

BIRMINGHAM NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

Friday 10th May 2013

I very much enjoyed judging my very own loved breed at the National Championship Show. The size of the ring was perfect to show off the movement of Pointers. I requested a big ring and the very kind show architect Mrs Britton obliged and gave me a double ring for which I was so grateful. I wish to thank the Chairman, President, Secretary and committee members for their friendliness, the very comfortable hotel, the food and unlimited wine. The show organisation was so wonderful and, Crufts excepted, without parallel in my humble opinion.

I was blessed with 148 pointers with 179 entries. I have not judged the breed for a number of years and I did so look forward to judging my favourite breed. All the dogs were new to me and this was so wonderful as then there was no pressure, no pre-judging, enabling me to judge without fear or favour with the courage of my convictions. I always judge on the day, at that moment in the ring. I do not judge on potential; I judge them as I see them at that very moment.

I found the pointers to have changed very much in type and in quality. Orange and white seems to be in fashion. The liver and whites and black and whites of the old fashioned type seem to be in small minority. There are some good heads on view with deep stop. Some muzzles are a little short and some have too broad skulls and this really detracts from the beautiful chiselling of the skull. Many did not show the occipital protuberance, another hallmark of our breed. Many had too-round biggish eyes. There were some poor fronts, being out at elbow. Many had the angles from neck to tail but there were very few with the series of graceful curves that is plainly stated in the Standard and an important yardstick of the breed. If one has gone back to the old times between the '60s and into the '90s, many top class pointers had the series of graceful curves be they Pennine (Daviam), Toberdoney, Crookrise and Pipeaway. The most disturbing aspect was the movement and the tail shape and tail carriage. So many have longish, thick tails, not gradually tapering to a point. So many did not carry the tail in the correct fashion as I saw high carriage, curled tails and dead tail without the true gentle lashing and beautiful tail action. The lashing tail, be it gentle or vigorous from side to side, to my humble opinion is one of the hallmarks of the breed. Arkwright said the head shows the character of the Pointer but the true blue blood is the tail. A Pointer without a well-carried tail and tail action to me is not a proper Pointer. Many had heavier gait and I prefer light effortless gait with drive behind.

However, all my winners in each class pleased me very much and I was able to find my old-fashioned typical Pointers in my CC and RCC winners and Puppy winner. These are truly the Pointers that I have owned and known since I was a child. I won over 40 BIS All Breeds with them and I also shot over them since I was young and also had the honour of grouse shooting by the kind invitation of Lady Jean Fforde of Isle of Arran.

MINOR PUPPY DOG (1)

1st Huxley's Aurichalcum Evan Knows. Very nice type. Good head, neck and shoulders. Very immature in body and movement, just could not be assessed due to his age. Perhaps this was his first outing.

PUPPY DOG (3)

1st Abbott's Millpoint Dare To Dream for Mirasol. Very balanced for age; good eye and expression; good neck and shoulder, lovely tail set and shape. Sound on the move.

2nd Siddle's Calderside If Only at Wilchrimane. Good head, neck, shoulder and body. Tail could be better in shape. Sound on the move.

3rd Bowmar's Millpoint Field of Dreams at Stoneygun

JUNIOR DOG (10)

1st Davis' Wilchrimane Xcel. Lovely type and body and shape. Good head and eyes, feet and tail action. Well handled.

2nd Perkins' Kanix Fate of Brent. A very nice b/w. Good head and eyes and balanced body but did not move as positive for me behind on the day.

3rd Oddie's Wilchrimane Igoyougo At Riowood.

GRADUATE DOG (12)

1st Harrison's Millpoint Heat Wave. B/w of beautiful type. Good head and neck and shoulders. Good width of thighs. Sound on the move.

2nd Bell's Crookrise The Medlar at Owlspoint. Masculine head, good stop and ears. Perhaps a little too full of lip for me. Good neck, shoulders and quarters.

3rd Nelis' Freebreeze Yankee Clipper.

POST GRADUATE DOG (13)

1st Bradley's Teisgol King Alfred. Correct type with very good balanced body. Good eyes, expression, neck, topline and quarters. It was his sound movement that won his place.

2nd Martin's Sunhouse Anything Goes. Balanced body from neck to tail. Lovely tail shape. Sound on the move.

Two very acceptable dogs for type and quality.

3rd MacManus' Luneville Harvest Moon.

LIMIT DOG (12)

1st Barker's Flinthill Chocolate Thyme. Came into the ring, an old-fashioned typical liver and white. Lovely Pointer head and expression in his eyes. Very typical balanced head. Very good topline, excellent quarters. Lovely neat tail. Moved sound and with style of a typical pointer using his tail in wonderful action as a Pointer should.

2nd Tibbs' Raigmore Dusk Till Dawn. A lovely black and white of quality. Good head and eyes, neck, shoulders and correct topline. On the final run I preferred the typical character of my winner. Not in disgrace as he is a very good dog that I do like very much.

3rd Martin's Sunhouse Believe It or Not.

OPEN DOG (11)

1st Udale's Freddie Flintoff. DCC. Came into the ring all Pointer, typical in quality. Black and white. Another old-fashioned type that I admire. He has a lovely head and kind expression. He commanded my attention by his excellent handler that handled him to show his best Pointer character standing and moving for me. He has quality and style and is all Pointer; the ideal size for a dog. Masculine and not coarse. Strong, lissom appearance. Good tail shape and tail carriage and so stylish when on the move with his handler, moving with drive. I could not deny him the CC. It was his overall quality, size and type that I put him over 2.

2nd Alcorn and Lynn's Sh Ch Afterglow Bare Face Lie at Kanix. RCC. He also caught my attention for his general quality and type. He has a correct head though slightly longer. Very good neck and shoulder and depth of chest. Good body and quarters. Very good tail set and tail carriage. He, too, has a very good handler who handled him superbly and stylishly. There is so much to like about this dog. Perhaps to be critical the handler ran him a little too fast. However, I just preferred the size of my CC winner. Not in disgrace as he also shows his Pointer character that pleased me much.

3rd Drake's Sh Ch Clamerkin Crystal Mountain.

VETERN DOG (1)

1st Wilcox's Sh Ch Pipeaway Zonic Tonic for Merynjen. Orange and White, lovely type. Balanced body and typical head and eyes. Sound on the back but front could be more positive but this is due to his age. A very typical Pointer. So much to like of his type and quality.

MINOR PUPPY BITCH (8)

1st Barker's Braithwaite Ever Thus at Flinthill. A lovely b/w puppy just 6 months old. Full of quality and so very outgoing in character and she used her correct tail carriage to advantage showing true Pointer character. Very stylish on the move. BP and I believe she was shortlisted in the Gundog Puppy Group under Mr Frank Kane.

2nd Tibbs' Somerled Classic Romance at Raigmore. Orange & white. More mature than 1 above. Has all the essentials but I just preferred the tail shape and tail carriage of my winner. Not in disgrace in the good company of good puppy bitches.

3rd Goodyear and Allen's Afterglow Tealeaf.

PUPPY BITCH (4)

1st Harrison's Millpoint Hopes N'Dreams. Nice type. Good head and eyes. Good neck and topline, sound mover.

2nd Isherwood's Symitry Tickled Pink. Lovely type with good eye and expression. Correct neck and shoulders and sound on the move. Not so well handled perhaps on the day. These two could change places on another day. Two lovely youngsters.

3rd Rankine and O'Neill's Tenshilling Rumour Has It.

JUNIOR BITCH (14)

1st Backler's Kanix Find The Dream. Nice type. Good head and eyes; good quarters. Sound on the back but front could be more positive. A lot to like about her.

2nd Rose's Ridanflight Rhonwen. Lovely quality bitch. Very good body and tail shape. Sound. On the final run she did not put all in. These two can change places on another day.

3rd Booth's Crookrise Wren.

GRADUATE BITCH (11)

1st Stilgoe's Teisgol Lucky Chance. Nicely balanced. Good head, eyes, body and tail shape. Good hindquarters and sound on the move. A lot to like about her.

2nd Smith's Fydal Ava. Very active orange and white. Good head and eyes. Just a little dip behind the shoulders. Good quarters and sound on the move.

3rd Nelis' Freebreeze Providence.

POST GRADUATE BITCH (21)

1st Stilgoe's Teisgol Lucky Chance.

2nd Dyer's Sharnphilly Juici Cuture. Lovely liver and white of good quality. Very nice head and eyes. Good neck, shoulders and quarters. A little long in loin. Very good tail set and tail shape and sound on the move.

3rd Abbott's Esrews Sheer Gorgeous to Mirasol.

LIMIT BITCH (15)

1st Ingham's Calderside Yours Truly. CC & BOB. There came into the ring the most beautiful old-fashioned liver and white bitch that caught my heart and eyes when she ran into the ring from the entrance. It took me a whole day to find one like this. She has a typical 'English' Pointer head with lovely stop and the correct shape of skull and wide nostril. Deep stop and balanced muzzle and with occiput and neat ears. Lovely kind, gentle expression. Beautiful neck into shoulders and topline and tail set and so correct tail shape. Lovely width of thigh and second thigh. When I asked her to move up and down she moved with soundness front and back with drive from the hocks. When she moved around the ring she used her tail to the perfect fashion, lashing her tail from side to side and showing the perfect Pointer character with her head and neck so beautifully carried. She also possessed effortlessly light, airy gait that a proper Pointer should have. This is the true 'English' Pointer that I have been so used to and owned and won with and shot over. She has totally conquered my heart and soul. She reminded me so much of my Aust Ch Crookrise Sprig, a liver and white, winning BIS All Breed moving around the arena at the Sydney Royal under the late Harry Glover. She also reminds me of my Ch Crookrise Return, BIS under the late Judy de Cassembroot and of Aust Ch Crookrise Rosita winning BIS also under the late Madeline Pickup of Druidswood German Shepherd fame in the UK. It will be a very long time before I will forget this bitch.

2nd O'Driscoll's Fowington Caracas. A very lovely and correct black and white bitch. Very stylish and so well put together. She is good from head to tail and her movement is sound and stylish. I like her tremendously. My winner was just more of my type and movement that I have been so used to. Second place was no disgrace in this lovely class.

3rd Andrews & Ledger's Sunny Side Up at Ledgands.

OPEN BITCH (11)

1st Wilkinson's Sh Ch Flinthill Forget-me-Not. RCC. Black and white. Standing she looked a picture with every inch of her anatomy so neat and well put together. I could not fault her from head to tail. She looked like a statue and a piece of porcelain. She is so sound front and back on the move, but I would prefer more activity of her tail, though she has a very correct tail in set, shape and carriage. Her place could not be denied. I would like to have seen her handler just move her on with a word to get her character to come more to the fore. A lovely bitch.

2nd Mason's Freebreeze As You Like It. There came into the ring a very beautiful lemon and white of superb quality. She has correct skull shape and occiput, and lovely eye and expression for a lemon. Very neat ears. Good neck into good shoulders and topline. Very good quarters and tail set and shape. She oozes quality and Pointer type. On the move she was sound and had a lovely gentle tail action. Perhaps her handler could move her a little faster. These two bitches could change places on another day.

3rd Siddle's Wilchrimane Ice Crystal.

VETERAN BITCH (1)

1st MacManus' Crookrise Arran at Luneville. Lovely head with correct dish and small ears. Neat tail. In excellent condition for her age.

DAVID WONG (Judge)