

How to Grow Glorious Gladiolus

Chapter Ten

HOW JUDGES JUDGE

The following pages have been prepared primarily for use as a study guide for learning judges, and as such should be useful as a test in the conduct of judging schools.

Beyond that it should also serve as a ready reference for the experienced judge. Certainly a yearly reading of these fundamentals should refresh the memory and be of benefit to anyone aspiring to judge the gladiolus in any of its many forms of exhibition or selection.

The gladiolus is such an intriguing flower with its many diverse facets of color, size, shape, form, facing, texture, substance, open florets with beauty and appeal.

Grooming of the spike by the entrant is of the greatest importance, and both exhibitor and judge should pay very close attention to item #15 of the rules and on the score sheet.

It is generally acknowledged that the judging of beauty in any form will never become an exact science because every eye sees beauty in a different way. This is especially true in the judging of a flower that is as complex as the gladiolus with its symmetrical arrangement of florets and buds and its wide divergence of size, color and form. Surely no set of rules could begin to cover every conceivable aspect that a judge might encounter. The most we can expect is that the GUIDELINES put down here will shed some light on what we should be looking for, and tend to somewhat standardize judging from one area to another.

What follows are the standards as developed by the North American Gladiolus Council. They were originally prepared in 1969 by the Judging Standards Committee, Dr. John J. Eppig, then Chairman. It was revised in 1979 and again in 1995 by the Judging Standards Committee, Miles C. Labrum, Chairman.

The score sheet on the next page is used by judges when judging an exhibition gladiolus spike. A study of them will help the beginner to understand what to look for in his or her exhibition entries. They will also be useful as a learning guide.

Equally helpful are the rules for judging baskets and patinas. These are set forth in excellent detail as part of this chapter so that the exhibitor or visitor may know what constitutes the ideal arrangement in these categories.

NORTH AMERICAN GLADIOLUS COUNCIL SCORE SHEET

BASIC DATA	DIAMETER (INCHES)	MIN. TOTAL BUDS	MIN. OPEN FLORETS	BUDS IN COLOR	STEM LENGTH
100:	Up to 2 ½	15	5	4	17"
200:	2 ½ to 3 ½	19	6	5	19"
300:	3 ½ to 4 ½	21	8	6	20"
400:	4 ½ to 5 ½	22	9	7	20"
500:	5 ½ to 6 ½	21	8	6	20"

PENALTIES - DEDUCTIONS		FLORET	EXH. SCORE	SEEDLING SCORE
Item:		Color		
8. -1 each bud short		1. Clarity	5 _____	5 _____
9. -2 each floret short		2. Saturation	5 _____	5 _____
10. -1 to -4 Judge's opinion		3. Harmony	5 _____	5 _____
16. -2 for each inch over or under		4. Uniformity of Color	5 _____	5 _____
17. -2 for each inch over or under		5. Overall Beauty & appeal	10 _____	20 _____

Additional Deductions (up to 10 points for each item:)	Structure		
Crooking _____	6. Floret Form	5 _____	5 _____
Condition _____	7. Substance & Texture	5 _____	5 _____

		SPIKE	
Health _____		Structure	
Deformed Florets _____		8. Total buds	4 _____ 4 _____
Adventitious Buds _____		9. Open florets	7 _____ 5 _____
Irregular Opening _____		10. Buds in color	4 _____ 4 _____
Total Additional Deductions _____		11. Attachment	6 _____ 6 _____
		12. Facing	5 _____ 5 _____
		13. Uniformity of Florets	4 _____ 5 _____
		14. Stem	3 _____ 4 _____
		15. Grooming	7 _____ 2 _____

3 Spike and 5 Spike Judging		Balance	
Average all of the spikes under the One Spike System and then award up to 5 points for the UNIFORMITY of the spikes.		16. Floret size to Flower head	8 _____ 5 _____
Average Score _____		17. Inflorescence to Flower head	6 _____ 0 _____
Bonus for uniformity _____		18. Taper	6 _____ 5 _____
Final Score 3 & 5 Spike _____		19. Distinctiveness	0 _____ 5 _____

	TOTAL	_____	_____
	Less additional deductions	_____	_____

FLORET	EXH. SCORE	SEEDLING SCORE	FINAL SCORE ONE SPIKE

HOW TO USE THE NAGC SCORE SHEET

You will notice that the first consideration in judging the gladiolus concerns the color: This is as it should be with any flower. It is true that the color of any flower contributes at least 50 to its beauty and appeal, but here we are assigning only 30 of the score to the color because of the many other factors which contribute to its grace, symmetry and presentation on the show table. Therefore it behooves the judge not to be too liberal in his consideration of the color. He or she, before giving full credit, might ask in mind, how might this color be improved? If there is any room for improvement, the color does not deserve full credit. Personal preference for certain colors should not enter into the judgment. Below is an explanation of the items on the judges score sheet, listed on the preceding page.

Item 1. - CLARITY of color. Deduct for dullness, muddiness, distracting flecking and the smearing of vagrant color.

Item 2. - SATURATION of color. Deduct for feathering, peeling, any unevenness, bleeding of blotches and transparency denoting lack of pigment.

Item 3. - HARMONY. Deduct for objectionable throat or lip markings, bizarre or discordant blotches, detracting anther or calyx coloring.

Item 4. - UNIFORMITY of color. Deduct for fading or difference of color from one floret to the next, in whole or in part. This includes blotches or other markings which should be uniform.

Item 5. - BEAUTY & APPEAL. Impact of color and/or form on the judge. This is purely subjective with the judge, but one should strive not to permit the frequent appearance of a cultivar to cloud appreciation of its beauty, or the novelty of a new one to bedazzle. Beauty and appeal are of primary importance in the selection of new introductions, regardless of type, thus these factors deserve extra weight in the judging of seedlings.

Item 6. - FLORET FORM. Deduct for cupping, hooding, clawing, uneven throat knuckling, folded petals, excessive reflexing or ragged effect. Should be penalized only if form is definitely displeasing, not because it may be unusual.

Item 7. - SUBSTANCE. Thickness of petals which usually denotes keeping quality and resistance to handling and dehydration.

TEXTURE. The physical surface quality of the petals. A velvety surface or sparkling sheen add beauty, a rough, dull surface detracts.

Item 8. - TOTAL BUDS. This includes open and partly open florets. Deduct for too few under Basic Data and Penalties and Deductions. There is no penalty for too many buds except as it affects items 16 and 17.

Item 9. - OPEN FLORETS. A floret shall be considered open if it is one half or more open. Deduct for too few under Basic Data and Penalties and Deductions.

Item 10. - BUDS IN COLOR. Deduct one point for each bud in color short of Basic Data requirements. Deduct a maximum of two points for too many in color when objectionable. Flower heads with a great many buds and open florets may exceed the norm in buds in color without penalty.

Item 11. - ATTACHMENT. Deduct for a split calyx or elongated tube which allow an unattractive floret droop and enhance danger of floret loss with handling. This characteristic is inherent in some cultivars.

Item 12. - FACING. Deduct for improper facing, stem showing through wide open florets, reversed florets or buds and face-up florets unless uniform. Downward nodding florets also deserve a penalty.

Item 13. - UNIFORMITY OF FLORETS. Deduct for a mix of single and double lip floret types on any spike. Florets should be of proper size to conform with their placement on the flower head. Florets should be the same size on both sides of the spike for balanced symmetry. Deduct for any deviation. There should be a gradual decrease in the size of each floret up the spike. There should be no variance in degree of rotation.

Item 14. - STEM. The length of stem is usually set by the local rules of the show committee. Anything less, and stems too heavy or too weak for the floret and flower head should be penalized. When practical, show committees are encouraged to 17" stems for the 100 size; 19" for the 200 size; and 20" for 300, 400 and 500 sizes or whatever seems proper to give balanced spikes.

Item 15. - GROOMING. The presentation of the spike on the show table. There should be a one point penalty for the removal of the bottom floret to indicate that it was an imperfection even though its removal does improve the spike. However, do penalize four points for the removal of any portion of floret or calyx of the second floret or a total of five points if the bottom two florets are missing. An additional two points is available for deducting in case of any further infraction. Deductions should be made for a poorly dressed spike that allows pollen to remain, or florets to overlap those above. Side shoots must be removed from all but seedling entries, but a penalty of two points should be applied if the shoot sheath is removed. Tip buds broken off or foreign material such as pins or cotton balls left in place disqualify the spike from competition.

Item 16. - BALANCE OF FLORET SIZE TO FLOWER HEAD. The length of the flower head should be between five and six times the breadth of the inflorescence at its widest point. Any variance above or below this ratio should be penalized as indicated under Penalties and Deductions. The important thing here is horizontal mass, so allowance should be made for cultivars with flaring or needlepointed florets, the measurement of which may not truly reflect this factor. Deduct for irregular spacing which allows gaps in the symmetry of the spike, and for crowding which allows a floret to hide the throat of the floret below.

Item 17. - BALANCE OF INFLORESCENCE TO FLOWER HEAD. Inflorescence is the continuous mass of color made by the open and half open florets. It is measured in inches, and should be from 50 to 55 of the overall length providing that the spike is not thrown out of balance, depending on the width and flatness of the florets. Six points are allowed for this item on the exhibition side of the score sheet because of its relative importance to the symmetry of the flower head. No deduction for over bloom should be made on seedlings, since anything beyond the required minimum number of open florets is a factor to be desired.

Item 18. - TAPER. This should be gradual from the bottom floret to the spike tip including the green buds. From the half open florets to the tip there should be a gradually reduced separation, lowering and movement of the buds to alternate sides. Deduct for a clump of un-separated buds at the tip, or too much separation, leaving only a single bud for the tip. The tip should be straight or bent slightly forward, not to the rear or side. The transition of color from the open florets to the green buds should taper gradually and not square off abruptly. The bottom of the flower head should be rounded.

Item 19. - DISTINCTIVENESS. An attractive variation of color, floret form or spike conformation which might tend to broaden interest in or the use of glads in general. This item is a plus factor which applies only to seedlings.

ADDITIONAL DEDUCTIONS - Deduct up to ten points for each of the following:

CROOKING - Penalize in proportion to the impairment of the flower head attitude or the usability of the spike.

CONDITION - Deduct for lack of freshness in any part of the florets or foliage. Deduct here also for calyx bum, foliage tip bum, mechanical or insect damage.

HEALTH - A spot of fungus on the petal could entail a one or two point deduction

depending on how it affects the whole spike. Flowers or foliage spotted all over with disease should be disqualified. Deduct here also for discoloration in foliage, stem or calyx which indicated a probable nutritional deficiency.

DEFORMED FLORETS - Not to be confused with petal folding which is covered in Item 6. Deduct in proportion to severity.

EXTRA BUDS (or double buds) - Are usually shaved off by the good showman, and this is another reason to look at the spike from the rear. One shaved off which does not mar the appearance of the spike probably deserves a one or two point deduction. A number of them, either shaved off or left in place, does increase the penalty.

IRREGULAR OPENING - Very seriously affects balance and taper. Penalty should be imposed in proportion to the harm done.

JUDGING BASKETS, VASES AND PATINAS

BASKETS

Suggested points for scoring. (Total 100 points)

Arrangement	40	Color Harmony	10
Condition	15	Conformity	10
Quality	15	Use of Foliage	10

A basket is an arrangement or display of glads for effect. The arrangement may be made in a basket or flared container. The overall finished effect should be wide and full. Only enough terminal buds may be removed to make a symmetrical picture. (From not more than 25% of the total number of spikes.)

ARRANGEMENT:

Top line of basket high in center, gradually tapering to the sides to make a symmetrical curved semi-circle. Each spike should be able to be seen clearly. Spikes in front should not hide those in the rear. Spikes should be arranged from back to front to make a gradual full effect.

CONDITION:

All florets should be clean and fresh. Penalize for the removal of more than two bottom florets.

QUALITY:

Spikes should be well grown and of good quality. No penalty for well grown material. Penalize for undersize, also for thrips marks, burning, excessive spray residue or side shoots not removed. We would like to see a severe penalty in the display class for 100's and 200's grown oversize with permission to judges to either disqualify or place in higher size classes.

COLOR HARMONY:

Under this heading the single spike should be judged as well as the color harmony of the finished arrangement. Since so many seedlings are shown in the display classes, we should be extra careful in our judging of these entries. We are not against this practice, but think that the standard should be just as rigid here as in the open classes, as far as the color and harmony are concerned. The overall effect should be appealing as to color and harmony.

USE OF FOLIAGE:

Foliage should be in good condition but be secondary, at least, to the flowers. It should not compete with, but enhance the flowers, and we would suggest that the effect of the foliage should be fine to medium in weight and appearance depending on the class of glads with which it is to be used. 100 and 200 glads should have a finer type foliage than the larger glads. It may be a good idea to stipulate that foliage should be plain as opposed to berried or flowered. Variegated could be permitted where it does not detract from the arrangement or is not too conspicuous. Avoid use of

material that is on the conservation list.

CONFORMITY:

Entry should contain the number of spikes called for in the class. Penalty for more than 25 of terminal buds removed on total spikes. Show schedule to specify if the arrangement is to be made in a basket with a handle or if a flared vase is permitted. If baskets with handles are specified, the show committee should supply enough baskets for all possible entries. This should also apply when flared containers are specified.

The following remarks will have to be sorted out and placed in their proper category. Some have been covered previously but are included here for continuity or explanation.

POINTS TO BE PENALIZED:

Uneven or ragged effect because of the different lengths of spikes used. Poor use of color. In a mixed basket, light colors should be at the top or side. Darker colors at the front, the bottom, or at one side. Do not penalize for two colors or contrast effect of alternate spikes of different colors if the overall arrangement is pleasing.

A flat effect should be penalized, as well as too sharp a graduation from front to back or in depth; also a squared effect, resulting from the use of spikes with a rounded effect, or gradual graduation from back of basket to the front. Do not penalize for spikes placed downward in front of the basket even though they might touch the table. Extra points should be given for the judicious use of foliage and for spikes placed downward in front of container for a finished effect.

BASKETS SHOULD BE SET UP IN CLASSES AS FOLLOWS:

Large florets, 3-4-500's, two or more colors, and single, or one color.

Small florets, 1-200's, two or more colors, single or one color.

In shows having large basket classes this can be broken down in color classes. Other classes can be added, such as dark colors, light shades, analogous colors or shades and tones of one color. Classes can be made for those of sharp contrast. In these classes extra points should be given for judicious and harmonious use of color tones, or hues in combination. We would like to see the mixed baskets, wherever possible, with other garden flowers, but glads to predominate. The purpose of this, is to educate the public and glad fanciers on the use of other flowers with glads. Penalize if 300 glads are entered in the 100-200 basket classes. Measure seedlings to determine to which class they belong.

Another suggestion would be that baskets should be made up at the same level as that at which they are to be displayed or judged. A basket made at eye level and displayed higher or lower is unfair to the exhibitor.

VASES

Six to fifteen spikes. The reason for this is that most shows have a five spike specimen class. Baskets usually have a minimum of sixteen spikes. A vase should be somewhere in between. We suggest that vases be supplied at least 12 inches high. Fourteen to sixteen inches would be better for the larger spikes. They could be round or square but not flared or oblong so as to distinguish them from baskets. Vases of glads should be judged either as specimens or as arrangements. This should be made clear in the schedule. If they are to be judged as specimens we suggest that 75 points be allocated to quality and condition and 25 points for arrangement.

THE FOLLOWING TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION:

All spikes to be nearly uniform as possible in number of buds, florets open, in color and green buds. Under arrangement, the spikes should be evenly placed in the vase so that each can be seen

clearly. A rounded or full effect to score higher than a flat or fan shaped one. Greens should be used in all vases at least below the first open floret. Classes for specimens should be the same as for regular color classes except in the smaller show where colors and sizes could be condensed.

If the vases are to be judged as arrangements, then the point score should be reversed. 25 for quality and 75 for arrangement, using the same point scoring as in baskets. Back of vases should be checked for finished effect, judicious use of greens and filler. Spikes need not be all on one level. Penalize for crowding. Terminal buds may be removed only if they interfere with a symmetrical arrangement (not more than 25% of total number of spikes.) In vase arrangement classes, two or more colors may be included in the classes. Overall judging to be the same as for baskets except the vase need not be hidden. A special note for the exhibitor should be included at the beginning of the display section: All flowers used in this section, except for artistic arrangements, were grown by the exhibitor or arranger.

PATINA OR BOWL

This should be an arrangement or display of small flowered glads 100 and 200's, in one or more colors with moderate use of other small flowers that don't detract. In this class, foliage is a necessity and should be used to hide the containers and the material used to hold the glads. Penalize if too much of the container, oasis, or other material shows in the finished effect.

This type of arrangement should be lower, not over twenty four inches in height, round or angular. An asymmetrical arrangement should score higher than one that is too symmetrical, that is, one where all the flowers in one place make the overall effect to mechanical. Do not penalize if flowers or spikes touch the table. This is a low arrangement and should look as if it were part of table or space where it is used.

Extra points should be given for judicious use of color, good contrast or harmony. Check back of arrangement for finish or trim. Greens should be used for trim and to hide the bare part of the stems. This arrangement can be made to be viewed from one side as a buffet arrangement or from all sides as a centerpiece.

We suggest that round plastic containers five to six inches in diameter and three and one half inches high be supplied by the committee for this class. These containers are inexpensive and can be purchased at any florist supply house. The container isn't being judged, and this gives each contestant an equal start.

It has been suggested that patina arrangements have definite classes not for size alone or for color but for type of arrangement. These arrangements should be circular or upright, crescent, triangular or horizontal. The crescent, circular or any curved type arrangement should be contained in the round or oval shaped container. More angular arrangements should be in the square or oblong container. For these classes we suggest the following scale of points:

Arrangement	60	Condition	10
Color Harmony	10	Conformity	10
Use of Foliage	10		

No penalty should be made in these classes for the use of tips or breaking off terminal buds. Relationship of containers should be considered under conformity and should be a little more important than in the other display classes.

Updated by: Miles Labrum