

25th February 2009

Dear Judge

At the Meeting of Council on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009, the revised BAC Philosophy, Rules and Constitution together with the accompanying Judge Appointment Scheme Forms were approved. They will be implemented as soon as individual BAC's are able to do so.

The role of the GCCF's Full Judges is crucial to the successful training of Stewards and Probationer Judges and we are seeking your support for this. We attach the statement summarising the role of Full Judges from the Philosophy and Principles of the GCCF Judge Appointment Scheme and detail the important part Full Judges play at each stage of the process below.

The Stewarding Section of the scheme provides opportunity for trainees to learn a great deal from the judges for whom they work. They can develop the ability to handle cats of all breeds in a show situation sympathetically and with confidence; to display them to their best advantage; to gain a thorough knowledge of show administration and the Rules of Procedure and to obtain an understanding of the manner and attributes that are required in a steward. The new form for these initial stewarding engagements outlines the areas for training and it is hoped you will assist with this process for the GCCF. By the time a candidate can apply to become a GCCF Steward it is hoped they will be familiar with handling cats correctly across the breeds and be capable of providing full details of GCCF procedures, if necessary, when stewarding for an overseas judge.

Once they have been listed as a GCCF Steward, those applicants wishing to progress further will join the Stewarding Section of the GCCF Judge Appointment Scheme by applying to the BAC that caters for the breed(s) they hope to judge. This is a period of further learning to gain a deeper understanding of the manner and attributes that are required in Judges. Your role in training these candidates is of the utmost importance. The GCCF, through the BAC's, relies upon full judges to impart their expertise and knowledge to candidates during these engagements. The Stewarding Certificates outline the areas to be covered and any further information you can provide is welcomed as the contents will be used to assess the ability of the candidate concerned. Successful candidates can then become Probationer Judges.

The probationary period must be regarded as a time of ongoing learning and testing the conduct, character and ability of the person training to become a Full Judge. Your role in this training process is crucial and you must feel able to provide constructive, critical comment without fear of repercussion. Probationer Judges should regard a Tutorial as a very important educational process where they can increase their knowledge of a breed from the first hand experience of Full Judges. It is hoped you will always complete the "Aspects covered by the Tutorial" section of the form to assist BAC's to monitor the progress of candidates working through the scheme. The presence of Full Judges at Breed Seminars is also of vital importance; it is hoped you are able to co-operate with the BAC's as far as possible by supporting these forums for gaining extensive knowledge of particular priorities when judging a breed.

The Assessment of a Probationer Judge, which should take place towards the end of the probationary period, is of the utmost importance. It should be regarded as a practical "final examination" for the BAC to ascertain whether the candidate is ready for promotion to Full Judge. A maximum of five exhibits may be included at any one assessment, preferably adults and/or neuters, which should be from the judging book of either the Full Judge or the candidate concerned. The date of birth/age, sex

and breed number for each exhibit involved should be supplied to the candidate. Questions, or advice about the exhibits selected, should not be sought from yourself or any other judge prior to a candidate judging the given cats, writing their critiques, deciding their placings and discussing them with you. When the Assessment has taken place, the candidate will hand you the relevant Form, together with the pen numbers and placing of the cats judged and an SAE for the relevant BAC Secretary. Then, the Probationer Judge must forward to you, within FIVE DAYS of the assessment, the written critiques of the cats judged, to enable you to complete the Assessment Form and return all paperwork to the relevant BAC Secretary. If, in the case of a minority breed, there was just one exhibit to assess, it is important for you to state whether the candidate was, in your opinion, correct in their decision to award or withhold the certificate/BOB on that cat.

If the BAC requires further information on a candidate before promotion, they may ask for additional assessments and your name may be provided for this purpose. The BAC should inform you of the reasons they have asked for these further assessments and the areas to be covered.

Council hopes all Full Judges will realise the essential role they play in the Judge Appointment Scheme and thanks you, in anticipation, for your support.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Jennings  
for GCCF

## PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES OF THE GCCF JUDGE APPOINTMENT SCHEME

### 4. FULL JUDGES

- a) Full Judges play an essential role in the GCCF Judge Appointment Scheme by passing on their knowledge and techniques to their stewards at every judging engagement, whether verbally or by demonstration. This knowledge includes not only the finer points of handling and judging cats but the other qualities required of judges such as impartiality, demeanour etc.
- b) Full Judges will also have the opportunity to give advice and guidance to Probationer Judges throughout the probationary period since when they are engaged to judge an adult Open class they may be approached by the Probationer Judge to discuss his/her placings of the equivalent kitten Open class, after completion of the class. This tuition is a vital part of the judge training procedure. Any Judge may decline to participate in this procedure on a particular occasion but it is hoped that all Judges will be able to participate when their judging load, and that of the Probationer Judge, permits them to do so.

If there are no Open kittens present, the Probationer Judge may seek permission of the Full Judge to judge, place and report to the BAC on the equivalent adult and/or neuter Open class and to discuss his/her placings of the class after completion.

A Full Judge's Open adult or neuter classes may coincide with the Open kitten classes of more than one Probationer Judge; in such a case the Full Judge should establish, prior to the start of judging, which Open classes have entries, decide which Probationer Judge(s) will be offered tuition and inform all the relevant Probationer Judges. At shows with a low judging load and low Open class entries a Full Judge may wish to be available for tuition to more than one Probationer Judge.

- c) The system is designed to benefit from the experience of all Full Judges since stewards may choose from whom they seek engagements and Probationer Judges may seek to discuss their Open kitten classes with the Full Judge who is engaged to judge the equivalent Open adult or neuter class at the same show.
- d) Judges must give careful consideration to completing stewarding certificates and offering tuition. Although it may be very difficult to be critical without risk of upsetting some candidates, constructive criticism throughout the scheme should enable candidates to progress far more quickly since, in its absence, they may remain unaware of their shortcomings. Encouragement should be given, although any steward who is obviously not "judge material" may be gently encouraged to try other areas of Cat Fancy activity, such as show management etc. if appropriate.
- e) BACs may require stewards to seek certificates, or Probationer Judges to seek tuition, from Judges determined by the BAC in order to be guided and/or assessed on particular points. These Judges will be those who have specialised knowledge of a particular breed, colour or pattern, such as breeding experience etc. The BAC will write to the Judges concerned outlining the areas requiring tuition.