

Heelwork to Music Report and Results

By Gina Pink, Event Co-ordinator

The Kennel Club are describing heelwork to Music as Britain's fastest growing canine sports and I think they could be right. This is Heelwork to Music's third appearance at Crufts in competition form; previously held in the Special Events ring, it attracted such huge audience attention that this year it was held in the new Arena which seats 6,000 spectators. The competition was split over three days; Heelwork to Music on Thursday, Freestyle on Friday and a new competition, International Freestyle on Saturday. This year's judges over all three days were Annie Clayton, Richard Curtis and Karen Sykes.

Thursday saw ten Heelwork to Music finalists battle it out for top position. The standard was extremely high with Nicky Joyce and her collie Busybug Marquisete taking an early lead on 26.40 marks out of a possible 30. Nicky held her position right up to Kath Hardman and her dog Copper Coin of Retcoll who slipped into first place on 26.70, with just three dogs to work. It was to be a nail biting finish as Gina Pink and her working sheepdog Our Magic Combination tied with Kath on 26.70 marks, but under the new Kennel Club HTM rules, if there is a tie for first place in the Heelwork to Music class the dog with the highest accuracy mark will win. With just 0.067 of a point between them Gina Pink took first place, Kath Hardman second and Nicky Joyce third.

Friday saw the final of the Freestyle competition. Once again ten finalists battled it out and although the standard was high there were several routines which were outstanding. The judges had a difficult job ahead of them. Once again Nicky Joyce and her dog Busybug Marquisete set the standard on 26.57 marks, she again held her lead until Kath Hardman worked her dog September Spice and snatched it from her on 27.47 marks, but even Kath's lead was short lived as next into the ring came Lesley Neville and her Bearded Collie Chooxstart Dream Angus and stole the place from her on 27.70 marks. The last dogs to work were determined to make this competition as exciting as the previous days. Tina Humphrey and her collie Bluecroft My Blue Heaven stormed into second place on 27.63 marks, leaving the Lesley Neville in first place and Kath Hardman in third. The winner of this competition was to represent England in the International Freestyle competition the next day.

The first International Freestyle competition was held on Saturday. Eleven countries took part including Switzerland, New Zealand, The Netherlands and Denmark. The atmosphere and support from the audience was fantastic. First into the ring was Christiaan De Jong and Looking For Dorothy Mae representing The Netherlands who gained 24 marks but Lesley Neville was determined to do England proud and shot into the lead on 27.57. Lesley held her position throughout the competition with just two handlers coming close to demoting her, those were Donelda Guy and One Step Ahead Biba representing The Channel Islands in second place on 27.37 and Frida Binette and Somollis Blinka-Bla in third place on 27.17. There were some excellent routines and outfits in this competition and the Arena was packed to the brim leaving a huge queue around the obedience ring trying to get in.

This was by far the best three days competitions in the history of heelwork to music and I suspect it will only grow in years to come.

Heelwork to Music Results:		
1	Gina Pink and Our Magic Combination (Working Sheepdog)	26.70
2	Kath Hardman and Copper Coin of Retcoll (Working Sheepdog)	26.70
3	Nicky Joyce and Busybug Marquisete (Working Sheepdog)	26.40
4	Marleen Van Hees and Working Stock Adventure Gino (Australian Shepherd)	26.37
5	Kath Hardman and Stillmoor Lady In Red (Border Collie)	25.33
6	Lesley Brocklehurst and Borderlair Cinnamon Twist (Working Sheepdog)	24.93
7	Lynda Edmondson and Gimme A Buzz (Border Collie)	24.80
8	Carole Dodson and Kinaway Doctor Watson (Border Collie)	24.70
9	Ann De Rizzio and Stillmoor Touch of Spice (Border Collie)	24.63
10	Carol Wallace and Last of the Summer Wine (Jack Russell)	24.43
Freestyle Results:		
1	Lesley Neville and Choxxstart Dream Angus (Bearded Collie)	27.70
2	Tina Humphrey and Bluecroft My Blue Heaven (Working Sheepdog)	27.63
3	Kath Hardman and September Spice (Crossbreed)	27.47
4	Jackie Clarke and Cafcoll Brite Dreams (Border Collie)	26.80
5	Nicky Joyce and Busybug Marquisete (Working Sheepdog)	26.57
6	Lesley Neville and Highlander Red Robbie (Bearded Collie)	25.87
7	Jackie Clarke and Chocolate Sensation (Staffie Cross)	25.43
8	Jill Davis and Stillmoor Russet at Glidersway (Border Collie)	25.40
9	Corrine Camagna and CWM Cadno Tenderness (Parson Russell Terrier)	25.17
10	Carol Mortimer and Zak Ziggs About (German Spitz Mittel)	23.83
International Freestyle Results:		
1	England – Lesley Neville & Choxxstart Dream Angus (Bearded Collie)	27.57
2	The Channel Islands – Donelda Guy & One Step Ahead Biba (Working Sheepdog)	27.37
3	Sweden – Frida Binette & Somollis Blinka-Bla (Border Collie)	27.17
4	Denmark – Emmy Marie Simonsen & The Charmed Ones Biscuit in Blue (Shetland Sheepdog)	26.80
5	Switzerland – Claudia Moser & Darjeeling's Jewel (Border Collie)	26.63
6	Scotland – Heather Smith & Catch Her In The Skye (Bearded Collie)	26.50
7	Belgium – Marleen Van Hees & Working Stock Adventure Gino (Australian Shepherd)	25.87
8	Italy – Corrine Campagna & CWM Cadno Tenderness (Parson Russell Terrier)	25.23
9	New Zealand – Karen McCarthy & NZ CH Weblyn Lord Connor (Gordon Setter)	24.30
10	The Netherlands – Christiaan De Jong & Looking For Dorothy Mae (Border Collie X Rhodesian Ridgeback)	24.00
11	Wales – Mary Muxworthy & Collywobble Celtic Harry (Working Sheepdog)	23.93