GENERAL APPEARANCE

A symmetrical, powerful, active dog, sound and well put together, not clumsy nor long in leg, displaying a kindly expression, and with a personality that is eager, alert, and self-confident.

OVERALL APPEARANCE, BALANCE, GAIT, AND PURPOSE TO BE GIVEN MORE CONSIDERATION THAN ANY OF HIS COMPONENT PARTS.

SIZE

- Females: 21 1/2 - 22 1/2”, 55 - 65 lbs.
- Deviation of more than 1” above or below standard to be proportionately penalized.
- See Disqualifications.

PROPORTION

- Height : length as 11:12

Length is measured from forechest to buttocks. Ground to elbow is approximately 1/2 the distance from elbow to withers. A properly constructed, proportioned and angulated dog will divide nearly into “thirds”.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Deviation in height of more than one inch above or below the standard
- Undershot or overshot bite
- Evidence of functional abnormality of the eyelids or eyelashes.

EXCUSALS

- Evidence of functional abnormality of the eyelids or eyelashes.

TEMPERAMENT

- Friendly, reliable, trustworthy
- Eager, alert, self-confident
- Kindly, intelligent

Primarily a hunting dog, he should be shown in hard working condition.

The Golden is to be a versatile working retriever for varied terrain and harsh climates.

Overall suitability for purpose takes precedence over details.

A Judges’ Reference

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Text GRCA 2006
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GAIT

Free, smooth, powerful, well coordinated.

Good reach. Feet converge toward centerline of balance as speed increases.

Loose lead is recommended to reflect true gait.

Exaggerated reach and drive, high action of the legs, and excessive speed are not indicative of the sound, efficient, endurance gait required of a hunting retriever.

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**Skull** broad, slightly arched. Stop well defined but not abrupt. Foreface deep and wide, nearly as long as the skull. Muzzle straight in profile, slightly deeper and wider at stop than at tip. No heaviness in flews. Removal of whiskers permitted, but not preferred.

Expression friendly and intelligent.

**EYES**

Size: medium large, set well apart, reasonably deep in sockets. Color: preferably dark brown (medium brown is acceptable). Rims: dark and close-fitting. Loose eyelids permit seeds and other debris into the eye, a hazard for a working retriever. See Excusals.

**EARS**

Size: rather short, falling close to the cheek. When pulled forward, should just cover the eye on the same side. Placement: attached well behind and just above the line of the eye.

**TEETH**

Scissors bite; full dentition.

It is not necessary to open the mouth of a Golden to check for full dentition. Lifting the lips at the side to check for obvious gaps is sufficient. See Disqualifications.

**NOSE**

Black or brownish black; fading to lighter shade in winter not serious.

**NECK AND FOREQUARTERS**

Neck medium long, sturdy, muscular. Shoulder blades long, well laid back. Upper arms appear about same length as blades. Elbows set well back beneath upper tips of blades, close to ribs without looseness. Legs straight with good bone, not coarse. Pasterns short, strong, sloping slightly. Correct forequarter construction enables the retriever not only to trot and carry game efficiently but also to swim with power.

**BODY AND TOPLINE (cont.)**

Back strong and level whether standing or moving. Croup slightly sloping.

Caponious body contributes to stamina and to buoyancy in swimming. Strong back and loin aid in working rough terrain and in carrying game.

**HINDQUARTERS**

Stifles well bent. Hocks well let down. Legs straight when viewed from rear. Pasterns short and strong.

Angulation in balance with front; a line dropped from the rear of buttock should touch the toes. Well-muscled throughout for strength and power with moderate speed and great endurance.

**TAIL**

Tail set follows natural line of croup. Base of tail thick and muscular. Tail bones extend to, but not below, point of hock. Carriage level or with some moderate upward curve. Merry in action.

**FEET**

Medium size, pads thick. Shape: round, compact, well-knuckled. Strong, enduring feet and nails of functional length are important to the working retriever. Dewclaws may be removed.

**COAT**

Dense, water-repellent; outer coat firm and resilient, good undercoat. Straight or wavy with no preference.