

Chapter 6

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LÖWCHEN



CH Bumir Bien Du Plaisir, Owner Anna Tommila, Photo Sonja Carlson

Other than brief written breed descriptions and examples of Löwchen in art, there was little to guide breeders before the turn of the 20th century. The earliest standard known to date, was published in a Dutch book *Hunderassen*. Written at the turn of the century by H.A.Graaf van Bylandt, this important reference work contained a collection of standards and photos and was published in several volumes and languages. A copy of this valuable reference work can be found in the AKC library. The Löwchen standard included in *Hunderassen* is the earliest known written breed standard. As the breed was revived in the 1940s, a breed standard was again needed. Madame Bennert wrote the first standard accepted by the FCI. Her standard was based on the teachings of Maximillian de Coninck and the turn of the century standard.

Löwchen Standard 1905

GENERAL APPEARANCE: A small ladies' dog. Very active and intelligent, always onethird of the body to be clipped or shaved, giving him with his profuse collar the appearance of a lion in miniature.

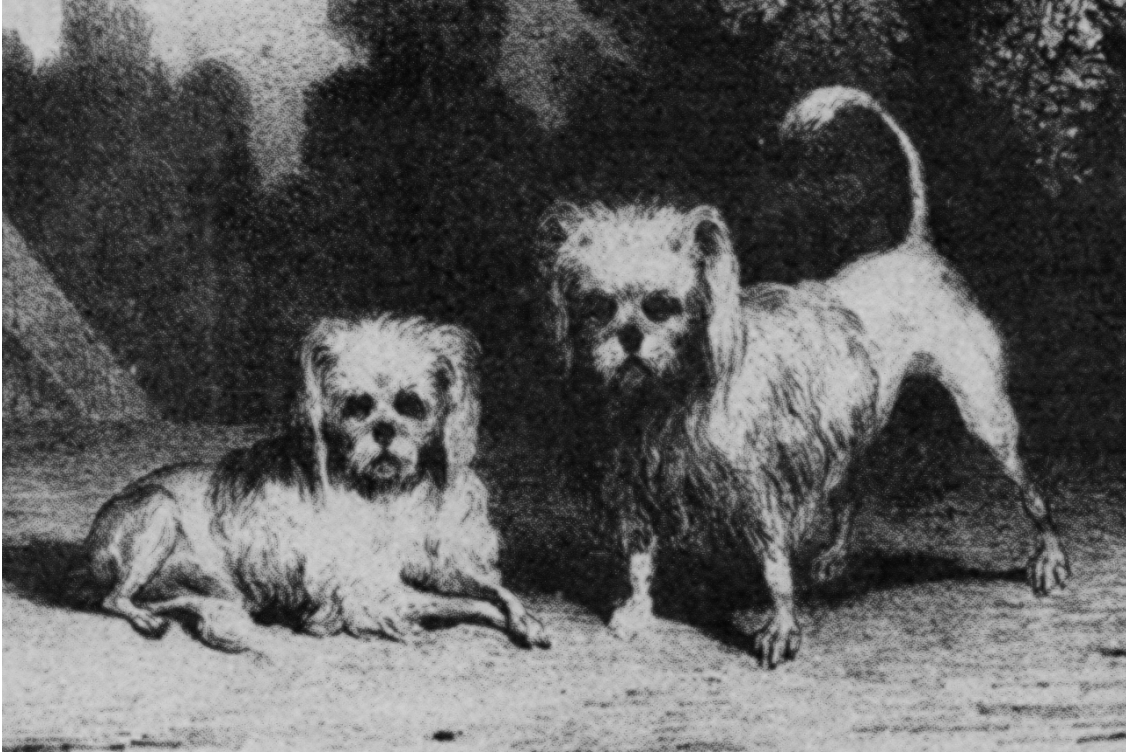
HEAD: Short; skull rather broad.

NOSE: Black, not turned up.

EYES: Round, large and intelligent, dark in color; eyelids dark.

EARS: Long and hanging, well feathered.

BODY: Small, short but well proportioned.



Petit Chien de Lion d. 1833. Print Jane Cook

LEGS: Fine and straight

FEET: Small and round; nails dark in color.

TAIL: Of medium length, clipped at the root and well feathered at the tip.

COAT: Rather long and wavy, but not curly.

COLOR: Of all colors, self-colored or particolored; the most preferable are the self-colored white, black and lemon.

HEIGHT AT SHOULDER: From 8 to 14 inches.

WEIGHT: From 5 to 9 lbs.

When the Löwchen was recognized by the FCI, Madame Bennert wrote the breed standard, which was used until September 15, 1995. That year the French Löwchen fanciers put through a standard change. Since the Löwchen was designated a French breed by the FCI, only the French Löwchen fanciers have the right to change the FCI breed standard. The old standard changed in two significant ways. The size was brought down from 13³/₄ inches to 13 inches. This change was due to concern that the breed was becoming too big in Europe. The other important change was the deletion of brown being an acceptable color. The explanation for this change was that brown dogs couldn't genetically have the black noses as called for in the standard, therefore they cannot be allowed. The omission by Madame Bennert of stipulating that pigment may be brown or black was unfortunate. It is unlikely that her omission was intentional, since she would have sternly refused to allow the brown dogs that were regularly produced to be used for breeding. Many early dogs were in fact brown and Madame Bennert gave no indication that this was not allowed. This change was undertaken, ignoring the fact that many Löwchen from the Middle Ages through today were brown. In fact, Madame Bennert, Dr. Rickert and Frau Ostertag all produced significant numbers of brown Löwchen. For a breed with a limited gene pool, the removal of brown dogs from breeding programs is not a genetically sound decision.



Chic Choix Faudrivoir

FCI Löwchen Standard
Translated from German

ORIGIN: France.

DATE OF REVISED STANDARD: 9/11/95.

PURPOSE: Companion Dog.

CLASSIFICATION FCI: Group 9. Section 1.3 Bichons and related breeds. No working tests required.

GENERAL ATTRIBUTES: Intelligent, devoted small dog with all the combined attributes of a companion dog. The body is cut in the classical cut of the Poodle. The tail is clipped to a tassel on the end. The silhouette reminds one of a small lion.

HEAD: Short, rather wide at the back skull. Fault: Too long, not enough width of skull.

NOSE: Black, good length across the top of the nose. Fault: Spotted pigmentation, with every other color than black. Turned up nose.

EYES: Round, big with intelligent expression. Dark Color. Fault: Small, almond in shape. Protruding or light eyes. Restless or vicious expression.

EARS: Hanging down. Long and well-coated. Fault: Too short, sparse or poorly coated.

BODY: Short and well proportioned. Fault: Too long, poorly balanced or muscled.

LEGS: Straight and light. Fault: Turned out or bowed.

FEET: Small and round. Fault: Flat, long or splayed.

TAIL: Medium length. The balance clipped to a nice tassel. Fault: Too long or too short.

COAT: Fairly long and wavy. Not too curly. Fault: Too short, too curly or too silky.

COLOR: Every color is allowed, solid or particolor, except brown (chocolate brown, liver colored) and all variations of this color.

SIZE AND WEIGHT: Size: At the withers 25-32 cm. Weight: 4-8 Kg.

COMMENTS: Males must have two seemingly normal testicles, both of which are to be found in the scrotum.



Ch. Marron Glacé of Littlecourt

The English Standard

The English standard varies slightly from the FCI standard. Of note would be that it calls for a silky coat. This is an important change from all other standards written prior to the English standard.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: Coat clipped in traditional lion clip, tail also clipped, topped with a plume, giving the appearance of a little lion. Strongly built, active, well balanced and alert.

CHARACTERISTICS: Gay, lively and alert little dog.

TEMPERAMENT: Intelligent, affectionate showing no signs of aggression.

HEAD AND SKULL: Short, skull wide in proportion. Nose black or brown according to coat color.

EYES: Round, dark, large and intelligent.

EARS: Pendant, long, well fringed.

MOUTH: Jaws strong, with perfect, regular and complete scissors bite. I.e. The upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

NECK: Good length, proudly arched.

FOREQUARTERS: Forelegs straight and fine. Shoulders well laid.

BODY: Short, strong and well proportioned. Level top line. Ribs well sprung. Strong loin with moderate tuckup.

HINDQUARTERS: Hindlegs well muscled, with good turn of stifle; straight when viewed from rear.

FEET: Small. Round.

TAIL: Medium length, clipped with tuft of hair to resemble a plume. Carried gaily on the move.

GAIT/MOVEMENT: Free, parallel movement fore and aft, no hackneyed action.

COAT: Fairly long, wavy, never curly. Fine and silky.

COLOR: Any color and combination of colors permissible.

SIZE: Height at withers 2533 cm. (1013 inches).

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.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.



LCA Champion Marcel's Goldin Gamin. Photo Sandi Lunka.

The American Standard

The Little Lion Dog Club of America adopted the first American standard in 1972. It was revised in 1974 and again in 1977. This standard was originally based on the FCI standard. The coat description followed the FCI dictate, prior to the FCI revision of 1995, in regards to color. In 1992, the Löwchen Club of America (Formerly the Little Lion Dog Club of America) appointed a breed

standard committee to bring the standard in line with the American Kennel Club's recommended format. The proposed revision was presented and approved in 1995.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: A small, bright, and lively dog that originated as a companion breed in PreRenaissance Europe where ladies of the court groomed it in the likeness of a little lion. Breed characteristics are a compact, balanced body; a relatively short, broad top skull and muzzle; and a proud, lively gait that accentuates the lion cut with a long flowing mane. These quintessential features combined with an outgoing and positive attitude, resulting in a dog of great style.

SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE: Ideally 12" to 14" at the withers. Dogs or bitches above or below these measurements should be faulted to the degree of variance. The body is just off square when properly balanced. The distance from the prosternum to the point of buttocks is slightly greater than the distance from the withers to the ground in an 11 to 10 ratio. The Löwchen is strong and sturdy in bone, but never coarse.

HEAD: The head is a hallmark breed characteristic. The **expression** is bright, alert and lively.

EYES: The eyes are well set into the skull, large, dark and round in shape, set well apart and forward looking. Brown and champagne-coated dogs may have slightly lighter eyes. Full pigmentation is required on the eye rims.

EARS: The ears are pendant, moderate in length, well fringed and set on slightly above the level of the eye.

SKULL: The back skull is broad with a moderate stop.

MUZZLE: The muzzle is equal in length or slightly shorter than the back skull and is relatively broad with moderate depth of under jaw resulting in a slightly rounded finish to the muzzle.

NOSE: Dark, complete pigmentation is required on the nose. Coloration of pigment is black or brown dependant on coat color.

LIPS: The lips are tight; with color the same as the nose.

BITE: The bite is scissors and the teeth are rather large and well spaced with complete dentition.

NECK, TOP LINE, AND BODY: Neck: The neck is of good length, with a slight arch, fitting smoothly into the shoulders and top line. The head is carried high when the dog is moving. Top line: The top line is level from withers to tail set. Body: The body is slightly off square when properly balanced. The loin is short and strong. The ribs are well sprung. The underline has a slight tuckup at the loin.

TAIL: The tail is set high and carried in a cuphandle fashion over the back when the dog is moving. A dropped tail while standing is not to be penalized.

FOREQUARTERS: The shoulders are strong and well laid back with smooth musculature. The brisket is moderate in width and extends approximately to the elbows. The upper area is of equal length to the shoulder blade and the two meet in a near 90-degree angle. The elbows are held close to the body. Forearms are of good length and the distance from the withers to the elbow is slightly less than the distance from the elbow to the ground. From the front the legs are perfectly parallel from the elbow to the feet. The bone is more round than oval and of medium size with only a slight decrease in size at the pasterns. The pasterns are short, parallel from the front and very slightly bent when viewed from the side. The dewclaws on the forelegs should be removed. The forefeet point straight ahead, and are well arched with deep pads and the two center toes are slightly in advance of the two outer toes. The nails are relatively short. A tight foot is preferred, and a splayed foot is to be penalized.

HINDQUARTERS: The pelvic bone projects beyond the set of the tail and is at an approximate 45-degree angle from a perfectly horizontal line. The upper and lower thighs are well muscled and of approximately equal length with medium bone. The stifles are well bent. The hocks are well let down and perpendicular to the ground from any angle. The rear dewclaws should be removed. The hind feet are slightly smaller than the forefeet, and are well arched with deep pads.

COAT: The untrimmed coat is long, rather dense and moderately soft in texture. It has a slight to moderate wavy appearance. Wiry, wooly, curly and flat coat textures are not correct and are to be penalized to the degree of severity. No scissoring or shaping of the untrimmed coat is permitted. Puppies typically have a softer coat.

TRIM: Trimmed in Lion Trim, the coat is clipped to about 1/8" on the following parts of the body:

From the last rib back to and including the hindquarters, leaving a ruff or mane which just covers the last rib. The hindquarters are clipped to the hock joint. The fore legs are clipped from the elbow to a point above the knee, which is equal to the same distance as from the ground to the hock joint leaving cuffs of hair on all four legs. The tail is clipped from the base to approximately onehalf way to the tip leaving a plume at the end of the tail. The feet are clipped to where the dewclaws were.

The unclipped areas must be completely natural and untrimmed. On no account should the unclipped areas be smoothed, shortened, shaped or otherwise tidied.

Disqualification: Any trimming other than the above. Any shaping or scissoring of the long coat.

COLOR: All colors and color combinations are acceptable, with no preference given to any.

GAIT: Movement at a trot is effortless with good reach in front and full extension in the rear. From the front, the forelegs move in almost parallel lines, converging slightly as speed increases. From the side, movement is efficient and ground covering. The forelegs reach well out in front in a long, relatively low stride, and the rear legs come well under the body and extend behind to maximize propulsion. The body should remain nearly square in outline, and the top line is held firm and level, with the tail being carried curved over the back and the head is held above the level of the back.

TEMPERAMENT: The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.

The Canadian Standard

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Strongly built, active, well balanced and alert little dog whose presentation (i.e. coat and tail clipped in traditional lion clip) gives the 'little lion' appearance.

HEAD: Short. Skull wide in proportion, flat between the ears, head carried proud and high. Well-defined stop. Short, strong muzzle.

EYES: Round, large and intelligent, dark in color. Unbroken pigmentation of eye rims, pigment to be in accordance with coat color.

EARS: Pendant, long and well fringed, set on level with the eye, close hanging.

MOUTH: Jaws strong, with perfect, regular and complete scissors bite, i.e. the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaw.

NOSE: Black or brown according to coat color.

NECK: Good length, proudly arched.

FOREQUARTERS: Forelegs straight and fine boned. Shoulder well laid back.

BODY: Short, strong, well -proportioned. Level top line. Ribs well sprung, strong loin with moderate tuck up.

HINDQUARTERS: Hind legs well-muscled with good turn of stifle; straight when viewed from the rear.

FEET: Small, round.



Ch. Kiji's Harrison

TAIL: Of medium length, clipped with a tuft of hair to resemble a plume. Carried gaily on the move.

GAIT/MOVEMENT: Free, parallel movement fore and aft. No hackneyed action.

COAT: Fairly long and wavy but not curly. Fine and silky. Clipped in the traditional lion clip.

COLOR: Any color or combination of colors permissible.

SIZE: Height 10-13 inches (25-33 cm) 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.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

The Australian National Kennel Club Breed Standard

The Australian Löwchen Club amended its standard in July 1996. It is based on the English Kennel Club's Löwchen Standard. They differ in small ways in that the Australian standard calls for a single coat of soft texture as opposed to the silky coat called for in the English standard.



Ch. Lyonscourt Lockinvar at ten months.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: Coat clipped in traditional lion clip, tail also clipped, topped with plume, giving appearance of a little lion. Strongly built, active, well balanced and alert.

CHARACTERISTICS: Gay, happy, lively little dog.

TEMPERAMENT: Intelligent, affectionate showing no sign of aggression.

HEAD AND SKULL: Short fairly broad. Skull flat between the ears head carried proud and high. Well-defined stop; short, strong muzzle.

EYES: Round, dark, large and intelligent. Unbroken pigmentation of eye rims, pigment to be in accordance with coat color.

EARS: Pendant, of moderate length with long fringing.

MOUTH: Jaws strong, with perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

NECK: Good length, proudly arched.

FOREQUARTERS: Forelegs straight and fine. Shoulders well-laid.

BODY: Short, strong and well proportioned. Level top line. Ribs well sprung. Strong loin with moderate tuck up.

HINDQUARTERS: Hind legs well-muscled, with good turn of stifle; straight when viewed from rear.

FEET: Small, round.

TAIL: Medium length, clipped with tuft of hair to resemble a plume. Carried gaily on move.

GAIT/MOVEMENT: Free, parallel movement for and aft, no hackneyed action.

COAT: Fairly long, wavy, never curly. Single coat of soft texture.

COLOR: Any color or combination of colors permissible.

SIZE Height: 25-33 cm (10-13 ins) at 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.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

Toy Group A.N.K.C. © January 1998



Defining The Ideal Löwchen

Löwchen worldwide, have differences from country to country, since breeders everywhere will always emphasize certain features over others. These differences allow an astute breeder to correct defects in their bloodlines by choosing a bloodline that strongly carries what is needed. For example, if you have weak heads, an ideal country to look towards would be England, since the heads have been close to perfected. Germans are very strong in producing dogs with complete dentition and bite. They also are proficient in producing small Löwchen and dogs with dark pigment. The Finnish breeders have been able to create dramatic profiles. The point being, if your bloodline consistently lacks somewhere and you want to fix it, being familiar with Löwchen the world over is not a bad idea. Of course it makes sense to search out dogs at home first that could fix your problems. In order to be able to do this though, you must understand the breed and the ideal Löwchen. Only when you are able to see the ideal Löwchen in your mind's eye will you be on your way to becoming a breeder that consistently produces a quality dog. Judges too, must understand the breed as thoroughly as a breeder does if they have any hopes of properly judging Löwchen. It is unfortunate that there are many judges who have not really been educated on the breed. This is a constant problem for exhibitors of the rarer breeds such as the Löwchen.

The Löwchen Head

The correct Löwchen head is one of its defining features. If topped with a head conforming to the prescribed type, then a Löwchen is certainly identifiable out of a crowd of dogs of undetermined breeds. There are those, uneducated in the breed, who would liken the Löwchen to a mixed breed dog, declaring that if the Löwchen were not clipped, they would be indistinguishable from a mutt. Yes and no, if it weren't for their distinctive head, along with other features. Very few mixed breeds would possess all the elements that put together a beautiful Löwchen head at the same time. Mixed breeds may have some of the characteristics called for, but rarely, if ever all of them at once.

When initially approaching the Löwchen from the front, one first sees the

profuse coat crowning the head. Moving closer, the eyes stand out, presenting the dog's character, happy and friendly. Only upon closer examination, by putting one's hand on the bone, will the examiner be able to determine if the dog is blessed with the correct head, defining a Löwchen.

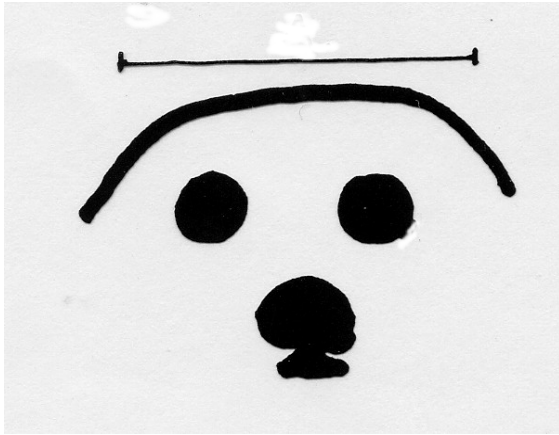
The correct Löwchen head can be difficult for a breeder to achieve, but once set into their bloodlines firmly, is relatively easy to keep. The problem being, that there are many breeders who do not recognize what a correct head should be. The masters of the correct Löwchen head are the English and Germans. Rare is an incorrect head in those two countries, but like anything else, they do exist.

Those breeding or judging the Löwchen should make all effort to study the Löwchen head. One should be fully aware of that which defines the head. And upon laying hands on one, they should be able to immediately grasp if the bone structure is laid out as needed. One should be able to tell if the head is well boned, sturdy to the hand and correctly proportioned. Additionally, they should be able to determine correctness of skull by asking themselves several questions: is the back skull broad enough in width? Is there enough stop, is the muzzle shorter than the back skull? Is the muzzle broad, nose prominent, the eyes round? And, once having asked, know what the correct answers should be to these questions in order to evaluate the dog whose head they are judging.

The Skull

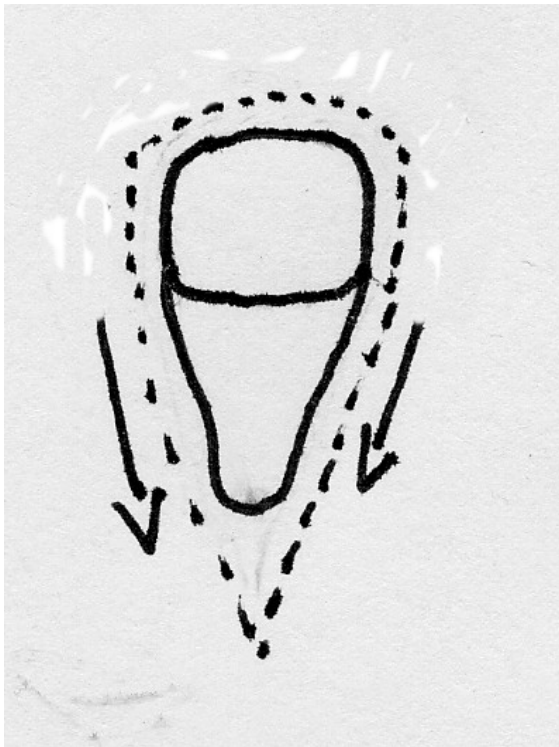
The ideal Löwchen head is well boned, possessing correct proportions. **The back skull should be broad, never narrow.** Additionally, the top of the skull is relatively flat. It should never be rounded like a Chihuahua. Those with greatly rounded back skulls are known as apple-heads. Viewed from the front, the widest portion of the head is between the ears. Frau Ostertag explained that the back skull should be square in appearance. **The ideal back skull is equal in length between the ears, to the length from occiput to the stop.**

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Ideal frontal profile. Look for a broad back -skull as well as round eyes. Drawing Juha Kares

Behind the ears the head ever so gently rounds, almost in a half circle. From the ear to the eye the head remains the same width. From the eye to the muzzle the head gently begins to taper. If one cradled the head between both hands, the hands should be able to trace, roughly, the shape of a teardrop. When tracing to find the teardrop, one does not actually run a hand down the



Tracing the head, with hands in the shape of a teardrop. Drawing Gini Denninger

sides of the muzzle, but tries to see an imaginary line from the widest point of the head to the tip of

the nose. The portion of back skull behind the ears forms the top of the imaginary teardrop. This is an easy way to determine if the dog is close to possessing the correct shape of head, since one could not trace a tear drop shape on a dog that is too oblong, rounded or more rare, short of head. This teardrop shape is, of course, a rough estimate towards evaluating the head, since there are other important factors to be considered.

Lastly, the head should be proportionate to the body. Sometimes a head can be too small or large to properly match the body it is set on. This is usually a subtle fault, but important to catch

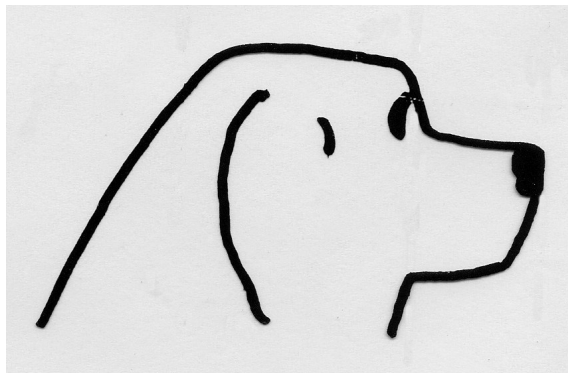
The Stop

Between the back skull and muzzle is the stop. There should be a moderate stop, which is defined on the correct Löwchen head. If the stop slopes too gently, usually the head will be too long.

The Muzzle

Worldwide, the accepted Löwchen head has a shorter muzzle than the length of the back skull. Adapted in the latest American standard is the head of equal proportions, but internationally, the first is preferred. How this break with European interpretation of breed qualities came about is unknown but theories exist. For many years in the United States Löwchen breeders were not sure what a correct head should look like. This is changing. Some American dogs had muzzles as long as the line from the occiput to the stop. Sometimes these heads were too long in proportion to the body. During the late 1980s and early 1990s many American breeders and exhibitors had the long-headed Löwchen, versus Löwchen with the short head described in the standard. This could account for the unprecedented change in the American standard, allowing for a muzzle equal in length to the back skull. Unexplainable is why the longer head was preferred to the shorter. One possibility is that several early Löwchen fanciers were also Havanese breeders. The Havanese standard calls for muzzle and back skull to possess equal proportions. These breeders and exhibitors, believing that the Havanese

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Ideal side profile. Drawing Juha Kares

and Löwchen came from the Bichon family, may have assumed that their heads should possess similarities. They may have chosen heads more typical to the Havanese than Löwchen, since they were not trained to do otherwise. Another reason they may have preferred this head type was that it presented itself with frequency, leading one to believe that it is strong in the gene pool and therefore correct. As a result, an adjustment or allowance for this type of head was included in the 1995 American breed standard.

In Europe, where breeders and judges had more exposure to those trained by Madame Bennert and Dr. Rickert, the idea of equal proportions is foreign and considered very incorrect. This would be supported by the fact that all previous Löwchen standards call for short heads. A dog with a muzzle equaling the back skull is considered to possess a medium head. A dog with a wide back skull and short head can not have a back skull which equals the length of muzzle, since if it did there would be very little room for a brain! The back skull must be longer than the muzzle in a short-headed dog. Or, conversely, if the muzzle equaled the length of a correctly proportioned back skull, it would be too long to be correct.

A review of Löwchen standards from 1905 until present day shows that equal proportion of skull has had no precedence prior to the current American standard. Perhaps after some research by American breeders, the American standard will be brought in line with the European. Until



Edda von Livland. Note the pale pigment around the eyes and on the nose. This is highly undesirable in all circumstances. Photo Felizitas Dylla.

then, since the American standard allows for two distinct head types, judges judging in the United States have more leeway of choice. American breeders though, must make a choice as to which head type they prefer. But if any have hopes of breeding Löwchen correct in type to dogs of the past, like dogs from the Middle Ages until Madame Bennert's dogs, then the choice is obvious.

The Löwchen muzzle should never be longer than the back skull. That creates too oblong a head, resembling a Poodle to the untrained eye. Equally as important is that the muzzle not be too short. The Löwchen head should never resemble a Lhasa Apso, whose nose is approximately 1/3 the length of the back skull. The Löwchen's ideal head proportion is 2/3rd of muzzle length to back skull. Anything slightly over or under that proportion is certainly acceptable.

The muzzle must have depth and width, and not be snipey. A broad muzzle is able to accommodate a full compliment of teeth, which the Löwchen should have. The muzzle

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should be topped off with a subtly large nose. This nose is described in the FCI standard as calling for good length across the top of the nose. It is meant to be broad, like the muzzle.

Lastly, concerning the muzzle, the skin should fit snugly on the bone. There should be no dewlaps or loose skin extending under the muzzle to the neck

Pigment

The pigment of the nose and lips should be dark, but this is also dependent on coat. The lighter dogs, especially creams, can sport lighter pigment. But when all things are equal including coat color, the dog with darker pigment is preferred.

The Bite

The Löwchen bite should be scissors. It is preferred that the dentition be complete, but sometimes there are missing teeth. The correct number of teeth is 42.

The overshot bite. Another problem found are crooked teeth which suggest the need for braces were the dog human. To put braces on a dog, presumably one that will eventually be exhibited in competition and bred, is considered unethical. It cheats both the owner



Chic Choix Denise Larousse. Note the dark pigment of eyes, nose, footpads and nails; this is desirable, especially on a light coated dog. Photo Sonja Carlson.



Ch. Brittborgens Cheemba. This photo demonstrates the correct round eye. Owner: Mrs. Mirja Jussila and Miss Johanna Jussila.

who ignores this serious problem and any unsuspecting buyer of potential offspring. No matter how gorgeous a dog is, if the bite is off or crooked, it should not be used for breeding. The Löwchen teeth are surprisingly large and strong, especially for such a small breed.

The Eye

One of the most defining traits of the Löwchen is the round eye. Since the appearance of the first known Löwchen in artworks, they have had round eyes. A Löwchen must have round eyes. This cannot be over emphasized. The ideal eye is described as round, large and dark in color. If a judge is faced with two dogs being equal in all regards except shape of eyes, the dog with the round eye must prevail. Even, if the round-eyed dog has a light eye. A Löwchen with a dark almond shaped eye is not preferred, since the round eye is one of the defining traits of this breed and always has been. In many of the old artworks, when a lemon or cream-colored Löwchen is pictured, most likely, they also have light colored eyes. **A light round eye is preferred over a dark almond shaped eye in every case.** This is so, even though the FCI standard calls the light eye a fault. On the scale of importance, a round eye precedes the light eye, since the round eye is easily lost. It is vitally important that the judges and breeders are very conscious about the round eye and select for it. Hopefully, over time, the light-eyed Löwchen will disappear, but more

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importantly is that the round-eyed Löwchen not disappear.

Along with the round dark eye, every standard now being used calls for a large eye. This is certainly a desirable trait. But when looking for the large eye, do not select for a dog with a pop-eyed appearance since this ruins the elegant smart look the Löwchen possesses. The pop eye is a result of our modern preferences; putting more emphasize on large eyes. Of late, there are some that feel the Löwchen eye must protrude slightly. This is absolutely not so. The FCI standard calls a protruding eye a fault.

Eye Pigment

The eye should ideally be rimmed by unbroken pigment. This pigment should extend around the entire eye. While calling for full pigmentation, the Löwchen does not have to possess the halo around the eye, as the Bichon does. Keep in mind that only the American and Canadian standard call for unbroken eye pigmentation. Pigment is important. A dog with light pigment is not as desirable as a dog with dark pigment for a breeding program. There are more limitations to which dog one can bring a light pigmented Löwchen to versus a dark colored one where one does not have to consider the strength of pigment in addition to all other factors. While a Löwchen is a puppy, one thing to look at right at birth and a few days later are the eye rims, footpads and nose. Dogs that are strong in pigment will fill quickly to black on the nose and pads. Dogs that take longer



Ch. Pride of Kiji Dexter. Note the dark pigment around the eye. Photo Kim Schmidt.



Ch Chic Choix Moiche PaPa. This dog demonstrates the desirable amount of coat which frames his face in a flattering way. Photo Jari Partenen

to fill, yet completely fill should still be considered weaker carriers of pigment.

Ear Set

The ears should be set slightly above the level of the eye. Placed incorrectly, the entire expression can be changed. Sometimes a Löwchen coat will cover incorrect placement of ear. If this is not too intruding on the dog's overall appearance, consider this as one of the lesser faults. If ears are set too high, they may look askance or flyaway. If an ear is incorrectly set, the degree of noticeability determines the degree of fault. All breed standards call for a pendant ear. The ear should hang close to the head and be well fringed.

The Head Coat

A Löwchen that has all the right qualities that define a great head should, lastly, possess a wonderful coat of hair on the head. This coat will soften all the angles and give the dog its pleasing appearance. When describing the head this is often ignored since it is so obvious. What must be realized is that there are varying degrees of coat. Some Löwchen have unwieldy amounts and others are less blessed. One thing all show specimens must have is enough coat to create the look of a mane about the head and neck.

Open Face

There are some Löwchen that possess what is termed an open-face. This is obvious even when the dog is a puppy. Its muzzle will have a shorter coat of hair, which gradually blends into the longer coat about the ear and topknot. But as this dog matures, the hair continues to grow and

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eventually achieves some length about the muzzle. The coat on the face will never be as rich as a full coated sibling, and allows the eyes to be seen unobstructed. The appearance is of a dog that is trimmed to open up the face. The open-faced Löwchen are somewhat rare, especially now with the modern emphasis on more coat. The open-face is not to be penalized. An open-faced dog still possesses the required mane about the head and neck; it is only sparse in the face.

Head Styles

Serious students of the Löwchen realize that there are various head types in existence. The English have developed a head type that did not exist previously. They have created a head that is properly broad and square in the back skull, enlarged the eyes, shortened and widened the muzzle. This is not incorrect and cannot be faulted in any way. But caution must be taken that this change not be taken to the extreme. The English head could be considered more extreme than the original heads found on dogs owned by Madame Bennert, Dr. Rickert, Frau Ostertag and other early breeders dogs. The English head is greatly admired by exhibitors worldwide and rightfully so, since the English head style with correct proportions is the example of the head many breeders currently strive for.

To find heads that are most like the original dogs, one must see the German Löwchen heads. They have a more teardrop shape than the English do. There is a hint of a foxy expression on some. This is entirely correct too. Both heads fall into the breed standard as written, they are merely different styles.

The newest head style is the American head, which allows for equal length of muzzle to back skull. This is not agreeable to European Löwchen fanciers, who seriously denigrate this style. Since the acceptance of the breed by the American Kennel Club, this head type seems to be abating, possibly due to the influx of more European imports. Interest in the imports seems to be creating a taste for the European head type at the expense of the American head type. It is possible, as the breed becomes less diverse in type, this head style may disappear.



Hansel von Livland had the classic Löwchen head.
Photo Felizitas Dylla.

Last Word On The Löwchen Head

To sum it all up, the Löwchen has several traits that define it as a breed, in regards to the head. It should possess a wide back skull, shorter muzzle than length of back skull (or in United States may possess equal planes), large round eyes, large nose, and a mane of hair crowning all these unique traits. When possessing all these attributes along with the shining personality a Löwchen should have, this breed is certainly distinguishable from a pack of mixed breed dogs, even when unclipped.

The Löwchen Coat

There is nothing like experiencing the sight of an outstanding Löwchen proudly parading around a show ring, its lovely coat flowing with each stride. Sometimes the sight can be so breathtaking. What is it about those beautiful dogs that captivate us so? Besides the correct type and movement, they have gorgeous coat.

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LCA Ch. Ashford's Ulana. Owner Gini Denninger.
Photo Alice Bixler.

Most pet owners keep their Löwchen cut in a clip known as the puppy cut to avoid the work involved with a show coat. And yet, show coats do not require the effort of say a Lhasa Apso, Bichon Frise or Poodle. Keeping a Löwchen in show coat is comparatively easy. If... you have the correct coat type.

This is where opinions can differ. According to Madame Bennert's instruction to Frau Ostertag of the Livland kennel, the Löwchen coat historically, should be a wavy, long coat. Wonderful examples of dogs exemplifying this coat type are Ch. Hansel v. Livland and various Littlecourt dogs such as Ch. Littlecourt Pippin and Ch. Marron Glace' of Littlecourt. Their coats are long, smooth but also have just enough waves.



This Löwchens coat is a wonderful example of the correct texture. It is wonderfully wavy and has good volume. Ch. Xandra von Burgwald. Photo Felizitas Dylla.



Note the wave in the coat. Ch. Ashford-Lowenhaus Fati Abu. Photo Jari Partenen.



This group is a wonderful collection of dogs with wonderful coats. They all have the correct wave in their coats. Photo Felizitas Dylla.

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The Löwchen coat is a difficult one to describe. It took years for members of the Löwchen Club of America to come to grips with just what constituted proper coat. There was such a lack of information available on the breed. Additionally, making matters worse was that several of the early import dogs grew up to have very poor or incorrect coats. Among them was the sister pair, imported by Dorothy Goodale of the Berdot Kennel. She brought these two from the Von den Drei Lowen kennel in Germany; their names were Mirilee and Madalaine von den Drei Lowen. Their coats were frizzy and brittle. They and others like them produced



Madelaine von den Drei Lowen. This is an undesirable coat. According to Dorothy Goodale, Madelaine was 11½ inches tall and 12 pounds. Photo Dorothy Goodale.

these coats in their immediate offspring or it came out in successive generations. Breeders in the States, not having had enough examples to learn from, accepted the incorrect coats, innocent of the bad seed being sown. Besides frizzy and brittle coats such as sported by Mirilee and Madelaine, there are other coat problems that should be taken just as seriously. After American breeders began to travel abroad to seek out European breeders, the correct type began to become more common in the United States. Unfortunately though, the legacy of incorrect coat is still firmly imbedded in the Löwchen and must be carefully weeded out. There are lines that do not produce incorrect coats and others that do with great frequency. Care on the part of breeders must be taken to eliminate this problem. A point to be made here is that this problem is not

exclusive to the American breeders and their dogs. Incorrect coat type is found around the world.

Smooth Coats

A little known fact is that worldwide, Löwchen occasionally come smooth-coated. The term smooth coat has been around as long as the breed. Madame Bennert even had a smooth Löwchen, which looked like a spaniel, named Jarouffe. Dr. Rickert also produced smooth-coated dogs, and sent one



Hja Von den Bungener-Heide, offspring from Pino von den Drei Lowen and Polli von den Drei Lowen. This dog was a smooth coat. Frau Ostertag wondered on the back of the photo is the dog was a mix-bred. But as we know today, this dog's smooth coat is very typical of the smooths found in Europe and America. Photo Felizitas Dylla.

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This bitch has a coat that could be similar to Hja 's coat as an adult. The coat is typically thinner with less fine hairs blending the coat into a 50/50 mix. Bedlams Able Sable. Photo Gini Denninger

to Mrs. Banks for breeding named Nadine von den Drei Löwchen. He told her to use the dog in her breeding program, which she did. The term smooth coated is misleading. It covers an array of abnormal coat types. The smooth coats can range from sleek short hairs, a spaniel type coat, or a double coat consisting of the smooth layer interspersed with longer hairs. Dogs with open faces and thin coats that do not grow to great lengths are also smooth coats, even if they are less obvious.

These dogs are undetectable as young puppies but when their coats begin to grow they do not produce the full lush coats that the average Löwchen puppy has. There is a danger that sometimes a breeder could be



In the center of these three Australian dogs is another from of the smooth coat. This coat is more of the spaniel type coat. Madame Bennert had a dog with a similar coat named Jarouffe. This type of smooth coat is more common in Australia. Left to Right: Paddy, Bella and Tessa. Photo Pat Jones.



This puppy will grow up to look like a spaniel style smooth coat. Photo Pat Jones.

fooled into thinking a puppy is smooth coated, especially with the double-coated puppy, only to find its adult coat did come in at a later date.

Obviously, smooth coats are not desirable in the show ring. Whether to use smooths for breeding is the individual breeder's choice. There are old time breeders who have used smooth coated Löwchen in their breeding programs. They believed that the offspring from these dogs actually produced the most luxurious coats. It is said that these breedings did not produce another immediate generation of smooth coated dogs. This is a trait that pops up rarely.

One thing to be pointed out is that total elimination of smooth-coated Löwchen may not be so desirable. With the exception of the spaniel type smooth coats, it is possible to use smooths, or at least their normal coated siblings in breeding programs judiciously. The reason is that in countries where smooths seem to be non-existent, coats can have more tendency towards becoming finer, albeit fuller too. This fuller and finer coat while pretty in the show ring, if the coat does not have the 50/50 mix, will also be much more difficult to care for. This is undesirable. It is

LCA Ch. Ashfords Ulana. Photo Gini Denninger

possible, but scientifically unproven, that having the gene for smooths in a bloodline also helps preserve correct coat texture.

Soft Coats

Coats that are too soft are seen with more frequency today than ever before. An adult Löwchen coat should drop along the sides of the dog and flow with movement. In many of these

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cases if a strand of coat is taken for examination and spread across a finger, instead of finding a fifty/fifty blend of thick and thin strands of hair, there are more strands of thin hairs. The danger with this coat is that if care is taken to preserve coat, it can actually look very beautiful and glamorous. This is still an incorrect coat since it is often somewhat cottony and not really silky. This coat mats extremely easily. One sign that a dog possesses this coat is if it requires brushing daily or mats develop overnight. The breed is in danger of losing the correct coat type in favor of softer coated Löwchen due to competition at shows. Show dogs with lots of coat are hard to ignore, even if the coat texture is incorrect, since they look so well maintained and beautiful. On this note, it is important to include here, that full coats are fine, only they must be of correct texture.

Correct Coat Texture

What is the correct coat? The Löwchen coat should be long and wavy. All four-breed standards currently in use the world overcall for this. The English standard until 1996 called for a silky coat. The American standard takes coat definition further in calling for a coat to be rather dense with a moderately soft texture. The Löwchen coat should be healthy and shiny in appearance. A dry, brittle or broken off coat should be severely penalized. A coat that is hard and terrier-like or poodle-like should be penalized. Likewise a soft and curly, frizzy, or limp coat is incorrect. None of these coats flow properly when the dog moves. Approaching the Löwchen, one should see a dog with a lush, shiny and slightly waved coat that flows when moving. Incorrect coats do not flow smoothly, generally staying in place as the dog moves. The exception to the rule is a dog with too soft or curly a coat, which if scrupulously maintained, can flow nicely too.

When examining the Löwchen coat take a strand of hair from on top of the withers and lay it across one finger. Spread the strand, fanning it out, so that you can compare individual hairs. You should find that the hairs vary in width. There will be thick hairs interspersed with thin hairs. The ideal mix is a fifty/fifty equation. If there is an imbalance the coat will be too hard or too soft. Dogs with visually incorrect coats (i.e. too wavy, limp, brittle, broken or frizzy) often do not have the proper balance between thick and thin hairs. The thick hairs provide the coats'

strength, the thin ones it's volume. Because of the mixture of hairs and wave, the Löwchen coat is voluminous, not limp or straight.



Ch. Ashford's Q-BeBe-daughter of Ch. Ashford's Ulana. Photo Gini Denninger

Coat Presentation

Assuming the dog has the proper texture, the next consideration is presentation of coat. **A Löwchen Coat should never be scissored.** There are no exceptions to the rule in the United States. The American breed standard calls for a dog to be disqualified if scissored. The reason the Löwchen Club of America membership chose to adopt such a severe penalty is the fear that the breed would become excessively sculpted, much like other breeds such as the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, Bouvier des Flandres and the myriad of other breeds not originally meant to be scissored and yet now are. The outline of the dog should not be altered in any way, by plucking, scissoring or other techniques. It must be pointed out here, that the most Löwchen worldwide are shown adhering to this as an unspoken rule. But there are variations of the clip pattern and some exhibitors do scissor their dog's long coat in some fashion. This is usually about the face to open up the eye area, so the dog can see. In Australia dogs have been shown with scissoring of the bottom profile of the coat to emphasize the lion outline, but this seems to be accepted by most Australian exhibitors as an out of date fashion.

In the United States it is a disqualification to scissor the Löwchen. At American judge's educational forums, discussion centers on the fact it is hard to prove someone has scissored a coat and so it is hard to disqualify a dog. Some judges feel this is an unreasonable expectation and

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demand put on them. The best advice to these judges is if they suspect a dog is scissored in any way then do not award it a win, even if it deserves it. Only when exhibitors that insist on scissoring find that this will not aid them in winning, will scissoring cease. Disqualification should happen, in the United States, even if the scissored dog is the better specimen, if judges adhere to the American standard. It is unlikely that many judges will disqualify dogs for trimming since they find it a very hard thing to prove. In some cases, the trimmer is very skilled at hiding their work.

Another potential and foreseeable problem concerning Löwchen in the show ring is too much coat length. This breed is meant to be an athletic dog. If given the proper amount of exercise, the coat generally breaks off where it should naturally, leaving an uneven appearance to the coat along the bottom fringes. A dog that is confined or has a wrapped coat to artificially promote long coat growth will not have the breakage



Ch. Hanrovia Phandango



Ch. Rum Tum Tigger

needed to put the coat in the lion outline. A coat that completely covers the front bracelets, or reaches the floor is as incorrect as a scissored coat. This breed should not resemble a lion-clipped mature Shih Tzu or Lhasa Apso, which must currently have coat to the ground to win at a dog show. The Löwchen must have a lion profile!

As far as grooming aids for the breed, the Löwchen coat should not be chalked, hair sprayed or dyed. Properly examining and determining the coat texture of a dog so altered, is difficult at best. These aids make it almost impossible to determine if the dog possesses correct coat texture. They may in fact, hide a correct coat! The coat must flow and feel soft to the touch, not stiff, gritty or altered in any way. A judge's hand should be able to glide through the coat. As for dyeing the dogs, this is totally unnecessary since any color is allowed in the breed except in countries judging by FCI standard. FCI standard calls for browns to be disqualified, those with brown or liver noses.

A lesser-recognized no-no is the complete straightening of the coat, usually with the use of a blow dryer or curling iron. **The standard calls for a wavy coat.** By that definition, if the coat is artificially straightened it is incorrect! There must be some wave to the coat. This is not an Afghan Hound or Maltese with long straight strands of hair. Allowing dogs with completely or mostly straight coats to win may open the door for dogs that have had their coats blown out to disguise an incorrect coat texture, such as dogs with too wavy or kinky coats.

There are some that claim coat texture is color related. This is incorrect. At times it may

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seem so, especially when the number of Löwchen seen by an individual is limited. The reality is that correct coat texture can be found in any color the breed comes in. Blame for incorrect texture should not be placed on the color of the dog. Likewise, color should not be an excuse for incorrect coat texture.

Appreciating a Löwchen with a correct coat is not hard, in fact is a pleasure. There is nothing more enjoyable than seeing a well-groomed and presented dog moving in the ring. While the Löwchen should not be sculpted in any way, those dogs with correct coats that are well maintained are inherently obvious to both the educated and untrained eye.

Color

Löwchen come in any color dogs come in. Some colors are more rare than others. The more rare colors are pure white, reds, brindles, and solid black. Löwchen coat color is also determined by the fade factor, which is very strong in all bloodlines. Most Löwchen fade from the original color they carried as puppies. It is a rare individual that still is as dark as it was as a puppy when adult. The dogs that are still dark should be considered to carry strong coat pigment factor, the opposite of the fade factor. The fade factor is the fading of a dog's color, which is genetically determined.

Coat color has become somewhat controversial since the FCI breed standard was changed. Prior to the change, all coat colors were accepted. Now brown-colored dogs are unacceptable in the show ring in Europe. In Germany, brown Löwchen cannot be used in breeding programs, despite the quality of the individual dog. There is serious disagreement between people from various countries over this situation.

Those that favor elimination of brown Löwchen, maintain that browns dilute pigment. They cite as example, brown Löwchen with light eyes; some are even yellow or almost green. This is certainly an undesirable trait, and should be heavily



Duncara

factored in on whether to use such a dog in a breeding program. Most breeders find that even if a dog is great in other ways, that green or yellow eyes are too overwhelming and they decide to eliminate this individual from their breeding program.

Some fanciers champion the browns since they like the color, others since they feel it has always historically existed and deserves a place in the breeding program. Others feel that the total elimination of brown Löwchen from the gene pool removes too large a proportion of the Löwchen gene pool, and they feel this is genetically unhealthy for the breed.

A serious consideration of removing the browns from the gene pool is that by removing browns, the chance of producing pure black Löwchen is seriously reduced to minuscule proportions. Genetically true black is linked with true brown in the gene pool. Bloodlines that produce solid black also are capable of producing brown dogs and this applies the other way too, lines that produce browns are capable of producing solid blacks.

Of interest here, is that there are those who would argue that solid black dogs do not belong in the gene pool either. The elimination of brown will also eliminate black, which is correct according to these people. What must be considered is that solid black dogs have been a part of the breed since its emergence. A wonderful example of a solid black dog in art is a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, 'Die Hochzeit zu Kana' which was finished in 1485 a.d. The early breeders had a far larger number of solid black and brown dogs born than breeders do today. The fade factor seems to be dominant. The total

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elimination, willingly by breeders, of browns and as a byproduct, the black dogs means that the fading of coats will be automatic. Clear colors that do not fade will not be possible in the breed.

To be considered a true black, the dog must not significantly fade in color, as it ages. If a dog is black but fades to silver it is not a true black, since its coat color is affected by the fade factor. It is important to keep the solid black dog in the gene pool since this reduces the incidence of coat fading and light pigment.

There are gene pools that have lost their strength and now only have diluted genes for black and brown. These are the genes that are influenced by the fade factor. This occurs by no longer breeding true blacks or browns into the bloodlines every few generations. The result is that

There are two types of brown dogs. Some bloodlines carrying brown are diluted to the point that there are no solid black dogs in the gene pool any more. These bloodlines do not manage to produce as a rule; colors that stay clean or clear. They fade and change to lighter colors with time. These browns are also more likely to carry light pigmentation of eyes, eye rims, lips and pads than browns that descend from lines that still strongly carry the solid black dogs. The fact that brown dogs can have light or green eyes is a result of the dilution of black from the gene pool. This is quickly achieved by breeding a brown to brown or a dog that is carrying strongly the fade factor. If this scheme of breeding is continued for several generations, eventually the colors will lighten drastically as well as pigment. Most of these brown dogs will be café au'lait or heavily silver-brown as adults. It is these bloodlines, while still producing brown, that also produce the extreme light eyes that those opposing keeping browns in the gene pool cite as the reason to eliminate brown.

The lines that carry solid black dogs produce brown colors that do not fade as drastically as in the lines that



Ch. Golracers X-tra Dantes Virgileo

don't. The pigment is stronger in these bloodlines also. The stronger pigment and weaker fade factor in these browns is due to the black dogs. Black dogs in a gene pool generally provide protection against the fade factor. The black dogs are always in bloodlines that carry the brown genetically. To eliminate brown will eliminate black. With the elimination of black, the gene pool will increasingly consist of dogs with the fade factor. Eventually solid colors that stay true and are clear will disappear. This is a good argument against the elimination of browns. Brown dogs should always be bred to dogs that carry strong pigment in their bloodlines. Browns should never be bred to cream colored or heavily faded dogs, even if both parents have good pigment. While the cream-colored or heavily faded dog may appear to carry strong pigment, since it is itself well pigmented, it usually does not. There is a genetic connection between pigment strength and the cream and faded colors.

Colors are not predictable in this breed. There is little knowledge of how the color genes work in the Löwchen. Frau Ostertag at one time attempted to determine the color inheritance pattern. She was forced to give up since there was not a truly predictable pattern being produced by the dogs being bred. This may change as the years go by. There are ever more Löwchen and with the higher numbers comes the opportunity to determine statistically in a satisfying way, the inheritance mode.

There are some givens regarding color in the breed. You cannot breed for color. If you decide to breed for a given color, you must inevitably sacrifice in other areas. Creams should not be bred to creams, where as it is very

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desirable to breed black to black. Creams must be very carefully used in gene pools since they often can dilute the pigment of successive generations. Creams and browns should be bred to dark-colored dogs and not the same color as themselves. Browns should not be bred to creams. Some say that parti-colored dogs should not be bred to other parti-colored dogs. Others contend this is a safe practice. The key in doing so is consideration of the ancestors, if they all carried strong pigment, this breeding could work. But, if there are individuals in the three-generation pedigree with weak pigment, you have a higher chance of producing poorly pigmented dogs.

The Whole Löwchen

The key to evaluating the Löwchen is to remember always the word **moderation**. The Löwchen should be moderate in all forms. Exaggeration is incorrect in this breed. The Löwchen is not frail or fragile or hulking and over boned or muscled dog. They must walk the fine line between the two extremes, creating an athletic, hardy yet elegant and pretty dog. Always think of moderation when viewing the dogs' parts individually or as a whole.

Neck

While head and coat are the first qualities a judge will notice, there is more to the dog. A Löwchen with a wonderful head must have the proper length of neck to carry it. While the neck needs some length to carry the head through the coat, care must be taken not to cultivate too long a neck. Currently dog fanciers worldwide seem to equate the degree of elegance on how much neck a dog carries. The more neck, the more elegant a dog is perceived to be. Because Löwchen can carry large amounts of coat, too short a neck will give the dog an appearance of having its head stuck on to the shoulder. In recent times, this is more common in the breed than too long a neck. A look through the annuals of Löwchen yearbooks and newsletters from around the world illustrate this as a common



This dog appears as if he could use more neck. Ashford's Emir at Eaglenest. Photo Gini Denninger

problem. The amount of neck a Löwchen carries must be balanced with the rest of the dog's proportions. As with all other traits of the Löwchen, there should be no exaggeration. The Finnish and Scandinavians have perfected length of neck in the Löwchen. When evaluating a Löwchen neck, keep in mind that a full or incorrectly styled coat can hide adequate neck. It is vital, therefore, that judges feel for length of neck. Length of neck in Löwchen is correct when the head is carried above the shoulders with the neck being discernible but not much more. If one notices the length of neck before the rest of the body or the neck looks out of balance then chances are it is too long. The Löwchen must never become a giraffe! The neck, according to the Löwchen Club of America standard should fit smoothly into the shoulders and top line. Length of neck may exaggerate length of the overall dog. Löwchen with short, inadequate necks may look long in back when they are square. A dog with a long neck could make a dog look too short in the back. There is definitely a balance that must be struck

Length

The Löwchen body has evolved through the years, sometimes in faddish ways. Evidence shows that through the ages, Löwchen have been both long bodied dogs as well as square. A look throughout many artworks shows Löwchen that were longer

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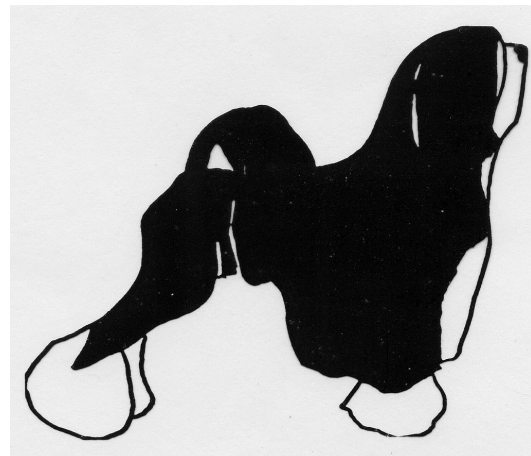


This dog is posed to appear as if he has too much neck.
Ch. Ashford-Lowenhaus Fati Abu. Owner Gini Denninger. Photo Jari Partenen.

than taller. This type has persisted, and exists still in the gene pool, along with the more modern Löwchen who are more up on leg. As in the many dog breed varieties that started out longer than tall, current breeders and exhibitors seem to prefer dogs shorter backed rather than long. This is so for the Löwchen too. Breeders, judges and exhibitors must remember the Löwchen has always been a dog that is slightly longer than square. Even if this goes against what the modern exhibitor is used to, this is what the breed profile has been. Since historically, length of the Löwchen has been slightly longer than tall, it is preferable that when choosing a dog to favor the slightly longer over short backed dog. The first standard used by the Löwchen Club of America allowed bitches to be long bodied. The Löwchen should be slightly longer than tall. This is one more trait that defines the breed. Never should a Löwchen be shorter backed than tall. Looking for a Löwchen that is slightly longer than tall does not call for dogs that are long backed to the point that balance is gone. The Löwchen should never resemble in outline the Dachshund. Coat can sometimes create an illusion of either correct or incorrect length of back. Learn to examine a Löwchen as if you have x-ray eyes with which to see through the coat and cutting lines placement.

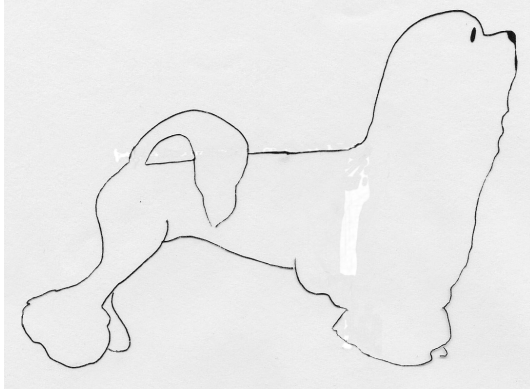
It is so, that some of the dogs that Madame Bennert, Dr. Rickert and Frau Ostertag had to work with were long on leg or short in back. They were unwilling, rightly, to eliminate them solely for this reason since in those days there were precious few Löwchen available for the breeding program. They felt this was acceptable to work

with. In fact Dr. Rickert had several dogs in his breeding program that were so long as to resemble the Dachshund. Because he used these long Löwchen, there were those who accused him of having bred the Dachshund into the gene pool. Naturally those accusers did not realize that extremely long dogs were as common in the limited gene pool as were the too tall Löwchen. The Löwchen proportions just were not consistent in the early days of the breeds' revival. Proportion of the Löwchen body length was difficult to predictably maintain. While we still have too long or tall dogs, this is much less of a problem today. We have had considerable time and numbers of dogs to help improve the breed since the days of Madame Bennert, Dr. Rickert and Frau Ostertag. Confusingly, all breed standards call for Löwchen to be short or square. The 1905 standard calls for the body to be short. Considering that in those days the majority of Löwchen were long bodied by our definition today, it would not be unreasonable to think their definition of short meant "not tall". What today's breeder must do is view the breed historically and determine what his or her own interpretation of the standard will be. Of importance is that

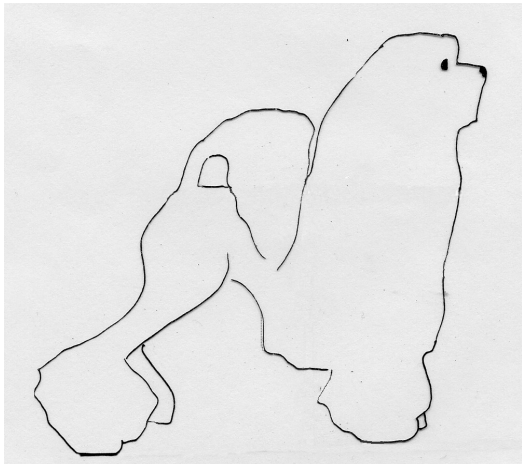


This is the ideal outline of the Löwchen. Drawing by Juha Kares.

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This dog is too long bodied. Drawing Juha Kares



This dog is too short bodied. Drawing Juha Kares

what this breeder produces not become too distanced from what has always been accepted as correct. The trend for many breeds, in the last thirty years, has been a shortening of backs.

Top Line

Structurally the Löwchen is a cobby, small and athletic dog. There should be no hint of reedy structure since the Löwchen must be a solidly built dog. Löwchen should possess a level top line, without exceptions. The Löwchen top line should be level from the withers to the tail set. You should be able to run a ruler from withers to the base of the tail, at level. This trait is crucial since the rest of the body hangs off the spine. Any deviations from a straight spine will most likely lead to other problems such as a low tail set and or improper movement. Dogs



The top line on this dog is very level. The tail is set to come directly off the top line. Ch. Lionlife Chapter One. Breeder Kim Perula. Photo Gini Denninger

with roached top lines often sport low tail sets.

One of the most common top line faults found in this breed is the roached back. On some dogs it is very pronounced, others very mild and felt only when the judges runs their hands down the back. Note here though that the coat can lead to an appearance of poor top line, if the coat is not lying properly. This is so particularly if the coat is thin about the shoulders and bushy in the midsection. So when evaluating a top line you should have the dog on a table, set up properly to be able to run your hands down the back. This will help you find any possible faults. Look to see if the shoulders are lower than the middle of the back, if so there is a top line problem. This type of problem, combined with a low tail set indicates a roached back. One way to evaluate the tail set is to hold the tail up into the teacup handle position. If there is a fold in front of the tail and the dog is not over weight, then the tail set can reasonably be considered to be too low. Sometimes a young dog will have a roached top line, particularly if thin. That same dog may mature into a dog with a strong, level top line. This is an example as to why one needs to understand their dog's bloodlines, since some are slower maturing than others are.

Interestingly it is true that there is precedence, historically, of Löwchen that had roached top-lines, just look at the Dürer dogs. There are more Löwchen found in art works with correct top lines, than not. The dogs from the turn of the century (1900) appeared to have good top lines.

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Tuck-Up

Ideally, Löwchen have a moderate tuck-up. There should be a gradual raise in the line from the chest to loin. It should not be pronounced or extreme. This does not mean that the chest can be short when viewed from the side. It should extend to the elbows. The desired amount of tuck-up should be moderate. The Löwchen, if correct, will appear a little thick waisted. The tuck-up of the early Löwchen was not as pronounced as they are becoming today. Exaggerated tuck-up could be a future problem. Breeders must avoid exaggerating Löwchen tuck-ups while on quest for elegance. If you have never seen a Löwchen with moderate tuck-up it is difficult to imagine this dog being elegant. But elegance is certainly possible despite a thick waist. Oh, if only so for humans too!

Tail

Tail sets can be a problem, in this breed. There are large numbers of dogs with tails set too low. The predominance of this trait varies from country to country. Incorrect tail sets are set too low off the back. This is often accompanied with a stiff or wide movement in the rear when the dog is gaited. Some breeders, in trying to achieve a nice round rear, lose the correctly placed tail. Dogs with roached top lines often have low tail sets, exaggerating their poor top line even more. The tail should come off the back with no break in the level line until the point where the tail lifts off the back. There should be no fold over the tail set when the dog has its tail held in the classic teacup handle position.

A correctly set tail with the right amount of curve of the tail will look like a teacup handle. The tail should curve up over the back, with the tip falling to one side of the back.



The tail on this dog is perfect. It is properly set, and has the teacup handle shape. Ch. Cleevview Brave Jewel. Bred by Janet Edwards. Owner/photo

The tail should never be held tightly to the back where it lies across the top line, much like a Pekingese tail does. Nor should it stand straight up with only a slight curve at the tip. This is considered a flag tail. It is more common than one might imagine in this breed. A minor problem is the short tail. As long as the tail is set right and has the right amount of curve to it, it's long hair at the end if the tail will compensate for lack of length. The preferable tail is longer rather than shorter.

For years breeders were more concerned with getting the body right and so a tail fault, while recognized, was not given priority. The time has come, now with the good amount of great examples of the breed available to breeding programs, that breeders should look for the proper tail. A well set and held tail strongly contributes to the unique profile of the Löwchen.

Rear Conformation

Below the tail is the rear of the dog. The breed has long been admired for its strong rear. A correctly built rear propels the dog forward efficiently and cleanly. The rear should be well muscled and **slightly** rounded. The rear, when viewed from behind, is wide rather than narrow. A rear not rounded, will appear narrow which is not desirable. The rear legs should be parallel and straight when viewed from rear. They should not

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This is an excellent rear. Chic Choix Vousle Vouslais. Photo Gini Denninger

hock in or out. Sometimes the rear bracelets give the appearance of problems such as moving close in the rear, so a breeder and judge must be able to look through the coat.

Rear legs should never be severely angulated. Viewed from the side the dog should have moderate angulation. For some reason this is a problem for many new to the breed. It is true a dog with much angulation looks elegant and showy from the side. But if one studies pictures of the early dogs, the first thing that stands out is their moderate angulation. The angles of the rear leg are subdued. This does not mean there should be no angulation, only that the Löwchen should not stand out as a well-angulated breed. A well-angulated Löwchen goes against historic type.

Chest

Ribs should be well sprung. There should be room in them for the lungs of this athletic small dog. Since the Löwchen has never been noted as being a working dog but rather as a companion, this would seem to be



This dog has a correct front. Chic Choix Vousle Vouslais. Photo Gini Denninger

an odd requirement. Keep in mind, while a small companion; the Löwchen has always been somewhat of an active dog. They were always fit to follow their masters wherever they went in the days before cars. This sometimes required a lot of running or walking resulting in the small athletic Löwchen of today. The brisket should be moderate in width. The Löwchen, while needing room for their lungs, should not be round barreled and wide or slab sided and narrow in the width of the chest.

Approaching a Löwchen from the front, one is surprised by the amount of chest the small dog has. Besides bone construction, muscles give the chest its solid appearance. The legs descend out of the chest in straight parallel planes. They too, are well muscled. The American standard describes the shoulder construction of the breed well. It calls for a moderately long and well-laid back shoulder. The brisket extends to the elbow. The upper arm is of equal length to the shoulder

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Hansel von Livland. Photo Felizitas Dylla



Ch Keenburnie Ashford Harley. Photo Ardis Shurtleff

blade, the two meeting at a ninety-degree angle. The forearms are described as having good length, with the distance from the ground to the elbow slightly greater than the distance from the elbow to the top of the shoulder. A Löwchen built like this is able to move firmly and efficiently.

Size

Size of the breed has become an issue as of late. The earliest standards allowed for a fairly large range of size from 8½ to 13½ inches or 21.59 cm to 34.29cm. In the early days this was necessary, since there were so few dogs in the gene pool. The early dogs bred in Belgium and Germany were small compared to today's Löwchen. Especially during the last fifteen years the breeds' size has increased. This is evident when you compare current Löwchen sizes with the list of Frau Ostertag's dogs and their sizes. Worldwide larger Löwchen have become an alarming trend, especially for those taught about the breed by Madame Bennert, or who seek to preserve the breed as intended.

The Löwchen Club of America reduced the size range and also changed the actual allowed size range for the breed. The mode average of breed standards around the world is 25-32cm, which translates into 9.9-12.6 inches. This has always been the accepted size range. The American standard calls for 12-14 inches or 30.48-35.56cm. This is a dangerous precedent for

the breed which most, when considering the facts, would agree. The Löwchen have for all time been a small dog. In many countries they are in the toy or companion dog group. The size range of the

Tibetan Terrier, which is considered a medium sized dog, begins at 14 inches.

Some people justify the 12-14 inch range by the fact that the AKC has (at the Löwchen Club of Americas' request) placed the Löwchen in the non-sporting group. Since many of the dogs in the non-sporting group are bigger than the Löwchen, the reasoning goes that the Löwchen will do better if it were a little larger itself. Die-hard purists strongly disagree, countering with since when do you change a breed standard to suit the group? Others justify the size increase with the declaration that today's Löwchen eat better than ever before and so their size increase was inevitable. This is surely not the case, since there are many Löwchen kennels world wide that definitely do not starve their dogs and yet manage to keep them within the correct size range. Yet others contend that a small dog does not move as well. This is definitely not so, there are many examples of small yet wonderfully moving Löwchen. While good movement is vital in indicating a dog is built well, it does not define type. Type must always be of most importance since without type you do not have a breed.

It is true over the last twenty years Löwchen have gotten larger. Löwchen breeders today need to mull over how much do they

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want to alter the breed from its origins? The stated desire of most dog breeders is to improve on the qualities of their dogs while preserving the breed. How much change can the breed endure until it is something other than it started out. Many of today's breeders will be surprised at the sizes of Frau Ostertag's dogs. Most have never seen Löwchen in these sizes. There are still pockets in Europe where these sizes are more common, but they are disappearing. Some early English breeders have said that the dogs that they received from Dr. Rickert were rather large. That probably is so and very unfortunate. But in those days even Dr. Rickert, Frau Ostertag and Madame Bennert used dogs that were larger than their liking. There were too few Löwchen to exclude a dog based on size alone.

When it comes to determining correct size, original breed standards play a crucial role, since they should be considered to a bible for breeders. The only changes truly acceptable to their content is further elaboration, not changing called for dimensions. An original breed



Ch. Wanted Take A Bow. Owner Kirsi Loonroos.
Photo Jari Partenen.

standard that had been changed to further explain what is called for should be considered a correct breed standard. One that changes dimensions to suit what breeders are producing at the time of change is faulty. If correct breed standards are adhered to, breeders will be hard pressed to change the breed in any significant ways. It must be remembered here too, that standards must not be altered in such a way that the breed type or purpose could be changed. Changes in a standard should be considered only if there were prior precedence of the



Lamberts Lady of the Forest Photo Earl Marie Dingel.

proposed change. In this case, this could be considered a rectification of the standard.

The FCI standard has been changed once since Madame Bennert wrote it and submitted it to the FCI. One of the concerns the change was reflected was that the breed was getting too big in Europe. Increase in size is not limited to American dogs, and so must be of concern for all. Reflect that Madame Bennert regularly exhibited dogs in the 10-11 inch range. How far away from that have we gotten? Additionally, were the current standards in use, and Madame Bennert and her dogs magically appeared again, would they be eliminated from competition for size alone? This is something to mull over.

Measuring

The internationally recognized way to measure the Löwchen is from the wither to the tail set and from the wither to ground. The ideal proportion is 10 parts tall to 11 parts long. If one measures from the brisket to tail and withers to ground, as called for in the American standard, the working proportion is 13 or 14 parts long to ten parts tall, dependant on the prominence of the brisket. If one applies the 10 parts tall to 11 parts long formula to measuring the dog in the American fashion as prescribed in the breed standard, the dog would be far too short in the back.

Personality

The Löwchen has some of the fire of a terrier and the intelligence of those mysterious eastern breeds. It is the tomboy of the small

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companion dogs. Most Löwchen enjoy being in the show ring, and are there just for the joy of



LCA Ch Ashford's Ulana. Photo Gini Denninger

doing something different. A shy Löwchen should be penalized since one of their personality traits is a cheerful demeanor. Löwchen are naturally confident dogs that like being the center of attention.

A truly great Löwchen is one that has all the right qualities, physically and mentally. When one finds one of the "greats" in the show ring it is unlikely to be missed, since this dog's personality and physical attributes will scream out to be noticed. Those judging the breed owe it to themselves, and the breed, to understand what makes a quality Löwchen.

In Conclusion

It is not so easy to sort through the many types of Löwchen being shown or bred today unless you fully understand what makes the Löwchen a breed. Both breeders and judges will play an important part in the direction that the breed takes. Breeders must understand, in minute detail, what a quality Löwchen is and ruthlessly weed through their dogs to keep it. Unfortunately, as in every breed, there are those breeders who are not confident in their own knowledge of the breed and they will place greater importance on how a dog does in the show ring than what its actual qualities are. In situations like this, these people rely on the judges to weed through what is brought to them to find those dogs truly worth breeding. This means that sometimes judges too have an influence on the direction the breed is going through their choice of winners. It is equally important that anyone judging the breed understand it as well as knowledgeable breeders.



Ch. Juron Better Be Good Photo Juha Putkonen.

Breeding and judging Löwchen can be a heavy burden to get it right, but with the right amount of study, it can be successfully carried out; to the joy and benefit of all breed fanciers intent on preserving the Löwchen as it has been through the centuries.

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Löwchen Measurements From The Livland Kennel Records

Of the dogs listed below, the ones with no kennel name indicated are dogs bred by Madame Bennert. Of course at a later date she did begin adding "de la Souverain".

Name	Breeder	Sex	Centi-Meter	Inches
Ch. Issa.	M. Bennert	F	22.	8.66
Benjamin VD3 Lowen	H. Rickert	M	28.	11.02
Bienchen	"	F	32.	12.60
Daisy	"	"	24	9.45
Adam V.Livland	I. Ostertag	M	32	12.60
Adrian	"	"	30	11.81
Alexander	"	"	30	11.81
Alexis	"	F	28	11.02
Bar	"	M	28	11.02
Birke	"	F	24	9.45
Conardine	"	M	32	12.60
Charlie	"	"	35	13.78
Carlote	"	F	30	11.81
Cordula	"	"	26	10.24
Cornelia	"	"	28	11.02
Cecilie	"	"	28	11.02
Dorian	"	"		
Dora	"	"	28	11.02
Dunja	"	M	30	11.81
Ekre	"	"	28	11.02
Enziun	"	"	28	11.02
Edda	"	F	30	11.81
Eki	"	"	24	9.43
Ethel	"	"	26	10.24
Fabienne	"	M	33	12.99

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Florian	"	"	35	13.78
Flora	"	F	26	10.24
Funny	"	"	26	10.24
Felizitas	"	"	26	10.24
Farouke	"	M	25	9.84
Gogo	"	F	31	12.20
Gigi	"	"	22	8.66
Igor	"	M	24	9.45
Ivan	"	"	35	13.78
Ilona	"	F	24	9.45
Ira	"	M	24	9.45
Julchen	"	M	26	10.24
Kiriki	"	"	24	9.45
Lidi	"	F	22	8.66
Mocka	"	M	22	8.66
Nika	"	"	24	9.45
Olivia	"	F	26	10.24
Omo	"	"	26	10.24
Pinocchio	"	M	29	11.42
Q-Bebe	"	M	26	10.24
Queen	"	F	25	9.84
Quando	"	M	Noted as very	small
Raja	"	"	28	11.02
Rija	"	"	27	10.63
Saschinka	"	F	26	10.24
Toni	"	M	28	11.02
Walodja	"	M	28	11.02
Wasja	"	F	26	10.24
Wera	"	"	29	11.42
Willi	"	M	26	10.24
X-Lina	"	F	26	10.24

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X-linda	"	F		
Y-Maxi	"	M	26	10.24
Y-Moorchen	"	"	26	10.24
Juan v.d.Bungner-Heide	I. Jansen	"	33	12.99

