

ON COATS BY H. BIXBY
Excerpts from AKC Column
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(Contributed by Frank Rogers)

The real Norwich terrier coat, hard and wiry, but lying close to the body, as it does, sheds dirt easily. I believe that the proper coat is one of the first things for our consideration, as is also size.

The Norwich undoubtedly is, primarily, a hunt terrier, but I believe he has a bright future as a house pet as well. Probably, due to years of selection as a working dog, he is, as a breed, remarkably free from nerves. This is very noticeable at shows at which most terriers are inclined to be very noisy.

Soft coats seem to be in the majority at shows, contrary to standard requirements. This fault is very bad, for the individuality of our breed depends on his flat, harsh coat.

The matter of coat also is something the standard is definite about and rightly so. It says, "Coat as hard and wirey as possible, but lies much closer to the body than a Cairn's, and is absolutely straight. It is longer and rougher on the neck and shoulders in winter (in full coat) forming almost a mane. Hair on head, ears and muzzle, except slight eyebrows and slight whisker is absolutely short and smooth."

It seems to me that the standard describes a definitely different type of coat than a Cairn.

Under "disqualifications," the standard states that trimming is not desirable and should be penalized, which I take to mean that the natural coat is wanted and that it should be tighter and closer than a Cairn's coat.

More than that, if the standard calls for "slight whisker" and "slight eyebrows" and short hard hair on head, ears and muzzle, while penalizing trimming, then how is this to be had unless the body coat is very hard, close and tight to the body? The Border Terrier has more the type of coat wanted than any other breed I know.

There is no question that you can get the coat too flat, but from what I have seen most of the dogs have the opposite trouble - that of too stand-offish coat. If you are not going to trim, the correct type of coat is very important indeed. Size and type of coat are far more important just now than type of ears, straightness of front, or other things that may be important later.