

## **GUIDELINES FOR MENTORING**

- Use breed specific terminology from the AKC breed standard when making a reference to conformational features.
- When relevant, in discussing the physical characteristics, relate them to the function and original purpose of the breed.
- Avoid pointing out generic faults—they are obvious to all.
- Stress the importance of staying with the “whole picture.”
- Personal preferences must never override and take precedence over breed standard requirements.
- If one “gets” the essence of breed type, they will “get” the details of type.
- Prioritize key features of the breed by how they are referenced in the breed standard.
- Judges have a small window of time in the show ring to assess important characteristics—they are not building a breeding program.
- Break down your information in simple terms targeted toward the prioritization of breed characteristics in a 2-minute ring evaluation.
- Ask judges to visualize the ability to perform the function he was bred for when looking at the dog.
- Be articulate and knowledgeable about all sections of the standard, applying the priorities as they are stated.
- Accurate breed-specific hands-on examination technique is important—explain effective ways to go over heads, coats, etc.
- The Ringside Observation form is filled in first by the mentored judge followed by mentor’s comments after the previous section is complete. Be sure the form is filled out in its entirety.
- Take ownership in your breed. When you sign a form for a prospective judge for a ringside observation, tutoring session, long-term mentoring relationship etc., you are verifying that the experience occurred as described. If it did not, do not sign the form. If the individual displayed conceptual challenges and/or difficulties, state it on the form.

***Keep a record of whom you mentor and sign forms for.***

