

JUDGING THE PUMI

By Chris Levy



calling for a square, light-bodied dog.

HERDING STYLE

The Pumi's herding style influences its structure. It is an upright, close-working breed and its tools are bouncing and barking for recalcitrant sheep. The native Hungarian sheep, called Racka (pronounced ROT-skuh) are temperamentally tough and quite often take some convincing on the part of the dog who is trying to move them. So functionally, the Pumi must be light-footed and able to turn on a dime, resulting in moderate angulation that results in a collected, moderate reach and drive.



The three breeds vary the most in coat type, ear shape, and tails. The body types are quite similar, all

The Pumi is one of three Hungarian herding breeds, all of similar origin, representing regional variations within Hungary. The Puli originated in the eastern plains, the Mudi in the southern plains, and the Pumi in the hilly Transdanubian region of western Hungary. These breeds are so closely related that even today Pumi-appearing puppies can be born in Puli litters, and Mudi-appearing puppies can be born in Pumi litters. Understanding the close relationship between these breeds will assist a judge in their prioritization of dogs when judging each of these breeds.





Figure 1:
Ears should be 1/3 folded over

HEAD AND EARS

The head shape of the Pumi is longer and narrower than the Puli, with the muzzle from 40-50% of the length of the head. The stop is slight compared to the Puli's which is "defined, but not abrupt". The standard asks for a "full complement" of teeth, and we ask that judges check the dentition by pulling the lips back to view the sides. If there are any missing teeth (which is not common), it is usually the premolars.

The ears are one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Pumi, and lends to its whimsical expression. The ears are erect, with the top 1/3 of the ear tipped over, the tips pointing slightly to the sides. Judges will see ears from ½ to ¼ tipped over, but the ideal is 1/3 as pictured here. Don't be fooled by a lot of hair on the ear covering up an erect ear, which is a disqualification. The fold of the ear is not distinct, and is more of a curve than a crease.



BODY SHAPE

The Pumi was used for herding cattle, sheep, and swine. They need to be quick to think and light on their feet, able to change direction instantly. The Pumi is moderately angulated, with moderate reach and drive. The picture should be of a tightly held together square, moving in a very collected manner at a moderate trot. The dogs bond very tightly to their owners, and rarely will show for someone they don't know. Typically they are

cautious of strangers, not backing away, but not going up to them either. This is one reason the Pumi is a table breed. Where they will stand very well for a judge to go over them on the table, they do not appreciate a stranger hovering over them while on the ground.

The Pumi is light-bodied, with the depth of chest slightly less than the length of leg. They are like a distance runner – light-bodied and wiry, but with good muscling. The thigh muscling should be surprisingly thick considering the lightness of body. The illustration below is of a shaved dog to better see this proportion.

COAT

The coat is distinct among AKC breeds. It is a mixture of hard and soft hair in a 50-50 proportion.

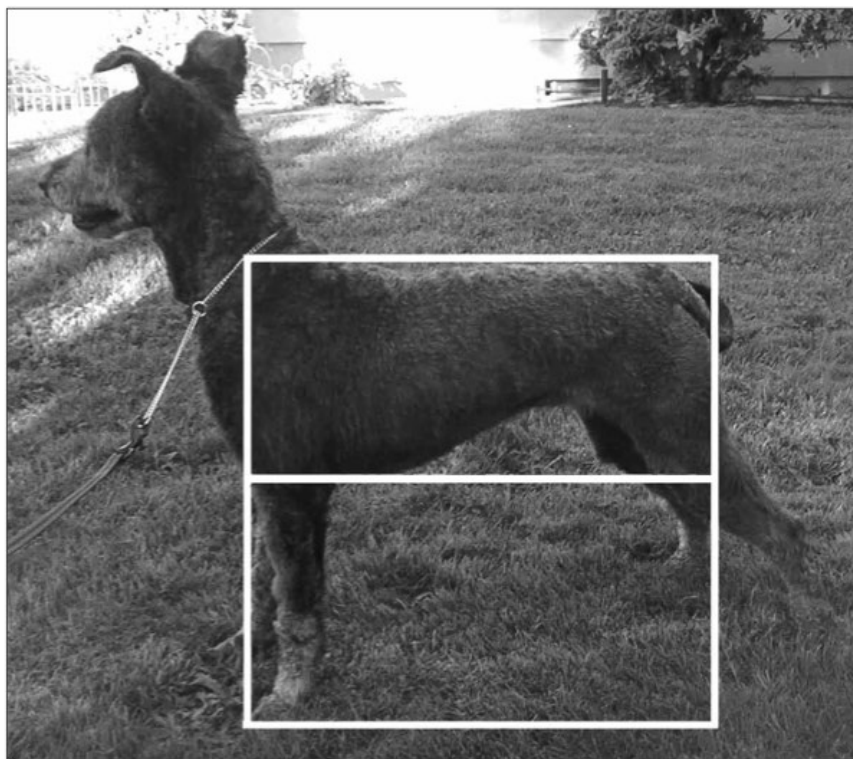


Figure 2: The chest is less than 50% of the height of a Pumi

The hard hair and the soft hair are basically the same length. The hair forms into locks of hair which is a distinguishing characteristic of the breed. The hair must never be blown dry and fluffed because it obscures the characteristic coat. The coat is wet down prior to being shown in order to form the curls and locks of hair.



Figure 3: Locks of hair

These locks of hair vary in type and shape over the body, from curls on the back to corkscrews on the legs. A judge must check for this type of coat, and for the 50-50 proportion of hard and soft hair. The locks of hair do not cord as in the Puli, but can easily be combed out, which they need to have done about once every 2-3 weeks. The hair is surprisingly resilient to dirt and twigs, and what doesn't fall out, the Pumi will pull out themselves.



Black & Tan Pattern
(Disqualification)



Solid Colored Dogs with Shadings
(Correct)



COLOR

The Pumi can be almost any solid color, but always with a black nose and black pigment. The accepted coat colors are black, white, fawn, and any shade of gray. Fawn should preferably have some gray shading in it (i.e. it was also born black and faded to fawn). Gray puppies are born black and fade to gray, the same as the Kerry Blue Terrier and silver Poodle. Because of the graying process, the coat may be a number of shades of gray on the body, typically a bit lighter gray on the legs and muzzle. This shading is not the same as a black and tan pattern which is a disqualification (similar to the phantom Poodle).

The Pumi is to be a solid-colored dog, but can have shadings, such as darker ears and tail or lighter colored legs. The two dogs below are solid-colored dogs with shadings. Only disqualify a Pumi

that you are positive has the black and tan pattern.

TOPLINE

The topline is not explicitly described in the standard, but can be implied through the following:

- Withers pronounced and forming the highest point of the body.
- The back is short, straight, and taut.
- The loin is short, straight, and firmly coupled.
- The croup is not too long, slightly sloped, and of medium breadth.
- Tail: set high

From front to rear, the withers form the highest point of the topline, sloping to a short, level back, and extending to a slightly sloped croup with a high tailset. However, the customary trim for the dogs is with a totally sloping topline from withers straight to the tail. When judging, please check for the actual topline on the table during the exam.

TAIL

The tail forms a full circle on top of the back of the Pumi, where the tip of the tail touches its base. This is



Figure 4: Some of the curls from a single Pumi

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Acceptable Tails

unlike the Puli which blends into the backline, or the sickle of the Mudi. This type of tail may hang straight when at rest (which is not often), but should always be in a full circle on the move. While a full circle is ideal, a range of curl is acceptable. The primary criteria is that it must at least touch the back when moving.

WHAT JUDGES ARE MISSING

Showing in the Miscellaneous Classes, we have found that there is a tendency to look for the “generic dog” and miss some breed-specific

requirements. At first glance, the Pumi should have a Pumi silhouette: very square, upright, light-bodied, slightly sloping topline, high tailset, and curled tail, moving at moderate speed with very moderate reach and drive – with head carried relatively high, a light step and springy (not bouncy) motion. Judges seem to be finding the one with the most reach and drive and a longer back, which while it satisfies many of the AKC breeds’ requirements, that is not one of Pumi’s. The Hallmarks of the Pumi insert totally describes the silhouette, both standing and moving.



Correct



Incorrect

HALLMARKS OF THE PUMI (IN PRIORITY ORDER)

1. Tulip ears
2. Curly locks of hair
3. Square
4. Circular tail
5. Moderate reach and drive
6. Light-footed, ready for action
7. Light-bodied

THE FUTURE

The Pumi was able to enter companion and performance events as of January 2008, and entered the Miscellaneous Class in January 2011. They are scheduled to enter the Herding Group July 1, 2016. While there are just over 300 Pumik registered in the US, many of them are competing in AKC and non-AKC events. Approximately 30% of the registered Pumik have obtained multiple AKC titles in obedience, rally, conformation, agility, tracking, lure coursing, and herding (in addition to non-AKC titles in flyball, freestyle, dock diving, barn hunt, and nose work). Their temperament and structure makes them versatile working dogs for whatever sport you choose to do with them.

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Figure 8: Pumik excel in all dog sports, but especially agility



Figure 6: Szürkebarát Vadóc of Abiqua

The Hungarian Pumi Club of America has provided judges education seminars in most of the main venues, and is willing to provide more as requested, or to answer any questions judges may have about the breed. Go to www.pumiclub.org/about-the-pumi/judges-education/ for much information on the breed and a list of parent club approved mentors. For questions, contact JEC Chris Levy at chris@abiquadogs.com.

We hope that those judges who are approved for Pumik will take this breed seriously enough to uphold the standard, assuring that the dogs do not change from the heritage that has been given us by those dedicated breeders in Europe.



Figure 7: FCI International Champion, Hungarian, Polish, Finnish, Argentine, Mexican Champion, ARBA Champion of Champions, Argentina Grand Champion, Latin American & Caribbean Champion Galla-Hegy Gömböc CM PT CA World Winner '05, '06, '07, '09. Four times National Specialty BOB winner.



Chris is the Judges Education Chair for the Hungarian Pumi Club of America in addition to being its President. She's had Pumik for 17 years, importing a number of dogs from Hungary and the Scandinavian countries. She and her husband, Tom, have accumulated 5 World Winner titles, 2 European Winner titles, BOS at the Hungarian Pumi Klub Show with a homebred, and an FCI Hungarian herding working certification. Chris judges the Terrier and Non-Sporting Groups and almost half the Sporting Group. She was just approved as the first adjunct judge for the Pumi.