

Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound Club Sunday April 2 2023

Debbie Tebbutt

Firstly, may I thank Jodie and her team for inviting me back to the show all these years on. Can I also thank Cullen Leck for keeping me in check subtly all day as my steward, and to the patient and kind Caballes who ferried me about during my visit.

Well done to the committee and their friends for actually managing to put the show on at all. The day before saw such torrential rain and high winds that I worried about competitors travelling to the show or staying safely on site. It says much for your resilience that you all managed it. How wonderful it was to be greeted at the site on Sunday with blue skies and bright sunshine even though the temperature was chilly.

Having come from judging at Crufts a few weeks earlier, I was more than ready to see a consistent representation of the breed. I still think that the quality in this breed lies on your side of the Atlantic so thank you for reminding me what a typical hound should look like.

I do feel that there were some stunning hounds who missed out on top honours, spectacular when moving but longer in loin than is to my taste. One might argue with the rejoinder "so it's your taste and not the standard that matters then!" Well the standard asks for "proportionate length of body "to height and specifies "Back: Rather long than short. Loins arched".

For me that means, given two extremes, one should prefer the longer- but it doesn't mean that, in breeding or judging, we should seek length.

That's one for a debate and I am starting to sound too opinionated! It's good that all judges are not the same.

There were many fit, well-muscled hounds but others who need muscle building to improve their fronts and first and second thighs.

Having said all that, may I commend you for your efforts in upholding the quality of the breed and for your gracious acceptance of my placings.

On a final note, it was both poignant and warming for me to see so many Lonnkyles in the catalogue, a testimony to an erudite and successful breeder – and to Lloyd himself, always the gentleman.

Dogs 15-18 months

1. Johnson, Johnson and Benjamin's Monty Lismore of Aerie **Reserve Winners Dog**

Very nice youngster, well grown in terms of height and bone. I liked his dark eye, his length of head which he carried high on that long neck. At present he looks a bit narrow in front but he has strong straight front legs and good hind angulation and shows a great stride in profile.

Dogs Novice

1. Wortman's Redtops Brynleigh

Pale cream with pleasing head, showing nice pigmentation and neat ears which he carried smartly. He has a good underline and reasonable hind angulation with nice low hocks but needs to sort out his front feet which turn out a little too much. He appears a bit narrow coming towards whilst impressing from the side. What a charmer with a joyous temperament!

Dogs Bred by Exhibitor

1. Flynns' Shancarrick's Awesome Tullaghan

Tall dark brindle hound with pleasing dimensions to head, a big black nose but whose ears let him down a bit. He has a nicely laid shoulder, good depth of chest, good bone, is well ribbed back with a gentle rise over loin. All of a piece with much to like.

Dogs American Bred

1. Sula and Dormady's O'Lugh Blackwater Barkeep **Winners Dog and Best of Winners**

A young one in his class but won on wonderful free movement and general balance. Curvy substantial pale brindle with a strong neck, good slope to upper arm, exceptional depth of ribbing, good shoulder, pleasing hind quarters with great width across upper thigh, well let down hocks and strong croup.

2. Marx, Benjamin and Monberg's Dreamcatcher's Wolfhouse Blue Note at Aerie

Here's a hound with a commanding appearance thanks mostly to his noble head and his long neck. Another good mover I noted but with not quite the front of 1 in terms of lay back of upper arm. I liked his houndy underline and good hindquarters. Two strong competitors for the future I guess here.

3. Scheidman's Lindenhall Carnasserie Concerto Grosso

Pleasing in general outline and a typical flowing shape with a good head and neck set a pleasing croup and low hocks. What spoils him for me at present is his front assembly which appears to be set a little too far forward and narrow, and he could have more substance.

4. Smiths' and High's Coleraine's Zenith of Taliesin

My favourite profile in this class standing in terms of shape and type but a dog of parts with a classy head, nice expression and lovely front, long upper arm, strong neck but he lacked the strength in hindquarters of 1 and 2 which showed up on the move, alongside an awkward tail carriage.

Dogs Open

1. Muffleys' Lonnkyle Pining for the Fjords

Small but substantial, nicely made male, ribbed well back, good depth of chest, a touch short in upper arm but good in shoulder, nice strength in neck, good croup and tail set with good angle to pasterns. My notes say lively and that he strode out well, but at times his tail was up which spoilt the overall picture.

2. Strait's Lonnkyle Pacific Yeti

Taller with a better proportioned head and nice long legs. I liked his underline, his crisp coat and great width across the upper thigh. He moved easily but again with the tail up.

3. Clint and Johnson's Gladstone's Kiss Me Kieran

Here's an imposing, tall hound with much to like. Shapely with a long upper arm but lost out to 1 and 2 on movement on the day.

Bitches Puppy 6 months and under 9 months

Delightful class with two nice bitches

1. Swicks' and Kluzaks' Stormborn's Head over Heels **Best Puppy**

Curvey, balanced, pale brindle youngster, all of a shape with pleasing expression, nice shoulder, good neck, deep chest, good width across upper thigh, good tail set and low hocks. Free moving.

2. Abrams' and Shriver's Eirian Padraic Iris K O' Tailstorm

Pretty bitch with nice expression and neater ears than 1 but again with great depth of chest and pleasing underline and good layback of pasterns. Not quite the curves of 1. She just needs time for this and the topline to settle.

Bitches 12 to 15 months

1. Dormadys' O'Lugh's Truly

Red brindle. Loved her head and its carriage, the length, set and crest of her neck, her crisp coat and rise at loin, good underline, lovely angle to hindquarters and the longest of tails. Moving out with ease but I thought a bit close behind today.

2. Schaeffers' Femke's Footsteps Lady Starlight

Glossy, dark bitch in good coat with lovely head proportions and long neck with a better croup and tail set than 1. Sadly dipping in topline at present and longer in loin which cost her first place. Nice hindquarters.

Bitches 15 to 18 months

1. Marx and Benjamin's Muse Lismore of Aerie **Winners Bitch**

Really like this girl. Lovely shape to this bitch all flowing lines with lovely proportions to the head. good front, deep chest, strong ribbing and lovely underline, well let down hocks, well bent stifles and the longest of tails. Graceful on the move, with long easy stride.

2. Le Vans', Marx's and Benjamin's Myrna Loy Lismore of Aerie

Another gorgeous bitch with lovely shoulder, long legs again good width of upper thigh and lovely tail carriage. Nothing much at all between these two, but 1 won on more rise in topline and slightly better hind angulation. Another good mover.

3. Levin's Lonnkyle Pinnacle at Gemini

Young and lean, pale cream with a charming temperament but needs more bone for height and to grow into those legs and show more length of neck. I liked her dark pigmentation and depth of chest and, with maturity, should develop more substance in the upper thigh.

Novice Bitches

1. Gagne and Callender's Lonnkyle Calorien Prophecy at Starkeeper **Best Gait**

Very nice, grey brindle with lovely head and that typical gentle expression which melts the heart. I liked the layback of her upper arm, her good front and her lack of exaggeration. She was a bit naughty at standing and, at times, seemed a bit flat in topline but she's an exemplar for movement being easy and active. This made her stand out for best gait in a very good competition.

2. Amberman's and Patterson's Riversong Lit My Soul on Fire

Blond bombshell this one with a lovely head, crowned with a fine set of ears and pigment that looked like dark eyeliner. She has a great coat but has a touch flatter topline than 1 but with a pleasing croup.

3. McCarthy's Mami's Beardie Zuzu of Maccaura

Smaller bitch who excelled in her free movement. Houndy outline, some rise at loin, less bone than ideal but that might come.

4. Abrams and Shriver's Eirian Nellie Q O'Tailstorm

Houndy brindle with a nice outline and a good coat. Nice and deep in chest with elbows set well under. A pretty head but her ears need to tighten.

Bitches Bred by Exhibitor

1. Rolands' New Girl in Town at R Noble **Best Bred by Exhibitor**

Pleasing, dark bitch with a head showing a soft expression and a good ear set. She is all flowing lines with a lovely layback of upper and, nice front, lovely rise in topline, good coat, and well angulated croup and low tail set. For perfection she needs to develop a bit more width in upper thigh to balance that strong front but lovely on the move truer in front action than 2. I see that she is sister to my BIS winner.

2. Marx and Benjamin's Gin Fizz O'Lugh of Aerie

Gorgeous bitch with lovely curving lines, good layback of upper arm, good depth of chest and length of ribbing with a nice tuck up and strong muscular thighs. I loved her easy active movement in profile but felt it was less secure when viewed from the front on the day.

3. Dormadys' O'Lugh's Black Label

Another classy bitch in great coat and condition. A bright dark brindle with correctly proportioned head and good ears. I liked her bone and that width across the stifle but she is a touch longer in loin than 1 and 2. However, lovely on the move in profile with that fine head held high.

4. Formans' Ballyhara Aideen

Attractive, pale brindle with dark eyes and nice expression. Again longer cast but with lots of substance and well angulated hind quarters but not the movement of 1,2 and 3.

Bitches American Bred

1. O'Sullivan and Schaeffers' Hops-N-Hounds Girl on Fire Sagittaria Everdeen

A young one here. Nice wheaten bitch, all of a shape with a pretty head, neat, dark ears and a big black nose. She has low hocks, a good underline and ribbing, unexaggerated hind angulation. She moved out well, covering the ground with ease.

2. Levin's Gemini's Big Girls Need Big Diamonds

Pale grey brindle with a nice head, good arch to neck, nice depth of ribbing and good hind angulation with low hocks. Her front is a little far forward at present and she seems longer in loin than I like. Moved with energy but not always in the right direction.

3. Smith's Cualainn Wild Ambition

Shapely, bitch with a smart coat with deep chest, nice head with dark eye, but slightly flat ears, typical in shape with good layback of pasterns but needs more rise at loins

4. Schneidman's Lindenhall Carnasserie Camerata Musica

This girl has a pleasing head with excellent proportions, long well set neck, deep ribbing and nice croup. Not the width in front of those ahead of her and more upright in pastern.

Bitches Open

Fabulous class of star bitches

1. Dormady's O'Lugh's Martini **Reserve Winners Bitch**

What a star turn this one was, with fabulous proportions to head, neat, tight ears and lovely expression. I liked her long upper arm, good shoulder and the fabulous angles to hindquarters with the lowest of hocks. Long cast for me but poetry on the move.

2. Sharpe's Stormborn's Edge of Heaven

Imposing dark grey brindle with lovely head carriage without the neat ears of 1 but good in terms of stride and ground coverage She has well let down hocks, a nice angle to upper arm, lovely hind angulation but is rather steep in croup which affects her outline. Excellent easy active movement.

3. Rolands' R Noble Nainsi

Captivating, typical bitch who like the others made an impact as she strode into the ring. Gorgeous planes to head and dark pigmentation and a gorgeous crisp dark coat. More upright in pastern and not the width of upper thigh of 1 and 2.

4. LeVan's Zendaye Della Bassa Pavese

Big, strong girl with rather a lot of width in front, but with good shoulders and plenty forechest. She's nice and broad across the pelvis and has well-muscled hindquarters. Exuded strength and great on the move in profile but toeing in.

Dogs Veteran

1. High and Muffleys' Ch Coleraine's Cathbhadh Incubator Jones

Handsome male, 7 years old and fit as a fiddle, substantial shapely hound with plenty bone, nice head, good width across pelvis, lovely rise in topline and broad upper thigh with low hocks. He moved really well and could teach some of the younger males a lesson.

Bitches Veteran

1. Smiths' Taliesin's Druid Duinn Eostar JC **Best Opposite Sex and Best Veteran**

What a sweetheart this old girl was! Dark brindle with the most lovely of heads, very alert and carried high. I loved her balanced outline and those curving angles of her upper and second thigh, the gentle rise at loin and her good feet. On top of that how happy she was - that long, long tail sweeping constantly as she strode around the ring.

2. O'Malley and Levin's Gemini's Irish Queen of Hearhound

Another lovely old lady. I loved her layback of upper arm, her bone, her neat tightly held ears and that gentle expression. Perhaps not the width in upper thigh nor the hind angulation of 1 but a gracious hound all the same.

Best of Breed Competition

Best in Show

Rolands' GCH CH R Noble Nasch

Of great size and commanding appearance, here is a real stallion of a dog. What appeals to me is the sense of continuous curves that his outline makes. In terms of his structure that means a shoulder and upper arm which brings his elbows well under his front, that he has depth and length of ribbing and breadth all through without coarseness. His topline rises and his croup is well set and he has lovely hind angulation and low hocks. Please note the angle of his pasterns too. There should always be an angle there. With all this, also impressive on the move too.

Best Opposite Sex

Smiths' Taliesin's Druid Duinn Eostar

I liked being able to observe this pair together as my big winners, as they match each other so well and much which applies to Nasch, can be said of her. It's not easy to match a grace with strength. She does this.

Best of Winners

Sula and Dormady's O'Lugh Blackwater Barkeep

Select Dog

Johnsons' GCH CH Gladstone's Can't Wait to be King

Lovely outline to this pale brindle boy. Really lovely front, layback of upper arm and angle of pasterns. I liked his deep ribbing and that curving underline, perfect hind quarters and rising topline. Moved with ease and caught the eye in a strong group.

Award of Merit

Gagne and Ivanovskis's Ch Starkeeper Aoibheann Alis RN **Best Head**

What a lovely bitch, so typical and so pleasing. For those who need to know what a wolfhound's head should be like, take some time and study this one. The planes of the head are perfect with her rosed ears carried high on that fine head. She has a wonderful, soulful

expression in those eyes and just the right array of whiskers over them. It's not all about the head though, again it's the flowing lines and balance of body that gained her the award.

Best Puppy

Swicks' and Kluzaks' Stormborn's Head over Heels

Select Bitch

Sula and Dormady's Ch O'Lugh Blackwater Bombay

Gorgeous, pale brindle with lovely balance to her front and hind angulation and I loved her length of loin and its gentle rise, great depth of ribbing, lovely croup and low hocks. I can't believe her date of birth is correct as she looks like a bitch just reaching maturity. Brilliant for her and a measure of the owners' dedication to her fitness.

Best Bred by Exhibitor

Rolands' New Girl in Town at R Noble

Best Veteran

Smiths' Taliesin's Druid Duinn Eostar

Best Stud Dog

Marx, Benjamin and Monberg's Dreamcatcher's Wolfhouse Blue Note at Aerie

Standing alone but - given that his offspring impressed so in their classes 1st in 15-18 months male and 1st and 2nd in the female equivalent- I couldn't imagine him being beaten. An impressive line-up of what I expect to be all future stars.

Best Brood Bitch

Marx, Benjamin and Le Vans' GCH CH Lismore Marion Kerby

Impressive dam to have produced these big winning juniors.

Best Head

Gagne and Ivanovskis' Ch Starkeeper Aoibheann Ailis RN

Best Gait

Gagne and Callender's Lonnkyle Calorien Prophecy at Starkeeper

