

sprouted and was developed into what became known as the “pignic” seminar. The purpose of the activity was to bring together exhibitors from the various venues into an informal dinner setting that was then followed by a seminar on structure as it relates to the non-conformation events, which are termed “performance events” within the PWCCA. Officers and board members were also encouraged to attend to better facilitate communication with all exhibitors.

The “pignic” was a buffet-style pig roast and lasted about two hours. Large, round tables made conversation easy. The club president welcomed everyone and introduced the board members and officers. The performance-events chairs were recognized and thanked. A show of hands revealed the number of first-time attendees, and they were applauded.

We then reconvened in the show area for the seminar. Each performance-event chair or her designee was present, with the club president representing conformation.

Each panelist was asked to focus on three things: a brief overview of her participation in the event she chaired, how the breed standard relates to that event, and the single most important feature of the breed standard as it relates to that event.

I served as the tracking-test chair. I found that many parts of the standard had little to relate to tracking; for example, equilateral triangle for the head, coat and eye color, height and length proportions, and so on. I was beginning to worry what I would talk about, and then I read the structure parts of the standard. I selected “freedom of movement” as the most important aspect. In the end, it proved to be a very useful learning exercise. I looked

forward to hearing what the other panelists would select.

The club president pointed out that our breed standard was last revised in 1972, long before the advent of advanced tracking titles, the OTCH in obedience, AKC herding events, agility competitions, or rally. She selected breed type as the most essential part of the standard.

The spokesperson for herding pointed out that overall correct structure leads to soundness, which was proven in the ages of dogs that won High in Trial each day: Both dogs have had a long working career.

The obedience chair mentioned the breed’s personality and trainability, and the agility chair noted the need for flexibility.

The 2010 performance-events chair, who has an extensive background in the



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breed, then discussed shoulder assembly and its effect on the Pembroke’s ability to perform. She had a visual display of the parts of the shoulder and demonstrated various concepts, including the result of the upper arms being too short or lacking the proper layback.

The audience ranged from newcomers to longtime conformation exhibitors, with a good cross-section of interests. The seminar lasted about an hour and a half and was very well attended. Plans are to try to make a “pignic” seminar a yearly event, featuring topics which would interest both performance and conformation exhibitors.



—Lynda McKee, Hiram, Ga.;  
TifflynLDM@aol.com ♦

## Pulik

### Cutting the Cords

There are many reasons why one would want to shorten a Puli’s cords. Retired show dogs are often kept in shortened cords, as are Pulis who are participating in herding, agility, or other performance events. It is a matter of personal taste, and if the trimming is done properly your Puli will look like a youngster who is just starting to grow his coat. He will have that perpetually young look and be a lot easier to keep clean.

Your Puli must lie quietly on his side on a table while you work on him. You will need good scissors and a strip of cardboard or poster board, cut to a width of four inches, and a length equal to your Puli’s length from base of neck to base of tail. This will be your cutting guide, helping you to cut all cords to an equal length.

Part the coat down the topline so that the cords lie flat down the sides of the dog. Place your Puli on the grooming table lying on his right side, with the cords on the underside tucked under the

dog.

Take the strip of cardboard and lay it on the table above the dog, with the long edge against the dog’s spine. Following the part from neck to tail, flip the first layer of cords up across the cardboard. Trim the ends of the line of cords all the way down the back to the tail. Cutting each cord at an angle gives it a more natural look.

You have just cut your first layer of four-inch cords. Remove the cardboard guide, and lay it on top of this first layer of cords, with the edge against the dog’s body.

Starting at the neck, flip the next

layer of cords up and over the guide, and trim as you did the first layer. Place the guide on top of the second layer of cords, and repeat the process again.

Work your way toward the dog's belly, cutting one layer at a time and moving the guide for each new layer.

After a break, repeat the process with the dog lying on his left side. When finished, your Puli will have short (four-inch) cords all over his body.

With the dog standing, you can now trim the chest and the legs to match the rest of the coat. The cords on the legs will be proportionately shorter, and these need to be tapered as you work toward the feet. Blend the head, tail, and neck cords with the body cords. Work slowly, cutting only one cord at a time.

Trim head-cords by pulling the entire head coat forward toward the nose, and then cut off everything that extends beyond the nose. This leaves the cords on the muzzle quite short, and they will stay cleaner. To trim the tail, gently guide the tail into a dropped position so that the tail is hanging straight down, and blunt-cut the tail cords even with the tabletop.

Once your Puli is in short cords, you will just need to tip the cords about every four months to maintain the look. Always cut individual cords at an angle. Enjoy your perpetually young Puli! —*Sherry Gibson, Manchester, Tenn.*; gibsons@blomand.net ♦

## Pyrenean Shepherds

### Herding With Pyrenean Shepherds PART ONE

These smallest of the French herding dogs are upright workers who are really not all that long out of the mountains, where their shepherds relied on the little dogs to move the sheep from meadow to meadow, up hill and down dale, and back to the village for lambing season.

Many, if not most, of the dogs retain a substantial amount of herding

instinct and are apt to demonstrate their talents at a young age. The tactics that work to train some herding breeds don't prove useful with Pyrenean Shepherds, however.

Betty Wathne, who has been herding for 15 years, first with Border Collies and now with her Pyr Sheps, reports that bringing those talents to fruition with the little dogs requires a different approach than she could use with her Border Collies.

"Widget seemed to have plenty of drive initially—she would easily go and gather a large flock of ewes by the time she was 6 months old,"

Wathne recalls. "About the time when that initial positive instinct turned to doing inappropriate things like wanting to split and chase (which would be the time to start more formal training normally), she turned off the sheep."

Wathne figured out that the turn-off occurred because Widget no longer was sure how to deliver what her shepherd wanted. The young herder could not tolerate repetitive training and would show that she was stressed by disengaging and instead eating sheep droppings.

Because the youngster already had demonstrated to Wathne in other disciplines that she would do any job that she understood, Wathne took the unusual step of praising Widget for any interaction with the sheep, even if she ran straight at the flock, barking at them.

She also took Widget along when she did her regular farm chores, and the little girl proved to be a superb farm dog; she left the horses and the sheep alone unless she was asked to do something. "She's been soaking in what the job entails and observing the Border Collie. Sometimes she would go with Boon when he worked the sheep, and sometimes she would stay at my side," Wathne said.

"Whatever she chose was fine, but on our daily hikes I encouraged her to go out in front of me rather than staying at my heels, so she practiced sweeping out to the left or right many

times a day."

Then, last fall, her elderly Border Collie started showing his age, and Wathne started relying more on the little Pyr Shep. "And she rose to the occasion."

"At feeding time, if one ewe was pushing on me too much, I could point at that one and she would chase it far away. If I needed a backup for Boon, she would lend her presence and get the sheep moving the way they didn't want to go."

Just this fall, Wathne has started training Widget to work the sheep. She reports that now that the Pyr Shep has an idea what her job is, she tolerates the training very well.

Next time, more on Widget's herding progress, as well as a talk with longtime Pyr Shep shepherds Susan Buttivant and Patricia Princehouse.

—*Kathleen Monje, Pleasant Hill, Ore.*; cognitivedog@epud.net ♦

## Shetland Sheepdogs

Our guest columnist for this issue is Nancy Porta (of Jana Shelties), who has been breeding for 18 years. Nancy is proud to have bred and shown dogs who have achieved conformation championships as well as advanced titles in obedience and agility.

### Sheltie Eye Health: CERF Is Not Enough

As a responsible breeder, health testing has always been important to me. I send hip X-rays to OFA (the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals), register my dogs' clear eye exams with CERF (the Canine Eye Registration Foundation), and mail off DNA cheek-swabs to VetGen for the von Willebrand's disease (vWD) DNA test. I always thought I was doing everything I could, but a recent experience changed my mind.

Last year, I had a litter of puppies out of a lovely young bitch who was OFA excellent, vWD clear, and CERF normal. I chose a stud dog



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