

August – September 2020

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# AKA Reporter





# AUSTRALIAN KOI FARM

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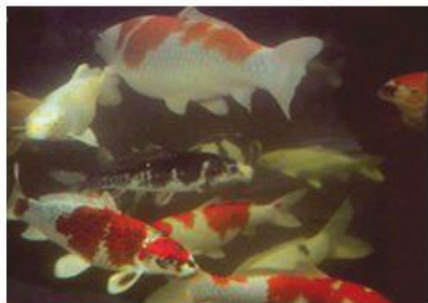
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# AKA Reporter



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## All correspondence

Australian Koi Association, 17 Westmore Drive, West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

# President's Report



Sitting here at the computer writing this report in these difficult times, and (as we all are), faced with the huge uncertainty of the coronavirus, I would like to pay a special tribute to the wonderful nurses and medical staff that are at the

coalface of this pandemic. It's their dedication and great skills that ensure the best outcome for those unfortunate enough to be infected by this dreaded virus. As a community we must be thankful for their efforts.

Our hobby has been impacted too...with the worldwide cancellation of koi shows and the inability just to be able to conduct regular koi-associated gatherings has sadly put our koi hobby 'on hold'. It's just not the same; I am sure everyone misses the meetings, auctions and shows as much as I do. Most of our opportunities to get together, admire each other's koi and exchange stories have gone out the window...!

At least in the short term, AKA members are able to become involved in the first Australia-wide Virtual Koi Show currently underway. (See page 6 for full details).

I would like to encourage as many AKA Members as possible to give this koi show a go. We have two very highly-qualified ZNA Certified Judges in Mr Mike Harvey and Mr Harry Beckx from South Africa lined up to judge the koi. For the first time all members of koi clubs right across Australia will be able to compete at the same time and I think that will be a really great thing for our hobby.

It's relatively easy to enter and most mobile phones today can take a reasonable photograph of your koi. As well there is some pretty good prize money on offer. So why not try it out? It should be a bit of fun and everyone can try their hand at judging the photos as well. Not quite the same as walking around the show vats, but the best we can do at present.

I would be happy to help any member enter koi; should you require assistance with either photography or the website, please give me a call.



**Cover photo: A stunning pewter-coloured Kin kikokuryu...a rather unique koi.**

Regarding our Auctions, we have been in touch with Auburn Council and unfortunately we are still impacted by the 20-people-gathering rule...so for the time being the auctions are cancelled. Should this change I will contact everyone to advise.

As for our meeting nights I am seeking clarification from the Sydney Equestrian Centre, as the four square metre rule would apply which would mean providing we use social distancing rules we could theoretically hold a meeting with up to 35 members. I am looking at a possible September meeting and will contact everyone should we be given a green light to go ahead.

In the meantime please do everything to keep safe.

*Yours in koi*  
*Ian Andrews*  
*President AKA*

# AKA News and Events

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## COVID-19 Update

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AKA has suspended all monthly meetings and koi auctions until it is deemed safe by the government to resume normal routines. We will post changes as they are announced on AKA's website and contact other members via phone when we can resume our normal activities.

In the meantime we hope everyone and your families remain safe. ■

## August Meeting CANCELLED

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## September Meeting MIGHT GO AHEAD (watch this space)!

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If COVID-19 restrictions are further lifted it may be possible to hold a general meeting in September. We will contact everyone if it is going ahead. ■

## New members

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New members are always assured of a friendly welcome when attending the AKA's monthly meetings. Help and advice is available if required and our Supply Officers can provide you with koi food and accessories at favourable prices. Call our membership officer (details on page 2). ■

## Contributions to the AKA Reporter

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We welcome any contributions to this newsletter. If you have news, articles or photographs that you think would be of interest to members, send them to Ian Andrews either by email (ian.andrews@fujifilm.com.au) or call Ian on 0418 255 897. Articles should preferably be submitted in MS Word or similar word processing files. Photographs should be submitted as separate files, not embedded in the article itself. ■



## The AKA is seeking a new meeting venue

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After nearly 30 years of utilising the Scottish Hall at Bankstown for AKA's Meeting Night Venue, the Scottish Society has decided they no longer wish to lease the premises. At over \$10,000 per annum we can understand why!

When we are finally able to reinstate our Monthly Meeting nights in the future, month by month we will meet at Sydney International Equestrian Centre Conference Room (down past Main Arena) Saxony Road Horsley Park. At this stage this will be a temporary set up as it is easier paper-work-wise to use this venue. It is also closer for most AKA Members who have to go to work the next day. ■

**REMINDER**  
**AKA SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
**were due 1st July**  
Please send to PO Box 68  
St Clair NSW 2759

# AKA News and Events



## Koi Net Magazine

*Koi Net Magazine* is featuring the first Sydney Koi Show in the next issue of Koi Net.

Members of the AKA may be interested in subscribing to *Koi Net* (the FREE on-line koi magazine) as it may be of particular interest to see what is happening in the koi world else where.

Simply go to [www.koinet.co.uk](http://www.koinet.co.uk) where there is a simple form to subscribe.

## Koi food

It is hoped that we can continue to provide as necessary any koi food requirements from our four outlets. We will require payment upfront or similar, and with no direct contact—our suppliers (see advertisement in this magazine) can arrange for food orders to be left out ready for pick up, having nil face-to-face contact. ■

## Australian Koi Association—Mid Northern Region

Nothing to report on the local scene due to the COVID-19 shutdown. We are looking forward to a return to normal operations. We still can organise any koi food needs for you, so please don't hesitate to contact me if you require assistance.

Also, just a reminder to all our Northern Members that the AKA Annual Subscriptions were due 1st July. ■

*John Irwin*

*August – September 2020*



## AKA auction dates

Held at Auburn Botanic Gardens (entry from Killeen Street, Auburn). Commencing at 10.00 am. Quality fish at reasonable prices! Food and refreshments available. Fish food and other fish keeping supplies also available.



Bankstown City  
NSW Chapter  
Zen Nippon Airinkai

Sunday 9th August 2020 **CANCELLED**  
Sunday 11th October 2020 **TBA**  
Sunday 22nd November 2020 **TBA**

## KSA Auction Dates

Sunday 6th Sept 2020

Sunday 1st Nov 2020

Sunday 6th Dec 2020

# Australian Virtual Koi Show 2020

We are holding the first Australian Virtual Koi Show for financial Members of all the Koi Clubs across Australia.

Varieties are Kohaku, Sanke, Showa, Utsuri, Kin Gin Rin, Metallic and Non-Metallic.

Size 3 (300-399 mm) and Size 4 (400-499 mm).

One entry per variety, per size with a maximum of 14 entries per member.

Judges will be ZNA Certified Judges Mr Mike Harvey and Mr Harry Beckx from South Africa.

There will be cash prizes for GC A (Kohaku, Sanke and Showa) \$200 and GC B \$200 as well as the 7 x Best in Varieties \$100 each and \$50 for each other size winning koi.

Exhibitors will need to first contact their respective Koi Club Show Chairmen and obtain a Registration Number.

Your Registration Number is then to be placed onto your vat so it appears next to each fish in the photos, e.g. written on a piece of plastic or tape with Texta pen and stuck to the bottom of the vat before filling with water. Blue vats only please. Be mindful of good daylight as it's very important to achieve a good quality un-retouched photograph, as this is what our judges will use to determine the winners.

One photo per fish clearly showing your Registration Number.

Once you have registered and all your entries are photographed, upload your entries at [www.akakoi.com.au](http://www.akakoi.com.au) or <https://koiclubwa.com/showentry.toy> show portal.

Entries Close on Sunday August 31st.

## Koi Club Show Chairman contacts

KSA: Richard Power

AKA: Paul Miglionico, 0415 834 529

KSWA: Shona Macskasy





# Extraordinary koi

*Bernie Woollands, ZNA Certified & BKKS Judge*

This is the second of a series of articles from about 'extraordinary koi'. More of these in future editions of *AKA Reporter*.

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## Extraordinary Koi number 3.



I came across this koi at the 2107 All Japan. It was bred by Omosako. There was no other koi remotely like it at the show and I haven't seen another in the flesh since.

As you can imagine photos of it soon began appearing over the koi media. Some christened it a Kanoko Utsuri, a name I disagreed with then and still do.

Kanoko translates to dappled and is a term that has been used for many years to describe a fawn-like effect of beni. It can be seen on several varieties these days sometimes in a pure form. On other occasions it is used to describe the effect



**Kanoko yuki asage.**



**Ki showa with kanoko.**

---

when a beni dan starts to disintegrate. In the latter case it can be viewed as a demerit. In its pure form it is just another colour effect.

In recent years I've seen good examples of this on Yuki Asagi where it gives a very distinct impact. However, none of these examples look anything like the additional colour and effect on this koi, hence my objection to it being described as kanoko.

For a start it is quite clearly yellow – not red at all. Furthermore it is situated uniformly on the edge of the scale whereas kanoko can be anywhere and rarely uniform.

I doubt I would have been concerned about the misnomer if it wasn't for the fact that this koi is extremely extraordinary for its perfection as well as its uniqueness. The yellow colouration sits perfectly on the edge of each and every visible white scale. Any other koi with a colour on the edge of the scale would earn the description 'Kado'. Any other koi with yellow on it would earn the description 'Ki' and finally – three colour koi earn the name 'sanshoko', and when the sumi wraps around the body the term Showa



**Kanoko kujaku.**

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is applied. By that quick summary of Japanese terms I would refer to this koi as a Ki-Kado Showa. But make no mistake I am not trying to name it as a variety. I am just describing what I see using my very limited knowledge of the Japanese language couched in a bit of existing koi terminology. I don't see the point in creating a distinct variety name for what is so far just a single example.

By the way, the Utsurimono class and by deduction utsuri is used for two colour koi which again doesn't make any sense when this one displays three colours.

However, I am going to leave the naming debate there as it detracts from the beauty of this koi. I know my photo isn't the best, but even the surface ripples and the effects the overhead lights have on the water can't hide its quality. The sumi is dense, lustrous and in most cases developed, there are a few areas where it is underlying and waiting to develop fully. The shiro is very uniform in clarity across the body. There is no staining on the head but the colour plate is still a little bit translucent. Like some of the sumi it is



**Kanoko showa.**

still 'work in progress'. Finally – this yellow kado effect. It is uniform, every non sumi scale is the same giving it a sort of a distinct vignette over the rest of the body. It is my hope that this effect stays as it is.

It has been suggested to me that the yellow might continue to develop and one day consolidate. I hope not. Were that to happen completely it would just become a ki-utsuri. If the head remained white and the rest went yellow it would be different and possibly even deserve a name of its own. But somehow I don't see that being extraordinary.

To further my case I have included some examples of kanoko koi varieties.

Personally I would like to see this type of koi developed in numbers. However small those numbers may be I think it will deserve a unique variety name of its own – something better than a kanoko utsuri. They would be a valid addition



**Kanoko.**

to the list of varieties, far better than many on the so called 'new varieties' that appear every now and again that are minor variations of an existing variety. This one with its yellow edged scalation really is something new and I would certainly like to own one. ■

## Extraordinary Koi 4 – a diamond from the dirt.

Like several other examples in this series I first saw this koi in Germany at the Interkoi Show staged by KLAN the German ZNA Chapter. That in itself isn't unusual as Interkoi is the first show of the year in Europe and therefore the first chance for people to show koi collected at the autumn harvests in Japan. However, that isn't the case for this one. This one was bred in Holland.

The breeder is Jeroen van Keulen of Koicentrum van Keulen based in Nijverdal and it is a Beni Ginga - the metallic wagoi version of a Beni Kumonryu or a metallic version of Beni Matsukawabake if you prefer. The nomenclature surrounding these varieties is quite interesting so



**Three years old.**

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**10 years old.**

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**10 years old.**

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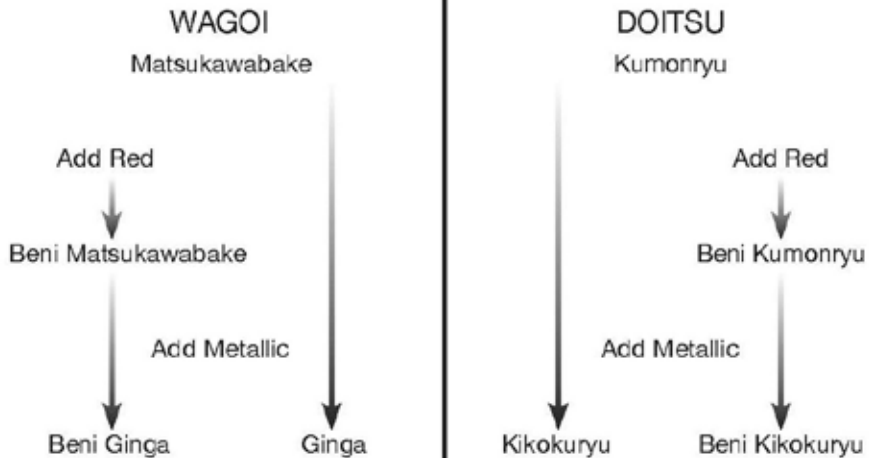
I will close this article with a diagram to explain.

However, this koi was a very happy mistake. Ten years ago Jeroen set out to improve the sumi on the Beni Kikokuryu he was breeding. To this end he crossed a female of doitsu Kujaku x Beni Kikokuryu lineage with a male Kin Showa. In his words “the spawning was a failure” not only in quantity but also in quality. Furthermore, it also failed to deliver anything near the results he was hoping for. However, amongst the fry was this little beauty – the diamond in the dirt. Again, in Jeroen’s words “the only fish of good quality”. So he nurtured this koi and when it was in its third year he took it to the Interkoi which is where I saw it.

I can’t remember if it won any prizes there but it certainly did in the years that followed. I saw the koi on several occasions at Interkoi and the Holland Koi Show.

Three years ago he sold it to a German hobbyist who continues to show it, albeit at the German Shinkokai shows (there are two). Two years ago she was awarded ‘Best in Variety’ and ‘Unique Koi’ at the Koi Expo in Berlin. She is due to be exhibited there again this year. At the last measurement she was just short of 80cms.

Now to the complexities of this and its



relative varieties. For every variety there is a doitsu and a metallic version. Normally the prefix 'doitsu' or 'kin' will suffice but with the varieties from the extremes of the Karasu line like Matsukawabake that doesn't really work.

I hope the diagram will be self explanatory. The Matsukawabake is a black and white koi displaying linear sumi. Its doitsu equivalent is the Kumonryu. The metallic versions of these koi are Ginga and Kikokuryu respectively. Add an additional red colour and they become Beni Matsukawabake and Beni Kumonryu whose metallic versions are called Beni Ginga and Beni Kikokuryu.

The photos accompanying this article show the koi at 3 years old, 8 years old and 10 years old. Over the years the linear sumi on the flanks has never thickened up and remained more 'sumi nagashi-ish' but the metallic beni has. But all in all it has changed very little. Seven years on and it still retains its lustre and unique pattern. Not bad for a failure!

I saw Jeroen very briefly at this year's Interkoi show when he came up to collect his prizes. This year, all the koi he entered (33) were from his own breeding programmes and

he collected 15 awards, (8 firsts and 7 seconds). When the MC Sebastian Quilmann read out his name he stated "Jeroen van Keulen of Made in Holland" instead of the name Jeroen had entered them under "van Keulen papegaaien- en Koicentrum". I can't say I blame him; I wouldn't have wanted to read that out. But in my opinion Sebastian did him a favour. Jeroen has been entering his own koi for a few years now with some good results. All of which have gone under the radar as far as I and several others were concerned. Maybe he should now include "made in Holland" at every show to make people aware of what he's achieving.

### Jargon Buster

WAGOI means a fully scaled koi (as opposed to Doitsu-goi which is essentially an unscaled koi). ■

*Photos courtesy of Jeroen van Keulen.*

# Sashi and kiwa

by Stephen and Anthony Grey.

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## Another Saturday morning (partial) lockdown thread by Anthony and me.

Sitting in the garden again during the week (in the rain) having a well-earned cuppa Anthony and I got talking again regarding Sashi and Kiwa...

An area that we have come to understand more in recent years is Sashi and Kiwa, and how it changes and develops. Mainly from what we have learned from Japan and our own experiences, such as our Yonsai Matsue Kohaku (pictured Oct 2019 75cm), which we'll come back too...

We like most things though, the attributes of the koi need to be right and in the case of Sashi and Kiwa, the koi's skin needs to be right, such



**Our Yonsai (4-year-old) Matsue Koi Farm 75 cm Kohaku.**

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**Close up photo depicts the soft red sashi on the leading (forward) edge of the hi (red) plate.**

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**Left – Nisai, centre – Sansai, right – Yonsai.**

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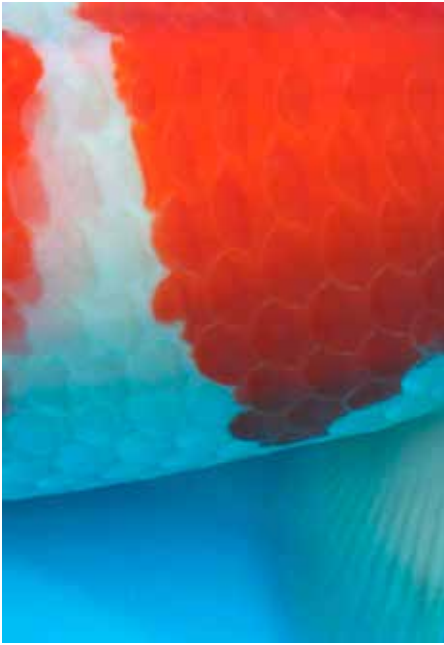
as the thickness and quality of the Beni. As this plays a part in determining the Sashi and Kiwa style and how it develops and changes.

So first of all, Sashi...

Sashi appears on Hi and Sumi, in the middle skin layer at the front edge of a pattern. Good acceptable Sashi is when it is even throughout the koi and is no more than two scales deep in the white skin, ideally being only one scale Sashi and is often seen on younger koi, but due to better koi genetics and koi keeping skills a larger koi can now be relatively young and demonstrate Sashi.

Sashi is a combination of the relationship between the Shiroji white and the Beni at the leading edge of a pattern.

So back to our Matsue Kohaku, we feel she is quite a good example of how Sashi can change, as when we selected her she had deeper and not so even Sashi, we compromised here because all her other attributes, body, skin and pattern were



**Close up photo depicts the sharp Kiwa edging compared to the soft sashi edging**

spot on. We've attached a close up photo of her from Nisai to Yonsai (the three pictures together). When looking at her Nisai Sashi on the middle dan you can see how it is uneven, especially from the left side compared to the right side...but now looking over to the Yonsai Sashi you can see how this left side changed, the Shiroji white ground at the front of the Hi plate has thickened and the Beni has thickened on the Hi plate, and so a more defined line between the white ground and the Beni is starting to form and starting to match with the right side. Of course, there is still some ways to go yet, but she is only young, and we hope the Sashi will continue to even. Also, I must add that a lot of this comes down to the genetic of the koi and the Beni type, so understanding this will also greatly help when determining if deeper Sashi will neaten with time.

So now Kiwa...

Kiwa is the trailing/back edge of a pattern, there are three types... Maruzome, which follows the edge of the scale, Kamisori, which cuts straight through the scale and Konzai, which is a combination of both types.

More finished Kiwa will look sharp and even



**Stephen and Anthony Grey—father and son koi keepers from the North East of England. Young Anthony has started a traineeship to become a BKKS Judge.**

throughout but developing Kiwa will often look blurrier. When Maruzome Kiwa is developing it can also demonstrate Kamisori Kiwa as well, known as Konzai. When Maruzome Kiwa is developing the Beni will grow outwards and fill the scale, on larger koi the Beni will also fill the fukurin between each scale, therefore making the Maruzome Kiwa flow nicely from scale to scale.

So back to our Matsue Kohaku Nisai to Yonsai photo, when looking at her Kiwa you see how it's moving around and how the Beni is growing outwards, though slowly...at this stage her Kiwa is more Konzai style and maybe more towards the Kamisori style at the moment. It's interesting to see on the middle dan again on the right side how the Kiwa and Beni have grown outwards and filled in slightly, this can also be seen more so on the first dan in the photo as well, also looking at the other photo we've attached you can see the maruzome kiwa starting to develop from the underside of the first dan/ pattern. We hope that the Beni will continue to fill out the scale on the back edge of the pattern and potentially compete and form maruzome kiwa, but time will tell! But it's looking promising...as currently her Beni has thickened more since these photos were taken in October last year especially on the bottom edge of her dans, where the Teri was a little weak in areas.

Will update in October when we take our development pictures of our koi. ■

# Kohaku—the beginning and the end

Kate McGill-Andrews

*Kohaku* is the Japanese name for a deceptively simple koi having only red patterns on a white background. These fish appeared early in the nineteenth century, possibly from early Asagi-type lines, (an Asagi is a blue koi with a darker blue reticulated scale pattern and often, extensive red pigmentation around the sides of the head and along the flanks). However, other accounts tell of a first natural mutation from wild carp demonstrating red cheeks (reference “Koi 1” Harald Bachmann). Over the next 80 or so years development of coloured carp continued (see photos 1 and 2 courtesy *Nicherin*, December 2000), including early red and white koi looking nothing like the Kohaku we see today. Developed in the Niigata Prefecture villages, koi first came

to the notice of a wider audience when a small number were exhibited at the 1915 Taisho Exhibition in Tokyo as an opportunity to promote a trade in Nishikigoi. The Exhibition proved to be a turning point in the history of Nishikigoi and their future was assured (*Nicherin* December 2000). Intensive selective breeding in Japan since that time has produced the stunning Kohaku we see represented today (photo 3). Early bloodlines include the ground breaking Tomoin line, plus Yagozen, Buketa, Manzo and Sensuke Kohaku. Names still well recognised alongside the famous modern Dainichi and Sakai Kohaku.

Kohaku has been called “the representative class of Koi” and the Japanese people have said; “the road to the world of Nishikigoi begins and ends with Kohaku”. This means, perhaps, that the beauty of Kohaku may be appreciated, in an



(1) Early Koi Drawings from Taisho Exhibition 1914



(2) Early Koi Drawing called after azalea flower.





**(3) A beautiful modern champion Kohaku.**

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**(4) A fully mature Kohaku with an excellent conformation.**

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artistic sense, at any level of the hobby. Understanding Kohaku however, is a profound study and leads to understanding of other varieties, which Koi keepers may prefer over the years. Return to Kohaku when more experienced in appreciation is almost inevitable, because of the fascination this infinitely variable, yet elegantly simple koi variety holds.

Appreciation of Kohaku, as for all koi, begins with the figure (photo 4). A good body shape, or conformation, is essential. By this, we mean that the fish must be in proportion throughout its length with smoothly shaped, unblemished fins. A broad, blunt nosed head leads the eye to strong, wide "shoulders", just behind the pectoral fins. The body from this point tends to show a gradual taper to, ideally, a



**(5) A narrow nose plus widest part of the body in the dorsal region gives a rugby ball shape.**

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**(6) Nice white and hi but note the pop eyes and deformed pectoral.**

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**(7)** Note the head of this koi is clearly bent to the left.

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**(8)** Not obvious but this Kohaku is bent slightly right. Note the left hand side of the koi looks larger than the right.

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**(9)** A young yondan (4 step) Kohaku, with excellent white and hi. Note the sashi at the leading edges of pattern elements.

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**(10)** Excellent conformation and strong hi but dark stained white skin, possibly stress-related.

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**(11)** A lovely quality Kohaku with maruzome kiwa.

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**(12) Beautiful white skin demonstrating fukurin.**



**(13) Kohaku showing distracting windows in the second hi element.**



**(14) Very poor pattern edges.**

thick, well-muscled tail area or peduncle. A very large koi, however, may not begin to show any tapering until the leading edge of the dorsal fin is reached. It is important to remember that if the broadest part of the body is too far back, for example, across the central dorsal region, a “rugby ball” shape results, which is undesirable. A narrow, pointed head exacerbates this type of conformation defect (photo 5). An out of proportion head, badly shaped fins, or pectorals and tail too small for the size of koi, are other common problems seen (photo 6). Sometimes the head will not be set correctly (photo 7), the body may not look bi-laterally symmetrical (photo 8) or there may be an overt bend in the koi’s spine. Much impact of any variety, but particularly of simply patterned or single coloured koi, will be lost with a poor conformation.

Skin quality is the second vital point to general appreciation and again, is more immediately noticeable with fewer pattern



(15) A classic sandan (3 step) pattern with mostly karisori kiwa and hi. Note the sashi at the leading edges of pattern elements.



(16) Easier to achieve good pattern edges on a doitsu Kohaku.



(17) Appealing to some hobbyists, this Kohaku has a very memorable pattern.

components. The koi's skin should appear smooth, soft and lustrous, giving large, mature koi a youthful appearance. Smaller fish, which have naturally better skin due purely to the age factor, should look incredibly bright (photo 9). Scale edges should not be easily visible, regardless of the size of koi. High quality skin gives fins a translucent, delicate gloss.

Starting with this blank template of a well-conformed koi with high quality skin, it is now possible to focus on other appreciation points, which are important when examining this class of koi. Quality and colour of the white skin (*shiroji*) is particularly important. It must be pure white with no yellowing (compare photos 3 and 9 with photo 10). If the basic skin quality is high the white skin will appear soft, clear, uniform and luminous, with very delicate pectoral fins, even in large koi. In more recent years, a faint reticulated effect, (*fukurin*—see photo 12), has become a quality feature of white skin, particularly on adult and mature koi. Perfect white on a Kohaku is often the feature you notice first.

The highest quality and most desirable red skin (*hi* or *beni*) has an orange/red (persimmon), rather than a purple base. Hi should look as though it has been painted thickly on to the koi. Ideally, no scaling should be visible through the red areas and the surface, when hi is fully

developed, should look almost lacquered, or "polished". Hi should also be *homogeneous*, even in colour and texture from the head to the tail, and have no blemishes (see photos 3, 4, 9 and 10). Small windows of lighter coloured hi or white within a large pattern element are unsightly and may point to impending deterioration, or break up, of hi (photo 13), as do grossly uneven edges to any pattern element (photo 14). Having bred Kohaku in Australia for several years now, the realisation of just how difficult it is to produce koi with strong, homogeneous, stable hi has come to be very much appreciated! Not even mentioning hi placement, another study in itself, examined later.

The trailing edges of hi markings (*kiwa*—facing the tail) have a special significance when appreciating Kohaku, and in fact, any patterned koi. Remember, leading and trailing edges are examined quite differently. On a fully scaled koi (*wagoi*) each scale fits partially under the one in front of it. When a red scale is overlapped by a white scale, the red/white interface may look blurred. This type of edge is called *sashi* and tends to be more common on younger, still developing koi (see photo 9). Opinions differ on the subject of the desirability of sashi, but it is generally thought that it should never extend more than two scale widths forward of any hi marking. Preferably, not more than one scale width and if present,



**(18) This extensive hi pattern is uninteresting.**

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**(19) Shows a partial inazuma pattern.**

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**(20) Godan or five step pattern.**

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sashi should be evenly distributed. The trailing edge or *kiwa* of hi should always be sharp, and looks particularly elegant when the cut-off line of hi follows each rounded scale edge (*maruzome* or scalloped *kiwa*—see photos 10 and 11). More commonly, *kiwa* cuts directly across each scale forming a *kamisori* or razor border. The popularity of the Sensuke bloodline of Kohaku, which demonstrates this type of *kiwa* (see photos 4 and 15), made koi showing the *maruzome* edge, (a feature of an earlier bloodline), quite rare in the past, although in more recent times it has become more common.

Koi with no scales (leather carp), or with only single rows of large scales along the dorsal and lateral lines (*doitsu*) cannot compete fairly against fully scaled koi with respect to appreciation of pattern edges. This is because it is regarded as much simpler to achieve a clean edge, when no scales are present. In some contests, *doitsu* koi are judged separately (photo 16).

Pattern is something that inexperienced koi hobbyists tend to focus on first. In fact, the style of a Kohaku's pattern is not of prime importance, as long as the impression or balance is pleasing. Although an attractive, highly individual pattern may be very appealing and desirable (photos 3 and 17); a plain pattern by no means excludes a champion quality Kohaku (see photo 11).

Important pattern appreciation points include the size of hi markings. Larger markings,

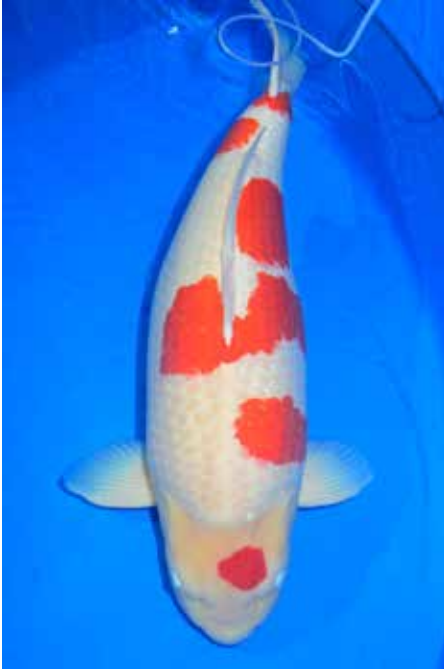
particularly on large koi, are more impressive. Balance is improved if the largest hi step (*hiban*), is over the shoulder area (see photo 4 and 11). Too much hi towards the tail can give a heavy appearance. Ideally, a small area of white skin between the last *hiban* and the tail (*ojime*), should be visible. Hi should never extend into the tail, and is preferred not to stain any other fins. A clean white dorsal fin, against a solid hi marking is very elegant. An exception to this general rule might be made by the presence of *motoaka*, or red pectoral fin joints, which, in conjunction with other pattern elements, may look very attractive.

Several categories of Kohaku patterns may be defined:

(1) Straight hi (*ippon*): Hi extends in an unbroken line from the head to the tail. This pattern looks very plain and excludes appreciation of most pattern edges along the length of the koi (photo 18).

(2) Lightening shaped hi (*inazuma*): This is an extension of *ippon* Hi, where the line describes a zig-zag along the back. This pattern is very elegant with insertions of white skin allowing pattern edges to be appreciated more fully (photo 19).

(3) Stepped pattern (*danmoyo*): Blocks of hi appear along the back separated by areas of white skin. The pattern may be two-step (*nidan*—photo 18), three-step (*sandan*—photo 15), four-step (*yondan*—photos 9 and 22), or five-step



**(21) Small flowery hi patterns on this mature koi.**

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**(22) Shows a maruten head pattern.**

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**(23) Deep wrapping hi patterns on this top quality Kohaku.**

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(*godan*—photo 20). This pattern category allows full appreciation of all the desirable qualities for Kohaku. Three and four-step patterns are the most popular in Japan (photos 9, 15 and 22).

(4) Flowerly hi: Hi markings do not form a recognisable step pattern. Pattern elements may be unusually shaped or small and very numerous (photo 21).

(5) Maruten: The head pattern is clearly separated from hi pattern elements on the body, a highly desirable feature (photos 12, 16 and 22).

*It is important to remember that a large, mature Kohaku requires hi markings in proportion to its size to look truly imposing.*

In the early years, hi markings extending below the lateral line were disliked. Latterly, deep wrapping markings (photo 23) have been recognised for their ability to confer an impression of power to a large koi (compare photos 11 and 21).

The head pattern is important enough to warrant separate attention. Hi is essential on the head of a Kohaku, a bald white head (*bozu*) looks unbalanced (photo 24 shows a Kohaku with a



(24) Rather minimal head hi.



(25) A Hanatsuki head pattern.



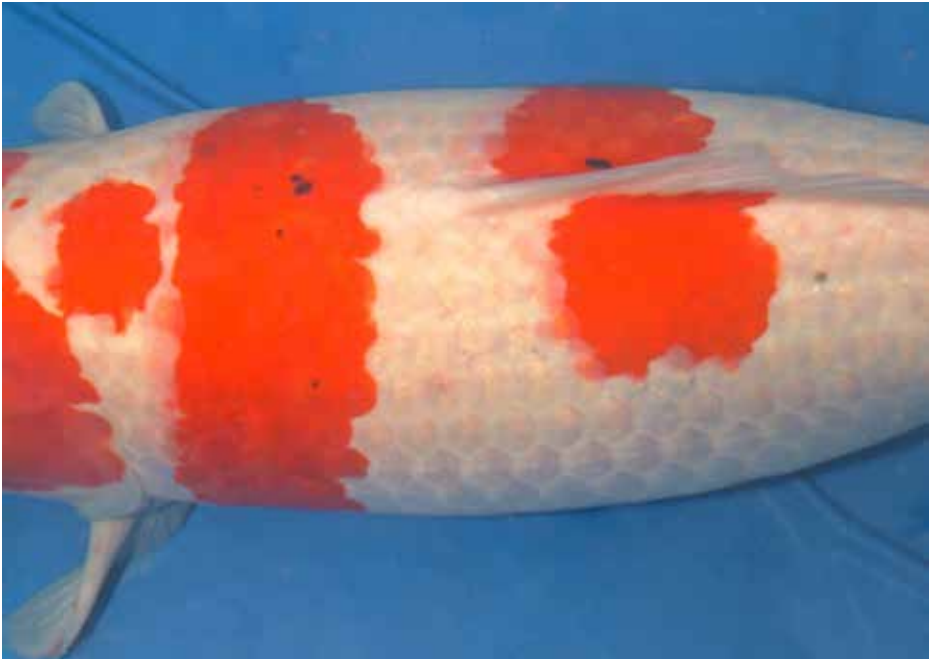
(26) A uniquely shaped head hi.



(27) A Kanoko Kohaku.



(28) Still a long way to go. An Aussie Kohaku



**(29) Undesirable shimis (black spots) will spoil any kohaku should they occur.**

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minimal head hi), as does the opposite extreme of a completely red head (*menkaburi*). A single hi marking which extends all the way down the nose but does not cover the eyes or cheeks is called *hanatsuki* (photos 13 and 25). The classic Kohaku head hi describes a U-shape, or shoehorn (*kutsuberu*) between the eyes reaching approximately halfway to the nose (see photo 8). If the head hi does not reach as far down as the line of the eyes, a further hi on the nose and/or lips (*kuchibeni*), may add necessary balance. Again, there is much difference of opinion on the merit or demerit of nose hi. In recent years uniquely shaped head hi patterns have become both acceptable and very desirable (photo 26), often with asymmetric hi covering one cheek (beret pattern). Aesthetically speaking, “character” is often conferred to an individual koi by very distinctive markings, particularly on the head (see photos 17, 24 and 26).

Various specific Kohaku patterns have been “fashionable” during the evolution of this type of koi, for example Inazuma (lightening stripe) Kohaku, or Maruten Kohaku with a separate, often round, head pattern, again, very

popular in Japan (see photo 22). Very unusual Kohaku, for example, *kanoko* (dappled fawn) may be classified with Kawarimono. Kanoko koi demonstrate hi either completely or partially as a pattern confined to individual scales, giving a reticulated effect (photo 27).

Examined in detail, Kohaku as a group are koi of surprising complexity, considering their deceptively simple red and white colours.

Kohaku in Australia still have a long way to go. Although there are exceptions, often Kohaku produced are plagued by thin, unstable hi. Stepped patterns beyond two steps are rare and heavy hi, covering head and tail areas, is far more common than not (photo 28). Probably due to cross breeding with Sanke, black spots (*shimi*) appear with maddening regularity (photo 29) and white skin is rarely the sort of pure white we really want. It is up to us as koi breeders to persevere however. Remember, it took the Japanese over 100 years to get where they are now and we haven’t done too badly in a mere 40. Sometime soon, that breakthrough will happen and a line of Kohaku to rival the Tomoin will be established here! ■



At the 2016 ZNA International held early November in Niigata, history was written. Possibly for the first time ever at this prestigious show, a koi won Grand Champion unanimously by the 50 ZNA Judges in the very first round. Even her name fits... "S-Legend".

Bred by Sakai, she was actually sold at two years old, which just goes to show potential champions are not always obvious at a young age. She grew rapidly; achieving 73 cm at 3 years and 93 cm at the time she won her award.

S-Legend was truly an amazing koi. I remember arriving at the showground with Ian on the Thursday afternoon for a quick look around. It was cold and windy and Ian hurried off to look at some of the more remote bins on the huge ground. I went first to a bin near the entrance and stopped in my tracks. The very first koi I saw, in this enormous show, I absolutely knew would win GC, S-Legend was, certainly at that time, as near perfect a Kohaku as you are ever likely to see. It was an incredible moment; one I will never forget and of course, she did go on to take the highest award, endorsed by every judge on the day.

She later went on to win the prestigious GC at the Shinkokai the following February in Tokyo. Her famous breeder Kentaro Sakai believed that her "finish" had dropped slightly from her ZNA appearance...but she still managed to take out the crown. She was then out of the show circuit breeding future champions for the next couple of years but she reappeared at the 50th Anniversary Shinkokai in February 2019. Her last appearance as it turned out, as sadly, later that year she died. All those fortunate enough to have seen her, probably the finest Kohaku ever produced—so far—will remember her.

We in Australia still have a long, long road to travel when it comes to breeding Kohaku!



**(30) S-legend 2016.**

# RUSSIE KOI WA INTRODUCES



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No.3 High Protein Crumble	1 kg	\$20.00
Baby Koi Pellets	1 kg	\$10.00
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