

THE YEAR OF THE BOMBAY

by
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A *JET-BLACK* cat, with deep, copper-colored eyes, can be a breath-taking sight. The breed of domestic cat known as the Bombay is certainly no exception. Bombays are a hybrid, or manmade breed, as opposed to a naturally occurring breed such as 'the Persian'. Bombays also differ from established breeds, such as the Burmese, in that they do not always breed true.

Bombays are the result of mating a Sable Burmese to a Black American Shorthair. Nikki Homer of Shawnee Cattery is the originator of this breed. She worked over twenty years to develop the Bombay and to have it recognized as a new breed, eligible for championship status. Shawnee Cattery used the best available Burmese and Black American Shorthairs to develop a cat blending features of both, though tending more toward the Burmese in type and personality. Bombays, however, are *not* duplicates of the Burmese, nor are they black Burmese. They represent a happy medium, somewhere between the Burmese and ASH in type and size, but not large or rangy. Medium-sized cats, tending to be a little larger than the Burmese, they should have surprising weight for their size, and should not have lithe, long, panther-like type.

The Bombay is distinctive in being a short-haired black cat with copper eyes, and with coat color and texture which reminds one of patent leather—very glossy, with a polished, shimmering sheen, sleek and very close-lying—almost as if it were painted on. The coat should not appear to be plush like that of the British Shorthair, and the texture should be very soft, perhaps like black velvet or mink.

There are currently about 350 registered Bombays, and although they have been in existence for twenty years, the Bombay was first recognized for championship status only in 1976 by CFA. Bombays are currently eligible to compete in the championship class in three of the larger associations: CFA, TICA, and ACFA. Bombays are also listed in CFF with non-championship, experimental status. Hopefully, the CFF status will soon be changed, since Bombay registration is approaching the CFF requirement of twenty-five cats from six



Gr Ch Kejo Zanzabar of Gotagato

different registered catteries before a breed club may sponsor a proposal for status change. The remaining associations do not, as yet, recognize the Bombay, nor is it recognized outside of the United States.

The three accepting associations now recognize for showing Bombays bred from Burmese and Black American Shorthair parents, Bombay and Burmese parents, Bombay and Black American Shorthair parents and, of course, offspring from two Bombay parents. The most common breedings are generally between Bombays and Burmese, or two Bombay parents. (Previous to June 1, 1981, ACFA had accepted for showing only Bombays bred from two Bombay parents.)

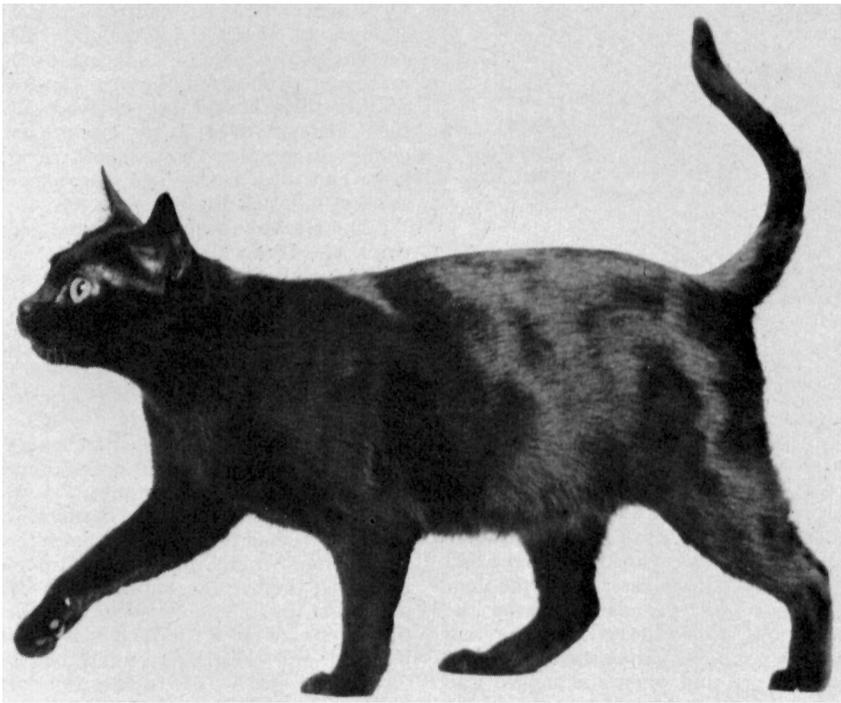
The first Bombay male to be CFA registered was Shawnee Ominous (Gr Ch Shawnee Cassius Clay, a Burmese male, x Shawnee Obsidian, a Black American Shorthair). The first female was Shawnee Media (Gr Ch Shawnee Dancing in the Dark, a Black ASH x Ch Shawnee Latakia, a Burmese). These cats and their progeny figure prominently in the pedigrees of most Bombays.

The first grand champion Bombay was CFA Gr Ch Kejo Kyrie, a female, owned and bred by Patt Taylor. The first male grand champion is CFA Gr Ch Kejo Zanzabar of Gotagato, also bred by Patt Taylor, and owned by Joanne Pantaze. Zanzabar was Kyrie's only son; Kyrie is no longer living. However, Zanzabar is currently being shown, and has fathered many fine Bombays. One of them, Gr Ch Gotagato Jacqueline, has granded in both TICA and CFA.

The Bombay name is derived from a small black Indian leopard of that name, but all similarity ends there. Bombays are *not* wildcat-domestic feline hybrids; they are bred from totally domesticated felines. Most Bombays are very people-oriented, as are their Burmese relatives, and often actually prefer human companionship. Many Bombay owners will testify that, while the Bombays may not be as demanding or vociferous as Siamese, they will usually be somewhere in the same room as their owners, content to curl up and sleep within sight of their human companions. At the same time, Bombays will rarely refuse to be picked up and fussed over, as they also tend to be rulers of the roost, regardless of whatever other kind of pet may reside in the household. Like many other breeds, Bombays are often bed-sleepers, especially fond of being *under-cover* cats, usually sleeping with the person they feel closest to. They make excellent companions and pets, as well as being glamorous show cats.

As hybrids, Bombays tend to be sturdy, healthy cats. Many other pedigreed cats, due to limited genetic pools and the necessary linebreeding, are not as fortunate. Bombays frequently have large litters, four to six kittens, and generally have little trouble either delivering the kittens or in taking care of them afterward.

Since the Bombay breed is derived from hybrid matings of different colored parentage, sable and black, Bombay parents may occasionally have sable-colored kittens. The more distant in the pedigree the hybridization occurred,



Gr Ch Shawnee Ai Ai of Sankachi

however, the less chance there is of that occurring. While the gene for black coloration is dominant to the gene for sable, the sable gene can be carried recessively for many generations. Sable kittens in a Bombay litter are the result of mating a pair of Bombays who both carry the recessive sable gene. Not all -kittens resulting from such a mating will be sable, however, and, even if both parents carry the recessive sable gene, it is still possible to have a litter consisting entirely of black kittens. It must be noted that a sable-colored kitten from a Bombay litter is not eligible to be registered or to compete as a Burmese, nor does it meet the standard requirements for a show-quality Bombay. A sable Bombay is registered as a Bombay AOC (*Any Other Color*), and therefore is usually considered as a pet only, though some sable Bombays are being used in breeding programs, especially if the sable Bombay is of exceptional type. Mating a black Bombay to a black Bombay has the least probability of producing any kittens other than the desired black. If a hybrid mating is done, utilizing a Black American Shorthair, whether with a Bombay or a Burmese, the American Shorthair should be colorbred black, preferably for three or more generations, to avoid producing more AOC Bombays. One should be aware, too, that breeding to an American Shorthair can result in some loss of type.

The CFA Bombay standard, (those of other associations are almost identical) is similar to the Burmese standard, but there are some definite differences, apart from the obvious one of color—the physical features of the Bombay coat, for example, count twice as much with

judges as those of the Burmese. It is still somewhat rare to find Bombays in the judging ring, and some judges will call both Bombays and Burmese to the ring together, so that they can compare one to the other for conformity to the Burmese standard. Fortunately, most judges have reviewed the standards for both breeds, and judge them as distinctly different breeds. It is also fortunate that more Bombays are being exhibited, so that the judge can become more familiar with them. Bombay breeders are emphatic in -stating that a Bombay is not a black Burmese.

The Bombays have a strong appeal for cat lovers, not only for their beauty, but also because of their uniqueness in looks and personality. They are startlingly beautiful, elegant, sleek and extremely devoted companions. While they may occasionally be difficult to obtain in some areas, they are well worth whatever waiting may be necessary.

A West Coast CFA club, Havan A Heat Wave, dedicated its March 1981 show to the Bombay. The show featured special Bombay logos and designs, as well as Indian foods. Bombays were present from all over the country. Havan A Heat Wave is dedicated to promoting minority breeds. Its members have truly helped make this past show season the year of the Bombay.

Further information about the Bombay may be obtained from the International Bombay Society by writing President Patt Taylor, 2741 E. Sylvia, Phoenix AZ 85032; or through this author, H. A. Priess, 20736 S.W. 120th Ct., Miami FL 33177.

CFA BOMBAY STANDARD	
HEAD AND EARS (25)	
Roundness of Head	7
Full face and proper profile	7
Ears	7
Chin	4
EYES (5)	
Placement and shape	5
BODY (20)	
Body	15
Tail	5
COAT (20)	
Shortness	10
Texture	5
Close Lying	5
COLOR (30)	
Body Color	20
Eye Color	10

HEAD: The head should be pleasingly rounded with no sharp angles. The face should be full with considerable breadth between the eyes, tapering slightly to a short, well-developed muzzle. In profile there should be a visible nose break; however, it should not present a "pugged" or "snubbed" look.

EARS: The ears should be medium in size and set well apart on a rounded skull, alert, tilting slightly forward, broad at the base and with slightly rounded tips.

CHIN: The chin should be firm, neither receding nor protruding, reflecting a proper bite.

EYES: Set far apart with rounded aperture.

BODY: Medium in size, muscular in development, neither compact nor rangy. Allowance is to be made for larger size in males.

LEGS: In proportion to body and tail.

PAWS: Round. Toes, five in front, four in back.

TAIL: Straight, medium in length; neither short nor "whippy".

COAT: Fine, short, satin-like texture; close-lying with a shimmering patent leather sheen.

COLOR: The mature specimen should be black to the roots. Kitten coats should darken and become more sleek with age. Nose Leather: Black. Paw Pads: Black. Eye Color: Ranging from gold to copper, the greater the depth and brilliance the better.

PENALIZE: Excessive cobbiness or ranginess.

DISQUALIFY: Kinked or abnormal tail. Lockets or spots. Incorrect number of toes. Nose Leather or Paw Pads other than black. Green eyes. Improper bite. Extreme break that interferes with normal breathing and tearing of eyes.
