

Inspections and show report for GCS France August 09

I was very happy to return to France to continue the inspections of the Gypsy Cobs eligible for the GCS France stud book. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers, the Society Committee, Officials, and the owners who brought their horses for inspection all of which were beautifully presented.

Is was a good venue with an indoor arena ideal to judge horses, I would like to thank each owner for accepting our decision politely.

The breed type continues to improve with mares gaining in strength and quality. It is a worry for me that there are very few good stallions presented, as these are the backbone to the breed.

The overall conformation and breed type does appear to be more prominent and improving but certain breed characteristics are still poor and need to be considered when purchasing or breeding your stock.

The characteristics which continue to be poor are inadequate feather or lacking the long silky texture required. Short backs and wide chests are a breed requirement, a square muscular outline, and a free easy going stepping trot. There are too many long backs, not enough depth in the chest and unenthusiastic movement. Please think about this when buying or breeding your Gypsy Cobs, Remember a gypsy cob should be 14hh high and 14 hh wide!! Is a good picture for your imagination.

Having said that, bone was good, all presented had the correct flat bone, good legs, length of cannon bone and stood four square under the horse's body. A few horses moved with too close action with their hind legs giving the problem that if they were driven they would have sore fetlocks after a few miles. Others did not pick their feet up enough in front which would give them the risk of falling when driven on uneven ground. It would be a suggestion that each owner asks a friend to trot their horse for them so that they can watch and study the movement of their own horse. How many owners know exactly how their horses move? Do you know where the hind feet should fall?

In the same footprint as the front foot, or near to it

Every horse carried enough weight with the exception of some mares who were nursing foals. Heads have improved greatly in 2 years, there were no bad scores for heads at this inspection, expressive eyes are important and they must be large, kind and gentle. Ears do not want to be too big and correct jaw is important to allow for good placement of teeth. Necks should be long and muscular, Stallions should have a prominent stallion neck with solid muscle and strength, weak necks are very undesirable, short necks are a major fault and 'U necks' will not be tolerated.

When you consider this Society is so new, the quality of its horses presented is very good and typical of the breed.

If any owner would like my personal advice than they must feel free to ask me. I am very happy to offer advice to any one interested in the breed, the correct conformation and **breed type** is extremely important. They are not just a colour cob or heavy horse. The breed is reliant on your understanding of what a Gypsy Cob should be, their history and continued promotion is reliant on the members of the Society breeding true correct Gypsy Cobs, and there is no room for error.

I trust that the breed be promoted correctly and with the care the Gypsies have shown for generations. The breed is delicate and with careful selection of brood mares and stallions can go from strength to strength in our European neighbours, but it can so easily be spoilt at the risk of *poor judgement*. Do not let this happen, keep your eyes open, take advice from those who know and keep the breed pure and of top quality.

You have been trusted with one of the nicest, good tempered breed of horse, '*a Jewel in the Nile*' a **truely remarkable breed of horse, love him, trust him and treat him with the respect that he deserves.**

It was a great pleasure for me to judge on Sunday alongside your President 'Corinne Eiselle',

It was 8 years ago that Corinne first approached me regarding the possibility of setting up a sister registry in France. We had been brought together previously over a mutual affection for a young stallion in England, known to us as Chance, who would think that this young stallion would result of a friendship responsible for the establishment of the GCS France???

Your President has promoted the breed and helped put the Gypsy Cob on the Map in Europe.

The Gypsy Cob is a unique breed, please remember this, it is unique, treasure it, nurse it, and above all respect the years of breeding behind it to get the Cob it is today.

I ask all the members to keep an open mind, a clear vision and remember what the Gypsy Cob is, a breed established for generations, with a unique type of people, closely bred, and kept secret for generations, now the secret of this most unique/rare/unusual breed is out, keep it pure, and please keep it within the quality and pureness its breeders. IE: the gypsies intended.

Your GCS UK President UK

Carol Smettem Minson