

Judges Report (Kerry Jones) Birdwell – 27th September

This was the first show back after what seemed like an age, because of the cancelling of the National at the end of last season due to COVID19. We had all really hoped that by the time the new season started it would be somewhat of a distant memory. Sadly, this of course was not the case and the saga continues with so many questions left unanswered.

My first address for this show must go to the North region and in particular Sandy. She put in many hours of work to ensure the show could legally and safely go ahead. I know Sandy would also want me to mention Sian our brilliant national committee editor who worked with Sandy on these procedures to ensure we could safely hold the event and then on the day, all of the north region committee and members who worked hard to make sure the event went seamlessly.

I must also thank Jayne who shut herself away in the kitchen and served through a hatch, the lovely chilli Heather had made so we didn't have any close contact in the kitchen, but weren't left hungry.

Of course we had to reduce numbers who could attend and in the end we had 9 exhibitors bringing approximately 60 plus animals and only 15 people in the hall in total. It felt so strange with everyone spread out and masks covering their faces, but you know me, I still cracked a few jokes and we managed to have a few giggles and as nice a day as possible under the circumstances.

Hopefully this will be a good example of how we can hold shows safely and within guidelines if allowed. Yes, it will be limited numbers and of course some people will not want to attend until all this is over and that's ok too, but at least limited numbers we know it can be done, with less risk than visiting the supermarket.

Now on to the animals.

Only 2 std females and both classed as medium dark were awarded a 1st and 2nd, so both automatically became Best and Reserve Young Females for Denise Oaten. The 1st had clear strong fur, with a silky tip, blocky in the neck but needing to prime through, the 2nd was a reasonable chin but down in all departments to the winner.

We had one Novice Young Female awarded a 3rd for Joanne Rycroft, she had good fine fur, had been well prepared but needed better veiling and size to be awarded a higher place.

Medium Dark Young Males gave us 4 entries with Denise again coming out in 1st place, for a blocky, fine furred well-groomed chin with decent colour. The 2nd from Andrew was a little brighter than the 1st and with more eye appeal, but he was small and narrow. The 3rd from Sian was sadly very small for its age and very salt and peppery but it was bright and had eye appeal. Andrew Lee's HC was large and blocky but sadly, weak furred.

The Dark Young males provided us with the Best Young Standard and eventual Reserve Best Standard show awards. A really sharp bright and blue baby with good conformation and acceptable size, sadly he wasn't quite primed through fully, but couldn't be denied for Sian Allcoat. This baby has lots of potential, well done Sian.

Sian also took the 2nd award and Reserve Young Std award for B36 who had silky fur and was clear bright colour but just failed slightly in veiling on the hips and was not as sharp as the winner. Denise this time took 3rd for a bigger blockier baby but with open fur on the hips and not as bright in colour.

We had one Novice std male again, for Joanne Rycroft. It was awarded a 2nd ribbon, with very blocky shape, good size, fine fur and ok colour. It just needed better veiling over the hips and in the neck to achieve a higher award. Again, this chin had been well prepared.

We had 6 Adult std females, 3 Medium Darks gave us a good well contested class, all good chins and all could change place on a different day. Denise took 1st and 3rd with Sian in second place. The 1st had the best veiling coverage, good size, full neck, fine fur and good colour plus was in the best condition on the day. The second had a longer silkier fur of good colour but was very choppy over the shoulders, and the 3rd was shorter in fur and a little hippy, but the colour was pleasing.

We then had 1 x Dark adult female and 1 x Extra Dark. The dark and eventual Best Standard and Grand Show Champion went to Denise's Dark, this really was a lovely chin. She had long strong fur on a massive conformation, wonderful fur length through the neck and in the centre of the back and very even veiling coverage, good colour and in top condition on the day, very well done Denise,

Sian took the 1st Extra Dark that followed the big Dark to become the Reserve Best Adult Female and Reserve Adult Standard in show. This animal was quite the opposite of the Dark winner, this chin was incredibly dark, sharp and flashy but with a much shorter fur type, it did not have the size nor neck of the winner, but had bags of eye appeal. We found out at the end of the show this was a black pearl carrying standard, well done Sian.

One novice adult female for Joanne was awarded a HC, she was a little small and narrow and the condition wasn't there but she'd been well groomed and had fine fur.

Adult Males gave us 4 entries split between Medium Dark and Dark.

The m/dark gave us a 2nd for Denise that was clearly a reasonably good chin with some quality but very out of condition on the day. Heather Arnstein took a 3rd (welcome to the main bench Heather), her chin was of reasonable fur strength and shape, with fair colour.

The Dark class produced the Best and Reserve in section for Sian, her male was of sharp bright colour, very silky fine fur but light on the hips and sadly, out of condition on the day. Hopefully, there will be better days for this chin as he was very nice, the Reserve to him was also a good all round chin, again lacking in condition and not having quite the eye appeal of the winner.

We carried on to the Wilson White young mutation class as we were early for lunch. This was a good class and all the chins were reasonably nice, the first for Sian was a nice Persil white, blocky, strong fur with std guard hair but out of condition on the shoulders. The 2nd from Denise was well prepared and had eye appeal with fine dense fur but sadly a little down in colour, the 3rd from Sian was again similar to this, blocky, excellent dense fur but further down the creamy scale. The HC from Denise was a clear white (no cream) but sadly quite dull, no flash on the day and open furred, you will have to see if this one improves. The final HC from Andrew was a pretty dapple coloured Wilson white, sadly the animal lacked size and conformation and the white patches were creamy, but the fur was fine and strong.

We then broke for a lunch and a social distancing chat lol. Thanks again to Jayne for playing host and dish washer.

Next were the Violets, 4 of them gave us a good well contested quality class. The 1st was a beauty, Ok for size, correct conformation, clear blue colour and stunning fine silky dense fur with sheen, this chin had a real bushy tail that constantly pushed into the fur on the back and the fur was incredibly resilient, bouncing straight back, very impressive. So much so, this chin went all the way to Best Mutation and Reserve Show Champion for Cameron Holmes, this being his very first champion. Well done Cam! The 2nd from Sandy was also a nice violet with good colour and clarity, but a more open and slightly course type of fur. The 3rd and HC were both nice Violets too, that on another day could have achieved a little higher ribbon, both clear in colour and of good type for Cameron and Andrew respectively.

We then had several AOC colours, 2 x Ultras violets provided us with the group Young Mutation Reserve winner again for Cameron. This chin had stunning blue colour, sharp clarity, good shape, acceptable size and well prepared, but the fur was open and slightly course, Cameron also took the 2nd with an animal of good shape and size, finer furred but not the colour of the winner,

A 3rd ribbon Violet wrap was shown by Heather A and was of good size, blocky, beautifully prepared with a silky fur; but sadly, wasn't quite fully wrapped (showing a muddy white belly) and was not as clear as I would like and lacked sparkle.

Next up a baby Brown Velvet achieved a 1st ribbon for Sandy and has lots of future potential, a nice sharp clear colour, fine fur, good shape and the veiling developing nicely.

Denise was awarded a 1st ribbon for a Beige with blocky shape, good size, density and strong fur, the colour was ok but I would have liked it a little sharper.

Two Black Velvets were presented by Andrew Lee. The 2nd ribbon was of good conformation, quite sharp for colour, reasonable coverage but sadly very choppy and out of condition. The H.C had the better coverage and was again blocky, but sadly the fur was lying flat in the centre of the back. It was said to me after the show that it may have got wet which was a shame. I'm sure next time will see an improvement on its results, if that was the case.

A single Self Black shown by Heather A received a 3rd ribbon. This animal was sadly small and slightly too narrow, which was a shame because the colour was clear and the fur fine and strong.

Finally, in the main show Cameron presented a Pearl (Beige/Violet) a nice teddy bear type with clear colour and blocky shape, but the chin lacked eye appeal and the course open fur prevented it from getting a 1st.

Joanne (one of our newest members) showed some of her own bred youngsters from this season and I want to congratulate her for having a go, it's lovely to see your own work pick up awards. Two ebonies were awarded a 2nd and 3rd, both were nice shape and the fur was fairly strong, sadly both were out of condition but had been well groomed. The darker one was almost every hair black and had the better colour, but both lacked eye appeal on the day. The 2nd was a little open furred and the 3rd lacked veiling over the hips.

A decent 3rd ribbon Beige had good strong fur, complete veiling but was very out of condition and had started to oxidize and the final offering was a real baby Black Velvet, only just old enough to show, with good fur type and fair neck, but hardly any mutation coverage at this point.

We then moved on to the Adult Mutations.

All were classified as AOC. We started off with a large Black and White Cross from Sandy, an excellent chin that I had judged before, real extreme markings, gorgeous dense fur, but he was brought along today to help with numbers and wasn't quite in top shape. This boy I found out later, has now produced his own off spring so acquitted himself well and yet again confirmed how well Sandy keeps her breeding animals. I look forward to seeing his kits, he deserved his 1st on the day.

Two LRW's from Denise achieved 1st and 3rd. The 1st was the best one I have judged, big, blocky and bags of fine dense fur, champagne colour that I would have liked a little more even in patternation but a very nice example. The 3rd was also very large and blocky but the fur type was more open, the veiling broken and it showed slight tinge across the tips.

A cracking Sullivan Violet from Heather A achieved a well-deserved 1st ribbon. A very large blocky, well furred chin of good colour and well presented. You could see it was past its best, but it is a real quality chin,

Another 1st for Denise, this time for a quality large, very dense furred beige with even veiling coverage, full neck, and good colour although it just perhaps had a hint that it was starting to oxidize. However, a lovely chin that deserved the Reserve Adult Mutation award.

The last main show exhibit was a Black Velvet from Sandy, that went on to win the Best Adult Mutation and the Reserve Mutation in show awards. This chin was of large enough size, blocky, well covered over the flanks and in the neck, it was dense and a good clear colour. I would have liked it to of had a bit more flash, but it was a lovely chin nonetheless.

I had 2 chins from first time exhibitor Anya that she had purchased some time ago. The white/violet cross was awarded a H.C and Anya very kindly came up to the front whilst I showed her the difference between much cuddled pets and animals prepared for show. Hopefully she enjoyed the show (I have been told she did very much) and that she will look to maybe purchase a nice breeding pair and start off with her own babies (fingers crossed). The last chins were 2 from Novice exhibitor Andy Marshall, a Black and White Cross that without hesitation deserved a 1st. It had OK size, was blocky with good clarity and strong fur, it was immaculately presented. His lovely Black Velvet also received a comfortable 1st, lovely sharp colour, good coverage, just about big enough with a fair neck and nice coverage. This chin went on and was awarded the judges choice novice award, well done again Andy, you're doing very well.

Finally, it was time to judge the Best in Show award, it was honestly a comfortable victory for the Standard who won with something to spare, well done Denise. Sian's very good Reserve baby standard had all the flash required for a Reserve GSC but sadly its condition wasn't great and it really showed at the end, so another day another dollar for that chin. Cameron's Violet had all the finish and x factor needed on the day to shine its way into taking the Reserve Show Champion award with that amazing silky strong fur, well done Cameron on your first Reserve Show Champion. Hopefully many more to come.

Well done to all the award winners and all who took part. Although the chins weren't in great condition, the group winners were all top chins and were of high quality, many of the other 1sts/2nds will look better after some consistent cold weather.

The show went off without a hitch and everyone seemed to enjoy the day even with all the tiresome restrictions. Thank you so much for inviting me and thanks to North Region for all your hard work and paving the way for what shows are likely to look like for some time ahead, if we continue to be able to hold them.

Kerry Jones (Senior Judge)