**1-6 Mechanics of Judging**

**RESOURCES**:

* Handbook on Judging
* aos.org webinar: The Process of Judging: what do judges look for (an introduction). Allen-Ikeson. 12-2021 <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/3392445689792476418>
* aos.org webinar: Choosing the best plants (prospective judges). Cinert. 03-2019
* “Judges corner: Is my plant good enough for judging”. Bodei. *Orchids*. 02-2022
* aos.org webinar: Judges Forum: Myths & Misconceptions in Judging. 10-2022

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**:

* Look at the blooming plants in your collection. Pick four: at least one species, one hybrid and one specimen plant (--a specimen-sized plant might be used also for a species or a hybrid as well, so long as you discuss four different plants. If you do not have four plants in bloom that look reasonably good--this is practice, they do not need to be FCCs!), then supplement from a friend’s or another judge’s collection. For each,
  + Research in *OrchidPro*, count the flowers and inflorescences, measure a flower for natural spread, and study each for form and color and record your findings.
  + For each, discuss the pros and cons in terms previous awards to other cultivars if a species, and, if a hybrid, discuss the pros and cons in terms of previous awards to the cultivars of the same hybrid and its parents.
  + From your study, discuss why, if you saw the plant at the judging table (assuming it was not yours!), you would or would not nominate each for an award.
  + What features made it ‘special’ in terms of awards or what was different or improved that would lead you to suggest a nomination for an award.
  + Did the number of awards to other cultivars of the species or hybrid in question influence your decision? Explain.

Hint:

* When you are asked to comment on a plant at the judging table, *mentally* consider each of the following one by one:
  + The items on a Quality Score Card: Form, Color, Floriferousness, Size of Flower, Habit and Arrangement,
  + How does each of these compare to previous awards?
  + Are the flowers fresh or are they ‘going down’.
* Then as you look at the plant, for example, consider and comment:
  + Is the color something special: darker, richer, more harmonious, more contrast, etc. than previous awards?
  + Is the form fuller or is it asymmetrical where it should be symmetrical? Does the form showcase the flower in the best possible way? Do you see any obvious faults or improvements?
  + Are there more flowers per inflorescence? A total count of flowers should not be your only consideration for judging floriferousness. Consider flowers per inflorescence, number of inflorescences and number of inflorescences vs. number of growths (how does a plant with 10 growths and one inflorescence of three flowers compare to one with the same but only four growths. Is the expectation that the larger plant should have more inflorescences?)
  + Are the flowers larger than you would expect? Are there reasons why a smaller flower might *not* trigger a loss of points?
  + Does the arrangement of the flowers best showcase them?
  + Do the substance and texture enhance the color, especially compared to what you read or learned from the research?
  + Are the flowers really nice or just what you would expect?
* Cut flowers from a single plant may be sent into judging. Usually this occurs when it is not practical to bring or ship the entire plant to judging.
* What award(s) could you give to cut flowers? How might it affect scoring for floriferousness?
* What award(s) would you NOT give to it and why?