

AKC – BMDCA – standard revision

OFFICIAL AKC STANDARD FOR THE BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG (1980 version*)

BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

GENERAL APPEARANCE - A sturdy, balanced, large, strong-boned dog. Intelligent and having an appearance of strength and agility suiting it to draft and droving work in mountainous regions. Dogs appear masculine, while bitches are distinctly feminine.

HEAD - Skull-flat and broad with a slight furrow and a well-defined, but not exaggerated stop. Muzzle - strong and straight. Dry mouthed. Teeth - strong; scissors bite; complete dentition. Serious fault: overshot or undershot bite. Ears - medium sized, triangular in shape, gently rounded at the tip, hanging close to the head when in repose, brought forward and raised at the base when alert. Eyes-dark brown, slightly oval in shape with close-fitting eyelids; expression intelligent, animated and gentle. Serious faults: inverted or everted eyelids. Disqualification: Blue eye.

NECK AND BODY - Neck-strong and muscular and of medium length. Back-broad and firm. Topline level from withers to croup. Chest-deep and capacious with well-sprung ribs and brisket reaching at least to the elbows. Body-nearly square with over-all body length measuring slightly greater than height at the withers. Loin-strong. Croup-broad and smoothly rounded to tail insertion.

FOREQUARTERS - Shoulders-moderately laid back, flatlying, well muscled, never loose. Forelegs straight and strong with the elbows well under the shoulders. Pasterns slightly sloping without weakness. Feet round and compact with well-arched toes. Declaws may be removed from front legs.

HINDQUARTERS - Thighs-broad, strong and muscular. Stifles-moderately bent, tapering smoothly into hocks. Hocks-well let down and straight as viewed from the rear. Dewclaws should be removed from rear legs. Tail-Bushy. Bone reaching to the hock joint or below. When in repose, tail should be carried low, upward swirl permissible when alert. May be carried gaily, but may never curl or be carried over the back. Fault: Kink in tail. Coat - Thick, moderately long, slight wavy or straight, with a bright natural sheen.

COLOR AND MARKINGS - Tri-color: jet black ground color with rich rust and clear white markings. Nose - always black. Markings (symmetry desired): Rust: over each eye; on cheeks, preferably reaching at least to the corner of the mouth; on each side of chest; on all four legs; under tail. White: blaze and muzzle-band; chest marking, typically forming an inverted cross; feet; tip of tail. Faults: Markings other than as described to be faulted in direct relationship to the extent of the deviation. Serious faults: White legs; white collars. Disqualifications: any ground color other than black.

GAIT - Natural working gait is slow trot, but capable of speed and agility in keeping with use in draft and droving work. Good reach in front. Powerful drive from the rear transmitted through a level back. No wasted action. Front and hind legs on each side follow through in the same plane. At increased speed, legs tend to converge toward the center line.

HEIGHT - Dogs: 24 1/2" to 27 1/2" at the withers. Bitches: 22 1/2" to 25 1/2" at the withers.

TEMPERAMENT - Self-confident, alert and good-natured. Never sharp or shy. A dog which will not stand for examination shall be dismissed from the ring.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Blue eye color.

Any ground color other than black. Approved July 8, 1980

Summaries of club correspondence and work product including drawings pertaining to the parent club's breed standard revision were published over many months in the BMDCA Newsletter during 1977 - 1979. Discussion included study of both the breed's history, the dogs' functionality as working draft dogs, as well as in depth explorations of canine anatomy, structure and essential aesthetic qualities.

The carefully crafted language found in the 1980 Breed Standard reflects the key characteristics of the Bernese.

The AKC breed standard was updated again in 1989 to bring it into compliance with AKC's breed standards' formatting requirements.

A few content changes were made.

AKC approved the revisions on February 10, 1990, Effective March 28, 1990.

**Best of Breed at the 1989 BMDCA National Specialty,
Alpenblick's Alpine Alpenweide, 'Willi'**

