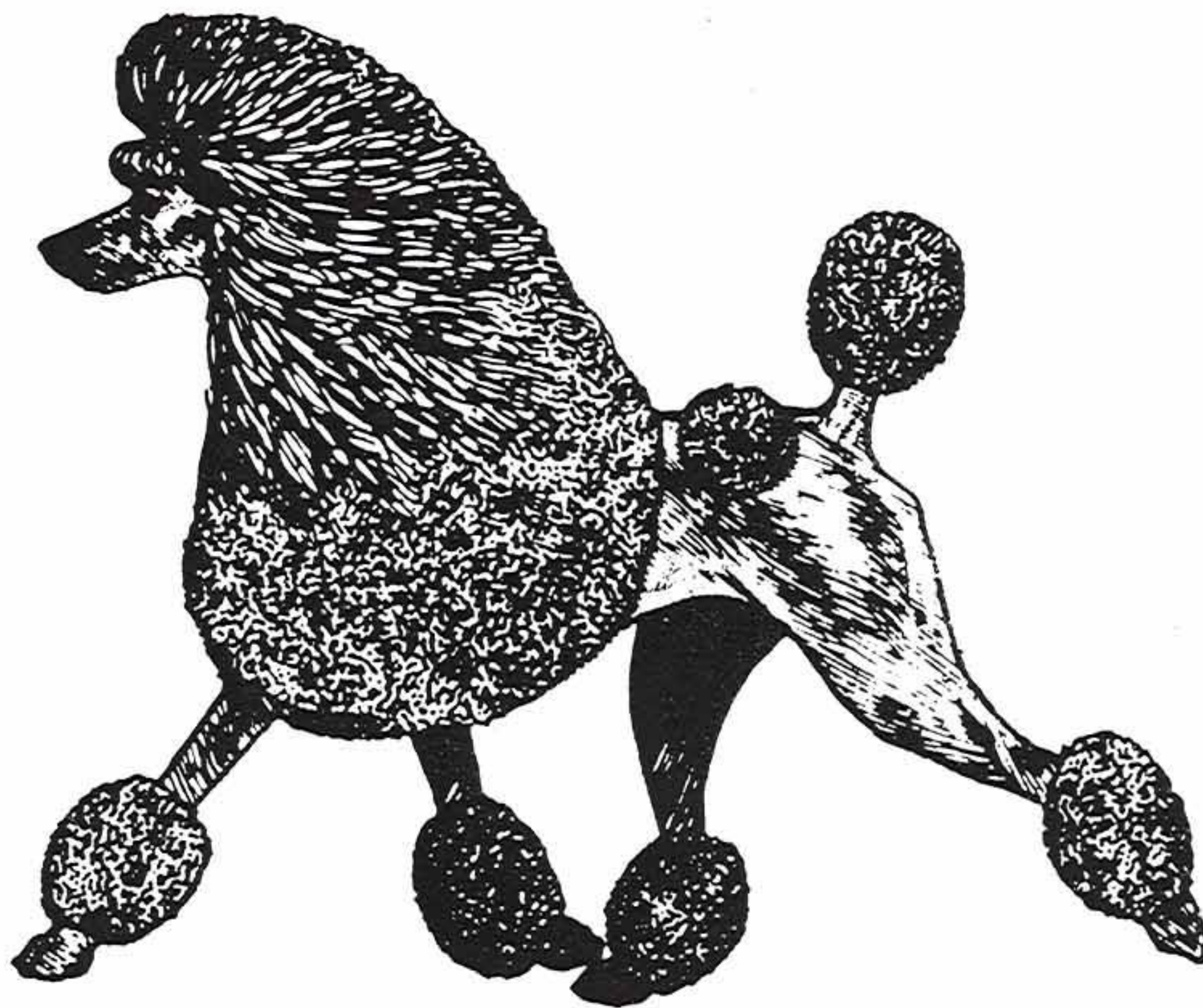




**Illustrated Study**  
of the  
**Poodle Breed Standard**



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Prepared and Published by

**The POODLE CLUB of AMERICA, Inc.**





## PREFACE

This booklet has been prepared by the Poodle Club of America's Illustrated Breed Standard Committee for the purpose of promoting a better understanding of and appreciation for the Breed Standard of the Poodle. We have attempted to do this by illustrating the various points in the official Breed Standard.

Just as individuals differ in their interpretations of the standard, artists will vary in their concept of the perfect Poodle according to the standard. It is impossible to please everyone, but that is an important part of our sport—comparing and criticizing and seeking an unobtainable ideal. Our hope is that this booklet will serve as a guide in interpreting the Poodle Standard to breeders, judges, exhibitors and especially the novice.

We would like to express our appreciation to Club Presidents Sterg O' Dell, Helen Sokopp and Jacklyn Hungerland for their encouragement and support of this project.

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Illustrations by Lyn St.Clair  
and Wendell J. Sammet







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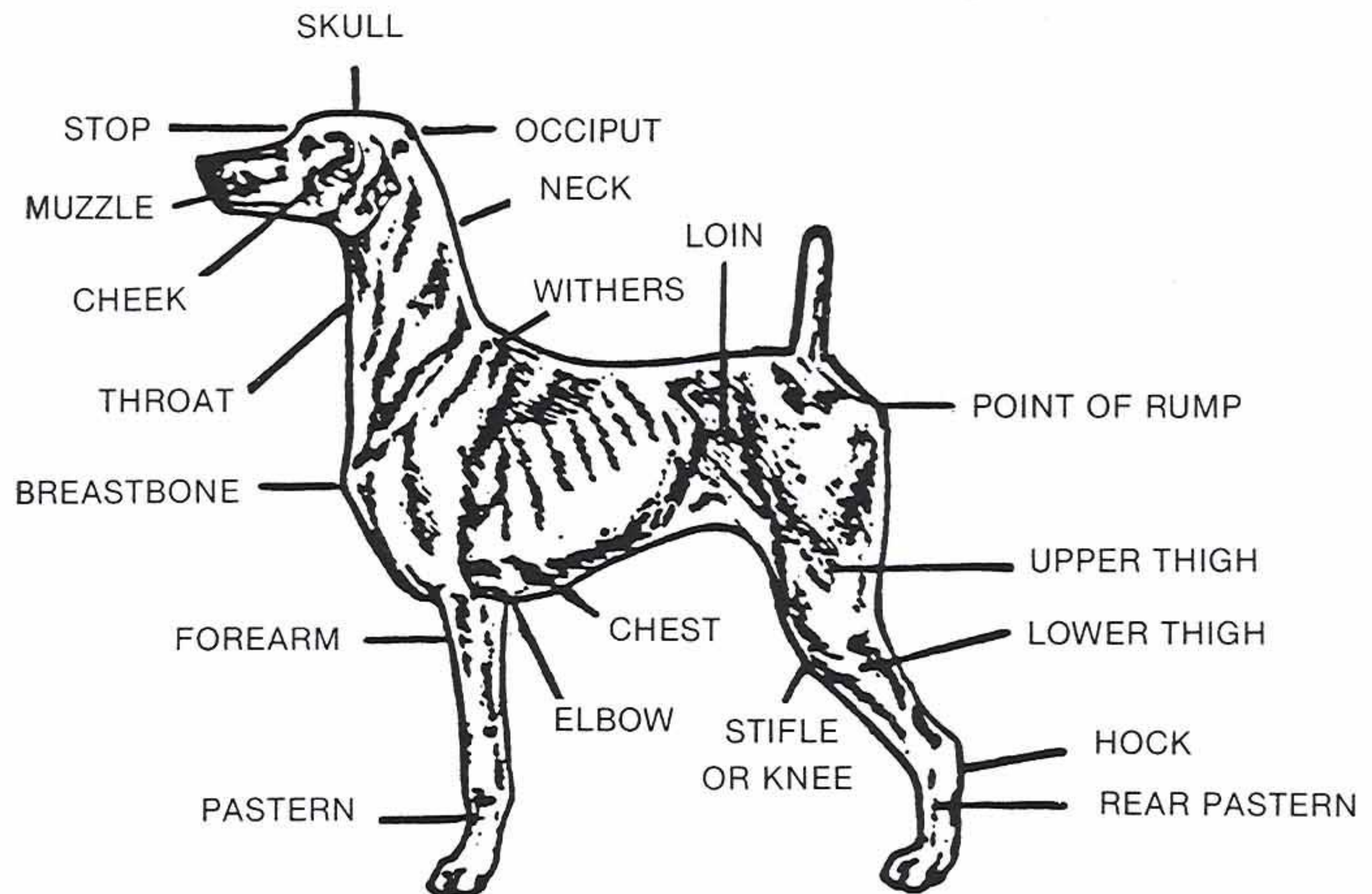
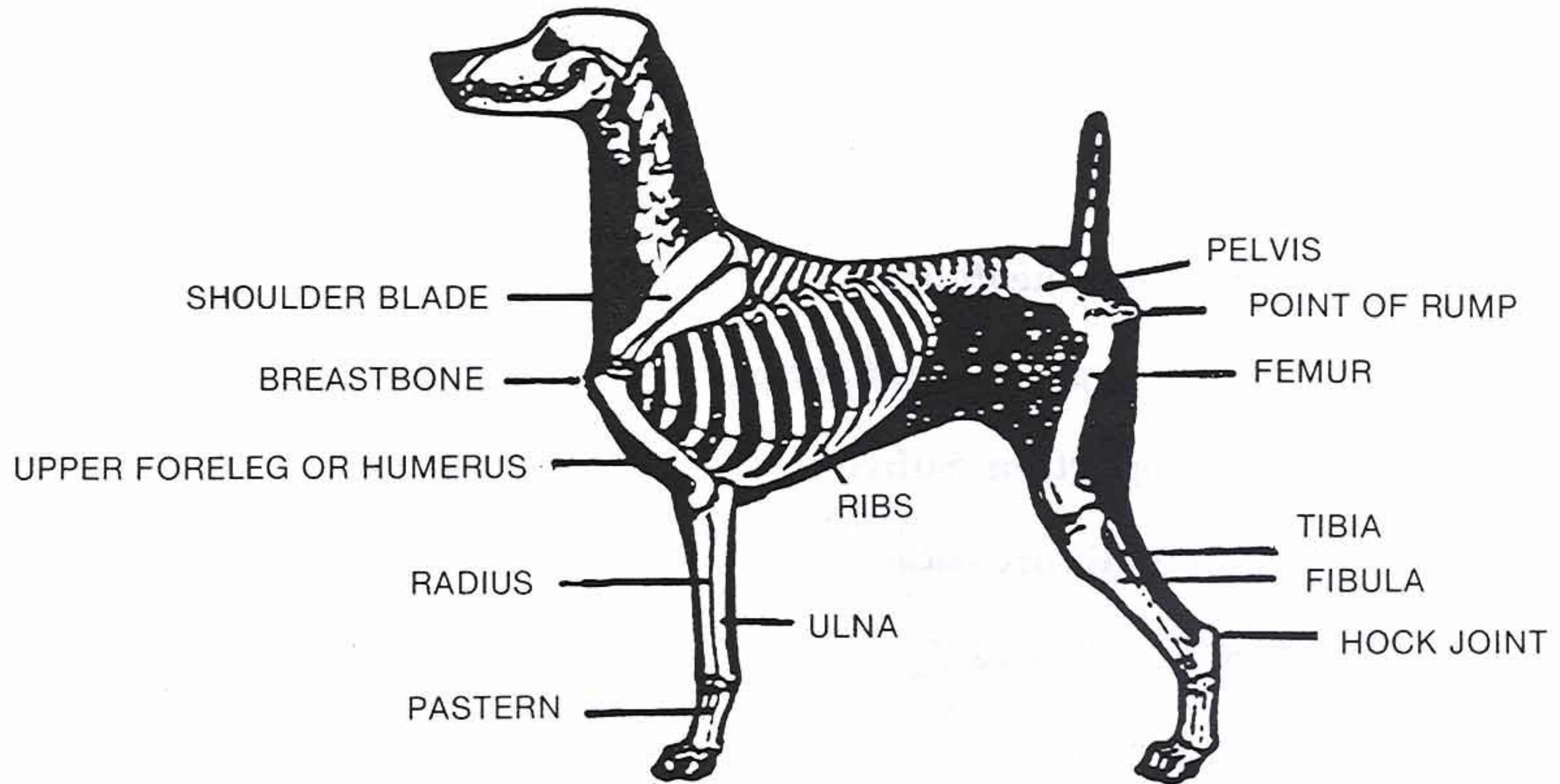
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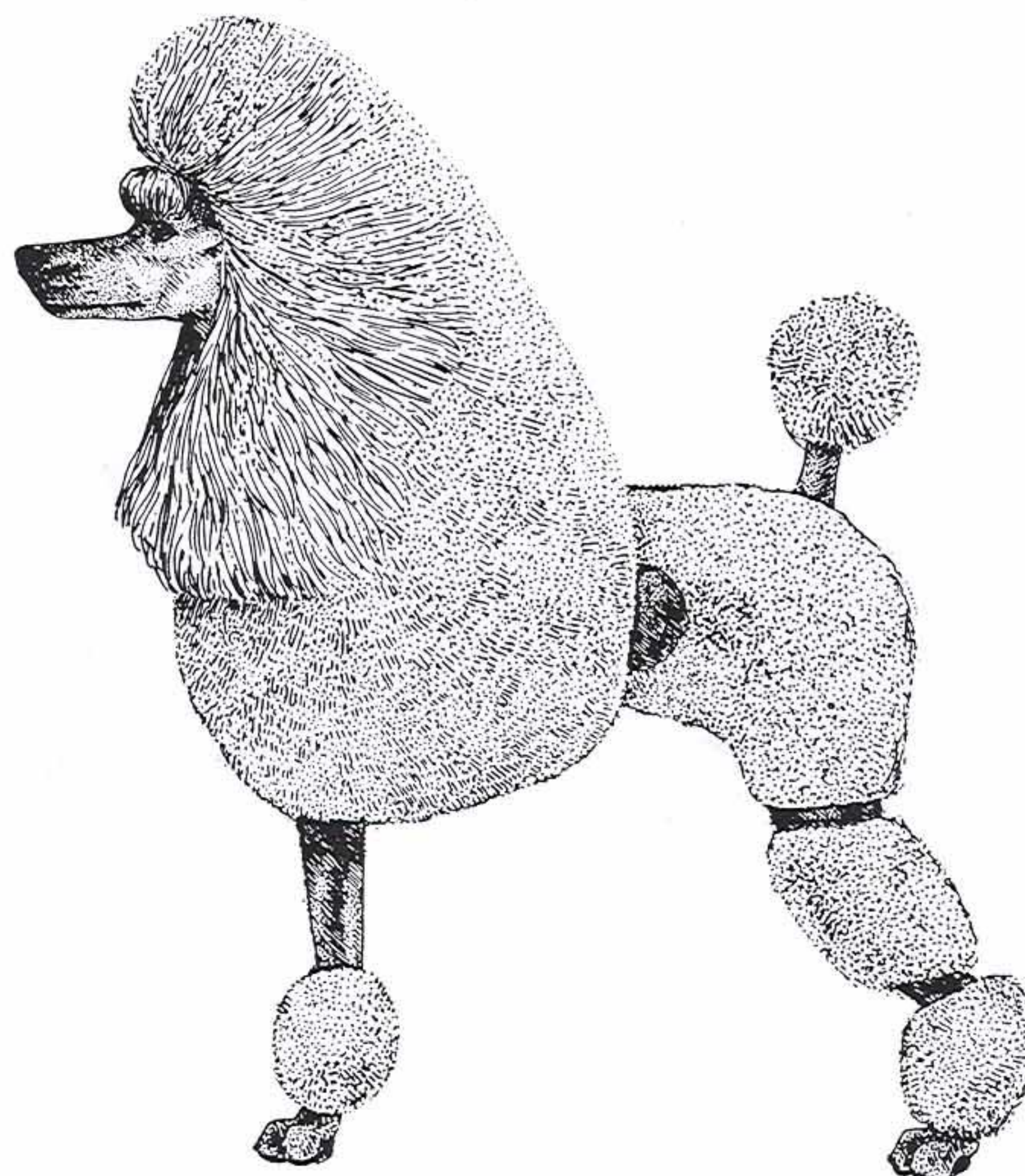
# ANATOMY OF THE POODLE





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# Official AKC Standard for the Poodle



The Standard for the Poodle (Toy variety) is the same as for the Standard and the Miniature varieties except as regards heights.

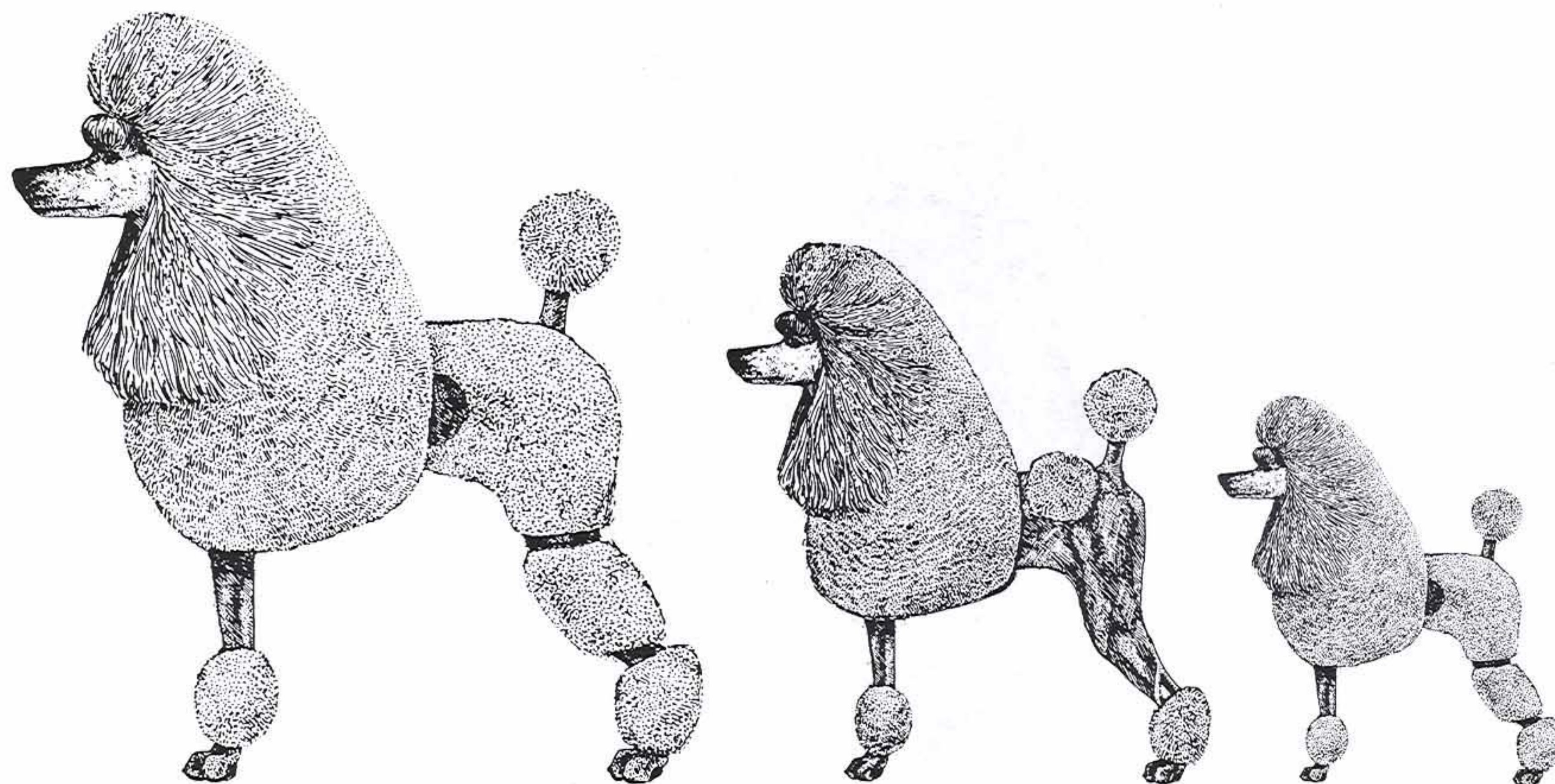
## **General Appearance, Carriage and Condition.**

That of a very active, intelligent and elegant-appearing dog, squarely built, well proportioned, moving soundly and carrying himself proudly. Properly clipped in the traditional fashion and carefully groomed, the Poodle has about him an air of distinction and dignity peculiar to himself.



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## Size, Proportion, Substance



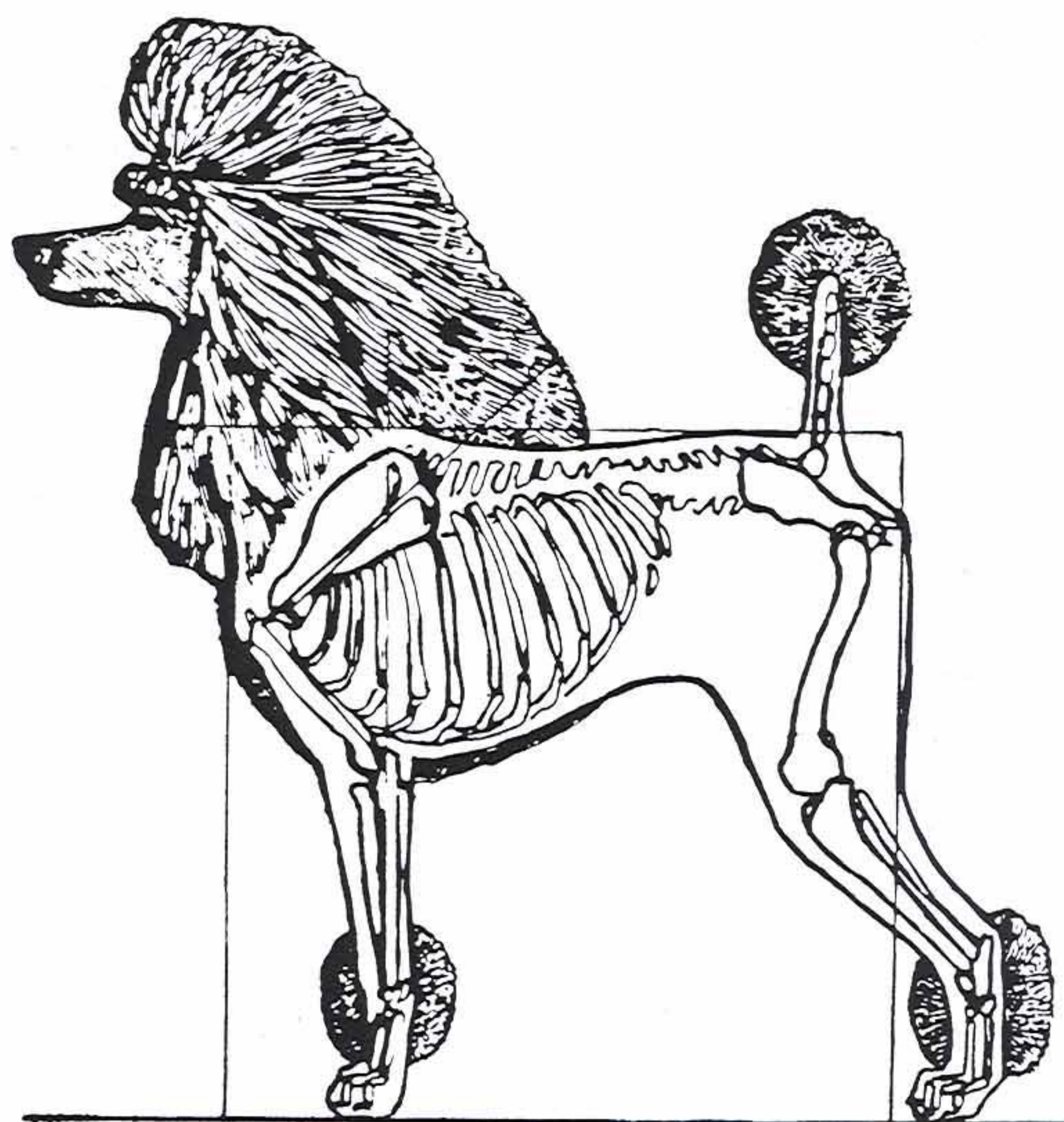
Size: **The Standard Poodle** is over 15 inches at the highest point of the shoulders. Any Poodle which is 15 inches or less in height shall be disqualified from competition as a Standard Poodle.

**The Miniature Poodle** is 15 inches or under at the highest point of the shoulders, with a minimum height in excess of 10 inches. Any Poodle which is over 15 inches or is 10 inches or less at the highest point of the shoulders shall be disqualified from competition as a Miniature Poodle.

**The Toy Poodle** is 10 inches or under at the highest point of the shoulders. Any Poodle which is more than 10 inches at the highest point of the shoulders shall be disqualified from competition as a Toy Poodle.

As long as the Toy Poodle is definitely a Toy Poodle, and the Miniature Poodle a Miniature Poodle, both in balance and proportion for the Variety, diminutiveness shall be the deciding factor when all other points are equal.





Squarely built: height equals length.

**Proportion:** To insure the desirable squarely built appearance, the length of body measured from the breastbone to the point of the rump approximates the height from the highest point of the shoulders to the ground.

**Substance:** Bone and muscle of both forelegs and hindlegs are in proportion to size of dog.

**I M P O R T A N T**

Poodle faults and virtues are covered by coat. Careful examination is required by hand. -Editor's Note



---

## Head and Expression

- (a) Eyes: very dark, oval in shape and set far enough apart and positioned to create an alert intelligent expression. *Major fault: eyes round, protruding, large or very light.*



Round eyes, round skull, snipey muzzle



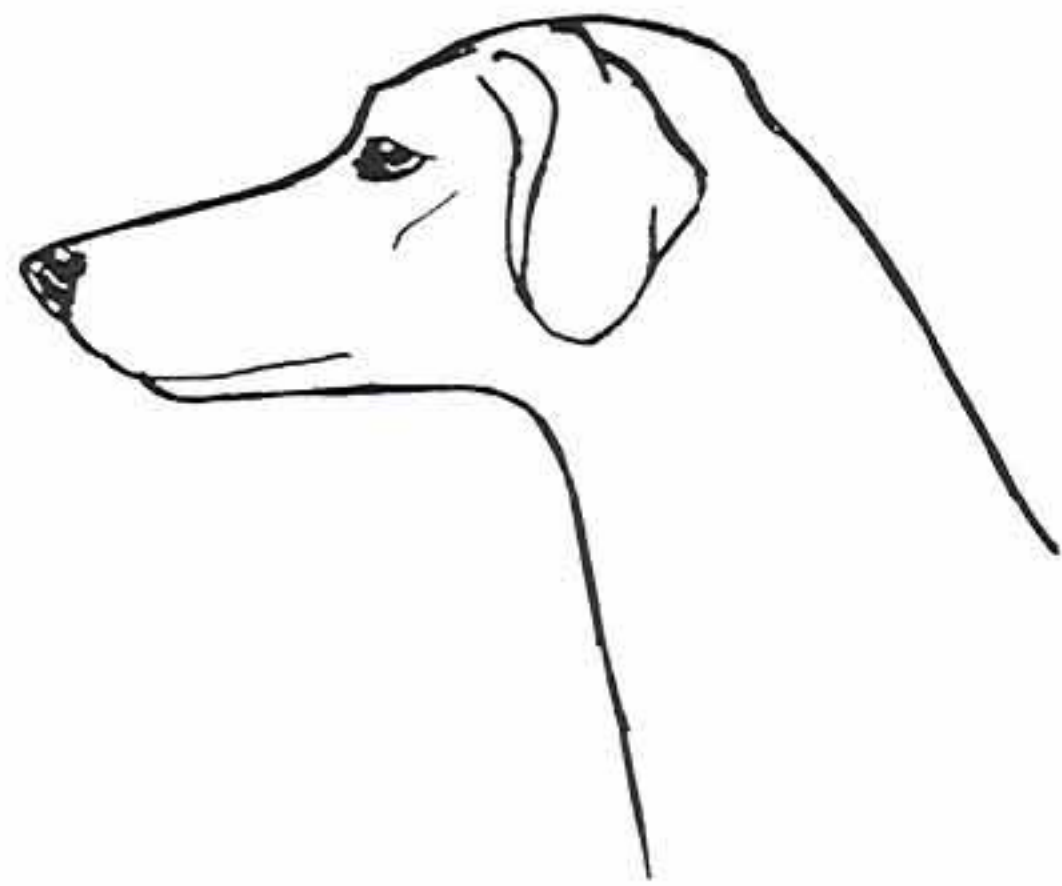
Preferred



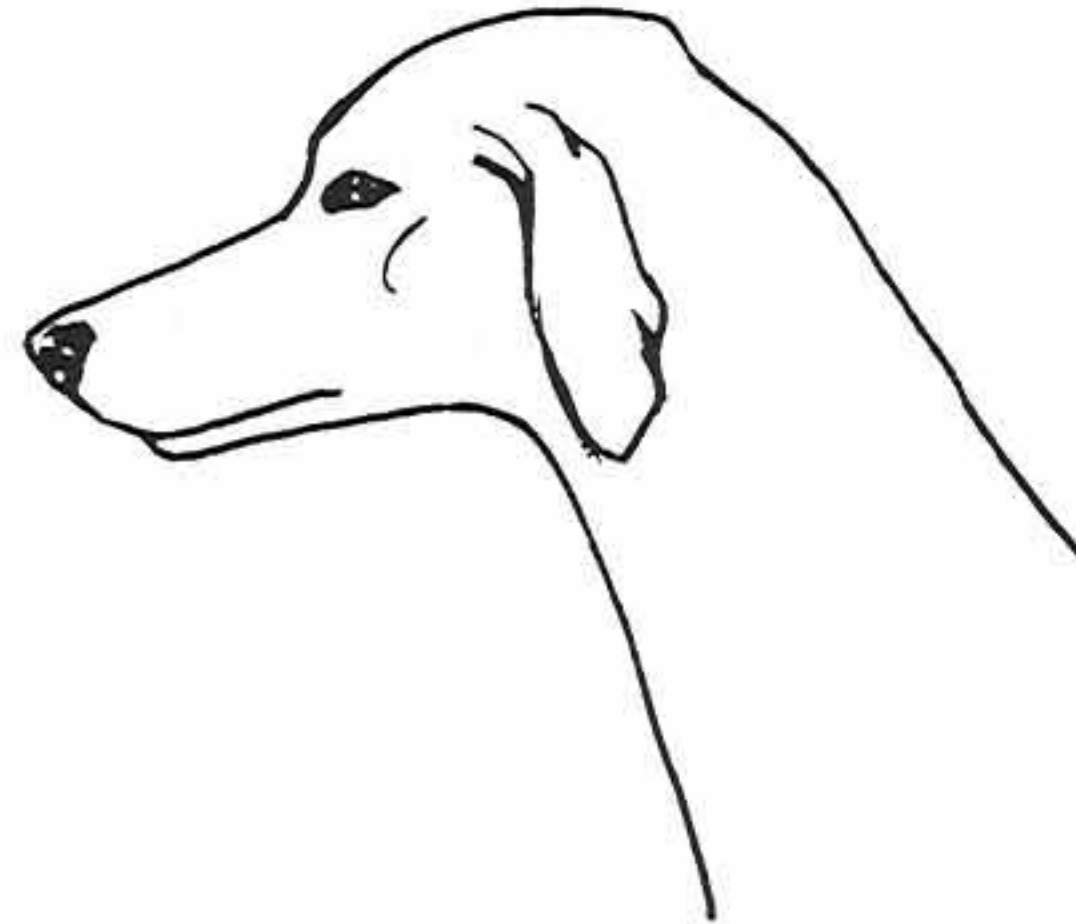
Eyes: too large, too round and too light. Cheeky.



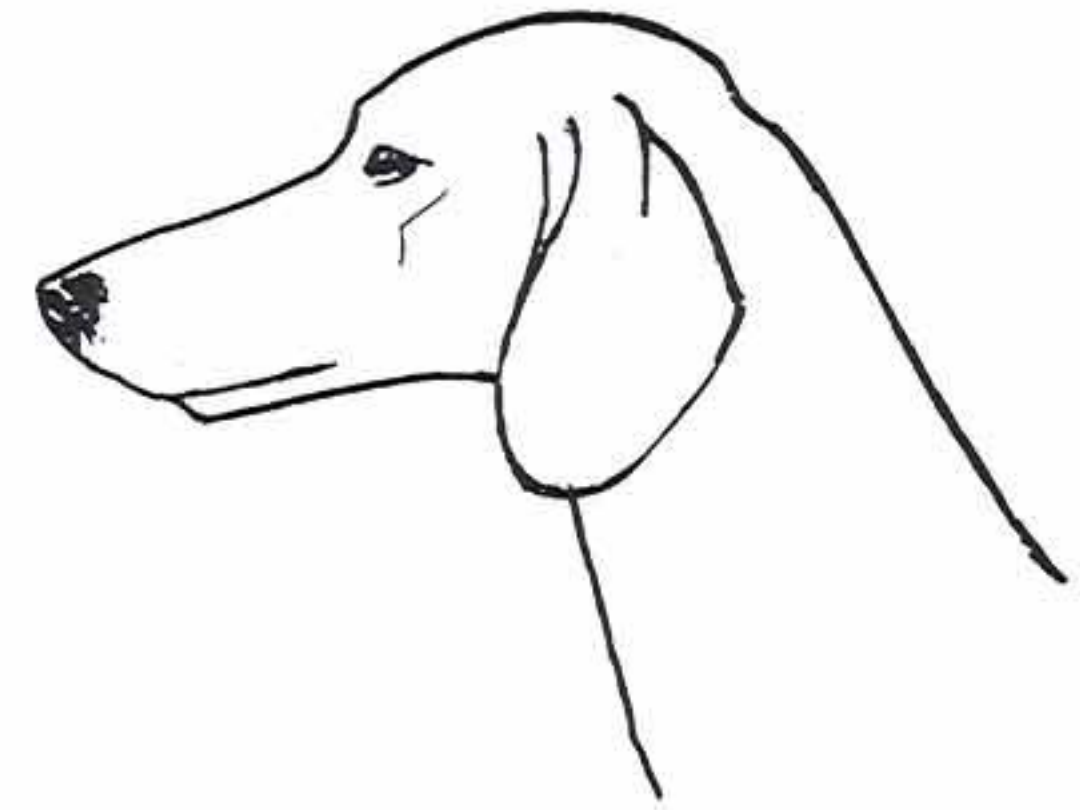
(b) Ears: hanging close to the head, set at or slightly below eye level. The ear leather is long, wide and thickly feathered; however, the ear fringe should not be of excessive length.



Ears: too high set,  
too short



Too narrow



Preferred



Flying ears



Too high set



Preferred



- 
- (c) Skull: moderately rounded, with a slight but definite stop. Cheekbones and muscles flat. Length from occiput to stop about the same as length of muzzle.



- (d) Muzzle: long, straight and fine, with slight chiseling under the eyes. Strong without lippiness. The chin definite enough to preclude snipiness. *Major fault: lack of chin.*  
Teeth white, strong, and with a scissors bite. *Major fault: undershot, overshot, wry mouth.*



Even bite



Scissors bite



Undershot



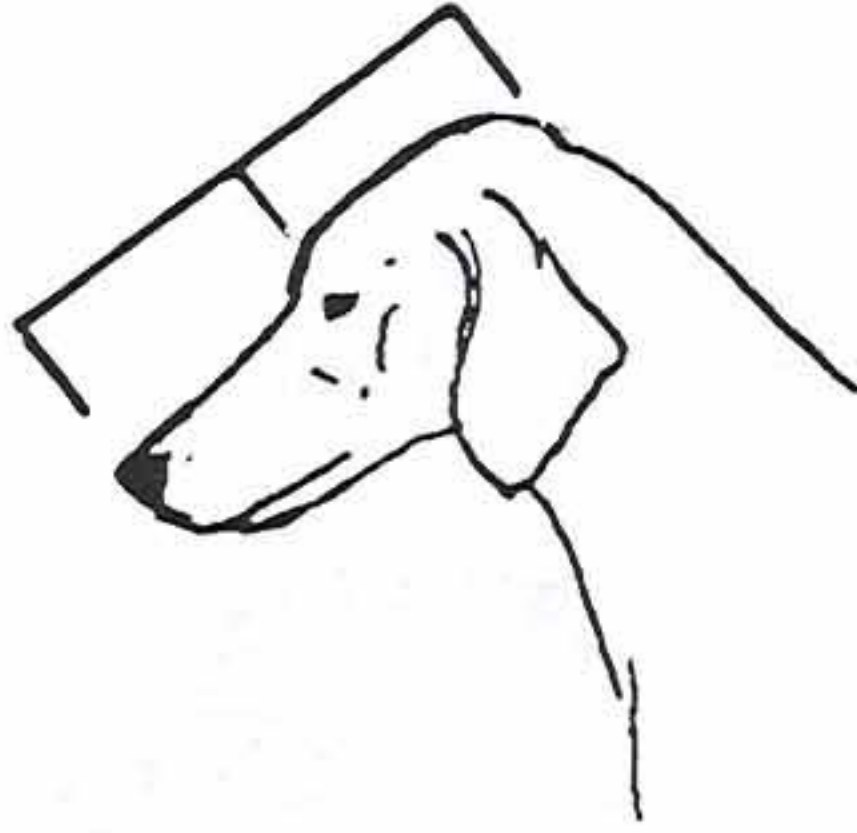
Overshot



Wry mouth



## Head and Expression



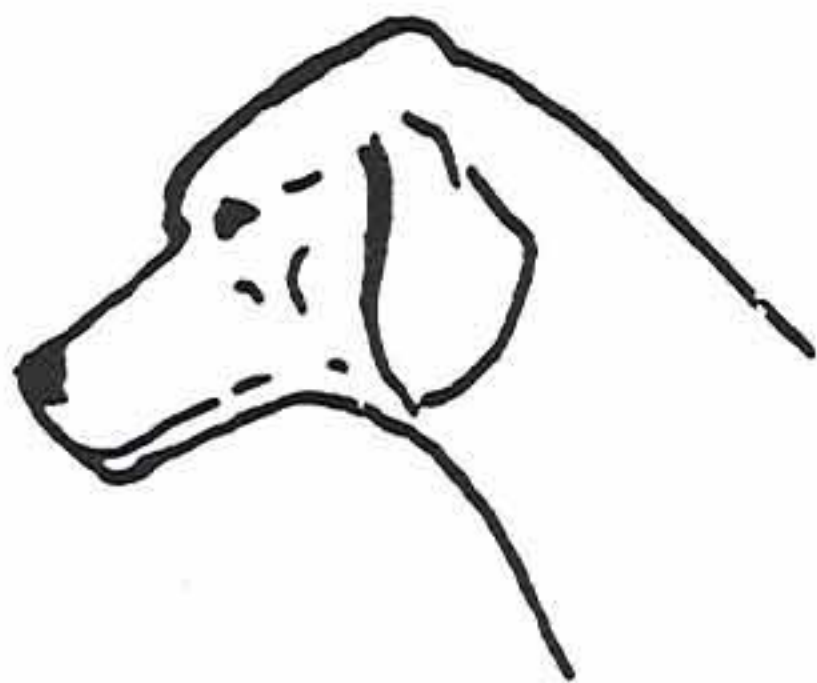
Correct side view



Correct front view



Preferred



Broad, heavy head, throaty



Too broad and heavy



Too broad and heavy



Round skull, short snipey muzzle



Round head, snipey muzzle



Round skull, snipey muzzle, round eyes



Lack of chin, too narrow, snipey muzzle



Too narrow



## Neck, Topline, Body

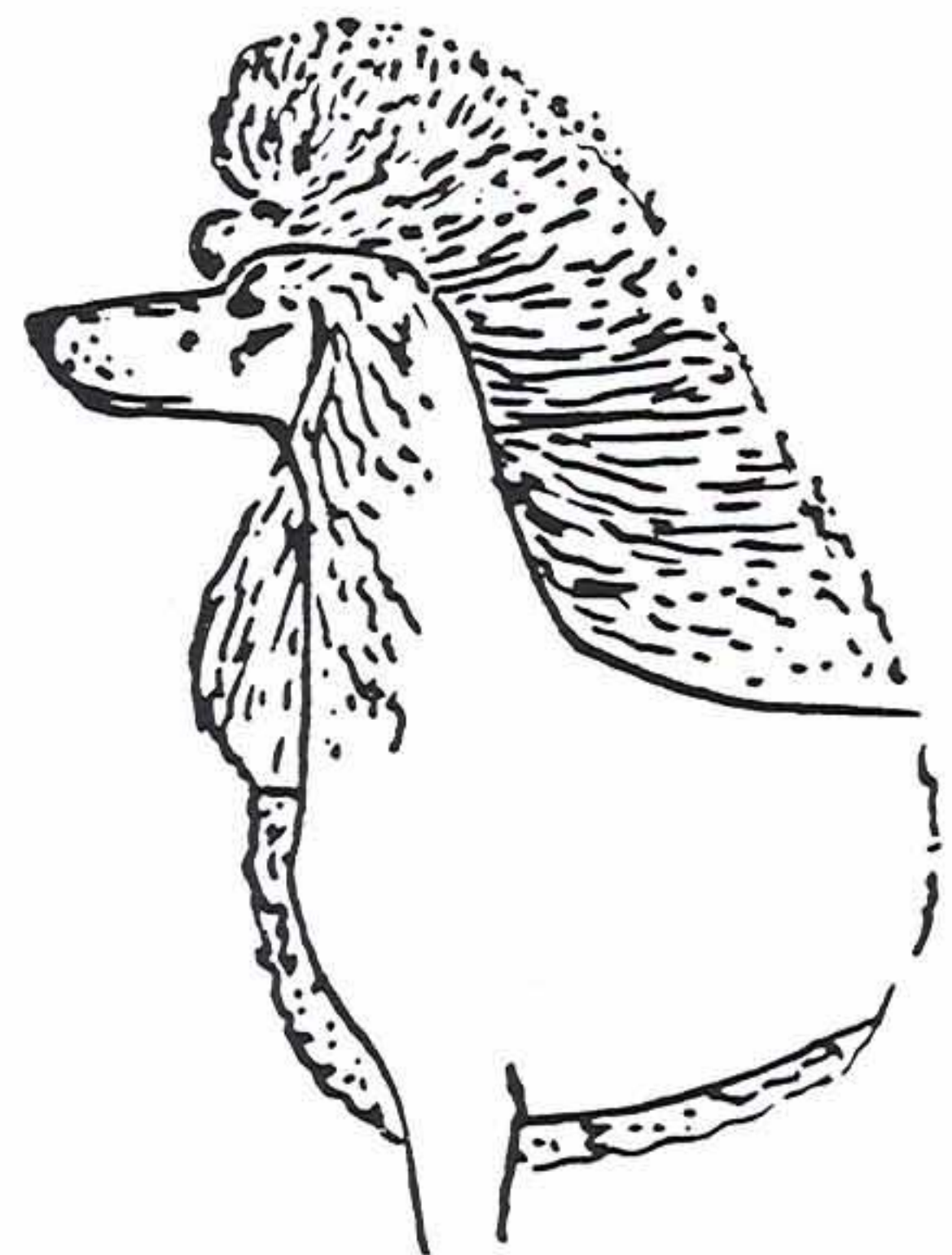
Neck well proportioned, strong and long enough to permit the head to be carried high and with dignity. Skin snug at throat. The neck rises from strong, smoothly muscled shoulders. *Major fault: ewe neck.*



Short neck,  
steep shoulder

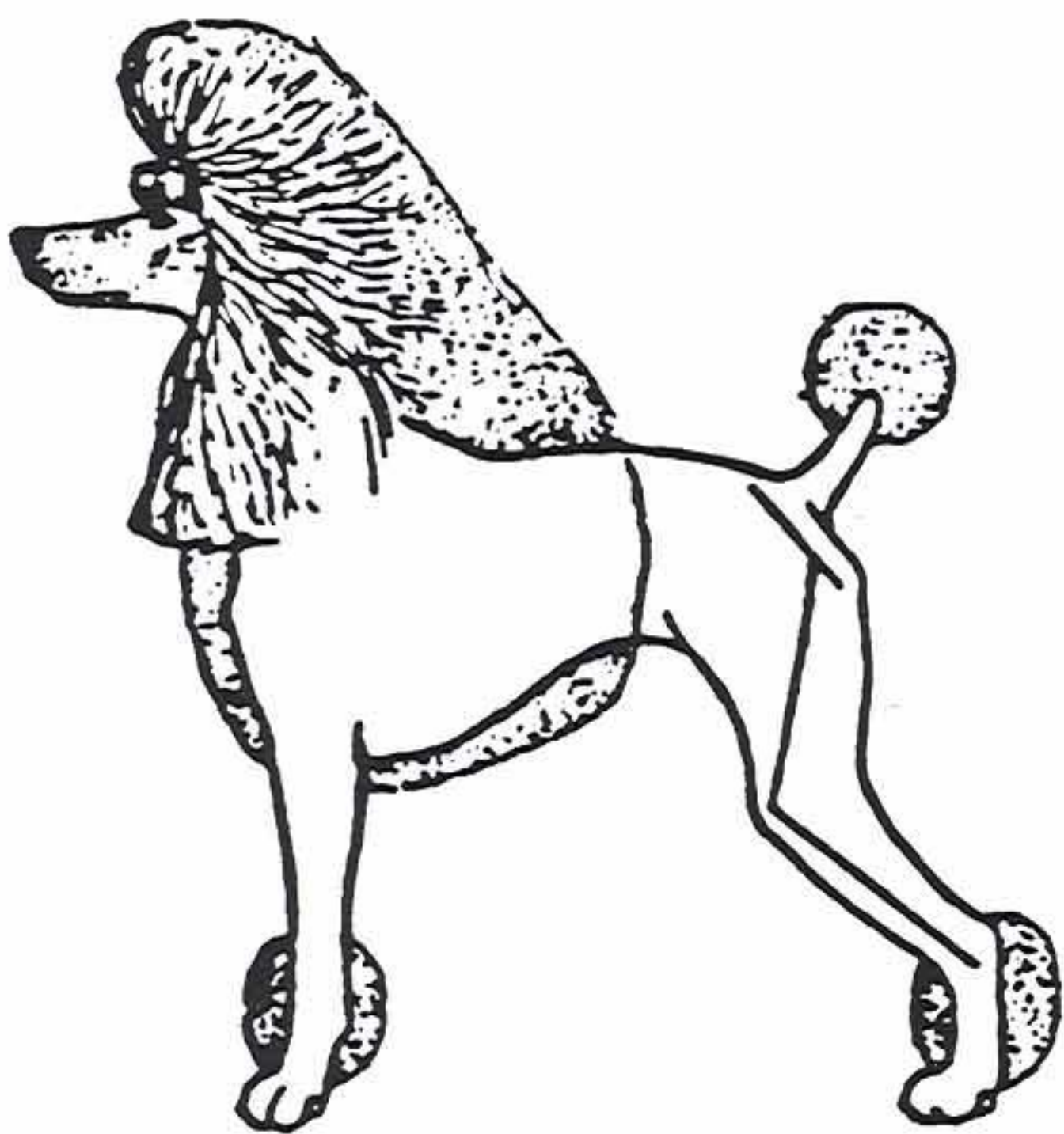


Ewe neck which sets  
forward on shoulders

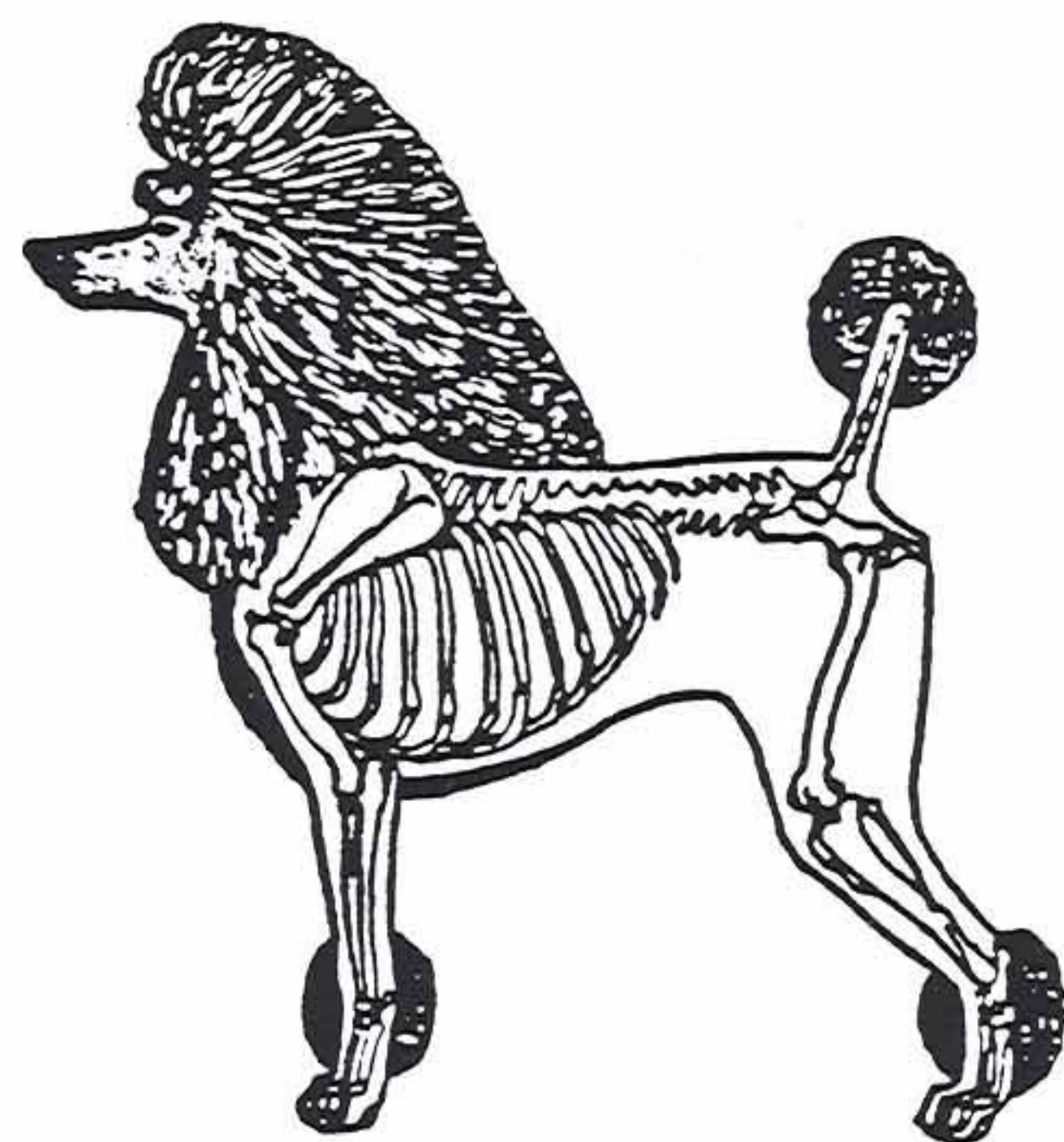


Preferred

The topline is level, neither sloping nor roached, from the highest point of the shoulder blade to the base of the tail, with the exception of a slight hollow just behind the shoulder.



Roached back  
low tailset



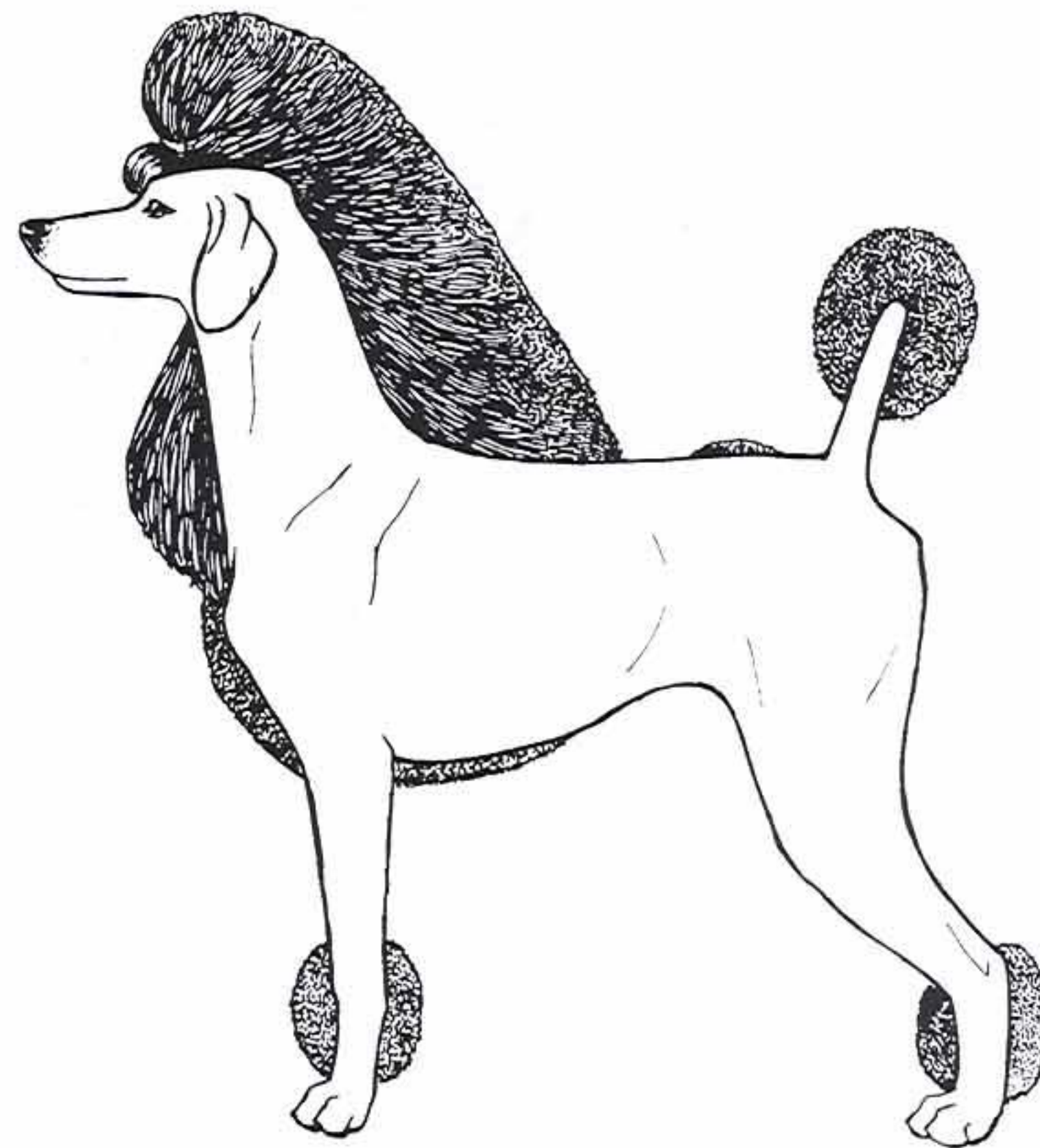
Preferred



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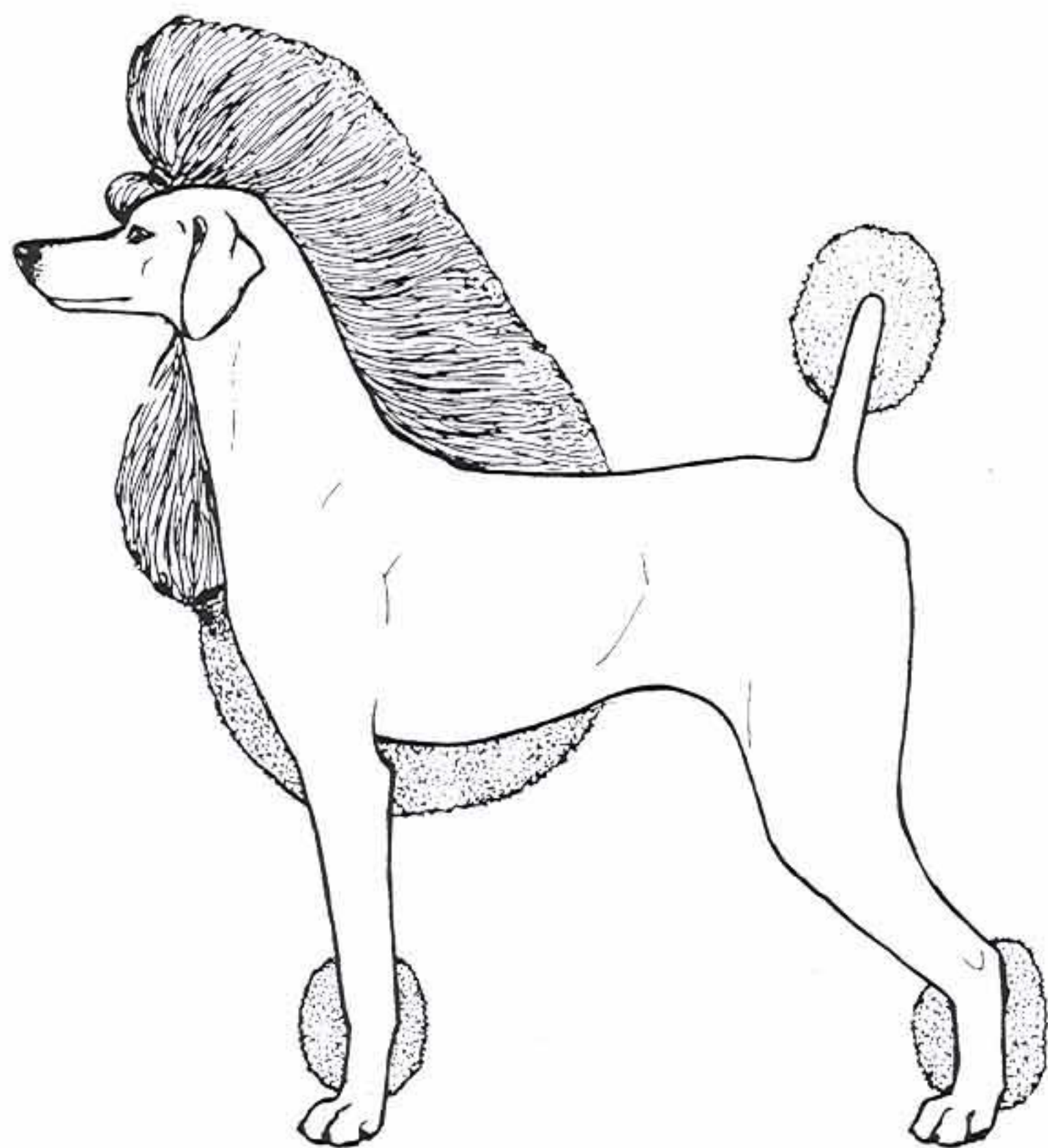
**Body:**

- (a) Chest deep and moderately wide with well sprung ribs.



Preferred.

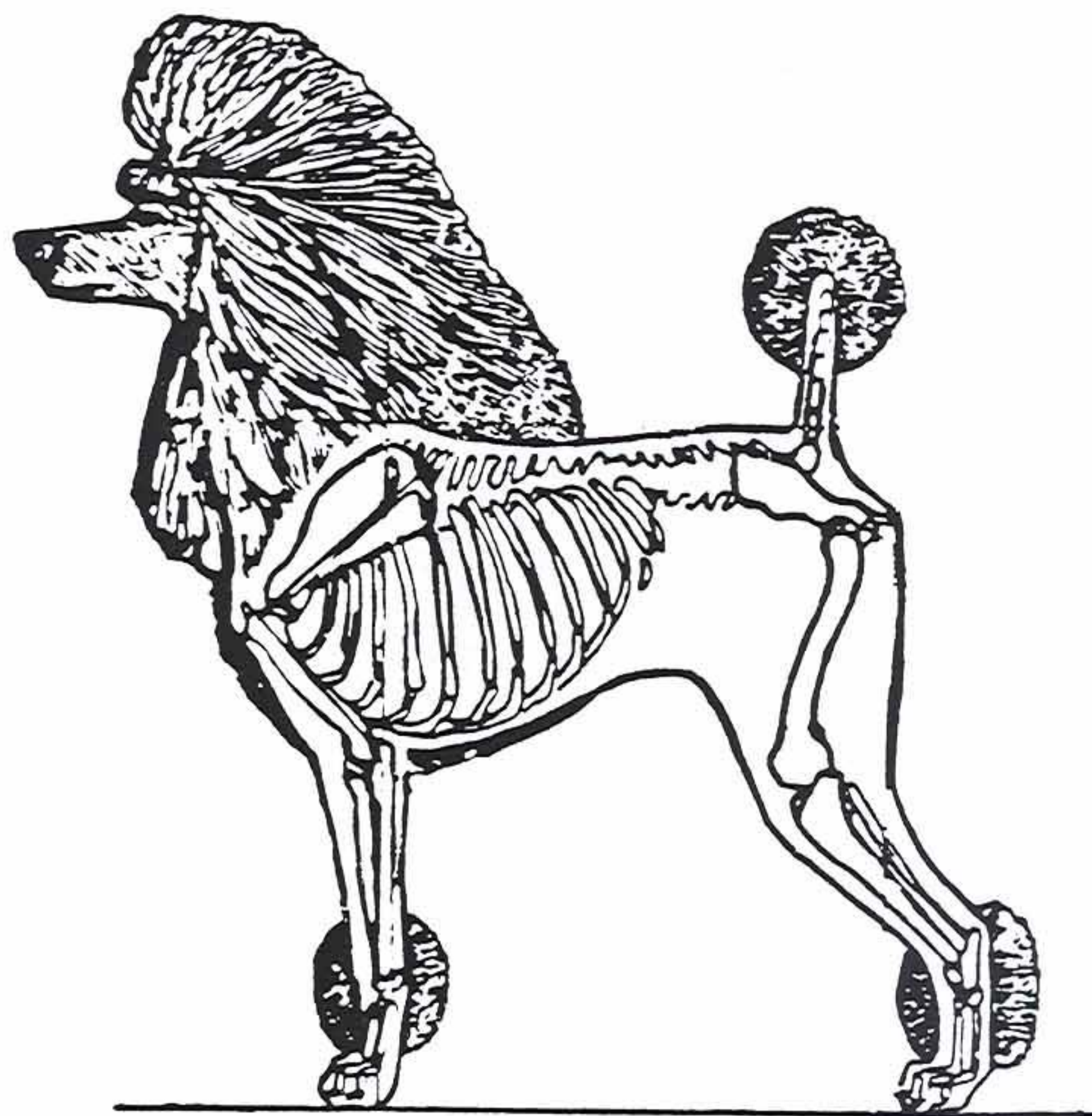
The chest is deep, its lowest point no higher than the elbows.



Lacking rib depth. Too shallow in chest.



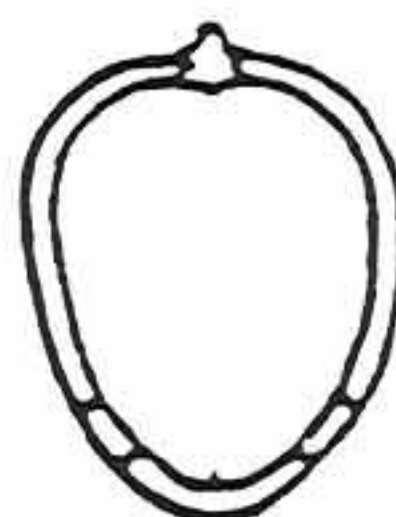
Body:



(b) The loin is short, broad and muscular.



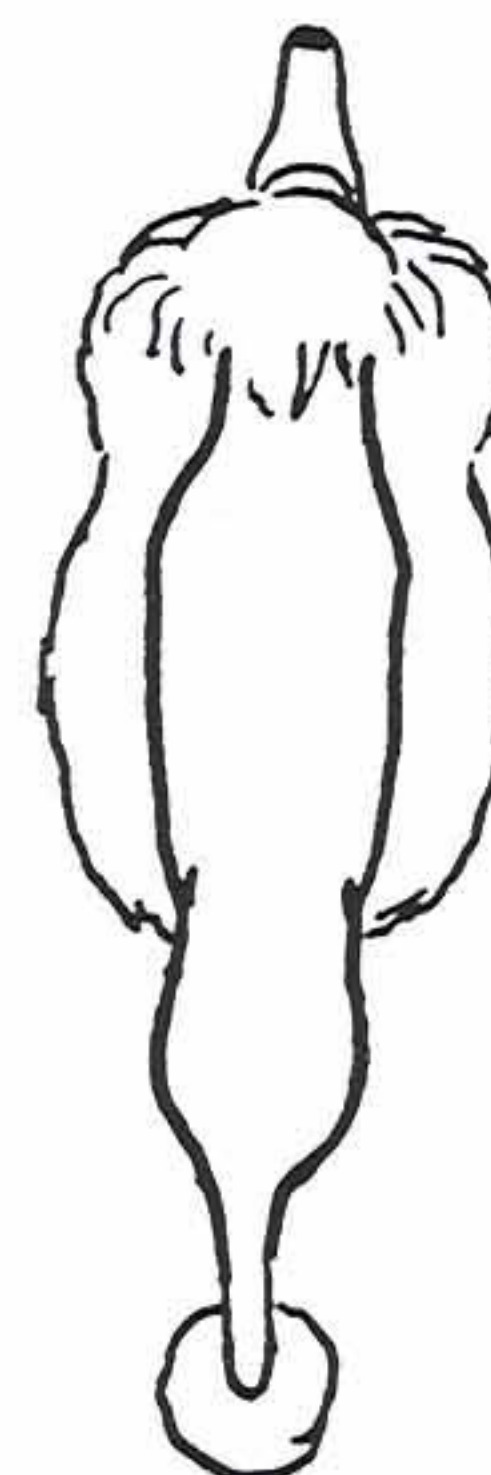
Incorrect  
Round or barrel-shaped



Correct  
Heart-shaped



Incorrect  
Poor rib spring, slab sided

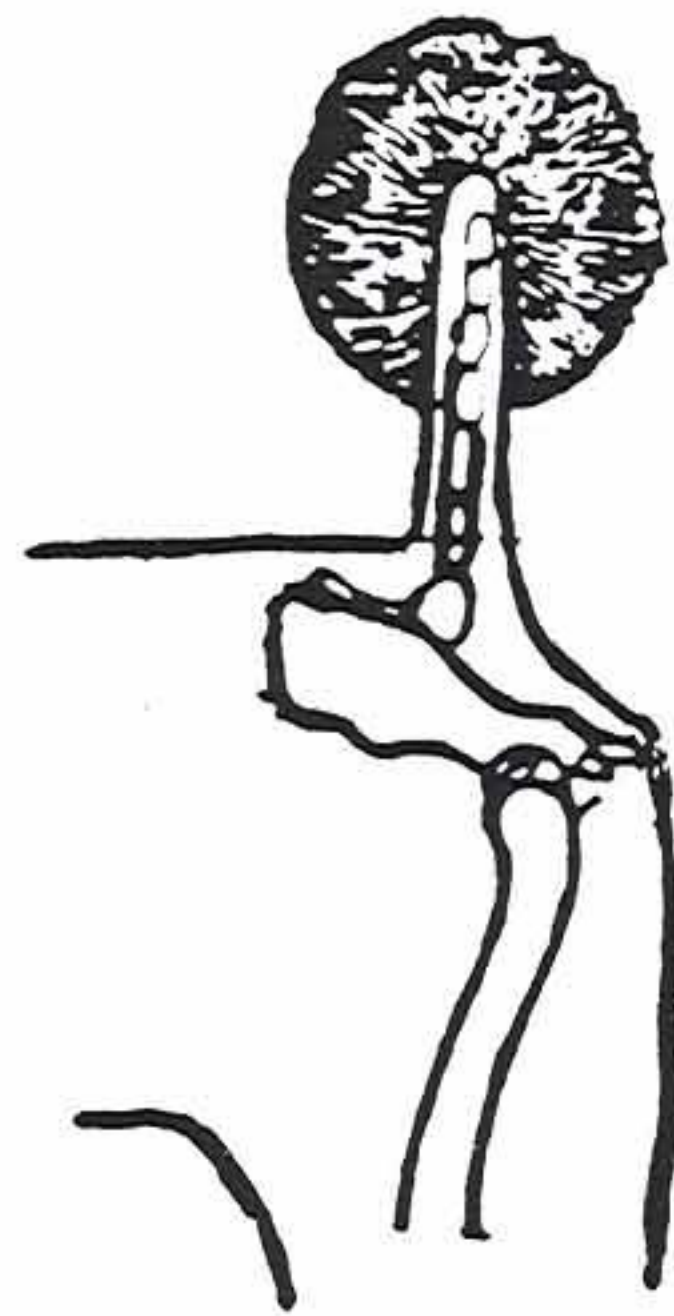




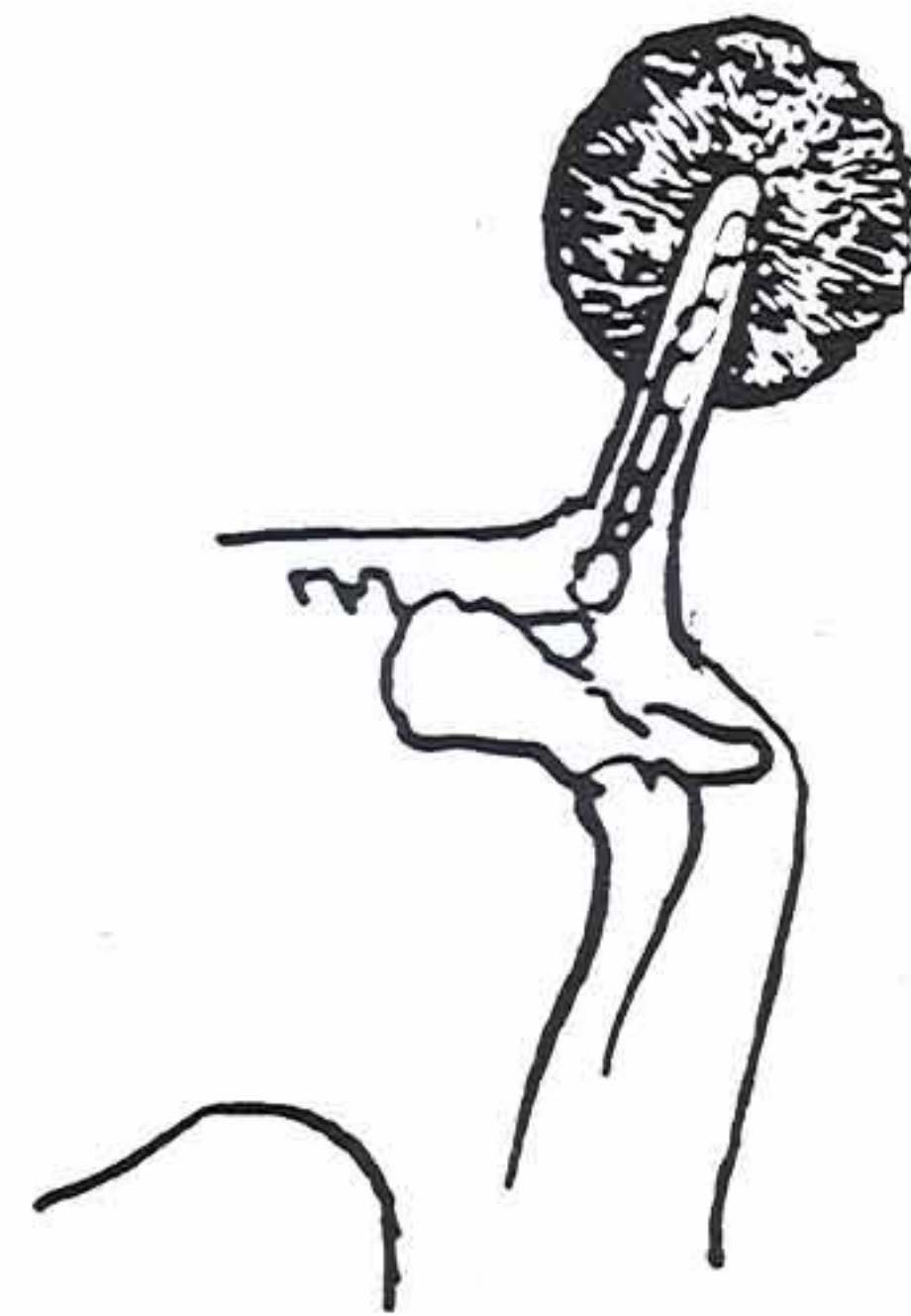
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## Body

- (c) Tail straight, set on high and carried up, docked of sufficient length to insure a balanced outline. *Major fault: set low, curled, or carried over the back.*

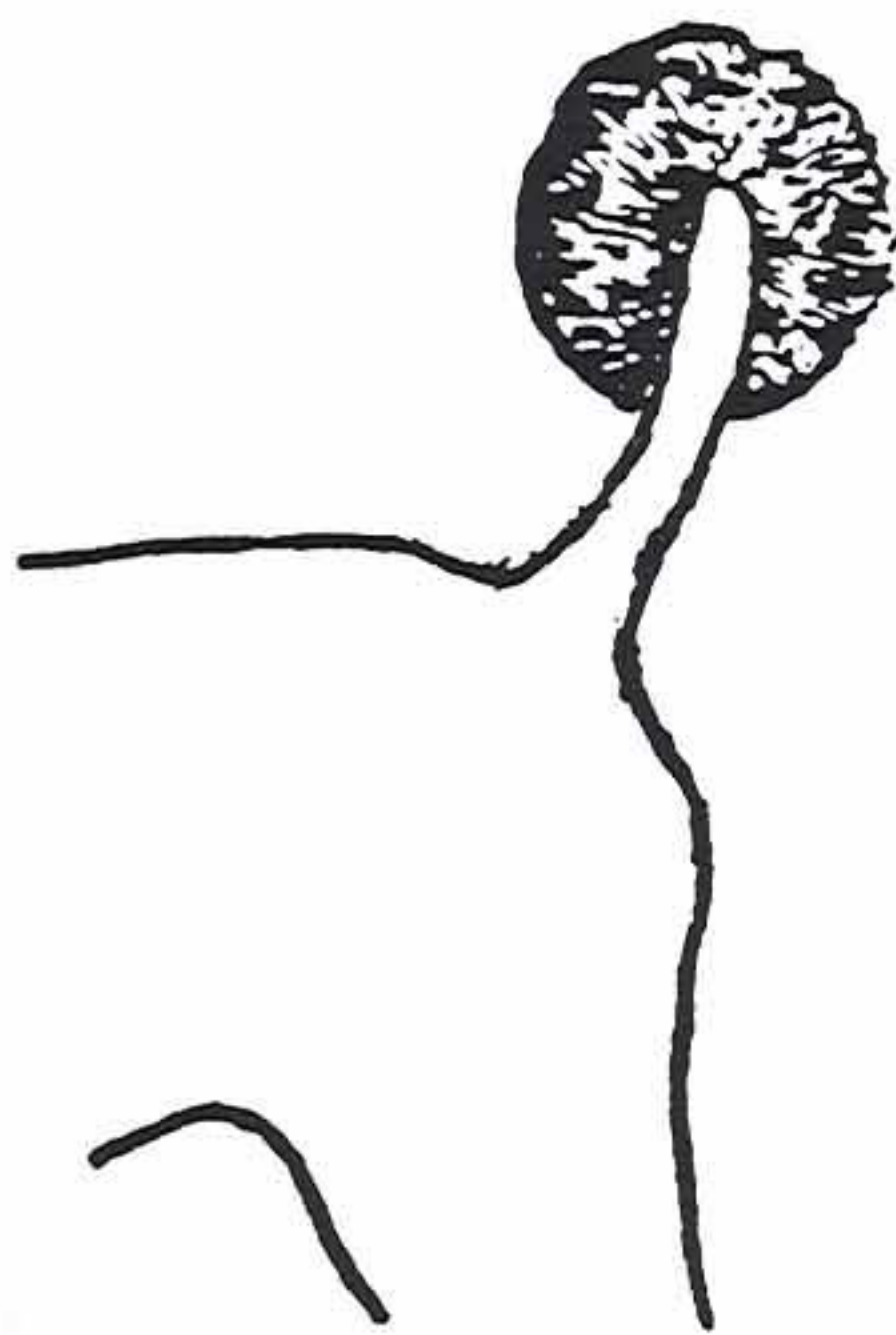


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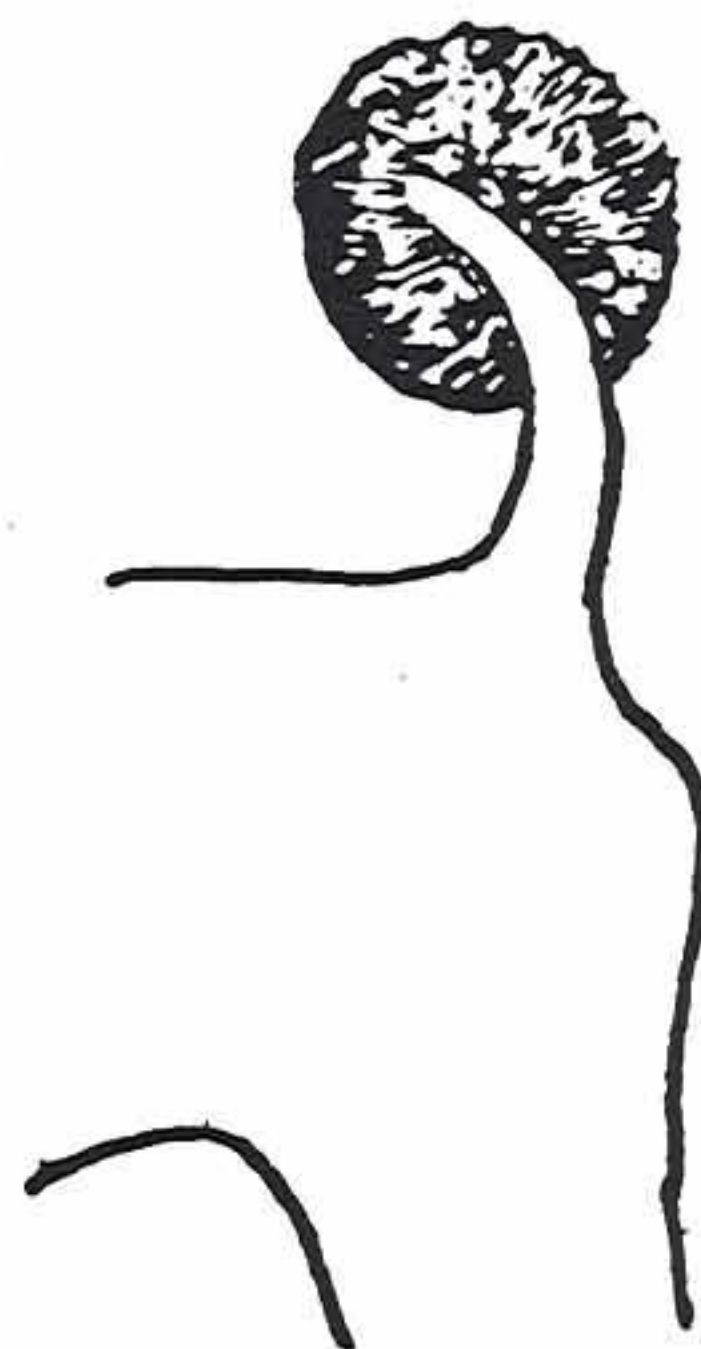


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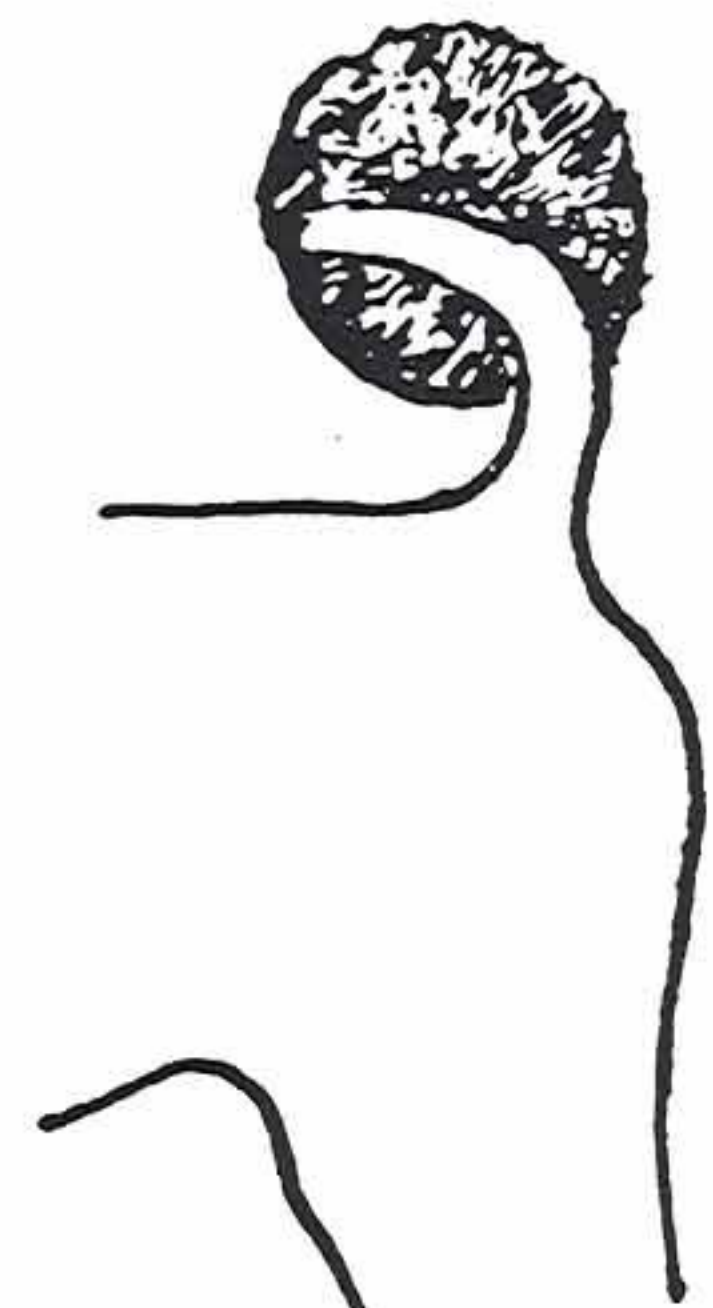
(Tail carried up. Both equally correct)



Set Low



Curled



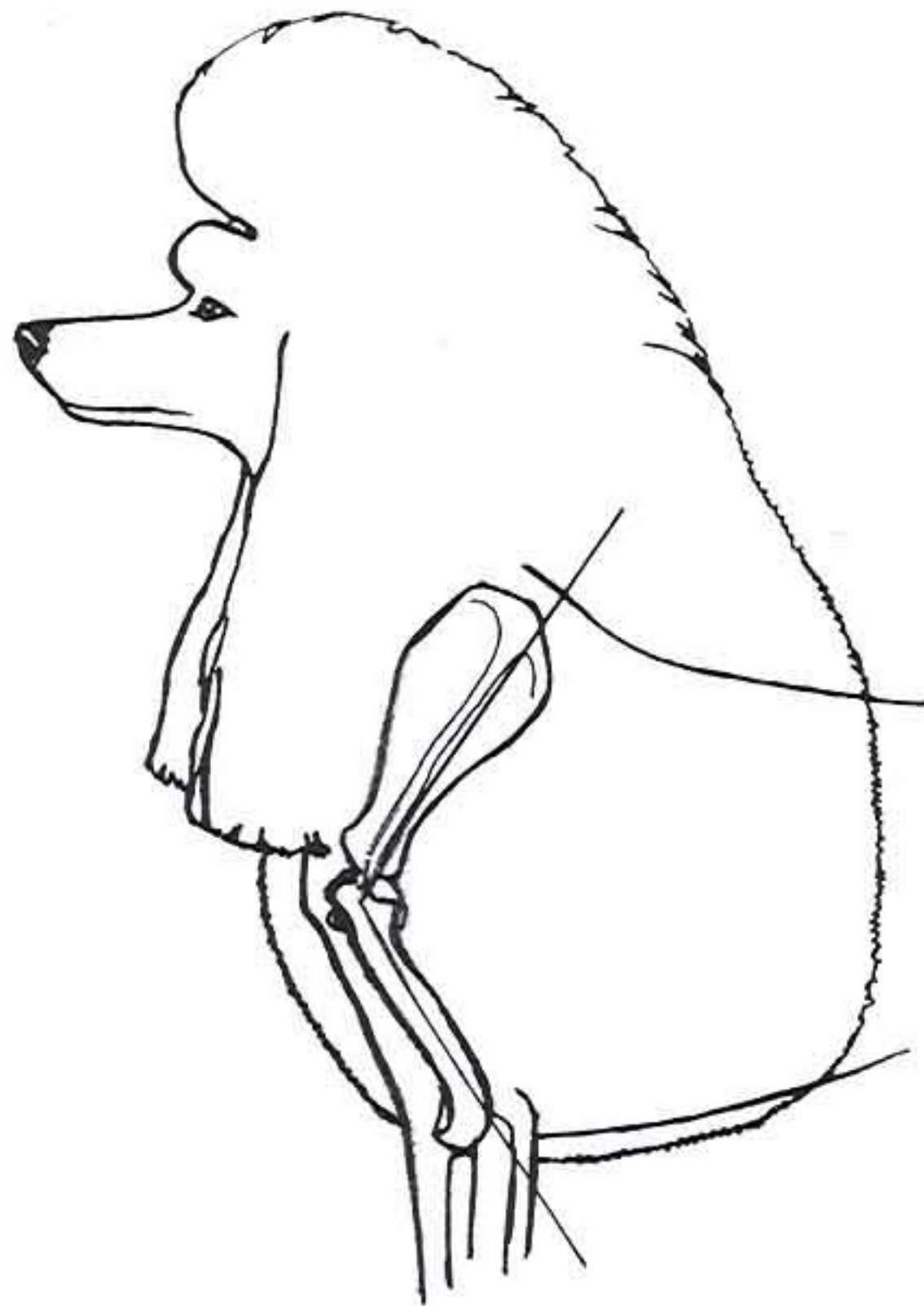
Carried over the back



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## Forequarters

Strong, smoothly muscled shoulders. The shoulder blade is well laid back and approximately the same length as the upper foreleg. *Major fault: steep shoulder.*



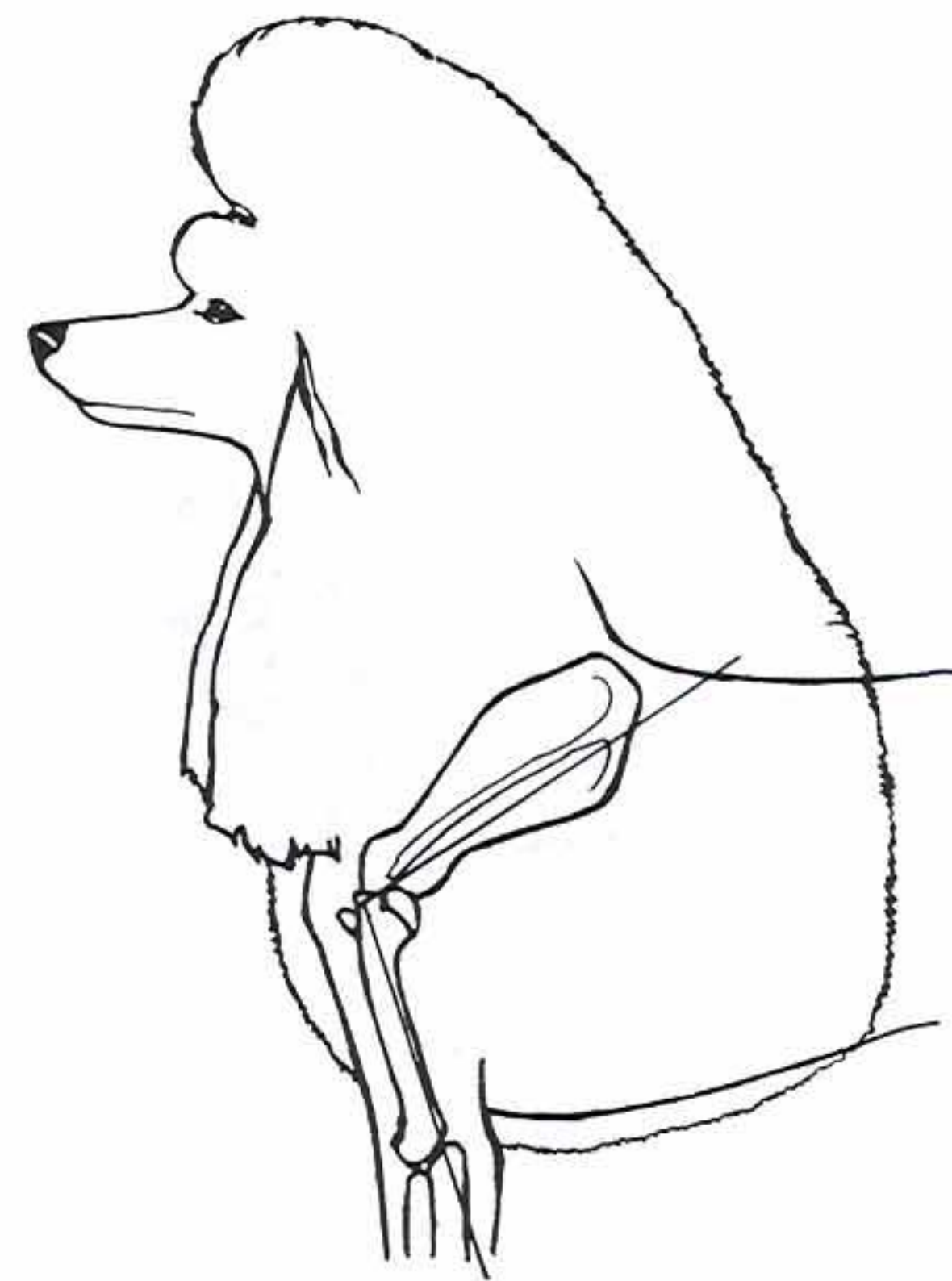
Upright shoulder blade combined with correctly angled upper foreleg - this does not allow the head to be held high while standing or carried correctly while moving.



Preferred  
Proper layback of shoulder and upper foreleg gives correct forward reach with correct head carriage.



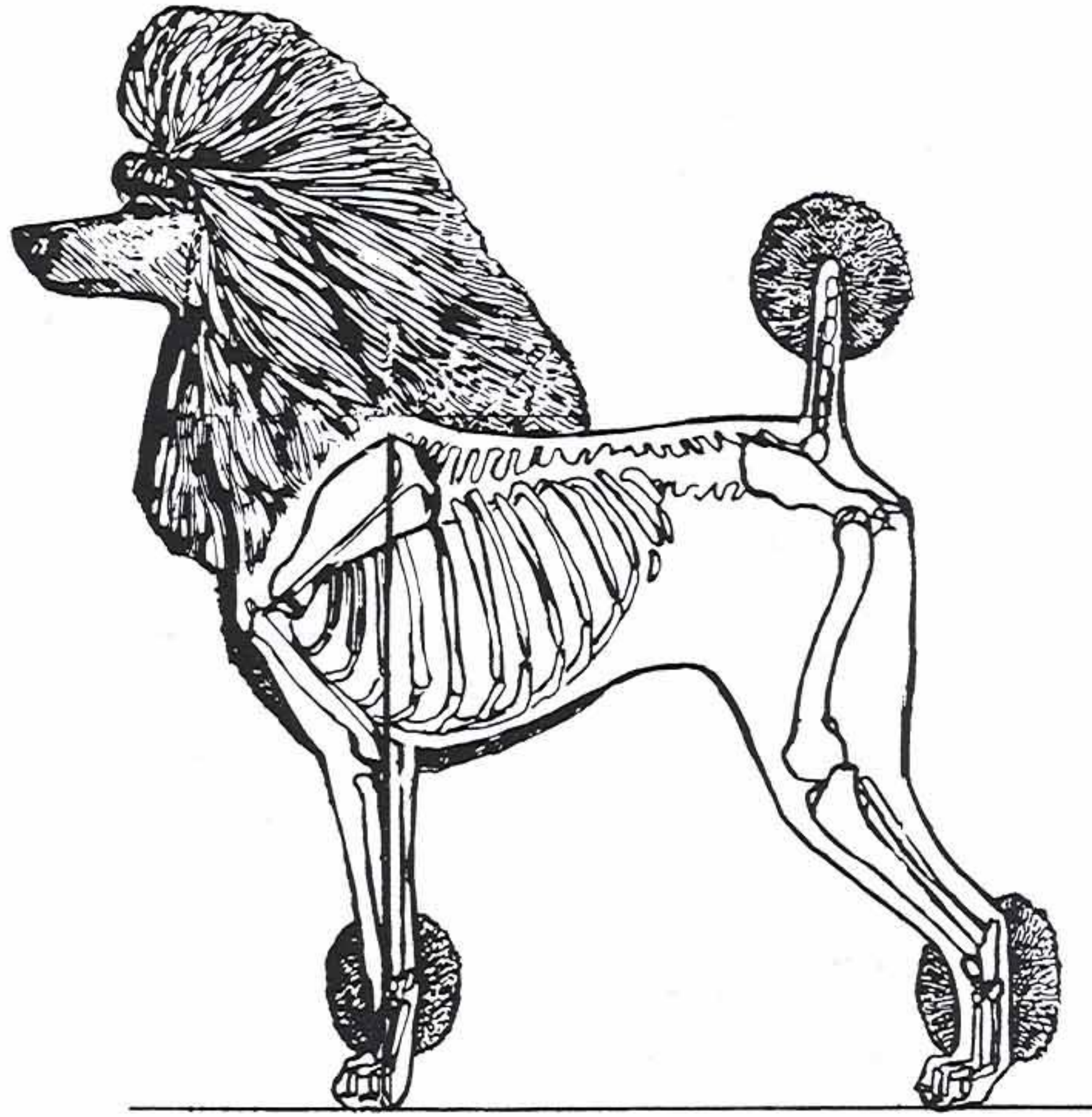
Upright shoulder blade and upright upper foreleg restricts smooth forward reach of front leg and allows for no forechest.



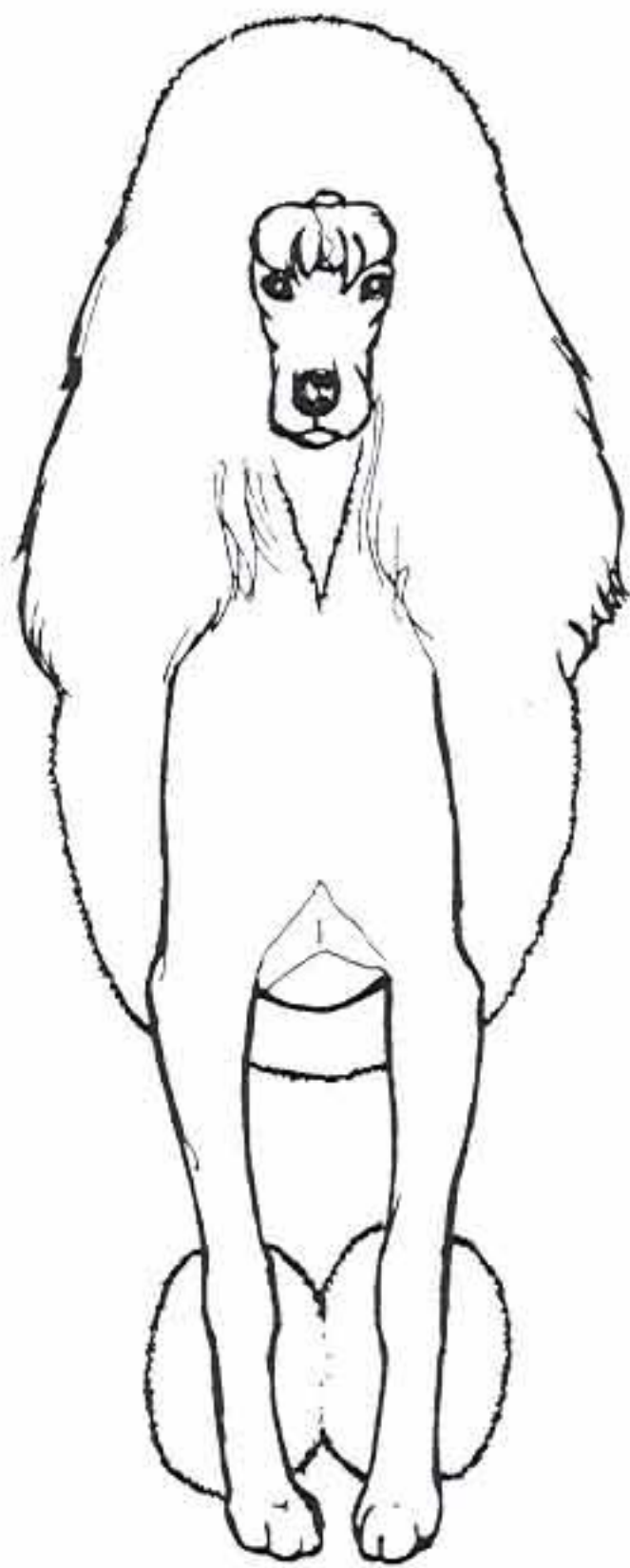
Correct shoulder blade combined with too steep upper foreleg restricts forward reach and allows for no forechest.



- 
- (a) Forelegs straight and parallel when viewed from the front. When viewed from the side the elbow is directly below the highest point of the shoulder. The pasterns are strong. Dewclaws may be removed.



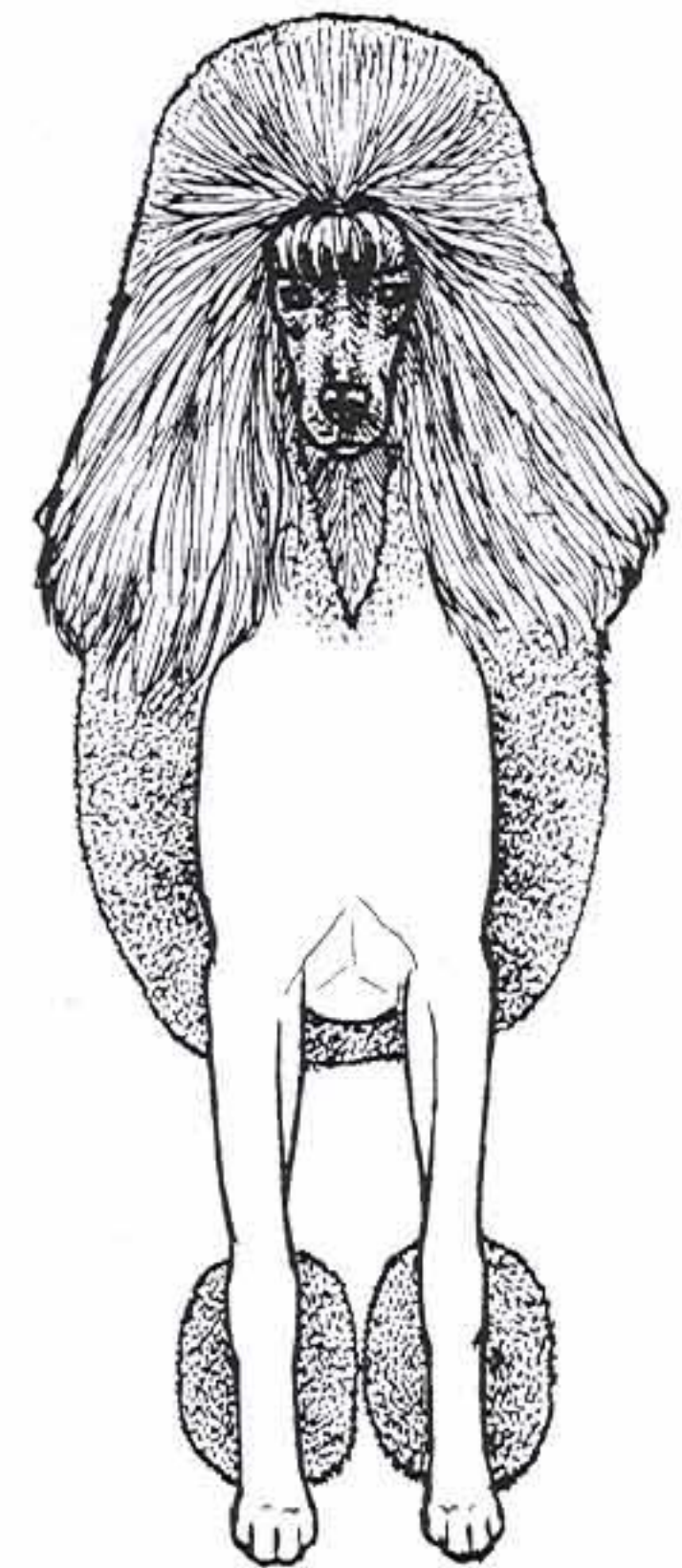
The elbow is directly below the highest point of the shoulder.



Out at elbows; toes in



Too narrow; toes out

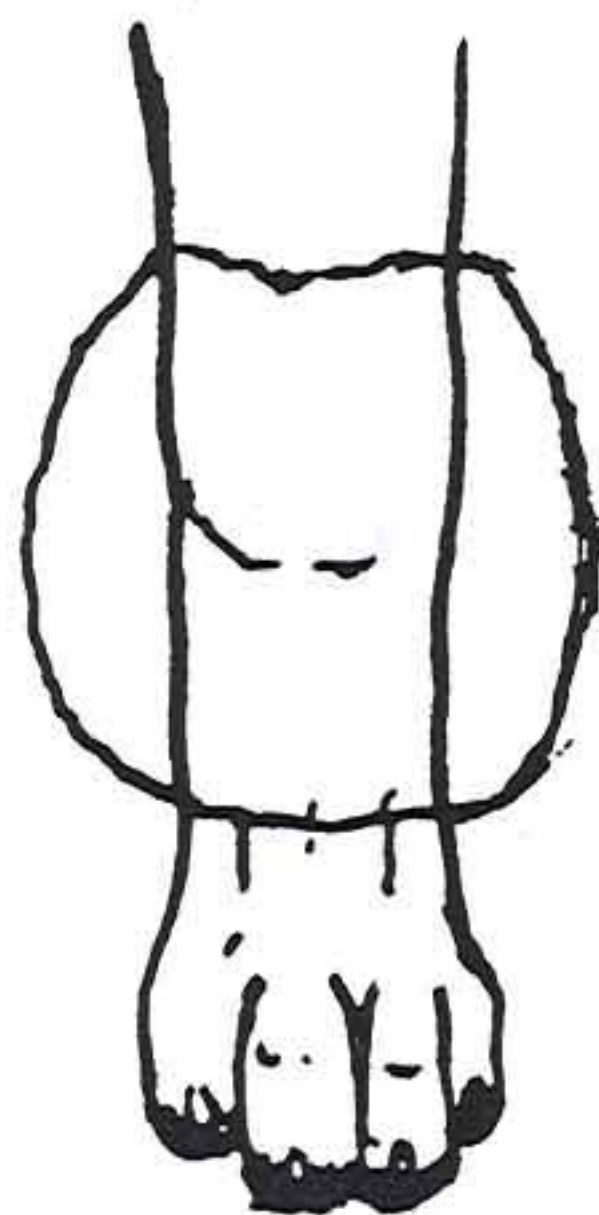


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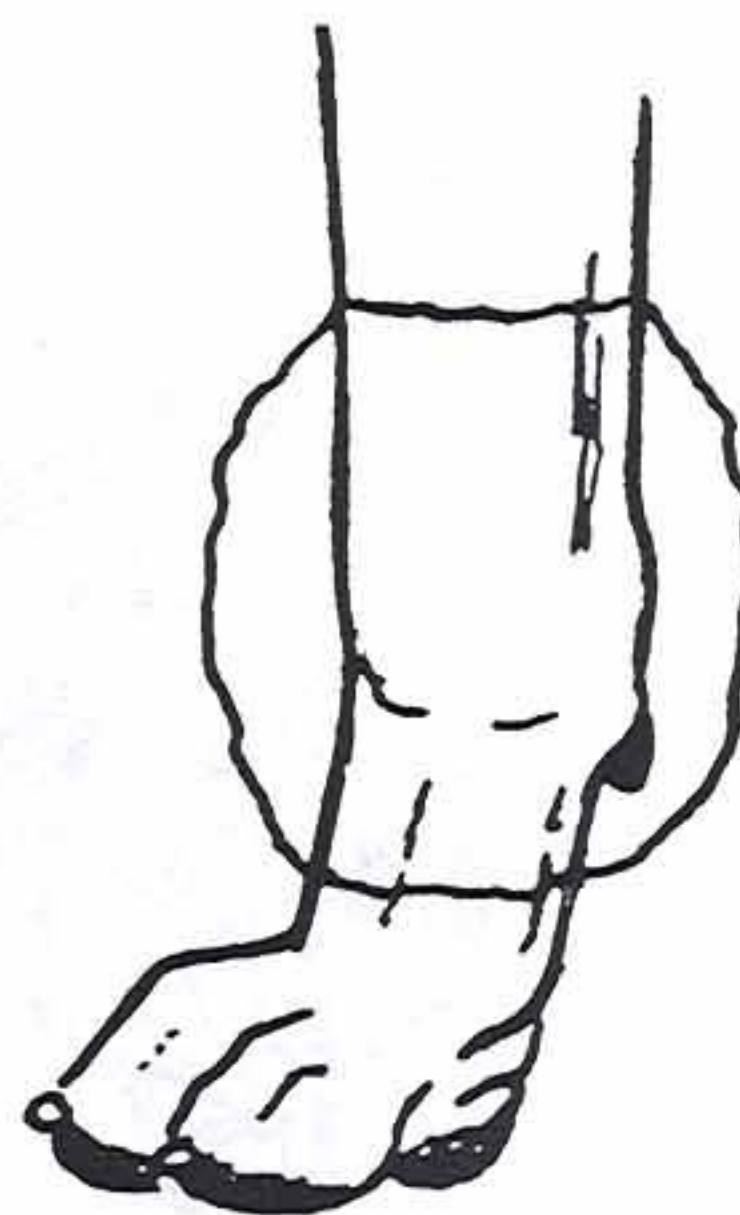


## Feet

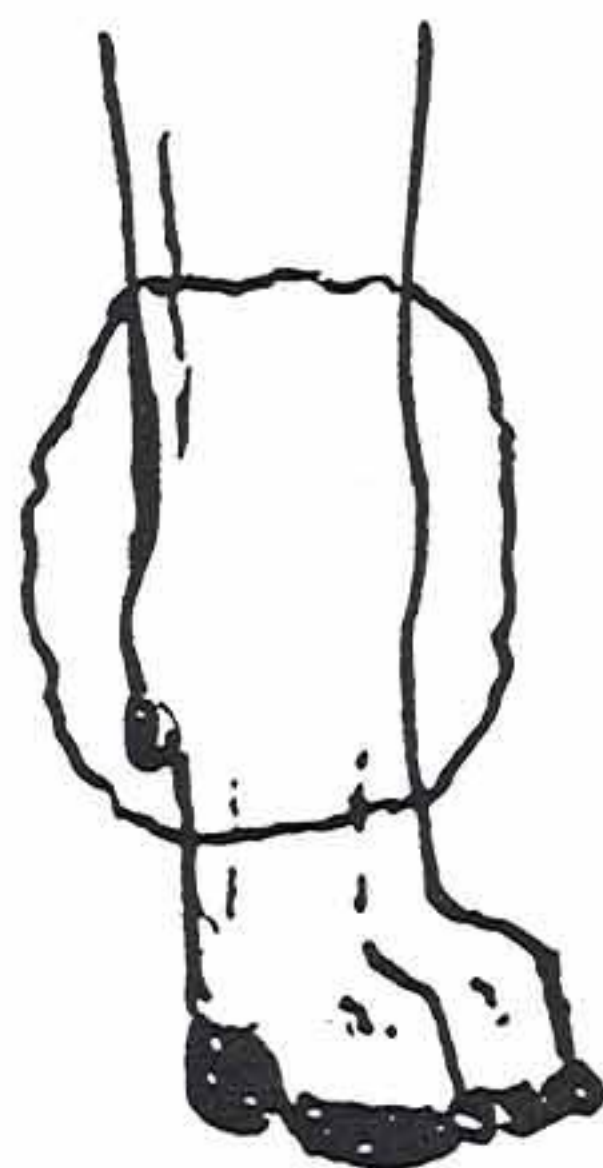
The feet are rather small, oval in shape with toes well arched and cushioned on thick firm pads. Nails short but not excessively shortened. The feet turn neither in nor out. *Major fault: paper or splay foot.*



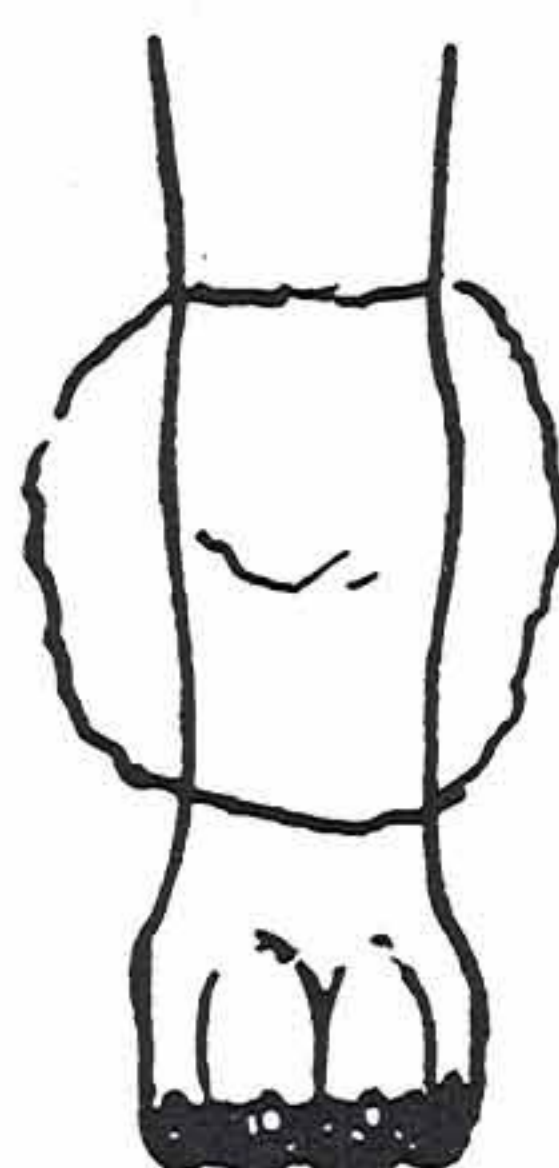
Correct foot  
front view



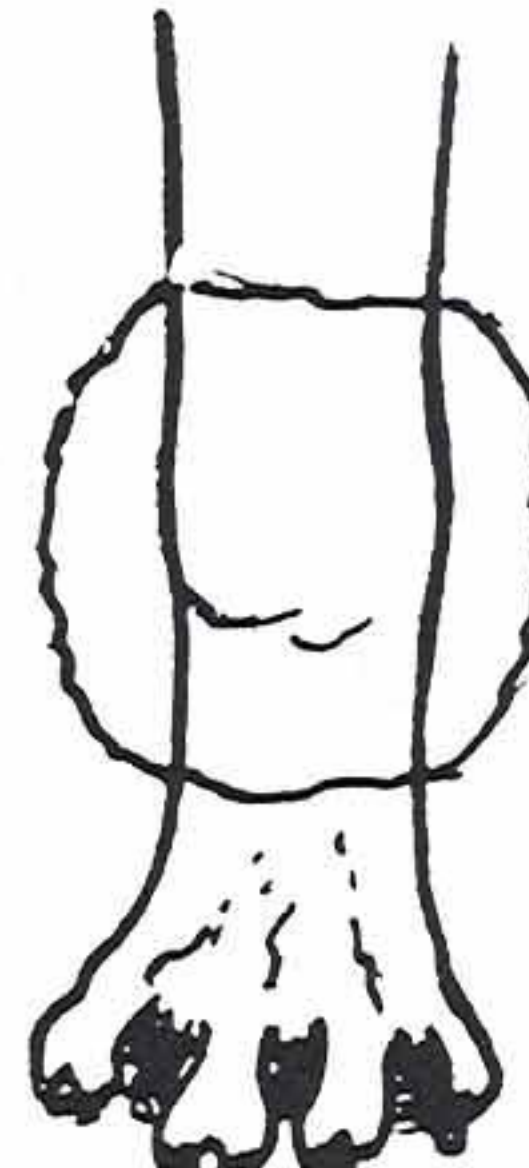
Correct oval foot  
side view



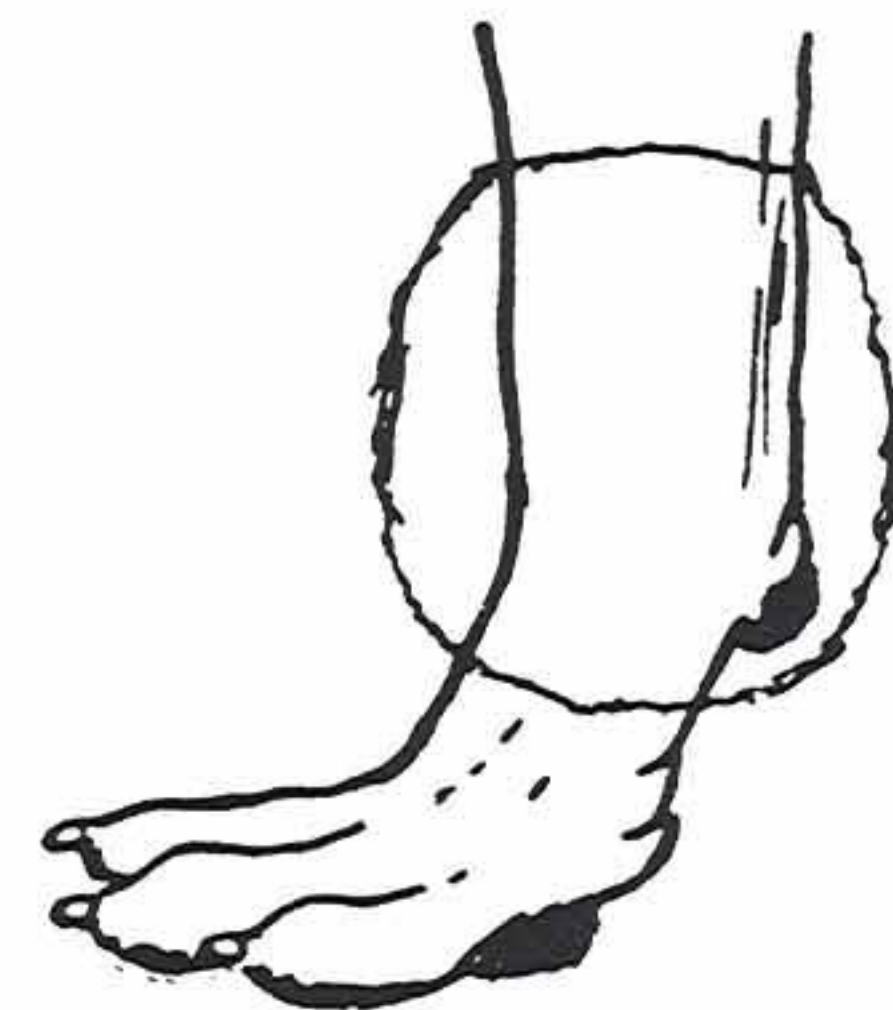
Cat foot  
-side view



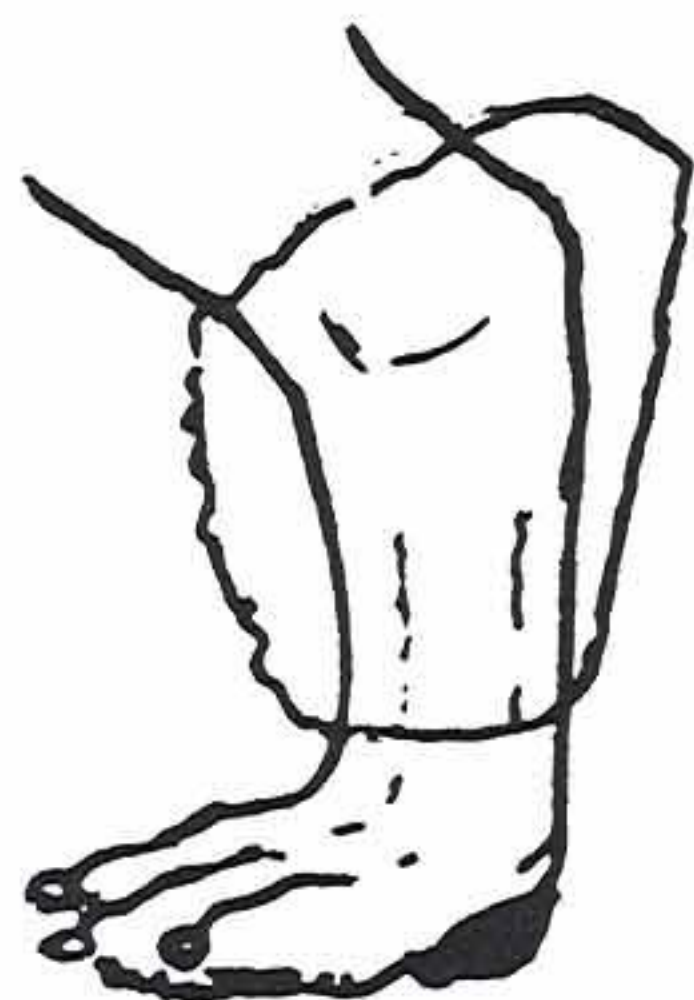
Cat foot  
front view



Splay foot  
front view



Paper foot  
-side view



Flat hind foot



Correct hind foot



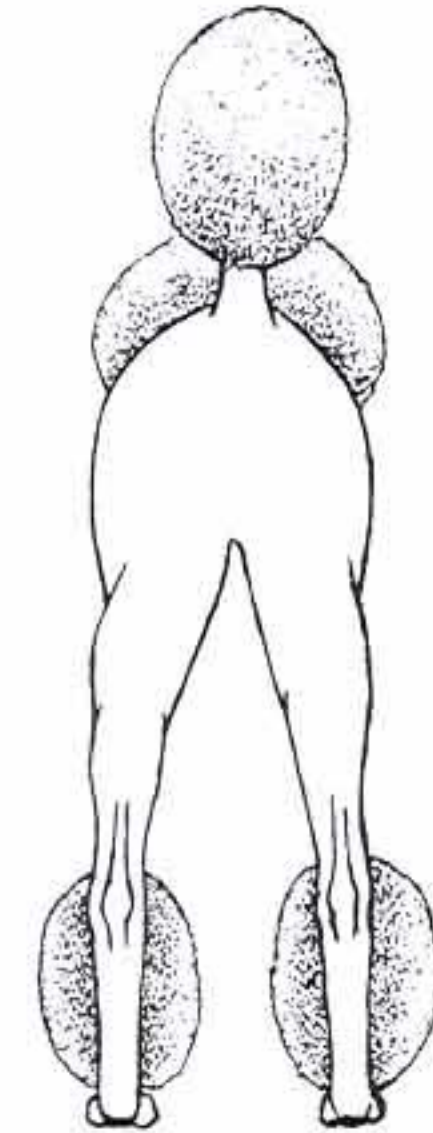
## Hindquarters

The angulation of the hindquarters balances that of the forequarters.

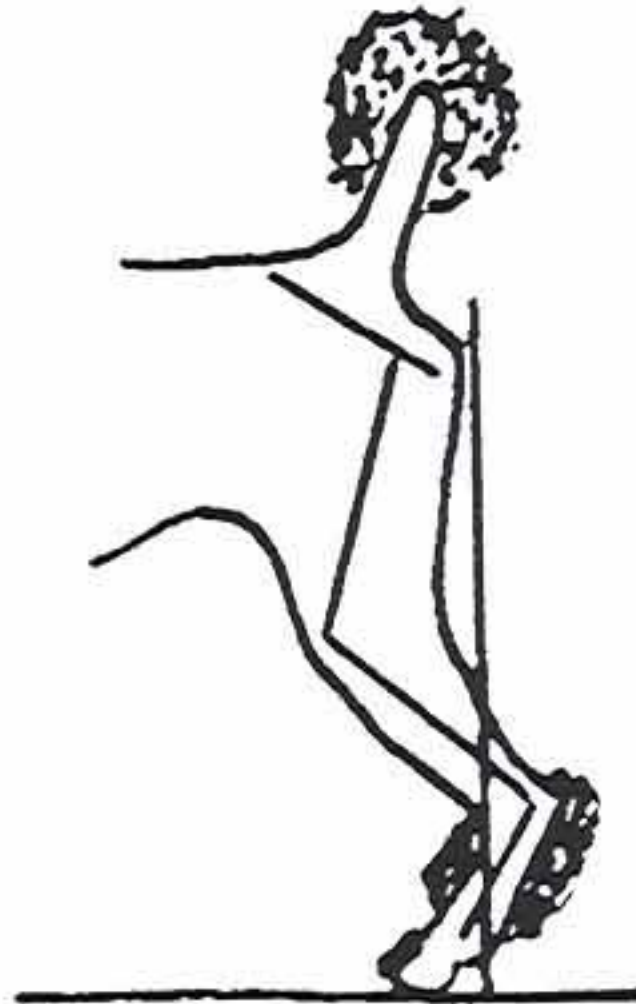
- (a) Hind legs straight and parallel when viewed from the rear. Muscular with width in the region of the stifles which are well bent; femur and tibia are about equal in length; hock to heel short and perpendicular to the ground. When standing, the rear toes are only slightly behind the point of the rump. *Major fault: cow-hocks.*



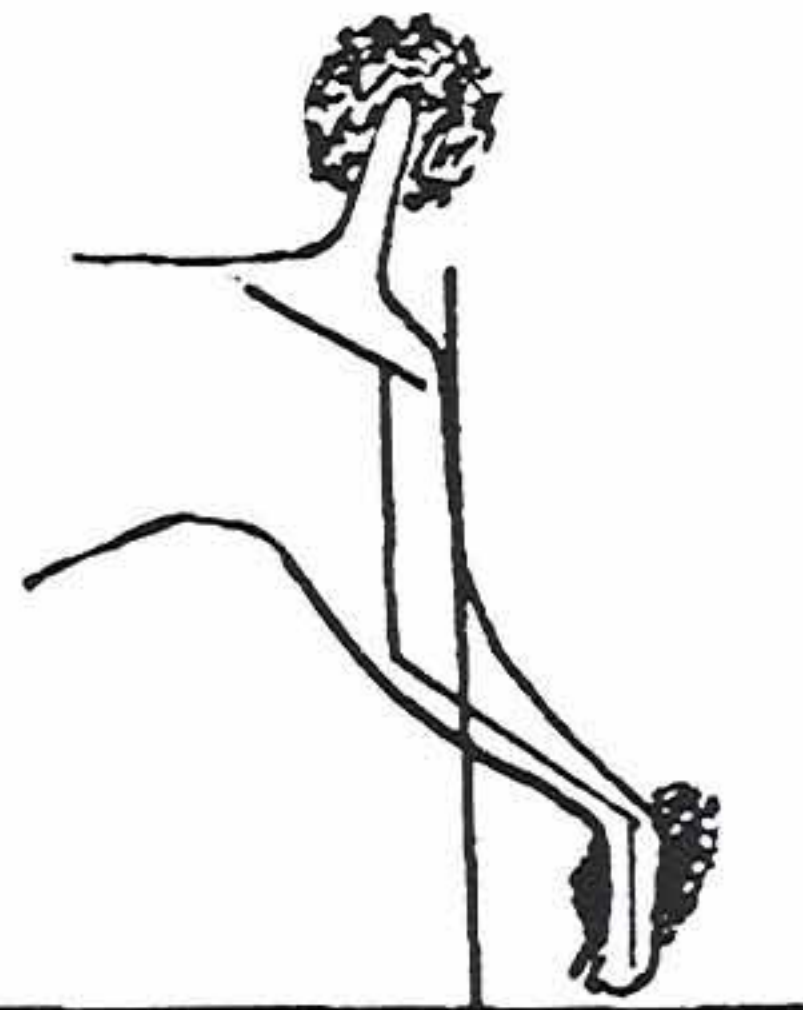
Correct angulation



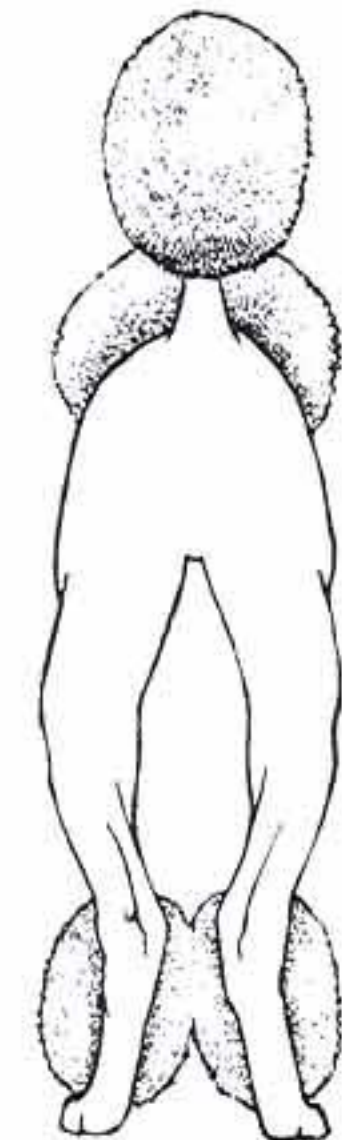
Preferred



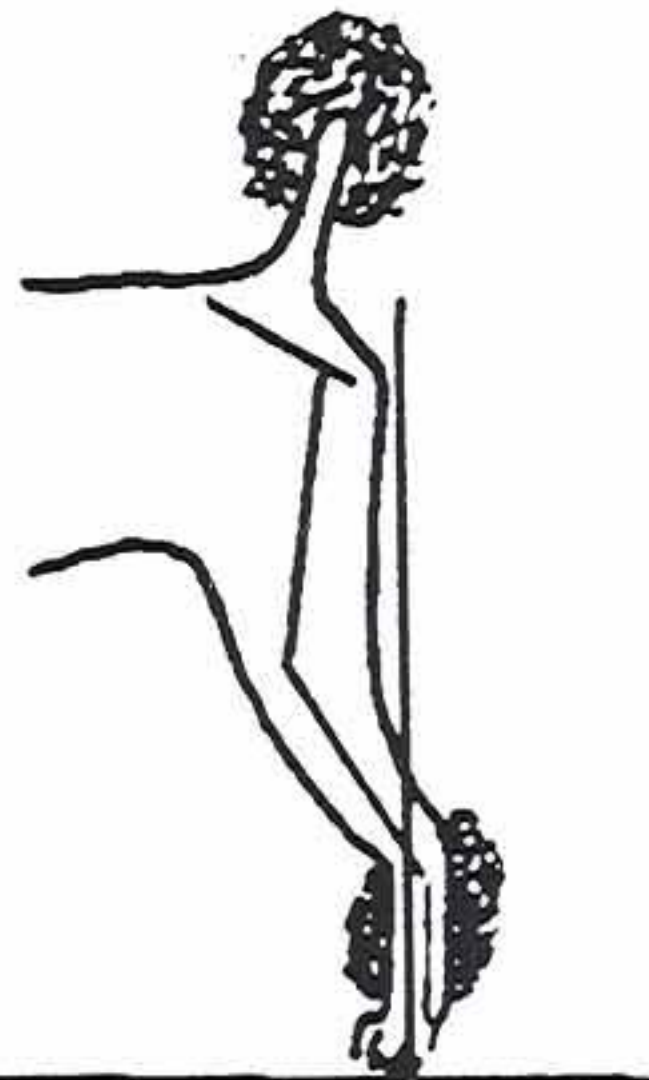
Sickled hocked  
(or standing under)



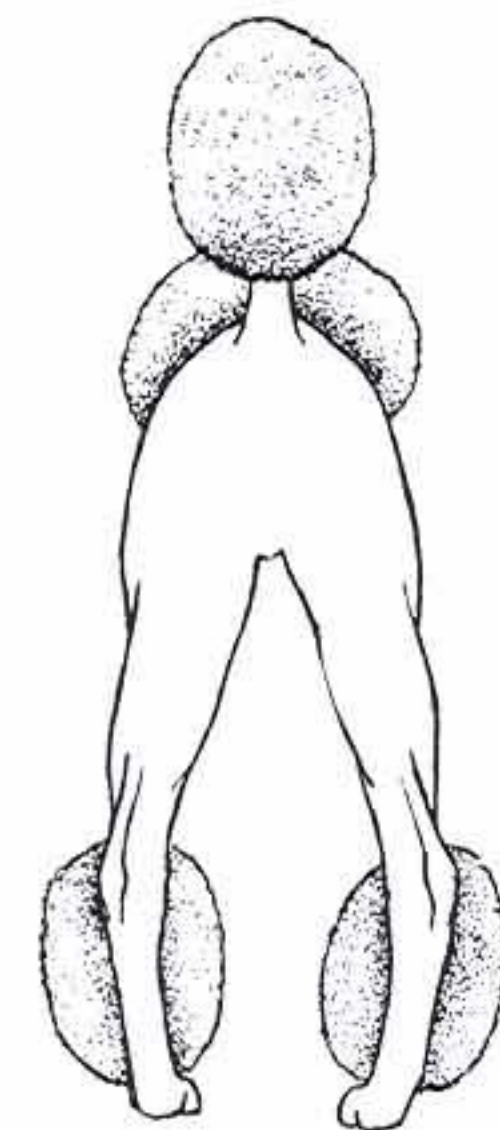
Over angulation  
standing too far out behind



Cow hocks



Too straight hindquarter  
with typical high hock.



Bow hocked or open  
hocked; bandy legged



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## Coat

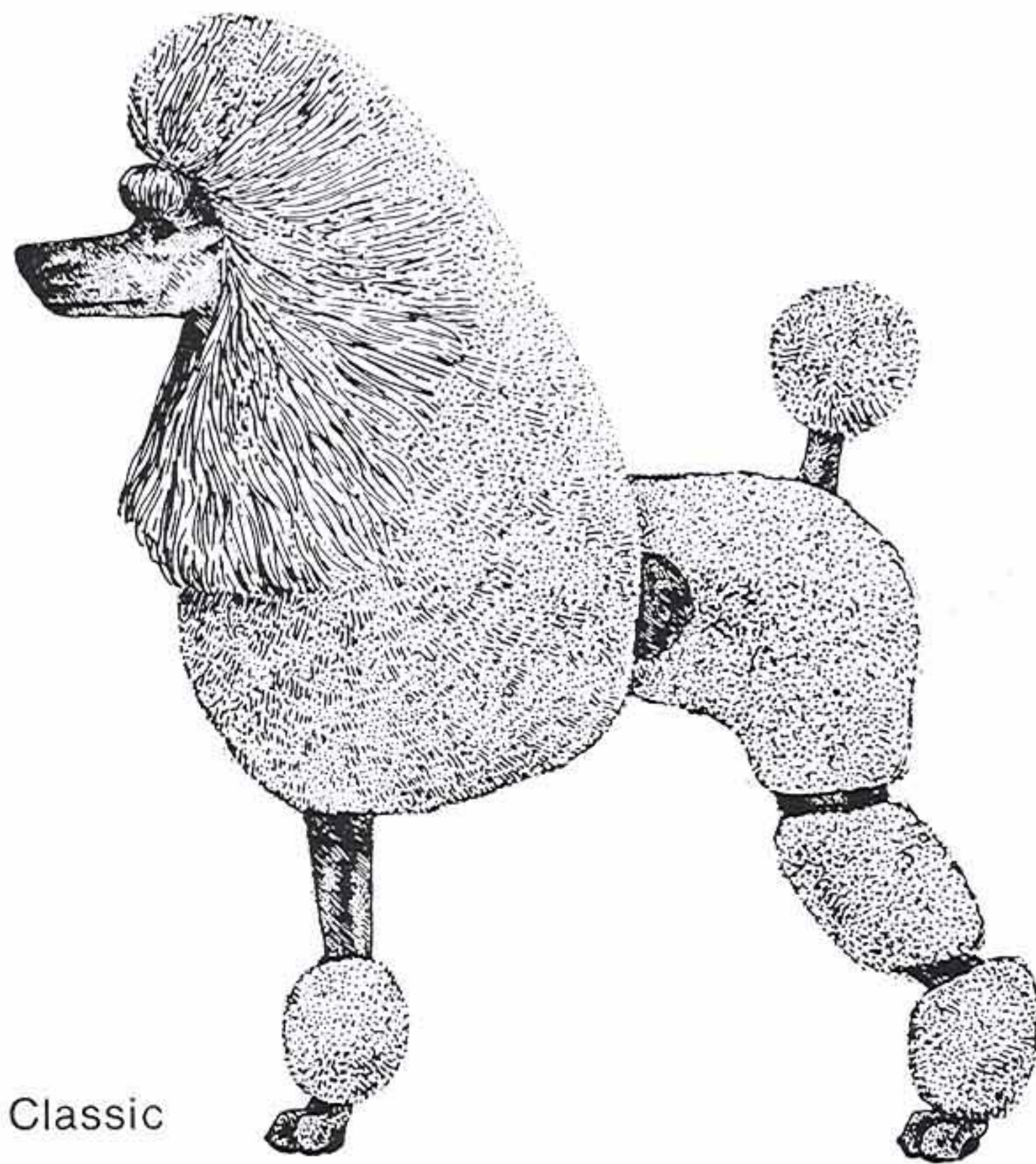
- (a) **Quality:** (1) Curly: of naturally harsh texture, dense throughout. (2) Corded: hanging in tight even cords of varying length; longer on mane or body coat, head, and ears; shorter on puffs, bracelets, and pompons.
- (b) **Clip:** A Poodle under 12 months may be shown in the "Puppy" clip. In all regular classes, Poodles 12 months or over must be shown in the "English Saddle" or "Continental" clip. In the Stud Dog and Brood Bitch classes and in a non-competitive Parade of Champions, Poodles may be shown in the "Sporting" clip. A Poodle shown in any other type of clip shall be disqualified.



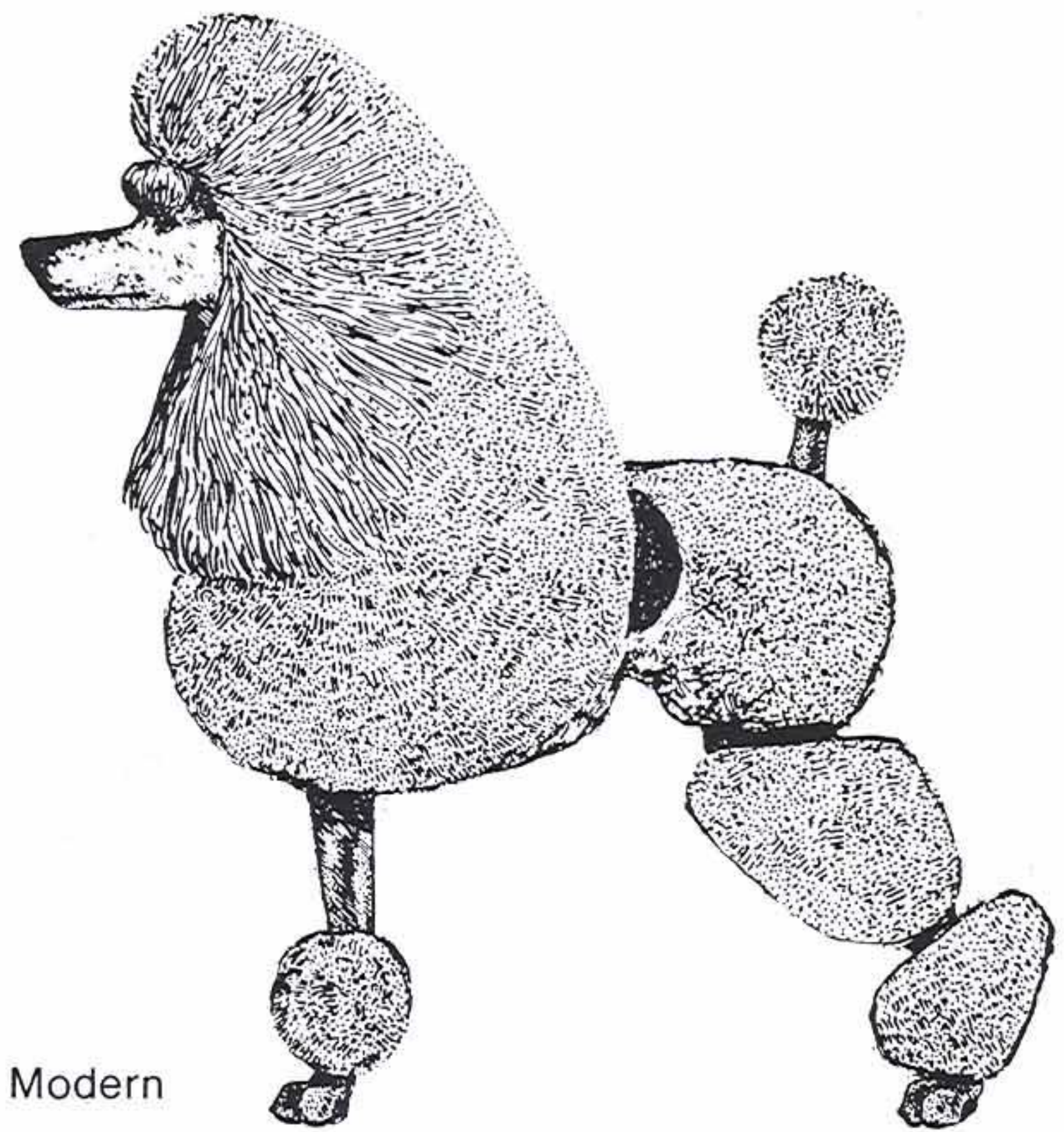
Puppy Clip

(1) "Puppy": A Poodle under a year old may be shown in the "Puppy" clip with the coat long. The face, throat, feet and base of the tail are shaved. The entire shaven foot is visible. There is a pompon on the end of the tail. In order to give a neat appearance and a smooth unbroken line, shaping of the coat is permissible.



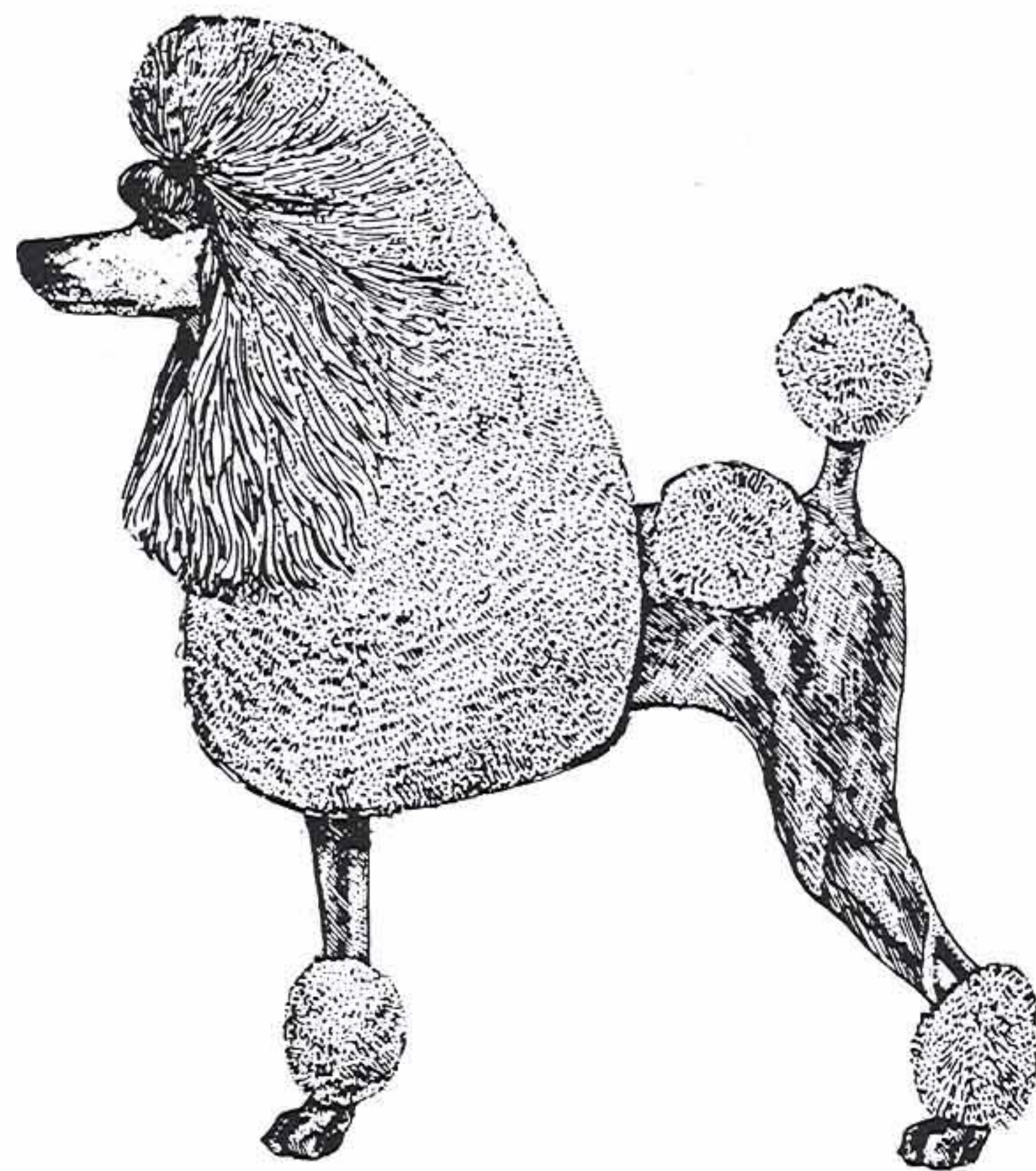


Classic



Modern

(2) "English Saddle": In the "English Saddle" clip the face, throat, feet, forelegs and base of the tail are shaved, leaving puffs on the forelegs and a pompon on the end of the tail. The hindquarters are covered with a short blanket of hair except for a curved shaved area on each flank and two shaved bands on each hindleg. The entire shaven foot and a portion of the shaven leg above the puff are visible. The rest of the body is left in full coat but may be shaped in order to insure overall balance.

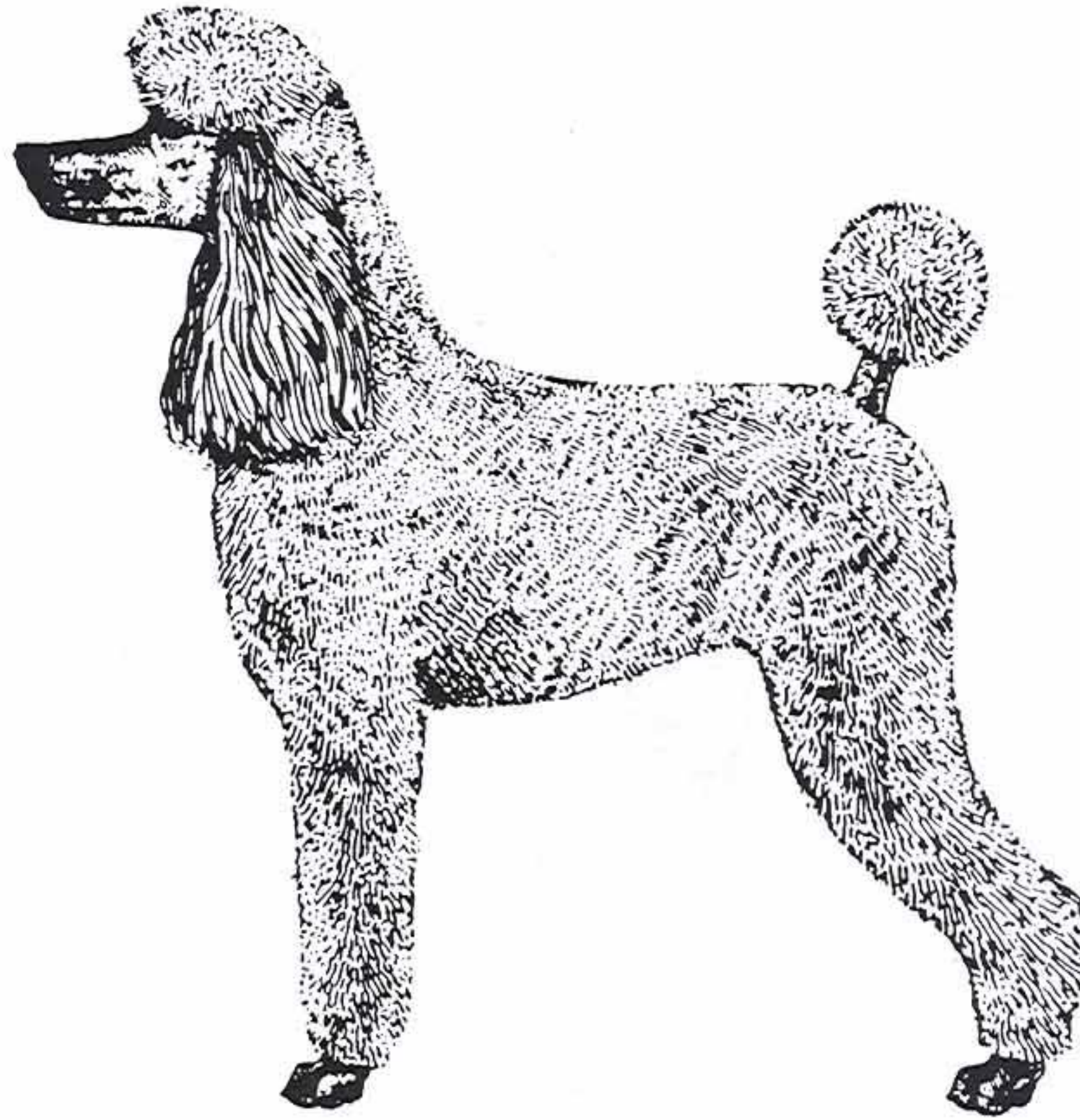


(3) "Continental": In the "Continental" clip, the face, throat, feet, and base of the tail are shaved. The hindquarters are shaved with pompons (optional) on the hips. The legs are shaved, leaving bracelets on the hindlegs and puffs on the forelegs. There is a pompon on the end of the tail. The entire shaven foot and a portion of the shaven foreleg above the puff are visible. The rest of the body is left in full coat but may be shaped in order to insure overall balance.



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## Coat



Sporting Clip

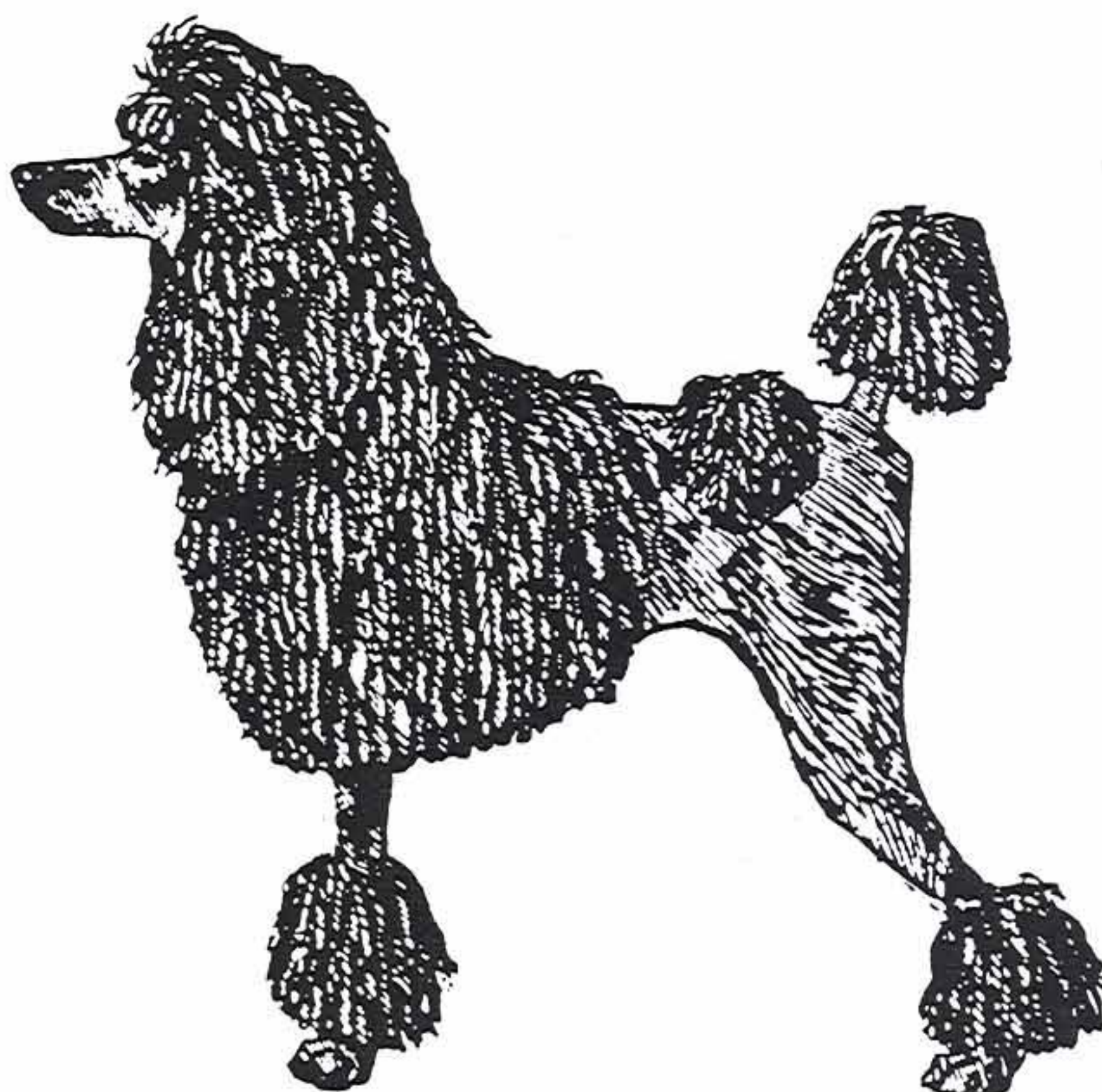
(4) "Sporting": In the "Sporting" clip, a Poodle shall be shown with face, feet, throat, and base of tail shaved, leaving a scissored cap on the top of the head and a pompon on the end of the tail. The rest of the body, and legs are clipped or scissored to follow the outline of the dog leaving a short blanket of coat no longer than one inch in length. The hair on the legs may be slightly longer than that on the body.

In all clips the hair of the topknot may be left free or held in place by elastic bands. The hair is only of sufficient length to present a smooth outline. "Topknot" refers only to hair on the skull, from stop to occiput. This is the only area where elastic bands may be used.



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## Color



Corded Coat

The coat is an even and solid color at the skin. In blues, grays, silvers, browns, cafe-au-laits, apricots and creams the coat may show varying shades of the same color. This is frequently present in the somewhat darker feathering of the ears and in the tipping of the ruff. While clear colors are definitely preferred, such natural variation in the shading of the coat is not to be considered a fault. Brown and cafe-au-lait Poodles have liver-colored noses, eye-rims and lips, dark toenails and dark amber eyes. Black, blue, gray, silver, cream and white Poodles have black noses, eye-rims and lips, black or self colored toenails and very dark eyes.

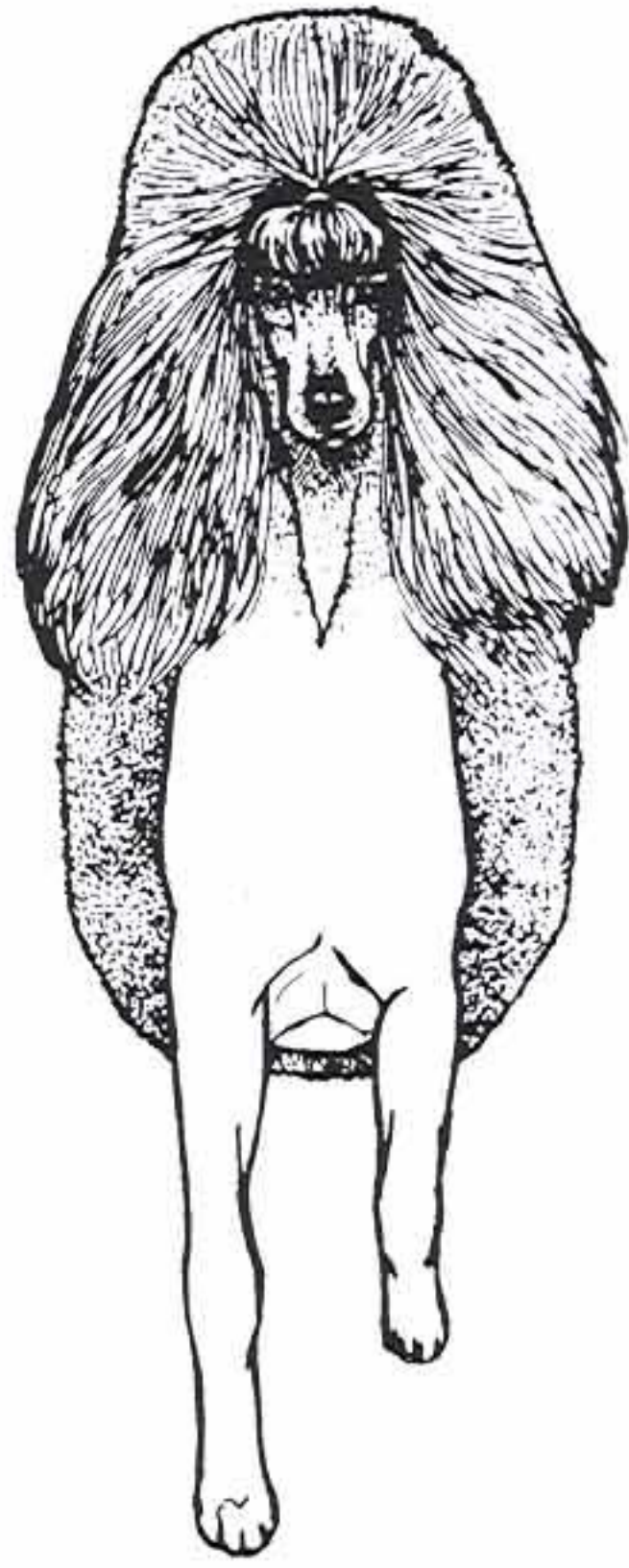
In the apricots while the foregoing coloring is preferred, liver-colored noses, eye-rims and lips, and amber eyes are permitted but are not desirable. *Major fault: color of nose, lips and eye rims incomplete, or of wrong color for color of dog.*

Parti-colored dogs shall be disqualified. The coat of a parti-colored dog is not an even solid color at the skin but is of two or more colors.

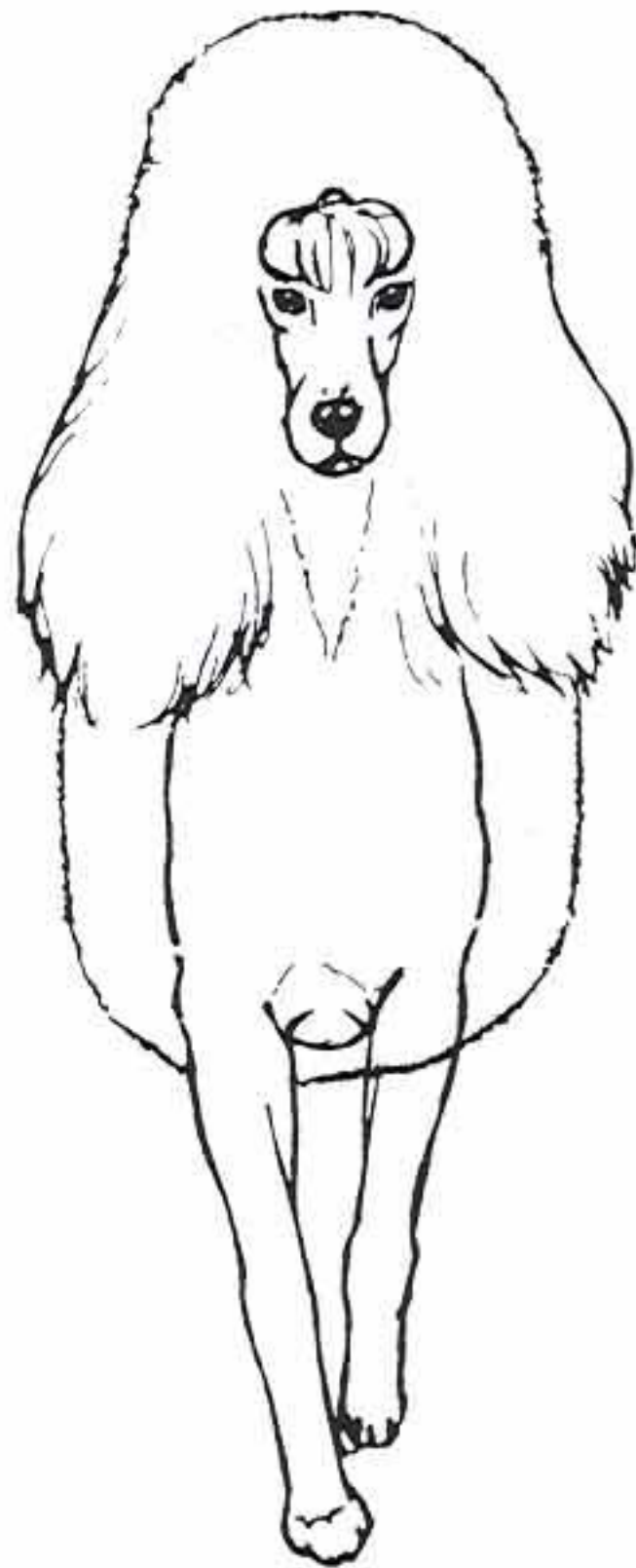


## Gait

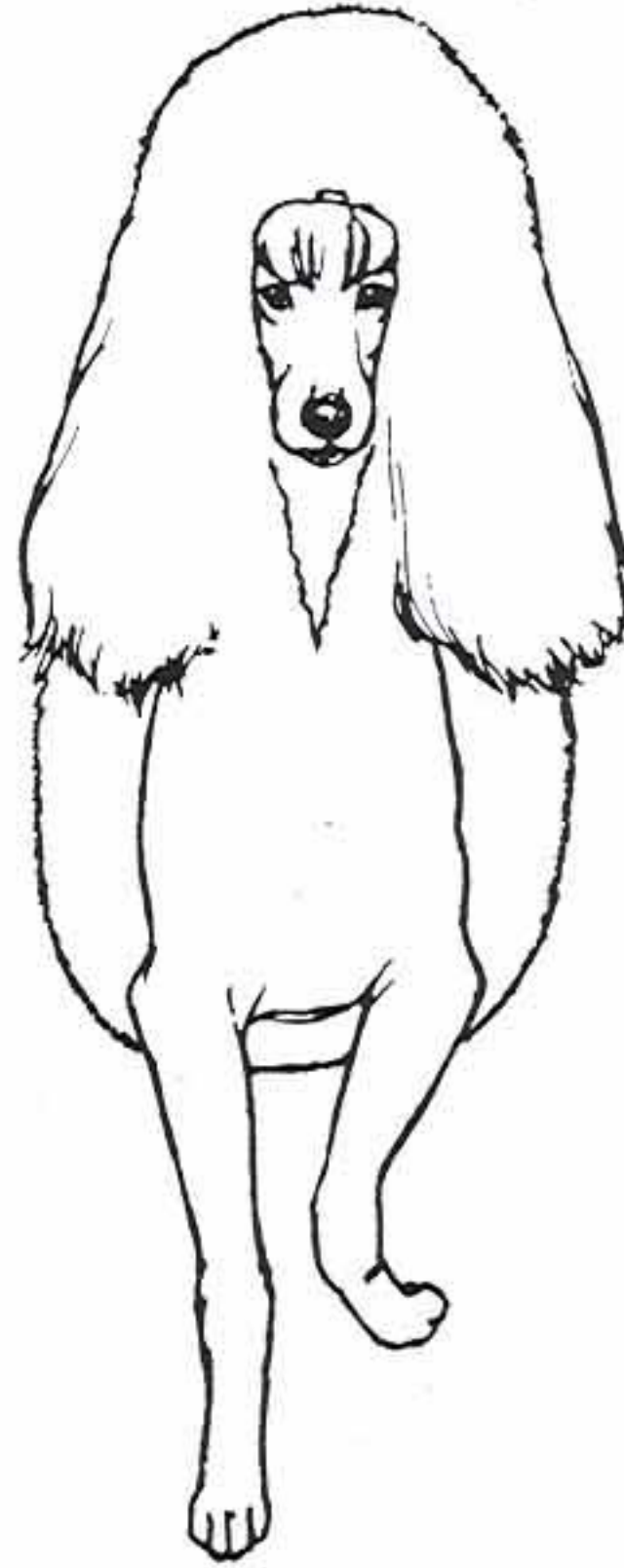
A straightforward trot with light springy action and strong hindquarters drive. Head and tail carried up. Sound effortless movement is essential.



Straight normal



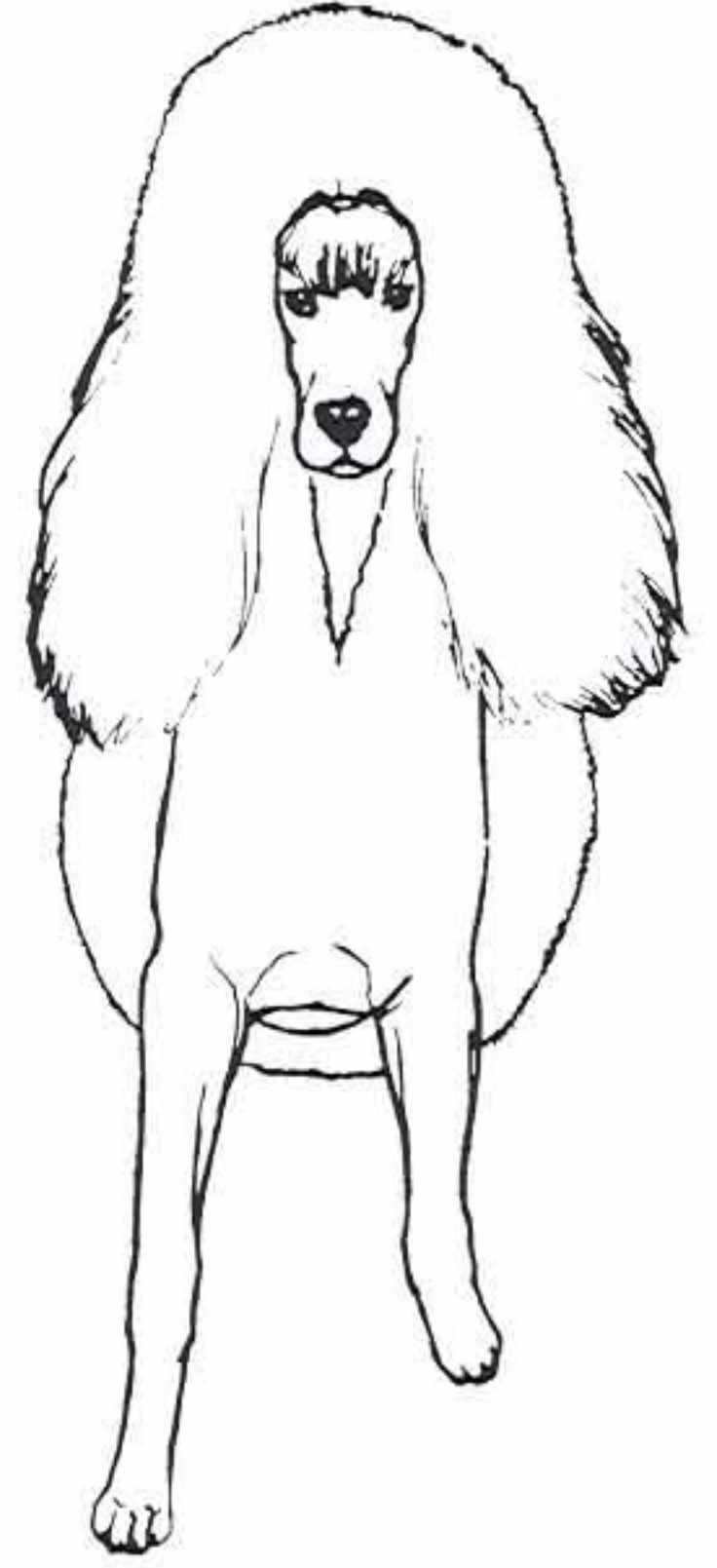
Single track  
As speed increases  
legs tend to move  
toward a single track.



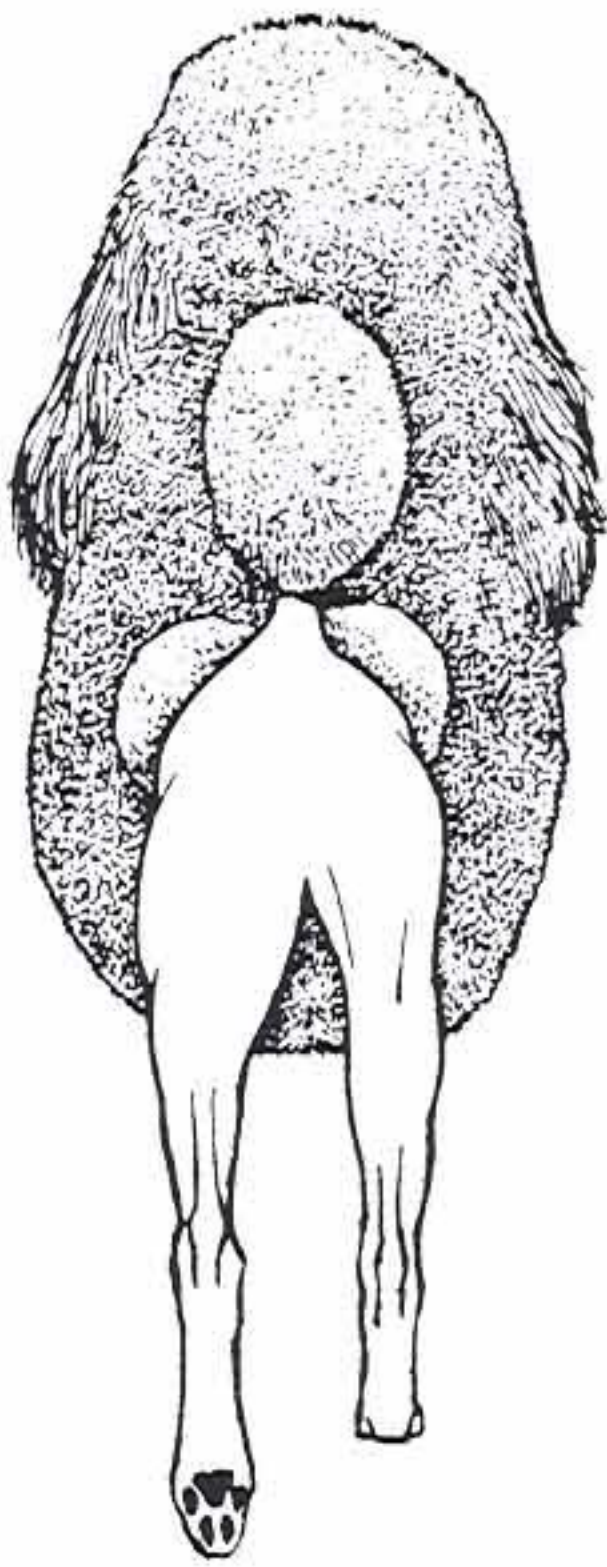
Out at elbows,  
paddling



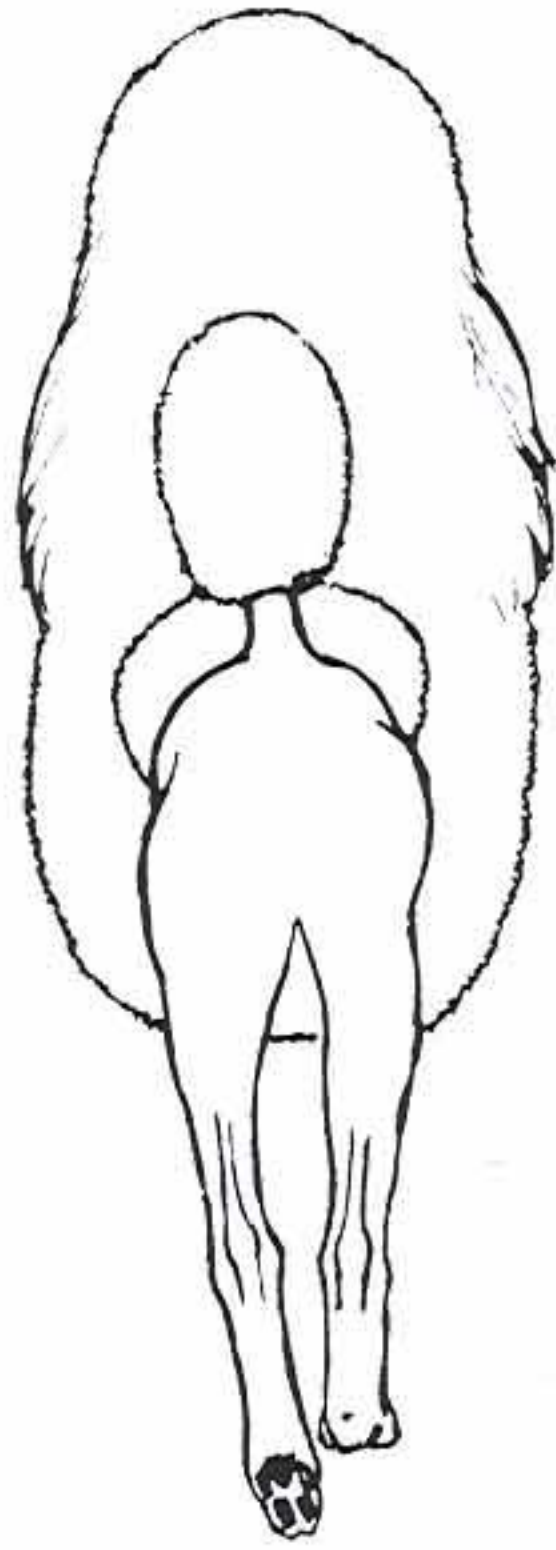
Weaving, crossing  
over, plaiting, knitting,  
dishing or toeing in



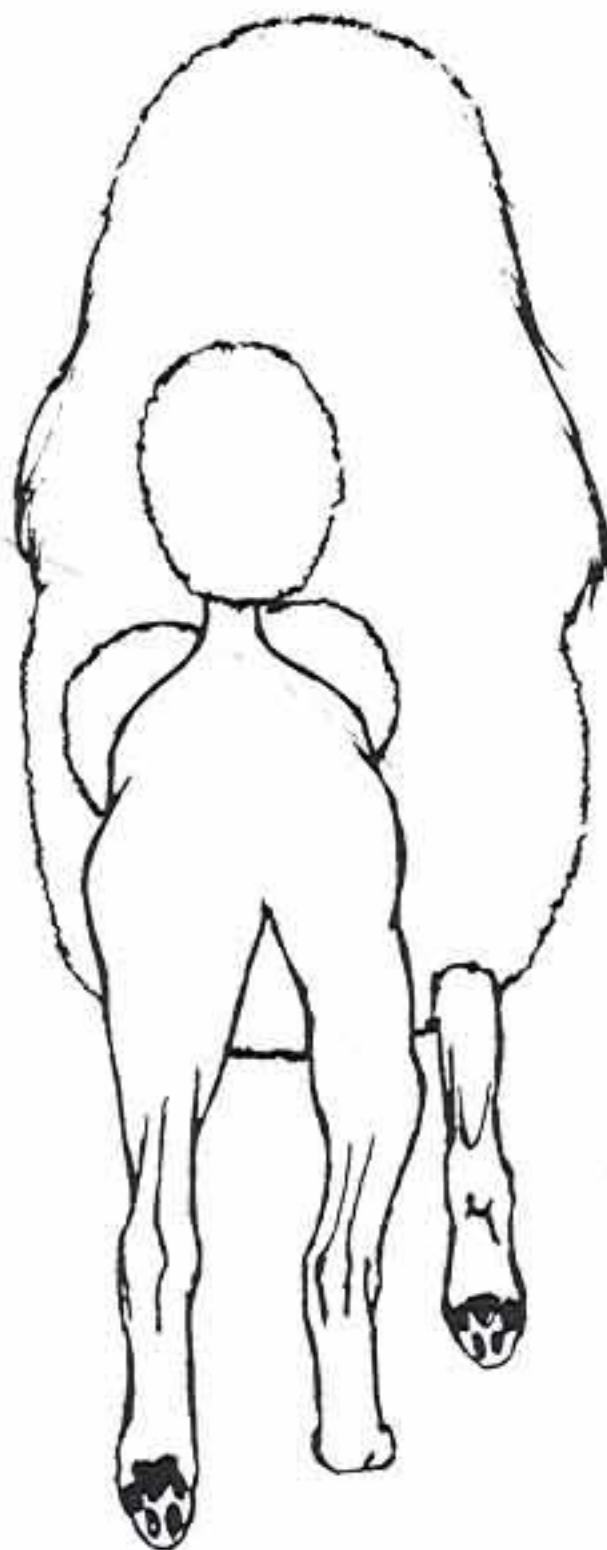
Moving wide



Straight normal



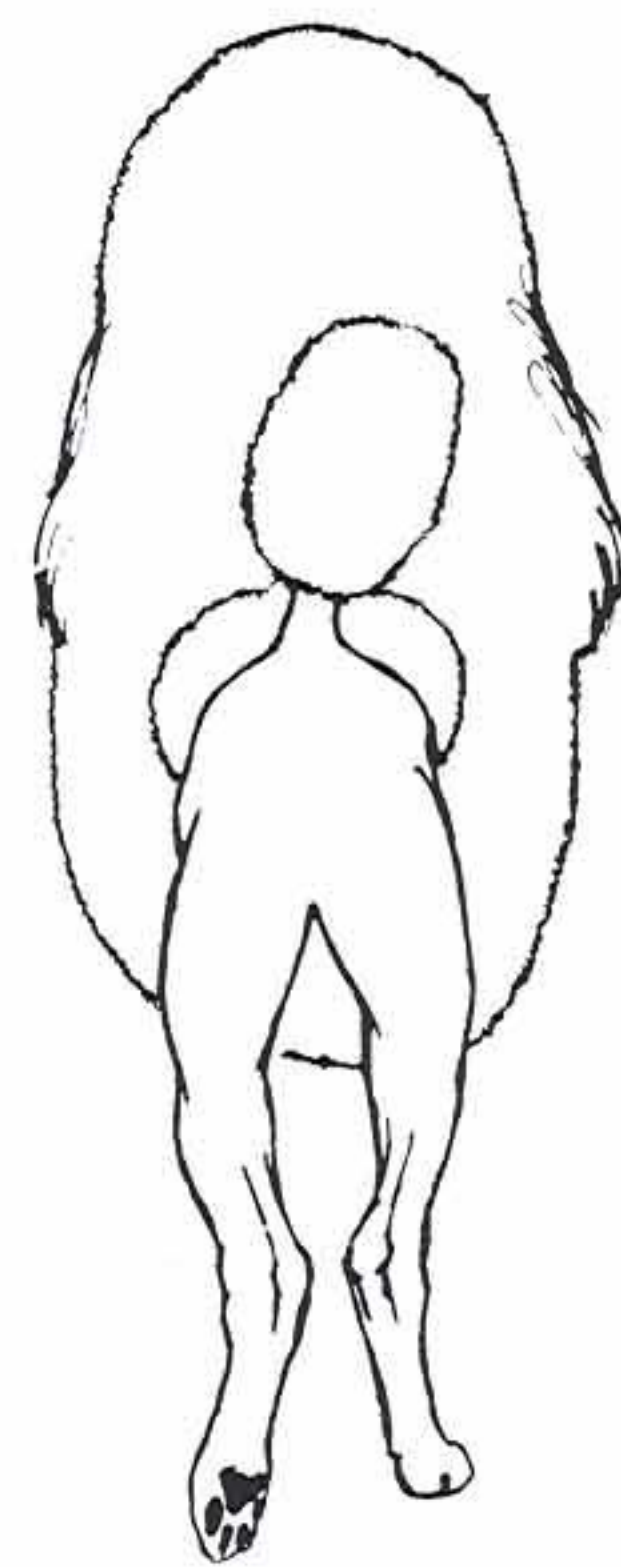
Single track  
As speed increases legs  
tend to move toward a  
single track



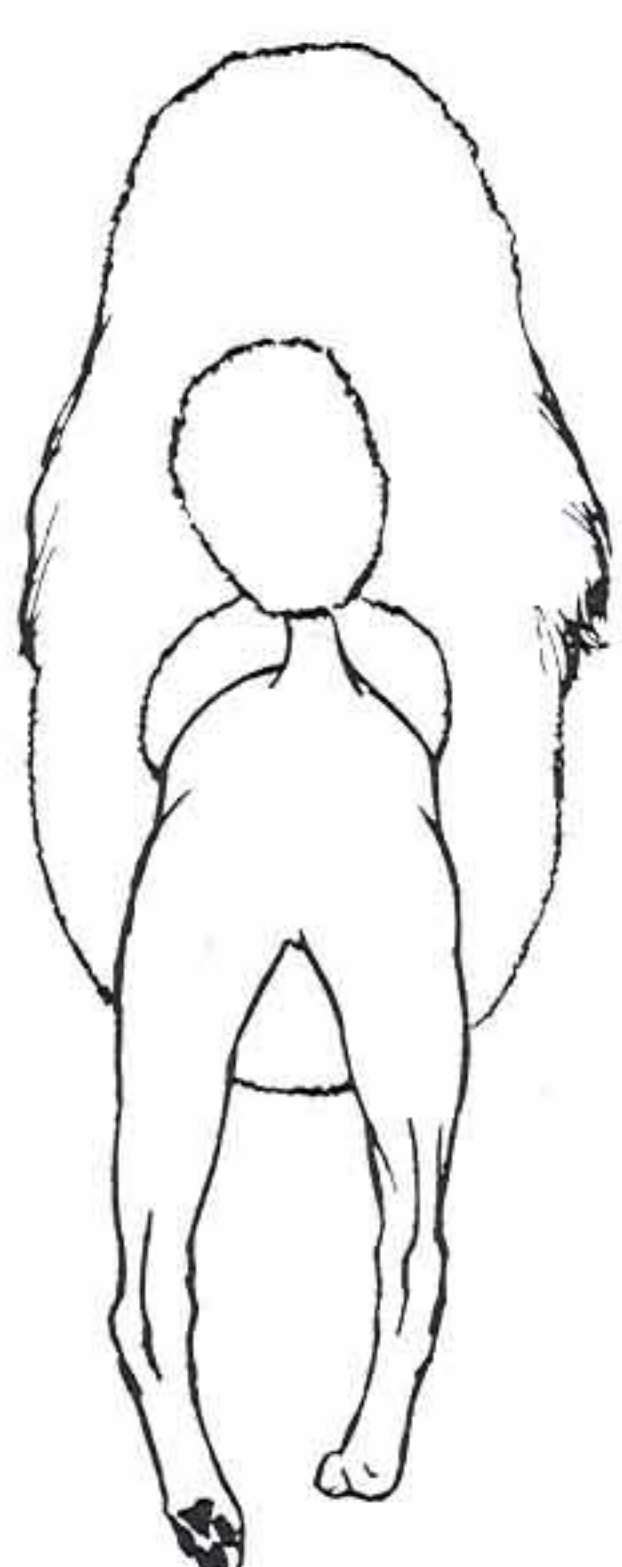
Side-winding  
moving with body  
at an angle



Close behind



Cow-hocked

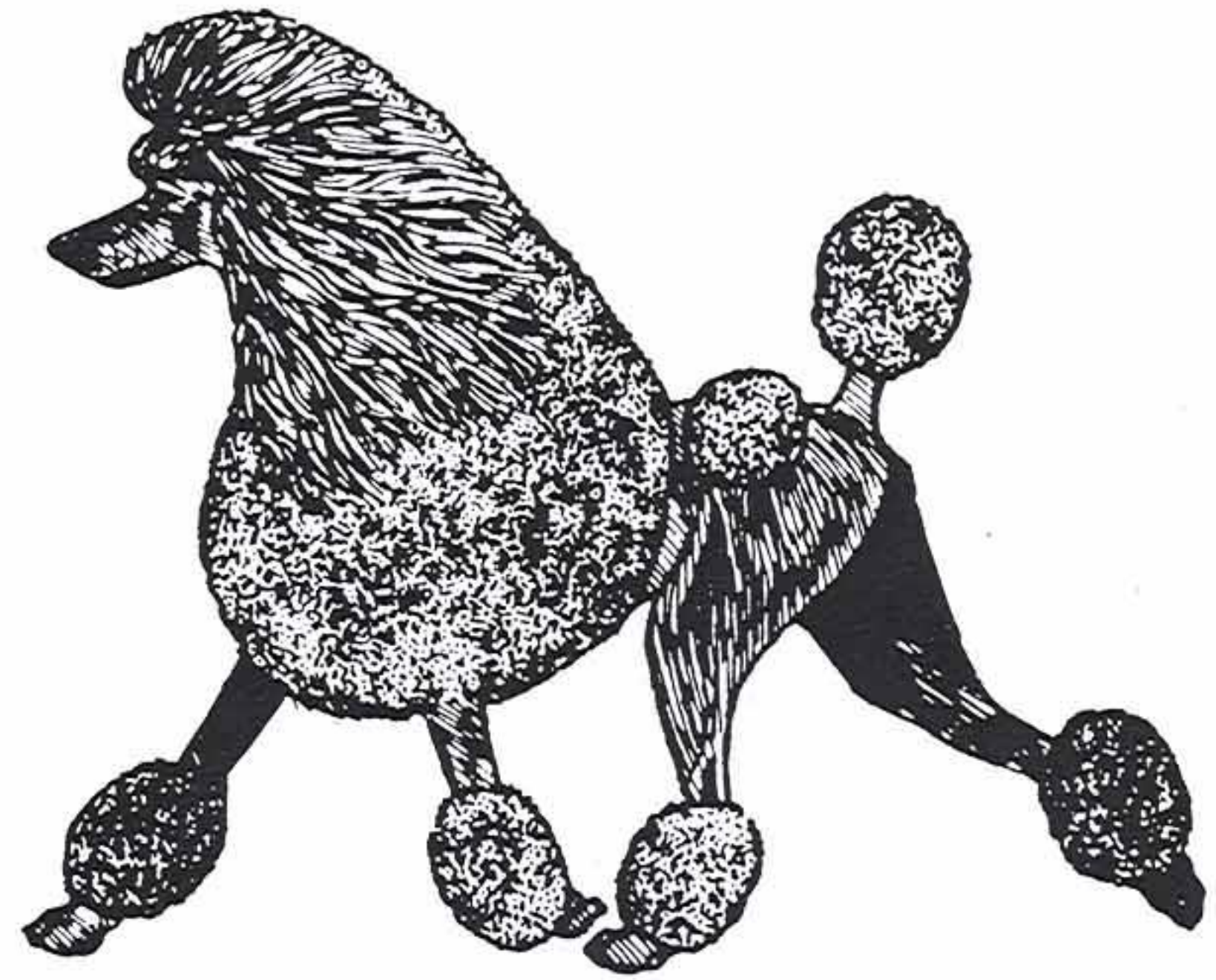
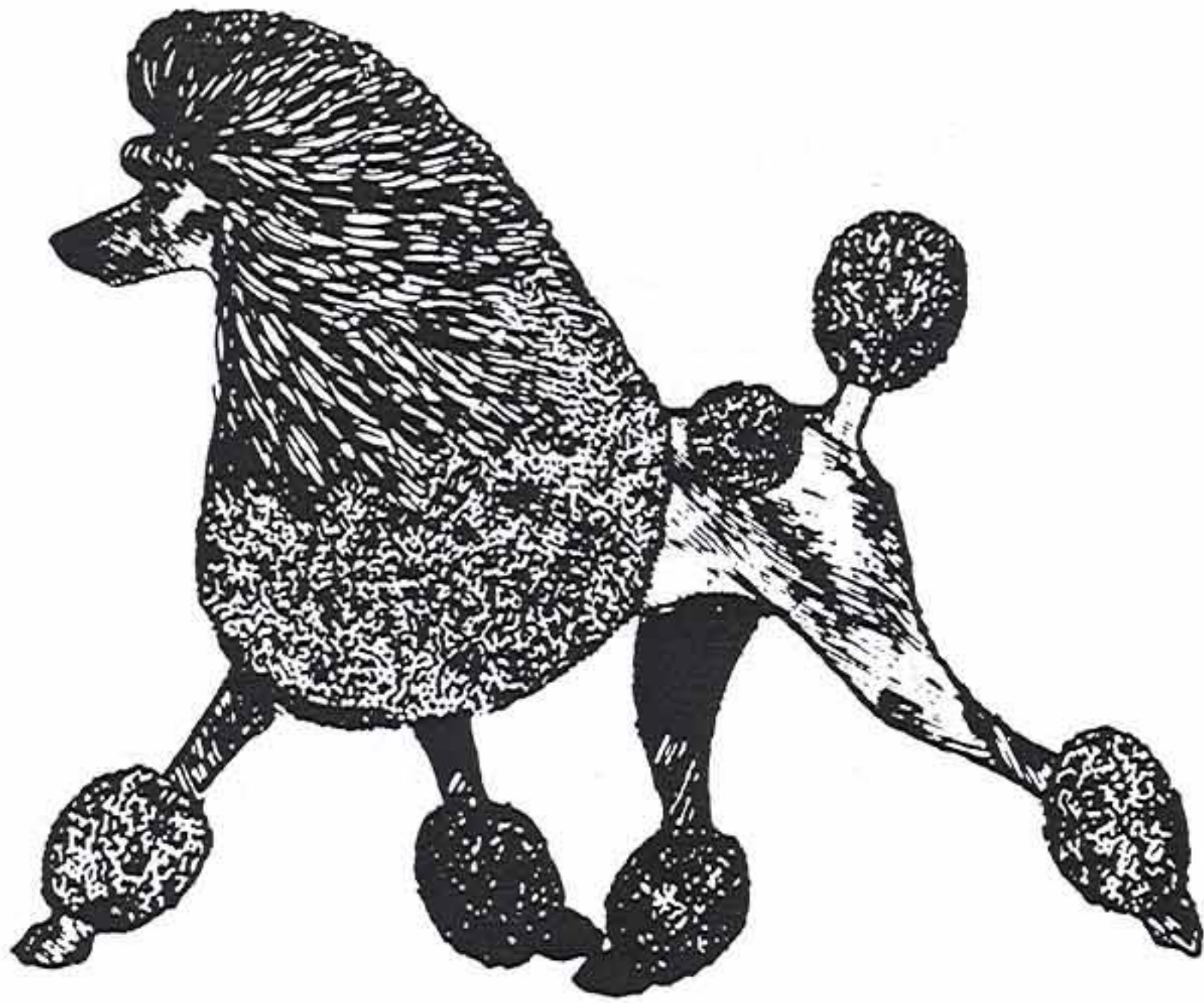


Bow-hocked, open-  
hocked, bandy, moving  
wide behind

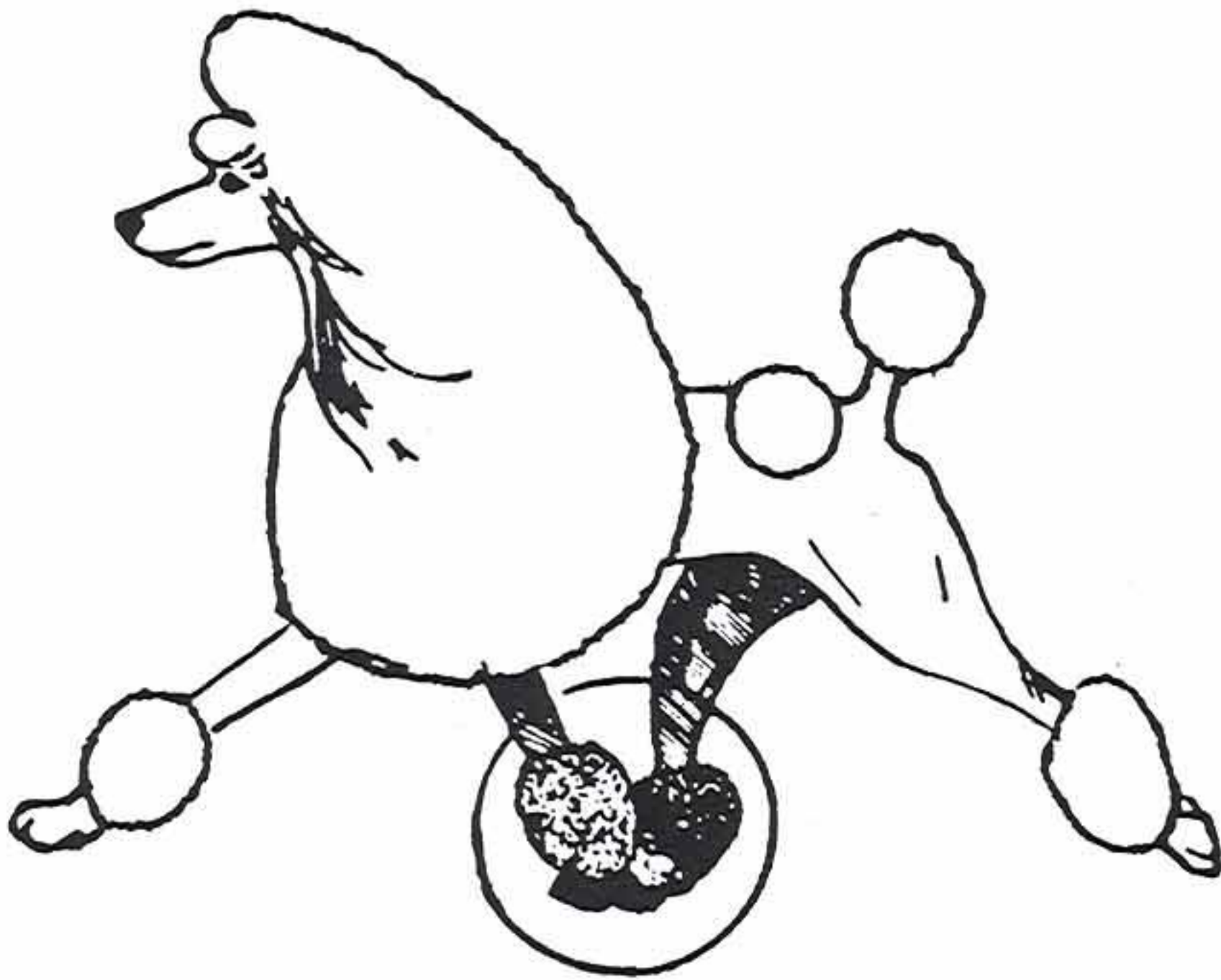


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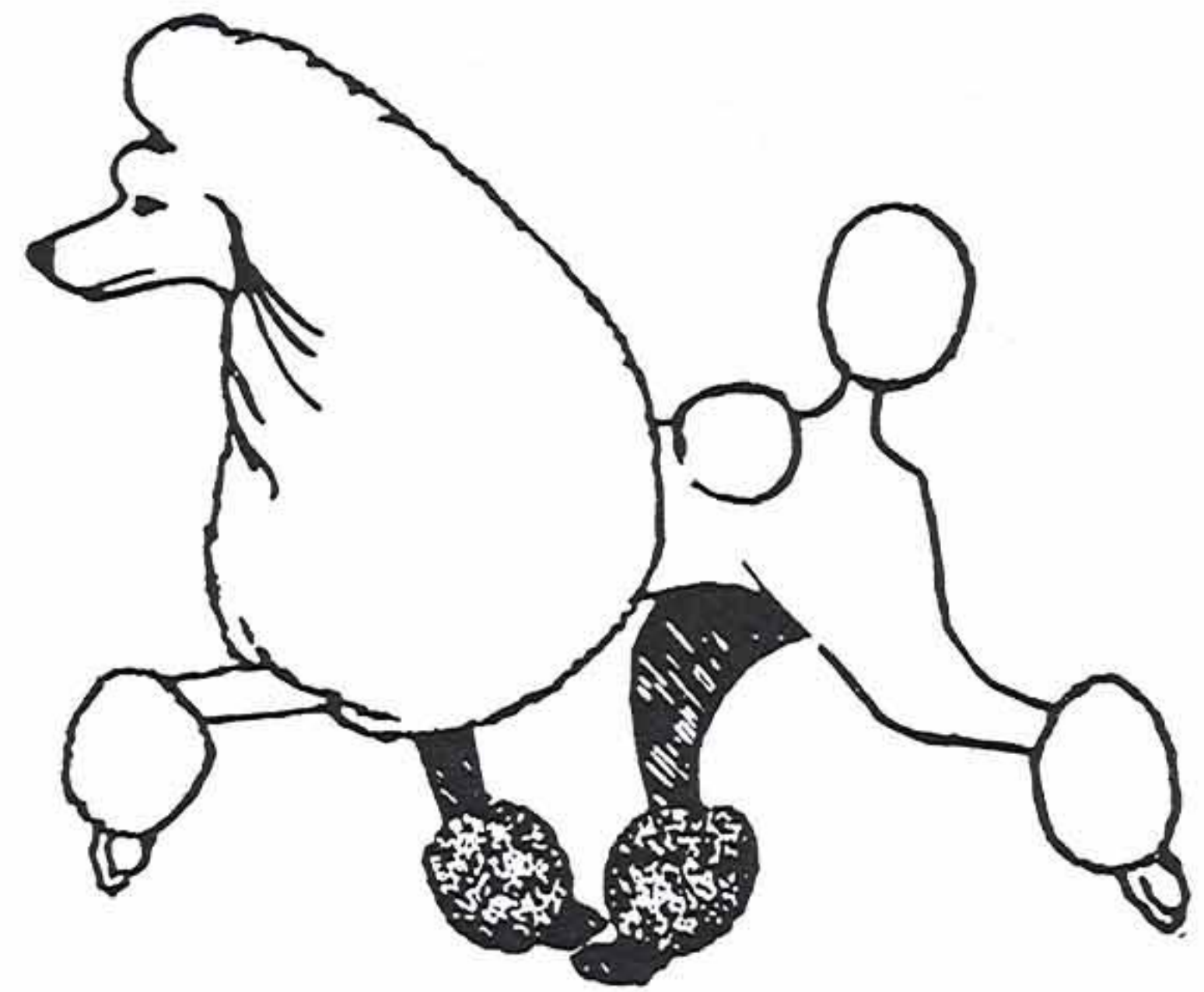
## Gait



Correct. TROT: supported by legs on diagonal.

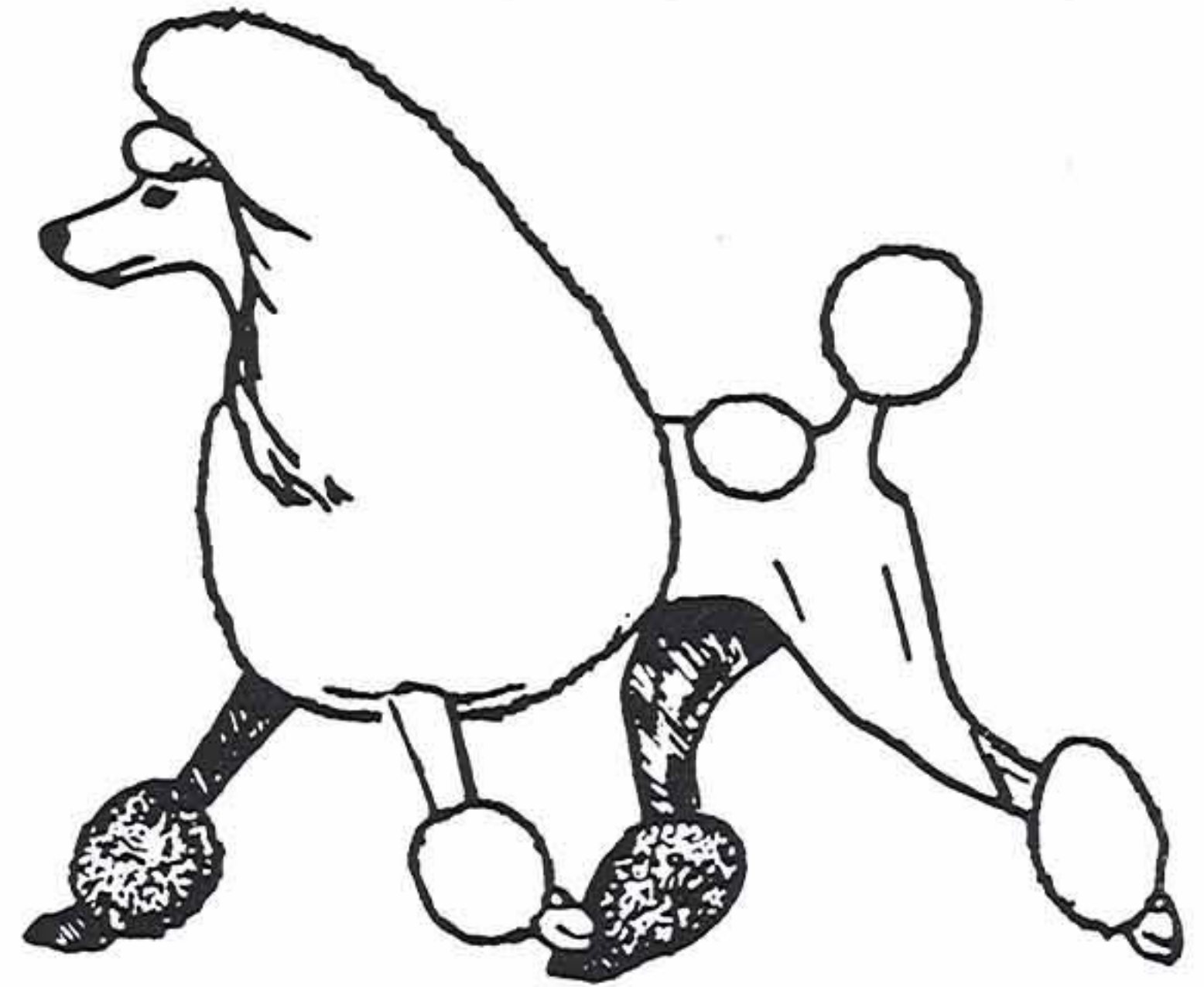


Incorrect. Over reaching



Incorrect. Hackney front, also lacks drive.

PACE: (incorrect) supported by legs on same side. The dog will rock from side to side when moving. A gait used by Poodles that do not have balanced angulation between forequarters and hindquarters.



Pace



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## Temperament

Carrying himself proudly, very active, intelligent, the Poodle has about him an air of distinction and dignity peculiar to himself. *Major fault: shyness or sharpness.*

**Major Faults:** Any distinct deviation from the desired characteristics described in the Breed Standard.

## Disqualifications

Size: A dog over or under the height limits specified shall be disqualified.

Clip: A dog in any type of clip other than those listed under coat shall be disqualified.

Parti-colors: The coat of a parti-colored dog is not an even solid color at the skin but of two or more colors. Parti-colored dogs shall be disqualified.

## Value of Points

General appearance, temperament, carriage and condition .....	30
Head, expression, ears, eyes and teeth .....	20
Body, neck, legs, feet and tail .....	20
Gait .....	20
Coat, color and texture .....	10

Approved August 14, 1984  
Reformatted March 27, 1990



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# GLOSSARY

- Angulation:** The angles formed by the meeting of the bones at the shoulder (scapula and humerus); stifle (femur and tibia); and the hock joint.
- Back:** The vertebrae between the withers and the loin.
- Barrel:** Rounded rib section; thorax.
- Bow-hocked (open hocked):** Hocks turning outward.
- Breastbone (sternum):** bone in the forepart of the chest.
- Brisket:** The forepart of the body below the chest between the forelegs closest to the ribs.
- Buttocks:** The muscular area surrounding the rear of the pelvis
- Chiselling (modelling):** a request for clean-cut lines and contours about the head and foreface—particularly if enhanced by fine, close-fitting skin covering, adds to an impression of refinement.
- Chest (thorax):** The part of the body or trunk that is enclosed by the ribs.
- Clipped:** Shaved closely with an electric clipper.
- Coarse:** Too heavy or overdone with bone, lacking in quality.
- Cow-hocked:** Hocks turning inward.
- Croup:** The muscular area just in front of and around the set-on of the tail.
- Elbow:** The joint between the upper foreleg and the forearm.
- Ewe neck:** The topline of the neck is concave rather than convex and the circumference at the base is usually not much greater than at the head junction.
- Femur (upper thigh bone):** extends from the hip joint of the pelvis to the stifle joint.
- Fibula:** The upper and smaller of the two bones in the lower thigh.
- Forearm (lower arm, radius and ulna):** The bone of the foreleg between elbow and pastern.
- Foreface (muzzle):** That portion of the head from the stop forward.
- Hock joint:** The joint of the hind leg between the lower thigh and the rear pastern.
- Layback of shoulder (scapula):** A term denoting a shoulder blade sloping well back (opposite of straight or steep shoulder).
- Loin:** The lumbar area, extending from the end of the rib cage to the start of the pelvis.
- Muzzle (foreface):** The head in front of the eyes.
- Occiput (occipital bone):** The highest and rearmost part of the skull.
- Paddling:** Incorrect and energy-wasting forequarters movement in which pasterns and feet perform circular, exaggerated motion, turning or flicking outward at the end of each step.
- Pastern:** The area between the wrist and the foot below.
- Pastern (rear):** The area between the hock joint and the foot below.
- Pelvis (pelvic girdle, hip bone):** composed of three bones: the ilium (front), pubis and the ischium (rear).
- Point of rump:** The projection of the pelvis bone (ischium) below the tail.
- Refinement:** Having bone and muscle in perfect proportion to size of dog; showing quality throughout; the opposite of coarse and overdone.
- Roach back:** A back arched or convex to some degree along its length.
- Sharpness:** Showing aggressive tendencies.
- Side-winding (crabbing):** Movement where the hind feet do not follow the paths of the front feet but rather move to one side in a sideways motion.
- Stifle (stifle joint, knee joint):** The joint of the hind leg where the upper and lower thighs meet. The dog's knee.
- Stop:** A depression or step down in the topline of the head between the eyes, where the muzzle joins the skull.
- Sway back:** A back that sags or is concave to some degree along its entire length.
- Thigh, upper (femur):** The upper part of the hind leg between the pelvis and the stifle.
- Thigh, lower (tibia and fibula):** The hind leg between the stifle joint and the hock.
- Tibia:** The larger and lower of the two bones in the lower thigh.
- Upper foreleg (upper arm):** The humerus bone of the foreleg between the shoulder blade and the forearm.