The Malta Canine Society – September 2025 Championship Show – Day 1
Judge Critique: Mr. David Craig.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to judge the two back-to-back September All Breeds Shows, along with my co-judge, Dr. Ian Gabriel. The organisation was first-class, the cameraderie and sportsmanship of all the exhibitors was to be admired and the quality of the dogs shown was of good throughout. It was inspiring to see so many people of the younger generation involved in the sport – the future certainly looks bright for dogdom in Malta. The very best specimens afforded strong competition within breeds, with lots of quality in Pomeranians and German Shepherds in particular. Presentation and handling was of a high standard and all exhibitors were very kind, gentle and encouraging to their charges – lovely to see.

The lynchpin who holds all this together is undoubtedly Mr Frank Borg. He is a rare gem indeed! I cannot thank him enough for his hospitality throughout our stay on your beautiful island. We will be back as tourists, I am sure! The celebration after-show party on Monday evening was most memorable – my voice was hoarse the next day!

This was a judging trip that I will always remember.

Terrier Group:
Best: M.Cassar's Bull Terrier, UNIQUE PASSION BIG GUN LADY, strongly built, muscular and well-balanced all through, full of spirit and obviously a female but with strength all through, liked her head shape and eye, muscular arched neck, short back, good spring of rib, good hindquarters, shown in hard muscular condition, sound mover, showing parallel movement front and back;
Reserve: J.Attard's Jack Russell Terrier, TAL-KRAWS NALA, giving away a lot in age but a sweet, pleasing type youngster who will continue to develop well I am sure, already confident and outgoing in outlook, pleasing stop, clean neck, muscular hindquarters, drove from behind on the move;

Terrier Junior Group:
Best: M.Cassar's Bull Terrier, UNIQUE PASSION BIG GUN LADY. (Repeat)

Terrier Puppy Group:
Best: J.Attard's Jack Russell Terrier, TAL-KRAWS NALA. (Repeat)

Toy Group:
Best: L.Delceppo's Maltese, Ch. IVY OF LEARA WHITE STAR. (RESERVE BEST IN SHOW) smart as paint with a look of real quality, super head carriage both standing and on the move, oval eyes, dark haloes, round feet with black pads, strong body which is well ribbed back, level topline held on the move, shown and presented in most super coat of correct texture, has an extrovert personality and has good carriage in profile, moves with real drive behind and covered the ground so well with correct tail carriage, a pleasure to judge;
Reserve: M.Vella's Pomeranian, THAI SILK MR SUGAR DONUT. – (BEST JUNIOR IN SHOW), this youngster took my eye by virtue of being vivacious and also so sound, foxy head, dark eye of correct shape, short neck set into good shoulders, super cat-like feet, well set and carried tail, brisk movement going particularly well behind, coat of correct texture and correctly carried tail, presented a very nice overall picture and pressed hard;

Toy Junior Group:
Best: M.Vella's Pomeranian, THAI SILK MR SUGAR DONUT. – (BEST JUNIOR IN SHOW) (Repeat)
Reserve: J.Banfai's Italian Greyhound, CELTIC SANSHA AT SASSICAIA, very pretty, quality exhibit who was so graceful, pleased in head, gracefully arched neck, fine strong bone and correct pasterns, well ribbed back with good hindquarters, fine supple skin, breed typical movement, am sure will continue to do well;

Toy Puppy Group:
Best: R.Mizzi's Pomeranian, THAI SILK MAXIMUM POWER, what a little star, has great deportment and carriage for age, correct head, eye colour and shape, short neck with good shoulders, cat-like feet and stands

so well in front, short body, correct hindquarters, super coat and correctly carried tail, brisk, sound movement and kept static outline on the move at all times;
Reserve: L.Delceppo's Maltese, SILKWHITE DREAMS GUNS BLAZING, this is a really promising puppy with a definite look of quality, pleased in size, dark eye, correct haloes, well made fore and hindquarters, already well bodied with very good topline which is kept on the move, so sound and self-assured on the move, correct coat of silky texture, pushed all the way and one with a definite future for sure;

Working Group:
Best: R.Xuereb's Dobermann, Ch. QUESTO MAXIMUS DOBGRACE, big handsome lad who was handled to great advantage, masculine without being coarse, long head, flat skull, really well boned, great body and rib, short firm back, superb hindquarters, shown in fit hard muscular condition, has great side profile where he maintains his static outline, driving well from the hock and reaching in front, shown in gleaming condition, a showman which made him stand out from the crowd;
Reserve: P.Mallia's Rottweiler, XAKIRA VOM HAUSE NIVEKSUE, very good type youngster of super type, overall shape and balance, confident and shows so well, good head with broad skull, correct almond shaped eye, well made forequarters, well sprung rib and well balanced body, sound unrestricted movement, true fore and aft and covers real ground in profile, shown in superb condition and super musculature, one to watch I am sure;

Working Junior Group:
Best: N.Zammit's Siberian Husky, BANELORD BLASTER BOMB, really good type, medium sized with very good feet, moderate bone, correct head with medium length muzzle, almond eye and correct ears, correct head carriage on the move, has pleasing balance, superb topline, well made hindquarters, has a smooth, ground-covering profile gait, correct double coat and well carried tail, immediately falls into position, presenting a typical outline on the repose;
Reserve: B.Fenech's Boxer, BRYNHAFOD JOHNNY BRAVO, handsome youngster who pushed hard, correct head shape, dark eyes, overall has the right balance with short back, hard topline, good bone, well-muscled and strong hindquarters, moves on a very good stride and is sound fore and aft, will improve further with maturity, I am sure;

Working Puppy Group:
Best: Zammit & Grixti's Siberian Husky, SIERRA IMPERIO IMANBEK. (BEST PUPPY IN SHOW) – quality puppy of super type, outline and correct overall balance, medium sized with correct feet, has the right head and almond eye, well placed ears of correct shape, moderate bone, superb topline and really strong hindquarters, moves on the typical smooth, ground-covering gait, has an excellent coat and maintains outline on the move where soundness is obvious as well as the correct stride in side profile, could have watched move all day, has great promise for the future;
Reserve: L.Buhagiar's Rottweiler, MAXIMUS VOM HAUSE FURIMER real youngster with the most wonderful outgoing personality, liked his head with dark brown eyes, very well boned limbs, strong muscular neck, deep brisket, very good hindquarters and moves on a sound true stride, lots of promise here for the future;

The Maltese National Canine Federation – September 2025 Championship Show – Day 2

Judge Critique: Mr. David Craig

Utility Group:
Best: Deluca's Shih Tzu, TOPGUN SOLO PER I TUOI OCCHI. (RESERVE BEST IN SHOW) – very typical youngster with lots of quality accentuated by being a composed performer in the ring and with excellent presentation and handling, sturdy all through and with the chrysanthemum-like face, dark eyes of correct shape, well made forequarters with good bone, well ribbed with good topline and muscular hindquarters, well coupled body, well ribbed, has an arrogance that is so typical of the breed, dense coat (not woolly!), great drive from behind showing full pads, went even better when I judged on the second day and her face was less exaggeratedly adorned! Lots of quality here;
Reserve: M.Aquilina's Miniature Poodle, Ch. ABBA DABBA-N DELLA BAIA BLU, beautiful, quality exhibit who really pressed hard, presented to the minute, pleasing size with elegance and correct head carriage at all times, correct long head with pleasing eye giving lovely expression, well made fore and hindquarters, so

sound on the move and goes on a sound and free gait, correct tail, coat of harsh texture, handled to advantage;

Utility Junior Group:
Best: D.Bonello's Boston Terrier, MAKIE TOBY. (BEST JUNIOR IN SHOW), what a showman this one is, super type, short compact and well balanced all through, pleasing head and eye shape, strong body, correct topline, shown in super well-muscled condition, never stood wrong and kept his excellent outline on the move in profile, a great character and a born showman;
Reserve: M.Aquilina's Miniature Poodle, MAGIA MAGIA DELLA BAIA BLU, another quality, good type exhibit from this kennel, again shown and presented to perfection, quality head, well-made fore and hindquarters, carried herself beautifully in profile on a light gait;

Utility Puppy Group:
Best: E.Meli's Standard Poodle, RUMBA STAR GALLA, learning the trade but when concentrated, had a lovely stride in profile and had good carriage, well presented and shown in good body condition, well-chiseled head, good eye, good legs with correct bone, dark almond eye, well angulated hindquarters with well let down hocks, drove from the rear, sound and true on the move and light in overall gait, correct coat texture;
Reserve: R.Vassallo's Japanese Shiba Inu, AKAI HANA B'SEIDI MERC, of pleasing type and overall balance, shown in good condition although not in full coat, excels in profile gait having the correct light and quick gait, good head and eye, moderate tuck up, tail set on high, pleasing outline overall both standing and moving;
Gundog Group:
Best: B.Borg's Golden Retriever. Sh.Ch. OLVINGLAY VENUS AMOR. (BEST VETERAN IN SHOW), no way did she look a veteran, shown in super condition and musculature, is of very good type and balance, well made front, good bone and feet, superb topline and well set tail, really good hindquartesr with width of thigh, moves on a really good stride in profile where she maintains her static outline, in good coat and condition, hass the correct balance for the breed;
Reserve: J.Galea's Spanish Water Dog, DINGLIGEM BETTY DAVIES EYES. (RESERVE BEST PUPPY IN SHOW), this puppy has great potential and is so full of breed type, so well balanced, correct head, very well made front, good feet, well ribbed, excellent topline, well angulated behind, has a correct coat of the right texture, presents a super outline when she freestands, sound and free on the move going on a good stride, when she gains more self-confidence, she will really make her presence felt, has so much promise for the future;

Gundog Junior Group:
Best: Shoemake & Chetcuti's Clumber Spaniel, BIG BOOM'S SHOWMAN STUART, fit and well-muscled dog with pleasing large head shape, clean eyes, correct bone, strong body of correct balance, large round feet, free unhurried but strong, sound gait with drive.
Reserve: M.Tabone's Golden Retriever, SHIVA'S GOLDEN IL MONDO NUOVO, pleasing youngster of pleasing overall type, pleasing balance, built on correct lines with very good hindquarters with width of thigh, well presented and maintained her static outline on the move.

Gundog Puppy Group:
Best: J.Galea's Spanish Water Dog, DINGLIGEM BETTY DAVIES EYES. (RESERVE BEST PUPPY IN SHOW), see above
Reserve: S.Degabriele's Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, AMERICAN ROBIN OF CLAN BUCHANAN, what a good type, confident young puppy this is, amazing to think that this was her first show, has lots of promise for the future, well balanced all through, well reared and excels in profile gait which has reach and drive as well as the breed typical jaunty gait;

Hound Group:
Best: K&C Galea's Saluki, Ch. GABRA CK ALEXANDER HELIOS. (BEST IN SHOW) – this dog is truly a high quality ambassador for his breed, he has such elegance and dignity combined with a look of majesty about him, such a great showman and knows his art so well, has a quality head – long and narrow, dark oval eyes, long neck, so well made in front, excels in hindquarters with well let down hocks, he comes into his own on the move where he goes with total soundness with the breed typical smooth, flowing effortless gait, he never falters and can kick up a gear when the owner/handler asks him to, looks his best on the go-around, shown in superb condition and musculature, overall fits the Standard so well and it was his correctness for his breed overall that won him the ultimate award, a pleasure to judge!

Reserve: C.Cachia's Whippet, SUNTACH HE IS, very nice quality dog balanced all through, long lean head, correct ears, well-made forequarters with elegantly arched neck, deep chest, graceful arch over the loin, well bent stifles with good width of thigh, shown in super condition, great freedom of action and totally sound in all directions;

Hound Junior Group:
Best: R.Vassallo's Miniature Long Haired Dachshund, ESME HISROYALMAJESTY, shown in good condition, with good eye colour, pleasing overall balance and showed good drive behind;
Reserve: M.Azzopardi's Miniature Smooth Haired Dachshund, TSVIK IZ BELOI RUSI, shown in good condition, good temperament, just preferred the front, underline and ribbing of 1;

Hound Puppy Group:
Best: E.Ambrogio's Irish Wolfhound, TOBERCORRAN THUNDER, this puppy has a lot of promise, has correct bone, very pleasing head and correct eye, well-made hindquarters with width of thigh, excels in side profile where she goes with reach and drive, covering plenty of ground, pleasing size and strength overall, will look better with maturity and more body condition;
Reserve: E.Meli's Min Smooth Dachshund. TA LELI MIKA, a real baby but liked the overall shape and balance, balanced angles fore and after, pleasing prosternum, good topline held on the move, shown in good condition, has a great temperament, will do well in the future, I am sure;

David R Craig
(Judge)