

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE NZKC BULLDOG BREED STANDARD_

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My main concerns are that the proposed changes to the Bulldog Breed Standard do not compromise or alter the key attributes of the Bulldog composition that give the Bulldog its distinctive characteristics.

I vote that we stay with the UK Standard (Pre 1987) and do not move to adopt the FCI standard.

In reading through the proposed changes to the NZKC Bulldog Breed Standard, I wish to raise the following issues:

General Appearance:

Point 2.1: Description about the Head

The omission of the word “**strikingly**” is a point of concern. I believe that the word “strikingly” needs to remain – as it is an important point of clarification – to describe something as striking that indicates that it is something that takes your eye, grabs your attention. The head of the bulldog is something that should be striking – grabs your attention.

Point 5.1: Body Shape and structure

The change omits the point that the hind quarters “**are rather lightly made in comparison with its heavily made foreparts**” - This point needs to be maintained in the NZKC standard as it is an important characteristic that gives the bulldog its “pear-shaped” body. The bulldog should be heavier in the foreparts than in the hind to produce this distinctive body shape. On the stack, you should therefore be able to look through the front view and see the hind feet positioned clearly inside the front legs.

Point 6.1 Gait/Movement:

The change omits the clarifying point that the gait is peculiar heavy and constrained, the gait being similar to the manner of a horse cantering. This point gives the judge a visual example to relate to. It is impossible for the bulldog to roll and gait perfectly unless the dog has a pear-shaped body. It takes 4 things to give the dog its perfect gait: 1. big shoulders. 2. Roach 3. Back and fine hindquarters. 4. Cut up of loin. When watching the gait – you will see 4 legs when he is going away from you– as the dog is wider in the front and narrow in the back. When the dog is coming back to you, you will see only 2, as the dog is deep in brisket and so don’t see the hind legs.

Head and Skull:

Point 1.1 The change omits the clear descriptive, which again clarifies what a large skull equates to.

Point 7.1 “The nose”. The change has omitted the point that the top of the nose should be deeply set back almost between the eyes. From the top of the lip of the underjaw to the top of the nose it should have a layback of 45 degrees and should be very large and the nostrils very wide. Then you go to the “STOP” which should be very deep and much lower than the tip of the nose. All this was

important to ensure that when the bulldog was latched on to the bull, the layback of 45 degrees would ensure that he would still be able to breathe through his nostrils, since with a mouthful of bull, he would not be able to breathe through his mouth!

If you were to lay a pencil in the flat line of the face of a Bulldog, the tip of the skull, the tip of the nose and the tip of the underjaw should be in a straight line – this is what is known as the layback in the breed.

Point 11.1 The Jaw; It is important to retain the descriptive about the turn up and projection of the lower jaw as this effectively enabled the dog to be able to grab and hold onto the flesh of the bull.

If a centreline was drawn vertically through the head, each side should be a mirror of the other in its make and shape.

Body:

Point 3.1 The change omits the point that the bulldog body is “**comparatively narrow at the loins**”. This point needs to be maintained in the NZKC standard as it is one of the distinctive characteristics that gives the bulldog the pear-shaped body and enables the bulldog to drive from the front when moving, with the hindquarters gliding/following from behind. The word “comparatively” is important because too narrow/light will limit the strength required and result in lack of balance.

Point 4.1 The description of the slight fall to 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 up again more suddenly to the tail, forming an arch – **a distinctive characteristic of the breed – termed “roach back”**.

It is important that this descriptive remains in the standard, as it is one of the distinctive characteristics of the bulldog. Beware of the flat topline and the sway of camel backs – both are indicative of lack of / incorrect roach.

Referring to the original purpose of the bulldog, the good arch of neck and roach turning right down to the tail, along with the tuck up of loin and turn of stifle, is what enables the bulldog to do what it was designed to do – turn himself into a complete ball, once latched onto the bull. (reason for this was so that he wouldn't break his neck, back or legs when being tossed about by the bull!)

Hindquarters:

Point 1.1 The change omits the point that the hind legs are longer in proportion to the forelegs so as to elevate the loins. With the bulldog's original purpose of baiting and pulling down a bull in mind, correct elevation of the loins and length of hind legs enables the bulldog to tuck his hind quarters up and under his front when latched onto the bull. (as described below).

Point 3.1 The change omits the point that with the stifles turned slightly out from the body this results in the hocks slightly facing each other making the feet turn slightly out. The emphasis being on the word slightly! I think that this is important to retain in the standard as it is an important point of clarification.

Again, referring back to original design – When the bulldog gets hold of the bull, he turns himself into a complete ball. So when his hind legs turn under, the turn of stifle then fits inside the elbows and ribs, then his front legs turn back enabling him to wrap up into a very small parcel, so that when the bull throws him around, it is impossible for him to break his neck, back or legs.

Feet:

Point 1.1: As clarified above with the hindquarters, stifles that are turned out slightly from the body will result in the hind feet also slightly turn outwards.

Colour:

Point 1.1 With regards to the undesirable colours: Dudley, black and black with tan, the change has used the words “extremely” undesirable to “highly” undesirable. The word “extremely” undesirable is important. Let’s not lighten the undesirability to highly undesirable.

In Summary, it is my view that with the number of omissions and subtle changes made to the UK standard, the FCI standard compromises some of the key attributes of the Bulldog’s composition and distinctive characteristics and by doing so is not a true or good representation of the Bulldog Breed standard. It is important to remember, that the Bulldog has very distinctive features that make the bulldog a bulldog and enables the bulldog to perform its traditional work.

