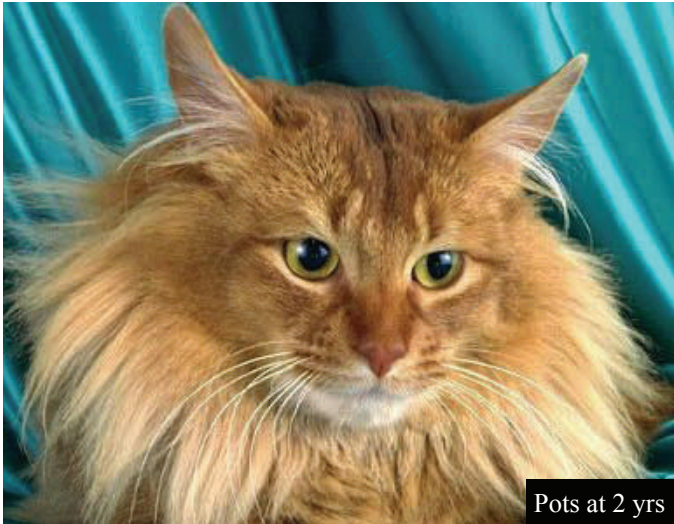


A Showman Through and Through



Grand Champion and UK & Imperial Grand Premier Emanan Alderman Ptolomey was born on the 21st June 1991 and he was the first Sorrel Boy I had bred. As I'm from Gloucester, England, I was naming my kittens after Beatrix Potter characters (because of her book "The Tailor of Gloucester"), so he and his sister were duly named Emanan Mittens and Emanan Alderman Ptolomey, Emanan being my prefix.

As they grew Pots (his pet name) began to look promising. I had been showing his elder brother Emanan Squirrel Nutkin (Nuts) with great success and people were showing an interest in my kittens. I was asked whether I would sell Pots and I did contemplate this, but not for very long. I decided this kitten was with me to stay.

As he grew we started to show him and he loved it! As a kitten and a young adult he did well, picking up his first 2 Challenge Certificates and Best in Show Adult at the Somali Cat Club show in 1992. Then he started to struggle - his head had all grown out of proportion, it was too long and narrow. I knew this would not be permanent, but we had to wait until he matured more. Eventually he picked up his 3rd CC on the 6th March 1993 gaining his Champion title. At shows he would always sit at the front of his show pen talking, as Somalis do, to anyone who walked past.

In early 1993, a girl came in to be mated to Nuts. When her owner arrived, I was pointing out Nuts' good and bad points, but each time I looked at the owner he wasn't interested in my wonderful stud boy – he just kept looking at Pots. When the girl was mated and her owner returned he said if I should ever decide to part with Pots he would be interested. Over the next year a wonderful friendship grew between this girl's owners and myself and again they asked me to part with Pots, but my answer was still no.

As he grew into a handsome young male his first girl came into stud, but he was having none of it. He eventually sired his first litter with me at 18 months old, but now I had a dilemma. Pots and Nuts were of the same parentage, so there was little advantage in keeping them both entire. So after much thought and talking to other breeders I decided to let Pots go to live with my friends in the North of England to help widen the gene pool up there. I cried so much the day he left me, but I knew it was a good home and would be good for the Somali breed.

His new owners continued to show him and the following year he gained his Grand Champion title. He looked wonderful and had a ruff like a lion, but most of all he had a temperament to die for - he lapped it up. He also proved to be a very successful stud, siring Champions and Grand Champions, Premiers and Grand Premiers. Over time he won The Somali Cat Clubs Best Opposite Sex Somali in 1993 and 1994, and Best Sire 1996 and 1997.

Then things started to go wrong. His new owners had a marriage break up and although this was resolved they decided to neuter all their cats, apart from Jasmine, Aka Emanan Ninnynany Nettigoat, a Usual female they had also bought from me. She was re-homed to a great friend of mine, Sue and went on to gain the title of UK Grand Champion & Grand Premier.

Pots was neutered and everything seemed to be going well for him. He made his first appearance back on the show bench on the 17th January 1998. Then in Autumn 1999 I had a phone call from my friends to say that the marriage completely broken down and they had separated. Pots could not stay where he was and needed a new home, could I help? I did not hesitate in saying he could come back to me.

When he arrived back he settled down straight away, it was almost like he had never left. After a week he went to the vets for a long overdue dental - he hadn't been eating properly, his coat had gone coarse and dull and he had lost some weight, but after the dental everything started to improve. I hadn't thought he would ever look good enough to show again, but he did.

His debutante show back with me was in September 2000 where he picked up his second Premier Certificate. He gained his premier title on the on the 14th October 2000, at 9½ years old.

At the Somali Cat Club show in March 2001, he became Best in Show Neuter and picked up his first Grand Certificate. He continued with great success throughout the year gaining his Grand Premier title and The Somali Cat Clubs Best Overall Somali 2001. He had now won all the titles he could, apart from one - UK Grand Premier – a title which can only be won at our Supreme Show once a year.

In 2002 he came out for 4 shows - I felt leaving him at home was such a shame as he loved his days out. In March 2003 I entered him at the Somali Show and he won Best in Show Somali Superstar. Unfortunately, the following month I had a nasty car accident and couldn't show again until the Supreme in the November. He beat a strong class of Somalis, Ragdolls and Turkish Vans to pick up his first UK Grand Premier Certificate. The Somali Show in 2005 arrived, he won the BIS Superstar for the second year running, but again health problems prevented me from showing during the next few months, but the Supreme arrived and Pots came 2nd in his UK class.

Then GCCF announced that from June 2005, a new title was to be introduced. This was to be the Imperial title and it was to be awarded to cats of exceptional quality. To gain this cats would need 5 certificates (not the usual 3) from 5 different judges. So I began my show year as per usual, with the Somali Show and for the third year running my wonderful Pots was BIS Superstar. As June approached Pots started to bloom and he picked up his first Imperial Certificate on the 18th of June (3 days before his 14th birthday) at the Aby CC show, he went on to become BIS Neuter and the comments I received made me very privileged to own such a wonderful gentleman. That year he went from strength to strength and by the end of October he had won 4 Imperial Certificates and 4 Best of Variety Awards. The Supreme arrived and he became the first Somali Neuter to hold the title of UK Grand Premier - he looked wonderful.

Our last show of 2005 was a Christmas show on the 17th December, The Maidstone & Medway - a day I will never forget. The Imperial judge was not a Somali breed judge, so I did not think we would be successful. As the results came in Pots had won the Grand class out of 12 cats and he also won the Best of Breed. Then the Imperial class results went up and I had to look twice - my Somali superstar had won the Imperial class out of 10 cats, thereby becoming the first Somali to hold the Imperial title. He absolutely shone that day. He knew he had done well and as the day progressed it was announced that he had won Best of Variety. He went into his Best in Show pen awaiting the judge who was judging the Overall Best in Show. She handled all the cats one by one, narrowing seven down to three and my Pots was one of these three. She then took it down to two and Pots was still there. Then she held him aloft - my 14½ year old boy had won Overall Best in Show out of 551 entered cats. I had been crying most of the day because of the Imperial, but now the tears would not stop, I was so proud of him.

In April he won Overall Best in Show at the Semi Longhair CA show, a wonderful achievement for a cat almost 15 years old. It was announced at the Somali Cat Club AGM in March, that Pots was Best Overall Somali for 2005, making this the second time he has gained this wonderful accolade.

His winning streak has continued into 2006, during this year my old lad has picked up another UK Grand, 7 Imperials, 3 Reserve Imperial, 8 Grands, 2 Reserve Grands, 15 BOBs, 4 PCs and 5 Best of Variety/Best in Show & to top this he won the Royal Canin/Our Cats Overall Exhibit 2006.

In October this year I decided that the right time had come to retire Pots, he had been to the vets in September with a kidney infection (now cleared), he is on daily medication & is again behaving like a 2 yr old. It was decided his last show was to be the Maidstone & Medway Christmas Show, what a day, Pots had a Red card day, I did have a little cry & we celebrated his show career with a bottle of Champagne.

Pots will hopefully becoming out on exhibition in 2007.

I feel so privileged to have bred and owned such a wonderful gentle lad who is the perfect showman, playing to the crowds of many admirers he has gained over the years. Many judges have come to see him, just to have a cuddle and a kiss, which he will give out readily, but be warned never ignore him as you walk past his show pen as he will shout at you, "Hey, I'm here, I'm wonderful, you can't ignore me!"

Emma Watts - One very proud Mum

Photos Courtesy of Alan Robinson

