

## HOUND Group

The rhomboid ear is an ear designed for acute hearing; it is not a fashion statement. The Ibizan uses its hearing as it hunts in rough cover of brush and rocks. I have heard it said that the Ibizan does not run on its ears. This sort of view is exactly what the originators of the breed feared from dog fanciers.

The Ibizan is a sighthound, but is *not* a Greyhound. The Ibizan also uses its keen hearing in the pursuit of game. Ibizans work as a pack, encircling a rabbit in the brush, spacing themselves; the dogs pounce straight up and land heavily in an attempt to flush the rabbit. Meanwhile, all are cocking their heads and listening! Ibizans are fast. Lure coursing is great fun, but the Ibizan's true hunting style and purpose is to work in a pack, leaping to great heights to clear the tops of brush to get a reconnaissance view of the fleeing rabbit. When they sight their prey, they give tongue, alerting their pack-mates and the accompanying human hunter.

At our national specialty this year, our most qualified and experienced judge, Mr. Ed Gilbert, expressed his concern for the scarcity of the rhomboid ear. It is heartening to have such a noteworthy judge aware of the refinements of the Ibizan.

As an artist specializing in the canine, I am acutely conscious of the physical aspects of my own breed. The ear-set of the Ibizan is high.

Unfortunately, the ear-set of the Ibizan and the Pharaoh are often confused and transposed. The Pharaoh Hound has a more open set. A very intense Ibizan can lift its entire ear-set quite high. A low-key or reticent Ibizan may "pin" its ears when intimidated.

As a breeder, I would be thrilled to get perfect rhomboid ears on my dogs. The rhomboid ear sets off the head, gives expression and type, and most of all is entirely functional as a sort of sonar device. The Spanish hunters did not select this feature for looks. Their goal was to maximize success in capturing rabbits with a particular breed in a very specific environment. Now it is up to us, without the evolutionary forces of nature, to preserve the heritage of our most ancient breed. —*Nan Kilgore-Little, Gladstone, Va.; Lws4art@gmail.com* ♦



### Beginner's Luck PART ONE

**“**You should really give some thought to adding compost mix and making the holes larger,” I advised my neighbor, who had bare-root roses still in their colorful boxes strategically placed up and down her driveway. “Oh, I only have an hour before I leave for an engagement,” she replied, as she proceeded to drop each rose, box and all, into its hole. Imagine my surprise next spring to look out my kitchen window and see a display to rival the famous Huntington Gardens.

Most of us who have been in dogs for any length of time can tell a similar story of the novice breeder who manages to come up with the coveted Best in Show dog in their first litter. Upon careful study, however, it becomes apparent that their success is due not to beginner's luck, but to the work of those who have gone before them—no different than my neighbor, who just happened by chance to select plants from one of the great nurseries.

When pursuing success in breeding dogs, there is no substitute for hard work, and there is nothing more necessary in that endeavor than establishing a great female line. “Great bitches come from other great bitches” was the advice of my mentor, Alma J. Starbuck. And she knew of what she spoke, having produced one famous brood bitch after another that left an enviable record for Ambleside, both in the show ring and whelping box.

Mrs. Florence Nagle, of England, whose Sulhamstead Irish Wolfhounds held a unique place in the Wolfhound world, had this to say in an article on breeding:

“Having obtained a well-made bitch, absolutely sound, with good powerful hindquarters, whose dam and grand-dam are, if possible, the same, mate her to the best dog you can find who is particularly good in any points in which your bitch is a bit weak. I like to line-breed to any really good hounds, as a violent outcross is not so likely to

be satisfactory, as one brings in unknown factors. In my opinion, the bitch is by far the more important, though one does get some outstanding sires that produce good stock from almost any bitch. However, if your bitch comes from a good line of first-class hounds, you cannot go far wrong.”

In the selection of a foundation bitch, it is better to take a companion puppy from an outstanding, established line than a show prospect with a pedigree containing nothing but a mix of unrelated individuals. To do so allows the amateur, with limited resources, to profit from the arduous study and research already done by the breeder of that line, whose intimate knowledge of the ancestors and family characteristics allows her to make skilled decisions in the selection of breeding stock.

For the novice to be able to build upon such a breeding program leaves little to chance in his first generation.

—*Lois J. Thomasson, Salinas, Calif;*  
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### Future Futurities

**T**he futurity competition sponsored by the Norwegian Elkhound Association of America seems to be a mystery event to many people.

*What is a futurity?* It is the premier event of any breeders' organization where the efforts of dedicated, knowledgeable, hardworking, forward-thinking breeders are rewarded, and where breeders and observers can learn from each other about the current status and future potential of our breed. A futurity is not just another sweepstakes event to be tucked in where time permits at our specialty shows.

Breeders who participate in futurities are long-range planners. Puppies are nominated before they are born; as they mature, they are renominated with an additional ante to the futurity prize fund. Yes, there is money to be won, but for most breeders the incen-