
The History of the Boerboel



South African breed created from interbreeding indigenous African breeds with breeds brought into South Africa from Dutch, French and British Settlers.

- Natural selection in harsh environment
 - Bred for a Purpose
 - In danger of extinction
 - Regulated Breeding emerged
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Origins of the Boerboel



- Recorded history of 350 years (Cape Colony)
- Cape of Storms (southern tip of Africa) was visited by traders travelling to the East
- European settlement in 1652
- Wide mouthed mastiffs of various sources seeded along Africa coast by traders and colonists
- Free interbreeding with local dogs
- Local dogs originated from human migration from North Africa thus sight hound influence as well as trading civilizations such as Mapungubwe and Zimbabwe
- First recorded dogs seen with KhoiKhoi (extinct race of beach combers)

Initial European Influence

- First Dutch settler brought “bullenbijter”
- Unknown if dog survived but assumed it had offspring resulting from crossbreeding with similar local dogs
- Became popular with Dutch settlers who were farmers and travelling traders
- Dutch farmers started colonizing the “hinterland” and used dogs for protection and hunting
- English occupation of Cape of Good Hope forced settlers further inland



An Evolutionary Dog

- Dutch and French Huguenots hated British rule and moved North toward the interior
- Similar move to the American Western migration...except there was nothing on the other side
- Migration was slow and followed scouting parties for good grazing and water
- Dogs had to have purpose....used as hunters, protectors of wagons and homesteads and the explorers themselves
- Became known as the “farmers’ dog” (Boer Boel)
- **No regulated breeding....bred for purpose only**



What was Required from the Dog?

- Health: the environment culled anything that could not withstand it
- Protection: Families were left behind by scouting and hunting parties. Threats: Lion, leopard, elephants, snakes, African war parties
- Hunting: Muskets were inaccurate. Dogs chased and held down game for hunters
- Threat perception: No all animals and humans were enemies
- Loyalty, tractability and intelligence
- **No regulated breeding....bred for purpose only**



Other “Small” Hardships

- First Boer War
- Second Boer War
- Great flu epidemic
- Great recession
- Urbanisation of the farmers
- Emergence of commercial value
- Emergence of imported breeds (Bull Mastiff, etc)
- **No regulated breeding.... bred for purpose only**



Pre-regulated Breeding

- Breeding continued on farms and in cities
- Concentrations in Free State, Kwa Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Namibia
- **Breeding for purpose**
- First tour to select breeding stock in 1983
- 250 dogs seen, 72 selected
- Initial register established
- Later registrations added



Emergence of Regulated Breeding

- First breeders association (SABT) constituted in 1990
- HBSA constituted in 1995
- EBBASA constituted in 2001
- BI constituted in 2008
- Boerboel Breed Council (SABT, EBBASA, BI and KUSA) formed in 2011
- Common Breed Standard, Health and temperament testing, Code of Ethics, common database, transparent data, etc.



The Boerboel

- The origin and purpose of the Boerboel should be well understood in order to maintain the unique identity and qualities of the breed as a South African developed mastiff.
- Type, conformation, functional efficiency and mentality are equally important in the evaluation of the Boerboel as a whole.



General Appearance

- The Boerboel is a large dog that is strong, confident and muscular in appearance, with powerful, free-flowing movement.



In General

- It should demonstrate strength, suppleness, nimbleness and agility.



Size, Proportion, Substance



The preferred height for Dogs -
24 to 27 inches.



Bitches-22 to 25 inches

Size, Proportion, Substance

A mature Boerboel should be proportionate with strong bone structure and slightly longer than tall.

- Balance, proportion and sound movement are of utmost importance -more so than size
 - The length and height should ideally be 10:9.
 - Front and rear angulations should be equal for proper balance
 - Dogs are characteristically of larger frame and heavier bone than bitches
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The Head

- Is an impressive, distinctive feature of the Boerboel
- It should be blocky, broad, square and muscular, with well-filled cheeks and in proportion to the body.
- The cheekbone is well muscled.



The Head

- The muzzle is broad, deep and narrows slightly towards the nose
- Ideally the dog should have a scissors bite. (under bite of up to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch is acceptable)
- The lower lip is moderately tight without excessive jowls.



The Head

- The eyes are medium sized and widely spaced.
- The eyelids must be tight fitting with complete pigmentation
- The color of the eye is preferably dark brown but all shades of brown (preferably darker than the coat are acceptable)
- The ears are medium sized, V shaped, set wide and are carried close to the head.



Neck, Topline, Body

- The neck is powerful, of medium length, and forms a muscular arch. It flows smoothly into the sloping shoulders, gradually increasing in width from the head to the shoulders.



Neck, Topline, Body

The body is blocky, muscular and solid, with good depth and width. The back is broad and straight, with pronounced muscles.

- The loin is strong and muscular.
- The croup is broad, flat and strong, with well-defined musculature.
- The tail is thick and set fairly high.



Forequarters

- The forelegs are strong boned
- Elbows should be held close to the body.
- Length of the foreleg to the elbow is approximately 50% of the dog's height at the shoulder
- The chest is broad, deep and wide with well-sprung ribs and strong developed pectoral muscles.
- The shoulders are moderately sloping, powerful and muscular, with no tendency to looseness.



Forequarters

- The pastern is short, thick and strong
- The front feet are large, round, strongly boned and compact.
- The toes are well arched, with short, preferably black toenails and protected by hair in between.



Hindquarters

- The hindquarters are sturdy and muscular.
- The stifle should be sound, strong and moderately angulated.
- The upper thighs are broad, deep and muscular.
- The lower thighs have well defined muscles and show substance down to the hocks.
- The rear pastern is broad, relatively short and perfectly upright.



Coat and Color

- The coat is short, dense, smooth and shiny and the skin is well pigmented.
- The recognized colors are brown, red, fawn, or any color brindle. A black mask is desirable however, absence of a mask is acceptable.



Brown with Mask



Red with Mask

Colors



Red without mask



Brindle



Irish Mark

Color

Pie-Bald, total area of white may not exceed 33%.



Irish Marked, a dog with up to 30% white, with standard socks, collar and blaze markings.



Coat/Color Disqualifications

Long coat



Blue/Powder Coat



Black



Black W/White Markings



Movement

Movement is the ultimate test for correct conformation. The Boerboel is the most agile of the molosser breeds and it should be reflected in its movement.



- The Boerboel's movement is powerful and with purpose.
 - The front reach should compliment a strong rear drive.
 - The back remains firm and strong and without excess body roll.
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Temperament and Character

The Boerboel is a dominant and intelligent dog with strong protective instincts and a willingness to please.

- Stable
- Confident
- Calm



Loving with his family.

FAULTS

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Boerboel. Any deviation that detracts from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

- Severely out of proportion and balance
 - Reversal of sex characteristics
 - Pink paw pads
 - Yellow (bird of prey) eyes
 - Two or more missing teeth
 - Fearfulness or overly aggressive
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Disqualifications

- Blue Eye(s)
 - Entropion or ectropion
 - Under shot greater than 1/4 inch or overshot bite
 - Wry mouth
 - Prick ears
 - Black (without a trace of brindle), black with white markings
 - Blue colored (Powdered Coat) dogs
 - Long coat
 - Nose leather in any color other than black
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Functional



Versatile



Strong



Agile



Confident



Steady



Loyal



