

## The Responsibilities of the Awards Registrar

Anonymous

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Though the responsibilities of the Awards Registrar here in the Cambridge office do not lie entirely shrouded in mystery to most AOS judges and Regional Judging Chairmen, the rapid expansion of the judging system has created a host of new procedures and problems which may need clarification. This discussion will hopefully give judges a clearer idea of the complexities involved in the processing of awards and, as a result, may offer suggestions on ways to improve awards procedures.

**SUMMARY SHEETS** - Judging summary sheets are vitally important for they contain all necessary data from any judging. Though most summary sheets are received within days of a judging, others are held by judging chairmen often upwards of six months, whereupon they are sent in a group. Such a procedure causes great delays in the processing of awards and is a source of understandable annoyance to the individual exhibitors. Summary sheets should be sent to the Cambridge offices as soon after a judging as possible.

The Awards Registrar must maintain a list of all judges in attendance at judgings so that she may inform the Awards Committee, when asked, of the status of any judge. Individual signatures of judges are sometimes indescipherable. Errors could more easily be avoided if the summary sheets and the list of participating judges were both typewritten.

**VERIFICATION OF SPECIES OR HYBRID** - The Awards Registrar must verify the registration and spelling of each awarded hybrid in the Sander's Lists of Orchid Hybrids. She must also consult many books for the authenticity and correct spelling of an awarded species. The procedure of awarding unregistered hybrids, while valid, causes inordinate delays in the processing of the entire judging, for such awards must be held in abeyance until crosses are formally registered. Some delay could be avoided if the Judging Chairman, or a designated Student Judge, could attempt an initial verification of hybrid crosses. We would like to thank several Regional Chairmen who have, in the past, taken the time to provide a reference by which each species or hybrid could be verified. This task could provide a valuable learning experience for the Student Judge.

**BILLING** - Bills are issued to each exhibitor immediately upon verification of the awarded species or hybrid. In cases of unregistered crosses, the exhibitor is advised on his bill that publication cannot occur until the cross has been duly registered. All exhibitors are requested to make final corrections on their bill as to choice of clonal epithet and the spelling of their name.

Second billings are mailed approximately two months after the initial billing. One unpaid award can greatly affect the status of other awards in a small judging, for ninety percent of all awards must be paid for before the judging itself can be published. Were it otherwise, the publication of awards would become quite random and the overall picture of the judgings most chaotic. Anywhere from three months to a year may elapse before the required percentage of awards in any given judging are paid for. At this time, the judging is ready for the process of publication. One year from the date of the judging, remiss awards are put into a holding file, and the remainder of the awards are published as a unit. How could exhibitors be encouraged to pay for their awards more promptly?

PICTORIAL MATERIAL - The Awards Quarterly is a pictorial as well as a written record of AOS awards. Publication of judging results must therefore frequently be delayed up to six months or more until receipt of pictorial material from the Awards Photographers. We are extremely grateful to our many Awards Photographers for their excellent help and we wonder whether our Regional Chairmen and individual judges might work more closely with their respective Awards Photographers in speeding up the delivery of pictorial material to the Cambridge offices.

One problem concerns the labeling of slides. This is a time-consuming but very important task. It is also one which lies outside the province of the Awards Photographer to whom the task has more often than not been assigned in the past. Once again, the labeling of slides is a procedure which could be undertaken by Student Judges as part of their training program.

CERTIFICATES - Both judges and exhibitors may wonder why it frequently takes nearly a year from the date of an award until receipt of the certificate. As awards are paid for, the Awards Registrar compiles a list to be sent, periodically, to our Engrosser for certificate engraving. Unfortunately, the art of hand engrossing is a dying one and the few engrossers in this part of the country find their schedules extremely full. With more than 600 awards a year, individual groups of 50 certificates may take up to three months to be engrossed. Subsequently, engrossed certificates are sent to the current President, frequently across country, and then back to the Secretary of the AOS for their signatures. Upon return to the Cambridge offices, certificates are individually packed and mailed to the exhibitor - a not inconsiderable task. We ask our exhibitors for patience in this area as delays seem unavoidable within the present situation.

The Awards Registrar has many other duties in addition to the processing of awards as described above: maintenance of card files on awards and new orchid hybrids, constant distribution of materials to every region and show prior to a judging, answering a multitude of letters from judges and exhibitors, preparation of pages of copy for both the Bulletin and the Awards Quarterly - these are but a few. All bear directly upon the speed with which awards can be finally published.

The reasons for avoidable or unavoidable delays in the publication of judging results and the receipt of awards certificates may be summarized as follows:

1. tardy and/or incomplete summary sheets
2. tardy payment or non-payment of individual awards, causing delays in the processing of the entire judging
3. delay or non-receipt of pictorial material
4. lengthy process of Certificate Engrossing
5. time required, once a judging is ready for publication, to process it for actual printing.

While we cannot hope to remedy all the problems and delays - some are built into the system and will remain unavoidable - we hope that improvements can be made. To this end, we seek the advice and cooperation of all judges in helping to prune the procedures for processing awards of all unnecessary obstacles. We can then appreciably shorten the length of time from the date of any judging to its publication in the Bulletin and the Awards Quarterly and speed the Awards Certificate to the exhibitor.