

NSW CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

A Guide for Organising and Running Cat Shows

A successful cat show doesn't just happen, it is the result of a lot of planning and teamwork.

So, let's look at the issues in a chronological fashion.

Show Date: The show dates are given in the annual Show Calendar prepared by the NSW CFA. A club may hold its show on the Saturday or Sunday of the allocated weekend, but please advise the NSW CFA office if you do decide to change the published date.

Type of Show and Venue: The club members usually decide whether it will be an Open Judging or Closed Judging style show and the number of Rings, and this will dictate the minimum size (floor area) of the venue, or vice-versa. Most clubs now prefer the Open Judging show as it provides more interest and involvement for the exhibitors, but some clubs may have a preferred or traditional venue which only allows enough room for a Closed Judging show.

Size of Show Hall:

From experience here are some floor area guidelines.

Open Judging - For every 100 cages (a mixture of singles and doubles) you will need around 300 sq.m of floor area. This will allow a comfortable layout with space for trophies, vetting, and 2 or 3 stalls, but does not include the kitchen and catering areas.

A sports hall containing 1 basketball court is around 650 sq.m, so it can accommodate 210 exhibits comfortably, and possibly up to 230 or even 250.

Closed Judging – Here you can fit almost 3 times as many cages into a hall – for every 100 cages you will need around 100 sq.m floor area.

Show Manager, Show Secretary, Show Committee

These people are elected by the club members. These people should have a working knowledge of Section 2 – Show Organisation of the Show Procedures.

Judges

Some clubs like the members to elect the judges for the show, but when you do, make sure that you elect 1 or 2 reserve judges as the first preferences may not be available on the date of your show.

If you decide to invite overseas or interstate judges, you will need to plan this 12 months or more in advance to ensure their availability. Also take into account that their air fares, accommodation, and local travel costs become a significant part of the total show expenses, and budget accordingly.

Number of Judges

Show Procedure 2.3 (g) limits the number of exhibits a judge can reasonably judge in a day to 100 for Open Judging, and 150 for Closed Judging.

Based on typical entry numbers for your past shows and a split up of, Group 1 - 40%; Group 2 - 15%; and Group 3 - 45% you should be able to decide the number of judges you need.

As a guide you should invite 4 judges per Ring for an Allbreeds Show with around 200 entries.

Invitations to Judges, Stewards, Ring Co-ordinators.

The Show Secretary is usually responsible for sending out these invitations (there is a standard form available from NSW CFA). It is best to enclose a stamped return addressed envelope to ensure prompt return of the documents, but the Show Secretary may still have to follow up by phone or email.

Make sure that you make suitable and timely travel and accommodation arrangements for overseas, interstate, and NSW judges (mainly for country shows).

Show Sponsorship

Potential major show sponsors (such as Whiskas, Purina, Oz-Pet, etc) should be contacted at a very early stage as these companies have limited budget allocations each year, some may require 12 months notice. Also, the major sponsors should be acknowledged in the Show Schedule.

Draft Show Schedule

The draft Show Schedule is prepared by the Show Secretary.

The NSW CFA Show Procedures Section 2.3 and Attachment A, set out the details required in a draft schedule which **must be submitted for approval not later than 60 days prior to the show date.**

Veterinary Officers and Vet Stewards

Show Procedure 2.7 requires that at least 1 qualified Veterinary Officer be provided for each 100 exhibits. Unless the club can make other arrangements with the vets, the usual fee paid to a vet is \$150.

The Show Secretary should also ensure that at least 1 steward per vet has been asked to vet steward. It is preferable to ask 2 stewards per vet, and split the times – e.g. 7-7.45am, and 7.45-8.30am.

Publishing/Issuing of Show Schedule

Once the Secretary or Show Secretary has received the schedule approval letter from NSW CFA, the Show Schedule can be listed on the NSW CFA website and made available to potential exhibitors.

Don't forget to send a copy to each of your Judges, and it is polite to send a copy to your stewards, and to your Veterinary Officers.

Receipt of Show Entries

Show entries are usually lodged with the Show Secretary or the Show Entry Clerk (Processor) as decided by the Show Committee, and this is to be stated on the Show Schedule. For financial control it is recommended that the Show Secretary receives the entries and checks them for completeness and money. The entries then go to the Entry Processor, and the money to the Treasurer for banking.

All of the clauses in Section 5 of the Show Procedures relate to Show Entry Requirements, and the Show Secretary and Show Committee should have a working knowledge of their contents. It is entirely up to these people whether late entries are accepted or returned, and whether an exhibitor is permitted to pay the entry fees on the day of the show. Remember when you allow this and the exhibitor doesn't attend, it is more difficult after the show to recover the entry fees.

See also Show Procedures 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.13, and 5.14.

Award Cards, Challenge Cards, Ribbons, Rosettes, Prizes

Award and Challenge Cards are usually provided by the Entry Processor. If not, the Show Secretary will need to arrange for them. Ribbons and rosettes need to be ordered in a timely fashion. Delivery and receipt of any sponsor's products needs to be followed up by the Show Secretary or Trophy Co-ordinator.

Show Publicity

A member should be given the task of arranging publicity with local newspapers and radio stations.

Attendance by the public is very desirable as it gains extra revenue, and provides sales opportunities for breeders, particularly those with litters.

At Open judging shows it is recommended that you do not open the show to the public until Ring judging is completed (around 12.30pm – 1.00pm). The public adds to the general noise level, and the public want to get close to the cats, not just stand and watch them being judged.

Show Catalogue

A show catalogue listing all the requirements listed in Show Procedure 2.5 needs to be printed for those exhibitors who have ordered a copy, as well as copies for the judges and key show workers.

Judges' Slips, Judging Times, and Show Conclusion

These are usually prepared by the Entry Processor, but the Show Secretary (or Show Manager) should ensure they are arranged in order to suit the Judging Program. For an Open Judging show you should work out a judging program (who starts where and then continues to judge the exhibits in what order) to facilitate a smooth flow and timely completion of judging. Arrange each judge's sheets in the same order as the judging program.

All Ring judging should be completed prior to the lunch break at 1-1.30pm latest (judges and stewards deserve a timely lunch time break).

This then leaves adequate time for specials and Supreme (or Top 10) judging to be completed mid-afternoon, followed by the presentations to the Judges, and drawing of the raffle by 3.30-3.45pm, with the show concluding at 4pm.

At some shows a later show conclusion is planned (e.g. Ag. Society Shows where exhibits must remain until 5pm). The show conclusion time must be stated on the Show Schedule, and it is a good idea to add it to the foot of the Entry Summary Sheet as an additional reminder to exhibitors.

Show Manager's Duties

The Show Manager's role is an important one – it is to oversee the planning and conduct of the show, and to ensure it is a successful and enjoyable day for exhibits, exhibitors, and the officials alike. The Show Manager is the link between the exhibitors and the show officials. He/she usually has a finger on the pulse of every segment of the show, and the duties start long before the show day itself.

Pre-show planning includes the following items, a number of which have been discussed in the earlier pages.

Show Date	Allocated by NSW CFA
Show Venue	Booking and price
Judges	How many required, and invite
Stewards	How many required, and invite
Ring Co-ordinators	How many required, and invite
Veterinary Officers	How many required, and invite
Show Sponsorship	Seek out sponsors (cash and product)
Catering	Arrange for Caterer and Menu
Estimate the number of Exhibits*	By Group, sex, etc.
Estimate the number of Cages*	Single and Double
Estimate the number of Tables*	Show cage and Judging tables, plus tables for Vets, trophies, and stalls – Order
(Note * - use past shows as a guide)	
Equipment for Show	First Aid Kit, spray bottles, towels, paper towels, pipe cleaners (3 per S, 4 per D), cage cards, etc.
Show Layout	Best to do a plan to scale.
Program for Judging	Order in which each Judge will judge

Some of these items may be the responsibility of a particular person or Show Committee member, but the Show Manager needs to check that these things are done.

Specifically the **Show Manager** will arrange the following:-

1. Confirm the show hall booking, and check times of access for the set-up and on the show day. Also check if there will be a hall representative present, and if not, a contact phone number for problems and emergencies (e.g. power failure, unwanted fire alarm, toilet problems).
2. Place provisional orders for tables and cages (based on previous years), confirm them once you have done your show layout.
3. Check that a suitable First Aid kit is on hand.
4. Check that there are towels, spray bottles, and appropriate disinfectant on hand (Dettol and similar coal tar derivatives are not acceptable disinfectants).
5. Cage cards – pre-numbered and single and double cages marked (this can be a final check of your cage layout after setting up the show).
6. Pipe cleaners for securing the doors of the cages (4 per D, and 3 per S is the norm).
7. Spare cage cards (some exhibits chew them up), and for UTH and UTJ identification.
8. Prepare the show layout plan (once you receive the numbered show list from the Entry Processor, and this may be only 5 days before the show).
9. Confirm that people will be there to help set up the show the day before the show (club members, friends, Scout Group, or local Rural Fire Service etc.).
10. Garbage bags, packaging tape, scissors, adhesive tape (for attaching cage cards on some or all cages), bunting, and other show incidentals.
11. Oversee the set-up of the show.
12. Ensure that veterinary inspection of exhibits is carried out as per Section 5.2 and Attachment B of the Show Procedures.
13. Attend to exhibitors' enquiries and needs on the show day.
14. Oversee the pull down of the show.

Show Layout Plan

In my view it is essential to prepare a show layout plan (preferably to scale) so that the set out of tables and cages proceeds smoothly and with a minimum of frustrations for the set-up crew. This is absolutely essential for an Open style show where each judging section is arranged in a separate judging bay. There is nothing worse than having laid out 90% of the show you find there is not enough room to fit the other 10%, and you and the set-up crew have to move tables (and cages) to make the necessary room, and this is often fairly late at night. And you, the Show Manager, have to be back bright and cheery at 6.30-6.45am the next morning before the start of vetting.

Tips for the Layout of an Open Judging Show

Firstly you need to get a plan of the show hall. Some halls can provide this, but if not go down to the hall, take a few measurements and draw a plan yourself.

The first time that you do a show layout plan (or a plan at a new venue) it will probably take you twice as long as it does in subsequent years. A show plan for an Allbreeds show of 200 exhibits will take some 4-8 hours to calculate and rough out, and a further 1-2 hours to do the actual layout plans. However the time spent is rewarded at the show set-up, because you will finish sooner and in a much better frame of mind. You will feel proud when your layout works. If you have not done it before then ask someone who has had experience to give you a helping hand.

Here are some tips.

Judging Bays:

- You will need - for Group 1, 3 bays – kittens*, cats*, and desexed
- for Group 2, 3 bays – kittens, cats, and desexed
- for Group 3, 5 bays – M & D kittens, F kittens*, M cats, F cats*, desexed*.

* Note – You may need to split these into 2 bays (or put 2 Judging tables in the bay) if entries in these sections are large (exceed 25-30 in total).

The reason for splitting of the bays is not so much for space, but to facilitate timely completion of judging, as the next judge can start on a section before the judge ahead has completed it. Often the best alternative (for layout and space) is to retain the large bay and provide 2 judging tables in that bay.

I prefer to prepare a show layout using Imperial measurements – because a Single cage is 18 inches (1.5ft) wide and a Double cage is 27 inches (2.25ft) wide. But the metric dimensions are Single 460mm and Double 690mm. I have found the maths/calculations easier in Imperial units.

Typically 8ft tables are used to set cages on but an 8ft table is not quite 8ft long – it is 7.85ft (2400mm). This becomes important to the layout as you need to leave a clear space of 3 inches (80mm) between the end of a cage and the edge of the table (so a cat is less likely to escape over the edge).

Detailed Layout Plan

Once you have received the numbered cage list (with Double cages noted) from the Entry Processor, you can start your detailed layout calculations.

The best way to start is to total up the cage length for each judging section (judging bay).

e.g. there are 30 female cats requiring 10D and 20S cages.

These cages will occupy: $10 \times 2.25 + 20 \times 1.5 = 52.5$ ft. or $10 \times 690 + 20 \times 460 = 16100$ mm

You will therefore need 7 tables: $7 \times 7.85 = 54.75$ ft. or $7 \times 2400 = 16800$ mm

Do this calculation for each judging section. Once you have done this you will then have the total number of tables for the exhibits in the show, and the table length required in each judging bay.

The following are important guides for a detailed layout.

1 table (7.85ft) will accommodate a maximum of 7.5ft (2300mm) of cages

2 tables in a row (15.7ft) will accommodate a maximum of 15.25ft (4650mm) of cages

For each extra table added to the row, 7.75ft (2350mm) of cages can be added.

Now to the **table layout** .

Most halls are rectangular, and experience suggests the following alternatives;

- A single, 2 tables wide (back to back) spine running down the centre of the longer dimension of the hall. The spine length will be 10 or 11 tables, and bay sides will be 2 tables.
- Two, 2 tables wide (back to back), spines running across the hall (at right angles to the longer dimension of the hall) in each half of the hall. This works well in a basketball court sized hall which is typically 100ft x 75ft (30m x 23m). In this case the spines will vary between 5 and 8 tables, and bay sides 1 or 2 tables.

The bay sides run at right angles to the spines. But there are no fixed rules as to their number and experience and will be your guide. When laying out the bay side tables leave a gap of 1.5-2ft (460mm-600mm) between the spine and the start of the sides – this allows separation of the corner cages to avoid cats “eyeballing” each other. It also allows walking room between the bays.

There should not be any cages located on the spines behind where the bay side tables go out at right angles, but if you really need a bit of extra space you can put half a cage width in there.

This layout approach will allow cages to be set up back to back (except on the outer ends of the spine where you will only have a single table bay side). The backs can be clipped together for greater stability if you so wish. This is not essential with the wider party hire tables (2.5ft or 760mm wide).

Notes - When using the Blue Mountains/Longhair trestle tables which are narrower (2ft or 610mm wide), the cages should be back to back clipped.

- On single table width rows, back boards (a length of light timber clamped to the back edge of the table) should be used, or the cages securely taped. This stops an exhibit pushing the cage back and escaping over the edge.

Having got your provisional table and bay layout, you should then confirm this with a detailed cage by cage, and bay by bay, layout.

Attached are copies of detailed layout plans used for a recent Western Districts show. Your plans do not need to be as neat, precise, and detailed as these. However, the more detailed they are, the less you will have to supervise and guide the set-up crew.

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