

## **Alberta Boxer Club April 3, 2009 - Critique**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Alberta Boxer Club for inviting me to judge their Specialty. It was an honour and a challenge with so many very good Boxers. You westerners have hospitality down to a science. I must mention here the gift that the club gave me. It brought tears to my eyes. A beautiful head study of my Texas (Can/Am Ch Bellcrest Just Watch Me) done by a local artist. I need to get the name and contact of that artist and pass it on to others so they too can enjoy her talent. Your gift will have a special place in my home as well as in my heart.

### **6-9 male class**

There were only 2 in this class. This class was difficult. One puppy was more ready to win with a good neck topline and tailset and moved well but lacking a bit in head. The other puppy is lacking in body at this age so not quite ready for the win. Both are very nice pups but at very different stages of development. Don't you just love the boys!! Judging must be done on the day, not on how we think they will mature. My choice was Exhibitz Last One Out, who went on to be my Winners Dog.

Open Fawn RWD came from this class a plain fawn natural eared dog. This dog, Tricker's Moving Heaven had a pretty head and expression. He is smooth and balanced. I would prefer to see a little more angle front and rear. I am sure he will finish easily.

### **6-9 females - 6 in the class**

This is one of my favourite classes. There were some very lovely girls in this class and for the most part very well behaved too. On any given day the placing could be different, but on the day, my first place winner caught my eye. I kept looking back at her. She looked like a little statue with her lovely expression, arched neck flowing smoothly into her shoulders and nice level topline and high tailset. She has natural ears that are set properly and she carries them well. I would like to have seen a little more ground covering side gait, but having said that, she fit the description to a T, medium size square Boxer. She is a natural eared plain fawn girl. In this class I saw a few questionable bites. We need to strive for the wide bites that are not too undershot while still retaining the chin.

A quick mention here, not intending to center this girl out, but instead to point out her virtues - 4th place winner in this class.... She is a plain fawn with natural ears and is put together like a brick you know what. She has a lot of bone perhaps a bit much for a female. It is obvious that she is a judicious combination of North American and overseas breeding.

### **Canadian Bred class**

(RWB came from this class. She is a littermate to the WB also a nice plain fawn with well set and carried natural ears. She and her sister look like two peas in a pod.

Veteran classes. – Both the veteran dog class and veteran bitch class were chock full of quality. It is so difficult to look at the old ones without feeling a lot of emotion. I wish I could have given them all first place!!

### **The Specials Class**

What an impressive line up of Specials!! As good as I have seen anywhere in my travels. I decided to split the class. I brought in the male specials first. I had my work cut out for me. When I made my cut of 6 males, I looked around and saw some nice dogs still standing there. The process of elimination is not an easy one and often times it is small things that help make decisions. Nit picking is what I call this.

The female specials came back in and I had to start eliminating all over again. Some of these bitches were stunning, and once again after making my cut I looked back and saw some lovely girls leaving the ring. Now that I was down to the final decisions it became even more difficult as there was a lot to like about each of the dogs and bitches still in the ring. My oh my, what to do, now it comes down to more nit picking and down to showmanship. Bearing in mind that it was now 10:30 at night and many of these Boxers had been shown early and again in sweeps and had been at the show all day I proceeded to make my final choices.

I pulled out the WB who at that point was now my Best of Winners. Behind her I placed my first award of merit winner. Ch Rikar's Gone Hollywood a nicely put together girl with a pretty head and expression. This girl appeared just a little tired and was giving her handler the "I don't want that stuff" look. She was a serious competitor for the top award. Next came my second award of merit dog Ch Rikar's Renegade Law Man, a lovely young brindle dog in excellent condition. This boy will do his share of winning in future. I found out that my AOM winners were littermates.

Next my BOS dog, a Fawn dog who makes you stop and look a second time, He is very smooth, his head is nice, his neck flows into his shoulder and he has a lovely topline, an honest dog. If I were to change him at all it would be to give him a little stronger rear. In my opinion his many virtues outweighed this fault. As we all know there are no perfect dogs.

My BOB bitch was on her game that night, she seemed to get better as she was worked. She looked like she was enjoying every moment of the time in the ring. She always stopped 4 square and at one point, after her down and back, she free stacked perfectly looking up at her handler with such enjoyment and expression in her eyes. She arched her lovely neck and defied me to not put her up. She is a very pretty, sound, girl with many virtues and few faults. She fits my idea of "a Medium size square Boxer with substance and elegance". Her face markings might be a handicap under some judges. Over all in my opinion this Boxer bitch is very worthy to be Best of Breed at the Alberta Boxer Club Specialty.

As I stood looking at my line-up after placing them in order and before pointing to the winners, I thought to myself, what a beautiful line-up. I was proud to have been asked to judge the Specialty.

But then a thought came to me, dear me, they are all fawn, except for the lonely brindle at the end. I am sure there were people ringside saying I preferred fawns. I actually like both fawn and brindle but for so many years have only had brindles. We now own 2 fawns and jokingly call them "the other colour". Colour shouldn't matter, a good Boxer is a Good Boxer, fawn or brindle, flashy or plain!!

Boxer breeders in Alberta are doing a fine job with our breed. It made me happy to see the quality of the Boxers at this show. Keep up the good work.

Shirley Bell  
Bellcrest Boxers Perm Reg'd