

The Potomac Valley IW Specialty 2011 boasted a wonderful hotel and grounds, beautiful weather, and quality Wolfhounds. The Officers, Show Chairman, Committee Chairs, and PVIWC members deserve recognition for an excellent event, and they have my gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of it. Mr. Peter Van Brunt was, as always, an excellent Steward and kept the ring running smoothly with style and good humor.

All of my comments are made “on the day” and, in fact, within the few minutes that each entry is in the ring. As I’ve written before, I place a lot of emphasis on each dog’s silhouette, both standing and moving. I want to see a dog exhibiting the combination of power and swiftness which is, indeed, remarkable. And I want to have an impression of endurance. I look for strength, graceful build, and easy movement. This is a tall order for a giant hound. Many times my notes included a comment that I would have preferred more length of neck for the length of the back. The impression of a shorter neck is generally caused by a more upright scapula, a front assembly set on too far forward, or both. I place great value on balanced proportions of length of leg to height of the hound to the length of the neck to the length of the body.

A few general comments come to mind. I found a significant number of hounds that had length throughout: head, neck, back, and, to a lesser extent, legs. Most were fairly well balanced in the front and the rear assemblies. Most coats were excellent. I also saw a few Wolfhounds that had upper arms of excellent length and return. Congratulations. That is quite an accomplishment. Better movement went along with better construction.

On the “watch” list, I saw too many Wolfhounds that did not have the required curves, especially over the topline. Too many were soft and overweight. I know that many are just getting through a hard winter and may not have had time to muscle up and slim down. I saw some lighter eyes that often accompany a lighter coat, but these were generally the intense flame eye. Bites were more problematic than I’ve seen recently with many level bites with worn teeth and several bites were undershot.

As always, the exhibitors were gracious and demonstrated great camaraderie with each other, devotion to their hounds, and dedication to the breed.

Puppy Dogs, 6-9 months

1. O’Lugh Blackwater Harper

A lot of nice curves with good length through the topline and legs. Would prefer a bit more length to the neck. His upper arm has excellent length and return. He is balanced fore and aft with regard to angulation. He moves easily on the side gait, and is true down and back but moves a bit close in the rear at this time. Nice bone and a pleasant head and expression.

2. Blackwing Starkeeper Tegann

I especially like the length of leg on this puppy, and the length of topline and neck may well come into balance with maturity. He doesn’t have quite the curves over the topline of #1. He has a bit more rear at this time than his front assembly. Very nice head and expression. Isn’t moving true today on the down and back.

Puppy Dogs, 9-12 months

1. Aigih’s Seosamh Mac De Jenny

This youngster doesn’t have much coat yet so his beautiful curves can be seen standing and moving. He has good length throughout. He has very good length and return of upper arm, and excellent width of stifle. His head is very nice, especially the length of the muzzle. His

- side gait is smooth and effortless.
2. O'Lugh Holy Toledo of Blackwater
Somewhat longer in back than #1 but would prefer a bit more neck for balance. Nice curves over the loin, but somewhat soft in the topline especially when standing. Side gait was somewhat restricted.
 3. Eirian Heart N Soul
Nicely balanced with good curves throughout. He doesn't have quite the length throughout that I prefer but time is on his side. He isn't using himself well today.
 4. O'Lugh Clash of the Titans
Much larger youngster with a more sweeping rear than front. His topline doesn't have much curve, but this might be obscured by his weight. Pleasing head and expression.

12-18 Months

1. Riverlawn Exit of Aerie
This fellow caught my eye and wouldn't let go. A lot of scope and length. Still rather raw boned. His curves show up best on the move and he covers ground with ease and precision. He has an excellent head with good length of muzzle and backskull, a very dark eye, and beautiful rosed ears. He has few facial furnishings, but I love the look of the ancient, warrior hound.
2. Carrickaneena Tyrconnell
This length of neck is one of the best so far. It blends nicely into beautiful curves over the topline. A bit more leg would better balance the length topside. Nice head and expression. Movement was sometimes excellent but inconsistent.
3. Starkeeper Glenamadda Fyrenze of Gryffindor
Looks much better moving than standing today. Would prefer more angulation fore and aft. Somewhat soft and less curvey in the topline when standing. He pulls himself together on the move.
4. Castlemaine's Salinger
Nice curves over the topline and through the rear. The front assembly is somewhat straighter, especially the upper arm. The little longer neck would better balance his longer backline. Even though his cheerful tail can be distracting, he has very nice side gait.

Novice Dogs

1. Glenamadda Starkeeper Banner
While not the more rangy look I prefer, he is very well balanced and moves well on the side and on the down and back. He holds his curves well on the move. Has a beautiful head and expression.
2. Juggle of Aerie
This dog has more of the length overall I prefer, good bone and width of stifle, but he is not using himself well today, especially going away. Good head, expression, and rosed ears.
3. Laislinn Starkeeper Connal
This dog is in excellent muscle and the best conditioned one so far in the ring today. His more sweeping rear is not well balanced with his straighter front. Would prefer more curve over the topline.

Bred-By-Exhibitor Dogs

This was a very nice class with significant depth of quality and beautiful movement.

1. Quint of Aerie

Has the overall length I like from the head, through the neck into the topline. He is balanced front to rear. Would prefer more curve over the loin.

2. Rockhart Nemesis

Very nice length of back which might be better balanced with a bit more leg. His sweeping rear is not equaled by his front assembly. Nice head with pleasing expression and a dark eye.

3. Carrickaneena Croppy Boy

Upstanding dog with a lot of nice leg. Lovely length through the back but could use more curves over the loin. Beautiful mover.

4. Hound Hill Tallberg O'Tailstorm

A more compact dog than those above with a softer topline standing. Moderate angulation in the front with more bend of stifle in the rear. Shows better curves on the move.

American Bred Dogs

1. Shanachie-N-Wolfhaven's TNT

Big fellow with length of back and legs. Would prefer a bit more neck. Pleasing head that could use tighter ears. Good curves throughout. Holds himself well on the move which is efficiently ground covering.

2. Dun Myrica Lyre of Eagle

Similar to above with less length throughout. Stands somewhat soft in the topline and doesn't firm up on the move.

3. Gladstone's Brother Digby

Has a lot of potential with fairly good length throughout. He isn't moving well today and isn't holding his shape on the move.

4. Armagh's Faolan Buster O'Ros

His shape leans to the "power" side of the continuum as opposed to "speed". His topline is rather soft when standing, but improves on the move. Would prefer more arch over the loin standing or moving.

Open Dogs

1. O'Lugh's Jagermeister of Aerie

A lot of wonderful curves on the move. Although his upper arm could use more return, it is long and he uses it really well on the move. I'd like more length of neck for the length of his back. His loin is powerful and deep but looks somewhat flat standing, better when moving. His rear is a bit more angled than his front with good width of stifle.

2. Kellamore Braemar of Fitzwick

Pleasing curves. Good length of neck into well made shoulders into a long back. Back is somewhat soft when standing, but improves on the move. Would prefer more leg to better balance the topside. Balanced fore and aft. Moves well.

3. Castlemaine's Bram of Sidhe

Front assembly somewhat upright which shortens the impression of neck length. The leg length is balanced with the length of the back. Nice arch over the loin.

4. Moondancer of Elkhorn

Big dog with good length of neck into a balanced length of back. Nice shape on the move, but isn't moving well on the side or down and back.

WD: #31, Riverlawn Exit of Aerie

RWD: #85, Shanachie-N-Wolfhaaven's TNT

Puppy Bitches, 6-9 months

1. St Leger Urraca

Quite like this puppy. She has good length of neck, topline, and legs. Her good shoulder assembly smoothly blends the neck into the back. She has a proper upper arm and she uses it well on the move. She has curves throughout. Very feminine head and expression.

2. St. Leger Voila

Very similar to #1. Less well stacked; but on the move, she has a very nice shape, length, curves, and balance. Equally nice head.

3. O'Lugh June of Blackwater

Balanced length of neck to back to legs, but not the curves or fill of the first 2 placements. The topline is soft and appears high in rear with a rather steep croup. She uses herself well but not with the ease of the first two.

4. O'Lugh's Corona Extra Gold

Similar to #3 but doesn't have the scope. Topline is a bit firmer, arch over the loin similar to #3, and the croup is a bit steeper.

Puppy Bitches, 9-12 months

1. O'Lugh's Streetwalker

Good length of neck into length of topline. Would prefer a bit longer leg for balance. Back sometimes appeared soft when standing, but she held her shape on the move. Rear is more sweeping than the front, but the length and return of upper arm is better than most and she uses it beautifully.

2. Rockhart Paloma

This puppy has length of leg that is a bit more than her length of neck and back at this point in her development. Her front assembly is not quite balanced with her more sweeping rear. The upper arm length and return restricts her front movement especially as compared with her rear action. Very pretty head and picture perfect ear.

3. Glenamadda Starkeeper Delilah

Love the long legs with length of neck and back. Nice curves throughout. Somewhat restricted on the go around.

4. Glenamadda Echo of Starkeeper

Smooth package of nice curves. Would like more neck and leg for the length of the body. Very pretty head and expression. Moves well and holds her shape.

12-18 Months

1. Glenamadda Starkeeper Clodagh

The first two placements are almost identical. They are on the small size, but beautifully balanced regarding their length throughout and their angulation fore and aft. Beautiful curves over the topline. Not quite the length of leg as #2. Moves well with excellent use of her upper arm.

2. Glenamadda Starkeeper Chevonne

Comments above apply to this sister. Although #2 moves quite well, she didn't use her upper

arm as well today as #1.

3. Warwick Teach of Aerie

This beautiful, black girl struck a very responsive chord with me. She has lovely curves which may be somewhat masked by her weight. She has good length of neck and back with balance fore and aft. Might give her a bit more leg. Love her beautiful head, expression, and super ears. She carries herself well on the move.

4. June of Aerie

Beautiful head, eye, and ears. Shoulder assembly a bit upright which shortens the appearance of her neck. Good length of back. Nice curves over the topline. Her moments of good movement today were brief and infrequent.

Amateur Owner Handler

1. Laislinn Long Roa to Caoihme

Pretty, feminine bitch with good proportions and nice curves throughout. Softer topline when standing but firms up on the move. Better side gait than her down and back today.

2. Vandeventer's Kyna O'Ros

Like the length of leg which balances her length of back. Somewhat forward and upright front shortens the appearance of her neck length and produces a lift in the front on the move. Balanced angulation front to rear but would prefer more on both ends. Nice curves down her topline and maintains a firm back.

Novice Bitches

1. Starkeeper Glenamadda Kayte

Balanced fore and aft with flowing curves. Good length of neck to body and legs. Nice silhouette when moving.

2. Opal of Aerie

This promising youngster needs time to pull all her beautiful parts together. She is long throughout with beautiful curves. She has an excellent front assembly with a long upper arm of sufficient return to balance her powerful rear. Head, expression, and tight rose ear are beautiful.

3. Brimstone Sojourn From Connemara

Somewhat less length throughout with more moderate curves than #2. Pretty head and good ears. Did notice a lighter eye. Moves well.

Bred-By-Exhibitor Bitches

1. July of Aerie

Nice curves and length throughout with a better silhouette on the move than when standing. Arch over the loin is diminished when stacked. Balanced front to rear. Very good movement on the side and down and back.

2. Kellykerry Peony of Aerie

Lovely head, expression, and ear. Longer cast through the topline than #1 and somewhat soft when stacked. Smooth curves throughout. Didn't move as well as #1 today.

3. Starkeeper Glenamadda USA Flag

Smooth curve down the neck and through the topline. Arch over the loin better seen on the move. Rear doesn't have quite the bend and width to balance the front. Easy mover.

4. Hound Hill Tallulah

Big wheaten with good length of back that is somewhat soft when stacked but improves on the move. The length of the neck appears longer and more balanced with the body on the move. Not moving cleanly in the rear.

American Bred Bitches

1. Gladstone's Maeve

Rangy bitch with smooth curves overall and balance throughout. Nice head, but could use tighter ears. Another example of an excellent upper arm. Moves well with an easy, open side gait that cover ground. Her shape is best seen on the move, and gets better with each step. Her easy, ground covering movement that never let down garnered her WB.

2. Myrica Leanbh Nollaig of Eagle

Very nice curves but I'd like more length everywhere. Nice balance front to back. Pretty head and expression. Moves cleanly.

3. FCH. Carrickaneena Winds of Morning SC

Like this length overall, good proportions neck to back to legs. Would prefer more arch over the loins. Like her head, expression and ears. Isn't moving well today, especially in the rear going away.

4. Connemara's Wise One At Hearhound

Longer back somewhat out of balance to the shorter neck and legs. Topline is rather soft but has a nice rise over the loin and through the croup. Front and rear balanced but would prefer more angulation on each end. Very pretty, feminine head and expression. Would prefer more ground covering movement.

Open Bitches

1. O'Lugh's Jigger of Aerie

Length and curves throughout, especially when she is on the move. Balanced front to rear. Excellent ground covering movement on the side and down and back. She faded a bit during WB competition, but her structure and silhouette garnered her RWB.

2. Gladstone's Wicca

Pushed for 1st place. Would prefer more arch over the loin, both standing and moving. Good angulation fore and aft with an excellent front assembly, esp. upper arm.

3. Starkeeper California Ierne

Lovely bitch about as small as I would like to see. Doesn't have quite enough neck and leg to balance her longer back which is somewhat soft. Easy, smooth mover around and down and back.

4. Kellykerry Isolde of Aerie

Big bitch with curves and balance that might be somewhat obscured by her weight. Goes well but might be easier on the move with less weight. Pleasing head and expression that would be improved with tighter ears.

WB: #94

RWB: #112

Veteran Dogs

1. CH. Taliesin's Suailce JC

This veteran is looking really good in his maturity. He has a lovely head and beautiful ears. He has smooth curves over his whole frame and a nice spring of rib. Balanced front and rear with good width of stifle. Good muscle tone. His topline is a bit soft standing, but he pulls himself together on the move with beautiful side gait.

2. CH. Lorilane Zydeco of Ierne

This longer cast dog is very much the style I like. More sweep in the rear than in the front assembly. Excellent head.

3. CH. Greymist Eyesoftexas Gabriel

Upstanding senior with a goodly amount of leg under him. His topline is fairly firm with a beautiful curve over the loin and across a long, properly angled croup. He is the senior of the class and his movement reflects his age.

Veteran Bitches

1. CH. Glenamadda Starkeeper U R Zada JC

One of the most beautiful heads with excellent length to width of the back skull matched with length of the muzzle in a level plane. Super ears. Her curves flow beautifully from the crest of her neck through the topline and over her broad croup. She is balanced fore and aft.

I would give her a bit more leg. She is a beautiful, easy mover.

2. CH. Gladstone's Come Fly With Me

Similar look to #1 but with a longer cast. Her topline is now somewhat soft on the stack but she pulls herself together and moves with ease. Her excellent front assembly boasts a very long upper arm with excellent return. To her credit she has passed along this upper arm to two of her daughters by different sires for which she was awarded #1 Brood Bitch.

3. Sidhe's Whitney O'Tailstorm

Balanced fore and aft with a shorter cast throughout. Maintains beautiful curves.

4. CH. Ierne's Sorcha Ni Shivey JC

Love the length of back but would be better balanced with a bit more neck and leg. Balanced fore and aft. Moves easy and true.

BOB

CH. Guffaw of Aerie

Beautiful head, expression, and tight rosed ears. On the smaller size, but well built with smooth, flowing curves. Good proportion of length throughout. Easy ground covering movement, and she never put a foot down wrong. She radiates power, speed and endurance in a beautiful, feminine package.

BW

Riverlawn Exit of Aerie

He got better and better as he went around the ring.

BOS

CH. Talieson's Willow's Glympse

Big wheaten that has length and curves throughout. Very pleasing, masculine head with good expression. He uses himself well on the side and down and back. Very nice combination of speed and power.

SD

GCH. Starkeeper McEnroe of Limerick

Good proportions neck to back to legs. A bit soft in the topline when standing but pull himself up on the move. Good curves and balanced angulation front to back. Easy mover.

SB

CH. Kellykerry Peggy Sue of Aerie

Substantial bitch that doesn't lose her femininity with a beautiful head, expression and tightly rosed ears. Curves and balance throughout. Another easy, accurate mover. Gives the impression she could hunt all day.

AOM

CD Carrickanee Meirgire SC

Substantial, masculine dog well up on leg. Very pleasing head and expression. Good flowing curves throughout. Easy mover who holds his shape well.

CH. Gordon of Aerie

Curves and balance, and length are best seen when she is moving and they all flow together to exhibit her beautiful silhouette and easy movement.