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BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG
(Bernese Sennenhund, Dürrbächler)



Zeichnung C. Laubinger nach Foto B. Ginter

TRANSLATION : Mrs. Peggy Davis, revised by Elke Pepper.

ORIGIN : Switzerland.

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UTILIZATION : Originally used as a guard-, draught-and cattle dog on farms in the Canton Bern, today also family dog and versatile working dog.

CLASSIFICATION F.C.I. : Group 2 Pinscher and Schnauzer
type-Molossoid breeds-
Swiss Mountain and
Cattle-Dogs.
Section 3 Swiss Cattle Dogs.
Without working trial.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY : The Bernese Mountain Dog is a farm dog of ancestral origin which was used as a guard and draught dog and for driving cattle in the prealpine regions and in the midland areas around Bern. Originally he was named “Dürnbächler” according to the name of the hamlet and of the inn of Dürnbach, near Riggisberg in the Canton Bern where these long-haired tricoloured farm dogs were especially numerous. In 1902, 1904 and 1907 specimen of this breed had already been exhibited at dog shows, and in 1907 some breeders of the region of Burgdorf decided to promote the pure breeding of these dogs by founding the “Schweizerischer Dürnbach-Klub”, and fixing the characteristic traits of the breed. In 1910, at a show in Burgdorf where many farmers of that region brought their Dürnbächler dogs to, already 107 specimen were shown. From that day onward this dog, renamed “Bernese Mountain Dog” following the example of the other breeds of Swiss Mountain Dogs, became rapidly appreciated all over Switzerland and in the neighbouring parts of Germany. Today the Bernese Mountain Dog is well known and

appreciated all over the world as a family dog thanks to its striking tricoloured coat and its great adaptability.

GENERAL APPEARANCE : Longhaired, tricoloured, strong and agile working dog, of above medium size, with sturdily built limbs; harmonious and well balanced.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS :

- Height at withers : length of body (measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock) = 9 : 10, rather compact than elongated.
- Ideal relation of height at withers : depth of chest = 2 : 1.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT : Self-confident, attentive, vigilant, fearless in every day situations; good-natured and devoted to his own people, self-assured and placid towards strangers ; of medium temperament, docile.

HEAD : Strong. In size balanced to general appearance, not too massive.

CRANIAL REGION :

Skull : Viewed from the front and in profile little rounded. Frontal furrow hardly marked.

Stop : Well defined, but without being too pronounced.

FACIAL REGION :

Nose : Black.

Muzzle : Strong, of medium length; nasal bridge straight.

Lips : Close fitting; black.

Jaws/Teeth : Strong, complete scissor bite (molars 3 (M3) are not taken into consideration). Pincer bite accepted.

Eyes : Dark brown, almond-shaped, with close fitting eyelids. Neither too deep-set nor prominent. Loose eyelids are faulty.

Ears : Medium-sized, set high, triangular in shape, slightly rounded at the tips, in repose hanging flat and close to the head. When alert, the

rear part of the set-on is raised while the front edge of the ear remains close to the head.

NECK : Strong, muscular, of medium length.

BODY :

Topline : From the neck running slightly downwards to the withers in a harmonious line, then running on straight and level.

Back : Firm, straight and level.

Loins : Broad and strong; seen from above slightly less broad than the chest.

Croup : Smoothly rounded.

Chest : Broad and deep, reaching to the elbows; forechest distinctly developed; ribcage of wide-oval section extending as well back as possible.

Underline/belly : Slightly rising from chest to hindquarters.

TAIL : Bushy, reaching at least to the hocks; hanging straight down when at rest; carried level with back or slightly above when moving.

LIMBS : Strong bones.

FOREQUARTERS : Forelegs seen from the front straight and parallel, standing rather wide apart.

Shoulders : Shoulder blade long, strong and well laid back, forming a not too obtuse angle with the upper arm, well attached to the chest, well muscled.

Upper arm : Long, set oblique.

Elbows : Close fitting; neither turned in nor out.

Forearm : Strong, straight.

Pastern : Seen from the side almost upright, firm; seen from the front in straight line with the forearm.

Forefeet : Short, roundish; with well-knit, well-arched toes. Turned neither in nor out.

HINDQUARTERS : Seen from the rear straight and parallel, not too close.

Upper thigh : Long, broad, strong and well muscled.

Stifle : Distinctly well bent.

Lower thigh : Long and oblique.

Hock joint : Strong, well angulated.

Metatarsus : Set almost vertically. Dewclaws to be removed (except in those countries where it is prohibited by law).

Hind feet : Slightly less arched than forefeet, turned neither in nor out.

GAIT / MOVEMENT : Sound and balanced movement in all gaits covering a lot of ground; free stride reaching well out in front, with good drive from behind; at the trot, coming and going, legs moving forward in a straight line.

COAT

HAIR : Long, shining, straight or slightly wavy.

COLOUR : Jet black main colour with rich tan markings on the cheeks, above the eyes, on all four legs and on the chest, and with white markings as follows :

- Clean white symmetrical markings on the head : blaze extending towards the nose on both sides to a muzzle band; the blaze should not reach the tan markings above the eyes, and the white muzzle band should not extend beyond the corners of the mouth.
- Moderately broad, unbroken white marking on throat and chest.
- Desirable : white feet,
white tip of tail.
- Tolerated : small white patch on nape of neck,
small white anal patch.

SIZE :

Height at withers : for dogs : 64-70 cm,
ideal size : 66-68 cm.
for bitches : 58-66 cm,
ideal size : 60-63 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.

- Unsure behaviour.
- Fine bones.
- Irregular set of the incisors provided that the bite remains correct.
- Absence of any other teeth than 2 PM1 (premolars 1); the M3 (molars 3) are not taken into consideration.
- Coat :
 - Distinctly curly coat.
 - Faults of colour and markings :
 - Absence of white on head.
 - Blaze too large and/or muzzle band reaching noticeably beyond the corners of the mouth.
 - White collar.
 - Large white patch on nape of neck (maximum diameter more than 6 cm).
 - White anal patch (maximum size 6 cm).
 - White markings on forelegs reaching distinctly beyond half-way of pasterns (“boots”).
 - Disturbingly asymmetrical white markings on head and/or chest.
 - Black ticks and stripes within the white on the chest.
 - “Dirty” white (strong spots of pigmentation).
 - Black coat with a touch of brown or red.

ELIMINATING FAULTS :

- Aggressive, anxious or distinctly shy.
- Split nose.

- Undershot or overshot mouth, wry mouth.
- One or two blue eyes (wall eye).
- Entropion, ectropion.
- Kinky tail, ring tail.
- Short coat, double coat (Stockhaar).
- Other than tricoloured coat.
- Other main colour than black.

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.