

For the attention of:

## **ITALIAN COLLIE CLUB**

### **Report by Geoff Duffield (Judge)**

It was my very great pleasure and honour to be invited to judge the Italian Collie Club championship show, held in the beautiful grounds of the Pisa Racecourse, the Ippodromo Di San Rossore. The weather was around 28 degrees centigrade with hardly a cloud in the sky. The rings were well prepared and spacious, with a pagoda in the middle to offer shade to the dogs as they were being judged.

I was rewarded with a very nice entry of 49 rough collies, 25 males and 24 females. All were very well presented in full coat, the overall quality was very good, temperament was excellent apart from a few shy exhibits with no sign of aggression.

Overall I found the shoulder angulation to be particularly good, first and second thighs were well developed and the majority had correct tail carriage, reaching well to the hock. There were a few inexperienced handlers among the entry but credit to them, they listened to instructions and followed them very well. A good handler can make an average dog look very good, and vice-versa.

The club's system of judging the champion class first, advancing all the way down to the baby puppy class was a new experience for me, all other clubs specifying the opposite, but it was no matter because it meant I would commence with quality rough collies who knew their job.

This was the case, only two present but both of excellent quality, d Galdelli's Ch Unlovedkevin Della Collina Dei Ciliegi winning over G Pascale's Ch Papillon Flight Nero Della Cambianella. They were both five-year-olds born within a month of each other, both good examples of the breed. Movement was excellent as they had the opportunity to run round the large ring to demonstrate their quality movement.

In the Open class, 13 were entered, a pleasure to judge. Not a bad one among them, handling expertise spot on. All stood up well to the heat, they were requested to wait in the shade until it was their turn to be judged.

After careful consideration, the class was awarded to Claudia Romelli's blue merle, Ch Dallinaire Xtravagant Blue, handled by Daniele Tabernini to first place, the CAC, and ultimately Best Male and RBOB. Beautifully presented, not a hair out of place, superbly constructed, excellent mover. Placed second and awarded the RCAC was Manu Licini's tricolour, Keyline Nelchael, another quality two year old, so very well developed and presented. Third was Wiener Walz Blu Di Cambiano and fourth, M Bertone's Lewis Of River Tweed.

There were two entered in the Intermediate class, both sable and white, R Stoppini's Attila Prince Of Barbarians beating A Fazzini's Wow Factor Della Buca Delle Fate.

In Junior, four were entered, the beautifully presented Keyline Quasar of Manu Licini's giving a fine performance of showmanship and movement to take the class with A Menacorde's Zeno Fulvo Dell'Isola Dei Collies placed second and M Fortanelli's Torrino Woow, a blue merle, placed third.

There were four babies present, all very promising, Marina Ciro Beffi winning the class with Dear Boy Della Buca Delle Fate. All were very promising.

There was only one entered in the female Campioni, Manu Licini's homebred blue merle, Ch Keyline Marilyn Monroe who has since become an International champion. Excellent presentation, excellent quality, excellent movement which saw her awarded the CAC and BOB, later placed BIS2 by Sigi Wilburg. I have judged this very feminine bitch before as a youngster so it was lovely to see her again to assess her development. Beautiful, with lovely ring presence.

Ten were present in Open, again a class teeming with quality. It was hard work to sort them out as many excelled in movement while others had very good make and shape, so after compromising them, I awarded first place to the Cambianella kennel, Your Love Is Better Fulva Della Cambianella, winning the CAC. Second was Maria Teresa Garabelli's English import, the blue merle, Samhaven Temptation Ladnar. I believe I did her well two years ago over here. Interestingly, she is sired by Ch Ladnar Kingfisher, to whom I have awarded a CC, out of Branock Rum And Truffle, who won a RCC under me. Third was E Benaglia's Unique

Pearl Dell'Isola Dei Collies and fourth, E Saviori's Femme Fatale Collies Of The Lario Lake.

Three entries in Intermediate class all sable, first and awarded Res.CAC R. Stoppini's Zexwood Love of my Life followed by E.Cimarelli's Winter Wild Flower della Collina dei Ciliegi while 3<sup>rd</sup> was C.Pretelli's Zeudy Araya dell'Isola dei Collies

Five lined up in the Junior class won by C Romelli's sable and white, Anais Anais Della Buca Delle Fate who was awarded Best Junior in Breed, a really lovely youngster full of ring presence. Second was A Fazzini's Okie Dokie Of Cedarwood and third, M Bertope's Flower Of The Night Dell'Antica Eporedia. Best Minor Puppy was F Galano's tricolour, Jeunesse Oblige Nera Di Cambiano with two babies both marked Very Promising, G Cuccu's Giuly's Dream Made In Italy and E Cimarelli's Hilary Dressed In Blue Della Collina Dei Ciliegi.

Overall, no serious problems to speak of. There were many who looked nice standing, but lacked fitness. Their muscle tone was not good and their thigh muscles under-developed. Rough Collies are a working dog and in order to herd sheep, must be fit enough to do a day's work. Some, after thirty minutes, would be looking for some trees to lay down by. However, my principal winners and those placed were in the prime of condition. Well boned, good muscle tone, strong in loin, well bent stifles with a good let down of hocks. And it shows in their eyes. The eyes tell you everything. Intelligence, or lack of intelligence, alertness, friendliness or shyness, love, hopefully non aggressive. The good ones stand away because they have been well reared, sufficient exercise, plenty of work on hard ground to keep the feet tightened and the pasterns strong.

It was a delight to judge this lovely entry, however, and I was very pleased with my main winners who would all do well in the UK.

There were seven Smooth Collies entered with one absent and my CAC & BOB went to Francesca Mussi's blue merle, Future Dream, a quality five year old male. Bitch CAC and RBOB was awarded to the same kennel's Adela Essentia Amicorum, a three year old tri and Francesca was again the winner of Best Junior with another tri, Medusa, interestingly sired by Multi/Int Ch Brontes Bohemia Elenor who was my

RCC winner at Crufts two years ago and my BIS winner at the Czech Republic Collie Club's championship show last year.

Again, no problems of note, perhaps some would benefit from more body and bone, but all were very clean, good movers and lovely temperaments.

There were 16 Shelties entered. Having judged the Italian Shetland Sheepdog Club's championship show last year, I was disappointed by the overall quality in the breed. Many lacked confidence and some were not typical Shelties.

However, I was pleased with my CAC winners, BOB awarded to M Morosini's sable and white, Mopava Marco's Gold from the Intermediate class, RCAC to Alfredo Gili's tricolour, Rivermist Ready Steady Go.

Bitch CAC and RBOB was Alfredo Gili's sable and white Rivermist Someone Like You and RCAC to the same owner's Rivermist Let The Dream Begin. Best Puppy was M Morosini's sable and white, Mopava Morgana Gold.

All three breeds were a delight to judge. There's not a lot wrong with the rough collies, on average they were a quality entry which gave me plenty of reward. The Smooths never draw large entries but I was pleased with those I judged while the Shelties lacked a lot for type, but the principal winners had plenty to offer in quality.

I must congratulate the committee of the Collie Club. The set-up was splendid, I had a superb interpreter/ring steward and I treasure the lovely presents I was given, particularly the ceramic wall tile depicting a pretty little girl with her rough collie.