

It was an honour for me to be invited to judge at the championship show of the Old English Sheepdog Club of Scotland. Judging one's own breed at a championship show on the shores of the breed's homeland, even if it is a bit more north over the border, was definitely a highlight in my judging career. A thank you to the committee and especially to the exhibitors who made such efforts, including many hours back and forth from the other side of the UK, to show the dogs under me.

A thank you for the club and especially Margaret and Lew McWilliam for the hospitality during the weekend. It was lovely to meet Dorothy Brocklesby-Evans and spending two evenings talking about OES and to listen to all the stories from the past from the experts who were already active and successful in the breed before I was born.

I enjoyed the friendly atmosphere at the show and the very good entry. Really good were the number of dogs that were entered and present in a year of declining numbers, and the quality of the exhibits as well. In the past few years I had the privilege to judge specialties all over Europe, in Siberia, and in Australia. I also judged at the open show at the OES Club of East Anglia in 2012, and the dogs shown today gave me a good impression of the current quality in the UK. As often happens, the overall quality in the bitches was better than in the males. Generally spoken, I have some observations and concerns about the dogs and/or the breed that I feel I have to share for considering and discussing. Firstly, I was really happy to see that almost all dogs had darker eyes. Lighter eyes is a serious problem in the breed that is seen all over the world. Those lighter eyes spoil the expression and are actually quite hard to breed away from. Also the coat quality was fine in general and many dogs have the texture the standard asks for, although it seemed to me that the males were shorter in coat than many of the bitches.

I really do hope that the way of grooming and shaping as seen in several regions across the Channel does not gain popularity and that the OES remains a long coated, but not overly coated breed and will not change into a sculptured, more generic looking flashy show dog with a softer coat that is easier to sculpture than the harsh coat with a typical break. We as judges and breeders have the responsibility that we don't lose that beautiful harsh, crispy coat with the break, which is typical for the breed and is needed for the breed's working origins. It is even so, and better said, that in these days, now our dogs are not working dogs anymore, we still must respect its origins without any doubt and discussion. Even though the breedtype will change between generations, there are some characteristics that separate a correct OES from a good looking dog that looks like an OES

Another concern is the bite and quality of the teeth. I was unpleasantly surprised with the bite in several dogs. I found some dogs with bites that couldn't close correctly. Since the standard requires a scissorbite without space between the teeth and accepts a level-bite, we breeders and judges should pay attention to incorrectly closing bites. In this respect I don't mean bites that have dropped teeth, so often seen in older dogs, but in younger dogs I saw bites that could not close, with spaces of more than a few millimeters, sometimes so big that a few matches would easily fit, and with back teeth that could not close either.

It is something that can't be seen from outside the ring, it doesn't influence breedtype or "the total picture" but it can harm the dogs in their well-being. Another point of concern is the quality of the teeth themselves. Too many younger dogs have bites that look much older than the dog

actually is, and in some exhibits the teeth were much smaller in size than should be expected in dogs from a working breed. I am not really a mouth-fetishist, and really I don't mind a missing tooth here or there, but I believe that in breeding and judging we should consider the correct bite-of the incisors and (pre)molars as well. The often heard phrase "dogs don't move on their teeth" in my humble opinion ignores the part of the breed standard that involves the dog's well-being.

I was very pleased with my final line-up in the males as well as with some others who created competition for the class winners. There was much to like in and to see in these dogs. Personally, I think the art of judging is in finding the features, the breed specific characteristics, in a dog. When you go for beauty, there is beauty to find in every single dog but one should never lose the critical eye. As I said before, the overall quality in bitches is often better than in males. At this show that was also the case. Some of the dogs and bitches in the younger classes will have a bright future, which I will follow with much interest. But judging the open class gave me a feeling of being a boy in a candy store. I saw several high quality OES that can change placements at any other day at any other show. Splitting hairs for looking for breed specific features and soundness; that's what makes judging so enjoyable.

From a professional point of view, as canine behaviour is my profession, I prefer to use clips at all times whilst moving the dogs. Using clips is mostly for the dog's well-being, but also it improves movement. I am sure several dogs could have done better in movement on the day and thus might have gotten a better placing. An OES is definitely more than just a pretty picture and those who know me, know that I appreciate a sound and typical movement as an inseparable part of breed-type of a dog that should be able to do a day's work.

Veteran males

1: Mrs.S.Robertson's CHAZMATZ BLUE BOY WONDER AT TICKERYSTIX.

8, 5 years old male of a correct type. Masculine and cobby. He was shown in a good condition as might be expected from a 'younger' veteran. Excellent head, eyes and pigmentation. Lovely expression. Correct bite. Good angulations in front and rear. His neck should be a bit longer for more sound outlines. Typical raise over loin. Good back. Well developed brisket with well sprung ribs. Strong bone. Good hocks and enough strong for his age. Correct texture of coat. Moves well.

2: C.L. & S.Brown HILLNDALE SAMUEL WHISKERS JW SH.CH.

8 years old male who shows a good breedtype. Masculine. He has a head with a beautifully broad skull. Nice dark eyes and correct pigmentation. His muzzle is strong but should be a bit shorter for better proportions in the head. Good bite. Correct angulations in front and rear. Good length of neck. Well developed body. Good topline. Strong bone. Coat of good texture. Needed some time to show good movement.

Puppy males

1: Mr.J. & Mrs.S.Adcock WILBAMILL VENTURER AT AMBLEHART

11 months old very promising puppy. Lovely breedtype and with correct proportions in head and body. His eyes should be a bit darker. Well pigmented. Scissorbite. Good angulations in

front and rear. Good length of neck. Good back and a correct raise over loin. He has a well developed body for his age. Good brisket and ribcage. Strong bone. Reasonable strong in hocks. Changing coat to a good texture and colour. Moves correctly for his age. Correct temperament.

2: Evelyn Luster's STORINBLU GLEANN DRONACH

10 months puppy with many good qualities and breedtype. In his overall proportions he looks a bit long in loins. He has a strong head with good proportions. His eyes should be a bit darker. Scissorbite. He is reasonably angulated in front and rear. Neck of enough length. Typical topline with a good rise. Well developed body for his young age, showing a good brisket and sprung of ribs. Strong bone. Coat that is changing into a good colour but is a bit soft in texture.. Needed time to settle in movement that needs to be stronger in rear. Correct temperament.

Junior males

1: Mrs.ACorrigan's MEGABOB WILLIAM WALLACE

18 months male with a lovely, masculine breedtype. Correct bodyproportions. He has a strong, square head with correct eye-colour and good stop. Scissorbite. Well angulated shoulders and good front. His neck of fairly long length flows in to a typical topline. His brisket is of correct depth but needs to gain more substance. Short coupled. Correctly angulated in rear with well set hocks. Lovely jacket with harsh texture. Moves well for his age with a good drive and stride. Behaves nicely and well presented.

2: Mr & Mrs.B.H.Bradley's HIBRAY UNDER MY SPELL

15 months old male of an masculine and lovely breedtype. Correct proportions in body. Beautiful and strong head that would have been excellent if his underjaw was a bit stronger. Eyes of correct, brown colour. Scissorbite. Well angulated in front and rear. Good length of neck. His brisket and ribcage is already well developed for his age. Short coupled. Strong bone and well set hocks. Changing coat in a lovely texture and colour. Moves well for his age with a good drive and stride. Lovely temperament.

Post Graduate Dog

Post Grad was a lovely class to judge with two dogs that are very close in quality. Both have lots to love in a typical OES and I am sure they both have a bright future in the showing. Although some both showed also some points for improvement that might come with age. Being judged at the day the final decision was made when the dogs were moved. For me movement is inseparable part of breedtype.

1: Mrs.S.Rutland's BRWYN'S HOWDY DOODY LOVES HILLBILLY AT MELLOWDEE

Strong, masculine male of excellent breedtype. Square head with eyes of good colour and well set apart. Lovely expression. Well pigmented. Strong scissorbite. Very good front and well

angulated shoulders. Strong neck of good length flowing in a correct topline with a good rise over loin. Lots of substance and strong bone. Well developed brisket and good spring of ribs. Strong rear with good bent of stifle and well set hocks. Coat of excellent texture and a beautiful silvery blue colour. Correct and free movement with good stride and strong drive. Lovely temperament.

2: Mrs.T.Reed and Mrs.Bashforth Monk's CHARMLEA CLEANSWEEP

Young male who was shown in an immaculate presentation. Attractive breedtype and shape. Excellent head with eyes that are well set apart and with dark brown colour. Lovely expression. Correct bite but to be critical the teeth should be larger for a dog of an originally working breed. Correct front and sound angulations like the opponent in the class. Strong and long neck. Good back and a typical rise over loin. Well developed body with lots of substance. Strong rear, well angulated rear with good hocks. Excellent coat texture and a beautiful silvery colour. Well shaped and handled to his perfection. Moves with good stride and drive but needs a bit more coordination and efficiency.

Limit Dog

This was a really tough class for me, there were several quality dogs and they were quite diverse in breed type. That said there was a lot to really like about each. The decision between the first two dogs presented different breed specific virtues and hence my dilemma. My "split of hair-decision" had to be based on the entire dog on the day. I took into consideration all breed specifics including coat texture and that is what my final placing was based upon. I am sure the dogs will have an excellent career in the near future.

1: D. & A.Oakes' GOJOLEGA STARGAZER AT AMBLEOAK

Saguine, young male of an attractive breedtype. Lots of quality and appealing to the eyes. Excellent proportions and sound overall. Masculine and with lots of substance. Excellent head with dark eyes that are well set. Well defined stop. Lovely expression. Well pigmented Scissorbite. Very good front angulation and well laid back shoulder. Good fore-chest. Strong and fairly long neck into a typical topline and rise over loin. Short coupled. Very good rear with correct bent of stifle and well set and used hocks. Reasonably developed brisket and good sprong of ribs. Strong bone. Excellent coat texture and condition. Gave his handler a hard job and drops of sweat in showing his technically correct and typical movement. Moves with good stride and strong drive but needs some more discipline and a large ring. My pleasure to give him RCC and I won't be surprised to see him as a champion rather soon.

2: Christina Bailey's ZOTTEL'S BEST KEPT SECRET

Young male of yet another but attractive type and shape. Shows lots of virtues to like in an OES. Excellent proportions and sound over all. Excellent head with dark eyes, well set apart. Correct stop. Lovely expression. Well pigmented. Scissorbite. Very good front and shoulderangulation with well defined pro-sternum. Long and strong neck that goes over in to a good back and a typical topline. Short coupled. Very good developed body and substance for his young age. Plenty

bone. Strong rear with very good bent of stifle and well set and used hocks. Coat with dense undercoat and a darker coloured topcoat that should be harsher for my interpretation and shaped in what could be described as modern style that suits him nicely but what I not prefer for an OES. Easy mover and well presented to his best. Lovely and sweet temperament. Surely a male who will knock on the door for the club of champions in the near future.

Open Dog

1: Dr. Ann Hodgson's JEDDEP HAIRY BIKER

Very attractive dog, classic and with lots of breed specific virtues. Strong, masculine, well shaped male that pleases the eye. Good body proportions. Excellent, square and strong head with correct stop and dark eyes. Lovely and lively expression. Very good pigmentation. Scissorbite with teeth of good quality. Sound agulations in front and rear. Well developed chest and pro-sternum. Deep brisket and correct ribcage. Lots of substance without being coarse. Strong and fairly long neck. Good back and breedtypical raise of loin. Good croupe. Strong rear with excellent bent of stifle and strong and well set hocks. Strong bone. Harsh coat with lovely colour. Easy and efficient movement, correct from aside and in coming and going. Lovely temperament. DCC and after the judging I was told that he was my best puppy male in 2012 and that this CC was his final one to become Champion. I am glad for his breeder-owner and happy to see how he is grown from my winner of the puppy class at the East Anglian Open Show in a worthy champion.

2: Mrs. D & Mr. M. Palmer's ZOTTEL'S XCEEDINGLY NICE FOR HAZYLAND

Another male that attracted me with his breed characteristics. And type. Masculine, strong and cobby in his overall appearance. Excellent head and eyes of correct colour and placed. Well pigmented. Scissor bite. Well laid shoulder. Front assembly could be a fraction longer for a more fluent movement. Fairly long neck that flowed over in a good back and topline. Well developed body with lots of substance. Strong boned. Good developed sternum. Strong rear with a very good bent of stifle and good hocks. Harsh coat that is almost clear in colour. Moves correctly in rear but tends a bit to dive in front but reasonable and typical for the breed. Well shaped and presented. Lovely temperament.

Veteran bitch

1: Mrs.M.J.Matthews's CH.GOJOLEGA SHOWTIME

Lovely and attractive breedtype. Feminine. Cobby. Very good head with correct proportions. Wall-eye. Good eye-colour and pigmentation of the eye-rims. Scissorbite. Angulation correctly in front and rear. Neck of correct length. Good back and typical rise over loin. Strong body with lots of substance without losing her femininity. Strong bone. Coat of correct, harsh texture and lovely colour. Well shaped. Shows correct side-movement and in coming and going. Presented in a good condition. Lovely and sweet temperament.

2: D & V.McIntosh' LOVING LADY PETRINA AT BLAIRDON

9 ½ years young veteran who is shown in a good condition. A bit longer in body but still acceptable for a good breedtype. Very good head with good stop, wall-eyed. Well pigmented eye-rims. Scissorbite. Correct angulations in both front and rear. Neck of reasonable length. Strong body and bone. Coat of correct texture and colour. Moves easy and correct for a "young" veteran. Lovely and sweet temperament.

Minor Puppy bitch

1: Mrs.M.Leeson's NIEDERSACHSEN'S PRIDE JOY OF LIFE AT PADDIEBEAR

7 months young puppy who is already well developed and sized for her age. Lovely and appealing breedtype. Very good head with the dark brown eyes and plenty of pigmentation. Scissorbite. Correct angulations in front and rear. Fairly long neck that flowed correctly in a good back and rise over loin. Body is well developed considering her age and size, well formed brisket and ribcage. Strong bone. Correct puppycoat and colour. Moves accordingly to her age and size. Very promising puppy.

Puppy bitch

1: Ms.Amanda Munro's NOT TONIGHT AUS DEM ELBE-URSTROMTAL

10 months of age. Appealing breedtype. Feminine. She shows correct body-proportions with enough substance for her age and size. Lovely head with correct stop and dark brown eyes. Pigmentation is developing. Scissorbite. Breedtypical angulations in front and rear. Neck of correct length and strength. Good topline. Good croupe. Good body. Good bone. In between coats, changing into a good texture and colour. Moves correctly. Very promising puppy who needs plenty of time and is worth having patience.

2: Wendy Sculthorpe's GREYFELL ONE DANCE

Lovely puppy of 9 months who appears a bit longer at the day. She is well developed for her age. Head with a good muzzle but needs to get broader in skull. Dark brown eyes that are set wide apart enough. Good pigmentation. Scissor bite. Moderate angulations in front and rear. Neck of correct length. Breedtypical topline. Well developed for her age and size. Moderate strong bone. Coat changing nicely in texture and colour. Moves accordingly for her age. Lovely and sweet temperament.

Junior bitch

This class showed a bright future for the breed. I was most happy to see several quality bitches. I particularly liked the first 3 juniors a lot. It was my pleasure to judge this class and like in Limit males some decisions were close and made on breed virtues and soundness. I will not be surprised to see these three bitches winning in the future.

1: Mrs.Sue Goddard's KINDAMAGIC DREAM CHASER

Young feminine bitch of an excellent breedtype. She is not the smallest of bitches but is not losing femininity and elegance. Excellent head in details and with the darkest of eyes. Sweet Expression. Excellent pigmentation of the eye-rims. Scissor bite. Sound angulations in front and rear. Well laid back shoulder that flowed in to a good back and a breedtypical rise of loin. Well developed body for her age. Good brisket, chest and ribcage. Well bent stifle and correctly set and stonf hocks. In between coats and changing in a correct texture and clearing in colour. Breedtypical and easy movement. Well behaving in the ring and plenty of showmanship. I'll follow her future with interest.

2: Mr.T & Mrs.C.Spurling DANTRECAR SWEET DREAM

Another very promising young bitch of an attractive breedtype. Excellent head with well defined stop and beautiful dark brown eyes. Lovely and sweet expression. Excellent pigmentation of the eye-rims. Scissorbite. Sound angulations in front and rear. Well laid back shoulder in to a correct back and rise over loin. Very good developed body for her age. Good brisket and ribcage. Strong bone. In between coats and changing in to a correct texture and lovely colour. Moves with ease and typical for the breed. Lovely and sweet temperament. Good temperament.

Post Graduate Bitches

1: Mr.G & Mrs.IDuplock's ARYAKAS OPHELIA AT MIRENE

Strong bitch from a larger size who is still feminine and without being coarse Well framed and showing femininity and breedtypical over all. Excellent head with correct stop and dark brown eyes. Lovely expression. Scissorbite. Excellent pigmentation. Breedtypical in her angulations in front and rear. Good shoulder assemblée. Well arched neck of fairly long length. Correct rise over loin. Good and steady in back. Well developed body with good brisket and well sprung ribs. Strong bone. Correct jacket in texture and colour. Well set hocks. Breedtypical movement what made her win the class. Good temperament.

2: Ellen Wheeler's ZOTTEL'S BETTE MIDLER

Feminine and promising bitch of an attractive breed type who needs more time and is still young in her overall appearance. Correct proportions. Excellent head with darkbrown eyes. Lovely, sweet expression. Scissorbite. Well angulation in both front and rear with correct shoulder-assemblée and good bent of stifle. Well arched neck of good length. Brisket of correct depth and well sprung ribs. Good back and rise over loin. Strong bone. Coat is not at its best in showcondition on the day in texture and colour. Needs to settle more in movement. She needs

more time to mature which is good for a slowing developing breeds and she deserves patience. Correct ringmanners.

Limit Bitch

1: Jenny Joice's BRINKLEY EMMA ROSE OF RAYNHAM

Feminine bitch of an excellent breedtype. Sound in her construction. Excellent head with dark brown eyes. Sweet but alert expression. Scissor bite. Correct angulations with a well angulated shoulder and well bent stifle. Fairly long, well arched neck that flowed correctly in a typical topline. Correct rise over loin that starts at the correct part of the topline. Short coupled. Well developed brisket and ribs. Strong bone. Coat of excellent texture but not fully changed in an adult coat. Breedtypical and efficient movement in which she didn't put a foot wrong from aside and in coming and going. Steady temperament and shown with showmanship. It was my delight to give her RCC and as icing on the cake RBIS. I am sure she will knock hard on the door of the club of Champions.

2: S & M. Henderson & McNally's: ZOTTEL'S XTREMELY NICE

Strong bitch at the borderline of femininity but from a correct type and not being coarse in her overall appearance. Correct body-proportions. Very good head with good stop. Correct eye colour. Scissorbite that should close better. Correct angulated shoulder. Her neck is well arched and from a correct length. Correct topline and croupe. Good and strong body. Strong bone. Coat of correct coat but needs to clear in colour. Moves typical for the breed from aside and in coming and going. Lovely temperament.

Open bitch

1: Miss J. and Mrs.D. Higgins and Young's CILLASTYLE CANDIGRIL AT LADAMIS

Young bitch that screams breedtype. She combines breedtype, sextype, elegance and strength in one body. Excellent head with a correct stop and dark brown eyes. Scissor bite. Sound in her angulations. Fairly long neck that flowed into a correct topline with a correct rise over loin that started on the correct part. Well set croupe. Very good body with deep brisket and a good chest. Well sprung ribs. Strong bone. Excellent coat with a beautiful silverly blue colour. She showed the correct outline of the breed in her movement. Her movement anyway was efficient, steady and she didn't put a foot wrong in both coming and going. She knows she's is pretty girl and showed herself with the attitude of a winner. Gladly gave her CC and BIS and happy to give her the final CC to UK Champion (sub. to KC confirmation).

2: Christina Bailey's ZOTTEL'S XQUISTITELY MADE

The other bitch that immediately caught my eye when she entered the ring. Excels in breedtype. Feminine, elegant without losing the looks of a breed of working origins. Excellent head with correctly coloured eyes. Well pigmented. Scissor bite. Well arched neck of correct length that

flowed into a good back and typical rise over loin. Correctly and sound in angulations in front and rear. Well developed body with good brisket and ribs. Strong bone. Excellent coat in texture and colour. She gave her handler a tough time and needed and deserved an extra change to show her correct and efficient movement. I wished she showed more self-confidence at the day but I am happy to have seen many features.