

What Does it Take to Become an American Budgerigar Society Judge?

by Don Denny
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To become a champion exhibitor or an American Budgerigar Society (ABS) judge in this hobby is equal in my mind to a person wanting to become a superstar in any sport! How many people become a Barry Bonds in baseball, a Joe Montana in football or a Michael Jordan in basketball?

We have our superstars in birds, just as they do in the cat, dog, rabbit and horse hobbies. Everyone cannot be a superstar, just as everyone does not aspire to become a judge. However, the following thoughts reflect what I believe it takes to become a successful A.B.S. panel judge.

First, advance from novice to showman champion. Second, become a successful winning champion exhibitor with wins in three different shows, under three different judges (placing either first, second or third). Become an active, participating member of a local A.B.S. affiliate club. Meet all the qualifications and rules to qualify, and last, pass all testing procedures in force at the time of your application.

The above is the "formal" process. Let's talk for a minute about the "informal" process. One of the most important unwritten rules is to be able to take criticism after you have tried your very best to place birds as you see them. We are all human and we all see the birds somewhat differently. We all interpret and judge for the standard as we envision it to be.

Remember everyone is not truly "qualified" to be a judge, even if they meet all the qualifications. In spite of all the pressure, you need to be relaxed and yet intense when placing birds, have total confidence in every move you make and especially when you talk and explain your rationale in placing one bird over another.

Does this sound like a tall order? I believe it is. I also believe that most judges in the 40-plus years of a breeding program tend to be on a downhill slide, losing activity in competing and raising budgies and this will hurt his eye after becoming a judge. Some maintain and hold on a little longer than others, but it is not easy.

I personally feel to remain a successful champion exhibitor and a suc-

cessful A.B.S. judge you must exhibit at least 10 shows per year and judge at least three or four more. You should attend meetings and be totally active in our hobby. And, if that does not keep a member busy, utilize at least 100 bands a year.

As I said in the beginning, becoming a "superstar" in our sport requires the

same dedication as in any other. It takes all levels of people to make it successful, just like it takes all levels in all sports for one to achieve success. We have to support all levels of our hobby. We need to always look up at our goals, never down at anyone, treating everyone equally and enjoy our wonderful hobby. ●



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