

BRUGES 2008

International encounter of Silkie & Poland fanciers

Text and photos: Hans Ringnalda

The European Silkie Show & International Poland Show was held in Bruges, on the 25th and 26th of October 2008. The Show was organised by the Koninklijke Angora Kleinveeclub of Bruges, in co-operation with the Dutch Silkie Breeders' Club. Apart from the 1100 animals of various breeds, 425 Silkies and Polands were present from 5 countries.

It was Tim Fahner who put forward the idea to organise a European Show to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Dutch Silkie Club, and this time it had to be a real European Show, including an international Show for Polands, as in Germany these two breeds are combined in the same Breeders' Club. But where to house hundreds of birds, and where the judges, exhibitors etc.? As it happened the 'Koninklijke Angora Kleinveeclub' from Bruges was celebrating its 70th Anniversary and wanted 'something extra' at its Jubilee Show, soon the idea was set. Bruges was the perfect place for this event, with its many shops, restaurants, museums and palaces, and its numerous historic buildings – the city centre is on the UNESCO list. Contacting Frans van Oers, the president of the Poultry Section in the Entente Européenne was the next step and he took care of the necessary 'paperwork'.

The people from the Bruges Show did a marvellous job and everything was ship-shape! Naming a few names would derogate from others' merits, still we make an exception: Rik and Jan VanHooren, Roland Lamotte and Yves Schepens from the Bruges Show committee guaranteed a spotless organisation and proved it!



Right: An international team of Judges.



The judging on Friday by 7 international Judges was an example of 'constructive' judging, resulting in many happy and content exhibitors.



On Saturday evening the exhibitors were invited in the unique gothic Council Hall of the beautiful medieval Town Hall of Bruges. Here the awarding of the Certificates, the European Champion Diplomas and the Entente Européenne Medal took place. Following the City Council offered a festive reception. Earlier that afternoon also a guided city tour around Bruges was offered.



On Saturday and Sunday this unique Show had over 11000 visitors. Coming from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Italy and England, by car, plane or ferry; they all wanted to be there. Breeders, judges, organisers and visitors.... The energy bubbled through the halls and the enthusiasm sparkled from the faces! It was one big party. Shows like this give the Fancy a future, being innovative and contemporary.

THE BIRDS

189 large Silkies and 128 Silkie bantams from 37 breeders, together with 71 Polands and 39 Bearded Polands from 13 breeders, making a total of 422 crested chickens; the largest number that has ever been entered from 5 Entente Countries in a European Show.

14 Chickens were classified as 'insufficient' with zero points, and also 14 were awarded 97 points – the highest ranking: 5 of them Silkies, 6 Silkie bantams; 2 Polands and 1 Bearded Poland. This is to illustrate the quality of the entered birds.

Some of the European Champions refused to pose for the photo; some others got "messy" because of the drinking water and didn't 'show' anymore.

**Right: Partridge pullet, 96 points.
Owner: Herman van Amerongen.**

LARGE SILKIE (NOT BEARDED)

There have been years when Bearded Silkies were so popular that there were hardly any not-bearded left. In fact this still holds for all varieties except for the White. Today 56 were entered, but 14 of them were in fact bantams.

Blue

There are hardly any Blue Silkies; still here we had 4 birds from one breeder. The colour is usually too dark, still Matthieu Leuridan (Fr) showed 4 birds in a perfectly even shade. Same as in most of the other colour varieties the size could have been a bit larger, however, comparing these with the superior white Silkies would immediately turn the breeders disinterested in breeding anything but white. Often it is a pullet that wins but this time it was a cockerel with 95 points.



Partridge

An unexpected class of 12 partridge birds by 2 breeders from 2 countries. 4 of them were in fact bantams. Still, the number of birds entered at a show doesn't tell anything about the real number of breeders. This is a difficult variety, with often the crest being black (a mingled tone is allowed) or on the average too yellow. Especially the cocks didn't look as they should. The birds Herman van Amerongen (NL) were the best, the cockerels (gaining 94 and 95 points) and the hen (96 points) had the wanted colour tones.

Left: A white cockerel by Martin Zwanenburg.

White

A class of 19 Whites (11 were bantams) had been entered by known fanciers from the Netherlands and Belgium. The bantams were removed from their pens and caged at the proper place, thus the cage numbering was no



longer in the right order, but the overall impression was much better. These were nicely sized, large birds, with only a few remarks on the wing carrying. If this can be noticed from outside the pen, a high award is not possible. A point of interest is the flat crest, inherited from the bearded Silkies. Martin Zwanenburg (NL) won with an outstanding white cockerel.

Right: Outstanding white cockerel by Martha van Dam.

LARGE SILKIES - BEARDED

Entered: 155 birds, 3 were absent.



Blue

7 Blues were entered from 3 Countries. Günter Droste (D) won with a pullet (96) with outstanding colour, volume and head.

Buff

11 chickens from 4 Countries giving the opportunity to make a good comparison. Differences in shades where obvious, still most chickens showed a nice and even tone. Some black in wings and/or tail is thought to be necessary to get the right buff tone. Patrick Tolle (D) won with an excellent pullet.

Left: Buff pullet, 97 points, by Patrick Tolle.

Cuckoo

8 chickens from Germany and the Netherlands. Although this variety has been only recently recognised in Germany and it was Günter Droste (D) who won this Class with a very good pullet that was really cuckoo (not barred) and also not too dark in tone. We noticed that all entered cockerels and cocks were in the 'dark' (heterozygote) variety.

Pencilled

This is a colour variety for the fanatic breeders. 19 birds were entered, from 2 countries and by 4 breeders, of which one entered 10 chickens. It is a pity that this colour still has such a very small basis, same as the partridge variety. Manuela Bakker, participating in a



Show for the very first time, triumphed with her chickens being outstanding in type and colour and gaining 95 and 96 points. She is also the lady who had decorated the display of the Silkie Club with her beautiful paintings of Silkies.
Left: Pencilled male and female by Manuela Bakker.





Lavender

4 breeders entered 16 chickens in this colour. The quality was not that good. Only one – a pullet from Günter Droste (D) was awarded 96 points.

Left: Lavender pullet by Günter Droste.

Partridge

12 birds from 3 breeders. The best one in this class, having an outstanding colour, was entered by Swen Baltus, the young 'enfant terrible' of the Silkie Breeders' Club (and of his parents!) This bird – a cockerel- gained 96 points, same as the pullet from Honny Kruithof.



Below: Partridge pullet by Honny Kruijthoff.



Right: Partridge cockerel by Swen Baltus.

Paint

The visitors were very attracted to this new colour variety 'paint' (like the paint horses and Frisian cattle). In Germany this colour is about to be recognised, in Holland it is far off yet. The paint birds



were entered by Bardine in 't Veld (NL).

The markings are large asymmetric black patterns on a white (as much as possible) ground colour. Due to the genetic background the white ground colour at the males is very hard to achieve.

One of the entered cockerels was very promising for the future results in this colour variety.

Left: Paint cockerel by Bardine In 't Veld.

Red

Wien Vullings (NL) entered 3 outstanding red pullets. Two of them hardly differed in nothing but the colour, the pullet with the wanted deep chestnut red won her class with 97 points. (photo right)





White

This is the colour where the Champions were expected to be, and they were. 30 chickens were entered by 9 breeders from the Netherlands and France. The high points that were awarded testify their quality: 7x 95, 2x 96 en 1x 97. Much improvement was achieved in the form and size of the crest, so 'free eyes' for the birds. Three chickens were 'top of the bill': a hen by Willemijn van Eunen (NL) with 96, a pullet by Martha van Dam (NL) with 96 and the winner, the classic example of how a white Bearded Silkie should be:

a pullet by Patrick Lanckmans (NL) with 97 points.



**Above: The white pullet of Patrick Lanckmans.
Right: A black pullet by Patrick Tolle.**

Black

As much as 41 Blacks by 9 breeders from 4 countries, so a large class with also much quality: 13x 95, 5x 96 and 2x 97 points were awarded! Still again the appearances are deceptive; the basis is small, as the larger part of this class, 32 birds, were entered by only 3 breeders. Competitors for the highest honour were Patrick Tolle (D) who entered 14 birds and Martha van Dam with 9 birds, and it was Martha van Dam who won the European Medal for the Best Silkie – a white hen with 97 points, although the difference with Patrick Tulle's pullet – also 97 points, was less to nothing. Still you can only have one Champion of the Show.

Links: Martha van Dam with her black bearded pullet who won Best in Show.

Photo: Dirk de Jong.



In conclusion: There is lots of quality in Europe Silkies, but the base is still very small! Extremely large crest or the 4th and 5th toe setting too wide apart are things that are (almost) no longer seen. Good free sight is also realised by the Bearded Silkies. Points of interest still are: wrong wing carriage, noticeable from outside the pen and flat or drooping crests.

SILKIE BANTAMS

A total of 128 bantams were entered; 19 were falsely entered as Large Silkie. Different from the Large Silkies, the not-bearded bantams are more popular than the bearded ones.

Buff

The rows opened with 15 buff bantams, entered by 5 breeders from 3 Countries. It is striking to see how soon this new - and difficult to breed - colour variety has become popular in diverse countries. Matthieu Leuridan (FR) won with an ideally tinted pullet (96 points). (photo right)

Partridge

17 birds by 3 breeders from 3 countries. Same as in the Large Silkie, this is a colour very difficult to breed. 4 were falsely entered as Large Silkie but were Bantams.

Yorick Schaeffer (NL) entered the best bantams in colour and type. With 8 bantams he scored an average of 94.38 points and showing an excellent pullet with 97 points is indeed an achievement!



Left: Partridge pullet by Yorick Schaeffer



Lavender

As backyard poultry the lavender Silkie bantams are very popular, but at the Shows they are not! Often they are larger than wanted. In this row of 10 – entered by 2 Dutch breeders - we did find one of the Champions of the Show: a pullet by Margré Feijen with 97 points. The 4 lavender birds from Germany that were falsely entered as Large Silkies, were of average quality.

Left: Lavender pullet by Margré Feijen.
Below right: Red pullet by Hans Ringnalda.

Only one red pullet was entered by Hans Ringnalda, but she showed the wanted deep red colour and gained 95 points.

White

A large class of 43 bantams, but again by only a few breeders: 7 from 3 countries. 11 bantams were falsely entered as Large Silkie. Here the Grand Master, Gerben Stigter from the Netherlands, excelled! All bantams with 96 or more points were entered by him; he showed 7 bantams with an



average of 95.71 points! He even achieved to bring the Best Collection of 4 wit 385 points, being an average of 96.25. One of these 4 was a beauty of a pullet that gained the max 97 points.

Right: White pullet by Gerben Stigter.

Black

In Blacks, the best birds were also from Holland. 9 bantams from 2 countries were entered. Fine, small sized bantams with the characteristic blue earlobes and showing their wattles (as they should, being not-bearded! Hans Ringnalda showed the Best in this class; an excellent pullet with 97 points.

BEARDED SILKIE BANTAMS

31 bantams were entered from 2 Countries.

Blue

Jutta Perthun (D) entered 8 Blue Bearded bantams.

The remarks were the same as with the large Blue, especially concerning the colour. 2 Pullets gained 95 points.



Buff

9 birds by 2 breeders from 2 countries; 8 of them were entered by Jutta Perthun. One of her pullets, excelling in every respect, was awarded 97 points. (photo left)

Lavender

5 bantams from Holland, which were of average quality.

White

Two hens by Pim van der Wouw (NL), both outstanding with 96 points.

Black

6 Birds by Jutta Perthun, from which one had 96 points and the other 97 points. Excellent bantams without a negative remark.

Right: Bearded black pullet.

Owner: Jutta Perthun.

In conclusion: Same as with the Large Silkies; high quality birds but the base is very small! Points of interest at the females: Azure blue earlobes and visible wattles!

**The photos in the next page are by:
José Van Isacker, with our thanks to the Silky Club.**



Louise Oome



Manuela Bakker



Margé Feijen



Bardine in't Velt



Groeten uit Brugge



Yorik Schaeffer



Sabine Eijpe



Sven Baltus



*Rechts: Günter Drost
Links: Martin Zwanenburg*



*Photos:
José Van Isacker,
with our thanks to
the Dutch Silkie Club.*

THE POLANDS

A class of 70 entered birds, 4 being absent, by 9 breeders from Germany and the Netherlands. Hardly any more colour varieties still exist then those that were shown here, with often only 1 or 2 specialist-breeders per variety. In other words: our Heritage is really endangered!



Blue white crested

5 birds by Wim Diepenbroek (NL). Two of them being outstanding pullets qua crest and colour and gained 96 points. (left, photo Dirk de Jong)

Buff white crested

Another 5 birds from Diepenbroek. Due to animal-friendly housing (outside!) their colour was a bit uneven, but they had perfectly rounded crests. The 2x 93, 2x 95 and 1x 96 points speak for itself!



Cuckoo white crested

Here the same holds as with the Buff white crested, also the points.



White

7 Birds from two breeders. Wim Diepenbroek achieved a top performance: 384 points with a collection of 4 chickens. The Best Poland Overall was one of his white pullets with 97 points. As one of the pullet's secondaries was 1 cm shorter (...!) the judges wouldn't let it win Best Bantam in Show – apart from the Silkie Class. (That Honour went to the white Watermael Bearded Bantam pullet of Noel de Rycke).

Left: The winning white pullet by Wim Diepenbroek; Best Poland bantam in Show.

Black

Only Dutch birds were entered. Best was an outstanding pullet with 96 points by Dick Nijland, also gaining Third Best Overall.

Black white crested

With 28 entered Birds, this was the only Class with real competition. Outstanding bantams with nicely rounded crests had been entered by Cees de Nekker (NL), Franz Evers (D) and Arjan Fiktorie (NL). Same as Diepenbroek did at the Whites, here Cees de Nekker achieved to show 4 young Black white crested Polands that gained 384 points in Collection. What a superb quality!

Right: Black white crested cockerel.
Photo Dirk de Jong.

Below: Black white crested pullet, both birds by C. de Nekker.



Mottled white crested

Again a solo action by Diepenbroek with 5 birds. One pullet was awarded 95 points.

FRIZZLED WHITE CRESTED

Only 3 birds; 2 white crested cuckoo pullets by Combination Gahrmann (NL) with 94 and 95 points and one white pullet by Ronald Ouwehand (NL) with 94 points.

Right: A frizzled white crested cuckoo bantam pullet by van Comb. Gahrman.

BEARDED POLANDS

40 Bearded Polanders were to admire, amongst them 15 in the Frizzled variety. In fact the Breed is not in a good situation. The average quality is rather poor and the number of breeders can be counted with the fingers of one hand. A blessing in disguise that hardly any renowned German breeders had entered, or else the Dutch birds would have been wiped out completely.



Buff and chocolate

Stanislaw Roszkowski (P) entered 3 in Buff and 2 in Chocolate, both not recognised colour varieties. The two Chocolates were outstanding birds, but the Buffs were not at all perfect in colour, crest and beard.

Buff white laced/Chamois

Only 2 birds of average quality, from a Polish breeder, while we have such fine birds in this colour variety in the Netherlands and Germany. These were not entered here, alas.



Blue laced

4 Chickens were entered; a cockerel by Thomas Niemeijer (D) had 94 points and this was high enough to win Third Best in the Polands.

Gold laced

4 Dutch birds, of which the Best had 93 points.

Black

7 Birds from Germany and the Netherlands. Thomas Niemeijer showed the Best and Second Best with two pullets that were both awarded 96 points. His blue laced cockerel was Third Best.

Left: Black bearded Poland bantam pullet by Thomas Niemeijer.

FRIZZLED BEARDED POLAND

Buff white laced/Chamois

2 Pullets by Luuk Hans (NL) of which one gained 96 points and was Best of Frizzled Bearded Polands. (photo right)

Blue laced

Norbert Niemeijer (D) showed 1 pullet; with 95 points it was Second Best of the Frizzleds.

Black

12 birds from German breeders. Three of them scored very good with 95 points, especially the cockerel of Norbert Niemeijer, being Third Best of the Frizzleds.

In conclusion: The number of breeders, the number of entered chickens and the quality of the Bearded Polands at this Show was alarming.



EE-medal

The Medal of the Entente Européenne was won by Martha van Dam with a Black bearded Silkie with – of course - 97 points.



European Champions

According to the rules of the Entente, the European Championship is won by the best bird from a Class of at least 16 birds entered from at least 2 Entente Countries, which is awarded a minimum of 95 points.

10 Breeders from the Netherlands, 4 from Germany and 1 from France were honoured with this Title.

Championship Banners

Two Championship Banners had been donated for the Collection of Four chickens with the highest points.

At the Silkies, the Best Collection of Four was won by Gerben Stichter; 4 White Silkie bantams with 385 points.

At the Polish chickens, both Cees de Nekker – with Black white crested Polands – and Wim Diepenbroek – with White crested Polands – had their Collection of Four awarded with 384 points. The Championship Banner was won by Cees de Nekker.



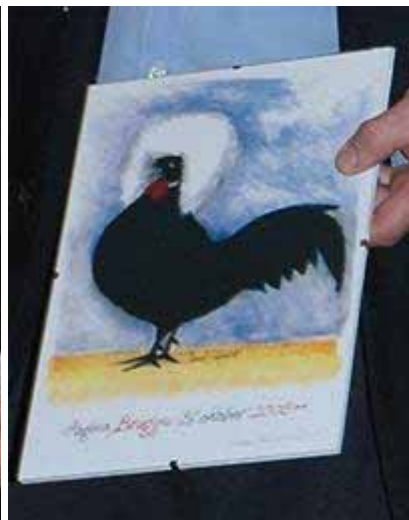
Trophies

For the Best of White Crested Poland bantams: Wim Diepenbroek with a white pullet, 97 points.

Second Best - other sex: Cees de Nekker with a Black white crested cockerel, 96 points.

For the Best of Bearded Polands: Thomas Niemeijer with a Black pullet, 96 points.

Second Best - other sex: Norbert Niemeijer with a Frizzled Black cockerel, 95 points.



Other prizes

Each participant received a memory medal and an engraved glass. The Best of each colour variety – if a class of 9 birds or more – received a Certificate.

Each participant also received a unique drawing by the known artist Camiel Vrielynck. These drawings were especially made for this European Event.

Also prize money could be won: 10, 20 and 30 euro.

Right: Martha van Dam was presented a full-size Silky made of Belgian Chocolate.

