



Neptune 1887

## History of the British Longhair

At the end of the nineteenth century wealthy Englishmen began to exhibit and breed with their cats. Mainly these cats were brought from distant journeys. From the Far East longhaired cats but also Siamese, Abyssinian and Russian Blue were imported into Western Europe.

At that time the English domestic cat simply was called "Shorthair". These cats were available in many shapes and colours for they were never deliberately bred. That's why it was also difficult to assess and compare the animals. There were no standards. Therefore a breed standard was composed, describing the ideal characteristics of the new breed British Shorthair. In addition to other characteristics the animals had to have the physique of the sturdier built 'longhair', but with a short-haired coat.

Breeders then began to select their cats for a compact and solid build with a dense, short-haired plush fur. Sometimes they crossbred their shorthair with longhair to accelerate this process. Mostly a blue longhair was chosen because they thought this was the fanciest colour. Through occasionally crossbreeding these longhairs the 'colour palette' increasingly expanded and brought new colours and

patterns in the 'shorthair'. By regular crossbreeding with longhair cats the recessive longhair gene had a chance to hitchhike for generations within these shorthair cats referred as British shorthair at this time. Frequently longhair kittens born from two shorthaired cats were seen as a breeding mistake.



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Through the increasing popularity of British Shorthair more and more "breeding mistakes" were born and so a desire for the acceptance of these "fluffs" arose as they were often first chosen from the litter.

In the meantime the British longhair is recognised as a fully recognized breed in several cat associations.

## Future Goals

Maintain the British type and eye shape and size. Develop uniformity through the breed on coatquality. Keep the health standard high. Give breeders information about grooming their cats. BC will try to organize seminars for Judges and Breeders.



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## Breed Standard as Proposed

Large to medium in size.

Head is round broad and massive, a short broad and straight nose with a slight indentation but not a stop as in the "Exotic". Chin is strong. The ears are small, slightly rounded at the tips and well furnished on the innerside, set wide apart.

The eyes are large, round, wide open and set wide apart.

Colours are copper or deep orange, blue, odd eyed, green or blue-green, green is preferred.

