ADMIRING ENGLISH GAME IN THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Part 2 ~ The Carlisle Old English Game Show



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As a supporter of both standard and bantam size Old and Modern English Game one likes to stay abreast of new developments in the breed. Hence regular visits to the most important shows abroad are vital. Especially shows in Great Britain and Germany where these breeds are bred in substantial numbers. It is also an opportunity to get to know some of the more prominent breeders in those countries. These contacts make it easier to realise a combined visit.

This is why a visit to the Carlisle Show was mooted again last autumn, this specific show is THE show for standard and bantam size Old English Game. The standard Carlisle originated in the vicinity of the city of Carlisle in the north of the United Kingdom. The number of entrants at the Carlisle show is expected to be between 1250 and 1400.

In December 2011 planning began for a visit to the United Kingdom in early January 2012. The German breeder Dieter Ruppel was the most enthusiastic proponent for the trip. He organised visits to breeders, accommodation and the travel arrangements. By the end of December everything was organised. The trip would take us from the south of England to Northern Ireland. It was all looking very promising.

The travellers were, in addition to Dieter, the driver, Jutta Niemann, Christoph Mooren, Hubert Grondorf and myself. In late December a difficulty arose, I was part of the HEP judging committee for poultry at the Noordshow, and the day of the judging fell on the same day as our planned departure day. After some juggling I was able to book a ticket to Bristol for the following day and to join my fellow travellers for our trip to Carlisle. Thursday 5 January I finally flew from Schiphol to Bristol. With some delays due to severe winds I was able to join my fellow travellers that night. Earlier that day they had visited the Harvey family in Liskeard. Mr Harvey is one of the best breeders of standard size Indian Cornish Game and is well known for the high quality of his birds.

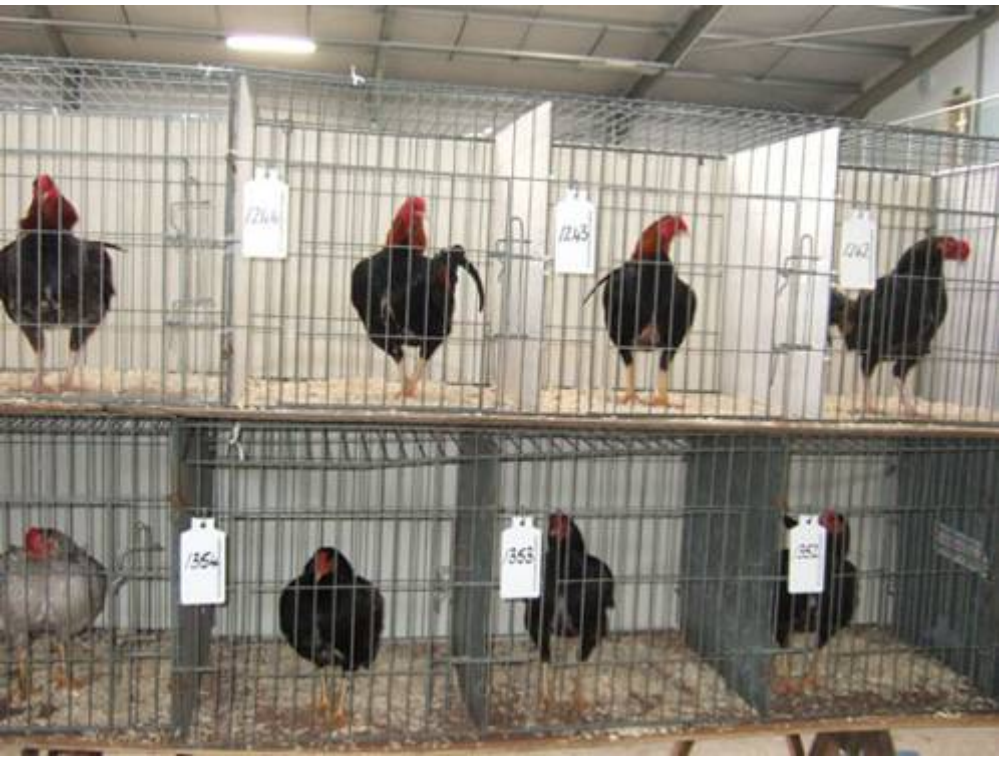


Friday morning 6 January after a hearty English breakfast, we visited Mark Perkins in Wick, and later that day on our way to the north of England we paid a visit to the Lowe family in Byley. These visits were described in Part One in the June issue.

Right: Recovering. From left to right: an unknow Englishman, me, Christoph Mooren, Dieter Ruppel and Hubert Grondorf.

Around 8 in the evening we reached Carlisle. Mark Perkins who had arrived earlier had booked our rooms. After a drink and dinner with some of the British breeders we went to our rooms as the show to be held the next day.

Saturday 7 January. The alarm was set for an early start and after another English breakfast we left for the Exhibition Show Hall. This one-day show is traditionally held on the first Saturday in January and organised by the Old English Game Club. This year 1378 birds were entered; 354 standard size Old English Game and 1024 bantam size Old English Game. This is a greater number of entries than anywhere else. It had been some years since I last visited this show. At that time there were slightly fewer entries due to the extreme winter conditions.



Left: an overview of a number of the bantam size Old English game on show. All cages were fitted with closed partitions. Characteristic for the Old English Game is their alertness and curiosity. They all face the visitors with their chest pushed forward.

Nearly all colours and varieties were present. Even crested, muffed and rumpless ones could be admired. The largest class however was the Furness/Blue Furness, with approximately 250 birds.



Left: The first results are announced and written on the scoreboard. Visitors and participants are able to write this down in the show catalogue which was printed previously. A possibility for a one day show at home?

Below: The scoreboard. All classes are listed. The four highest placed birds are written down.



It's a big task for the judge to select the best from this class. There is very little difference in the quality of these top birds. No judging cards are written out unlike at home. Only the four best birds of each class are selected. Each judge selects what he or she considers to be the best Male and Female. From these they select the Best of Show.

Right: Discussion among the jury members. Who will be Best of Show in 2012? Second from the right our friend and jury member Mark Perkins.



Similar to previous years the winner came from Northern Ireland. This time a Furness female from breeder Ingham was awarded Best of Show.

At the end of the morning after the judging had finished we were able to admire the birds on show. A real pleasure. We also we made more friends. Once more we experienced British hospitality and kindness.

After the show we left with Austin and Robert Shaw for Northern Ireland. The report of our visits to these breeders can be found in Part One in the June issue.



Left: Showtable of the Carlisle Old English Game Club.

Below: At the end of the afternoon, the award ceremony. The Chairperson stood on a chair in order to be heard. In the background a number of beautiful old awards.



Below: Our friend Austin Shaw was also one of the successful entrants. He was visibly delighted with his award.



Right: Early in the morning and already a lot of interest is shown in the 'for sale' section. Many birds changed hands. Typical for the Old English game bantams is to lift up the bird to feel its body shape. This must become noticeably narrower towards the back end. In the background sellers father and son Lowe, who we visited on Friday, and Dieter Ruppel.





Above: An overview of the prizes to be awarded. Many of the awards are silver. They hold historic value and are many years old.



Left: The most beautiful Old English Game female, a Birchen. The winner is the well-known breeder P.T. Watson. Always a great sight, those coloured and hand made rosettes. This way the winning birds are easy to spot.

Below: 'Spangled' is a unique colour variety of Old English Game bantams.



Unfortunately we don't see these that often anymore in the Netherlands. The legs of this spangled cockerel should not be too straight, we want a little bend in the legs. The tail feathers are conditioned beautifully. Dubbing is still permitted here.

Rightbelow: A Blue Furness cockerel. This colour variety too is unique and only recognised in Old English Game bantams. This cockerel is showing good type and an alert carriage. Only the tail is a little messy. This received little attention.



Below: A Furness female. In our country this colour variety is recognised in Old English Game bantams only. This was the colour variety most represented in the show. Approximately 250 birds were entered in this colour variety. The colour differed markedly among the birds. Overall this pullet is a little on the light side.



Below right: A female from the same class, she is clearly darker in colour. It is important to keep in mind that that the chest colour should not become too black but should be yellow / brown.



Below: A Blue Furness female.
A beautiful soft blue with a noticeable yellow glow.





Above: What we observed with the bantams, we also noticed with the standard sized birds. Alert looking at the camera and the chest pushed out. The parallel set legs are also clearly noticeable.

Right: A pile bantam cockerel, an absolute stunner as far as colour is concerned. He shows off the well formed thighs. Again the tails is different from our standard.





Left: This pile female clearly shows a small crest. This is also recognised at home. Unfortunately we don't se these anymore at our shows. (Recently a number are present again in he Netherlands)



Above: This Furness female is Winner of the day. (According to the Dutch standard she would be too dark in colour, the chest is too laced.) This female stood out because of her shape. Owner G. Ingram from Northern Ireland.



Above The winning cockerel was a Blue Furness. Owned by Graham and Tom Lowe, who we had visited on Friday. This cockerel shows an excellent body type with perfect parallel set legs. Shoulders are carried high. A first class bird. The placement of the tail is a point of attention.

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