

Self Cavies—How To Choose The Winners

By C. V. B. TAYLOR

"YOUR recent article on the ideal Self Cavy made very interesting reading," writes Mr. F. B. Willis, Stretton. "I have just made a start with whites and creams, and would like to know the best guide in selecting youngsters. What do you consider are the main features of a stud boar in Selves?"

The best way to pick out the youngsters in Selves, apart from colour, if we are selecting for show quality, are width between the ears, width between the eyes, and size of eye. You can generally make a fairly accurate selection on those lines when the youngsters are not more than a fortnight old. Do not lose sight, of course, of a well-developed baby, for puny youngsters seldom make the required grade as adults.

Most fanciers will, I feel sure, agree with me when I say that the male has the biggest share in fixing that very essential point—type. Size is also an important factor, but this can be carried to excess at times.

To a great extent I agree that we must have size in a stud boar, but I consider type and character should go a long way toward making a decision. Look at it this way. We do not, in smooth Selves, want a boar with a long raking body. One that is short and cobby in build, with a good masculine head and plenty of width between ears and eyes, is preferable. The shoulders, too, should not only be broad, but should be deep, so that we get that arch-like appearance from the nose to the middle of the cavy's back.

Colour and quality of coat must also be taken into consideration, but a breeder must go a little further than making his choice of a boar on face value alone. He must look up the family history, and that is why a record of all breeding stock should be carefully kept.

It often happens that a boar from a small litter is one that makes the strongest and best for stud purposes. If it is found to be bred from a family which is known to breed small litters, we can generally take it for granted that there is not much to worry about in reference to size.

When selecting cavies for the breeding pen, be sure that they are in really good condition, otherwise strong healthy youngsters will not be produced.

If a sow has had an abortion or dead litter, for goodness sake do not attempt to get her mated up again straight away, because she is sure to be in a very distressed and weakened state. Give her a few weeks' rest and a chance to build herself up again before placing her in the breeding pen. In the long run this will not prove a waste of time, as subsequent litters will surely show.

A Luton fancier asks if cavy manure can be used in the same manner as rabbit manure for the growing of vegetables and flowers.

It certainly can and, from experience, I may add successfully too. If it is not required for immediate use it can be buried in the garden, and I assure you there is nothing so helpful in assisting growth of both flowers and vegetables.

AROUND THE CAVY CLUBS

English Self Cavy Club

BALLOT papers for election of judges for and English Self Cavy Club's young stock and adult stock shows have been sent to all members. Will members who have not received one let me know, when one will be forwarded by return post?

New members to join the club are: Mr. G. Ward, Derby; Messrs. Fryer and Asquith, Heckmondwike; Mr. R. G. Blakeley, Dewsbury; Mrs. C. Naylor, Batley; Mr. A. A. Horne, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Mr. Horne has also registered the prefix Carram with the club.

Certificates of merit will be offered at the following shows: 5 April, Yorkshire Cavy Club; 5 April, Coalville; 17 May, Otley; 24 May, Lime Tree; 31 May, Hebden Bridge; 3 June, Wetherby; 7 June, Ossett; 21 June, Pinchbeck; 28 June, Batley; 16 Aug., Blackpool and Fyde; 28 Aug., Sandy; 30 Aug., Bentham.

Wetherby Agricultural Society will hold its centenary show, and extra prize money will be 20/., 15/., 10/., 5/.

Pinchbeck will have a self classification of ten classes guaranteed by one of our vice-presidents, Mr. F. Overton. I trust that all Self fanciers will give Mr. Overton support.—Charles J. Wilson, hon. sec. and treas., 34, Dale Street, Rawmarsh, Rotherham.

Southern Cavy Club

MISS BUFTON, Ealing, N.W.10, and Miss Brooks, Portslade, Sussex, have joined the Southern Cavy Club.

At the time of writing my last notes, when I made reference to the success of several of our members at the Bradford championship show, I was not aware that the National

Cavy Club's trophy for best rough had been awarded to our members, Messrs. Gilbert and Son. Congratulations!

The club's March show was one of the most successful held for some time. Total entry was over 90, and the judge was Mrs. Elward, who officiated for the first time as a S.C.C. club judge. Best in show was awarded to Mrs. Maunsell's tortoise and white Abyssinian, and best young or intermediate to Miss Castlemans Brown's self golden sow. The next show will be on April 7th, Judge, Mr. J. A. Armes.

Will members who would prefer Saturday afternoon table shows to our evening shows please drop me a postcard to that effect, and if sufficient members are in favour of these Saturday afternoon shows I shall do my utmost to provide two or three such events a year.

I hope soon to dispatch a copy of the club's guide book to all fully paid-up members. These have been in the printer's hands for four months, and immediate delivery has been promised.

The name of the winner of one of our specials offered last year has just come to hand. At the Gosport show on November 10th best cavy was awarded to Miss Nora Scard. Mrs. Scard was awarded best cavy at Portsmouth (Dockyard) show on Feb. 16th. Best cavy at the Sussex championship show was awarded to Master Blanchard.

Please note the following members changes of addresses: Mrs. Goddard, "South Down," Kingsnorth, nr. Ashford, Kent; and Mrs. Webb Carter, "Highlea," First Raleigh, Bideford, North Devon.

Specials have been offered at the following shows during 1952: May 24th, Redhill (Lambkin); April 15th, Coalville (Lodge); August 16th, Blackpool (Baron, Craven and Woods); August 28th, Sandy (Craven); October 4th, Redhill (Bareham); Dec. 6th, Cullompton (Trigger); Redhill (Hollings).

Subscription 5/- per year, partnerships 8/-. Juveniles under 16 years 2/6 per year. New members welcomed.—Miss Radeglia, hon. sec and treasurer, 7, Dorking Road, Epsom, Surrey. Tel. Epsom 9203.

THE result of the Southern Cavy Club ballot for 1952 is:—President: Mrs. Maunsell 19c. H. J. Lawrence 13c. Vice-presidents (3): Mrs. Bareham 13c. Mrs. Maunsell 6c. H. J. Lawrence 7c. G. Vipond 3c. Miss Bartholomew 8c. C. Cooper 5c. J. M. Treveal 7c. P. Wright 2c. Miss Castlemans Brown 18c. B. Lambkin 14c. H. Trigger 7c. Wyborn 7c. Chairman: J. A. Armes 20c. H. J. Lawrence 8c. Hon secretary and treasurer: Miss Radeglia (unopposed). Auditors: A. H. Brazil, B. Lambkin (unopposed). Committee (8): Mrs. Bareham 15c. Mrs. Maunsell 8c. R. Blake 12c. A. Gilbert 7c. G. Hocking 7c. H. J. Lawrence 10c. P. R. Radeglia 23c. H. Trigger 8c. Miss Bartholomew 14c. Mrs. Elward 17c. A. H. Brazil 12c. A. V. Harris 2c. H. B. Hollings 6c. G. Pascoe 7c. G. Tremere 14c. G. Vipond 3c. Miss Castlemans Brown 18c. J. A. Armes 13c. T. Carr 11c. A. Hartley 11c. B. Lambkin 9c. F. V. Pink 5c. J. M. Treveal 10c. P. Wright 12c. Club judges (18): Mrs. Bareham 20c. Mrs. Elward 17c. J. A. Armes 24c. T. Carr 20c. G. Hocking 11c. B. Lambkin 21c. F. V. Pink 12c. G. Vipond 13c. Miss Bartholomew 19c. Mrs. Maunsell 9c. R. Blake 22c. A. Gilbert 19c. H. B. Hollings 15c. H. J. Lawrence 18c. J. M. Treveal 26c. P. Wright 16c. Miss Castlemans Brown 25c. Miss Radeglia 31c. A. H. Brazil 20c. A. Hartley 18c. J. W. Hustler 8c. G. Pascoe 14c. H. Trigger 20c. Number of papers 36.—H. Dyson (scrutineer).

South-West of England

Cavy Club

THE South-West of England Cavy Club's young stock show will be at Newton Abbot on 5 July. Judges will be Mr. H. Trigger and Mr. G. Pascoe.

Mr. F. G. Colwill, the well-known Himalayan rabbit judge and breeder, is the club's latest member. Mr. Colwill is suffering from an affliction which renders him almost helpless without aid. He spends hours every day in his rabbitry watching his rabbits and cavies. He will shortly be entering hospital for an operation, and I feel sure that all members will join me in wishing him a speedy restoration to health. If anyone would like to cheer him up with a letter, his address is, Heaslunds, Bideford, Devon.

New members are welcome. Several old members have not yet renewed their subscriptions for 1952. Subscriptions 5/- adults, 1/- juveniles, 8/- partnerships.—G. C. Tremere (hon. sec. and treas.), 16, The Crescent, Bude, Cornwall.

Nuneaton R. Club's March show was so well supported that the showroom was not big enough. Its next show will be held at the Bull's Head, Abbey Street. Further details can be obtained from Mr. A. Emery, 73, Tomkinson Road, Nuneaton.

CAVY IN THE LARDER

ONE seldom hears of the cavy being used as a food in this country, yet old books of the Tudor period on cookery give a wide variety of ways in which to use the cavy as a food. For many hundreds of years it was regarded as an excellent and delicious food in stews, or fried with mushrooms. I remember some years ago a well-known fancier and judge trying cavy stew for the first time. It made him quite sick, but then he probably had it cooked the wrong way or not at all. Cavies should be prepared for cooking by scalding. All the wild varieties are eaten with relish in their native countries. For centuries the tender flesh and gelatinous skin has been regarded as of special value in the feeding of invalids and convalescents.

There are actually few dishes, either of rabbit or game, that would not be applicable to cavy. The smooth-haired white cavy was a great favourite. Cavy soup is a great delicacy, but it should not be made too thick, otherwise it becomes rather sickly. It is certainly very nourishing.

The common belief that the odour of cavies is distasteful to rats is quite wrong. Nor do cavies show any fear of rats.

The cavy has one characteristic that is peculiar. He is not to be trodden on. His sense and caution is illustrated in that, if you allow him to run about around your feet you cannot tread on him. The vigilance of a cavy in this respect is remarkable.

G. A. KENT.

NATIONAL MOUSE CLUB

NOTES AND NEWS

By C. H. Johnson

Hon. Secretary, Highfield, Driffield.

MOUSE SHOW CALENDAR

19 April, Rotherham (Spring Cup)
3 May, Calder Valley.

FIRST N.M.C. "FILL-THE-GAP" SHOW AN IMMENSE SUCCESS

THE first National Mouse Club "Fill-the-Gap" show, at Driffield, on 22 March, was a great success. The entry totalled 622, and when everything has been paid out there will be a balance in hand to finance further shows of the series. I have not as yet had time to get out a balance sheet, but this will be done in due course. Every penny which is made will go back to the Fancy in one way and another.

When I was dealing with the entries, my mind turned to the Leeds mouse shows of the 1930's, and particularly that held in 1936 when I had to cope with the all-time record of 1,632 entries. Compared with that, my task at Driffield was easy, but, nevertheless, much work was involved, and I hope fanciers appreciate what is being done for them. I am not mentioning this for my own glorification, but on behalf of all show secretaries who give their time and money to run a show in order that we may participate in the pleasures attached. The making of entries is little compared with the work of the show secretary, the stewards and the judges. At Driffield, the judges, Mrs. Plant and Mr. R. Ward and their stewards had a busy day and did not finish until close on 5 p.m.

I had one sadness when dealing with the entries at Driffield, namely that so many names which I used to know at the time of the Leeds mouse shows are no longer with us, or the owners have ceased to take an interest in the mouse Fancy. It has always been a source of regret to us old members that so many mouse fanciers come and go, and we do make an earnest plea to newcomers to give the Fancy a real chance and not to give it up if success does not come as quickly as expected.

Many exhibitors at Driffield would be disappointed. The competition was keen, and the coloured cards hard to come by. I had a fair share of success myself and yet was badly out of pocket, but for every shilling which I lost, I had much pleasure. It is with this in mind that we must face the money we lose. All hobbies must be paid for, and perhaps in the long run we can get more back from a livestock hobby than we can with others.

Another source of satisfaction is to see other people happy, and it can safely be said that the visitors to Driffield show were happy. Among those present were Mr. A. Day and Mr. C. Simpkins of Airedale, Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Marsden, Mr. Graves and Bill Horsley of Grimsby, Mr. L. Walker and "Jack" of Beverley, Mr. Ray Lockwood and Mr. Eric Tindle of Rotherham, and last but

not least, Mr. Percy Ashley, who had trundled all the way from Manchester on his motorbike.

Specials and donations came from my friend 10/- (best in show), "Longtails" 7/6, Airedale Mouse Club 5/-, Rotherham Mouse Club 5/-, Grimsby Mouse Club 5/-, Mr. C. B. Peters 5/-, Mr. T. H. Hillary 4/-, Mr. J. Foulds 2/6, Mr. E. Tindle 2/-, and Mr. J. Wadsworth 2/-. Apart from my own special for best in show, I distributed the remainder to good advantage, and in order to give the "also-rans" a chance, I awarded 1/- to the best mouse outside the money in the 18 largest classes. I am sure that these odd "bobs" would be appreciated. I like the 1/- for reserve and also, if it can be managed, another 1/- for vhc in the largest classes, for, when all is said and done, the difference between the first five mice in a class is often very narrow. I do not like one fancier to take everything, as often happens, while so many go without, although I like a good special for best in show; hence my own gift. Apart from this, however, I say "spread the money about." It does more good.

The visitors all made themselves useful, and to one and all, exhibitors, special donors, and stewards, I tender my best thanks, with a special "big hand" for Mrs. Plant and Mr. R. Ward for their services as judges. Dick has already proved himself a first-rate judge, and Mrs. Plant is rapidly coming to the front. Betty she was not on the judging panel year ago. In so far as my own mice were concerned, Mrs. Plant picked out the same as Mr. Marriott at Calder Valley. This stamps ability.

One last word to exhibitors. Do not be dispirited by your lack of success at Driffield. Let your failures spur you on to greater endeavours.

I have written up this show at some length because it was a N.M.C. show and, therefore, must be officially recognised. I have obtained the show stationery for 11 more shows of the same kind and, as and when necessary, they will be put on.

While I am writing up shows, I would let you know how Mr. Asquith went on with his venture at Heckmondwike, and herewith is a copy of the letter received from him in this connection:

"We had a good show. Entries for mice were above all expectations, 45 mice, 86 entries, and 31 in the challenge class. You were, of course, first with the Chinchilla that obtained best in show. I came second, and a juvenile third. Among the exhibitors were Mr. A. Day of Keighley, Mr. Day and Mr. Blackburn of Birstall, and Mr. Jowett of Bradford, along with others whose names I did not obtain.

"Mr. Milnes, the judge, was delighted, and remarked that it was 44 years ago since he won his first award for mice in our present showroom. It was also 30 years ago since I won my first award in the same spot, incidentally, with a mouse purchased from Mr. Blackburn, so you can understand with Mr. Milnes judging and Mr. Blackburn and myself as stewards we had a fine time. Thanks very much indeed for helping to make the show a success, more so with having your own at Driffield.

"You would have laughed to have seen the juvenile class; boxes of all sizes and shapes, and to top it all, a travelling box, 18in x 12in, containing two baby Self Blacks. Mr. Milnes was very kind and offered to set these youngsters off with a show cage. Such was the spirit of the afternoon."

Thanks, Mr. Asquith, for your good work. If I may add a little to your letter I would say such is the spirit of the mouse Fancy.

In a recent letter received from Mr. C. B. Peters, Rotherham, he tells me that Wilf Baldwin has been seriously ill with pneumonia. He was, however, able to add that Mr. Baldwin was out of danger. We all join in wishing him a speedy and complete recovery.

Talking about Rotherham reminds me that Charlie Peters and his merry men will stage the N.M.C. spring cup show on 19 April. Charlie is a glutton for work, a fine organiser and, in conjunction with his fellow members, can be depended upon to stage the show in a manner worthy of the highest N.M.C. traditions. I shall be writing up the show more fully in next week's issue of "Fur and Feather," and in the meantime will members be saving up their money ready to make the spring cup show of 1952 one of the best ever?

HECKMONDWIKE SHOW

The mouse section at Heckmondwike on 22 March attracted an entry of 86. Mr. Milnes, who won his first red card at Heckmondwike 44 years ago, judged and was pleased with the quality of the exhibits. Mr. C. H. Johnson's Chinchilla was best in show.

SELF WHITE.—1 Johnson; 2 Jowett; 3 Wolfenden. 8 WKS.: 1, 2 McDonald; 3 Day. BLACK, BLUE OR CHOC.—1, 2 E. Day; 3 Johnson. 8 WKS.: 1 Johnson; 2 E. Day; 3 Blackburn. A.O.C.: 1 Asquith; 2 Evans; 3 A. Day. 8 WKS.: 1 Johnson; 2, 3 Jowett. MARKED.—1 Asquith; 2 Johnson. 8 WKS.: 1 Johnson. TAN.—1 Johnson; 2 A. Day; 3 Jowett. 8 WKS.: 1 A. Day; 2 Johnson; 3 Blackburn. A.O.V.: 1 Johnson; 2 Asquith. 5 MTHS.: 1 Johnson; 2 Whittaker. JUV. (condition only): 1 Asquith; 2 Evans; 3 Blackburn. CHALL.: 1 Johnson; 2 Asquith; 3 Evans.—R. TURNER, show sec.