

After our perfect A-Litter we decided to bring “Plan B” into operation. As the puppies from the A-litter aroused so much enthusiasm in different leisure/sports/working fields, we are asked to consider a further one in 2013. Several puppy requests convinced us to get “Plan B” going...

More detailed information under [angeraue\(at\)fam-henschel.de](mailto:angeraue(at)fam-henschel.de) .

Dear interested bouvier lovers,

December 17th we received the new DBC (German Bouvier Club) magazine 3/12 with some astonishing news: the basic breeding qualifications had been changed- only taking IPO into account-which is just one dog sports activity offered. The basic thought -to return to the roots of the race and help doing just that- is a good thing in principle, but this requires general knowledge not to lose sight of the actual breeding purpose. And it's that kind of knowledge that seems to be missing within our present club board who just seem to care for their own interests and not those of this specific race.

Let's have a closer look at what the FCI has to say about the Bouvier des Flandres:

UTILIZATION: *Originally the Bouvier des Flandres was used as a herding dog, as a draught dog and as churning dog. The modernisation of farm equipment has affected these first tasks and nowadays the Bouvier des Flandres is above all used as a guard dog for the estate and the farm, as a defence and police dog. Its physical and behavioural aptitudes, its great qualities of scent, initiative and intelligence warrant its use as a tracking dog, a messenger dog and a gamekeeper's dog.*

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY : *As its name indicates, the Bouvier des Flandres (Flanders Cattle Dog) is native to Flanders, to both Belgian and French regions of that name, since they*

are not divided by any natural frontiers. The cowmen and drovers of stock in Flanders needing good dogs to drive their herds, only selected from the local dogs available those specimens which possessed the required physical and behavioural qualities. The present day Bouvier des Flandres has inherited these qualities.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT : *The Bouvier des Flandres has the calm, thoughtful character of a sensible, but fearless dog. Its lively look indicates intelligence, energy and audacity. It is essential that the Bouvier des Flandres should retain its aptitude for work. Any change which could harm this must be penalised.*

Even in the club's description of its origine, working dog activities like driving cattle / herding, carting dog are widely described, autonomous activities as messengers and missions in ambulance as well. The question however why the German Bouvier Club only accepts this versatile race in the breeding regulations as "Gebrauchshund"/ working dog in combination with a successful IPO is left open...

What has a successful IPO test to do with "**Back to the original genes**"?

As for ourselves we've been into several "original" bouvier activities like "[Herding](#)" and practiced it for a while. Besides both our bouv ladies have done canine waterwork and water rescue and are both on duty, as mantrailer in the

[BRH RHS Wesel](#)

(2 years already) for one thing; for another thing in water rescue (tested and awarded with [Team Rescue Diploma](#)

), since 2009 working in close collaboration with the Duisburg swimming baths, in a lake district as water patrol for the lido "

[Poseidon](#)

" e.g. "

[Carting](#)

" as well (we do for a hobby as winter activities) is related to the earliest bouvier activities in Flanders.

By the way, the DBC doesn't validate AKZs (working certificates) acquired in other countries, if it's not for IPO- only this discipline seems relevant as working dog quality in DBC circles.

All activities mentioned above can't be started with an IPO education, they're contra-productive, (dog/handler eye contact, in herding for example, can lead to disastrous or even deadly

consequences for the bouv, just to mention one of many examples in this place- with a subtly pointer to the last underlined sentence of the FCI text.

As you might understand by now...we're not against a reduction to the race's origine! To the contrary, we vehemently support this direction, but we definitely disavow from a "one-way-breeding line" under "mindcuffs" conditions as well as from completely separating breeding of show/working lines! Especially the intelligent self-reliant working quality of the bouvier, which rarely isn't found in other breeds in such a high degree will sure get lost in such a one-sided orientation, as well as in the opposite, an extreme title-orientated conformation champion breeding!

A Bouvier des Flandres shouldn't only look like a bouv, but have internalized the original working drive, both aspects are required to save the Bouvier des Flandres as an original type.

Under these circumstances there will be no following litter in our kennel, nor will we consider breeding within the DBC furthermore! We thank all those interested for their trust wishing they'll find an appropriate dog.

As for us- our dog is a bouv and it always will stay that way!