JUDGING STANDARDS
FOR CULTIVATED STRAINS AND WILD SPECIES OF
POECILIA SPHENOPS, POECILIA LATIPINNA
AND POECILIA VELIFERA

ALA – 2017

Introduction

The following judging standards have been commissioned by the American Livebearer Association to better promote, classify and ultimately judge in an equitable and impartial manner cultivated strains and wild species of Poecilia sphenops, P. latipinna and P. velifera presently being bred in the USA.

Objectives

The purpose of those standards is to serve as guidelines for judges to evaluate cultivated strains and wild species of Poecilia sphenops, P. latipinna and P. velifera, but also for serious breeders to better define and selectively improve their strains in order to earn the highest awards in sanctioned shows.

Specimens can be entered as pairs or as a single entry. Please note that each fish in a pair is to be individually judged, yet it may earn an extra ten (10) points for harmony only as a pair. By the same token, any entry displaying lack of “selective breeding achievement” in either finnage or color.

In order to ensure consistent judging in sanctioned shows, all entries must primarily be sorted out and grouped by categories defined by their species OR “parent” species; i.e. Poecilia sphenops, P. latipinna and P. velifera. A secondary grouping is to be organized by finnage variations; i.e. lyretail or double swords.

Each entry is then individually judged and the three (3) specimens or pairs in each group with the highest cumulative points will be respectively awarded: “First”, “Second” and “Third” place.

Note that the present judging directives can be amended each year by the Commission of Standards, with the possibility of adding new potential strains as they become established in the hobby. Such a set of standards is meant to remain flexible, allowing breeders to continuously modify existing strains. In order to do so, a breeder must enter his or her newly selected strain in a minimum of three (3) sanctioned shows, OR the new strain must be entered by three (3) different breeders. Nevertheless, any new strains must also be validated after an official meeting of the Commission of Standards.

By Karl W. Trochu
Based on French and German harmonized standards
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JUDGING CRITERIA

1. Body Conformation .......................... 15 Points
2. Body Length .................................... 10 Points
3. Finnage Conformation ..................... 20 Points
4. Color Conformation ........................ 20 Points
5. Harmony (pair only) ....................... 10 Points
6. Vitality ........................................... 10 Points
7. Selective Breeding Achievements ...... 15 Points

Maximum Total .......................... 100 Points
1. *Poecilia sphenops*

Body Conformation 15 points

*P. sphenops* displays a long body, a pointy head as well as a round-shaped dorsal fin and relatively small.

Body conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Spine deformity............................................. -3 points
- Excessive curvature of the back..................... -3 points
- Eyes deformity............................................. -3 points
- Hollow belly................................................ -3 points
- Flat body..................................................... -3 points

Body Length 10 points

Body length is measured from the mouth to the base of the caudal fin.
Body length necessary to earn 10 points: ♂ 6cm - ♀ 6cm
Body length necessary to earn 0 point: ♂ 4cm - ♀ 4cm

Finnage Conformation 20 points

The dorsal fin is composed of 9 to 10 rays.

Normal fin
No finnage modification allowed

Finnage conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Shredded and/or torn finnage....................... -10 points
- Poorly defined margins.............................. -10 points
Double swords
Upper and lower rays of the caudal fin are elongated and pointy for both sexes.
All other fins are normal.
The elongation of the outer rays of the caudal fin must measure at a minimum 3/10 of the total length of the tail.
The maximum of 10 points are earned only when the lengths of the elongated caudal rays 3/10 of the tail:

\[ \text{mind.} \quad 7/10 \quad 3/10 \]

Fin conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Shredded and/or torn finnage.................... -10 points
- Unevenly elongated rays of the caudal fin ... -10 points

Lyre-tail
Upper and lower rays of the caudal fin are elongated and pointy for both sexes.
The elongation of the outer rays of the caudal fin must measure at a minimum 6/10 of the total length of the tail.
The maximum of 10 points are earned only when the lengths of the elongated caudal rays 6/10 of the tail:

\[ \text{mind.} \quad 4/10 \quad 6/10 \]

The dorsal fin is also pointy:

\[ \text{Rfu} \]

Fin conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Unevenly elongated rays of the caudal fin .... -10 points
- Other fins not elongated .........................-10 points
2. Poecilia latipinna

Body Conformation 15 points

*P. latipinna* displays a long body along with a typical pointy head.

Body conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Spine deformity -3 points
- Excessive curvature of the back -3 points
- Eyes deformity -3 points
- Hollow belly -3 points
- Flat body -3 points

Body Length 10 points

Body length is measured from the mouth to the base of the caudal fin.
- Body length necessary to earn 10 points: *♂* 7.5cm - ♀ 7.5cm
- Body length necessary to earn 0 point: *♂* 5.5cm - ♀ 5.5cm

Finnage Conformation 20 points

The dorsal fin is composed of 14 to 16 rays is robust and elongated all the way to the top of the base of the tail.

- Normal fin
  - No finnage modification allowed

Finnage conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Shredded and/or torn finnage -10 points
- Poorly defined margins -10 points

Double swords
Upper and lower rays of the caudal fin are elongated and pointy for both sexes
All other fins are normal. The elongation of the outer rays of the caudal fin must measure at a minimum 3/10 of the total length of the tail. The maximum of 10 points are earned only when the lengths of the elongated caudal rays reach 3/10 of the tail:

Fin conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Shredded and/or torn finnage ................. -10 points
- Unevenly elongated rays of the caudal fin ... -10 points

Lyretail
Upper and lower rays of the caudal fin are elongated and pointy for both sexes. The elongation of the outer rays of the caudal fin must measure at a minimum 6/10 of the total length of the tail. The maximum of 10 points are earned only when the lengths of the elongated caudal rays reach 6/10 of the tail:

Fin conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Unevenly elongated rays of the caudal fin .... -10 points
- Other fins not elongated .....................-10 points
3. *Poecilia velifera*

**Body Conformation 15 points**

*P. velifera* displays a high body along with a pointy head.

Body conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Spine deformity ........................................ -3 points
- Excessive curvature of the back .................. -3 points
- Eyes deformity ........................................... -3 points
- Hollow belly ............................................... -3 points
- Flat body.................................................... -3 points

**Body Length 10 points**

Body length is measured from the mouth to the base of the caudal fin.
- Body length necessary to earn 10 points: ♂ 8.5cm - ♀ 7.5cm
- Body length necessary to earn 0 point: ♂ 6.5cm - ♀ 5.5cm

**Finnage Conformation 20 points**

The dorsal fin is composed of 18 to 19 rays is robust and elongated all the way to the top of the base of the tail.

- **Normal fin**
  - No finnage modification allowed
  - The large tail measures 2 to 3 /10 of the body length.
  - The dorsal fin is carried straight and high.

The maximum of 10 points are earned only when the length of the dorsal fin reaches 8/10 of the body's length. Any dorsal fin measuring less than 5/10 of the body length is disqualified.

Fin conformation penalties triggering points deduction:
- Shredded and/or torn finnage.............. -10 points
- Poorly defined margins...................... -10 points
COLOR CONFORMATION **20 points**

Color conformation is evaluated in two phases:
1. Background colors
2. Foreground color patterns – i.e. recessive hue, shiny scale, black markings as well as eye color.

In general, more intense coloration is preferable.

HARMONY (pair only) **10 points**

The pair must be judged on their harmonious homogeneity and similarity in body form and size, as well as finnage and coloration. It is commonly understood that females may be slightly smaller in body size and have inferior fin development as well as overall coloration than their male counterparts.

Penalties triggering point deduction:
- Major discrepancy in background coloration ........................................ - 2 point
- Male smaller than female................................................................. - 3 point
- Discrepancy in finnage type between $\sigma$ and $\sigma$................................ - 2 points
- Different color and/or finnage strains (e.g. hi-fin $\sigma$ and lyretail $\sigma$) - 3 points

VITALITY **10 points**

Vitality is an essential judging criteria used to evaluate each specimen based on how it fares in a show environment (e.g. how does the fish carry its finnage, its swimming pattern, is it lethargic? etc..)

Penalties triggering point deduction:
- Sick and/or unhealthy fish............................................................... - 5 points
- Defective swim bladder................................................................. - 5 points

SELECTIVE BREEDING ACHIEVEMENTS **15 points**

In the overall points attributed to *Selective Breeding Achievements*;

Eight (8) points are allocated to the breeding difficulty of a specific finnage strain.
For instance, breeding a quality lyretail specimen whose caudal lyretail is well and evenly develop requires more selective skills than breeding low-fin strains. This rewards the breeder who attempts to breed combined finnage patterns while maintaining both overall finnage quality and conformation.

Seven (7) points are allocated to the breeding difficulty of a specific color strain (e.g. red, albino, black, etc...)
**JUDGING FORM FOR WILD & FANCY POECILIA**  
*Poecilia sphenops, P. latipinna and P. velfera*

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<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>MAXIMUM AWARDED POINTS</th>
<th>POSSIBLE POINTS DEFUCTION</th>
<th>MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS DEDUCTION</th>
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<td>2) Color breeding difficulty</td>
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MAXIMUM AWARDED POINTS: 100  
MAXIMUM DEDUCTED POINTS: -85

TOTAL AWARDED POINTS:  
TOTAL DEDUCTED POINTS:  
GRAND TOTAL POINTS:  

**JUDGE NAME**  
**JUDGE SIGNATURE**