

PROTOCOLS IN THE SHOW HALL

There are a few unwritten rules about behaviour and protocols at a GCCF show.

1. Never try to jump the queue for vetting-in or, later in the day, for your catalogue!
2. Do not leave your phone switched on in the exhibition hall. There is already enough noise; and having to hear multiple different ring tones, buzzes and bleeps (plus the increased volume of the speaker trying to talk over the background noise) can be very disturbing for the cats - which are the most important creatures in the hall.
3. Keep control of your children, they are not in their own home so they should be made aware that they must behave. No running, shouting, touching cats or pens, no eating or drinking near the pens etc. They are sure to enjoy the experience all the more for being calm.
4. Make sure that you have all documents and vetting-in slips at hand well before it's your turn to see the vet for vetting-in. The queues are often quite long (and may even extend outside into the rain or snow) so hold-ups can cause stress – which is not a good start to the day.
5. Space is limited, so keep your pen and under-pen area clean and tidy, it is most impolite to allow your bits and pieces to overflow into your neighbours' space; and dangerous to allow it to spill into the aisle. This is particularly important in the morning when everyone is desperately trying to install cats in pens.
6. Do not touch other people's cats unless you have their express permission. If you see a pen in which the cat has tipped its water, food or litter tray over then report it to the owner if you can otherwise to the show manager - but do not attempt to tidy the pen up yourself.
7. Do not hover near or talk to judges/stewards while they are working. There are 3 good reasons for this:
 - I. They are usually extremely busy and have a fixed amount of time to complete their work.
 - II. You must not influence, or even appear to influence, a judge in any way.
 - III. You will encourage people who do not know the protocols of the cat show to interrupt the judges' work. This point is especially relevant at the National Cat Club show as it is open all day to the public so the judges have no private period in which to work. If you wish to discuss a judge's results or findings with them then wait until they have completed their full engagement. A reasonable judge may be able to go over their opinion of your cat with you, depending on whether or not they have to dash for their transport home – but remember once the place decisions have been made they cannot be altered.
8. Everyone needs to get to the show results boards, whether you are a judge, steward or an exhibitor so once you have your results stand back out of the way.

Don't stand in front of the boards discussing them with friends! Pushing-in is a definite No-No. The only person 'allowed' to push-in is the one putting the results up!

9. While some exhibitors don't mind if you take their cat's Assessment or GCCF Supreme Show critique from the pen to read, others definitely do, after all it is not public property and they have paid good money for the critique. It is always polite to ask permission from the owner, who may still decline.
10. Do not take photographs of any cat unless you have express permission from both the Show Manager and the owner of the cat.
11. If your cat doesn't get the place you think it deserves bear in mind that it isn't entirely relevant what place you were given at a previous show – different judges, different hall acoustics, different lighting, different competition in the class and the different condition and behaviour of the cat can all affect class results.
12. If your cat is given a special award try to make a point of thanking the donor, 99 times out of 100 these are taken for granted but shouldn't be! The name of the donor is usually printed in the front pages of the catalogue.
13. Don't gripe or grouse, there is always something to complain about at a show but in the end it really isn't important - so enjoy yourself and make life more pleasant altogether. If you really believe something is important enough to complain then do so in writing to the proper person – the show manager.
14. It's not surprising that it's getting more difficult to train new show managers when the only feedback they get is from complainers. So at the end of the day have the courtesy, if possible, to thank the show manager for their efforts. Not all show managers receive an honorarium for their hard work and, having been a show manager myself, I can assure you the work load is huge, very complex, often personally expensive, and extremely time consuming!

If you bear these simple courtesies in mind your day will be much smoother and far more enjoyable.