

KLM - I Performance Standard of the Kleine Münsterländer

Description of the hunting characteristics of the Kleine Münsterländer

Introduction

The Kleine Münsterländer is a medium-sized, long-haired versatile hunting dog whose breeding has been practiced for more than 100 years in its parent country Germany according to the criteria of performance, conformation to the breed standard, temperament and hereditary health. The Kleine Münsterländer has several breed-specific hunting qualities that have evolved over the centuries in its use as a hunting dog in the North-West German lowland:

Noteworthy firstly is the intelligence of the KIM, which it uses to hunt with all its senses as effectively as possible and, on the other hand, with a close relationship to its handler, which makes it a cooperative hunting partner. It is essentially a friendly and well-balanced dog with - depending on its temperament - great passion, which is why it should not be trained carelessly in obedience, despite a close relationship to its handler. Sharpness on game is required as well as not being gun-shy on land and in the water. These characteristics have made the Kleine Münsterländer a popular hunting companion well beyond Germany's borders.

Not only in Germany, but also globally, the population is growing steadily, and it has thus become necessary to organize international tests in order to maintain a uniform standard for the KIM as a fully versatile hunting dog and to make the best possible use of the great genetic potential of the breed across international borders.

The following performance description is intended to serve as support for consistent judging of KIM at international tests such as the IMP A and B.

In the case of natural ability tests, expectations regarding the above-mentioned abilities can be lowered if, in terms of experience and due to its age, the KIM is not yet fully developed and trained. But its important hunting abilities must always be clearly recognizable.

Dogs with great breeding potential demonstrate hunting passion, desire to work, hunting intelligence and teamwork during their work in the field, water and forest.

A. Field work

1. Use of nose

The Kleine Münsterländer shows excellent nose quality in all work before and after the shot, but especially in the search. It is always able to make good use of the wind to quickly and frequently find game, occasionally marking bird scent, indicating tracks and trails and working them out. It can use them to quickly pin birds, especially game birds, and scent game from far away.

2. Tracking work

For all required tracking work, the Kleine Münsterländer should show the will to track and the ability to hold the track.

The will to track is recognizable by how it sets itself to work and—taking into account the circumstances (soil conditions, weather, etc.)—takes up the track, works it willingly, under control and concentrated, striving to work them further even under difficult circumstances. Whether it has the will to track can be seen by whether it calmly searches and resumes the track, after losing sight of the hare or fox, or whether it breaks off the track or even haphazardly searches around. In doing this, the dog should ideally give Laut when following the track of the game.

The ability to hold a track manifests itself in the behavior of the dog, how it—as an expression of its stability of temperament—has the will to track (prey drive), i.e. seeks the continuation of the track, especially in difficult conditions, at a calm pace and carries out the track independently and with certainty. When assessing track work, the will to track, the ability to hold a track and the difficulty on the track through terrain, weather, wind and standing time are to be rated higher than the sheer length of the track.

3. Search

In the search, the body is tense, the dog moves elegantly, and shows an expressive bearing of its head, its body and its legs, as soon as it gets the scent of game in its nose. The dog holds its nose high, half-raised or deep into the wind. In the track work, it often searches with a low nose. The position of its nose always depends on how it can best find game.

Its search is focused on the hunt, marked by the will to find, systematic and thorough over the entire area, brisk and persistent. In doing this, it shows a desire to work, passion, hunting intelligence and team spirit. It always enjoys working, also without much handler influence, and largely independently for the success of its handler.

In the search, it adapts itself to the terrain, the species of game and the wind. That means, working against the wind by quartering, run ahead with a tailwind and turn into the wind. Its pace in the search is consistent with the quality of its nose.

The search is wide-ranging, but a distance of about 100 steps to the handler should not be constantly exceeded.

It can be handled in its work, even over long distances (cooperation, teamwork). It repeatedly keeps eye contact to its handler and is ready to follow any commands given (call, wave, whistle).

It quickly learns that all game is taboo, until an appropriate command comes from the handler. It will no longer pursue healthy game on its own, if it understands that this reduces the shared success of the hunt. It always tries to get its handler into a position to shoot, so they can capture their prey together.

However, the Kleiner Münsterländer must not be uncontrollable, because it should and must work the track of wounded game when hunting. But when given the appropriate command it must immediately leave any fleeing furred game or flushing feathered game.

It does not change its search style, even if it is working with several dogs at the same time (search in pairs), since it always works for the common hunting success.

In doing this, frequent chasing and disturbing (other dogs), aggressive behavior towards the partner dog, lack of obedience, lack of search, as well as lots of loud commands and frequent whistling by the handler, is undesirable.

4. Pointing

The Kleine Münsterländer does not have a special form of expression when pointing. It freezes on point in all possible body positions. Turning its head into the wind, it remains still in a tense posture and no longer moves its tail. When pointing, it stands on the ground with all four legs, or a front or rear leg is raised. It is also typical of the breed that some KIM do not point but crouch down or even lie down when they encounter game (*Vorliegen*).

As soon as the Kleine Münsterländer has scented tightly sitting game, it should pin the game by initially advancing and cautiously relocating or by purposefully encircling the game and then point or lie on point until its handler can approach quickly, even from a longer distance, and when he is near the dog, can shoot without having to hurry. The dog knows exactly how to best bring the handler to a shot.

The handler can usually easily recognize when the game in front of the dog is no longer sitting tightly or has run off. Because the tension in the dog is released and the tip of its tail begins to twitch slightly.

The dog points very well on haired or feathered game, whereby it usually points feathered game from further away.

Dogs that point without game or the scent of game multiple times, expressively and for a long time, are undesirable.

If the Kleine Münsterländer searches with several dogs at the same time, it should also point with or honor (the pointing dog).

Pointing with means that a second or third dog also gets scent of the game that the first dog has scented and, like the other dog, also points.

Honoring means that the second or further dog holds in a pointing posture, when he sees another dog in this position. The honoring dog does not point with its nose (due to scent) but upon an optical signal. The pointing posture taken while honoring should be maintained until the dog that originally found the game has finished its work on the game.

B. Water work

The dog is expected to be calm at the water. On command, the dog should immediately enter the water and do its work.

1. Independent search without a duck

For the work before the shot (independent search without a duck), this means

that the Kleine Münsterländer has to find the waterfowl to be hunted from the cover, also from deep cover with reeds. It is a job that requires great physical and mental abilities. Hardness, endurance and passion for water must distinguish the dog. This also means that, as in the field, it has to work with its nose to find the evasive waterfowl and to get them to fly up or leave the cover.

2. Blind retrieve

If it is sent to search for lost waterfowl, the Kleine Münsterländer should allow itself to be directed towards the duck. Any waterfowl found must be retrieved without the handler's command.

3. Independent search behind live duck

The dog has a difficult task to accomplish when the waterfowl is only winged and is now trying to get away from the dog that is pursuing it. Concentrated nose work is now required to follow the swim track. Disregarding or evading live waterfowl is a serious fault.

If the dog has grasped the duck in the reeds or has driven it out of the cover onto the open water, and if the handler has managed to kill the duck there, the dog must retrieve it flawlessly.

This is particularly important at the water, because if the dog shakes and lays down the duck, it will immediately enter the water again, if it has not yet dead, and is now aware of the danger which it is in, will behave in a way that the dog often cannot find it again.

C. Forest work

In addition to field and water work, the Kleine Münsterländer can also do a great deal before and after the shot in the forest.

1. Dense cover search (Buschieren)

Working before the shot in the forest is above all an independent search or a dense cover search; the latter corresponds to the search in the field, with one big difference:

While the line of sight between a Kleine Münsterländer and his handler in the field can be a long distance, it is limited to a very short distance in the forest.

This and the fact that game can also be flushed out, and that the dog did not have to scent and point to the same extent as in the field, means that during the dense cover search, the Kleine Münsterländer is required to search under the gun.

This search under the gun means that the Kleine Münsterländer can only search as far as the handler is in a position to—taking into account the local conditions—still shoot game that gets up or flushes in front of the dog. So, while the Kleine Münsterländer is allowed to search swiftly and in large casts for the handler in the field, it has to work in the forest during the search in dense cover in difficult terrain at a distance of approx. 25-30 m. He must point scented game;

he must respect game that flushes on its own, i.e. does not chase. Otherwise the handler would not get to shoot anything; by the time he got his dog under control, the game would have disappeared from sight.

2. Independent forest search

A Kleine Münsterländer is required to be more independent, because it has to go into a designated forest plot (thicket - corn field) without its handler and is completely on its own, without any connection to its handler, often far away from them, to drive out game that is found, and if possible, toward one of the other hunters or its handler.

It is essential that the dog has a sense of direction and hunts at least with sight Laut (*sichtlaut*), or better yet with track Laut (*spurlaut*). A silent dog is useless for forest hunting. While the handler can follow the dog's hunt by sight during the dense cover search and the field work, here they are dependent on their ears. A dog that doesn't hunt at least with sight Laut leaves the hunter or hunters waiting on the periphery, completely uncertain about what is going on in the thicket.

It is also very important that the Kleine Münsterländer does not over hunt, i.e. that he hunts only in the area encircled (by hunters) and designated for the hunt, and does not leave the area, in order to continue to hunt in adjacent thickets that are still to be hunted. Because that can jeopardize the success of an entire hunt.

A Kleiner Münsterländer, that only hunts in the complex of thickets surrounded by the gunners, hunts "bogenrein" (within the designated hunting area).

After completing the work or on command, the good flushing dog (*Stöberhund*) immediately seeks out its master and allows itself to be leashed.

Dogs that move only a few meters away from their handler (kleben/clinging) and only move back and forth on the edge of the cover (rändeln) are undesirable.

A Kleiner Münsterländer, that is not sent to search and remains with its handler, must behave with the utmost calm.

The dog placed next to its handler at the shooting position must not stand up or move away from its place. It must not whine or make a sound. All these behaviors would result in giving an early warning to game that is on the move and thus cause it to take a different route. Just as with the driven hunt in the field, the dog must also behave calmly when its handler or other hunters shoot—with shots in the thicket or noise by the drivers—and must not lose control because of over-passion and misbehavior.

3. Blood tracking

The Kleine Münsterländer is particularly suitable for blood tracking work, because it has the necessary natural ability-related requirements. This includes

endurance on the track, the ability to concentrate and calmness, a fine nose and a good dose of controlled sharpness on game. It can produce large, hoofed game able to defend itself by constant circling and barking. However, it is also able to chase wounded roe deer or small pieces of hoofed game and finally pull them down. The dog is Laut and its handler can follow it by listening to the commotion of the resulting chase.

The Kleine Münsterländer works quietly on the blood track, true to the track and working steadily on the tracking lead. It does not allow itself to be distracted by false tracks and always tries to bring the hoofed game into the possession of its handler.

D. Retrieving

The Kleine Münsterländer retrieves only on the command of its handler. It should find the game in the most direct way possible, pick it up immediately and bring it quickly by the shortest route. Upon arrival at the handler, the dog must sit and only give up the game after being asked to do so. Mouthing game is incorrect, and indirect or hesitant retrieval of the game picked up, as well as a lack of obedience by not sitting when giving out or an incorrect release (e.g. grabbing again, dropping) of the retrieved piece of game.