



Whippets

to the rally and obedience ring, to dock diving, and *still* be a successful conformation show dog. It behooves us to celebrate and preserve all of those versatile aptitudes.

It is also important to maintain our breed as a moderate, balanced and *fit* athlete, eschewing any form of extremes in his conformation, temperament, and character. Our judges' education emphasizes this important aspect of the Whippet.

While on the subject of judges' education, I strongly recommend that anyone with an interest in learning more about the Whippet, especially all aspiring Whippet judges, plan to attend the American Whippet Club National Specialty that will be held in Virginia Beach, Virginia, from April 2 through the 9th, 2022, with judge's ed and conformation competition to take place April 6–9. Detailed information is available on the American Whippet Club website.

I can't stress enough that to truly understand the Whippet, one should make an effort to attend some of the other events highlighted over national-specialty week: Lure coursing (April 2 and 3), and agility (April 3), and hopefully Barn Hunt and racing (not scheduled yet). If you cannot take the extra time to attend these performance events at the national in April, please try to attend a race meet or field trial (lure course) near you prior to applying to judge the breed, in order to truly appreciate the Whippet at his very best and most versatile.

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AKC GAZETTE COLLECTION

TERRIER GROUP

Australian Terriers

Our guest columnist for this issue is junior handler Moira McGroarty, of Virginia.

CHALLENGES OF SHOWING AN AUSTRALIAN TERRIER IN JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP

Handling an Australian Terrier in Junior Showmanship presents unique challenges and distinct advantages. This column addresses the challenges; subsequent columns will address the successes and life lessons learned from juniors.

Every breed should be presented according to its standard, and the Australian Terrier has many intrinsic breed characteristics that the handler should display. Unlike in the breed ring, in Junior Showmanship the handler is judged on how they lift the dog on and off the table, as well as how they present the dog on the table.

There is a misconception that showing a small dog is easier than showing a large dog. Lifting the dog on and off the table gracefully can be difficult for a junior, especially for handlers who are smaller. The average 9-year-old weighs 60 pounds, so an Australian Terrier can weigh one-third of the young person's weight. It takes practice and strategy to lift a dog on and off the table gracefully and lightly.

Once the dog is on the table, the junior must set the dog up quickly, showing off the



Junior handler Moira McGroarty has advice for other juniors seeking to show an Australian Terrier.



characteristic Aussie expression. They must also use care in showing the dog's structure while leaving room for the judge. In fact, the specific table skills required to display the dog in a short time create much room for mistakes. The handler must keep in mind the importance of looking calm and composed even when feeling rushed and pressured.

Showing an Aussie requires showing off the breed's characteristic expressions and physical traits. Aussies are not a silhouette breed but are

a lively breed. With a small breed, kneeling to bait the dog helps show off the neck arch. When free-stacking, one should practice ensuring the lead is not breaking the line presented by the dog's topknot, ruff, and apron. The handler must show off these key features that are distinct to the Aussie. With many details for presentation compared to showing some other breeds, this can be both challenging and rewarding.

Terriers are not common Junior Showmanship breeds, and some judges and exhibitors actively

discourage juniors from showing terriers. Australian Terriers are even rarer, and some judges don't recognize the breed. They don't remember that the breed is judged on the table and try to examine the dog on the ground, which is against the AKC rules. Some judges also think the Australian Terrier is a dwarf breed and should be gaited like a dwarf breed or should move a slow pace. When rearranging the class, juniors with Aussies should know how fast their dog moves compared to other

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