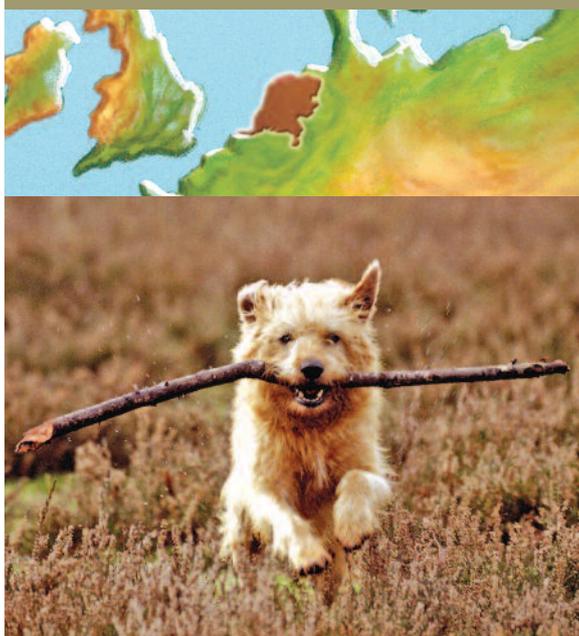


DOGS *NOT* IN CANADA

THE CANADIAN KENNEL CLUB RECOGNIZES 164 BREEDS, BUT THERE ARE HUNDREDS MORE WORLDWIDE, SOME OF THEM RARELY SEEN OUTSIDE THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.

Hollandse Smoushond



ORIGIN:
19th-century Holland

ORIGINAL PURPOSE:
Stable dog, ratter

DESCRIPTION:
The present breed standard says that the head is one of the most typical characteristics of the Smoushond. Today, Stinstra's description is still valid. The general appearance of a Smoushond is of a vigorous, strong, squarely built dog. They must have the stamina to follow a horse and carriage and the energy to catch rats in the stable. This dog is not ponderous or coarse. An underbite or an even bite are permitted, but a scissors bite is desirable. The coat is still an important aspect of the breed and is minutely described in the standard: coarse, rugged, hard, straight and never curly, wavy or woolly. There must be sufficient undercoat and a parting on the back is a serious fault. The colour of the coat should be solid yellow in different shades, but preferably dark straw yellow. Today the Smoushond is an easy-going family dog.

HEIGHT/WEIGHT:
Dogs 37 to 42 centimetres (14-1/2 to 16-1/2 inches); bitches 35 to 40 centimetres (14 to 16 inches). About nine to 10 kilograms (20 to 22 pounds).

INFORMATION:
www.smoushond.nl and www.kennelclub.nl (both in Dutch).

A CAREFUL RECONSTRUCTION

A rare breed in its own country, the Dutch Smoushond is certainly unknown in Canada. Is it an old breed? Yes and no. The breed was known from about 1850 and was registered and exhibited at dog shows from the first quarter of the 20th century. However, during the Second World War, it became extinct and by 1947, there were no pure Smoushonden left. In 1973, two Dutch ladies began to rebuild the breed, but without having any living examples of the old Smoushond available, the present breed, not even 40 years old, is a careful reconstruction of an extinct one.

GENTLEMEN'S STABLE-DOGS

It is absolutely certain that this breed has its roots in Holland. About 1850 – so the story goes – the Smous-

hond was owned mostly by Jews living in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. At that time, a certain Mr. Pulzer owned a pub in the old city centre of Amsterdam. Being a dog fancier, Pulzer had no objections to dogs going into his pub, so a small group of regular customers took their dogs with them to this pub. These dogs looked very much alike and were obviously related. Most of them had been purchased from a certain C.J. Abraas who, in his stall situated not far from the pub, sold these small hairy creatures. The name he gave his 'breed' was *Heeren Stalhonden* (Gentlemen's Stable-Dogs).

Nobody has been able to find out where Abraas got the dogs he sold. We do know that he wasn't a breeder himself and that most of his dogs came from Rotterdam. Some historians think his dogs arrived by boat from England. Others are convinced that Abraas's dogs

ILLUSTRATIONS: COURTESY RIA HÖRTER



Left: Mr. Stinstra's famous 'Tommy,' born circa 1892.

Top right: The resemblance between this wire-haired German Pinscher or Ratter (1895) and the Smoushond below is obvious.

Bottom right: Bram van Baarn, a male Dutch Smoushond, circa 1901.

were of German origin and closely related to the wire-haired German Pinscher, albeit yellow-coloured. Rhine barges still sail from Germany into the harbour of Rotterdam. My personal view is that there is certainly a relation between Abraas's dogs and the wire-haired German Pinscher. Just have a look at the pictures, dating from the same time.

NOT A LADIES' PET

A century ago, the Smoushond was not an obscure breed – quite the contrary. In the famous Dutch dog book *Hondenrassen* (1904), by Count Henri van Bylandt, the Smous is well represented as Hollandse Smoushond or Wire-haired Dutch Terrier. This book has several illustrations of the breed, and its standard, which states: "He is a stable dog, not a ladies' pet; good ratter and very gay companion." At that time, the height at the shoulder was between 14 and 17-1/2 inches. In 1912, another well-known Dutch author, L. Seegers, wrote that the breed resembled an Irish Terrier – not because the Irish Terrier was an ancestor, but because some Smoushonden were crossed with Irish Terriers.

MR. STINSTRA AND HIS 'TOMMY'

A certain Mr. Stinstra played a key role in the breed's early history. Around 1890, he owned a Smoushond,



The general appearance of the Smoushond is of a strong and square-built dog.

'Tommy' (born circa 1892), pictured in magazines in and outside Holland as the "one and only good representative of the breed." In 1874, 20 Smoushonden were entered in a Dutch Agriculture Show, and in 1890, at the first dog show organized by the Dutch KC (*Cynophilia*), Stinstra judged two classes of Smoushonden.

PHOTOS: ALICE VAN KEMPEN



The Hollandse Smoushond was recreated in the 1970s.

His criteria for a good Smoushond are clear: “Forty years ago, the Smoushond was quite popular, especially in Amsterdam. The colours were light and dark yellow, brownish, black and white. Whites and blacks were rare, most of them were yellow. Their body was not long and they were a little high on leg. A Smoushond must be able to see clearly, without being bothered by too much hair. His head is somewhat round with a puggy nose, which is black-coloured. The ears are cropped, not pointed but round. His eyes are big and dark with a lively expression. The body is rather short and the coat is sturdy. The tail is also docked and the Smoushond has a strong fore- and hindquarters with round feet.” In his critiques, Stinstra told exhibitors that a flesh-coloured nose, being too high or too low on legs, light eyes, too much white and a curly coat were most objectionable.

‘SAMOS’

It seems that the breed gradually declined after Stinstra’s death. People were still interested in the dog, but began breeding their own types. Some of them resembled big Brussels Griffons, others incorrect Affenpinschers. In 1905, the first re-evaluation began with the foundation of a breed club. In 1919, this club had 91 members throughout the Netherlands, but for some reason, the breed never became popular. ‘Samos,’ who was considered one of the best Smoushonden ever, was born in August 1915.

The first breed club had disappeared by 1925. That same year, a dog fancier drew up an inventory, resulting in a second breed club. During the Second World War, breeding dogs was almost impossible; the Dutch KC withdrew recognition of the breed club after 1949 since no Smoushonden had been entered in the stud book and there was no longer any contact with the club. End of story?

TWO AMBITIOUS LADIES

In 1973, two Dutch ladies launched an ambitious plan. They wanted to recreate the Dutch Smoushond, but the only dogs they could find were merely look-alikes, whose owners were persuaded to cooperate in a careful breeding program. Mrs. M. van Woerden and Mrs. H.M. Barkman van Weel were not only very determined, but also aware of the importance of good PR. They travelled around the country looking for good examples and every year, Mrs. Barkman reported about their progress in the national Dutch dog magazine, *De Hondenwereld*. She kept her own stud book and data and collected hundreds of photographs, knowing that some day the breed would be recognized again.

Between October 1974 and October 1975, 73 puppies were born. Of course, there were disappointments; it seemed to be extremely difficult to get the typical yellow colour. A second problem was breeding a good scissors bite – too many dogs were born with an underbite. In 1977, Mrs. Barkman spotted the first “real Smoushonden” and in 1978, the yellow colour seemed to be under control. It was not only ‘dogs from the street’ that contributed to the new Smoushond; in the early years, Border Terriers were used to improve coat texture.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

In 1978, the third breed club was founded, and by 1979, 544 Smoushonden were registered in Mrs. Barkman’s stud book. Breeding, health and temperament have always had priority; beauty comes third. If you live outside the Netherlands, it is not possible to acquire a puppy; the breed club wants to follow every dog during its entire life. In Holland, purchasing a Smoushond means waiting for about two years. The influence of the breed club goes even further; when a dog or bitch is healthy and good tempered, the owner is obliged to make the dog available for breeding one time.

This breed is still ‘under construction.’ Every puppy is seen and described at the age of seven weeks. At the same time, there is a puppy test to ensure that the right dog goes to the right owner. At the age of 1-1/2 years, the dogs are described again during a so-called “Day of Inventory.” It’s obvious that the present breed club leaves nothing to chance.

The Smoushond belongs to FCI Group 2, Section 1 (Pinscher and Schnauzer type). The old name Dutch Terrier is more or less wrong; the true name should be Dutch Pinscher. The breed standard dates from 2001.

A retired bookseller and publisher, Ria Hörter is a contributing editor of De Hondenwereld, the national dog magazine of Holland.