

Judging the Chinese Crested

by Mary B. Napper

As a judge it is our responsibility to know as much as possible about the breed being presented to us. Over the many years I have been involved in this sport, I have seen how judges can make a difference in the future of a breed by rewarding the flashier, showier dog regardless of breed type. To help judges unfamiliar with this breed or newly approved judges to this breed, I am going to touch on areas that, as a breeder judge, I have seen questioned or misunderstood.

When your classes enter the ring, have them line up and take a moment to go down the line to look at the outline and breed essence. They should give the impression of refined elegance. Cresteds are a toy dog, fine-boned, elegant and graceful, they should not appear heavy or coarse. Overall balance, rectangular body, good length of neck and leg, with front and rear angulations being equal; remember balance.

When examining the dog on the table, remember to be gentle. A heavy hand does not do well with most toy breeds. Also, on cold or damp day, the Hairless variety is at a disadvantage of being “naked”. Under these conditions being on a table shivering should not be mistaken for shyness and judging structure might be more difficult. With that said however, the standard states that a Crested should be “Gay and Alert”, they should display a lively, curious personality and be friendly. A Crested should not be timid and cringing away.

While there are no disqualifications for size, Chinese Cresteds appear to be getting larger. Remember this is a toy breed, they should be between 11” - 13”, slightly larger or smaller should be considered. But what does “slightly” mean? I feel that 1/2-inch would be considered by most as “slightly”.

I start my examination by holding the head and look for the wedge-shape from the top and the side (not a triangle). The cheeks should taper cleanly in to the

muzzle. I prefer a well-chiseled head that shows expression and a nice pleasing almond shaped eye. I prefer a dark eye in a Crested as I believe it adds to the expression. However, the standard does state that lighter-colored dogs may have lighter-colored eyes and the pigment of the eye rims will match the coloring of the dog. I do not judge by the pieces but consider the entire dog and overall type.

When examining the bite, I use my thumb and index finger to gently lift the upper lip. The hairless are allowed to have missing teeth and will have forward slanting “tusk like” canines, do not hold this against them as it is a genetic mutation that, along with the lack of hair, also produces a lack of dentition, so missing teeth are not a fault in the Hairless Crested and perfect dentition should be appreciated. However, in Powderpuffs missing teeth are to be faulted. Both a scissors and level bite are accepted. Ears are relatively large and uncropped. They are to be carried erect in both the Puff and the Hairless. They can have the hair removed or be covered with hair. I think this is a personal preference of the breeder and I personally feel that as a breeder I look at each dog and evaluate what I want to accentuate. As a judge it makes no difference to me.

The body of the dog should be fine-boned and slender but not so refined as to appear breakable or on the other hand should not be robust and heavy structured. Their brisket should extend to the elbow, ribs should be well developed and the depth of chest tapers to a moderate tuck-up at the flank. The Crested should not be barrel chested. The topline should be level to a slightly sloping croup. I don't want an abrupt, steep croup, these are not little Afghans and to me this is unattractive. Something to remember, especially on the Hairless, if it is cold their topline may roach when actually if it were to be warmer this same specimen would have a level topline. The tail should be an

extension of its spine and should be carried gaily.... This does not mean a gay tail, it means that it should curve like a saber, but does not necessarily mean up and over the back (although I would prefer that to one that is tucked between the legs). The tail should not lay flat across the back of the dog. At rest the tail is down with a slight curve at the end of the tail.

My first breeds were in the Herding & Sporting groups so I like a dog that moves straight and true. This breed is very agile and should move smoothly without being stilted or hackneyed around the ring at a trot. They should go straight on the down and back and they should not paddle or pound the ground. The rear should be moderately angulated; they should not be cowhocked or have luxated patellas.

When I was first introduced to this breed, I heard the term “China Skinned” to describe the ideal skin texture of the hairless. The skin should be smooth and silk like to the touch. On the hairless, furnishings may range from sparse to heavy. Don't discard a dog just because it doesn't have a Clydesdale like mane, plume & socks. Yes it's flashier but look beyond the flash, is it more correct? To the exhibitors, if you are going to show me a dog with excess body hair, please do me the courtesy as to remove all of the stubble. The tail plume is only supposed to cover two-thirds of the tail, it should not go all the way to the root of the tail.

The Powderpuff has it's own challenges with coat. The correct coat should be a double soft, silky and straight coat. It should not be curly, kinky or have excessive scissoring or sculpting. The standard states that grooming should be minimal. Faces and ears do not need to be shaved, this is a preference of the exhibitor, educate yourself on the appearance of an unshaved face so you are not surprised when it is presented to you. Judges, please educate yourself to know

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what the untrimmed face looks like so you are not completely thrown by it's appearance. If you want pictures of what this looks like please ask and I will be happy to have pictures of full faces emailed to you for your review.

In closing, please remember to judge all the parts as a whole, do not fault judge, evaluate the overall dog while it's moving and above all ask yourself... Is this a toy dog, is it fine-boned, is it elegant and graceful? Is this a Chinese Crested?



About Mary...

I got addicted to the sport of dogs in 1975 in Kalamazoo Michigan with an Old English Sheepdog and a great mentor.

I consider "my breeds" being the Chinese Crested and the Cocker Spaniel which I have bred and exhibited for many years. I have also owned Komondorok, Afghans & Miniature Pinschers and handled many other breeds. When I decided to start breeding I chose the kennel name of "Tumbleweed" because of the moving around the country and ending up in Texas, it just fit.

I started judging in 2007 after many years of putting the application back in the drawer. I have had the great honor of being elected by the membership of the American Spaniel Club to judge the Cocker Spaniel National Specialty - Particolor Variety in 2009. To a breeder judge this was the ultimate compliment by my peers. I believe in giving each dog my full attention and

consideration, after all the exhibitors have paid for my time and whether or not I choose their dog, they are entitled to my honest and unbiased opinion. I currently judge 4 breeds (3 of which are toys) including Junior Showmanship and waiting on final approval for 4 additional toy breeds.

I am a member of the American Chinese Crested Club, Dallas Miniature Pinscher Club, American Spaniel Club, Nolan River Kennel Club where I have held a position on the Board of Directors and have been Show Chairman 2007-2011 and the Cocker Spaniel Specialty Club of Dallas where I currently serve as President. I also am a member of several judges association including the DFW Judges Association where our main focus is education.



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877 690 3647
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