

June 2010 Issue 114

# ***GLOVE and GAUNTLET***

***Newsletter of the Birman Cat Club of Canberra Inc***



***Michael Bowra (QFA) presenting Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman,  
his Best Kitten, Best Exhibit and the Birman Specialist Show's Supreme Exhibit.***

All photographs © Editor

# Birman Cat Club of Canberra Inc

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*Showtime 2010!*



## **Letter from the President**

*Hello All,*

*Well, our show is now over and with a few hiccups I think it all went well on both days. I have had good feedback from the exhibitors and also from our local people. I was told that it was a good show and well run, thanks to all the hard work the committee put in on both days.*

*Congratulations to all the winners and losers who presented their cats beautifully and I was told by the judges, who stayed with me after the show, that there was a good line up of Birman cats on the Saturday and it made things a bit difficult to pick the best. I haven't had time to look through a catalogue to see who actually did what on both days.*

*We are in the process of planning for our next two shows. 2011 will be a bit more low key as we will be celebrating our 30th show in 2012 and we have invited D. Newkirk, A. Walbrun and C. Gradowski and Judy Lewis to judge. We will have four rings for that show.*

*There were some unhappy bits to the show. There was some friction because a few people ignored, or were not aware, that there was to be no food in the club unless it was purchased from the club. Also some of the exhibitors used the ladies toilet as a place to dump their litter trays. I have discussed these incidents with the club and they are happy to have us back again but we will be more vigilant from now on. It is very hard to get a venue to hold cat shows and we don't want to be told not to come back.*

*Enough of the negative things. I hope everybody had a great time. It is hard to please everybody with meals and what clubs may offer but I think on the second day it was better. The functions manager wanted me to thank the committee and the exhibitors, personally, for sticking with the Birman Cat Club and Burns Club by using the facilities on both days. There are plans to have a better set up for next year, so start saving for 2011 and 2012!*

*I hope that everybody has a good year of shows and some of us Canberrites may see you at a show down your way.*

*Best wishes,  
Carol*



## ***From the Editor***

*Hi Everyone,*

*I have included a short overview and links to a website that I have found interesting and useful. The “World of Birmans” website primarily hosts a database of Birman pedigrees but offers more than just this service to Birman breeders and owners. They also support feline health research. All Birman owners have the chance to participate and make contributions to a valuable resource and research.*

*As this will be my last newsletter as editor, I would like to say goodbye to all and thank you to those who have contributed. Thank you also for the positive comments received over the past two years, they were much appreciated.*

*Cheers!  
Karen.*

## ***Membership***

Just a gentle reminder that membership fees are now due. If you have not renewed yet please send to: The Secretary  
Birman Cat Club of Canberra Inc.  
PO Box 2545  
Tuggeranong ACT 2901



## ***Members' Show News***

### **Canberra Royal Agricultural Show**

Congratulations to the following members whose cats/kittens were placed in the top 5 at the show:

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Best Kitten - Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman, Liz Robinson

4<sup>th</sup> Best Kitten - Bindura Blaze, Carol and Peter Cootes

2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Best Desexed Cat - Ch & CH(NSW) Bindura Toberlone, Rosemary Agnew

All results are on the Society's website - [www.rncas.org.au](http://www.rncas.org.au)

### **Goulburn Country Energy Show**

Congratulations to Lisa Siladyi and Zaeshinwa Kandi Stripes who won a Best Female Cat Award.

Best in Show result are on the NSW CFA site –

<http://www.nswcfa.asn.au/2010%20Show%20Results/2010%20Goulburn%20Country%20Energy%20Show.htm>

### **Royal Bathurst Show**

Well done Lisa Siladyi and Zaeshinwa Kandi Stripes who won two Best Female Cat Awards, and Margaret Keith and CCCA CH GDGC Conde Bajazzo Birman who won a Best Desexed Cat Award.

Best in Show results are on the NSW CFA site –

<http://www.nswcfa.asn.au/2010%20Show%20Results/2010%20Royal%20Bathurst%20Show.htm>

### **Sydney Royal Cat Show**

Congratulations to Pam Coyte and SDGC Minosa Rich N Sassy who won a Best Female Cat Award.

Results for Cat and Kitten Shows - <http://www.nswcfa.asn.au/ShowResults.htm>

### **CCCA National show**

Congratulations to Margaret Keith and CCCA CH GDGC Conde Bajazzo who won a Best Desexed Cat Award as well as a Reserve, a 6<sup>th</sup>, 3x 8<sup>th</sup> and a 10<sup>th</sup> place. Annliese Hackman (WCF), President of Deutsche Edelkatz, also presented him with a special rosette. Well done Jazz!

For all results - <http://ccca2010.breedsite.com/results/>

### **Birman Cat Fanciers Club of Queensland**

Special congratulations to Greg and Jenny Weeks and their kitten, Sunsoar Unchained Melody, who won Supreme Birman Exhibit and to Carol and Peter Cootes and NS CH CCCA CH & DIA TGC Bindura Embers, who won Runner Up Supreme Birman Exhibit.

Results on the QFA site - <http://www.qfeline.com/index.php?page=showresults>

### **Birman Cat Club of Canberra Specialist and All Breeds Shows**

The shows were held at the Burns Club, Kambah, on 15/16<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

The judges were: **Birman Specialist Show** - Yanina Melnikova (Belarus) (WCF), Johan Lamprecht (South Africa) (WCF) and Michael Bowra (Australia) (QFA).

**All Breeds Championship Show** - the judges above and Norm Auspitz (USA) (CFA), Geoff Dumigan (Australia) (QFA) and Therese Johnson (Australia) (NSW CFA).

Congratulations to all the winners, but especially to members who won Supreme Exhibit Awards: Phil Charley with Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman, Runner Up: Carol and Peter Cootes with NS CH CCCA CH & DIA TGC Bindura Embers at the Birman Specialist Show and Heidi Groom with Furkidz Heres Hoping tied for the Runner Up Supreme Exhibit Award at the All Breeds Show.

At the Specialist Show, Phil Charley with Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman also won the Ann Donnelly Memorial Award and Carol and Peter Cootes with NS CH CCCA CH & DIA TGC Bindura Embers won the Sue Richings Memorial Sash. Well done!

Top 10 exhibits for each judge at the Birman Specialist Show are tabulated below, followed by photos of the judges with their winning exhibits. More results will be put up on the CCI website under "Show Business": <http://cci.asn.au/shows/>



## Birman Cat Club of Canberra Specialist Show 15<sup>th</sup> May 2010

**SUPREME EXHIBIT: Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman** Seal point male kitten Owner: **Phil Charley**

**RUNNER UP: NS CH CCCA CH & DIA TGC Bindura Embers** Seal tortie point spay Owners: **Carol and Peter Cootes**

**Ring 1: Yanina Melnikova (WCF)**

**Ring 2: Johan Lamprecht (WCF)**

**Ring 3: Michael Bowra (QFA)**

<b>Best Exhibit</b>	<b>BRZ DGC Gramar Touch of Majic D Saunders</b>	<b>NS CH CCCA CH &amp; Dia TGC Bindura Embers C and P Cootes</b>	<b>Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman P Charley</b>
<b>2nd</b>	CCCA CH, GI DGC & ACT Dia TGC Conde Bajazzo M Keith	Zaeshinwa Poker Face L Siladyi	CCCA CH, GI DGC & ACT Dia TGC Conde Bajazzo M Keith
<b>3rd</b>	Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman P Charley	Trevallian Altariel T Stewart	CCCA Ruby GC Dia GD CH Shalimar Butterfly Kisses R Parsons
<b>4th</b>	NS CH CCCA CH & Dia TGC Bindura Embers C and P Cootes	GC Zaeshinwa Kandi Stripes L Siladyi	Sharada Dreaming O'Chocolate B Patterson and K Franke
<b>5th</b>	BZ DGC Conde Moshio Wildfire H Groom	Furkidz Heres Hoping H Groom	SLV GC Kasterlyn Ice Maiden M Cave
<b>6th</b>	CCCA Ruby GC Dia GD CH Shalimar Butterfly Kisses R Parsons	Furkidz Howzat Harmony H Groom	CH & CH(NSW) Bindura Toblerone R Agnew
<b>7th</b>	Zaeshinwa Poker Face L Siladyi	CH & CH(NSW) Bindura Toblerone R Agnew	Shakandah Sherlock Holmes A Davis
<b>8th</b>	Damukyan Fhoenix B Gale	Sharada Tabithas Dreaming B Parsons	GC Zaeshinwa Kandi Stripes L Siladyi
<b>9th</b>	DGC Minosa Milly Vanilly P Coyte	Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman P Charley	CH Bindura Adena B Patterson and K Franke
<b>10th</b>	Furkidz Howzat Harmony H Groom	SV DGC Shakandah Rockabilly Rebel P Lamey	Furkidz Howzat Harmony H Groom

Ring 1: **Yanina Melnikova (WCF)**



Best Kitten:  
Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman



Best Entire Cat and Best Exhibit:  
BRZ DGC Gramar Touch of Majic



Best desexed Cat:  
CCCA CH &GL DGC & ACT DIA TGC Conde Bajazzo

Ring 2: **Johan Lamprecht (WCF)**



Best Kitten: Zaeshinwa Poker Face



Best Entire Cat: Trevallian Altariel



Best desexed Cat and Best Exhibit:  
NS CH CCCA CH & DIA TGC Bindura Embers

Ring 3: **Michael Bowra (QFA)**



Best Kitten and Best Exhibit:  
Sarikamajik Hugh Jackman



Best Entire Cat:  
SLV GC Kasterlyn Ice Maiden



Best desexed Cat:  
CCCA CH &GL DGC & ACT DIA TGC Conde Bajazzo



Congratulation to all the winners in the Junior Handlers' competition, well done!

## ***World of Birmans***

**<http://www.worldofbirmans.co.uk/>**

The World of Birmans website and database was launched in 2007 by Alwyn and Ted Hill. They have made their considerable Birman pedigree database available for the benefit of the Birman breed.

The database is a valuable tool for researching or just browsing Birman lines and allows custom searches for colour code, age, country, related cats etc or combinations of these fields. Coloured highlights can be used to automatically show up common ancestors or other points of interest in the pedigree. Photos of the cats can also be stored on the database.

Since inbreeding is an ongoing problem in the Birman breed because of its small genetic base, the importance of easy access to pedigree information cannot be overestimated. The World of Birmans' database allows breeders to check extent of inbreeding in known individuals or hypothetical offspring using a "trial mating".

Contributions of photos and pedigrees from breeders and owners of Birmans are always gratefully received by the administrators of the database as they are needed to keep it up to date.

There are other facets to the website besides the database. There is information on blood typing, breeding and the history of the breed. Two major university research projects are also supported.

**[http://www.worldofbirmans.co.uk/current\\_research\\_projects.htm](http://www.worldofbirmans.co.uk/current_research_projects.htm)**

The FIP project is a collaboration between Bristol University, UC Davis and University of Sydney.

The portosystemic shunt and swab program includes Australia. Portosystemic shunts occur infrequently in Birmans in Australia but when they do it is devastating. The project needs DNA data from swabs taken from Birmans that have been diagnosed with a shunt or are related to one. If you can, please send mouth swabs to Dr Leslie Lyons at UC Davis, USA. Information on how to take swab samples and where to send them from Australia, is on the website.

**[http://www.worldofbirmans.co.uk/swab\\_samples\\_form\\_for\\_uc\\_davis\\_i.htm](http://www.worldofbirmans.co.uk/swab_samples_form_for_uc_davis_i.htm)**

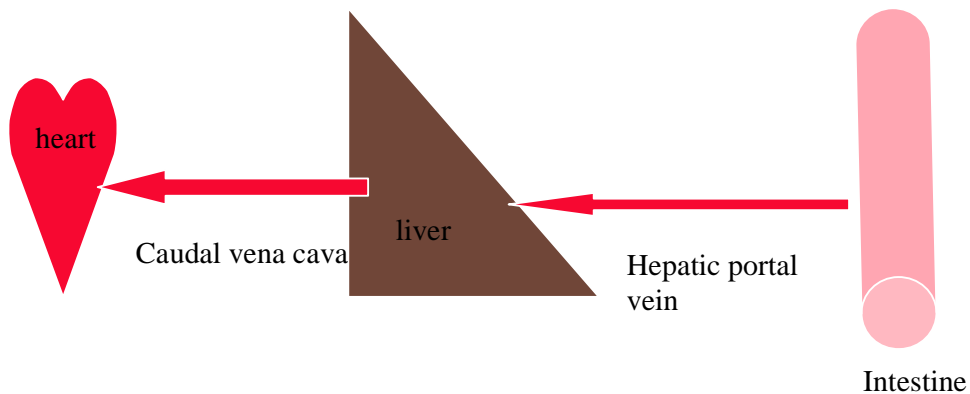
On the website there is an article explaining portosystemic shunts, written by Dr Angie Hibbert, which is reproduced below with the kind permission of Alwyn Hill.

## Congenital Portosystemic shunts

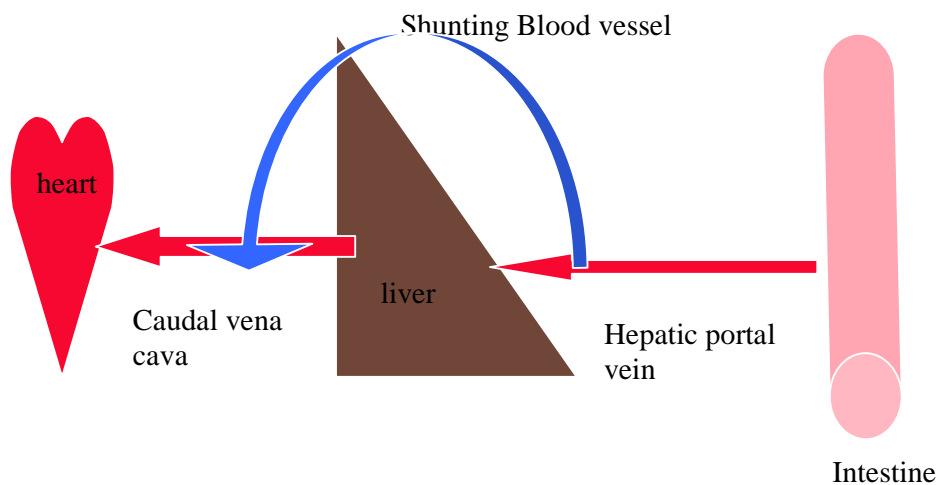
Angie Hibbert BVSc CertSAM DipECVIM-CA MRCVS  
European Specialist in Small Animal Medicine  
The Feline Centre  
University of Bristol

### What is a Portosystemic shunt?

This is an abnormality in the blood vessels draining the abdominal organs and passing to the liver. In the normal cat blood drains to the liver, via the hepatic portal vein, to be filtered before joining the systemic circulation.



In a cat with a shunt the blood by-passes the liver and enters directly into the systemic circulation



Portosystemic shunts (PSS) can be congenital meaning that the cat has been born with the vascular (blood vessel) anomaly. Occasionally shunts can develop later in life in association with severe liver disease, this is termed an acquired portosystemic shunt. Shunts are also classified by the location, the majority are outside of the liver, as in the diagram above (termed 'extra-hepatic'), occasionally the abnormal shunting vessel may lie within the liver itself (termed 'intra-hepatic').

### **What signs are associated with congenital portosystemic shunts?**

Typically the disease is recognised in kittens or young cats that fail to grow normally and appear stunted. The signs are usually related to three systems and can be intermittent, sometimes relating to feeding. The systems most commonly affected are:

1. Nervous system – the signs associated with the nervous system are termed hepatic encephalopathy and arise due to increased levels of toxins in the blood stream (including ammonia), which have not been cleared by the liver. The signs seen include behavioural changes (lethargy or aggression), altered consciousness, seizures (fits), intermittent blindness, a wobbly gait, circling, hyperexcitability and tremors. Drooling of saliva (ptyalism) is also commonly seen and is a unique feature of feline hepatic encephalopathy.
2. Gastro-intestinal system - these signs are non-specific and relate to liver dysfunction. Signs include a poor appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation and weight loss.
3. Urinary system - signs include bloody urine and difficulty passing urine associated with crystal or stone formation (ammonium biurate uroliths). Increased thirst and urination (termed polydipsia and polyuria) are often seen.
4. Anaesthetic complications following neutering may raise suspicions of a PSS, for example prolonged recovery periods or the development of neurological signs including blindness or a wobbly gait.

### **What abnormalities are found on physical examination?**

Patients are often thin, stunted in size and have an unkempt appearance. Some cats have copper-coloured irises but it is not known whether this is actually due to a PSS or is co-incidental. It is not unusual for the kitten to have other congenital abnormalities such as heart murmurs and cryptorchidism (undescended testicles).

### **How does a vet diagnose a PSS?**

A tentative diagnosis of a PSS can be made based on the patient's history, physical examination, blood work and liver function tests. Confirmation of the diagnosis is made with imaging studies.

### **What abnormalities are found on blood tests?**

Typical abnormalities include reduced levels of substances made in the liver (urea, albumin, glucose and cholesterol) and mild elevations in liver enzymes. The kitten may have a mild anaemia, which shows little signs of regenerating.

Assessment of dynamic bile acids is the preferred test of liver function. Bile acids are measured following a 12-hour fast and two hours following a small meal. High levels of bile acids are supportive of a diagnosis of a PSS (but have to be confirmed by imaging)

### **What abnormalities are found on analysis of urine?**

Routine urinalysis may identify blood, protein and ammonium biurate crystals (the later is found in 10-33% of cases).

### **How is imaging used to confirm the diagnosis of a PSS?**

Ultrasound is the most useful non-invasive diagnostic tool. It allows localisation and identification of the shunt in most cases; this is however highly dependent upon operator skill and equipment available. Typical findings include a small liver size and an anomalous shunting blood vessel. The bladder and kidneys should be assessed for the presence of stones. Abdominal x-rays are less useful for diagnosing a PSS.

Portovenography is the definitive method of confirming the diagnosis of a PSS. This involves placing contrast dye into one of the veins in the abdomen to highlight the shunting blood vessel. This is usually performed at surgery. This allows positive identification and localisation of the shunt vessel and can be repeated post-shunt ligation to evaluate the change in blood supply to the liver.

### **How is a PSS treated?**

Management of a congenital PSS typically involves a period of medical treatment followed by surgery. In our experience at the Feline Centre (University of Bristol), surgery is the treatment of choice for single congenital PSS. Surgical therapy is not recommended for multiple acquired PSS.

Medical treatment involves therapies that reduce the production and absorption of toxins from the intestines

1 Diet – a restricted protein diet is recommended to decrease the production of nitrogenous wastes e.g. Hill's l/d or k/d, Royal Canin Hepatic Support diet.

2 Lactulose – a synthetic disaccharide laxative. This is effective by reducing colonic faecal transit times and acidifying colonic contents, resulting in decreased ammonia production and absorption. The dose is titrated to ensure that the cat is passing soft-formed faeces at least twice daily.

3 Oral antibiotics – to modify the gut flora and reduce the production of toxins involved in the development of hepatic encephalopathy, in particular ammonia.

Suitable choices include

ampicillin, amoxycillin, neomycin and metronidazole.

### *Medical treatment of the encephalopathic crisis.*

It is not uncommon for a patient with a PSS to have an acute deterioration, for example following eating a high protein meal as a result of dietary indiscretion or an intestinal bleed. The patient may start to seizure or even fall into a coma. Emergency management involves special treatment of hepatic encephalopathy using lactulose enemas and intravenous antibiotics. Occasionally such patients will have seizures that require additional specific drugs to control.

### *Surgical treatment*

The goal of surgery is to 'tie off' of the shunting vessel to redirect blood back through the liver, without causing excessive blood pressure within the blood vessels of the liver (also known as the portal system-excessive pressure is called portal hypertension). At surgery the PSS is identified, usually with the aid of portovenography. The shunting vessel may be completely or partially ligated ('tied off') using suture material, a cellophane band or an ameroid constrictor. Occasionally some patients require a second surgery to completely occlude the shunt. A biopsy of the liver is usually taken at the time of surgery for pathological examination.

Kittens are usually hospitalised for several days after the operation to monitor for potential complications. We closely monitor for bleeding, seizures and portal hypertension. Fortunately serious complications are rare.

What is the prognosis for a kitten diagnosed with a PSS?

The long-term prognosis is generally related to the degree of shunt vessel occlusion achieved at surgery (Tilson et al, 2002). Around 90% of cases have a good clinical outcome following complete extra-hepatic shunt ligation (Van Gundy et al, 1990). These kittens are expected to have a relatively normal life following surgery. Partial ligation is associated with poorer success rates, with 58% of cases having a good to excellent outcome (Birchard et al, 1992). Following successful surgery supportive medical therapy is gradually withdrawn. In some cases the kittens require long-term medication, which maybe due to continued shunting or the development of multiple acquired shunts. Despite this diligent medical management may allow the cat to have a good quality of life for many years (Tillson et al, 2002).

### References

Tilson DM, Winklet JT (2002) Diagnosis and treatment of portosystemic shunts in the cat.

Vet Clinics of North America 32:881-889.

VanGundy T, Booth HW, Wolf AM (1990) Results of surgical management of feline portosystemic shunts. Journal of the American Animal Hospital 26:55-62

Birchard SJ, Sherding RG (1992) Feline Portosystemic shunts. Compendium of Continuing Education for the practising veterinarian 14:1295-1300.



## ***Top 10 Cat Sayings***

1. Cats humour us because they know their ancestors ate ours for breakfast.
2. Never feed your cat anything that doesn't match the carpet.
3. I'm not much of a cook but my favourite thing to make from scratch is a purr.
4. Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get eight cats to pull a sled through snow.
5. There is no snooze button on a cat who wants breakfast.
6. For a man to truly understand rejection, he must first be ignored by a cat.
7. When I'm in the doghouse, my cats still come to visit.
8. Cats are like potato chips. You can never have just one.
9. Some people have cats and go on to lead normal lives.
10. These aren't my thoughts, they're my cat walking on the keyboard.

*Anonymous*

