

Norwegian Elkhound Association of America 21st National Specialty Show
& Greater Cleveland Norwegian Elkhound Club Regional Specialty Show
April 2-8, 2006 in Cincinnati, OH

Held at the Holiday Inn Cincinnati Eastgate, the 21st NEAA Specialty recorded an entry of 315 dogs with a total of 453 entries, including 38 obedience, 4 junior showmanship, 61 puppy sweeps and 41 veteran sweeps. The first official Rally Trial (Rally has been an AKC recognized event since January 1st of this year; the Rally Trials held at previous specialties were unofficial events) had an entry of 40 dogs (45 entries). There were 35 dogs entered at the NEAA Agility Trial (held at a different venue), with a total of 66 entries. Entries for the GCNEC regional specialty, which offered only conformation and obedience, totalled 256 dogs with a total 346 entries.

Sunday, April 2nd morning and early afternoon were devoted to Obedience, and the inaugural Rally Trial followed at 2:30 pm. HIT was Ch. Peer Gynt Reyk Javik At Rijeka UDX3, OA, OAJ owned by Renée and Steve Schmidt. Javik was also HIT at the 2nd NEAA trial, held in conjunction with the GCNEC specialty on Friday, April 7.

For those who are unfamiliar with it, Rally combines many obedience-type exercises, and a few agility moves, into a numbered obstacle course. It's an interactive event, where handlers are encouraged to talk to their dogs as they perform the various 'stations'; tight leashes are penalized, as are harsh corrections – Rally is all about having fun with your dog!

Monday, the NEAA Agility Trial was held at the Clermont Count Dog Training Club in nearby Milford OH and boasted the largest entry in NEAA's agility history. The venue was an agility handler's dream – roomy, fabulous flooring to cushion those jumpers, windows (natural light!) and great equipment. Despite a power outage that delayed set-up for an hour, the trial was ably organized and coordinated by Dominique Mercurio (chair) and Chris Mayer (secretary) and their team of Susan Anderson, Kari Olson, Bobbie Oxley, Andrea Schokker and Tom Slattery. Judge Rob Robinson clearly enjoyed the enthusiasm (and antics) of our breed, as did the spectators. The High in Agility Trial Award, new this year, went home with Wil-Mar's Sea Breeze and Lisa Wilkinson.

Monday afternoon, back the Holiday Inn, it was Puppy Sweepstakes time. Long-time breeder Barbara Roby chose Sharin Graves & Rita Burson's Bristlecone Kash It In from the 6-9 puppy bitch class as her Best Junior in Sweeps; Best Opposite Junior, from the 9-12 month class, was Pat Trotter's Vin-Melca's Apollo. Best Senior in Sweeps was the 15-18 month bitch Sangrud Ben's Tess av Skyemar, owned by Ronald Denn and Karen Tillman; Best of Opposite Senior, also from the 15-18 month class, was Trolan's What A Catch, owner Phyllis Anderson.

Tuesday morning the early birds mustered outside the hotel for NEAA's first One-Miler – a fundraising race/walk of approximately a mile around the hotel and adjacent shopping centre. Entries were \$2 and there were prizes for oldest handler & youngest handlers, oldest & youngest dogs, fastest run/walk with one dog and with two dogs, and for the best attired handler and best attired dog. Proceeds from the One-Miler were used to host the Veteran Sweepstakes Reception. Tuesday's daytime program featured seminars and question and answer sessions to broaden our

knowledge of Elkhounds. The first seminar was presented by eye specialist Andras Komaromy, DVM, followed by an eye clinic. A peer-group seminar, similar to the judge's seminar but geared towards breeders and/or exhibitors, followed. Afternoon performance problem solving question and answer sessions were offered in Obedience (with Renée Schmidt), Agility (with Chris Mayer, assisted by Tracy Smith and Rosemary Hoffman) and Rally (with Bobbie Oxley).

Tuesday evening kicked off with Junior Showmanship, judged by Erika Angle (some of us 'oldsters' can remember when Erika was a competitor in this event!) Best Junior was Katherine D. Kaus Pigott.

Veteran Sweepstakes followed, judged by Barbara Roby. This event is always a highlight of the week and it's a treat to see the enthusiasm of our senior dogs as they get a chance to strut their stuff one more time. Best Veteran Dog went to the 11+ year old class winner, Cotton & Stan Silverman's Ch. Statton Joshua av Norgren, ably handled by his slightly teary 'mom', dressed for rockin' and rollin' in her poodle skirt! Best Veteran Bitch, from the 10-11 year old class was Ch. Windy City Whispers in th' Dark, CD owned by Susan Kaplan, Teresa Getting and Jennifer Nee.

Conformation got underway on Wednesday morning with the non-regular 'Generation' class, judged by Barbara Roby. This class is similar to the Stud Dog/Brood Bitch classes; the entry comprises three generations – father or mother, son or daughter and grandson or granddaughter. The winning group represented Sangrud Kennels.

The Elkhound internet list, 'Moosedog', was well-represented at this specialty and the special Moosedog ID buttons were the envy of everyone. A pizza party of 'moosedoggers' and friends was held on Wednesday in the Hospitality Room. For more info on the moosedog listserv or to join the list, please check out http://moosedog.net/mailman/listinfo/moosedog_moosedog.net

For the shoppers attending the specialty, Wednesday evening's auction provided ample opportunity to part with their money. As usual, a good time was had by all, and the NEAA coffers were topped up!

Regular conformation judging followed and was completed the following day. Judge Mr. Arild Berget chose Ch. Silverdal's Royal Tribute, a dog bred and owned by Raymond Vaturro and Betsy Wade-Vaturro as his Best of Breed. Best of Opposite Sex was awarded to the Winners Bitch, Hestsko's Morning Mist, bred and owned by Dorothy Wallace and Best of Winners was Vindarne's Backdraft, bred and owned by Dee Queen. (Full NEAA Specialty results are available on the NEAA website at www.neaa.net/2006natl/results_06.htm)

Established in August of 1996, www.elkhoundrescue.org is believed to be the oldest Elkhound Rescue page on the Internet. It arose from the common desires of group of people with one common goal: to find caring, loving homes for Norwegian Elkhounds and Elkhound mixes, in both the United States and Canada. Eventually these desires and goal became the foundation of a rescue organization called the John Nelsen Moosedog Rescue Fund. In the last 10 years, this organization has been responsible for the rescue of more than 1120 dogs! The draws for the John Nelsen Moosedog Rescue raffle items took place Thursday late afternoon. Over two dozen

wonderful Elkhound and moose items were offered ... everything from a cement almost life-sized Elkhound statue to a lap-sized furry stuffed Elbee Elkhound puppy!

The Awards Banquet was held Thursday evening. The first OFA Champion of Health Award was presented to Tracy Lorraine Smith to honor Impi, BISS Ch.Norelka's City Slicker CDX MX MJX OAP AJP RN CGC TDI HIC VNE-X. This new award will be given annually by the parent breed club to a dog that has achieved significant accomplishments in the ring, in the field, as a producer or as a working dog, and that has the necessary health clearances to be certified with the Canine Health Information Centre (CHIC).

Friday morning began with the obedience trial and conformation Puppy Sweepstakes running simultaneously, followed by Veteran Sweepstakes. Conformation judging began around noon and concluded on Saturday. Judge Mr. Rony Doedijns chose Ch. Valords Diamond in Disguise, bred by Constance Vaillancourt and Sharon Jackson, owned by Constance Vaillancourt as his Best of Breed Dog. Best of Winners and Best of Opposite Sex went to Paul Woito's Quiquen Heartlands, bred by Dorothy Wallace. Narvik av Norjer, bred and owned by Jerrie Schweizer, was Winners Dog. (Complete GCNEC Specialty results are available at www.akc.org/events/search/index.cfm?action=plan&event_number=2006216201)

Several Canadians were in attendance for part or all of the Specialty week including NECC President Barbara Innes and Treasurer Liz Sykes and NEAA members Paul Woito, Donna Weeks and Nicole Casavechia (apologies if I missed anyone). Canadian bred and owned dogs participated in conformation, obedience, rally and agility. The results – no Canadian dogs qualified in obedience or agility; the only Canadian participant in Rally, Liz Sykes' Ch. Lenan Nynorsk Royal Canadian, qualified, but did not place in the top 4 in his class; and in conformation, Nicole Casavechia's Daggarwoods Its Hip Tobesquare placed 3rd in the 6-9 puppy bitch class and Paul Woito's Quiquen Heartlands was a major winner (WB/BW for 5 points, and BOS) at the GCNEC regional specialty. Congratulations!

For those who couldn't attend but would like to see what the fun was all about, all events were videotaped and DVDs are available – check out the NEAA website at www.neaa.net/2006natl/DVD_06.htm for prices and order forms.