

ENGLISH SHETLAND SHEEPDOG CLUB 2020 CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

2ND July 2021 – Bitches, Judge Barbara Thornley

They say every cloud has a silver lining and the cloud caused by the Club's 2020 Championship show having to be cancelled due to Covid found its silver lining in the re-arranged show held at Stoneleigh on 2nd July 2021. This year's Summer Open show had to be cancelled for the same reasons, and although the KC agreed the date for the postponed 2020 Championship show to go ahead in July, it was never absolutely certain that it would happen, almost until the beginning of that week. Our Championship show is always an indoor event in October and when it was re-arranged it was at the time when all events had to be held outside. Luckily Stoneleigh has outside rings and plenty of room for spectators to socially distance so there was no need to look for another venue.

When we arrived on the morning of the show the first thing to see were the two very large rings of beautifully mown grass and plenty of other space outside the rings for spectators. As I do love to be able to see Shelties really striding out, the sight of these large rings made me quite excited - and that was before I saw any of the exhibits!

Most people know by now that my priorities when assessing a Sheltie are correct breed type, along with correct conformation. I have been told I am a shoulder and upper arm fanatic, maybe that is true, but if the front angulation of the dog is correct, so many other things fall into place automatically. The movement and the overall balance of the dog is determined by its correct conformation. I did find some really good examples of correct conformation and when I watched the final line up of bitches moving around the big ring in the lovely sunshine, all of them had flowing movement covering the ground with ease and were a joy to see.

I came away from the show feeling very happy with the lovely entry of bitches which were a pleasure to judge, and also with a little more confidence about the future of the breed than I may have had on previous occasions. I thought size was more uniform, there were a few big girls and some little tots who probably won't make the size, but generally size was okay.

However, I find it strange that many judges mention poor conformation in their reports, yet there is some evidence that breeders aren't listening or even trying to put this problem right, or maybe is it because they don't understand what goes on under the coat? I did find, as always, some bitches with poor movement, some very out at elbow and some who have to lift their legs high in the front to compensate for having a short steep upper arm. That is a pity because some of those were of good breed type with lovely heads and eyes, but a Sheltie is a working dog and to do that work it must be properly constructed.

Whenever I judge I always have a secret hope that I will come across a top class dog I haven't seen before and don't know. This year my luck was in – a beautiful blue merle came into the

ring in the Novice class, together with some other lovely bitches and I could hardly believe my eyes. My report describes what I saw and my thoughts at that time. Obviously because of Covid and no shows, there are quite a few dogs who still qualify for Novice, but it was a stunning class!

This was the fourth time I have had the pleasure of judging the ESSC championship show and, as the Club requires a ten year gap between appointments, I have been going for quite a few years, but this show was the one I will remember. It was such a lovely day, lots of sunshine, a very happy atmosphere around the rings, some beautiful Shelties to judge and I loved every minute of the day. Thank you to my two stewards, Stuart Gruszka who used his voice to help everyone hear the numbers to mark their catalogues (no award boards allowed this year), and to Jean Tuck who religiously cleaned the table between each exhibit to follow Covid regulations. As it is the members who choose the judges for this show every year, thank you to all of you and thank you for the lovely entry – a fantastic day.

VETERAN (9,2a)

- 1.** Main's SHENACHIE FLAKEY DOVE – a beautifully constructed blue girl, the best mover in this class, her lovely neck and level topline together with a very good shoulder and upper arm were evident as she flowed effortlessly around the ring. She has a balanced head but maybe a little more stop would help to complete a very attractive picture.
- 2.** Gruszka's SAMPHREY SHADES OF BLUE – another very well put together blue girl, a perfect size with a well arched neck and level topline. Her head is balanced and she has a sweet expression, she too is a very sound and positive mover, but she doesn't quite have the length of stride in front of 1. Having said that some handlers have longer legs than others which does make it easier for them to stride out when they move their dogs, thus enabling the dog to cover more ground.
- 3.** Elder's ELLENYORN GEM OF CARA

MINOR PUPPY (2)

- 1.** Stafford's RANNERDALE HONEY BEE – lovely sable girl in full coat with the most beautiful head and eye, topped by perfectly carried ears so she has the elusive Sheltie expression which is a delight to see. She has a very good reach of neck, level topline and strong well angled hindquarters, however she does lack front angulation which tends to hold her back on the move.
- 2.** Dunn's SHELLERY BORN TO SHINE – a little star in the making, so much going for her in the way of conformation which is very good, with the correct angulation in front and behind. Her head is balanced and she has well carried ears. Plenty of confidence even though she was a lockdown baby and she moves really well. She just needs to grow and develop in head, but plenty of time for that.

PUPPY (6,1a)

1. Robinson's LAVIKA LUCID DREAMS – already a star, this beautiful blue baby has it all. She is spot on for size, correct breed type, perfectly balanced throughout, correct conformation with a very good shoulder and upper arm which is obvious when she moves, also with the correct bend of stifle to drive her forward. Her head is very well balanced with a flat skull, well filled foreface and good underjaw and her eye is well placed and shaped so she has a sweet feminine expression. She and her young handler are so in tune watching each other all the time and when they move they stride out together. A great team, I was pleased to award her Best Puppy Bitch and with the agreement of my co judge Best Puppy In Show.
2. Hateley's LIZMARK LULLABY MOON OVER MOHNESEE – another blue girl, with a very attractive outline, good reach of neck and level topline with a good sweep over the croup ending in the correct tail length. Her head is well balanced with a flat skull and just the right amount of stop and she is a very good showgirl. She is well balanced overall and presents an attractive picture in profile, however I would just like to see more positive front movement.
3. Raaff's MOLSON MISS CONGENIALITY FOR STORMRAVEN

JUNIOR (5,1a)

1. Riding's ACHOR'S SURPRISE ORISSA FOR TORINSKA – elegant sable built on lovely flowing lines. She is well balanced with very good conformation which produces effortless movement around the ring. I really liked her profile, the flowing line starts from behind her ears and is unbroken on the topline and over the croup until it reaches the end of her tail, and she holds her neck and topline well on the move. Her head is well balanced with a nicely shaped and placed eye which could be a bit darker, but overall a very nice youngster who has promise.
2. Moore's NATARA SPARKLING LADY – on first glance she took my eye because of her excellent reach of neck, correct front angulation and her total overall balance. At the moment she stands a little high over the loin but she is still a puppy and hopefully when she finishes growing her topline will level. Her head is well balanced with a well placed and shaped eye, at the moment her ears are quite heavy so just spoils her expression slightly but another promising youngster.
3. Norris's SANDYVALLEY SHADES OF GOLD

YEARLING (4)

1. Stock's SHEMIST SUMMER ROMANCE – so much to like about this girl. She is of excellent breed type, with a sweet expression, flat skull and good foreface. She has a really well arched neck and a level topline, correct slope over the croup and well angled hindquarters. She is well balanced overall and her movement reflects her excellent conformation. At the moment she just seems a little immature but when she fills out I'm sure she will do some useful winning.

2. Stafford's RANNERDALE ABRACADABRA – so much like her young kennel mate in puppy and the same remarks apply to her. Her head is straight out of the text book and she has the sweetest expression enhanced by her perfectly carried ears. This super head is carried on a well arched neck which flows into her level topline, she has good rear angulation. My problem here is a battle between super breed type and correct conformation, then my thoughts go back to the job a Sheltie was built to do and in order to do that job it has been built correctly, so I had to penalise her for a very short steep upper arm, just one fault in the midst of such quality elsewhere, but it does inhibit her front movement.
3. Dunn's SHELLERY IN YOUR DREAMS

NOVICE (16,1a)

This was an amazing class, full of quality Sheltie bitches.

1. Hardman and Simpson's– BLUE PANDA AMONG CLEMWOOD here was the much awaited Sheltie I'd never seen before! Absolutely stunning was what I said into my recorder, so satisfying to go over on the table with everything in the right place at the right angle, then to watch her move is a delight, she just flows around the ring covering the ground with ease and drive. Her head is just as the standard calls for, it is balanced with a lean flat skull, just the right amount of foreface, a well placed and shaped eye and neat well carried ears. Then to top it all, she is a really good coloured blue, no big black patches, just splashed and marbled with black. From an entry of much quality I was delighted to be able to award her the CC and then together with my co-judge she was awarded BIS. She was the icing on the cake.
2. Morrison's KETIM FUTURE EDITION - a very good example of correct breed type, no exaggerations and full of quality. She has a well balanced head with a flat skull, correct foreface and stop, and a really well placed and shaped eye. Her overall balance is excellent and she has a very good reach of neck, level topline and slope over the croup. Correct angulation in front and rear with the resulting free flowing movement. Slightly smaller than 1. but well within the size the standard calls for.
3. Hateley's LIZMARK LULLABY MOON OVER MOHNESEE

TYRO (3)

- 1.** Hateley's LIZMARK LULLABY MOON OVER MOHNESEE
- 2.** Mottram's LUNDECOCK'S THERE'S NO LIMIT AT LOCHKAREN – excellent breed type, spot on for size and she has much quality. She has a balanced head with a very dark eye, giving a sweet expression all topped by neat ears. In good coat, she is very well put together both in front and at the back, she has a well arched neck and topline, strong hindquarters and she moved very well.
- 3.** Stock's SHEMIST SUMMER ROMANCE

GRADUATE (16,2a)

- 1 Hill's MOLSON MOVIE STAR – pale sable girl of much quality and very good breed type. Well balanced throughout, she has a superb reach of neck which enhances her shape and elegance, this runs into a level topline and slope over the croup. Her head is balanced, the correct wedge shape with just the right amount of stop and she has the darkest of almond shaped eyes. Her conformation is excellent and she moved with drive and elegance. Not in her best bib and tucker, but her overall quality won her this large class.
- 2 Robinson's LAVIKA SPRING QUEEN – lovely tri girl out of the top drawer, she has excellent conformation is spot on for size and in lovely well fitting coat. Her head is well balanced with a flat skull, well filled foreface and neat well carried ears. I like her overall make and shape, today she was in a hurry to get round the ring and although her handler did her best to slow her down, she decided to set the pace which made it just a bit difficult to assess her movement.
- 3 Whittington's TIGHNESS THE TIDE IS HIGH

POST GRADUATE (12, 2a)

1. Pierce's PHILHOPE TASTE OF SUMMER – I really like this beautiful sable girl who is a very good example of correct breed type. So well balanced with no exaggerations, her excellent conformation is evident when she moves around the ring. She is in lovely coat but not so much that her beautiful outline is hidden, her well arched neck, level topline and sweep over the croup is exactly as the standard calls for. Her head is also well balanced with a sweet feminine expression. Great showgirl.
2. Hardman's SEAVALL TARAN – striking tricolour of excellent make and shape, very much a working type of Sheltie, not dripping in coat but it is her general appearance which appeals and she moves like a working dog with purpose and drive. She is a stronger type than the class winner and I would like her skull to be leaner, but she fits the standard in most other aspects.
3. Hickling's SHELTI SHA BELL OF THE BALL AT NATARA.

MID LIMIT (8, 1a)

1. Whittington's ESTERBON THREE KISSES FOR TIGHNESS – eye catching tricolour in really tip top condition with the shiniest coat which is groomed to perfection. A dream to go over on the table because everything is in the right place at the right angle and I just knew when I put my hands on her she was going to move beautifully, which she does. She has a very well balanced head with a well placed and shaped eye, just the right amount of stop and her correct ears all go together to give her a sweet feminine expression. She has matured into a very beautiful Sheltie. I was pleased to award her the RCC in very good company.
2. Tinker's RUSCOMBE MOSAIC – blue girl of good colour, another well made Sheltie with all the right components to enable her to move really well round the ring. She has a very well balanced head with a flat skull and good foreface, good bone and substance. I liked her overall breed type and quality.
3. Roberts' MALAROC RAINFALL

LIMIT (5,1a)

1. Hill's MOLSON MONEYPENNY – thought I was seeing double here, because this girl's litter sister had won graduate, so for a minute I thought she should have been with the seen dogs, but having such an efficient steward I knew it must be a different bitch. So all the comments I made for Movie Star apply to Moneypenny, but she did have a little more coat than her sister. They are both so alike and good examples of excellent breed type and quality. They should win brace classes hands down!!
2. Morrison's JONTYGRAY GOLDEN DREAM AT KETIM – spot on for size, she is very well balanced with excellent conformation overall. I love her head which is so well balanced, correct stop and with a beautifully shaped and placed dark eye, a very good example of true sheltie expression.
3. Dunn's NERAKLEE CHARDONNAY AT SHELLERY

OPEN (5, 1a)

1. Hateley's MOHNESEE MILLYBELLE – Lovely to look at in profile, like her shape with a well arched neck and level topline. Her head is balanced and she has a sweet expression. Going over her on the table I found a good lay back of shoulder and strong well angled hind quarters but her upper arm is short and steep which does make a difference to her front movement. However because she is so well balanced overall, her profile movement is good, and because she is a very good example of breed type she won the class.
2. Deveson's JANETSTOWN JE SUIS – I remember this girl from a puppy and always liked her for her true breed type, size and overall quality. Now approaching her veteran status, she hasn't changed or coarsened at all, she still has the happy Sheltie expression she had as a youngster and moves like one!
3. Bray's SHELDRIDGE CHANTILLY LACE AT LIANBRAY

SPECIAL OPEN (SABLE AND WHITE) (6, 2a)

1. Main's SHENACHIE LYRIC OF LIGHT – sable girl of outstanding shape and conformation, super reach of neck and level topline she is a pleasure to watch on the move as are all the Shelties carrying this affix, they are built as working dogs should be. If I had a criticism it would be that although her head is balanced, I would prefer more stop, but in the scheme of things she is so well made I had to forgive that.
2. Hayhurst's MILESEND SWEET MELODY OF KEYCHARM – another girl of super breed type with a really well balanced head and sweet expression, she too is built on racy lines and consequently her movement is effortless and she covers the ground well.
3. Ritchie's Jaelis MYSTIQUE REFLECTION

SPECIAL (OPEN TRICOLOUR, BLACK & TAN OR BLACK & WHITE) (3, 1a)

1. Robinson's LAVIKA BLACK BEAUTY – Excellent Breed type and perfect for size, this girl is in excellent condition, her gleaming black coat fits her well and her muscle tone is amazing.

She has balanced head, a well shaped and placed eye giving a true sweet Sheltie expression. Because of her overall balance and excellent conformation she moves with elegance and drive.

2. Westerman's ONTOCO DELIGHTFUL DAISY MAE – again I was impressed with the condition of this girl, she is in full coat and she is very well made, so flows around the ring easily. She's well balanced and well constructed, her head is balanced but I would prefer a more almond shaped eye.

SPECIAL OPEN (BLUE MERLE) (4, 1a)

1. Dunn's MONHESEE DIAMONDS N PEARLS – eye catching blue who is of good breed type, I particularly like her shape, good reach of neck and level topline, balanced head with a pleasing and sweet expression. Well put together in front and at the rear, she is a bit "chunky" over the ribs but that didn't impede her very good movement.
2. Kennedy's LIRREN BLUE GAMBLE AT DONBELEY – very similar in type to 1. Another well put together Sheltie who moves as her conformation suggests. Balanced head and good ear carriage, I would prefer a more almond shaped eye.
3. Waldron's SHELLAMOYED MADE IN HEAVEN AT FRECIA

SPECIAL OPEN BREEDERS (2, 1a)

- 1.** Gruszka's SAMPHREY SEA BREEZE – stood alone today but well deserves her first place as she is of very good breed type, well constructed with correct front angulation, good strong hindquarters all of which allows her to really move well around the ring She has a balanced head with a flat skull and well filled foreface, sweet expression and well carried ears. Very nice.

SPECIAL OPEN WORKING (3)

1. Edwards' CASTLEROSE THAT'S THE SPIRIT – a real working type with the construction needed to do a day's work. She probably tops the measure, although her very long, elegant neck may cause this to be an optical illusion! Her conformation is so good and her long tail balances her when she moves, really striding out and covering the ground well. She doesn't have much coat but nothing to hide.
2. Wallis's PEARTBROOK PERLE D'ORE – in a way, quite the opposite to the winner of the class. She has almost too much coat which is beautifully groomed and presented, but it does hide her outline, to completely balance this outline her legs could be longer. I like her head which is well balanced with a flat skull and neat ears. Her conformation is good and she moves quite well.
3. Wallis's SHOUGIES NIGHTSTAR