

# Predictions for National Wins, As of January 31, 2014

By Monte Phillips

We've arrived at the end of January's point postings, and we're at the 3/4 mark of the show season. I'm not going to analyze the top spots (except for kittens, which has always had the kitten at the end of January as best be the one that was best at the end of the season), as that's not where the most apprehension is. Of most interest is where the bottom will be for the top 25 in championship, kittens, and premiership. So here we go with each category.

## **CHAMPIONSHIP – Most Likely around 5,590, but get 6,057 to be safe**

Over the past ten years from 2004 to 2013, cats have averaged a pickup of 1,421 points at the 25<sup>th</sup> spot from the end of January to the end of the show season, but that wasn't the case two years ago. That year, the gain was an all time high of 1,790 points picked up from the end of January. If you look specifically at the gain on a year-by-year basis, the past four years have been 1,359; 1,791; 1,338; and 1,266. If you treat 2011-2012 as an outlier, you get an average gain for the other three years of 1,321. Conversely, if you look at the big picture averages over the last several years the 3, 5, and 7 year averages all come in around 1,500. So what should we assume is a "good" number. Well, given the counts this year more reflect what we saw last year than the year before, I'm going to split the difference between that 1,321 and 1,500 number and come in with 1,410 as the expected point gain. With that in mind, that brings 25<sup>th</sup> in with a total of 5,675, which is not that significantly different from where we ended up last year (5,765). While it would again be the all-time record low final total for that placement since we went to individual ring scoring, it is very close to the total for last season. This makes sense if you look at how the counts are for shows this year compared to last year. While this is below the bottom of the range based on the December totals, it isn't much below (25 points). For safety, I'd want to get enough points to match that all time high (which would net a final total of 6,057) just to be sure I was safely inside the 25<sup>th</sup> spot. However, that being said, this year looks like another tight race between about five cats for the bottom spot (exactly 181 points separate 25 from 32). The problem is that the big-count shows are still to come later in the season as the European shows start to pick up. Even without Novices, the counts in Europe in Championship are the tops in all of CFA. From the beginning of February to the end of the show season, four out of the 13 shows held had cat present counts of over 90, while in the states that number was one out of 68. I would expect that same trend again this year, so that would mean the cats with the best chances of picking up points live in Europe.

## **KITTENS – most likely no more than 0 to four new kittens – max total around – 2,200**

The kitten counts have already dropped significantly from where they were earlier this year. That being said, the average point pickup between the end of January and the end of the show season has been about 45 points. If that were again the case this year, then 2,200 would be the final spot for 25<sup>th</sup> place. Problem is, that will require a lot more than 45 more points for any kittens competing at this time, so it is unlikely that any kitten will actually reach that value. If you look at the average number of "new" kittens that have made it in over the past four years, the highest number is two, with two years having one and the other 0. Given that, I don't know if you're safe in the 23<sup>rd</sup> spot, or if you'll need that 2,200 (meaning only the top 21 are safe). Unfortunately, young cats that were able to go to the World Show at four months and did well, still have room to pick up points, so I'm going to stick with that 2,200 number. Even so, that number was the bottom of the range I predicted in December. Therefore, it is very possible that the bottom has already been reached. I guess we'll just have to watch and those bottom four cats will have to sweat it out to the end of February, when no kitten will have had a chance to have earned points at the World Show.

## **PREMIERSHIP – Most Likely around 3,050 but get 3,100 to be safe – really tight race**

Last year was one of the largest point pickups in Premiership (824) that occurred since we went to individual ring scoring. That was with only seven shows over the period from February to the end of the show season having total counts of at least 50. There were many shows with counts in the 40s. That's what we're also seeing right now. I think this results in lots of cats bunching up when it comes to their top 100 ring scores. As such, it makes for a lot of competition at the bottom. We're going to see that again this year. Therefore, since the counts are about the same as last year, I'm going to go with a pickup similar to last year's (825) versus the previous two year's average of 480. That gives us a total of 3,055 at the end of the season. That's almost exactly the same as what I came up with based on December's data (3075). The only good news is this is probably close to a maximum, so if you have 3,100, you should be safe. The bad news is there will be a lot of cats close to that number at the end, so it will again be very competitive.

Well, there you have my take on things at the 3/4 point. I'm not going to do one at the 5/6 point, as that is when making assumptions based on placements starts to get real dicey, and the only real way to actually predict the bottom score is to predict individual scores for all of the cats, and then look at where the 25th placing cat's score ends up. That's what the predictor program does, and I'll start loading data into it (it needs four weeks worth of data) starting with the third week in February.

Numbers Nerd over and out until late March – when the predictor program picks the placements. It's been very accurate on which cats are in or out even if it isn't always accurate on the final point totals. All assumptions must remain valid for the score prediction to be accurate.