

Flatcoated Retriever Society Open Show
Saturday 9th June 2018
Bitches
Nicky Colson (Windyhollows)

Thank you to the Show Committee for inviting me to judge the bitches, having judged the dogs eleven years ago. I consider myself very privileged to have judged at four breed shows over the last twenty years. Ray and Chris did a great job stewarding for me, so I could concentrate on the dogs, thank you. The Kennel Club Building rings are perfect for judging dog's construction. Dogs do not stand in holes, hiding feet and top line and uneven ground doesn't alter movement or perception of length to height proportions. This fact was brought home to me the following day at Three Counties which was judged outside on a very uneven grass ring, as bitches I had found rather large seemed to have shrunk overnight.

Having not judged for 4 years, I think I had only seen a couple of the entry before. I look for a medium sized dog that is fit for function. The dog in the ring should be the same as the one in the field whether the owners choose to work their dogs or not. In recent years, I have seen a change in the hind quarters being over angulated and bend of stifle not being moderate. This alters the length of the dog and its ability to drive from the rear, losing the "power without lumber". I was pleased on the day that this, on the whole was not the case with my entry although some bitches lacked muscle tone in their second thighs and did not feel fit to go over. I was also pleased that generally neck and fronts had not been barbered, in fact some bitches could have done with being tidied.

I was delighted with my top bitches, as I felt they fulfilled my interpretation of the breed standard. Due to the fact that I have handled my co-judge's Best Dog, BIS fell to the referee to decide, with the dog going BIS and BVIS. The remaining decisions were made in total agreement with Sally, although BPIS caused us some debate.

Veteran Bitch (4 ents, 1 abs)

1st Joyce's Stranfaer Lucy Locket JW

At 9 ½ this lady is still very bright and active with a happy tail action standing and on the move. She has a lovely feminine head full of flatcoat expression. Good length of neck and level topline, well developed brisket and good bone down to tight feet. Carrying a touch too much weight but a lovely typical bitch BVB.

2nd Simons' Coedylan Visi D'arte ShCM

Shown in lovely condition, at 7 this bitch has a naughty expression and dark eye although I would prefer a slightly less pronounced stop. Unfortunately not using her short tail to her benefit today, she moved freely around the ring.

3rd Bellamy's Woodfinch Lorelei

Minor Puppy Bitch (4 ents)

These babies were very different.

1st Powell's Bonnyhilbrae Love of Joy

To me, this puppy stood out. Workman like, she was different from her classmates and is as I would expect at 6 months, a baby. She has a lovely head with mischievous expression and dark, tight almond shaped eyes. Her brisket is well defined and her rear quarters are well muscled which you don't often find in young puppies. She has a gentle spring of rib to a short square loin. Moved very steadily covering the ground with a short well set tail. Her feet will improve with age.

2nd Calverley's Gwenadillo Tweety Pie

A taller, elegant bitch with a clean outline. Pleasing head and excellent reach of neck and level top line. She has quality bone but is a touch longer in loin and second thigh than I would prefer. She moved around the ring on a free flowing stride but her rear movement was erratic. Not the balance of 1.

3rd Staff's Bonnyhilbrae Lasting Joy

Puppy Bitch (6 ents)

1st Jones' Caehaidd Lets Go Crazy with Braemist

At 9 months, this lady is developing nicely. She has a dark eye with very naughty expression. Good reach of neck down to moderate lay of shoulder. Level topline, gradual spring of rib to short square loin. Moved confidently with correct footfall. Neat feet. I preferred the rear assembly of 2 today although she wasn't helping her handler by leaning back. A racy, confident puppy. BPB. BPIS was our most difficult decision, as both fulfilled the standard on many accounts but were very different. For me the dog just had the edge today with his strong hind quarters, moderate bend of stifle and well let down hocks, showing a more balanced outline.

2ndge Powell's Bonnyhilbrae Love of Joy

3rd Walker's Lizzlog Brewing Bettie

Junior Bitch (5 ents, 1abs)

1st Simons Rainesgift Royal Mint I Coedylan

At 17mths this bitch has a lovely dark almond shaped eye, a good length of muzzle and an excellent reach of neck and a well developed brisket. She has a level top line that she maintained on the move with a correct tail carriage. She won the class on her stronger rear movement.

2nd Jones' Blacktoft Sapphire Ice at Benvellyn (AI)

Although younger she is mature in her development and shown in a dense shiny coat. Pleasing head with a dark hazel eye. She has well developed hind quarters and a well let down hock down to neat feet. She moved out well in profile, with tail carried correctly.

3rd Harley's Blouet Noelle at Arrowhill

Yearling Bitch (6 ent, 1 abs)

1st Simons' Rainesgift Royal Mint I Coedylan

2nd Jones' Blacktoft Sapphire Ice at Benvellyn (AI)

3rd Goodman's Blacklake Isabella

Novice Bitch (3 ents)

1st Walker's Lizzlog Brewing Bettie

This baby is up on size for her age but should have done most of her growing. A touch narrow is front for me but excellent bone throughout and neat feet. She stands correct hock to floor and has a level topline and tail carriage. She lost out in the puppy class as her rear movement was not as positive as 1 and 2.

2nd Reynold's Gemswin Let's Dance

A well made 2 year old liver bitch. Her coat is dark and in lovely condition but I would prefer a darker eye. Pleasing head. She is strong throughout but her rear movement was not as positive or true.

3rd Carter's Lizzlog Top Totty

Graduate Bitch (12 ents, 3abs)

This class contained some lovely bitches, who are, as you would expect, on their way but not quite there yet!

1st Holmes & Knight's Wiccansage Virtue at Rydanah

This bitch stood out to me whilst her handler was collecting her number. She is a fidget who does not like being handled yet, as she dances around, she places her feet, stands with a level topline and shows off her well defined brisket and racy outline. She has a pleasing head, dark eyes and correct fill between, I would prefer a touch more length of muzzle to complete the balance. She has a moderate bend of stifle and well let down hocks which showed in the drive as she moved around the ring, covering the ground with ease. At 2 ½ she was presented in lovely coat and condition, just lacked the overall muscular firmness that maturity will bring. RBB.

2nd Watson's Wistaston The Black Secret

Another who caught my attention for her overall type and balance. She has a classic feminine head, long with flat skull, a slight stop, small and well set on ears with lovely dark almond shaped eye. Excellent length of neck to well placed shoulders and good return of upper arm. Her fore ribs are fairly flat, with gradual spring to short square loin. In profile she moved with good forward reach and rear drive but lacked the accuracy in the rear movement of 1st, some tidying of this bitch's feathering would enhance the overall picture.

3rd Gale's Willowswind Nette Lark JW

Post Graduate Bitch (8 ents, 4 abs)

A difficult class to judge. These girls were all around the same age but each is developing at a different rate

1st Walker's Lizzlog Chicago Showgirl

Not wearing her coat today, she had nowhere to hide. Still very immature at nearly 3, she has everything I like. A lovely one piece head with correctly set neat ears and a kind dark eye. Her neck is strong and of a good length to well laid shoulders. Her chest is deep and fairly broad, with a well defined brisket. Forelegs are straight with good bone, down to strong neat feet. She has a level top line and her tail comes straight off her back. She moved freely and with ease pushing off from her well let down hocks.

2nd Simons' Gwenadillo Montesori Coedylan

Not the balanced outline or tailset of 1. Her head is long and nicely moulded with a good depth to her muzzle. She has a kind eye and naughty expression. Good feet and well let down hocks with moderate sweep of stifle. Moved freely.

3rd Stevenson's Steelriver Sun Kissed JW

Limit Bitches (6 ents, 3 abs)

1st Joyce's Stranfaer Solitaire JW

At 3 ½ this bitch was spot on today. She is medium sized and beautifully presented with a dense shiny black jacket and tidy feathering. She has a lovely moulded head with kind dark eyes and neat ears. Her neck is strong and long and has a well laid shoulder and good return of upper arm. Straight front and good oval bone down to tight, well padded feet. Her fore rib is flat, ribcage well sprung to short square loin. She stands true on her hindquarters, with moderate bend of stifle and well let down hock, square to heel. She excelled on the move, with good front extension and rear drive and accurate foot fall. From behind she was straight and true, her movement was only matched by the dog in the challenge. BB and RBIS.

2nd Campbell's I Believe in Angels Oasis of Peace at Ronevorg

Another shown in excellent coat, she is a little bigger all round. Pleasing head with dark eyes, good length of neck to well placed shoulder. I would prefer a flatter fore rib and more length to her ribcage to give her a racier outline, carrying a touch of weight here, caused her to roll in her front movement. Strong rear assembly, her rear movement drove her around the ring.

3rd Hedges' Blacktoft Quickstep of Satinbaze

This lady has been on maternity duty and was completely out of coat, which meant you could clearly see her construction. She has an intelligent expression, excellent length of neck, good return of upper arm, a racy outline and powered around the ring.

A lovely class of ladies who moved freely, with drive

Open Bitch (6 ents)

I found this a difficult class to judge as they were all good examples of the breed but excelling on different aspects of the standard and my personal preference.

1st Gale's Willowswind Maias Wish

At 6 years she is bigger all round and is strong in bone but is balanced in outline and not overdone in anyway. She has a pleasing head with dark almond shaped eye. Her brisket is well defined and she has a correct length of rib with gradual spring to a short square loin and her tail is correctly set. Her hocks are well let down. This lady won the class on her free flowing movement, covering the ground with ease.

2nd Stevenson's Blacktoft Misty Blue Steelriver

Sharing the same sire of 1, she is similar in outline yet of a medium size but lacked the winner's well defined brisket. She has a pretty head with a very dark eye and naughty expression, bright and active, demonstrated by her happy tail action, carried maintaining her topline on the move.

3rd Murray's Ariminta Glass at Gayplume

I preferred the heads and balance of the 1 and 2, but a very honest sound flatcoat with the best rear action in the class, moving straight and true, pushing off from well let down hocks

Special Open Liver Bitch (3ents, 1abs)

1st Reynold's Gemswin Let's Dance

Placed 2nd in Novice this lady was BLIS.

2nd Harley's Blouet Noelle at Arrowhil

A very raw junior who left her coat behind, she has a clean outline, good bone down to strong feet. A little short in upper arm. She moved positively around the ring covering the ground well. She will take a long time to mature.

Special Shooting Dog Certificate (1 ent)

1st Reynold's Gemswin Let's Dance

Nicky Colson (Windyhollows)