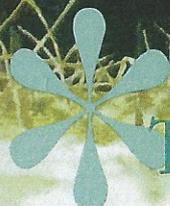
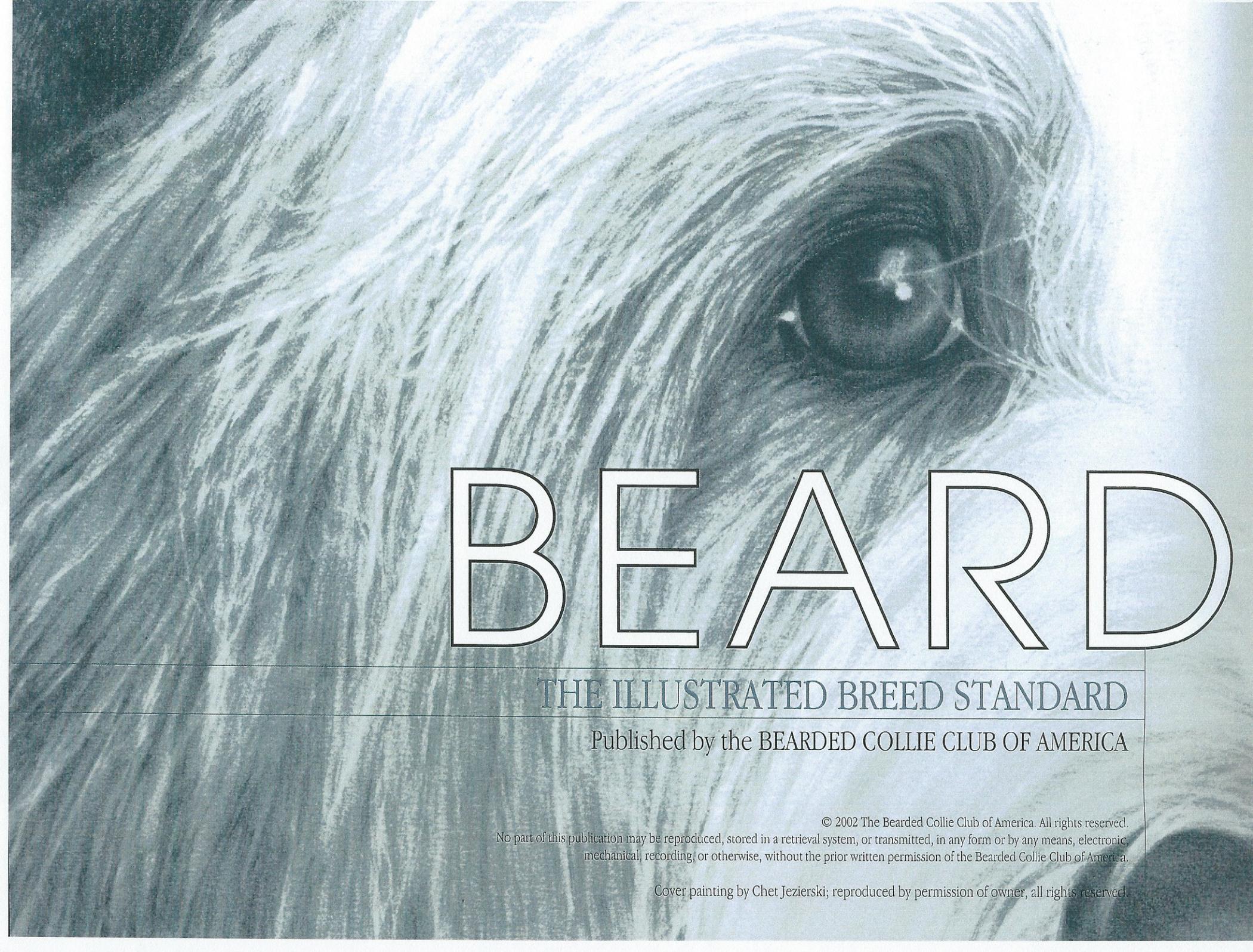


BEARDED COLLIE



THE ILLUSTRATED BREED STANDARD



BEARD

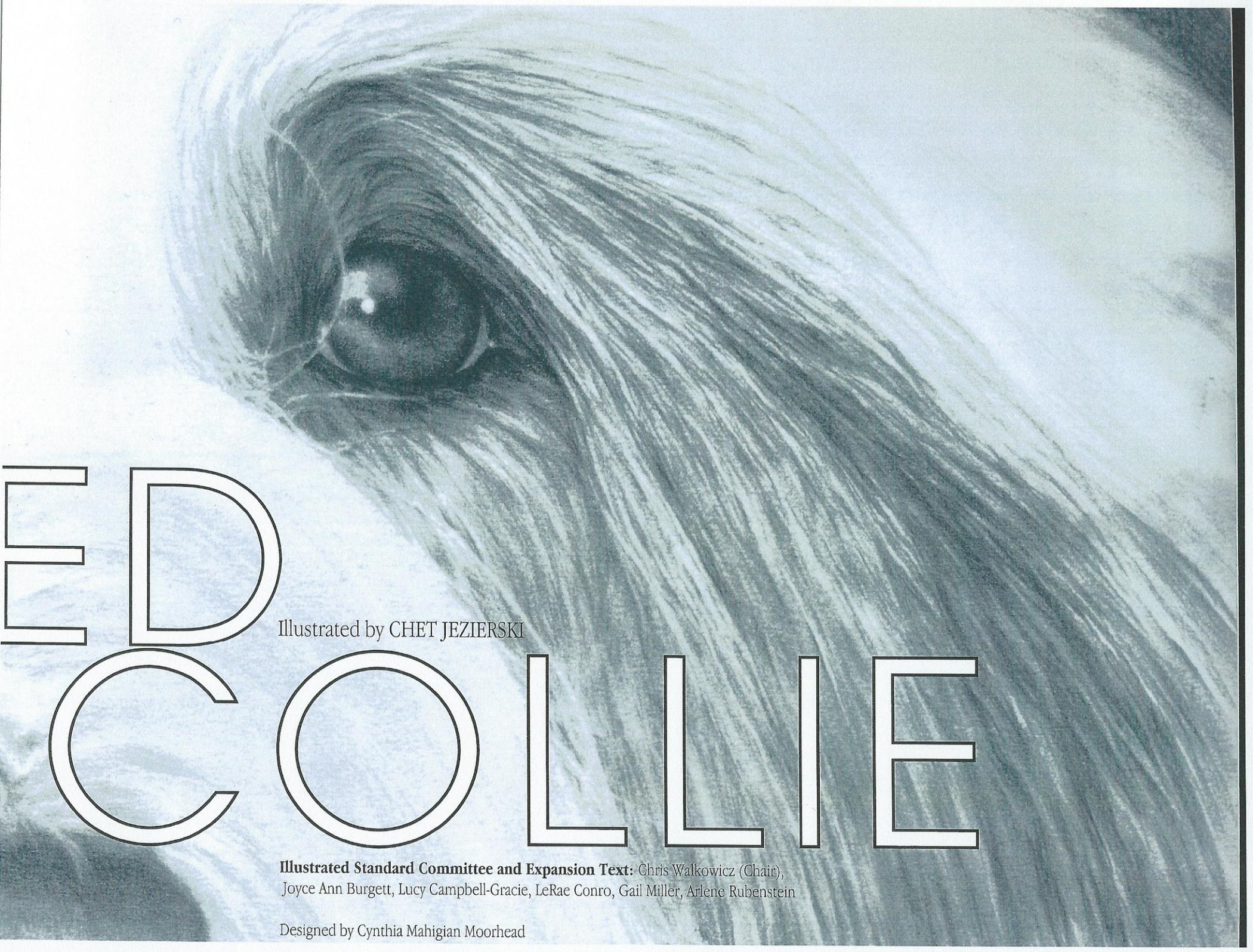
THE ILLUSTRATED BREED STANDARD

Published by the BEARDED COLLIE CLUB OF AMERICA

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ED

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COLLIE

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Designed by Cynthia Mahigian Moorhead

Should you, while
wandering in the wild
sheep-land, happen on
moor or in market upon a
very perfect gentle knight
clothed in dark grey habit,
splashed here and there
with rays of moon; free by
right divine of the guild of
gentlemen, strenuous as a
prince, lithe as a rowan,
graceful as a girl, with high
king-carriage, motions and
manners of a fairy queen;
should he have a noble
breadth of brow, an air of
still strength born of right
confidence, all unassuming;
last and most unfailing test
of all, should you look into
two snow-clad eyes, calm,
wistful, inscrutable, their
soft depths clothed on with
eternal sadness—yearning,
as is said, for the soul that
is not theirs—know then
that you look upon one of
the line of the most
illustrious sheep-dogs of
the North.

—Alfred Ollivant, *Owd Bob*

INTRODUCTION

At one time variously called the Mountain Scotch Collie, the Old Welsh Grey Sheepdog, the Highland Collie, the Loch Collie, or the Hairy Moued Collie, Bearded Collies—now familiarly known as Beardies—were developed in Scotland. As European herding dogs set paw upon the shores of the United Kingdom, they surely were bred to other canines of local talent. While not known exactly, it is quite likely that the Polish Lowland Sheepdog lent some genes to the mix. The Beardie itself figures in the background of other herding breeds of the British Isles.

Originally, the Beardie was of two types: that which developed along the border of Scotland and England, i.e., the “border” type, with long coarse, slate-colored hair; and the smaller, “highland” type with shorter, wavy brown coats. These two are well-blended today into our black, brown, blue and fawn Beardies. The Beardies of old needed to work independently of the shepherd, able and willing to force a ewe from a ravine or to gather a wandering lamb into the flock. Their ringing bark aided them in turning a stubborn ram, as well as serving as an audible marker for the shepherd. This huntaway style may still be seen today.

The Beardies’ harsh coats protected them from the brush and inclement weather. Agile bodies easily maneuvered the rough and rocky terrain and enabled the dogs to leap over cairns.

The above description from Ollivant’s *Owd Bob* is, perhaps, less realistic and more romantic than the Bearded Collie who today serves as a sturdy sheepdog and playful companion. Yet it gives us insight to the breed. We who love and own them, however, swear they do *indeed* have a soul.



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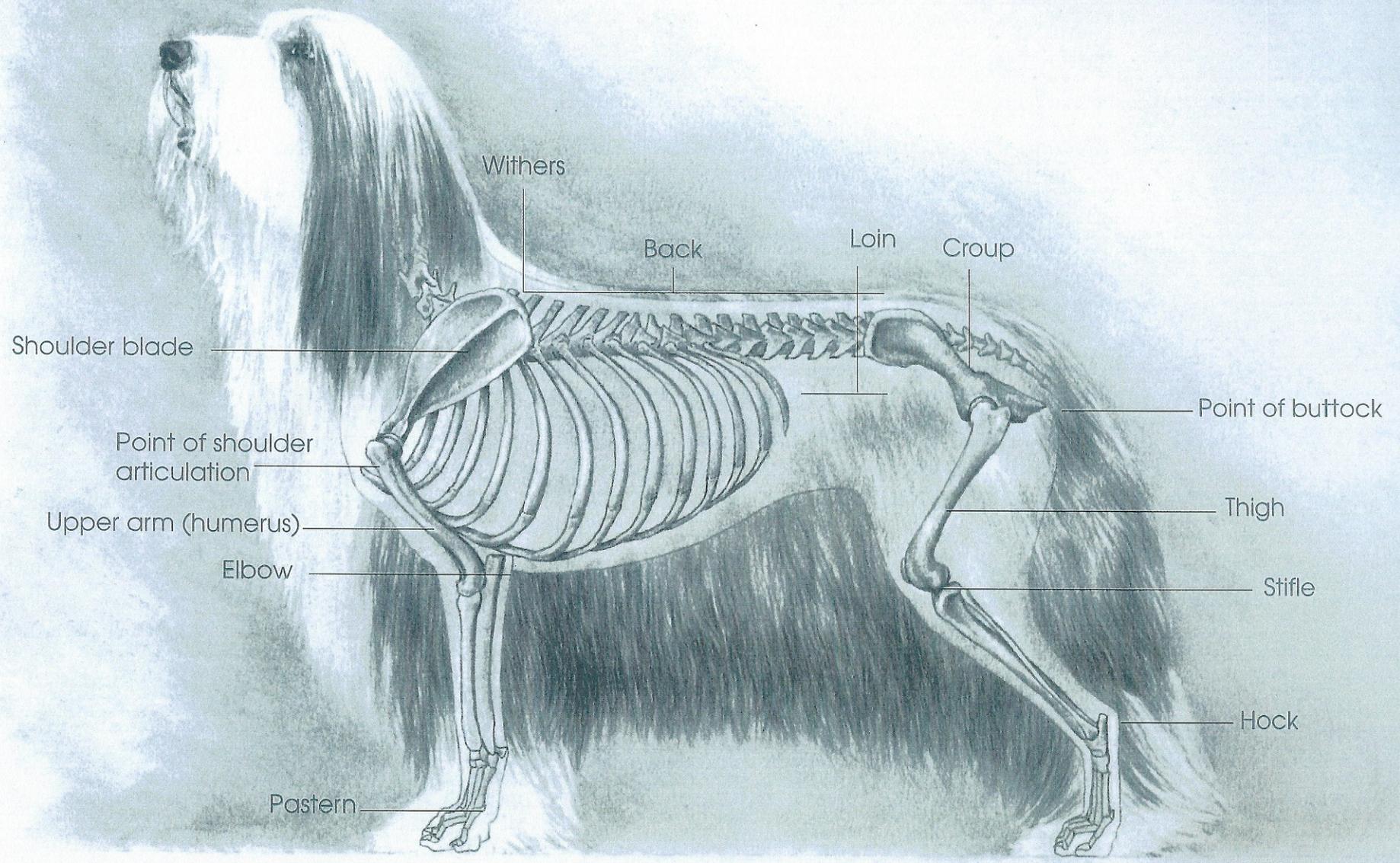
NOTE: The official Standard of the Bearded Collie appears throughout in this black typestyle.

This blue typestyle indicates expansion text, clarifying specific details in the official Standard

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Anatomical Points as Discussed in the Breed Standard



CHARACTERISTICS

The Bearded Collie is hardy and active, with an aura of strength and agility characteristic of a real working dog. Bred for centuries as a companion and servant of man, the Bearded Collie is a devoted and intelligent member of the family. He is stable and self-confident, showing no signs of shyness or aggression. This is a natural and unspoiled breed.



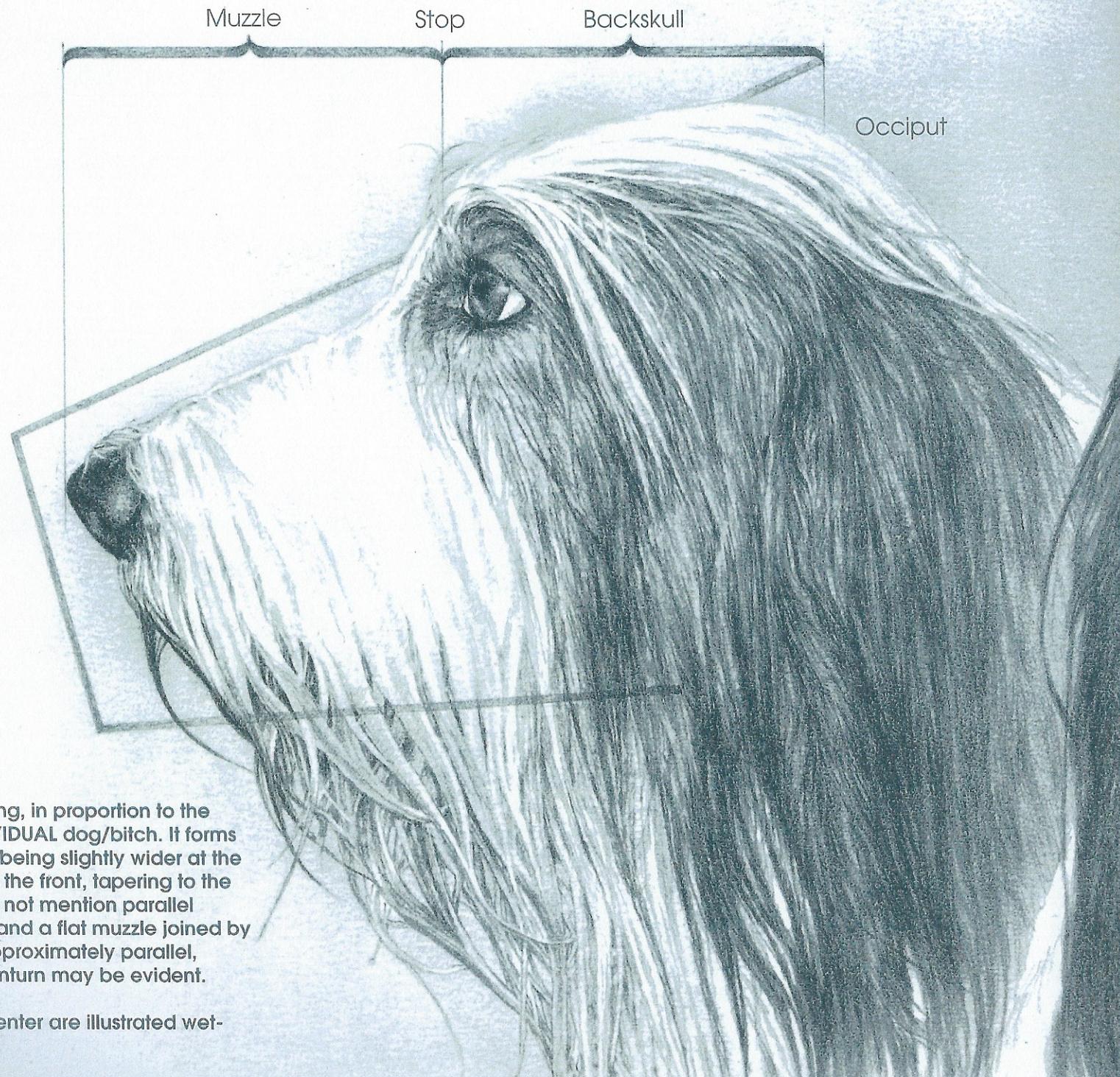


GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Bearded Collie is a medium sized dog with a medium length coat that follows the natural lines of the body and allows plenty of daylight under the body. The body is long and lean, and, though strongly made, does not appear heavy. A bright inquiring expression is a distinctive feature of the breed. The Bearded Collie should be shown in a natural stance.

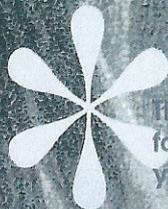
HEAD

The head is in proportion to the size of the dog. The skull is broad and flat; the stop is moderate; the cheeks are well filled beneath the eyes; the muzzle is strong and full; the foreface is equal in length to the distance between the stop and occiput. The nose is large and squarish. A snipy muzzle is to be penalized. (See Color section for pigmentation.)



The head should be strong, in proportion to the muzzle, and to the **INDIVIDUAL** dog/bitch. It forms a smooth, blunt wedge, being slightly wider at the back of the skull than at the front, tapering to the muzzle. Although we do not mention parallel planes, a flat backskull and a flat muzzle joined by a sloping stop will be approximately parallel, though some slight downturn may be evident.

The dog at left and at center are illustrated wet-down for greater clarity.



The backskull is about the breadth of an average-sized hand, allowing for difference in size of dog or bitch. When encircling the muzzle with your hand, the thumb and forefinger should not meet.



We are seeing some foreshortened muzzles, which are not correct. The dog on the left has a correctly proportioned, pleasing head. The dog on the right has a muzzle that is shorter than its backskull, which adversely affects its overall expression and is incorrect.

Consideration should be given to assessing the correct proportion between the head and the body.

Here, the head is too large for the body.

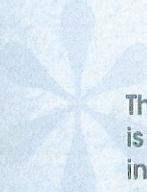


This Beardie's head and body are correctly proportioned.

This Beardie's head is proportionately too small.

EYES

The eyes are large, expressive, soft and affectionate, but not round nor protruding, and are set widely apart. The eyebrows are arched to the sides to frame the eyes and are long enough to blend smoothly into the coat on the sides of the head. (See Color section for eye color.)



The ideal expression is soft, melting, and inquiring. The eyes are more oval than almond-shaped. Puppies and young adults have softer coats, which will often flop over their eyes.



These eyes are set too close to give the correct inquiring expression.



These eyes are set correctly and show the typical size and shape that allow for ideal expression in the breed.

EARS

The ears are medium sized, hanging and covered with long hair. They are set level with the eyes. When the dog is alert, the ears have a slight lift at the base.



Beardie ears may fold horizontally or vertically. Either is correct. Ears should fit on the head with the opening level with the eyes, giving breadth to the head.

This Beardie's ears are set on too high.

This is a correct earset, showing ears that are slightly lifted at the base indicating alertness.

These ears are set correctly, too, but depict the ears at rest.

TEETH

The teeth are strong and white, meeting in a scissors bite. Full dentition is desirable.

NECK

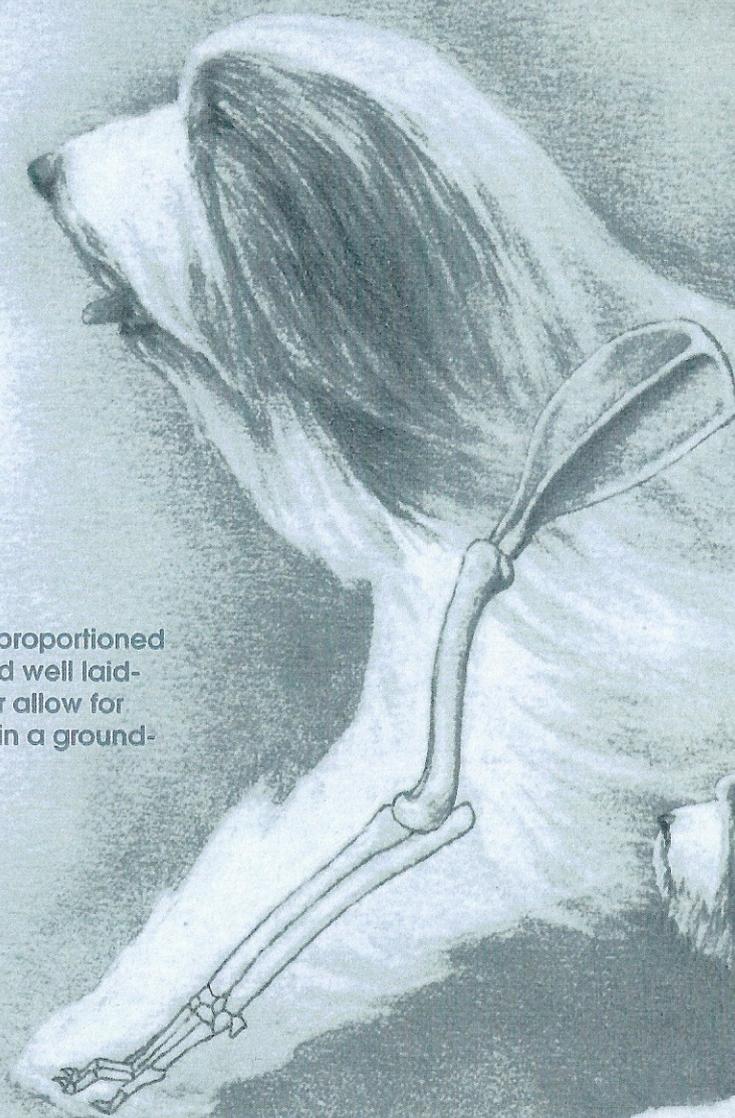
The neck is in proportion to the length of the body, strong and slightly arched, blending smoothly into the shoulders.

FOREQUARTERS

The shoulders are well laid back at an angle of approximately 45 degrees; a line drawn from the highest point of the shoulder blade to the forward point of articulation approximates a right angle with a line from the forward point of articulation to the point of the elbow. The tops of the shoulder blades lie in against the withers, but they slope outwards from there sufficiently to accommodate the desired spring of ribs. The legs are straight and vertical, with substantial, but not heavy, bone and are covered with shaggy hair all around. The pasterns are flexible without weakness.



Withers are no more than two fingers' width apart. The upper arm should be equal in length to the well laid-back shoulder blade. Short upper arms restrict front reach. Proper movement comes from adequate length of shoulder blade and upper arm and NOT from widely placed shoulder blades.



This correctly proportioned upper arm and well laid-back shoulder allow for proper reach in a ground-covering gait.



This short upper arm restricts front reach and may cause hackneying or other undesirable movement faults.

BODY

The body is longer than it is high in an approximate ratio of five to four, length measured from point of chest to point of buttocks, height measured at the highest point of the withers. The length of the back comes from the length of the ribcage and not that of the loin. The back is level. The ribs are well sprung from the spine but are flat at the sides. The chest is deep, reaching at least to the elbows. The loins are strong. The level back line blends smoothly into the curve of the rump. A flat croup or a steep croup is to be severely penalized.

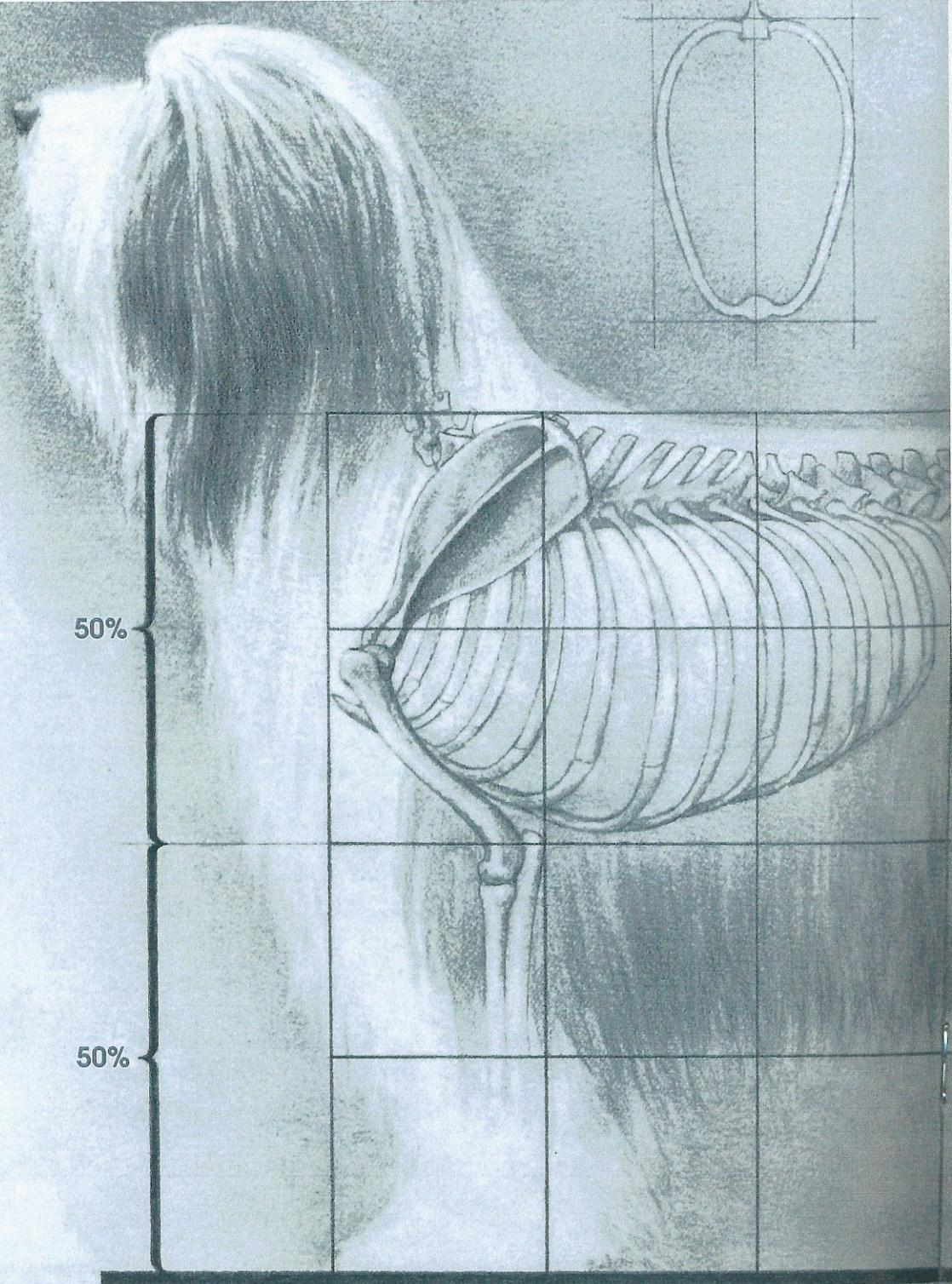


With the exception of the short-legged Corgis, the Beardie is the **LONGEST-BODIED** of the herding breeds in proportion: 5 to 4, length to height. A Beardie should be rectangular, **NEVER** square or cobby. Beware, however, of Beardies that are too short in leg, giving the illusion of proper proportion.

The Beardie is a medium-sized dog, and the depth of chest should reach the elbows, with approximately 50 percent of the dog above the elbows and 50 percent below.

SIZE

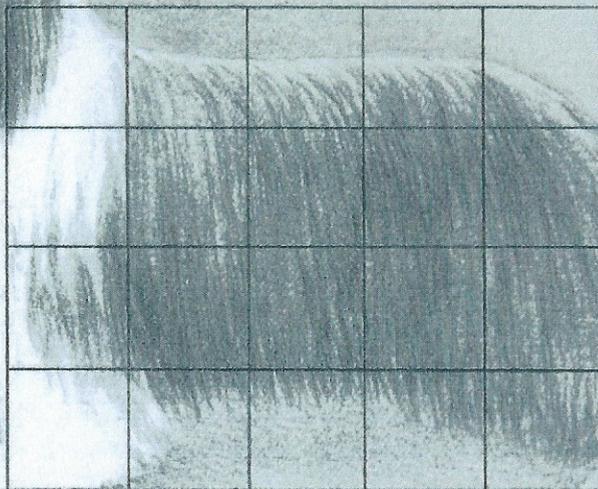
The ideal height at the withers is 21-22 inches for adult dogs and 20-21 inches for adult bitches. Height over and under the ideal is to be severely penalized. The express objective of this criterion is to insure that the Bearded Collie remains a medium sized dog.



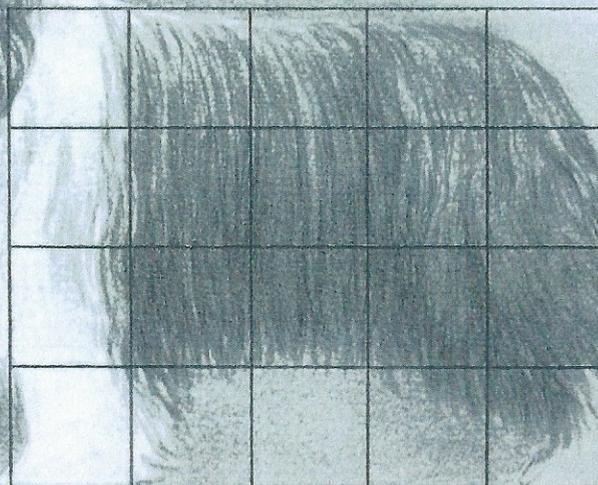
Ribbing is nearly egg-shaped, more oval than round, with slight flattening at midpoint. The Beardie is a narrow-bodied dog, and the ribs should never be rounded, nor slab-sided. The length of the body comes from the angulation of shoulder and rear, as well as the ribs which slant backwards, rather than vertically.



This Beardie's legs are too short.



This Beardie is too cobby and square.





This illustrates a correct length of loin and a correct angle of croup for a Bearded Collie.

This Beardie's croup is too flat.



This Beardie's croup is too steep.



The backslant of the ribs causes the length of loin to be relatively short, about the breadth of four fingers. The slant of the croup is approximately 30 degrees, giving the dog a smooth curve with the tail setting on smoothly. Flat or steep croups affect proper movement and are serious faults.

HINDQUARTERS

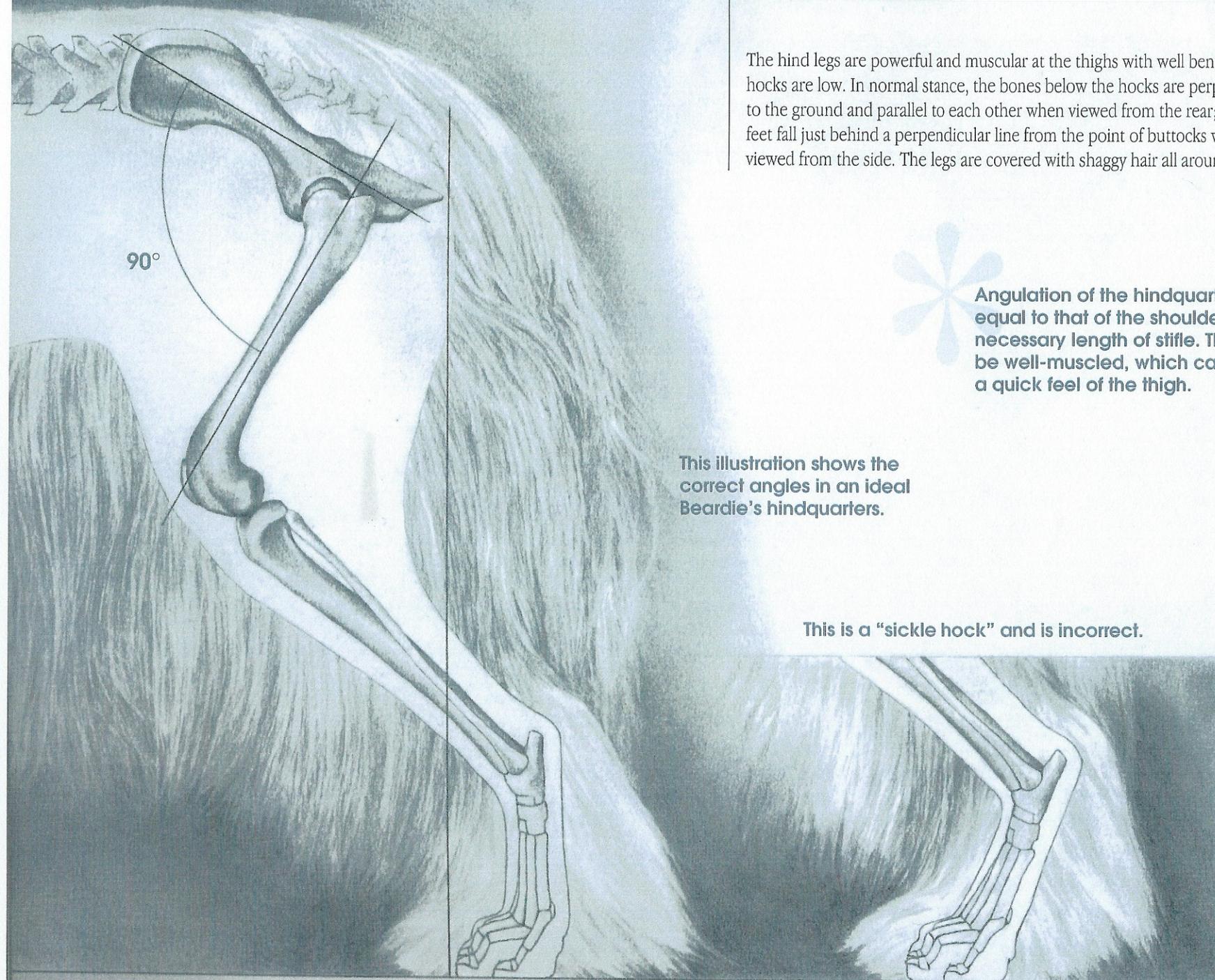
The hind legs are powerful and muscular at the thighs with well bent stifles. The hocks are low. In normal stance, the bones below the hocks are perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other when viewed from the rear; the rear feet fall just behind a perpendicular line from the point of buttocks when viewed from the side. The legs are covered with shaggy hair all around.



Angulation of the hindquarters, ideally, is equal to that of the shoulders, requiring necessary length of stifle. The Beardie should be well-muscled, which can be checked with a quick feel of the thigh.

This illustration shows the correct angles in an ideal Beardie's hindquarters.

This is a "sickle hock" and is incorrect.



FEET

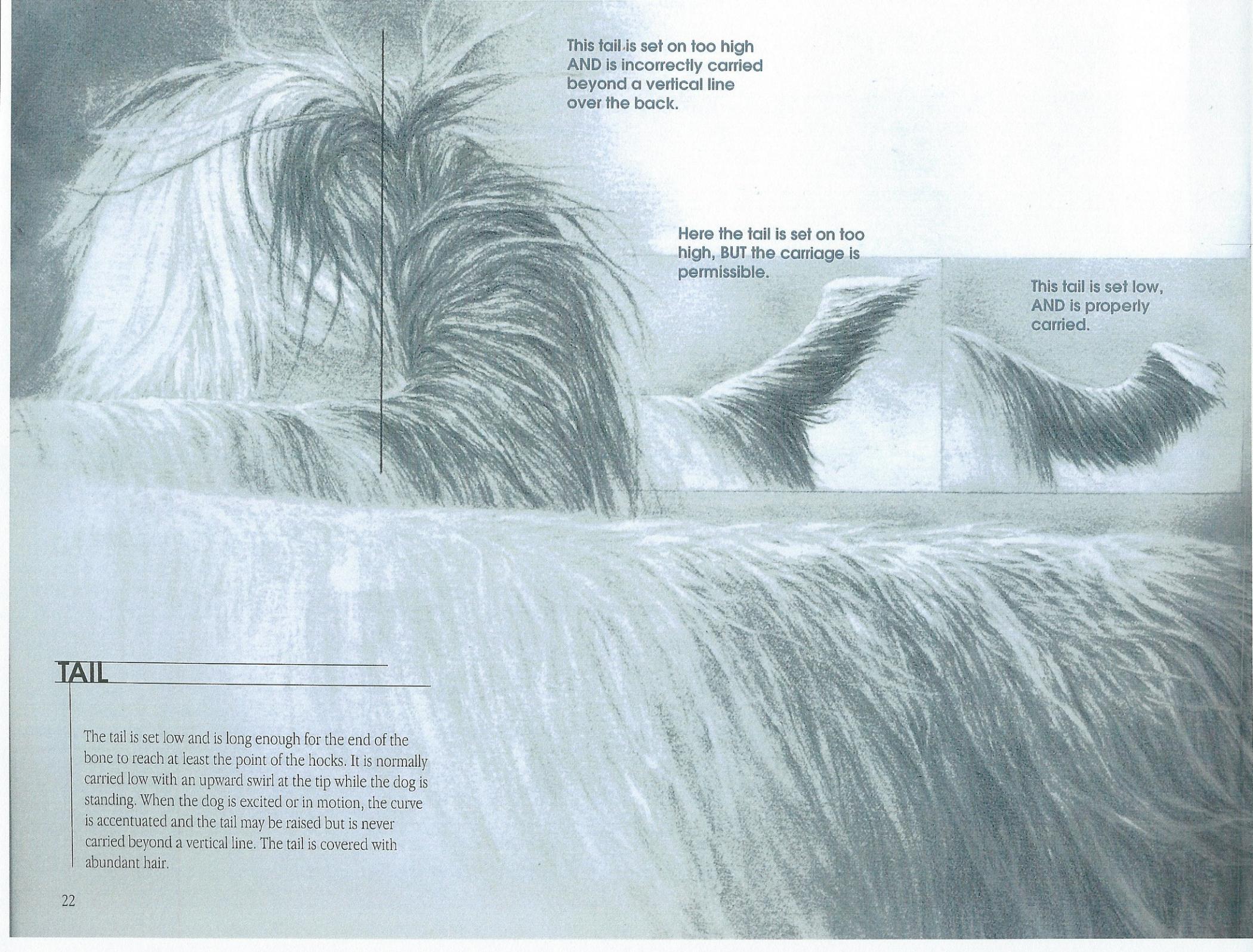
The feet are oval in shape with the soles well padded. The toes are arched and close together, and well covered with hair including between the pads.



These hocks are incorrect "cow hocks."



These are correct, parallel hocks.



This tail is set on too high
AND is incorrectly carried
beyond a vertical line
over the back.

Here the tail is set on too
high, BUT the carriage is
permissible.

This tail is set low,
AND is properly
carried.

TAIL

The tail is set low and is long enough for the end of the bone to reach at least the point of the hocks. It is normally carried low with an upward swirl at the tip while the dog is standing. When the dog is excited or in motion, the curve is accentuated and the tail may be raised but is never carried beyond a vertical line. The tail is covered with abundant hair.

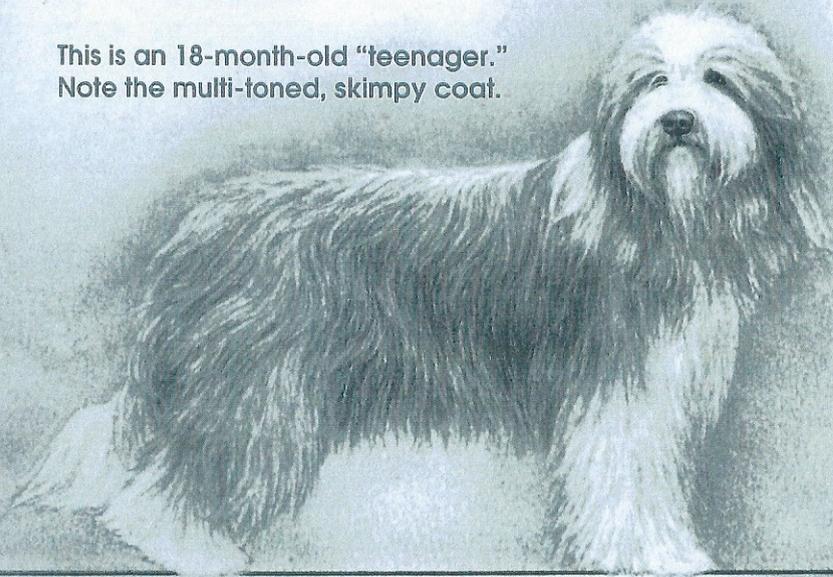
Tail set and tail carriage are not the same. The tail set, as stated, should be low, with the tail curving at the tip. Tail carriage reflects the dog's attitude, and most Beardies, being happy dogs, wag their tails or raise them on the move. This may be above the horizontal (especially with studly males), but adults, when at work—such as in the ring—should not have tails curled over the back. The dead tail clamped flat against the rump is also not typical of this happy breed.

This is a proper tailset, carried low and with an upward curve, reflecting a happy attitude.



COAT

**This is an 18-month-old "teenager."
Note the multi-toned, skimpy coat.**



The coat is double with the undercoat soft, furry and close. The outercoat is flat, harsh, strong and shaggy, free from wooliness and curl, although a slight wave is permissible. The coat falls naturally to either side but must never be artificially parted. The length and density of the hair are sufficient to provide a protective coat and to enhance the shape of the dog, but not so profuse as to obscure the natural lines of the body. The dog should be shown as naturally as is consistent with good grooming but the coat must not be trimmed in any way. On the head, the bridge of the nose is sparsely covered with hair which is slightly longer on the sides to cover the lips. From the cheeks, the lower lips, and under the chin the coat increases in length towards the chest, forming the typical beard. An excessively long, silky coat or one which has been trimmed in any way must be severely penalized.

**This 9-month-old's short, dark coat is
still soft enough to flop continuously into
his eyes.**

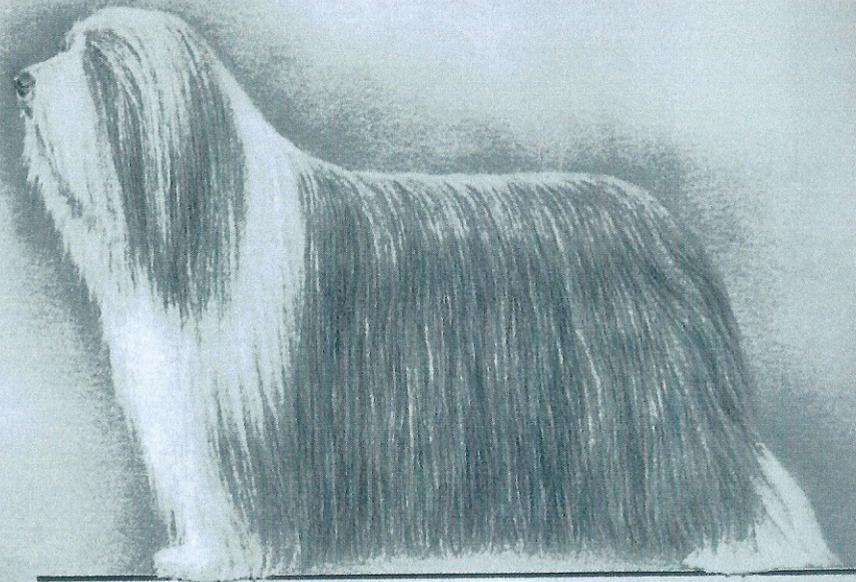


This adult Beardie is presented in a full, natural coat, not trimmed or sculpted in any way.

Proper coat texture is highly important, more so than coat length. The undercoat is visible, often lighter in color and softer in texture. The puppy coat may be fuller and softer than the adult coat, which usually starts to grow in between 18 and 24 months. At certain stages of growth, the coat may seem to give a roll or bounce to the topline. Feel under the coat to evaluate structure.

Even the pups have the trademark beard, albeit a wee one. The hair on the back may part naturally, but should not be knitting-needle perfect.

Teenage coat may be skimpy in length, with a variety of shades of color, from very pale to very dark. Puppies can lose coat from front to back or from the part downward, or, occasionally, front and back to meet in the middle! Either way, adult coat often starts at the shoulders, and this is usually where texture is best felt. A dog may be three years or older before the adult coat is fully developed.



This adult has an excessively long, silky coat.

This adult Beardie has been trimmed and sculpted and should be penalized for this serious fault.



Pigmentation in blues is lighter and duller than in blacks. Even the blacks that fade to slate have darker pigmentation than the dilute blue. The same is true of fawns and browns; however, the differentiation may not be as distinct or obvious. Skin pigment on the muzzle is usually pink and may be spotted—perfectly acceptable.



PIGMENTATION: Pigmentation on the Bearded Collie follows coat color. In a born black, the eye rims, nose and lips are black, whereas in the born blue, the pigmentation is a blue-gray color. A born brown dog has brown pigmentation and born fawns a correspondingly lighter brown. The pigmentation is completely filled in and shows no sign of spots.

The four allowable colors in Beardies are illustrated with head studies and in standing profile. Top row: black and blue. Bottom row: brown and fawn.



COLOR

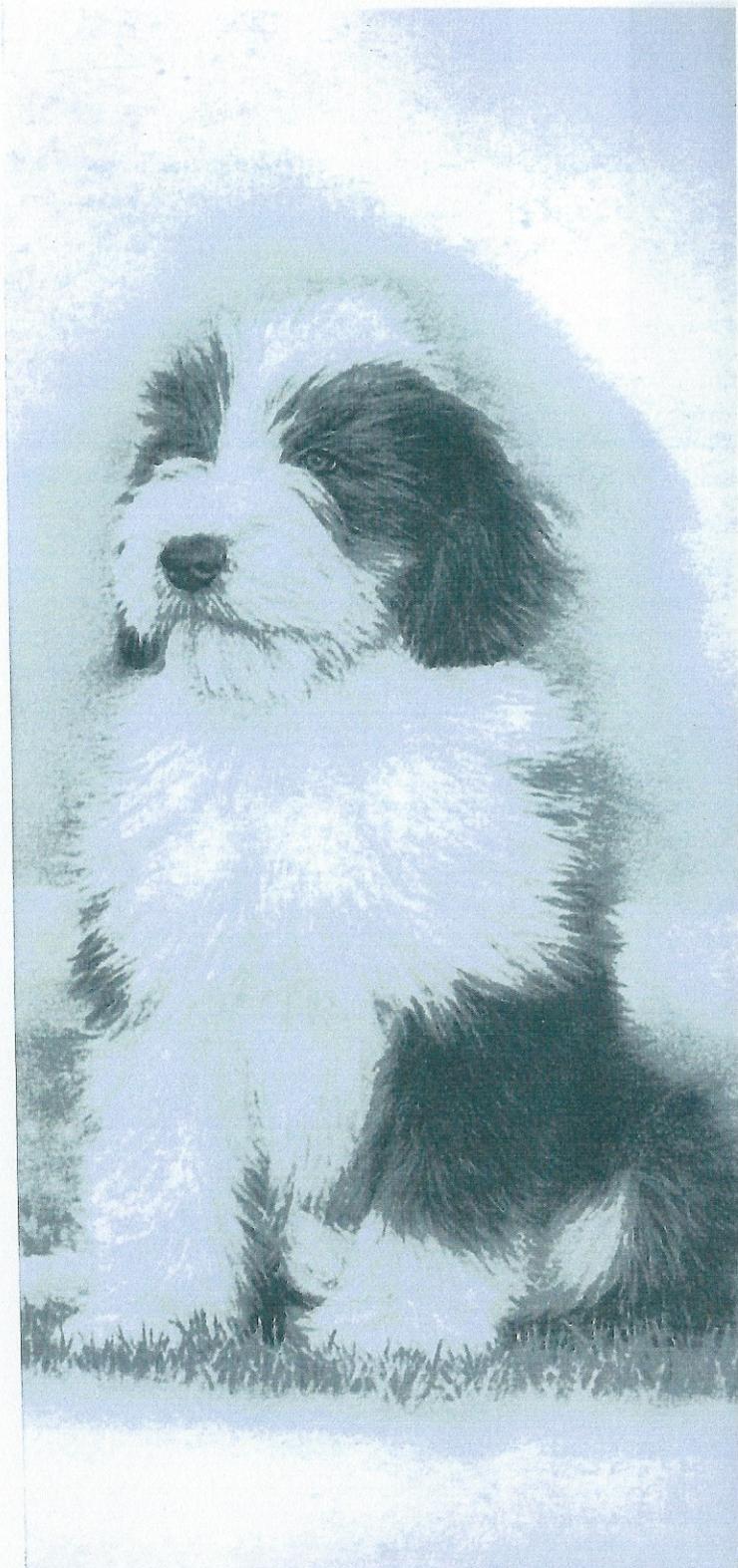
COAT: All Bearded Collies are born either black, blue, brown or fawn, with or without white markings. With maturity, the coat color may lighten, so that a born black may become any shade of gray from black to slate to silver, a born brown from chocolate to sandy. Blues and fawns also show shades from dark to light. Where white occurs, it only appears on the foreface as a blaze, on the skull, on the tip of the tail, on the chest, legs and feet and around the neck. The white hair does not grow on the body behind the shoulder nor on the face to surround the eyes. Tan markings occasionally appear and are acceptable on the eyebrows, inside the ears, on the cheeks, under the root of the tail, and on the legs where the white joins the main color.

White, when it occurs (and it usually does), appears in the Irish pattern—collar, forelegs and chest, rear feet to the hocks, muzzle, tip of tail and blaze up the middle of the face and skull—to a greater or lesser degree. Flashy markings should not be preferred over a plainer dog.

We have a misplaced comma in the above section. The sentence that reads, “Where white occurs, it only appears on the foreface as a blaze, on the skull . . .” should actually read, “Where white occurs, it only appears on the foreface, as a blaze on the skull . . .,” removing the erroneous impression that white may not be on the mustache or beard, but may cover the entire skull!

Most Beardies carry a fading gene, and their colors lighten as they mature, with the lightest coloration usually occurring about 10 to 18 months. Color can fade from ebony to gray, blue to silver, dark chocolate brown to sandy, and fawn to champagne. At times a fawn may actually appear darker than a brown or a blue darker than a black. A few Beardies retain their birth color throughout their lives. This also is acceptable. Color depth should not be a consideration, nor should one color be preferred over another. Tri markings, which are acceptable, are usually not visible on adults.

The important thing to remember is not whether a Beardie is black, blue, brown, or fawn, whether it's faded or a “stay-black.” It's whether the eye color and pigmentation tone with the coat.



The four allowable colors in Beardies are illustrated with head studies and in standing profile. Top row: black and blue. Bottom row: brown and fawn.



EYES: Eye color should be correct and clear with the color of the coat. In the fawn, the distinctive correct and



On this mismarked Beardie, white appears on the body behind the shoulder.

This is a mismarked head: the white surrounds the eyes.

EYES: Eye color will generally tone with the coat color. In a born blue or fawn, the distinctively lighter eyes are correct and must not be penalized.



The phrase “Eye color will generally tone with the coat color” can be difficult to interpret. Blues ideally have blue or blue-gray eyes, but they sometimes are a lighter shade of brown. The lighter the coat, the lighter the shade of the eyes, with amber (never yellow) as the lightest color. It is no more correct for a fawn to have dark brown eyes than for a coal black to have amber eyes. There should be no jarring difference between coat, eyes, and pigmentation.



Beardies single track as they increase speed.
NOTE: Many Beardies, being narrow-bodied dogs, tend to move closely in the rear. This is not the same thing as being cowhocked and should not be faulted.

This front is correct for a narrow-bodied dog like the Bearded Collie.





This front is too wide to allow for ideal effortless Beardie movement; the front legs should converge on a center line as speed increases.



This Beardie rear, though close, is correctly parallel and should not be faulted.



This Beardie is cowhocked. These turned-in hocks are incorrect and should be faulted.

SERIOUS FAULTS

snipy muzzle
flat croup or steep croup
excessively long, silky coat
trimmed or sculptured coat
height over or under the ideal



Most, if not all, Beardie breeder judges agree that faults of structure (flat or steep croup, and snipy muzzle) should be considered most serious. Faults which could interfere with performing the breed's historical function as herding dogs (height over or under the ideal and excessively long, silky coat) would be considered next. Cosmetic alterations such as (trimmed or sculptured coat), are not genetic. They do change our breed's "natural and unspoiled appearance," however, and do not depict TYPE, something we do not want to happen. These should also be faulted.





Speed alone does not a proper mover make! The Beardie's movement should be strong, yet effortless, with long, low, ground-covering strides and no wasted motion. The gait is easy, fluid, and light, almost floating, giving the impression the dog could gait all day without tiring.



This Beardie shows the correct ground-covering stride that comes from proper construction both front and rear.

This Beardie's incorrect kick-up in the rear comes from poor construction and wastes energy.

GAIT

Movement is free, supple and powerful. Balance combines good reach in forequarters with strong drive in hindquarters. The back remains firm and level. The feet are lifted only enough to clear the ground, giving the impression that the dog glides along making minimum contact.

Movement is lithe and flexible to enable the dog to make the sharp turns and sudden stops required of the sheepdog. When viewed from the front and rear, the front and rear legs travel in the same plane from the shoulder and hip joint to pads at all speeds. Legs remain straight, but feet move inward as speed increases until the edges of the feet converge on a center line at a fast trot.



This Beardie exhibits both inadequate front reach and restricted rear extension.

