

TURKU WINTER DOG SHOW

The traditional Turku January show was again a big event. 5500 dogs were entered, and the halls were crowded. Nowadays exhibitors have a lot of equipment with them, like cages, grooming tables, foldable chairs etc. and the entry figures seem to keep growing in Finland all the time. There are not very many venues in the whole country where indoor shows of this size can be organised, and the biggest halls like Turku Fair Centre are becoming too small.

A dog show is not only for judging dogs, it should also be an opportunity for the general public to see dogs of various breeds and get to know the whole sport of purebred dogs. There are a lot of families who are considering buying a dog, and a show should be an ideal place to see dogs in reality, talk with their owners and breeders, visit the breed club stands and study what the trade stands have to offer. But now, when the rings have to be placed next to each other so closely, that only one side is available for the spectators, and there is a wall of boxes and tables, it is quite impossible to get through and get a seat at the ringside to see something. Most cages are covered, so one can't actually see the dogs even when they are waiting for their turn to be judged. Benched shows are just impossible over here, they would need even bigger venues and besides, we don't have benching firms. This is a difficult question. It would be important to have shows also in the winter season, but it is becoming more and more difficult.

Every second year the Turku show is called the Winter Dog Show, like now, and the years in between it is the Top Dog Show. There are two combinations of clubs who organise the show turn by turn, that's why their shows have different names. Whoever is organising, they have the same idea about the judging panel: most judges come from abroad and only very few Finnish judges are invited. This has caused a lot of discussion, especially when this idea seems to have spread among other show organisers. Of course it is important to have fresh opinions, respected Specialists for certain breeds or otherwise well-known judges from different countries to give some international colour, but sometimes the show committees invite judges they know very little about. At least a breeder-judge, visiting our country for the first time, would like to judge his own breed, but that doesn't always happen, if the show committee has not done their homework properly.

This time the judges at Turku weren't extremely exotic, most of them were well-known European names, having already visited Finland several times. The show committee had some headaches, when some judges had to dance at the last minute, but substitutes were found amazingly quickly and the show just went on. Especially the popular Romanian allrounder Petru Muntean jumped straight on to the plane, when he got an emergency call on Friday, the day before the show. Luckily he happened to be free to come!

Also the exhibitors represented many nationalities, a lot of dogs had come from other Scandinavian countries and remarkably many from Russia. However, only one Group win went to a dog coming from abroad, that was the famous and successful Wire-haired Standard Dachshund Int Ch Revestrekken's Frikk from Norway. He has a very impressive line of titles from various countries, and also Underground Hunting Trial Champion title. The Group was judged on Saturday, and the owner-breeders, the Aspevik couple, couldn't stay for Sunday's BIS final.

So the Dachshund was the only one who was missing, and the BIS judge Kari Järvinen had nine Finnish dogs to choose from. Many of them were well-known established winners, but Kari

preferred two new young up-and-coming stars for the highest placings. He had judged the Bernese Mountain Dogs himself, and made BOB a youngster, Riccarron Pinocchio, o.Sari Luotoharju, less than two years old. He managed to beat among others 13 Champions in his own breed, and after the French judge Boris Chapiro had made him the Group winner, he met Kari Järvinen again in the BIS ring. Obviously Kari was so fascinated with this young dog, that he wanted to give him the big "Turku Winter Cup". Pinocchio was handled by his breeder, Satu Ylä-Mononen, who is one of our young judges herself. Both the parents of Pinocchio are home-bred, too. He has been shown a few times before this, and has already won six CCs and almost as many Reserve CCs so far, but this must have been his biggest achievement to date. Well, he still has a plenty of

time ahead, as he is just reaching his full maturity.

Another new name in the Finnish rings was the Tibetan Terrier Ch Araki Fantastic Freddy of Capeldewi, bred by Ken Sinclair. The apple hasn't fallen far from the tree, as he is a son of Ch Araki Fabulous Willy, the renowned Crufts BIS winner. He has come to Finland to stay with Tanja Hakamo, who was without any doubt the most successful exhibitor of the day. Not enough to win the Group, her team of four Tibetan Terriers of the Falamandus fame won Best Breeder's Group of the Day under Paul Stanton, which makes this win even more valuable, as everybody knows Paul himself is a noted belongs to the breed authority.

Third in BIS-line-up was the Portuguese Water Dog Int Ch Leve Leve do Monte do Catula, a consistent winner who is well remembered for his recent Group win at Stockholm for example. This dog has come to Finland from Portugal, and I've been told his wealthy breeder Mercedes Gerales appreciates Eija Suomela's work for the breed so much that she wanted to give this dog to Eija. She flew herself in a private plane to Finland to bring the dog and deliver him personally to Eija. He has been a great ambassador for the breed since that, and couldn't be in better hands.

Another one who was successful in many fields was Eija Wegelius, whose GSD bitch Bar-Waxan Bacill won the Herding Group and was fourth in the BIS line-up. That was not enough, as her veteran dog Bar-Waxan Kamaro was Best Veteran of the Day, and her Breeder's Group was second, only beaten by Arja Kettunen's Neliapilan Afghan Hounds. These two breeders have both been Breeder of the Year recently, and obviously both are keeping their wheels rolling.

The other Group winners were the Smooth Fox Terrier Ch Foxfield Sunrise Queen, o. Leena-Kaisa Vainio, the Basenji Ch Faraoland Xcuse Me Desmond, o. Nora Lindqvist, the Finnish Hound Ch Juri, o. Tapani Räsänen, the Irish Red & White Steer Corranroo Celtic Vision, o. Sirke Siitro & Päivi Peltonen and the other Veteran, the Afghan Hound Int CC Ingenue Sebaztian, o. Carita Heliö & Meri Pakarinen

PAULA HEIKKINEN-LEHKONEN



BIS 1 Bernese Mountain Dog, Riccarron Pinocchio

BIS 2 Tibetan Terrier Ch Araki Fantastic Freddy of Capeldewi

BIS 3 Portuguese Water Dog Int Ch Leve Leve do Monte do Catula

BIS 4 German Shepherd (bitch) Bar-Waxan Bacill



And of course the Aussie bred Corgi Pembroke Int Ch Dygae Wild Night, with Else Ahlbom, did well, 2nd in Group and 2nd Best Veteran this time.