

NZDJA

Challenges or Chocolates?

Presentation at NZDJA Conference 24th June 2018

by Linda Strongman

This was an interesting task for this presentation that I was asked to undertake. I pondered this for a while. I had the opportunity to ask the question of a group of overseas judges that I happened to be with, which was interesting, as they were from far and wide with different back grounds. They had all had their own demons on this issue of Challenge or Chocolates, so their views were very helpful for me and gave me inspirations to put this together.

It was my great pleasure to present this Challenges or Chocolates at this year's annual NZDJA conference a long side the other Breed presentations. Unfortunately attendance was not that great, but on a positive note, these presentation were well received by the attendees. For my part I was very pleased with the reception of this presentation, which created a great deal of interaction and hopefully food for thought!

Overview

This presentation turned into an interesting debate on the pros and cons of the awarding Challenges or Chocolates. Also, to understand what a chocolate means and what a challenge means and to know the difference. Are we giving these for the right reasons and is it acceptable to do so.

Also under what circumstance would you award a chocolate verses a challenge? Do we also understand the consequences for doing this, also the ability to be able to stand up to a challenge on your decision?

Questions I asked of the attendees:

1. Am I doing this honestly?
2. Have I come to this decision for the right reasons?
3. Can I live with the decision I made?
4. Can I answer for the decision I just made? (i.e. if challenged on your decision)

We hope the answers were "Yes" to all these.

There were also some negative questions put to everyone, but I do not want to focus on those as this turned into such a positive debate. Pointing out that these are your decisions and your reputation is at stake out there. Asking the question how you want to be seen... the positive – honest and your opinion matters. The negative – well? The choice is yours.

An interesting question put to everyone was "who could recite the wording on our New Zealand Challenge Certificate?" This should

have been the easy one, but, proved a challenge in itself. So I pushed a bit further to see if anyone could recite the Australian Challenge wording. Again, a little challenging. So just a reminder read what you sign, it's your name on it.

I am pleased to say that everyone took part in the debate without prompting and with the added incentive of CHOCOLATES, which were well received. This debate was light hearted, everyone was more than happy to share some of their experiences and challenges that they had to deal with. As we are not machines and it is human nature that we do not always get it right. That we do not beat ourselves up about it. But, yes sometimes the situation can call for a chocolate, as long as it has been done for the right reason.

But as we move more into the realms of the F.C.I situation with the awarding of CAC and CACIBs more and more of us are judging in these countries where you are accountable by the way of critiquing, you might want to think a bit different. Only you can decide what you do. We wish you good luck with your decision making out there. Above all else, enjoy what you are doing. It is very enjoyable journey.

Post script

The wording on the NZ challenge certificate is: I hereby certify that having judged the above named dog at the place and dated detailed, I am of the opinion that it is worthy of the title of champion.

And the wording on the Australian challenge certificate is: I am clearly of the opinion that this exhibit is of such outstanding merit as to be worthy to qualify for the title of "champion" and is awarded, with this certificate, the following points toward the title of "Champion".

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31 January Closing date for applications for promotion