

CRUFTS INTER REGIONAL RALLY JUDGE'S REPORT 2020

Well what an exciting Rally competition it was this year, with a really nail biting finish. Unlike probably most of the Team Managers I had deliberately not looked at the overall paper score sheet so I was quite surprised to discover that we needed to have a run off for 1st place. I had managed to keep to our timetable up to this point so this meant that we over-ran a little which could not be helped. It must have been very nerve wracking for the level 6 handlers to suddenly discover that they needed to complete their whole course again to decide the overall winner. Sue (North) and Kate (Midlands) stepped up to the mark and both performed really well under the pressure but Sue with Delta carried it off which meant that the Northern Team were triumphant.

The whole competition couldn't run without the input of so many people all willingly giving their time. My thanks must go to Richard Kebble for his guidance throughout and to Rachel Bradley for being the link between myself and the Teams. I would also like to thank Our Dogs for their generous support of the competition and to Gina Pink for coming along after her HTM organising role to assist me with the presentations. I could not have carried out my judging role without the invaluable support of my ring party namely: Sharon Formstone, Carole Thornley, Pat Dobbie, Sheila Farrow, John Khan (who stepped in at the last minute to replace Mike Muxworthy whose dog was ill), Gwen Holland, Emma Taylor and Carys Davies.

The courses were designed to allow the dog/handler teams to demonstrate Rally at its best. I did not make the courses too complicated since I think that the pressure of Crufts creates enough difficulties without adding to that. Observant people may have noticed that I made quite a bit of use of 'nesting' within my courses. So certainly levels 1 to 4 followed a very similar pattern with just some changes to individual signs as the levels became more advanced. This helped my course builders do the changeovers between levels quite quickly. My three course builders are actually agility competitors as well so they were well used to putting out courses and measuring – even bringing along a measuring wheel to set accurate distances.

Overall Winners

The ultimate winning team, after the run off, was the North, ably led by Gail Holl in her second year in this position. She was assisted by Sharon Dunn and Janet Thickbroom. The team gained: 2 x 1st, 1 x 3rd, 1 x 4th and 2 x 6th.

Coming 2nd was the Midlands team competently managed by Julia Bodsworth, assisted by Karen Kendall and Helen Chetwynd. The team gained: 1 x 1st, 1 x 2nd, 2 x 3rd, 1 x 5th and 1 x 6th.

Level 1

1st Fran Mitchell (North) with Mikmaqlabs Kuruk (Labrador Retriever). This was a lovely round with just 3 marks lost for occasional out of positions. Congratulations (8 points).

2nd Glenis Charles (Midlands) with Corneroak Golden Gambler (Golden Retriever). This was another good round just unfortunately losing 5 marks on the first 'sit- stand' exercise. Well done (6 points).

3rd Nicki McAlister (Northern Ireland) with Connonbenali Bizzy at Dreamweaver (Cocker Spaniel). A good overall performance just making an error on the 'call front forward left' exercise so losing 5 marks there and a bit of lack of attention on the 'figure of eight'. Well done (5 points).

Rhian Lloyd (Wales) with Chocolate Mystery Maiden (Cocker Spaniel). A lovely little worker just losing marks for minor out of positions including in the bonus. A pleasure to watch (4 points)

Mary Cockings (South & South West) with Another Beautiful Husky (Siberian Husky). It was lovely to see a Husky working and just losing marks for slight out of positions and lack of attention. (3 points).

Sonya Wright (South East & East Anglia) with Edward Scissor Paws (Crossbreed). Again marks mainly lost on out of position and lack of attention but 5 marks going on the 'call front finish right' which was performed incorrectly. But nevertheless a good round (2 points).

Sharon Deans (Scotland) with Highhouse Adranus Fliro (Labrador Retriever). Quite an enthusiastic worker but I think Gus may have found the Crufts atmosphere a bit much which led to some lack of precision (1 point).

Level 2

1st Betty Straw (South East & East Anglia) with Dukeson I'm a Believer (Shetland Sheepdog). An almost perfect round just losing 1 mark for an additional cue on the Bonus. Congratulations (8points).

2nd Nerys Thomas (Wales) with Tudful Ddraig Coch at Calanhaf (Welsh Springer Spaniel). It was a pleasure to watch this partnership work with just 8 marks lost for a couple of tight leads and some out of positions. Well done (6 points).

3rd Colleen Fawcett (Northern Ireland) with Fostebrie Divine Gold at Beannchor (Briard). How nice to see a Briard working so well. Unfortunately the team lost 5 marks in the figure of 8 due to a handler error. But apart from that most of the marks lost were for slight out of positions. Well done (5 points).

Sarah Edwardson (North) with Kenaiteen Mungo (Bernese Mountain Dog). Joey obviously enjoyed his time in the ring and mainly lost his points for minor lack of attention and being out of position. He was only a couple of marks behind the 3rd place. A good round (4 points).

Monica Collins (South & South West) with Cama Z Jirkova Dvora (German Shepherd Dog). On the whole worked well but quite a few marks lost due to being out of position , lack of attention and the occasional tight lead (3 points)

Gloria Bonnell (Midlands) with Sandwich Centre Stage at Cinlock (Shetland Sheepdog). Unfortunately quite a few tight leads and out of positions, plus failure to remain in position for exercise 13 and the bonus. But nevertheless Dylan coped with the Crufts atmosphere well so well handled by Gloria (2 points).

Lorraine Murtagh (Scotland) with Practically Perfect Inca (English Springer Spaniel). Inca appeared to enjoy himself in the ring despite sniffing the distractions and knocking a sign over. I think Lorraine must have struggled to keep his exuberance under control (1 point).

Level 3

1st Lizzy Lang (Midlands) with Slatina Norroca (Crossbreed). Yogi is a rescue dog from Romania but you would never guess it from his performance losing just 3 marks for out of positions. Congratulations (8 points).

2nd Christine Dunning (South East & East Anglia) with Mohnesee Miss Nightingale (Shetland Sheepdog). This would have been a perfect round had the team not lost 5 marks for passing on the wrong side of a sign. Well done for such good work (6 points).

3rd Sarah Collin (Scotland) with Stockibears Caramel Mist (German Shepherd Dog). Lost marks for just out of positions and a little bit of attention lapse but only 1 mark behind the 2nd place. Well done (5 points).

Debbie Martin (Northern Ireland) with Foxbarton Platinum Prince (Border Collie). A happy worker and did really well for such a young dog losing marks mainly for out of position and 5 in the Bonus for exercise performed incorrectly. Nice to watch (4 points).

Rosemary Banfield (South & South West) with Delator Spring in in the Air (BSD Tervueren). Although most of the marks lost were for out of positions and lack of attention I think the Crufts atmosphere affected Kite's work (3 points)

Ann Lee (North) with Izzy Wizzy Woo (Crossbreed). I think the whole audience as well as myself were willing Izzy to keep going. She had bursts of good work and then decided to go at her own pace. Well done Ann for persevering and gaining 2 points for your team.

Katie Harvey (Wales) with Madgack Maple (Labrador Retriever). Unfortunately Luna had an accident in the ring even before she started and this is one of the few things resulting in an NQ at Crufts. Such a shame as Luna did really well last year.

Level 4

There were quite a few changes to make to the course for level 4 including the run past jump exercise and an angled recall. The jump did cause a few issues but on the whole the handlers coped well with the increased pressure at this level.

1st Amy Jackson (Scotland) with Scottish Duke 'O' Emerald Isle (Crossbreed). This is another rescue dog showing what can be achieved. Lost just 3 marks due to an out of position and momentary lack of attention. Congratulations (8 points)

2nd Anne Uglow (South & South West) with Aculsia Teardrop (Border Collie). Ziggy lost the same marks as the 1st place but came in 2nd with a slightly longer time. Congratulations (6 points).

3rd Katie Lynn (Midlands) with Borderforce Any Witch Way (Working Sheepdog). Hocus failed to take the jump and also lost another 5 marks on the send to mat exercise. But the rest of the round was well done (5 points)

Mary Muxworthy (Wales) and Beverton Ted (Border Collie). This was another dog that failed to take the jump but a nice steady worker overall and a good partnership. Well done(4 points).

Alison Ruyter (South East and East Anglia) and Resi's Practical Joke (Crossbreed). Ida is another rescue dog and she managed the jump but it led to being out of position afterwards. Most of the other marks lost were for minor out of positions and lack of attention. A good round overall (3 points).

Denise Curran (North) and Madsway Aramis (Crossbreed). This would have been a really good round had Denise not gone off course in both the figure of 8 and the spiral exercises, losing herself 20 marks for those errors. Well done for keeping going though despite that (2 points).

Louise Boomer (Northern Ireland) and Gracehill Mister Charles (Crossbreed). Charlie was an enthusiastic worker as demonstrated by some jumping up which cost him. He lost 5 marks on the angled recall but apart from that the other marks were mainly lost for out of position. Well done (1 point).

Level 5

This course needed a bit more time to get set up as there were quite a lot of layout changes. On walking the course though the handlers seemed to find it fairly straightforward. The jump at this level required the dog to move away from the handler to take so it was a bit more complicated than at level 4.

1st Denise Platts (North) with Littlethorn Leaf (Border Collie). This was a nearly perfect round with just marks lost for movement on a static, a jump up and an out of position. Congratulations (8 points)

2nd Felicity Feazey (South & South West) with Janallan Bakari (BSD Groenendael). Jet was just 2 marks behind the 1st place losing just minor points including a jump up in the Bonus. But well done it was a pleasure to watch (6 points).

3rd Marie Miller (Midlands) with Stormlake's Jester (German Shepherd Dog). I always like watching a large GSD working and Yogi was no exception. Unfortunately he failed to take the jump and lost 6 marks on his Bonus but most of his other marks were lost for minor errors. So well done (5 points).

Gareth Smyth (Northern Ireland) with Tippi May Hadron (Smooth Collie). Another dog that failed to take the jump and also had to go and have a look at the distractions. Gareth made an error on the 270 degree left but apart from that it was a credible round. Well done (4 points).

Val Kelsey (South East & East Anglia) with Rooqui's Typoni Maiden (Border Collie). Tipi on the whole lost marks for just minor errors but something upset her before she got to the finish line and although the handler is allowed to touch their dog as a reward after static exercises I had to deduct 10 marks as Val actually went off course then before passing the finish line. But well done Val for putting your dog first in that situation (3 points)

Sally Sanford (Scotland) with Danehaven Midgell at Paludic (NSDTR). This was a very creditable round but the jump caught Zee Zee out as did the stand, leave dog, turn, call to heel. It is lovely to see this breed working. Well done (2 points).

Mary Rayment (Wales) with Grizwold Lady of the Lake (German Spitz Mittel). This is not a breed you see often in Rally and Krystal coped really well with the Crufts environment. There were a couple of failures to wait and the distraction exercise caused a few problems as did the retrieve. But well done nevertheless (1 point)

Level 6

This followed a similar pattern to level 5 but with the jump being an angled recall over. And I included the Bonus that I really like which is send your dog round the pole/cone.

1st Katy Girdler (Wales) and GwynionSinead For Pashamatts (Border Collie). What can I say – a brilliant round. Unfortunately Katy gave an unintended additional visual cue when sending Tyler round the cone. Luckily it only cost her 1 mark. Congratulations (8 points).

2nd Sally Sanford (Scotland) with Erikachen Lasadoir at Paludic (NSDTR). This team lost just 4 marks, 2 of them for movement on static. The rest of the round was excellent. Well done (6 points).

3rd Sue Brown (North) with Stillmoor Tartan Banner of Delphinia (Border Collie). This was another team just losing minor marks, the largest chunk being for significantly out of position on the first exercise. A lovely round to watch well done (5 points).

Sarah Lindsey (South & South West) and Merryway Narla of Goldbounty (Golden Retriever). Narla took the jump well but managed to knock it over thus losing 5 marks. Just minor errors for the remaining lost marks so well done (4 points).

Kate Wykes (Midlands) with Dreaganta Xary's Star of Tarnforce (Border Collie) A nice round to watch but quite a few out of positions which all add up. Star managed the jump but then ended up considerably out of position. Well done (3 points).

Amanda Wark (Northern Ireland) with Smokin Joe Razor (Crossbreed). Razor managed this course really well but I think the environment caused him to lose some precision so quite a few out of positions and additional cues needed but only 1 mark behind the previous dog (2 points).

Jenny Morris (South East & East Anglia) with Blackrobin Bob the Builder (Border Collie). This was actually a good round but Jenny lost 5 marks for doing the right turn backup incorrectly and Bob lost the team another 5 marks for knocking the cone over (1 point)

Margaret Booth

Inter Regional Rally Judge