

Clumber Spaniel Weight Survey 2013

Summary of Results

At the end of 2012 a survey form was sent to all Clumber Spaniel Club members asking them to submit the weight of their dog, and an assessment of the dog according to a Body Condition Score where the animal was classified as *emaciated, thin, optimum, overweight or obese*. Both assessments had to be confirmed by a qualified vet.

It was suggested that owners could have their dogs assessed when taken to the vet for their annual booster injections and so the survey was kept open for just over a year. At the end of this period, completed forms for 30 dogs and 37 bitches had been received.

Weight Measurements

The current KC Standard includes 'ideal weights' for Clumber Spaniels. The average weight of dogs in this study is 28.97kg which is just under the Standard range, while that of the bitches at 25.37 kg is very close to the low end of the range. This is summarised in following table.

	Dogs	Bitches
KC Standard Ideal Weight range	29.5 – 34 kg	25 – 29.5 kg
Combined average from survey	28.97 kg	25.37 kg

Fig1: Average weights of dogs and bitches compared to the KC Standard weight range

Further analysis of weights showed that 77% of dogs and 84% of bitches weighed within or under the KC Ideal Weight range, and only 23% of dogs and 16% of bitches weighed over this range. This is illustrated in the next two figures.

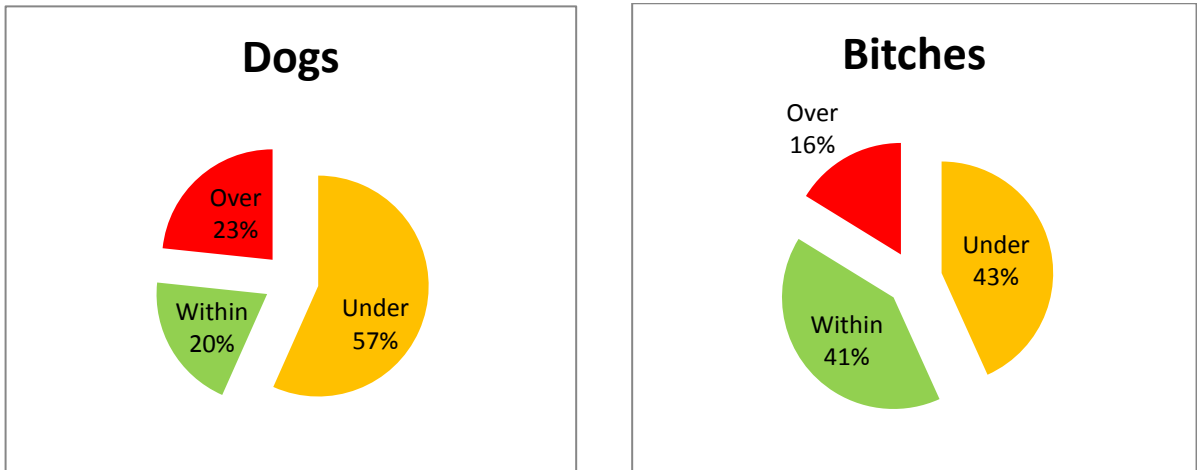


Fig 2: Percentage of dogs and bitches whose weights fall over, within or under the KC Standard weight range

The next diagram combines the figures and shows that 20% of the whole population were over the KC Standard Weight range.

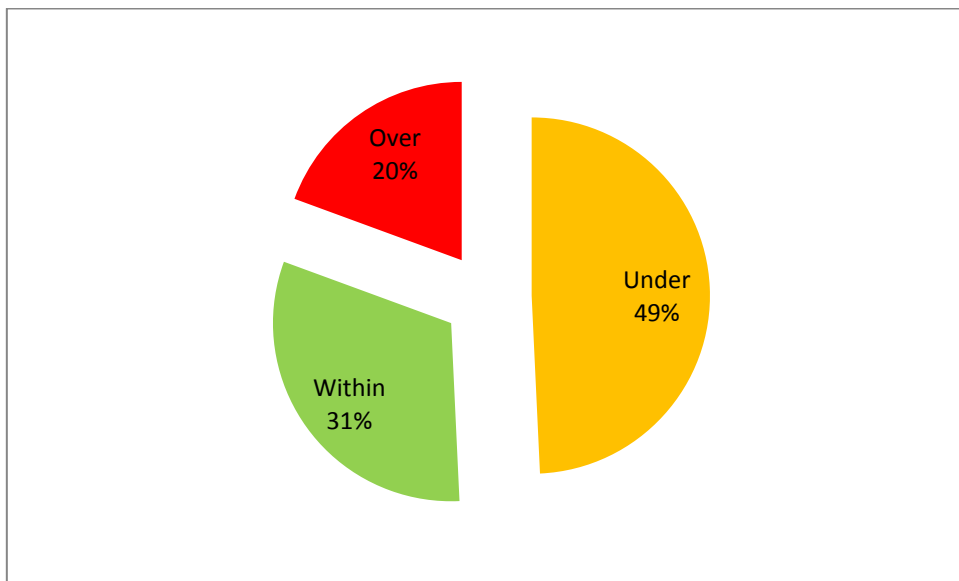


Fig 3: Percentage of the whole population which fell under, within or over the KC Standard Weight Range.

Both dogs and bitches were then split into three separate age groups: 'Junior' or under 18 months, 'Veteran' or over 7 years, with all those in between described as 'Adult'. Average weights for both sexes for the three age groups are shown in the following diagram.

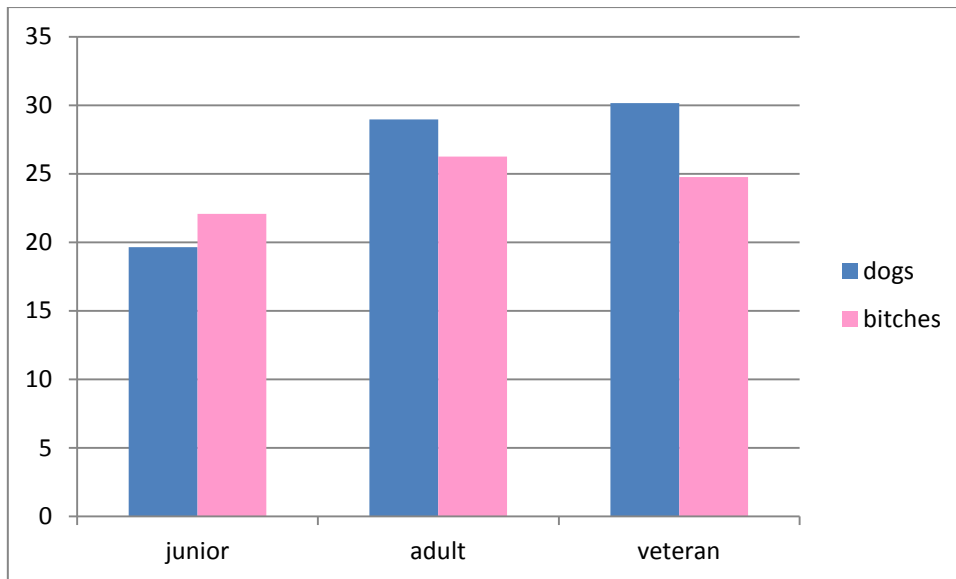


Fig 4: Average weights of dogs and bitches separated by age groups

Body Condition Scores

One bitch was not given a definition of body condition therefore only 30 dogs and 36 bitches were considered in this section. Some vets had used an additional description *optimum/overweight* which was analysed as a separate category.

Using the Body Condition Score 3% of dogs and 14% of bitches were described as being *overweight*, with an additional 10% of dogs and 14% of bitches described as *optimum/overweight*. No animals were classified as *obese*, *thin* or *emaciated*. The vast majority, 83% of dogs and 72% of bitches were defined as *optimum*. The following charts show the distribution of *underweight*, *optimum*, *optimum/overweight* and *overweight* animals as defined by the vets.

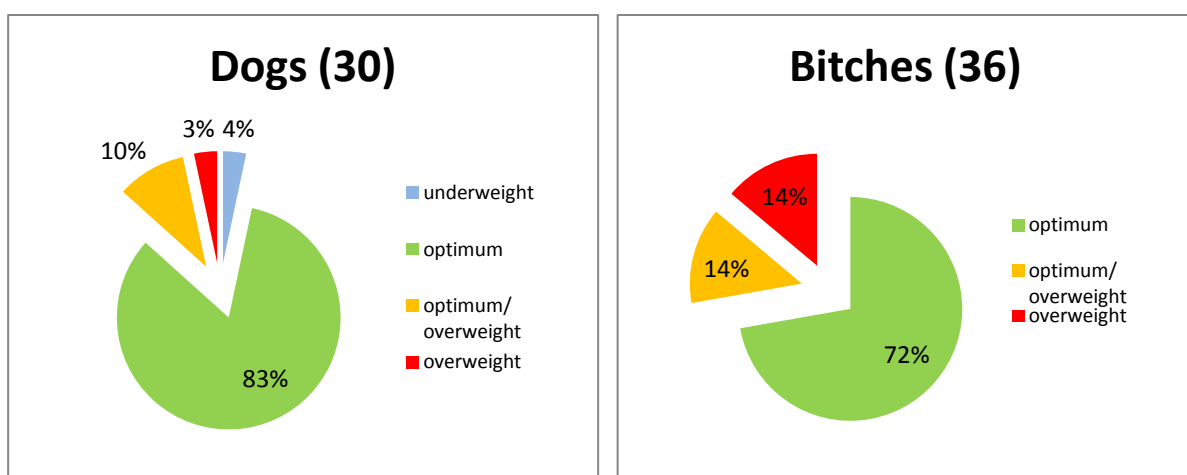


Fig 5: Percentage distribution of dogs and bitches according to their Body Condition Score

The next diagram combines all animals and shows that 9% of the whole population was classified as *overweight* according to the Body Condition Score, with an additional 12% described as *optimum/overweight*.

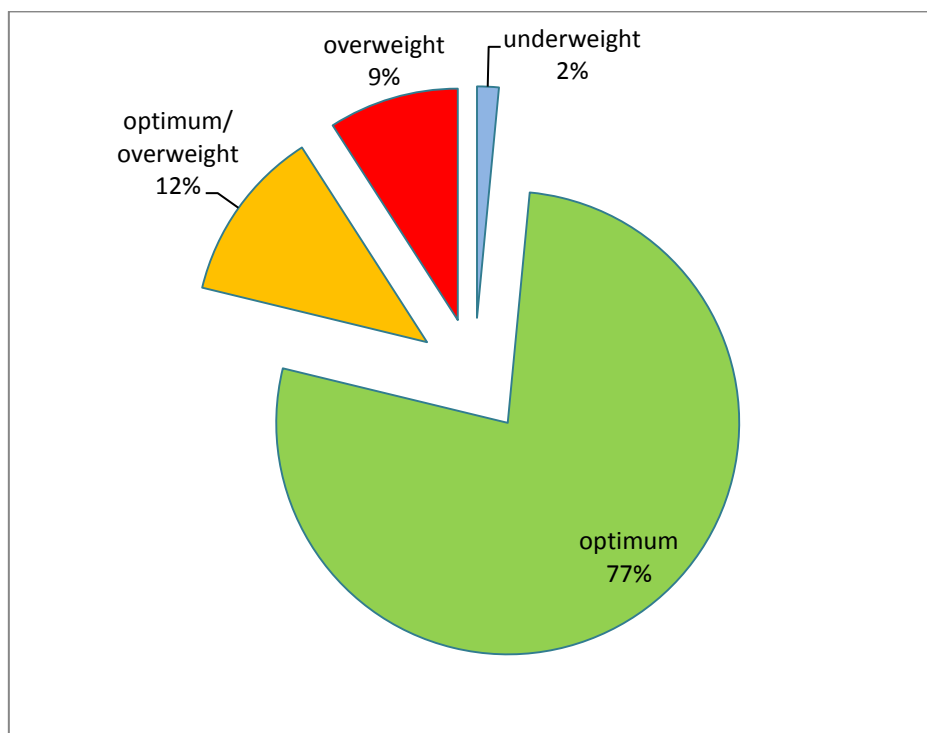


Fig 6: Distribution of Body Condition Score of total population

It is interesting to note the difference between the percentage of animals defined as overweight because their weight measurement is over the KC ideal weight range, and the percentage defined as overweight using Body Condition Score. More dogs were defined as overweight based on their actual weight (23%) than were overweight based on the Body Condition Score (3%). However the figure for bitches is much closer with 16% using weight measurements and 14% using the Body Condition Score. This is illustrated in the next diagram.

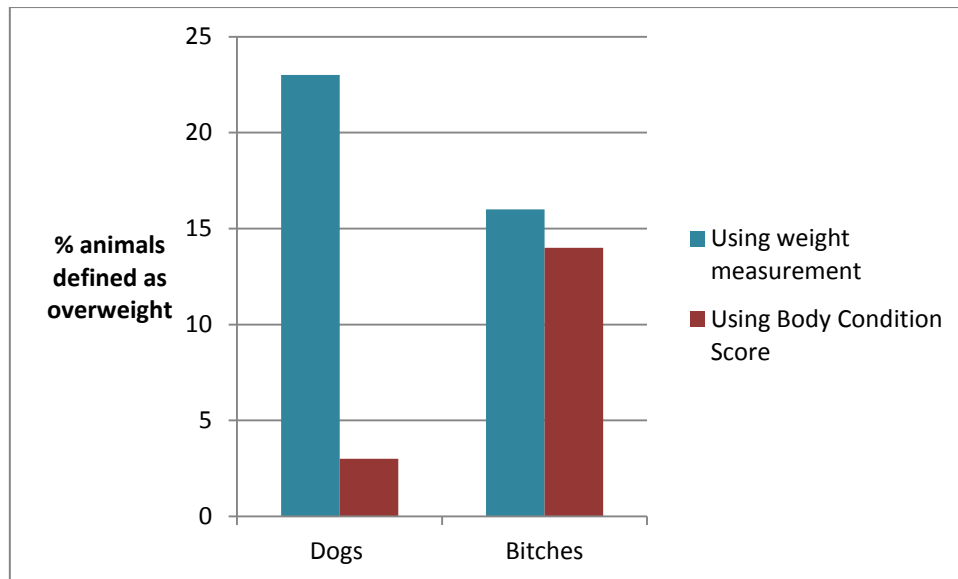


Fig 7: Comparison of percentage of animals defined as overweight using the two methods

CONCLUSIONS

Based on this sample (67), the average weights of both dogs and bitches were below (dogs) or at the lower end (bitches) of the KC Standard Ideal Weight range.

There appears to be a significant difference between the percentages of animals defined as overweight depending on whether measurements of weight or a Body Condition Score system are used. Measurements of weight alone suggests that 20% of all the animals in this study weighed more than the ideal weight range given in the KC Standard i.e. were overweight. Whilst using the Body Condition Score only 9% of the whole population were classified as *overweight*.

This difference might be accounted for by the number that was classified as *optimum/overweight* (12%). However it could also be due to the likelihood that if a dog has a large frame it might weigh more – be overweight - but it could well be in the *optimum* range for overall body condition.

This suggests that defining whether an animal is overweight should not rely on weight measurement alone but should include some form of Body Condition Score which will take into account the size of a dog's frame.

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