

AUGUST 2020

CONFORMATION JUDGES NEWSLETTER





UKC JUDGE'S HANDBOOK

The UKC Judges' Handbook is currently under revision. Once this project is completed, you will find a more comprehensive handbook that not only includes how to apply for the specific judges license, but also will address some of the most common judging techniques and judging problems with suggested solutions on how to solve them. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see covered in the Judge's Handbook, please email us at judges@ukcdogs.com.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

We have all been dealing with the pandemic these past few months, and as more and more states start opening, we are seeing more clubs offering events. We want to make it clear that clubs, judges, and exhibitors all have a responsibility to make those who are participating in the events feel comfortable about exhibiting their dogs. Unfortunately, we know that many are still worried and wondering if dog shows should be held, and if so, what precautions should be taken.

To reiterate UKC's stance, please read the UKC News article that was posted on the UKC website on May 22, 2020. *In part, this reads: "As always, clubs, officials, and participants are required to follow state and local guidelines that apply to the area where the event is held. It is critical clubs strictly adhere to all local mandates and orders not only because clubs and their officers may face possible penalties and sanctions from local authorities, but also because they put their fellow clubs at risk of potential further scrutiny and restrictions by authorities."*

All the commercials and ads over the television are promoting social distancing and contactless delivery. Unfortunately, this is impossible to do when you are at a dog show. Both judges and exhibitors should take the time and be empathetic for those who are attending shows. If we want dog shows to continue, we must do what is

necessary to make sure they can be held safely. Judges and exhibitors who feel the need to wear appropriate face coverings should be able to do so and if asked to wear a mask, please try to comply for the safety of all.

As a judge, whether you decide to wear a mask or not, or if you are requesting exhibitors to wear a mask, you **must** make your decision known to the club and this information needs be published with the club's event listing. This way, exhibitors can make an informed decision of whether to enter the event.

Social Media Reminder. Yes, we all use it to stay in touch with each other, share photos, and pass on information. We find many of the different formats informative, but we may also find things that are personal enough where we feel the need to comment is overwhelming.

As with everything today, you have the choice to respond to anything presented on social media. However, keep in mind that as a UKC Judge, you are held to a higher standard. Feel free to post as you choose but remember posts that are disparaging, damaging, or that overstep the boundaries of the UKC Judges Code of Ethics can be deemed negligent and are means for disciplinary action to be imposed. So, post what you want, just think twice before hitting that send button.

WHERE DO YOU RATE?

BY DENISE VAVLA

I recently read a survey asking "all-around" judges and breeder judges to compare the judging of their breed in the ring to how well the dog that won compared to the breed standard. The answers I read were eye-opening.

Of those who responded, just under 50% of the judges said they judge by the breed standard. So, now you may wonder how the majority of judges look at our breeds.

Would it surprise you if I told you there were more than half of the remainder of the judges who judge by an image of past dogs? How about over a quarter of the judges taking notice and placing the new trend of dogs leaving the remaining

judges who base their decision on just movement?

I am sure this is startling news. But what can be done? Both judges and breeders blame each other for not following the breed standard and the demise of their breed type. But when asked what can be done, the answers were to breed to the breed standard! That is the problem.

How are breeders and exhibitors supposed to choose their breeding stock or companion dogs that are healthy and conform to the standard when over half of the judges are not judging to the breed standard? Let me



say that again... OVER 50% of judges are NOT judging to the breed standard!

This does nothing to improve breeds and only escalates the problem when a judge places a mediocre dog over a dog that meets the breed standard only because that dog looks so different than the other dogs in the ring.

Here is where the new generation of breeders may make bad choices for their breeding program. This is a serious

issue and as a judge or a breeder, instead of pointing fingers, it is the responsibility of us all to help make that change and evaluate and choose your breed by the written breed standard.

We as fellow judges and breeders need to face the problems that affect our breeds and start offering real solutions. We can all start by welcoming and mentoring those new exhibitors in your breed. The future health and well-being of our dogs depend on it.

JUST FOR FUN - WHAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION?

To follow up on judging to the breed standards, our office often receives complaints on the way judges translate the words in the breed standard to meet their "idealistic image" of what the dog should look like. This may be abstracted, but if you are taking words out of context and creating your own "ideal image" and "interpretation", the results may be different than intended by the standard.

Here is an excerpt from a breed standard:

"The manner in which the coat grows on the head gives the breed a distinctly chrysanthemum-like appearance."... Interestingly enough, in abstract thinking, we can end up with a head that looks like this:



Or the ideal specimen of a "lion" dog...



How a judge visualizes that ideal image in their mind's eye to the written word of the standard, as we all know, can vary. So, are we to say, "they are the judge," and should we not allow the interpretation of the standard be left up to the judge? And should we allow those creative differences to influence the future of our breeds over the version of the ideal specimen? That is a question only you can answer. I am so glad you played along.

If you are an approved judge and would like to submit an article for consideration about judging a specific event, please submit the article to judges@ukcdogs.com with the subject line 'From a Judge's Point of View Submission'. Submitting an article will not guarantee publication.

BREED SPOTLIGHT - THE ALASKAN KLEE KAI - REVIEW AND INTERPRETATION OF THE BREED STANDARD

WE THANK THE ALASKAN KLEE KIA ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN FOR THEIR PRESENTATION OF A MORE IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE ALASKAN KLEE KIA BREED STANDARD.

The **Alaskan Klee Kai** is a relatively new Northern dog breed often referred to as a smaller companion-sized version of the Alaskan Husky. It is very important to understand the UKC standard for the AKK, and to judge and breed the dogs according to the standard, in order to preserve the integrity and uniqueness of the breed. An Illustrated Breed Standard has been developed by the National Breed Club AKKAOA (Alaskan Klee Kai Association of America), with photo examples to help clarify the standards further. The current UKC breed standard and Illustrated Breed Standard can both be found at the AKKAOA website: <https://www.akkaoa.org/breed-standards>.

The UKC standard for the Alaskan Klee Kai was updated in January 1, 2019 to help clarify a number of the points, and to provide guidance for the judges and breeders, in order to maintain the quality of the breed, and to continue and advance the AKK to a state of similarity throughout the world. Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental or against breed standards. Some of the important points clarified in the updated Alaskan Klee Kai UKC standard include the following:

- The most distinctive characteristic of the Alaskan Klee Kai is the striking contrasting colored facial mask with the well-defined nose bar down the center of the muzzle, which does not extend down the sides of the muzzle, and the goggles around the eyes, which do not extend more than halfway down the face.
- Lip pigment, eye rims, and nose are black in dogs whose coat colors are shades of black or gray; and liver-colored in dogs whose coat colors are shades of red. A pink streaked 'snow nose' is acceptable.
- All dewclaws may be removed (now optional since removing dewclaws is illegal in many states).
- The tail may hang down when the dog is relaxed or in unfamiliar situations. Preferred tail carriage is a well-furred, loose natural curl, which falls to the center over the back, or drapes to either side of the body when alert or moving.
 - It is a Serious Fault if there are tail kinks that are not a result of injury
 - It is a Disqualification if the tail is too short to curl over and naturally touch the back

***** Clarification was made in the color section to better differentiate between the Most Desired Markings, the Acceptable but Less Desired Markings, and the Not Acceptable Markings. *****

- Coat colors in shades of **black, gray or red** are acceptable provided that the **facial mask** is distinct and clearly visible, and the contrasting lighter color is on the bottom half of the dog's face, and is on the throat, chest, breeches, feet, legs and underside.
- All markings which are visible while the dog is standing should be **symmetrical**.
- The **MOST DESIREABLE** markings include:
 - Contrasting light-colored spots over the eyes
 - The fur on the inside of the ears is also the same lighter contrasting color
 - Tip of the tail has a dark hair coloration (not white tip)

Full Facial Mask which consists of:

- **Nose Bar** - Solid nose bar of undivided darker color extending from the forehead down the top of the muzzle to the nose that does not extend down the sides of the muzzle
- **Goggles** - Dark coloration on the skull which extends down the nose bar of the muzzle and around the eyes (goggles), provided that it does not extend down under the eyes more than half the length of the muzzle (or face)
- **Contrasting lighter color** extending up the cheeks to a line between the outside corners of the eyes and the base of the ears, down the sides of the muzzle, under the jaw, and down the throat

Examples of most desired masks



- The **ACCEPTABLE, BUT LESS DESIREABLE** markings include:
 - White tipped tail
 - Light colored blaze centered in the middle of the skull and stop (on 'forehead')
 - With the exception of the blaze and the light spots above the eyes



- Upper face – The more of the lighter contrasting color present on the upper part of the face, the LESS desirable is the mask
- Lower face – The more of the darker color present on the lower part of the face, the LESS desirable is the mask
- The least acceptable being the Widows Peak (where the entire face is of the lighter color with just a small dark area capping the top of the head and a point dropping into the center of the upper forehead)
- **Hindquarters:** Over angulation; hocks turned in or out; thin or weak thighs.
- **Tail:** Tail kinks not a result of injury.
- **Coat:** Coat that is so long as to obscure the outline of the dog; trimming other than as described in “Coat” paragraph.
- **Height and Weight:** Over 17 inches up to and including 17½ inches.

FULL SERIOUS FAULTS, ELIMINATING FAULTS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

- **Faults:** is given if there is a symmetrical split mask – a narrow, light colored strip which evenly divides the dark strip down the nose bar of the muzzle.
- **Eliminating Fault:** are given for an absence of required lighter contrasting color as described in the “Color” paragraph; Any Non-symmetrical markings visible while the dog is standing; Any distinct area of lighter contrasting color on the topline, known as a “cape”; the Dark strip on the center of the muzzle extends down the sides of the muzzle; Distinct spots of lighter contrasting color anywhere other than the spots over the eyes, the blaze on the head, or the tip of the tail.
- **Disqualification:** is given if there is an Absence of a distinct mask, or a solid coat color lacking distinct and contrasting markings (any solid coat color, including, but not limited to, white, black, gray, or red).

SERIOUS FAULTS: (Judges must penalize dogs with any of one of the following serious faults and withhold championship points from any dog possessing two or more of these faults, breeders should take a strict or even stricter view of these serious faults in their breeding program.)

ELIMINATING FAULTS: (An Eliminating Fault is a Fault serious enough that it eliminates the dog from obtaining any awards in a conformation event.)

- **Eyes:** Bulging eyes
- **Color:** Absence of required lighter contrasting color as described in “Color” paragraph; asymmetrical markings visible while the dog is standing; any distinct area of lighter contrasting color on the topline, known as a “cape”; a dark nose bar on the center of the muzzle that extends down the sides of the muzzle; distinct spots of lighter contrasting color anywhere other than the spots over the eyes, the blaze on the head, or the tip of the tail.
- **Height and weight:** Over 17½ inches in height

DISQUALIFICATIONS: (A dog with a disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.)

- **General appearance:** Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism.
- **Characteristics:** Viciousness or extreme shyness.
- **Teeth:** Over or undershot bite; Wry mouth.
- **Ears:** Hanging or drop ears.
- **Tail:** Tail too short to curl over and naturally touch the back.
- **Color:** Absence of distinct mask; Solid coat color lacking distinct and contrasting markings; Albinism.