

SHOWMANSHIP CATEGORY

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SHOWMANSHIP CATEGORY

The visual characteristics of the barbershop style include high energy, natural body movement (in addition to planned choreography), facial animation and unity of a contemporary visual appearance.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of the showmanship category is the evaluation of the salesmanship of the musical product. This includes the elements of preparation, the visual plan and the creation and communication of on-stage magic. With effective showmanship, the performer is able to enhance what the listener hears by reinforcing it with what the viewer sees, creating a total performance. Showmanship is an intangible art, affected neither by age nor by beauty. With showmanship, a little talent can seem great; without showmanship, the greatest talent can be lost.

The showmanship judge assesses the performer's ability to incorporate the intangible art of showmanship into a performance that creates and communicates magic. She rewards a performance wherein:

- Thorough advance attention has been given to all details of preparation, so that no visual or musical flaw creates such a distraction that the impact of the total performance is weakened.
- An appropriate mood is established and the performer appears so relaxed, poised and self-assured that the audience is readily able to respond to that mood.
- The separate musical and visual facets of the performance enhance and support each other, combining to create a total, entertaining performance.

Although this category description defines standards for judging a *contest* performance, the performer can also consider the information presented here as guidelines for public performance. Sweet Adelines International hopes that its choruses and quartets will present performances of a high caliber at every opportunity, not just in competition. Through exposure to television, video, movies and Broadway shows, the general public has learned to distinguish between performances that are of a professional caliber and those that are not. The image of Sweet Adelines International depends on our maintaining the caliber of all public performances at a high professional level.

A "professional" engages in a vocation as a business or career for financial gain. An "amateur" practices an art for love or pure self-satisfaction, not as a means of livelihood. As a musical organization, Sweet Adelines International holds "amateur" standing because its choruses and quartets perform for the love of the barbershop art form, not to earn their livelihood. However, performances by Sweet Adelines International choruses and quartets are expected to reflect standards of a professional quality.

For purposes of evaluation, the showmanship category is divided into two major areas: performance and preparation.

PERFORMANCE (0-70 POINTS PER SONG)
(The Visual Communication of the Musical Product)

A successful performance results when complete rapport is established between the performer and the audience. Communication is a two-way street; as the performer establishes contact with the audience, the audience responds to the mood or emotion established by the performer. While thorough preparation for a performance is essential, the performer must still effectively implement the details of preparation by successfully incorporating them into a total performance.

All of the facets of performance considered by the showmanship judge combine to achieve a specific goal: “selling the song.” As stated earlier, selling the music is the primary focus of the showmanship category. Costuming, makeup and choreography are a few of the tools available to assist the performer in making that musical sale. However, there must be two parties to any sale: a seller and a buyer. For our purposes, the chorus or quartet is the seller; the audience is the potential buyer. In order to consummate the sale, the product — the music performed — must be of acceptable quality.

While the average audience is not sufficiently educated in the barbershop art form to recognize the finer details of an arrangement, as evaluated by the music judge, the general public can distinguish between performances that are in tune and those that are not. The average audience can also recognize the basic qualities of musicianship that are inherent in a good musical performance. No amount of clever choreography, dazzling costumes or exquisite makeup can compensate for a lack of accuracy and basic musicality. The showmanship judge rewards the performer who actually makes the sale.

VOCAL SKILLS

Because the goal of the showmanship category is to effectively communicate the musical product, the showmanship judge demands the same attention to the details of good vocal production as do the other three judging categories. Good vocal production techniques are an integral part of the musical product examined and evaluated by the showmanship judge.

ENERGY

Energy is the force that propels all aspects of musical performance. It adds a special shine to the visual performance, taking it beyond routine into magic. Energy is the life force of the showmanship category. Adding energy to a performance well-grounded in basic musical techniques will be recognized and rewarded by the showmanship judge.

POISE AND COMMAND

The performer opens the line of communication by putting the audience at ease. In order to do this, the performer must appear poised and in command. This does not mean there is no room for nervousness, but that the successful performer makes constructive use of nerves. Even veteran performers feel a certain amount of healthy apprehension before facing an audience. The successful performer focuses on entertaining the audience rather than worrying about whether she will remember words, notes or choreography. Her unspoken message to the audience is “I am here to entertain *you!*”

A poised, confident and self-assured attitude is paramount if the performer is to succeed in evoking an emotional response from the audience. When the performer exhibits nervousness through such actions as trembling hands or knees, fidgeting fingers or failure to make eye contact, audience attention is drawn away from the performance to the nervous action and members of the audience are unable to enjoy the performance because they are concerned about whether the performer will make it through. The showmanship judge recognizes and rewards a performance that demonstrates a high level of proficiency in the areas of poise and command.

ENTRANCE/BREAK/EXIT

A planned entrance is the greeting that says, “*We are here to entertain you!*” First impressions are extremely important; no one ever gets a second chance to make a good first impression.

The showmanship judge begins her evaluation of a quartet after the emcee has announced the contestant, at the moment the first member of the quartet appears. An effective entrance is alert, brisk and confident, and the quartet acknowledges the audience with broad, sincere smiles that convey an implied “Thank you” for the applause and a “We are glad to be here” attitude. Any movement from acknowledgment to singing position should occur smoothly.

The chorus entrance also begins at the moment the emcee has finished the contestant announcement. Unlike the quartet, chorus members are already in position on stage. The showmanship judge begins her evaluation when the curtain opens or, when no curtain is used, when the stage lights go up. With confident smiles and upright stance, chorus members convey their appreciation for the audience applause and their eagerness to entertain. Whether the chorus director is on stage or makes a delayed entrance, the director also acknowledges the audience before signaling the chorus to begin the performance.

Occasionally a chorus sets the scene by striking a pose or depicting a tableau that prepares the audience for the presentation to come, but which does not involve actual eye contact. When this occurs, the showmanship judge bases her evaluation on the effectiveness of the entrance and the degree of success achieved in preparing the audience for the entertainment to come.

Sample Emcee Announcements:

- Quartet: Contestant Number 3, [Representing Region 39*]
From Harmony Chorus, What Are We Here Four!
- Chorus: Contestant Number 3, [Representing Region 39*]
From Anytown, U.S.A., Under the direction of Donna Director
The Harmony Forever Chorus!

* At international competition, the regional affiliation is added to the introduction.

The break is that brief period of time between the end of the first song and the beginning of the second. During this interval, the show continues with sincere, gracious and confident acknowledgment to the audience, with the performer conveying an implied "Thank you again for your applause." For maximum effectiveness, the performer's acknowledgment begins in character with the music just performed and is compatible with the costume and image. The performer savors the audience applause until it begins to fade, then takes pitch and begins to establish an appropriate mood for the next song. The showmanship judge rewards the performance when all facets of the break are smoothly and effectively carried out so that audience rapport is maintained.

Timing is important to making an effective exit. At the conclusion of the final song, the performer again acknowledges the audience in a style compatible with the music just performed. If the song was a ballad, the acknowledgement begins with gentler smiles to allow the audience to remain in the mood established by the music, and the performer can then break into a stronger, more confident acknowledgement. As the applause reaches a plateau, the quartet turns and leaves the stage with the same confident attitude demonstrated during the entrance, still in command of the stage. The chorus director and chorus members maintain radiant smiles and a confident attitude until the curtain closes or the stage lights go down.

CHARACTERIZATION

Characterization is an effective skill that can be used to enhance the audience's enjoyment of the chorus and quartet performance. Our musical presentations are enriched through costuming, choreography, facial animation, and physical expression. While these skills can energize a performance and assist in transmitting the lyrical interpretation across the footlights, characterization is another aspect that deserves the performer's attention.

Characterization is creating a dramatic persona, or creating a role for the stage. After the musical and lyrical interpretations are designed, the characterization can be created. Decide exactly who is telling (singing) the story. Is it a comedic, broadly-drawn character, or is it a more subtle, sophisticated individual? Does the character remain the same throughout the song or does a transformation take place? How does one convey that change? Appropriate emotions throughout the entire song should be decided upon, followed by methods of conveying those emotions—raised brows, a tilt of the head, a cocky attitude, and so on.

Define who the character is by devising actions, facial expression, and demeanor that will delineate the character for the audience. The choreography and costume plans should be congruent with, and part of, the characterization. It is important that all members of the ensemble participate fully and commit themselves to creating the same character by giving up thoughts of self and inhibition. All must give themselves over to the characterization. This will help to create a more complete and believable character that can have a dynamic impact on the audience. When the performer skillfully creates strong characterization, those very characterizations serve to draw the audience emotionally onto the stage and into the performance.

Care should be taken when devising characterizations so that any deviations from good vocal production are kept to an absolute minimum. For instance, slumped shoulders and downcast faces can convey many emotions but they can also inhibit proper vocal production.

It should be noted that the performer should maintain the characterization until a predetermined time to release the character. For example, the characterization might be maintained throughout a performance, from entrance to exit. The plan might be to maintain character throughout the first song and the bow, or only during one song. The performer should maintain the characterization until the identification with the character reaches a satisfying conclusion. It should be noted that once characterization has begun, it is not advisable to “break character” for even a moment until the predetermined point of the performance. “Breaking character” causes a disturbance of the emotional involvement on the part of the audience. It can easily disrupt the audience/performer bond that the performer has worked so diligently to create.

PHYSICAL EXPRESSION

While the term “choreography” is used to describe *planned* movement, “physical expression” describes the *unplanned*, natural body movement that occurs during a performance. Appropriate, *natural* body movement is one of the indications to the audience that the performer is involved in the performance. Effective physical expression reinforces the fact that the performer feels the music, and supports the musical performance so naturally that it cannot be recognized as separate from the music.

Good posture is the basic foundation for effective physical expression. The goal is to present the audience with the qualities of freedom and spontaneity in performing style, rather than rigidity, while maintaining the best posture for good vocal production. Arms and hands should fall relaxed and naturally to the sides, where they will attract a minimum of attention, yet be readily available to flow freely and naturally into gestures.

Facial expression is a major component of physical expression, for effective facial expression is the best tool available to the performer in visual communication with the audience. The face can convey a wide variety of moods ranging from joy, sorrow, grief, anger, excitement, pain, nostalgia, reflection, apprehension and fear to the extreme opposite of each. Appropriate facial expression reflects the message of the song; inappropriate facial expression confuses, distracts and sends mixed messages to the audience. The stage

performer realizes that more intensity and animation are required in a stage performance than in a face-to-face interaction, because of the distance that must be spanned. The performer's job is to communicate with the last row of the audience, not just the judging panel. Appropriate stage makeup to assist the performer in this regard will be discussed in the "Preparation" segment of this category description.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Evaluation of the choreographic plan itself is discussed in the "Preparation" segment of this category description. However, planned choreography must still be successfully integrated into the total performance. The showmanship judge evaluates how well the choreography is implemented so as to enhance the music; she rewards for choreography that appropriately reinforces the musical presentation.

To give the appearance that one large motion is being made, individual movements need to be accomplished with a common approach. Noticeable differences in body stance, attitude or size of motion can detract from the unit presentation. One of the major concerns of the average chorus member is forgetting planned movements. Those fears are usually groundless, because the showmanship judge cannot possibly watch each individual during all motions just in case one member misses. On the other hand, early or late movements do attract her attention because they create a flaw in the unit presentation. Effective choreography flows naturally and easily into the performance, enhancing the music performed so that what the eye sees reinforces what the ear hears.

UNITY

Throughout the showmanship category description, reference is made to the unit performance or presentation and the means available to the performer for strengthening the overall unit. In Sweet Adelines International the performing group, whether it be chorus or quartet, is a unit, a single entity, and care must be taken in planning all facets of the presentation so that the group appears to be a unit rather than a collection of individuals.

Because of riser positioning, and depending on the size of the group, it is not always possible for all members of a chorus to make all movements or gestures. It is permissible for the front line, the back row, a section or even a single individual to do certain appropriate actions alone. Appropriate action by one member provides only momentary distraction from the overall unit presentation. In many instances the appearance of unity can be enhanced by having the remainder of the chorus either simulate the motion assigned to the front row, or perform the same motion on a smaller scale. The showmanship judge rewards an effective *unit* presentation; choreography that consistently draws attention from the overall unit cannot be considered effective.

Positioning and spacing of chorus members can create an overall unit appearance, as can a uniform approach to matters such as stance and intensity of facial expression. Spacing of quartet members can also help to achieve a unit look. The eye is pleased by balance and symmetry, so attention to the overall visual balance aids the performer in ~~creating the desired unit look.~~

AUDIENCE RAPPORT

Another significant element in establishing rapport with the audience is sincerity. A good actor plays a role with such sincerity that the character becomes believable. When the performer is gripped by the music she is performing, whether it be a tender ballad or a jazzy uptune, she is able to put heart into the voice and the audience catches the contagion of her mood. Audience rapport is a circular phenomenon: The performer creates a mood; the audience responds to the mood and to the performance. The performer, sensing the positive response, feeds more energy and vitality into the performance, eliciting a heightened response from the audience!

The showmanship judge, as an objective part of the audience, senses when audience rapport has been effectively established. She can distinguish between the “hometown” or “favorite-son” reaction and sincere, unbiased response to a valid musical performance. When some flaw in the performance prevents establishment of audience rapport, the showmanship score is affected. The showmanship judge’s highest reward can be given only when true audience rapport is established on entrance and maintained throughout the performance.

PITCH PIPE TECHNIQUE

The showmanship judge is the only member of the judging panel who evaluates the pitch-taking procedure, and her evaluation is confined to assessing the ease with which pitch is taken. Pitch should be taken smoothly, quickly and unobtrusively. If for some reason a firm pitch is not established on the initial attempt, the showmanship judge bases her evaluation of the second and even the third attempt on the performer’s ability to maintain poise and composure and to keep the audience comfortable.

Most quartets still use the traditional pitch pipe because it is easier to slip into a pocket or conceal in some other manner than is the electronic pitch instrument now used by many choruses. If either is retained in the performer’s hand during the performance, it should not provide a visual distraction for the audience.

Judges in the sound, music, and expression categories do not evaluate the taking of pitch, so neither penalties nor rewards are incurred in those categories. However, when pitch is not securely established, any or all of those judges may note resulting problems, and those problems will be reflected in the scores.

Some performers prefer to take pitch off stage, before the entrance or before the curtain opens. Successfully omitting the pitch-taking procedure is neither rewarded nor penalized by the showmanship judge. A faulty start, however, can result in a lower score in the sound, music, and expression categories because pitch was not firmly established. If the performer loses composure because of an insecure start, the score in the showmanship category will also be affected.

POSTURE

As previously noted in this manual, good posture is a requisite of good vocal production. It takes on an additional role in the showmanship category. While good posture keeps the vocal instrument properly positioned, it also helps the performer convey an impression of confidence and poise. Conversely, sagging shoulders, drooping heads, and slumped carriage convey the impression that the performer is timid; the effect can be that of visually apologizing for the performance.

One of the most recognizable tools of the showmanship category is costuming. It is mandatory that positive, correct posture be maintained, allowing the costumes to be appreciated for their creative style and detailing and not distorted by bad posture. The appearance of the costume as worn by the performer is an easily identified indicator of proper or improper singing posture.

CHORUS DIRECTOR

The visual performance of the chorus director is a major factor in the effective overall communication of the chorus performance. The director inspires chorus members by providing a model for posture, facial expression, emotional projection, sincerity, energy and attitude. The director sometimes plays an active part in planned choreography by turning to face the audience, thus becoming part of the chorus. This can be effective if chorus members shift their focus to the audience rather than the director, and if they can successfully continue to perform without direction. However, if musical unity suffers when the director ceases to direct, effective communication is blocked.

The chorus director has the pleasure of accepting, on behalf of the chorus, the response of the audience. When this is graciously done, with an attitude of sharing the spotlight with the chorus members, it adds to the effectiveness of the visual performance. Featuring the director at the expense of the chorus is best left to noncontest performances.

PREPARATION (0-30 POINTS PER SONG)
(Visual Plan)

The showmanship judge considers all facets of the performance that should have been planned in advance, in order to determine how effectively the performer has prepared to entertain the audience. In essence, preparation is the *visual plan*.

ENTRANCE/BREAK/EXIT

Entrance, break and exit were discussed in the “Performance” segment of this category description. The effective entrance, break and exit require careful planning and practiced timing. Careful preparation here adds confidence to the performance. The plan, as well as its effective execution, are reflected in the showmanship category score.

COSTUME

Costumes are generally selected to denote a theme, to illustrate a song or the name of the performing group, or to reflect the personality of the performer. Costumes that demonstrate originality and flair are highly desirable, but it is not necessary that they be expensive or elaborate. The performer’s primary consideration should be presentation of a unit appearance with a costume that is suitable to the performing group and appropriate for stage wear. The same suitable and appropriate costume may be worn during more than one appearance as a contestant, including successive sessions of one competition or a competition in a subsequent year.

Costuming is one of the tools available to the performer in achieving a unit appearance, and costumes should be uniform in style or theme. While most performers reinforce unity by choosing costumes that are uniform in *both* color and style, it is sometimes possible to depart from this sameness while maintaining the unit appearance. When costuming is not identical, though, care must be taken to insure that the reason for the difference and the meaning of the costume plan will be obvious to the audience. When this is not the case, the audience may become so involved in trying to determine the connection that they are unable to enjoy the performance.

The effective costume points up the faces of the performers rather than directing the viewer’s attention elsewhere. Accessories such as belts, collars, appliques, sequins, rhinestones, gloves or jewelry should always complement the costume rather than providing a point of visual focus for the viewer.

In selecting color and fabric, the performer should consider how it will be affected by the intense stage lighting used in Sweet Adelines competitions. When colors or textures are combined, differences that may not be apparent under normal lighting sometimes become very noticeable under stage lights. When colors or textures are combined, the showmanship judge evaluates their compatibility and the effectiveness with which the combination is implemented, so that emphasis remains on the performers’ faces.

In selecting a costume for the chorus director, many options are possible. It may be the same style and color as that of the chorus; it may be the same style but of a complementary color; it may be the same style but, when colors are combined, a reverse of the combination (e.g., chorus in red with white accent, director in white with red accent); it may be the same color but a different style; or it may be a different color and different style. The showmanship judge bases her evaluation on the overall effect, bearing in mind that the goal is a unit appearance.

The costume chosen may be suitable to both songs or it may specifically apply to just the first, but it should not conflict with one or both songs. For example, a clown costume is suitable to two clown or circus songs but is in conflict if the second song is an Irish ballad.

Quartets can generally select costumes in a style and color combination flattering to each quartet member. In a chorus, however, so many sizes and shapes are encountered that it is rarely possible to select a style and color combination best for each individual. Chorus members must bear in mind that emphasis is on the *overall* visual effect rather than on the individual, so long as the costume is flattering to those members readily visible to the audience.

An effective costume is appropriate to the performance, both in style and length, and within the boundaries of good taste. For a quartet, hemlines that are a uniform distance from the floor provide visual unity. Chorus hemlines may be successfully varied so that they are appropriate to the individual, provided members are positioned in such a way that visual distraction is not created by uneven hem heights. Shoes should be the same color and style. It is desirable, but not necessary, that heel heights be uniform. Any noticeable difference in heel heights can usually be concealed by strategically positioning the performers in question. In dealing with such differences in costume as hemlines and heel heights, the performer should bear in mind that animated, involved facial expression keeps the audience attention on the performers faces, not their feet.

A final aspect of costuming considered by the showmanship judge is fit. Costumes that do not fit properly present a visual distraction of such magnitude that the viewer is often unable to respond to the performance. The costume that fits properly also allows sufficient room for the breathing mechanism to function properly. There is no excuse for the performers' failure to ensure, before going onto the stage, that costumes are clean, well pressed and fit properly.

MAKEUP/GROOMING

The spotlight in a Sweet Adelines performance is on the unit, not any single individual. To reinforce the unit appearance, the performer strives to apply makeup in such a manner that individuals blend into an overall picture.

The primary purpose of stage makeup is to define facial features so that the audience is aware of, and can respond to, the performers' facial expressions. Communication with the audience requires facial expression, i.e., use of the eyes, eyebrows, mouth and facial muscles that control expressions such as smiles and frowns. Facial expression must span the distance between performer and audience. For the performer to evoke an emotional response, the audience must be able to identify the lift of an eyebrow, the sparkle in the eyes and the subtle changes that play across facial features during a performance.

Stage makeup is a vital part of the stage presentation, whether the costume be a sophisticated gown or that of a clown. The intensity of stage lighting tends to drain color and the performer needs to compensate for this by increasing the vibrancy and intensity of stage makeup.

Though there is no "rule" that performers must wear red lipstick, experience has shown that a true red is least likely to fade under stage lights. The once traditional blue or green eye shadows have been supplemented by contemporary shades that are acceptable so long as the desired effect — that of highlighting the performers' eyes — is achieved. The shade of makeup, whether greasepaint, pancake or cream, should result in a natural-looking complexion under stage lights. Again, the unit appearance is of primary importance, and any techniques employed to minimize or enhance individual features must remain in harmony with the finished unit look rather than becoming obvious to the viewer.

The showmanship judge bases her evaluation of makeup on the overall unity and effectiveness of the performers' makeup, not on the colors, product or techniques used.

Hairstyles change as frequently as fashions and the contemporary hairstyle of any period is not necessarily compatible with stage appearance. Hairstyles should be appropriate to the costume — casual hairstyle with casual dress, elegant hairstyle with formal dress, period hairstyle with period dress, etc. The hairstyle can also serve to frame the performers' faces through use of height at the crown area. Uniform hairstyle for chorus or quartet members is not required; however, some degree of similarity provides an additional means of enhancing unit appearance.

The showmanship judge rewards the performer who demonstrates that careful preparation and planning have been given to the areas of makeup and grooming.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography has been defined as "dancing, especially stage dancing as distinguished from social or ballroom dancing." To Sweet Adelines members, the definition goes a little further in that the term "choreography" is used to define all the *planned* body movement used in a musical performance.

The purpose of choreography is to visually enhance, illustrate and add meaning to the musical presentation. Often, choreography also aids in achieving desired musical expression, since physical movement generally results in vocal emphasis. For that reason, planned choreography can also detract from the musical presentation when it results in

improper musical emphasis. The showmanship judge's evaluation of choreography is based on its appropriateness to the music and lyrics, and whether it enhances or detracts from the musical presentation. She cannot reward choreography that results in disruption or distortion of the musical performance, no matter how intricate or cleverly designed.

A gesture is a movement that expresses or emphasizes an idea, sentiment or attitude. Effectively planned gestures are an integral part of choreography, but their use must be meaningful to both the lyrical and musical story. The most effective gestures appear natural and spontaneous, even when performed by an entire chorus or quartet, because they exhibit a fluid quality rather than the appearance of "now we put our hands out here." The overall impression is that of unity and precision.

Like choreography, the style with which gestures are executed must be compatible with the musical mood. Effective gestures also encompass a greater scope of motion than would be used to illustrate the same idea in one-to-one communication, because the dramatics required of an onstage performance are greater. Scope, however, should be modified to suit the size of the group. A small movement by 100 chorus members can have the same effect as a larger movement by 25 chorus members.

The music category description discusses the form and overall design of a good barbershop song and arrangement. Choreography that has been well planned to enhance the music is obvious to the showmanship judge. The overall scheme goes hand-in-hand with the musical design, supporting the build to the song's musical and lyrical high points. The mood(s) of the music are also reflected in the style of movement utilized (for instance, smooth and flowing where appropriate and brisk and abrupt where indicated) and key motions coincide with points of musical importance. The choreography plan should complement the image and abilities of the performing group. Intricate dance routines that are inadequately executed cannot be rewarded.

CREATIVITY

The inventive performer finds room for creativity in many aspects of preparation — entrance, break, exit, costuming, makeup and choreography. In evaluating creativity, however, the showmanship judge must still consider propriety to the musical presentation. She cannot reward ideas implemented just because they are new and different; they must also be appropriate to the music, to the barbershop style and to the performing group. Originality is refreshing, and creativity that meets the above criteria will be rewarded.

SPECIAL COMMENTS

DISABILITIES

A chorus or quartet may include a member with a physical disability that prevents her full participation in the performance. Visual impairment, paralysis and broken limbs are examples of disabilities likely to be encountered. The showmanship judge does not ignore a disability; she bases her evaluation on the effectiveness with which it is handled.

STAGING/PROPERTIES

Sweet Adelines competition rules require that staging and lighting be uniform for all contestants. Props and visual elements can be a creative way to increase audience rapport, to enhance characterization, and to entertain, and are permitted in all contest sessions, without penalty. Elaborate scenery or sets may run the risk of penalty for delay of contest. Visual elements that cause a distraction, or interfere with the musical or visual performance of the singers may result in lower showmanship scores.

Just as with choreography and costuming, the contestant is cautioned to be sure that all elements of the visual performance enhance the music, and do not draw excessive attention away from the singers and the musical message. The showmanship judge rewards the performance where the music and the characterization is enhanced by the use of these visual devices or props, and will likewise reduce her score if such elements interfere or detract from the musical message.

Creative performers will use these visual elements in a way that reinforces the message of the music, helps to set the mood, and entertains. Props and visual devices may be used effectively when they are an integral part of the visual plan.

The contest requirement for uniform lighting insures that all contestants are judged under as nearly the same conditions as possible. Where available, a follow-spot may be used for quartet entrance and exit. Use of special lighting may be permitted for the non-competition songs included in the performance package sessions of Sweet Adelines competitions, in which case contestants are notified in advance of details.

NONSINGING MEMBERS

The purpose of a singing organization is to *sing*; and the primary emphasis in a competition of a singing organization is singing. It is expected that all individuals appearing on stage as members of a competing chorus or quartet will be singing at the times required by their voice part. Sweet Adelines competition rules require that only the director(s) and performing members of a competing chorus may appear on stage. A penalty may result if the presence of a “non-singing” member is a distraction and detracts from the musical performance.

CROWNS

Sweet Adelines competition rules require that crowns be neither worn by nor presented to any contestant other than a quartet named international champion. Therefore, the wearing of crowns, tiaras or other similar accessories is subject to penalty.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

As in all creative endeavors, everything that can potentially be covered by a rule has not yet been conceived. Generally speaking, deviation from the norm presents a calculated risk. If the result isn't as effective as hoped, the quartet or chorus may lose all it had hoped to gain. ~~On the other hand, ingeniously clever planning, effectively implemented, can add the finishing touch of success necessary to transform a good performance into a great performance.~~

SCORING THE CATEGORY

The primary responsibility of a Sweet Adelines International judge is to determine the level of proficiency demonstrated by each competitor in her category, and to place each competitor in the proper position relative to other competitors in the competition. In doing so, the judge assigns numerical scores that accurately represent the level of each performance in her category. The composite numerical scores of the entire judging panel establish final placement of all contestants and are the basis for determining winners of the awards.

The showmanship category has been divided so that the 100 points available for one song are allocated as follows:

Performance	0 – 70 points
Preparation	0 – 30 points

In evaluating the performance portion of the category, the showmanship judge considers the elements of successful musical presentation to determine the degree to which the performer meets the established criteria. The performance that leaves the audience uncomfortable, because of a noticeable lack of musical or visual proficiency, is scored accordingly. The performance that satisfies the basic requirements but fails to make a significant impression on the audience can be awarded only an average score. When a performance exceeds the basic requirements, when the performers are poised and in command, when audience rapport is successfully established and when careful preparation is flawlessly implemented and the audience is truly “sold” on the total presentation, then the showmanship judge can award an above-average score. Exceptional accomplishment is recognized and rewarded by the showmanship judge.

In evaluating the preparation portion of the category, the showmanship judge considers the basic requirements. It is expected that the performer will come to the stage in costume, appropriately groomed, and that some degree of planning such details as entrance, break, exit and pitch-taking technique will be evident. The performer who demonstrates that careful attention has been given to all the details involved in creation of a visual plan that supports the music in a superior fashion will be rewarded.

It isn’t necessary to have been “born in a trunk” to love the smell of the greasepaint and the roar of the crowd, but it is necessary for the performer to have respect for the audience and a sincere desire to entertain. These are the requisites of good showmanship. The ultimate is a polished, professional-caliber performance, enjoyed by performer and audience alike. Showmanship, fortunately, is not necessarily an inborn talent; it can be acquired through careful planning, diligent practice and performing experience.

The ideal Sweet Adelines International performance creates an illusion so real, so alive, that both performer and audience are caught up in its spell and all else is forgotten in the magic of song.
