

Australian National Cavy Council

Standards Review Panel.

2008 Report

Introduction

This year has not seen us having to tackle as many items of business as in previous years although the workload has been just as heavy. Most of our time has been spent in reviewing the latest British standards and amending them to suit the Australian fancy so that they are as clear as possible. This work is ongoing.

This year we would like to upgrade the Self Cream (pink eyed) to Guide Standard and to present a Working Standard for Gold/Slate based Agouti. Ongoing work is continuing with the Sheba and Ridgeback.

Ridgeback.

The SRP have had feedback from two breeders Melanie Barnes in New South Wales and Heather Harman in South Australia this year. Both are new to the breed and are only in the early stages of working out how the genetics of the Ridgeback works.

Sheba

New South Wales is the main state where work is continuing with the Sheba. We received reports from Nikki White and Dawn Klobucar. We also received a report from Heather Harman in South Australia. Karen Nichols has been working with breeders in New South Wales on the growth rate of the coat and on rosette placement. This work is ongoing with little information coming through to the SRP as yet. It needs to be stressed to breeders that any work being done such as on the growth rate of the coat or rosette placement must be done in a consistent and reproducible way. The results must be documented in writing. The SRP has received no litter records in an appropriate format despite the importance of this being stressed to breeders at their meeting with the members of the SRP in Narrandera in 2007. The breeder's reports we have received arrived very late, not giving the SRP time to consider them and respond to the breeders before this report was due.

A question put to us in a breeders report on how do you prove that the rate of growth changes when it reaches 8 inches? A very simple procedure was put to the breeders by the SRP some time ago. This involved a number of people taking a Sheba and wrapping them for 12 - 18 months and recording the coat length each month and presenting those animals at the National to demonstrate the progress. Unfortunately no breeder has taken up our recommendation as yet.

In response to comments on the litter reports it has been explained to breeders that as the document is available in an electronic format it can be modified to include as much information as the breeder wants. The onus of supplying information to the SRP is up to the breeders. It is not up to the SRP to try and get information on how breeding programs are progressing. If there are perceived problems then they need to work with us to resolve them not ignore them as unimportant.

The Sheba has been exhibited in New South Wales where the reports received from judges' state that the breed hasn't changed at all from previous years.

Last year a scathing attack was made on Karen after all the time and advice Karen had spent in trying to help with the progress of the Shebas. This sort of behaviour does nothing whatsoever to advance the cause of a breed. It is completely inappropriate behaviour and those indulging in it will be removed from any of the dialogue about the relevant breed with the SRP.

Guide Standards

No Magpies or Harlequins were exhibited during the year as far as the SRP is aware. Slates appear to be very few in number.

Proposal 1

The SRP recommends that the Self Cream Pink Eyed be upgraded to a Guide Standard

Rationale: The SRP continues to be encouraged by the presentation of this breed at the 2007 National Show, and various shows in NSW and elsewhere. The breed continues to develop, and now is being exhibited with a similar colour range to those animals exhibited in the DE Cream classes.

The Self Cream Pink Eyed will be shown in the Self AOC class.

Guide Standard for the Self Cream Pink Eyed

Feature	Description
Colour	Top colour to be lustrous and of even shade all over the head and body. Under colour to match top colour down to the skin giving an appearance free from flakiness. Hair on feet to match body colour.
Type	Broad roman nose with good width of muzzle rounded at the nostrils, short and cobby body with deep broad shoulders.
Coat	To be short and silky with a glossy sheen.
Ears	Rose petal shape set wide apart, large and drooping.
Eyes	Large and bold.
Presentation	(i.e. Condition cleanliness and grooming).

Should be a pale even colour, free from lemon or yellow tinge. Eyes pink. Ears pink/cream pads flesh pink.

Faults

As per Self standard.

Disqualifications

As per Self standard.

Proposal 2

The SRP recommends that the Gold/Slate Agouti be given a Working Title.

This variety is being kept in Western Australia by Sharon Deas. The SRP has received information and a description on what the breeder is looking for in this variety along with breeding records.

Working Title for the Gold/Slate Agouti

Ticking colour	Deep golden
Undercolour	Slate
Belly colour	Even rich mahogany, free from brassiness
Ear Colour	Blue/Slate
Eye Colour	Dark as possible
Pad colour	Blue/Slate

All other features, faults, disqualifications and description would be the same as for any other Agouti.

Faults:

Eye colour not dark enough.

Pigment not dark enough.

These faults are found in Gold/Slate Agouti crossed with the Gold/Lilac Argente as these will have lighter pigment and dark pink eyes. The eyes tend to get darker as they get older but the pigment will not change much.

Observations from the promoter of the breed:

If the eye colour is not dark enough, then neither is the Slate colour or the pigment colour. There is also the problem of overly dark Gold/Lilac Argente crosses between Gold/Slate Agouti and Gold/Lilac Argente, but it is up to the judge to assess this and make their judgement. Pale pigment, poor coloured Slate and eyes that are too pink are signs of this, just as it is for Self Slates. The colour of the eyes darken slightly as the cavy gets older, but as the eyes darken the colour also fades and the pigment does not change much, so even in a young cavy it is possible to tell if it is a true Gold/Slate or not.

I have also chosen to call it Gold/Slate like the Golden Agouti.

The best Gold/Slates are born very dark in colour and as they grow they go through a "brown stage" where they look more brown than slate and even look very like Tans as the ticking does not show up well. At the age of around 3 – 4 months they have a lovely dark slate base colour with rich golden ticking.

Proposal 3

That the elected position of Standards Book Coordinator be removed.

Rationale

The Standards Book Coordinator duties were to keep the Standards book up to date and produce hard copies of the Standards book for sale as requested by the clubs. Since the Standards book has been placed onto the ANCC website for members to access for themselves at no charge hard copies of the standard book are no longer being ordered by the clubs. We therefore feel that this position of printing the Standards books has become redundant.

Proposal 4

That the Standards review panel be expanded to four judges.

Rationale

The Standards Book Coordinator has always contributed to the deliberations of the SRP and has been in reality an ex officio member of the SRP. Therefore as the SRP has been operating as a panel of four this proposal is to make this official.

Proposal 5

If proposal 4 is passed then the following is proposed

That the members of the Standards Review Panel be elected for a period of two years with two members being elected each year.

Rationale

Currently members of the SRP are elected for a period of three years with one member standing down every year. If the panel is increased to four members asking a member to commit for a period of four years is difficult due to the length of time. For someone to stand for a two year period is not such an onerous commitment whilst still giving continuity to the SRP.

Reporting from Judges

There has been an improvement in the use of the Judges Reporting forms this year, although the usage could still be improved. The SRP again suggest that all exhibitors of

unstandardised breeds take responsibility for providing judges with forms and sending them to Ken Hart. The Judges Reporting forms are available on the ANCC website.

Reporting from Breeders

This has again been quite disappointing. We have received litter records for Shebas but not in any useful format. We have received litter reports for Ridgebacks that included photos. The SRP need to see what is being bred in each and every litter. Not just the perceived better quality babies. These are an extremely important part of the process of advancing each breed. In fact without them it becomes a pointless exercise.

All judges and litter report forms should be sent to Ken Hart preferably by email at klhart@westnet.com.au If email is not possible reports should be posted to PO Box 447 Narrogin Western Australia 6312

Robert Brown (Chairman)

Ken Hart

Karen Nichols

Ken Peddersen (Standards Book Co-ordinator)

APPENDIX 1

Ridgeback Breeder report for the past year

I have only been breeding the Ridgeback for 5 months. I have produced 4 litters from the same Ridgeback boar, (which I consider to be a good example and displaying good characteristics of the desired look.) He has been bred to 2 shorthair (smoothcoated) and 2 ridgeback sows.

The resulting litters all had the same mixture of 3 different types of coats on the offspring. This seems to be the known result.

1. Ridgeback
2. Smooth Coated (reverse hairs on feet)
3. Rosetted coat.

- I have found that those animals with a better full length ridge (from ears to hips) have the reverse hair on all four feet. (Some examples only have the reverse hair on the rear feet.)
- They all seem to have slight facial ridges, which I would recommend be a part of the standard.
- Of very hardy nature with good appetites that grow well and breed easily.
- The ridge does improve as the cavy matures

My intention is to breed ridgeback to ridgeback over a number of generations to see if the resulting litters start to produce a greater percentage of ridgebacks. If they continue to produce mixed coat types after several generations, then many genes must be involved and perhaps it would not be possible to develop the breed.

As I only have 3 ridgebacks without records of their breeding it will take me many generations to get these results.

I am keeping notes and photographic records of the results.

Sheba Breeder reports for the past year.

SHEBA MINI YAKS

I am working on looking at the placement and number of rosettes which are necessary to achieve the desired lift to the coat of a Sheba. For each baby born I make a set of diagrams (one for each side) and mark with an X where each rosette appears. I also photograph them at different stages. I am at the information gathering stage.

In the past 12 months, I lost two breeding sows and was unable to obtain more until around October. The lines I have (which I have had since around 2002), tend to throw the same sort of faults, namely a tendency to a Peruvian style frontal and around 5 to 7 rosettes mostly around the rump. This gives a rather flattish coat. The worst have been petted out. The more promising have been let run on and one boar mated with some sows from another breeder.

In addition, I have discovered that rosettes aligned around the middle of the body produce a wasp-waisted effect which is totally undesirable as the coat is flat otherwise with no lift. Equally undesirable are rosettes aligned along the rump as they do nothing to give the coat a lift either. Basically a good Abyssinian would make a bad Sheba. The more rosettes there are scattered over more of the body, possibly with splits or doubles or lifters would seem to be the thing to aim for. I will have to see if I can breed animals with these characteristics in order to come to a proper conclusion.

Nikki White
Reguli Cavy & Rabbit Stud
Canberra

Hi Robert

I have had an email from Nikki that you need a update on the Sheba.

I have only had a few litters this year, all have had at least 8 or more rosettes, as for the placement it seems to be more of a difference in the lift if the coat has more density. If the coat is thin it will lie too flat or to thick its to heavy, so try to breed from those in between.

All have had good ears, type, chops and frontal, as for the coat length seems to grow just under an inch a month till about 6 months and then slows down very rarely growing passed 8'. How this can be proved to you I have no idea.

I have not filled out any litter reports as there is no room for any information, only has the cavy name on it and when you bring these to a show no names are recorded anyway so who is to know the history of the cavy as to how it is developing except me, so I keep these records for personal use. At this point in time from what I can gather you just need to know that we are still breeding for the standard we want which I have found hard to put into words, maybe you could help us as to how we can explain the Sheba I have been breeding and showing for the past 8 years. I thought our last try was very good, the main problem I see is the coat length but with any breed you don't show or breed from anything thats not up to standard, who has perfect pigs born in every litter?

I feel there was nothing wrong with the original standard. Some people have not done selective breeding and some lines were of poor quality, these should never have been put on the show table therefore bring the quality of the sheba down. we have trying to improve this....I feel with success!

****Dawn****

Heather Harman - Wotamess Cavies 07- 08 breeding summery for unstandardized breeds

Sheba's

During the year I have had 6 live litters, average of 3 per litter, of these one was a rexed coated . 4 had insufficient rosettes, excess boars were culled (pet homed)

I boar remains for stud duties and 3 sows. These have what I feel are desirable coats. With medium density and sufficient lift . coat length on the older boar certainly isn't of a growth rate of other long coated varieties

I realize this isn't a detailed individual litter report, but more of a summery.

Ridgebacks

Litter 1

Ridgeback X ridgeback

Offspring 6 . 2 have ridges (kept sow) 2 have straight coats with reversed hair growth on rear feet. 2 had 2 rosettes on shoulder area

Litter 2

Ridgeback X ridgeback

Offspring 6. 1 ridgeback sow 4 with extra rosettes on shoulder and 1 self with reversed hair growth on rear feet

Litter 3

Ridgeback X self

Offspring 3

1 ridgeback

2 selfs

Coat lengths on them seems to be a little longish, type is very average, ear set very high.