

THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF IMPORTING

I have now imported quite a few cats into Australia from New Zealand, Germany and the USA, always with the intention of improving our breed in Australia and strengthening the lines. Just recently I brought a boy in from Gail Warwick of Kemenkat in New Zealand, with some new lines and some older lines I used quite a few years back. We are also awaiting our newest import from the US cattery Highgaitpaws.

It is always a risk when bringing in new lines, and although we trust and research breeders, or in my case recommended by Lesley Morgan Blythe, there is

no 100% guarantee that the lines are tough, there is always that disappointment like I had recently with Cannonball of Wonderlove having Renal Amyloidosis, I have maintained the line but will not share this line until I feel it is OK to share with other breeders. We have consulted with other breeders and Dr. Lesley Lyon who has been doing a lot of research, and outcrossing with these lines is the key. We also have been doing urine testing to make sure all is well with this line, and that will go on now for years – anyone who knows me will know that I leave nothing to chance.....but there is a risk, and we will try and only have a few litters from the line and move on a generation quickly, which is what we have been advised to do. It is always a hard decision to make whether to go on with the line or lose the line; many would prefer to remove it!!!

We do ask for health checks by vets and of course the Government vet always does vet checks, in our case this time around, we went to New York to visit Dave and Mindy (Highgaitpaws) and see for ourselves the cattery and the health of our boy – he passed with flying colours. You always ask for PK deficiency status, PRA status and blood type as well. It is a risk we take as there are just no guarantees!!! I have watched this line of Highgaitpaws now for a number of years and many others who have Highgaitpaws lines love the longevity and health of the cats from this cattery, hence we have gone back there.

The highs, and there has been many over the last 5 years on the show bench, with many Best in Show and Supreme in Shows not only at our own Council level but at National level as well, with cats from Rififi of Wonderlove, Cannonball of Wonderlove, Tijah Porcelain Blue (parents are both US imports), Highgaitpaws Have A Chat (*see left*) and



Riverfern Zeta Leporis all of these cats have contributed a lot to Osiris(V) Abyssinians over the years and have helped evolve the breed to what it is today.....I think the biggest contributor to my improvement would have to be Rififi of Wonderlove; he put profiles back into our Abys and stunning black hocks and black ticking. I don't think anyone would dispute that.

Anyone who has imported from overseas will know it is quite involved, firstly finding a breeder who trusts you enough to let you have a cat, noting that they often do not like the fact we are on the other side of the world and we have 30 days quarantine. It is a trust thing, and with Doris and Mindy it took many years to gain their trust before I was offered a kitten. Then it is finding the right kitten to suit what you are looking for to improve your lines. Once all of this is established, you need to arrange for them to give a rabies vaccination at 3 the age of month, then a rabies

blood titre to be done 30 days later to make sure that the blood level is right to gain entry into Australia. This RNAT test costs \$284.75 in the US. Once this is all done, the cat sits in the country of origin - in our case with the breeder - for 150 days, making it at least 10 months of age before it can travel. Before this, you have to apply to AQIS for an import permit which is about \$280 approx.....they require a form with the rabies titre to be signed by a Government Vet costing approx \$120 for that.....then you need to organise a quarantine station of which they now require that you pay them up front so another \$1005.....then once that is done and a receipt is given, the transport can be organised. Costs differ from most countries; from LA you are looking at \$1400 approx.....and all of these costs are of course before you pay at least \$3000 for the cat.....there is also one last government vet check before they leave country of origin as well so another \$120 so all in all it does work out to a bit of money.....

Sue Shawn

Osiris(V) Abyssinians
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