

December 2017 AKC Gazette column

## **Just a Hoot**

Quite some time ago I judged a significant entry of our breed. The following day another judge had a similar number to judge. I saw one of the exhibitors several months after the assignment. This person said to me, "I could follow everything you did in the ring. I could predict your winners nearly 100 percent." I was feeling good about these comments, when a comment like the following was made by this same person: The exhibitor said, "I could not follow the judge the second day, and predicting the winners was like tossing a coin." I still felt good until the following statement was made: "The judge the second day is such a hoot in the show ring. Showing dogs to this judge is always a fun experience."

These quotes are not verbatim, but they are very similar to the comments made to me.

I wanted to ask which of us the two judges awarding championship points meant the most. Do points coming from a breeder judge that is easily followed and predictable in his/her choice of winners carry more significance? Or are points awarded by a judge who is difficult to follow, but a "hoot" in the show ring has the same importance to exhibitors?

When I was actively showing dogs, I always entered under judges whom I felt knew our breed standard. The opinions of these judges were much valued by me as I worked toward a championship certificate. Once the certificate was awarded, I felt that the animal was a sound candidate for my breeding program. Judging and awarding championship points should equate to selection of breeding stock for exhibitors. I did not even consider how much fun it was to be in the ring of judge XYZ. For me, I wanted the money I invested to enter shows to be well spent on judges who really knew my breed.

Early on in my exhibiting career I kept track of which judges awarded the single point and the majors. I wrote this kind of information on the back of a championship certificate. For some unknown reason I ceased doing this, even though I found the information of much value.

I don't ever recall thinking that a particular win was awarded under a judge who was a "hoot" to whom to show. If this ever happened (I don't recall that it ever did), I would have felt the point was of less merit.

I have to ask the question of readers, and I would appreciate email responses to [mrichchi@laharpe.us](mailto:mrichchi@laharpe.us). The question is: Do you value wins under judges who really know the standard and are predictable more? Do you ever enter a show based on how much fun the judge is in the show ring while judging?

Finally, I have yet another question. That question is about reading articles in the *Gazette*. I often ask other judges if they read the *Gazette* now that it is not hard copy. More often the response from others is that they seldom if ever read *Gazette* articles. Please consider sending me an e-mail to allow me to know if you seldom, always, or sometimes read these articles.

—Richard Miller