

THE MAKHANDA STORY

By MARY FRANCES PLATT

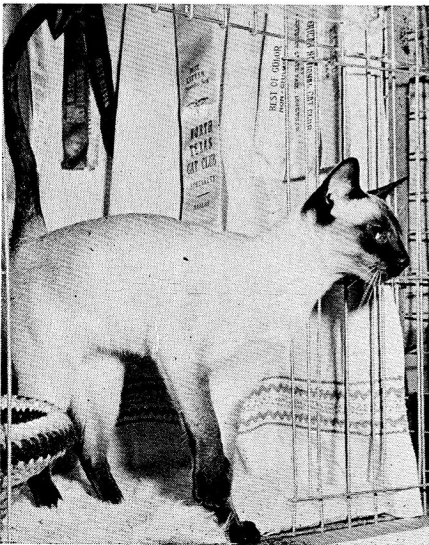
In June, 1961, when the announcement came of our first All-American award, I was stunned. Although she had made a consistently good showing, becoming the first CFA Grand Champion bred in Houston, and had on the preceding year made the surprising wins of All-Southern kitten and Seal Point female, Maraca had never taken a Best-in-Show win. The Siamese competition is strong in this area, and while the classes are relatively small, the uniform good quality of the cats entered is remarkable. Another problem was the scarcity of CFA shows in this region. For years there have been only one or two All-Breed clubs within a 300-mile radius, another at 500 miles, and a few others at 800 to 1000-mile distant. Due to this factor alone, it was exceedingly difficult for



Mrs. Platt with Willa

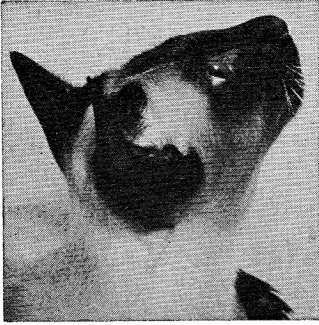
loyal CFA affiliates to accumulate enough points to win in nation-wide competition. Under these circumstances, for a novice breeder to win

a place on the "Top Ten" list was truly incredible. Marauder, a Seal Point male, went on from Highest Scoring All-American kitten in 1961 to Opposite Sex Shorthair on the following year, when CFA honored our Siamese with the Hydon-Goodwin Award. A fantastic stroke of luck seemed the only explanation. During the next year and a half, a series of misfortunes took all except two females of our original stock, together with a number of promising young cats, including all of Maraca's only litter. I felt that this was the end of our breeding program. Then, early in 1963, six weeks after the death of their sire, a litter of kittens was born that put us back in business again. Among them was Matil, who was with us only a



Maraca

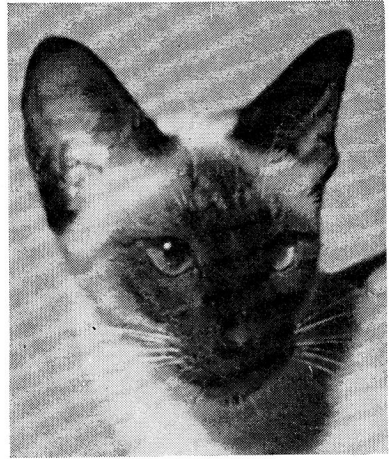
short year and one-half, but will never be forgotten by those who knew and loved her. A CFA Grand Champion at eleven months and Opposite Sex Shorthair, 1964, she and her brother, Gizmo II, won for us the *Year Book*, 1966



Marauder

Jack's beanstalk. What better time to retire!

Even as I pondered, an exciting litter of kittens, nearly identical in appearance, poked their black noses from their nursery box and postponed retirement indefinitely. One of these babies, granddaughters of Gr. Ch. MaKhanDa Marauder and sired by Ch. MaKhanDa Gizmo II, rose from the novice class to Grand Champion in three shows, winning the All-American award in 1965 and Cat of the Year, Opposite Sex, in 1966, shown in CFA shows exclusively. With the exquisite Gr. Ch. MaKhanDa Willa, our fourth CFA Grand Champion, and fifth All-American cat in six years, even I doubted that luck alone could account for these exceptional cats.



Matilda

Despite eight years of experience in breeding Seal Point Siamese, I still consider myself a novice in the Fancy. Having been occupied necessarily with more lucrative pursuits, I have given little time to the available books and journals giving important information on genetics, nutrition, grooming, and all of the tips and tidbits which might have proved valuable. The knowledge that I have gleaned during these years of living with the Siamese has come primarily from advice and experience, and should be viewed accordingly.

The story of the MaKhanDa Seal Point Siamese might be considered a demonstration of a way in which a novice in the Cat Fancy may develop a line which rather consistently produces animals of similar appearance, and having qualities that are desirable in the show ring. There is no secret of success, as anyone can learn to play this game who can meet these basic requirements:

1. The ability to love and understand the Siamese in all of their varied moods, and to respect the individuality of each cat as a living, feeling, intelligent creature.

the pet store kittens by a pair of nice, though Kink-tailed Seal Points, that I had owned briefly before the housing problem of World War II forced me to give them away.

The search for a kitten began via the newspaper classified section. One of the calls introduced me to show cats and to an enthusiastic newcomer to the Fancy, Mrs. Tommy Brodie, who was already up to her eyebrows in cats, pedigrees, and rosettes.

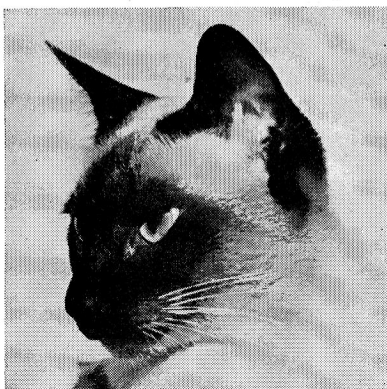
"I'm not interested in a show cat, only a nice pet for the family," I declared. Then there appeared a skinny little waif of a kitten with wispy coat and unbelievable deep blue eyes, tilted outrageously at the corners, and the solemn, remote manner of a minute goddess. Being only mortal, I fell under her spell, paid the astronomical sum of \$75, and took her proudly home. The family agreed that this was much more desirable than a mouse.

In time Ting, named Usaf Shooting Star on her twenty-foot long pedigree, became a cat, with the same exquisite eyes now framed in a mask of deepest seal, and a sleek coat over her long, fine-boned frame. Alert to her maturing beauty, Mrs. Brodie arranged to have her shown. When she won her championship, we were caught up in the whirlwind of this mad, joyous, heartbreaking, and perennially captivating world of the Cat Fancy.

As the offspring of a Cuthpa — Palos Verdes male, Gr. Ch. Interceptor of Usaf and a pure Cuthpa female, Ting inherited the intense pigmentation of eyes and points, the fine bone, good head type, and extreme eye slant of her Amdos and Prestwick forebears. Now with a more critical eye, even her loving owner could see that she had a nose dip, a rather long and dark coat, a soft body, and ears that were a trifle small for her long wedge.

Mrs. Brodie was an ardent and energetic disciple of Price Cross (Mao cattery) and Mrs. Pauline Cuthbertson (Cuthpa cattery), and she convinced us of the wisdom of breeding back into the line. Without a great deal of understanding why certain cats far back in the pedigree were so important, we obediently adhered to this policy in acquiring most of the cats which were added from time to time over the next two years.

In 1958, we acquired four cats, which were to make important contributions to our cattery. Palos Verdes Invader, a Seal daughter of Gr. Ch. Palos Verdes Avatar x Ch. Palos Verdes Tapa Tam, was purchased by my Cynthia, who wanted a cat of her own to show. Invader, known as Sis, was a joy to own, if not a great beauty. Gregarious, alert, and fun-loving, she was quite the opposite of our sedate and regal Ting. Sis was a larger and heavier cat than Ting, and lacked the intense pigmentation in her eyes and points. Her coat was better in color and

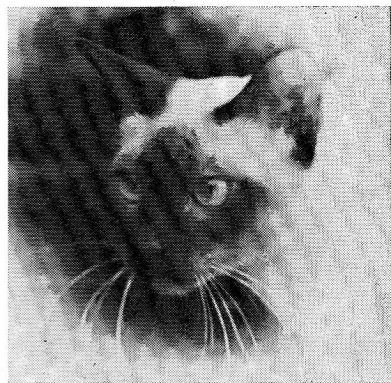


Ch. USAF Shooting Star of MaKhanDa

shortness, but coarser in texture. Shown under nine judges, she collected only one winner's ribbon, but she proved her worth in her daughter, Maraca.

We had a fling at Blue Point breeding with Blue Orchid of New Moon, bought from Mrs. Georgia Headley by Marcia, who still prefers the blue coloring. Blue Orchid, called Luna because of her pale silvery body and point color, loved people but not cats. She was a red ribbon winner, short in neck, body, and tail, with small ears, roundish eyes, and a prominent brow. On the other hand, her eye-color was good, her coat was short, silky, and close-lying, and her legs were long and slender. Although she produced some excellent Blue Point males when bred to Gr. Ch. Interceptor, and later to her half-brother, Ch. Fan-T-Cee Firefly of Dazzling, we decided to concentrate all our efforts and resources on the breeding of Seals, and let the Blues go. Since Luna could not adjust to the other cats and had to be caged, she was given to a loving home as a pet, and after raising a litter of Seal Points (X-Mikado) to continue her line, she was spayed. One of her daughters, bred to a half-brother, Marauder, gave us Karlah, a Seal Point too good to have never been shown. In type and color she closely resembles her daughter, Willa.

While on a trip to California in the summer of 1958, we acquired a Chocolate Point female, Dark Gauntlets D'Esprit, from Mr. and Mrs. Leigh Manley. Known as Sprite, she was a quiet, independent little cat. While her body was dainty, firm, and nicely proportioned, her head type left much to be desired. Her eyes were too wide open to appear slanted, and she had a noticeable nose dip and whisker break. Although her coat was short and kept its pale color, it was not as close-lying as we wished. Sprite did well at the shows, winning Southern Chocolate Point Female in 1959.



**Gr. Ch. Dark Gauntlets
D'Esprit, Chocolate Point**

While her kittens inherited her head faults, these defects diminished in the following generation.

In 1958, the Seals were bred to Interceptor, but the breeding was too close and serious faults made out-crossing imperative. For a stud to complement our females, Mrs. Brodie suggested that we write to Mrs. Adolph Olsen, of the Medicine Lake Cattery, which was producing outstanding cats with the qualities we needed. Mrs. Olsen sent us Medicine Lake Mikado, who was a disappointment in the show ring, but later proved to be our greatest asset, together with Interceptor's daughters out of Ting, Luna, and Sprite. Known to us as Mike, he was a heavy boned cat of medium size, whose long head and neck made his body and tail seem short. His deep-set eyes appeared small and the color was not remarkable. His assets, however, were exactly what we

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had wanted — large ears that matched the wedge, a straight profile, and a short silky coat that lay fairly close despite a good bit of undercoat. Mike collected only one winner's ribbon during his show career. He had no "stage presence." His legs collapsed and his ears pointed left and right instead of up and forward as they did at home. After that season, Mike was a home-body, shown only at our Houston show, where he was twice honored as Best Siamese Sire, judged by his offspring. With his



Medicine Lake Mikado of
MaKhanDa and Ellie Olson

first mating (x Palos Verdes Invader), Mike sired our first show cat bearing the MaKhanDa prefix, Maraca, bred and proudly shown by thirteen-year old Cynthia. That same year, Mike's son (x Shooting Star), began his show career. Bred to Minx (Interceptor x Shooting Star), Mike sired a beautiful litter of kittens, all sold as pets before their value was realized. One of these, Mikaboi, was borrowed before he was altered to be bred to Gidget, a daughter of Interceptor x Dark Gauntlets D'Esprit. A female offspring from this pair, Gr. Ch. MaKhanDa Gismet of Blue-Iris, was shown by Mrs. Erolyn Snelling, winning All- Southern honors in 1963. Her brother, Gr. Ch. MaKhanDa Gizmo, I kept for breeding.

A half-Cuthpa cat came to us unexpectedly, when early in 1961, Mrs. Pauline Cuthbertson, pleased with the results of our Medicine Lake outcross, allowed us to breed the aging Ch. Cuthpa D'Ista to Mikado. For this breeding, we kept Cuthpa M'Kista, probably the last of the cats to bear that proud name. Bred to Gizmo, M'Kista produced the exquisite Matil.

These cats comprised the total of our foundation stock. Palos Verdes Invader was lost, together with Medicine Lake Mikado and our own Gidget, during a trying period in the spring of 1962. Invader left no progeny to us except Maraca, now spayed, for in those early years most of our kittens, including many fine ones, were sold as pets to be altered. Palos Verdes, however, is still represented in the current pedigrees through Gr. Ch. Interceptor's daughters.

Of the original breeding stock, Ch. Usaf Shooting Star was nearest the standard in type, depth of color in points, eye-color, and eye-slant, and these were the qualities with which she endowed most of her offspring. So strong were these traits in the Cuthpa line behind her, that they have appeared in many of her descendants for several generations. Through her son, Marauder (x Medicine Lake Mikado), and his offspring, Karlah, her assets are plainly visible in Willa. Shooting Star's faults were usually overcome in her offspring by Mikado's strength in transmitting his assets to his progeny. The large ears and ear-set of Mikado have been passed through several generations. Al-

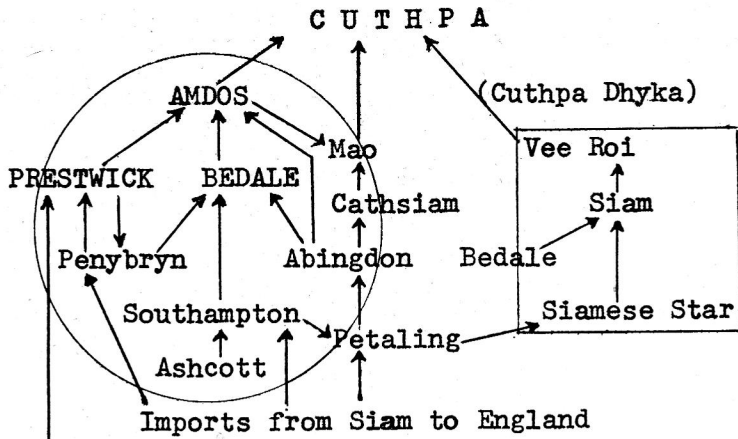
though the straight profile was not consistent in his offspring, the nose dip was always modified, and by doubling back on Mike's pedigree, the straight nose often reappeared. His coat gave immediate improvement to the longer, rather gray coats of Shooting Star and her daughter, Minx. Mikado's heavy bone structure has been rather a problem. Although all of his kittens were finer-boned than he, few were as fine as the Cuthpa cats behind them. This deficit was at least partially overcome by bringing in the Dark Gauntlets strain with its Amdos-Prestwick strength, and by drawing in more of the Cuthpa line through Cuthpa M'Kista.

The immediate improvements which resulted from combining the Cuthpa and Verdes Palos with the Medicine Lake bloodlines may be attributed in large measure to that quarter of the Medicine Lake pedigree based on the cross with Ch. Cuthpa Nuzano, an outstanding Seal Point male owned by Price Cross. Mrs. Cuthbertson, working in cooperation with Mr. Cross, developed her Cuthpa bloodline largely from the famed Amdos cats of Mme. A. M. d'Ollone. The Amdos line was based on a pair of Seal Points, Prestwick Plush (a sister of Prestwick Polka, owned by Mrs. Frederick Hokin of the Dark Gauntlets) and Ch. Padriac of Bedale, and a pair of Blue Points, Ch. Celeste, from the Abingdon strain, and Ch. Sayo of Bedale. The Amdos cats were selected and bred for type and eye-color, rather than for coat color.

Padriac was described in *Our Cats Magazine* (June, 1944), by Agnes Avata, who judged him at the 1943 Empire show, as a "fine Siamese of excellent type . . . short, close lying coat, slender legs, small oval feet, and wonderful eye shape and color." Sayo of Bedale, the first Blue Point to win a championship in England, was said to have "Marvelous type which he transmits to all of his get, a fine head, genuinely Oriental eyelids, and deep blue eyes with a superlatively beautiful coat in both texture and colour," recorded in *Our Cats Magazine*, June, July, August, 1943.

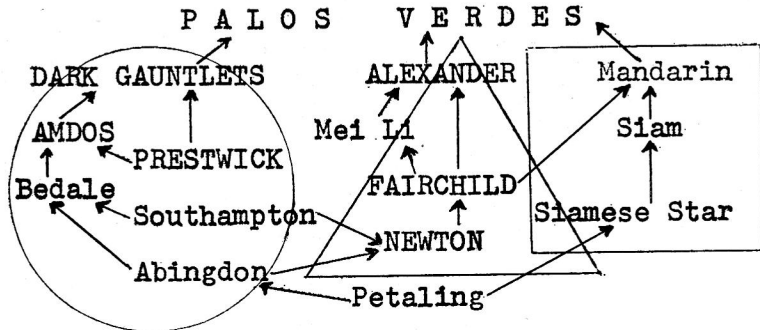
In the CFA Yearbook, 1961 Mrs. Carlon Boren wrote at length on the Amdos cats, with their long Prestwick heads, dazzling Bedale eye-color, firm slender muscle structure, flat silky coats and tall pricked ears. Before Mme. d'Ollone's death, Mr. Cross purchased two cats, Amdos Imperator, a son of Ch. Sayo of Bedale and Amdos Plooshka (Ch. Padriac of Bedale x Prestwick Plush), and Amdos Celepa, a daughter of Ch. Padriac of Bedale and a Blue Point, Amdos Celeyo (Ch. Sayo of Bedale x Ch. Celeste).

According to *Our Cats Magazine*, Mme. d'Ollone showed Imperator for Mr. Cross at Empire "where he took . . . Best Siamese Opposite Sex, quite a record for a youngster barely out of kitten class." Imperator was bred to Cathsiam Indeg, imported by Mr. Cross, producing Mao Seal Nuzzaboi, described as fantastically typey and dainty. Nuzzaboi was bred back into the Amdos line to Cuthpa Anavist, a daughter of Amdos Atavist (Ch. Padriac of Bedale x Prestwick Plush) and Mao Seal Angelina, a Seal Point bred by Mr. Cross from his Amdos pair. The mating of Nuzzaboi and Anavist produced Ch. Cuthpa Nuzano, who was chosen by Mrs. Olsen as a mate for Ch. Wee Sal of Medicine Lake. Their offspring, Ch. Medicine Lake Wee Zano Kitty, sired the famous Gr. Ch. Medicine Lake Tex-xess Rose and also our own great sire, Medicine Lake Mikado.



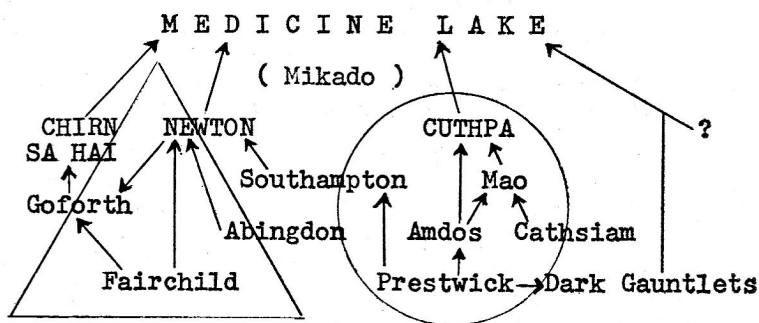
Ch. Bonzo and Ch. Simple (also behind Bedale, Southampton, Petaling, and Siamese Star)

The Cuthpa line behind Shooting Star and her sire, Interceptor, contains an outcross through Cuthpa Dhyka, a Seal Point female from Flick Purr of Vee Roi (bred from Siam and Siamese Star lines) x Dhyani of Khyber, an offspring of Amdos Padilou (of the same breeding as Atavist and Plooshka) and Khyber's Pinta, of Amdos Prestwick, Abingdon and Bedale strains. Mrs. Cuthbertson felt that the dilute factor which appeared in some of her cats came from Cuthpa Dhyka, who produced (x Amdos Imperator) Ch. Cuthpa Dhympo (All-Southern, a Blue Point male, 1949), who sired all of the Siamese colors. Dhympo, bred to the lovely Blue Point, Ch. Cuthpa Linale, produced Ch. Cuthpa Dhyoli, the sire of Gr. Ch. Interceptor of Usaf (x Palos Verdes Dazzle), bred by Mrs. Helen Weiss. Dhympo and Anavist produced Ch. Cuthpa D'Ista (All-Southern Seal Point female, 1952), the dam of our Cuthpa M'Kista and the maternal granddam of our first cat, Ch. Usaf Shooting Star.

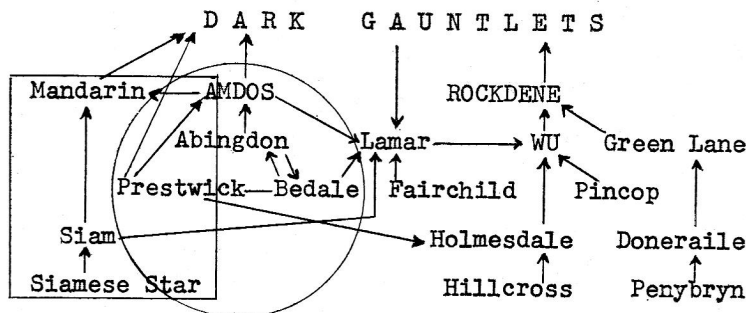


The Palos Verdes bloodline of Dazzle repeated (three times) the Prestwick imports of the Amdos line, through Tapa of the Dark Gauntlets back to Ch. Amdos Celsaya (Ch. Sayo of Bedale x Ch. Celeste) and her famous son, Ch. Pagan of the Dark Gauntlets (x Prest-

wick Polka). Tapa and Ch. Mandarin's Blue Chips produced the sire and dam of Gr. Ch. Palos Verdes Avatar, 1953's Highest Scoring Short-hair. The Madarin line goes back through Ch. Mr. Blue Nilambo to Ch. Oriental Nanki Pooh of Newton, and appearing four times behind Blue Chips, Ch. Siam's Chief Nada, of Siamese Star (Prince Favo), Bedale, and Petaling ancestry. The Alexander line is represented by Alexander's Tamelik Yongen, sire of Ch. Palos Verdes Tapa Tam (x Tapa of the Dark Gauntlets). Out of Mei Li bloodlines, Tamelik Yongen came from strains of Fairchild's stock out of Newton lines, including Ch. Oriental Nanki Pooh of Newton, who, with his son, Fairchild's Pang Yo of Newton, appeared three times on this pedigree. Listed twice, with her daughter, Fairchild's Mei Lan of Mei Li (x Fairchild's Pang Yo of Newton) was Ch. Nyima of Newton, bred by Jean Meunier from King Kambus and Naga of Yates-de-Airy.

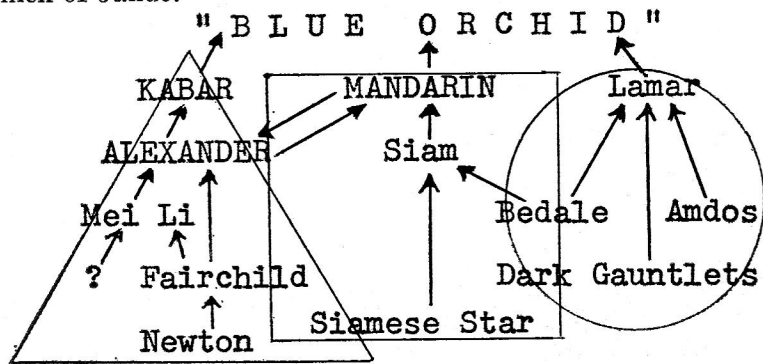


Repetitions of many of these bloodlines occurred in the Medicine Lake pedigree. In addition to the Amdos-Prestwick-Bedale complex, the Fairchild and Newton lines appear again, adding the All-Eastern Seal Points of 1947, Ch. Newton's Yan Tana of Chindwin and his daughter, Ch. Chindwin's Lantana. Also from Newton and Fairchild stock was Ch. Goforth's We Wun. While the maternal great-granddam of Medicine Lake Mikado descended from four generations of cats bearing no cattery names, and a few Foundation Record registrations, the fifth and sixth generations surprisingly showed the name of Alastor of the Dark Gauntlets no less than five times. Alastor, a Chocolate Point male, was bred in 1940 by Mrs. Hokin from Prestwick Polka, brother of Mme. d'Ollone's Prestwick Plush, and Pushkara, bred by Jean Meunier.



Our Dark Gauntlets Chocolate Point, "Sprite," proved to be a sound investment, with her grandsire, Ch. Pagan of the Dark Gauntlets, appearing twice on the pedigree to add the great strength of the Amdos-Prestwick-Bedale-Abingdon crosses. Pagan was first shown at the age of nine years and continued as an active stud until the age of about seventeen years. A smaller contribution to this pedigree was made by the Mandarin line with Mandarin Blue Mist, a daughter of Ch. Mr. Blue Nilambo x Mandarin Evening Star (sired by Amdos Sycel). Sprite's sire was a Chocolate Point from Lamar (Ch. Lamar's Rocca, Ch. Lamar's Toto and his sire and dam, Satyr, of the Dark Gauntlets and Ch. Lamar's Kuan Yen, All-American Blue Point in 1948), Millbrook (Ch. Millbrook's Ping Pong, All-Eastern Seal Point in 1952), and a number of English lines, including Prestwick (Ch. Prestwick Penglima Pertama). Many of these Chocolate Point Siamese took All-Eastern awards in the 1950's including Ch. Green Lane Vance, Ch. Wu Taffeta of Rockdene, Ch. Beauchat Brunnesceus Lynn of Wu, Ch. Doneraile Brun Malvana, and Regal Pastelle of Wu.

When "Sprite" was brought into our seal point breeding through her daughters (x Gr. Ch. Interceptor of Usaf) we saw immediate improvement in body type which had been coarsened by the crosses to Mikado, and in shorter coat length with less undercoat. This coat appeared first in Gizmo (Gidget and Mikaboi), a magnificent cat of predominantly Cuthpa-Amdos-Prestwick, etc., bloodlines, with enough of the Medicine Lake stock, through his grandsire to improve the profile and ears. Although somewhat dark in coat, he had a long, rangy frame, covered by a short thin coat that showed the contour of the firmly developed muscles beneath. His head was difficult to fault, with a long wedge and eyes of deepest violet and excellent slant. Bred to Cuthpa M'Kista, he sired Matil and her two champion brothers, Gizmo II, and Gimmick of Jando.



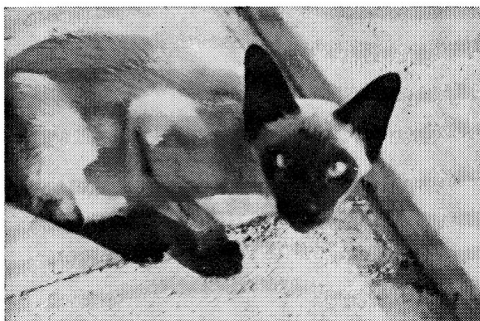
The Blue Point female, Blue Orchid of New Moon, was descended from many of the same cats found in the Palos Verdes pedigree. Through her sire Ch. Kabar's Alexander the Great, Alexander's Tamelik Yongen appeared as grandsire and through her grand-dam, Ch. Kobar's Miss Milly Tilly, he was also her great-grandsire. The Mandarin line was further supplemented through Blue Orchid's dam, by Ch. Mr. Blue Nilambo and his son, Mandarin's Blue Soong of Pomonas, and Ch. Mandarin's Blue Sung. A cross into Amdos appeared through

the Lamar stock, with the Blue Point Ch. Lamar's Satyra and her Seal Point sire, Satyr of the Dark Gauntlets, a son of Diego of the Dark Gauntlets x Ch. Amdos Celsaya (Ch. Sayo of Bedale x Ch. Celeste).

The line-breeding represented by this combination of pedigrees, with the many repetitions of the same fine cats and bloodlines is, I feel, the keystone of our successful breeding program. Besides the famous cats of later eras, Ch. Bonzo, usually mated to Ch. Simple, appeared at least 12 times in the ancestry of Amdos Imperator, and eleven times behind Ch. Pagan of the Dark Gauntlets. Born in 1924, he had been the type setter of the breed in England. Known for his long body and head and for his extreme eye-slant, Ch. Bonzo and his mate Ch. Simplex, have been described as England's finest Siamese before World War II. Ch. Simple was a half-sister, through her sire, Robin Goodfellow, to Ch. Siamese Star Prince Favo, imported by Mrs. H. E. Naatz, whose Siamese Star cattery name is prominent in the ancestry of the Mandarin and the Vee Roi crosses.

I have devoted a great amount of space to our pedigrees, not because I feel that they are better than others, but to emphasize to the newer breeders the importance of researching the records to unfold the hidden ancestry behind the four or five generations of names and numbers that you are given when you shop for a kitten. We were fortunate in stumbling onto cats from the fine bloodlines that blended so well in producing our present stock. Many novice breeders are not as lucky. Even if they buy good show cats, the resulting kittens often fail to yield the hoped for improvements, and the breeder may quickly give up, keep repeating the same breeding, or try new out-crosses instead of taking the cat back to its own best lines. If you must outcross, be sure that the line is strong in the qualities which you wish to obtain, and be alert to those traits which you hope to avoid.

Once settled on our line—breeding program within the framework of these overlapping pedigrees, we were on our way—guided by the steering mechanism known as selection. Unless one happens to visualize Siamese perfection in the same general terms as the breed committees, now is the time to study the cats with the Standard in hand. I have always made my selections according to my own personal preference. In order of importance, I choose for head-type, eye shape and color, body type, coat, and coat color. The first two are controlled completely by inheritance. Either you pull them out of the genetic grab-bag or you do not get them. I look for a good wedge, with ears to fit the wedge in size and placement. Eye shape and color are nearly equal in importance, although I'm inclined to look for color, as eye shape has never been a problem. Body type and coat are about 75% pedigree and 25% perserverence. I regard ranginess as the



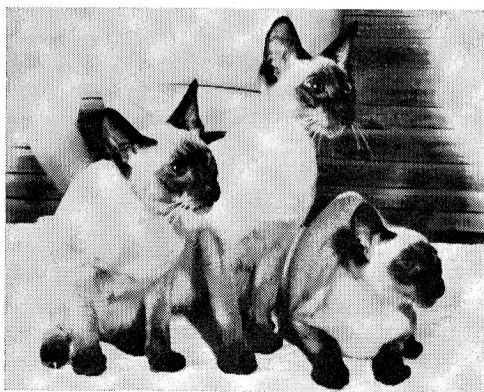
MaKhanDa Comet of Pan Am

best assessment of body type. All body parts should be described in terms of length, the longer the better, within the limits of overall proportion and balance. Condition can mean the difference between good and poor body type. If a cat is allowed to over-eat, his body type is hidden under pads or layers of fat. If the diet is insufficient in quantity or quality, or if exercise is not allowed, muscle development and body tone will suffer. Condition is a variable which also affects coat quality. The Siamese coat should be short and close-lying. Besides hiding body type, a fluffy or rough coat picks up shadows, making the color appear darker. The undercoat must be thin if the coat is to lie close to the body. Heavy undercoat may result from inheritance or from a natural reaction to cold temperatures. The breeder can achieve coat improvement through selective breeding, by regulating the environment, and by proper grooming. At one time, I had to groom out excessive coat with a saw-tooth rubber implement, but with Gizmo in the pedigree, this type of grooming has been replaced by a light "once over" with a rubber glove to remove loose hair. I always bathe my show cats frequently during show season, often mere hours before they go up for judging. After a bath with Johnson's Baby Shampoo, and a thorough rinsing, I sit by the hair-drier with the cat, brushing and combing until the coat is nearly dry. Then the cat goes into a covered carrier, with the hair-drier blowing in, to finish the job cat-style.

Control of the coat and point color is limited by heredity, but within these natural limits care and condition play an outstanding role. The Siamese color pattern is produced by a color restrictive gene that operates on a thermal basis, that is, the temperature differential between various body parts. White at birth due to intrauterine warmth, coat color develops slowly on the cooler skin areas of the head, feet, tail, and body, until the mature coat appears at about eighteen months of age, fawn on the upper body, deep seal brown on the mask, ears, feet, and tail. A slight increase in external or body temperature may lighten the coat somewhat, but at the same time, it always ticks the points, disastrous in the Seal Point, though scarcely noticeable in the Blues, Chocolates, and Lilacs. An accumulation of fat, which insulates the skin from the body heat, will cause a dark area on the cooler patch of skin, due to the same genetic factor that darkens the extremities. These color faults are also more obvious in the intensely pigmented Seal Points than in the other colors. Maintaining good color in a Seal Point is no easy task. Even the Standard penalizes the Seals. While for many years the Seal Point standard called for a body color of pale fawn, now it has lightened the desired coat to the juvenile color of pale fawn to cream, shading to a lighter color on the underbody. In no other color or breed is a cat so disadvantaged in the show ring strictly on the basis of maturity. Whereas cats of other breeds can be shown for many years, drawing nearer the standard in color and type with increased maturity, the Seal Point must make his wins quickly in a short show career of two or perhaps three years at the most, before his color defeats him. To win, an exhibitor must bring up a new cat about every two years. It would be interesting to know how many Seal Points have won national honors beyond the age of three years.

Mme. d'Ollone wrote (*Our Cats Magazine*, 1942), "fawn in animals means just that — animal fawn, and that isn't fashion beige or cafe au lait." Granted, to breed a lighter coated cat is a challenge, and effort should be made in this direction, but not at the expense of point color. We have found in our line of principally Amdos-Prestwick, et al., now blended with the lighter-bodied strains of Newton and others, that the medium fawn adult body color invariably accompanies intense point color. Our lighter bodied adults always have unsound points. There is no question in my mind concerning which is less desirable. Although it serves an important purpose, the Standard is, after all, merely a guide made by people, whereas the Almighty made the cat and people can do only so much to change His plan. The skull, for example, was intended to house a brain, and what is to become of this essential organ if the head is pushed in on the sides, flat at the back, and flattened into a straight line from the tip of the nose to the top of the head? Having pondered these problems with fellow breeders, we have decided that the brain should be left on top rather than pushed out behind, or to the sides, or compressed into idiocy. I'll gladly compromise with nature to the extent of a 160-degree angle at the brow line.

In a selective breeding program, you must keep your best cats or at least be able to use them. This is what I have tried to do in most cases, although a great many have slipped by. We now have up to six generations of MaKhanDa bred Seal Points on our present pedigrees, with another generation soon to appear. As we bred beyond some of the earlier cats, they were altered and placed as pets. This is a necessity



Kittens at MaKhanDa

in a selective breeding program if one is to avoid building up an unmanageable number of aging cats that would be much happier living out their years as family pets.

One outstanding disadvantage in our line is the rapid growth of the kittens, with early sexual maturity and late development of type. With each litter there is always the enormous problem of keeping the kittens long enough to make a reliable estimate of their potential — and people want KITTENS, not

cats, especially pet owners. Willa, for example, and her three sisters were calling at five months of age, whereas it was months later that Willa finally surpassed the others in type. In all honesty, I cannot be sure of my very best kittens until they are well out of the kitten class.

I have tried marking them for type at birth, but this has not proved reliable.

Another clue is the depth of the depression or dent in the skull just over the brow-line — the depth of the dent is in direct proportion

to the predicted head length. This is a fairly reliable yardstick, although it, too, leaves a large percentage of error. Since prospective buyers of "top Show-kittens" have a notorious intolerance for errors, I usually keep the best show prospects until maturity, sell the others as breeders or pets. One of these breeders, Gr. Ch. MaKhanDa Gismet of Blue Iris won All-Southern honors in 1963. Another Ch. MaKhanDa Gimmick of Jando, was All-Southern, Honorable Mention, in 1966.

To a large extent, the wins depend upon the care the cats receive and the condition in which they are shown, factors which may be unknown to the breeder and over which she has no control when the cat has been sold. Many times our own cats have defeated others that appeared equally as good in type and color, because of the advantage of good condition. Breeders to whom I have sent kittens have remarked on the excellent condition in which the kitten arrived. Why should it ever be otherwise? Good condition means to me that the cat is in good health and has had the proper care, although there are times after illness and motherhood when one must wait patiently for recovery, and a change of coats, if the cat is a Seal Point. All our cats receive the same care and attention. Regardless of the circumstances, our cats are fed twice a day, with a snack in between for the youngsters. Their basic food is raw meat — a ground mixture of beef, whole chicken, and calf liver, with corn oil and a mineral-vitamin supplement added. Some like sardines to flavor their meat, others want some extra bites of calf liver, and for those who like it, I sprinkle on a few bits of dry food to crunch. Each cat and kitten has its food prepared, measured, and served individually, at the cost of approximately three hours in the kitchen daily. When a crash diet was necessary, I purchased a prescription reducing diet from the veterinarian. This food, though unappetizing, was usually consumed greedily, and it really melted away fat without depriving the animal of essential elements in his diet. Eliminating the fat, however, does not remove the dark spots that it has caused, and is likely to leave the skin stretched. It is far better to keep the show cat in proper condition the year round.

To preserve the integrity of the intense point color, Seal Points must be provided with a stable environment. Air-conditioning to control the heat and humidity is necessary if the Seals are to be ready for the fall shows. The thermostat in the cattery is set at eighty degrees summer and winter. In the house, as a concession to the human inhabitants, I lower the temperature to about seventy-eight degrees, but leave the electric blanket turned on all day to provide a cozy king-sized napping place. Pampered? Yes, they deserve to be.

It has taken, of course, much more than luck to produce our Seal Point beauties. It has taken far more than most people are willing or able to give. It has also taken the years of work and devotion of all of the people behind the names on the pedigrees. It was they who did most of the arduous work toward perfecting the Siamese. If we have made any further contribution here at MaKhanDa, I shall be humbly proud.

REFERENCES:

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