



Breed specific Europe show for Brahma & Brahma bantams

November 29th 2019 - Woincourt (France)

Show report

During the last weekend of November the fourth breed specific Europe show for Brahma and Brahma bantams was organised by the Brahma club of France in Woincourt in the North of France. Unfortunately the numbers stayed below hope after previous very successful editions in Holland and Belgium. Taking a wild guess, the memory of the Europe show in 2015 in Metz was probably still fresh in the memory of many breeders and withheld them from participating. This memory has probably ruined the chances of breed specific Europe show in France in the near future also. The show in Woincourt however proved this assumptions to be wrong since housing, feeding and caring of the birds was perfectly OK.

In total 358 large Brahma and 89 bantams were entered by breeders from 5 countries, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Romania and Germany. The mean quality was however not very high. Quite a lot of animals lacked good showing conditions, were still moulting or were simply still too young. Another problem contributing to this lower quality is the continuously rising number of colours in the breed. A lot of the newer colours are just not on the required level yet and do not show good Brahma types, e.g. the black mottled ones are mostly too small, expressing an almost horizontal back line and generally too rounded forms. Also the Brahma breed is known for many 'structural' problems such as poor wing structure, bad wing position (much too low or even scissor wings), bad tail forms and so on. These kind of defects of course cause a lot of low notes. It is absolutely essential that more attention is paid to this kind of problems in every country. It doesn't help the breeders if judges ignore this problems because on the larger international shows they will most certainly fall through. More specific problems that also devalue the birds are an untypical narrow head and irregular and/or very big combs. Another problem is that some colours have developed very heavy feathering on the legs, resulting in matching but unwanted heavily developed vulture hocks.

A serious problem is also the difference in type of the birds from East- and West-Europe where the first are more concentrated on height and size, the latter are more on mass and deep breasts. It is not always easy for the judges to find a good way to deal with this. Initiatives by the EE are awaited. In the bantams this problem is even bigger and a lot of birds don't look like miniatures of large Brahma's anymore.



But let's not only focus on the difficulties and the problems. There were definitely some very nice things to be seen in Woincourt. By far exceeding the quality of all the rest were some excellent white blue and black columbians. The best of these were the white blue columbia hens of Dutch breeder John Bax which had already won everything there was to win in Holland and Belgium this year. The 'best in show' hen was a true beauty that demonstrated continuously in the cage what a deep breast and an ideal Brahma backline should be. A rare quality because not all the hens these days are natural posers and often need a little help from the judge to show the correct backline.



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019

In white, blue and cuckoo the quality was not convincing and the same goes for black. Some birds got 95 but the general conclusion is that a lot of work needs to be done to get them on the same level as the classic colours. A young black hen of Tisca Liviut (RO) became Europe Champion. The quality of the mottled birds was non-existing. Most birds don't even look like Brahma's. In white-black columbia the scores were a lot higher and one Romanian rooster and three hens from Holland and Belgium got 96. Europe champions became the rooster of Vaida Flavia Dorel (RO) and a hen from John Bax (NL). In white

blue-columbian the latter even showed two hens with 97 and one with 96. Without any doubt the best series of the show. In buff columbia the quality was just medium and a lot of birds got disqualified for various reasons, both with black and with blue marking. A nice buff-blue hen from Peter Pieraerts (B) became Europe champion in the category 'hens all other varieties'.



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019

In gold partridge, one of the classics, the results also remained below expectation. Two hens got 96 with the hen of Rony Van Wassenhove (B) coming out on top as Europe champion. No rooster obtained the minimal 95 points to also be awarded the title. Also the blue partridge didn't excel in any way. Half of the birds were disqualified. The lavender partridge on the contrary were good, a little surprising since this is a new colour that has only just been

accepted recently. Almost all the birds got 93 or more. A nice old hen from Cindy Vanheel (B) got 96 and was awarded the Europe champion title. Important in this colour is that the Isabel ground colour remains visible and that the overall impression doesn't become too grey.



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019

The silver partridges were also one of the larger series. The mean quality was OK but the real top animals just weren't present. A young rooster of Klaus Stahl (D) with 95 became Europe champion and his female counterpart was a young hen of Kevin Vreys (B) also with 95. The same breeder also obtained the male Europe champion of 'all other varieties with a very nicely shaped red-shouldered blue silver partridge rooster which got 95.



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019

The bantams didn't do well in the show. Only two partridge hens got 96, almost all the other bantams scored low to very low. Type and oversize are the main problems but also very narrow and long heads are often seen. Europe champion in partridge became a young hen with 96 from Benjamin Hollevoet (B) and the champion hen other varieties was a black with 95 from Tom Sanders (B). No rooster got the required 95 for obtaining a title.



PHOTO : MATTHIEU LEURIDAN - EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BRAHMA - WOINCOURT (FR) 2019

To conclude we can say that the Woincourt championship was a well-organised one but that it lacked participation from a lot of important breeders from several countries. This didn't contribute to the overall quality. For a breed as the Brahma, probably the most popular large breed Europe-wide, this is just not good enough. Breed clubs should try harder to help each other more when such events are organised. Although the end result was a bit disappointing there still were some very good animals to see and those breeders present got to tighten the friendships with other breeders from different countries. Thanks to everybody who participated, especially the breeders coming from Romania who had to cross an enormous distance. At the end, as usual, we can only say 'those who stayed home were wrong' and hopefully 'better luck next time'.

Andy Verelst
Photos : Matthieu Leuridan