



The Kuvasz

*Standard and Interpretation: A Guide for
AKC Judges, Breeders, and Owners*

Kuvasz Club of America Judges Education Council



AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE KUVASZ CLUB OF AMERICA



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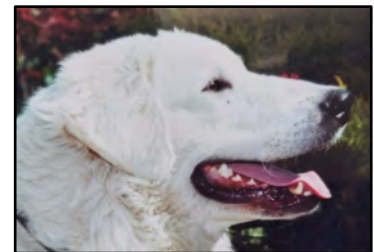
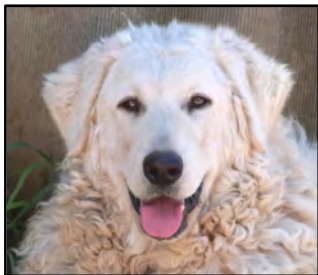
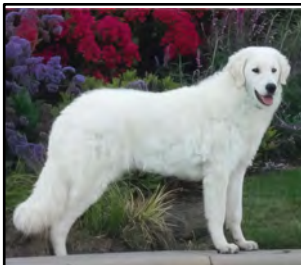
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AMERICAN
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Official Standard of the Kuvasz

General Appearance: A working dog of larger size, sturdily built, well balanced, neither lanky nor cobby. White in color with no markings. Medium boned, well muscled, without the slightest hint of bulkiness or lethargy. Impresses the eye with strength and activity combined with light-footedness, moves freely on strong legs. The following description is that of the ideal Kuvasz. Any deviation must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

Size, Proportion, Substance: *Height* measured at the withers-Dogs, 28 to 30 inches; bitches, 26 to 28 inches. Disqualifications - Dogs smaller than 26 inches. Bitches smaller than 24 inches. *Weight* - Dogs approximately 100 to 115 pounds, bitches approximately 70 to 90 pounds. Trunk and limbs form a horizontal rectangle slightly deviated from the square. Bone in proportion to size of body. Medium, hard. Never heavy or coarse. Any tendency to weakness or lack of substance is a decided fault.

Head: Proportions are of great importance as the *head* is considered to be the most beautiful part of the Kuvasz. Length of head measured from tip of nose to occiput is slightly less than half the height of the dog at the withers. Width is half the length of the head. *Eyes* almond-shaped, set well apart, somewhat slanted. In profile, the eyes are set slightly below the plane of the muzzle. Lids tight, haws should not show. Dark brown, the darker the better. *Ears* V-shaped, tip is slightly rounded. Rather thick, they are well set back between the level of the eye and the top of the head. When pulled forward the tip of the ear should cover the eye. Looking at the dog face to face, the widest part of the ear is about level to the eye. The inner edge of the ear lies close to the cheek, the outer edge slightly away from the head forming a V. In the relaxed position, the ears should hold their set and not cast backward. The ears should not protrude above the head. The *skull* is elongated but not pointed. The stop is defined, never abrupt, raising the forehead gently above the plane of the muzzle. The longitudinal midline of the forehead is pronounced, widening as it slopes to the muzzle. Cheeks flat, bony arches above the eyes. The skin is dry. *Muzzle* - length in proportion to the length of the head, top straight, not pointed, underjaw well developed. Inside of the mouth preferably black. Nose large, black nostrils well opened. Lips black, closely covering the teeth. The upper lip covers tightly the upper jaw only; no excess flews. Lower lip tight and not pendulous. *Bite* - dentition full, scissors bite preferred. Level bite acceptable. Disqualifications - overshot bite; undershot bite.

Neck, Topline, Body: *Neck* muscular, without dewlap, medium length, arched at the crest. Back is of medium length, straight, firm and quite broad. The loin is short, muscular and tight. The croup well muscled, slightly sloping. Forechest is well developed. When viewed from the side, the forechest protrudes slightly in front of the shoulders. Chest deep with long, well-sprung ribs reaching almost to the elbows. The brisket is deep, well developed and runs parallel to the ground. The stomach is well tucked up. *Tail* carried low, natural length reaching at least to the hocks. In repose it hangs down resting on the body, the end but slightly lifted. In state of excitement, the tail may be elevated to the level of the loin, the tip slightly curved up. Ideally there should not be much difference in the carriage of the tail in state of excitement or in repose.



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Forequarters: Shoulders muscular and long. *Topline* - withers are higher than the back. The scapula and humerus form a right angle, are long and of equal length. Elbows neither in nor out. Legs are medium boned, straight and well muscled. The joints are dry, hard. Dewclaws on the forelegs should not be removed. Feet well padded. Pads resilient, black. Feet are closed tight, forming round "cat feet." Some hair between the toes, the less the better. Dark nails are preferred.

Hindquarters: The portion behind the hip joint is moderately long, producing wide, long and strong muscles of the upper thigh. The femur is long, creating well-bent stifles. Lower thigh is long, dry, well muscled. Metatarsus is short, broad and of great strength. Dewclaws, if any, are removed. Feet as in front, except the rear paws somewhat longer.

Coat: The Kuvasz has a double coat, formed by guard hair and fine undercoat. The texture of the coat is medium coarse. The coat ranges from quite wavy to straight. Distribution follows a definite pattern over the body regardless of coat type. The head, muzzle, ears and paws are covered with short, smooth hair. The neck has a mane that extends to and covers the chest. Coat on the front of the forelegs up to the elbows and the hind legs below the thighs is short and smooth. The backs of the forelegs are feathered to the pastern with hair 2 to 3 inches long. The body and sides of the thighs are covered with a medium length coat. The back of the thighs and the entire tail are covered with hair 4 to 6 inches long. It is natural for the Kuvasz to lose most of the long coat during hot weather. Full luxuriant coat comes in seasonally, depending on climate. Summer coat should not be penalized.

Color: White. The skin is heavily pigmented. The more slate gray or black pigmentation the better.

Gait: Easy, free and elastic. Feet travel close to the ground. Hind legs reach far under, meeting or even passing the imprints of the front legs. Moving toward an observer, the front legs do not travel parallel to each other, but rather close together at the ground. When viewed from the rear, the hind legs (from the hip joint down) also move close to the ground. As speed increases, the legs gradually angle more inward until the pads are almost single-tracking. Unless excited, the head is carried rather low at the level of the shoulders. Desired movement cannot be maintained without sufficient angulation and firm slimness of body.

Temperament: A spirited dog of keen intelligence, determination, courage and curiosity. Very sensitive to praise and blame. Primarily a one-family dog. Devoted, gentle and patient without being overly demonstrative. Always ready to protect loved ones even to the point of self-sacrifice. Extremely strong instinct to protect children. Polite to accepted strangers, but rather suspicious and very discriminating in making new friends. Unexcelled guard, possessing ability to act on his own initiative at just the right moment without instruction. Bold, courageous and fearless. Untiring ability to work and cover rough terrain for long periods of time. Has good scent and has been used to hunt game.

Disqualifications: *Overshot bite; undershot bite. Dogs smaller than 26 inches. Bitches smaller than 24 inches.*

Approved July 12, 1999
Effective August 30, 1999

Introduction

The current American Kennel Club standard on the Kuvasz was adopted by the parent club on July 9, 1974, reformatted on March 28, 1991, and revised August 30, 1999. Judges of any breed are required by the American Kennel Club to make their selections based on how closely the exhibit conforms to its current standard. Standards are subject to interpretation. The following information is being provided by the Kuvasz Club of America to facilitate your understanding of the Kuvasz. Knowledge is an ongoing process, and this is by no means the final word. We hope that you will continue to learn about our wonderful breed throughout your judging career.



Overview and Interpretation

The following pages contain an overview and interpretation of the AKC Kuvasz Breed Standard.

All terminology in the Kuvasz Standard and this commentary is as defined in Harold R. Spira's Canine Terminology; Howell Book House Inc.; New York, New York; 1982.

Throughout this commentary, the standard is printed in black text, and the interpretation is printed in *blue italics*.



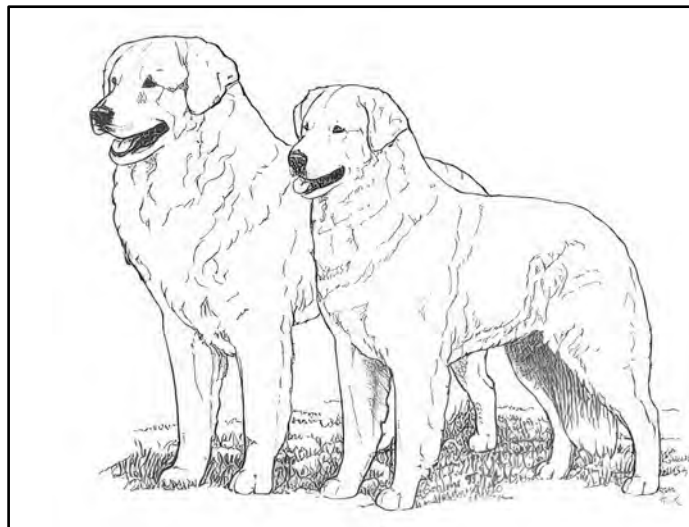
Overview

Looking at the standard, there are several areas that stand out and should be considered with importance when judging the Kuvasz. Descriptions of the head or parts of the head are quite detailed in the standard; movement descriptions not only in the gait section but throughout the standard are emphasized; descriptions of the coat need careful review; and descriptions of the temperament are important in the overall impression of the dog. The overall dog should be evaluated, both standing and moving, keeping the dog's working heritage in mind. Soundness of body and mind, proper size and proportion, confident disposition without inappropriate aggression or shyness, and firm slimness of body in well-exercised condition should prevail.

Correct coat texture is important to protect the dog against the elements, but the whiteness of coat should not be a deciding factor. All these areas together define this breed and should be weighed proportionally when judging. A judge is often presented with a tremendous diversity and variety in appearance in the ring. Judges should strive to select the best representative of the breed, according to the AKC standard, being careful not to penalize or reward the dogs in the minority on any given day. The dog must be unmistakably a Kuvasz.

Kuvasz Breed Standard

General Appearance: A working dog of larger size, sturdily built, well balanced, neither lanky nor cobby. White in color with no markings. Medium boned, well-muscled, without the slightest hint of bulkiness or lethargy. Impresses the eye with strength and activity combined with light-footedness, moves freely on strong legs. The following description is that of the ideal Kuvasz. Any deviation must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.



Interpretation

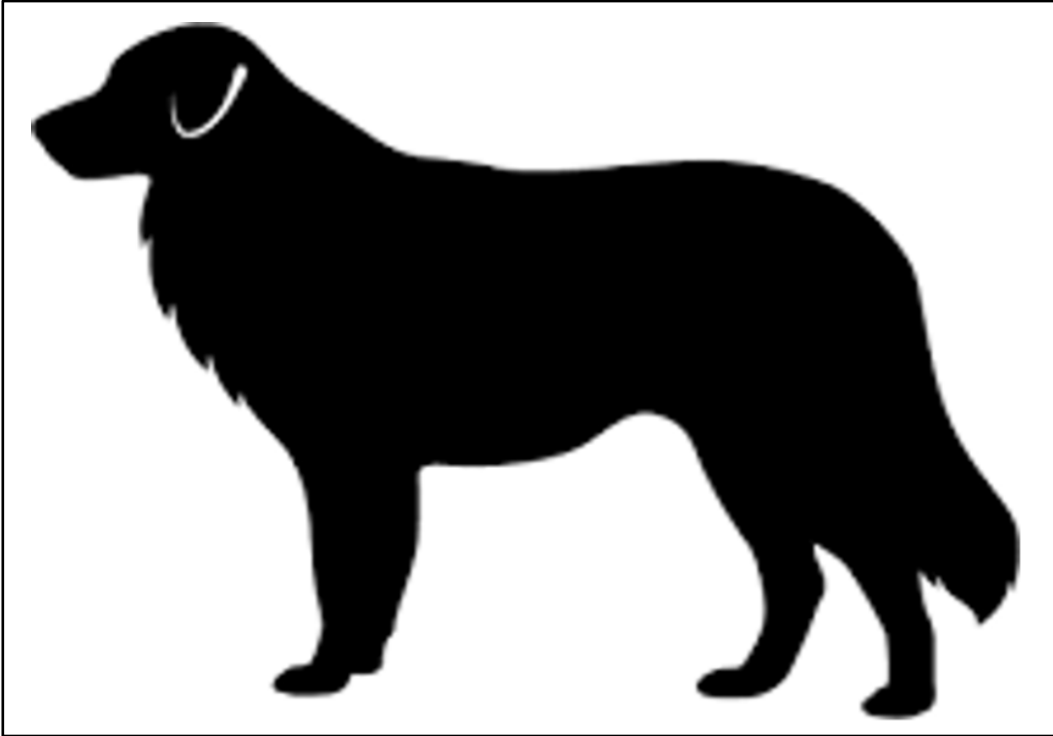
Dogs and bitches are easily distinguished from one another. Dogs are larger and more heavily built, with more muscle mass and bone. The dog head is decidedly more masculine, with the main and ruff more pronounced. Bitches are decidedly more feminine. Always bear in mind that both the dog and bitch are working dogs. Nevertheless, dogs should not be allowed to become too coarse, or bitches too refined, to perform their task. There should be no difference between the working dog and the show dog.



Male



Female



Interpretation

Even as a silhouette, the Kuvasz should be easily identified.

Size: Parameters are defined by the standard. Ideal height for a male Kuvasz ranges from 28 to 30 inches and for a female 26 to 28 inches. The standard does not comment on Kuvasz that are above the ideal range but does have disqualification heights that are two inches below the ideal height guidelines. One must take into consideration the other factors of the dog's quality when weighing this difference in height. Below 26 inches for dogs and below 24 inches for bitches is a mandatory disqualification.

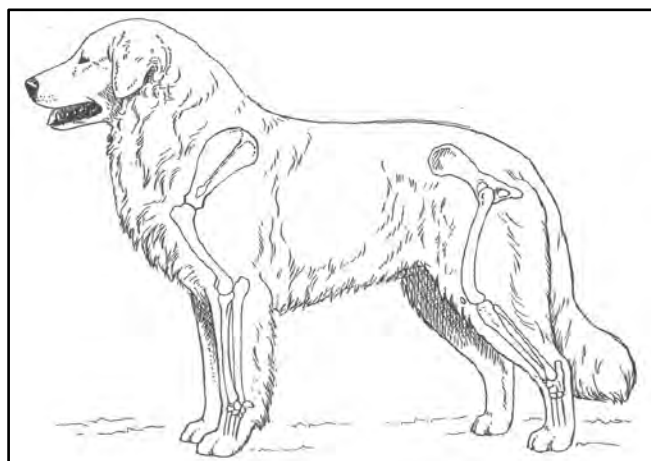
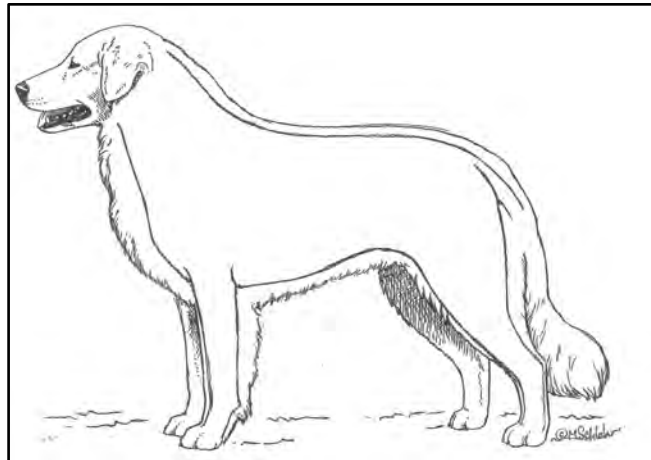
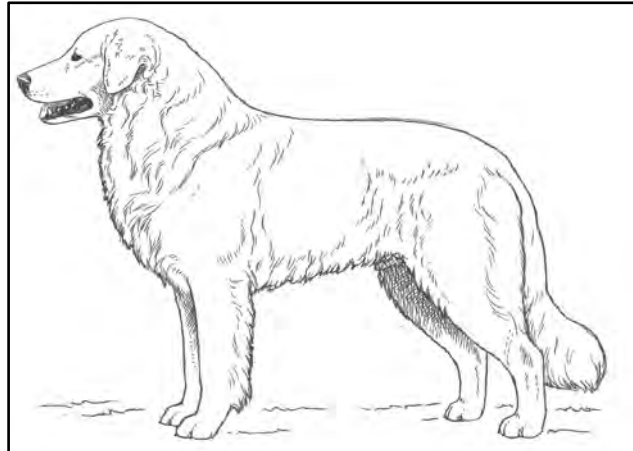
Kuvasz Breed Standard

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Interpretation

Proportion: When standing back and viewing the Kuvasz in profile, one should be impressed with a large white dog of balance and correct proportion. The horizontal rectangle slightly deviated from the square is a critical proportion when judging this breed. The length of body is approximately 5-10% longer than its height at the withers. A Kuvasz that is too short-legged or too long-bodied loses its balanced look. The same is true of a Kuvasz that is too square due to shortness of body or too much length of leg. Finding that rectangular proportion is a key when viewing several exhibits in a class. Realize that this proportion is one of perception and can vary depending on the amount of coat the dog is carrying and/or the background or surroundings of the ring.

Substance: The term "substance" refers to the amount of bone (specifically leg bone) and muscle mass. Moderation is a good term with respect to Kuvasz substance. Too much or too little substance are equally undesirable in relation to a dog's overall balance. This moderate bone is covered by tightly-fitting skin, giving the Kuvasz a dry, tight appearance.





Kuvasz Breed Standard

Head: Proportions are of great importance as the *head* is considered to be the most beautiful part of the Kuvasz. Length of head measured from tip of nose to occiput is slightly less than half the height of the dog at the withers. Width is half the length of the head. *Eyes* - Almond-shaped, set well apart, somewhat slanted. In profile, the eyes are set slightly below the plane of the muzzle. Lids tight, haws should not show. Dark brown, the darker the better. *Ears* - V-shaped, tip is slightly rounded. Rather thick, they are well set back between the level of the eye and the top of the head. When pulled forward the tip of the ear should cover the eye. Looking at the dog face to face, the widest part of the ear is about level to the eye. The inner edge of the ear lies close to the cheek, the outer edge slightly away from the head forming a V. In the relaxed position, the ears should hold their set and not cast backward. The ears should not protrude above the head. The *skull* is elongated but not pointed. The stop is defined, never abrupt, raising the forehead gently above the plane of the muzzle. The longitudinal midline of the forehead is pronounced, widening as it slopes to the muzzle. Cheeks flat, bony arches above the eyes. The skin is dry. *Muzzle* - Length in proportion to the length of the head, top straight, not pointed, underjaw well developed. Inside of the mouth preferably black. Nose large, black nostrils well opened. *Lips* black, closely covering the teeth. The upper lip covers tightly the upper jaw only; no excess flews. Lower lip tight and not pendulous. *Bite* - dentition full, scissors bite preferred. Level bite acceptable. Disqualifications - overshot bite; undershot bite.



Interpretation

The head should be judged in three planes: full face, profile, and from above. From above the skull is wedge-shaped and elongated with proportions described above. From the side, the stop is defined but graceful. Transitions from one area to another are smooth and not abrupt. The proper proportions with clean planes create a head with beautiful symmetry.

Correct ears and eyes create an expression that is unique to the Kuvasz. Dark eyes that are almond-shaped, set obliquely and well apart, with outer corners slanted slightly upward, give the Kuvasz a distinct expression. Common eye faults include round or protruding eyes, drooping or loose eyelids, eyes that slant downward at the outer corners, light or yellow eyes, and visible haws. Ears must have a fold and flare out at the base. The ear just covers the eye on the same side when pulled forward. Ears that are too short or long are incorrect, as are ears that are set too high or low. Ears that lie flat against the head, have thin leather, or are cast backward create an atypical expression. Proper ears that fold and fan forward to frame the face (in attention) create a harmonious and balanced look that is most desirable. Ears can and should move depending on the dog's movement and level of interest.

The muzzle is a continuation of the skull and is approximately 45% of the total head length. The skin on the entire head is dry. Loose flews, white haws, light eyes, round eyes, poor ears, exaggerated or imperceptible stop all ruin proper expression and should be penalized.

Kuvasz Club of America



Dark, almond-shaped eyes.



Cheeks are smooth with no wrinkles, good fill under the eyes. Correct wedge-shaped head with correct bony arches above the eyes.



Correct bite.



Correct mouth pigmentation.



Stop is defined, never abrupt or flat.



Kuvasz Breed Standard

Neck, Topline, Body: *Neck* muscular, without dewlap, medium length, arched at the crest. *Back* is of medium length, straight, firm and quite broad. The *loin* is short, muscular and tight. The *croup* well-muscled, slightly sloping. *Forechest* is well developed. When viewed from the side, the *forechest* protrudes slightly in front of the shoulders. *Chest* deep with long, well-sprung ribs reaching almost to the elbows. The *brisket* is deep, well developed and runs parallel to the ground. The *stomach* is well tucked up. *Tail* carried low, natural length reaching at least to the hocks. In repose it hangs down resting on the body, the end but slightly lifted. In state of excitement, the tail may be elevated to the level of the loin, the tip slightly curved up. Ideally there should not be much difference in the carriage of the tail in state of excitement or in repose.

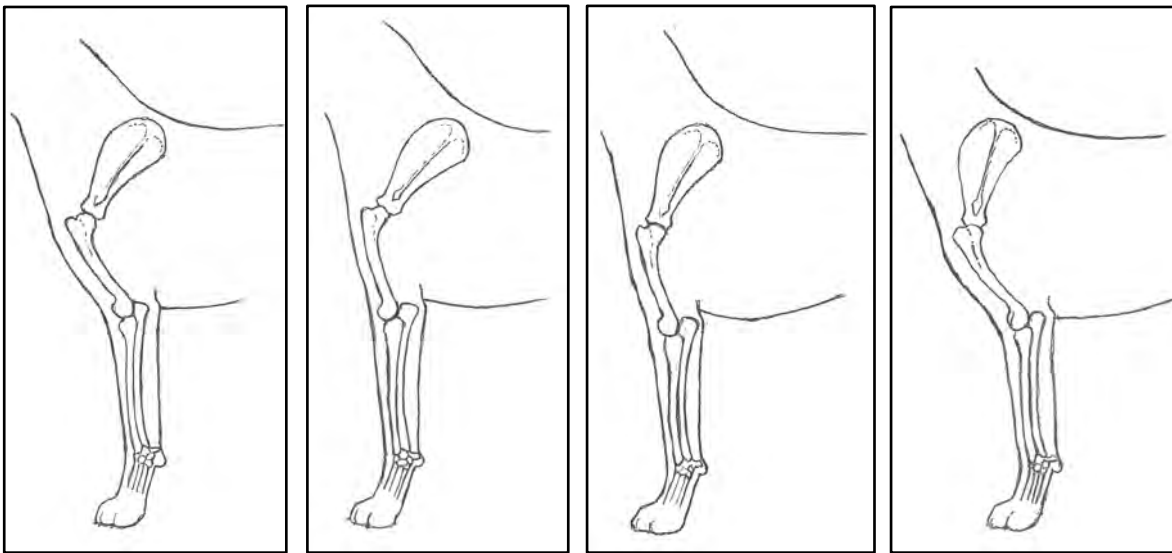


Interpretation

When evaluating these areas, one should be impressed by the muscular, hard nature of the Kuvasz. The back is broad, with well-sprung ribs, allowing the Kuvasz the heart and stamina it requires. The topline of the Kuvasz should present a smooth, continuous line from withers to croup. The neck, arched at the crest, must blend smoothly into the high, well-muscled withers, which flow into the medium-length, firm, straight back; short loin; and slightly sloping croup. The tail is an extension of the croup to complete the graceful outline. A tail set or carriage other than that described in the standard should be penalized based on the extent of the deviation. The true outline of the body is often obscured by coat growth patterns; therefore, manual examination of the Kuvasz structure is imperative.

Kuvasz Breed Standard

Forequarters: *Shoulders* muscular and long. *Topline* - Withers are higher than the back. The scapula and humerus form a right angle, are long and of equal length. Elbows neither in nor out. Legs are medium boned, straight and well- muscled. The joints are dry, hard. Dewclaws on the forelegs should not be removed. Feet well padded. Pads resilient, black. Feet are closed tight, forming round "cat feet." Some hair between the toes, the less the better. Dark nails are preferred.



Correct

Upright humerus

Scapula and humerus
both too upright

Upright scapula

Interpretation

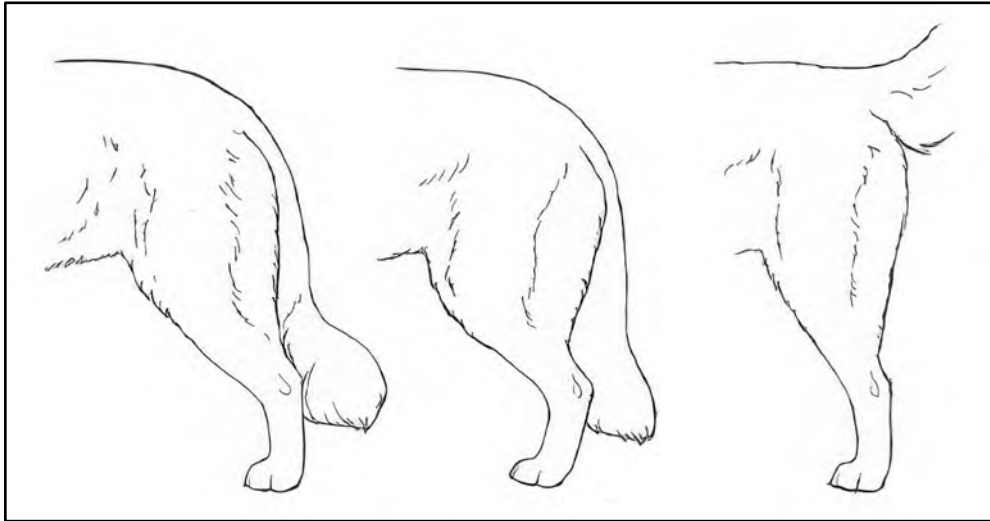
The greatest amount of work in supporting the dog falls to the forequarters for directional thrust, supporting the body weight during stride, and absorbing the impact as the step or jump is completed. Placement and angulation of shoulder and forearm give the dog reach, and the slightly sloping pasterns and well-conditioned pads absorb the shock as the foot hits the ground.

As form follows function, the design of the shoulder and the placement of the scapula allow the flexible steering and strength required. The shape and position of the forequarters, consisting of the shoulders, the scapula, and the humerus (upper arm) and sternum (breastbone) are very important to serve their purpose in the forward movement.

While the scapula is essential to the canine shoulder, the shoulder consists of many components, including 25 muscles, each contributing to the wholeness of the canine body. Any time the dog moves, the scapula and muscles must move to adjust the forequarters. If the shoulder cannot do its job, all parts of the dog will suffer. The shoulder assembly must be capable of flexion, extension, rotation, abduction, and adduction. Being able to control direction easily with balance and purpose is essential to well-being.

Kuvasz Breed Standard

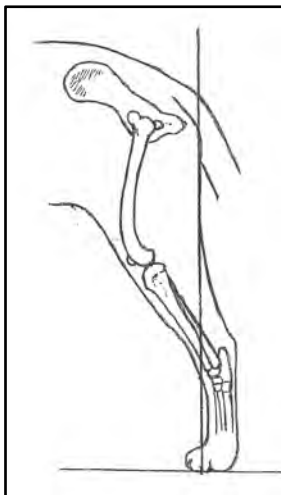
Hindquarters: The portion behind the hip joint is moderately long, producing wide, long and strong muscles of the upper thigh. The femur is long, creating well-bent stifles. Lower thigh is long, dry, well-muscled. Metatarsus is short, broad and of great strength. Dewclaws, if any, are removed. Feet as in front, except the rear paws somewhat longer.



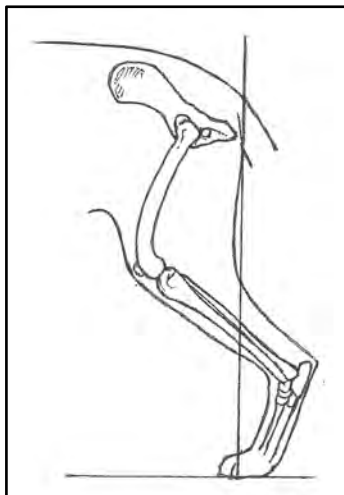
Correct

Sickle hock; over-angulated, long second thigh and rear pastern

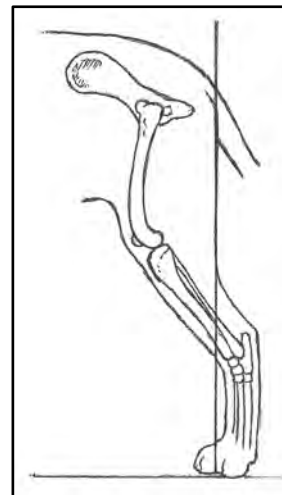
Straight hock and stifle; under-angulated



Straight stifle, short second thigh



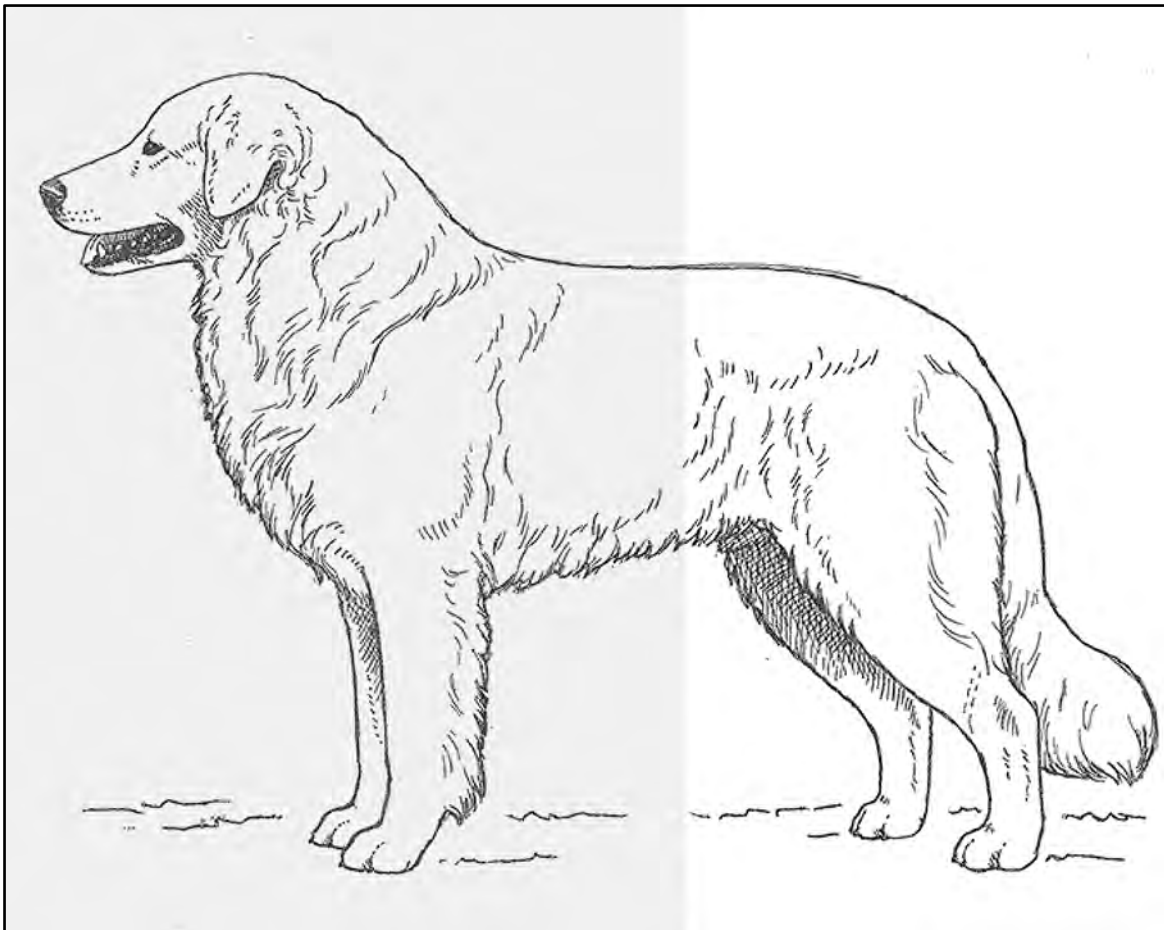
Over-angulated, long second thigh, sickle hock



Long rear pastern

Interpretation

The rear assembly is another important part of dog anatomy. It involves the vital hip joint, which connects the femur (upper thigh) to the tibia and fibula (lower thigh) at the knee joint. It gives the dog forward thrust and drive. When in motion, the entire rear leg assembly should extend and flex through the hock to drive the dog forward.



Interpretation

The forequarters and hindquarters exemplify the balance and power of the Kuvasz. This is a dog that is built to trot long distances tirelessly, while also having the ability to react quickly and powerfully in response to a threat. When judging the Kuvasz, one must always keep the dog's function in mind. The standard describes the balanced dog with the scapula and humerus forming a nearly right angle. The Kuvasz standard's discussion of angles alludes to a well-angulated dog. Lack of sufficient angulation, as well as over-angulation, should be penalized.

Kuvasz Breed Standard

Coat: The Kuvasz has a double coat, formed by guard hair and fine undercoat. The texture of the coat is medium coarse. The coat ranges from quite wavy to straight. Distribution follows a definite pattern over the body regardless of coat type. The head, muzzle, ears and paws are covered with short, smooth hair. The neck has a mane that extends to and covers the chest. Coat on the front of the forelegs up to the elbows and the hind legs below the thighs is short and smooth. The backs of the forelegs are feathered to the pastern with hair 2 to 3 inches long. The body and sides of the thighs are covered with a medium length coat. The back of the thighs and the entire tail are covered with hair 4 to 6 inches long. It is natural for the Kuvasz to lose most of the long coat during hot weather. Full luxuriant coat comes in seasonally, depending on climate. Summer coat should not be penalized.

Color: White. The skin is heavily pigmented. The more slate gray or black pigmentation the better.





Wavy coat

Interpretation

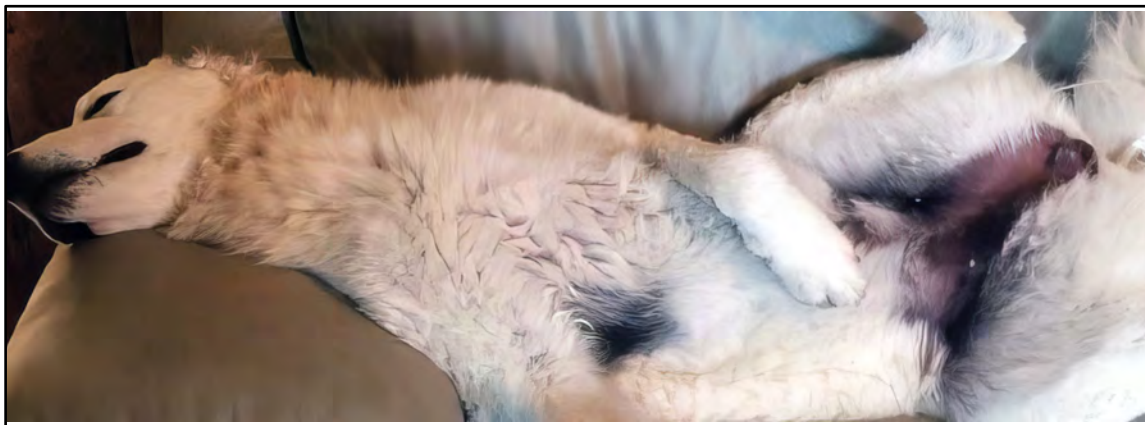
Whether wavy or straight, the coat must have two features. First, it must be a double coat made up of a fine undercoat and longer guard hairs of medium-coarse texture. The coat will feel somewhat coarse to the touch, especially on the dog's back. Second, it must have the correct distribution. Short, smooth facial and leg hair transitions to medium-length body hair and then to longer mane, tail, and leg furnishings. Lack of leg furnishings (on a mature animal) or improper distribution should be penalized. This is a working dog; excessively long coat with improper distribution and texture should be penalized. It should be able to shed water and dirt and to withstand harsh temperatures. Frequent baths will change the coat texture and durability. You may find black hair on a Kuvasz. At one time they were different colors. Selective breeding has removed the colored dog from the gene pool. The light color of the Kuvasz coat was more easily distinguished from the predators. This served the shepherd well in the dark when the livestock were attacked. For shows coat should be presented in a clean and natural manner. Flat, silky, or felt-like guard hair is incorrect. Full coat develops with maturity and is shed seasonally. Summer coat or puppy coat should not be penalized, and abundance of coat should not be given priority over proper coat texture or over the animal's general quality.



Quite wavy coat

Interpretation

Ideally, the Kuvasz is a dark-skinned dog with a white coat. A dog that has dark skin, black nails, dark eyes, and black lips, mouth, and eye rims is highly desirable. Lack of pigmentation, pink spots, or reddish tones on lips, nose, muzzle, or eye rims should be penalized. Judges should keep in mind that there are many shades of white, and that lighting, coat texture, and environmental factors (such as staining from soil, coat care, and parasite-control products) can alter the hues of coat color. Judges should part the coat to help determine the true color near the roots. Judges should also guard against using the whiteness of the dog as a more important criterion than structure, soundness, or temperament.



Kuvasz Breed Standard

Gait: Easy, free and elastic. Feet travel close to the ground. Hind legs reach far under, meeting or even passing the imprints of the front legs. Moving toward an observer, the front legs do not travel parallel to each other, but rather close together at the ground. When viewed from the rear, the hind legs (from the hip joint down) also move close to the ground. As speed increases, the legs gradually angle more inward until the pads are almost single-tracking. Unless excited, the head is carried rather low at the level of the shoulders. Desired movement cannot be maintained without sufficient angulation and firm slimness of the body.



Interpretation

This is a dog that is built to travel at a trot with untiring efficiency. The Kuvasz should be gaited on a loose leash. Proper movement is efficient with head and tail held relatively low. There should be no wasted motion, neither flamboyant prancing nor heavy, lumbering gait. There should be no looseness of structure or skin.

Points to evaluate from the side and coming and going:

- **Clean coming and going:** feet facing forward, not out or in
- **Length of stride:** adequate reach and drive
- **Timing of feet:** two-beat gait
- **Diagonal leg coordination:** the rear foot tracking the front foot
- **Suspension:** a moment of suspension with each stride
- **Stability:** without rolling or bouncing
- **Topline:** strong, firm topline
- **Joint articulation:** smooth flexion and extension
- **Head carriage:** level or slightly above level
- **Gait:** effortless and efficient
- **Foot and pastern strength:** correct footfall and pasterns
- **Balance:** front and rear stride

The most efficient movement is when the hind foot steps into the impression made by the front foot. When the hind foot is unable to step into the track made by the front foot, it is called under-reaching and is usually a result of under-angulation in either forequarters or hindquarters. When the hind foot exceeds the track left by the front foot, this is called over-reaching caused by over-angulation of the rear.



Kuvasz Breed Standard

Temperament: A spirited dog of keen intelligence, determination, courage and curiosity. Very sensitive to praise and blame. Primarily a one-family dog. Devoted, gentle and patient without being overly demonstrative. Always ready to protect loved ones even to the point of self-sacrifice. Extremely strong instinct to protect children. Polite to accepted strangers, but rather suspicious and very discriminating in making new friends. Unexcelled guard, possessing ability to act on his own initiative at just the right moment without instruction. Bold, courageous and fearless. Untiring ability to work and cover rough terrain for long periods of time. Has good scent and has been used to hunt game.



Interpretation

The words "intelligent," "determined," "courageous," "devoted," and "untiring" are worn as a proud mantle by the Kuvasz and describe its very being. One should realize that this breed is slow to mature, and the breed's special characteristics may not fully develop until two or three years of age. Judges should appreciate the importance of the Kuvasz' cautious and reserved nature as an independent guardian. However, shyness and aggression are not acceptable. Judges should respect the suspicious nature of the breed and make the judging as non-threatening as possible. This involves using a businesslike approach, confident body language, and smooth movements. Use casual, friendly eye contact rather than an intense stare. One should avoid wearing obtrusive or unusual clothing that makes odd or distracting motions or sounds, as well as heavy perfumes or colognes.



Working Kuvasz with correct structure.



Approach

Do not change your method of judging.

- Approach from where the dog can see you.
- Be aware of the dog's anxiety level.
- Allow the handler to have control of the head before approaching.
- It helps to talk to the handler prior to handling the dog.

Use common sense and avoid:

- Floppy clothes
- Hats
- Dangling jewelry
- Overpowering perfume or aftershave

Things to Remember

Breed Type

- *Large, athletic dog with rectangular body*
- *Back, broad.*
- *Most beautiful part is the wedge-shaped head*
- *Dry, tight skin*
- *Dark pigmentation*
- *Double coat, medium coarse, from straight to quite wavy*
- *Balanced from front to rear*
- *Movement - free, elastic*
- *DQ – Males under 26 inches*
- *DQ – Females under 24 inches*
- *DQ – Overshot or undershot bite*

Disposition

- *Protective*
- *Intelligent*
- *Loyal*
- *Courageous*
- *Keen sense of right and wrong*
- *Super observant, will notice anything out of ordinary*
- *Wonderful problem-solving skills*
- *Spirited and playful*
- *Sense of humor*
- *Wary of strangers*

Grooming

- *The coat should be presented in a clean and natural manner with a texture to withstand extreme conditions.*
- *General neatening of the dog's appearance is acceptable. This is NOT a topiary breed. Full body scissoring/sculpting is incorrect and ruinous to the breed's ancient history. It should not be rewarded. On exam, do your hands feel what you see?*
- *Flat, silky, soft, or felt-like guard hair is incorrect. Full coat develops with maturity and is shed seasonally. Summer coat or puppy coat should not be penalized.*
- *An abundance of coat should not be given priority over proper coat texture or over the animal's general quality.*

Although this booklet's goal is to help judges understand the breed's most important points, it is also meant for breeders, owners, and handlers.

Breeders, owners, and handlers: Please do not make this breed into eye-candy for the show ring! It is most disrespectful to its ancient Hungarian heritage.

Kuvasz History

Many theories have evolved around the history of the Kuvasz. Sandor Palfalvy, M.D., the Hungarian born cynologist, member of the Alabama Academy of science, has spent his lifetime researching the history of the Hungarian breeds. He found that the Kuvasz had been domesticated by the Sumerian herdsman as early as 7,000 to 8,000 years ago and accompanied them during their travels from Mesopotamia to present day Hungary.



A tigriskölyköket szoptató kuvasz. Szabó Ferenc dr. felvétele.

Dana Alvi, a Kuvasz breeder in the 1970s and '80s and co-author of *How to Raise and Train a Kuvasz*, concurs with Dr. Palfalvy's theory on the origin of the name: "The word 'Kuvasz' is of Sumerian origin. The first letters 'Ku' are from an old Sumerian word for dog, 'Kudda.' Modern Hungarian has the word as 'Kutya.' The other word important in the history of the Kuvasz, the word 'Assa' meaning 'horse', in Sumerian. Ku-Assa, therefore, means a dog that guarded and ran alongside horses and horseman."

Another prominent theory about the origin of the word 'Kuvasz' is that it derived from two words: the Turkish word "kawas," meaning "guard," and the Arabic word Kawwas, translating to "bowman" or "archer," a type of warrior very highly regarded in his time.

During the reign of King Matthias I (1458-1490) Kuvasz were regularly used to hunt wild boar and bear. The King himself had raised Kuvasz, and puppies were often presented to the members of the nobility as gifts. At the time of the Turkish rule (16th and 17th century), dogs with similar looks, conformation, and temperament may have been introduced, but ever since the 17th century the breed has retained its characteristics unchanged.

It is interesting to note that there are several breeds of dogs with similar conformation and temperament to the Kuvasz: Great Pyrenees, Maremmano-Abruzzese, Polish Owczarek Podhalanski, Slovakian Cuvac, and Akbash. In the Middle Ages the Magyars traded in farm animals with other countries. They would bring the cattle, sheep, and horses to their foreign destination on foot. Along with them went the trusty Kuvasz to guard against the wolves and bears of the Alps. It is most likely that along these paths the Kuvasz female whelped, and the pups stayed behind with other shepherds to raise them. Hence through geographic isolation, different types or breeds evolved.

In 1863 there were Kuvasz shown at the dog show in Hamburg, Germany, and in 1865, at the first dog show in Hungary, there were Kuvasz entered. At the turn of the century there were some mix-ups between the names of the Kuvasz and the Komondor. Some Kuvasz were imported to Germany but were called and registered as Komondor. This was corrected in the early 1900s, and the Kuvasz developed into a very handsome animal under the careful supervision of some serious breeders.

Kuvasz Club of America

Unfortunately, the Second World War did great damage to the breed. Many dogs were shot by troops moving across Hungary. The soldiers either feared the dogs or thought it to be good sport. Many dogs starved to death. Owners did not have enough food for themselves or their families, let alone their dogs. It is assumed that there were about 30 Kuvasz who survived the war in Hungary.

After the war, Antal Kovács established the Gyapjus ("Woolly") State Kennel in 1953. By this time the number of Kuvasz was growing, and this increase

in the population permitted better selection and improved quality. The most famous male, Gyapjus Morcos, had a great effect, with many excellent offspring. The number of private owners and breeders was growing, and in the 1970s there were 240 Kuvasz in a Budapest show.

Dr. Kovács notes that the Hungarian breed standard of Abonyi was accepted by the FCI and published in 1937 with the number "54." In 1966, a revised version was issued with the FCI number "54/b."

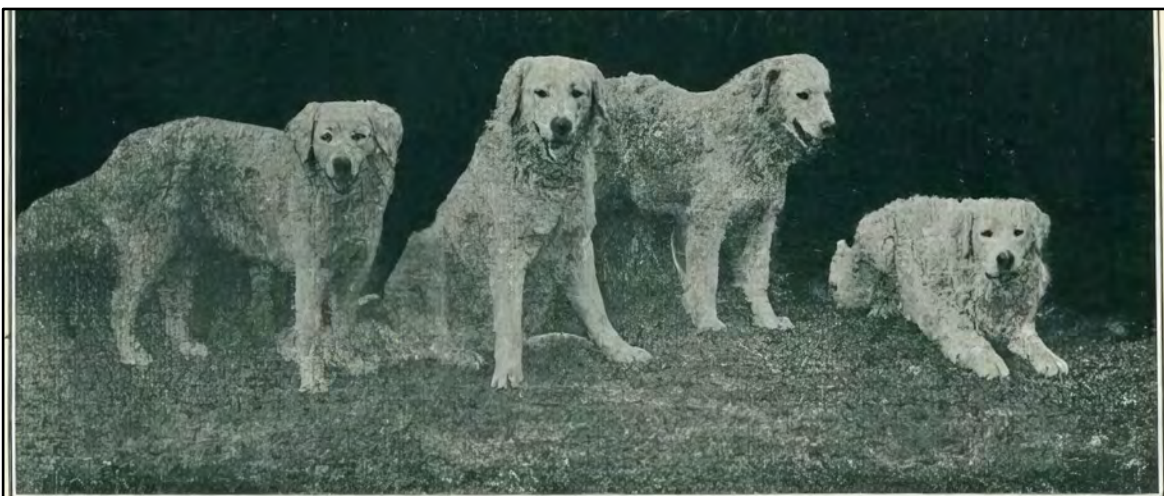
Our breed standard was the first one written for flock guardians in Central Europe. It was written to describe the then-existing breed. The Slovakian Cuvac and the Polish Owczarek Podhalanski emerged from the same population, since Slovakia was a part of Hungary for thousand years. In Poland, the breed existed only in a small area at the former Hungarian border. Some small differences, like the eye shape, tail carriage, and coat, were stressed when writing the national standards, so at present the "excellent" individuals of these three breeds are already different, but the "medium quality" ones look still quite the same.

The Italian Maremmano-Abruzzese and the long-haired Turkish Akbash are also very similar to the Kuvasz. There are similar dogs without standards in Iraq, Iran, Dagestan, and the French Pyrenean Mountains.

The most important characters distinguishing the Kuvasz are the wedge-shaped head with almond-eyes and the wavy white coat.



Kuvasz of Long Ago



Hullámos szőrű pásztor komondor (Kemptner Ernő tenyésztése).





Magyar komondor.



Fokusz Alzabert 2007. III. 1. III. bismarck arado. Tegy. Alred. ca. 1870-1880.
Tal.: Eckharder Anton (Eckharder Emil és felesége.)



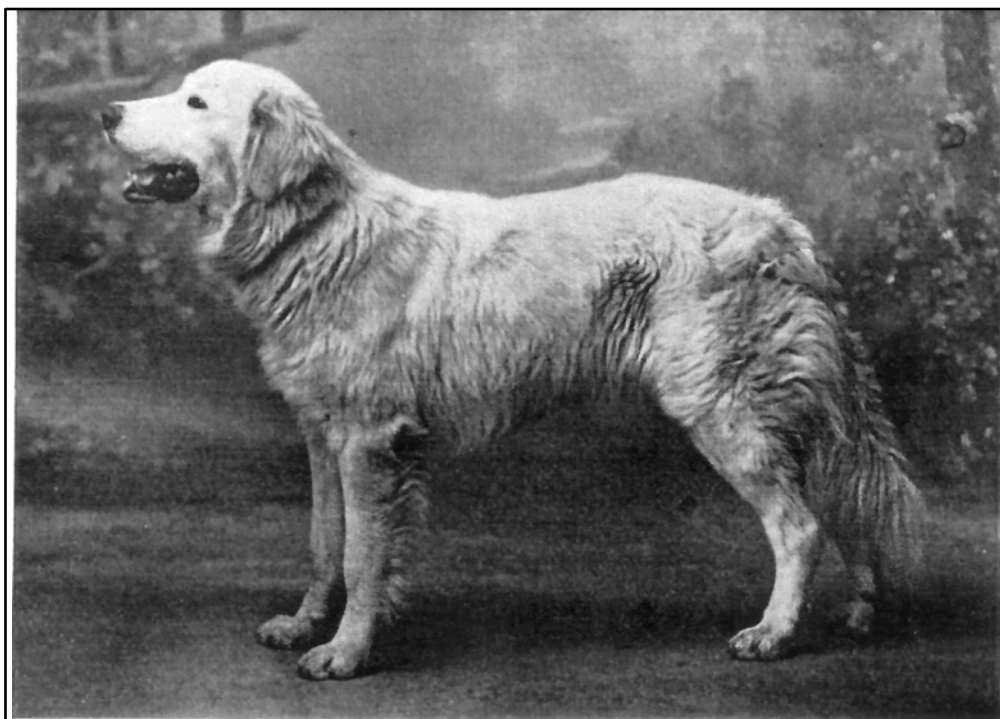
„Táncos” és „Tisza” 1/4 éves sűrűszőrű komondor nőstények : „Hattyú” simafejű komondor? Zselma lenyészése. (A „Táncos” és „Tisza” némileg a komondor jellegét mutatja, amíg a „Hattyú” inkább kuvasz, mint komondor. A szerkesztő.)



Kuvasz Club of America



Fehérszléd Kóta Allakert. Ku. I. 124. Tal. Domokos Gyuláné.



IX. d.

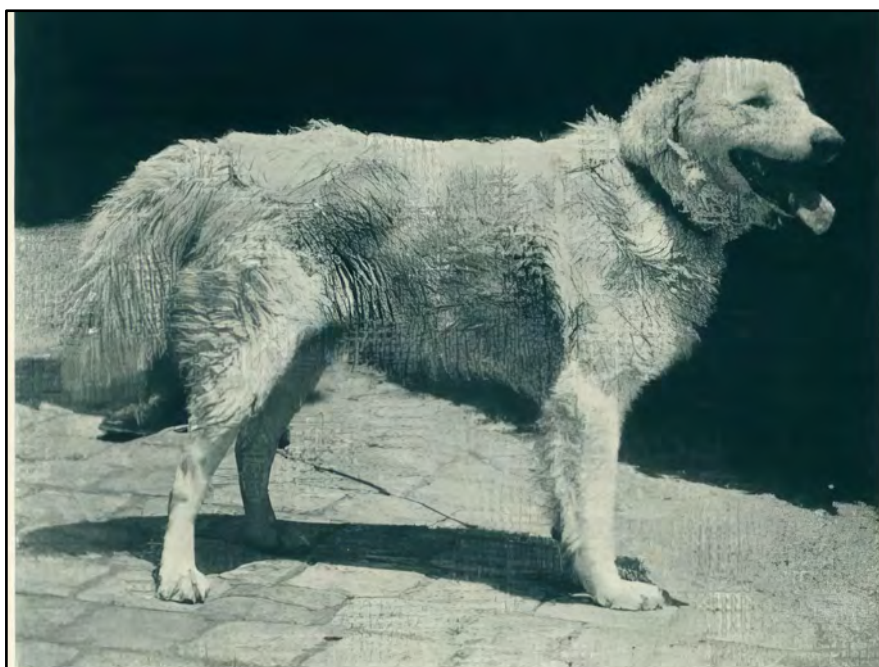
„JANOS“

Komondor (Rüde).

Bes.: Not.-Ass. Klein-Feldrennach bei Neuenbürg.

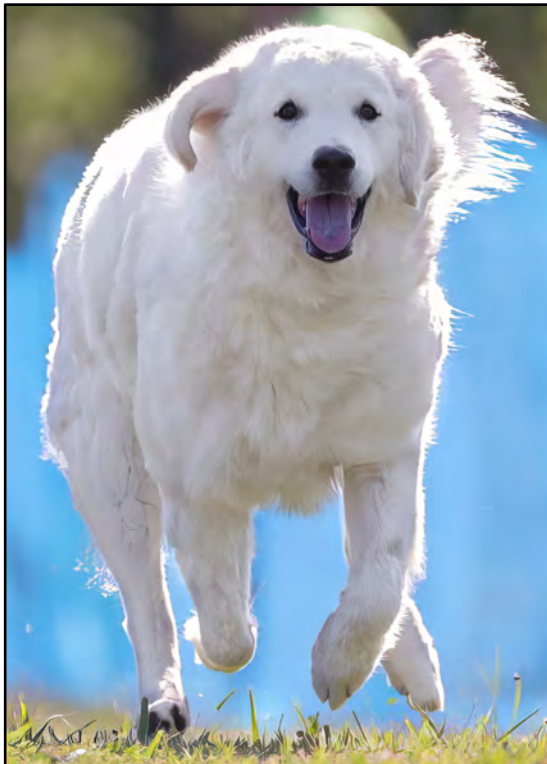
Preise in Offenen Klassen:

I. Heidelberg 1901; I. Frankfurt a. M., II. München, I. Stuttgart 1902.



Elre Állatkert MKT. ko. I. 94. Teny. : Állatkert. Tul. : Lukács Gyula, kitűnő. II. díj.
(Raitsits Emil dr. felvétele.)

Kuvasz in Performance Sports





Kuvasz as Therapy Dogs





Working Kuvasz



