



Darlington Championship Show 2011

Best in Show and group reports

Hound group

I HAD a most enjoyable day at Darlington Show, which is so well run and gives every breeder their own classes, the weather stayed fine and the hospitality was excellent as usual.

I pulled out eight out for further consideration, the Petit, Beagle, Smooth Dachshund, Finnish Spitz, Wolfhound, Elkhound, Pharaoh and Saluki. After moving them again and a last look I placed the Wolfhound.

1. Amoo's Ch Seplecur Berthia. Irish Wolfhound. Upstanding bitch with long powerful head, dark eye, rose ear on long strong neck leading into sloping shoulder with good width of chest and fill bone to the ground, good ribbing with strong topline and quarters, correct bend of stifle moved with long true easy stride.

2. Garratt, Oakey & Smith's Ch Caryna Meilishia ShCM. Saluki. Elegant bitch with feminine head, good ears and dark eyes, long neck into clean shoulders, correct topline into moderate quarters, good depth with fill in, giving chest room, true movement with reach and drive.

3. Robertson's Ch Soletreader Peek A Boo. Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit). I have always admired her but it was not her day here, classic head, large dark eye, correct ears, long neck into well laid shoulders, straight front, good forechest, level topline with strong driving quarters, god on the move but standing not her thing on the day.

4. Greaves & Croxford's Ch & Ir Ch Kunniakas Look No Further For Whittimere. I judged this dog as a puppy and thought he would grow too big, how wrong can you get!! Young dog who is maturing well, masculine head, good ears, well used, dark eye, medium neck into correct shoulder and straight front, strong body and matching rear angulation behind, moved true in full coat.

Jenny Startup ■

Terrier group

IT IS always a pleasure to judge at Darlington, the committee can never do enough for everyone, both judges and exhibitors and I can say we all appreciate it. With the exception of the Cairn, this was a full group.

I shortlisted the Australian T, Bedlington, Border, WFT, Irish, Kerry Blue, Skye & WHWT.

G1 Ch Salena Black Shadow, my BOB Skye from Crufts this year and looked just as impressive. Typically long, low and level, good reach of neck, in superb coat and body condition. I felt him a worthy winner of this good group.

G2 Ch Silhill Red Rock at Sherex, Australian T, in tip top condition and just never stopped showing. His coat could not have been better & he pushed 1 all the way.

G3 Ch/Am Ch Fleet St Fenway Fan, Irish T, a great favourite of mine and also a BOB winner of mine for this year. His handler had his coat in great nick. For some reason on the final move his front was not as good as I have seen it.

G4 Ch Fralex Culibre Sapphire, Bedlington who was a new one to me though I believe he has 5 CCs and easy to see why. Trimmed to perfection and so feminine.

Geoff Corish ■

Utility group

I ENJOYED my day at this well run show, the quality in this group was very good, with some top quality dogs sent forward, my final cut was close decision making.

Best in Group. Cox & Isherwood's Vanitonia You' See. (Toy Poodle dog). Most exquisite Toy Poodle, I have placed well before. Lovely headpiece, arrogant, good front and feet. Powerful strong backend, which he uses with purpose on the move. The complete package in full dense coat, immaculately presented and handled.

Reserve Alexander's Offordale Sapphire. (Dalmatian). A quality Dalmatian with feminine and lovely head, good sloping shoulders, firm topline good strength to loin with smooth strides, a very close contender.

3rd Wilson's Redwitch All That And More. (Akita). Liked this Akita she is very typy, correct size, good head and ears, great bone and substance, good tail set, moved well, but a little to interested in the surroundings, expertly handled.

4th Dangerfield's Hillplace Florence of Bullfleet (Bulldog). A lovely young Bulldog bitch who was made up on the day I was told by her excited owner. We will hear of her again as she is so well balanced and fit for function, as they say, moved well

Ken Sinclair ■

Working group

MY THANKS go to the committee for the kind invitation to judge my first group at this level and for their hospitality throughout the show. It's an honour to judge at this level and extra special because I have been involved with them for several years now.

The venue is an excellent site and despite the torrential rain on Friday night the ground held up well. Everything here runs like clockwork and the groups started on time every day. I thought I had everything covered in the clothing department but unfortunately my belt buckle let me down after going over some of the dogs hence the adjustments at times! I thank the breed judges for sending through some very good exhibits and making my task an enjoyable one to sort them out. There were a few that looked the part standing but were not conditioned and therefore seemed to struggle on the move to extend and drive. I short listed eight, Malamute, Bouvier, Giant Schnauzer, Great Dane, Leonberger, Newfoundland, Rottweiler and Russian Black.

Malamute, shown in excellent coat and body toning and sound on the move. Giant Schnauzer, top class conditioning with hard coat and clean easy movement. Leonberger, strongly made and balanced all through and steady

Best in Show

IT WAS an honour to be invited to judge my first Best in Show at my local Championship Show.

My thanks to the committee and officials for the hospitality and kindness shown over the three days. They had worked hard to make sure everything was in order for the exhibitors even to the point of organising good weather for this time of the year. Well done to you all.

The group judges sent forward seven beautiful representatives and this made competition keen. The lovely Irish Wolfhound, Ch Seplecur Berthia impressed for her size, height and substance. She was in hard condition, has great depth of body and such a lengthy stride. The Skye Terrier, Ch Salena Black Shadow I have judged recently. Here he was on top of his form, his black coat in super condition which enhanced his outline and he performed perfectly. The Toy poodle Ch Vanitonia You'll See is such an elegant dog, so well presented and moved with verve. He has a lovely expression with his small dark eye, long leathers and short sturdy body. The Shetland Sheepdog Ch Edglonian Singin the Blues gave a good account of himself, he moved true and maintained his outline all the time. His blue merle colouring is so appealing and he was very much at one with his handler. The Pekinese Ch Yakee Ooh Aah Cantona was carrying a beautiful coat, is so well constructed and picks up heavy for his size. Really impressive in head and eye. He moved in typical fashion and style. The Bouvier De Flandres Ch I'm Special Inessence Movado at Kanix is so typical in profile with substance and power. He is so well balanced from head to tail. On the move he is sound, covers plenty of ground and catches the eye. On this performance I had the pleasure to award him Reserve Best in Show.

My Best in Show was the truly lovely Irish Water Spaniel Sh Ch Am Ch Whistlestop's Elements of Magic. He was in super coat and condition. I liked his head and eye so true in front with plenty of rib and substance. On the move not only does he show sound movement with a ground covering stride but his character shows through with just a hint of doing his own thing at any moment.

My thanks to all once again.

Stuart Plane ■

free action. Rottweiler, balanced in outline and well muscled covers the ground easily. My final four were all sound and moved with style that was a pleasure to see in large dogs.

G1 Lambert, Hughes & Murray's Bouvier Ch. I'm Special Inessence Movada at Kanix (Imp). Such an impressive dog from all angles he defies you to look elsewhere. So good in head and body toning throughout. Strong bone and beautifully balanced in body with muscle to spare, comes into his own on the move with perfect foot fall and such good reach and drive, handled to get all he has to offer. Put down in top class jacket, not yet 2 so I'm sure there's a lot more to come from this boy. Pleased to watch him take RBIS on Sunday. Well done

G2 Searle's Great Dane Ch. Murrayvhale Manfred. What a Great Dane should be a large impressive dog capable of bringing down a boar. Well proportioned in head, powerful neck and front, strong quarters and bone. Carries himself well on the move covering the ground with an effortless easy action and would surely be able to work all day given his construction. Pushed the Bouvier hard.

G3 Sheridan's Newfoundland Ch Hanningfield Touch Of Magic JW ShCM. He certainly has that touch of magic, impressive in profile and on the move. Strong well made in head, muscular neck and front. Deep in chest and firm in back. Uses the ring to full advantage to show of his build covering the ground with style and accuracy but with the minimum of fuss. Covered with a gleaming black coat of correct coarse, waterproof texture. Another handle to perfection

G4 Huxley's Russian Black Terrier. Robroyd I Lyka. Yes I did like her a lot. Good head to handle strong yet so obviously feminine. Proud in appearance and one you cannot ignore. Clean through her front with all the parts flowing into each other nicely. Well sprung in rib and defined in rear. Put down in the best of body toning and coat texture. Flowed around the ring with such an easy stride that was true and accurate from any angle, good to watch such sound movement.

Richard C Kinsey ■

Pastoral group

DARLINGTON HAS long been a show which really caters for its exhibitors with classes for as many breeds as possible, and many extra stakes classes so everyone can have several bites at the cherry. So that now it has this wonderful new venue at Newby Hall with lots of space, one wonders why the society does not have a better distribution of CCs. For example, in the pastoral group 30 breeds had individual classification but only 11 of these had CCs, though in fairness I should add that 7 of the breeds classified are not yet qualified to have CCs. This has always been a strong area in the world of dogs so I hope that the Kennel Club will look kindly on the

society in future.

I am sure that Lisa Burtenshaw would have enjoyed judging this group and I know that the exhibitors will join with me in sending her good wishes for a speedy return to health after her operation.

There were many candidates for group placings so I pulled out 9 in my short list. These were: Border Collie, Finnish Lapphund, Puli, Old English Sheepdog, Polish Lowland Sheepdog, Pyrenean, Shetland Sheepdog and both Welsh Corgis.

My winner was the Shetland Sheepdog, Pearson's Ch Edglonian Singin The Blues, who bristled with good health. His lovely blue merle coat looked superb and he moved and showed to perfection. His eyes and beautifully set and carried ears gave a lovely expression. He has a very good outline and tail carriage and pleasing brisket, bone, legs and feet, splendid hindquarters.

Second was the Pyrenean, Bayliss's Ch Shiresoak Wizards Legend JW, impressive dog, sound in every way and presented and handled so well. Well made, beautifully balanced and well coupled. Good head and eyes.

Third was an old friend, the Cardigan Corgi bitch, Taylor's Ch Blondie's Read My Lips for Bymil, now over 7 but still as beautiful as ever.

Fourth was the Finnish Lapphund, Murray's Elbereth Mikko Sh.CM, excellent representative of one of the new breeds to CC status. Well balanced dog in very good body and coat, good head, eyes and ears, moved and showed well.

Ferelith Somerfield ■

Gundog group

WHAT EXCELLENT attention to detail by David Guy and his team, a good crowd gathered to watch the big ring competitions at the end of the last day. Lots of quality dogs were presented to me in this group.

Best In Group. Carruthers & McDaniel's Sh Ch Am Ch Whistlestop's Elements Of Magic Spaniel (Irish Water). Dog. Obviously I have seen this dog in groups before but never been over him. His size, shape and outline suggest that he is a great IWS. When you have the opportunity to lay hands on him this is not only confirmed but also enhanced. He has the most gorgeous expression, which makes one smile, so typical of this breed. The power from his quarters comes not only from correct bone structure but Fit hard muscle definition with width of second thigh. All topped by his crisp curled coat. Just worked the well-proportioned ring to advantage. Delighted to place him as the winner, and thrilled he went on to BIS.

Reserve Mitchell's Sh Ch Nord Barecho Hold Your Horses At Peasblossom. Spaniel (English Springer) Dog. I was delighted to find two impressive English Springers in less than two weeks that has to be good for the breed. This chap is such a free easy mover with positive action and long stride. He is masculine clean and well balanced in super coat.

3. Blackburn-Bennett's Sh Ch Kiswahili Martin At Kanix. Pointer dog. Fit, clean and eats the ground on the move. Works in unison with handler, presenting an eye-catching image, both standing and moving.

4 Morgan & Bott's Sh Ch Quensha Little Jeanie JW English Setter. Bitch. Such a feminine, pretty girl with beautifully moulded head, reachy, clean neckline flowing through good shoulder placement. Firm topline, short coupled and good quarters with skilfully prepared coat. Goes with lashing tail.

Also in the shortlist. Boden's Sh Ch Tweedsmuir Beautiful Dream Among Suelynnda. Clumber Spaniel. Quality Clumber who is certainly fit for purpose, have awarded her a CC and she just gets better. Marris-Bray's Sh Ch Helenwood Crystal Maze JW. Cocker spaniel. Judged this Cocker yesterday at a breed championship show, when she was sent forward by my co-judge to challenge for BOB, she delighted me then and was bang on form again today with her busy true cocker action and temperament. Thirlwell's Sh Ch Ferndel Aeron Magregor. WSS. Again have judged this boy as a puppy, he is maturing so well, yet another quality Welsh from this clever breeder. Knowles & Glen's Cobbets Rock N Roll Party with Bessalone ShCM. Italian Spinone. No exaggeration, really typical, loved his head, correct topline, good skin, free, active, ground covering produced from sound construction. Harper's Sh Ch Pitswarren Planet JW. Hungarian Vizsla. Fit, balanced, really appeals for size and lines, determining that he could be no other breed. Presented in Very good order.

Patsy Hollings ■

Toy group

BEST. Martin's Ch Yakee Ooh Aah Cantona. Pekinese. Dog. Good head and expression, deepest of rib cages, strong bone, moved over the ground with typical rolling gait. Coat and fringing in A1 condition, a great show dog.

Reserve. Lister's Ch Florita Tipitina. Italian Greyhound. Bitch. Exactly what I expect from this kennel, a superb example petite and fine with beautiful head, supple skin, moved with lift and drive never faltered.

3rd. Baker's Ch Keyingham Branwell. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. Dog. Today was the first time I have judged this dog I adored his head and expression, good neck and shoulders, short coupled well angulated hindquarters driving hind movement. Unbelievably 9 years young and still enjoying every minute in the ring

4th. Jackson's Ch Benatone Gold Bow. Maltese. Dog. Sweet head and expression, well placed shoulders, excellent depth of rib, short coupled moved and showed well, fine silky correct textured coat, good pigmentation

I also shortlisted the: Japanese Chin, Alcocks & Young's Ch Vantistica Kazuki Sleepyhollow JW: Pomeranian, Cawthera's Ch Lireva's Sir Fin The Net: English Toy Terrier. Newton's Witchstone New Star At Tettoy: Havanese, Walker's Happyfriends What A Guy).

Val Blore ■