

BIRMINGHAM NATIONAL SHOW MAY 2007

REPORT FOR Retriever (Flat Coated)

I would like to thank all those who supported the show and my judging on such a wet day. I wish I could have changed the weather and thereby eliminated the problems of moving in the ring for both dogs and handlers. I trust all those who suffered falls are on the "road to recovery". Thank you to the show organizers and my wonderful stewards who helped make my day so enjoyable.

I was surprisingly impressed with the overall quality of the higher classes, in particular the bitch classes. Hopefully some of these will hold the "key" to the future of the breed, especially if care is taken when breeding to put these bitches to compatible quality sires, then I feel the future of the breed can be viewed with cautious optimism.

Historically, fashion has often dictated which stud dogs should be used by some breeders, regardless of suitability to the bitch in question. There is a huge responsibility on the shoulders of both the dog and bitch owners when breeding a litter - we should all be breeding to the breed standard - I found it hard to believe that had been the case when I judged a few of the exhibits. My main areas of concern are that the overall size seems to be creeping up and up, the beautiful one piece heads seem to be becoming broader and shorter and the hazel colour of eyes seems to be getting lighter. When breeding please look at the strengths and weakness' of both dog and bitch and try not to double up on those faults.

Class 1948 MPD (9 Entries) Abs: 0

This was a very impressive class, which set a high benchmark for the rest of the day. The first and second dogs were excellent puppies and difficult to split, I shall look forward to seeing how they mature.

1st Best Puppy: Miss C AFSETH Llantrussa Fernando

This is a very mature laid back puppy which helped him to win the class over his brother. Beautifully moulded head with a melting eye expression. Excellent quality bone and good strength of rear with pleasing angulation. Superb top line both standing and moving, moved soundly front and rear, with an outstanding side gait taking control of the ring.

2nd: Mrs R BRADY Llantrussa Head Over Heels to Bordercot

Full of flatcoat personality, thrilled with his day out, which unfortunately meant that his movement was not quite as accurate as his brother. An excellent moulded head with pleasing eye colour, shape and expression. Superb bone. Wonderful front with correct lay of shoulder, lovely to see the good top line both standing and on the move.

3rd: Mr A & Mrs A LAIRD Benvellyn Cape Columbard Of Daicheil

Another quality puppy, with a lovely reach of neck into a well defined brisket. Super bone. Unlucky to come up against the 1st and 2nd.

Class 1949 PD (15 Entries) Abs: 1

1st: Miss H S WALKER Rainesgift Huckleberry Finn To Lizzlog

Nicely balanced dog with a well defined brisket. Pleasing moulded head, with a good eye colour and shape of eye. Nice top line, needs time for his movement to settle.

2nd: Mrs A CLARKE Satinbaze Sea Hawk

Well presented dog which was plenty big enough for me. Clearly defined brisket and nice turn of stifle, good neat ears.

3rd: Mrs S M CANDLER Capeldewi Truly Unruly

Very playful needs time and practice in the ring to do himself justice. Nice body. Excellent top line and good tight feet.

Class 1950 JD (9 Entries) Abs: 2

1st: Mrs P BELLAMY Bochilbarley Snowstorm

Again needs time to settle in the ring, but in between his playfulness there was good width and drive in his hind movement. Pleasing one piece head, but would prefer a darker eye. In excellent coat and condition.

2nd: Miss E M C HOLMES Candidacasa Rollacoaster

I hope this dog and the 3rd have both finished their growing. A quality dog that needs time and practice to do himself justice in the ring. Superb head with a melting eye expression. Moved well.

3rd: Mr R & Mrs S LANE Kulawand Love To Remember

Excellent quality bone and a nice lay of shoulder. Good level top line both on the move and standing. Would prefer him to be cleaner cut beneath the jaw.

Class 1951 YD (6 Entries) Abs: 0

This was a class of dogs dominated by high tail carriage – I just hope this is an adolescent phase and not something we shall be seeing more of.

1st: Mr B & Mrs G GRAHAM Onyxro Centauri

This dog was not giving his handler the easiest of days, however in between his playful behaviour I could see his outstanding quality. I do hope that his handler spends more time on training him for the ring, as I fear others may not appreciate his qualities whilst being "blinded" by his

antics! Superb overall type and balance. Wonderful to see the good strong hindquarters and turn of stifle with an excellent tail set giving that "table top" level top line.

2nd: Miss C F MANGHAM, Mr M W & Mrs M G & MANGHAM Onyxro Sirius

In contrast to his brother who was 1st, this boy was superbly handled which made my task all the more difficult in splitting the two! Great workmanlike size and type, with quality bone, good turn of stifle and excellent feet.

3rd: Mrs S M HENESEY Clandrift Dark Legend JW

Nicely balanced dog with good depth of chest and excellent bone.

Class 1952 ND (7 Entries) Abs: 2

1st: Miss C F MANGHAM, Mr M W & Mrs M G & MANGHAM Onyxro Sirius

2nd: Mr R & Mrs S LANE Kulawand Love To Remember

3rd: Mrs D BROOKS Castlerock Eternal Love

Well balanced workmanlike dog of correct size. Excellent bone.

Class 1953 GD (11 Entries) Abs: 1

1st: Mrs D M WRIGHT Lakemere Moonlight Shadow JW

Correct size and nicely balanced dog, good quality bone with a well defined brisket. Beautifully presented.

2nd: Mrs D J & Mr J P COLEMAN Ravensjais Millie's Boy

Full of flatcoat personality, with a good reach of neck and pleasing top line. Nice tight feet with well padded soles.

3rd: Miss C F MANGHAM, Mr M W & Mrs M G & MANGHAM Onyxro Sirius

Class 1954 PGD (16 Entries) Abs: 0

1st: Mrs S A WEST Downstream Double First

Just the right size for me and an overall well balanced dog, with a nicely moulded head, good reach of neck into correct lay of shoulder. Well angulated rear.

2nd: Mr R D & Mrs V E ORME Elmstock Stealing Thyme

Full of flatcoat playfulness which did not enhance his performance. He has a good reach of neck. Correct tight feet and well padded soles.

3rd: Miss C KENNETT Bach Bryn Of Bramatha

He had the best hind movement of the day, helped by his superb balance. If only more of the exhibits had the width and strength in rear action that this dog demonstrated – such a treat to see.

Class 1955 LD (14 Entries) Abs: 1

1st & Res CC: Mrs L M STRUDWICK Branchalwood Aylanmhor For Burpham JW Sh.CM

A really showman, who was in top condition and form on the day. Won the class on his overall balance and type. Superb typical head with correct eye shape, colour and expression. Good quality bone, excellent top line with a well angulated and good strong rear.

2nd: Mr & Mrs P E FORSTER Wizardwood Tawny Trent

Overall a nice liver boy, who still needs time to fulfil his potential. Correct size. Nicely moulded head with a kind eye and melting expression. Excellent top line and tail set, moved soundly.

3rd: Mrs S HART Great Self Respect From Samadhi

Pleasing head. Well angulated with a good top line, tail set and strong hindquarters.

Class 1956 OD (13 Entries) Abs: 0

1st & Dog CC & BOB: Miss E PHILLIPS, Mrs B & HEIDE, Mr P & TYRIHJELL
Sh Ch Lhaxy's Yatzy At Exclyst Sh Ch

What a pleasure to go over this typical workman like dog of correct size. He reminds me of the dogs we used to see in days gone by, which has to be refreshing for the breed. He typifies "power without lumber and raciness without weediness" a quality which is lacking in so many today. The beautiful overall balance, good width and depth of chest, strong rear which enabled him to move so soundly and with drive. Superb well padded feet.

2nd: Mr S HIGGINBOTHAM, Miss H & CHIPPERFIELD Sh Ch Vbos the Tycoon JW Sh.CM

3rd: Mr J M IRVINE Sh Ch Vbos the Kentuckian

The 2nd and 3rd are so obviously "twin" brothers and are so alike and I found it hard to split them. Both are very flashy, pleasing dogs of good balance and correct size with lovely moulded heads. Good turn of stifle and moved with that beautiful flowing action. I felt that the 2nd had just the edge over his brother when it came to the lay of shoulder and there was the all important width.

Class 1957 MPB (11 Entries) Abs: 4

1st Best Bitch Puppy: Mrs S & Miss V LEWIS Llantrussa Just Like That at Fairwinds

Beautifully balanced, well boned puppy – I hope she has finished her growing. Wonderful one piece well moulded head with correct eye colour, placement and expression. Good reach of neck. Won the class on her outstanding movement.

2nd: Mrs E PRATT Benvellyn Cape Little Karoo

Classical bitch, with a pleasing typical head and good dark eye. Good angulation front and rear. Moved soundly. Shows tremendous promise.

3rd: Mrs V STIBBE-WILLIS Braemist Brenna By Madison

Mischievous girl that needs time and practice in the ring to do herself justice. Nicely balanced with correct front and rear.

Class 1958 PB (13 Entries) Abs: 3

1st: Mrs L STURMEY Polgara Made You Look

This bitch lived up to her name and "Made me look" – her quality both standing and on the move was a pleasure to see. Superb balance, great topline and tail set, nice head with correct eye set, colour and expression. Well defined brisket.

2nd: Dr P YATES, Miss V & STRACEY Llantrussa Mamma Mia with Hinchley

Very pretty typey bitch, that needs time and practice in the ring to do herself justice. Good reach of neck into a nice lay of shoulder.

3rd: Mrs J. A. JACKSON Wistaston Summer Love At Wabush

Well balanced with nice front and rear angulation. Would prefer a darker eye.

Class 1959 JB (7 Entries) Abs: 1

1st: Mr J I DALZIEL-SCOTT, Mrs M & SCOTT Woodavens Flower Drift Over Branchalwood (ai)

A classical bitch, well balanced, with a nicely defined brisket, good turn of stifle. Beautiful typical head with correct eye colour, placement and a kind expression.

2nd: Mr & Mrs T TREVOR Trevorsilk Galaxy Starlet

Nicely balanced liver, with good quality bone and correct lay of shoulder and turn of stifle.

3rd: Ms H FOX Blacktoft Blue Like Jazz

Playful elegant bitch of correct size and balance, with correct angulation front and rear. Moved well.

Class 1960 YB (11 Entries) Abs: 2

This was another very strong class and a pleasure to judge.

1st: Ms C A YOUNG Aricdell Carmen

Underneath the mass of coat I was pleasantly surprised to feel the quality of this bitch. Nicely balanced with a good lay of shoulder and turn of stifle. Won the class on her outstanding movement.

2nd: Mrs V. A. JONES Madison Rose Orchid For Braemist

A very stylish bitch with a most beautiful typical head, great reach of neck into a good lay of shoulder and depth of brisket. Unfortunately didn't move quite as well as the winner on the day.

3rd: Mr J I DALZIEL-SCOTT, Mrs M & SCOTT Woodavens Flower Drift Over Branchalwood (ai)

Class 1961 NB (7 Entries) Abs: 3

1st: Miss C F MANGHAM, Mr M W & Mrs M G & MANGHAM Onyxro Capella

Nicely balanced bitch or correct size, with a well defined brisket and a good strength of rear. Wonderful cat like feet.

2nd: Ms H FOX Blacktoft Blue Like Jazz

3rd: Dr P YATES, Miss V & TRACEY Llantrussa Mamma Mia with Hinchley

Class 1962 GB (11 Entries) Abs: 4

1st: Mr P, Miss S & The Late Mrs M SMITHERMAN Levelmoor Lanosa of Seaheart

Great to see a bright active girl of correct size really enjoying her day out. Lovely overall balance, with a pleasing top line and good tail set. Nice head with a kind expression. Correct shoulder and depth of brisket. Moved with real drive.

2nd: Miss C F MANGHAM, Mr M W & Mrs M G & MANGHAM Onyxro Capella

3rd: Mr D & Mrs K JOYCE Rainesgift The Dawn of Tyme For Stranfaer JW

Good overall balance, with a nice typical head and correct eye colour and kind expression. Pleasing angulation front and rear. Moved well.

Class 1963 PGB (17 Entries) Abs: 4

1st & Res CC: Mr & Mrs L MALONE Huntfar Saint Alexis

To me this bitch has "star quality" and made me want to look at her. Both standing and on the move she is outstanding and pushed so hard for the CC. Excellent typical head with a nice dark eye and kind expression. Pleasing lay of shoulder, good spring of rib, lovely top line and correct tail set and nice turn of stifle.

2nd: Mr R D & Mrs V E ORME Elmstock Whispering Thyme

Smaller than the winner. A very classy workmanlike bitch, unlucky to come up against the winner. She showed beautiful overall balance with a good body. Moved very soundly.

3rd: Mr C & Mrs C HEWISON Harvest Moon Of Casblaidd

Pleasing liver bitch, with a nicely moulded head, correct lay of shoulder. Moved well.

Class 1964 LB (22 Entries) Abs: 12

This was an outstanding class, along with the Open bitch, which I was spoilt for choice and the placings could so easily have been changed.

1st: Mrs A R KILMINSTER Withybed Silver Dollar

A workmanlike bitch, who was a pleasure to go over, a very elegant racy bitch, typifying "raciness without weediness", full of flatcoat fun and enjoying her day out. Well defined brisket, with a good depth of chest.

2nd: Mr & Mrs P E FORSTER Wizardwood Tawny Tyne

Classy liver bitch, showing great balance, with the correct lay of shoulder and depth of brisket. Pleasing head with good eye colour and expression. Moved soundly which helped to earn her place. Just needs time to mature into a very special liver.

3rd: Mrs S M CANDLER Irish Molly Of Capeldewi (Imp)

Unfortunately, this bitch was carrying too much weight for my liking, which spoilt her both standing and on the move – a great shame. Underneath this is a high quality bitch, with a pleasing head & kind expression.

Class 1965 OB (11 Entries) Abs: 4

1st & Bitch CC: Mr R & Mrs S LANE Ch Almanza Thank God Its Friday of Kulawand (Imp)

Wow. This is a bitch I have followed with great interest since giving her a Res CC in 2003. She certainly “pulled out all the stops” on the day to put in an impressive performance to win the CC. Such quality from head to tip of tail is such a pleasure to see. She has a typical head with a lovely eye and melting expression, good strong hind quarters with correct turn of stifle and powerful hind movement.

2nd: Mr J I DALZIEL-SCOTT, Mrs M & SCOTT Sh Ch Branchalwood Aylansula JW

So unlucky to come up against the winner. A real quality bitch and a pleasure to go over. A classical bitch, with an excellent front and moved so soundly.

3rd: Miss B JOHNSON Downstream Revival

Another classical bitch showing beautiful balance, not quite the top line of 1st and 2nd.

Sarah E F Whittaker
Judge