

XOLOITZCUINTLI CLUB OF AMERICA

A DISCUSSION OF XOLOITZCUINTLI BREED TYPE

***KEY: Content quoted from the
AKC Xoloitzcuintli Standard
approved 2004***

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Breed Origins

The Xoloitzcuintli (show-low-itz-queen-tee) or Xolo is estimated to be three to four thousand years old. Its existence was first documented in the art of Western Mexico's Colima culture and later by various cultures of Ecuador and Peru.



By the late fifteenth century numerous references to the breed could also be found in Western Europe. It is generally believed that the Xolo originated as a spontaneous mutation in a population of native Indian dogs.



For a detailed history of the Xoloitzcuintli, including information on the Hairless Mutation - please refer to pages one through four in the handout accompanying this presentation.

The Xoloitzcuintli Club of America

The Official AKC Parent Club

Since its formation in 1986 the Xoloitzcuintli Club of America has granted equal privileges to all three sizes and both varieties as part of their effort to regain the breed's AKC recognition status.



The XCA studbook was
accepted by AKC in 2005,
the breed became eligible for
Performance and
Companion events in 2007,
and entered the
Miscellaneous Class January
1, 2009.



GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Xolo is an ancient, natural breed, molded by evolution rather than selective breeding. . moderate in all aspects of type and conformation, never extreme or overdone. Today the breed serves as a guard and companion. . .



*Clean, graceful outline,
equally combining elegance
and strength. There are two
varieties, hairless and coated,
identical except for coat and
dentition.*



SKIN AND COAT

Hairless: “Skin smooth and firm, tuft of short coarse hair on head and nape, feet, and lower portion of tail acceptable. Hair on other areas is a serious fault.”



The Xolo is a natural breed,
created and molded by
environment and function.
Moderation was the key to the
breed's survival. A good Xolo
possesses endurance, dexterity,
and excellent survival instincts.



Coated: “Hair is short and close to body, completely covering all areas of the dog. Long, soft, or wavy hair is a serious fault.”



From a functional standpoint, total hairlessness is the Xolo ideal but every mammal species, including whales, possess some hair. Most hairless Xolos have small amounts of short coarse hair on the brow, tail tip, and toes.



Patches of hair on the body or evidence of shaving should be strongly faulted, as should long, soft or wavy hair.

Coated Xolos have a dense, flat, hard outer coat and a moderate amount of undercoat.



There should be no thin or bare patches or areas of noticeably longer softer hair on the neck, chest, hind legs, or tail. The Xolo is a flat-coated breed.



A natural hairless pattern does not present an abrupt demarcation between coated and hairless areas. Even if the pattern has been neatened up the hair will gradually thin out and taper off at the edges of the pattern.



Skin Quality

A dog's skin possesses more oil glands and no sweat glands. Therefore large pores can set the stage for skin problems. Xolo skin is the product of thousands of years of evolutionary adaptation.



It is very functional by design,
tough, thick, and protective.
Xolo puppies are very wrinkly
and grow into their skin by
maturity. Adults have supple,
close fitting skin but usually
retain distinctive brow wrinkles
when alert.

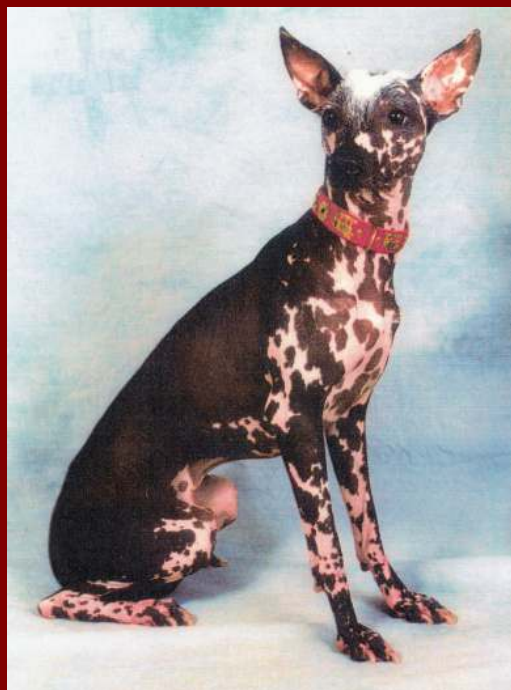


Color

Color: “Any solid color or combination of colors is allowed.”

Skin color ranges from shades of red and bronze and from pale gray to black. Recessive blue and chocolate with self coloring occurs in Xolos.

ALL COLORS ARE ACCEPTABLE



Solid colors are more common in the Xolo but broken color patterns, spotted markings, black and tan, masking, and brindle occur in both varieties. All colors should be given equal consideration in the ring.



Hairless dogs darken when exposed to the sun. Slate and blue dogs will turn a deep blue/black. Pink and liver shades will become darker bronze or mahogany.



However, even when dark, there will be some lighter and darker variations in the skin color. A perfectly even deep skin tone can only be achieved through artificial color.



Eye Color: The color varies from yellow to black, the darker being preferred, but lighter color is acceptable. Both eyes must be of the same color.



The eye rims may be less pigmented on light colored dogs. Light or spotted eye rims are tolerated but not preferred.

Nose is dark on dark colored dogs, lighter on light colored dogs.



Xolo expression should convey keenness, intelligence, and deliberation. Regardless of the dog's actual temperament, eye color plays a role in creating this impression.



Light brown eyes and pale eye rims detract from expression but this feature should be weighed in context of the rest of the dog's faults and virtues. Blue eyes, green eyes, or variations in pigmentation of the iris rarely occur in the Xolo and should not be encouraged.



Head Type and Skull Shape

Head and Expression:

“Thoughtful and intelligent, vivacious, conveying the noble and faithful character of the breed, will show distinctive brow wrinkles when at attention.”



The line from the muzzle to jaw should be clean and smooth and the skull and muzzle planes should be parallel. A concave (dishy) or convex (roman) muzzle plane is incorrect.



Skull is wedge shaped, when seen from above, wide and strong, gradually tapering to the muzzle. Excessively wide or narrow heads are a fault. Skull and muzzle planes are parallel.



Stop is not pronounced. Muzzle is longer than skull, straight when viewed in profile. The lower jaw is strong and well developed, free from throatiness.”



The Xolo skull is a blunt wedge shape with flat parallel head planes, a slightly tapering muzzle with sufficient underjaw. The muzzle is slightly longer than the skull.



For all sizes of Xolos, the head should be proportionally long to balance the desired length of neck and body proportions.



Like other Xolo traits, the wedge shaped head offers a moderate compromise. It is streamlined for wind resistance, but equipped with enough substance for proficient bite power.



Eye Shape

Proper eye shape is a product of correct skull shape. Xolos should have medium sized, wide set, almond shaped eyes. Although this trait is highly prized it is becoming rare.



Ear Size, Shape, and Set

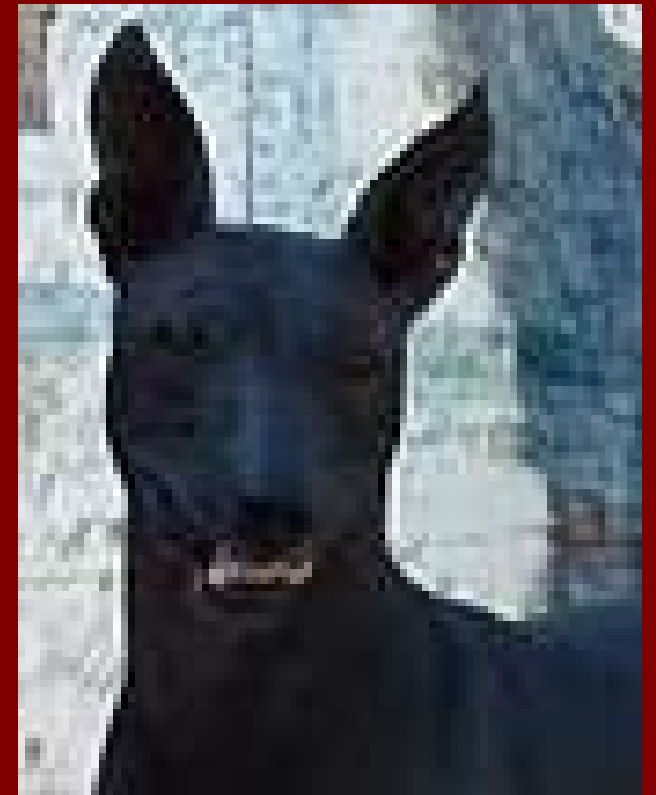
Ears are one of the most defining features of this breed. Correct ears are essential to the head, enhance expression, and reveal temperament.



Xolos commonly fold their ears back when apprehensive, tired or relaxed. Like other primitive breeds, the Xolo ears are erect and highly responsive. Their large size also helps to dissipate heat.



Ears: “Large, elegant and expressive, a thin delicate texture, tapering to a rounded tip. Ears are set high and carried strongly erect when alert.



Ears not standing erect by one year of age are a fault. The Xolo should never exhibit ear fringe. Cropping is prohibited.”

The Xolo's ears can be up to four inches in length according to breed authority Norman Pelham Wright. They should be set higher than the corner of the eye, thin and gently tapered to a rounded tip.



Because Xolo ears are so large, it can take up to a year for puppies to achieve strong ear carriage. Unlike the Chinese Crested, the Xolo should never have ear fringe.



Dentition

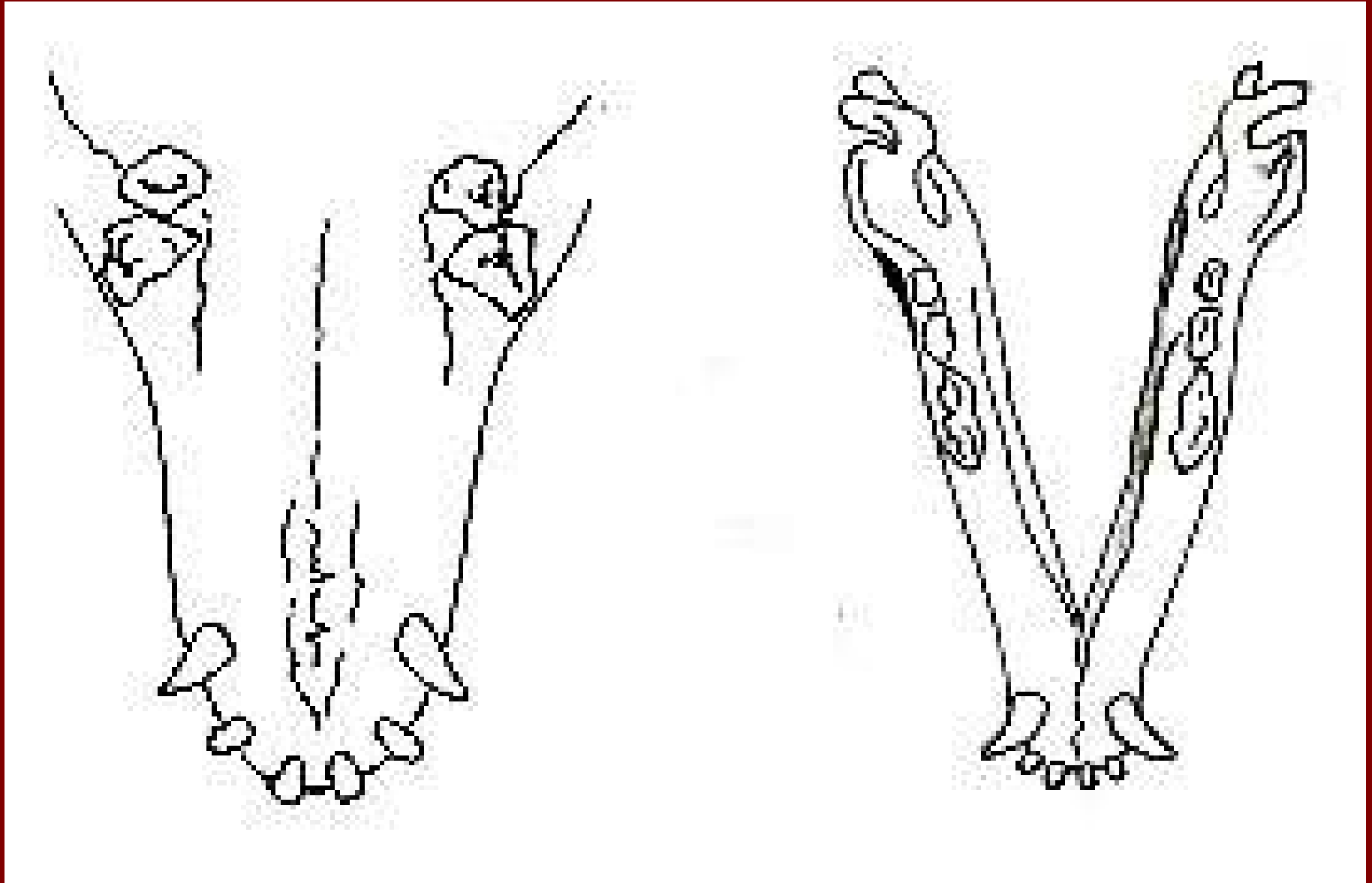
For 500 years, anecdotal evidence has strongly suggested a genetic link between the hairless trait and incomplete dentition.

A HAIRLESS MOUTH



The gene responsible for the hairless trait is now identified. Although its exact function is not yet completely understood, we know that the protein encoded by this mutation activates development of hair and teeth.

Typical examples of Hairless dentition
Missing premolars, incomplete incisors



Upper jaw

Lower jaw

Dentition: “Bite is neither undershot nor overshot. In the hairless variety, the absence of premolars is acceptable.

ANOTHER HAIRLESS MOUTH



Complete set of incisors preferred but lack thereof not to be penalized. In the coated variety full dentition is required.”

COATED MOUTH



Most hairless are lacking premolars. Some have incomplete incisors and primitive looking canine teeth. However many hairless also possess completely normal dentition.

Incomplete dentition
is a variable trait. It is
not a sign of breed
purity.

Because they do not carry the hairless gene, coated dogs should possess completely normal dentition.

Size and Substance

Size and substance are not just a matter of height and weight.

Angulation and correct shape of ribcage are equally crucial to creating a sturdy, resilient structure regardless of the size of the dog.



Size and Substance: “Height measured at highest point of withers.

Toy: Height at withers at least ten, and up to and including 14 inches.



***Miniature: Height at withers
over 14 inches, and up to and
including 18 inches.***

***Standard: Height at withers over
18 inches, and up to and
including 23 inches.***



***Dogs less than 10
inches, or over 24
inches are
disqualified.***

Body is well developed. All three sizes exhibit moderately balanced proportions and appear strong, covered with smooth, flat muscle, but never coarse heavy or over-muscled.



***Medium bone is desirable.
However, bone type should
be in proportion to the
overall size of the dog. The
larger the dog, the more
bone is acceptable.”***



For thousands of years, the Xolo has occurred naturally in a range of sizes.

No effort was made to artificially select for a particular size range until 1956 when FCM Standard limited size to a range of 13 inches to 22.5 inches.



FCM later created a division within this range and smaller dogs were designated as Miniature (Intermediate).



They recognized the Toy
(Miniature) size in 1999.
Ironically, only the Toy size
was recognized in the AKC
standard that was in effect
from 1888 to 1959.



XCA has always encouraged standardizing sizes. Even so, few breeders had the luxury of constructing a breeding program within one size range.



Toy, mini and standard
Xolos should be identical
in type, temperament,
structure, substance and
proportion.

Ideally, looking at a picture of a well made Xolo, it should be impossible to tell the size of the dog. However, this rarely happens.



The ideal Xolo is free from exaggeration with well defined flat muscling and oval shaped bone, conveying an impression of sturdiness and agility in all three sizes.



National
Specialty
Opposite Sex
Puppies

It is easier to maintain correct substance and proportions in the medium size Miniature Xolo but no size is free of problems in this area.



Standard Xolos can be too light and refined, or more often heavy and coarse. It is extremely difficult to preserve the sturdy solid ideal type in Toy Xolos.



Oval shaped bone
not only enhances
elegance, it is denser
and harder.



Structural Traits

The Xolo is noted for its moderate body type and a correspondingly low incidence of orthopedic problems.

This is an outline breed
and correct proportions,
topline and underline
are essential to a correct
silhouette.



Gait

The ideal gait is described as a trot. Although variations exist, specific traits are associated with breeds designed to move at a trot.



Hock joints not more than $1/5$ height at withers and pastern joint less than the length of the hock joint.



Chest should reach to
bottom of elbows or
lower. Moderate
balanced front and
rear angulation.



Light to medium body substance. Length of leg below chest equal to or slightly longer than depth of body.



Length of body from
forechest to rump
longer than height at
withers by 10 to 20
percent.



*Description of
Xoloitzcuintli Gait:
“A free and effortless
trot.”*



Exaggerated or high stepping movement is sometimes admired as flashy or pretty in toy breeds.

*Please do not
reward it in
Xolos.*

Proportion and Outline

Xolo proportion is
rectangular. The
standard asks for a
ratio of 9:10.

However, different combinations of traits can produce this proportion. It should be the overall product of longer vertebrae, a longer ribcage, and a short loin. Among other things a round ribcage, long loin, steep shoulders or short legs can create a rectangular shape.



Length and Set of Neck

Good length and arch of neck are essential to correct proportion and proper head carriage.

The arch of the neck should flow gracefully from the skull into the withers. The front of the neck should transition smoothly into forechest.



***Neck: “Long, elegant,
slightly arched,
blending smoothly
into the shoulders.”***



***Proportion and Outline: “The Xolo
is lean and well proportioned.
Body slightly longer than height,
measured from point of shoulder
blade to end of rump.”***



Measuring Proportion

Xolo outline should be smooth. The brisket reaches to the elbow.



The abdomen is well muscled and moderately tucked up. This body shape is a tried and true canine prototype, serviceable and adaptable for many uses.



Xolo body length is measured from point of shoulder to end of rump.

Ideal Xolo proportions were first described by Norman Pelham Wright in the first version of the Xolo standard in 1956 as a 9:10 ratio - slightly rectangular, not long but definitely not short-backed.



The ribcage should be notably longer than the loin and the overall body length should exceed the height at the withers.



Leg Length

Breeds designed to move at a trot should have leg length (from paw to elbow) approximately equal to body depth from top of shoulder to bottom of ribcage.



Leg Length: “Legs are to be straight and parallel when viewed from all sides. Set well under the body to allow for a long and elegant stride.”



Topline

Xolo topline should remain level when the dog is moving.

The Xolo standard calls for a rounded croup. The transition from croup to tail should not be abrupt or cause noticeable changes in the topline.



Topline: “Neck long, slightly arched, blending smoothly into shoulders. Topline is level with slight arch over loin. . . .



Back is level and firm . . .

Slight arch over loin. . .

Croup is well muscled,

slightly rounded, and

broad.”



Xolo topline should flow smoothly from neck over the withers to a strong rounded rump. The slight loin arch blends smoothly into a rounded croup. This arch is largely the product of muscle development to enhance strength and agility.



The slightly angled croup allows the hind legs to get up under the dog more easily. This provides more agility at the expense of rear extension so this angle should not be extreme.



Depth of Brisket and Fill of Chest

Underline is equally crucial to correct outline and this feature is often overlooked.

It is a combination of a deep long ribcage and strong loin muscles which create the tuck up and aid the flexing ability of the back as the dog moves faster.



***Depth of Brisket and Fill
of Chest: “The brisket
should reach to point of
elbow.***



A 21st National
Specialty
Winner

The ribcage is deep and oval, of good length, with sufficient ribspring to produce a rounded shape, but never barrel shaped.

***The loin is muscular,
with a smooth
underline showing a
slight tuck up.”***



A Xolo should have proportionally greater width of chest than a Chinese Crested. This doesn't mean that barrel chests or loaded shoulders are desirable.



The body width should be approximately equal across the shoulders, widest point of the ribcage and the hips.



Xolo Angulation: “Shoulders are long and sloping, well laid back, with flat smooth shoulder blades providing free movement.



Upper arm is long enough to allow for movement. Elbows should be firm and tight allowing for reach.



***Hindquarters -
angulation of
proportionate depth to
allow for strong driving
rear.***



***Croup should not
be flat or steeply
angled.***

*“Feet are hare feet,
webbed with well
arched toes.”*



Flat, splayed feet are not as prevalent as round feet which are often accompanied by round bone, shorter legs, and an overall cobby look.

Tail

Xolos should have long, straight, fine tails reaching to the hock.



Tail Description: “Tail is set low; long and fine, reaching to the hock.

*Carried in a graceful
curve but not over
the back when in
motion.”*



The Xolo's long whip
like tail has appeared
in breed descriptions
for over a thousand
years.

Set on low, long and fine, it can be carried either low or parallel to the back, but never high or curled.



In the hairless, a few short coarse hairs on the tip are acceptable but this should never resemble a tail plume. The absence of hair on the tail is equally acceptable.

TEMPERAMENT:

A wide range of temperament exists in Xolos. Judges should be aware of what is considered ideal, acceptable, and unacceptable.

For instance, cold weather will affect the ring performance of most hairless dogs.



***Temperament:
“Happy, alert,
intelligent. Timidity
or aggressiveness a
serious fault.”***



The typical Xolo is calm
and tolerant but always
alert and instinctively
watchful.



This breed has a pronounced guardian instinct, characterized by watchfulness and loyalty towards its owner.

An extremely happy,
outgoing, excessively
friendly, or submissive
demeanor is **NOT**
characteristic of this
breed.



*After a fifty year
absence, we are
thrilled to have our
Xolos back in the
AKC ring!!*

