

Cambridge couple breeding New Zealand's only 'toy tigers'

Donna-Lee Biddle · 17:05, Jul 31 2016



MARK TAYLOR FAIRFAX NZ

Cambridge residents Simon and Sandra Broomfield with their prized toyger, Baron Jarman. He weighs 8.5kg.

A Cambridge couple lay claim to the only tiger-like thoroughbreds in the country, except they are not of the horse variety, they're cats.

Simon and Sandra Broomfield breed toygers, a cross between a bengal and a domestic short-haired cat that look like mini tigers, hence the name.

The pair were at Karnak: The National Cat Festival at the Hamilton Gardens Pavilion on Sunday.

The had on show their male toyger, Baron Jarman (BJ), who was a beast at 8.5kg, and a smaller female, Bindi.

BJ was flown in from Germany at nine months old. He's now 18 months old. On Sunday, BJ won three best-in-show awards and a reserve best-in-show award - and there were two more judgings to go.

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"We don't have a programme as such, but we breed toyger to toyger. We have two lines and are about to breed a third."

Toygers are fairly new to the country and getting new breeds to the judging bench is a task in itself.

"Between then and now, there have been other breeds introduced to try to produce different traits that the standard suggests," Broomfield said.

"That's what it takes to win. Your cat has to fit the standard.

"It has to be a mackerel pattern to start off with. It has to have a rounded face and we are trying to get an elongated muzzle. We do that by breeding them with [specific cats]."

Show coordinator Irene Brooks, who was also a cat-show judge for many years, said there were about 80 cats on show.

Although the toyger was an attractive breed, the blue-eyed ragdoll seems to be the most popular.

"They're trending at the moment. We have a lot of those and maine coons," she said.

"There's so much that goes into judging a cat and for breeders, there are many standards they have to fit."

There were 15 premiere divisions up for judging, which were to be announced on Sunday afternoon.

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