

Judges Report – West Midlands and Wales Show

Calf Heath February 1st 2026

Judge: Sian Allcoat

Unfortunately, a few of the expected attendees were unable to attend on the day due to medical conditions but despite this, we had a reasonable size show with just under 50 animals. There were some lovely chins at the show, but it is fair to say that with all the extended periods of damp (wet) weather we have had in the past few months, many of the animals struggled badly for condition.

As usual, we kicked off the day with the young standard females, which was a class of three mediums. It was close between the top two animals, both being good overall chins with Stephen Helmore just pipping Denise Oaten for top spot on the basis his animal was in the better condition. This animal wasn't quite 5 months old so it will be interesting to see how it develops in the coming months.

The young standard males consisted of 7 chins in 3 different colour phases. These produced three firsts, one for Stephen and 2 for Andrew Lee. Andrew's Dark 1st ribbon winner was of good size and conformation, with a nice fur type but this lost out to Stephen's first in the medium colour phase and his own first in the medium dark class; with Stephen being awarded the Best Young Standard Male with a good overall chin not showing any significant weaknesses and Andrew the Reserve.

On judging for Best and Reserve Young Standards, congratulations go to Stephen for winning Best Young Standard with his female A25 and Reserve Best Young Standard with his male B32.

We then moved onto the judging of the 6 adult standards, the adults being of a general higher standard than the youngsters. In fact, the adults produced our Best and Reserve Standards with the Best Standard going onto win Grand Show Champion for Denisewell done to her. Denise's Medium Dark, the eventual show winner, was first to be judged. A lovely big blocky chin, with good colour and fur type that had been well prepared and this came ahead of Andrews 1st ribbon winner in the dark colour phase when judging for Best and Reserve Adult Standard. Andrew's chinchilla was a nice breeding quality female but could not beat Denise's which was the better in almost all aspects.

The Adult Standard males produced two firsts and a second. Again a first for Denise for an extra dark male which was not in top condition, it could have been a bit larger but had good colour. This was unable to take spot in the Adult Standard Male category from

Thomas Jones in the Novice class whose first ribbon winner was a big, blocky well furred animal of good blue colour. Big congratulations go to Thomas who is in the early stages of his showing career for not only getting Best Adult Standard male, but also Reserve Best Standard against Denise's adult female who eventually became the show winner.

We quickly moved onto the young mutations which just one full class, which was Beige. A nice class it was too. The winner of this class, produced by Denise, was the best of the bunch in all aspects. It had a lovely fur type being more silky than course, good colour (with no signs of oxidation) and an overall excellent Beige. The second in the class, again from Denise, was not in such good show condition and didn't have the clarity of colour of the 1st ribbon animal. The 3rd and two HC's for Stephen although basically good chins, were really struggling for show condition with the fur being choppy and the 2 HC's starting to oxidise (the curse of the Beige chinchilla!).

There was then 11 AOC's. A first and a third for Wilson Whites from Denise and Andrew respectively. Denise's first was a heavily furred animal with lots of dark guard hairs but it could have been brighter and clearer in colour, so did not get any further on the day. I awarded a 1st and 2nd to Stephen and Andrew for their Sullivan Violets. Stephen's 1st had better fur strength while Andrews had better colour, but the fur was so soft it couldn't take top spot. There were two Lowe Recessive Whites which rendered a 1st and a HC. Denise's first had very good density and fur strength, probably the best I have seen on this mutation and hence the first ribbon, albeit I would have liked it be a bit clearer in colour.

There were 3 further 1st for Andrew with a lovely coloured Black pearl, a TOV Pearl and a Pink White. The Pink White had good fur strength and was clear in colour and was good enough to become Reserve Best Young Mutation behind Denise's very good Beige.

We then moved onto the adult mutations. There was a class of 5 Beige, with Denise's first being best in all aspects. It was well prepared with a lovely silky type fur, not the biggest of animals (but big enough) and great clarity of colour/blueness to the fur. An extremely good Beige that was in top condition and not only good enough to easily win Best Mutation (ahead of Denise's young Beige), but also Reserve Grand Show Champion. Unfortunately, the other animals in the class although they had qualities, were struggling with condition on the day.

We then had a class of 4 Self Blacks (Ebony) which were all in the dark/extra dark category. Again, in this class it was a first for Denise for a large chin with excellent density and the only one in the class that had a sheen to its fur. The others in the class did not compare in terms of fur strength and were again struggling for condition. Denise's Self Black although not in top show condition was overall good enough to get awarded Reserve Adult Mutation.

Stephen brought to the show a Black Velvet that was four and a half years old. Despite its age, it was good enough to be awarded a 1st ribbon. The coverage was good, the belly clean and the colour reasonably intense although it could have shown more blueness (which could be down to age).

We had one P (purchased) class animal in the show which was from Cody Ma-Sloan. This was a very good Black Pearl which had the lovely bright intense blue colour of the Black Pearls, a lovely white belly, excellent fur density and strength and decent size and conformation.... Something which is often difficult to achieve in the males (which this was). This was awarded an easy 1st. Since it was in the P class and was not owner bred, it could go no further in the show, which is pity for Cody since while it would not have beaten Denise's Beige, it was good enough to take Reserve Best Adult Mutation.

Thank you to everyone who attended, I enjoyed the day. A special mention goes to Andrew who had his first ever MacDonalds burger at lunchtime! It appeared that is an experience he will remember well (the jury is out on how he rated it, underwhelming I think would be a fit assessment). It is a pity that the weather has been so dire here in the UK for the chinchillas (wet and damp), so here's hoping for a crisp dry spell prior to the National show in mid March!

Sian Allcoat

NCS Senior Judge