

# Sphynx

This is a spontaneous mutation that appeared in Ontario, Canada in 1966. In a litter born to a black and white housecat named Elizabeth, one cat was entirely hairless. A new breed was in the making but much work lay ahead, as this hairless cat is not easy to breed. Interest was taken by a Siamese breeder and a Mrs. Kees Tenhove of Canada. CFA gave the breed provisional status and then revoked it. Many original breeders stopped breeding this cat. Crown finally recognized them for championship competition in 1971 and to date only two have been shown. The first Sphynx champion was Dutchie's Nefertiti, shown by Mrs. Mardell Jones in 1972. The cat was then purchased by Sandy Kaiser in 1973 and she has been carrying on her breeding program since then. The cat has become a grand in Crown and Sandy believes she is the only breeder of this breed in this country and that in addition to her whole family there is only one other cat around and that is a spay in Florida. It is a shame as they are a unique breed. (Recently, Mrs. Kaiser sold two kittens to a Peter Gann of Iowa who will work with this breed.)

The Sphynx is a simple recessive. To get a hairless kitten you must breed a hairless to a hairless, a hairless to a carrier, or a carrier to a carrier. The kittens are born nude and gradually grow a little hair later. For outcrosses the domestic is used as that was the original parent. However, this mutation, as with the Rex, did not just change its hair length, it changed its type also. The Sphynx does not look like a domestic from which it came.

As a pet, Mrs. Kaiser says that the cat is a love, purrs loudly and incessantly. They are people-oriented, but don't like other cats. They also don't like to be held or cuddled but will sit or stand on your lap purring sometimes with one foreleg lifted. This is a common stance—one foreleg lifted. Never do they put their hairless bellies on a cold floor but prefer to lie on warm surfaces. They have a unique way of sitting with both hind legs under, hocks together and fanny off the ground.

Seeing the Sphynx is a unique experience and so is touching one. For one thing this is a breed with a high body temperature and they sweat. The head of the cat is slightly longer than it is wide and with a slight but definite whisker break. The profile has a stop at the bridge of the nose and another may be felt above the eyes. The neck is long, slender,



**Dutchie's Nefertiti of Mewsi-Kal**

giving a snakey appearance to the head. It is barrel-chested giving a bowed appearance to the legs.

The body is medium long with a modified “tuck up” behind the ribs. The cat is hard and muscular and has a medium bone structure, it is not delicate. The tail is long, tapering from the body to the tip, and the

length is in proportion to the body. The paws are oval, dainty and with long slender toes. This cat is not hairless, it is covered with a very short down that is almost invisible to the eye and touch. On the points (ears, muzzle, tail, feet and testicles) there will be short, tightly packed soft hair. No whiskers or eyebrows are to be seen. A very light dispersion down the spine of short, wiry hair is allowable. The cat is firm and muscular and warm to the touch, and its coat will feel like suede. This cat cannot be small, the male adult weighs a minimum of eight pounds and the female a minimum of seven pounds. The eye color is in keeping with the coat color except where green, gold or hazel eye color is acceptable in the black and white particolored. The coat color is accepted in all color and markings as for the Manx and Rex and the Domestic Shorthair.



**Dutchie's Nefertiti of Mewsi-Kal**



**Prunes Napoleon of Bor-Al**