

talk to the judge

With OCA Chief Judge Mike Pruitt

Looking Back, To Look Forward: Part 2 with Greg Childs

Former OCA Chief Judge and President Greg Childs shares the beginnings of the OCA Judging Program.



We hope with this series, members gain a better understanding of the Judging Program, its goals and how the OCA truly strives to make its judging the best in the hobby.



Last month, the first of this four part series dealt with the beginning, or “birth” if you will, of the OCA formal Judging Program. Little did I realize that at the time, by simply establishing a set of rules and forms, my work would lead to the outgrowth of additional programs, awards and record keeping.

The earliest of these new programs was probably that of establishing a method to recognize Award Winners of previous Meets. The intent was to keep those cars and owners involved. There was a concern that once a fine Oldsmobile had achieved “Best of Class” at a show, the owner may find little enthusiasm for future participation. The outcome of that concern was the “Senior,” and then the “Preservation Senior” classes. Apparently, those awards worked, as can be seen by the number of Preservation Seniors attending our National Meets.



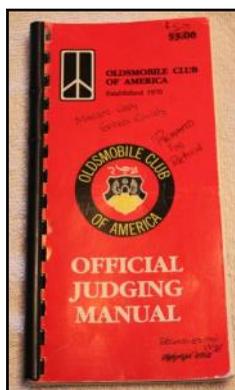
The next program I recall was the “Judges Recognition Program.” It proved to be a huge success. All too often acquiring Judges at the National Meets was akin to pulling-hens-teeth. Everyone wanted their car Judged... but most owners were hesitant to participate *in* Judging. After all, it was and remains, an arduous task in the heat of a summer’s day. A program was developed to recognize the stalwart few

who were regular volunteer Judges with an elevated recognition.

This program of “Judge,” “Senior Judge” and “Master Judge,” combined with various recognition badges and caps, produced not only more willing Judges, but brought a level of

expertise to the field. The more experienced Judges were teamed with the novices who, in turn, often aspired to the Judges Recognition Program. Because record keeping and recognition of the Judge’s “advancement” during our Breakfast Meetings became cumbersome, my wife Debbie agreed to take over the program. I’m sure many of you “old-timers” remember Debbie.

Another successful program was the “Judges Training Seminar.” It was felt that some form of basic training was necessary for the volunteer Judges during the Judges Breakfast Meeting. This seminar was used to answer the most common questions that the Judges have, and helped encourage professional demeanor on the Showfield. At the seminar, the first training aid was the popular slide show narrated by the Chief Judge (many of you will recall the slide of mustached Judge “Rick” sporting his Oldsmobile Jacket with the prominent name of “Betsy” embroidered on the front; always lots of chuckles). As the Training Seminar slide show became stagnant, we moved on to a DVD video (Ricky was absent). It was filmed in Ogden, Utah and I remember spending hours in the editing room of the studio, overlaying voice onto the screen as well as cutting the errors. Since, this has been discontinued, in favor of the more simple PowerPoint presentation.



The next project was to develop a formal “Official Judging Manual.” The manual was designed for Field Judges to carry in their back pocket to use as a reference while they judged. It was a big hit, and was sold out in the first couple of years. At \$3.00 a copy, it more than paid for itself and helped make our judging more uniform and consistent each year.

In the summer of 1998, I assumed the position of OCA President, and relinquished the Chief Judge appointment to Bob Casey. The Judging format, with improvements, remains in use today. Last summer I attended a NAOC meet in Colorado and was pleased to note they too continue to utilize our 1986 Judging design with the addition of their refinements.

The continuing history of Judging will be authored by our current Chief Judge, Mike Pruitt. I am sure Mike will have some insights into the ongoing difficulties in Judging, as well as some other fine improvements in our Judging Program’s near-feature.

Next month: We welcome back Mike Pruitt.