



Futurity Program

American Bouvier des Flandres Club (ABdFC)
www.bouvier.org

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About the ABdFC Futurity Program

Now that the Bouvier des Flandres Futurity is a reality, the owners of Brood Matrons and Stud Dogs, as well as prospective purchasers of Bouviers, will want to keep the Futurity in mind. This Stake is a breeders' classic for Bouviers and is comparable to the Kentucky Derby for breeders of top running horses. Who wouldn't be thrilled to say, "I bred the winner of the Futurity" and who wouldn't be delighted to be the owner of a winner in the Futurity.

The word "Futurity" implies looking into the future. In the case of the American Bouvier des Flandres Club (ABdFC) it means a conscientious attempt to insure the future excellence of the Bouvier. Much time and effort has been expended in the past toward the development of the breed as we know it today. The Futurity Program is the means for the continuation of this development and improvement.

"Futurity" can also imply challenge, or a gamble on the future. The breeder has picked a certain bitch to be bred to a certain stud. It is the breeder's opinion that this breeding will produce offspring of the desired conformation and abilities that will win in competition over the offspring of other breedings that are enrolled in the Futurity Program. To back up their faith in their own judgment, the breeder pays monies into a fund that will be divided among the winners of the Futurity.

The Bouvier originated as a Herding breed, for the purpose of herding cattle. Why then, should there be so much concern about good conformation? A Herding Dog needs more than just intelligence to herd cattle. They must also have the stamina and rhythm of movement, to travel easily over all types of terrain, for long periods of time, without tiring, if they are able to fulfill their role as a herding dog. Good "conformation" is therefore extremely important.

Proper conformation for a Herding Dog is the basis for the Bouvier Standard. This Standard describes the perfect Bouvier. While we cannot hope to achieve perfection, the Standard sets a goal for which the conscientious breeder must strive. The conscientious breeder chooses, as a potential brood bitch, a female that most nearly approaches the Standard. She will, in many instances, be from proven stock and, hopefully, she will have been proven herself by competition on the Bench and in the field. When the breeder feels sure that their chosen bitch is an outstanding example of the breed, they begin to look for a suitable stud dog that will complement the bitch. The stud will also be from proven stock and will also have been proven. He will also have a reputation for producing high quality offspring. This should not preclude using quality type bitches and studs that have not previously produced. Many fine young Bouviers have been produced in the past from just such breedings.

The Breeder's next step, after the breeding has been accomplished, is to nominate the bitch for the Futurity Program. When the puppies are whelped, the litter must be registered. The proper forms are available from the Futurity Director.

Because of the rules established by the ABdFC Board of Governors, there are three age groups to be judged at the Futurity. Futurity pups will vary in age from approximately 12 months old to 24 months. Prior to the judging, the judge is provided with a set of rules that define the method of judgment. This procedure is followed so that each Futurity class winner has an equal chance to win Best Dog or Best Bitch In Futurity.

The goal of all Futurity Breeders and owners is, of course, to record a win in the Futurity. A breeder or owner can take great pride in a placement in the Futurity. It should be remembered that all of these pups are bred for excellence, and a placement in this type of competition is indeed a prestigious accomplishment. Along with the prestige involved, there are also financial rewards for winning in the Futurity. All of the fees that have been paid, minus a percentage for expenses, are divided among the winners of the Futurity and the breeders of the winners.

The rules of the Futurity permit the use of a professional in training and showing these pups. Many owners, however, choose to train and show their own pup. They are often successful. The owner/handler who will take the time to learn the fine points of training and campaigning their dog will certainly realize a great deal of personal satisfaction from the accomplishment. Both owner and puppy will benefit from the close rapport that results from the training necessary to prepare the dog to compete in the Futurity. If conditions and abilities permit, there is much to be said for the owner who campaigns their own dog.

Most of the Breeders are also knowledgeable in the training and showing of the Bouvier. They will gladly answer questions and assist in efforts to develop puppies that are the product of their breeding.

In summary, it is hoped that the Futurity Program will provide some incentive to improve the quality of the breed by appealing to the gambling instincts of those members that are proud of their accomplishments in breeding Bouviers.

Rules

Introduction

The purpose of the Futurity is to encourage breeding of high quality Bouvier des Flandres and to reward successful breeders. Monetary and recognition awards will be given to those breeders best meeting their responsibilities in developing the described inherited potentialities of the Bouvier des Flandres.

Eligibility

- **Dogs:** Puppies whelped on or after October 1 of one year through September 30 of the following year will be eligible to compete in the Futurity held one year later. (i.e., Oct. 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021, will compete in the 2022 Futurity.)
- **Breeders and Owners:** The Futurity is open to all AKC registered and AKC recognized foreign registered Bouvier des Flandres where one of the breeders is a member of the ABdFC and where one of the owners is either a member or pending member of the ABdFC. A pending member is one whose membership application, dues and initiation fee have been received by the ABdFC Secretary and the application is pending approval.
- **Puppy Sale:** If a Futurity puppy is sold, eligibility will continue to the new owner provided such owner is a member or pending member as defined above.
- **Bitch & Litter Nomination:** The breeder or the co-breeder signing the Bitch Nomination and Litter Registration forms must be a member in good standing of the ABdFC and remain a member in good standing until after the Futurity entries are closed.
- **Puppy Nomination:** The owner or co-owner signing the Puppy Nomination form must be a member in good standing as defined in the ABdFC By-laws Article II, Section 4 or a non-member owner who is initiating action to become a member.
- **Futurity Entry:** The owner or one of the persons listed as co-owner on the Futurity Entry Form must be a member in good standing or pending member of the ABdFC by August 1st of the year of the Futurity.
- **Health Requirements:** Must fulfill Futurity health requirements (see page 9).
- **Dual Sire litters** in compliance with AKC rules are permitted.

Fees

- **Bitches** shall be nominated after being bred but before the puppies are whelped. The nomination must be accompanied by a fee of \$30.00.
- A **Litter** shall be registered within 30 days after being whelped. A registration fee of \$10.00 is required for each litter registered. Each puppy in this litter will be eligible for individual nomination.
- Nomination of an eligible **Puppy** must be made before the puppy reaches four (4) months of age by paying a fee of \$30.00.
- All fees shall be paid to the ABdFC in U.S. funds and become the property of the Futurity fund. No refunds will be made.
- If the bitch fails to whelp or gives birth to a dead litter, her nominator will be permitted one substitute nomination, provided said nominator gives notice to the Futurity Director within ten (10) days after the bitch would have normally whelped. If notification is not made in accordance with this requirement, the nomination fee shall be forfeited.

Registration

The breeder's nomination will be verified with the puppy's registration for birth date of the litter.

Futurity Classes

- **Senior** dogs and bitches whelped on or after October 1 through January 31.
- **Intermediate** dogs and bitches whelped on or after February 1 through May 31.
- **Junior** dogs and bitches whelped on or after June 1 through September 30.

Entering the National

The entry for the Futurity requires the puppy to be entered in one of the regular classes at the ABdFC Specialty Show.

The Futurity entry must be indicated as an additional class. Additional Class entry must include age division (i.e., Futurity – Junior, Intermediate or Senior).

Division of Monies & Awards

1. Income

- Bitch Nomination fee
- Litter Registrations fee
- Puppy Nomination fee
- Entry fee

2. Disbursements:

- 40% of Income – Operating expense fund (stationary, printing, postage, record keeping, forms, judges' expenses including selection, show secretary or superintendent expenses, advertising, awards, rosettes, etc.)
- 36% of Income – Prize money shall be equally distributed to each of the first place winners of the Junior, Intermediate, & Senior classes for each sex.
- 24% of Income – Prize money shall be equally distributed to Best Dog in Futurity and Best Bitch in Futurity.
- 50% of each prize goes to the owner(s) and 50% of each prize goes to the breeder(s)

3. Awards

- Awards will be awarded to the breeder listed first and the owner of the sire listed first on AKC registration paperwork of the Best Dog in Futurity and Best Bitch in Futurity.
- Rosettes will be presented to Best Dog in Futurity, Best Bitch in Futurity, and all placements.

Judge Selection

FUTURITY JUDGE ELIGIBILITY

Individuals to be considered for judging the Futurity Stakes shall conform to any of the eligibility requirements listed here:

- **LICENSED JUDGES** - Have judged the Bouvier des Flandres at the breed level for a period of three (3) or more years and have judged twenty-five (25) or more Bouviers des Flandres in conformation competition at American Kennel Club, Canadian Kennel Club or FCI shows.
- **BREEDERS** - Are a Bouvier des Flandres Breeder or Co-Breeder of record who have breed three (3) or more litters and have produced a minimum of seven (7) individual champions in conformation competition.
- **BREED EXPERIENCED** - Is an individual with Breed experience such as an approved ABdFC Mentor or a conformation handler of Bouviers for five (5) years who has professionally shown and finished five (5) or more Bouvier Champions or three (3) Bouvier Grand Champions.

FUTURITY JUDGE NOMINATION

Futurity Judges will be nominated by ABdFC members.

FUTURITY JUDGE SELECTION

Futurity Judges will be selected by membership vote in accordance with ABdFC Bylaws Article IV, Section 5.

Futurity judge selection results for the following year shall be announced at the Annual Meeting of the membership, if available.

JUDGING SCHEDULE

Dogs and Bitches shall be judged separately.

The judge will begin with dogs in this order.

- Junior dogs – placing 1, 2, 3, and 4
- Intermediate dogs – placing 1, 2, 3, and 4
- Senior dogs – placing 1,2,3, and 4

The judge will then review bitches in this order:

- Junior bitches – placing 1, 2, 3, and 4
- Intermediate bitches – placing 1, 2, 3, and 4
- Senior bitches – placing 1, 2, 3, and 4

The first place winners of all the above classes will then compete for Best Dog in Futurity and Best Bitch in Futurity.

Futurity Health Requirements

The ABdFC Board on September 13, 2021 approved changes to the Futurity Health Requirements following recommendations from a Special Futurity Committee and survey of members for feedback on the proposed changes.

A change to four required “normal” health certifications (hips, elbows, eyes, heart) from three required “normal” health tests was made effective for litters whelped on or after October 1, 2022 (2024 exhibition year) as nominations for the 2022 & 2023 Futurity exhibition years were submitted prior to the effective date of the new health requirements.

NOTE: The following are current Futurity Health Requirements effective for Bitch Nominations for puppies whelped on or after October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2022 and therefore eligible for Futurity exhibition in 2022 and 2023.

Futurity Health Requirements – 2022 & 2023 exhibition years

For Futurity nominated Bouviers to be eligible to compete in the Futurity competition beginning in the year 2001 through 2023 competition, both parents must have certification of health clearance in at least three of the following areas, two of which must be hip status and OFA cardiac:

Hips – OFA, PennHip

- For the purposes of this program, PennHip results of less than 50% will not be acceptable, or equivalent certification from recognized Foreign Registries.
- Preliminary OFA results of Good or Excellent, obtained at 18 months or older, are acceptable. If submitted for a dog or bitch over 24 months, a preliminary OFA is no longer acceptable.

Elbows – OFA

Cardiac – OFA

Eye – OFA or CERF

- Certification must be dated within 12 months of the date of the breeding that produced the Futurity nominated Bouvier or the collection of the semen used for the breeding)

Breeder must provide health certificates for the Sire and the Dam to the Futurity Director by July 1st of the Futurity Year. Exempt from this requirement are sires who are deceased prior to January 1, 2000.

Thyroid certification purposely was not placed on the list due to the concern that the current testing procedures cannot detect if the thyroid levels are maintained by medication. The absence of thyroid certification shall not be interpreted as tolerance for the use of thyroid deficient Bouviers in any breeding program.

This timing provides notice to and allows owners of frozen semen of currently alive sires until 12-31-99 to certify the dog if the owners desire to protect the status of the semen as useable for litters that will be eligible for the Futurity after 12-31-99; if the sire dies after 12-31-99 and has not been certified, the requirements will not be waived even if the semen was collected prior to 1-1-00.

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Futurity Health Requirements – Starting with 2024 exhibition year.

NOTE: The following are Futurity Health Requirements effective for Bitch Nominations for puppies whelped on or after October 1, 2022 and therefore eligible for Futurity exhibition 2024 and beyond.

Certification for the following health tests is required for both sire and dam for Futurity eligibility.

“Normal” certification is accepted from the Orthopedic Foundation For Animals (OFA) or recognized Foreign Registries providing equivalent certification or “normal” evaluations.

Breeder must submit all current Health Certifications with Bitch Nomination. All updates for preliminary x-rays must be submitted by August 1 of the Futurity exhibition year.

Hips

- Fair, Good or Excellent Hip certification at or after 24 months.
- Preliminary evaluation of Fair, Good or Excellent, obtained at 18 to 24 months is acceptable for nomination. For Futurity exhibition, permanent certification of Fair, Good or Excellent must be submitted.

Elbows

- “Normal” certification at or after 24 months.
- Preliminary evaluation of “Normal”, obtained at 18 to 24 months, is acceptable for nomination. For Futurity exhibition, permanent “Normal” certification must be submitted.

Cardiac

- Basic or Advanced Cardiac Certification at or after 12 months

Eyes

- “Normal” certification at or after 12 months

FROZEN SEMEN

When using frozen semen, sire must be in compliance with Futurity Health Requirements when collected. (Futurity Director’s Note: This means in compliance with Futurity Health Requirements in effect at the time the stud was collected.) Exempt from this requirement are sires deceased prior to 1993 when Futurity program was created.

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Related Forms

Forms are available on our website at <http://www.bouvier.org/futurity.html>

Document	Relevance
Bitch Nomination Form	Use the form to submit a Bitch nomination.
Litter Nomination Form	Use the form to submit a Litter nomination.
Puppy Nomination Form	Use the form to submit an individual Puppy nomination.

Revision History

The following revisions have been made to this booklet:

Version	Modification	Summary of Changes
6.0	Sept. 13, 2021	Revised rules and requirements approved by ABdFC Board of Governors
5.0	June 9, 2020	Pursuant to special board meeting action on 6/4/2020, Health Requirements were returned to the August 2014 version.
4.0	February 17, 2017, August 11, 2017, October 20, 2017	Revised Futurity Health Requirements approved by the Board.
3.0	August 15, 2014	-
2.0	August 18, 2006	-
1.0	March 12, 1999	Approved by the Board of Governors