

RMS INSTA-POLL

“What criteria do you use to decide what OTHER clubs to belong to, besides RMS? (only matchcover clubs)”

[May - 61 responding, multiple answers given]

Criteria	Votes
1. Bulletin quality	29
2. Location	23
3. Membership	16
4. Auctions	15
5. Club specialty	12
6. Supported events	4
7. General information	4
8. Support clubs	3
9. Dues	2
10. Freebies	2
11. Date started	1
12. Scheduling	1
13. Roster	1

Bulletin quality includes basically whether the particular bulletin has what the reader is looking for in a bulletin (it's not the same for everyone!)

Location refers to whether the club is local. Most collectors would join a club in their own area. Also includes, though, joining all the clubs in your region, state, etc.

Membership includes friends belonging to that club, how welcoming the members are, was an invitation to join extended, will traders likely be found, etc.

Club specialty includes specialty clubs (such as Jewelite Club, Huggable Bears, etc.), but also how well a specific club meets the needs of that collector.

General information includes joining a variety of clubs to “keep tabs on what's going on across the country” and “have a better chance of finding those elusive covers”

Supported events refers to whether the club sponsors swapfests, drawings, raffles, or other such activities.

Support clubs refers to joining simply to support the hobby's clubs and activities.

Freebies includes availability of freebie tables, covers sent with bulletins, etc.

Scheduling includes “How much of a demand would membership impose upon my schedule.”

Well, the results are not exactly what I expected. I had assumed that the most repeated criteria would be if the club was in the particular collector's local area. That rationale turned out to be #2. Bulletin quality turned out to be the #1 criteria. That should make clubs pause and think about cutting back on bulletin pages, frequency, etc. when looking for ways to save money. When I came into the hobby, the ‘normal’ bulletin put out by clubs was 8 pages every other month. That's not the norm now. And, of course, length and frequency doesn't necessarily include the quality of the information contained therein. But, assuming, a bulletin has good content, cutting back on the length and frequency can only be seen as a negative. Also, almost all clubs are made up of members *outside* of their local area, which means that the majority of your members aren't going to be attending meetings, so what does that leave?...The bulletin!

If you add Auctions and Freebies together, as ‘Covers available’, that moves up to the #3 slot. Does your club give you access to covers? And, look at ‘Roster’...dead last! Remember when a club's roster used to be one of its major drawing points? No more.