

**Event: Irish Wolfhound Club of Canada
National Specialty Show**

Date: Sept 18, 2004

Sweepstakes Judge: Jackie Carswell

Beautiful weather for hound and human, albeit a bit nippy for a southerner, along with the playing of the Canadian and American National anthems with the raising of their perspective flags, set the mood for a glorious day in Woodstock, Ontario. I felt honored to have been chosen to judge the sweepstakes classes for the Irish Wolfhound Club of Canada's 33rd Annual Specialty Show and thank the membership for extending the invitation. Chairperson Casey Nesbitt and her show committee did an outstanding job of making everyone feel welcome and comfortable. The show grounds were beautiful; everything was clean and ran smoothly; the hospitality and food was outstanding. Ring stewards Allan Pepper and Rosemary Shoreman kept me on my toes and the ring organized. The gift basket of local goodies awaiting my arrival was delightful.

I thank and appreciate ever exhibitor who presented a hound for examination. As I had stated previously at the judge's luncheon, I thought the group in general, was of high quality. I found only one bad bite (parrot mouth). Of concern to me was that I consistently found front assemblies that were upright with little or no angle. This is becoming more prevalent with each assignment that I judge. I was hard pressed to find a balanced front with proper angulation. Even though it appears that the dog has good reach, the entire front-end assembly (from the toes to the scapula) takes quite a jolt upon impact with the ground. We are breeding giant sighthounds; this manner of movement is not conducive to soundness and is an issue we all need to address.

Eight very capable young handlers competed in the junior showmanship classes. I was proud to see their interest in the Irish Wolfhound. My best Junior Handler was very polished and presented her dog perfectly on the day. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity of spending this time with the youngsters. It will be rewarding to watch them grow and contribute to the future of our breed.

6-9 Month Male

This group of baby boys did not want to cooperate for their handlers or move very well this morning. I think they were enjoying the weather!

1- Aotearoa Kia Ora - This puppy had adequate substance and was the more balanced of the three. His head was a bit course compared to his body. Good bite. I liked his overall length and strong loin. His bend of stifle was good and after he settled down a bit, he moved out better on the day.

2- Erinwood Velocity VD Oelmuhle- This puppy had the most substance in this class and was well muscled throughout. He had a very pleasing head with correct planes of the skull. He was balanced but did not have the length my first place puppy had and was not using himself on the move. Good bite.

3-Gulliagh Brendan Behan- Similar in substance to my first place puppy. Straight front, nice bend of stifle, tail carried high and curled and didn't use himself when moving. Good bite.

9-12 Month Male

1- Wolfkin's Chai Pi- Wheaten male that was well presented and in excellent shape. Very nice boy that didn't place a foot wrong on the down and back. Not quite the substance of my second place but very balanced. Masculine head, good bite with a bit of a flat ear. Nice long neck that flowed into a decent shoulder assembly. Pasterns were good. Good spring of rib with a strong loin and correct topline that remained strong and correct on the move. Strong rear with hocks that flexed well on the move.

2- Viceconsul of Aerie- A high quality red wheaten male with tons of bone and substance. Beautiful head and expression with superb dark pigmentation. Covered ground while going around the ring. Topline was sloping both standing and moving. He was giving his handler a bit of a fit on the day and not comfortable in the ring.

3- Kaeylyn Fionnbharr O'Murchadha- Dark male, didn't quite have the substance of the first and second place dogs. Could use more angulation front and rear. Moved with tail carried high and curved over his back, top line rolled, was sound coming and going with little reach and drive on the day.

12-18 months of age is a tough time for a male IW puppy. Seems that they just lose their curves and shape during this time.

12-15 Month Male

1- Castlekeep's Soul Of The Bard- Light gray brindle male whose easy and active movement won him his class on the day. Nice head and good bite. Good topline that remained strong on the move. Nicely muscled throughout with curves.

2- Erinwood Can You Hear Me Now- Nice young male with very good substance throughout. He was very well balanced and moved soundly, just didn't cover ground on the day.

3- Karontara Starkeeper Fantom- This wheaten boy had very good bone and substance, just not enough shoulder angle and bend of stifle to support it on the day. He was sound on the move but lacked enthusiasm.

4- Castlekeeps Viking Soul & Spirit- Long dog with a soft topline. Carried tail high on the move. Sound coming and going. Scapulae upright and spaced wide between. Nice ear and temperament.

15-18 Month Male

1- Skywalker's Worth A King's Ransom- Nice substance but a bit overweight which gives him the appearance of not having a houndy outline. Moved soundly and was balanced front and rear, would have liked a bit more curve though. Good topline. Would have liked a longer muzzle and less stop. Bite and ear was good.

6-9 Month Female

1- Starkeeper Cearah of Fitzwick- This light red brindle had plenty of leg underneath. Sound coming and going. Excellent reach and drive. Beautiful head, expression and curvy shape. Very sound temperament and was happy to be in the ring for all to see. Pigment was a little light.

9-12 Month Female

1- Gabriels Starkeeper Jayde- Lovely brindle bitch that was very well put together. Tail set was very good. Beautiful head. Topline was a little flat on the day. Single tracked coming and going and covered ground easily and effortlessly with plenty of reach and drive. This girl had a lovely long forearm that set under with proper layback of scapulae. She had the proper amount of flex in the pasterns. I hope she keeps this front assembly as she matures.

2- Skyes Stoneybrook Rue- Strong bitch with plenty of bone and muscle without losing her femininity. Solid movement coming and going. Front a bit straighter yet did have flex in the pastern. Great temperament, happy to be in the ring. Easy effortless ground covering movement from the side. Pushed the first place bitch hard for this class, just didn't move quite as well as number 1 on the day.

3- Wolfkin's Bodacious- Nice bitch that tracked correctly coming and going. Would have liked a bit more leg underneath. Her bend of stifle was nice and strong but she didn't have the shoulder angulation to match. She had good drive but not enough reach, causing her to overstep. She is a very good quality bitch in every other respect. Hopefully this will correct itself as she matures.

4- Wolfkin Bydand For Wolfhaven- No doubt that this girl is a sighthound. She couldn't keep her eye off of the geese as they continually flew over. Beautiful head and eye and lovely temperament. This girl had a good topline and very strong loin. I would have liked a bit more substance and more angulation front and rear. She was equally balanced though. Her movement coming towards you is good, she crosses over just a little moving away. Could have used herself a little more on the side.

12-15 Month Female

1- Castlekeep's Soul Of The Earth- Beautiful, houndy bitch. Planes of the skull were correct with a properly set rosed ear and dark eye. Strong, long neck, scapulae with good layback, long back and strong loin. Correct croup, tail that was carried properly on the move. Single tracked coming and going. Would have liked a little longer forearm and for it to set under better. Good flex in the pasterns. Excellent reach and drive.

2- Castlekeeps Heavenly Freesoul- Equal in type and quality to my first place bitch. Not as much strength as my first place and didn't push as hard for the class.

3- Limerick Hannah Sylverwolf-. She had a straight front with upright pasterns that wasn't balanced with her curvey rear. Pleasing head and good topline. Harsh coat. Easy and active movement but rear overstepped the front on the day.

4- Jadzia Freesoul of Castlekeep- Didn't have quite the substance that the others in her class had. Moved closely in the rear. Had a very strong and correct topline. Carried her tail a bit high. Beautiful head with rosed ear. Upright in forearm. Would have liked a bit more length of second thigh.

15-18 Month Female

1- Prairie Creek Dulce Ygdrasil- Cream bitch with lovely dark pigmentation. Strong balanced bitch but would have liked a bit more length of leg underneath. Covered ground effortlessly on the side and was sound coming and going.

Best In Sweepstakes 54: Castlekeep's Soul Of The Earth

Best Of Opposite Sex In Sweepstakes 14: Castlekeep's Soul Of The Bard