

## Staking Plants for Shows



There are differences between the Queensland Orchid Council Rules for staking and tying plants and those from the Australian Orchid Council Rules.

The Australian Orchid Council Standards for judging state: Staking and tying for support will be permitted. The judging panel has the right to remove any staking and or tie if necessary in order to ascertain the strength of the flower spike.

The Queensland Orchid Council Rules state:

On all Inflorescences no staking or tying is allowed on or above the pedicel (Ovary) of the flower. On multi-flowered un-branched inflorescences staking and tying is allowed up to but not above halfway along that portion of the inflorescence carrying flowers or buds.

On branched inflorescences the main inflorescence may be staked or tied up to but not above the utmost branch. Staking and tying of the side branches is allowed but may disadvantage the plant if considered excessive by any Judge. Note Parafilm or florist tape is NOT ALLOWED as ties when supporting the inflorescence. All ties shall not cover more than a reasonable portion of the flower stem. 5% or less of the supported portion of the stem would be considered reasonable. All ties must be such that they can be removed easily at the request of the Judging Panel and must allow any missing flowers to be seen clearly.



Staking and tying should not alter the natural arrangements of flowers on the inflorescence. Staking should commence once spikes have reached around 20cm tall, allowing the increasing weight of the spike and flowers to determine the arch of the spike for the classic (Show bench) inflorescence, the object is to have the bottom flower at the highest point on the arch. Be careful not to move the orientation of the plant once buds are formed or the flowers will change direction and spoil the arrangement.



Lower the light level, lower the maximum temperature, and raise the minimum, switch to a high nitrogen fertilizer if not already doing so. Keep plants a little wetter by watering more often. Give them a little more air movement to cope with the water, and increase the humidity. This will provide the cultural conditions in the flowering season they enjoy in their natural habitat.

These notes have been used at our Cultural and New Grower's Meetings. They are from various sources and we thank the authors. All articles are supplied in good faith and the Bribie Island Orchid Society and its members will not be held responsible for any loss or damage.