
Woolgathering

Official Newsletter of the Selkirk Rex Bred Club, a CFA Affiliated Club

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Another Year, Another Show!

By *Donna Bass*

Those of you who weren't able to attend the International this year in Anaheim missed a good (mostly) show. We had from 6-9 Selkirks in each ring, to mostly good comments. Nancy had a long hair red (a Socrates son, of course) and a short hair black who I thought had the best type of any of the cats (head & body, coat was okay - of course I could be prejudiced; his mommy is my Bon Bon); Cecelia and Larry Baum had a long hair red boy (another Socrates son) who was very curly; Lorraine Shelton had two long hair reds and a long hair white, all of whom had nice curly long coats; and I had two colorpoint short hairs (boy and girl) and a short hair red neutered male.

Three of the judges applauded our "consistency" and each selected a different couple of cats for their "best" and "second best". Wayne Trevathan liked Lorraine's older red male and Nancy's red boy. Pam DelaBar liked Nancy's black boy and my little girl. Don Williams liked Celia and Larry's red male and Nancy's red boy. The other judges either didn't comment or mentioned other "problems" (in a couple of cases - phantom problems).

We all had several people asking about our cats and if I had had 6 of my little girl (Woolibaar Woolma Rudolph), I could have sold her for as much as I wanted. I had a couple of people from Japan who wanted her *right now* to go to Japan. They had to have her! However, since I have sent just about every single breeding female I have ever raised or owned off to someone else, she is the only curly female (besides her mommy) that I have. I only have one breeding curly male (Tequila Sunrise) and since he is a son of Woolma's mom, he's hopefully going to be going to

someone else's house. If not, he will be neutered.

So, I did not sell Woolma. I may repeat the breeding. If so, then I may have some like her to sell. Until then, all I have to sell are straighthairs!

It was fun talking to Nancy again and meeting Cecelia & Larry. They also raise American Curls.

There were moments of joy and appreciation, in addition to moments of disgust and annoyance when the cats were being judged. Overall, I'm glad I went and I'm going to do my best to make it to Atlanta for next year's Invitational. I hope others of you can make it too!

Start making plans for February 1 & 2, 1997 in San Francisco, CA - Board Meeting!!!

Selkirk Rex Breed Club Officers

President:	Lorraine Shelton
Vice President:	Pam Sharp
Secretary:	Donna Bass
Treasurer:	Carolyn Koval
Directors:	Sandy Babcock Kathy Hummer Nancy McMullen

Consistency

by Donna Bass (comments below do not reflect the views of the members of this club)

After listening to second hand reports (along with one or two first hand experiences) that judges are saying our cats are not consistent I feel compelled to make a few comments myself about the word "Consistent".

1. We are not getting consistent comments on consistency. Whose opinion are we supposed to listen to? Three of the members of the Board judged the Selkirks at the International; all three said they liked the consistency of the cats we were showing. The other three either said they weren't consistent or said nothing. Given my druthers, I'd rather listen to DelaBar, Trevathan and Williams than Sumner, Adkison and Dickerson.

2. None of the judges who have mentioned consistency problems have stated where they think we are inconsistent: with other Selkirks (difficult if it is the only one and they are remembering a cat they saw three or four years ago) or with the standard or *with their interpretation of the standard*. I mention this because one of the judges at the Int'l said he wanted to see a Selkirk with a long flowing coat dripping with curls. Another seemed to think the look should be more Persian! Maybe they haven't read our proposed standard. Maybe they are still reading our old standard. Maybe they're just making it up as they go along!

3. The CFA Board has been adamant in the past about the philosophy that the judges should not be deciding what a particular breed should look like. By making consistency an issue, they are, in essence, saying the judges don't like what we are showing and they want us to change the look. Every cat we showed at the International met the proposed standard. If they think the standard is too loose, they should say so!!

4. One sure way of making sure we have "consistency" is to have a good official standard. Currently, the only official standard that CFA has for Selkirks is the original one Jeri submitted in 1992, you know, the one that describes everything from bad

Persians to bad Maine Coons. However, until we get into Provisional status, our "official" standard is that original standard. Our "proposed" standards are just that. Proposed. Anybody could walk into a showhall with any standard, claim that it is the new "proposed" standard and it could be just as accepted as our club's proposed standard.

There are some people showing at CFA shows who are not members of this club. God knows what they are using for a standard, if any. A judge suggested that we should contact these people and make sure they know what we are proposing for a standard. However, as you may be aware in your other breed, there are those who choose to ignore standards even in accepted breeds. They get politely (or not so politely) laughed out of the ring and that's the end of it. The incident is not used as an excuse to condemn a whole breed of cats!

With Selkirks, the whole breed is condemned as inconsistent because someone is either using the old standard or chooses to ignore standards entirely. It could even be that there are those out there who are trying to sabotage our efforts with CFA (speculation only - I have heard nothing to indicate that someone is doing this, so don't jump to any conclusions!) by showing inconsistent cats deliberately.

5. The remarks about consistency have only come up in the last year or so, since it became politically incorrect to put the cats down with "Bradshaw says they are a Wirehair". I am probably way off base with this, but I get the feeling sometimes that since judges can't use the Bradshaw excuse to deny Selkirks, they are jumping on the inconsistency bandwagon as a way to sooth Bradshaw's feelings without getting reprimanded by CFA. I am beginning to feel that even if we had twenty identical Selkirks in a show hall, the judges would find some "inconsistency" about them, and use that to say the breed does not deserve recognition.

6. There are three distinct head types in Abyssinians. Has anyone ever said they were not consistent? There are many different looks in Scottish

Folds, American Curls, Siamese, even Persians and Exotics, yet no one has ever said these breeds were inconsistent. They were just different “looks”. Each cattery has a different “look” to its cats and with some breeds you can tell where a cat comes from by its “look”. Does that make them inconsistent?

At a show in December, one of the judges handled my little tortie point and white female kitten. She seemed to like her, and Woolma was her usual playful purring self. When I looked at her report the next day, she had said the cat was not easy to handle and was not in good condition. The judge had probably just automatically marked “no” on every question, probably without reading the questions. How do we combat these responses? Once the judge turns the reports in to the Master Clerk, they are official and cannot be changed, even by the judge. And so there is one more false mark against the breed, for no good reason.

As these false negative reports keep coming in, I ask myself, “Does CFA deserve to have Selkirks as a breed?” Perhaps it is time to reconsider whether CFA should even have the opportunity to evaluate the breed, since it appears more and more that politics and individuals are more important to the majority of CFA judges than the cats. If you know me, you know that this is a 180 degree turn from my previous viewpoint. I have always been a CFA supporter over any other organization. But with the lies and stupidity we have been getting from judges, I am beginning to wonder if showing cats in CFA is a viable option for ANY breed if you don’t kiss the right ass at the right time.