

Behind the Coops

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I'll let you in on a little secret. If you get this concept, then you are ready to take the table by storm. You could even be ready to get your judge's license. Are you ready? Okay, all five body types of rabbits are posed the same. **WHAT?!?!**

Before you slam this newsletter on your coffee table in disgust or think I have fallen off my rocker, let me explain myself. No matter the body type of rabbit, they are all posed the same. Full arch, semi-arch, cylindrical, compact and commercial are all posed with their front feet in line with their eye and their back feet in line with their stifle (knee). Think about it. In a properly posed Holland Lop, where are their feet versus eye and stifle? Think about a Tan or Spot's top line. Where are their feet lined up in order to see the beautiful curvature of their spine? Himalayans are the same in that the front feet are lined up with the eye and the hind feet are lined up with the stifle. Posing is incredibly important when judging. It can make or break the rabbit. It is so important not to over or under pose a rabbit. You can cover up faults by bunching them up too much or miss a pretty darn typey animal by not posing them at all. Each animal should be posed the same each time. Pulling them out and plopping them on the table isn't being posed the same.

I have Hollands that make a perfect example for this. Some are shy, but will pose if played with for a little bit. Some are high-strung and come out of the coops like a bucking bronco. The ones that have a long forelimb can't help but to sit up (but that's another topic for another time). Now that you have this concept down, let me add a part B.

After much experimenting, I can have a rabbit stretched out too far with its legs still in the right spot. Take a rabbit that is normally very typey when properly bunched and squared. Now, take her and plop her out on the table. Now this short rabbit with a normally beautiful arch now looks long and flat. Go ahead, try it...experiment. Isn't it our job as judges to make the rabbit look as good as it structurally allows without creating or hiding faults? Commercial and compact rabbits should still be bunched - not to the point of having its hind feet below its eyeballs. Now that's a little exaggeration to make my point. It's an art. Keep practicing and, whatever you do, do it consistently.



Broken Silver Steel - overposed.



Broken Chestnut properly posed.



Same Rabbit - not posed.



Golden Steel properly posed



Golden Steel - not posed



Opal buck properly posed

Proper Posing...



Opal buck - not posed

makes ALL the difference!