

January 2005

This month I would like to talk about the new experimental “one-frame” class. As you are aware, FIP is presently allowing organizing committees to include this class, on an experimental basis, at international shows. The FIP Board intends to have a recommendation concerning this class brought forward to the members at the Congress in 2006. When I asked the delegates to the Commission on Aerophilately what they would like to see the Bureau work on, the most common request was for guidelines to be used by judges when judging one-frame aero exhibits. These exhibits are presently being judged by FIP accredited judges from any of the recognized disciplines, not necessarily aerophilately. The question arises, “what should non-aerophilatelic judges be looking for in an aerophilatelic one-frame exhibit?”

While guidelines developed by our Commission might seem like the way to go, the task is not as easy as one might think. First, the FIP Board must decide just what a one-frame exhibit really is, that is, what is its purpose? There are two present schools of thought here. The first is that the one-frame exhibit should be the starting point for a multi-frame exhibit on the same topic. Under this concept newer exhibitors would be able to start modestly, get their feet wet, and then continue to develop their exhibit into a more complex and complete one. This was the concept under which one-frame exhibiting began in the United States. It was hoped that new exhibitors would be joining the exhibiting fraternity since preparing a 16-page exhibit wouldn't be as daunting a task as preparing a multi-frame exhibit. What happened, though, was something entirely different. Some of the major exhibitors decided that they could “wow” their fellow collectors with one-frame self-contained exhibits worth tens of thousands of dollars. They soon were taking all of the major prizes, leaving the beginners behind. The second concept being discussed, then, is that a one-frame exhibit must be self-contained, that is, fit exactly one frame, and not be able to be expanded into a multi-frame exhibit. It is a complete exhibit on a narrow topic that couldn't be shown in 5 or 8 frames. Are these two concepts unalterably opposed, or is there a common ground? I personally think that by carefully crafting the regulations for one-frame exhibits, both of these concepts can be brought into the picture. A few examples follow: