

Nick Harrington-Smith

Alpaca Evolution

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From a farming family and with agriculture running through his blood Nick has devoted much of his life to farming livestock. Nick began working with Alpacas in 1998 and currently co-owns and manages Alpaca Evolution, a herd of close to 800 alpacas situated in the beautiful Buckinghamshire countryside.

Nick's time in Alpacas has presented him with a great deal of opportunities. Nick has been involved in the selection and purchase of breeding stock in both North and South America and Australia, giving him the opportunity to assess many thousands of alpacas in the process. A dream come true! He has also watched with pride as those alpacas have gone on to become cornerstones of the UK and European breeding herd. In part, these opportunities encouraged Nick to enter the first British Judge training scheme and becoming the first graduate of the scheme in 2003 and he is now a certified judge trainer for the British Alpaca Society. Nick then went on to become the first European to have gained qualification as an AoA (American) Halter Judge in early 2006, as well as certifying for Fleece Judging and Performance classes. Nick over the years has used all of these educational opportunities to enable him to write many alpaca related articles for various magazines.

Nick has judged shows across the UK, Europe, Canada, Australia, and the USA and considers each show judged a great privilege. The high points in his career have to be judging the American National Show, even being asked back to judge it a second time, and the American Futurity, and of course the British National Show a number of times. There can be no greater reward for a judge than being afforded shows of such standing.

Nick strongly believes showing is about education delivered through informed and accurate oral reasons. He is a very strong believer in the show ring as a promotional vehicle for alpacas, but also has a real awareness of the need to keep in perspective its importance in respect of breeding decisions. Nick's primary objective when judging is to ensure that all exhibitors experience an enjoyable and informative event.

Nick is married to wife Terry and enjoys nothing more than time spent enjoying the alpacas and introducing his much-loved grandchildren to the joys of farming, alpacas, and the Great British countryside. Though a spot of fishing doesn't go amiss now and again, and of course spending time trying to train his favourite labrador Mac, both with varying degrees of success!