

SAINT EVALUATION

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An evaluation is an appraisal of one's dog. This appraisal is based upon the appearance of the dog at that particular moment-not as it may appear in the future or what it did look like in several weeks or months ago. It is exactly how the dog appears at that very time.

The evaluator is usually a breeder or an individual knowledgeable of our breed.

Show-giving clubs very often exercise great care in their selection of an evaluator.

Each strain has its own growth patterns and with the number of strains arising lately, it is virtually impossible for any one human being to be completely familiar with each line.

Some strains may grow "in pieces" where the rear tends to be very high while waiting for the rest of the body to "catch up." Such a dog is bound to be off-balance and may, at the time, move questionably. Some young dogs will exhibit "cow-hockedness," long gangly legs, no width, uneven top lines, and perhaps, small narrow heads. Bites may shift as the head grows. Unless one is very familiar with the line/strain, there is absolutely no fair means of indicating to the owner that the dog will outgrow or retain any of these characteristics.

There are some characteristics that maturity will never change-such as a mask growing in, eye-color, lip color in general, and the overall markings.

Evaluations are excellent for our many dog-owners who would like to know more about their dog's quality and whether they should or should not show and breed their "Saints." Match shows bring out many such individuals that seem to enjoy themselves. The surroundings, the presence of other dogs, the noise and confusion, etc., are excellent experience for those who plan to attend the point shows at a later time. From here, after comes the breeder of tomorrow and perhaps the up and coming top winners.

Evaluations can be of worth if one carefully considers the final analysis. The evaluation can, very often, offer suggestions on how to improve certain conditions of which the owner may not have been aware. A dry coat can be, very often, improved by the addition of fat or oil to the diet. "Cowhockedness" can, possibly, be improved by proper and controlled exercise. These are only a few.

There is much to be considered upon absorbing the final result of evaluation. Some strains require nearly three years before they reach full maturity and their evaluations as very young dogs have been generally pretty bad. On the other hand, many an evaluator has made an individual, unfamiliar with the Breed Standards, well aware of what to expect-and they have been correct.

The best procedure for our new "Saint" owners is to please ask questions if you do not understand-regardless of how trivial it may seem. A mere suggestion made could avoid a future tragedy. And by attending match and point shows, there is almost bound to be an individual available who may acquaint you with a particular growth pattern of your dog's strain.