

Judging the Brazilian National

By Bob Vandiver

It was a great trip, but it didn't start out that way. With a storm on the East Coast, it didn't look like my plane would make it to Washington, DC in time to catch the flight to Brazil. After waiting four hours in the airport, I was right. The next available flight to Brazil was 24 hours later. Gosh, I was glad that the good folks who called asked me to come down a day early.

After enduring about every delay possible, running through airports, and flying in completely full airplanes, I finally arrived in Rio de Janeiro. It was a day later than planned, but still in time to have a good night's sleep before judging.

The ride from the airport to the show site was absolutely breathtaking. Partly because of the innate beauty of Brazil, and partly because I had a very aggressive taxi driver!! Having lived for a year in Brazil many years ago, I realized that things have changed a lot, but not the driving!

Sunday, May 18th dawned clear and sunny. The temperature at show time was in the mid-70s increasing to the mid-80s by the end of the day. Humidity was reasonably low. Judging in shirtsleeves was comfortable.

The show grounds were perfect for a dog show. They were groomed like the green on a golf course. The ring was huge, and it didn't hurt that the mountains rose high, encircling the entire venue. The view was spectacular.

Show procedures are not the same!

I was surprised when the first puppy (4 to 6 months) in the first class had no testicles. It was OK, though, because

she was not supposed to be plumbed that way. The procedure in Brazil is to judge bitches first. That means from the first puppy class through the equivalent of our Winner's Bitch. Then the Champion bitches are judged, and placed first through fourth. After that the Grand Champions are judged and placed first through fourth. Finally (for bitches) the best bitch and reserve best bitch are selected. The process is repeated for the dogs. At the end there are two competitors left ... best bitch and best dog. Best of Breed is selected these two. The reserve to the Best of Breed enters the ring and competes for Reserve Best of Breed.

Written critiques and ratings are required on every dog. That slows the judging process from USA norms, but the critiques seem to be of value to the exhibitors.

About the dogs

Brazil uses the FCI standard, so I was obliged to judge accordingly. The FCI standard has several differences from the American standard, notably body length to height, angulation, size, and tailset.

I had expected some good dogs, but not depth of quality that I saw. Often times when judging, there is one dog that clearly stands out in a class and the remainders are of substantially lesser quality. This was not the case at the Brazilian National Specialty. There were classes that had several dogs that were competitive for the win.

There are a number of differences between Brazilian dogs and those of the USA. In general, I found that the Brazilian dogs have better front angulation with more correct forechest

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than is typical of USA Dobermans. I also found that they typically have more rear angulation than the US dogs. I consider the well-angulated fronts to be a strong positive, but the angles in the rear are sometimes extreme. Not always, but enough that I noted it. It should be a high priority for breeders to keep the well-angulated fronts, but with a rear that is balanced with the angulation of the front. Unfortunately, this seems to be difficult to do, since correct rear angulation is much easier to achieve than correct front angulation.

There were a number of dogs that were long in body when compared to the US dogs. I also noticed that Brazilian dogs typically have higher tailsets than those of the US.

Interestingly, I found the heads to be stronger in Brazil, especially in underjaw and strength of muzzle. This is a prevalent problem in the US, and it is becoming difficult to find a US Doberman with correct underjaw. I saw some correct heads in Brazil.

Most of the dogs were in good condition and well handled. There were a couple of exhibits that were shy, but in general, most seemed to be stable in temperament and willing to show.

Some of the winners

I was pleased at the very first class I judged. It was a class of 7 with the first three places going to litter mates.

The bitch that earned the challenge certificate was a lovely 16-month-old red, Tosca De Vida Nova. She was owner-handled by a teenaged boy. Her breed type was excellent and her movement was true. She also was

awarded reserve best bitch over several champions and grand champions.

The male challenge certificate went to another 16-month-old red. At the end of the day I learned that he was a littermate to winners bitch.

Best Bitch and Reserve Best In Show was won by the beautiful Ch. Double D Nicols Spice Girl. She was also a 16-month-old red girl with impeccable breed type and outstanding side gait.

Best In Show was awarded to Ch. Don King de Black Shadow. This Argentinean bred dog also won the top twenty on Saturday and was Best In Show at the 2001 National Specialty under Pat Doniere. He is also an American Champion.

I was very pleased with the top winners. Having judged in Europe, Asia, Australia, and all over North America, I can truthfully say that Brazil had some excellent examples of the breed that can compete successfully anywhere in the world.

What else

The people that I met were typical dog people. They loved their dogs, and they loved the sport. All were very hospitable and friendly.

Some of the exhibitors were owner handlers and some were professionals. In general, the exhibitors are as good as the average Doberman exhibitors in this country. The professional handlers are as skilled as ours. It made for an easy judging assignment when the exhibitors are so capable.

My return flight didn't leave until evening the day after the show. I was pleased

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that one of the exhibitors and his wife (Ney and Maria Kurtz) took the time to tour me around Rio de Janeiro for the entire day. It was a great opportunity to see the sites. We discussed a lot of topics during the day, and it proved to be a good occasion to learn more about

the dog sport in Brazil and how it relates to our sport here.

It was a long trip done in a short time, but I was very pleased to have the opportunity to judge at this show.

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Suggested text to go below the photos

File name	Text
Best of breed.jpg	Best of Breed Ch. Don King De Black Shadow
Reserve BOB R1.jpg	Reserve Best of Breed - Ch. Double D Nicols Spice Girl
Winners dog BW.jpg	Winner's dog – Taurus De Vida Nova
Winners bitch BW.jpg	Winner's bitch - Tosca De Vida Nova
Class shot.jpg	Everyone at work
Overview BW.jpg	An overview of the lovely show site
People BW. jpg	Some of the exhibitors
Ring BW.jpg	The beautiful setting up close