

Show Results – Northern Region Show, *Bilsborrow 10th March 2013*

Judge: - Georgie Busher

It was quite an adventure travelling up to Bilsborrow to judge the North Region Show, but I had been recommended an amusing hotel and had a good journey up, so I enjoyed myself. I arrived at the hall, and was impressed with the light and space it offered, it was ideal for a show with plenty of spare room for grooming and a good sized kitchen, and it was nice to meet up with friends, especially those from Scotland, on arrival. Entries were a bit limited, I think because the date was within two weeks of that of the National, but there were some good quality chins in evidence.

After colour phasing all the young standards I started with the Medium Young Standard females, of which there were three. The first was a good well-furred animal, blocky with strong fur. It went on to take Reserve Young Standard female. There was no second, but a third went to another good-sized chin which was not so clear and was out of condition and lighter over the hips.. There was also a Highly Commended, just, for an animal which did not have the fur strength and was priming.

These were followed by two Medium Darks. The first ribbon went to a very nice chin, with good strong fur and even fur length and clear colour, and a third went to a much smaller animal which had potential. The sole dark chin also got a first ribbon as it was a very well covered and big chin, but had more open fur and was a bit light on the hips. The first Medium Dark took Best Young Female, so congratulations to Richard and Eddie, these two awards got them off to a good start. There were no Novice Young Standard Females.

We then went on to the Young Standard Males. The Medium was not up to the previous class but got a Highly Commended for Chris Galt. It lacked the desirable fur strength and was not in prime. Two Medium-Darks produced a first and a second for Sandy King. The first was a really big animal, blocky with nice fur quality and full side coverage, and great eye appeal. The second was a very good size with excellent conformation and good fur strength.

The Crutchleys showed one Dark animal, which gained a second ribbon, it was small, but had good potential. Sandy's two went on to take Best and Reserve Young Standard, so very well done.

There were four Novice Young Males in this Group. There was a second ribbon for a Medium Dark with good conformation and strong upright fur which was not entirely developed, and an HC for a rather narrow animal which was out of condition.

Of the two Darks, one got a second ribbon also, it had softer fur which needed strength, but had reasonable colour and coverage, and there was an HC for a chin which was priming but a fair size with reasonable fur, which will improve. All four belonged to Kirsty Mitchell, if you bred the two seconds yourself you are coming along well.

We then moved on to the Adult Standard females, the largest class of the day.

The class of six Mediums produced a first for Rich and Eddie's very big animal, with well developed fur and coverage. She became Reserve Adult Standard animal. There was also a third, and two HCs for Galt, the third was not very clear in colour compared with the first, and the HCs had good quality fur and were a good size, but light and priming over the hips which spoilt their appearance overall.

There were four Medium Dark Adult Females, two from Crutchley and two from Mills. The first ribbon winner, the eventual show champion, was a very good chin indeed, with strong upright fur, excellent even coverage, and very good density. She was also a good clear colour. A nice animal. The second, belonging to Mills was also a big animal, with very good conformation, but she was priming

just in front of her hips and had uneven fur over her rump. Her colour was not as good as the first. The HC had good size and conformation but the fur was breaking at the shoulder and she was light on the hips. Well done the Crutchleys for getting first and Reserve Adult Standard Female.

There were only four Adult Standard Males, two Medium Darks, a Dark and an Extra Dark. The first Medium Dark could have been bigger, but it had good strong silky fur, and sharp white belly fur, good colour and coverage, and bags of eye appeal. The Dark had strong fur, good coverage and nice conformation and size. The Extra Dark could almost have been mistaken for a Black Velvet, especially in the centre of its back and on its face. It had lovely strong silky fur and reasonable coverage. The Medium Dark was Best Adult Standard Male and the Mills' Dark was reserve.

After a good lunch (lovely sponge cake!) I used the respite occasioned by the North Region's AGM to check over the animals again and verify my comments. Any judge will tell you that writing coherent comments as you go along is difficult and you spend a lot of time later glaring at your laptop and your notes trying to decipher what you really, really meant.

So we then moved on to the Young Mutations. I started with an AOC class of one Brown Velvet and two Beiges. The Brown Velvet is a lovely big teddy bear of an animal, with a delicate shade of brown colouring coming right down its sides, and good strong guard hair so there is no weakness in the fur. It deservedly won a first ribbon, though it is beginning to go over a bit, and I hope it keeps in good condition for the National. It became Reserve Best Young Mutation, and Reserve Mutation. There was a really cracking Beige from Sandy, beautifully prepared, lovely colour, and excellent fur quality and finish. There was also a much darker Beige, but it appeared to have a line in the grotzen area of its back under the lights, which was sad because it is a good chin. The trouble is one has to judge them as one sees them on the day.

Then there were three Black Velvets. The first was great, not very big, but with good conformation and beautiful fur quality, and deep blue-black colour, definitely one for the judge to take home. It became Best Young Mutation, Best Mutation and Reserve Show Champion. The second animal was bigger, but the mutation fur did not cover the body so well, and the fur was of coarser type.

There were three Self-Blacks. The first was very nice, with good tight fur, good size, and very good coverage and colour. The second was smaller, had a good depth of colour but not quite such good coverage as the first, and was I thinking rather young. The third had looser fur but good colour, and needed the coverage to improve.

The Adult Mutations had fourteen entries. I started with a class of Wilson Whites, where I awarded a second and a HC. The second was a big animal, quite good for colour if a little creamy, and I wasn't convinced by the clarity of the standard patches, but it has plenty of fur which was reasonably strong. The HC was the silver type of colour, with a lot of fur and well prepared but really lacked blueness and sparkle.

There were four Adult Beiges, to which I awarded a first and a third. The first was a great big animal, with good strong fur with the coverage coming right down the sides, and a nice blue colour to it. It went on to become Reserve Mutation. The third was darker, with good fur quality, but narrow in the shoulders.

There was quite a big AOC class. I awarded a first and a second to two Pink-Whites. The first was a lovely big animal with a lot of fur, perhaps marginally on the soft side, and quite a good colour. The second was down on colour and smaller than the first, but still had plenty of fur, weak over the hips. I gave a second to a Brown Velvet, which was rather darker in colour than the youngsters, and a third to a Self Black which was small for an adult, had good coverage, but did not have the required depth of colour.

Finally there was a class of Black Velvets, from which I got my Best Adult Mutation. Sandy's first ribbon winner was a really good quality chinchilla with good size and coverage and very nice fur and blue-black colour. The third animal was duller in colour and didn't have the density of the first.

It then came to judging for the Show Champion and there was no denying Rich and Eddie's excellent Medium Dark Adult Standard Female, big, blue and blocky, a real star. But the little Young Black Velvet ran her pretty close, and could well turn the tables when it is older and more mature.

My overall impression of the show was that there are some very good animals about, though some of them have started to prime again due to the recent cold weather, and some have a lot of loose fur still to get rid of. I spent quite a bit of time trying to blow it off the tops of their backs. Also, if you're going to the National, make sure your cages aren't moulting; there were a lot of silver specks on the chins, along with the fur! Having said that, almost all the animals were beautifully prepared, and were a pleasure to judge.

Thank you very much to Rich for managing, Barry for keeping the score, Sandy and her helpers for stewarding and the cooks for a good lunch. It was a great day out. I had a good journey back and got home by nine o'clock, I was touched that someone rang to make sure I had got home safely. And one final note, the late afternoon sun shining on the snow covered slopes of the Parbolds as I drove home was quite beautiful. Thank you for having me.

Georgie Busher – NCS Senior Judge