

THE COLORPOINT SHORTHAIR

by Debbie Kusy

The Colorpoint Shorthair, like many of CFA's accepted breeds, is a man-made breed. Sometime either during or not long after World War II, someone decided that the beautiful Siamese would look nice in a red point, rather than just in the traditional seal and blue points that were most often seen. A seal point Siamese was bred to a red American Shorthair and a breed was born!

Early Colorpoints more closely resembled their American Shorthair forebears than their Siamese relatives, but with years of selective breeding, they came to look more and more like the Siamese. Today's Colorpoints are elegant and refined, with long, hard bodies, fine boning, and a wedge-shaped head with large, flaring ears, which together form an approximate equilateral triangle. Their almond-shaped eyes are a deep vivid blue, slanted towards the nose, in harmony with the shape of the wedged head and the placement of the ears. A blindfolded person holding both a good Siamese and a good Colorpoint should not be able to tell the difference.

Red points were accepted for registration by CFA in the late '50's and by the early '60's a move was staged to have them accepted for championship judging. Many of the "traditional" Siamese breeders were not inclined to let the Colorpoint breeders use their better breeding stock, so it was a hard road to hoe for the Colorpoints to achieve type. In March of 1963, the CFA Board received a letter from Empire Cat Club, CFA's oldest and a very prestigious club, questioning whether the fledgling Colorpoints were to be granted registration numbers merging them with the Siamese. CFA Secretary Jean Rose answered with an emphatic "NO"-they were a separate breed. At the annual meeting that same year, the Shorthair Club of the Northeast moved that Colorpoints be recognized as separate colors of the Siamese, competing with the Siamese. There was no action taken on this motion, as it failed to receive the required vote of the delegation.

The Colorpoint breeders then applied for acceptance of Colorpoints as a new breed, and at the April 1964 Board Meeting in Las Vegas, NV the breed was accepted. It was then

known as "Red Colorpoints," with the red point being the only accepted color. Also accepted for championship status at that same Board Meeting were the Rex (what is now known as the Cornish Rex - there were no Devons at that time) and the Havana Brown. At that point, cats of these breeds and all new breeds, having not less than 3 generations of like ancestry registered with CFA (from either primary or foundation records kept by the Central Office, or from the stud books), were eligible for entry in shows. The "Red Colorpoints" were placed

in judging order alphabetically just before the Rex and were first shown at the start of the 1964 show season.

The reds were the only color accepted until the June 1969 Board Meeting in Miami Beach, when Magic City Cat Club moved that lynx points and tortie points be advanced to championship status. The motion was carried and at the September 1969 Board Meeting, Board Member Jane Martinke reminded the board that lynx points and tortie points should be advanced. Will Thompson wanted to wait to resolve the champagne Burmese question (What to do with the dilutes that were produced by sables?) first, before granting the lynx and tortie points championship status. Lillias Bloem agreed, saying that the champagnes had waited and the Colorpoints could too. However, David Mare refuted Mrs. Bloem by

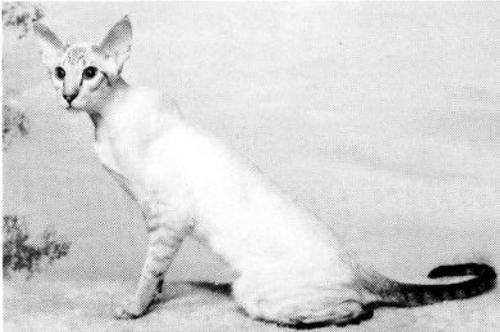
saying that, correctly or incorrectly, there was an argument about the background of the champagnes, but the ancestry of the lynx and tortie points was not one of controversy. Jane Martinke moved to accept the lynx and tortie points for championship status, and the motion was carried.

It is interesting to note here that the color descriptions for the lynx points were different from those of today - the original colors were brown-lynx, silver-lynx, blue-lynx and red-lynx. Also, originally only the seal-tortie points were accepted, not the blue-cream or dilute colors. Obviously, these lynx points came about the same way that the original reds did - from outcrossing to brown tabby and silver tabby American Shorthairs.

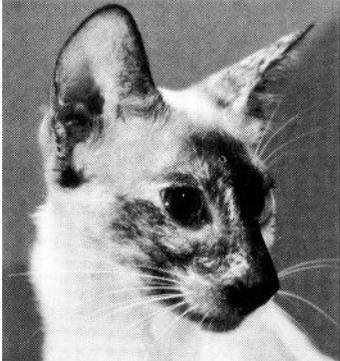
At that time there were no Breed Councils; breed standards were originally drawn up by appointed committees. At the March 1970 Board Meeting in New Orleans, LA, then-



GRC Lebianco Prima Linca II, seal-lynx point female. Br/Ow: Jo Quinzi. GRC Lebianco Petra Linca of Jemwyck, seal-lynx point female. Br: Jo Quinzi. Ow: Jayn Murray



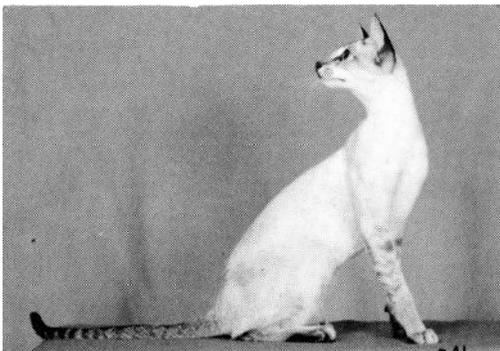
GRC, NW Shabou Victoria D., seal-lynx point female, Br/Ow: Sharon McKeehan-Bounds and George Bounds, Jr.; 1981-82 12th Best Cat Nationally and Best Colorpoint Shorthair.



GRC Da-Glo's Loreal, seal-tortie point female, Br/Ow: Evelyn Huffman.



Red and cream point kittens bred by Kay Van...



GRP, NW Lebianco Nicholas of Quarryhill, seal-lynx point male, Br: Jo Quinzi. Ow: Anne Vanasse; 6th Best Cat in Premiership Nationally 1986-87.

president Richard Gebhardt appointed Mrs. Marinke to draft standards for the new colors. The new color descriptions were put into place and the new colors competed with the red points in May of that year.

At the March 1972 Board Meeting in Atlanta, GA, Board Member -Jeanie McPhee, always one to insist on exactness concerning color and color descriptions, proposed changes in the lynx point standards: that silver be eliminated, lilac-lynx points be added, and that "brown" be divided into seal- and chocolate-lynx points. She offered that this -was more in line with the descriptions of their Siamese cousins. She also suggested that the standard for the Colorpoints should read similarly to that of the Siamese, offering a realigned point score, and submitted new color standards for red points, tortie points and proposed color standards for the chocolate-cream points, blue-cream points and lilac points. (This is how it reads in the old CFA minutes - lilac, not lilac-cream point.) Someone (and again, the old minutes are not clear on who made the motion) moved that the standards changes for the Colorpoints match those of the Siamese standard changes. This was voted upon and passed. Barbara St. Georges moved to refer the Colorpoint standard to the recently created Breed Council committee and this was carried by a unanimous vote. The standard apparently sat in committee for some time, as it was not until the February 1974 Board Meeting that cream point, chocolate-cream point, blue-cream point, and lilac-cream point (with the color description now corrected) were added. It was at that same Board Meeting that the "brown" lynx points were divided into seal- and chocolate-lynx points. These changes became effective for the show season beginning May 1, 1975. The chocolate-cream point was changed to chocolate-tortie point on May 1, 1980, and part-color lynx points were accepted for championship status beginning with the May 1, 1985 show season. These are still the accepted colors at the time of this writing.

Some of the more successful breeders of the early years were Jack and Barbara Collins (J-Bar), Evelyn Huffman (Da-Glo), Barbara Harr (Harr), and Sylvia Boyd (Sybo). Everything seemed to go along quietly and well for the Colorpoints until 1983 when the Oriental Shorthair Breed Council passed the question of advancing to championship status those cats appearing in Oriental litters in acceptable Colorpoint colors. This was passed by the Oriental Breed Council and voted upon at the February 1983 Board Meeting, and was passed by the CFA Executive Board. However, the Colorpoint Shorthair Breed Council had not been polled on the question and many resented the pointed Orientals being shown as Colorpoints without its consent. Beginning on May 1, 1984 pointed cats produced in Oriental litters were eligible for championship status. In that same year, GRC Tintadel's Rose By Any Other Name, a seal-tortie point "Oriental Shorthair," bred and owned by Erica Mueller, was named best Colorpoint Shorthair Nationally. Several other pointed Oriental Shorthairs have achieved Regional and National Colorpoint breed wins, notably in the 1987-88 and 1990-91 seasons.

This is an issue about which most Colorpoint breeders have strong opinions. There are those who believe that the only true Colorpoints are the original cats without the Oriental Shorthairs behind them. Others believe that both breeds come from the same foundation stock and are one and the same breed, with the Colorpoints expressing the pointed gene and the Orientals not expressing it. There is yet a third group that believes that the original Colorpoints were variations of the Siamese and actually belong with them. It is an issue that is not likely to soon be resolved, and few questions will stir more heated debate than this one with a Colorpoint breeder.

There have only been two Colorpoints that have achieved National Wins. The first was an exquisite seal-lynx point female, GRC, NW Shabou Victoria D.,

bred and owned by Sharon McKeehan-Bounds and George Bounds, Jr. of Nashville, TN. Victoria was 12th Best Cat and 5th Best Shorthair Cat Nationally in the 1981-82 show season, and was also 3rd Best Cat and 3rd Best Kitten in the Southern Region that year. She was extremely fine-boned with a lovely long head and huge, flaring ears. She competed under the old scoring system, before a cat's top 100 rings were scored and before ring averaging was so important. Victoria traveled extensively, competing successfully at CFA's biggest shows. Like most ladies, she was sometimes temperamental but few judges could deny her magnificent type.

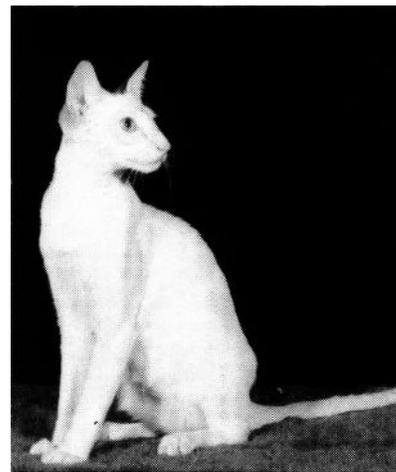
The other National-Winning Colorpoint Shorthair is GRP, NW LeBianco Nicholas of Quarryhill, a seal-lynx point male, bred by Jo Quinzi and owned by Anne Vanasse of Ottsville, PA. "Nicky" was sold to Anne specifically for Premiership showing, as this was Anne's first show cat. He achieved a Regional Premiership win in the 1985-86 season and Anne decided to "go for it" in the next season. Nicky's lovely long, hard body and sweet expressive face carried him to the 6th Best Cat in Premiership Nationally for the 1986-87 show season. Nicky still makes an occasional visit to North Atlantic Region Shows, accompanying other cats that Anne and her husband Dick are showing, and is always happy to visit with old friends.

Another seal-lynx point male, GRC LeBianco Kristofferson of Capriole, bred by Jo Quinzi and owned by Charlotte Cohn and Jo Quinzi, just missed a National (Top 25) Win in the 1989-90 season, coming on strong at the end of the year, just falling short by a few hundred points in the last few weeks.

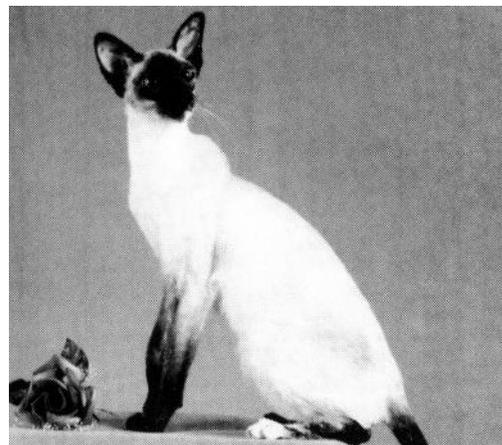
There are only two Colorpoint Shorthair Distinguished Merit winners, both females. The first cat to DM is GRC Sanlino Prima Linca, a seal-lynx female, who was best Colorpoint Shorthair Nationally and the 7th Best Cat in the Southern Region in the 1982-83 show season. She produced five lynx-point Grand offspring, three of them for Jo Quinzi (LeBianco Cattery) of Havertown, PA. She was bred by Bob Molino and Joe Sanches. "Mia," as she was known, was a very striking cat, with a beautiful head and long, hard body, and has passed these features on to her offspring.

The other Colorpoint Distinguished Merit is CH Norwin Amber of Skan, a red point female. She was bred by Linda L. Patrick and owned by Ann H. Leaty of Redmond, WA. Ann didn't send me a picture of Amber, as she says that Amber's special qualities were in producing beautiful offspring. Amber has also produced five Grand offspring.

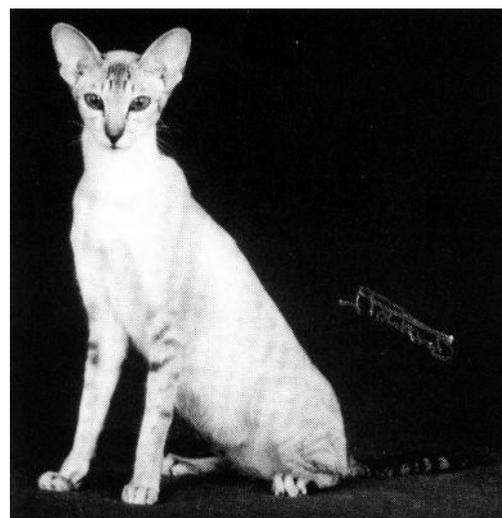
What is in the future for the Colorpoint Shorthair? As there have only been two National Winners in almost 30 years, you might say that they have enjoyed limited success, at least on the show bench. In a way, perhaps this is true, but it is also true that more and more Colorpoints are granding every year as judges become more aware of them. Colorpoints are a wonderful breed. They are very devoted and loyal to their people. Sensitive to their owner's moods, Colorpoints are more than happy to sit at their sides or on their laps and purr words of encouragement on a bad day. Colorpoints, like the Siamese, are talkative and want to discuss their day with anyone who will listen to them. If you don't seem to want to pay attention to them, they will insist, following you around the house, chattering away in their somewhat raspy voice. If you are reading a newspaper or a book or writing a letter, these cats will want to be right there with you. They will often sit down in the middle of what you are doing (or trying to do) staring at you with their expressive blue eyes and demanding that you give them the attention that they rightfully deserve. Colorpoints love personal computers, often walk ing across the keys to hear the sound of the beep; after



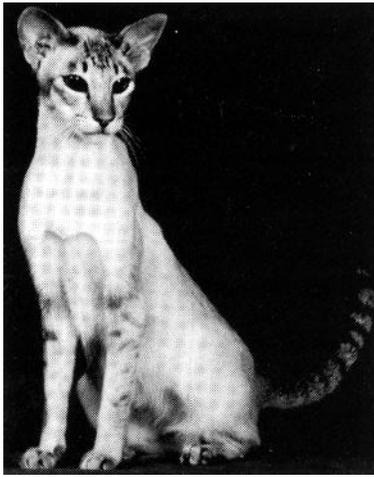
GRC Da-Glo's Gorgeous George of J-Bar, red point male, Br: Evelyn Huffman, Ow: Jack and Barbara Collins; Best Colorpoint Shorthair Nationally and Southern Region's 2nd Best Cat 1974 -75.



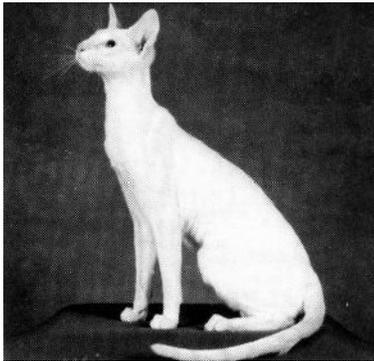
GRC Alieron Dandelion of Rippleys, seal-tortie point female, Br: Judy Richards, Ow: Judy Richards and Jessica Everhart.



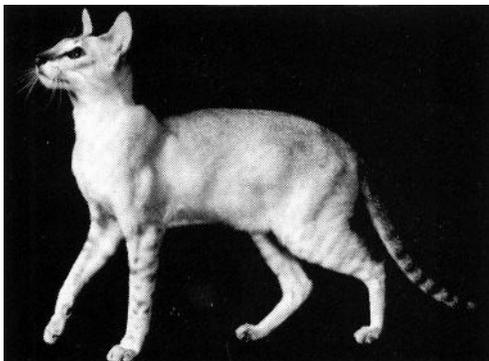
GRC Sanlino Prima Linca, DM, seal-lynx point female, Br: Robert Molino and Joe Sanches, Ow: Robert Molino and Jo Quinzi; Best Colorpoint Shorthair Nationally and Southern Region's 7th Best Cat 1983-84.



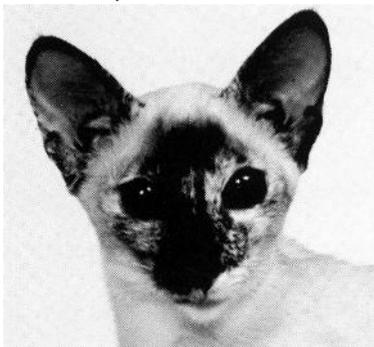
GRC, GRP Kiling's Katrycia, seal-lynx point female, Br/Ow: Debbie Kusy; 2nd Best Colorpoint Shorthair Nationally 1986-87.



GRC Aileron Daz-Zling, red point female, Br: Judy Richards and Gill Melz, Ow: Judy Richards.



GRC Glor-EE's Road Warrior, seal-lynx point male, Br/Ow: Susan and Gloria Adler; 1987-88 Best Color-point Shorthair Nationally.



GRC J-Bar's Tortellini, seal-tortie point female, Br/Ow: Jack and Barbara Collins.

all, this gets them your attention.

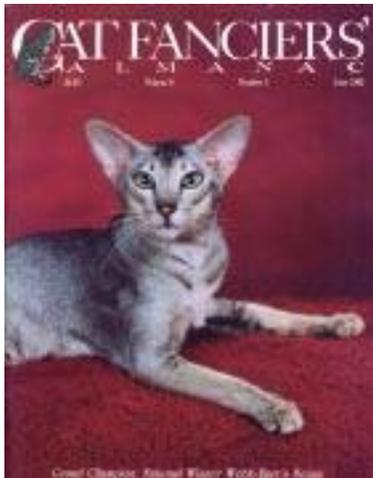
Colorpoints are very intelligent and easily learn to play games such as fetch. An item as simple as a wad of paper or tin foil or as sophisticated as a stuffed mouse will become the object of their full attention, as they demand that you throw it for them to bring back to you. They are also very easy to travel with and love the attention that they receive at cat shows. They will primp and preen for the judges and are easy to handle. They truly enjoy the attention of both judges and admiring spectators, often purring in the judging ring. When they place in the finals they seem to know that they are something special, often standing very high on their legs to stare proudly at the audience.

I asked before, "What is in the future for the Colorpoint Shorthair I feel that they have a great future, both in the show ring and as pets. They are no longer the "black sheep" of the foreign body-type family (that is, the Siamese, Javanese, Oriental Shorthair, and Balinese). The cats and the breeders have worked long and hard over the years to earn them their place in the sun. Look for them to prosper in the years to come!

National Best of Breed Winners

1969	Potomac Lotus Rose Ow: Richard Talley Jr.	Red Point Female
1970-71	Mai-ed Temugin Ow: Jacqueline Stephenson	Red Point Male
1973-74	GRC Tie-Dyed Baronessa of J-Bar Br: Deidre McConnell; Ow: Jack & Barbara Collins	Red Point Female
1974-75	Day-Gb's Gorgeous George of J-Bar Br: Evelyn Huffman; Ow: Jack & Barbara Collins	Red Point Male
1975-76	J-Bar's Red Satin Br/Ow: Jack & Barbara Collins	Red Point Female
1976-77	GRC Gillyflower Kolya Br/Ow: Margaret Anne Miskovsky	Red Point Male
1977-78	GRC Sybo's Sabra Br/Ow: Sylvia Boyd	Seal-Lynx Point Female
1978-79	GRC Sanlino Bella Linca of Die Lilo Br: Bob Molino & Joe Sanches; Ow: Liesobotte A. Grimes	Seal-Lynx Point Female
1979-80	GRC The Heriot's Lambeth Walk Br/Ow: Margaret & James Parks, Jr.	Tortie Point Female
1980-81	GRC Sybo's Makeba of Tarashan Br: Sylvia Boyd; Ow: Steve Witmer & Roger Olson	Seal-Lynx Point Male
1981-82	GRC, NW Shabou Victoria D. 12th Best Cat & 5th Best Shorthair Nationally Br/Ow: Sharon McKeehan-Bounds & George Bounds	Seal-Lynx Point Female

National Best of Breed Winners <i>continued</i>		
1982-83	GRC Sanlino Prima Linca Br/Ow: Bob Molino & Joe Sanches	Seal-Lynx Point Female
1983-84	GRC Fan-C Jim Beam Br/Ow: Barbara Baylor	Seal-Lynx Point Male
1984-85	GRC Tintadel's Rose By Any Other Name Br/Ow: Erica Mueller	Seal-Tortie Point Female
1985-86	Alsace Jo D. of La Chrisma Br: Pam DelaBar & Pat Steinlicht; Ow: Larry & Marijo Swanson	Seal-Lynx Point Female
1986-87	GRC Eskars Sheena Br/Ow: Evelyn Karmen	Seal-Lynx Point Female
1987-88	GRC Gbor-EE's Road Warrior Br/Ow: Gloria & Susan Adler	Seal-Lynx Point Male
1988-89	GRC Alsace V. Lestat Br/Ow: Pam DelaBar & Barbara Baylor	Blue-Lynx Point Male
1989-90	GRC Lebianco Kristofferson of Capriole Br: Jo Quinzi; Ow: Charlotte Cohn and Jo Quinzi	Seal-Lynx Point Male
1990-91	GRC El-Dia Celebrity Br/Ow: Barbara L. Phelps	Seal-Lynx Point Female



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