

The Irish Wolfhound

A Form and Function Perspective

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CKC Conformation Judge



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
- $\frac{2}{3}$ 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



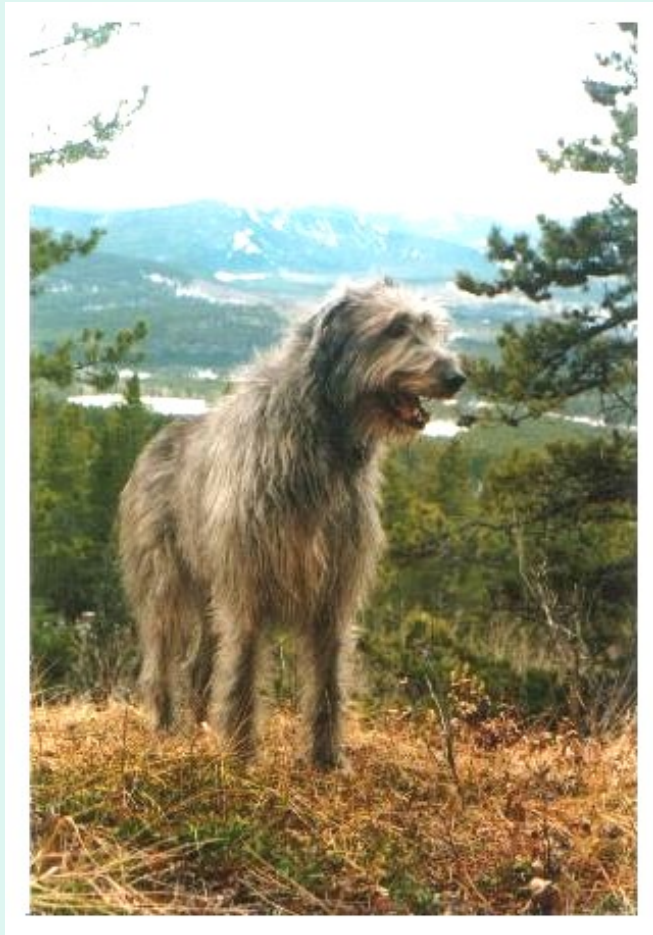
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Legs/Running Gear



- 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!

