

Show Report – 2015 NCS NATIONAL SHOW
22nd March 2015, Calf Heath
Senior Judge: - Richard Crutchley

The end of the 2014-15 season was rounded off with our National Show, held at Calf Heath Village Hall, just outside Wolverhampton in the West Midlands. This was my third National Show and my 40th as a judge, and I faced 130+ entries in the six main classes.

The weather had been kind in the run up to the show with consistently cool and “dryish” weather which I hoped would reflect on an entry in good show condition. Sadly this wasn’t the case with most adult animals over the top showing signs of pen stain and significant priming, and most of the youngsters priming in the shoulders and also suffering from creamy bellies. I do wonder whether the end of March/early April is a sensible time to hold our showcase event; yes from the perspective of “end of the season”; certainly no from the perspective of animals in good order for show!!!

Class A - Young Standard Females (16)

The young Standards were colour phased and just one extra-dark and three darks across 30 animals, with the remainder Medium-Darks and Mediums. The first colour phase were the Medium Darks and eight chins were judged, gaining six awards. The top 5 were from Kerry with the last of the awards for Paul Spooner. The 1st winner was of good size and conformation, with silky fur type and good density, clear in colour but with a break in its veiling pattern. Second had strong but not silky fur type and was open furred, and dull compared to the winner. Third again had a coarse fur type and again a drop in clarity. The HC’s all had merit but were generally of coarse fur type, dull in clarity with creamy bellies; something I saw quite a lot of through the show!

The Medium CP yielded seven entries but gained a 2nd for Kerry’s female which had very good size and shape, but again with a coarse fur type and lack of density. Also a HC for Denise Oaten’s chin which had nice fine fur type and had been prepared well, but was down in clarity of colour. Just one Dark young female brought a 1st for Kerry for her chin of strong fur type, reasonable size, good veiling coverage, clear colour, whitish belly

colour and good density. This chin became Best Young Female and Reserve Young Standard.

Class B – Young Standard Males (14)

First up came a class of six promising looking Medium-Dark males. I managed to award five of them ribbons but no 1st award. 2nd went to Kerry for her chin with strong fur, well veiled, in good condition and prepared well, and 3rd for her silkier furred chin which was blocky but was breaking and much further out of condition. Sadly all of these entries suffered from yellow bellies, which comes from pen stain or being off colour. I could not overlook this as it was not a minor issue. Others in the young females didn't show this so I discounted the conditions of the hall. Something to watch, this!!!

Next up came five Medium males. Just two HC's awarded for chins of merit but which were down in clarity of colour.

Two dark males followed which brought 1st and 2nd awards for Kerry. The 1st had eye appeal, strong fur type, fairly good density and good veiling, with the 2nd clear and bluish in colour with strong fur but not quite the required density.

In the Extra-Darks came our winner, again from Kerry, gaining Best Young male, Best Young Standard and Reserve Best Standard. He was densely furred, with excellent veiling, strong fur type and prepared well. Clarity was fair and his deep tipping and eye appeal took him a long way – very nice.

Class C – Adult Standard Females (14)

Again the adult standards were colour phased with the entry dominated by Mediums and Medium-Darks.

First up came six Medium-Darks yielding four awards. No 1st, but 2nd for Denise Oaten's female which had strong fur type, good density and well veiled, with adequate size and shape, but again a yellow belly. 3rd again for Denise for her very large chin with poor density and a little hippy.

Five Medium adult females brought just a HC for Andrew Lee. This female was well presented, blocky with fine fur type but open density and down in clarity of colour.

Three dark adult females, all from Kerry gave us our winners and a 1-2-3.

First was of good size and conformation, bright in clarity of colour showing blueness, of fairly good density and well veiled. She was in good condition on the day and very well presented, going on to take top

Standard honours and eventually Reserve Show Champion – very nice. Second in the awards was not in the same quality bracket but still a solid chin, just lacking clarity of colour and that creaminess in the belly showing again, but good enough to beat the males into Reserve Adult Standard.

Class D – Adult Standard Males (10)

The Medium-Dark colour phase, as always, came first and gave a full spread of ribbons for the four entries. 1st for Kerry's male with strong fur type, good veiling coverage, very good size and conformation, if not quite in top condition on the day. 2nd also from Kerry for another decent entry, but a coarser fur type and less density.

Three Medium males gained just a 2nd for Georgie Busher for her boy of fair size and conformation, but a lack of clarity and eye appeal.

Two dark adult males again brought just a second for Sandy King for a very good chin with lovely veiling, silky strong fur and good density, but not in top condition and showing some off colour to the tipping. Later it emerged this boy was 5 years old and pulled from her breeding lines – testament to the superb way Sandy keeps her chins!

Another singleton entry was Kerry's extra-dark male, which was otherwise excellent aside from an off colour caste and a yellow belly, hence being awarded a 2nd.

Group champions came from the Medium-Dark class – nice!

Class E – Young Mutations (40)

Mutations were in greater number, with 67 mutations to 54 standards. I should point out that without good standards, you end up without good mutations!!!

Forty young mutations were split into eight colour phases, as follows;

Wilson White (5): No first and second but a third for Kerry's coarse furred large chin which was in good condition and well prepared, but a little creamy.

Pink White (4): A 1-2-3 in this class, with Wendy French gaining the 1st for her silky furred chin with an acceptable level of creaminess and acceptable size. Second for Kerry's well prepared chin which was creamy and had a coarse fur type, akin to having the tips sheared from the fur. Third for Georgie Busher's chin which was crystal clear in clarity of colour but could not compete on condition and prime with the winners.

Beige (5): - Three awards but no first again. Second ribbon to Georgie for her silky furred chin which was dense and bright but was out of condition

on the day, breaking down the sides and over the hips. Third ribbon for Kerry's chin which again had a coarse fur type and a lack of density.

Brown Velvet (3): - Another class yielding a 1-2-3, with the 1st for Sian Allcoat's lovely chin with silky strong fur, good density, clear blue colour and a lovely sharp-white belly colour. This chin wasn't in tip-top condition but all the same showed well and became Reserve Young Mutation. Second went to Kerry for her well veiled chin which was clear in colour, with strong fur type.

Sullivan Violet (9): - A large class of Sullivan Violets were awarded seven ribbons, with a 1st to Andrew Lee for his clear and blue chin, blocky and well prepared. Second and third went to Jean Beardshaw from Scotland, attending her first National Show, for two good quality chins, both well furred and bright but not such eye appeal as the winner.

The HC's in the group were all worthy of commendation but were down in clarity of colour to the top three and had creamy bellies.

Black Velvet (9): A large class of Black Velvets were given just four awards. The first from Kerry was a large and blocky chin, in near perfect condition and prepared beautifully. It was black through the neck and reasonably well veiled for a youngster with good intensity of colour in the centre of the back, good clarity and some blueness. Fur type and density were good and this chin went all the way to Best In Show – well deserved and a very nice youngster... Second and third also to Kerry for a bright chin which had some grey in the neck and good conformation, and the third slightly dull compared to the top winners. Many of those which failed to score a ribbon were not well veiled or intense enough, and were down in clarity of colour.

Self Black (4): No first but a second ribbon for Denise Oaten's Ebony which was clear and bright, with strong dense fur but not the required intensity of colour or veiling for a 1st.

AOC (1): - Just one entry in the Any Other Colour class, which was a Self Brown from Kayleigh Barber. In this case it was a Tan which won a 3rd ribbon, and was bright in clarity of colour with good fur in the centre of the back but choppy around the sides and not quite intense enough for a 1st.

Class F – Adult Mutations (27)

Wilson White (3): - Three entries all won ribbons but no first. A 2nd for Wendy French's chin which had good size and conformation, slightly soft fur over the hips, and although the best clarity on the table, just slightly

creamy in colour. Third for Kerry for her chin which again was a little creamy with a strong fur type which could have been denser.

Beige (4): - Four entries winning 1-2-3-HC awards! First and second for Wendy French, with the winner clear and bright, with strong and fine fur type, well veiled, blocky and of adequate size. Second was again nice and blocky, of reasonable size but dull compared to the winner.

Sullivan Violet (4): - No first again but a well-deserved second to Andrew Lee for his lovely blue and clear Violet which was just over the 7 month age limit and was a little small and out of condition on the day.

Sullivan Ultra Violet (4): - Four entries brought three awards, but one chin of real note Andrew Lee's 1st was clear, blue, bright and attractive, with good fur quality and density and a nice sheen. Not quite in tip-top condition but again well deserving of Reserve Adult Mutation.

Black Velvet (6): - Six entries in this group sadly were given just one ribbon, but it was a 1st for Kerry's chin. The winner was extra-large in size and of very blocky conformation. Intensity of colour was fairly good with veiling reasonable but not right down the sides. Slight grey in the neck but perhaps past its best and priming on the day.

The balance of entries were either not black enough, not well veiled enough or too small for adults...

Self Black (3): - All three entries won awards, with the 1st from Denise Oaten just a fraction off being Best Mutation!!! This chin was large and blocky conformation, dense strong fur type, very good veiling and intensity of colour and well prepared and in pretty good condition on the day. Second ribbon went to another good chin from Andrew Lee which had silky fur and was dense, but not so well veiled and dull compared to the winner.

AOC (3): - Three entries won a 1-2-3. A 3rd for Lorraine Prince's Brown Velvet which was blue and clear, but too small to gain a higher ribbon. 1st for a Pink White from Wendy French which was reasonably clear with good strong fine fur and reasonable density. Second, also for a Pink White was Kerry's more peachy chin which was large and blocky but had coarse fur type and a lack of density.

Breeders Award

Congratulations to Kerry Bradburn on winning both the Standard and Mutation breeders awards, and tying with Denise Oaten for the Exhibitors prize – very good indeed. Also congratulations to Denise and Sandy King for success in the Standards, and Andrew Lee and Wendy and Callum

French for success in the Mutations. Many thanks for bringing along your chins...

Finally I would like to thank all the folks who made this the successful show it most definitely was.

From an exhibition perspective, I have to say I left the show a little disappointed. The chins that won did so rightly and their owners should be proud of their results. I do feel that the lack of prime and general lack of condition of the exhibits led to some very nice chins not getting to the top table due to going “over-the-top”; for instance had the show been held six weeks earlier a quite different set of awards would have been evident as condition would not have had such a large effect.

As with all judges I try to be forgiving of condition as it is a temporary and ever-changing characteristic, but it affects so many qualities that it will always have a bearing and I am sorry to say it was considerable given the time of year we hold this event. It was a shame some of the quality animals on display weren't at their best, which made for a mixed bag of awards.

On a more permanent basis I feel I must comment on a particular characteristic not particularly prevalent at this event – that being “Silky, Strong, Stand-up fur quality”. You will see an absence of the word “Silky” in all but a handful of descriptions throughout this article, and that is not because I forgot or left it out. All characteristics are deemed equal when judging chinchillas, this is fact! However, the thing which separates chinchilla from any other rodent is its beautiful fur, and this is what I crave to see when I breed chins, attend events and judge chinchilla shows. A silky texture is obvious and easy to see, it is either there or not. Take a biro or clean stick (back of comb works well), sweep down the chin from head to tail, then back-comb the chin across half its body. Move the chin under lights. Do you see a shine? A uniform shine preferably? It comes from the texture of the fur... It is a good way to see GRADE 1 FUR QUALITY!!!! If you see it, you have it, if you don't, you don't!!

Many thanks for your interest and attendance, and I hope you enjoyed the show!

Richard Crutchley