

Australian Shepherd Conquers Crufts

The Canadian-bred dog wins Best-in-Show.

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For the first time in its long history, this years Crufts dog shows Best-in-Show title went to a Canadian-bred dog. Furthermore, the award went to an Australian Shepherd, a breed which had been classed as rare in the United Kingdom up until this year, and had never been represented at this level before.

The winner was 5-year-old Am. Ch. Caitland Isle Take a Chance, handled by Larry Fenner. Owner Nancy Resetar, from Royal Oaks, Calif., described the win as the best moment of her life. The dog's success follows that of a U.S.-based Norfolk Terrier, Cracknor Cause Celebre, who won last year.

The number of foreign entries taking part at Crufts has soared over recent years, thanks to the introduction by the U.K. government of what have become known as pet passports, issued under the Pet Travel Scheme. This now enables owners to bring dogs which have been vaccinated against rabies, treated against parasites, and microchipped for identification purposes, from specified overseas countries, without quarantine.

Although the main impact of this change away from a compulsory six months in quarantine kennels for all dogs entering the U.K. has been to enable those going on vacation to Europe from the U.K. to take their pets with them, it is now having a marked impact at major shows such as Crufts. When pet passports were first introduced in 2001, there were just 93 entries from overseas. This years show attracted 920 dogs from 32 different countries.

Another aspect of Crufts are the trade stands, many of which cater to breed enthusiasts, offering all sorts of collectibles of their favored breeds, ranging from books to models and stickers.

All the major pet food companies are represented, too.

Posted: March 28, 2006, 5 a.m. EST