A Judge’s Guide for The Dalmatian

Prepared by the Dalmatian Club of America
© 2013
This Presentation compliment’s the AKC Video and Illustrated Standard

• *Excerpts from the AKC Standard appear in black Italic*

• *Major Faults* appear in Blue

• *Disqualifications* appear in Red
Presentation Includes

• Brief History of the Breed
• Discussion on Breed Purpose
• Breed Development “Type and Temperament”
• Break Down of the AKC Standard
• Q&A Session
• Tips on Judging the Breed
• Hands On Evaluation
Spotted dogs in Europe in the 1700’s
There are some accounts that George Washington owned Dalmatians.
Sporting Dog

Original development was for sporting purpose
Coaching Dog

Dalmatians then became associated with horse drawn carriages and coaches, running alongside, to guard the coaches and the horses.
Distance traveled in a day was typically 20-30 miles at 5 mph

Pay special attention to dogs outline under axel
Dalmatians made the transition to the Fire House with the invention of the Horse drawn fire wagon, serving the same purpose to protect horse and wagon with an added duty of protecting the hydrant connection. Dalmatians typically worked in pairs at the Fire House.
Circus Dog

Dalmatians followed the horses to the circus and showcased their versatility and love of people.
The Versatile Dog

Today's Dalmatian can be seen in all AKC events
Major Breed Developments Last 20 Years

Movement
- Head and Tail carriage rising indicating lack of balance front and aft

Temperament
- A more secure and happy breed increased Performance participation

Health
- Coat condition has improved
- Hearing improvement
- Incorporation of the LUA gene

Markings
- Specifically in livers
Objective

For each participant

• To understand the breed purpose
• Review current AKC standard
• To understand which Breed characteristics are important
• How to prioritize them when judging
Purpose - Coaching

• Providing Protection for the Horse and Rider or Carriage Occupants while traversing 20-30 miles of Country side and small towns.

• Staying with Horse and carriage while riders Lodged protecting both their possessions and livestock
Proper Coaching Positions
Proper Coaching Position
Essence of Breed

- **Movement**
  (Reach, Drive, Topline, Head and tail carriage)

- **Body Shape**
  (Size and Balance)

- **Spotting**
  (Distinctive)

Judge the entire dog... Not just one characteristic

*A quality Dalmatian combines all three of these components*
General Appearance
5 points

• A DISTINCTIVELY spotted dog
• Poised and Alert
• Strong Muscular and active
• Free of shyness
• Intelligent in expression
• Symmetrical in outline
• Without Exaggeration or Coarseness
Male Dalmatians
Male Dalmatians
Male Dalmatians
Female Dalmatians
Female Dalmatians
General Appearance
(continued)

• Capable of great endurance, combined with a fair amount of speed.

• Deviations from the described ideal should be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of deviation
Improper Outlines

Deviation from correct type

Not sturdy in bone (too fine boned), exaggerated tuckup

Body is longer in loin than desired, topline is not smooth, croup not nearly level with back

Too coarse, front and rear not balanced, stifles not well bent

Skewing topline, over-angulated rear, high hocks
Size, Proportion and Substance
10 Points

• *Desirable Height at withers 19”-23”*

• undersize or oversize or is a fault

• *Over 24” is a DQ*

• *Overall length of body from the forechest to the buttocks is approximately equal to the height at the withers.*

• Good substance, strong and sturdy in bone, but never coarse
Head - 10 Points

• The head is in balance with the overall dog

• It is of fair length and free of loose skin

• Expression is alert and intelligent, indicating a stable and outgoing temperament.

• Eyes set moderately well apart, medium size and somewhat rounded in appearance set well into the skull. Color brown or blue or any combination, the darker the better, and darker in black spotted dogs than liver
Head
(cont)

• *Ears are of moderate size, proportionally wide at the base, gradually tapering to a rounded tip. Ears are set rather high. Carried close to the head and are thin and fine in texture.*

• *Top of skull is flat and approximately as wide as it is long*

• *Stop is moderately well defined*

• *Muzzle and top of skull are about equal in length*
Head Study
Head

- Incomplete pigmentation of the eye rims is a **Major Fault**

- Abnormal position of the eyelids or eyelashes (ectropion, trichasis) is a **Major Fault**
Unfinished Nose

- Completely pigmented on the leather
- Black in black spotted dogs
- Liver in liver spotted dogs
- Incomplete nose pigmentation is a Major Fault
Mouth

• The lips are clean and close fitting

• The teeth meet in scissors bite

• Overshot or undershot bites are a Disqualification
Neck, Topline, & Body 10 Points

- The neck is nicely arched, fairly long, free from throatiness
- The neck blends smoothly into the shoulders
- The topline is smooth
- The chest is deep, capacious, of moderate width
- The brisket reaches to the elbow
• The underline of the ribcage curves gradually to a moderate tuck up
• The back is level & strong
• The loin is short, muscular, & slightly arched
• The croup is nearly level with the back
• The tail is a natural extension of the topline
• The tail is strong at the insertion, tapers to the tip and reaches to the hock
Tail Set & Tail Carriage

- The tail is carried with a slight upward curve
- It is never docked
- It should never curl over the back
- *Ringtails and low set tails are faults*

Tail set and tail carriage should be judged when the dog is moving.
Forequarters 5 points

- Shoulders are smoothly muscled and well laid back
- The upper arm is approximately equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it in an angle sufficient to ensure that the foot falls under the shoulder
- The elbows are close to the body
- The legs are straight and sturdy in bone
- There is a slight angle at the pastern denoting flexibility.
Hindquarters  5 points

• The hindquarters are powerful, having smooth, yet well defined muscles
• The stifle is well bent
• The hocks are well let down
• When Standing Hocks are Parallel
• Cowhocks are a Major Fault
• “Gait” requires “powerful drive in the rear, coordinated with extended reach in the front. Balanced angulation fore and aft is crucial.”
Feet 5 points

- Feet are very important
- Front and rear feet are round and compact with thick elastic pads and well arched toes
- Toenails are black and/or white in black spotted dogs,
- Brown and/or white in liver spotted dogs.
- Dewclaws may be removed
- Flat feet are a **Major Fault**
Gait 10 Points

• *In keeping with the Dalmatian's historical use as a coach dog gait and endurance are of great importance.*

• *Movement is steady and effortless*

• Balanced angulation for and aft combined with proper head carriage produces smooth efficient action
Gait - Head Topline and Tail

- The topline remains level

- As the Dalmatian moves, the head should be held forward and lowered. The head, topline and tail should create a smooth continuous line.
Gait
Color and Markings 25 points

Dalmatians are born pure white except patches

2 patches 9 not patched

2 patches 5 not patched
• Color and Markings and their overall appearance are very important to be evaluated
• The ground color is pure white
• In black spotted dogs the spots are dense black
• In liver spotted dogs, the spots are liver brown.

• Any color markings other than black or liver are Disqualifications
Color and Markings

• Spots are round and well defined.
• The more distinct the better
• They vary from the size of dime to the size of a half dollar
• They are pleasingly and evenly distributed
• The less spots intermingle the better
• Distinctively spotted
Tricolor is a Disqualification

(which occurs rarely in this breed)

Tri-color consists of TAN marking found on the head, neck, chest, leg or tail of a black or liver spotted dog. 

Tricolor is a pattern similar to other tricolored dogs.
Coins

More distinct

Less distinct
Old Age Ticking

Notice the difference in spotting from the show side to the off side
This is the same dog at 2 years of age (left) and 7 years of age (right)
Color and Markings

- *Spots are usually smaller on the head, legs and tail than on the body.*
- *Ears are preferably spotted*
- Ears can begin as spotted and darken as the dog ages. Solid colored ears usually have some white guard hairs.
Patches

• A patch is a solid mass of black or liver hair containing no white hair.

• A patch is appreciably larger than a normal sized spot

• Patches always have smooth edges Spots are scalloped

• Patches have a silkier feel

• Patches are a Disqualification
• Patches are dense brilliant color with sharply defined, smooth edges. Patches are present at birth.
• This patch has puppy guard hairs. Notice the smooth edge.
• Overlapping masses of spots have uneven edges and or white hairs scattered throughout the mass.
• Overlapping masses of spots frequently appear on the throat neck and underbelly
• Large color masses formed by intermingled or overlapping spots are **not** patches
• Spotting patterns vary

• All of these patterns are acceptable. Spotting is a major component of breed type
• These dogs are considered very colorful
Extreme spotting patterns detracting from breed type
Spotting changes a dog's appearance and outline—don’t be fooled.
• Bronzing of black spots and or fading of liver spots due to environmental conditions or normal processes of coat change are **NOT** tri-coloration
Coat 5 points

- *Coat is short, dense, fine and close fitting*
- *Neither wooly nor silky*
- *Sleek, glossy and healthy in appearance*
Temperament 10 points

- *Stable*
- *Outgoing, yet dignified*
- *Shyness is a Major fault*

- When approaching a Dalmatian, walk casually toward the dog.
## Scale of Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Appearance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size, proportion, substance</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck, topline, body</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forequarters</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindquarters</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feet</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color and markings</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gait</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperament</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

Faults

- Ring tail
- Low-set tail
- Under 19 inches,
- Over 23 Inches at withers
Summary
Major faults

• *Ectropion & entropion, trichiasis*
• *Incomplete pigmentation of the eye rims or nose (leather)*
• *Flat feet*
• *Cowhocks*
Summary

**DQ’s**

- Over 24” at the withers
- Overshot or undershot bite
- Any color markings other than black or liver
- Tri-color
- Patches
Breed Characteristics

Movement • Body Shape • Spotting

25 pts are assigned to color and markings. After subtracting for head, coat, & temperament, more than half the points relate to structure or function. Thus, both spotting and soundness are essential parts of correct Dalmatian type.

JUDGE THE ENTIRE DOG
Questions and Answers
Tips on Judging

• First appearance on the go around
  Look for proper outline
• When viewing from side look for unfortunate markings
• Approach from the front with out hesitation
• Look at both sides of the dog
• Exam is basically Teeth, Touch, Testes
• Do not stress or obsess over Patches and Tri Color