

Midland Counties Championship Show 29 October 2016

Irish Red and White Setters

My thanks go to the Society for their kind invitation for my first ticket appointment and their most welcoming hospitality. My warm appreciation goes to my most able stewards, Ann and Mike Green who worked cheerfully from 9 am to 4 pm for 3 judges.

Having been away from the show scene for a year, it was a real pleasure to go over such lovely dogs. Thank you to the sporting exhibitors. The quality of the great majority of exhibits was high. Some close decisions were made in the last moments as performance and sparkle were finally assessed. The breed standard is broad enough to permit several "types". My line ups reflected this as I concentrated on the essentials of conformation and soundness as expressed in body condition and movement.

There were no exaggerations in angulation. A few heads were finer than the standard calls for. I found no incorrect bites but a few level ones, no dodgy eye shapes, no light eyes nor incorrect ear sets. Fronts were very good with only one slightly suspect. All had good oval bone, nothing weedy. Pasterns were correct, or acceptable, in all except one with hare feet which made for inefficient foot fall. As I commented when I judged the Club show in March 2013, feet were worrying in quite a few exhibits, being of the correct basic shape but somewhat flat. The classic remedy advised by the old hands is extensive road walking, easier said than done for many busy owners, I know.

Only a very few had dipping top lines on the stack. Tail set and carriage were good in nearly all. Only a few mature dogs had less than good movement. Muscle tone in some exhibits, and weight in a few, spoilt movement. The standard of grooming was of a high order. Colour was overall very good with some outstanding. Typically at this time of year coat quality varied in the bitches but this was the very last criterion to take into account and related to very few decisions. Temperament of all dogs was excellent with a just a few younger dogs showing some apprehension in the noisy venue. Having said all the above, I do not need to recite all of the standard for each exhibit, thus confining remarks to special points and reasons for placings.

Minor Puppy Dogs (4, 1abs)

Two very attractive littermates of seven and a half months, a credit to their breeders.

1 Green's Zendarric Heart Shaped Box With Vizaset - An eye catching dog. Strongly built and developing on sound lines at this age. Masculine broad head with level planes, intelligent alert expression, good length of neck into correct shoulder placement, deepening in chest with good spring of ribs and moderate coupling to well formed rear. Best mover in the class. Rich red colour, and lots of it, with quality coat. Very well handled. Pressed hard for BPD giving away 4 months.

2 Rowles' Zendarric Thunderstruck - Slightly less well on than his litter mate but also growing on sound lines so similar remarks apply, a touch less outgoing in movement. Also had good feet. Less red in coat but of quality.

Puppy Dog (4, 1abs)

1 Ball and Harrison's Corranroo Commitment - Very impressive with the beginnings of ring presence, well developed with a clean, appealing outline, good angulation all through. The best of heads for a puppy and a bright expression. Excellent feet, moved soundly with driving action keeping his topline. **Best Puppy in Breed**

2 Rowles' Zendarric Thunderstruck - Remarks as in MPD. More settled than in earlier class but not yet developed sufficiently to match 1 in movement.

Junior Dog (3)

1 Cuddy's Taxus Golden Prince in Balbriggan - A tall dog with a grand head who made an immediate impression of masculinity, substance and strength. Balanced angulation, deep in chest, strong in bone, wide rear end, quite mature for 17 months. Feet need corrective exercise, in my view. Not the easiest dog to handle but his movement was purposeful and straight. Good jacket marred by some ticking but that may improve with a heavier growth. Seriously considered for the Reserve CC.

2 Jones' Alanea Royal Reward of Berryessa - Built on a smaller frame than 1 with adequate angulation, attractive head on a moderate neck into good shoulders. Decent top line and well made rear assembly enabling sound movement but not quite with the drive of the winner. Presented in a pleasing coat and finish.

Postgraduate Dog (2)

1 Cuddy's Taxus Golden Prince in Balbriggan

2 Pilmer's Anisbrig Tobermory - A very smart dog with an appealing head and soft expression. He made a good first impression on coming into the ring but it was disappointing to find that his top line broke at the coupling making him appear a touch bum high. Although he had good driving action, his movement was not as energetic as that of the winner. Coat, colour and finish to the highest standards, well handled.

Limit Dog (4,1abs)

1 Vaas' Red Fellow's Nordach Tyronen [ATC AQ00360FIN] - A strongly built, compact dog of considerable substance, excellent in angulation and balance, well ribbed up, wide rear assembly and good bend of stifle, neat feet. Slightly heavy in head for me and with more red on the skull than I prefer. His movement was powerful and proficient. Coat and colour were very pleasing. Very well handled. Delighted to award him the

Reserve DCC.

2 Bayne's Corranroo Casper - An attractive dog made on a smaller and lighter frame than 1 and slightly less mature but still well balanced with deep chest and adequate spring of rib. Though sound on the move, he did not match the power of the winner. First class coat, colour and finish. Handled with flair.

Open Dog (8)

Varied in type and age but a terrific class with 5 titled dogs and 3 strong contenders. A huge privilege to assess them, placings were finely balanced.

1 Barney and Howatson's Sh Ch Killary's Grand Adventure with Vanders and

Romaunt (Imp USA) JW - This medium size dog stood away in his superb clean outline, very well balanced. Impressive in the smooth flow from his correct head down a moderate neck to lovely shoulder placement, firm top line coupled to a strong rear end with correct tail set and carriage. Deep in chest, looking down on him, his ribbing was spot on. Firm to the touch with very good muscle tone, he was up on his toes, his energy and drive gave fluid movement. His white coat gleamed, some more red patches and feathering would be good but the owner has made the best of what he does have. All in all, a beautifully constructed dog in tip top condition. Expertly handled. Delighted to award him the **DCC and BOB** and later to see him make the cut of 10 from a full and strong group.

2 Walker's Sh Ch/Ir Sh Ch Vanders Va Voom Avec Wroxham - When I think back over 20 years in the breed, a handful of males come to mind as the epitome of the breed. The definition of epitome I use is a person or thing that is typical of or possesses to a high degree the features of a whole class. This dog is one such. He presents a balanced and complete picture. A dog of pleasing shape and medium size with compact body properties yet showing a lovely flow from classic head with intelligent expression over strong back to correct rear assembly. He moved out strongly, keeping his top line, going and coming very true. In the challenges for top honours, he had to give way to the sparkle of the DCC winner and the strength of the Reserve.

Minor Puppy Bitch (3)

Three delightful litter mates of seven and a half months and a credit again to their breeders.

1 Henton and Plowman's Zendarric Born to Be Wild - Well developed for her age with a balanced outline, not yet at the gangly legs and wings stage. A sweet feminine head with that adorable puppy expression, deepening in chest and starting to rib up. Super colour and coat quality. The tallest of the trio, she was the best mover. Well presented and sympathetically handled by a lady, not the owner but experienced in other breeds.

2 Rowles' Zendarric Isle of Avallon - Set in a smaller frame than her litter sister and not so far on but with similar qualities in head and body. Excellent colour and quality of coat for this age. Moved out cheerfully but not quite as positively as the winner.

Puppy Bitch (0)

Junior Bitch (3)

1 Soper's Lovenjoel Belle of the Ball - Of medium size, she has good angulation all through, nice straight front and adequate substance and bone for her age. Classic headpiece with appealing expression, smooth neck into good shoulders, shortish back and well angled rear. Firm to the touch, good muscle tone. Best mover. Very good colour and coat.

2 Barney's Romaunt Ain't Life Grand - A larger bitch with adequate angulation, reasonably balanced in side outline but a touch loose in front for me compared to 1. Typey in feminine head, neck and shoulders, not overlong in back. Good in muscle tone and competent in movement. Lovely white coat, more red would be good. Again, well handled but I marginally preferred the overall package and performance of the winner.

Postgraduate Bitch (2)

1 Callaghan's Corranroo Coco - A well made and substantial bitch of 2 years, quite mature, level head planes and correct skull, lovely dark eye, pretty straight in front with deep chest and well finished rear. Good in top line which she held on the move. Slightly orangey red markings in places. Cooperated well with handler.

2 Soper's Caispern Winning Colours - Rather a small bitch for 3 years old but well put together, attractive head and eye. Sound enough in movement but not as energetic as 1.

Limit Bitch (2)

1 Walton's Gallybob Bedazzled - This bitch scored in positive movement. Feminine head with lovely expression, moderate neck into good shoulders, clean in body, well balanced all through, stood four square, short coupled with good bend of stifle, neat feet. Coat and colour were good, she was well presented and cooperated with handler. Considered for the Reserve BCC.

2 Barcroft's Ballakinnish Muse - Similar bitch to 1 in most respects, well proportioned with a typey head and expression. There was nothing amiss with her movement but it lacked the drive and zest of 1.

Open Bitch (5,1 a)

Not as strong as the open dog class but enough quality.

1 Tattersall's Sh Ch Alanea Summer Cottage - There is no size clause in the UK standard but, for me, this bitch is near the top end for acceptable size and substance. She stood away from the class in ring presence. Nigh on perfect angulation and balance, wonderful head and neck smoothly flowing into shoulders, short back to strong loin and wide hind assembly. Firm to the touch, good in muscle tone, well covered but spot on for weight. Movement was powerful and steady. Her pearly white coat is fabulous, the best I can remember in the breed in 20 years, with super red markings. Most pleased to award her the **BCC**. In the challenge for BOB, the dog just pipped her for energy and verve.

2 Barry's Rustasha Rosa Kim - A smaller frame carries this lovely bitch but she has substance. Pretty head with the dark eye I just love, clean and balanced in outline, straight front and good ribbing, level in back with correct croup, tail set and carriage. Presented in top condition with superior coat and finish. She moved steadily but did not match 1 for drive. She was a worthy winner of the **Reserve BCC**.

Charles Henderson

Judge