

*The Persian-
Enjoyment
&
Evaluation*



LEGEND OF PERSIAN

- In 525BC King Cambyses of Persia conquered Egypt.
- When the soldiers went home they took with them some of the sacred cats of Egypt.
- Since the climate of Persia was much colder than that of Egypt, the cats through the generations developed longer thicker fur
- In 331BC, Persia was itself conquered by Alexander the Great. The Persian court fled to the plains of Chorassan, taking with them their prized Persian Cats

Legend -2

- The weather on the plains was even colder than before and the cats had to adapt to an even harsher climate
- By 247 AD when the Parthian empire arose the Persian cat had evolved to look much more as it does today
- The shorter face and cobby body has resulted from selective breeding over the succeeding years.

EVALUATING THE PERSIAN

- As with all breeds the evaluation should be founded totally and completely by the standard for the breed
- The Persian has
 - 35 points allocated to the head,
 - 35 points allocated to the body ,
 - 20 points to the Coat/Color/Pattern, and
 - 10 points for other (Condition and Balance)

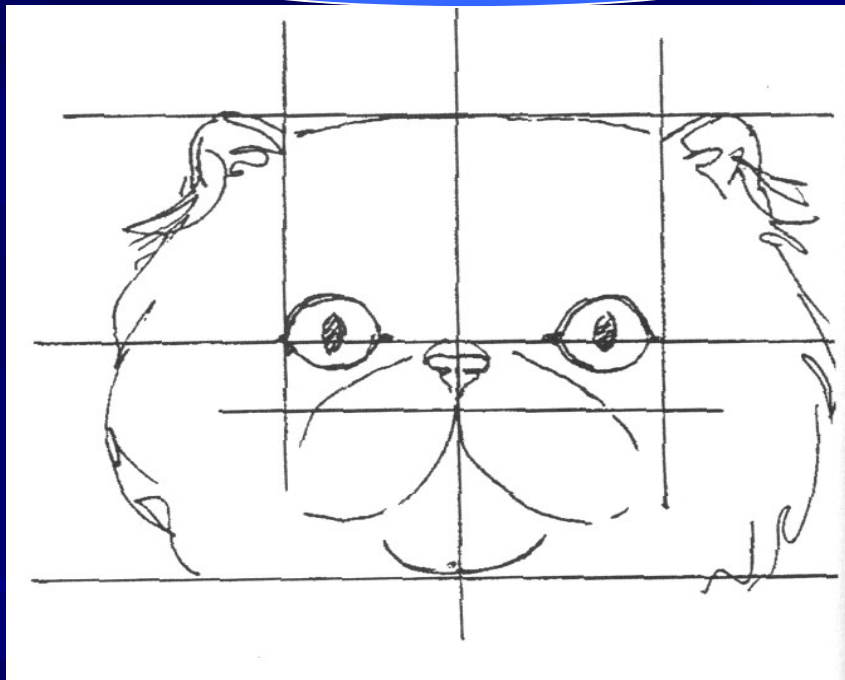
EVALUATION- GENERAL

- In preparing this presentation we will be talking about the standard and giving some tips on how to evaluate the characteristic.
- Although the head and the body of the Persian are equally weighted many consider the head as the basis of the Persian
- Let's first talk about the head and how best to evaluate it. We will be using pictures and drawings to illustrate our presentation

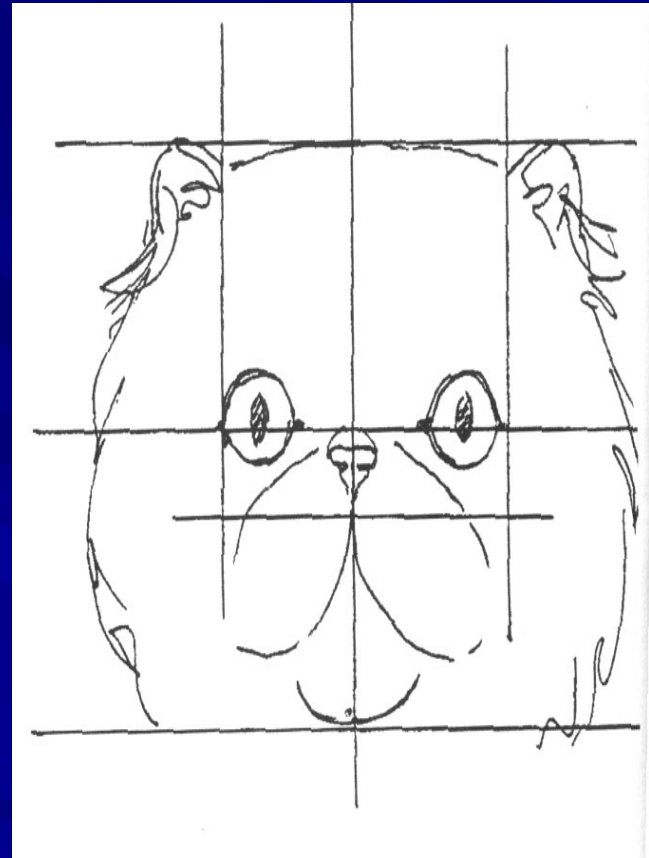
THE PERSIAN HEAD

- The shape as defined by the standard is “Round, broad, smooth domed with great breadth. Should be medium to large in size and in proportion to body. Jaws broad and powerful with perfect tooth occlusion. Cheeks should be full and prominent. Overall sweet expression”

Head ,shape

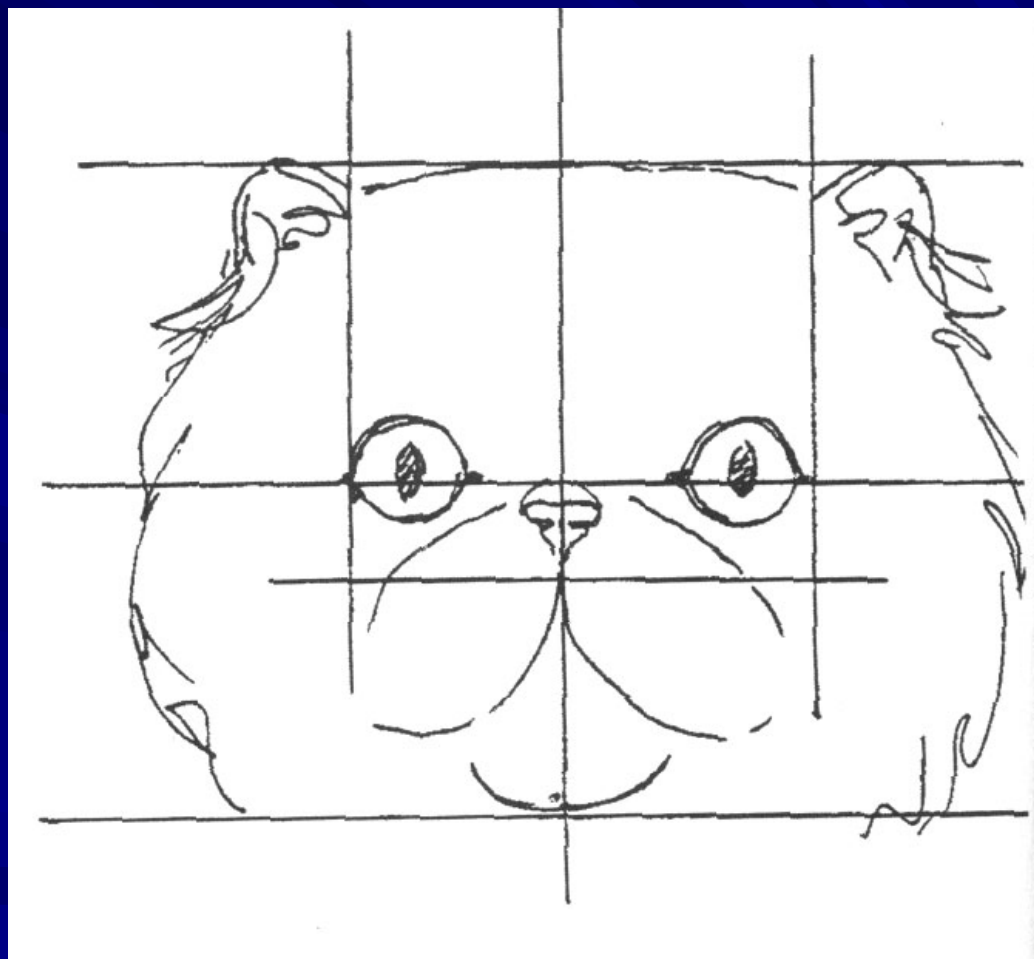


Not an oval head



Not a narrow head

Head shape



A perfect circle

HEAD CHARACTERISTICS

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HEAD CHARACTERISTICS

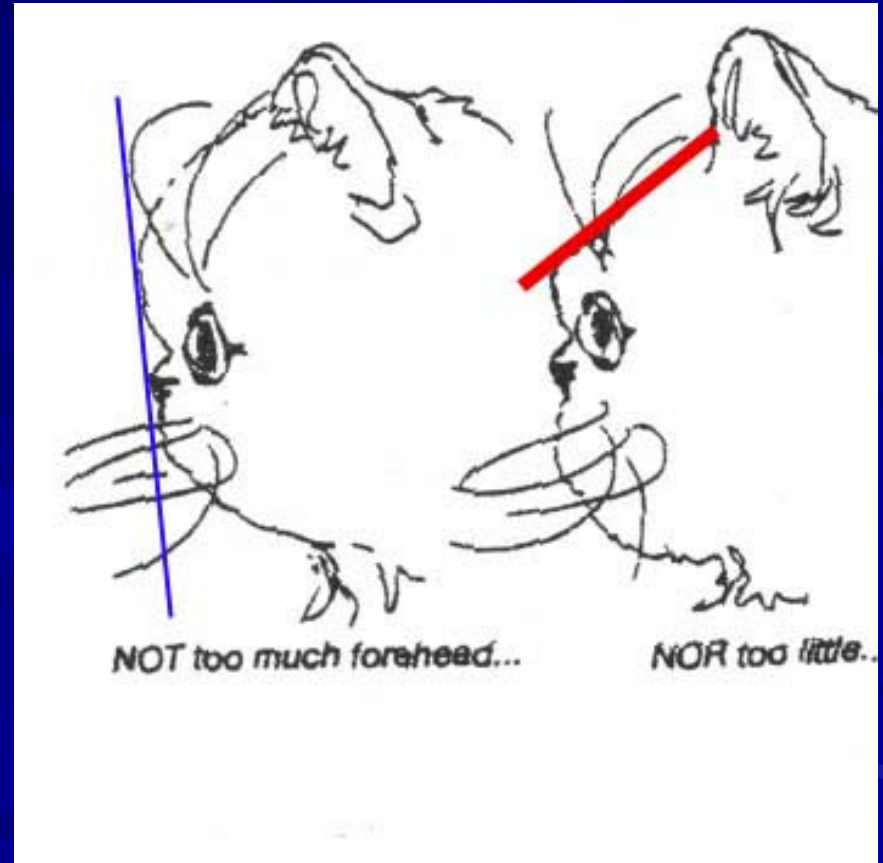
- An additional characteristic to which the standard speaks is “perfect tooth occlusion.” Perfect tooth occlusion addresses the alignment of the upper and lower teeth.
- One method of checking for tooth occlusion is to simply run your finger across the outside front of the jaw line and you will quickly feel any abnormality
- If you find or suspect an abnormality, **GENTLY** raising the lip on the cats head near the front and observe the match of the teeth. Many cats will resist this, however a quick peek is all that is really necessary.
- Prying open the mouth is unhealthy or forcing the cat to open it's mouth will result in an extremely unhappy exhibitor and likely an unhappy cat.

HEAD CHARACTERISTICS

- By doing this task quickly and unobtrusively, in no way suggests that we should ignore nor slide over the trait. It is a problem that the breeders want penalized or disqualified and that is what we are obligated to do, especially if it is severe.
- Most of breeders and exhibitors however object strenuously to indiscriminant opening every mouth, especially if there is no outward appearance of malocclusion.
- Remember that the standard is the same for the Himalayan and the Exotic Shorthair. Once you do it for one you must do it for the others as well.

HEAD CHARACTERISTICS

- Another characteristic that the standard addresses is “smooth domed”
 - This is a characteristic that has deteriorated in some Persian lines and has crept into the show ring.



Proper Doming

- As can be seen from the drawing you observe doming by viewing the head from the side. A straight line drawn perpendicular to the ground will touch the dome and the chin.
- **CAUTION:** Do not be mislead by fur sculpting. Doming is cranial boning. Feel the head!



Eyes – 10 points

- The eyes carry the same maximum weight as any other single trait in the standard
- Many judges feel that the eyes are where the Persian begins.
- The standard says **“Large, round, and full. Set level and far apart giving a sweet expression to the face, eye color has equal importance to size and shape”**

Lets look at some eye traits



Biased eyes



Almond eyes



**Nose break above
center of eyes**



Eyes too small & close

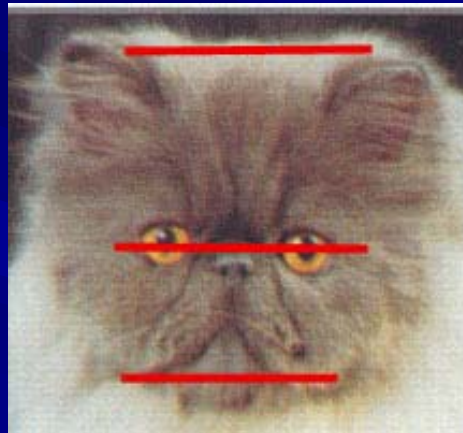


Too much top head

Recognize these faults?



Bias?



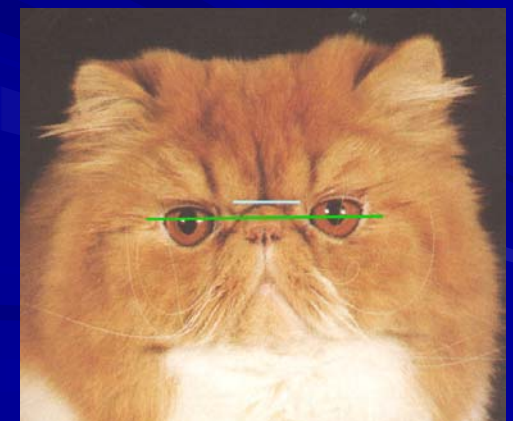
Top Head?



Too Close?



Almond?



Nose Break?

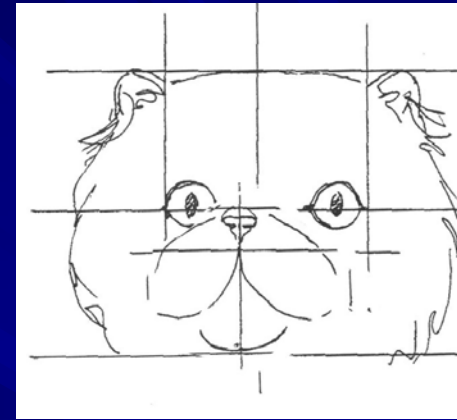
THE PROPER PERSIAN EYES

- Large,
- Round
- Full.
- Level
- Far apart
- Sweet expression

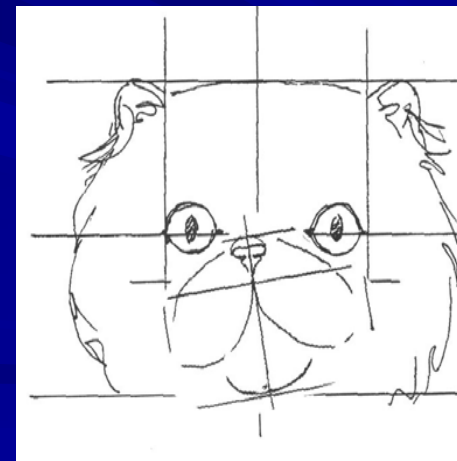


ADDITIONAL HEAD CONSIDERATIONS

- The standard identifies “Asymmetry” as “crooked or off center nose, mouth, etc.”
- This is a tuffy to really visualize but is generally evident as “something just doesn’t look right.”

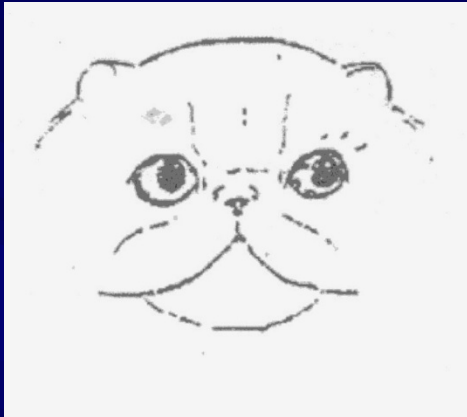


Nose Off-center



Muzzle rotated

Do you recognize these problems?



?????



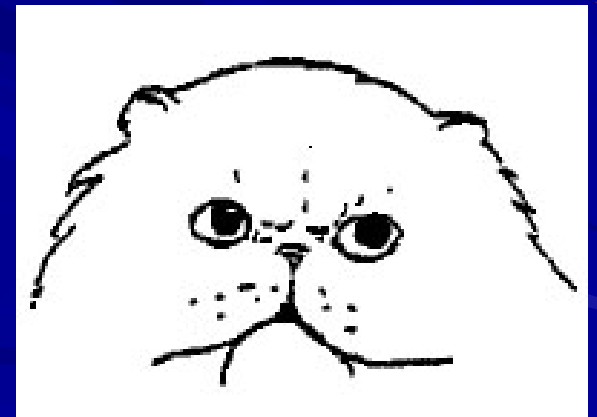
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Click when ready

Do you recognize these problems?



Eye shapes don't match



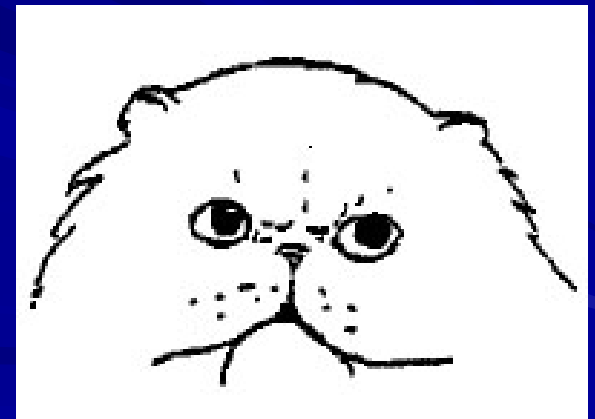
Cats right eye higher than left



Wry mouth



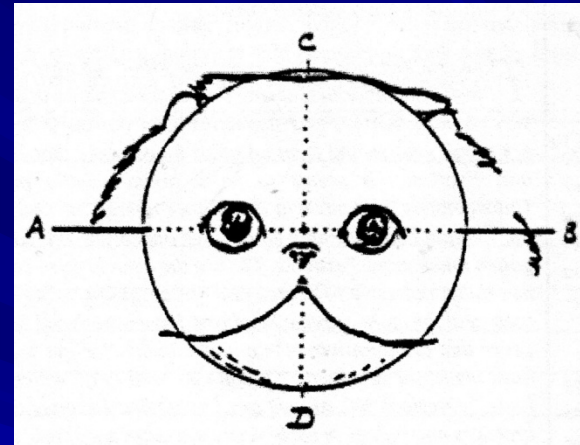
Muzzle shifted to right



Over developed jaw

Quarter circle approach to judging Persian head

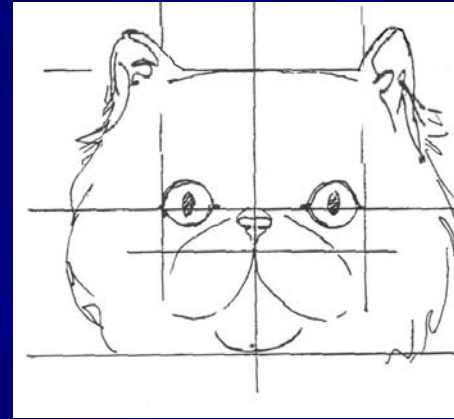
- Draw a circle mentally around the cats face.
- Bisect the circle with one horizontally and one vertically axis.
- A balanced symmetrical face will have the eyes on the horizontal line, the nose and center of the mouth & jaw on the vertical line



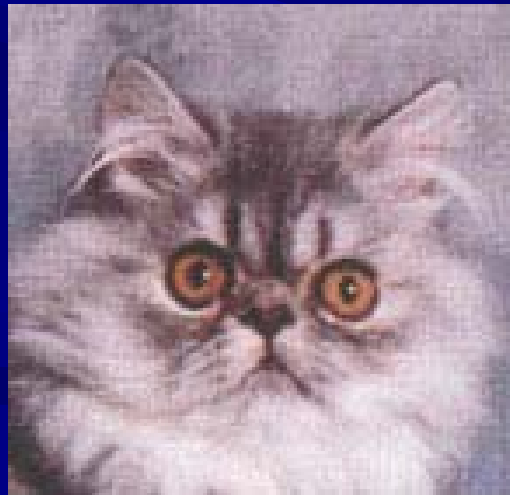
Any feature that is not matched with a feature from the corresponding quarter circle is most likely a cause for considering asymmetry

ADDITIONAL HEAD CONSIDERATIONS

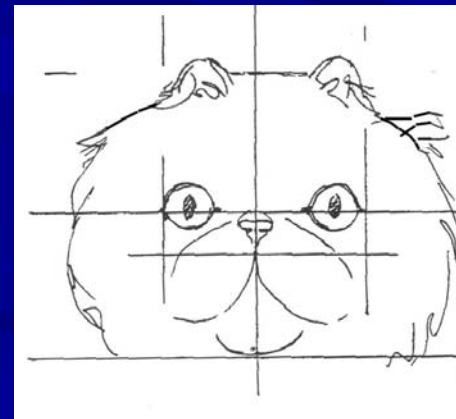
- Penalize for “ears that are large, pointed, slanting out from the head or set too close together.



Big ears



Ears too big & close



Close ears

The rest of the head

- Ears- small round tipped not unduly open at the base. Set wide apart, fitting into the contour of the head



Think Round

Round head structure

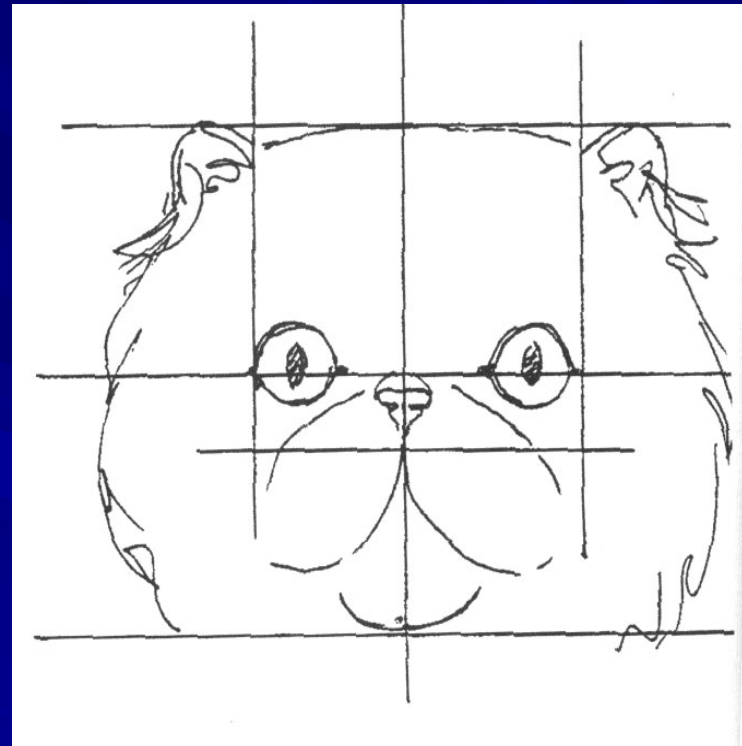
Round face

Round eyes

Round tipped ears

Round lower jaw and face

**All balanced on
a quartered circle**



Good Persian Heads



The nose

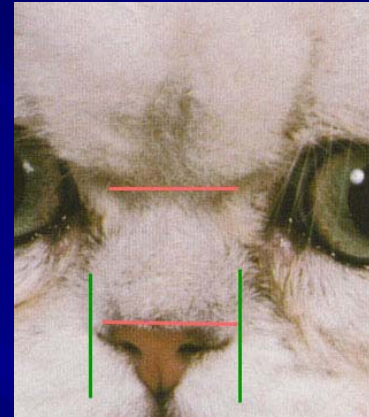
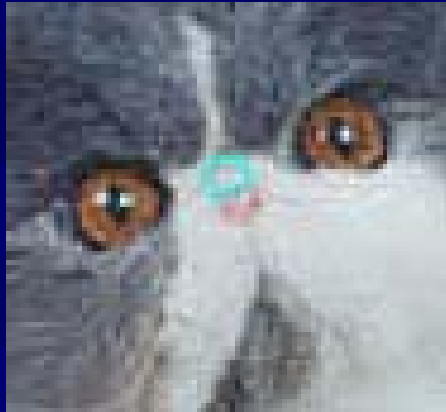
- Possibly the most considered part of the head is the nose. It is however only 5 points in the standard --- the same as the shape, the ears, the profile, the feet and legs, the tail, the musculature, condition, and balance.
- It remains, however, as a factor that many judges place a disproportionate amount of weight.

The nose

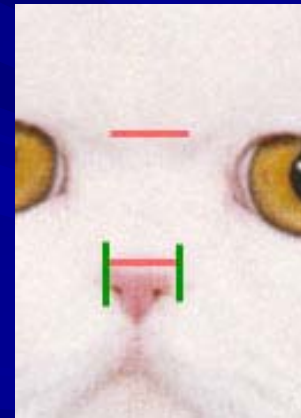
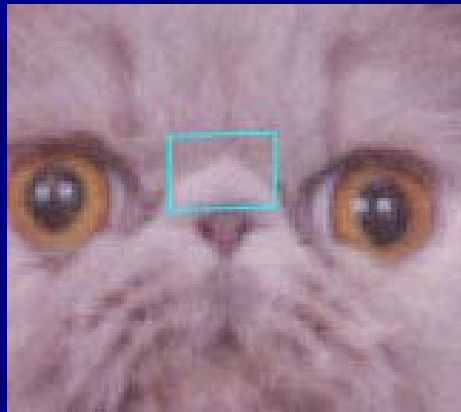
- Lets see how the standard describes the nose.
“Almost as broad as long with open nostrils.”
- It says to penalize for a “long Roman nose”
- No where does it say that a “deep break is desirable” and yet many judges when finalling a Persian will say “ This cat has a great deep break.” The standard under profile says “short snub-nose, definite break between the eyes.”
- What the standard is looking for is a balanced short snub-nose with a break. Keeping in mind it should be as long as it is wide.
- It is the opinion of many Persian breeders that a “deep’ break often leads to a mean look. Keep in mind we are looking for a sweet look.

The nose

■ Examples



See the differences?



Two on left, equal width and length – on right, longer than wide

OVERALL HEAD

■ We have discussed nearly every characteristic of the Persian head and here is what we have come down to.

- Round
- Broad
- Great breadth
- Proportion to body
- Jaws broad

Jaws powerful

Round, smooth domed

Cheeks full & prominent

Sweet expression

Symmetrical



- When it is all said and done you can generally tell quickly if you have a good Persian head --
 - It looks sweet and nothing is displeasing to your eye
- Just think round
- Trust your eye – that is what judging is all about !!

THE PERSIAN BODY

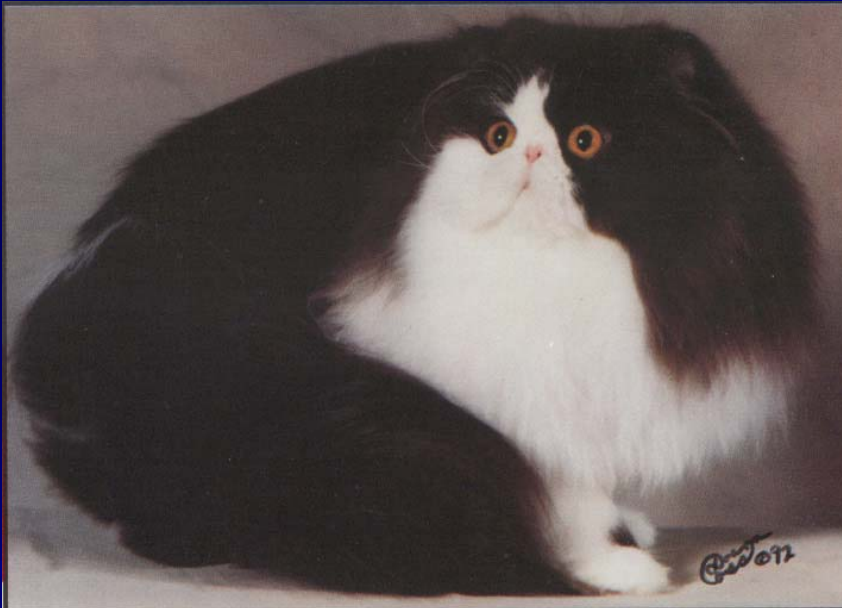
- As previously noted, the body on the Persian has the same number of points as the head.....35 points
- Do **you** mentally put equal weight on the body as the head?????
- Lets look at the various aspects of the body:

BODY --- 35 POINTS

Torso – 10 Points- Cobby, firm, well developed mid-section, in proportion. Medium to large in size. Back short and level. Chest is to be deep; equally massive across the shoulders and rump with a short well-developed abdomen and ribs.

In our terms, the body is built like a brick you know what. When you pick up a Persian in one hand, you should feel like you have it ALL - right there in your hand. If it hangs over or if the legs are far apart, it is not cobby. Starting at the shoulders, spread your hand with your thumb on one side of the cat and your fingers on the other side. Run your hand down the length of the body feeling for equal width. No narrowing or broadening should be detected; broad all of the way. A great Persian body is exciting to handle.

Cobby massive and uniform



Both of these cats
represent massive
cobby, bodies with
uniformity of
back and body
structure.

BODY – 35 POINTS

Feet, Legs & boning – 15 points

Large boned, well-developed and with firm musculature. In front view, the forelegs should be short and straight. From the rear legs, should also be short and straight.

Easy to check— as you look at the cat from the rear, grasp the front legs, wrap your hands around the legs,. Boning, musculature will readily become very apparent after a few cats, especially good and bad examples. Straightness --- just look!

CAUTION : Do not mistake fatness for musculature. Some Persian exhibitors think a fat cat is well muscled. If it is mushy look out. Fatness also covers up a multitude of sins like ranginess.

Feet, Legs and boning



■ Tail – 5 points

A tail is actually a very distinct part of the anatomy of the Persian. It is described as **short and straight. In proportion to body length.**

Many old time judges used to pull the tail around to compare it to the length of the body. The exhibitors became incensed that this hurt the cat, so to check for proportion just look -- you can visualize proportionality.

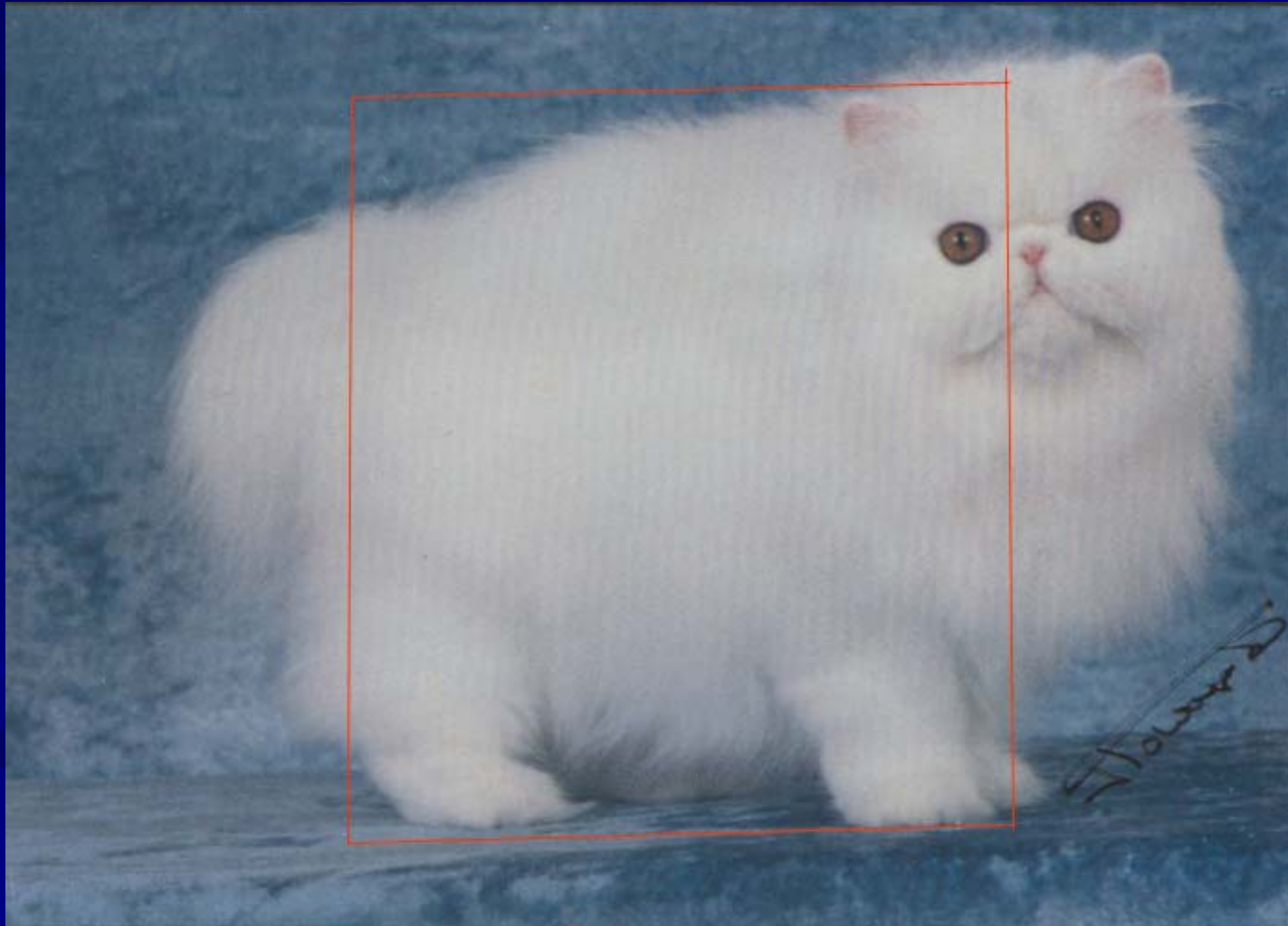
What constitutes **short**? **Experience**
I have never seen a Persian with too short a tail -- unless someone altered it. When you are checking for tail abnormalities, experience will set off the bells if it is too long. Mentally you will think "there is just too much tail here."

PERSIAN BODY SUMMARY

CHARACTERISTICS

- COBBY
- FIRM
- MEDIUM TO LARGE SIZE
- WELL MUSCULED
- HEAVY BONE
- STRAIGHT LEGS
- STRAIGHT-SHORT-TAIL
- GREAT BREADTH OF CHEST
- VISUAL APPEARANCE ** SQUARE WHEN VIEWED IN PROFILE WITH LEGS, BODY, AND FLOOR

Square Body Profile



COAT, COLOR, PATTERN

20 points

LENGTH: 10 points ** Long all over the body. Full of life. Dense undercoat giving the coat full volume. Ruff should be immense. Seasonal variations in coat shall be recognized.

The coat on a Persian is really self evident. Long is very obvious, while volume is very descriptive. In actuality, when everyone thinks of a Persian they expect large voluminous coats.

The texture is lumped in with length for the 10 points. It is however not defined in the standard. In general the texture is very soft and silky to the touch. It flows in the air. Experience however will educate the evaluator that texture will generally vary depending on color. A shaded silver will have a very delicate coat while a red or tabby will generally have a stronger harder coat.

COLOR / PATTERN - 10 points

Defining all of the colors and patterns is beyond the scope of this presentation. You are directed to the Standards for complete descriptions.

Voluminous Coat



CONDITION & BALANCE

- Condition has long been debated as a given expectation on all show cats. Assigning 5 points to it however reinforced the criticality of it in the show ring. The standard defines condition as “should reflect excellent health and robust power with good muscle tone, well muscled, but not fat.” In layman's terms condition should generally mean the cat looks like a **show cat**.
- Balance is probably the most difficult and yet critical characteristic to teach or learn. It is best described as “all pieces and parts of the cat fit together in a way so as to compliment all of the other parts of the cat in order to provide a beautiful work of natural art.” Balance is very breed specific.
 - Large ears on a Persian are considered unbalanced.
 - Large ears on an Aby are considered very balanced.
 - A long tubular body with big flaring ears on a Siamese is very balanced
 - A short cobby body with little round tipped ears on a Persian is balanced

Much like the head statement, when you look at the cat if anything sticks out as not looking right, the cat is likely not balanced.

Balance

- This is an excellent example of a beautiful cat that at the time of his picture was out of balance. Beautiful body, coat tail but the head too small for his body!



CONCLUSION

- In putting this CD together I have called upon my 27 years of experience and pictures and drawings that I have seen over the years.
- As I stated in the beginning the Standard is however the only bible that we have as judges. If you are using characteristics that are not defined in the standard, you might as well throw the standard out the window. Everybody can do the same and we have no standard.
- If we all use the standard as our bible, we are offering our customers, the exhibitors, an interpretation that they can strive to breed to and one which everyone is working to the same ends, the perfect cat

– Thank you I hope you enjoyed the presentation

**Good bye
and thank
you for
watching
this video**

