



FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

SECRETARIAT GENERAL: 13, Place Albert 1^{er} B – 6530 Thuin (Belgique)

17.12.2015/EN

FCI-Standard N° 195

VOLPINO ITALIANO

(Italian Volpino)

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ORIGIN: Italy.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL VALID STANDARD: 13.11.2015.

UTILIZATION: Guard and companion dog.

FCI-CLASSIFICATION: Group 5 Spitz and primitive type.
Section 4 European Spitz.
Without working trial.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY: The Volpino is one of the descendants of the European Spitz that already existed in the central region of our continent since the Bronze Age and of which skeleton fossils have been discovered around the foundation piles of the dwellings on stilts. So the Volpino goes back to the same ancestors as the German Spitz of which he is not a descendant, but a relative. He has been bred in Italy since immemorial times and has been idolized in the palaces of the noblemen as well as in the hovels of the common people, where he was especially appreciated because of his instinct of guard and vigilance. Work by Vittore Carpaccio from 1502 shows a Volpino in the Venetian painting, *The vision of St Austin*. Volpino was the dog of Michelangelo, and in the 18th century, the tireless companion of the carters of Tuscany and Latium, always ready to noisily announce any strangers met on the roads. The standard was written in 1913 and the breed was fairly popular during the first part of the 20th century but then it disappeared. Some white specimens appeared again in 1968 and the Volpino were registered again in 1972. Even the earlier well-known red colour is seen again.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: Small sized dog of Spitz type, compact, harmonious, with a long stand-off coat.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS: Length of body from the point of shoulder to the point of buttock is equal to the height at the withers. Length of muzzle is 4/10 of the total length of the head. Depth of chest is slightly less than half the height at the withers.

BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT: Very attached to his environment and his family, with exuberant temperament, lively, happy and playful.

HEAD: Pyramid shape, length reaching almost 4/10ths of the height at the withers.

CRANIAL REGION:

Skull: Longer than the muzzle and slightly egg-shaped; viewed either in longitudinal or transversal direction. The bizygomatic width exceeds half the length of the head. The medio-frontal furrow is only slightly marked; occipital protuberance is slightly marked. The superior axes of the skull and muzzle are slightly convergent.

Stop: Well defined.

FACIAL REGION:

Nose: Large, black, with well-opened nostrils. Seen in profile, set in the same line as the topline of the muzzle and does not protrude beyond the front line of the lips.

Muzzle: Inferior in length to that of the skull with lateral surfaces convergent is pointed but not exaggeratedly. The nasal bridge is straight. Seen in profile, the lower edge of the muzzle is determined by the lower jaw.

Lips: Lips, although somewhat thick, are tightly close fitting and the rims of the upper lips are stretched in a straight line. The labial commissure is not visible. Lip-rims are black.

Jaws/Teeth: Jaws strong, normally developed white teeth, regular and complete set of teeth. Scissor bite, pincer bite is tolerated.

Cheeks: Normally developed, not protruding.

EYES: Well opened and of a normal size, expression denoting vigilance and vivaciousness. Roundish but eyeball not prominent, set in sub-frontal position: eyelids close-fitting to the eyeball. Colour of the iris is dark brown; the rims of the lids are black.

EARS: Triangular shape, pricked, with a rigid cartilage and the inner surface of the lobe showing forward. High set and close together. The length of the ears measures to about half the length of the head.

NECK: Length is about equal to that of the head. Neck always carried upright. Well muscled. Skin closely fitting.

BODY: Square built, its length measured from the point of the shoulder to that of the buttock is equal to the height at the withers.

Topline: Dorsal line straight, slightly convex over the loins.

Withers: Slightly raised from dorsal line, harmoniously set into neck.

Back: Straight, strong musculature, longer than loin.

Loin: Short, broad, well muscled and slightly arched.

Croup: Extends the line of the loin and is longer than broad. Obliqueness from the hip to base of the tail is of 10° below the horizontal. Well muscled.

Chest: Descending to level of elbows; ribs well sprung. Sternal region is long but breastbone not to protrude point of shoulder.

Underline and belly: From sternum to belly rising only slightly. The hollow of the flanks is slightly accentuated.

TAIL: Set in the prolongation of the croup, high set and carried permanently curled over the back and reaching as near to the neck as possible. Its length is a little less than half the height at the withers. Tail is strong at the base and narrowing towards the tip; it is covered with abundant long coat.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS:

General appearance: Legs set perfectly vertical to each other and parallel in relation to the median plane of the body. Height at the elbows is slightly more than half the height at the withers.

Shoulder: The length of the shoulder blade is equal to 1/4 of the height at the withers and its obliqueness below the horizontal is of 60°. Well-developed muscles. The scapulo-humeral angle is 125°.

Upper arm: Longer than the shoulder blade and its obliqueness below the horizontal is of 65°.

Elbow: Parallel to the median plane of the body. The humero-radial angle is 155°.

Forearm: Longer than the upper arm, fine but strong bone, dry musculature.

Carpus (Wrist): Strong, almost as broad as the forearm.

Metacarpus (Pastern): Almost as wide as the forearm: slightly sloping.

Forefeet: Oval shaped with closely-knit and arched toes. Strong pads with black pigmentation, nails preferably black.

HINDQUARTERS:

General appearance: Seen from behind, hind legs must follow a perfectly vertical line from the point of the buttock to the ground. They are parallel to each other.

Thigh: The length is equal to 1/3 of the height at the withers. Broad with well-developed muscles. Obliqueness of 60° below the horizontal; coxo-femoral angle of 90°.

Stifle (Knee): Parallel to the median plane of the body; femoro-tibia angle of 115°–120°.

Lower thigh: Length is a little less than that of the thigh. Of a light, but strong bone structure and its obliqueness below the horizontal is of 55°–60°. Well muscled.

Hock joint: Strong but not broad. The tibio-tarsal angle is 145°–150°.

Metatarsus (Rear pastern): Vertical and perfectly straight seen as much in profile as from behind. Sufficiently broad. Length from point of hock to ground slightly more than 25% of the height at the withers.

Hind feet: Oval shaped with closely-knit and arched toes. Strong pads with black pigmentation, nails preferably black.

GAIT / MOVEMENT: Normal trot, must not be hopping. Characteristic gallop is that of a stayer rather than a sprinter. Gait with normal steps, not striding out.

SKIN: Taut, well adhered without looseness in any part.

COAT

Hair: Dense, very long and exceptionally straight and standing-off. Of harsh texture with straight stiff guard hairs; must never be falling flat but be upstanding even when there is not of a lot of coat. The body gives the impression of being wrapped up in a muff, particularly on the neck where the coat forms an abundant collar, but not like a mane. The skull is covered with semi-long hairs that hide the base of the ears. Hair is short on the muzzle. On the ears, the hair is very fine and smooth. The tail is covered with very long hair. On the backside of the hindquarters, the coat forms trousers.

Colour: Self-colour white or red. Champagne colour is tolerated but not desirable. The white colour should be clear white with a depth like milk. Pale biscuit shading on ears is tolerated, although it is a fault. The red colour is of an intense deer-red; lighter shades are tolerated on the tail and trousers. A little white on feet is tolerated, as is a slight darkish overlay on the collar and shoulders.

SIZE AND WEIGHT:

Height at the withers: Males: 27–30 cm.
Females: 25–28 cm.

Weight: In proportion to the height at the withers.

FAULTS: Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

- Skull too long or too narrow.
- Muzzle too long.
- Nose with light pigment.
- Reversed scissor bite.
- Light eyes.
- Ears that is too small.
- Coarse and heavy in build.

- Body slightly long, not square.
- Coat that lacks volume.
- Mane instead of coat collar.
- Guard-coat falling flat.
- Size, 2 cm over the limits indicated in the standard.

SEVERE FAULTS:

- Apple-head.
- Prominent eyeballs, oval eye shape.
- Shallow stop.
- Pinched muzzle.
- Missing two or more teeth (except PM1 and M3).
- Undershot bite.
- Rectangular in body.
- Tail tucked in between hindlegs.
- Absence of undercoat.
- Woolly guard coat.
- White feet in red-coated dogs.
- Red coat with heavy black overlay.

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Untypical.
- Convex nose bridge.
- Overshot bite.
- Total depigmentation of nose or eye rims.
- Wall eye.
- Ears completely drooping.
- Lack of tail or very short tail whether congenital or acquired.
- Any colour except white, red or the not desirable champagne colour.
- Red markings on white basic colour, white or black markings on red basic colour.

N.B.:

- Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.
- Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation, should be used for breeding.

SURFACE ANATOMY

