

## Crufts Showcases Top International Dogs

**More than 22,000 dogs from nearly 40 countries competed in the world's largest dog show.**

*Dawne Deeley*

Photos by Dawne Deeley                      Westminster may be the greatest, but there's no doubt that the Crufts dog show is the largest, and they have the Guinness World Record to prove it! The event, which got its name from promoter Charles Cruft, started in 1891 in London, England, but is now held in nearby Birmingham.

The 2008 event spanned March 6th through 9th, with over 160,000 spectators paying to watch canine competitors representing nearly 40 countries. More than 22,900 dogs competed this year – 1,165 of them from overseas – just 27 entries short of the all-time record set in the 1991 Crufts centenary. The most popular breed of the 177 varieties registered was the Golden Retriever with 534 entries, while the Hungarian Kuvasz was represented by just one specimen.

Highlights included the show debut of the Kooikerhondje – a mid-sized Dutch dog breed used for centuries as an all-purpose dog – as well as International Obedience, Agility, and Junior Handling competitions. Those looking to add a canine companion to their lives had the chance to research more than 190 different dog breeds at the "Discover Dogs" displays, while hundreds of trade booths spread over more than 20 acres provided endless retail temptation.

Visitors from the United States made their mark by winning two Groups – the American Cocker Spaniel Ch. San Jo's Born To Party picked up Gundog honors, while the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier, Ch. Caraway Celebrate Life, came out on top in Terriers, thus proving Crufts is truly a "hands across the water" competition.

Other notable winners included the Shiba Inu Ch. Janeryls In The Line of Fire (Utility), the Beagle Ch. Dialynne Maximus (Hound), the Smooth-Coated Chihuahua from Gibraltar, Ch. Gibeltarik Happy Go Lucky (Toy), the Samoyed, Ch. Vandream Imperial Hermioni by Berezniki (Pastoral) and the Working victor, the Giant Schnauzer, Ch. Jafrak Philippe Olivier, a twice-previous Group winner.

Only one dog can be chosen, however, and Best in Show judge Clare Coxall proved third-time lucky for the Giant Schnauzer, making him supreme champion of champions at Crufts 2008, with the Samoyed as the Reserve winner.

Dawne Deeley is a contributing columnist to Dogs in Review.