

— [The Doberman Mouth] —

At a recent meeting Pat Hastings brought up the point that Doberman occlusion is becoming a problem. So I checked.

It is disappointing to see so many Dobes with teeth that don't mesh. This phenomenon is viewed on the sides of the mouth.

Handlers, in their quest to be helpful, make it impossible to see occlusion. Ask most handlers to show the teeth and they usually show the bite and alligator the mouth open. Of course you can't see side occlusion that way.

The DPCA Judge's Education committee wants you to use the following method in viewing our dog's mouths. First view the incisors with the mouth closed to view bite and count teeth. Then look at each side with the mouth closed. Lift the lips on one side and see if the teeth mesh or have a gap from top to bottom. At the same time you can see the premolars upper and lower and see if there are any missing. Then ask the handler to open the mouth to view the molars.

You cannot check for the teeth disqualification without opening the mouth and viewing the small back molars. Remember the Doberman has 42 correctly placed teeth. Correctly placed teeth mesh like pinking shears. Disqualify four or more missing teeth and more than $\frac{3}{16}$ inch overshot and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch undershot. Evaluate the occlusion to the extent of the deviation.

The Doberman standard has three disqualification in the mouth. The Doberman is a working dog who uses his mouth. Therefore you must know how to evaluate quickly and accurately. ■

