

Judges Report - Graham Smith

It was an absolute pleasure to judge at the 2015 South Australian Arabian Championships with fellow judge Jayne Bellchambers from Victoria. I enjoyed judging the Purebred and Derivative halter and performance classes.

At the outset I was impressed by the wide variety of classes provided for competitors, it was a comprehensive two day A Grade program which included new Sporthorse classes, Youth Championships, Dressage and a range of feature events such as the South Australian Championship Cup for the best performed and conformed horse of the show.

The Mallala indoor arena provide a good venue at which to conduct these classes as well as providing excellent facilities for spectators. I also wanted to make comment on two pleasing aspects which I think deserve mention. Firstly, I wanted to congratulate all competitors on the positive spirit in which they conducted themselves in my classes. Many competitors genuinely displayed very good sportsmanship to their fellow competitors, officials and judges throughout the course of the show. I certainly enjoyed the show and had fun - I think the majority of competitors did as well.

Secondly, I wanted to compliment the competitors on the way they showed and stood up their horses for me to judge. By this I mean that I did not see any handler forcing their horse into a hard stand up. Horses were shown sympathetically but were alert, happy and not stressed.

Another point I would note is that I was very happy to see a number of the horses shown without any tactile hair removed - well done to those competitors. I am supportive of those competitors who do not want to remove tactile hair and will always judge them and indeed all horses on their merits with or without tactile hair.

During the show I judged many good horses that won their respective class or championship and would be competitive at any show throughout Australia, however the horse that stood out for me was the warmblood gelding Warrawee Intreeg. Apart from winning an impressive range of championship classes over the two days of the show he deservedly won the South Australian Cup. The Cup required horses to perform an open class set workout then to be judged as a led horses with both scores combined to determine the overall winner. He was superbly ridden by Ms Samantha Kennedy and was a unanimous judges winner as well as being a crowd favourite.

Finally, the show attracted competitors from far afield including Victoria. I dare say people support the show because of its very good reputation, an impressive horse program and good facilities including a very large indoor arena. Additionally the show committee is passionate and progressive about listening to and providing a wide range of classes for competitors. In this regard running a range of new Sporthorse classes for competitors was a case in point.

In summary I would seriously suggest that you should consider attending this show either as competitor or spectator. Most importantly don't forget to leave time to visit the many wineries and restaurants in the Barossa Valley region which are only a short drive away from the show location.