

Judging Should Not Be Confusing or Time Consuming



Judging should not be confusing or time consuming, but sometimes it is.

Let's examine why that might be happening and what can be done to change that. We've all seen or heard people wonder why a certain gourd received (or didn't receive) the blue ribbon. There are many possible explanations and some of them are due to personal preferences or expertise. But it could also be due to confusion during the judging process.

Examining the Judging Process

- Could it be that some judges are giving mostly top scores for all of the criteria to each entry? When the scores are tallied there will be many ties and duplication of effort when the judges have to go back and differentiate the entries to find 1st, 2nd and 3rd.
- Or it could be that some judges scored the entries individually compared to the best case possible and others are judging and comparing to each entry in the category. When this occurs the results often lead to inconsistent results.

Can we reduce both confusion and time required to complete the judging process? After discussions with Judy Richie from Texas, who witnessed these issues, we created a Ranking form that encouraged judges to apply the scoring criteria and differentiate the entries by forcing a ranking. Each judge on a team will still have their own form for the category. The clerk will tally the results from the 3 judges and then the 1st, 2nd & 3rd places will be awarded.

Judy's Patch piloted the use of the Rank Scoring Form and the same group of judges repeated the judging process with the Short Scoring Form. "It was very interesting. I had two groups with three gourds for each team to judge. I had them use the Rank Scoring Form first. They used the Short Scoring Form second, scoring each of the five criterion. Both groups took twice as long to get a decision using the Short Scoring Form. One group came up with the same winners using both methods. The other group reversed 1st and 3rd places while 2nd place stayed the same. Both groups preferred the ranking of first, second and so on to scoring the individual criteria. They referenced the judging criteria while reviewing the entries, but then ranking them was less confusing. I used gourds from my collection that were fairly equal and all from top gourd artists. We went over the rules thoroughly, specifically making sure they understood the 5 criteria.

"The fact that marking a score for each of the five criteria took twice as long is worrisome. This makes the time for completing the judging at shows will be much longer. Also, it

RANK SCORING FORM for JUDGING

JUDGING CRITERIA

Overall appearance: Overall appeal; Artistic design; Stands out from the competition; Originality and artistic creativity

Craftsmanship: Attention to detail; Uniform quality of work; Overall impact not marred by obvious flaws; Sits flat or hangs evenly; Finished look

Difficulty/Level of effort: Difficulty or techniques as applied; Design complexity or intricacy; Skill in multiple areas; Amount of effort required

Featured technique or Theme: Featured technique dominates; Apply quality of craftsmanship for specified technique for entry level (novice, intermediate, etc.); Theme or class description must be fulfilled; Overall impression created by the featured technique or theme

Judge ID#	Category	Division

Entry ID#	Ranking	Comment

CLERKS Ranking Tally Sheet

Category: _____ LOWEST SCORE = 1st PLACE

	Entrant or Entry	Judge#	Judge#	Judge#	TOTAL SCORE	PLACE (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

is much quicker adding up the scores for the ranking of 1st place and so on. Judges are always concerned with how long they will have to be there. Also, some of the venues require us to leave by a certain time. At our new location we aren't allowed to have food in the building so we can't provide snacks for the judges."

Thank you Judy and the participants in her patch. Based on her feedback we'd like to invite Chapters to consider using the Rank Scoring Form and also share their feedback. Let us know if it was more or less confusing than the form used last year; let us know if it was time consuming or a time saver. Chapters may now download the new form.

How To Use It

- Each judge will need one Rank Scoring Form for each category
- Each clerk will need 1 Clerk Tally Ranking Sheet for each category
- Be sure to discuss the details of each of the five criteria when reviewing the rules
- Stress the importance of the team staying together to discuss the entries before individually ranking them

- Be sure to inform the clerks that the lowest score based on rankings is first place, and so on. This is different from when using the Short, Medium or Detailed forms.

One More Thing. What each show needs to decide is how the judges will write helpful feedback to each entrant. The teams can be given a 3x5 card (or something similar) for the comments. Each member of the judging team can collaborate to write feedback for each entry in the category before moving on to the next one. 🙌

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