

beyond the root of the tail, giving a strong reachy appearance to the hindquarters, as opposed to the weak crouching look given by a tail which is too low set and has no curve of buttock behind it. The tail should lie as closely as possible to one hip or the other; a central curl is not desirable, as it gives a 'tea-pot' handle effect and spoils the outline of the dog. The ideal is a double-curl tail lying well down against one hip, so that only the root of the tail shows from the other side.

Colour

The popular colours are red and white; and black, tan and white. Every effort should be made to get these as clear and brilliant as possible. Light red, sandy and brown shades are permissible, but are not nearly as attractive as the desired bright red and orange red. Apart from the white feet, chest and tail tip, the extent of the white markings is optional, though a fair amount of white is proving most popular as it makes a more striking looking dog. Black, tan and whites should be coal black, with tan melon pips over the eyes, tan cheeks and a fringe of tan where the black joins the white on the legs. But there should be no intermingling of the different coloured hairs. Creams used to occur quite frequently, but have been a very rare occurrence for many years. These should

be either put down at birth (when they are easily recognisable as they are a sort of cream-grey) or parted with as pets without pedigrees. The scientific probability is that creams are either a dilute gene, and therefore extremely undesirable or, equally undesirable, they are 'near albinos'. Because of their lack of pigmentation, pale colour, pink eye rims and washy noses, it is felt they might be harmful to the desired red colour, with the black eye rims, noses and dark eyes of the ideal Basenji.

The 1954 edition of this book stated that 'plenty of white markings are proving most popular as it makes for a more striking looking dog'. Even in those days too much white used to crop up, such as half white ears and odd zebra-like stripes over the body. The author feels that common sense is the best guide to what is required and what is incorrect. Briefly, the more orthodox the markings, the more desirable they are. Where 'white on the legs' is stated, common sense indicates that all white forelegs are permissible, but what of the hindlegs? Common sense would say that the usual white on the hindlegs extends to around the hocks, and photos of early imports onwards sometimes show a fringe of white along the whole of the outside of the thigh. More white than this would look unusual and therefore not desirable. With regard to the white blaze and/or muzzle, since the earliest days it has been accepted that this can go right over the head to join the collar, but wide white blazes which include part or all of the eyes are not desirable. A frequent query is whether red markings in the white collar and blaze are allowed. Since 1939 this has always been considered permissible, but white markings in the red of the shoulders, the back or over the hindquarters were considered the worst type of mismarking—these were described as 'Islands of white' which make them an easily understood mismark. 'White collar' means a neat white collar, but there are many correct variations, and it has been suggested that 'white neck markings' would be more appropriate. White marks, half white collars and white streaks up the neck are all considered correct. It seems it is only the

very wide white collars which might be suspect, raising the query as to where a collar ends and mismarking begins. Here it is felt that the white should begin below the ear and end before the shoulder blades. It is most important that the white markings on all parts of the body should be pure white with no ticking of black or red hairs. This is a very ugly fault, but it should not be confused with spots of grey pigmentation on the skin, which many Basenjis have, and which shows through if the animal has a very fine coat.

Three new colours have appeared in Britain in recent years. Black and white was achieved by the importation of Liberian blood from West Africa (see page 81). This should be pure black with the usual white markings. There should be no tan hairs, nor any flecks of black hair in the white markings, and the black must not be rusty looking.

The tiger-striped brindle is a red dog with clear dark brown or black stripes over the head and body. A number of these

were seen all over the Basenji country in the South Sudan, and also in the Ituri forest region of the Congo. There is no doubt they are an absolutely pure Basenji colour, in fact the tiger-striped dogs of the South Sudan were in many cases the most typey Basenji seen, which is not surprising as true brindle is a basic African colour.

Mahogany, tan and white is another Sudanese colour, seen in the South Sudan. It was also the colour of Major Richards' tri-colour, Nyanabiem, who was imported from the South Sudan in 1938. The mahogany is very dark mahogany, almost black, with tan and white in the usual places. If this colour is imported in the future, it should be recognised as a true native colour. After all, the aim of most Basenji clubs is to preserve native type, and colour must come into this.

Another variation in colour arrived in England by a different but equally legal method. It was found that the imported native bitch, Fula (see page 78), carried black, tan and white recessively, and this was brought out by line breeding to her, in just the same way that the native bitch, Amatangazig, carried tri-colour with melon pips recessively, and this again was brought out by line breeding. Amatangazig's tri-colours were black, with white markings, tan cheeks, tan seat and tan fringes to the back of the legs, often quite a lot of tan where the black on the legs joins the white and, of course, tan melon pips. Fula's tri-colour was rather different, as there were no melon pips, very little or no tan on the cheeks and often no tan where the black joins the white on the front legs. In fact they could be mistaken for pure black and white until close inspection reveals the tan fringes. In some specimens there are only a few tan hairs inside the ears and a slight fringe of tan down the back of the thighs. A great number of people consider these are the 'black and whites' which gave rise to black and white being included in the original standard — as quoted by Mrs Burn in the 1938 Cruft's catalogue — as no one has ever mentioned finding a pure black and white either in the South Sudan or the Belgian Congo

DESCRIPTION OF DETAIL

(Zaire), although all other colours, except cream, have been referred to. Incidentally, no creams, nor pure black and whites—apart from one doubtful little specimen—were seen by the 1959 Sudan Expedition. A so-called 'black-and-white' Basenji was sent to me from the South Sudan in 1938, but upon arrival in England it was found to be pure black and white, with no tan hairs anywhere—but it had bright yellow melon pips. So a few tan hairs did not, apparently, deter them from being called black and white in the land of their birth. One school of thought feels these black, tan and whites should be banned, but they certainly would not have been if they had been the first of this colour in England instead of the ones with melon pips from Amatangazig. There seems no ground for banning them as they are a pure African colour and there is nothing against them in the official standard. But care must be taken that they do not become a rusty black or become sabled, which is very unattractive.

In the Basenji the following appears to be the order of dominance as regards colour inheritance:

Black and white, originally from Liberia, is dominant to red and white, tri-colour with melon pips, and tri-colour without melon pips.

Red and white is dominant to both types of tri-colour.

Tri-colour with melon pips is dominant to tri-colour without melon pips.

The late Dr Fitch-Dalglish, the famous geneticist, stated that in his opinion, tiger-striped brindle would be dominant to all the above colours, apart from the Liberian black and whites, which at the time of his death had not been introduced into the British Isles.