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CAUCASIAN SHEPHERD

(Kavkazskaia Ovtcharka)

TRANSLATION : Translated from Russian to French by Madame Allain and Mr.R.Triquet, senior-lecturers at the University of Lille III; from French to English by Mrs. Peggy Davis.

ORIGIN : Russia.

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UTILIZATION : Sheep-, guard- and defense dog.

CLASSIFICATION F.C.I. : Group 2 Pinscher and Schnauzer type- Molossian and Swiss Mountain and Cattle Dogs.
Section 2.2 Molossian, Mountain type.
Without working trial.

GENERAL APPEARANCE : The shepherd dogs from the Caucasus are dogs of superior size to the average and large size dogs, of robust even coarse constitution; by nature, they are aggressive and distrustful of strangers. To these peculiarities must be added the endurance, lack of demands and the faculty of adaptation to varied thermal and climatic conditions, allowing the use of the Caucasian Shepherd dog in nearly all the regions of the Soviet Union.

The principal regions of penetration of the Caucasian Sheepdog are the Federal Republics of Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaidjan, the Independent Republic of Kabardino-Balkarie, Daghestan and Kalmoukie, the regions of the North Caucasus steppes and the surroundings areas of Astrakhan. In the regions of the Transcaucasus the dogs are of a more bulky type of constitution, whereas in the steppes regions they are lighter, higher on the legs and often short-haired.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT : Type of great alert activity, strong - balanced - calm. The reactions of defense which manifest themselves in an active form, are well developed.

An aggressive disposition and distrust towards strangers are characteristic.

TYPE OF CONSTITUTION : Robust, even coarse, with a massive bone structure and strong musculature. Skin is thick but elastic.

INDEX OF BONE STRUCTURE : (Proportion of the perimeter of the pastern vs. the height at the withers) = Males 21 - 22; females 20 - 22.

INDEX OF THE FORMAT : The proportion of the length of the body vs. the height at the withers is 100 - 108.

SEXUAL TYPE : Well accentuated. The males are stronger and more massive. The females are a bit smaller in size, of a little lighter constitution.

HEAD

CRANIAL REGION :

Skull : Massive with a broad skull and strongly developed zygomatic arches. Broad forehead, flat, divided in two halves by a slight furrow.

Stop : The stop is not clearly marked.

FACIAL REGION :

Nose : The nose is strong, broad, black. In the white and the light straw coloured dogs, a brown (chestnut) coloured nose is admissible.

Muzzle : The muzzle is shorter than the length of the skull, only lightly tapered.

Lips : Strong lips, but lean and fitting tightly.

Teeth : White, strong, well developed, close together, not showing gaps. Incisors aligned at the base - Scissor bite.

Eyes : Dark, small, oval shaped, deep set.

Ears : Hanging, set high, cropped short.

NECK : Powerful, short. Carried quite low so as to form an angle of 30° to 40° in relation to the line of the back.

BODY :

Withers : Broad, muscular, well detached above the topline.

Back : Broad, straight, muscled.

Loin : Short, broad, slightly arched.

Rump : Broad, muscled, set almost horizontal.

Chest : Broad, deep, slightly rounded in shape. Lower line of chest is at elbow level or lower.

Belly (abdomen) : Moderately tucked up.

TAIL : High set, hanging down, reaching the hock. In shape of sickle, hook or ring. Docked tails are admitted.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS : Seen from the front : straight and parallel. Angle of the scapular-humeral articulation about 100°.

Forearm : Straight, strong, long without excess.

Pastern : Short, strong, placed on the vertical or with an insignificant inclination.

Length of the legs up to the elbows a little superior to the half of the height at the withers. Index of height of the forequarters (proportion of the height of the forequarters from the point of the elbow to the ground vs. height at the withers) = 50 - 54.

HINDQUARTERS : Seen from the back : straight and parallel; in profile : slightly open at level of stifle articulation.

Legs : Short.

Stifles : Strong, broad, angle slightly open.

Metatarsal : Thick, placed vertically.

Hindquarters not sloping from front to back. The vertical line starting from the ischiatic tuberosity must pass in the centre of the hockjoint and of the hock.

FEET : (front and hind feet).

Big, oval shaped, compact and tight.

GAIT / MOVEMENT : Free, swinging stride; usually balanced. The characteristic gait is a short trot, which in case of acceleration usually turns into a slightly heavy gallop. On the move the legs must move in straight line, the forelegs slightly converging towards the median line; the articulations of the fore-and hindquarters function with ease; the back and the loins work smoothly. The withers and the rump should remain at the same level during the trot.

COAT

HAIR : Straight hair, coarse, with a strongly developed undercoat of a lighter colour. On the head and front part of the limbs, hair shorter and lying well flat against body. We distinguish 3 groups according to the coat :

- Long-haired : top coat longer. The long hairs on the neck form a ruff, on the rear parts of the legs fringes and culottes. The thick coat, which covers the whole of the tail, makes it thick and bushy.
- Short-haired : Covered with a thick coat, relatively short, without a ruff, without fringes, without culottes nor feathering on the tail.
- Intermediate type long-haired but without ruff, fringes, culottes or feathering.

COLOUR : Banded hair of grey, with varied shades, usually light with a tendency towards ginger (rusty), straw colour, white, reddish brown, brindle and also pied coat and scattered with patches.

SIZE :

Height at the withers : For the males, not less than 65 cm; for the females, not less than 62 cm.

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.

- Constitution a little weak or frail.
- Slight deviation in relation of the format indicated.
- Lack of gameness and energy, lack of distrust towards strangers.

- Slight deviation in relation to sexual type. Females of male type.
- Head insufficiently broad and massive.
- Forehead too bulging, transition from forehead to muzzle (stop) abrupt or too lightly marked.
- Muzzle short or elongated.
- Lips soft, loosely-hanging.
- Teeth showing abnormal wear in relation to age. Presence of broken teeth which do not harm the occlusion (bite). Absence of at most two first premolars, or absence of one the first and one of the second premolars. Slight yellowing of the teeth.
- Light eyes, lower eyelids slightly drooping. Presence of milky white spots on the cornea.
- Ears set low, not cropped.
- Neck long, lacking power.
- Weakly developed withers, standing out insufficiently above the topline of the back.
- Soft back, arched or narrow.
- Longish loin, straight or too arched.
- Rump insufficiently muscular or slightly sloping.
- Chest slightly flattened. The lower region of the chest not quite reaching the elbow line (insufficiently let down).
- Belly too tucked up or too bulky (profile convex).
- Forequarters : Small deviations in relation to angles of shoulder articulations, forearm slightly shortened or lengthened, slight deviation of elbows, slight toeing out, pastern too oblique.
- Hindquarters : Seen from behind : small deviation in relation to the parallelism (slight closeness or spreading of the hocks). Legs a little wide apart or a little close together, hindquarters too straight, hindquarters slightly overbuilt.
- Feet : Soft or of elongated shape. Dewclaws present.
- Movement : Deviations in relation to the normal movement (the dog brings the legs in or puts them out). The articulations do not function with sufficient ease. Lack of suppleness of back and loins movement. Rump raised during the trotting movement. Slight side-to-side swinging of the rump (rolling of the hindquarters).

SERIOUS FAULT :

- Constitution with strongly marked weakness or frailness.
- Important deviation in relation to the format indicated.
- Timid dog, strongly marked indifference; lack of aggressiveness.
- Strong deviations in relation to sexual type. Males of female type.
- Light head, narrow, with pointed muzzle, not in proportion with the general type of construction, turned up muzzle.
- Teeth small, scattered (wide apart), insufficiently developed. Incisors implanted in irregular line. Teeth with badly damaged enamel.
- Eyes of different colours; lower eyelids drooping, showing part of the sclerotica.
- Back sagging or very arched.
- Loin long, sagging or too curved.
- Rump narrow, short or distinctly falling away. Chest flat, narrow, insufficiently developed.
- Forequarters : Straight shoulders or angle of shoulder too closed, forearm crooked or thin, marked deviation of elbows, very weak pastern, distinctly toeing out, or one or both feet pigeon - toed (turned in).
- Hindquarters : Strongly marked deviations in relation to the parallelism. Hindquarters excessively straight. Legs bowed. Hindquarters very overbuilt.
- Feet very splayed or flat.
- Soft coat, wavy, without undercoat.
- Black, black with ginger (rusty) patches, chestnut in varied combinations.
- Restricted movement, heavy. Rump very much overbuilt, when trotting, in relation to the withers. Marked vertical movement of the rump. Ambling gait.
- For the males a height at the withers less than 65 cm; for the females, less than 62 cm.

ELIMINATING FAULTS :

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- All deviations in relation to the correct scissor bite.
- Absence of one of the canines or one of the incisors; absence of one of the third or fourth premolars or of one molar.
- Black and brown (chestnut) colour of the coat.

Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.

N.B. : Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.