



As I did last year, I've captured some of the general comments that applied throughout the feedback. Some of this text is taken verbatim from my notes last year.

The Judging Process

The judges used the same process they used last year. They judged each level for each category, e.g., beginner large bowls, then intermediate large bowls, then advanced, then professional, then moved to another category.

Last year, the judges spent 3 hours judging 49 pieces. This year we had 77 pieces and the judging took 4-1/2 hours, which is about 3.5 minutes per piece, which is a similar "per piece" time as last year.

The judges seemed really objective, discussing the facts around each piece. Personal preference and impact of the piece only came into the picture when there were two pieces with equal ratings, which only happened once or twice.

The judges noted in their comments certain items that weren't the turner's fault, and they didn't mark down for those: for example, a crack in the piece, or grain collapse upon drying which causes lumps.

Suggestions for improvement were also provided in some cases, to help the turners remedy some of the issues with their pieces.

If the pieces entered didn't suit the quality needed for their particular skill level and ribbon, the judges didn't award a ribbon.

Themes to the Feedback

Finish

Once again, finishing was the most common type of issue noted by the judges: tool marks, torn grain, sanding scratches, and grainy finish (dirt and hair in the finish). Some pieces had chuck marks on the base. One common problem was areas where the finish either didn't stick to the piece, or where it ran or developed buildup.

No one method of form or finish was preferred or "correct" – it depended on the context of the rest of the piece and the intent of the turner.

Form

After finishing, the next most common issues were related to design. The base diameter on some items was too big or too small (there are certain guidelines we can provide on the "norm" for this). It is also an option sometimes to eliminate the base.

Crisp lines on the details really help lift a piece to a higher level, unless the intent is to round the form, and it's consistent throughout.

Another issue that came up often was the weight of certain pieces. Some pieces were too heavy for their intent, or their wall thickness was inconsistent throughout the piece. This is especially difficult to get right on hollow forms.

The shape of the curves on pieces was another frequent comment: some pieces had flat areas in the middle of curves, and others didn't continue the curve smoothly to the end of the piece. A French Curve would help visualize this.

It was also important that the form be consistent: for example, there shouldn't be a lot of finely turned items such as beads or classical elements on a natural edge item or a rugged piece. Angular lines in both the piece and base are an example of consistency.