

**Minutes of the annual meeting
of the UEBB commission for behaviour and work
in Sien (D) on 12./13. April 2003**

Begin: Saturday 14:30 h, Sunday 9:00 h
End: Saturday 19:15 h, Sunday 13:00 h
Chairmanship: Norbert Haag
Present: Alain Jacquot (F), Yves Antoine (F), Jan Gedopt (B), René Holzer (CH),
Katja Werner (CH), Frank Cegla (D – CfH), Bernd Stephan (D – BCD),
Martina Klinzing-Pleuger (D – BCD), Hilmar Gowin (D – BCD)
Excused: NL, Czech Republic, Slovakia, GB, A
Unexcused: I

All participants get a working folder (English, French, German) with the agenda, the standard, the standard interpretations, a study from M. B. Willis over the “Possible Heritability of the Characteristics of Dogs”, an extensive listing of criteria for the behaviour tests and their evaluation given in written form, as well as different suggestions for a behaviour test at a breeder Selection show.

Agenda:

- TOP 1: Greetings by the commission chairman**
- TOP 2: FCI Standard /Behaviour
Standard interpretations of behaviour of the Berger de Brie for breeding purposes**
- TOP 3: Which behavioural characteristics are considered, tested and evaluated as important?**
- TOP 4: Test parts in practice. The conduct of a behaviour test with note-evaluations 1-5.
(The note evaluates the observed behaviour of the dog, which is prescribed in the criteria.)**
- TOP 5: Which Briard clubs have a behaviour test? What purpose, what value, and what acceptance does this test have in the clubs?**
- TOP 6: How can the acceptance of a behaviour test be raised among breeders?**
- TOP 7: What is the experience in heredity of certain behavioural characteristics? What is the experience in heredity of the tested characteristics?**
- TOP 8: Summary:
Recommendations of the commission to the UEBB member countries.**

TOP 1: Salutation by the commission chairman

Norbert Haag welcomes the present participants of the annual meeting of the UEBC commission for behaviour and work from France, Belgium, Switzerland, CfH and BCD and excuses the responsible delegates of the clubs in the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Slovakia, England and Austria. Despite great interest Russia could not participate as host country due to visa problems. Italy did not respond at all despite repeated invitations. At the same time he expresses his thanks to Corinne de Brouwer, Christiane Comby and Dabney Craddock for the assistance of the correction of the translation in English and French, which is to facilitate communication during this meeting. He also expresses special thanks to Kristina Wiese for the simultaneous interpreting in English and French during the meeting.

TOP 2: FCI Standard / Behaviour Standard interpretation - behaviour of the Berger de Brie as a pedigreed dog breed

Norbert Haag presents the standard of the FCI as well as different, well-known standard interpretations of the Berger de Brie originating from different times and summarizes:

Pedigreed dog breed means responsible person breed with consideration to

- **exterior**, according to the FCI standard
- **behaviour** according to the FCI standard and recognised standard interpretations as well as to the today's living conditions adapted social behaviour
- **health** according to club-internal breeding criteria with consideration of the defaults of the umbrella federation (e.g., hip dysplasia, C.P.R.A., hereditary diseases).

All three aspects have a meaning in the breed; however, they are differently weighed by the different clubs and breeders.

The FCI standard /exterior and, in the meantime, also the health defaults (hip dysplasia, C.P.R.A.) are recognised by the responsible persons and the "quality-breeders" in the European clubs.

In addition, it is an important task of the clubs and their breeders to preserve the typical **character of the Briard according to the FCI standard**

by a suitable breed selection.

The breeder has the possibility to set in the context of the FCI standard (behaviour) emphasis according to his personal concept.

The standard separately describes the exterior or general features and the behaviour:

General feature: Rustic dog, agile, muscular build and well proportioned, with lively and alert behaviour, neither aggressive nor fearful.

Faults:

Aggressiveness, without energy, fearfulness, dullness - no excellent

In addition the definitions of the early and experienced Briard owners as well as the general herding dog characteristics can be considered in a work concept, because this FCI standard is very brief.

Sédir (et C.A.B) has mentioned in his book "LE BERGER DE BRIE" the standard versions of 1925, 1978, and 1981 more precisely.

1925 it is mentioned beside the standard for the exterior the general feature and the behaviour: Rustic dog, supple, agile, muscular build, well proportioned, with lively and alert feature.

1978/1981 it is said:

The character has to be open, free, not aggressive, and not fearful.

Faults:

Aggressive, soft, strengthless, weak, slow acting, fearful, foolish – no excellent

Sédir writes: "... at peace he has to present himself peacefully, as a guard he should be watchful and alert with authority to observe his task ... no foolish, crazy, nervous cracking up. No nervous panting and incessant barking, no fearfulness with tail constantly carried under the belly, although its owner is with him."

His disadvantages are the other side of his advantages with a permitted, instinctive reserve.

Frank Haymann writes in his book "Le Berger de Brie"

"... the Briard should move in an easy way and not be lumbering: his temperament should be one of deep affection and sensitivity. In no case should he be fearful, shy or of malicious or exaggerated aggressiveness. As well as uncontrollable and obstinate, which may not be mixed up with a strong character." Thereby he quotes Joseph Ortéga, who sees the Briard in the constitution of a solid land man: Respectable, courageous, cheerful and of special sensitivity with his family; with regular, supple movements.

M. Bernd Weber writes of the character:

"Our Briard must have the personal qualities of the real French shepherd dog. That means a balanced character - not aggressive, not fearful. It must have stability and react with reasonable reactions attentively, watchfully and prudently to the different environmental attractions."

In the continuing literature of behaviour of dogs generally and herding dogs or Briards particularly, it is written:

Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. E. Seiferle

(Instincts and examination of the dog's nature - manual for tester of behaviour)

"The herding dog: The tasks of the herding dogs are today no longer as versatile as in earlier times. Above all, protection and defence of the herd is in our area no longer necessary against four or two-legged robbers. The herding dog has to hold a herd of small or big animals together and bring them in the direction wished by the herdsman.

Desired:

Middle up to high temper, perseverance, secure in his character and fearlessness, enduring gun shots firmly, good controllability, distinct guarding and driving instinct, close connection to handler and herd, hardness, good association and combination gift.

Sometimes desired:

Tracking and hunting drive, retrieving drive, protection drive, fighting drive.

Unwanted:

Fearfulness, shyness, softness, sharpness/ biting drive, hunting impulse

Bruce Fogle

(“The Dog’s Mind”. View of the behavioural characteristics of various breeds of dogs)

“During the assignation of characteristics according to use or outward behaviour the following classification for the Briard resulted:

- very high training ability
- high reaction readiness
- middle aggression willingness

Professor Dr. Karl Hermann Finger

(“Herding dogs – origin and use of the races and casts, their attitude, training and competitions”)

“... of the Briard as a herding dog, which shows still all good characteristics as occupation urge, authority understanding and a reserve towards strangers. As untiring, spirited long runner he works elegantly and supply ... an efficient, sensitive herding dog, which becomes a good-natured comrade if he is treated with loving care.”

Generally Professor Dr. K.H. Finger wishes the herding dogs in his own pack to be friendly and sociable, but with as much distrust that they reserve for each stranger on distance, without attacking them and showing their teeth.

Perhaps these difficult characteristics are its advantage in why they did not bring them in a so large number into the cities to other use, contrary to other shepherd dog races.

Integrating the binding layout of the FCI standard and the interpretations of Sédir, Frank Haymann, Bernd Weber, Eugen Seiferle, Bruce Fogle and Karl Hermann Finger, it is possible to derive the following behaviour picture:

The Briard should be:

Lively, spirited, persistent, alert, open, free, unrestrained but prudent, watchful, protective, sensitive, easy to lead, happy, rustic, calm in peaceful surroundings, balanced and stable. But the dog can be appropriately reserved towards strangers.

The Briard should not be:

Without energy, slow-acting, weak, soft, foolish, timid, shy, fear-biting, hectic, nervous, incessantly barking.

TOP 3: Which character characteristics are judged, tested and evaluated as important?

Here first of all information about the characteristics that will be judged in the individual clubs as important and which clubs are going to test and evaluate behaviour in a behaviour test are gathered:

René Holzer, president of the Swiss Briard club and behaviour tester for many years presents the extensive behaviour test from Switzerland, which in 18 points specifies in detail, which behaviour of the Briards is tested. Here the emphasis is on the social behaviour of the dog in different situations.

Jan Gedopt, president of the Belgian Briard club, breeder and for many years behaviour tester, implements that in Belgium the social compatibility of the presented Briards against human beings (most important point), the manipulation (measurement) of the dogs, acoustic/ optics, the calming down and the behaviour against the owner are observed. Out of these single points it

results a general impression of the presented dog, which contains the self-assertion and the temper of the Briards.

Alain Jacquot, President Commission Utilisation ABB, and Yves Antoine, both breeders and behaviour testers for many years, present the reworked French behaviour test by Michel Pierre Martin. Against optics/ acoustics, spirit, courage and a very detailed description of the general impression. Also the dog's social compatibility has a high value.

Frank Cegla, main breed-ward for the CfH Germany, breeder and behaviour tester for many years, presents the behaviour test of the CfH, which covers three parts: The social compatibility of the dogs is the most important point, moreover acoustic/ optic and during isolation (a so-called stress part) further behaviour characteristics are tested.

Bernd Stephan, speaker of the behaviour testers for the BCD/ Germany, shepherd, breeder and behaviour tester for many years, presents the behaviour test of the BCD. This one covers self-assertion, social compatibility, courage, and calming down after the excitation and the spiritedness in a special running part.

Summarising we may see that for all countries it is important that the Briard shows appropriate and social behaviour in today's everyday life.

The self-assertion and the sociable manageableness in everyday life will be tested by the behaviour testers with many different evaluation criteria. Spiritedness is judged as important, but tested differently – as general impression during the complete test but in detail in a special running part which will show the joy of movement, as well as during the play with the owner and stranger.

In addition to the faults, which are mentioned in the FCI standard, aggressiveness and fear are tested by some clubs in the behaviour tests.

At this point Norbert Haag summarises the terms spiritedness, self-assertion, fearfulness, aggression and calming down out of the presented behaviour tests:

Spiritedness is not the hectic, nervous dog who is always jumping around, but it is shown by the dog's joy in controlled movement, if the dog handler demands it from the dog.

Self-assertion can be seen as a total result from many different test parts of the behaviour test.

With fearfulness and aggression there are different concepts to a test and as mentioned below the test has been done differently in every country for years

- either these two characteristics are not tested in a behaviour test
- or they are tested only a little – the fearfulness is often recognized, the unwanted aggressiveness however, rarely
- or in the most different operational sequences, the working dog and protection dog suitability are expected and evaluated

Fearfulness/ aggression can also be recognized:

- with a very dynamic and exciting play of the dog with the owner and/or a strange person in a close, noisy, moving group of several people.
- or still more clearly in a special test part called “irritation/ courage”, during which the dog reacts to strong sound and movement irritations.

Directly after this irritation test, the owner with his unleashed dog goes into a group of moving people, in order to see the inclination towards aggressiveness or fearfulness and the calming down of the dog. In the group of people it must appear appropriately self-assured, peaceful and attentive.

All of us know that only the excited dog clearly shows its inclination to aggressiveness.

After a state dog regulation in North Rhine-Westphalia came into being, certain dogs may be led only with a muzzle and in each case with a leash, but after a successfully passed aggression test, these dogs were set free from this restrictive legal order.

Norbert Haag points out that he has already tested dogs with both above mentioned test runs whether they are biting or become biting dogs with excitation. In both test runs the biting dogs were recognized.

Nevertheless he can recommend, after these experiences and what he has seen during the last 25 years of test runs concerning fearfulness /aggression, the particularly developed test part irritation/ courage for the behaviour test of a selection or a breed entrance examination, because this one wouldn't leave any negative lasting impression on a young, fearful or 'tender' dog.

**TOP 4: Test parts in practice. Conception of a behaviour test with note evaluation 1-5.
(The note evaluates the range of behaviour of the dog, given in written form.)**

All participants drove together to the dog training area SV St. Julian, where already in the morning all necessary implements were built up by the behaviour testers of the BCD. Herewith the different test parts were demonstrated and discussed as a suggestion . The behaviour test begins after the control of the tattoo number with lying the dog on it's side or back by the behaviour tester within a neutral person's group. Afterwards, the described test parts - play with owner, play with behaviour tester, optics and the acoustics, irritation/ courage and calming down directly after the excitation with irritation / courage as well as a special running part - the spiritedness of several Briards were tested.

All participants were able to observe the behaviour of the dogs and with the help of the participant worksheets in English, French and German, gave a note for the observed behaviour parts. The evaluations were discussed in detail and they found out that there was a very high agreement in the given notes (between 1-5).

TOP 5: Which Briard clubs have a behaviour test? Which task, which value, which acceptance has this test in the clubs?

The individual participants will inform the others at which occasions a behaviour test is made in their country:

In France a behaviour test only takes place during the selection. After a 'circumscribed overall evaluation' it results in a single note. For the title "sélectionné" a minimum score has to be achieved. In addition there are basic tests for young dogs in France.

In Belgium behaviour tests only take place during the selection. For the "sélectionné", the Briard only has to take part.

In Switzerland no selection takes place, but there is a breed entrance examination. Before a dog is allowed to breed, it must participate in this breed entrance examination (male and female). Here, among other things, the behaviour will be tested and during that test the dog has to fulfil minimum requirements in social compatibility in order to receive breeding permission.

In the CfH the owner of the Briard/ breeder, before he may breed with his Briard, must participate at a breed entrance examination (male and female). Here, among other things, the behaviour will be tested and during that test the dog has to fulfil minimum requirements in social compatibility in order to receive a breeding permission. For young dogs, a less strenuous behaviour test has been adapted and takes place.

In the BCD the owner of the Briard/ breeder, before he may breed with his Briard, he must participate at a breed entrance examination (male and female). Here, among other things, the behaviour is tested. Minimum requirements must be fulfilled to receive a breed permission which are the following: social compatibility/ self-assertion, courage during irritation, and calming down after the irritation. Also, a special running test part for spiritedness is conducted. The breed responsible persons of the BCD consider it important to test not only the neutral and passive behaviour but also the active behaviour characteristics, as they are demanded in the FCI standard.

In short form this test also takes place at the common German selection of the BCD and CfH as behaviour test, whereby minimum requirements must be fulfilled. Also, for young dogs, an adapted young-dog test (less strenuous than the breeding selection) takes place, likewise in the BCD.

TOP 6: How can the acceptance of a behaviour test be increased among breeders?

Norbert Haag informs the participants that in the different countries there are very different requirements and scope of testing within the Briard clubs and within each FCI umbrella organization of the countries.

In France and Belgium e.g. the country's FCI umbrella organization issues the pedigrees. Membership in the country's FCI Briard club is a voluntary thing for owners and breeders. Therefore rules and regulations for breeding and for the breeders are no more than a recommendation of the clubs to the breeders, no matter how good and sensible they are. A lot of breeders though take over these recommendations voluntarily and thus fulfill a quality standard.

In Germany and Switzerland it's not the FCI umbrella organization of the country, but each FCI Briard club that issues the pedigrees. Thus a membership is obligatory to obtain an FCI pedigrees as a breeder. Therefore, the FCI Briard clubs in these two countries can decide autonomously that the Briards presented for a test as an admission for breeding have to fulfill minimum demands in **appearance, behaviour and health**, before people are allowed to use them for breeding.

In the discussion following, which was very extensive and informative, one thing becomes clear: The appearance of a Briard is judged according to the FCI standard in UEBC countries. As far as health is concerned, the breeders, the clubs and the commissions for breeding are responsible for an "honest breeding". This means that mistakes are to be named in order to be judged and taken into consideration for further reflections in breeding. Breeders who are prepared to talk about mistakes, to look seriously into their origin and never to run down rashly any Briard or breeder just because of some rumors, earn appreciation.

Here the warning is issued that a Briard's general value should remain a deliberative matter and not one of omission which leads to the refusal of a dog. Furthermore it is established that HD is a point of discussion in all countries among breeders and in the clubs, as well as illnesses of the eyes, turning stomachs (GDV) and other occurred illnesses.

If a behaviour test should be accepted by the people responsible in the clubs and by the breeders, then it has to evaluate the characteristics of the Briard mentioned in the FCI-standard and the results of the test have to be useful information for breeding.

To recognize such characteristics the courses of the tests have to be such that these characteristics are evident and have to be evaluated in such a way that everybody understands the evaluation.

It is important to recognize that as a behaviour tester observes the behavior of a dog, its genetic disposition and everything learned, as well as the momentary conditions, are seen together as an "image of behavior" and only this image can be evaluated in a behavior test.

Therefore at best, a behaviour test always only makes a statement about the high probability of recognizable hereditary characteristics.

Behaviour testers can live up to their responsible task only if they have great specialized knowledge for this honorable office, and if they are sincere and are capable of explaining their decisions.

A behaviour test for a selection (breeder show) or for admission to breeding always has to provide information for breeding.

This behaviour test is neither intended to fulfill the task of selecting working dogs, nor to develop scientific models, nor to give kindly meant help for education and training, nor to harass breeders.

Instead it should judge the Briard according to all characteristics demanded in the FCI-standard in order to be able to look for a compensating partner for breeding where there are weaknesses, but also in order to exclude extreme behavior in breeding.

Extreme behavior is: very fearful, very nervous, very dull or unspirited, dominantly aggressive, or fearfully aggressive.

The behaviour according to the standard of the FCI and the interpretations of the standard demand of the Briard a medium to high spiritedness (no uncontrolled crazy jumping about, but activity when asked for by the owner), a medium self-assurance in all everyday encounters even during irritations, as well as a medium-to-high calming characteristic.

During the discussion it becomes evident that breeders differently valued the importance of the characteristics noted above and that the character of the Briard has to be seen in its whole spectrum in today's breeding – just as we see him at all Briard events.

This means that "soft" and "strong" Briards are recognized as such in the test and judged accordingly. They are always accepted if they are attentive and can be guided.

An comment makes it clear that today's demands of the Briard often ask for "a Porsche and a tractor at the same time."

To conclude, it is established that in judging behaviour, different tests, interpretations and judgements have existed for years, although there is only one FCI-standard.

The acceptance of a behaviour test can only be raised among breeders if this test contains useful information for breeding and if the percentage of "good" descendants rises over the years.

Therefore, as a result of behaviour testing for the selection (breeder show) or for admission to breeding, only those characteristics are important where the heritability is known.

**TOP 7: What is the experience in heredity of certain behavioural characteristics?
 What is the experience in heredity of the tested characteristics?**

Norbert Haag presents the statistics “Possible heredity of canine characteristics” by M.B. Willis, 1992, where the factors of heredity are classified as follows:

Disposition to hunting	10 – 30 %
Nervousness	50 %
Temperament	30 – 50 %
Disposition for protection	10 %
Success as blind dog (self-assurance)	50 %

During the discussion it was established that a certain percentage of the characteristics is hereditary. But also that the imprinting phase by the bitch and by the breeder in his kennel are very important because they can worsen good dispositions. In particular after giving away the puppy, the owner’s integration of the Briard into his family are responsible for a complete development of behavioural characteristics, as well as the dog’s stability in everyday situations in case of inherited behavioural weaknesses.

Breeders who for many years have been taking the behavioural characteristics into consideration by choosing mates know that dispositions are hereditary and see their experience reinforced in the statistics of Willis.

During the lively discussion on the topic “What is the experience in heredity of the tested behavior?”, it was established that a lot of things are tested but in the end they are not taken into a statement on heredity, and that as well, a lot of things are tested that provide no information on behavioural heritability at all.

**TOP 8: Summary
 Recommendations of the commission to the UEBC member countries**

In the concluding summary of the annual gathering it is established that a selection (breeder show) is and always has to be something different than only a beauty (appearance) exhibition.

The selection (breeder show) therefore is a judgement of quality for breeding dogs.

The dogs presented have to have a quality corresponding to the seal of quality “**selected**” in their appearance and behavior according to the FCI-standard, in their health (HD, ERG or PRA), as well as the current focus for the breeding authorities.

The goal wanted by all participants is therefore a uniform test of behaviour for the selection which judges all characteristics according to the FCI-standard (behaviour). The judgement should be uniform in all countries and languages.

As a framework to be worked on, the participants recommend the test of behaviour presented and discussed during this gathering for selections or breeder shows (see attachment) contain the following criteria:

- **Self assurance (behavior towards people, playing with the handler, playing with strangers, optics, acoustics)**
- **Temperament (Spiritedness)**
- **Courage during irritation**
- **Calming down**

For this all participants will discuss their impressions in their different groups of behaviour, and try to point out the common points found at the annual gathering in order to pursue their acceptance until the UEBC show in Bratislava on the 4./5. October 2003.

Jan Gedopt proposes the establishment of a UEBC selection during the UEBC show, where the behaviour testers of the UEBC-countries will judge the dog's behaviour in a common group.

The last point was the invitation to the behaviour testers, issued by CfH and BCD, to come to the German selection on the 20./21. September in Balve and test along with the official behaviour testers there.

Norbert Haag voices his thanks for the very engaging and constructive working together of all participants, and closes the meeting and wishes everybody a safe and good trip home.

Norbert Haag
(Chairman of Commission)

Kristina Wiese, Tanja Rommerskirchen
(translation)