

## Critique for King Charles Spaniels at Border Union Show 18 June 2022

First I must thank the committee of Border Union for inviting me to stand in as judge for KCS following the withdrawal of the nominated judge. I understand the withdrawal was over health concerns so I hope that things are getting better. I also thank the committee for its hospitality and for providing me with Mason Thorn and Robert Bairns as my stewards who were exactly the sort of company any judge would appreciate.

It is some time since Andrew Brace wrote a prescient article on fashion, or fashionable, judging, warning of the dangers of one particular trait or characteristic becoming so significant in judges' eyes as to subvert the requirements laid down in the breed standard. At the time I read it with mild interest comfortable in my estimation that it could not happen in this breed. How wrong I have been proven to be ! The principal feature of a King Charles Spaniel is the head. It should be domed, curved from every viewpoint, front, side, and back. There is an increasing tendency to see sloping foreheads, and flat heads. Also the lips should meet, not have the upper lip overhang hound style which has also become prevalent. These features, especially, are foreign to the breed standard and should not be accepted. Although the entry for this show was very modest I was pleased to note that the majority of exhibits were unblemished by those kind of features.

Equally I was delighted with the quality of my major winners who would have held their own in any field. In the dogs the CC winner ( and BOB) and Res CC I found two of a kind, in bitches I had to decide between a starlet and a grand dame.

### Dogs

#### Grad (1)

1. Coupland's TUCHERISH ANDREW CARNEGIE. 3year old b/t. Well domed head. Darkest of eyes, wide black nose, with open nostrils. Plush cheeks finished with wide jaw and well defined lips. Luxurious length of ears. Moderate arched neck reaching to sound body with substantial rib cage and depth of chest. Long, rich coat with well set ontail. Body outline compact, cobby and reassuringly square with lovely level topline. Well boned legs. Good rear angulation. Sound movement shown energetically. RCC. A close decision between Carnegie and Black Magic with Black Magic having that little extra "something".

#### Post Grad(2.1 abs)

1. Maddison's JUSTACHARMA NORTHERN MAGIC 2 1/2 yr old tri. Good head. Strong jaw. Dark eyes. His expression would have been enhanced with a wider blaze Well broken coat of good texture. Well shaped body but still maturing and lacked a little in substance. Movement was a little erratic.

#### Limit (3.1)

1. Sidgwick's PAULIAN WHERE'S WALLY JW ShCM 6 yr tri. Good bone, substance and depth of chest. Good strength of bone in legs. Well domed skull, Eyes, ears and nostrils in a straight line with good pigmentation and dark eyes, enhanced by long ear fringing. Well broken coat covering a well formed body. Moved soundly and happily.

2. Tarabad and Whitman's COFTON ALL I HAV TO DO IS DREAMWITH KHATIBI 3 yr tri. This young man was really taking on a challenge. Well made in himself with a good, sound body, clear coat markings and flowing ears, his head structure did not match that of his older rival. Equally his movement lacked the same drive and assurance.

## Open (2)

1. Clarke's POLTOMIC BLACK MAGIC 3 1/2 yr b/t . I said earlier that my Dog CC and RCC were two of a kind. Going round together they were as a pair of bookends. However, this one lived up to his name with that extra little sprinkling of magic. All that I wrote about the Graduate winner could be overlaid here. Correctly shaped skull, full over the eyes, large, black open nostrils, well padded lips, that little but more eye catching topline, the little more gusto on the move. Deep chest, well sprung ribs, level topline, well set on tail, good bone. Moved with drive off well defined hocks. CC and BOB.

2. Coupland's AMBASSADOR BOY STAR OF TUCHERISH (IMP RUS) 4 1/2 yr ruby. Large, wide head, gently domed. Eyes well spaced in line with nose. Strongly built body at top of size range. Well constructed ribcage and great depth of chest. Level topline. Short coat with slight wave. Strong on the move if lacking exuberance.

## Bitch

### Puppy(1)

1. Tarabad and Whitman's BALDRAGON RUSSIAN AROUND WITH KHATIBI 11 mth tri. Lovely to watch on the move. Free, easy movement showing her enjoyment of being there. Well broken coat of silky texture. Well rounded head with quite a narrow blaze. Dark eyes, strong pigmentation. Solid body with level topline and overall square shape. Good spring of rib, and deep chest. Well boned legs with clear bend of stifle. BP.

### Junior (1)

1. McFarlane and Johnston's GRACIE MARADECO KING (IMP POL) 16 mth b/t Sweet head with good dome, dark eyes and good pigmentation. Neck finely arched into lightly built body which is slightly long at present. She demonstrated considerable energy and strength on the move. Unfortunately for her handler it was more directed at release from the ring than any showing , making assessment of movement very difficult.

### Yearling (1)

1. Tarabad and Whitman's BALDRAGON CENTRE STAGE WITH KHATIBI 15 mth tri. Lightly marked coat. Good rib construction with deep chest. Good bone to legs A little away from a square, cobby body WITH just a little extra length. Moved soundly, and happily. Her head needs a bit more height, exaggerated by her a prominent jaw line, a typical Charlie development phase.

### Post Grad (2.1)

1. Rix's BALDRAGONFAME GAME AT RICKSBURY 15 mth tri. Having encountered this young lady previously I was not surprised with how I found her, especially as during the intervening time she has gone on to make her mark in the show ring and already accrued a number of significant wins. Pleasingly domed head accentuated by a wide blaze. Dark eyes and well placed black nose with open nostrils, all framed with well feathered ears. Well proportioned neck leading on to compact, cobby body with well barrelled ribs and deep chest. Good bone to legs and sound rear quarters. Moved true and straight. A very promising starlet RCC.

## Veteran(1)

1. Willey and Siddle's CH. PENEMMA MISTY FOR ME JW bl. When asked her age and being told she was almost 9 yrs old it struck me that it was 8 years ago that my wife had awarded this bitch BP and RCC at this very show. Since the she has had a stellar career and even before today shown that she could still win with the best. Large dome accentuating good line of eyes, nose and ear level. Well cushioned below eyes. Good length of neck into firm, compact body of correct length. Sound construction allowed her to move round the ring with style and swagger as befits such a grand dame. Even the blemish of a slightly off colour nose could not deny her the CC

Judge Ron Stewart