

Skye is Best in Show in Helmsdale

Skye, an Akita/Bulldog, from Alness was chosen as top dog at the 3rd Helmsdale Dog Show on Saturday to the delight of owner Greg. Skye, who also won Best Cross Breed, was up against 38 other competitors to win the accolade.

Over 100 people were in attendance to watch as the dogs went up against each other in 11 categories, including Best Pedigree, Best Veteran and Waggiest Tail. Competitors gathered from villages across Sutherland, including Bonar Bridge, Brora, Golspie, Helmsdale, Portgower and Rogart. Others travelled a greater distance from Alness, Invergordon, Inverness and Portmahomack. Most impressive though, were those who hailed from Edinburgh, Kirkcaldy and Puddletown (Dorset). Beccy Clay, owner of Tess the Pointer/Setter made the journey for the third year running from Drumbeg.

As well as the competition categories, each dog was able to take part in the Fastest Recall challenge in which the time it took them to reach their owner, with a number of distractions along the way, was recorded. The fastest small dog, Kayla the Shih Tzu (owned by Nicki Hughes from Brora), and fastest large dog, Skye the Border Collie (owned by Hannah Munro from Portmahomack) received an engraved glass from Alsorts Arts and Crafts to mark their win and some Tecxys herby dog treats, made by Sandra Mackenzie in Rogart.

The Judge on the day, for the second year running, was Annabell Broom from Aunty Annabell's Dog Training. Annabell had her work cut out for her with 26 different breeds in total. The final category of the Show was the Dog the Judge would most like to take home. After much deliberation, Annabell chose Mac of Springfield the Teckel, owned by young Ailsa Shaw from Helmsdale.

Mini Reiki sessions with Kareen were available on the day for both dogs and owners. Tea, coffee, soup, sandwiches and home baking were on offer in the Community Centre hall, alongside table-top displays from The Highland Hound, Crafty Crofter, Yvonne's Wee Honesty Box, Highlands of Scotland Pets as Therapy, Weaving Heart Wood, SSPCA, Jo Henderson's Crafts, and the Helmsdale Village Hub Pop-Up Shop.

For the third year, Easter Ross Vets very kindly supported the cost of rosettes for the winners. A variety of raffle prizes were on offer courtesy of a number of local businesses and individuals including Maisie's Daisies, Spar Helmsdale, La Mirage and Nicki Hughes.

The Helmsdale Dog Show is organised and run by the Helmsdale Village Hub, which is managed by Dementia Friendly Communities Ltd. The event raised £830, which will go towards the running of the Helmsdale Village Hub.

Wendy Simmonds, Project Lead for the Helmsdale Village Hub said: "We had such a wonderful turn-out this year. It was great to see many familiar faces and some new competitors too. Our thanks must go to all of those individuals and organisations who were involved, including Annabell Smith, Easter Ross Vets, Ossie and Kareen

from Rogart, Waverly Engineering, our volunteers, those who had tables in the hall and everyone who came along on the day. The Dog Show seems to be growing year on year, which is great to see. Our dogs are family and it's great to have a day especially for them. We're also very pleased that the rain stayed away this time after a couple of very wet Dog Shows in the past!"

Results from Helmsdale Dog Show

Best Pedigree

1st: Boorach (3 yrs), Red & White Irish Setter. Owner: Dean Cowie, Helmsdale
2nd: Mac of Springfield (7 yrs), Teckel. Owner: Ailsa Shaw, Helmsdale
3rd: Balach (9 mths), working Cocker Spaniel. Owner: Ian Whitehead, Helmsdale

Best Cross-breed

1st: Skye (1 yr), Akita/Bull. Owner Greg, Alness
2nd: Marcie (2 yrs), Jack Russell/Chihuahua. Owner: Jenny Morrison, Inverness
3rd: Lexi (3 yrs), Staffie/Akita. Owner: Mandy Baird, Bonar Bridge

Best small dog

1st: Cassie (12 months), West Highland Terrier. Owner: Chris Gray, Edinburgh
2nd: Kayla (2 yrs), Shih Tzu. Owner: Nicki Hughes, Brora
3rd: Percy (6 yrs), Chihuahua. Owner: Hilary Michael, Brora

Best large dog

1st: Fionn (7 yrs), Labrador Retriever. Owner: Carol Grant, Kirkcaldy
2nd: Mackie (2 yrs), Sprocker. Owner: Allan Bokas, Helmsdale
3rd: Tess (13 yrs), Pointer/Setter. Owner: Beccy Clay, Drumbeg

Best veteran

1st: Hettie (11 yrs), Bedlington Terrier. Owner: Hilary Michael, Brora
2nd: Titch (7 yrs), Border Terrier. Owner: A M Wallis, Invergordon
3rd: Macy (11 yrs), Chocolate Labrador. Owner: Carol Pann, Puddletown

Best in Show

1st: Skye (1 yr), Akita/Bull. Owner: Greg, Alness
2nd: Boorach (3 yrs), Red & White Irish Setter. Owner: Dean Cowie, Helmsdale

Brightest eyes

1st: Sasha (4 yrs), Border Collie. Owner: Keith Cookson, Helmsdale
2nd: Zara (18 mths), German Shepherd. Owner: Ossie Ross, Rogart
3rd: Tikka (5 yrs), Labrador. Owner: Caitlin Martin, Helmsdale

Best turned out

1st: Kayla (2 yrs), Shih Tzu. Owner: Nicki Hughes, Brora
2nd: Archie (5 yrs), Cairn Terrier. Owner: Robin Macleod, Helmsdale
3rd: Garty (4 yrs), Cocker Spaniel. Owner: Alister Jappy, Helmsdale

Waggiest tail

1st: Shon (7 yrs), Cocker Spaniel. Owner: S Swinton, Invergordon
2nd: Marcie (2 yrs), Jack Russell/Chihuahua. Owner: Jenny Morrison, Inverness
3rd: Tullie (3 yrs), Springador. Owner: Tani, Invergordon

Best biscuit catcher

1st: Garty (4 yrs), Cocker Spaniel. Owner: Alister Jappy, Helmsdale
2nd: Fionn (7 yrs), Labrador Retriever. Owner: Carol Grant, Kirkcaldy
3rd: Koda (7 yrs), Alaskan Malamute. Owner: Tony Harris, Portgower

Dog the judge would most like to take home

1st: Mac of Springfield (7 yrs), Teckel. Owner: Ailsa Shaw, Helmsdale
2nd: Bobby (8 yrs), Border Collie. Owner: Caitlin Munro, Portmahomack
3rd: Bonny (6 yrs), Chinese Powder Puff. Owner: Isobel Macleod, Helmsdale

Fastest recall (small dog): Kayla (2 yrs), Shih Tzu. Owner: Nicki Hughes, Brora

Fastest recall (large dog): Skye (3 yrs), Border Collie. Owner: Hannah Munro, Portmahomack