SABBS | GLOBAL

APPRAISAL & REGISTRATION

2023

APPRAISAL

At present, SABBS hosts appraisal days in South Africa, Namibia, Africa, North America, Canada, the UK, Europe and Scandinavia throughout the year. The dates of appraisal days appear under Diary.

Members interested in helping to host and arrange additional appraisal events, are welcome to submit requests to their regional representatives, or to the coordinator, Anemarí Pretorius ().

The following requirements must be met when presenting a dog for appraisal:

1) One of the following must be submitted:
   a) The Birth Certificate, in the case of a first appraisal, or
   b) The Registration Certificate, in the case of a reappraisal.
2) The dog must be at least 12 (twelve) months old.
3) The dog must be microchipped.

The Head Office sends registration certificates to members after the appraisal results have been checked and processed by SA Stud Book. The Office will issue a registration certificate and publish the appraisal results of a particular dog only if all documentation (e.g. birth certificate, microchip number, and DNA profiles of both parents) are in hand.

Appraisal results are also published on the web as they become available, and provide valuable information on how the offspring from various Boerboel studs performed at their appraisals.

The Value of Linear Classification in Boerboels

Written by Kenny van der Merwe

Introduction

Phenotypic improvement of domestic animals has been around for at least 2000 years.

Selection in breeding programmes focusses on three areas: economical, functional and aesthetic traits. In dogs, the initial focus was on functionality, which in later years shifted to aesthetics in many dog breeds as the need for working dogs diminished. SABBS strives for a balance of functionality, health, and aesthetic traits in its appraisal of Boerboels.

The classification of animals according to the traits they exhibit, proved to be the fastest way of improving multiple traits in the least number of generations. With known classification points, a breeder can make informed decisions regarding the use of an animal for corrective mating.

The Best Linear Unbiased Prediction (BLUP) method of classification represents a modern scientific approach to the classification of animals for breed improvement. Through BLUP, these animals can receive breeding values for the different traits that will contribute to even faster genetic progress through informed targeted selection.

In adopting the BLUP classification system, SABBS once again places itself at the forefront of scientific dog breeding practice.

Why measure?

In 1980, the USA implemented a linear classification system for other breeds, which holds the following advantages compared to the old system of subjective assessment:

1) It is more accurate than the old system because a characteristic is described numerically;
2) This numerical value is distributed between two biological extremes;
3) The linear system describes only one measurable characteristic at a time, and not a composition of characteristics as in the old system, and
4) The system represents an objective measurement of characteristics and not a subjective judging.

Characteristic of a linear trait

1) The description of a linear trait is as follows:
   a) The trait must have a biological range.
   b) The trait must be heritable.
   c) The trait must have variance.
   d) The trait must be focused on a working dog.
2) Linear classification is merely a description of a trait.
3) Degree rather than Desirable is recorded.
4) Variation within the population
5) Each linear trait should describe a unique part of the dog which is not covered by a combination of the other linear traits.

Scale of measurement

1) All traits are measured on a scale from 1 to 9, e.g.
   a) 1 is a very small dog and 9 is a very big dog
   b) 1 is a very straight angulation and 9 is excessive angulation
   c) 1 is a dog with weak pigmentation and 9 is a dog with strong pigmentation
   d) 9 is not always the ideal

2) Dogs are inspected, classified and assigned grades/scores ranging from 50 – 97 points or %. The most common scale for mature dogs is:

   - Excellent 90 +
   - Very Good 85 – 89
   - Good 80 – 84
   - Fair 75 – 79
   - Poor/Insufficient 50 – 74

The final class and score is derived from a breakdown of the main functional areas of the dog.

Next: Description of each trait

Description of each trait

General Appearance 12%

Height (Too low / Too high)
Volume (Lack of / Ideal)
Balance (Imbalance / Perfect proportion)
Gender authenticity (♂ too feminine / ♀ too masculine)

Head & Face 26%

- Broad. (Narrow / Broad)
Deep (Shallow / Deep)
Square (Round / Ideal)
Circumference. (Too small / Oversized)
Typical Boerboel (Other breeds / Distinctive BB head)
Stop (Absent / Prominent)
Filled between eyes (Not filled / Flat)
Teeth/bite (Undershot / Overshot (parrot))
Nasal bone: deep (Shallow / Deep)
Nasal bone: broad (Narrow / Broad)
Nasal bone: length (Short / Long)
Eyes: setting (Narrow/Sunken / Wide/protruding
Eyelids (Entropion / Ectropion)
Ears (Small/rose/erect / Too long)
Neck Shape (Long/narrow / Ideal)

Forequarter 12%

Shoulder: attachment (Loose / Fixed)
Angulation (Straight / Over angulated)
Elbow (Turn in / Turn out)
Front legs: musculature (Lacking / Ideal)
Front legs: thickness (Thin / Ideal)
Pasterns: standing position (Turn in / Turn out)
Pasterns: moving tread (Tread through / Straight)
Front paws: Size (Small / Big)
Front paws: shape (Flat/splayed toes / Ideal, well cushioned)

Centrepiece 9%

Topline (Hollow / Arched)
Loin: Deep & Broad (Long / Short)
Back: Broad (Narrow / Broad)
Chest: broad (Narrow / Broad)
Ribcage (Flat/inadequate / Well sprung)

Hindquarter 19%

Croup: gradient (Droopy / Flat)
Croup: width (Narrow / Broad)
Hindquarter wide, broad, deep (Lacking / Sufficient)
Hindquarter muscular (Lacking / Ample)
Tail attachment (Low / High)
Angulation (Straight / Over angulated)
Stance (Bandy / Cow hocked)
Hind pasterns: Length (Short / Long)

Coat 5%

Skin (Too little / Excessive)
Lips (Too little / Excessive)
Pigmentation (Lacking / Ideal)

Temperament 9%

Temperament (Insecure/Afraid / Aggressive)

Movement 8%

Resilient /Boyant (Stiff / Ideal)
Parallel (Not aligned / Aligned)
Topline (Rolling / Fixed)

Intermediate optimum

1) Linear classification is only a description.
2) The breed profile determines where the ideal for each trait is e.g.
    a) What does the breed lack?
    b) What does the ideal Boerboel for SA look like?

What about a final class?

1) A final class will have eight subdivisions.
2) The subdivisions as well as the final class must be calculated and not assigned by the classifier.
3) The weight on each trait should be determined by the Board with input from experts.
4) Accumulated classification data on each measured trait over time, provides objective basis for the correction of any trends in the deviation from the breed standard.

The Value of Linear Classification in Boerboels

Improving quality and transparency of data collection and monitoring appraisers

Animals are routinely scored for conformation by specially trained appraisers. It is important that data collected in a consistent and transparent manner. This ensures the quality of data and enhances the public's understanding of the process.

Practical considerations for the implementation of the classification system

1) One organisation should oversee classifications within the evaluating system.
2) There should be a head-appraiser in charge of training and supervising other appraisers within the evaluating system to achieve and maintain a uniform level of classification.
3) Appraisers must record the trait as observed without adjustment e.g. age, sex or sire.
4) The working information provided to the appraiser should make no reference to the pedigree, owner, or breeder.
5) Appraisers should always rotate classification areas to ensure a good data connection between regions and to minimize the sequential scoring of dogs by the same appraiser. This procedure reduces this risk of appraiser/regional genetics interaction.
6) An advisory group should be installed with expertise in the field of conformation classification, statistics, breeding, and training, in order to monitor and advise on the improvement to the classification system.

Training and monitoring of appraisers

The International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) recommends standards for the monitoring and performance evaluation of appraisers. This is an important part of ensuring the standardisation linear classification.

Objectives

Improve accuracy of data collection within a country, all appraisers should:

1. Apply the same trait definition.
2. Apply the same mean.
3. Apply the same spread of scores.

Tools for objectives:

1. National group training sessions.
2. Statistical monitoring of individual appraisers' performance with reference to mean, spread and normal distribution of scores.
3. Compute the correlation between the scores of one appraiser and the group. This shows the quality of harmonisation of trait definition between appraisers.
4. Use a group of dogs that is representative of the dog population for training session.
5. Deviations of individual scores are discussed and the correct score for a specific trait on a dog is clarified.

National group *training sessions*

One way of improving harmonisation of scoring by appraisers is having regular training sessions with a group of appraisers.

There are many ways to accomplish trait harmonisation through training sessions. Normally a training session consists of scoring a group of dogs and the scores of individual appraiser are compared with the scores of the other appraisers.

Attention points are:

Scores of each appraiser are analysed per trait using some analysis tools:

1. Compute the mean and standard deviation of the deviations of the scores on dogs per trait, per appraiser.
2. The deviation is the difference between the score and the average group score for a trait, for a dog. This gives insight in the scoring of individual appraiser: always above or below the mean, more variation in scoring a trait than the group appraiser. (With a test it can be shown if differences found are significant.)
3. Instead of scoring a group of dogs once, the dogs can be scored twice by the appraisers, for example in the morning and in the afternoon. Based on these scores (approximately 20) the repeatability per appraiser per trait can be computed.

National Selection Index (NSI) made up as follows:

1. FTI = Functional / Type Index (Linear classification)
2. FHI = Functional / Health Index (Hips / EB / Prolaps etc.)
3. FTI = Functional / Temperament Index (Test)
4. Estimated Breeding Values (EBV) are also made up with the following:
    i. Fertility
    ii. Motherly Instincts
    iii. Longevity

To conclude

1. Objective measurement brings about scientific breed improvement.
2. The responsibility for improvement of the breed lies with Board.
3. Improvement will only be achieved if subjective opinion can be put aside and the best, scientifically substantiated, decision can be taken for the breed.

Registration

The Boerboel – a declared South African landrace – is registered in terms of the Animal Improvement Act (No. 62 of 1998) under the auspices of SABBS as the only legally registered breeders' society for this breed. No other grouping is recognised to officially represent, register, appraise or host Boerboel events and shows. SABBS' Bylaws – primarily A (Recording and Registration) and B (SA Boerboel Database and Registers) - deal extensively with the legal and administrative registration requirements.

SABBS offers members an infrastructure, systems and support systems of the highest possible standard. Its registering authority, SA Stud Book, is a member of the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR), and is audited by them every three years.

To help SABBS serve you efficiently, and to ensure registrations can be processed, please provide:

1. **Queries:** Your full name, member number, kennel name, contact details, the full name and registration number of the dog(s), and attach relevant documents, if available.
2. **Appraisals:** Relevant documentation (birth/registration certificates, microchip numbers); and to the Head Office: (DNA profiles, health certificates, service certificates, transfer of ownership forms; per capita lists, etc.).