Maine Coon Seminar

Coonsboro Calvin Coonidge
(at 9 months)
Born October 1991
The first Maine Coon one show Grand Champion in both CFA and TICA
B/O: Jill & Dave Burrows

Seminar Prepared by:
Beth Hicks, January 2004
TICA Judge since 1979
TICA Instructor – School & Ring
Tanstaaf Cattery – Est. 1972

This photographic seminar on the Maine Coon would not have been possible without the fantastic support received from Maine Coon breeders worldwide. The cats pictured in these pages are from the United States, Europe, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. These Maine Coons are beloved pets, breeding cats, and award winners that have been shown in many different associations around the world. After more than thirty years of breeding, I still find that the community of Maine Coon breeders and fanciers is a very special group of people. The response to my frequent requests for photos to illustrate specific features was fabulous! This started as a project to develop a photo seminar for TICA judges but quickly became much more than that. Maine Coon breeders, owners, and clubs worldwide have my permission to use this seminar as a teaching and training tool.

Copyrights in the photographs contained in this document belong to their photographer, including without restriction Chanan, Jim Childs, Carmelynn Cole, Jim Brown, Feline Fotos by Helmi, and all other photographers (professional or otherwise). No photograph used in the photo seminar is to be used for any other purpose without the express written permission of the photographer.

This seminar can be found on the web at http://home.midsouth.rr.com/mcseminar
Maine Coon

The female’s chin (left) is strong and deep but a little narrow. Male’s chin (right) is receding and needs more depth.

The female’s chin (left) needs to be stronger and have more depth. The male’s chin (right) has the depth to look balanced with the muzzle.

“Penalize: Weak or Receding, Narrow, Lack of Depth”

“Wide, deep enough to complete square look of muzzle. Firm, in line with upper lip ...”

Chins with the width and depth to complete the square look of the muzzle, also in line with the upper lip.
Maine Coon

THE MUZZLE

"Square
Penalize: Prominent whisker pads."

Short Muzzle

Snippy & Narrow

Triangular

Rounded

Muzzle appears prominent due to narrow head width but head should widen as this young female matures

Prominent Whisker Pads - detract from squareness of muzzle and strength of chin

Square muzzles. White on the face can be visually distracting, look for actual shape.
Maine Coon

THE EYES

"Large, slightly oval, appear round when wide open. Wide-set. Outer corner of eye points toward outer base of ear."

Almond Shaped

Round

Too Wide-Set

Slanted

Flat topped

Small

"Penalize: Slanted, almond-shaped eyes, flat tops on eye openings."

Three cats with good eye set, size and aperture.
Maine Coon

THE PROFILE

"Gently curving forehead. Gentle concave curve at bridge of nose flowing into a smooth nose line."

Two profiles that are too straight

Suggestion of a Roman Nose

Pronounced Nose Bump

Slight Nose Bump

Unusual Nose Bump

"Penalize: Straight. Roman Nose. Pronounced bump."

Perfect profiles
Maine Coon

EARS  “Large, wide at base with outer base set just slightly farther back than inner base. Outer base just above the level of the top of the eye. Outside edges have a very slight outward tilt that is not past eleven and one o’clock. Set fairly high on head with inner bases not more than one ear’s width apart. Taller than the width at base but still in balance with head length. Moderately pointed ears appear taller due to lynx tips. Furnishings extend beyond outer edge of ear.”


“Allowance: Allow for tighter earset in kittens and wider earset in mature males.”
Ear flare is largely determined by the relationship between the set of the inner and outer base of the ear. If the outer base is set way back from the inner base, the ears will be flared out.

Set too low

Out of balance - so tall that ears are the first thing you notice!

Lynx Tips add dramatically to the MC look! Pictures of the same female against different backgrounds - see how the visible lynx tips properly finish the pointed shape of the ear.

Curved inner edges - Rarely seen
Pictures of the Same Male at ages 7 months, 2 years and 12 years - Ear size did not change! The head broadened

Two whole males: one on left is 6 years old, one on right is 5 years old. Ears that are set correctly should not "go south".

Same female pictured at 8 months and 5 years old. Properly set ears should stay properly set.

Nice set and size - Well balanced ears

Good ears on a 3 year old female
Maine Coon - COAT

"Length: Uneven; shorter on shoulders, gradually lengthening down the back and sides. Long, full, shaggy belly fur and britches. Tail fur long, full, flowing. Frontal ruff becomes more developed with age.

Texture: All-weather coat. A slight undercoat gives the coat body but coat still falls smoothly. Not cottony.

Penalize: Lack of slight undercoat or belly shag. Overall even coat."

Two similar looking girls illustrate the difference a slight frontal ruff makes in appearance. Age is a factor in ruff development - girl on the right is now 2 years old and her ruff is just starting to grow.

Coat lies too close to the body - this boy needs more undercoat.

Two young males about the same age - boy on right has more belly shag.
Maine Coons with wonderful shaggy coats, frontal ruffs and long flowing tail fur.
Maine Coon - HEAD

“Broad modified wedge. Size in proportion to body. Lightly longer than wide. Distinct muzzle break can be seen under high prominent cheekbones.”

Maine Coons with different looks shown in different associations worldwide - all lovely cats that fit the standard.
Maine Coon
SIZE

Comment: The size difference between males and females is more significant in Maine Coons than any other breed. Males average 15-20 pounds. Females average 9-12 pounds. Put a 10 pound female next to a 20 pound male and she will look small. Ten pounds in NOT a small female. Most breeders feel that the girls don’t get a fair deal in the show hall.

"The standard favors the male. Allowance MUST be made for a significant size difference between the male and female."

On the left is a SIX MONTH old male who already weighs 14 pounds. Next to him is his two year old dam who weighs 11 pounds - that is not a small female, but in another six months she will look “small” sitting next to her son.

"Type should not be sacrificed for size. Breed is slow to mature."

Littermates at 11 months. This is a big female (right) but notice the difference in body build and boning in the leg.

Littermates at one year two males and one female.
Maine Coon - Tongue
Long enough to clean the nose...

Hope you enjoyed our show!

The End