



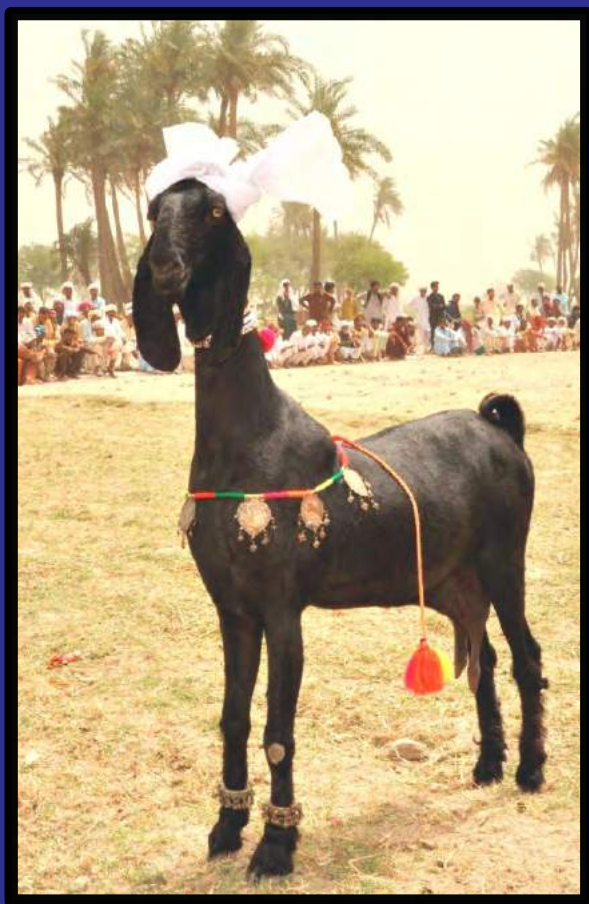
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Nachi Goats: Judging and Selection Guide



M. Sajjad Khan

AIP – Livestock

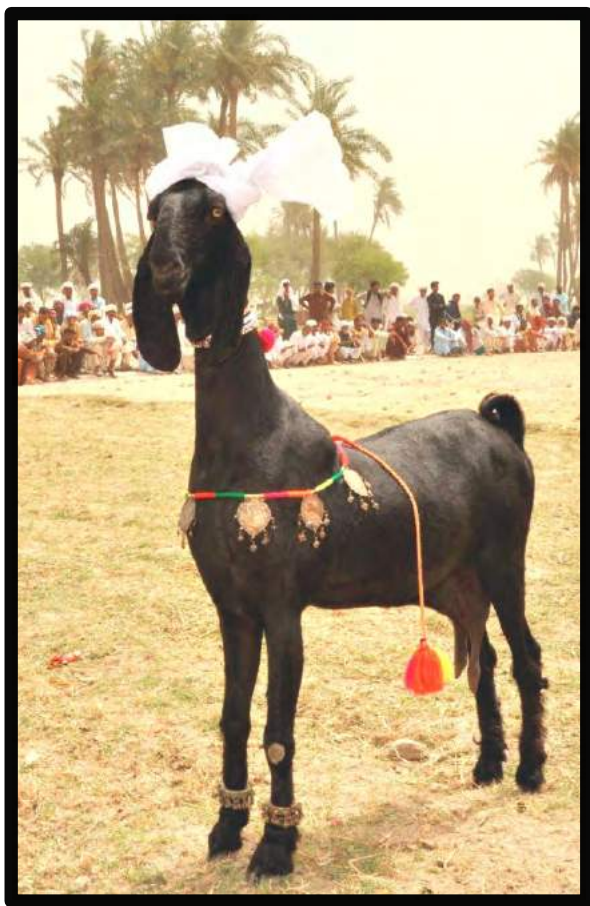
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Contents

Preface and Acknowledgment	05
Background	07
Judging Nachis	08
Nachi utility	09
Hometract	09
Body parts	10
Judging Nachis as dancing milch breed	10
Judging Nachis from front to end	10
1. General appearance	13
1.1. Breed characters	13
1.2. Stature	13
1.3. Color	14
1.4. Hair color	14
1.5. Vigour	16
1.6. Gait	16
1.7. Faults	16
2. Front end	17
2.1. Head	17
2.2. Neck	18
2.3. Chest	18
2.4 Shoulders	19
2.5. Front legs	19
2.6.Front hooves and pasterns	19
2.7. General assembly	20
2.8. Faults	20
3. Back and barrel	21
3.1. Withers	21
3.2. Heart girths	21
3.3. Back	21
3.4. Rump	21
3.5. Ribs	22
3.6. Flanks	22
3.7. Faults	22

4. Rear end	23
4.1. Rear legs	23
4.2. Thighs	24
4.4. Rear hooves	24
4.6. Tail	24
4.7. Faults	24
5. Udder and teats in does	25
5.1. Size	25
5.2. Balance	25
5.3. Texture	26
5.4. Udder support	26
5.5. Teat size	27
5.6. Teat shape	27
5.7. Teat placement	28
5.8. Other faults	28
6. Testicles in bucks	29
6.1. Testicle size	29
6.2. Testicular symmetry	29
6.3. Scrotal shape	30
6.4. Extra teats:	30
Final thoughts	31
References	35
Commonly used terms in judging goats	36

List of Figures

1	Winner of a walk competition	08
2	Black Nachis	09
3	Body part of Nachi doe	11
4	Body part of Nachi buck	11
5	Grouping of traits in Nachi does	12
6	Grouping of traits in Nachi bucks	12
7	Black Nachis with light underline	15
8	Multicolor flock of Nachis	15
9	White /Grey Nachis	15
10	Nachi face	17
11	Nachi horns – variation in twists	17
12	Long neck - characteristic of Nachis	18
13	A shorn Nachi buck with wide chest	18
14	Foreleg faults	19
15	Trimmed, desirable and undesirable hooves	19
16	Undesirable overshot and undershot jaw	20
17	Wide, medium and weak heart girths	21
18	Desirable and undesirable rump slopes	22
19	Rear view with desirable and undesirable legs	23
20	Rear legs side view for desirable and undesirable alignments	23
21	Weak, optimum and straight pastern	24
22	Good fore-udder	25
23	Small, medium and large udder size (rear view)	26
24	Loose, normal and tight udder attachment	26
25	Small, long and very large teat size	27
26	Commonly found bottled shape teats in Nachis	27
27	A doe with large sized (undesirable) teats	28
28	Extra teats in Nachis	28
29	Adequate sized symmetrical testicles in a Nachi buck	29
30	Asymmetrical/tilted testicles in a Nachi buck	30
31	Bi-partitioning of testicles in Nachi bucks	30
32	A Nachi farmer with his does at a show	32

List of Tables

1. A proposed scorecard for Nachi does 33
2. A proposed scorecard for Nachi bucks 34

Preface and Acknowledgment

Nachis, the dancing goat breed is endemic to Pakistan and are special when it comes to beauty. Their unique gait attract young and old equally. Goat shows without Nachis are incomplete and whenever they are part of multibreed shows, they attract maximum visitors.

Indigenous knowledge of raising and breeding Nachis is however, scarcely documented. Breeding objective for Nachis will remain beautiful and unique gait with milk yield as the second objective. As awareness improves, other similar guides may incorporate more indigenous knowledge to judge animals correctly in an effort to conserve and promote this breed. Experience gathered from conducting goat shows over the last seven years for judging goats and especially Nachis, is summarized in this guide. All those who shared their experiences in goat shows and otherwise are thanked and gratefully acknowledged.

Funds provided by AIP-Livestock-ILRI under the Agricultural Innovation Program for Pakistan for preparation and publication of this guide is gratefully acknowledged.

M. Sajjad Khan

Background

Nachi is a unique genetic resource, unique not only in Pakistan, in the entire goat world. It is unique due to its dancing gait which is natural (genetically controlled). 'Nach' means dance and Nachi means one having dancing quality. It is also pronounced as "Naouchi" in the local dialects. Bikaner term has also been used for Nachi but is erroneous because Nachis are not found in Bikaner.

Anatomically, shoulder joints are not attached securely in Nachis, nor is the upper joint of the fore arm and therefore animals cannot jump as freely as in other breeds. Even kids are difficult to rear as they have difficulty in getting up for first few days and suckling may need assistance. When animals walk, feet and pastern move in a partially revolving motion and with heads held high, animals exhibit a dancing walk. Interestingly, animals tend to stay together in the herd (flocking instinct) and may follow the herder more than any other breed. That is why in 'Nachi walk competitions' a herd that follows the herder and moves with herder's moves is considered better than others.

Goats in general, are natural browsers rather than grazers and this is more true for Nachis. Among other behavioral attributes, fighting behavior is also different in Nachis. Males do fight for dominance and mating rights yet, the fighting styles are different. Kicks are few and as rear legs are weak, bucks do not rise up on their hind legs and come down forcefully to butt heads as observed in other breeds. They strike heads on sideways while standing with occasional forehead bursts. Pushing and shoving is still the same as in other breeds. Mating behavior is also different as landing after mating may result in falling of bucks.

Nachis have reduced in number over the years mainly because of changing lifestyles in villages. With squeezing

free grazing lands, herders are becoming fewer. Nachis are mainly kept for their beautiful walk and cannot travel long distances.

As part of the goat shows or any livestock show, Nachis get maximum attention. While beauty, milk and weight competitions are held for other goat breeds, walk competitions are true for Nachis only. Their ability to follow the herder is judged in Nachi shows and winning does are decorated with turbans.



Fig. 1. Winner of a walk competition

Judging Nachis

Nachis, like other goats are judged to select an attractive animal which is structurally correct and meet breed standards. Yet, field situation is different from bookish knowledge. The bookish color for Nachis, for example, is black (no spotting). Ears are expected to be white with some black speckles. This is far from reality and has resulted in narrowing the genetic base. A dancing goat should be Nachi. Yet, crossbreds (for example, between Nachi with other breeds such as Beetal) do not possess the

same gait and are in-between dancing and normal gait. Even 75% Nachi animals can be recognized from purebreds because the gait is not the same as that of purebred Nechis. Animals should therefore be judged for individual body attributes but unless they are allowed to walk freely, judging will not be complete. It should also be realized that Nachis prefer to walk in groups/company and therefore while focusing on any individual animal, others should accompany them.



Fig. 2. Black Nachis (with typical black speckled ears)

Nachi Utility

Primary objective of raising Nachi breed is its dancing gait. Milk is secondary characteristic. Meat is eaten and hair also used for making rugs. Most of the animals are shorn before summer season. They are sacrificed but to a limited extent.

Hometract

Main districts inhabiting Nachi breed are Jhang, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Layyah, Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar in Punjab province. Animals have been taken to other districts and provinces and even to other countries.

Body parts

Before discussing physical appearance, it is important to understand various body parts. The male and female body parts are given below (Fig. 3; Fig. 4). For judges it is important to have knowledge of various body parts in local languages/dialects. Punjabi and to some extent Siraiki dialects are important.

Judging Nachis as dancing milch breed

There are many ways to segment or group various body parts for ranking Nachis. Most breed associations obviously take first and foremost decision of categorizing the breed as dairy, meat or dual purpose as the major decision. As an animal breeder this means the main breeding objective or simply the main purpose for which a specific breed is kept by the farmers/breeders. For Nachis an obvious objective is beautiful Nachi gait with adequate milk producing ability. Milk yield or generally dairy traits will therefore be important for judging does but traits may be specific to the Nachibreed and same will be true for bucks.

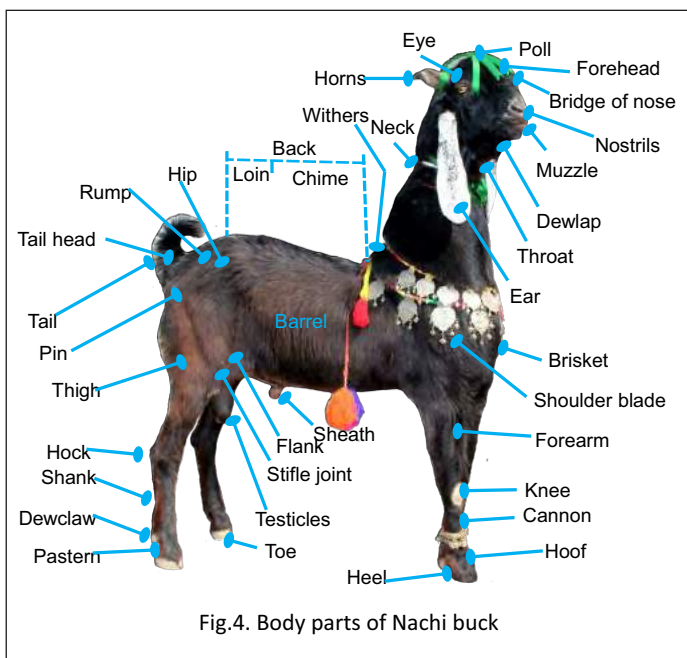
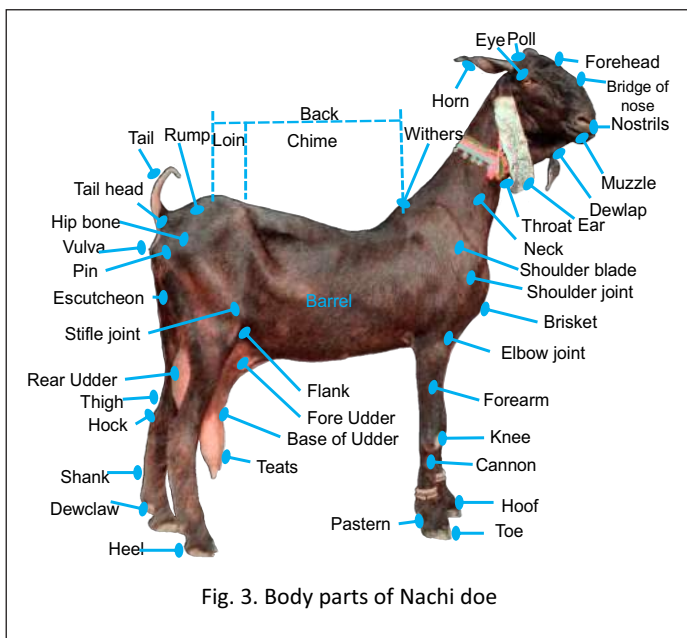
Judging Nachis from front to end

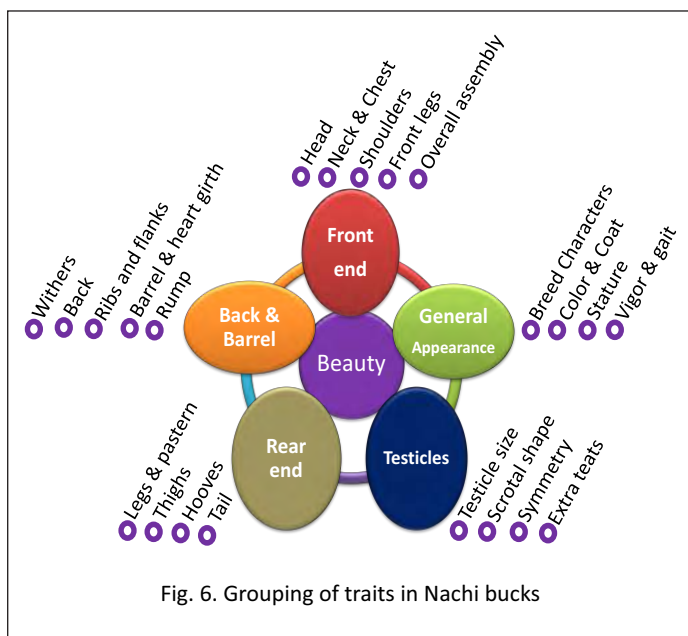
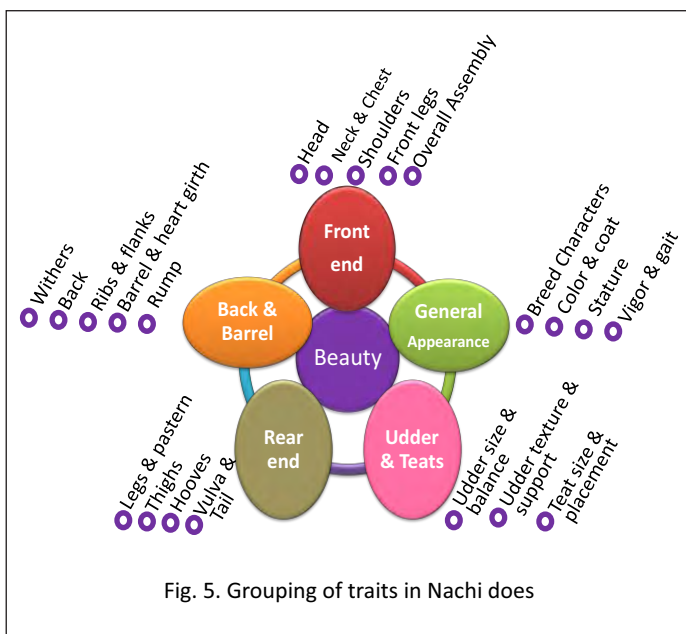
General appearance and the specific traits can be judged easily if grouped as follows.

1. General Appearance
2. Front End
3. Back and barrel
4. Rear end
5. Udder and teats in does
6. Testicles in bucks

Grouping has been to run from one to the other end. Other option for grouping is to group them into dairyness, capacity etc. which may have attributes spread throughout the body, instead sequenced from one to the other side.

Discussion is focused on both sexes in general appearance, front end, back and barrel and rear end. Udder and teats in does and testicles in bucks are discussed separately.





1. General Appearance

1.1. Breed characters: Breed characters are generally defined by breed associations. For Nachis, the description of the breed available in booklets and manuals is quite misleading. Descriptions such as “black but black and white spotted too, medium head, Roman nose, small & thin horns, medium ears; udder well-developed...” (Khan et al., 2003) or “neck is short and muscular in males but relatively thin and long in females. Udder is not well developed and teats are small.” (Bhutto et al., 1993) or “legs are also medium sized and stout” (Isani and Baloch, 1996) are beyond reality and are being corrected in this guide keeping in view the ground realities. Actually, the average body weight in Nachis is more than double the 20-25 kg reported by Isani and Baloch (1996).

Restricting the color to black or black and white will narrow the base especially when almost all goat colors are present in the breed and breeders have different preferences for the color.

Head is quite proportionate to body while horns can neither be called very huge nor can be categorized as thin. There are slight to moderately spiral but not as spiral as those of Diara Din Panah (DDP). In size, these are not as small as those preferred for Beetal bucks (small stumpy and close to body). Polledness is rare in Nachis. Horns can therefore be called as partially to completely twisted, directing generally backward. Completely twisted and directed upward (similar to Sindh Desi) are also found but in a small proportion of the population. The bridge of nose is prominent but not as prominent as that of Rahim Yar Khan strain of Beetal

1.2. Stature: Nachis are tall in stature almost as tall as Beetals. Taller does are preferred but very leggy animals are not preferred over animals with balanced height and body length. Body length has the same qualifying criteria

and animals with longer body length are preferred. Adult body weight in breeding does varies and may average 60 kg (in show does) with breeding males weighing more than 80kg.

Body length (diagonal) in these animals average 80cm in does(participating in goat shows)with bucks some 10cm longer. Height at withers average 88 and 98cm in does and bucks, respectively.

1.3. Color: Black is the main color in Nachis. Yet, other colors are allowed because Nachis are available in almost all goat colors.Sawi (grey) and other colors are also being maintained by breeders. Multicolred (spotted animals) can also be found. Purple color has also been seen. Solid colors with light underline are also present.

1.4. Hair coat: Hair coat in Nachis is short but not as short as that of Teddy or Beetals and of course not as long as Jattal or Kaghani. Animals are generally trimmed once a year before the summer. Shows are mostly arranged during spring and summer season and so animals may or may not be shorn. While animal with small hair coat give better appearance, preference may not be shown due to hair coat unless it is announced a year earlier that a certain show will be held on certain time of the year.



Fig.7. Black Nachis with light underline
(at a show in District Bahawalpur)



Fig.8. Multi-colored Nachis (near Jhang)



Fig.9. White /Grey Nachis(at a show at Faisalabad)

1.5.Vigour: Animals showing vigour are desirable. Animal should be alert and to some degree aggressive, especially the males. Males can be furious and dangerous if a handler is not alert especially in the breeding season, so holding from ears is common. Handlers may however, be guided to hold at the base of the ear (on the opposite side of the judge/judges).

1.6.Gait: Impressive style and powerful carriage are preferred attributes. Does should have feminine appearance through head, neck and shoulders while bucks should be more masculine. As gait is the main objective of raising Nachis, gait in does is considered important and most of Nachi shows have judging contest of does. Small steps and semi circular movement of front toes are the two most important attributes. Neck is kept upright while animals walk. Some degree of hopping is also there and erect necks give some feeling of them being relative of camelids.

1.7.Faults: Beard is not allowed in Nachis. Normal goat walk (not dancing) will disqualify any animal.

2. Front End

2.1. Head: It should be devoid of excessive hairs similar to other Pakistani goat breeds (except for Jattal or Kaghani breeds). Jaws should be strong and muzzle should be wide. Bite should be aligned. Nostrils are large. Bridge of nose may be from slight to moderately prominent (Roman nose). Eyes should be prominent and alert. Eye balls are generally reddish yellow (dark yellow) in color. Horns should be small, twisted and pointed backward and upward. In some animals twisting may be tight and these should not be discriminated against. Ears are of medium size and drooping. Softness and length varies with an average around 30cm. Ears remain drooping even when animals are alert.



Fig. 10. Nahi face

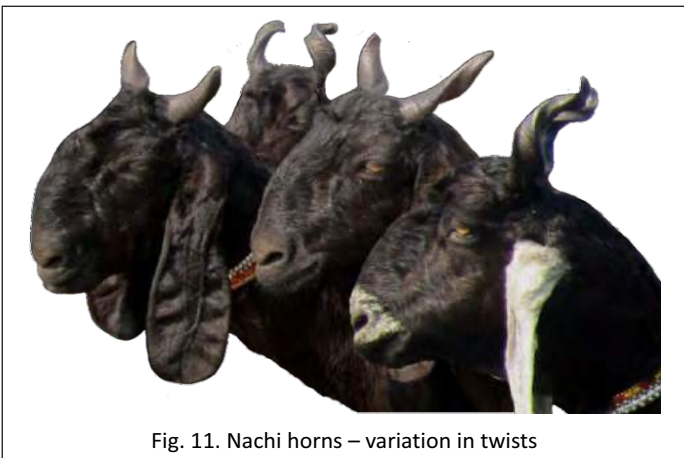


Fig. 11. Nahi horns – variation in twists

2.2. Neck: Long and lean neck is a peculiar characteristic of Nachis. It is kept upheld as if it is quite erect. It may also not blend smoothly into shoulders and brisket as expected in other breeds, rather shoulder may be quite visible in most cases. Throat may not be clean and some dewlap may be present especially in older animals. Wattles are absent.



Fig.12. Long neck - a characteristic of Nachis

2.3. Chest: Deep and wide chest is preferred; it should not give look of an over conditioned / fattened animal and is generally quite wide in males.



Fig. 13. A shorn Nachi buck with wide chest

2.4. Shoulders: Blades in Nachis are not set very smoothly against withers and may be seen clearly especially in newly shorn animals (shown in neck session, Fig. 12).

2.5. Front legs: Legs should be set smoothly against the chest wall and withers. Legs should be straight with some curving allowed (front view). The knees on the front legs should also be smooth and in direct line with the front legs. From knee downward, standards are the same as in other breeds.

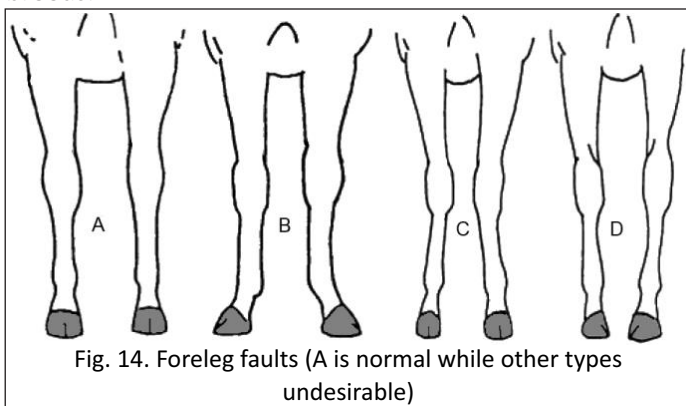


Fig. 14. Foreleg faults (A is normal while other types undesirable)

2.6. Front hooves and pasterns: Small front hooves and strong pasterns are preferred. Both hooves should be symmetrical and proportioned to the size of the animal. Well-trimmed hooves are desirable because these will be more comfortable for the animal and promote better weight distribution and stance. Overgrown hooves put animals at the risk of developing problems such as lameness and joint and other problems. Both hooves should be symmetrical and proportioned to the size of the animal. Deep heel and level soles are preferred.

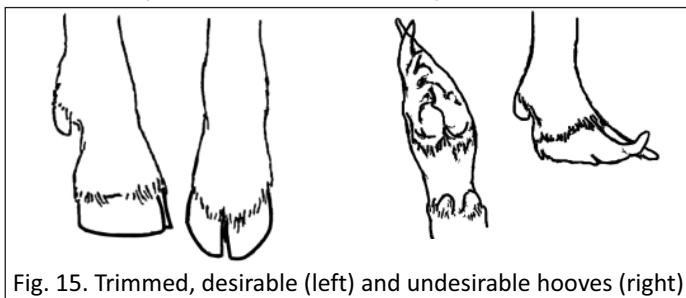


Fig. 15. Trimmed, desirable (left) and undesirable hooves (right)

2.7. General Assembly: Style and balance comes when entire body blends together from front to end. Smooth blending of various parts is preferred but in weak animals, blending may never be smooth as shoulder blade will be quite obvious.

2.8. Faults: Convex forehead, blind eyes, severely under or overshot jaw (slight parrot or monkey mouths are acceptable); erect ears; bow legged animals; big horns and excessive/overgrown hooves are not preferred.

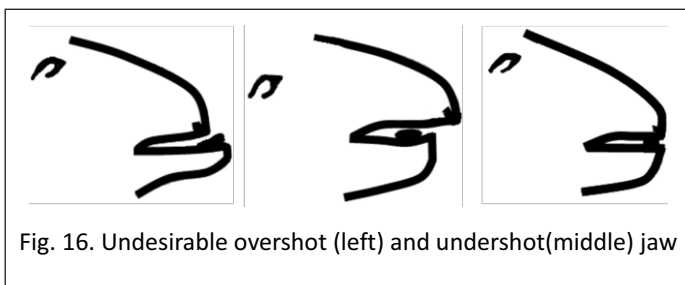


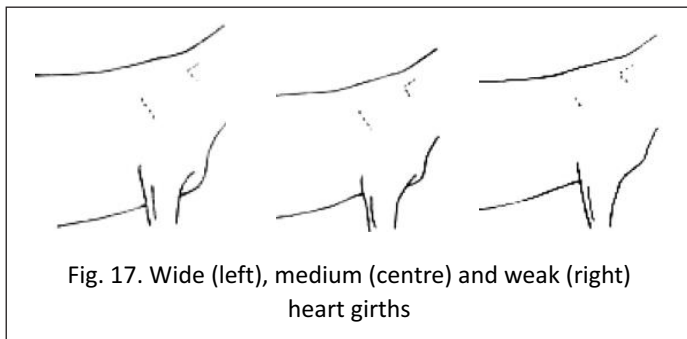
Fig. 16. Undesirable overshot (left) and undershot(middle) jaw

3. Back and Barrel

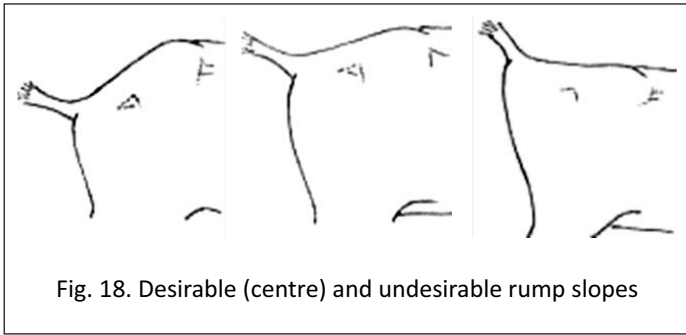
3.1. Withers: These are prominent and wedge shaped, moderately covered with flesh and blend well with neck and shoulders. The front side of chime is dished in and is characteristic of the breed. In Beetals, this dip does not exist.

3.2. Heart girths: Heart girth should be medium, resulting from well sprung fore ribs and wide chest floor between the forelegs and fullness at the point of elbows. The heart girth has a wide variation and may average 85 cm with 5-10cm wider girths in bucks.

3.3. Back: Strong and appearing dipped in behind the withers. This is very typical in Nachis while in other breeds, smooth blending is expected. The loin area should be long. The hips (hooks) should be wide apart and almost leveling with posterior side of the back.



3.4. Rump: The area between the hook bones and the tail should be wider with medium slope. It is one of the most important areas for selecting younger animals. This area affects general appearance in does due to its tail set and placement, but more importantly, it affects how the animal moves off of his/her rear legs. Animals with steep rump and low set in tail are not preferred.



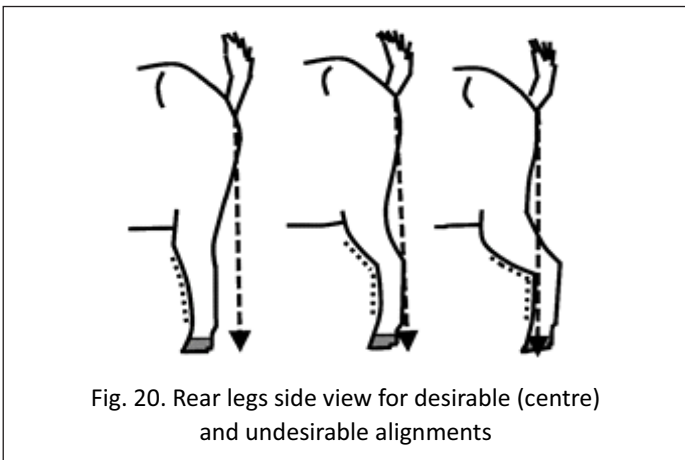
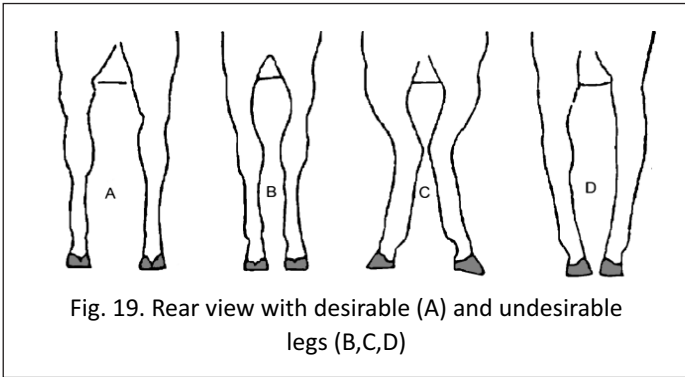
3.5. Ribs: Ribs should be wide apart, well sprung, flat and long with lower rear ribs angling to flank.

3.6. Flanks: Flanks should be deep, arched and refined.

3.7. Faults: Severely curved/arched back.

4. Rear End

4.1. Rear legs: Rear feet and legs are important for any goat breed. For Nachis, rear legs are weak and animals are generally hock-in (sickle hocks) reducing space for udders in does. Legs should preferably be as straight as possible and set squarely when seen from rear and straight when seen from side. Post-legged and sickle-hocked animals results as poor moving, ill-structured goats. As “bow-legged” or “cow-hocked” animals at younger age develop into worse legged animals with age, potential bucks should be selected carefully that there is space between hocks as much as possible.



4.2. Thighs: Incurving to flat from the side and wide apart when viewed from rear to provide sufficient space for udder. A dense hairy coat is not preferred.

4.3. Pastern: Strong and springy pasterns are preferred over weak pasterns. This is important for Nachis because they have inherit difficulty in traveling long distances.

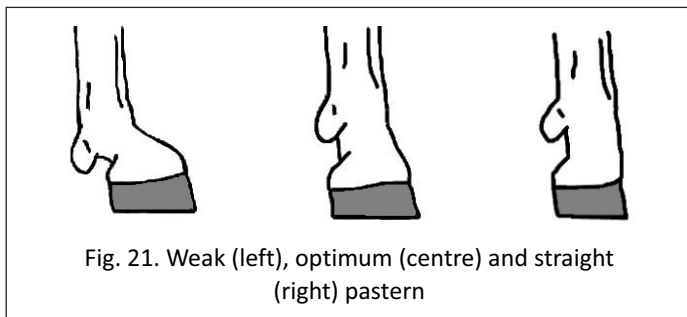


Fig. 21. Weak (left), optimum (centre) and straight (right) pastern

4.4. Rear hooves: Square hooves with two halves spaced closely is desirable. Worn out hooves or overgrown hooves are not preferred. Trimming is not generally practiced.

4.5. Vulva in does: Vulva should be of normal size (as per age of the animal). Smaller size for non-breeding and younger animals and comparatively bigger size in older and freshly kidded animals is expected.

4.6. Tail: Tail should be bent upward and preferably make a semicircle loop (Fig. 22). It is hairy and tuft may or may not be kept when trimmed. Animals with hanging tail are discarded.

4.7. Faults: Extremely hocked-in animals are not liked. Tail should not be hanging.

5. Udder and Teats in Does

5.1. Size: Udder size and yield are positively correlated. Capacity of udder is mainly determined by its shape. Long (fore and hind udders), wide and capacious udders are preferred. A low hanging pendulous udder may be bigger but is not preferred over a smaller strongly attached udder. Fore udder should be carried well forward, be tightly carried and blend into body. Rear udder should be wide and high. Nachis generally have good fore udders but rear udders are not very wide and high. It may also be pointed out that milk is synthesized in udders and not in teats. Therefore size of the udder and not the total size (udder+teats) is important.



Fig. 22. Good fore udder

5.2. Balance: The two udder halves should be nearly of the same size for balance and symmetry. Tilting to right or left when animal walks is not preferred. This may be difficult to judge in Nachis as space between hocks is narrow. Awareness for selecting bucks with symmetrical testicles and does for symmetrical udders is weak.

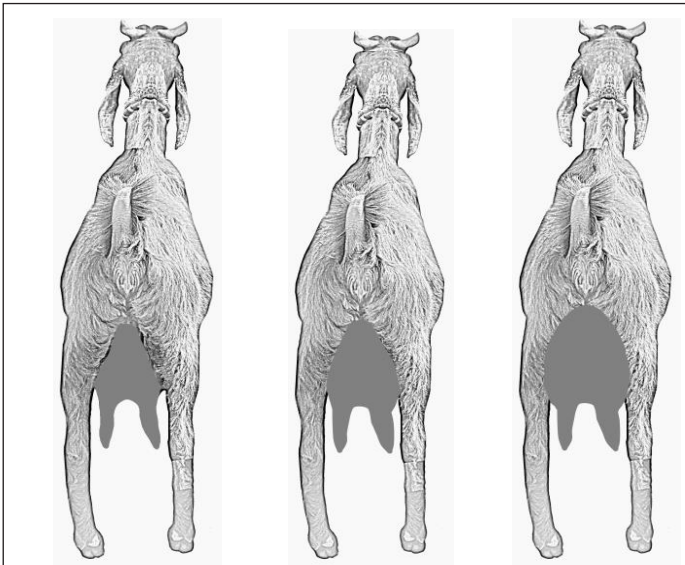


Fig. 23. Small (left), medium (middle) and large (right) udder size (rear view)

5.3. Texture: Generally, texture is judged by palpating the udder to seek for pliable and soft tissue (rather than hard tissue, lumps etc) where milk is produced and stored. Soft, pliable and elastic udders (which can collapse after milking) are preferred. Scars may not be ignored but some scarring will be present as most of the does graze all year long.

5.4. Udder support: Medial suspensory ligament is the main support for the udder. It divides the udder into two halves and holds the udder to the body. The strength, elasticity and length of the ligament determine the udder height.

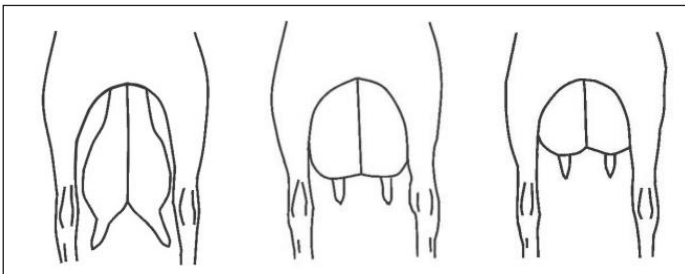


Fig. 24. Loose (left), normal (centre) and tight (right) udder attachment.

5.5. Teat size: Both teats should be of equal and adequate size for hand milking because 100% Nachis are hand milked. In reality however, teats are generally long in Nachis. So if teats hang below hocks these should be discredited. As the awareness will improve, udders will become larger and teats shorter.

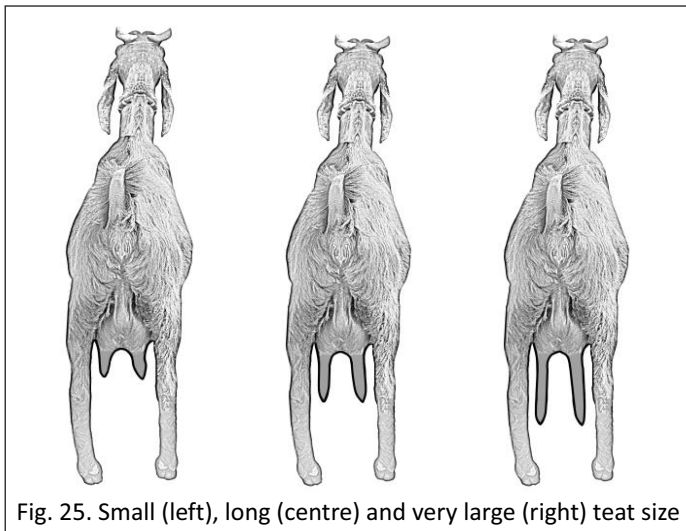


Fig. 25. Small (left), long (centre) and very large (right) teat size

5.6. Teat shape: Cylindrical shape is preferred in many goat breeds but not in Nachis. Most does have bottled shape teats (Fig. 26, left and right photos). So cylindrical shape can be emphasized for dam selection and gradually situation can improve.



Fig. 26. Commonly found teats in Nachis.

5.7. Teat placement: Preference is generally given to teats pointed straight downward and slightly towards front. Teats pointed inwards or outwards are not preferred.

5.8. Other faults: Large extra and blind teats are considered as a fault. Broken udders do not fetch high points.



Fig. 27. A doe with large sized (undesirable) teats

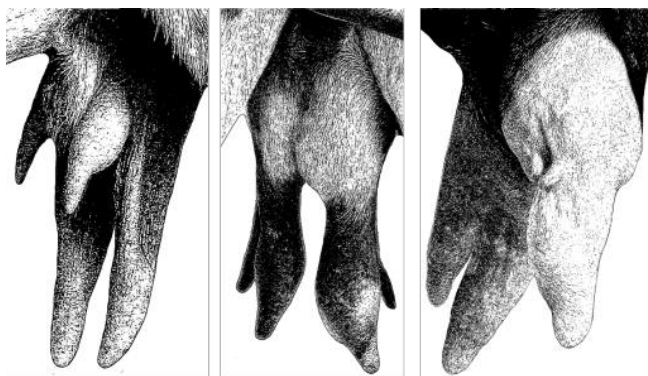
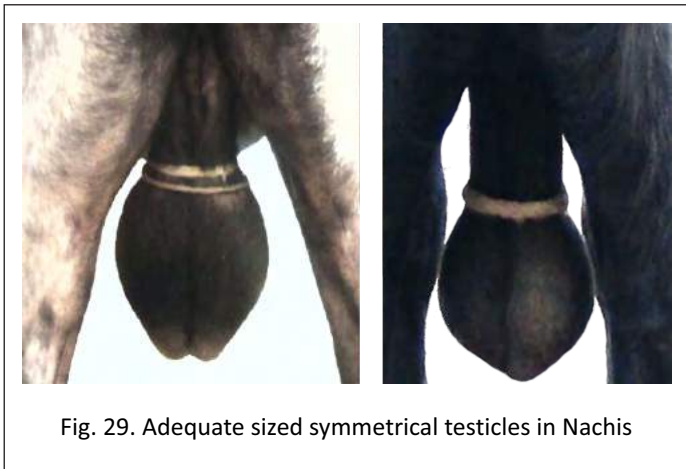


Fig. 28. Extra teats

6. Testicles in bucks

6.1. Testicle size: Two fully descended, large sized testicles are needed. Age should be considered in comparing bucks because younger bucks have smaller sized testicles. If thighs are not trimmed, judgment may be difficult. Palpating may help to judge their softness and movement in the scrotum. Size of the testicles is generally measured in scrotal circumference i.e. length of the measuring tape put at the maximum width of the testicles. In Nachi males it is above 30cm. Sheath in bucks is generally devoid of defects. Tying a string at the orifice to stop matings in non-breeding season may result into injury and therefore overgrown or damaged sheath is not preferred.



6.2 Testicular symmetry: Tilting (left or right) is not a preferred attribute for breeding bucks. Slight tilting may be acceptable however. Testicles should be directed downward. Buck should be forced to stand squarely and exhibiter should lead it to see for judge from behind if asymmetry exists. Both testicles should also be of equal size.



Fig. 30. Asymmetrical/tilted testicles in a Nachi buck

6.3. Scrotal shape: Bi-partitioning of scrotum is not preferred in most goat breeds. Some associations allow a cut of one inch or less. For Nachis, a wide variation exists and convincing the farmers to select bucks without bi-partitioned scrotums may take some time. For simplicity, the two main shapes may be called 'U' (left below) and 'W' (middle and right below) with 'U' being the preferred shape. For comparisons, Teddy bucks generally have 'U' more common than Nachis and other breeds.

6.4. Extra teats: Two small supernumerary, non-functional teats in the inguinal region are normal. More than two or big sized extra teats are discouraged. These are not very common in Nachis

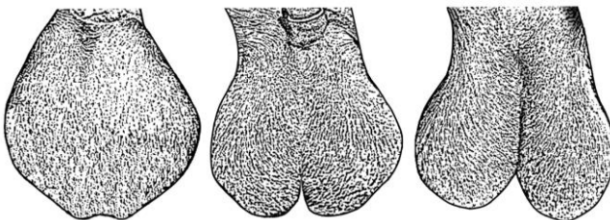


Fig. 31. Bi-partitioning of testicles in Nachi bucks (left, no partitioning; middle, slight partitioning; right, huge partitioning)

Final Thoughts

While judging goats (or any animal species for that matter) experience counts a lot. Animals with gross faults and extraordinary animals can be distinguished from others in no time. Final placing takes some time as top few animals need to be looked at repeatedly. In moving them in circles or asking presenters to lead them towards or away from the judge helps. With some experience, eye appeal still is the final attribute that must be considered when evaluating animals. Along with dancing gait, balance and symmetry are the most important factor in final judgment.

Does should be feminine in appearance with visible angularity such that body depth increases into the region of the rear flanks. Udders are extremely important and should be given due importance. Bucks, on the other hand, should express a masculine appearance. Testicles are important and ideal may not be easy to find even when other traits are easier to judge. Dancing gait is a special attribute of the breed and it takes time to learn what is a Nachi gait.

As many goat farmers participating in goat shows are poor, due respect should be paid to them to encourage them to keep raising good animals. Some have no experience of presenting animals in shows which requires patience from Judges.

Show rigs should have enough space for individual animals to walk freely (go to the farmer or herdmates for judging their walks. Some animals (especially males) may be reluctant to walk (away from herd) by themselves and therefore time taken for judging may be more than any other breed of goat. Standing for very long time may also put stress on animals and should be kept in mind while age class competitions are planned.

Number of prizes should be as many as possible even if of a smaller monetary value. They should feel good when going back to their village/community. There is no perfect animal and one must try to rank animals in the fairest possible way.



Fig. 32. A Nachi farmer with his does at a show near Bahawalpur

Tables

Table 1. A proposed scorecard for Nachi does

	General Appearance	Front End	Back & Barrel	Rear End	Udder & Teats
1	Breed Characters	Head	Withers	Rear Legs	Udder length
	2	7	2	4	6
2	Stature	Neck	Back	Pastern	Udder depth
	5	3	5	2	5
3	Color	Chest	Ribs	Thighs	Udder balance
	2	3	3	1	2
4	Coat	Shoulders	Flanks	Rear Hooves	Udder texture
	2	1	2	1	3
5	Vigour	Front legs	Barrel	Vulva & Tail	Udder support
	2	3	3	2	6
6	Gait	Front Hooves	Heart girth		Teat size
	7	1	4		3
7		Overall assembly	Rump		Teat shape
8		2	1		3
					Teat placement
					1
					Extra teats
					1
Total	20	20	20	10	30

Table 2. A proposed scorecard for Nachi bucks

	<i>General Appearance</i>	<i>Front End</i>	<i>Back & Barrel</i>	<i>Rear End</i>	<i>Testicles</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Breed Characters</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Withers</i>	<i>Rear Legs</i>	<i>Testicle width</i>
	4	7	2	7	7
<i>2</i>	<i>Stature</i>	<i>Neck</i>	<i>Back</i>	<i>Pastern</i>	<i>Testicle length</i>
	5	2	5	3	4
<i>3</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Chest</i>	<i>Ribs</i>	<i>Thighs</i>	<i>Scrotal shape</i>
	2	4	4	2	3
<i>4</i>	<i>Coat</i>	<i>Shoulders</i>	<i>Flanks</i>	<i>Rear Hooves</i>	<i>Symmetry</i>
	2	1	2	1	4
<i>5</i>	<i>Vigour</i>	<i>Front legs</i>	<i>Barrel</i>	<i>Tail</i>	<i>Extra teats</i>
	4	3	2	2	1
<i>6</i>	<i>Temper</i>	<i>Front Hooves</i>	<i>Heart girth</i>		
	1	1	4		
<i>7</i>	<i>Gait</i>	<i>Overall assembly</i>	<i>Rump</i>		
	7	2	1		
Total	25	20	20	15	20

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Commonly used Terms in Judging Goats

- **Balance:** A well-balanced means a good over-all ratio of height to width to length
- **Capacity:** Space for growth
- **Clean front:** Free of excess hide and wrinkles
- **Cow hocked:** The hocks are rotated toward each other viewed from the back
- **Deep udder:** Udder is stretched towards floor
- **Eye appeal:** Nice to look at
- **Feminine:** Looks like a female
- **Heart girth:** Circumference of chest measured behind elbows
- **Hock-in:** Looking from rear, legs from hock joints turning inward
- **Inguinal:** Pertaining to the groin
- **Lacks femininity:** Neck too short, face big or over-developed muscles
- **Masculine:** Looks like a male animal
- **Monkey mouth:** Upper jaw is shorter than the lower jaw causing an incorrect bite
- **Over conditioned:** Refers to the excessive amount of fat layer below the skin
- **Over finished:** Too fat
- **Overshot:** Upper jaw projecting beyond lower jaw
- **Parrot mouth:** Bottom jaw is shorter than the top jaw causing an incorrect bite
- **Posterior:** Situated behind or at the rear, opposite to anterior

- **Roman Nose:** Nose with a prominent upper part or bridge
- **Short bodied:** Short from the shoulders through the hip
- **Steep rump:** too much angle between the hook and pin bones
- **Stifle:** Joint between femur and tibia
- **Stylish:** Well balanced and pretty to look at
- **Supernumerary:** Those beyond the normal number, extra
- **Thurl:** Hip joint, connecting femur to pelvis
- **Undershot:** Lower jaw projecting beyond upper
- **Wasty:** The brisket protrudes out in front of the goat
- **Wattle:** Short, finger-shaped appendages generally on neck
- **Weak pasterns:** pasterns are weak that a goat may walk on his/her dewclaws in severe cases
- **Well balanced:** All the parts match and tie in correctly
- **Withers:** Highest part of the back just after neck) where the shoulder blades almost touch



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