

Judge, Ian Finney, DVM

I will keep very happy memories of my first judging appointment, and indeed my first trip of any sort, to the USA. First of all I need to thank the Irish Wolfhound Association of New England for inviting me, my stewards, my hosts and most importantly the exhibitors for coming to show their dogs under me. Many of the distances travelled are beyond my comprehension. The venue was excellent for a show of this size, the hotel and its food were perfect.

I was always told the north-east had the best quality of Irish Wolfhounds in North America, and while I can't compare directly, I have no reason to disagree with this statement. The overall quality would have held up well anywhere in Europe, the overall winners would be easily competing for EIWC, World Show and Cruft's titles. The majority of exhibits were fit and functional and of steady temperament, and looked like sighthounds. While obviously some classes were stronger than others, it was very close in many classes to identify my winners.

One or two things bemused me. I don't know why mouths are not mentioned in the American Standard. I wasn't trying to be over harsh, but I count a good mouth as part of general soundness. While the majority of dogs had fine bites, there were a higher percentage of dogs with poor to bad ones than you see in Europe, ranging from small teeth, to wry mouths until you got canines growing inside the gums. Many of those dogs would have been disqualified in certain countries, especially in Scandinavia. Another small thing I noticed in grooming was owners brushing the coat downwards at the chest to give impression of deeper chest, when the depth was fine and broke the streamlined look of the dogs. A deeper chest is not always better!

Puppy, 6-9 Months Dogs

1. Coleraine's Cathbhadh Incubator Jones
Nicely shaped pup, quite straight shoulder, nice hindquarters, happy with himself. Needs some lead training. Hope his bite improves. Moving quite freely. Could mature nicely. Quite leggy, good scope.

Puppy, 9-12 Months Dogs

1. Starkeeper Haydn Highest Honor
Quite mature for age. Big front. Could do with a bit more reach perhaps. Croup quite flat, carrying tail high. Head quite plain. Incorrect bite. Backend big and strong. Hefty for age
2. Ancupla Penny Called It First
Needs some ringcraft training. Nice head, shoulders bit straight, hindquarters nicely angulated, quite sound, needs more reach of upper arm, head plain, houndy type. Very promising puppy.

12-15 Months Dogs

1. O'Lugh Blackwater Concannon
Nice houndy dog, very much like the type. Impressive standing. Moves easily. Little paddling in front. Like a more extension due to shorter upper arm. Could do with a little more length to body. Good teeth and head, ears. Topline could be stronger. Croup little flat. Hindquarters sound. Very promising male who with a bit of time and maturity could be a top winner
2. Starkeeper Calorien Ambr Declan

Quite nice type. Flat ears, good mouth. Moves away and back OK. Nice red colour. Nice low hocks. Would like more reach on upperarm. Quite nice backend, will gain more soundness as he matures.

3. Cugein Livin' Like A Renegade
Big dog. Lovely teeth, unattractive head. Good, low hocks. Carries tail high. Good length of leg. A lot of forechest with a big loaded front, nearly overdone. Topline falls away a bit
4. Brackynwood Redtops Maoilseachlainn
Active boy. Nice length of leg. Carrying tail way too high, little wide in front. Head and ears OK. A very big front. Poor topline. Needs to gain soundness while maturing, was OK standing

15-18 Months Dogs

1. Lismore Puck
Good head and ears, OK mouth. Neat moving. Not great length of upper arm. Moves away and back well. Well presented. Lots of angulation behind, using it well. Fore- and hind-quarters not corresponding symmetrically, but with some maturing would like to see this dog again in a year or two. My number 3 pick in the Winner's lineup
2. Highcross Tully
Small dog, quite typey. Nice head, teeth and nice length neck. Moves away OK, little loose and elbowy moving towards me. Would like more going on in front, hindquarters quite straight. Would be nice another inch or two taller. Nice length of body
3. Kellykerry Kerian of Aerie
Unfortunately my recording didn't save for this dog, apologises to the owner.
4. Kellykerry Barbancourt of Aerie
OK head and ears. Incorrect bite. Heavy for a younger dog. Nice length of neck. Big front. Very sound, moving away and back OK. Croup not pleasing. Decent length of leg. Hindquarters just functional. Plain but sound dog.

Novice Dogs

1. O'Murchadha's Cugein Caolabuinn
Plain dog. Hindend movement not very symmetrical. Head OK. Ears flat. Front good. Topline OK

Bred By Exhibitor Dogs

1. O'Lugh's Single Malt Scotch
Racy type, very impressive while moving. Head and mouth OK. Nice front, best one so far. Nice length of neck. Plenty of reach. Good length. Topline does slope off a bit too much. Ears OK. Hindquarters nearly overangulated, but able to use them well, nice and powerfully. A worthy winner. *Winners Dog, BOS*
2. Taliesin's Rhionanedd
Mouth and head OK, would like more reach in neck. Nice easy mover. Topline nice. Good reach. Impressive. Big front and big chest. Moves well towards. Would like a little more length. Hindquarters need to settle down *Reserve Winners Dog*

3. Ballyhara Ki
Plain, moves away nicely. Fairly big. Well filled in front. Moves around well. Nice when gets going. Heavy neck. Falls away a bit at the croup. Could do with more length and more grace. Needs a little training
4. Marblehead's Limin' on Maho
Heavy dog, too short of leg. Head, ears, teeth OK. Big front. Chest too deep beyond elbows. Topline flat, croup steep. Workman-like but plain dog

American Bred Dogs

1. Lismore Lone Ranger
Nice stacked, doesn't hold it together so well when moving. Good moving back and forward. Houndy type. Needs fraction more length. Good head, good mouth. Nice length of neck. Abdomen bit cut up. Hindquarters good. Dog who takes your attention
2. Tartan Terror of Fitzwick
Nice dog, nice length of body. Good low hocks. Moves nice away and back. Mouth and ears OK. Would like stronger underjaw and longer neck. Topline little flat, could have little more extension behind. Outline could be improved with a bit of grooming. Moves freely
3. Redtops As Time Goes By
Smaller male. Teeth OK, would like stronger underjaw. Ears not great. Plain, dog. Moves back and forward OK. Flat forefeet. Topline is quite dippy. Backend doesn't have the best coordination. Would like a little more upperarm
4. Berrybriar Caraglen Ieise Ar Carrowmoragh
Plain head, mouth OK. Nice condition. Ears good. Front well filled in, shoulders fairly straight and placed up neck, wide in front. German Shepherd topline. Tail in too tight a curl. Hindquarters functional. OK length of leg, needs more length in body

Open Dogs

1. Hound Hill Valkyrie of Aerie
Nice length of leg. Mouth good, ears OK. Head OK. Both shoulder and front too straight, lacking extension in movement. Houndy type. Moves easily. Hindquarters good. Topline good.
2. Carnasserie Tarsa
Quite nice, good length of body. Moves away and back soundly. Would like little more upperarm, affecting reach. Hindquarters OK, little high on hock. Moves OK. Teeth OK, plain head, flat ears. Topline bit flat. Sound, honest dog
3. Cugein Cepheus of Shanachie
Nice dog, head OK, incorrectly placed canines affecting class placement. Little wide front. Topline a little flat. Ears nice. Moves very nicely. Nice length of neck. Nice length of body. Little short upperarm.
4. Lionspring Gryphon of Eagle
Incorrect bite, canines inside gum unfortunately. Plain head. Fairly straight front. Topline poor. Too short in body. Hindquarters more pleasing.

Puppy, 6-9 Months Bitches

This was one class I took joy in judging

1. Starkeeper Granuaile's Galleon
Beautiful pup, hit me like a thunderbolt. Moves away and back lovely. Nice head and teeth. Topline little flat, should improve at this age. Moves around lovely in profile. Nice hindquarters. Good length. Front good. Outstanding, wasn't far from going all the way today. *Reserve Winners Bitch, Best Puppy*
2. O'Lugh Giddy Up of Aerie
Nice black puppy. Would like a little more bone. Mouth and teeth OK. Nice front, could do with more extension. Topline good. Hindquarters good. Good head. Moved at good speed. Promising pup.
3. Tirnanog Blaze of Glory
Quite nice pup. Moving away and back OK. Good head. Topline bit flat, croup steep. Moves well. Well angulated, good extension on move
4. Starkeeper Gra Mo Chroi Gemma
Nice and leggy, will take time to mature. Little short in body. Needs to settle in head. Ears flat. Topline little flat. Tail curly. Moves well away. Nice length of neck. Nicely angulated hindquarters

12-15 Months Bitches

1. O'Lugh's BBC
Nice bitch, good bone. Nice head and mouth. Fighting a bit. Needs a bit of training. Very nice hindquarters. Moves away nice. Nice type of bitch. Very promising
2. Starkeeper Calorien A Diamond
Good head but flat ears. Moves away and back nicely. Mature for age. Like more extension in neck. Front bit straight, no great reach in upperarm. Topline somewhat flat. Hindquarters are good. Functional but plain bitch
3. Dun Myrica R Noble Nuala of Eagle
Nice type, small black bitch. Frontfeet bit flat, hindend needs coordination, needs to mature there. Nice length of leg. Good teeth. Nice head. Front quite nice, good extension.

15-18 Months Bitches

1. Carnasserie Nikita
Nice, houndy bitch. Moves away nicely. Could do with more bone. Nice head, mouth OK. Little elbowy. Nice neck. Topline bit flat. Hindquarters OK. Nice type.
2. Spicemate's Blizzard
Nice young bitch. Neck short and thick. Plain. Smaller side. Head OK. Underjaw quite tight against gums. Loaded front for female. Quite nice reach. Hindquarters bit straight when stacked. Good bone. Moves quite nicely. Nice length to body, good bone

Veteran Dogs

1. GCH AM & CAN CH Carrickaneena Tyrconnell
Lovely dog. Teeth little worn. Good head and ears. Lovely front, lovely coming towards. Well built. Good topline. Easy moving. Lovely feet. Commanding appearance. *Award of Merit*
2. Carrickaneena Inishowen
Nice condition for veteran. Wry mouth. Good ears. Straight shoulder. Wide in front coming towards. Topline a bit dipped. Good length. Flat forefeet. Head nice. Neck good. Cycle motion in front. Hindquarters good. Moving well for age
3. CH Shanachie's My Guy
Hindquarters sloping and giving away. Good head. Lost strength in pastern, flat feet. Moves easily. Ears bit flat. Poor mouth.

Veteran Bitches

1. CAN & AM CH Glenamadda Starkeeper Clodagh
Lovely bitch, carrying a little weight, had pups recently. Lovely head and teeth. Moving away and back lovely. Lovely length of neck. Can have a little more reach. Good hindend.
2. Ch Carrickaneena Greenore
Moves nicely. Good ears and head. Teeth gone a bit wry. Nice topline. Lacks little drive, good low hocks. Handsome bitch. Lovely moving towards. Nice neck. Close with number 1
3. Shancarrick's Tegwyn
Nice bitch, doesn't move great away, better moving towards. Flat forefeet. Hindquarters lost some coordination. Nice when stacked. Mouth OK. Nice head and ears. Lovely length of neck.
4. Eirians Inishkeen Dubheasa
Nice bitch. Dippy topline. Moves away and back very nicely. Coming back the same. Poor mouth. Nice neck. Lacking a bit of drive today

Novice Bitches

1. Starkeeper Nuala O'Ard Rhi
Lovely bitch, houndy. Little wide behind. Nice mouth, good ears, head. Lovely length of neck. Nice lay of shoulder. Could have little more extension in front. Topline good, lovely hindquarters. Would have been 3rd or 4th in Winner's lineup
2. Gladstone's Lola of Rathkeale
Young, houndy bitch, like type. Needs ringcraft. Good mouth. Pleasing head. Good ears. Like little more bone. Nice length of neck. Could do with more reach front, little wide too. Will take more maturing than others in the class. Bit wide in front. Topline alright. Hindquarters good
3. Tir Alain's The Rising of the Moon from Maccaura
Overweight for young bitch. Mouth OK. Head OK, eyes too round. Nice ears. OK length of neck. Away and back true, pleasing. Short upperarm, better when speeds

up. Would be better if lost 10lb. Hindquarters could do with more angulation

4. Orchid of Nutstown
Nice temperament, enjoying herself. Mouth and head OK. Quite close behind and in front. Needs to steady. Too long body, bit roached topline. Ears flat. Hind-quarters look OK but doesn't use them as well while moving, angulation OK.

Bred By Exhibitor Bitches

1. O'Lugh's Stella Artois
Lovely bitch, smaller size. Typey. Really lovely side movement, needs to be seen in the flesh. Moves at good pace. Nice teeth, ears, head. Lovely neck. Great front. Plenty of rear angulation, able to use it. Plenty of length. Croup drops away a little bit, the only reservation. Very pleased to be able to put on hands on her, effectively RBIS. *Winners Bitch, BOW*
2. Taliesin's Ruadhoigh
Lovely wheaten bitch. Moves out lovely. Nice head, mouth, ears. Little wide coming towards me. OK neck. Nice front. Good extension. Nice topline. Uses hindquarters and her angulation well. Would have been 3rd or 4th in Winner's lineup
3. Kellykerry Echo of Aerie
Big bitch, looks quite mature. Moves away soundly enough, elbows converging in front. Nice head, good mouth. Good neck. Hindquarters not doing much, front end has more drive. Fair length of leg
4. Gladstone's Donna Marie of Rathkeale
Very leggy bitch. Nice mouth. Good head. Moving nicely at good speed. Nice length of neck. Needs a bit more body, is whispery. Nice feet. Short upperarm. Still quite nice type

American Bred Bitches

1. Shanachie's Mira of Thuban
Nice head, good mouth. Good ears. Eyes little round. Covers ground well. Nicer when gets to moves out. Moves away OK. Could be a bit more willing. Nice length of neck.
2. O'Lugh Black Lady of the Night
Incorrect bite. Head, ears OK. away and back nice. Nice length of neck. Front little restricted but moves freely. Could do more angulation in her hindquarters
3. O'Murchadha's Bebhinn
Mouth OK. Plain bitch. Head, ears OK. Short upperarm. Unsound front coming towards me. Topline flat. Flat feet. Hindquarters functional. Could do with more drive

Open Bitches

1. Taliesin's Spriolag
Nice bitch. Nice height. Nice length of leg. Pleasing head. Good ears. Little wide coming towards me, front little restricted. Topline little flat. Nice type. Stacks lovely. Moves away lovely. Move easy and open in profile. Neck little short.

2. Nutstown Aisling of Carrickaneena
Nice, well made bitch. Moves away a little close. Good mouth. Good head, nice ears. Good front coming towards me. Bit of a stocky neck. Little short and restricted in upperarm. Nice feet. Hindquarters working well, nice hocks.
3. Starkeeper Ard Rhi's Supernova
Plain bitch, little wrong nor fantastic with her. Little wide coming towards me. Moves away nicely. Bite not perfect. Ears and head alright. Nice neck. Upperarm little short. Moves easily enough. Croup little flat and falling off. Could do with more bone.
4. Calcara Damhsoir
Small bitch. Moves away and back very nicely. Good feet, nice ears. Topline a bit flat. Low hocks. Good bone. Moves well. Would be consideration for higher placings if a little taller

Best of Breed

Can Ch Starkeeper's Rena Rogue

Beautiful bitch. Lovely houndy, classic type. Lovely head. Lovely ears. Good mouth. Lovely front. Topline just right. Lovely moderate hindquarters. Chest depth just right. Moves nice and easy, very little undue effort. Was my winner the first time I saw her coming into the ring. If I was (or had the ability) to draw an outline of my ideal Irish Wolfhound, it wouldn't be far from hers. *BOB, Best Gait*

Ch Hound Hill Vanderbilt of Aerie

Big, upstanding male. Nice head. Mouth just about OK. Flat ears a little. Slightly short neck. Would like little more upperarm extension but does move nice and easy. Nice topline. Nicely constructed rearend. Nice wheaten colour. Good length of leg. Worthy winner. *Select Dog*

Marblehead's Kiss of the Jumbie

Nice type, younger bitch. Nice and easy moving, little effort. Pleasing head. Nice mouth. Neck could be little longer. Forefeet little flat. Good ears. Good front. Nice moderately angulated hindquarters. Pleased to place her well. *Select Bitch*

Ch Carrickaneena Anna Liffey

Nice type of bitch. Lovely front assembly. Underjaw little narrow. Nice easy movement, no undue effort. Would like little more angulation in her rearend. Nice tight forefeet. Ears could be better. *Award of Merit*