

Changes to the “Observation Hive” class at Cleveland Show

As you know, the committee has decided to substitute the Observation Hive class at Cleveland Show owing to an excess of hives in the 2015 show. The replacement class will be a blanked out jar of honey which will be subjected to a taste test. The new schedule should be available on the Cleveland Show website very soon.

This does not mean that Observation Hives will disappear from our shows – far from it. It is considered that Observation Hives are an excellent education resource as well as a draw to the public. With that in mind and supported by comments from Tony Jefferson, the YBKA Deputy Chief Steward for YBKA honey show, who has complimented Cleveland Beekeepers on having an almost unique class in the Observation Hive class, we have decided to continue judging observation hives using the following protocol:

- All shows at which we exhibit such as the Cleveland Show, the Stokesley Show, the Town Meal in Middlesbrough, Preston Park and the Imagineer events at Middlesbrough College, will request people to present Observation Hives
- According to the readiness of Cleveland Beekeeping members, members will offer to prepare an Observation Hive and these volunteers will be accepted per show on a “first come, first accepted” basis
- Any member who has already exhibited an Observation Hive will go to the bottom of the list to allow a fair chance for all members to exhibit equally
- New and inexperienced members will not be excluded from this process on the basis that they do not have/cannot afford an Observation Hive, as the Association has a number of Observation Hives which can be borrowed for preparation at any time. These hives will be available to borrow for one week before an event and one week after an event to give time to prepare the exhibit and transfer bees back afterwards
- For members with their own Observation Hive, there is no restriction on the type of Observation Hive which must be used, all are equally acceptable
- Each show will accept up to two Observation Hives at a time
- At the Cleveland and Stokesley Shows, the judges will be the appointed Judges for those events
- At all other shows, the judges will be 2 experienced members who are not presenting an Observation Hive at that event
- The marking procedure will follow the mark scheme published on the Association website under “Observation Hive Marking Template”
- Spot prizes will be awarded at the Cleveland and Stokesley shows by the appointed Judges. These prizes have been very generously provided by Tony Jefferson to support the Association in the continuance of Observation Hive judging
- For all shows, the chosen judges will complete judging and hand the completed judging form, in a sealed envelope, to the Show Secretary at the end of the event
- The Show Secretary will keep all results secure and then compile the results at the end of the showing year
- All Observation Hive results will be collated and a final winner will be presented at the AGM. A newly inaugurated trophy will be awarded to the overall winner

- If an excess of members wish to enter the Observation Hive class then they can present their hives at one of the summer outdoor sessions on a Sunday afternoon and they will be judged according to the criteria

We hope that this is a fair and clear explanation of the process. We look forward to seeing a wider range of exhibits in the coming showing year. Happy Beekeeping.