

DISCUSSION

The Committee reviewed the Standard in a section by section manner. Suggestions from the membership were considered under the appropriate section. The Committee's approach tried to emphasize what is correct in the Vizsla rather than to dwell on faults. When a Standard emphasizes faults, it tends to promote "fault judging", where the judge picks apart what is wrong with a dog rather than looking for the strengths of the dog. A general statement regarding faults has been included at the end of the Standard.

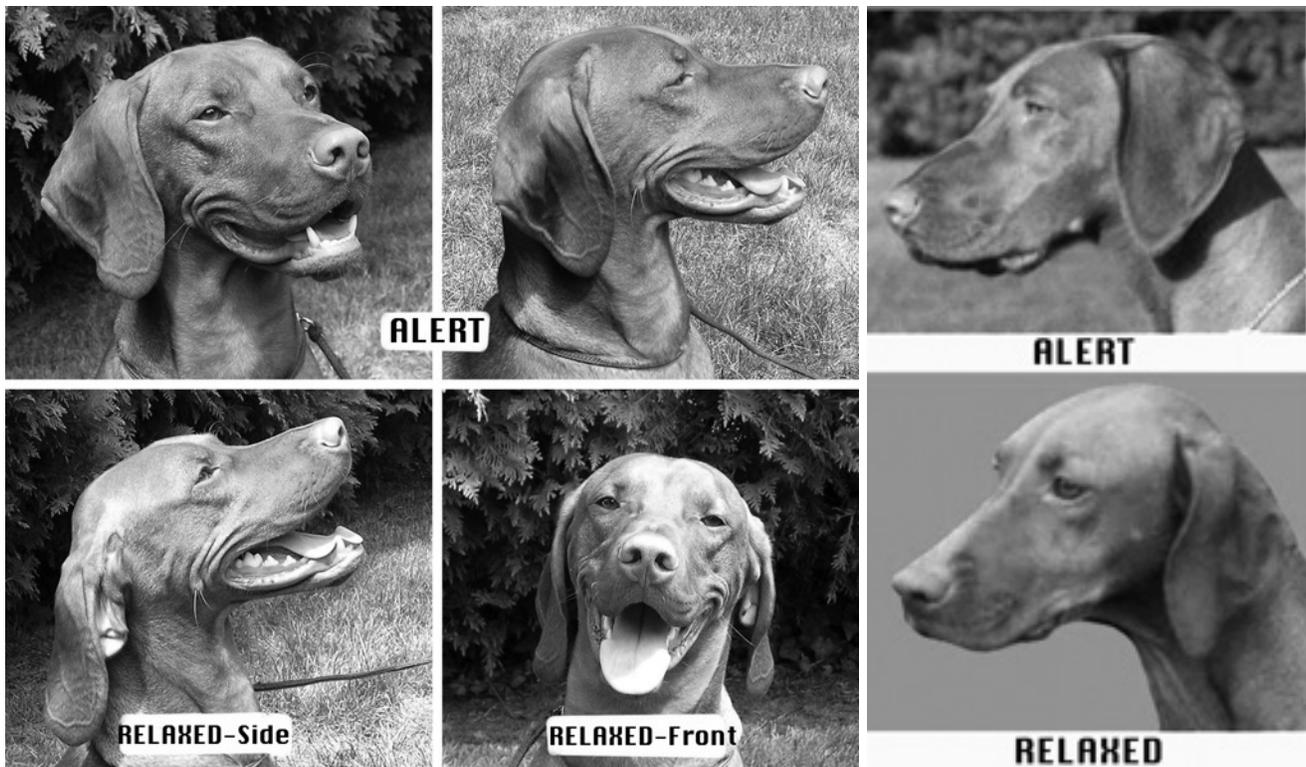
1. General Appearance Section

The committee reworded the general appearance section to identify the Vizsla's country of origin (Hungary) and to emphasize its versatility.

2. Head Section

The committee removed "*not deep*" in the description of the stop as they felt "*moderate*" is an adequate description. They changed nose color from brown to self-colored, which they felt to be a more accurate description, added a partially black nose as a disqualification but included an exemption for freckles. Self color is defined as of one color all over with shadings of the same color. The FCI/Hungarian standard describes nose color in a similar manner - "The color of the nose harmonizes in a dark shading with the coat color."

The current standard describes the ears as "set fairly low". This is more typical of a setter or spaniel ear set and is also subjective. Breed standards describe dogs in a relaxed, natural posture. When relaxed, the Vizsla ear is set level with the outside corner of the eye following the zygomatic arch. When excited or alert, the Vizsla will lift its ears to a higher position on the head. This is illustrated in the following pictures.



VIZSLA EARS – Alert and Relaxed. Male (l. & c.) Female (r.)

The ear set is judged during the head examination. The judge approaches the dog quietly, lifts the chin gently, examines the bite, checks for white under the chin or on the throat, looks at the eye shape and color and, again quietly and gently so as not to arouse the dog, lays the ear forward to the corner of the mouth to measure its length and, at that point, can see the relaxed ear set.

The Canadian Vizsla standard describes the ear as set 1/2" below the top of the skull, while the FCI or Hungarian standard states that the ear should be "set on at medium height." The proposed description is not inconsistent with these.

The committee described the shape (slightly oval) and expression of the eye and reworded eye faults in an explanatory manner.

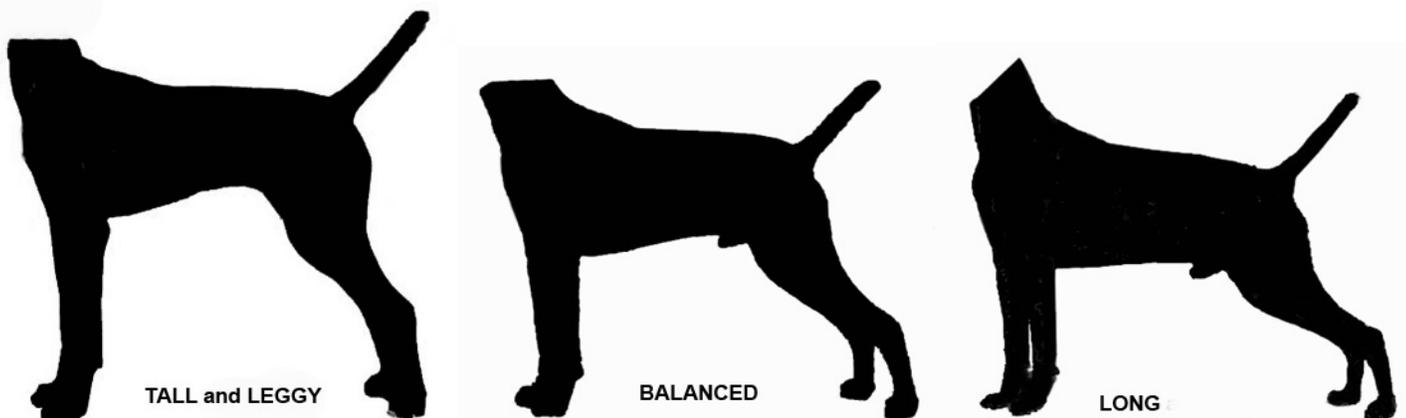
The description of eye shape is important because the shape of the eye contributes to function. To function efficiently in the field the Vizsla needs good binocular marking ability accompanied by good peripheral vision. An oval eye shape serves these requirements. A round, forward facing eye loses much of its peripheral vision. An almond-shaped, oblique eye loses much of its marking ability. The FCI/Hungarian standard also describes the eye as “slightly oval.”



The description of the expression deals with the temperament and disposition of the Vizsla, elements of breed type. The language used by the committee is that generally found in breed standards. The description is meant to convey a general impression of an active dog eager to get out and run and hunt. This description can be compared or contrasted to that found in numerous other breed standards. All AKC breed standards can be accessed on the AKC website. The FCI/Hungarian Vizsla standard calls for “intelligent, lively expression.”

3. Neck and Body Section

The current Breed Standard is vague in its description of proportion and outline. These are important elements of “breed type”. The committee wanted to encompass balance, athleticism and moderation in the formal description. A description of height to length as measured from defined points was added and, in the interest of balance, no absolute ratio of leg length to body was defined. Rather those elements should be in proportion. The relationship of backline, loin and croup was described. Backline is defined as that portion of the entire topline beginning at the rear of the withers and ending at the tail. Generally speaking a dog is considered to be short on leg if its legs from elbow to ground are shorter than the distance from the top of the withers to the bottom of chest. Long bodied usually translates to long in loin.



The committee moved the term “withers high” to a more logical position at the beginning of the body description and changed the point of measurement of height from “withers” to “highest point over the shoulder blades” which is anatomically more exact. They reworded the tail carriage description to emphasize the correct carriage and describe incorrect carriage. They deleted the statement “An undocked tail is faulty.” and substituted “A docked tail is preferred.” This will allow undocked imports to be exhibited without undue penalty.

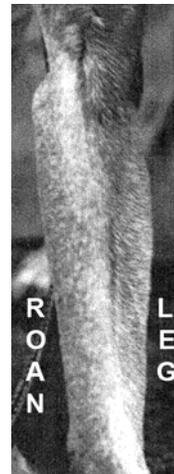
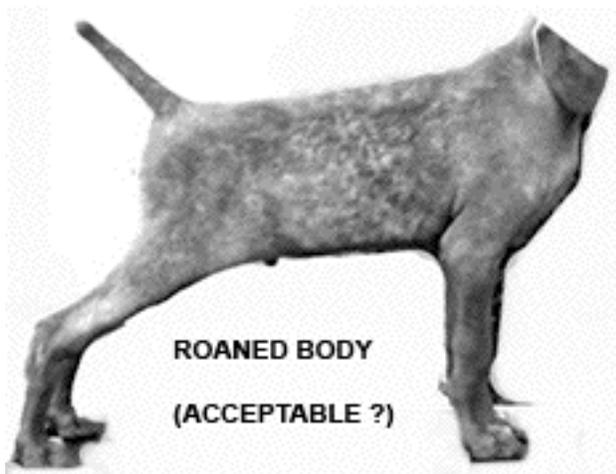
4. Forequarters Section

The committee defined the ratio of upper arm to shoulder blade and changed the wording regarding the removal of dewclaws from mandatory to recommended with a rationale. *"Hare feet are faulty"* was deleted in keeping with the committee's desire to avoid emphasis on faults. The correct foot is described. Any deviation, including a hare foot, is to be considered incorrect.

5. Color Section

The committee felt that the description *"Solid golden rust in different shadings"* is confusing, because a dog with shadings in its coat is not solid colored. Originally, the inclusion of "solid" in the description was meant to infer that white in the coat is undesirable. This is addressed more appropriately in the next section. The word "Solid" was deleted and "different" changed to "varying". The shadings forming a "saddle" are also described.

The current standard states: *"White on the forechest, preferably as small as possible, and white on the toes are permissible. Solid white extending above the toes or white anywhere else on the dog except the forechest is a disqualification."* The term "solid" is used in an inconsistent and confusing manner. For instance, if "Solid white extending above the toes..." is not acceptable, does this imply that roaned white extending above the toes is permissible and, if so, how far above the toes can it extend. *"Solid white extending above the toes..."* is followed by *"...white anywhere else on the dog except the forechest is a disqualification."* In this instance the modifier "solid" is not used, so white can be interpreted very broadly, from solid to roaned to a few hairs, anywhere else but the forechest. The statement was modified to *"Solid or roaned white, as minimal as possible, is permissible on the forechest and on the toes. Solid or roaned white extending above the toes or anywhere else on the dog except the forechest is a disqualification."* This uses the modifiers in a consistent manner and clarifies the definition of white to include both solid or roaned, so as to avoid any confusion as to whether the white must be a discrete patch, marking or spot. The definition of roan is having the base color muted and lightened by a mixture of white hairs. The addition of roaning to the description of white **in no way expands or changes the standard with regard to the areas where white is permitted (forechest and toes) or where it is not permitted (anywhere else on the dog)**. Additionally, a few stray white hairs do not constitute a roaning pattern. Roan refers to the base color being thickly interspersed with another color. Because the current standard does not deal with roaning, it could be interpreted in two ways - to mean that roaning is permissible or to mean that roaning is not permissible. If roaning were to be permitted on the body or the legs above the toes, the patterns illustrated in the following pictures would be acceptable.



"Small" was changed to *"minimal"*, as it is the amount of white that is of concern rather than the shape. The committee deleted *"When viewing the dog from the front, white markings on the forechest must be confined to an area from the top of the sternum to a point between the elbows when the dog is standing naturally. White extending on the shoulders or neck is a disqualification."* The committee felt it was redundant

and confusing. They added an exception for white due to scarring and changed “*shall not be faulted*” to “*must not be faulted*” in order to emphasize the point.

A description of the Vizsla as a self-colored dog was added which incorporates the consistency of color for the entire dog. Self color refers to one color or whole color except for lighter shadings. The FCI/Hungarian standard calls for the color of the nose, eyes, eye-rims and lips to harmonize with the coat color.

“*Black in the coat is a serious fault*” was deleted. The color of the Vizsla is emphasized to be golden rust, so black would automatically be incorrect.

6. Final Statement

The committee added a general statement at the conclusion of the Standard regarding deviation from the ideal, rather than listing numerous faults.

Questions and comments may be directed to the VCA Board of Directors or Breed Standard Committee members.

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