
Xoloitzcuintli (Toy)

Origin and Purpose

One of the world's oldest and rarest breeds, the Xoloitzcuintli (pronounced show-low-eets-queent-lee) can be called the first dog of the Americas. The name is derived from the Aztec god Xolotl and the Aztec word for dog Itzcuintli. Highly prized for their curative and mystical powers, a reputation that persists to this day, the Xolo held a place of special religious significance for many ancient cultures. Clay and ceramic effigies of Xolo's date back over 3000 years and have been discovered in the tombs of the Toltec, Mayan, Zapoteca and Colima Indians.

There are three sizes: Toy, Miniature and Standard. The miniature and standard Xolo's were first registered in Mexico in 1955. Before then, the breed was kept alive by secluded Indian tribes in remote parts of Mexico and South America. The Countess Lascelle De Premio Real was primarily responsible for the re-establishment of this almost extinct native breed, which is now designated as the official dog of Mexico.

General Appearance

A dog of clean and graceful outline, equally combining elegance and strength. There are two varieties: coated and hairless. In the hairless variety, the principle characteristic is the total or almost total absence of hair. In the coated variety, the hair should be short, dense and flat. In Conformation, the Xolo is lean and well proportioned, somewhat like a Manchester Terrier.

Temperament

A calm, cheerful dog, quiet and tranquil, attentive and alert, somewhat aloof towards strangers. Barking and growling only under provocation.

Size, Proportion, Substance

At the withers, height is as follows: toy-up to and including 13 3/4 inches (34.9 cm). Miniature-over 13 3/4 inches (34.9 cm), up to and including 18 inches (45.7 cm). Standard-over 18 inches (45.7 cm), up to and including 22 3/4 inches (57.8 cm). Length of body, measuring from point of shoulders to end of rump, in proportion to height at withers, equals 10-9, thus slightly longer than high. Bitches may be slightly longer than dogs. Xolo's with long narrow bodies and short limbs to be severely faulted. Medium bone is desirable, however bone type should be in proportion to the overall size of the dog. The larger the dog the more bone acceptable, remembering that the breed exhibits an overall view of elegance and strength.

Coat, Skin, Colour

The principle characteristic of the hairless variety is the absence of hair in general, but the presence of a tuft of short coarse, and not very dense hair on the head and nape is acceptable. It is also common to have similar hair on the feet and tail. Hair on areas other than the head, nape, feet and tail is a serious fault. Skin is smooth, firm, sensitive to the touch and seems to radiate heat. Scars caused by accidents should not be penalized.

In the coated variety the hair is short, dense and lies flat on the body, completely covering all areas of the dog. Solid colour dogs and dark shades are preferred. Colours may range from black to grey, red, liver, bronze to golden yellow. Particolours occur, including white patches. Solid colours and darker shades are preferred.

Long soft or wavy hair in either variety is a serious fault.

Head

Expression is thoughtful and intelligent, showing distinctive brow wrinkles when at attention. The expression is of a vivacious animal, conveying the noble and faithful character of this breed. Eyes should be almond shaped and of medium size, neither sunken nor protruding.. Both eyes are the same colour, which varies from yellow to black, the darker being preferred. The eye rims are dark on dark coloured dogs and may be lighter on light coloured dogs. Ears are large, expressive and elegant, set medium high and carried erect when alert. The ear leather is to have a thin and delicate texture. Ears not standing erect at one year of age, is a fault. Cropping is prohibited. Skull is wedge-shaped. Stop is not pronounced. The muzzle is slightly longer than the skull, with strong upper and lower jaws. The jaw line blends smoothly into the muzzle. The nose is black on dark coloured dogs and may be lighter on light coloured dogs. Lips are thin and tight, cheeks are barely developed. The bite is a tight scissors bite. Overshot or undershot is a serious fault. In the hairless variety the absence of premolars is to be expected and the absence of molars is not to be penalized. A complete set of incisors is preferred but lack thereof not to be penalized.

In the coated variety full dentition is required. Moderate wrinkling on the heads of adults is acceptable.

Neck

The neck is long and slightly arched, blending smoothly into the shoulders. The skin is without wrinkles or dewlap, though in young dogs under one year of age wrinkled skin may still be present.

Forequarters

Seen from the front, the front legs are straight, vertical, in good proportion and of good length in relation to the body. The shoulders are flat and muscular, the length of shoulder blade and upper arm are also of good length and proportion in relation to the body. The moderate angulation of shoulder blade and upper arm permits free and reaching movement. The strong elbows fit close to the chest wall, never turned outward (elbowing out). The feet are hare feet, webbed with tight well arched toes. Pads are firm and elastic. Nails are short and black on dark coloured dogs and may be light on light coloured dogs. Dewclaws may be removed. The feet may have a small bristly hair, and neither toe in nor out.

Body

The body is well developed and strongly built. From the front the forechest is adequately broad but the tip of the sternum does not protrude. The brisket reaches the point of the elbow, ribs are well sprung but not barrel shaped. The top line shows not very well defined withers, a straight level and firm back and loin, strong and muscular having a slight arch. The croup is gently rounded, muscular and relatively broad. The underline is elegant, beginning under the chest and following the muscular tucked-up belly in a rising line.

Hindquarters

Seen from the back, the hind legs are straight and parallel with strong well muscled thighs, standing wide rather than close. Stifles moderately bent, hocks straight, turning neither in nor out, with well let down angulation of proportionate degree to permit free strong driving movement of the hindquarters. Feet and nails are the same as front. Dewclaws may be removed. Cowhocks are a serious fault.

Tail

The tail is long and thin and may have some bristly hair. Set on low, reaching to the hock, and tapering towards the tip. In movement it is carried high, curved, never curled over the back. In repose, it hangs down in a slight curve.

Gait

The Xolo has a long, elegant, springy step, a free and effortless fast trot, with a double tracking movement. The legs converge towards a centre line as speed increases but do not single track. Head and tail are carried high.

Faults

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded, should be in exact proportion to its degree.

- In hairless variety, hair on parts not mentioned in the above
- In the coated variety, patches of hair missing
- Long, soft, wavy hair
- Skin slack forming folds
- Dewlaps
- Albinism
- Head very broad
- Too nervous or aggressive dogs
- Eyes very light in colour
- Body very long and narrow with short legs
- Short tail

Disqualifications

- Cropped or drop ears
- Height greater than 23 inches
- Docked tail
- Long, soft topknot as with a Chinese Crested Dog
- Absence of one or more testicles