

The Cichlid Chronicles



Volume 2 Issue 5 - September 2014

And now a message from our CCY President



THE CCY Presents:



2nd annual
CLASH OF THE CICHLIDS!!



The Cichlid Show of the Century
SEPTEMBER 27th 2014 1pm

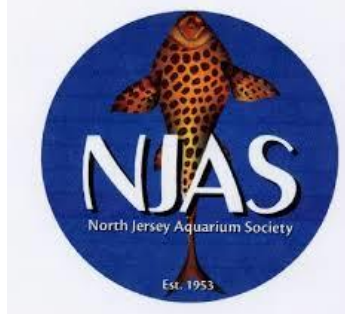
As my 2nd year as CCY President comes to an end I begin to reflect on all we have accomplished as a club. It has been a joyous ride and whether I get the privilege of being CCY President for a 3rd year or if someone comes and continues what's been started- I couldn't be prouder! One of my proudest creations outside of the club itself is our CCY Clash of the Cichlids "Cichlid Show". I would love to see this contest become a yearly event that grows and grows over time. Since the moment I saw the fabulous cichlid show the American Cichlid (ACA) and Capital Cichlid Association (CCA) put together in Washington DC (summer of 2011) I have been hooked! Keeping and raising your cichlids is a wonderful experience but for those of us who have a competitive nature showing your cichlids is a tremendous rush of excitement and fun. Last year we had about 35 entries, this year we have about 60 entries and hopefully next year we will have 100! I will be forever proud if my name is always attached to this event over the years. But events like this don't happen with just one person, it is through the collective efforts of many that an event such as this takes life. I want to thank our CCY Board, sponsors and neighboring clubs for all their work and support of our CCY Cichlid Show. We were able to take our show to a new level this year that's all because of the support we received. Throughout this newsletter we will be recognizing the companies and clubs that made The Clash of the Cichlids a success. Now without further ado, enjoy our cichlid show driven newsletter with many reprinted articles focused on the subject of cichlid and tropical fish shows!

- Scott McLaughlin

Things to Know Before You Show



By Rick Bolger



Reprinted from the North Jersey Aquarium Society Reporter.
1st Place Winner 2000 FAAS article awards



With one eye on your fish room, and the other on your calendar, the answer is "yes," you still have time to prepare a contender or two for that upcoming fish show. The purpose of this tome is to provide people who have never shown a fish - and those who have never shown a winning fish - with a few guidelines for selecting and preparing your show specimens. These guidelines are based on typical judging rules at an ACA or NEC sanctioned show.

The difference between a show contender and an also-ran at most shows depends on five criteria: Size, Color, Deportment, Finnacle, and Condition. Having spent a few years as a scribe for legendary aquarists like Wayne Liebel and Lee Finley, and ultimately trained as a judge by Mike Sheridan, I can assure you that judges seldom have the same standards or approach to these criteria, but somehow the cream always rises to the top in each show. Regardless of the judge's style, it is important to understand these categories, so that you can avoid the pitfalls in each category, and know what it takes to win.

Cichlid Club of York PA

Clash of the Cichlids - CCY Cichlid Show

JUDGING SHEET

ENTRY	<input type="text"/>	
JUDGE'S NUMBER	<input type="text"/>	
SIZE	<input type="text"/>	20 POINTS MAX
DEPORTMENT	<input type="text"/>	20 POINTS MAX
COLOR	<input type="text"/>	20 POINTS MAX
CONDITION	<input type="text"/>	20 POINTS MAX
FINNAGE	<input type="text"/>	20 POINTS MAX
TOTAL POINTS	<input type="text"/>	
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Size

I list this first, because it is the easiest to discern and least disputed of the five. We often use this as an immediate "pass or fail" for fish. Although it is only 20% of the grade, an undersized fish is often dismissed outright in the judge's mind. Despite this fact, many aquarists insist on showing undersized fish! I've talked to a few about this, and they all point to some other outstanding factor, "Yeah, but look at his fins!" or "I know he's small, but there's not a flaw on him." In the judge's eyes, your fish is a baby, and will not be a finalist. This is one area where you have to be sure your fish is right...and the rule of thumb is 4/5ths. Make sure your fish is at least 80% as big as it should be. Have a critical eye, and keep that 6" managuense home. The point of a fish show is to compete (hence the name, "competition") and there is no point in competing unless you intend to win.



Color

Except for bettas, guppies, discus and goldfish, this is the most disputed category. While

judges are often firm in their opinion of size, they tend to soft-pedal the color question. Most react with "color is ok" or "good color"; occasionally they say "I like the color." A good rule of thumb is, if you like the color, most judges will also. If the fish looks washed out and dull to you, the judge will see that too. If you are concerned about the specifics of what color should be where on a given fish, I can only suggest that you do as much research as possible. Also be prepared for different judging styles here. One judge may say, "no, that fish is supposed to have blue spangles on the caudal peduncle blah blah blah" while another judge may not care at all. I'm not saying that's fair, I'm just saying be prepared for anything.



Finnage

Most serious aquarists participate in a Breeders Award Program of some sort.

Unfortunately, breeders do not usually make great show fish, because their fins tend to suffer. Be it a cichlid that fans

its eggs, or a barb that wrestles its mate, breeder fish get ragged. In my experience, however, finnage is not usually the most critical factor in judging, so if you have a borderline case, don't shy away from showing it. But if your fish has missing spines, holes in the dorsal, etc., don't waste your time. By the same token, excellent finnage will not compensate for an undersized fish.



Condition

In this category, judges look for many factors; most of which are based on years of observation. Basically, if the fish looks good, and everybody else says it looks good, the judge will give it good marks for condition. Just don't try to show a fish that "looks great except for..." Condition is the catch-all for judges. This is where missing scales are noted, curved spines, deformed gill covers, funky eyes...often judges will zero in on a small defect, and focus on it until they see that fish as a sideshow freak. I saw it as a scribe, and I've done it myself as a judge.

Those are the five "official" judging categories, and the common pitfalls to be avoided. Some judges may strongly disagree in principle with my observations, but in practice, this is what we do. And many judges will positively cringe at the following "unofficial" factors...

Other Influences



This is an unofficial category that you really can't prepare for; I include it so the novice learns to expect bizarre things at a show. Let's say your blue ram looks like a champ in your fishroom. It is always well colored, and robust. You take every precaution during transport, and the show set up goes flawlessly. Suddenly, your fish thinks the tiger barb across the aisle wants to eat it. So it loses all color and decides to hide in the corner. You check everything, but can't figure out the problem. The fish is unable to voice its concerns, and your chances of winning are inexplicably lost.

Sometimes lighting and background can wreak havoc on a fish. I recall a major event that had a light background, extremely bright overhead lighting, and to top it off, white table covers. Some entrants wondered why fish that showed a deep maroon at home looked pale yellow at show time. Again, there is really no way to prepare for this type of thing, especially when rules prohibit backgrounds.

Be prepared that your fish may not enjoy the show atmosphere as much as you do. As an example, I saw an *Aequidens metae* in a 2 1/2 gallon tank throw a protective film. This is normal I guess, but it looked rather unattractive when it came off and swirled around in the tank. That afternoon I scribed for Wayne Leibel, who pointed to it saying, "that metae would be the winner, but it's got all that schmutz in the tank." If the fish had been in a larger tank with a sponge filter, the slime would have been minimized, and the owner would have a trophy.



I've also seen fish go in the tank on Friday evening as a clear and solid favorite, but by Saturday afternoon they look like a refugee from the scrap yard. Fin extensions looked glorious when the fish was benched were mangled or gone the next day. There wasn't anything the owner could do about it -- in fact he had done everything right. The fish was rowdy, colorful, strong as an ox. It was exactly what a "best in show" fish should be. Unfortunately it swam itself silly, beat itself on the tank, and was shot when the judge rolled in.

In short, don't be discouraged by influences beyond your control, but unlike the metae owner above, don't make it easy for your fish to lose.

The Whims of the Judge

Although they deny it, judges like the same things you like. More common species create less excitement. Colorful species get more attention. Judges have the same faults we all have; they don't know the benchmark for every single species. If the fish has only recently been imported, or is some far-out killie that hasn't been seen for decades, the judge will naturally be more excited by it.



How do you prepare for this? You really can't in the short-term, but for the long-term, you can save a lot of time by not bothering with bread-and-butter fish. All things being equal, zebra danios and Nandopsis urophthalmus (the orange tiger, often sold erroneously as a "red terror") just don't win shows, even when they are the best a fish could ever hope to be for its species. Some judges are just not good judges. In fact, some of the more revered aquarists in this area are second-rate judges at best. They know so much, they simply can't be bothered with the standard point system. In the worst case I ever saw, a judge dispensed with show rules and used the criteria from another

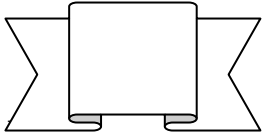
organization with a vastly different agenda. In another case, I scribed for a judge who more or less forgot about a handful of fish that were set up elsewhere in the room. As scribe, I reminded him twice about the entries, but he kept getting distracted by the more centrally displayed entries. Finally, he gave a cursory look...but that was about it. I've

also seen judges give first in class to fish they are totally unfamiliar with, while failing to consult a reference book out of pride.

When you enter a show, these are the things you simply cannot prepare for. If your judge happens to be one of the rare few who cannot do the job properly, chalk it up to experience. You're in it to win, but sometimes things just don't work out, so you move on.

Regardless of what happens, you have to do the best you can in preparing your fish. Bring specimens that meet the five judging criteria. Keep an eye out for any potential problems in the show room and where your fish are set up. Sweat the details in transport and set up; above all else, enjoy the competition. And one last thing...my fish will beat yours!





With our 1st CCY cichlid fish show taking place on November 16th, I decided to ask long time veterans **Mo Devlin and Kevin J Carr** their thoughts on how to prepare for a fish show and what judges look for. Based on his jaw dropping photos its obvious Mo's eye for detail is one of the best in the business. Kevin has been showing fish for over 40 years and his cabinet full of trophies and awards speaks for itself. These 2 men have agreed to share some of their knowledge and "tips" on how to prepare your fish for a fish show. So sit back, relax and take notes from two giants in the cichlid business!

1. How important in your opinion are Fish Show contests and why should hobbyist get involved?

Kevin- "I think it is a very important aspect of the hobby. I think it gives all hobbyists young and old to learn about the fish they are keeping. Many fish when young especially cichlids don't develop their full range of colors and finnage. This is the chance to see in person what the fish looks like when they mature. There is also the satisfaction of knowing you have competed against fellow hobbyists. If you win you know what you did right, If you lose you can talk with the judges and find out what you did wrong."

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Mo- "I like the fish shows for one specific reason. It gives hobbyists an opportunity to see a variety of fish in their very best condition. The

competition part is a personal experience. And like all competition, it gives a goal to shoot for and work toward.”



2. What is your definition of a stunner or show worthy fish?

Mo- “it’s an adult fish in peak condition. It could be as common as a guppy or as large as a Dovi. Size isn’t an issue as much as condition and appearance.”

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Kevin- “There are several things you need to look for. One is how will the fish show? Certain fish look beautiful in your tank but just stress out in transporting and going to new tank. Chocolate Cichlids are a perfect example. They just don't show well. They lose their color and sit in a corner. Green Terrors, most Geo's, and Red Devils to name a few just adapt better.

I look for a fish that is about 3/4 grown, great color and finnage and has to have an attitude. Some like Red Devils are EXPECTED to be aggressive.

Age is important as some cichlids tend to "bend" as they get bigger and older. “

3. Once you determined you have a stunner (whether through your own breeding or purchasing it from somewhere else) do you isolate that fish in an effort to promote his growth and coloring?

Kevin- Yes I isolated them in a tank sometimes divided with another potential show fish. I do at least 50% water changes every week. As it gets closer to the show I do 75% water changes. I split the water changes into three 25% water changes every other day. This gets them use to you moving around in there tank and helps to lessen a little bit the trauma of moving them about a month prior to the show I start to lower the temp so that the fish gets use to it as most show rooms are a little colder than your average fish room. Besides there normal diet which includes pellets and live food I increase the amount of live food depending on the fish. If they are smaller I get them black worms, larger fish get earth worms. Also depending on the fish I may increase the use of foods like Krill

which increase the red coloring of fish. I stop feeding about 2 days prior to the show as you don't want your water to get all fouled up before they get there!

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Mo -Depends what you are in to. Most folks who enjoy the competition aspect will agree that in order to preserve the fish's condition, it's almost a prerequisite to keep it isolated. When something as minor as a small fin tear or a missing scale can put you out of the wining circle, it's best to not take any chances.



4. As judges what does your trained eye look for when judging tropical fish that your normal hobbyist might not see?

Mo- Overall condition and deportment says "healthy specimen".

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Kevin -The late and great Mike Sheridan my mentor on showing fish use to say to me when judging a show fish you must ask yourself "What should a good example of the species look and act like?" , base you're judging on that." I think that all judges look for a fish to be as perfect as it can be based on size condition finnage etc. It really helps if the judges have kept the particular fish you are showing. They know what the fish should look and act like. That is important

especially for large cichlids. Also all judges are not the same. Some lean towards size some may lean towards condition. I have seen some cichlids that we really maxed out in size but not perfect win while I have seen some 1/2 grown but perfect in all other aspects win. I am lucky and I have been around awhile so I usually know who the clubs will get to judge and base what to bring on that. A good judge is going to know certain things about a particular fish. Take a Green terror for example. I won a best of show once with an Andinocara Stalisbergi. He was not full grown, but he had all the other features. The judge said what I like about that fish is it has a full stomach a feature that is important when you consider some terrors do get a hollow stomach.

5. Any trade secrets you can share concerning transporting and setting up your tropical fish in its show tank at the time of the contest?

Kevin- Lower tank as low as possible when catching the fish. Catch fish in bag or bloomer net. Bring as much of your own water as you can. Water conditions are different where ever you go. Bring a cycled sponge filter. Your fish is stressed enough. You want to make the conditions as close as possible. Use a chunk of poly filter when transporting. This stuff is amazing it takes everything out of the water! It keeps your ammonia level in check. It will turn brown just sitting in the water. Also I use buckets or Tupperware containers to transport. For the recent show I had watertight Tupperware containers. They weren't exactly watertight (LOL!) but they weren't that bad. If you use bags put a trash liner over it. This helps in two ways. One the trash liner is another bag to help prevent leaking and it's dark which cause the fish to mellow out and go to sleep hopefully! Get the thickest trash liners you can get. Also if the show committee will let you I try to change a little bit of water prior to judging. I use warm water that brings the temp up and makes them more active.

Mo- Veteran hobbyist and long time competitor Ron Georgione used to “practice” moving his fish. Most damage done to a prized show fish is done when packing it up to bring to the show. Most of that because the fish gets spooked when they see the net. Acclimating the fish to being moved can help. Best advice is “take your time in moving”.



6. What is the most important element you look for when judging a fish, color, size, attitude ?

Kevin- I look for the one element of these three that are outstanding. If that is the most colorful Managuesne (for example) I have ever seen then I may grade it a little higher for color. How hard it is to transport? Any fish with trailers are tough to move without damaging them. Moving a 16 inch Umbie is not an easy task...If someone moves a fish of that size and it is really good condition I give extra points for that. I see a good size [Acarichthys heckelii](#) or similar fish with a full set of trailers no sign of damage that gets extra points. Also if I see a fish that normally is mellow and it acts like a Pit Bull than that gets extra points also. All in all it really depends on the individual fish....If I see something outstanding I know it by one look LOL!

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Mo- **A combination of all of these makes the fish stand out.**

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The CCY would like to thank both Mo Devlin and Kevin J Carr for taking the time out of their schedules and answering these questions, educating our readers and further promoting this wonderful hobby of ours!

Sincerely

Scott McLaughlin

CCY President





**North Jersey
Aquarium Society
TROPICAL FISH
WEEKEND
OCT. 11 & 12, 2014**

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AD KONINGS, WAYNE LEIBEL
CHARLES CLAPSADDLE
+ MINI TALKS**

Event Registration = \$30 includes bidder card



The Cichlid Club of York

PRESENTS:

“THE LEGEND”



**DR. PAUL
LOISELLE**

CCY BIRTHDAY BASH



CICHLID BASICS 101

NOVEMBER 8TH 2014 1PM

**50 NORTH EAST RD SPRING
GROVE PA 17362**

Dr. Paul V. Loiselle is an accomplished aquarist. This internationally published author has numerous articles on the care and breeding of aquarium fishes. He was for many years a Contributing Editor for

Freshwater and Marine Aquarium.

Dr. Loiselle has his Master's degree from Occidental College in Los Angeles, and took his doctorate at the University of California at Berkeley. His professional background includes five years as a Peace Corps fisheries biologist in West Africa, where he carried out faunal and environmental impact surveys in Togo and Ghana. During the course of his career, Dr. Loiselle has had the opportunity to observe the behavior of cichlids in Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika, in Mexico and in Central America. A founding member of the American Cichlid Association, he currently serves the A.C.A. as Technical Editor of its journal, Buntbarsche Bulletin, and as Chairman of the Special Publications Committee. **-Courtesy of Cichlid Companion**

Paradigm: Quality in Every Crumble

By Stephanie Butt

If you are a fish enthusiast, a fish breeder, or you just have a couple of fish....then you have had to purchase fish food recently. With so many different brands and varieties it can get a little overwhelming. So what sets one food apart from another one? One word....Quality. There are certain things that one needs to look for when choosing a quality fish food. I will briefly go over what I feel these important things are.

First of all is that not all fish are created equal. There are 3 different types of fish: carnivores, omnivores and herbivores. A carnivore is a fish that eats other living creatures including fish, invertebrates, insects, insect larvae etc. An omnivore is a fish that eats other living creatures including fish, invertebrates, insects, insect larvae etc. and plant matter. This group is comprised of opportunistic scavengers eating anything that they can catch and scraps provided by other larger predators. When the previously mentioned items are not available they eat plant matter. A herbivore is a fish that primarily eats plant matter. Most herbivores kept in the aquarium are algae grazers however there are a few that eat water plants. As you can see, each of these 3 types of fish eat different things. So how does one just go out and buy one type of food that encompasses all 3 of these different diet and nutritional requirements? They can't!

Since we have determined that fish are categorized into 3 different types and have 3 different diets, then it's important to feed your fish the appropriate one. The reason for this is that each type of fish should have a diet that differs in the amounts of proteins, fats, and starches that it consumes. I could talk about this topic for quite some time...but I won't. The basics that one needs to know is that carnivores digestive systems can handle higher amounts of proteins and fats and a limited amount of starch. Omnivores require less protein and fat than carnivores and due to their longer digestive tracts utilize more starch. Herbivores require less protein and fat than omnivores and due to their much longer digestive tracts can utilize even more starch. Fish convert the starch into sugar...which then turns into energy. So to get the most out of your fish food and keep your fish as healthy as possible, then you should feed them a food that correlates with which diet their bodies are designed to handle.

Which brings me to myself, my name is Stephanie Butt. My husband Frank and I own Low Country Cichlids. We breed African cichlids out of our home in Savannah, Georgia. We breed all kinds of African cichlids from Lake Malawi, Tanganyika, and Victoria. We were using a popular brand of fish food for all our fish but we were not completely satisfied with the results. I wished that there was a whole tropical fish food line that could mimic what the fish are accustomed to eating in their natural habitat...but there wasn't. Then we purchased some fish from a breeder in Staten Island, NY and he included a sample of some Premium Green fish food. We tried the food and the fish went crazy for it. We looked up Premium Green and contacted the owner, Clay Neighbors. Clay and my husband both shared two things: a love for fish keeping and a desire to

feed their fish the healthiest fish food that they could. Clay had been making fish food for about 4 years when we met. Frank and I started testing all of Clays formulas on our own fish. With our combined knowledge and observations.....we came up with the formulas that Paradigm Fish Food uses today.

Most commercial fish foods that are out today use a multitude of grains (wheat, corn, soy, etc.) in their foods as cheap filler and/or a binder. There are a couple of reasons why this is bad. First because most grains used are high in starch. If the food contains excessive starch the fish can't use it all and any of the fat. This leads to the excess being stored in the fish's liver and eventually around its organs. Over time this leads to a condition called Fatty Liver Disease. So....What I wanted most of all was a food that did not use any grains. There had to be a way to bind the food together without using grain containing gluten.

First and most importantly we wanted to make a binder using as minimal amount of starch as possible. We knew that eggs were using in holding baked goods together so why couldn't we use it to keep whole fish meal together? We first tried actually breaking whole chicken eggs apart and taking the whites out but that got way too messy. So we then decided to use dried egg whites. Using a binder that has 75% protein with a complete amino acid profile separates our food from any other fish food on the market today.

Next, we knew that there had to be some form of starch in the food but what would be a good starch to use? Well...fish's digestive tracts are different. Some are short and some are very long. The best thing to ensure that the foods the fish are eating move along the digestive tract with the most ease is fiber. Is there a food that could be used as a starch and a fiber? Yes there is....Green Peas.

Green peas are a very beneficial food, especially to fish. Peas are an excellent source of fiber, starch, protein, low fat (and the fat they do have are high in Omega-3 and Omega-6), a good source of vitamins and minerals (vitamin K, B1, B2, B3, B6, C, Manganese, Folate, Iron, Phosphorus, Copper, Magnesium, Iron, and Potassium), and they also have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits too. These are all the reasons we use Green Pea flour in all of our fish foods.

If you look at all of our food labels you will see that we use a total of only 9 ingredients: Whole menhaden fish meal, shrimp meal, green pea flour, dried chicken egg whites, spirulina, astaxanthin, whole menhaden fish oil, paprika, and cayenne pepper (not all formulas contain all the ingredients). That's it...there is no need to have a whole bunch of unused, unnecessary, unhealthy and unpronounceable ingredients added.

One thing that is also very different about Paradigm Fish Food is that we don't need to add any extra vitamins and/or minerals to our foods. The reason for this is because we do not make our food like any other company. Commercial tropical fish foods are made by using a process called extrusion. The food is mixed and then placed into a large machine that can produce mass quantities of food in a very short amount of time. The mixture is fed into that machine, called an

expander, which uses pressurized steam or hot water to cook the ingredients. While inside the expander the ingredients are under extreme pressure and heat. The food is then forced, or extruded through tiny holes that will shape the food into the pellet form you are used to. The pellets must then go through a dryer machine to extract any extra moisture left over.

The temperature that the ingredients are cooked at is at about 350 degrees. Vitamins are heat sensitive and they break down at higher temperatures. Therefore, companies must add extra vitamins and minerals into their foods to ensure that the fish are receiving the proper amounts. Our foods are not cooked at 350 degrees like theirs are...ours are dehydrated at only 150 degrees.

Dehydrating foods is the oldest form of food preservation but not everyone knows how beneficial dehydrated foods can be. Dehydrated foods require no preservatives or chemical additives. This is because you are literally taking most of the water/moisture out of the food. Without all that water, the food does not spoil so it is preserved for a longer period of time. Dehydrated foods contain the same nutrients, enzymes, vitamins and minerals as if you were eating the food fresh and raw. This is why no extra vitamins and minerals are needed to be added. "The dehydration process retains almost 100% of the nutritional content of the food, retains the alkalinity of fresh produce and actually inhibits the growth of microforms such as bacteria." Dehydrators produce a thin food material with its vitamins and minerals still present. Dried vegetables and sprouts, naturally low in "high-cholesterol" fats, are high in fiber. Almost no Vitamin C is lost in the ingredients that we dehydrate and all Vitamin A--Beta Carotene--in plant foods is retained. Such minerals as selenium, potassium and magnesium are preserved.

So there you have it....we are just avid fish enthusiasts who wanted the very best quality fish food for our fish. It has taken many years of research (both written and physical) and a lots of trial and error. The end result is the most simple and healthy ultra-premium fish food that you can give to your fish. We are pleased to be able to offer to you all the new shift in fish food, Paradigm.

You can check out Paradigm Fish Food for yourself and see a list of Authorized Retailers at www.paradigmfishfood.com





AQUARIUM CLUB OF LANCASTER COUNTY



CICHLID CLUB OF YORK

PRESENT



WAYNE LEIBEL

TIME & PLACE

SATURDAY

OCTOBER 25TH 2014

1:00 PM

THAT FISH PLACE
237 CENTERVILLE ROAD
LANCASTER PA 17603

ACARAS, THE FORGOTTEN CICHLIDS OF SOUTH AMERICA

A review of the biology and Aquarium Husbandry of South American cichlids historically all classified in the genus *Aequidens* (which has since been split into several distinct genera) and commonly called 'Acaras'. These include such well-known aquarium favorites as Blue Acaras, Flag Acaras, Green Terrors and many more (over 50 species and counting). Despite the popularity of these few fish, Acaras in general remain the poor cousins of the cichlid world, all but forgotten by aquarists. This talk will attempt to (re-) acquaint cichlidophiles looking for something different, with this interesting group of cool fish.

Wayne wrote the columns 'Wayne's New World' and later 'Cichlidophiles' for Tropical Fish Hobbyist for more than 20 years. He was also the author of the series 'Going South, Cichlids of the Americas' in Aquarium Fish Magazine,

Wayne is a Fellow of the ACA, Recipient of Jordan Lifetime Achievement Award (ACA). For seven years he was editor of "Buntbarsche Bulletin" the Journal of the ACA and is the current editor of Cichlid News. Wayne is also the author of two books on South American Cichlids.

F0, F1, F2, What does it all mean?

By Jay Stephan



F0, F1, F2. These terms can be confusing, especially if you are new to the hobby. They are often found on stock lists both from retailers and wholesalers alike. By just looking at these lists, it is tough to know what these terms mean and what effect they can have on the fish you are purchasing.

FO means that a fish has been caught in the wild. This term sometimes is replaced with the words “wild caught” or sometimes just simply the word “wild”. Fish that are wild caught have been captured in the wild and are usually introduced to the fish keeping hobby through importing. Sometimes they are also collected by private individuals on collection trips. Either way these fish require more attention to detail than the common tank raised fish.

Wild caught fish need water conditions as close as possible to their natural habitat. For Central and South American cichlids, as well as Western Africans and most riverine (fish from rivers or streams) a requirement of more soft water is needed for these fish to flourish and do well. In the U.S. where most water is hard, this means that these fish will need their water softened by either R.O. (Reversed Osmosis), peat moss, rain water or other means. Some wild caught fish will adapt to harder water; but, it will likely effect spawns and in some cases may shorten life spans.

Wild caught African Rift Lake (Lake Malawi, Lake Tanganyika, and Lake Victoria) are more accustomed to hard water and fit in better to U.S. water conditions. However, since they come from large lakes they are accustomed to large areas to swim, spawn, and set up territory. This means they are likely to require extra space in an

aquarium setting. Because they are used to setting up larger territories, these fish can also be more aggressive to other tank mates than common tank raised fish.

Since wild caught fish are accustomed to larger areas, they tend to do best for wholesale fish farmers in ponds or large vats. Some of the more successful fish farmers import wild caught fish, create breeder stock from them, and sell off the extras. When the breeder group starts to get too old they are often replaced with newer breeders from the wild or from their offspring, if there are no more wild ones available or if the cost to import new wild ones is too high.

There also is a school of thought in the hobby that wild caught fish, tend to color better than other fish. This thinking helps the wholesaler and the retailer to get higher prices for these fish in order to offset the higher cost of importing them over raising fish from fry. However, not all wild caught fish are more colorful. Some have a hard time adapting to aquarium life and never really show their full color. Therefore, if you are looking for show color fish, wild caught may not be the best way to go, unless you can provide for their special needs.



Cynotilapia Afra Jalo f1

F1 means that these fish are the first generation born from wild caught fish in captivity. F1 fish are better accustomed to aquarium life than wild caught fish. Often they are born in an aquarium or in a vat with a separation screen to protect them from the adults. Most are raised in an aquarium and never see the lake. Others may become breeder stock for the wholesaler, or be grown out in a tank, vat or pond before they are sold. Either way, these fish are not accustomed to the large space of a lake. They tend, therefore, to establish smaller territory than their wild caught parents. This makes them a better fit into aquarium life. In addition, because these fish are more accustomed to tank life, these fish tend to show the most color and are a better source for show color fish than their parents may be. The photo above is a F1 Jalo that is showing more orange on the dorsal fin, where most Cynotilapia Afra Jalo has yellow on the dorsal fin. This fish just happens to be an exceptional show class individual.

F2 means that these fish are the second generation from wild caught fish. Their parents are F1 fish. Personally I do not use this term when selling fish. I see it as just

another way to ask a higher price for a given fish. To me an F2 fish is really a farm or tank raised fish.

There is nothing wrong with most farm and tank raised fish. Many have good color much like their ancestors. Just because they are not wild caught or first generation does not mean that they lack color or have far different temperaments than their parents, grandparents, etc. Below is a photo of a tank raised Aulonocara Red Shoulder peacock that I raised from young. This fish is now my breeder male for the group and he has produced a large amount of quality fry so far. Like most mouth brooders, this male breeds regularly with multiple females producing about twenty fry per brood. Since broods are about 50% male and 50% female this means there are at least ten males which have the potential to breed with many females from each of these broods. Since each fish carries its own gene set, it takes a very long time for a group of fish like this breeding between themselves to develop a problem.



Aulonocara Red Shoulders

Occasionally a very old strain of a particular fish that has not had any new fish from other sources can breed some imperfect fish. Defects can vary with the worst case being a fish with a deformed spine that will likely shorten its life span. Sunken belly can also be a generic defect or in can be a sign of an internal worm. This makes diagnosing fish with internal worms all the more difficult. Fish that are defective should not be allowed to spawn and spread the defective gene. Mothers that produce partial defective broods also should be removed from a breeder group. While other mothers in the group may not have this problem. If fathers continue to produce defective broods they also should not be allowed to continue to be breed.

Aulonocara Jacobfreibergi Blue is a fish that is an example of an older strain. According to my wholesale source for them, they were collected from the Lake many years ago and were given to him by Jacob Freiberg. Where this fish actually came from remains somewhat a mystery, however. Despite being an older strain, these fish are still capable of producing color males. Below is a photo of one of these males.

Aulonocara Jacobfreibergi blue male color can vary slight. This is probably due to the mix in their gene base that has developed over the years. Most show more of a yellowish look on the lower belly while some show more orange on the belly. Several show a thin line of yellow on the shoulder and a few shows orange or red on the shoulder. Some with a red shoulder could be confused with Aulonocara Red Shoulder; but, they are definitely a Jacobfreibergi type because they grow larger than Red Shoulder Peacocks. Below is a photo of a Jacob Blue. This particular male shows some green on the face and along the tail. This tract is not often seen in other males of this fish. All this makes these fish unique.



Aulonocara Jacob Blue

In conclusion, color is not always about where the fish came from. Just because it is wild caught does not mean it is going to be more colorful. Nor because it is farm or tank raised mean that it will be less colorful. Color has more to do with the individual genes and how comfortable a particular individual is with their surrounds. For this reason wild caught fish can be more difficult to keep since they need conditions that are closer to the area from which they are collected. On the other hand F1 and farm raised fish have grown more accustomed to aquarium life and are, therefore, usually less demanding to keep. No matter which you choose, FO, F1, F2, or farm raised fish; the most important thing is to provide a proper environment for the fish you choose to keep. The better the environment provided, the better the color, and the more likely it is for a fish to spawn and prosper.



Capital Cichlid Association

A Growing Force in the Cichlid Hobby



Some tips on selecting and preparing your fish for the show:

- 1) A good show fish should be as close as possible to an ideal representative of its species: full adult size, appropriate color, finnage and deportment
- 2) Nearly ideal, common, brown fish should score higher than less ideal fish, even if they're colorful or fancy. Each fish is judges on its own merits, so do think that only colorful or rare fish will win!
- 3) Split fins, missing scales, scars, etc. give cichlids character but are deficiencies in fish shows.
- 4) Start conditioning your fish now: do an extra water change or two...feed a little extra...use some Melafix or the like to heal up anything minor. You might even isolate show fish or remove some decorations from their tank to simulate show conditions.
- 5) Participating is half the fun. You can't win if you don't enter! Enter a fish or two - worst case

SOME TIPS FOR TRANSPORTING AND SHOWING YOUR FISH:

1) DON'T FEED YOUR FISH 2-3 DAYS PRIOR OR DURING THE FISH SHOW. HUNGRY FISH ARE



MORE ACTIVE!

2) TO MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO YOUR FISH, REMOVE DECORATIONS FROM THEIR TANKS THE NIGHT BEFORE AND CATCH THEM WHILE THEY SLEEP WITH A SOFT NET. I USE BRINE SHRIMP NETS. FOR REALLY DELICATE FISH LIKE VEIL ANGELS YOU CAN USE A BASIN TO CATCH THEM.

3) TRANSPORT YOUR FISH IN NEXT-SIZE-LARGER-THAN-NEEDED BAGS OR BUCKETS WITH BAGS IN THEM. FISH CAN SCRATCH THEIR EYES IN BARE BUCKETS. YOU WANT TO MINIMIZE STRESS ON YOUR

FISH.

4) IF YOU'RE PUTTING YOUR FISH INTO SHOW TANKS WITH LOCAL WATER, JUST ADD THEM TO THE SHOW TANK (WITH A SOFT NET...AND NOT THE BAG WATER). CONSIDER BRINGING YOUR OWN WATER IF THE SHOW TANK AND YOUR OWN ARE DIFFERENT.

5) ADJUST THE AIR IN THE SHOW TANK TO SUIT YOUR FISH. SOME LIKE LOTS OF AIR, SOME LIKE CALMER BUBBLING. ALSO, MOVE THE FILTER OR AIRSTONE IN THE TANK TO COAX YOUR FISH TO THE FRONT OF THE TANK (AND NOT DISAPPEAR INTO A CORNER...AT LEAST FOR JUDGING).

6) COVER THE SHOW TANK. SOMETIMES IT'S PROVIDED, SOMETIMES NOT. BRING SOME HEAVY DUTY PLASTIC WRAP JUST IN CASE.

7) BRING SOME AIRLINE TO SIPHON POOP OUT OF THE SHOW TANK AND A PAPER TOWEL OR THREE TO KEEP THE FRONT GLASS CLEAN.

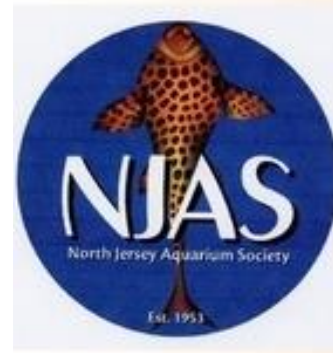
8) IF THE SHOW REQUIRES YOU TO KEEP YOUR FISH ON LOCATION OVERNIGHT OR LONGER, DO A WATER CHANGE OR THREE TO KEEP THE WATER CLEAN. YOU CAN ALSO USE POLYFILTER OR THE LIKE TO ABSORB AMMONIA.

9) PUT YOUR FISH IN A TANK NEXT TO A FISH THAT WILL ENCOURAGE IT TO INTERACT. THERE'S NOTHING BETTER TO JUDGES THAN SEEING CICHLIDS DISPLAYING THROUGH THE GLASS!

10) KEEP ALL OF YOUR SIPHONS, NETS, BUCKETS, BAGS, DECHLOR, BANDS, STYRO, ETC. TOGETHER FOR THE TRIP HOME. THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN TRYING TO FIND STUFF. GOOD LUCK AND SEE YOU AT THE SHOW!


MATT QUINN






A huge “Thank You” to our sister clubs
for sponsoring and supporting this years
“CCY Clash of the Cichlids”

THE CCY Presents:

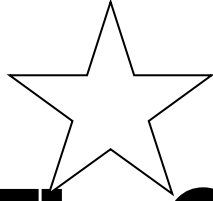


The Cichlid Club of York

2nd annual
CLASH OF THE CICHLIDS!!



The Cichlid Show of the Century
SEPTEMBER 27th 2014 1pm



A look back at last year's show

The Cichlid Circle

By Scott McLaughlin/ Photos by Christina Smith



Behind the scenes of the 1st Annual CCY Cichlid Show

The summer of 2011 I was in Washington DC at my first ACA convention (hosted by the wonderful CCA aka The Capital Cichlid Association) when I experienced my first “tropical fish show”. I was like a kid in a candy store as my fascination for cichlids quickly became an addiction thanks to the variety of cichlids I got to see up-close and personal at that ACA cichlid show. Last year at the 60th year anniversary of the NJAS (North Jersey Aquarium Society) I actually got up enough nerve to enter 2 of my beloved cichlids into their Tropical Fish Show. What an incredible experience that was- not just because I won the Grand Champion Best of show award (which was an incredible honor) but because of the experience of entering my cichlids, seeing them judged, understanding what the judges looked for and of course seeing an incredible diversity of tropical fish. The NJAS (as they always do with everything) did a

wonderful job of putting the show together and opening it up to the public so they could get a taste of our wonderful hobby.

I left Jersey feeling very inspired!

One of the things I promised when I created the Cichlid Club of York PA was to push the boundaries of what is expected and to never let a “challenge” stop me for trying to do something different or special for our club and members.

I remember chatting with a friend of mine online (who had been president of a well-known club) and I asked him his advice on running a cichlid show at our next CCY meeting. His answer- “Don’t do it!” LOL! I asked why and he went over a long list of negatives and reasons why pulling off a show like this is so very difficult. I didn’t falter.... Growing up I was one of those kids who would do anything just on a dare. If you told me I couldn’t do something you could bet minutes later I would be trying to do it. Even the creation of the CCY was a bit of a personal “dare” initially where I challenged myself to create something nobody thought had a following in our area. 400 Face book members later and here we are! Don’t applaud me for this bravado of mine because there were many times where my drive to prove others wrong nearly cost me an arm or a leg (the show Jackass has nothing on me...LOL). But back to our story I felt strongly the positives of putting a show together far outweighed the negatives my friend warned me of.

And so the show was on!

I still remember the look Lonny Langione gave me when I presented my idea to the CCY Board. Anyone who is a friend of Lonny’s knows he will go down to the fires of Hell for a friend, but this day he gave me a look like “Buddy, if you only knew what you were getting us into.” But as always, Lonny stood by me and this crazy dream I had. The other great thing about Lonny is he is a “reality checker”.

I think the success for any club is that there needs to be a “dreamer” insert myself, and then a reality checker aka Lonny and then a team of people willing to get it done. The CCY is blessed to have all these ingredients. Originally my idea was to do the cichlid show in November with our 1 year celebration which included the great speaker and hobby icon Discus Hans. Lonny quickly made it apparent that a cichlid show (of the magnitude I wanted) in our old clubhouse simply wouldn’t be possible largely due to lack of space. Luckily for me our CCY project manager Wayne Smith was already ahead of the game looking for a better meeting place due to the CCY’s rapid growth.

He had located an incredible room in the Spring Grove Township that we now call home. Thanks to Wayne the dream was now becoming a reality. The CCY Board then began to list the equipment needed to pull off such a show.

Obviously we were going to need tanks and some sort of air system. We would also need sponge filters to give our cichlids a safe display tank to show off in.

Again Wayne came to the rescue and was able to locate everything we needed from a local pet store that was unfortunately closing down. He was able to purchase 30 plus tanks, an air compressor and sponge filters all for one very reasonable price.

The dream didn't seem that far away now. With the location and all the equipment in place, it was time to promote.

One of the things I love personally doing is creating an event and promoting it. I figured getting people to bring their cichlids out to display would be easy....

Boy was I wrong!!!

Awards will be given in the
Top 3
Categories
of each category.
1ST Place
WINNERS
will win Trophies and
possible cash prize.

O...M...G....
Cichlid Club
of York is
having a
Fish Show!!!

Categories

- New World up to 6"
- New World 6" & up
- Lake Malawi (all sizes)
- Lake Victoria (all sizes)
- Lake Tanganyika (all sizes)
- Other (all other Cichlids)

**Entries are limited to maximum of
2 entries per Category**

Entry fee is \$1 for CCY members
\$2 for guests of CCY

**CASH PRIZES TO BE ASSESSED UPON # OF
ENTRIES**

One of the many promos created by Christina Smith

The drive to getting people to register their cichlids for the show started slow and I internally began to panic as I was fearful that there would be too little participation in our 1st Cichlid Show. So I began to do what I did when I wanted to build my membership at the CCY. **"I hounded people"** LOL! This was also about the same time our talented and former CCY Vice President Christina Smith emerged like a bolt of lightning. Christina who had dealt with a difficult 2013 with the loss of her loving Mother was now (after some needed time) ready to plunge back into hobby and our club. Talk about perfect timing! Christina was able to breathe some much needed energy into our upcoming cichlid show. And she quickly became my right hand "gal" and cichlid show manager as she openly welcomed all the responsibilities of running the show.

With Christina now by my side we began to bombard the internet with promos, flyers, blogs and even videos. Anything to spark people's interest or curiosity we did. We even created a separate Face book page just for the show, inviting

members, non-members and famous hobby greats to become a part of the discussion and excitement.

And it worked!! Within 2 weeks we had over 20 entries and they continued to come in at a steadily rate. At one point we had more entries than tanks and had to put a cutoff date for entering the cichlids just to insure we could round up enough tanks. We were now well on our way!



-The cleaning team with Shane, Tonya, Kerry, Scott, Wayne and Christina and Eric not shown-

Next we called a CCY board meeting code named "Project Clean Tanks". Project clean tanks was a well-orchestrated assembly line of board members bringing in tanks to the central cleaning area, other board members scrubbing and soaking the tanks, while another group rinsed and wiped them clean.



Clean 10 gallon tanks set to be filled with water and awesome cichlids

The cleanup went well and never felt too much like work thanks largely to Kerry Dilks whose jokes and laughs were plentiful but not printable for this publication LOL!



Shane filling the tanks up with water the night before the show

With everything about done it was time to go down the checklist.-

Tanks- check! **Air system-** Check! **Sponge filters-** Check! **Trophies and ribbons-** Check! **Cichlid classes, divisions and rules and a judge-** Check! **Plenty of cichlid entries-** double Check! Guess what guys we have ourselves a show!!!

With Christina managing the entries, divisions, classes and all other aspects of the cichlid show, I could rest easy knowing it was all under control. Christina also had some fantastic CCY signs made up showing the tank locations for each division. Our deadline came and we officially ended up with 37 entries all together. Pretty impressive for our first show. We posted a list of all the show entries on various online forums to generate a buzz and then began counting down the days till the show.

The night before the show the team got together again to fill the tanks up with water and sponge filters. Thanks to Shane Mell (who had stored our sponge filters in one of his active tanks) the sponge filters were cycled and ready to go into our 10 gallon tanks. Mike Mull then joined the party that night putting all the air compressor, PVC tubing and air lines together which connected to our sponge filters. Mike who is the owner of the successful company Reliable Plumbing was a great asset to the team with his plumbing knowledge and years of experience with cichlids in general. Half way through filling the tanks we ran out of hot water which threw a monkey wrench into our plans as we had no intentions of having to use heaters. But we continued to fill tanks with the hope that the water would reach room temperature by morning. We turned the air system on and much like a miracle everything worked and not a single tank had a leak! Before leaving we jacked the room temperature up to help speed up the process of heating the tanks and left with fingers crossed. The following morning we all came in around 10am to prepare for the show. I arrived right at 10am and was pleased to see Wayne, Christina, Eric, Shane and CCY member Dwayne Walker (who volunteered to help) already hard at work.



CCY President Scott McLaughlin and CCY member Dwayne Walker checking water temperatures

Shane and I began checking the tank temperatures and found that the tanks closer to the floor were not as warm as the tanks on the top. Luckily I was prepared as I brought 3 heaters and placed them in the bottom tanks. As each tank would get to an acceptable temperature (between 73-76 degrees) , I would then move one of the 3 heaters to the next tank and so on until they were all safe and ready for the cichlid entries. It was a good thing we got there 3 hrs before the show because it did take some time to get the tanks heated properly. We opened the doors at 11am for people to start bringing in their cichlids giving them adequate time to acclimate their cichlids into the 10 gallon tanks. Christina was well prepared with tanks already assigned, numbered with the scientific cichlid names on each tank. Thanks to her and the rest of the team the arrival and departure of all cichlid contestants went extremely well with no casualties.

As the room began to fill with CCY members and the meeting was about to start I took a personal moment just to look around and really enjoy what we had accomplished. What our team created looked first class and very well done. An extreme sense of pride came over me as I watched the excitement on people's faces looking at the show cichlids.

We've done it!!



Lonny Speaks about judging the cichlid show

Lonny Langione was gracious enough to accept the role of cichlid show judge. His years of experience working with cichlids and all tropical fish more than qualified him for this role. Jay Stephan was an assistant judge and helped Lonny. Jay stated in his own words that he learned more watching Lonny judge than he did in helping him. Still we were very appreciative of Jay's expertise and help. As the meeting began I said a few words, followed by CCY board members Kerry Dilks and Christina Smith. Lonny then talked to everyone and went over how he would be judging the cichlids and what he was looking for. I thought this was very helpful for those who had never been to a show before and it would certainly be beneficial to them in preparation for our next show when selecting a potential winner. The meeting continued with our great guest speaker Joshua Wiegert and Lonny went to work. Now let me tell you another thing about Lonny Langione. Whenever Lonny does something- he does it right. There will be no shortcuts; it will be done fairly, and just. No stone will be unturned and attention to detail will be of his highest concern. This combined with his great knowledge of cichlids made him the perfect judge for our 1st show. Lonny didn't disappoint!

As Joshua presentation came to an end, Lonny was still hard at work. We took a break and enjoyed with some awesome food and great conversations with old and new friends.



We then started our auction thanks to Joel A who stepped in to run the auction as Lonny and Christina tallied up the points of each cichlids and prepared ribbons and trophies. The suspense and excitement was high as it appeared more people were paying attention to the cichlid show than the auction. I mistake I will not make twice. Finally the results were in – Drum roll please!!



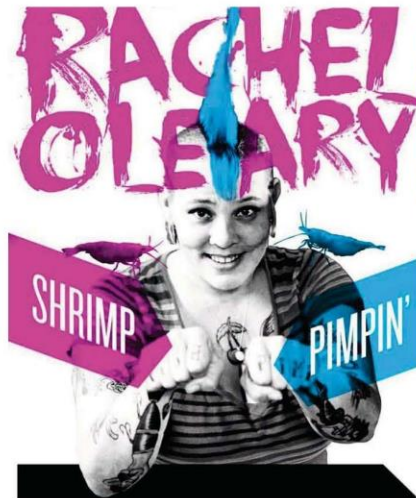


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