

CONTEST & JUDGING HANDBOOK



**Published by the
LABBS
Education & Judging Committee**

REVISED JANUARY 2012

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DEFINITION OF THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterised by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonising above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonising notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics and easily singable melodies, whose tones clearly define a tonal centre and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that resolve primarily around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. Barbershop music also features a balanced and symmetrical form, and a standard meter. The basic song and its harmonisation are embellished by the arranger to provide appropriate support of the song's theme and to close the song effectively.

Barbershop singers adjust pitches to achieve perfectly tuned chords in just intonation whilst remaining true to the established tonal centre. Artistic singing in the barbershop style exhibits a fullness or expansion of sound, precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Ideally, these elements are natural, unmanufactured and free from apparent effort.

The presentation of barbershop music uses appropriate musical and visual methods to convey the theme of the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying and entertaining experience. The musical and visual delivery is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and its arrangement throughout. The most stylistic presentation artistically melds together the musical and visual aspects to create and sustain the illusions suggested by the music.

OFFICIAL LABBS CONTEST RULES

ADOPTED JANUARY 1994

(REVISED JANUARY 2011, JANUARY 2012)

FOREWORD

These rules apply to all quartet and chorus contests. In these rules, the definition of the Preliminary Round Competition is the contest at which the contestants for the Chorus Finals and Quartet Semi-Finals are selected. In matters not specifically covered by these rules, the Education & Judging Committee may exercise reasonable latitude and prerogative provided that the established ethics and policies of LABBS are closely observed.

ARTICLE I: ELIGIBILITY

A. Quartets

1. Each member shall be a fully paid up FULL member of LABBS. A competing quartet may contain up to four Club at Large members.
2. The quartet name and names of members of the quartet shall be registered with the LABBS Quartet Registrar and such registration must include the same personnel that enter the contest.
3. No professional quartet shall be eligible to enter. A quartet shall be considered professional when its members' principal means of income is from fulfilling quartet engagements. Right of appeal in the matter shall be to the Education & Judging Committee, whose decision shall be final.
4. A quartet may be registered and be eligible to compete in the main contest providing the quartet contains no more than two members of the same championship quartet. The quartet must be registered under a new name.
5. Previous Gold Medallist quartets are not eligible to compete in the main quartet contest, but shall be eligible to compete in a separate Quartet Champions contest which will be held during the years which precede a European contest. The winner of the Quartet Champions contest shall be appointed as one of the LABBS representative quartets at the European contest.
6. No person shall sing in more than one competing quartet in the same contest.
7. Personnel Change After Qualifying: To remain eligible for subsequent rounds in a competition cycle/year, at least 3 members from the quartet should remain constant.
8. A Novice quartet is considered to be one which has never previously competed and shall include no quartet medallists from LABBS or any other barbershop organisation. No novice quartet may include more than two members who have previously competed in a quartet contest in any recognised barbershop organisation, at the time of the contest performance. Quartets whose status

has changed since submission of the contest entry form should notify the Contest Administration Category Director as soon as possible, or the Chairman of Judges prior to the start of the contest.

9. Failure to comply with the above will result in forfeiture by the Chairman of Judges.

B. Choruses

1. Member Clubs of the Association may enter only one Chorus.
2. Choruses shall ensure that all their members are fully paid up FULL members of LABBS.
3. Choruses on stage shall consist of no less than nine singing members, all of whom must be female.
4. The Champion Chorus for any given year shall not be eligible to enter the contest in the following year.
5. A Novice Chorus (Club) is considered to be a chorus which has never previously competed in a contest run by LABBS or any recognised barbershop organisation.
6. Failure to comply with the above will result in forfeiture by the Chairman of Judges.

ARTICLE II: CONTEST ENTRY PROCEDURES

1. Contest entry forms shall be sent to every member club at least 45 days prior to the contest date.
2. Completed entries for the contest and information regarding song titles must be received by the Education & Judging Committee's nominated representative by the date specified. All contestants are required to observe the copyright laws in the acquisition, arranging, learning, and performance of songs and arrangements.
3. The contestant reserves the right to alter songs up until two hours prior to the start of each relevant contest, having informed the CA Category accordingly.
4. Roster Submission: Each chorus competing in a chorus contest must submit a list of competitors to the Contest Administration Category, either by email in advance by the date specified in the Chorus Briefing, or to the CA table by the specified time on the morning of competition. The list must include the full name of each member who will be competing, together with her LABBS membership number. Any further alterations must be notified to the CA Category prior to your performance.

ARTICLE III: SCORING CATEGORIES

Each scoring judge awards a score from 0 to 100 for each song. All contestants shall be judged in the three scoring categories:

A. Music

The Music judge evaluates the song and arrangement, as performed. She adjudicates the musical elements in the performance: melody, harmony, range and tessitura, tempo and rhythm and meter, construction and form, and embellishments. She judges how well the musical elements of the performance establish a theme, and the degree to which the performance demonstrates an artistic sensitivity to that theme. She adjudicates the degree to which the musical elements of the song and arrangement display the hallmarks of the barbershop style.

B. Presentation

The Presentation judge evaluates how effectively a performer brings the song to life - that is, the believability of the theme in its musical and visual setting. She responds to both the vocal and visual aspects of the presentation, but she principally evaluates the interaction of those aspects as they work together to create the image of the song. She adjudicates the quality and appropriateness of the overall effect. The Presentation judge evaluates everything about the performance that contributes to emotional impact upon the audience.

C. Singing

The Singing judge evaluates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style. This is accomplished through precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Mastering these elements also creates a feeling of fullness, ring or expansion of sound throughout the performance. When artistry is present, these elements will be natural, not manufactured and free from apparent effort, allowing the performer to fully communicate the theme of the song.

ARTICLE IV: CONTEST JUDGES AND ADMINISTRATORS

1. Contest judges and administrators shall be registered by the Education & Judging Committee through the Category Directors, in their respective categories in accordance with their qualifications to judge one of the three scoring categories or to serve in the Contest Administration category. It is the duty of the Education & Judging Committee, to provide an official register of registered and candidate judges and administrators. Judges registered by LABBS E & J Committee must be fully paid-up FULL members of LABBS.
2. The Contest Administrators and scoring judges for Preliminary Round, Semi-Final and Final Rounds shall be appointed from the Official Register of

Registered Judges and Administrators by the Education & Judging Committee through the respective Category Directors. The determination of the number of Judges/Administrators for a given contest shall be made by the Education & Judging Committee.

3. The E & J Committee reserves the right to appoint registered judges from other associations if required.
4. An expense allowance for each judge and administrator shall be determined by the Education & Judging Committee on an annual basis.

ARTICLE V: TYPES OF CONTESTS

A. All Contests

1. Contestants shall be judged on two different songs in one appearance.
2. Song Repetition
 - a) *Substantial Part Repeated*: Within all rounds of a specific contest, a contestant may not repeat a song or a substantial part of a song. In the context of these rules, the term song may refer to a single song or a medley in which major portions of two or more songs are used. A parody of a song previously sung would be considered repeating a song.
 - b) *Recommendation by the Music Judge(s)*: A Music Judge shall recommend forfeiture to the contest administrator if a contestant repeats a song or a substantial portion from one of its songs in another song. If there are two or more Music Judges, the decision to forfeit must be unanimous.
 - c) *Recommendation Unanimous*: When the decision to forfeit is unanimous, the contest administrator shall record as zero the contestant's entire score in all categories for the repeated rendition of the song(s).
 - d) *Recommendation not unanimous*: When the decision to forfeit is not unanimous, the score(s) for the recommending judge(s) shall be recorded as zero.
3. Convention Registrations: All contestants shall hold full registrations for the convention at which the contest is held.

B. Preliminary Round Contest

1. The Education & Judging Committee shall determine whether or not a Preliminary round contest shall be held.
2. The number of contestants going forward from a Preliminary round contest to the next round shall be determined by the Education & Judging Committee.

C. Semi-Final and Final Round Contest

1. The Quartet Semi-Final and Final Round and the Chorus Final Round contests shall be held in conjunction with the LABBS Annual Convention and shall be under the general supervision of the Education & Judging Committee.
2. Quartets shall prepare a total of four different songs for the Semi-Final and Final round contests, two songs per round.
3. At least six highest ranking Quartets from the Semi-Final round shall compete in the Final round. Each quartet shall be judged on two more songs.
4. After the Final round, ranking of quartets shall be computed from the combined scores obtained in the semi-final and final round. The winners of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places shall be designated Gold, Silver and Bronze Medallists respectively.
5. The winner of the Chorus contest shall be designated Champion Chorus.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICIAL RESULTS

A. Official Scoring Summary

An official scoring summary shall be published and shall show the contest date, the scores for each song in each category for each contestant, the total score for each contestant, the names of the songs and the names of the official panel members.

B. Quartet Semi-Final Round Contest

An official scoring summary as detailed above shall be published except that it shall not contain information regarding qualifiers for the final round contest.

ARTICLE VII: RANKING OF CONTESTANTS

1. Contestants shall be ranked in accordance with the cumulative total scores of points awarded by the panel of judges. The judges shall report their scores immediately following each contestant's performance. Except for first place ties, tie scores shall not be broken, and the official scoring summary shall list the tied contestants in alphabetical order by the name of the quartet or chorus, as appropriate. A tie for first place shall be broken by ranking the contestants according to their overall scores in the Singing category or, only if that does not break the tie, according to their overall scores in the Music category. If a tie still exists, the tie shall stand.
2. In the event a contestant is declared ineligible or disqualified for any rule violation after the results are announced or published, their rank order shall be filled by the next ranked contestant and a revised official scoring summary will be published

accordingly. All remaining lower-ranked contestants will have their rank order adjusted accordingly.

3. If the disqualified or ineligible contestant was given medals and/or other award(s), all members of the disqualified quartet or chorus must return the awards to LABBS E & J Committee for presentation to the appropriate contestant.

ARTICLE VIII: ORDER OF APPEARANCE

1. Contestants shall sing in the order in which their names are drawn by lot or as determined by the Education & Judging Committee.
2. Any contestant failing to appear in its assigned order when called, shall be excused by the Chairman of Judges if circumstances were beyond the control of the contestants and shall appear at a time decided by the Chairman of Judges.
3. Any contestant failing to appear in any round shall not be eligible to compete in any subsequent round in that contest.

ARTICLE IX: SONGS AND ARRANGEMENTS

A. Songs

1. Barbershop Style

All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style. (See style definition above). A song performed in contest must be in good taste, be neither primarily patriotic nor primarily religious in intent, and have a melody and implied harmony consistent with the barbershop style.

2. Unaccompanied

Songs must be sung without any kind of musical accompaniment and without instrumental introduction, interlude, or conclusion. The latter provision applies to both the entire performance and each individual song.

3. Chorus Subunits

In chorus contest performances of songs, selected use of a soloist, duet, trio or quartet is acceptable as long as it is brief and appropriate. At no time should the musical texture exceed four parts.

B. Copyright Compliance

Contestants shall comply with the copyright law in the acquisition, arranging and learning of songs for contest performance.

C. Penalties

Violation of this article will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by one or more judges as follows:

1. Violations of this article relating to taste and patriotic or religious intent are the responsibility of the Presentation judge(s) only.
2. Violations of this article in relation to songs consistent with the barbershop style, including accompaniment and chorus subunits, are the responsibility of the Music judge(s) only.
3. Violations of this article relating to copyright law compliance are subject to post-contest action deemed appropriate by the Education & Judging Committee.

ARTICLE X: SOUND EQUIPMENT AND STAGE SETTING

A. Equipment

1. Provision

The best possible sound equipment shall be provided, if needed. Monitor speakers are permitted. Sound equipment should be operated by a competent operator.

2. Testing and Approval

The stage setting shall be set up sufficiently in advance of the starting time of the contest so that the sound equipment and lighting may be tested to the satisfaction of the appropriate persons, as agreed by the Category Directors and under the supervision of the Contest Administration Category Director. The contest shall not start until the Chairman of Judges has given her approval.

B. Restrictions and Exception

1. Own Equipment

Contestants may not use their own equipment to electronically amplify or alter their voices.

2. Recorded Music or Spoken Word

Nothing in this rule shall be interpreted to permit the use of recorded music (including singing) and/or recordings of the spoken word.

3. Electronic Pitch and Brief Effects

Contestants may use electronic means independent of the house system to take pitch or to provide limited, brief and relevant sound effects.

C. Jurisdiction and Penalties

Violations of Article X.B are subject to penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Presentation judge(s).

ARTICLE XI: STAGING

A. Restrictions

1. Non-members

Persons who are not members of the competing chorus or quartet may not appear on stage during the performance.

2. Bad Taste

Actions by any contestant that are deemed suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste shall not be allowed.

B. Jurisdiction

The Presentation judge(s) shall have jurisdiction over issues of staging. See the Presentation category description for a discussion of unacceptable staging.

C. Penalties

Violation of this article will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Presentation judge(s).

ARTICLE XII: NON-SINGING COMMENT/DIALOGUE

A. Spoken Comments

Non-singing dialogue is generally not a part of a contest performance. However, brief comments made with supporting visual communications may be permitted to more clearly establish mood/theme, to assist the transition of packaged songs, or to add to the effect of closure of mood/theme.

B. Penalties

Spoken words deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance shall be penalized by the Presentation judge(s) up to and including forfeiture.

ARTICLE XIII: PENALTIES AND FORFEITURES

A. Forfeiture

A scoring judge indicates forfeiture by awarding a score of zero.

B. No Public Announcement

There shall be no public announcement of any penalty or forfeiture.

C. Inclusion in Official Scoring Summary

Forfeitures shall be published as part of the official scoring summary, with citation of the rule violated, if appropriate.

ARTICLE XIV: OPERATION OF THE CONTEST

Once the contest begins, and until the contest results are determined, the Chairman of Judges is completely in charge of the operation of the contest.

Announcement of the results of the contest shall be the responsibility of the Education & Judging Committee.

The Chairman of Judges is responsible for ensuring that the contest environment is as fair and consistent as possible for all contestants, and Right of Appeal is available through the Stage Manager.

The Chairman of Judges alone has the authority to stop the performance and judging, and re-schedule part or all of the performance later in the contest. At her sole discretion, the Chairman of Judges may allow a contestant to repeat part or all of a performance later in the contest.

If the Chairman of Judges must cancel a round or an entire contest, that round and/or contest shall be re-scheduled by the Education & Judging Committee in conjunction with the Convention Team.

In making these decisions, the Chairman of Judges shall consult with scoring judges as appropriate.