

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE JUDGING CATEGORIES

Sound, music, expression and showmanship — the four judging categories — reinforce, strengthen and interconnect. This overlapping of the various facets of each category is one of the strengths of the judging system. It is also one of the reasons that a Certified Judge in one category is able to serve in a different category when necessary. One has only to compare the printed score sheets to verify the interrelationships.

Each category necessarily focuses on a particular area and the majority of points within that category are allotted accordingly; however, a portion of each score is related to one or more other categories. For instance, tempo, phrasing, dynamics and emotional projection can be seen on both the music and expression category score sheets. Breath support and vowels are found on both sound and expression. Audience rapport and visual communication of a musical product, as found on the showmanship score sheet, are directly related to the emotional communication and artistic sound noted on the other score sheets. Vocal skills are a component of all four categories.

Other interrelated facets of the four categories are not quite so obvious. When a barbershop arrangement is constructed with incorrect or awkward harmonic progressions or weak chord voicings, the sound of the performing group will be adversely affected. Good harmony accuracy will be extremely difficult to achieve, as will good barbershop balance. Synchronization, good lyrical flow and the ability to use an adequate range of dynamics, which are prime ingredients of the expression category, will also be affected by problems in the arrangement. Good showmanship entails the ability to capture an audience and deliberately evoke a favorable response. This ability will be seriously hampered if there are problems in the other three categories.

When a performing group relies mostly on choreography to carry the weight of the showmanship category, the other three categories may suffer. With total emphasis on choreography, the physical energy that comes from natural body English and the dramatic impact of continued facial expressiveness is sometimes missing. When these two ingredients are included in a performance, however, the sound gains new vitality, the lyrics seem to flow more smoothly and a larger variety of dynamics becomes easier to perform.

If a performing group fails to observe the basic fundamentals of the sound category, the other three categories will also be affected. A performance that is chronically out of tune cannot possibly earn a good score in any of the four categories. Even if the performers are beautifully groomed and costumed and use appropriate choreography, they will not be awarded a good score in showmanship if the judge and the audience are bombarded with inaccurate singing.

If we consider one of the ingredients for a good score in the expression category, a performing group must sing together. That means starting and stopping each tone, word

and diphthong at the same time. Without such synchronization, all categories will be adversely affected. Lyrics that are not sung with a flow are likely to be penalized in the music category as choppy phrasing. Poor lyrical flow or choppy phrasing may sometimes even be attributed to the type of choreography used by the performing group.

Only in very rare instances will a performance score very high or very low in only one category. This situation could conceivably occur if a totally unacceptable song/arrangement were performed very well in the other categories. The score given by the music judge would be much lower because of the unsuitability of the music. A very good barbershop song/arrangement performed in tune and in balance with good lyrical flow and a suitable dynamic range might still receive a low score in the showmanship category because of very poor grooming or choreography in poor taste.

It is evident that the four categories dovetail and enhance each other. The performing group that selects a good arrangement and follows the rules of the music category should receive a good score from the music judge; however, this can only be the case if that arrangement is performed in tune, with good synchronization, with musical and lyrical flow and with a visual performance that enhances and supports the music performance.

Each of the four categories comprises one quarter of the potential total score. All four categories are equally important and each must receive equal attention from the performer. The resulting performance will be rewarded in all categories.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SCORING

In each of the category descriptions included in this book, it has been stated that the primary responsibility of a Sweet Adelines International judge is to determine the level of proficiency in her category for each competitor's competition performance and to place each competitor in the proper ranking in relationship to other competitors in the contest. To perform this task, 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 for all contestants and are the basis for determining the winners of awards.

To accomplish this, at the conclusion of each performance, each judge reviews her scoresheet comments. She considers favorable areas as well as the specific errors or general problems noted and makes the above comparisons to assign a numerical score. Performers do not lose "x" number of points for each attack error, each inaccuracy, each gesture missed, etc. Instead, judges consider degree and consistency of error and determine to what extent these problems affect the caliber of performance. Judges do not judge contestants; they judge single performances presented by choruses and/or quartets in competition situations.

Each performance may be awarded a maximum of 200 points (100 points per song) by each judge on the panel. (Information regarding the scoring of the performance package at International Competition is included elsewhere in this book.) To aid judges in arriving at accurate scores, the A-B-C-D (level) method of scoring has been adopted. This method is valuable to contestants, because numerical scores are an indication of caliber of performance, or level of achievement, both in any category and overall. The standard is as follows:

	One Song	Two Songs	Total Score (four judges)	Total Score (eight judges)
A+ Perfect	94 - 100	188 - 200	752 - 800	1504 - 1600
A Nearly Perfect	86 - 93	172 - 187	688 - 751	1376 - 1503
A- Excellent	80 - 85	160 - 171	640 - 687	1280 - 1375
B+ Very Good	74 - 79	148 - 159	592 - 639	1184 - 1279
B Good	66 - 73	132 - 147	528 - 591	1056 - 1183
B- Low Good	60 - 65	120 - 131	480 - 527	960 - 1055
C+ High Average	54 - 59	108 - 119	432 - 479	864 - 959
C Average	46 - 53	92 - 107	368 - 431	736 - 863
C- Low Average	40 - 45	80 - 91	320 - 367	640 - 735
D+ Fairly Poor	34 - 39	68 - 79	272 - 319	544 - 639
D Poor	26 - 33	52 - 67	208 - 271	416 - 543
D- Very Poor	20 - 25	40 - 51	160 - 207	320 - 415
F	0 - 19	0 - 39	0 - 159	0 - 319

In analyzing contest scoring, the contestant should remember to consider both the level score (A-B-C-D) and the placement earned. A seemingly low score may accompany a high placement or vice versa. For example:

	Song 1	Song 2	Total	Placement
Sound	70	71	141	2
Music	66	69	135	7
Expression	64	66	130	3
Showmanship	68	70	138	5
			544	4 overall

Here we have placements of 2, 3, 5 and 7 within categories and an overall placement of 4, but numerical scores are all within the same general “level”— on the high side of B- or low side of B. The 7th place score in music is actually five points higher than the 3rd place score in expression, which should indicate that the caliber of the contest in the music category was higher than the level of achievement in the expression category.

In addition to the above, each category has its own breakdown of available points for each of its areas. In the sound category, 70 of the available points are for the performer’s achievement in unit sound, including vocal skills, accuracy, balance and blend, and the remaining 30 points per song are for artistic sound. In the music category, 70 of the available points per song are allotted to the performance of the arrangement, 30 to the song and arrangement. Of the available points per song in the expression category, 40 are allotted for achievement in the basic requirements of the category, i.e., vocal skills, synchronization/unity and word delivery, and 60 are allotted for artistic lyrical interpretation, i.e., the interpretive plan. In the showmanship category, 70 points per song are reserved for the actual performance and the remaining 30 for preparation. (Refer to the “Outline of Category Weights,” Section III-B, page 3.)

In every contest, only one contestant can be declared the winner; likewise, one receives the lowest score. The contestant who places last in one contest, however, might still have received scores in the C/C+ range, while the contestant who receives the highest scores in another contest may be of the same general caliber. Not all champions give A/A+ performances, nor do all contestants who place last perform at a D/D+ level.

It is the hope of Sweet Adelines International that the scoring level used by its judges will eventually reach the A/A+ level — not because judges are scoring higher but because performances given by contestants are of that high a caliber and because the music they represent is truly outstanding.

OUTLINE OF CATEGORY WEIGHTS

SOUND CATEGORY

<p><u>Unit Sound</u> 0-70 Points</p> <p>Vocal Skills Accuracy Barbershop Blend Barbershop Balance</p>
<p><u>Artistic Sound</u> 0-30 Points</p> <p>Energized Vocal Line Tone Flow Dynamic Flexibility Vocal Style</p>

MUSIC CATEGORY

<p><u>Song & Arrangement</u> 0-30 Points</p> <p>Merit as Barbershop Material Form/Melody/Lyrics Arrangement</p>
<p><u>Performance</u> 0-70 points</p> <p>Vocal Skills Harmony Accuracy Barbershop Style Musical Artistry Suitability to Performer</p>

EXPRESSION CATEGORY

<p><u>Basic Requirements</u> 0-40 Points</p> <p>Vocal Skills Synchronization Vowels Diphthongs Consonants Enunciation</p>
<p><u>Artistic Lyrical Interpretation</u> 0-60 Points</p> <p>Lyric Flow Phrasing Forward Motion Embellishments Dynamics Tempo/Rhythm Inflection Energy Finesse Emotional Communication</p>

SHOWMANSHIP CATEGORY

<p><u>Performance</u> 0-70 Points</p> <p>Vocal Skills Energy Poise and Command Entrance/Break/Exit Characterization Physical Expression Choreography Unity Audience Rapport Pitchpipe Technique Posture Director</p>
<p><u>Preparation</u> 0-30 Points</p> <p>Entrance/Break/Exit Costume Makeup-Grooming Choreography Creativity</p>

PENALTIES

1. General

Violation of any competition policy adopted by the International Board of Directors is subject to penalty as determined by the panel chair after consultation with the other judges on the panel. Penalties may range from deduction of a specific number of points to disqualification. Any penalty points assessed are deducted from the total score.

2. Time Penalties

a. Performances are timed separately by the panel secretary and page at regional contests, and by the two panel secretaries at international contests. In the event of a variance between the recorded times, the time most favorable to the contestant prevails.

b. Elimination Sessions

- (1) Total singing time of the two separate songs or medleys performed in any Sweet Adelines competition other than a performance package session shall be not less than three (3) and not more than six (6) minutes.
- (2) Timing begins with the first word or chord of a song and ends with the last word or chord of the same song.
- (3) The two songs or medleys performed are timed separately, and times are added together to determine total singing time.
- (4) Penalties for singing over or under the prescribed limits are:

No. of Seconds over or under	Regional/ Area Contests
	Int'l Quartet Semifinals Int'l Chorus Semifinals
15	20
30	40
45	60
60	80
75	100
etc.	etc.

c. Performance Package Sessions

(1) Total Time: Total time of the performance package in the finals session of any official Sweet Adelines competition is:

(a) Quartet: Not less than ten (10) and not more than twelve (12) minutes.

(b) Chorus: Not less than twelve (12) and not more than fifteen (15) minutes.

Timing begins at the first word spoken or the first chord of the first song, whichever begins the performance, and continues through the final chord of the last song or the last word spoken, whichever concludes the performance. The two songs designated as competition songs are not subject to the three-to-six-minute limitation imposed in other competition sessions, and songs are not timed separately.

(2) Penalties

(a) Overtime: One (1) point per second is assessed for performances over the prescribed limits, up to a maximum of fifty (50) points.

(b) Undertime: No specific penalties are designated for performances under the prescribed limits; however, judges evaluate the effectiveness of obviously undertime performances.

3. Rule Infraction Penalties

- a. Official Language: The official language for songs designated as competition songs in Sweet Adelines competitions is American English (see the Music Category, *JCDB*, for additional clarification). Languages other than English may be used for noncompetition songs included in the performance package of a chorus or quartet finals session. In all competition sessions, the penalty ranges from a minimum of ten (10) to a maximum of twenty-five (25) points, depending on severity.
 - b. Official Songs: The official songs of Sweet Adelines International are *Harm - nize the World* and *How We Sang Today*; neither of these songs may be sung in any competition session, including the performance package. Performance of any official song results in disqualification of that song with a score of zero (0) from all official judges.
 - c. Religious and Patriotic Songs: Religious and patriotic songs may not be sung in competition (see the Music Category, *JCDB*, for further clarification).
-

Performance of any song that is considered by the music judge(s) and a majority of the judges on the official panel to be either religious or patriotic results in disqualification of that song with a score of zero (0) from all official judges.

d. Performance Content

- (1) Eliminations Sessions: Competition performance (time on stage) is confined to singing. An occasional special sound effect (e.g., a cough, a sigh, a clap, a finger snap, a yell, etc.) is permissible, but spoken material or noise-making devices (e.g., bells, whistles, tambourines, drums, etc.) may **not** be included. In all sessions, the penalty ranges from a minimum of ten (10) to a maximum of twenty-five (25) points, depending on severity.
- (2) Performance Package Sessions: Spoken material and/or sound effects, as defined above, may be utilized in any of the noncompetition songs included in the performance package.

- e. Crowns or Tiaras: Crowns are neither worn by nor presented to any contestant other than the quartet winning first place in the international quartet competition. In all sessions, penalty for violation is twenty-five (25) points.

f. Staging and Lighting

- (1) Eliminations Sessions: Staging and lighting are uniform for all contestants. No penalty is attached to the use of props or visual devices in any regional or international contest sessions. The degree to which such use enhances or detracts from the performance is reflected in the showmanship score.

All props and visual devices must enter and leave the performance venue with the chorus or quartet. Storage space for any props or equipment, other than riser chairs or medically necessary items, is not provided at the contest venue.

Props or visual devices requiring excessive set up time will be subject to delay of contest penalties.

All contestants are required to leave the stage in the condition they found it. Anything discarded or dropped must be removed and exit the stage with the contestant. In all sessions, penalty for violation is twenty-five (25) points.

- (2) Performance Package Sessions: Special staging and/or lighting effects may not be incorporated into the songs designated as competition songs, but may, as provided by the organization, be utilized as part of the noncompetition songs included in the performance package. No penalty is attached to

the use of props or visual devices in any regional or international contest sessions. The degree to which such use enhances or detracts from the performance is reflected in the showmanship score.

All props and visual devices must enter and leave the performance venue with the chorus or quartet. Storage space for any props or equipment, other than riser chairs or medically necessary items, is not provided at the contest venue.

Props or visual devices requiring excessive set up time will be subject to delay of contest penalties.

All contestants are required to leave the stage in the condition they found it. Anything discarded or dropped must be removed and exit the stage with the contestant. In all sessions, penalty for violation is twenty-five (25) points.

Musical accompaniment is permitted as part of the noncompetition songs included in the performance package.

- g. Misconduct: Any contestant, including a chorus director, may be disqualified for conduct deemed, in the judgment of the panel chair and a majority of the remaining judges on the official panel, to be prejudicial to the welfare of Sweet Adelines International.
 - h. Designated Performance Time
 - (1) Contestants are expected to report for entry into the traffic pattern at the time and place designated by the competition coordinator and/or the director of music services, and are expected to be ready to perform in their assigned sequence. Any contestant who fails to appear and/or is not ready to perform in the contest at the time designated is penalized twenty-five (25) points, loses position, and appears at the end of the contest.
 - (2) If failure to appear is due to circumstances beyond the control of the contestant, tardiness may be excused and penalty withdrawn upon the decision of the panel chair and a majority of judges on the official panel. If it is determined that tardiness was premeditated in order to lose position and appear at the end of the contest, the contestant is disqualified.
 - (3) It is expected that a chorus' entrance or exit be completed in a timely fashion. If, in the opinion of a majority of the official panel, a chorus' entrance or exit exceeds a reasonable amount of time, creates a distraction, and/or delays the contest, a penalty may be assessed.
-

- i. Participants: Only the director(s) and performing members of a competing chorus may appear on stage. A penalty may result, if in the opinion of the official panel, the presence of a “non-singing” member is a distraction and detracts from the musical performance. In all sessions, the penalty ranges from ten (10) to twenty-five (25) points, depending on severity.
 - j. Minimum Chorus Size: Competing choruses must have at least fifteen (15) members on stage in addition to the chorus director(s). A chorus that competes with fewer than fifteen (15) competing members, not including the chorus director(s), performs for evaluation only and receives a written evaluation from each judge, provided that all other requirements for entering the competition have been met. Scores recorded on the score sheet reflect performance levels rather than specific points earned. The number of competing members is calculated according to the *List of Competing Members* form submitted to the competition coordinator or director of music services at the chorus briefing session.
 - k. Change in Performance Package: Contestants qualifying for the finals session of a competition are required to submit a prepared program listing the songs to be performed, designating the two songs to be judged as competition material, and indicating the placement of emcee material. Any deviation from the submitted program results in a zero (0) score in all categories for the bonus points awarded for the performance package.
-

INSTRUCTIONS: To be completed by the Chair of the Official Judging Panel.

Session: _____ Regional Quartet _____ Quartet Semifinal _____ Quartet Final _____ Harmony Classic Div. A
_____ Regional Chorus _____ Chorus Semifinal _____ Chorus Final _____ Harmony Classic Div. AA

CONTESTANT # _____ NAME _____

Violation of any competition policy is subject to penalty as determined by the Chair of the Judging Panel, after consultation with the other judges on the panel. Penalties may range from the deduction of a specific number of points to disqualification, depending on the nature and severity of the violation. **These points will be deducted from the total score.**

_____ TIME PENALTY	Regional Quartet/Chorus:	20 points for each 15 seconds over or under
	Quartet/Chorus Semifinal:	20 points for each 15 seconds over or under
	Quartet Final:	1 point per second over 12 minutes; max. of 50 points
	Chorus Final:	1 point per second over 15 minutes; max. of 50 points
	Harmony Classic Div. A/AA:	1 point per second over 15 minutes; max. of 50 points

RULE INFRACTION:

- _____ Songs not sung primarily in English. (10-25 penalty points)
- _____ Official song of the Corporation. (Disqualification of song, with score of "0" from all official judges)
- _____ Religious or patriotic songs. (Disqualification of song, with score of "0" from all official judges; does not apply to noncompetition songs in Quartet/Chorus Finals, or Harmony Classic, performance packages)
- _____ Performance included spoken material and/or noise making devices. (10-25 penalty points; rule does not apply to Quartet/Chorus Finals, or Harmony Classic, performance packages)
- _____ Crowns worn by contestant. (25 penalty points)
- _____ Condition of stage. (25 penalty points)
- _____ Conduct of contestants, including director, deemed prejudicial to the welfare of the organization. (contestant disqualified)
- _____ Contestants not ready to perform in their assigned sequence at the designated time. (25 penalty points)
- _____ Delay of contest. (Number of penalty points awarded at discretion of official panel)
- _____ Nonsinging member, in addition to director, on stage and detracting from music product. (10-25 penalty points)
- _____ Chorus contestants, competing for placement, and appearing with fewer than 15 chorus members on stage, plus the director. (Contestant disqualified)
- _____ Other (specify): _____

COMMENTS:

TOTAL PENALTY POINTS _____ SIGNED: _____

Panel Chair

Distribution: Original to Panel Chair, to be attached to contestant's score sheet.
Pink copy to Panel Secretary, to be attached to official score sheet.

DATE: _____