

Show Report – Scottish Show, Biggar, 26th Oct 2014

Judge: - Richard Crutchley JUI:- Chris Galt

The morning of the 26th brought an extra hour in bed as the clocks went backwards for the coming winter. Our start on the road involved picking up Chris Galt, my JUI for the day (and Chris' first appointment in the role) at Preston before pressing on to Scotland. The weather was mixed but our journey uneventful and we arrived in good time to see all attendees busily grooming their chins. Over 50 entries were present, with 49 exhibits in the main and novice sections, and we started the show by colour phasing all of the Standards. I did take time to set the scene for Chris, given this was his first time behind the show bench as JUI, and so apologies if the show dragged for some of you.

The first class of the day brought three Dark Young Standard Females, all exhibited by David Blakey and Aileen Cook. The first ribbon winner and eventual Best In Show had eye appeal, silky strong stand up fur quality, good density and good size with fair conformation. She was not in top condition, slightly open over the hips but had nice sharp white belly fur. Overall a good chin and a deserving overall winner on the day. Second ribbon went to a chin which again followed the first all the way to Reserve Best In Show. This girl was slightly clearer in colour to the first, and again with a blueness. She had strong but not so silky fur type and fair density, but was again not in tip top show condition, not finished over the hips. Third ribbon went to a large and blocky chin with strong fur type which could have been denser, but main issue was a creamy belly and drop in clarity of colour. Well done to David & Aileen for gaining the top awards on the day, and both from the very first class!

The next colour phase was a singleton Medium Dark from James Buchan. This chin won a 2nd ribbon and was blue, had strong fur but was rather open in density and again was not finished over the hips, priming just in front of them and looking quite open in this area – time will certainly help with this!

The final colour phase was a class of four Medium chins, exhibited by Teresa Moir in the Novice section. No first ribbon but a second for a very young baby just over 4 months which was clear and blue, with strong fur in the centre of the back but soft baby fur around the sides, hips and around the rump. This will improve as the more mature fur grows in. Two HC's for chins of fairly good size and shape, but a definite drop in clarity of colour to the 2nd winner.

In the Young Standard Males, four main show and two novice entries gave me 5 classes! The group of two were Extra-Darks in the main show. Second ribbon went to an otherwise excellent chinchilla – silky fur, dense, well veiled, big and blocky, eye appeal, but sadly markedly off colour. Third ribbon went to a chin with good size, heavy density but only fair conformation, needing a little more in the shoulders and neck. Clarity was better with a white belly colour but condition and conformation holding it back.

One Dark chin in the main show from Wendy French was clear and bluish, with strong fur in the centre of the back, but again priming and loose around the hips with that salt and pepper appearance – again time will help this youngster improve. A third ribbon for Wendy's Medium Dark was given for a fair sized youngster with nice conformation, clearish colour but no eye appeal. Condition was similar to the 2nd in the Darks – just not finished on the day. Two novice entries yielded a 2nd for a Dark youngster exhibited by Teresa Moir which had eye appeal with good veiling coverage, good density but out of condition and narrow through the shoulders. Sadly no firsts awarded in the young males class, particularly as the best of the extra-darks was as said, an otherwise excellent chin with a single significant fault.

The Adult Standard females were three in number. Two darks in the main show gave a 2nd and 3rd for David & Aileen, and James Buchan respectively. The 2nd was extra large and blocky with good density and strong fur, but again dull in clarity and also condition cost it a 1st with no finish (veiling) over the hips and very much out of condition on the day. The 3rd was a brighter chin, although still down on what we would desire

from clarity perspective. Silky fur on this chin but more open density and again out of condition. The Medium Dark Novice entry from Teresa was big with reasonable veiling coverage, but was dull i clarity and needed more bulk in the shoulders and neck.

The Adult Standard males numbered three, again three different colour phases. just one chin of real note, a 2nd ribbon for the extra dark of David & Aileen. This boy was large, blocky, had dense silky fur, excellent veiling coverage and good all round condition and presentation, sadly spoilt by off colour tinge and creamy belly. I was very sorry not to give this chin (and the young male too) a higher award but we really must take account of off colour and judge in line with the Guide to Quality Chinchillas (GTQC). This was a learning point as I thought it common knowledge that if a chin has a “grade 4” in any characteristic as listed in the inside cover (grading sheet) of the GTQC then no 1st (or special award) should be given...

A lovely lunch followed and I tucked into hot dogs and soup which went down a treat!

Into the afternoon and the Young Mutations brought the following classes. In the main show, three Self Blacks gave a 2nd, 3rd and HC ribbons for David & Aileen. The 2nd ribbon was of very good size and conformation, fine dense fur, but not quite intense enough or well veiled colour to gain a 1st. 3rd and HC chins were dark and extra-dark in colour, intensity and veiling but did not have the fur qualities or clarity of the 2nd ribbon winner. A single Beige from Wendy French made up the main show AOC class and this was awarded a 2nd ribbon, all round nice chin being of fair size, nice and blocky, clear in colour but no blueness or eye appeal, and not in top show condition.

The Novice youngsters gave a class of five Sullivan Violets, all from Jean Beardshaw. The 1st ribbon winner, although very young, was clear and blue, had eye appeal and strong fur of fair density in the centre of the back. It was very well prepared with a lovely sharp white belly colour.

This chin went on to become Reserve Best Young Mutation and Reserve Best Mutation – very well done!

No second but a third ribbon for a clearish violet which was blocky and of fair size, again with strong fur but no eye appeal or blueness compared to the winner. Three HC's for deserving chins all with something commendable about them, although clarity was down on these compared to the winner. The next class was a group of three Ultra Violets, the 1st ribbon winner again being very similar to the young violet, blue, clear, lovely white sharp belly colour, and strong fine fur in the centre of the back. This eye-catching chin pipped the Violet into Best Young Mutation and Best Mutation positions – very nice indeed. These two winners did not compete for Best In Show and reserve awards as they were barely 4 months old and had baby fur over hips, but they certainly should improve in time and I look forward to seeing how they develop.

The final Young Mutation class was an AOC consisting of two Wilson Whites, a Pink White and a Black Velvet. The Wilson Whites exhibited by Teresa Moir were good and won 3rd and HC ribbons, just watch the clarity of colour and density here... The Pink White gained a HC for Kelly Buchan as it was again peachy in colour, a little small with soft fur over the hips. Best in this group was the Black again from Kelly which was big and blocky, had dense fine fur, but its intensity of colour and veiling coverage were not black enough or spread enough for its age, costing it a 1st.

The Adult Mutations gave me three colour phases;

Main show Black Velvets numbered four, all from James Buchan. It looked like all these chins had gone over the top, with loose fur lying across them which I attempted to remove with a gentle shake but to no avail. The 3rd ribbon was small for an adult but very blocky conformation, long fur, out of condition over the hips but good intensity of colour. The HC's all had merit but were either down in clarity of colour, fading to grey a little too much or having a coarser fur type – all spoilt temporarily through condition. The Main show AOC class gave a 1st for a very large, blocky Sullivan Violet from David & Aileen. This chin had a full neck, fine dense fur, a white belly and some eye appeal, and although not in top

condition became Best Adult Mutation. A 2nd for a Pink White for Wendy French which was good all round, but had slightly coarse and open fur and a little peachy. Also a 2nd for Wendy's Beige which had very similar comments to the Pink White.

The final class were the Any Other Colour Novice Adult Mutations, numbering five chins. The best of these was a Pink White exhibited by Teresa Moir, winning a 1st and Reserve Best Adult Mutation. This chin was big and blocky, had fine dense fur, was well prepared, in good condition, but a little peachy (some peachiness is allowed). 2nd for a Beige for Kate Smith which was very big and blocky, past its best on the day and certainly has been a good chin on earlier days... also a 2nd for a Black Velvet for Teresa Moir which was good all round but fading to grey and not as bright as it could have been for a 1st.

I do like to give special note to the winners of the breeders awards, so very well done to David & Aileen for 1st Standard and 2nd mutation Breeders Awards, and to James Buchan and Wendy French for a tied 2nd place Standard breeders award.

Huge congratulations to Jean Beardshaw for 1st Mutation Breeders award – quite a feat given your chins were in the Novice Section and only get points for special awards – excellent and I do look forward to seeing your chins again over coming shows. Again strong performances for Wendy French gaining third mutation breeders award – excellent. I should also congratulate Chris Galt who made a strong start to his JUI training.

It was my pleasure to judge the show and a delight that Jean Beardshaw came along with her chins and exhibited so well. I hope the awards (or lack of them) in the Standard groups didn't upset too many, but I do need to be fair. Some lovely chins with just one or two significant faults which if you can correct you will do an awful lot better in the future – I guess that is part of the art of breeding successfully. Thanks to all those who helped stage the show – a very well run event and good luck to everyone for the future.

Richard Crutchley