

PHOTO

Elaine and Ringo
(Winterfellin Gotta
Dash avec Elstoto) at
Ronostrand, European
Championships
2021. Photo:
Anifotografia



JUDGE SPOTLIGHT

Elaine Jenkinson

*As she prepares for her first
Championship judging
appointment, her story embodies
the very heart of UKSS.*

Some people come to
sighthounds by chance. Others
wait a lifetime before the right
dog arrives. For our featured
judge at this year's UKSS
National Championship, it was a
teenage dream that took years to
come true — and has since grown
into a journey of competition,
travel, and now judging.

"I had always dreamed of having a Whippet since I was 13, but due to my mum's animal dander allergy, we had a miniature poodle instead," Elaine recalls. "Years later, after university and settling into our first home, I hoped to adopt a Whippet through the rescue I volunteered with. While none came up at first, we fostered several greyhounds. One stayed (Comet), and eventually we welcomed Luna, a sweet non-pedigree Whippet who fitted in perfectly."

Then came Ringo, her first pedigree Whippet from the Winterfellin kennel. He would become the cornerstone of her story.

"Ringo introduced us to lure coursing, competing successfully in the UK from 15 months to 9 years old, and even helped clear several other dogs in his retirement."

It was Ringo's influence — and that of his offspring — that carried Elaine into a new chapter.

**"Whether you are
new to the sport or a
seasoned competitor,
the key is to enjoy
every moment —
and preparation is
everything."**



ABOVE

UKSS National Championship 2024 — a moment of calm focus
before the chase begins. Photo credit: Liljeros Design



LEFT

World Lure Coursing Championship 2025, Harfang avec Elstoto - placed 5th in CACIL male. Photo credit: Anifotografia



ABOVE

Hektor (Winterfelin Dashin Comet avec Elstoto), Dog Sports Derby Match 2024. Photo credit: Coalcroft Photography

BELOW

Tycho (Coppermow Harfang avec Elstoto) in the show ring at National Whippet Association Show 2025. Photo credit: Hannah Wayman



"Once Ringo retired and my career settled, we got a little campervan for international coursing adventures with his offspring. This also allowed me to complete mentoring and shadow judging placements across several countries over the last 12 months. During my judging training journey, I have been fortunate to have some amazing mentors in wonderful locations."

Her first mentoring session was on UK soil, in the heart of the Cotswolds. Elaine felt this was a truly special ground.

"The field team used the ground to its full potential; the dogs ran across two fields via an inclining tree line. It really did challenge so many of them due to the terrain change!"

Her second mentoring session was at Ronostrand, a venue that holds a special place in her heart.

"It was the first international venue we travelled to as part of Team UK! Being there on the sand was incredible and seeing some dogs even take the plunge into the water made it unforgettable."

Another highlight came in Belgium, where Elaine was able to explore course design more deeply.

"One of my favourite mentoring opportunities was in Belgium, where I spent time learning about course choices and design — especially how to ensure the course allows the behind dog to 'get back in the game'."

PHOTO

Tycho moving out with purpose at the Bath Championship Show 2023. Photo credit: Hannah Wayman



At the UKSS Summer Championship 2025, she passed her judging exam. Later this year at the Nationals, she will step onto the field for her first official appointment — a proud milestone in her sighthound journey.

Looking ahead, she sees opportunity.

“With UKSS hosting its first multi-day Championship, I am excited to see how this format can help increase the number of dogs successfully cleared ahead of the 2026 season.”

Elaine feels that her philosophy is firmly rooted in tradition.

“I am old school when it comes to owning a dog, as I believe they should have a job to do which really fulfils them! With my first rescue Whippet we did flyball (when Whippets in flyball was not a thing). Ringo also dabbled in flyball, straight racing and agility in his youth before settling on lure coursing. With Ringo’s offspring I currently compete in agility as well as lure coursing, and they also know a few tricks to keep their brain ticking over, so to speak!”

Her view of Whippets is simple but uncompromising.

“A Whippet should look like a Whippet — with the stereotypical ears, head, and elegance — and be able to soar effortlessly across a coursing field. Lure coursing is the closest sport we have to what they were originally bred for, and it is the very reason the breed standard was created.”

As a judge, she relishes the diversity of styles.

“Each breed has its own unique coursing style, and I especially enjoy analysing the non-Whippets, as Whippets dominate the UK field and are the breed I own. Whippets are solo hunters — fast and gritty — while breeds like Deerhounds display a more coordinated, almost dance-like strategy, with one leading and the other timing their strike. It is these distinct breed behaviours that truly bring the scoring system to life.”

She is also candid about the challenges.

“I need to balance judging with running my own Whippets competitively in the UK, as earning points is essential for qualifying for Team UK — a team that I am proud to have been a part of several times and hope to continue representing. If more UK judges were available, it would be easier to share appointments and allow everyone the chance to both judge and run their dogs. Internationally, this is already the norm, as judges do not assess their own breed.”

For those just starting out, her advice is as practical as it is heartfelt.

“Whether you are new to the sport or a seasoned competitor, the key is to enjoy every moment — and preparation is everything. Know the rules, arrive early, and most importantly, have your dog properly warmed up before heading to the paddock. A consistent warm-up routine not only improves how you handle your dog but also enhances their focus and performance on the field. That calm, confident energy transfers directly to them and can make all the difference during the course.”

From a girl dreaming of a Whippet to a competitor, traveller, and now judge, Elaine’s journey has been one of steady devotion and discovery. As she prepares for her first Championship judging appointment, her story embodies the very heart of UKSS — a community where form meets function, history meets sport, and passion opens new chapters for dogs and their people alike.



PHOTO: World Coursing Championship 2025 — focus and anticipation before the chase. Photo credit: Anifotografia