



## **VIDEO CONFERENCE REPORT BY OLIMPIO CICIRIELLO**

On 14 October 2020 the ENCI teaching session was held in videoconference for the updating of the expert judges on the Italian Volpino breed.

Fabrizio Bonanno, President ATAVI, opened the meeting (Associazione Tecnica Amatori Volpino Italiano) and, after the ritual thanks, explained the situation of UMAVI (Unione Mondiale Amatori Volpino Italiano) which now includes 17 nations. He stressed the need for readmission to the official standard of the variety of black color, now increasingly popular, and the importance of uniformity of the criteria for the granting of the Certificate of Typicality.

He concluded by thanking the expert judge, as well as councilman ENCI and ATAVI partner, Antonino La Barbera, for having accepted with great enthusiasm to hold the technical report on race.

Antonino La Barbera in turn thanked ATAVI for the trust given to him and the ENCI for the important and innovative initiative represented by these online learning sessions that are enjoying a great success of participation.

He began the technical report by illustrating a graph showing the constant registration in ENCI herd books in recent years (on average around 160 units per year)

He also highlighted that, although the breed is notoriously healthy and long-lived, in the parameters the selected reproduction includes subjects free from oculopatias and dislocation of the patella, to demonstrate the interest of the (ATAVI) specialist company in the protection of the health of the breed.

He then passes to the analysis of some characteristics of typicality of breed described by the official standard currently in force, all accompanied by explanatory photos.

After analyzing the main proportions that characterize the Volpino as a rather agile dog, the rapporteur emphasizes the absolute importance of the width of the skull, always more than half the total length of the head and the inescapable presence of a slight convergence of the cranial facial axes.

To contribute to the typical expression of breed, in addition to the round and lively eye, there are the shape, the size and the posture of the ears, always well erect but rather spaced because of the width of the skull.

Another fundamental characteristic of the type is the tail, as long as possible (almost half height at the withers) and covered with thick and long hair, which shall be carried curved on the back in the direction of the neck.



This greatly increases the compact appearance of the Italian Volpino together with the coat, of course, which in turn is carefully analysed for the characteristics described by the standard, but the rapporteur especially points out that though an excessively opulent coat is often overvalued, it is definitely off the type because, as scenic as it is, it's not very functional.

In the description of the colors allowed is punctuated that the right white shade that must be white-milk and the red must be red-deer.

All always accompanied by clarifying photos.

The pigmentation of the main mucous membranes should be absolutely black, while in the case of white Volpino, light nails should not be penalized.

For quality subjects the sexual imprint must always be strongly marked.

Among the defects described in detail in the standard are those of construction on which emphasis is placed on the historical moment of the race.

They are: the divergence of the cranial facial axes, the exaggerated length of the trunk, the excessive opening of the metatarsal tibio angle that strongly limits the thrust of the rear and results in a severely defective movement, unbalanced and therefore inefficient.

To clarify the criteria on which to base the granting of the Certificate of Typicity some of the topics already dealt with above are taken up.

It follows from the observations of the ATAVI Technical Committee that Volpino Italiano should not bring to mind related breeds such as Klein and Zwerg German Spitz and the Japanese Spitz.

As to the head, the first differs for the ratio skull muzzle 4-2, both have small and close ears and slightly oblique and almond eyes.

Japanese Spitz has a longer trunk and a much larger size.

The German Spitz have an opulent coat with a showy mane.

The Certificate of Typicity should not be allowed to dogs with dental problems such as marked microdontics or lack of P3 or P4 as highly heritable.

Same fate for divergent cranial facial axes.

Greater tolerance instead for the size and excesses of carbonation on red subjects that deserve it.

The bearers of disqualification defects stated by the standard are obviously excluded from the Certificate of Typicality.



As regards the reintroduction of the black variety into the official standard, the rapporteur informs colleagues that the Board of Directors of the ENCI April 19, 2018 in acceptance of the proposal of the Central Technical Commission dated December 19, 2017 requested ATAVI to promote an appropriate project with the collaboration of ENCI's Zootechnical consultant deepening also the genetic characterizations within the different varieties of coat colours.

The results obtained will enable the genetic structure of the population of black Italian Volpino and then objectively assess the final inclusion in the ENCI's genealogical books. The final objective of the project is the evaluation of the genetic structure for maintenance of biodiversity thus promoting the well-being of the Italian Volpino breed.

The Executive Committee, September 18, 2018 considering the proposal received thought that the Governing Council should investigate the matter further on the basis of the consideration that research activities should be carried out by the ENCI.

The file was updated by the Executive Committee of 18 September 2018 pending the establishment of a framework project for genetic analysis.

As it is known, after the acquisition by the ENCI of the laboratory of analysis Vetogene, it will finally be possible to give adequate answers to the requests of the Club.

The report is concluded by a detailed analysis of the psychophysical characteristics of breed that in addition to ensuring the classic attitudes (company and watch) make it the protagonist in various sports (mini agility, etc.) and socio-therapeutic activities (Assisted interventions with animals more generally known as Pet Therapy activity).

Following are some questions and considerations.

The first concerns the exposure assessment of "tolerated" breed characteristics as the color champagne, the shades of color biscuit on the edges of the ears, the pincer closure, etc.

In this connection, the rapporteur agrees with the remarks made by some colleagues stating that the penalty must take into account the overall value of the subject in so far as the breed with only 160 inscriptions per year, cannot be "depleted", otherwise the genetic variability will be lost.

The next question concerns the size; La Barbera recalls that in the previous standard the excess of 3 cm from the allowed sizes was an eliminatory defect.

The current standard is reduced to 2 cm and considered as one of the least serious defects.

This presumably leads to a more flexible assessment depending on the level of competition and on the historical moment of the race.



## **Associazione Tecnica Amatori Volpino Italiano**

The training session closes with compliments and cordial greetings among the participants and the common wish that this ancient and eclectic Italian breed will quickly regain the success of the public that it deserves.

This, in extreme and faithful synthesis, is what happened in an afternoon of high cynophilia that has been realized also thanks to the modern technologies used by the ENCI.

We hope that meetings such as these will be more frequent and fruitful.

*Translation by Rossano Oeyangen  
& E.Z.*