

JUDGING THE BULLDOG THE HEAVYWEIGHT POINTS

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AND
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IN MY ROLE AS JUDGES' EDUCATION CHAIRMAN FOR THE BULLDOG CLUB OF AMERICA, I STRUCTURE MY SEMINAR BASED ON THE SCALE OF POINTS THAT IS PART OF THE BULLDOG STANDARD. MY STUDENTS TELL ME THIS HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN GIVING THEM A GUIDELINE FOR PRIORITIZING BULLDOG CHARACTERISTICS. WITH THAT IN MIND, I AM PRESENTING THIS ARTICLE IN THAT FORMAT. HERE, WE WILL COVER ONLY THE FEATURES THAT RATE FIVE AND SIX POINTS EACH. THESE ALONE MAKE UP 43% OF THE POSSIBLE 100 POINTS IN THE SCALE! I HOPE THIS WILL BE A TOOL FOR JUDGES ALREADY APPROVED FOR THE BREED AS WELL AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR BREEDERS AND ASPIRING BULLDOG JUDGES.

I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS BREED AND TAKE A VERY PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF MY STUDENTS. I ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME WITH ANY QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE ABOUT JUDGING THE BULLDOG.

THE SIX POINT CHARACTERISTIC

THE SINGLE CHARACTERISTIC WHICH CARRIES THE MOST POINTS IN THE STANDARD IS THE **NOSE**. IT IS GIVEN A VALUE OF 6 OUT OF 100 POINTS.

*Nose--*The nose should be large, broad and black, its tip set back deeply between the eyes. The distance from bottom of stop, between the eyes, to the tip of nose should be as short as possible and not exceed the length from the tip of nose to the edge of underlip. The nostrils should be wide, large and black, with a well-defined line between them. Any nose other than black is objectionable and a brown or liver-colored nose shall *disqualify*.

THE ONLY DISQUALIFICATION IN THE BULLDOG STANDARD CONCERNS THE NOSE. "...A *BROWN OR LIVER-COLORED NOSE SHALL DISQUALIFY*." A BUTTERFLY NOSE (ONE WITH INCOMPLETE PIGMENT) WOULD BE OBJECTIONABLE, BUT NOT A DISQUALIFICATION. ONE IS MORE LIKELY TO FIND INCOMPLETE PIGMENT IN PUPPIES. I WOULD FAULT A DOG TO THE DEGREE OF THE DEVIATION AND WOULD FAULT A DOG OVER THE AGE OF 12 MONTHS WITH INCOMPLETE PIGMENTATION MORE HEAVILY THAN I WOULD A PUPPY.

THE STANDARD TELLS US THAT THE DISTANCE FROM THE BOTTOM (DEEPEST POINT) OF THE STOP TO THE TIP OF THE NOSE SHOULD BE AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE. HISTORICALLY, THE TIPPED-BACK NOSE ALLOWED THE BULLDOG TO BREATHE WHILE HOLDING ON TO THE BULL'S NOSE WITH HIS VICE-LIKE JAWS.



A WELL LAID BACK
NOSE
*NOTE THE NOSE
ITSELF IS SLANTED
BACKWARDS

“THE NOSTRILS SHOULD BE WIDE, LARGE AND BLACK...” THIS IS AN AREA OF REAL CONCERN FOR ME AS A BREEDER AND A JUDGE. I AM SEEING MORE STENOTIC NARES THAN IN THE PAST. **JUDGES TAKE NOTE!** A DOG WITH STENOTIC NARES CANNOT BREATHE PROPERLY THROUGH ITS NOSE AND WILL INEVITABLY BE COMPROMISED TO A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE BY THE FAULT. FRENCH BULLDOG BREEDERS AND JUDGES KNOW THAT THIS IS A REAL AND PREVALENT PROBLEM IN THAT BREED. MOST CONSCIENTIOUS FRENCHIE BREEDERS ARE TRYING TO IMPROVE THIS FAULT IN THEIR LINES, BUT THE PROBLEM IS SO EXTREME THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO FIND QUALITY DOGS TO BREED TO WITHOUT STENOTIC NARES. MY FEAR IS THAT UNLESS BULLDOG BREEDERS PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO MAINTAINING OPEN NARES IN THEIR DOGS, WE WILL FIND OURSELVES IN A SIMILAR SITUATION. STENOTIC NARES ARE A SERIOUS FAULT IN A FEATURE OF THE BULLDOG THAT IS GIVEN THE GREATEST WEIGHT BY THE SCALE OF POINTS AND JUDGES SHOULD PENALIZE THE FAULT ACCORDINGLY. NOT ONLY IS THE FAULT OUT OF LINE WITH THE HISTORICAL PURPOSE OF THE BREED, IT COMPROMISES THE HEALTH OF THE DOG OVER ITS LIFETIME AND POTENTIALLY THREATENS THE HEALTH OF ITS OFFSPRING.

“THE NOSTRILS SHOULD BE WIDE, LARGE AND BLACK...”



5 POINT CHARACTERISTICS

“BULLDOG BREEDER-JUDGES PLACE GREAT EMPHASIS ON FINDING A CORRECT JAW.”

THE JAW – 5 POINTS (+TEETH: 2 POINTS = 7 POINTS)

*Bite--Jaws--*The jaws should be massive, very broad, square and "undershot," the lower jaw projecting considerably in front of the upper jaw and turning up.

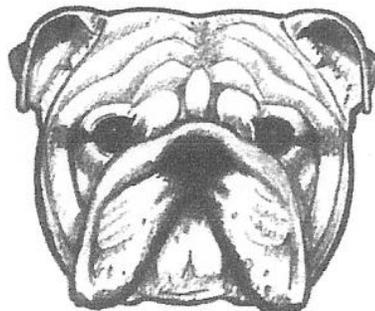
WHEN I ASK PEOPLE TO GUESS WHICH FEATURE OF THE BULLDOG CARRIES THE MOST POINTS IN THE SCALE, THEY USUALLY SAY THE JAW AND ARE SURPRISED TO LEARN IT IS THE NOSE. THEN I LET THEM OFF THE HOOK AND TELL THEM THAT, IN A WAY, THEY ARE RIGHT. WHEN YOU COMBINE THE 5 POINTS ASSIGNED TO THE JAW WITH 2 POINTS FOR TEETH, THE JAW BECOMES A 7 POINT CHARACTERISTIC. **THE CORRECT BULLDOG JAW IS A UNIQUE AND UNMISTAKEABLE FEATURE OF THE BREED. THE PART IT PLAYS IN CREATING CORRECT TYPE IN A BULLDOG CANNOT BE OVERSTATED.**

THERE ARE 3 ELEMENTS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO A CORRECT JAW:

- ▶ **WIDTH**
- ▶ **PROJECTION**
- ▶ **TURN-UP.**

A TIP FOR CHECKING PROPER WIDTH IS TO LOOK AT THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE LOWER CANINES. THE WIDER THE BETTER.

WHEN VIEWED FROM THE FRONT, THE LOWER JAW SHOULD APPEAR AS AN UP-SIDE-DOWN “U”, NOT AN INVERTED “V”. A JAW THAT IS TOO NARROW OR LACKS PROJECTION WILL CREATE THE INCORRECT INVERTED“V” SHAPE. THIS IS CALLED “FROG FACED”

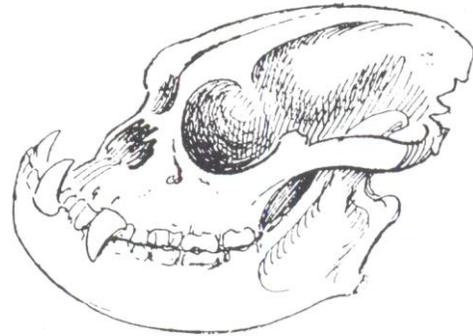
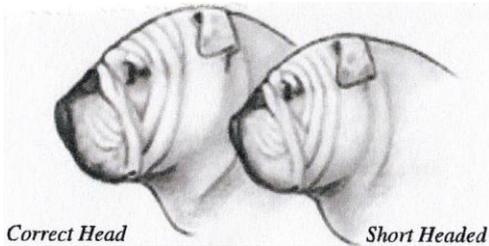


Correct



Incorrect

PROJECTION IS ACTUALLY THE LENGTH OF THE LOWER JAW ITSELF. A JAW THAT IS TOO SHORT CREATES THE “SHORT FACED” LOOK THAT IS A FAIRLY COMMON FAULT AND EASY FOR A JUDGE TO MISS. TO AVOID THIS COMMON JUDGING ERROR, **KNOW WHAT IS IDEAL** AND EVALUATE THE JAW IN PROFILE AS WELL AS FROM THE FRONT. A JAW WITH GOOD LENGTH OR THRUST HELPS CREATE A HEAD WITH PROPER LENGTH. TURN-UP OR SWEEP OF JAW IS THE CURVE OF THE JAW WHICH GIVES IT ITS CHARACTERISTIC SWEEPING OR “ROCKING-CHAIR” SHAPE. THE CURVE SHOULD BE RETAINED THROUGHOUT THE LENGTH OF THE JAW BONE.



NOTE THE WIDTH, PROJECTION AND TURN-UP OF LOWER JAW IN THIS ILLUSTRATION OF THE IDEAL HEAD.



THIS IS WHAT YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR WHEN EVALUATING THE BULLDOG JAW!

CH. PUGILIST, CIRCA 1930
Image courtesy of the artist, Elizabeth M. Davey

TEETH

Teeth The teeth should be large and strong, with the canine teeth or tusks wide apart, and the six small teeth in front, between the canines, in an even, level row.

I AM OFTEN ASKED HOW MUCH OF THE TEETH, IF ANY, SHOULD SHOW. UNLIKE THE FRENCH BULLDOG, WHICH SHOULD SHOW NO TEETH WHEN THE MOUTH IS CLOSED, A BULLDOG WITH THE CORRECT PROJECTION AND TURN-UP OF LOWER JAW MAY SHOW A FEW TEETH. YOU ARE APT TO SEE MORE TEETH WHEN THE DOG COMES BACK TO YOU OR IS PANTING. OF COURSE, A WRY, TILTED OR OFFSET JAW IS A FAULT AND SHOULD BE PENALIZED TO THE DEGREE OF THE DEVIATION.

EARS – 5 POINTS

Ears--The ears should be set high in the head, the front inner edge of each ear joining the outline of the skull at the top back corner of skull, so as to place them as wide apart, and as high, and as far from the eyes as possible. In size they should be small and thin. The shape termed "rose ear" is the most desirable. The rose ear folds inward at its back lower edge, the upper front edge curving over, outward and backward, showing part of the inside of the burr. (The ears should not be carried erect or prick-eared or buttoned and should never be cropped.)

THE EARS SHOULD BE ROSE EARS. A PROPER ROSE EAR WILL SHOW THE BURR OR INSIDE OF THE EAR WHETHER THE DOG IS ALERTED OR RELAXED. WHEN VIEWED FROM THE FRONT, THE TOP OF THE EARS SHOULD BE LEVEL WITH THE TOP OUTLINE OF THE SKULL. SMALL EARS ARE DESIREABLE BUT NOT AS IMPORTANT AS THE ROSE SHAPE AND PLACEMENT OF THE EAR. THE ILLUSTRATION ABOVE OF CH. PUGILIST SHOWS AN IDEAL EAR.



Correct Rose Ears

When viewed from the front, top of ears should be level with top outline of the skull with the burr partially exposed and the entire front edge of the ear visible.



Rose Ear Held Back

SKULL – 5 POINTS

Skull--The skull should be very large, and in circumference, in front of the ears, should measure at least the height of the dog at the shoulders. Viewed from the front, it should appear very high from the corner of the lower jaw to the apex of the skull, and also very broad and square. Viewed at the side, the head should appear very high, and very short from the point of the nose to occiput. The forehead should be flat (not rounded or domed), neither too prominent nor overhanging the face.

WHEN EVALUATING THE BULLDOG'S SKULL, THINK OF IT IN THREE DIMENSIONS. IT MUST BE EVALUATED NOT ONLY FROM THE FRONT AND IN PROFILE, BUT FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, FRONT TO BACK AND FROM ABOVE.

"THE SKULL SHOULD BE VERY LARGE, AND IN CIRCUMFERENCE IN FRONT OF THE EARS, SHOULD MEASURE AT LEAST THE HEIGHT OF THE DOG AT THE SHOULDERS."

THIS IS THE ONLY MEASUREMENT IN THE STANDARD. THIS MEASUREMENT IS NOT ONE THAT SHOULD BE OF MUCH CONCERN TO JUDGES TODAY. EVEN A VERY YOUNG FEMALE WITH AN IMMATURE HEAD WILL USUALLY MEET THIS REQUIREMENT. WHAT IS MORE PERTINENT IS WHETHER THE SIZE OF THE HEAD IS IN BALANCE WITH THE BODY.

"VIEWED FROM THE FRONT, IT SHOULD APPEAR VERY HIGH FROM THE CORNER OF THE LOWER JAW TO THE APEX OF THE SKULL, AND ALSO VERY BROAD AND SQUARE." A PROPER UNDERJAW COMPLETES THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE SQUARE HEAD. THE PROPER HEIGHT FROM THE CORNER OF THE JAW TO TOP OF THE SKULL, ALONG WITH BREADTH OF SKULL, CREATES THE TOP HALF OF THE SQUARE.

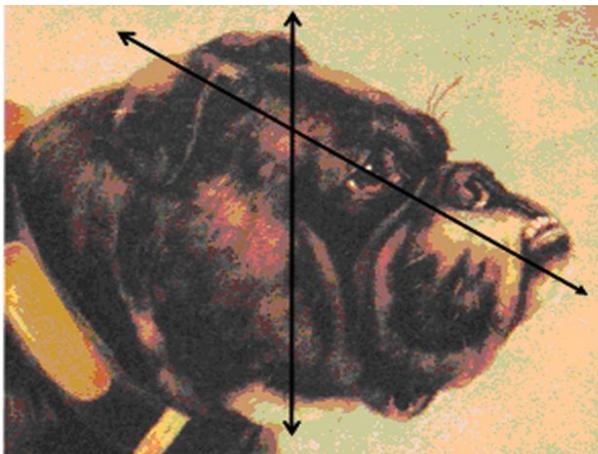


Very High from Corner of Lower Jaw to Apex



Broad and Square

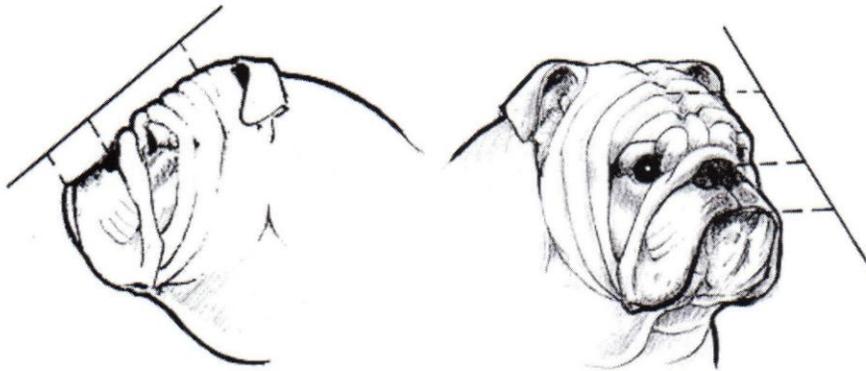
THIS ILLUSTRATION FROM THE VICTORIAN ERA SHOWS GOOD LENGTH AND DEPTH OF SKULL.



"VIEWED AT THE SIDE, THE HEAD SHOULD APPEAR VERY HIGH...THE FOREHEAD SHOULD BE FLAT."

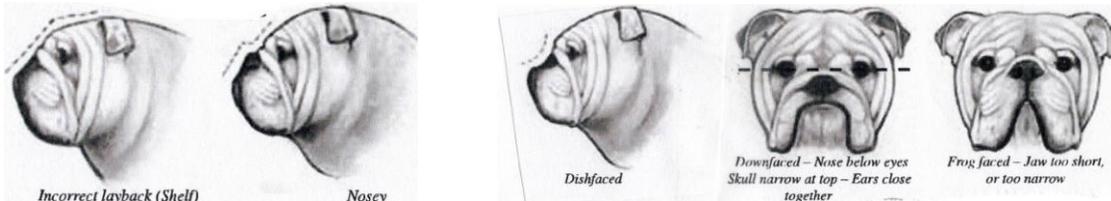
HEAD FAULTS

ALMOST EVERYTHING I HAVE COVERED SO FAR IS AN ELEMENT THAT GOES INTO MAKING A PROPER “LAYBACK” IN THE BULLDOG HEAD. WHEN WE TALK ABOUT LAYBACK IN BULLDOGS WE ARE REFERRING TO THE FLAT ANGLE CREATED BY THE PROPER ALIGNMENT OF THE FOREHEAD, NOSE AND JAW, RATHER THAN SHOULDER LAYBACK. YOU HAVE, NO DOUBT, SEEN BULLDOG JUDGES PLACE THE EDGE OF THEIR HAND VERTICALLY ON THE HEAD, IN BETWEEN THE EYES. THIS IS A VERY HELPFUL EXAMINATION TECHNIQUE AND I ALWAYS TEACH MY STUDENTS TO USE IT THOUGHTFULLY. IF A BULLDOG’S HEAD IS MADE PROPERLY, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO LAY A STRAIGHT EDGE FROM THE TIP OF THE LOWER JAW, OVER, AND JUST TOUCHING THE TIP OF THE NOSE, AND ON UP THE FURROW OF THE FLAT SKULL TOWARDS THE OCCIPUT



When a straight edge is placed against the head in the furrow between the eyes, it should touch the tip of the lower lip, tip of nose, and top of head. This is called the “layback” in Bulldogs and should be about a 45° angle.

PLACING THE EDGE OF THE HAND ON THE DOG’S HEAD IN THIS MANNER WILL REVEAL FAULTS IN THE HEAD. IF THE DOG’S NOSE IS TOO LONG (WHICH CAN BE CONCEALED BY A LARGE NOSE WRINKLE) THE HAND WILL HIT THE NOSE FIRST AND ROCK BACK AND FORTH LIKE A SEE-SAW. IF THE DOG’S BROW IS TOO PROMINENT, THE FINGERS WILL NOT LAY FLAT AGAINST THE FOREHEAD. IF THE JAW DOES NOT PROJECT OR TURN UP ENOUGH, IT WILL NOT MEET THE HEEL OF THE HAND. THE NOSE OF A DOG THAT IS DISH FACED WILL NOT TOUCH THE EDGE OF THE HAND AT ALL. DO NOT PLACE YOUR PALM FLAT ON THE DOG’S FACE AS THIS OBSCURES THE BREATHING AND VISION AND THE DOG MAY RESIST. IT ALSO DOESN’T SERVE AS WELL AS A STRAIGHT EDGE.



THE BACK, LOIN AND TOPLINE – 5 POINTS

THERE ARE SEVERAL ELEMENTS THAT GO INTO CREATING THE CORRECT TOPLINE:

- ▶ **THE SLIGHT FALL BEHIND THE SHOULDERS**
- ▶ **LENGTH OF BACK**
- ▶ **THE CURVE OF THE SPINE PEAKING OVER THE LOIN**
- ▶ **THE MORE SUDDEN CURVE DOWNWARD TO THE TAIL**
- ▶ **TAIL SET**
- ▶ **ELEVATION OF REAR**
- ▶ **UNDERLINE**

“THE BACK SHOULD BE SHORT AND STRONG, VERY BROAD AT THE SHOULDERS AND COMPARATIVELY NARROW AT THE LOINS”

WE WANT A SHORT BACK. YOU WILL SEE A WIDE RANGE OF LENGTHS OF BACK. MY RULE OF THUMB IS TO FIND A BACK THAT IS AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE YET WILL STILL ACCOMMODATE A CORRECT TOPLINE. THE DOG SHOULD REMAIN WELL BALANCED AND IN PROPORTION. IT IS POSSIBLE TO FIND ALL THIS IN A VERY SHORT BACKED DOG AND FOR THIS REASON, ONE SHOULD NOT REWARD A SHORT BACKED DOG AT THE EXPENSE OF A CORRECT TOPLINE AND TAIL SET. IN MY OPINION, THE THEORY THAT BITCHES CAN BE FORGIVEN A LONGER BACK SO THAT THEY CAN CARRY PUPPIES MORE EASILY IS SIMPLY WRONG. BREEDING LONG BACKED BITCHES WILL SIMPLY PRODUCE LONG BACKED OFFSPRING. SHORTER BACKED DOGS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE FEWER PUPPIES OR A HARDER TIME CARRYING THEM, IN MY EXPERIENCE.

TOPLINE

Topline -- There should be a slight fall in the back, close behind the shoulders (its lowest part), whence the spine should rise to the loins (the top of which should be higher than the top of the shoulders), thence curving again more suddenly to the tail, forming an arch (a very distinctive feature of the breed), termed "roach back" or, more correctly, "wheel-back."

THE STANDARD STATES THAT THE ROACH TOPLINE IS A **VERY DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE BREED**. LIKE THE JAW, THE BULLDOG'S TOPLINE IS ONE THAT SETS IT APART FROM OTHER BREEDS. A CORRECT TOPLINE IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF TYPE. BULLDOGGERS TREASURE A GOOD ONE AND REALLY APPRECIATE A JUDGE WHO UNDERSTANDS AND REWARDS THE FEATURE.

“WHEN YOU ARE JUDGING A DOG AND QUESTION WHETHER THE TOPLINE IS MADE CORRECTLY, REMEMBER THAT THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE ROACH SHOULD BE OVER THE LOIN.”

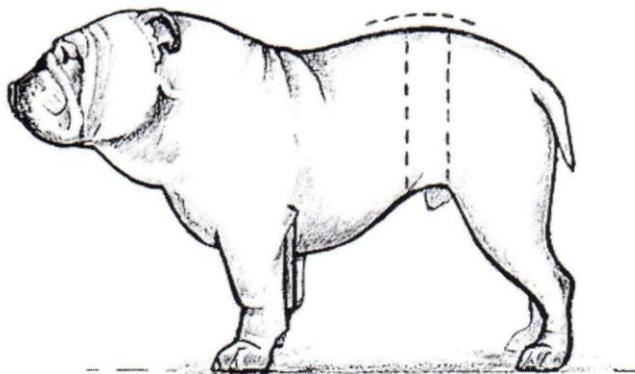
THE TOPLINE ITSELF BEGINS WITH THE SLIGHT FALL IN THE BACK, CLOSE BEHIND THE SHOULDERS. THE SPINE RISES TO THE LOINS, THEN CURVES AGAIN MORE SUDDENLY TO THE TAIL, FORMING AN ARCH. **NOTE THAT THE STANDARD SAYS THAT THE SPINE RISES TO THE LOIN, FORMING AN ARCH. THE ROACH BACK IS NOT MERELY A RISE OVER THE LOIN FORMED BY MUSCULATURE, BUT A CURVE OF THE SPINE WHICH CAN BE SEEN AND FELT.** THE PLACEMENT OF THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE TOPLINE IS CRITICAL. IF THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE ROACH IS PLACED TOO FAR FORWARD, IT IS A CAMEL-BACK AND IS A FAULT. WHEN YOU ARE JUDGING A DOG AND QUESTION WHETHER THE TOPLINE IS MADE CORRECTLY, REMEMBER THAT THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE ROACH SHOULD BE **OVER THE LOIN.**

THE TAIL SET ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO THE TOPLINE. A LOW SET TAIL ALLOWS FOR THE TOPLINE TO CURVE MORE SUDDENLY TO IT AS THE STANDARD STATES.

ANOTHER FEATURE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO A GOOD TOPLINE IS THE LENGTH OF THE REAR LEGS. THE STANDARD CALLS FOR THE “*HIND LEGS (TO)... BE LONGER THAN THE FORELEGS, SO AS TO ELEVATE THE LOINS ABOVE THE SHOULDERS*”. THIS IS MENTIONED IN THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPLINE AS WELL AS IN THE PARAGRAPH ON HIND LEGS. FRONT LEGS THAT ARE TOO SHORT WILL CREATE A REAR THAT IS ELEVATED OVER THE LOIN BUT, IN THIS CASE, THE BALANCE AND PROPORTION WILL NOT BE CORRECT.

THE UNDERLINE SHOULD BE “WELL TUCKED UP BEHIND THE RIBS”. ABSENCE OF A CORRECT TUCK-UP CAN CAUSE THE TOPLINE TO LOOK INCORRECT.

JUDGES SHOULD EVALUATE THE TOPLINE WHILE THE DOG IS STANDING AS WELL AS WHILE MOVING, BUT A DOG THAT SHOWS NO TOPLINE WHILE STANDING IS MOST UNLIKELY TO HAVE ENOUGH WHILE MOVING. TOPLINE FAULTS INCLUDE A FLAT BACK, A CAMEL-BACK AND A SWAYBACK, WHERE THE TOPLINE RISES BUT DOES NOT FALL AWAY TO THE TAIL SET AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.



A correct roach arches over the loins.

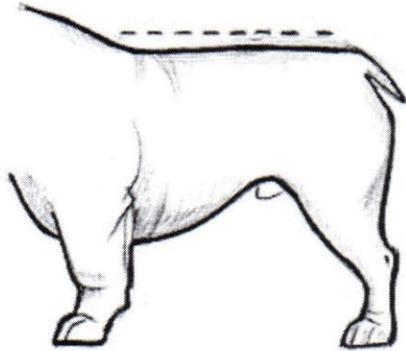


SHORT BACKED, WELL BALANCED, WITH CORRECT TOPLINES

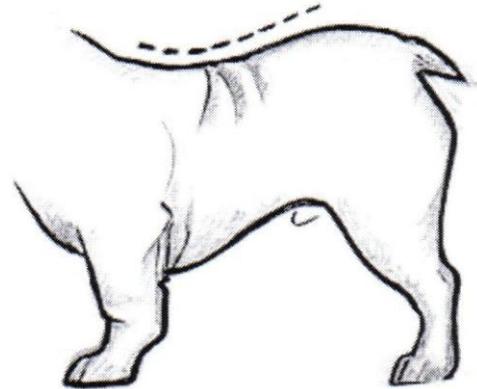


TOPLINE FAULTS

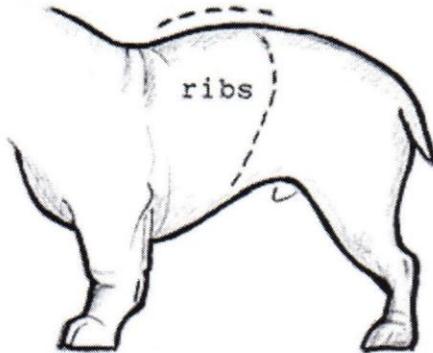
FAULTY TOPLINES



Straight backed



Swaybacked



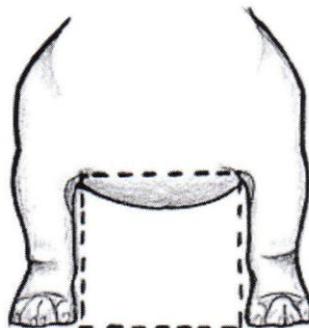
Camel backed

SHOULDERS – 5 POINTS

Shoulders--The shoulders should be muscular, very heavy, widespread and slanting outward, giving stability and great power.

THE HEAVIER, WIDER FRONT GAVE THE BULLDOG GREATER STABILITY WHEN APPROACHING A BULL FROM THE FRONT, LOW DOWN. THEY ALSO CREATE THE FRONT HALF OF THE UNIQUE “PEAR” SHAPE THAT IS SEEN WHEN THE DOG IS VIEWED FROM ABOVE.

WHEN VIEWED FROM THE FRONT, THE SHOULDERS SLANT OUTWARD FROM THE BODY. THIS IS WHAT BULLDOGGERS REFER TO AS “TURN OF SHOULDERS”



Correct turn of shoulder with proper front legs will show straight perpendicular inner forelegs. A correct front will form a near square from the top of the legs, across and down

WRINKLES - 5 POINTS

Wrinkles and Dewlap--The head and face should be covered with heavy wrinkles, and at the throat, from jaw to chest, there should be two loose pendulous folds, forming the dewlap.

BULLDOGS WERE ORIGINALLY BRED WITH HEAVY WRINKLING SO THAT WHILE THEY WERE HANGING ON TO THE SNOUT OF AN ENRAGED BULL, THE RESULTING BLOOD WOULD BE DRAINED AWAY AND NOT INTERFERE WITH THE DOG'S BREATHING OR EYESIGHT.

AS BREEDERS AND JUDGES, WE HAVE DETERMINED THAT THE STANDARD, WHEN REFERRING TO "HEAVY" WRINKLES, MEANS MANY WRINKLES, NOT ROPY OR COARSE WRINKLES. REMEMBER THAT THE STANDARD WAS WRITTEN OVER 125 YEARS AGO AND REMAINS VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED. IF WE HAVE PERFECTED NOTHING ELSE, WE DO HAVE GOOD WRINKLES ON OUR MODERN BULLDOGS. YOU MAY ENCOUNTER A DOG THAT LOOKS A BIT "PLAIN HEADED" TO YOU. YOU KNOW SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT, BUT YOU JUST CAN'T QUITE PUT YOUR FINGER ON IT. CHECK THE WRINKLES. CHANCES ARE THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH. WHAT IS ENOUGH? THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH WRINKLING TO DIVERT THE BULL'S BLOOD AWAY FROM THE EYES AND NOSE. I CAN TELL YOU THAT THIS IS NOT SIMPLY HISTORICAL LEGEND. WHEN YOU BATHE A BULLDOG AND RUN WATER ON THE SKULL, THE WRINKLES EFFICIENTLY DRAIN THE WATER AWAY FROM THE NOSE AND EYES.

PROPORTION AND SYMMETRY – 5 POINTS

Proportion--The circumference of the skull in front of the ears should measure at least the height of the dog at the shoulders. *Symmetry*--The "points" should be well distributed and bear good relation one to the other, no feature being in such prominence from either excess or lack of quality that the animal appears deformed or ill-proportioned.

WE'VE ALREADY COVERED THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF THE SKULL ABOVE. WE COMMONLY REFER TO SYMMETRY AS BALANCE. WHATEVER YOU CHOOSE TO CALL IT, BALANCE IS CONSIDERED OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE WHEN EVALUATING A BULLDOG. THIS MEANS THAT WITHIN THE PARAMETERS SET DOWN BY THE STANDARD, ALL FEATURES SHOULD BE IN GOOD BALANCE WITH ONE ANOTHER. THIS STATEMENT DOES NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE CALL FOR A MODERATE DOG WITH MODERATE FEATURES. IT MEANS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL FEATURES OF THE BULLDOG, AS DEFINED BY THE STANDARD, SHOULD BE IN BALANCE AND BEAR GOOD RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER. I.E: A DOG WITH THE PRESCRIBED MASSIVE SHORT-FACED HEAD SHOULD HAVE A BODY WITH FEATURES OF MATCHING SIZE, QUALITY OR SUBSTANCE. ONE LAST TIP FOR EVALUATING BALANCE: ALTHOUGH THIS MEASUREMENT IS NOT IN THE STANDARD, A GOOD RULE OF THUMB IS THAT THE DISTANCE FROM THE GROUND TO THE ELBOW IS APPROXIMATELY HALF THE HEIGHT OF THE DOG AT THE WITHERS.

ASPIRING BULLDOG JUDGES OFTEN EXPRESS FRUSTRATION AT THE WIDE VARIETY AMONG CHARACTERISTICS THEY SEE IN THE RING AND WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE “CORRECT” TOPLINE, LENGTH OF BACK, JAW, AMOUNT OF BONE, ETC. IS. I FIND THAT BREEDS WHICH POSSESS EXTREME CHARACTERISTICS (ONES WHICH DEVIATE GREATLY FROM THE WOLF-TYPE, ARCHETYPAL DOG) HAVE A DECIDED RANGE OF ACCEPTABILITY IN THOSE FEATURES. THE FURTHER AWAY THE FEATURE DEVIATES FROM THE GENERIC, THE HARDER IT IS TO MAINTAIN BECAUSE IT ALWAYS TENDS TO REVERT TO THE WOLF-TYPE DOG. BREEDERS OF DOGS WITH THESE KINDS OF EXTREME CHARACTERISTICS KNOW THAT IT IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN THESE FEATURES IN THEIR LINES. I THINK THIS IS WHY WE DO NOT SEE A LOT OF CONSISTENCY IN TOPLINES, SHORT BACKS AND UNDERJAWS. IN ADDITION TO RECOGNIZING A CORRECTLY MADE JAW OR TOPLINE, OUR JOB AS JUDGES IS TO KNOW WHAT THE ACCEPTABLE RANGE IS, I.E., HOW MUCH TOPLINE OR JAW IS TOO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH (TOO MUCH IS SOMETHING WE ALMOST NEVER SEE!). SO THERE IS NOT A SIMPLE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION EXCEPT TO SAY THAT PART OF LEARNING THIS BREED IS TO OBSERVE AS MANY DOGS AS YOU CAN AND REFER CONSTANTLY TO THE STANDARD TO REFINE YOUR EYE.

<i>General Properties</i>	
Proportion and symmetry	5
Attitude	3
Expression	2
Gait	3
Size	3
Coat	2
Color of coat	4
<i>Head</i>	
Skull	5
Cheeks	2
Stop	4
Eyes and eyelids	3
Ears	5
Wrinkle	5
Nose	6
Chops	2
Jaws	5
Teeth	2
<i>Body, Legs, etc.</i>	
Neck	3
Dewlap	2
Shoulders	5
Chest	3
Ribs	3
Brisket	2
Belly	2
Back	5
Forelegs and elbows	4
Hind Legs	3
Feet	3
Tail	4
Total	100

