

Info shared by Pitbull SA.

Manjaro APBT kennel.

South Africa.

My Website www.pitbullsa.co.za

My E mail "manjaro@pitbullsa.co.za"

My Facebook "Gawie Manjaro"

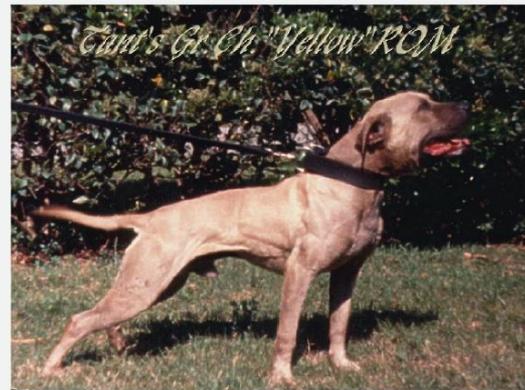
My Facebook page "Manjaro Kennel"

My mobile +27827838280.

Zello.com "VoIP" – ask for info.

Breed standard & conformation.

Looking at GR CH Buck ROM & Taint's GH CH Yellow ROM.



Gr Ch Yellow Buck's excellent conformation was and will always be a model for what a "true" APBT game dog should look like.

This dog just sets the standard.

(Yep! he has faults which should or could be corrected in breeding, such as the flat and splayed feet (then again **it did not hamper in functionality** – for what the dog could do.)

The head structure and size, substance, the angulations and all the other components **are the origins of the standard** (this is not a back yard breeder, puppy mill or show dog interpretations **or exaggerations**).

Look at these dogs and determine if you are breeding or judging for dogs that are within the standard or over done dogs.

A real historically game bred APBT build for the job at hand.



Compare the physique – conformation - of Yellow and Buck.
Notice the similarity?

Notice that these dogs are not big and bulky - that none of the features are exaggerated - that there is an extreme layback to the shoulder - that the rear angulations are balanced - notice the top lines and backlines - notice the upper arms are balanced with the shoulders.

If you are breeding for dogs that do not fit “this mould” **you are not on the right track.**

Yep - these dogs do not have that wonderful "dog steps" type movement that the “show ring” and show breeders cannot see past.

For the historical APBT, catch dog and working dogs ... **structure was and still is of utmost importance.**

This article will provide some **vital information about how to judge structure - conformation of the APBT as a defined breed and provide historical perspectives about why this structure was and still is of utmost is important.**

This information is not meant to glorify dog fighting or the APBT but to acknowledge that it was and should be the breeds history and that as stewards of a breed, it is our duty to maintain that original conformation (the look, structure, and type of the “real” APBT), which made the APBT dogs utterly successful.

How and why is a breed standard developed?

Proven set conformation standards.

What we (breeders and judges) should avoid at all costs is redefining the “successful conformation” and structure, then to base conformation upon what is winning currently in competition and the show ring ... or ... worst still ... what the puppy buying public is asking for ... or even worse still what you think structure should be.

If you as a breeder do not recognize this necessity, and you would rather own and create caricatures of the APBT ... as by the fad breeders ... the bigger head, extra heavy big dogs with various obvious genetic faults or colour syndrome ... then you are not a true APBT dog man.

Conformation and its relationship to the historical catch and working APBT dog.

The primary factor that contributed to the success of the APBT dog was and still is or should be is > **a proper height to weight ratio – nothing too much or too little.**

The working APBT dog ... in whatever discipline during history – and still today were contested only in nearly identical weights (not height).

Looking at strength to weigh moderate optimized physique.

The general rule was - **the best optimized strength to weight ratio of the dog** (not bulkier, not bigger head, but actually the dog with the most optimized physique).

Usually the dog with the most moderation of conformation (such as given examples > Buck and Yellow (there are many more examples of such dog) would possess more overall optimization.

Strength to weight would be optimized at a given weight,
the most reach would be gained at a given weight and height,
and the most rear power would be possible at a given weight.

Thus, a great deal of wrestling advantage will go to the dog that is moderate.

Although moderate can be subjective the origin of the standard, has proven and we do have examples (such as Buck and Yellow), to mould our dogs after.

The history of the breed continually prefers a lean predator's awesomeness with more height rather than a dense dog more with overt bulk Pitbull/Staffie difference.

As mentioned, historically **dogs were matched at nearly identical weights**, so let's consider an example to clarify the meaning.

What this means is that a stocky dog with heavy shoulders overly, big head, and too much bulk and heaviness of bone (often called substance by "some"), would typically lose in the pit to the taller, rangier lean completely balance opponents.

Rangy does not mean fine boned and tall but "**optimized**".

Obviously a dog that was extremely tall and fine boned (like a whippet) would not be too successful either, as they were likely to have legs broken - for instance by a dog with a good terrier bite and shake.

The dog with the good reach had so much advantage, for the same reason a human boxer with more reach typically has the advantage (then of course without saying ... **fitness and conditioning is definitively going to plays a major roll**).

They could hold off the opponent, stay out of reach of the opponent, and still do damage.

Simply the truth ... the dog with better reach could grab the opponents stifle when his opponent gained a hold on his front leg, grab an ear to hold off a stocky short necked opponent, dig into the chest underneath when the other dog got an ear hold.



See the comparison above.

Balanced structure in relation to width length and height.

Take a 18 kg dog that has **a lot of substance**, a large bowling ball head on a short in the shoulders neck, short and wide, similar to the "American bully" (style that is now so popular these days even on "APBT" shows).

If we consider these factors, along with the prescribed weight, this dog would be about 400mm tall (like an overdone Staffybull).

If (back in history) we matched this dog against "Yellow" at 18 kg and 480mm high, take a look at the two dogs in comparison – above.

The black overdone dog in the image has been given the advantage and made the same height.

The black opponent to Yellow in this comparison is a typical "short and wide" type dog that is so popular with modern fads.

Much wider, with more bulky mussels, this dog actually looks so much smaller than "Yellow" when compared side-by-side and matched at the same relative weight.

It should be apparent, to anyone with an unbiased eye, which dog would have the advantage in a real wrestling match.

When evaluating any APBT's important then to get a good feel for the dogs overall profile.

Ideally, the dog should be "slightly longer than tall or almost square" when viewed from the side.

That is, a bit longer from the point of the shoulder to the point of his hip than from the top of the shoulder, to the ground.

Such a dog will still stand high, but when balanced in structure, will have maximum leverage for his weight.

The dog will not be either high stationed, nor will they have a low centre of gravity.

The ideal will have a balanced moderate physique with exceptional depth of insertion for muscles.

Just looking at the "real" game bred performing APBT gladiator.

What the "real" APBT adult dog should present at first glance:

Short accepted summery.

"The APBT is a medium-sized, solidly built, short coated dog with smooth, well-defined musculature.

This breed is and looks both powerful and athletic and predator like.

The body is just slightly longer than tall, but bitches may be somewhat longer in body than male dogs."

This is the general description but the conformation standard should be a study on its own.

Configuring should relate to well-conditioned dogs

+ should look like an APBT from any direction with no uncertain terms.

+ The vitality of the dog's spirit – this is an APBT... Act like an APBT ... readiness – eagerness.

+ The clean gloss of the dogs coat and the sharpness of the dog's eye, will exude the healthfulness of the individual animal at first glance.

+ The dog should be well socialized, showing interest in things around them... but **ready** to face anything you put up in their face ... confident, alert, and inquisitive and in control of their space, not threatened by anything in their surroundings – with a definite no fear attitude – not shy or timid – ready to defend its space.

+ Although some degree of dog aggressiveness is characteristic of this breed and accepted, **unruly behaviour will always detract from normal presentation.**

+ Observe unreal gentle behaviour with loved ones / handler.

+ Sturdy, three dimensional and giving the impression of strength and awesomeness, not slight or frail.

+ Appears square, with heavy boned, solid front end with a light and springy back end.

+ The dog should be of a lean, exercised (well-conditioned) animal showing a hint of rib and backbone (without hipbones showing), athletic, predator look and mannerism and warrior like, with muscles firm and defined, not overly bulky.

+ With short trimmed nails.

+ Puppies should be well-nourished (not to fat), showing no ribs, backbone or hips.

Looking at the general appearance of the APBT.

Without a doubt this breed is both a combination of awesome power, oozing strength, athleticism and agility - predator like- with grace and should never appear bulky or muscle-bound or fine-boned and rangy.

The APBT is classes a medium-sized, solidly built, short-coated dog with smooth, well-defined musculature that speaks power, predator and warrior.

The body is called upon for speed, power, agility and stamina, balanced in all directions.

Too much of one thing, robs the dog of another.
In the ideal form, this dog breed is a thing of beauty.

Functional capabilities.

Because of the awesome specific APBT conformation their functional capabilities make the APBT a warrior and gladiator of note.

Then of course, above all else, the APBT must have the functional capability to be a true warrior, hunter and predator - **to be a catch, grab, hold and shake dog that wrestle (push and pull) and breathe easily while doing its job – never to give up.**

Balance and harmony of all body parts synchronized as a “complete” unit.

These are critical components and functions of breed type.

Fault:

Any disproportionate overdone characteristic - such as short legs, excessive bone or massive head or body and size that would interfere with working ability.

Looking at the characteristics of the APBT.

The essential characteristics of the APBT are unbelievable gameness, strength, confidence, unbelievable human loving nature and placid temperament, and zest for life.

This breed is eager to please and brimming over with enthusiasm. APBTs make excellent family companions and watch dogs and have always been noted for their love of children and could be very protective to their human family.

Understanding human and dog aggression.

Aggressive behaviour toward humans is uncharacteristic of this breed and highly undesirable.

Dog aggression and human aggression are two totally different characteristics.

Like with any other dog any APBT showing any degree of unprovoked human aggression should be put down.

Sorry, a true, pure and honestly bred APBT game dog should never have any degree of human aggression.

If they do, this means they have lost one of the primary and the most important temperament quality of the breed or was specifically trained to be that.

Although bred for dog aggression and is characteristic of this breed, owners or handlers will be expected to successfully control and handle dog temperament.

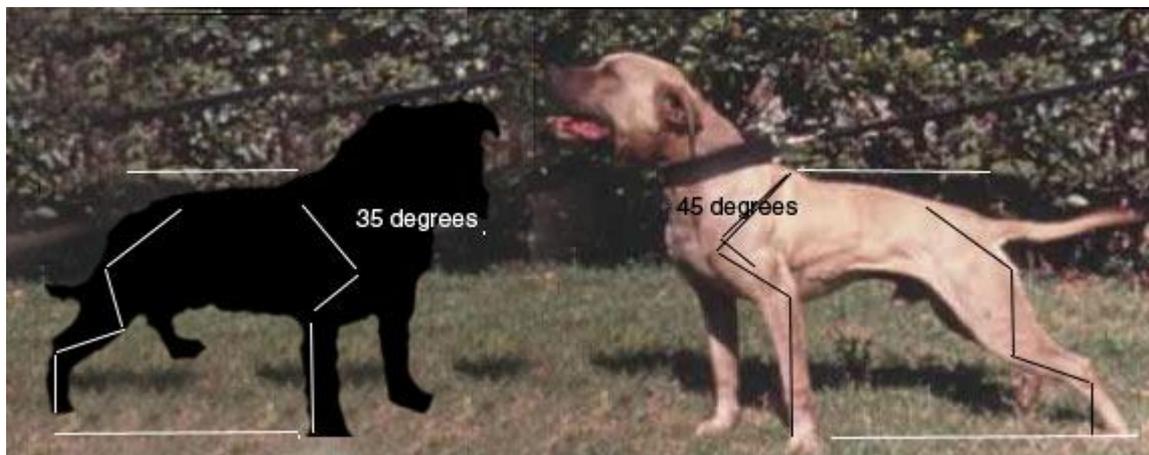
Because of its powerful physique, the APBT requires an owner who will carefully but firmly socialize and obedience train the dog.

The breed's natural agility makes it one of the most capable canine climbers and jumpers so good fencing is a must for this breed – to confine it for its own and for other animal's safety.

Because APBT's are extremely human friendly, normally even with strangers, the APBT is not the best choice for a guard dog or attack dog (unless specifically trained to be such - as with any other breed – this said, if that is your aim - these game dogs can successfully be trained as guard attack and security dogs, a dog for some to have in our modern era with house break-ins robberies rape and murders).

This breed does very well in performance and ability events (in all disciplines), because of its high level of intelligence, prey drive and its willingness to work.

A closer look at the set approved conformation standards for the APBT.



The body.

The body is just slightly longer than tall, but bitches may be somewhat longer in body than dogs.

Height and weight.

The APBT must be both powerful and agile so actual weight and height are less important than the correct proportion of weight to height.

Desirable weight for a mature male in good condition is between 22 and 35kg the female 17 – 25 kg but this will depend on the bloodline. Dogs over these weights are not to be penalized unless they are disproportionately massive or rangy.

Very Serious Fault: Excessively large or overly massive dogs.

Head.

Let's consider the most controversial topic – the head.

The head of the game proven APBT and then today for most show competitive APBT dog has become a caricature of what it once was in its most functional form.

The real competitive fighting APBT dog does have a relatively larger seeming head than most breeds as the head is where the primary contest takes place.

Always keep in mind that 80% of the work begins in the hindquarters and the head is primarily a holding device.

In general, a well-structured head is wedge-shaped when viewed either from the top or side, round when viewed from the front.

The head can vary a great deal in form, and as can be seen when comparing historical “winning” dogs **the heads are the least uniform of any aspect of conformation.**

This is primarily because as noted the conformation of the head has little to do with whether the dog wins or loses in a fight.

There are key things to note - the primary factor that has been ignored in fad bred dogs is **that a head that is too big, really only carries more weight and increases the chances of having to wrestle a bigger dog.**

On the opposite side of the coin a small head can be more easily punished and will often not have sufficient strength to maintain a hold.

It has been said that in an otherwise **well-proportioned dog**, the **heads will appear to be about two thirds the width of the shoulders and about 25% wider at the cheeks than the neck at the base of the skull.**

The APBT **typically** is seen to combine the traits of the bulldog and the terrier- most in the head structure.

This can be seen in the length of the back of the head to the stop, which to optimize aspects of strength and endurance (we are again talking about muscle attachment and insertion) should be about the same distance as from the stop to the tip of the nose.

Although **not boxlike** as we see in modern day American Bulldogs, the bridge of the APBT nose is still well-developed **this appears to make the head wider below the eyes, than at the base of the ears.**

If we are again considering muscle attachment and insertion then we must consider that **from top of the head to the bottom of the jaw must be relatively deep** to provide surface area for attachment and deep insertion of the musculature.

The jaw is closed and held closed, by the “Temporal Fossa” muscle exerting pressure on the “Coronoid” process.

The deeper the head is from the “zygomatic arch” to the angular process of the bottom jaw **the more relative leverage the dog will have to close and keep closed its mouth.**

Supraorbital arches over the eyes are well defined **but not overly pronounced.**

Fault: Overly large, heavy heads. Small head.



Skull.

The skull is **large, flat or slightly rounded, deep, and broad between the ears.**

Viewed **from the top, the skull tapers just slightly toward the stop. There is a deep median furrow that diminishes in depth from the stop to the occiput.**

Cheek muscles.

Cheeks 25% wider than the neck at the base of the skull.

Cheek muscles are prominent but free of wrinkles.

When the dog is concentrating, wrinkles do form on the forehead, which give the APBT his unique expression.

Fault: too cheeky.

Muzzle.

Although not a huge consideration in comparison ... the APBT should typically have a straight muzzle that is box-like in appearance with a well-developed lower jaw.

The opposite would be a pointy muzzle which could still have the important points of biting leverage (also bloodline related) - but which could be more easily bitten and probably withstand less punishment.

The muzzle then is broad (wide) deep with a very slight taper from the stop to the nose, and a slight falling away under the eyes.

The top line of the muzzle is straight.

The bridge of the muzzle is well developed.

The fill in under the eyes should be wider than the head at the base of the ears.

The length of muzzle is shorter than the length of skull, with a ratio of approximately 2:3.

Fault: Snippy muzzle (also dependable on bloodline), underdeveloped muzzle.

The lower jaw.

The lower jaw is well developed, wide and deep.

Lips.

Lips are clean and tight.

Fault: too lippy.

Flews.

Weak lower jaw.

Muzzle too short, which impairs breathing capability.

Teeth.

The American Pit Bull Terrier has a complete set of **evenly spaced, white teeth**. The teeth should typically meet in the front then with the most important aspect being that the canine teeth **should naturally be functional for bite ability** – the teeth are the dog as a canine's tools of the trade not just an aesthetic requirement.

The upper canines mesh together tightly right behind the lower canines when the mouth is closed.

The canines should be wide at the base and taper to the end, top.

They should be sound and healthy.

Know this > There is a great deal of emphasis placed on “scissor bites” in the APBT show ring for conformation - that is often **over-judged** and for show conformation purposes then **more of an aesthetic requirement than a functional conformation requirement** and definitely **not one that has anything to do with functional ability to bite.**

Faults: **Now consider this** - overshot or undershot to the extent that the canines do not fit tightly together as fault – then as a **non-functional ability** - with a level bite or wry mouth.

Missing teeth (this does not apply to teeth that have been lost or removed by a veterinarian).

Broken teeth should be of no concern in conformation standard.

The nose.

The nose is large with wide, open nostrils. The nose may be any colour. The length from the nose to the stop should equal the length from the stop to the back of the head.



Butterfly nose – different colours

Eyes.



Eyes are medium size, round and deep set and well apart and low on the skull.

Elliptical when viewed from the front, triangular when viewed from the side.

All colours are equally acceptable –

Fault; blue is not desirable.

Faults: Bulging eyes

both eyes not matched in colour

blue eyes.



Haw – third eyelid.

Should not be visible. Dogs also have a third eyelid, called the haw. It moves sideways across the eyes to protect them or to lubricate the corneal surface with tears.

The haw is **not normally visible**, unless the dog is in poor health or undernourished.

When the haw becomes permanently visible, giving the eye a "half-shuttered look, it is an indication that the dog is in need of veterinary assistance.

Ears.

Ears are small to medium size, high set and may be natural rosed or half pricked.



Natural ears



Half pricked ears



Rose ears



Rose ears



cropped ears



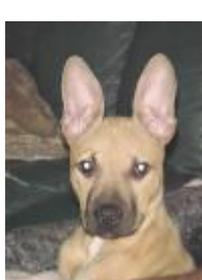
Wide ears are not desired.

No preference should be given to crop or not cropped ears, except to enhance the overall attractiveness of the individual dog.

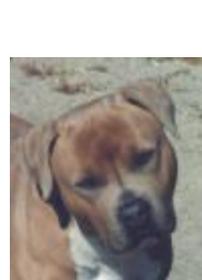
Faults:



Prick ears different directions



Rabbit ears



Flat ears not desired.

One or more ear standing up (rabbit ears) or facing different directions.

Neck.

The neck just long enough, of moderate length (not short and into the shoulder – staff look) to have the underside of the jaw appear above the top of the back when head is in a normal upright position.

There is natural slight arch at the crest. The neck widens gradually from where it joins the skull to where it blends into well laid-back shoulders.

The neck is muscled to the base of the skull. The skin thick and loose around neck and chest and tight fitting elsewhere, showing vertical folds around the neck and chest even in a well exercised animal.

Fault: Short neck.

Neck too thin or weak;

Ewe neck

Short, thick neck that would interfere with functional ability.



<< **Fault:** Dewlap (heavy) -above.

The back.

The back is strong and firm.

The top line.

The top line inclines very slightly downward from the withers to a broad muscular, level back.

The tail.

The medium size tail is set low, thick at the base and tapers to a point.

The tail is set on as a natural extension of the top line.

When the dog is relaxed, the tail is carried low and extends approximately to the hock hanging down.

Like a pump handle when relaxed - pump look.



Relaxed pump look.

When moving tail.



When the dog is moving, the tail is carried level or anywhere to a challenged tail with the backline



Challenged tail.



Docked tail



fault - Long tail

When the dog is excited, the tail may be carried in a raised, upright position (challenge tail)



Faults: Curled tail acceptable but never curled over the back (gay tail).

Fault: long tail (tail tip passes beyond point of hock).



Gay tail (not to be confused with challenge tail);
Kinked tail.



Bobbed tail.

Bobbed tail or any tail other than straight.

Coat.

Short and bristled, and smooth, close, and moderately stiff to the touch the gloss showing overall health of the animal.

Faults: Fringed hair (ridge back) on tail or elsewhere, curly, wavy, or sparse coat.

Disqualification: Long coat.

Coat colour.

Colours or colour patterns known to be genetically linked to health problems **will be considered a serious breeding fault**.

Any colour, colour pattern, or combination of colours is acceptable

Except.

Faults;

merle, Blue "pitbulls", albinism, white dog - blue or pink eyes, pink nose, lips, no pigment present on pads, rims of eyes etc.

Overly and too much white with tri colours.

Fault. About albinism

<http://www.geocities.com/~amazondoc/albinism/textframe1.html>

Optimized angulation, muscle insertion, and balance.

The best wrestler at a given weight must have optimized angulation, muscle insertion, and balance.

Thus looking at the dog from the side, with the dog standing normally, with the hock straight (90 degrees to the ground) the dog's base, (where his feet are) will be longer than his height.

The APBT must combine speed, power, agility and stamina.

To give away agility for more power we find that the dog will also lack speed and stamina.

To give away strength for stamina we find that the dog will be easily broken and lack ability to engage the wrestling opponent.

As said before - the APBT is not an entity formed by the hand and eye of man **but by the multitudes of tasks for which they excelled.** In his most winning form he is a perfect, balanced and blueprinted machine...a thing of beauty. It cannot be stated to many times that the APBT must be balanced in all directions.

Forequarters-front end.

Considering the chest shoulders and neck.

When we look at **the front end of the APBT** we should not be reminded of the bulldog which is typically a broad stationed animal.

The APBT must balance power and agility in the structure of the front end.

The ideal dog must be balanced in all aspects as too much of one attribute will rob him of another.

Notice the graphic and how the wide chest and heavy shoulders, neck and head mean the dog is sacrificing reach, length of bone, and depth of muscle insertion.

The viewer should first measure the dog using hip and shoulder as guides as depicted in the following graphic.

As noted the APBT, as an athlete can best be described in terms of that **task for which they were originally developed.**

This same task created a strong, yet agile and fast dog.

If we consider the task the true talent, at least which we can relate to true conformation, which typically defined the winner was endurance and wrestling ability.

The chest.



In a functional fighting dog the chest is both deep and elliptical – well filled in and moderately wide with ample room for heart and lungs, but **the chest should never be wider than it is deep - appearing almost narrow compared to the round or barrel chested fad bred dogs we see these days.**

It has been said that the lungs are not storage tanks for oxygen but are high volume pumps that have to move air in and out with optimization of volume.

Their efficiency is related to the difference in volume between contraction and expansion.

A barrel chested dog has an air pump with a “short stroke”.

This means that more breaths are required to match the volume of air derived from a dog with an elliptical chest that has room for a longer expansion and contraction stroke (effectively this means that the barrel chested dog has smaller lungs at the same weight – and could never go the distance in a real contest).

The fore chest.

Fore chest does not extend much beyond the point of shoulder.

The ribs.

Ribs extend well back and are well sprung from the spine, then flattening to form a deep body extending to the elbows.

Rib cage.

With the ribcage we can consider the other aspect of conformation that we can evaluate to some extent visually.

This is the potential for stamina, or wind, which is the ability of the fighting or hunter dog to efficiently move air in and out of the lungs at high volumes.

To do this in an animal like the ultimate fighting dog that moves on all 4 feet there it's essential that there must be room for the lungs to expand and contract.

Remember this expansion of the lungs is not moving out (sideways) or backward (toward the tail) but the primary movement for lung expansion is directly downward.

This means that the optimized chamber is not wide but instead is deep.

What we are considering is the rib cage, which constrains the lungs and limits their movement.

Thus, we have to have a rib cage that is deep, "elliptical" - well sprung and tapering to the bottom, with a prominent breastbone or prosternum.

From the side, the bottom of the ribcage should at least be even with the elbow joint and extending well back into the loin.

Shoulders.

The primary and most lacking of structural optimizations in modern fad dogs is that they have straight shoulders.

In an optimized 4-footed wrestler the scapula (shoulder blade) would be almost laid back to a perfect 45 degree, or even slightly more than 45 degree, slope to the ground.

For a functional fighting dog - like the hip, the shoulder must also be broad and flat to allow for optimization of attachment and insertion of the muscles.

The reason why this is lacking so dramatically in modern dogs is that along with the sloping of the hip and short femur this means the dog will not have a perfectly smooth trotting gait in the show ring.

The fighting dog will be more-springy with much more flexing of the back to obtain the same reach and drive than a dog with straighter shoulders that also has balanced rear angulation.

The dog with 45 degree layback of shoulder will also not appear to converge, nearly as much, as a dog with straight shoulders.

Because judges rely so much and are so used to looking for that smooth gait, with the flat moving back, they are missing the fact that in an optimized machine the movement will be much springier and the back more flexible.

A truly optimized wrestler (fighting dog) will not move as "pretty" as the dog with perfect show gait.

When considering the front end and the length of bones, we note that in addition to the broad, sloping shoulder that the "humerus" should be at an equal angle in the opposite direction and long enough that the elbow comes below the bottom of the rib cage.

This means that the upper arm (humerus) is typically slightly longer than the shoulder.

The elbows should lie flat but never be tied in tight to the chest which means that the "humerus" is running almost parallel to the spine.

While not heavy with overly thick bones the upper arm is relatively heavy at the shoulders.

Shoulders should be moderately wide but not too wide.

A dog with a narrow shoulder does not support adequate musculature and on the opposite side of the coin a dog with overly wide shoulders adds unnecessary weight, loses agility and overall does not provide any additional working benefits.

- + The shoulder blades are long, wide, muscular, and well laid back.
- + Wider than the ribcage at the 8th rib.
- + Scapula well laid back, 45 degree or fewer angle to the ground.
- + Broad and flat allowing for adequate muscular attachment for a heavy and sturdy front end.

The upper arm.

Is roughly equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an apparent right angle.

The humerus.

Is angled at an opposite 45 degree angle and is long enough that the elbow comes to the bottom of the ribcage, elbows lying flat against the body.

Forearms.

Slightly longer than the humerus and solid, twice the thickness of the metatarsal at the hock.

The forelegs.

Are strong and muscular.

The length of the front leg (measured from point of elbow to the ground) is approximately equal to one-half of the dog's height at the withers.

Viewed from the front, the forelegs are set moderately wide apart and perpendicular to the ground.

The pasterns are short, powerful, straight, and flexible.

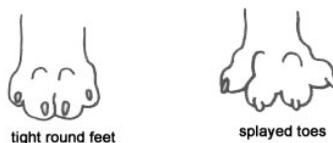
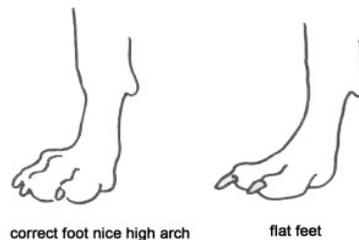
The elbows.

Are set close to the body.

Feet.

The feet are small, tight and round, proportionate to the size of the dog, well arched.

Pads are hard, thick and, tough, and well cushioned (well build up).



Thigh feet

Dewclaws.

Dewclaws are natural on front feet and not so common or desired on back feet but genetically acceptable.

Some fanciers have dew claws removed if intention is showing the dog for conformation.

Faults:

Down in pasterns, splayfeet, thin pads.

The pasterns.

Front pasterns.

The front pasterns must also be considered as these are both a primary shock absorber but also must be strong to provide a solid foundation - are nearly erect when viewed in profile.

Low pasterns provide no stability - short pasterns do not provide shock absorption.

Again moderation is the key in both length and flexibility.

Remember that the power of any animal originates at the feet and this power must be transferred upward by balanced angulation to facilitate truly optimized leverage.

Faults:

- + Upright or loaded shoulders;
- + elbows turned outward or tied-in;
- + down at the pasterns;
- + front legs bowed;
- + wrists knuckled over;
- + toeing in or out.
- + barrel chest, narrow chest, fine bones:

Serious Fault:

Legs shorter than half the total height at the withers.

Considering the back end of the APBT.

Hindquarters.



We must realize that even more important than the head we must have powerful, well-structured hindquarters.

The drive train of any four legged animal is where 80% of the work of wrestling occurs.

The drive for any forward movement is based off of the hips and back legs.

Thus, to maximize leverage a long sloping hip is most important.

This is missing in so many of the modern dogs because the focus has been on the size of the head and width of the chest.

By ignoring the most critical aspect of a 4 legged wrestler's physique the truly optimized conformation is missing.

The length of the hip is where the leverage is derived to efficiently contract and extend with the femur (thigh bone).

A long hip will give the dog a slightly roach-backed appearance (this is a moderate roach rather than dramatic as all things again must be balanced).

This does mean that the APBT will have a relatively low set on of tail.

The hip, in addition to being long, should also be broad.

This is vital as, in order for balance - the dog will also have a broad loin which permits a much larger surface area for the attachments of the "gluteal" and the biceps "femoris" muscles.

These two muscles are absolutely the biggest drivers in the power train.

Rear power.

Another aspect of optimizing the rear power train, which is contrary to what is "show and fad popular", these days, is that the femur (thigh bone) should be moderately shorter than the tibia, or lower leg bone.

The stifle joint will thus be in the upper one third of the hind leg. These days most of what we are seeing in the conformation ring is dogs with a low stifle.

This can often give the appearance of "good angulation" but it is misleading.

The greatest tell is that the dogs typically appear very heavily, even impressively, muscled.

This is because of the bigger head of the biceps femoris, and the longer tendon with its shallow insertion.

Even though the musculature appears very impressive and powerful it is comparatively weak compared to a dog with adequately short femur and therefore the likelihood of much deeper muscle insertions and comparative ratio of muscle belly length to distance between attachment at the hip and insertion into the femur.

The dogs with longer femur are comparatively weak and slow on their back legs, because of leverage lost by the long thigh.

When we mention that the femur is comparatively short it follows that what we are comparing to is a relatively longer tibia.

This is most evident visually, in a dog structured in the way described, by what we know as a well bent stifle.

Notice the comparison of “Yellow” to the fad structured dog in the following graphic.

This graphic demonstrates structurally what we are referring to.

Notice that the shorter femur, longer tibia result in what is a well bent hock.

Take careful note of the angle of the straight hock of the fad dog compared to the angle of the hock joint for “Yellow”.

The stifle and hock are vital contributors to actual wrestling ability.

Remember that that 80% of the work in a dog wrestling originates in the hindquarters.

If this musculature is not optimized, and then when such a dog finds itself being driven backward, they lack the natural springiness of the well bent hock and stifle to control his movement.

As an experiment have someone grab you by the shoulders and push you backward while you keep your legs straight (even your ankles), then bend your knees and hips and ankles and have someone push you backward.

Dogs with a straight stifle and hock can effectively wrestle effectively only as long as the muscle power can sustain them.

Because they must then rely on a heavier bulkier muscle, which uses energy at a faster rate and does not efficiently convert the power to forward drive, they will tire in the back end much more quickly, while a dog with a well-turned stifle and hock, using the same amount of energy, can exert much more force or the same force for much longer duration.

I realize that these concepts are especially difficult to conceptualize but if you have two dogs that get along and play well together and one has excellent structures rear-end while the other is shallow hipped with long femur, with less turn to stifle and hocks.

If you watch these dogs play-wrestling as they love to do you will notice that the well-structured dog always seems to have the advantage and eventually, if they play long enough, you will notice that the dog with the straight stifle will soon begin to work primarily with their front end, then soon they will begin dirt wrestling (rolling over while the other dog bounces around).

Hindquarters - back end.

The hindquarters are strong, muscular, and moderately broad.

The loin.

Broad and just long enough to square the dog but muscular and slightly arched to the top of the croup, but narrower than the rib cage and with a moderate tuck-up.

Too short can interfere with a dogs flexibility.

Too long a loin causes the dog to carry excessive weight and affect a dog's agility and quickness.

Hip.

The hip long and sloping with adequate width. This can be judged by the set of the tail, which should be low.

Ideal slope of hip should be 30 degrees to the ground.

The croup.

The croup is slightly sloping downward.

Fault: Overly massive body style that impedes working ability.

Proportions of the back leg.

- + The femur should be of a length so that the stifle joint is proportioned in the upper 1/3 of the rear assembly.
- + The tibia-fibula is the longer bone of the rear assembly.
- + The length of the metatarsal is moderate, with muscles that attach equally on each side of the bone so that the hocks move parallel to each other, deviating neither in nor out.
The metatarsals bones, hock and lower part of the tibia will be light, fine and springy.
- + Rear angulation - ratio between the lengths of the bones and the muscles which attach on these bones, causes a bent stifle which leads to a well bent hock.

This contributes to the natural springiness that is desired in the rear assembly.

- + The muscle attachment is long and deep, well past the joint, which causes the muscles to appear smooth, but defined. (Not bunched).

Faults:

short or flat hip, straight stifle, double jointed or slipped hock, cow hocked, bunched muscles.

- + The rump is well filled in on each side of the tail and deep from the pelvis to the crotch.
- + The bone, angulation, and musculature of the hindquarters are in balance with the forequarters.
- + The thighs are well developed with thick, easily discerned muscles.
- + Viewed from the side, the hock joint is well bent and the rear pasterns are well let down and perpendicular to the ground.

+ Viewed from the rear, the rear pasterns are straight and parallel to one another.

Faults:

+ Narrow hindquarters;

+ Hindquarters shallow from pelvis to crotch;

+ Lack of muscle;

+ Straight or over angulated stifle joint;

+ Cow hocks; sickle hocks;

+ Bowed legs.

Gait.

Balance.

Equal angulation of front and rear assembly – this could be judged best at the trot.

The APBT moves with a jaunty, confident attitude, conveying the impression that this dog expects any minute to see something new and exciting.

When trotting, the gait is effortless, smooth, powerful, and well-coordinated (predator like) showing good reach in front and drive behind.

When moving, the backline remains level with only a slight flexing to indicate suppleness.

Viewed from any position, legs turn neither in nor out, nor do feet cross or interfere with each other.

As speed increases, feet tend to converge toward centre line of balance.

Faults:

Legs not moving on the same plane; legs over reaching; legs crossing over in front or rear; rear legs moving too close or touching; rolling; pacing; paddling; side winding; hackney action; pounding.

Disqualification.

Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Unilateral or bilateral deafness.

Useful schematics.

