

JUDGING

By Owen Webb

Meguiar's Australia

Judging varies from show to show but listed here is an overview on the system used at all major national shows including Summernats, Meguiar's Superstars etc. Judging usually begins at scrutineering where the vehicle gets classified and pre-judged. Firstly it will be decided if the vehicle belongs in Street or Show Class. The main difference between these two classes is the condition of the undercarriage and of course the general build quality. If the car does not have a detailed undercarriage then it is difficult to place that car into the Show Class, as it will score very low, if at all, for undercarriage and therefore very low overall. There may be some exceptions in this area, if the vehicle is presented in such a manner as the judges find it hard to believe that the car has regular street use. Areas such as the engine bay finish and signs of street use on the undercarriage will tell us if the car is to be in street or show, but this will be discussed with the owner on a case-by-case basis.

When a car is classified as to its body style of modifications eg. A highly customised coupe may be placed into custom as apposed to coupe if the modifications are too extreme for it to be considered a coupe, the same would go for all categories. If the Judges are unsure of what category the car is to go in they will discuss with the owner the options and come to an acceptable result. But when all else fails the Chief Stewards decision is final.

Judging is based on:

- Quality of workmanship – The quality of workmanship is of upmost importance when a car is being presented for judging. It won't matter how many, or large the modifications are if there is evidence of poor workmanship.
- Cleanliness – The judges will mark a car down on points if it is not presented in a clean and tidy manner.
- Innovation – For a car to perform well overall it would be necessary for there to be a certain amount of modifications that reflect innovation on the car builders part.
- Presentation – The car must be presented to the judges ready for judging. The judges will only judge what they can have access to. The car must be unlocked and the bonnet open for the car to receive points for these areas. If a judge cannot gain access to any part of the vehicle then that part will receive nil points. At static shows the display should be taken into account as your vehicle should be displayed well for the public and judges to view it from all angles.

Points are awarded in the following areas and take into consideration workmanship, innovation, degree of difficulty, cleanliness, and presentation including display (as above).

- Paint – There are usually two areas in the paint category (Special Effects and Standard Paint) and a car can only score points in one of

these areas. Special Effects Paints would include custom finishes such as: Harlequins, Pearls, Candy's etc whereas Standard Paint is a solid or metallic colour found on factory produced vehicles. The Judge will look for any imperfections in the paintwork including the preparation and score the car accordingly. Note: Murals, graphics etc would be judged separately if there were enough cars to warrant the inclusion of a separate category or categories.

- Bodywork – Judging of the bodywork looks at the preparation of the body before paint is applied. Consideration is also given to both the quantity and degree of difficulty of modifications to the body of the car. Even if the car has many modifications they still need to have a high quality of workmanship otherwise the car may receive a low score, therefore it is not only how many modification the car has but also how well they have been executed.
- Interior – Creativeness, workmanship and attention to detail are key areas for judging in the interior area. This includes all items visible from the doorjamb and includes dash, floor coverings, rear parcel/floor, hood lining, seats, modified/fabricated panels, car audio components and other finishing's etc.
- Undercarriage – Includes floor pan, driveline components and all visible brackets, fuel lines etc on the underside of the car. To achieve a high score on the undercarriage it is suggested that considerable attention be paid to all components available to the judges.
- Engine bay – Fitment of non standard engines and accessories and all other components in the engine bay. This includes areas such as the firewall, inner guards and radiator support etc. Also the overall finish and enhancement of the engine bay as a whole.
- Engineering – Covers all non-factory modifications that would require a degree of manufacturing to improve the function of a particular part/parts including driveline and suspension components. There is also the re-engineering of factory or aftermarket parts, this is done to enhance the looks of the overall vehicle.

A further explanation of these areas is provided below and should be read by all those who wish to compete in any category of car shows.

This information was written by show judges and gives an insight into the way a car is judged and how you can prepare your car for competition.

As you read on it becomes apparent that one of the most important areas to consider is not on the car itself but starts before you actually lay a spanner on your car. That is the area of planning. Top show cars are always planned, with the builder knowing what the outcome will be, even if it is not all achieved in the one build, and has to be done over time. A plan is a must, know what class you are building your car for so you can maximise your point's gain and understand how a car is judged. This will give you the edge.