

Judges Report – North Region Show, Birdwell 3rd October 2021

Judge – Siân Allcoat; JUI Hannah Whiteley

Foreword by Siân

Well, how great it was to go to a show after so long? It was fabulous to see so many new enthusiastic exhibitors as well as all the familiar faces (including James and Kelly who drove all the way down from Scotland, so deserve a special mention). A great big thank you to everyone who brought their animals along to help support the show. There is no doubt that some of the chinchillas would have got better awards had they been exhibited at a younger age, but this was not possible because of COVID restrictions. Many suffered because of being in poor show condition, however, it was heart-warming to see that everyone at the show appears to have brought along everything they could in order to make this first show of the season a success. Your dedication and enthusiasm are very much appreciated! Also, I need to say thank you and well done to Hannah who was my JUI for the day. While as the judge the final decisions was always mine, Hannah as a JUI coming towards the end of her training, did an excellent job including commentating on a number of the classes, hence saving my voice! In the main, Hannah has written the judges report that follows, although I have adjusted and added comments where I feel appropriate. As soon as she qualifies, I am sure Hannah will be a valuable addition to the NCS's small team of judges.

Judges Report: -

North Region Show 3/10/21

After what feels like an eternity (over 18 months), it was lovely to be back at a Chinchilla show having missed the 2 shows that managed to go ahead last season. I arrived to find a full car park and plenty of people in the hall – both exhibitors and new faces who had come along to watch.

Young Females (A)

Medium Darks

Unfortunately, there were no full classes of 3 animals in the Young Standard Females, so we started with an AOC of 2 Medium Darks. The first ribbon winner from Andrew Lee had clear colour, the fur type was strong, dense and silky in the centre of the back. However, some baby fur was present on the hips, but it was well prepared and presented in good condition. Sadly, the second animal in the class from Kelly Buchan was significantly held back by its condition and could only be awarded a Highly Commended.

Novice Medium Darks

We then moved on to 2 Novice Medium Darks. Andy Marshall received a 1st ribbon for his 4-month-old baby which had nice strong stand-up fur, clear colour and well-developed veiling. This animal went on to win Reserve Young Standard Female and the Judges Choice Novice Award - well done Andy! Another novice entry from Joanne Rycroft was awarded a 3rd ribbon, having reasonable fur density and clarity, however, condition was sadly lacking meaning it could not be awarded the second.

Mediums

In the main bench Mediums, there were again 2 animals, both from Andrew Lee. The 2nd ribbon winner had good conformation and size and was very well presented; however, the fur was quite open and in places bent slightly at the tips. Andrew's second entry in this class was awarded a Highly Commended, this animal had similarly open fur, the conformation was a little wedgy and unfortunately the animal was very out of condition.

Darks

Andrew Lees' dark female was awarded a 1st ribbon and went on to win the Best Young Standard Female and subsequently Reserve Young Standard. She had beautiful strong silky fur, clear blue colour and a lovely bright white belly. It was presented in top show condition and expertly prepared – well done Andrew!

Extra Dark

A single Extra Dark from Kelly Buchan was awarded a first ribbon. It had strong silky fur, reasonable clarity, size and conformation but sadly, its condition held it back from advancing further when compared to the other first ribbon winners in the Young Standard female category.

B – Young Standard Males

Medium Dark

Again, no full classes of three in the young males, so we started with the Medium Darks. This resulted in a 1st for Denise Oaten. The chinchilla was large and blocky with silky strong dense fur, it had good clarity of colour and a striking white belly. This male went on to win Best Young Standard Male, Best Young Standard, Best Standard and eventually Grand Show Champion. Congratulations Denise for this stunning youngster – I look forward to seeing how he grows on as an adult. Second to this was again from Denise, but it was a little narrower and down on condition compared to the 1st ribbon winner. Nevertheless, it had strong fur and good clarity which meant it went on to become Reserve Young Standard Male.

Medium

A single Medium from Andrew was awarded a second, this animal had reasonable clarity of colour but

lacked blueness and sparkle, the fur was strong in the centre of the back but it had open baby fur over the hips, which will hopefully improve with age.

#### Dark

Just one Dark and this was from Heather Arnstein and was awarded a 3rd. The animal had reasonable colour and strong fur in the centre of the back, was slightly narrow in the neck and like many of the chinchillas at the show, it unfortunately was out of condition.

#### C – Adult Females

##### Dark

We kicked off the adult females with a class of 6 Darks. The first ribbon went to Denise Oaten for a chinchilla which was of exceptional size and incredibly blocky, the colour was reasonable although it could have been sharper - this female went on to receive Reserve Adult Standard Female. The second went to James Buchan and although it was clearer than the first ribbon winner and had better fur strength, it was out of condition on the day and also could have been a little blockier. Third in the class was Kelly Buchan's female which also suffered from poor condition, nevertheless, it had reasonable clarity, size and conformation. Three Highly Commended were awarded to animals with differing strengths and weaknesses. The two from Andrew Lee suffered from being somewhat casty in colour, whilst James' HC while being much bluer in colour than the other two, was again out of condition and on the small side for an adult.

##### Medium Darks

Two medium Darks gave another 1st for Denise, this animal was clear of colour and excellently prepared, with strong fur in the centre of the back although a little weak over the hips. The second to this from Andrew, had excellent size and conformation with reasonable colour, and although out of condition, clearly time had been taken to present it as well as possible on the day.

##### Extra darks

A class of 2 Extra Darks resulted in a 1st for Denise for a female with strong silky fur, reasonable clarity and excellent size and blocky conformation. This female went on to win Best Adult Standard Female, Best Adult Standard, Reserve Standard and Reserve Grand Show Champion – well done Denise on another beautiful Standard! The second to this from Kelly Buchan had sharp and clear standard fur, but the belly colour was slightly down and the animal was once more lacking condition.

#### Novice AOC

In the novice section of the Adult Standard Females, we had two Medium Darks and a Medium – all from Anita Parrott. In the Medium Darks, a 2nd was awarded to a female with good size and conformation that was sadly out of condition, with the fur appearing a little long and breaking over the hips. A Highly Commended went to a smaller female who was a little narrow and slightly casty. Anita's Medium female was awarded a 1st, being very well presented with good size and conformation, although the veiling coverage over the hips could have been better.

#### D – Adult Standard Males

##### Medium Darks

There was a disappointing lack of adult males on the day, which may reflect the time lapse since the last show, as many will not have had a luxury of keeping adult males in large quantities. We were presented with just 4 animals all Medium Darks – 2 main bench and 2 novice. The 1st ribbon winner from the main bench entries went on to win the Best Adult Standard Male and Reserve Adult Standard. This male was from Denise and had lovely long silky fur which appeared just slightly weak over the hips, which could be attributed to its length. This animal had been very well groomed but the belly colour was slightly down, possibly due to cage stain. A 3rd was awarded to James's male which was very sharp in colour, however, it lacked veiling coverage and had soft open fur over the hips.

##### Novice Medium Darks

Two Novice Adult Males, both from Anita, resulted in a 3rd for a male with reasonable size and conformation, however, the animal was lacking veiling coverage over the hips and it was badly out of condition. Anita was also awarded a Highly Commended for her other male who was small for an adult and appeared to have quite short fur, which was very choppy over the hips. Despite this, Anita had done a good job with preparation to present him in the best possible manner.

#### Purchased Standards

We finished the Standards with a purchased Adult Standard Male from new member Connor Mason.

This animal was awarded a 3rd and was incredibly well presented on the day – if you groomed this yourself Connor, you are off to an excellent start! The animal had a very long plushy fur which was quite open, with very little veiling coverage and unfortunately, it was also small in size for an adult. We later found out this was a Blue Diamond carrier, which may explain some of this.

#### E – Young Mutations

##### Black Velvets

We started the mutations after lunch with a class of young Black Velvets. The 1st ribbon winner from Heather Arnstein was a sharp intense black with good veiling coverage in the neck, although some improvement was needed in the coverage over the hips, although this will likely come with age. Its fur

was strong and silky and it went on to win Best Young Mutation and Best Mutation in show – congratulations Heather! Second to this from Sandy King, was clear of colour but lacked the intensity of blue black fur that the first ribbon winner had, it had reasonable size and conformation for its age, but the fur was a little open over the hips. The 3rd ribbon winner, again from Sandy, was very similar to the 2nd, however, there was a slight drop in clarity of colour between the two. The two Velvets from Sandy were literally a few days over the 4 months mark and as was said on the day and as Sandy will know, it is extremely difficult for Black Velvets of that age to be able to successfully compete. They were definitely “ones to put away” to see how they grow on and develop, but thank you Sandy for taking them to Birdwell to support the show.

#### Self-Blacks

A class of 4 Self-Blacks was colour phased resulting in 3 Extra Darks and one Medium. The Extra Darks all from Heather, had the same DOB so are likely to be from the same litter, although they differed in their merits. The first ribbon winner had the best balance of qualities, having strong silky fur and reasonable conformation however, it was a little small for its ages and not as clear in colour as the second ribbon winner. The 2nd ribbon winner had the best colour of the 3, but was really too small and had some weakness of fur over the hips. The chinchilla that came in third had the best size of the 3, but unfortunately the colour was more chocolatey rather than the desirable blue black and again, the fur was weak over the hips. The Medium Ebony from Andrew Lee was awarded a Highly Commended. This animal was very much in the lightest phase of the ebony spectrum, with the belly being more off white rather than a wrap of colour, still, the fur was strong in the centre back albeit weak over the hips. It was also quite wedgy in conformation.

#### AOC

In the young mutations, there was a group of 5 AOCs on the main bench. A first was given to James's Beige which was clear in colour and of reasonable size and conformation for a youngster, but it did show some baby fur over the hips. Nonetheless, this animal went on to win Reserve Young Mutation and Reserve Mutation in show – well done to James! Two Homo Beiges again from James, were awarded a 2nd and a 3rd. The second ribbon winner was of acceptable colour and had silky fur although it was a bit choppy over the hips. The 3rd was very similar but was significantly down on clarity of colour compared to the 2nd place animal. A Wilson White from Andrew Lees was awarded a 3rd, it was of reasonable size assuming an age of around 5-6 months old and had reasonable colour although not quite the “Persil” white we like to see. However, this animal was also held back by traces of a very small swirl of twisted fur in the centre of the back. A Pink White from James was of good size and conformation, reasonable clarity of colour and a stronger silkier fur type than is usually seen on Pink Whites, thus it was deserving of a 1st.

#### Novice AOC

A pair of Novice Sullivan Violets from Joanne were awarded 2nd and 3rd ribbons. The 2nd ribbon winner had reasonable colour but lacked blueness and sheen and was small for its age, although it did have reasonable conformation. The 3rd ribbon was very similar in appearance to the 2nd, but there was a slight drop in clarity. We then had a Black Pearl from a relatively new exhibitor and member of the NCS, Gemma Halliday. Her chin was awarded a 2nd ribbon, it was of decent size and conformation and had the lovely sharp black colour typical of Black Pearls. The 1st was withheld purely because the intense black faded just where it met the lovely white belly and with the Pearls, we are looking for complete black coverage right down to the belly line. Nevertheless, Gemma should be extremely happy with what she has achieved, so very well done.

#### F – Adult Mutations

##### Black Velvet

A class of 3 Black Velvets, resulted in a second for Kelly for an animal which had good veiling coverage, good size and conformation, silky stand-up fur and clear colour. Sadly, it was out of condition on the day with some signs of cage stain on the belly, hence why it was not awarded a 1st. A 3rd ribbon was given to Sandy King's 9-year-old Black Velvet that was in remarkable condition for its age. This animal had good, strong, silky fur and good veiling coverage, but was a little small and narrow. It certainly takes some incredible skill to present an animal of that age in that show condition! A Highly Commended was awarded to Heather for her Black Velvet which was small for an adult and appeared somewhat tinged in colour, however, it did have dense silky fur and had been prepared well.

##### Novice Black Velvet

In the Novice section, a Black Velvet from Joanne achieved a 2nd, being of reasonable size and conformation however, the intense blue-black colour we look for in this mutation was unfortunately somewhat lacking.

##### AOC- Main Bench

A Wilson White from Denise was awarded a 2nd having clear colour and a reasonable size but the fur was sadly choppy and open over the hips and, the conformation could have been better. The 3rd to this, also from Denise, had stronger, denser fur along with good size and conformation but it was quite yellow in the centre of the back.

A 2nd ribbon winning Beige from James had reasonable size and colour, showing very little oxidisation, however, it was narrow in conformation and out of condition thereby, stopping it getting a 1st. A Homo Beige, again from James, also got a 2nd. It had excellent size and a blocky conformation with nice strong dense fur, it was very well prepared but was down on colour, holding it back from a first ribbon. A Lowe recessive White from Denise received a Highly Commended, whilst this animal was of good size and conformation, it was very off colour. This mutation is relatively new to the show bench and can present in varying shades, from off white to "Champagne". However, this animal had a significant yellowy tone which could have partly been down to age and oxidisation.

Two self-blacks once more from Denise, were awarded a 1st ribbon and 2nd ribbon. The 1st went on to win Best Adult Mutation, it was sharp black in colour with silky fur but was priming on the hips quite significantly, it was also quite narrow in the neck and on the small size for an adult. The 2nd to this, which automatically took the Reserve Best Adult Mutation award, was bigger with better conformation, but it was down in colour in comparison to the 1st ribbon winner and had soft fur over the hips.

#### Novice AOC

A Beige in the Novice Adult mutations earned a 2nd for Joanne. This animal had strong silky fur and good size and conformation. Unfortunately, the cancelling of most of the shows last season, probably robbed Joanne of the opportunity of achieving a 1st with this animal, because it had sadly started to oxidise by the time this Birdwell show was held. A Wilson White from Andy was also awarded a 2nd. It had good size and conformation and strong silky fur and was well presented, but was yellowish in the centre of the back preventing it from gaining a first. Finally, an Ultra Violet once more from Joanne, was given a 3rd – this animal had very strong fur which sadly was quite coarse in texture and somewhat down in colour, it was also on the small size for an adult.

Thank you to the North Region for an enjoyable return to the show season and for having me along as JUI and a special thank you to Sian for her excellent tuition and support. Congratulations to all the winners on the day and I hope to see many of the exhibitors new and old again soon!

Hannah