
HISTORY

MARKIESJE-MARQUISE-MARQUEUR

Unfortunately, a translation in English of the breed's name is not possible. This Dutch breed is recognized only nationally and not yet by the FCI. The name is pronounced Markees. The Dutch suffix *je* means 'small'. Even in its home country, fanciers have to guess where the name originated. There are

That is certainly the case with the Markiesje. In 1963, a Dutch Phalène (drop-eared Papillon) breeder met a small dog belonging to her neighbor's mother. The owner called the dog a Markiesje. The breeder, Miss Mia van Woerden, became more or less obsessed with discovering the dog's origin and if it belonged to a certain group of dogs and, if so, in which

MARKIESJE

Pronounced Markees

The re-creation of "the black pearl of the Dutch dog world"

text and illustrations by RIA HÖRTER

a few possibilities. "Markiesje" may have derived from the Marquise de Pompadour in France (1721-1764), who could have possessed these little black dogs. Or, the dog's name could have a relation to a Dutch markiesje, which is a small handled basket made of reed. Because the dog fits into it, the dog came to be named after the basket. Lovely explanation, but is it true?

Although this dog never has been used as a tracking dog or gun dog, there could be a third possibility, because the French word for a pointing dog is *marqueur*. In Dutch, French and German paintings from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, one can see small black dogs, obviously related to the present Markiesje, but also to the Dutch Spioen (Toy Spaniel) and the French Papillon.

The bitch 'Pom', the ancestress of all present Markiesjes in the Netherlands, originated from France, so maybe there is a link with the French word *marqueur*.

MORE OR LESS OBSESSED

As in the history of other breeds, there is always someone to whom we owe the breed as it is today.

country.

At the same time, the famous Dutch dog writer P.M.C. Toepoel mentioned the Markiesje in one of his books: "This dog has been known in our country from the 18th century. It is a well-known lady's dog like the King Charles Spaniel in England and the Papillon in Belgium. It is, however, a little larger and in appearance it remained closer the Spioen. The colour is black with usually some white on the chest and feet. Although never pure-bred, one can see them everywhere." Toepoel predicted that, "There is a possibility this breed can be restored."

RESTORING THE BREED

From the beginning, Mia van Woerden turned to the media to find dogs resembling the Markiesje she knew. She mainly used radio, newspapers and the dog press. There was a lot of response from people who owned dogs as Mia described, and there was sufficient visual material for example, several paintings to be able to re-create the breed. It is said that the Markiesje had belonged mainly to wealthy families and royalty which could be the reason we have quite a few paintings of its ancestors.

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The black or black-and-white Spioen was a common dog in the 16th, 17th and 18th century. It is said that the Markiesje had belonged mainly to wealthy families and royalty, which could be the reason we have quite a few paintings of its ancestors. "Young Girl", painted by the Dutch artist Paulus Moreelse (1571-1638), dated circa 1620.

As a result of Mia's investigations, the first litters of Markiesje look-alikes were born. The results, however, were disappointing. The gene pool was too small and the dogs far too big. A second attempt was made by using (1982) black-and-white Papillons from Sweden and England. Later a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel was used as well. Again the result was poor. The dogs did not resemble Mia's first love, the dog she had seen in 1963, and some hereditary diseases cropped up.

In the '70s, a group of people formed around Mia with the common goal of restoring this breed so conscientiously depicted in old paintings. In 1977, Mrs. M. Posthumus Meyjes-Granpé Molière imported a small black toy spaniel from France to the Netherlands. This was 'Pom' (born in 1977), probably out of a black Papillon and by an unknown dog. Mia was delighted with this bitch; it was exactly the type she was looking for. In 1980, two males were imported (nephews of 'Pom') and in 1981, five puppies. 'Pom' was owned by Mrs. Mieke van Ederen and whelped three litters; the first in 1979, producing a total of 12 puppies. Six of her offspring have been used for breeding. 'Pom' died at the age of 17, a dignified 'mother of the breed'. Mrs. Mieke van Ederen is still very much involved in the breed club

and keeps a close eye on the breeding program. In 2005 she was awarded the "Gouden Speld" (Golden pin) by the Dutch KC.

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED

A breed club was established in 1979 and recognized by the Dutch Kennel Club in 1985. The first breed standard was written in 1980, but wasn't approved by breed club members until 1987. The first club show took place in 1987 with an entry of 38 dogs. 'Pom', then about 10 years old, was qualified as Excellent and her daughter 'Fleur' was Best Bitch and BOB.

STRICT BREEDING PROGRAM

In the first years, the dogs varied in type, size and color. In fact, they were all colors of the rainbow! However, thanks to some very dedicated fanciers and judges, the breed improved and gradually came to resemble the dogs in the paintings. Such can be done only if there is a strict breeding program and painstaking registration of the litters. A report is still written about every litter and the breed is 'guarded' by qualified people.

In 1996, the Dutch KC opened a provisional stud book for the Markiesje; 139 dogs and bitches were entered and the Markiesje became eligible to be shown and qualified at national shows. The Markiesje was nationally recognized by the Dutch KC in May 1999.

About 1,800 Markiesjes have now (2010) been entered into the Dutch stud book. Breeders and owners worked hard for more than forty years to make Mia van Woerden's dream come true; the re-creation of a small, black Spioen with a fascinating name.



A prince and a princess of the Dutch Royal Family Orange-Nassau in the 19th century with their dog, resembling a real Markiesje.

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A photo taken around 1885 in the Netherlands. The lady on the left has a Markiesje on her lap.



In the beginning of the 20th century Dutch schools had school boards in the classrooms depicting daily life. This one, drawn by the Dutch illustrator Cornelis Jetses, shows a little black dog resembling the Markiesje.

DIFFERENT KIND OF SPORTS

Interest in the Markiesje in the Netherlands is substantial. The breed's size is its advantage and the Markiesje is popular in a number of sports including agility, obedience and flyball. He is an excellent companion dog and good with children. In 2004, a Markiesje won a competition among the nine native Dutch breeds.

The Markiesje is a friendly, happy and intelligent dog. The only thing he wants to do in life is please his owner. He is inquisitive and will bark when he thinks something is wrong. As a result of crossbreeding, colors other than solid black, and black with small white markings, still pop up but cannot be registered.

Mia van Woerden moved to Australia where she died in 1992. Mieke van Ederen, her 'successor', was a member of the first breed committee; she is still active in the breed. The stud book is still open; dogs without a pedigree but approved by judges can be entered.

THE FUTURE

Today, Markiesjes can be registered in the breed club's Markiesjes Register (registration by the breed club) and



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(Photo by Alice van Kempen)*

the Voorlopig Register (provisional stud book of the Dutch KC). In the near future, it will be admitted to the Bijlagen (Appendix) of the kennel club's stud book. The last step is the NHSB, the official stud book of the Dutch KC.

At the Winner Show Amsterdam, 2009, about 70 Markiesjes were present. They presented themselves to an official FCI delegation, hoping for international recognition in the near future. It was a unique happening for the Dutch owners and the Dutch dog world.

If you live outside the Netherlands, it is very difficult or impossible to acquire a puppy; the breed club wants to follow every dog during its entire life.



The Dutch Van Reede family was depicted several times with their little black spaniel-like dog. This painting was made (1786) by the Dutch artist R. Jelgershuis.

BREED STANDARD

Origin: 18th-century France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Original purpose: Companion dog

Description: A finely built black Spioen, elegant and alert. A small dog, but never dwarfish. The dog is proportionally built, the body slightly longer than tall. He is intelligent and has a kindly disposition, not showing aggression or nervousness. The shining coat and fine feathering accentuate the gracefulness. Any form of exaggeration is undesired. The skull is almost flat and in proportion to the body. The stop is clearly indicated but not abrupt. The length of the muzzle is slightly shorter than that of the skull. The nostrils are well-developed and always black and shining. The almond-shaped, dark-brown to black eyes are rather large, with a soft expression. The eyelids are black and close fitting. The high-set triangular ears are medium in size and feathered. When the dogs attention is drawn, the tip touches the cheek. A complete scissor bit is required. The chest is well-developed with round ribs (not barrel-shaped) and the belly is slightly tucked up. The back is straight and strong; the loins are strong and slightly arched. The front is straight when looking from the front; hindquarters well-angulated, in harmony with the angulation in the forequarters. The oval feet are rather long and tight with strong pads. In length the tail reaches the hock; it's never carried above the back and a curled tail is most objectionable. The gait is quick and active, ground covering with drive from the rear; with growing speed inclined to single tracking. The coat is fine, soft and straight. Ears, tail, front legs and back are feathered. The colors are shining black or black with a white marking. White is allowed on the head, chest, feet and at the end of the tail.

Height/weight: About 13.75 inches at the withers, dogs taller than bitches. In judging, size must never be a priority. Weight is not indicated in the breed standard.

Information: www.markiesjesvereniging.nl (Dutch breed club, in Dutch). There is also a website in English: http://www.hetmarkiesje.nl/welcome_com.htm