

BIRMAN BREED COUNCIL PRESENTATION JUDGES' WORKSHOP 2013



BIRMAN BREED PRESENTATION

- OVERVIEW
- LEGEND OF THE BIRMAN
- HISTORY OF THE BREED
- THE IDEAL BIRMAN
- UNDESIREABLE
CHARACTERISTICS
- DISQUALIFYING FAULTS
- HANDLING TIPS
- SHOWCASING OUR BIRMANS
- SUMMARY



OVERVIEW



- **Majestic, friendly, intelligent**
- **Originated in Khmer temples in Burma**
- **First appearance in the western world in France in 1919**
- **Known as Le Chat Sacre de Birmanie**
- **Recognized in France for Championship status in 1926**
- **Recognized in England for Championship status in 1966**
- **Recognized in The United States for Championship status in 1967**

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- **Color pointed cat**
- **Long silky hair - not prone to matting**
- **Pure white feet**
- **Elongated, stocky built cat. Males proportionately larger than Females**
- **Large blue almost rounded eyes**
- **Roman nose of medium length**
- **Strong jaw, firm chin**
- **Sweet expression**
- **Sweet nature**
- **Currently recognized in the following point colors: Seal, Blue, Chocolate, Lilac, Tabby, Parti-color, Red and Cream.**



THE IDEAL BIRMAN - HEAD

(30 points)

**Ears Set As Much to the Side
As to the Top of the Head**

**Ears almost as
Wide as Tall**

**Slight Flat Spot
in Front
of Ears**

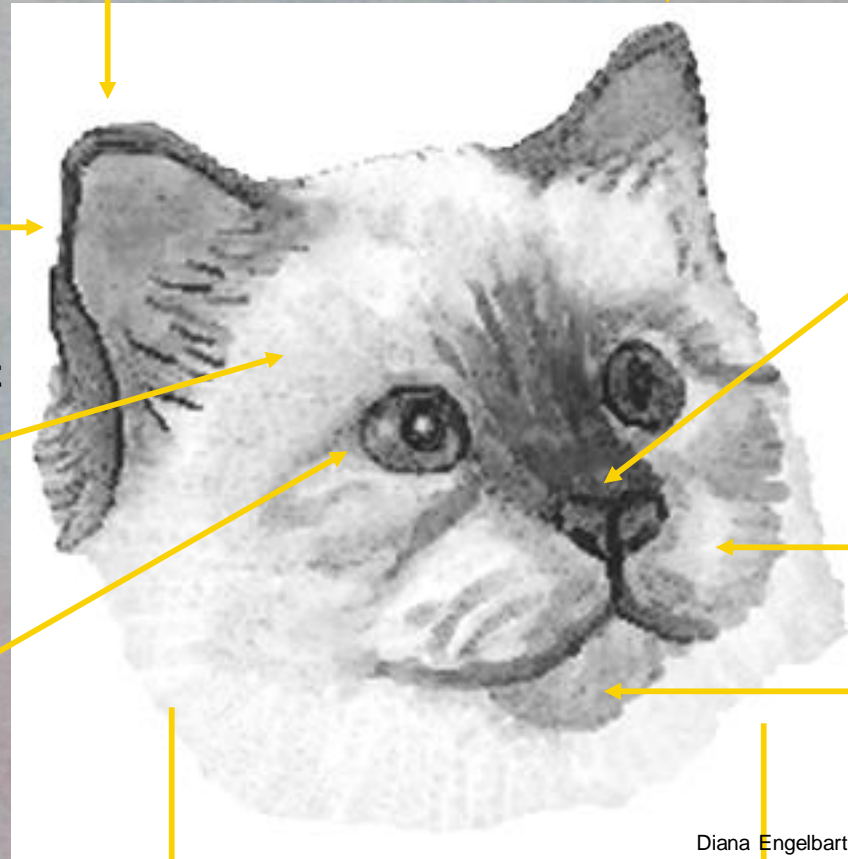
**Rounded Eye
Outer corner tilted
VERY slightly upward**

**Medium Length and
Width Nose in
Proportion to Head
Width. Roman shape
nose.**

**Broad Muzzle
Full Cheeks**

Strong Chin

Broad Head



Diana Engelbart

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - BODY

(25 Points)

- **Body should be long and stocky**
 - Chest wide and heavy with a full rib cage
 - Flanks and hips should be heavy and muscular
 - The tail medium in length and in proportion to the body length
- **Front and rear legs in proportion to body length**
 - Both front and rear legs heavy and medium in length
- **Paws large round and firm**
- **Size varies between males and females with emphasis on balance and proportion**



THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COAT

(10 POINTS)

- **Coat soft and silky to the touch**
- **Resistant to matting**
- **Length varies from one cat to another and by time of year**
- **Softer silkier texture is preferred**



THE IDEAL BIRMAN – COLOR - GLOVES

Color (except gloving) includes body, point and eye color - 15 Points / Gloves - 20 Points

- **Body, even with slight shading when allowed.**
- **Good contrast must exist between points and body**
- **“Golden mist” a desirable coloring but may be absent in kittens.**
- **Eye color, blue, the deeper and more vivid blue the better.**
- **Points, mask, ears, legs and tail dense and clearly defined.**
- **Mask covers entire face including whisker pad. Connected to ears by tracings.**
- **Gloves, front paws have gloves ending in even line across paw.**
- **Upper limit at metacarpal (dew) pad.**
- **Back paws, white covers all the toes.**
- **Laces, inverted V extending 1/2 to 3/4 of the way up the hock.**
- **Symmetry of gloves and laces is desirable.**
- **Ideally, front gloves match, back gloves match and laces match.**

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - GLOVING

Front



Right



Left



Left



Right

Rear



Right



Left

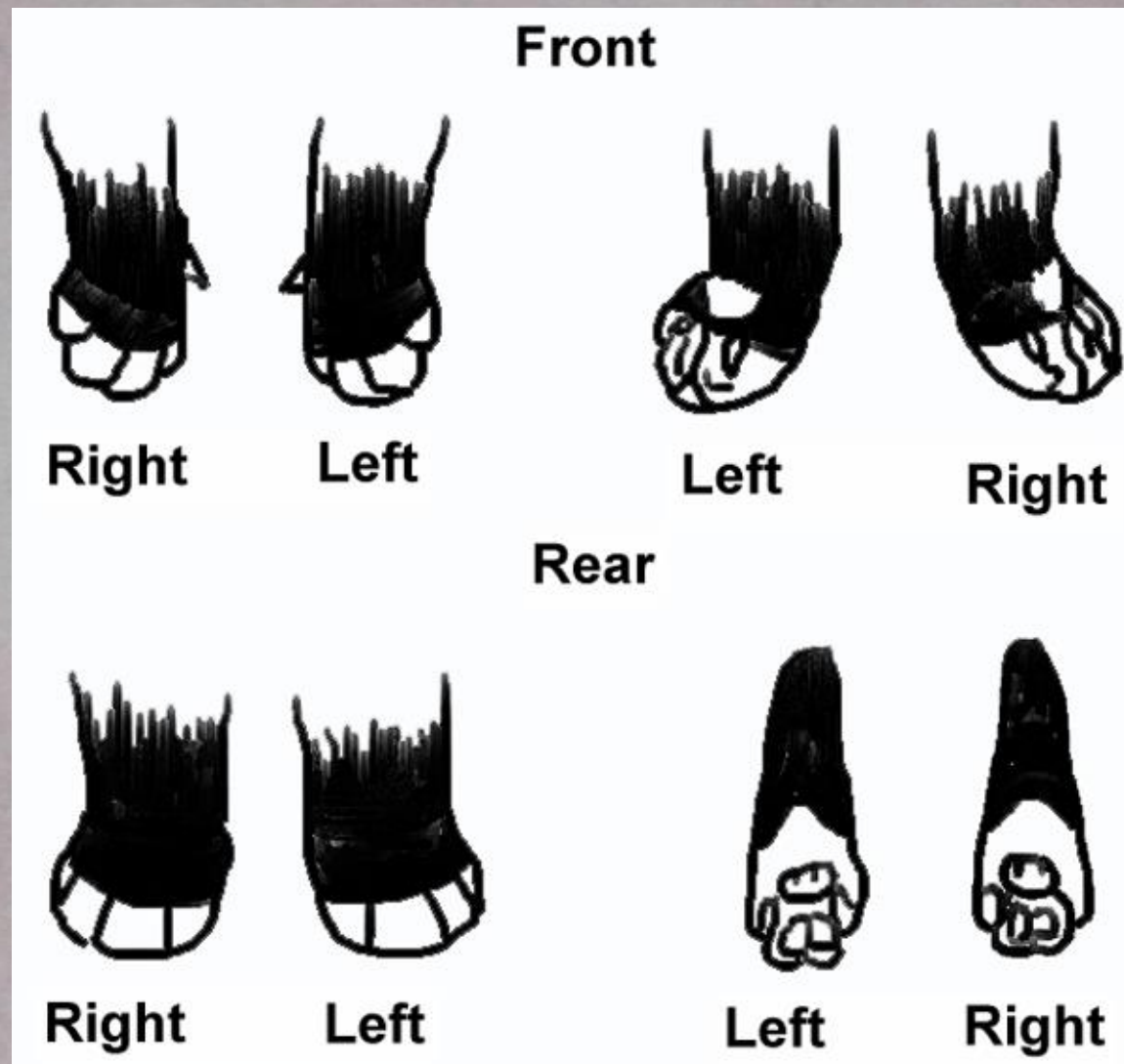


Left

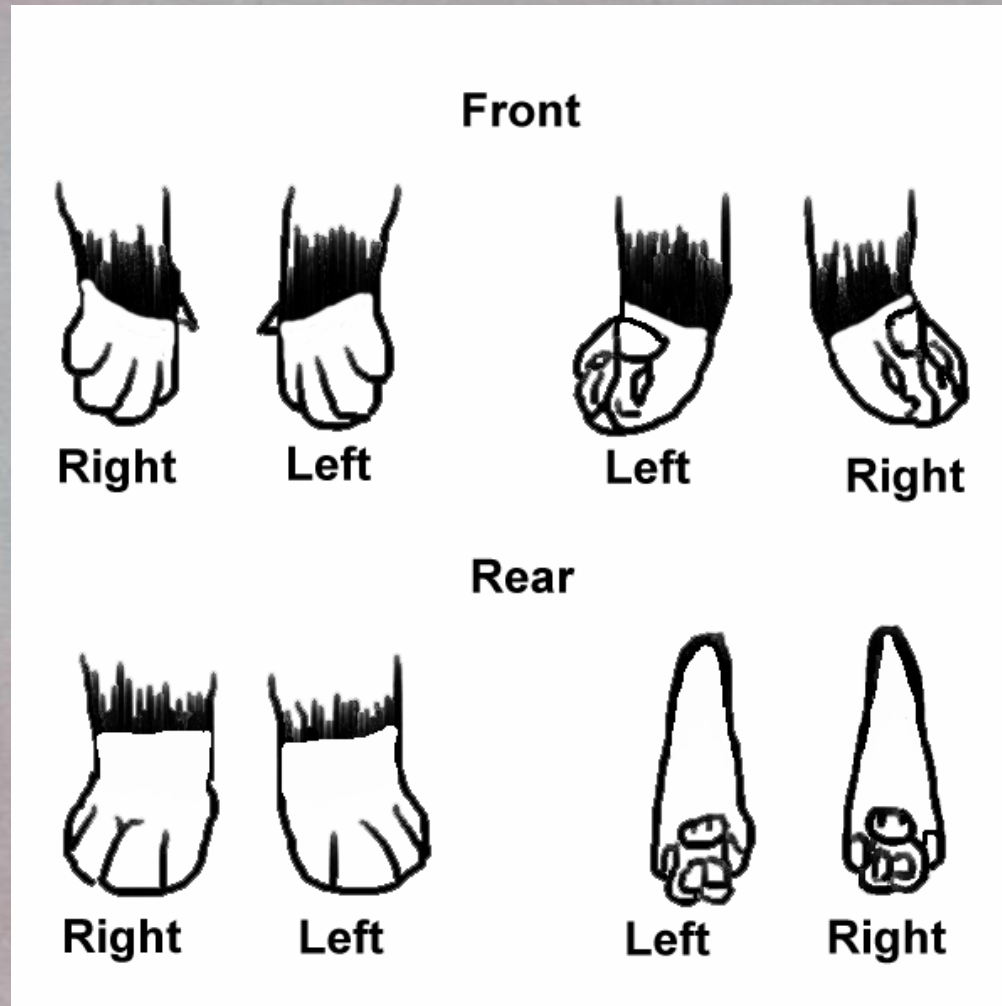


Right

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - ACCEPTABLE GLOVING - LOW



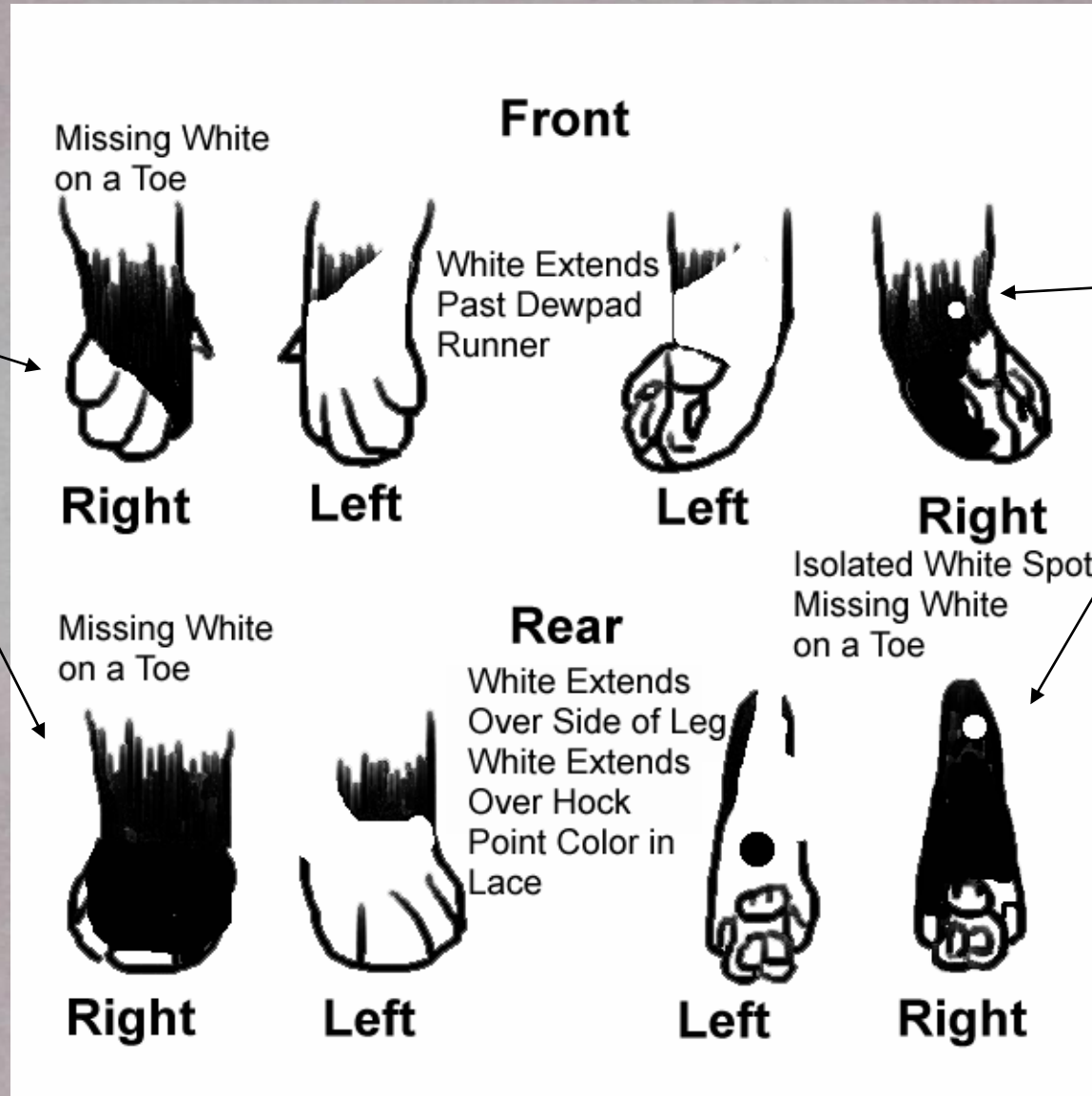
THE IDEAL BIRMAN - ACCEPTABLE GLOVING - HIGH



GLOVING FAULTS

Penalizing faults

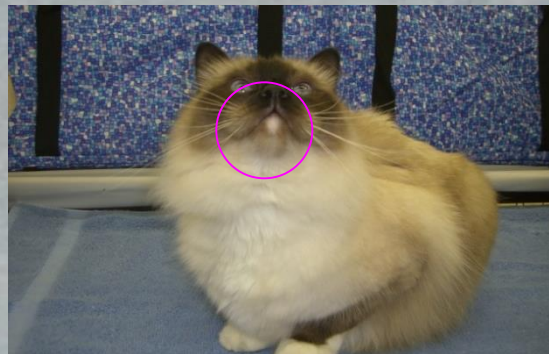
Disqualifying faults



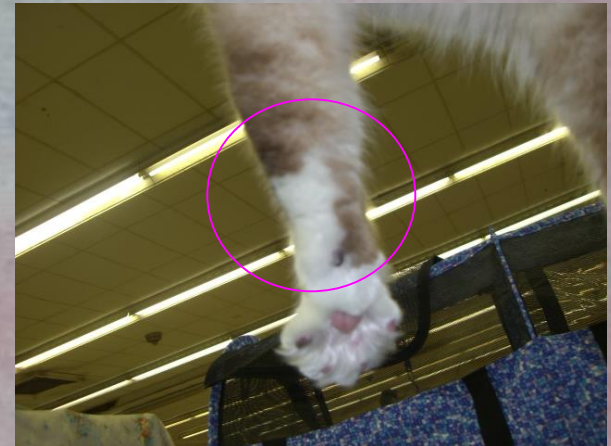
DISQUALIFYING FAULTS



Which one is NOT a DQ?

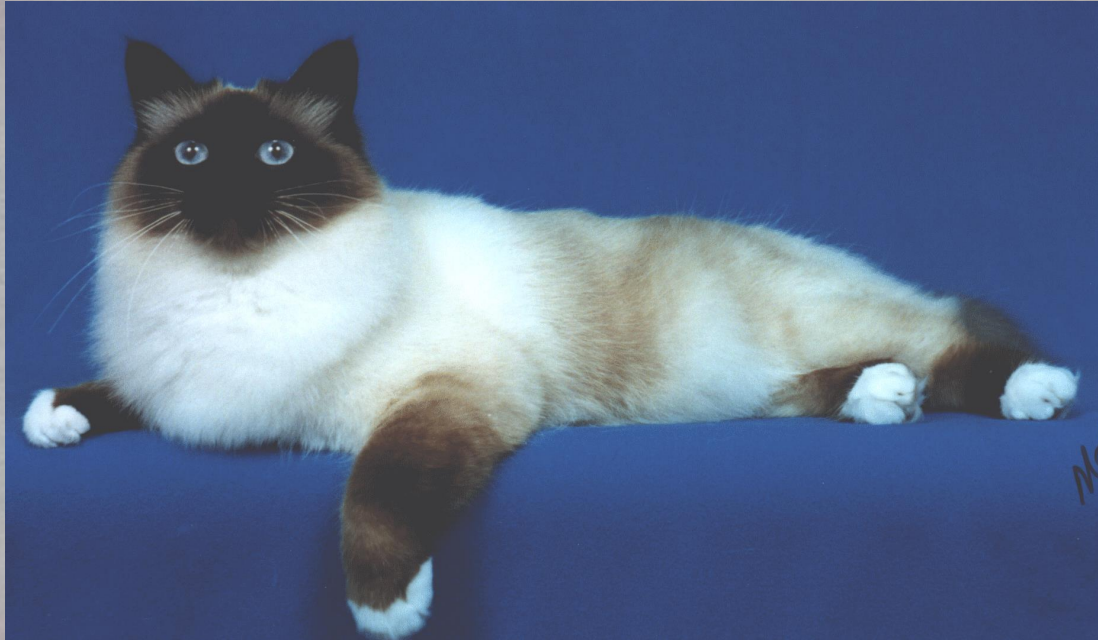


Yes, these are all on the
same cat.



THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Seal Point



- Body, even pale fawn to cream.
- Shading gradually to lighter color on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, deep seal brown.
- Nose leather, same as points.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Blue Point



- Body, bluish white to pale ivory
- Shading gradually to almost white on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, deep blue.
- Nose leather, slate-color

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Chocolate Point



- Body, ivory with no shading.
- Points, except for gloves, milk chocolate, warm in tone.
- Nose leather, cinnamon-pink.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Lilac Point



- Body, almost white.
- Points, except for gloves, frosty grey with pinkish tone.
- Nose leather, lavender pink.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Tabby Point Color Class

- Clearly defined “M” marking on forehead.
- Light colored “spectacle” markings around the eyes.
- Spotted whisker pads.
- Solid ears with no stripes.
- “Thumb marks” visible on back of ears. Less visible on kittens and dilutes.
- Legs have clearly defined, varied sized broken stripes and/or rings.
- Solid markings on the back of the hind legs above the gauntlets.
- Tail showing lighter and darker rings is preferred.
- Tail may be ticked.
- Chin may be light colored.
- Light colored “bow tie” should be evident just below the nose.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Seal Tabby Point



- Body, even pale fawn to cream shading to lighter color on stomach and chest. Pale body coat free from body markings. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable.
- Points, except for gloves, seal brown markings on a pale brown agouti background.
- Solid marking on back of hind legs deep seal brown.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, deep seal brown.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in seal. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Blue Tabby Point



- Body, bluish white to pale ivory free from body markings shading to almost white on stomach and chest. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable.
- Points, except for gloves, blue markings on a light beige agouti background.
- Solid marking on back of hind legs solid blue.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, solid blue.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in blue. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Chocolate Tabby Point



- Body, ivory. Free from body markings. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable.
- Points, except for gloves, milk chocolate markings on a light bronze agouti background.
- Solid marking on back of hind legs milk chocolate color, warm in tone.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, milk chocolate in color.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in chocolate. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Lilac Tabby Point



- Body, almost white (magnolia color).
- Pale body coat, free from body markings. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable.
- Points, except for gloves, frosty grey with pinkish tone markings on a pale beige agouti background.
- Solid marking on back of hind legs frosty grey with a pinkish tone.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, frosty grey with a pinkish tone.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in grey-pink.. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Red Tabby Point



- Body, creamy white shading to white on stomach and chest.
- Pale body coat, free from body markings. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable.
- Points, except for gloves, deep red on a light apricot agouti background.
- Solid marking on back of hind legs deep red.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, deep red.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in red. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Cream Tabby Point



- Body, clear white to creamy with no shading. Free from body markings. Body shading of light ghost striping toning with the points is acceptable. Thumb marks less apparent in cream tabby points.
- Points, except for gloves, buff cream on a paler cream agouti background.
- Tail color, with exception of rings, milk chocolate in color.
- Nose leather, pink to brick colored outlined in cream. Solid color nose leather to tone with point color is acceptable.
- Note: on Red and Cream Tabby Points “freckles” may occur on nose, lips, eyelids and ears. Slight freckling in a mature cat should not be penalized.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Seal-Tortie Tabby Point



- Body, mottled pale fawn to creamy white, shading to lighter color on stomach and chest. Thumb marks are mottled in seal-tortie tabby points.
- Points, except for gloves, seal brown markings on a pale brown agouti background overlaid and intermingled with shades of light and dark red.
- Nose leather, pink, mottled pink or seal.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

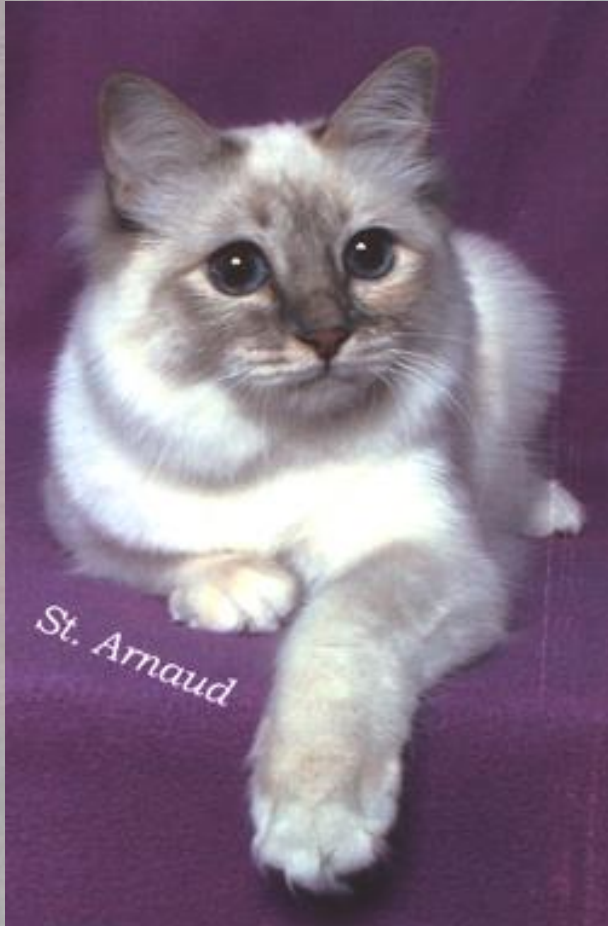
Chocolate-Tortie Tabby Point



- Body, mottled ivory to creamy white, shading to lighter color on stomach and chest. Thumb marks are mottled in chocolate-tortie tabby points.
- Points, except for gloves, milk chocolate markings on a light bronze agouti background overlaid and intermingled with shades of light and dark red.
- Nose leather, pink, mottled pink and chocolate or solid chocolate.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Blue-Cream Tabby Point



- Body, mottled bluish white to clear white, shading to almost white on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, blue markings on a light beige agouti background overlaid and intermingled with shades of light and dark cream.
- Nose leather, pink, mottled pink and blue or solid blue.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Lilac-Cream Tabby Point



- Body, almost white with no shading,
- Points, except for gloves, lilac markings on a pale beige agouti background overlaid and intermingled with shades of cream.
- Nose leather, pink, mottled pink and light grey or solid pink-grey.
- NOTE: the four colors above show the normal tabby pattern which has been overlaid with shades of light and dark red (seal-tortie/chocolate-tortie) or cream (blue-cream/lilac-cream). The extent and distribution of the tortie areas are not important providing that both elements, tortie and tabby, are clearly visible.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Parti-Color Class

Seal-Torti Point



- Body, mottled pale fawn to creamy white, shading to lighter color on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, seal brown mottled with red.
- Nose leather, in accordance with one or both point colors.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Parti-Color Class

Blue-Cream Point



- Body, mottled bluish white to clear white, shading to almost white on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, deep blue mottled with cream.
- Nose leather, in accordance with one or both point colors.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Parti-Color Class

Chocolate-Tortie Point



- Body, mottled ivory to creamy white, shading to white on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, milk chocolate mottled with red.
- Nose leather, in accordance with one or both point colors.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Parti-Color Class

Lilac-Cream Point



- Body, almost white with no shading.
- Points, except for gloves, frosty gray with pinkish tone, mottled with cream.
- Nose leather, in accordance with one or both point colors.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Other Solid Point Color Class

Red Point



- Body, creamy white, shading to white on stomach and chest.
- Points, except for gloves, deep red.
- Nose leather, bright pink.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - COLOR

Other Solid Point Color Class

Cream Point



- Body, creamy white to clear white with no shading,
- Points, except for gloves, buff cream.
- Nose leather, flesh pink.
- NOTE: on Red Points and Cream Points, small dark “freckles” may occur on nose, lips, eyelids and ears. Slight freckling in a mature cat should not be penalized.

THE IDEAL BIRMAN - PERSONALITY



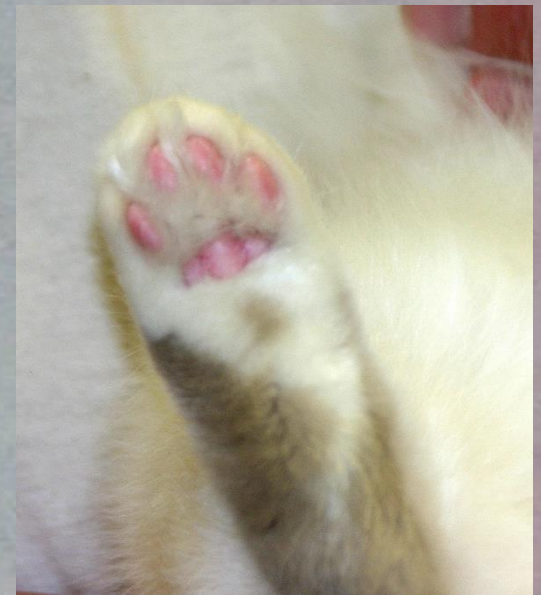
- Very loving, devoted companion.
- Unusually easygoing and quiet.
- Social: enjoy the company of humans as well as other cats and dogs.
- Unique vocalization called the “huff”. Equivalent of a frown.

UNDESIREABLE CHARACTERISTICS

- Tall, thin ears
- Ears set high on head
- Small eyes
- Close set eyes
- Oriental tilt to eyes
- Long, narrow head
- Straight nose
- Weak chin
- Oriental body type
- Long thin legs
- Thin whippy tail
- Runners
- Dark toes

DISQUALIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

- Lack of white gloves on any paw
- Kinked or abnormal tail
- Structural defects or abnormalities
- Crossed eyes
- Incorrect number of toes
- White spots not connected to gloves
- Spots of point color in laces
- Eye color other than blue
- White tail tips or chin spots



HANDLING TIPS

- Handle with firm but gentle hands.
- Judge tension by the degree of body tension, not by vocalizations
- Play with the cat to relax it.
- Some Birmans become annoyed with frequent handling of their feet.
 - Bending the cats paws backward to evaluate gloving may upset cats that are shown often.
 - Evaluate gloving from a show stretch
 - Try scratching the lower back to get cat to stand on tip toes.



HANDLING TIPS



- Use bright indirect light to evaluate gloves on lilac points.
- Contrast may be greatest on sides of feet on lilac points.
- Use a feather to evaluate eyeset. Observe cat's focus as it looks at feather.
- Bring cat to its feet before lifting from judging table.

SUMMARY

- More than just four white feet:
 - Strong bodied cat
 - Broad head
 - Wide muzzle
 - Good ear and eye placement
- A well balanced small female should be competitive with a much larger male
- The white gloves are an important part of this breed and can't be overlooked. However, the weight given to the gloving should be as specified in the standard, no more, no less.
- Both Birman breed clubs publish quarterly newsletters which are available to any judge.



Your questions are welcome.

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND INTEREST
IN OUR WONDERFUL BIRMAN BREED.



Showcasing Our Birman



Chocolate Point



Seal Point



Lilac Point



Blue Point



Seal Tortie Point



Blue Cream Point



Lilac Cream Point



Cream Point



Seal Tabby Point



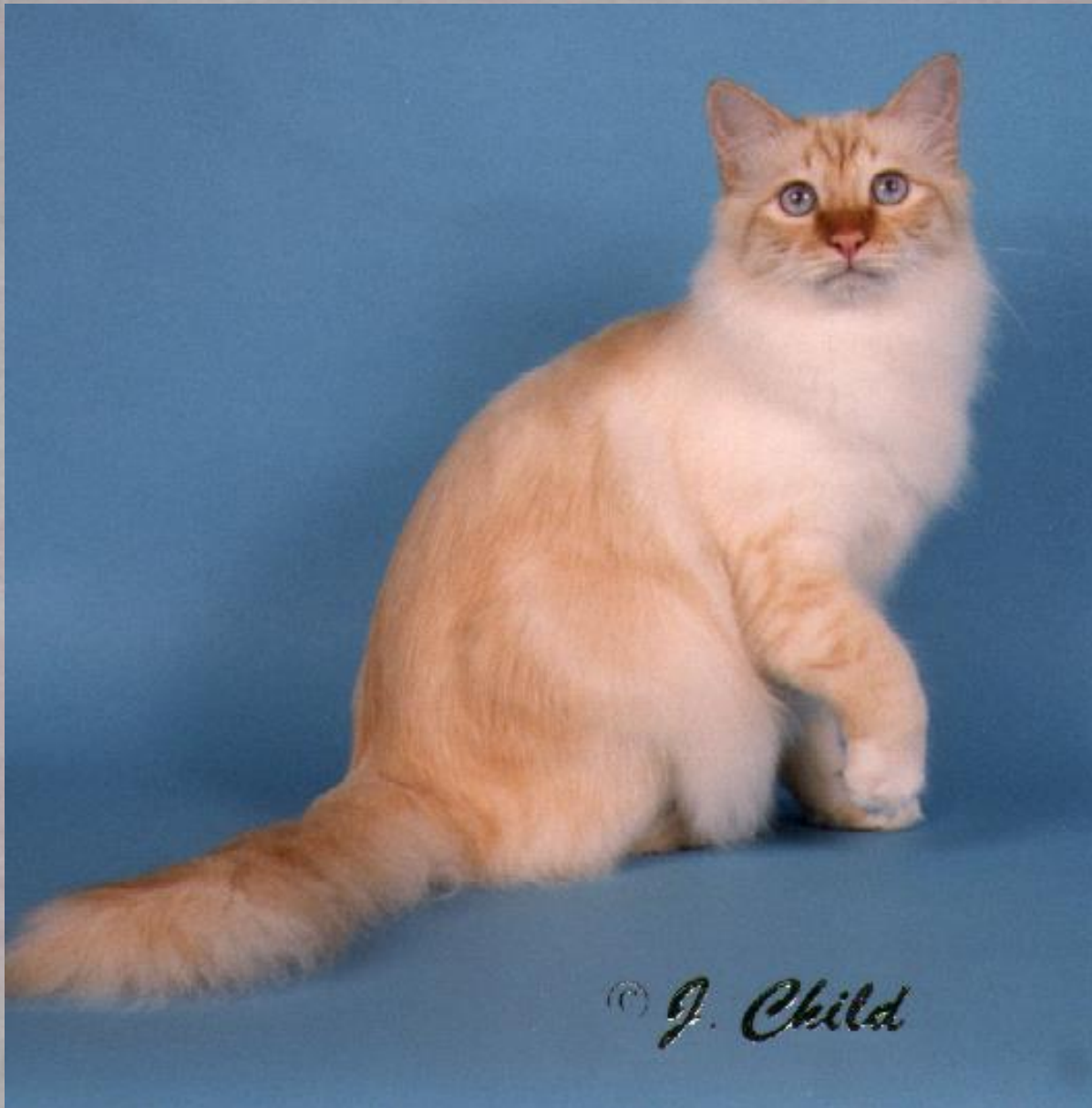
Lilac Tabby Point



Blue Cream Tabby Point



Red Tabby Point



THE LEGEND OF THE BIRMAN

(one of several variations on the same theme)

- The legend states that many years ago before the birth of Buddha the Kymer people of Burma who were very devout, built wonderful temples to their Goddess Tsun-Kyan-Kse. The most beautiful of these temples at Lao-Tsan contained a solid gold statue of the Goddess, with sapphire eyes. The priests of the temple also kept one hundred pure white cats as companions and temple guardians. The elderly head priest Mun-Ha had an especially devoted friend in his cat Sinh.
- One stormy night, raiders attacked the temple, killing the priest Mun-Ha. Immediately the cat Sinh leapt to assist his master, and as he stood on Mun-Ha's dying body before the golden Goddess the priest's soul entered into Sinh and his appearance was changed to one of great beauty, that of a seal-point Birman complete with golden tipped coat and sapphire eyes. Inspired by this sign from the Goddess the other priests drove out the raiders and saved the temple.
- Sinh lived for seven more days without either food or water, before dying and taking his and Mun-Ha's souls into Paradise. Next day the remaining ninety nine temple cats were found to be transformed like Sinh, and from then onwards they were regarded as Sacred Cats, and thought to contain the souls of pious priests on their way to heaven.

HISTORY OF THE BREED



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The modern story of this breed, also called the Sacred Cat of Burma, begins in 1919, when a pair of Birman cats arrived in France. Two different accounts are associated with this pair of cats and, like the legend, neither account is documented. The first one alleges that around the beginning of the twentieth century, the temple of Tsim-Kyan-Kse was again raided. Two Westerners, Auguste Pavie and Major Gordon Russell, helped some of the priests and their sacred cats escape to Tibet. When the two returned to France in 1919, they were sent a pair of Birman cats by the grateful priests. In the second and less romantic account, an individual named Mr. Vanderbilt bought the pair of Birmans from a disgruntled servant of the temple of Lao-Tsun.

In both accounts, the male cat, Maldapour, died on the ocean voyage to France, but the female, Sita, arrived in France pregnant with Maldapour's offspring, and became the European foundation of the Birman breed.

The breed flourished and in 1925 the Birman was formally recognized in France and the first breed standard was written. The breed was further developed and refined in that country until the chaos of World War II, when the breed almost became extinct. At one point, the Birman breed dwindled to a single pair of cats.

With careful outcrossing, the Birman was reestablished and by 1955 Birmans began to be exported to England. They were officially recognized as a purebred breed in Britain in 1966. In 1959 the first Birman pair arrived in the United States, and in 1967 the breed was officially recognized in America.