

The 'royal' family in English Springers: from left, Connaught's sire, Sh Ch Moorcliff Dougal of Truelindale, and dam, Sh Ch Stayleigh Paulina, and his younger sister Sh Ch Hawkhill Derby Daydream photo Anne Roslin Williams

rent record holder and his predecessor, which makes them both possibilities. However, I think, Sh Ch Hawkhill Royal Palace was probably as good as anything, and had he not taken a back seat to his younger brother, Connaught, would have done a lot more winning.

Carolyn: Ch Mompesson Remember Me because she was such a lovely type, so well made, and even qualified in the field, which in my book is always a bonus.

2. Colin: I could have so many choices here, but will finally settle on Dual Ch Horford Hetman.

Carolyn: Multi Ch Strathnaver Barley Wine. From a photograph we have her looks just my sort of dog.

3. Colin: Apart from size being a couple of inches smaller, the Welsh is more streamlined in build and has an athletic look about him. Another difference is in the head; the ears on a Welsh are definitely more suited for work, being smaller with little feathering. The skull shows brain room.

In character the Welsh seems calm and sensible, but never having lived with them I do not know what they are like as companions.

Carolyn: Heads are a different shape, especially re depth of muzzle, stop and skull shape. Welsh have much smaller vine-shaped ears without the feathering.

The English is slightly taller and racier in build and in character perhaps more exuberant.

4. Colin: The tail length is an irrelevance. Being undocked does not make a good dog bad. However, it can make the faults on a bad dog stand out. I have found this particularly so in Cocker.

Judging by what has happened abroad, if a ban did come (heaven forbid) I think it would soon produce good tail carriage in a short while.

Carolyn: If the tailset is correct docked, it should be correct undocked. If a ban comes into force, maybe the variety judges will have to accept dogs with long tails, which at present many find impossible.

5. Colin: Yes, get rid of the show champion title, bring in bench qualification before a FT champion can use the title!

But, seriously, I think it is already too late to close the gap. Those on the working side are uninterested in having dogs to fit the Standard physically, and most show people do not have the facilities to work their dogs. A hunting Bill will probably make this question superfluous anyway before long.

The Welsh, like the other minor spaniel breeds, have not suffered from over-popularity in the field trial world; consequently the same strains figure in both spheres. Llong may it remain so!

Carolyn: The superior working ability of the Welsh as a whole is because the gene pool has never been split. If people buy a



Sh Ch Bruce of Brent

Welsh, they buy a Welsh with brains and looks.

An English is usually bought for brains or looks. There are only a few English owners even interested in both show and work, and no working people appear to know a breed Standard even exists. To keep English dual-purpose sometimes means foregoing 'show fashion'.

6. Colin: In some ways: better presentation and handling, fronts have improved, not so many bad backends, bad mouths have disappeared, feet generally have improved.

On the debit side, light eyes still appear, ears generally are becoming too long and low set, Cocker-fashion, and I feel some exhibits are becoming too leggy and a full tail could make them appear 'settery'.

Carolyn: No, the difference between show and working is now wider than ever, caused entirely by exaggeration on both sides.

**Maggie Mullins (Athelwood WSS)**

1. Sh Ch Golden Tint of Tregwyllym — she was almost perfect in size and ribbing, sound, balanced with correct head and wonderful Welsh expression to die for.

No other bitch in the breed was made up in nearly three years while she was shown, but I never saw Cliff Payne take her into the group, not even at Crufts. He did however have no compunction about taking two and sometimes three CCs from the same judge.

2. Corrin, the Welsh Cocker who turned Welsh Springer at the turn of the twentieth century. I never saw him despite the common held belief that I was middle-aged at the time...

3. The show English Springer is much longer in ears and legs and has a stilted movement that makes him very different from both his working cousin and the Welsh.

My father mated his red working Cocker to a working English Springer in the early '30s which produced both red and white and black and white puppies. My uncle took one of these red and white puppies, who in time was mated to a bona fide Welsh Springer and produced one of the top winning WSS champions of the '30s. So the working English has more than a little in common with the Welsh.

4. Having seen our local doctor, who had previously thought docking cruel, bring his undocked Welsh home from a day's shooting, always with a damaged and bleeding tail, I have no doubt that banning docking is a very, very stupid idea.

5. Probably any hope of working the show English Springer has now long gone. The Welsh has had enough dual-purpose owners to keep the breed successful in both departments. Encouraging pet or show owners to the working side is not very easy as a high percentage of working judges view any dogs whom they consider are show bred with great suspicion and disdain.

6. Despite the recent success of a couple of high-profile Welsh, the breed generally has gone into steep decline in the past ten years or so — too big, too long, flat ribs, no bone and poor movement. The typical Welsh Springer of the '70s and '80s has almost disappeared.

**Julie Revill (Julita WSS)**

1. This is easy, I gave the CC at the first championship show I judged to Sh Ch Northoaks Sea Mist at Menstonia, and I have not found another to touch her since. She had it all in the ring, was full of charis-

ma, loved every minute and it showed in her ever-wagging tail and joyful demeanour.

She was all Welsh Springer from her lovely head with kind expression to the tip of that waggy tail. Beautiful shoulder placement and big ribs, and nicely angulated behind. Her movement was a pleasure to watch, she really drove around the ring, demanding attention. She still holds the bitch breed record — well deserved.

2. I have not had to think too hard for this one, and have chosen Ch Dalati Del. Her picture, which I have always admired, came immediately to mind.

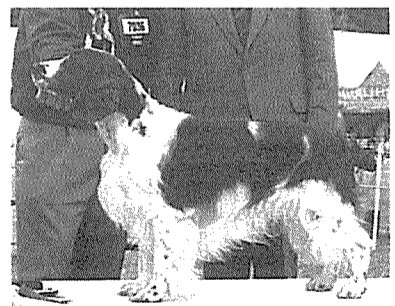
She appeared to be a very good example of the breed, added to which she also worked and became a full champion, which makes her even more special. She had a beautiful soft expression and would appear to meet the requirements of the Standard as far as can be seen from a photograph.

3. From the point of view of looks the English Springer is quite different from the Welsh — its size for one thing, the English is altogether a bigger dog. He has much longer ears of a different shape, his topline is perhaps the main difference — the Welsh has the lovely rise over the loin whereas the English has a more level or slightly drooping topline. Movement is also very different, the English has a style all its own which is difficult to describe, but easy to see!

I cannot comment on the character differences as I have never lived with an English Springer. The Welsh are very much 'people dogs', wanting to be with you all the time; I do not believe that this trait is in the English to such an extent.

4. I do not think that a docking ban would have too much effect on the Welsh Springer, except from the working point of view. I would worry about working a dog with a long tail. However, I have seen them working overseas and the tail did not cause a problem, but I did not see them working in really hard, deep cover.

I believe, from seeing long-tailed dogs abroad, and judging them, that most of the tails seem to be set to give an acceptable tail-carriage. The males can occasionally



Sh Ch Wainfelin Barley Mo in 1990 photo Dalton

raise them well over their backs which I find objectionable, but it is usually the proximity of a nice bitch that causes this; the actual tail-set appears to be good in most cases.

There have also been a few 'tailed' dogs shown and bred in the UK and they seem to be fine. Of course we only see maybe one or possibly two of a litter in the show ring, so we cannot say what the rest of the litter was like.

The tail can give an impression of a 'long' dog which is something I do not like, bearing in mind that our Standard states that the Welsh should be 'compact'. So it would be up to judges to ensure that they do not let the tail get in the way of

putting up a good specimen.

5. Over the years that I have been involved with Welsh Springers, a number of people have tried to raise the standard of the dogs with regard to working. John Phillips, Derek Dean and I have tried very hard to encourage people and to run training for those who show interest. Unfortunately, the large number who start training courses are usually reduced to just a few at the end which means that we all lose the enthusiasm and that training chances are reduced.

I do not believe that in my own breed there is much more that can be done — if owners want to work their dogs they need to be more determined and greatly more focused.

I believe the Welsh Springer is more successful with regard to working than the show English Springer because of the complete split within the English Springer breed. There is no comparison in looks or working ability between the show and working lines, whereas in Welsh the same dogs work and show, ie dual-purpose.

It is extremely unfortunate that those in the show fraternity of English Springers who wish to work their dogs have very little chance of entering working tests and trials with any chance of gaining a place. This is because their tests and trials are filled with the 'working' bred dogs and the difference between them and their show bred dogs means that not only do they not stand a chance of gaining a place, but that they are made to feel very inferior, thus giving up very soon.

In Welsh Springers, we are very lucky. We have tests and trials which are exclusive to our breed, or to other spaniels (excluding English Springers and Cocker), therefore we are competing against dogs of a similar type and ability. Thus we are encouraged to work our dogs. If the English could have tests and trials which were exclusive to show bred dogs, then they would soon show that they also have the ability to be good dual purpose dogs.

6. A very difficult question. Although I had been in dogs and showing for many years when I came into Welsh Springers, the breed was very new to me and therefore every dog I saw in the ring I thought was a 'good' one!

However, over the years I have of course gained much knowledge and I can look back with a more critical eye. The breed has a large number of 'types' now and size varies greatly; many are well over the Standard and some well under. Although this is a fault like any other, we should not have quite such a discrepancy in size in the ring.

The 'spaniel' is now quite hard to find — they are more rangy or elegant than they were in the past, I do not feel this is a good thing, but many prefer this type.

Have they improved overall? Yes, I believe that they have in general; there are some really lovely dogs shown now and competition can be fierce, which is a very good thing for the breed.

**Trudy Short (Parkmist WSS)**

1. Sh Ch Wainfelin Barley Mo remains the dog which I have most admired. One time breed record holder, he excelled in breed type and had the true merry and active temperament so important in a Welsh Springer. He had a lovely typical Welsh head, masculine without coarseness. His coat was true in colour and texture and his overall balance and outline fitted the Standard to a T.

2. It is difficult to name a dog whom you have never seen but although I did see him in his kennels as a veteran, Sh Ch Bruce of Brent is my choice of a dog I would like to see in the show ring when he was in his prime.

A BIS winner at LKA and a great ambassador for the breed, he also sired winners and is behind so many of today's top winning dogs.

3. Having owned both English and Welsh and spent time with both breeds, I feel qualified to answer this one but I can only speak about the show-bred English.

The first thing I noticed was the total lack of hunting instinct in the English; my Welsh hunt two fields away and come back eventually whereas the ESS stayed close and had no wish to wander off. I found overall that the Welsh were much more intelligent than the English but I like both breeds equally for their different ways.

Show preparation was another eye-opener, as it takes so much longer to prepare an English. The Welsh coat is sleek, silky and flat and dries quickly but you can spend hours flattening and drying the ESS and stripping out dead coat.

When you look at the two breeds there are obvious differences. In the ears Welsh are shorter and trimmed and the head is very different. The Welsh is a smaller dog and comes only in the rich red and white unlike the English who can be black and white, liver and white or tricolour. For me the big draw back with the English was that you can't walk the liver-coloured ones in the sun as they bleach which is so different from the Welsh who can lie out in the sun all day without any problem.

For those who like me have agonised over the way Welsh Springers are so picky about eating and struggled to get weight on them — the joy of having the English who would eat for England is a definite plus!

4. Having judged the breed abroad I have no problem with undocked tails. The Europeans seem to have been able to breed dogs who hold their tails well. If and when the docking ban comes, breeders will need to be very careful about breeding from dogs with gay tails as these will become more noticeable and completely ruin the outline of an otherwise good specimen.

5. Both Welsh and English Springers are fortunate to still have a number of dedicated exhibitors who pursue the dual-purpose aspect of the breeds. In English the bitch breed record holder, Ch Mompesson Remember Me, holds a full title and most years both breeds qualify show dogs in the field.

The Welsh, with a much smaller gene pool, still have a strong instinct to work and have not divided into working and show dogs so you can still buy a puppy from almost any kennel and succeed in the working field.

The English Springers on the other hand have split the breed into two totally separate types, show or work with both sides concentrating on their own priorities. Many feel that the workers should be renamed Working Springers, as in looks they are so far diverse from the show bred dogs.

6. It would be easy to say that the dogs were better in the '70s when I started showing, but do I think that because the breed was new to me at the time and I was not qualified to judge? While now, after being involved in the breed for many years, I see things differently and have more knowledge and experience to draw on.

However, the breed has changed and I leave the decision of whether it is for better or worse to you. The dogs today are much more trimmed, groomed and clean cut in outline. The overall shape appears to have got rangier and longer in body but their attractive colour and style have made them a popular choice for group placings with two Welsh in the Top Ten Dogs league



Sh Ch Northey Stormcloud in 1987 photo Dalton