

Judges Report

National Show April 2019

The National show is always a prestigious event and the show on the 7th of April was no different.

Our members pulled out all the stops and presented me with almost 200 chins to judge. It's been said many times that the end of March/ beginning of April is realistically too late for our animals to be in their best condition, and I can honestly say that less than 10% of the exhibits were in any kind of show condition. This made the show quite a challenge for me to judge, that said, the winners of the group's and classes were very nice chins and certainly deserved what they achieved.

We very swiftly colour phased all the standards and I started as usual with the medium dark young females.

Young Standard Females

Medium dark young females

A good class of 11 animals with the 1st going to Sian Allcoat for a well prepared, nice all-round quality chin with clear colour. The 2nd ribbon was a truly excellent chin from Denise Oaten and initially was quickly put in first place, but on closer inspection I noticed a small piece of fur missing which sadly meant she had to concede 1st place, it is always a shame when this happens. Sian, also got a 3rd in the class and Karly and Craig Donkersley took the 3 HC's. All were very useful young females.

Medium young females

This time a first for Sandy King for a very nice clear young baby with tight fur and although it was maybe a touch short in fur length, it was beautifully prepared and attractive. No 2nd was awarded but there was a 3rd for Karly and Craig, again it with nice clear colour but was more open furred and choppy on the day.

Dark Young Females

The Darks were up next and what a lovely group of chins, all belonging to David and Aileen Blakely. The 1st was a lovely chin, of huge size, extra heavy density and good veiling coverage. Certainly, a high-quality animal but unfortunately she was not only spoilt by lack of condition, but more importantly, she needed to be sharper and brighter. However, when compared with the other 1sts her fur quality and density meant she still had enough to defeat the other class winners to become Best Young Female. The 2nd in the class followed the winner to become Reserve in the section. She actually had the slightly brighter colour but paled on the hips and did not quite have the density of the winner, but still a quality female. David and Aileen took a 3rd and a HC in the class, with Lorraine Prince also awarded a HC. They were all useful chins, struggling for condition.

Extra Dark Young Females

David and Aileen also won a 1st with an extra dark with superb coverage, great density, reasonable shape and size but showing slight tinge under the lights, so it couldn't go further.

Young Standard Males

Medium Dark Young Males

The Medium Darks were up first and provided us with a lovely young male from Paul Spooner. It was what I refer to as a real quality all-rounder, with good size, lovely blocky shape, very nice even coverage, a clear bright colour that showed blueness and strong fur that had been well groomed even though it was not in top condition. However, he was still in better condition than all the other young

standards. This chin went on to win the Best Young Standard Male and Best Young Standard and also the Reserve Standard in show award. Very well done, Paul! No 2nd was awarded in the Medium Dark class but a 3rd for David and Aileen for a chin in decent condition and with good clarity, but open furred. There was a HC from the Donkersley's, which had lovely clear blue colour but was only just 4 months old so was very fluffy and open furred, it needed time and had potential.

Dark Young Males

The Darks were again won by David and Aileen with a young male which I liked very much. It was dark and flashy with eye appeal, having top quality veiling but he was out of condition with some loose dead fur. Nevertheless he still followed up Paul's to take the Reserve Young Standard in show award as his quality couldn't be denied. Well done David, and Aileen!

Extra Dark Young Males

The same herd then gained the 1st ribbon in the extra dark class, again, it was well furred and dense but was in need of a brighter colour. The 2nd from the Donkersley's was blue and bright but at only 4 months of age was open furred and a little fluffy but should look better in a month or two.

Adult females

Medium Adult Darks

The Medium Darks were first up and a massive chin took the 1st ribbon for David and Aileen. It was of huge size, extremely blocky, with long dense fur but very out of condition with a fair amount of loose fur. Denise took 2nd with a very similar chin, big, blocky, bags of fur but very salt and peppery which spoilt the overall appearance. The 3rd from Heather Boncey was again a nice chin with good veiling and strong fur, however, it was slightly pinched in the neck. 4 decent HC's completed this class and these came from Denise, Heather and James Buchan.

Dark Adult Females

The Darks females were won by Sian who also took 2nd ribbon in the class. The 1st was a nice chin, clear colour, silky furred, well veiled and with fair shape and size. The 2nd was in better condition and very well prepared but the fur was open and the veiling paled a little. The 3rd this time was from Denise was a big blocky chin but the fur type was a little coarse and the colour a little steely.

Medium Adult Females

The Medium class was disappointing only producing a 3rd for Andrew Lee.

Extra Dark Adult Females

The single extra dark from James Buchan was a seriously good chin with super sharp colour and clarity, excellent veiling and absolutely loads of eye appeal, she was just about big enough and had acceptable conformation. However, the show condition was very poor, and this sadly limited her progression, even though she was without doubt one of the best chins in the show.

When comparing all the adult girls, I couldn't deny James's female. It would have been a sin for her not to top the group even in the condition she was in, as the other firsts, although in better condition than her, were themselves not in top show condition. David and Aileen's huge Medium Dark took the Reserve Adult female award.

Adult Males

17 adult males were next up and again we kicked off with the medium darks.

Medium Darks Adult Males

No 1st in this class but a 2nd for Sian with a nice chin that had a good level of quality across all the attributes, but sadly had a small piece of fur missing so I had to demote him to a 2nd. 3 very useful HC's completed the group, all lacking show condition but all having some quality. These were bred by James, Andrew and Elisa Snaden.

Dark Adult Males

A large class of 11 dark males were next and produced a lovely chinchilla in top spot. As soon as the animals were put in front of me, he was moved into first place and didn't move. Beautifully prepared, showing himself off wonderfully, a lovely shape with full neck, good size, crisp white belly, clear blue colour, silky strong stand up fur with very good density and perfect veiling coverage. He was certainly in good, although not perfect, show condition. The eye appeal was there and he stood out from the crowd. He went on to win Best Standard in show for Sian, huge congratulations Sian! The 2nd from Denise was also a lovely male, with good size and neck, sharp bright colour but it was light over the hips. The 3rd from Paul was also a good male, superbly veiled, very good density and lovely full neck but slightly down in condition and colour to the 1st and 2nd. Denise and Stephen Helmore took the HC's in this class and my notes say they were all good quality and a useful bunch, so a good class overall.

Extra Dark Adult Males

Two extra darks were awarded a 1st and a 3rd. The 1st from Karly and Craig was an excellent chin, very nice veiling, silky fur, lots of eye appeal but a tad lacking in size, which was made more apparent because the fur was slightly short. However, a lovely chin none the less. The 3rd from James was a decent furred blocky male but badly lacking condition. Karly and Craig's extra dark went on to win the Reserve Best Adult Standard award. Very well done both of you.

We then broke for a superb lunch that was provided by Sian, she really is such a treasure and everybody enjoyed the food, we should all be very grateful to her. She works so hard on the food, sometimes to the detriment of preparing her own exhibits. Thank you so much Sian and anyone who helped on the day in anyway with the kitchen and the catering.

After 45 minutes we started back with the young mutations.

Young Mutations

Sapphires

Three sapphires were first up and I could only award 3 HC's, all for Dave Green. All were a very pleasing blue sapphire colour but had very poor show condition and different lengths of fur growth. One in particular had the making of a nice chin, with very good conformation too.

Beige

Next up were the beiges, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd were from Sandy King and were a promising bunch. All had potential but were not the complete animal on the day. The 1st was the best all-rounder and in good condition, with blocky conformation. The 2nd was very similar with even veiling and a nice colour and the 3rd was the bluest and clearest, but the most choppy and unfinished. The HC from the Donkersley's was very well finished and well-groomed but a bit too down in colour.

Violets

Violets followed and I was a little disappointed. In recent years we've had some lovely young violets at the National but on this occasion I was unable to award a 1st. The 2nd from Andrew Lee was a blocky shape, ok colour and fine fur that lacked strength over the hips and general density. In contrast, the

3rd from Stephen had the density I wanted to see and a sheen that makes you look again, but sadly the colour was muddy.

Brown Velvets

Thankfully a very nice class of Brown Velvets followed with a 1st and Best Young Mutation award going to Kelly Buchan. This young brown had excellent size and conformation, clear blue colour of a medium/dark brown with superb coverage over the hips and in the neck, a lovely crisp belly and fair density with guard hair. Well done Kelly. Denise took 2nd with a very dark chocolate brown of good colour and fair coverage. The fur type was very good but sadly the animal was slightly narrow in shape and small for its age. Dave Green took 3rd for a blocky pale brown of good coverage, with fine fur that was slightly open - a nice animal that had sadly started to oxidise.

Black Velvets

Another good class followed with the Black Velvets and this found our other group winner in the young mutations for the Donkersley's. Their 1st ribbon Black Velvet had lovely sharp colour, was very well veiled and had been prepared very well with dense silky fur. It was a real tight choice between this chin and Kelly's Brown, but on the day the Brown just had that extra sparkle we look for. Well done guys! The 2nd was also from the Donkersley's but was a little pinched in the neck but had lovely dense fine fur. Cameron Holmes took 3rd with a big blocky sharp baby that was lacking in the depth of mutation coverage and needs more time. However, the potential was there. 3 decent HC's completed the group and these were from Sian, Heather and Anna and Gareth Kirk (who came all the way from Northern Ireland to compete at the National). These were all very young animals with potential, that again needed time to develop.

Ebonies

Finally, a very large class of 11 all nearly all extra dark ebonies was presented to me, it was suggested we could split them males and females as there was so many of them and I didn't mind.

First up, was the young males and Denise won the group with a very good extra dark baby, only 4 months old but very blocky and very sharp with good strong fur. The 2nd went to a truly excellent ebony from David and Aileen who had everything including huge size and ultra-blocky shape but under the lights showed orange/red over the tips. The 3rd from Hannah was also very useful, not having quite the conformation or size of the 2nd but not showing a tinge either, it had reasonable colour and fur strength and has potential. Hannah took the remainder of the class with three HC and they all had qualities to commend.

Females ebonies were next and this time the winner came from David and Aileen, Again, an excellent chin, huge size, blocky shape, good strong dense fur but although not tinged, was still quite down in colour, lacking sharpness. The 2nd this time for Denise, was very young and had sharp silky strong fur with every hair shiny black, however, it was small even for 4 months and a little narrow in the neck. A well-deserved 3rd went to Anna and Gareth Kirk, a great achievement in their 1st ever show against such strong competition. Two commendable HC's completed this group from Hannah and the Blakey's.

Any Other Colour (AOC)

We then had 5 animals in the AOC group,

A 1st for Lorraine Prince and her gorgeous ebony angora. It was very well presented with a distinctive mane, strong fur in the centre of the back and clear in colour. Although lacking a little in veiling, the fur was even over the hips. Lorraine also took a 1st for her tan, which had a good sharp clear chocolate colour and strong fur, it was blocky and well prepared but again lacked a little in veiling. Stephen took

a 3rd for an ultra violet that had a strong silky fur, was blocky and of fair colour but was very choppy and out of condition. Another 3rd this time for a LRW from Sian, with decent size and shape, clean condition and well-groomed, but it was uneven in colour and a little too lemony. The last award in the young mutations was a 3rd for Elisa Snaden for her Wilson White Angora that was big and blocky with "clearish" colour, but sadly the fur was not long or strong enough.

Adult Mutations

Wilson Whites

First up was a good class of Wilson whites with the 1st and 2nd being very good. The 1st for Andy Marshall had good enough size and was blocky with a strong fur of truly excellent clarity, a real blue white! Paul's 2nd was another very good White with large size, an exceptional blocky shape, strong fur but the colour although clear, was not as blue and sharp as the 1st. Andy took 3rd with another very good animal with good density and silky fur type, but with just ok colour. The HC's from Denise and Heather were also good chins and at a smaller show would be higher up the ribbons. A good class.

Sullivan Violets

A large class of 8 Sullivan violets was won by Paul Spooner with a very good all round violet. It had a blocky shape, clear colour, adequate size and a crisp white belly, my only negative critique being the fur type was slightly on the course side. The 2nd from Andrew had a "plushier" fur type than the 1st ribbon, but was down in all other departments. Paul and Andrew shared the remainder of the class, with my notes saying they were all useful and a good overall group.

Beige

Beige were next and what a group they turned out to be, all 4 were very good animals! The winner from Denise was exceptional, of superb size and conformation, very tight dense fur, good condition, even veiling with a good clear dark beige colour. This chin turned out to be almost unbeatable and went straight to the top of the mutation tree. Well done Denise! The 2nd from Sandy was big and blocky with a paler colour and even coverage, but the fur wasn't anywhere near the density of the winner and the chin was a little choppy over the hips. The 3rd from Denise was also exceptional and I honestly believe the best of the entire group, it was extra-large in size, had great conformation, heavy fur density and perfect veiling, but sadly it had oxidised so showed tinge under the lights.

Black Velvets

Black Velvets were next and were another good group. I really like the 1st ribbon from James Buchan, a fair sized blocky Black Velvet with exceptional mutation coverage, really black and with good clarity, sadly, the show condition wasn't very good, Andy Marshall's 2nd ribbon was also sharp for colour and in much improved condition, but was nowhere near as well covered and needed to fill out in the neck and shoulders. Three useful HC's made up the remainder of the class, these were bred by Sian, James and Andrew.

Self Blacks/Ebonies

The last complete class was the Ebonies/Self Blacks and this was a very good class. Previously, I have seen other good individual ebonies NCS shows but never before have I seen such a good group of extra dark ebonies at one show. The 1st eventually went to Hannah Mitchell for her very good, blocky, well sized extra dark ebony, with very good density, strong upright fur of excellent sharp clarity. This chin followed up Denise's Beige to become Reserve Best Mutation in show. Well done Hannah! The 2nd in the ebony group went to Denise which was a very close class with the 1st and 2nd being very hard to split. The 2nd ribbon was of fair sized with good conformation and a beautiful silky fur that was very shiny with eye appeal, the coverage wasn't quite as good as the 1st and there was also a

little fur missing low down on one hip. Denise, Hannah and Heather Arnstein took the remaining HC's in the class, all being good entries capable of achieving higher awards at another show.

Finally, a good group of AOC's completed the entries at the show, with some very good chinchillas amongst them.

AOC

A 1st for Sian for her quality Brown Velvet who was a good blocky size, well covered with strong fur but that had sadly just started to oxidise.

Another 1st for Lorraine Prince and her attractive Blue Diamond which was of fair size with a blocky shape, it was a beautiful blue clear colour and had fine tight fur that was perhaps a little short in length.

A 1st for Dave Green and his homo-beige of good shape and size, with fine fur that was slightly open and just starting to oxidise, but it was well prepared and a nice chin.

Cameron Holmes' ultra violet also received a 1st, being of fair shape with nice strong fur that was slightly open, it had been prepared well and had good clear colour with a crisp white belly.

Karly and Craig received yet another 1st with a lovely violet bred beige (a Pearl) with excellent tight fur, good clear colour, a nice size and shape and it had been beautifully prepared.

The final 1st went to Lorraine for her lovely Tan Angora. It had a very good size and neck, nice upright fur and a long mane around the neck area; it was clear in colour being very well-kept and presented. A very attractive chin.

Elisa Snaden was awarded a 2nd for her Pink White which was a good all-round chin, but just a tad too creamy to achieve a 1st. Dave took a 3rd for his PW which was big and blocky but very out of condition and down in colour. A 3rd for Kelly Buchan's Black and White cross which was well furred, had good shape and was well prepared, however, it needed to be bigger and brighter to achieve a higher award. Dave Green presented a Charcoal that received a HC for tight dense fur and a blocky shape, but it was down in colour.

As members who attended the show will know, we now have three special mutation cups/awards which are only presented at the National, the most prestigious show in the NCS calendar. The oldest of these cups is for the Best Sullivan Violet which deservedly went to Paul's adult Sullivan Violet. The Barry Thornton's Best Ebony cup, which is in its 2nd year, went to Hannah's excellent adult ebony and new for this year's show is the John Bradburn Velvet Cup which is awarded in memory of my beloved father. On the day, this new cup was a total surprise to me with it being funded by the generous donations of members who knew him. Thank you, so much. As anyone who knew my father will tell you, he was someone who at shows laughed and joked with everyone and was "all inclusive" - making anyone who walked into the hall feel welcome. He was in fact, a great ambassador for the society. Therefore, the committee decided that any chinchilla that carries the Velvet gene, be it a Black Velvet, Brown Velvet, a Black and White cross, an Ultra-violet etc. should be eligible to win the cup so as many members as possible can compete for it. I am pleased to report that I chose as the first winner of this cup, James Buchan's beautiful adult Black Velvet.

At the end of the show, for the honour of Grand Show Champion, we had an excellent Beige representing the mutations (it really has to be one of the best Beige's I have ever seen) and a lovely

dark standard male with lovely clarity representing the standards. It was incredibly close and honestly could have gone either way, but in the end, I went for the standard. It really was a close decision.

My warmest congratulations go to Sian on winning her first National Show Champion and to Denise for her first Reserve National Show Champion. Well done ladies! It was lovely seeing a very good spread in the ribbons and the breeders awards so well contested. All our Scottish exhibitors had a really good day, as did the folks travelling from down south and from up north, as well as though living in the Midlands.

It will come as no surprise how difficult the day was for me, it being just a matter of days after my father's funeral. However, I took comfort in the knowledge that not only were my family there to support me but the chinchilla community were too. I have already thanked everyone in my last chair report so other than explaining the background of the new cup, I didn't want to make my report about my difficult personal circumstances. I just wanted to focus about the animals and the breeders who won the awards.

Thank you for helping me complete what was still a memorable and enjoyable day. It means a lot.

Thanks for everybody's help and see you all soon.

Kerry NCS senior judge.