

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE FELINE D'EUROPE (F.I.F.E.)

Brita Kastengren-Remborg

FIFE was created in France in 1932 by Miss Tzaut, Cat Club de Paris, (the club of Mrs. Ravel) , Mr. Chamonin, Switzerland, and Mr. K. Hirshmann, Germany. In 1936 Italy joined the fancy, and Dr. de Maddalena, from this country, was the first Chairman. The first name of the organization was "Confederation International Feline," and under this banner the rules were drawn up by Mrs. Ravel and Dr. de Maddalena.

During the war years, from 1939 to 1947, the work of the group came to a halt. It was not until 1947 that Mrs. Ravel picked up the pieces and continued working for the Fancy but the name now had been changed to Federation Internationale Feline d'Europe, or what we call FIFE. In 1950 Denmark and Belgium joined



Mrs. Remborg with her Best Kitten in Show in Stockholm, 1968, **SAPINETTE RIKI.**

FIFE. Mrs. Ravel was elected Secretary, Mrs. Coget, of Belgium, was now Chairman. FIFE was catching on, new members kept coming in. Austria, Sweden, Holland and Norway all joined in 1951; Mrs. Ravel was still Secretary but a new Chairman, Mrs. R. Eisenhuth, was elected this year. It was a time when ideas about the Fancy were maturing and new methods were developed. It was agreed that new rules and standards were needed, but until they could be drawn up the club operated under the Governing Council Cat Fancy of England rules and Standards. The elected committee to work on the new rules was: Mrs. Eisenhuth, Mrs. Ravel, Mr. Hirshmann, Mr. Mariani (France) and Mr. Trivier (Belgium). It proved to be a difficult task, and it was 1953 before the group was presented with the result of this effort.

Mrs. Ravel was elected Chairman in 1956 and I, (Mrs. Brita Kastengren-Remborg) was elected Secretary. Finland joined FIFE in 1960, and in 1968 Czechoslovakia became a member.

I am still Secretary, but Mrs. Ravel asked to retire in 1963 as Chairman. She was elected Honorary Chairman for life. The office was then filled by Dr. G. Balsiger from Switzerland, whom I enjoyed working with a great deal — as much as I had enjoyed Mrs. Ravel, before him. However, in the fall of 1969, Dr. Balsiger passed away, and at the



After judging a show in Gothenbourg, Mrs. Remborg is explaining to an exhibitor how to prepare her Tortie for a future show.

time of this writing we still have no Chairman. I believe Mrs. Ravel will be obliged to take over again until we can find another such good, diplomatic, genial and fine man. He made a superb Chairman.

People have asked how I came into the Fancy, it's easy when you fall in love with a cat. I bought a white Persian male in 1952, for a breeding cat, thinking he was a top cat. I was soon to be disillusioned, for he went only "Very Good" instead of the "Very Best" as I had hoped. He was a darling but no show cat so he was neutered for a pet. At his first show, he was judged by Mrs. Ravel, who had been invited to judge in Stockholm, at the show given by the first Swedish Association, which was composed of three clubs affiliated with FIFE. I was asked to translate for Mrs. Ravel, since I speak French as my own language, having been educated in Paris, where we lived during my

childhood. Our friendship began at this show, in spite of the fact that she put down my cat, and it has continued to grow ever since. The Swedish Association elected me Secretary, at the same time I was Treasurer of the Stockholm KattKlubb.

After six years of intensive work in the Fancy, as Treasurer of my club in Stockholm, as Secretary of the Swedish Federation and also working hard for FIFE, I began to feel the need to cut down. I gave up the first two jobs but continued to work as Secretary of FIFE, since I really enjoyed the work very much. My love of FIFE began when I had, as Secretary of the Swedish Federation, continuing correspondence with Mrs. Ravel, since she was Secretary to FIFE. Later when she gave up the Secretary's post to become Chairman, she recommended me for her former job, a position I still hold having been elected every two years as Secretary to FIFE. Even though Sweden is my home, the fact that I speak fluent French has made it possible to take care of this job since the official language in FIFE is French, with some German occasionally. However, I have been of some help to the Swedish clubs since I can translate the French FIFE literature into Swedish for the four Scandinavian cat-federations.

It was at the aforementioned show at Stockholm, when I found out that "Very Good" in Europe is not so good, that I asked Mrs. Ravel to find me a White Persian as good as the Black Persian that went Best-In-Show there. And she did. My new girl, **Djella de IrEtoile** came from Paris to Sweden, to start the line of **Sapinette**; this was my new cattery name and we had mostly White Persians. I have had a lot of success with **Djella's** kittens. Later I got **Beauregard Jacotte** and a Brown Tabby male also from Paris. Both of these cats **Djella** and **Jacotte** gave me many wins, **Jacotte** winning most of the two, although both went Best-In-Show many times. We did well until I lost first **Djella**, then **Jacotte** and finally the Brown Tabby male. I began to breed again three years ago after Dick Gebhardt sent me a lovely White female bred by John Bannon, **J. B. Wild Daisy**. I bred her to a male from my old French stock, and got very lovely kittens. In each litter we always get at least one Best-In-Show.

Recently in a show in Stockholm (I no longer live there, having been transferred to Linköping by my travel-agency in 1962) I got up my courage to try again in the Breed-Class this time with **Daisy**. And she did it! It was the first time I had shown a cat in that class since 1958.

At the moment I have six charming kittens underfoot. They have free run of the apartment, and are never caged. All are very lovely and are part of the family. In Stockholm this litter was First Winner and the group was elected Visitor's Favorite at the show. It was a really surprising show. Since I've been breeding I have exported cats to Norway, Finland, Denmark and Italy. Although my cattery name **Sapinette** has become well-known, I do not try to breed a lot of cats. One litter a year is my motto, for I believe it is so much better for the mother cat. If you have a good breeding female and stick to one litter a year you may not have so many cats but those you have are good ones. I am of the opinion that it is better to have a few first-class kittens than a lot of mediocre ones.