

The Champion Waterfowl Exhibition – an organiser's view

Having just returned from our show, my head is buzzing with thoughts about the day and how we can make next year's 25th show a really great event. We were using a new venue at Warwickshire College in Moreton Morrell, and although I had visited the arena when booking it in the summer, it was with some relief that it was as I visualised it, and that our plans as to how to set out the arena worked!

It is hard work, and thanks must go to all who contributed in any way: John & Margaret Richards, Jackie Jarvis, Guy Waller and Simon James, all of whose long journey up from Cornwall was made more so by the horrendous crash on the M5. All helped in setting up, with a late finish and a hurried pub meal before bed! Kate Elkington and Valerie Kitt were on the go all day in the selling section. Clare Lovegrove had a full day on her bookstand and did a brilliant job of publicising the event. Kay Worrell and Denise Bell were busy on the BWA shop. Graham and Sandra Barnard provided and managed a display of the lovely little calls. Tim Daniels and Rupert Stephenson were constantly taking photos and Jed Dwight's services were invaluable supporting them. Chris Boothby manned the door for much of the day, along with other helpers. To all the judges and stewards, we extend warmest thanks – it is much harder work than it might look! The call duck judges had an especially difficult task with a later than expected lunch. Christopher Marler, the Championship judge, presented the trophies.

As to the new venue – most seemed happy with the facilities and managed to find it, even if with some difficulty! We are taking away some constructive suggestions for next year. What was pleasing was that the light was very good – we were blessed with a fine day. The College could not have been more helpful.

Although the entry was down, there were some excellent birds. A new trophy was presented for Sebastopol geese by John Hall, Billy Sumner and Steph Mansell, in memory of our former President Diana Holloway. Fittingly, John Hall won the award with a magnificent goose. John had a great day, winning Supreme Show Champion with one of the finest Toulouse geese you are ever likely to see. He is always a great supporter of the show. I must also mention Rosemary Sharpe – with her first foray showing birds outside of calls, her Pekin duck swept the board to become Reserve Show Champion – well done Rosemary!

We would like to thank all exhibitors – many said that the atmosphere was friendly, and above all, that is what we are trying to achieve – an enjoyable day which promotes and celebrates all that is good about keeping waterfowl. Anyone who feels that they would like to help next year would be most welcome, in jobs such as setting up, manning the door, stewarding or packing away.

Finally, and not by any means least, we must say how grateful we are to the Northcott Charitable Trust who made a donation to cover the cost of the rosettes and prize cards. This donation enabled the show to break even.

Geoff & Sue Chase