

Crufts 2016 King Charles Spaniels

It is three years since I last judged this breed, & upon that occasion, from a representative entry of 70, I commented on how I thought that soundness & temperament had generally improved. At Crufts 2016, from a good entry of 125, I made the following observations. I regret to advise that the improvement I reported upon in 2013 has not been maintained; in fact it has deteriorated, & I must tell you that I am seriously concerned for the future of this beautiful breed. Judges have a pivotal role to play in taking the breed forward. Gone are the decades when the magnificent head was the be-all & end-all of the breed. It is the responsibility of all judges, be they all rounders or breed specialists, to take the dog as a complete whole, heavily rewarding soundness & good temperament, then breed type. Today I had too many examples of badly constructed dogs moving unsoundly, & shivering wrecks that were incapable of standing without support; this is unacceptable, & must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The starting point for all dedicated breeders has to be making soundness & temperament their first priority, & then stamping type on the sound foundation. I would never dream of breeding from an unsound animal of poor temperament; by doing so you are just creating problems for yourself, & more importantly problems for the breed. Good health, in conjunction with conditioning & clean presentation, are also priorities on which to focus. Today, conditioning & presentation ranged from magnificent to unsatisfactory. Every dog has the basic right to be well conditioned & presented in a clean manner. During the last few years the breed has lost such doyens as Shealagh Waters, Di Fry & Ellis Hulme, & I am sure that breeders & exhibitors miss their great knowledge &

advice. I know from personal experience that Ellis would never have tolerated a dog being propped up in the ring. He always insisted that they were free standing, & one of today's great breeders reminded me of this fact. This preamble has not been written to be offensive, but to express my opinion & my serious concerns over the problems facing this breed. I do hope that both judges & breeders will implement the corrective action that is needed to take the breed forward.

VD (5) 1 Gillhespy's Ch Tucherish Sundance, a most worthy champion. Totally sound, moving to perfection, & of excellent breed type. A real asset to the breed. His temperament is exemplary; 2 Askins, Kendall & Vallila's Ch/Int/Fin/Sw/Nord Ch Headra's Chocolate D Lite, this exhibit is of a most attractive size & build, moving & showing well. A most appealing headpiece. A happy & outgoing temperament; 3 Moffat & Robins' Ch Maibee Teddie, 9 year old tri, distinctive headpiece, of compact build. Today he was not moving to my satisfaction.

MPD (1) 1 Sproul & Coburn's Khandro Liverpool Lullaby, 8 1/2 month tri, naturally raw & immature, but showing promise. A generally pleasing headpiece, excellent nose leather with wide open nostrils. A happy, outgoing temperament.

PD (4) 1 Moffat & Robins' Maibee An Impression, this puppy is ticking all the boxes at this stage of his development. Handy size, compactly built, a pleasing head correctly shaped, & good facial properties. He possesses dark, expressive eyes & was in excellent body condition. BP; 2 Boyer's Pomelo Never Ending

Story, this 9 month old tri had something of a shaky start, but eventually settled. This puppy is of a pleasing size, compactly built, & excellent showman, & moves with confidence. However, he needs to carry much more weight; 3 Jones, Johnston & Lloyd's Cwmhaf Flash Bang Wallop, a blen dog who possesses an impressive head. Excellent head size & skull. A composed showman. A little too long & rangy for my personal preference.

JD (12,1a) 1 Schilizzi & Healy-Gates' Chacombe Arizona, this lightly marked blen, complete with spot, is quite exquisite. Perfect size, superbly built, & of excellent breed type. Showing & moving to my total satisfaction, he is one that I confidently tip for his title; 2 Byers' Lanola Giorgio Armani with Simannie, another impressive exhibit of sound construction & impressive breed type. Free & active movement with drive from behind. Immaculate presentation; 3 Stewart's Kasamanda Just A Dream for Marchog, standing 3rd in a particularly strong class, he possesses the most impressive head with correct facial features. Generous, correctly set ear leathers, excellent body, a happy, outgoing showman.

YD (9,1) 1 Kolb's Melrose Denver, this exhibit is an absolute delight to go over. Take this dog as a complete whole, & there is very little that I would want to change. He scores heavily in soundness, temperament & breed type. It is little wonder that he is already titled in his own country. An excellent example of the breed; 2 Gillhespy's Joshua De Melcourt, another exhibit who pleased me immensely. Fabulous head properties, beautifully shaped skull, excellent temperament. This dog is assured of a most excellent

future; 3 Jackson's Amantra Regal Duke, tri of generally pleasing type. I preferred the topline of the exhibits above.

PGD (11) 1 Moffat & Robins' Maibee Horatio, this exhibit conveyed to me the image of a true English Toy Spaniel. He is of the most perfect size. His superb build, balance & conformation will satisfy the most fastidious. His correctly sized & shaped head with perfect facial features & dark, expressive eyes are perfect, & he possesses excellent, well set ear leathers. His temperament is exemplary. Free standing, completely composed, constantly wagging his tail. I had no hesitation in awarding him his first CC, & have every confidence that his soundness, superb temperament & exquisite breed type will attract many other judges; 2 Austin's Dragonheart Fall Breeze, tri of the most attractive size. Short, level back, sufficient width of chest & a good layback of shoulder. Completely unexaggerated, exceptionally good head. Generally impressed me. Unlucky to meet the winner of this class; 3 Hardiman's Kasamanda Wishing On A Star, a free-standing blen of sound build & generally good type.

LD (13,1) 1 Pennington's Tudorhurst Corsair, impressive b/t. Such a handsome, masculine dog. A very impressive, satisfying headpiece. Superb ribs & topline. A composed, dignified showman; 2 Matches' Baldragon Striding Edge to Fochai, ultra smart blen. Particularly admired his size & build. Large, detailed headpiece. A sensible, composed showman; 3 Mochrie's Downsbank Montgomery, in many ways very similar to the 2nd in this class, & much that I have written about the 2nd is applicable to this exhibit.

OD (17,4) This was a strong & challenging class that impressed me. 1 Johnson, Hubbard, Peterson, Kirschbaum & Vorderstrasse's Ch/Am/Fin/Lux Ch Clussexx Champagne Breakfast, at 8 ½ years of age, this handsome fellow is simply amazing. His condition & presentation is worthy of the highest praise. His superb temperament & love of life are captivating. His outstanding head is breathtaking, & his rib & body are perfection. The handler initially moved him far too quickly, & on a second run-off his deportment was more in keeping with the dignity of the breed. A very beautiful champion that deserved to top this very strong class, & win the RCC; 2 Morozova's Marchog Mr Maldini, a 4 year old b/t. The two words that I wrote in my judging book said 'excellent throughout'. On checking my catalogue I see that he is a son of Champion Sundance, & bred in the UK by Mr & Mrs Stewart, to whom he is a great credit. Had he remained in the UK I have every confidence that he would have gained his title. However, I am sure that he will have many victories in the country of his adoption; 3 Schilizzi & Healy-Gates' Ch Chacombe Retained Asset, another very appealing exhibit, typifying all that is good & correct in the breed. He possesses the soundness, true breed type & perfect temperament that we associate with Chacombe. I am certain that Mrs Schilizzi must be very proud of the two exhibits that represented her today.

GCD (0).

VB (5,1) 1 Coupland's Ch Tucherish Clemency, a most lovely tri in excellent form. Very sweet & feminine; 2 Goodwin's Lanola Moreneta, b/t, 12 years of age, a most appealing type; 3 Champion's Lankcombe Miss

Money Penny, a blen 10 year old looking exceptionally well for her age.

MPB (2) 1 Coupland's Tucherish Adieu Tristesse, a promising puppy scoring in all the essentials of the breed. Now naturally needing time to develop; 2 Sproul & Coburn's Khandro Ur My World, another good puppy at exactly the same stage of development as the winner, & similar remarks apply. I hope that the future months are kind to her.

PB (4,1) 1 Mochrie's Downsbank Tiger Lilly, another good example from this kennel. I thought her to be a most promising puppy; 2 Dawson & Jones' Pomelo Buttons And Bows, of a generally nice type, but needs much more time spending on her ring etiquette; 3 Hardiman's Tovarich Teanna, a good honest type generally.

JB (5,2) 1 Goodwin's Lanola Mademoiselle, an exceptionally good bitch who has yet to reach her best, but everything is in place for her to secure a most successful future; 2 Smith's Justacharma One More Magic, I was most impressed with this bitch. She is of an excellent type, but would insist on sniffing the ground, which completely destroyed her shape on the move; 3 Morozova's Baldragon Royal Lucky Kings, this exhibit was seriously lacking body, & this issue must be addressed quickly.

YB (8) 1 Jackson's Amantra Regalia, she appealed to me most of all the exhibits shown from this kennel today. She is completely unexaggerated. Of superb build, solidly made, excellent body properties, & is generally appealing throughout; 2 Johnson's Headra's

Pennywise at Alambra, a pleasing blen, generally well built & of compact stature & well bodied; 3 Rignall's Cofton Brown Eyes Girl, a b/t of pleasing size & compact build.

PGB (10,2) 1 Matches' Khandro La Vie En Rose from Fochai, a very useful, lightly marked tri. Possesses many appealing attributes; 2 Chapman's Penemma Dream Come True, firstly, I want to commend this young exhibitor, who made such an excellent job of showing & handling his charge. He is to be encouraged, & I hope he continues on to great success. Dream is a very smart & attractive tri, excellent body & generally pleasing throughout; 3 Harvey's Rivermoor Lady Martha, a very typical & appealing blen, soundly built, of excellent temperament, a free-standing showgirl.

LB (9,1) 1 Dawson & Jones' Cwmhaf Te Kanawa, takes us back to the very basics of the breed, & is an excellent example of the foundation on which to build. Completely sound, of excellent temperament, & of the most pleasing breed type. A good, honest bitch who should always receive consideration; 2 Coupland's Tucherish Julie Christie, my admiration for the type of Charlie produced by this kennel has been consistent throughout the years, & has resulted in the highest accolades being awarded to them. Here we have an exquisitely feminine bitch, beautifully built, compact & well balanced. However, today she was a little too reserved; 3 Askins, Kendall & Vallila's Sandstrand Merituuli at Headra, a generally pleasing tri of good type, particularly attractive head properties.

OB (11,2) 1 Robinson's Ch Baldragon She Demands, three years ago I awarded this bitch her first CC &

BOB. I wrote enthusiastically about her wonderful attributes, & predicted a great future for her. Today, at over 4 years of age she was awarded her 17th CC & BOB that she richly deserved. Here we now have the complete, finished article. She simply delights me throughout, & she did the breed proud in the group; 2 Willey & Siddle's Ch Penemma Misty For Me, I first came across this bitch in the toy group at WELKS last year, & although I did not shortlist her, I thought her to be something rather special. I was glad to be reacquainted with her today, & can confirm that I retain my high opinion of her. Today she was awarded the RCC. A beautiful bitch; 3 Pennington's Ch Tudorhurst Pearl, an attractive blen, worthy of her title.

GCB (1) 1 Gurtner's Lux/Bel/Int Ch Ellinor von der Gebhardshoh, a most attractive 5 year old blen. Very feminine. Short & compact. Generally of good type throughout.

GEOFFREY DAVIES