

The Beltie--The Beauty or the Beast

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1. Firstly, I want to make it clear that I have no pretension of being an expert fitter of stud cattle. My experience of cattle covered the establishment and the culture of various breeds of cattle from a 3968 square mile Station in the Northern Territory to the mineral deficient area of South Australia, and now New South Wales - coastal and highland. The BASIC IDEALS in these enterprises have always been centred on the production of sound structurally correct cattle that can survive under very difficult situations. Surely the Beast plays a more important aspect than the Beauty for the successful development of the Breed. Nevertheless, both in the Army and as a Chartered Accountant, I have been guided by the fact that 2 and 2 make 4 - except of course in Computers, where they can make anything.

2. The point of all this is that it is essential to recognise the history of the Galloway Breed - including Belties. There are two excellent books on the subject - one by Lord David Stuart - Flora Stuart's father - and one by General Sir Ian Hamilton.

3. I think it is very relevant to mention that the Shorthorn Society makes no distinction whatever about Hair Colour or Skin Colour - between White - Red - Roan - Part Coloured or Brindle. Irrespective of Colour it is the Conformation of the Beast and the accepted Breed Characteristics of its body that count.

4. Lord Stuart was strongly opposed to Interbreed Competitions. He made the point that all the Breeds-have been evolved from a variety of sources, with specific objectives in mind. Especially different objectives for different purposes. However he seemed to share normal satisfaction at any Galloway Interbreed Wins at Smithfield. These include Beef Breeds from Southern England or Dairy Breeds or Dual Purpose Breeds and Bos Indicus and Crosses for Tropics and Warmer Climates, and last - but most certainly not least - the Galloway Breed - whatever the Skin Colour - to cope with Highland weather and Highland food and grazing available all the year round.

The point is that the very fact that there are so many different results indicates the fact that no one Breed can perform equally well in all the different circumstances.

So the Breeds range from Chianina to Highland cattle, from Jerseys to Belgian Blues.

5. To keep to my subject, I want to emphasise the meaning and point of the title of my little talk.

What do we really want in the Galloway Beast?

Is it the qualities of:-

**Foraging
Hardiness in Cold Climates
Easy calving
Minimum excess fat
Fine quality beef
High cut out percentage
or Beauty in the form of fancy Colourings?**

Decorative and Oneupmanship factors ONLY.

Or is it the Basic Qualities which are important - in fact the vital Factors?

6. Now no one enjoys making and spending the extra dollar more than I do. And as Belties are the flavour of the month - we breed some Belties - and make the extra dollar per acre.

But don't let us delude ourselves. There is no long term benefit in pulling your own leg - whichever one you may choose.

7. So therefore my basic belief and Principle Factor.

Let us accept that any BEAUTIFUL coloured Galloways are acceptable - whatever your fancy and whatever any group supporting that colour wishes to define.

But for Heavens sake Stick to - Cling to - Build on - the wonderful Galloway Characteristics of a Good Galloway BEAST.

8. Some people have contended that Belties were an original Breed - some even say THE original GALLOWAY Breed.

However, all the literature and pictures and AVAILABLE records clearly prove that the Blacks, the Duns, the Belties, the Brockets and the Riggits, the Whites and the Reds have over the last 200 or 300 years bred and mixed - back and forth - in a rather RANDOM but very effective way. Riggits have reappeared by mating a White bull and cow together - COP THAT.

This is especially the case in Blacks and Black Belties. But GENES will out, with introduction of Welsh Black LAKENVELDER and who knows what else.

Last year we had a Black calf from the purest of pure Black Belties. We visited a Beltie Stud of the purest of the pure. They were astounded that their Champion cow had a Black calf. They had NO other Galloway or Black cattle

on the place. So much for the suggested rigid distinction between Pure Bred and Full Blood Belties.

9. It is interesting to study the rules in different countries. Time does not permit me to detail them all - or indeed the reasons for the variations.

The reasons include:

**Accident of History
Facts of Geography
Ignorance
Prejudice**

and overwhelmingly self interest by individuals or group.

In the UK and Scotland there are two separate Breed Societies:

**The Galloway Cattle Society for Blacks and more recently included Duns
and**

The Belted Galloway Cattle Society for Black Belties

Dun Belties

Whites

Reds.

10. I have been told, but have not seen documents, that in the USA there is a Galloway Society that includes all colours and that a four generation Breed Up programme covers all eventualities. Between these two there are infinite varieties and rules of distinction.

From "TILL DEATH DO US PART" principles
to "WAFER THIN" distinctions.

Some even permitting other Breeds such as Holsteins to come back in and be discounted as handicaps after four or five generations. Now no system is perfect and every system has some justification. However in Australia - which is what I am on about, and what I am pleading about - we have the tightest and most illogical system that I have discovered in my world-wide comparison.

11. It is very interesting to observe that in Australia the Highland Cattle have a welcoming and broad breeding up acceptance programme. We are told they now have nearly 500 members - are prosperous and growing rapidly. Furthermore the Highland Breed and Crosses are growing in acceptability and are far ahead of the Galloways in this respect - the question of comparative merit is in the background.

12. It is interesting to note that some Australian members are importing cattle and/or semen and/or embryos from North American stock belonging to Societies with rules much freer than Australian Rules, and having them accepted into the Australian Herd Book. LOGIC. The mind boggles.

13. So the recommendation I make today, for discussion and consideration, and will later make to my fellow members of the Galloway Cattle Society of Australia, is as follows:-

That all Galloway Beasts of an acceptable type standard be accepted and listed in the One or Main Herd Book subject to a four or five Generation Careful Breeding Up Condition.

After each entry there will be a Double Capital Letter - Descriptive of the Colour Pattern and subject to Normal Definition.

Suggestions for some are:-

SB (Standard Black)
SD (Standard Dun)
BB (Black Beltie)
DB (Dun Beltie)
WH (White)
WB (Black from White Parents)
RX (Red)
and so on as necessary.

14. Apparently White Galloway Parents often have Black calves. So where should they be listed? In the Australian Society two proposals are being considered:-

(a) List them in a White Appendix and described as Black.

(b) Shown in the Standard List shown as White or Black-White.

Now I am not a Purist but either methods seems to strain the logic.

Which seems to me a strong argument to support my proposal for one list with Capital Suffixes.

Please remember United We Stand Divided We Fall.

15. A word on the practical Reward of a Welcoming Breeding Up Programme.

Surely everyone knows that any Breed that has become recently successful in Australia and elsewhere has some sort of programme. This of course includes the Charolais, the Limousins, the Simmentals.

16. It is an interesting item to note that recently in the USA at a Belted Galloway Sale a Pure Bred (Bred Up cow) sold for \$US11,000, and a Full Blood cow of very similar quality sold for \$US8,000.

17. Now to return to the Baffling "LACK OF LOGIC" aspect, in the Australian Galloway Cattle Society.

Firstly - A Black Galloway Registered bull - Full Blood - is mated with a Black Belted Full Blood cow.

Secondly - The resultant Black Belted calf can only be registered as a "Pure Bred" Beltie NOT as a Full Blood Beltie.

Thirdly - Yet both Parents are registered as Full Bloods in the Australian Galloway Society Herd Book.

18. Now does this mean that it is assumed and contended that the Black Belted Registered Full Bloods are NOT Galloways?and/or that they are a separate breed to Pure Black Galloways?

Well if so - if that is the contention - then the Beltie owners should leave the Australian Galloway Cattle Society and go elsewhere - either to the South Australian Beltie Society, where cattle with completely foreign breeding - Shorthorns for instance are registered

or

form their own new Society.

It's up to them. But it seems clear to me that if they persist with their contention something should be done.

Again why - if they (the Black Beltie Full Blood) are a separate Breed - then why are they judged at Shows with the other Belties - Blacks - Duns - Whites, etc.?

19. There seems no doubt that our Australian Society has the most restrictive rules of any Galloway Society in the world - that I have been able to access.

Maybe this is a tribute to our Australian Pioneering Spirit of Dogged Determination, etc.

Well - I make two comments.

Firstly - Maybe we need to catch up with the world.

Secondly - Some of our more recent settlers are very quick to adapt.

so God Bless us all.

The long and the short and the tall, as the Solders' Song Book says, in a more procreative vein of Army humour.

20. In conclusion may I plead for -

**Breadth of Vision
Logical Approach
Welcoming Breeding Up Programme.**

So please adopt my

"ONE LIST SYSTEM"

**and Embrace Prosperity. Logical Prosperity for BREEDERS and Success for
the GALLOWAY Breed.**

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