

DOGUE DE BORDEAUX

is due to the combination of his visible chin mark, nice muzzle layback, his very low and wide eye placement and prominent wrinkled forehead. He has



a deep stop and good muzzle length and strength.

He is a stocky and substantial dogue, neither too high or low on leg. I feel he is balanced in appearance. He has a very nice topline and good bone. He has very nice movement, head low with plenty of power, I was present last year to witness him being graded excellent full marks for movement on his TAN test at the French club match.

Leanne Miller Bellarouge

A.1. No. The Breed Standard listed on the ANKC site does not include the diagrams containing the measurements that are incorporated in to the Standard printed in the book "The Saga of the Dogue de Bordeaux" (Prof. Raymond Triquet - published by Bas Bosch Press). In my opinion, these diagrams and measurements are essential for anyone studying the breed.

The Standard itself is also not as comprehensive as it could be. A breed characteristic like "chin mark" is only mentioned in passing. The commentary on the topline leaves some judges looking for "tabletop" topline instead of the "straight but not level" topline that the Dogue de Bordeaux should have.

There is a chapter in the book "The Saga of the Dogue de Bordeaux" titled "Commentary to the Standard" and this is required reading for anyone interested in the breed as it expands on many points within the Standard.

A.2. When trotting, the movement should be far-reaching with good extension of the forelegs. There should be good drive from the hindquarters. The head should lower so that there is a direct line with the topline. When moving correctly, the whole body appears to be getting closer to the ground. The front feet move closer together, but should not cross.

The Dogue should not lift its feet high, nor should it 'daisy clip' nor move with a rotary or hackneyed action.

A.3.a. Hips and elbows are common health problems in large breeds, including the Dogue de Bordeaux. Most of the major breeders are hip/elbow scoring, although there are

some breeders that still do not. There are dermatological problems arising in the breed from both environmental and food allergies. There appears to be an increase in heart and epilepsy problems within the breed, although this seems to be happening more overseas than in Australia. Some breeders are now doing echo cardiographs on their dogs to rule out heart problems. Bloat (gastric torsion) is a common problem in the Dogue de Bordeaux (as it is in any deep chested breed), however it appears little research is being done in this area in the veterinary community.

A.3.b. We are seeing some Dogues being exhibited that have poor basic structure. For example, 'Slippy hocks', dogs 'daisy clipping' due to straight front angulation, lack of balance between front and rear angulation, sagging or roached topline and so on.

We are also seeing dogs that lack the basic breed characteristics. 'Brick shaped' heads instead of trapezoid, lacking a repandous jaw and the characteristic chin-mark, little or no undershot, and lacking closed angles in the head.

Some breeders are paying particular attention to structural soundness as well as breed type and this can only benefit the breed overall. As a friend of mine often says, "a dog cannot run on its face".

A.4. In addition to sound structure, my five main points are:

1. Trapezoid shaped head.
2. Repandous jaw and good chin-mark.
3. Good stop and closed angles in the head.
4. Straight, but not level, topline.
5. Correct movement.

A.5. Many judges just look for the biggest dog. They think "mastiff" and a mastiff is big, so the biggest dog must be the best. The Dogue de Bordeaux is a "medium sized mastiff", not a massive mastiff.

Other judges look for the dog that runs around the ring with its head up moving as fast as it can. We often see dogs with "showier" movement (rotary or hackneyed) being awarded, yet this type of movement is incorrect.

Often in these cases, dogs of more correct breed type are being overlooked because they are not big or flashy.

A.6. Unfortunately, as I have not had the opportunity to travel overseas to shows like the French Club Match, I will limit my comments to Dogues that I have seen in Australia. Whilst I love the breed type of my own home-bred boy, Aust. Grand Ch. Bordogue Benjamin, I have to be honest and say that the best example of the breed in Australia to date would have to be the imported bitch, Aust. Grand Ch. Laruscades Tazz (Imp UK).

Tazz has a lovely trapezoid shaped head, strength of muzzle, good chin-mark and beautiful feminine expression. She has very good rear angulation, balanced with a well laid back shoulder and an excellent topline. Although a veteran

now, I used to enjoy watching her move around the showring as she displayed superb movement with excellent reach and drive. She is a very balanced, harmonic example of the breed.

Keith & Kylie Reid
Bordogue

A.1. Yes, the Australian Standard very clearly follows the FCI standard. In fact, the Dogue De Bordeaux standard is probably among the most complex and in depth.

A.2. Correct Dogue De Bordeaux gait should have an essence of power and strength. It should display a far reach in front and strong drive from the rear, the forward step should come to the median plane.

Dogues are now being trained to hold their heads high whilst on the move as preferred in an 'All Breeds' ring. Although, it is not as appealing, it is more natural and correct for a Dogue to drop his head creating an inclining topline whilst on the move.

As Dogues are vying for recognition amongst many flashy and fast moving breeds in the Utility Group, their pace is increasing. But as a friendly reminder has come recently from a handful of visiting European judges "Slowly, slowly these are Mastiff not hounds!"

A.3.a. Health- The Dogue De Bordeaux is inflicted with many of the same generic problems that arise in most dog breeds today, that being Hip Dysplasia, Elbow Dysplasia, and to a lesser degree OCD, Eyes, Hearts, and Skin Problems.

For the moment the Dogue could be considered a remarkably healthy breed with only Hips and Elbows being the most common issue. Thanks to the diligence of many Australian Breeders, we can boast some of the best results for Hips and Elbows world wide.

A.3.b. Conformation - I think we could probably write all day to list and discuss the improvements that could be made in regards to conformation/construction. As achieving the correct head type can be a long journey of its own. To narrow down a few weakness that are prevalent despite good head type would have to be good fronts and good rears.

A lot of Dogues lack sufficient rear angulation despite the standard calling for 'well angulated.' Along with this

comes an overall weakness in the rear. A Dogue should be slightly broader in the front than in the rear however they are all too often broad across front and fading away in the rear. This is usually evident in their movement, lacking any strength for straight and true drive from behind.

In front, we often struggle to achieve the happy medium of 'broad' chest and 'depth' of chest. Don't mistake by a broad front with dogs that are just out in elbow creating the illusion of width, the elbows should be supple and in line with the body. The chest depth should sit below the elbows, this creates the 'low slung' or 'near to the ground' effect.

As described in the standard a Dogue should present with a balanced body type giving what is referred to as a 'harmonic appearance.'

I must also make mention of a head trait that is becoming a problem across the board here in Australia. Too many Dogue De Bordeaux bites are getting closer and majority are displaying flat underjaws. A Dogue must have a good upward curve of the underjaw to create a repandous chin mark. This curve of the underjaw allows the Dogue to have length of undershot without showing his teeth.

Whilst most are making small improvements with body and type, I feel that not enough breeders are paying attention to the flat underjaws.

Not so much in Australia but abroad is the greatest problem affecting the breed - the tendency for those to go to the extremes of the breed hallmarks. This then creates a hyper type which should be penalised as equally as those that lack type.

A.4. 5 points :-

Trapezoid - General head shape (outline) when viewed from above and in front. We are sadly losing a lot of this shape to more square or round head types. This comes with breeding to extremities of other breed hallmarks.

Chin mark/undershot - A very distinguishing factor that requires not only a good length of undershot but curve of the underjaw.

Stop - Should be well defined, deep and should create an angle of 95-100 degrees.

Muzzle - Broad, Powerful, length to fall between 1/3 and 1/4 the

We asked Breeders

Q.1. Do you think the Dogue De Bordeaux standard is detailed enough?

Q.2. How would you describe, in your own words, the movement of the Dogue De Bordeaux ?

Q.3. What are the main problems in the breed currently in A) Health and B) Conformation and are they being addressed ?

Q.4. Can you list five important points (breed hallmarks) that judges should look for, and list your order of priority?

Q.5. What is the most common mistake made by Judges when judging the breed ?

Q.6. Could you name the dog or bitch that in your opinion is the best example of the breed you have seen and explain your choice?

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