



The Criteria of Judgment and Song Theory of the Malinois Waterslager Song Canary

Published by the Italian National Technical Commission of the Malinois Waterslager Song Canary

Translated from Italian by Sebastian Vallelunga

Preface

The song of the Malinois Waterslager canary, developed by means of selection in Flanders since the last quarter of the 19th century, is composed of various parts called tours or song schemes which, generally, following the original Flemish nomenclature, are indicated using terms that are etymologically purely onomatopoeic and difficult to translate into our language.

Edited by the National Malinois Technical Commission
Aldo Trubiano, President
Fausto Bosi, Director
Roberto Gabriele, Director

With the collaboration of F. Di Giorgio, G. Celsi, and F. Busso
With thanks to G. Paolo MignoneSong

Theory and the Definition of Archetype

The tour forms of the standard or archetype of this singer may be classified by means of two fundamental types of keys which are rhythmic in nature:

I. The first rhythmic key, the tours of interrupted scheme are:

1 Klokkenden 2 Bollenden 3 Chorren 4 Staaltonen 5 Tjonkken 6 Tjokken 7 Fluiten 8 Soeten
9 Bellen 10 Woeten 11 Schokken.

II. The second rhythmic key, the tours of uninterrupted scheme are:

1 Rollenden Waterslag 2 Knorren 3 Fluitenrollen 4 Tjokkenrollen 5 Belrollen.

Within the sphere of classification, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the tours of interrupted scheme predominate making the Malinois song typically a beaten one, as opposed to the Harzer which is typically a rolled song which excels in the uninterrupted tours.

At this point it would be good to specify the importance that breeders of Malinois give to the necessity of stabilizing a clear demarcation between the song of the Malinois and that of the Harzer in order to root a rigorous and precise conviction of selection and therefore of genetics between the two singers, and the grave error inherent in pairing Harzers and Malinois, with the illusory goal of attempting to obtain the deep notes of the first in the repertoire of the second.

Postulates of the Judging System

The system of judging or of attributing points is based on certain postulates which date back in time. In fact, their origins are the same as the system adopted for the Harzer canary proposed by Dr. Wolf. The principles of his system were gathered, organized, and expanded.

Each system of judgment consists essentially **in the logical application of the principles of the standard** relative to the theoretical archetype, as in the classification contained in the following chapter.



Canary in Song Cage

- The cage is in beach wood and unstained
- Length 21 cm – Width 14 cm – Height 15 cm
- Perches are set at the 3rd wire from the feeder and the 7th from the door

The Classification of the Song Tours

I. The principal tours, including those which reproduce the sounds of water: Klokkende and Bollende; the flutes: Fluiten and Soeten; the metallic sounds: Staaltonen and Tjonken.

II. The secondary tours, among which are found the nightingale notes: Tjokken and Woeten; the Chorren and Knorren; the fastest form of the Waterslags: Rollende; the Bellen.

III. Finally the Schokkel, an inferior tour.

The classification of the tours, also called the Wolf classification, was studied in a complete and profound way by this same Dr. Wolf; using the system of multiplication by three, he enumerated his principles of valuation in the following form:

Inferior	1	2	3
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Secondary	1-2	3-4	5-6
Principal	1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9
	1-2-3-4	5-6-7-8	9-10-11-12
	Sufficient	Good	Optimal

A study of the table thus exposed, including that of the groups of the numerical valuations there contained, conduct one to the direct formulation of the three “bundles” Wolf used to attribute assessment in the judgment seat as is restated in the table which follows:

Wolf’s Numerical Bundles

- 1. For tours judged sufficient: 1/3 of the maximum point value on the standard**
- 2. For tours judged good: more than 1/3 and up to 2/3 of the maximum point value on the standard**
- 3. For tours judged optimal: more than 2/3 and up to 3/3 of the maximum point value on the standard**

Technical Foundations of the Scale

The international scale of the Malinois is based on the system of multiples of 3 and therefore, according to the numerical bundles of Wolf, when the **tours** of merit are classified as **sufficient**, these obtain a point value equal to one-third of the maximum attributed to them on the scale; those classified as **good** obtain a point value from one-third to less than or equal to two-thirds of the maximum on the scale; those classified **optimal** obtain a point value more than two-thirds of the maximum on the scale.

Even the defective tours follow the same modality and are subdivided into **less grave** and penalized with one point, **grave** and penalized with two points, and **very grave** and penalized with three points.

For **Tjap** (chop) is foreseen the immediate disqualification of the singer and his distancing from the holding shelves.

The canary with a score of below 60 points total is judged **insufficient**, with this indicated on the score sheet in the form of an abbreviation: **insuff.**

The total point score for the tours, including the value awarded for impression, is multiplied by three in consideration of the fact that in the past there were three judges and the point value attributed by each was added to the other to get the bird’s total.

For each team is foreseen the possibility of receiving points for **team harmony**. These harmony points as well as the demerit points for faults are not multiplied by three.

Starting the Judgment

The methodology that it is advised to follow in estimating and determining the song value of a canary is composed of two phases: the cage numbers are recorded at the top of the score sheet; a line is drawn which corresponds to the extinct (or very rare) sounds; the subject birds are attentively observed to determine that all is in order and the first sounds, which are generally imperfect, are listened to in order to determine individually the presence of water sounds, metallic sounds, and flutes, which are indicated with a small dot on the score sheet; later, as the individual tours are repeated or modulated in a better form, the initial point values are indicated, or revised with the improvement of the sound; according to the value of each of these one must proceed to the successive approximations in determining the numeric values which are ever more exact in reflecting the song's value; this gives account of all of the tour schemes, of the whole song together, of the **impression** made by the song, and also of any defects of the song.

To synthesize, applying general observation and listening in the beginning is used as a song diagnosis in terms of the bird's morphology and of the song scheme and its analytical keys. in the numerical valuation of the tours that are evaluated: of the Wolf bundles and the present criteria, taking into consideration, among other things, any understanding of the criteria themselves: **repetitions, tour length, tone modulation, tour 'color' or timbre within the context of the entire song**—slow, fast, interrupted.

General Norms of Judgment of the Tours on the Part of the Judge

Regarding the song in itself, the judge must attune himself to the following general parameters:

- Tonality
- Timbre
- Rhythm
- Structure
- Persistence
- Interpretation

Specifically, point 6 pertains particularly to the thematic variations and modulations of the tours themselves as presented by the singer.

The six general norms established above are those valid for all tours and necessarily

represent, in order of priority, the Wolf classes; with the checks provided by norms 1 and 2, the judge determines that the song is sufficient; with those provided in norms 3, 4, and 5, that it is good; with that in norm 6, that it is optimal.

Analysis of the Tours of the Waterslager

The waterslags are presented in an archetypical or standard way in three distinct tours:

- Klokkende Waterslag
- Bollende Waterslag
- Rollende Waterslag

These are separately judged for their own typical characteristics.

1. Klokkende Waterslag Typical Characteristics

- a) Tour rhythm: well noted for avoiding any connection from note to repeated note.
- b) Tour structure: referenced to the varieties which are well known— curved Klok and beaten or hammered Klok.

Preference—Kloks with a clear resonance of water are to be preferred, repeated in 4-5 beats with a bass tone, pure sound, tour rhythm and structure containing variations on the melodic theme.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—manifested without a liquid resonance, sharp or unclear tones; no points
- **Sufficient**—slight impurity of timbre, good resonance of water, good tonality, little persistence: 4 points. The same but with more repetitions (4-5 beats) 4-5 points.
- **Good**—notable tonality, purity of sound, rhythm, structure and resonance of water, well delineated (4-5) beats but only slightly persistent; 5-6 points. The same but with persistence and variations; 7-8 points.
- **Optimal**—manifested with purity of sound, rhythm, structure, good tonality and abundant resonance of water; well persistent sound and other variations on the melodic theme; 9-10 points. The same with repeated variations, good variety of curves, and variations on the melodic theme with one or more modulations with a bass tone; 11-12 points.

2. Bollende Waterslag Typical Characteristics

- a) Rhythm: noted for avoiding either interconnections or pauses.
- b) Structure: clear initial accent of beats.

Preference—one must take into consideration the particular and attention-grabbing notability of the initial percussion of the tour, which must demonstrate a resonance of water, a regular cadence, and little speed from repetition to repetition.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—manifested without the resonance of liquid, sharp or unclear tones; no points.
- **Sufficient**—slight impurity of timbre, good tonality but only slightly stressed; 3 points.
- **Good**—notable tonality of sound; rhythm and structure well accented but only slightly persistent in sound; 4-5 points.
- **Optimal**—manifested in purity of sound, rhythm, and structure, good persistence of sound, with variations on the tour's rhythmic theme; 7-8 points. The same with one or more modulations of a bass sound or tone; 9 points.

3. Rollende Waterslag Typical Characteristics

- a) Rhythm: absence of notable pauses between the attached notes.
- b) Structure: typically continuous.

Preference - those individuals are to be preferred which express the tours with a calm but fast rhythm, good and clear tones, clean and notable resonance. In the tour the depth of tone, the clear resonance of water, and a regular cadence must be taken into consideration.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—too high a tone, flatness of sound, hard consonants, scarcity of water sound; no points.
- **Sufficient**—slight impurity of timbre, fair tonality, a poorly emphasized execution; 2-3 points.
- **Good**—good tonality, clear and correct timbre, good rhythm and structure, fair persistence; 4-5 points.
- **Optimal**—sung in a sonorous mode, clear timbre with clean resonance, rhythm sustained but unhurried, with variations and modulations of sound; 5-6 points.

4. Chor-Knor Typical Characteristics

Note: these two tours, at the end of the judging, are reunited into a single point value.

- a) Chor is presented as an interval or repetition; it is a tour that is typical and widespread among wild birds, particularly the nightingale.
- b) Knor is a tour that is presented with the characteristics of a roll.

Preference - in Chor, the forms which vibrate on the final consonant are to be preferred; in Knor the forms in which the final bass tone persists in a vowel are to be preferred

Judgment: while taking into account the difference in preferences in the repetitions of the two tours, it is foreseen that the same criteria would be used.

- **Sufficient**—non-modulated tone, not clear; 2 points.

- **Good**—sonorous tone, very clear, long sequence; 3-4 points.
- **Optimal**—as above for the two tours but both sung by the same singer, 5-6 points.

5. Staaltonen Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: well noted for avoiding interconnections, rhythmic interval very long.

Structure: structure dominance of metallic resonance moderately high and based on open vowels.

Preference: clear and subtle resonance of metal; vibrant sound of a high tonality, but without sharpness, which is protracted in slowly fading resonance. This resonance is very difficult and somewhat rare.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—absence of metallic resonance, unclear timbre, sharp and strident tonality; no points.
- **Sufficient**—great tone, not sharp, clear timbre, metallic resonance slightly accented, slightly persisting sound; 3 points.
- **Good**—with major resonance, more persistence; 4 points. Clear timbre, good structure, major vibration; 5-6 points. great tone, great metallic resonance, major persistence, modulation of sound; 7 points.
- **Optimal**—special form of staaltonen with the presence of Tjonken, with modulated tonality persistence of sound; 8-9 points.

6. Fluiten Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: pauses are well marked and very regular, somewhat slow rhythm.

Structure: relaxed transient phrases, particularly simple in structure.

Preference: They are to be preferred, as opposed to more simple structures, when presented in syllabic groups constituted by a single consonant which is profound and bass.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—unclear and strident timbre, fast rhythm; no points.
- **Sufficient**—bass and correct tonality, high but not sharp timbre, slightly persistent; 3 points.
- **Good**—clear timbre, unhurried rhythm, bass and correct tonality, major persistence of sound; 4-5 points. The same with modulations and variations; 6-7 points.
- **Optimal**—with criteria based on tonality, timbre and persistence, additional points may be attributed up to 8-9 points.

7. Bellen Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: tour weakly rhythmic with short pauses only slightly marked but completely perceptible.

Structure: linear, constituted by simple syllabic groups, with an execution which is not too persistent.

Preference: sound favoring the tones emitted by tapping crystal, grand and silvery, developed in the higher registers, of a non-exclusive duration.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—timbre which is only slightly clear or strident, too fast in rhythm; no points.
- **Sufficient**—tone slightly high but not sharp, clear timbre, slightly persistent; 2-3 points.
- **Good**—the same with silvery tonality, rhythm, and correct structure, good persistence, but not invasive with other tours; 4 points.
- **Optimal**—silvery and with a slight intonation of water, bass tonality and balanced (li-lung, lu-lung), very correct in form; 5-6 points.

8. Belrol Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: a rolled tour and, therefore, continuous; it is a variation on Bellen which is very accelerated.

Structure: It has a linear structure in the high registers but is not sharp.

Preference: forms which are resonant and with limited persistence.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—manifested without clear timbre, dry and hard tone; no points.
- **Sufficient**—bass tone with clear timbre, with absence of resonance expressed in long rolls; 2-3 points.
- **Good**—high and silvery tonality, persistent content, good resonance; 4 points.
- **Optimal**—the same but very well modulated in tonal registry, content with very clear resonance; 5-6 points.

9. Fluitenrol Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: almost imperceptible and particularly simple in structure, very short in relation to the duration of each beat.

Judgment: criteria nearly identical to Fluiten.

- **Insufficient**—unclear timbre, strident; no points.
- **Sufficient**—bass and correct tonality; 2 points.
- **Good**—the same with very clear timbre, with major persistence and variations; 3-4 points.
- **Optimal**—in relation to the tonality, timbre, and variations points are attributed up to 5-6 points.

10, Tjokken (Tjokkenrol) Typical Characteristics

Rhythm: somewhat slow, well-marked pauses (see Bellen).

Structure: clean breaks, brief pauses in Tjokkenrol with a linear tonal line.

Preference: typical nightingale tour which makes itself heard in a muffled way at the start, sweet at first, with marked and prolonged rhythmic breaks which are later reduced to a rhythm of harder and accelerated form (Tjokkenrol). The very short emissions with strong breaks are to be preferred.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—unclear execution, flat emission; no points.
- **Sufficient**—good tonality, clear timbre, and fast rhythm; 2 points.
- **Good**—the same but with regular rhythm, strong structure, correct persistence; 3-4 points.
- **Optimal**—very well modulated, with the presence of the two tours, paying attention to the faster rhythm of the second tour, very clear tonality; 5-6 points.

11. Impression Typical Characteristics

With points for impression it is intended to reward the quality of the song in its entirety. Impression, therefore, must take into consideration the wholeness of the song, that is, the sum of all the sounds considered in their complexity on the score card.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—frequent interruption of the execution, fast, with demerit (negative) points; no points.
- **Sufficient**—uninterrupted execution, rhythm of the song fairly slow, average point values in individual tours in the sufficient range; 1 point.
- **Good**—uninterrupted execution, correct tour rhythm, average point values in individual tours prevalently in the good range or even some optimal point values in a tour or two; 2 points.
- **Optimal**—the same with the average point value in the optimal range; good Klok and Bol, good flutes and metallic sounds, song timbre is watery and crystalline; 3 points.

12. Stam (Team) Harmony

Belgian judge, Mr. G. Lelievre, on page 9 of his book *The Malinois Waterslager Canary* described the term Stam thus:

“...by stam is meant a group of birds which are 4 in number and represent a line, with the same song, same direction, same tours, and same tone. All of these should belong to the same breeder. For this special aspect is foreseen a small number of supplementary points; that is, for stam harmony: 3 points which are not multiplied by three.”

This concept of harmony allows the judge to evaluate and reward the selective direction of the singers, and the talent of the singers to give a beautiful interpretation should be kept in mind. In each case the intelligent and consistent work of the breeder is to be rewarded.

13. N. B.: The impression points are multiplied by three; the harmony points are not.

Judgment:

- **Insufficient**—song direction of the individual singers is of a different form one from another; no points.
- **Sufficient**—some slight difference in song direction form and in the tonality of the individuals; 1 point.
- **Good**—very slight difference in direction, good quality sound; 2 points.
- **Optimal**—the same song direction with the same tonality, sounds of good and optimal quality; 3 points.

Penalties

Neutral Defects—sharp or acute tones (Hoge Spitse), high to the limit of tolerance but supported by sweet consonants which the judge has already taken into consideration on the score sheet; no points.

Slightly Grave Defects—rough aspirations (Ophaal-Riet); strident acute tones (Hoge Spitse); nasal tones (Neuzige); Snetter-Snitter; Tjip, Tjep, Tsiet; all just noticeable; 1 point.

Grave Defects—the same but accentuated and slightly standing out from the song but not persistent; 2 points.

Very Grave Defects—the same but very accentuated and standing out, often persistent in the context of the whole song; 3 points.

The Most Grave Defects—Tjap; disqualification.

Motives for Disqualification—Article 24 of the Order of Judges Regulations of the FOI states:

I. The following may not be entered in a contest and therefore may not be judged.

- a) a subject which does not bear an irremovable band
- b) a subject wearing a band not issued by the FOI
- c) a subject wearing a band which does not conform to those envisioned for the particular breed or a band that is modified or is in anyway irregular
- d) the subject bears some sign which can serve to identify the breeder (it is the same case if the sign is on the cage)
- e) the total or partial absence of a limb, of one or more toes, of one or more nails; partial or total blindness.

FOI

National Technical Commission of the Malinois Song Canary

Regulations for Malinois Song Canary Contests

The present Regulations have the scope of authority over the development of song contests of the Malinois Waterslager Canary.

The song contests proposed by the various associations must be approved by the competent Federation Organizations.

The subsequent classes are to be included in these contests:

CLASS A: stams of 4 young canaries from the same breeder

CLASS B: stams of 4 adult canaries from the same breeder

SINGLES: young canaries from the same breeder presented without a limit in number

COUPLES: groups of 2 canaries as described in class "A" with a limit in number

Article 1

Each class of canaries present at a contest has a separate slate of awards; the consistency of awards from year to year is to be determined by the Organizing Committee according to the possibilities and availability of the awards themselves; in each case the assignment of awards for each category must be made before the beginning of judging. All Malinois Waterslager Canaries at a contest must be banded with an irremovable FOI band, a registered band number, including the year of birth of the canary and the progressive number of the individual canary.

The director of the contest or the person responsible for transporting canaries from the holding room to the judging room must not be competitors and are required to maintain absolute discretion on the results of judgment.

Article 2

Whenever possible the exhibitors must present the subjects in proper song cages, which must conform to the prescriptions of the FOI-COM. The cages are to be in dried beech, without coloration, of the following dimensions: length 21 cm; width 14 cm; height 15 cm. The perches go at the third wire from the feeder end and at the seventh from the door end. The seeds go in the right-hand cup and water in the left when seen from that end of the cage.

Article 3

Upon acceptance, the subjects must be registered in the proper contest Registry which must be in the custody of the organizing club's Contest Organizing Committee's Secretary. The Contest Director is to be occupied in their compilation; in addition, he is in charge of:

- sealing the cage with the proper pliers provided and with the codes well visible
- placing on the same a tag with the progressive order number recorded in the Registry of Acceptance, making this the regulation number for the contest
- placing the cages on the proper shelves, covered with a green curtain, in the location which was predetermined
- drawing, in the presence of a competent member of the Organizing Committee, numbers corresponding to the teams presented for evaluation which must be maintained in secret as should be the drawing itself

The operation of caging up the teams must be completed by the hour of 8 PM of the day preceding the start of judging.

Article 4

For the whole period of time preceding the contest and during the contest itself the canaries are to be left resting on the shelves in semi-darkness; each team, before being judged, must be prepared with an "anticipation time" of 10 minutes and placed in an open carrier in order to give the canaries a chance to refresh themselves before being brought into the judging room.

There must, therefore, be two carriers in readiness: because while a first team is being judged, 4 other canaries must be prepared in the second carrier...and it proceeds in this way until the end of the contest.

Article 5

All of the subjects placed in the contest must be presented for the judge's evaluation in groups of 4 (within the limits of possibility; this is also the case for the subjects presented as singles).

Article 6

The committee delineates a maximum time of 20 or 25 minutes during which the judgment occurs on the international scale: the judgment may not be appealed.

The audition must be done in a room which can be artificially illuminated and warmed to a temperature of 20 degrees C, higher than that where the canaries were kept before the judgment; in this last room the temperature should be maintained at no higher than 16-18 degrees C.

The number of teams to be evaluated is absolutely not to exceed 20 per day.

Article 7

In case the number of contestants is higher than foreseen, the Organizing Committee, with the agreement of the President of the Committee, may request from the order of judges of FOI the addition of a second judge, or to ask the judge already present to continue with the judgment in the successive days after the originally anticipated end of the contest; in this case the FOI is to be made aware in order to correctly compute the number of birds per day

for each judge.

Article 8

The Judging Room is to have the proper score cards on hand where the contest number of each cage must be written as well as the valuation of the bird is to be marked down. At the end of each day of the contest, the score cards must be consigned to the Secretary of the Contest Organizing Committee who is to treat them with secrecy until the end of the contest and the carrying out of the formal announcement of the scores of merit.

In the case of a tie in points between two or more teams in forming the rankings, the team which obtained the highest point value in Klokkende Waterslag is to be preferred, and so on.

The same criterion is to be adopted for subjects presented as singles.

Immediately after the judgment of each team or single canary, the judge has the authority to have the birds removed from the song cages in the presence of the Director of the Contest in order to see if the caged and judged canaries correspond to those registered.

Article 9

It is prohibited for anyone to approach the judging room during the operation of judging; only the regulated learner judges inscribed from time to time, properly authorized by the President of the Malinois Technical Commission, are to be admitted; no exception is admissible and the duly charged Judges are rendered guarantors of the application of this article and the others contained in this set of Regulations.

Article 10

As part of the evaluation of the notes it is foreseen, for every canary presented in the contest, a point score for “impression” as indicated on the score sheet, from 1 to 3 points—and for team harmony from 1 to 3 points.

Article 11

Those canaries which do not achieve 60 points have not made the minimum total necessary and on the score sheet is written “insuff.”. For those canaries which did not sing is written N.C. (non cantata—no song).

Article 12

In the case that the Jury is made up of more than one Judge, each judge is to separately fill in his own score sheet: later, another single score sheet will be completed which will reflect the average of the others.

Article 13

The canaries which score 90 points or more are “Premi di Onore” (awarded with honors).

Article 14

In the course of the operation of receiving the birds and of the song contest, it is rigorously prohibited for judges, contestants,, or anyone else who is not officially assigned to the receiving and the care of the canaries to have access to the room in which they are lodged.

Article 15

It is also rigorously prohibited for a Judge to enter his own birds in a category of a contest, or to have them exhibited for judgment by a third party, in an event in which he is called to judge.

Article 16

It is not acceptable (on the part of the FOI) to hold a song contest prior to November 1st.

Article 17

It is absolutely the responsibility of the Associations running song contests to regulate heat, qualified personnel, and light levels until the end of the contest itself.

Article 18

The designation of judges for each contest is to be done in good time with respect to responsibilities, rotation, and equitable distribution of tasks.

Article 19

The breeder with the highest point total in the course of a season, as determined by calculating the totals from 3 principal competitions is proclaimed “champion of the year” and more precisely:

1. Regional or Interregional (in the absence of a choice of a regional champion) Champion
2. Special Reserve
3. Italian Champion

The points are assigned as follows:

STAM/TEAM	COUPLE	SINGLES
1st—15 points	1st—12 points	1st—9 points
2nd—12 points	2nd—9 points	2nd—6 points
3rd—9 points	3rd—6 points	3rd—3 points

The results are to be determined by the National Technical Commission.

Article 20

For all that which has not been contemplated in the present Regulations, one must refer to the Regulations of the FOI Order of Judges and other Statutes of, and Regulations of, the FOI and of the COM

