

YOU BE THE JUDGE

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THE BOXER

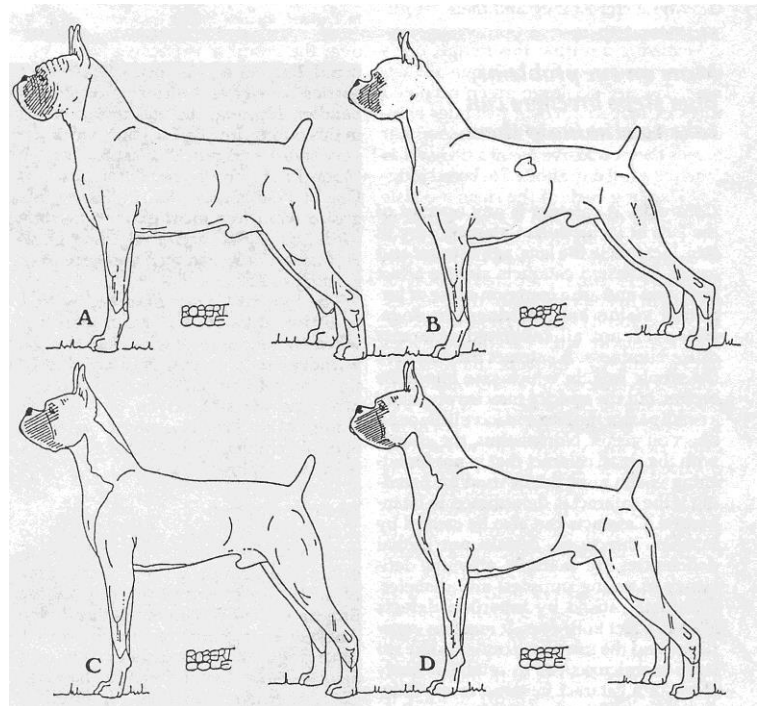
In judging these four relatively sound Boxers, consideration should be given to general appearance and overall balance, to relationship of substance and elegance and to form, strength and beauty of head. Taking these factors into consideration, one of these four particular examples stands out. Second place should not be difficult to find. Deciding between third and fourth place involves consideration of a multitude of departures. There is, however, something about one of these two dogs that is considered to be wrong – very wrong – which dictates fourth place.

DOG A

This example represents a bully type, very wrong for the Boxer and considered by breeders to be a serious departure. He is, however, sound, but sound is not enough. He has balance, but not Boxer balance. He has substance, but not the required combination of Boxer substance and elegance.

While this illustration is somewhat overdrawn in respect to the bully type, it is done so purposely. About the only good thing that can be said about his head is that it balances with his heavy body. Note that his head has parallel planes and this is wrong. Wrinkles on the forehead, on the top and on the sides of the muzzle are too deep, thick and profuse. This head has little or no appeal.

The neck is overly thick, and the dewlap disturbs. The body is deeper and more powerful than required. The topline is level, rather than slightly sloped, and he lacks light tuck up. Bone front and rear is too heavy. I have placed this bully example fourth.



DOG B

This example has many good individual parts, but they do not come together as a balanced whole. He has good neck, shoulders, forechest, depth of body and bone. He departs from typical in nine ways. I have given him three head faults, three body faults, two foreleg faults and one hindquarter fault.

His muzzle lacks depth and is forced back into the skull. The skull is apple rather than slightly arched, and the occiput is pronounced. The body has too much tuck up and arch over the loin. The small white marking on this fawn dog's torso is not desirable.

One foreleg fault is more obvious than the other. The most obvious is the excessive slope to the front pastern. Less obvious is the lack of required leg length. A Boxer's foreleg should be as long as the body is

deep. This Boxer's elbow (level with the brisket) is less than half the height of the dog. Short legs take away from correct Boxer balance. This is my third place dog.

DOG C

By itself, without comparison to more typical Dog D, this relatively sound, balanced example is intended to have certain appeal. Compared to Dog D, he can be seen to be a watered down version. As such, he provides by degree a fuller appreciation of Boxer type. I have subtracted or pared down nine virtues. Can you identify the nine? None relate to the head.

The neck has been pared down. The forechest is not as well defined, the withers are not as prominent, the brisket is not as deep. The shoulders are not as well laid back, and this has caused the body to raise slightly above the elbow. The topline does not have a slope, nor does the pelvis have required length. Angulation has been reduced at both stifle and hock. This is my second place dog.

DOG D

This example represents the closest, of these four, to typical. He stands the maximum 25 in. at the withers (23 ½ for bitches) and weighs 75 lbs. (the CKC Standard does not suggest a weight). He is square – about as long as he is tall. I have given him what I believe to be correct Boxer head, length of neck, length of body, length of loin, topline, croup, tail set, length of leg, angulation front with rear, tuck up, bone and feet. This example combines balance of substance and elegance, and each of his well-proportioned parts flow into the next to produce a balanced whole.

Special attention has been paid to the Boxer's unique head. The Standard advises that “the beauty of the head depends upon the harmonious proportion between muzzle and skull.” I see the Boxer's muzzle as 1/3 of the Boxer's head and the length of the muzzle as 2/3 the width of the skull. I measure muzzle length from tip of nose to inside corner of the eye.

I have included the few wrinkles on the forehead that occur when the ears are erect, as well as the folds that run down the sides of the muzzle from the lower edge of the stop. The dark mask has been confined to the muzzle. White markings do not exceed the allowable 1/3 (more is a disqualification). The broad nose is slightly turned up (not mentioned in the Standard). The tip is set slightly higher than the root of the muzzle. The jaw is undershot. The lower edge of the upper lip rests on the edge of the lower lip, so that the chin is clearly perceptible when viewed from front or side.

The eyes are dark brown, forward looking, not too small, not protruding or deeply set. Rims are dark; there is no haw. The top of the skull is slightly arched. There is a distinct stop. The size of the head matches the body.

The round neck is what I consider to be ‘ample’ length, with an elegant arch blending smoothly into high withers. The forechest is well defined. The shoulder blades are nicely laid back. The upper arm is long. The elbow is level with the deep brisket and set at half the height of the dog. The forelegs are straight, the strong pasterns slope slightly.

I have drawn the firm topline as sloping slightly; however, there is nothing in the Standard that so directs. The Standard only directs that the flat, broad croup (from hip bones to tail set) slopes, not the topline. The docked tail is set on high and carried upwards.

The back is short and well ribbed up. The loin is short and tuck up is light. The pelvis is long. The hindquarters are strongly muscled with angulation in balance with that of the forequarters.