

Minutes of the meeting held at Norton Lindsay on 10th June 2006

Present: B Mayoh (Chair & Minutes), E Brearley (NHCC), B. Crick (CCC), C Smith (RVCC), A Rolph (DRCC), A Trigg (DCC), P Bell (NACC), B. Wiles (ESCC), J. Phillips (PCC), B Emmett (CSTCC).

1. **Apologies:** N C Hadley (Secretary/Treasurer), S Neesam (ACC), H Pashley (RCC)

Absent: National Tort & White CC

2. **Agreement to Minutes of Meeting of 21st January 2006:**

All present agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting were a true and correct record.

3. **Matters arising from the previous minutes:**

There were no matters arising that were not covered on the Agenda.

4. **Chairman's Remarks:**

The Chairman explained the purpose of the meeting as being to consider the Review of Standards for all breeds of exhibition cavy and to resolve the matter of the future of the Alpaca. He thanked Councillors for attending on one of the few hot days of the British summer, as well as the occasion of England's first match in the World Cup finals. He stated his belief that this indicated a commendable commitment by Councillors to their Clubs and to the cavy fancy.

In response to the Chairman's request that any Councillors wishing to claim additional votes under Council Rule 2.2 allowing such for clubs with membership in excess of 200, B Wiles responded that the ESCC were entitled and wished to do so.

5. **Review of Breed Standards**

The Chairman introduced this item by reminding Councillors that the original discussion regarding Standards had begun over two years ago when the Council had recognised a number of inconsistencies between Standards that had been written and agreed over many years and on many different occasions. The Council had recognised that Standards had never been reviewed in their entirety and in a coherent way, and had asked him to undertake this task. The aim of the review was to help breeders, exhibitors and judges better understand the important features, and their relative importance, of an ever-increasing number of cavy breeds, thereby making it easier to educate judges and exhibitors and in some small way to improve the quality of judging decisions. It aimed to do this by addressing inconsistencies, removing ambiguities and by improving clarity within Standards. To this end the Council gave its unanimous approval to the process; and all Councillors had indicated their commitment to see the process to fruition.

The methodology of the review had been to:

- Group together for consideration breeds of similar characteristics, defined as Selves, Ticked, Marked, Rough Short-Coated, Crested, Satin, Long-Coated. Then -:
- Ensure that Points Allocations accurately describe the relative importance of different features within each breed.
- Ensure that the same features in related breeds carry the same Points Allocations.
- Ensure that the descriptions of features within Standards are as clear and comprehensible as possible.
- Ensure that the same features in related breeds are described in the same way
- Ensure that the same features are described in the same sequence in all Standards.

Last year, following a general discussion of these principles and their application at further Council meetings, additional meetings had been held in which representatives of Specialist Clubs met and agreed the principles that would underpin improved standards for their particular breeds. Principal amongst these were meetings held at Newark in May 2005 when representatives of the NACC/RVCC, ACC/RCC and DRCC/NHCC/NTWCC/DCC/RVCC discussed Standards for breeds that had most in common.

The Chairman stated that his intention was that this meeting should agree, if possible, revised standards for all breeds of cavy, modifying if necessary the Standards provisionally agreed at the January meeting and seeking to resolve any conflicts or disagreements that remained.

The situation for each breed was discussed and the following positions agreed:

English Self :

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council, with B Wiles/B Mayoh (in his capacity as Chairman of the Club) asked to consider rewording the requirements in regard to muzzle. This has subsequently been done.

Agouti

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council, after incorporation of minor changes identified by P Bell and with a definition of the colour 'Cinnamon'.

Argente

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council, after incorporation of minor changes identified by P Bell that also apply to Argentes.

Rex

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council.

Abyssinian

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council.

Crested

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council, after incorporation of a change proposed by B Crick to specify that the skin colour at the centre of the crest is irrelevant in American Cresteds.

Satin

The RVCC wished to modify the proposed Standard to require 30 points for Satinisation, but was not concerned whether the extra points were derived from HEE or Colour. Following discussion, Council voted 6-2 that the points allocation should be:

HEE 25, Body Shape 20, Satinisation 30, Colour 15, Coat 10.

It was confirmed that varieties in which coat qualities are paramount and where these are fundamentally affected by satinisation will be regarded as having Guide Standards, i.e. Satin Rex, Satin Aby, Satin Rexoid Longhair (Texel, Merino and Alpaca) and Satin Longhair (Peruvian, Coronet and Sheltie). It was further agreed that satinised versions of Guide Standard Coated breeds (e.g. Teddy) should be exhibited in the New / Emerging Breeds class until they can be assessed as suitable to compete with their normal-coated variants in the Guide Standard class.

The revised Satin Standards and the status of the various Guide Standard and New / Emerging Variety Satins were agreed by the Council.

Marked Varieties

The Chairman reminded Councillors of the situation with regard to Marked Varieties, namely the considerable inconsistencies between standards for breeds of cavy that have much in common. He recalled the meeting that had been held at Newark in May 2005 with representatives of all of the Marked Varieties (DCC, TWCC, RVCC, DRCC, NHCC). This meeting had agreed the following principles:

- All marked breeds to attach equal importance to type qualities in Head, Eyes and Ears (10 points), Body Shape (10 points) and Coat qualities (5 points).
- The disparate points awarded to Markings and Colour in the various marked breeds to be simplified to 60 points for Markings and 15 points for Colour, other than for the Himalayan, where the appropriate ratios are considered to be 50 / 25, and possibly the Dalmation and Roan, where Head, Eyes and Ears might be emphasised at the expense of Colour (reflecting the particular significance of HEE and the lesser importance of evenness of colour and depth of undercolour in these breeds).

- Detailed specifications of the required Markings to be defined for each breed, but to be similar in similar breeds (e.g. T/W, Tricolour).

Subsequent to that meeting the individual Specialist Clubs had considered their standards, with the following outcomes:

Dalmations, Roans

A Rolph reported that the DRCC agreed the proposed Standards but wished to increase HEE points to 15 and reduce Colour points to 10 for the reasons outlined above.

The modified Standards were agreed by the Council.

Himalayan

E Brearley reported that the NHCC had agreed to the Proposed Standard but wished to modify the words used to prevent faded Blacks being considered as Chocolates.

The modified Standard was agreed by the Council.

Tricolours, Bicolours, Tortoiseshell, Brindle

The RVCC did not wish the Standard to specify that patches had to be in sequence, but otherwise agreed the proposed Standard.

These Standards were agreed by the Council.

Dutch

The DCC had recently proposed a modified standard that incorporated many of the elements of the proposed standard, but which still had differences that the Chairman found difficult to understand. In particular:

- Points for Head and Eyes were grouped with those for Body Shape, when for all other breeds (excluding the T/W) Specialist Clubs had agreed with the recommendation that points for Head, Eyes and Ears (shape, not colour) should be grouped together and points for Body Shape shown separately. The Council could not see the purpose of the DCC's proposal in this regard.
- Points for Ear shape and Ear markings were again grouped together, though again all clubs other than the NTWCC had agreed to the suggestion that points for ear shape and points for ear markings should be separated. Again, the Council could not see what logical purpose grouping them might serve.
- In similar vein, points for Colour and Coat were grouped, when the agreed norm is to define these separately.
- Finally, the points for Foot Stops had been increased from the long-standing 15 to 20, which the Council felt was not necessary, especially since this meant that Colour points would have to remain lower than for such comparable breeds as T/W, Tricolour, Tortoiseshell and Bicolour. Councillors felt that the 10 points allocated to Colour (both previously and as deduced from the 15

now being proposed for Colour and Coat combined) underplayed the importance of the solid, deep colour, free from flakiness or odd coloured hairs, that is so important to a good Dutch.

In its deliberations the Council also considered that:

- Splitting the 10 points for Ears into 5 for Shape and 5 for Colour would not be a fundamental change to the Standard proposed by the DCC.
- Neither would be splitting the 15 points for Coat & Colour into 5 for Coat and 10 for Colour.
- Nor would be grouping the points for Head, Eyes and Ears (shape of) to total 10 as previously suggested, with the points for Body Shape also being shown separately at 10.
- The Dutch Cavy Club had rightly incorporated the suggestions made by its representative that points for Markings on Blaze, Cheeks and Clean Neck should be grouped together, but the Council could see no real reason not to include Ear Markings in this grouping, to total the suggested 25.
- Therefore the only fundamental difference between the Standard proposed by the DCC and that proposed by the Council was in regard to points for Foot Stops versus Colour. As stated above, the strong view of the Council was that there was no logical reason why the points for Foot Stops should be increased from the original 15; but there were very good reasons, in terms of both consistency with other breeds and innate significance to the Dutch cavy, to increase the points for Colour.
- The production by the DCC of definitions of terms used in the Standard was regarded as an excellent idea. **A glossary of such terms will be drawn up to cover all Standards and Breeds, and incorporated in the version of BCC Standards that will be published next year.**

Additionally, the Council recalled that the move to a 60/15 split of Markings to Colour points agreed at Newark had been made at the specific suggestion of DCC representatives that this should be acceptable to the Club, whereas a 55/20 or 50/25 split would not be.

Given this situation, Councillors came to the following conclusions:

- Discussions on Standards had been ongoing for almost two years and had reached satisfactory conclusions in regard to virtually all breeds, representing a major improvement in the clarity and usefulness of these Standards, to the benefit of judges, breeders and exhibitors alike and to the cavy fancy in general.
- The proposed Dutch Standard was a major improvement on the previous one, but was unnecessarily at variance with that proposed by the Council.
- The publication of this Standard, its being unjustifiably different from those for similar breeds, would reflect badly on each of the Council, the DCC and the Dutch breed itself.

- The timescale for reviewing and agreeing modified Standards should not be prolonged, particularly given the extensive efforts to resolve matters that had previously been made by the DCC Representative and the apparently minor issues that now separated the DCC's views from those of the Council.

The DCC Representative told councillors that the DCC Executive had agreed its proposed Standard, and that he had been advised that the Executive did not wish to modify this proposal but to present it to their members at the next AGM. It was therefore clear that the Council could either:

- Accept the proposal for a Dutch Standard that it considered to have unnecessary and confusing differences with that which it had proposed to the DCC, or:
- Vote under Rules 1, 4.2, 4.7 and 3.7 of the Council to determine that the Dutch standard circulated with the Agenda of the Council meeting should come into force.

By a vote of 9 to 1 (the 1 being the vote of the DCC Representative), with no abstentions, the Council agreed the second course of action. Clearly this voting majority satisfies Council Rule 3.7, and so **the Standard previously circulated was agreed by the Council.**

Tort/White

The Chairman advised Councillors of several communications that he had received from officers of the NTWCC and of attempts that he had made to persuade the NTWCC of the need to engage in dialogue as regards the T/W Standard. In particular he outlined:

- The inadequacies of the existing T/W Standard, in terms of clarity, completeness and consistency with those for other Marked Varieties, not least the Tricolour;
- The agreement made at Newark in May 2005 by Representatives of all Marked breeds, including the NTWCC, to move towards standards that are clearer, less ambiguous and that have much more in common than do the present ones;
- The subsequent resignation of the Council Representative of the NTWCC, who in a letter to the Chairman had reported considerable difficulties in obtaining a constructive discussion on the Standard within the NTWCC;
- The comments of the Chairman of the NTWCC to the effect that: "The members of our club have been very clear of our standard for many years and have unanimously voted for no change" (a position that seemed oddly at variance with the stated views of the former Council Representative), and that: "It is for judges to learn their jobs properly and not for the BCC to simplify."
- The repeated attempts that he (the Chairman) had made to explain the situation to the NTWCC and to engage it in dialogue, via verbal, letter and e-mail communications, with no evidence of a constructive response.

Given this situation, the Council came to the following conclusions:

- Discussions on Standards had been ongoing for almost two years and had reached satisfactory conclusions in regard to virtually all breeds, representing a major improvement in the clarity and usefulness of these Standards, to the benefit of judges, breeders and exhibitors alike and to the cavy fancy in general.
- The existing T/W Standard was unsatisfactory in a number of ways, being at variance with the guidelines on sequence, wording and clarity agreed for all other standards, as well as inconsistent in points allocations with those agreed for similar breeds.
- The publication of this Standard, alongside vastly clearer ones for other breeds, would reflect badly on each of the Council, the NTWCC and the T/W breed itself.
- However, the NTWCC was unlikely to agree the changes to the T/W standard suggested (and provisionally agreed by the RVCC and Council in regard to Tricolours, which are clearly closely related to the T/W).

Councillors recognised that, since further discussions with the NTWCC were unlikely to lead to significant progress on the issue, it could either:

- Accept the continuation of a T/W Standard that it considered wholly inadequate for its purpose, or:
- Vote under Rules 1, 4.2, 4.7 and 3.7 of the Council to determine that the T/W standard circulated with the Agenda of the Council meeting should come into force.

By a unanimous vote of 10 to 0, with no abstentions, the Council agreed the second course of action. Clearly this voting majority satisfies Council Rule 3.7, and so **the proposed Standard was agreed by the Council**, with the addition of a remark in the Guidance Notes intended to emphasise the significance of good colour in the T/W, that: "Cavies showing an excessively light, 'washed out' colour should be severely penalised."

Councillors reiterated their great regard for the T/W cavy and their strong belief that this decision is in the best interests of the T/W, as well as judges and exhibitors. It considered that:

- No attempt was being made to change the way that an expert will assess the T/W: it would be impossible and undesirable to do so.
- However, for non-experts, the previous Standard did not provide a sufficiently clear guideline on how to judge T/Ws. As the number of standardised breeds of cavy constantly increases, these non-experts will require clearer guidelines than once were necessary in order to judge the various breeds of cavy properly.
- The newly approved Standard provides far better guidance to the non-expert in what to look for in a T/W than did the old one.
- By making the Standards for similar breeds clearly comparable, in sequence, wording and points allocations, it is far more likely

that non-specialist judges will actually remember them and take notice of what are their requirements.

- By making the Standards for each breed clearer, it is likely that breeds will, to some extent, be demystified for the non-expert, increasing the attractiveness to fanciers of the less widespread breeds of cavy.

The Council expressed the hope that the NTWCC would react constructively to the decision by engaging in dialogue both within the Club and with the BCC on how we can further improve the clarity of the T/W Standard, within the framework of the Standard determined by the Council.

Longhairs

The Chairman reported that the PCC had now agreed to modify its Standard in line with that proposed, with the exception that Chops had been described under HEE/Frontal rather than in Coat Appearance as originally recommended and as agreed by the CSTCC for its breeds. Councillors discussed this and expressed various views, but it was not felt to be a significant issue; although both the PCC and the CSTCC were asked to consider where this feature would best be covered to see if consensus could be obtained.

Sheltie, Coronet, Texel, Merino

The proposed Standards were agreed, although, as detailed above, the CSTCC will consider whether Chops should be described under HEE features, given that chops derive from the cheeks of the cavy.

Alpaca

The Standard provisionally agreed at Harrogate had been modified to bring it into line with that proposed by the PCC for Peruvians, since the Alpaca and Peruvian are the two longhair breeds in which Frontal is important.

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council.

Peruvian

The PCC had agreed the Proposed Standard, with the modification of where Chops are described. J Phillips reported that the PCC Executive are meeting in two weeks time, and might wish to incorporate additional notes on assessing U/5s.

The Proposed Standard was agreed by the Council. Further, it was agreed that, subject to the Chairman's discretion, minor amendments that might be proposed by the PCC Executive could be included; and that the PCC would consider whether chops could be incorporated into Coat Appearance, to be consistent with other breeds, and whether under the heading 'Frontal, Head, Eyes, Ears' the points for Frontal could follow the points for HEE so as to show all Coat features in sequence and emphasise that the Peruvian (along with the Alpaca) has more points for Coat than any other longhair. Any changes agreed would also apply to the Alpaca.

Guide Standards

The various Guide Standards were discussed and minor modifications made.

The Proposed Guide Standards were agreed by the Council.

Guidance to Judges, General Faults & Disqualifications

The previously circulated notes on 'Guidance to Judges on Use of Standards' and of 'Faults & Disqualifications Applying to All Breeds' were agreed by the Council.

It was agreed that, when individual Breed Standards are published in Year Books etc., these Notes should also be included, so as to provide a complete picture for each breed.

All revised Standards should be treated by Specialist Clubs as effective immediately, although it was recognised that they will not fully impact breeders, exhibitors and judges until they have been publicised by Clubs and in CAVIES.

6. Proposed Transfer of the Alpaca cavy to either the CSTMCC or the PCC.

The Chairman reviewed the background to this issue, in particular reminding Councillors that:

- When the RVCC had held a ballot of its members asking them which club should cater for the Alpaca, it had reported a small majority (6 to 5) in favour of the CSTCC amongst those RVCC members who had stated that they were Alpaca breeders, but had recognised that it had no way to audit whether such people were in fact bona fide Alpaca breeders and that not all Alpaca breeders were members of the RVCC.
- Therefore the RVCC Executive were unwilling to express a view as to which of the two longhaired clubs was best placed to look after the Alpaca or seek to act as arbiter on the matter. It regarded its ballot as for guidance only, not as definitive.
- Because of real divisions amongst Councillors as to which Club should cater for the Alpaca, C Smith had been asked to undertake an independent, confidential survey to try to ascertain the real views of Alpaca breeders and exhibitors.

The Chairman asked Mrs Smith to report the findings of this survey.

Mrs Smith described the methodology as being that:

- Lists of Alpaca breeders and exhibitors had been obtained from RVCC records, the CSTCC and the PCC, as well as show reports published in CAVIES.
- These breeders and exhibitors were contacted by telephone and asked a series of questions designed to indicate their level of

interest in the Alpaca and their views on which Club should cater for the breed.

- Breeders and exhibitors had then been placed into one of four categories (numbered in descending order of the assumed significance of their views to the survey) dependent on the level of their interest in the breed
- Category 1 consisted of people who currently kept Alpacas and for whom there was proof, via prize cards or show reports, that they had shown them in 2005/06
- Category 2 consisted of people who kept Alpacas now and who had shown them in 2003/04 but not since; or who had shown in 2005 and who, though having no stock at present, intended to keep and show them again.
 - Category 3 consisted of people who currently kept Alpacas, but who, although they had not shown them in breed classes, did express an intention to do so.
- Category 4 consisted of people who currently did not keep Alpacas but had done so in the past and had shown them; or who did currently keep Alpacas but who did not intend to show them.
- All of these fanciers were asked which club they preferred to cater for the Alpaca and why.

The results were as follows:

- In Category 1 there were 7 fanciers in favour of the CSTCC and 14 in favour of the PCC.
- In Category 2 there was 1 fancier in favour of the CSTCC and 9 in favour of the PCC.
- In Category 3 there were 0 fanciers in favour of the CSTCC and 5 in favour of the PCC.
- In Category 4 there was 1 fancier in favour of the CSTCC and 7 in favour of the PCC.

The principal reasons given for supporting a move to the PCC were that the Alpaca is a rexoid Peruvian, it shares common breed characteristics and at times is interbred with the Peruvian. The principal reasons for supporting a move to the CSTCC were that other rexoid longhairs belonged to the Club, the breed would be better promoted and a perception that the PCC did not really want the Alpaca.

Before putting the matter to the vote the Chairman asked BEmmett and J Phillips for any comments. B Emmett reiterated his long-standing belief that the longhaired breeds would best be served by a single Longhair Club, but wished the matter to be decided and put to rest. J Phillips stated her willingness to work with the CSTCC in arranging joint venues for stock shows if the Alpaca were transferred to the PCC. She further confirmed that the Club would, in this circumstance, change its name to the 'Peruvian Varieties Cavy Club', so as to incorporate the Alpaca; and reiterated that there was no intention whatsoever of renaming the Alpaca.

A secret ballot was then taken, with the result that 7 votes were cast for the Alpaca to transfer to the PCC and 2 for it to transfer to the CSTCC.

It was therefore determined that the Alpaca will come under the remit of the Peruvian Cavy Club, to be renamed 'The Peruvian Varieties Cavy Club', effective from 1st September 2006.

Councillors agreed that there was a real problem in the small numbers of longhairs being exhibited at many shows, including Specialist Club Stock Shows, and expressed the wish that the two longhaired clubs would cooperate in the interests of the longhaired fancy.

7. Correspondence.

The DCC had submitted a new Complaints Procedure to apply within the Club. The Chairman had advised the DCC Representative that this did not really need to be approved by the Council, so long as it was understood that all such Rules within Clubs must not conflict with BCC rules. However, he was grateful for sight of the document; and confirmed that, since the treatment of all complaints by individual clubs may be appealed to the Council under Rule 6.1, the document should be amended to reflect this.

8. Motions of Urgency. None.

9. Any other business

B Wiles and J Phillips both asked how, after the effort that had been put into creating improved Standards, these Standards would be maintained in the future.

The Chairman replied that he intended to produce a document describing the rationale behind the present exercise and the principles that should be considered in determining changes to Standards or the development of new Standards. In the case of the latter, the templates that had been laid down should allow new breeds to be compared with existing ones and standards for them to be based on the standards for comparable breeds.

It was further decided that:

- The Standards now agreed will be published in CAVIES as soon as space agrees; and will be available by e-mail to anyone requesting them, as well as on the Council website.
- Any suggestions for further enhancement of these Standards, within the frameworks now agreed, should be considered at the next meeting, after which:

- The Council will publish all Standards, as well as material explaining their significance and how they have been developed, in A4 Ring-binder form.

The Chairman once more thanked Councillors for their commitment in attending the meeting and the constructive way in which it had been conducted. Several Councillors commented that holding the meeting away from a show had made for a much less pressurised environment in which to discuss important matters. The meeting then closed at 4 p.m., after 5 hours of discussion.

10. Date and location of next meeting

To be arranged at Harrogate, if the Agenda will permit a meeting of little more than one hour's duration, otherwise at a central venue on a date agreeable to the majority of Councillors.