

FISH TALES

Remembering History

Many , many years ago I use to go to Steve Kwartler's house which was about 15 minutes away by car. Steve lived in the Bronx, NYC and I live in Manhattan, NYC. This particular year Steve was in a tight race for the IFGA Half Black AOC class. This class was very competitive, make that highly competitive in those days. This class would routinely produce a Best Of Show winner.

There were a few well know breeders showing in that color class. Mike Lastella, Lou Wasserman, Mike Regent(one of only two breeders that I have known to win first Best Of Show in one show (Tank, Delta,Veil). Mike did it with HB-AOC Tank , HB-AOC Delta and HB-AOC Veil), there were other well know breeders competing in this class as well.

These were the years where the majority of the color classes consisted of Tank, Delta, Veil. Lou Wasserman would find the phone number to the show's fish room and would call to find out how his guppies did. Remember these are the Fred Flintstone days, no cell phones, no Black-Burries, no pagers. It was not unusual for Lou to send a very large box of entries (40-50 entries).

In these days I was an assistant judge, once in a while Steve would say come on up and help me pick out some show entries (on close races I would go to his house). It was always a pleasure to go to Steve's house in the Bronx , he always had plenty of cold beer and over 50+ tanks of fish to look at. This particular year it was the last show of the season, a horse race in the HB-AOC class. I think it was the 10th show of the season, yes the 10th show !!! a time when IFGA clubs fought to have a show.

I always preached send 5 Tanks , 5 Deltas and as many veils that we could find. Usually we could find one veil maybe two if we were lucky. It was a close race for the HB-AOC class and I was looking to throw in the kitchen sink if it would not get disqualified.

So at the end of the 10th show it became a task to find show entries. You not only had to have top notch fish you had to have enough guppies for the 10 shows, so that took some planning. Even the best laid plans of mice and men goes a-rye.

Anyway while scrounging around looking for more entries, I asked Kwartler what was in that 2 ½ gallon tank that was on the floor. I told Steve to let me see that fish. I then said something like "Man are you crazy" or "Are you kidding me" ...That HB-AOC male was a horse. I have never seen a HB-AOC that large. Steve told me that male was way over a year old. The male had a real ragged edge on the tail, no problem. In those days I was a real good barber when it came to fixing ragged edges on the edges of guppy tails. I had done this 3 to 4 times on my guppies. So 1,2,3 just like that with a single edge razor and some mercurochrome , problem solved. The tail grew back evenly.

On the Sunday of the show, Steve called me. I said "Hello ?", Steve said "Best Of Show Baby !". This was Steve's first Best Of Show male award, he had previously won a female BOS award, but never a male BOS .

Well to make a long story short , Steve racked up enough points to win the HB-AOC class that year. A year when having good fish was just not enough.