

Judges Report – Scottish Region, Biggar, 27th October 2013

Judge: - Kerry Bradburn

The prospect of judging the Scottish show was just the tonic needed to cheer me up after the lovely sunny holiday I had just returned home from and which now seemed a distant memory with all this damp rainy weather. As the weekend approached, we were forecast horrendous storms and I was hoping everything would go smoothly with the show so I could be back on the motorway heading south before the worst of the weather hit. As it turned out the worst weather we experienced on our journey home was around the Lake District (driving reduced to 30 miles per hour) and once we hit the Midlands everything was surprisingly calm. I know folks in the South (and other areas) weren't so lucky and I hope none of our members suffered any damage or problems as a result of the storm.

After travelling up on the Saturday afternoon and staying overnight about 12 miles from the hall, we had a nice, albeit rainy drive to the hall on the Sunday morning. The hall, to the surprise of everyone in attendance had been recently decorated and is just about as good a colour scheme as you could get for chinchilla shows. All the windows had been given brand new blinds which completely blocked out the sun and the wonderful white walls and ceilings were a welcome change from the pinks/oranges/yellows and beiges we normally see in these old buildings.

I'm sure the weather, time of year and I know holidays and work, prevented the attendance of one or two folk from outside the Scottish region who would have liked to support the event. However, the Scottish region is now in a strong position as they can be, and did hold a successful show with just their own members in attendance. We had a couple of brand new exhibitors which is always good to see and all the usual faces were there too. Steven King, who although not having one single animal to show, still made the trip to support the show and was a big help to me on the day. Let's hope your animals have a few surprises in store for you and present some kits for you to show at a later date.

As Always, we kicked off the show with the young females of which we had 5 main show mediums and 3 novice (2 medium dark and 1 medium). Unfortunately this class couldn't produce a 1st but the best in the group was a second from Wenda Christie that was a promising baby with clear colour, even veiling and good conformation. The 3rd from Wendy French was well prepared with a tight fur, blocky, but down in colour to the 2nd. This class also yielded 3 H.C.'s - 2 for David and Aileen Cook and 1 for Wenda.

The novice females from Kristy Mitchell received a 2nd and 3rd for two medium dark s that both showed potential with good quality fur of reasonable colour, but were a little too young at present. Kirsty was also awarded a H.C for her medium female.

The young standard males did prove to be a much better prospect. Four medium darks produced our first -1st of the day for David and Aileen, this boy looks to have potential with plenty of plushy baby fur with long guard hair of good colour and fair confirmation and size. However, he was out of out of condition on the day. The second from Wenda Christie was also a decent male in good prime but down in all departments to the 1st. The class was

completed with 2 reasonable males obtaining H.Cs for James Buchan, both of which were blocky and of fair type but very out of condition on the day.

The dark males were a better group providing the Best Young Standard for David and Aileen. This boy was only just under 7 months and was so much further in development with beautiful strong fur of good length, veiling coming right down the sides, good size and shape and with eye appeal. He was easy pickings for the group awards. The second from Wendy French was also a big blocky male but just down in all departments to the winner. David and Aileen also got the 3rd and H.C. awards for two decent males that could do better as they mature.

The AOC's gave us 2 extra dark males which provided us the Reserve Young Standard award to a male with brighter colour than the winning dark, lovely silky plushy fur, but unfortunately quite narrow in the shoulders and pinched in the neck. The 2nd was blockier and wider in the shoulders but down in colour and overall not as good as the 1st. Both were again from David and Aileen, congrats both on winning the Best and Reserve Best Young Standards awards. James Buchan was awarded 3rd for his medium young male which was blocky with plenty of fur but was a little dull on day.

The novice young males were grouped in an AOC class and yielded a 2nd and a 3rd for Teresa Moir's medium darks. Both were well prepared with plenty of fur but both out of condition and a little small for their age. A novice dark was awarded a 3rd to Kelly Buchan for a baby with lots of fur and blocky shape, but condition meant the fur was breaking everywhere and the colour looked flat. Maybe condition would help. Kirsty Mitchell also received a 3rd for her medium which was a little narrow in the neck but had been well groomed.

The main show adult females only produced one female for James Buchan, I was a little generous and gave a 1st as this was clearly a good quality animal but was badly out of condition with the fur breaking everywhere. I explained that in a large show with heavy competition this female's condition would have most certainly made her slip down the ribbons as you would hope and expect better condition exhibits of similar quality to be present. However, as she was the only one exhibited it was fair to point out I could see enough to award her the ribbon that her quality deserved.

Three adult novice medium females produced a 3rd for Teresa for a well prepared female of fair size and shape, and a H.C for Jean Beardshaw that was also of good size and shape but further out of prime, both had clear belly and bars and were worth using.

We had 6 main show adult males that were split 4 darks and 2 extra darks. The darks were an interesting group as they were all small for adult males but all displayed some good quality attributes. The best from Wenda was only just an adult and unsurprisingly was in the best prime of the class - blocky confirmation, good density and clear colour with a plushy fur type completed the picture. The 2nd from David and Aileen was of silkier fur type with good veiling but was narrow in the shoulders and down in colour to the 1st. Two H.C.'s completed the group from Wenda and James but both were badly out of condition.

The 2 extra darks were next up and on seeing them I instantly knew these were the two best Standards I had seen on the day. Unfortunately the pattern was followed in that yet again

these two boys were lacking show condition. However, their qualities could not be denied. The 1st (and eventual GSC) from James although lacking in prime, displayed that wonderful bright colour with the blue haze that I sadly hadn't seen so far that day. He had deep defined tipping and long silky guard hair, was of good size, a blocky shape and dense. His fur would break up when he moved but he still had that eye appeal that makes you look again. The second and Reserve Best from David and Aileen was also a quality male with a slightly tighter finer fur type with very good veiling, slightly better condition and again good density, but sadly didn't have the sharp clarity or blueness of the winner but a very worthy runner up.

Six novice adult males were entered with an ex-dark for Teresa receiving a 3rd for good dense fur and even veiling but needing better size, confirmation and clarity to do better. Teresa also received a H.C. for her dark male. Jean Beardshaw was awarded two H.C.'s for good sized blocky chins that were clearly well loved pets, and had been bought along to help Jean in her introduction to showing chinchillas. I do hope you enjoyed it Jean and was pleased to be going home with some well deserved ribbons. The star of the novice Standards would have to go to Kirsty Mitchel for her 1st ribbon, a large, extremely blocky, well furred dense boy who's slight drop in clarity and lack of tipping in the shoulders just prevented him from going any further. With the correct partner this is a very useful male! The second to this was also a fair male but down in all departments to the 1st. Well done Kirsty!

We then broke for a 45 minute lunch for a hot dog and some of Wendy French's lovely chicken broth with crusty bread -yum yum.

We resumed with the young main show mutations which were all classed as AOC'S. Two Wilson Whites produced a 1st and Reserve Young Mutation for James. This chin was big, blocky with plenty of strong but open fur. I would have liked to have seen this animal with sharper clarity of colour as although it was clear, it did lack sparkle. The 2nd from Wendy was immaculately presented with a denser fur type but was a little small for the age and certainly a little creamy. Two pink whites achieved a 2nd and 3rd for Wendy with the better having clear pleasing colour of fair size and confirmation but lacking density with the fur having quite bent tips. The 3rd very similar in most respects except the colour certainly had a hint of a tint about it. Two nice beiges also from Wendy were awarded a 1st and 2nd with the 1st being the best condition animal of the whole show and presented in immaculate form, the fur was tight and dense and the confirmation was good. Unfortunately, the animal was just starting to display the start of oxidisation over the tips which stopped it going above the Best Young Mutation award which it deserved on the day. The 2nd beige was also a decent example but just down in all departments to the winner. I awarded a 1st to a single Self Black that was a good example of its type being well furred, blocky and well covered, unfortunately, it showed a drop in clarity from David and Aileen.

Novice mutations yielded a 2nd and 3rd for Teresa's Wilson Whites, the better of the two had good size and shape with plenty of well groomed strong fur that unfortunately was too creamy to be awarded a 1st. The 3rd was a young animal which you could see had the influence of a violet breeding. The colour although pleasant, again lacked the sharp clarity required and gave more of a light steely colour rather than the blue hue we so desire. Breeding these animals although interesting and rewarding on many levels, is very hard

work and this baby suffered from the typical characteristics of both violets and whites where the fur lacked strength and was rather open. As with all of Teresa's exhibits these two were very well presented on the day. Jean Beardshaw was awarded a H.C for her little Black Velvet that needed much improved coverage of mutant fur but was a good shape.

The Adult Mutations were few in numbers but did provide the eventual Best Mutation and Reserve GSC for James. A single Black Velvet which was a good solid example, but again like 95 percent of the exhibits on the day, show condition was lacking. However, size, confirmation, density and superb mutation coverage couldn't be denied. It was such a shame that the lack of finish prevented it from shining like it should however, it still had enough quality to thoroughly deserve its award on the day. A class of 3 violets produced a 1st for Trevor Pugsley who only arrived in the nick of time after car trouble! This 1st ribbon was a clear bluish colour with good white belly fur of even veiling and fine dense fur, I would have liked to have seen it bigger and blockier. The 2nd from Wenda was big and blocky with plenty of dense fur but had sadly oxidised. The same comments applied to Trevor's 3rd that was a big, blocky and dense furred chin that was badly out of prime and again had oxidised. Two Wilson Whites produced a big blocky 2nd ribbon for Wendy that had plenty of fur and had been prepared well, but was down in clarity and a little dull on the day. Wenda's Wilson White was awarded a H.C and had fair clarity of colour and shape but had fur slipped on the back end and was very uneven and choppy.

We rounded off the show with the Novice Adult Mutations. A 3rd was awarded to a new exhibitor Louise Gormley for her violet which was blocky with a reasonable volume of fur, and Jean's violet received a H.C for good shape that was struggling for show condition. The star of the novice mutations was undoubtedly Teresa's Self Black who would certainly be described as a dark rather than extra dark (every hair black). This chin was large, extremely blocky, had very good density, strong fur of correct length, good clear colour and was presented in top form. Had this chinchilla had every hair shiny black it would have certainly pushed hard for higher awards, a very good chinchilla and useful breeding tool!

When judging for best at the end of the show, it was obvious that both Best and Reserve Standards and Best and Reserve Mutations were very good chinchillas and were easy pickings even though all but one was lacking in finish. The Standard had deteriorated a little during the show but still had enough to defeat the Black Velvet because of his very good blue colour and sharp clarity, which made him stand out.

My congratulations to all who exhibited and won awards. I tried to be fair and take into account that nearly all the exhibits were badly affected by this damp weather the whole country has been suffering from. Well done James on bringing both the GSC and Reserve and well-done to David and Aileen on winning the Standard Breeders awards- 1st prize. Congrats to Wendy for winning the Mutation Breeders Award -1st prize and to everyone else who picked up a Breeders Award, very well done. Thanks for inviting me and making me so welcome.

Kerry Bradburn senior NCS Judge.