

## 3/4 SEASON POINTS ANALYSIS

We've arrived at the end of January – three-quarters of the way through the show season. While the analysis for the top of the standings is provided, most interest is where will the bottom be for the top 25 in championship, kittens, and premiership. I'll go over each competitive category's year-end requirements and compare them to what I thought a month ago at the 2/3 point. These are still semi-accurate predictions, I won't really have the "good" predictions until we get to the predictor program's calculations of individual final scores for each competing cat that I track, and then it will tell me their placements, and hence, the top 25. Those results won't be out until mid-March. However, at this point, we're down to about plus or minus 5 percent error.

### CHAMPIONSHIP

Over the eight years from 2003 to 2010, cats have averaged a pickup of only 940 points from the end of January to the end of the show season; but that wasn't the case two years ago, where that pickup was only 452 points. Last year, the corresponding pickup was 784 points. This was despite the fact that almost every weekend from the end of January to the end of the season had a show with an entry over 100. Counts continue to stay down about 10 percent from last year, but as noted earlier, last year was an improvement over the year before. If you look at the full range of point pickups between the end of January and the end of the season, the minimum pickup was 452 while the maximum was 1,449 (2009). Based on what we've seen so far, one might assume they will stay down. However, kittens is actually throwing a wrench in the works. I'll talk about that in the next section. So let's assume the maximum point pickup of 1,449, added to the current top score gets us 9,397 for the top score in championship. Conversely, if you use that bottom number, it's more like 8,500. So that's the prediction on the COTY – somewhere between 8,500 and 9,400. Now let's look at the bottom. With one exception (2009) the count pickup for the cat in 25<sup>th</sup> place has ranged between 1,127 and 1,350 for most of the last eight years. Putting this range on the current score for 25<sup>th</sup> gives a range of 6,000 and 6,200. That's just about exactly what I predicted at the 2//3 point (6,197). Now the real question – do we factor in that continual decline of 10% from prior years. That's where things get interesting. Normally, I'd say yes, but given that kitten season has not ended yet, I don't know. Will those kittens convert to new cats in Championship?? We'll have to wait and see. One thing IS for sure – if your score is over 6,300, you're probably safe for a National win in Championship as counts rarely take a huge spike for the cat at the bottom of the standings. It does look; however, that the bottom will still be over 6,000, but not by much. At this point it is also safe to say that we won't crack 7,000 points at the end. As I noted before, one of the big variables in all of this is what will the top runners do if the counts stay in the 80s, where the rings will be virtually useless. Eventually, there will be no point gain to go, and they may just stop showing. That will open up those spots for cats to get point pickups they would not otherwise get, and cause the bottom to rise. On the other hand, if there is a race for that top spot, the likelihood of those cats dropping out is slim. I'll have a much better value when the predictor program comes in with its results at the middle of March. It is always good to within less than 1% of the final score value. Again, 6,300 to be safe, but more likely between 6,000 and 6,200 is the prediction at this point.

## **KITTENS**

As I noted earlier, the recently-deceased KOTY will set the record for the most points ever earned by a kitten in a season with 4,560.80. No other kitten has ever scored that many points, so it is safe to say he will be the highest scoring kitten not only for this season, but for all past seasons since ring point scoring started in 2001. HOWEVER, on the bottom of the top 25, it has rarely looked good to be in 25<sup>th</sup> place, even at the end of January. There have only been three seasons (last year being the last) where the kitten in 25<sup>th</sup> at the end of January survived to finish in that spot at the end of the show season. Unfortunately, this year, I still haven't seen that dramatic drop-off in kitten counts that one expects to see at the end of Kitten Season. Heck, as of the first two weekends in February, there were show counts such that the top scoring kitten in a ring could easily acquire 80 points. If you averaged that over 40 rings, the kitten would pop well into the top 25. So, the best we can do is count how many kittens have made the leap from outside to inside the top 25 from the end of January to the end of the season. Over the last seven years, there were three with no new kittens, two with one new kitten, one year with three popping in and in 2009 (the first year of split-season kittens) five new kittens. I'd like to just assume that we could look at that and say one maybe two more kittens make the top 25; however, since kitten season does not appear to be over, there really is no limit on the number that can climb in if they go to the right show and do real well. That's why I always consider kittens the toughest to predict – until the predictor program results come in. Usually we're so close to the end at that point that it's initial predictions are the final results. By the way, from the end of December to the end of January, six new kittens moved into the top 25. If you work averages, then one new kitten should make it into the top 25, with a range of from none to five. That would make kitten 20 definitely safe at this point. Kittens 21 to 24 are questionable, with kitten 25 doubtful. Obviously my statement at the end of December that the top 21 were safe was wrong, as the kittens then in 19, 20 and 21 are already out. My guess at this point is that the top 20 are safe, 21 to 24 is iffy, and 25 will need some prayer to stay put if they can't pick up points. Given the wild swings caused by kitten season - -which is still underway - - the predictions in this category have the highest probability of being wrong.

## **PREMIERSHIP**

I don't see Premiership this year picking up that many points between now and the end because there have been so few shows with counts over 50. To that end, last year the cat in 25<sup>th</sup> place picked up only 454 points over the last 14 weeks of the show season. That's an average of less than 33 points per show, or if you assume 6 AB rings, less than 6 points earned in a ring. That's the bottom. The top was even worse, with only an 85 net point pickup in the last 14 weeks of competition. That's less than 6 points a SHOW, not a ring. Given the significantly small number of shows with counts even in the 40s, I see this same kind of pathetic point pickup between now and the end for this year. Other than last year, at the top of the standings, the average point pickup for the top in premiership has been over 400, but given last years pathetic 85, I'm not willing to go much above 100. Therefore, I put the top of premiership right now as something between 5,590 and 5,800. Similarly, at the bottom, the average pickup over the past couple of years has been 550, which isn't that much greater than last year's 454. Therefore, I'd

would put the bottom of premiership somewhere between 3,190 and 3,300 this year. Again, I won't feel comfortable until I get the results from the predictor program, but right now, I'd want 3,500 to be really safe.

You have my take on things at the 3/4 point. I'll do my final one from the Predictor Program in mid-March. THAT's the one that is traditionally spot on. I'll start loading data into it starting with the last weeks in February (it needs four weeks worth of data).

Numbers Nerd over and out until mid-March.