

G.S.D.C. of Manitoba Inc. Specialty Show

Saturday, August 18, 2012
Judge – Jack Kilgour, Vancouver, BC



Every year I try to get "home" to Winnipeg 4 or 5 times to visit with Mom and Dad. This trip was extra special as I had the privilege of judging my old Club's annual Specialty Show! I was grateful for the invitation, and it was nice to have my Parents ringside to watch me judge.

This club has had its share of ups and downs, but resilience and determination is at its core! The few working members are here for the betterment of our breed and we thank them for that. The Club's Executive made the decision several years ago to hold their 2 specialties and the Regional Futurity/Maturity show in conjunction with a 4-show, all-breed club. That is seven (7) shows for German Shepherd Dogs in four days!!!

Their decision paid off in Specialty Show entries as I believe they hosted the second largest entry in Canada this year, second only to the Nova Scotia Club. Club members made sandwiches and other great snacks and offered them free of charge to all exhibitors and spectators.

This club held a ringside mentoring program on the day I judged. Club President, Deanne Jur organized the event and long-time, respected judge Sally Hayden (who judged the specialty the day prior) was the Lead Mentor. The handout package was comprehensive, with thanks in part to Joan Fox's unwavering support. Our Parent Club donated DVDs from our 2011 Education Seminar Series so each participant would have one.

This education initiative received an impressive response. Almost 20 All-Breed judges and German Shepherd Dog Fanciers were signed up for the event. Sally had some great discussions with the ringside learners. Furthermore, she fully supports the G.S.D.C. of Canada Education Committee's idea of sponsoring these mentoring events at all regional specialties next year. Great work breaking the path Deanne and Sally!

The Club's after-show dinner was a definite highlight for me!! I'm not sure why more local Clubs don't try to offer one. They are reason to celebrate friendships in our German Shepherd Dog community. We have the opportunity to congratulate the top conformation and performance winners and we also get to host out-of-town exhibitors with our homegrown hospitality! Dog shows are about more than going to the show grounds to win the blue ribbon, aren't they? Shouldn't they be?

Kudos and thank you to the dinner's Master of Ceremonies, Ken Jur. Ken, who is Deanne's son, can capture and hold a room's attention with his every word. He brings young energy, humour, confidence and sensitivity to the equation and it made for such an enjoyable evening. Ken is also an excellent German Shepherd Dog handler and I hope he stays involved with our noble breed. We need his enthusiasm, professionalism and talent.

Long-time Club member, Donna Cameron, was this year's Futurity/Maturity judge and she brought the room to tears with her words of gratitude. Donna is no longer able to own a German Shepherd Dog, but she emotionally shared how much she appreciated getting her hands on one again. Congratulations Donna on your excellent job of judging the show, and thank you for everything you've done for our breed and with our breed!

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Critiques

General Observations:

The class male entry was low, but the overall quality of them was very good. The male who had the best structure and motion did not exhibit confidence on this day and therefore was at the end of the line.

The class females were a better entry and deep in quality. In winners I considered the 6-9 puppy, the Bred-By and the Open Bitch. I had the pleasure of re-judging the Bred-By bitch in a highly competitive Herding Group later that day. She made the cut and was right up there in contention.

Judging the Best of Breed class was by far the highlight of my day!! Thank you to the owners of these beautiful specials. I had eleven (11) dogs to work with and the quality was excellent. I would have preferred a little more confidence from 2 of the 4 male Specials.

1st 6-9 Puppy Male, Winner's Male Zytut's Crossing Rivers

This medium-sized, black and tan youngster leaped into the ring and did his best to have fun. He is confident, cocky and full of mischief. He reacted confidently on his temperament test. His head is appealing with strong ears, dark eyes and a good length of muzzle. I would prefer him broader in the skull and deeper in the underjaw, even for his young age. I appreciate his ideal proportions, strong back, good front and rear angulation and nice croup. Coming at me he is clean, going away he was a little loose and close in the hocks. He didn't take a lot of strides (galloping, chasing and bouncing being more his style), but the ones he took were effortless and ground-covering. He's a very good one!

1st Open Bitch, Winners Bitch, Best of Winners, Best of Breed Clementine of Oh-My

This medium-sized, elegant, black and tan bitch gaited into the ring and I was immediately impressed. Effortless, suspended and outreaching in side-gait, she owned the ring on every lap. She is feminine with a lovely head, beautiful ears, eyes, head and muzzle. She was approachable on her temperament test. She is exactly what the standard refers to when it says our breed should "present an outline of smooth curves rather than corners." Her neck is long, her shoulder blade is set at a correct angle and well laid back, and her upper arm is of equal length and at a matching angle. Her back is strong and her underline is deep. Her croup is long and gradually sloping, and her hindquarter matches her well-angulated front. I would prefer a tighter foot and more muscle mass through her upper and lower thigh. Her pasterns turn out ever so slightly coming at me and she's a little loose in the hocks going away. I believe age and lack of optimal conditioning are factors in the most of the faults I mention. From the side, the bitch was undeniably in a league of her own on this day. She moved effortlessly and with suspension, covering the maximum ground with the minimum steps, keeping her feet low to the ground at any speed. One to watch for – in a word, she's "breathtaking."

Best of Opposite Sex – G.S.D.C. of Manitoba President's Trophy Winner Ch. Penhall Crown N Anchor Lincoln

This is a medium to large-sized black and red dog that caught my eye from the moment he entered the Specials class. He has magnificent type and character. His reaction to my temperament test showed me he is very confident, approachable and somewhat aloof. His head is masculine, with a good eye, skull, muzzle and underjaw. His ears are slightly offset. His neck is long, his withers high and he has a nice front assembly. His back is strong and his underline is ideal. He has a good length of leg. His croup is a little short. His hindquarter matches his front. He is clean coming and going. This is too much dog (physically) for his owner/handler. At times he wanted to move out and she struggled to keep up with him, often yanking the lead and holding him back from achieving what he can in side-gait. That tight, jerking lead made his back look questionable at times. Other times he was busy being a male, nose down, grass-surfing the girly smells. I was patient and the dog began to get his act together enough to start working. His sidegait is effortless, with nice front reach and good rear follow through. I'd like to see a little better under-reach. In addition to the Best of Opposite Sex award, he won the Club's President's trophy, awarded to the top-placing member's dog. "Lincoln" is the one I'd want to take home from this show..... to toss a ball for in my back yard, as an ambassador for our breed when I walk in a park, and for his overall strength, type, nobility and incorruptible character.