



Official Judges Seminar
on the
Staffordshire Bull Terrier



Stafford History

- Authorities generally agree that the breed can be traced back to the Mastiff-like dogs through the old Bulldog which, when crossed with British terriers, produced the first "Bull and Terriers."
- The old-fashioned Bulldog was a fierce, courageous animal used in the sports of bear- and bull-baiting as early as the mid-sixteenth century. When these "sports" were outlawed, their supporters turned to dog fighting.



- They sought to create a sporting dog that, while retaining the legendary courage and ferocity of the Bulldog, would incorporate the greater agility of the terrier.

Stafford History continued

- Terriers thought to have been used in the cross are the Manchester Terrier and the now-extinct English White Terrier. In addition, crosses with various of the old working terriers were made.
- Two distinct types of Bull and Terrier arose and, by 1900, they were easily distinguished. The elegant white dogs, produced by crossing the original bulldogs with the English White Terrier were recognized by the turn of the century. This "White Cavalier" is known today as the Bull Terrier.



Stafford History continued

- The other Bull and Terrier -- the Stafford, which was owned by the common man -- was not as easily "legitimized."
- The common people that favored the "working class dog" needed to have a multipurpose dog.
- In 1935 the Staffordshire Bull Terrier fanciers formed a club and drew up a Breed Standard.
- The American Kennel Club recognized the Staffordshire Bull Terrier in 1975.



Lady Eve (left) and Gentleman Jim (right)

The Stafford Knot



- The **Stafford Knot**, also known as the **Staffordshire Knot**, is a distinctive three-looped knot that is the traditional symbol of the English county of Staffordshire and of its county town, Stafford.
- The knot has been associated with the Stafford family for centuries, being used in their standards, seals & heraldic badges.
- One legend of its origin, generally considered mythical, is that three convicted criminals who had committed a crime together were due to be executed in the Stafford gaol. There was argument over who should be hanged first but the hangman solved the problem by devising this knot and hanging the three simultaneously.

The Stafford Knot



- "The Knot Unites" - the motto on the Stafford Coat of Arms - which will be the theme of the presentation

When the knot appears it's an important component of breed type
"The Knot Unites" means you put them all together and get a picture of what defines breed type, i.e. what makes a Stafford a Stafford

- **Yellow is mustard** – goes great with a pretzel – Important messages on Breed Type
- **Red is ketchup** – Ketchup on a pretzel, YUCK! – These are faults

Historical Priorities

- For historical reference consider the following 100 pt judging system that was proposed in 1948/49 for that updated version of the standard:

■ General Appearance and Coat Condition	10
■ Head	25
■ Neck	10
■ Body	25
■ Legs and Feet	15
■ Tail	5
■ General Movement and Balance	<u>10</u>

Total = 100

This system is **not** used today as the UK Kennel Club discontinued inclusion of all 100 pt judging systems in published breed standards. However, it does give us some perspective as to how the 'forefathers' of the **show** Stafford prioritized the importance of the individual elements and characteristics of the breed after its departure from his original function as a fighting dog.

General Appearance

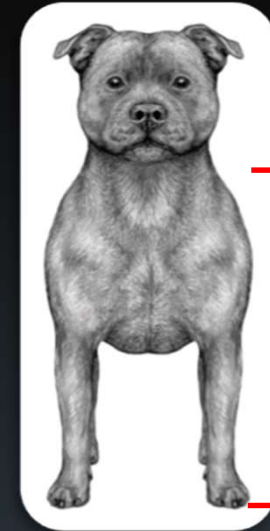
“The Staffordshire Bull Terrier is a smooth-coated dog. It should be of great strength for its size and, although muscular, should be active and agile.”

- The first impression of a Stafford should be that of a strong, powerful dog with the athleticism to balance it. The Stafford should have strength that can be turned into instant action, and the agility is not at the expense of substance. Neat, clean, impressive and beautiful in its strength of body, agility and ease of movement.
- This is NOT a bulky looking dog, NOR is it wispy or racy. The Stafford is a medium sized balanced dog that shows great strength for its size. It is imperative to remember that the Staffordshire Bull Terrier is a blended breed with clear characteristics of its ancestry (Smooth coated Terriers and early Bull dog lines), keeping in mind they are both strong and agile.
- This balance of strength with agility is one of the key elements of breed type.



Size, Proportion & Substance

- *“Height at shoulder: 14 to 16 inches. Weight: Dogs, 28 to 38 pounds; bitches, 24 to 34 pounds, these heights being related to weights. **Non-conformity with these limits is a fault.** In proportion, the length of back, from withers to tail set, is equal to the distance from withers to ground.”*
- The Stafford is of course a blend of bulldog and terrier. **Having the correct blend (balance) is one of the fundamental elements of breed type for the Staffordshire Bull Terrier.** So how much bulldog and how much terrier are ideal? The answer is revealed in this section of the standard. While the standard does not explicitly dictate the exact blend in terms of percentages, it does provide a test to ensure that our understanding of the proper mix complies with the guidelines set forth.
- Size in and of itself is pretty straight forward and objective. **Non-conformity with the limits is a fault.** That seems simple enough. However, although size helps define the Stafford apart from other bull and terrier breeds it is not the most important element to focus on in this passage of the breed standard, nor does it reveal the proper blend of bulldog and terrier.
- The concept of Substance is defined by a height to weight ratio: *“...these heights being related to weights.”* This is where the ideal blend of bulldog and terrier is revealed. A 16 inch male weighing in at 28 pounds fits within the size limits of the standard. However, he is grossly out of balance leaning too much to the terrier end of the spectrum. At the other end of the extremes a 14 inch dog weighing 38 pounds also fits the ranges given, but misses the all important element of balance leaning too far to the bulldog side.



Dogs

Height at
Shoulder:
14 to 16”

Weight:
28 to 38
pounds



Bitches

Height at
Shoulder:
14 to 16”

Weight:
24 to 34
pounds

The Stafford Head

“Short, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop, short foreface, black nose. Pink (Dudley) nose to be considered a serious fault.”

- The Staffordshire Bull Terrier is often referred to as a “head breed.” **As with the appropriate balance between Bull and Terrier, the headpiece significantly contributes to breed type (that which makes the Stafford distinctly “Stafford”).**
- If you chose to think of the Stafford as “head breed” be careful not to use this as your **ONLY** means of evaluating a good exhibit. It is true that a proper head is extremely important in the breed, but of course do not make it the “be all to end all.”



Below are examples of Classic head types showing the proper blend of “bull and terrier”.

Dog



Bitch



The Stafford Head Continued

- As mentioned, the Stafford head is a unique hallmark of the breed, and a significant contributor to breed type.

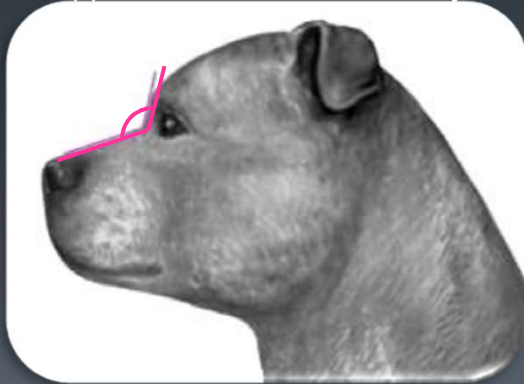


Breakdown Of The Head

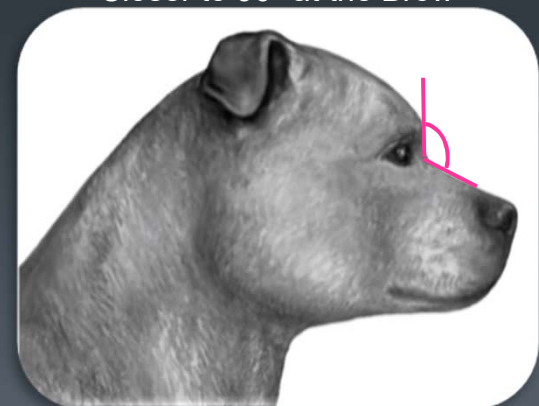
- The stop should be distinct. The angle from the foreface to the skull being in the neighborhood of 110-120 degrees between the eyes. However, when viewed from the side the brow and eye socket itself will create an angle that approaches closer to 90 degrees. The foreface (muzzle) has good fill under the eyes and tapers slightly to the nose, where it is neither blocky nor snipey, but forms more of a rounded block
- One of the most distinctive aspects of the Stafford head is the well defined temporal muscle pads creating a center cleft on the top of the skull, which adds to the character and expression that is typical of the Staffordshire Bull Terrier.



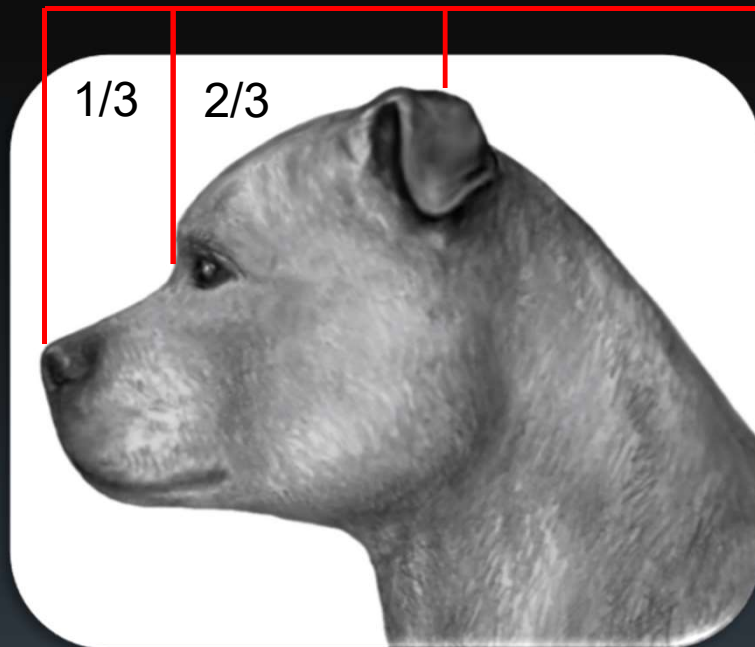
Approx 110-120° Between Eyes



Closer to 90° at the Brow



The Stafford Muzzle



A Stafford with a correct muzzle

length in relation to skull.

1/3 muzzle 2/3 skull.



Heavy, overly short muzzle - incorrect



Slightly longer muzzle than ideal - incorrect

Eyes

“Dark preferable, but may bear some relation to coat color. Round, of medium size, and set to look straight ahead. Light eyes or pink eye rims to be considered a fault, except that where the coat surrounding the eye is white the eye rim may be pink.”



- The eyes are round (not almond nor triangular in shape), medium sized and well set in the skull without being bulbous or protruding. They should be set wide apart and looking forward, with keen and intelligent expression. Eyes should be dark but can have some relation to the color of the coat. On the red coated dog notice the eyes are a dark brown. On the black brindle bitch, her eyes are even darker. On the pied dog where the coat is white the eye rim may be pink in that area only. Otherwise, rims should be dark. On the blue bitch the eyes are a grey-brown. Yellow, amber or light eyes on any Stafford is a fault.



Ears

“Rose or half-pricked and not large. Full drop or full prick to be considered a serious fault.”

- Ears should be small, neat, thin, and either rose or half-prick They are set moderately-low and are close to the head. Properly sized and placed ears enhance the Stafford's expression. Expression is drastically changed by variations in the ears, hence the call for a “serious fault” with full drop and full prick ears.



Left: Rose Ear

Right: Half-Prick ear

Both are correct



Left: Full Drop Ear

Right: Full Prick Ear

Incorrect and a serious fault



Mouth and Bite

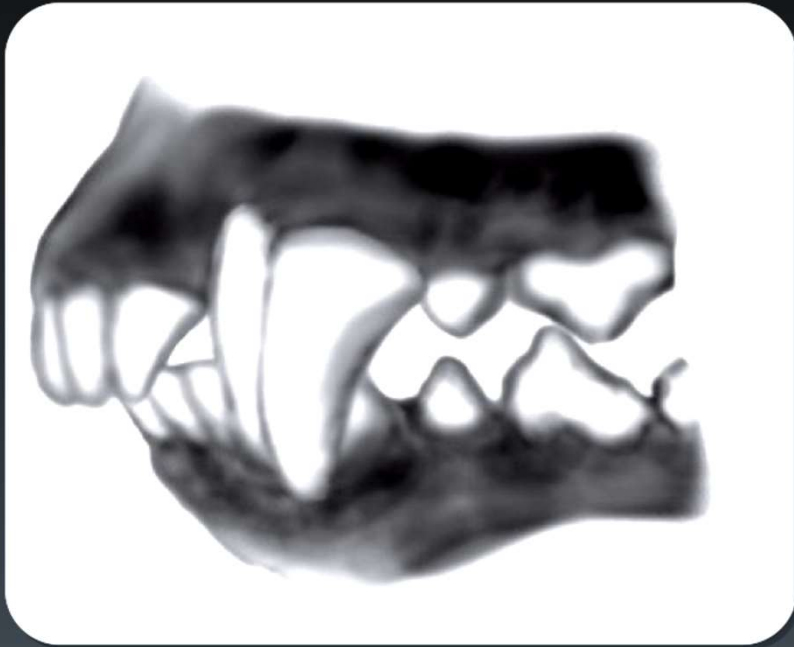
*“A bite in which the outer side of the lower incisors touches the inner side of the upper incisors. The lips should be tight and clean. The **badly undershot or overshot bite is a serious fault.**”*

- Ideal is a scissor bite with large canines.
- The badly undershot or overshot bite is a **serious fault**.
- With the bulldog history less than perfect dentition does creep up from time to time. Assess on severity and in relation to how it affects the original function.

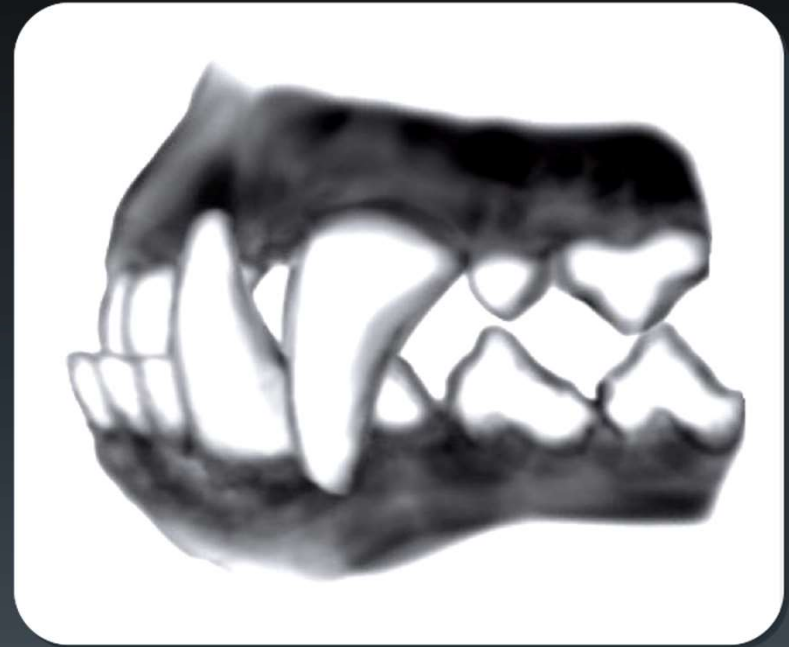


Remember that the Stafford is an active animal with very powerful jaws. Missing or broken dentition due to an accident should be considered in relation to its severity. You can still assess the nature of the bite and check for developmental issues. Some environmental casualties may be observed from time to time.

Mouth and Bite Faults

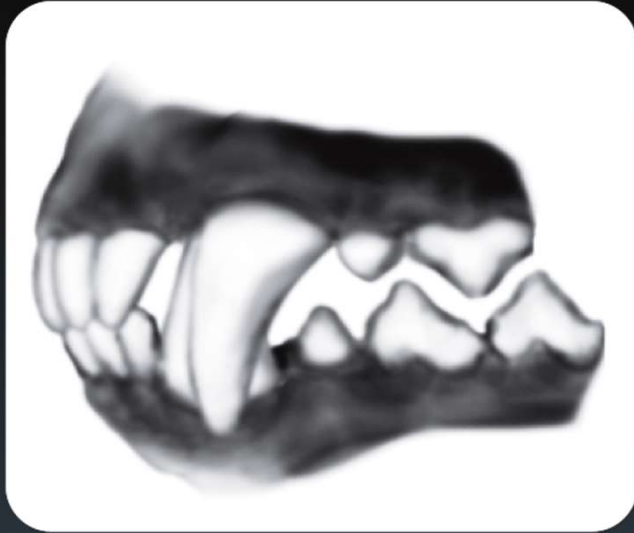


“Badly Overshot is a serious fault.”



“Badly Undershot is a serious fault.”

Mouth and Bite - Unsound Mouths



“Converging Canines”

Lower Canines strike inside the Upper Canines. This can be a serious hindrance depending upon the severity. In the worst cases the lower canines will poke into the roof of the mouth causing significant discomfort and loss of functionality of the bite.

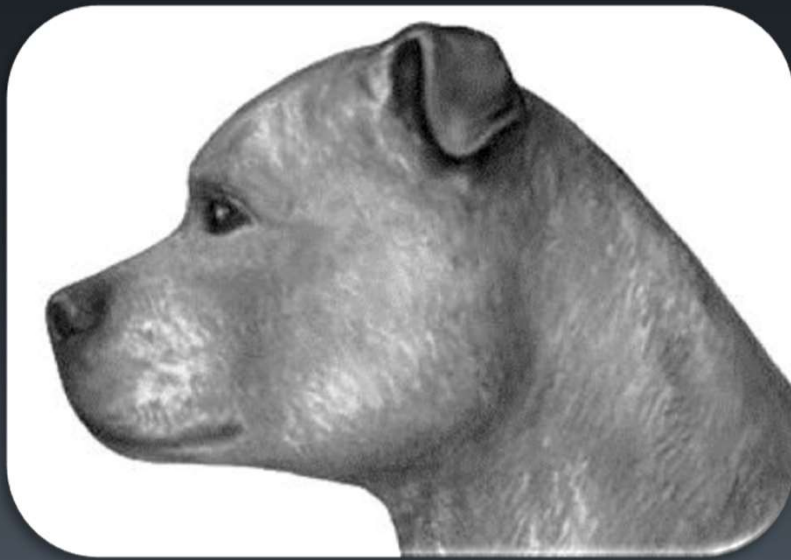


“Wry mouth”

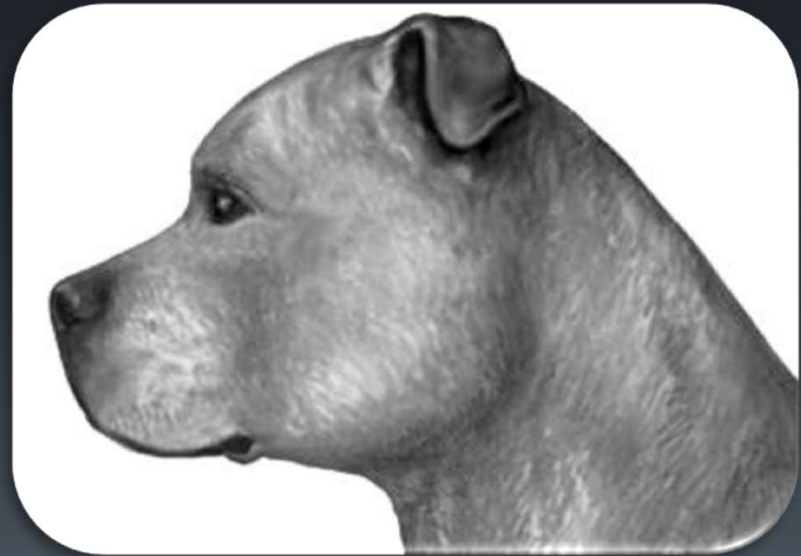
A wry mouth is caused by the lower jaw (mandible) appearing to be “twisted.” One side of the mandible (left or right) is longer than the other causing the bite to be uneven. This causes $\frac{1}{2}$ the upper incisors to strike on the outside of the lower and $\frac{1}{2}$ to strike on the inside. A wry mouth is a serious structural issue with the jaw, not simply a tooth or two simply out of place.

Mouth and Bite

- The lips should be clean and tight. Lippy-ness gives a Stafford's head a coarse look and can often hide a weak under jaw.
- Notice, from the side you can see the line of the underjaw with the mouth closed.



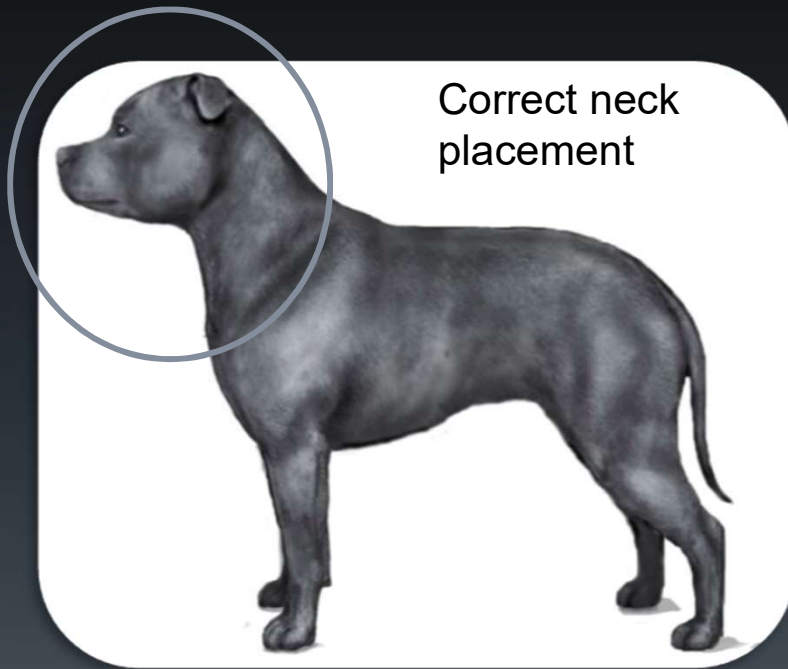
Stafford with a nice profile and clean lip



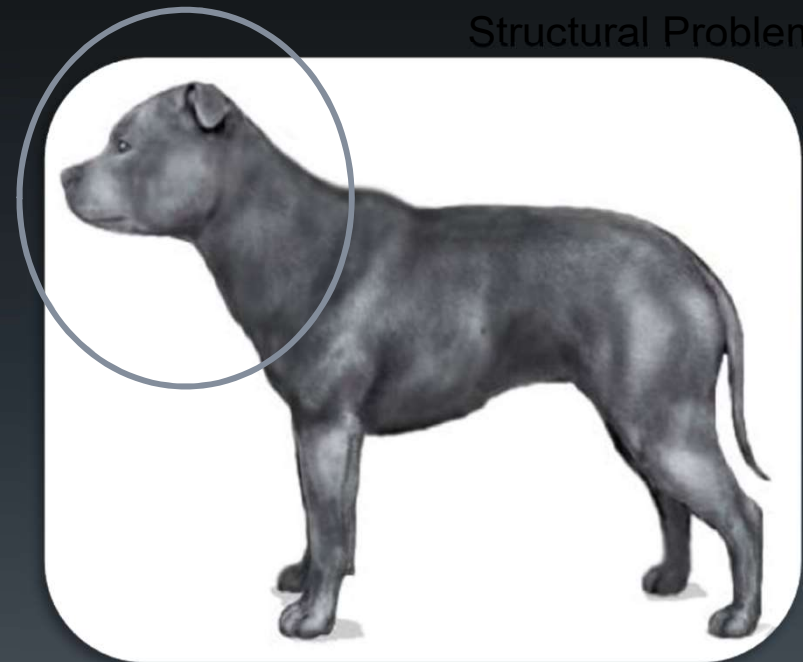
Stafford showing coarseness due to lippy-ness

Neck Topline and Body

“The neck is muscular, rather short and clean in outline and gradually widening toward the shoulders.”



The neck should be well muscled with sturdy yet fluid attachment as it widens towards the shoulders. Because of the strength, the neck will appear rather short. However, it should remain flexible and never look stuffed onto the shoulders.



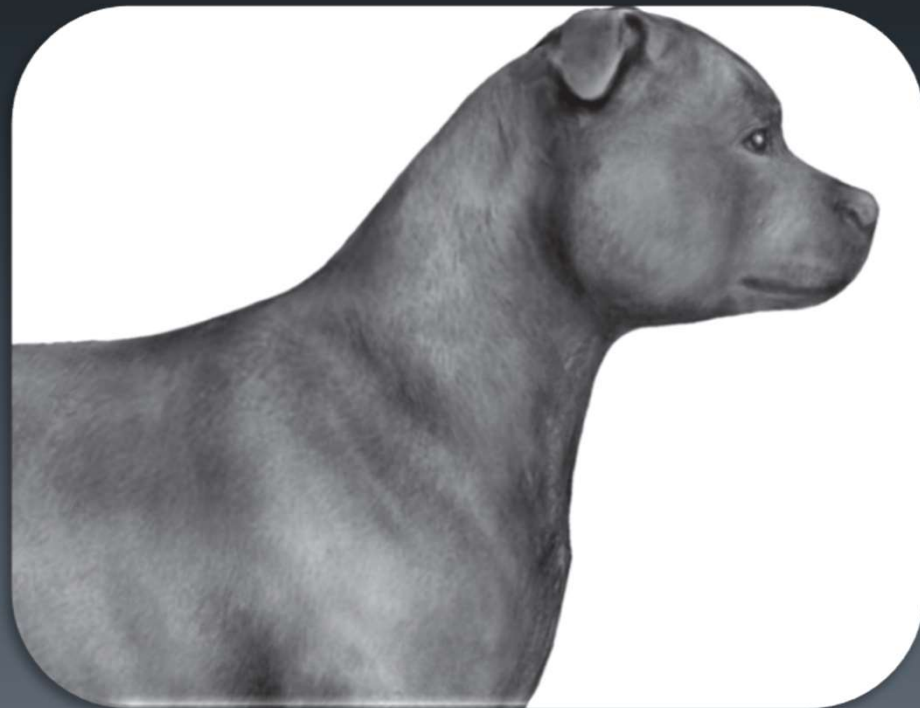
In this illustration the neck is attached in front of the withers (liken to a Brahma Bull). This type of structure is called a “ewe” neck and is weaker than a correctly placed neck.

Neck Topline and Body

- The standard calls for a neck that is “rather short.” It should be powerful, but still have enough length to maintain agility and flexibility. The back of the neck forms an arch or crest as it rises towards the head. It gradually widens into the shoulders seamlessly tying together the head and body.
- . One way to recognize the proper length of neck is to stack the dog and look from profile. The neck should naturally position the head so that the underjaw is level or slightly above the top of the withers

Proper length of neck

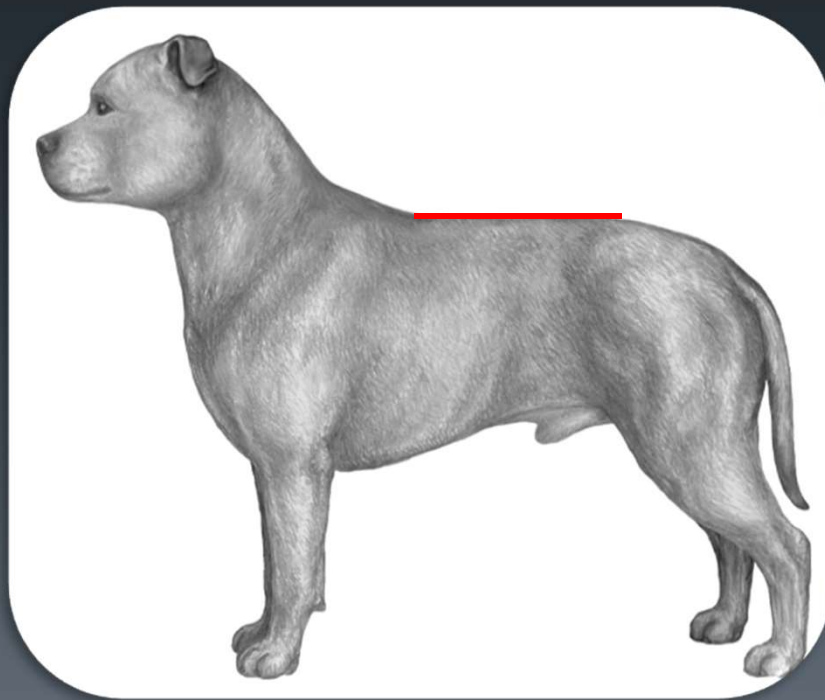
A slight arch gradually widening into the shoulders to seamlessly connect the head and body



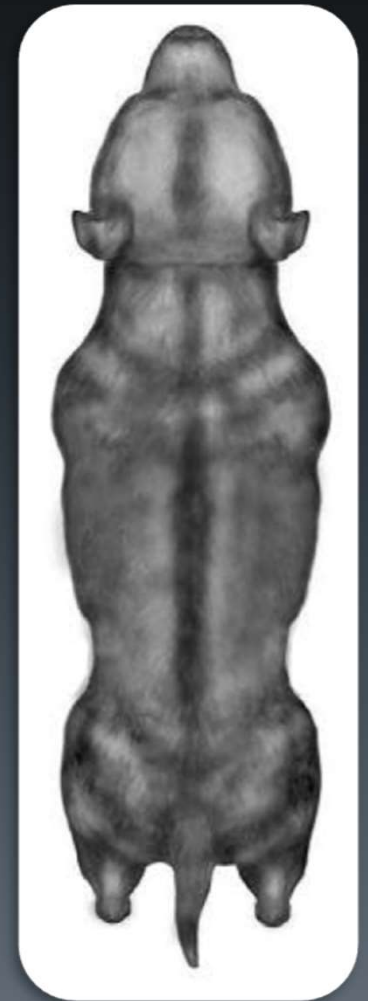
Neck Topline and Body Continued

“The body is close coupled, with a level topline, wide front, deep brisket and well sprung ribs being rather light in the loins.”

- The Topline is level from the withers (which are defined by a developed muscle pad) to the croup. The brisket is deep with well sprung ribs for good lung capacity and a wide front for excellent stability and leverage.
- Also, in mature dogs/bitches there is a well developed muscle running the length of the back on either side of the spine, it should not distort the level topline.

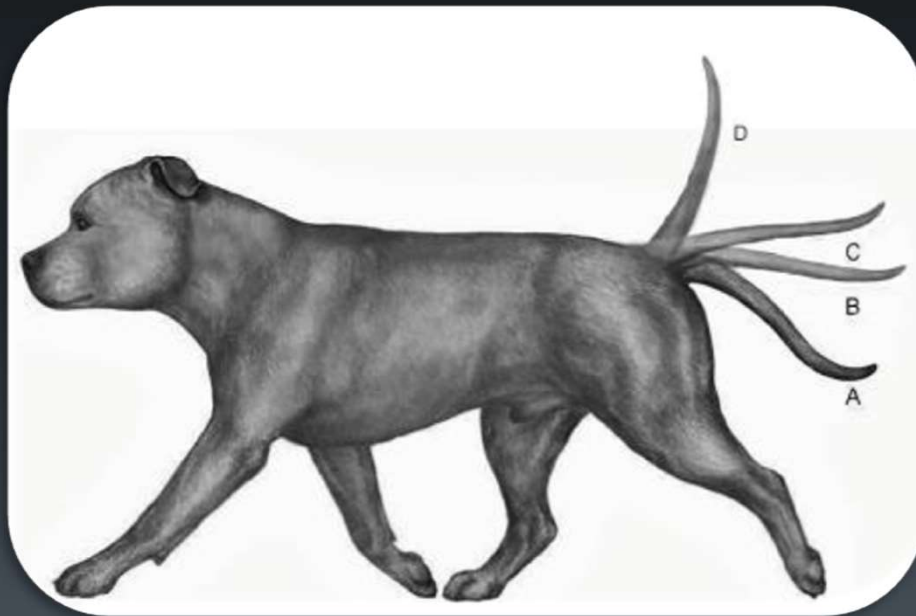


When looking over the top of the Stafford there should be distinctive contours showing shoulders, well sprung ribs, light loin area, and muscular rear all in good balance.

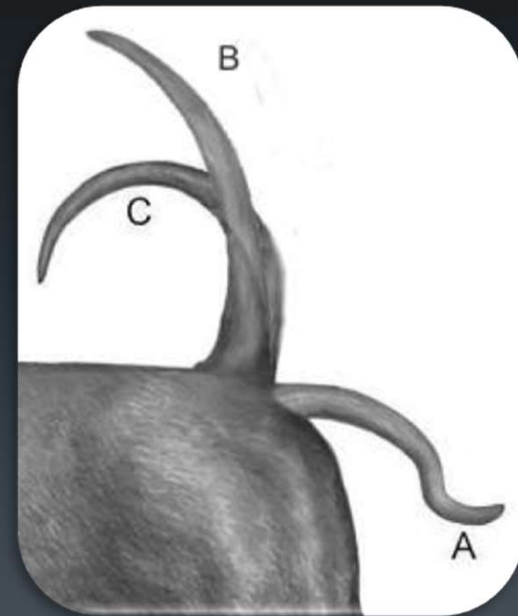


Tail and Tail Carriage

“The tail is undocked, of medium length, low set, tapering to a point and carried rather low. It should not curl much and may be likened to an old-fashioned pump handle. A tail that is too long or badly curled is a fault.”



Tail A, B, C show good carriage on the move, and D shows a carriage known as a challenge tail, is also acceptable.

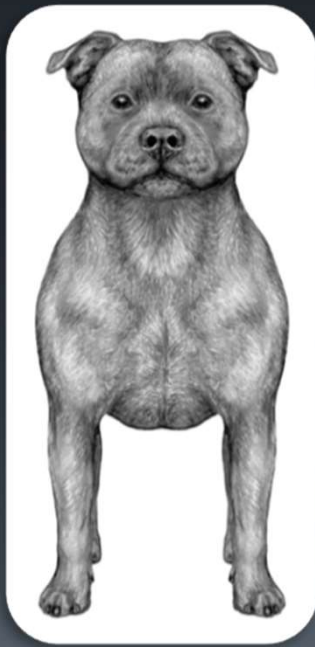


Tail A is curled/screw. This is considered a fault. B is gay and is high set. This undesirable. C is “scorpion” (curled over the back). This is also a fault.

Forequarters

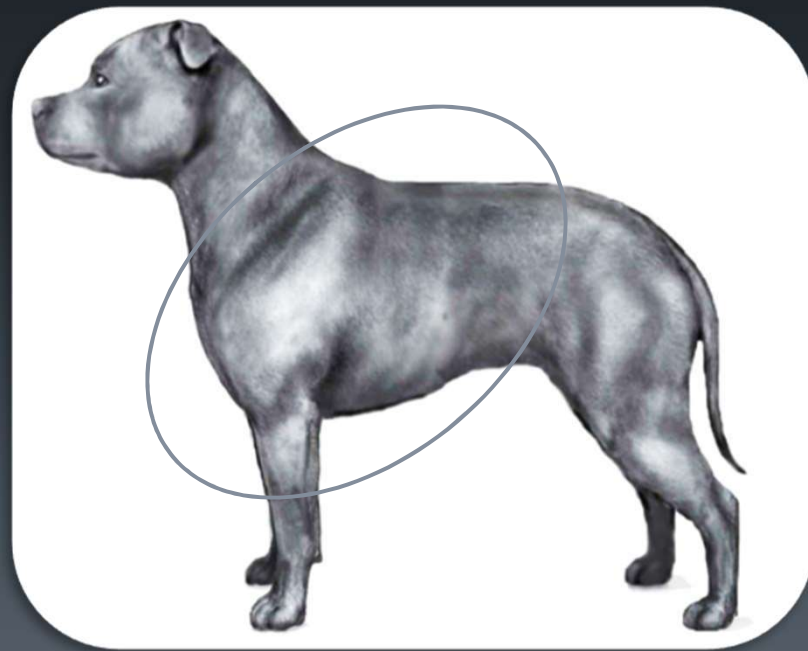
“Legs straight and well boned, set rather far apart, without looseness at the shoulders and showing no weakness at the pasterns, from which point the feet turn out a little. Dewclaws on the forelegs may be removed. The feet should be well padded, strong and of medium size.”

- A strong well-balanced front possesses bone in proper proportion with the rest of the body. The shoulder assembly is one of the main components to making a correct front. The feet are set wide for stability. The elbows are approximately the same distance apart as they are off the ground, and that point is approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ the height of the dog at the withers.
- Brisket - the lowest point of the chest to fall at elbow. It should be blunt and wide at its lowest point forming a U shape as oppose to a V shape.



Good Front

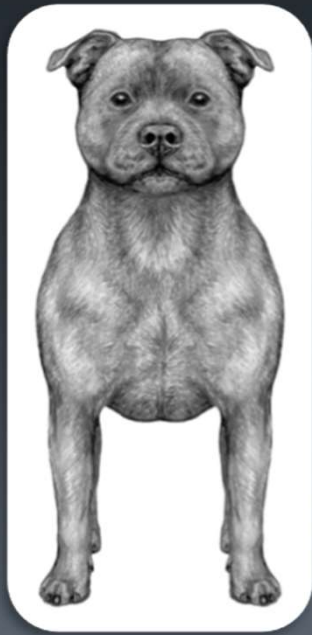
Note: Proper front feet turn out slightly.



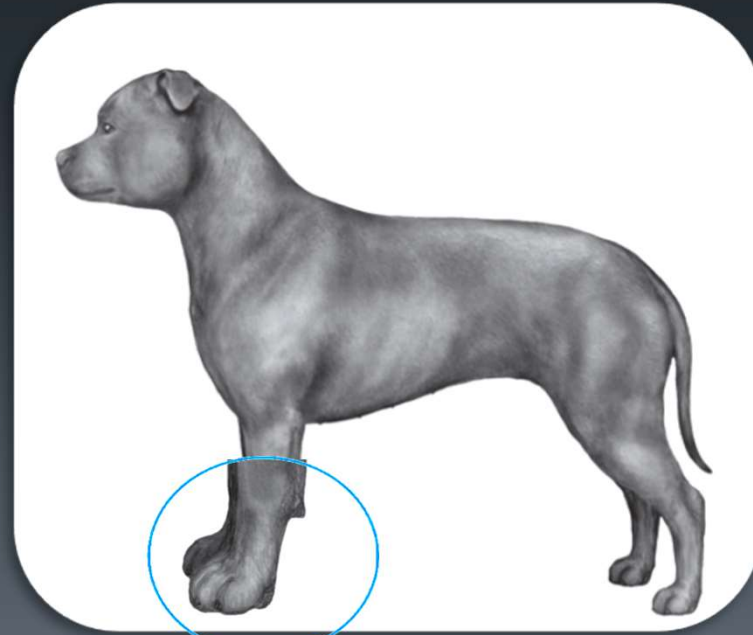
Proper lay back of shoulder allowing for correct neck attachment and the “keel” in the forechest.

Feet

- Feet are well padded with strong pasterns. Feet should be tight, and toes short, but not to the point of being a 'cat foot.' There should be no sign of weakness. Remember the standard says the "feet turn out a little."
- Keeping in mind we have an active, athletic breed. Thin, flat or splayed feet are very undesirable, as the foundation to all movement is weakened. Considering again the breed's original function, all parts of the Stafford should be able to hold up to forces equaling several times his own weight.
- Look for short black nails in solid colored dogs. Where a dog has white toes you can expect translucent nails.



Front feet

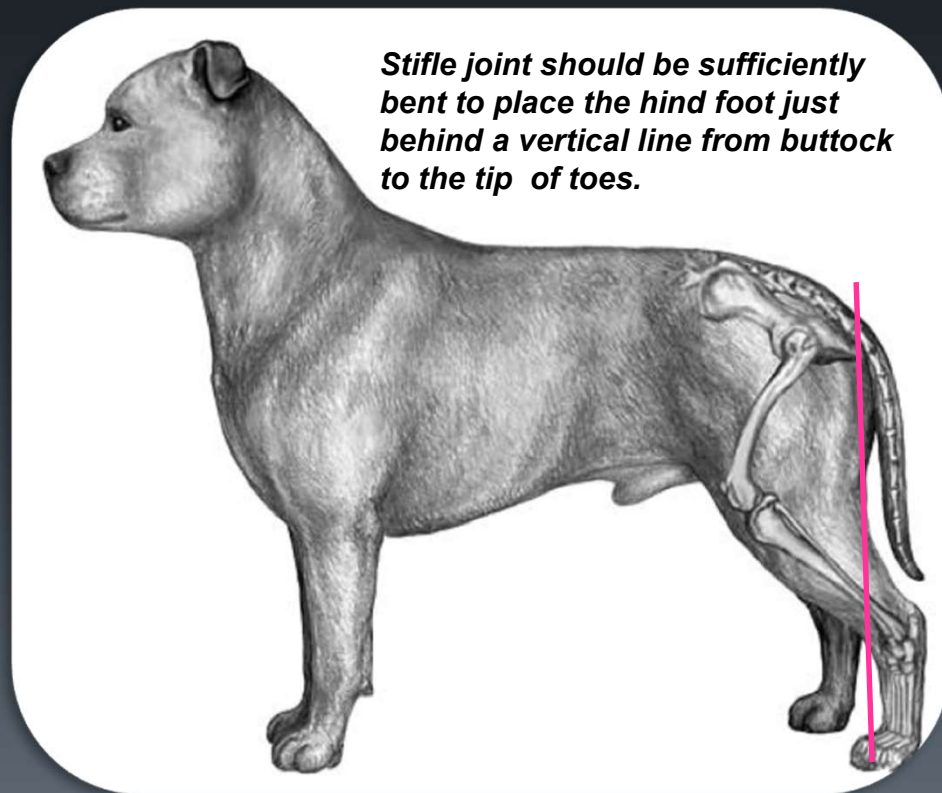
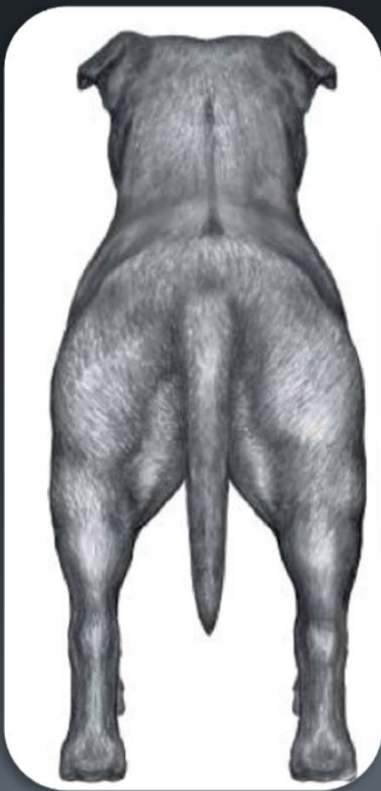


Side View

Hindquarters

“The hindquarters should be well muscled, hocks let down with stifles well bent. Legs should be parallel when viewed from behind. Dewclaws, if any, on the hind legs are generally removed. Feet as in front.”

- The hindquarters are well developed, muscular and powerful. The rear assembly stance is symmetrical, with well bent stifles and hocks that are parallel to each other and perpendicular to the ground. The stifle points forward and stays over the feet. The hind feet, like the front are well padded and of medium size but they do not turn out.



Coat and Color

*Coat: "Smooth, short and close to the skin, not to be trimmed or de-whiskered." Color: "Red, fawn, white, black or blue, or any of these colors with white. Any shade of brindle or any shade of brindle with white. **Black-and-tan or liver color to be disqualified.**"*

- A good Stafford coat will gleam in the sunlight because the hair is smooth, hard and close to the body allowing the surface to reflect light.
- The main thing to remember about color is that no color should be favored over others. With the exception of eliminating the DQs. However, be mindful that different colors or markings can accentuate or hide faults or can create illusions about the dog's structure and sometimes its movement. Judge the dog beneath the color.
- Black and Tan will have the same color as the Manchester Terrier. A brindle pointed dog where the "points" manifest in brindle is acceptable, as the standard allows for "any shade of brindle".



Coat and Color



BLACK / BLACK BRINDLE



RED / WHITE



BLACK / WHITE



Black and Tan is a DQ.
Marked Like a Manchester Terrier



WHITE



BLUE / WHITE



BRINDLE



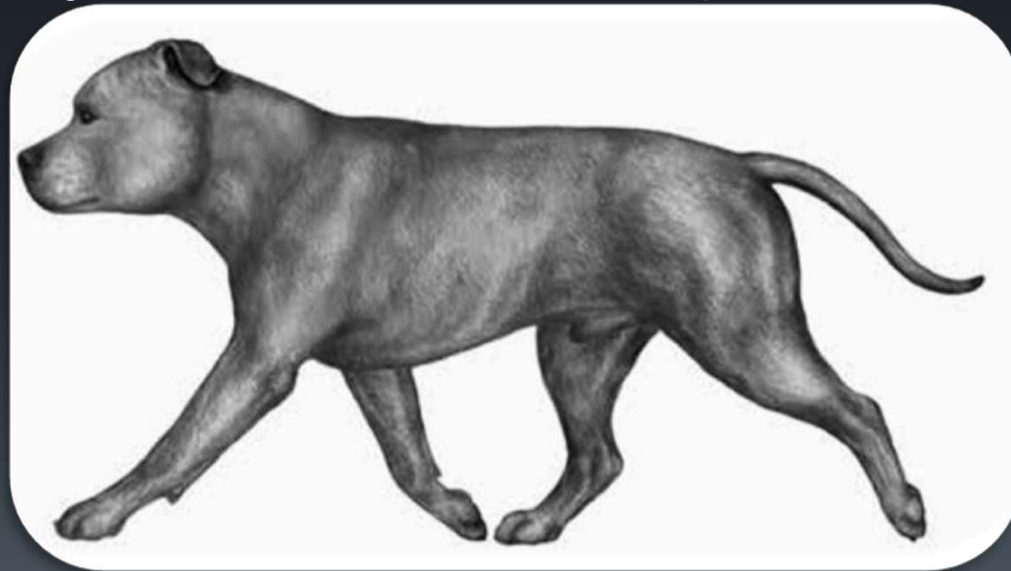
LIVER is a DQ.
Varying shades from Chocolate Lab to Chesapeake Bay Retriever.
Always has liver nose, nails, skin
and very light brown or amber eyes

Gait



“Free, powerful and agile with economy of effort. Legs moving parallel when viewed from front or rear. Discernible drive from hind legs.”

- As with structure the standard once again directs us to the key concept of blending power with agility; not sparing one at the expense of the other. There should be no lumbering nor heavy exertion. The gait is both powerful as if the dog could plow through anything in his way, but also agile as if he could turn on a dime. Topline is held level.

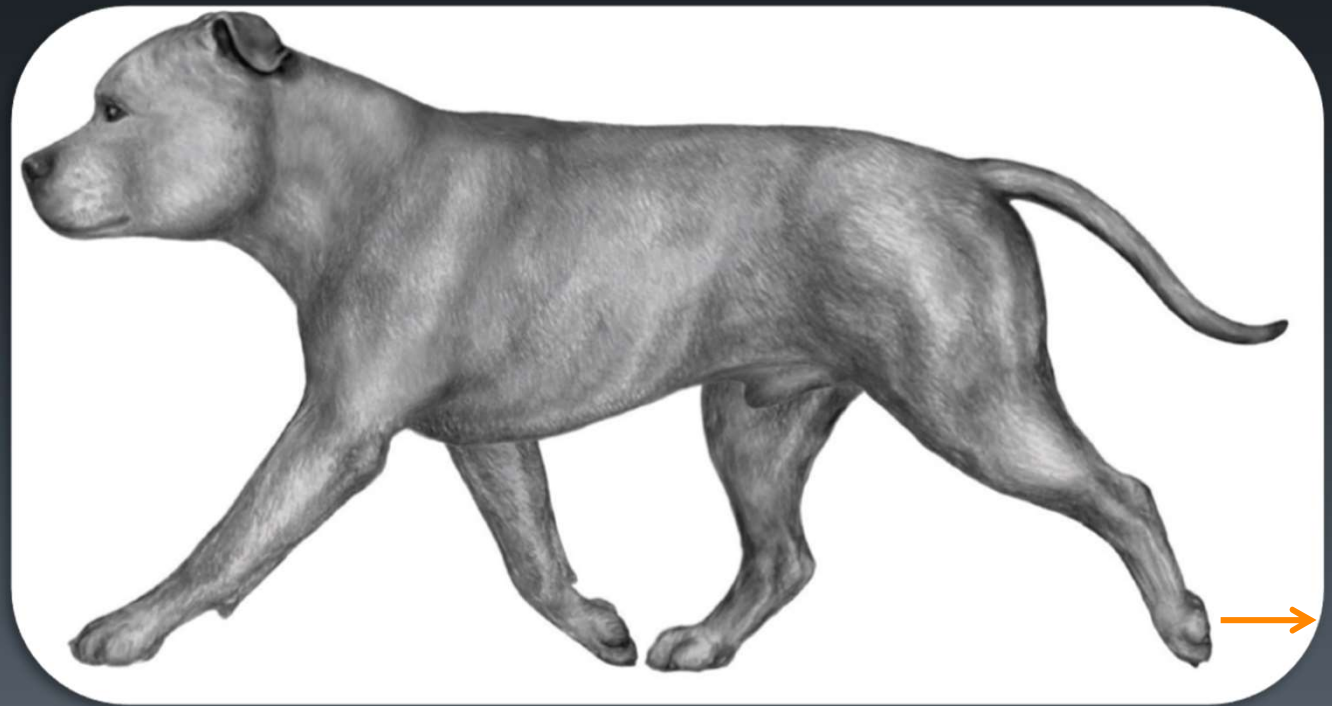


“Economy of effort” means efficiency and without hindrance. It also means without an ounce of wasted energy. Because of this the Stafford utilizes the most efficient arc of travel when moving, not necessarily the most boastful. Do not expect the Stafford to kick the hind feet towards the air in a showy, but wasteful display. Efficiency is key.

- The dog is moving with great determination; driving with purpose from the rear, and utilizing a well laid back shoulder in front to have the reach that matches the drive.

Gait Continued

- The wide stance causes the dog to generally utilize parallel movement, although the faster it moves the more the feet will incline slightly toward the center of the dog. When viewing the dog coming toward you, the front legs will obscure the hind legs. When moving away, the hind will obscure the front. You will also see the rear pads perpendicular to the ground while the dog is going away if the proper drive is present.



← REACH

Temperament



From the past history of the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the modern dog draws its character of indomitable courage, high intelligence, and tenacity. This coupled with its affection for its friends, and children in particular, its off-duty quietness and trustworthy stability, makes it an



foremost all-purpose dog.



- It is impossible to comprehensively assess any dog's temperament in just a few minutes in the show ring. However, there are a few key things to look for and some things you don't want to see. Keep in mind that **temperament is part of breed type**.
- A Stafford should never be shy or cowering to a friendly approach. Take some consideration for young puppies, of course, but even they will typically be wagging their tail as they melt at your feet upon the friendly attention.
- As with other terriers, the Stafford should be judged on spirit and attitude. The attitude should be alert and full of life. They are generally very aware of everything going on around them. It should go without saying, but **NEVER "Spar"** Staffords when judging.



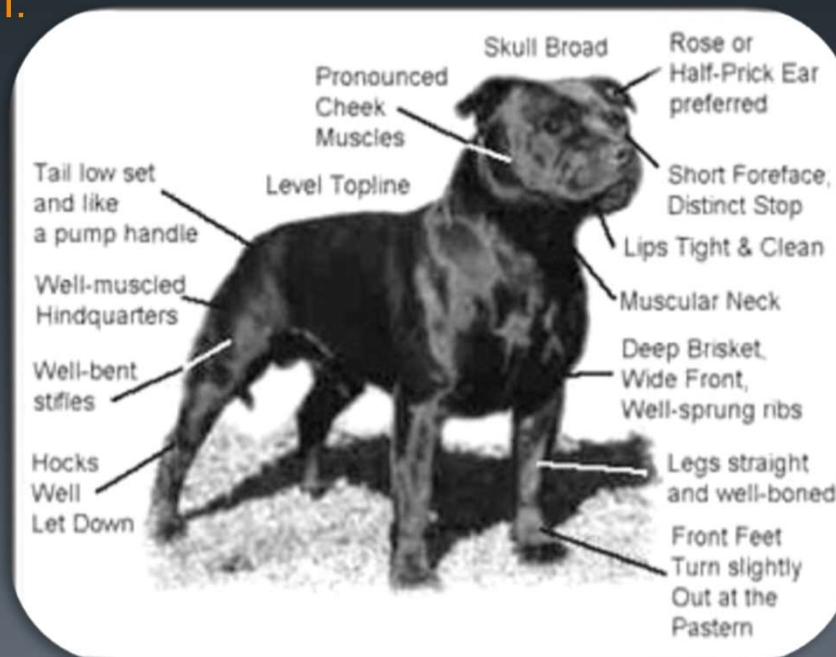


“The Knot Unites”



(Breed Type Review)

- **General Appearance:** The balance of strength with agility is one of the key elements of breed type.
- **Size, Proportion & Substance:** Having the correct substance equates to the proper blend of bulldog and terrier. Standard calls for 14-16 inches. Dogs 28-38 pounds. Bitches 24-34 pounds. Learn to recognize what this proper balance (blend) looks like in the flesh.





“The Knot Unites”



(Breed Type Review Continued)

The Stafford Head is a hallmark of the breed.

- Furrow down the center dividing in $\frac{1}{2}$ with temporal muscles on either side
- Distinct stop. 110 degrees +/-, but appears nearly 90 from side when the eye socket / brow is used as the reference point for “Y-axis”
- 1/3 muzzle 2/3 skull
- Small, neat, thin ear is essential. Rose is ideal.
- Medium, round eye with alert expression
- Very pronounced masseter muscles





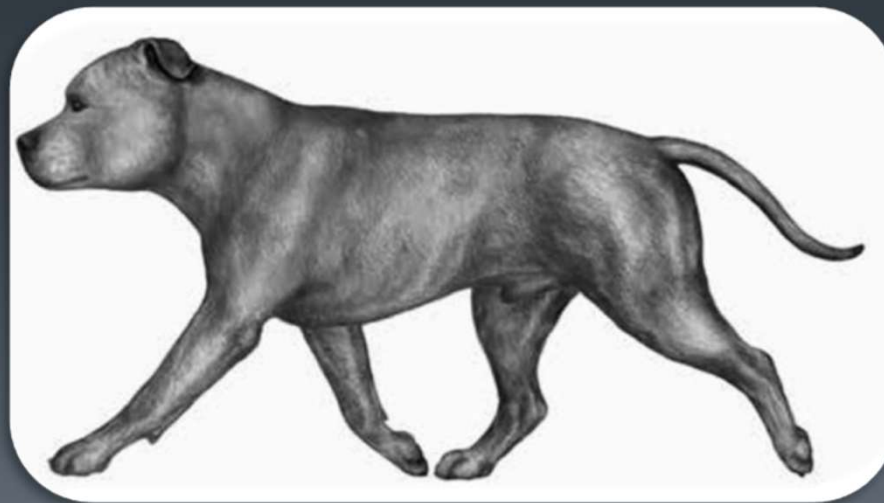
“The Knot Unites”



(Breed Type Review Continued)

- **Gait:** While the Stafford does not move with a characteristic stride entirely unique to the breed the concept of “Economy Of Effort” is an important component of breed type.
 - Whether static or while in motion the Stafford is Efficient, Free, Without excess, Without struggle, Powerful and Agile, Athletic.

“When moving the Stafford should appear ready to turn on a dime, or ready cash a check, whichever one the situation may call for.”





“The Knot Unites”



(Breed Type Review Continued)

- Temperament is Summarized in the UK breed standard:

*“Bold, Fearless, and
Totally Reliable”*



“Ketchup on Pretzels”

Faults Mentioned In the SBT Breed Standard

- Referencing the Height to Weight guidelines: *“Non-conformity with these limits is a fault”*
- *“Pink (Dudley) nose to be considered a serious fault”*
- *“Light eyes or pink eye rims to be considered a fault, except that where the coat surrounding the eye is white the eye rim may be pink”*
- *“Full drop or full prick to be considered a serious fault”*
- *“Badly undershot or overshot bite is a serious fault”*
- *“A tail that is too long or badly curled is a fault”*
- *“Black-and-tan or liver color to be disqualified”*

Breed Specific Examination

PROFILE:

Observation from The Side

- Breed type showing strength with no exaggerations in his makeup, a moderate dog that is athletic and fit. The height of the dog being related to the weight. The proper blend of Bulldog and Terrier. Gender should be apparent by observation.
- Head - Clean outline, tight lips, tidy rose or half pricked ears, distinct stop that is vertical with a strong under jaw, Neck – Rather short flowing into the shoulders. Underjaw is level or slightly above the top of the withers
- Topline - Level with no dips or rises.

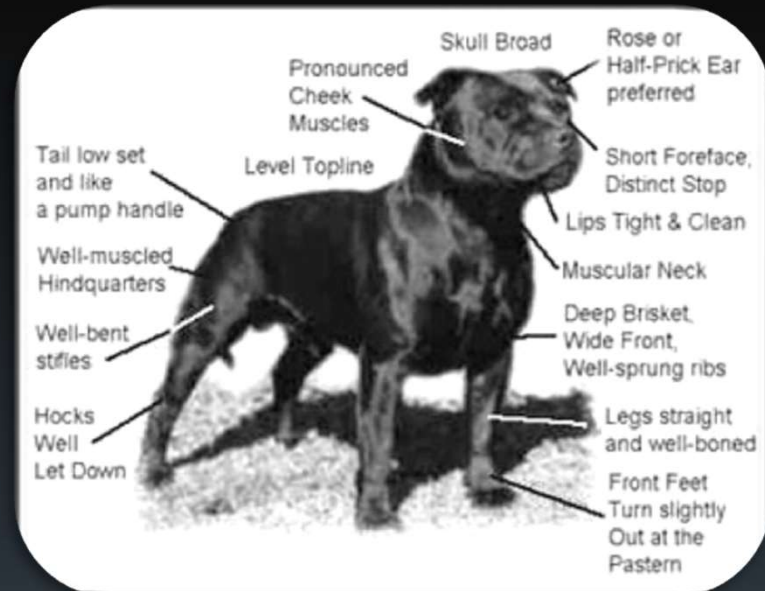


Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

PROFILE:

Observation from The Side Continued

- Angulations - Good bend of stifle at knee and above hocks that are parallel. Buttocks are even with rear toe.
- Feet - Strength in pasterns, no flat or splayed toes, Dog should appear to be “up on toes”, feet of medium size
- Tuck Up - Under carriage should not be straight across, tuck up under the stomach
- Body Length - The length of back from withers to tail equals distance from withers to ground.
- Height- Dog is 1/2 the height at the elbow
- Muscle Definition - Athletic and agile build but never appearing “bulky.”



Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

FRONT:

Using your hands from the front of the dog

- Dentition - Check both sides for correct scissor bite, severe under or overbite and converging canines are serious faults
- Length and Angle of Muzzle - Measure with your thumb from the tip of the nose to the stop, and then stop to the occiput (back of skull). The head is 2 parts skull to 1 part muzzle. The muzzle should not be downed, or dish faced. Muzzle should run all the way back to the eyes for “fill under the eyes”. Muzzle is neither blocky nor snippy
- Stop - Feel with your thumb if the stop is distinct with the angle of the foreface to the skull being approximately 110-120 degrees between the eyes.
- Skull - Width and depth should be proportionate with the muzzle. The skull should have well defined temporal muscles in a mature dog.



Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

FRONT:

Using your hands from the front of the dog

- Cheek Muscles-Pronounced especially in males you should feel these with your hands
- Nose - Black except in blues which will be dark. Nose should not be tipped up
- Eyes - Look for round well-placed eyes (not too close together) that are dark or in relation to coat color. Eyes are not bulging nor narrow and/or almond shaped as that will change the expression of the face. Staffordshire Bull Terriers, regardless of color should not have “light” eye color.
- Bone in Front Leg - Feel the size and muscles with your hand, muscles should be found on each side of the bone
- Front Brisket - Using your hand, reach under the front of the chest and feel the drop down of the chest. The lowest point of the chest to fall at elbow.



Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

FRONT:

Using your hands from the front of the dog

- Shoulder Placement and Development - Using your hands feel the lay back of shoulder and check to see if the dog has balanced shoulders. Overdone or “bossy” shoulders can make the front legs appear short
- Front Feet - Look for well-padded feet by lifting the foot. Strength in pasterns are key. Black nails are preferred except on white markings. Full sized toes.
- Ears - Feel with your fingers the ear leather it should be thin. Take the tip and reach it to the corner of the eye to measure a tidy ear. Half prink and rose ears are desired, not drop or button ears missing folds. Ear set to high or too low on the head will change the expression of the face.



Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

REAR:

Standing behind the dog

- Neck - Run your hand from the top of the neck along the sides to feel a strong flowing into shoulder from the neck. Neck should not be stuffy.
- Coat - Run your hands down the short coat and then back against the grain, the hairs should be hard short and close to the skin. Soft and silky coats are not desired.
- Spring of Ribs - run your hands down the sides of the dog feeling for spring of rib and hour glass shape. Stafford's should have a waist, not be slab sided or tube like. A fit dog will feel hard not boney.



Breed-Specific Priorities Examination

REAR:

Standing behind the dog

- Loin - Use 4 fingers and measure the loin, anymore fingers could mean a dog that is too long in the body.
- Hindquarters -Feel down for good bend of stifle at the knee, then move the hands down the thighs to second thigh muscle, it should feel hard with muscle definition.
- Tail - Most handlers do scissor the tail very thin to a taper. The tail should fall to the top of the hock, it should indicate a tail that is too long or too short without kinks.



Pictorial Showing Breed Type

- The next few pages are some examples of Staffordshire Bull Terriers



Dog



Dog



Bitch

Pictorial Showing Breed Type Continued



Dog



Bitch



Bitch



Bitch



Dog