

Judging the Merle Great Dane

Submitted by Jason Hoke, President Great Dane Club of America

Effective January 1, 2019 the Merle Great Dane will be permitted to be exhibited in the conformation ring. The Merle has always been an integral part of the Mantle/Harlequin Family and is a necessary genetic component to produce Harlequin.

The Merle Standard Addition

Merle

Color: A pale gray to dark gray merle base color with black torn patches within.

Commentary ***Gray may appear to be a dark steel gray, a bluish gray, all the way to pale silvery gray. It should never appear mouse or brown in color ***

Patterns/Markings: May be Solid Merle (white on chest and toes is permissible) or Merle with a Mantle Pattern (solid merle blanket extending over the body; merle skull with a white muzzle; white blaze is optional; whole or partial white neck; a white chest; white on whole or part of the forelegs and hind legs; white tipped merle tail. A small white break in the blanket is acceptable. (Black pigment may be seen on the skin in white areas.)

Disqualification: Merlequin, a white dog with ONLY patches of merle.

Faults of Patterns/Markings shall NOT carry as much weight as faults of conformation and breed type. Any variance in Patterns/Markings as described in the above colors, shall be faulted to the extent of the deviation. Any COLOR other than the seven described shall be disqualified.

Applying the Standard While Judging

Judging the **Merle** should not be a complicated new process. The simple way to look at the Merle Class which will have both **Mantle Merle** and **Solid Merle** together is by judging them just as other colors already recognized are judged.

The Mantle Merle

When Judging the Mantle Merle the exact same principles and standard with the exception of the Merle Coloring are applied as with the Mantle. There is no difference between the two (Mantle and Mantle Merle) except color.



Ideal

Acceptable Deviations in the Mantle Merle

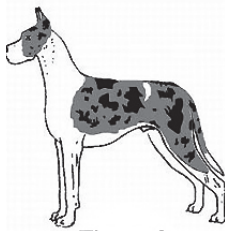


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

NOTE: Faults of Patterns/Markings shall NOT carry as much weight as faults of conformation and breed type.

The Solid Merle

When judging the Solid Merle the exact same judging principles apply to the Solid Merle as apply to our solid colors such as Fawn, Blue, Black. The Solid Merle however **does permit** white on the chest and toes which differs from the other Solid Colors that deem it not desirable.



Ideal

Special Notes on Judging Merle

There are NO Disqualifications for Markings and Patterns in the Great Dane Standard. Any deviations in the Markings and Patterns are simply faulted to the degree of deviation. The only Disqualifications are for COLORS not described in the standard, for example the Merlequin which will be described next. Our Standard is now divided into Color and then Patterns/Markings.

The Merlequin DQ

Merlequin is described as a white dog with ONLY patches of merle. This means that there will not be any Solid torn black patches visible on their own, as in Harlequin, anywhere on the dog, only merle patches (black will be present in merle patches this is not considered a solid patch of black). As you can see from the picture there are NO SOLID PATCHES OF BLACK. This is the Merlequin. A dog with only PATCHES OF MERLE.

If you have any questions regarding the new Great Dane Standard please contact me at jasonhoke@aol.com. As the President and Co-Chair of Judges Education I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



Merlequin