

True Type of Native Basenji Head

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FIGURE #1: Born in Africa in 1959

perfect nose, without that nasty little pointed end seen on some dogs. The pointed end makes the muzzle look even longer and spoils the expression. Note the ideal chiseling down the center of the skull, looking almost like a groove. This again makes for correct expression. The eyes are perfect – dark, almond shaped, and obliquely set, with soft loving expressions. A hard expression is all wrong in a Basenji. Another point: note how the eyes are wide set, possible very useful in their native land so as to allow for wide viewing. A Basenji with close-set eyes gives a mean, hard expression.

Note that there is width to the skull, but not cheekiness, an ideal but difficult point to achieve. There is enough to show side wrinkle, but not cheekiness, though head Number 1

As there has been a lot of discussion on Basenji heads lately, I feel that as the only woman who has spent a good number of weeks studying Basenjies in their true country, "the country of the barkless dogs" on the borders of the South Sudan, I hope breeders will not take it amiss if I try to describe the true native type, and some of the faults to be avoided.

All three dogs pictured have perfect length from muzzle to stop and then again from stop to the occiput. It utterly ruins Basenji expression if the muzzle is too long, and I'm afraid many are. Each of these dogs has a



FIGURE #2: Born in Africa in 1962
Note: This one should say Born in England

could do with more side wrinkle, but some do show it as much as others, especially Number 1, being an amateur shot with a very ordinary camera. All have smooth, very fine coats with correct markings. Number 1 has an especially fine coat. All three look to have fine necks of good length.

The setting of the eyes, almost in a chiseled framework, is the correct bone setting. Yet, again, there is no cheekiness. Number 1 is particularly good in this respect. Number 3 has particularly good wrinkle and chiseling on the forehead and the groove down the muzzle shows clearly.

The ears on all three are good, small and the narrow space between the ears is particularly good. It makes one think of how different they are to some of the photos one sees of wide-set ears and a big, wide space between them. No need to add that this is a very incorrect and ugly fault.

Although the markings on these three are correct, it does not mean that other markings are wrong. Faults in markings are white extending right over the shoulders, white running up into the loin, white running too far up the ribs and extending back into the shoulders. The reverse is no white chest, no white tip to the tail, and brown feet. However, I think half a white toe should not be as severely penalized as the excessive white. Another fault in white is a white mark going right over the back like a zebra, though this is very scarce.

I hope this may be of interest to Basenji owners and breeders, and possible even a help.

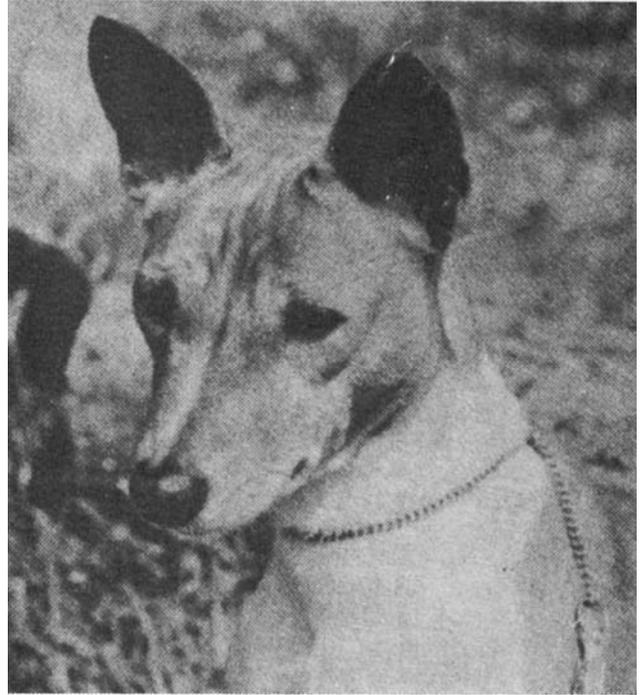


FIGURE #3: Born in U.S.A. in 1974