The large grassy area at the entrance to the Camp Minsi Trails lodge was the location for this year’s Comprehensive Entlebucher Breed Assessment (CEBA) Conformation Evaluation.

Saturday afternoon, following the Entle Olympics, each of the 15 participating Entlebuchers started their evaluation process by standing for exam on the canine grooming table. Lasers for height and length measured each dog. When reviewing the height/length ratio for these dogs, there was only a 0.56-inch difference between ratio for the longest dog at 71% and shortest dog at 85%. These figures support the judge’s observation, this group of dogs had good height/length proportion.

Following a sequential order, our two scribes led the judges through the evaluation areas of: general appearance, coat, color, & markings, gait, head, neck, lines, & body, fore-quarters, hind-quarters, and temperament. The 15-minute evaluation was recorded by our scribes, and signed by the judges.

We were particularly fortunate to have three veteran judges returning to mentor our new judges. Each 3-person team had a unique balance of canine experiences.

If you would like more details about CEBA's conformation evaluation experience, I invite you to continue reading below. I think you will find the personal impressions of the judges, our scribe, and participants very interesting.

One Scribe’s Impression

It was my pleasure to witness first-hand how nice our NEMDA dogs really are! And to see that our dog owners are such good sports! Both people and dogs were patient with the process, respectful of the organizers and other participants, and the owners showed incredible love for their dogs!

One of the judges mentioned to me how impressed he was that our dogs were able to co-exist with strangers and each other so peacefully. When the dogs went through CEBA temperament testing, it was obvious that most all are real “troopers” – rolling with whatever (goofy and unexpected) situation they are presented with. Bells and funny surfaces to walk on? Sure! Strangers in their space? Why not? And through the conformation portion, it was clear that not only are they flexible and willing participants in whatever comes their way, but they con-
sistently fall within the range of the breed standards.

Reading K-9 structure books and participating in AKC shows paled in comparison to having the chance to scribe for a team of conformation judges. My team especially worked well together – agreeing on their determinations in all but a couple of instances for which they eventually deferred to the one of them who they considered to be the “expert” in that area. Having them agree made the experience even more educational, since there was no doubt in their perceptions of the characteristics. By the last few dogs, I was starting to “see” what they saw. I am so fortunate to have been able to participate, and the experience was truly invaluable!

If there were a way to get a bit of immediate feedback, (which having been there, I know would take some doing!) it would help the participants. I was asked by several people “how did we do?” to which I was reassuring, but had no concrete/specific information. I would definitely recommend this evaluation to others. This is an especially important tool for breeders and I can see why the Ankörung is such an essential part of the Swiss Club’s breeding program. Having a uniform means of evaluating our dogs will allow us to compare apples to apples. I look forward to the chance to participate with my own dog and as part of the CEBA “team”!

Dru Patterson
CEBA Scribe
Judges Impressions

In the section below, we are pleased to offer you highlights from the judges responses to our conformation evaluation survey.

The CEBA Evaluations were an excellent learning tool for all of us. As an AKC judge, we are given only 2 ½ minutes to evaluate an exhibit. With CEBA, we have more time to evaluate and are able to be more detailed with the exams. Many breeds I judge have similar evaluations and the judges give a written critique to the owners.

Also, I wanted to comment on the overall entries. I was very impressed at the quality I saw as compared to 2 years ago when I judged. The breed is structurally improving. I would like to see improvement in temperament, and this comes with socialization. I hope more owners consider training during the formative puppy months, as this will give the owner a much happier home situation.

Deborah Anthony, AKC Judge
CEBA Judging Panel

My personal experience was wonderful. Being Swiss, it was a special treat to learn more about the Entlebucher and having the pleasure to meet so many devoted owners/breeders.

I was a bit nervous as you entrusted me
to go over a breed I knew little about. The educational Seminar was informative, nicely presented and extremely helpful. I would have liked to have more hands on of both ‘perfect and not so perfect’ Entles. To watch the match show was another valuable part as we could see a few dogs in the ring and compare, then, observe the judge’s decision and ask questions if we had some.

I would suggest that you offer the judges a few minutes to express our ‘thank you’ to the membership and give a short statement of ‘impression’ as to the dogs judged. I was very much impressed by the fact that so many Entles could run together catching balls and play without any animosities. What a pleasure to observe.

Thank you again for offering me the opportunity to be a part of your happy event. I got to learn, enjoy the breed and hope to become a permanent student by joining your group.

Lilian Ostermiller
CEBA Judging Panel

I will say that I did enjoy doing the CEBA evaluation. It was a great way to really see the dogs, their good points and their bad ones. As I said before I think CEBA should be part of every judge’s education.

My one suggestion might be that you have two different CEBA forms. One the judges use for pet people, a second one for people who are thinking of showing their dogs. The second form would give the judges more latitude to assess the dogs more freely. After all, owners who are thinking of showing and breeding their dog would want to be aware of all the good and bad points of that dog.

As for the Entlebucher breed, I do think they are a wonderful dog. They seem smart and they really want to please their owners. I think the one problem you will have with them is showing them. They are so devoted to their owners that it will be hard to hand them off to a handler if one is needed. I do think if you teach them as puppies to go with other people then you will have no problems.

Andrew Ritter
CEBA Judging Panel

I had a fabulous day. You have so many pleasant members.

I would like to see more emphasis on temperament and suggestions given to owners as to the importance of socializing. Although most of the Fun Match participants were sound in temperament, there were a few that needed more confidence. It should be explained that a standard for any breed should include temperament in order to evaluate whether or not a dog is able to function according and what they were actually bred for.
We actually mentioned to a few handlers that they needed to get their dog socialized, which in some cases may be too late. I say almost because, I believe socializing must be done the first 3 months of a puppy’s life. After that time, the dog and handler are already reacting, and poor behavior becomes a habit. Maybe something should be said somewhere about the importance of early socialization, or perhaps it is mentioned somewhere?

What I did see was overall good toplines, good movement and correct proportions. Those that were serious breeders had their dogs under control and well socialized. One can learn the most from this group. As with any breed, we get back what we put into it.

The Judge’s Workshop was very enjoyable and it was a pleasant surprise to see so many dogs/bitches of quality at the Fun Match. The handler/owners seemed to have as much fun as the Entlebuchers and were appreciative of the evaluations of their dogs. A cordless microphone would have been an educational tool for the audience as well as the handlers.

Grace McGlynn, AKC Judge
CEBA Judging Panel

Our Participants
On behalf of NEMDA, we thank the following brave and selfless participants: Monique Bocock (Kai), Rebecca Hahn (Queso), Alan Campbell (Digby), Kathy St. Onge (Ryder), Gerry Delengowski (Sirius), Sue Schneider (Little Duey), Melissa Gugliotti (Bero & Kozmo), Jan Vincent (Bronte), Marianne Brauchi (Moriz), Nancy Soderberg (Gena), Pat Moran (Dakota), Fran Fleming (Biff), Dianne Merz (Tango), & Jenny Munge (Otto) who willingly presented their Entlebuchers to the scrutiny of the evaluative process. Their presence in this process educates the Entle community at large. We appreciate our participants willingness to incorporate the evaluation documents into the NEMDA database.

Participant Impressions
The following responses were selected in the advancement of this wonderful breed.

I found that, for the most part, the rear assembly on the dogs overall was the weakest area. Many were straight in the stifle and restricted the rear drive required for this breed to work efficiently. Head pieces were generally nice and only a couple had ear problems. (open ears or set to low) Fronts were for the most part, quite nice and those dogs that I was charged to evaluate were of decent temperament. Now in my sixth year of learning about this wonderful breed, I already see advancements from that first introduction. Kudos to the members and please continue to evaluate and learn.

David L. Anthony
CEBA Judging Panel

Grace McGlynn, AKC Judge
CEBA Judging Panel

Debbie Dayton, Deborah Anthony, Grace McGlynn

Perpetually Sirius v. Adhem (Sirius)
from the participant’s conformation survey.
1. How was the experience of value to you?
   Both evaluations helped me learn more about my dog.
   Conformation – wow – absolutely learned where strong positives & areas of weaknesses.
   I have read the breed standards. However it was much more useful watching the unbiased panel evaluate my dog than doing it myself.
   High value.
2. What did you learn from the evaluation?
   The strength and weaknesses structurally.
   Hope I will remember it all. Will be able to better assess weakness/breeding/to improve the breed.
   That my puppy was almost as good as I think he is.
   Learned how others view my dog, not as seen by me.
3. What did you like best?
   Judges going over all areas of the body, discussing body parts. Very interesting.
   Hearing “very promising puppy” at the end of the evaluation.
   No PRESSURE
   Leelee Stefanki explaining to me what the judges were looking for in a post evaluation briefing.
4. Where could we improve?
   I can’t think of any areas that could be improved.
   As this was my first experience – can’t say.
5. Would you recommend the evaluation to others?
   Yes, if you are interested in how closely your dog matches the breed standard.
   Yes, hopefully to be used to better the breed.
   Yes, just interesting to learn about your dog. I won’t show her (she’s spayed) but nice to know about her.
6. Would you consider retaking the exercise at a future time and place for an update?
   Yes, once he (my puppy) is full-grown. Sure!
   Perhaps, but not sure it would be useful for the same dog????
Do you have any additional comments?
Conformation evaluators had different opinions at times. They did seem to compromise and come to an agreement.
Big thank you to judges, volunteers who helped get me through this.
Try to have some fun games & other activities going on during the evaluation. The evaluations take a long time & the other waiting dogs need activities. Guess that means you need more volunteers! Thanks for all the effort. Lots of work & we appreciate it. Loved it.
Hopefully, the collective results are presented to NEMDA members. Maybe breed buyers/owners need to show discernment along with breeders concerning the breed.