

# Mystery solved

by Pat Renshaw

Understanding the nuts and bolts of dog show competition.

THE UNINITIATED, ON THEIR FIRST visit to a dog show, watch as dogs enter the ring, run around, get ribbons and leave the ring – then watch another group of dogs enter the ring and do the same thing. With no commentary, none of it seems to make any sense! This month, let's try to take some of the mystery out of a dog show.

Dog show competition starts off with the classes, which are divided by sex. These are:

*Junior Puppy* – for puppies six to nine months of age.

*Senior Puppy* – for puppies nine to 12 months of age.

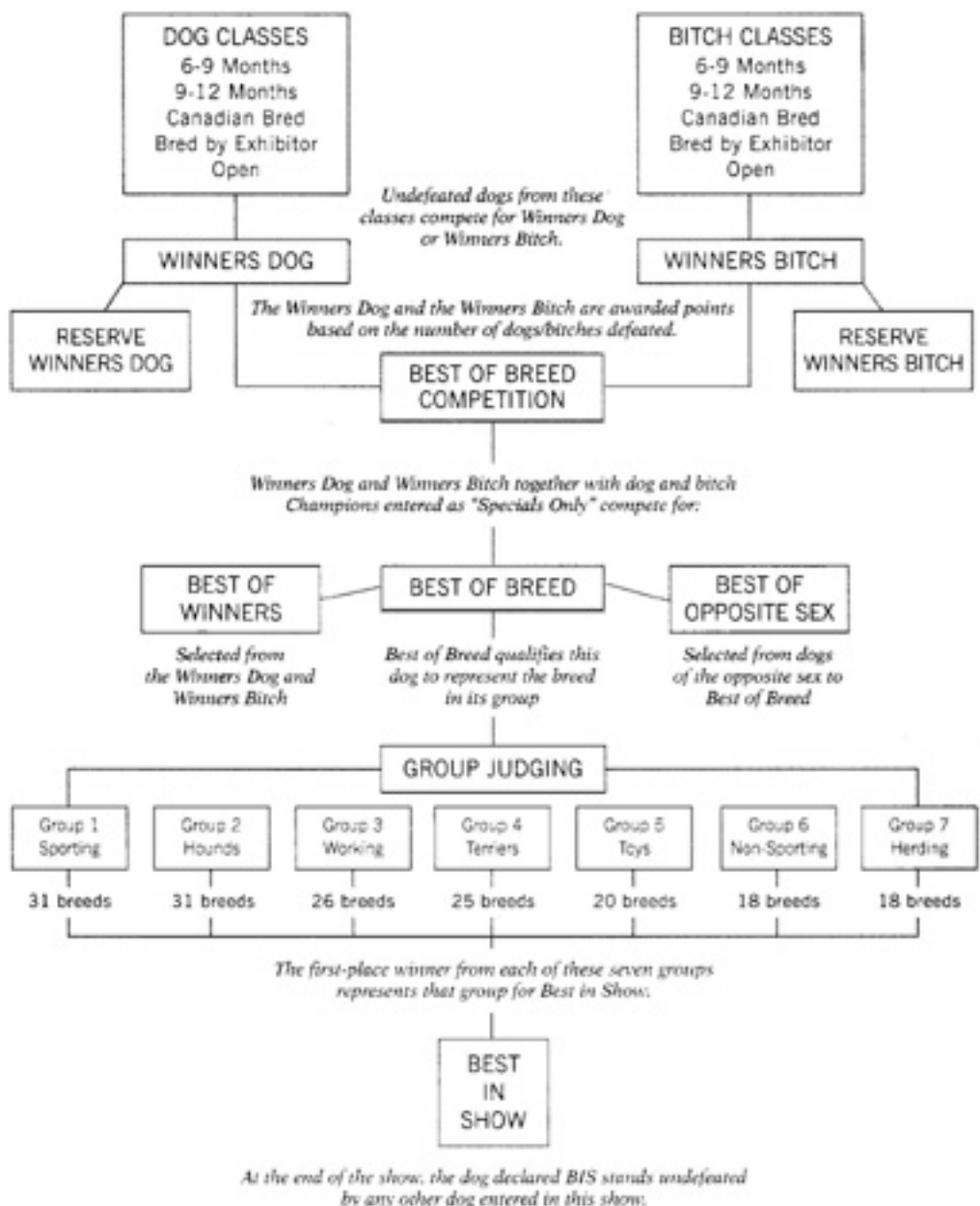
*Canadian Bred* – for dogs of any age, born in Canada.

*Bred by Exhibitor* – for dogs that are handled in the ring by the breeder, who must also be the owner or co-owner.

*Open* – for dogs of any age, born in Canada or 'foreign' soil. Usually these dogs are mature and ready for top competition.

Placements for the above classes are first to fourth. No points are awarded at this level. However, the first-place dog from each class enters the ring to compete for WINNERS DOG (males are "dogs"; females are referred to as "bitches"). It is at this point that championship points are awarded.

The dog who places second to the Winners Dog enters the ring and competes with the balance of the first-place dogs for RESERVE WINNERS DOG. If, for any reason, the dog awarded Winners Dog is not entitled to these points, the points will be given to the dog awarded Reserve. This



doesn't happen often. If your dog 'goes' reserve, it means that of all the dogs that lost (and, let's face it; only one dog won!), yours was the best one!

All of the above is repeated for the 'bitch' classes, with points being awarded to the female deemed WINNERS BITCH.

If this isn't confusing enough, we have all the Canadian champions (Specials) enter the ring, along with the Winners Dog and Winners Bitch, to compete for BEST OF BREED, BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX and BEST OF WINNERS. In the order of things, all the *continued on page 66*