

You have no idea how proud I am to have been your judge at the 9'th Australian Poodle National held in Perth 2009. I had a couple of years to prepare myself for the long trip and I looked forward to it with great expectation. It is a privilege for a breeder judge to be able to travel to a distant country and be able to have a look of what they have to offer. World has become more and more international and especially in standards and toys I saw some heavily Scandinavian impact, more than 1/3 of the standards were sired by Swedish bred or owned dogs. I understand many of the toys had Swedish or Norwegian background too.

My Best in Show winner Ch Dootwa Hot Passion was a great little dog. I loved everything about him. He covered the ground with a springy gait, carried himself beautifully keeping his stunning outline the whole time. He was completely in balance. I thought his expression was really beautiful and when I got to see the catalogue and found out that he is a grandson of a dog I used to show in Norway, I knew where I had seen him before! Finding a dog like him is the very reason to be a judge for me. I believe this dog would make it hard for any poodle in the world right now!

Runner-up BIS was a silver standard, Ch Violet Sky Over Marechal. I usually don't award bigger dogs but this one has something unique to offer. When he sets off he is a sight to behold. What a stallion of a dog. Wonderful reach and drive and wonderful carriage. A very eye-catching dog that won BOB comfortably on the day. Was pushed hard by the mini for Runner-up BIS and it was just an emotional decision in a second. This dog also gave me goose bumps for a totally other reason. During pictures, after it was all over the handler told me that he was Erica Thomas-Howes last dog. She was a good friend of mine and I will never forget our passionate poodle discussions, wherever we met.

Standards

I felt there were quality dogs in the entry. I probably had better heads than I had expected. Most dogs had reasonable balance and were in good condition. Fronts are a problem in most countries and are difficult to breed. A few of other wise good dogs were having trouble with the fronts on the move.

Minor dogs

1 Picardy Dreamcatcher, a promising puppy, clear winner of the class. Excellent type and balance, elegant, refined with very good proportions, good head, could have slightly more underjaw. Good feet, very nice on the move and a super temperament.

2 Wazky Dralion, excellent type, tall, built on long lines. Masculine, very impressive standing. I would like a straighter muzzle. Very good expression. Probably needs more time to mature, not as good front as 1. Very nice neck.

3 Cotian Call My Name, Very good type, rather immature black dog who needs a lot of time.

Junior dog

1 Cotian Luv The Night Life, Excellent type and balance, very good shape, good size, very attractive head and expression. Excellent proportions, moves with a very light and springy gait. Real poodle temperament with that sparkle in the eye that I love. R-CC

2 Ch Shertonah I Am Legend, very good type and quite good balance. He is a taller and longer dog than 1. I would like a more elegant head and shorter body. Beautiful

feet, beautiful coat, colour and very good rear angulation.

Intermediate Dog

This was a hard decision.

1 Artixan Master Chief, is a short dog, almost too short bodied. Excellent type, very well put together. Could have a little bit better profile in head but really nice expression. He is well made but could be a little bit more elegant in boning. Long neck.

2 Ch Tytaff Walk The Line, excellent type. Could have slightly better balance and carriage. He is slightly short on his legs. Eye a bit round and prefer the head of 1. Could have slightly better feet. Liked his movement, he is very light on his feet. Good coat and colour.

Australian Bred Dog

1 Ch Mistivale Dreamweaver, tall brown dog, excellent colour, excellent eye colour. I would prefer a more elegant head, a bit more compact body and a better front. He is quite light on his feet when moving. Very good coat texture, excellent tail set and good feet.

Open Dog

An exciting class to judge with 4 very nice dogs.

1 Ch Violet Sky Over Marechal

2 Ch Remkyn Don't Call Me Crazy, best size, very elegant, everything fits together. Lovely, attractive masculine head and expression. Short body, could perhaps have a little bit more angulations all around but very nicely made dog. Beautiful coat and colour. Pushed hard for R-CC and very much same type as the junior dog. At times a bit too anxious to go, not finding ideal balance. Really a lovely dog with a lot to offer.

3 Ch Artizan Man About Town, a quality dog, very nicely balanced, beautiful head, very nice expression. Could have a better front. Excellent topline and very good tail set. Light moving but should have a more elegant front action.

Baby bitch

1 Jusst Picture This, a really promising puppy on the move, very light on her feet, carrying herself nicely. Liked everything about her and it will be interesting to see if she will be as nice as I think!

Minor bitch

1 Cotian Call it Destiny, beautiful, feminine very pretty bitch. Excellent type, very good balance. Attractive face, nice eye but perhaps head profile could be improved on. Good front, feet and short body. Liked her a lot and found her very promising. She was in contention for the R-CC.

Puppy bitch

1 Aufait A Shrug Just for Remkyn, was winning the class on her overall quality. She is perhaps slightly long and low. Excellent feet, coat and colour and lovely temperament.

2 Aufait For All The World, she is the winner of the class when standing but her front movement ruins the picture. She has a beautiful head, most superb coat and colour. Not quite the construction of 1.

3 Mistivale Daydream Believer, excellent brown colour, not the outline of 1 and 2.

Junior bitch

1 Emmoge Ona Wing N Prayer, nicely made, good head, slightly masculine expression. Has an absolutely wonderful overarm and forchest, good body, nice to go over, good mover but a tendency to loose carriage a bit giving her a slightly ordinary picture on the move.

2 Cotian Look of Love, loved her head and expression, beautiful to go over, could have a slightly less body and a higher tail set. Lovely on the move. Liked her a lot and sorry to see she didn't perform on the day as she would have been the obvious winner of the class.

Intermediate bitch

2 bitches of very high quality.

1 Ch Artizan Vanity Fair, my heart stopped for a moment when I saw this bitch. She is the copy of a bitch I bred in Sweden, outline, head and especially the behaviour. This lovingly nature is the perfect reason to have a standard poodle. No surprise to see in the catalogue she was sired by same dog as my own bitch! Almost perfect proportions, carried herself beautifully, very light on her feet. I liked her a lot. R-CC.

2 Avatar Jahallifaxa, tall, elegant, built on long lines. Very nice to go over. Good head and eye, perhaps slightly masculine, Very nice feet, good bone. Light on her feet. Needs time to co-ordinate herself but a high quality black bitch with a lot of breed type.

Australian Bred Bitch

1 Sylvenus Crazy with Style, perhaps not the most glamorous but she is sound and honest. Nice to go over with good proportions. Good rear end, nice on the move.

2 Artizan Milliondollarbaby, very refined and pretty bitch with a very nice head but could have a little bit more underjaw and a darker eye. Excellent ice-white colour, glamorous on the move. Front could perhaps be better to get a slightly longer stride.

Open bitch

Excellent class

1Ch Paradigm's Hot Lips, easy winner of the class and the CC. Stunning black bitch, beautifully made. I fell in love with her exquisite type and close to perfect balance. Best head in the entry, loved her eye and the chin. Nothing really to criticize about her and she is all through a high quality bitch.

2 Agaia More Than A Game, very elegant and refined, could have slightly more bodyweight but she is really glamorous on the move. Loved her carriage and beautiful stride. A strong contender for the R-CC.

3 Ch Retsae Espritit de Lune, very mature bitch full of quality. Nicely made giving a lovely impression on the move. 1 and 2 just a bit more elegant and a bit more my preference.

Miniatures

I found the minis to be as good as anywhere else in the world, I have seen. I can see there has been a good job from the breeders for generations. Overall the entry had good size and reasonable balance. I had some lovely heads and the dogs were usually not coarse, as that is something I really don't like but see much of in Europe. There were some weak fronts that is common problem in the breed. Problems with shoulders, resulting in lack of support for elbows and a bit east-west fronts are common faults. The number of flat feet were alarming! I don't consider myself a feet fanatic but this was a bit too much even for me. Only a couple of dogs in the whole entry had good feet.

Minor Dog

1 Jenuin Extreme Design, really promising. Lovely head and expression with an unusually good underjaw. Well balanced and moved with proud carriage and a springy gait, hope he will shorten himself with maturity.

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Junior Dog

1 Ch Westpriors Black Dondino, Impressing, showy dog. Excellent size. Details in head could be improved on, ok front and rear angulations, short body super coat and colour, good balanced mover, just slightly busy movement, nice dog.

Intermediate Dog

1 Ch Hillani Ausi Dymond, beautiful outline, really nice expression, absolutely beautiful eyes. A bit strong in head, nice to go over. Very good proportions, moves in a nice way with good carriage. Could have slightly cleaner front action.

2 Splash Sudden Impact, a strong male, too heavy head and overall impression is a bit strong. Good tail set, nice white coat. Moves alright, could have slightly more elegant carriage.

Australian Bred Dog

1 Elire Casanova, a quality dog, would not want more of him he is also slightly strong in head. Very nice to go over, super coat and colour. Nice on the move, very showy.

2 Ch Coifico Cosmocha, smaller dog, more refined. Very pretty with beautiful expression. Would prefer slightly less skin and a better shoulder. Excellent short body. Moves beautifully going around, little bit loose behind, great carriage. Would probably have won the class if he acted more positive and had a sparkle in the eye.

Open dog

A very strong class, exciting to judge and made me think hard.

1 Ch Funtosy WamBam Im Your Man, loved everything about him, except his feet! He is in super condition making him hard to beat. An absolutely exquisite headpiece, probably the best in the entry. His eyes were the very much sought after almond shape giving him the most arrogant look. He had the length of foreface and the ideal headproportions all in complete balance, lovely chiselling and to topp it all, a lovely chin. Impressing outline, lovely shape and a good mover keeping his profile the whole time. This dog has that classical look about him that is rare to find and he was a joy to judge. CC BOB

2 Ch Bobkins Heads or Tails, a dramatic moving dog. Gave his best the whole time and was hard to look past, very good overall balance, just not the finish in the head as

1. Clear R-CC winner.

3 Ch Myflair Just You And Me, Presented in the most beautifully balanced English saddle trim. A high quality dog with a lot to offer, just unlucky to meet 1 & 2 that moved just a little bit better.

Baby bitch

1 Pudelian Linvin The Dream, lovely headed with good body and coat, just slightly longer at the moment, good mover.

2 Clojo Colour Me Pink, more toy looking, short backed, ok head, slightly round eye, good body and coat. Allright mover, slightly high stepping. Excellent temperament.

Minor bitch

1 Hillani Slick Chick On Silver, lovely outline. Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful head, lovely expression. Should have a better front and a little bit softer movement. Good coat and colour. Excellent tail. Excellent temperament.

Puppy Bitch

1 Hillani Eureka I am Here, really nice outline, pretty puppy, I liked her head, bus

she had slightly big eyes. Very good front, topline and tail set, very nice on the move, a little bit reluctant but did enough. Good soft type of movement. Best feet of the day!

Junior bitch

1 Jenuin Mabe An Angel, high quality bitch, impressing outline, good, short body. Beautiful head and eye just slightly too little underjaw. Front is ok. A lovely little bitch that gave it all and looked better the more she went and looked the best in the competition for Best junior in Show making her even beat the lovely standard dog.

Australian bred bitch

1 Shephaus My Choice, nice outline with short back. A bit too much backscull and a bit east-west front, Good coat and colour. Won the class on movement.

2 Ch Arataire Exclusive, Feminine and petite with a short body, classical look. Would prefer more underjaw and slightly longer forelegs. Good coat and colour. Nice on the move, good balance but slightly busy action.

3 Ch Jenuin Diamond Doll, a very sound, honest and good moving bitch. She could be more feminine, shorter backed, and a better head but she is very nice on the move and a quality bitch.

Open Bitch

A very good class

1 Ch Coifico Drama Queen, very attractive lovely bitch. Loved her outline and she makes herself even better on the move, displaying a near ideal side picture. This is the type of movement I look for, light on her feet and very soft flex in every joint.

Beautiful and very typical head carriage. Clear winner of the class and an easy CC winner. Also pushed the male for BOB but fell for his more classical look.

2 Ch Clojo Kinda Causin Chaos, excellent balance, full of quality, especially nice on the move. Really lovely feminine head, small almond shaped eye and unusually good chin and chiselling making a very nice and expressive look. Very nice to go over, could just have slightly longer neck.

3 Ch Troymere Whos That Girl, perhaps the best head of the day! Divine expression. Overall a feminine and petite bitch with a lot to offer not quite the movement of 1 & 2.

Toys

This is really my variety. As much success I have had with dwarfs, minis and standards, I think of myself first and foremost as a toy poodle person. The first dog my family had was a silver toy dog.

I found the entry as a whole to be varying in type. Some dogs could have showed better but perhaps it is a training and handling problem. Some dogs lacked the sparkle in the eye and the willing to do the job. A poodle should be intelligent and easy to train. It is not too much you need train your poodle for the ring.

I found size to be satisfying, only one or two dogs slightly over the limit. I was surprised to see very few dogs of the minority colours. I love the fact that they come in many colours and shades of them. Browns, apricots and reds were not present at all.

Minor dog

1 Gaytrolin Im No Wind Up Toy, easy winner of the class. Best outline and best balance. Good head, good drive. Nice type.

2 Asleda Believe It Or Not, slightly bigger and quite a lot of him, would give a little bit more elegant look with a more refined head, better feet and a straighter tail. Good body. Loved his temperament. A sound and honest dog.

3 Hythere Secrets and Wispers, excellent size, very good proportions. Could have a

little bit more foreface and a better front. Good body, coat and colour. Needs training.

Puppy Dog

1 Sauvage In The Line of Fire, excellent size, well balanced, nice headed, short backed. Carried himself nicely, good mover.

2 Moravia Dancing To The Top, liked him better standing than moving. Has a lovely head with good muzzle, bite could be improved on. Excellent underjaw. Good body and rear end but shoulder is steep. Excellent coat and colour.

Junior Dog

1 Zazzin Pie In The Sky, eye-catching outline. Very elegant proportions and head. Very good mover. Should do very well in the rings once matured.

2 Toniri Lord of The Dance, striking on the move. Attractive trim and in good condition, excellent coat and colour. Would prefer slightly more elegant head, and a straighter tail.

3 Chapford Getya Rocks Off, small, compact and well balanced. Comes to his own on the move. Not quite the head or front as 1 & 2.

Intermediate dog

1 Sauvage Sultan of Brunei, excellent outline and length of stride. Nice head, beautiful coat and colour. Nice on the move but would look better balanced with more carriage. Shoulder, feet and tail set could be improved on.

2 Ch Hythere Xtr Vibes Ingray, compact, clear silver. Lovely eye. Excellent coat, in good condition. Could perhaps carry himself slightly better.

Australian Bred Dog

1 Sintee Midnight Samba, black up to size. Loved everything about him. Striking outline. Beautiful head, sparkling expression. He had the temperament I just love. I had decided he was my R-CC winner but when sending them around for last look, the 2'nd in open went really effortlessly around whilst the Australian bred dog worked a little bit too much using too much energy and lost a bit of his carriage. However this dog is my type and I was very impressed by him and believe he will be a hard one to beat in the future.

Open dog

1 Ch Dootwa Hot Passion, BIS.

2 Ch Troymere Tribute to Atalanta, excellent size and well balanced. A lot to like about this dog, especially on the move, very light on his feet. Liked the way he performed and danced around and standing there doing anything for his handler. R-CC

Baby bitch

1 Elluje So What, very promising baby. Well balanced with a short back. Attractive head. Very good topline, tailset and rear angulation. Could have a slightly better overarm. Excellent tailset and tail. Very good mover with nice carriage. Very showy, wonderful temperament.

Minor bitch

1 Hoku French Vanilla, lovely puppy making me smile with her gorgeous temperament. Loved her face. She is very attractive especially on the move with very typical carriage. Slightly longer cased. Beautiful coat and colour.

2 Sylvenus Busy Being Famous, good proportions and a good mover although could have slightly softer type of movement. Not quite the finished package as 1.

3 Chapford Bustin A Gasket, ice white with excellent feet. Very nice expression. Needs better tailset and tail. Moves better in the circle than coming and going.

Puppy bitch

1 Pocketrocket Mischief Brewing, excellent size, type and balance. Really lovely on

the move covering ground keeping a really nice outline with a completely straight tail. Very nice expression. Mouth could be improved on. Excellent colour.

2 Moravia Little Marlau, very tiny with ok balance but could have a slightly better head. Surprisingly good body, ok coat. Could keep her outline a bit better on the move. Excellent temperament.

Intermediate bitch

1 Ch Rosuvic Luck BA Lady, high quality bitch, compact body. Loved her temperament, must be a joy to show such a showy bitch.

2 Madlen Top Narcis, feminine and petite. Excellent proportions standing but looked a bit immature moving. Needs more coat for the full look.

Australian Bred bitch

1 Alamoana Dance N Swing, high class bitch. Liked her a lot. Excellent type and balance. Liked her head but could have slightly more underjaw. Lovely to go over. Lovely side picture, just throwing her front a bit. Won her class with ease and was a strong contender for CC and R-CC.

2 Toniri Its Justa Whisper, compact silver with a nice body. Good expression. Lovely coat and colour. Could perhaps have a little more elegance for me. Very good mover.

3 Elluje Wild Child, showy silver with a nice body type, very good proportions and a lovely colour. I would like a much more elegant head and slightly better forequarters. Really nice on the move.

Open bitch

Very nice class. Challenging to judge, four nice bitches with different virtues.

1 Ch Chezjolie Bring It On, high quality bitch of excellent type and balance. Just ok head. Won the class on her breathtaking movement. Beautifully presented.

2 Ch Troymere Born Free, pushed hard for the classwin and won the R-CC in strong competition. Very elegant and refined. Beautiful outline and a good mover. Liked her head. Just found her a bit too fine and could have a better topline on the table but perhaps with a little bit more bodyweight this would improve. Lovely side picture.

3 Ch Centatoy Parisian Nights, high quality bitch of excellent type. Found her lovely to go over, with not much to improve on. Excellent front. Good head just slightly masculine. Dense coat, lovely colour. Found her very attractive, just lacked the sparkle on the day.

The get together after the judging of the second speciality with a panel discussion was a good idea. I believe it was well received. An open discussion and a good atmosphere in the breed is essential for a breeds development. I come from a country where this at the movement is lacking and the new generation is not prepared to join the club work to bring the breed club into the future, which is worrying. I travel to some of the new dog countries in the world and see the problems that occur when history and tradition is lacking. You should really treasure your own history with people like Bob Curtis and Greame Missen willing to share a wealth of knowledge and wisdom. It was truly emotional to catch up with Bob and Greame whom I met several times since they both were judging and decorating my brown dog Ch Härbovi's Rocko Barocko in 1996. To be able to spend time with them both was a bonus of this trip.

I didn't know that the issue about the trims were touchy in Australia. I understood there were strong feelings for and against the trim I refer to as "the second puppy trim" and about interpretation of the current standard about trims. Personally I have

nothing against the trim which I find attractive. However there are both pros and cons with both points of views. If the traditional trims, continental and English saddle trim detracts people from showing their poodle it is the biggest problem of all. If none is showing there is just no tradition to bring to the future. I did enjoy many poodles this national with carefully executed continental trims and English saddle trims and really appreciated the job behind them. A well proportioned poodle looks lovely in these trims giving the classical look.

I love the breed for much other things than the trim and grooming. I have yet to meet a breed more intelligent and entertaining than the poodle and it is the complete breed versatile in use.

Never forget there are far more important issues to fight that has to be fought united. It is difficult being a breeder nowadays with rules and regulations about everything from amount of dogs in the house to docking ban and everything in between. I believe everyone knows the difficulties The Kennel Club had almost had to cancel Crufts this year due to bad publicity about purebred dogs and their health.

I will treasure my memories from this important judging appointment for the rest of my life. I had a great time from the minute I put my feet on Australian soil to the minute I left it, culminating in a well organized show with beautiful dogs and fantastic sportsmanship from the handlers, both winners and losers. Catching up with old friends and making new ones was truly nice.

Knowing some exhibitors travelled five days (!!!) to come to the show is nothing but moving. This kind of passion is vouching for a rosy future for Australian poodles.

The judge for the 9'th Australian National, Mikael Nilsson