

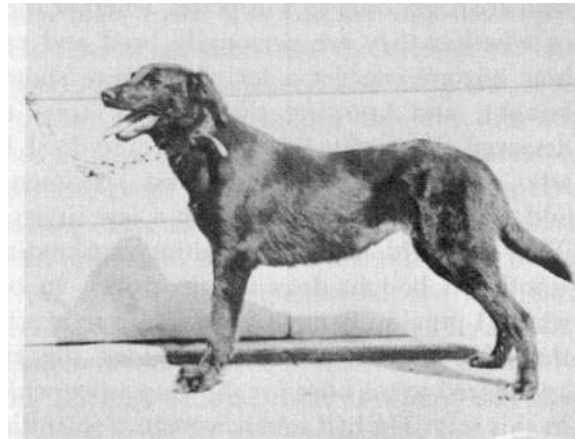


The Chesapeake Bay
Retriever

DYANE BALDWIN

HISTORY

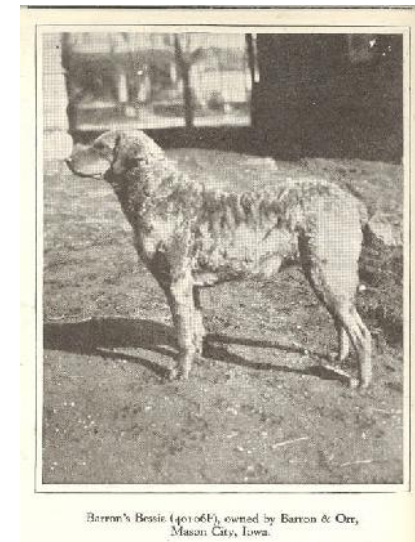
Obviously from its name, the breed was developed along the Chesapeake Bay. There are several variations of their beginnings, but most accounts all agree that the 1807 rescue of two Newfoundland puppies, a dog and a bitch from a sinking ship were instrumental in the breed's development. The dog was a dingy red color, not large in stature, hair short but very thick coated and with a tail carried high with light eyes. This trait of light eyes marked many of his descendants. The bitch "Canton" was black and little else is reported of her appearance. It is logical to accept that they were bred to local dogs being used for gunning. The Brooke strain of English Foxhound (imported 1650) was known on both shores of the Chesapeake used not only for fox but also for general gunning. Described as "red in color, high in courage, independent and persistent with fine noses and great endurance" it is not hard to see that they may have been part of the ancestry. Whitney in his book *How To Breed Dogs* experimented with the crossing of a Newfoundland to a Bloodhound. The offspring pictured below looks remarkably like a Chesapeake!



Cross of a Bloodhound with Newfoundland. All of the progeny were short-haired.

HISTORY

General Latrobe associated with the Carroll Island kennels speculated they were mated with the yellow and tan coonhounds of the time. A 1926 ACC brochure & other sources claims the Otter hound part of the breed's development ! Bloodhounds also played a role being introduced to improve blood tracking in water. There are documented crosses to Irish Water Spaniels too. As a result of this infusion of various breeds along with the reconstruction of the breed after the US Civil War, the breed had a wide variance in appearance which is still evident to some extent today (particularly in coat and head type variations). By the turn of the century, the breed settled into more or less a more consistent look.



History

There are many “myths” about the breed- swaybacks, surly temperaments, only brown in color, etc. to name a few.

This presentation we hope will show you that they are just that MYTHS.
Here is Chess-1880's-note the short back, topline and overall body length



History

The Chesapeake has changed little since its development. They are the ONLY retriever breed still capable of making Dual Championships.

This dog could walk in the ring today and fit in!

The standard describes a dog capable of working in all sorts of conditions. It does not focus on “cosmetic” features but rather those most important to function. This is what you need to bear in mind when judging this breed.



PURPOSE



Early duck shooting on Chesapeake Bay
Chesapeakes were developed to retrieve the market ducks-canvasback & red headed ducks.

The breed is mainly used as gun dogs even today, There is not a divergence between show and field stock. Here is a goose hunting scene in Nebraska- the dog lies on board between the gunners.



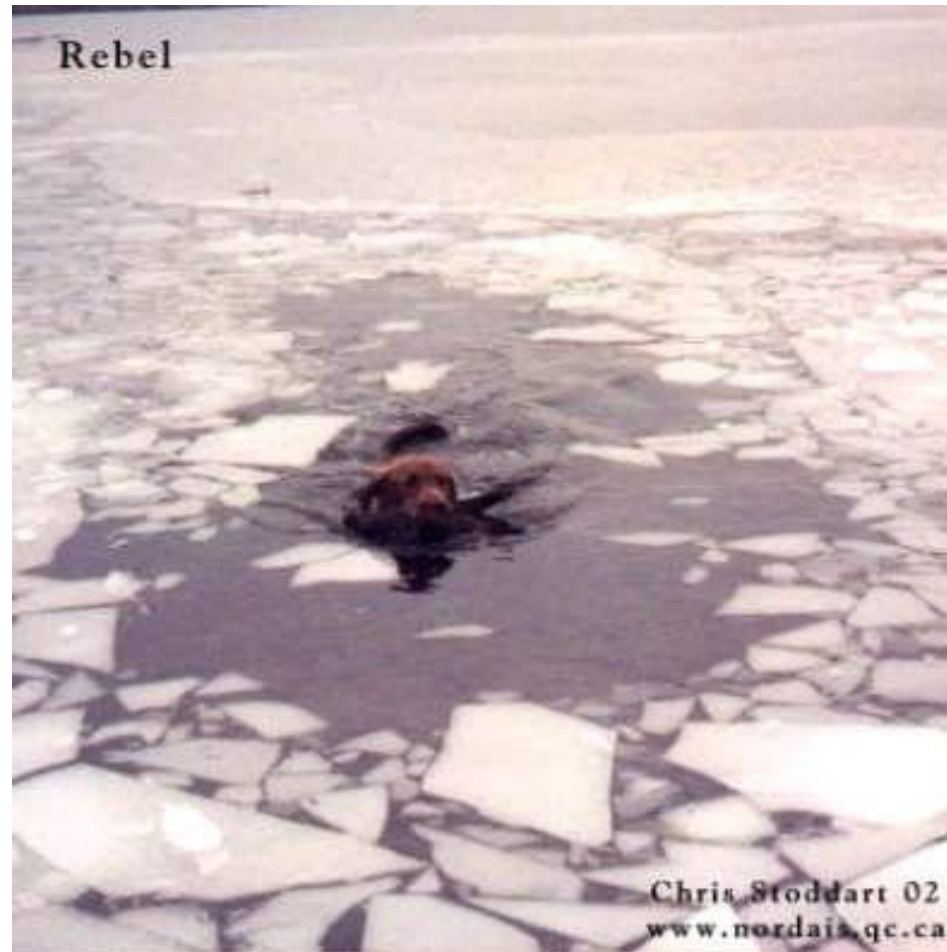
Working on Puget Sound 1940's-the dogs do work from boats



They are THE cold weather and water retriever-often working in icy conditions.



They frequently have to break ice during their retrieves.



In fact, they work in all sorts of adverse conditions-mud flats



to flooded rice fields and tule swamps !



PURPOSE

It is important to remember the breed's purpose when judging and the qualities needed to perform their purpose.



Two of the Earl Henry strain of Chesapeake used in early breeding for the dead grass color



The Great "WATER KING"
(1110, F. D. S. B.)



JUDGING PRIORITIES

- Standards provide a blueprint for a breed. However, some portions of a standard are the building blocks to correct interpretation, or in other words the priorities of a standard which create TYPE.
- The breed also has numerous Ch/MH (master hunter) title holders- some with group placements. This breed is **not** split into a field version and a show version. What keeps this unity ? Beyond the interest and determination of Chesapeake fanciers, the breed's standard emphasizes those qualities **most** important to function. These qualities are, and should be in your judging, the priorities.

So let's start-As you look at the dogs in the ring- is there good structure and balance (good angles front and rear); is there substance of body (chest depth) **and bone for the dog's size**; are its proportions correct (just off-square with shoulder to elbow and elbow to ground equal), is there coat (double coat but styles vary); does the head have small ears and some length of muzzle; is its size within the size range listed in the standard.

A dog with all these qualities has **TYPE**.

They are: PROPORTION,STRUCTURE, COAT, HEAD & SIZE



PRIORITY- PROPORTION

. This dog has correct proportions of height at shoulder to length from breastbone to the point of the buttocks; proper shoulder & rear angles; a good top line; depth of body; and desired ear set and length to muzzle.



Correct proportion is just off square.

You will see many more dogs that are longer in loin than desirable. Don't fail to recognize correct body length when it appears-it may be the only dog with it in your ring!



However, here this dog is too short in leg and long in body. Gives the dog a dumpy look and you can see this fairly regularly. It is NOT correct !



We do have dwarfing in the breed, so short legs and long body are not desirable. The dwarfing occurs in stages and this look below is typical of the first stage.



Here are two dogs showing the full expression of the dwarfing. So, please pay attention to the proper proportions of body length and shoulder to elbow/elbow to ground proportion. Watch for crooked front legs and bowing of front legs too-more first stage indicators of the dwarfing gene.



Proportions here are too square-height at shoulder is equal in comparison to body length. The breed is NEVER square.

Shoulder to elbow and elbow to ground should be equal. This dog is also too high on leg and his body is shallow as chest is above the elbow.



Once again, good proportions and over all dog-balance, good angles, top line (trifle higher than shoulders) and length to muzzle. The ears are a bit too large.



PRIORITY-STRUCTURE

- **Physical Structure-** *"Soundness, size, conformation, in fact every characteristic which pertains to the dog's physical perfection should precede the item of color. The true type Chesapeake even with his yellow eye and **almost too close-coupled** body is a most impressive animal" John Hurst 1924*



An excellent example-note the balance of good angulation front to rear; the desired proportions (just off square) and the top-line.
The head is correct in shape with muzzle length and high set ears.



**Well laid back Shoulders
&
Powerful rear with well bent stifle**



HINDQUARTERS

Good hindquarters are essential. They should show fully as much power as the forequarters. There should be no tendency to weakness in the hindquarters. Hindquarters should be especially powerful to supply the driving power for swimming. Legs should be medium length and straight, showing good bone and muscle. **Stifles should be well angulated.** The distance from hock to ground should be of medium length



Hindquarters

Stifles should be well angulated. This dog is showing the “well bent stifles” with medium length of hock requested in the standard.



Hindquarters

One of the biggest problems in the breed is a lack of well bent stifles and broad second thighs. This dog is an example of that problem. Notice, too, the extreme top line, this is often the result of the lack of angulated stifles.



Hindquarters

Here is again is a lack of balance due to a lack of bend of stifle and the resulting lack of muscle in the second thigh. The dog is not balanced front to rear either.



Hindquarters

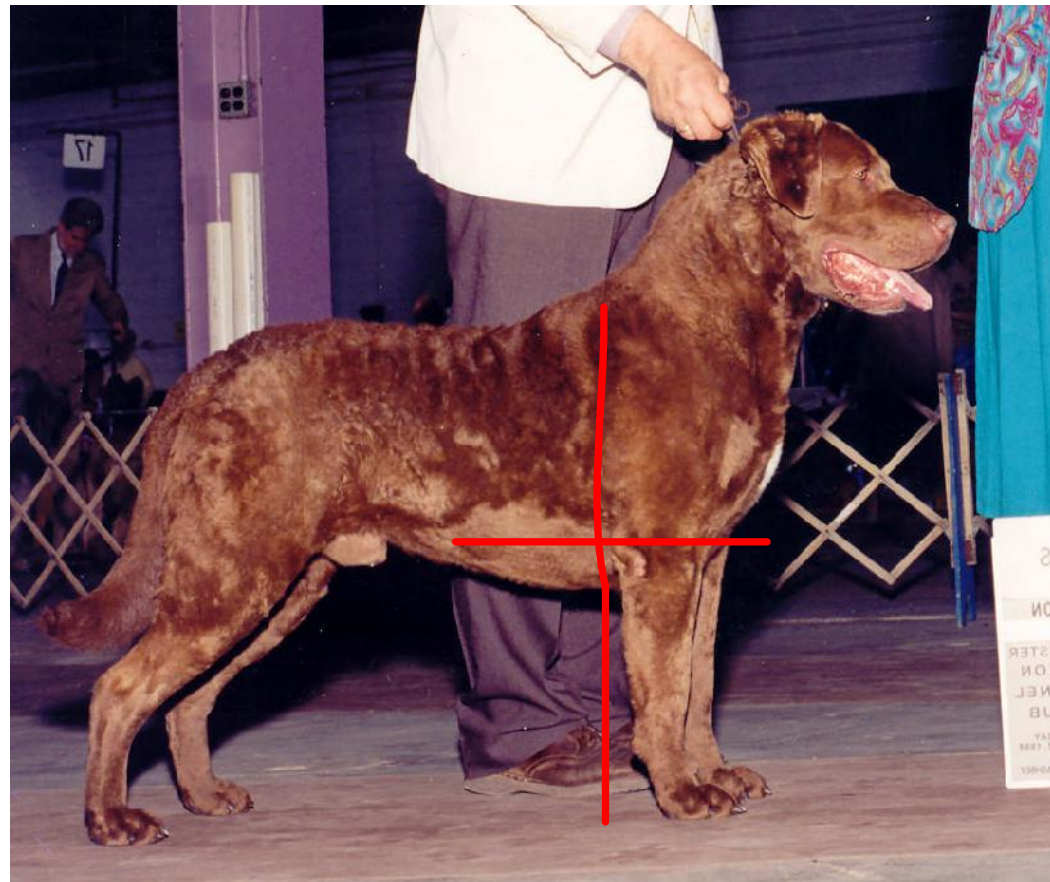
This dog illustrates again-proper hindquarters & angulation



SUBSTANCE

“In body, the Chesapeake is a strong, well balanced, powerfully built animal of moderate size and medium in body and leg, deep and wide in the chest...”

Note the depth of body at elbow-chest extends below the elbow; and that the shoulder to elbow and elbow to ground proportions are equal.



Substance

This dog lacks the substance that the breed should and must have to work in the conditions it was developed for. Note again the lack of depth of body to elbow.



Substance

“Depth of body should extend at least to the elbow.” The Chesapeake should have substance of body and the whole look of the dog (for its size) should convey power standing and moving.



Substance

“and with no tendency to weakness in any feature, particularly the rear”.

This dog shows a well developed rear with powerful thighs and buttocks and good substance and correct proportions of body depth to leg length. She is a bit

too long from breastbone to buttock.



FRONTS

Chest is deep AND wide. There should be no gaps at elbows. Depth of chest is hard to maintain-the rib cage must be properly shaped- oval immediately behind the shoulder blades-then barrel out.



Fronts

This type chest is wide without depth. See the gaps at the elbows and bowing to front legs. Typical fault. If viewed from the rear, the elbows would be sticking out.



Fronts

Again-chest with depth and width-note no bowing of legs.



FEET

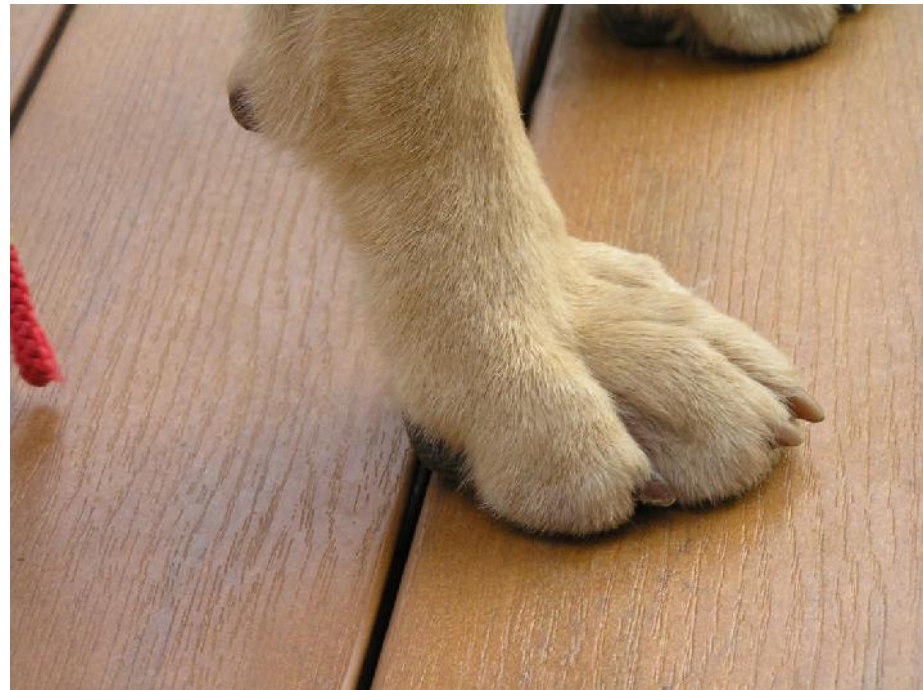
Chesapeake have **hare feet** with pasterns slightly bent. The two middle toes are longer than outside toes and are not as arched as in the other retriever breeds.



Feet

Large feet are an important aid in swimming-work like paddles to pull the water; in the marsh, they serve to distribute the weight of the dog.

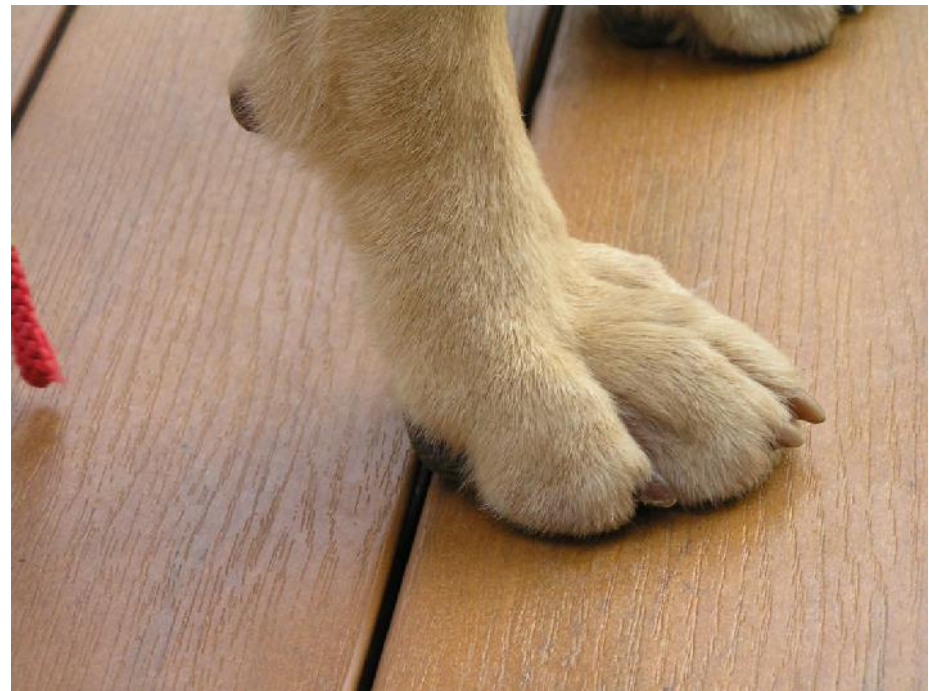
Feet are too often ignored **small feet**, short **cat-like** feet, and **splayed** open feet without webbing are
are
SERIOUS WORKING FLAWS.



Feet

“Well webbed hare feet of good size”

When swimming the dogs will extend their toes to actually “grab” the water-left.
A large foot “**grabs**” more water.



TOPLINE

Myth- Chesapeakes are/should be sway-backed

Ch Airline Teresa 1934 -note the top line and proper proportion of height to length-just off square; the short back and the well coupled loin.



Top line

The breed has two acceptable and equal top lines. *Top line* should show the hindquarters to be as high as or a trifle higher than the shoulders. This is an example of the “as high as” or level top line.



Top Line

This dog shows a top line that is a “trifle higher than the shoulders”. There should be no sway in the back but instead a steady rise to the rear that is not at all extreme. Top line should always be observed in motion as well as standing.



Top line

Top lines in young dogs are deceptive-age 9 mos. Here we have an obvious sway back ! If you see a sway like this is an adult dog, it is **WRONG!**



Top Line

This is the same dog at 2 yrs ! The top line has settled in. So be more lenient of top lines when judging puppies. Chesapeakes tend to grow in pieces.



Underline

The Chesapeake also has an underline-approaching hollowness from underneath-see arrow. Some dogs do have “skirting” so you should feel to see if the tuck-up is there.

The whole underline is a result of the deep chest and the hollowness underneath at the loin.



TAIL CARRIAGE



“Tail of medium length; medium heavy at base. The tail should be straight or slightly curved And should not curl over the back or side kink.”

This dog is showing a very typical tail-slightly curved.

When gaiting/working the Chesapeake will often carry its tail up-as the dogs below illustrate.

The tail does not have to be measured to the hock. Its length should fit the overall proportion of the dog.



Both the tail carriages below are correct. Tails that are curly and touch the back or that have a significant side kink are not desired. They should be penalized to the extend of the fault.



Balance is important.

However, the balance should be of positive virtues. This dog is certainly balanced but this is not a balance of positive virtues.



Here is balance of positive virtues

Good shoulder & rear angles; correct proportions with proper top line and underline.



PRIORITY-COAT

- **Coat-** *"The first thing to consider is the coat of the dog. This, of course, **AFTER disregarding physical faults**, is the premiere characteristic of the dog whose working time is spent 50% in the water and 50% in the cold air after immersion. **The very nature of his work places this foremost AFTER physical soundness.**" The Chesapeake Bay Dog- John Hurst of W circa 1924*



COAT

“Coat should be thick and short, nowhere over 1.5” long, with a dense fine wooly undercoat. Hair on the face and legs should be very short and straight with a tendency to wave on the shoulders, neck, back and loins only.”



- The coats on both the dogs at left fit the standard description. Some dogs have more profuse undercoat and more waves (which some breeders prefer). The tendency to wave can encompass the entire neck or just back of neck, top of shoulders or entire shoulder assembly. The waving should **never** extend below the mid-point of the dog's side.

Coat

A Chesapeake's coat should resist the water in the same way that a duck's feathers do. When the Chesapeake leaves the water and shakes the coat should not hold water at all, being merely moist." This dog has just come out of the water.



Coat

The most important things in examining a coat are: undercoat, somewhat harsh texture, and an oily feel. On this lovely coated bitch, the amount of undercoat on her sides and thighs gives a dimensional effect-this is NOT considered waving beyond the limits described in the standard.



Coat

Another lovely coat with a tighter wave or tendency to curl. For a coat to be disqualified, the coat would have to be complete curls like that of an IWS or Curly-Coat; or the tendency to curl (as seen here) would have to extended ALL over the body-down the front (chest area) & sides & down the rear.



Coat

This dog shows yet again another variation on the waving. A coat like this is usually quite short and crisp and lays close to the body. Again as long as there is undercoat, texture and oil in the coat-the coat fits the standard.



Coat

Here is another coat style-again dense and well waved. You can almost “see” the oils in the coat.

This dog also has a dark undercoat so that it does not give the dimensional effect seen in dogs with light undercoat.



Coat

Coat length varies; waving style varies but it always must be a **double coat**.



Coat

A coat that is curly or has a tendency to curl all over the body must be disqualified. Feathering on tail or legs $1\frac{3}{4}$ " long must be disqualified.

The dog on the left-showing the tendency to curl all over the body; the dog on the right feathering on tail over $1\frac{3}{4}$ " and over $1\frac{1}{2}$ ' on the rest of the body-note ears.



Coat

Three more dogs showing long coat-sometimes they only show the long coat on the ears and tails-like the dog at the left.



PRIORITY-HEAD



- **Head-** *“His head should be broad at base, tapering to nose, with little or no cheekiness, fair length of muzzle. Eyes of yellow color, ears small placed well up on head.” B. Alton Smith 1894*
 - This is **not** a head breed and less emphasis is placed on head in judging the Chesapeake than in any of the other retriever breeds. Heads will vary quite a bit in this breed but still meet the standard’s requirements. Those elements of head important to the breed’s work are: small ears, set up well on head; length of muzzle approximately the same length as skull from occiput to between eyes; thin lips; broad top skull tapering in a 2 to 1 proportion to the muzzle width below the eyes. The Chesapeake’s head rounds from ear to ear **not** from between eyes to occiput ! It is the proportion of 2 to 1 that you should be looking at as head sizes vary according to sex and bone. Eyes can be yellow to amber and no preference should be made for one color eye over another. Most serious faults- short muzzle, too much stop, large low ears.

Head

Newfoundland from 1900-Chesapeakes with heads like this-rounding from between eyes to occiput creating a definite stop are NOT correct. Blocky is not a term that should be applied to this breed.



Head

This is a Chesapeake head from the approximately the same era. Note the less pronounced stop-rounds from ear to ear and more length to muzzle.



Head

Here is a good head on profile-it rounds from ear to ear, the stop is medium, ears are set high, lay close to skull, muzzle length to skull proportion correct-an overall pleasing head and expression.



Head

Girth at ears 20" to 21" Muzzle below eyes 10" to 10 ½"

Here is the same head from front-notice that the proportion of skull width at ears to the width at muzzle below eyes is approximately 2 to 1. This creates a look of a "blunt wedge". It is the 2 to 1 proportion that is the most important as the actual size of skull and muzzle width will vary with sex, size and bone of the dog. As long as the 2 to 1 ratio is maintained, the head appearance is correct. It is VERY HARD to get and maintain this 2 to 1 ratio.



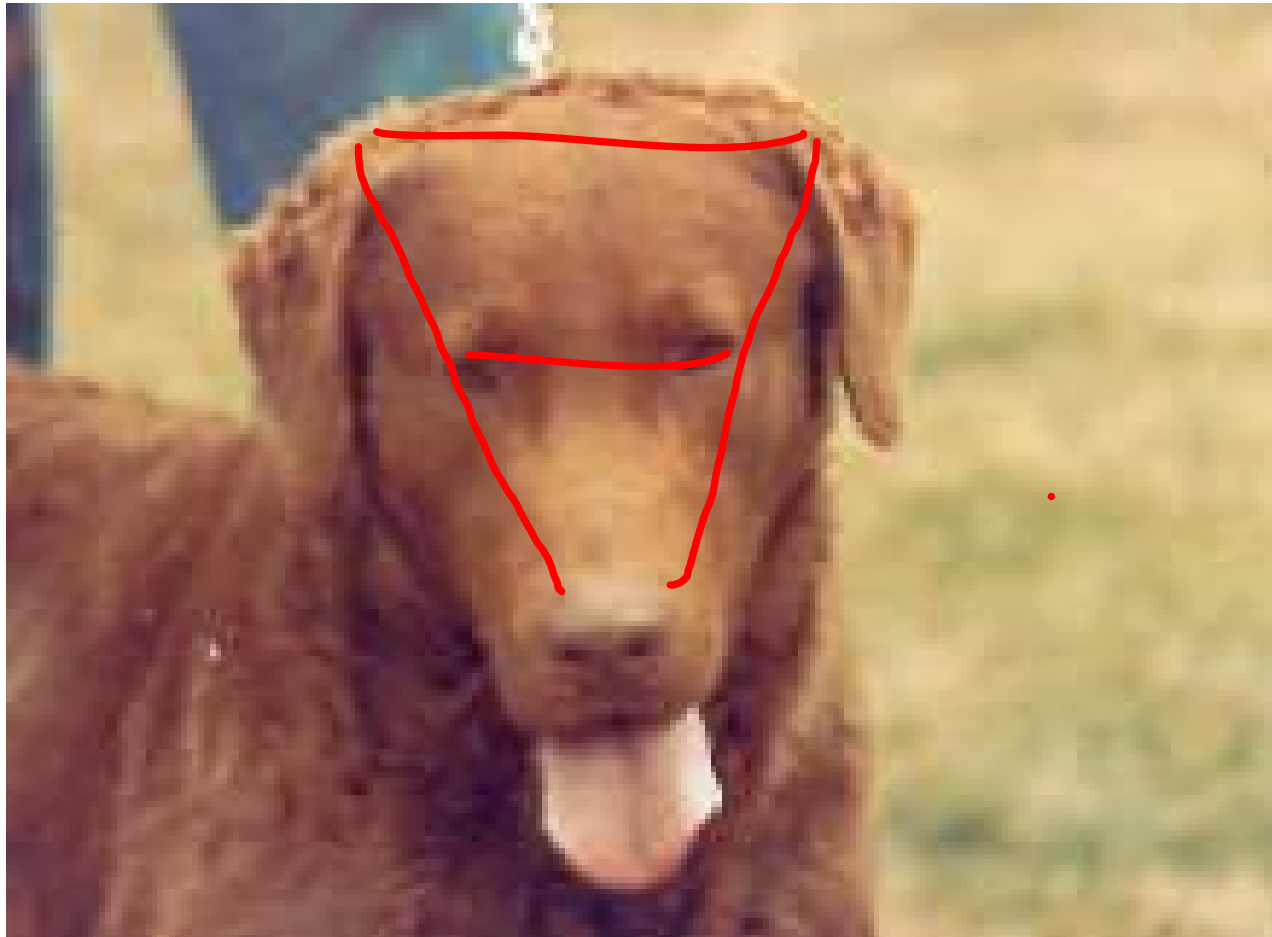
Head

Proportions to 2 to 1-skull width at ears to width of the muzzle just below eyes.
Appearance of a BLUNT wedge



Head

Here is another view head with the width at the ears to the width of the muzzle below eyes in 2 to 1 proportions.
It creates the correct appearance of a “blunt wedge”.



Head

Here is the view of head again without the lines.

You will see many more heads that do not have the ratio of width of skull to width below eyes.

When that ratio is missing, it creates a longer and narrower “look” to the head.

More like the look of an old-fashioned “keyhole”- dog on right.

Again, this is not a head breed, just do not mistake the more proper “blunt wedge” as incorrect which is often what happens.



Head

Muzzle is....., tapered, pointed but not sharp. These photos show the desired “pointed but not sharp” shape to the muzzle.



Head

These overall heads are too heavy-lips are pendulous, ears set low and of heavy leather, stop is too pronounced and muzzle is short in proportion to length to the length of the skull.



Head

Another view from the side of too much stop and a short muzzle. Ear set & leather is correct though.



Head

The head (left) is too pointed-the under jaw is weak, the skull is flat instead of rounding between the ears. Ear set, size and shape are good and there is correct proportion of muzzle length to skull length. Head (right) is feminine & similar to head on left but see the stronger under jaw.



Head

On this head the muzzle is longer than the length of skull. However, if you have to choose between too short or too long a muzzle length-longer provides more functional ability. Short muzzles usually come with multiple head faults and are not as functional.



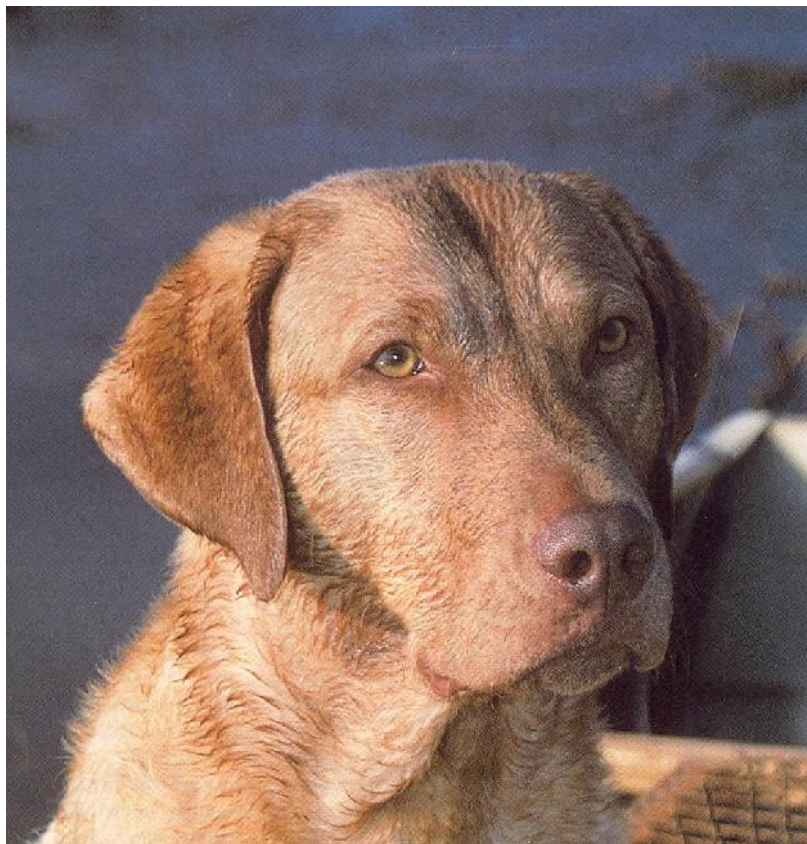
Head

This is a beautiful head-overall look is clean, balanced, ear set, shape and size right, muzzle length and shape correct.



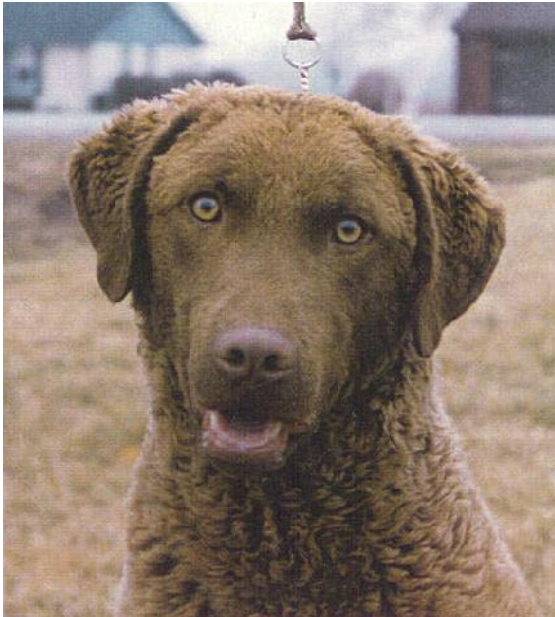
Head

Nose color while not currently addressed in the standard is brown to a fleshy pink color.



Head

“Eyes are to be medium large, very clear, of yellowish or amber color and wide apart.” The standard does not require that the eye color and coat color match. Some breeders prefer a darker eye on a brown dog but as a judge, you should not have that preference.



- *“Ears are to be small, set well up on the head, hanging loosely, and of medium leather”.* Both these dogs have correct set, size and shape of ear. There is also no requirement for pigment color of eye rims to be dark. Nose is flesh colored-some darker and some lighter as on the dogs above.

Head

Here are two dogs with ear faults-on the left, the ears are too long and too low. Sometimes even lobular in shape-houndy. The dog on the right has fly away ears, they do not lay next to the skull as they should. The dog below has two different ear shapes !



Head

Here again is the right look- Both these heads, the overall look is clean; stop is medium, correct skull shape and proportions of muzzle length to skull, the muzzle shape is right, and the ears are set high and of proper size and shape.



PRIORITY-SIZE

- *Height* - Males should measure 23 to 26 inches; females should measure 21 to 24 inches. ***Oversized or undersized animals are to be severely penalized.*** *Weight* - Males should weigh 65 to 80 pounds; females should weigh 55 to 70 pounds.
- Please note the penalty only applies to the height. The weight ranges are suggested (should weigh) weights. Dogs at the higher end of the size range will weigh more if they have the correct substance.



Size

- Why is there such a large size range in the breed from 21" minimum bitches to 26" maximum males with the males and bitches overlapping at 23" & 24" ?
- The reason for this wide range is the many types of terrain and settings that the breed works in. If your hunting is mostly from a boat or tree stand, you would like a dog or bitch from the lower end the size range.



Size

- If you hunt big rivers nearly exclusively with swift currents, you are going to want a dog or bitch at the high ends of the size range.
- This dog was 26" and weighed over 100 lbs. He **had** to weigh that much to have the substance a Chesapeake should have.



Size



- The mid range appeals to people who do a lot of general hunting.
- Never make the mistake that a smaller dog or bitch cannot work- which is usually the problem judges fall into.
- **The biggest thing to consider is that you are not judging the sizes against each other. Final choice should be on the first three priorities, not which size you like better.**

Size

Size and substance should not be excessive as this is a working retriever of an active nature.

Dogs should never appear dumpy, massive or have so much bone as to bring a large working breed to your mind.



Size

They are athletic, agile dogs with substance and bone.



PRIORITY-COLOR

- *“Soundness, size, conformation, coat, in fact every characteristic which pertains to the dog’s physical perfection should precede the item of color. “
John Hurst 1924*
- Color is only 4 pts in the standard. A Chesapeake that is self-colored is preferred but the breed does come in other color patterns- brindling, masking , tan points and saddles.
- **DO NOT DISQUALIFY** *dog with these patterns. They are acceptable, just not preferred.*

COLOR

Chesapeakes come in three basic colors-brown, sedge & deadgrass. There is **NO** preference for one color over another! These color occur in many shades of the basic colors and several color patterns. The dog in the foreground shows the masking pattern.



Color

The brown color comes in many shades from a dark brown through chestnut brown, light brown and to tan.



Color

Here is a lovely chestnut brown dog.



Color

On the left, a light brown with a medium brown on the right.



Color

This is the sedge color-there are definite tones of red. Note the self-coloring on the ears, muzzle and waving areas of coat. This perfectly correct and often occurs.

- .



Color

This is another sedge dog in a bright “orange” tone. Again muzzle, ears and waving areas are self-colored-darker shadings of the same base color of sedge



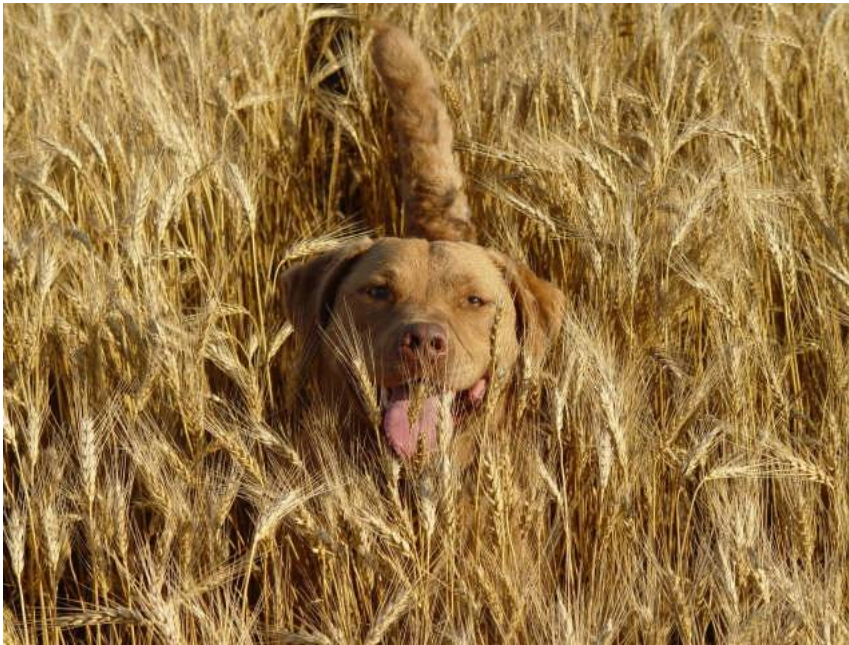
Color

This is the deadgrass color-no red tones but tan/yellow tones. The color ranges in all shades of blonde-even to nearly silver blonde.



Color

Here are self-colored deadgrass dogs blending into a field of grain. The deadgrass color was popular in the Midwest in the 1800's.



Color

The breed also comes in other color patterns besides self-colored. Here is a tan pointed puppy. The markings are exactly like that of a Gordon Setter or Doberman and occur with not only brown but sedge and deadgrass dogs too.



Color

While see this color pattern is rarely exhibited, if a dog like this comes in your ring do **not** disqualify it. The color pattern is acceptable, just not preferred.



Color

Another pattern that does occur is a brindle pattern like the dog below. Sometimes this fades as the dog matures but like the tan points, dogs with this color should **not** be disqualified. The pattern is simply not preferred.

Since color counts for only 4 pts., the overall quality of type, conformation, coat and soundness mean more.



Color

Chesapeake also come in a dilute shade on the liver color gene. These dogs appear gray, taupe, silver-gray. As long as their eye color is yellow to amber, the color is acceptable whether in the self-color pattern or part of any of the other color patterns. They should **not** be excused or disqualified. However, if the eye color is not yellow to amber, the dog should be excused as eye color not as in standard.



Color

Perhaps one of the most confusing color issues is the difference between tan and “ash”. The dog on the left (lower) is **tan**-no gray tones/shade; the on the right (upper) is **ash**-definite gray tones/shade. Sometimes an ash dog will have some tan areas in its coat but the presence of the gray coloring makes it an ash.



Color

WHITE MARKINGS

- A dog without white is preferred by the standard but **many** Chesapeakes have white markings. Do not peg down a dog for white that has superior conformation, balance and coat. As long as the white is not in a disqualifying location, we do not have a limit on the amt of white except to say *the smaller the spot, the better*. Hunters with dogs with large amts. of white simply smear the dog with mud.



Color

You will see white more frequently on the Chesapeake than the other retrievers. It is allowed on the breast, belly, toes and back of feet. White above the breastbone, on neck, or extending above the toes is a DQ



Color

White is allowed on the back of feet-immediately below the stopper pad.



Color

Premature graying on the muzzle & chin is not a DQ



GAIT

Gait should be smooth, free and effortless, giving the impression of great power and strength.

*When viewed from the side, there should be good reach with no restrictions of movement. The front leg should not only extend out but also should reach back under the body- “back reach”. Much too often judges go for the look of lots of front reach without noticing the dog is **not** reaching back under its body.*



Gait

Coming at you, there should be no signs of elbows being out. When the Chesapeake is moving away from you, there should be no sign of cow hocks from the rear. As speed increases, the feet tend to converge toward a center line of gravity.

*The idea you should get in your mind when you watch the dog move is effortless **POWER** with the dog driving off its rear.*



The gait should say
Power to you, not
pretty

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Specimens lacking in breed characteristics.
- 2. Teeth overshot or undershot.
- 3. Dewclaws on hind legs.
- 4. Coat curly or with a tendency to curl all over the body.
- 5. Feathering on the tail or legs over 1 3/4" long.
- 6. Black colored.
- 7. White on any part of the body except breast, belly, toes or back of feet.

In the end remember:

The question of coat and general type of balance takes precedence over any scoring table which could be drawn up. The Chesapeake should be well proportioned, an animal with a good coat and well balanced in other points being preferable to one excelling in some but weak in others.

