

To: IBC Show Chairs

From: IBC Judging Board

Subject: Following Show Procedures

All Show Chairs are directed to pass this on to members of their Show Committee, including all helpers, whether in your chapter or from another. We want to make sure it reaches all people who are working on shows.

There have been some incidents in recent IBC sanctioned shows regarding issues involving inventory, scheduling, and problems with returned fish bagging and boxing. Because of this, we are sending out a reminder to all shows that everybody needs to be careful and follow all protocols during all stages – before, during, and after a show.

The first two chapters of the IBC Standards covers showing. They are a little bit out-dated, and we are working on updating them to make them more current and applicable, but in the essence of the Standards, they are still the guides we follow. The old show checklist in the appendix, form 2, also needs a bit of updating, but is very much the key to what show committees should do.

The main parts we want to re-emphasize right now are:

1. Plan your show!

Think about what this means in terms of both physical inventory you have on hand, and also, and probably most importantly, the people you have available to help. No matter how many times your club has done this before, check it again! Check before every show.

- a. Inventory

CHECK YOUR INVENTORY! Even if you have done a show with 400 fish in it before and you "know" those beanies/bowls/containers are in your storage – don't take it for granted! Well before your show, at least a month before, you should do a full inventory of your items and MAKE SURE you have those things and that they're in good repair. Give yourself time to get new items if storage has damaged things, or if somehow a box has been mislaid.

- b. People

You MUST have enough help to carry out a show. Shows cannot be one-person responsibilities. There is a Show Chair to oversee everything and to coordinate it all, but the Chair should not be the one to do everything. Form a Committee and get helpers and make sure that you have enough people at every point along the way to do the job. Look at the checklist and think about what is needed in a show. There have to be people who can:

Do advertisement and sponsorship, Arrange for awards, Do pre-registration (usually the Show Chair or your specific computer person), Receive the boxes and check the fish (be sure and plan for late-arrivals!) (your head judge cannot be the person receiving the fish and checking them), Set up the show space, Unpack the fish (working with the show chair for labeling and benching), Judges helpers, Auctioneer and Runners, Baggers, Break-down, Fish Return, Show Results compilation, Auction money, and Awards mailing.

Nobody can do all this themselves. Nobody should even **think** about doing it all themselves. Make sure you have the right number of people who can help with every stage, and also arrange for back-ups for just in case.

If you do not have the resources... consider a smaller show. Lately, all we've seen for awhile have been IBC International Shows. There are other options for shows. We also have Local Shows and District Shows, which are generally smaller shows. You can also impose more limits than we have listed in the IBC standards, such as only allowing registrants to enter a maximum of 25 fish instead of 50. (If you plan on imposing restrictions over what IBC Standards call for, check with the Judging Board first and get their okay.)

## 2. Show Schedules

Make sure that your show schedule matches your resources. There are a couple of chapters which hold one-day international shows. A one-day show is a very, very, VERY tight timeline. Everything must be coordinated and executed almost perfectly with enough people doing exactly what they need to do to carry it off. Most shows are generally two-day shows, with judging on one day and the auction on the second. This allows for more time and a smaller work force to concentrate on the jobs they need to. **UNLESS YOU HAVE THE RESOURCES, DO NOT PLAN A ONE DAY INTERNATIONAL SHOW.**

- a. Set-up needs to be done at least one day before the show, so the fish have a minimum of overnight to adjust to the water and the location.

When you're unpacking boxes, keep in mind that entrants expect to be contacted ASAP if they have any DOAs or sick fish at the show. Show committees should not put this off until after a show – call them or email them immediately if there are problems.

Entrants are often also rushed when they are packing their own boxes, and we've all seen packing and bagging that... isn't quite the best it could be for the fish. One thing that show committees should consider is when *\*anything\** at all out of the norm shows up initially, whether boxes are packed oddly, fish are bagged with too little air or water, or dead fish, is **TAKE A PICTURE**. Most people will have cameras and even video on their phones or just for the show. Use them to record what happened so if an entrant has an

issue, you've got evidence that the club did the best they could. If you want to be really careful, photograph the inside of each box before you put the lid on to ship it back.

If a show has time during unpacking, you might want to have helpers make a quick note for each box to how the entrant had packed them in the first place – for many shows, it can be rare that the same people are unpacking that are packing later, so leave guides for the people packing. Especially if the boxes and bags inside are outside the IBC standards (1/3 water with a third of a cup, with 2/3 air).

- b. Judging a 300-400 fish show will take roughly between 5-7 hours. Do NOT run your judges short on time! IBC regulations require that there is no time limit on judges while they are working. Be smart about this in your schedule and do not schedule anything else too soon.

\*If\* the Head Judges agrees, it's allowed to let the public in to see already-judged fish, as long as the judging for the remainder (usually Best of Variety and Best of Show) is kept segregated away from the public and the public not allowed to interfere in any way. But make sure your head judge is okay before even trying to schedule anything like this.

- c. Auctions are up to you – every show does them a bit different. Review in the standards what the expectations on both Buyer and Seller are, and make sure to do the best for both parties that you can. NO BAD-MOUTHING OF FISH IS ALLOWED! You must give equal consideration to all fish that are up for sale. Before judging, any fish that are sick should have been pulled – none of these fish should be auctioned. Check again after judging because sometimes a fish can develop symptoms later.

No matter how you do auctions, remember that you need to separate out the auction fish from the non-auction fish ahead of the auction, and CHECK the fish! Make sure that all the fish for auction are present that are supposed to be, and that NO fish that are supposed to be returned are in it.

Allow enough time for auctions, and make sure the people coming to the show are prepared for it.

- d. Packing up the fish to go home is one of the last parts for a very long show day, and the importance of it cannot be stressed enough. These are people's show fish. Their babies. The fish they've spent time and money and resources on. The entrants have every expectation that a show will take good care of their fish and will send them back to them in good condition. Shows should be VERY careful to make sure they do.

If entrants are present at the show, and are going to take their fish home directly, they should do their own bagging and packing. A show committee member must check their

sheet at the end to make sure they have all correct fish before leaving (entrants can get tired too). If an entrant is present but is having the fish mailed back, they should also do their own bagging, to make sure things are done as they want them to be. Some entrants might have to leave sooner than the bagging, though, and then the show committee should treat their fish as any other being mailed back.

Pay attention to what it says in the show standards about bagging the fish. While no show entrant should expect special treatment for their fish, the entrants should expect due consideration for the bagging and packing of their fish into their return boxes.

All fish going home should be in bags labeled in permanent sharpie with their continuous number so the entrant can match the number on the bag to the log that includes the show placements. Do not rely on the stickers alone! Stickers get wet, roll, or can otherwise be made unreadable. Always put the continuous number on the bag, and then double-bag over that.

Fish should generally have at least 1/3 cup of water in their bags – enough to completely cover all fins and let them move freely. An exceptionally large-finned fish might need a bit more water for safety in shipping. They should have 2/3 air in the bag. The actual dimensions of the bagging will vary from entrant to entrant based on how big a box they sent, and how many fish they expect to go back in it. Some entrants use less than 1/3 cup of water or only 1/2 air.

Some entrants might have instructions on how they want the fish packed. If the instructions are excessive, this would fall under 'special treatment' and the show chair might ask them in the future to tone it down. A simple water-marked bag or a cup with a line marked should be adhered to. If there is something about the instructions or the bags to boxes that doesn't make sense, though (such as asking for a certain amount of water, but that water plus the air ratio means not all the bags will fit in the box), then the show chair should call the entrant and find out what the entrant actually wants done.

If there's anything that a show chair feels might have to change on an entrants shipping, such as two boxes needed, then the show chair should call the entrant. This is specified in the Standards, and it MUST be adhered to. The entrant needs to know if anything changes and they need to be able to give direction for their fish.

All fish must be double-bagged! Read the standards, make sure that every fish in the box has been double-bagged.

After all the fish are double-bagged and boxed, then somebody on the show committee should double-check all the bagging and boxing. It's usually late at night and people are very tired at the end. With all the good will in the world, mistakes sometimes happen.

It should be scheduled into a show list for a duty for somebody to make sure that everything is okay before the fish are sent out. This doesn't have to be that night – often this can take place the next morning by the person assigned to mail back the fish. Make sure that person has enough bags and packing material that if they have to redo any part of the packing that they have adequate resources for it.

THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! It's emphasized in the standards for a reason. A chapter can have the greatest show ever at the time, but if the fish don't make it back okay, everything is ruined both for entrants and chapters. We've had chapters successfully hold shows for many years, and then after a disastrous fish return experience, never hold another one. We want shows to be successful *\*all\** the way, from beginning to end – make sure you get the fish back safely!

(Don't forget to also put the show results in with the boxes. (More about that in 3.))

After the boxes are shipped, make sure entrants have tracking numbers for all their boxes and they can know when their fish have gone out and when they should arrive.

3. The show isn't quite done yet! After the fish are shipped back, there's still a few more things to be done.
  - a. The first one is the show results. All the preliminary results that were taken at the show should be checked and double-checked with the hard-copy judges sheets. They should be entered onto the formal IBC Show Results form, checked again to make sure you have the current year for the form and all the results, and then sent out. You *\*have\** to send them to multiple places, so don't forget! Before publishing, you might also want somebody else to review, just to triple-check. Accurate show results are important. Rushing the show results simply to get them out can have many unintentional repercussions down the line. Entrants might be asking for the results the day of the show... it is NOT recommended to send them that quickly! Too many other things being done that day. Take that extra day, go over the results, check them, and make sure before posting.

But DO compile the results *\*at\** the show so that you can ask the judges if there are any questions at all! This is very important – you can't change results after judges have gone home, so if there's something that looks a bit strange, get it asked while there's still time! You also need to send a copy of the preliminary show results for entrants in their return box with the fish. If on computer, a printout of the show log for that entrant is good. If hand-done, mark the awards on the entry forms. (show log print outs are recommended).

Attached is a guide to how to double-check results. Review that guide for more tips.

Show results should be sent to: All Show Entrants, the Judging Board Chair and Registrar (the person who keeps the year-end point totals), the FLARE, the webmistress, and the Better Bettas mailing list. Some chapters have been so eager to get results out, they post to BB and then think they're done. They're NOT done until all of the above have gotten the results. (Don't forget the entrants – not all of them will be watching the mailing lists.) Most especially don't forget the Judging Board! We can't do year-ends without the results. You can send pdf copies of the results to everybody else, but the Judging Board needs the Excel version – it helps us in the year-end tallies.

- b. Judge's Comments. If the judges wrote down comments on the fish during judging, be sure and get those comments back to the entrants!
  - c. Auction money and shipping reconciliation.
  - d. Awards.
4. Questions and disputes after a show are... well, they're not common, but they're not rare. Expect some of the entrants to come back to the show chair with questions. Sometimes about the placement, sometimes about the auction, and sometimes about the fish. These will usually be simple questions and requests for clarification or information. Sometimes, they're actual problems that have occurred.

If there are ANY problems that an entrant has with their fish being returned, show chairs are expected to give this top priority.

Please cc the Judging Board Chair on any issues that arise so the JB is aware of them. The Judging Board Chair will not take any action unless the show chair and the entrant cannot resolve the problems, but the Judging Board does need to know what is going on. Too many times in the past, people have had issues repeatedly that the judging board has had no knowledge of because nobody has ever told us. It says in the Standards to first contact the show chair, then the JB... but we'd rather the JB was cc'd at the same time, please.

Likewise, if a Show Chair has any problems with an entrant or excessive special requests (or demands) or rude behavior in asking for show results, then please let the Judging Board know about this as well. We won't necessarily take any action right then unless somebody submits a formal complaint, but we do want to know about these things happening.

This review guide for show procedures is not intended to supersede the Standards. The Standards are still the key to our shows, even if they do need updating at the moment. This guide is being put out right now as an extra reminder and direction to show chairs and chapters to ensure that you think about the shows – all parts of a show. As we said at the start, there have been some problems. In some ways,

there will always be problems. I don't know of a single show, ever, where everything ran perfectly from beginning to end with no mistakes and no problems. But we can hope to minimize them, especially if we pay attention to what we're doing and don't get complacent.

Review your inventory, review your resources. Plan your schedule to match what your chapter can handle. Don't let one person take on too much work. Have back-ups. Check the bagging and boxing before shipping out.

Make it a successful show. From beginning to end.

If you have any questions, please contact the Judging Board Chair at [jbchair@ibcbettas.org](mailto:jbchair@ibcbettas.org)

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## Steps for Ensuring Accurate Show Results

1. Make sure all judges sign their judging cards so that you don't have to chase around figuring out who judged a class or needs to re-judge.
2. Double check your transfer of the 1st/2nd/3rd place fish onto the results form. It helps to have someone read the info to you from the judging sheets while you check the form. Then double check the BOV/BOS placements as well from the final judging sheet.
3. You might also want to keep a plain print out of the results form while you're entering things into the computerized log form. Hand-write the continuous number in each of the spots on the results form so you can tell at a quick glance what has been judged. (In pencil, in case a class change shifts results.)
4. Check any class that appears to have zero placements to be sure they really had zero entries or were all moved/DQ'd. Sometimes classes get skipped, or judging sheets get lost. Make sure you catch this error **before** judging is complete!
5. Enter your total entries for each class from the show log (**not** the judging sheets!) and double check any class that had more entries than placements to be sure the additional entries were actually DQ'd.
6. It helps to do the above steps right after the main judging is complete and before BOV/BOS judging starts so you can question the judges directly on any discrepancies. Mistakes discovered after the judges have gone home are very difficult to fix.

HINT! Have the judges take a nice break after all the class judging is done and before BOV/BOS starts so that the fish are rested, the judges are rested, and you can take this opportunity to go over the paperwork to this point.

7. If there's time, and a willing Head Judge, you might hand them the physical results form that you've been hand-writing on, and have the judge quickly check the results, making sure that the first place fish really are the best in the class. (This completely depends on timing, though, so it won't always be possible.)
8. For Best of Variety, check the class and winner of each fish. Every Best of Variety fish should be 1st place in its class. Be sure the "winning class" corresponds to the winning fish. The class points are awarded according to this entry, so please be sure it is accurate.
9. For Reserve Best of Variety, all the fish/winners should have placed 1st, unless they were in the same class as the BOV fish, in which case they would be the 2nd place winners in that class.
10. Check to be sure the BOS male and female were also Best of Variety winners.

11. Check the RBOS male and female to be sure they were also Best of Variety winners, unless they were from the same variety as the BOS fish, in which case they should be RBOV winners.
12. Check the New Breeder BOS/RBOS in the same way - BOS should be first place winners in their class, and RBOS should be first as well, unless from the same class as the BOS fish.
13. Be sure to fill in head judge, judges, and apprentices at the top of the form. This is how judges keep their certification, so make sure to include everyone!
14. For E1 Variations and for F Wild Types, list the variations/species of the winners, **and** all fish entered. We track variations to consider whether or not to create a new class, so even if the variation didn't place at the show, we want to know it was shown so we can make informed decisions about the creation of trial classes. For Wild Types, it's good to know what species are being bred and shown during the show year.
15. Once you are happy with the accuracy of the results, post them to Betterbettas and any other IBC group you'd like to. Currently Betterbettas is where people expect to see results, but also posting them to the IBC and your club's Facebook pages is another option. Clubs like to see the results, so it's nice to share with everybody even if they're not IBC members.
16. Finally, please email a copy of the results to both the JB chair and the current JB registrar, using the [jbchair@ibcbettas.org](mailto:jbchair@ibcbettas.org) and [registrar@ibcbettas.org](mailto:registrar@ibcbettas.org) emails (or whatever the current emails listed in Flare are). You also should send copies to the entrants (you can send a link to the files in BB), the IBC website editor, and the FLARE! editor.
17. Afterwards: Save all your show paperwork until the end of the show season. Definitely keep a copy of the show log, including class moves, and all of the original judging sheets. You never know when a question about the results may come up. Once the show season ends, feel free to trash them (unless your show was at the very end of the season, in which case, keep them for one more just to be sure).

## Show Host Guidelines

1. **DATE, LOCATION AND JUDGE:**
  - \_\_\_ Pick a date and Submit IBC Form 4, ninety (90) days in advance & Pay the Fee.
  - \_\_\_ Arrange for a Judge.
  - \_\_\_ Settle fees with the Judge.
  - \_\_\_ Arrange for a Show room/building.
2. **ANNOUNCING YOUR SHOW**
  - \_\_\_ FLARE! Flyers, Pet Stores, Newspapers, Radio, Television, etc.
3. **PLAN THE PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**
  - \_\_\_ Bowls/Beanie Boxes.
  - \_\_\_ Bowls/Beanie Boxes clean.
  - \_\_\_ Gallon Bowls for Wild Types.
  - \_\_\_ Show benches/stands and tables.
  - \_\_\_ Dividers to place between the bowls.
  - \_\_\_ Room Temperature Controlled.
  - \_\_\_ Lighting.
  - \_\_\_ Water containers, hoses and the like (places to fill from and drain to).
  - \_\_\_ Black background for the tables and/or stands.
  - \_\_\_ Extra tables for registration, trophy display, refreshments and the like.
  - \_\_\_ Materials to rebag the fish for the return trip home.
  - \_\_\_ Removable Labels for bowls, tape, and water proof markers for the bags
4. **PLAN THE LABOR REQUIREMENTS**
  - \_\_\_ Someone to go to the airport or wait for the postman for late arrivals.
  - \_\_\_ People to set up the tables, bowls, etc.
  - \_\_\_ Someone to assist the Judge.
  - \_\_\_ People to run the auction.
  - \_\_\_ People to rebag/rebox the fish.
  - \_\_\_ People to take it all apart?
  - \_\_\_ Someone to promptly return mail the fish.
  - \_\_\_ **RECOGNIZE YOUR WORKERS!!!**
5. **PLAN THE AWARDS**
  - \_\_\_ Awards ordered.
  - \_\_\_ Other awards ordered.
6. **RECEIVING, REGISTERING ENTRIES**
  - \_\_\_ Book/log system. Computer program strongly recommended.
  - \_\_\_ Someone trained to do registration.
7. **BENCHING THE FISH**
  - \_\_\_ People to handle the water system and setting up the bowls/labels.
  - \_\_\_ Water should be treated and allowed to sit for at least 1 hour before using.
  - \_\_\_ Lids for containers.
  - \_\_\_ Labels go at the top left with Class Numbers showing and Continuous Numbers on the Side.
  - \_\_\_ Class Signs should have Class Number and Description.
  - \_\_\_ Judges Cards place for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. BOV and BOS Cards also.
  - \_\_\_ Keep the Judge away from the Show fish until judging starts.
  - \_\_\_ Set up your "Class Help" corner.
8. **SUPPORTING THE JUDGE**
  - \_\_\_ Copy of the Standards on hand.
  - \_\_\_ Other things the Judge/s may need, straws, extra flashlight.
9. **ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS.**
  - \_\_\_ Winner stickers for the bowls.
  - \_\_\_ When.
10. **CONDUCTING AN AUCTION**
  - \_\_\_ People identified to run it.
  - \_\_\_ Change available.
  - \_\_\_ Auction Show Winners First.
  - \_\_\_ Bags & Bidder Identifier Cards.
11. **RETURNING FISH AND AWARDS**
  - \_\_\_ **FISH SHOULD BE MAILED BACK ON MONDAY AFTER SHOW, unless it is a holiday.**
12. **AVOID COMMON ERRORS**
  - \_\_\_ Do NOT send heavy, sharp pointed awards back in the same box as the fish.
  - \_\_\_ Do NOT fail to use the bags an entrant sends; this is the most common complaint.
13. **REPORTING THE RESULTS**
  - \_\_\_ To all show entrants: Forms 3, 5.
  - \_\_\_ Registrar of the Judging Board and Judging Board Chair Forms 5, 6, 7.
  - \_\_\_ Editor of FLARE!, Web Master & BetterBettas message Board – Form 5.
14. **KEEP ALL YOUR RECORDS!**