

Swedish Basenji Club specialty • Norrköping, July 3 and 4, 2004

Decisions far from easy

I RECENTLY judged the Swedish Basenji Club specialty, held at a campsite at Norrköping, about an hour's drive south-east of Stockholm's Skavsta airport and by the sea. What an ideal venue it was with a large grass ring, around which many exhibitors had pitched their gazebos and tents in which to shelter their dogs from whatever the weather might throw at them and in which to eat, drink or just relax during the two days of the event.

An added bonus was that the exhibitors

seemed a long day of judging – but one which I thoroughly relished.

I enjoyed myself immensely and much appreciated the beautiful Swedish Basenjis, the hospitality afforded me and the sporting attitude of the exhibitors. It was so refreshing to find that they share their critiques with each other – warts and all – and although extremely competitive in the ring, quite readily admit their dogs' faults outside it and do not appear to be quite so 'precious' as we Brits who are far



BIS under Rosie Lane at the Swedish Basenji Club specialty was the tri-colour male, Swe Ch M Wami's American Fortune Hunter, owned and handled by Jeanette Nilsson and bred by Birgitta Prah. RBIS was the red/white bitch, Faraoland Umbra Complete, owned and handled by Åsa Holmberg and bred by Helena Strömbert.

are able to stay for the weekend in caravans, motorhomes or in the chalets on the site and this enabled everyone to participate in a barbecue on the Saturday night in the same place. Luckily the weather was superb but even if it had not been, I'm sure the same friendly and relaxed atmosphere would have prevailed.

A super entry of 94 awaited me and as judging FCI-style was new to me, it

too sensitive to criticism.

Providing an individual critique for each dog is certainly more testing of a judge's ability to not only critique every single dog but also to grade each one and then have to make the decision whether or not to award a 'CK' (champion quality) or 'HIP' (highly promising) if considered appropriate. Add to this the requirement of this specialty to award 'best head' and 'best



An unusual opportunity to see Basenjis giving a superb obedience demonstration (l-r): tri colour bitch, Liljeborg's Chan Dixie of Dazzling owned by Carina Ingemarson (handler) and Elisabeth Wennerbo and bred by Henritte Folke; Ch Yulara Desert Pea who, as a veteran, was the first Swedish Basenji to win a first prize in obedience, bred by Monica Massih (owner) and Mia Löwbeer; Suntribe's Coruscant, the second Swedish Basenji to win a first prize in obedience and the youngest at 4½ years old, owned and handled by Lina Alm, bred by Elisabeth Wennerbo; Ch Yulara Fulared Fagus, also a veteran, owned by Mia Löwbeer, past chairman of the SBC and co-bred by Monica Massih.

movement' awards out as you go along – so that all those exhibits so awarded can compete later on in the show – and there is not a chance in the world that the judge can 'ease up' for a second!



Report by
ROSIE LANE
Deputy editor



I found the Swedish Basenjis of great quality – most fronts and feet were excellent and the condition of the coats was superb. I was particularly impressed with the quality of the tricolours and black and whites as in England we see very few outstanding examples of these colours. Eyes in general were of good shape and colour and I noticed that there were very few with large ears. Also, it was reassuring to see good wrinkle very much in evidence.

The majority of exhibits displayed wonderful temperament and I was delighted to receive so many licks and kisses – from the dogs!

My main winners were absolutely stun-



One of the veterans at the show was 13-year-old Bokoto Nile Gossimer Glowlimn, owned by Helena Strömbert (Faraoland) and bred in the UK by Irene and John Horner. 'Mingeli' is the grand-dam of the BOS puppy and dam of the BOS veteran and of the winner of the yodelling competition. She herself had previously won this particular competition on a regular basis. Mingeli's sire, Ch Bellini (owned by Jill Avis) was also a great yodeller so it runs in the family. Interestingly another UK import from the same kennel, the late Ch Bokoto Nile Black Tango was the great-grand-dam of the BIS, BOS and BPIS!

ning and I am very envious – I would love to own any one of them. My BIS winner was the male tricolour, Swe Ch M Wami's American Fortune Hunter (Am Ch Jamila's Madahiro Re ex Swe Ch Faraoland Nile Wild Nimba), owned by Jeanette Nilsson and bred by Birgitta Prah. He absolutely stood away and commanded the ring from the minute he came into his class. Apart from his superb construction, type and condition, his movement was just what I was looking for – effortless, rhythmic and ground covering.

Reserve best dog was Lotten Eriksson's red/white six-year-old NZ/Nord Ch NordV-02/SV-02 Wazazi Dazzling Image (Aus Grand Ch Wazazi Perfect Dazzler ex

Aus Grand Ch Wazazi Trybal Image) bred in New Zealand by Kylie Delacourt.

Bitch CAC and RBIS was the lovely red/white, Faraoland Umbra Complete (Int/Fin/Dk/Sw/Nor Ch Wazazi Grand Crusader ex Sw Ch Faraoland Nile Wild Nimba), bred by Helena Strömbert and owned by Åsa Holmberg. Despite another CAC win, unfortunately she is as yet unable to claim her title as she is under two years of age.

At the end of the day I was delighted to find that my reserve best bitch, Sw Ch/NordV-03/SV-03 M Wami's Ehioze (by Int/Sw/Nor/Dk Ch NV-00 M Wami's Totu), also owned by Jeanette Nilsson and bred by Birgitta Prah, was ex the same dam as my BIS and RBIS winners!



BPIS was the black and white male, Faraoland Viking of Venture, co-owned by his breeder, Helena Strömbert and his handler, Patrik Cederlöf. BOS was the red and white bitch, Kaya-Kayenna, owned, bred and handled by Naranja Persson.

Best puppy in show was the most striking black and white male, Faraoland Viking of Venture (Multi Ch Mandela Free Out Of Africa ex Int/Nord/VDH Ch Faraoland Lucia Out Of Africa), just seven months old but with the confidence and ring presence of an old hand. Co-owned by his breeder, Helena Strömbert and his handler, Patrik Cederlöf, this precocious young star has everything to make him a future top winner. He has everything I look for in a Basenji and I would like to have put him in my suitcase. On top of his physical attributes, condition and great movement, he was just so self-possessed with an innate calm which belied his age, and such a sweet nature.

Another pleasing discovery for me was that the best puppy bitch (6-9 months), the red/white Kaya-Kayenna (ex Sw Ch Faraoland Nile Wild Kazizi) was by the BIS winner! She is owned and bred by Naranja Persson.

Movement is always very important to me and all my main winners were excellent in that department. Choosing the best was not an easy task.

The handling of my winners was very good but there were several very good dogs who could have been trained to better advantage. I did not penalise them for this as I believe that a judge is there to judge dogs, not handlers, but



when it comes to top placings, a dog has to look the part.

I was particularly impressed by the veteran exhibits. What a fit, superbly conditioned bunch they were and just to prove it, my third best dog in show is heading towards his tenth birthday!

One of the highlights of my visit was the obedience demonstration. I take my hat off to those owners who have trained their Basenjis to what many of this breed's owners would consider to be an almost unachievable standard. With several displaying perfect heelwork, recalls, finishes, stays – in the sitting and down position – all off lead, as well as heelwork to music moves such as 'weaving' and walking on hind legs, I found it a moving experience



to see these hounds – not renowned for their ready willingness to comply – so obviously enjoying their work and to see them working in a confined area together without any arguments. They were fabulous and living proof that Basenjis are not impossible to train and I thank these clever trainers for letting me share the enjoyment of their beautifully-behaved dogs.

Some of the most difficult decisions for me were sorting out the progeny and breeders' groups. They all had so much to offer that I could almost have thrown a coin in the air.

Also on the first day I had to choose the exhibit with the best head and exhibit with the best movement.

The schedule for the second day was shorter and certainly less serious although my decisions were again far from easy. Classes included best wrinkle, best eyes, best ears, best tail, best feet and best colour and with so many to choose from I was certainly spoilt for choice. The old cliché of 'not enough first prizes' certainly applied here!

An amusing and extremely manic part of the morning was the yodelling contest and with so many contestants – and handlers, owners and helpers – taking part it was very difficult to hear and see all at once!

My memorable trip to Sweden was further enhanced by the helpfulness of my two stewards who kept me on track during my occasional lapses in procedure. To put the icing on the cake, I was presented with a unique gift by the club – a picture which depicts two Basenjis in their Egyptian origins – painted by an obviously very talented club member. A lovely finishing touch.

