

Northumberland and Durham Labrador Retriever Club, October 12th 2019

Critique for Labrador Bitches:-

This was a special appointment as Northumberland and Durham Labrador Retriever Club is my 'home' club, attending their championship show for the first time in 1980. Having many happy memories of club events, I recalled the longstanding secretary, Miss Evelyn Smith, whose lifeblood was this club, as well as other well-known local Labrador ladies like Miss Edith Hope (Haverton) and Miss Aileen Todd (Staithe), who were always ringside and happy to give this young enthusiast sage advice all those years ago. The trophies on display are of great historic significance and full of famous names from the annals of the breed.

It gave me the greatest pleasure for Honorary Life Member, Joyce Brabban of the famous Cambremer kennel (from whom, with her husband Leslie, I learned such a lot) to accompany me to the show and there were non-stop reminiscences on the journey! This was the twentieth time I have had the honour to award CCs to the breed. The officers and committee who run the show today are a hardworking bunch where teamwork is obvious. Everything ran smoothly with a happy atmosphere prevailing.

From this entry there were several things that struck me. The correct Labrador head was conspicuous by its absence. There must be length as well as strength to the muzzle without any cheekiness. Also, the overall balance of the dog has to be right – this you can see at a glance. There were many exhibits that were not balanced, e.g. too short on the leg. This is not correct. One more thing, good movement is essential and is the result of being constructed correctly. Many were close behind, lacking drive from the hindquarters. Over the years, Labrador breeders have been very good at correcting areas of weakness; I do hope that this is still the case.

Veteran Bitch (5,3):

1. Burns' Bonnieburns Bubblicious, black of 7 years, pleasing basic type with appealing head and eye, strong topline, correct coat and tail, moved soundly albeit erratically in front;
2. Logan's Tintagel Winds High Heels for Minocqua, also 7 years and in good shape, fit and a great showgirl, overall picture of 1 was better;

Minor Puppy Bitch (12):

1. McGillivray's Antonine Sweet Dreams, very forward yellow who is well grown, super bone and feet, good topline, short coupled body, strong hindquarters and moved on a good stride, great showgirl, BBP;
2. Jones' Hafnau Orabela, very pleasing type black with a good outline, made in one piece, pleasing head, neck, shoulders, coat and tail, well bodied with barrel rib, just needs to strengthen behind a little;
3. Baillis' Tissalian Hi Class

Puppy Bitch (10):

1. Woodley's Alkhamhurst Polar Star, black of very good type, totally unexaggerated and stands up to closer examination, good outline with firm topline, excels in coat and tail – correct texture to her double coat and an otter-like shape – good body and rib, moved soundly;
2. Rowe's Rochevale Once Upon A Time, very stylish yellow who pushed all the way, it was a close call, excellent outline, clean neck and shoulders, adequate bone, good body, rib and short loin, well angulated hindquarters with good width of thigh, sound mover;
3. Dawson's Beskerby Nutcracker

Junior Bitch (12): headed by two very typical young yellows who shared the same sire

1. Baillis' Tissalian Hi Society, top quality yellow of great charm and beauty, only 14 months but will be a title holder very soon I'm sure, lovely head with correct eye colour, length of muzzle and a look of kindness, clean neck, well laid shoulder, good bone and feet, excellent topline, short coupled body, strong topline and super hindquarters with width of thigh and well let down hocks, never stands wrongly and moves soundly, maintaining her excellent outline at all times, RCC and RBIS in agreement with co-judge;
2. Campbell's Binnaig Eskimo Blonde, very similar to her half sister above, all Labrador in type and temperament, well balanced, pleasing head, good bone, great spring of rib, short loin and very well angulated hindquarters, sound true mover, will do well for sure;
3. Baron's Mariank Vanity Fair at Landebec

Yearling Bitch (14):

1. Wood's Sundyke Secret Steps, well balanced quality black, pleasing dark brown eye colour, good legs and feet, very good body, barrel rib and short loin, firm topline held on the move, well angulated hindquarters, has a good double coat of the correct texture, sound and enthusiastic mover, well muscled but I thought carrying a little too much weight;
2. Lewis' Crammondkirks YoYo, another lovely type black and good to go over, pleasing head and eye, clean neck, well bone, good feet, super topline, coat and correct tail shape which is well set, sound true mover, slightly longer in loin than 1;
3. Maclean's' Afinmore Amiable

Maiden Bitch (13):

1. A Sweet Dreams
2. B Nut Cracker, strong, well made yellow who was third in PB, good type, short coupled, good bone, pleasing coat texture, sound mover, shows promise;
3. Mariank Vanity Fair at L

Novice Bitch (8):

1. A Sweet Dreams
2. Lesley's Sleddarwood Tikka Take Aim at Steeleigh, well grown black with super topline, tailset and strong hindquarters with width of thigh and well let down hock, would prefer her to be shorter coupled and rather soft in coat;
3. Park's Kinchyle Hit The Lights

Undergraduate Bitch (3):

1. Sleddarwood Tikka Take Aim at Steeleigh
2. Litherland's Oakhouse Our by Our
3. Young's Hannah's Honey Pie

Graduate Bitch (7):

1. Jones' Hafnau Georgette, this young black impressed me, she is a quality, typical Labrador free from exaggeration, well made all through, pleasing head and eye, clean neck set into well placed shoulders, good bone and feet, very good body and rib, topline and tailset, has a double coat of the right texture, sound true mover, was shortlisted to the final 4 in the challenge where she pushed hard, think she is title worthy;
2. O'Neill's Ramsayville Tali, another very lovely black, shown and presented in super condition and a great showgirl, pleasing overall outline and balance, good bone and feet, great rib and short loin, correct double coat and very strong hindquarters, sound true mover, not the head of 1;
3. Woodley's A Sense of Pleasure's Ella at Alkhamhurst

Post Graduate Bitch (11):

1. Woodley's Crosscroyde Class Society at Alkhamhurst, extremely pleasing yellow bitch, lovely size, type and balance, short coupled and sound moving, pleasing head and eye, strong neck, well made front, good bone and feet, barrel rib, well muscled strong hindquarters, sound true mover;
2. Lewis' Crammondkirk Rogue Gossip, another very nice yellow, not dissimilar to 1, clean outline, good bone, well made hindquarters, good coat and tail, sound mover, a little longer in loin;
3. Rowe's Rocheby Mimosa at Rochevale

Mid Limit Bitch (6):

1. Bell's Brighburn Sonoran at Westerulston, this 6 years black is all Labrador, liked her type, size and substance without being overdone, good bone, well ribbed body with short loin, has cope but still short coupled, good coat and tail, free stride in profile, rather close behind;
2. Newton's Meadowline Mad About You for Ralyville, extremely showy black shown in fit hard condition, short coupled, good topline, strong hindquarters, enthusiastic mover, preferred head of 1;
3. Litherland's Oakhouse Olanthe

Limit Bitch (5):

1. Mitchell's Afinmore Ardmere, this chocolate is not an immediate eyecatcher but is a very good Labrador, she's the right size, well balanced with good length of leg, pleasing head, good eye colour, strong clean neck, good front and bone, short coupled body with long rib, very good topline and set on of tail, correct coat and tail, sound free mover, shortlisted to the final 4;
2. Gardner's Rewari Eureka, black of good type and shown in superb condition, very good bone and feet, short coupled, firm topline, good coat and tail and sound moving;
3. Dodd's Bonnieburns Bubblegum at Carriegame

Open Bitch (8):

1. Park's Ramsayville Rhubarb Rock at Kinchyle, pretty, feminine quality yellow who I believe has just gained her title – well done, very pleasing head and expression, short coupled, good bone, pleasing coat of correct texture (just beginning to blow), drove off the hocks and moved soundly;
2. Shirton's Woolman Proper Fancy Free, very nice yellow, strong and well built, good outline, strong topline, good bone, well angulated hindquarters, very well muscled and in super condition, just preferred movement of 1;
3. Pollock's Pollham Freya

Champion Bitch (3,1):

1. Woodley's Sh Ch A Sense of Pleasure's Ylvi at Alkhamhurst, the word that immediately sprung to mind when I examined this bitch was "CORRECT", she is all Labrador and so typical in every department, excellent for type and balance, she handles heavier than she appears at first glance, pleasing head with correct length of muzzle and correct eye colour, well made front with well laid back shoulders, correct bone and very good feet, barrel rib, short loin, perfect topline and tailset, tail of the correct otter-like shape, strong, muscled hindquarters, well let down hock, double coat of the correct texture, four-square strong, sound mover fore and aft, covers the ground without effort in profile and holds her excellent outline at all times, she never stands wrong, a pleasure to award her CC and with agreement of co-judge BIS;
2. Campbell's Sh Ch Binnaig Just Blonde, most worthy title holder, has size, substance and strength with quality and without being overdone, short coupled, big ribbed, good coat and tail, great showgirl and strong mover;

Special Open Working Bitch (1):

1. Coates' Binneybottom Run Like Hell, black who is typical of her field trial breeding and is no doubt a very fast, eager worker;

David R Craig (Judge)