
The silhouette is the first thing we see, and it creates that all-important first impression. Every breed has its own correct and distinct silhouette. (p. 142)

The AKC Standard, the origin and the purpose are explicit in regard to the Clumber Spaniel's correct proportions, yet we find dogs standing in total contradiction to this important element of breed type achieving lofty records. The Clumber on the left presents the breed's ideal silhouette. The dog on the right is wrong but all too frequently found in the winners circle (art courtesy of "Dogs in Canada"). (p. 142)

Breeders and judges of the Clumber Spaniel are extremely fortunate in that the AKC Standard of the breed tells us specifically what we need to know in this respect: "long, low... he works within gun range... rectangular in shape possessing massive bone structure... length to height is approximately 11 to 9 measured from the withers to the base of the tail and from the floor to the withers." Even if we were not given that excellent description, the history and tradition of the breed would still tell us a great deal of what we must know. The Clumber was developed to accompany the elderly gentleman hunter afield. A Clumber was meant to be slow-working and methodical - massive and powerful rather than swift - and built to push through brush and bramble rather than to clear it. (p. 142)

Thus the Clumber Spaniel's Standard, purpose and tradition all give us what we need to know. But if this is so, we are again left to wonder (p. 142) how a high-on-leg, short-coupled Clumber can be included among the top winners in the breed, as is all too often the case. Would this not contradict the very essence of the breed? (p. 146)

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As an example of how revealing the use of a graph transparency can be, we've superimposed a graph over the silhouettes of the two Clumber Spaniels that appear above. Starting at the same point on the forechest of each of the dogs, count the number of squares between there and the point of the buttocks. Compare that to the number of squares you count from the top of the shoulder to the bottom of the foot. This exercise helps train the eye to detect the difference between right and wrong in a breed's silhouette (art courtesy of "Dogs in Canada"). (p. 224)