



822

# ROSECOMB BANTAMS

**Text and photos: Adri Hermesen of the Rosecomb Bantam Club NL**  
***With additional breed info by Aviculture Europe***

A few kilometres across the border of the Netherlands, in Bocholt (Germany), the Euregion Show was held from 24 to 26 November 2017, with the 58th German Rosecomb Bantam show. A total of 822 Rosecomb Bantams in 24 colours were showed here by 60 participants, coming from Germany, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The exhibited colour varieties were: black, white, buff, laced blue, lavender, cuckoo, wild colour, partridge, blue partridge, silver partridge, yellow partridge, pile, crele, silver crele, white-black columbia, white-blue columbia, buff-black columbia, birchen, mottled, yellow mottled, millefleur, blue millefleur and lemon porcelain.

Several Belgian and Dutch members of the Dutch Rosecomb Bantam Club (Java Club) participated in this show. They were, from Belgium: Jos en Patricia Reyskens; Martin Hermans; Willy & Vivian Rosseel; Roger Struyf; Georges Vinckenbosch; Marc & Anita Aerts and Roberto Gattie. From the Netherlands: Cees Michielse; Marcel Hermens; Willy Toonen; Henrie Lankveld, and Gerrie & Adri Goorden-Hermesen (Team Goorden-Hermesen).

Thursday November 24th was penning day and it was overwhelming to see so many Rosecomb Bantams in all those colour varieties. In the colour variety Black there were a huge number of 172 birds, being 56 roosters and 116 hens!

In Germany, the assessing of chickens at a show is slightly different than we are used to in the Netherlands. The German judging card is divided into 3 parts. One part where the positive points of the bird are mentioned, one part where wishes / improvement points are indicated, and one part stating any faults of the bird.



The remarks on 'wishes' or 'errors' yield deductions of points and in this way the judge ultimately makes up the final points.

At a show in the Netherlands, the maximum 97 points are often only awarded to the Best in Show. In Germany, the max 97 points is sometimes awarded several times in a colour class. You will be the winner in a colour class if you have gained the most points with 6 entered birds.

The members of the Dutch Javaclub did quite well at this show. In recent years, we have noticed that the differences between the Rosecomb Bantams of the Dutch / Belgian breeders and the German breeders are becoming smaller.

In the Blacks, Team Goorden-Hermesen was the winner with 576 points for 6 birds - one of their black pullets gaining the maximum 97 points. Willy Toonen was winner in the Whites with 566 points AND winner in the White-Blue Columbia class with 569 points (One of Willy's white-black columbia pullets gained 97 points). Marcel Hermesen was winner in the Buff class with 555 points.

It was a great show, we learned a lot from each other and it is worth repeating.



**Left: Black cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Wolfgang Browarzik.**



**Right: Black pullet, 97 p. Owner: Team Goorden-Hermesen.**



**Left: Black cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Wolfgang Browarzik.**



**Right: Black pullet, 96 p. Owner: Team Goorden-Hermesen.**



### **The Rosecomb Bantam**

This breed is perhaps the oldest known bantam, named after Bantam, an important seaport on the Isle of Java. The exact origin however, is unclear as one story suggests they originated in Japan, others state China, and in some old books, England is mentioned as country of origin. Unfortunately there was little documented on these tiny chickens, as they were of no economical value and mainly seen as pets for ladies and children. It is unknown what the very first 'Bantams' looked like. In England 'Bantam' became the suitable name for all small chickens and for some time, 'Rosecomb bantam' was a generic name for several breeds that had the same comb type. Today it is a specific breed, with the same name in all English-speaking countries. In Germany the breed is called 'Bantam' and in Holland: 'Javakriel'.

In the Netherlands these bantams were named Javakriel by the Dutch Poultry Association in 1919, and scheduled as an Asiatic breed. Over the years, fanciers succeeded in reaching the highest perfection in this breed.

Rosecomb bantams are small and graceful, with a short, broad body. The breast is full, round, and carried well up and forward. The rather large wings are carried low. Tame roosters that have been exhibited many times, often carry their wings too high, giving an impression of high stance. The large tail is carried at a medium height and is abundantly feathered with wide feathers, the sickles well curved with round tips. In the Netherlands, the highest point of the tail should be at the same height as the earlobes. In the pullet, the tail coverts should be in line with the earlobes. The legs are rather short and when alerted the cock often stands with the back toe off the ground. The female has the same dignity and grace as the male and is also abundantly feathered. The plumage of both sexes is tight, due to the short fluff.



**Left: White pullet, 97 p. Owner: Bernhard Brigl. Right: White pullet, 96 p. Owner: Willy Toonen.**



**Below, left: Buff cockerel, 93 p. Owner: Marcel Hermens. Below, right: Buff pullet, 96 p. Owner: Wolfgang Dannenfesler.**





**Left: Laced blue cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Bernd Findling.  
Right: Laced blue pullet, 97 p. Owner: Bernd Findling.**



**Left: Lavender cockerel, 94 p. Owner: Werner Ruppert.  
Right: Lavender pullet, 96 p. Owner: Werner Ruppert.**



**Left: Cuckoo cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Bernd Findling.  
Right: Cuckoo pullet, 96 p. Owner: Tarek Steverding.**



The Rosecomb Bantam has a small, broad head with a characteristic rose comb that should be square at the front with a long, tapering spike behind. The earlobes are round, flat and velvety white. The earlobes of a Rosecomb Bantam are unusually large; often the size of specific coins were mentioned for comparison, however many fanciers say the earlobe size should harmonise with the size of the bird, rather than be of an arbitrary size. The rounded wattles should preferably not extend beyond the bottom line of the earlobes. Even though the earlobes are distinctive for the breed, the same holds for all head points, and any faults in the head are penalised at the show.



**Left: Wild colour pullet, 97 p. Owner: Niels Rasmussen.**  
**Right: Wild colour cockerel, 94 p. Owner: Bernhard Brigl.**



**Left: Partridge pullet, 97 p. Owner: Manfred Tunk.**  
**Right: Partridge cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Manfred Tunk.**



This proud, alert and graceful bantam is known worldwide, although the different countries have their own interpretation of this breed. Always the comb and earlobes are the most distinctive features of the breed, but for instance, in the USA the Rosecomb Bantam's tail is carried well-spread with broad, long, and very well curved sickles, while the English breeders prefer extra large head ornaments – including earlobes – but also for the comb and wattles – while the tail seems to be less important, often more narrow than well spread.



**Right: Partridge pullet, 96 p.  
Owner: Manfred Tunk.**

The colour of the eyes, beak and legs varies with each colour variety. The darkest eyes (dark brown to black), beak (blackish) and legs (dark blue with a black shade) are seen in the black and blue bantams. Birchen and Lavender bantams also have a dark beak and legs, with dark brown to red-brown eyes. The Cuckoo, Lavender Cuckoo and Crele have reddish-bay eyes, a light coloured beak and dusky white legs with some dark spots. The latter leg colour we also see in the mottleds. The other varieties have reddish-bay eyes, horn colour beak and white legs.



**Left: Blue partridge cockerel, 94 p. Owner: Bernhard Brigl.  
Right: Blue partridge pullet, 96 p. Owner: Erwin Loos.**



**Left: Silver partridge cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Jörg Sibbe.  
Right: Silver partridge pullet, 97 p. Owner: Christian Gäck.**







**Left: Pile cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Stefan Jahn.  
Right: Pile pullet, 95 p. Owner: Stefan Jahn.**



**Left: Crele cockerel, 91 p. Owner: Roberto Gatti.  
Right: Crele pullet, 93 p. Owner: Roberto Gatti.**



**Left: Yellow mottled cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Sebastian Hiesener.  
Right: Yellow mottled pullet, 95 p. Owner: Jos Reyskens.**





**Left: Mottled cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Sascha Plath.  
Right: Mottled pullet, 97 p. Owner: Manfred Tunk.**



**Left: Millefleur cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Maik Eberhardt.  
Right: Millefleur pullet, 97 p. Owner: Maik Eberhardt.**



**Left: Lemon porcelain cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Werner Dörntlein.  
Right: Lemon porcelain pullet, 97 p. Owner: Hannah Niehus.**



## Breeding

To get one continuous sweeping curve from neck to tail, males in the breeding pen must have abundant saddle feathers. The females need to have broad and long tail coverts, flowing well up the tail; this results in cockerels with abundant sickles and coverts, which is important to avoid a sharp angle between the back and tail. Separate breeding pens for males or females are not really necessary although you could add one or two females in each breeding pen which have longer and curved upper tail feathers, in order to breed males with nice, well-developed sickle feathers.

Other things to consider when selecting birds for the breeding pen: The spike (leader) of the male should be round from the base to the tip. While the female's comb is smaller, it is still important that her comb is also well-shaped to avoid problems in her sons. With Rosecombs, the head points are most important.



**Left: White-black columbia cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Christian Gäck.**



**Right: White-black columbia pullet, 97 p. Owner: Willy Toonen.**



**Left: White-black columbia cockerel, 97 p. Owner: Stefan Röber.**



**Right: White-blue columbia pullet, 96 p. Owner: Willy Toonen.**

## Caring

The Rosecombs are easy to tame. They are not shy around people, but they can be very temperamental, although that differs between various bloodlines and colour varieties.

Rosecomb Bantams don't lay every day, but you may expect an egg every two days. They do go broody though.



In summer, provide good ventilation, as chickens cannot tolerate heat very well and in winter, when it is freezing, you should grease the earlobes, combs and legs with Vaseline or alike. The spike of the comb is very susceptible to frostbite, which is very painful for the bird and roosters whose comb has been frozen, are infertile for some time afterwards.

Most of the damage to the beautiful white ears is caused by mutual fights. It can help to place one or more high perches in the run, so that birds that are attacked or cornered can escape.

When birds are put back in the coop after being away at a show, things often deteriorate in a fit of fighting and pecking. The delicate, white earlobes are the first things damaged, so you have to keep an eye out for possible injuries during scuffles.



**Left: Buff-black columbia cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Werner Kruppert.**



**Right: Buff-black columbia cockerel, 96 p. Owner: Stephan Browarzik.**



**Left: Buff-black columbia pullet, 97 p.  
Owner: Stephan Browarzik.**

### **Showing**

In Holland, when assessing at the show, type (symmetry and size) is most important, followed by the comb and earlobes, plumage, colour and sheen. Rosecomb Bantams – in the Netherlands recognised in 22 colour varieties, are a suitable bantam breed for both the serious show breeder and the people who want a dainty and attractive bantam in the backyard.

For more information you may contact the specialty club in your country:  
Netherlands <http://www.nederlandsejavaclub.nl/page/homepage>  
Great Britain <http://bantam-klub.de/>  
Germany <http://www.rosecombbantamclub.co.uk/>





**Left: Buff-blue columbia cockerel, 94 p. Owner: Jos Reyskens.**

**Right: Buff-blue columbia pullet, 95 p. Owner: Jos Reyskens.**



The Euregio Show takes place annually in the Aa-See-Halle in Bocholt (D). This Hall has proved to be an excellent facility for our show. It is large and has a particularly good climate for our animals. The ample floor space provides the opportunity to set up the cages single tier with still spacious aisles for the visitors.

The show took place for the first time in 2006. The idea arose to work together on a cross-border basis, with various small animal associations in Germany and the Netherlands. Today, the associations A & O Aalten, RGZV Bocholt and W38 have merged into the association KT (D) VE Euregio.

[http://www.euregioshow.eu/euregioschow/Euregioschau\\_Euregioshow\\_2017.html](http://www.euregioshow.eu/euregioschow/Euregioschau_Euregioshow_2017.html)

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