

# AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL KENNEL COUNCIL



## Extended Breed Standard of **THE CLUMBER SPANIEL**

Produced by  
Clumber Spaniel League Victoria Inc.  
in collaboration with the ANKC

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“Very different types of Clumber Spaniels have from time to time been exhibited, and although there is a standard of points for judging Clumbers, there is no denying the fact that there are slight differences of opinion as to what should constitute the ideal type of Clumber.” <sup>1</sup>

## **HISTORY OF THE CLUMBER SPANIEL**

“As a sporting spaniel, it may be said that the Clumber has no equal among the different varieties of spaniels. They certainly may not be quite so flashy in outward appearance to the casual observer, but they are very much sounder in actual work, for once they have been properly broken, they do not easily forget their lesson; they are less headstrong, more honest and conscientious in their perseverance, better game-finders, and although perhaps not as a rule quite so fast in their pace as the more leggy springer, they can be got quite quick enough to satisfy the most fastidious, and, if properly trained in condition, will endure and stay as well as any.” <sup>2</sup>

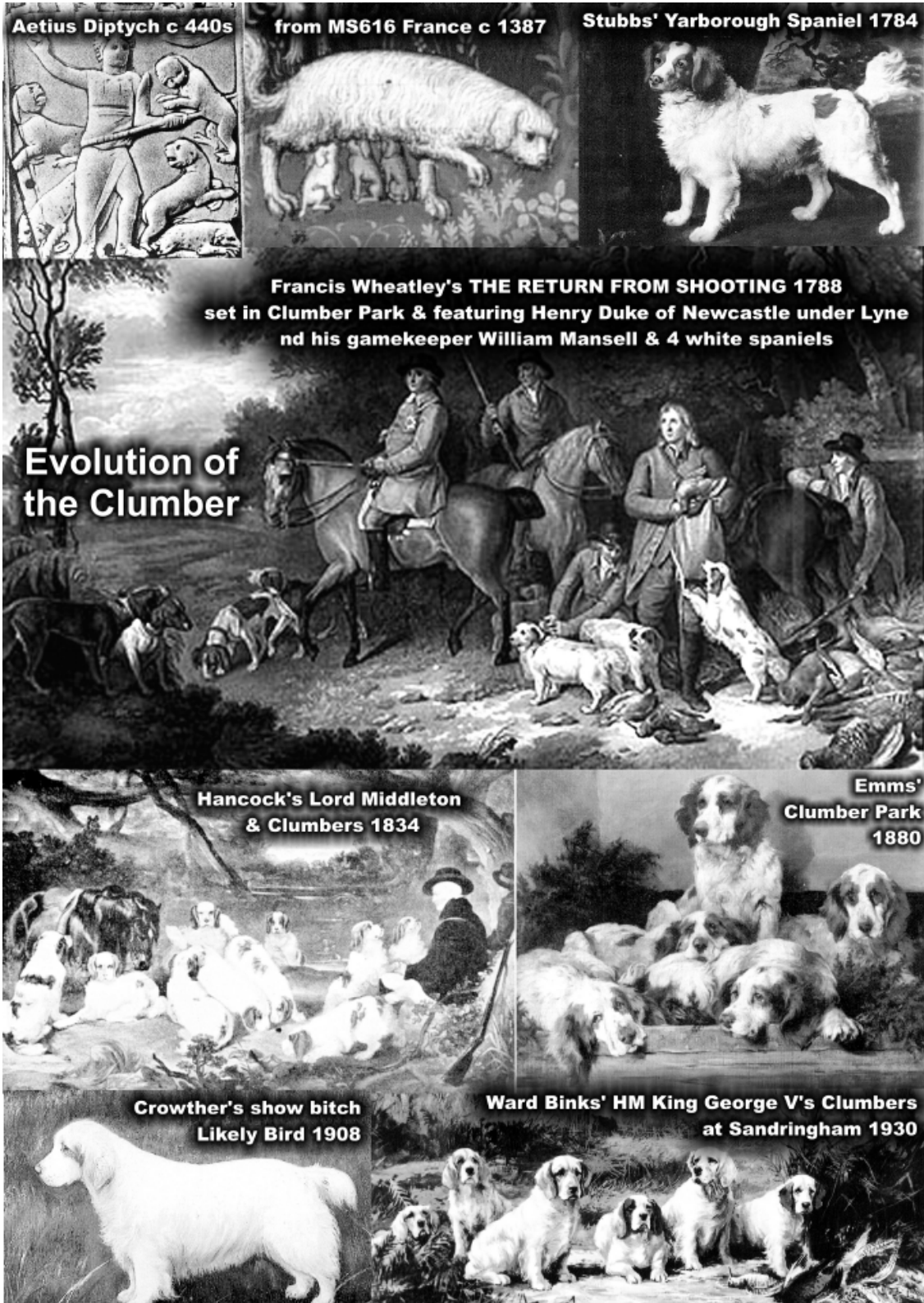
The Clumber Spaniel is the oldest gun/field dog, developed for a specific purpose by sportsmen; in fact the Clumber is one of the oldest named breeds. History has seen the development of a number of such breeds but they have died out or further evolved. The Laverack and Llewelin Setters are an example of strains merging to yield a modern breed; the English Setter. The Clumber Spaniel is unique in that Henry, second Duke of Newcastle under Lyne, bred a kennel of stylish and efficient but thorough dogs as general-purpose field dogs, or spaniels, and granted them the title of Clumber. The name came from the estate where they were first recognised as a breed. The Duke’s head gamekeepers, the Mansell family, for over three generations, were the people responsible for the care and breeding of the white spaniels.

Francis Wheatley RA (1788) executed the first portrait of the Newcastle spaniels and from then the breed was widely sought by sportsmen. Some years earlier Newcastle’s cousin the Duke of Yarborough commissioned George Stubbs to execute a portrait of a large white spaniel that is undeniably a Clumber. In the area of Clumber Park many noblemen established their own sporting kennels from the Newcastle seed stock. Generations of families such as the Royal family starting with HRH Prince Albert, his son Edward VII and his son George V (and after a two generation gap) now HRH the Princess Royal; and the Foljambe family have shot over and exhibited their Clumber Spaniels.

There is a persistent myth that the Clumber Spaniel was a gift from the French Duc de Noailles to Henry, Duke of Newcastle under Lyne because of the French Revolution, however after years of research by professional and amateur historians there is no documentary evidence to support this claim in any way. The French Revolution gained full momentum in 1793 - yet the breed is portrayed in definitive paintings in Nottinghamshire, England in 1784 and 1788. The testimony of John Mansell also brings the claim into ridicule: *"... I do not know the exact date of the spaniels being introduced into England, but it must be almost as soon as the duke inherited the title (1768), as the Mansell in the picture was my great grandfather, and they first came in my great great grandfather's time."*<sup>3</sup>

If the dogs arrived at Clumber Park in 1768, the aristocracy had the benefit of twenty five years notice of the horrendous French Revolution. Rawdon Lee<sup>4</sup> pushes the date back even further to 1720 with the dogs actually arriving from France and being the property of Earl Spencer of Althorp. In any case, the breed has been a purely English one since at least the mid 1780s.

Another myth must also be shown for what it is, unfeasible nonsense. The claim that the Clumber owes any of its attributes to the Basset Hound is based on poor interpretation of a statement from a naive author - Hugh Dalziel<sup>5</sup> (1879) actually said of the origin of the Clumber's long, low stature, "it is a puzzle to me" ... "I content myself with imagining the introduction of French Bassets to the Clumber kennels". Any one who has the slightest knowledge of breeding and inherited traits of such things as leg length, coat type, and many other points, or a smidgen of dog history (Bassets arrived in the UK<sup>6</sup> decades after Dalziel's proposed crossbreeding), or has taken the time to review modern DNA studies<sup>7</sup> of dog breed families will know the Clumber is not closely related to the Basset.



*Fig 1: A collage of paintings & illustrations showing the evolution of the Clumber Spaniel breed from 440s to the 1930s*

Clumbers have been well represented around the globe. They arrived in Canada in 1844, and a pair direct from Clumber Park arrived and established the breed in Australia (and later New Zealand) in 1883. They were amongst the first ten breeds recognised in the show scene in England, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The breed's initial claim to fame was in the field trials, but after sweeping the awards at most of the first trials, authorities re-wrote the regulations to suit the sprightlier Springers, so Clumbers faded from the UK field trial scene, the show scene has been the main nursery of the breed since.

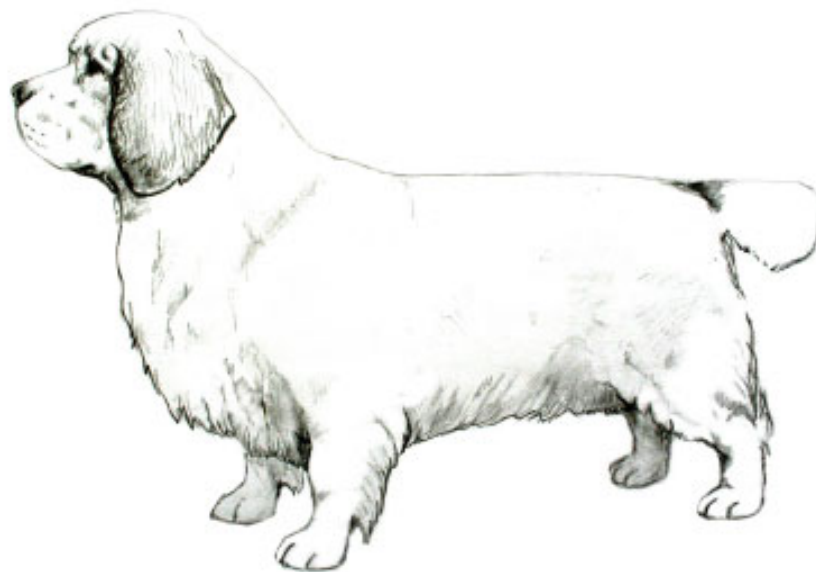
The first southern hemisphere Best in Show Clumber was Ponto in 1899 at the Auckland Kennel Club (bred from Australian Clumbers), while KCC CH Thornville Swim (imp UK) was the first in Australia to claim an all breeds Best in Show (Phillip Island Hospital Show - on her Aussie debut) in 1959; her daughter KCC Ch Erinveine Gleam was the first locally bred Clumber to attain that honour in 1962. Since then the breed has continued to do exceptionally well in the showing. Australian bred Clumbers have also notched up CD, AD, JD titles in Australia, TD in Canada (in fact the breed's first there) and America, and American CGC, and a field Qualifying Certificate in New Zealand.

In 1999 the Clumber Spaniel League Victoria was founded. The club became affiliated with the Victorian Canine Association in 2004, the centenary year of the UK club. On July 10, 2005, twenty one Clumber Spaniels congregated in Melbourne for Australia's first ever breed shows - the Clumber Spaniel League Victoria hosted an Open Show and a Championship Show. Exhibitors came from Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales, and Victoria, with dogs bred in Australia, New Zealand, Holland and the UK competing. The shows attracted the Australian breed record entries of 23 and 24 respectively with 19 being able to compete on the day, still making it easily Australia's biggest public Clumber event. The previous record entry was 21 set in 1995 at the Victorian Gundog Club's 50th Anniversary Championship Show. In 2004 Sydney hosted 17 Clumber entries under USA breeder Doug Johnson of Clussexx Spaniels.

Readers are reminded to always consider what is written or told of the Clumber Spaniel with deference to his heritage as a spaniel for working in extremely difficult conditions where game was sparse.

*"I advise approaching the dog confidently, not boldly. I set my starting point and my finish and I place my hands firmly on the exhibit. I want to know exactly what is there. My own dogs are used to firm hands and do not like being gushed over. Take to mind that, to a very great extent, the future of the breed depends upon the judges who run the rule over it. ... One real problem, hated by all exhibitors, is that of the judge who just does not know, and therefore cannot apply the points of the Breed Standard. Unfortunately in Clumber Spaniels there are so many such judges." <sup>8</sup>*

## STANDARD AND BREED STANDARD EXTENSION



*Fig 2: A typical specimen that conforms to the Clumber Spaniel Breed Standard*

### ● GENERAL APPEARANCE

***Well balanced, heavily boned, active with a thoughtful expression, overall appearance denoting strength.***

From the side the Clumber is low set; with obvious but powerful legs, he should exhibit good to excellent angulation fore and aft and stand “four square” without assistance. He has balance (equal mass) between the front and hindquarter. He should carry his tail about level with his back when on the move, that is parallel to the ground, a gentle wave from side to side when very comfortable with the environment or vigorously and most often a little raised when head down and on a scent. From the rear he should stand with his hind legs parallel and set apart so the feet are about in line with the outside of his hindquarters. The lower thigh should not pull into the centre line and achieve the rear pasterns brushing each other. The head should be carried decidedly above the topline when he stands relaxed; this is a Clumber not a Sussex Spaniel. From in front, his broad chest is evident with the forelimbs fitting neatly against the sides and dropping down to form very strong parallel props.

Likewise the short, strong legs typical of the Clumber contributed to his sturdiness in the low height clearance areas he so often worked and so provide exceptionally strong stumps or foundations for his body. From all aspects the feet should be evident, large and round, deep and strong.

The Clumber Spaniel is always basically white; any markings are of a lemon or very light hue or perhaps a genetic series of this colour so the orange is acceptable both genetically and in reality. The white base allows the dog to be clearly identified even when he is working the thickest coverts of an estate.

The Clumber Spaniel gained his fame for his working ability at Clumber Park, which is situated in the northern parts of Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, in the midlands of England. This is an estate that has never been very productive in the growth of quality timber, much was removed to furnish the fleet sent against the Spanish Armada and regeneration was slow to develop, scrub was scrawny and woody. The estate never provided good cover for birds and feathered game was often introduced to the estate for sport and also to try to increase local supplies. One of the main sources of income for country estates and the families who owned them was the harvesting of naturally occurring game, which was sold in London. Although sparsely inhabited by feathered game, Clumber Park was often over run with rabbits, however, apart from feeding the locals there was never much market demand for rabbits. Rabbit warrens disturbed the natural ecology and even disturbed regeneration of plant species; the only plant to reliably establish itself was the rhododendron. Unlike the tame domestic varieties we know of around the world today, the rhododendrons, still to be seen in the park grew tall and their branches droop down to ground level forming a massive, difficult barrier which is not easily penetrated.

The Clumber Spaniel, to be of any use to the landowner, needed to be

- ◆ very thorough and diligent in hunting up game
- ◆ very true to following a scent because of the lack of game numbers, and
- ◆ able to work quietly or silently to avoid flushing game before the guns were within shot, as there was a scarcity of game
- ◆ able to push through woody scrub
- ◆ easily seen because of the rhododendrons and the camouflaging effect of the heavy cover
- ◆ hardy and tough to avoid personal damage when working in such terrain

The density of the bone, required to carry this style of dog that is squat and bulky, must be heavy and dense which adds considerably to the weight of a Clumber specimen. Spongy bone can often appear strong if it is thick to view, however such bone is inappropriate, as it will not supply the internal framework needed to keep a dog working for eight plus years. The calibre of the bone is easily measured if a hand is placed around the limb and slid down, or even more precise is to feel the tail for its whole length (assuming it is not bob docked!). The feel of the underline of the lower jaw is also another excellent place to assess the calibre of the bone quality. For those not restricted to making this assessment in the field or showing, the X-ray plates for hip dysplasia assessment is also extremely informative as the actual density and diameter of the upper thigh and pelvis bones is revealed.

## ● CHARACTERISTICS

***Stoical, great-hearted, highly intelligent with a determined attitude enhancing his natural ability. A silent worker with an excellent nose.***

Although very brave and impervious to rough vegetation on a scent the Clumber is also very responsive to concern on your part for his well being - the patient is really too trusting of our abilities to mend all diseases and ailments!

By no means a dolt or dunce, this dog is actually extremely intelligent. He accomplishes so much of his learning by mimicry that he really is very easy to train, although of course he can be easily bored by constant repetitive obedience trial drill.

The Clumber is a rare breed in that he does not give tongue or bark when working a scent, how one tests this in the show ring is to be resolved.

The Clumber Spaniel is often described as ‘the old man’s dog’, most assume because of his relative slow hunting of a field, however, it is as much to do with his loyalty and diligence, qualities older men have over the youth and qualities the senior hunter truly appreciates. For a retired gentleman the Clumber is a dog that puts up enough game and game that is within range of the guns, he is not a dog that darts hither and thither putting up game from one side of the field to the other, wasting time, shot and energy.

## ● TEMPERAMENT

***Steady, reliable, kind and dignified; more aloof than other Spaniels, showing no tendency towards aggression.***

The Standard’s description is fairly self-explanatory, but a word about “more aloof than other Spaniels” because this breed is the oldest named breed, and until the 1950s was essentially a kennel and pack dog and so still is best suited as a pack breed. Whereas the Springers, Fields, and Cockers have more traditionally been kept within the gamekeeper’s cottage in much smaller groups. The Springers and Cockers too have enjoyed more showring popularity, so again any ancestral kennel or pack bonds have been teased away.

Unlike the Cockers and Springers, he is not effusive with those he doesn’t know, but he won’t forget someone he has met.

The Clumber should never be considered as a guard dog except perhaps with your own personal items or the game bag.

Temperament, while inherited, is as much a result of the environment and management than we often realise. Unfortunately, as with all creatures, a Clumber that is badly frightened may have a temperament problem for life. Consider also that temperament is a sign of overall well being, bad temperament may be the product of a bad diet or disease.

The Clumber is loyal, biddable, and anticipatory of your moods and wishes and wherever he can be he will be your constant companion and confidante.





James Farrow THE CLUMBER SPANIEL 1912 Illustrated Kennel News UK

*Fig 4: the Clumber at work and play.*



- **HEAD AND SKULL**

***Square, massive, medium length, broad on top with decided occiput; heavy brows; deep stop. Heavy, square muzzle with well developed flews. No exaggeration in head and skull.***

The Oxford Dictionary says massive is “*large and heavy or solid; (of features, head, etc) relatively large, of solid build*”, in the modern day and age we are all inclined to confuse “massive” with “mammoth” which of course is huge, and another issue to confuse breeders and judges is that from the 1930s onwards massive was (previous to 1987) used to describe the whole Clumber, today it is not - the word “massive” now appears only in the description of the head.



*Fig. 5 Two distinctive types of head, but both conform to the Breed Standard.*

The square head accentuates those sinuses most suitable to hunting stale or old scent on sparsely vegetated ground that does not hold scent well. The shortness of skull, brain box (skull) and muzzle, allows the scent vapours to quickly reach the sinuses. The length of jaw is hardly compromised as the cranium is so long compared to the muzzle; this allows the Clumber to still be a useful retriever.

The deep stop, which lies perpendicular to the bridge of the muzzle, allows vegetation to glance and glide over the skull, as the Clumber works on ground scent, his nose only millimetres (say half an inch) from the ground, at about 45 degrees, his flews allowing a little moisture to freshen the stale scent of the ground. The flews or upper lips are fairly thick, and should hang well down over the lower jaw to protect his teeth and gums in severe conditions when hunting and provide a moist and warm microclimate to “thaw” the ground scent. With his head carried to scent the air currents or as posed in the showing the flews form a square visage adding to the squareness of the profile of his head. His nose pushes through the scanty grasses, drives the heavier twigs and branches up and over the nose, which then suddenly bounce up and over the brows and slip off over the broad flat skull.

The eyes are recessed so that the skin can provide protection from the vegetation ploughed through. The ear shape and placement is likewise very important, but is discussed under Ears. The pronounced occiput is a product of extremely well developed sinuses and provides another point of armour plating for the “veritable bulldozer” protecting the back of the skull and also the point of connection of the spine to the skull. The pronounced occiput is a “soft” protrusion in the Clumber as the bony structure is well protected by a heavy skin and short neat coat, it will not appear as prominently as it does in the Pointer or the Basset who have neither the skin or coat to compare with the Clumber and have different head shapes.

From in front a broad flat nose and fairly wide bridge and muzzle, the perpendicular drop of the stop accentuate the squareness of the head and broad and well developed brows which take much of the wear from hunting in scrub. The cheeks and zygomatic arches while well developed are not very prominent because of the wide muzzle, heavy skin and thick coat.

The top of the skull is broad and flat, again adding to the square visage. The lower jaw needs to be strong and squarely set to allow for light retrieving duties. Teeth and bites are discussed further on.

Proportions are not discussed in the Standard, and nor (as defined in the ANKC Glossary of Terms) is a ‘balanced head’ required - rather always look for a head with squareness viewed from all directions that still allows retrieving and scenting on poor scent retaining ground. Short muzzles and large skulls can do this, likewise a head where the muzzle and skull are about even can do so also, width of skull and muzzle must be appropriately altered to achieve the squareness and avoid exaggeration. The Clumber is primarily a flushing spaniel for working to dense undergrowth in heavily wooded and poorly maintained terrain, his head shape allows for this but without destroying his ability to retrieve shot game.

So while the degree of squareness and overall shape will accentuate the spaniel's ability to scent (by allowing appropriate sinuses to be large and effective) in such conditions, these points should never be allowed to reach a point where they will detract from his usefulness as a general spaniel and light retriever. For example, excess or loose skin over a weak eyebrow will reduce the capacity of the dog to see into the distance as the excess skin hoods his eye, such excess skin will also snag in the Clumber's native terrain.

## ● EYES

***Clean, dark amber, slightly sunk, some haw showing but without excess. Full light eyes highly undesirable. Free from entropion.***

The eye should be of a deep orange or amber colour - the actual colour and depth is of course dependent on the actual lemon marking on the coat because of the genetics of colours. A true lemon is hard pushed to have a really dark amber eye.

Full light eyes are undesirable as they detract from the dog's expression with a moon like look. A full eye will be prone to damage in the Clumber's natural terrain. The eye is recessed or slightly sunken to limit the chances of the vegetation tearing the cornea. Likewise the skin around the eye should be loose and a little haw should be evident to allow tears, which will form naturally if a foreign body lodges itself, to easily flush away any foreign bodies.

Haw is the red tissue visible when the lower lid is a little loose - it is not redness of the white of the eyeball, but the tissue below the eyeball. A Clumber needs to exhibit no more than a flash of red for his tear washing mechanism to work well and to stave off eye infections.

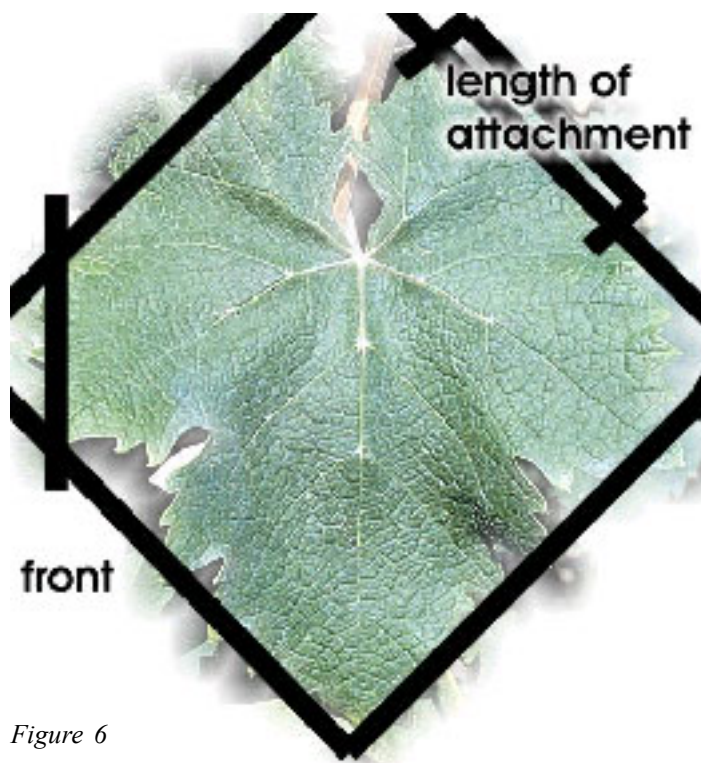
Eye shape is not defined, but the Standard implies, that in shape the eye appears like a diamond in very heavily skinned dogs or more like a round top very short diamond in the best sort of Clumber who has a good big head, reasonable skin looseness, no entropion, and good boning.

The formation of the eyelids should also be considered, any fanning out or rolling in of the eye lids can be reasonably penalised as it impairs the natural ability of the eye to flush and may also allow damage to the cornea, however the Standard only specifically penalises entropion, not ectropion but ectropion is a conformation fault and can be treated as any other conformation fault such as east-west fronts and cow hocks. The rim of the lower eyelid should be clean and well formed and free of eyelashes, the skin colour should be a light tan, pink or white being unflattering and prone to sunburn. Similarly there should be a clear line of differentiation of the rim of upper eyelid, but the degree is not as marked as in the lower eyelid.

Entropion is a common fault in the breed, but now should not be tolerated in show or breeding stock - entropion in veterinary terms is the turning or rolling in of either the upper or lower (or both) eyelid rims or a part of the rims to the extent that the eyeball/cornea is touched and suffers damage. In ANKC Terms any rolling or turning in of the eyelids is considered entropion. As to the inherited traits of this disease in the Clumber there is no documentation.

- **EARS**

***Large, vine leaf-shaped, well covered with straight hair. Hanging slightly forward, feather not to extend below leather.***



*Figure 6*

The short broad ears are much more typical of the modern setter, albeit larger, than of the spaniel family bar the Welsh Springer. As the Clumber snuffles along so diligently the large ears drape forward so providing blinker or side protection for the eyes and allow the slightly moistened scent to warm between the cheek and ear leather before being drawn into the mouth or nose. The ear, unlike the majority of spaniels, is attached across a broad edge to make it more stable and less liable to damage in tough terrain. Described as a vine leaf ear, it is short in length and broad through the centre.

The name is derived from the shortness and broadness typical of the grape vine leaf hung from its stalk. The whole ear lies flat against the skull. In shape it mimics a square of equal length sides, suspended from one corner. In most instances the forward most free hanging corner of this square is not present giving a pentagon shape. For a vine leaf ear to hang correctly it must be suspended from the head along about one half length of a side of a square. A vine leaf ear should not fold or drape as a curtain and under no circumstances should such an ear reach the nose if laid along, or measured against, the muzzle. The broadness provides protection to the eye, the shortness means the Clumber won't trample on the ear as he works the ground scents. The feathering of the ear should not extend below the ear proper, if it did so it is prone to trampling by the feet and snaring in vegetation or picking up loose vegetation. A working Clumber or one exercised regularly even over lawns, will naturally wear the length of feathering back to the edge of the leather. Straight hair is essential, and not necessarily present in all Clumbers, for hygiene and avoiding vegetation collection.

- **MOUTH**

***Jaws strong, with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.***

A scissor bite is now the preferred formation, although breeders worldwide still can find this challenging. To accommodate the regular complement of incisors the jaw needs to be wide and keep a level pace of growth while the Clumber grows. Growth in fits and starts so often yields a faulty bite. In the adult Clumber check to see the last to cut premolars, those which lie behind the canines on the lower jaw, have also erupted; their absence is often the only reason a dog has a good bite, their eruption often being the last straw to crowd the mouth and drive the lower incisors beyond the upper. The angle of the lower jaw, below the jaw hinge or joint, needs to be square and clean cut to achieve the maximum length of lower jaw to accommodate the full complement of adult teeth. Likewise a slack jaw joint has been frequently implicated in the bad bites found in Clumbers. Bites as described within the Standard are achievable, don't be too lenient with ones that do not reach this grade, however, considering the breed's worldwide population it is salient to remind readers that the whole dog does not hang by its teeth.

## ● NECK

***Fairly long, thick, powerful.***

The first part of the spine forms the core of the neck, a neck that needs to have good length because of the lovely forehand angulation in a good working Clumber to allow the head to be carried downwards comfortably with the nose just skimming above the ground surface, and thick enough to provide a wedge to allow the shoulders and chest to follow where the head has already penetrated, and strong enough to carry retrieved game, and long enough so the game is not dragged.

## ● FOREQUARTERS

***Shoulders strong, sloping, muscular; legs short, straight, well boned, strong.***

The Clumber Spaniel is NOT a dwarf<sup>9</sup>, a short pastern achieves much of the shortness of leg and the body being set down into the legs - so the underline lies below the elbow. Dogs set up on leg are prone to more fatigue and damage in getting under scrub.

The shoulder blade needs to be broad and neat but with a good ridge. The scapula ridge runs the length of the blade and is where so many of the muscles attach; a well-developed muscle will need a good anchorage point.

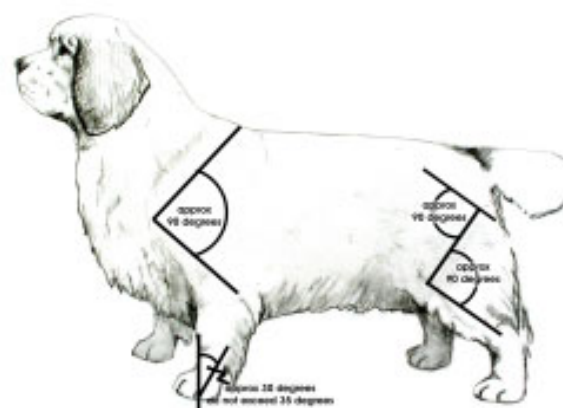


Figure 7. Demonstrating the fore & rear angulation.

The withers, also not specifically defined in the Standard, which is the place where the tops of the shoulder blades almost meet being the highest points of the shoulder blades, should be fairly wide and flat as the ribcage must be broad on top to maximise structural strength of the ribcage and ensure the lungs and heart are not restricted.

Also as the Clumber bunches himself to his lowest possible height you will notice his withers tend to “punch” and his spine actually sinks further down between the withers. This allows him to assume the minimum height but remain active and free moving on his limbs. Reasonably broadly set withers make this possible and also allows them to form a peak that lets the heavy vegetation glide over the body.

Not described in the Standard per se, the presence of the upper arm is obvious. To further complement the uplifting power of the forelimb (the Clumber has a heavy chest and only short limbs, he needs mobility to climb over fallen logs, down into streams and up banks) the upper arm should be nearly as long as, if not equal in length to, the shoulder blade, this will also ensure the whole upper two bones of the forelimb girdle the rib cage so giving protection and strength to the forequarter of the Clumber. The upper arm needs to be long to help distribute the weight of the dog, and to fit within the confines of the body it consequently needs to be well laid, this also gives the dog’s trunk more length without lengthening the back. As the usual method is to measure the lay with the shoulder blade; as near as possible the upper arm should be at an angle of ninety degrees with the shoulder blade (measured in the angle towards the rear of the dog). Good fore and aft angulation, where each pair of limb bones lying within the protection of the body, also gives the dog a little more spring and flexibility which is important for covering tricky terrain with limited height access.

The elbow should lie neatly in a shallow concave or slightly flattened section of the rib cage; it must not be lumpy or prominent, or tied. The Clumber works in heavy undergrowth and does not need to have this joint damaged by being dragged against woody vegetation. And also this is a heavy breed for its height, arthritis in this joint will be aggravated by the weight of the dog.

The foreleg (viewed from the side), a point not discussed in the standard, should have a slight easing in the pastern to cushion the body from the shock of the heavy chest being lifted up and forward, however the slope of the pastern should not exceed thirty five degrees measured from the perpendicular - any more and the tendons cannot mediate the stress placed on the limbs as the weight is brought down onto the foot nor operate efficiently as the toes are dug into the ground to provide the momentum to lift the chest up and forwards when the dog moves.

The carpus (wrist), not discussed in the Standard, which is a joint, will naturally be slightly larger in circumference than the leg, however; again the difference should only be marginal viewed from the front or side.

Just below the carpus, again viewed from the front, there is often a depression obvious on the inside margin of the leg. This is evident in those dogs with a lovely natural gentle growth twist to bones forming the pastern, the twist adding structural strength and the clean lines are a good sign of high quality and strong bone. This is not the same as poor bone structure or bent, twisted or Queen Anne fronts.

The lower arm/forearm/foreleg/leg should be straight and strong, thickening in diameter as it approaches the elbow. Viewed from the front the forelegs should be gun barrel straight on their inside planes which melt into the chest, the outside planes will thicken slightly but markedly as the eye travels up from the foot to the elbow.

The feet, but particularly the pasterns, carpus, foreleg comprise the leg of the standard, which must be short (short compared to the tall breeds of the gundog group not short as in the Sealyham Terrier or other dumpy breeds otherwise the Clumber will not be able to work in its native terrain), straight, well boned and strong, thus you penalise knock knees, east-west fronts, bandy legs, tied at elbow, pigeon toes, narrow fronts, dropped or soft pasterns and similar conformation faults

- **BODY**

***Long, heavy, near to ground. Chest deep. Well sprung ribs. Back straight, broad, long. Muscular loin, well let down in flank.***

The top of the spine should be flush with the shoulder blades (so the spine proper, spinal column, is well recessed) to form broad and flat withers allowing the maximum of flexibility in trunk movement without jeopardising the strength of the body. From the spine at this point springs the ribs. The spine needs to be broad and deep to carry excellent quality muscle and to nourish the development and maintenance of the ribs. The well muscled ribs should shoot out on a near-horizontal plane to form a broad and firm back and then sweep around to form a fairly flat sided but very deep cage, turning in towards the centre underline to meet the sternum which needs to be broad to add rigidity and supply a flat base to the cage. The sternum carries on well back along the base of the trunk, but also the prosternum flies forward and in a bold upward arch between the front legs to give a broad flattish chest; in the palm of the hand it should be full and have a decided but comfortably fitting curve, akin to the bow of a tall ship's long boat rather than a punt. Each rib should contribute to the depth of the cage and so to the body. Exceptional angulation fore and aft with a long ribcage where even the hindmost ribs are full and well let down gives the breed its length of body without creating a weak back. Poorly nourished or badly formed rear ribs give the tuck up more typically found in a Whippet than a quality Clumber.

The good angulation in the hindquarter and the well developed pelvis ensure the flank is small so making the Clumber a short coupled dog in this respect with the strength of trunk to support the broad flat and firm back.

Through the loin there should be very little difference in the topline after the last rib and within the loin and the unshielded flank suspended from this. The crest of the iliac wings are palpable and add strength to the back in this essentially unsupported area of the body, the spine continues along across the length of the pelvis, dropping a shade, to emerge well down the length of the croup, as the tail is 'low set', this length of pelvis and bulk of the croup adds to the overall length of the body to the viewer. Overall the croup presents a relatively level aspect not a rounded fall.

The body is set down so the underline is below the elbows; this again accentuates the long and low nature of the breed. The Clumber is long bodied, but not elongated like the Dachshund.

- **HINDQUARTERS**

***Very powerful and well developed. Hocks low, stifles well bent and set straight.***



The foundation of the hind limbs are the feet which should be rounded, deep, broad and flat on top and like the fore feet half as wide again as the immediate leg circumference to conform to the Standard's requirements (see Feet). The rear pastern or metatarsals (that is the "hock to heel") should be short, clean and strong, this gives strength to the rear limbs and sets the actual hock low. This part of the limb carries most of the hindquarter weight at rest and is the thrusting piston that propels a strong hindquarter forward when the dog moves.

When the Clumber stands naturally on an even surface, his feet should rest on all his pads with his nail ends resting on the ground, his rear pasterns should be vertical to the ground, the front plane of the rear pasterns is in the perpendicular line with the rearmost part of the pelvis (he stands marginally beyond his hindquarter), his rear pasterns viewed from behind are parallel to each other and spaced well apart but not beyond the perpendicular plane from his thigh, his hocks and thighs likewise need to be parallel, and overall presented in a 'square' pillar like fashion.

The hock is the joint connecting the rear pastern to the second or lower thigh. The hock joint needs to be firm and well formed, it should never be able to flex markedly forwards (popping). On the move, the hock should retain its flexibility which allows the rear pastern to be swept forward and also extended back a little beyond the perpendicular; as the thrust travels down from the body to drive the dog forwards, then the hock extends until the dog draws its leg forward again. The Clumber cannot afford to have trailing hind feet or it will lose its power and momentum. There should be no looseness allowing the hock joint to swing or wobble from side to side. Cow hocks are more a weakness in the two thighs, stifle and pelvis than in the hock joint itself, but in any case should be considered a weakness within the breed particularly as the Standards requires a "very powerful and well developed" hindquarter.

The lower or second thigh lies between the hock and the actual knee or stifle joint. The lower thigh is longer than the rear pastern (so giving hocks that are "well let down") but should be close to equal in length to the upper thigh, which lies between the stifle and the pelvis. The lower or second thigh is strong and thick to handle and very well endowed with strong firm muscle around it.

The stifle is the knee joint and probably the weakest point of the hind limb; however, interestingly in the Clumber it is rarely a problem. The stifle should lie in line with the upper and lower thigh and have a large but closely lying and neat fitting patella or kneecap. The stifle is a joint and its ability to flex should be demonstrated when the dog moves. The open style formation allows the dog remarkable flexibility when transferring power from the body and pelvis down to his hind feet.

The upper thigh is often masked from the uninitiated eye, however it is there and equally important. In length it is nearly the same as that of the lower thigh, the angle (again measured towards the rear of the dog) at the stifle formed by the upper and lower thighs should be about 90 degrees. Again, like the lower thigh, it should be strong and the actual bone should have a sweeping wave through its length to give added strength, and likewise it should be covered in strong and healthy muscle. The upper thigh lies between the stifle and the pelvis, which is a cage like structure giving width to the hindquarters as the ribs do in the forequarters.

The upper thigh should lie at about 90 degrees to the pelvis and the hip should be about two thirds down from the fore end of the pelvis.

None of these angles are spelt out in the Standard, but striving to achieve these angles gives a mechanism that will most closely approach the Standard's call for "Hindquarters-Very powerful and well developed. Hocks low, stifles well bent and set straight."

The pelvis should be broad and the upper points (the iliac wing crests) should be easily felt through the topline, the rear most points (the pin bones) should be easily identified about one quarter of the depth down the trunk and below the tail, the hip points (greater trochanter) should be fairly easily found at least on handling and should be significantly set off from the centre line and set down the trunk depth a little below the level the tail "appears". It is unwise to use the butt of the tail to locate the line of the hip joint for the simple reason that bad pelvis lay and shape are common in the Clumber Spaniel and using the tail butt as the source point could confuse. Again, per se, the pelvis is not discussed in the Standard, but the overall picture of a "*Appearance-Well balanced, heavily boned*" dog with "*Hindquarters-Very powerful and well developed. Hocks low, stifles well bent and set straight.*" can be best achieved by selecting a dog that has power and strength throughout the whole hindquarter. This is mechanically achieved with optimum angulation at each and every joint without over-angulation, which weakens the power of the dog. By packing in the angulation but without over-angulation, more power is available to lift and move forward the heavy dog, without adding height.

- **FEET**

***Large, round, well covered with hair.***

The foundations of any building or animal will determine how well it can meet its function. That of a house built of mortar-like concrete rather than proper grade concrete will fail, likewise the feet of the Clumber need to be strong and match the rest of the dog. The Clumber's feet should be rounded on the circumference as it rests on an even surface. The toes should be arched and show good bone quality and actually fit neatly against each other. Viewed from the side, the top of the foot should be obvious and be at least half as broad again as the actual leg immediately above the foot. This gives a "Large, round" foot to match the leg "well boned, strong." Compared to the forefeet the hind feet are most often marginally smaller in size, however, while noticeable the difference should not be significant; the Clumber has four feet so he should be able to use them. While the toenails are not discussed within the standard they are of extreme importance. If the breeder and owner have not mutilated them from birth by constant and ill informed clipping, the toenails should arch rather sharply and almost cascade down to reach the floor if the dog is standing on a level and even surface. Toe nails are used whenever a dog moves, they need to rest on the ground comfortably when walking, or standing, at faster paces they are actually driven (to varying degrees depending on speed) into the ground in a method often mimicked by athletes using spiked shoes.

Hind dewclaws can appear in this breed, although not discussed in the Standard, once expressed the inheritance appears to be autosomally dominant however there is some form of overall masking. Hind dewclaws should be removed “at birth” as they are prone to damage and tearing in life. Front dewclaws can be left on so the Clumber can use them as a thumb when he is climbing banks and scaling rocks. Front dewclaws should sit snugly against the leg in a naturally occurring depression. A prominent front dewclaw indicates poor general bone structure and forelimb quality, and of course is prone to damage.

## ● TAIL

***Set low. Well feathered, carried level with back.***

The tail is set low (comes away well down the croup), its diameter should be “full in the hand” indicating good bone and the firmness and diameter should carry well through. The tail needs to carry a good solid fringe of feathering to add protection to the tail itself, the feathering should be sleek and straight, as on the ear, so any vegetable matter collected is easily cast off by tail wagging, or if well caught only a little feathering is removed with grooming the offending matter out. The tail is carried level with the topline in the showing and at easy exercise, but once on a scent the tail may elevate to close to 40 degrees (measured in the angle underneath the tail and from the extension of the topline), an aggressive dog (not to be tolerated within the bounds of the breed or Standard) will always carry the tail proudly and may even flag it at 90 degrees.

With a tail docked to late 20th century show protocol (two or more thirds removed), the stump should be short, hard and thick - a little feathering is required to be visible but long drapery bits should be tidied up as they can collect faecal matter without the longer length of the tail to ensure the feathering is out of the way during toileting.

In the tail docked to traditional working lengths (about one third off) the sudden reduction in diameter can be felt but the remaining tip should not be whip like. The feathering is presented as a neat bobbed fringe.

In the undocked Clumber the sudden reduction is also apparent, however the tip, while markedly finer than the butt, needs be of good quality bone that should withstand modern suburban life and fieldwork. The undocked tail may not appear to be carried level with the topline or back as you are now viewing the full length, however the part nearest the body will achieve this. In many cases a mild curve towards the tip of the tail is evident in undocked compared to docked tails, provided it is only the last one third with the curve or sweep and the tail is set low and not gaily carried this should not be an impediment to the dog in its natural terrain. The feathering is traditionally presented in near full length with no more than a light fringe bobbing. Tail lengths vary in the undocked specimens, with obviously short and long tails being seen in the breed throughout the world - both are acceptable and typical.

No tail should be carried in an upright or near upright position.

## ● GAIT/MOVEMENT

***Rolling gait attributable to long body and short legs. Moving straight fore and aft, with effortless drive.***

This seems to be the area most people have major problems comprehending. “Rolling gait” does not mean a reeling or wobbly action from side to side - the Clumber works in undergrowth, if he buffets from ‘pillar to post’ he takes too long to get the now alerted game, he bumps and jars himself, he snags in the vegetation which will rip into his coat. Nor would a rocking horse motion be of any use.

Instead, consider, “Rolling gait attributable to long body” and let your mind cast back to the long low steam engines of the past - they roll effortlessly along a laid track without reeling or keeling from side to side (as well for when they express run through stations or travel through tunnels and under bridges), this is what you should relate to a Clumber.

Next, “Rolling gait attributable to long body and short legs”, stick on long legs and the centre of gravity is higher, there is more chance of side to side keel, go back to the short legs and the centre of gravity is much lower set and so the dog maintains a fairly upright position when viewed from the front or rear when moving. Look to the next sentence, “Moving straight fore and aft” again no indication here of a reeling motion from side to side, but again more of that long, heavy, sleek steam engine moving forwards along a well laid set of tracks. One more comment seals the deal, “... with effortless drive”, if the body was rocking and buffeting along when moving forward the motion of the legs would be irregular and hard to follow. Clean (“moving straight forward and aft”) action of the limbs with a heavy set dog moving on short legs will culminate in the beautiful energy of true action with a well built and muscled dog, so the effortless drive.



*Fig 8: Demonstrating the lift and drive given by the Clumbers “very powerful” hindquarters.*



*Fig 9: Demonstrating the smooth and methodical gait of the Clumber, the 'rolling' being in a forwards direction, not a side to side reeling action.*

The gait of the Clumber is smooth and methodical. He reaches forward with one forelimb and touches the ground, his chest drops towards the ground as he does this, his opposite hind foot is lifted by the flexing of the hip, stifle and hock joints and brought upwards and then forwards underneath his sternum, the breadth of his body sees the hind foot tend to centre towards the centre line to take his great bulk. As the hind foot touches the ground the upward thrust sees the power travel back up his hind limb and into his body taking the chest upwards and lightening the load on the same side forelimb which he now draws up under his body by tucking the foot backwards up behind the pastern, so flexing that part and aiding in the drawing up of the carpus with an uplifting of the lower arm and upward and forwards movement of the upper arm and elbow.

And so the process continues, the fore and hind limbs should do the same amount of work, as the forelimb is flexed forward so the pad touches the ground, the chest drops, and the hind foot travels up and forward to then take the weight, the chest lifts and the other forelimb is free to be lifted and flexed forward, the chest drops and the other hind foot is drawn up and swept forward, so the chest lifts again. Each of the four feet line-up towards the centre line as they reach for the ground so giving the diagonal skin action or swing often referred to as the rolling gait.

It is the heavy, pliable skin as it moves under the thrust of the hindquarters from the rear hip across the back to the opposite elbow (diagonally across and over the body) that is the physical roll of the Clumber, and can only be generated by a heavy short legged deep bodied dog with a power rear drive.

The Clumber moves with a reasonably level topline, but with enough flexibility in the spine to allow the body to track through an easy corner, back flexibility being important in the breed's traditional working terrain.

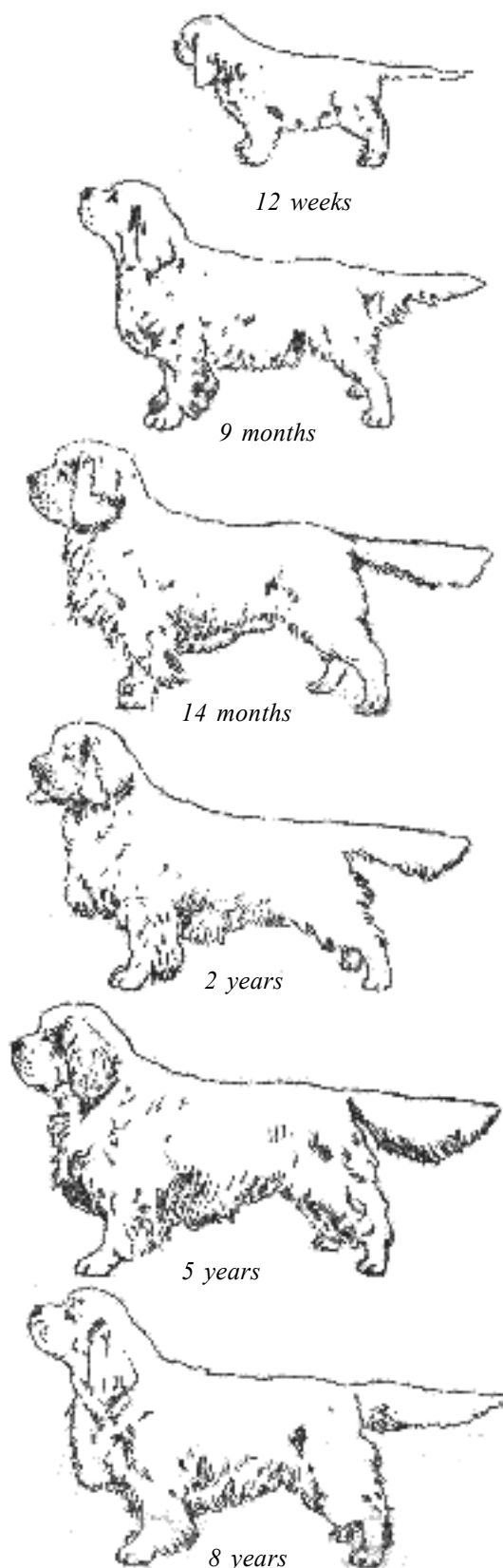
Also consider the Clumber is a dog for working in heavy undergrowth, place him on immaculate lawns or hard surfaces of a showring, he should be able to get around the ring with effortless work, here he has no rough terrain, no logs to get over, banks to get up or down, or brush and branches to get past, game to haul out of undergrowth, fences to get through or over; in the showring you will see a well constructed Clumber gait well, with remarkable speed and with no reeling or stumbling.

## ● **COAT**

***Abundant, close, silky and straight. Legs and chest well feathered.***

His coat should be lovely bright and shiny, not a true starch white, he is in fact very slightly off white. The texture should be almost like silk but with an inherent warmth, although the outer coat can feel cold when first touched. He also has a well-developed undercoat. The coat is water resistant. The lustre of a healthy coat is unparalleled and best compared to the magical lights of the stars in heaven. The coat reflects nearby strong colours so be aware of the effects of artificial lighting (most Australian indoor show ring facilities seem to use a yellow light, which may suit Golden Retrievers but can 'yellow' a Clumber) and also the handler's clothes can reflect into the coat.

Feathering should be easily maintained with little undercoat growing through it. It forms a lovely plume on the tail, from the rear of the hindquarter as breeches, as a fringe along the lower edges of the trunk but is rarely present in any excessive quantity on the central belly of any dog allowed to freely work or exercise in anything but smooth lawns, and cascading from below the throat, around the front of the chest and between the front legs. It is also evident on the backs of the forelegs. The feathering portion of the coat is a little harder, but only marginally, than the body coat; it should be long in the adult, the full feathering length being evident from about three years of age. Feathering is rarely cast in its entirety whereas the body coat will have two major and full sheds a year. The feathering on the ear is a softer hair and provides a fringe over the outer layer of the ear (see Ears). Soft hair under the ear is prone to matting and this is easiest avoided by trimming it away every two months or so. Curly body coats are very uncommon; their presence would suggest an inappropriate diet rather than a hereditary fault. Rarely is there excess coat to trim away in any dog that is regularly exercised and groomed. Be very cautious about condoning any dog that has obvious scissoring on or around the neck, an unusual coat texture, or is a little matt in coat brightness, these can be the result of an owner trying to mask a heavy front or short neck, a poor coat quality by using conditioners, or carrying a non-white coat. Also do not condone the dog carrying a profuse coat - this is a working field breed not a modern showing breed, and excess coat is of no use in the field and a hazard in modern urban life with owners not taking the time to maintain it.



*Fig 10: Illustrates the variation in 'finish' of the Clumber from Baby Puppy to Veteran class*

Coat presentation within the showing is at the owner's discretion but the coat should not be presented unkempt or prepared to the degree of a Poodle or Bichon; in either extreme it is uncharacteristic of the breed or its heritage.

The illustrations present a dog in classic kennel/working/show trim. Trimmed around the feet, up to the front stoppers and up the back of the rear pastern to the hock joint. The tail is neatened and occasionally in a mature dog the front leg feathering will be 'banged' or shortened. Soft coat under the ear is also removed - trimming can be affected with straight edge scissors - stripping knives and clippers are not required on a correct textured or length Clumber coat.

## • COLOUR

***Plain white body preferred, with lemon markings; orange permissible. Slight head markings and freckled muzzle.***

The placing of markings is purely personal - the only suggestion this Breed Standard Extension makes is that they cover no more than twenty percent of the body - more than that and the markings will mask the Clumber in the undergrowth. Ticking and roaning are present in the breed and are not condemned by the Standard unless the overall effect of a white body is lost, so if the dog appears white from across the show ring (being a substitute for checking the whiteness in the field) then it can be of no significance.

Lemon and orange are part of the same genetic series so it would be impossible to not accept orange although lemon is the traditional colour. The breeders in England look for a soft orange as their lemon, Australian breeders have regularly produced a much yellower lemon more typical of the lemon citrus fruit, while a very deep orange has become popular in Sweden, and perhaps a shade darker orange has been very successful in America and Canada. The colour of the standard is not a liver or brown.

The Clumber must (genetically) have a soft brown or dark, dark pink nose, not a skin pink nose nor a black nose.

## • SIZE

***Ideal weight: dogs: 36 kgs (80 lbs); bitches: 29.5 kgs (65 lbs).***

The weights used in this Standard are modern and a judge may still come across young dogs that fall short, however, as a mature dog (4-6 years of age) you can expect, if given the chance, to see the scales return these figures. The bulk of the Clumber's weight is actually packed into his heavy bone so that is why it can take a few years to achieve the weight.

There has been some talk in the early 2000s in the UK of reviewing and probably reducing the standard weights - another challenge for breeders to face if and when this happens.

Height is not defined in the Standard but a Clumber standing more than 20 inches (50cms) at the shoulder is so unlikely to be able to work in his native terrain that it is safe to penalise any males standing over this height.

By the weights it is evident that the bitches are significantly smaller than the males (close to 20% less) so likewise a bitch should not stand as tall as a dog.

- **FAULTS**

***Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.***

Perhaps the words of longtime UK breeder Bill Ironside will sum this up, “Dogs with serious faults must be penalised by the judge and the details of the fault should be published in their reports” All dogs have faults, even if it is only the single fault of having no virtues, but the now obligatory Faults paragraph is an asset to all breeds. If you find a dog with a doubtful bite but outstanding Clumber type and soundness elsewhere, this Breed Standard Extension urges you to choose this one over an insipid poor representative with an exceptional bite, because this is a breed that has been kept pure for 250 years and has a small breed population to work with and few to do the work. Besides, it is what the Faults section calls for, is it not?

- **NOTE**

***Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.***

No exception to this statement need even be considered, nor granted to, the Clumber.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Peggy Grayson & Rae Furness THE CLUMBER SPANIEL 1991 Boydell Press UK

Jan E Irving CLUMBER SPANIELS 1998 Hoflin, USA

Jan E Irving THE WHITE SPANIEL 2000 Erinrac Enterprises Australia

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## **FURTHER READING**

(the CSLV hope to have these available online when the BSE is accepted)

Robbie Carnegie TYPE AND PROPORTION IN THE CLUMBER SPANIEL in CLUMBERS CELEBRATED (1995)

Bill Ironside THOUGHTS ON JUDGING CLUMBER SPANIELS in CLUMBERS 100 (2006)

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- 5 Hugh Dalziel BRITISH DOGS 1879
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- 7 Parker et al GENETIC STRUCTURE OF THE PUREBRED DOMESTIC DOG report in SCIENCE 21 May 2004
- 8 Bill Ironside THOUGHTS ON JUDGING CLUMBER SPANIELS in CLUMBERS 100 (2006)
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## **COMPILERS' NOTES**

It has been the intention to explain the particular form and requirements that are called for in the Breed Standard and to show how these combine to produce a useful field dog, not to rewrite the Breed Standard or extrapolate it, although as some points of anatomy aren't covered in the Standard they have been discussed. The illustrations are only such, and do not take precedence over the written word. It is assumed the reader has an understanding of basic sound conformation, illustrations of poor conformation are not included as most conformational faults are common to all breeds.