

## **CRUFTS SHETLAND SHEEPDOG DOGS 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

It was a lovely surprise and a great honour to be invited to judge our breed at Crufts for a second time. It is an unwritten rule that breed specialists rarely have this honour, so to be invited for a second time was very exciting. A big thank you to Stuart Gruszka and Keith Mottram for being very efficient stewards and keeping everything flowing, it is so much better to have Sheltie stewards who know the breed and most of the exhibitors, they were a comforting presence!!

The entry overall this year was down, disappointing not to have any minor puppies entered. Also now that the Graduate class has been dropped from the classification, we ended up with a class of twenty in Post Graduate, where there were some really lovely dogs but only five places, so disappointing for some handlers whose dogs well deserved to be in the line-up.

Temperaments on the whole were very good, quite a few kisses and waggy tails on the table. Teeth were a bit difficult to assess because of the new rule that handlers need to show the mouths to the judge. I could see the bite and didn't find any problems, but some clever handlers managed to put their fingers where the premolars should be so I wasn't able to check some of those! However, I did manage to see the occasional gap. There were some really sound moving Shelties with obviously correct conformation but sadly these were in the minority. Looking at my Crufts critique for 1995 I have written "the usual old moans, poor angulation with consequent incorrect movement, particularly steep and straight upper arms" and now 27 years later nothing has changed which for me is very disappointing because for those years and many before them I have been involved in breed education, giving lectures and seminars on the breed and emphasising the importance of correct conformation. Correct breed type is of course high on the list of priorities, but no good having a good looking Sheltie with a big coat and a pretty head if it isn't fit for purpose!

That all said, I enjoyed my day because I love judging and finding Shelties that fill my eye for all the right reasons, so thank you very much for entering your Shelties for me to judge, it was a great pleasure and I had a lovely day.

### **VETERAN DOG (5) 2 abs**

1. Hill's Ch./Aust. Ch. Hartley How About Me for Molson – I can't believe this lovely boy is a veteran already. His head is balanced and hasn't coarsened with age, the eye is dark, well placed and shaped which was the deciding factor when assessing him and second in this class. He has a nicely arched neck and a level topline which ends in a smooth slope over the loin. His front and hind angulation provide him with the ability to move freely and cover the ground well. He is in good coat and well muscled condition. 2. Rutterford's Ch. Kelgrove Just Blue at Stormhead this lovely blue boy most certainly belies his age, just had his eleventh birthday and hardly looking any different to when I awarded him a CC in 2013. He is spot on for size, a really good example of breed type with text book conformation. His head is balanced and he still has a lean flat skull topped by well carried ears, over the years his eye has become slightly fuller and as I needed to find a reason to make a decision between him and the first in this class, that was it, but it was a hair splitting decision. 3. Malone's Carmeva Caymen just approaching nine years old and moving quite well. His head is balanced but I would prefer less stop. His upper arm and shoulder needs more angulation to give him the ability to stride out in front on the move.

### **MINOR PUPPY DOG (No entries)**

#### **PUPPY DOG ( 7)**

1. Hardy's Sandwick Masterclass, this lovely tricolour in excellent condition with a dark black shiny coat was in tip top condition. His head is balanced but at the moment he needs to fill out in foreface which will come as he matures. His eye is dark and he has a sweet, masculine expression. His front angulation is excellent, well angled upper arm and shoulder with a deep chest giving him plenty of freedom to stride out on the move. Good length of neck and a level topline which blends well into the correct slope over the croup. His hindquarters are well angled and he moves with really good drive from the rear. I'm sure he has a great future. BPD 2. Robinson's Lavika's The Winter Soldier, beautifully presented sable in excellent coat and condition. His head is well balanced with a flat skull, well placed ears one of which was a bit troublesome today, a very nicely placed and shaped eye making for a sweet yet masculine expression. His front angulation is excellent with a well arched neck, deep chest and good spring of rib. He moves with plenty of drive, another puppy with an exciting future. 3. Saunders' Galateus Bohemia Classic at Torrighlen, very attractive sable, excellent size and

with a well balanced head, neat ears and a sweet expression. His angulation was acceptable both in front and behind, but I would like more length of neck to enhance his outline.

#### **JUNIOR (12) 1 abs**

1. Hardy's Sandwick Road Runner, I just loved this blue boy, his make and shape is to the standard, he is so well balanced throughout with everything in the right place at the right angle. His neck is well arched and he keeps his lovely shape and topline on the move. His head is balanced with a flat skull, his ears are a bit mobile at the moment but once he gets used to this showing business, they will settle. He moves with drive from his well angled hindquarters, just a bit close in front at the moment but when his chest develops this will come right. Probably not the easiest dog to handle as he is very much aware of what is going on around him, but his handler did a great job, she kept him focused and he stood his ground. 2. Sutherland's Shelcrest Winter Solstice, eye catching sable of lovely shape, perfect size with a very nicely balanced head, flat skull and correct stop all topped by neat ears which he uses well. He has a good reach of neck, although his topline slightly dips at the withers, his hindquarters are strong and he moves well. He is well presented and in lovely coat, I loved his happy temperament. 3. Roberts' Stanydale Rewrite The Stars for Malaroc, blue of perfect size with excellent conformation both in front and behind. His head is balanced with a flat skull, well filled foreface and correct stop. He has well rounded bone, neat feet and moves well in profile showing off his lengthy reach in front. His happy temperament goes through to his tail carriage, but when he comes into full coat with some extra brush on his tail, that should improve.

#### **YEARLING (6)**

1. Robinson's Lavika Deep Blue Ocean, this lovely youngster just gets better. I admired him as a puppy and he is developing into beautiful dog. He is spot on for size and his overall balance and quality makes him an eye catcher. He has a balanced head with a very well placed and shaped eye and neat ears which he uses well. Well rounded but not heavy bone, excellent front and hind angulation which enables him to really cover the ground with a good reach in front on the move. He has a good reach of neck, level topline with the correct tail set. He is in tune with his handler who knows her job. 2. Miles' Milesend Kingfisher, another young blue, pleasing to go over on the table because he is very well put together with correct angulation in front and behind. His head is balanced with a good foreface, flat skull and correct stop. He is a very good mover, he also covers the ground well in front and has drive from the rear. I would prefer him to have a slightly longer neck to enhance his outline. 3. Hateley's Mohnesee Mr Bobbie Black, tri boy, spot on for size who is now coming back into coat after a successful puppy career. Today was his birthday and he would probably rather have spent it doing something more exciting as he wasn't on his toes and as sparkling as he usually is. On the table I found him to be well put together with good angulation, a balanced head with a dark eye, decent length of neck and a level topline. I would like to see more positive front movement.

#### **POST GRADUATE (20) 1 abs**

1. Robinson's Lavika Starlight Salute, very attractive golden sable in a well fitting coat of the correct texture and beautifully presented. He has a well balanced head with a dark well shaped and placed eye, neat well carried ears and a very good reach of neck. His shoulder and upper arm are well angled, he has a deep chest and consequently he single tracks in front on the move. His topline is level, his hind movement is strong with good drive and he heads a large class of very nice Shelties. 2. Williams' Tachnamadra Au Revoir to Milesend, another very attractive golden sable, very similar in many ways to 1. Perfect size, excellent conformation, well balanced head with a sweet expression, neat well carried ears and he too moved very well. His neck is well arched which enhances his shape, I love his happy outgoing temperament, his coat is the correct texture and groomed to perfection. 3. Stock's Shemist Sea Dragon, a blue boy spot on for size and very well put together with a very good shoulder and upper arm, I liked his overall balance and quality. He is a very good moving Sheltie, covering the ground with little effort. Whilst not a glamour boy he is very sound and one who could do a day's work with no problems.

#### **MID LIMIT (7) 1 abs**

1. Fisher's Shellamoyed Gold Fever, this lovely sable took my eye as soon as he entered the ring. Full of quality and of excellent breed type he is in very good coat of the correct texture. Lovely outline with a good reach of neck, level topline, correct sweep over the croup, well angled hindquarters, well bent stifle and he moves with plenty of drive and confidence. However, it was his head which captivated me, the true Sheltie expression, a combination of the balance of his head and the shape and placement of his dark eyes, and his ear set. Going over him on the table he looked straight at me and it made me quite emotional, because this expression captures the very essence of our breed, it is unique. 2. Redpath's Molson Miroquai Into Pathaaron, as in the last class, the first two in this class were quite similar in type. Very little to separate them. This boy is well built with very good angulation in front and behind, he has a deep chest with exactly the right amount of bone and the straightest of fronts. A good reach of neck and level topline, his well angled hindquarters enable him to

drive from the rear so he moved effortlessly around the ring. His head is well balanced and he has a sweet expression. 3. Gamble's Solyric Inaugural Gold, another lovely sable boy, slightly lighter in frame than the first two in this class, but very sound with good angulation in front and behind, so he moved with drive across the ring. I like his overall balance, make and shape and he has a lovely expression. Beautifully presented in immaculate condition.

#### **LIMIT (9) 1 abs**

1. Walker's Tooralie's Pie In The Sky, this shaded sable is another dog which took my eye as he entered the ring. Now coming up to three years old, he has matured into a really sound well developed Sheltie. Built on clean lines, he is spot on for size, very well constructed and consequently an excellent mover with a long reach in front from his well angled upper arm and shoulder. I liked his shape, enhanced by his well arched neck, he has a level topline and the correct slope over the croup, he is well muscled behind, has a good bend of stifle and I enjoyed watching him move. His head is balanced with a sweet but masculine expression. When he comes into full coat he will be another one to watch. 2. Bastiani & John's Auberswell Ghost Rider, golden sable in very good harsh correct textured coat. Another good example of correct breed type, he is well put together which shows when he moves around the ring, His head is balanced with a flat skull and well filled foreface and he has a sweet expression. Looking at his outline and being picky, I would like a fraction more neck to complete the overall picture. 3. Moore's Sanscott Limited Edition, sable boy, very little to choose between these two, again very similar in type, size and colour. His head is balanced with a well filled foreface, flat skull and neat ears. His upper arm was not quite as well angled as it should be so it did slightly impede his length of stride in the front. However he still is a very good example of breed type.

#### **OPEN (15)**

1. Robinson's Ch. Lavika Luminary, this boy is a first class example of correct breed type with no exaggerations, he isn't a glamour boy, no flashy white markings but it is his perfect balance, quality and breed type which won him this class of really lovely Shelties. He is all boy, with a truly sweet, yet masculine expression. His conformation is difficult to fault and his movement is a joy to watch. He has a harsh coat which fits him perfectly and he shows off these attributes with style and panache and I was delighted to award him the dog CC. 2. Pearson's Ch. Edglonian Golden Graham, I saw this beautiful golden sable boy when he was a puppy and couldn't believe his quality at such a young age. Still not yet two he is already a champion and is destined to hit the heights with his "look at me" attitude. Conformation wise he is difficult to fault, and he has a text book head and expression. Today he was on a high and when it came to making a decision on places his movement, although excellent because of his conformation, wasn't as steady and positive as the winner of this class. However, I was pleased to award him the RCC in very good company. 3. Stafford's Ch. Rannerdale Showmaster, another great favourite I saw as a puppy and it was love at first sight. He too oozes with quality and is a fine example of correct breed type. His head qualities are outstanding which is a feature of all the dogs carrying this affix, his eye placement and shape is perfect and if I was basing my choice on heads, he would win hands down. However, today he decided he wanted to act up and as I was making my final decision on movement he had to be content with third place, but he is a truly lovely Sheltie!

#### **GOOD CITIZENS (4)**

1. Riding's Achor's Surprise Percy Polaris for Torinska, a bouncy blue boy, with a fantastic temperament who was out to win this class! He is well put together and moves with great enthusiasm. He is spot on for size and is well balanced throughout. 2. Woolley's Pepperhill In The Moment at Valjon, lovely tri with a super expression which is almost smiling. A very sound boy with consequent very easy, smooth movement, I love his outlook on life and he must be a joy to live with. 3. Braddish's Bradmigail Tauri Gold, well coated smart sable of excellent size and breed type, steady temperament and a good mover, an excellent example of a good citizen!

#### **JUDGE - Barbara Thornley**