

# The Irish Wolfhound

## A Form and Function Perspective

PRESENTATION FOR THE EIWC BREEDERS  
& JUDGES SEMINAR

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STARKEEPER IRISH WOLFHOUNDS

CKC Conformation & Lure Coursing Judge



# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Look at the dogs lined up
- overall sighthound shape
- strong dog with graceful flowing lines
- Power & Balance



# Judging the Irish Wolfhound



- Typical...great size, greyhound shape, power, strength



# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Typical.... Strong though gracefully built



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# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Move the class
- Look for shape and balance on the move



# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Cover plenty of ground... standing and on the move





# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Examination.... Head, forequarters



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# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- Move over dog to hindquarters



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# Judging the Irish Wolfhound

- **SIZE** – not just height; also bone & substance



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# Judging the Irish Wolfhound



Hold their ground for  
examination.....  
**COMMANDING  
APPEARANCE**



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# HISTORY & FUNCTION

- GAZEHOUD HUNTER
- FUNCTION DETERMINES FORM





# Outline & balance

- Overall shape -  
Greyhoundlike
- Smooth curves
- Length
- Strength
  
- Parts flow & fit  
together:
- Head & neck
- Forequarters
- Body
- Hindquarters



# Size, Strength, Movement



- Great size
- Commanding appearance
- Large, tall
- Muscular, strong
- Movements easy and active
- Athletic

# Temperament



- Confident
- Gentle & Trustworthy
- Discerning personality; gentle when stroked, fierce when provoked



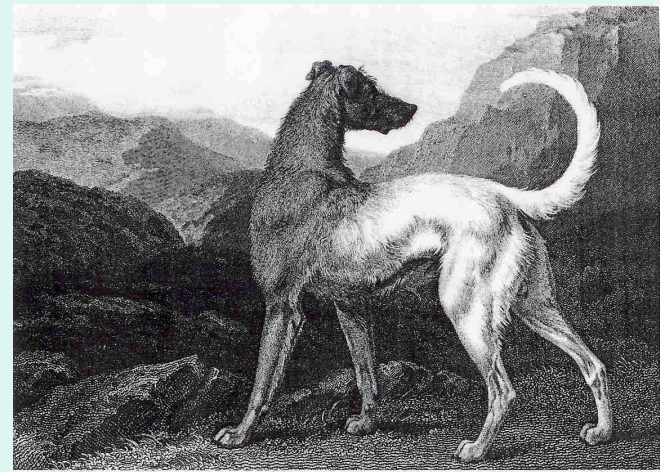
# HEADS

- IW expression
- Level planes
- Matching muzzle length to backskull
- Strong jaw
- Rough wiry hair
- Dark, oval eyes
- Rosed ears



# Neck

- Long – in proportion to body – balanced
- Strong; well muscled
- Arched and powerful
- Smooth transition to shoulder assembly



# Head & Neck Carriage- Standing/Moving

- **GOOD STRUCTURE:**
- **Length & Height**
- **Head held high**
  
- **BALANCE**
  
- **SMOOTH STRIDE**
- **Reach & drive**
- **Easy ; ground covering**
- **Head held level**





# Chest & Ribcage

- Depth & length of chest
- Long ribs & ribbed well back
- Deep chest required for heart and lung room
- Oval shape to facilitate gallop



# Chest & Ribcage



- Chest very deep
- Breast wide
- Depth to elbow
- 2/3 length of underline
- Forechest
- Egg shaped
- Strong neck

# Back & Loin

- Well ribbed back
  - Good length
  - Solid topline
  - Typical shape
  - Tuck up
- 
- Flexible loin
  - Rear legs on outside-overreaching



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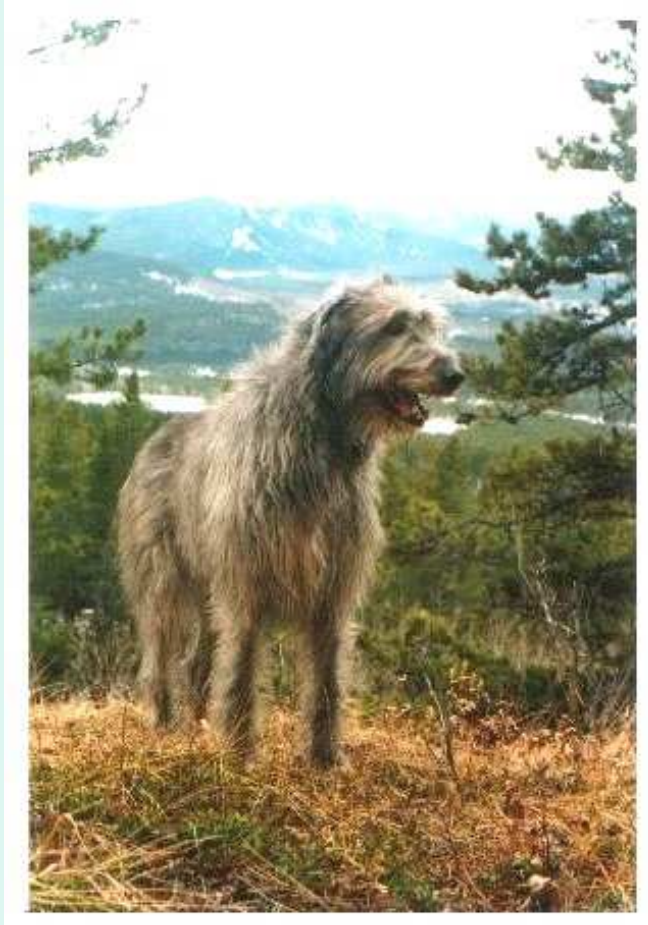


# Legs/Running Gear



- Room for heart & lung capacity (width)
- Elbows close to chest
- Legs set under bulge of shoulder muscle (well set under chest)
- Straight (not turn inwards or outwards)
- Strong running gear

# Legs – Running Gear



- Straight legs/long legs
- Maximize stride
- Leg length balanced to shoulder/upper arm
- Daylight under dog
- Good bone
- Bladed bone
- Good muscle & ligament attachments

# Running Gear



- Balanced angulation
- Good leg length
- Ground covering stride



# Legs – Running Gear



- Pastern faults
- Straight but some flexibility in pastern
- Knuckling over serious fault – front breaks down
- Too loose – sloppy action - inefficient
- Need resiliency – strong carpal joints

# Running Gear



- Front leg bears full weight
- Need strength and flexibility – note pastern joint
- Feet carry large load – need to be well shaped and cushioned – cat feet preferred

# Running Gear – Hind legs



- Matching long bone lengths
- Long, strong second thigh
- Good bend of stifle
- Low hocks
- Powerful quarters
- Front & rear angulation balanced



# Front Assembly - Shoulder

- Angulation/Slant of bones
- Size of angles
- Bone lengths – especially upper arm
- Front carries 60% of body weight



# The Sighthound Shoulder



- Coursing function – running hound
- Shoulder angulation
- Angles sufficient for both speed and endurance – moderation
- Balance is essential for efficiency

# SHOULDERS

- Trot – touch down is only to point of nose
- Gallop – reach is much further
- Angulation, bone lengths, balance, condition – each impacts movement





# Front construction to suit purpose



- Galloping hound
- Largest & tallest
- Proper shoulder construction to provide resiliency and cushioning on touch down

# Straight Fronts

- Steep shoulder
- Restricted reach
- Choppy strides
- Neck looks shorter
- Angles more abrupt
- Stress on front assembly



# Balanced angulation



- Smooth ground covering stride
- Good foot timing
- Excellent reach and drive



# Hindquarters



- Good bend of stifle
- Length, strength, muscling
- Broad, powerful rear quarters
- Hocks low set and straight

# Tail

- Strong, long
- At least to hock
- Low set
- Curved acceptable
  
- Should not be carried up/over back when moving



# Tail



- Strong
- Acts as rudder in the field



# Hair/Coat



- Double coat
- Short, harsh
- Wiry beard & eyebrows

# Color



# Double Suspension Gallop



- Contraction

Extension

- Two suspended phases in one stride
  - Typical sighthound gallop



# BALANCE –Reach & Drive



# BALANCE

Angulation matches front & rear





# Running Hound



- Proper construction = maximum efficiency of movement
- Coursing Hound!

