

## A salute to the Show Co-ordinators and Show Secretaries

The average club member and show aficionados would seldom give much thought to the organisation or realise the tension headaches, sleepless nights and approaching nervous breakdowns suffered by the show organiser, more especially so when contracting overseas judges.

Even after being in possession of the contracts, with flights booked and paid for, hotel accommodation and transportation all firmly fixed as if in concrete, disaster can strike. It can strike in so many ways and unlike lightning, can hit you in so many different ways.

My first experience with this was one year ago, when two weeks before THE show our German judge fell down the stairs at his home and broke his leg.

This unusually considerate gentleman, when he rang to give us the bad news, told us that he had already arranged for his own replacement. Coincidentally, his replacement turned into a firm favourite judge and friend throughout Australia. No other judge has been so considerate.

Others have cancelled at short notice because of the Afghan War, the Gulf War, SARS, and a suddenly acquired fear of flying.

There have been others but where it concerns family illness one can only feel sympathy.

The normal engagement of foreign judges, more often than not, involves telephone calls, which when made across time zones requires sitting up waiting for the wee hours of the morning in order to talk to someone on the other side of the world just as they arrive home for tea. Telephoning Europe from Perth means doing it at 1-2 AM. Phoning from Sydney to the same person would mean making the call at about 3 or 4AM. Calling America becomes a nightmare, with them having even more time zones than we do.

To catch the prospective judge the call times can vary from having to make the call yesterday or even the day before.

Sometimes you can be anxiously awaiting an important call when you find you have to go out, so you leave your partner with strict instructions on what to say. If the incoming call is from a non-English speaking country and it's your wife who is the linguist, it can be a little difficult, especially if the husband doesn't speak "foreign."

Imagine the scenario where left all alone and praying that the call doesn't arrive while your husband is 'home alone.' He is in the toilet when the phone rings. Thoughtfully you have left your mobile with him.



He is cold and busy. It's the third night in a row that phone calls have arrived but it could be the replacement judge you all have been praying for. Bravely he answers and hopes that any rude noises he may inadvertently make cannot be heard all the way to Germany.

Hurrah! We have a replacement. When you arrive back home and you ask who you managed to get at such notice you find he can't quite remember the replacement judges' name, except it starts with a 'G' or something.

All he can remember is that who ever it was, he is quite well known.

Another source of worry with ever increasing costs and falling entries, is the number of judges who are insisting on Business Class air travel.

Long gone are the days of super economy flights such as those offered by Extra Virgin Oil and People Mover Airlines. They used to hand you a slice of bread with your ticket, (butter was an optional extra). Water was available during the flight but the glass had to be paid for.

I've always hated airline food anyway and the fuss of balancing trays on the tiny drop down shelves that somehow was always a signal for the urgent need by the passenger on the window seat to visit the toilet.

We recently found an airline that solved all the problems of security and was hijack proof. There are one or two bugs still to be ironed out to overcome passengers' complaints about in flight service.

So dear show goer, after the next show when you speak to the Secretary, remember to say a few kind words on the running of the show.

Who knows, next year they make elect YOU!?!

**Rick Richardson**

