

## WINGS

By Jamie Matts, as published in the September, 2012 CI Newsletter

This article is just my perspective of judging cochins everyone has their own opinions and this one is mine. In 2011 I was lucky enough to judge the Eastern National for Cochins International at the Crossroads show in Indianapolis. At this show I handled almost 400 cochins. Because this is what I have raised for over 20 years now most of the time when I am judging I am put on the feather leg class last year alone I handled over 900 while judging. As a judge I have a very methodical way of handling and looking over a bird. All judges are different but I tend to look at a class as a whole first and then start with each variety and go through the class. I get the bird out of the cage check foot color, look at its head and eye color, check under color and pattern where applicable and then pull out each wing checking for color, width and tightness or strength of the wing. The wing is common problem with a lot of heavily feathered birds they are not strong and hang low also a lot of bird have a gap or weak wing.

A split wing to me is a very large gap between the primary and secondary feathers where the axial feather should be and this is a disqualification. I see a bunch of weak wings where you pull the wing out it doesn't snap back, it just hangs there or there is a noticeable gap, axial feather there but still a gap. I then put the bird back in the cage look over the whole confirmation make a couple notes and on to the next one. Most shows it is expected that a judge is expected to handle roughly 350-400 birds in a day. This article was supposed to concentrate on the wing issue. Let's face it most cochins don't fly or use their wings to reach higher ground so they aren't strong. Also with the amount of plumage they have they tend not to keep them tight to their bodies. Some people exercise the birds by tossing them in the air. I have heard of this never done it personally so I don't know the success rate.

Complete Wing



Weak Wing



Split Wing



In closing I just want to conclude it is just my opinion on any given day another judge may have another. I have been fortunate enough to find a bunch of great cochins over the years judging. One made it to the cover of last year's APA yearbook and this past year at Crossroads made it to Champion Feather leg. When all is said and done, when I am showing, I show my best and they will still be my best when they come home. Some judges agree others do not but I have learned over the years we all interpret the standard a little differently and we all are allowed to have an opinion. As I have said many times it's more about comradery a break from the hustle and bustle of day to day life and not about who wins or loses in my book. Hopefully a few will gain a little insight to what a judge is looking for and if at any show you have a question don't hesitate to ask why I placed a bird the way I did. My job that day is to find the best bird I can to represent the standard and I always try to do my best.