may be part of an AKC-approved herding event. Some of the participants will go on to more formal herding training, but regardless, a good time is had by all. The first two levels of the AKC herding program, Herding Tested (HT) and Pre-Trial Tested (PT), also involve tests and require some training of the dog.

Often a first step in a Pembroke’s obedience career is passing the Canine Good Citizenship (CGC) test. Many training facilities offer CGC as the final part of a basic obedience class. Other times CGC tests are offered in association with a dog show or as a club activity. Passing a CGC test is a common requirement of therapy dogs.

Each AKC title is actually a series of tests. In the conformation judge’s mind, how well does the dog represent the breed standard? How closely does the dog’s performance match the scoring guidelines for obedience, rally, herding, or agility? Did the dog follow the track and indicate the articles along the way?

Most exhibitors enjoy the bond they forge with their dog and the journey to the title more so than the actual title, but both dog and handler celebrate when they pass the “test” of the day, whatever it may be.

Pembroke and their partners will see how well they prepared for their tests they are when they compete toward the end of this month at the national-specialty events in Pennsylvania. See [pwcca.org](http://pwcca.org) for full details.

Always remember when competing: It’s only a test! —*Lynda McKee, Hiram, Ga.; TifflynLDM@aol.com* ♦

### Polish Lowland Sheepdogs

#### Revised Standard PART THREE

Our overview of the revised standard brings us to the section on coat. The first addition to this section is *The outercoat should be crisp with a water resistant texture*. The previous standard made no

mention of the outer coat. As the Polish Lowland Sheepdog is a herding and working dog, it is important to remember that his coat serves as protection. The outer coat must be weather resistant and the undercoat insulating in both warm and cold weather.

Further along, there is an emphasis on hair that “covers the eyes.”

Hair covering the eyes acts as protection from the elements. Additionally, in my opinion, this is a clue to presentation for both the exhibitor and the judge.

The last paragraph of this section and the “severe fault” described are in response to input from many breeders and exhibitors: *The Polish Lowland Sheepdog must be shown naturally, with an “unkempt” but clean appearance—any scissoring of the coat must be penalized so severely as to eliminate the dog from competition. Only the hair between the pads may be trimmed. Severe fault: Any coat that appears to be visibly scissored or sculpted.*

Many breeders and exhibitors have been outraged at dogs receiving awards who have obviously been scissored or sculpted; in response, this section has been added to the revised standard. The severe fault was added so that judges have clear direction on this issue.

By and large the fancy has made clear that the Polish Lowland Sheepdog should be maintained in as natural a state as possible. Further, there has been some question as to inclusion of the adjective *unkempt*. Note that this word in the standard has quotations around it and may be interpreted as “rumpled,” “tousled,” or “scruffy,” all of which convey a more natural presentation. Oddly enough, I have not had one judge question the inclusion of this word to describe the breed.

The section on color remains the same.

It may seem that the section on gait differs completely from that of the previous standard. While much of the wording has changed, however, the emphasis is still the same, and hopefully the revision is easier to understand. This section is largely based on the “Commentary” published by the Polish Kennel Club.



One of the first things I mentioned at the beginning of this discussion (in Part One) was the last full section of the revised standard, “Faults.” I believe it is worth quoting this section again: *The foregoing description is that of the ideal Polish Lowland Sheepdog. Any deviation from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.*

We must remember that the written standard of the breed is a blueprint of the ideal dog. While the perfect dog has not yet been created, everyone should bear in mind that we further the breed the most by accentuating virtues.

While this has not been a full and in-depth look at the revised standard, I hope that the discussion has caused readers to, at least, pause and reflect on some of the changes.

As always, comments, questions, and suggestions are welcome. —*Russ Tesarz, Concord, N.C.; retesarz@aol.com* ♦

### Pulik

#### The Puli Bounce

Breeders, exhibitors, and judges have often heard of the “Puli bounce.” What exactly does that phrase mean?

For the average Puli owner, it refers to the athleticism and elasticity of the dog as well as the breed’s lively spirit and their ability to spring straight up and look you in the eye. Most Puli owners agree that this is one of the breed’s most endearing traits.

The term should not, however, be descriptive of the Puli’s gait. Like any dog who was bred to do an honest day’s work, the Puli should move efficiently with no wasted motion. A young Puli moving at a collected trot may appear to be bouncing, but that is an illusion created by the motion of the immature coat and the springiness in the pasterns. A dog who is moving up and down when he is trying to go forward is not moving efficiently, no matter what the breed.

It can be a challenge to assess movement on a fully coated Puli, but there

are reference points one can use to make the task easier. When the Puli is coming straight at you, focus on the dog's nose. It should remain level and not move up and down or from side to side. (There is a similar reference point when the dog is going away, but it is not as pleasant to look at.) Viewed from the side, the topline must remain level as the dog moves. At a collected trot, there will be some springiness to the dog's movement in side-gait, but the back should remain strong and level. At an extended trot, a Puli should move like a hovercraft. Any deviation is due to structural imperfections. The movement should be effortless and smooth, not bouncing.

Excessive up-and-down motion in the rear making the cords fly can appear very showy, but it is due to the movement fault known as bicycling, where the movement of the hind feet is vertical with no extension in the rear. Bicycling occurs when the angulation in the rear exceeds that of the front. Because the dog's front feet can't get out of the way, the forward motion of the rear legs is restricted, and the dog kicks out behind instead of reaching under and pushing back efficiently. On a smooth-coated breed, this movement fault would be obvious, but in a Puli it can often be mistaken for the mythical "bounce" that judges have heard discussed.

The gait should maintain a steady cadence, with no break in stride.

Occasionally one will see a Puli who appears to be moving smoothly and then will suddenly give a little hop in the rear. This is incorrect and indicative of a structural problem—it is *not* the infamous Puli bounce. No dog should move with a skipping hop every fourth or fifth step. Doing so is a sign that something is wrong under the coat.

No one should use the term "Puli bounce" as an excuse for incorrect movement. The Puli is a shepherd, bred to possess the stamina and endurance necessary for its age-old task of herding sheep on the plains of



Hungary. Anything that interferes with that ability is not acceptable.

—Sherry Gibson, Manchester, Tenn.; gibsons@blomand.net ♦

## Pyrenean Shepherds

### Tracking With Puppies

This spring my Pyrenean Shepherd pup, 11-month-old Speed, earned his first tracking title in a huge grass-seed field outside Eugene, Oregon. Speed sniffed his way through a 460-yard track, becoming the fifth puppy to give me the pleasure of successfully training a little one to track.

The experience of tracking with pups—Pyrenean Shepherds, Great Pyrenees, and a Basset Hound—has been such a source of bonding with each new canine companion that it now is a part of my initial training for every puppy.

The Pyrenean Shepherds who live with me earned their Tracking Dog titles at 9 and 10 months; the Great Pyrenees earned theirs at 8 and 10 months; and the Basset Hound earned his at 9 months. Other breeds I've helped train to track as pups include Rhodesian Ridgebacks, an Australian Cattle Dog, a Bearded Collie, a standard Poodle, and a Bull Terrier. Every single one has loved the sport.

When I first started tracking with puppies, I trained on grass. The little fellows would toddle through grass stems as high as their knees to find their treats, as happy as could be (except for one; more about her later). Now I start pups as well as older dogs on asphalt, so they trot through a parking lot enthusiastically searching for their tidbits.

They're born with those great noses: All we do is ask them to follow a particular scent. They get rewarded with food for staying on top of that smell. There is no punishment associated with learning to track this way. If they get off the track, they simply don't find the food. Being hungry little opportunists, they quickly learn to stick with the smell that produces the goodies.

That makes the experience hugely positive for the puppies, except for that one—my Great Pyrenees girl—had very

little appetite as a pup. Food on the track was no reward for her at all. A good friend and I were training together, so we experimented with hiding from our puppies. We each handled the other's pup at first, then we asked our husbands to hide from the little guys and handled our own youngsters. We branched out to other tracklayers from there, and our pups loved tracking as much as the food-motivated ones. It worked well, but food is simpler for most handlers.



Because scent work is such a natural activity even for very young dogs, they learn to work cooperatively with their humans in the

least stressful way possible.

Watching the puppies enjoy their first teamwork with such ease has convinced me that tracking can begin to pave the way for other, more demanding training when the pup's age is still counted in weeks. —Kathleen Monje, Pleasant Hill, Ore.; cognitivedog@epud.net ♦

## Shetland Sheepdogs

### A Snapshot in Time

In March, I had the honor of judging Best of Breed at the 2010 American Shetland Sheepdog Association (ASSA) national specialty in Tucson, Arizona. The panel also included Marcia Bittner (dogs), Charlotte McGowan (bitches), and Kim Aston (futuraity).

After judging a large number of Shelties, one cannot help but make some observations about the current "state of the breed" in terms of areas where many dogs excel, as well as areas needing more attention from breeders and judges. With that in mind, this column combines observations from this year's judges to create a "snapshot" of our breed at one moment in time.

What we're doing right:

*Balance and symmetry:* All three breed judges found an improvement in overall balance following a period when insufficient length of leg had become more prevalent, which led to outlines appear-

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