

One in a Million

Similar breeds sweeping Hound Group judging leaves one spectator stunned.

By Allan Reznik

Q. I attended a dog show recently where the judge awarded first in the Hound Group to a 13-inch Beagle; second to a 15-inch Beagle; third to an American Foxhound and fourth to an English Foxhound. All four dogs were tricolor and looked like clones of one another. The spectators were too stunned to applaud. Has this ever happened before?

A. It doesn't happen often but the judge is there to find the best representatives in the Group. Depending on the day, the judge may feel the three Dachshunds – Smooth, Longhaired and Wirehaired – are superior to any other dogs in the ring. Or perhaps it's the Rough Collie, the Smooth Collie, the Sheltie and the Border Collie that lead the pack.

In the Working Group it might be the Akita, the Alaskan Malamute, the Siberian Husky and the Samoyed ... four Spitz breeds with a rather similar outline and look.

Judges don't want to look foolish in public so they are not putting up related breeds to shock the gallery. They are in the ring to evaluate the quality of the dogs. If all four happen to be black, or fluffy, or tricolored scenthounds, then you can assume it was their virtues that won them a piece of their Group and nothing else.