



U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, holding GC, BW, NW Caricature's Colin Powell. CFA's 2004 Cat of the Year traveled to the U.S. State Department offices in Washington, D.C. on Friday, August 13, 2004, where he met his distinguished namesake and participated in a formal photo session in the prestigious Treaty Room.

BEST CAT GC, BW, NW CARICATURE'S COLIN POWELL

by Sig Hauck



"Colin" was born on the anniversary of the 9/11 disaster, in the same birthing box in our bedroom as his dam had been and his sire before her.

Colin observed his siblings as they tumbled out of the birthing box and carefully climbed out when he was more sturdy. During weaning, he shunned

kitten food and went for his mother's raw beef, with a low growl and a tiny paw out to discourage the others. He would lie on his back like "road kill" watch his siblings wrestle and run, and then join them for a cozy nap. When his littermates spun to catch a teaser, he studied their actions and grabbed the handle. During shows, he liked to be out of his cage, observing spectators.

He had no neck, a large head, tiny ears on the sides of his head, large bulging eyes and a very fuzzy coat. Sharyn decided to hang on to him, hoping his coat would improve. "Improve" was an understatement!

Colin's coat developed into a pitch-black lacquer-like sheath. No product was used except during his bath. Before he entered a ring, his coat was smoothed with a pink cotton cloth obtained at a local flea market. Many exhibitors, convinced it held a secret ingredient, wanted one. Colin's coat is all a product of genetics and conditioning — grooming from the inside out.

Sharyn and I encourage exhibitors to stay in CFA by providing them with cats that we would be proud to show. This season, this policy resulted in two one-show grands, a regional winner and Cat of the Year for the four exhibitors showing Caricature cats.

In 2002, we sold a pet kitten to Gloria and John Clark and we soon became friends. Gloria got the "show bug," so we provided Gloria with a premier out of Colin's parents from a previous litter. John asked to show a kitten himself. We were running a kitten for a regional win at the time, and Colin was awaiting his turn to enter the show world. So, Colin went to join the Clarks at their winter quarters in Florida.

John fell in love with the little guy. Gloria asked if there was a way that Colin could always be John's cat. An

agreement was reached without John's knowledge, so Gloria could surprise him for his birthday on May 5th.

Colin didn't turn eight months old until May 11th and therefore spent the month of May first as a kitten, then an open and then he grandd. After an outstanding start, he was accidentally dropped at the Mo-Kan show in Kansas City in late August, after his photos were taken, when Gloria tripped on the photographer's cables taped across the floor. Colin finished the show with a great score, but also with trepidation about being shown.

A week later at National Capital, Colin was afraid. The four of us decided he should stay home for a couple of weeks. We developed a plan to rebuild his confidence. The Clarks practiced "showtime" at home. At National Capital, wheelchairs, carts and baby strollers seemed to worry Colin. The Clarks rented a wheelchair and Colin lived with and in it for two weeks. After his rest, he went to a small show in Allentown, PA as a "test." He was back to his wonderful, self-assured and playful self.

Even with that setback, Colin reached first place in the standings by the end of September and maintained first place the rest of the year.

The pressure of showing a cat for Cat of the Year has sometimes resulted in fond friendships going sour. The four of us developed a plan to avoid this. Each person had a role. Sharyn provided the "how to" of showing and conditioning. Gloria and John took Colin to shows. I developed a computer program to provide predictions and "what if" scenarios. The results provided us with confidence. But it was scary when the computer predicted in late November that a white Persian, 3,750 points behind Colin and not in the top 200, was going to pass him in March if Colin didn't improve. The Persian, GC, BW, NW Artemis Stardust Memory, eventually finished second to Colin by only 114 points!

During the last week of January, we planned a fun weekend with the Clarks at the Plymouth Meeting, PA show. At 8:30 Thursday night, I discovered a very high count had been posted late in the day for a show in Wichita, KS. I called Gloria and told her to repack for Wichita and the expected ice and snowstorms, while I secured a hotel

room. Twelve hours later, holstered by competitive spirit, Gloria and John flew to Wichita without a murmur of (his appointment. They secured a substantial gain and the computer — for the first time — predicted that Colin would be Cat of the Year!

Colin's performance faltered only once after that, in Toronto in late February. Then he never fell behind again.

Colin was never sick, never dropped weight, never lost his appetite and never lost his sweet disposition. He loved the hotel rooms and was a patient traveler by car and air. He did not breed during the show year, nor did he live with cycling females or studs. Between shows, Colin rested at home with the Clarks in Riverside, CT, along with three of his siblings that they also own. He is as loved and cared for as any family pet could dream of being.

Week after week Colin represented his breed as no other before him. During the season, Colin amassed a total of over 23,000 points in 45 shows, appearing in over 300 rings, over a hundred of which were as Best Cat. He ended the season with a 117.85-point ring average. He is the first Bombay to become Cat of the Year in CFA history.

Since his retirement, Colin has bred successfully. The first dam bred by him delivered on the Fourth of July. Colin will enhance the Caricature Cattery breeding lines and other lines as well, by siring healthy, friendly and lovely Bombays — The Ultimate Black Cat!

