****

**Consistent quality and positive comment at CCM Skipton summer working sheep dog sale**

Castlederg’s Willie Torrens top dog on price with 5,100gns Jed

A small, but select entry of fully broken working sheep dogs which took to the trials field at Skipton Auction Mart’s summer sale saw an excellent clearance rate, with all but two sold, the majority on the field to a day’s high of 5,100gns, a brace at 4,000gns, plus a trio at 3,900gns, with positive feedback reported from all parties. (Thursday, July 27)

Best on price at 5,100gns (£5,355) was a familiar face from Northern Ireland, Willie Torrens, of Killen, Castlederg in County Tyrone, with his November, 2021, red and white dog, Jed, by another Jed, from Andrew Procter in Great Musgrave, Kirkby Stephen, acquired for £6,900 at a timed online Skipton sale in 2020.

The top price performer’s dam is a daughter of Tyngraig Queen, another red and white bitch herself sold online at Skipton in 2021 for £15,200 by leading Ceredigon breeder and triallist Dewi Jenkins, of Talybont, Aberystwyth.

Bought privately some five months earlier and successfully trained on by the Irish handler, Jed, who sparkled on the Skipton trials field and has the potential to make a first-class nursery dog, became one of three acquisitions on the day by a buyer from the Scottish Borders who requested anonymity.

Mr Torrens also made 1,800gns with Jill, a recently broken March, 2021, black and white bitch, by DTA Williams’ Kemi Doc, out of the same breeder’s Eryri Jill, which also joined the unnamed Scottish Borders buyer. The Irish handler was also in action in the unbroken pen, claiming 800gns with his four-and-a-half-months-old black and white dog, Duke, a son of top Welsh handler and trialist Kevin Evan’s German import, red Spot, out of a daughter of the same handler’s European Nursery Champion and dual Welsh and International Brace Champion Derwen Doug. Duke goes to Pendle with Wycoller’s Mick Harker.

A further red and white dog, this time a bitch, became the first 4,000gns sale for another venue regular, Tony Birkett, of Carnforth. His two-year-old Lady is a litter sister to another dog sold by the Lancastrian handler and also making 4,000gns at the previous live Skipton sale this May. Like her sibling, she is also by Kevin Evans’ red Spot, out of Tony’s own Ruby, herself a daughter of Ricky Hutchinson’s 2015 Reserve Supreme Champion, Sweep. Lady also went to the unnamed Scottish Borders buyer.

The second 4,000gns price fell to Craig Kempson, from Waterfoot in Rossendale, with his aptly named 18-month-old red and white dog, Red, by Don, from Richard Saxon, of Leek, out of Jonathan Shorrock’s Pip, bred in nearby Burnley. She sold on the field to regular North Wales buyer John Roberts, of Betws-y-Coed, Conwy. Himself an accomplished trialist, Craig, is due to compete in this year’s forthcoming English National Trial with another trials-winning dog, Flo.

The first of the 3,900gns prices came from a vendor selling his first-ever dog, dairy and sheep farmer David Inman, of Witherslack, near Grange-over-Sands. His April, 2021, black and white, Dan, is related to national winners on both sides, being by Pen-y-Borough Roy, bred locally in North Craven by Shaun Richards, out of Groesfaen Sky, a grandson of Welshman Aled Owen’s International Supreme Champion Llangwmn Cap. A delighted David saw Dan go to Ireland with Aidan Gallagher, of Ballymena in Co. Antrim, himself a familiar face on the Skipton trials field.

Also hitting 3,900gns and taking top call among the Welsh vendors was Brynley Williams, of Holywell in Flintshire, with his black and white dog, Boss, by TB Davies’ Lad, out of Northtyne Lasi. She heads to the Midlands with James Uys, *(spelling correct*) of Stroud in Gloucestershire.

The third 3,900gns sale belonged to Mid-Wales handler Dan Rees, of Tregaron, Ceredigion, with his fully Irish-bred black and white Mac, a July, 2021, son of Brendan McAllister’s multiple trials winner Spot, out of Donal Mullaney’s Nan. Mac goes to another well-known name in working sheep dog circles, Nigel Watkins in Llanddeusant, Carmarthenshire.

Mr Rees also claimed 1,500gns top call in the unbroken pen with his well-bred four-and-a-half-months-old black and white bitch, Floss, a daughter of Dewi Jenkins’ 2022 International Supreme Champion Clywd Bob, out of the handler’s own Bet, a South-West Nursery Champion. Floss goes the far north of Scotland and Wick in Caithness with T McPhee.

Also from Rossendale, hitting 3,800gns and taking top call among the younger end of the field-run dogs was a 17-month-old black and white bitch, Freya, from 22-year-old Janine Ashworth, this another Derwen Doug daughter, out of Heywood-based Miss R Robinson’s Orange.

Freya is by the same sire as a 3,950gns dog purchased from Willie Torrens last October at Skipton that became shepherdess and budding trialist Janine’s first-ever acquisition and she has since confirmed her promise by picking up tickets on the nursery circuit. Freya goes to the Forest of Bowland with Slaidburn father and son, Stephen and Jack Wallbank, seeking a replacement work dog to join another young dog on the farm.

Retired sheep and cattle farmer Robin Bell again headed down from Hawick in the Scottish Borders to impress with 3,700gns and 3,500gns sales of young up-and coming 2022 dogs. The former, the January-born red, white and tan, Chief, a son of fellow Scottish breeder Andrew Dickmon’s Bill, out of C Collander’s Megan and a litter brother to Dewi Jenkins’ then record price 27,000gns Kim, joins E McBride in Sleaford, Lincolnshire.

Ringing up 3,500gns for Mr Bell was the first dog on to the trials field, his February-born black and white bitch, Tess, fully bred in Northern Ireland by Pat Byrne, another familiar face at Skipton, being by his highly regarded Moss, acquired as a 17-month-old at Skipton back in 2017 for a price-topping 9,200gns, out of June. The purchaser was Graham Brierley, of Norden, near Rochdale.

Field-run dogs were put to work on Herdwicks kindly provided by Oakworth’s Carol Mellin, whose accomplished trials dog Moor Lodge Ben has long and is still been used to marshal the sheep at live sales at Skipton.

Craven Cattle Mart’s general manager and auctioneer Jeremy Eaton commented: “The consistent quality of the dogs, the sheep and the trade seemed to meet positive comment from everyone. A good crowd from all over the UK and Ireland despite the small entry underlined the fact that there is a move on the part of some buyers to be at the field side to see a dog run and confirm or otherwise their conclusions drawn from the pre-sale videos. Meanwhile, plenty of dogs also sold to online bidders who watched the sale realtime.”

ENDS

Pic caption 1 (choice of pics): Willie Torrens with his 5100gns top price Skipton dog Jed.

Pic caption 2 (choice of pics): Tony Birkett with his 4000gns Lady.

Pic caption 3: Craig Kempson with his 4000gns Red.

Pic caption 4: David Inman and partner Vanessa Bell with the 3900gns Dan.

Pic caption 5: Brynley Williams with his 3900gns Boss.

Pic caption 6: Janine Ashworth with her 3800gns Fern.

*Images: Moule Media, Skipton*

Further info: Robin Moule 07976 559961