

## **JUDGING THE SABLE MERLE COLLIE**

**The Collie Standard recognizes four colors: "Sable and White," "Tri-Color," "Blue Merle" and "White." Sable Merles appear sable (sable is dominant and is only diluted by the merle gene) but may exhibit varying degrees of the merling pattern.**

**Quality, rather than color or pattern, is of foremost importance in judging the Collie. *The Standard's emphasis on overall balance, head properties and expression is clear and should always take precedence over color.***

**Ideally, the Sable Merle should have dark eyes, matched in color. If the eyes are not dark and matched in color, the Sable Merle should be penalized (not excused or disqualified) to the degree that the expression is affected.**

**The Standard states, "Expression is one of the most important points in considering the relative value of Collies" and "The Collie cannot be judged properly until its expression has been carefully evaluated." It further states "Eye faults are heavily penalized."**

**Collie Club of America  
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Thomas W. Coen, Chairman  
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