

East Anglian Gundog Society October 2026 Open Show Junior and Adult Handling Critiques

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to the committee at East Anglian Gundog Society for giving me my first ever judging appointment. Thank you to everyone who entered under me!

6-11yrs (4,2a)

1st - Ella Punter handling a Flatcoat Retriever

This handler was very neat and had lovely pattern work. She spoke to her dog and you could tell they had a good relationship. Unfortunately she did break the golden rule, make sure you practice not allowing yourself to come in between the judge and your dog, other than that a lovely handler!

2nd - Kenley Francis handling a English Springer Spaniel

This handler had a lovely attitude towards handling and was extremely determined, he was encouraging his dog throughout, which was lovely to see. However he broke the golden rule and struggled to show me the correct pattern I asked of him. Please just practice familiarising yourself with different patterns, neater lines and the golden rule.

12-16yrs (4,1a)

1st - Emily Windler handling a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

This handler was extremely hard to fault. She did everything I asked of her, I moved a foot and she moved it straight back and her pattern work was so neat and precise. She spoke to her dog throughout and you can tell they have a brilliant relationship. She will do great things in the future. She was my Best Junior Handler in Show! Well Done Emily!

2nd - Grace Fox handling a Labrador Retriever

This handler was very good, she moved the foot and showed teeth clearly. She was encouraging to her dog. It was very hard to pick between her and the winner so I had to nit-pick with who had tidier pattern work, but honestly it was lovely to see her move calmly with her dog, again she will do great things in the future!

3rd - Keira Clarke

17-24yrs (3,1a)

1st - Megan Slack handling a Brittany Spaniel

Another handler who was extremely hard to fault. She had neat corners and straight lines. She spoke to her dog throughout and followed instructions and shadowed correctly. She is such a clean and kind handler. She showed off her dog to the best of her ability which made her stand out to me. That's why I gave her Best Adult handler in Show! Well Done Megan!

2nd - Emily Rice handling a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

Another handler who showed her dog well, Emily was encouraging even when her dog got quite overexcited, she showed teeth clearly and also shadowed well. Similarly in the 12-16 I had to nit-pick and choose who had neater pattern work.

25-39yrs (4,2a)

Now this class was my toughest, both quality handlers which I had to test.

1st - Roxanne McDonald handling an Irish Red and White Setter

She followed instructions clearly and had lovely pattern work, she stacked her dog nicely and shadowed beautifully. She was extremely encouraging to her dog and produced straight lines. She followed my feet on the last up and down which showed she was very focused!

2nd - Hana Holden handling a Flatcoat Retriever

All throughout the class I was struggling with who to put first as she was so neat and followed instruction correctly and shadowed well until the last hurdle! I went behind both of the handlers and only my first place winner shadowed in that circumstance. However when I placed my feet differently in the up and down she followed them correctly. Just remember to never get in between the dog and the judge.

40-59yrs (2)

1st - Nikki Rice handling a Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

She had neat lines and tight corners and followed instructions well. She was extremely encouraging to her dog even when the dog was unsettled when I moved in the up and down. Her shadowing was clean and correct.

2nd - Kirsty Watts handling a Chesapeake Bay

This handler spoke to her dog throughout which I liked and stood her dog nicely. She shadowed correctly. However her lines were slightly off and she didn't lead from my feet in the up and down.

60yrs and over (7,3a)

1st - Caroline Gammon handling a Hungarian Vizsla

She was extremely neat with her dog. She showed the teeth beautifully and followed instructions. Another handler who was very encouraging towards her dog! Her corners were tight and you could tell she had a lovely relationship with her dog!

2nd - Ray McDonald handling an Irish Red and White Setter

This handler showed the teeth clearly and did everything I asked. He stacked his dog up well and was a pleasure to watch. Again he put up a good competition and I couldn't decide between him and my winner so again I had to give it to the person with slightly neater lines, however I sympathize with him as he had a bigger dog.

3rd - Janet Unwin

Well done everyone!!

Judge: Leila Levene