KUSA
Kennel Union of Southern Africa

BOXER

A Breed Standard is the guideline that describes the ideal characteristics, temperament, and appearance of a breed, and ensures that the breed is fit for function, with soundness essential. Breeders and Judges should, at all times, be mindful of features that could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare, or soundness of this breed.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2018

ORIGIN

Germany.

UTILISATION

Companion, guard, and working dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The small, so-called “Brabant Bullenbeisser” is regarded as the immediate ancestor of the Boxer. In the past, the breeding of these Bullenbeissers was in the hands of the huntsmen, whom they assisted during the hunt. Their task was to seize the game put up by the Hounds and hold it firmly until the huntsman arrived and put an end to the prey. For this job the dog had to have jaws as wide as possible with widely spaced teeth, in order to bite firmly and hold on tightly. Those that had these characteristics were best suited to this job and were used for breeding. Previously, only the ability to work and the dog’s utilisation were considered. Selective breeding was carried out that produced a dog with a wide muzzle and upturned nose.

Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Boxer is a medium-sized, smooth-coated, sturdy dog of compact, square build and strong bone. His muscles are taut, strongly developed, and moulded in appearance. His movement is lively, powerful, with noble bearing. The Boxer must be neither cumbersome nor heavy, neither light nor lacking in body substance.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- Length of body / height at withers: Square build, which means that the horizontal line of the back is perpendicular to the vertical line passing through the point of shoulder, and to the other vertical line passing through the point of buttock, thus defining a square outline.
- Depth of brisket / height at withers: The chest reaches to the elbows. Depth of chest is half the height at withers.
- Length of nose bridge / length of head: Length of nose bridge in relation to skull should be 1 : 2 (measured respectively from tip of nose to inner corner of eye and from inner corner of eye to occiput).

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

The Boxer should be fearless self-confident, calm, and equable. Temperament is of the utmost importance, and requires careful attention. Devotion and loyalty towards his master and his entire household, his watchfulness and self-assured courage as a defender are famous. He is harmless with his family but distrustful of strangers. Happy and friendly in play, yet fearless in a serious situation. Easy to train on account of his willingness to obey, his pluck and courage, natural keenness, and scent capability. Undemanding and clean, he is just as agreeable and appreciated in the family circle as he is as a guard, companion, and working dog. His character is trustworthy, with no guile or cunning, even in old age.

HEAD

This gives the Boxer his characteristic look. Must be in good proportion to the body and appear neither too light nor too heavy. Muzzle should be as broad and powerful as possible. The harmony of the head depends on the balance between muzzle and skull. From whichever direction the head is viewed – from front, above, or sideways – the muzzle must always be in the right proportion to the skull i.e. it must never appear too small. It should be clean, not showing any wrinkle. However, natural folds are formed in the cranial region when alerted. From root of nose, folds are always indicated running in a downward direction on both sides. The dark mask is confined to the muzzle and must be in sharp contrast to the colour of the head so that the face does not appear sombre.

Cranial Region:

Skull: The cranial region should be as lean and angular as possible. It is slightly arched, neither too round and short, nor flat; nor should it be too broad. Occiput not too pronounced. Furrow in forehead only slightly marked, must not be too deep, especially between the eyes.

Stop: The forehead forms a distinct stop with the bridge of nose. Bridge of nose must not be forced back into the forehead as in the Bulldog, nor should it be down-faced.

Facial Region:

Nose: Nose is broad and black, and only slightly turned up, with wide nostrils. Tip of nose is placed slightly higher than root of nose.

Muzzle: The muzzle is powerfully developed in three-dimensional volume, neither pointed nor narrow; neither short nor shallow. Its appearance is influenced by: a) Shape of jaw. b) Position of canine teeth. c) Shape of lips. The canines must be placed as far apart as possible and must be of good length, making the front of the muzzle broad, almost square and forming a blunt angle with bridge of nose. In front, the edge of the upper lip rests on the edge of the lower lip. The part of the lower jaw with lower lip curved upwards, called the chin, must not markedly protrude over upper lip, seen from front. Nor should it be hidden by the upper lip, but should be well-defined from front and side. The canines and incisors of the lower jaw must not be visible when mouth is closed, neither should the tongue show. Median groove in the upper lip (philtrum) is clearly visible.

Lips: The lips complete the shape of the muzzle. The upper lip is thick and padded and fills the space formed by the undershot lower jaw; it is supported by the lower canines.

Cheeks: Cheeks are developed in proportion with the strong jaws without markedly bulging. They merge with the muzzle in a slight curve.

Jaws and teeth: The lower jaw protrudes beyond the upper jaw and is curved slightly upwards. The Boxer is undershot. The upper jaw is broad where it joins the cranial region, tapering only slightly towards the front. The teeth are strong and healthy. The incisors are as even as possible, set in a straight line. Canines wide apart and of good size.

Eyes:

The dark eyes are neither too small nor protruding or deep set. Their expression conveys energy and intelligence and must not be threatening or piercing. Eye-rims must be dark.

Ears:

The natural ears are of appropriate size. They are set on wide apart on highest part of skull. In repose they lie close to the cheeks and turn forward with a definite crease, especially when the dog is alert.

NECK

Topline runs in an elegant arch from the clearly marked nape to the withers. It should be of ample length, round, strong, and muscular.

BODY

Square body resting on sturdy, straight legs.

***Withers*:** Should be marked.

***Back*:** Including loin should be short, firm, straight, broad, and muscular.

***Croup*:** Slightly sloping, broad, and only slightly arched. Pelvis should be long and broad, especially in bitches.

***Chest*:** Deep, reaching to elbows. Depth of chest is half the height at withers. Well-developed forechest. Ribs well-sprung but not barrel-shaped, extending well to the rear.

***Underline and belly*:** Running towards rear in elegant curve. Short, taut flanks slightly tucked-up.

TAIL

[ed. Previously customarily docked.]

Set on high rather than low. The tail is of normal length and left natural.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Front legs, seen from front, must stand parallel and have strong bone.

Shoulder: Long and sloping, connected firmly to body. Should not be too loaded.

Upper arm: Long, making a right angle to shoulder blade.

Elbow: Neither too close to side of chest nor turned out.

Forearm: Vertical, long, lean, and muscled.

Carpus (wrist): Strong, well-defined, but not exaggerated.

Metacarpus (pastern): Short, almost perpendicular to ground.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Very muscular, the muscles brick hard and visible under the skin.
Hind leg: Seen from rear, straight.
Upper thigh: Long and broad. Angles of hip and knee are open but as little as possible.
Stifle (knee): When dog is standing, should reach sufficiently forward so that it would touch a perpendicular line from point of hip to ground.
Lower thigh: Very muscular.
Hock joint: Strong and well-defined but not exaggerated. Angle approximately 140º.
Metatarsus (rear pastern): Short with slight inclination, 95º - 100º degrees to the ground.

FEET

Forefeet:

Small, round, tight, well-cushioned, hard pads.

Hind feet:

Slightly longer than front feet, tight; well-cushioned, hard pads.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Lively, full of strength and nobility.

SKIN

Dry, elastic, without any wrinkles.

COAT

Hair short, hard, glossy, and close-fitting.

COLOUR

Fawn or brindle:

- ***Fawn:*** Various shades from light fawn to dark deer red, but the most attractive shades are in the middle range (red fawn). Black mask.
- ***Brindle:*** Fawn background of varying shades, has dark or black stripes running parallel to ribs. Stripes must contrast distinctly to ground colour.

* White markings should not be discarded. They can be quite pleasant.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 57cm – 63cm (approx. 22½" – 25").
Females: 53cm – 59cm (approx. 21" – 23").

Weight:

Males: over 30kg when height at withers is about 60 cm.
Females: about 25kg when height at withers is about 56cm.

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 with the exception of the World Dog Show (WDS) and FCI Section Shows, the latter restriction applying to all dogs born after 1 January 2025. At shows where this restriction does not apply, i.e. shows other than the WDS or FCI Section Shows, 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.

- Behaviour / Temperament: Lack of spirit.
- Head: Lack of nobility and typical expression, sombre face, Pinscher or Bulldog type head.

- Dribbling, showing of teeth or tongue.
- Muzzle too pointed or slight.
- Bridge of nose falling away.
- Leather or weather nose, pale nose leather.
- So called, “hawk eye”, lack of pigment in haw.
- In uncropped ears: flying, half-erect or erect ears, rose ears.
- Wry jaw, slanting teeth, incorrect position of teeth, poorly developed teeth, and unsound teeth due to illness.
- Neck: Short, thick, and throaty.
- Body: Front too broad or low to the ground. Sagging body, roach or sway back.
- Lean, long, narrow, sagging loin, loosely coupled body. Arched loin, croup falling away.
- Narrow pelvis, hollow flanks, pendulous belly.
- Tail: Low set on, kink tail.
- Forequarters: French front, loose shoulders, loose elbows, weak pastern, hare foot, flat, splayed feet.
- Hindquarters: Weak muscles. Too much or too little angulation, down on hocks, barrel hocks, cow hocks, narrow hocks, dewclaws, hare foot, flat, splayed feet.
- Movement: Waddling, insufficient reach, pacing, stilted gait.
- Colour of coat: Mask extending beyond muzzle. Stripes (brindling) too close together or too sparse. Sooty ground colour. Mingled colours. Unattractive white markings such as an entirely white head or white on one side of the head. Other colours and white markings exceeding one-third of the ground colour.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.

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FCI Standard No 144: DEUTSCHER BOXER

FCI Classification: Group 2: Pinscher and Schnauzer, Molossoid type dogs, and Swiss Mountain and Cattle dogs
Section 2.1. Molossoid breeds; Mastiff type
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. The dog must have passed a FBCSA BC Breed Assessment / Breed Survey.
7. The dog must have passed an Aptitude Test.
8. Hip score must not be worse than C2.

F*EDCO 06-2019 Amendment to ARC, (P.M 01.08.2019)*