

Siamese Breeders Group of South Africa



*San-Shing's Baby Tjoklits - SBG Kitten of the Year
2011*

Newsletter
December 2011

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The views and opinion expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect the views of the Siamese Breeders Group of South Africa. Any medical related articles are for information purposes only and we recommend that you seek the advice of a Vet before undergoing any treatment.

Editorial - By Tony Perestrelo

The year has passed by far too quickly and 2012 is already on our doorstep. With it comes a new show season, new challenges, and a fresh start.

This year has seen some major achievements for some catteries. I think on the top of the list has to be Paul and Tania Prime with their introduction of their two new imports of stunning type and personalities who've gone on to do very well on shows. We wish them well in their breeding programme. Charlotte van der Riet has also imported a new boy to compliment the breeding programme of the Mai-Thai cattery. This is also a very exciting move as this Black Oriental boy is of super type.

Top of the achievement list for this year must be Michelle Fleischman taking both the SBG Breeder of the year for 2011 and Stud of the year. Well done Michelle and hope that 2012 will be equally successful for you. To all the other catteries, well done to you too and best of luck for 2012.

Finally we would like to wish all members, both two and four legged, a merry Christmas and remember to drive safely. See you all in 2012.

Tony Perestrelo



Group G Streptococcal Infections in Kittens

Septicemia is a significant cause of death in neonatal kittens, usually in the first week of life. Coliform septicemia alone may account for up to 10% of deaths. Many factors can predispose kittens to neonatal septicemia: failure of passive transfer of antibodies (inadequate colostrum intake, or inadequate antibody levels in the queen), high levels of pathogenic bacteria in the birth canal or from the queen (saliva, milk), unhygienic environment, failure of passive local immunity (inadequate nursing, or inadequate immunoglobulin levels in milk).

Pathogenic bacteria may enter the kitten via the mouth, intestinal tract, genital or urinary tract, or umbilical cord. The most important routes of infection are the mouth and the umbilical cord. Kittens with gram-negative bacterial infections may appear healthy to within a few hours of death. In others, difficulty breathing from pneumonia may be the only sign. Deterioration is rapid as the kittens cease to nurse and become chilled before death. Queens will often refuse to care for such kittens. Diagnosis is reached at necropsy with culture of the umbilicus, liver, spleen, lungs, etc.



Abdomen of Sphynx kitten that died from Strep G infection at 6 days old. Note the dark discolouration around the umbilical area.

Omphalophlebitis (umbilical infection) results when pathogenic bacteria from the queen's saliva or the environment invade the umbilical cord. Normally, the queen chews off the umbilical cord a few inches from the body wall. The cord quickly dries which limits bacterial invasion of both the cord and the umbilicus. If the cord is severed too short, especially if it is severed flush with the abdomen, bacterial invasion may occur or an umbilical hernia may result. An abscess may form at the umbilicus, either just under the skin, or inside the abdomen. Bacteria may also enter the bloodstream via the umbilical vein (which stays partly open for several days) and cause septicemia.

The two most common agents of omphalophlebitis are hemolytic *E. coli* and *Strep. canis*. If the cause of the infection is not immediately known, antibiotics with coverage of both gram-negative and gram-positive organisms should be chosen (enrofloxacin [Baytril] 5 mg/kg plus cephalexin [Keflex] 22 mg/kg, once daily if under 2 weeks of age).



Kittens with streptococcal infections may die suddenly with no symptoms of illness and no visible lesions. This 5 day old Sphynx kitten was found dead unexpectedly with no signs of illness.

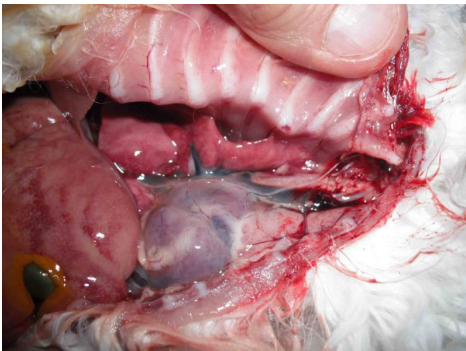
S. canis was first identified as a cause of neonatal mortality in the mid-1980s at UC Davis. Most affected kittens die between 5 and 10 days. They may have no clinical symptoms of illness until hours before death, although they often gain weight slower than their uninfected littermates. A transient fever may be present in the 24 hours prior to death. Kittens are infected with the bacteria from the queen's vagina during birth. Usually not all of the kittens in the litter are affected. An abscess of the umbilicus spreads into the liver and abdominal cavity, leading to peritonitis and septicemia. Some kittens may have an obvious umbilical abscess or swelling. The diagnosis is confirmed by culture of the umbilicus, liver, peritoneal cavity or lungs at necropsy. A second syn-

drome associated with *S. canis* is also seen where kittens develop abscessation of lymph nodes in the neck at about 3-6 months of age.

S. canis is found in the vaginas of about 50% of young queens. The carriage rate in queens up to 2 years may be 100% in some catteries. Generally, the queens themselves are healthy. The highest incidence of infection is in kittens from the first litter born to a young queen (under 2 years). Older queens are more likely to have eliminated the bacteria spontaneously. Toms can also carry the bacteria in their prepuce, leading to rapid spread of the bacteria in a naive cattery. Antibiotic therapy is rarely effective in eliminating *S. canis* from a queen's vagina. However, a single dose of combined procaine and benzathine penicillin given to the queen at parturition may temporarily suppress the *S. canis* population and decrease risk of infection in the kittens.

Kitten mortality from *S. canis* is the highest when the bacteria first enters a cattery. Thereafter, any naive queens entering the cattery may become infected and have a high mortality rate in their first litters. Most affected kittens die too quickly for effective treatment. Since *S. canis* is almost uniformly sensitive to penicillin, remaining littermates can be treated prophylactically with oral amoxicillin pediatric suspension (every 12 hours for 5 days).

The risk of kitten mortality from *S. canis* can be managed prophylactically in catteries. The umbilical cord should be dipped in 2% tincture of iodine promptly after birth. In catteries experiencing recent kitten deaths from *S. canis*, kittens can be given a single SC injection of 0.25 ml of a 1:6 dilution in sterile 0.9% saline of product containing 150,000 IU/ml benzathine and procaine penicillin G. The queen is also given one SC injection of 150,000 IU of the same product (undiluted).



A 6-week-old Persian which died from respiratory hemorrhage secondary to β -haemolytic streptococcal infection. Courtesy Dr Jim EuclidReference:

Blanchard P, Wilson D. Group G streptococcal infections in kittens. In Kirk RW, Bonagura JD (editors): Current Veterinary Therapy X: Small Animal Practice, W.B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 1989, pp. 1091-1093.

Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to Wiebke Heron for her permission to publish this case material.

Strep G - My Experience

Written anonymously by a Cat Breeder

After having many problems with my breeding I was honestly ready to throw in the towel and neuter everyone.

I had just suffered with yet another girl loosing a litter of kittens half way through a pregnancy and to be honest I was so sick and tired I just wanted to walk away.

My kitten mortality rate was incredibly high and it scared me to death, I was literally watching kittens dying and not being able to do anything, I am going to take you through each litter step by step, you will be shocked, you will say I have had a lot of kittens, but let me tell you the facts before you judge me. Last year I had a lot of kittens but I was involved in breeding with a friend who due to health problems had to retire from breeding, some of her girls were here with me using my stud boy, the girls stayed here which meant that I had 3 more litters than I had planned on having and was going to be over run with babies had all gone to plan. I am going to start with when I first started breeding and bring you up to today and what is going on here, the only way I get this through is to list in chronological order what has happened.

Litter 1 - One kitten born by c section up to 4 inside cat partially reabsorbed

Litter 2 - Five kittens born, within a week or so developing runny eyes, 3 kittens died at roughly 9 weeks of age, tests inconclusive, treated with synulox and Aureomycin for flu like symptoms.

Litter 3 - Five kittens born all but one lost by the age of 9 weeks again flu like symptoms, didn't respond to synulox, vet baffled

Litter 4 - Queen took 2 years to get pregnant, litter born by c section kittens faded after a week even though they had 2 mums on babysitting duties.

Litter 5 - 4 kittens born, one died at less than 2 weeks old, another died at about 9 weeks old with flu like symptoms no response to antibiotics etc

Litter 6 - 4 kittens born healthy up until about 9 weeks of age started showing flu like symptoms, one kitten died at 16 weeks in its new home, other kitten's fine eventually

Litter 7 - 2 kittens born, one had very swollen eye vet said it was injured and would be fine, eye became ulcerated and damaged so vet wanted to remove it, kitten never came round from operation, other kitten stopped eating and faded literally before my eyes

Litter 8 - 5 kittens born, all 5 faded within in a week of birth, we put this one down to blood type incompatibility, mum got pyo so neutered therefore we never bothered blood typing her.

Litter 9 - 5 kittens all faded within the first week although everything was done to try to

stop including me not having any sleep for about 3 nights cos I was sat with them.

Litter 10 - 5 kittens born at day 48 needless to say these were all put to sleep, we put this down to mum being stressed due to move etc

Litter 11 - 1 kitten born seemed perfectly healthy, we got up on day three and he was dead no illness at all

Litter 12 - One kitten born with internal organs on outside, kitten was PTS

Litter 13 - 2 kittens born, one faded in the first week the other survived, at about 8 weeks old got badly ulcerated eyes, vet baffled.

Litter 14 - 5 kittens born all healthy until 9 weeks when snotty noses and eyes started, one kitten started loosing weight, was concerned but not concerned enough to feed separate as not major weight loss, fed at 10pm one evening, next morning kitten had died

Litter 15 - One kitten born with deformed face, luckily born dead

Litter 16 - Lost at about 36 days into pregnancy.

I hope from the above you can see why I was desperate, this had happened to me over 3 years and I was at the end of my tether, after the latest miscarriage I was on the phone crying to one of my breeder friends and she just mentioned that it could be strep G, I had never heard of it but duly went away and read up on it.

The symptoms which were listed on the site which I read were as follows

- a.. Unexplained spontaneous abortions
- b.. All the signs of Chlamydia but negative on testing
- c.. Kittens doing ok then suddenly die from acute severe broncho-pneumonia (they are ok and you take a look a few hours later and some may already be dead)
- d.. Birth abnormalities e.g. intestines on outside
- e.. No live kittens
- f.. Problems don't respond to the main stream antibiotics.

I could literally put a tick in every box and say I had suffered all of this, I was at the computer absolutely gob smacked. Here was the answer to my problems staring me in the face yet my vets had never mentioned it, I was angry at the vet and at myself. I went through every emotion with this one.

I rang the vet as soon as they were open, asked to speak to him and fired this at him straight away, his response was that he had heard of it but it didn't affect anyone in this country, yeah right, I was loosing cats because of it I was sure. He said he would do some research and bring it up in the practice meeting that afternoon and then call me back.

The meeting was at 3pm, I gave him until 4 pm then rang him back, he was apparently just looking my number up to call me. The outcome of the meeting was he was to do some research and see what could be done, I said I had done the research and had it all

printed did he want to see it, his response was not at the minute.

He rang me back the next day and said the first thing he must do was to check my cats for other nasties such as FIV/FELV and Chlamydia. I knew I was clear for FELV/FIV but agreed to the test for Chlamydia even though we knew we didn't have it. The test was going to cost me £45 and they wanted to test three cats. I came off the phone and explained to my husband what had been said, he rang the vet back and said as we knew what the problem was and it wasn't Chlamydia they were free to test but if the tests came back negative we weren't paying for them as it was expense that we didn't need. The vet then decided to test one cat and wanted the girl who had miscarried recently.

When I took the girl to the vet, he asked me if I was sure I had brought the right cat in as she looked so healthy, I assured him that I was positive it was her and would he just get on with it.

In the meantime I had requested a prescription for Clindamycin which had been recommended for the treatment of Strep G and the only antibiotic that was known to combat the infection was Clindomycin also known as antirobe. For me to get it from the vet it would cost me nearly £500 but for me to get it from vet-medic it would cost me just over £230.

According to my vet I couldn't have a prescription until he had tested for everything, I argued with him that there was no test for Strep G but that was what I had in my opinion as all of the symptoms were pointing to kittens I had here.

He performed the test on my girl and said if I hadn't heard from him in a week to give him a ring and he would let me know about the prescription. I was not happy but didn't have the guts to argue with him. The next day was when the boy from litter 14 died. My husband rang the vet and asked him how many more kittens we had to loose before he would give us the medication we needed, the prescription was ready for us that day.

Vet medic were fantastic, they said as soon as I had the prescription I my hand they would order the quantity of tablets we needed as they didn't carry that many in stock, I rang them straight away and sent the prescription off to them.

The kittens we had in the house at the time were a little boy from litter 13 and litter 14 who were all snotty and had gunged up eyes, the boy from 13 had the ulcerated eye and they were all loosing interest in food, as you can tell I was running against the clock.

The tablets arrived two days later, fortunately we hadn't lost anymore kittens but things weren't looking good. The cats were all to be medicated for 21 days with 50mg for the adults and 25mg for the kittens.

I drew up a chart with all of the cat's names and tick boxes for 21 days, it was going to take us over Christmas and into the New Year we knew we were in for a long hard slog and lots of claws and bite marks.

I clipped all of the cats claws, got myself a pill popper and we got down to business.

The kittens were the first to be done, then the boys and then onto the rest of the household. It took us just over 2 hours to do them all the first time, we did eventually get this down to just over 40 mins.

After two days the kittens were showing major signs of improvement, the little boys eyes had cleared, I couldn't believe it. These were kittens that I was losing and here they were with clear eyes, noses and appetites that I couldn't satisfy. They were no longer lethargic, they were literally into everything. Even the adults seem to be more lively and interested in stuff.

I did hold the kittens back from getting their first vaccination as I didn't want to overload their systems with chemicals but we took them for the first one this week, I can honestly say hand on my heart that is the first time I have taken kittens for vaccinations and not been worried that their eyes are running or noses snotty.

My vet stared at me in disbelief I am sure he thinks they were a different litter, he still isn't convinced I had Strep G but I am.



I know a lot of people will say I am wrong to advertise my problem like this but to be honest, to hell with them. If me going public like this saves just one person going through the heartache that I went through then it will all be worth it.

On the other side a friend had problems with her kittens and was crying out for someone to help her, her vets were baffled etc, I rang her told of my experience and offered her the medication. Her kittens are now up and running and eating fine.

It hasn't been cheap and it has been time consuming but sit down and think about

this, it has cost me less than the price of one kitten to do this, you can see from the above how many babies we have lost – ask yourself is it worth it? I would honestly recommend that anyone who is having problems thinks about treating for it. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Trophy Stakes 2011 - Final Report

Stud of the Year

Pos	Title	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1	CH	Samoa Gem's Catonic of Michele's	SIA07Pt	M Fleischman	223.5	6
2	SUP CH	Taldi Okonor Hermes (Imp)	SIA05Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	222	5
		Wideskies Sailor Boy of Michele's	SIA05Tp	M Fleischman	222	6
4	GR CH	Tamarind's Valentino	SIA07Tp	I Moore	165.5	6
5	SUP CH	Mai-Thai Koosje van Tutte's Alive and Kitting (Imp)	SIA05Tp	C van der Riet	147.5	6
6	CH	Sherlah Mafdet Jack the Lad (Imp)	SIA05Pt	L du Toit	138.5	6
7	SUP CH	Roysterer Snowfun of Mutti's (Imp)	SIA08Pt	M van Dyk	111	6
8	SUP CH	MyEden's Mauritius of Dell O'reade (Imp)	SIA06Pt	T & I Perestrelo	83	6
9	SUP CH	San-Shing's Prince of Jewel	SIA05Pt	C Coutinho & B Webber	69	4
10	SUP CH	Michele's Manville	SIA05Pt	M Fleischman	50	3
11	CH	Catkin Thunder Cloud of La Montanara	SIA06Pt	H Hoffman	40	3
12	GR CH	La Montanara Tammany (dec)	SIA05Pt	H Hoffman	27	2
13	SUP CH	Lucca von Hestemaas of Taldi (Imp)	SIA06Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	20	1
14	SUP CH	Merindol Roysterer Snowemperor (Imp) DM (dec)	SIA08Pt	M van Dyk	15.5	5
15	SUP CH	Mi-A Imraham (dec)	SIA06Pt	T & I Perestrelo	14.5	1
16		Sherlah Gypsy King	SIA08Pt	L du Toit	7	2
17	SUP CH	Koosje van Tutte's Earic Flapton of Paddy Paws (Imp)	SIA06Pt	D Enslin	5	1
18		Taigha Leo da Vinci	SIA05Pt	L Arends- Wagner	4	2

Best Stud - Champion Samoa Gems Catonic of Michele's

Catonic was born in September 2007 in Moorreesburg and was bred by Eurica Teichmann.

Eurica let me have him to replace my Sup Ch Samoa Gem's Winnebago (Cadbury) whom I lost in rather tragic circumstances. Catonic is a chocolate point, very affectionate and a real gentleman with the ladies! He is a very good stud and has sired some exceptional kittens including Gr Ch Michele's Mantle who is one of my best queens and was a COTY finalist this year.

Michele Fleischman

Male of the Year

Pos	Title	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1	SUP CH	Lucca von Hestemaas of Taldi (Imp)	SIA06Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	99	4
2	GR CH	Mafdet Marchello of San-Shing (Imp)	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	95	3
3	SUP CH	Michele's Manville	SIA05Pt	M Fleischman	75.5	4
4	SUP CH	Koosje van Tutte's Earic Flapton of Paddy-Paws (Imp)	SIA06Pt	D Enslin	25	1

Male of the Year - Sup Champion Lucca von Hestemaas of Taldi (Imp)

I was searching for a new Siamese Bluepoint stud on the Internet and Claudine of Mazal-Tov cattery in Belgium, advised me to contact Dirk Seidel of Hestemaas cattery in Germany. I fell in love with Lucca's photo when I saw it. He was shy and nervous when he first arrived but after sleeping with me for a few months he became the sweetheart he is now is even in his stud run. Lucca was 2nd in the EPCC Top 12 at the 13 March 2011 show. He has already produced some stunning babies. One of his sons bred by Rita Wiseman was the 2nd Best Cat on show at the last EPCC show. He has had a very successful show career and never missed an award.

Johan Groenewald



Female of the Year

Pos	Title	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1	SUP CH	Mutti's Anna Sui	SIA07Tp	M van Dyk	136.5	6
2	SUP CH	Siamlove Zimbali	SIA05Tp	E van Renen	124	5
3	GR CH	Rimchar Mafdet Jackass of San-Shing (Imp)	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	119.5	4
4	GR CH	Michele's Mantle	SIA08Pt	M Fleischman	96.5	4
5	GR CH	Siamesis Hello Kitty of Taldi (Imp)	SIA07Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	66	3
6	CH	Pittipat's Snow Goose	SIA08Pt	B Nieberg	62.5	6
7	GR CH	Siamlove La Petit Belle Fleur	SIA05Pt	E van Renen	42	3
8	GR CH	La Montanara Shewee	SIA06Pt	H Hoffman	35	2
9	CH	Ikin's Devron Soundofmusic	SIA08Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	33.5	2
10	GR CH	Michele's Miyori	SIA16Pt	M Fleischman	20	1
11	GR CH	Ashways Modry Melynas	SIA06Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	19	1
12	CH	Michele's Moraine	SIA06Tp	M Fleischman	17	2
13	GR CH	Mai-Thai's Glamorous	SIA05Tp	L Sherwood	15.5	1
14	GR CH	Siamlove Lexie	SIA05Pt	E van Renen	12	1
15	GR CH	San-Shings's Betty Blue	SIA06Pt	P & T Prime	11.5	2

Neuter of the Year

Pos	Title	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1	GR PR	AbFab's Andy's Bandit	SIA05Pt	C Tennison	83	6
2	PR	Taldi Prince Charming	SIA05Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	39.5	3
3	PR	Mutti's Ming-Shu	SIA08Pt	M Zinn	29	2
4	PR	Mutti's Lucky Stripe	SIA11Tp	M van Dyk	25	2
5	PR	Taldi Bocelli	SIA05Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	16.5	1
6	PR	Pittipat's Cassidy (dec)	SIA05Pt	B Nieberg	15.5	5
7	GR PR	MyEden's Goddess	SIA08Pt	T & I Perestrelo	14.5	1
8		La Montanara Indoda	SIA05Pt	H Hoffman	11.5	1
9		Samoa Gem's Aramis	SIA06Pt	E Polonsky	5	1
		Samoa Gem's Athos	SIA07Pt	E Polonsky	5	1

Female of the Year - Tr Sup Ch Mutti's Anna Sui RQ NQ

Anna was born on the 29th November 2008 from Mutti's Flutterby to Gr Ch Tamarind's Valentino. I had no intention of keeping a tabby especially not a chocolate tabby. However in the end she stayed with her lilac sister, Dona. During her kitten show career she was beaten all the time by her sister until she suddenly blossomed after her first litter of kittens. She went on to do very well on the show bench making both COTY and CTC 2011, much to my absolute surprise. She has also obtained her triple supreme title. She has had 2 litters thus far and hopefully she will produce offspring to follow in her footsteps.



Marlene van Dyk

Neuter of the Year - Grand Pr AbFab's Andy's Bandit

Ab Fab's Andy's Bandit (Bandit for short) was born on the 23rd of August 2009 to Mai Thai's Absolutely Fabulous, her first litter and my first brood queen. He was one of three kittens in the litter to survive and was supposed to go to an elderly couple. When Bandit was two months old we sadly lost his mother so when the home fell through it was an easy decision to keep him. He is a lot like his mom and has done her proud. Bandit has a very close bond with



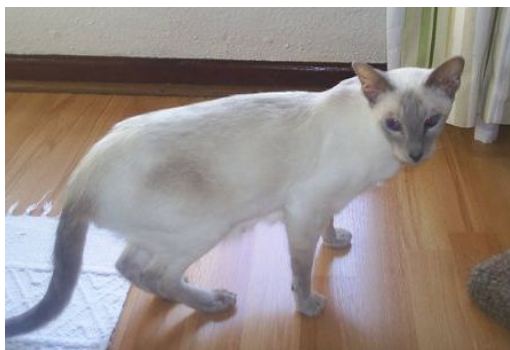
Andrew and will come to find him if he feels that it is time for bed, waiting for the lights to go out before crawling in under the covers. He has the sweetest personality and, despite being very shy, can be very affectionate when he chooses – particularly when it comes to putting it on for the judges or when there is food involved!

Colette Tennison

Brood Queen of the Year

Pos	Title	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1		Mutti's Flutterby	SIA08Pt	M van Dyk	182.5	6
2	SUP CH	Taldi Mystikue	SIA08Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	160	4
3	GR CH	Michele's Maybet	SIA07Pt	M Fleischman	134.5	5
4	SUP CH	San-Shing's Che Sarà-Sarà	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	133.5	6
5	CH	Michele's Memorable	SIA05Pt	M Fleischman	130.5	6
6	GR CH	Siamlove la Petit Belle Fleur	SIA05Pt	E van Renen	124	5
7	CH	Quizzipaws Purr-Sona	SIA05Pt	M Fleischman	117	4
8		Mai-Thai's Absolutely Fabulous (dec)	SIA05Pt	C Tennison	83	6
9	SUP CH	Catkin Lindiwe of Siamlove	SIA15Pt	E van Renen	79.5	3
10		Wide Skies Mosaic of Michele's	SIA15Pt	M Fleischman	75.5	5
11	CH	Pittipat Sabrina	SIA07Pt	B Nieberg	61.5	6
12		La Montanara Rosante	SIA06Pt	H Hoffman	61	4
13	CH	Michele's Mirage	SIA07Pt	M Fleischman	58	5
14	SUP CH	Catkin Montana of Siamlove	SIA15Pt	E van Renen	54	3
15	CH	Lentia Capri of Michele's	SIA15Pt	M Fleischman	50	3
16	SUP CH	Mutti's Anna Sui	SIA07Tp	M van Dyk	40	4
17	SUP CH	Taldi Dame Delta	SIA06Pt	R Gerber	33.5	2
18	SUP CH	Mai-Thai's Ariel	SIA07Tp	C van der Riet	25	3
19		Michele's Milly	SIA05Pt	M Fleischman	23	2
20	SUP CH	Taldi Fantastique	SIA05Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	21.5	2
21	GR CH	MyEden's Coco Chanel	SIA05Pt	C van der Riet	15.5	1
22	GR CH	Mutti's Boogie Woogie (dec)	SIA08Pt	T & I Perestrelo	14.5	1
23		Kia-Ora's Yin (dec)	SIA05Pt	B Nieberg	10.5	4
24	GR CH	San-Shing's A Slightflirtation	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	7	2
25	GR CH	Mai-Thai's Brown Sugar	SIA07Pt	D Enslin	5	1
	CH	Ashway's Mi Azzuro Maya of Minki Liu	SIA06Pt	N Earnshaw	5	1
	CH	Sherlah Bella Rosa	SIA05Pt	L du Toit	5	1
28	SUP CH	Mai-Thai's Charlie's Angel of Taigha	SIA07Tp	L Arends- Wagner	4	2

Brood Queen of the Year - Mutti's Flutterby



Bug, as she is known, was born on the 30th March 2007 from Gr Ch Muttis Pud Pie to Tr Sup Ch Muttis Snow Dragon RQ NQ, a brother/sister mating. Bug was one of five kittens born and the only female so I kept her as I then only had one other brood queen. She has never shown as she injured her eye as a kitten, which caused a blocked tear duct plus she also has a nervous disposition.

She has produced some very nice kittens that have done well on show namely Tr Sup Ch Mutti's Anna Sui, Gr Ch Mutti's Donatella and Ch Mutti's Ming-Shu.

Marlene van Dyk

Breeder of the Year

Pos	NAME OF CATTERY	BREEDER	TOTAL	NO OF SHOWS
1	Michele	M Fleischman	477	6
2	Siamlove	E van Renen	257.5	5
3	Mutti	M van Dyk	217.5	6
4	Taldi	J Groenewald/ I Taylor	181.5	5
5	San-Shing	P & T Prime	139.5	6
6	AbFab	C Tennison	83	6
7	Pittipat	B Nieberg	77	6
8	La Montanara	H Hoffman	72.5	4
9	MyEden	T & I Perestrelo	59.5	6
10	Mai-Thai	C van der Riet	40.5	4
11	Ikins	R Gerber	33.5	2
12	Taigha	L Arends-Wagner	33	3
13	Minki-Liu	N Earnshaw	5	1
	Sherlah	L du Toit	5	1
	Paddy-Paws	D Enslin	5	1
	Hasimo	D de Villiers	5	1

Kitten of the Year

Pos	NAME OF CAT	BREED	OWNER	TOTAL SCORE	NO OF SHOWS
1	San-Shing's Baby Tjoklits	SIA07Pt	P & T Prime	127	5
2	Rimchar Mafdet Jackass of San-Shing (Imp)	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	76	3
3	Mafdet Marchello of San-Shing (Imp)	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	45	3
4	Michele's Merritt	SIA12Pt	M Fleischman	35	3
5	Mai-Thai's Paco Rabanne	SIA07Pt	W Eykehof	25	3
	Westwood Chloe of Michele's	SIA05Tp	M Fleischman	25	3
7	La Montanara Tiffany of Taigha	SIA08Pt	L Arends-Wagner	21	2
8	Michele's Melani	SIA15Pt	M Fleischman	15	3
	Mutti's Ming-Shu	SIA08Pt	M Zinn	15	3
10	Mutti's Lucky Stripe	SIA11Tp	M van Dyk	10	2
	Samoa Gem's Aramis	SIA06Pt	E Polonsky	10	2
	Samoa Gem's Athos	SIA07Pt	E Polonsky	10	2
13	San Shing's Gossip Girl	SIA05Pt	P & T Prime	7	2
14	Minki Liu Karma Sutra	SIA06Pt	N Earnshaw	5	1
	Paddy Paws Lady Nikita	SIA05Pt	D Enslin	5	1
	Mutti's Most Precious	SIA07Tp	M van Dyk	5	1
	Hasimo Sky	SIA13Pt	D de Villiers	5	1
	Michele's Mingle	SIA07Pt	M Fleischman	5	1
	Michele's Marbella	SIA16Pt	M Fleischman	5	1
	Sherlah Jay Natalie	SIA06Pt	M Cannell	5	1
	Taldi Prince Charming	SIA05Pt	J Groenewald / I Taylor	5	1
22	Taigha Valentino Rock 'N Rose of Mai-Thai	SIA07Pt	C van der Riet	4	1



Kitten of the Year - San-Shing's Baby Tjoklits

Tjoklits was born on the 16th December 2010 from Ch. Sherlah Mafdet Jack the Lad (Imp) and Sup.Ch. San-Shing's Che Sarà Sarà. She was the only female in Sara's litter of two and as we missed Coco so much, we decided we wanted another chocolate point to fill the void. She started her show career with a 'big bang' wining Best SA bred Cat on Show at only four months. Her accolades during the year were as follows:

Best SA Bred Cat on Show – BIG CC 16/4/2011

Best Siamese Kitten and Kitten on Show – WPCC 21/5/2011

Best Siamese Kitten and Kitten on Show – ABCC 11/6/2011

Best Siamese Kitten and Kitten on Show – ABCC 30/7/2011

Best Siamese Kitten and Kitten on Show and Cat of the Day – WPCC 20/8/2011

She qualified for COTY in July and came 8th in the kitten class. She also qualified for the CTC show in September and won her section as Best Cape Top Kitten.



Baby Tjoklits, "ons like jou stukkend"

Paul, Tania and Matthew

Breeder of the Year - Michelle's Cattery

I have been breeding and showing Siamese cats regularly since 1985 and only breed Siamese. Michele's is a medium sized cattery with 8 queens and 3 studs at the moment. I have been SBG Breeder of the Year twice before and have produced a number of supreme and grand champions over the years. This has been a particularly successful year with a 3 Michele Siamese represented at COTY 2011 in Sandton.

Michele Fleischman



Cosmetic Surgery for Cats - A warning for the Cat Fancy

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Show cats are bred to meet exacting standards and competition can be fierce. In the past, dirty tricks have included bleach or other noxious substances sprinkled onto cats in their cages and even cats being poisoned or stabbed with hat-pins. Some exhibitors, it seemed, were willing to harm their competitors' cats. Thankfully, such incidents are now far less common, but another type of "interfering" may soon be on the rise - cosmetic surgery.

A History of Cosmetic Surgery in Cats

Cosmetic surgery is not new to the cat show world. In the late 1800s and early 1900s there are references to creating Manx cats through tail-docking and to using dye on cats not just to mask an imperfection, but to entirely change a cat's colour. In the past, cats of nondescript colours could be dyed to create the then popular Maltese (blue) cats. According to an issue of "Our Cats" magazine in 1900, the blue dye dried almost instantly but did not produce the desired solid effect; it had to be supplemented with



dye combed into the fur. The cat's muzzle would be dyed using a sponge. Within an hour, the owner could have a Maltese cat and if done well, the judges would be none the wiser. Producing a fake tortoiseshell cat took around three hours, because dyes had to be applied in patches using a comb. Some of the dyes were no doubt toxic.

Manxes may undergo more radical intervention. Only tailless Manxes can be shown in championship competition; naturally tailless Manxes are therefore valuable to breeders and exhibitors. Tailed Manxes are sold as pets, but since Joe Public often refuses to believe that Manxes can have tails, most fully tailed Manx kittens are docked at birth (in the USA at least). Joe Public is more receptive to buying an honestly docked Manx because it "looks like a Manx" than to buying a tailed Manx that looks like an ordinary

moggy. Manx kittens with tail-stubs may be docked for medical, rather than aesthetic, reasons - the partial tails are prone to painful arthritis and ossification later in life. Removing the kitten's tail-stub prevents the problem; leaving it for later results in the pain of arthritis, the trauma of surgery and the adult cat has to adapt to taillessness. Docked Manx are ineligible for competition, but there are often dark rumours among beaten exhibitors that a winning specimen may not have been born tailless.

Like the Manx, some American Bobtails have long tails that are surgically docked at birth. They are ineligible to show in competition and show judges look for cats with naturally shortened tails that are erect when alert. A few years ago, the cat shelter where I worked took in a tabby cat rescued from Hong Kong whose tail had been "cruelly cut off by a previous owner". It was actually very easy to see and feel that the cat was a natural bobtail, but she was nevertheless homed as a cruelty case! It's easier to distinguish between a natural and a faked bobtail (the end of the tail will look and feel wrong) than it is to detect a faked Manx. Judges may soon be looking out for a lot of other alterations. There are also tales of "ear reduction surgery" on some Persian cats to reduce slightly too-large ears to the small kittenish ears required by show standards - you need to look closely at the edges of the ears for signs of surgery.

Lesser forms of enhancement are perfectly permissible, for example plucking a few unsightly wrong-coloured hairs from a cat's otherwise perfect coat e.g. the odd white hairs that mar the coat of otherwise black cats. The fur around a cat's nose leather may be plucked or shaved so the nose leather is better displayed (particularly in chinchilla cats where the black rim must be well displayed). However, ever since cat shows began not all exhibitors have restricted themselves to these minor interventions. There are rumours of white lockets, too large to pluck, on solid colour cats being dyed with hair dye or of pale chins, a fault on tabbies, being darkened with dye. If the vet is willing and the exhibitor can afford it, ears can be reshaped and eyelids operated on. So far claims of cosmetic alteration are few and far between and some are entirely fictitious, spread to discredit certain exhibitors. Things may soon change and unless judges are able to spot the signs of cosmetic surgery, there is little the cat fancy can do.

During the late 1990s it was alleged that a Chinchilla Persian had achieved high honours in the USA despite it "being well known" that the cat's ears had been surgically reduced. At that time, the Chinchilla Persians had not been extreme typed to the same extent as the solid Persians. The allegations and rebuttals were discussed on cat-related mailing lists (the social networks of that time). Guidelines went onto websites showing photographs of Chinchilla Persian ears (natural size and set) and noting the signs of

cosmetic surgery. Dashed lines on the photos showed the shape and set of ears after cosmetic surgery. The alignment of the hair on the outer part of the ear was one indicator of surgery - did it point towards the ear tip or point off to the side where the ear tip had originally been before reshaping?

Masking Imperfections, Masking Genetic Defects

Another dangerous aspect of cosmetic surgery for the show ring is that breeds may be weakened. An animal with a genetic defect might have that defect surgically corrected. Show-winning animals, unless they are neuters, are greatly in demand for breeding (especially the males). While they appear perfect, their perfection is a surgically applied gloss and they could well be spreading substandard genes into the next generation.

The most extreme cases of concealment involves prosthetic testicles. An animal with one or both testicles undescended cannot win prizes or be used to breed from. Although a monorchid dog or cat may well be fertile, there is evidence that the trait can be inherited. By fitting a monorchid animal with a prosthetic testicle to match the one that has descended normally, no-one need know that it has a potential genetic defect. Silicon testicles have even spread into dog show urban legend which tells the story of a dog whose "missing" testicle descended naturally and whose prosthetic was revealed when the judge encountered three testes in its scrotum during judging.

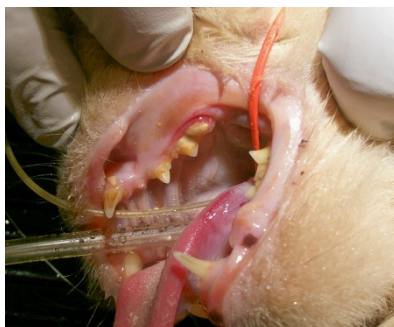
Particular physical traits can be mimicked by surgery: tails can be bobbed or removed; ears can be reduced, reshaped and possibly even curled or folded; eyelids can be altered to modify the eye shape; in theory, laser depilation could be used to "improve" hairless cats. White spots can be masked with hair dye. Genetic defects that would result in disqualification can be hidden. A perfect, prize-winning specimen can be created out of a mediocre one. None of those surgically enhanced traits can be passed on to the next generation; its offspring will inherit its hidden imperfections. It may not even have the genes for the desirable traits at all! If that happens, innocent breeders who thought they knew what genes they had in their bloodlines will find they don't actually know what genes their cats carry. A few will compound the problem by sweeping it under the carpet.



Decades of careful breeding might be undone if a widely used sire or dam turns out to have been a cosmetically enhanced fake. The effects, and the distrust, will spread through the cat fancy like ripples in a pond.

A Lesson from Livestock Shows

Historically, horses have had their tails docked i.e. not trimmed, but had the tail cut off between two caudal vertebrae. When the surgery healed, they were left with a short, brush-like tail that often stood semi-upright, a look that can be seen in many old paintings. Tail alteration still occurs in horses. American Quarter Horses may have the



nerves in their tails severed or numbed to make the tail lie flat, depriving the horse of its ability to swish away flies and causing it to be soiled with urine and faeces. It is up to the judges to deter cosmetic surgery cheats by disqualifying horses with lifeless tails. It is up to show organizers to prohibit surgically enhanced horses from competition.

The question is "will judges and show organizers take the initiative and ban cosmetic surgery in show animals?" In Australia, cosmetic surgery on show cattle has already been banned by organizers of the Tasmania Agricultural Show. The cattle must be exhibited as they were bred and with no enhancements - either permanent or short-term - to improve the appearance of their udders.

Paralysed tails and enhanced udders are one thing, but it may be far harder for judges to detect cosmetic surgery on well-furred cats or dogs and to disqualify enhanced animals.

Legality and Acceptability

In many countries there is legislation against "mutilation" or unnecessary procedures being carried out on animals. Like dew-claw removal and tail-docking in the USA and UK and like ear-cropping in the USA, cosmetic surgery currently exists in a grey area that is not currently classed as "mutilation" and may, therefore, be legal. Ear-cropping is banned in the UK as it is a mutilation that makes a dog look fierce but, contrary to folklore, does not improve its hearing or reduce ear infections. In the UK, tail-docking is more and more being restricted to working dogs only, but remains legal if performed by a qualified veterinarian. How does this translate from the doggy world to the cat world? The conservative nature of the UK cat fancy means that cosmetic enhancements have

not yet become an issue in Britain. In the USA, where doggy mutilation remains part and parcel of the dog fancy and where cat mutilation in the form of declawing is considered acceptable, there may be greater acceptance of cat cosmetic surgery.

If found to be legal and if considered acceptable by owners, cosmetic surgery has huge implications for show animals. Not everyone considers cosmetic surgery to be cheating. An exhibitor with enough money, access to a willing veterinarian and few enough morals can ensure that his/her imperfect specimen has a better chance of winning than more perfect, naturally bred specimens. Cat show judges may soon have to learn how to spot signs of surgical alteration and cat show rules or judging standards may have to be revised to prohibit cosmetic alteration of exhibits.

If show judges don't tackle cosmetic surgery at this early stage and before it becomes accepted practice, the damage will have been done and genes from cosmetically altered, but genetically imperfect, cats will end up in the gene pool, pulling the breed down for generations to come. If cosmetic surgery is not deterred at an early stage, it will be the future generations, for whom cosmetic enhancement is (or at least, should be) prohibited, that will suffer. Breeders will have their work cut out trying to eliminate faults that have been surgically hidden and bred back into their bloodlines.

Cat shows should be about breeding cats to meet an agreed standard. They should not be about who can afford the best cosmetic surgeon for their cats. It's up to judges and show organizers to make sure cat shows remain about careful selective breeding and never deteriorate into a cosmetic surgeon's showcase.



Cats that kill kittens

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Why do cats, either male or female, sometimes kill kittens - either their own kittens or those belonging to another cat?

At present there are several recognised reasons for this, all supported by field observation, documented by breeders and related to other known feline behaviours.

Males Killing Kittens

Although cats are often considered to be purely solitary, in the feral and the domestic situation they are frequently organised in social groups similar to the social grouping of lions (prides). These groups are matriarchal in nature i.e. dominated by the females, and often the males will only be in attendance when a female is available for mating (though this rule is flexible and some groups will have a resident male). A tom cat will normally establish a territory which contains a number of females or female groups, and it is in his own interest to repel other males and to destroy kittens which may have been fathered by another male and which contain the genetic complement of his rival. This is true of many social animals, relatively few of whom will expend their own energies in raising the offspring of another male.

How do males know who has fathered the kittens? Cats rely greatly on scent and scent markings to determine who is present in their territory and who has visited that territory. If a tom smells the scent of a rival tomcat he may decide that the kittens belonging to his 'harem' have been fathered by the visiting tomcat. This is not in his own genetic interests. Consequently he may kill those kittens. This has two purposes. Firstly it ensures that his queens do not raise kittens fathered by a rival male. Secondly, the queens will usually come on oestrus within a few days and he can be sure of mating them so that subsequent kittens are his.

When a new tomcat takes over or inherits a territory (the former territory owner having been removed, neutered and thus non-competitive, or dead) he may also be driven to destroy any kittens in order to 'found his own line'. A territory can be something as small as a single room in the house. These are all fairly anthropomorphic terms describing an instinctive drive to give his own genes the best chance of survival. It is an over-generalisation to state "tomcats are just like lions, they kill kittens so they can mate

with the females" as it depends on how many toms are competing over the females i.e. is linked to rivalry. Itinerant tomcats cannot be certain whether the kittens are theirs or were sired by another visiting male and thus kill all kittens below a certain age (it is in the mother's best interest to hide kittens while they are vulnerable). A few tomcats seem to be genuine rogue fathers and kill kittens that they have sired. This is an aberration and is self-limiting - by killing their own offspring, their genes will not be passed on (except in breeding programmes where the male has no access to his offspring).

Some tomcats are more benevolent in their approach, perhaps they lack this instinctive drive or it is less well developed. It also seems related to the lack of other tomcats in the area such that the male is in a less reactive state. Some breeders raise the kittens with both parents present, again, there is usually only the one tomcat around. Neutered toms, as a whole, tend to be more benevolent due to their hormonal state (or lack of a hormonal state). These toms may tolerate kittens which are not their own, only driving them away (through fighting) as the kittens become sexually developed.

Although in the main, toms do not contribute to the raising of kittens, there have been instances where even unneutered toms may supply food, tend or move the kittens or be willing to play auntie even to the extent of allowing the kittens to 'suckle'. A few males have



even taken over the majority of mothering duties (apart from milk production) from incompetent females or where kittens are orphaned. A potential problem arises when the kittens play. Most female cats can switch between 'play mode' and 'hunt mode' in order not to harm their offspring. In tomcats this switching off of 'hunt mode' may be incomplete and when they become highly aroused through play, the 'hunting' instinct comes into force and they may kill the kittens. The hunting instinct is so strong, and so hard to switch off when prey is present, that dismemberment and even eating of the kitten may ensue.

The automatic response of a young kitten being held in a nape-of-neck grip is to go limp to allow the mother to lift and move it. Neckbiting is an activity found in both mating behaviour and in dominance behaviour (which does occur between cats, though not as often as it occurs between dogs). A tomcat may attempt to assert dominance over a kitten, particularly an unruly one, and in doing so may break the kitten's neck. A tomcat

which has been attracted to a nursing female may attempt to mate the female (her hormonal state invites sexual advances), but if he is repelled he may then attempt to mount a kitten instead (a displacement or frustration activity giving an alternate outlet for the mating urge). Again, the force of his jaws may break the kitten's neck.

Compare the size, sound and activity of kittens with the size, sound and activity of prey. They are both small, have high-pitched voices and move with fast, erratic movements. All of these trigger hunting behaviour. In the tomcat, maternal behaviour cannot always override hunting behaviour and he treats the kittens in exactly the same way he would treat small prey. His instincts are confused; he simply may not be able to override the hunting response triggered by the combination of size, sound and movement even if he is normally non-aggressive towards kittens. Some female cats act the same towards other females' kittens.

Finally there is the question of whether queens protect their kittens against marauding tomcats. In the lion pride, females defer to the male e.g. in relinquishing prey to him and also make little attempt to defend cubs from his attacks. The cat social structure is less well defined. Unlike lion prides, tomcats are present for less of the time and females are less submissive. Communally nesting queens have been seen to drive away attacking males. A colony's 'resident' tom may also drive off a marauding male though probably in response to territorial instinct rather than any attempt to actively protect his own offspring. Whether a queen defends her kittens probably depends on her presence (most male attacks occur when the female is away from the nest), her physical condition (ability to defend the kittens and not sustain injury herself) and her size (she may be smaller and less powerful than a tomcat). Most queens will defend their litters against attacks from larger animals e.g. bobcats, coyotes, dogs so it is likely that they will also defend against tomcats. The fact that tomcat attacks on kittens have mostly been seen when the queen is AWAY from the nest suggests that the females will indeed protect their litters against other cats. This is not a certainty since too few kitten-killing instances have been observed from which to draw firm conclusions.

Females Killing Kittens

Kitten-killing is more often seen in females, simply because the tom is usually absent from the nest. There are numerous reasons for this behaviour.



As in tomcats, some females cannot switch off hunting behaviour in response to the presence of kittens. Some have poorly developed maternal instincts or they may have a hormonal imbalance so that the maternal behaviour is not triggered by pregnancy and kitting. Because the kittens may inherit this as a genetic trait (hypothetical but very feasible), it is wise not to breed from such females again - not just to avoid the tragedy of seeing kittens killed by their mother, but to avoid the problem becoming more widespread. Females which haven't given birth may treat kittens born to other females as prey. Pregnancy and birthing cause hormones which generally trigger maternal instinct. A female without kittens has not gone through this process and the size and sound of the kittens triggers her hunting instincts.

Some kittens are born with abnormalities that humans cannot detect. For this reason they may not thrive, they may even act or smell 'wrong' to the queen. Where one or two kittens are either killed or abandoned, these kittens are often found to be somehow 'faulty'. The mother simply does not want to waste energy on raising kittens that have little chance of survival. In addition, she has expended a lot of energy during pregnancy and she may eat all or part of some of these kittens in an attempt to recoup some of those losses (just as she eats placentas) and to dispose of 'carcass' that could potentially lead predators to her nest. The same goes for kittens which have an illness - she can smell the problem, humans cannot.

Kittens born at a 'bad time of year' e.g. early spring/late fall/winter in the wild state, have a poor chance of survival due to lack of prey. A number of female cats will kill litters born at 'bad times of the year' in order not to use up valuable energy in raising kittens when they themselves have problems in finding adequate food. This has been noted in feral cats.

It is well known that a mother cat may kill kittens if the nest is disturbed, especially if she is confined and cannot move or hide her litter. This is attributed to a frustrated 'protection' instinct. Unable to protect her kittens against a perceived threat, she kills them in a futile attempt at protecting them. Perhaps instinct tells her that it is better to kill offspring herself and make good her own escape than to attempt to defend them against insurmountable (in her view) odds and possibly endanger herself in the process. A few mothers have accidentally killed kittens by trying to push them *underneath* a doorway in an attempt to move them to a new nest and some over-anxious but non-confined queens have killed kittens as a result of maternal incompetence or perceived threats to the nest. These mothers are generally either desperate or inexperienced or

both. A few nervous queens are disturbed enough by the scent of a tomcat nearby that they will resort to the eat-is-protect mechanism.

Stressed mothers may simply decide to cut their losses. Perhaps finding that they cannot successfully rear or save their own kittens, it becomes preferable to try again at a later date or in a more favourable/safer location. However, she has invested a lot of effort in pregnancy and suckling those kittens (and in hunting for food for older kittens) so she eats them in order to reabsorb some of that energy investment. By reabsorbing the nutrients they gained from her, she will more quickly return to breeding condition and may successfully raise kittens later in the same breeding season. Some mothers will simply abandon kittens, but in doing so they lose whatever investment they put into partly rearing the offspring and might not breed again until the next season. This may also explain why some females kill some, but not all, kittens - by reducing the number of kittens in their litter, they increase the chances of successfully rearing their surviving kittens.

Sometimes she will kill the kittens because they have been handled by another person or animal. Her own scent has been obscured and she either no longer recognises them as her own or she feels threatened and unable to escape. They either become prey - in size, sound, smell and movement - or she attempts to 'protect' them by the last resort method of killing them. A female that has previously been in an abusive situation may be anxious with kittens and may kill them as a result; stress seems to over-ride normal maternal instincts.

Where several litters have been born in one colony it is not unknown for one queen (generally the more dominant one) to either kill her rival's kittens or to 'kidnap' them. This may enhance the survival prospects of her own litter; it may remove the genetic competition from the other queen; it may be that the predatory queen's maternal instincts do not extend as far as recognising the other kittens as something other than prey or alternatively it may be that her attempts to kidnap the kittens and raise them as her own (over-developed maternal instinct?) result in the accidental death of the kittens as one queen tries to kidnap them and the other tries to defend them (even to the point of killing them herself). In a number of such cases the queens may move into a single communal nest and take turns in nursing the kittens, but in other cases some of the kittens (usually the smaller, more fragile, ones or those of the less dominant queen) die. The kidnapping of offspring is better documented in dogs, but has been observed in cats as well.

Happy Families

At the other end of the spectrum, cats in colonies (ferals, breeding catteries etc) can exhibit some truly social behaviours. They may co-operatively raise kittens along with other nursing females, with non-nursing females or even with males (most often, but not exclusively, neutered males). In most cases the participating 'aunties' and 'uncles' are related by blood, usually sisters or mother/daughter pairs who may pool their kittens or co-operate in kitten care. In most cases the kittens may have the same father (or multiple fathers since kittens in a single litter may have different fathers) or the



queens may be closely enough related that the communal raising of kittens is in the genetic interest of participating queens. In the domestic setting, the co-operating cats may be unrelated but may be very familiar with one another and act as though closely related. Even if they have been mated to different toms their instincts may be fooled into allowing this co-operative behaviour especially if there is a resident stud cat on the premises - the

females are unlikely to compare notes about who they actually mated with and simply view themselves as part of that cat's harem bearing litters which share a common father. Some males also become excellent and trustworthy kitten-sitters.

In a domestic situation, the owner may be viewed as 'the other queen' and it is not unknown for a female to transport all of her kittens onto the owner's lap, chair or into the bed so that the human can mind the babies while the queen takes some time out from maternal duties.

Conclusion

Fortunately the domestic cat is adaptable enough that a 'happy families' situation usually prevails. Kitten killing is more common in inexperienced or highly stressed mothers and, because the surviving kittens of a kitten killer may grow up into poor mothers themselves, there may be some genetic problems (leading to hormonal or behavioural problems) influencing kitten killing behaviour in queens. In males, the kitten-killing behaviour is most often due to their highly competitive natures, something which has been modified by selective breeding but which has not been entirely eliminated as it is part and parcel of the male instinct. Since it seems linked to the number of competing males present, it might be reduced by preventing rivalry situations. There are no studies as to whether "rogue fathers" pass on their tendencies as they rarely have access to the kittens.

Siamese and Oriental - Quo Vadis

Article by: Mimy Sluiter

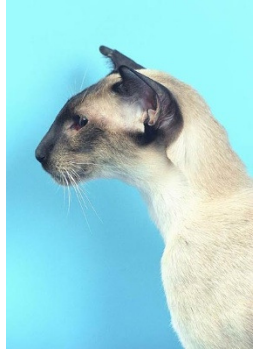
Seeing the heated and sometimes emotional comments involving how to deal with “new” colour and pattern factors within the breed group from which the Siamese is the fore runner and eldest representative, I feel perhaps it is time to put some perspective in the subject of what is a Siamese and what not. I do this “not” as a long time cat fancier or former Siamese owner, but as a published cat writer and cat history researcher and hope this give some perspective for those involved. It is a complicated story with many aspects to be considered, but I hope it helps those involved in moving on keeping the Siamese and Oriental going well into this new century. This Is not a fancy fairy tale story but it simply does give a very down to earth historical account on the breed, varieties, roots, health and past, present and future and also in the end will give breeders a very clear mirror I hope they can and want to look into very honest and open minded. I hope it helps the future of a breed group, which deserves a much better future and can get it back on track as well.

Roots

Siamese were (and are) indeed one of the earliest recognized breeds. A small percentage of the cats found in the Far East show one or more of the present albinism factors in cats – cb (Burmese), cs (Siamese) or ca (blue eyed white). Two of the three phenotypes found were picked up by westerners and made it into breed status sooner or later – firstly the cscs phenotype with darkest points (seal point, black based) was picked up by British and Americans and French mainly, living there for various reasons, and were brought / sent back to the respective home countries from roughly 1880 to 1930. Some of these cats were in real cbcs (tonks) or cscsa (pseudo-iamese) and initially this was not understood from a genetic viewpoint, but the pointed forms were preferred anyway, so bred on from and selected fro so became the main phenotype in the end. The cb thus disappeared and the ca almost also, but stayed in secretly in some American lines (since the pseudosiamese gives a lighter clear coated Siamese image and varies anyway so can look “normal”). In the thirties, Americans brought the darkest form over to the US and this turned into the Burmese, the cbcb cat, bred for a less elegant less long headed type to distinguish it from its “sister breed”

A matter of taste

Colour and pattern always has been a matter of taste and in the beginning the selection for an Oriental typed cat with clear dark points was nothing more than this – just a matter of human taste and preference. While in the Far East countries all kinds of pointed “Siamese” (with white, with stripes, tortie point, diluted, choc-point – you name it) were found these simply were not selected and taken to the west, but only the seal point was chosen. What did happen however, was that two recessives could secretly sneak in anyway as they were brought along secretly carried by the seal points – these were the dilution (d) and chocolate (b) factors, giving in later years chocolate point, blue point and lilac point. Albeit the “purist” breeders vehemently opposed this (if there had been a discussion list on the internet in those days a similar discussion would have been present as has been held these times on the S gene <g>) eventually they were accepted everywhere and hence the breed had 4 colours, a situation that stayed so until the fifties of the previous century.



Early health problems



Until the fifties, breeding went on fairly well all over the world. But then some health problems began to appear – decreased litter sizes, limited fertility and other problems were signs on the wall. Not very surprising when you realize that the breed worldwide had become intermingled through import and export and also it stemmed from only a very, very small number of ancestors. Perhaps 80 cats had been brought to England, say another

30 to France and another 50 to the US but from those ancestors only perhaps optimistically guessed 50% had made it into pedigrees (many cats died after of infectious diseases and worms – no drugs were available then alas) and also not every cat was bred from either and several imports also were full brother / sister. So all in all the initial roots were perhaps less than 75 cats were to be found behind all Siamese worldwide and, the breeding of pedigree cats being a main selection on a specific beauty ideal, only made matters worse. A situation that can be considered even worse than a small rural village community plagued by locked in genetic defects by generations of intermarriage! The two “accidents” happened in the UK initially (but similar events also

took place elsewhere) that had two unexpected effects, introducing a new trait and broadening the gene pool as a side effect. A mismatch between a Siamese and tabby housecats in the second generation pointed cats with lovely stripes in mask and on legs and tails. Another mismatch between a red housecat and a Siamese (also several other incidental and some planned crosses) gave tortie and red and cream points (and combined later the tortie tabby points). Except for some registries in the US, after a lot of “cat fighting” (again <g>) amongst purists and more progressive souls, the stripes and red made it into the Siamese breed world wide from Europe to the US to Australia / New Zealand and South Africa, albeit that in America some registries separately classified them as “colourpoint shorthair” (until today CFA still does this). The boost of the several influxes of unrelated housecat blood improved genetic resistance and health well – especially the tabby points in the UK saved the breed often – giving new life to beautiful lines that had begun to literally wither away. In the US where the split was the same happened there but there “paper hanging” (falsifying pedigrees) had to be done to get the lines mingled as well as “rewriting” colours on imports having the dreaded red and stripes on the pedigrees and some “purists” still went on with the classic colours only but then those numbers started to diminish dramatically – a trend that continues until today there.

Oriental galore

In the sixties also in several different places worldwide mismatches between housecats and Siamese gave non-pointed cats people liked too – the Oriental Shorthair was born. A cat identical to the Siamese except for the lack of points and connected blue eyes. The people working with them were often Siamese breeders, but felt a new name was needed now for his daughter of the Siamese since a



Siamese by definition had points. So solid coloured, tabby, tortie, red, cream also now could be found on a complete coloured body with green eyes. While many people fancied the Siamese as a breed on its own and kept Siamese lines “pointed only” several other lines worldwide got intermingled and many pointed cats out of an Oriental parent also did well on the show bench as Siamese. Except (again) some American registries who kept matters completely separate like they did earlier with red / tabby in points, all over the world people showed and bred Siamese and Oriental as sister breeds. Some pointed cats still having only pointed ancestry but also several have the occasional non-pointed cat behind them and in most Oriental cats many Siamese ancestors could be found. What was handy was that in essence there was no problem

mixing pattern / pattern wise – the equivalents pointed and non-pointed were recognized varieties again – tortie vs tortie-point, seal point vs. black and so on, so no problems showing and breeding were encountered and all could pursue their own pattern / pattern preferences as well.

Whites

A separate place within this corner is reserved for the all-white cats of Oriental type. Here a definite split in breeding practices and end-goal can be seen in the USA and the rest of the cat fancy world. In the UK and also the mainland of Europe, people started with the aim to produce Siamese with a dominant “white cover” or genetically a Siamese with cscs blue eyes, while in the US the focus was to breed a white Oriental, so a cat who most often had C related green eyes. So until today there are “white Siamese” next to “white Orientals” and while the latter is most popular in the States, the blue-eyed cscs based one is most popular in Europe. Because in Europe Siamese people were involved with the development, they did not feel threatened by the white colour at all and gladly added this to their Siamese colour palette and maintain a strict self imposed white x non white pointed breeding policy to keep the blue eyes and thus also have an extreme low incidence of W related deafness.

Looking back to the roots

If the Oriental typed cats with and without points in Thailand and surrounding countries would have known this all had happened and understood with their far away relatives in the West, they would have smiled a bit and thought those breeders were a bit crazy – why did they not come back to Thailand and brought along the Oriental and tabby points and tortiepoints from there since they all were there already as one happy mingled family from the beginning? Only one group of cat fanciers indeed returned – they loved the blue self type found there amongst the cat population – the blue Korat from Thailand made it to breed status as a separate breed – firstly in the US and later elsewhere. Bred for a heart formed head to distinguish it from the in the mean time very elegant “long nosed” Siamese. Until today Korat people occasionally return to Thailand to look for blue kittens as they realize that keeping their chosen variety healthy involves a constant influx of new blood – in that aspect they had learned from the serious mistake made by their fellow Siamese fanciers who went on without returning. Of course the Korat people also had to face the inevitable facts of life, namely that their self blue cats sometimes carried “natural recessives”, namely points or chocolate. The points they did not like often, the lilacs they kind of “adopted” as “Thai-Lilac” albeit also here some purists frown upon this lighter shade of blue <g> and feel it “should not be

there”. Again: the original cats in Thailand, blue or pointed or whatever would have a good giggle over this I would say!

A new coat length

In the United States some longhaired kittens began to appear in the sixties in Siamese litters. The LH gene most likely had crept in via either unregistered pointed cross bred local cats that had been novice registered from 30ties to 50ties or perhaps even the LH gene (present in the Orient as well) had been carried along too and was hidden for generations. Since Americans are a bit provincial and think the world outside their own town is “foreign anyway” they took out a map of the world and found Indonesian (sic) island called Bali and decided that Balinese would be a lovely name sounding a bit like Siamese and also they recalled that Balinese dancing girls looked elegant so the long-haired Siamese were recognized as such. In due time of course the complete coloured equivalent of the Oriental also appeared, again plagued by cat breeder fights claiming all kind of silly names ranging from Mandarin to Javanese (used in the US to denote tabby / tortie / red point Balinese and in Europe (FiFe) some years for Oriental long-haired cats) to finally almost all cat people decided Oriental Longhair would be OK (big sigh of relief from this cat historian). Contrary to the Siamese vs. Oriental SH situation where stocks became mixed more and more everywhere gradually, the LH equivalents stayed a real separate offshoot. Breeders communities were not identical firstly – people more often simply like to breed either SH or LH and also this was the very first time that Siamese people really did not want a hidden factor in their breed they did not have any purpose for and which could become a nuisance later. Hence SH offspring of a LH x SH cross could be shown / registered as the SH phenotype it is, but usually is only used for breeding LH from. In this the breeding communities found some common ground and dealt with the situation rather well without much problems informally and they respect and trust each other.



Cinnamon

When until then the “new” patterns always had originally come from the Siamese bred to “something else”, be it breeding them with stripes, red, longhair or completely coloured, in the eighties and nineties some developments took place which originated primarily from the Oriental Shorthair corner only. Firstly from crosses done in the past

and more recently years between Orientals (and some Siamese to be fair) and Abyssinians also the sister gene of the chocolate gene (b), cinnamon (bl) was introduced. Initially only found the oriental version and gradually recognized by many governing bodies, also inevitably pointed versions became popular and people strived for recognition as cinnamon and fawn Siamese. Since the roots and people involved were mainly Oriental breeders, this process was much more difficult but they felt resistant to add the colour into their breed. The situation was blurred also since the ca gene, which had crept in some UK lines, had affected some lines by coincidence by the import of an American caca female, Anaarts Miiko. Once this was sorted out and affected lines cleared, and people realized that the ca nuisance was not restricted to cinnamons only (the gene pops up occasionally mostly in the so called “pure” classic lines especially the American ones) gradually there became acceptance that cinnamon was to stay both in Oriental and Siamese forms.

Silver

Silver was quite a different cup of tea as the main focus was breeding Orientals with this factor added for a long time. The initial crosses made were by either using a Persian or British Shorthair in various countries and striving for a flashy silver tabby Oriental in the end after several generations. Then also smokes were resulting and shown and shaded forms also became popular (since the shading poly-genes were brought in with some shaded silver Persian ancestors). Here the Siamese community was definitely not positive about it also resulting pointed cats that had the dominant inhibitor gene in their points. They felt this trait was something unhandy and not easy to get rid of. While smoke points and silvertabby-points (these especially once then the ground colour lies on a lovely off-white back ground in the points) can be very beautiful in the own right, it will take some time before they will become accepted as show cats in many governing fanciers bodies, albeit some have recognized them already. If and when in FiFe the day comes, clear *breeding* restrictions should be formulated since the trait is not something Siamese breeders want in their regular stock at all and they should be protected as well.

Piebald white spotting

One last factor not present in the breed group yet was the piebald white spotting gene S. However in the seventies several Oriental breeders all over the world using housecats and Cornish rexes amongst others introduced the dominant S trait resulting in flashy low to high grade Orientals by some given loving nick name “cows”. In England the longhaired versions were given a weird fancy name “Seychellois” but this was one

of the many times a specific breeder wanted to have her own mark on something that in essence was not realistic or correct. Of course also “pointed cows” resulted and here the debate amongst the breeder communities became heated. Siamese breeders had accepted a lot, but here they drew the line: they had been busy removing the last poly-genetic remnants of the S gene (white feet and lockets and belly spots) for over hundred years from their cats and now this would be re-introduced? No way! But the breeders of non-pointed and pointed “cows” loved both varieties much and many were and are shown until today and the non-pointed got recognition gradually everywhere, also in FiFe recently. If they want acceptance for the pointed versions however they should themselves behave and respect the rightful feelings of Siamese breeders not fancying the S factor. Registering them should within FiFe of course follow the EMS system sc with a SIA code (just like the SH cats carrying LH have it) And very important is that any pointed cat resulting from an Oriental or Siamese / Balinese parent with white that usually seems to have no white ALWAYS is registered as 09 – denoting it can have small amounts of white that do not show.

Decline

I know what I’m going to write now will be hard to face for some avid Siamese and Oriental fans but it has to be Addressed and said. I hope and trust this will be understood as coming from a genuine lover and a former owner of a Siamese (dearly missed) and hope can be realized since it needs writing and accepting if the breed will survive this century. The Siamese and its derived relatives are seriously on the decline everywhere. Once a very popular breed and for decades the most popular shorthair breed warranting their own best in show classifications in many governing bodies including FiFe, they have become a minority breed all over the world with fewer and fewer breeders staying with the breed and often leaving after a few years and not passing on information or history at all since they themselves do not know more than fragments. I already shortly gave one of the reasons for the decline, namely the very narrow “pyramid on top” structure of the breed and offshoots worldwide, who stem from a very small group of ancestors without much influx of unrelated blood since 1930 as from that period onward almost no one returned to the Far East anymore to get new cats. While it can be said that the influx of new unrelated housecat blood in the fifties and sixties (tabby housecats) gave the breed group a much needed shot of new genetic material, this can alas not be said anymore from the later crosses at all. The incidental events of a few cats from other breeds (an ABY, a Persian, a Cornish Rex and a housecat here and there) do not statistically mean that health improved at all – they are merely drops of yellow lemonade in a sea where the sea consists of millions of blue

drops that are already genetically almost identical. The sea therefore did not change into green but stayed the same shade of blue. Another problem is that the cat fancy is mainly a beauty breeding system. We do not breed our cats mainly for stamina, mice hunting, and longevity etc. as a main goal. Notwithstanding the fact that many ethical breeders did and do take such matter into account too. It is simply impossible when working with a locked in totally interrelated and inbred stock to reverse the tide of 100 + years of (in) breeding and main focus on striving for a specific look which in itself turned out not to be the most handy health wise either since it has become more and more extreme.

The look

The current Siamese and Oriental both in SH and LH version have changed essentially from the cat until today to be found in Thailand and surrounding countries. The original phenotype was an elegant cat, with a moderate triangular face, medium large ears and a smooth close lying coat but not the cat found today on a cat show. I have such an original Siamese at home. It is a bronze garden statue from Thailand I bought at an antique auction



years ago. A Dutch lady had bought it on holiday in Thailand around 1920. She had lived in Indonesia until its independence in 1949 and returned to Holland and then put it in her garden there to as she had done in her colonial mansion in Indonesia. A lovely half size statue of an elegant oriental typed triangular faced cat sitting with its whip tail around it and wearing a typical Thai collar with three bells to warn the birds. When she died her son brought the statue to the auction and I bought it and indeed it was so similar to the pictures of the cats imported to the UK found in my antique cat book collection! When my own “wind tunnel model” Siamese, now gone, sat next to it however the difference was very noticeable. Her skull was no longer the medium triangle but an elongated very long extreme long cephalic head type, her ears had been bred to now sit on the side of her head giving a “fly away” appearance and being of huge size compared to the statue. Her body was no longer merely elegant but was very long, thin, extremely elegant and her whip tail was a very refined whip and her legs were not yet spindly but almost there...

Health related to type change

I loved my beautiful elegant stylish Siamese with her many famous Killdown, Beaumaris and other ancestors. She however stood far away from her more sturdy muscled medium elegant ancestors in Thailand and so do all her relatives to be found for say the last 20 years on shows. With striving for more and more thin, long, elongated in head and body something has been lost in health as well. Eyes often can no longer match the slant eye sockets and cats have third eyelids showing permanently, under jaws can no longer keep up with the head becoming longer and longer and over bites appear, mouths have become so narrow at the end that teeth are missing sooner or later and a Siamese or Oriental with a complete bite around eight years with all teeth present is no longer the norm – often the small six teeth between the scissor corner teeth (so twelve in total) are no longer there and also molars so not last a life time any more. The search for more elegance also has lead to body mass loss sometimes – muscle tone is missing and this means the breed is sometimes prone to lack of calcium resulting in legs more easily breaking and during deliveries the lack of calcium, which cannot be supplied any more sufficiently by the body from the bones, can lead to labour trouble and c-sections. I am trying not to paint a doom scenario here at all but feel it is time that it is said what is experienced amongst many breeders who often feel a kind of omerta and dare not break the code in fear of becoming outcasts. The general public was the first to notice the changes in looks and also decline in longevity and turned away often in time – they knew their Siamese to be sturdy, strong, long living and getting 8 kittens without problems. They now encountered cats that were starting to look different and also did not have the same health any more nor lived until their eighteenth birthday any more. This lead to a decline in popularity and thus a decline of breeding activity.



Genetic problems

Breeders of Siamese and related breeds are facing a big problem: the awareness and willingness to tackle the present health problems, either caused by general worldwide inbreeding depression resulting in many genetic problems that were present from the start to become much more prevalent (amyloidosis, HCM, lack of resistance and other come to mind) or were caused by striving for too extreme look is very limited alas I have to conclude. While other breeds have realized it is time to act and no longer be silent and blame others, Siamese breeders often chose or feel obliged to follow the omerta code of denying and not willing to accept, share nor act to solve. Unless this mentality is changing and people realize matters are not normal, that problems are there to be faced and solved by opening up, using the veterinary testing possibilities and also by going back to the Far East to find new unrelated blood (hey guys, you have your type back in just a few generations!) I do think that the decline that began thirty years ago will continue. I really hope that more ethical (and yes, I count some of my best cat fancy friends amongst this breed group so know they are out there) people will wake up, act, work and get this lovely breed in many shades and varieties back on track. Firstly they have to show it by no longer fighting publicly over a new colour (in this case the cows) to the outside world. When they can solve such a minor problem gracefully and warmly there is hope for more changes for the better...

Obituary - Yvonne Akersten



Yvonne Akersten, Committee member of WPCC from 1974 to 2011, passed away 2 December 2011. RIP

Yvonne, Chair lady of the Western Province Cat Club passed away on the 2nd December 2011. She leaves a legacy of passion and commitment to fellow breeders, enthusiasts and most of all the cats. We will miss you, Yvonne.