

National Gundog Critique 22

Judge: Anthony Allen

It is always a pleasure to judge my own breed and at National Gundog which is such a special show. It is six years since I last judged the breed and it is fair to say quality is not what it was.

In comparison to the last time I judged, there were a few issues that concerned me.

The first was the lack of depth of quality in the younger classes and this is a real concern for the future, where is the next generation of top-class English Springers coming from? As a breed we seem to be retaining more bitches and less males and this is adding to the conundrum.

Heads are not what they were and to me many were untypical, and I had quite a few yellow starey eyes, which really spoil that beautiful ESS expression.

Fronts are not what they were and correspondingly this impacted on movement, many did not have the true movement and forelegs were not swinging straight forward from the shoulder.

I was thrilled with my principal winners; I had a number of dogs to whom I would have happily awarded a CC. My **Dog Challenge Certificate** was the 2-year-old Beresford Lockdown (Mrs T E Topliss). **Reserve Dog Challenge Certificate** was his sire Sh Ch Beresford Night Train (Mrs T E Topliss). **Bitch Challenge Certificate** and **Best of Breed** was the very beautiful Sh Ch Trimere Tickle Me Fancy (Mr S, Mrs M, Mrs E & Miss G Wildsmith & Brown), what a little star she is. **Reserve Bitch Challenge Certificate** went to second on open Daenerys Winds of Winter (Miss L & Mr L Ainsley & Nicklin). **Best Puppy** and best bouncing dog in breed went to Dexbenella Double Oh Seven (Mr S & Mrs W Walker), **Best Special Beginners** was awarded to Trimere Turn Back Time (Mrs J I Kibby)

Puppy Dog

Entries: 2 Absentees: 1

1st Place Dexbenella Double Oh Seven (Mr S & Mrs W Walker)

This young man was ten and a half months old and was really enjoying his day out. He has a good head shape with defined chiselling that gave a pleasing expression, eyes need to darken which they will over time. Clean through neck and shoulder, with good front angulation. Body length of correct proportion, well-made quarters with a moderate bend of stifle. Moved well with energy and lots of 'spring', and when he kept his feet on the ground, he had good footfall. I was delighted to award him **Best Puppy** and to hear later he was awarded **Puppy Group 3**, congratulations.

Graduate Dog

Entries: 2 Absentees: 0

1st Place Greg De Les Tres Llacunes (imp) (Mr C & Mrs J Gledhill)

He has a clean outline on the stack. His head is masculine and balanced with defined chiselling, eyes need to darken a little. Powerful neck, front construction is good, would like a shade more return of forearm. Good length of body, ribs well sprung and a muscular loin. Hindquarters OK, hocks well let down. To nit-pick today I wished he had more fluidity on the move – although his movement was sound, he struggled to get into his stride, he needs to work with his handler a bit more to complete the picture.

2nd Place Tigerrock Ocellatus (Mr D & Miss G Thomas)

Tri dog with a balanced head, correct amount of chiselling and work. Neck of moderate length and powerful, would like a tad more lay back of shoulder, ribs well back and firm through loin, quarters well developed and would like more bend to stifle. Moved true and soundly just needed to get into his stride.

Post Graduate Dog

Entries: 1 Absentees: 0

1st Place Cherishym Draconis (Mr P & Mrs Y Richardson & Terry-Richardson)

A smart young man just over two years old with a lot to like about him. He was absolutely superbly presented, not a hair out of place a real credit to his owners. Masculine in head and expression. Strong neck, nicely developed chest and ribs well sprung. Powerful quarters with correct angulation. Moved out well but not quite the accuracy in footfall.

Limit Dog

Entries: 6 Absentees: 0

1st Place Beresford Lockdown (Mrs T E Topliss)

On first impression this two-year-old dog presented that balanced picture I was looking for. He has a masculine head and soft in expression with the correct amount of chiselling, He flows through the neck and shoulder and has good return of upper arm. His forechest is developed and ribs are sprung and well back to a firm loin, giving him compactness without being short. His quarters are well developed with hard first and second thigh. I was impressed as I went over him, he just felt right. He was a little over enthusiastic on the move but what I could see was accurate and with a good driving motion. In the challenge I liked everything about him, but his mum was handling the open dog and he struggled to concentrate on his job. I had to give him a couple of attempts to confirm his positive action and on the third attempt he got it right. My **Dog CC** winner, which I was told afterwards was his third, a worthy champion in my opinion.

2nd Place Daenerys Blood of The Dragon (Miss L & Mr L Ainsley & Nicklin)

This dog looked very smart today and I could not ignore him. He has a masculine springer head, balanced with defined chiselling, slightly strong in back skull, super dark eye and expression. Powerful neck, front construction is good, would like a shade more lay back of shoulder. Good length of body, ribs well sprung and a muscular loin. Hindquarters were well made with a good bend of stifle, hocks well let down. He didn't have the fluidity of the winner on the move. Ran him off in the challenge the RCC but he just didn't get into a fluid stride. I am sure he will do well.

3rd Place Eastriding Royal Black (Mrs K Jenkinson)

Open Dog

Entries: 3 Absentees: 0

This was a challenging class; it was an honour to judge three of the breed's top winning males.

1st Place Sh Ch Beresford Night Train (Mrs T E Topliss)

Love this dogs outline and appearance. Typical head and expression with correct chiselling and fluting, kind expression and good balance. Clean neck leading on to well-placed shoulders and good return of upper arm. Depth to chest and ribs well back, good through the loin. Quarters well developed and correct bend to stifle. Held his topline throughout and good finish to croup. Moved well and covered the ground in profile, would have like a shade more enthusiasm. Lovely type of dog. Please to award him the **RCC**.

2nd Place Sh Ch Dexbenella Atticus Finch ShCEx (Mr S & Mrs W Walker)

Another that I have really liked from the ringside. Liver and white boy. Loved his outline, smart masculine head and expression with plenty of chiselling and fluting. Strong through the neck in to well set shoulders, good return of forearm. Depth to chest. He was standing on well boned legs and neat feet. Ribs well sprung and strong in loin. Super quarters with a good bend of stifle. He didn't bring his A game on the move, I suspect the heat got to him, he was just a bit untidy and lacked drive.

3rd Place Sh Ch Beresford As Good As It Gets (Mrs T E Topliss)

Minor Puppy Bitch

Entries: 2 Absentees: 0

1st Place Barecho Fame Queen at Eastriding NAF (Mrs K Jenkinson)

Just six months, a smart youngster with a lot of quality about her. The most beautiful head and expression with correct amount of chiselling and fluting, so right for her age. Clean reach of neck which led on to correctly placed shoulders, good front angulation. Correct length of body, with well sprung ribs just needs to firm up in topline on the move. Quarters well made, adequate bend of stifle and hocks well let down. Good on the move with a fluid action, just wouldn't play ball in the challenge at all which was a pity.

2nd Place Daenerys Moondancer to Cherishym (Mr P & Mrs Y Richardson & Terry-Richardson)

She has a good overall shape and style, head still a work in progress. Clean reach of neck and correctly placed shoulders. Good length of body, slightly long in loin at the moment, quarters well angulated, hocks well let down. She threw away her chances on the move where her legs were just not cooperating. Loved her outline and shape, should do well.

Puppy Bitch

Entries: 5 Absentees: 3

1st Place Dexbenella Double Take (Mr S & Mrs W Walker)

A pretty bitch, ten and a half months, with a pleasing feminine head and expression which is still developing but very appealing at this age. Clean reach of neck which led on to well-placed shoulders, good front angulation. Correctly proportioned body, loin short, strong in topline, well-made hindquarters with moderate bend of stifle. Movement was a little erratic as she was having fun, but she did enough to win the class.

2nd Place Barecho Cover Girl (Imp Swe) NAF TAF (Miss L & Mr L & Miss A Ainsley & Nicklin & Gardiner)

She has a pleasing head piece still developing but should finish with an attractive expression. Liked her outline, clean neck into correctly placed shoulders, standing on good straight well boned legs and super feet. Body of correct proportions just at the in between stage at the moment. Quarters developing nicely with stifles well bent. Moved out well with good footfall.

Junior Bitch

Entries: 2 Absentees: 0

1st Place Trimere Time Flys (Miss S J Corbett)

Liked her a lot, on the stack she presents with a super clean outline. Feminine in head with good fluting and chiselling under the eye that gave her that typical springer kind expression. A real hint of mischief in those eyes when she looks at you. Neck of good length which just flowed into her well laid shoulders. Standing on straight legs and super tight feet. Ribs springing nicely for her age, loin firm. Super quarters with stifles well bent and hocks well let down. Good muscle tone. Now this is one lady who just comes alive on the move, showcasing that typical springer action forelegs swinging forward in an easy manner. She had both drive and accuracy. So close up in the challenge to the open ladies but obviously lacks in maturity and finish, I am sure she will have a bright future ahead of her.

2nd Place Trimere Taylor Maid at Pinhays (Mrs J I Kibby)

Elegant in outline, good head shape and soft expression balanced head of good proportions, neck of moderate length and leading to well-placed shoulders with good return of upper arm. Depth to chest and ribs well back, firm in loin, quarters well developed for her age. Needs to settle on the move but will get there with practice.

Special Beginners Bitch

Entries: 1 Absentees: 0

1st Place Trimere Turn Back Time (Mrs J I Kibby)

Litter sister to the junior winner, typical of her breeding, very pretty tri bitch, eyes need to darken and they should do that with age. Good front assembly, shoulders well laid back and stands on well boned legs. Good through the body, firm in loin and held her topline. Quarters developing as they should, short from hock to heel. Moved out well with a typical action. **Best Special Beginner.**

Novice Bitch

Entries: 1 Absentees: 0

1st Place Dexbenella Double Take (Mr S & Mrs W Walker)

Limit Bitch

Entries: 6 Absentees: 3

1st Place Carlyquinn Kisses of Fire JW (Mrs H Cokell)

Lovely on the stack, super coat in excellent condition and presented to perfection. Elegant in outline, good head shape and soft expression, neck of moderate length and leading to well-placed shoulders with a decent return of upper arm. Depth to chest and ribs well back, firm in loin, quarters well developed for her age. Just a shade untidy on the up and down today which cost her top honours, surely destined for the upper house.

2nd Place Eastriding Glam Princess (Mrs K Jenkinson)

Her head is pleasing and her expression is feminine with defined chiselling and good definition. Good depth of chest for her age and proportionate length of body. Quarters well made with a moderate bend of stifle, not over angulated in any way. She moved positively and covered the ground with ease both in profile and fore and aft. For my tastes I just wanted a little bit more of her all though.

3rd Place Sandylands Send My Love (Mrs T E Topliss)

Open Bitch

Entries: 6 Absentees: 0

1st Place Sh Ch Trimere Tickle Me Fancy (Mr S, Mrs M, Mrs E & Miss G Wildsmith & Brown)

This lady just stood out today, she presented a lovely picture of balance on the stack. She has a beautiful feminine head shape and expression. Clearly defined chiselling and fluting and lovely eye colour. Neck of good length and muscular which led on to well laid shoulders and correct front angulation. Body of proportionate length with good depth of chest, ribs well sprung, super finish to her body. Muscular through the loin, excellent rear angulation, quarters well made with stifles well bent and hocks well let down. Her crowning glory is her movement, typical springer action, legs swinging straight from the shoulder, with free and easy action. Delighted to award her the **Bitch CC** and then **Best of Breed**. Pleased to see her shortlisted in a strong Gundog Group.

2nd Place Daenerys Winds of Winter (Miss L & Mr L Ainsley & Nicklin)

Very petty bitch with a classic head, excellent shape, defined fluting and chiselling with a beautiful eye shape which gave that typical expression. Neck of good length which led on to correctly placed shoulders. Standing on good straight legs and neat feet. Mature through the body with ribs well sprung and depth to chest, strong loin. Good hindquarters with stifles well bent. Presented that picture of balance and symmetry that I was looking for. Pleased to award her the **RCC**.

3rd Place Sh Ch Trimere Taylor Swift (Miss S J Corbett)

Good Citizen Dog Scheme Bitch

Entries: 2 Absentees: 0

1st Place Sh Ch Trimere Tickle Me Fancy (Mr S, Mrs M, Mrs E & Miss G Wildsmith & Brown)

2nd Place Trimere Turn Back Time (Mrs J I Kibby)