

Judges Report – Birdwell Show, September 25th 2017

Judge – Kerry Bradburn Jones

Where does time go? It only seems like a few weeks since I was writing the National Show report. The first show of the 17/18 season was hosted by the North region at Birdwell. I love the first show of the season, it's always a hive of excitement and anticipation of the season ahead. Everyone enjoys meeting up to share stories of the spring/summer and the arrival of kits, all this makes the first show a real occasion and this show was no exception, living up to all the excitement and more.

The number of entries was very good and this is both pleasing for the NCS and chinchillas in the UK. Anyone who was in attendance on the day will tell you that more chairs had to be added because we had so many visitors and many first-time visitors, the hall was literally full of folk chatting chins. Absolutely great.

Now down to business.....

After swiftly colour phasing all the Standards my JUI for the day Heather Boncey and I pushed on with the judging.

As usual, the first class of the day was the young m/dark females of which there were 4 nice exhibits. The first ribbon went to Jean Beardshaw for her very good all-round chinchilla, excellent size and shape with a fine fur type, good coverage and blue colour, perhaps a touch open furred but only a youngster with plenty of potential. She went on to win the group. The 2nd from Karly and Craig Donkersley was also a nice chin and in fact a touch bluer, but the fur was more open and she was priming over the flanks. Again, lots of potential and it couldn't be denied the Reserve Group award. The 3rd and HC for the Donkersley's and Andrew Lee were both decent entries with the Donkersley's 3rd again showing blueness and Andrews HC being dense but down in colour.

The Medium colour phase bought a 1st ribbon for Paul Spooner with good clear colour, tight fur and reasonable conformation. A drop down then to 3rd from the Donkersley's for a clear chin with fine fur that was a little open and short. It was slightly small for the age. HC' in this class went to Lorraine Prince and Karly and Craig.

The darks were next and I awarded a 2nd to a lovely young female from Denise Oaten. This was a very nice female, that was blue with plushy fur and good density. Unfortunately, she was just too small for her age, such a shame as this would have been a contender for the group prize, perhaps she'll catch up. The HC in this group was blocky and well covered but the fur was course.

Two novice young females from Heather Arnstein gained a 2nd and 3rd. Both decent females that were very well presented in clean condition and had been well groomed. The 2nd had good conformation and size with a fine fur but lacking sparkle. The 3rd was also blocky but priming quite badly so again although fine furred, it lacked eye appeal.

Moving on to the medium dark young males

The 1st went to Paul Spooner for a chin I liked very much, good size, blocky with clear blue colour and very deep tipping to the fur, the animal was a long-furred type and high quality, it just needed better show condition to really progress and the fur was slightly open. Nevertheless, he couldn't be denied the reserve group prize and the reserve best young std award. Well done. The 2nd also from

Paul had the tighter fur type and reasonable colour but condition and conformation needed improvement. A real baby with good fur for Andrew Lee gained a 3rd and has some potential if he develops well.

The mediums were a disappointment and could only produce 2 x HC's.

Thankfully the darks were much better and brought forward our best standard of the day. This young male from Sian Allcoat was very nice, good size and shape with lovely blue sharp colour, plenty of silky guard hair, good density and beautifully presented. My only real critique was the slight paling over the hips with a faint priming line, this boy has loads of potential and oozed quality. Very well-done Sian. The 3rd from Paul was dense and well furred but very out of condition and down in colour on the day. A single HC completed the class.

A single extra dark from Sian gained a 1st and was again a very high-quality chin, good coverage, lots of eye appeal and very good density, but slightly small and very out of condition being very loose and choppy over the hips and I would have liked it to be a little fuller in the shoulders.

We then moved on to the adult females and as usual started off with the medium darks. The 1st and Best adult female was a good solid chin belonging to Denise Oaten, it had large size, blocky conformation plushy fur of good length with clear colour and was in good show condition. No 2nd but a 3rd also from Denise which was an excellent chin of very nice colour but had no show condition with salt and pepper appearance all over. A HC from Andrew completed this class.

We had a medium class of 1 and no awards were given, the darks proved to be better and I awarded another 1st for Denise for her chin that was of good quality but very out of prime. I advised the 1st was generously given as it was clearly a good animal behind the poor finish. A 3rd for Andrew had reasonable plushy fur but was quite narrow in the shoulders.

Extra darks proved better for Andrew as he produced the 1st ribbon and reserve adult female section winner. This was a high-quality female with plushy dense fur of reasonable colour and good veiling, but it could be blockier in the neck and shoulders.

We then moved on to the adult males, first up was the darks. Sian came out on top with a 1st for her chin that had good fur of clear colour, good density but was very out of condition and did well to get away with the first because of the finish. A drop then to a 3rd for Denise that was of good size, white belly and average in all other departments.

The extra darks were a good class with Karly and Craig coming out on top and producing the section winner, plus the reserve best standard in show. Their adult male, had good conformation and excellent veiling coverage, good clear colour and fine silky fur, he was a little small for an adult but was generally a lovely chin. Denise took 2nd, 3rd and HC in this class with some solid chins, they were just edged out by the eye appeal of the winner. Although her 2nd matched him in colour and density he was still slightly small and a trifle narrow in the shoulders but still good enough on the day to be the reserve section winner. Well done all of you.....

After a truly superb lunch provided and cooked by Sandy King with a hot and cold selection that even included a whole cooked salmon and beautiful puddings supplied by Heather Arnstein, her mum Jane and Cameron Holmes, all attendees were in for a real treat, we had so many folks in attendance that at one-point Sandy was concerned that she wouldn't have enough food for all the unexpected visitors but she need not have worried as we had plenty to go around.

We recommenced with the young mutations, kicking off with the Wilson whites.

A good class of 6 all received awards with Sian's 1st being the best overall with plenty of potential, plushy baby fur, bright colour and strong fur with guard hair, a nice baby. A 2nd from Karly and Craig had slightly tighter fur and improved density but not the clarity or eye appeal of the winner. The 3rd from Paul was also plushy furred with guard hair but just behind the winners in all other departments. HC's for Jean, Dave Green and Andrew completed a good class.

Beiges were next and this class provided our show champion for the day. The first ribbon and eventual GSC was put to the top immediately as a clear standout winner, huge size on a massive conformation, long dense plushy fur with very good veiling and a rich deep, dark, clear beige colour. It was presented in immaculate order and in top condition on the day with a lovely white belly, it couldn't be denied top spot. Very well done, Denise.

Violets produced a 1st for Paul Spooner, good clear rich violet colour with contrasting white belly, silky fine fur of fair density and conformation, it needed improved condition to go further. Andrew took 2nd and 2 HC's, his 2nd had better conformation than the winner but the fur was quite soft and choppy, the colour was clear and sharp. Maybe, a cold snap will help improve the coat condition.

Black Velvets were an interesting group, I gave a 1st, 2nd and 3rd and my notes say they were all so close and all appeared very young babies so all needing more time to develop. Andrew came out on top with his example being slightly better covered and blockier through the neck and shoulders but maybe not quite the clarity of Lorraine's 2nd and 3rd that both needed to develop their mutant coverage and fill out.

A class of charcoals sadly weren't given any awards, the main reason being oxidisation and very poor show condition, some sadly had bits of fur missing.

We then had a large AOC group. A 2nd for a tan from Lorraine that was a good well furred example, good even coverage and well prepared but showing slight signs of tinge over the tips preventing a 1st. A 2nd for a sapphire from Jean that had good tight slightly short fur, the colour was clear but not showing blueness being a little steely in appearance but a good attempt. A 3rd and HC for 2 brown velvets from Andrew Lee, both were fairly well covered and both displayed typical slightly course fur often seen with this mutation, sadly although young, they had both started to oxidise. A 2nd for Jean's beautiful true blue "blue diamond" the clarity of these Jean is producing are exceptional and better than I've seen in this mutation here and abroad. However, they are still lacking some of the important fundamentals such as size, shape, fur length and it's preventing them going further, keep trying Jean.

A 2nd for a pink white from Paul that had good plushy fur, nice shape and was well prepared but just a little too peachy, the 3rd from Andrew was similar but just further down in clarity of colour. A 1st for a very nice homo beige from Denise, large size and excellent conformation with a tight fine silky fur of good clarity that became reserve young mutation. Dave Green took 2nd for a blocky dense furred homo beige that had been well prepared but didn't have the clarity and fur type of the winner. Dave also took 1st with his "homo brown velvet" large size, blocky shape and good density with a clear very pale colour completed the picture.

Finally, Jean took 2nd with the first angora to be shown on British soil, much to the delight of everyone. These very attractive balls of fluff still need much work from a show point of view, this example, as expected had good size and conformation, with the long fur boosting these qualities, fur type was slightly course and the colour was a little flat and steely but these are the first we have seen and I found out later this one contained ebony which would explain the muddy tummy. I look

forward to see these as Jean and any other prospective breeders work to improve them, they certainly have the cute factor.

We had one novice young mutation entry from Kayleigh and Jay Pearson, a Lowe Recessive White that had good fine dense fur of decent size and conformation, a clean white belly and was very well presented. Unfortunately, this example showed lemon tinge under the lights.

Finally, we started on the adult mutations, all of which were in an AOC class.

A 1st for a very nice Wilson white for Denise, good size and conformation in top class condition and groomed to perfection, it had good colour being a clear white that was quite sharp under the lights, it went on at a stroll to become best adult mutation. A 2nd for Sian's pink white that had lovely plushy fur, was immaculately presented but was too peachy to receive a 1st. Another 2nd for Sian's brown velvet that had reasonable size and shape plus good coverage but had sadly started to oxidise. A 2nd for Denise's beige that was an excellent chin that had gone over and was clearly past its best, showing tinge. A 3rd for a black velvet from Sian that was good size, blocky well covered but a matt black missing sparkle and being choppy over the hips. A 1st for Denise's self black, a very useful all-round example that had good coverage, almost every hair black, was blocky with good strong fur that was dense. It became reserve best adult mutation. Jean took HC for a good coloured self black that was small and necky.

Finally, a 3rd for another Angora from Jean, this one had very good size and blocky conformation but the fur was choppy and gave an uneven appearance even in the centre of the back, this one also needed better clarity of colour. I know Jean will put some work into improving these and I look forward to seeing them.

2 Novice HCs completed our show for first time exhibitor Miss Daniel, a self black and Wilson white. Both had good shape and plenty of weighty (well fed) size but I explained both were some way off what we look for in a quality show chin, however, they were in good clean condition, had been given a little groom and with their size and shape. I felt this warranted a HC for Miss Daniels at her first ever show. Congratulations.

In conclusion, a great day was had by all, the ribbons were reasonably well spread and the top animals were very good indeed. My warmest congratulations to all the winners on the day, well done Denise and Sian for taking top honours but plenty of good ribbons for Karly and Craig, Jean, Paul, Andrew, Dave, Lorraine and our novices Kayleigh, Heather and Miss Daniels. Nice to see the breeders awards well spread too. The two top animals from Denise and Sian were a delight and I'm sure on a different day the result could reverse, both of you should be very pleased.

I'd like to thank everyone who had a hand in running the show, the food was superb Sandy and well done, Andy Marshall on your first stewarding appointment, you did great. A big thanks to Barry who stepped in to registrar this show for us and show Kayleigh the ropes, Paul kept everything running smoothly and it was a happy good spirited show, which is exactly what we want.

Finally, I'd like to thank my JUI Heather Boncey, who drove 3 hours to my house then rattled mine and my dad's head off for 2 hours up to the show and then did exactly the same coming home (ha-ha, he-he). Considering the long hard day, she kept her concentration and even commented on a couple of classes, which she hadn't done before, well done Heather..... now keep it up!!!

Kerry Bradburn Jones
Senior judge