



## National Fancy Rat Society Rules and Show Regulations

### CONSTITUTION

#### I TITLE

The Society shall be called the "National Fancy Rat Society".

#### II OBJECTIVES

a) To promote the propagation, study and exhibition of fancy rats.

b) To publish one set of standards by which fancy rats shall be judged.

c) These standards to be the only criteria used by breeders, judges and show committees in the breeding of rats and awarding of prizes.

d) To support the showing of rats and to foster and maintain a high standard of excellence in judging and show management.

e) To take all necessary steps to advance and protect the interest of fancy rats, both as exhibition animals and pets.

f) To educate and encourage members to adopt and maintain high standards of management and care of fancy rats consistent with current agreed practice.

g) To encourage all members of the NFRS to take a responsible attitude when passing on rats to other people and to adhere to best practice guidelines.

#### 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

For the purpose of amending the Constitution, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) must be called by no fewer than 30 members of the society, or a two-thirds majority vote of the whole Executive Committee (EC).

If 30 or more members call an EGM, they shall sign a petition stating any proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution, and shall forward this to the Chairman and Hon. Secretary not fewer than 28 days before the date of the proposed meeting. The date and place of the EGM will be decided by the EC.

The Hon. Secretary will circulate full particulars of the meeting and any proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution to all members of the society recorded at the time. There is no provision for votes by proxy or post at such an EGM.

At an EGM to amend the Constitution, 30 members present shall constitute a quorum.

An amendment to the Constitution may only be passed at the EGM by a two-thirds majority vote of those members present. Each amendment shall be voted upon separately. Any agreed amendment shall be referred to the EC for ratification.

The EC, every 10 years starting from 2002, will review the Constitution and present the findings for ratification at the AGM.

#### 2. AFFILIATIONS

The society may accord affiliation with/to an organisation whose aims and objectives are similar to and in sympathy with the NFRS. All affiliations will be reviewed as necessary.



**3. MEMBERSHIP**

a) There shall be four grades of membership, namely:

- i. Adult (within UK)
- ii. Family (within UK)
- iii. Concessions (Junior or Senior, within UK)
- iv. Overseas

b) Life membership shall be awarded for services rendered to the Society if approved at an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

c) Membership shall be open to all persons in sympathy with objectives of the Society.

d) Junior members shall be at least six years old and not more than sixteen years of age. They may enjoy privileges of ordinary membership, except the right to vote in the annual election and at meetings, or hold any official position.

e) Senior members shall be at least 65 years old.

f) Application for membership, accompanied by remittance of the appropriate subscription, shall be submitted to the Membership Co-ordinator (MC) who is empowered to withhold membership until the next committee meeting. The EC then may grant membership or, in some cases, invoke Rule 5 if it is felt necessary.

g) Payment of the first subscription shall be deemed to mean that the member agrees, and consents, to be bound by these rules.

h) A register of the names and addresses of all members shall be kept by the MC and a separate copy stored elsewhere. Access to this register shall be co-ordinated by the MC adhering at all times to current Data Protection legislation.

i) Family memberships have one vote per adult up to two named adults at the same address, both at the AGM and on the committee.

j) All members who wish to use the online NFRS forum must agree to abide by the current published forum rules.

k) A discount for "digital" memberships may be offered for each membership grade. No physical membership pack will be posted. A digital copy of Pro-Rat-a will be emailed to the member. It is each member's responsibility to ensure their email address is kept up to date by liaison with the MC. Members with digital memberships should not forward Pro-Rat-a to non-members.

**4. SUBSCRIPTIONS**

a) The annual subscription shall run for twelve months from the date the application is received, in accordance with the rates approved at the previous year's AGM. If members wish to renew their membership prior to renewal, it will be at revised rates. Payment must be made in sterling. If members wish to renew their subscription at the AGM it must be at the revised rates.

b) New memberships to run for twelve months from the date of joining, in accordance with the rates approved at the previous year's AGM.

c) A member whose subscription is in arrears may not take part in any proceedings of the Society at the AGM, nor compete for special prizes offered by the Society, nor enjoy any privileges of membership unless a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming.

d) The EC shall have the power to waive payment of the subscription of any special cases.



**5. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF MEMBERS**

a) Any member or proposed member whose behaviour is considered harmful to the NFRS, its members, seriously affects the welfare of animals at a club meeting, or where a serious breach of the rules has occurred, shall be called to give account of their actions by the committee.

This shall be restricted to occasions held under NFRS auspices. Affiliated societies can request that we also consider harmful actions taken at their events by NFRS members under this rule.

The EC shall give the person concerned 14 days' notice of the hearing, to which they may either submit a written reply, send a representative or attend in person. The person shall have the right to bring another member to the meeting with them.

At least five members of the committee must be present at the hearing and these must not include the person under investigation or their representative.

Following the meeting, whether or not the person attends, the EC may:

- i. Expel the member or refuse membership in the case of a proposed member.
- ii. Suspend the member for a set period of time, during which they shall take no part in society activities, shall not receive Pro-Rat-a and shall return all NFRS property including any cups etc.
- iii. Warn the member as to their future behaviour.
- iv. Withdraw the complaint if it is not upheld.

The committee's decision will be given in writing.

Within 14 days of the committee decision, the member shall have the right of appeal to an EGM, whose decision shall be final. The member will have to inform the Hon. Secretary within those 14 days of their wish to appeal. If they do so then the Hon Secretary shall inform all members, giving at least 28 days' notice of the date and venue of the EGM and stating the object of the meeting, at which no other business can be discussed.

There is no requirement to obtain signatures to call this meeting, but if no fewer than eight persons, not including the person under investigation, attend, then the earlier EC decision stands.

b) Any persons shown to be bringing malicious complaints to the committee shall be deemed in breach of the rules and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

c) Any persons holding any NFRS property or money, who does not return it within three months of a formal committee request (in writing), shall be suspended from membership until its return. The NFRS retains the right to refer the matter to the appropriate authorities.

d) If the membership of a person ceases for any reason but they subsequently re-join, then their period of membership shall be as from the date of re-joining unless they pay back all due memberships.

e) Suspended members are not allowed to enter or attend any show run by the NFRS.

**6. OFFICIALS**

The annually elected Officers of the Society shall consist of ten:

1	President	6	Membership Co-ordinator (MC)
2	Chairman	7	Committee Member
3	Hon. Secretary	8	Committee Member
4	Hon. Treasurer	9	Committee Member
5	General Show Secretary (GSS)	10	Committee Member



In addition, the following six posts shall be appointed by the EC as necessary and are not subject to election:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 11. Archivist         | 14. Pet Awards Scheme Co-ordinator      |
| 12. Standards Officer | 15. Rosettes, Cups & Show Administrator |
| 13. Journal Editor    | 16. Web & Forum Administrator           |

## 7. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

- a) The affairs of the Society shall be conducted by an EC as enumerated in Rule 6 above.
- b) Arising out of Society affairs, the EC shall have the power to decide any matter or arbitrate in any dispute not provided for in these rules.
- c) Should any vacancy occur on the EC, the EC may, at its discretion, fill the vacancy until the next election.
- d) The EC may co-opt further committee members as necessary.
- e) Co-opted and appointed members of the committee shall all have voting rights unless specified otherwise.

## 8. MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- a) Meetings of the EC shall be convened by the Chairman/Hon. Secretary when necessary, and at least 14 days' notice of a meeting shall be given to each member of the EC. Any member of the EC, on a matter of sudden importance, may ask the Chairman/Hon. Secretary to convene an EC meeting.
- b) A quorum shall consist of five members.
- c) The EC may hold a meeting at any time but, in any case, should hold a minimum of three each year; the AGM to count as one and the others at convenient intervals.
- d) Other business of the EC may be conducted upon the NFRS forum or by telephone. The Hon. Secretary shall record the voting, and this mode of procedure shall be as conclusive and binding as if a meeting had been held. Matters dealt with under this section are not subject to 14 days' notice as specified in Rule 8(a).
- e) At any meeting where the Chairman is not present, the members shall elect another Chairperson according to consent.

### Rules for Committee Members

- Anything discussed at committee meetings or within the confines of the committee area of the NFRS forum, is to be kept confidential and not discussed with other people or members outside of the forum and most definitely not copied and pasted. Sometimes we do discuss sensitive subjects and it would not be good for the society or members if this information is leaked.
- Committee members are to be expected to take part in committee business on the NFRS forum and at meetings. Failure to log on to the forum for three months will initiate investigation from other committee members and the committee shall decide on any action taken if needed. If they need help or to take a small break at any time for personal reasons, they need to notify another committee member so that substitution can be made to allow business to run as normal.



- If a committee member has to stand down at any time for any reason, they can do so by informing two other committee members by phone, email or post. They can be replaced by a majority vote of the existing committee at any time during the duration of the post.
- If any committee member should be thought to be using their position to bully or intimidate other members then this shall be fully investigated. If this is indeed to be found to be the case then they shall be removed from office.
- Committee members must claim any expenses in accordance with 11 d). Any committee member that fails to claim within the timescales given will be ineligible for reimbursement.

## 9. GENERAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

- a) The AGM of the members of the Society shall be held at a time, date and venue most convenient to members, in conjunction with a social function where possible. The meeting may be held online to enable a larger attendance. If held online, any certificates and trophies will be posted to their recipients or handed over at the next physical event.
- b) Except in the case of a proposal to amend the Constitution (see Rule 1), eight members present shall form a quorum at General Meetings.
- c) Proposals should be sent to the Hon. Secretary in time for inclusion with committee nominations for publication as per Rule 10. The Chairman shall, however, have the discretion to accept a proposal, notice of which has not been given.
- d) A member who is not present may have their views read out by the Chairman.
- e) Except in the case of a proposal to amend the Constitution (see Rule 1), EGMs may be called by 20 members of the Society who shall sign a petition stating the object of such a meeting, and shall forward it to the Chairman/Hon. Secretary no fewer than 14 days before the date of the proposed meeting. The date and place of such a meeting shall be decided by the EC.
- f) The Society may, at any time, be dissolved by a resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and at least 28 days' notice of such a meeting shall have been sent to all members of the Society. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by, or in the name of, the Society, provided that if any assets remain after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, such assets etc. shall be given or transferred to such organisation(s) having objectives similar to some or all of those of the Society that the meeting may determine.

## 10. ELECTIONS

- a) The annual election of officials shall take place as early as possible after 31<sup>st</sup> July.
- b) Advertisement must be placed within the May/June Pro-Rat-a and by 1<sup>st</sup> May on the NFRS forum by the Hon. Secretary seeking nominations from all those who wish to stand for committee for the next AGM.
- c) Those who wish to stand for committee positions must send their intent in writing by post or email, by the advertised date in Pro-Rat-a and on the forum. The advertised date must be no fewer than 10 weeks before the AGM. The nominee must clearly state which committee position they wish to stand for and also include an election statement for publication in Pro-Rat-a and on the forum. Each nominee must be proposed and seconded by other fully paid up NFRS members. Incumbents do not need to send in nominations for their current posts, but can, if they wish, provide election statements to the Hon. Sec. if they are informed that their current position is being contested
- d) After completion, the nominations and proposals shall be scrutinized by the EC.
- e) If any election is required, this will be held using a method the EC decides to be most appropriate. For example, a postal ballot or online voting system.



f) A returning officer must be chosen. The RO must not be in the EC. They will be responsible for administering the online voting or collecting postal votes, and will liaise with the EC to do so.

g) Junior members cannot be included in the annual elections and should not be sent ballot papers or links to vote.

h) Anyone who votes must be a fully paid-up member of the Society.

## 11. ACCOUNTS

a) The Hon. Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds of the Society and shall keep a banking account for all monies received and paid on behalf of the Society, and shall present an audited statement of income and expenditure to the AGM.

b) The balance sheet shall be audited by a person or persons elected by the EC and they shall not be a member of the EC.

c) All monies must be sent to the Hon. Treasurer within six weeks of receipt. To comply with the Cheques Act 1992, all cheques should be payable to the 'National Fancy Rat Society' or 'NFRS'.

d) All claims for reimbursement by fully paid up members must be made within 3 months of the date that costs were incurred. Any claims made outside of this time-frame can only be agreed by the committee. All invoices/claims presented to the NFRS Treasurer for payment must be settled within 28 days.

e) No reimbursement will be considered unless a receipt is produced.

f) No payment will be made by the Society without prior consultation with the Hon. Treasurer.

## 12. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

The minutes, accounts and all documents relevant thereto shall be open to inspection by members on request to the EC in writing, taking into account current Data Protection regulations.

## 13. ALTERATIONS TO RULES AND STANDARDS

a) Subject to the provision of the next succeeding sections, the EC shall have the power to make rules and standards, or alter, rescind or add to any existing rule or standard at the any time if they deem it expedient in the interests of the Society to do so. All such rules and standards shall be submitted to the members at the next AGM for confirmation.

b) Before a rule or standard may be made or varied, the majority of the members of the EC voting shall be in favour.

c) Other than in exceptional circumstances, no show regulations to take effect until published in Pro-Rat-a or upon the NFRS forum.

## 14a) RATTERY & STUD REGISTRATION AND NOVICE AWARD

i) A rattery or stud is defined as a collection of animals (rats) kept and bred at one location.

ii) No more than one rattery name or stud name can be registered per membership.

iii) Any multiple memberships per rattery name or stud name must reside under the same roof.



- iv) Custody of registered rattery names or stud names remains with the partner who registered or earned it. Any disputes shall be referred to the EC whose decision shall be final.
- v) Registered ratteries and studs will be listed on the NFRS website and regularly published in Pro-Rat-a.
- vi) The registered name shall be used as a prefix on family trees/birth certificates of rats bred by a registered rattery or stud. A suffix can be used to show the location of the rat if it is not owned by the breeder, e.g. Vicinalis Waterloo Sunset at Rivendell.
- vii) All breeders wishing to be listed on the NFRS Breeders' List must be registered as a rattery or stud.
- viii) Ratteries must enter their rats at shows under their given name and not their rattery name. Only registered stud names can have their stud name written on prize cards.
- ix) Rattery and stud applications should be accompanied by a proposed prefix.
- x) Rattery names must be unique, under 20 characters long including any spaces and distinct from any currently registered prefixes. Rattery names should not be offensive or subject to copyright laws. Where any membership chooses to register a rattery under a name that could be contrary to copyright legislation then the NFRS accepts no responsibility.
- xi) Suggested prefixes are subject to approval by the committee.
- xii) Stud names not belonging to current members will be protected in perpetuity. Rattery names not belonging to current members will be protected for five years.
- xiii) The owner of the prefix will be held responsible for any dispute arising from their choice of prefix. The NFRS accepts no responsibility for any legal action or dispute even if the name has been approved.
- xiv) All NFRS registered studs and ratteries, or any member seeking to home rats and including their affiliation with the NFRS as a stud, rattery or member as part of that homing process, will display the following statement prominently at point of sale on any website, advert, or other social media page or platform, whether online or not. NFRS forum sales, however, are exempt.

"The NFRS maintains a list of its studs and ratteries as a convenience but doesn't endorse any stud, rattery or member. Therefore it accepts no responsibility for any rats, including rescues, homed by me."

Any registered breeder who fails to comply will first receive a written warning from the committee. If they do not comply within 7 days following the warning, they may have their registration revoked.

## **14b) Registering a rattery**

- i) Members can apply to register a rattery name after 12 months of membership.
- ii) Rattery registration is simply a paid-for listing of a rattery name. Ratteries should be mindful of this when advertising ratteries and kittens on websites and other forms of social media, and avoid using wording or imagery that suggests they are in any way approved or inspected by the NFRS. The EC



may, at its discretion, contact ratteries to request removal of any media which they find to be suggestive of NFRS endorsement or approval.

iii) Anyone wishing to register should enclose the name of the rattery and the fee at the current agreed rate to the EC, who shall vote on it. The applicant shall then be informed within 28 days as to whether their application has been successful. If unsuccessful, the applicant may submit a second name to the process or receive a full refund.

iv) Any rattery registered as a partnership should elect one party at the time of registration who will retain the rattery name in case of a dissolution of the partnership.

v) Any rattery wishing to change rattery name must pay an additional fee at the same published rate as the initial registration fee. Amended rattery names must also be approved by the EC.

## **14c) Novice Awards**

i) Any registered breeder who has not yet qualified for a stud name, is eligible to enter their rats for the novice award, given at all shows where NFRS stars are awarded.

ii) To be eligible, the rat must be bred by and in the possession of the novice exhibitor at the time of entry. The rat must have lived with the breeder since birth,

iii) The novice points are calculated annually and the winner awarded the trophy.

iv) If the exhibitor gains their stud name in the year, the novice points will count until the time it is awarded, when the exhibitor is no longer eligible to enter.

## **14d) Stud Name Registration**

i) All wins must be earned under an NFRS championship/show judge.

ii) The individual(s) must be paid up member(s) to qualify for earning a stud name and have a rattery name already registered with the NFRS as part of the Novice Rattery Registration scheme for at least one year.

iii) The rat(s) in question must be owned and bred by the individual from a dam(s) also owned and bred by the exhibitor and attain either of the following awards:

i. NFRS silver champion – 8 stars on one rat.

ii. 2 x BIS/BOA/RBIS on one or two rats with two different judges. At least one win must be a show where NFRS stars are awarded – the other may be at a NFRS affiliated club show, providing the NFRS judge agrees in writing (or signs back of card) that the rat is of suitable quality.

The application must be made to the Standards Officer along with supporting prize cards for the rat(s), the suggested stud name and the registration fee at the current rate.

## **15. PROVISIONAL STANDARDS**

a) The proposed variety shall be distinct from any standardised variety.

b) Sterility in one or both sexes shall not necessarily disqualify a provisional standard if there is good chance that this can be controlled by selective breeding. The committee, however, reserves the right to withhold the right to show those mutations that are deemed inherently harmful to the rat.





c) Homozygous lethals (that is, mutations where a double dose of that mutation is fatal) are not disqualified where the heterozygote is distinctive and healthy.

d) Before showing a provisional standard variety for the first time, a member should apply to the Standards Officer enclosing the following information:

i. Proposed name of the provisional standard. This should, wherever possible, follow established usage in other fancies.

ii. Proposed exhibition standard of provisional standard. This must conform to the layout of existing standards. Where necessary, the Standards Officer will advise. Standards must reflect the ideal and not describe the animal(s) to be shown. However, it should take account of the animal's genetic make-up.

iii. Full information on the discovery and creation of the provisional standard together with parentage. If possible, a genetic description of the provisional standard should be provided.

This information will be scrutinised by the Standards Officer, who will advise on any necessary alterations. This information will then be passed on to the committee who will have the final say on accepting the variety. This process is not necessary if another fancier has already posted a standard. Where differing standards are submitted and there is a dispute, this will be arbitrated upon by the EC whose decision will be final.

e) It is the duty of the Standards Officer to send a copy of the new standard, when accepted, to the General Show Secretary (GSS), who will then pass it on to the judges and show secretaries.

f) The variety may be shown in the Provisional Standard class when approved by the committee.

g) In order to progress out of the Provisional Standard class into standard classes, the breeder needs to pay attention to the following points:

i. Improve the rat in line with the standard, correcting any faults.

ii. Show regularly in order to educated judges and other fanciers and to publicise the variety.

iii. Get other breeders to take up the variety.

The standard may need alteration during this time; the Standards Officer will advise.

h) When it is considered that the variety has improved sufficiently to be able to make a good account of itself then the committee will consider it for a Guide Standard. During this time, the breeders should maintain contact with the Standards Officer to let them know of any developments.

i) Guide Standard rats shall be shown in the Guide Standard class. After two years the standard shall be reviewed. The variety may then be: i. retained in the Guide Standard class for a further year, ii. progress to Full Standard, or iii. be demoted to Provisional Standard class.

j) Any Provisional Standard not shown at least twice within a specified three-year period shall be deregistered. They may be reregistered if there is enough interest shown by breeders. That is at least two breeders who are actively breeding and promoting them.



Note that show regulations regarding imported rats apply to all animals, whether new or established varieties.

## SHOW REGULATIONS

### SR1. GENERAL SHOW REGULATIONS

a) The EC shall have the power to accord the Society's patronage or support to any show provided that:

- A suitable classification is laid down.
- Proper rules are laid down for the protection of exhibitors and the welfare of rats.
- Entry fees and any prizes be approved by the GSS in consultation with the EC.

b) Members must arrive at a show allowing themselves time for setting up, in order that stock may be tabled 15 minutes before the commencement of judging at the advertised time.

Exceptionally, if the judge and show secretary are agreed, judging may be postponed for up to 30 minutes for a member who is unavoidably delayed. It would be usual for this decision to be reached only when the aforesaid member had made efforts, prior to their arrival, to inform the show secretary of the circumstances.

c) It shall be the responsibility of the exhibitor to ensure that each rat is entered in the correct variety and age class (kittens minimum age eight weeks and under 14 weeks). Once judging has commenced no alteration will be allowed. In the case of inexperienced exhibitors, assistance will be given by the show secretary or show manager before the commencement of judging.

d) Any member who owns wild *Rattus norvegicus* will be barred from showing or selling any stock under NFRS auspices until they have had the rats tested for *Leptospira* and received a negative result.

e) All show stock should be in the possession of and owned by the exhibitor at the time of entry, and have resided within the common travel area of the British Isles for a minimum of three weeks.

i. Kittens under the age of 6 weeks and nursing does shall not be brought to shows.

ii. No stock shall be offered for sale at NFRS shows or events. Private pre-booked arrangements will be brought to the notice of the show secretary prior to the day of the show.

f) All entries are subject to the discretion of the officiating show secretary. All exhibitors, when they undertake to enter any show, agree to their animals being handled by any or all of the show staff including judge, sitters in, scribes, stewards, show secretary, show manager or any other person that the show staff deem fit.

g) At shows held under the Society's patronage, rats must be exhibited in either of the two recognised 'standard' plastic fish tanks which measure either 30.5cm x 20.5cm x 20.5cm **or** 35cm x 23cm x 20.5cm together with the recognised wire mesh sliding tops available through the Society. A limited number of show tanks, for the use particularly of juniors, may be available at any show at the agreed hire rate, subject to availability and at the discretion of the show secretary provided at least seven days' notice is given. Exhibitors should provide their own substrate.

To facilitate ease of judging and stewarding, only current pen number label(s) shall be visible.



The show secretary/judge has the right to refuse permission for any rat to be tabled in a show tank, which in their opinion is in an unhygienic or unsafe condition. The decision of the show secretary/judge is final.

The only marks of ownership allowed on a show tank shall be on its underside. Lids shall not be marked. No food bowls shall be placed in the show tank. Substrate used in tanks should be natural, brown or beige unscented substances – e.g. aspen, pale wood shavings, hemp, chopped/shredded card.

Kittens can be shown in tanks containing white shredded paper as bedding in addition to the normal substrate.

h) Exhibits may be provided with one small piece of apple, carrot or cucumber per animal as a source of moisture. A small quantity of dried food may also be placed in the tank. Individual water bottles must be provided for tented and warmer shows.

i) Only one rat to be exhibited per show tank. Kittens may be exhibited in pairs provided that they are of distinctly differing varieties and are of the same sex.

j) All venues are non-smoking in accordance with national law.

k) The entry fee charged shall be a block entry for variety and pet classes. These fees shall be subject to review by the EC and shall be submitted for confirmation, with other rule changes, at the AGM. All entries must be paid for in full. If an exhibitor withdraws their entries after the listed entry close date and time, these entries must be paid for in full. These can be paid for in person at the show, or payment can be sent electronically or by cheque. Payment for show entries should be received within one week of the show date.

l) Breeders qualified to register a stud name will have a separate section within the pet classes at any show, but are eligible to win the overall Best Pet award.

m) Any mutation that the Society deems harmful to the health of the rat shall not be permitted within any class or event run under NFRS auspices.

n) If a rat is disqualified at a show, for any reason, the owner or owner's representative shall be informed on the critique on the day of the show. The show secretary on the day must send the duplicate copy to the Standards Officer within 7 days of the show, who shall keep it on file. If a rat dies or is discovered to have a potentially serious infectious disease at a show, then the owner is required to remove all their animals and take no further part in the show. The rat will not remain within the show hall but shall be removed to an area where other rats are not put at risk. If there is no suitable area, then the exhibitor can be asked to leave. The occurrence must be brought to the committee's attention within 24 hours.

o) Where any exhibitor has rats disqualified either for the presence of external visible parasites or ill-health, or showing of visually under-developed kittens, twice or more in any six month period, then all rats exhibited by that person must be inspected at the next three shows (at which NFRS stars are awarded) entered by that exhibitor before that person is allowed to compete. It is the judge's discretion to disqualify if they feel kittens are under-developed and look to be under 8 weeks old. If either visible external parasites are found on any of the rats entered by the exhibitor, or they are ill, then all of that person's exhibits must be withdrawn from the show. If all the exhibitor's animals pass inspection for three consecutive inspections then no further inspections will be necessary and normal entry procedures will resume. If visible external parasites or ill-health or any kittens deemed to be



visually under-developed are found during any inspection, then a further three consecutive inspections will be necessary.

Inspections may take place at NFRS shows and affiliated club shows at the discretion of the affiliated club, the show secretary of the day and there being an NFRS judge available to do the inspection who is not the judge at that show in any section. The form sent with the breach letter to be returned to the Standards Officer on completion.

p) Each rat exhibited will be given a written critique at the end of the show.

q) A rat may be entered in both its relevant variety and pet class at the same show where the show is designated for such joint entry. An entry fee will be due for each class. The GSS will select shows from the calendar for joint variety/pet entry to be allowed.

r) Fundraising that happens at any NFRS events or via the NFRS forum needs to be firstly approved by the NFRS committee and a receipt of payment of funds raised needs to be forwarded to the committee

## **SR2. JUDGES**

a) Judges are to be arranged at the discretion of the GSS but to be ratified by the EC.

b) Judging expenses shall be paid by advance agreement between the judge and show secretary in liaison with the Hon. Treasurer.

c) Judges may claim reasonable expenses from the show secretary for a meal and refreshments when judging all day shows.

## **SR3. JUDGING PANEL**

a) To qualify for a place within the scheme, the prospective judge should have:

- A minimum of one year's membership and be a fully paid up member.
- Demonstrated a willingness and commitment to the Society and its aims and objectives.

b) Trainee Judge

After having fulfilled the criteria in (a), the current training scheme as approved by the EC to be put into operation. The training scheme will be overseen and maintained by the Judges' Training Co-ordinator.

c) Show Judge

In order to proceed to Show Judge status, trainee judges must provide documented evidence of having completed the first stage of the NFRS approved training which includes having stewarded at no fewer than six shows and sat in with Championship Judges at no fewer than six shows before being put forward for final assessment.

Once they have reached the Sitting-in stage of their training the trainee must also take and pass all of the following tests; Varieties Assessment, Written Assessment, Judging Assessment.

The Written and Varieties Assessments can be undertaken at any point once Sitting-in status has been attained. The Judging Assessment will take place once at least 6 Sittings in have been completed and the trainee is felt to be competent. All Show Judges must be fully paid up members of the Society.



## d) Championship Judge

After a time when a Show Judge is considered to have “proved” themselves and has also undertaken all additional training and assessments that may have been requested of them by the committee, which have shown consistently good results, they may be considered for promotion to a Championship Judge by the Assessors which would be ratified by the EC. All Championship Judges must be fully paid up members of the Society. During their time as a Championship Judge, a member may be requested by the EC to undertake regular assessments and training; if these assessments are not attended as requested or results show more training is required then the Championship Judge may be demoted to a Show Judge until standards have been raised. Decision to promote or demote judges will always be made by the Assessors and ratified by the EC.

If any Championship Judge lapses their membership, they will be reconsidered for the Judging Panel by the EC when they re-join. Any judges who do not judge varieties at either an NFRS show or an NFRS affiliated club show within a three-year period will be required to re-sit the Training Pack Assessment.

In the event of a written complaint received by the EC in regard to a judge’s ability of conduct, the EC shall decide if the complaint is to be upheld and act according to the seriousness of the complaint. If any complaints made are deemed justified then the judge will be informed of the nature of the complaint, and the course of action that the EC deem appropriate, in writing.

The judge has the right to appeal any decision made by the EC (see Rule 5).

## e) Championship Judge and Assessor

In order to promote best practice in judging and to assess judging quality, a small number of Championship Judges will carry out formal assessments. Assessors are approved by the EC based on experience and ability to teach and communicate judging excellence. These judges will carry out all judging assessments. Should there be a need to add an Assessor, the choice to be decided by the remaining Assessors and agreed by the EC.

f) NFRS stars can only be awarded by Show and Championship Judges. 3 star championship shows can only have 3 stars awarded when judged by Championship Judges.

## **SR4. JUDGING**

a) The eligibility of a kitten (under 14 weeks) shall be left solely in the hands of the officiating judge.

b) A rat that has not won its breed class shall not be selected for Best in Show (BIS).

c) A judge must restrict their nomination for BIS to exhibits in their own sections.

d) In order to determine BIS, each judge shall bring out the best rat from each section they have judged. From these, the BIS shall be chosen. The exhibit gaining BIS shall automatically be awarded first in every class in which it is entered, except the Stud Buck class, the judging to take place before any duplicate classes are judged. The rat awarded Best Opposite Age (BOA) to the BIS shall automatically win any classes confined to its age, except those mentioned above.

e) A Reserve Best in Show (RBIS) shall be awarded when second place in the Supreme Challenge is not BOA. This award shall carry the same number of points as BOA.

f) An additional card shall be awarded at all NFRS shows for the following categories: Best Provisional Standard, Best Self, Best Marked, Best Russian, Best Shaded, Best AOV, Best Rex, Best Dumbo, Best Guide Standard, Best Stud Buck, Best Junior, Best Novice, Best in Show, Reserve Best in Show, Best Opposite Age, 3<sup>rd</sup> Supreme Challenge, 4<sup>th</sup> Supreme Challenge, Best Agility and Best Pet.



- g) Pet judges may choose; time permitting, at their discretion and with the agreement of the show secretary, to present additional awards.
- h) If a rat has been entered into a particular class, then it must be judged within the class it has been entered unless it is disqualified under the rules.
- i) It is preferable that the same judge may not officiate at more than one 3 star show per year.

## **SR5. VARIETY CHAMPIONS**

- a) At all shows held under NFRS auspices, provided there are exhibits totalling 15 or more from at least five exhibitors in the varieties section, the judge shall decide the best of each variety (or varieties grouped together on the schedule) to which they may award stars. The minimum total exhibits/exhibitors does not apply to supporting shows as long as the main show has reached the stated criteria. The BOA and RBIS shall automatically be awarded variety stars. It is the judge's responsibility to withhold stars if the best rat is not of quality.
- b) Only one set of stars is ordinarily given for each variety class. Stars may be awarded to either the adult or the kitten at the judge's discretion. In a case where BIS, RBIS and BOA are from the same variety, stars may be awarded to all. Where the variety win is awarded to a rat that comes higher in the Supreme Challenge (top four) than the rat that wins BOA, then variety stars must be awarded to both ages. Additional stars awarded to the first 4 in the Supreme Challenge and BOA are not mandatory and are at the judge's discretion.

Stud bucks can be awarded an additional star at the judge's discretion.

There will be three levels of show:

- One star shows: this status is awarded to ordinary shows and shows held by affiliated clubs.
- Two star shows: around one third of NFRS shows held in any one year shall be given two star status. The GSS shall try to ensure that these shows are shared equally throughout all regions of the UK currently holding NFRS shows. Affiliated clubs may also hold two star shows as per current affiliation show regulations.
- Three star cup and championship shows.

If a rat goes on to win BIS, BOA and RBIS it will then be awarded a further star. Stars awarded will be indicated on the prize card. The 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> in the Supreme Challenge are all eligible to an extra star at the judge's discretion if they have not already received one by merit of gaining BIS, RBIS or BOA.

c) The owner of a rat winning a total of eight stars may apply to be awarded a Silver Star Variety Championship, twelve stars a Gold Star Variety Championship and sixteen stars a Platinum Star Variety Championship. At least two of the rat's wins must have been as an adult and all of the rat's wins must have been as the same variety. Those claiming championships must be fully paid-up members.

d) Star Sheet

A list of all star winners shall be compiled by the judge and show secretary at each starred show. This will be forwarded to the Standards Officer to enable verification of awards.

e) All UK affiliated clubs may apply for star status for their shows providing:

- i. The show does not clash with any major cup show (i.e. Bradford, London and Scottish Championship Shows, Spring, Summer and Annual Cup Shows) or the NFRS AGM.



- ii. The schedule is approved by the committee.
- iii. They use NFRS standards and show schedule.
- iv. They use NFRS Show or Championship Judges.
- v. They notify the NFRS of any disqualified rats at the last show within seven days of shows taking place.
- vi. The Regional Club complies with NFRS Show Regulations:
  - SR1** a, b, c, d, e (not including e(ii)), f, h, i, j and n
  - SR4** a, b, c, d, e, and h
  - SR5** a, b, c and d

All shows will normally be awarded one star status. However, two star status will be awarded for one show per year providing this show is expected to attract at least 40 exhibits (not to include Provisional Standards) and the club runs **at least three** other one star shows per year.

Two star status may be awarded for two shows per year providing that the club runs **six or more** one star shows per year.

The club applying for star status for their shows should do so by the published date in the previous year. This will normally be in the six months before the first one star show. Applications to be made initially to the EC.

No two separate starred shows will be awarded star status if held on the same weekend within a 75 mile radius.

Any affiliated club wishing to award NFRS stars must hold at least one open show per year where NFRS stars are offered. This must be advertised in Pro-Rat-a and entry must be open to all members of the NFRS.

Where an area or other affiliated club has expelled an NFRS member, that member should not have the automatic right to show at the affiliated club's open star shows. Where the affiliated club objects to the said member showing then the club shall have right of appeal to the NFRS committee. This should be done at the time of application for stars.

## **SR6. PET CHAMPIONSHIP**

a) The Pet Awards Scheme Co-ordinator (PASC) is responsible for:

- i. Appointing a pet steward for each NFRS show (see b).
- ii. Collating awards sheets, administrating scheme and presenting awards at the AGM.
- iii. Co-ordinating agility/fun events where required.

b) Pet Stewards

- i. The show secretary will prepare the paperwork as normal prior to the day. On the day the show secretary will pass all prepared critiques, cards, paperwork and results slips etc. to the Pet Steward.
- ii. Pet Steward will steward for the Pet Judge on the day or in an emergency delegate someone to do this, but be on hand to co-ordinate.



iii. Pet Steward will complete all the pet show paperwork and rosettes on the day and sort out the presentation of the pet awards.

iv. Pet Steward will, if required, also either run the agility or delegate someone to run it, arrange for an agility set to be at the show and complete all associated paperwork and rosettes.

v. Pet Steward will return completed Awards sheets for pets to the show secretary to return to the PASC.

c) Pet Championship – this will be worked out using a points system.

i. Pet points will be awarded automatically to all rats placing 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> in the supreme pet challenge. Rats winning a pet section that have not placed in the supreme pet challenge may be awarded points at the judge's discretion. Best pet also wins 1 additional point.

ii. The Pet Steward and judge will already know how many points are to be awarded by the status of the show (i.e. 3 star variety shows will award 3 points in the pet classes).

iii. The Pet Points sheet will be completed at the show and returned to the PASC.

iv. As per the star award system, if a rat gains 5 points = silver pet champion, 10 = gold pet champion, 15 = platinum pet champion.

v. An extra point will be awarded for Best Pet in Show regardless of the star status of the show.

vi. Pet Champions will be claimed as directed by the PASC in time for awarding at the next AGM.

## **SR7. SHOW CHAMPIONSHIP CERTIFICATE**

On application to the Standards Officer, a Show Championship Certificate will be issued at the next AGM to a member owning a rat that has fulfilled the following conditions:

a) Has won BIS awards not fewer than three times, under at least two different judges with exhibits totalling 15 or more rats from at least five exhibitors in the varieties section. The minimum total exhibits/exhibitors does not apply to supporting shows as long as the main show has reached the stated criteria.

b) Or has won BOA/RBIS awards not fewer than five times.

c) Or has won two BIS awards and two BOA/RBIS awards.

d) Or has won four BOA/RBIS and one BIS.

e) A rat gaining the title "Show Champion" twice shall qualify to hold the title "Supreme Show Champion".

f) Qualifying shows must be judged to the official standards and under the Rules of the NFRS. These can be any NFRS affiliated club show providing the NFRS judge agrees in writing (or logo stamped on card) that the rat is of suitable quality.





**SR8. CUP SHOWS**

- a) Six cup shows shall be held each year which shall be: the Bradford Championship Show, the Spring, Summer and Annual Cup Shows, Scottish Championship Show and the London Championship Show.
- b) The Spring Cup Show shall be held at a suitable venue in April or May.
- c) The Summer Cup Show shall be held at a suitable venue in June or July.
- d) The Scottish Championship Show shall be held at a suitable venue in August or September (unless held as part of a pre-existing event) and can be held jointly with a Scottish Regional Club.
- e) The Annual Cup Show shall be held at a suitable venue in November or December.
- f) The EC will arbitrate on all matters pertaining to these events.
- g) The EC shall have discretion to arrange shows on a Sunday or National Bank Holiday where this is deemed appropriate. They also have the discretion to allow two cup shows to be held on the same date/weekend if the two shows are more than 150 miles apart. Discretion can be allowed to allow another starred show to be held on the same day as a cup show if the distance is more than 150 miles apart, however this should not be a regular occurrence.

**SR9. TROPHIES**

- a) Winners of trophies shall sign a receipt for the trophy(ies), a copy of which shall be retained by the officiating show secretary and forwarded to the cup secretary. NFRS trophies will not be awarded to non-members unless where the winner is a child under six (who cannot be a member) of a fully paid up member of the club.
- b) All trophies shall be returned to the cup secretary upon written request and, in any case, not later than 14 days before they are to be offered for competition, unless being returned at the show itself.
- c) Any member failing to return trophies shall be suspended until such time as the trophy(ies) are returned as per Rule 5(c).
- d) Certificates to commemorate cup wins will be issued at the next AGM.

**SR10. OBJECTIONS**

- a) The judge's decision regarding the placing or awards given to any exhibit is final.
- b) The eligibility of an exhibit, except on the grounds of age, may only be challenged by another member on the grounds that would not be known to the judge. Any challenge must be made in writing to the EC and the matter will be investigated as soon as possible.

If any complaints made are deemed justified then the member will be informed of the nature of the complaint and the course of action that the EC deem appropriate in writing.

The member has the right to appeal any decision made by the EC (see Rule 5).