

# My long Judging Critique for the Northern Basenji Society 45th (Sapphire) Anniversary Championship Show

July 21, 2012

**I was honored to judge the NBS Sapphire Anniversary Show on July 15th and decided to publish it on my blog site for those who don't read Our Dogs.**

It is some time since I last judged the breed and I was pleased to have such an excellent entry to examine – the best for some years. This was the sapphire anniversary of the society and I was honoured to be at such an enjoyable event with a great party atmosphere with a huge blue and white iced cake endorsed “45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show” and there were specials for everyone including the dogs.

To celebrate my birthday the society had even had a cake made for me depicting me with one of my Champion Basenjis – how do they change a photograph into edible icing one wonders? – It was almost a shame to cut into it. I received some lovely gifts as well as a special bottle of malt whisky. What a super day it was for everybody organised by a great committee. I was delighted to be assisted by excellent stewards Brian and Barbara Henry.

The current trend in dog showing is to move ones charges around the ring at running pace and I have long subscribed to the belief that this type of movement can hide a multitude of faults no matter how attentive a judge maybe. Consequently I had all the dogs in each class move twice around the ring at pace before individually judging them at which time I had each dog make a triangle at normal walking pace before doing another circuit at running pace.

In the old days all dogs were judged at walking pace, often never moving at pace at all, and so fewer dogs could get away with poor movement. Not so these days and I was proved right in my assumption that faulty movement is being hidden by moving at pace as many Basenjis today were moving badly. When viewed at walking pace, looking through the front legs of the dog, one should not see hind legs converging or touching and at least 40% of the exhibits today moved this way. I was

taught by all the old great all-rounders that faulty movement was evidence of faulty construction so maybe it's time for all judges to start applying the walking technique. I hasten to add that there were no problems with the movement of those I picked out today.

Basenjis have changed considerably over the years that I have been associated with the breed and unfortunately, in my opinion, not for the better. The head of the Basenji is unique and should be well wrinkled, with side wrinkling desirable, eyes should be dark, almond shaped and obliquely set. Muzzles should be shorter than skull, well cushioned and never snipey. Ears should be small and hooded. These were major factors in determining my choice of winners and other placing in the classes.

Unfortunately the modern Basenji is beginning to lose its wrinkle; there are some with light coloured round eyes – including tri colours. There are too many that are long in the muzzle, that are too broad between the ears, with others that have ears that are too large. There were even a few today that had all of these faults.

Another fault with the modern dog is the lack of a pliant skin. I could lift my last Basenji off the floor with the pliant skin on his back, without this bothering him at all, but doubt that this could be done with many in the ring now. Well arched necks are not so common either.

There were some on show here that had a flat shelf and straight stifles and feet like the dog is standing on top of four big spiders were not uncommon. I do so love to see Basenjis with well arched toes and in hard condition these too were other major factors in my decision making.

It was a disappointment to me that I had to leave out of the top prizes a number of dogs that I really liked some who had travelled a long way to be judged by me but if your dogs are out of condition or are overweight, or are still carrying winter woollies, or need to tighten up then perhaps you will accept why on this occasion I couldn't select you for a prize.

I hope Basenji breeders and exhibitors take on board these observations and look to make improvements because until they do the regular top winning dogs will continue in their winning ways as despite some ringside comment that suggests that the top winners are not really worthy of their wins this is far from a fact because the regular winners are generally presented in tip top condition and today was no exception.

**MPD. (7.0)** 1, BPD and BOSPI. Miller's Benkura Blue Sky Mine – just a week over 6 months old and a great little lad – he does need to grow on a bit but he has time to do just that, tall on the leg and short in the back he has no trouble striding around the ring with verve for one so young. He has a lovely short muzzle and nice wrinkle, well set almond shaped eyes, good dentition and hooded ears that he still needs to grow into, nice reach of neck set into well laid back shoulders. Excellent level top line that he keeps on the move, nice tail set and shelf behind, has the correct turn of stifle. In nice hard condition he is a great little puppy 2. Wright & Wilkinson's Faraoland Yuletide Snowfall at ElSCO – he is more mature than 1 and is still carrying his winter woollies which I overlooked for his other good qualities including his pleasing head, dark eyes and level top line. He has good tail set and shelf behind and strong rear quarters that help him move with drive 3. Baker's Silverbriar Winter Sun – I like this fellow particularly for his excellent skull, ears, neck and top line, good tail set and shelf give

a pleasing overall picture of quality. To be super critical a smidgeon more turn of stifle would not be remiss but he travels with free flowing movement around the ring and is spot on coming and going. R/W litter brother to BPIS see MPB.

**PD (3.0)** 1. Benkura Blue Sky Mine. 2. Hooper and Gibson's Giantswood Marmalade Man – More mature puppy with excellent head and the best wrinkle on any puppy today. Nice front, neck, top line and shelf with fine coat and strong fine bone. Not with his usual handler so let himself down but never-the-less moved well enough front and rear keeping his top line at slow pace as well as fast. 3 & B B/WIS Shaw-Fitzsimmons & Carman's Kingwannas Jazzy Jive at Suefitz- it was good to see a B/W once again as it has been some years since one was last exhibited at this club's shows. This is an excellent example of this colour with nice gleaming coat, good head with nice wrinkle, well arched neck set into well laid back shoulders. His tailset is good although a tighter curl would not be remiss and he has correct shelf, second thigh and hard muscle. He is an import from Norway where he has done a lot of winning and maybe his handler needs to gain confidence. He moved well and to be super critical perhaps he could do with a shade more length in the leg.

**JD (3.0)** 1. Benkura Blue Sky Mine. 2. Gostynska's Bubas Beau Bill – another quality puppy with a pleasing correctly shaped head showing plenty of wrinkle, lovely short back, good tail set, nice feet, just enough turn of stifle and moves well although at times today on the move he did not hold his top line level. In nice hard condition. 3. Baseley's Shadiki Summer Son by Marzuku – just out of puppy and another with the correct head and wrinkle, he too had excellent feet, correct second thigh and turn of stifle he was close up to number two but on the move just let himself down however he is still a nice youngster.

**UGD (1)** 1. Dowey's Bubas Wing Commander – a dog I have judged before and placed highly. I like him a lot he is very sound but today I was a little disappointed as I felt he should carry a bit more weight. He is of good square appearance with nice topline and shelf and he has a pleasing expression with typical Basenji aloof expression. Stood alone here but worthy of the class.

**PGD (2.0)** 1. Hoopers Bubas Pharaoh's Fortune – sound yearling with correct shaped head, plenty of wrinkle on display here, good dark eye and pleasing expression. He has a nice arched neck set into good shoulders, a level topline and a strong rear end with good shelf finish him off nicely. He moves well in all directions but I would have liked to see slightly shorter nails. 2. Gaskell's Memetuka Juakali – not got the head of number 1 and I would have liked a darker eye although he did have the dark rims around the eye that I call the mascara look which used to be common on Basenjis in the past but less so these days. He also has well set hooded ears, nice length of neck and a good tail set. His feet are good and he moves well.

**LD (6.1)** 1. Wright & Wilkinson's ElSCO Amatilysen – a quality tri in hard condition with a good head, although I would have liked to see a darker eye. Nice hooded ears, neck and shoulders, short backed with good tailset, shelf and hard muscled rear legs that gave him impetus and drive on the move in all directions. Held his top line on the move. 2. Hannah's Zordia's Ajani – a sound dog with lovely body and coat colour. He is one I have always liked but felt that today he was perhaps a tad overweight. It is difficult to keep dogs exactly perfect for the show ring and I have seen him looking

better on other days. That is being super critical but he is nice and hard with a lovely back end that gives him the verve to pace around the ring true both coming and going. He was a pleasure to watch.  
3 Bubas Wing Commander.

**OD (4.1)** 1,CC, BOS & RBIS. Hardy & Hallam's Ch. Tokaji Kentucky Blue – recently he became a new Champion when judged by Andrew Brace and rightly so. What is there not to like about this super tri, with lovely head and expression and wrinkle. His skull is excellently shaped with the correct muzzle and despite what I have heard some people say –that he is bitchy – he couldn't be more of a dog. He is in great condition with lovely topline, tailset and reach behind. Nice hard muscles and splendid feet with well arched toes he covers the ground beautifully and despite his owner hating having to move him at walking pace he is absolutely true coming and going at that pace and is spectacular when moving at pace. 2 & RCC. Grayson's Ch. Tokaji American Gigolo at Embeau JW ShCM – another outstanding dog who has to date had a sensational career. Always put down to perfection much of what I said about 1 applies to this dog. In outstanding hard condition he has pleasing head, expression, ears and neck set into well laid shoulders with a good tail set and reach of buttock. Another terrific mover he ran the first close but I felt the younger tri just edged him today 3. Gostynska's Bubas Buffalo Bill – sound, fine boned dog with excellent head and expression, good top line, tail set and feet. He is a grand dog and moved well but he was up against two dogs at the top of their form today.

**VD (3.0)** 1, BOSVIS & B Brindle IS Chavez Novoa's Bel/Lux Ch. Abotere's Zahir for Hicel – a sound cobby dog in really hard condition, lovely expression and eyes, good ears finish off a sound skull and despite appearances he has sufficient arch in the neck and judges should note it is only his markings that create the illusion of stiffness. He has well laid shoulders a lovely short back with great top line that he holds all the time, good tail set and reach of buttock. He has absolutely fantastic feet and moves soundly coming and going and at pace. To be super critical I would have liked slightly more height on the leg but a terrific beautifully marked brindle (the best of this colour I've seen). 2. Lane's Antefaa African Emigrant – good tri-colour with correct dark eye. I thought that he was slightly wide in skull but his feet were good and he was in hard condition for a dog in his 12<sup>th</sup> year. He moved well in all directions and presented a pleasing picture standing. 3. Miller's Kalrinda Ekundu Kidibu – another in his 12<sup>th</sup> year with pleasing head with nice expression. He had wonderful dentition, good legs and feet, and top line. In hard condition he moved well. He had four white feet, tail tip, front and chest but was pretty much red over the rest of his body which I quite like.

**Breeders D (2.0)** 1. Miller's Ch. & Ir, Ch. Benkura Take A Chance On Me – very sound dog and a worthy champion with excellent short coat, I like his head shape, expression and arch of neck which is set into correct shoulders and level top line. He is in really hard condition with good muscle and feet. He moved well in all directions and looks good standing. 2. Gaskell's Memetuka Jabali – another sound dog with good short coat. His head is not so good as 1 but he uses his ears well, has a good top line, tail set and shelf and moves correctly in all directions. He was close up to 1 but I just preferred the head of the winner.

**SNBBE D (3.0)** 1. Hardy & Hallam & Webb's Ch. & Am. Ch. Kazor's Make Way For Riley – a well-known lovely r/w dog but who today was carrying a bit too much weight. His head, top line, shelf, legs and feet are great and he moves with great style 2. Lindop's Woodella Northern Dancer – a

smaller type, with great top line and tail set, good feet and excellent movement. I would have liked a bit more shelf behind but still good. 3. Bel/Lux Ch. Abotere's Zahir for Hicel.

**MPB (4.0)** 1, BPB & BPIS. Baker's Silverbrier Mirror Image – a spectacular, beautiful tri and one straight out of the top drawer, still at the legs and wings stage yet but I am confident that with ordinary luck this little girl will get her title. In superb coat which is jet black she has a lovely head and expression and a nice top line, tail set and rear end. In hard condition for a puppy she looked terrific on the move without the slightest hint of closeness behind (which often puppies do). Her handler doesn't need to stretch her legs behind (and I told her so) as standing naturally this little bitch is a picture of what a Basenji puppy should be. I would have liked to take her home with me. 2. Drummond's Kissangani Ask No Questions at Djoser – another quality R/W from the BIS owners kennels and she was another little gem. She is a lovely colour with excellent coat and pleasing head and expression, good reach of neck and well laid shoulders. I like her level top line, tail set and rear quarters. She has good legs and correct feet and moves true in all directions. Despite being younger than 1<sup>st</sup> she is actually more mature but not so spectacular yet. 3. Hooper & Gibson's Giantswood Woizero Tessay – up to size puppy with great head and expression, lovely body with strong quarters. Today she gave her handler some difficulties, as puppies can do. Particularly on the move when walking she played up but never-the-less moved soundly. At pace she moves with verve keeping her top line at all times.

**PB (4.0)** 1. Adams' Kissangani Life Of The Party – yet another from this kennel that is as sound as a pound, beautiful and well-constructed bitch with pleasing head and expression, nice dark eye and sufficient wrinkle. She has a good top line; tail set but to be super critical maybe a smidgeon more shelf behind would finish her off. Loved her long second thigh, her feet and she was in nice hard condition for a puppy moving true in all directions – close between her and her litter sister at 2nd. 2. Kissangani Ask No Questions at Djoser. 3. Giantswood Woizero Tessay.

**JB (3.0)** 1. Gostynska's Bubas Monisha – a lovely little eye catching 6 months baby with sweet expression, super head, good wrinkle, ear placement and nice reach of neck. For a puppy she is in hard condition, with good feet finishing off fine boned but strong legs. She moves very well. A real cutie but still has a lot of maturing to do when I am sure she will do well. 2. Eydmann's Shadiki Summer Sensation. Just out of puppy she is good over-all although her coat could be better. She is another sound youngster with good head, pleasing expression and sufficient wrinkle. Graceful neck, level top line, good feet and moves well in all directions. 3. Bradley's Emmzar's Destiny's Child – another with more maturity she is what I call the old fashioned Basenji type, good all round construction, good head with sufficient wrinkle and dark eye. She has excellent depth in brisket and looks well standing. She was also a little out of coat. She moved well enough if somewhat unsure of herself at walking pace.

**UGB (1.0)** 1. Matthew's Gooses Glint of Gold – one that I have always liked when I've seen her in the past although today I thought she could have done with a bit more bodying up but never-the-less a very sweet bitch with nice head and expression. Good skull shape with correct ratio of muzzle to skull, sufficiently wrinkled brow but a little more side wrinkle would just finish a nice head off. Good neck length, correct top line, tail set and turn of stifle. Tail could be tighter but still OK. She moved well in all directions.

**PGB (5.0)** 1. Rabbitte's Kibushi regalia for Woodella – a mature 18 month old in very good condition, she had a nice head with sufficient wrinkle and good ear placement, good neck, top line and shelf behind tail. Excellent movement coming and going and covers the ring well at pace. 2. Chavez Novoa & Baseley's Marzuku Mzara – another I have admired in the past but today she was still carrying her winter coat. She has a good head and expression and well hooded ears, was in excellent hard condition and moved really well keeping her top line at all times. She looked good when stacked, handled beautifully as usual. 3. Gostynska's Bubas Cepelia- another nice baby from this kennel, with excellent head, neck, top line, tail set, legs and feet. She is tall on the leg and short in the back but still moves with free swinging gait. She lost out to those above her purely on immaturity.

**LB (4.0)** 1. Wright & Wilkinson's ElSCO Amatiger – an excellent tri with correct head and very sweet feminine expression, excellent neck, shoulders, top line, tail set and shelf. She has fine strong boned legs and good feet and moves with verve in all directions. Looked very well standing and as usual expertly and gently handled. 2. Hardy & Hallam's Tokaji California Dreaming – this bitch has been doing a lot of winning just lately and she is in typically fine fettle with most things going for her not least her condition, muscle and drive but for me she probably has the least attractive head of all this kennel's top charges and in my book the Basenji head is a very major feature. However be that as it may she is still a sound bitch. 3. Gray's Woodella Northern Delight of Jisgard – it was good to see this sweet attractive bitch back in the ring. She is quality with a good well-proportioned head, nice shaped eyes, pleasing expression and correct ear placement. She has a well arched neck, good shoulders, level top line, good tail set and reach of buttock. On the move she let herself down a little by dropping her top line now and again but generally everything about her is pretty good.

**OB (8.1)** what a class this was absolutely packed with quality, anybody left out shouldn't feel bad about it. 1, BCC & BIS Adams' Kissangani Only Dreaming – she has grown into an absolute stunner never putting a foot wrong today. She has a lovely head of correct shape with plenty of wrinkle and side wrinkle, with nice dark expressive eyes, uses her ears well. She has a well arched neck, good shoulders, top line, tail set and shelf. She is tall on the leg with short back, good legs and feet. In nice hard condition she moved superbly today and looked a living example of the breed standard when stacked and viewed from the side. 2, RBCC, B Breeders IS & B Tri IS Drummond's Ch. Kissangani Dream Maker at Djoser – litter sister to winner and another top class bitch. This lovely tri has pleasing head, expressive dark eyes and beautiful gleaming coat. For her description read the critique for 1st as it applies to this beauty as well. It was a case of splitting hairs selecting the winner but I felt the R/W just edged it today. 3. Bakers Tokaji American Dreamz of Silverbriar – I have long admired this super and beautifully marked tri who by now ought to be a champion. She oozes quality with lovely head and feminine expression really beautiful arched neck, good shoulders, top line, tail set and shelf. Looks well standing but I feel she needed just a shade more condition today and just very occasionally lost her top line on the move but generally she was well up to those above her.

**VB (4.1)** 1 & BVIS. Hardy, Hallam, Kite & Gilleppe's Ch. & Am. Ch. Klassics Million Dollar Baby at Tokaji – this is the top ever winning Basenji and rightly so. It was an honour to go over her she really is beautiful. Everything has been said about this lovely tri and today she was in superb condition and gleaming coat. Her movement was astounding and she really can still motor. I just felt she had to give way to younger Basenjies today but what a joy she is to watch. 2. Ir. Ch. Antefaa Nakura Wood

Nymph – another top notch veteran in great condition, with lovely top line and hard muscle. Her tail is not her fortune but boy can she move with drive. 3. Allies' Bubas Mariella at Alys – another in good hard condition, nice head, excellent dentition and level top line. She too moves really well.

**Breeders B (1.0)** 1. Giantswood Woizero Tessay.

**SNBBE B (4.0)** 1. Ch. Kissangani Dream Maker at Djoser. 2. Woodella Northern Delight of Jisgard. 3. Lane's Antefaa Bereke Kohinur – another veteran with the old fashioned head, good neck, top line, tail set and shelf. Good legs and feet moved very well.

**Brace (5.0)** 1. Allies' pair. 2. Miller's pair. 3. Scott & Wilkinson's pair.

Posted by caninecapers

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## One Response to “My long Judging Critique for the Northern Basenji Society 45th (Sapphire) Anniversary Championship Show”

1. *Linda* said

[January 20, 2014 at 9:16 pm](#)

What a great critique! Wish all judges would be so discerning instead of the usual follow the leader mentality. I am interested in buying a basenji puppy dog for showing as at the moment show a popular gundog breed and after 20 years of limited success am getting very disillusioned by the follow the leader faction in judging. Breeds can be changed dramatically by these people and end up having no resemblance to the standard although they always make their dogs fit it in their minds.

Just came across your critique whilst surfing for a puppy and am so glad I read it as I have learned so much from it – thank you.

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