

## OUR FIRST SHOW

By Sue Rostermundt

From the moment of our first meeting in February of 1964, the Riverside Cat Fanciers began to plan our first show, which was held barely a year later on February 27-28, 1965. There was much apprehension on the part of each member

whether our show would be a success or a failure, because most of us had no experience in shows. But the show was very successful and I feel it was due to the spirit of the club members working toward their goal. This I write for those who are in the same position we were, hoping that it will be of some help.

Our President and Secretary, a husband and wife team were the backbone of our show for they were the only members who had shown their cats and their pet shop business

was of great advantage in many ways.

Of much value was the CFA Judging School introduced by Mrs. Betty O'Brien that three of us attended. We took notes and compiled them into a paper that we faithfully followed for the show. This school taught judging and clerking methods, duties of the ring steward and told of items needed for the ring. We had one chief ring steward, an adult to help him and Girl Scouts to clean the cages. The steward is of most importance, he is the keeper of the ring and should be prompt, efficient, unobtrusive and the pacemaker. We feel that keeping on time is of immense consequence in the success of a show. The steward should see that the cages are clean, dry and deodorized, and that the supplies always be on hand and in good amounts. The source of any of the needed materials should be known. The basin on the judge's table should be checked and changed often, at the very least during the break and there should be an adequate supply of paper towels (torn ahead of showtime). Have a large cardboard box under the table for the judges to dispose of hand towels, and another box out of sight for disposal of towels used to clean any accidents in the judge's cages. Clean these boxes often. After each class wash top, bottom, sides and both doors with the solution, we used Zephiran for this, it is used one ounce to a gallon of water. Thoroughly wipe all cages, be especially careful with the male cat classes. Try to be as quiet as possible. It is preferred that no spray cleaners are used, as the sound may frighten the cats. Always leave an empty cage between males. When the cage is clean lay the card on top down. Have the front door of the cage closed and the back door open. In case of a cage accident, ask the judge to remove the cat to another cage, if possible. If it must remain proceed very carefully. Wrap in paper towels, sponge and wipe the cage thoroughly and make a mental note of the cage and clean it extra well during break time. During the breaks, change the solution and the

towels for cleaning. Leave the ring only when all of this is accomplished. A ring steward should be on duty throughout the entire show. If not, there must be a qualified substitute. A steward can benefit so much by learning from the judges, by being alert and helpful at all times to the judge's duties.

Because there is not space for all the duties of the show officials and items needed I suggest you read the CFA Year Book of 1959, "So You Want To Put On A Show!" and "Benching — Setting Up and Tearing Down Your Show" in the 1963 Year Book.

When we had decided upon a date, and let me stress that is it very important that you apply early for your show date to both "Cat Magazine" and the CFA Central Office, we began to select the judges, we needed six, two All Breed, two Short Hair Specialty and two Long Hair Specialty judges. We chose two approved All Breed judges, two approved Specialty judges and two Apprentice judges. The latter two were satisfactory in every way, they were a help in finances for us and were pleased for the chance to judge in our show.

A large scale drawing of the building to be used for the show was made and placed in the entrance at showtime. Cutouts of cages and tables to scale were placed on the drawing so the exact location could be determined prior to setting up. This not only simplified the setting up of the hall but aided the exhibitors in finding their cages.

The ribbons, trophies, catalogs, printing and all items were purchased with great care to be sure that we could get the best quality for the least money. We used plastic under the judging cages, it was less expensive than oil cloth and we plan to acquire new each year in order that each show will have a fresh new look. Regular industrial plastic can be purchased in various weights and widths, a piece thirty inches wide and twenty feet long, adequate for one ring having nine cages will cost approximately one dollar. For each judging table we had black bunting, a good quality fabric that can be laundered. I feel it is important for a neat appearance and for the women who must sit at the tables. On each table we used masking tape to hold a heavy grade rippled plastic that could be easily cleaned and could be gripped by the cats giving them confidence, therefore relaxing and allowing them to be shown at their best. There were sprayers with a deodorant—Odorite, a basin of solution (all of our judges preferred Zephiran which can be purchased at any drug store). We purchased several sizes and types of sponges so the judges might have their choice. The ring steward had written to the judges for their preferences in advance of the show. For the pleasure of the judges we placed on the tables a glass, a covered decanter of ice water, an ashtray and a small vase of flowers. The cage cards were another item placed there. These cards were a great cause of concern. The cost of having them printed is so great that we felt that we must do them ourselves. They should be large enough to be easily seen, ours were five by eight inch unlined index cards with three inch numbers. They should have a smaller number with "OUT" printed in red on the back. This is so the card may be turned to indicate the cat may be returned to its cage. I might add that having the number on the back is a great help when the exhibitors are placing

their cats in the cages. Ours worked out well, but it would be a good idea to make a club project of the card making to do throughout the year, for it will take a great deal of time and it will be difficult to find an efficient way to make them. Each set was placed in a box and had a divider every twenty-five cards. The blocks placed on the judging cases were 2 by 4's cut in eight inch lengths with a five-eighth inch deep groove down the center in which the cards are placed.

The judging school advised that boxes be made to hold ribbons. These were eleven and one-half inches wide and eleven inches long, two and one-half inches high and divided into four compartments two and one-fourth inches wide. The four compartments hold the winner, first, second, and third ribbons. One end is open for easy access of the ribbons.

As the judges arrived at their rings they found a note welcoming them and telling them who the ring steward was and that he was at their disposal, and that we had on hand two complete First Aid Kits made to the specifications of Mrs. Paul Raines in her speech at our Regional Meeting.

One of our members had charge of the snack bar which carried a variety of sandwiches, donuts, potato chips, candy bars, two soft drinks, coffee and tea. I mention the tea because so many were delighted that we offered it. And all that is needed is hot water and tea bags.

The gate was wonderful and I am sure it was the result of extensive advertising on our part. We worked with the local newspapers and are grateful for their co-operation. Most newspapers are interested in local news and are very helpful. On the Sunday before the show there was a half page article with three large pictures of cats that had been supplied by our members. There were many articles and one the Friday before the show telling of the final preparations for the show.

Attractive posters were placed throughout the area. Four of us were on a half hour radio program explaining cat shows, once in early February and once the week before the show. The rest was word of mouth and the President's pet shop was headquarters for this.

In the afternoon of both show days prizes were given. Two manufacturers had donated two carrying cases and three scratching posts, and we sold tickets at ten cents apiece. The drawings added excitement and suspense to what might have been a mid-afternoon lull.

We tried to make the show as pleasant as possible to all. We have since found many areas in which there is need of improvement. One area of great importance was brought to our attention by the member who had charge of motel and hotel reservations. She asked the motels after the show if they had been happy with the cat owners. Most said they would have us back again, but complained of an odor that lingered and of litter scattered over the carpets and floors. As the club putting on the show we might offer the motel management sprayers of Ozium that is very satisfactory in combating such odors. As exhibitors we all might be more considerate toward the motel owner.

Each of our members was congenial and each of us did our part to keep the hall neat and attractive. At the time of Finals the ring stew-

ard consulted the judges in order the tables be set up to the judge's liking. In addition to this the entire ring was scrupulously cleaned. Two other items that need improving for the next show are the need for more ashtrays and trash containers. It has been suggested that we collect small cat food cans throughout the year to be painted and used as ash trays. The trash containers may simply be large cardboard boxes placed strategically throughout the hall. The master of ceremony should remind the people that they are available and ask their co-operation in using them.

I am proud to say that even though we were extremely tired at the end of the show everyone pitched in and began to clear the hall. The exhibitors had been asked and very kindly folded their cages as they left. In record time we had completed the job and our talk had turned to how we could improve our Second Annual Quad Championship Show.