

SHOW RING ETIQUETTE

by Sandi Wall

With all the shows that are upcoming in the near future, I think all exhibitors should review the following show ring etiquette. These are simply a few rules to remember when you are in the show ring that will help you look better as an exhibitor, show your animal off to its best advantage and help the judge to better judge your goat. REMEMBER PARENTS, if your children are showing in the ring, PLEASE GO OVER SOME OF THESE RULES WITH THEM.

1. Always move in a clockwise circle (unless the judge instructs you otherwise).
2. Keep at least 2 feet behind the goat in front of you. The judge has a hard time judging your goat if it is riding piggy-back on the goat in front of it.
3. ALWAYS KEEP YOUR GOAT BETWEEN YOU AND THE JUDGE. When changing sides of your goats, do so in front of the animal. DO NOT go behind the goat or climb over it. As you are changing sides, switch the lead from one hand to the other.
4. Use a short lead. You don't want your goat to be able to walk 3 feet in front of you, but rather at your side. Keep the collar up high around the goat's neck, keeping the head held high.
5. When setting up your goat, do so by placing his/her front legs set squarely under him/her. Place the rear legs so that the hocks are lined up with the tail head.
6. When you are asked to walk your goat side by side with another goat, do just that. Do not run your goat up and back. This is not a race to see who can get back in line first. This is a method a judge uses to compare two goats from the front and rear. If the goat next to you stops, then wait for him/her. Walk up to where the judge is standing, turn the goat in towards you and then walk back into line where you started from.
7. When the judge asks you to line your goats up head to tail, leave a space of at least 18 inches between your goat and the one in front of you. There is nothing worse than having your goat jumping around and acting up, then to discover your goat's tail being swallowed up by the goat behind you.
8. KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE JUDGE. Your eyes should be only on two different places, the Judge and your goat. This is not the time to be checking out the scenery around you. If the judge asks you to move your goat, he/she doesn't really like to have to repeat his/her instructions two or three times.
9. Do not call your goat by it's name when the judge is within hearing distance.
10. DO NOT TALK TO THE EXHIBITOR NEXT TO YOU. Save your conversations with fellow exhibitors for outside the ring and show a little professional courtesy to the judge.
11. **Last of all, but probably most important, DO NOT BRING A SICK ANIMAL TO THE SHOW!** This also applies to goats with scours, pink eye and sores on their mouth or other parts of the body. Many of these conditions are contagious and will very probably (if not, should be) disqualified from the show ring.

Excerpts from:

Hale, Lydia, and Ellen Kritzman, eds. Pygmy Goats: Best of Memo (1976-1981)

National Pygmy Goat Association: pp 117