

## Surprises Raise the Curtain at Westminster

**Four group winners were announced on the opening night of the Westminster Kennel Club's 132nd annual dog show.**

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February 11, 2008, was opening night of the Westminster Kennel Club's 132nd annual dog show held at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Four groups were judged Monday evening; the remaining three groups along with the highly coveted Best in Show will be determined Tuesday.

During its venerable history, longshot wins and surprises have added extra spice to an already colorful event. Tonight was no exception. While the Herding Group was the last to be judged, it provided the biggest upset, as judge Stanley Saltzman pointed to a red merle Australian Shepherd bitch for first place. Ch. Vinelake Collinswood Yablon, owned by Terri K. Collins and bred by Sandra Landry, sailed around the center ring as an enthusiastic crowd cheered her on. Following closely behind was the Canadian-bred Bouvier des Flandres, Ch. Quiche's Demetrius. The top AKC Herding dog of 2007, the German Shepherd Ch. Kaleef's Geneva Aeval-Achtung, was Group 3rd. Rounding out the quartet was the blue merle Rough Collie, Ch. Sylvan Argent Simply Irresistible.

The Hound Group launched the evening in fine style. This group is divided into sighthounds and scenthounds, but judge Ralph Lemcke favored the latter for his four top placements. Leading the pack was the 15" Beagle "Uno," more formally known as Ch. K-Runs Park Me In First, bred by Kathy Weichert and Leah Bertagnolli, and owned by Caroline Dowell, Eddie Dziuk, Jon Woodring and Kathy Weichert. The Standard Long-haired Dachshund Ch. Solo's Drag-Queen picked up Group 2nd. Third place was awarded to a breed not commonly seen, the Harrier ... resembling a smaller English Foxhound. Ch. Downhome Family Tradition has become a great ambassador for her breed. The English import Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen, Ch. Afterglows Ebenezer, claimed Group 4th.

The strong Terrier Group was judged by Betty-Anne Stenmark, a long-time authority and a breeder of Dandie Dinmont Terriers herself. First in this most impressive lineup was the Sealyham Ch. Efbe's Hidalgo at Goodspice, another Canadian-bred entry, owned by Margery and Richard Good and Sandra Middlebrooks. His older full brother, "Merci," ended 2007 as Canada's No. 1 terrier and a top all-breed dog. Always a popular breed, the Scottie representative, Ch. Roundtown Mercedes of Maryscot, strutted her way to Group 2nd, followed by the Norfolk Terrier, Ch. Max-Well's Viper, and the South American-bred Smooth Fox Terrier, Ch. Torquay S Demetrio.

Dr. Michael T. Manning, a Dalmatian breeder, favored the white Standard Poodle, Ch. Brighton Minimoto, to head up his Non-Sporting Group. "Remy," bred by L'Dyne Brennan and owned by Cindy Coggin, Don Rochow and Zuleika Borges Torrealba, claimed this victory for the second year in a row. Bulldogs are always a crowd pleaser, and tonight's Best of Breed winner was no exception: Ch. Cherokee Legend Rock. The charming Bichon Frise Ch. Paray's Paragon took Group 3rd while 4th went to the lavishly coated Tibetan Terrier, Ch. Players Prodigy.

A poignant moment occurred midway through the evening as service-and-assistance dogs involved in the Angels on a Leash program were acknowledged. "James," the English Springer Spaniel who went Best in Show at the Garden last year, was among the dogs honored for his work.

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