

PAWS FOR EFFECT



*The PolyTrak
Newsletter
August 2009*

Volume 3 - Number 5

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Maine Coon Polydactyl



International Database



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WELCOME!

Welcome to another edition “*Paws for Effect*”. Also a welcome to our new subscribers. You can add, remove or send us your comments or story ideas at any time by just emailing ptnewsleter@polytrak.net.

“*Paws for Effect*” is a Newsletter from PolyTrak, a worldwide database service that tracks information on the Maine Coon polydactyl. Each month we try to feature articles of interest, not only for better understanding of the Maine Coon polydactyl, but also articles that may be of interest to the Maine Coon Breeder and Fancier, as well as the General Public. As always, we look forward to your ideas, suggestions and particularly your information and stories.

UPCOMING SHOWS OF INTEREST IN TICA

THE NETHERLANDS



This show is one of two each year put on by the Cats and Tulips TICA club in the Netherlands.

Cats and Tulips shows have turned out over the years to be more than just a cat show for Maine Coon poly people. It attracts one of the largest gatherings of Poly owners in the World who flock to the show to exhibit their poly in TICA’s New Traits Division. It has also become kind of an unofficial social get-together for many Maine Coon Breeders and Fanciers

from many Countries around the World. This year will be no exception, as a contingencies from the USA/Canada as well as European Countries will be on hand for the show and a “fun time”.

This fall’s show will be October 31st and November 1st. There will be two Poly Fun Rings if enough (20 poly cats per ring) Maine Coon polys are registered for the show. Organizers are asking for poly show people to register as soon as possible to secure enough polys for the special rings. For more information view the show flyer at (<http://www.catsandtulips.nl/flyer%20show%20Heinenoord%202009%20definitief.pdf>). Or

you may contact:

Winnie Scheffmann

Ledenadministratie

The Dutch TICA Club

Cats and Tulips

www.catsandtulips.nl

ledenadministratie@catsandtulips.nl

Everyone is welcome from anywhere!



Petteycats Ashnola P of Mishikoonz (Texas USA)

CANADA

Back across the big puddle, better known as the Atlantic Ocean, in North America, The



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Kool Kats Cat Club will be holding their first TICA Show ever in Eastern Canada on the 10th through the 12th of September in Hamilton Ontario.

Kool Kats Club Proudly Presents 
Southern Ontario's First INTERNATIONAL Tica Cat Show

www.hecfi.ca **Sep. 11-13, 2009**
Copsps Coliseum
Friday 3:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Saturday/Sunday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

HCM Testing & ICAT **Judges TBD**

Show Manager/Club President
Denise Mayhew
president@koolkatsclub.com

Entry Clerk
Kim Chenault
kchenault@yahoo.com
937-298-5078

Vendors/Show Secretary
Linda Pollington
lindameow@quickclie.net
905-296-4085


www.koolkatsclub.com

This is turning out to a large and important show in Southern Canada for all show people in TICA. Show manager and Club President, Denise Mayhew states: *“The Hamilton Tiger Cats are donating Tickets to their games, The Hamilton Bulldogs are donating Tickets to their games, Our event rentals is donating a nice door prize, Lisa from Spots on the Lake is donating nice raffle prizes, The Hamilton Tiger Cats as well will have a Platinum draw set up for some lucky person to win a years worth of free entries into their games. Lots more surprises are being organized & the clock is ticking We are trying to have as much as possible at our show:-) There is a VERY NICE restaurant on site at Copsps Coliseum upstairs too with WONDERFUL food!”* Kool Kat's Entry Clerk Kim Chenault added: *“Amazing how many different things are going on around the show*

itself: Hamilton Tiger Cat players signing autographs, a separate area upstairs with baby zoo felids (sic), ICAT and the opportunity for HCM testing -- and then the opportunity to spend some time talking with TICA's President and Vice President on Saturday evening!”

Two of the PolyTrak Staff will on hand at the Show with an information table with handouts, pictures and people to speak with, answer questions, and generally offering information about the Maine Coon polydactyl. And the important thing, a real live, in-the-fur, genuine polydactyl Maine Coon to see, touch and experience. Always a crowd pleaser! You will actually get to see who owns the set of Paws used on the Cover page of this Newsletter. (Being that he is a mitten-paw cat with a thumb he might be able sign autographs for you. 😊)

Every one is welcome; the public, show entries, Fanciers.... For more information check out the link on the Show Flyer or email one of the Show officials.

UNITED STATES

This year' Annual Show for TICA will be held in Orlando Florida on September 5th and 6th.

 **AquaTICA's** 
Proudly presents...
2009 TICA 30th Anniversary Annual Awards Show & Banquet
September 5 & 6, 2009
Orlando, Florida

Our Judges

Marilyn Dombroski	Altbred	Delaware, USA
Scottie Tullio	Altbred	Arizona, USA
Edith-Mary Smith	Altbred	Manitoba, Canada
Pamela Bennett	Altbred	Oregon, USA
Doreene Barnes	Altbred	Illinois, USA
Motoko Ozumi	Altbred	Saitama City, Japan
Barbara Play	Altbred	Alabama, USA
Fate Mays	Altbred	Texas, USA
Lisa Dickie	Altbred	Maryland, USA
Marie-Franco Dendaue	Altbred	Asnières, France
Francine Hicks	Altbred	Maine, USA
Irene van Beizen	Specialty	Tilburg, Netherlands

12 Rings, continuous format (500 cat limit)

Showhall: Orange County Convention Center
Banquet & Hotel: Wyndham Orlando Resort

Beyond the Sea

TICA Annual Show
Orlando, Florida

A Maine Coon polydactyl has been entered in New Traits for showing and a small poly info/display will be at this year's show. For more information visit: www.tica2009.org.



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Pantahduc's Shasta P of Bojin

POLY MAINE COON TO BE A NATIONWIDE PIN-UP

A Maine Coon polydactyl was recently selected as one of 12 finalists in a nationwide photo contest of cats. This was not a judging of a cat meeting a certain standard, but a hard and thorough assessment of a cat's photogenic quality and ability to be a "spokes-cat" for a worldwide cat product Company by marketing and design people.

Hundreds of entries were received nationwide in the Country by **Fresh Step**, a company that markets Cat Litter Worldwide.



Fresh Step, is a division of the Clorox Company and sells many other products throughout the World. Once the pictures were received, the submissions were

narrowed down to the best 200 entries. These 200 honourable mentions receive a letter, calendar and a Fresh Step gift product. From there it is narrowed down to the 12 best. These become photos for the 12 months of the year for the Fresh Step 2010 calendar. These 12 finalists

receive approximately \$300 USD worth of Fresh Step products and of course their cat's picture on the 2010 calendar. One of the 12 finalists is selected as "Fresh Step to Fame" and is the number one cat, who appears as Mr./Ms. January, 2010. This cat and its owner is the benefactor of \$3000 USD worth of product and of course the fame and bragging rights. 😊 Congratulations to all the finalists, but especially to the Maine Coon polydactyl, a first for our MC polys.

Editors Note: At the request of the owner of the Maine Coon poly, we have left out the cat's name, photo, owner's name and Country. But you may see it on the Fresh Step 2010 calendar somewhere as Ms. November 2010.



Krammedytet Black White Orlando P



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GCCF CONTEMPLATING POLICY CHANGES ON MC POLYDACTYLS

The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy is updating its stance on the Maine Coon polydactyl. Although no official changes have been announced, it appears at this point, policies regarding the poly are being tightened.

A very strong anti-MC poly sentiment has been the norm in GCCF over the years, since the Organization as a Registry has followed most other WCC members Registries and Cat Associations throughout the World. They have accepted the Maine Coon polydactyl for registration in GCCF as a pedigreed Maine Coon. Sanctions for poly breeders were left to the local clubs, as the Registry continues to take the stance that the poly was a genetic defect. When asked at this year's World Cat Congress meeting in Arnhem, The Netherlands, Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, delegate John Hansson stated: *"Never!"*, when asked if the GCCF would ever consider accepting the poly in their Organization. Once again ignorance and a closed mind triumphs over *"right"*.

Following the April meeting in Arnhem, the GCCF began to take further measures against polydactyls. The GCCF, even after two days of discussions by Scientists and informed speakers at the WCC Annual meeting, is still holding onto an unsustainable position that polys are defect that cause *"greatly increased risk of deleterious impact"* and therefore should not be recognized nor accepted in the breed. Much of the talk on the fact that polydactylism is a harmless trait that causes no problems to the cat, at The WCC, was based on the recent report generally referred to as the "Endinburgh Study". This study was performed in the GCCF's backyard, The United Kingdom. The GCCF apparently does not believe their own hometown Scientists. To strengthen their position, Steve

Crows of the GCCF has produced a extensive draft rewrite to the GCCF's Breeding Policy. One of the proposed entries includes the following addition: **For this reason the GCCF will not consider granting recognition to any new breed based upon structural anomalies, this specifically includes shorten (sic) limbs (eg. Munchkin), shortened or bent tails (eg. Pixie Bobs), polydactyl feet (such as Japanese Bobtail), bent or deformed ears (such as Scottish Fold or American Curl), hairlessness, or any miniaturized breed (see GCCF Rules, Section 1).**



It is interesting to note, that deliberate or accidental, the GCCF may not even have an understanding of traits in a breed. In the listing above the example of polydactyl feet is attached to the Japanese Bobtail and "shortened or bent tails" are noted in the PixieBob. This is a obvious reversal of traits in a breed. Another proposed change to the GCCF Breeding Policy includes: **"The GCCF requires each Breed Advisory Committee (BAC) to have in place a clear registration policy for each breed, in addition every BAC is required to produce, publish and promote an accepted breeding policy for its constituent breed(s) by 1st January 2011. All breeding policies will be reviewed by the Genetics Committee, who will ensure they are comprehensive and consistent with this General Breeding Policy; copies of all breeding policies will be kept for reference purposes at the GCCF Office alongside current registration policies."**

This may be the most troubling of the changes, since this calls into question current registration policies of existing breeds and forces registrants to comply with the General



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Breeding policy. This problem came to light recently when a Breeder attempted to register a Maine Coon polydactyl in the GCCF. The registration was put on hold until a meeting could be held at the GCCF on July 29th. It was to be decided at this backroom meeting whether this Breeder would be allowed to register a new Maine Coon polydactyl. The Organization went on to further say they would also consider whether the Maine Coon polydactyl would be classified as a new breed. This would allow them to reject based on the proposed changes to the Breed Standard above....or whether to reject this registration and go back “after the fact” and reverse or un-register existing Maine Coon polydactyls. When contacted about the decisions of this July 29th meeting, the Office Staff at the GCCF stated they were “short-handed” and had no idea what was decided. In the meantime these registrations are in limbo until a decision is made and the GCCF can find some direction and justification for their actions.

NEW POLY GROUP FORMS IN GERMANY

PolyMCdeutsch is the name of a new message Group recently formed in Germany. Similar in nature to the PolyStandard Group, PolyMCdeutsch was formed to work with problems of showing and breeding Maine Coon polydactyls that are unique to Germany.

The Group was the inspiration of Martina Roth of Altenstadt located in the State of Hessen. She is also the owner of the Cattery Wakapala Luta and a breeder of Maine Coons.



Wakapala Luta's

Wackymoon Coon

Elsie P

The Group was formed on the 6th of June, this Year and now supports over 40 members. In speaking of the Group's goals and projects, Martina stated: *“One our projects will be to make a little study about stillborns and kittens dying before they get to puberty.”* In Germany, an unsubstantiated fact states that polydactyl kitten suffer a 50% mortality rate in the first 6 months of life. The Group hopes to set the record straight regarding the fact the infant mortality rate is no higher or lower in polys than their non-poly counterparts. Ms. Roth went of to say: *“Then we can try to remove a paragraph which says the Polys live in pain. If we can remove this paragraph we will be allowed to breed Polys without to fear any sanctions. We have achieved successes already with the news that we are allowed in one state (Hessen) to breed Polys without sanctions!”*



Clevercoon Quandro of Fayola - Finland

Cats seem to go on the principle that it never does any harm to ask for what you want.

Joseph Wood Krutch June 2007



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Other projects noted by the Group includes: *“We would be interested if the nonpoly kitten in a litter are different to their ancestors with poly feet ? And how the kittens are different in a poly x poly and a nonpoly x poly mating. Do they have different boning, and where are the differences ? We want to know what cats in Maine look like. How are their colours, their fur, Paws, how big are they ? And perhaps we will x-ray the Poly kittens feet and later again as adults.”*

Although Germany is a bit unique in that the poly sanctions are Government sponsored, it again shows that each Geographic area of the World faces various forms of discrimination and prejudice attached to a naturally occurring and harmless trait in the Maine Coon.

POLYTRAK FACT

At the end of August there are 798 kittens listed in PolyTrak born as part of a polydactyl litter. 428 of these kittens listed are polydactyl.

- 4 Kittens (1.1%) are 1WD
 - 167 Kittens (40.3%) are 2FWD
 - 7 Kittens (1.7%) are 2RWD
 - 27 Kittens (6.5%) are 3WD
 - 209 (50.5%) are 4WD
 - 14 Kittens have unknown paws
 - 428 litter kittens are from poly Sire
 - 345 litter kittens are from poly Dam
 - 28 litter kittens – both parents are poly
 - 7 litter kittens have homozygous Sire
- No litter kittens with homozygous Dam

As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat. - Ellen Perry Berkeley

TICA MC BREED COMMITTEE ASKS BOD & MEMBERS TO BLOCK POLYSTANDARD APPLICATION

(Editorial – Ken Bussard & Deb Brown)

Our old anti-poly friends at the TICA Maine Coon Breed Committee have written a new Chapter in their Book of Nonsense. The Committee as a Whole (7 members) recently submitted a request for a rule change for the advancement of New Traits to Championship Status. This request for a rule change wants the Board of Directors at TICA to place before the membership a ballot issue calling for 3 year moratorium by any group of people or individual that submits an application for New Traits advancement and is subsequently turned down by a vote of a Breed Section.

That is a bit of complicated concept, but essentially it is the desire of 7 people (or at least reported to be unanimous amongst these 7 people) to be able to override the rights of TICA members to place before their membership through a legal and set procedure to advance a New Trait to Championship Status. This of course is just another attempt to silence the Breeders and Fanciers of Maine Coon polydactyl TICA members and force the will of the Main Coon Breed Committee Chair upon all of TICA. In this case the arrogance has risen to the level that not only do they want to silence the poly movement, but seek to impose their power on all breeds and members of TICA regardless of the Trait involved.

TICA New Trait advancement rules require that a minimum of 10 people sign the application and demonstrate that at least 50 cats have been registered in TICA in the preceding 3 years that exhibit the Trait involved. By placing a 3 year moratorium on seeking a new application all existing cats with the trait would



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be illegible on a new application forcing the applicants to start from the beginning. It appears, at least to me, that as the obstacles to advancement of the poly are removed one by one and the vehement opposition based on discrimination and hate of a few people, dwindles even further, the frustration and panic of the few remaining die-hard anti-poly people grows inversely and exponentially to their group size and ability to rule absolutely. So as the number of options in their “play book” diminishes the emphasis has now changed from trying to find a problem with the poly cat to character assassination of poly Breeders and Fanciers and a supercilious seizure of power vested in the regular members of TICA.

The request for Amendment to the Rules regarding Advancement of a New Trait, or any Rule change request normally requires a signature of the Applicant or Applicants. In this case, or at least as reported in the Agenda for Board of Directors meeting this week, no names were shown submitted although as a Committee it would have to be:

Chair: Laura Cunningham

Ryoko Doi

Elizabeth D Flynn

Jennifer Sable

Kim Tomlin

Elaine Weitz

Liz Hansen

As with any request for a Rule change or addition, a rationale or reason needs to be listed: The Maine Coon Breed Committee listed the following: *The proposed rule addition for New Traits (33.9.4) that is submitted is based on experience of the Maine Coon breed section who recently dealt with the proposal that would have allowed polydactyl Maine Coons to be shown in the championship class. For nearly six months prior to the Board's action at the 2008 Annual meeting, the TICA Maine Coon breed section discussed the polydactyl issue from every possible point of view. Polydactyl discussion dominated, and still dominates, all*

other discussion topics within the breed section. The polydactyl proposal was rejected by 2/3rds of the polled breed section. With the section's vote and action by the Board, we need to move on. We must address other pressing matters of interest for the Maine Coon breed, including discussion of health issues affecting the breed, updating the Maine Coon breed seminar presentation and the educational brochure. This suggested rule is being presented as a result of the Maine Coon breed section's experience about the New Traits process, because it provides evidence that there needs to be a “cooling off period” before a New Trait can re-apply for Championship status. Discussion last summer was divisive. It is imperative that our section, or any other breed group having the same situation, have a 24 month period to enable the breed committees to manage issues other than the proposed new trait which failed to pass.

That rationale is so full of what you would normally find in your cat's litter box that it would take many pages to address each little ludicrous point made by the Committee. This is born out by some of the responses from the TICA Rules Committee, which is required by TICA to review any proposed changes. This Committee of 5 people looks at the rationale and offers opinions to the validity and necessity of submitted requests for changes. Thus far three members of the Rules Committee have voiced concern about the need for such a change. Three quoted comments states.

- 1. I feel this rule is to address a specific situation within the New Traits program and I feel uncomfortable with the Board making a rule to suit a single situation. If we must have this rule, I feel that a 3 year wait is excessive (bearing in mind that there's still an extra 120 days needed anyway from the time of application before it goes before the Board).*
- 2. I also agree with Member 1. Additionally, waiting three years*



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actually requires the new trait to start from the beginning, given the requirements. I do not think such is in the best interest of any breed, nor does there seem to be a problem that needs to be addressed, as the new trait program seems to be working fine.

- 3. I am in agreement with both Member 1 and Member 2 - the New Trait Program seems to be working fine and I'm not sure that we need to change it or add to it.*

The Breed Section that is referred to in the rationale by the Breed Committee, is not the TICA Maine Coon Breed Section, but rather an unofficial Yahoo Message Group of less than 25% of the TICA MC Breed Section and is run, owned and Moderated by a few of the members of the Breed Committee. This message group goes for months with little or no messages from the leaders and does come to life once or twice a year for a short time, when someone asks about information on acceptance of the polydactyl Maine Coon in the Show Ring. Discussion of valid questions are then hijacked by the Committee members and a small handful of vehement anti-poly prejudiced people. After a few days of this absurd rhetoric, threats from the Committee to the poly supporters are made regarding moderation and expulsion if the factual discussion continues...from there the messages drop to zero and the group is quiet for a few weeks/months until another unsuspecting person dares to ask a question.

To say that the Breed Committee's Group of Breed Section members (less than 25% of the Maine Coon Breed Section is being dominated by the poly issue is about as valid as saying "you need a buckle on a dishrag". Further to say that this measure was defeated by a two thirds majority last year, reminds of a TV "pitch-man" trying to sell you a used car. Nearly 75% of the TICA Maine Coon Breed Section did not vote at ALL on the poly acceptance issue, either because of apathy or not

receiving a ballot from the TICA Head Office. So in fact the Application was defeated by 17% of those eligible to vote not the 2/3 majority as quoted in the Rationale to the Board of Directors. "Figures don't lie....but liars figure."

Personally the move by, at most 7 people, is a feeble attempt to suppress 1st Amendment rights, reeks of discrimination to non United States members and is nothing more than trying to cover up the fact that this Breed Committee lacks the ability to work with its Members and provide effective leadership and guidance in an area that they have never bothered to understand from a factual and Scientific basis. To ask that members of all other Breeds in TICA suffer the same restrictions and that the Board of Director's procedure for Advancement of a New Trait is flawed is a total fallacy designed to cover-up the lack of understanding of an issue and does nothing to promote the "Fabulous Felines, Fun and Friendships of TICA. The Breed Committee members are not "Team Players" when it comes to respecting all members of TICA.

A general letter opposing the proposed rule change has been sent by members of PolyStandard to each and every Board of Directors member and each Regional Director. The Annual Board Meeting begins Sept 2nd. Write to your regional Director NOW with you opposition to the Rule Change. Email them today! Together we can keep the MC Breed Committee under control until the next election.

That's a wrap for another Issue. We hope that you will join us again in for more of the latest news from PolyTrak. Visit PolyTrak at <http://www.polytrak.net> to see archived issues of "Paws For Effect" dating back to January of 2007.

Bye for Now!



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