

THE EXHIBITION MOUSE

THERE'S SOMETHING 'STERLING' ABOUT SILVER

BOTH Angus Ridley and Alf Horne have recently questioned the use of the word 'silver' in the naming of certain varieties. Whilst I would agree that the present different meanings and possible mis-use of this word could be perplexing to newcomers, there are other names that are equally confusing. For example, Self Fawn—"Oh, but that's orange colour, not fawn"—and Cream "Oh no, that's off white".

I think novices soon adjust themselves, however, to the various names that have been allotted to each variety and so I am against any change of name of any breed.

Mr Ridley states that Silver-Greys should keep the name but this contradicts his own case for the hairs are not silver ticked but are white. Furthermore, the mouse is black and not grey.

To be critical Angus, your description of the Silver-Grey is not wholly correct. According to Grundberg's 'Genetics of the Mouse', the Silver-grey has four types of hairs inter-mixed.

1 All Black; 2 all white; 3 black with white tips; 4 black, grey and white banded. This variety is genetically unique as it carries a gene for partial albinism, ie all white hairs.

The Silver-Grey mouse has correctly been described as the Silver-Grey rabbit in miniature.

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Not the Silver Fox group. The word 'silver' is used here to describe the white ticking or guard hairs along the flanks. Possibly the confusion arises because judges often describe a Black Fox as a Silver Fox, yet the other two colours are called as such, ie Blue and Chocolate.

I see no reason for dropping the word silver as they all have ticking. Again this

mouse is comparable to the Silver Fox rabbit (note the rabbit Fancy have the same three top colours plus Lilac).

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I believe that Silver Agouti is a correct definition. The cavy Fancy have golden and silver Agoutis, and our agoutis are exactly the same as the colouring of the cavies. 'Silver' seems a natural companion to 'golden'.

The substitute term 'grey Agouti' is the old name given to this variety and reference is made to it in Ralph Blake's 'Mice and Cavies'. But what a dull name, there is no romance or appeal in it at all. I'm sure people would think of the house mouse when the word grey is used.

It is interesting to note that Bryan Makin (the originator of Silver Agoutis) was working on the equivalent of our Argente in cavies by introducing pink-eyed factor into Golden Agoutis. The cavy people call their Pink-Eyed Agoutis the Salmon Agouti. Personally, I think our name is better, 'argente' being, as Angus pointed out, the French for silver.

The Argente mouse really does have Silver coloured ticking, as the wording of the standard indicates. Yet again, the Argente Creme is well named, being a cream and silver blending of colours.

Returning to the Silver Agouti, the secretary of the National Agouti Cavy Club, Brian Emmett, has some of these mice which he obtained from Don Taylor for experimental purposes. Mr Emmett has said they are the exact equivalent of the silver Agouti cavy.

Sorry Angus, both the names given are good enough I think. TONY JONES

THEY SAY . . .

Must it always be the same faithful few?

IN reply to Mr Cook's article on Show Management I have this to say. Mr Kitchen's article in reply was very good and was very true.

I was show secretary of the London and Southern Counties Mouse Club as you all know for a while. At shows the secretary has enough paper work to do to keep him busy. He has to rely on the few willing helpers at every show to pack mice away and feed etc ready for railing back home to exhibitors. I had complaints just the same after open shows from one or two exhibitors. This cannot be helped as whatever a show secretary

does to run a show well he will always get the odd one or two who will complain. As Mr Kitchen said you can't please everyone all the time.

I have taken an active part in only one club as show secretary and I will agree with Mr Kitchen and Mr Kellet that after every show you will see time after time the same few helpers who stop behind to clean up the show hall. This should not happen; all members of the club should be prepared to do a little after the shows, not just get their mice out on arrival, have them judged, then off again as soon as judging is over. G HARLOW

Foxes are sub-standard

THE Silver Fox mice of today do not come up to the standard laid down by the National Mouse Club but still gain top awards at Open shows. Why?

The faults with all Foxes shown today are just the same as the Tans but nothing is ever said in judges' reports about these very common defects.

One reads so often of Tan on feet, creeping round tail root and behind ears. Foxes have all these faults but here it is the white that creeps in all the wrong places, not tan.

The top colour on Foxes is black, blue or chocolate, belly, inside legs, under jowls white with clean straight demarcation line along side of body with white ticking up sides of body. This ticking is the only white that should be above the demarcation line.

The feet should be white on the inside with black coming down from legs outside. Outer edge of feet should be black (or of the standard colour laid down).

I have not seen a Fox with two colours on its feet for several years. They have all white feet which is wrong and is as bad as a Tan with tan feet instead of tan inside and body colour outside. One never sees this mentioned in reports.

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Is this the breeder's fault or must one blame the judges for letting a fault like this pass. Or is it that they do not judge to the Standard but to what they like themselves.

This fault can be put right by an outcross to a Self of the same colour. Granted you will lose the good white belly, but this will come back in two or three generations. By selecting only the best you will be back in the cards again and with mice of the Standard laid down by the NMC. G HARLOW

GRIEVOUS LOSS

THE NMC has suffered grievous loss by the death of Dick Wain and Sid Berry. The amount of work which Dick did for the Fancy was untold and he always went about it in such a quiet, pleasant way. He will be sorely missed, especially by the Shipley fanciers.

Sid Berry has also done great work for the Fancy and was most enthusiastic about the future of the mouse Fancy. We are going to miss him very much indeed.

I know that all members of the National Mouse Club would wish to join me in expressing deepest sympathy to Mrs Wain and also to the family of Sid Berry.—A L EDMONDSON, President NMC

MELTON MEETING

MELTON and District Mouse Club's annual general meeting will follow the last show of the year on December 14 at 2.30 pm. Will members please note that June and I will not be standing for re-election as secretary and treasurer. TONY COOPER

NATIONAL MOUSE CLUB NEWS

The secretary writes . . .

NEW MEMBERS

A J Bristow (adult), 33 The Pondfields, Stoke Aldermoor, Coventry.

J D Brockett (juvenile), 41 Woodlands Avenue, Sidcup, Kent.

J K Cloy (adult), 14 High Street, Starbeck, Harrogate.

S Davies (juvenile), Bryn Melyn, 123 Norman Road, Wrexham, N Wales.

J C Dawson (juvenile), 28 Lindsey Road, Lincoln Green, Leeds 9.

R Hogarth (adult), Kroy Cottage, Dolton, Nr Winkleigh, Devon.

B Mort (adult), Bryn-Afon, Townfield Avenue, Farndon, Nr Chester.

R Smith (adult), 16 Corporation Street, Mansfield, Notts.

P Watson (juvenile), 9 Woodfield Road, West Melton, Nr Rotherham.

RESIGNATION

Mr Eric Kitchen has informed Mr Edmondson and me that he feels he cannot remain on the executive committee. He has in fact resigned. It was with regret that we accepted this decision. His valued opinions will be greatly missed.

CURE FOR SCOURS

I have been asked how one can cure scours in mice. I have found that if mice, especially youngsters, contract the complaint then no amount of attention will cure it. Mice are such delicate animals and go down the grade of fitness so fast that it is difficult to administer any remedy quickly enough.

However, if one wishes to try to cure the affected animal then mix about a teaspoonful of arrowroot powder in an egg cup of warm milk. Give the mouse as much as it will take with the aid of an old fashioned fountain pen filler.

Down South . . .

THE ENTRY of 608 was not tremendous and admittedly a financial loss was sustained, yet the London and Southern Counties Mouse Club's first open show for five years was an undoubted success.

All the southern members 'mucked in' and although we got off to a slow start everything went smoothly. Lesley Ash put in a lot of pre-show work for the club and she was ably assisted on the day by Tina Knight writing prize cards (which were printed by Eric Jukes) and also Tony Cooke who dealt with payment of prize money.

The two hardest workers however were Jill Cooke and Mary Dobson in the canteen. Considering the limited facilities we have at Worcester Park, they did a thoroughly good job.

We were pleased to see Ken and Pat Morton and Mr and Mrs Beach and family. Also Mr Sill and Son travelled down by train all the way from Doncaster.

I still maintain it is a waste of time to doctor mice and any ailing animal is better destroyed.

MAINTAINING SIZE AND TYPE

The only way to obtain and maintain size and type in a stud is by selection within the family. When a strain or family has been formed inbreeding is essential to stamp a feature within the stud.

Selected males possessing standardised type and size must be mated to equal quality females. Occasionally one gets a buck which is dominant for size and type but get it out of your head that a good buck mated to a second rate doe will give good results. Second rate dams are a detriment to any stud.

Litters must be culled. I never leave more than four young on any one doe and I normally leave either all bucks or all does because I find that bucks grow on faster than does in a mixed litter to the detriment of the young does.

Of course, one must not breed for size and type alone; colour or markings are also very important and therefore one has to watch all the points required by the standard.

In conclusion, cull litters for size, fix in your mind's eye the ideal and mate animals as near the ideal as possible together.

FINALE

The last mouse show of the year (Calder Valley) was on November 23. We can look back on a successful year of shows, where entries have maintained a good average.

Looking back on the mice exhibited I think mention must be made of Eric Kitchen's outstanding Broken which has won numerous firsts and several best in shows. Now we must strive to maintain this standard in 1969 and who knows, maybe you will breed the elusive flyer. S SMITH (sec)

Our grateful thanks to visiting judges Doreen and Harry and to our own Eric Smith. The only time they completely disagreed was in the award for best youngster when each went for their own mouse. Roger Edmondson was called in as referee and gave it to the Dutch, much to Doreen's delight.

There were fifteen railstock exhibitors and we thank them for their support, as without them the show would have been a failure.

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The next southern event is the Annual Cup show this Saturday, Dec 14. Would all trophy winners from last year please have the cups returned for the show so that they can be presented to the new winners.

Last year's Annual was a record for a sweepstake show of over 400 entries. Let us try and better that figure this year. TONY JONES (Press Rep)

The marked ones in London

My thanks to my excellent stewards who worked very hard all day. I enjoyed the visit immensely.

The standard of the mice was very high and some good mice went cardless. Some stock seemed to have caught cold travelling but the majority were in top condition.

MARKED DUTCH Ad 12: 1 Knight, Dutch, very good all rounder, stops on feet a bit uneven 2 Thorn, agouti Dutch, good saddle and condition, one cheek a bit ragged 3 Gilpin, black, cheek slips, strong tail r Cooke, poor condition due to cold. Under 8 wk 7: 1 Horne, black, saddle pulls slightly but cheeks excellent, also stops well defined 2 Cooke, agouti, slips one cheek otherwise good, type, very close to 1 3 Beech, blue, lovely type and condition, saddle wavy r Holland, agouti, pull on right side of saddle, good stops **AOV** Marked ad 10: 1 Heywood, 10 spot Black, two slightly even but big bold patches 2 Knight, Himalayan, ears and feet want to be darker, lovely type 3 Carter, 6 spot Black, spots brindled at rear r Purbeck, Himalayan, body should be lighter Under 8 wk 2: 1 Sill, 7 spot Broken, nice bold spots, well placed 2 Carter, 6 spot, good condition, even spots spoilt **Chall ad 18:** 1 Knight, Dutch 2 Heywood, Broken 3 Thorn, Dutch r Carter, Broken Under 8 wk 8: 1 C Horne, Dutch 2 Sill, Broken 3 Cooke, Dutch r Beech, Dutch **AOV AGOUTI** or **CINNAMON Ad 5:** 1 Hartley, Cinnamon, a bit fat but otherwise lovely type and very even ticking 2 Reice, Silver Agouti, good even ticking, could be better under 3 Reice, Silver Agouti, moult across nose spoils, feet good r Purbeck, Agouti, colour not golden enough Under 8 wks 7: 1 Hartley, Agouti, lustrous, golden, smashing condition

2 Purbeck, colour not rich enough, might improve 3 Holland, moult on face, good head and ears r Knight, too much black ticking **FOX** or **ARGENTE Ad 5:** 1 Holland, outstanding Fox, blue, shown to the minute, snow-white under and a bevy of guard hairs 2 Holland, another lovely blue Fox, even top and well ticked with white on flanks 3 S Smith, big type Argente but dull coated r Knight, chocolate Fox, good type and condition, even top, but yellow caste under Under 8 wks 7: 1 S Smith, Argente, very even throughout, nice wide skull and big ears 2 3 Robb, both very jumpy and need handling more, should win when adults r Morton, Argente, tail a bit short, nicely silvered, level top **LONG-HAIRED AA 12:** These mice were well-equipped for the cold weather, why not call them Angora? 1 Jones, very long hair overall, greatly improved strong type, really white 2 R Welch, good length of hair but just 'passed it' 3 r Jukes, good condition but hair short in places **AOV Ad 7:** 1 3 Gillespie, Seal Point, excellent condition, strong dark points and shaded correctly 2 S Smith, wonderful sized Seal Point, moult on face spoilt 3 Seal Point, all three very close r Ridley, Sable, very pleasing specimen, good colour, affected by cold Under 8 wk 6: 1 Horne, Silver Grey, a little beauty, very evenly ticked, very young 2 Ridley, Sable, moult on middle of back spoils otherwise very good try 3 Gillespie, Seal Point, good points but tail short r Holland, Chin, level top but under could be better **Chall ad 19:** 1 2 Holland, Blue Fox 3 Hartley, Cinnamon r S Smith, Argente Under 8 wks 19: 1 Hartley, Agouti 2 S Smith, Argente 3 Robb, Blue Fox r Robb, Black Fox. **DOREEN COOPER**