

# COMMENT ON THE WORKING STANDARD

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Many, many words were used to describe and comment the work of the Bracco Italiano. In fact, still today, we described and discussed a lot about how this great pointer should perform its action. The trot especially, a gait so particular and specific, has stimulated the interest of dog technicians and amateurs of the breed, which sometimes hotly and passionately entered into controversy because of their conflicting positions, more than anything else due to subjective interpretations.

Today we have a working standard, not recent, but certainly inspired and written by great technicians and experts on this breed: a description of the working Bracco by G. Pastrone, is undoubtedly one of the most comprehensive and detailed standards ever written for a pointing breed. Nevertheless this clear 'picture' must be studied and interpreted always adapting to what could be described as "the historical moment of the breed."

Especially the breeder, the judge, and the specialist who are responsible for the future and the address of the breed selection, can not fail interpreting the standards, either working or morphological, considering the history of the breed, consistency and level of quality, as well as the most opportune evolution that this will be able to have in order to occupy an increasing place of prestige through its own functionality.

Looking back to the long road of the breed formation, we could establish that, in ancient times and up until quite recent times, the function of the dog to the commitment of hunting had the upper hand consistently in the selection criteria. The current type was sought, but was formed almost as a natural consequence of a breeding directed towards selection of gifted individuals for a certain type of use. Lamarck said 'The function creates the organ,' and without incurring its disputed theories you can still say that the morphology must be at the service of the function and the individual parts must have the most suitable conformation so that the required work is better performed.

So without disturbing Darwin and his theories of evolution, you can simply say that the choice of dogs to be put into reproduction was done almost always basing on their hunting skills subordinating the pure aesthetic to the functionality.

“The gait is a long and brisk gait. Brief periods of galloping are admitted when re-crossing previously covered ground, at the beginning of the hunt or in cases where the dog encounters a new situation. Above all, the rule when working scent is the trot. This is a lively movement that covers the ground well. During the hunt, the dog should quarter at distances of about 100 metres (330 ft) or more from the handler, giving proof that this grand pointer always not giving opposite to its nature.”

So states the standard in its first part. Here we talk about a trot “Long and Brisk.”

The Trot described in the texts of zoognostica is actually two limbs (diagonal – front right with left rear) which artfully move simultaneously for Bipedes and, between the two subsequent strides, there is a suspension period during which the animal is completely lifted. While trotting, the lateral center of gravity is slightly extended, and vertical displacements in correlation to the stationary limbs are a little more intense. Consequently the reactions are sufficiently powerful to be noted that these, vertically, during a relapse of the body from suspension, are worst at the withers to rump.

The metacarpals serve to dampen the impact and for this function they must be adequately slanted. But about this, and about all the other characteristics that the Bracco must have, to explore and gait with minimal effort and with greater speed, and therefore saving energy and having the highest yield, we will talk again more in detail about this in the chapter dedicated to its morphology.

The trot is generally divided into slow, ordinary and lengthened trot. In the first type the phase lacks suspension and while the ordinary trot is not a skipping pace, the one lengthened ultimately prolongs the phase of suspension that equals or exceeds the phase of support. In the lengthened trot the footprint of back biped remains the one of the front limb.

In the trot, when the extended projection of the limbs is at the maximum, the speed will be able to increase if these, examined stationary, will result in sufficient “angulation” and therefore with relatively long bony limbs.

But the phase of suspension is due to a strong impulse supplied mainly from the rear, so that this is prolonged and achieves the greatest speed, using very much energy.

In conclusion, to make the gait fast and profitable it is necessary to have: construction to favor a wide search pattern with better use of the force derived from the contraction of muscles (the most important aim is the length of the rump and the angle that this makes with the femur, so that the muscles work their best and to avoid precisely, dispersions of force); a powerful musculature, above all in the posterior; the animus. And third, last but not least, because “a car without engine can only go downhill!”

The animus: the will, the instinct that brings you to defy the hard work and any uneasiness in order to go search for the coveted wild bird to offer to your owner! Without it he collapses and all our speeches become empty theory.

The drafter of the working standard, with justice defined the trot of the Bracco as “long and brisk”, to differentiate it from the heavy and ambling gait of the ordinary trot of the “nineteenth-century lazybones followers”. These two adjectives indicated that the trot of the Bracco must be lengthened and not an ordinary trot. “The brisk” term could confuse ideas, and this sometimes has happened, if meant in the strict meaning of straight. But in this case, brisk, as described in many dictionaries, indicates “rapid and frequent strike” and it is attributed properly to the trot and the gallop of the horses breed.

But brisk, that means with frequent strikes, isn't in contrast with long? No sir. And in order to have clear ideas we created a test. We take a bicycle and we put a very well constructed and beautiful lending Bracco on the leash, even a prototype of the breed, one of those dogs that when you watch them in the fields during the tests make us dream that we always wanted it and only for us! We begin to pedal, gradually increasing speed and observe our beautiful big dog. From the step, it will quickly pass to the slow trot and then to the ordinary and then, as it increases speed the trot will become lengthened. If we are good cyclists and we do not fear of crashing with our dog, we will be able to observe that, as the speed increases, the feet, that in the stationary dog lean to a certain distance also in cross-sectional sense, will approach a straight line, while the head and the neck will extend ahead slightly more. With the speed, that situation of instability is created when it becomes maximum the galloping pushes for the projection of the head. If we take the curves fast we will notice also that our trotting, resting the feet on a same line, will be able to be tilted laterally, much like when we travel on two wheels.

But the observation we want to remark now is the evidence that, when we progressively increase the speed the trot becomes long because the dog will try to extend the limbs to the maximum and at the same time it will increase the phase of suspension, but also the striking limbs will be made more and more frequent, that is “are brisk.”

“Long and brisk” indicates therefore appropriately a trot carried to the maximum speed from an endowed Bracco of a suitable construction in order to extend the limbs adequately.

The trot, carried with the exasperation of speed, from a resting pace, adapts to cover long distances, becomes a much laborious one. The propulsion comes alternatively carried out from a single posterior limb and therefore, like in horses from a race, the Bracco can “break off” the trot in order not only to accelerate beyond the limits of its characteristic search, but also in order “to rest itself”, having the possibility, with the gallop, to share the effort at the same time on two limbs and to change the times of suspension.

The standard fairly expects four different situations in which the Bracco can gallop, and it is worth that we dwell on this for a comment.

We have read the long history of the Bracco and know its evolution for employment in hunting, in the centuries, endured multiple transformations. We have assisted to its improvement during the second half of the past century and, as the reader will have already seen, we are engaged to make progress on much more possibilities with the breed and to individualize those characteristics that also make it possible in the future, without distorting the type, and to project towards a prominent position within the pointing breeds. Since in the world all is evolving and indeed today many things change with a whirling speed, we should not exclude initially the possibility to modify the standard of our breed. I know already that some conservatives are ready to scream to the bitter end about the scandal, but they are tranquilized, partly from me. Absolutely I do not see the necessity to bring changes, it is discussed alone to know and interpret in a way more opportune to how much has been left from the illustrious dog technicians that have preceded us and to clear and to debate those points that can leave space for misunderstanding.

We have been talking about “If the Bracco Italiano can or must gallop” for a century! And on this issue I want to stop and come back later on, because around this point is the key of the Bracco and of its future selection. I wrote on this, because the real key real time would be those “something” that makes the Bracco trot and that form its character, this “something” is not in the legs, but comes from the brain and depends on many things; we appraise it mainly from the expression and from various attitudes. With a good glance, also in the courtyard and at the leash you can establish if in its character there is the “factory brand”!

Even though we are not absolutely certain, looking at historical testimonies and thoughts of many authors, we can assert that before the nineteenth-century forfeiture the Bracco did not have a different search from the new breeds, the ones having its own blood: the Bracco was therefore a galloper. Succeeding the lynchism due to bad feeding and with selection “off the cuff” that was made when the calm subjects were preferred, little blood that hunted with gun shooting, the Bracco (you pardon me if I express myself so brutally and maybe with a little approximation) became lazy, sure a trotter, but also like a “person taking a walk.” But, also then, the better dogs (you see Ranza) “always hunted trotting, fastly, with high head and snout in the wind”. In our century, with the spread of the Bracco pointers, of the Braccos lightened and the contest in the field trials with faster breeds, the Bracco began again to gallop.

Next to these subjects with non noble blood, there were always beautiful typical and joggers Braccos, but also a lot of cowardly lazy-bones that for years carried disrepute to all the breed.

With the unification of the large Bracco and the light Bracco in the new morphological standard and with the promulgation of the working standard finally put order, and the breeding of the race was able therefore to be based on a precise technical aspect. In the tests the bandits came to gallop to the bitter end, but sometimes, to blunder typical subjects were penalized alone for exuberance or "outside excitements" when carried to gallop. Not always it was used, instead the ax was given for the due energy towards the dogs with soft and apathetic. Today this does not happen even more: the teachings of Ciceri

and the indications of the SABI were understood and the results are well shown! The nineteenth-century heavy and lymphatic Bracco almost disappeared from the breeding, and in the tests more numerous are the typical landing subjects, able to perform in a spectacular way.

I briefly wanted to remember which events we arrived at to have the present prototypes as joggers because, also this, serves to give a reply to who would think to leave the most spacious Bracco a faculty of the gallop.

We came to the present gait, typical of the pointing Bracco and of the griffon, going through a long selective evolutionary trial that is difficult to repeat.

Should the breed lose the natural trot, the best breeder will not be able to do it again easily. The trot, even if favored from an adequate construction, comes from a psyche, from a special nature that has formed across the nineteenth-century lymphatism and subsequently selected for tens of years. It will not be possible to repeat all this.

At this point we only have to ask ourselves if the trot is an advantageous characteristic to maintain. The answer is obvious for those who know and use the properties and are interested in hunting practice or score, but the trot is "long and brisk" and performed in a wide and ordered search, besides a spectacular gait, distinguishes our dogs in the competitive arena and can make the pure dog lover prefer the Bracco, to that type of use that will become in the two thousand, with the decline and the restrictions of hunting, more and more numerous.

Therefore the breeder should pledge to maintain the trotting breed, conserve that sweet character that is expressed across the gait its plastic of elasticity, the softness and the serenity that resolves the olfactory questions, the flexibility that understands the teachings, the bright look that emphasizes delight, when they know to please the owner like, for example, in the carryover. To lose these features, to carry the breed as a galloper, where already there are other pointing breeds that gallop very well, you want to say condemn the Bracco.

But tolerating the slow subjects have also condemned the Bracco, or worse still those of little passion and continuance of action that, even if they make a big gallop, after five minutes stop at "dream!"

The trot "long and brisk" therefore, is a continuous action, pledge costing until it exhausts the last energy: this is the auxiliary that we want and that will be able to do much to serve the hunter. And if it gallops in the field trials? Do we have to penalize it?

We re-read the standard: "the gallop is tolerated for a short time during the return, on the land already inspected, or at the beginning of the trial and in case of outside excitations. But the rigor of the gait, when it faces the question of scent, is the trot".

### **The Judges' Criteria**

The standard, right from the start, would seem rather restrictive to grant the Bracco the license to gallop during a fields trial. In reality, if we consider the brevity of a trial, we are able to be very tolerant, since, if the subject in examination is greedy and of strong personality (characteristic always advisable in a hunting dog), it "will hear" the contest; already this will be motive for strong excitement, without keeping account of the anxiety and of the irritability that frequently come transmitted to him from the handler, as well as from other unfailing excitations which often come in a trial, above all if this comes coupled. The judge therefore, in accordance with the standard and regulation, considering the "outside excitations" that the dog is submitted to, would be able in theory, to tolerate the gallop for the duration of the test.

Practically things go in a different way, it is necessary to have some distinctions, it is important to base the evaluations on the sensibility of the judge and on his deep knowledge of the breed. This sensibility, I believe, is acquired not only with an intense hunting habit, but better and in a quicker manner, attending the professional trainers and observing the preparation of their subjects. This way, in a short time, the

judge has the opportunity to confront a lot of dogs and to study their reactions to the different methods of training.

Surely for the economy and for the future progress of the breed, it is better to have a Bracco that galloped for the most part of the trial showing eagerness and exuberance, emphasizing moments of large gait to trot long and closed, with fine bearing of head to go back on the wind and carry out classic spin on the issuing of the wild bird, than a Bracco showing a monotonous search, without fantasy, always trotting, rigid like a Cod, without the typical softness of the continental Italian breed that comes to him from that special character about whom we already spoke and that we absolutely want to preserve. The first subject, even if emphasized for a little moment, has in himself the quality of a champion and will be provided also with perfect construction for the large gait of the extended trot that in the hunting employment will perform for hours, on the contrary the second is not an Italian Bracco because only the constraints of the handler or a special training led it to the trot. This, in fact, could be due also to a dog of a galloping breed, but without naturally having the guarantees to maintain such gait in the middle of a day of hunting and a nevertheless he can transmit this peculiarity. We believe that this peculiarity is absolutely interesting since the trials have a significant importance in zootechnics concerning the breed improvement.

It's therefore wrong to base the evaluation on the timing between which our Bracco trots or gallops, We'd better observe with caution what circumstance, how and when it gallops.

We have to say a word on "the way it gallops."

Often people say: "If it goes to the basculant gallop it is a Bracco, otherwise, if the gallop is energetic, carried with easiness, is not a Bracco Italiano and should be penalized".

This assertion is debatable. Today we have "dried" the Bracco, we reduced its volume, consolidated the superior line, improved the construction to have a fine physique and physical efficiency, such to make it an athlete capable of hunting for whole days with good gait on the most binding grounds. It's natural therefore, that when you want the dog to gallop it can do it with greater ease of time and not with the heaviness of the lymphatic "big Bracco" bad built and similar to a "nineteenth-century one" simply jogging to avoid the hard trot making it tired!

Instead of simply observing the gallop, I suggest that we appraise it's class and the way it "faces the olfactory question". Observe the elasticity of the motions, the bearing of the head and the mobility of the neck and when possible even open the ears, and then the tail: mirror of its thought! To the profane they seem like insignificant touches, but it is from these details that the experience opens the door to discern the gold from the bronze! Pay attention to how it is turned when concludes the lacets: is here that finding itself with the opposite wind excites his quality and, in cases where he is not already doing it, should put itself into the trot with large concentration to explore the scents that the air carries from far away and to decide the direction to take. And the evaluations on the search should be done possibly at the end of the trial, when the action is more calibrated and "expansive" and the a lot in motive and the excitements making the Bracco gallop or trot in a "contract" way for imposition of the handler are slackened.

Now we should also talk about the different methods used today and in the past to reduce our dogs to the trot and "to be reasonable"! That it does not seem very interesting to me because this is not a Bracco training manual, a lot of papers have been written and published on this subject and finally it is very difficult to dictate rules of generalized training to all of the representatives of a breed. It is the sensibility of the trainer that in fact should lead to the definition of what kind of education methodology has to be applied and on what subject it's necessary to intervene.

## **The Braga**

I would spend only a word on the "braga", about which people speak a lot today and that is generally used in the preparation of subjects for the trials. The strong use of it should not constitute a scandal, assumed that the use is limited to the exuberant but with "authentic class" Bracchi. Such tool consists of a

simple string passing from the collar and bound to the metatarsus, and it should not be considered, as a kind of constriction to reduce the trotting subjects from galloping, but rather like a useful means of training to agree with a most rapid maturing and preparation of our exuberant young dogs.

With a light sling, in fact, the Bracco comes carried to develop the search to the most congenial pace and profitable, will carry the head high and since the first outing in the country, will be found in better conditions to use the game that will find on its walk, but more than this, it will be able to be incited and directed in the exploration of the ground without continually being distracted, suppressed or rather dazed from continuous orders or absolutely from punishments to restore it to the trot. In this manner it is able quite soon to plan its action in a wide and ordered search; this, as known, is the base to let a setter express the better of its natural quality and come fairly suited to the trials. Also the correctness and other teachings, will be easily and shortly be understood from a Bracco led to reason with the "braga". To obtain good and long lasting results, it is essential to apply it every time the Bracco goes out on the ground, until the student has acquired the perfection in the training, showing mastery in the action always stretching out and stopping to find the wild bird in tight collaboration with the instructor. According to the subject this will last from some months until one year and more: the important thing is to have steadfastness, like in all things, in order to avoid wasting a long and patient work.

Sometimes the braga and other systems, were used thoughtlessly, in coercive means to carry the test subjects that had nothing of the character of the Italian continental and that, in the wild state, would have galloped also after three hours of hunting. Such subjects "made up" do not have to and cannot escape the eye of the judge that, fairly, gets penalized even if they trot for the whole trial. It's not difficult to identify it if we keep in mind the points we talked about on the previous pages, every doubt will be then dispelled observing the behavior in the presence of the wild bird, during the point and in the guiding. If then you are still in doubt, we watch their face and from their expression we will be able to understand if they are Italian or if they have foreign ancestors!

In the standard there is a step that does not fully convince me and that should be completed where it says: "Gallop is tolerated for some short time during the return". In this circumstance, in fact, the Bracco sometimes could return towards the handler, also without having to use the nose because it is secure not to find game on its path; then, but only in this special case, and therefore not in the return in which he should pledge the sense of smell, above all if it is recalled from its owner, I would say that the gallop should not be tolerated, but absolutely appreciated. The dog in fact in this occasion shows attachment and collaboration with the handler (and for the same reason also will be noteworthy to gallop in the carryover), gets back quicker to its exploration of the ground and, changing pace, it rests and slackens the tension in a moment in which it cannot run into inopportune movements (sfrulli). For these last two reasons we could appreciate the gallop also on the ground already inspected. But pay attention! If the search is correct and it is not in very uneven zones, the occasions to refute the same ground have to be rare enough.

## **The Search**

The author of the standard also cares about giving some indications on the search of the Bracco where it says: "This is a lively movement that covers the ground well. During the hunt, the dog should quarter at distances of about 100 metres (330 ft) or more from the handler, well spaced and in relation to his excellent smell."

The search therefore has to be well ordered in diagonal "almost" always well spaced; the exceptions to the perfect geometric quality have to be defined as depending on the irregularity of the ground, or on those special waverings that the Bracco carries out to follow the scents carried from the wind and that herald to the typical one that carries out when it goes back frontally on the issuing scent. The standard correctly emphasize "that for the Bracco the scent task is the the most and first thing to care on".

## **Passion and Adaptability**

The breadth of the search, like for all the service breeds, has to be in connection to the nature of the ground and to the type of game that this can accommodate. On the mountains or on the hills, or exploring the large plains, also the Bracco should show brave initiative to extend the search; only this will make the difference from the other breeds for the gait. On this appearance we should not compromise: the cowardly, the undecided, or the dogs that after the first difficulty come running back always should be discarded. What kind of auxiliary could be a dog that does not search all of the available ground and that stops facing any irregularity of the ground? "Have serene eye, the spur to the feet, neither refuses work when you ask it" wrote Lorenzo Tornieri in 1700!

But about the Bracco and its proverbial lack of precision, we know that: "Its natural calm and reflective nature lends it to work in various circumstances, so that it may restrict the above actions corresponding to the best conditions of game and environment in a more narrow frame imposed by a temporary need."

The Bracco is therefore a malleable dog, generic and extremely practical: for the utilitarian end of the hunting he can temporarily agree to any "filth" without altering nature and class. If the Bracco is "mature" and balanced a day in fact can go to the classic manner plus, the next day to black birds or to pheasants in the forest and to perform also that action that Amaldi wanted to call "seguidata" and that was very discussed. You should not insist in one specialization or in another. I personally tested that the more things a Bracco knows and does, while hunting or at home in the garden, the more positive he will be in facing the working trials, during which digressions are quite completely disagreed, without diminishing its natural class.

### **The Tail**

Reading again the standard we note that "The search is extremely diligent and enlivened by the rhythmic, almost continuous, side to side motion of the stub of the tail." That means that the tail is carried on the horizontal plane (slightly lower or slightly higher, we will say later) and with the actual rhythmic motion of the trot, indicating to us that the Bracco is developing the actual work serenely, without constraint or fear. If the motion is frenetic he gets penalized, since he thinks about an excitement or a nervousness that is not actual of the Italian Bracco and this attitude is more of the number of times it is shown and also with motion of the tail in the "filata", in the service and in the guide, shows that it is only a few available to service. To the opposite side, if the tail is carried still or almost still, we have to think about the character being too sensitive or training excessively coercive. Of the two lacking, the second should be the less serious but we should appraise the circumstances and every other detail. In fact, the judgment on a dog has to be based on an examination based on all the details and, any observation, positive or negative, would be better is focused broadening our place of analysis. In the specific case also an examination of the handler, of the manner that he gives the orders to the dog, can explain a lot!

Let me open a parenthesis to underline the evaluation of a setter, is the more deepened and technically valid, when the judge or the breeder have a deep knowledge of the hunting and of the work of the dog, a valid preparation on the dog diagnostics and on the morphology of the breeds. We return to the working standard of the Bracco to clarify a point.

### **Divergence = Head held high**

It is written that in the search "the bearing is very erect, with the neck a little outstretched, to have the head quite high with the nasal pipe strongly inclined on the horizontal line (towards the land)."

The bearing is quite erect therefore, with the neck a little outstretched and the center of gravity in a position rather withdrawn: is the situation of relevant actual stability of the trot and of which we already spoke. The neck has to be a little outstretched and the head carried high since, as it will be explained in the comment to the morphological standard, the Bracco has the divergent facial axes skull, and therefore to be able to pick up the scent that comes from afar, should have the nasal pipe almost parallel to the ground and, because that happens without the dog choking or compressing the larynx, it necessarily should carry the neck rather raised. Extending the neck like a swift galloper the Bracco, in order not to

suffocate would be compelled to smell its own feet! And here, in fact is explained one of the motives for that galloping, the Bracco runs more easily to the game.

In the standard published from the ENCI, restored in the beginning of this volume it is written that during the search the nasal pipe is "strongly" inclined on the horizontal, this is not a clerical error of translation, besides it is already corrected by Ciceri in his book on the Bracco, to read "slightly."

If we want to give an indicative value we could say about ten to twenty degrees, but it is not very exact to fix a parameter, because of the specific features of the Bracco, consequently from its gait, the mobility of the head actually is large during the search, in a vertical and transversal sense, to better find the game and to adapt itself to the different situations.

When the Bracco is on point, and therefore the issuing and direction comes more from the surroundings, the standard talks about "the neckline should be a little raised and the head carried up with the muzzle pointing down significantly towards the ground (approx. 30 degrees from the horizontal). The angle is acceptable for a point on quail, pheasant or on a wild bird that supports the environment of the dog, but not always on grey partridge and snipes. (N.d.A).

### **The Bracco in the Presence of Game**

The standard is a masterpiece of precision in the part that describes the filata, the point and the guide, little yourselves therefore to add a comment. It could be said that the behavior described in the standard is reported about a Bracco that is developing its hunting in the greatest serenity. In the trials, mostly at the beginning of the trial and on quail, the excitement can carry it more decidedly and flying off to react to the olfactory stimuli. Also here, the sensibility and the experience of the judge to discern the gold from the bronze does matter, the evaluation, like always has to be global and for example a point of release, in certain circumstances, could not harm the final evaluation very much. But since the argument was often object of fascinating quarrels, it is worth dwelling on it for a while.

"A dog that senses he is suddenly upon the game (and only in this case) will stop immediately. He will stay more often upright or with the limbs a little flexed with the head turned down towards the game. Exceptionally the dog may halt in a contorted or twisted pose." The standard is a lot permissive to the Bracco giving it also the possibility, even if exceptional, to stop itself in "twisted poses".

In case of immediate stop, the criterion of judgment has to value a lot of factors. Above all it must be taken into consideration if the Bracco had to stop immediately for a mistake in the search or for other rashness. In this case the point does not have to be penalized because it showed readiness, nose and good capacity to return "to the reason", but for the mistake previously committed. If on the contrary it is found to return to the wild game without that it is an "err at the origin" then, we look at well how it is "flown off" and how it will be allowed after the trial and in all of the remainder of the trial. The true Bracco has ready reflections, but will not ever have the nervous look and even more the rage that some galloping breeds have.

It will be able to stop immediately, but it will be an immediate "soft" and when it will have ascertained the presence of the wild game, if it will be able to do it without determining it the "frullo", slowly it will recompose into its habitual noble pose and will begin to drive in the more classic manner.

If it behaved so, take off your hat and do not skimp the greatest bet if showed that also all of the rest is gold!

And, having proposed the greatest qualifications, I would like to do another short digression. Today it is complained often that they created "champions without value" and that times in the tests the CAC are assigned to dogs that do not deserve it. Undoubtedly here is something true in this, even if they care to do the work of the championship, it seems tome that the problem is not for the Italian Bracco. On the contrary, for this breed, it could be absolutely the opposite excess.



If it is a dog-loving crime to assign a CAC in a test to a subject that does not honor a championship, there are two other crimes, to my warning, quite more serious than consumed in the field of these shows. The first one is to assign a CQN or a very good to a little lazy-bones provided of natural quality, showing it the road to the championship of beauty and to the glory of reproducer, the second is not to have the courage to assign the CAC, for assumed and insignificant slights in the trial, to that Bracco that provided some quality of breed to the greatest level. Unfortunately due to how things go today in our Country, the possibility to appear a dog in a trial on game is more rare, and therefore this means that we lose a favorable occasion and delay the career and in addition to postpone the use of a precious dog for breeding.

### **The Dog of the Reason**

Sometimes the judge, and the hunter as well, use to value the work of the most known breeds, that have a nervous system different from the Italian Bracco's one. They do not completely understand the meaning and do not give the right value to specific behaviors and reactions of our dogs. Absurd mistakes and penalizations are therefore done in the evaluation of the work, as well as in the training and in the hunting use.

For example, one among a lot, I will tell of an episode I watched a lot of years ago during a classic trail on quail.

It is run in difficult conditions with beating wind, little dogs succeed in allowing itself honor, almost none concluded the trial with a valid service. It was at the end of the test that entered in the field a champion, then well-known and today still noted to be present in the pedigrees of a lot of champions. It excited the class and the magnificent trial, with extensive search in all the field. The regulated time was about to expire when, one's will and ears began to spin to the wind to conclude with a very expressive trial, taken a long-distance from the handler. We arrived near the Bracco after a lot of time. Upon the arrival the bitch, in the meanwhile remained still, the head turned with sweet verse to him like to say: "Finally you are arrived" and alone then it began to draw near in perfect style: quite erect, dominating the quail and concluding very well this magnificent action and the trial in which it had given a test of exuberance, draft and great understanding with the handler. It rhymed very disappointed and to me had almost an "iron industry" when, to the end of the test we listened to the connections and we heard the praise of the service of this magnificent Bracco to that, however, worthless to earn the CAC because during the point it had turned the head!

No doubt that the Bracco should stop with rigidity and expression, but this should not enter in "catalexis" with its character calm and reflective, large lucidity can agree to perform and to conclude positively any action always in perfect understanding and to the service of the hunter. In the situation reported above, it turned the head, it has to be therefore considered, not like scarcity of pointing in the trial, but like expression of character and of that wonderful and much productive "conversation" that never should be lacking with its handler.

I could tell you a lot of other episodes of "live hunting" to describe and to exemplify how the Bracco, that was nicknamed "dog of reason", knowing how to resolve any situation on behalf of the gamebag, for the delight of its proprietor. A story would come out of it! It says itself that: "Not all the rings succeed with the hole" and certainly also between the Braccos find, luck in numbers is always minor, the mediocre and the difference; but also we should affirm that when an Italian Bracco reflects fully the features of the breed, having behind himself centuries of selection "under the net", with the arquebus and with the shotgun, is a hunting dog that does not have a rival. Restoring the attractive words of the Cancellari, I want to remember who never experienced this noble and ancient breed, that: "To hunt with a Bracco rich of means and of style, it is really an attractive thing and highest poetry, without getting nervous, with the most cordial and peaceful collaboration between dog and hunter, for the delight to explore the ground, to contemplate a majestic service, to hit with a calm and secure gunshot. Also outside the ground of hunting the Bracco is a companion that knows how to understand, to love and to be loved."