

## A PBGV is a PBGV is a PBGV

by Linda Skerritt

Have you ever looked at your PBGV and wondered why he looks like he does? There are well over 200 pedigree dog breeds in this country, therefore it is pretty marvellous that each one looks completely different. So that each breed stays looking more or less the same over the years, all pedigree dogs have what is called a “breed standard” – a description of each part of the body of that breed, and of the dog’s character and temperament. Health needs are also borne in mind and the job the breed was originally designed to do. When conscientious breeders think about having a litter, they consider how best to promote and perpetuate the ideal of the breed.

The previous version of the PBGV standard had been in existence since July 1997. Since then, the introduction of Pet Passports and increased movement of judges and show dogs to/from this country and mainland Europe brought to the fore the benefits of fine-tuning the wording of the standard and making it as close as practicable to that of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI) - the international federation of kennel clubs based in Belgium. With the UK Kennel Club remaining independent of the FCI, consideration was also given to other countries, such as America and Canada, who based their standard on ours (Australia and New Zealand adopted the FCI standard within the past couple of years).

The BGV Club is also in a unique position, being the guardian of two breeds – the Petit and Grand. This allowed sequence of wording of the PBGV standard to be more in line with that of the GBGV one, with the aim of helping judges see more readily the differences between these two breeds. After lengthy consultation with breeders, club members and the KC, this revision was finally agreed and approved last year. It finally appeared in print in July, a project that had taken six years since conception in 2004.



### **Hello – are you the same as me?**

So – what *are* the differences? Hard to believe – but not many! That said, hopefully judges and exhibitors are now familiarising themselves with the main shifts of emphasis.

To help them, I prepared an Extended Breed Standard, which is now on my website [www.bgvcommunity.co.uk](http://www.bgvcommunity.co.uk) but the following may give you an idea of those aspects that are now slightly different or where the distinction between GBGV and PBGV can now be more readily seen.

“The skull is slightly domed”, whereas the GBGV’s skull is domed. “The occiput is moderately well developed”. The back point of the skull should be raised, not excessively so but sufficiently prominent to be felt. “The eye is oval”. The Petit was the only *basset* standard not including eye shape and oval helps to create the desirable friendly expression. “The ear flap does not reach beyond the tip of the nose”. This is one of the significant differences between the Petit and Grand, whose ears reach to just beyond the tip of the nose. “The upper arm should be approximately equal in length to the shoulder”.

Equal length of shoulder blade and upper arm bone, and balanced angulation between the two, allows for good extension of the front legs. Also the upper arm plays an important role, as a short upper arm reduces effectiveness of front support and forward movement. "Forearms straight". This is not a breed with a heavy, low chest therefore it does not need a crooked or half crooked front for support.

"Length of body measured from point of shoulder to point of buttock exceeds height at withers at a ratio of approximately 7:5". This KC terminology avoids use of decimals and equates to the historically researched and more familiar breed terminology of "1.4 : 1", which is the accepted norm.

"Level topline", though the well muscled and strong loin gives the appearance of a very slight rise in this area, especially when on the move. "Tail reaching no further than the hock when lowered" is one of the points that sets the PBGV apart from the GBGV whose tail is rather long. In keeping with the KC emphasis on moderation, hind movement is with "good", not great, drive.

Coat presentation is strengthened by the addition of "For show purposes the coat may be tidied but a natural appearance must be retained. Trimming or stylising should be penalised". This is a rough-coated breed, which must retain its unrefined appearance. The standard seeks to make it clear what grooming and presentation is acceptable for the show-ring. Permissible coat colouring now includes white and sable and white and black.

Height at withers is returned to the 1983 Standard of "34-38cms (13½-15 ins). A tolerance of 1cm (½in) more or less is permissible". This is applied worldwide. I think only America has retained a lower height of 13" and upper of 15", though outside this range in the States leads to disqualification from the show-ring.



So, the emphasis has been altered here and there, words may have been changed but, hey, breeders will still continue to produce the same type of dog and you still have the same adorable PBGV!