

BASENJI CLUB OF NSW INC

49th championship show, 14th October 2017

The Basenji Club of NSW Inc held its 49th championship show at the Bill Spilstead Complex for Canine Affairs, Orchard Hills where BIS was **Ch Xalmes Shake It Up Sister**; RUBIS, Sup Ch Lomar Hat Trick; Reserve Dog CC, Xalmes Man Of Colours; and Reserve Bitch CC, Zandeena Getn Cort In The Act.

It has been said that second-generation dog people get a leg up in our hobby and I am sure that has been the case with me. Without the encouragement of my parents and the BCNSW, I doubt I would have had a number of special opportunities including judging at this world renowned Basenji show, which was a great honour.

I had looked forward to this appointment for a long time, but unfortunately, we were not blessed with the warmest weather. This did not bother me particularly, but, of the handful of breeds I judge, I know Basenjis are the one more than any other which can look wonderful when the sun shines and absolutely ghastly when it doesn't, so I did feel especially sorry for those dogs which had travelled from the warmer parts of the country, as well as for the baby puppies as they were scheduled first in the ring when the wind was at its coldest. At least it didn't rain to any appreciable degree, so we should be grateful for small mercies.

Special thanks go to Ross and Kay Eldred who looked after Simon and me brilliantly prior to the show, nothing being too much trouble, and ferried us between two judging venues in separate cars. That is what I call devotion to a club and it is often things like this that people don't see behind the scenes when a show comes together. Thanks also go to Ted Pickering who did a first-class job as ring steward. A special mention for Alan Hunt, one of the club's patrons, who was sitting ringside. Alan was the driving force behind getting the club formed 49 years ago and brings a wonderful continuity to all BCNSW events, so I hope you will wrap him in cotton wool in readiness for next year's golden jubilee.

A special mention too for the people who had travelled from country NSW and interstate to be at the show. I know the sorts of mileage you all clock up when exhibiting at specialties, so thank you for supporting the club in this way.

For me, the greatest challenges for Basenji breeders are getting a tall dog in a small package and also breeding dogs which are short backed but can move with a long stride. The gazelle-like grace, floating movement and lightly-built frame complete the picture of an inquisitive animal with its ears right on top of its head, fine wrinkle and a high-set tail. The pioneers of the breed in the '30s had known it in its native habitat in Africa and felt very strongly that Basenjis must be, above all else, small and leggy – this is something I aim to bear in mind when judging.

Now to the most important aspect of the show, the dogs themselves. Australian Basenjis have an enviable reputation worldwide, first recognised in the '70s, and I was delighted to see that you are doing a wonderful job in maintaining a very high standard. There are fewer of you now – and I note a number of important kennels retired during the decade since I last judged the breed in Australia – so your breeding choices are getting smaller, but your top exhibits really are outstanding and could win anywhere in the world. In fact, I am fast coming to the conclusion that when I judge elsewhere I should be thinking to myself, "Is this Basenji good enough to win in Australia?" and I really mean that.

When judging at a specialty of this calibre, choosing between the two CC winners is truly a matter of splitting hairs. I thought the best dog and best bitch were outstanding. When they came into the ring to compete for BIS, they reminded me of two small antelopes, poised and alert, and this pleased me greatly. They both combine correct breed type and effortless movement in rather a special way. I just felt that the dog could have been carrying a shade more weight, which is no real fault, and this tipped the balance in favour of the bitch who was shown in tip-top condition. In any event, I would have happily smuggled either one of them back to England where I have no doubt they would hold their own and be a huge asset to the breed. Congratulations to their clever breeders for producing such outstanding Basenjjs.

A few points to bear in mind. I did notice some exhibits which had rather a lot of white. While I have nothing against a bit of glamour, I think you need to be careful. In days gone by, some really beautiful Basenjjs were bred which had solid-coloured faces and small white socks and I can see no good reason why 'sombre' markings such as these should be regarded as less appealing and especially in a first-class specimen. Long white legs and flashy collars are fine if that's your preference, but please do not allow white to cut up into the body or spoil the expression by creeping too far up the muzzle.

Toplines also need watching. A few exhibits had a distinct dip behind the withers which only got worse on the move. There is no better sight than a really beautiful Basenji striding out but a level topline should be part of this package. I also wonder, where all the small ears have gone? While I do not think your ears are bad, I did not see many of the really tiny ones we used to see years ago. This is a problem in the UK at the moment and I sometimes wonder whether people do not breed for tiny ears because they don't know what they look like!

One exhibit appeared unhappy on the table and his handler sensibly withdrew him, which is always the best course of action, as, in my experience, an unhappy Basenji never suddenly becomes happy after being forced to be examined. Otherwise temperaments were first-class, which is a great credit to you as breeders.

On the plus side, your dogs have very good wrinkle. Much better than the last time I judged in Australia. I noted some really attractive heads among the baby puppies, which bodes well for the future, and even though their wrinkle will diminish with maturity, I am confident some of them will keep this very important breed characteristic. Lovely to see some exhibits with side wrinkle, a point sadly lacking in other parts of the world. Tails in Australia remain the best I have seen anywhere.

It was also very good to see all four colours well represented at the show and especially the brindles which seem to have failed to make much of a mark in Britain, which is a shame after the struggle to get them recognised.

Judging the baby puppies was a real treat. Trying to assess twisting, turning, naughty bundles of energy was certainly challenging but I enjoyed it immensely and feel sure there are some real stars of the future among these babies. Some of the dog puppies presented with either one testicle or none, giving me a real headache in some places. This was more than likely caused by the cold weather, I realise, but it is impossible to forgive this problem when giving out top awards. I did feel very sorry for the bitch puppies as they definitely did not like the cold gusts of wind which came their way during what was doubtless the coldest part of the day.

Lovely to see some young people involved in the breed, some of them with super handling skills. In fact, I understand some of them are second and even third generation Basenji folk, which is wonderful news for the club and the breed.

Thank you again for making Simon and me feel so welcome. There was a wonderful atmosphere at the show. I only wish we could have had the opportunity afterwards to chat with you all for longer. Thanks also for the gift of the two beach towels – a happy reminder of our time spent in sunny (?) Sydney.

As you prepare to enter the club's golden jubilee year, I send my warmest congratulations to the BCNSW on reaching this very important milestone. May you and your dogs all have a marvellous year and enjoy your special shows and celebrations.

Dogs

Baby Puppy Dog (18, 3 absent):

1 Marsden's Lomar Cut The Mustard, very typical and alert 5 months lad, so together and full of quality, ears on top, good wrinkle, outstanding forehand with sloping shoulder and long forearm, clean bone, medium front, well set tail, good extension in front movement without exaggeration, held his topline well on the move, appealed enormously for his overall balance, totally filled my eye, shall follow his progress with great interest.

2 Fox's Zandeena Whos Ya Daddy, 3 months br/w, the youngest in the class but moved and showed like a seasoned campaigner, very together and appealing, very good angulation and leg length, nice size. Not quite the refinement in head of 1. Very good crest of neck, fine coat with well defined stripes, very well presented by his young handler, moved with good stride, very promising.

3 Delacourt's Wazazi Gives Ya Shivers, 4 months, attractive head and expression, excellent wrinkle. Topline sloped away a little standing but was much better on the move. Short back, long forearm, super tail curl and set. More strongly made than 1 and 2, should do well if he fines down slightly. Lovely clear orange red colour.

4 Salmon's Nonaym Hunting Othe Congo, 5 months soberly marked youngster, nice type, attractive head, lovely side wrinkle, long forearm. Topline slightly soft on the move and feet could be tighter. Quite naughty but looked good once he got in his stride.

5 Salmon's Barzoom Congorythm, 4 months, nice type, good wrinkle. Expression slightly spoiled by smuttiness on muzzle which hopefully will clear with age. Stepped out well, very good long second thigh.

Junior Dog (2):

1 Mayo-Ramsay's Eurabbie Zues, 16 months b/w dog of very nice type and balance, good size, clean bone. Eye could be slightly darker. Good topline which he held well on the move, overall picture very appealing.

2 Braithwaite & Clift's Nayembe Safiyas Araalinkuba, 15 months, quite tall, very attractive head and expression, lovely wrinkle, used his ears well. Not quite the stride of 1 and stood high in rear at times. Very good square body proportions, lovely tail curl and set.

Intermediate Dog (3):

1 Marsden's Ch Lomar Top Hat N Tails, very typical and masculine dog, correct angulation, excellent topline both standing and moving, well set tail. Could have used his ears slightly more. Sound and powerful movement won him this class, good length of leg.

2 Salmon's Barzoom Magicman, very good type, lightly marked br/w dog, attractive wedgy head, hooded ears. Not the topline nor tail of 1. Square outline, side movement OK.

3 Tromp's Lomar Dressed To Impress, tri dog, quite strongly made. Attractive head, very good long neck. Not the elegance of 1 and 2 and a bit too deep through the body. Super topline and tail curl and set, stepped out well.

Limit Dog (3):

1 Darr's Xalmes Man Of Colours, 16 months tri, tall dark and handsome, beautiful head and expression, long neck, super long forearm, lovely square outline and highly desirable lightly built frame, deep chest, medium front, level topline, well curled tail. Could have a smidgen more front angulation. At most specialties a judge will have a mad moment and I have no doubt that this was mine. Hardly put four feet on the ground, but in the few fleeting moments when he did he totally filled my eye. Litter brother to the BIS winner. **Reserve Dog CC.**

2 Lee's Wazazi Mr Magnificent, masculine dog, full of quality, quite tall, super head and expression, excellent wrinkle, super long forearm, good length of neck with lovely crest, very good topline and tail. Made from a slightly stronger mould than 1 but in no way heavy. Moved with soundness and drive.

3 Johnson's Remwin Turnbacktime, smaller dog of good size, slightly plain in head and tail could be tighter. Deep chest, square outline. My notes say, "Does not look entirely happy" so it is possible he was spooked by something. Very nice fine bone.

State Bred Dog (4):

1 Fox & DeAngelis' Zandeena Getn Jiggy With It, very stylish and tall 16 months dog, up to size but full of quality, attractive head with correct hooded ears, long neck with good crest, super long forearm and second thigh, very good topline, tail and shelf. Moved a shade close behind. Handled to advantage by his young handler who moved him at exactly the right pace. Very eye-catching and moved with good stride.

2 Parr's Bayenzi Martian Pink Diamond, 15 months leggy and square dog, good wrinkle and topline. Tended to fall forward slightly in front. Very good tail and long forearm. Could not quite match 1 for length of stride. Very nice size and tuck up.

3 Mayo-Ramsay & Mrs L Marsden's Baagna Jiminy Cricket, lovely to see this famous kennel name among the place getters, his breeder is very much missed. Fine boned dog of very good size, leggy and with correct light-built frame. Stood over slightly too much ground, tail could be tighter and was not in his best jacket. Loved his small ears.

Australian Bred Dog (6, 1 withdrawn):

1 Hughes' Gr Ch Remwin Cheeky Liasons, appealing masculine dog, so alert, sound and together, good square appearance, lovely head with good ear set and wrinkle. Could have a shade more turn of stifle. Very showy, stepped out well.

2 Curnick's Ch Karamo Dancing Leopard, attractive br/w dog, good wrinkle, correct fine bone, deep chest, square outline. Tail not as well curled as 1. Well defined stripes, covered the ground well on the move.

3 Ordar's Gr Ch Nonaym Sound Of The Congo, small and square dog, small ears, good wrinkle, correct fine bone, good topline. Could have moved with more enthusiasm. Deep chest, good moderate hind angulation. I am sure some breeders give dogs names like this for completely innocent reasons or perhaps because they wish to pay homage, but I can't help feeling this is going to create great confusion for pedigree researchers in generations to come.

Open Dog (4):

1 Lanser's Sup Ch Lomar Hat Trick, outstanding dog of excellent balance and breed type, showy and alert, perfect size and stamp, totally embodies the standard requirement of a lightly built dog of gazelle like grace. Ears right on top, good wrinkle, short back, medium front, lovely square outline, very good tail and shelf. As if by magic totally transformed himself on the move and became ten times the dog he was on the table. Simply floated on air, so sound and swift, handled to absolute perfection by his talented handler with whom he had a rapport which is rarely encountered in this breed and which was a joy to witness. **Dog CC and RUBIS.**

2 Johnson & Hughes' Remwin Against All Odds, very typical dog, well balanced, masculine outlook, attractive head with correct hooded ears, deep chest, square outline, super topline, very good tail and shelf. Could not quite match 1 for length of stride but created a very pleasing picture overall.

3 Fox's Sup Ch Zandeena A Twist Of Fate, masculine dog, quite tall, good head proportions, very good square outline, deep chest, level topline. Made along slightly stronger lines than 1 and 2 but in no way coarse. Loved his calm temperament. Very well handled by his young and sympathetic handler. Sire of the young Reserve Bitch CC winner and ended the day as the show's top sire so is proving his worth to the breed.

Veteran Dog 7-10 years (2):

1 Curnick's Ch Barzoom Captain James T, 7 years dog of very nice size and stamp, good wrinkle, nice square outline, held his topline very well for his age. Tail could be slightly tighter. Deep chest, stepped out well.

2 Pearson's Ch Jebelmarra Fire N Dandy, super to see this well-known kennel name among these veterans, his breeder is now retired from breeding but is still very much involved in the dog world. 9 years tri dog, slightly longer cast, typical head with attractive masculine outlook, good ear set, long neck. Carrying a tad too much weight which I am sure can be said of a lot of older gentlemen including me. Stepped out OK once he got going, excellent tail and shelf.

Veteran Dog 10 years & over (1):

1 Mayo-Ramsay's Ch Eurabbie Mustang, 12 years dog, looked like he would have preferred to be under the duvet at home and who could blame him? Nice fine bone, loved his small ears. An elderly gentleman who was rather reluctant to move around the ring in what he clearly regarded as Antarctic conditions. Very good size.

Bitches

Baby Puppy Bitch (11, 1a):

1 Connelly's Obsidion Gift From Above, 5 months bitch of very pleasing type, lovely clear orange red colour, good wrinkle, level topline. Quite deep in the chest already so a shade more length of leg would help and hopefully will come with maturity. A bit unsettled to begin with but eventually pulled everything together to win this competitive class. Very good tail curl and set.

2 Curnick's Karamo Lobibi, 5 months, tall and fine. Better leg length than 1 but more upright in shoulder. Overall impression very pleasing and gazelle-like. Stepped out OK in spite of the cold wind.

3 Briggs' Nonaym Blu Arrows Othe Congo, 5 months bitch with a very nice head and wrinkle, loved her small ears and clean bone. Body slightly longer cast than 1 and 2. Stepped out OK once she got going.

4 Fox's Zandeena Whos On Top, 3 months br/w, lovely size and stamp. Head a shade blocky but this may fine down with maturity. Very good demarcation between stripes and body colour. Handled to advantage by a young handler who had no trouble getting her charges to stride out. Nice square outline and topline.

5 Blair's Wuliango Tenzin Tibetan Child, 4 months, somewhat unruly but appealed for her attractive head and wrinkle. Stood a bit high in the rear at times and movement was somewhat erratic. Looked nice and square when she concentrated on the task in hand, just needs time.

Junior Bitch (3):

1 Darr's Ch Xalmes Shake It Up Sister, straight out of the top drawer, everything I look for in a Basenji I found in this striking 16 months orange red bitch, so full of quality, beautiful head with lovely wrinkle and hooded ears, super square outline with outstanding long forearm which is so essential to breed type. Level topline, medium front, good shelf. Her tail is absolute perfection sitting right on her hip with its super double curl. Covered the ground with a good long stride without any

exaggeration. Never stood wrong, a leggy gazelle presented in the most beautiful bloom. A rare combination of outstanding type, quality and movement which was impossible to resist. **Bitch CC and BIS.**

2 Fox's Zandeena Getn Cort In The Act, 16 months well balanced bitch, so well knit and together, appealed greatly for her square outline, sensible amount of bone and body, looked more than capable of doing a day's hunting while retaining a look of quality. Good level topline, nice tail curl and set, lovely sound movement. Not quite the head quality of 1. Moved by her handler at just the right pace, covered the ground well without exaggeration. A young bitch with a bright future.

Reserve Bitch CC.

3 Hughes' Remwin Itsallaboutme, 15 months b/w bitch, in many ways it probably sounds like a bit of a cliché to say she was unlucky to meet 1 and 2 but I think that was the case! Very attractive youngster with lovely square outline, good head and wrinkle. Deep chest, correct angulation. Suspect she was feeling the cold a tad as she did not move with quite the verve of the others in this class. Super ears and ear set.

Intermediate Bitch (2):

1 Johnson's Remwin Thisismytime, very nice size and stamp, a small bitch with a lovely square outline, good amount of body. Could have used her ears slightly more. Stepped out well.

2 Mardsen's Ch Lomar Hot Pants, longer cast bitch, good topline. Used her ears better than 1 but seemed slightly unsettled on the table, possibly feeling the cold. Nice curl to tail, moved with drive.

Limit Bitch (5):

1 Ashley & James' Bayenzi Holly Golightly, tri bitch of very nice quality, attractive head, just the right amount of bone and body, long neck, used her ears well. Good forehand and quarters, easy action on the move.

2 Braithwaite & Clift's Nayembe Safiyas Sarabi, 15 months feminine bitch, beautiful head, eye and wrinkle, excellent long forearm. Could not quite match 1 for depth and spring rib and depth of chest. Good tail curl, nice tuck up, stepped out OK.

3 Parr's Bayenzi Edcora Red Diamond, 15 months youngster, very feminine, lovely wrinkle. Ears slightly too wide set and stood high in rear at times. Good curl to tail.

State Bred Bitch (3):

1 Mayo-Ramsay's Eurabbie Scarletrose, well balanced bitch, not in the her best bloom, very typical lightly built frame, fine bone, good ears and ear set, lovely medium front. Covered the ground well.

2 Braithwaite & Miss M Clift's Nayembe Safiyas Tukio, 15 months tri, very good coat and colour, tan markings lovely and rich and clear. Not the elegance of 1 and tended to stand high in the rear at times. Moved OK.

3 Salmon's Ch Barzoom Possum Magic, square bitch, good angulation. Needs a touch more elegance and is a bit plain in head. Moved OK.

Australian Bred Bitch (5, 1a):

1 Delacourt's Ch Wazazi The Wow Factor, very stylish bitch, rather too much white bordering on mismarking. Otherwise a very nice bitch. Lovely square outline, super long neck, clean bone, good depth of chest, super tail. Ears could be slightly smaller and higher set. Sound mover, moved with good reach and drive.

2 Salmon's Nikrus Pure Essence, very typical and gazelle-like bitch, very nice fine bone, square outline. Would prefer tighter tail and slightly more wrinkle. Loved her small ears. Moved OK, nice size.

3 Curnick's Ch Karamo Eoli, dark br/w bitch, quite leggy and fine, long neck, good topline. Not quite the spring of rib of 1 and 2 and tail was rather loose. Dainty on the move.

Open Bitch (5, 2a):

1 Delacourt's Ch Ngozi Shes Too Cool, incredibly leggy bitch, super head and expression, very attractive wrinkle. Ultra square outline created in part by a slight lack of angulation. Super long forearm, attractive red colour, first-class tail curl and set, a very sound mover with exemplary reach and drive, holding her table-top backline all the while. Very close up in the challenge.

2 Ordar's Gr Ch Nonaym Bells Of The Congo, well balanced tri bitch of very nice type, ideal size and stamp. Attractive head, lovely small ears. Tail a shade loose at times. Lovely square outline. Gave her handler a bit of a hard time but looked lovely on the move once she settled.

3 Marsden's Ch Lomar Chai Latte, longer cast tri bitch, nice long legs and neck, good topline. Tail a shade loose. Very good angulation, deep chest, moved OK. Dam of the Dog CC winner and ended the day as the top dam of the show, so is more than proving her worth as a brood bitch.

Veteran Bitch 7-10 years (5, 1a):

1 Hughes' Sup Ch Remwin Kissmycheek, top quality 7 years bitch, very good square body proportions, lovely head with good wrinkle, super table-top backline. Could have a shade more tuck up, which is understandable in an older lady and especially in one who has produced litters. So sound and together on the move.

2 Curnick's Ch Karamo Mopanzi, 9 years well marked br/w bitch, nice fine bone, good sweep to stifle. Hind movement a tad close and tail could be tighter. Lovely well defined stripes, stepped out OK.

3 Mayo-Ramsay's Ch Eurabbie Black Rose, 8 years b/w bitch, lovely and square. Was feeling the cold which unfortunately affected her movement and general demeanour. Lovely fine bone, correct gazelle-like frame.

Neuters

Neuter Dog (3):

1 Mathieson's Neut Ch Wazazi Diamonds Will Do It JC, very typical dog, lovely leggy appearance, outstanding fine coat of the most beautiful clear orange colour, lovely wrinkle, long neck. Eyes could be darker and forehead could be slightly more angulated. Super tail and topline, looked nice going around once he settled. **Neuter Dog CC.**

2 Darr & Delacourt's Ch/Neut Ch Wazazi High Velocity, typical dog, lovely high set ears, deep chest. Stood a shade low in front at times. Tail nicely set on hip, moderate turn of stifle, moved OK.

Reserve Neuter Dog CC.

3 Hughes' Gr Ch Remwin Littlebitofcheek, square dog, slightly out of coat which gave him a bit of a plain expression. Tail dropped at times as he was feeling rather cold. Very nice ear set, good wrinkle.

Neuter Bitch (2):

1 Darr's Ch Wazazi Rapt In Rubys, well made bitch of very nice type, attractive head and expression, good topline. Would prefer slightly longer legs but she scored highly for her sound and effortless movement. Very good tail, lovely size. Dam of the BIS winner and the Reserve Dog CC winner, who are litter brother and sister, so she is passing on her many positive qualities. **Neuter Bitch CC and Best Neuter in Show.**

2 Mayo-Ramsay's Tamard Thundabird, b/w bitch, very good square body proportions, fine bone. A smidgen overweight which tended to spoil her underline. Lovely small ears, wedgy head. **Reserve Neuter Bitch CC.**

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