

2014 Potomac Valley – Judge’s Comments

Roni Kaluza

When I was offered this assignment, I was pleased and excited at the opportunity to judge so many fine hounds. Silly me. Little did I know that the weather was going to be a nightmare and the showgrounds a swampy mess. My compliments to the show committee and the exhibitors for making the best of a bad situation, and doing so with good cheer.

I was impressed with the overall quality of the hounds shown to me. Excellence in type was evident in every class, and almost all the hounds were in good condition and body weight. Of the faults I saw, only two are worthy of comment: first, the balance between length of upper arm and shoulder blade was quite variable, with too many hounds lacking proper upper arm, which adversely affected their movement. Second, there were a number of hounds with short rib cages and long loins, when the opposite is desirable.

My critique has some gaps where the wind interfered so much with the recorder that I can’t make out my comments, and for this I apologize.

PUPPY, 6-9 MONTH DOGS

BerrybriarCaraglenIeisearCarrowmoragh. Big, substantial boy with curves in all the right places. He was easy on the move, light on his feet, great attitude even though he was a giving his handler a bit of a hard time. Moves a bit wide in the front, which is a typical puppy trait that he should grow out of as he matures.

Starkeepers Storm Stryker. Beautiful facial expression and ears, easy mover but not quite the front action of the first place dog. Plenty of bone. Nice attitude.

Echo Hounds Voodoo. While adequate, his angulation was not as good as the first two dogs. Worked harder on the move. General type and body shape were good.

Hound Hill Valkyrie of Aerie. Very nice expression, good body outline, but his running structure shows the gangliness and awkwardness

typical of males his age. Looks like he may recently have had a growth spurt that he hasn't figured out how to handle yet. Good coat.

PUPPY, 9-12 MONTH DOGS

Taliesin's Rhionganedd. Very masculine and substantial, excellent coming and going. His topline and shape hold well on the move, and he self-stacks into a nice picture. Excellent coat. Head just a trifle heavy in the backskull, but expression is pleasing nonetheless.

Taliesin's Rory of Abhainn. Beautiful bone, nice substance. Nice attitude, good head, good coat. Front clearly the best in the class when evaluated standing, but the first place dog uses himself better on the move, which is what determined the placings. Otherwise the first two dogs were very close.

O'Lugh's Turbo Diesel. Curvy dog, with a good topline. Giving his handler problems, perhaps due to the noise the demolished tent made when the wind flipped it. Very pretty picture moving from the side, and stops himself into a beautiful stack. Not as nice coming and going. Substance less than the first two dogs, but adequate for his age.

Taliesin's Roibhlin Aengus Gumby. Not the substance of the dogs who placed ahead of him. Nice body shape, but lacks the desired setback of elbow, dropping rather steeply from the point of the shoulder, and this shows in his front stride. Excellent coat.

12-15 MONTH DOGS

Hound Hill Vanderbilt of Aerie. Big wheaten, very masculine with good bone and substance. Good coat. Easy, ground-covering movement, and shape holds up on the move. Great pelvic structure. Beautiful head.

Castlemaine's a Leap of Faith. Attractive dog, with nice angulation, could use a little more depth of chest. Good length of rib compared to loin. Topline slopes a little on the move and his pelvic structure was not as strong as the first place dog. Good coat and attractive head and expression.

Eirian Padraic Brie Quick Draw Marco. Tall hound, could use a little

more angulation in the rear. Good front angulation. Good pelvic width. Could use a little more bone. Easy, light stride, and his topline holds well on the move. Outclassed by the first two dogs in terms of substance and masculinity.

Starkeeper's Ryn. Angulation not as nice front or rear as the third place dog. Better body shape and depth of chest than the third place dog. Good attitude and light and easy on the move but doesn't cover ground as well as the third place dog.

15-18 MONTH DOGS

Sylverwolf Grady Glaslaenn. Very big, very masculine, lots of bone. Nice angulation behind. Comes down a bit straight from the point of the shoulder. Nice depth of chest and nice curves to the body. Good coat. Movement not as nice as the second place dog, but improved dramatically on the last go-round as he quit fighting his handler.

Niobrara and All That Jazz at Castlemaine. Pretty picture but obviously adolescent. Nice, curvy rear angulation. Adequate but not excellent bone. Good masculine head and nice expression. Easy, light movement. This was a close decision.

NOVICE DOGS

KnocknareaZacob. Tall dog, with adequate angles front and rear. Could use more curves in the bottomline. Easy, correct movement. Topline and bottomline both look better on the move than standing.

BRED BY EXHIBITOR DOGS

This was an extremely nice class from start to finish, and was a pleasure to judge.

Taliesin's Realtbhuion. Beautiful, big, strong, masculine hound. Nice curves and angulation everywhere one could want. Good attitude and expression. Strong neck, good pelvic structure. Good coat. Movement easy and sound, and he covers a lot of ground. Hard to fault him, but if I had to find one, his backskull is just a little heavy.

R Noble Ghasper of Eagle. Very nice picture. Very curvy, nice

bottomline, nice angulation. Not the strength and substance of the first place dog, but certainly adequate, and pushed the first place dog hard. Nicer shape to his head than first place. Movement sound, easy and ground-covering.

Hearthound's One for the Road. Adequate depth of chest but could be curvier. Good layback to shoulder and good width of pelvic structure. Front movement just OK, and this class was so strong that anything less than excellent will drop him in the placings.

Echo Hounds Merlin Leaves You Breathless. Lots of good points about this dog, but he would not stop pacing. Nice, attractive head. Good coat. Adequate angulation, nice pelvic structure, good shoulder layback, so there is no obvious explanation for the pacing.

AMERICAN BRED DOGS

Taliesin's Realteolai of Wideview RN. Tall dog, good topline and curvy bottomline, good angulation behind when he stacks himself. Prettier headpiece than the second place dog. Nice wide pelvic structure. Decent coat. Picture-perfect soundness coming and going. Won this class based on head and movement.

O'Lugh's Holy Toledo of Backwater. Nice curvy dog, good angulation behind. Adequate substance and power. Bit of a wide backskull. Decent coat. Nice going away but wide in the front coming back. Easy side movement.

OPEN DOGS

Another really strong class.

Cu Gein Ortega of Castlekeep. Well angulated rear, good topline, nice deep, curvy bottomline. Adequate front angulation. This dog is in good lean weight and strong condition. A little long in the loin. Good attitude despite the trophy table getting blown clean behind him. Picture perfect movement from all angles.

Taliesin's Dea-mhiotail. Nice rear angulation. Could use more depth of chest and a curvier bottomline. Excellent head and expression. Upper arm drops off a bit steeply from the point of shoulder. Nice coming

and going, and easy light movement from the side. Not the strength of the first place dog.

FitzarranDunmadadhPadraic Brie Quinn. Nice angulation behind, good strong rear, good topline, could be curvier on the bottomline. Nice strong neck. Loin a little long compared to the ribcage. Movement a little choppy because he seems to be trying not to step on his own front feet.

WINNERS DOG

Winners Dog, Taliesin's Realtbhuion from the BBE class. This was a no-brainer. I cannot say enough good things about this dog, and he dominated the ring in the WD class.

RESERVE WINNERS DOG

This was between R Noble Ghasper of Eagle, second place in BBE and my Open Dog winner, Cu Gein Ortega of Castlekeep, and the Open Dog edged out the BBE because of his strength, size and particularly his masculine presence.

PUPPY BITCHES 6-9 MONTHS

Starkeeper Saratoga Sally. Nice body curves, good topline and depth of chest. Better front construction than the second place puppy. Nice width to pelvis. Not as sound moving away as second place, but better coming at me. Nice coat.

Starkeeper Antrim's Elvira of Echo Hounds. Very obviously a puppy, looks like she will have plenty of angulation when she matures, though her upper arm is a bit short. Topline a little flat at this point. Very pretty face and expression. Light and easy moving, quite sound going away. Adequate bone. Nice coat.

PUPPY BITCHES 9-12 MONTHS

R Noble Lola of Eagle. Very shapely bitch, very nice basic structure. Good coat, very nice attitude. Needs more bone, and her pasterns are a little soft. Self-stacks very nicely. Light on her feet, and holds her shape well on the move.

Dun MyricaMabelline of Eagle. Sorry, no comments as my batteries gave out.

Taliesin's Ruadhoigh. A little soft in the topline, and could be curvier underneath. Good coat. Strong pelvic structure. Needs a little more upper arm. Movement pretty typical of a puppy, should be fine when she matures and fills out.

O'LughTedy B of Blackwater. Again, no comments.

12-15 MONTH BITCHES

The top three placings in this class were very close.

MythicsDairea Kindred. Big, strong girl with lots of bone. Nice sweeping rear curves. Great coat. Her curves and topline hold up on the move. Pretty picture overall.

Cu Gein's Sterling. Also very curvy and pretty. Not as tall as the first place girl. Self-stacks beautifully.

Castlemaine Hey Lollie Lo. Also very curvy and pretty. Coat is softer than second place, and she has a little less depth of body.

Mythic's Texas Pearl. Tall rangy girl, could use more body for the amount of leg she has. Maturity should take care of that.

15-18 MONTH BITCHES

Kellykerry Echo of Aerie. Very tall, rangy strong bitch. Good angulation behind. Bottomline straighter than I'd like to see, would be prettier if curvier. Has a classic, very attractive head and expression. Very nice coat. Dead sound coming at me, and side action is easy and active and covers lots of ground.

StarkeeperLaislinn on the Edge of Glory. Not as large or strong as first place bitch. Coat is softer, and the excess hair blowing around her face detracts from her expression, otherwise head is correctly shaped. Bottomline curvier than her classmate and front a little nicer, but rear is not as nicely angulated.

NOVICE BITCHES

Jeepers of Aerie. Lovely rear end with beautiful sweep of stifle. Nice bottomline. Good coat. Good rib length compared to loin. Longer upper arm than many. Nice strong neck. Clean action coming at me. Self-stacks into a pretty picture. Nice head and expression.

Taliesin's Damhsoir. Strong bitch, with a good topline and bottomline and a better shoulder-to-upper-arm ratio than many. Nice strong neck. Decent head and expression. Self-stacks into a nice sweep of rear. More length of leg than third place bitch.

CalyddonMiraude. Lack of experience made this girl hard to place. She was sinking in the rear and moving hectically when the class started, and as she relaxed, stood and moved better and better each time. Lovely dark eye. Nice broad rear end. Decent coat but a lot of it.

Eirian'sAnnora. Decent angulation, good topline, good depth of chest although bottomline could be curvier. I'd like to see more bone.

AMATEUR OWNER HANDLER BITCHES

Laislinn Perfect Pour O Stella. Good front angulation. Ribcage both deep and long. Not as fond of her head shape. Nice strong neck and good neck carriage. Decent coat. Walks herself into a nice stack, covering a lot of ground and showing good curve of stifle. Easy mover.

BRED BY EXHIBITOR BITCHES

Nice quality throughout this class. Very impressive.

O'Lugh'sAmarula. Very nice body shape, proper curvy bottomline. Nice front, good forechest. Head shape not quite as nice as the second place bitch. Good bone, substance, size. Very strong bitch without any excess weight. Long rib cage. Walks herself into a nicer stance behind than when stacked by the handler. Easy, active, light side movement covering a lot of ground. Makes a beautiful picture when going around.

Kellykerry Kindle of Eagle. Very pretty type, nice curves underneath, and nice rear angulation. Pelvic structure wide and strong enough for me to sit on! Good front, though not as nice as the third place bitch.

Side movement very nice, really reaches out, topline holds on the move. Going and coming adequate. Excellent head shape. Pushed for first place very hard, but in the end, not as easy and light on her feet.

Castlemaine's Nola. Smaller bitch. Really nice front, one of the best I've seen here. Adequate angulation behind, good topline and bottomline. Pretty head. Pelvic structure wide and strong. Good clean elbow action coming at me, sound going away, and light and proper movement from the side. Overall very high quality, and were she as large and strong as the first two bitches, could easily have placed higher.

Dun Myrica Nova of Eagle. Quite strong, nice curves. Good angulation behind. Good forechest but needs a longer upper arm compared to shoulder blade. Nice head shape and expression, good strong neck. Decent coat. Sound coming and going. Topline looks a little soft when standing, better on the move.

AMERICAN BRED BITCHES

Galena of Aerie. Big, very strong girl. Good body shape with proper curves everywhere and a wide, strong pelvic structure. Short upper arm and front angulation could be better. Moving, her rear seems to overpower the front just a little. Walks herself into a beautiful stack, nice clean sweep to her rear. Topline holds on the move.

R. Noble A Glympse of Eagle. A slightly smaller bitch, less bone than the first place bitch and not as strong. Better length to upper arm. Ribcage nicely long compared to loin. Curves hold on the move. Wish I could say more but the wind obliterated the remainder of my comments on this girl.

OPEN BITCHES

Cu GeinChenin Blanc O'Tairisem. More moderate angulation behind than the second place bitch, but a wider, stronger pelvic structure. Proper body curves, and decent ratio between shoulder blade and upper arm. Sound going away. Stacks herself into more angulation behind than when her handler stacks her. Easy, clean mover.

Sylverwolf Sage GRC. Had a bit of excess hair on her that obscured her curves, but under all the hair, has a nice, curvy shape. Longer upper arm than many I've seen today. Good strong neck. Needs more width to pelvis. Stacks herself very nicely. Has a hitch behind, which spoils the picture of her movement.

WINNERS BITCH

O'Lugh's Amarula, from the superb Bred By Exhibitor Class.

RESERVE WINNERS BITCH

Kellykerry Kindle of Eagle, again from the Bred By Exhibitor Class.

VETERAN DOGS

Can CH US GCH Taliesin's Willow's Glympse. Still looks like a dog in his prime. Beautiful curves everywhere. Good coat. Head and expression attractive and masculine. Upper arm needs to be longer, but front action coming at me is correct. Self-stacks into a beautiful profile. Side movement going around is a little bit heavy, probably the only sign that he's getting up there in age.

DC Taliesin's Wizard of Wideview LCX, MC, SGRC, CGC. Very happy senior citizen. Nice front, clean action coming at me. Nice coat. Topline still strong. Not as sprightly on the side movement as the first place dog.

VETERAN BITCHES

CH. Hound Hill Valley of Aerie. Good body shape, good rear angulation, very strong and substantial, lots of bone. Commanding appearance. Excellent coat. Good shoulder layback though needs just a little more upper arm. Very typey and attractive head. Nice reach and drive, and body shape holds well on the move. Overall a very pretty picture, both standing and moving, with proper curves everywhere.

CH. Kellykerry Peony of Aerie. Good angulation, good body shape, a very stately girl with a commanding appearance. Good bone, needs more upper arm. Does not have the reach of the first place bitch, and not as pretty coming and going. Great coat. Pushed the first place

bitch hard.

Glennagh R Noble of Eagle. Shapely girl, with beautiful curves behind. I'd like a little more width to the pelvic structure and a little more upper arm, and a little more bone. Nice coat. Self-stacks into a beautiful picture. Movements easy and active. Not as large or substantial as the first two.

GCH Garlow ArdRhiNessie of Eagle. Nice curves, nice topline. Coat a little softer. Nice long ribcage. Sweet expression. Needs a little more upper arm. Sound going and coming. Not the substance or power of the higher placing bitches.

BEST OF BREED

Best of Breed, Best of Winners and Best Bred-by-Exhibitor goes to my Winners Dog, Taliesin's Realtbhuion. I can't say enough good things about this amazing dog. His demeanor in the BOB ring was, if anything, even more masculine and dominating than in the classes, especially on the go-round.

Best of Opposite Sex goes to the Veteran Bitch winner, CH. Hound Hill Valley of Aerie. This large, strong, classic wheaten truly looked and moved as if she was in her prime of life.

Select Dog, GCH Riverlawn Exit of Eagle. This is a very tall dog, beautiful strong topline, good broad rear. I don't like his front as well as the BOB. Has a beautiful masculine head and expression. Wonderful bone. Nice coat. Good easy mover on the go-round, but not quite the masculine attitude and presence of the BOB winner.

Select Bitch, CH. Dun MyricaLyra of Eagle, pushed the veteran hard for BOS. Lovely, pretty grey brindle type. Has a beautiful front, proper curves everywhere. Topline holds on the move. Walks herself into a gorgeous stack and owns the ground she stands on. Truly a standout among the specials bitches.

Award of Merit goes to the Veteran Dog winner, Can CH US GCH Taliesin's Willow's Glympse.

