

South China Specialty

China Rottweiler Club December 21, 2008

Judge: Pamela J. Grant (Past President of American Rottweiler Club)

Photos: Pamela J. Grant & Lana Tsan (Hong Kong)



Article by Pamela J. Grant



American Kennel Club Director Patti Strand contacted me in November of 2005 to request that I aid Mrs. Lana Tsan in her efforts to develop a national Rottweiler club in China. As President of the American Rottweiler Club, I was able to

provide Lana with templates for a national club constitution and by-laws, code of ethics, membership form, and parliamentary procedure. In addition, I sent her electronic copies of the ARC Illustrated Standard for the Rottweiler, as well as the ARC Judges Handbook. Mrs. Tsan and I have stayed in touch since then, and share our dedication to our clubs and our breed. The China Rottweiler Club (CRC) has donated a Best of Breed trophy for the 2008 and 2009 ARC National Specialties. This year, CRC will be providing a BOB trophy for the Medallion Rottweiler Club 50th Anniversary Specialty as well, and Lana is planning to be in Valparaiso, IN in October 2009 to present the award. Mrs. Tsan has been recognized by the Premier as a valuable resource in promoting the sport of purebred dogs in The People's Republic of China. She serves in a national advisory position and coordinates over 50 dog shows a year in her country.



Opening Ceremonies

I was honored when Lana called last fall to invite me to be the first from the United States to judge a CRC Specialty. Although I have a passport, I had to acquire a Visa from the Chinese Embassy in Chicago, Illinois in order to enter China.

My trip began the morning of Monday, December 15, 2008, flying out of Chicago O'Hare with plane changes in Minneapolis, MN and Narita, Japan, finally touching down in Guangzhou International Airport at 10:30 pm on Tuesday night...a total of 22 hours of air travel. In addition, China is 15 hours ahead of Chicago, so I lost the better part of a day to

the time change. My hosts, Mrs. Lana Tsan, CRC President, and Mr. Philip Huang, Minister of Ministry, met me outside of customs and took me to our first hotel which was decorated for the holidays with a Christmas tree and employees in Santa hats. The Chinese are fascinated with all things western and go out of their way to make foreign visitors feel welcome.



Accepting Judge's Gift

The two all-breed judges, Elaine Young of Seattle, and John Rowton, a Canadian judge living in Portland, were to arrive the next evening, December 17. I was able to spend Wednesday with Lana and another CRC member visiting the temple where Bruce Lee's Kung Fu Master spent the final years of his life training his disciples. The temple itself is thousands of years old and contains huge carved statues of the various gods that were worshiped at the time it was built.



Temple in Guang Zhou

The complete show event ran from December 19-21, 2008. The China Kennel Club hosted the two-day all-breed show, Golden Retriever Specialty, Shar Pei Specialty and Tibetan Mastiff Specialty under the auspices of the China Veterinarian Association. The show venue was the football stadium on the campus of the Southern China Agricultural University in Canton, which is the southern capital of China that has been renamed Guang Zhou. The University grounds consist of 7,700 acres and the campus is like a small town within the city.

On Thursday, we all transferred to a hotel close to the show venue. The Chinese judges for the Shar Pei and Tibetan Mastiff

Specialties arrived and joined us for lunch and dinner that day. Although few of them spoke any English, we all got along just fine with smiles and the help of our hosts who spoke both languages. Within China there are many dialects, but Mandarin is understood by almost everyone from the different provinces. Several of the CRC southern members who joined us from Hong Kong and around the Guang Zhou area spoke English quite well and assisted those of us who needed help with conversations.



Judge's Dinner

Friday morning, December 19, we assembled in the stadium where we were honored at the event opening ceremonies which were televised. The Mayor and the Head of the Veterinary College spoke, and we judges were presented with beautiful plaques made of teak wood and gold embossed certificates.



Opening Ceremonies



Tibetan Mastiff

The members of the Tibetan Mastiff group from Tibet presented the dignitaries with honorary saffron colored silk scarves from the Lama and paraded their magnificent Mastiffs for our review.

A military policeman did a demonstration of protection work with his impressive Dogue de Bordeaux.



Dogue de Bordeaux - Protection Demonstration

The CKC all-breed show and the Golden Retriever, Shar Pei and Tibetan Mastiff specialties were conducted over the next three days. The stadium was filled with breed club booths, vendors, a grooming competition and Frisbee dog competition.



China Rottweiler Club - Show Venue

Several spectators brought their pet dogs with them and although most were leashed, several dogs of various breeds were running free and playing within the stadium. Occasionally, one would find its way into a ring, and the show would stop until



V1 - 12-18 bitch - Baby vom Bisheng; owner: Selena Ip

the "un-entered" dog could be shown the gate. It was clear that the Chinese public is very interested in purebred dogs. The show rings and performance rings were lined with rows of spectators who avidly cheered for their favorites all weekend.

The China Rottweiler Club Specialty was scheduled to begin at 10:00 am on Sunday. It was a beautiful day for the show; sunny with a light breeze and expected to top out in the low 70's. The ring was large, covered in red carpet, and with shade provided for the crating area and the judge/award tables.

The CRC Southern group's preparation and organization of the event was impressive, with very nice plaques and certificates for placements in the classes. Unfortunately, due to the acceptance of late entries on the day of the show and late arrivals of some exhibitors who traveled the farthest, the show did not begin until 1:30 pm when the sun was high overhead and temperatures were quite warm. Several exhibitors who were pre-entered were not able to travel from the north due to a major snowstorm.

Exhibiting is relatively new to many of the Rottweiler fanciers and the club has not yet instituted pre-show entry closing. Therefore, not all of the entries are printed in the show catalog. There are also limited handlers (all men at this time) so gathering classes at the ring gate is often a slow process. The crating area was crowded and handlers had their hands full getting their exhibits in and out of crates without incident. There were a few very close calls.

Although the CRC event was a sieger style show, it was not run in the same manner as we are accustomed to in North America. They do not utilize a scribe to type the critiques. I was provided with a clip board and a form to fill out for each exhibit I judged. I was asked to mark the description in each box that most closely matched the dog. Each of the 22 boxes on the form was titled; i.e., behavior, movement and areas of conformation (head, eyes, ears, muzzle, dentition, topline, etc.). Descriptive words were provided within the box to choose from such as very dark, pronounced, good, well-developed, weak, strong, well-placed, correct, and so on. I had an excellent translator, Eric Omura, a Shar Pei breeder/judge from Hong Kong, who shared my comments with exhibitors and spectators over the PA and helped me to communicate with the handlers and stewards. I found that much of my time was spent circling words and writing comments on the form. When the class was completed, I entered the rating for each dog and signed the form which I presented to each exhibitor along with any certificate or plaque earned. For me, this method disrupted the flow of my oral critique, but it did provide each exhibitor with very detailed feedback on their dog. Photographs were taken at the end of each class, which also slowed the judging process.

Another major difference in the event was the classes that were offered. I was asked to critique the Champion Class first. These dogs were presented for evaluation only and were not to be placed in any order. Next the Puppy, Youth and adult dog and bitch classes, including classes for locally bred dogs and bitches, were presented for judging. There were no classes for dogs with working titles and no veterans or kennel group classes. Placement awards for V-1, V-2 and V-3 were offered in each class including the puppy classes. I do not believe in giving a V rating to puppies and very young dogs as they are not yet complete. I awarded only promising and very promising ratings in the younger classes and primarily G and SG ratings in the under 18 month classes. There were a few young dogs and bitches that did receive V ratings.

The most significant difference in this show was that there were no Best Puppy, Youth Sieger/Siegerin, or Sieger and



Very nice champion

Siegerin awards. Therefore, you will not see photos in this article showing the usual "winners". I have included photos that will give you an idea of the quality of the Rottweilers that were presented to me on the day. Unfortunately, due to a computer problem experienced by the Show Secretary, I was not sent many of the photos that were taken of the awards presentations for the class placements and do not have information on the names of some of the dogs or their owners/handlers.

There were several fine Rottweilers in the entry of approximately 50 dogs. Many were in the Champion Class, where head pieces were strong with dark mouth pigment, good front and rear angulation, good bone, type and movement overall.



I was pleased to find several very promising youth as well as some very correct adult males and females. I was particularly impressed with my V-1 dog in the locally owned male class who exhibited strong temperament, was very correct structurally and was the best moving dog of the day. The V-2 exhibit in that class was a beautiful, compact, square dog with a handsome head piece, but did not cover the ground as effortlessly as the class winner. My V-1, V-2 and V-3 placements in the adult female class were strong, ground-covering trotters, with good breed type and full temperament.

For the most part, the dogs were alert, attentive and displayed appropriate drive. I felt most of the exhibits possessed correct Rottweiler temperament. In some of the young bitches, I felt their confusion and uncertainty regarding being shown, but I did not see a truly shy animal. The babies and puppies needed more training and ring experience, with many having difficulty showing dentition. The handlers need to condition their dogs

(muscle them up) for the show ring and clean their dogs' teeth. Several of the handlers need to work on learning to move their dogs correctly to show the optimum gait. As the sport is still young in this country (I believe this may have been the seventh show for CRC), I have no doubt that the handlers will become more adept at presenting their dogs for evaluation in the future. At no time did I feel uncomfortable with any of the dogs. There was no aggressive behavior in the ring toward any human; however, a few dogs and bitches were dog aggressive. One handler in the open bitch class excused himself and his exhibit due to her desire to engage the other bitches in the class. The good sportsmanship displayed by all of the handlers and club members was refreshing.



Based on the exhibits presented to me on this day, I would encourage the breeders to pay attention in their breeding programs to improving eye color, mouth pigmentation, ear placement, correct dentition, elbow placement, topline, rear angulation and feet. Eye color for the most part was medium brown. Several of the lips and gums were rose grey or mottled with pink. Too many of the exhibits had level bites. Many of the ears were set on too high. Several fronts were out at the elbows with short, somewhat bowed, wide-set legs giving a bulldog-like appearance. Breeders need to be careful not to breed Rottweilers that resemble bulldogs or the Dogue de Bordeaux. Remember that the Rottweiler is a nearly square breed with enough leg under the dog to balance the length. Backs were a bit long on many of the younger exhibits and several had a break behind the withers or rose over the loin and did not hold firm when moving. I would like to have seen more bone and substance to many of the younger dogs. Several of the dogs could have used more rear angulation, being somewhat straight in stifle. It is difficult to know whether the flat feet with splayed toes prevalent on many of the dogs was a result of genetics or due to housing the dogs on hard surfaces. I would encourage breeders to work toward producing a compact, round foot with tight toes and deeper pad. Tail size and carriage was quite varied; several dogs had more drop-off of croup than is correct.



I was told that Chinese Rottweiler fanciers have only been working on the conformation of the Rottweiler for about 15 years and have primarily imported breeding stock from Korea, Thailand, Russia and other eastern European countries. The gene pool is somewhat limited at this time due to the great distance a dog would have to be shipped for importation or breeding. In order to continue to improve the quality of the Rottweiler in China, I would urge serious breeders to work to produce a more square, well-balanced, harmonious dog. At this time, I would also suggest concentrating on improving the fronts by breeding away from legs that bow and feet that are flat and that turn out.



I am so appreciative of having had the opportunity to adjudicate this event. The CRC has made great strides as a club and can be very proud of their show. I hope the exhibitors understand that my purpose in accepting the assignment was to assist with furthering the development of the Rottweiler breed in their country. I know some exhibitors may have felt that I was very tough, but I feel strongly that only honesty in judging will ensure the integrity of our breed in the future.



I felt privileged to pass judgment on the dogs and thank the exhibitors for bringing them for evaluation. I would like to thank my Ring Steward, Mr. Zhang Yi Xiang, CRC Secretary; my translator, Mr. Eric Omura; and all of the CRC southern members who worked so hard to make this event a success. I will never forget the warmth and graciousness of my hosts and the members of the CRC. Their enthusiasm for the sport and dedication to the Rottweiler breed are to be commended.

I thoroughly enjoyed my stay in China and fell in love with the people. I have carried many of them home in my heart. I wish them all continued success in the breed.