

Delaware Valley
2015
Sweepstakes Critique

Laurie Morris

It was an honor to have been invited to judge sweepstakes at this wonderful show. Thank you to the Club, my stewards and to everyone involved in making this event so great. And of course thank you exhibitors for the lovely entry of your special puppies. To have the opportunity to go over puppies from many different lines is a tremendous learning experience no matter how long one has been in the breed.

I was truly delighted with my top winners. All of these young dogs were full of quality and type, I had no problem finding hounds I would be proud to have in my own kennel. All the puppies were sweet and only a few were concerned about being at the show. I was able to go over them so in time they should be fine. I was pleased to see lots of leg on this generation but found there were too many hound silhouettes, tall pups that were so narrow from the front their legs nearly touch. No chest and no spring of rib I think this is a real concern. Muscle or not, these are wolfhounds not borzoi and they must have more substance.

When going over the pups I look for the same virtues I want in my dogs. I look for the hound that should be able to hunt though most never will. Isn't that what we all must do to honor the standard and not fall prey to the show dog? I want strength in dogs and bitches, but I want to be able to tell the difference. My ideal hounds have strong necks, fore chest that has muscle & well laid shoulders. A top line that starts at the top of the head and flows all the way down the tail is not just nice to look at, it is strong. A dippy top line or a loin that is too long is a weakness that could break down in a working animal, as could upright and weak pasterns. Well sprung ribs, muscled loins, wide pelvis, strength everywhere. Since there are no perfect hounds I forgive some faults if the overall picture in front of me could do the job that was originally intended.

6-9 PUPPY DOG

1st-#11 Kellykerry Keiran of Aerie

A very handsome tall youngster. Nice masculine head, rosed ears, correct coat. He has big bone, good fore chest & fill. A strong neck that flows into a correct top line with a long strong croup. Lovely width through thigh & hocks. Beautiful hindquarters. Super underline for his age. He has correct depth of chest with a long gradual slope to a nice tuck up. He uses himself well when moving. Knuckling over in front which may contribute to slightly erratic foot behavior. I loved this quality young dog. **BEST OPPOSITE SEX**

2nd #17 Templar of Warwick

Half brother to first place. A tall boy with good reach and side gait. Nice head & pigment, ears a bit heavy. Not quite the front or as shapely as 1st place right now. Croup a bit short. Good bone.

3rd #13 Castlemaine Laissez Les Bon Temp Rouler

A handsome dark puppy smaller than the others in the class. Pretty head & ears. Lovely front assembly, nice underline. I like his long croup but it is a bit steep, I expect that will change as he matures. Not happy to be here today.

9-12 PUPPY DOG

1st #29 Starkeeper's Davinci

This puppy surprised me. He is moderate in size & shape. Rather straight in front. When he settled into moving, he was the most together & overall correct in his class. He was a bit unsure & not happy to be here, but he did what his owner asked of him.

2nd #25 Starkeeper Drummond Duncan

Litter brother to first place, taller and a bit more muscled in the hindquarters. Uses himself well moving. Nice pasterns. I'd like to see more width through out.

3rd #21 Starkeeper Silverthorne Nettle

A tall boy with good reach on the move. Narrow chest and ribcage.

4th #31 O'Murchadha's Cugein Caola Bhuinn

A handsome dark brindle boy. Lovely masculine head, good fore chest, long strong neck & nice top line when standing. Correct wide pelvis. Sadly this lovely boy is too fat, and was unable to use his hindquarters properly.

12-15 PUPPY DOG

1st #39 Lismore Lone Ranger

A tall, strong pup. Pleasing head. He has more angulation in rear than front yet has a nice long stride. I would like less length in the loin. Very nice croup. Good pasterns.

2nd #33 Tartan Terror of Fitzwick

Another very strong pup. Lovely head & expression. Strong neck. A bit long in the loin & he could stand to have a bit more leg. Good topline, very nice over the croup & lovely hindquarters. A big bursa impedes his movement and he carries far too much weight.

15-18 PUPPY DOG

1st #41 Taliesin's Looking For Trouble

A happy handful, this pup stands along in his class. Handsome head with good pigment & nice ears. He is in wonderful hard condition. At times he can make himself appear square, but he has a strong topline and a correct underline that gradually flows into his tuckup. This is a nice moderate youngster that will be interesting to watch as he matures.

6-9 PUPPY BITCH

1ST #8 Keel of Aerie

A really lovely girl, nearly perfect for her age. She has a beautiful head, dark pigment & nice rosed ears. She has a long strong neck that flows into a well laid shoulder & a good topline. Already she has a gentle arch over her loin, a perfect croup & wide pelvis. Good fore chest and width between her front legs. Plenty of bone, lovely strong wide thigh. A bit straight in pasterns, and she probably has more angulation than she needs at this age but she uses herself well and is lovely on the move.

2nd #10 Castlemaine's Smitten By Jemima at Grianan

A strong bitch with pretty head & ears. Good fore chest and fill. Very nice topline when she settles. Plenty of body for her age, would like a bit more leg. Pasterns are weak. She is a moderately & balanced girl.

3rd #12 Redtops Athena at Blair

The least mature of this class. Pleasing head, rosed ears. Still in her baby coat so not showing her top line well. Croup a bit steep, and would like to see more fore chest. Not happy being here today.

9-12 PUPPY BITCH

1st #32 Starkeeper Ard Rhi's Supernova

Not a flashy girl, but she has the quality and correct attributes to mature into a big lovely bitch. Good length of leg. Very pleasing head with nice ears & a strong muzzle. Good front assembly, wide breast with correct rib cage. Perfect long underline to her tuckup. Nice top line, gentle rise over her loin, wide pelvis and nice croup. Good bone, feet a little flat right now. Balanced in every way.

2nd #14 O'Lugh Stella Artois

Pretty bitch with hard muscle. Attractive feminine head, good pigment. Good upper arm and shoulder. Big bone. Top line a bit soft, pasterns weak. Beautiful strong croup and hindquarters.

3rd #18 Wildisle Brie Deja Vu

Not as rangy as those before her. Muzzle a bit short. Nice fore chest with good fill. Correct top line & nice croup. She has good bone & nice pasterns. She is in good hard condition. I would prefer more angulation front and rear, but a pretty and balanced bitch.

4th #24 Laislinn The Last Noel

A tall girl with lots of maturing to do. More narrow in body than the rest of this class. Pretty expression. Top line flat right now & too long in body but has a nice croup.

12-15 PUPPY BITCH

1st #34 Lismore Lovey Wentworth Howell

Strong girl with beautiful reach moving. Nice fore chest, pasterns & bone. Lovely wide strong thighs and hocks. Slightly masculine head.

2nd #36 Karontara Starkeeper Bonnie of Fitzwick

A smaller bitch than first place. Moves out & uses herself well. A tad long in the loin and straight pasterns. Nice fore chest, strong body and nice over the croup.

3rd #50 Quinlan's Aquitaine of Ard Rhi.

Tall girl in good condition. Lacks bone for her size and needs fore chest. Nice over the croup and wide pelvis.

4th #46 Lismore June Cleaver

A first show for owner & puppy. She is a houndy girl but most immature in her class. One of the few good pair of pasterns of the day. She needs more bone. Lovely sweet temperament and she is happy to be here.

15-18 PUPPY BITCH

1st #42 Karontara Blathnat O'Tailstorm

At first glance you may think this bitch is too small, but she isn't. She is very well put together & strong. Her head is somewhat doggy, but the rest of her is a feminine powerhouse. She has a long strong neck that blends into her shoulders well. Proper spring of rib, strong loin, correct croup & wide pelvis. I love her fore chest, perfect underline and meaty thighs. Her angulation

fore and aft is just right. She is a super youngster and I will watch her with interest as she matures. **BEST IN SWEEPS**

2nd # 48 Karontara's Beach Bride at Tralen

Litter sister to above, there is a lot to like about her. She is taller than her sister right now so she doesn't have the angulation. Good coat and in good hard condition. A correct topline, strong loin, wide pelvis and a lovely croup. She lacks fore chest and has a straight upper arm. A good honest and strong bitch.