

## The Mission Nuevo Cat Club Show, Riverside

In September we attended this small kitten and neuter all-breed show held under C.F.A. rules. The temperature was 98° outside but the chapel of the historic Mission Inn where the show was held was air-conditioned. There were 83 cats competing and 20 on exhibition for sale. The standard, certainly of the Siamese, was high. In America, kittens for breeding or showing are sold "with papers" and pet stock for lower prices "without papers," so that, should cats subsequently have kittens, these cannot be registered or shown. This is a useful control to ensure that only the best stock is used for breeding and showing.

Before the judging started I spotted two lovely Seal-pointed Siamese kittens and saw from my catalogue they belonged to John Dawe. He showed me their pedigree and it included the famous British Seal-Point studs Ch. Prestwick Penglima Pertama, Ch. Spotlight Melchior, Lindale Simon Pie and Ch. Kildown Sultan. John particularly asked me to pass on messages to Mrs. Hindley and Mrs. Keene and say how much he had valued their advice in the past and that he always looked for the names Penglima Pertama and Sultan in the pedigree if he imported a Siamese. Later his female kitten was best female S.P. kitten and best opposite sex (B.O.X.) Siamese kitten. As explained by Dorothy Thompson the organisation and judging is totally different from our own. It is simpler and

requires less administration. From a spectator's point of view it is a disadvantage not to be able to see all cats of one breed and sex penned together and I felt that the varied coloured drapes round the cages and multifarious clobber they contained detracted from the cats. Also the lines of pens were filled up with exhibitors' chairs which left little room to move. On the other hand it is a great benefit to exhibitors to have all their cats caged together and judging is much more interesting and exciting.

As each class is called exhibitors take their cats to the cages in front of the Judge's ring and cats are removed from a door in the back of the cage for examination by the Judge. The cages are disinfected between each class. There is plenty of room round the Judge's ring for spectators to sit or stand and watch every move at close quarters. During the finals when a Judge has a difficult choice to make it can be quite theatrical. It is his job to place the ribbons for the winner, second and third on the respective cats' cages. Holding the ribbon in his hand he will walk up to a cat and look at it, holding out the ribbon; the owner's heart pounds; he walks to another cat, then another; he can't decide; he walks back to a cage and this time takes out a cat, looks at it, returns it to its cage, goes back to his table and cleanses his hands; he takes out a second cat, he turns to the audience and explains the difficulty of his choice; he holds the cat aloft as if to spot some blemish on its underside but is undoubtedly asking guidance from the Almighty; the Almighty obliges and reminds him that perhaps this cat has rather a thick root to its tail; he replaces the cat at once; he disinfects his hands and this time walks unhesitatingly to the first cat and attaches the winning ribbon. The audience applauds and the tension is eased. The Judge marks his book with the points awarded and a copy of this goes to the headquarters of the respective cat association so that they can compute the winner at the end of the year. The highest award any cat can win is the C.F.A. annual All-Star Best Cat (longhair or shorthair) for which a \$300 prize is awarded.

All cats in this show were judged twice. Paul Raine, a speciality judge, held two finals. In the shorthair division he placed a Burmese kitten first, followed by a Siamese Seal Point male and John Dawe's S.P. female who was B.O.X. I did not see his longhair final.

Will Thompson, an all-breed judge, made a gorgeous longhaired bundle of smokey fluff B.I.S. followed by the same two Siamese. The judging of these 83 kittens, including the Best of Colour decisions and finals, took 7½ hours including a short break for lunch. Most American shows take two days and I was told that non-C.F.A. shows often last well into the night.