**ASA 59th Celebration, November 27, 2022, at Scottsdale Dog Fancier Association**

My first experience of a Saluki show in the USA was in the end of the 1990’s, in Lexington, Kentucky. The late Mrs Lena Stålhandske of the Schiram Salukis in Sweden was the judge, and I was allowed to sit in the ring closely following her judging during the three days of the show. A fantastic experience and many photos and memories.

The next time I was judging myself, in 2004, at the ASA Celebration in connection with the AKC show in Lompoc, California, with 107 entries.

I was happy and proud to be asked to judge again at an ASA Celebration, which at first was planned to have been held earlier, at Lompoc, California, but finally moved to Phoenix/Scottsdale, Arizona, end of November 2022. The pandemic and other things has resulted in many a change of plans all over the world.

But, in the end of November 2022 I packed my bags and went from Winter and snowstorm in Sweden to (for me) Summer in Arizona. I was very well taken care of during my stay and also had the opportunity to do a little sightseeing in the surroundings, Everything worked out fine with my long journey, from Stockholm/Sweden to Chicago and then to Phoenix going out, and reverse, but via New York, going home. My checked-in luggage went with me all the way, too!

**General impressions**

When reading the catalog after the shows I realized that many of the exhibitors had travelled very long distances to come and show at these shows, and I want to thank all of you for showing your Salukis to me.

I was pleased to see many Salukis of high quality, and of different types, since variation within the breed, still within the requirements of the breed standard, is a positive and desired feature in this breed. (There was, however, only one smooth coated exhibit.)

Heads, ear carriage, shape and color of eyes and expressions were generally typical and pleasing. Underjaws were a bit too thin in some exhibits, but that, I believe, is a worldwide consequence of aiming for a more elegant head all over. (The first Salukis imported to Europe were often stronger in heads, skulls, and, also in upper and under jaws, according to old photos.)

Toplines were sometimes too flat, or a little sagging, without the desired (but not exaggerated) arch over the loin. Only a few underlines were not “curvy” enough.

Generally, feet were excellent, beautiful, and strong, typically moderately long feet, with long toes, but not flat; with feathering between the toes (the latter of course not required in the smooths).

Temperaments were excellent. Only very few needed a little extra time to relax, but there was no problem going over them. A few of the younger ones were a bit too playful, making it a bit hard to assess their movements, but it’s better that they are happy in the show ring from the start; they will most likely achieve more dignity when more mature.

As is the situation in many parts of the world (at least where I have judged), also at this show there were some bad front constructions, with shoulders not enough laid back or set on too forward, and straight upper arms, mainly affecting movement coming towards me, but also the length of step from the side. Hindquarters were, however, generally, as the breed standard requires, and very rarely exaggerated in angulations.

For sustainability, the Saluki needs to be well constructed. Even if many of us nowadays are not allowed, or don’t have the possibility, to let our Salukis participate in real hunting (it is not allowed at all in Sweden and in many other countries), they do need a functional construction also for everyday life, to stay fit. I do hope that most of your Salukis have the possibility to run free as often as possible, in safe areas of course.

Not least, I want to thank my mentor Nancy Leising, and my excellent ring steward, who – respectively – guided me, before and during my judging.

**Results and individual comments**

**Puppy Dogs 6 Months & Under 9 Months (1/1**)

1. Freespirits Freddie Mercury.

A happy, promising grizzle puppy with beautiful eyes and expression. Still a little fine in muzzle. Confident temperament and well presented, but playful on the move and therefore a little hard to assess his movements.

**Twelve To Eighteen Months Dogs (1/1)**

1. El-Shaddai Chezday Majaanan of Liberty at Yandisa

Cream, classic type, well-shaped head and beautiful expression, excellent depth of brisket, excellent topline, still a little loose in front movement, excellent feet.

**Bred-By-Exhibitor Dogs Adult (1/2, 1 Abs)**

1. Firedawn Redneck Road Hunting

Black and tan, stylish dog, lovely warm tan and shiny black color, masculine head, skull could be a little finer, well-developed body, looked good standing and moved well, but spoiled his outline by keeping his tail straight up when moving.

**Open Dogs (4/4)**

1. Albion's I Square I Am A Legendary Persian

Light golden dog in excellent muscle condition, beautiful well shaped head, super expression, well-constructed front, well-developed body, typical moderately angulated hindquarters. Typical Saluki feet. Excellent, efficient, free side movements, sound coming and going.

2. Jidda The Panhandler

Beautiful, well-constructed particolor dog, lovely head; at first, he was not relaxed in the ring, but there was no problem going over him. He would probably have moved out even better if he had been more at ease with the situation. Excellent balance of angulations, and of elegance and substance.

3. Issibaa's Memphis into The Mystic

Very appealing, smaller, but still masculine, golden and white dog, with beautiful head and expression, easy mover from the side, confident temperament.

4. Raza Sarastro Lightning

Tall, well-developed grizzle, excellent general outline, well carried and shaped head, moved well, very well presented.

***Winners Dog: Albion’s I Square I AM A Legendary Persian***

***Reserve Winners Dog: Jidda the Panhandler***

**Puppy Bitches 6 Months & Under 9 Months (2/3, 1 Abs)**

1. Pania Sadik Al Djiibaajah

Black fringed fawn, excellent conformation and temperament, excellent presentation, showed and moved like an adult, a very promising puppy.

2. Baha Persian Passion

Light golden pretty bitch, very playful and happy, making it a little more difficult to assess movements, enjoying her day at the show.

**Puppy Bitches 9 Months & Under 12 Months (1/1)**

1. Al Sayad Isirad Oh Ej's Tiny Dancer

Cream with excellent pigmentation, well-shaped body, excellent neck set on to well laid shoulders, typical topline with slight arch over the loin, strong hind quarters with good width of thigh. Moved well, just needs a little more self-confidence.

**Amateur-Owner-Handler Bitches (1/1)**

1. Alii Ready for My Close Up Wingfoot

Elegant, but rather immature, light golden bitch, feminine head and expression, needs to develop in body and put on some more weight, a little thin in condition today, topline should become firmer, happy mover with high carried tail, but needs to settle down a little, lovely temperament and well presented.

**Bred-By-Exhibitor Bitches Adult (7/8, 1 Abs)**

1. Emma Of Sundown

Elegant black grizzle bitch with lovely head and expression, noble attitude, excellent outline, well-laid shoulder, deep brisket which is also well tucked up, excellent topline with slight arch over loin, balanced angulation behind, moving fluently and effortlessly, using her body to the best, excellent temperament, very well presented.

2. Alii I Wish To Go To The Festival

Appealing cream bitch, excellent outline, excellent pigmentation, beautiful expression, lovely neck, feet a little short, excellent mover, in excellent condition.

3. 7seas Parfait Pharoah Kleopatra's Echo of Avalon

Beautiful black grizzle bitch, with a good frame, lovely expression, proud and self-confident, elegant neck, well carried head, beautiful easy, effortless typical movements, well presented.

4. Tribute Al Sayad Hot Lips

Cream, classic type, excellent pigmentation, well-shaped head, lovely expression, well developed body, well-muscled, at times appeared a little high in the rear, but balanced angulations in front and behind, excellent long Saluki feet, efficient mover.

**American-Bred Bitches (1/1)**

1. Firedawn Buckle Bunny at Sundog Saloon

Beautiful, elegant and stylish black and tan bitch, lovely colors, exquisite head, dark eye, lovely ear fringes, good proportions in body. Unfortunately, she is moving very tight in front and carries her tail a little too high (for me), but she has good saluki feet and excellent temperament.

**Open Bitches (1/3, 2 Abs)**

1. Albion's I Square I'm The Chosen One

Beautiful cream bitch of excellent quality and balance all through, fantastic expression and pigmentation, good head shape, long neck, well filled in front, good ribcage, excellent adequately sloping croup, in good muscle condition, well carried tail.

At first she seemed very nervous and I was afraid that I would not be able to touch her or come near her, but she relaxedrther quickly and going over her was no problem at all, and she showed herself very well also on the move.

**Winners Bitch: Albion's I Square I'm The Chosen One**

**Reserve Winners Bitch: Sundown Emma**

**Veteran Dog (1/1)**

1. Castlebay Appalachia Smooth Operator

A lovely classic red male (9 years), with a truely lovely head and beautiful, soft, dignified expression, lovely ear fringes, good pigmentation and lovely neck, excellent type and outline, does not show his age, still moving with pleasure and a springy, easy stride all around, well presented.

**Veteran Bitches (2/2)**

1. Karnak's Ajah Rose Of Sundara

Black and silver of excellent type and outline, 9,5 years, small but oozing of quality, classic type. Well-laid shoulder and good return of upper arm. Excellent topline with desired arch over loin, good ribcage with excellent tuck-up. Strong quarters with good width of thighs. Proudly floating around the ring with a typical easy, effortless stride. Very well presented by a young male handler.

2. Basra Sabe Philyra

Light golden bitch, also of classic, excellent, but different, type. Excellent general outline, shown in excellent condition, 11 years old, not showing her age at all! Beautiful head, expression, and pigmentation, lovely temperament, excellent purposeful movements all around, excellent presentation.

**Best of Breed Competition**

I was really spoiled for choice when 15 males and 8 females entered the ring, and certainly more than filled the big ring, together with Winners Dog, Winners Bitch and Veteran Dog, and Veteran Bitch. I wish I could have awarded more prizes than the judging system allowed!

**Best of Breed**

Kazper Alexander Mazada of Sundown.

I loved him from the very start when I first saw him. He didn’t disappoint on closer examination. A lovely cream dog who reminds me of the best of Salukis I have ever seen, with regal (not exaggerated) carriage of head, balanced angulations and allover harmoniously built, good pigmentation and feathering, typical Saluki feet, elegant but not too thin, strong but not coarse, in excellent muscle condition, very well presented, excellent temperament.

When judging, all breeds, but, in this case, especially, Salukis, you use your “brain” to evaluate what’s in front of you, in relation to the breed standard, which describes what is wanted in anatomy and breed characteristics. You must also use your “heart” to evaluate what is important to you, as a judge, and for the breed, in your opinion.

In this case, my brain and my heart were in total agreement!

He is still quite young, but shows nothing of an immature dog’s common faults, still he is not fully developed, and, as I see it, he can only become better and better, without losing his present virtues. I also felt that he was a loved dog, and his cooperation with his owner-handler was a pleasure to watch.

Later that day I also had the opportunity to watch him win Group 4 in the big Hound group under respected American judge Mr Scott D. Pfeil.

**Best of Winners**

Next choice was between Winner’s Dog and Winner’s Bitch, both from the Open classes. I later learned that they were siblings. I loved them both, but today it was the male who won, Albion’s I Square I AM A Legendary Persian. (See individual critiques above.)

**Best of Opposite Sex**

My choice here was the Champion bitch, Twohearts A Flower in the Desert, a beautiful well presented particolor with well-shaped head, feminine expression, adequate balance between elegance and substance, harmonious angulations, excellent Saluki feet, lovely feathering, and a very nice mover.

**Select Dog and Select Bitch**

My Select Dog was Heldorado Stampede at Sundog Saloon, a lovely, well moving red with white male, masculine, with a well-proportioned typical head, and body; he had beautiful, typial eyes and expression, and was presented in excellent muscle condition.

Select Bitch was without hesitation Karnak's Ajah Rose Of Sundara, (see individual critique above), a very well presented Veteran bitch in excellent condition, with excellent proportions and beautiful silhouette.

**Stud Dog (1/1)**

Baha Heart Of Gold

Tall elegant red male, eye catching standing and moving, well presented, lovely temperament. He was one of the seven I picked from the fifteen dogs entered in champion class. One of his daughters in the stud group won BOS and the other daughter was among the females I choose from the champion class, so he was really a nice stud dog with nice progeny. I liked him, and I liked his daughters when I judged them all individually.