

Congress 2016
20.5.2016

INTRODUCTION TO THE REVISED STANDARD

The Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland was requested by the EIWC at its Congress in Denmark and by other Irish Wolfhound Clubs to consider revising our Breed Standard, with particular reference to comparison with other breeds, as many have changed since Graham's time.

Down through the years we have consistently resisted this request. We are protective of the ancient heritage of our noble breed. We believe that the original was well written by people who had knowledge and experience of what was needed so that the breed was fit for purpose. Some of the other breeds which have allowed revisions of their Standards are now struggling to return to the fit for purpose requirements.

There have only been two additions to the Irish Wolfhound Standard since Capt. Graham and his colleagues published it in 1885. In 1930 'Eyes, dark' was added to the List of Points in Order of Merit. Then in 1979 the reference to the correct bite was included 'Bite: scissors ideal, level acceptable'.

Looking at the number of bad bites now seen in the show ring and the sad sight of level bites with teeth worn down to stubs makes me wonder if we made the correct decision in allowing level bite as acceptable.

The Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland's reluctance to interfere with The Standard that had worked so well for so many years can easily be understood. However in recent years it was noticed that people were not understanding or misunderstanding what was being 'said' in the Standard and so it was considered necessary to clarify some important points. We were very conscious not to make any changes to the Standard but to improve the terminology to allow better understanding. I am confident that we have been faithful to the original..

As requested we have removed all references to other breeds, it was felt that this was no longer applicable and it was causing some confusion to some people. We are often reminded that the other breeds have changed considerably since Graham's time and the comparison is no longer relevant.

In addition it was also thought necessary to increase the minimum heights and weights, a twenty eight inch female is no longer acceptable in our breed.

A few other very important clarifications were deemed necessary to highlight: Correct tail carriage. A high tail carriage is and looks very untypical. Yes, there are times when your hound will carry his his tail high but not in the ring.

Correct spring of pastern is essential in a galloping hound. The pastern must be able take the tremendous punishment while at full gallop.

Straight pasterns, often accompanied by a straight front, is a handicap to movement.

We felt it was necessary to draw attention to another very serious fault, a narrow underjaw. In some cases the jaw is so narrow that the lower canines are on the inside of the upper canines, even piercing the roof of the mouth. This problem has to be eliminated immediately otherwise our Breed is non functional. I find it difficult to except that this is a recent development, have we not been paying enough attention?.

I wish to remind everyone of their responsibility to our Breed if or when you decide to breed a litter please be sure that you consider everything in the Standard including good temperment.

We treasure our ancient breed and believe that we hold its authenticity in trust for future generations. It is our greatest pleasure to share our noble breed with friends and countries worldwide.

Jim Behan

President IWCI