

2017 National Show Judges Report

Judge – Kerry Jones

As an exhibitor I've attended every National Show since I became serious about chinchilla exhibiting in 2006/7. It's very hard work in the run up to the show with lots of preparation work on the animals etc. so I was so pleased to be able to enjoy the run up to this show without the stress of grooming a fair few chins. My family and I did all our usual contributions to the National Show by helping with supplying food, organising trophies and awards and then accessing the hall the evening before and setting everything up, this I couldn't have done without my husband Mark. This meant exhibitors wanting to be in the hall early the following morning can get straight into grooming their chins which is quite a luxury. There is many people I wish to thank for the work that was put in to this show but I will do that at the end of my report.

209 entries faced me and I must say I was delighted that everyone who could possibly turn up was there and we were only missing one or two of our regular show attendees. After very swiftly colour phasing the standards we started as usual with the young medium dark standard females. It was apparent to me whilst colour phasing that the show was going to prove quite a challenge as most animals were clearly going over their best, the slightly later show date certainly not helping. We were so limited on dates with the complications of Mothers Day, the start of British Summer time and hall availability.

The first 1st ribbon of the day went to Eddie and Rich Crutchley for a very young clear blue baby, that needed to fill out in the neck, but showed potential. The 2nd from Andrew Lee was blockier and larger with good fur but the colour was not so sharp. 2 HC's for Jean Beardshaw and Dave Green completed this group.

Mediums were next and produced a 1st for Karly and Craig Donkersley, a lovely blocky shape, excellent size with a strong upright fur but needing a little more flash, a drop down to 3rd for Rich and Eddie with improved density to the winner but needing better shape and veiling. James Buchan and Sian Allcoat both received highly commended in this group.

Darks were the best class with another 1st for Karly and Craig for their female that I described as a good all rounder, good size, blocky shape, fine strong silky fur of clear colour in reasonable show condition and with a nice clean belly. She went on to be the National's Best Young Female.....very well done. 2nd to her was a other chin from Rich and Eddie that had good strong fur, with good body shape, clear colour and a clean belly, she followed up the first to become Reserve Young Std Female, again well done.

Extra darks were an interesting group, all from Rich and Eddie. The 1st was flashy with excellent veiling and a short dense coat, however, although eye catching the colour was down and the size and conformation needed much work. The 3rd and HC were a very similar type.

We then moved on to the Young Std Males. First up again was the Medium Darks, the winner this time coming from Kayleigh and Jay Pearson. A nice young male with good silky strong fur, clear colour and very well presented. I found out after the show it was a Violet carrier..... excellent!!! Two HC's completed the groups from Denise Oaten and James Buchan for 2 very young babies.

Darks again were best of the Young Males with James Buchan coming out on top. His 1st ribbon and eventual Best Young Std and Reserve Best Std in show was another good all round chin, a good balance of everything we judge for, clear colour with blueness showing across the tips, silky fur with guard hair and good size and shape. Sadly the show condition was its poorest feature and possibly cost the animal further progression. A 3rd ribbon for Siân and her clear chin that was a little open furred and choppy on the day but had a good white belly.

The extra darks were again represented by Rich and Eddie with their extremely dark, well veiled young male that had a beautiful almost velvety fur, it had lots of eye appeal but sadly was quite small and narrow and the clarity could be better. For the reserve group prize the extra dark young male couldn't be denied with his eye appeal and followed up the dark to take reserve young std.

We then moved on to the Adult Female Medium Darks. The 1st was again taken by Rich and Eddie for a big blocky nice female of clear colour and strong fur that was sadly out of condition. No 2nd but a 3rd for Denise Oaten's huge chin with strong fur that was down in colour on the day, Paul Spooner took two highly commendeds and one for Rich and Eddie in this group.

The Medium 1st ribbon was a chin showing potential with lovely blue colour, blocky shape, good size, and a strong fur type that was open but with lots of guard hair. A good entry from Siân that needs to prime through.

Again the Darks proved the best with a large quality class won by Rich and Eddie. A good sized blocky female, again a good all round chinchilla with strong fur and clear colour with density and reasonable show condition. She went on to be a worthy Best Adult Female section winner, very well done. She was closely followed by the 2nd ribbon from Denise Oaten that had sharper colour and again good size and conformation with a strong silky fur, but the veiling and show condition were not as good. However, she became the worthy Reserve Adult Female, very well done. Karly and Craig took 3rd and 2 more HC's for Denise and James completed a strong class.

A single Extra Dark from James gained a 2nd ribbon, she was well covered with plenty of dense fur but was small and a bit narrow plus out of condition and a little dull on the day.

The Adults Males were a mixed group but with some good chinchillas amongst them. Sadly this group was particularly marred by condition. As usual Medium Darks were up first and I awarded a 1st to Karly and Craig for a good chin of blocky shape, good size with clear colour with good veiling, it just needed improved density. A drop down to 3rd for Karly and Craig for a chinchilla that my notes say was an average animal, nothing exceptional, nothing terribly bad. HC's in this group for the Donkersley again and 2 x HC's for Paul Spooner.

The Darks presented me with yet another 1st for Karly and Craig. This was a good chinchilla, with a large blocky shape, even veiling coverage, nice white belly and clear colour over the tips with good density. Sadly quite a few priming lines and lack of show condition just spoiled the overall affect, this animal became Reserve Adult Male, again well done. A decent male in 3rd place for Teresa Moir with good colour and veiling, blocky shape but open furred and out of condition on the day. Paul took another HC in this class, he had a few chinchillas just edged out of the 1,2 3 ribbons due to condition on the day.

The Best Standard of the day put in his appearance in the Extra Darks and took 1st, Best Adult Std and Best Std of the show and eventually Reserve Show Champion for Eddie and Richard Crutchley. This animal was of good size and blocky conformation with lovely dense fur of a good length with veiling coverage down to the belly line. He had lots of quality and eye appeal and was a standout in the Standards, however, he wasn't without fault. Sadly, he was a stained in the tummy and certainly wasn't as bright as he could be, this very much due to age and general show condition. I'm sure these Extra Dark Adults are very difficult when they been in their cages for a year or more, and this prevented him from being at his brilliant best, still he was of high quality.

Rich and Eddie also had the 2nd in this group and this was also a good chinchilla, fairly good size, blocky shape with fine fur of good density and coverage and although in slighter better show condition than the winner, wasn't in the same quality bracket. Siân had 2 HC males in this group which my notes say were flashy but small.

We broke for a truly excellent lunch of curry, casserole, chilli, and shepherds pie with rice/chips and jacket potatoes that so many people worked hard to provide, I thoroughly enjoyed it and the jam roly poly with custard for afters.

After an hour, we kicked off with the Young Mutations. First class up was the Wilson whites and Denise took 2nd for a 4 month plushy furred, clear coloured white just needing better density and to grow on. 3rd ribbon went to Siân for her tighter denser furred more mature white that was nice but showed slight creaminess on the white patches. Hc's in this group for Denise, Andrew and Paul.

Next were the Beige's and this time a 1st ribbon awarded to Rich and Eddie for a blocky young Beige of good size, colour and veiling but lacking finish. The 2nd also for Rich and Eddie was fine furred and a nice Beige that was in improved condition and was better groomed but did not have the clarity of colour of the winner. Wendy French received a HC for her tight furred, well prepared Beige that had sadly oxidised.

A good class of Violets produced a stand out winner for Cameron Holmes, lovely size and shape, plushy fine fur with lovely deep colour and a crisp white belly. One of the best Violets I've seen for a while and a worthy winner of this year Violet challenge trophy. Well done! This animal also received Reserve Young Mutation. Jean Beardshaw took 2nd for a blue sharp very young Violet who was behind the winner in conformation and fur strength but will improve. Another nice Violet in 3rd for Heather Ainstien that was again good but just down in all departments to the winners of this class. Three HC's in this group for Kayleigh and Jay, Sandy King and Jean.

Three Brown Velvets were next and produced a 1st and 2nd for Rich and Eddie. The 1st was a good blocky animal with a long strong fur type that was in reasonable condition and was very well covered being more of a medium chocolate brown, a nice chin. The 2nd was slightly bluer with a deeper brown colour but the conformation and show condition were some way behind.

Nine Black Velvets produced the Best Young Mutation and Reserve Mutation of the day for Rich and Eddie. A lovely young black with loads of potential, good conformation and fair size with a silky plushy first type. It was clear colour, showing blueness and exceptional coverage for the age. Very well done. 2nd also from the same stable was a nice black, more mature with good coverage but without the clarity of the winner. Both the 3rd from Siân and HC for Kayleigh and Jay deserve a mention as they were reasonable quality blacks with potential.

The AOC class of youngsters were a mixed bunch of animals, but certainly contained animals that were both interesting and useful, some being examples we don't see that often on the UK show table.

2 Sapphires from Rich and Eddie could only manage a 2nd and 3rd. The 2nd I believe to be a good chinchilla but on the day was out of condition and missing sparkle. The 3rd was big and blocky but down in colour to the 2nd.

2 Blue Diamonds from Jean were awarded a 2nd and HC. The 2nd had an absolutely beautiful clear true blue colour with a strong fine fur, but so much of the basic fundamental qualities were missing, tiny size and narrow conformation being the biggest problem. A work in progress for Jean but if she combines that colour with the other qualities we look for, we can all look out!

A 3rd for a Pink White from Siân that was blocky, well presented but a little creamy and wooly.

A 3rd for Denise's Lowe Recessive White that had very good size, shape and strong plushy fur but appeared down in colour on the day.

We then moved on to the huge group of adult mutations.

Wilson whites were first up and a good solid 1st ribbon for Teresa Moir for her Wilson white that is a cracking chinchilla just requiring a clearer colour to be an exceptional white, excellent size, shape, density and show presentation completed the picture. A drop down to 3rd again for Teresa for another good white that wasn't in the same condition and was a little further down in colour. 3 reasonable HC's for Siân, Andrew and James completed the ribbons in this group.

A large group of Pink whites produced a blocky plushy furred Pink White 1st ribbon for Rich and Eddie that had heavy Beige influence, although the animal didn't show creaminess it didn't have the brightness I would have liked, being a little flat in appearance. The 2nd was also a reasonable Pink White with plushy fur and good shape but the colour showed more creaminess under the lights for Denise. The remainder of the class all had something to commend but all needed clearer colour to move up the ribbons.

A large group of 14 Beige's produced a very nice 1st ribbon for Denise, a standout winner in this group showing lovely clarity of colour and blueness with plushy fur, blocky shape and fair size. The 2nd from

Sandy King was also a nice Beige with strong fine fur, good preparation and blocky shape but not the clarity or blueness of the winner. A 3rd for Denise and hc's for James and Wendy in this group.

A class of Homo Beige's saw Denise again coming out on top with a large blocky example with volumes of fine fur not often seen on a homo beige, sadly it had just started to oxidise. Similar comments for her 2nd that had an even better fur type and again big and blocky but the colour was further down.

6 Sullivan Violets were next and a clear stand out 1st ribbon and Reserve Adult Mutation for Sandy King. Good size and conformation with fine strong fur and clear colour and a nice white belly. A good example. No 2nd but a 3rd for Andrew Lee for a blue Violet with sheen but the fur showed weakness over the hips lying flat and uneven in length. The 2 HC's from Paul Spooner showed quality but show condition and preparation let them down.

A good class of Self Blacks were next and produced a strong 1st for Hannah Mitchell. It had a good shape and size, plushy silky dense fur type with good black colouration throughout but I would have liked it slightly clearer but certainly the most balanced example by some way. Jean's 2nd was bluer and slightly sharper than the winner but some way behind in size, shape and the fur type being quite short. Denise 3rd was clear in colour and fairly sharp but the fur type, although strong, was slightly course compared to the 1st and 2nd.

Three Deutsch Violets, from Rich and Eddie produced a 1, 2 and 3. The 1st was a good example and clearly the best of the class overall. Good shape and size and a strong silky fur of deep lustrous colour of reasonable clarity. The 2nd was also a decent example but down in all departments to the 1st.

A large class of Black Velvets were next and provided us with the eventual Grand Show Champion of the day for Sandy King. This animal was picked from the group and put straight to the top of the table and did not move. Excellent sharp clear blue colour with superb large size and blocky conformation, very good density and a beautiful silky fur type. Coverage over the flanks came right down to a white belly line, good coverage in the neck (between the ears) with my only small criticism a little more coverage around the lower neck area for perfection, this was my only small criticism, it was groomed and presented to perfection. The 2nd from Siân moved it's way up the table as it too had good clear blue colour and good coverage but the condition was seriously lacking, similar comments for Rich and Eddie 3rd a clear black out of condition. HC's for Jean, James and Siân completed a good class.

AOC's gave me 2 Brown Velvets to which I awarded another 2nd for Siân for her fairly nice brown of medium chocolate colour that was well covered but had just started to oxidise and was a little open in fur type.

A 2nd for another Sapphire for Rich and Eddie that was of good size and blocky shape with a strong fur type that was slightly course but had a good clear belly and fair clarity.

A 2nd to Siân for her blocky plushy furred Lowe Recessive White that had fine strong fur of good density and was well presented, but showed tinge under the lights.

Finally, a 3rd ribbon to Dave Green for his very blocky, large black and white cross the had plenty of strong fur of good length but was down in colour and needing more preparation.

When judging for Best at the end of the show it was clear we had one excellent animal shinning and at its best on the day and one animal that was there due to his excellent quality that wasn't near his brilliant best. The black with one very minor point for me to criticise on the day and the standard unfortunately had more points of criticism. This meant the Black Velvet was the worthy winner and I couldn't deny the standard the Reserve Show Champion spot due to his great quality,

My warmest congratulations firstly to Sandy for presenting an immaculate chinchilla that we found out after the show was 3.5 years old. An achievement to present an animal in such immaculate order. Secondly again my warmest congratulations to Rich and Eddie for their lovely Reserve Show Champion male who although not at his best, was a lovely chinchilla.

Congratulations to everyone who won ribbons, and group awards at this National Show, ribbons were well contested for and well earned. It was lovely seeing the awards fairly well spread out with a fair few

folk winning 1sts and special awards. Very well done to Rich and Eddie for gaining both 1st standard and 1st mutation breeders awards and congratulations to anyone else who was lucky enough to pick up a breeders award.

Finally I was very honoured to be judging the 2017 National Show and I was truly delighted with the huge turnout on the day. The show couldn't have been a success without all the help received on the day, big thanks to all the exhibitors who travelled far and wide to attend, a huge thanks to Siân, my mum and dad and Denise for producing and preparing the excellent food. Thanks to Stephen Helmore and his lovely children Laura and Michael for all their help in the kitchen, we really appreciate them giving up their day. Thanks to Hannah for her efficient registration of the animals and to my Show Manager and stewards for their efficiency in presenting the animals for me to judge. Finally thank you to everyone who helped in anyway on the day from washing up/ collecting dinner money/selling raffle tickets to tidying up at the end of the show. We need every one of you to help make the show what it is.

I thought judging would be easier and not so tiring as exhibiting at a National, but I am not so sure now!

Kerry Jones
Senior Judge