



“Overall Appearance” What the Judges Look For

By Patti Jones

As an entrant and a judge, this area has a special “mystique” on how it is judged. “Overall Appearance” is the only area that has no “guidelines” as to what score a judge would put down. I’m hoping this article will take some of the mystery of how it is judged.

Overall Appearance, is judged in every category. It can be the determining factor for “Best of Show” or an Award of Excellence. It is the judge’s personal opinion/discretion if the entrant looks like they stepped into the judging room during our Model A era. Here is how I judge this area and what I look for in the entrant.

As an entrant comes into the room, I immediately look for color, tones of fabrics, and is the outfit “complete” in my mind. Does the outfit require a hat, purse, coat, etc.? I’m not actually judging whether the individual areas are correct, but how the entrant has put together the complete outfit. Have they gone the extra “mile” with era style makeup, hair and nail polish?

The major garment determines how I judge if the entrant has put together their outfit in my mind. Assuming from the above picture, the entrant is a woman as a point of discussion. I would not give her full points because my eyes are drawn to the hat and its’ color. It’s too bright a color for the outfit worn by the entrant. If it’s evening or daytime, did they add a wrap, coat, fur, etc., did they carry gloves, and the style of purse and shoes helps determine the score. Did she wear leather shoes with an evening dress, or did they wear an evening hat with a daytime dress. I next look at the fit and year the entrant has put on their entry form. If it’s a 1928, is the hemline at or below the knee? If it’s a 1930, is the hem at mid-calf. Length isn’t the only area of concern. How tight is the bust and hip area? I’d deduct a point if it appears that the fabric is stretched in these areas. This is my opinion on what I look for in judging “Overall Appearance”.