



FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

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

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FCI-Standard N° 378

МАКЕДОНСКО ОВЧАРСКО КУЧЕ КАРАМАН

(Macedonian Shepherd Dog Karaman)



ORIGIN: R.N. Macedonia.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL VALID STANDARD: 11.02.2026

UTILIZATION: A dog for active protection of the sheep and property, worthy, valuable and capable of standing on very low as well as very high temperatures.

FCI-CLASSIFICATION: Group 2 Pinscher and Schnauzer –
Molossoid and Swiss
Mountain and Cattle dogs
Section 2.2 Molossian type -
Mountain type
Without working trial.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY: The Macedonian Shepherd Dog is an autochthonous breed whose origin is connected with stockbreeding settlements in Macedonia and the nomadic migrations of the stockbreeders. It is bred continuously centuries ago as a protector of the herds in Macedonia. The stockbreeders had a special cult towards these dogs and for them, it was always a mythical dog. Written records of these dogs can be found in folk songs, but motifs of Karaman are also found on medieval frescoes and iconostases. The most important artefact on which the Karaman is presented is the fresco in the church of St. George in Kurbinovo, Prespa, painted in 1191 and is part of the logotype of the club. The breed is preserved in its authentic form until nowadays by the stockbreeders, whose lives were in constant movement from the summer to the winter pastures.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: The body is compact, with a strong constitution covered with a medium-long coat with black or black and tan colour. The average length of the coat at the withers is 9.5 cm. The presence of tan markings is possible. Very resistant with the capability of moving fast.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS:

- The body is rectangular and the length of the body is 10-12% more than the height at the withers.
- The depth of the chest is approximately 45% of the height at the withers.
- The length of the head is 41-43% of the height at withers.
- The length of the muzzle is slightly shorter than of the length of the skull.

BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT: Reserved towards strangers, but when guarding the stock and the property is determined and brave. Calm, good-hearted, precautious while guarding. Stable and fearless with no aggression at all, independent, and very intelligent. Proud and dignified of every trust. Affectionate and loyal to its owner.

HEAD:

The profile lines of the muzzle and the skull are slightly divergent.

CRANIAL REGION:

Skull: Strong, longer than wide, slightly narrowing towards the stop. In profile, only slightly rounded.

Stop: Clear, slightly pronounced.

FACIAL REGION:

Nose: Black pigmented. Large with well-opened nostrils.

Muzzle: Slightly shorter than the skull. From the stop towards the nose is slightly narrowing.

Lips: The edges of the lips are black pigmented. The lower lip could be a bit loose, but not visible under the edge of the upper lip. The corner of the lips is closed.

Jaws/Teeth: The jaws are strong and well developed. The teeth in the upper and lower jaw are strong, well-positioned and correctly placed with strong canines. Scissor bite is desirable. Allowed forms of bite are also level (pincer) bite and reverse scissor bite. Absence of 2xP1 and 2xM3 is not considered a fault.

EYES: Large and well set apart with almond shape. Tight fitting, black eye rims. No trace of white should be visible when the dog is looking forward. The third eyelid is not visible. The colour of the eyes is preferably dark brown, or chestnut colour. Slightly lighter shades can be accepted.

EARS: Medium high set, when the dog is alert, carried a bit higher. Triangular shape with slightly rounded tips. Hanging, closed to the cheeks. The length of the ears is around 45% of the length of the head.

NECK: Must be strong and muscular. The length is almost the same as the length of the head. Well covered with dense hair. The upper line is slightly arched. Carried at an angle not more than 40° to the horizontal.

BODY: Rectangular in shape.

Top line: It is slightly sloping from the withers towards the middle of the back (2-3%), further gradually rising and the front part of the croup is slightly higher compared with the withers.

Withers: Strong, well set, slightly pronounced.

Back: Firm, well-muscled, with medium length, well connected with the loins.

Loin: Firm, muscled, with medium length, well connected with the back and the croup.

Croup: Must be well muscled, well connected with the loins. The pelvis is strong, set at an angle of 30° to the horizontal.

Chest: Well developed, the lower edge of the chest bone is a bit above the elbows. The ribs are strong with good spring. The chest is long enough.

Underline and belly: Underline slightly tucked up.

TAIL: Medium high set, has harmonious continuation of the spine. It reaches out to the hock joint. Strong at the root, at the top could be slightly curved like a hook. In repose, it is carried low and is slightly curved, but when alert and in movement carried high and curved above the back along the spine.

The tail gradually closes in the shape of a sickle with a hook at the tip. When loosened, the end of the tail might be curved like a hook at the tip.

LIMBS:

FOREQUARTERS:

General appearance: With strong bones. Front legs stand parallel.

Shoulder: Moderate laid back, muscular.

Upper arm: Must be closed fitted to the body, muscular. Well connected with the shoulder blade and the forearm. It is nearly the same length as the shoulder blade. The average value of the shoulder angle is 110°.

Elbow: Firm, enables easy movement. Nor turning in, nor out.

Forearm: With strong bones and muscles.

Carpus (Wrist): Strong

Metacarpus (Pastern): Strong, slightly sloping seen from the side, elastic.

Forefeet: Slightly oval, medium-sized, strong with firm pads. Black and short nails are desired.

HINDQUARTERS:

General appearance: Strong, looked from behind standing parallel, with strong bones.

Thigh: Strong, well muscled. The average length is approximately 40% of the height at the withers.

Stifle (Knee): Moderately bent with an average angle of 125°.

Lower thigh: Strong, well muscled.

Hock joint: Must be firm and well let down. Neither too high, nor too low.

Metatarsus (Rear pastern): Parallel, strong, vertical, with moderate length.

Hind feet: Firm. The pads are dark-pigmented and resistant. Toes arched and tight. Nails, preferably black. The presence of declaws is permitted.

GAIT/MOVEMENT: Energetic, elastic, harmonious. Long reaching with front legs, a strong drive of the hind legs. When moving slowly pace is allowed.

SKIN: The skin has to be well fitting to the body at all parts including the head as well. It is moderately thick. Moderately loose skin is allowed on the lower part of the neck.

COAT:

Hair: Dense, rough on touch with a well-developed undercoat. Short on the head and the internal part of the ears. The hair on the front part of the legs is shorter than the body. The hair is at its longest at the withers with an average length of 9.5cm. The variations in the length of the hair varies depending on the climate conditions. Longer and denser on the neck, the withers and the thigh.

Colour: Black or black with tan markings. The intensity of the tan markings may vary from light to dark shades. The tan markings are distributed as follows:

over eyes, on sides of muzzle and of the lower lip, on inner edge of ears, on forechest, on inside and rear side of legs, on the feet, around the anus and from there reaching to about one third or one half of the underside of the tail.

A small white spot on the chest is allowed, but not more than 5 cm in diameter, as well as white on the toes which does not reach the pastern.

SIZE AND WEIGHT:

Height at the withers: Males 65-68 cm.

Females 62-66 cm.

+/-2 cm is allowed.

Weight: Males: 40-45 kg

Females: 37-42 kg.

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.

- Height \pm 2 cm outside the standard.

- Body slightly longer than described.
- Tan markings too extended.
- Tail carried on the left or the right side of the spine, in movement.

SEVERE FAULTS:

- Insufficient or too pronounced stop.
- Weak under jaw.
- Skull wider than its length from the occiput to the stop.
- Pointed muzzle.
- Ears too short or too long.
- Eyes too light.
- Croup lower than the withers.
- Flat chest or barrel-shaped rib cage.
- Elbows turning in or out.
- Steep shoulders.
- Roach or sway back.
- Weak hock joints, irregular position of the hindlegs.
- Steep or too short croup.
- Too short or too long hair.
- Short tail.
- Bigger white marking on the chest (up to 5 cm in diameter is tolerated).
- White markings other than tolerated

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Lymphatic constitution.
- Atypical profile lines of the head.
- Concave or exaggerated convex bridge of the nose.
- Eyes of different colours (heterochromia).

- Undershot without contact of the incisors, overshot, distorted (wry) jaw.
- Too short muzzle (one-third of the total length of the head or less).
- Short and smooth hair, lack of undercoat.
- Curly hair.
- Brindle pattern or any other colours not described in the standard.
- Missing any teeth other than those described in the standard (one PM1 or M3).
- Nose, any other colour than black.

N.B:

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

SURFACE ANATOMY

