

TERRIER GROUP

as an assembly of “what could be better” or “what I don’t like.” Counting up faults, real or imagined, and then picking the dog with the fewest faults leaves a lot of room for error.

To disregard a clearly superior dog because it has a light eye, a low tail-set, or is one that finds the footing not to its liking, or who has a handler whose inexperience has made the table a challenge, is to do a disservice to the breed.

To aid potential judges in evaluating the “whole dog,” the Norfolk Terrier Club has a Judges Mentoring Program that is dedicated to formulating effective, reliable, and objective breed presentations to aspiring, provisional, and approved Norfolk Terrier judges. The goal of the program is to help judges objectively evaluate our breed by recognizing strengths as well as weaknesses, and to understand that our breed standard has no disqualifying faults.

In addition to mentoring potential judges, it is also important to mentor potential owners and breeders. This doesn’t mean ignoring flaws or shortcomings in the dogs we’re observing, as long as we point out the good attributes, as well. So, rather than sitting ring-side and negatively critiquing each exhibit, we do far more good by pointing out the positives.

Don’t like a tail-set? How about mentioning a nice head and expression? Is the dog moving

close behind but has a marvelous coat? Call the newcomer’s attention to both. Can’t find anything to dislike about a class winner or Best of Breed? It’s quite alright to be positive. Can’t find anything to like? Maybe this is the time to exercise a little discretion.

—Sheila Foran,

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The Norfolk Terrier Club

Norwich Terriers

THE PET NORWICH COAT: MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

The Norwich Terrier section of the benched National Dog Show, hosted by the Kennel Club of Philadelphia, drew the usual crowd of interested spectators researching breeds. Questions about coat care topped the list, prompting my spiel this year about the amount of work required to make a Norwich actually look like the Norwich sitting on the bench.

A little Norwich named Roxy has been my inspiration for educating potential puppy-buyers about hand stripping.

Several years ago, I agreed to examine Roxy’s coat for her owners, a young couple with a baby on the way. They paid a lot of money for a purebred Norwich Terrier and were disappointed because Roxy did not look



Norwich Terrier puppy

COURTESY JANE SCHUBART

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like a Norwich. Her coat was no longer red of any shade; rather, it was a nondescript greyish-whitish. As I suspected, she had been clipped by a professional groomer.

A Norwich Terrier's coat should be "hard, wiry and straight, lying close to the body with a definite undercoat." This double coat has a purpose. The harsh outer coat is nearly weatherproof, and the soft, supportive undercoat insulates the body from both heat and cold. Originally bred to be stable-ratters and to bolt foxes on the hunt, this little working terrier required a protective coat. The natural course of a working day provided the required grooming as longer, loose hairs were removed by briar and brush, allowing the coat to replenish.

Because the natural-looking coat of today's Norwich is anything but natural, learning to hand-strip or finding a groomer who will hand-strip is an important consideration in choosing this breed. The traditional way to groom the terrier coat is by manually removing the dead (or "blown") hair. Each hair follicle supports a single, hard outer hair and several soft, finer hairs that form the supportive undercoat.

The purpose of hand-stripping is simply to remove the old, faded outer hairs and excess undercoat so that new hair can grow in the follicles. The color pigment of the Norwich

coat is in the tips of the outer hairs. Clipping or scissoring cuts the colored tips off, and the dog's natural color fades. The texture is also softened. Because hand-stripping takes considerably more time than grooming with clippers, professional groomers charge more or decline to offer this specialized service.

Pet owners may not realize that maintaining a hard coat is often a work in process. If the timing of grooming visits is not consistent, the finished results will vary. For best results, the coat is "rolled" so that there is always a new layer of growth coming in. "Rolling" is how dogs who are on the show circuit maintain the desired coat appearance, but this requires frequent grooming and is generally not practical for the pet owner.

Wire coats that are cared for properly by hand-stripping have a beautiful shine and rich colors. It is relatively easy to maintain the Norwich coat, and while many owners learn how to trim and tidy their own dog, hand-stripping is not for everyone. When done correctly, it causes little discomfort to the dog, but many pet owners are hesitant.

While hand-stripping is recommended for the adult Norwich, clipping is acceptable (and sometimes preferred) for an older dog. It is also an option for the Norwich with an incorrect soft coat that is difficult to pull out.

Besides the beauty of vibrant color and

healthy hair, the hand-stripped Norwich coat has other advantageous. Because it is fairly dirt resistant, a Norwich does not need frequent bathing. Also, by stripping out old coat, hair follicles are not plugged with fine hairs and oily sebum, which can contribute to skin problems.

Although the modern Norwich is not likely to dispatch small vermin, it is important that modern breeders preserve the nearly weatherproof coat, as this is one of the inherent qualities that distinguish this hardy little hunt terrier. Most are devoted pet companions like Roxy, whom I continue to groom. Her body coat is now in two distinct layers with correct harsh texture, and though the leg furnishings are a bit soft, her owners are pleased to have a Norwich who looks like a Norwich.

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Scottish Terriers

RETURN OF THE TERRIERS

*O*ctober 2021. Two years since our last gathering of like-minded terrier folks in Pennsylvania. And the events seem to capture every aspect of Montgomery County shows of the past.

Morris & Essex showcased an abundance

of the country's finest dogs and fashion. The morning started off misty, humid, but cool. My first time attending, the schlep across the green fields to the rings felt like traversing in Hobbit Land—never-ending, and so many trees, only to get through the gravel and hilly incline to see more distance and rings upon rings upon rings. But what a sight to behold! And when surveying the entire Scottie entry before making his cut, judge Mr. Jim Reynolds said, "What a way to come back."

As we all practiced in the past year, being Gumby-like and staying flexible with changes and shifts, the kennel clubs worked together, and "home base" was Macungie Memorial Park for many. No venue is perfect. But we were having our Montgomery County Weekend, and everyone was thankful to be there.

Some things felt odd. Attendance at our host hotel garnered fewer guests than years past. Some chose not to come. That electric feeling of "family reunion" felt more like a dimmed light-bulb. But the hotel thanked us repeatedly for having our club there, and those who attended enjoyed Scottie Bingo, a silent auction, an awards dinner, time in the bar sipping on adult beverages, and spending time together.

Montgomery County Sunday seemed to encapsulate everything familiar for everyone: