

Tonight, I created a **TICA CODING** page so that you can understand how your Savannah Kitten has been developed from our lines.

We carefully *hand-select* our cats, even if that means waiting 18 months (sometimes longer!) for the right kitten, from the right pairing just so that we can shape our breeding programme to meet our goals of excellent type.

You will see a lot of our cats are from nowhere near Scotland, UK and have been imported to ensure that we have a really good mix of the best bloodlines.

### **Pedigree-Check**

1. When purchasing a Savannah kitten available for breeding you should ALWAYS check the pedigree of both parents before purchasing. Most breeders will provide you with a 5-generation pedigree, so by asking to see the parents pedigrees individually, you will be able to see further back than just the kittens pedigree itself.
2. By analysing the codes and the colours, you will be able to get a good idea of what to expect when you pair the potential breeding kitten with another of your own. More on "*paying for stud – why we don't offer stud*" tomorrow.
3. It is also worth asking the breeder for pictures of other cats in the pedigree. Any good breeder will have pictures of other cats in the pedigree and even potentially their offspring - as they would've researched the parents properly before buying too.
4. Does the name on the pedigree match the persons name you are buying the kitten from? If not, why not?
5. Does the pairing appear planned or is it a bad match (in your own opinion) NOTE: Just because you believe a pairing isn't a good one doesn't necessarily mean the breeder will. You can only decide what you need for your breeding programme and sometimes it can take a long time to really see why breeders use certain cats together.
6. What colours do you want to produce? What colours are in the pedigree of the kitten and what do you plan to mate the kitten to – and what colours do they have?
7. So you've identified all the colours – will you be producing non-standard colours and is that your intention (that's okay if it is!). Everyone is different. It is up to you what colours you choose to produce. Focus on type. Type wins every time over colour.
8. Is the kitten an A, B, C or SBT – see below.

Other points to consider -

**Black nose** - Do not fall for the '*black nose will produce black nose*' train of thought. It is often we see two black-nosed cats mated and only some or none of the kittens will have a black nose. Ask about the line. If the line has a lot of black noses in it on both sides then it is

a higher chance you *will* produce black noses. Your breeder should be able to tell you roughly how many black noses are in the line and where. It is one of the first questions we ask when looking at breeding kittens.

### **Spotting patterns**

We really like the jet black spots on a golden coat...who doesn't right? Learn from breeders how to produce those kind of kittens if that is what you are looking for. Just because a kitten does not have a good pattern or perhaps the spots are lighter than you would prefer, does not necessarily mean that the offspring of that kitten will produce the same. Look again at the cats in the line and their offspring. Remember pairing your cats takes practice and a lot of "being picky" but it also has a lot to do with "vision". If you can see the type on that kitten and it perhaps has a few off spots then is it really worth losing those nice big ears and fabulous eye shape over?

### **Analyse**

You have to be selective but still comprehensively analyse each kitten. Take your time. If you're not sure then don't buy it. You'll know when you've found the right one.

We've placed a pre-birth deposit on a kitten before because we knew the lines and knew that we would have one from the next litter. We watched around 6 litters from that line develop before being sure that we could move on to analyzing the kittens when they were born.

### **Sometimes you will kick yourself...then kick yourself again**

We have purchased a kitten which by the time it was 9 months old we knew we didn't want him in our programme as he had changed dramatically from being a kitten. He was neutered and placed into a pet home and we lost £2,500 / EUR 3250 / \$3,600.

### **Testing (oh here she goes again..)**

### **We will always bore you to tears on this subject. Seriously.**

I'll have an upper respiratory panel and a Faecal panel please!

You do not want to buy a sick kitten and bring it into your cattery. When we refer to a *sick* kitten it could mean something totally normal-looking and normal-pooing but inside that little bundle of joy there could be lurking a fabulous parasite called *Tritrichomonas Feotus* or an upper respiratory infection totally undetectable to the human eye. Before you know it the cats passed it's quarantine period at your home, looks great then BAM, your whole cattery has cat flu and your changing your clothes 16 times a day to prevent cross-contamination?

NO THANKS!

**Don't risk it.** It is an extra expense to check but get it tested. You will never regret testing but you can definitely regret *not* doing it. Would you rather lose £200 or potentially your whole cattery? **#promotingcleancatteries**

We sent a kitten back last year which arrived with a whole host of infections – even gum disease! ...from a supposed reputable breeder who does fantastic at showing in Russia. The cat came into the quarantine pen, was tested and the day the tests came back the cat went. Some problems you could fight for months, some could wipe out your whole cattery. It is not worth it. Some are not worth fighting when the spread of infection is so easy. Another £2,000 down the drain. Plus all the fees for the individual quarantine staff to tend to the cat solely.

Chances are, you're never going to get the perfect kitten – and if you do, give us a call...

If you've done your best then it's all you can do to ensure you are being a reputable breeder and that is before you have even bought your first Savannah for breeding.

The coding system itself helps you to determine how many Savannahs have been used in the mating and of those cats, which were the purest Savannahs. It is always worth keeping in mind that just because a cat is an SBT, doesn't necessarily mean that the kitten is better than a B or C for example if the latter has better type overall and good solid lines behind it. **One of my best studs is a B. The male I neutered and petted out was a C.** You would think it would've been the other way round - I had to do what was right for my programme.

Post any questions in the comment box below and we'll respond.

New blog to follow on tomorrow titled, *"Why we'll never offer stud"*.

We compiled the following page with a fully downloadable version for you to refer back to.