

CAN ONE EVER BE CONSTRUCTIVE ABOUT

DISQUALIFICATIONS ?

Disqualification of an Open Show entry is, thankfully, more of a rarity than commonplace. On balance, Judges would prefer to severely down-point rather than disqualify so that at least the exhibitor gets some constructive feedback about the exhibit.

According to the current Show Rules (Rule No 26), diseased, deformed or distressed fish will be disqualified and the container be removed (this Rule was applied to entries in Classes Ma and Ta and an exhibit was voluntarily withdrawn in Class N o-t).

This is done so that primarily the fish can be treated if necessary and to ensure that fishkeeping presents a 'seen-to-be-responsible' image to the visiting public.

Similarly the Rules (Nos 7, 9 and 10) governing the size and appearance of the Show tanks themselves are also important, and those that do not comply with the minimum dimensions, or proportions suitable for the size and comfort of the fish contained within, or feature coloured glass panels other than on the base of the tank, are also likely to be disqualified (this Rule was applied to entries in Classes D, G and La).

The most recent information concerning Show tanks incorporating filtration sections can be found on the FBAS J & S Information Sheet No 1-05 on pages 3-16, 3-17 contained in the Show Rules; the main point being that all glass divisions must be of clear glass.

The onus is upon exhibitors to familiarise themselves with the Show Rules. These are found in the current edition of the FBAS Constitution which is issued free to all affiliated Societies and also available on the FBAS website.

Show Rules 4 and 5 govern the acceptance and compliance of the Show Rules by exhibitors, ie, submitting an entry implies full acceptance of all the Show Rules and any exhibitor who fails to comply with the Rules will have their exhibits disqualified.

Whilst Show Secretaries and Judges are often in conversation with exhibitors during benching and prior to judging (the most common subject is often species identification!), the content of such conversations should have no bearing upon results, expected or otherwise.

Judges and Show Secretaries should not be regarded as offering a pre-judging screening service for exhibits. The first time that the actual tanks and entries are usually seen is immediately prior to judging, during the Show Secretary's final entry check, and when the Judges begin their period of duty.

However, this does not mean that mistakes cannot be queried, as long as the correct procedures are followed – which leads back to the Show Rules once again, Rules 42,43.

In the competitive pet animal world, aquarium fish are not particularly 'big business' – we don't have the temptations of big money prizes or have to worry about pedigree bloodstock lines and, so far, all our attempts at being a self-regulating hobby seem to be working.

Let's keep it that way.