

Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit)

15 / 6 / 2018

WHAT A TREAT IT WAS to read the Three Counties critique in the car on the way home from the show. Somewhat akin to FCI procedures but, without a secretary, Mark Cocozza typed his critiques for 1st and 2nd in each class as judging proceeded and, shortly afterwards, uploaded these onto the Kennel Club's new Judges' Critiques website. One could forgive the few typos and the critique lacking the niceties afforded by the luxury of time in return for the speed and efficiency. No waiting for months, when the show becomes a distant memory, or those other occasions that we all waste our time searching week after week when the judge has no intentions at all of submitting a critique.

DCC, his 4th, went to Teresa Eaton's Ch Debucher Unique with Reserve also going to her with Linphil Kili. From Limit, BCC and BOB went to Linda Lewis' Tangaer Chamlee with RBCC to our Beaujons Ugly Betty of Monkham's JW ShCM. In the competition for BP between our Beaujons Vagabond of Monkham's and Ceri McEwan's Marunnel Miss Adelaide, BP went to the bitch. There was no award for BV.

Following the show, the critique gave rise to many comments on social media, even by those who weren't there, and it is disappointing that some were none too polite. We enter a show for a judge's opinion and far too often we see bland, generic critiques that tell us absolutely nothing about the entry or the judge's understanding of breed type, if we get one at all! From that perspective it is refreshing to read something that clearly shows the judge's thinking and breed specific observations, even if it is not as rosy and positive as many would like.

Most of the online comments have fallen on the manner in which the critique was written. The introduction of the KC's Judges Critiques facility allows for the FCI method of instant production. Snappy critique writing calls for quick thinking and use of trigger words, noting not only a dog's virtues but its weaker points as well. In FCI countries forthright negative points can be expected such as "Nails too long" or "Tail carried gaily". Alongside the positive, this helps form a balanced picture of that particular dog, all combining to aid speedy production. Of course, this invariably strips away the niceties of, for example, changing "Light eye" to "Would have preferred a darker eye". These are thoughts and notes made without embellishment, not to be mistaken for a lack of courtesy. Would exhibitors prefer to see a critique published within hours of judging or a polished one that appears in print weeks afterwards when most have forgotten about the show and moved onto the next ones?

Fran Mitchell has an entry of 16 at Border Union this weekend. Then on to Blackpool, again with no CCs, where Karl-Eric Johanssen (Swe) also has 16. Going further ahead, Serena Parker has 32 entered at East of England.

Lucky recipients of June's Limited Odds Draw money are Linda Jones with £15, Joan Stallard £10 and Phil Reid £5.

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