

Norwegian Elkhounds Notes 11th August 2024

Only one Open show to report on this week and that was Otley Premier Open Show. Vanessa McHugh's Erik (Kamgaard Kloudberry Jam For Conrick) was BOB at this lovely show under Frank Whyte and Layla (Laakso Dina of Conrick) was RBOB.

Next week is WKC where 20 dogs have made 17 entries for Christine Gilbert to judge. The last time Christine judged the breed was in 2022 at the Hound Association of Scotland. Hound day is the second day, a Friday which thankfully doesn't seem to have affected entries too much the way weekday shows often do. Best wishes to Barbara Stokes for whom WKC is her local show. She is presently recovering from surgery. I hope you're well enough to get to the show Barbara.

I'm delighted and relieved to say that the NECGB 2023 Journal is almost ready to go to the printers. This extensive, historical work on the breed takes a very long time to put together and it's only thanks to volunteers who give up a lot of family time and a great deal of effort to put it together. It has been made somewhat easier recently because there are now 4 people sharing the load; Karen Gold, the principal editor; Cathrin Saint who prepares all the show results; myself who sorts out printing and checks the final layout and this year a new volunteer, Vanessa Mc Hugh who did the proof reading – a very intensive job. Thank you all. Without your efforts it couldn't have happened.

Thank you also to those of you who have put in adverts for your dogs. These are what bring our breed's history to life. Why do we produce a Journal? So that, people, many years into the future, can trace their own dogs' ancestors and see how the breed has developed over the years and can look back to those people who worked so hard since the first days of the Club and the Elkhound Society to maintain and improve the quality of the breed. I often look back at the early Journals, remember those people who were breeding and importing dogs and I'm delighted to see, on the whole, just how little the breed has changed since the first imports. In the early days the breed was still being developed even in Norway; colour is now much clearer and not as dark as the early dogs and construction has stabilised to make them more able to do a full day of hunting in difficult terrain. The main faults I see in quite a number of modern-day dogs, that need improvement are ears which seem to be getting bigger and bigger which can ruin a dog's expression and head shape – the Standard calls for "Ears, Set high, **small, firm** and erect, pointed and very mobile; slightly taller than width at base; when alert, outer edge should be vertical." The underline is also, in many cases becoming much too tucked up and often more like a whippet's underline. Again, the Standard says, "Loin short and wide with **very little tuck-up**". Please, if you are breeding, use the Journals to look back at some of the good early dogs and compare them to your own. Numerous people have a full set of copies right back to the 1930s. Be critical of your own dogs- the perfect Elkhound has not yet been born, there is always room for improvement. Compare them to the standard, do your research on the ancestors of the dog you are thinking of breeding to and see if they have and have passed on the qualities you need to improve your own. You can find the breed Standard online on the RKC website and in the Journal.

The Journal will still take a few weeks to be finalised, printed and sent out to members so please be patient; it is on its way.

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