

Even a volcano cannot stop the 2010 OES Euro Show

With 2 days to go, flights from Stansted airport to Copenhagen are grounded due to volcanic ash from Iceland. We check out the ferries from Dover to Dunkirk and Google the journey of 1200 kms, we fill the car with diesel and are ready to leave for the 23rd Old English Sheepdog Euro Show in Denmark.

It doesn't seem 5 years since I was the support judge to the lovely Jilly Bennett at the same venue on the middle island at Nyborg, an important centre of communications. A bridge and tunnel cross the Great Belt between Funen and Zealand a fantastic monument to man's engineering skills. The Hotel Nyborg Strand is known as 'where all Danes meet' and is justifiably proud of its good reputation. It now has 350 bedrooms and can handle conferences of up to 1000 delegates.

The weather was hot and sunny as we played golf then shopped in Odense on Thursday and the same for Friday in the golf tournament at Nyborg, next to the sea. This time 5 of us teed up for the Euro Show Challenge, Jo Pilz and his partner Regina, Barbara Mueller and Angie & Ray Owen, and we sweltered in the heat for 5 hours until Ray took the prize. After a few beers the evening was spent in the Hotel bistro enjoying a steak and yes, it is expensive in Denmark and possibly a deterrent to many Bobtailers in other countries who are in economic meltdown. Yet 150 OES had been entered at the show, coming from 18 countries with many more spectators from around the world, including USA, Russia and the keen group from Estonia, driving for days to support. Nicolas Kanales flew in from Greece despite the countries problems and so many others who drove their motor homes from all over Europe to the campsite that was located a few kms away.

It is a shame that we have to have this separation from the ever growing band of travellers who need more facilities than the hotel car park can offer.

The registration in the hotel lobby is a great occasion with bags of goodies and the itinerary being handed out by a smart looking committee all wearing Danish red shirts with embroidered names and the club logo. The Great Danes pay so much attention to detail and this helps ensure a perfect vacation.

Saturday morning breakfast is a chance to really say hello to old friends and chat before the bus leaves for sightseeing and shopping trip to Odense, home to Hans Christian Anderson and his museum. We decided to visit Old Nyborg having seen Odense before and the long walk into town was well worth the trip. What wonderful friendly people the Danes are, we were having trouble finding a taxi so a kind lady drove us and our shopping back to the hotel, where we watched the Obedience Show in the hotel gardens under the excellent judgement of Hans Ove Pedersen and the high standard of many bobtails who impressed with their ability to sit still and actually do what the handlers told them. A rare achievement in my 40+ years of ownership.

At 4.30 we assemble in a large conference room for a seminar on coat colour given by Dortmarie Nielsen, who has built her reputation in the cat show world and breeding carefully for various coat colours in her lines. A most interesting and illuminating area of breeding skill that should have had a question and answer session afterwards to bring out the full benefit. Birgitte followed with a health issue lecture that touched on some of the rarer diseases that might or might not be found in our OES lines. The over riding fact that came out is that we must all talk and share our findings, both good and bad and in a receding gene pool. Malene Thorup Petersen the Chairman of the Danish Club, made an

emotional speech on the loss of a litter of pups that contracted PCD and put us all on our guard for the future.

We look forward to the informal dinner as the food is so good, the beef is cut into thick slices and covers the plate, 300 people are fed in buffet style and another chance to sit with old friends and chat and catch up with what is happening in their countries dog scene. Some of the Germans and Italians slip away early and watch the European Football Cup Final in the cosy atmosphere of the basement night club and we join them for the last 10 minutes. Only the Italians are happy, Sophie Bilshiem cries in her beer as Bayern Munich lost out to Inter Milan.

Despite the late night we were up early ready for Show Day. There was a buzz of excitement at breakfast then we made our way out into the gardens, freshly mown grass and spring flowers under the morning sun, dogs being brushed under the fluttering Danish flags and then the welcome from Show Manager Lisa Nielsen and a long speech from the deputy mayor of Nyborg in Danish and then again in English. The judges, Sally Duffin and Kim Reeves were heralded into the ring behind a flag carrier and stirring music, what a way to start your first overseas judging appointment, Sally will be officiating at the next Crufts and she must have been impressed with the welcome from the crowd gathered at ring side and in the tented village that had sprung up. The hot sunshine added to the atmosphere of sheer joy to be alive and the sound of animated conversation and laughter. There were 2 big rings with connecting tents for the critique writers who translate the judge's words on every exhibit. It took about 8 minutes per dog for movement and assessment and the 2 judges moved through the 150 exhibits until 1.30 when lunch was taken and an agility display was put on by the Euro show team which further enhanced the qualities of the OES.

The afternoon was cooler and the bitches had their turn to shine in the big ring. We took a tour of the tents and spent our money on Bobtail paraphernalia brought over by Geoff & Irene Duplock from the UK Midlands and a tombola stall and casual shoe stall. All the other many coloured tents housed well groomed OES either waiting to be judged perched on grooming tables or sitting contentedly in canvas crates out of the sun and wind. Yes, a strong sea breeze was doing its best to bring down any tent that was not roped down and gave the handlers who love to have every dog hair in place a real challenge but a bonus for the many ringside judges to see outlines and important toelines.

After a long day of judging the winners paraded and the 2 judges selections were whittled down to these main awards.....**Best dog: 1st Dizzny'z Taxi Driver** (CH Dizzny's All Fall Down -CH Dizzny's Unbreakable Bitty)

2nd Zottel's My name is Bond (Aryakas Callipous - Zottel's Kiss'n Make Up)

3rd Aryakas Geocosmic (Rollingview Shaggy Blue Zorbas - CH Aryakas Calliopee)

4th Aryakas Filippus (Reata's Cosmopolitan - CH Fan-Fell Qualify For Happiness)

Best Bitch 1st Manrose Marquesa Di Brera (CH Manrose Power Of Love - CH Manrose Spirit Of Ecstasy)

2nd Brinkley Shezadorable (CH Brinkley Sir Jonny - Brinkley Miss World)

3rd Griland Beauty Bear (Ch Reata's Frequent Flyer - CH Karund Zhu Zhu)

4th All Of Me Tokata-Wicocage (CH Youandi Antaeus - Gluckselig For Your Eyes Only)

Best Junior: Niedersachsen' s-Pride Give'n Take (CH Zottels My Name Is Bond - CH Niedersachsen' s-Pride Beautiful Fairy)

Best intermediate All Of Me Tokata-Wicocage (CH Youandi Antaeus - Gluckselig For Your Eyes Only)

Best veteran: Manrose Primadonna (CH Hibray Action Replay - CH Vigilat's Unique Yazzy Manrose)

Best Brace: Griland Beauty Bear & Zottel's Secret's out

Best Breeders Group Aryakas Kallistos, Aryakas Ionios, Aryakas Klytos, Aryakas Kleio, Aryakas Isadora

A full list of the results and lots of pics can be found on the excellent website

<http://www.phpbber.com/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=245&mforum=oldenglishsheep>

There was now a big rush to get back to the campsite and hotel rooms to get ready for the Gala dinner. No expense had been spared to create a fairytale atmosphere with silken butterflies and gossamer dragonflies attached to glassware and flying from the ballroom ceiling. Freshly cut foliage from the forest adorned the pillars and added a secret garden effect. Tables of 10 were quickly filled and the buffet was excellent, the club supplied a glass of wine and we toasted our absent friends. More delicious beef and a strawberry dessert with a smoked salmon starter and a nice break between courses.

No Euro Show would be complete without the committee thanking the stalwarts for putting on such a wonderful event and Swiss cow bells were handed over by Barbara Mueller to the hard working committee. We all wished Claude Ritter well after his operation which kept him away and noted the absence of any one from France. No silver pin was awarded this year for outstanding service to the Euro cause but Eef Ter Mors sang his Euro Show song with the words printed on the back of the superb menu beautifully illustrated by the Norwegian artist Arnfinn Olsen. We all exercised our lungs and sang loudly. Golfing prizes were given to Jo Pilz, Regina and Ray Owen.

Toastmaster Lisa kept the party rolling along with the silent auction closing at 9 o/c and attracting a rush of bids and a lot of jostling with a few people missing out on handbags, paintings and related bobtail artefacts. Still this gave a chance for us all to bid on the only auction item which was a fabulous pastel of a bobtail head study with insets of the Copenhagen mermaid and a Viking long ship and a standing OES drawn by the talented Claire Jones and purchased and then donated by Malcolm and Leila Bull. The bidding was fast and furious and soon passed the reserve price of 250 Euros, Trevor and Pauline Mills, Pedro from Spain, Matt and Christine Smith, Birgitte Schjoth were some of the hands waving in the air and pushing the price up to a magnificent 800 Euros which will go to the OES Health fund to help pay for the 48 blood tests on eye problems. The target of £8000 will soon be reached if the support continues and the English Kennel Club have pledged to double the money we raise and Ms. Mellersh at the AHT trust in Newmarket is eager to help with the research. Trevor, Pauline, Matt and Christine threw £200 into the fund to make the auction up to £1000, well done all you guys.

The lady who bought the drawing is Herdis H. Theusen from Denmark. She is an honorary member of the Danish Old English Sheepdog Club and got her first OES in 1966. She has been an avid collector of art and antiques dog books for many years and has an impressive collection. She has also an interesting collection of Danish paintings purchased from now well know artists before they became recognized. Herdis is a painter by trade and a talented OES artist herself. She is not only delighted to own such a magnificent drawing but also pleased that the proceeds will go toward OES health.

All this excitement laid the way for the entertainment to begin and Lisa introduced the surprise act from the UK, 4 young Beatles from Liverpool dressed in 1963 jackets who were quickly joined by the go-go dancers led by Jan Betts in their Beatlemania T-shirts saying 'Love U Bobtails' and waving flags and items of underwear. The party started and 2 encores were demanded, the award winning photographer Johnny Nielsen captured the act on video and it now features on 'YouTube' on the internet. Many emails have asked who was under the mop top wigs and the secret is out, George (Pauline Mills) Harrison, Paul (Angela Owen) McCartney, Ray (John Lennon) Owen and the super drummer Trevor (Ringo Starr) Mills. The Danish DJ Bryan said he had never seen anything like it at any of his gigs in his lifetime and hoped we would take the act on a world tour. I hope this is a compliment!! He kept us all dancing until 2am and it was a great night. Monday morning breakfast is a happy and a sad moment; we say our goodbyes and then confirm our commitment to being in Pilsen, Czech Rep. next year on the 10th till 13th June. Full details are on www.bobtailclub.cz from July 2010 . Danish Club details on www.eurooesshow2010.dk . Euro OES Forum on www.euro-oes.eu Johnny Nielsen has his photo album in his Photo Section - follow this link: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Old_English_Sheepdog_International_list/photos/album/175592020/pic/list