
Bloodhound

Origin and Purpose

The Bloodhound is the oldest of the scent hounds as we know them today. All scent hounds today were bred with the Bloodhound as the base. Although his beginnings are left to speculation we owe his development to St. Hubert, the patron saint of the hunter. It was believed he originally obtained his stock from southern France. This breeding was carried on after his death by the abbots, who succeeded him. The original purpose of the Bloodhound is not completely clear but in the time they were bred, hunting had to be uppermost. The nobility of the day soon learned they made excellent trailers of persons and were heavily used to trail and find game poachers killing the King's game. Trailing of people remains its primary purpose today along with rescue and cadaver search.

General Appearance

The Bloodhound possesses, in a most marked degree, every point and characteristic of those dogs which hunt together by scent (Sagaces). He is very powerful, and stands over more ground than is usual with hounds of other breeds. The skin is thin to the touch and extremely loose, this being more especially noticeable about the head and neck, where it hangs in deep folds. The expression is noble and dignified, and characterized by solemnity, wisdom, and power.

Temperament

In temperament he is extremely affectionate, neither quarrelsome with companions nor with other dogs. His nature is somewhat shy, and equally sensitive to kindness or correction by his master.

Size

Height

The mean average height of adult dogs is 26 inches (66 cm) and of adult bitches 24 inches (61 cm). Dogs usually vary from 25-27 inches (64-69 cm) and bitches from 23-25 inches (58-64 cm); but in either case, the greater height is to be preferred, provided that quality, proportion and balance are maintained.

Weight

The mean average weight of adult dogs in fair condition is 90 lb. (41 kg), and adult bitches 80 lb. (36 kg). Dogs attain the weight of 110 lb. (50 kg), bitches 100 lb. (45 kg). The greater weights are to be preferred,

provided (as in the case of height) that quality, proportion and balance are maintained.

Coat and Colour

The colours are black and tan, liver and tan, and red; the darker colours being sometimes interspersed with lighter or badger-coloured hair, and sometimes flecked with white. A small amount of white is permissible on chest, feet, and tip of stern.

Head

The head is narrow in proportion to its length, and long in proportion to the body, tapering but slightly from the temples to the end of the muzzle, thus (when viewed from above and in front) having the appearance of being flattened at the sides and of being nearly equal in width throughout its entire length. In profile the upper outline of the skull is nearly in the same plane as that of the foreface. The length from end of nose to stop (midway between the eyes) should be not less than from stop to back of occipital protuberance (peak). The entire length of head from the posterior part of the occipital protuberance to the end of the muzzle should be 12 inches (30 cm), or more, in dogs, and 11 inches (28 cm), or more, in bitches. The skull is long and narrow, with the occipital peak very pronounced. The brows are not prominent although, owing to the deep-set eyes, they may have that appearance. The foreface is long, deep, and of even width throughout, with square outline when seen in profile. The nostrils are large and open. In front the lips fall squarely, making a right angle with the upper line of the foreface; whilst behind they form deep hanging flews and, being continued into the pendant folds of loose skin about the neck, constitute the dewlap, which is very pronounced. These characteristics are found, though in a lesser degree, in the bitch. The eyes are deeply sunk in the orbits, the lids assuming a lozenge or diamond shape, in consequence of the lower lids being dragged down and everted by the heavy flews. The eyes correspond with the general tone of colour of the animal, varying from deep hazel to yellow. The hazel colour is, however, to be preferred, although very seldom seen in liver red and tan hounds. The ears are thin and soft to the touch, extremely long, set very low, and fall in graceful folds, the lower parts curling inwards and backwards. The head is furnished with an amount of loose skin, which in nearly every position appears superabundant, but more particularly so when the head is carried low; the skin then falls into loose, pendulous ridges and folds, especially over the forehead and sides of the face. Mouth-A scissors bite is preferred, level bite accepted.

Neck

The neck is long.

Forequarters

The shoulders are muscular and well sloped backwards. The forelegs are straight and large in bone, with elbows squarely set; the feet strong and well knuckled up.

Body

The ribs are well sprung; and the chest well let down between the forelegs, forming a deep keel. The back and loins are strong, the latter deep and slightly arched.

Hindquarters

The thighs and second thighs (gaskins) are very muscular; the hocks well bent and let down and squarely set.

Tail

The stern is long and tapering, and set on rather high, with a moderate amount of hair underneath.

Gait

The gait is elastic, swinging and free, the stern being carried high, but not too much curled over the back.

Fault

Any bite other than a scissors or level bite.

Disqualification

Any colour other than Black/Tan, Liver/Tan or Red.

