

## **Deerhound-Club of Switzerland, Clubshow 2011**

Judges Critique by Virginia Hawke

It was such a pleasure to be invited to judge your 2011 breed show and I would like to thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to appraise your lovely Deerhounds.

We were fortunate to have such perfect weather and the show ring was set in such lush beautiful surroundings especially when compared to our often dry and dusty conditions in Australia.

Overall, I thought the hounds were of lovely quality and a credit to you. There were no major faults that I could see that were consistent throughout which says well for future breeding programs.

As most of you would know I am very keen on fieldwork with Deerhounds and therefore I am always looking for a hound that could perform well and hold together when tested in conditions that could be quite tough. It was therefore very pleasing to find no big coarse hounds that are often totally useless in the field. Instead, the height and weight of most exhibits was well within the range of practicality. Heads also were not heavy and although a couple were a bit too fine for me the majority were good .

In general, bodies were very nice and although a few could have done with more spring of rib the majority had ample and some were excellent in this area. Overall soundness was good and it was nice to see some exhibits with lovely depth flowing through to the fore chest. I did not notice many hounds with obviously straight shoulders and hindquarters in general were good.

The dog I chose as best dog won out on his overall balance and athletic build. He is an elegant dog and he combines this with a look and feel of strength. He had terrific presence in the ring and really did show himself well. Even so, he was pressed hard by the veteran male who was also very nice and again presented in superb condition.

As is so often the case with our breed there was more depth of quality within the bitches and there were some really lovely ones, both young and old. I was really impressed with the winner of the Champion class who later became the Club winner and there were some very nice hounds exhibited in the Senior class

My best bitch and eventual Best of Breed I loved from the moment she walked into the ring. She really does have everything I look for in a Deerhound bitch. She is a perfect height and weight for work and I imagine she could run all day. I loved her general outline and her all over feminine appearance. I learnt later she was also Best of Breed at last years breed show and is a European Coursing Champion and European Racing Champion. All this and still only three and a half years!

In conclusion, it was great to see so many of my winners racing on the track the next day and some put in cracking runs. It is such fun to watch the dogs and the hounds just love it.