

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



## The UK Spanish Chicken Breeders Group Newsletter Introduction

Welcome everyone, to the first UK Spanish Chicken Breeders Group Quarterly Newsletter.

This first edition will be quite large as we have quite a lot of information to impart

I would like to set out the history of the Breed Group that I inherited as Registrar in July 2017 as I understand it

I met with the previous registrar Shayne Bee, who had been registrar since 2012 and unfortunately I learned that a "Spanish Registrars Archive" did not exist when he took over the position. This I found surprising for a breed that has been exhibited since the 1800's!

There are suggestions from other quarters that the well known authority, author and breeder David Schrivener, who was maybe also once breed registrar, "probably" had his own archive.

Since his death his entire library and the considerable amount of paperwork was handed to Reading University to catalogue. I am in contact with the co-ordinator there and he will advise me

when he finds something relevant to our group.

In the meantime therefore, I appeal to all breeders to share any information that you have accumulated on the breed over the years, so we can create a more up to date "History" page on our website.

If you have any published information, I would like to obtain permission to reproduce it for the benefit of the group, or at least to be able to refer to it. Please contact me on the email address at the bottom of the newsletter

I hope that sets out as concisely as possible our historical position as a group so far

So, in this short time we now have a website, facebook & Instagram pages, dedicated e-mail address thanks to all who have helped get this setup.

I would now like to introduce "the team" who have helped get our group to where it is today.

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



## Paul Morgan



Rare Poultry Society (RPS) Spanish Breed Registrar – Paul Morgan

I am a traditional breed farmer - Sheep & Cattle.

I also have an interest in Rare Breed Poultry – Spanish, Ixworth and Marsh Daisy

## Daren Norman



I am an IT Professional with 30 years experience in the IT sector, as well as a professional Gymnastics coach with more than 40 years experience, running his own business. Daren is well known in his local area as a keen breeder of rare Galliformes. He has a particular interest in the White Faced Spanish fowl. I am responsible for setting up website & Facebook Page

## Rachel Slade



Admin, newsletter editor, Instagram

I am a relative newbie compared to most of you. I have been breeding chickens for the last 3 years. To date, I have bred Orpingtons, brahmas and Crowlitzer turkeys. I have learnt so much in the little time I have had chickens and now I am venturing into the Rare Breeds even more with UK Spanish.

## **CENSUS UPDATE**

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete our census request on the website for 2018.

This is an important annual event from now on so that we can see the number of birds in the UK. This will enable us to assess the success of the breeding program and hopefully show an increase in breeders over the coming years. To date we have located Spanish large black, large white and large blue and black bantams and blue bantams.

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



## SPANISH BREEDING PROGRAM 2019

This is a recreation of a 3 year breeding program piloted by the Andalusian Breeding Group which ended successfully this year and has been so successful it has been extended.

This is a breed program supported by Rare Breed Survival Trust (RBST) and Rare Poultry Society (RPS)

I have an expression of interest from 8 breeders in our group who want to join the

Breeding Program, I would be grateful if those breeders please confirm they still wish to participate as the new breeding season has now started.

Those interested only need to be prepared to apply numbered leg rings (or wing tag tbc) on all 2019 chicks, continue for 3 years and complete a short log of progress every year.

Eventually the RBST will build a pedigree system of our breed and others, similar to pedigrees available for sheep, cattle etc. However the software does not exist to enable this to happen at the moment so it will follow on in the near future.

If any other breeders wish to join to help the breed please also get in touch with me, it is very simple and many people already complete their own form of breed recording using various numbering systems.

## ARTICLES

A new report has been added to the Articles and Newsletter section of the website entitled CONSERVATION GENETICS OF BRITISH TRADITIONAL CHICKEN BREEDS.

This is a reproduction of a scientific paper produced by The Roslin Institute – Edinburgh University and it shows the relevance and place of Spanish poultry in the UK.

## STOCK AVAILABILITY

For breeders who would like to advertise their stock or fertile eggs for sale. Those who want to purchase more stock or fertile eggs please use the website Classified Section. [CLICK HERE](#)

We have already managed to supply birds and eggs to a group of breeders in South Wales last year and are happy to do the same to maybe your area in 2019 ?

I hope between us we can satisfy all your needs for eggs and birds across the breed but please get in touch as soon as possible with your requirements as the breeding season picks up.

There are both birds and eggs available at the moment

***\*\*\*some breeders remove the cockerels from their breeding pens once they have enough eggs hatched***

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



*for their own use. In some cases in April - so please be sure to get your orders in early. Contact us if you need or have eggs available\*\*\**

## NATIONAL SHOW – TELFORD

### ELEANOR'S STORY

Some of you will know that Eleanor Russell and Andrew Marshall were successful at the National Show in Telford. A big congratulations and hopefully we will have a full report soon

I only have the Spanish since August 2018. I was stewarding at a local agricultural show and there was one Spanish there. I had never seen one before in the flesh and I thought she was lovely. Having sourced some in N. Ireland I ended up with two pairs of v young birds.

From the beginning I had to keep the males separate and keep the females away from the males. I read the articles on the Spanish breeders website and the advice there was very good.

My 1<sup>st</sup> show with the Spanish was here in Ireland with The Irish Society of Poultry Fanciers. I entered two females and one male. The male who is the bigger of the two, unfortunately got a cut in his wattle and as a result the wattle is a bit puckered so I have never shown him. Here he is below.

The Spanish male got Best Large Rare at that show. He got a lot of attention at the show as most people had never

seen a Spanish before. I would have liked to get a proper photo of him but he isn't the easiest to catch times so I wasn't chancing it. He still doesn't like being caught but once caught he is very quite. I regularly wash his earlobes and put cream on them. He loves this attention and will nearly go to sleep. The females, on the other hand are very placid.

I also showed a pair of Spanish at both The English National and at The Federation. At both shows there were very few Spanish but I did meet another breeder who gave me some good advice. I felt my Spanish could be a bit bigger and he advised that to improve their size, I should be hatching them before the end of March. At both shows there was also a trio. These looked great. Unless you go to shows you are unable to compare your own birds with others. Also, by showing you are promoting the breed. I also show and breed Norfolk Greys and a lot more breeders of Norfolks show at the National than at the Federation so it makes for a sociable occasion. But, it was lovely at both shows to talk with people who had never seen the Spanish before.



**Best Large Rare at Telford**

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



2<sup>nd</sup> to the cockerel  
above at Telford

## SISTER GROUPS

USA / Worldwide Facebook group :- white faced black spanish chickens breed group

Australia Facebook group :- white faced black spanish chickens breed group Australia.

We have also contact with breeders in Holland, Belgium, Spain, France and Greece and Indonesia

## SPANISH EYE COLOUR

All breeders will have specific “must have points” in their birds and “desired points” to breed towards.

Spanish are such a rare breed that attempting to concentrate on single aspects can in the long term be detrimental to breed. This is what happened in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s when breeders who kept the breed could not agree over smooth and cauliflower faces. At the same time breeders concentrated solely on the face and legs resulting in the breed

losing much of their reputation as good layers of white eggs. Net effect by 1910 the breed was relegated to the AOV classes.

So with regards to red eyes, it is my experience that the red eyed males will produce both red and dark eyed males and always dark eyed females though some can be lighter in colour. I therefore regard dark eyes as a desired rather than must have breed point.

When I am selecting breeding males I always consider the whole bird and would always keep a decent red eyed male over a poorer quality dark eyed male. I apply the same principle when judging as the judge has to assess the bird and should not overly penalise a decent cockerel if it has red eyes.

I am sure there will be some keepers who regard dark eyes as a must however don’t be tempted to keep them if they have other more serious faults such as fish tailed combs or as I found recently a wry tailed bird when judging .

Think of the breed and look for balance and I am sure as more breeders take up Spanish it will be possible to gradually reduce the number of decent red eyed males with good black eyed ones.

*Andy Marshall*

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



## GARMENTS

For those breeders who would like to advertise the breed at shows etc we have designed a Breed logo which we have also had converted into an Embroidery Logo.

Garments - polo shirt & fleece are available to order, details below.

### *Spanish Logo Fleece*

S-3XL      £25.00 plus P&P



### *Spanish Logo Polo*

S-2XL      £12.90

3-5XL      £14.15 plus P&P



For more information please contact Paul on [spanishchickens@gmail.com](mailto:spanishchickens@gmail.com)

## CREDITS

We would like to thank individual breeders for the use of their photographs.

Further contributions are welcome! If you have Spanish Chicken images you would like to share with the gallery please send the images to Daren via our e-mail address.

If you are able to offer a contribution to future editions or offer suggestions for subject matter or have any questions please do get in touch using the contact details at the end of this Newsletter so we can make this an even more interesting breed newsletter.

## SPANISH CONTINGENT



Juan Manuel Martin Perez White Faced Spanish bird

Juan achieved 95 points at the Spanish exhibition show in Recintal Ferial De Sarinena in November.

# NEWSLETTER

April 2019



## REGISTRARS RAMBLINGS

The following are some of the comments I have heard when discussing breeders opinions into what we are doing now and what we could plan to do in the future.

*I would like to help the breed, but I'm not interested in showing.*

*I don't like the Blue Spanish I prefer the Blacks*

*I don't see the point of the White Spanish*

*I don't want to get involved with the Spanish Bantams*

*I would like to show Spanish one day but need to learn from the beginning, would there be any help available ?*

*I am happy to take on something different so can I help by joining in the breeding program to help the white's, blue's or bantams ?*

*We have enough to do to get the large black to a good standard rather than diluting our effort across all colours and sizes.*

*Now I am getting older I am not strong enough to be handling the large black cockerels, how can I help increase the number of Spanish Bantams ?*

*What is the usual size of Spanish eggs ? We might strive for excellence in the breed but until we increase numbers of the breed we have to be careful we*

*don't discard some of the more undesirable traits for perfection. History of Animal breeding is littered with examples of bloodlines discarded in the pursuit of perfection. We only have 3 or 4 Spanish bloodlines in the UK, we have to be careful, selection for 1 trait is often at the expense of another.*

To you all I would like to say thank you.

We will encourage and help you however we can. There are experienced breeders ready to help. There is work to be done across the breed, colours and sizes but that is the challenge ahead.

*Did you know ?*

Just to highlight the power of Facebook

In the last few weeks we reached 105 people and engaged with people 171 times in one week!

Do have a look, there are always plenty of pictures and we hope for more facts in the future.

## Contact details :-

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