Australian Boran Cattle Inc Breed Standard
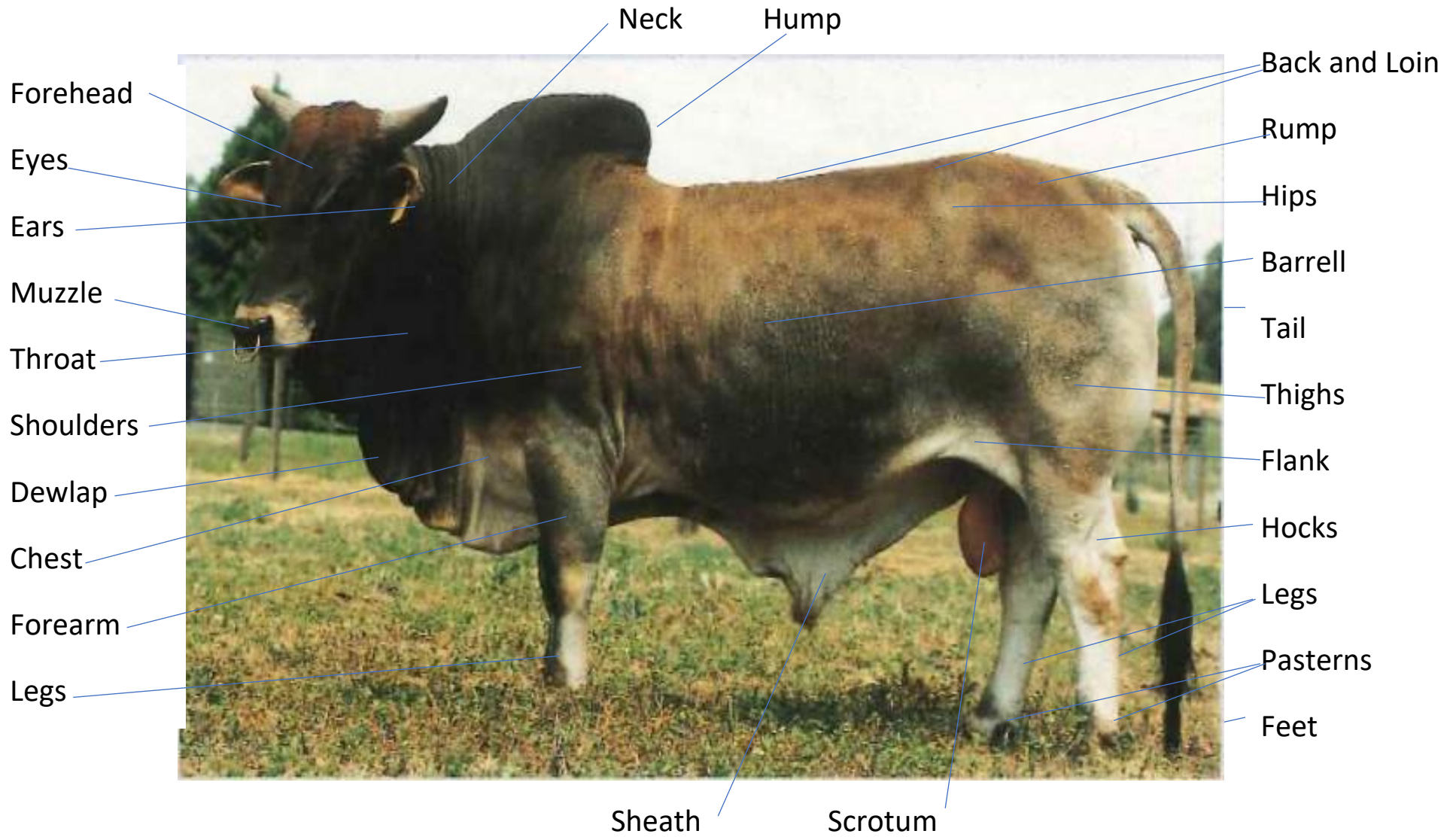

Contents

Purpose of the standard

The Australian Boran Cattle Inc breed standard is a set of guidelines developed to ensure that the Boran cattle produced by breeders conform to the ideal characteristics of the breed. The breed standard provides a description of desirable traits to inform herd improvement and to assist decision making when selecting animals to purchase or register.
The structural information contained herein is derived from Beefclass Structural Assessment (developed by the MLA and BIA) and Evaluating and Reporting Bull Fertility (used by Cattle veterinarians to undertake Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluations).

General Appearance

The Boran is a hardy breed adapted to harsh conditions with a high resistance to pests and diseases. It is a free moving breed which covers large amounts of territory and utilises low quality feed. The Boran is of medium frame size with sound muscling and demonstrates good growth for age and high relative weaning weights. Body parts are in perfect symmetry. The breed reflects considerable sexual differences, with bulls much larger than cows that are smaller and of a more feminine appearance. Both sexes display typical Boran characteristics (hump, capacity, skin, muscling, head, muzzle, condition, tail, dewlap, etc..).

Terminology

Neck · Hump · Back and Loin · Rump · Hips · Barrell · Tail · Thighs · Flank · Hocks · Legs · Pasterns · Feet

Forehead · Eyes · Ears · Muzzle · Throat · Shoulders · Dewlap · Chest · Forearm · Legs

Sheath · Scrotum

Characteristics

Component	Desirable characteristics
Head	Bull coarse and masculine, well hooded eyes, dark pigmentation around the eyes is desirable.
	Cow more feminine, well hooded eyes, dark pigmentation around the eyes is desirable.
	Head slightly convex when viewed from the side. Muzzle broad, dark pigmentation desirable.
Neck	Bull short, strong, thick and muscular, darker in colour. Cow short and strong.
	Neck blends smoothly into the shoulders and head.
Hump	Rounded thoracic or neck hump, positioned above and in-line with the front legs.
	Bull large often leaning to the rear. Cow rounded and smaller.
Back	Long, straight, strong and well fleshed.
Chest and shoulders	Bull smooth, wide and deep; shoulders broader than rump. Cows smooth, wide and deep: shoulders and hips similar in width.
	Well sprung ribs showing good capacity.
Sheath and scrotum	Moderate umbilical fold. Sheath firm skin, good muscle control and angulation.
	Scrotum large, smooth and firm with a narrow neck. Testicles even size.
Udder	High tight and well attached. Teats small to medium sized. Four quarters of equal size.
Hindquarters	Wide rump and hips. Rump long and broad with a slope of approximately 22.5 degrees from hip to pins bones.
	Upper thighs full and thick, rounded and well fleshed thick through the twist.
	Tail low set. Long and narrowing towards the point, well-formed and pigmented switch.
Feet and legs	Legs medium in length, strong and squarely set. In proportion to and balance with the rest of the body.
	Front legs straight; hind legs wide and strong with good angles not sickle hocked or post legged.
	Moderate bone. Sound joints.
	Hooves straight, symmetrical and well pigmented with even sized claws.
Hide and Coat	Skin thick, loose and motile, preferably with dark pigmentation. Large well-defined dewlap.
	Hair short, glossy and oil rich.
	Diverse colours; includes white, red, grey, spots, pattens and dark points.
Size	Medium frame score.
Movement	Free moving with rear hooves tracking into the front hoof prints.
Temperament	Docile easily handled. Responds well to human contact.
	Strong herd instinct, good collective and individual creche instinct.
Fertility	Bull highly fertile, virile, high libido.
	Cow highly fertile, calves unassisted.

Interpretation and evaluation of defects

Shoulders, Front Legs and Feet
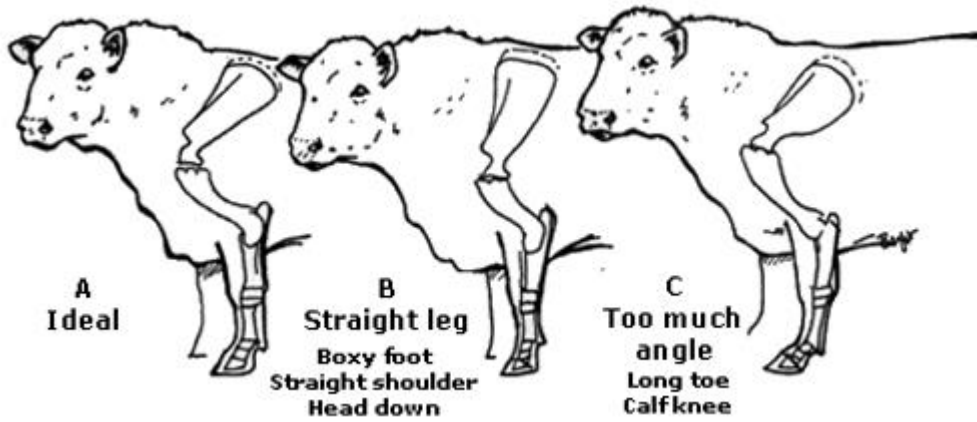

Figure 1 Front leg and Shoulder Structure of the bull [1]

Smooth shoulders   **Prominent shoulders**

Figure 2 Bull Shoulders should be smooth against the rib cage. Prominent could increase the chance of calving problems [1]

Normal   **Knock-kneed**   **Bow-legged**

Figure 3 Front Legs of a bull should be straight when viewed from the front [1]

Correct   Too much angle   Too straight

Figure 4 Indicates the correct angle of the Pastern [1]
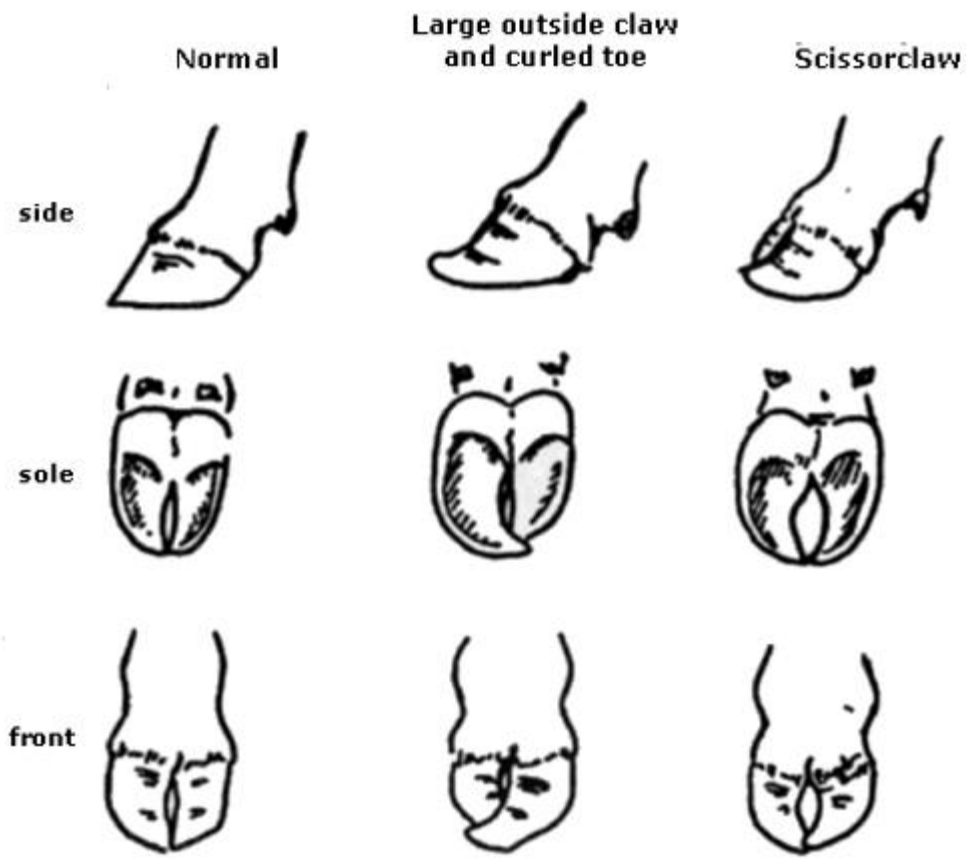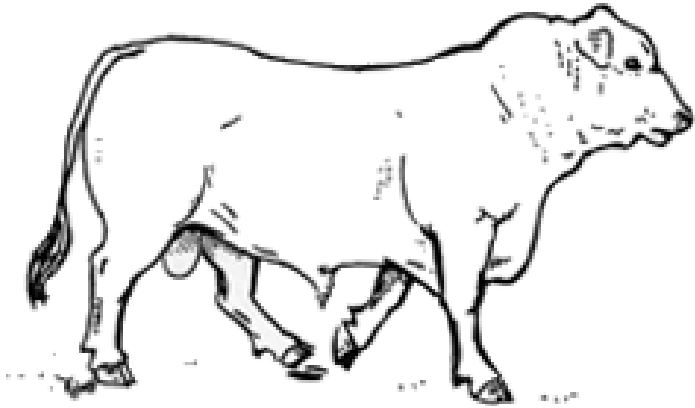
Figure 5 Avoid overgrown, scissor or curved claws [1]

Movement

Figure 6 Free moving gait, with hind legs stepping into footprints of the front feet [1]

Hind Legs and feet

Correct

Too straight

Sickle-hocked

Correct

Bow-legged

Cow-hocked

Figure 7 The structure of the hind legs should be well-defined angles in the joints at the hip, stifle and pastern joints [1]

Testicles

Table 1. Recommended minimum scrotal circumference *Bos indicus* bulls [7]

Age *(Months)*	Scrotal Circumference *(mm)*
15	240
18	280
24	300

Testicular consistency

A very low proportion of bulls have very hard testicles (score 1) without resilience; these have probably suffered fibrosis and should also be culled or subjected to a semen examination.

Bulls with testicle consistency scores of 2 or 3 almost always produce good quality semen.

However, bulls with soft, flabby testicles with low resilience (scores 4 or 5) are likely to produce poor quality semen and should either be culled or subjected to a semen examination.

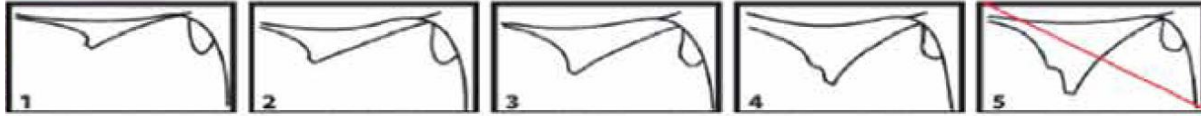Table 2. Testicle consistency score [2]

Score	
1	Very Firm
2	Firm
3	Moderate
4	Soft
5	Very Soft
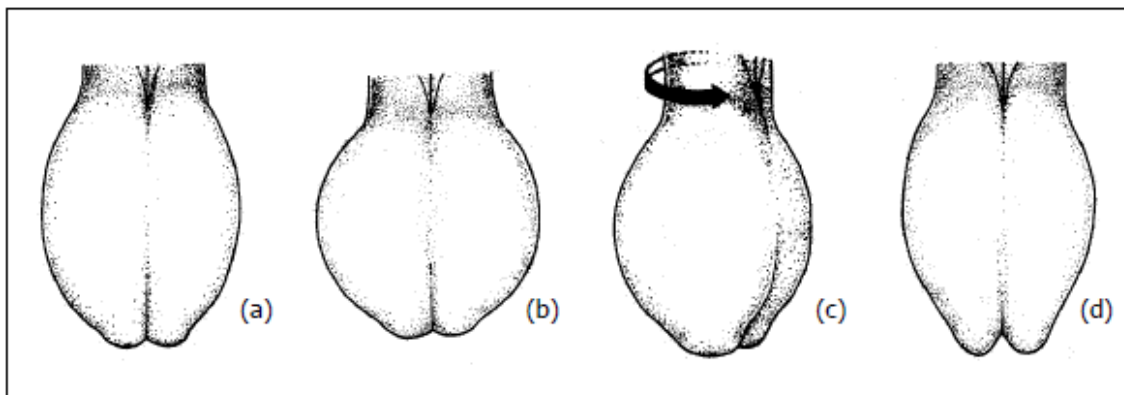
(a) Normal (elongated) (b) normal (rounded) (c) lateral rotation (d) distinctly cleavage scrotum
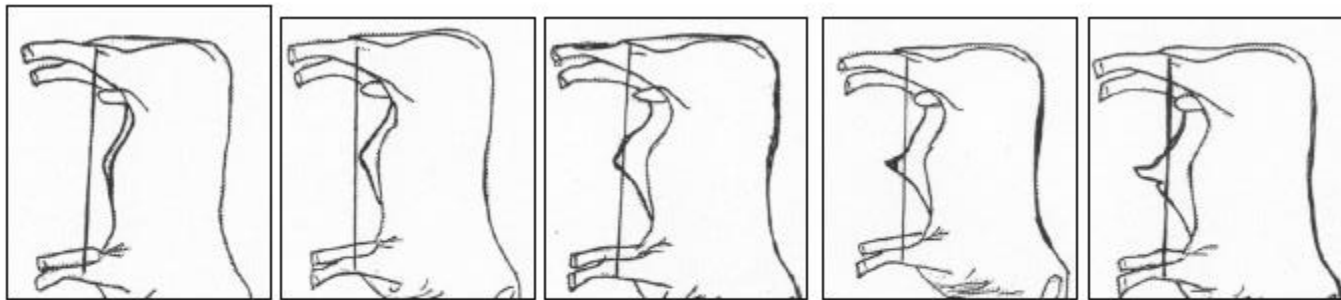
Figure 8 Testicular conformation [5]

Sheath

| Tight | Optimal | Acceptable | Marginal | Unacceptable |

Figure 9 Sheath Scores [4]

| 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

[8] Breedplan sheath scores

Udder

Udder Evenness   1 – 9: 1 – dropped hind quarter; 5 – good balance; 9 – dropped fore quarters
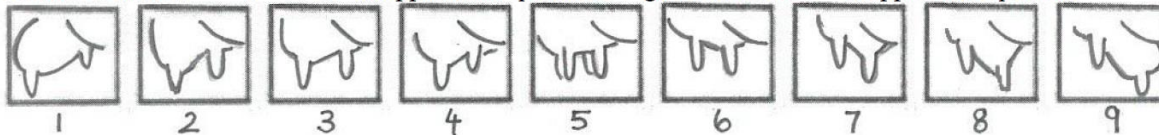

Figure 10 Udder evenness [3]

Udder Attachment 1 – 5   1 – low or weak attachment; 5 strong or high attachment;

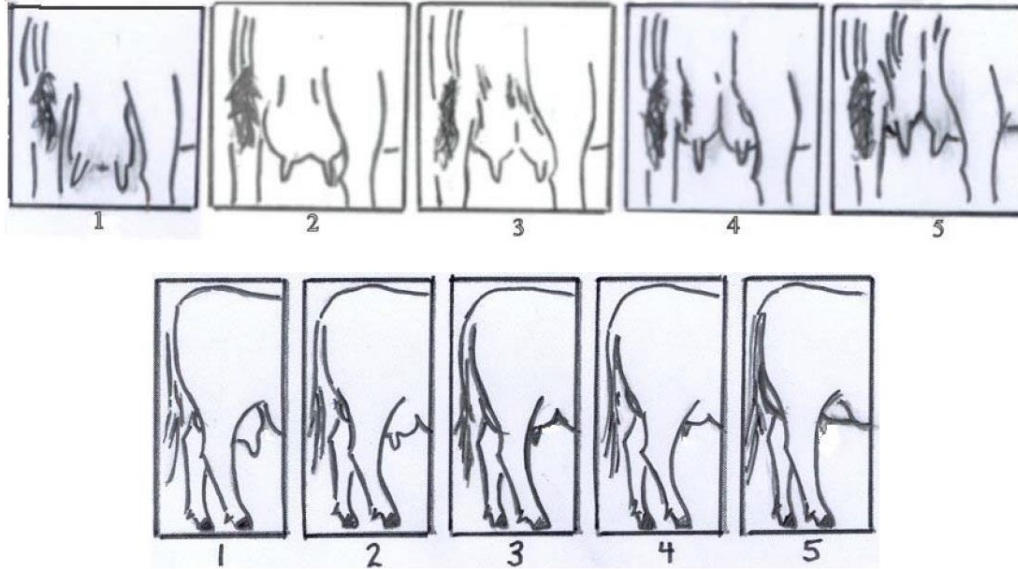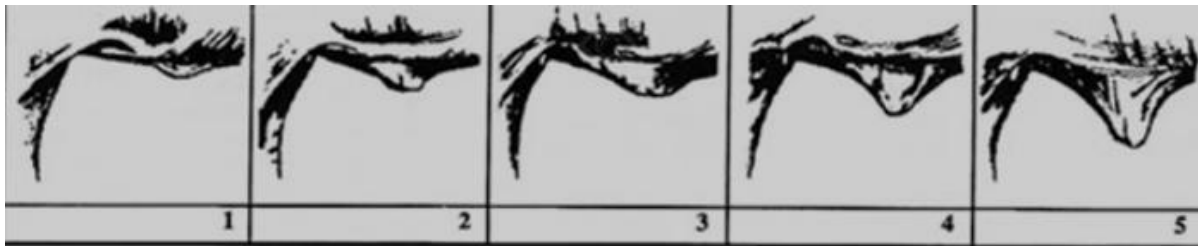
Figure 11 Udder attachment [3]

Naval

Tight   Optimal   Acceptable   Marginal   Unacceptable
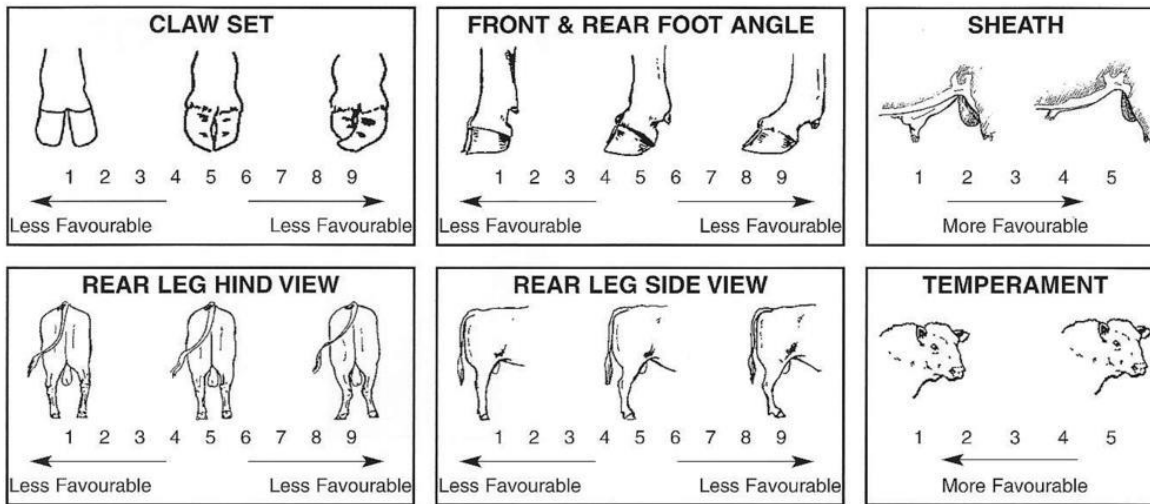
Figure 12 Naval scores [6]

Figure 13 Beef Class Structural Assessment [3]

References

[1] Bull structural soundness, New South Wales department of Primary Industries

[2] Soundness of Testicles in Beef Bulls, **Note number: AG014, March 1995, Agriculture Victoria**

[3] Beefclass Structural assessment, MLA

[4] Australian Bovine language, appendix C, MLA 2016

[5] Bull selection, buying better bulls, John Bertram et al, QDPI&F, 2003

[6] It's the angle of the dangle that matters, Nindooinbah 2017

[7] Evaluating and reporting bull fertility, AACV, Entwistle and Fordyce, 2003

[8] Breedplan

Many thanks to the AACV and the MLA for the images used in this Breed standard