American Killifish Association

Killifish Judging Program

Part l.
Killifish Judging Program
Operating Procedure for Judging Killifish at A.K.A. Sanctioned Shows

Part 2.
Certified Judges Program Procedure for Certifying Judges

Part 3.
Judges Guide to the Judging Program

Revision C: 9/02. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
Revision B: 4/94. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
Revision A: 4/82 Original Issue: C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee

Forward to the Judging Program:

The Judging Procedure is the result of many years of experience, revised as the needs of the A.K.A. membership changed over the years. The Judging Program consists of three parts, each designed for a different purpose. Each document stands on its own, and can be separated as necessary when the entire document is not required.

Part 1 is the operating procedure, the detailed instruction for conducting a judging event, the methods of pointing, and the administrative policies that apply to the judging process.

Part 2 is the procedure by which judges become certified and, as in Part 1, it expresses the methods and administrative policies that apply to the certification process.

Part 3 is a training aid for both prospective judges and judges who wish to review the requirements of the program in a concise form.

The program is augmented with two appendices:

Appendix A. presents the judging forms that are used in the pointing process.

Appendix B. presents short explanations and definitions of A.K.A. sponsored special awards and the authorized A.K.A. classes

Acknowledgements:
Since 1982 when the first version of this program was issued, several dedicated A.K.A. members have served on the Judging Committee and participated in the in the evolution of the program throughout the years. The A.K.A. is proud to acknowledge the contribution of the following members.

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Al Castro	Dr. Ken Lazara	Dr. Harry Specht
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American Killifish Association Judging Committee

Part 1.

Operating Procedure for Judging Killifish at A.K.A. Sanctioned Shows

Revision C: 9/02. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
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Classes Defined:

1.0 Purpose:
The purpose of this standard is to establish an integrated judging system whereby killifish may be evenly and fairly judged. This standard shall serve to establish criteria and the methods of employing those criteria as an aid to the killifish Judge, and as an educational tool for the killifish hobbyist.

2.0 Revisions:
Periodically as the need arises, this standard will be revised, expanded, or otherwise changed in order to reflect new knowledge and/or changes in A.K.A. policy. This standard shall operate under a "revision letter" system, the latest letter reflecting the latest issue.

3.0 Generation of this procedure:
This standard shall be issued under the auspices of the A.K.A. Judging Committee Chairman who will be appointed each year by the board of trustees of the A.K.A., and in accordance with the by-laws and the constitution of the American killifish Association. This standard shall be the only recognized judging standard used for A.K.A. sponsored or sanctioned events.

4.0 Organization:
This part is a standalone document as are the other parts of the Judging Standard. Part I provides the general provisions of the plan, the administrative procedures and the criteria by which killifish are judged.

5.0 Theory of Judging:
The fundamental principal by which all killifish are judged is the degree to which the specimen is a fair representative of the species. The generic phrase that describes the determination of this fact is …..

THE SPECIMEN SHALL BE REPRESENTATIVE OF ITS SPECIES

A particular fish can only be judged with respect to its own kind. As a representative of its species, it must exhibit the characteristics known to define that species, and it should not exhibit characteristics not normally found in that species. It should be free of defects, abnormalities, damage and other conditions which may indicate less than full health and vitality, and it should be capable of reproducing.

In addition to these basic premises, the specimen that exhibits superior aspects of their expected characteristics will score higher, while those that exhibit inferior aspects will score lower. The point system is designed to accentuate these issues so that the superior specimen will score highest among its group. The lowest scores are assigned to specimens that do not exhibit expected characteristics, are in poor condition or exhibit deformities or other disqualifying conditions.

These statements are easily expressed but no so easily implemented. The major reasons for this are enumerated below, along with the manner in which this standard addresses them.

5.1 Objectivity/Subjectivity:
Ideally, each specimen should be judged objectively. Although subjectivity cannot be erased entirely, it can be minimized by the establishment of a uniform set of individualized and species-specific criteria by which each species is judged. When the candidate is judged in accordance with his individualized criteria it is, in essence, being judged against what we can determine to be representative of his species. In this way, the classic problem of subjectivity is substantially reduced, if not eliminated entirely. In the absence of such individual species standards, the knowledge and experience of the judge is the primary knowledge base upon which the pointing is ultimately based.

5.2 General Provisions:
This standard includes explanations of the meaning and purpose of each point category. The judging forms have be designed for a minimum of writing, ease of summing and rechecking, and with an eye toward the most common sequence of observing characteristics. Also, there are provisions for automatic disqualification so that specimens which will obviously score very low due to some grossly inadequate condition will not be pointed, thereby speeding the judging process. As you go through this standard, you will note that the points assigned to females are nearly equally to that of males so that a well conditioned female is essential to a high score for the pair. In previous judging systems, the female played a vastly inferior role to the male. Yet the value of the female, especially when auctioned, is equal to that of the male.

6.0 The Judging Procedure:

6.1 Show Classes

6.1.1 Defined:
The class designations are determined by the BOT and/or the Judging Committee in consultation with others as determined by one or both AKA entities. The classes so designated constitute the official classes to be used at the national convention. Two or more such classes may be combined for efficiency at sanctioned regional or local shows as determined by the relevant certified judges and the local show committee. See Appendix B for a listing of authorized classes.

6.1.2 Verification that entries are in the proper classes:
It is the responsibility of the Chief Judge at the national convention, or the Senior or Class judge at regional or local shows, to assure proper placement of entries, and to confirm or determine their correct identification. The Chief Judge has the authority and the responsibility to re-identify and/or re-classify any entry which is incorrectly marked. As an aid in this process, the "Killifish Species List for Class Placement", a separate publication of the Judging Committee, lists every species and genera and their proper class placement.

6.2 Entries:
All entries, to one degree or another, are judged for certain fundamental characteristics; body, fins, deportment, condition, etc. which are detailed below. And although the relative value of these characteristics vary for some special classes, the requirements of and issues involved in judging these characteristics do not change from class to class.

6.2.1 Pairs Classes:
All classes except the Matched Breeding Pair and the Breeder Group Classes shall consist of a single pair, male and female. The hermaphrodite Rivulus marmoratus is to be presented as a two fish pair, but is pointed with a special judging sheet designed to accommodate this unusual species. In all pair classes, only one pair of fish shall be judged. Sometimes an extra fish is presented. Although the A.K.A. welcomes as many fish for auction as the members are willing to donate, multiples of either sex present an administrative difficulty where the entrant does not specify which are for competition, and which are for "auction only." The entrant is urged to specify which specimens are for which purpose. It is not the function of the judges to select the "best" of the multiple entries to judge.

Where no such specification is made, the Class Judging Team will determine the pair from the group that will be competitively pointed.

6.2.2 Multiple male/female Classes

In the Matched Breeder Pair and Breeder Group classes, the minimum number of pairs must be present in order to compete in that class. The Matched Breeder Class requires two pairs. The Breeder Group Class requires a minimum of three pairs and a maximum of six pairs. If there are insufficient numbers of pairs entered for the class designated, the Class Judging Team shall reassign the entry to the next most appropriate class in which the entry can properly compete.

6.2.2.1 The Matched Breeding Pairs Class:
This is a special class wherein two pairs are judged not only in the normal manner, but also against each other for matching characteristics. A special judging sheet has been designed for this purpose.

6.2.2.2 The Breeding Group Class: As in the Matched Breeding Pair class, this is also a special class wherein at least three and a maximum of six pairs are judged. It differs however in that the group is not only judged in the normal manner, but with additional emphasis as a breeding group capable of reproduction. Therefore, compatibility among the entire group as well as breeding potential are much more important in this class than other characteristics. A special judging sheet has been designed for this purpose.

6.2.3 Hermaphrodites: Rivulus marmoratus is the only hermaphrodite that will appear at A.K.A. conventions. To keep balance with the other pairs classes, there must be two specimens entered. Because hermaphrodites are nearly always female in appearance, a special judging sheet has been constructed for use in judging them. This sheet proportionalizes the scoring so that it compares with a standard entry.

6.3 The Judging Procedure:

6.3.1 The Judging Team: Two Judges per Competitive Fish Class: There shall be two judges assigned to each class at the A.K.A. national convention. Regional and local shows may use one judge per class. There is no limit on the number of classes a team may be assigned, but for scheduling purposes, more than two classes for each team should be avoided.

Each entry selected for pointing as provided for below is to be judged by both judges working together. Both are to examine the selected entries together, point the entries in accordance with the provisions of this procedure together, and complete and sign a judging sheet for each. If irreconcilable differences occur, the matter under dispute is to be brought to the Chief Judge for adjudication. The decision of the Chief Judge is final. For entries not selected for pointing, a comment sheet is to be completed and signed by both judges.

Non-fish classes do not require more than one judge and such classes are not pointed. The judge assigned simply selects the prizewinners. Included in this group of classes is the Print and Slide Photo Classes and the Artwork Class.

6.3.2 The Judging Procedure: The fundamental operational procedure consists of the following steps:

> Step 1: Preliminary Examination and Categorization of Entries:
> The judging team is to scan the class and determine which entries have the potential to score more than 75 points, and which do not. In addition, the preliminary scan may reveal entries that are subject to disqualification as defined below. At the completion of this initial examination, the judging team will:

Determine which entries are to be pointed
Determine which entries are not to be pointed
Determine which entries are to be disqualified

Step 2: Pointing of Selected entries: Using the appropriate Judging Sheet, point each entry that has been predetermined to have the potential to score 75 or more points in accordance with the pointing instructions given below.

Step 3: Non-Pointed Entries: Complete the explanatory checklist: Those entries deemed not to be capable of scoring 75 or more points are not to be pointed at all. The "Non-Pointed Entry Checklist" is used to note the reasons for the decision not to point. One such sheet is to be completed for each of the non-pointed entries. The purpose of this form is to give the entrant an evaluation of the entry, and a reason why it was not individually pointed. You will note that there are comments for every major characteristic that is judged on the standard form. Simply check as many of the comments that apply. A form must be completed, even if there is only one comment.

Step 4: Disqualifications: Using a standard judging sheet, designate the appropriate reason for the disqualification. The judging system includes provisions for automatic disqualification so that candidates which will obviously score very low due to some grossly inadequate condition will not be pointed, thereby speeding the judging process. The criteria for disqualification is delineated in pp. 7.6 below.

Step 5. Minimum Points Rule:
The minimum points rule provides that an entry must score at least 70 pointes to be awarded a prize. Normally, there are at least three entries that have been selected for pointing, and should, therefore, score 75 points or more. In the unlikely event that a class does not have at least three entries that meet this criteria, the judging team and the Chief judge may, at their option, select from the remaining group of non-pointed entries those that are likely to score at least 70 points. It is not required to so proceed, but if this option is made, the selected entries are to be pointed in accordance with the provisions of this procedure. Under no circumstances can an entry be awarded a prize if it does not score at least 70 points. See Award section, pp. 8.4.1 below.

6.3.3 The Judging Sheet: Pointing and Comments:
If the entry is to be pointed, the points are awarded for each category by circling the appropriate number. The determination of the number granted is to be in accordance with the provisions of the pointing system as detailed below. If applicable, the area reserved for disqualification are checked as appropriate. If the entry is not pointed, the appropriate "Non-Pointed Entry Checklist " must be completed. In all cases, the judges are encouraged to provide written extemporaneous comments so as to inform and educate the entrant.

6.3.4 Summing Scores and Determination of Class Winners: The judging sheet is to be summed by the judging team. The scores are then to be examined for First, Second and Third place winners, and the appropriate forms so marked. If time constraints do not permit the summing of scores, the Judging Team may request the Chief Judge to assign personnel to perform this task.

6.3.5 Ties:
Ties shall be broken by the two class judges, and by mutual agreement. If they cannot agree, the tie is broken by the Chief Judge. Point awards are not to be altered, but the judging ledger shall contain the comment, "Awarded on Tiebreak".

7.0 The Point System:
The point system, as demonstrated on the standard and special Judging Forms, is designed to properly weigh each set of characteristics with respect to the others. Because the species is judged only against what is perceived a good example of its species, it is judged against its kind, and not against other fish that may be more or less colorful, or have more or less attractive fin structure. Condition, health and the ability to reproduce are all important factors in the judging, furthering the desire to recognize a superior specimen.

The point system also places great emphasis on the female's importance in furthering the A.K.A. goals of propagation and maintenance of healthy killifish. Circumstances where a pair scores high even where the female is in poor condition, and/or incapable of reproduction, are eliminated with the emphasis this system puts on female condition and compatibility. The female is given enough points so that the pair cannot win if she is not, at a minimum, healthy and capable of reproduction.

7.1 Judging Forms:
The judging forms used for the pointing of those entries pre-screened as likely candidates to score 75 or more points are designed for ease of use, and to speed the pointing process. Points are awarded for each category by circling the appropriate number granted for the characteristic. If applicable, the area reserved for disqualification are checked as appropriate. As previously noted, written comments by the judge are encouraged as they serve to inform and educate the entrant. Each form must be signed by both judges.

There are five judging forms used in the A.K.A. system. They are:

Standard form for Pairs
Special form for Hermaphrodites
Special form for Matched Breeding Pairs
Special form for Breeder Group class
Special form "Non-Pointed Entry Checklist"

7.2 Pointing Instructions:
Each major physical characteristic, condition, behavior and estimates of reproducibility are all included as criteria in the judging process of pair entries. It is recommended at this point to have a standard judging sheet available as you go through the judging methods enumerated below.

7.2.1 Fins: Fins are judged as to their adherence to the size, shape, color and pattern expected of the species. Fins are pointed down if rays are bent or damaged, or the membranes between rays are torn or split, or the expected color or intensity of color is not apparent. For example, a fully formed crescent pattern in the caudal of Fp. cinnamomeum is essential to that species, and a break in that pattern is downpointed.

7.2.2 Body Size: The size is defined as the normal adult size, and extraordinary size does not score higher. In order to recognize that no particular effort or talent is required to raise a fish to 70% or so of its normal adult size, point awards are not linear with % of adult size. The normal adult size is that which is expected for the species, and if that is not certain, then consultation with appropriate texts or with the Chief Judge is to be made.

Ref. Size.	Male (6 max)	Female (3 max)
If 100%	award 6 pts.	award 3 pts.
If 90%	award 5 pts.	award 3 pts.
If 80%	award 3 pts.	award 2 pts.
If 70%	award 1 pt.	award 1 pt.
Less than	award 0 pts.	award 0 pts.

7.2.3 Body Shape: A very important characteristic. The shape is judged not only against the descriptions in the literature, but also for smoothness of body lines, absence of anomalies such as bumps, concave or thin areas. Included in this characteristic is the shape of the head, snout, jaw, operculum, etc. The body shape is to be downpointed if any of the above are noted, or where the candidate varies from the species norm. Pay particular attention here with respect to the results of poor nutrition or genetic deformity, both of which are to be severely downpointed.

7.2.4 Body Color and Pattern: Color and pattern is judged with respect to what is expected of the species. Colors shall be bright and intense unless otherwise expected. This category shall be downpointed for variability or color or pattern outside the norm except where variability is expected and common in the species. Be careful in downpointing for variations in species where variability is the norm. Please note that different populations of such species often exhibit significantly different body patterns. Be sure of your ground here if severely downpointing for pattern.

7.2.5 Deportment:
Deportment is defined as the actions and attitudes of the pair in the context of show conditions. The salient deportment characteristics include the position a fish normally holds within the confines of the tank, its movement within the tank, its level of activity or lack thereof, and how the pair relate to each other. Substantial deviation from the expected norm is to be downpointed. The problem here is to determine whether the entry is reacting to show conditions, or is not behaving properly because of some other cause, such as the onset of disease. Expected stress associated with the show environment is not to be downpointed.

7.2.6 Condition:
An extremely important category, the term “condition” is here referred to as the physical condition and health of the specimen. It is required that the fish be strong, vibrant, free from major deformities and exhibits a minimum of minor deformities resulting from healed wounds, etc. Downpointing results from the following:

A. Torn, missing or poorly healed scales.
B. Cataracts or cloudy eyes.
C. Cuts, swelling or other injury related conditions.
D. Poorly healed lip or mouth structures.
E. Overall weakness, lethargy or unusual motions.
F. Non-fatal disease, or minor infections.

7.2.7 As Pair: The "as pair" category was introduced to promote the exhibition of healthy pairs, capable of reproducing. In this section, the pair rather than each individual fish is judged.

There are two sub-divisions, compatibility and breeding potential.

7.2.7.1 Compatibility: This designation is primarily concerned with the relative physical size of the male and female. For proportionally small specimens the relationship should be constant. Therefore, this category is downpointed if the male or female is too small or too large proportionally for the other. Greatly mismatched fish, more than twice the expected ratio, should receive no points under this sub-section. Obviously, where size mismatches are normal, downpointing does not apply.

7.2.7.2 Breeding Potential: Adhering to the goal of the A.K.A. to promote the propagation of killifish, each entry should have the potential for reproduction, either now or in the reasonable future. Therefore, young fish not yet at their breeding size can be judged if their condition warrants a conclusion that they can be reasonably be expected to reproduce in the future. In the same context, fish too old to be reasonably expected to reproduce, are to be downpointed under this category. If fish are too young to determine their breeding potential, they stand in the same position as those too old and are downpointed accordingly. The downpointing is not as severe however, because the young fish may be able to reproduce in the future. Those specimens in the prime of their breeding potential receive 100% of the points in this category.

7.3 Hermaphrodites:
Rivulus marmoratus is the only killifish that is a true hermaphrodite. Two individual fish must be entered, and the pointing system is essentially the same as it is for pairs, but equalized for each individual, eliminating the male/female pointing ratios used in pair judging. The individual categories; body, fins, condition, et. al. are defined as noted above for pairs judging, and are judged in the same manner.

7.4 Matched Breeding Pairs:
This class requires the entry of 2 pairs of the same species. The ideal candidate for this class are two pairs that not only perfectly match each other, but are also each excellent representatives of their species. The ideal here is that each pair should be as "bookends" or as nearly identical to each other as possible. The point system reflects this ideal by requiring each pair be individually judged fulfilling the requirement as an ideal representative of species; the judging techniques are the same as noted above for the pairs classes. In addition, each pair is then compared to the other for size, color and pattern, condition and deportment, thereby fulfilling the requirement for similarity – the ideal “bookends”. The point disposition is 36 points for each pair, and 28 points for the pair to pair comparison.

7.5 The Breeding Group:
This class requires the entry of at least 3 pairs of the same species, and there is no limit on the total number of pairs entered. However, only a maximum of 6 pairs will be pointed. Where more than 6 pairs are entered, the judging team will select the 6 pairs to be pointed. The judging sheet is set up to judge a maximum of six (6) pairs.

The idea of the breeding group is quite literal - a group of fish that are excellent representative of their kind, and have a high probability of reproducing. This criteria results in a point distribution which is heavily but not entirely biased toward compatibility and breeding potential. The individual categories; body, fins, condition, et. al. are defined as noted above for pairs judging, and are judged in the same manner.

To minimize the obvious tendency to treat the group as a superset of matched breeding pairs, each pair is primarily judged on its own, with less emphasis on its relation to the other pairs. The points for pair to pair compatibility is necessary to reflect the idea that the breeding group works best when the fish are about the same size. This size comparison is for purposes of the viability of the breeding group as opposed to the size comparison in the Matched Breeding Pair class, where the comparison is for the purpose of matching.

There is much less emphasis on the cosmetic characteristics, but yet enough so that poor specimens will prevent the group from scoring high.

The best candidates are a group of robust, healthy breeding size pairs that are close enough in size so that all members can be reasonably be expected to reproduce. In addition, the pairs should exhibit the finnage, body size and colors expected of the species. Conversely, if the group includes a specimens of substantially different size, or specimens in poor health and condition, the point total of the group will be lowered, lessening the chance to win. A special judging sheet has been designed for the unique requirements of this class.

7.6 Disqualification:
An entry can be disqualified under the following conditions, and the appropriate area of the judging sheet shall be checked. The pair will be disqualified if either the male or the female exhibit any of the disqualification criteria noted below. As soon as a disqualifying condition is noted, no further judging need take place.

Hybrids.
Death or near death of either fish.
Evidence of serious, life threatening disease.
Deformities in major body structures; head, spine, eyes, jaw, abdomen, caudal peduncle, fins except isolated bent rays or torn membranes.
Extremely poor condition, emaciation, hollow abdomen, or substantial physical damage.
Mixed species, male and female are not of the same species or sub-species.

NOTE: MISIDENTIFICATION IS NOT A BASIS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

8.0 Administrative Procedures:

8.1. Chief Convention Judge:
The Chairman of the Judging Committee will act as the Chief Convention Judge, and if the he or she is not in attendance, or otherwise cannot perform the function of the Chief Judge, the next ranking member of the Judging Committee in attendance shall so serve, and so on. If no members of the Judging Committee are available, the most senior Certified Judge in attendance shall serve in this capacity. The Chief Judge shall perform the duties and possess the authorities herein required, and shall assure that the provisions of the A.K.A. judging program are observed.

8.2 Selection of Judges:

8.2.1 Convention Judges: Convention judges shall be selected by the Chairman of the Judging Committee from the A.K.A. issued Certified Judges List. Class judges selected shall be assigned to the classes in which they are certified. Senior judges can be assigned to any class. Under no circumstances shall any judge be allowed to judge a class in which he has an entry, or knows specifically to whom a particular entry belongs.

8.2.2 Regional or Local Show Judges: Regional or local show judges can be either Class or Senior Judges selected from the A.K.A. issued Certified Judges List, and they can judge any class within the regional or local show.

8.3 New Classes, Demonstration Classes, Class Eliminations, and Alterations:

8.3.1 New Class/Demonstration Class Process:
New classes can be added directly by the BOT and/or the Judging Committee. This is normally done in consultation between committees, individuals and others. The Chairman of the Judging Committee will nominally chair a discussion on this issue prior to the installation of a new class. The process for the installation of a new class is outlined as follows:

Step 1: A suggestion or a petition for a new class is to be made to the Chairman of the Judging Committee. This suggestion of petition can be made by any individual member of the AKA or any officer or official of the AKA, or by direction of the BOT.

Step 2: The Chairman of the Judging Committee shall evaluate the request, gather relevant data, estimate the support such a class may be expected to have, and present the findings to the AKA Judging Committee for evaluation and discussion.

Step 3: At the appropriate time when those discussions appear to be at a conclusion, the Chairman of the Judging Committee is to bring the request to a vote.

Step 4: If the request is not approved, the Chairman of the Judging Committee shall notify the Judging Committee members, the BOT Chairman and the petitioner of the committee's action.

Step 5: If the request is approved, the new class will enter the "Demonstration Class" phase as detailed below. The Chairman of the Judging Committee shall so notify the parties as above as well as the show committee Chairman of the upcoming annual convention.

Step 6: The Chairman of the Judging Committee shall write a definition of the Demonstration Class, and design a judging sheet if the Demonstration Class cannot be accommodated by the existing sheet designs.

Step 7: The Chairman of the Judging Committee shall publish in the BNL a description of the demonstration class and any other relevant information that may be of interest to the members about the new class.

8.3.2. Demonstration Class to Permanent Class Process:
Once a Demonstration Class has been implemented, it has a life of two years with an additional optional year before it can become permanent. At the end of the two years or three years if the Judging Committee extends the evaluation time, the Chairman of the Judging Committee shall conduct an evaluation of the how well the class had been supported, an estimate of its popularity and any other relevant issues that are germane to a determination of whether the class should be made permanent. Once completed, the Chairman of the Judging Committee shall present the findings to the Judging Committee and conduct a discussion to determine whether the class should be made permanent.

If the Judging Committee votes to make the class permanent, it shall be added to the list of classes and the relevant parties so notified and an announcement made in the BNL. If rejected, notifications of that decision shall also be given in the same manner.

8.4 Awards:

8.4.1 Minimum Points:
In order to win an award, an entry should have a score of at least 75 points. Therefore, at least 3 entries should score 75 or more points to award the full complement of prizes. If the judging team determines that the minimum points rule is violated (see pp. 6.3.2 Step 5.), they may, at their option select three winners from those non-pointed entries as provided in pp. 6.3.2 Step 5. above. The judges can also determine that no entries are entitled to an award.

8.4.2 Class Awards:
There are three awards per class. The entry with the greatest number of points wins the class. Second and third place are awarded to the next highest scoring entries. As noted above, there is no requirement to award prizes where the minimum points rule (pp. 6.3.2 Step 5.) is not met..

8.4.3 Honorable Mentions:
There is no requirement to award honorable mentions. However, the show officials may issue such awards at their option.

8.4.4 Best in Show Award:
All first place winners, regardless of their point totals, are eligible for the Best in Show Award. All class judges participate in the selection for the Best-in-Show award. The process is directed by the Chief Judge or his or her assignee if the Chief Judge has an entry in contention. The Chief Judge does not vote unless there is a tie. If there is a tie, the Chief Judge shall cast the tie-breaking vote to determine the winner.

Typically, the class winners are staged in one area and are examined by each judge. A series of votes is taken by the Chief Judge, each narrowing the field until two remain. The final vote determines the winner from these remaining entries. If the judges cannot select two final entries, the Chief Judge shall select two from the immediately preceding vote, and conduct the final vote. There is no limit on the time and number of votes taken, however, there is a need to complete the voting in a timely manner so that the fish room can be opened for viewing. In this regard, the Chief Judge is charged with the responsibility to expedite the process to a fair and rapid conclusion.

8.4.6 Special Awards:
There are a series of special awards which are sponsored by the A.K.A., Affiliate Clubs of the A.K.A., foreign killifish associations, and individuals. These special awards are to be listed each year by the Chief Judge and the upcoming Convention Chairman advised with regard to which trophies the show committee will supply. Verification of the private award shall be made some months prior to the convention, and the Chief Judge should obtain a description of the private award, who is to award it, and how it is supplied or otherwise financed.

The Judging Committee and the BOT have the right to accept or reject private awards. The policy for the submission, acceptance and rejection of private awards is not part of this operating procedure, but rather shall be controlled through relevant policy procedures.
The criteria for awarding special awards is governed by the provisions specific to those awards. The chief Judge and members of the Judging Committee will determine the winners of the special awards in accordance with those criteria.

The special A.K.A. awards are permanent until otherwise determined by the BOT. The installation, maintenance or elimination of AKA awards is entirely the province of the BOT and although the Judging Committee can be called upon to participate in any relevant discussions in this regard, it does not have the authority to change the status of, introduce, or eliminate A.K.A. sponsored awards.

The Permanent A.K.A. awards are listed with the authorized classes in Appendix B.

8.5. Authority to Interpret:
If the Chief Judge cannot resolve judging related problems, or where this standard requires interpretation, the resolution of the problems or the interpretation of this standard shall fall to the following, in order of availability: Judging Committee Chairman, Judging Committee Member, Chairman of the A.K.A. Board of Trustees, Convention Chairman

8.6 Judging records:
The judging results are to be recorded electronically or manually in some manner that includes the following information: The class entry number, the entrants name, the entry score and the award won, if applicable. If not already summed by the judges, the judging forms for each entry shall be summed to determine the total points. After completion of the judging, the ledger or electronic record shall be made available for inspection by anyone.

8.7 The Judging Room: The display room where the judging is to be done shall be isolated during the judging process from both the public and the show personnel except as noted below. The display room shall only be accessible to the Chief Judge, his staff, the selected judges, the Convention Chairman, the Chairman and members of the A.K.A. Judging Committee, and the Chairman of the A.K.A. Convention personnel shall only be allowed entrance if urgent convention business needs to be conducted with the Chief Judge or his staff.

8.8 Opening the Fish Room to the Public: Accessibility to the fish room is determined by Convention officials except during the judging process as noted above. The display room may be opened to the public only after all judging is complete and the best in show determined. Determination of special award winners and the public posting of winners may be done after the display room is opened to the public.

American Killifish Association

Judging Program

Part 2.

Certified Judges Program

The Procedure for Certifying Judges

Revision C: 9/02. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
Revision B: 4/94. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
Revision A: 4/82 Original Issue: C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee

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1.0 Purpose:
The purpose of this program is to establish and maintain a group of certified judges, people who have met the requirements of this program and its certifying procedures, and who have maintained membership in the American Killifish Association.

2.0 Certified Judges List:
At least once per year, the Judging Committee shall issue a list of people who are qualified in accordance with the provisions of this program, and publish such list in an American Killifish Association publication. This list is also supplied to various committees of the A.K.A. for various administrative purposes, and sanctioned show hosts who require the list to engage Certified Judges in order to fulfill the sanctioning requirements.

3.0 Levels of Certification:
There are two levels of certification, Senior and Class.

3.1 Senior Judge:
The senior judge is qualified to judge all classes of killifish hi any level of competition. The Senior judge is one who has met the following requirements:

Has gained certification in accordance with the provisions of this document in at least seven (7) classes.

Is a member in good standing of the American Killifish Association.

Has met and continues to meet the administrative requirements of this program.

3.2 Class Judge:
The Class judge is one who has met the following requirements:

He has gained certification in accordance with the provisions of this document in one or more classes, but less than seven (7).

He is a member in good standing of the American Killifish Association.

Has met and continues to meet the administrative requirements of this program.

The Class Judge is subject to some limitations that the Senior Judge is not, and these limitations relate to the level of competition.

3.2.1 National Convention:
The Class Judge is limited to judging the class in which he is qualified. At the option of the Chief Judge of the National Convention, the Class Judge may be utilized to judge a closely related class where no qualified Class or Senior Judge is available.

3.2.2 Regional or "Mini" conventions:
In addition to the class(es) in which the Class Judge holds certification, the Class Judge may judge classes within the same genera or recognized group which is considered closely related.

3.2.3 Local Aquarium Shows:
The Class Judge may judge any killifish entries.

4.0 Judging Duties and Responsibilities:
It is the duty of the Certified Judge to accept judging assignments whenever it is possible to do so. The Certified Judge is considered a representative of the American Killifish Association, and an ambassador of the killifish hobby in general. As such, the Judge is one who is:

…. well versed in the history and organization of the American Killifish Association, and its member benefits and services.

…. well versed in the fundamentals of the aquarium fish hobby.

…. well versed in the technical status, maintenance, and propagation methods of killifish, and in the standards by which killifish are judged.

5.0 Certification Procedures:
There are two methods through which a candidate may gain certification status. One method is used at sanctioned shows to test the candidate's qualifications, and the other is designed to service those who are not able to attend sanctioned shows.

Prior to proceeding with the certification process, the candidate is urged to obtain a copy of two instructive publications which are available from the Chairman of the Judging Committee. Please contact the Chairman for purchasing details.

5.1 Methods for Certifying at Sanctioned Shows:
This method contains provisions by which the candidate gains certification by directly judging entrants at A.K.A. sanctioned shows. No certifications can be gained at shows, which are not sanctioned by the A.K.A.

5.1.1 Notification:
The candidate is charged with the responsibility of notifying show or A.K.A. officials that he or she desires to take a certification examination. There is no limit on the number of classes one can test for. There may, however, be practical limits, imposed by the show schedule, to the number of class tests that can be taken.

5.1.2 The Oversight Official:
The Oversight Official acts as a representative of the A.K.A. for the purpose of conducting Certification examinations. There may be more than one Oversight Official at an event. The Oversight Official shall be determined in the following order of priority, depending on who is available to conduct the examination.

A member of the Judging Committee
A Senior Certified Judge
A Class Certified Judge.

Since sanctioned shows must use a Certified Judge to maintain sanctioning, one or more of the above will always be available.

The Oversight Official is responsible for assuring the methods herein outlined as well as the provisions of the Judging Standard are adhered to. Unless the Oversight Official is a member of the Judging Committee, he or she cannot pass on policy questions, or authorize a variation to the methods herein specified, or to the rules associated with the Judging Standard. The Oversight Official shall execute the following tasks:

5.1.2a. Determination of Class:
The examination shall be class specific. It is common in regional and local shows for the class designations to be at variance with the A.K.A. defined classes. Where entries at local or regional shows overlap the Class designations specified by the A.K.A., the oversight official will decide to which class the certification applies to, and shall thereafter select entries to be judged in accordance with that determination. As a result, certification can be gained in only the class so determined.

5.1.2b. The Examination:
The oversight official will coordinate the examination so that it does not interfere with show functions. The oversight personnel shall determine the status of the class, and select six (6) entries that are appropriate to that determination. The entry identification, the A.K.A. class to which it applies, and the name of the both the candidate and the oversight official is noted on the A.K.A. judging sheet. The candidate shall then judge the entries assigned without assistance and in accordance with the A.K.A. Judging Standard. The oversight person shall collect the candidates completed judging forms and obtain from the show personnel the official forms for those entries that were completed by the certified judges. Copies of the Certified Judges forms and those of the candidate are to be bundled and sent to the Chairman of the Judging Committee, or the Chairman's assignees for evaluation. If copies of the Certified Judges forms are not available, the oversight official shall clearly note the score of the Certified Judge on each of the candidate's forms.

5.2 Methods for Certifying without attending shows:
This method addresses the candidate's inability to be present at sanctioned shows, and accommodates the examination process by requiring a preliminary examination to test general knowledge levels, and individual exams for the specific class certifications desired.

5.2.1 Notification: The candidate is to request certification from the Chairman of the Judging Committee who will arrange for the assignment of the Oversight Official as indicated below, and who will begin the certification process. The request may be verbal or in writing. There is no limit on the number of classes for which certification is requested, but the Chairman of the Judging Committee may schedule the examinations over a period of time.

5.2.2 Description of Examination.
The examination consists of two parts: A written examination and a class oriented judging session. These examinations are designed to test both the specific knowledge of typical members of the class being tested for, as well as the candidates overall knowledge of killifish related matters the applicants

5.2.3 Examination:

5.2.3a. Written Test:
This examination consists of 20 to 30 true/false and multiple choice type questions which cover the applicants knowledge of the particular class of fish being tested for, his or her knowledge of killifish related matters and the American killifish Association in general.

5.2.3b. Judging Test:
The judging test requires the candidate to judge a series of photographic utilizing the appropriate judging forms and in accordance with the provisions of the judging program.

5.2.4 Proctoring: The candidate must take the following examinations in the presence of a proctor approved by a member of the Judging Committee. It is always preferred that the proctor be a certified judge, but when that is not possible, then a non judge proctor will be approved. The set of slides and the judging forms are sent to the proctor along with instructions for conducting the test. The proctor displays the slides and each is individually judged by the candidate without outside assistance. There is no time limit. After completion, and judging forms and slide set are submitted to the Judging Committee Chairman, or a person the Chairman assigns, for evaluation. The Judging results are evaluated as noted above, and a determination rendered in accordance with the criteria previously delineated.

5.3 Criteria for Certification:
The acceptance for certification is based on a mathematical analysis of the candidate's scores as they compare to those of the Judging Team. No matter the magnitude of the scores, if fish A is determined by the Judging Team to be superior to fish B, the successful should be similarly so. It is recognized however, that some judges tend to point "High" while others point "Low". Therefore, two mathematical tests are applied, one that evaluates the similarity of the raw scores, and one that evaluate whether the trend of the scoring is similar, regardless of how close the actual numbers are.

Both models depend on whether the candidate's scores or trend is within a certain percentage of the Judging Team's scores or trends. This percentage may be altered as time and experience dictate. For details of the current limits, please contact the Chairman of the Judging Committee.

If the candidate's scores pass either test, certification is granted. Certification is denied only when BOTH tests are failed.

Criteria – Comparison of Raw Scores: The difference in the Standard Deviation of the scores. The difference between the standard deviation of the candidate's scores and those of the Judging Team must remain within a percentage determined by the Chief Judge.

Criteria – Comparison of Consistency: The first order regression (a trend line) of the scores is made and the difference in the slope of those trend lines compared. The difference in the scores must remain within a certain percentage determined by the Chief Judge.

5.4 Results:
The applicant will be advised within 30 days of the examination results.

5.5 Retaking Examinations:
There is no limit on taking examinations.

5.6 Costs and Fees: The candidate will be responsible for the postage and production costs associated with providing the examination materials.

5.7 Term of Certification: A Certified Judge will remain certified for a period of four (4) years from his or her last certification providing that his or her membership during this period is uninterrupted. Certification terminates with the termination of membership. Certification is resumed upon rejoining, but the period remaining to the recertification requirement does not change, and always runs from the last

recertification date. For example, if a Certified Judge's certification was last confirmed in June, 2001, recertification will be required on or before June, 2005 regardless of whether membership in the AKA lapses and is renewed during that period.

5.8 Recertification:

5.8.1 Recertification for Current Judges:
Each judge is required to recertify within a four (4) year period from his or her last certification. New certifications will start another four (4) year period. Judges with current certifications may recertify simply by judging at the national convention or at a sanctioned regional show. Each such judging event will automatically confer recertification for an additional four (4) year period, extending from the date of the event..

5.8.2 Recertification of Lapsed Judges:
Judges whose certifications have lapsed can only recertify through retesting in accordance with pp. 5.1 or 5.2 above. In essence, a lapsed certification places th judge in the same position as a new candidate.

American Killifish Association

Judging Program

Part 3.

New Judges Guide

Revision C: 9/02. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
Revision B: 4/94. C. Nunziata: A.K.A. Judging Committee
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Forward:
The purpose of this section is to acquaint the Judge with the Judging Standard, and how it is applied in the evaluation of killifish.

1.0 Purpose
The purpose of any judging standard is to establish a system whereby the act of evaluating to whatever criteria, is evenly and fairly accomplished. Furthermore, the judging has to be completed in a time frame consistent with the requirements of the organization. The American Killifish Association judging system serves to establish a framework for establishing a set of criteria by which killifish are judged as well as to implement methods of employing those criteria as an aid to the killifish Judge, as an educational tool for the killifish hobbyist, and as a procedure which can be consistently applied from event to event.

2.0 Theory of Judging:
The "theory of judging", as interpreted by the Judging Committee of the A.K.A., can be summed up in one phrase:

"THE SPECIMEN SHALL BE A HEALTHY REPRESENTATIVE OF ITS SPECIES."

A particular fish can only be judged with respect to its own kind. As a representative of its species, it must exhibit the characteristics known to define that species, and it should not exhibit characteristics not normally found in that species. It should be free of defects, abnormalities, damage and other conditions which may indicate less than full health and vitality, and it should be capable of reproducing.

3.0 Objectivity/Subjectivity:
Ideally, each candidate should be judged objectively. Although subjectivity cannot be erased entirely, it can be minimized by the establishment of a uniform set of individualized and species-specific criteria by which each species is judged; a point system which does not allow the inordinate loading of one set of characteristics over others; and administrative actions which further the goal of objectivity.

Because there are no specific species standards, the experience and knowledge of the judge are paramount to proper judging. The judge's level of knowledge must reflect the current body knowledge as expressed in published literature. The judge must be cognizant of the characteristics, behavior and physical nuances of the specimen being judged; and must be well grounded in the fundamentals of fish physiology, ecology, and related matters which can impinge on the appearance of the candidate under show conditions.

4.0 Classification and Identification of Entries:
The class designations published by the Judging Committee are the only authorized class designations to be used at the A.K.A. national convention. It is the responsibility of the chief judge to assure proper placement of entries, and to confirm or determine their correct identification. Only the Chief Judge has the authority to re-identify and/or re-classify an entry. However, it is the responsibility of the judge to report such errors wherever they are encountered, and advise the Chief Judge of the misidentification.

5.0 Determination of Awards:

5.1 Class awards: Three awards per class are given. The entry with the greatest number of points wins the class. Second and third place are awarded to the next highest entries. There is no requirement to award prizes if the minimum requirement of 75 points is not met. However, if in the unlikely event that three (3) entries do not score the minimum 75 points, entries that score between 70 and 75 points can be given an award. No awards can be given to entries scoring less than 70 points.

5.2 Special Awards: Aside from the Best in Show Award, official and private special awards are governed by the provisions specific to those awards. The chief Judge and members of the Judging Committee will determine the winners of the special awards after the judging is complete.

5.3 Best in Show Award: The Best in show is selected by a simple majority vote of the judges present from the class winners. Typically, the class winners are staged in one area and systematically eliminated from consideration until the winner is determined. The process is directed by the Chief Judge or his or her assignee.

6.0 The Judging Team and the General Judging Process:

6.1 The Judging Team:
There are two judges assigned to each killifish class. Non-fish classes do not require more than one judge. As provided below, each entry is to be judged by both judges working together. Both are to examine the selected entries together, and complete one judging sheet for each. If irreconcilable differences occur, the matter under dispute is to be brought to the Chief Judge for adjudication. The decision of the Chief Judge is final.

6.2 The Judging Sheet Point Total: The judging sheet may be summed by the judging team or by staff personnel authorized by the Chief Judge. The results for the entry are then recorded by staff or show personnel on a ledger or on a computer organized by class and entry number. This ledger, often a computer printout, is available to inspection by anyone after the judging is completed.

6.3 Ties: Ties shall be broken by mutual agreement of the two class judges. If they cannot agree, the tie is broken by the chief judge. Point awards are not to be altered, but the judging ledger shall contain the comment "Awarded on Tiebreak"

7.0 The Competitive Classes:
All classes to one degree or another incorporate judging fundamental characteristics; body, fins, deportment, condition which are detailed below. And although the relative value of these characteristics vary for some special classes, the requirements of and issues involved in judging these characteristics does not change from class to class.

7.1 Pairs Classes:
All classes except the Matched Breeding Pair and the Breeder Group Classes shall consist of a single pair, male and female. See special provisions for the hermaphrodite Rivulus marmoratus below. Entrants sometimes enter multiple males or females in pair classes. The Chief Judge or the Class Judges will determine which pair to judge, and all other fish will be disregarded.

7.2 Hermaphrodites: Rivulus marmoratus is the only hermaphrodite that will appear at A.K.A. conventions. To keep balance with the other pairs classes, there must be two specimens entered. Because hermaphrodites are nearly always female in appearance, a special judging sheet has been constructed for use in judging them. This sheet proportionalizes the scoring so that it compares with a standard entry.

7.3 The Matched Breeding Pairs Class:
This is a special class wherein two pairs are judged not only in the normal manner, but then against each other for matching characteristics. A special judging sheet has been designed for this purpose.

7.4 The Breeding Group Class: As in the Matched Breeding Pair class, this is also a special class wherein three or more pairs are judged. It differs however in that the group is not only judged in the normal manner, but with additional emphasis as a breeding group capable of reproduction. Therefore, compatibility among the entire group as well as breeding potential are much more important in this class than other characteristics. A special judging sheet has been designed for this purpose.

8.0 The Judging System:

8.1 Judging Forms: The judging forms are designed for ease of use, and to speed the judging process. Points are awarded for each category by circling the appropriate number. If applicable, the area reserved for disqualification or minimum points are checked as appropriate. Written comments by the judge are encouraged as they serve to inform and educate. Each form must be signed by both judges.

There are five judging forms used in the A.K.A. system. They are:

Standard form for Pairs Judging
Special form for Hermaphrodites
Special form for Matched Breeding Pairs
Special form for Breeder Group class
Special form for under 75 point entries. “Checklist for Under 75 Point Entries”

8.2 The Point System: The point system, as demonstrated on the standard and special Judging Forms, is designed to properly weigh each set of characteristics with respect to the others. For example, an entry which exhibits excellent finnage but a poor body structure will never outpoint another entry with average fins and body structure.

Likewise, the "spectacular" or eye catching characteristics of some species will not overshadow the more subtle but equally important characteristics of another because the "spectacular" characteristic can only garner the maximum points allowed for the group of characteristics to which it belongs.

Likewise, one of the major aspects of the A.K.A. standard is the recognition of the female's importance in furthering the A.K.A. goals of propagation and maintenance of healthy killifish. Historically, The female has played an inferior role to the male when judging a pair. Yet the value of the female, especially when auctioned, is equal to that of the male. Circumstances where a pair scores high even where the female is in poor condition, and/or incapable of reproduction, are eliminated with the emphasis this program puts on female condition and compatibility. The female is given enough points so that the pair cannot win if she is not, at a minimum, healthy and capable of reproduction.

9.0 The Judging Procedure and Process:

An outline of the general operational procedure consists of:

Step 1: Preliminary examination:
The judging team is to scan the class and determine which entries have the potential to score more than 75 points, and which do not. In addition, the preliminary scan may reveal entries that are subject to disqualification as defined below. At the completion of this initial examination, the judging team will:

Determine which entries are to be pointed
Determine which entries are not to be pointed
Determine which entries are to be disqualified

Step 2: Point Judging: In accordance with the provisions of the Judging program, point each entry that has been predetermined to have the potential to score 75 or more points.

Step 3: Under 75 judging: Complete an Under 75 judging sheet for those entries designated not to be pointed. For each entry that does not have the potential to score 75, the form entitled "Checklist for 75 Point Entries" is to be completed.

Step 4: Disqualification: Using a standard judging sheet, designate the appropriate reason for the disqualification.

Step 5. Minimum Points Rule: Determine whether the minimum points rule is violated. In the unlikely event that a class does not have at least three (3) entries that score 75 or more points, the judges are to select the best candidates that are likely to score at least 70 points from the remaining group and score them on the appropriate judging sheet. Entries under 70 cannot receive an award, and are not to be pointed.

Step 6: Return completed forms to the judging committee staff.

9.1 Preliminary Examination of Entries:

9.1.1 Selection of Entries to be Pointed: Only entries with the potential of scoring 75 or more points will be pointed. All others are not pointed. Although the determination of whether or not to judge is made by the judging team members, the Chief Judge may add candidates as his or her option. Only one sheet for both team members is required for each of these entries. If an entry scores 75 or under, you need not then complete the aforementioned checklist.

The judging team examines each entry to determine whether it has the potential to receive 75 or more points. Each candidate is then pointed for each characteristic appearing on the appropriate judging sheet, and in accordance with the Point Judging Process detailed below. Judging may be discontinued as soon as the specimen loses 25 points.

9.1.2 Selection of Entries not to be Pointed: Those entries deemed not to be capable of scoring 75 or more points are not to be pointed at all. The "Checklist for Under 75 Point Entries" is used to note the reasons for the decision not to appoint. One such sheet is to be completed for all non-pointed entries. The purpose of this form is to give the entrant an evaluation of his entry, and a reason why it was not individually pointed. You will note that there are comments for every major characteristic that is judged

on the standard form. Simply check as many of the comments that apply, and the judge is encouraged to be as complete as possible. Please note that a form must be completed, even if there is only one comment.

9.1.3 Selection of Entries to be Disqualified: The judging system includes provisions for automatic disqualification so that candidates which will obviously score very low due to some grossly inadequate condition will not be pointed, thereby speeding the judging process. The pair will be disqualified if either the male or the female exhibit any of the disqualification criteria noted below.

A. Hybrids.
B. Death or near death of either fish.
C. Evidence of serious, life threatening disease.
D. Deformities in major body structures; head, spine, eyes, jaw, abdomen, caudal peduncle, fins except isolated bent rays or torn membranes.
E. Extremely poor condition, emaciation, hollow abdomen, or substantial physical damage.
F. Mixed species, male and female are not of the same species or sub-species.

NOTE: MISIDENTIFICATION IS NOT A BASIS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

As soon as a disqualifying condition is noted, no further judging need take place. and the appropriate area of the judging sheet shall be checked.

9.2 The Point Judging Process - Pairs

Each major physical characteristic, condition, behavior and estimates of reproducibility are all included as criteria in the judging process of pair entries. It is recommended at this point to have a standard judging sheet available as you go through the judging methods enumerated below.

9.2.1 Fins: Fins are judged as to their adherence to the size, shape, color and pattern expected of the species. Fins are pointed down if rays are bent or damaged, or the membranes between rays are torn or split, or the expected color or intensity of color is not apparent. For example, a fully formed crescent pattern in the caudal of A. cinnamomeum is essential to that species, and a break in that pattern is downpointed.

9.2.2 Body Size: The size is defined as the normal adult size, and extraordinary size does not score higher. In order to recognize that no particular effort or talent is required to raise a fish to 70% or so of its normal adult size, point awards are not linear with % of adult size. The normal
adult size is that which is expected for the species, and if that is not certain, then consultation with appropriate texts or with the Chief Judge is to be made.

Ref. Size.	Male (6 max)	Female (3 max)
if 100%	award 6 pts.	award 3 pts.
if 90%	award 5 pts.	award 3 pts.
if 80%	award 3 pts.	award 2 pts.
if 70%	award 1 pt.	award 1 pt.
less than 70%	award 0 pts.	award 0 pts.

9.2.3 Body Shape: A very important characteristic. The shape is judged not only against the descriptions in the literature, but also for smoothness of body lines, absence of anomalies such as bumps, concave or

thin areas. . Included in this characteristic is the shape of the head, snout, jaw, operculum, etc. The body shape is to be downpointed if any of the above are noted, or where the candidate varies from the species norm. Pay particular attention here with respect to the results of poor nutrition or genetic deformity, both of which are to be severely downpointed.

3.9.2.4 Body Color and Pattern: Color and pattern is judged with respect to what is expected of the species. Colors shall be bright and intense unless otherwise expected. This category shall be downpointed for variability or color or pattern outside the norm except where variability is expected and common in the species.

9.2.5 Deportment:
Deportment is defined as the actions and attitudes of the pair in the context of show conditions. The salient deportment characteristics include the position a fish normally holds within the confines of the tank, its movement within the tank, its level of activity or lack thereof, and how the pair relate to each other. Substantial deviation from the expected norm is to be downpointed. The problem here is to determine whether the entry is reacting to show conditions, or is not behaving properly because of some other cause, such as the onset of disease. Expected stress associated with the show environment is not to be downpointed.

9.2.6 Condition:
An extremely important category, condition here is referring to the physical condition of the specimen. It is required that the fish be strong, vibrant, and free from major deformities and exhibits a minimum of minor deformities resulting from healed wounds, etc. Downpointing results from the following
:

G. Torn, missing or poorly healed scales.
H. Cataracts or cloudy eyes.
I. Cuts, swelling or other injury related conditions.
J. Poorly healed lip or mouth structures.
K. Overall weakness, lethargy or unusual motions.
L. Non-fatal disease, or minor infections.

9.2.7 As Pair: The "as pair" category was introduced to promote the exhibition of healthy pairs capable of reproducing. In this section, the pair rather than each individual fish is judged.

There are two sub-divisions, compatibility and breeding potential.

9.2.7a. Compatibility: This designation is primarily concerned with the relative physical size of the male and female. For proportionally small specimens the relationship should be constant. Therefore, this category is downpointed if the male or female is too small or too large proportionally for the other. Greatly mismatched fish, more than twice the expected ratio, should receive no points under this sub-section.

9.2.7b. Breeding Potential: Adhering to the goal of the A.K.A. to promote the propagation of killifish, each entry should have the potential for reproduction, either now or in the reasonable future. Therefore, young fish not yet at their breeding size can be judged if their condition warrants a conclusion that they can be reasonably be expected to reproduce in the future. In the same context, fish too old to be reasonably expected to reproduce, are to be downpointed under this category. If fish are too young to determine their breeding potential, they stand in the same position as those too old and are downpointed accordingly. The downpointing is not as severe however, because the young fish may be able to reproduce in the future. Those specimens in the prime of their breeding potential receive 100% of the points in this category.

9.3 Hermaphrodites:
Rivulus marmoratus is the only killifish that is a true hermaphrodite. Two individual fish must be entered, and the pointing system is essentially the same as it is for pairs, but equalized for each individual, eliminating the male/female pointing ratios used in pair judging. The individual categories; body, fins, condition, et. al. are defined as noted above for pairs judging, and are judged in the same manner.

9.4 Matched Breeding Pairs:
This class requires the entry of 2 pairs of the same species. The ideal candidate for this class are two pairs that not only perfectly match each other, but are also each excellent representatives of their species. The ideal here is that each pair should be as "bookends" or as nearly identical as possible to each other as possible. The individual categories; body, fins, condition, et. al. are defined as noted above for pairs judging, and are judged in the same manner.

The point system reflects this ideal by requiring each pair be individually judged fulfilling the requirement as an ideal representative of species; the judging techniques are the same as noted above for the pairs classes. In addition, each pair is compared to the other for size, color and pattern, condition and deportment, thereby fulfilling the requirement for similarity – the ideal “bookends”. The point disposition is 36 points for each pair, and 28 points for the pair to pair comparison.

9.5 The Breeding Group:
This class requires the entry of at least 3 pairs of the same species, and there is no limit on the total number of pairs entered. However, only a maximum of 6 pairs will be pointed. Where more than 6 pairs are entered, the judging team will select the 6 pairs to be pointed. The judging sheet is set up to judge a maximum of six (6) pairs.

The idea of the breeding group is quite literal - a group of fish that are excellent representative of their kind, and have a high probability of reproducing. This criteria results in a point distribution which is heavily but not entirely biased toward compatibility and breeding potential. The individual categories; body, fins, condition, et. al. are defined as noted above for pairs judging, and are judged in the same manner.

To minimize the obvious tendency to treat the group as a superset of matched breeding pairs, each pair is primarily judged on its own, with less emphasis on its relation to the other pairs. The points for pair to pair compatibility is necessary to reflect the idea that the breeding group works best when the fish are about the same size. This size comparison is for purposes of the viability of the breeding group as opposed to the size comparison in the Matched Breeding Pair class, where the comparison is for the purpose of matching. There is much less emphasis on the cosmetic characteristics, but yet enough so that poor specimens will prevent the group from scoring high.

The best candidates are a group of robust, healthy breeding size pairs that are close enough in size so that all members can be reasonably be expected to reproduce. In addition, the pairs should exhibit the finnage, body size and colors expected of the species. Conversely, if the group includes a specimens of substantially different size, or specimens in poor health and condition, the point total of the group will be lowered, lessening the chance to win. A special judging sheet has been designed for the unique requirements of this class.

APPENDIX A.

Standard Judging Sheet – Pairs
Standard Judging Sheet – Matched Breeding Pairs
Standard Judging Sheet – Breeder Group
Standard Judging Sheet – Hermaphrodites
Non-Pointed Entry Checklist

NOTE: THESE DOCUMENTS ARE INCLUDED AS SEPARATE ADOBE .PDF FILES. YOU WILL NEED AN ADOBE READER PROGRAM TO ACCESS THEM.

APPENDIX B.

Authorized Classes and Special Awards

A.K.A. Sponsored Special Awards

Best in Show:
See the Awards section above for the selection process.

The Werner Award for the Best Photographic Entry:
The slide or print selected as the best entry. The class judge selects the best entry from the two photographic classes.

The Latzel Award for the Best Foreign Entry:
The best of the entries submitted from outside the United States.

The winner of this award is selected by the Judging Committee. Since absolute point totals are not directly comparable across classes, the points should not be used as the sole determining factor. Class winners that were entered from outside the United States are to be given consideration because of the presumption that these are indeed good specimens. However, because a class winner may not be the best specimen entered from the target group of entrants, the Judging Committee shall examine other entries that have placed for a prize and compare all the logical candidates directly to assure that the best entry is chosen. The Judging Committee may enlist the services of Senior Judges in the process, and to the extent that the Committee requires in order to come to the best decision.

The Cahalan Award for the Best Entry among Scriptaphyosemion, Archiaphyosemion Callopanchax.

The award was originally for the “Best Roloffia” but has been revised to include the new genera that represent the species in the original “Roloffia” designation.

The same technique used to select the recipient of the Latzel award is to be employed to determine the winner of the Cahalan Award. All reasonable candidates shall be directly examined by the Judging Committee and/or Senior Judges who are aiding in the process to determine the winner. Point totals should not be the determining factor.

Class Definitions:
Please consult "Killifish Species List for Class Placement", a separate publication of the Judging Committee that lists every species and genera and their proper class placement. Unless otherwise noted, winners are determined by the relevant scoring procedures included in this procedure.

Class 1: North American Natives Except Rivulus.
Includes all North American native killifish genera. "North American" is defined to include Canada and Mexico.

Class 2: Rivulus: Includes all members of the genus.

Class 3: South American Annuals.
Includes the members of all the genera described as "Annual Killifish" found in South America.

Class 4: Nothobranchius**:** Includes all members of the genus.

Class 5: Fundulopanchax, (all subgenera except paraphyosemion) and Callopanchax.

Class 6: Fundulopanchax paraphyosemion

Class 7: Fundulopanchax sjoestedti – The "Blue Gularis"

Class 8: Aphyosemion mesoaphyosemion except "calliurum" types.
All mesoaphyosemion species not considered members of the "calliurum" group.

Class 9: Aphyosemion mesoaphyosemion "calliurum" types.
This group designation has been used to divide the mesoaphyosemion subgenera.

Class 10: Aphyosemion chromaphyosemion

Class 11: Aphyposemion scriptaphyosemion and archiaphyosemion

Class 12: Aphyosemion, all other:
All remaining Aphyosemion species not included above.

Class 13: Epiplatys

Class 14: All Other:
Includes all genera not included in any other class.

Class 15: Matched Breeding Pairs.
A special class wherein two pairs are judged not only in the normal manner, but then against each other for matching characteristics. See section 6.2.2.1 and 7.4 for judging details.

Class 16: Breeder Group
A special class wherein at least three and a maximum of six pairs are judged. It differs however in that the group is not only judged in the normal manner, but with additional emphasis as a breeding group capable of reproduction. See section 6.2.2.2 and 7.5 for judging details.

Class 17: Photographic class for prints, color or black and white.
Any print in any format. No restriction on size or method of presentation.
Not pointed, winner selected by the class judge.

Class 18: Photographic class for 35 mm slides, color or black and white.
Not pointed, winner selected by the class judge.

Class 19 Artistic Renderings: The only requirement is that a killifish be somewhere represented in the rendering. Any media, any format, any shape, size or structure.
Not pointed, winner selected by the class judge.