



## **Judges' Report of the 1. Breedspecific European Show in Twello / the Netherlands on 7th. June 2008**

Wenn Gaby Prust asked me 12 months ago whether I would be available as a reserve judge for the Breedspecific European Show, I jumped at the chance. At the end of May I was contacted by our president, Evelyne van Vliet who told me that my services were required, as the entries had topped the 333 mark.

All smooth coated cavies were judged according to the European standard that was published in May 2008. All rough and longhaired breeds were shown in the one day show of the Netherlands Cavy Club (NCC) and were judged to the Dutch standard.

As I was also exhibiting at the show, I left home on the Friday for Twello. I was welcomed by Wilma Flokstra who had organised the administration.

On the Saturday morning, I met up with my judging colleagues in the hall. Despite the high entry and the amount of fanciers from all over Europe, the atmosphere was excellent and not chaotic at all. The pens were stacked two tier. I found it unfortunate that the exhibits had been penned per age group rather than per breed. It so happened that my blacks were penned in three different places according to their age group –I found this very disappointing, as we have never seen such a large amount of cavies in one breed in Germany and it would have been much more impressive to have had them all penned in sequence.

Before judging started we were instructed by Evelyne to secure a uniform judgment. Cavies that attained 97.5 points or were disqualified had to be judged by the head judge before the points or disqualification could be allocated. This is a very good idea as it serves both parties –the judges and the exhibitors who can be assured that their cavies have been fairly judged. The cooperation with the head judge was very good, although it would have been helpful if he would have been able to speak another language but Dutch.

My engagement included 47 Blacks, 4 Lilacs, 6 Beige, 1 Slate and 10 Dutch (1x Gold Agouti, 2x Black, 4x Chocolate, 3x Red), totalling 68 cavies of which 7 were absent.

The Blacks were of exceptional quality- these are traditionally a very strong breed at shows and it was therefore an absolute delight to be able to judge Europe's best Blacks at this show. The very first exhibit that hit my table, a C-Class boar, was awarded 97 points. I was able to award between 95 and 97 points to 25 Blacks– of which 5 gained the 97 points.

The other breeds were also very good in quality, but overall slightly uneven in colour. It was such a pleasure to see Lilacs and Beige at a show again. We do unfortunately not have many cavies in these two breeds left in Germany. The Slate gained 95 points.

I was totally impressed by the quality of the Dutch that were shown in Chocolate, Black, Red and Gold Agouti. None of them showed any grave faults in their markings, but, as it is a breed that is very difficult to get right and with many opportunities to deduct points, none of the Dutch were awarded any more points than 92.5.

The breeders have plenty more to do to improve this breed, especially in the typ and shape department, but above all the head shape has to be improved..

I sincerely hope, though, that the exhibitors will not be disappointed by the results at this show and remain loyal to this beautiful breed.

Best in Show was conducted by my colleagues Gerrit Grooten (NL), Helmut Sakac (A) and Flor Dickens (B). I could not take part in this, as I had entered Selves at the show. I was pleased to see my nomination, a Black from Gerrit Kwakkel, come third in the BIS line-up.

Many congratulations to all prize winners.

The German fanciers did very well at this show, too, with Carola Heise „bagging“ not 1 but 2 European Champions! One for her Chocolate sow with 97 points and the other for her Red, also with 97 points.

But also the results from all other German exhibitors were very high. The sum total of the attending 8 German exhibitors (1 exhibitor only entered the NCC show) amounted to: 19x HV (5 cavies with 97 points, the highest score at this show), 14x SG and 1x G –I think this is a fantastic result which speaks for the quality of German smooth coated cavies.

This urges me to persuade as many German exhibitors as possible to enter the 26. European Show in Nitra, Slovakia which will be held from 20. – 22. November 2009. This show will undoubtedly be an unforgettable experience.

This first ever Breedspecific European Show in Twello was a huge success. Of course, minor details can be improved in future. For instance, it would have been better if the catalogue would have been in English, to underline the international character of the show. Also the European show should have been promoted better –it seemed to me to lose its significance on more than one occasion.

All in all it was worth the trip and I hope for many more events like this in the future.

Dr. Christian Koch