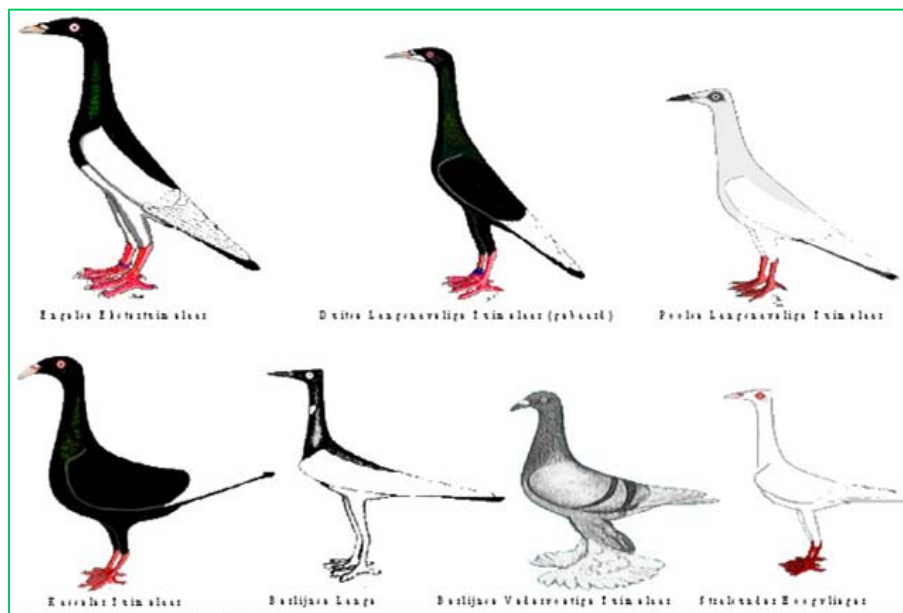


# Introduction to the Long faced Tumblers

## Introduction to the Long faced Tumblers

By: N. Akkerman

For a large part all Long Faced Tumblers share the same history. Keeping this in mind when reading their breed descriptions, will give you a better understanding of their characteristics. They don't just share a lot of positive breed characteristics, but also several negative ones. We will explain further in this article.



Drawings, left to right:  
1<sup>st</sup> row

- English Magpie
- German Long faced Tumbler
- Polish Long faced Tumbler

2<sup>nd</sup> row

- Kassel Tumbler
- Berlin Long faced Tumbler
- Berlin Muffed Tumbler
- Stralsund Highflyer

### Judging

Any Judge who pokes in the pen will usually make any Long faced Tumbler more shy and anxious. This is not due to lack of show pen training, but the logical consequence of the rather shy character of the birds. However, a judge who uses his judge's stick every now and then often outside of the Pen, will catch the attention of the pigeons. They will almost always react by positioning in the desired natural stance. There are pigeons that can be positioned in the Pen by means of a judging stick, but they are the exception on the rule.

This is a tip for the breeders: before penning at the show, gently rub the eye ceres with a wet tissue. This will remove dried feather wax and stimulate the flow of blood in the eye ceres. Both breeders and judges will be astonished how intensely coloured the eye ceres will become through this simple measure, the result will hold during the time of the show, especially in red and plum-blue eye ceres the result can be superb!

### Type and Stance

The first thing that is noticed when comparing these breeds is the type. All these breeds have in common that they are long and slender, although still having their own and very distinctive appearance, however, with some restriction to the Berlin Muffed Tumbler, which is unlike the others in posture. They do have the same long legs and neck, but the body and breast are rather broad. Seen from above the body is wedge-shaped. In the other breeds the breast is rather narrow and the wings are carried parallel to the body. This type of birds have a long head and a long beak, and also a long neck and long legs. But there is long and long. As you will understand there is a fair dissimilarity in size in the different breeds. The English Magpie is the largest of the Long faced Tumblers and with its height of 32 cm by far the longest, whereas the Berlin Muffed Tumbler with its height of 22 cm is probably the smallest of these breeds. The body stance of the various Long faced Tumblers also differs. Four of them have a nearly horizontal stance (see drawing above) these being the Berlin Long faced, the Berlin Muffed, the Stralsund and the Kassel Tumbler. Opposed to these are the English Magpie, German Long faced, Polish long faced (plus the Danish Tumbler, who is not included in this Article) also have a sloping downwards backline, so generally called an 'upright stance'.

**Head studies**

**1<sup>st</sup> row**

- Kassel Tumbler with arched head.
- English Magpie with arched head
- Polish Long faced Tumbler with slightly arched head.



**2<sup>nd</sup> row**

- Berlin Long faced Tumbler with flat head.
- German Long faced Tumbler with flat head in front of the eyes.
- Berlin Muffed Tumbler with arched head and angular back of head.
- Stralsund Highflyer with flat forehead and angular back of head.



**Head form**

The biggest difference is in the head form, more specific: the line of the Top of the skull, that varies from straight (flat) to more or less arched/Curving, or angular. (see drawings). Although the head forms of the mentioned breeds are really different, they have one thing in common: The forehead is long and not 'Pinched' or weak looking and should have substance, while the head itself is slender, even narrow. Then again, in this narrowness there are gradations according to the Breed. The head needs to be judged by looking from above from the back to the front! If done the other way around, the underline of the head will disturb the impression and possible faults will not be clearly noticed.

In all these breeds the same type of faults occur in the head form. Often we see birds with a pinched head or a 'break' between the Beak and Forehead, in the supposedly smooth line from tip of Beak to the top of the skull). The reverse fault is a prominence between the Beak and Forehead, The 3rd Bird has a 'Dished' Face, (a concave Forehead) (bird 3). Still both faults are not necessarily linked together. Often the head line is fine, with only the front of the head more or less pinched (bird 4).

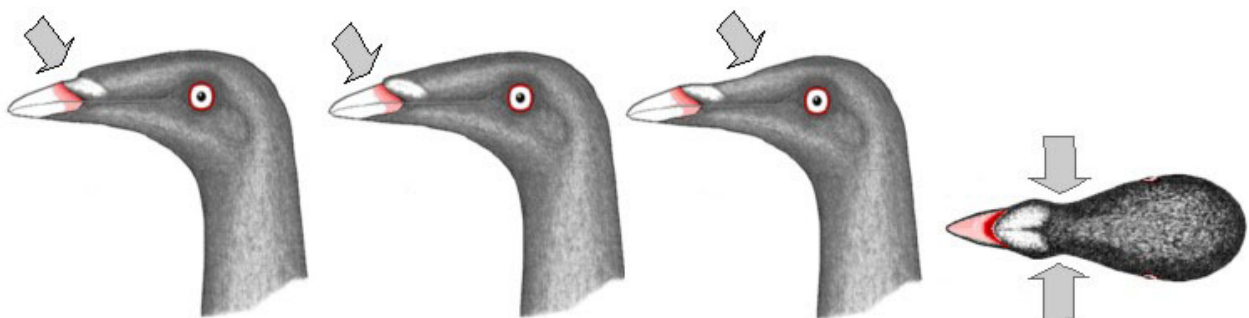
Apart from the concave Forehead, we know two other varieties of these fault, namely "the Break between the Beak (inclusive the wattle) and Forehead" (bird 1) and "the Break between the Beak (exclusive the wattle) and Forehead" the line rises slightly from the Beak to the Forehead (bird 2). These two faults are somewhat alike.

Break, /Dip in the Beak Cere (1) caused by a fault is hardly ever seen, but when it is, it is a severe fault, being a anomaly of the natural form of the nose wattles.

The Beak is lower, not in a continuous line with the Forehead and can be because the Beak Cere is too large or 'proud'(2) happens just before the nose wattles. Almost all Long Faced Tumblers more or less show these fault.

Any obvious break or narrowing at the root of the beak will result in a lower grading, depending on the severity of the fault and also if it concerns a young or old bird. Young birds often have a slight breaking that will often correct in its second year, due to the fact that the feathers, which are needed for the wanted 'filling' of the head, grow larger each year (at least during 3 to 4 years) and soon will restore the breaking in the headline.

**Drawing 3. Faults in head form, from Left to the right, # 1 to # 4.**



Next there are faults that specific and are known to happen in a distinct breed. For instance: a ram's head or a saddle head in the Berlin Long. (Picture 4) Still these malformations are not exclusively seen in the Berlin Long, but also happen in the Polish Long faced Tumblers, probably as a result of crossings with the Berlin. Occasionally the head of the Polish Long faced Tumblers tends to resemble that of the Berlin. Things like this are described more specifically in the standard descriptions of the named breeds.

**Picture 4**

Left to right: # 1 to # 3

1 - Ram shape head

2 - Concave or 'Dished' shape head (as in a Plate/Teller)

3 - Too long in back head



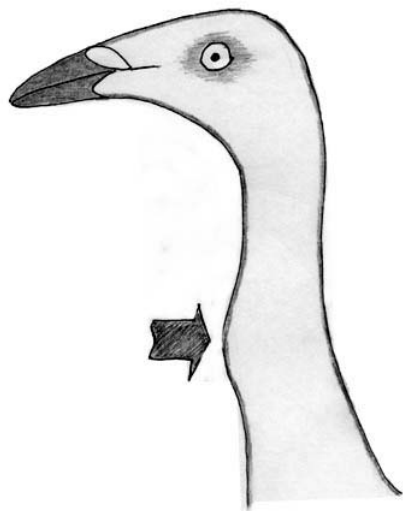
These faults are mentioned here because a arched headline can be characteristic in several breeds, while in others it is a severe fault. (Picture 5) A hollow head line is always a fault. In conclusion we can say that each deviation of the wanted headline is noted as a severe fault.

### Neck

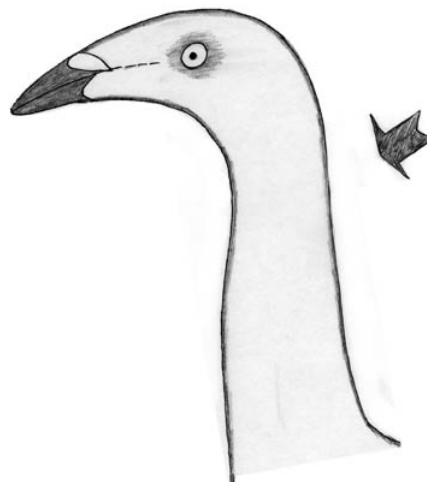
In all Long Faced Tumblers the neck is long and straight. Sometimes we see a fault know as 'Bagadet knot' (Picture 6) This fault is a legacy of the French Bagadet, which is sometimes crossed in to breed longer necks and legs. This fault is sometimes wrongfully noted in the judge's report; a bird that doesn't stretch the neck will always show a kink or bend in the neck. This will not show in pigeons with a normal neck length, but in the Long Faced tumblers it does show. This kink is different from the untypical true Bagadet knot though. However, the true Bagadet knot is almost completely bred out of these Tumbler Breeds, so there is no longer justified to start a witch-hunt for this!

Another fault that we dislike to find in the Long faced Tumblers is the swan-neck. (Pic 7). This means the neck is carried in a flattened curve, somewhat similar to the neck carriage of the mute swan. This is not a common fault, but if present, the judge will deduct at least two points.

A fault that does occur regularly and is also very hereditary, is too much back head. This fault becomes visible in a too long back head, and is a discontinuation of the Smooth lines needed; in breeds with an angular back head it results in an oblique flattening between the back of the head and the bottom line of the skull, therefore causing a discontinuation in the smooth lines from the Neck to the Skull, as is stated in the standard description. This fault is deducted with at least one point.



**Picture 6.**



**Picture 7.**

## *Legs*

Long slender pigeons go with long and slender legs. In most of these breeds that is so, but again the Berlin Muffed Tumbler is the exception to the rule, because of its heavy leg and foot feathering. A wide leg stance, spread legs or knock-kneed, are not appreciated. These are faults that can happen in all long-legged pigeons, also in Long faced Tumblers. The width of the leg stance wanted, varies per breed. The Berlin Long faced Tumbler has the narrowest stance and the English Magpie the widest. In any case the legs, seen from the front, need to be straight and placed well under the body. Knocked knees are a severe fault. Frog legs, meaning the thighs are coming forward from the body, this sometimes happen in too upright birds. This is also a fault, the same as very rough feathering on the thighs.

## *Wings*

All Long faced Tumblers carry their wing tips on the tail. Wings that are carried below the tail are a fault, as are crossing wing tips.

Due to the short feathering, in all these breeds - except for the Berlin Muffed Tumbler - the shoulders are rather prominent from the body. This makes the looks of the shoulders rather Sharp in these breeds. Only in the Berlin Muffed Tumbler the wing butts have to be covered by the breast feathering.

## *Tail*

Broad carries tails don't fit these slender birds and will immediately strike the eyes of a specialist. Often these tail are also split tails or they tend to be split. As a rule the tail should be narrow, only 2 tail feathers wide. Another thing that can happen is a wry tail, carried to the left or right of 'True'. The judge has no mercy on such birds; they don't belong in a show.

Another possible fault is too narrow tail feathers, being pointy instead of rounded and with narrow vanes. This is sometimes a case of too close inbreeding and will result in a lower ranking, especially when the tail feathers – in a spread tail – don't close properly.

Hanging outer tail feathers is another fault, which occurs more often. This is a heredity fault and – according to the Dutch judging system - the judge will deduct one point. A properly closed tail is demanded in the standard.

The Polish Long Faced Tumbler sometimes have a broad, rather full tail but as long as narrow, flat tails are still an exception in this breed, we have to close our eyes to this for the time being. Just a remark at the judging report will do.

Still in the final awarding these pigeons should not precedence birds that have all the wanted breed qualifications plus a correct tail.

The English Magpie may carry its tail too high. The tail is not carried in an unbroken line with the back. This is mainly owing to the nervous character of the breed. However, when the pigeon also carries the tail high when in rest, this is a true fault.

With these general rules we hope to have given you an insight in the most important things when judging Long faced Tumblers.

In the following we will have a closer look at the German Long faced Tumbler.