

Extended Breed Standard of **THE ROTTWEILER**

Produced by
The National Rottweiler Council (Australia)
in conjunction with
The Australian National Kennel Council

Updated 1st July 2009

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HISTORY OF THE BREED

The Rottweiler is considered to be one of the oldest breeds of dog. Its origin goes back to Roman times. These dogs were kept as herders or driving dogs. They marched over the Alps with the Roman legions, protecting the humans and driving their cattle.

In the region of Rottweil, these dogs met and mixed with the native dogs in a natural crossing.

The main task of the Rottweiler now became the driving and guarding of the herds of cattle and the defence of their masters and their property. This breed acquired its name from the old federal town of Rottweil and was known as the 'Rottweil butcher's dog'. The butchers bred this type of dog purely for performance and usefulness. In due course, a first rate watch and droving dog evolved which could also be used as a draught dog.

When at the beginning of the 20th century, various breeds were needed for police service, the Rottweiler was amongst those tested. It soon became evident that the breed was highly suitable for the tasks set by police service and therefore they were officially recognised as police dogs in 1910.

In the early 1920's the ADRK (Allgemeiner Deutscher Rottweiler Klub - the General German Rottweiler Club) was formed which brought in strict rules for breeding including hip X-rays, proof of working ability and correct temperament and conformation.

The following extract, written by Barbara Hoard-Dillon, an internationally recognised judge, identifies the profile of the Rottweiler of today:

'The Rottweiler has become a concept worldwide for faithfulness, dependability and many varied tasks. The dog can be used as a service dog, protection dog, herding dog, cart dog, tracking dog, rescue dog, therapy dog, just to mention a few of the possibilities. The extent of uses is so great that not all of them can even be mentioned.

It is a credit to the goodwill of the Rottweiler, as well as the skills of the true breeder, that the area of use for the Rottweiler is so large and varied.'

- **GENERAL APPEARANCE**

The Rottweiler is a medium to large size, stalwart dog, neither heavy nor light and neither leggy or weedy. His correctly proportioned, compact and powerful build leads to the conclusion of great strength, agility and endurance.

Important proportions. The length of the body measured from the point of the sternum (breastbone) to the ischiatic tuberosity, should not exceed the height at the withers by, at most, 15%.

Rottweilers should be large enough to create the desired impression of a robust, athletic dog. The dog should convey the appearance of a working dog, fit and muscular, not overweight, with waistline visible as a slight indentation behind the ribs. Dogs are more massive throughout, with larger frame and heavier bone than bitches. Bitches are distinctly feminine, but not weak in substance or structure. It is important that a Rottweiler be well balanced front and rear and not front heavy.

The correct Rottweiler has a functional body, coupled with an intelligence, as befits an effective working companion guard. A dog bursting with vitality, black with reddish brown (mahogany coloured), well defined markings, that does not lack refinement, in spite of heavily built general appearance. A dog that displays a lethargic attitude, or lack of purpose or interest, should be penalised, as this is not typical of the desired Rottweiler. Elegance is not looked for as in the Dobermann.

Rottweilers showing marked reversal of sexual type, i.e. very feminine dogs, or very masculine bitches, should be disqualified and receive no award in the show ring.

Measurements and proportions of a Rottweiler

Lack of balance and proportion affect the dog in his capacity for work as well as beauty. Considerable weight should be given to these factors when judging. The eye of the experienced judge can sum up and assess the General Impression, however for the inexperienced a few measurements are helpful.

LEGEND

1-3 Height at withers (ratio between height at withers and length of trunk is 9 to 10 approximately)

1-2 Depth of chest (not more, but also not much less than 50% of the height at withers)

1-2-1 Girth of chest (height at withers PLUS 20 cms approximately)

4-5 Total length of body (does not exceed the height at withers by more than 15%)

6-7 Total length of head (muzzle to skull = 1: 1.5)

8-9 Muzzle

9-10 Skull

11 Tip of ear

HEAD PROPORTIONS Muzzle : Skull = 1: 1.5

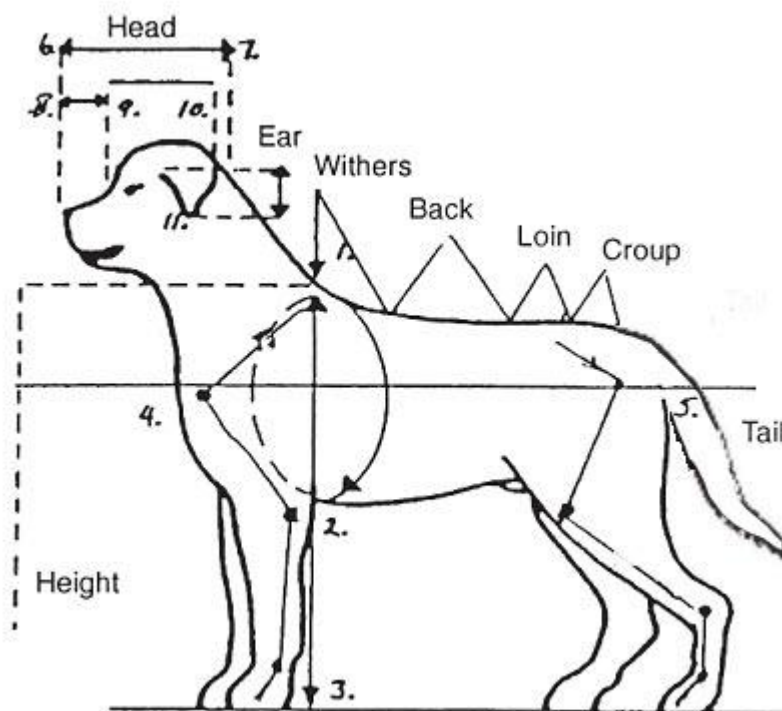


Illustration 1

POINTS FOR MEASUREMENTS (Numbers in illustration above)

1	Withers	The highest point of the shoulder blades (the point from which the height of the dog is measured)
4	Prosternum area	The most forward part of the breastbone, which is in the area between the points of the shoulder (the point from which the length of the dog is measured)
5	Ischiatic tuberosity	Point of buttock from which the length of the dog is measured. (The caudal end of the hip bone, its ischiatic portion)
8	Nose	Nostrils
9	Stop	The step up from muzzle to skull. End of facial region, area between the borders of the maxilla (upper jaw) and the frontal bones (forming the forehead)
10	Occiput	Upper back point of skull. Also point 7
11	Tip of ear	End of ear lobe triangle

Muzzle proportion to head is 1:1.5.

Desired measurements of the head for dogs are 9-10 cms from tip of nose to the corner of the eye, skull 15 cms.

Desired measurements for bitches are 8-9 cms from tip of nose to the corner of the eye, skull 13 cms .(These are Standard Country of Origin measurements).

Bone and muscle mass must be sufficient to balance the frame, giving a compact and powerful appearance.

Weak bone and muscle should be considered a serious working fault, and not typical of breed type.

- **CHARACTERISTICS**

Rottweiler breeders aim at a dog of abundant strength, black coated with clearly defined rich tan markings, whose powerful appearance is noble and is exceptionally well suited to being a companion, service and working dog.

With a basically friendly and peaceable nature, it acts quietly, in a wait and see attitude to influences in its environment, before responding appropriately.

The behaviour of the Rottweiler in the show ring should be that of a controlled animal, willing and adaptable, trained to submit to examination of mouth, testicles etc. However, an aloof or reserved dog should not be penalised.

A belligerent attitude between one Rottweiler and another in the ring should not be penalised, providing the dog is completely under control of the handler.

- **TEMPERAMENT**

Behaviour and character. Being good natured, placid in basic disposition and fond of children, he is very devoted, obedient, biddable and eager to work. His appearance is natural and rustic, his behaviour self assured, steady and fearless. He reacts to his surroundings with great alertness.

It is hoped that judges will look for the correct calm, stable, alert, confident disposition required in this breed when assessing their exhibits. A Rottweiler cannot be true to type if it does not display the correct attitude, as well as the correct conformation.

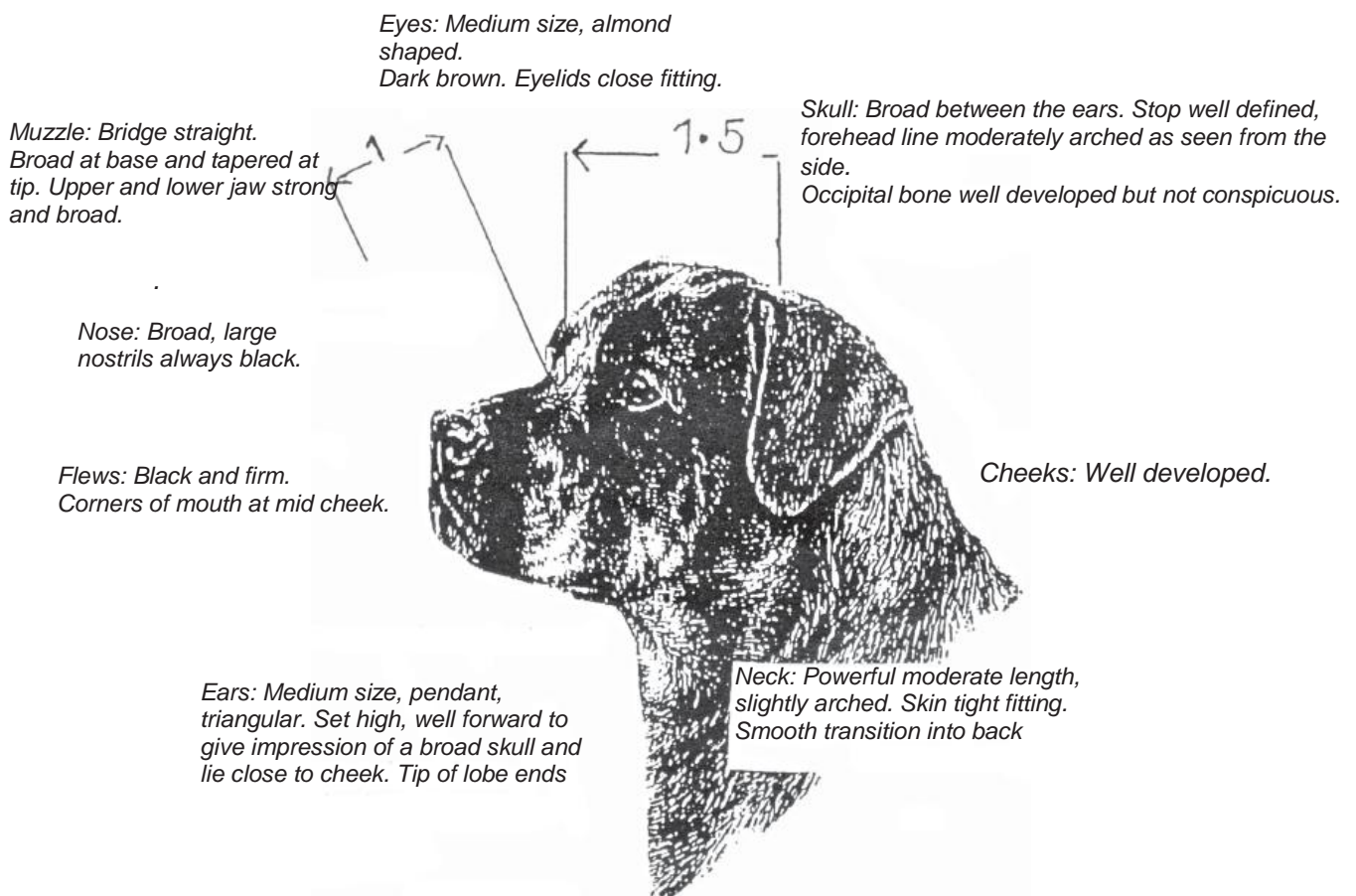
Type in the Rottweiler should not be separated from the requirement that the Rottweiler is a working dog. Rottweilers who are dull, apathetic or lacking the necessary vitality of the breed should be penalised.

Those Rottweilers who display excessive nervousness, viciousness, suspicion, or exhibit cowardly behaviour in the show ring should be disqualified and receive no award.

• HEAD AND SKULL

- Cranial region:** *Of medium length, the skull broad between the ears. Forehead line moderately arched as seen from the side. Occipital bone well developed without being conspicuous.*
- Stop:** *Well defined.*
- Facial region:**
- Nose:** *Well developed, more broad than round with relatively large nostrils, always black.*
- Muzzle:** *The foreface should appear neither elongated nor shortened in relation to the cranial region. Straight nasal bridge, broad at base, moderately tapered.*
- Lips:** *Black, close fitting, corner of mouth not visible, gums as dark as possible.*
- Jaw:** *Upper and lower jaw strong and broad.*
- Cheeks:** *Zygomatic arches pronounced.*
- Skin:** *Skin on the head overall is tight fitting. When the dog is alert, the forehead may be slightly wrinkled.*

Illustration 2



Cranial region: Of medium length, the skull broad between the ears. Forehead line moderately arched as seen from the side. Occipital bone well developed without being conspicuous.

Skull broad, with visible, but not over pronounced, central frontal depression. The skull is gently arched in both directions, tapering only slightly towards the eyes. The skull should also be broad, rather than narrow, when viewed from the front, but not so broad as to be heavy or unbalanced. It should be slightly rounded towards the temples.

Stop: Well defined.

The stop should be more pronounced in males, which contributes to their masculine expression. The stop flows steeply into the bridge of the nose. A flat forehead and an unduly prominent stop are undesirable.

Facial region

Nose: Well developed, more broad than round with relatively large nostrils, always black.

The bridge of the nose is straight and slightly tapered towards the tip. A nasal bridge that is dished or arched is not correct, although a slightly arched nasal bridge is not uncommon and should not be heavily penalised. However, an angular nasal bridge coupled with lack of stop is undesirable as it spoils the breed type.

Muzzle: The foreface should appear neither elongated nor shortened in relation to the cranial region. Straight nasal bridge, broad at base, moderately tapered.

The muzzle should be strong, deep and well formed, and rounded at the sides. Muzzle proportion to skull is 1:1.5. See Illustration 2.

Lips: Black, close fitting, corner of mouth not visible, gums as dark as possible.

Lips should be moderately full, just covering the lower jaw, and well set on, without allowing the corners of the mouth to be too prominent. Lips and gums should be black, although it is not uncommon for some mottling or loss of pigment to occur in the gum line, particularly in bitches and older Rottweilers; however, this cannot be taken into account in the show ring. When judging two dogs of the same quality, preference should be given to the Rottweiler with darker pigmentation of gums and jaw.

Jaw: Upper and lower jaw strong and broad.

Depth as well as strength of both jaws is required. A weak underjaw is highly undesirable.

Cheeks: Zygomatic arches pronounced.

The zygomatic arches are the bony ridges forming the lower edge of the eye sockets on each side of the skull, and extending to the base of the ear. They should not be protruding or coarse, but strongly muscled.

Skin: Skin on the head overall is tight fitting. When the dog is alert, the forehead may be slightly wrinkled.

A head without wrinkled skin is desired.

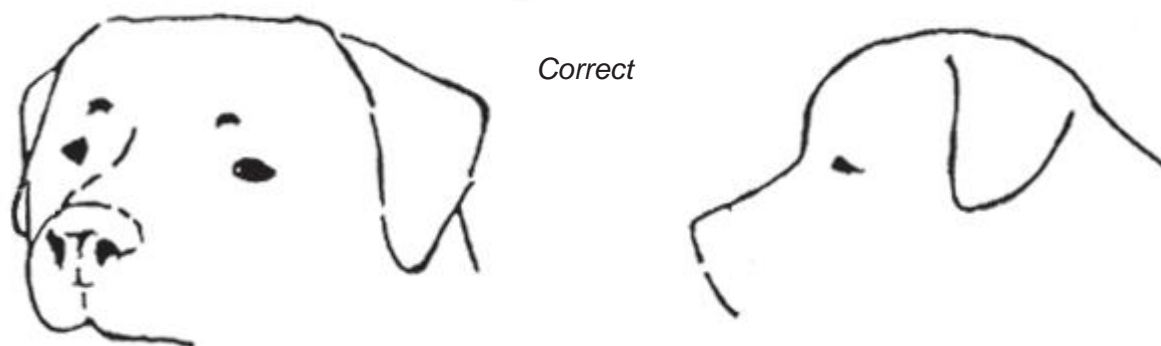
Eyes: Of medium size, almond shaped, dark brown in colour. Eyelids close fitting.

Rottweilers with yellow eyes (giving a piercing look resembling that of a bird of prey), eyes of different colour, as well as Rottweilers with eyelids that are loose or turned inward (entropion), or with eyelids that turn outwards (ectropion) should be disqualified and receive no award in the show ring. If an eyelid operation is concealed, this is condemned as deceitful and should be penalised in accordance with show regulations.

Ears: Medium size, pendant, triangular, wide apart, set on high. With the ears laid forward close to the head, the skull appears to be broadened.

The ear leather should be relatively heavy in order to permit the ear to lie close to the head. Ears should finish at mid cheek, approximately at the line of the zygomatic arch (cheek bone). Ears should be carried well forward so that they cover the ear hole. The tip of the ear should be slightly rounded. When alert, correct ear carriage gives the impression of extra breadth to the skull, the ears being tight against the cheek. See Illustration 3.

Illustration 3



Jaws/Teeth: Upper and lower jaw strong and broad. Strong, complete dentition (42 teeth) with scissor bite, the upper incisors closely overlapping the lower incisors.

The teeth should be strong and large, with the incisors set square to the jaw. Flawless, complete dentition with a scissor bite is demanded. Molars also are required to be in correct alignment. Correct dentition is regarded as vital to the Rottweiler. Dogs with missing molars and premolars, overshot, undershot or wry mouths, should receive no award in the show ring.

Neck: Strong, of fair length, well muscled, slightly arched, clean, free from throatiness, without dewlap.

Powerful, round and broad, heavily muscled, flowing from the shoulders in a slightly arched line. Faults: Too long, too short, thin or weak.

• FOREQUARTERS

Seen from the front, the front legs are straight and not placed too closely to each other. The forearm seen from the side, stands straight and vertical. The slope of the shoulder blade is about 45 degrees to the horizontal.

Shoulders: Well laid back.

Upper arm: Close fitting to the body.

Forearm: Strongly developed and muscular.

Pasterns: Slightly springy, strong, not steep.

Shoulders: Well laid back.

A long well placed shoulder is desired. Shoulder blade and upper arm should be at an angle of about 115 degrees.

Upper arm: Close fitting to the body.

Equal in length to shoulder blade, set so that elbows are well under the body.

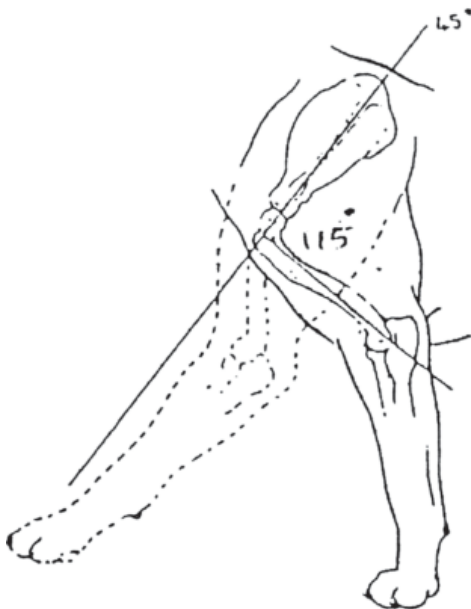
The distance from wither to elbow and elbows to ground should be equal.

Pasterns: Slightly springy, strong, not steep.

Pasterns should not be too sloping, and yet must not be straight. The ideal pastern is about ten degrees short of perpendicular to the ground as shown

in Illustration 4.

Illustration 4



Correct front – Legs and feet straight

Correct pastern and foot profile



- **BODY**

Back: Straight, strong, firm. Loins short, strong and deep.

Croup: Broad, of medium length, slightly rounded. Neither flat nor falling away.

Chest: Roomy, broad and deep (approximately 50% of the shoulder height) with well developed forechest and well sprung ribs.

Belly: Flanks not tucked up.

See Illustration 1

Proportions: Length of body should be slightly longer than the height at withers and not exceeding it by more than 15%.

Back: Straight, strong, firm. Loins short, strong and deep.

The definition of the back in the Rottweiler should be interpreted as the portion between the withers and the loins only.

Croup: Broad, of medium length, slightly rounded. Neither flat nor falling away.

The angle of the hip bone should be about 20 degrees from the horizontal.

Chest: Roomy, broad and deep (approximately 50% of the shoulder height) with well developed forechest and well sprung ribs.

In order to facilitate free forehand reach, it is preferable that the depth of the chest be slightly less than 50% of the height at the withers, rather than slightly more (i.e. 49%).

Belly: Flanks not tucked up.

The adult dog should demonstrate only a slight rise in the flanks, however, young stock will often display a tucked up underline in the growth stage.

- **HINDQUARTERS**

Seen from behind, legs straight and not too close together. When standing free, obtuse angles are formed between the dog's upper thigh and the hip bone, the upper thigh and the lower thigh and the lower thigh and the rear pastern (metatarsal).

Upper thigh: Moderately long, broad and well muscled.

Lower thigh: Long, strong, broadly muscled at top and sinewy.

Hocks: Sturdy, well angulated, not steep.

Illustration 5

Correct rear - Legs and feet straight



Obtuse angles are angles greater than 90 degrees. Powerfully developed and well muscled, the muscling should be visible from behind on the well muscled inner and outer thigh, as well as the broadly muscled upper thigh, viewed from the side. Lack of angulation produces narrow thighs which do not provide sufficient base for correct muscle mass.

Lower thigh: Long, strong, broadly muscled at top and sinewy.

Hocks: Sturdy, well angulated, not steep.

The lower thigh is of sufficient length to allow for a well angulated stifle; it is well muscled at the upper end and strong and sinewy at the lower.

Hock joints need to be strong, but not exaggerated in any way. Common faults in Rottweilers are long hocks (rear pasterns) that are often associated with a twist in the bone between hock joint and the foot.

Standing free, the foot is placed forward of the hock joint. Viewed from the rear, hind legs are straight and strong. Steep or over angulated hocks as well as cow or bowed hocks are faults.

• FEET



Front: Round, tight and well arched; pads hard, nails short, black and strong.

Hind: Slightly longer than the front feet. Toes strong and arched, as tight as front feet.

Front feet are compact and turn neither in nor out. Dewclaws may be removed. Hard pads and a well arched compact foot is required for an effective endurance dog. Flat or splayed feet should be heavily penalised as these inhibit the dog's working ability.

Illustration 6

Correct foot

• TAIL

In natural condition, level in extension of the upper line; at ease may be hanging.

Faults: set on too high or too low. Eliminating faults: Kink tail, ring-tail, with strong lateral deviation. This is the only disqualifying fault.

In an undocked dog with correct angle of croup, the tail may curve upward in a sabre-like shape.

See Illustration 7 – the fourth dog with the ring tail is incorrect, all others are acceptable.

A docked dog: Docked at the first or second joint.



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The undocked tail of Rottweilers

The normally
carried tail



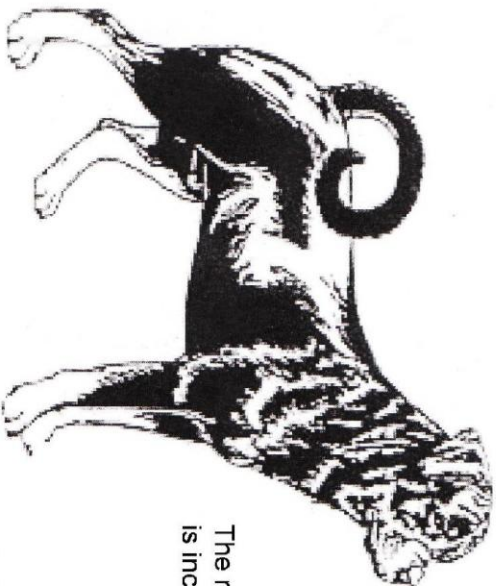
The tail showing
happy excitement



The tail showing
strained expectation



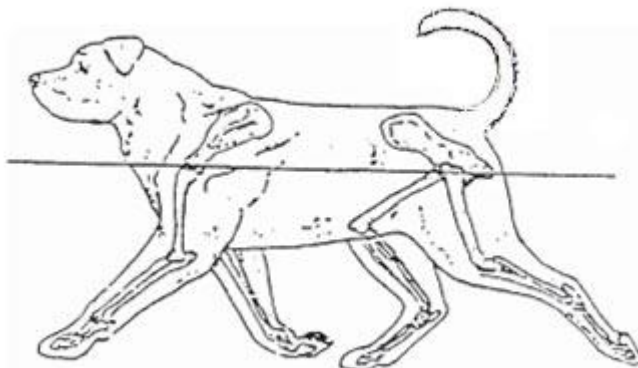
The ring tail, which
is incorrect



• GAIT/MOVEMENT

The Rottweiler is a trotting dog. In movement the back remains firm and relatively stable. Movement harmonious, steady, full of energy and unrestricted, with good stride.

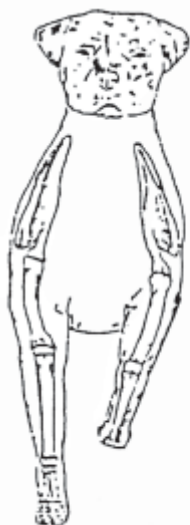
Illustration 8



Correct gait – Trot

When the Rottweiler is fully reaching and driving correctly, the position of the head is forward of the shoulders and in line with direction of travel. A head that is carried high in gaiting is incorrect.

Lack of balance and solidity affect not only the appearance (beauty), but also capacity for working. Working efficiency of a dog depends on his ease of movement and ability to run, for which reason special attention should be paid to both factors when judging



Correct – Coming



Correct – Going

Strength of back and topline is best judged on the move. The types of gait seen in the Rottweiler are walking, trotting (preferred), ambling (or pacing are not preferred but not a fault), and galloping. Harmonious movement required that there is no wasted action, and that the maximum amount of ground is covered in apparently effortless motion. Sure, powerful and unhindered movement with strong forward reach and rear drive is necessary. Because of the breadth of the chest, the legs tend to converge under the body towards a centre point as speed increases. Front and rear legs are thrown neither in nor out; the imprint of the hind feet should touch the imprint of the forefeet. Symmetry of body is required to produce correct movement which portrays strength and perseverance. Short legs, over angulated stifle or any exaggerated movement (i.e. hackney gait or rotary action in the rear) is caused by faulty construction and such 'showy' movement is completely incorrect for this endurance dog. Also incorrect is lack of angulation, causing faulty movement – short reach and lack of drive.

Illustration 7 – Note: Correct movement can only be demonstrated on a loose lead. When moving correctly the Rottweiler uses no extra energy and is not flashy. Note position of head in illustration - this is correct for the Rottweiler. The head is lowered on the move as in most correctly built working dogs.

- **COAT**

The coat consists of a topcoat and an undercoat. The top coat is of medium length, coarse, dense and flat. The undercoat must not show through the topcoat. The hair is a little longer on the hind legs.

The Rottweiler is a double coated dog, however, because of our climate in Australia, undercoat is usually seen only on the neck and thighs. The undercoat may be black, tan or grey. Undercoat visible on the right of the dog's neck is usually due to over use of the check chain and, in that case is not a fault. The Rottweiler is exhibited in natural condition without trimming. The coat is longest on the breechings and shortest on the head, ears and legs. Faults: Short coat, lack of undercoat, soft coat. Excessively wavy coated dogs or dogs with long coats should not be placed in the show ring.

- **COLOUR**

Black with clearly defined markings of a rich tan on the cheeks, muzzle, throat, chest and legs, as well as over both eyes and under the base of the tail.

Markings are located as follows: A spot over each eye; on the cheeks; a strip around each side of the muzzle, but not on the bridge of the nose; on the throat under the chin; a triangle on each side of the breastbone; on the forelegs from the carpus (wrist) to the toes; on the inside of the rear legs, showing down the front of the stifle and front of rear legs from hock joints to toes, but not completely eliminating the black from the back of the legs; under the tail. Black pencilling marks on toes desirable. Markings should not exceed 10% of body colour, as this detracts from the noble appearance. However, in young animals markings are generally more profuse and reduce and separate as the animal matures.

Markings may reduce in size or become smutty due to environmental or hormonal influences, but this cannot be taken into account in the show ring.

Faults: Yellow or pale markings; over marking, as this detracts from the image of the dog. Dogs with a base colour other than black, total absence of all markings (i.e. a black dog all over), white markings (a few white hairs do not constitute a marking), should receive no award.

- **SIZE**

Height at withers for males is 61-68 cms

61-62 cms is small

63-64 cms is medium height

65-66 cms is large - correct height

67-68 cms is very large

Weight approximately 50 kgs

Height at withers for bitches is 56-63 cms

56-57 cms is small

58-59 cms is medium height

60-61 cms is large - correct height

62-63 cms is very large

Weight approximately 42 kgs

• FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

General Appearance: Light, weedy, leggy appearance. Light in bone and muscle.

Head: Hound-type head. Narrow, light, too short, too long or coarse head. Lack of stop or too little stop.

Foreface: Long or pointed muzzle; split nose; Roman nose (convex nasal bridge) or dished faced (concave nasal bridge); aquiline nose, pale or spotted nose (butterfly nose).

Lips: Pendulous, pink or patchy; corner of lips visible

Jaws: Narrow lower jaw

Cheeks: Strongly protruding cheeks

Skin: Wrinkles on head

Ears: Set on low, heavy, long, slack or turned backwards. Flying ears or ears not carried forward symmetrically.

Eyes: Light, deep set. Too full or round eyes. Loose eyelids (showing haw).

Bite: Pincer bite

Neck: Too long, thin, lacking muscle. Showing dewlap or throaty.

Forequarters: Narrow or crooked front legs. Steep shoulder placement.

Loose or out at elbow. Too long, too short or too straight in upper arm. Weak or straight pasterns. Splayed feet. Too flat or too arched toes. Deformed toes. Light coloured nails.

Body: Too long, too short or too narrow.

Chest: Flat ribbed or barrel-shaped. Too narrow behind.

Back: Too long, weak; swayback or roach back.

Croup: Croup too sloping, too short, too flat or too long.

Hindquarters: Flat thighs, hocks too close, cow hocks or barrel hocked.

Joints with too little or too much angulation. Dewclaws.

Tail: Set on too high or too low.

Coat: Soft, too short or too long. Wavy coat, lack of undercoat.

Colour: Mismarking. Smudged, not clearly defined markings.

Markings which are too spread out.

Cosmetic or appearance faults are noticeable deviations from features described in the Standard which do not affect the ability of the dog to perform his required tasks.

Working faults are faults that affect the working ability and these are more serious than those that are merely cosmetic. However, too many cosmetic faults may obscure the characteristic breed appearance and care should be taken when evaluating the dog that both breed type and working ability are kept in mind.

• DISQUALIFYING FAULTS

General: Marked reversal of sexual type, i.e. feminine dogs or masculine bitches.

Behaviour: Anxious, shy, cowardly, gun shy, vicious, excessively suspicious, nervous animals.

Eyes: Entropion, ectropion, yellow eyes, different coloured eyes.

Teeth: Overshot or undershot bite, wry mouth. Missing incisors, canines, premolars or molars.

Tail: In the case of an undocked Rottweiler a kink tail, ring tail or a tail with strong lateral deviation.

Coat texture: Definitely long or wavy coat.

Coat colour: Dogs that do not show the typical Rottweiler colouring of black with tan markings. White markings.

- **NOTE:**

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Standard translated by Mrs C Seidler.