

## BOUVIER DES FLANDRES

*A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.*

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/02/2017

### ORIGIN

Belgium – France.

### UTILISATION

Originally the Bouvier des Flandres was used as a herding dog, as a draught dog, and as churning dog. The modernisation of farm equipment has affected these first tasks, and nowadays the Bouvier des Flandres is, above all, used as a guard dog for the estate and the farm, and as a defence and police dog. Its physical and behavioural aptitudes, its great qualities of scent, initiative, and intelligence warrant its use as a tracking dog, a messenger dog, and a gamekeeper's dog.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

As its name indicates, the Bouvier des Flandres (Flanders Cattle Dog) is native to Flanders, to both Belgian and French regions of that name, since they are not divided by any natural frontiers. The cow-men and drovers of stock in Flanders, needing good dogs to drive their herds, only selected from the local dogs available, those specimens that possessed the required physical and behavioural qualities. The present day Bouvier des Flandres has inherited these qualities.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

Sub-brachymorphic (short and compact body), strong, and well-muscled limbs. The Bouvier des Flandres gives the impression of power, but without clumsiness. The Bouvier des Flandres is to be judged in its natural stance, without physical contact with the handler.

### IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- Length of body from point of shoulder to point of buttock should be approximately equal to height at withers.
- Proportions of length of skull to length of muzzle are 3 : 2.

### BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

The Bouvier des Flandres has the calm, thoughtful character of a sensible, but fearless dog. Its lively look indicates intelligence, energy, and audacity. It is essential that the Bouvier des Flandres should retain its aptitude for work. Any change that could harm this must be penalised.

### HEAD

The head has a massive appearance, still more accentuated by the beard and moustache. It is in proportion to the body and stature. Its clean-cut lines are obvious to the touch.

#### Cranial Region:

**Skull:** Well-developed and flat, slightly less broad than long. Toplines of skull and muzzle are parallel. Frontal groove hardly denoted.

**Stop:** Only slightly pronounced; more apparent than real, due to upstanding eyebrows.

## Facial Region:

**Nose:** Nose continues the muzzle in a line that is slightly convex towards its end. It must be well-developed, rounded at the sides, and always black in colour. Wide-open nostrils.

**Muzzle:** Broad, powerful, well-boned, straight in its upper line, narrowing towards the nose, but never becoming pointed. Its length should be shorter than the skull by 2 : 3. Circumference measured just below the eyes should be approximately equal to length of head.

**Lips:** Well-fitting and strongly pigmented.

**Jaws and teeth:** Jaws must be powerful and of equal length. Teeth are strong, healthy, white, and evenly set. Scissor or pincer bite. Dentition must be complete.

**Cheeks:** Flat and clean, zygomatic arches are not very protruding.

## Eyes:

Frank and energetic expression, neither protruding nor sunken. They should be slightly oval in shape, set horizontally. Colour should be as dark as possible in relation to coat. Light and wild-looking eyes should be strongly penalised. Lids black, without the slightest indication of unpigmented areas. Haw should never be visible.

## Ears:

Cropped in triangle, carried upright, set high, very mobile; a crop proportioned to the head size is recommended.

### **Un-cropped ears:**

**Position:** Set high, above eye-level, flaps falling vertically. The fold must not stand higher than the top of the skull.

**Shape and carriage:** Half-long, forming an equilateral triangle, slightly rounded at tip, lying flat against cheeks, except the slight lift-up at top of ear set; neither folded nor curled, in proportion with head size; covered with very short hair.

[\*refer note below]

## NECK

Should spring cleanly from the shoulders and is carried sufficiently upright. Strong, well-muscled, widening gradually towards the shoulders. Length slightly shorter than length of head. Nape powerful and slightly arched. No dewlap.

## BODY

Powerful, close coupled and short.

**Topline:** Upper line of back and loins horizontal, tight and firm.

**Withers:** Slightly raised.

**Back:** Short, broad, muscled, and well-supported, with no sign of weakness, yet remaining flexible.

**Loin:** Short, broad, well-muscled; must be flexible, with no sign of weakness.

**Croup:** Must follow, as closely as possible, the horizontal line of the back and blend imperceptibly into the curve of the buttocks. Broad but not excessively so in males, more developed in bitches. A croup that falls away or a goose rump is a serious fault.

**Chest:** Broad and well let down as far as level of elbows, but not cylindrical. The first ribs are slightly arched, the others rounded and well-sloped to the rear, giving the desired length of chest. Flat ribs to be severely penalised. The distance from the point of the breast-bone (manubrium) to the last rib must be considerable, about seven-tenths of the height at the withers.

**Underline and belly:** The underside of the chest rises very slightly towards the belly, which is only slightly tucked-up. Flanks must be short, especially in males.

## TAIL

Set relatively high, the tail must continue the line of the backbone. Some dogs are born tailless and must not be penalised for this. The tail may be docked in the first week of birth leaving 2 or 3 vertebrae. In countries where docking is banned, the whole tail is admitted.

[\*refer note below]

## LIMBS

### **Forequarters:**

**General appearance:** Front legs have strong bone and are well-muscled. Perfectly straight and parallel seen from the front.

**Shoulder:** Relatively long, muscled, without being heavy, moderately oblique. Shoulder blade and humerus are approximately of the same length.

**Upper arm:** Moderately oblique.

**Elbow:** Close to body and parallel. Elbows turning in or out, in a natural stance or on the move, are considered a fault.

**Forearm:** Whether seen in profile or from the front, they must be perfectly straight, parallel to each other and perpendicular to the ground. They must be well-muscled and with good bone.

**Carpus (wrist):** Exactly in line with forearm. Only the pisiform bone juts out at the back of the wrist. Strong bone.

**Metacarpus (pastern):** Strong bone, quite short, sloping forward very slightly.

#### Hindquarters:

**General appearance:** Strong, with pronounced muscle, upright and perfectly parallel seen from the rear. Must move in the same planes as the front legs

**Upper thigh:** Broad, well-muscled, parallel in direction to the median plane of the body. Femur must be neither too straight nor too sloping. Buttocks well let down, trousered, and firm.

**Stifle (knee):** Set approximately on an imaginary straight line from the highest point of the hip (iliac crest) perpendicular to the ground.

**Lower thigh:** Moderately long, well-muscled, neither too straight nor too sloping.

**Hock joint:** Rather close to the ground, broad, tight. Seen from behind they should be straight and perfectly parallel when standing. On the move they should turn neither in nor out.

**Metatarsus (rear pastern):** Strong and lean, rather cylindrical, perpendicular to the ground when the dog is in a natural standing position. No dewclaws.

#### **FEET**

**Forefeet:** Short, round, compact, neither toeing in nor toeing out. Toes should be tight and arched, with strong and dark nails. Thick and hard pads.

**Hind feet:** Round, solid, toes tight and arched, with strong black nails. Thick hard pads.

#### **GAIT / MOVEMENT**

The whole of the Bouvier des Flandres must be harmoniously proportioned to ensure free, true and proud movement. Walking and trotting are the normal gaits, although one does also encounter amblers. At a normal trot the Bouvier des Flandres covers its traces i.e. covers the front pad marks with the rear.

#### **SKIN**

Tight fitting; no excessive slackness; the edges of the eyelids and lips are always very dark.

#### **COAT**

The coat is very abundant, the outercoat forming, with the dense undercoat, a protective layer perfectly adapted to the sudden climatic changes in this breed's native land. The hair must be coarse to the touch, dry and matt, neither too long nor too short (about 6cm), slightly tousled but never woolly or curly. Shorter on the head and very short on the outside of the ears. The inner part of the ear flap is protected by medium-long hair. The upper lip carries a moustache and the chin a full beard, giving the forbidding expression so typical of this breed. The eyebrows consist of raised hairs, accentuating the shape of the superciliary ridges without ever veiling the eyes. The coat is particularly harsh and rasping on the upper part of the back. It shortens very slightly on the limbs but remains harsh. A flat coat should be avoided because it denotes a lack of undercoat. The undercoat is a padding made up of fine, dense hair that grows beneath the outer coat and, together with the topcoat, forms a waterproof covering.

#### **COLOUR**

- The Bouvier des Flandres' coat is usually grey, brindle, or overlaid with black.

\* A completely uniform black is also accepted, without being favoured.

\* Light-coloured, so-called washed-out coats are not acceptable.

\* A white star on the chest is tolerated.

#### **SIZE**

##### Height at withers:

**Males:** 62cm – 68cm (approx. 24½" – 26½").

**Females:** 59cm – 65cm (approx. 23" – 25½").

With a tolerance of plus or minus 1 cm.

For both sexes the ideal size is the middle range, i.e. 65cm for males, 62cm for females.

##### Weight:

**Males:** approximately 35kg – 40kg.

**Females:** approximately 27kg – 35kg.

**N.B.** Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum. Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation should be used for breeding.

\*Regardless of the provisions of the current KUSA-adopted standard, docked or formerly docked breeds may be shown at all FCI- and KUSA-licensed shows in South Africa, whether their tails are docked or natural. Under no circumstances are Judges permitted to discriminate against exhibits on the grounds of docked or natural tails, and equal consideration for awards must be given to either.

**Note:** Cropped ears – KUSA Schedule 2 Regulation 7:

*“Any dog with cropped ears born within the jurisdiction of the KUSA, imported into it and cropped within it, shall not be registered or recorded by the Kennel Union, and if any such dog is registered or recorded in contravention of this Regulation, upon discovery, its registration or recording shall be cancelled.*

*7.1. Any dog with ears cropped before importation into the KUSA area of jurisdiction is not eligible for competition at any Kennel Union event.”*

## **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 and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

### **Severe faults:**

- Timid dog.
- Molossoid appearance, too heavy a dog.
- Body obviously too long (slight tolerance for females) or too light.
- Too massive a head, marked stop, pronounced frontal groove, very prominent zygomatic arches.
- Domed skull, narrow skull, very prominent occipital crest, important lack of parallelism between the topline of skull and muzzle.
- Muzzle too long, pinched nose.
- Loose, thick, or overlapping lips.
- Wry jaw; malocclusion.
- Small, unhealthy, or poorly set teeth.
- Light eyes, bulging eyes, atypical expression.
- Ears that are curled or folded.
- Cylindrical neck, dewlap.
- Back very sagging, very arched.
- Very faulty stance, obviously cramped stance, sickle hocks.
- Silky coat, lack of undercoat, puffed-up coat, shiny, over-groomed.
- Lack of head furnishings.
- Simultaneous faults in pigmentation (nose, lips, eyelids).

### **Disqualifying faults:**

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Obvious lack of type.
- Unpigmented nose or of any colour other than black.
- Pointed muzzle.
- Pronounced over- or undershot bite.
- Any missing teeth other than one P1.
- Wall eyes or wild expression.
- Entropion, ectropion, unpigmented eyelids.
- Coat chocolate brown, white, pepper and salt, washed-out colour and any other pale fawn going from light to red, even with black overlay.
- Height at withers outside the range of the standard.

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## **FCI Standard No 191: BOUVIER DES FLANDRES**

**FCI Classification: Group 1 – Sheepdogs & Cattle dogs (except Swiss Cattle dogs)**

**Section 2: Cattle dogs (except Swiss Cattle dogs)**

**With Working Trial**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADVANCED REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE (ARC)**

Before submitting any application the following requirements must have been fulfilled.

1. Must be on the Kennel Union Breed Register
2. Be positively identified by, microchip or DNA
3. Be over twenty-four (24) months of age
4. Be a Kennel Union Breed (Conformation) Champion
5. The registered name of the dog must contain an Affix (Kennel name)
6. Hips and Elbows x-rayed – Certified HD/ED Certificates (A maximum reading of 0:1 (each) to hips and elbows). – Eye Test – PHTVL SAVA Certificate after dog is twelve (12) months old and PHVP SAVA Glaucoma Test after dog is twelve (12) months old. Working Tests – “B” Test Obedience Qualified, or IPO1/Schutzhund 1 Qualified, or CD (Classic Working Trials) Qualified, or a Carting Champion or an Agility Champion. Passed an Aptitude Test.

*Fedco 05/04 - effective 01/02/2017*