



Left
Pekingese Ch Yakee A Dangerous Liaison
Right
Kerry Blue Terrier Ch Torum's Tunde Bayou

The Crufts show is now officially the biggest dog show in the world, and is now recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as such. The representatives of Guinness World Records came to present a trophy and a certificate to the President of the Crufts committee, Peter Mann, to confirm this. Again this year there were over 20 000 dogs entered. It was not, however, the biggest Crufts ever, a couple of times in its over a hundred years of history there have been even more dogs, but it is an institution of its own kind in the world of purebred dogs. This year there was a record breaking gate, about 128 000 tickets sold.

There were over 543 dogs from abroad entered, more than ever, representing 20 different countries. This may not sound a large figure for those who go frequently to World Shows etc, but only recently the quarantine border was lifted for dogs coming from European Union countries.

Dogs from many other parts of the world must still spend six months in quarantine. However, this year the USA was added to the Pet Passport scheme, and some American dogs indeed came over. Still, it is complicated and expensive to do this, even without the quarantine.

Because dog shows were invented in England, they have the longest tradition in showing and breeding purebred dogs, and also the shows in England are bigger than anywhere else. As the British Isles have for such a long time been forbidden fruit for the rest of dogdom, it is a big challenge for the breeders in other countries to come and conquer, especially Crufts, the Mecca of the dog world.

Expected win

Last year the British dog people experienced quite a shock, when a foreign dog, the now very famous Norwegian Standard Poodle 'King', Int Ch Topscore Contradiction, came and won Best in

Show at Crufts. There are many who still think that Britain has the best dogs in the world and many conservatives didn't want Crufts to be opened up for foreign dogs. It would not be the same, they said.

This is true, it is not quite the same, it is much more international now. The British breeders have now to face the fact that there really are excellent breeders and gorgeous dogs in other countries as well. This year there were again many BOB winners from other countries, several were placed in Group finals and two managed to gain a Best in Group win.

The supreme champion, the Best in Show winner, as well as the Runner up Best in Show winner, were both British dogs, to the relief of the patriots. They are both amongst the best-known top winners of the country. As a matter of fact, the BIS winning Pekingese Ch Yakee A Dangerous Liaison, has twice been very close to this before, having won the Group three years in a row, and last year he was Runner up BIS. This was said to be his last show, so it is good to retire when you are on the top. He is not an old dog, only three years, but after winning so much, the owners, Bert Easdon and Philip Martin, think that this is now enough for one dog. He will stay at home with them, hopefully sire some beautiful puppies, and definitely will never be sold, even if some millionaires offer the moon from the sky.

It seems it was no surprise that it was the Pekingese, called Danny, who won BIS, it was more or less expected and everybody seemed to think this win was deserved. He was handled by Bert Easdon as usual, but the final grooming before the show this time was done by an American breeder who had come over. So may be this was just the last finishing touch that was needed. The BIS judge was Albert Wight.

The Runner-up, the Kerry Blue Terrier Ch Torum's Tunde

Bayou, is not a "dark horse" either, he has done a lot of winning. He was handled by Geoff Corish, who has been seen in the Crufts main ring before with some other great winners. The Kerry Blue belongs to an incredible string of brothers. His elder brother Ch Torum's Scarf Michael won BIS at Crufts a couple of years ago, and after that he was sent to America. There he has gone from strength to strength, and the top of his brilliant career was without any doubt the BIS wins at the two most prestigious shows in the US, the Montgomery Terrier Show and Westminster earlier this year. The third brother, Int Ch Torum's Stormin Norman lives in Finland, where he is a big winner and is best remembered for his BIS win at the big Nordic Winner Show a couple of years ago, that is the most important show yearly in Scandinavia, held in turns in one of the northern countries. It was his son Ch Gaeltacht Iosac Advaidh who won BIS last year at Paris, European Winner Show. So, success obviously runs in this family.

Many international finalists

However, one doesn't need to be very experienced and famous to win at Crufts. Some beginners can really do it, too. You only need a good dog. A perfect example of this is the Swedish Flatcoated Retriever, Int Ch Inkwell Named Shadow. He is the first pedigree dog for his owner Susanna Lindström, and is now five years old.

So only five years in the world of pure-bred dogs, and Susanna has achieved something of which many much more experienced exhibitors can only dream about: won the Group at Crufts! If Susanna was nervous before entering the main ring, one could not tell, their performance was perfect and looked very professional. It was a big thing even to win BOB, there were no less than 377 Flatcoats entered, and England is, indeed, the country of origin of the breed.