

Type is an essential ingredient for success in Terriers

says **TOM HORNER**

Terrier breeders probably more than any other group of breeders have delved deep into the conformation and movement of their breeds, in general Terrier people understand what makes their favourites tick better than anyone else in the game. But, one factor a good Terrier man or woman can never afford to overlook is type. No matter how well made and sound the product, if a breeder loses type in his stock he is in real trouble with a long hard road ahead of him before he can expect to get it right again.

Type is one of those intangibles, like quality, balance and breed character in that it takes a long time and a great deal of study fully to absorb and appreciate. It is virtually impossible to state in words exactly what is correct or accepted type in any particular breed and the same goes for quality, balance and breed character, but the experienced breeder and judge will recognise correct type immediately just as he will recognise the other intangibles when he comes across them.

TYPE & CHARACTER

Type and breed character are very close but not quite the same; type refers primarily to the physical features, the way the dog is built, while breed character is concerned with the way it acts, its spirit and general demeanour.

Superficially the Lakeland and the Welsh Terrier are very much alike yet there are strongly marked differences in type between the two breeds, not only in colour. The Lakeland's shorter head is deeper and more blunt in proportions than the Welshman's which in turn is not as long and refined as that of the Wire Fox Terrier. Small points but vital to success in breeding typical examples of each of these breeds.

Cairns and West Highland Whites have undoubtedly come from common origins yet,

as they have been developed, there are marked differences in type. The Cairn has a somewhat longer body and more daylight under him while the Westie is more boxy, shorter and sturdier in build. The Cairn is presented tidied while the Westie is more formally trimmed, this with different styles of handling, quite casual in Cairns, more stylised for the Westie, helps to give the cousins rather different breed character, relaxed in the Cairn, more busy and bustling in the Westie.

Irish Terriers are more racily built than their cousins the Airedales – "built on lines of speed" the Irishman's Standard says - and this is reflected in their breed character. Mick will have a go at anything anytime but Airedales are inclined to lack Terrier spirit unless carefully bred to preserve it. Probably the Otterhound, said to be one of the forebears of the King of Terriers, has had something to do with this, and also possibly those rather heavy ears that take such a lot of breeding out when they appear in the Airedales.

While just as sparky as the Irish Terrier, the Kerry Blue is very different in conformation, more solid and compact but equally free moving – very similar in fact to the conformation of the Soft Coated Wheaten whose character is much more relaxed and staid than his blue cousin.

Character does not always follow conformation but the possession of both true type and typical breed character are ingredients all good Terriers need to possess.

STANDARDS WRITTEN LONG AGO

Many of the Terrier breed Standards were written long ago and by breeders who understood the basics of conformation and movement – probably because they lived in an age where the horse was familiar and understood by everyone concerned with stock breeding and a frequent topic of conversation, so that its parts and different

movements were known as well as the internal combustion engine is known and understood today.

Some of these Standards have stood the test of time and remain virtually unaltered, they are as true and reliable a guide to the breeds concerned as when they were first written. That does not mean that knowledge has not increased – it undoubtedly has – but those old fanciers managed to get the basics of the breeds into their Standards, and expressed them more clearly and positively than is the case in some Standards written much more recently.

GREAT DEAL TO BE LEARNED

There is a great deal to be learned from many of these older Terrier Standards helpful to breeders of Terriers and many other kinds of dog. The basics of correct movement and the effects of faults in construction are specially well expressed in the Standards of the Airedale, the Wire and Smooth Fox Terriers, and for the short legged breeds, the Scottish and Westie Standards are most informative.

Regrettably some of the Terrier Standards, as is the case in all Groups, are not as good as they might be. For instance in the Skye's Standard, there is no indication as to the shape of the forelegs, whether they should be straight or follow the outline of the chest as in the Dachshund and the Basset Hound; nor in the section on the hindquarters is there any mention of the stifle.

One of the difficulties in judging this breed that often arises is whether a taller dog with a dead level backline should be preferred to a lower to ground dog whose back is not so level. On this vital point the Standard of the Skye gives little or no guidance. Judges are left to decide for themselves which is the better.

The Dandie Dinmont has a long and detailed Standard but in it there is not one word to indicate how this very individual breed should move. Much the same applies in the case of the Staffordshire Bull Terriers, there is always discussion about how this breed should move because its Standard has nothing to say on the subject. Border Terriers are in the same bracket. Movement in Bull Terriers has greatly improved since some



paragraphs on conformation and correct movement were added to the Standard about 30 years ago.

In the case of the Bedlington there is a rather confusing anomaly, this breed's standard says the forelegs should be straight but wider apart at the chest than at the feet. But it does not indicate how the breed should move in front. Whether it should be in the same manner as when standing, wider at the elbows than at the feet, or whether it should be in the more normal fashion, seems to be a point that has never been resolved. Some breeders opt for one way other for the alternative.

Certainly there is room for improvement in all these standards, a tidying up operation seems to be well overdue. Consistency in judging can hardly be expected when there are such obvious deficiencies in the standards.

Tom Horner started in dogs in 1934, having taken dog papers and attended shows from about the age of 15. He went first as a pupil of Mrs Nancy Fleming's iOut of the West's Cairns, then in many famous kennels with various breeds including Cocker, Great Danes, Bull Terriers, Dachshunds, Irish Wolfhounds and Bulldogs. In 1937 he became manager of R H Oppenheimer's Ormandy Bull Terriers and 1948 began his own Tartary Bull Terriers. He has bred and handled champions; became a championship show judge in 1948, judged the Bull Terrier Club championship show in 1956, Crufts in 1963 and 1967 (Bull Terriers). Became an all rounder in 1964 and has awarded CCs in 48 breeds in the UK. He has judged in 21 countries including Australia.

After 24 years of breeding, owning showing training and preparing coated breeds (Australian, & Kerry Blue Terriers plus Collie (Rough) and Shetland Sheepdogs) we have accumulated a reasonable amount of knowledge regarding presentation for the show ring. However, there is always more to learn and there are many generous people willing to share their skills and help others to perfect their grooming. Like the scout motto "always be prepared" to look, listen and learn.

First of all you must have a picture in your mind of the ideal dog and to do this you will need to know your breed Standard. For most exhibitors, not to mention judges this will be a well balanced dog without exaggerations.

The outline of the dog is in our opinion the most important guideline and the best tool available to shape your dog for the show ring. An arching neck sloping into well laid-back shoulders flowing into a dead level topline complimented by a perfectly set tail will draw the attention of any judge from the moment of entry into the ring.

Now, since most exhibitors don't have this perfect exhibit, it is necessary to commence grooming with this picture in mind. Show off your dog's virtues and do the best you can to hide the obvious faults. Grooming equipment can be expensive; however, if you purchase good quality strippers scissors etc they will produce a better finish and hold you in good stead for the future.

Coats should be healthy and shiny due to the correct diet, housing and coat care from puppyhood. We feed and recommend Science Diet from puppy through to

Terrier Grooming

Yvonne and Wayne Griffin

senior.

Always work on a clean coat. Coat texture will determine how long before a show your dog is bathed.

Our routine for our breeds is as follows:

1) Kerry Blue Terrier coats look fabulous if bathed on the morning of or night before a show. Use a good quality high lathering shampoo and conditioner (Plush Puppy). A high powered blow dryer is required to straighten the coat to enable scissoring into the necessary shape. Clipping and close work should be done up to a week prior to the show. After you have achieved the correct shape of your dog it is most important to redampen the coat and comb the wave back in.

2) Broken and double coated Terriers are best bathed up to a week in advance to allow the coat to settle and for the texture to return to the correct state. Make sure your dog's coat is thoroughly dried to the skin after washing. Damp areas can encourage hot spots in humid conditions. There are some wonderful Terrier shampoos available which will clean without softening the coat.

Any hand stripping should also be done ahead of the show. A dog presented properly will look as though this is his/her natural appearance on any given day. It is amazing how many people think Cairn and Aussie

Terriers are scruffy little dogs that are just washed and taken to the show. The preparation for dogs with stripped and/or rolled coats is very time consuming and without the owners commitment a quality coat cannot be maintained.

Establish a grooming area where all the equipment and products you need to groom your dog are easy to access. Nothing is more frustrating than never being able to find what you want whilst your faithful friend is standing patiently on the table. NEVER leave your dog unattended on the grooming table. Good lighting is essential especially for scissoring and close work. Make grooming time enjoyable for your dog with plenty of interaction and reward for his patience. The most valuable asset to any grooming area is a mirror large enough to see your dog in full profile so that you can actually see the outline of the dog as the judge would see him.

Have someone move the dog for you at its normal gait to ascertain whether or not you have the coat exactly as you would like. There should be no areas flopping up or down as the dog moves around.

With all this preparation completed you should have minimal work to complete on the day of the show. Mind you there is the nervous groomer (Wayne!) who just can't settle down until their number comes up!

Presentation is now complete so go with confidence, do your ring thing and know that the judge appreciates a dedicated exhibitor. Enjoy yourself, encourage your dog and the results will let you know that the effort is worthwhile.