



Breed Standards

(This abstract has been condensed from the South African breed standard and training manual: Dorpers Into the New Century, by Dolf Lategan)

Pointing System

To distinguish the degree of excellence with a description and score by points on visual appearance and performance. These values must be a true reflection of the animal.

Pointing System	
Very good	5
Above average	4
Average	3
Poor or below average	2
Very poor with cull points	1

The following definitions will apply when using the Breed Standards:

- **Discriminate according to degree:** This means that the bigger the deviation from the ideal, the lower the score will be. (i.e. indication of colour around the eyes can score at best a P3. Moderate colour will be downgraded to P2 and extreme colouring around the eyes extending onto the face a P1).
- **Undesirable:** When analysed it can score at most a P2 and when extreme a P1 (i.e. brown on the face can be at most a P2 and too much a P1).
- **Cull or faulty:** This is when functional efficiency comes into play under conformation or an extreme under other sections of the Breed Standards.

Head

Strong and long with eyes widely spaced and protectively placed. Strong nose, strong well shaped mouth with well-fitted deep jaws is the ideal. To qualify for T5, stud and commercial the upper part of the inside on the cutting teeth must be in contact with the upper gum. The lower jaw may be 2mm shorter on adult animals and 3mm shorter on lambs. When an animal is shedding the front teeth, the adjacent teeth may be used for evaluation of the fit. The forehead must not be dishd. The size of the ears must be in relation to the head. A developed horn base or small horns are the ideal. Discriminate according to size against heavy horns.

Forequarter and Neck

The neck should be of medium length, well fleshed, broad and well coupled to the forequarter. Shoulders should be firm, broad and strong. A moderate protrusion of the brisket beyond the shoulders, moderate width and good depth are the ideal. Forelegs must be strong, straight and well placed with strong pasterns and hoofs not too widely split. Weak pasterns and Xlegs must be discriminated against according to degree. Shoulders, which appear loose, brisket that slants up too sharply with no projection beyond the shoulders, crooked legs and weak walking ability are faulty.

Barrel

The ideal is a long, deep, wide body, ribs well sprung, loin broad and full. The sheep must have a long, straight back and not have a "Devil's grip". A slight dip behind the shoulders is permissible.

Hindquarter

A long and wide rump is the ideal. The inner and outer twist to be well-fleshed and deep in adult animals. The hind legs must be strong and well placed with sturdy feet and strong pasterns. Weak, skew pasterns and sickle hocks must be discriminated against according to degree. The hocks must be strong without a tendency to turn in or out. Bandy or perpendicular hocks are faulty.

Reproductive Organs

Well-developed udder and reproductive organs are essential in the ewe. The scrotum of the ram should not be too long and the testicles should be of equal size and not too small. Any abnormalities in the testicles are cull faults.

- * Minimum testicle circumference in a sitting position:
- * 10 months of age 30cm
- * 2 tooth 32cm
- * 4 tooth 33cm
- * 6 tooth and older 34cm
- * A split of 1,5cm deep allowed on scrotum of ram, measured from the deepest point to the bottom of the testicles.

General Appearance and Balance

The sheep must be symmetrical and the body parts balanced in proportion to each other. A calm temperament with a vigorous appearance is the ideal.

Size or Growth Rate

A sheep with a good weight for its age is the ideal. Discriminate against extremely large or extremely small animals.

Distribution of Fat

Too much localisation of fat on any part of the body (see circles) is undesirable. An even distribution of a thin layer of fat over the carcass and between the muscle fibres is the ideal. The sheep must be firm and muscular when handled.

Colour Pattern Dorper

A white sheep with a black head and neck is the ideal. A limited number of spots are allowed on the body and legs. Totally white sheep or sheep that are predominantly black are faulty. Brown or white hair around the eyes must be discriminated against according to degree. Pink teats, pink under the tail and white hooves are faulty. Brown on the face is undesirable.

Colour Pattern White Dorper

A white sheep, fully pigmented on the eyelids, under the tail and on the teats is the ideal. A limited number of spots is allowed on the ears and underline.

Covering

H5: A short, loose, light mixture of hair and wool with a natural clean kemp underline. The head should be covered in short clean kemp.

H4: A short, loose, light covering of hair and wool with wool predominating on forequarter and with a natural clean underline. Wool is allowed up to the crown of the head.

H3: A short, loose covering of predominantly wool or soft fine hair with perceptible kemp on the outer thigh. A soft light mane or apron is allowed. Wool is allowed forward of the crown on the head.

H2: a) Almost exclusively coarse hair, b) Almost exclusively wool and very dense,

H1: a) Exclusively coarse hair, b) Exclusively wool (long and dense), c) A coarse hairy mane.

Type

Type is determined by the degree the sheep conforms to the Breed Standards. The general impression must be of good balance, muscling and a vigorous appearance. Masculinity in the ram and femininity in the ewe is important.

Note: Any tendency to a cull fault cannot be a Type 5.

Editor's note: The breeds standard as contained in "Dorpers into the New Century" includes extensive descriptions of the specific attributes of the breed. The book is a training manual and contains wonderful photographs that clarify both good and bad characteristics as well as related articles on nutrition, health and flock management. The book available from the registry office for \$34 (includes shipping).