BARBERSHOP HARMONY AUSTRALIA

STANDING ORDER NO. 6 - CONTEST RULES

Revision 13 as of 11 February 2013

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 AAMBS/BHA

1.1.1 The abbreviation AAMBS shall mean *The Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers Inc.*

1.1.2 The abbreviation BHA shall mean the AAMBS trading name *Barbershop Harmony Association*.

1.2. BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

1.2.1 The American organisation known by that name.

1.3. SENIOR QUARTET

1.3.1 A Senior Quartet is a quartet in which all members are 55 years of age or over and the aggregate age of all members is at least 240 years.

1.4. YOUTH QUARTET

1.4.1 A Youth Quartet is a quartet in which all members are 25 years of age or under.

1.5. SMALL CHORUS

1.5.1 A Small Chorus is a chorus that consists of at least 8 performers, and has 20 performers or less, excluding the Musical Director.

1.6. MEDIUM CHORUS

1.6.1 A Medium Chorus is a chorus that consists of more than 20 performers and 40 performers or less, excluding the Musical Director.

1.7. LARGE CHORUS

1.7.1 A Large Chorus is a chorus that consists of more than 40 performers excluding the Musical Director.

1.8. QUALIFICATION

1.8.1 A process in which the scores gained in a Regional contest are used to determine the right of a performer to participate in the following National contest. Competitors may qualify at Regional contests if they will meet the age requirement for their category by the day of the National contest. However, to be eligible for Regional medals competitors must meet the age requirements by the day of that Regional contest.
2. GENERAL

2.1. APPLICABILITY

2.1.1. These Rules apply to all quartet and chorus contests within BHA. In matters not specifically covered by these rules the BHA Council may exercise reasonable latitude and prerogative provided that the established ethics and policies of the Barbershop Harmony Society are observed in principle.

2.2. SPECIAL RULES FOR CONTESTS

2.2.1. BHA may issue special Contest Rules to cover specific contests. Such special rules may override provisions of these Rules.

3. ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE

3.1. QUARTETS

3.1.1. All members of competing quartets must be full financial members of BHA.

3.1.2. All competing quartets must be registered with BHA prior to entry to the contest and at the time of the contest.

3.1.3. All competing quartets must be eligible to compete according to BHA Standing Order 5 - Regulations for Quartets.

3.1.4. To be eligible to enter a Senior Quartet contest, a quartet must meet the Senior Quartet definition (Clause 1.3) prior to the commencement of the contest.

3.1.5. To be eligible to enter a Youth Quartet contest, a quartet must meet the Youth Quartet definition (Clause 1.4) as of the commencement of the contest.

3.1.6. A quartet that changes any member between qualifying for a national contest, and the contest itself, is not eligible to compete in the national contest.

3.2. CHORUSES

3.2.1. All members of competing choruses must be full financial members of BHA and of each club they choose to represent in the contest.

3.2.2. All competing choruses must be registered with BHA prior to entry to the contest, and at the time of the contest.

3.2.3. All competing choruses must be eligible to compete according to BHA Standing Order 4 - Regulations for choruses.

3.2.4. Nothing in these Rules will be so construed as to limit the rights of a chorus to appoint or replace its chorus director at any time, so long as the chorus director is a financial member.

3.3. GENERAL

3.3.1. For contests staged as part of a convention program, every competing singer and chorus musical director must be a registered delegate to that convention.
4. CONTEST ENTRY PROCEDURES

4.1. A contest entry form will be available from the BHA Secretary or his designate, at least 60 days prior to the contest. Following a qualification contest, qualifiers will be notified of their eligibility to compete and invited to enter the contest for which qualification was thereby obtained.

4.2. Completed entries for the contest must be received by the Contest Administrator at least 30 days prior to the contest date.

4.3. A contestant entering an Open, Senior or Youth contest must declare the contests to be entered on their contest entry form, and declare themselves eligible for the contests so entered.

5. SCORING CATEGORIES

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

5.1.1. SINGING

5.1.1.1. The Singing judge will evaluate 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, unmanufactured, and free from apparent effort, allowing the performer to fully communicate the theme of the song.

5.1.2. MUSIC

5.1.2.1. The Music judge will evaluate the song and arrangement, as performed. He will adjudicate the musical elements in the performance: melody, harmony, range and tessitura, tempo and rhythm and meter, construction and form, and embellishments.

5.1.2.2. The Music judge will judge 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. He will adjudicate the degree to which the musical elements of the song and the arrangement display the hallmarks of the barbershop style.

5.1.3. PRESENTATION

5.1.3.1. The Presentation judge will evaluate how effectively the performer brings the song to life – that is, the believability of the theme in its musical and visual setting. He will respond to both the vocal and visual aspects of the presentation, but he principally will evaluate the interaction of those aspects as they work together to create the image of the song. He will adjudicate the quality and appropriateness of the overall effect.

5.1.3.2. The Presentation judge will evaluate everything about the performance that contributes to the emotional impact on the audience.

6. CONTEST JUDGES AND ADMINISTRATORS

6.1. National Contests must have at least two panels of judges, with at least one panel being from the Barbershop Harmony Society’s “Official Register of Certified Judges and Administrators.” Additional panels will be certified members of Australasian Guild of Barbershop Judges. All judges will be from their respective categories in accordance with their qualifications to judge one of the three scoring categories.

6.2. National Contest judges from the BHS are appointed by the Chair of its International Contest and Judging Committee in collaboration with the Chair of the Australasian Guild of Judges.
6.3. National Contest judges from the Australasian Guild of Judges will be nominated by its Chair, and approved by the BHA Council.

6.4. National Contest Administrators shall be nominated by the Chairman of the Australasian Guild of Judges, subject to approval by the BHA National Council.

6.5. Regional Contests must have at least a single panel of judges, who must be BHS or Australasian Judges Guild certified.

6.6. Judges and Contest Administrators of Regional Contests shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Australasian Guild of Judges, and approved by the BHA National Council.

7. CONTESTS

7.1. DEFINITIONS

7.1.1. OPEN CHORUS AND OPEN QUARTET CONTESTS

7.1.1.1. An Open contest shall have no age restrictions on entry. The contestants are ranked according to the total of their scores allocated by the judges during the contest.

7.1.2. SENIOR QUARTET CONTEST

7.1.2.1. A Senior Quartet contest may be entered by senior quartets only.

7.1.3. YOUTH QUARTET CONTEST

7.1.3.1. A Youth Quartet contest may be entered by Youth quartets only.

7.1.4. MOST IMPROVED QUARTET

7.1.4.1. The Most Improved Quartet is the quartet that has the greatest increase in score between the current and the immediately preceding contest. A quartet must have participated in the immediately preceding contest to be eligible for this award.

7.1.5. MOST IMPROVED CHORUS

7.1.5.1. The Most Improved Chorus is the chorus that has the greatest increase in score between the current Contest and the immediately preceding contest. A chorus must have participated in the immediately Preceding contest to be eligible for this award.

7.2. AWARDS

7.2.1. Awards will be made as determined by the number of contestants in a contest, as follows:

   a) Fewer than 4: 1st only;
   b) Fewer than 6: 1st and 2nd only;
   c) 6 or more: 1st, 2nd and 3rd as appropriate.

7.2.2. Choruses and quartets may enter a Regional Qualifying Contest "for evaluation only." They will be graded by the judging panel, but their scores will not be officially recorded, nor announced. Contestants in this category will receive a judge's evaluation similar to competing groups, but they will not be eligible for any awards.
7.3. QUARTETS

7.3.1. Quartets meeting the eligibility requirements may enter any contest for which they have qualified. All competing quartets will perform two songs in each contest entered. Where contests are conducted in conjunction with one another, two songs only will be sung, and the scores for those songs used to determine the results of each of those contests.

7.3.2. A National Open Quartet contest will be conducted in two stages:
   a) a National Semi-final Contest, and
   b) a National Final Contest.

7.3.2.1. Qualification to the National Open Semi-final Contest will be obtained by the quartets scoring the highest at the preceding national Regional qualifying contests, with a minimum score of 50%, or other proportion as determined by the BHA National Council. A maximum of 30 quartets will qualify.

7.3.2.2. Qualification to a National Open Final Contest will be obtained by the 10 quartets scoring the highest points in the associated National Open Semi-final Contest. The songs sung by a quartet in a National Open Semi-final Contest shall not be sung by it in the associated National Open Final Contest.

7.3.2.3. In a National Open quartet contest, the scores used to determine the ranking of quartets shall be the sum of their scores in the Semi-final and Final contests.

7.3.3. The National Senior and Youth Quartet contests will be conducted in one stage, which may be independent of, or run concurrently with, the National Open Semi-final Contest.

7.3.3.1. Qualification to a National Senior and Youth Contest will be obtained by the quartets scoring the highest at the national Regional qualifying contests, with a minimum score of 50%, or other proportion as determined by the BHA National Council.

7.3.4. Quartets from the National Open, Seniors, and Youth contests may qualify to represent BHA at either of the BHS International contests that follow a National biennial Contest. As a BHS affiliate organization BHA will nominate Medallist Quartets in the following order: The Gold medallist may elect to compete at either of the Internationals following a biennial competition. The year(s) they decline the nomination will be offered to the Silver medallist, and then similarly to the Bronze medallist. The Medallist nominees may receive a grant (up to $4000) to facilitate their representation of BHA at Internationals. However, any one quartet may only go to Internationals once per two year cycle as BHS requires a separate national qualifying score for each Internationals nomination. Nominations by BHA, approval of the nominations by BHS, and allocation of grants are all subject to prevailing qualification scores.

7.3.5. In addition to the nominations in article 7.3.4, any other quartet attaining the BHS automatic qualification scoring level (currently 76%) by a panel of at least 3 BHS judges will be nominated by BHA to represent Australia at one, but not both, of the Internationals following a BHA National Contest.

7.3.6. Any quartet receiving a grant from BHA to attend an International Contest will be expected, while reigning medallists, to attend a significant number of engagements for barbershoppers throughout Australia as directed by the BHA Council.

7.4. CHORUSES

7.4.1. All competing choruses will perform two songs in each contest entered. Where contests are conducted in conjunction with one another, two songs only will be sung, and the scores for those songs used to determine the results of each of those contests.

7.4.2. A National Open Chorus contest will be conducted as one Final Contest.

7.4.3. National Chorus Most Improved, and Division contests, may be conducted in conjunction with a National Open Final Contest.
7.4.4. Choruses from the National Open Chorus Contest may qualify to represent BHA at either of the BHS International contests that follow a National biennial Contest. As a BHS affiliate organization BHA will nominate Medallist Choruses in the following order: The Gold medallist may elect to compete at either of the Internationals following a biennial competition. The year(s) they decline the nomination will be offered to the Silver medallist, and then similarly to the Bronze medallist. The Medallist nominees may receive a grant (up to $6000) to facilitate their representation of BHA at Internationals. However, any one chorus may only go to Internationals once per two year cycle as BHS requires a separate national qualifying score for each Internationals nomination. Nominations by BHA, approval of the nominations by BHS, and allocation of a grant, are all subject to prevailing qualification scores.

8. OFFICIAL RESULTS

8.1. An official scoring summary will be published by the Contest Administrator immediately following the announcement of the winners of any contest.

8.2. At the discretion of the BHA Council the official scoring summary may show:
   a) the contest date and location;
   b) the points scores for each song in each category for each eligible contestant in the order Singing, Music, Presentation, with a total points score indicated;
   c) the total score for each eligible contestant also expressed as a percentage of the total possible score;
   d) the names of the songs sung by each contestant in the order sung, and
   e) the names and positions of the judges and contest administrators.

9. RANKING OF CONTESTANTS

9.1. Contestants will be ranked in accordance with the cumulative total scores of points awarded by the panel of judges. The judges will report their points scores to the Contest Administrator immediately following each contestant’s performance.

9.2. Except for first place ties, tied scores will not be broken, and the official scoring summary will list the tied contestants in alphabetical order by the name of the quartet or chorus, as appropriate.

9.3. A tie for first place will 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 will stand.

9.4. Where contestants remain tied, each will be allotted the same place number, and the next lowest scorer will be allotted a place number as if the tied contestants had been allotted sequential place numbers.

10. ORDER OF APPEARANCE

10.1. Contestants will sing in the order in which their names are drawn by lot, unless the Contest Administrator excuses such appearance owing to circumstances beyond the control of the contestants. The Contest Administrator will determine whether to give an excused contestant the opportunity to appear after all other contestants in that contest session.

10.2. Any contestant not previously excused by the Contest Administrator, that fails to perform in its assigned order of appearance in a contest session will be penalised five points in each scoring category. A penalised contestant will have the opportunity to appear after all other contestants in that contest session.

10.3. If there are two or more excused or penalised contestants, their order of appearance will be determined by the Contest Administrator.
10.4. The Contest Administrator will adjust any drawn quartet Order of Appearance so that a person performing in more than one quartet will not be required to be on stage with less than two other performances between his appearances.

11. SONGS AND ARRANGEMENTS

11.1. 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. All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style, which is an unaccompanied vocal style of music. 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.

11.1.1. Contestants must comply with the copyright law in the acquisition, arranging, and learning of songs used in contest performance.

12. SOUND EQUIPMENT AND STAGE SETTING

12.1.1. The best possible sound equipment, with competent operators, will be provided if needed. Monitor speakers are permitted. The stage setting will be set up sufficiently in advance of the contest starting time so that the sound equipment and lighting may be tested under the supervision of the Contest Administrator. The contest will not start until the Contest Administrator has given his approval.

12.1.2. No changes to sound or lighting equipment will be made during a contest session, unless specifically approved by the Contest Administrator, and shall be only for the sole purpose of correcting a malfunction.

12.1.3. Contestants may not use their own electronic amplification. Violation of this rule may result in forfeiture by the Presentation judge.

13. STAGING

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

13.1.1. Actions by any contestant that are deemed suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste will be penalised by the judges.

13.1.2. The Presentation judge will have jurisdiction over issues of staging. Further information on unacceptable staging is available in the Presentation category of the Barbershop Harmony Society Contest and Judging Handbook.

13.2. Violation of this article may result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by one or more judges.

14. COMMENT

14.1. Non-singing dialogue is generally not a part of a contest performance. However, brief comments made with supporting visual communications may be permitted more clearly to establish mood / theme, to assist the transition of packaged songs or to add to the effect of closure of mood / theme. Spoken words deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance shall be penalized by the presentations judge(s) up to and including forfeiture.

15. PENALTIES AND FORFEITURES

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15.1. A scoring judge indicates forfeiture by awarding a score of zero. There will be no public announcement of any penalty or forfeiture. Penalties and forfeitures will be published as part of the official scoring summary, with citation of the rule that was violated, if appropriate.

16. OPERATION OF THE CONTEST

16.1. Once the contest begins, and until the contest results are determined, the Contest Administrator is completely in charge of the operation of the contest. Announcement of the results of the contest will be the responsibility of the Contest Administrator.

16.2. The Contest Administrator is responsible for ensuring that the contest environment is as fair and consistent as possible for all contestants.

16.3. At their sole discretion, the Contest Administrator may allow a contestant to repeat part or all of a performance later in the contest. If the Contest Administrator must cancel a session or an entire contest, that session and/or contest will be rescheduled by the Contest Administrator in conjunction with the appropriate administrative body supervising the contest. In making these decisions, the Contest Administrator will consult with scoring judges as appropriate.

17. INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

17.1. For contests staged by BHA and involving international contestants, the BHA National Council may approve an adaptation of these rules which takes into account differences between these rules and those of the organisation to which the international participants belong. Notwithstanding this, should a conflict remain, the rules approved by the BHA National Council for the event will take precedence.

18. PARTICIPATION BY ASSOCIATED BODIES

18.1. For competitions staged by bodies associated with BHA and involving contestants from such bodies, the BHA National Council may approve a special Standing Order which takes into account differences between these rules and those of the associated body to which the competing participants belong.

REFERENCES:  A. Standing Order No.4 - Regulations for Choruses
B. Standing Order No.5 - Regulations for Quartets

NOTE: The BHA Council has the right to amend any Standing Order if emerging circumstances dictate. In this event Club Secretaries and all registered Quartets will be immediately notified of any such variation.