

• BREED FEATURE •
BRACCO ITALIANO

They answered

A.1. I consider myself as a “beginner” when it comes to Bracco Italiano breeding. I am instead more known as a Sighthound breeder (SOBERS Greyhounds, Whippet and Italian Greyhounds



since 1957). My interest for this ancient breed came after being in contact with the wonderful BIS Int Multi Ch WW EUW Rivana del Monte Alago, who was one of the most Top Winning Bracco Italiano in Italy for several years. After following the breed for some years, I was offered a puppy out of Rivana and that’s how it all started. Home came BIS SBIS Int Multi Ch WW EUW Axel del Monte Alago (sired by Int Ch Omar). His pedigree was full of quality dogs both in field and in the showring and Axel quickly showed us his potential. Just to mention a few of his most special wins: he won RBIS at the European Dog Show in Helsinki (Finland) in 2006 among an entry of 10.000 dogs, at only 15 months of age! Later on the same year, he won BIS at the World Dog show in Poznan (Poland) in 2006 (only 19 months of age), among 22.000 entered dogs! He also won BIS at the Eukanuba World Challenge in California, USA 2009 and he won BOB and was short listed in the Group at CRUFTS no less than 3 times (2009-2010-2011)! He was n. 2 TOP DOG all breeds in Italy 2007 and TOP DOG All Breeds in Italy 2008. So far, Axel is the most winning Bracco Italiano in the breed history. Short after Axel came the lovely bitch, Polcevera’s Olza, herself a multiple Group winner, and together they produced our first Bracco litter (born 2008), which was co-bred with Mr Salvatore Tripoli. By previous agreement, we let the litter have Mr Tripoli’s “del Tavuliddaro” prefix. The litter was born and raised here at Sobers and contained no less than 7 Champions out of 9 puppies.

In 2011, we had the second litter of Braccos here at Sobers, sired by BIS Ch Poldo (a famous stud dog in Italy) and Ondina di Casa Corsini at Sobers (a daughter of Axel and granddaughter of the unforgettable Ch Giacherebbe dell’Angelo del Summano, BIS at the World Dog Show in Milan, 2000).

Among the five puppies (of which one was exported to Australia) three already earned their Champion titles. WW’13 EUW’13 Ch Sobers Atticus and his sister Ch Sobers Appia Antica are multiple Group Winners in and outside Italy.

My interest and admiration for this breed is mainly because of their lovely sweet character, their stylish way of working in the field and their beautiful way of moving.

A.2. The head is a really specific mark of the breed since it should not only have a certain shape for the beauty but also for its function when hunting . The unique profile with the unlevel planes and the slightly roman nose, called in Italian “a becco di flauto” (flute mouthpiece) has the special purpose of smelling the game when trotting with high head carriage.

A.3. The movement of Bracco Italiano is very easy to describe: he is the best trotter in the Dog World! Long reaching movement in front with strong drive from the rear, head carried high, proud and elegant and extremely elastic and effective.

Health problems are not a main issue for Bracchi Italiani, although, sometimes, they can show some clinical signs of dermatitis or allergic rash due to excessive protein content of the food they

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are eating. It is very important to keep Braccos ears (as many of those breeds which have long ears) very clean and check on a regular base any infection or irritation, because any lack would result in a chronic problem. Moreover, in Italy many breeders do not usually check hips and elbows of their sires and dams, which can lead to unexpected “bad news” sometimes. As breeders, we are trying to stimulate this matter and, as a result, we are getting more and more of Italian breeders to do it.

A.5. 1) BREED TYPE: never neglect the unique breed type with its special outline, both standing and on the move. The Bracco is a hunting dog which must be sound and functional. Don’t allow too extreme or overdone dogs, as well as too heavy and/or cobby specimens . The Bracco must never remind you either of a Bloodhound or a Pointer! The topline must never be totally straight or falling off and the tail set must not be like a Retriever!

2) MOVEMENT: is part of the breed type but so special for this breed that I

We asked Breeders

Q.1. How long have you been breeding Bracco Italiano? Why are they your chosen breed?

Q.2. The head section of the breed standard is very long, how would you best describe it in brief ?

Q.3. How would you best describe the movement of the Bracco Italiano?

Q.4. Does the Bracco Italiano have any health problems, and what are they like to live with?

Q.5. Could you list in order of priority the 5 most important points you think a judge should look for in the Bracco Italiano?

Q.6. What is your ‘pet hate’ when looking at a Bracco Italiano, and what do you think is the hardest fault to breed out?

want to mention it apart. The Bracco Italiano is a dog which hunts mostly trotting and he must be able to do so for many hours with style and elegance. The trot is unique for this breed and the way they use their legs is breathtaking. Extremely elastic and effective seen from the side. They must trot with a rather high but forward carried head, keeping their topline rather still and just moving their tail to the sides.

They must be sound coming and going – we often see dogs which are too wide in front and too narrow or cow hocked seen from behind. Also many dogs are just trotting around like any other dogs but lacking the typical elastic gait of the the Bracco Italiano

3) HEAD: important to keep it elegant with the typical side profile for the breed, with unlevel planes. Never wide in skull or muzzle seen from the front. Not too much or too little lip. The expression must be mild and kind. Ears must not be too high or low set. The two dewlaps must be seen. When shown with bate in the ring, the typical Bracco expression very easy dissappear!

4) SKIN and colour: Skin must be elastic but not overdone. Extra “finesse” is the typical “skirt” in the flank which should be seen but should not be excessive. The colours are quite clear described in the standard but sometimes there is difficulties to understand the Roano Marrone colour. They must not be as dark as the German Pointer. The typical colour is “Tonaca di Frate”, which means literally “Friar’s Robe” (St. Francesco Friars).

5) TEMPERAMENT: The Bracco is a sensitive dog and sometimes a bit timid but still a wonderful sweet family dog as well as a great pointing dog. In Italy they have always first and foremost been kept for hunting. Bracchi are sometimes considered great show dogs because of their fantastic movement, but it is not always easy to get also the very outgoing temperament which is asked for in the show ring. A happy Bracco should move his tail when trotting both in field and in the ring.

A.6. Well, my “pet hate” would be to see the breed lose its typical details.

That is the fear for many Italian Breeders now, when the breed starts to be more and more popular all over the world. The Bracco Italiano is part of the history here in Italy and so loved among many hunters for its greatness in the field. It is of highest importance that new breed enthusiasts, judges and breeders try to learn and respect the history of the breed and remember also about their function in the field as an excellent pointing dog.

I don’t want to see the Bracco Italiano shown like so many show dogs: strangled up with head too high on the stand, with falling off toelines and overstacked rears. They must be shown as natural as possible, without destroying their so typical outline.

The Bracchi we see here in Italy are usually of excellent breed type but could often be better in heads and for sure be better in movement, especially when it comes to soundness. Many dogs are crabbing and are very wide in fronts. I believe that it is hard, but not impossible, to get rid of bad fronts and general bad construction faults. I think

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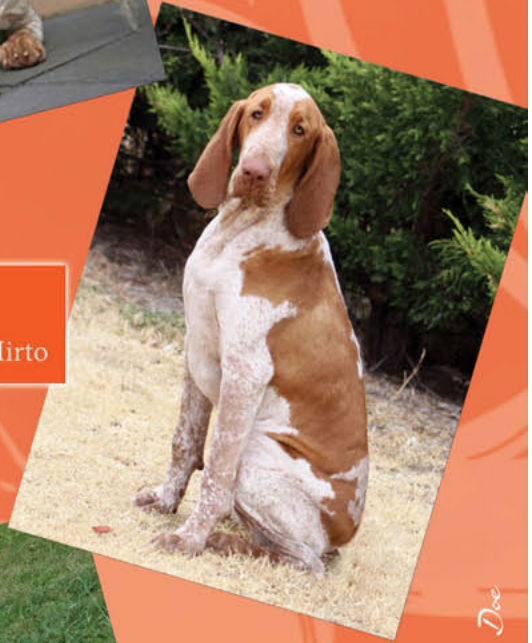
it is very important to be really critical and selective when starting up with a new breed and try to help each other in a creative way among breeders.

Bitte Ahrens
Primavera (Sobers /Italy)

Interviews continued on page 77



Arabella
Owned by: J & R Mirto

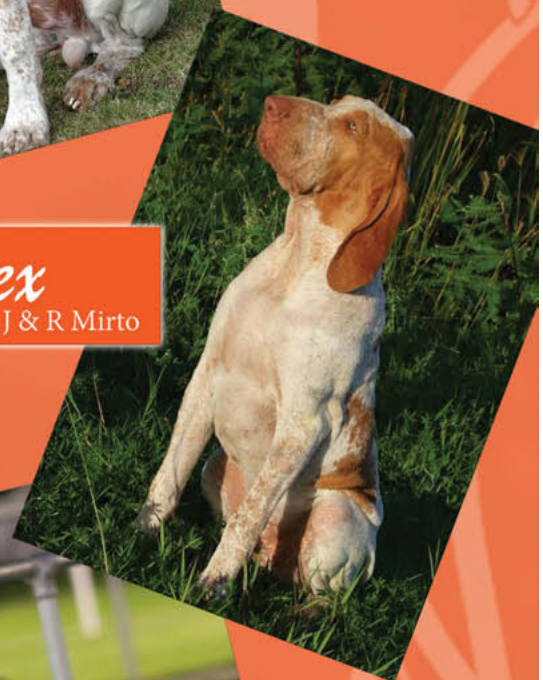


Rocco
R Sloan, J Eggleton, J & R Mirto



Aurelio
G Gulbransen & J & R Mirto

Alex
K & R Logan and J & R Mirto



Arianna
Moloscyc Kennels

Meet the multi award winning
HiPoint
Bracchi Team
nothing like a little sibling rivalry!

Designed by: Michelle Doe



Understanding the Bracco Italiano

By JOHN ABRAHAM

This short article is written to help prospective judges to understand what is ‘Bracco Italiano type’.

It is essential to start with a short breed history because this allows us to understand why there is such diversity in ‘type’.

After World War II the breed's numbers decreased dramatically and it was necessary to start with a program for perpetuation for the Bracco Italiano. At this time a couple of dogs were chosen, which were most similar to the correct Bracco Italiano type and had complete pedigrees. Because the quantity was really low, the so-called Bracco Nobile (pointing of the aristocracy - nobile), a heavy type from Piedmont and the Bracco Commune (public pointing) of lighter construction from Lombardi, were interbred. In the year 1949 on the 19th February the definitive standard of the breed was prepared.

When reading the standard look at the range of height & weight, this is a wide range which caters for the two original types, Bracco Nobile & Bracco Commune. But then, on reading the standard, it gives a detailed description of the proportions of a single type, to be judged against. To quote Mr Ciceri of the famous Dei Ronchi kennel often referred to as the father of the breed, '....to judge in the expo, in order of importance, first you must see the type, the meaning is, that the dog must be in the "breed", you have to see the characteristics of the breed in the dog (i.e. for the Bracco, the expression, the superior line of the head - divergence etc), second look at the body, angles, good legs and feet etc. Here the characteristics are relevant to all the dogs independently by the breeds, third the distinction. In the Bracco, neck, region under orbital, where you see the bones of the face etc....'

Study the typical Bracco outline in diagram A:

Look at the important proportions.

The square or almost square body.

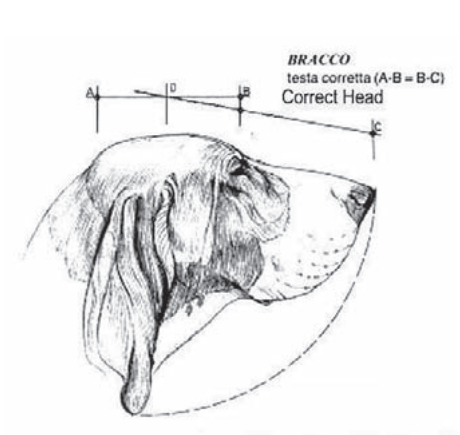
Length of head 4/10 the height at the withers, this is why the skull needs to be comparatively narrow to reduce its weight.

The moderately short strong truncated neck to carry that head.

The upward slope of the topline from the 11th vertebrae.

The steeper than ‘normal’ slope to the croup, i.e.30 deg to horizontal.

Next look to the head, the most crucial points of which are: The head planes must be divergent i.e. the topline of the muzzle if extended back should intersect the topline of the skull at mid point.



Angular and narrow at the level of the zygomatic arches. Note: the sub orbital chiselling, the low slung ears, well folded & held close to the head. The inverted V of the flews & the unexaggerated double dewlap.

EYES

Semi-lateral position with a soft and submissive expression neither deep set non prominent. Eyes fairly



large, eyelids oval shaped and close fitting (no entropion or ectropion should be present and is not desirable).

The iris is of a more or less dark ochre or brown colour depending on the coat colour.

Do not be swayed by the untypical ‘pointer type’ specimens which are common, they do not fit the standard.

BRACCO MOVEMENT

The Bracco is renowned for its trotting gait, this is characterised by strong powerful propulsion from the rear & exceptional reach in front. I know that some of you will be thinking that this is the ‘norm’ in many breeds but is characterised

in the Bracco by its differences in construction. The steeper croup, which allows the rear legs to extend further forward than most & the flexibility to drive rearwards with no lift to the rump. The more open front angulation from normal i.e. 105deg as opposed to 90deg, allowing for better reach. Plus the Bracco’s fabled flexibility, watch this clip:

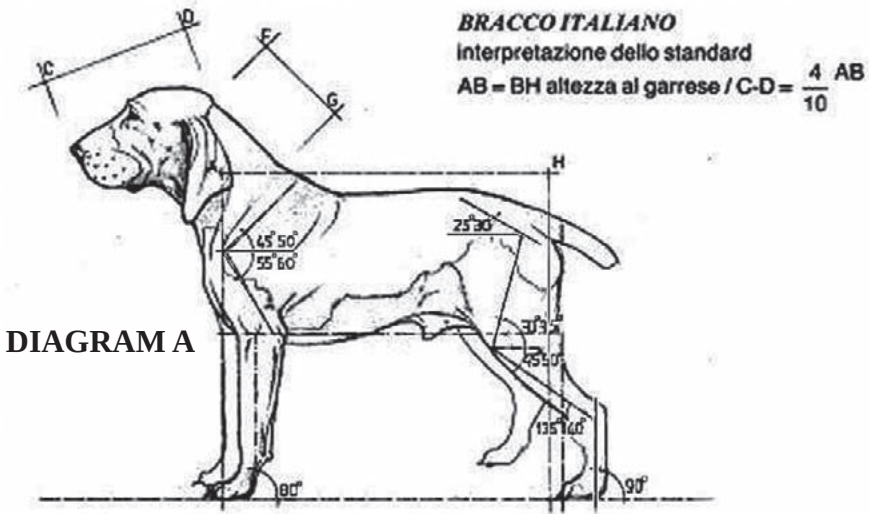
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDvol1S961M>

Notice the almost lazy stride & how much ground is covered. The very loose action, not in a lateral plane but in the vertical, look at the flex in the pasterns, people unfamiliar

with the breed mistakenly take as ‘loose in front’.

Do you see the slight flex in the topline at the eleventh vertebrae? This gives even more reach in front. Anyone see a Cheetah at full gallop? The flex in its spine which allows this animal to cover a huge distance at every stride, well, the Bracco does the same at the trot. Watch the economy of energy usage, little energy used equates to superb stamina.

John Abraham,
Chairman
Friends of the Bracco Italiano
www.bracco-italiano.org.uk



Chilli

Aust Ch SOBERS ACHILLEUS (IMP ITA)

First Bracco Italiano import from Italy - Home of the Bracco



Owned by Leonie Kellett and John Palmer

Bred by Bitte Ahrens Primavera & Pierluigi Primavera

**Ad by Alyssa Butler Designs
Photos by Cabal Canine Candids**

The Breed Standard

History:

This dog of ancient Italian origin used for bird hunting has modelled itself and developed over the ages; from the hunting of yesteryear by means of nets, he has adapted himself to the present hunting and shooting. Frescoes from the 14th century are proof of the indisputable timelessness of the Italian Pointer over the centuries, whether either regarding his morphology (appearance) or his aptitudes at hunting as a pointing dog.

General Appearance:

Of strong and harmonious construction with powerful appearance. The preferred subjects are those with lean limbs, well developed muscles, well defined lines with a markedly sculpted head and a very obvious lower orbital chiselling, elements which all contribute to give distinction to this breed. Important proportions: Length of the body is the same or a little more then the height at the withers. Length of head is equal to 4/10 of the height at the withers; it's width, measured at the level of the zygomatic arches, is less than half its length. Skull and muzzle are of equal length.

Characteristics: Tough and adapted to all types of hunting, reliable, endowed with an excellent ability to understand, docile and easy to train.

Head And Skull:

The head is angular and narrow at the level of the zygomatic arches; its length corresponds to 4/10 of the height at the withers; the middle of its length is at the level of a line which unite the inner angles of both eyes. The upper longitudinal axes of the skull and muzzle are divergent, i.e. if extending the top line of the muzzle, this one must emerge in front of the occipital protuberance, ideally at mid-length of the skull.

When seen in profile the skull is in the shape of a very open arch. Seen from the top. It forms lengthwise an elongated ellipse (elongated oval). The width of the skull, measured at the level of the zygomatic arches, should not exceed half the length of the head. The bulge of the forehead and the supraorbital ridges are perceptible. The frontal groove is visible and ends mid-length of the skull. The interparietal crest is short and not very prominent. The occipital protuberance is very pronounced. The stop is not pronounced.

The nose is voluminous, with large well opened nostrils, protrudes slightly over the lips with which it forms an angle. Colour is more or less pink to flesh-colour or brown, depending on the colour of the coat.

Muzzle: Foreface either slightly arched or straight. Its length is equal to half of the length of the head and its depth measures 4/5 of its length. Seen from the front, the lateral sides of the muzzle converge slightly, still presenting a foreface with good width. The chin is not very apparent.

Lips: The upper lips are well developed, thin and floppy without being flaccid, covering the jaw; seen in profile, they form an inverted “V” below the nose; the corner of the lips must be marked without being droopy.

Cheeks: Lean

Eyes: Semi-lateral position with a soft and submissive expression, neither deep set nor prominent. Eyes fairly large, eyelids oval-shaped and close fitting (no entropion or ectropion). The iris is of a more or less dark ochre or brown colour depending on the coat colour.

Ears: Well developed, in length they should, without being stretched, reach the tip of the nose. Their width is at least equal to half their length; raised only very slightly; base rather narrow, set rather backwards at a level of the zygomatic arches. A supple ear with a front rim well turned inwards and really close to the cheek is appreciated. The lower extremity of the ear ends in a slightly rounded tip.

Mouth: Dental arches are well adapted, with the teeth square to the jaw. Scissor bite. A pincer bite is also acceptable.

Neck: Powerful, in truncated cone shape, length not less than 2/3 of the length of the head, well detached from the nape. The throat shows a soft double dewlap.

Forequarters:

The shoulders are strong, well muscled, long and sloping, very free in their movement.

The upper arm is sloping and fitting to the ribcage.

The point of the elbow should be on a perpendicular line from the rear point of the shoulder-blade to the ground

The forearm is strong, straight, with strong and well muscled sinews.

The pasterns are well proportioned, lean, of good length and slightly sloping.

Body: Chest: Broad, deep and well let down to level of the elbows, without forming a keel, with well sprung ribs, particularly in their lower part, and sloping. Topline: The upper profile of the back is made up of two lines. One almost straight,

slopes from the withers to the 11th dorsal vertebra, the other is slightly arched, joining with the line of the rump.

Withers: Well defined, with the points of the shoulder-blades well separated.

Loin: wide lumbar region, muscled, short and slightly convex.

Croup: Long (about 1/3 of the height at the withers), broad and well muscled; the ideal pelvic angulation (angle formed by the pelvic girdle with a horizontal line) is 30 degrees. Pelvis wide.

Underline: Lower profile almost horizontal in its ribcage part, rising slightly in its abdominal part.

Skin: Tough but elastic. Finer on the head, the throat, the armpits and on the lower parts of the body. The visible mucous membranes must be of a corresponding colour with the coat, but never show black spots. The mucous membranes of the mouth are pink; in the roans or white and chestnut coloured dogs they sometimes show brown or pale chestnut spotting.

Hindquarters:

Upper thigh: Long, parallel, muscular, with a rear edge almost straight.

Lower Thigh: Strong.

Hocks: Wide

Metatarsus: Relatively short and lean.

Feet: Forefeet: Strong, slightly oval shaped; well-arched and tight toes, with strong nails well curved towards the ground.

Colour of nails is white, yellow or brown, of more or less dark shade depending on the colour of the coat; pads elastic and lean.

Hind Feet: With all of the characteristics of the front feet; they have dewclaws, the absence of which is not a fault.

Double dewclaw is tolerated.

Tail: Thick at the base, straight, with a slight tendency to taper; hair short. When the dog is in action and especially when questing, is carried horizontally or nearly like that. Should be docked at 15-25 cm from the root.

Gait/Movement:

Extended and fast trot, with powerful impulsion from the hindquarters. Head raised, nose held high in such a way that, when hunting, the nose is higher than the topline.

Coat: Short, dense and glossy, finer and shorter on the head, the ears, front part of the legs and feet.

Colour:

White

White with patches of varied size of an orange or more or less dark amber colour.

White with more or less large chestnut patches.

White speckled with pale orange (melato).

White speckled with chestnut (roano-marrone). In this last combination, a metallic sheen is appreciated, and a warm shade of chestnut is preferred, recalling the colour of a monk's frock.

A symmetrical facial mask is preferred, but the absence of a mask is tolerated.

Sizes:

Height at the withers: Between 55 and 67 cms

Preferred size for males 58-67 cms

Preferred size for females: 55-62 cms

Weight: Between 25 and 40 kgs depending on size

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, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

ELIMINATING FAULTS

Aggressive or overly shy

Convergence of cranial-facial axes

Split nose

Accentuated undershot mouth, overshot mouth.

Wall eye

Coat black, white and black, tricolour, fawn, hazel, uniclour, with tan markings.

Absence of pigmentation (Albinism)

Mucous membranes, skin and annexes with traces of black

Size of 2 cm above or below the limits indicated in the standard.

Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.

• BREED FEATURE • BRACCO ITALIANO



They answered

Continued from page 72

A.1. We imported our first Bracco in 2011, a female from Portugal mother of our current litter.

We consider ourselves “novices” and learning the ropes with lots of mentor-



ing and guidance as this breed is a very complex breed.

We fell in love with the Bracco Italiano because of its noble looks unique and mesmerizing movement and its clown like disposition.

A.2. Head should be angular and narrow at the level of the zygomatic arches. The upper longitudinal axes of the skull and muzzle are divergent.

Skull viewed in profile is in the shape of a very open arch while viewed from the top it forms lengthwise an elongated ellipse.

Stop is NOT pronounced.

Flews should form an inverted V and double dewlap should NOT be exaggerated.

Eyes should be in a semi-lateral position with a soft submissive expression.

Ears should reach the tip of the nose without being stretched, should be well folded and held close to the head.

A.3. The Bracco Italiano is renowned for his trotting gait (trotto spinto) strong propulsion from the rear and exceptional reach in front. The Bracco's gait should be long and fluid (elastic gait).

A.4. The breed does carry some health issues, Hip & Elbow dysplasia, Eye Diseases (Entropion - Ectropion) and Kidney disease (this not as common)

The Bracco Italiano is a great dog to live with, loyal, affectionate intelligent and a family clown, but in saying this he is not a dog for everybody.

A Bracco owner needs to have lots of time and energy for long regular exercise

We asked Breeders

Q.1. How long have you been breeding Bracco Italiano? Why are they your chosen breed?

Q.2. The head section of the breed standard is very long, how would you best describe it in brief ?

Q.3. How would you best describe the movement of the Bracco Italiano?

Q.4. Does the Bracco Italiano have any health problems, and what are they like to live with?

Q.5. Could you list in order of priority the 5 most important points you think a judge should look for in the Bracco Italiano?

Q.6. What is your 'pet hate' when looking at a Bracco Italiano, and what do you think is the hardest fault to breed out?

and stimulation. The Bracco needs plenty of time in natural surroundings but at the same time enjoys home comforts too.

As a short coated breed with minimum shedding the Bracco's grooming needs are not excessive.

A.5. Head to be typical of the breed and balanced with correct expression.

Good body proportions e.g. body should be square or almost square.

Good balanced angulation (not over angulated).

Typical Bracco elastic gait.
Sound temperament.

A.6. Pet hate... “Blood Hound style” Bracco.

We are very new to the breed and having only had one litter find it hard to give a precise and informative answer but we feel it would have to a body that is not in good proportions.

Joseph & Renata Mirto
HiPoint Kennels

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