
THE Cesky Terrier

BY GLENN DORSEY



When you observe Cesky Terriers in a group of other terriers, you notice one thing. They are so calm! While all around them Terriers are barking, quarreling, and bouncing around, you will see Ceskys just sitting beside their owners or handlers just taking it all in. When Frank Horak, avid Czechoslovakian hunter and genetic researcher, crossed his first Scottie and Sealyham Terriers in 1949, one of his primary goals was to develop an upland game hunting breed that was not quarrelsome and could be housed together and would easily hunt in packs. The result is a calm, slightly reserved, fiercely loyal dog that makes an ideal pet and companion. This natural reserve places the Cesky at a disadvantage at times in the Terrier Group ring. The breed standard calls for a calm and kind disposition, alert, but non-aggressive. Ceskys are never spatted in the ring.

Between 1949 and the mid-1960s, Mr. Horak's kennel, Lovu Zdar (Czech for "hunting success") bred dogs produced from the original Scottie-Sealyham matings until he fixed the qualities of the breed he was looking for—small, light, mobile, well-pigmented and an easy temperament. This national breed of the Czech Republic was accepted for FCI registration in 1963 and was accepted into the Terrier Group by the AKC in 2011.

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THIS FEATURE ALONG WITH A LONG, WELL-MUSCLED NECK MAKES THE BREED IDEAL FOR TRACKING AND TRAILING, MOVING FAST WITH HIS NOSE CLOSE TO THE GROUND."

Ceskys come in shades of grey. This is one of the breeds that carries the gene that causes the coat color to lighten with age (the "G" pigmentation gene that has yet to be located on the canine genome), and the effect is more dramatic than in any other breed. Cesky puppies are born either solid black or black with tan markings. Normally by the age of two, the black has lightened to grey and the tan markings have lightened to very light tan. This often places puppies and adolescents between six and 24 months in the uncomfortable position of appearing mottled or brindled as their coat changes from black to grey at different rates. This is normally resolved by age two (as required by the standard).

Some white markings are permitted and appear frequently on the chest, but no more than 20% of the pigmentation should be white. Pigmentation issues sometimes arise in the ring over this "white" pigmentation requirement for several reasons. The ("G") or greying gene can cause very pronounced lightening in some Cesky Terriers producing dogs that are a very light platinum. These light platinum dogs are much more common in Europe than in the US, and

when a light dog appears in the ring with more "traditional" grey dogs, it is striking. But closer inspection shows that this dog is not white (like a Sealyham, for example). Additionally, Ceskys with the dominant black and tan genotype often have markings that fade to a very light tan again giving the appearance of more than 20% white markings. Again, closer inspection reveals light tan furnishings rather than white. Lighter Ceskys are appearing in the US Cesky population, so this issue should soon be less problematic as these light dogs become less of a minority.

The Cesky has a ratio of 1.5 length to 1.0 height making this a long, short-legged breed. This feature along with a long, well-muscled neck makes the breed ideal for tracking and trailing, moving fast with his nose close to the ground. For example, they are used in their native Czech Republic for wild-boar hunting and given the responsibility for tracking this game and flushing it from the brush. They are also used for finding small game and will enthusiastically go to ground after them.

The predominant impression of a Cesky is a "well-muscled" dog. The standard uses this term over and over



The range of the grey color of the Cesky

"CESKY TERRIERS ARE A RELATIVELY HEALTHY BREED.

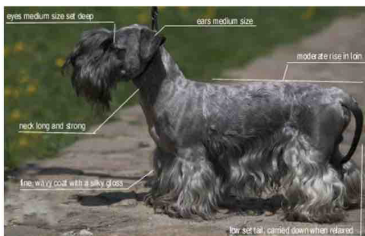
OF THE CLOSE TO 170 GENETIC ILLNESSES
THAT ARE NOW DNA TESTED BY COMMERCIAL LABS,
THE CESKY TERRIER HAS NONE THAT PRESENTLY
APPEAR AS PROBLEMS."

describing the neck, forequarters, hind-quarters, and body. The topline of the Cesky requires a slight rise or arch over the loin, but cautions against a roached back. The Cesky tail is seven-eight inches long, should follow the line of the rump and "may be carried downward, or with a slight bend at tip; or carried saber shaped horizontally or higher."

Cesky Terriers move with a free and even gait with "good reach in both the front and the back, covering ground effortlessly." The ideal Cesky weight is less than 22 lbs. (ten kg), although the standard encourages emphasis on a well-proportioned dog rather than a focus on any one feature.

Ceskys are groomed to accentuate their musculature. Unlike the standards for both founder breeds, the Cesky is single-coated (soft coated) and is therefore clipped not stripped. The furnishings should be firmly textured and should not be "overdone" in terms of length and coverage. This is a working Terrier and the furnishings should be practical for field work.

Cesky Terriers are a relatively healthy breed. Of the close to 170 genetic illnesses that are now DNA tested by commercial labs, the Cesky Terrier has none that presently appear as problems. Ceskys typically stay active well past ten years old—they just keep getting greyer. The calm, pleasant disposition that Frank Horak was striving for as he developed the Cesky Terrier in the years between 1950 and 1990 has made the Cesky a wonderful companion dog and pet and should lead to continued growth of the breed in the US and Canada. ■



"Gait should be free and easy with good reach in both the front and back."

CESKY HISTORY



BY JULIE GRITTEN

In 1932, Mr. Horak obtained his first Scottish Terrier and began studying this breed's behavior and ability to hunt. He found the Scottish Terrier excellent as a go to ground terrier and decided to breed the Scottie. He considered the breed to be quite aggressive, especially towards people, but the breed showed great prey drive. Frantisek Horak worked and lived in the town of Plzen in the Czech Republic at this time and hunted with the Scottie around the woods of his village.

At this time in Plzen, he made friends with another Scottish Terrier breeder who also owned Sealyham Terriers. It was during this friendship that Frantisek began to have thoughts and ideas about breeding the Scottish Terrier crossing it with the Sealyham, feeling the cross could lead to a more cooperative and successful working dog. He owned and named his kennel Lovu Zdar, which literally means hunting success.

Mr. Horak moved to Klanovice in 1940. It was there and then at Klanovice that he decided to put his breeding idea into fruition. It was not until 1949 that he finally mated his then Scottish Terrier bitch, Donka Lovu Zdar to his friend's Sealyham Terrier with the name of Bugarier Urquelle. The result was the birth of three puppies from this first breeding, but only one survived. He gave this puppy the name of Adam Lovu Zdar. This puppy was a brindle male, with only half hanging, large ears. Because of this, Mr. Horak decided to have them surgically changed to hang completely. Unfortunately, in 1951 this dog was shot dead during a hunt in the woods of Klanovice. During this time, Mr. Horak requested from the Czech Terrier Club for his new breed to be named Cesky Terrier.

In 1950, Frantisek Horak repeated a crossing of the Scottie to a Sealy, but this time using the Scottish Terrier bitch, Scotch Rose, to the same Sealyham Terrier, Bugarier Urquelle. This breeding produced a litter of six puppies, but only one puppy had the natural drop ears that he wanted from his new breed. He named this dog Balda Lovu Zdar. Balda was a brindle dog, but did become the foundation sire of the new breed, the Cesky Terrier. Mr. Horak mated Balda to his litter sister Baba Lovu Zdar, but unfortunately none of these puppies from this breeding could be used for future breeding. So, Frantisek Horak then bred Balda Lovu Zdar to his mother, the Scottish Terrier, Scotch Rose. This breeding, he felt, was successful having two puppies from this litter with the proper dropped ears he was seeking in his new breed. The male was named Dareba Lovu Zdar, who was brindle and the female was named Diana Lovu Zdar. Diana later became the foundation dam of the Cesky Terrier. Dareba was given to one of his friends, but died before he could be bred. Diana was born black, but eventually became grey as she aged and had the ears that Mr. Horak desired. It was at this point he decided that his new breed should be clipped rather than hand stripped like the other two terriers, the Scottie and the Sealyham. He felt that clipping was a much easier way for hunters to deal with grooming a true hunting Terrier.

Frantisek's next breeding was the bitch Diana Lovu Zdar to the Sealyham Jasan Amorous Artilleryman who was the son of the Sealyham Bugarier Urquelle. This litter produced two males and one female. The names of Fantom, Furiant and Fenka were given to these puppies. Fantom and Fenka were both brindle in color, but the dog Furiant Lovu Zdar was born black with yellow markings, and they all had some white markings on the chest and legs. Mr. Horak chose not to use Furiant in his breeding program because he was quite large and had large markings on his neck. He then chose to breed Fantom with his sister Fenka. From this litter, only one female was born and he named her Halali Lovu Zdar. She was black and tan with white markings and eventually became the pillar of the Cesky Terrier.

Halali Lovu Zdar was bred to the male Fantom Lovu Zdar and from this breeding one brown puppy was born and had a true brown nose. He was sterile, however, and was unable to be bred. He decided to cross Fantom instead to his mother Diana and they produced a brown bitch which he named Chrry Lovu Zdar. He was brown with yellow markings. It was at this point he realized that the brown was being inherited from the Sealyham Terrier, and the brown is an inherited colored from Fantom, Diana and Halali.

It was in 1959, after more breedings, that Frantisek Horak entered several dog shows and started the process of registering his new breed in the Czechoslovakian Register with the official name of Cesky Terrier. It was in 1963 that the Cesky Terrier was officially recognized by the FCI. ■

THE Cesky Terrier

BY BOB COMER

Everyone judging Terriers has a breed standard to which he or she can refer. Sometimes, however, in a group that is so diverse beyond "essential terrier characteristics", a judge might wonder how to fairly evaluate the individual members of this unique Group. As a part of this diverse collection, the Cesky Terrier is perhaps even less easily critiqued. Why?

It could be the Cesky's relatively recent entry into the Group that makes it largely unknown. Its small population in the US may also make it less recognizable. Maybe more tradition-bound judges rely exclusively on more general Terrier characteristics. For example, a Terrier must spar or must be hand stripped. Neither is true of the Cesky. Conceivably it could be a lack of formal classroom education. Whatever the reason, it's easy to understand why a judge may have concerns about the Cesky ranging from its variation in size, color and temperament to its gait, tail carriage, etc.

What is a Cesky Terrier supposed to be? Simply, it was created to be a pack-friendly hunting dog that worked the watershed area about the Danube River in the Czech Republic. This is an environment of bogs, thickets, thick forests, fields and burrows. Here the Cesky stalked rabbit, fox, other burrow dwelling creatures as well as deer, wild pig and boar.

The new Cesky Terrier Standard approved by AKC on July 11, 2017 was refined from its original version to approximate its European counterpart and the original design of the Cesky creator Frantisek Horak. For those who understand this new Standard, appreciate the hunting terrain, as well as the dog's mission as a hunter, questions about its design and nature give way to genuine education.

Eager to the hunt, the Cesky races to contain a wild pig.



Above: It took over 2 decades for the Cesky's creator, Frantisek Horak, to realize his dream of a pack-friendly hunting dog.

Size matters. Dimensions specifically stated in the Standard should be followed. Those dimensions in conjunction with how they fit together in the dog (proportionality) are crucial. It is understandable why a muscular, 25 to 28 pound male Cesky would catch a Terrier judge's attention. However, that Cesky should weigh 22 pounds which is the top of the ideal weight range in the Standard. A lighter-weight dog would fare far better navigating the terrain of his native country. Some judges in the Czech Republic think American Ceskeys are "too big" and/or "too fat". A Cesky Terrier, dog or bitch, must be lean, solid and compact to do the job for which the breed was developed.

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Cesky color comes from the genetic variabilities in breeding a Scottish Terrier to a Sealyham Terrier—Greys to Platinum to Coffee to Brown

Proportionality in the distribution of body mass, whether the Cesky is 13 or 22 pounds, is also important, as is gait, i.e. the manner in which the Cesky carries that mass. There is a certain drive and reach a well-proportioned Cesky has. Consider a low center of gravity in an NFL running back. Like a ball player, a hunting Cesky must make sharp turns, explode with speed and energy when giving chase or move laterally instantly if prey 10 times its weight comes charging toward it. The gait must be effortless, free of any encumbrances and show endurance. Therefore, the descriptor "a well-muscled, short legged hunting Terrier" is applicable. Even a skeptic cannot imagine an overweight, ill-proportioned and out of shape athlete as successful.

Why is the Cesky temperament described as "somewhat reserved towards strangers"? It's a pack friendly hunting dog. Its creator, Frantisek Horak, became disenchanted hunting with Scotties. He believed, rightly or wrongly, that Scotties spent more time attacking one another than pursuing their quarry. To offset this self-aggressive pack mentality, Horak spent years looking for the right Terrier (the Sealyham) to breed with his still beloved Scotties.

Hence, Ceskeys typically do not spar at home and are not to be sparring in the show ring. Owners of multiple Ceskeys will tell you they thrive in an environment of "the more the merrier." As one owner put it, "They can form a daisy chain of butt sniffers and no one minds."

Outside the pack this same non-aggressive, reserved character trait responds to a kinder, gentler judge's hand. Cesky handlers complain about judges wearing hats, approaching the dog from behind or over the dog's shoulder, making sudden gestures or movements or exhibiting any aggressive behavior. Lest a judge believe them cowardly, wild pig or boar hunters can dispel that rumor. A Cesky will make up its own mind about what it considers a threat.

Color does vary and is part of the Standard. Born black or chocolate brown, the Cesky can become any shade of grey from charcoal to platinum. They can also be light coffee color. The overall color of any individual Cesky must be uniform. The Standard is very specific about deviations in color; brindling is also addressed. It is worth noting that the variations in color were generated by the genetic variabilities of breeding a Scotty and a Sealy.

The term "designer dog" has been used to describe the breed, and they are... like the Labrador Retrievers, Rhodesian Ridgebacks, Doberman Pinschers and Border Collies. Like the vast majority of AKC-recognized dog breeds, the Cesky Terrier was developed to do a specific task, and do it well. Clearly, anyone knowing the length of time Mr. Horak took to develop the Cesky would never use this "dog in a minute" term. Frantisek Horak worked from the 1920's and into 1948 before he achieved his dream of a Cesky Terrier.

The Cesky's tail is another consideration. How it is carried is not a clear indication of the dog's state of mind save when it is tucked between its legs. A tucked tail is a sign of distress. Normally the Cesky Terrier carries its tail down and anywhere between there and up and sabre-like. Compare anatomy in people. Some folks stand straight, some lean forward, and some outright slump. That variability defines the nature of the Cesky tail as well. The Standard addresses the undesirable "squirrel tail" or a "tail touching the back". The Cesky tail carriage may not be what more traditional judges are used to seeing, but it is the Cesky tail and the Standard.

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Foto : Josef Ouředník



Tail carriage is not a clear indication of the dog's state of mind. Down, straight or sabre-like are typical carriages.



The Cesky topline rises slightly from the withers (lowest point) to the loin and rump (highest point). The tail set begins at the distal most aspect of the spine in the descent to the rump.

Other aspects of the animal require scrutiny. The ratio of the height of the dog at the withers to its length (sternum to buttocks) is 1:1.5. Specific ideal dimensions are in the Standard. Questions to be asked are: Does the top line rise slightly from the withers (lowest point) to the loin and rump (highest point)?

When critiquing this, determine whether the rise ends prematurely giving the dog an arched back with the highest point in the middle of the spine or is the top line flat. Sometimes positioning gives either effect and is the fault of the handler. Does the tail begin at the distal most aspect of the spine in the descent to the rump? If not, the dog presents a tail set either too high or too low. Is the body lean and proportioned? Judges should not see rolls to the skin or a tummy that isn't tucked up. From above, is the dog shaped like an artillery shell? The distal outline of the lungs and the hips forming the case of the shell. Does the dog move effortlessly? Given these attributes it is readily understandable why the Cesky is a creature of the burrow as well as the thicket.

When checking dimensions, again the questions a judge should ask are: Is the head 7-8" from the notch at the back of the head to the tip of the nose and is there a 3-4" space between the ears? Consequently, when viewing the Cesky's head from above and applying the standard's criteria defining the head and muzzle does this portion of the dog's anatomy look like a long blunt wedge? And, is this not an ideal tool for hitting prey? Are the ears dropped forming a triangle, the bend of which does not rise over the crown of the skull? Do the forward edges of the ears lay close to the cheek? It stands to reason that having these traits, a Cesky pursuing prey in the burrow would have these body parts tight to its frame? The Cesky fall, of course, protects the eyes.

Full dentition is required in the Cesky Standard. In any hunting dog this is critical. When examining the Cesky, don't just look at the teeth from canines forward. Most importantly, do those lower canines fit easily and smoothly into the notches either side of the mouth in the upper set of teeth? This is the "locking" mechanism to hold prey.

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The Standard defines the anatomy important to a dog hunting prey in burrows as well as above ground.

The chest should be cylindrical and well sprung. A judge should place a hand between the dog's front legs and let the dog's chest rest there. A judge's hand should only feel the center of the rib cage. The rest of the chest rises up and out. With the chest down and flat, the Cesky would be a wide body and unfit for a burrow. For the same reason, the set of the shoulders, and the shape of the legs and feet, are also important. The shoulders are muscular, well laid back and powerful. The elbows fit closely to the sides of the animal presenting a compact, no wasted motion to the gait; again similar to an athlete. Forelegs are short, straight, well boned and parallel. Forefeet are large with well-developed pads. In the hindquarters, the thighs are longer in proportion to the lower leg with the stifle well bent. Hind feet are smaller, with smaller, but equally well developed pads. Everything here is predicated on digging, moving underground, capturing and bringing the prey out of the burrow or simply dragging bigger prey across a field.

Judges know how important a standard is. Perhaps what should be stressed in Judges' Education is how the breed was created and/or refined to facilitate its mission and how the standard is meant to give the judge a guideline in presenting awards to animals who best present traits that exemplify that mission.

Judges wishing further clarification on the Cesky Standard or on Cesky anatomy are invited to contact the American Cesky Terrier Fanciers Association for a Judges' Education Slide Presentation as well as a copy of the new standard. Classroom seminars may also be arranged. Contact ceskyTerrierfanciers.org. ■



When judging the Cesky it is important to understand that when all the nuances of the Standard are clearly understood, there's no question concerning the animal's worth as a proven Terrier.