SHOWING A HOUSEHOLD PET CAT

Unlike most other animal fancies, the cat fancy and its shows have a place for the mixed breed or unregistered individual. Not, of course, for breeding purposes. That is not only discouraged, it is prohibited. However, at a cat show there is a special division where unregistered cats can compete for awards and titles. This division is called the Household Pet division. It is for mixed breed cats or purebred cats who are, for any reason, not eligible to compete in championship classes. Household Pets (HHPs) which are 8 months or older must be neutered or spayed. Declawed cats cannot be shown in shows sponsored by the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) but can compete in American Cat Fanciers Association (ACFA) shows.

HHPs are judged in three areas. The first area is anything which affects the cat's health and condition. They may show no signs of illness or presence of parasites, internal or external. They must be the proper weight for the individual's size and bone structure. The muscling should be firm and solid rather than flabby or mushy. They must be spotlessly clean and well groomed. Longhair coats must be free of mats and tangles.

After health and condition comes appearance. Every judge has his or her own opinion of what makes a pretty cat. Some like flashy looks; others prefer a good old basic tabby or solid color.

The third area of judging HHPs is personality. Cats don't usually like strange places, people, or other cats and the judges understand that. Consideration is given to a cat who may be nervous or shy. But a cat who will bite or scratch when upset should not be shown. There are many cats who completely enjoy the attention and excitement of a cat show. They purr, strut and play with the judges. And they do very well in the awards. If your cat enjoys meeting guests in your home it may be a cat who would enjoy being in a show. Why not give it a try?