

Thank you to the Club for making the day such a well organised event for the judge. I had so many people running around me, making everything run smoothly and keeping my paperwork up to date.

I have for some time, been aware of the many changes in IW type. The concentration on health is, of course of prime importance, but a drive to make sure that the young breeders now taking over the breed, are aware of the history of the breed, correct type, conformation, and how a hound should be presented in the ring in terms of condition, weight and muscle, has to be made soon. There has always been a varied opinion among breeders, as to what constitutes an ideal Irish Wolfhound, but at the moment we have such a wide range of 'type' that I think the time has come for an effort by the breed clubs to educate the next generation. It must be very confusing to newcomers to the breed to see such a wide variation in the ring. This is also part of the health and welfare of the breed.

I was delighted with my main winners.

BIS. CC Bokra Valencia

BOS CC Ch. Bokra Tudor

Mother and son from a kennel that must have been in the breed 40 yrs. Through all the ups and downs of long term breeding, still turning out top quality Wolfhounds, in spot on condition. The mark of true breeders.

RBIS RCC Ballyphelan Damson

Am I right in thinking the Ballyphelan kennel has been in the breed even longer than the Bokra kennel. Damson is rather different from my other winners. Her classic shape, good top-line, easy, balanced movement won her the RCC

Her mature curves won her the RBIS

RCC Rainster Azlan

Always double think giving a high award to a young male, but he couldn't be denied, long legged and shapely, with a beautiful easy, sound movement.

MALES

The main impression with many of the males was lumbering. The more I moved them, the more heavy-footed and ungainly they became. A lot of eye rolling from handlers when I sent the dogs around the ring again, but these hounds are meant to be athletes, by the second run around the ring many had their tongue hanging out and a heaviness to their movement. If they have trouble getting around the ring a few times, little chance of catching a wolf.

I was concerned that some of the young hounds seemed to be finished at a very young age. In my experience, there are very few finished young dogs that go on into mid life looking well. The old wish for young IW's to look like a colt, giving them a body to mature into, finishing when they were 4 or later, seems to have gone out the window. If we want to lengthen the life of our dogs, we are not doing them any favors, by breeding and selecting for early maturity. The veteran classes were two of the day's highlights, an 8 1/2 and 7 1/2 in the Males both looking wonderful going around the ring like youngsters. In veteran bitch I found my BIS and an 11 year old celebrating her birthday with cake and a clear heart test.

BITCHES

I was looking forward to judging the bitches, always a chance to find beautiful hounds. I will say with sadness, the quality of bitches in the UK is not what it was even when I last judged the breed here. There were, of course some first class hounds, but not the depth of quality that was a given just a few years ago

CONFORMATION AND MOVEMENT

There's nothing new in worrying about front construction, it is a problem we battle with at every breeding. But I think I saw more forward set shoulders and upper arms and more worryingly, ewe necks, than I've seen before. I wondered if the erratic movement up and down was the floor or the handling. When I started walking the dogs, it was obvious that the forward set fronts, giving a lack of stability, were the main cause of the problem.

In North America the problem with hind quarters, is often, an over steep croup and over long second thigh, this is rare in the UK. The most common problem I saw with hindquarters was a short croup, resulting in a rather high tail set and straighter angulation to the hock and knee join. This often gives sound movement going away, but in profile rather stilted powerless movement.

BACKS

Something I found at the Canadian National that I had not found in any great numbers before, were soft dippy backs. I did not expect to find them in the UK, but to my shock I found a lot. Much of this is to do with the forward set fronts, giving no support to the body, some of the dipping is the hound being overfed and under exercised.

HEADS

I always admired the beautiful heads on some of the great kennels of the past, but didn't have them, and learnt to live with that to achieve other things that were important to me. But even to my eye heads have become very plain, many with light eyes and heavy back skulls. Ears, although in some cases large were, on the whole carried well.

I had made a mention of loose sloppy lips on many of the dogs in Canada, there were a few in the UK, tends to go with the heads with heavy back skull. Needs to be watched as it very unsightly on a sight hound. Pigmentation was generally good, some pink splurges on lips. A few dogs had washed out colour around their eyes.

MOUTHS

As the KC have asked for judges of the breed to check for canines going into the roof of the top jaw, I will report on my findings. I found more than half a dozen hounds with one canine into the upper gum, one with both canines into the gum. All of these were in the younger hounds. A few dropped center incisors. Some weak under jaws and forefaces. Weak and narrow under jaws are becoming a problem worldwide and need to be addressed.

The teeth were of good size and much cleaner in the UK then the dogs I just judged in Canada.

I believe the jaw/teeth problems go along with the conformation/type/ condition problems. We now have people breeding with little understanding of the requirements of a stud dog or brood bitch. Also the selling of puppies with conformation and mouth faults as show dogs.

COATS

People that know me believe I'm obsessive about coats, but the coat is an intrinsic part of type. Coats were in general, pleasing, of correct texture and length with undercoat.

I was particular impressed at the red and black coats, I know how difficult it can be to get correct texture in these colours.

MALES

Minor Puppy Dog (2/1A)

1st Bogart's Nellwyn's Mr. Ozmandias 6 month old. Well grown red brindle, with coat coming through. Good bone, well proportioned head, with large, but well held ears. excellent bite. . High at his hind quarters at the moment which showed in his movement. When moved at the right pace, he got himself together and coped well with his, at the moment , unbalanced body. Delightful temperament.

Puppy Dog (5)

One, very nice puppy in this class, unfortunately, did not want to be handled.

1st Tebbutt & Wilde's Berwyck Arcangelo for Witchesbroom BPD 10mth. Well boned red brindle, with good coat texture. A little heavy in back skull, Again, has grown up at the hindquarters, throwing out his balance. Correct arch over loin. Moved soundly in this class, and for Best Puppy Dog. Unfortunately, by the end of the day, when it came to BPIS, he was having trouble dealing with his rear angulation. A nice dog in the making.

2nd Bogart's Nellwyn's Mr. Ozmandias 1st MPD

3rd Walsh's Bonaforte's Amaden's Wheaten, that, at the moment, has out grown himself and was standing upright at both ends.

Junior Dog (12/3A)

1st Redfern's Rainster Azlan RCC Tall, rangy red brindle., with good quality coat coming through. Just as he should be at his age. Balanced angles front and rear that shows in his easy sound movement. Excellent, clean bone. Strong neck, Correct forechest and long ribcage. Full, well muscled loins. Correct length and slope of croup and tail set. Powerful hindquarters. To be picky, I would like a tighter, dryer lip, and a longer thicker tail. In excellent condition. A very classy young dog. Will watch him with interest.

2nd Amoo's Bokra Anarchy to Sade 17 mths. red brindle, in hard condition. A more compact, workman, brindle hound. Little too much back skull. Would like to see more return of upper arm, a fault common on many of the young males. and at the moment falls away a little too steeply at the croup. Sound and strong.

3rd Timmins's Cornovi Keats Year old, Red sable, with rather a soft coat. Well made, balanced and sound. Excellent bone. Delightful disposition.

4th Sumner's Ballyphelan Blackadder

5th Beach's Rainster Astor

Yearling Dog (4)

1st Goodson's Ch. Moralach The Gambling Man A balanced, sound, brindle. Handsome headed dog, with a strong neck into well placed shoulders and correct return of upper arm. Free easy mover, and takes the eye on the go round. Would like to see more leg under him, especially at his young age.

2nd Treadwell's Hibeck Hugo Boss At Floydian Another substantial brindle dog in good condition. In excellent coat. with deep chest. Too much rise in the top line giving him a rather steep croup. Not the lay back of upper arm, of the first

3rd Jones Draugfara Minyelion Red brindle built on much longer lines. Well shaped hindquarters, standing rather upright on his forequarters. Obviously, unhappy with his handler and wanted to see his owner, this did not help his movement.

4th Beach's Rainster Astor

Novice Dog (3)

- 1st Holder & Howe's Mascotts Crackerjack** Given my coat obsession I hear myself taking a deep intake of breath when faced with a softer coat. Just to remind me not to fault judge, this young male is a good wolfhound under his coat. 16mth. substantial hound in excellent condition, he has well muscled, hindquarters. a strong back with arch over loin and sound ribbing. I would like to see a little more layback of shoulder and upper arm. Correct forechest. A classic head with balance to skull and muzzle. Light pigment around his eyes.
- 2nd Beach's Rainster Astor** 18 mth. Red brindle with coat of correct texture. Standing straight in hindquarters at the moment, giving him a rather square outline. Well ribbed with strong loins and in good condition.
- 3rd Addington's Harropine Dermot O'Leary of Wolfebrigg** Large boy, that has rather outgrown himself at the moment. Strong tall dog in good condition. well held ears. Dark pigmentation. Harsh coat.

Post Graduate Dog (7)

- 1st Stirling's Clanlily Baron of the Glen** Grey bridle, with the best movement in the class. Easy and active on his feet, in good condition. Excellent wire coat. Strong loin, with correct croup. A little plain in the head and soft in the ear. Correct bite. Houndy, but I find him a tad feminine.
- 2nd Dawson's Shalico Rolling Stone** Shorter, compact dog. Light on his feet. At 22 mths. I find him a little square, and wonder if there is enough for him to grow into.
- 3rd Cramphorn's Yelxba Perseus** An interesting, strong, very well muscled, young dog. Plain by the look of today, with a rather short foreface and a little too much width to the back skull. I would like to see him carry less weight, as his movement let him down and he is well made and balanced enough to move well. As a breeder I would put him in the 'useful dog' category.
- 4th Daw Purkayastha's Nellwyn's Mr. Tobias Among Neckrebagh**
- 5th Griffin's Kilrein Red River**

Mid Limit Dog (6) A very mixed class.

- 1st Treadwell's Hibeck Dizzy Rascal at Floydian** Powerful, masculine, cream brindle dog, in excellent coat, and good muscular condition. Strong neck and back, went well around the ring. A little plain in the head with round eye and flat ear.
- 2nd Timmin's Ballyphelan Panther Cornovi** Sound moving black, in good coat. My notes say, well made, balanced dog in small package. Would just like to scale him up a few times. Entirely opposite to the first dog, in a very mixed class. Light in eye. Well held ears.
- 3rd Webb's Driftcot Definitely Maybe to Inkleyboys** Would like to see this boy with a little less weight and a lot more muscle tone. He is a reasonably well made dog, but his lack of condition, let him down on the move.
- 4th Das Purkayastha's Shanimarle Charles Among Neckrebagh**
- 5th Pask's Baronglen the Lawman**

Limit Dog ((3)

- 1st Sumner's Ballyphelan Othello** Black, with surprisingly harsh textured coat, not the easiest thing to achieve in this colour. Balanced construction, front and rear. When sent around the ring, Othello kept moving on a balanced stride. Like to see more leg under him, and with the second dog in this class. As with many of the larger males, I would like to see him in much harder condition.
- 2nd Goodall's Driftcot Billy Elliot** An honest, well made dog. Head less houndy than Othello's, but with a darker, kind eye. His soft condition and extra weight failed him on the move, as he tired, he softened in his top line.
- 3rd Dawson's Conmeryl Detroit by Shalico** In this company, he looked a little square. Well made, and strong

Open Dog (5/1A)

- 1st Surrell & Coleman's Ch. Bokra Tudor CC BOS** Strong, sound, upstanding, nearly three year old. When so many of the hounds were puffing and sagging when sent around the ring twice, this dog, as well as his kennel mates, weren't even panting. In perfect weight and condition, he has the commanding appearance of his BIS dam, beautiful flow of neck into a strong back and loin, great bone and a balanced, easy movement. Not overdone in any way. It was interesting in BIS, standing with his dam, how unfinished he looked, so I expect to see him just keep improving in the next couple of years. On a personal note, after the show when researching my winners. I found that this was his eighth CC. Following him up on IW Pedigree I see that he has an 8 1/2 year old Father as well as his beautiful 7 1/2 year old Mother, but has been used just ONCE, and that in his own kennel. After the show I was asked if I thought if there were any good dogs left to use in the UK. Well, yes, but you have to see them, not just follow the latest trend.
- 2nd Redfern's Ch. Rainster Rory** Tall, rangy red brindle. Handsome dog, with commanding appearance. He seemed uncomfortable in the ring today. Houndy head with dark pigmentation, strong neck and good laid-back of shoulder. Balanced confirmation both front and rear, and sound, just not holding himself together today.

3rd McMillian & McCall's Ballalyn's Shakey Grey brindle, with well pigmented head. Strong, well conditioned dog, that moved soundly . Rather flat in the top line.

4th Sumner's Dukesarum Taddeus

Veteran Dog (2) Two excellent hounds.

1st McMillian & McCall's Sade Rossi at Ballalyn Eight and half year old in super condition. When I turned around to see my class, I was reminded of Seplecur Tommy. Pleasing head with kind eye. Excellent bone. Sound, and strong movement. A credit to his owner/breeder.

2nd Holder & Howe's Ch. Mascotts Mantovani Longer cast then first. Houndy head with dark eye and beautiful held ears. Moved well in all directions, was just softening in his top line

BITCHES

Veteran Bitch (9/4A)

1st Surrell & Coleman's Bokra Valencia CC. BIS Strong and beautiful, of great quality. Loved her in this class and as I judged the bitches I kept recalling her. When I saw her in the bitch line up, her type and beauty, won the day. Head carriage is something we seem to have lost in the breed, with it comes commanding appearance. Head held high, does not mean upright shoulders and a ewe neck. This bitches head carriage is classic. I remember, some years ago, making the same comment about some of her ancestors, good to see such an important feature is passing down. Wonderful top line, held both standing and moving. Great strength of back and loin. All balance ,no exaggeration. For me, I could read the breed standard around her. I would take her home in a heartbeat. Also won the brood bitch cup, and the confirmation and movement cup.

2nd Pain's Ch. Ravensbeech Britannia An old favorite of mine. Good to see her looking so well. Still and lovely, in great condition and coat. Her beautiful head with its soft expression won her the head cup.

3rd Gilbert's Anstyarna Geal Speir I apologize, I seem to have no notes on this bitch. I see from my photograph that she is a shapely red, in what seems to be excellent coat.

4th Sheppard's Goldswift Snow Leopard

5th Gilbert's Madiamoy Minnie Mouse to Anstyarna

Minor Puppy Bitch (1)

1st Jackaman's Nellwyn's Miss Katrina Well grown, 6 mth. old red brindle. Not being handled by her owner and causing some ruction, but having fun. Lovely head, very dark eye and good bite. When she moved she was quite sound, although growth has made her unbalanced at the moment. Nice puppy.

Puppy Bitch (2/1A)

1st Sumner's Dukesarum Tegan BPIS A very attractive, strong and powerful red brindle bitch, with an easy ground covering gait. Holds herself so well. Very promising puppy.. Beautifully handled. Hear that she, her Mother and litter mates have a very interesting history. Mum was second in PG and a handsome litter brother appeared in PD, but didn't want to be handled.

Junior Bitch (7/1A)

1st Evens-Jones & Halsall's Kracjik of First Avenue This very well made young lady is so well balanced, your eye almost misses her. With an inexperienced handler she comes into her own on the move. Balanced, ground covering movement in profile, sound up and down. keeps her top line both standing and moving. Most promising.

2nd Johnson's Nellwyns Miss Pollyanna Heavier boned, red brindle. Having two handlers seemed to unsettle her. Arch over loin and well angulated hindquarters. At the moment she is standing upright in her front, making her back seem overly long. Would like to see her carrying a little more weight.

3rd Morris's Amarach Cloghda Black with excellent cost texture, pleasing head and expression with beautifully held ears. At the moment a bitch of two halves. Her hind quarters well angulated and strong, her front, at the moment, upright

4th Forret-Close's Tapsalteeie May I Return

5th Scott's Knallasen's Lady Gaga

Yearling Bitch (4/1A)

1st Bradley's Glengail Nniamh Certainly in my group of top class bitches. Excellent coat texture, and in fabulous condition. Looked well on the move, kept her top line. Pleasing head with level plains, a little full in the eye, good dentition. Needs time to drop into her front angulation to give her balance. Look forward to seeing her in a year or so

2nd Dawson's Shalico Tumbling Dice Honest, workmanlike brindle bitch with excellent coat texture and in very good condition. Deep chest, strong back and loin. Rather narrow coming and going. Looked shapely in profile movement.

3rd Forret-Close's Buadhach Blanaid from Tapsalteerie Another workmanlike bitch, rather too much back skull, but with a kind eye and strong pigmentation, Large, but will carried ears. Went well around the ring. Would like to see her carrying a little more weight and condition.

Novice Bitch (4/1A)

1st Gregory's Killoughery Eineen Shapely, long legged bitch in excellent condition. Well ribbed back with deep chest, forechest, and strong tuck up into shapely hindquarters. Would like a little more angulation to forequarters.

2nd Macleod's Braehead Rhiona of Brachan Built on a smaller scale than the winner. With a houndy head, a little more square in body type. Kept her shape in profile, but rear movement narrow and lacking power.

3rd Dolling's Madiamoy Miss Money Box of Charobie Bigger, longer body bitch. Pleasing head, rather fiery eye, dark pigmentation and well held ears. Very mature for her, just two years. For balance, I would like longer legs.

Post Graduate Bitch (14/5A)

1st Goodall's Driftcot Erin Brockovich Well made, brindle bitch, with dark pigment and correct dentition. Very sound in all directions, and in lovely condition. Powered around the ring. Still very young, so would like to see her a little more rangy at this age. A very pleasing bitch.

2nd Sumner's Cailin Siobhan at Dukesarum Red brindle, shapely bitch. Houndy head with dark pigmentation, a little light in eye. Not quite the lay back of shoulder of the winner, but correct return of upper arm. Excellent feet and bone. Powered off her strong hocks. Another very pleasing bitch.

3rd Stirling's Clanlily Sky of Diamonds Yet another pleasing bitch. Red brindle, in lovely condition with excellent bone and coat. Just wasn't looking quite as balanced today, as 1st. and 2nd., but three very nice bitches.

4th Gregory's Killoughery Eineen

5th Vaudin's Braewisian Alice O'Mara of Torteval

Mid Limit Bitch (6/2A)

1st Surrell & Coleman's Bokra Tuscany Very striking bitch, with houndy head. Although nearly three, looks much younger. Rather unbalanced today, standing a little upright on her forehead, and sinking on her hindquarters. This affected her movement. Still has a way to go to maturity, would love to see her in a year. In perfect weight and condition.

2nd Box's Driftcot Evita Five-year-old brindle bitch, not the scope of the winner. Very nice underline, coat texture. Softening rather in the top line.

3rd Lockett's Amarach Aife de Caversmill Higher up on the leg than second. Rather boxy in head, but with excellent under jaw, dark eye and pigment. Just lacking strength of quarters

4th McCall's Mclight Star Light

Limit Bitch (8/3A)

1st Sumner's Ballyphelan Damson RCC RBIS Shapely, black bitch. Holds her outline on the move. Balanced angles front and rear, easy sound movement. Yes, I'd like a darker eye and a little more length of leg, but her many virtues override this. In the bitch line up her beautiful curves, and easy movement won her the RCC and RBIS.

2nd Court's Ravensbeech Valeria Striking bitch, caught my eye and she came into the ring and good top line with arch over loin. Liked her length of leg. Found her little forward fronted which makes her body looks very long. A very pleasing bitch.

3rd Morris's Amarach Aidah Bitch in excellent harsh coat. Clean, well pigmented head with tidy ears. Once again her rather forward set front unbalances her body.

4th Donaldson's Rainster Rosa at Kirkcarswell

5th Ashby's Ashgroave Tumbelgum

Open Bitch (10/6A)

1st Pain's Revensbeech Veritas Tall, rangy grey bitch, with very pleasing head. Sound strong hindquarters, fair angles in front, with forechest and deep, long ribcage. Standing a little high on her hind quarters, today, and in the bitch line up, she was losing her top line.

2nd Tebbutt's Ch. Cuuladh Sionainn Caredig Smaller, brindle bitch with an attractive houndy head. Today, she was doing herself no favors, standing straight in her hindquarters, throwing out her top line. Looking much better on the move. In excellent condition.

3rd Neal's Ch. Mascotts Another Dreamer at Cahmega Another 3rd. place that I have no recorded notes on. From the photo I took, she is a good fronted grey bitch, with a well carried head on a strong neck. Today, she was sinking in her top line.

4th Macleod's Seplecur Little Chippa of Brachan

Dave Malley Memorial Beginners Class (13/3A/2WD)

- 1st Treadwell's Hibeck Dizzy Rascal at Floydian** The winner of mid limit dog and looked very handsome in this class.
- 2nd Vaudin's Braewisan Alice O' Mara of Toreval** Houndy, long leg, red brindle bitch. Would like a little more front angulation, to compliment her hindquarters.
- 3rd Forret-Clos's Tapsalteeie May I Return** Cream brindle, workman like bitch. Strong head, very well held ears.
- 4th Treadwell's Hibeck Hugo Boss At Floydian**
- 5th Broughton's Madiamoy Moondust over Montisacre**

Judge: Anne Webb