

# **CWIS 1st Annual Show Report**

**(Excerpted from the Show Weekend Report in the Summer 2008 Newsletter)**

*(By B. J. Jackson)*

Saturday, June 7th 2008. Show time!!! The day dawned clear and sunny but I was firmly convinced that with the weather the previous day, no one was going to have anything to bring in to exhibit. But, as the clock ticked by, members starting trickling in with their stems. We ended up with 110 stems entered by 11 exhibitors. These represented 63 different cultivars from all of the classes we can grow here on the prairies except the beardless classes. In addition to these identified cultivar classes, we also had a division for the NOIDs in which there were 23 entries and 4 first place ribbons given. And, the lengths some of us had to go to to get those blooms open! Believe me when I say that gardeners, whatever the plant, can be very creative.

Because of the size of the show, the judging took extra time and we ended up behind schedule for opening to the public. It was totally awesome to see people waiting to get in and see the show when the doors finally opened.

The volunteers at the sale table were kept extremely busy. Those iris were flying off the table fast and furious. And, when I finally remembered to hook up the lap top and run the slide show I had put together of the sale iris, they sold like hotcakes again. We didn't sell out but we came darn close!

Susan LeBlanc and Debbie Innes did an awesome job on the display arrangements, too. The shutters were clicking on many cameras that afternoon trying to capture their beauty. I certainly know quality when I see it and these ladies had it in spades!

Volunteers at the Membership/Education table sold memberships, distributed ballots and talking to the folks who dropped by to see the results of the judging.

## **And, the winners are.....**

Starting out with the horticultural sweepstakes awards from the American Iris Society, the Silver Medal award for most first place ribbons awarded in the show was won by Sandy Eggertson. Just behind Sandy, winning the Bronze Medal award for the second most first place ribbons awarded was El "the iris queen" Hutchison. The award for the best specimen from the section exclusively for iris hybridized by a Canadian was won by Winnipeg member Len Giesbrecht with 'Eramosa Miss', a Border Bearded iris that was hybridized by Chuck Chapman. Irene Hyland's entry, 'Spot of Tea', a Miniature Dwarf Bearded specimen hybridized by Paul Black won the section award for best modern specimen. And, finally, (drum roll please.....)

Deb Petrie took home the top prize, the Queen of Show award for the best specimen in the show. Deb's winning entry, 'Star Woman', an Intermediate Bearded class iris hybridized by Marky Smith and introduced by Terry Aitken of Vancouver, Washington.

And, not satisfied with just one award, Deb also took home the CWIS People's Choice award for the one and only Tall Bearded iris in the show, the historic iris 'Prairie Sunset' hybridized by Sass in 1936. After 60 years this iris is still taking home awards. Now that is longevity! This award was determined by show visitors votes.

When I spoke to each winner in turn, each was reluctant to take the credit for the beautiful iris they exhibited. Without exception, Deb, Sandy E, Len, and Irene credited Mother Nature for their success and considered themselves as minor players. Lots of sun, soil with good drainage, attention to detail in grooming for the show and careful transportation to the show were mentioned. Regardless of what they say, they all deserve credit for a job well done for their achievements.

**CWIS Rocks!!!**

My thanks one more (for the final time) to all who participated in whatever capacity, our members and my friends. Most especially, thanks to the other members of the Organizing Committee.