

ACDCA 2019 National Specialty Results

Gray Summit, Missouri - Purina Farms

Judge's Comments

Conformation **Judge Linda Robey**

Thank you for inviting me to judge your 2020 National Specialty. It is such an honor to judge a breed's National Specialty. It's when we, as judges, get to see the best the breed has to offer all in one place. I didn't know I was going to be writing a critique, so I didn't take specific notes. I will use the clubs prompts as a guide for my comments.

What did you think of the overall quality of the Australian Cattle Dogs presented to you?

The quality was very good overall. All the class winners had the sturdy, compact working dog look that the breed should have.

Your top picks from the final cut, what qualities about them really stood out to you?

Getting down to the final winners was very hard, the quality ran deep. I was looking for a well-balanced, compact body with a strong level topline. A dog/bitch of proper size and proportions. I also wanted a proper head and eye shape. A broad skull, oval medium sized eyes. I'm very particular about front end angles. I want to see the front leg under the withers, this shows good angles. Movement that is free and easy. They need to look like they can work all day. I'm happy to say all my winners had these qualities.

My BOB and BOS both excelled in all those qualities. I moved them several times and my BOB winner continued to move in such a tireless easy gait that she ended up the winner on that day. The BOS dog is also an outstanding example of the breed.

What trait do you feel needs to most improve in our breed from a conformation standpoint?

From the national entry the breed is in good shape, but as with most breeds you need to stay vigilant. Watch for the proper shaped eyes, a few are becoming a bit round. Toplines and proportions are always important and need to be maintained. Feet are something breeders often don't think about. Dogs that work all day need good feet.

As a judge, you are faced with many difficult decisions when choosing the top dog in each class, what quality must the dog possess to initially grab your attention?

Proper Size, proportions and balance is necessary, and the first thing a judge sees. I like to see a nice flow from the neck into a strong level topline. A good front end assembly is very important, and it must be in balance with the rear angles also. Proper length of leg.

What poor aspect of conformation is a total deal breaker?

A straight front is hard for me to get past. As a breeder it is one of the harder things to maintain, so it carries a lot of weight in my decisions. Also, a strong topline. I feel a dog needs those 2 things to be able to do its job.

What did you enjoy most about judging this year?

The best part of judging in general is being able to examine very good dogs. Your National didn't disappoint. I was able to get my hands on many excellent examples of your breed. That is always fun. vAnd judging beautiful puppies is always a plus. Thank you again for inviting me to judge your National Specialty. **Q**

Sweepstakes **Judge Linda Bell**

First I want to thank the membership for the honor of electing me to judge the Sweepstakes and Herding trials. What a treat to be able to do both!

My overall opinion of the class dogs in sweepstakes were the dogs were nice. But, we still need to do work. I know people won't like that observation; but, it is my opinion. To me, there is no perfect dog. Every dog has faults. I have a tendency to look what a dog needs to have fixed, and then look at the overall package.

What I look foremost is a dog that can go all day behind a herd of cattle. Some of the dogs I observed would not be able to do that. Flashy movement is not necessarily correct. It looks nice in the ring but it would wear a dog out if it was working all day.

I do think the younger entries were better than the older dogs in the regular classes. Overall heads were good and bites were good. Tail sets could be lower. I saw a lot of long bodied dogs. We need more balanced dogs.

My overall winner was a nice package. Clean movement coming and going with a nice solid topline, nice angles and a nice head.

My puppy winner was a bitch that had not been in the ring much. Body wise she was a bit long for me but her movement is what drew me in. She out moved every dog or bitch before me.

My veterans. I loved them. These are the dogs we need to emulate. Almost every veteran was well balanced with excellent angles, clean coming and going, Nice shoulder lay back and good tail sets. Look at these dogs as patterns of what we should be breeding for. **Q**