

GREAT PYRENEES--APRI

GROUP: Working

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

The Great Pyrenees dog conveys the distinct impression of elegance and unsurpassed beauty combined with great overall size and majesty. He has a white or principally white coat that may contain markings of badger, gray, or varying shades of tan. He possesses a keen intelligence and a kindly, while regal, expression. Exhibiting a unique elegance of bearing and movement, his soundness and coordination show unmistakably the purpose for which he has been bred, the strenuous work of guarding the flocks in all kinds of weather on the steep mountain slopes of the Pyrenees.

SIZE

At withers, males 27 to 32 inches; females 25 to 29 inches; the medium sizes being preferred. Size alone should not take precedence over type, balance, soundness and temperament. The Great Pyrenees is a balanced dog with the height measured at the withers being somewhat less than the length of the body measured from the point of the shoulder to the rearmost projection of the upper thigh.(buttocks), creating a somewhat rectangular dog, slightly longer than it is tall. Front and rear angulation are balanced. The dog should be of medium substance with a coat that deceives those who do not feel the bone and muscle. **Faults: Dogs and bitches under minimum size or over maximum size. Dogs too heavily boned or too lightly boned to be in balanced with their frame.**

COAT:

Double coated. The long, flat, weather-resistant outer coat is straight or slightly undulating; of coarser hair than the undercoat. The heavy undercoat is fine and white. The coat is more profuse about the neck and shoulders where it forms a ruff or mane which is more pronounced in males. Longer hair on the tail forms a plume. There is a feathering along the back of the front legs and along the back of the thighs, giving a "pantaloon" effect. Hair on the face and ears is shorter and of finer texture. Correctness of coat is more important than abundance of coat. **Faults: Curly coat. Stand-off coat (Samoyed type).**

COLOR:

White or white with markings of gray, badger, reddish brown, or varying shades of tan. Markings of varying size may appear on the ears, head (including a full face mask), tail, and as a few body spots. The undercoat may be white or shaded. All of the above described colorings and markings are characteristic of the breed and equally correct. **Faults: Outer coat markings covering more than one third of the body.**

HEAD:

Correct head and expression are essential to the breed. The head is not heavy in proportion to the size of the dog. It is wedge-shaped, measuring from ten to eleven inches from the dome to the point of the nose. The crown is rounded. Furrow is only slightly developed: there is no apparent stop. The cheeks are flat. Close fitting lips are edged in black. Dewlaps are evident, but small. The expression is elegant, intelligent, and contemplative. **Faults: Too heavy head (St. Bernard or Newfoundland-like) Too narrow or small skull. Foxy appearance. Presence of an apparent stop. Missing pigmentation of nose, eye rims, or lips. Eyelids round, triangular, loose or small.**

Eyes Eyes are medium sized, set slightly oblique, almond shaped of a rich dark brown. The close eyelids are well-pigmented.

Ears: Ears are small to medium sized, V-shaped with rounded tips. They are set parallel with the eyes and carried low and close to the head except when the dog is at attention, when they are raised.

Skull & Muzzle: The muzzle is approximately equal in length to the back skull. The width and length of the skull are approximately equal. The muzzle blends smoothly with the skull. There is adequate fill under the eyes. Bony eyebrow ridges are only slightly developed.

Bite: scissor bite is preferred, but a level bite is acceptable. It is not unusual to see dropped (receding) lower central incisor teeth. **Faults: Overshot or undershot, wry mouth**

NECK:

Strong, well arched, of moderate length, blending cleanly into shoulders, skin fitting tightly at throat; in harmony with dog's weight and build.

BODY:

Back and loin are well-coupled, straight, and broad, with some tuck-up. The haunches are fairly prominent. The croup slopes slightly. Chest is deep and moderately broad. The rib cage is well sprung (but not barrel-shaped) oval, and of sufficient depth to reach the elbows. Top line is level. **Faults: Barrel ribs.**

FOREQUARTERS:

Shoulders are well laid back, well muscled, and lie close to the body. The upper arms meet the shoulder blade at approximately a right angle. The upper arm angles backward from the point of the shoulder to the elbow and is never perpendicular to the ground. The length of the shoulder blade and the upper arm is approximately equal. The height from the ground to the elbow appears approximately equal to the height from the elbow to the withers.

Forelegs: The legs are of sufficient bone and muscle to provide a balance with the frame. The elbows are close to the body and point directly to the rear when standing and gaiting. The forelegs, when viewed from the side, are located directly under the withers and are straight and vertical to the ground. The elbows, when viewed from the front, are set in a straight line from the point of shoulder to the wrist. Front pasterns are strong and flexible. Each foreleg carries a single dewclaw. Rounded, close-cupped feet, well-padded with toes well arched.

HINDQUARTERS:

The angulation of the hindquarters is similar in degree to that of the forequarters. Strong, muscled upper thighs extend from the pelvis at right angles. The upper thigh is the same length as the lower thigh, creating moderate stifle joint angulation when viewed in profile. The rear pastern is of medium length and perpendicular to the ground as the dog stands naturally. This produces a moderate degree of angulation in the hock joint when viewed from the side. The hindquarters from the hip to the rear pastern are straight and parallel as viewed from the rear. **Rear legs:** The rear legs are of sufficient bone and muscle to provide a balance with the frame. Double dewclaws are located on each rear leg. Rear feet have a tendency to toe out slightly. This breed characteristic is not to be confused with cowhocks. The rear feet are rounded, close-cupped, well-padded with toes well-arched. **Fault: Absence of double dewclaws on each rear leg.**

Tail Well plumed tail is long enough to hang below the hock. When the dog is in repose, the tail is carried low. When the dog is alert, the tail is curled high over the back, referred to as "making the wheel." When present, a "shepherd's crook" at the end of the tail accentuates the plume. When gaiting, the tail may be carried either over the back or low. Both carriage are equally correct.

MOVEMENT:

The Great Pyrenees moves smoothly and elegantly, true and straight ahead, exhibiting both power and agility. The stride is well balanced with good reach and strong drive. The legs tend to move toward the center line as speed increases. Ease and efficiency of movement are more important than speed.

TEMPERAMENT:

Character and temperament are of utmost importance. In nature, the Great Pyrenees is confident, gentle, and affectionate. While territorial and protective of his flock or family when necessary, his general demeanor is one of quiet composure, both patient and tolerant. He is strong-willed, independent, and somewhat reserved, yet fearless and loyal to his charges both human and animal.

Although the Great Pyrenees may appear reserved in the show ring, any sign of excessive shyness, nervousness, or aggression to humans is unacceptable and must be considered an extremely serious fault.

Any departure from this standard should be considered a fault, and the final score should reflect the seriousness of the deviation from the standard.

Disqualifications: Viciousness or extreme shyness; Albinism