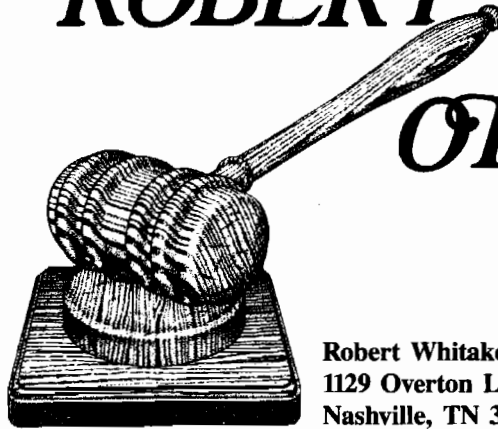




ROBERT'S RULES OF ROSES



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Potpourri

The ARS Convention in Portland, Oregon, in June was a great success due to a hardworking bunch of Northwest District "webfoots" who made everything run smoothly for those attending. The Jerry Justice "weather" balloon released outside the convention hotel after fun night drove the clouds and rain away and guaranteed a sunny tour of the International Test Gardens the next day in perfect weather. Seen at the "Come as a Rose" party on Thursday night was the largest "Moss Rose" in captivity. This two-legged variety might have won first prize in the judging contest except for the fact that the grower of the specimen had overdosed the "plant" on *Triacontanol* and its "balance" and proportion was somewhat off. The Queen of the Costume Court of Honor was Purple Splendour equipped with flashing light headdress, and the curious court included Pharaoh, Stars 'n' Stripes, Acey Deucey, Moss Rose, "Mildewed" Tropicana and Toy Clown.

The purpose of this month's column is to highlight how much each of us can learn attending an ARS National Convention. Here are some samplings.

ARS judges learned not to disqualify a rose as not registered just because it does not appear in *Modern Roses 9*. *Modern Roses 8* contains registered roses "not considered still in commerce" which have not been carried over as a part of *Modern Roses 9*. However, those varieties may still be found growing in an exhibitor's garden and may be used in a show. This fact was confirmed to the writer in the Memphis Rose Show this spring with the cultivar *Tyriana*. By making an inquiry to the Chairperson of Judges (who happened to have entered the rose), our team discovered this fact and avoided Judge's Brunch egg on our faces.

The show committee played a *low down* trick on the judges by staging the national miniature classes on 1½ to 2' high tables. This is the first time in recorded history that ARS judges have been observed getting down on their knees and praying about their decisions.

Side tips on conditioning roses for long vase life were given by Dr. Duane Coyier in addition to his excellent information on mildew disease problems on rose plants. His method of conditioning consists of initially cutting the stem end under water and placing it in a citric acid solution consisting of ½ teaspoon citric acid per gallon water. This technique is claimed to make revival possible even when a vase specimen dehydrates due to loss of water contact. This would have to be labeled the generic version of the *7-Up/Sprite* additives to rose water used by many

exhibitors which contain that same ingredient in more expensive form with sugar. This combination is usually one can *Sprite* to three cans of water.

The writer also received a Don Ballin "Conditioning Tip of the Month" on the bus ride out to the International Test Gardens. In order to condition light petaled roses like *Papa Meiland* to hold show form for exhibiting (or otherwise), Don cuts his specimens from the bush at the one-third open stage, recuts the stem under water, and places it in hot or warm water (preferably in a dark, cool location), allowing it to cool down before refrigerating. The specimen is later taken out of refrigeration the night before use, allowing it to open to a point of one-half to two-thirds open where it *usually* stops and holds form until show or arrangement use. This method is also useful on cultivars like *Garden Party* which tend to close up under refrigeration and refuse to open again. If this procedure does not work every time, please *do not* contact your Consumer Protection Agency.

A recommendation was made in the program on foliage disease to *ALWAYS* cut off and remove all foliage showing signs of a disease such as mildew. This appears to be at variance with a past Dr. Eldon Lyle procedure to *TREAT* the diseased foliage with a spray treatment but *LEAVE* on the plant until new, stronger growth can replace it. What do you and I do about this seeming conflict? If limited to a small part of the plant, we could remove all of the diseased parts. If the plant is covered with the disease too extensively, it would not appear wise to remove all of the affected foliage, as this would shock the plant's growth cycle. This same common sense rule translates to a spring pruning practice of maintaining all the strong, reasonably healthy wood the plant has manufactured until something better comes along. Many have discovered limiting plant size by heavy spring pruning of sound wood does not provide superior flowers or abundant bloom. This is also why we need to be very stingy in our removal of stem and foliage on new plants until we have seen the plant generate stronger replacement growth from what it has to work with. Foliage is the factory for plant growth in the photosynthesis process.

One other interesting subject learned from the Rambling Rosarian and confirmed here at this convention concerns the unusual properties of *Avid*, the new miticide/insecticide. A big advantage over other miticides is its ability by laminar flow from the top of the leaf to the bottom to kill mites there without having to spray the underside of the foliage (where the tiny mites hide out). A second benefit is the fact that it is effective against thrips

at the same time and can be alternated with *Orthene*. You can see why I am an advocate of *Avid*. Kimbrew Walter is one source of this new product. It is extremely soluble in water and sticks well when treated with the addition of one tablespoon of vinegar per gallon. Leave out detergent as it is not needed as a spreader sticker and discolors blooms as they open.

Now that you have an example of all the mixture of ideas and information that flows around an American Rose Society National Convention, your ticket for Tampa (the next one) can

be punched.

If you should think the ideas presented above are rotten, I would urge you to look up the literal definition of the French word "Potpourri." There was a warning on the label before I opened up this can of "rose petal" platitudes. Sign up now for the Tampa, Florida, ARS Convention to be held October 28-31, 1988, and you can put together your own *sweet smelling* potpourri of roses and rose activities that will make you want to return again and again.