

## The Official Working Standard For the Epagneul Breton

Most working breeds of dog publish an official working standard. Such a working standard is similar to the official conformation standard for the breed which prescribes the desired morphological qualities in the physical structure of the dog. The working standard specifies the working qualities and characteristics which the breed is supposed to properly exhibit when carefully observed at work in a hunting setting or during a field trial.

This version of the official working standard for the Epagneul Breton was formally adopted by the committee of the CEB-France and is published in French by the Federation Cynologique Internationale (FCI). It was translated into English by the Honorable Reynald Lefebvre, who has judged the breed in France, Canada and the U.S.A. Judges, breeders and other students of the Epagneul Breton should carefully study and acquaint themselves with the content of this important document which addresses many important aspects relating to properly evaluating an Epagneul Breton at work. Some of the more important considerations relate to the unique style which defines the breed (race). This includes proper carriage of the head with the lines of the skull and muzzle slightly inclined most of the time while the dog is searching for game. It also includes proper movement, which is executed in the form of a rolling Breton gait which should be exhibited by the dog engaging in impulsion via a succession of fast, short movements without the rear legs of the dog extending far to the rear. Other important considerations specified in the working standard are those which should disqualify a dog under judgment in a field trial, such as pointing with the belly near to the ground regardless of the situation-- or refusing to execute a commanded approach (couler), unless the game is produced in the dog's immediate presence.



*Photo courtesy of Roberto Jagerszky, Chenil de L'Ardour, Oussoy-en-Gatinais, France*

(Continued)

### ***Epagneul Breton Working Standard***

From Société Centrale Canine (French Kennel Club)

155 Avenue Jean Jaurés

3535 Aubervilliers CEDEX

France

Member of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI)

Translated from French to English by the Honorable Reynald Lefebvre, Field Trial Judge  
(France, Canada, USA)

The Epagneul Breton: an energetic and intelligent dog, with a keen eye. Petite Cob

#### *Gait.*

Happy, alert, lively, with an energetic and rolling gallop; a fast succession of short movements. A long extended gallop or gallop piqué\* is prohibited.

\* “Gallop piqué” means when the dog appears as if it is plunging forward with its head first and the front legs are digging in and pounding the ground heavily to drive the dog forward.

#### *Carriage of the Head.*

The head must be held high without exaggeration above the topline. The top lines of the skull and muzzle are slightly inclined. The head is always mobile showing confidence and a constant olfactory flexibility in the search of the game. However, in certain difficult scenting conditions, occasional rapid scenting of the ground is acceptable.

#### *The Hunt.*

The search of the game must be intelligent and methodical, without being mechanical, showing that the dog is hunting intensively and constantly, adapting itself to the cover and the type of terrain in such a way as to stay in contact with the handler.

#### *The Point.*

As he detects the scent of a bird, after a quick confirmation of the location of the scent, the dog must go boldly to the game to block it with authority. The Epagneul Breton on point is standing up, even when the point is made spontaneously. However, in a sudden point made by surprise, a different posture will be tolerated on the condition that the forehead is held high in the game’s direction, showing that the dog is dominating it.

A dog pointing with his belly close to the ground, no matter what the situation, is not acceptable.

#### *The Couler.* [pronounced “Koo-lay”] (Following the game or relocating).

Done on command of the handler, it must be immediate but decisive, and careful to maintain contact with the handler and the game until the game is flushed.

The refusal to couler on command is a serious fault (unless the game is very close).

#### *The Retrieve.*

On land or in deep water, the retrieve is done happily and quickly with no hesitation.