

NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

The FCI (Fédération Cynologique Internationale), the World Canine Organization, includes 87 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 recently provisionally recognized breeds is the:

TORNJAK (Bosnian and Herzegovinian – Croatian Shepherd Dog)

The Tornjak is classified by the FCI in Group 2, Pinschers and Schnauzers – Molossoïd breeds – Swiss Mountain and Cattle Dogs (Section 2.2 Mountain type). Its countries of origin are Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. The breed is used for herding and protecting livestock, and as a farmyard guard dog. The original valid standard was published in May 2007. The Tornjak is also being recorded in the AKC Foundation Stock Service®.

The AKC provides this service to allow purebred breeds to continue to develop while providing them with the security of a reliable and reputable avenue to maintain their records. FSS® breeds are not eligible for AKC registration. Several of the FSS breeds are approved to compete in AKC Companion Events and AKC Performance Events (akc.org/breeds/tornjak/)

TORNJAK

(Bosnian and Herzegovinian – Croatian Shepherd Dog)

text and illustrations by RIA HÖRTER



*The Balkan wars had a strong impact
on the development of the Tornjak in the 20th century.*
(Photo: Axel Glienecke)

ETHNIC CONFLICTS

Yugoslavia was a country in the western part of southeast Europe during most of the 20th century. In 1946, the new constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (renamed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1961), modeled after the Soviet Union, established six republics, and two autonomous provinces that were part of SR Serbia. The federal capital was Belgrade.

After Marshal Tito's death in 1980, ethnic tensions grew in the country, resulting in the Yugoslav Wars, a series of wars in the 1990s between republics that sought sovereignty. The wars were complex and characterized by ethnic conflicts. These conflicts also affected the national Yugoslavian dog breeds.

*In its countries of origin, the Tornjak's official name is
Bosanskohercegovačko-Hrvatski pastirski pas – Tornjak.
Pastirski means “shepherd dog.”*

NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

continued from page 290

GUARD DOG, NOT DROVER

Most dog writers mention that the history of the Tornjak goes back to 1067, referring to a document in the Episcopal archives of Djakovo (or Đakovo), a Croatian city in the region of Slavonia. In 1374, Bishop Peter Horvat, also in the city of Djakovo, documented a large mountain and shepherd dog. The dogs, known as *Canis montanus*, lived scattered in all mountainous regions of Croatia.

Four hundred years later, in 1752, historians found the same description, now written by Petar Lukić, also working in the diocese of Djakovo. Lukić described a mountain dog with a black, gray, yellow, brown (sometimes with red and white) coat color. Standing 24 to 30 inches (60 to 75 centimeters), it is a large breed.

At that time, the Tornjak was still a flock guardian, not a drover, protecting livestock (mostly sheep) and defending it against thieves and vagrants. The Tornjak was extremely well-adapted to its environment – mountainous regions with snow and extremely low temperatures in winter.

In 1923, Von Stephanitz, the creator of the modern German Shepherd Dog, wrote about the “Bosnian Shepherd Dog,” and in 1958, Ratomi Orban published an article about it in the magazine *Moj Pas (My Dog)*. In the following years, the Tornjak was frequently mentioned in books and magazines.

The breed’s name derives from the Croatian word *tor*, meaning “a fenced area for sheep,” specifically a wooden fence in which a flock of sheep can spend the night. The dogs are called Torashi around the city of Sinj and in the Kameshnica mountains. The shepherds in the Dinara mountains use the name Dinarci. It is said that the Dinarci have lived in the region since Roman times.



Where there are sheep one can find Tornjaks
(Photo: Eko Vlasic, Bosnië)

ORIGIN

There are various theories about the earliest history of the Tornjak. It has been suggested that this type of flock guardian arrived in Europe around 2,500 years ago with nomads and their flocks from the Fertile Crescent (Mesopotamia, Assyria, Phoenicia). The



Tornjak with Puppies
(Photographer unknown)

Tornjak is unmistakably a member of the large group of flock-guarding breeds. Its original name was *Hrvatski Pas Planinac* – Croatian Mountain Dog.

It worked mainly in remote areas such as western Bosnia; in Lika, a mountainous area in the middle of Croatia; and in Sinj and Knin, both in southern Croatia. Actually, where there were sheep, one could find Tornjaks.

DEDICATED PEOPLE

As happened with other working breeds, in the course of time the Tornjak lost its work as a flock guardian and if not for a number of dedicated 20th-century fanciers who worked for its preservation, the Tornjak would have disappeared.

In central Bosnia and the western part of Herzegovina, the Tornjak’s appearance, behavior and manner of working has hardly changed through the ages when the dogs remained with the sheep day and night. According to shepherds’ stories, a Tornjak could cope with two wolves, and two Tornjaks were courageous enough to hunt down a bear.

Several other breeds in FCI Group 2, mountain type, are the Anatolian Shepherd Dog (Anatolia), Pyrenean Mountain Dog (France), Estrela Mountain Dog (Portugal), Sarplaninac (Serbia/Macedonia), Karst Shepherd Dog (Slovenia) and Tibetan Mastiff (Tibet).

BREEDING PROGRAM

By the 1970s, the Tornjak had become a rare breed close to extinction. Prof. Dr. Stjepan Romić (an authority on the Croatian Sheepdog), Dr. Ivan Lovrenčić, Dr. Ratomir Orban, Prof. Šandor Horvat, Stjepan Petar Krasić and Prof. Mario Bauer became concerned about the Tornjak, and in 1972 they started a breeding program based on the descriptions from 1067, 1374 and 1752.

During the period of the Yugoslavian kingdom and republic (1917-1992), it seemed that at first the authorities could not or would not recognize the Tornjak as an official breed. However, in 1979, a “Commission for the standardization of the Tornjak and the introduction of regulated breeding” was founded in Za-

NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

continued from page 292

greb (Croatia), and the Yugoslavian Kennel Club started a breeding program in 1982.

The breed was nationally recognized in the late 1980s. In 1990, the breed standard was presented in Travnik, a small city in central Bosnia. The most recent standard, dating from 2006-07, was ratified in Sarajevo. The present studbook is maintained by the Croatian Kennel Club (Hrvatski Kinološki Savez) in Zagreb (hks.hr).

At first sight, the Tornjak resembles a Šarplaninac or Kraški Ovčar (Karst Shepherd Dog), both FCI-recognized in Group 2. Together they form the three shepherd dogs of former Yugoslavia.

DIFFERENT TYPES

The Balkan Wars had a strong impact on the development of the Tornjak in the 20th century. In 1993, only 10 dogs were registered in Zagreb. However, an unknown number of Tornjaks, without pedigree, were living in the rest of Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

By the time a breed club was founded in Zagreb in 1997, there were 200 registered dogs, but being registered is not the same as having a pedigree; many dogs were of "unknown origin" and various types.

Gradually, this working shepherd dog became an urban companion dog. In the 1990s, the Tornjak started to be exhibited at dog shows. German judge Uwe Fischer, who assessed the breed in 1997, was favourably disposed toward its future.



The Tornjak was preserved best in central Bosnia and western Herzegovina
(Photographer unknown)



The breed is friendly, obedient and intelligent.
(Photo: Axel Glienecke)

PROTECTION

Still there existed great anxiety that the breed's characteristics would disappear along with its original work and old habitat. Therefore, a project was started in Croatia with the goal of protecting both the wolf and the Tornjak. For this purpose, eight puppies were taken from Zagreb to the mountainous area of Unešić. For the Tornjak, it had become possible again to guard flocks against wolves and other wild animals.

While preservation of its natural ability was important, attempts had also been made, since

1997, to get the breed recognized. The efforts were successful – in 2006-07 the Tornjak was provisionally recognized by the FCI.

Today, between 40 and 50 Tornjaks are entered at large FCI shows and their number is estimated to be more than 1,000. The



As a rule, the Tornjak is parti-colored with distinct markings of various colors.
(Photo: Travnik Tourism, Bosnia)

breed received a lot of attention when Sarajevo Television broadcast a documentary about the Tornjak, and the book *Hrvatski Planinski pas Tornjak (Croatian Mountain Dog Tornjak)*, written by Ljiljana Nakić-Petrina and illustrated with more than 200 photographs, was published. In 2007, a statue was erected in Travnik, the city where the breed standard was first presented.

IMPRESSIVE DOG

The Tornjak is an impressive dog standing 24-27.5 inches (60-70 centimeters) at the withers (24-25.5 inches / 60-65 centimeters for bitches; 25.5-27.5 inches / 65-70 centimeters for dogs). Its body is almost square, the general appearance harmonious and well-balanced. The breed is steady, friendly, courageous, obedient and intelligent, and full of self-confidence. The standard reads: "Cannot be bribed and is suspicious of strangers. Devoted to his

NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

continued from page 294



There are still some differences in type, especially in heads.
(Photo: Tornjaci)



The breed is courageous and full of self confidence.
(Photo: Marko Kostanjevac)



The Tornjak is extremely well-adapted to its environment – mountainous regions with snow and extremely low temperatures in winter.
(Photo: Zadarskilist)

master.... Very affectionate towards persons living in his immediate vicinity.”

In summer as in winter the breed can stay outdoors, even when it snows. His long, thick coat – that makes him look larger than he is – protects him in all types of weather.

The long, very mobile tail – abundantly coated with a distinct plume – hanging when relaxed and raised over the level of the back when the dog is moving, is one of the characteristics of the breed.

There are still some differences in type, especially in heads. According to the standard, the upper lines of the skull and muzzle should be divergent. The hind part of the skull is elongated but moderately wide. The stop is slightly pronounced. Its muzzle is rectangular with a perfectly straight nose.

Jaws are very long and strong with a perfect scissors bite; full dentition is required. The almond-shaped eyes are dark with close-fitting lids. The ears are of medium size, triangular, folded and pendant, set on rather high and carried close to the cheeks.

NOT HEAVY OR COARSE

Although the Tornjak is a large dog, its bone is not heavy or coarse.

As a rule, the Tornjak is parti-colored with distinct markings of various solid colors. When breeding their dogs, shepherds preferred coats with many colors so they could recognize their dogs by their markings from a distance or at dusk.

Despite its weight of 77-121 pounds (35-55 kilograms), the Tornjak has a balanced, supple, long-reaching and harmonious gait. He is a trotter and, when moving, the topline is firm.

Eliminating faults are aggression or over-shyness, and lack of type.

The complete breed standard can be found at fci.be.

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.



Gradually, this working shepherd dog became a companion dog and show dog.
(Photographer unknown)



Sometimes Tornjaks are shown by handlers in national costume
(Photo: Wikimedia)