

Border Collie Club of Great Britain - Special Properties Event March 19th 2016

My thanks to the Border Collie Club of GB for their kind invitation to judge this event - a first for our breed in the UK. Thank you also to all those who entered and accepted my decisions with good grace. I was thrilled with the quality of the entry and all exhibits were beautifully presented. The only time my hands needed a wipe was when one young dog was over-enthusiastic with his kisses and one can't complain about good temperament! In many instances I was hard pushed with my final choices - it really was a case of splitting the finest of hairs, particularly in the Best Gaited Dog class.

In the Best Headed classes I was hoping not to see any of the round eyes or over-short muzzles that have been creeping into the breed & I was delighted that they were largely absent. In the Best Gaited classes I was looking for balance at all speeds, for smooth, flowing, tireless action with reach & drive when extended and again I was well rewarded. My line-ups in these classes epitomised the correct Border Collie head and gait for me, the dogs' heads masculine, the bitches' feminine, nothing exaggerated or overdone, movement displaying the grace & elegance of a true Border Collie.

The Best Owner Bred & Handled classes were 'standard' breed classes & again I was extremely pleased with my winners. The two Progeny classes were a complete delight - I would have loved to be able to award several first places for each class but in the end my overall winner scored heavily on her progeny being of a type to each other and to their dam - a lovely family group, instantly recognisable as such.

I took my job seriously, as a judge should, but I hope the exhibitors had fun on the day! It was a great honour and a joy to judge the first such event in the UK and I hope there will be more Special Properties events in the coming years.

Sheila Gay