

Crufts 2022- English Springer Spaniel



Judge Gareth H Lawler



I can remember it clearly 1984 - travelling on the local dog bus - walking into Earls Court and that sign "Crufts Dog Show". There's no doubt the buzz and aura here are different to any other show. Never having missed a year since, I'd never even dreamt that one day I'd be standing ring centre on the green carpet judging this wonderful breed.

In the 2 years since last Crufts the world has gone through such dreadful times with the pandemic which has affected each and everyone of us. More recent events in Eastern Europe have also affected so many, some on social media have been kind enough to remind us all of this and have actually suggested we should enjoy and accept placings with grace, remembering we are still free to do these things.

What wonderful advice, although it cannot be overlooked that still some in our breed feel immune to these suggestions. If they are so hard to understand possibly a 5 word phrase from the breed standard is easier "timidity and aggression highly undesirable". I believe as soon as some can accept that wins and awards are not theirs by right, the breed may be appear more welcoming to newcomers. The whole ethos of the show world is changing but in all honesty it's not rocket science to see our wonderful breed is perceived to be far less welcoming than many!

Many years ago, in her introduction and overview, one of our top breeders wrote "one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear!". The saying is as old as the hills yet the futile attempts by some in trying to prove it wrong could be entertaining if it wasn't having such a destructive effect!

In years gone by I do feel breeds were kept on the straight and narrow by a combination of breed judges and all-round judges. We know breed judges can get hooked on a certain point and occasionally this can have a detrimental effect -however the all rounder judges would hone in on the overall dog and a balance was maintained. Let us hope in the future we can return to such a balance of all round and breed judges and that ownership becomes less important to the results.

We are constantly told it's the judges decision on the day - yes it is - and as a breed we can preach this wherever we like - yet I do get a little confused when actually exhibiting that some are more than capable of forgetting their own preachings.

Anyway now to the dogs!

Overall temperaments were very good. As crufts is no doubt subject to the eyes of the world we as judges are told to be even more attentive to this and this did affect placings -I wasn't judging a waggy tail contest but I did want the exhibits to look like they didn't mind being there! One bitch in particular I really liked lost out on 1 of the 2 top placings in the class because of this. A great shame.

Type in the breed is probably more varied than ever but in fairness my penchant for liking both front and hind feet to have the same postcode is clearly getting more widely known and so I felt there were less with overlong hind limbs. Still we have a few a tad longer in loin than ideal - and whilst this may allow for a longer easier side gait we must not lose sight of the Compact requirement as per the breed standard.

In some cases it was harder to find just what one wants but look in each class and there was something approaching one's ideal even if it doesn't happen to be a more regular winner

The exaggeration that we have seen creeping in over quite some years was thankfully less evident and in both line ups I was pleased with the relative consistency throughout.

It's been interesting looking at the breeding as in many cases having only been to 2 shows in the last 2 years many I'd only seen once or twice, and some not at all. I notice I'd awarded both grandsires of my BOB winner their first CC and BOB as youngsters. What was also apparent was the fact the breeding from 2 kennels in particular have had an influence for several other breeder/ exhibitors -Beresford and Peasblossom -surely the real sign of top breeders when others benefit from their stock so many congratulations to both

Thankyou to the KC for giving me the honour of this appointment, and all exhibitors for their entry and the pleasure it gave me to judge so many of a breed so close to my heart at the best dog show in the world!

Veteran Dog (7, 1)

A lovely class to start the day with some lovely older males

1ST **Meonstoke Hawthorn** (Mrs K C Taubman) A quality dog of good breed type. Masculine in head and pleasing eye. He has decent length of neck and is moderately angled fore and aft and has excellent bone and feet. Well ribbed back with good depth and carrying just the right amount of body and condition He moved out well both on the away and back and on the go round. Sound and free. He was presented in lovely coat and condition. A good type and solidly made boy enjoying his day out

2ND **Ziphill Thunderflash** (Miss L Ainsley) another of excellent type although giving a little away with his extra years . Pleasing head shape and presented a classy balanced outline. Well developed middle piece he was in good body condition, and has lovely bone and feet. Moves soundly and covers the ground well He was in super coat and presentation although from a personal perspective I do find the pantaloons a little bit OTT. His reach and extension is still apparent even in his advanced years and he was enjoying being back in the limelight

3RD **Trixhund Talking Obsession** JW ShCM ShCEX (Mr D M & Mr J E Lewis & Bullock)

Minor Puppy Dog (1, 0)

1ST **Trixhund This Is My Destiny** (Mr D M & Mr J E Lewis & Bullock) alone but worthy winner. A young man of decent proportions, well developed in rib and body and compact in loin. Masculine head eye needing to darken as one would expect at this age. Moderately angled fore and aft he has excellent bone and feet. Well let down behind and moves well for his age

Puppy Dog (2, 0)

1ST **Calvdale Ever Thus** (Mr & Mrs M Calvert) very well grown young man presenting a lovely outline masculine throughout and very strongly boned. Great ribbing and depth and very well bodied for his age, he is very well let down behind and covered the ground in a stylish confident manner. In super coat and condition he was Very well handled both here and in later challenges. BPD but in challenge for BP he couldn't quite match the bitch when going away. A very promising young dog

2ND **Clentonian Pitch Perfect** (Mr R & Mrs J Reynolds) well proportioned youngster giving away a lot in maturity at present. Masculine and has good bone and feet . Ok for body . He has nicely turned stifles with hocks well let down. He moved ok just needs to settle to show himself to advantage

Junior Dog (4,1)

1ST **Sandylands Xpress Delivery** (Mr E & Mrs E Casey & Jayes) Top quality youngster of lovely breed type. His head is masculine without being overdone, yet to finish but I recall the words of dear Ellen Dobson "a springer isn't finished until 4 or 5 and the head is the last thing to come". He is good through forequarters and has lovely bone and stands on excellent feet. In super condition from head to tail, good ribbing and depth and compact in loin. Very well muscled hindquarters and well let down in hock. His topline is super and he has great tail carriage. He is true on the away and back and covers the ground. There is no doubt this young dog thinks he's "The greatest Showman" and seemingly plays to the crowd, yet when he concentrates his front settles and shows exactly what he's capable of. As his age suggests his best is still to come but for those who cannot resist decrying him publicly , I suggest effort in breeding suitable competition may be more beneficial to the breed! A quality young male with so much to commend and a little more to come yet and delighted to award him the res cc

2ND **Calvdale Scaramouch** Jones (Mr & Mrs M Calvert one cannot help but be drawn straight to this young man's outline. Very clean throughout. Masculine head good and eye, very well laid back shoulder, deep well ribbed body, short loin. Good width of hams and as always great well boned legs and tight feet. He moved very well both away and back and in profile. To be honest he has a tad too much neck for my taste for absolute balance and whilst the class winner isn't a big dog, stood next to him this one doesn't quite give me the "highest on leg and raciest in build" look so essential for the breed, which is also well illustrated by the photographs of the day. Nonetheless his qualities will ensure him a bright future.

3RD Canouan Rocks Up to Maemors (Ms M Morris)

Yearling Dog (6,0)

1ST **Beresford Lockdown** (Mrs T E Topliss) And what a lockdown project he's turned out to be. A new one to me and so full of quality. He presented a picture of absolute balance from head to tail. A lovely masculine yet refined head with a kind eye and expression. His forequarter and hindquarters are in complete harmony and he has a deep well ribbed body and compact loin. Presented in super coat and condition and with the super legs and feet one associates with this kennel, he moved accurately and had great ground coverage although one cannot deny at present he has limited concentration span just totally loving himself. It was his overall superb qualities and type and joie de Vivre which took him to the top of the line and later gained him a place in my shortcut

2ND **Barecho Show Must Go On Asgr-21** (Miss D.m. De Graaf) A lovely type of BW dog, with super well moulded head and lovely expression. He is well ribbed with excellent bone and feet, really well let down behind with excellent ground coverage on the move. He was in gleaming coat but perhaps a touch more body would have enhanced him even more

3RD Eastriding Royal Black (Mrs K Jenkinson)

Post Graduate Dog (10,3)

1ST **Cherishym Dofida** (Mr P & Mrs Y Richardson & Terry-Richardson) a super quality BW boy who I've liked from ringside. He has a lovely masculine well moulded head and super expression. Good neck into well assembled forequarters and he stands on great legs and feet. Well ribbed he has depth and well developed hindquarters. In absolutely gleaming condition, a credit to his owners. He moves with accuracy on the away and back and covered the ground well, clearly enjoying the green carpet as he was a little more controlled than last time I'd seen him. Personally I would take -carefully- some feather from underneath which will give a touch more daylight there but a super boy who asked for the class and rightfully got it -then he marched into my lovely shortlist too

2ND **Greg De Les Tres Llacunes (imp)** (Mr C & Mrs J Gledhill) a new one to me but very eye catching. A neat compact dog of super type. Masculine head but not overdone and pleasing expression. A compact well bodied dog statically balanced in fore and hind angulation and he has good legs and feet. Very well let down behind and he moved very well both on the away and back and going round the ring. In lovely coat and condition he was nicely handled

3RD Trixhund Foxtrot Oscar (Mr D M & Mr J E Lewis & Bullock)

Limit Dog (14, 4)

1ST **Peasblossom Valentino** (Mrs S Graham) a super type of dog I'd not seen before. Very refined head with a masculine outlook and the most lovely eye and expression. Good balance of forehand and hindquarter he has great ribbing and depth and was in super condition both body and coat, well boned and with good feet. A very pleasing type - he's compact and up on leg and he covered the ground well. Another who showed he really wanted to be there!

2ND **Crackerjanne Court Jester** (Mrs C M Woodbridge) a dog I judged as a youngster and liked him then, why oh why he,s been stuck in the Kent wilderness for too many years will remain one of life's mysteries. A neat dog of lovely type pleasing head and lovely eye and expression. He's very well bodied and compact and balanced in outline. Today he was in lovely coat and condition and handled so well to get every inch out of him. Very close decision here

3RD Imagine A Great Future Avendesora Nlj Ch/jw'19 (Mrs A.a. De Vries)

Open Dog (15, 6)

1ST **Sh Ch Beresford As Good As It Gets** (Mrs T E Topliss) A masculine headed boy with lovely eye and expression. He presents a super outline and his proportion and static balance draws your eye. Upstanding young lad and very well

boned I felt he just flows from head to tail and is a delight to judge. Excellent forehand and he is well ribbed and compact in loin. His hindquarters are well developed and he is very well let down behind. On the move he came into his own and moved soundly away and back and covers the ground in free easy strides. He was in super condition in both body and coat and he filled my eye completely. "As Good As It Gets" may be perceived a rather presumptuous name but today I could find no reason to question it. His maturity in the cc challenge gave him the edge over some super males- in the bob challenge he just pipped the stunning bitch on carriage - but what a pair to see going round together. His young handler in the cc challenge got every inch out of him - a performance she repeated in the group - however in the BOB challenge he was handled by his owner as the previous handler seemed otherwise detained! No matter who handled him he was a delight to watch going round and gave of his absolute best! Many congratulations and thankyou for bringing him!

2ND Sh Ch Beresford Night Train (Mrs T E Topliss) no doubting this dogs masculinity. He has a lovely eye and expression, very good in forequarters and with corresponding hindquarter. Super well boned legs and nicely rounded feet. He moves so soundly fore and aft and whilst there was a slight roll this wasn't so evident as it sometimes is. He was on his toes today and held his topline so well which gave him the edge over an outstanding 3rd

3RD Sh Ch Dexbenella Atticus Finch ShCEx (Mr S & Mrs W Walker) A previous CC winner under me and looking at him today I still like him very much. To be honest he appeals more in head and is slightly more compact than 2 but sadly on the last go round he lost his topline a bit so cost him higher placing. Nonetheless a super dog I still rate very highly

Special Working Gundog Dog (1,0)

1ST Tr Ch Canouan Just Imagine (Ms M Morris) A neat typy BW dog who was res in a very strong veteran class. Pleasing head and lovely dark eye, he is well boned and compact was in good condition and on the move showed he was really enjoying his day out

Good Citizen Dog Scheme Dog (5, 0)

1ST Trimere Ticks The Box at Mujascal ShCM (Miss J A Such) A typy neat dog with much to commend. Sufficiently Masculine in head and pleasing eye. He is balanced fore and aft well ribbed with good body. He moved well and won the class with a bit to spare

2ND Dexbenella Final Frontier (Mrs K Allery) bigger dog with masculine head. Well boned legs and good feet. Compact in body and well let down behind. He covered the ground well

3RD Peasblossom Into The Mystic (Mrs A J Jenks)

Veteran Bitch (8,1)

What a lovely class of our golden oldies.

1ST Sh Ch Trimere Teresa Green (Miss S J Corbett) A LWT who fared well under me as a junior. Today she looked every inch the ch bitch she is, and carries her years lightly. Still a tad strong in head for my taste but I do feel she has actually refined more with age. She has a pleasing eye and is moderately angled fore and aft, with such super legs and feet. Very compact and well filled throughout. She is nicely let down in hock. As always she comes alive on the move - so sound fore and aft and strides out so well, covering the ground in free easy strides. In super condition - pipped the dog on her superb movement for Best Veteran

2ND Sh Ch Kennair I Am I Said (Mr K T & Mrs C M Green) Another top quality girl who was unlucky to meet 1 today. Now carrying her well deserved title, she has a lovely feminine head and kindly expression, which I feel she mellowed as she's matured. She's moderately angled throughout and very well bodied. In super condition and moved so well today, sound and free.

3RD Dexbenella Inquisitress JW (Mr S & Mrs W Walker) I must mention this delightful old lady- the exhibit I mean. The eldest in the class by some time yet still presents a lovely outline feminine Head and she was in superb condition. Moved like a good 'un and really enjoying her day out. Hard to believe last time I judged her was 11 years ago where she stood 2nd in junior. What a laster- all credit to her owner for keeping her in such fine fettle

Minor Puppy Bitch (1, 0)

1ST **Seaspring Winds of Change** (Ms T M Dunsdon) A quality tri baby. Alone but very worthy. Pleasing head her eye still to darken as expected. She is well balanced throughout and has great body depth and fill. Good bone and tight feet. She is well proportioned. When she settled she was sound on the away and back and had good ground covering gait. A confident young lady in lovely condition

Puppy Bitch (5, 0)

1ST **Trimere Time Flies** (Miss S J Corbett) A super quality puppy and in my opinion the best to come from this very successful kennel for some time. She has a pleasing head and expression and is well angulated fore and aft with good ribbing and middle piece. She is compact and stands foresquare on excellent timbers with good feet. On the move she is sound and free and covers the ground. I liked her very much and had no hesitation awarding her BPIB, thus elevating her from the bridesmaid's position she seems to have occupied the vast majority of her puppy career - however I understand my reputation for rewarding youngsters with top honours may have given false hope in the challenge - needless to say in today's entry I found her quite irresistible - as a puppy, and shall watch her development with great interest

2ND **Calvdale Pure Theatre** (Mr & Mrs M Calvert) what a super name no doubt adding a touch of drama . However as with all those who take to the big screen it would be impossible to disguise her heritage as even though she is quite different to her brother, many hallmarks of her breeding were quite evident. Feminine with kindly expression very strong in bone and good feet. Ultra compact in body with the depth one associates from the kennel. Chunky hindquarters and low set hocks. Her movement was true away and back and I'm sure age and experience will give her the fluidity she lacks at present. In beautiful condition and so sympathetically handled

3RD Kingsheath Mayday at Seaspring (Ms T M Dunsdon) Another quality puppy who impressed me today

Junior Bitch (11, 1)

A super class of young bitches and I could have done with more cards!

1ST **Sandylands Send The Roses** (Mr E & Mrs E Casey & Jayes) Oh wow!! A feminine bitch with kind eye, presenting a picture of total balance. Excelling in forehead with corresponding correct well developed hindquarters. She has lovely depth and is well ribbed back with a strong compact loin. She caught my eye from the first go round with her strong powerful ground covering gait with a degree of fluidity not always seen particularly in springers of her age -totally coordinated and correct. In super coat and condition. Very sound and accurate on the away and back, her movement continued to impress on the individual and this together with her lovely breed type, proportions and quality took her to the top of the class. In the challenge she continued to impress and I could find nothing to beat her for the Res CC

2ND **Strathnaver Starstruck** (Mrs D Conrad) Another young lady who appealed greatly. Over the years this exhibitor has had some super typy bitches full of quality and I have no doubt this one will Follow suit . Feminine yet has substance her eye still to darken but she looks at you with a pleasing yet pert expression. Super legs and feet , great body well ribbed back, well let down behind. She presents a picture of static balance and on the move was sound and free - handled as always in a quiet unassuming understated manner with great empathy. Presented beautifully as always - I will follow her career with interest

3RD Calvdale Flutter (Mr & Mrs M Calvert)

Yearling Bitch (10,3)

Another lovely class of promising youngsters. 1 bitch in here was just up my street but sadly she was unsettled and very unsure in the busy atmosphere so lost out on top placings

1ST **Peasblossom Tupelo Honey with Teignvalley** (Mrs C Hill) a very stylish bwt lady with a feminine outlook yet has great substance. Beautifully moulded headpiece and with pleasing eye and expression. She is well angled in forequarter, well ribbed back with substance throughout, well bodied and compact in loin. Well developed hindquarters and really well let down behind, super legs and feet and she moves really well both on the away and back and in profile. As always in super coat and condition I feel she is destined for greater things in time

2ND **Sandylands Send My Love** (Mrs T E Topliss) a different style of bitch yet full of quality. Head is well balanced but slightly stronger than my ideal however she still has a feminine outlook. She flows so well from her well angled

forequarter she is well ribbed back and very well bodied, possibly a touch too well bodied, but she was in good muscular condition and when settled really covered the ground. An eye catching bitch who will continue to appeal to many

3RD Calvdale Hostage of Fortune (Mr & Mrs M Calvert)

Post Graduate Bitch (16,4)

Another very good class

1ST Freeway Remembrance (Mr J & Mrs L Lillie) A bitch of super type and quality who has appealed to me before. Very feminine in head and a lovely eye and expression. She is absolutely balanced throughout from her well angled forequarter and correspondingly angled hindquarter. She is well bodied and compact. Today she moved as well as I've seen her go to top this class but another 1/2 hour on the grooming table may have taken her even further - a quality bitch of the type I was weaned on, who I've often thought has been overlooked.

2ND Meltarose Mystique (Mrs E Rowlinson) another of quality albeit slightly stronger all through. Lovely dark eye, very well balanced with good bone and feet, excellent through the middle piece well ribbed and bodied and compact in loin. She moved very well to take this place and was presented in super coat and condition

3RD Melverly Burano (Mrs J L Harris)

Limit Bitch (10 ,1)

1ST Carlyquinn Kisses of Fire JW (Mrs H Cokell) very pretty bitch I've done well before. Feminine headpiece and pleasing in eye and expression, good length of neck and excels in forehand assembly. Good ribbing and depth and carrying right amount of body. Nicely turned stifles and low set hocks. Excellent bone and neat feet. She moved well in profile and when taken at the correct pace her away and back was ok. In super condition and presentation

2ND Eastfalla Sea The Stars with Shamisha (Ms D Eastwood) quality bitch of a type that appeals greatly. Feminine with substance nicely shaped head and lovely eye. Moderately angulated with good rib and depth with compact loin. Hindquarter well developed and hocks well let down. Super in bone and well rounded feet. She goes well on the away and back and has decent profile gait. Very well presented

3RD Melverly Ravello (Mr R J Smith)

Open Bitch (9,1)

This was a star studded class

1ST Sh Ch Trimere Tickle Me Fancy (Mr S, Mrs M, Mrs E & Miss G Wildsmith & Brown) This bitch looked as good as I've ever seen her. She is feminine yet has substance. Well moulded head and lovely eye and expression. She is statically balanced in forehand and hind angulation and everything is very much "all of a piece". She stands fore square on great legs and feet and struggles to stand wrongly. On the move she really came into her own and she decided this class was hers as she powered round the ring showing accuracy fore and aft and great drive and ground covering gait. Her condition was absolutely first class. "As Good As it Gets" and "Tickle Me Fancy".? How apt for both as HE WAS and SHE DID! And both superbly handled by this very talented young lady, so quietly confident yet quite understated in her style with great empathy. I'm sure a Crufts to remember and it was my absolute pleasure to award her the BCC too with this glorious bitch and watch her later win overall in the YKC finals

2ND Sh Ch Beresford Night Class (Mrs T E Topliss)

Some years ago at a breed education day a question was asked "what is northern type and does it still exist?" My response was it was a term used often by the late Jean Taylor and Ellen Dobson and referred to mainly neat pretty headed bitches with a melting expression who were invariably more solidly marked. Does it still exist? One look at this beautiful girl and you can see it definitely does. Compact and neat absolutely balanced throughout with the most feminine of heads and as Ellen would say "eyes like brown velvet". She epitomises the type I cut my teeth on and filled my eye completely. Last time I judged her she was 2nd to the cc winner -her litter sister but in my opinion she has matured and is now at her peak. She moved round the ring like the world was her oyster -soundly and covering the ground. Not in quite the coat of the winner but a super bitch well worthy of all her wins. A top quality girl!

3RD Daenerys Winds of Winter (Miss L & Mr L Ainsley & Nicklin) Another top quality bitch of lovely shape and type who was in superb coat and presentation and moved so well

Field Trial Bitch (1, 0)

1ST Streamside's Ladybird Quincegrove (Mrs V L Payne) Oh what a poppet she was. The one thing that always strikes me about the Field Trial style of ESS is their lovely eye and expression. There is no doubt when this girl looks at you she draws you in, such a gentle look. She was neat and compact and for her size had adequate bone and such neat feet. On the move she really showed she was enjoying her day out and was in good hard condition.

Good Citizen Dog Scheme Bitch (3,0)

1ST **Clentonian Pandemonium** JW (Mrs M Hydon) A very pretty headed BW girl with a super eye and expression. She was in gleaming coat and overall super condition. She is moderately angled throughout and has good ribbing and depth and was very well bodied. She strode out well covering the ground. Well boned with good neat feet and beautifully handled as always

2ND **Trimere Timeless** with Kassan (Mrs A Crouch) A bigger girl but pleasing outline with a very feminine head. Well boned with good feet. She moved well and was in lovely coat and condition

3RD Kingsheath Total Diva at Felltops (Mr N J & Mrs S L Joyce)