

1985 ARTICLE- The Smooth Chow Comes out of the Closet – by Zola Coogan

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THE SMOOTH CHOW COMES OUT OF THE CLOSET

The official Standard, adopted by the Chow Chow Club, Inc. in 1925, had a provision for the smooth coat. "In the smooth-coat variety, the top-coat should be of about one and one-half inches in length." In 1941, the Standard was revised and the reference to the smooth-coat was deleted. The provision for the smooth coat still exists in the European standards and through the years there have been kennels there which bred them on a small scale. There is a smooth Champion registered in Holland and another in Belgium with two C.C.'s, and interest is at an all-time high for the Smooth Chow Chow in North America.

This historic article written by Zola Coogan of Redcloud Chows, first appeared in the May 1985 Kennel Review. The author, along with the breeders named below, were instrumental in reviving interest in the smooth coated chow chow in the United States and ultimately returning the smooth back to its rightful place in the [1986 Standard](#) after a 45 year absence. The smooth coat was omitted from the [1941 Standard](#) and the reasons for the omission are still being researched. The earlier [1925 Standard](#) had a provision for



the smooth coat.

I came into the chow breed from poodles, right in the middle of this smooth "transition" . I remember quite vividly the details from the article... these sleek "honest" chows with nothing to hide made quite the impression on your's truly . So much so we ended up breeding a litter of smooths that produced the first smooth coated chow in history to win the CCCI National Specialty (1998). Had it not been for these early tenacious "pioneer" smooth breeders, The Society for the Preservation of the Smooth Chow Chow in the USA, and dedicated chowists abroad, we may well have lost the smooth coat altogether, and what a loss that would have been!!! Thank you for your kind permission to reprint this important time capsule of an article Zola!!!!

The year 1981 was the real beginning of North American Chow Chow breeders actively striving to preserve a Smooth gene bank. That was the year Prudence Baxter of Tamarin in California imported two Smooths from England; first to arrive was a male, "Ukwong King Cole" and next was the bitch, "Ukwong Velvet Touch." That same year, two other American breeders were fascinated when they discovered a Smooth puppy in each of their whelping boxes. Faye and Roddie Mitchell of Roddie's in New Mexico called their male pup "Roddie's Limited Edition" while Barb and Bruce Samoore of Wu-Li P'u in Illinois called their little female "Wu-Li's Something Elsa." Certainly, two well chosen names registering the surprise and delight of their breeders. So began a new North American chapter in the history of the Smooth Chow Chow.

By the time the New Year's bell rang out to welcome 1985, we were able to count 25 of these very special Chows. Presently, 13 North American Chow Chow kennels are involved in loving and raising these 25 Smooths, 12 of whom are male and 13 female. It is interesting to note that 19 of these have descended from three of the original four Smooths while the other two arrived unexpectedly in 1984 out of rough to rough breedings.

The list of breeders involved with the Smooths is an impressive one, seven of them have owned or bred a Best in Show Chow Chow, while another five have Specialty and Group wins to their credit. Consistently, their devotion to the Chow breed has been

CLICK PHOTOS BELOW TO ENLARGE – These are some of the pioneer smooth chows mentioned in the article – courtesy ingrus.net



UKWONG KING COLE-DOG



UKWONG KING COLE PEDIGREE



UKWONG VELVET TOUCH – BITCH



RODDIE'S LIMITED EDITION (black not red) PEDIGREE

proven by their skill as breeders and exhibitors over many years. It has been enlightening to observe more and more breeders succumbing to the charisma of the Smooths. In 1982, the Foon Ying, Wah-Hu, Claymont and Redcloud kennels joined the ranks. In 1983, Coronet kennels purchased its first Smooth and 1984 was a banner year as Charkay-Imagine, Lontamer, Sam Des, Pilgrim and Mi-Tu kennel owners lost their hearts to a Smooth puppy.

Who would have believed it possible that in four short years there would be 25 Smooths with five of them already pointed? Not a bad record, especially when you consider that 10 are too young to be exhibited at A.K.C. shows. Particularly thanks to those who have the courage and determination to compete in the show ring under the existing Standard and to our judges, who while justifiable penalizing the Smooth for lack of coat, have the wisdom to consider the merits and faults of all the Chow Chows before them, taking the time to measure all points against the Standard. Each of us is in debt to the others for the conscientious manner in which these Smooths are being bred, exhibited and judged. It is a wonderful thing to see this self-imposed discipline among breeders and feel the aura of affection and protection that surrounds these Smooths.

The most encouraging news concerning the Smooths arrived when the Breed Standard Council, under the guidance of President Cliff Shryock and composed of Chairperson Joel Marston, Jo Anne O'Brien and Car-

men Blankenship, released their proposed new Standard and it was found to contain a provision for the Smooth Coat. Even though this proposed new Standard has yet to be given approval by the A.K.C. and the general membership, we can hope that fortune will continue to favor the Smooths and they will once again be included in the American Standard and recognized as more than a footnote in the history of our ancient breed.

