

WELSH SPRINGER SPANIEL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW. 2nd September 2017.

It is such an honour to receive an invite to judge a breed club ch. show, especially when this is the result of a vote by the members. I had so looked forward to this appointment and I wasn't disappointed on the day. With an entry of 63 dogs making 101 entries, I think the dogs were quite representative of the current state of the breed. The overwhelming majority were typical, well made dogs, although, as when I last judged, close rear movement with a lack of drive was prevalent. Fronts, which for many years have been a weakness in the breed, are generally better. I was looking for a compact, short coupled dog and they were easier to find than in the past. In profile I hoped to find the breed's characteristic topline but sometimes the handler had other ideas of what they wished to achieve and by overstretching the back legs created a level or sloping topline, both of which are incorrect for the breed. Heads varied and forced me to clarify in my mind what I define as typical. My watchwords for the breed generally are strength and refinement and these I apply in my assessment of the head as well as the overall picture. Too much breadth across the skull and too much depth in the foreface and you lose refinement. The standard calls for a fairly square muzzle but there should be some tapering towards the nose. Eye shape too is critical in achieving that typical expression.

The breed standard for the Welsh Springer is relatively brief and shares much in common with the other Spaniel breeds. For this reason, I believe it is very important to identify what we believe to be the unique breed points of the Welsh and reward them highly when we find them. Balancing these issues with the importance of good conformation, condition and ring performance on the day is never easy but all of my principal winners possessed these virtues to a great degree. I thoroughly enjoyed the task and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to go over your dogs.

My co-judge, Mrs. Sue Connolly and I were in agreement on all of the principal awards on the day.

I appreciated the qualities of the bitch C.C. winner, GLENBROWS MEMOIR and agreed she should be awarded B.I.S. The B.V.I.S. also went to a bitch, SH CH GELLYBURN DAMSEFLY JW ShCM.

DOGS

VETERAN DOG (9.2ab)

1st INT. CH. FOREVER TEXAS FROM CHURCHK NIGHTS.

A substantial dog showing little sign of age retaining his good coat colour. Well angulated although his handler was inclined to overstretch him creating a sloping topline not apparent on the move. He moved with great enthusiasm, his tail constantly showing his happy disposition. His action really covered the ground with plenty of reach and drive.

2nd BUSHWACKER THRILLER

A more compact dog, good for size and balance. Typical head with nothing overdone. Correct topline and a good bend of stifle. Moved out really well.

3rd CERYSAN ROBERT ROY.

Another that presented a good, typical profile in a compact, short coupled body. Pleasing to see another one that really enjoyed his time in the ring. Could lose a little of his abundant coat to create a cleaner outline.

MPD. (6)

1st DON'S STATEMENT TO NYLIRAM (IMP. SWE.)

Headed a class of quality puppies. So balanced for one so young with a spot on height to length ratio. Very clean in neck and shoulder placement. Correct topline. Inclined to lose his bend of stifle when stacked but on the move his angulation is fine. Well shaped head. Good dentition. A really good ring performance. He moved out well and showed good extension at the front and carried his tail well. BPD. BPIS.

2nd TAMMANO STOORWORM.

Lots to like here. Plenty of substance in the right sized frame. Well off for bone and has a deep chest and a developing spring of rib. Stronger in the head but not overdone. Good "rich red" colour to coat. Good to see that he was happy to be in the ring and he moved accurately both fore and aft.

3rd GLENBROWS VALENTINO FOR GILPETA.

Again a well bodied puppy. He moved well but he was less happy to be stacked and tended to lose his shape when he fiddled. All the essentials are there; just keep practicing.

PD. (7.1ab)

1ST DON'S STATEMENT TO NYLIRAM (IMP. SWE.)

2ND BENOVEOR WIPEOUT

Well off for bone and substance. A well made puppy with good angles. Short coupled. Good bend of stifle with low set hocks. Ample depth to body, developing spring of rib and the required tight feet. Pleasing head with a well shaped eye. He took time to settle in the ring but with patience he got there and moved soundly.

3rd ISLANZA HARTLAND

Lacking confidence he doesn't sell himself well. Yet he possesses many commendable breed points. A taller more upstanding puppy with lots of bone and substance. Looked better on the move than when stacked. Just needs a bit of time to allow his confidence to grow.

JD. (8.1ab)

1st CWMBEILI GWILYM

Judging is all about the dog on the day and this dog has his good days and less good ones. It has taken him some time to begin to fill his frame but he is now maturing well and losing his teenage look. He presents a super, typical profile with a good reach of neck, the best of toplines, well

angulated quarters and well set down hocks. Another with excellent "rich red" coat colour and good feathering to complete the picture. He took time to settle but eventually moved out well.

2nd JULITA RUTLAND

Of a quite different kennel type but with many virtues. With plenty of substance but of the correct size, the balance of this dog is different from the winner as he is longer in the back. He has a reachy neck into well placed shoulders but I preferred the topline of dog 1. He has a well proportioned head and a good eye. His presentation was excellent as always from this kennel. He moved with enthusiasm and accuracy.

3rd CWMBEILI MORGAN.

Litter brother of my winner and sharing many of his qualities. I particularly admired his head which has a lot of work to it and a well shaped eye. Unfortunately today he was not in the best of coats and his lack of feathering, especially in the coupling, made him appear shallow in body although in fact he doesn't lack depth. Shown and handled well.

YD. (6)

1st FERDEL GLENFIDDICH.

This dog really did intrigue me. The profile picture he presents is quite different from many of the dogs from this famous kennel in recent times. In particular he is much shorter in the back and the coupling than many we see today and the overall impression is of an upstanding (but not tall) dog. His clever breeder will probably have some idea of where this inheritance originated but the dog he most resembles to me is Sh.Ch. Dalati Afan, one of the last champions from that great kennel. He has excellent bone and substance. He has a good reach of neck into the cleanest of shoulders and moderate, powerful rear quarters. For me his head is a little too strong, particularly in its depth of muzzle. On the move, he carries himself so well with super head and tail carriage. In fact he always gives his handler 100% and makes it all look so easy. Still a young dog, the best is yet to come and then he will be a difficult dog to get passed. R.C.C.

2nd SHANDWICK VISCOUNT

Still a young dog, he has some maturing to do but he is right for his age. I admired him for type and he presents many virtues in his excellent profile. He is well angulated and I particularly liked his head. His coat is of a good colour and he has plenty of furnishings to complete the picture. A very happy, outgoing dog, he moved out well if a little close behind.

3rd JULITA RUTLAND

ND. (7.1ab)

1st DON'S STATEMENT TO NYLIRAM (IMP.SWE.)

2nd JULITA RUKESTER

A strong dog but of correct size. Deep body and good ribbing. Pleasing head with refinement and a glint of naughtiness in his eye. Very happy to be in the ring. He moved out well but was inclined to carry his tail a little high.

3rd GLENBROWS FIRE STARTER

A nice, typical dog let down by poor presentation. The standard of presentation of the dogs in the breed has improved enormously in recent years and all other things being equal this can become a deciding factor as indeed happened here.

GD. (9.1ab)

1st CWMBEILI GWILYM

2nd JACRANELLA SOLO

I really liked this one for make and shape. Ample bone and substance but nothing overdone and of the correct size. Good depth to body, well ribbed and short coupled. He has a really good head with the strength and refinement I look for. He moved out in an animated fashion but I would have liked to have seen more reach in his action. Presented in superb coat and condition.

3rd SHANDWICK VISCOUNT

PGD. (6.1ab)

1st HUDOLUS RHYS HENLLYS AT TYPICA

A well made dog with good angulation throughout. He has a quality head with plenty of work and character evident. His coat was of a good colour but here was another who had left his feathering at home and initially he appeared shallow and a bit immature in body; going over him it became clear that this was not the case. He really used the ring and moved out well, propelling himself forward on the best of tight feet and with an ever wagging tail. A slow maturer but so are the best wines!

2nd SLAPESTONES TIDAL FORCE.

Very smart but perhaps not of the type I usually appreciate. On closer inspection, I came to recognise that he ticked a lot of the breed standard boxes. He has a lovely profile with curves in all the right places. His good reach of neck flows into well set shoulders. He has a good spring of rib and in his hindquarters ample bend of stifle and well set down hocks. He was immaculately presented and put in a good ring performance. Perhaps in the overall picture he doesn't shout Spaniel to me but I am quite prepared to acknowledge that others would disagree with me on this.

3rd CHERRYHEATH'S MR. MOJITO

What a happy dog delighted to be sharing time with his breeder/owner, handler. A compact, well balanced dog who reminded me of the Parkmist dogs this exhibitor used to show. He has a typical profile with the required rise over the loin. He moved with enthusiasm and accuracy.

MLD (9.1ab)

1st KYLOWEN DRYM

Nothing flashy about this one. Just an old fashioned Welsh that wouldn't have looked out of place in the ring when I came into the breed more than 30 years ago. As the breed standard hasn't changed in that time it was good to find one that was thoroughly typical rather than just thoroughly modern. He has lots of bone and substance but in the correct sized and compact body. His coat is a lovely "rich red" colour. I might be tempted to take more of its abundance out to create a cleaner outline but perhaps this is me succumbing to modern fashion. His conformation is good. He has so much work and quality in his head. He moves soundly but I would like to see him go with more animation then he could trouble the best.

2nd SHANNARA TOTAL ECLIPSE

A very different type from the winner but with lots to appreciate. He is longer in body than I would prefer but in full coat and immaculately groomed, he presents a fine picture. He has a well shaped head and a good reach of neck set into well laid back shoulders. In his hindquarters, he has a good bend of stifle and well set down hocks. Another one who thoroughly enjoyed his time in the ring, almost too much for his owner! Don't knock it; the breed standard calls for a "merry" dog and I will always give credit to a dog that displays this in the ring.

3rd BRYNSEIRI AFAN

One I have admired from the ringside but like his kennel mate he decided to leave his best bib and tucker at home. A well balanced dog with good ribbing and the best of feet. Lots of character in the head. I'd like to see him again when he is in better coat and condition.

LD (6)

1st KAMUNTING CAST AWAY TO BENOVEOR. J.W.

Bears many similarities to the winner of the previous class. Well off for substance and bone, he presented a balanced outline with the correct topline which he also held on the move. I liked his head with its good expression. His hindquarters displayed a good bend of stifle and well set down hocks which enabled him to drive around the ring. Shown in full coat and superb condition, he looked a picture and was close up for top honours.

2nd ISLANZA GOING DUTCH OF ROXDALE

At first I thought he appeared a little heavy but this was an impression created by his abundant coat and underneath it I found the right amount of substance for his frame. Again a well angulated dog with a typical head and a well shaped, expressive eye. Good coat colour and the best of feet.

3rd ISLANZA LOOKIN FOR SPOT. (A.I.)

Good for type. I would have liked a little more substance and strength in his hindquarters. Moved accurately but more animation would have improved the picture.

OD. (9)

A quality class of the sort you would hope to find at a breed club ch. show. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to assess your dogs. All had merit but of course some were closer to my interpretation of the breed standard.

1st SH.CH.TAIMERE'S TWISTER ROUND NYLIRAM J.W. ShCM.

A most impressive dog that just shouts breed type. I said my watchwords are strength and refinement and he has both in abundance. He has all the breed points required to do a day's work coupled with those unique elements of the standard that define breed type. So yes he is a Spaniel but he couldn't be anything other than a Welsh Springer Spaniel. Like all top quality dogs, he doesn't need to be moulded into shape when stacked. He always looked right at all times when he was in the ring. He is so well made and all the parts merge to create a balanced picture. Nothing jars. On the move, he displayed reach and drive and was completely in tune with his owner/handler. For me a truly memorable dog and my clear winner for top honours. C.C. & R.B.I.S. & B.O.S.

2nd SH.CH. GLENBROWS TRADEMARK. J.W. ShCM.

Another most impressive dog and possessing the recognisable kennel type that these breeders are capable of producing time and again. He has the best of profiles where his super angulation can be admired. Again he has that mix of strength and refinement that I was looking for; the refinement very apparent in his superb head and expression. He always seems to give his best and it came down to the smallest of details when placing him and my class winner. Ultimately I felt my winner edged over him with a more positive rear action on the move.

3rd MENSTONIA MARKSMAN ShCM.

A very good all round, sound dog with very little to fault. He put in a good performance but couldn't match the breed points of the two ahead of him.

SP. B.D. (6)

1st GLENBROWS PAPER MAYHEM

Probably unwisely entered in a series of higher previous classes, here he was my winner. At 2 years he is right for his age. He is maturing nicely. He has good bone, is starting to fill in his frame and he is compact and short coupled. I liked his head. He moved truly and with enthusiasm on the best of tight feet.

2nd JULITA RUKESTER

3RD GLENBROWS FIRE STARTER.

SP.NEW MEMBERS DOG.

1ST GLENBROWS FIRE STARTER

2ND ISLANZA BLADE RUNNER AT MAESSEIDR.

Needs more ring training but at just over a year he can be forgiven his teenage characteristics and immaturity. He is well angulated. Time is on his side.

3rd ISLANZA SPRINTER

Sprinter by name and nature. He was moved far too fast around the ring. Presently he lacks bone and substance but he too is just out of puppy. Needs time.

SP. WORKING DOG (1)

1ST FIERGEN CITY LIMITS.

Quite happy to be out of the field and gracing the ring. A strong, upstanding dog. He has a good head displaying character and expression. He moved out well although his rear movement could have been more accurate and positive.

SP. SHOOTING DOG (3)

1ST ISLANZA GOING DUTCH OF ROXDALE

2ND FIERGEN CITY LIMITS

3RD COED Y BERWYN AFON

GOOD CITIZEN DOG SCHEME DOG (6.2ab)

1ST KYLOWEN DRYM

2ND BRYNSEIRI AFAN

3RD CWMBEILI MORGAN

JUDGE - STEPHEN PICK