

The judging appointment that nearly didn't happen!

I flew into Prestwick (Glasgow) airport for my prestigious judging appointment with the Flatcoated Retriever Club of Scotland. Sandra, the show secretary kindly came to meet me and very sensibly stood at the "Arrivals", but for some unknown reason I appeared through the restaurant – no, I didn't have a quick feed! Anyway we eventually met up, went to pay for the car parking, when I spotted the previous customers ticket still at the pay station. Sandra paid for her parking, then, we did our good deed and chased after the two lads who had left their ticket at the machine, honestly there was no other reason to chase after these men! Sandra duly handed over the ticket and we found her car and drove out. Big problem time at the barrier, Sandra put in the ticket and the barrier did not go up, she tried every conceivable way of putting in the ticket, but still no joy. Then the fun started, we got big grief from all the irate people who couldn't get out of the car park as we were blocking it I started to feel very uncomfortable and thought we will be stuck here forever, or else end up in one of those beauracatic nightmares explaining that in our "do gooding" we had handed over our parking ticket and kept the other people's credit card receipt! Eventually we got the irate drivers to reverse back, so Sandra could reverse out of the way and they could escape. It took some time of Sandra and I both searching for some help and eventually I found another pay station and finally there was the elusive emergency button, so I did one of my "BAFTA style" performances and explained to a rather bemused man what we had done, to which he said "Yes I could see you were in difficulty, just drive to the barrier and I will lift it" Fortunately, he did and we were free again!

The next morning, Sandra didn't risk coming to meet me again and sent my co- judges steward, such a nice gentleman, but it was a little bizarre in that he arrived complete with his elkhounds and matching number plates, I immediately thought about the Swedish elk which I have seen, but then I got into the car and was greeted by my fellow passenger a parrot!! I then found myself talking to this bird... Perhaps not one of the best starts to a very important judging appointment!!

Flatcoated Retriever Club of Scotland Championship Show – Bitch Report

Thank you to the Flatcoated Retriever Club of Scotland for inviting me to judge this wonderful event, it was such an honour and privilege to judge this show. The venue was excellent with plenty of space indoors and out. It was a fabulous day, with amazing attention to detail by the organizers, making the day so enjoyable for the judges and exhibitors. Thank you to my stewards who were incredible efficient and last but by no means least the exhibitors who were all very sporting with my decisions.

The overall type of the bitches was extremely high, especially in the limit class and that was outstanding, with many high quality girls going home empty handed. The younger classes didn't seem to have that depth of quality, but there were still some nice ones for the future. I found myself being quite critical of size, as in most of the classes as I was lucky enough to find enough quality bitches of the correct size. Whilst I do not advocate the public use of a measuring stick, I do think it would be a useful tool for some exhibitors and breeders to use, then compare that measurement to the breed stand – yes a reality check. I was quite concerned about some of the

mouths, I do like to see a good scissor bite and several were penalised on the day for not having that. I was alarmed at the poor movement. I do enjoy seeing good sound movement – straight and true going out and coming back, but there were very few that displayed this, so I found myself putting emphasis on the most typical and good movement in side profile. I find it very worrying for a working gundog not to be sound.

Minor Puppy Bitch

1st & Best Puppy in Show. Miss K Holland & Mr G Hobson's Kulawand in Seventh Heaven at Flatcharm.

Wow, what a showy girl, thoroughly enjoying her day out, with excellent bone and tight feet. A beautifully moulded head, with correct ear set, good reach of neck into nice lay of shoulder, pleasing rear angulation with a good level topline. This will be one to look out for in the future. Delighted that she was awarded Best Puppy in Show.

2nd Mr TG & Mrs CA Ford's Fordingham Game Lady

This bitch carries the most amazing of coats and it would be easy to overlook her, until one has the chance of feeling the quality beneath the coat. A bitch of correct size with excellent bone and good feet. Nice dark eyes of correct shape and placement.

3rd Miss EMC Holmes' Ballriver Fallon

If only this bitch had stood and showed herself off as well as she moved! This was the best mover in the class, moving accurately and with drive. She is another quality bitch with all the essentials. I hope that with time and practice that she will come to like showing and do herself justice in the ring. A nicely moulded head and good reach of neck. Excellent topline and correct tail set.

Puppy Bitch

1st Ms. D. Halls' Ghilgrange Magic Maiden

I hope this one has finished growing, whilst plenty big enough for me she was still beautifully balanced and in proportion. She has a good typical head, with a pleasing eye colour and shape. Excellent topline and correct tailset. A well defined brisket.

2nd Miss S Stevensons' Steelriver Come The Dawn

Unfortunately carrying too much weight and again needs time and practice to do herself justice in the show ring. A superb head, with a good dark eye, correct shape and placement. Lovely reach of neck into an excellent front, showing good reach of upper arm. Good tight cat like feet.

3rd Miss EMC Holmes' Ballriver Fallon

Junior Bitch

1st Mr MW, Mrs MG & Miss CF Mangham's Onyxro Elara

This is a very eye catching workmanlike bitch of correct size, showing excellent balance throughout. A nicely moulded head with correct eye colour and shape, pleasing reach of neck into a well defined brisket. This is another bitch to look out for in the future.

2nd Mrs ME Romeo-Dieste's Bochlirley November Mist Over Hopevalley

A very racey bitch of correct size. Good topline with correct tail set. Nice eyes with a wonderful bright and alert expression. Pleasing angulation front and rear. Unfortunately, not in her best coats.

3rd Miss EMC Holmes' Candidacasa Scarlet Fever

This young lady needs time and practice to do herself justice in the ring as she does try to camouflage her quality. She has a nicely moulded head with correct eye. Well balanced body with a good turn of stifle.

Yearling Bitch

This was a high quality class and the top three were very classy workmanlike girls.

1st Mrs C Price's Llantrussa Lady Myfanwy

This is a workmanlike bitch of correct size, well balanced and mature for her age. She has superb quality bone. Pleasing front and good turn of stifle. The best mover in the class. She has a very typical head, with a kind eye expression. Good level topline which is maintained on the move.

2nd Miss K Hollands' & Miss A Websters' Calzeat Cwite a Catch at Flatcharm (Imp)

A beautiful classical head, with the correct eye colour, placement and expression, good reach of neck down into a pleasing lay of shoulder, excellent depth of chest. She has the correct topline and tailset.

3rd Mrs LM Strudwick's Branchalwood Rosa Water at Burpham

Another very typical bitch beautifully balanced and angulated, with a good depth of chest and pleasing turn of stifle. She has a nicely moulded head.

Maiden

1st Miss EMC Holmes Candidacasa Scarlet Fever

2nd Ms D Halls' Ghilgrange Magic Maiden

3rd Mr & Mrs L Malone's Kirkeck Brown Eyed Girl

This bitch has a nicely moulded head, but would prefer to see darker coloured eyes, although the placement and shape is correct. Good reach of neck into pleasing lay of shoulder.

Novice

1st G Lee's & J Holden's Innesbeck Lady of the Lake

This bitch could almost be summed up in one word – ELEGANCE. She is a beautiful workmanlike bitch, typifying “raciness without weediness”, very showy and presented most professionally. She has a nice head, with correct ear set, good reach of neck into well defined front and moved very soundly.

2nd Mr MW, Mrs MG & Miss CF Mangham's Onyxro Elara

3rd Miss EMC Holmes Candidacasa Scarlet Fever

Graduate Bitch

Another three very typical workmanlike bitches.

1st Mrs HM Tomlinson's Rainesgift Clemence

This is a superbly balanced bitch and the right size. She has the correct topline and set of tail which is maintained on the move. Nicely moulded head. Good tight feet and quality bone. One of the few good movers of the day and really went with drive.

2nd G Lee's & J Holden's Innesbeck Lady of the Lake

3rd Mrs JB Campbell's Beanit Money Penny of Ronevorg

A stylish bitch with the correct lay of shoulder. Pleasing head with good eye colour, expression and placement.

Post Graduate Bitch

1st Mrs MA Dalziel-Scott & Mr JL Scott's Woodavens Flowerdrift over Branchalwood

This is a very classy bitch and beautiful mover in profile. She has a well moulded head with correct eye colour, and a good reach of neck into a pleasing lay of shoulder. Strong back, nice turn of stifle. Good cat like feet.

2nd Mrs L Sturmeys Polgara Made You Look

This is a very racy bitch, without weediness. She moved very soundly. Beautifully proportioned head of correct length, nice reach of neck into a well laid shoulder. Good turn of stifle.

3rd Miss V Yates & Dr P Stracey's Llantrussa Mamma Mia with Hinchley

Another very typical bitch, with a pleasing head, correct eye colour, shape and placement. Good strong topline and tail set. Nice feet.

Limit Bitch

This was the class of the day, both numerically and most importantly for quality. Only once before can I remember judging a class and then saying to my stewards "Well if all those five were disqualified I could quite happily find you another five!"

1st & Res CC Mrs S Candler's Capedewi Never on Sunday

Wow, what an elegant bitch and every inch a lady. She is racy without weediness, but still has that strength and power that one is looking for. Excellent bone. Superb front with the correct lay of shoulder and the broadness which enabled her to be the best mover in the class. Good strong top line and correct tail set and carriage. Nicely moulded head and kind eye expression. Presented beautifully although not in her best coat.

2nd Mrs S & Miss V Lewis' Llantrussa Just Like That at Fairwinds

She was unlucky to come up against the winner, whose size I prefer, although this is a beautifully balanced bitch, which can not be ignored. Correct front, with a well defined brisket, good strong back and pleasing turn of stifle. Nice head and eye. An excellent sound mover.

3rd Mrs C Price's Llantrussa Chiquitita

Another very classy, racy bitch that needs time, just lacked in maturity of the 2nd but still has all the desired qualities, of correct angulation and typical head and again moved very soundly.

Open Bitch

1st Mr R & Mrs S Paterson's Torrweaving Black Damsel

This is a very stylish bitch of correct size, typifying "raciness without weediness". A very pleasing moulded head, with correct ear size and set, good reach of neck into a well defined brisket, well ribbed back. Good topline and a lovely turn of stifle.

2nd Mrs MA Dalziel-Scott & Mr JL Scott's Sh Ch Branchalwood Aylansula JW

She couldn't quite match the winner on movement on the day, but still a very classy lady, well balanced with a pleasing head, good reach of neck into a superb front and great depth of chest. Excellent feet.

3rd Ms E J Walker & Dr L Roberts' Contar Celtic Myth of Gloi SHCM

Unfortunately, she did not put in the top class performance which was required in this company. She has a beautiful head and is nicely balanced and moved soundly.

Veteran Bitch

1st, CC & BOS Mrs C Price's Almanza Crack the Bubbling (Imp)

To me this is a bitch "out of the history books" and not just because of her age! She is so very workmanlike of correct size and one which I could imagine being at the side of the likes of Mr Colin Wells. She so loved her day out and gave it her all. She is

has the correct one piece typical head, with a nice eye colour, shape and kind expression. She has a good front with a deep, broad chest. She is well balanced throughout, showing that required strength, good turn of stifle. She flows in profile on the move with excellent tail set and carriage.

2nd Mr KD & Mrs SJ Rees' Eskwinds About Time

Nicely balanced throughout, with a well defined chest and good rear angulation. Excellent feet. Pleasing head and nice neat ears.

3rd Miss I Gilchrist's Shiredale Roan Fell of Ardmhor

Good typical bitch enjoying her day out. Nice head and reach of neck, into a good front. Excellent cat like feet.

Special Open Liver Bitch

1st Mr PE Forster's Wizardwood Tawny Tyne

She is a well balanced strong bitch, unfortunately carrying too much weight which spoilt her. She has a nice deep chest and a good turn of stifle, excellent feet. Pleasing head with correct eye colour and expression.

2nd Mr E & Mr I MacRae's Rathanduich Havow Sul

This is a lovely puppy which needs time and practice in the ring. Good colour liver. She has a nice head, but I would prefer a darker eye.

3rd Mrs K Heinish's Rathanduich Tek

Again needs time and practice to do herself justice in the ring. She is a very elegant bitch with a good reach of neck into a nice front.

Sarah E F Whittaker

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