



FIP FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE PHILATELIE

SECTION FOR ASTROPHILATELY

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ADVICE ON JUDGING ASTROPHILATELIC EXHIBITS

in accordance with the FIP General Regulations - GREV for all Philatelic Classes and the Special Regulations - SREV and Guidelines for Astrophilately.

This supplementary information to the FIP Special Regulations and Guidelines for Astrophilately is intended to enhance the understanding of the peculiarities of astrophilatelic material and lead to better definition of the criteria and their application in preparing and evaluating an astrophilatelic exhibit.

To reach a balanced evaluation in judging an exhibit, the following relative values of Criteria are used:

- ref. SREV article 5.2 -

Treatment and Philatelic Importance	=	30
Treatment	=	20
Philatelic Importance	=	10
Philatelic and related Knowledge and Personal Study & Research	=	35
Condition and Rarity	=	30
Condition	=	10
Rarity	=	20
Presentation	=	5
Total		<hr/> 100

Before entering to the subject it may be indicated that these information primarily refer to FIP patronized World/International exhibitions and it should be kept in mind that the application will vary from level to level.

For National, Regional and Local exhibitions the relative values, especially in concern of the Criteria Importance and Rarity, might be evaluated differently according to the general level of the exhibition.

Treatment and Philatelic Importance

These Criteria are closely related to the different groups or self-contained sections in which an astrophilatelic exhibit may be classed to, ref. SREV article 3.4 a-e, enabling a primarily estimation of its scope and contents to be expected in regard to the Philatelic Importance and Treatment.

- The Guidelines give additional information on the possible contents of an exhibit according to the group or section it relates to - ref. article 3.4 a) - 3.4 e).

Treatment

Up to 20 points may be allotted to this Criterion which requires an evaluation of:

a) Agreement of contents with the title

b) Presence of an introduction statement and its conformance with the contents of the exhibit.

Above all, the title and introduction must be specific so that the extent (or limitation) of the exhibit is clear. They must provide the essential information on the scope of the exhibit and its contents.

The introductory statement usually takes the form of a brief summary of the exhibit, its purpose, arrangement and importance and must be written in one of the official FIP languages.

- In other words, the title and introduction will give an essential information about the scope of an exhibit and the expected contents and arrangement. It sets the stage for all that follows and is the critical element of the exhibit.

c) Balance between the various parts.

Generally the balance and harmony within the parts of space events or research programmes depend on the chosen subject and will give information on the properly treated philatelic material and arrangement in accordance with the title and introduction.

To give an example:

- An exhibit on "The manned space-programmes of the USA and USSR/Russia" - ref. Guidelines 3.4 e - should have a balanced share of philatelic material related to both programmes.
- On the other hand an exhibit treating a subject such as Astronomy, Telecommunication or Meteorology is expected to devote only a brief sequence to the very beginning whereat the main share should be related to the achievements made by modern means of rockets, satellites, space- probes and strato-balloons by showing the appropriate astrophilatelic material - ref. 3.4 d) 1-3.
- An exhibit on the latter subjects with the majority of philatelic objects related to the historical part and antic means of operating, with a considerable lack of astrophilatelic material referring to the launchings and missions of astronomical research-balloons, -rockets, -satellites and spaceprobes, is not to be considered as suitable.
- This leads to a very sensitive point, special care and level-headed sense should be applied to. In case of any serious doubt or objection that an exhibit does not correspond with the SREV and Guidelines for Astrophilately it should be referred to the class where it is supposed to get the better award.

d) Completeness of material

The contents of the introduction page usually will give the outline what the exhibit is all about and what the exhibitor intends to show and prove.

- Here it is to evaluate whether, according to the chosen subject and introduction, the space-events and/or other technical and scientific aspects are recorded by showing the best philatelic material available and as comprehensive as possible with regard to the scope of the exhibit and the frame space allotted.
- As stated in the SREV and Guidelines art. 3.4 a-e there are various possibilities of preparing an astrophilatelic exhibit and by defining the completeness of material it should be taken in consideration that:

- The more extensive the scope of the chosen subject as e.g. an exhibit referring to art. 3.4 that encompass all aspects related to the specified groups, the more the exhibitor has to take care for covering each part by restricting the philatelic material to the best items at hand by treating all main aspects as informative and revealing as possible.
- Whereat the more restricted the chosen subject to the whole scope of space-exploration as e.g. an exhibit on a section of the manned spaceflights of the USA such as "Mercury-programme" - the more completeness of related philatelic material available is to be expected.

Originality of Treatment may be demonstrated by special investigation in concern of:

- the purpose of space-objects
- tracing of technical, -scientific, -medical and other aspects in connection with space-research and spaceflights
- findings and achievements obtained by rocket inventions
- the different types of rockets and rocket-carriers and their operations
- the missions performed by astro- and cosmonauts during spaceflights and the researchwork done in space-laboratories etc..

To give an example related to "Rocketmail":

Rocketmail treated in a way that the chief characteristic is laid on the transmission of mail by rockets, as already known before in the Aerophilately class, -let it contain ever so rare material, -it may be considered of less interest in concern of the main astrophilatelic aspects where special interest is given to the information on the researchwork done and recorded by the rocket-pioneers in conjunction with these early rocket-launchings in the 30ies:

- inventions in regard to rocket propulsion and use of solid/liquid propellant
- the conquest of reaching scheduled distances and higher altitudes
- realization of stage-rockets
- construction of rocket trains and telescope-rockets
- technical, scientific and biological experiments performed by also transporting payloads of food, medicine, newspaper-clippings, scientific instruments and even living beings.

The same holds true for exhibits on "Stratosphereflights referring to scientific and medical research", where from the astrophilatelic point of view the specifications on the researchwork done during stratoballoon- or rocketplane-flights in preparation to spaceflights is of main interest.

In this concern it should be stated that an exhibit treating this subject is not to be considered to comprise only objects bearing evidence of having been flown. In accordance with the characteristic astrophilatelic material - ref. SREV art. 3.3 - covers with postmark of the exact date and place next to the take-off, ascent or descent are also valid.

This is of special relevance to experimental rocketplane flights performed in regard to manned spaceflights, since in the late 1956 the US Military authority prohibited the carrying of covers by pilots.

Furthermore from the late 50ies onwards up to the modern time a number of relevant unmanned data-collecting stratoballoon-researchflights of different scientific purpose still take place, which are to be recorded by so called covers of event.

Modern performances of stratoballoon-flights without a specific relation to space-research such as e.g. conquest of long distances etc. are not to be considered of relevance within an astrophilatelic exhibit.

e) Correctness of arrangement.

In the SREV article 4 - with reference to Treatment- it reads:

- "Special value is attached to the exact technical evolution of the events."

It is obvious that the progress of space-exploration, logically will be shown step by step. But this does by no means specify that the whole exhibit has to be built up chronologically, only the space events related to a special programme and there of course are different ways of doing.

To give an example:

- An exhibit on the space-programmes of the USA and USSR/Russia may show one complete programme after the other, keeping to a chronology by recording the space events within the different parts of programmes of each country.
- Whereas an exhibit treating the same subject but with a title referring to the competition in space-exploration of both countries as e.g. "Race in Space", may probably record the space activities of the USA and USSR/Russia by showing the space events alternately by also keeping to a chronological order.
- This means that the exhibitor may find his own way of arranging his philatelic material, to whatever group the chosen subject is related to, in harmony with his intentions stated in the introductory page.

Philatelic Importance

Up to 10 points may be allotted to this Criterion.

The Importance of an astrophilatelic exhibit will mainly depend on:

- **The philatelic significance of the exhibit**
- **The degree of difficulty of the subject**
- **the relation of the chosen subject to the wide scope of space-exploration**
- **the completeness of the chosen subject**
- **the general interest given to the chosen subject.**

A wide scope of space exploration and spaceflight is generally more important than a restricted part.

A pioneer period generally is of more importance than a very modern one.

The Importance of an exhibit accordingly stays in close conjunction with the groups or self containing section it belongs to and the interest given to the philatelic material expected to be displayed in accordance with the chosen subject and its scope. (ref. SREV 3.4, Guidelines art. 3.4 a-e).

Concluding the Criteria Treatment and Philatelic Importance it is important to bear in mind that

- an exhibit covering a restricted part of the wide scope of space activities may obtain a low rate of the 10 points for Importance but might score a considerable rate of points for Treatment when exceedingly well developed and arranged by showing as complete as possible the best relevant philatelic material available.

- On the other hand an exhibit that due to its scope and general interest given to the subject may reach a relative high amount of points for Importance but might lose much more in concern of Treatment when special study, essential relevant astrophilatelic material and correctness in arrangement is missing.

Philatelic & Related Knowledge / Personal Study & Research

Up to 35 points may be allotted in total to both Criteria.

Philatelic & Related Knowledge

This Criterion requires an evaluation of:

- a) **The choice of correct philatelic material**
- b) **The absence of mistakes**
- c) **The quality and clarity of text**

a+b) In the GREV art. 3.1 it reads:

"An exhibit shall consist solely of appropriate philatelic material"

Appropriate phil. material related to an astrophilatelic exhibit is stated in the SREV article 3.1 - 3.3 and more specified in the Guidelines 3.2.1 - 3.3.22.

To define proper astrophilatelic material shown for recording space events and differ between relevant and non relevant objects and for revealing eventual mistakes, special attention should be given to the conformity of postmark applied with place and date of the space event, - ref. SRV art. 3.3.

Some additional remarks may be useful.

- Ref. SREV article 3.2 - Guidelines 3.2.1:

Adhesive postage stamps should be wisely selected and mainly shown for:

- recording space-activities where no other relevant object such as e.g. cover with postmark of place and date of space event or special cancellation is available
- representing a historical part of space exploration
- visualizing special technical details of a space-object
- proving the existence of varieties or proofs
- but should not predominate in an astrophilatelic exhibit.

Non postal material: Items recording the pioneer period related to the development of rocketry may be included as e.g.: Some Rocketmail covers or cards dispatched by rockets but not further postal forwarded due to crash landing, post office nearest to place of landing closed since rocket experiment took place at night or on special festival etc., as well as newspaper clippings sent by such rockets.

Other material such as leaflets and messages dispatched by rockets are included in the scope of astrophilately and mentioned in the SREV 3.2 and Guidelines art. 3.2.2.

Examples:

Leaflets related to Rocketmail

Messages dispatched by rockets during the Spanish Civil War 1936-39 and the 2. Worldwar (except by V1)

Telegrams and messages transmitted from spacecraft (spacestations)

Such material which does not show any treatment by an organized postal service should be restricted to a minimum.

Non relevant objects according to the chosen subject and introduction page or an accumulation of objects not to be considered as appropriate astrophilatelic material according to the SREV and Guidelines, let it be ever so rare, may result in lower score since relevant space was used.

Non philatelic collateral material like pictures, newspaper clippings etc. should be avoided, unless of evidential statement with reference to the displayed philatelic object.

Copies of reverse site of an envelope may be shown in reduced size when of important information.

c) In the SREV article 2 it reads:

"An astrophilatelic exhibit is built up on historical, technical and scientific aspects related to space research and space programs."

This makes clear that the exhibitor is hold to create his comments as informative as possible by entering to the respective aspects in relation to the shown object by avoiding an overbalance of text, always bearing in mind that the displayed philatelic material is of main interest.

A well commented exhibit will be also partly rewarded under Treatment or even Personal Study and/or Research.

Personal Study & Research

This Criterion requires an evaluation of:

- a) **The presentation of an original study.**
- b) **The presentation of previously unknown facts.**

The term "Research" is well-known for astrophilatelist and often used in relation with technical, scientific or medical studies in space-activities and of significance in concern of astrophilately. It is evident that in case of the Criterion Research it is a question of philatelic term concerning all classes.

Philatelic and related knowledge and personal study is not copying of catalogues it is the degree to which an exhibitor has studied the relevant literature for presenting not easily found information.

Philatelic study may become evident by reference to e.g.:

- difference in postmarks applied to the same space event
- postmarks and/or official marks of secret places of military units and field post numbers relative to the development of the first space rocket V2
- distinction of flown and non flown covers into space on Intercosmos-flights of the USSR/Russia
- existence of backdated or faked postmarks
- non appropriate postage rates
- varieties in stamps etc.

Partly or complete faked objects or such considered as doubtful must be commented as such by pointing out the distinct signs.

An astrophilatelic exhibit may also give prove of originality of study by revealing particular researchwork done through rocket-experiments or stratosphere and space-flights related to the displayed philatelic object.

The profound study and search for answers to questions sometimes by chance result in new findings.

The way of selecting and presenting key items and the prove of special personal study followed from the comments in a well developed display is essential and will be honored by the Jury.

Condition and Rarity

Condition

Up to 10 points may be allotted to this Criterion.

The contents of material displayed in an astrophilatelic exhibit generally may be expected of good condition. There are some exceptions known such as e.g.:

- Covers flown on tiny rockets in the early experimental "Rocketmail" period sometimes are crumpled due to lack of space or crashlandings, or burned by explosion.
- Some postmarks applied by post office on board of main-recoveryships, - mainly related to early Mercury-missions -, are not of the desired quality.
- The same holds for postmarks of launching-sites as e.g. San Marco at Malindi/Kenya, those of India a.o.m..
- Postmarks applied at spacestations during early period of Intercosmosflights that usually look indistinct.

Rarity

Up to 20 points may be allotted to this Criterion.

Rarity generally depends on the difficulty of acquisition and is not conclusively related to the value.

Exhibits that qualified for FIP International exhibitions must have reached a degree of rarity.

It might be assumed that an astrophilatelic exhibit may mainly contain philatelic material not to be considered as rare. Therefore it might be referred to the fact, that an exhibit related to the early period of actual space-exploration and spaceflight may comprise objects to be considered of special rarity.

- This refers to the spaceprograms of the USA and USSR but also to the European space-activities and all countries which have their own facilities of rocket-launching sites since the number of covers available postmarked on place and date of the space-event, in some cases is very low (of some less than 50 recorded).
- This holds also true for subjects related to Rocketmail, where some covers flown on experimental rockets in the 30ies up to the 2nd Worldwar are extremely rare.
- The same holds for covers flown on stratosphere-researchflights and experimental rocketplane-flights in the 30ies and 50ies.
- And some covers flown into space by astronauts and cosmonauts.
- There also exist rare material related to the development of the first space rocket V2.

Presentation

Up to 5 points may be allotted to this Criterion.

Here the same is valid as for all other classes and the GREV's Article 4.7 give a clear information on this subject.

It should be the aim of the exhibitor to reach harmony in a well balanced presentation of the philatelic material and by optimal use of space available.

He is free in choosing the text which should be easy to read in one of the official FIP languages and transmit all necessary philatelic and related information without overwhelming the presentation of the sheet since the philatelic objects are of main importance.

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