

the wear slightly taller than it is wide at its base. [Reference is made to the shorter geometrically triangular often seen in the American ring, and the original working Siberian ear – slightly taller than maximum width and moderately rounded at tips – still seen in some racing bloodlines and still allowed for in the Canadian and English Standards.]

Whichever type of ear one prefers they should still be high set, close together at their base and strongly erect so that the inner edge of the ears are practically parallel when the dog is at attention. Ears should not be too large, not only because this would detract from the overall appearance of the dog, but also because over-large ears might be a factor in heat loss.

Eye colour. Nowhere does it state that this colour or that colour is to be preferred. Eyes may be many shades of blue, brown, amber, yellowish, hazel or green, any of which can be combined to produce bicoloured eyes, where one or both eyes contain two colours (again most commonly blue and brown).

The Standard calls for eyes to be 'set a trifle obliquely'. Most Siberians are correct ... the too slanted, lynx-like expression of the too oblique eye set is not often seen.

The level set eyes give the impression of a rather dull, disinterested look, quite unlike the usual keen expression which is typical of the breed ... the Standard calls for an almond shape, and it is interesting to note that the correct eye shape, coupled with the oblique set, helps protect the eyes from driving winds and snow.

... the pink streaked 'snow nose' should not be evident for the whole year. It should become black as the days lengthen ... pink skin or blotches on the face should be discouraged ...

The Siberian Husky's head should add to the general grace and balance of the Standard Siberian – giving it that distinctive, often foxlike, appearance. A blocky, coarse head detracts from overall appearance of even the soundest Siberian.

The wording of the Standard relating to tails should be criticised in one major respect. It implies that the tail is usually carried up when the dog is 'at attention', which is not necessarily the case. A Siberian can be 'at attention' with its ears pricked and head up, but still carry its tail down. Frequently this is their normal pose in the show ring, although

most will usually carry their tails up when gaiting.

The Standard emphasizes the 'graceful sickle curve' that is so typical of the breed. By 'sickle curve' it means that the tail should not touch the back when carried up ... it has been suggested that the curve of the tail should form a third to a half of a circle ... the tail should have enough undercoat to give it the appearance of a fox's brush. An excessively coated, plumed effect is wrong, as is fine wiry hair. It should also be noted that when the coat on the tail is slightly too long at the tip this may give the appearance of a 'too long' tail.

The coat is an important aspect of the breed type and an essential element of survival ... Excessively long coats are a fault according to the American and British Standards and they can be a disadvantage to the dog in its natural climate because they tend to ice up. They should therefore, be penalised in the show ring.

The American and English Standards call for a double, medium length coat, a well furred appearance and a clean-cut outline. The undercoat should be dense and sufficiently long to support the guard hairs. Guard hairs should be straight and smooth lying. They should not be harsh, shaggy or silky, nor should they stand straight off from the body ... within these requirements there is still variation in the types of correct coat ...

One of the worst, most inefficient coats, is the 'open coat' where the undercoat is too short for the guard hairs and does not support them adequately. This type of coat lets in the wind and catches snow and freezing rain.

A correct Siberian coat, whatever its colour, accentuates the body structure and should clearly frame the head and expression so unique to the Siberian Husky ... of course absence of undercoat during shedding is normal.

'All colours including white are allowed, and all markings ...' In other words, no preference should be given to one coat colour over another ... as is often said of horses; A good Siberian Husky cannot be a bad colour.

... The beauty of having a Standard which allows such variation is that people can exercise their natural tendency to have preferences. Personal preference, however, should not enter into the show ring – colour should not be used as a selecting factor in the judging of Siberian Huskies.