

PAWS FOR EFFECT



*The PolyTrak
Newsletter
December 2007*

Volume 1 - Number 12
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Maine Coon Polyductyl



International Database



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WELCOME! and THANK YOU!

Usually we use this first "Welcome" section to tell what is in this month's issue of "*Paws for Effect*". We will do that, but it is also a special time of year when we maybe should stop some of the "hustle 'n bustle" and take a few moments to reflect on what we have done this year and look forward to a New Year with anticipation and optimism.

All of us can look back over the previous year and see some pretty dark and gloomy days at times. A personal crisis, a tragedy maybe in our families, a hateful word spoken by us or to us, but overall, as we look back, there is much that each of us have to be thankful for.

We all have very different and separate lives on a day-to-day basis. But we do share one big thing in common; that is our love and enjoyment of animals...in our case the polydactyl Maine Coon. Many of you breed polys, many of you show polys and here at PolyTrak we log information about polys. As we pour through mounds of statistical information on these cats, it is easy to lose a little perspective at times. Behind each of these numbers is a cat. This cat is special to someone and someone is special to each of these cats. Sometimes it takes one of these large-footed critters to walk across your keyboard and "mess up" the newsletter that you are trying to type to put things in perspective. A walk across the keyboard, a loud and contented purr, a "head butt" and a "whisker-rub" makes you stop and realize, what this is all about.

Each of us does what we can in our own way and what we feel is best for these great polys. Sometimes we may differ on how to do that, but we all share a common goal for the preservation, promotion and protection of the Maine Coon polydactyl. As we look back over 2007 let us be thankful for what we have in our

lives and for the opportunities our groups have provided in our quest for the betterment of Maine Coon polydactyl. And as 2008 approaches let us increase our resolve and commitment in behalf of these great polys.

"What greater gift than the love of a cat?" - Charles Dickens

Well we did promise a "teaser" of what is in this month's Issue. We are going to be a little vague here, since much of the news we have has not arrived before the writing of the welcome section. But we do know that the Cat & Tulips show was a resounding success both for the Club and for the 15 polys that were shown in new traits. Deb will be giving you a little insight into a great week leading up to the show, as well as the show itself. Vonne spoke with breeders that are not working with the polys, at present, and received some insight into their thoughts and reasoning. We will be doing a little pleading for your submissions at PolyTrak as the size and prominence of this service continues to grow. And of course we will share a few statistics about the poly. You can also go to <http://www.polytrak.net> and see the latest numbers and information about the MC poly. This changes, quite often several times a week, so there is always something new to see at PolyTrak.

We would also like to welcome our new subscribers this month. As you may know this newsletter "*Paws for Effect*" is published monthly near the 1st of each month. Archive copies of the newsletter, should you desire to read them, are available for reading or downloading at our website <http://www.polytrak.net>. From there, click on the Newsletter button and at the top of the page you will see a link for archived issues. The current issue is archived each month approximately 2 to 3 weeks after publication. If you have a comment, suggestion or question email us at ptnewsletter@polytrak.net. We would love to hear from you!



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"The really great thing about cats is their endless variety. One can pick a cat to fit almost any kind of decor, color, scheme, income, personality, mood. But under the fur, whatever color it may be, there still lies, essentially unchanged, one of the world's free souls."

- Eric Gurney



DK*Mystery Coons Yuna Madalenn P of Kreiz ar Mor



POLY RESULTS FROM HELLEVOETSHUIS BY DEB BROWN

What a wonderful full-filled week for myself in Holland! As you probably know, I,

along with two other PolyTrak Staff members were in attendance at the Cats and Tulips Show last month in The Netherlands. Thank you ALL for your hospitality, friendship and one great week and show. My visit was culminated by a great show sponsored by the TICA Cats and Tulips show with 15 polys entered in the New Traits section of the two-day show. We saw some great poly MC's and met many new people and above all we learned a lot. Let's take a look at the results of the Maine Coon Poly Congress as well as the top 3 in each of the 10 rings.



Deb, Sharon & Vonne enjoy a piece of the PolyStandard/PolyTrak cake during the show.

The results from the two-day show are listed below. This includes The Maine Coon Poly Congress as well as the top 3 places each day in each of the 5 rings.

The Maine Coon Poly Congress By Irene van Belzen, TICA Judge & Chairperson, Cats & Tulips

1. ***Royalmaineys Fiera Heart P*** – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel
2. ***Diwilik Zilla P. Layla*** – Marja Winjnbeek
3. ***Watercoons Harald Blaataand P*** – D.J. Kooy
4. ***TLC Polycoons Butch P Cassidy*** – Sharon Otten-Boult
5. ***Amerrykoon P Princess Leia*** – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel
6. ***Ormedons Ambush P*** – Jenny



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- Charalampidis
7. *Daniel P Boone* - Winnie Scheffmann
8. *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
9. *The Dorsai Orlith of Pern* – Roos de Graaf – Misha Peersmans
10. *Liza Jane P. Van Siduroy* – Monique van Leeuwen

Judging was performed by:
(RH) Robin Higgins AB
(FG) Franziska Gagern SP
(FH) Francine Hicks AB
(JML) Jean-Marc Lagarde SP
(GB) Genevieve Basquine AB

Results: Cats and Tulips New Traits
Saturday November 10, 2007

Ring 1

Robin Higgins

- 1 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
- 2 *Diwilik Zilla P. Layla* – Marja Winjnbeek
- 3 *Royalmainlys Fiera Heart P* – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

Ring 2

Genevieve Basquine

- 1 *Ormedons Ambush P* – Jenny Charalampidis
- 2 *Diwilik Zilla P. Layla* – Marja Winjnbeek
- 3 *TLC Polycoons Butch P Cassidy* – Sharon Otten-Boult

Ring 3

Francine Hicks

- 1 *Watercoons Harald Blaataand P* – D.J. Kooy
- 2 *Ormedons Ambush P* – Jenny Charalampidis
- 3 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller

Ring 4

Franziska Gagern

- 1 *Watercoons Harald Blaataand P* – D.J. Kooy
- 2 *Royalmainlys Fiera Heart P* – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

- 3 *Ormedons Ambush P* – Jenny Charalampidis
- ## **Ring 5**

Jean-Marc Lagarde

- 1 *Uppervalley Silverfoot P* – Vonne Bode – Yvonne Bode
- 2 *Watercoons Harald Blaataand P* – D.J. Kooy
- 3 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller

Results: Cats and Tulips New Traits
Sunday November 11, 2007

Ring 1

Robin Higgins

- 1 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
- 2 *Royalmainlys Fiera Heart P* – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel
- 3 *Amerrykoon P Princess Leia* - Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

Ring 2

Genevieve Basquine

- 1 *TLC Polycoons Butch P Cassidy* – Sharon Otten-Boult
- 2 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
- 3 *Amerrykoon P Princess Leia* - Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

Ring 3

Francine Hicks

- 1 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
- 2 *TLC Polycoons Butch P Cassidy* – Sharon Otten-Boult
- 3 *Uppervalley Silverfoot P* – Vonne Bode – Yvonne Bode

Ring 4

Franziska Gagern

- 1 *Royalmainlys Fiera Heart P* – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel
- 2 *TLC Polycoons Butch P Cassidy* – Sharon Otten-Boult
- 3 *Amerrykoon P Princess Leia* - Sandra Van



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Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

Ring 5

Jean-Marc Lagarde

- 1 *Watercoons Valdemar Sejr P* – Kazandra Holm Moeller
- 2 *Uppervalley Silverfoot P* – Vonne Bode – Yvonne Bode
- 3 *Royalmainlys Fiera Heart P* – Sandra Van Kluiven – Patrick Hummel

If you would like to put a name with a face we were able to obtain pictures of most of the cats listed above.



**Jarnac Un G
Rico P**



**Liza Jane P of
van Siduroy**



**Ormedons
Ambush P**



**Royal Mainly's
Fiera Heart P**



**Vonne &
UpperValley
Silverfoot P
of Five Islands**



**TLC Polycoons
Butch P Cassidy**



**Daniel P Boone
(Winnie
Scheffmann)**



**Kazandra &
Watercoons
Valdemar Sejr P**

Again, it was a wonderful show and I can't express enough my appreciation for the work and planning that went into this show. It shows what we can accomplish when we all work together. THANK YOU! Deb



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OPINIONS

By Vonne Bode

It was nice to have such a large group of polys (15) in the show hall at the Cats & Tulips show. And of course as always we had lots of material to display, this time in 2 stands at different locations in the show hall. Ken out did himself by printing tons of newsletters, flyers and business cards and Deb had to carry it all the way to... Holland. 😊 And we had pictures of poly cats from Miriam, magnets, postcards and of course the digit definitions with this time some pictures to explain the pads and digits a little better. Every supporter got a great button with the new show supporter's logo on it, with thanks to Beryl, who set up the online shop for it and Cathy who brought it with her from the US.

We wore our button with pride. 😊 And of course we have to thank Hugo and Winnie for finishing this great log. 😊

So we were there to promote champion status for the MC poly, but we were also there to get some insight in what the MC breeders at the show thought about the Maine Coon poly as future competition in the Maine Coon classes of TICA. 😊

We already had the questionnaire that was used earlier this year at a show in the US (English version). So we re-used it and I made a special 'poly' box where people could put in their filled out questionnaire.



It was a bit hard to get the forms back since most exhibitors were in the ring busy with watching their cat, but during my 'hunt' for filled out questionnaires, I did manage to get some in the box and also had some interesting conversations with some MC breeders.

In total I received 21 forms. Some of the voting came from MC exhibitors that were there with a poly (although not all of them voted, they already expressed their voice by coming with their poly. 😊) But we of course also received votes from other MC breeders in the show hall. This was the questionnaire form:

WELCOME !

PolyStandard

INFORMAL SURVEY

We would like your answer and opinion on a couple of questions. You do not need to sign your name, but we would like your honest thoughts. A proposal will be made in 2008 to TICA for acceptance of Championship Status for Maine Coon polydactyls. We would like your feelings on:

1. Do you accept or oppose the Maine Coon Poly being accepted for show status?

Agree Oppose

If opposed, Why?

2. Would you object to the poly Maine Coon being shown in the same classes as other Maine Coons?

No Yes

If yes, could you please explain why?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR THOUGHTS



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Of the 21 votes, 13 voters agreed with them being accepted for show status and didn't object to them being shown in the same class as the other Maine Coons. Then I got 3 votes of people who basically voted the same, but didn't understand the question well. On the first question they agreed and on the 2nd question they voted "yes" (which means object to showing them in the same classes as other Maine Coons) and explained this with answers like:

- *"It's a Maine Coon"*
- *"It's a MC so an extra toe should not matter"*
- *"Same breed"*

So I will add these 3 votes to the 13 that voted for show status and showing them in the MC classes too;-). So that makes 16 votes for the polys.

Then the 5 votes we, IMO, can learn the most from: 3 votes agreed on accepting the Maine Coon poly for show status, but objected to them being shown in the same classes as the other Maine Coons. Their reasoning was as follows:

- *"They're Maine Coons with something extra"*
- *"Because it's still a different type of cat"*
- *"Because they're still different in my eyes"*

Then there were 2 voters left:

One opposed to the Maine Coon polys being accepted for show status and objected to them being shown in the class of the standard footed Maine Coons.

Reason:

- *"Because I find it a deformity"*

The last voter opposed to them being accepted for show status too.

Reason:

- *"My opinion is that a cat should have the natural normal numbers of toes. I'm afraid, that there may be a contest between the Poly-breeders who would have the cat with the most toes. And perhaps will produce cats with less quality"*.

On the question if the voter would object to them being shown in the same class, the voter said no, BUT wrote: "they shouldn't be shown at all".

These aren't things we haven't heard before. What did surprise me, was that some breeders wanted a separate class for the polys. I hadn't expected to hear that from Dutch MC breeders. 😊 One breeder commented on the lack of type in a lot of polys. When I told them polys prior haven't had the chance to be shown like the standard footed MC's have over many years, I was told that was not a good enough reason. Then I said don't you bring your cats/kittens to a show to hear what the judge has to say? The breeder said no, I only show what I like myself. But admitted that the extremer, more slim type ruled the show and that's why there were more sturdy build, old typed females in this breeder's house---so to compensate the boning. When I asked if these females were shown too, the answer was no. This breeder didn't think much of the polys but wouldn't hesitate to buy a poly when the cat had the type. But still would like to see it in a separate class. So I said then it can't compete with the standard footed MC's? But it was pointed out that it could do so in the finals. When I asked why this breeder wanted to see them in a separate class so badly when the toes are only worth 3 points in the standard? The answer was the people with polys made a big deal about the toes themselves, wasn't that what it was all about? Sigh... 😊

Another conversation I had was with a nice breeder who doesn't agree with them being shown or bred, but isn't that fanatic about it: She has no problem with dealing with breeders who do breed with them either. So a different opinion should not be a problem at all. 😊

If we look at the votes again, 16 (76%) of the 21 voters want the polys to get show standard and being shown in the same class as their standard footed brothers and sisters. 19



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voters were ok with the Maine Coon poly being accepted for show status (90%). 2 voters (9,5%) were against them being shown at all. 3 voters (14%) wanted to see them being shown in a separate class. So not bad results at all☺.

Overall, I think its good there're more and more MC polys seen in the show hall and that the NT class has bigger numbers of polys too. They will see we're serious and the polys are shown with proud. They're noticed and judges and breeders are getting used to them. And the visitors as always...love them, no matter the type. 😊 The MC polys are here to stay and they know it☺.



The Poly Pair at MagicCraft



Peppermountz Thyson



Way down deep, we're all motivated by the same urges. Cats have the courage to live by them. - Jim Davis

POLYTRAK FACTS **PolyTrak Litter-Tracking Statistics** (Current as of December 1st)

NUMBER OF KITTENS LISTED	405	
TOTAL MALES	200	53.1%
TOTAL FEMALES	177	46.9%
NOT COUNTED	28	---
TOTAL POLYS	224	57.7%
TOTAL NON POLYS	164	42.3%
NOT COUNTED	17	---
NUMBER OF DAMS USED FOR POLY LITTER BREEDING	77	---
TOTAL POLYS	35	45.5%
TOTAL NON POLYS	42	54.5%
NUMBER OF SIRES USED FOR POLY LITTER BREEDING	50	---
TOTAL POLYS	27	54.0%
TOTAL NON POLYS	23	46.0%
PARENTAL BREEDING COMBINATIONS THAT PRODUCED 405 KITTENS	405	---
POLY SIRE – NON POLY DAM	226	55.8%
NON POLY SIRE – POLY DAM	159	39.2%
POLY SIRE – POLY DAM	13	3.2%
HOMOZYGOUS POLY SIRE – NON POLY DAM	7	1.8%



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HELP US HELP YOU AND THE POLY

By Ken Bussard

As you read through this newsletter, as well as previous issues, you can see a glaring point. The "Poly" is making a resurgence and is here to stay, this time! 40% seems to be the most quoted number, although no one really knows for sure. The 40% refers to the number of polydactyls occurring naturally in original feral stock from which the foundations were selected when the Maine Coon Breed was established some 40 plus years ago. You can argue those numbers and we would be unable to prove differently, but there is one thing we can all pretty much accept: The original cats roaming the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada contained a significant amount of polydactyls that occurred naturally. When a trait occurs in a natural breed to the depth that polydactylism occurs in the Maine Coon then it is part of the Breed. You can like or dislike this feature, but you can't argue the fact that polydactylism is, has, and always will be part of the Maine Coon.

It was only through man-made decisions to cull this trait from the Maine Coon...not natural selection that the poly Maine Coon nearly disappeared. Again you can argue the reasons. The decision to not include the poly in the Championship ring was purely political and based on solely on choice. Even in the 60's, when the breed and show standards were being considered, there was ample evidence that polydactylism caused no quality of life issues and was a benign trait from a breeding standpoint. Since that time much noise and unsubstantiated claims have been made about all the bad things that will happen if you breed polys. But these same nay Sayers, when put to the test, cannot come up with a single scientific reason or documented study that shows any harmful effect.

So if we started with an estimated 40% polys in the beginning and the "cullers" were

able to get the population down to an estimated 1 to 2% by 2005, where are we today? I can't give you figure on that...but it is definitely on the rise. The Polys are coming back!

The question of the day: Why? The answer is because of breeders, fanciers, pedigree pet owners and poly show-ers in the rings today! It is because of you!!! In fact I have a couple of polys sitting not too far from my desk right now, who say thanks to all of you that are working hard to reintroduce the MC poly to the show world. They know they are special...we know they are special...and given the chance in the show ring they can prove to the world that they are not something to eliminate from the breed or the show hall for that matter.

Little has been studied of the origins and genetics of these lines. We at PolyTrak want to help you in your mission to publicize, study and document all poly MC's. But we can't do it without your help. So PLEASE stay in touch with us, send us your info and allow us to help you and the poly in the publicizing of facts and details of these cats. Submit today, the more than 100 polys that are not listed that we know about and probably many more that we are not aware of. You and the cats will benefit!



UpperValley Silverfoot P of Five Islands

That's it for another month. Hope to see you back again next month and Thank You all. The PolyTrak Staff wishes you the best for this Holiday Season for your family and loved ones!

Bye for Now!

