

South East International Koi Show

Another successful year for the South East International Koi Show. Bernie Woollands reports...

The international conference centre in session.
Photos by Rene Gerritzen, Des Harris, Bernie Woollands



In recent times there hasn't been a South East Show that hasn't had a crisis of one sort or another to contend with. Foot and mouth disease restrictions, water shortages, KHV... we've had it all. Generally, we've known about the problems in advance and dealt with them prior to the show, but this year it was different. We went into this one with a plan to put on a recession busting show and felt that we had succeeded, but an unconsidered symptom of the recession put a damper on proceedings that the club is still reeling from.

Over the course of the weekend thieves got into the showground and stole various items of koi equipment from several dealers and the club itself. The items stolen were mainly boxed items with the exception of some Aquosis vats. The thieves ignored second hand items like cameras, laptops, laminators, printers and DIY tools to concentrate on the koi-related goods. This leads us to surmise that the perpetrators are from within the hobby, and they knew what to take.

At the time of writing this we are still awaiting a report from the security firm tasked with patrolling the three dealers' marquees. To assist the Police with their enquiries the section has put up a £1,000 reward for information leading to a conviction. Please see the Koi Community pages at the back of the magazine for more information.

a happier note

Moving on, the show was every bit the success that we had planned for. Several innovations were trialled and most worked first time. We had several new exhibitors which is always a good sign, and they brought with them some quality koi to add to those we'd come to expect.

To cope with demand we introduced two more vats to the centre ring (making 42). However, in early August we began to get some timely cancellations which allowed us to bring in exhibitors from the waiting list before handing out second vats to a few that had expressed an interest. In the end we had 38 different exhibitors booked but two of those ended up as last minute no-shows and the final tally of koi was 254 exhibited by 36 hobbyists.

It has to be said that the run up to the show as far as vat and dealer bookings were concerned was slow to start with. A sign of the recession perhaps, as normally we are fully booked by the beginning of June. But this year it wasn't until the end of June that things began to take off, and when they did it was with almost avalanche like proportions with requests coming in daily. We like to think that our recession-busting policy of holding down prices to 2008 levels played their part.

In the end we managed to field 32 different koi and koi-related dealers to provide our visitors with variety and choice, supported by some arts, crafts, gardening and catering stands, plus the display of Bonsai and

About the author:



Bernie Woollands bought his first koi in 1969. He is a member of the South East Section and a BKKS and NVN Judge, having had articles published in Australia, Holland, Japan, South Africa, USA and the UK.

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Grand Champion



reptiles. So in total there were 51 stalls. A bouncy assault course was provided for the children, as well as a coconut shy. Balloonatic the clown entertained folks young and old

with his own brand of balloon magic.

But all of that was periphery activity, and the main event was, of course, the exhibition of koi in the centre ring. This year it was augmented by a dealers' section whereby three dealers exhibited 28 koi in a separate section competing for our inaugural 'Dealers Challenge Cup' competition. This will be covered in a future article.

quality koi

Being part of the benching team is a good place to observe the quality of the koi being entered into the show. My first impression, and one that remained with me throughout benching, was that the quality was up and it was a very high standard. This opinion was confirmed by others throughout the course of the weekend, including koi experts like Gary Pritchard and Peter Waddington, as well as our international panel of judges. The judging team was a good mix of people with experience of the South East Show, as well as some newcomers, which together added up to one of the most highly qualified and widely experienced team of judges ever to grace a UK koi show.

So that brings me nicely on to the koi themselves. During benching Christine Woolger and I came to the conclusion that a lot of high quality koi were going to go home without a prize as the competition was so intense, especially in the Go-Sanke classes in sizes 2, 4 and 5. Even size 7, a record (for us) 16 entries didn't leave any

easy options with eight Kohakus, five Sanke and three Kawarimono contesting the awards.

Baby Champion

This year's Baby Champion was a size 1 Kohaku exhibited by Frank Chalke, a member of the MSB Section which has a long history of taking major awards at our show. The koi was supplied by Worthing Aquatics from the breeder Sakuma, who used the Momotaro bloodline to produce this specimen.

This koi beat 32 other contenders in its size before taking on 46 from size 2, proving that quality can overcome quantity. My sources from within the judging panel tell me that this decision won by a 'large' majority.

Young Champion

Our Young Champion was a size 4 Kohaku exhibited by Andy Baker, a section member. It was supplied by Nippon Nishikigoi from the Tanaguchi Koi Farm. Andy bought this koi as Tosai at 28cm in 2008. Measuring up at 54cms in 2009 it was unanimously voted Young Champion out of a total of 89 koi benched in sizes 3 and 4.

Adult Champion

Our Adult Champion was an Oomo Showa exhibited by Ron Rance and supplied by Connoisseur Koi. This koi caused a split vote amongst our judges and needed the casting vote of the Senior Judge, Mike Harvey, to take the prize.

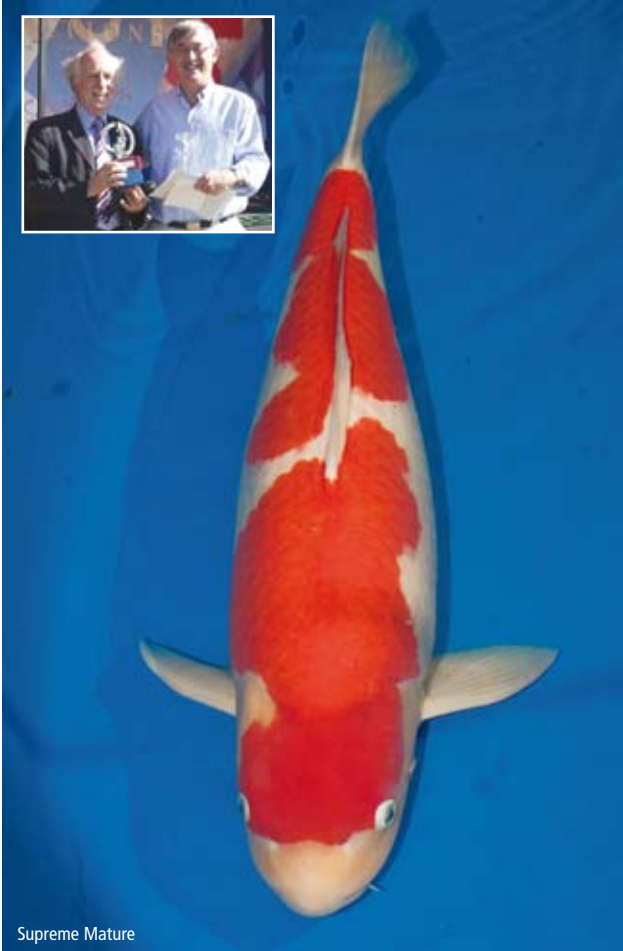
It was one of the smaller entries in this size but as Chinese judge, Hongman Leung, said to me after: "This is one beautiful koi". Hongman then put his money where his mouth was and awarded it the ZNA Guangdong Chapter Friendship Prize.

Ron is one of our long serving members and a mentor to many up and coming koi keepers.

The judges at work



Being part of the benching team is a good place to observe the quality of the koi...



Supreme Mature



Supreme Adult

Mature Champion

Our Mature Champion was a Kohaku aged approximately nine years. It was supplied by Selective Koi Sales from a breeder called Izeka and exhibited by John Hellens from the North East Section. The Senior Judge tells me that he thinks this was a unanimous decision too – if not it won by a very large majority.

Grand Champion

The Grand Champion was a size 7 Kohaku exhibited by Lee Jeffery, another of our own members. Lee exhibited this koi in 2007 where it took the Jumbo Champion award.

Lee won Grand Champion that year with a different Kohaku that also returned this year but failed to compete with its vat-mate that had bulked up considerably in the intervening years. As a result it was awarded Grand Champion unanimously by the judges.

To find out more turn to page 29 where you will find an interview with Lee Jeffery.

something for everyone

Back on the showground our latest addition to our array of caterers, Kushi – a company specialising in Japanese and Korean cuisine – did good business and added another



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Supreme Young



Supreme Baby

element to the food on offer which is geared to suit all tastes. Our section-run bar managed to quench the thirst of show workers and visitors alike.

Our outdoor seating facilities – now dubbed ‘The international outdoor Nishikigoi conference centre’ – was packed with visitors catching up with old friends from home and abroad. And international it was with hobbyists from all over the UK including Northern Ireland, plus those from Belgium,

Germany (who really enjoyed the Spitfire beer) and Holland. And let’s not forget the judging contingent representing Australia, Belgium, China, Germany, Holland, South Africa, the UK and the USA.

Our bi-annual feature of a lecture theatre, this time sponsored by Koi Nations, provided visitors with a well thought out agenda of topics, from Tategoi (Mike Snaden) to the Show Champions (Mike Harvey and judges), with Bernice Brewster (Koi Health) and

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Peter Waddington (Filtration Techniques). All speakers actively welcomed questions and dispensed answers on demand.

A post show survey with some of our long term visitors, which included the question 'Best speaker?' produced a tie between all four of them. The consistent remark was that all four were not only very knowledgeable in their chosen field, but also still very passionate about the hobby.

a huge 'thank you'

Before signing off, Show Chairman Alan Archer instructed me to include a thank you to all those that made this show possible, the dealers, the exhibitors, the judges, the sponsors, the visitors, and last but by no means least his crew of show workers that got the show on the road and took it down again ready for next year. With that said I shall leave the final paragraph to two of our visitors of long standing.

The judging panel

Judges:

Mike Harvey & Brian Welch, South Africa
Dirk de Witte, Belgium
Louis Vanreusel, Germany
Hongman Leung, China
Toën Feyen, Netherlands
Lloyd Bartley & Gary Pritchard, UK
Larry Gill, USA

Guest Judge:

Gerard McDonald, Australia

Trainees:

John Anderson & Allan Tait, UK
Frederic Cosemans, Belgium
Fred Ernsting, Arnand Schinkelshoek, Anja & Richard Albertsboer, The Netherlands.

The major awards

Grand Champion: Lee Jeffery, Kohaku, Size 7
Supreme Mature: John Hellens, Kohaku, Size 7
Supreme Adult: Ron Rance, Showa, Size 5
Supreme Young: Andy Baker, Kohaku, Size 4
Supreme Baby: Frank Chalke, Kohaku, Size 1
Jumbo: Lee Jeffery, Kawarimono, Size 7
South East Section Best Vat Award: Tim Fisher, Vat 40
Potteries Trophy for Best Novice: Alan Robson, Vat 36

2009 Selected Variety Awards (Kujaku)


Best Kujaku: Robert Robson, Hikarimoyo, Size 5
2nd Kujaku: Nick Relf, Hilarimuji, Size 1
3rd Kujaku: Peter Marvell, Hikarimoyo, Size 3

Friendship Awards

Banana-Bar Koi Society: Tim Fisher, Hikarimuji, Size 5
KLAN (Germany): Trevor Childs, Hikarimoyo, Size 6

Belgium Koi Society Best Tategoi:

Koi Society of Australia: Trevor Childs, Sanke, Size 5
NVN: Frank Chalke, Kinginrin, Size 4
South African Koi Society: Paul Williams, Tancho, Size 5
KwaZuluNatal Chapter SAKKS: Trevor Childs, Hikarimoyo, Size 6
ZNA Guangdong Friendship: Roy Voller, Hikarimuji, Size 5
Gerry Preston Memorial: Trevor Farrington, Koromo, Size 5
NorCal ZNA: Ron Rance, Showa, Size 5
Tim Fisher, Hikarimuji, Size 5
Nick Relf, Sanke, Size 2

Several years back one of our overseas visitors (Guus Roijen) summarised the show as "The Koikeepers Show", illustrating the fact that the vast majority of visitors were drawn from the Koikichi and that there was little passing trade. Those Koikichi and the title "Koikeepers Show" remain our priority to this day and it was remarked upon again when Dennis Tillbrook, one of our long term domestic visitors commented: "Whether they are eight or 80, everybody here is mad about koi". That is the way we like it and we hope it ever remains so! 

"Whether they are eight or 80, everybody here is mad about koi"

Show Entries Matrix								
Class/size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Kohaku	9	12	11	11	10	2	8	64
Sanke	3	8	3	6	8	8	5	41
Showa	1	5	5	7	10	4	.	32
Bekko	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	2
Utsurimono	1	3	3	3	6	3	.	19
Asagi/shusui	5	.	1	1	.	.	.	7
Koromo	2	1	4	3	2	.	.	12
Kawarimono	2	3	2	8	2	3	3	23
Hikarimuji	3	5	.	2	3	1	.	14
Hikariutsuri	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
Hikarimoyo	4	.	.	3	2	1	.	10
Tancho	2	6	6	1	1	1	.	14
Kinginrin	1	3	4	4	2	1	.	15
Total	33	46	40	49	46	24	16	254

As you can see, the most popular show classes were Kohaku (64), Sanke (41) and Showa (32). The most popular sizes were size 4 (49), size 5 (46) and size 2 (46).