

The JUDGE's Corner

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Last month we discussed some details in the evaluation of a seedling's form. The key elements in determining the quality of form are symmetry, contour, development, trueness to the ideal definition, and size proportion. In judging form, it is essential that we take each of those variables into consideration and not focus on just one of the aspects of form.

Unlike Form, Color is not broken down into a number of smaller elements. It can, therefore, be more difficult to come up with the appropriate numerical penalty when you are judging a seedling. How do you start to figure out whether an entry deserves a passing score for color? You need to start by determining the color of the blooms. In most cases, the blooms will be a solid, uniform color that comes pretty close to matching one of the chips in the ADS color chart. On the other hand, what if you were the lucky judge looking, for the first time, at Pooh as a seedling? Your first challenge would be to make the call on the color of the ray florets. Are they a blend or a bi-color? The manual says that the ideal bicolor will have uniform tips "with little bleeding" while the colors in blends "merge gradually." If this picture were the only information you had about Pooh, you might have trouble in deciding between blend and bi-color since there is some streaking of colors in the florets and some look more like a blend than a bicolor. Nevertheless, we would probably end up with BI (R/Y) with the appropriate chip numbers on each. Next, you would check the petaloids and reach the final classification as CO BI(R/Y)/y.



In the process of determining the classification, we've already discovered a couple faults in that the second color is not particularly uniform around the bloom and some of the florets exhibit quite a lot of bleeding or streaking of the yellow into the red. You will find the other types of possible color faults listed on the backs of the judging sheets. Are the color(s) faded, dull or gray? Blotchy, streaked, veined? Or, on the other hand, are they clear, bright, lustrous? In this bloom, we probably end up on the positive side for these characteristics.

Thus, for this bloom, there are several faults: bleeding, nonuniformity in the distribution of the colors, and the petaloids exhibit some

areas of white. Are the faults minor? Major? Severe? Certainly the white areas on the petaloids are very minor faults. The non-uniformity of the yellow color distribution should probably be considered a major fault. The bleeding or streaking is intermediate in severity to the other two faults.

Ok, how do we translate those observations of faults to a numerical penalty? The judging manual does not directly address this question. The following table provides an approach that I find useful in moving from the observation of faults to determining a penalty. In the context of our judge trying to come up with a score for Pooh, this table suggests that we should give this (single bloom) Pooh a failing score for color. Clearly, a lot hinges on your assessment of the severity of that color distribution problem. If, for example, the other two blooms in the 3 bloom entry on the seedling bench (or the other 8 blooms in the

Fault Observation	Rating	Score
No Faults	Perfect	100%
A Minor Fault	Excellent	90%
Minor Faults	Passing	85%
A Major Fault or Many Minor Faults	Failing	80%
One Severe or Sev-	Very Poor	70%

trial garden) had better color distribution, we would call it a minor fault and achieve a passing score for color. In this case, however, the answer to the penalty question would be 20%, or about -4.5 points.

In closing, I'd like to welcome and thank the Candidate Judges who have joined our ranks in the DSO. I'm having fun working with them and I think they are enjoying the process, too. We hope to have a seedling contest at the Petitti Show next year based on AN seedlings (plus our ongoing open-centered and stellar seedlings). More on that later. We hope you'll join us!

For the AC and SR judges out there, if you have not yet sent me your judge's test, please do so as soon as possible. I will need to report our results soon!