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Subject: PSG: CKC standard - teeth
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Further to the discussion of a scissors bite vs an even bite. The pre-1959 (US, Canada and UK) standard said: "Teeth white, strong and level". The following explanation comes from Stanley Dangerfield. Your Poodle and Mine, London, Camelot Press, C1954.

"Teeth 'level' means that the teeth in the upper jaw should not overlap, or be overlapped by, the teeth in the lower jaw when the mouth is closed. . . . The teeth should meet at the tips, or alternatively the lower teeth may be SLIGHTLY behind and touching the upper ones." p.21.

This description of the teeth was altered in the US standard revision of 1959 to read "teeth white, strong and with a scissors bite". (Incidentally, that revision was also the one which called for the legs to "gait parallel".)

The Canadian national club rejected that US revision and retained the previous standard - up to that point, the CKC had automatically accepted the US standard.

When the Canadian standard came to be revised in the early '70's, there was a strong push from some breeders who were showing extensively in the US to change to a scissors bite. The opposition to this group was based on an understanding of the traditional, historical requirements of the breed and a reluctance to opt for a change which had no justification in the history of the breed - not the rumour that one breeder objected because they bred level bites (which was, after all, correct to the standard of the day). In my opinion, the change to a scissors bite is a very good example of how a fad can materially affect the appearance of a breed, and how a lack of knowledge of the history of a breed can lead some newer breeders to accept the fad as correct. In recent years there have been articles in Dogs in Canada by Andrew Brace and Richard Beauchamp on just this subject - the generic showdog vs a well-researched understanding of the purpose and type of a breed.

Mary Jane