

Show Dogs

Learn about success in show dogs.

Richard G. Beauchamp

Nor are we able to determine if this dog's way of going is right or wrong. Right, I suppose, in the sense that he gets from point A to point B easily enough, but is that movement suited for a specific purpose other than just moving happily along? Again, no way to determine.

The same applies to the dog's coat and color. They may be lovely enough, but do they suit the purpose? The answer is no, because there is no definable purpose. Type, on the other hand, is all about purpose and respecting the integrity of what was originally intended at the breed's onset.

As the letter writer said, [T]here seems to be a marked problem with people not being able to see beyond quality to type. I guess this is the new catch phrase generic showdog in a nutshell []

A dog can be recognizable as its breed, sound of limb and firm of muscle, mentally and physically healthy; he can have a charismatic attitude and yet lack all the subtleties and nuances that separate the dog of great type from mediocre.

I remember well a hotly contested class of Wire Fox Terrier champions being judged many years ago at a major West Coast show. The current mega-winners of the day were all in attendance. They had come from across the nation. One had achieved great success in another part of the country and the event being watched was his West Coast debut.

The late Derek Rayne and I watched the proceedings together. I turned to him and said, speaking of the dog that I had not seen before, Well, that's the one they say excels in his moderation. Derek turned to me and said, I think moderation is the word that those who show the ordinary choose to use in place of mediocre.* This column first ran in the September 2005 issue of Dogs In Review.