

# You Be The Judge

■ THE MANCHESTER TERRIER

Based on the AKC Standard approved June 10, 1991

By Robert Cole



*Old Fashioned English Terriers*

Let's pretend the year is 1835 and you live near the Manchester or London docks. The area is over-run with rats and you are a breeder of rat killing; Old Fashioned English Terriers similar to the two in this early 19th century woodcut print. Your dogs are strong and courageous and are good workers on their own but they do not do well competing in the local Rat Pits against the clock (greatest number of rats killed within a certain time limit). Why?

**SPEED**

The Old Fashion Terrier, many heavier than these two, were not fast enough at killing rats

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*Italian Greyhound, Billy  
c.1835*



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to beat the clock. An outcross was needed. It is generally agreed that a Manchester district fancier by the name of John Hulme was the first to cross his terriers with possibly an Italian Greyhound similar to this woodcut of Billy or perhaps a black Whippet - known then as a Snap Dog. The IG or Whippet cross had three benefits: it increased the speed of the dog in the dispatching of rats; being lighter it also enable the dog to excel at rabbit coursing (popular in the Manchester district); and it gave this new English Terrier a more refined appearance, particularly about the head.

Called the Black and Tan, one of this new variety is reputed to have won a much publicized wager for his owner. The wager was that his B and T could not kill 100 rats within a time limit of 8 1/2 minutes. This B and T did better than that, he disposed of the 100 rats in 6 minutes 13 seconds. He killed with one clean nip tossed it aside and went quickly on to the next. His jaws had to be strong because after finishing off a rat the match would have been lost if any rat continued to move more than its own length.

In time the Black and Tan became popular as a house dog and sporting companion and looks became more important. When dog shows began in 1859 there were some good specimens that conformed to a strict color marking formula. There was also a lot of faking going on. W. E. Dury in British Dogs 1903, reports on some of the faking and malpractices performed to win at shows, "Exhibitors dyed and stained coats, plucked out white hairs and compressed puppies heads with tight bandages to produce long, fine heads and flat cheeks." The head continues to be a major show consideration.

## The Head

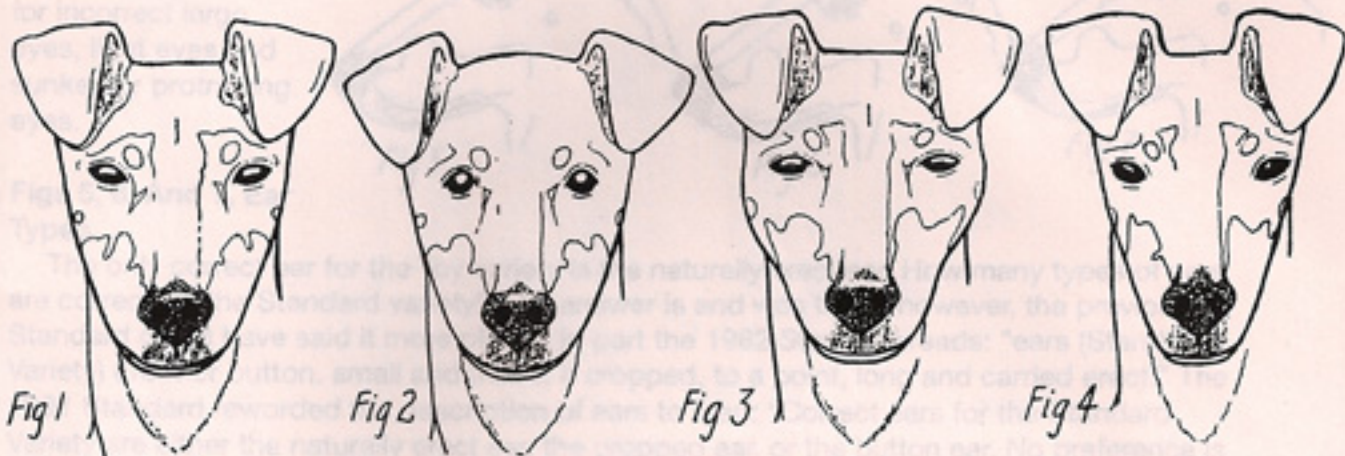
The Standard describes the head as: "long, narrow, tight skinned, and almost flat with a slight indentation up the forehead. It resembles a blunted wedge in frontal and profile views. There is a visual effect of a slight stop viewed in profile. The muzzle and skull are equal in length. The muzzle is well filled under the eyes with no visible cheek muscles. The underjaw is full and well defined and the nose is black.

Tight black lips lie close to the jaw. The jaws should be full and powerful with full and proper dentition. The teeth are white and strongly developed with a true scissors bite. Level (pincer) bite is acceptable. The nearly black almond shaped eyes are small, bright and sparkling. They are set moderately close together, slanting upwards on the outside. Eye rim pigmentation must be black."

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## Four Heads

These four heads, one correct and three inferior, reveal eight head faults identified in a loose leaf booklet prepared by the Education Committee of the American Manchester Club as a Standard and Toy guide for judges as well as breeders and exhibitors. I was further aided by Chapter 3 of the book The Complete Toy Manchester Terrier, 1950 by Dixie Dempsey.

Determining which of the four heads could be considered typical was I am sure not difficult. Each of the remaining three heads have certain departures that breeders want you to be aware of and fault accordingly ... what are they?

The top of Fig 2's head should be flat. The ears would then set higher and the tip of the ear would point towards the eye not lie on the sides of the head. The nearly black eyes should be almond shaped not round. Because this head is domed the, "with a slight indentation up the forehead" is missing. That leaves four faults, two on each of the remaining inferior heads.

Even if you are not fully familiar with this breed the first fault that caught your attention was probably Fig 3's faulty bulging cheek muscles however did you notice the incorrect position of the eyes. The shape of the eyes on this Manchester are correctly almond shaped and set entirely on the front of the face however they do not "slant upwards on the outside." Compared to typical head Fig 1, this lack of slant upwards can be seen here to produce an expression foreign to the Manchester.

The head should be long and narrow but not as narrow as Fig 4's weakened head. The shape should be that of a wider blunted wedge. Because its skull is narrow the eyes wrongly position on the sides of the head.

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I would be remiss if I did not also convey breeder concern for incorrect large eyes, light eyes and sunken or protruding eyes.



**Figs 5, 6, And 7, Ear Types**

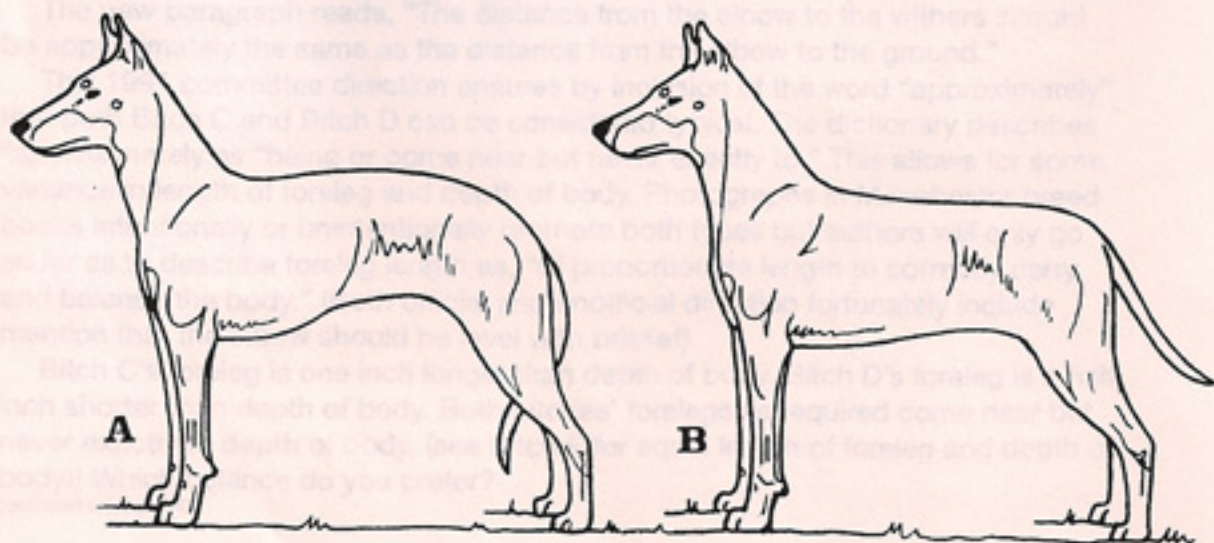
The only correct ear for the Toy variety is the naturally erect ear. How many types of ears are correct for the Standard variety? The answer is and was three, however, the previous Standard could have said it more plainly. In part the 1982 Standard reads: "ears (Standard Variety) Erect or button, small and thin ... If cropped, to a point, long and carried erect." The 1991 Standard reworded the description of ears to read: "Correct ears for the Standard Variety are either the naturally erect ear, the cropped ear, or the button ear. No preference is given to any of the ear types".

## **Bitch A And Bitch B**

I shall not ask you to choose between these two Standard Manchester's, instead I shall ask you to find Bitch A's four faults and Bitch B's four faults (none relate to the head or neck) as a step towards appreciation of correct Manchester balance.

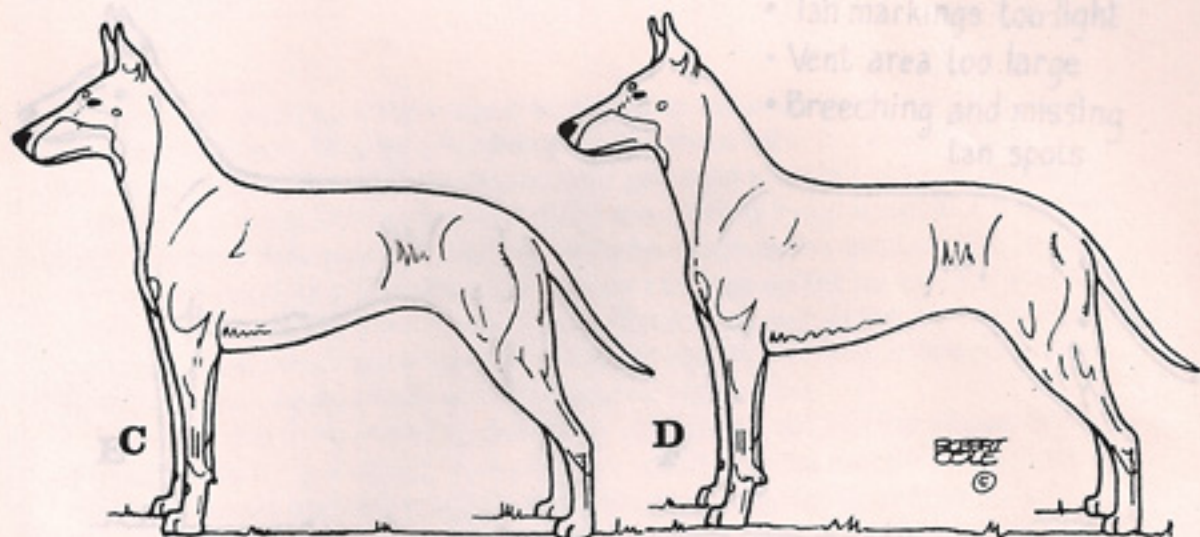
The Standard advises that Bitch A's roached back and Bitch B's flat back are both to be "severely penalized." Bitch A's tail is too long and is curled in a very un-terrier like fashion

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between the hindlegs. The weakness of her overly long loin is obvious. Bitch B's bone is too heavy, her undercarriage lacks tuck-up and her front pasterns are short and thick.

## Bitch C Vs Bitch D

The differences between these two typical bitches that directly affect balance seldom received mention. These two differences are now deemed to be of sufficient importance as to now warrant a new paragraph in the 1991 revised Standard.

The new paragraph reads, "The distance from the elbow to the withers should be approximately the same as the distance from the elbow to the ground."

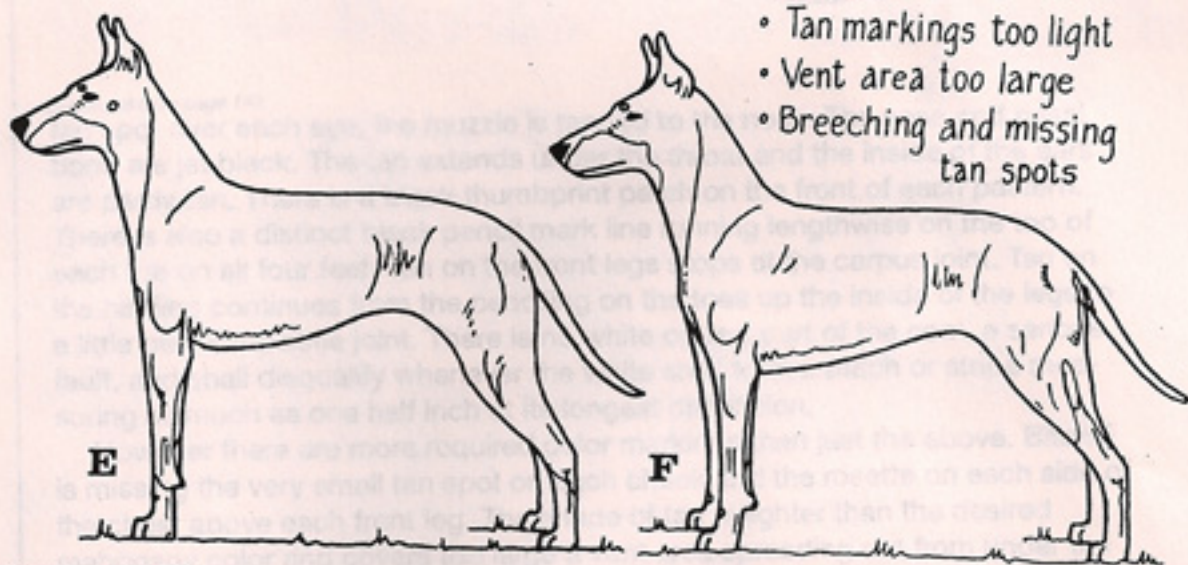
This 1991 committee direction ensures by inclusion of the word "approximately" that both Bitch C and Bitch D can be considered typical. The dictionary describes "approximately as "being or come near but never exactly to." This allows for some variance in length of foreleg and depth of body. Photographs in Manchester breed books intentionally or unintentionally promote both types but authors will only go so far as to describe foreleg length as, "of proportionate length to correctly carry and balance the body." (Both official and unofficial direction fortunately include mention that the elbow should be level with brisket).

Bitch C's foreleg is one inch longer than depth of body. Bitch D's foreleg is a half inch shorter than depth of body. Both bitches' forelegs as required come near but never exactly to depth of body. (see Bitch F for equal length of foreleg and depth of body) Which balance do you prefer?

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## Bitch E Vs Bitch F

Mr. Theo Marples writes in *Show Dogs, C*, 1900 that it is in the forelegs where so many Black and Tan fail. Mr. Tom Horner in *Terriers of the World* was of the opinion that this was as true 1984 as in Theo Marple's day. Many Manchesters continue to fail in this area and although there are good ones out there fronts like that on Bitch E are still too common.

### Bitch E

The front on Bitch E lacks forechest and is straight from the point of shoulder down through a short upper arm and continuing on to the foot, plus the shoulder blade could have more angulation. Aware of a tendency towards this departure the 1991 revised Standard now includes mention of the requirement for: a slightly arched neck; well laid back shoulders; a moderately defined forechest; a shoulder blade relatively the same length as upper arm; an upper arm (mentioned indirectly) that slopes rearward; and that the front pastern should slope slightly ("almost perpendicular"). Bitch E lacks all of these requirements.

The Standard penalizes any "indication of hackney action and this is commendable however Bitch E is more likely to adopt a rapid stick-like clockwork type action here there is no or hardly any flex (bend) to the front pastern under the body and very little bend to the wrist as the foreleg is lifted wastefully high as it reaches forward.

### Bitch F

To what extent are you willing to forgive incorrect or missing Manchester color markings in favor of soundness? Bitch F is sound, has a healthy jet black coat, a very small

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tan spot over each eye, the muzzle is tanned to the nose. The nose and nasal bone are jet black. The tan extends under the throat and the inside of the ears are partly tan. There is a black thumbprint patch on the front of each pastern. There is also a distinct black pencil mark line running lengthwise on the top of each toe on all four feet. Tan on the front legs stops at the carpus joint. Tan on the hindleg continues from the penciling on the toes up the inside of the legs to a little below the stifle joint. There is no white on any part of the coat, a serious fault, and shall disqualify whenever the white shall form a patch or stripe measuring as much as one half inch at its longest dimension.

However there are more required color markings than just the above. Bitch F is missing the very small tan spot on each cheek and the rosette on each side of the chest above each front leg. The shade of tan is lighter than the desired mahogany color and covers too large a vent area spreading out from under the tail. Where the outside of the hind leg should be black, Bitch F has tan, commonly called breaching and very undesirable.

The question is are Bitch F's faulty color markings sufficiently serious as to warrant placing less sound Bitch E over her? The Standard advises, "Color and/or markings should never take precedence over soundness and type." However the Standard also includes "distinctive rich mahogany markings" in the opening sentence, emphasizing in my opinion the importance of this breed characteristic.

I am reminded of/comments on Manchester markings in the September 29, 1995 issue of the British Dog News e.g., "Good judges will always look for good markings which are a must in this lovely breed", and "I consider the markings very important", and "The whole beauty of the breed is the distinction of the tan from the black and one point that should never be overlooked is breaching on the hind legs."

One British Manchester breeder comments that, "Variety judges will put more emphasis on soundness and type than on specific markings. Breed specialists know exactly what a thumbprint should look like, or breaching. They know about bright chestnut tan and the clear division from black to tan, so they will take these points into consideration when placing dogs."

The message is clear, Manchester markings are important...and so is type and structure, both are to be appreciated fully and taken into consideration. To what degree you forgive incorrect or missing markings depends on your priorities and the degree of departure. No two situations are exactly the same. In this instance I gave the nod to soundness over markings. 🐾