



Cats
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100 SUGGESTIONS FOR CAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS

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THE MOD PERSIAN IN THE MINI-SKIRT--II

CFA'S ANSWER

Perceiving this dilemma, one national association, The Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc., took a radical and enlightened step. It moved to protect the Domestic—known to it as the American Shorthair—by bringing its standard back into line with its true characteristics.

At the same time, by recognizing for championship competition a breed to be known as the Exotic Shorthair, it created a legitimate place for those lovely short-haired cats which are Persian in appearance. It did this in a wholly realistic way. Because there are so few recorded generations of American Shorthair on even the best of bloodlines, it is impossible for anyone to say with any certainty that a cat does not have Persian in its background which may reappear through inbreeding or linebreeding. Many of the old-timers who introduced Persian rather than go so far as to provide a false pedigree, registered the resulting kittens as being of "unknown parentage", apparently believing that this lessened the guilt. Therefore any breeder today may have cats of this type even though he himself may have conducted his own breeding operations under the most rigid ethics. Those whose cats resemble the standard for Exotic Shorthair more nearly than that for American Shorthair may, at their option and of their own freewill, transfer them to that breed and there is no stigma of any sort attached to this action. Contrary to the misconceptions about this misunderstood breed, such a step does not imply in any way an

admission of illicit breeding, nor should anything of the sort be read into this action. It means one thing and one thing only. The cat in questions has Persian characteristics, probably because of Persian ancestry in the "unknown parentage" portion of the pedigree, and can more properly be judged in the Exotic Shorthair class whose standard it meets than in the American Shorthair class whose standard it does not meet.

Any cat so transferred retains all its previous wins and titles. Once transferred, it may not be transferred back and all offspring from it must be registered as Exotic Shorthair. A judge encountering a cat he believes to have the characteristics of the Exotic Shorthair may request permission to transfer it to that class and judge it there and, in such a case, the owner may well find it better for the cat's future to make such a transfer. No judge is likely to make this request lightly or capriciously, and he cannot in good conscience give wins to a cat in a class which is, in his opinion and judgment, the wrong one. It may not be transferred, however, without the permission of the exhibitor, and no coercion is entailed in such a request.

BREEDING THE EXOTIC

This is the procedure for cats already in existence who meet the standard for this breed, but the deliberate creation of such cats can be endlessly fascinating. There are many ways in which they may be produced, as any Shorthair breed may be used with Persian to accomplish the aim of

what could be described as a Persian Shorthair. The *sine qua non* is sufficient Persian somewhere in the background, not necessarily in the immediate parentage, to give the Persian type and head. Since long hair is recessive to short hair in any case, retaining the short coat while enhancing the Persian conformation is not too difficult. The most obvious choice of Shorthair to use is the American. As quick or quicker results may be obtained, however, by the crossing of Burmese and Persian. In some ways the Burmese cat is not unlike the Persian, being rather cobby with broad chest, short thick neck, rounded head contour with a nose break, and gold eyes. One of the most striking Exotics the writer has seen was a beautifully-marked Tortoiseshell bred by a well-known judge from a Burmese dam and a Cream Persian sire.

There are some advantages in the use of other breeds for producing Chinchilla or Shaded Silver Exotic Shorthairs. Chocolatepoint Siamese combines well with Silver Persian and seems to result in the wanted intense green eyes of a good Silver. A green-eyed Abyssinian with its

by Jane S. Martinke

Last month Mrs. Martinke covered the origin and history of the Exotic Shorthair and presented the problems raised by the introduction in past years of Persian genes into Domestic lines. This month she discusses the Exotic today—its show and registration status, its purpose, and its breeding.

ticking can also be used profitably for Silver breeding. The strong Persian type may be a little slower to emerge from these combinations, however.

Some not too well versed in the uses and purposes of hybrid breeding have decried the permissiveness of the use of any Shorthair in the production of the Exotic Shorthair and profess to see in this a downgrading of the high standards and strict registration rules which we all admire. This outcry is heard with the appearance of every new hybrid breed. Indeed, it is heard very loudly over the introduction of new colors in the old and well-established breeds. In a breed which is created through open and intentional hybridizing, however, it is unimportant whether there are two breeds or ten in the background, provided only that all breeds used have been sanctioned for this purpose. The important thing is the cat itself and its offspring.



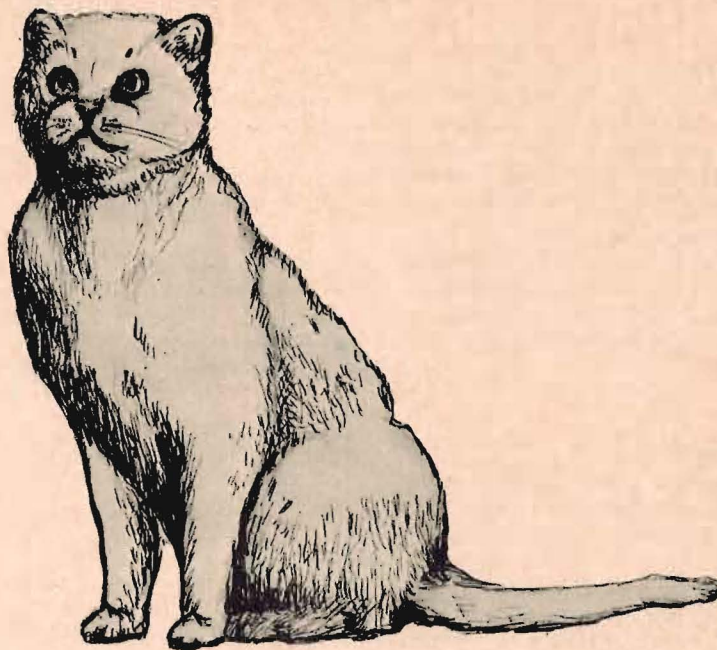
Cream
and
Red Tabby
Exotic
Kittens
Courtesy
Linda
Lopez

Also overlooked is the basic built-in safeguard against mongrelizing inherent in such a breed. These cats are bred to a specific standard which is fully as rigid in all respects as the standard for any of our time-honored natural breeds, and it is expected that judges finding unworthy specimens of the breed in a show will exercise their right and duty to refuse to grant a win to such a cat. Nor can any downgrading of the breeds used in the production of such a hybrid breed result, for all the offspring of an Exotic Shorthair must be registered as Exotic Shorthairs.

NEED FOR THE EXOTIC

This is a type of cat for which the cat fancy had a genuine and growing need—a need which those with the responsibility for the future of a proliferating cat fancy had the vision to recognize and the courage and wisdom to act on. Often in our world such needs are recognized only by the few until the remedy becomes a reality. The world did not really know it needed the synthetic fiber Nylon, hybrid if you will, until the imagination, vision and hard work of the research chemists at DuPont gave it to the world, yet milady's wardrobe has been the richer for it and the other man-made fibers which followed. Nor did these fibers supplant the natural ones of silk, cotton and linen. Instead they complemented them and they have been combined with them to produce even more interesting materials with unique qualities of their own.

Exotic Shorthairs are a very new breed recognized just two years ago and eligible for competition only during the 1967-68 show season. There has not yet been time for many of them to appear in the shows. It takes more time and thought and work to produce a worthy specimen of a hybrid breed than it does from a natural breed. Only in the last couple of years have we seen really sizeable classes of Himalayans at most shows even though they were recognized a long time ago, and even now we see only an occasional specimen of Havana Brown which was recognized some time ago. Because the Exotic Shorthair is created through the use of dominant characteristics rather than the recessives of the Himalayan breed and because of its universal appeal, I doubt that it will take as long for it to become established. It will also have the advantage of the new and more enlightened registration and show rules which have been of such help in the progress of the Himalayans and Colorpoint Shorthairs. The world knows its genetics better now, recognizes the tendency of any hybrid, whether it be cat, rose, or corn, to revert, and CFA has led in



Exotic Shorthair—Irene Powell

providing in its rules the necessary remedy for this problem.

WHERE BRITISH BLUES BELONG

Another useful purpose has been served by the creation of this breed. Many people do not realize that the British Shorthair cat is not the same cat as our Domestic Shorthair, but is rather, even in England, a breed distinct in itself and has Persian on the pedigree in most cases, this being permitted by British registration rules. Up until the creation of the Exotic Shorthair, British Shorthairs brought to this country had been classed as American Shorthairs in CFA and had competed in those classes. The facts on their background came to light at about the same time that the Exotics were recognized, and since they provided the perfect class for the British Shorthairs which were produced in the same manner, CFA directed that these importations be registered and shown in that class henceforth.

THE PET EXOTIC

The Exotic Shorthair makes an ideal pet. It combines the glamor of the distinctive Persian type with the ease of care of a Shorthair. It has hybrid vigor and stability of disposition and temperament. There is one great plus to this type of breeding which may so far have escaped notice, but which could prove a godsend. The great bugaboo of breeding Domestic Shorthairs has always been the difficulty in placing in suitable homes the kittens not destined for the show ring or breeding cattery. Unfortunately the world is overrun with this type of cat

and there simply are not enough homes to go around. This has held back many ethical breeders from doing the amount of experimental breeding with Domestics needed to bring them to perfection. However, everyone has at some time or other heard a child (and perhaps even some grown-ups) boast proudly that "My cat's mother was a full-blooded Persian" or "My cat has a Siamese father" when both cats in question appear to be "just plain cat". There is snob value here and there is always a home to be found for kittens whose one parent is a pedigreed cat. How much more then will people be willing to accept a lovely kitten, both of whose parents are registered cats and which is eligible for registration itself, so that even the culls from the litters bred for show purposes will be able to live happy lives as honored members of cat-loving families.

SUMMARY

Perhaps never before in the history of the cat fancy has any association shown the courage and foresight to break with tradition, and, acting for the protection of a breed already in existence and without pressure from a breeder lobby, give to the world a fine new breed because of its own recognition of the need for such a breed. As the cat fancy grows, other new breeds will come into being through the imaginative creativity of breeders, but the Exotic Shorthair will not only bring added lustre and interest to the show spectrum, but will go down in history as the pioneer step in charting the way for recognition of future breeds.