
HISTORY

The FCI (Fédération Cynologique Internationale), the World Canine Organization, includes 86 member countries and contract partners (one member per country). Each issues its own pedigrees and trains its own judges. The FCI ensures that the pedigrees and judges are mutually recognized by all FCI members.

Recognition of a breed by the FCI means that in almost every European country, that breed can be awarded FCI championship prizes. One of the provisionally accepted breeds is the:

GOŃCZY POLSKI (POLISH HUNTING DOG)

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

The Kingdom of Poland that existed from the 10th to the 18th century was partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria in 1792, '93 and '95, and thereby the country was eliminated until November 1918, when Poland was restored as a nation.

Poland was invaded by Nazi Germany in September 1939, at the start of the Second World War, then by the Soviet Union in July 1944. The country remained under Communist rule and Soviet domination until 1989 when Poland's economic decline forced the government to negotiate with the national union movement – *Solidarność* (Solidarity). The re-

NEW DOG BREEDS – RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

GOŃCZY POLSKI

(Polish Hunting Dog)

text and illustrations by **RIA HÖRTER**

POLSKA

The Republic of Poland (*Rzeczpospolita Polska*) in central Europe borders Germany on the west; the Czech Republic and Slovakia on the south; Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania to the east; and the Baltic Sea on the north. Poland's 120,726 square miles is home to approximately 38.5 million people.

In the northwest, the Baltic sea coast is marked by coastal lakes and dunes; the country has nearly 10,000 lakes! Central Poland and part of the north lie within the North European Plain. Above the lowlands lie four hilly districts of moraines and lakes; south of the lowlands lie regions marked by broad ice age river valleys. The mountain region along Poland's southern border includes the Carpathian Mountains, of which their highest range, the Tatra Mountains, forms a natural border between Poland and Slovakia.

sulting partly open election in 1989 marked the fall of communism in Poland; the country was renamed the Republic of Poland at the end of that year. Solidarity leader Lech Walesa became the first popularly elected President of Poland in 1990.

NATIONAL BREEDS

Poland has five national dog breeds: the Chart Polski (Polish Greyhound, sighthound), Ogar Polski (Polish Hound, scenthound), Polski Owczarek Nizinny (Polish Lowland Sheepdog, herding dog), Polski Owczarek Podhalanski (Polish Tatra Sheepdog, herding dog) and the smaller version of the Ogar Polski, the Gończy Polski (Polish Hunting Dog, scenthound). Both the Ogar Polski and Gończy Polski are members of the large East European hound family.

In 1995 and 2001, Austrian dog writer Dr. Hans

With its forests and abundance of game, Poland has always been a country where scenthounds are valued for hunting.

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*Hunting Scene, 1877, by Polish artist Tadeusz Ajdukiewicz (1852-1916).
At that time, the depicted dogs were known as Ogars.*

Räber wrote: “It seems that the small Ogar, the ‘hare hound,’ in Poland known as ‘Gończy Polski,’ has fully disappeared.” The author was too pessimistic and not well-informed; the small “hare hound” is little known outside Poland, but alive and well in its country of origin.

HOUD OF THE TARTARS?

In 1608, Count Jan Ostroróg (1565-1622) wrote a book about hunting: *Myślistwo z ogary* (*Hunting with Hounds*). This is the most comprehensive of early materials about hunting and breeding Polish hounds (“ogar” is the Polish word for “hound”). Being a member of the Polish nobility, Ostroróg was familiar with both hounds and hunting.

In *Bracken des Ostens* (*Hounds in Eastern Europe*), 1907, F.B. Laska wrote that Polish hounds are descendents of the Hound of the Tartars (also known as the Kostroma Hound or Russian Hound), a type of dog introduced by the Tartars to the European part of Russia in

the Middle Ages. Other historians disagree; they are of the opinion that the St. Hubert Hound – thought to be the ancestor of the Bloodhound – was involved in the development of the Polish hounds. It is supposed that in the Middle Ages, Bloodhounds were exported to Poland, where they were crossbred with local hounds.

The first accurate description of Polish hounds was made in 1875 by the Russian author S.F. Dawidow. At that time, working with these dogs was – as usual – a privilege of the upper classes. Dawidow mentioned two kinds of hounds, the Ogar – then called the Lithuanian Ogar – and a small hound that was frequently found. Both types had a mainly black coat with reddish-brown and white patches. In the same year, another Russian author, D.A. Wilinsky, wrote about three types of hounds – large, medium-sized and small. The medium-sized dog, in which we recognize the Gończy Polski, was mainly used for hunting hare. The smallest, only 11 or 12 inches at the withers, was used for hare hunting exclusively.

MEDIEVAL CHRONICLE

With its forests and abundance of game, Poland has always been a country where scent hounds are valued for hunting. As in the rest of Europe, hunting bear, deer, boar and elk was reserved for kings, the nobility and upper class. Small game, such as hares, rabbits and birds were left for commoners.

The anonymous Polish chronicler traditionally called Gall

Anonim (Gallus Anonymus), dating from the 11th to 12th centuries, wrote about gun dogs and hunting with hounds. According to sources dating from the 14th century, these hounds were highly valued by the Polish nobility. We know that in 1420 hunting with hounds was so extensive that King Wladislaus II Jagiello forbade hare hunting on cropland.

Although there were two types of Polish hounds in the 17th century, detailed descriptions weren't published until the 19th century. In his book *Poradnik Myśliwych* (*Hunting Guide*, 1819),



*A red Gończy Polski
Although primarily a hunting dog,
the Gończy can be an excellent guard dog as well, one of its former duties.
(Photo: Gończy Polski)*

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Jan Szytier described the “Polish Hound” and the “Polish Scent Hound.” A few years later, in 1821, the magazine *Sylvan* published a description by W. Kozłowski. Both types – heavy boned and light boned – were depicted.

Finally, there is a detailed description in *Nauka Lowiectwa* (*Hunting Science*), written by Ignacy Bogatynski and published in two volumes between 1823 and 1825. Bogatynski’s description could be considered the forerunner of a breed standard.

POLISH HUNTING AND HOUNDS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Hunting with Polish hounds flourished after the World War I, especially in eastern Poland and the southern mountains, but the World War II had disastrous results with many hunters, dogs, horses and game animals lost. However, there was a revival after WWII and, unlike in the past, hunting now came within the reach of large parts of the population.



Dog show in Leszno, Poland, 2008 - (Photographer Unknown)

After the Second World War, Polish dog fancier Col. Jozef Pawlusiewicz (1902-79) made an inventory of the hounds (*Ogary*) that had survived the war. He found the dogs mainly in the Bieszczady mountains, not far from his birthplace, and in the Carpathian hills, close to the Ukrainian border. Like his father and grandfather, he hunted with the hounds, and bred them. His *z Karpāt* (of the Carpathians) hounds were light-boned, small, with a black head. Pawlusiewicz wrote the first proper breed standard, and was very involved in the development of the Gończy Polski.



The Gończy Polski's temperament is stable and gentle. It's an intelligent dog that's not too difficult to train. (Photo Gończypolski)



The head is noble, the slightly convex skull the same length as the muzzle. (Photo: E. Ziolk)



The drop, triangular ears are of medium length, broad at the base and set low, level with the eyes. (Photographer Unknown)



A versatile working dog with a remarkable sense of direction that makes him an excellent tracking dog. (Photo: Wikipedia Commons)

TWO TYPES

Another important name in the recent history of the Gończy Polski is Col. Peter (Piotr) Kartawik (1918-69). At the end of the 1950s, Kartawik brought hounds from Belarus (where his family lived) to Poland, and registered them as Polish Ogar (Ogar Polski). Since then, Poland has had two distinct types of scent-hounds: Pawlusiewicz's type (small, light-boned and dark) and Kartawik's type (large, heavier-boned, and strongly built). In 1966, the Kartawik type was recognized by the FCI as the Ogar Polski, and Pawlusiewicz's type could no longer be registered. Even worse, they were disqualified at shows and regarded as mongrels.

Nevertheless, hunters still valued the “small Ogar” and kept breeding this type, selecting their puppies on workability. At the same time, some breeders tried – with the knowledge of the Polish Kennel Club – to crossbreed the two types, but the results clearly showed that the types were of very different genotype.

RECOGNITION

Although hounds have been known in Poland for centuries, the Gończy Polski has existed in an official way only since 1983 when the first standard for the Pawlusiewicz type (*ogarów Pawlusiewiczza*) was published, and the breed got its current name. The first Gończy pedigrees were issued in 1989. In 2006, at the occasion of the World Dog Show in Poznań, Poland, the breed was provisionally recognized by the FCI; the Polish dog world was delighted.

Today, most dogs live in urban areas and not everyone is happy with this development. However, from information posted on Polish websites, it seems that quite a few owners still work their dogs. To become a Polish champion, the Gończy Polski must also have a working certificate.

Keeping this rare breed healthy is in the hands of breeders who must breed with a limited gene pool while preserving its workability and excellent nose. In its home country, the Gończy Polski is valued as a part of Polish culture that should be treasured.

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A HOUND IN EVERY RESPECT

The Gończy Polski is a working breed that needs a lot of exercise. Without physical and mental challenges, he becomes bored, unhappy and destructive. The Gończy temperament is stable and gentle; they are intelligent and not difficult to train, although sometimes impulsive. The breed is not aggressive but is wary of strangers. All-round judge Prof. Andrej Kazmierski told me recently that, in his opinion, the Gończy's temperament is more pleasant than that of the Ogar Polski, one of the reasons the breed is flourishing.

Although primarily a hunting dog, the Gończy can be an excellent guard dog as well, one of its former duties. He is a hound in every respect, giving voice with a characteristic melody. The females have a slightly higher pitch. A versatile working dog, the Gończy has a remarkable sense of direction, a skill that makes him an excellent tracking dog. Hunters describe the breed as "strong, energetic, alert and clever, but at the same time a sensitive pet."

The Gończy Polski is a welcome participant at working tests and field trials and can be seen more and more at dog shows in Poland. Agility and flyball are suitable sports for this breed.

BREED STANDARD

The Gończy Polski is a lithe, medium-sized, compact dog of rectangular build. The distance from elbow to ground is equal to half the height at the withers. With strong bones that are not heavy or coarse, he is built for difficult working conditions in mountainous regions.

The head is noble, the slightly convex skull the same length as the muzzle, the occiput marked but not prominent, and the stop only slightly pronounced. A scissor bite is required, complete dentition is desired.

The medium-size, somewhat oblique eyes are dark brown (black-and-tan coat) or lighter colored (brown or red coat) with a kind expression. The drop, triangular ears are of medium length, broad at the base and set low, level with the eyes.

The medium-length, well-muscled neck is relatively strong with loose skin but no dewlap.



Excellent Tracking Dog
(Photo Wikipedia Commons)

The Gończy Polski shows all the characteristics required of a working dog: a straight and well-muscled back; broad, well-muscled, slightly arched loin; deep chest reaching the elbow; and long, oblique ribs. Both forequarters and hindquarters are upright seen from the front or behind. The pasterns are lean and elastic, slightly sloping in profile; the rear pastern is short. Feet are tight and slightly oval with slightly arched toes and strong pads.

The medium-thick tail reaches to the hock joint. It is carried low and sabre-like at rest, and slightly higher than the topline when the dog is in action.

COAT, COLOR, SIZE AND FAULTS

The body coat is harsh and lies close to the skin. There is an abundant undercoat, more in winter, less in summer. On the head and ears, the hair is short and soft.

The Gończy Polski comes in black-and-tan (the tan an intense color distinct from black); brown (chocolate)-and-tan; and red. The nose is black, brown or flesh color, depending on the color of the coat.

The tan markings are positioned over the eye, on the muzzle, on the front of the neck, the forechest, the lower limbs, behind and inside the thighs, around the anus and on the underside of the tail. Small white marks are permitted on toes and chest.

The height at the withers for males is 22-23 inches (55-59 centimeters); females are 20-22 inches (50-55 centimeters).

The body too long or too short, a light bone structure and long legs are faults, as are light, round eyes, a level bite, and tan not distinct from the black or too invasive. Eliminating faults are aggression or excessive shyness, and an overshot or undershot bite.

It's a joy to watch the Gończy moving, its gait effortless and energetic, long-reaching and fluid, the topline straight and even.

We have tried to find the names of all photographers. Unfortunately, we do not always succeed. Please send a message to the author if you think you are the owner of a copyright.

The article New Breeds Recognized by FCI – Russkiy Toy by Ria Horter that appeared in the August Canine Chronicle contained factual errors.

The article stated the breed was newly recognized by FCI. The article should have stated the breed was recently provisionally recognized. Also, the article stated approximately 145 Russian Toy Dogs are registered with the AKC FSS. There are actually 227 Russian Toys in the AKC FSS registry.

We apologize for these errors and any misunderstanding.



The Gończy Polski was provisionally recognized by the FCI at the 2006 World Dog Show in Poznan, Poland. The Polish dog world was delighted.

(Photographer Unknown)