

STATE FAIR AWARDS EXPLAINED

Minnesota Bonsai Society (MBS) engages a professional judge each state fair to evaluate the quality of the exhibited trees. One of the rules of the exhibit is that the tree needs to have been owned by the exhibitor for one full year to be eligible for awards. This is to even the playing field for awards attempting to avoid those that have the means just buying a refined tree and immediately placing it in the exhibit. It is also expected that those new to bonsai will have less refined trees than those practicing bonsai for many years, although this is not always the case. The exhibit has a category called “novice” where those with up to 3 years bonsai experience can enter their trees and only be judged against other “novices”. In 2023, we are adding a third category that is likely a subset of “novice” where anyone under 20 years of age will be judged separately in a third category “young emerging talent” to recognize our younger members in the club.

AWARDS

PLAQUES –

Best of Show – the tree receiving the most points in the general category that has never received this award before. In the case of a tie, the judge chooses between the trees tied for points.

Best of Shohin – the tree that meets the definition of shohin (8 inches or less in height from the soil surface). This is recognized separate from the “Best of Show” because a shohin rarely wins best of show and many are very spectacular in their own right.

Best of Show – **Showcase (Juniper)** – One of the showcase species for this State Fair. Showcase species can win both best of show in this category and “best of show” or “best of shohin” dictated by point totals.

Best of Show – **MN Native** - The other showcase species and a very broad category including anything that fruits. We are not identifying a “cone” as a fruit for this category to narrow it down a bit but any other type of fruit is included. Same rules apply to this featured species plaque as with the Ponderosa Pine.

Best of Show – Novice – the best novice category tree.

Best of Show – Young Emerging Talent – category applies to those under 20 years of age practicing bonsai.

Best of Show – Display – an overall award for best display which might include tree, accent, scroll, inside or outside a shoji screen. If you wish to exhibit with a scroll, please use the shoji screens as changes in the exhibit during setup are made difficult when a scroll needs to be moved.

Presidents Choice – this is at the discretion of the current MBS President and is his/her own decision and not based on points.

AWARDS OF MERIT –

Two of these will be given out (rosette ribbons) and are at the discretion of the exhibit judge and not necessarily based on point totals.

RIBBONS –

One first (blue), second (red), and third (white) ribbon is given out for each of the following categories:

Deciduous – Small, Medium, Large

Conifer – Small, Medium, Large

Novice – no tree size criteria

Ribbons will be based on points received but in the case of a tree receiving a plaque award, will be given to the tree in the category receiving the next most points or, in the case of a tie, not receiving the plaque.

CRITIQUES -

Any tree being exhibited, whether "Exhibit Only" and not judged, or judged tree is eligible for a critique by the professional judge. Critiques provide information on possible ways to enhance the design/development/health of the tree for the future and are very valuable.