

The King Charles Spaniel Association Open Show February 11th, 2018.

I would like to thank the Officers and Committee for thinking me worthy of judging your endearing breed at this special show. I apologise for the delay in sending my critique. The warm welcome, sportsmanship and hospitality made this a very memorable appointment. I ended up with 52 Charlies to assess from the 79 entered. Overall I found the breed appeared to be in good health with no breathing issues evident at all and a vast majority were sound. I found heads to be in good order generally with a majority having the characteristic well domed skull and low-set ears, large dark eyes squareness of muzzle and width to under jaw. I was looking for the typical Charlie character of a real Toy Spaniel combined with a compact, cobby body in fit condition. My principle winners were also rewarded for being so very sound and showing the desired free, active movement.

Best in Show ended up being a battle of two Kennel mates. Jackson's perfectly marked, well-broken tri-colour dog Ch Amantra Regal Duke versus Jackson's lightly marked chestnut-red blenheim bitch Amantra Truffle. Both totally sound with real drive from the hindquarters; the bitch stole the show today with her extra showmanship (when handled by her Mum). She also had an outstanding temperament and personality. Truffle is so typical in size and shape with a beautiful head and 'butter wouldn't melt' expression. She was lovely to go over, everything fitting together. Compact and cobby in body short level back, short on leg, well bent stifle and low hocks – such a well-balanced bitch. In fit condition with a silky, straight coat and desired feathering.

Duke had to settle for BOS and BD today as I fell for the charms of another bitch for RBIS spot in Bowles-Robinson's lightly marked blenheim Baldragon Hold That Thought. Only just 16 months old but already loves the show ring and has a wonderful head piece. She matches the BIS winner for soundness and really drives from behind. Loved her arch of neck and proud head carriage. Her head is a delight with such a gentle expression. In immaculate condition with coat and feathering well developed for age and so silky. I just preferred the compactness combined with the cobby look of Truffle which I know 'Hold That Thought' will get as she matures.

Ch Amantra Regal Duke is a fully mature dog and has a gentlemanly reserve so typical of the breed. Shows excellent overall balance. His head really stands out and is carried proudly on his arched neck. Shoulders well laid back and angulated hindquarters to match. Lovely and wide in chest, cobby in body, short in back and holds a level top line stood and on the move. Very good feathering and thicker silky coat which could be a little straighter for perfection.

Best Puppy in Show saw two very promising evenly marked tri-colour litter mates come head to head. Baker's dog puppy Cofton Stars And The Moon just stealing the award from his sister, Abbott's Cofton Reach For The Stars. Just 9 months and both have plenty of maturing to do yet – lovely to see such happy puppies in the show ring with tails a wagging. They both have beautiful heads – well domed, low set ears, square in muzzle and wide underjaw. Constructed to be compact in body but at this stage looking quite lean and thought the bitch could carry a little more weight. The dog was handled to advantage and whilst both were sound enough he moved with purpose and drive.

Best Veteran went to Wallhead's Sleepyhollow Trikki Dikki at Perida who I kept in my final 4 for the BD award. His head proportions were just what I was looking for and ooze breed type; he has such a gentle expression. I loved his cobby body and overall shape. In fit condition with an exceptional coat of the silkiest texture and perfect tri-colour markings. Very sound going away. A credit to his owner who he clearly adores.

VD (6,3) 1st Wallhead's Sleepyhollow Trikke Dikki at Perida. BVIS. 2nd Rushton's Amantra Mr Brownlow. Super cobby boy built on larger lines than the winner. Lovely domed head and low set

ears. Well laid shoulders and straight front. Not quite the drive going away of winner. Super rich chestnut coat.

MPD (3,0) 1st Bakers' Cofton Stars And The Moon. BPD & BPIS. 2nd Mochrie's Downsbank Chuzlewitz. Very well broken Blenheim of pale chestnut. Preferred the head and expression of the winner. Nice and short in loin but needs to drop in chest yet to create the cobby body required. Really drives well from behind.

PD (4,0) 1st Harvey's Rivermoor Alberto. This is a very exciting puppy. He really wasn't his self today which was such a shame as he was worthy of top honours for his breed type and soundness. I understand his usual handler was otherwise engaged. What a beautiful head this puppy has – it has width all through. Well domed skull, low ears and gorgeous large dark round eyes. In really good body condition. Short and cobby with a level back. So well-constructed. Perfect silky coat with very good feathering for age. Perfect tri-colour markings. I will follow his career with great interest. 2nd French & Traynor's Mitapip Elusive Ruby. Still very much a baby but again took all in his stride and wonderful temperament. Just the right size and shape. Loved his well domed head and ear placement. Preferred the width of underjaw of the winner. Very sound going away. Deep rich ruby colour.

JD (2,1) 1st French & Traynor's Celxo Vermouth On Ice. Just out of puppy and body starting to mature now but still a little 'teenage' in appearance. I am sure he will finish cobby and compact. Liked his typical head and width of underjaw. Coat only lightly marked but super pearly white silky coat and perfect blaze and head lozenge. Feathering starting to really come and tail already impressive. Well-constructed fore and hind quarters which ensured sound away and back.

ND (5,2) 1st Leach's Khandro Something Tells Me. Had the better overall shape and balance here. Liked the width of his underjaw and overall head proportions. Moved very positively with accurate foot fall. Ears lacked feathering. Very good tail set. 2nd Constable's Mitapip Rich Ruby. Lovely rich ruby colour. Domed head and large expressive eyes. Would like ears lower set. Longer in loin than winner. Moved with drive from behind. Well laid shoulders but just turns feet out slightly.

GD (4,1) 1st Rushton's Justacharma He Is So Magic at Tiflin. The larger of the two but preferred overall balance. Moderately large head and typical expression. Super low set ears and well domed head. Very sound going away but a little out at elbow coming towards. Made a typical shape moving in profile. Lovely coat for texture and very good feathering. 2nd Boyer's Pomeleo Never Ending Story. Well-marked tri-colour o better size. Preferred lower ear set of winner. Compact in body and level back but a little proud of his tail today.

PGD (6,2) Two lovely headed dogs. 1st Smith's Justacharma One So Magic. Litter brother to GD winner and again appeals in overall balance and compactness of body. Level back and well set tail. Loved his large dark eye and expression with good width of underjaw which flowed through his head. Super temperament; a really happy Charlie. Would prefer better distribution of markings. Construction wise he matches his litter brother. 2nd Cox's Petitpaws Black Knight. Loved his head and expression. Raven black coat with rich chestnut markings. Looks a picture in profile with very accurate footfall. Well-developed feathering in all the right places. Just a little longer in back than the winner.

LD (5,2) 1st Melville's Amantra Tiberius. Well broken blenheim. Ultra cobby and compact and is so typical stood. In fit condition. Silky coat but could have more feathering especially on the ears. So well made and moves freely with real drive and good extension. Level back and low set tail. Excellent head proportion with defined stop and width to muzzle and underjaw. 2nd Smith's Justacharma

Magic Is Here. Lightly marked tri-colour with just a narrow blaze. Loved the width of his head and squareness of muzzle. Expressive eyes and super temperament. Ear set could be a little lower for perfection. Cobby in body and low set tail. Moved soundly.

OD (4,0) Two super examples of the breed. 1st Jackson's Ch Amantra Regal Duke. BD & BOS. 2nd Clarke's Stonepit Super Sydney for Poltomic. I judged him a couple of times before as a youngster many years ago and loved him then. I think he took a BOB or a Group place on one occasion and BD behind the now famous 'She Demands'. I still find him so typical in head and body proportion and he is very sound. He must be a joy to live with as he has a fabulous temperament and personality. Today I found him just a little short in neck compared to the winner.

SOD BT or R (3,0) 1st Portingale's Jacrianna King's Ransome JW. Cracking head for size and shape. Width all through and wonderful expression – he has wonderful dark eyes. Very sound and holds a level top line on move with perfectly set tail. I would like him a little more compact in body. 2nd Smiths Alambra Magic Is Here for Justacharma. Although a little more compact in body he did not move as freely as winner today. Well domed head with good width but would like eyes larger to give more typical expression. Lovely silky coat but lacking feathering on ears compared to winner.

SOD Tri or BI (3,1) 1st Jackson's Italian Ch Amantra Regal Prince. Excels in breed type and soundness on the move. A very confident showman with such a happy disposition. He can't stand wrong. Easily made the final cut for BD. 2nd Bailey's Aldoricka The Maverick. Liked his head shape and low set ears. A lovely size and compact in body with low set tail. Did not have such accurate movement of the winner particularly coming towards.

VB (4,2) 1st Dix's Ch Paulian Prudence for Beewye JW. What a gem. Such a doting toy spaniel and looking a picture of health and vitality. Perfect size and shape. Domed head and low set ears. Dark expressive eyes. Lovely open nostril. My notes say so cobby, so sound and so happy. A real headache for BVIS as I thought they were both very special and credits to their owners/breeders. 2nd Bailey's Maibee Margot at Aldoricka. Another classy veteran and although nice and compact not quite as cobby as the winner. Loved her domed skull and low set ears. Would like her nose a little lower for better expression. So very sound on the move.

MPB (4, 1) 1st Abbotts' Cofton Reach For The Stars. BPB. 2nd Constable's Mitapip High Hopes Holly. Such a baby, black and tan but taking all in her stride on her show debut. Head developing well for age with super dark eye. Happy puppy with ideal temperament. Makes a very good outline in profile. Just needs to settle coming towards.

PB (4,2) 1st Constable's Mitapip Kallathea. Very promising Ruby with head showing great potential. Already good width to underjaw and large dark eye and wide open nostril. Ears set low and very good dome. Looking a little longer in back at this stage but very young and sure will come together as she matures. Sound going away and towards. A little shy today. Which cost her in BPB challenge.

JB (2,1) 1st Bowles-Robinson's Baldragon Hold That Thought RBB & RBIS.

YB (3,2) 1st Mochrie's Downsbank Vesper. I really liked this tri bitch and had just wished she had a little more confidence as her shyness caused her to 'crouch' which detracted. She is beautiful to go over. Ideal size and super cobby body. Loved her forequarters and angles matched her hindquarters. Neck with slight arch and then a typical head with gentle expression.

NB (2,0) 1st Constables' Mitapip Sunrise Ruby. Another sweet natured bitch and despite the odd tail wag when she was stood she was very shy today. Doemd skull and ears set low. Pretty expression. A little longer in back than ideal, Coat well developed with good feathering.

GB (3,0) 1st Boyers' Downsbank Lilly Regale. Well broken tri-colour with silky coat. Won this class based on her confirmation and movement. Perfect in body; compact and cobby. Sound away and back. Showing very good width to underjaw which followed through rest of head. A little shy but settled nicely on the move. 2nd Rushton's Justacharma She Is So Magic at Tiflin. Well marked blenheim with neat lozenge. Good width to underjaw would prefer lower nose placement to improve expression. Lovely and cobby in body. Sound away but not as positive as winner coming towards.

PGB (4,2) These two bitches were slipping and sliding all over on the move and just did not cope with the floor today unlike their contemporaries. This made assessing their movement and character very difficult. I preferred the size and overall shape of the head of the winner and loved her expression. When stood she presented a more balanced picture overall. 1st Lindley's Justacharma Magic Is For You at Meglind. 2nd Constable's Mitapip Trudy Doo Dee.

LB (5,1) 1st Jackson's Amantra Truffle. BB & BIS. 2nd Mochrie's Downsbank Tiger Lily. A young very promising tri-colour with a very special head indeed. Loved her expression and the width through with super domed skull and low set ears. Really well made forequarters with straight front and well laid shoulders. Just a fraction longer in loin than the winner. Moved freely and looked a picture in profile. I shall follow her career.

OB (3,2) 1st Pennington's Hello Dolly De La Montagne Ensoleillee of Tudorhurst (imp FRA). A lightly marked tri-colour who oozes breed type. My notes say she has a text book head both in terms of proportions but also tri-colour markings and she hooks you with that gentle expression. Compact and cobby with a level back and perfectly set tail. Has the required arch to neck given a regal head carriage with is a joy to watch when she moves in profile. Sound away. Just turning her feet out slightly stood and so not so positive towards.

SOB Tri/BI (4,2) 1st Baker's Cofton Snow White. Lightly marked Blenheim of ideal size and shape. Loved her head and expression and very sound. Just lacked enthusiasm today which was a real shame as she has many virtues. 2nd Bailey's Aldoricka Savannah at Peakdowns. A very happy spaniel oozing confidence. Compact and cobby in body. Kind expression and large dark eye. Prefer lower ear set and lacked drive from behind going away.

Judge – Nick Gourley