

Neatness Counts—Showing Tips

By Paula Hecker

In judging *The Hobby Horse News* Photo Show, I found that some of the entries were very difficult to sort and place into their proper classes. When entering photo shows, it is easier on the judge if everything you send is in a neat order. I decided to write this article to help the beginners in preparing their show entries, and also to give some tips to the more experienced ones.

The first thing I would like to discuss is the back of the photo. The back of the photo is important because it has all the information the judge needs. Too many photos include unnecessary information, or worse, not enough information. To make the photo back more legible, type all the information on a sticky label (you can even buy sheets of labels that can go in copiers), or directly on the back of the photo. Include the horse's name, sex, age, breed, and make and mold. It's also a good idea to give credit to the artist if it's an RRH horse. It's not necessary to include the horse's parents, but it's okay. Also include club registration numbers if they are required by your club. I put this label in the upper-left hand of the photo.

I put my address label in the bottom-left. The kind that you lick the back sometimes do not stick well, so I suggest getting the self-stick kind. A label with some kind of design, such as a horse or flower, is good because it helps identify your photos at a glance.

In between these labels I place a piece of Scotch Magic Tape (the "invisible" kind),

about 2 inches long on halter photos, 1 inch on performance pictures. I write the class numbers on it because it is much easier to erase from the tape than from the photo paper.

Write the class numbers in pencil. It is best to write large numbers, with dashes "—" in between the numbers, rather than commas (commas can look like 1's). Always write your numbers in chronological order, and double check them with the class list.

Lastly, I place a colored dot in the upper-right hand corner of all my photos. This identifies all my pictures and makes sorting for the judge easier. Because there are only a limited number of colored dots, you could use a star or some other sticker that identifies all your photos at a glance.

Whatever labels you use, it is important to place them in the same spot on all your photos—if your photos aren't consistent, sorting will be difficult for the judge.

It is a good idea to put your photos in some kind of protective bag or envelope to protect them from falling out if your entry comes open en route to the judge, and to protect them from moisture. I usually put my pictures in a Ziplock bag along with the fees and extra stamps, with a note written on a Post-It stuck to the Ziplock bag. Ziplock bags are best to keep photos in because they are air tight. Water can do great damage to photos, and an ordinary envelope won't keep water out. I include my name, address, and number of entries on a label stuck to the bag. I always include one extra stamp. In

your note include a list of what's enclosed. This helps the judge determine whether your entry is complete, and also helps when they return your entry.

It's a good idea to pay your fee by check, but since many shows are \$1.00 or less this is not always feasible. Never leave change loose—tape it to a 3 x 5 card or piece of paper, and it's a good idea to put loose paper money in along with the photos.

The return envelope is also important. Write your address neatly so the Post Office can deliver it easily. I also write "Please tape shut" on the flap, but most judges do that anyway. The return envelope should include the same postage as your mailing envelope, plus 20¢ to cover the weight of the results. Enclose one extra stamp just in case the results are extra thick.

This may seem minor to some showers, but the envelope you mail your entry in is very important. I prefer to use manilla 4-1/2" x 6" envelopes with a clasp. Regular business envelopes don't hold up very well under the weight of photos, but if you only have a few pictures, it's okay to use them. It's a good idea to write the date and name of the show on the outside of the envelope. This helps the judge who might be holding two or more shows in one month. Always include your return address. If the entry is not delivered to the judge it will then be returned to you. Otherwise it will end up in what's called a dead-letter box at the Post Office. Always include proper postage because many judges refuse postage due entries. First class postage rates are 25¢ for the first ounce and 20¢ each additional ounce (you can save money by using 20¢ stamps).

Write "Photos enclosed, please hand cancel" on the envelope. Most entries are too thick to go through the postmark machines, but it's a good idea to write it on the envelope anyway because postmark machines can mangle valuable photos. Lastly, tape the envelope shut once everything is inside. Envelopes have come open at the Post Office (once I received an opened show entry with no photos).

I hope this article has helped some of you. If you have any questions, please feel free to write. Enclose a SASE and I will be happy to answer.

Joker's Flashy Frost
1976 Appaloosa Mare
(Joker's Flashy Dan x Azure Te)
FMHC# PH452



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