

Small Chickens With A Big Strut

The Serama is considered the world's smallest chicken breed. But with its chest extended and uplifted, it has a big bird attitude.

"They are evaluated for not just their body structure but also for their performance and engagement on the judge's table - the flapping, crowing and walking around strutting proudly," says Donnie Gallagher, chairman of the Serama Council of North America, as well as a Licensed Tabletop Judge for SCNA.

At just 16 oz. (cocks) and 14 oz. (hens) a tabletop is a perfect place for the tiny chickens to perform for judging. According to American Bantam Association standards, the Serama has large wings and a large tail carried vertically. With a short back and vertical carriage, it has a full and uplifted chest.

"The Serama should be friendly and proud birds. They aren't an aggressive breed, and many folks keep one or two as pets indoors," Gallagher says.

When he first saw them, he liked their small size and "unique style of performance" and purchased his foundation stock from Jerry Schexnayder from Louisiana, who was the first to import Serama chickens from Malaysia in 2001.

Because they're small, they struggle in cold weather and during hot/cold temperature swings. Gallagher, who lives in Ohio, keeps his Serama flock in a heated area during the winter.

He sells fertilized eggs year-round (\$100/dozen) and hatches chicks in the spring. By late summer/early fall, he sells pairs. Depending on demand and quality, pairs sell from anywhere between \$100 to \$300.

"I ship early in the week only using USPS Express and include feed and something for hydration. I label the box clearly and do not ship around holidays or if there are reports of delays within the postal system," he says, adding he gets the permits required to ship to many states and maintains National Poultry



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Improvement Plan status (certification that the birds are free from Pullorum and Avian Influenza).

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As a judge and member of the SCNA, Gallagher emphasizes breeding healthy birds that maintain the standard. While some are smaller (called micro and sometimes less than 10 oz.) they are typically not hardy and do not lay eggs or reproduce.

Standard Serama hens start laying eggs at 6 mos. and they can lay up to 125 eggs a year. It takes three to five Serama eggs to equal a Grade A egg from a standard size chicken breed.

For those interested in learning about Serama chickens, Gallagher suggests checking out the SCNA website.

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Nigg built the frame from materials he had on hand, using plastic plumbing parts to make the gas tank, he cut down a car radiator for the radiator and removed the rubber from buggy wheels to make the back wheels for his Waterloo Boy.

Pedal Tractor Collector Also Builds Models

With shelves on three walls of his shop filled with 240 pedal tractors, Dave Nigg "blames" a local dealer for getting him started.

"I bought a Case IH air seeder, and they gave me a pedal tractor. It got a little out of hand after that," he says with a laugh, adding that these days he buys less and is building his own pedal tractors.

The Browns Valley, Minn., grain farmer was already collecting smaller scale toys that he picked up at shows and dealerships. But the "kid in him" really liked the pedal tractors so he started seeking out models that replicated the full-size equipment he owned.

He bought a 450 International, 730 John Deere and a pedal tractor that looked like a John Deere garden tractor, for example.

His collecting budget increased with the purchase of a John Deere A pedal tractor. Through eBay and attending the National Toy Show in Dyersville, Iowa, his collection grew even more colorful with Allis-Chalmers, Oliver, Case IH, Steiger and other model pedal tractors. His collection really grew when he purchased 83 pedal tractors from the widow of a collector. Some were in good condition; others were for parts or needed work.



To make them bigger, Smokey Bear and Bigfoot began with a frame of logs and lumber, a style they learned about from a Kentucky carver.

They Built A Giant Smokey Bear Statue

With the world's largest Smokey Bear statue, you won't miss Dahl's Chainsaw Art on Main Street in Hill City, S. Dak. It's a unique combination of construction framing and chainsaw carving that also gives tribute to Hill City's School Rangers mascot. It's the only U.S. school allowed to have Smokey Bear as a mascot, a privilege granted after 25 students from the school helped fight a 1939 forest fire that threatened the town.

The 30-ft. tall Smokey Bear is seated for visitors to pose for photos on a log or in front of a giant paw. Jordan Dahl manages the shop as part of his partnership with his brother, Jarrett Dahl, who manages the Keystone, S. Dak., shop marked by a 25-ft. tall Bigfoot, two miles from Mt. Rushmore.

Jarrett was introduced to chainsaw carving at 18 in 2004 when he visited a friend in Alaska to fish for a couple of weeks. Instead, he and Jordan, 16, ended up staying in Alaska to work with chainsaw carver Scott Hanson. Later the brothers opened their own business in Keystone, S. Dak. Their reputation grew and they added businesses in Hill City, Deadwood and Wall in S. Dak.

The wildlife, horses, cowboy art and commissioned pieces they and their apprentices create are carved out of logs. To make them more massive, Smokey Bear and Bigfoot began with a frame of logs and lumber, a style they learned about from a Kentucky carver.



30-ft. tall Smokey Bear was completed in 10 days.

Under Jordan's direction with half a dozen carvers from around the country, Smokey Bear was completed in 10 days.

"The muzzle and paws and feet are log carvings," Jarrett says. To create the "fur" on the parts constructed of lumber, workers covered everything with leftover pine, cottonwood and maple slabs from a sawmill. Some details such as the hat and head of the shovel were made by laminating boards.

Smokey Bear has attracted much attention since being completed in the spring of 2021.

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Nigg jokes that his wife says when he dies, she will "have his funeral at 10 and the auction at 2".

"If they are a little rough, I restore them." Nigg says, noting he leaves powder coating and painting to a professional.

Now that he is retired, Nigg started building his own models. He's made a 2+2 International Harvester, grain carts and augers.

"My favorite is the John Deere Waterloo Boy because it is unique," Nigg says. He built the frame from materials he had on hand, used plastic plumbing parts to make the gas tank, cut down a car radiator for the radiator and removed the rubber from buggy wheels

to make the back wheels.

His current project is a 1938 Minneapolis Moline UDLX, a tractor/car hybrid marketed to "plow all day and drive to town at night."

Nigg admits he has a reputation for being obsessed with his pedal toys. He jokes that his wife says that when he dies, she will "have his funeral at 10 and the auction at 2."

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