

The JUDGE's Corner

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The season is back! Isn't it great to be able to be back in the garden. I tell Barbara I'm going out to play. :-) I had the good fortune of loving my job—but retirement sure beats working in my book.

I hope your Blossom Gulch seedlings are growing well!

Those tiny seedlings that I took to the May meeting are starting to grow up (:-) and I have a big patch that is doing well. (Thanks, again, to Kathy Iler at Blossom Gulch for a ton of seeds!) I have at least a few seedlings from each of the different seed parents Kathy sent. Last month I included pictures of the Single and several of the Collarette parents. The other two Collarette seed parents are Kathy's introductions: OJ Hawkins and Cinder. The CHD doesn't have a color for the OJ Hawkins petaloids, but it does for Cinder. The two



O J Hawkins, CO OR, code D



Cinder, CO OR/or/lv, code J



Fancy Pants, NO LV5/lb/yl7/lv5/yl7, code N

would compete in the same class (which is what, judges?). There is an interesting difference in the relative size of the center disc, isn't there! The ideal definition does not provide any guidance on that issue.

The other two parents for the seeds Kathy sent us were both

Novelty Open cultivars. Fancy Pants is another of Kathy's introductions. It is an orchette and is already in the book as a Novelty Open. Note how nicely the petaloids lay in the ray florets.

When you figure it out, please also explain to me the meaning of the color listing in the book (NO L LV5/lb/y17/lv5/y17). :-)
I conclude that the orchette form is going to need some further discussion when it comes to listing and interpreting the color of the face of the florets and color of the petaloids. The current system uses the lower case letters for the colors of the face of the orchid or for the petaloids in a collarette. It does not readily cover the orchette situation where you need to describe both the color of the face of the involute ray florets and the color of the petaloids on the same bloom.



07 K53H "A," code O

string of lower case letters.

The orchette will almost certainly be the next form that will be moved out from the novelty class into a class of its own. As we have seen in these examples, the Classification Committee will need to invest some time in defining how we should correctly capture and interpret the complicated color combinations in orchettes.

I want to again express my appreciation to Kathy Iler and Blossom Gulch Dahlias for their generosity with seeds this winter. I'm sure that the seedlings will make for an interesting and exciting contest in the fall. The colors and the forms of the seed parents in their gardens (and now in our gardens!) are just wonderful. I fully expect that we will find that a lot of our seedlings have similarly spectacular forms and colors.

I think I can also virtually guarantee that at least a few of us will have new ADS cultivars to name out of the cultivars we'll

The last seed parent for our 2013 seedling project is another collarette. It is not in the book and may never be. Note that the ray florets are not uniformly involute. Do you see why Kathy is saving it as a seed parent? (I would do the same thing, if I had the room to do it!) Yes, of course, it is for the color. Now, however, imagine describing the color of an orchette when you add an eye zone to that

get from these seeds. My experience suggests that an originator can expect to get several keepers out of 100 seedlings. Some of those 'keepers' will fall by the wayside over the three additional years required before they can be entered for official scoring. Consider, now, that we got about 2800 seeds from Kathy, that the germination rate has been very high, and that the seed parents are highly unique in form and color. We will certainly have some ADS winners among our seedlings. In any case, they will add a great deal to the Petitti show and seminar.

The other issue we were dealing with last month was Form



"AA Pink"



Tahoma Gold

and Trueness to Form, in particular. The last fully double we talked about was the cultivar on the left. It is a big AA, probably now headed for the compost pile. It (let's call it AA Pink) did not succeed in scoring at the National Show last fall. Do you remember one of the basic reasons it did not get above 85? It has mixed form. Take a look at the range of floret shapes around the bloom. Which 'form mountain' would you put it on? You find some florets that are ID, some that are FD, and some that are SC.

Some of the cultivars from last month exhibited ray floret shapes that were intermediate to a couple forms, coming from a ridge between those two mountains seems like a good analogy. Take another look at Tahoma Gold. We concluded that FD was the correct classification, but that it was on a ridge headed out toward mount ST.

How is a 'ridge' situation like this one different from "AA Pink?" It is clear, I hope, that the shape of the ray florets in Tahoma Gold is highly uniform but highly variable in the AA Pink. The bottom line is that those mixed florets pretty much force you to deduct the whole 5 points associated with Trueness to Form. That is not, however, the end of the story. The mixture of ray florets impact a couple other of the evaluation criteria for Form: Contour and Sym-

metry. The contour of the bloom in the lower left part of the picture is thoroughly messed up by the mixture in ray floret shapes. The changes in shape lead also to gaps that detract from the symmetry of the bloom. The Tahoma Gold shows neither of those problems.

There are several bottom lines that I hope you will better understand from these examples. First, Trueness to Form is an important evaluation characteristic, comprising 5 of the 28 points associated with Form. Second, some cultivars very closely conform to the ideal definition, but there are also a lot of great cultivars that do very well in competition that deviate from the ideal definition. If they exhibit highly uniform ray floret shapes intermediate to a couple of the definitions, the penalty for that deviation should be small. Third, cultivars with a mixture of floret shapes should be more severely penalized for Trueness to Form. They are also likely to exhibit problems in other aspects of Form, particularly Contour and Symmetry.

I was remiss in not reminding you about the deadlines at our Trial Gardens. It is now too late to send your 2009 seedlings and 2010 seedlings to those gardens, even though they are now old enough (4th year) to be eligible. Our first two seedling contests at Petitti's produced a number of excellent seedlings. You can get your seedling named and into the CHD either by entering them for Seedling Bench Evaluation at an ADS sanctioned show or getting two or more blue ribbons on the seedling in open competition. If I can help you and/or answer questions about the process, please ask!

Your sanctioned show options for 2013 are great. While they don't include the Geauga County Fair (it isn't sanctioned), they do include the ADS National Show in Grand Rapids that same weekend. That would be a great venue to show off your seedling - whether in SBE or just in the open show. Check the ADS website (dahlia.org) for details. Our DSO shows and the other ADS club shows in the area represent other opportunities to exhibit and score those ADS-eligible seedlings.

We'll take a look at a couple segments of Wayne and Eleanor Shantz's DVD at the DSO meeting on June 21. Come and enjoy! There will also be a judging discussion at the DSO picnic on August 18. The event-of-the-year (judging-wise :-)) will be the seminar at Petitti's. Ron