

JUDGING THE BORDER COLLIE

(From a Working Perspective)

By Janet E. Larson

(About the author: Janet Larson bought her first Border Collie, Caora Con's Pennant-UD from a dairy farm in 1968. He was of Carroll Shaffner, Fred Bahnson and Edgar Gould breeding. She purchased her foundation bitch, Caora Con's Bhan-righ, a grand daughter of Gilchrist Spot and Wiston Cap from Arthur Allen in 1972. Four dogs from this original line graduated from Guiding Eyes for the Blind, many have competed in herding trials, earned obedience and schutzhund titles to include: VX-Caora Con's Black Bison-SchH3, CDX, WC; VX, HCh-Caora Con's Black Magnum-BH, SchH2, HX, CDX; HCh-Thornhill Meg-HX; Ch.X-Ivyrose Maya-HS, HX; Ch.X-Caora Con's Ceitlyn-PT, HS, HIAs; Ch.X- Caora Con's Pendragon-PT, HSAs and Ch-Caora Con's Ceiradwen-PT. Her Group placing, Nationally ranked, V, Ch.X-Caora Con's Gaidin Lan-HS, CDX, BH, TT is also descended from these original dogs. She is a strong believer in the "total dog" concept: working ability, temperament, soundness and good structure. All of her current breeding stock are pure British lines, have Championships with herding titles, dual OFA and PennHip ed, and CERF ed for clear eyes. In 1976, while still in high school, she founded the Border Collie Club of America, and edited Border Collie News for 19 years. She wrote the first edition of The Versatile Border Collie in 1986. The book was runner up for the Dog Writers Association of America Best Breed Book award. The completely revised and updated second edition of The Versatile Border Collie has just been released by Alpine Publications. It has been expanded from 140 to 284 pages has hundreds of new photos and color plates. She has a BS in Animal Science, BA in Chemistry and MEd in Science Education. She served 8 years active duty in the U.S Army, is a Desert Storm vet, and has experience training and handling patrol dogs and detection dogs.

Reason for Concern

A dog show is supposed to help breeders select breeding stock with the goal of improving the breed. This is unfortunately not always the case. Two breeds come to mind. The German shepherd is a breed I have experience with from a military and law enforcement background. The American show German Shepherd is an extreme caricature of the original working dog: overangulated, ski-jump back, tall with a narrow body, and long almost collie like nose. The police and military now purchase almost exclusively European working lines. The European working lines are sound, with much better hips on average, strong working drives, and good temperaments. These dogs are less angulated, not as tall, more compact, athletic in build, foxy faced and do not wobble coming and going at a trot like the American dogs. They can also get out of their own way jumping and clearing other obstacles. The English Setter is another. The field trial dogs are smaller, have shorter ears, tighter flews, and moderate coats which are practical in the field. The show dogs are giants with enormous ears, drooping flews, and hair dripping nearly to the ground. I fear a similar fate is in store for the Border Collie.

British vs. Australian type

There appear to be two types evolving. The British Working (original and unimproved) type and the Australian (show) type. The genetic drift is so strong the types may even merit being divided



Old Hemp: Born 1893, Northumbria. Foundation sire for Border Collie Breed.

into separate breeds such as the American and English Cocker Spaniel. I am not sure we really want this to happen, but it may be too late already. A blending of the British and Australian varieties could be of benefit to both, since both types have been intensively line-bred, although for different purposes. The Australian lines had a lot of crosses to other British herding types in their developmental years, but intensive line breeding was used to standardize physical type. The Collie blood used has caused a high incidence of CEA. Another problem is CL, a deadly storage disease where lipid deposits form around the neurons. A positive thing is that the Australian show lines are pretty much free of any British blood from the late 1940's on. This makes them pretty much free of J.M. Wilson's Cap blood. Cap had a brother with "fits", and he is in the legendary Wiston Cap's pedigree 32 times. Wiston Cap, being one of the top winning trial dogs of all times, and the most used stud dog in the history of the breed, is in virtually every British working pedigree today. With this concentration of blood has come an increase in hip dysplasia and epilepsy. A blending of types would give desperately needed outcross blood. The Australian dogs tend to be too short and chunky, while many British dogs are very leggy and fine boned. I have seen a number of crosses that both looked and worked well. The ideal proportion seems to be 1/4 Australian to 3/4 British.

They have more coat and bone, but still have a graceful, athletic elegance. Unfortunately both sides are so opposed to each other that separating into two breeds, the Australian Border Collie and British Border Collie may be the only solution.

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Wiston Cap, 1965 International Supreme Champion. Most influential modern sire.

The British Type

We must remember the British developed the Border Collie breed. I overheard a handler at a recent dog show tell someone the breed is Australian! The International Sheep Dog Society (ISDS) in Britain is the original registry and developed modern sheep dog trials to help select breeding stock. Interestingly, the founders, James Gardner, James Thompson, R.J.Lloyd, J.M. Wilson and James Reed were important men in the Collie breed. They formed the ISDS in 1906 because the Kennel Club was not meeting their needs breeding quality working dogs. The name "border" was not coined until 1921 in an article on the International Supreme Championship to



A smooth coated "lurcher" type Border Collie.

wide while gathering so as not to startle the stock, and a "stalking" creep when approaching and moving the stock.



Fraser's Moss, 1923 International Supreme Champion, Northumbrian Type.

shores and steep highland areas requiring a sure footed, fast, small dog which is the ancestor of the Sheltie. Recently, as a result of intensive linebreeding on Wiston Cap, a tall, athletic type with prick ears and a rough or medium coat has developed. These dogs are rather setter like in build, very fast and doing very well in herding trial work. In addition, there are many combinations in between.

differentiate the working from the show collie, and because the best workers were from the Border counties of Scotland and England to include Northumberland and Cumbria. The breed became the premier sheep dog in the world as a result, and was exported globally to include Australia and New Zealand. The ISDS registers working Border Collies as small, medium or large, (which vary from 17 to 24 inches tall). Coats are registered as rough, medium or smooth coat. Ears vary from drop to prick, but all Border Collies work with a distinct style: a desire to run

There are several physical types of working Border Collie, all of which are correct and serve specific purposes, depending on terrain and type of stock to be worked. These are: the smooth coated, often prick eared, lightly boned and very fast "lurcher" or "fox collie" type which is an ancestor of the Smooth Collie, Kelpie and Australian Cattle Dog; the large, drop eared, heavy coated Northumbrian type, good for cattle, sheep and droving large flocks - requiring a bigger, powerful dog. These dogs are the major ancestor of the rough Collie, English Shepherd and Australian Shepherd. The pretty, little, foxy faced, fine boned, rough coated "Highland type" found on the islands, rocky



Small, fine-boned highland type.

The Australian Type



Aust. Ch. Tullaview Temptation, a 1980's show dog.

even mentioned in pedigrees, others were listed only as female from such and such station, and sometimes the breed was mentioned! The offspring of these matings became the foundation stock for the Australian Border Collie, Kelpie and Cattle Dog. A study of their pedigrees shows several key individuals in the ancestry of all three breeds to include such dogs as Bantry Girl. In the 1940s standards were drawn up for conformation of these breeds, and breeding for the show ring started. Show dogs of all three breeds are registered with the Australian National Kennel Council.

The type of Border Collie the Australians selected for the show ring was the pretty little shaggy type. Due to influence of Lancashire Heelers and Smithfields, the Australian Border Collie has a blocky body, proportionately short legs, big domed skulls, very distinct stops and short muzzles. The Collie influence "improved" the thickness and length of the coat. By the 1950s show type was pretty well set. Unfortunately, these dogs did not function too well as working dogs, since they couldn't cover the vast spaces with their shorter legs, and had too much coat for the hot climate. As a result, they became primarily show dogs. Their temperaments are much more laid back than the working dogs, and they are intelligent and easily trained, which makes them a popular companion and obedience dog. The ranchers have continued over the years to import top working dogs from Scotland and register them with the Australian Sheep Dog Soci-

Many top working Border Collie stud dogs were exported to Australia and New Zealand, especially after World War I and before World War II. The blood of these important dogs was lost to the British working Border Collie. These studs were interbred with females of a variety of types to include the German Coolie, Smithfield Bobtail, Collie and Lancashire Heeler due to a shortage of quality females. In those days it was also felt the male was the most important influence on the pups, the female being primarily a receptacle. The names of many females were not

even mentioned in pedigrees, others were listed only as female from such and such station, and sometimes the breed was mentioned!



Robert (Bob) Floss with his famous Border Collie dog Yulong Russ won the National trial 1970.

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ety (patterned after the International Sheep Dog Society). These dogs are bred strictly for working ability. Sheepdog trials are very popular and competitive just as they are here and in Britain. Many show breeders complain the “trialers” are breeding hyperactive, overly intense, oversized, long legged, smooth or medium coated dogs, with unmatched, prick or drop ears, and horror of horrors - too much white, split faces or blue eyes! One well known show breeder even recommend the trialers call “their” breed something else, but NOT a Border Collie!

General Type: Form follows function

The Border Collie is first and foremost the World’s Premier Herding Dog. It should be athletic in build and look like it can do the work for which it was intended. That would be my major criteria for judging. It should also be shown in well muscled working condition, not over weight like many show dogs. I have no objections to a good looking dog, and actually prefer them, but working ability is still my priority. Some of the dogs I see winning in the show ring are too short in the leg and long in the body to be able to “cover” (circle around in front of) and turn a running sheep on the open range or moors. Many breeds of sheep such as the Katahdin, Cheviot or Barbados can run close to 35 m.p.h. A small short legged dog simply can’t do the job no matter how much desire. Most of the small and short legged herding breeds were designed to work in farm yards and restricted areas with small pens and chutes. The lovely, profuse, flowing coat that practically drags on the ground would hopelessly matt and tangle in a real working situation. Something a little shorter would be easier to care for and more practical, even if it isn’t as flashy. Although I personally feel movement is one of the most important things in judging a Border Collie, the flying suspension trot like a German Shepherd Dog is not correct. If you watch these dogs coming and going, most wobble or cross over like an American German Shepherd.

I feel any breeder or judge of Border Collies should go to an ISDS style sheep dog trial and watch the dogs work. That would help clarify why the dogs are built like a Thoroughbred hunter not a Clydesdale. These trials are held all over the United States, sponsored by the United States Border Collie Handler’s Association. Most trials have huge entries, often several hundred dogs compete. The big trials have purses of twenty thousand dollars or more. While watching these dogs go out and gather sheep at 600 yards to a half mile, you will see that the primary gait of the working Border Collie is the double suspension gallop, like a sight hound. The other gaits used are a canter, and a skulking pace or walk when approaching sheep. Rarely do you see a working Border Collie trotting, much less using the suspension or flying trot.

Angulation

Show breeders and judges may feel they are improving the breed, but are they? Natural selection on the hill for a thousand years has produced a dog best able to do the work required. Look at the structure of a sight hound, coyote, wolf or working Border Collie closely. The dog should have balanced, but not extreme angulation. The shoulder layback is about 30 degrees, not the “ideal” 45 degree layback desired in the German Shepherd Dog, which we seem to be emulating. In addition, the shoulder blade generally meets the upper arm at closer to a 120 degree angle, not 90 degrees, as in the German Shepherd. The angulation in the rear should balance that of the front. The croup in the sight hound, wolf, coyote or working Border Collie is only very slightly sloped, due to a less sloping pelvis. The German Shepherd has a sloping croup because it is a trotting dog. They also have a high rate of hip dysplasia due to the stress put on the hip joint from the unnatural angle. The sloping croup and low tail set leads to a high number of dogs with anal fistulas. Having

owned two German Shepherds, one who developed anal fistulas, I can tell you this is a silent killer. Repeated surgery and incontinence are the end result. The suffering is horrible.

Movement

The trot of the working Border Collie should have good reach, front and rear, but no wasted motion. As John Holmes, author of the Farmer's Dog and ISDS judge says, a good working Border Collie should be built like a Thoroughbred Hunter not a Shire or Clydesdale, and should move with a ground covering stride with **mini-**

mum lift to the feet. In the horse world, this is called a "daisy cutter". High, flashy action or a Flying trot are totally incorrect. Movement coming and going should be sound and true. A dog who wobbles coming or going is not going to last on the hill. I have seen group winning Border Collies with beautiful flying side gaits, who "knit and pearl" (weave) in the front, and wobble in the rear like a German Shepherd Dog! I have seen other dogs who are so long in the back and short in the legs that their front and rear legs seem to move independently of each other! Other dogs are so straight front and rear that they have no reach at all. To me, all of these are serious faults. I highly recommend all judges and breeders read and study Rachel Page Elliot's excellent book The New Dogsteps. It discusses both angulation and movement with line drawings done from actual x-ray cinematography of working dogs in action, normal and abnormal gaits, and shows placement of the bones, both standing and moving. In addition she shows all the different gaits, including the canter and double suspension gallop, and why certain structures allow for different types of movement.



Roy, 1959-1962, North American Supreme Champion on his outrun.

Neck & Topline

When gaiting, the Border Collie should have level high head carriage. Many of the dogs being shown today have high head carriage. When "eyeing" stock, the head is often dropped below the backline. Standing on alert, or posed in the ring, the head may certainly be raised up and the neck arched. The neck should be fairly long and flexible, allowing it to snake almost to the ground when "eyeing", and to extend and balance while gaiting or running. Some of the blocky show dogs seem to have no neck. The topline itself in the Border Collie is not completely level as some show people like to think it should be. Being a galloping dog, with many structural similarities to the sight hounds, there is a slight muscular arch in the loin region. This gives extra power and thrust while galloping. In addition, many working Border Collies are slightly higher in the rear, like a Chesapeake Bay Retriever, due to hind legs that are slightly longer than the front legs. The longer hindlegs also give more power to the hindquarters for galloping. Both a roached back and completely level back are not desirable because they tend towards weakness as the dog gets older. Dogs with roached backs may move awkwardly and pace, while a level back will become a sway back as the dog gets older and be prone to arthritis.

Body

The body of the Border Collie should be slightly longer than tall to prevent crabbing or pacing from too short a body, similar to a foxhound. Too square like a Belgian or too long like a German Shepherd dog are not desirable. Many winning dogs today are too long in the body. This invites lumbar injuries in an agility or working dog. I know from experience with Shepherds. Many



1980-1981 Welsh National Champion Bwlch Taff, an example of the athletic Cap type.

Shepherds end their working careers as a result of lumbar injuries. The short backed Malinois is much more resistant to performance injuries of the back. The longer back also causes stress on the hips. In the horse world, a Standardbred has a longer back, steeper croup and more angulation than a Thoroughbred. A Standardbred is a trotter by design, a Thoroughbred a galloping horse. Standardbreds are generally driving horses, not riding horses. The longer back is weaker. We must be careful not to change the breed from its intended purpose. In addition, as a galloping dog, a Border Collie needs a deep chest, with a slight tuck up. This is like the Thoroughbred Hunter with the “wasp waist” compared to the Standardbred. A dog with “no tuck up” (as called for in our current standard) would not be

able to flex at the waist while thrusting the hindlegs forward at a full gallop. Bone should be strong, but not over done. I do not think a dog with bone as light as a Saluki would stand up to a hard day’s work, nor would a chunky, big boned dog built like many of today’s show dogs.

Cowhocks

Cow hocks are another area of concern. Many of the top herding trial people in Britain do not like cow hocks. Several of these people have come here to judge herding trials have commented on the high incidence of cow hocks in American dogs. One person stated they felt we got all the dogs they didn’t want. Interestingly, cow hocks are common in the Border Collies with the flying trot, just as they are in the German Shepherd Dog. It is disgusting to me to see the German Shepherds wobbling around the show ring like a bunch of cripples. Breeders have given up sound movement for the flying trot. I hope we don’t do the same. I do not know why cow hocks were even mentioned in the standard.

Head

The head is another area I see big differences. Most working dogs have a head similar in structure to the wolf or coyote. They have a stop, wedge shape, and skull and muzzle of equal length. Some show dogs, especially males, have huge heads with a deep stop, much like a Bernese. The Australian head was selected to be cute. It has a high domed forehead, abrupt stop, short, slightly

upturned muzzle and large, slightly bulging eyes, giving a teddy bear cute look. The British head is longer and more wedge shaped, elegant and chiseled, with a skull and muzzle of about equal length. The stop is definite, but not as abrupt as the Australian stop. The eyes are medium large, slightly almond shaped and not protruding. the expression is more intense and not as appealing to many people. Some working type heads are rather long and unattractive. A blend midway between the two types can be very attractive. Moderation is again key.

Ears

As a working dog person, I find the current ear fetish ridiculous. Many Border Collies have larger, lower set ears than a Collie or Sheltie, since they have a wider skull. Many Americans, I believe more so than Australian or British show people, want to emulate the ears of the Collie



Bagshaw's Glyn, trial winner and star of the 1938 movie *Owd Bob (British)*, a classic Northumbrian type.

and Sheltie. I am not sure why. The propping and gluing of ears is time consuming, artificial, and frequently irritating to the puppy since it must be done for months. Worst it hides the true genetics of the dog's ear carriage, making ear selection more difficult if you desired to do so. A Border Collie's ears should be mobile to locate sounds and have enough lift to allow ventilation. We do not want dogs prone to ear infections like many of the sporting breeds. Most ears vary from a button or rose ear (what trialers call dropped) to completely pricked. In Australia the prick ear is a fault, probably going back to the days when the show type was being developed. To provide protection from sleet, snow and biting insects, an ear bent or folded from 1/4 to 1/2 is ideal. To give an alert expression, an ear 3/4 to fully erect is ideal. Since ears do not herd sheep, it is personal preference as to ears. I also feel nature usually gives a dog the ears that best fit his or her head. Some dogs with faked ears just don't look balanced or something, however I would be tempted to fix unmatched ears. To some people they add character. From a working perspective, they make no difference as long as they are mobile and allow ventilation.

Tail

Tail carriage is a big area of controversy. The ideal tail carriage is low when the dog is relaxed with a slight upward swirl at the end like a shepherd's crook. The tip should reach to the hock or below. When gaiting, it might be raised proudly and waved like a banner at a 45 degree angle, showing a confident personality, but should never be curled over the back like a Husky. I also do not like a kinked tail or a tucked tail showing a fearful or weak temperament. The tail should be able to wag and move. Many top herding trial dogs carry a high tail away from sheep. For some reason, the standard faults a tail carried above the topline. As a result, some show dogs appear to have had the muscles in their tails cut and they hang limply at all times.

I believe the reason for this tail folly is that the show people heard shepherds detest a gay tail (on stock). That is true. When working stock, the tail should always be carried low, in line with the

hocks. It is NOT used for balance or as a rudder (as our standard states) when working stock. It is held tensely low when working, sometimes even tucked. A wolf stalking its prey would never bark or flap its tail around over its back, since the prey would scatter. The working Border Collie works with a low tail for the same reasons! Remember, herding is an off shoot of the wolf's hunting behavior. A high, flapping tail on stock indicates one of two things: the dog is still playing and the light bulb hasn't turned on yet, or the dog lacks herding instinct!

Away from sheep, the tail gives an indication of personality. An outgoing, more dominant, energetic male will carry a high tail, while a softer more submissive dog will never raise its tail over its back. A look at the top obedience and agility dogs will show most work with a tail over their back! When jumping, or retrieving, the tail is actually used for balance and as a rudder. By only putting up dogs with low tail carriage in the show ring, we are weeding out all the dogs with outgoing, working temperaments! High tail carriage while gaiting in the ring should be allowed as it is in the Collie and Sheltie.

Expression and Attitude

I like a lively, alert, confident dog, with an intelligent expression. Most Border Collies are a bit aloof, in that they do not greet everyone as their friend, like a Golden. That does not mean they have an excuse to be shy or nasty tempered either. They should tolerate being handled and examined with no resentment or fearfulness. I have heard some judges say they want to see "eye" in the ring. That is crazy, unless you plan to bring a sheep into the ring. Some dogs will eye other dogs moving in the ring, but they are usually overly strong eyed to begin with. A dog who "eyes" a human being like sheep for no reason is not of a stable temperament, unless the human is wearing a padded suit, and the dog is told to "watch him"!

Coat

Coat is another area of big controversy. In Australia, the show dogs have been selected for a long, double coat like a show Collie. In the British working lines, a medium or short coat are actually preferred by many farmers to a heavy, rough coat. They are easier to keep clean, require almost no grooming, and do not catch burrs and seeds. In hot climates such as Australia or the American West, working dogs are almost all smooth or medium coated. Today, most show dogs drip coat. Some have belly feathers down to their pasterns! We must ask, "Are we improving the breed?" I don't think so. I see this type of dog in my paddock dripping with liquefied sheep manure and mud in the spring. The ideal coat dries, and the dirt flakes off leaving the dog looking clean a few hours later. The extremely long coat, especially if it is fine textured, mats and requires extensive grooming after working in muddy manure. A farmer with a dog like that would let it get horribly matted and filthy (which I have seen) or they trim them. This coat is not practical, even if it is pretty. Any coat, rough, medium or smooth, should have course, water resistant outer guard hairs, and a dense, wooly undercoat. A soft silky coat is incorrect, as is a lack of under coat. Straight or wavy makes no difference as long as the texture is course and dirt and water repellent.

Color and Markings

Border Collies come in three basic colors with modifiers: Black, liver (chocolate) and yellow (lemon). The inheritance is the same as for the Labrador. In addition we have two types of dilution genes: recessive Dilute (slate blue and red-brown), and dominant Merle (blue merle and red merle) which are dilutions of black and liver respectively. Dilution or merling of yellows results in a creamy white which is very undesirable. Tan and white marking are inherited independently of

each other, and of body color. Double merles and double dilutes can suffer from hearing and eye problems. Livers, reds and slates have matching nose leathers and light eyes. Merles may have multi colored eyes and nose leathers. Blacks and yellows have black noses.

Markings are another area of misconceptions. One of the beauties of the breed is uniqueness of individual markings.

Most shepherds do not like a dog with too much white, or a pale dog since

sheep mistake it for another sheep and challenge it more. This is not a problem on home field where the sheep learn to either respect or ignore the dog on its own merits. At a trial on strange sheep it can making the differences between winning and not even qualifying. A dark dog such as a black, dark slate, or liver will carry the most respect. Red (brown), blue merle and red merle fall somewhere in the middle. The least respected by the sheep are the predominantly white dog or the yellow (Lemon or Australian red) dog, or any very washed out double merles, since these colors approximate a sheep's own color. For a number of years a woman was trialing a lemon and white male who worked very well at home. At trials he was constantly challenged, and sheep walked up to him to investigate. He developed an attitude and started gripping in retaliation. Finally his owner had a black jacket made for him, and the problem stopped.

Tan markings are common in the working dogs, but not so popular among show people. They follow the typical Doberman / Collie tan pattern. White "collie" markings prized by some show people really make no difference. Several International Supreme Champions have had split white faces and even white heads like an Old English. Even, uneven or no sock at all on one or more feet are common. Most have at least a white spot on the chest, tail tip and toes, but several top winners have been as black as a Belgian. White markings are the icing on the cake, and really should only come into play when two dogs are equal in all other ways. Then pick what you personally find attractive. I have seen some unusually marked dogs who are breath taking, and others that were unattractive. Markings are something to lend individuality, and everyone has different tastes. I would hate to see the breed become regimented and restricted like the Bernese Mountain Dog where the slightest deviation could spell pet quality versus show.

Size

Size is not important if the dog is athletic and has the right temperament and drives for the work. What is important is the dog is structurally balanced and athletic in appearance. The dog must have enough leg to cover ground efficiently, even in long range grass or deep heather. A short



Kate Collin's Phippen, a lemon and white Border Collie.



legged dog might not be able to move through heavy cover. Many Australian show breeder complain that the trialers breed dogs that are too tall and rangy, and many American and British dogs are too big. That is partly because they want the Border Collie to remain classified as a small to medium sized dog, with the Shelties and corgis, since that group is smaller and less competitive. Many top trial Border Collies have been large. In recent years, Bobby Dalzial's two time International Supreme Champion Wisp is a 55 pound 23 inch male with a heavy coat and striking split "harlequin" face. Another was Jock Richardson's International Driving Champion Sweep, a mostly black dog "as big as an Alsatian". Many bitches are considerably smaller than dogs, like the Belgians are. Although this is the norm, there have been many exceptional larger bitches. Dodie Green's Purina Top Herding Dog, Soot, is a tall bitch, about 22 inches, as is my Scottish import, HCh-Thornhill Meg-HX, featured on the AKC video [Hooked on Herding](#), doing B Course Advanced.

1989, 1992 International Supreme Champion Wisp. A large 23 inch 55 pound male Border Collie.

Faults

No matter the size, the dog should be light on its feet with moderate bone like a Foxhound or Belgian, not heavy boned like an Australian Shepherd or Bernese Mountain Dog. Light bone like a Saluki is also not desirable. Remember, the Border Collie is built to run 60 to 100 miles a day in its work. It should be built like the Thoroughbred Hunter, not the Shire or Clydesdale. A foxhound is a good structural comparison. They are bred to run all day, must have speed when needed and stamina to run for miles. A Saluki is faster, but is a sprinter. A Bernese is stronger, but lacks both speed and stamina for running.

It is important not to exaggerate any trait in the Border Collie, good structure and sound movement, from the side, front and rear are of utmost importance. A fault is anything that would detract from working ability. The more the fault would detract from the dog's ability to work all day, the more serious it is. As judges and breeders, we hold the future in our hands. Please take the job seriously, and do the best you can. See some real working Border Collies at trials. Don't tell them you are a judge, but try to see them up close and put your hands on them if you can. Remember most trialers are not into grooming of any sort, and groomed up, some of these working dogs could give the show dogs a real run for their money.

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