

British Columbia Pipers' Association  
Board of Directors decisions on  
recommended revisions to BCPA Competition Rules 2012  
July 25, 2012

The following proposed rules changes, along with feedback from members, were reviewed by the BCPA Board of Directors (BOD) at its February 25, 2012 meeting. The decisions on rules that were revised at that board meeting were published on the BCPA website on March 8.

In addition, at its April 23 meeting, the BOD finalized a rule change that had been under examination since mid-2011 on setting an appropriate maximum caliber limit for the Adult Piping grade and defining its associated implementation.

The following are the reasons of the BOD on their decisions with respect to all the proposed rules changes.

**1. Remove live piping accompaniment requirement from amateur drumming events, allow recorded piping**

Presented Rationale: A factor in the lack of sufficient numbers (or no numbers in some grades) of side drumming competitors is the rule that a side drummer requires a piper for accompaniment. Another factor is conflict in schedules between the piper and side drummer leading to difficulties in arranging appropriate practice and competing times.

BOD Decision: The BOD reached out to the Music Board of the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association (an association that is over five times the size of the BCPA) which for over 11 years has had a rule allowing side drummers to perform in individual competitions to recorded music they provide. The EUSPBA Music Board members' experiences were that this option was seldomly used, and when used there were challenges with recorded music volume, inability for judges to adequately assess the "duet" performance, and some mechanical problems with the recording playback.

Members feedback was mixed and, as a result, the BOD decided to reject this proposed rule change and agreed to examine other options for increasing the numbers of side drumming competitors.

**2. Eliminate the Drum Solo Events in Professional and Grade 1 Side Drumming**

*Delete Grade 1 Side Drumming Event 253 Drum Solo and Professional Side Drumming Event 263 from the BCPA Music Requirements for Piping, Drumming and Pipe Band Competitions in 2011-2012 Season.*

Presented Rationale: This event is not preferred by the top grade side drummers. Many of the side drummers do not enter this event and even when they do, they do not put effort into preparing for it. It is not viewed as a serious competitive event by the top grade side drummers. Only two competitions offer this event so its removal from the list will be welcomed rather than mourned.

BOD Decision: The BOD (and other competing drummers members) agreed with the presented rationale and approved this proposed rule change.

**3. Assign an appropriate value to a competitor's solo event performance which is not a breakdown and does not earn a placing**

*Revise the BCPA Solo Piping and Solo Side Drumming and Tenor Drumming competition rules to add that a competitor's solo event performance which is not a breakdown and which does not earn a placing be awarded points in the amount of half of the points that would be awarded for the next placing, to a maximum of sixth place.*

Presented Rationale: The current solo event rules award no points for competitors who play in a solo event, do not break down, and are not awarded a placing. This is exactly the same number of points (zero) awarded to a player who does not even compete in the event.

However, the fact that the player competed has some value as one knows that everyone who earned a placing (and earned points) was competitively superior, in that event on that day, to the player who played, did not breakdown and did not earn a placing. The same cannot be said for a player who did not play in that event on that day. This information becomes important in grading decisions, when the value of competitor's performances must be valued and ranked.

It is proposed that a competitor's solo event performance which is not a breakdown and which does not earn a placing be awarded points in the amount of half of the points that would be awarded for the next placing, to a maximum of sixth place.

Awarding half the points appropriately recognizes that a competitor's solo event performance which is not a breakdown and which does not earn a placing should not receive the full value of the points for placing but nor should it receive zero points.

BOD Decision: Members responses, particularly from some adjudicators, were not favourable. They indicated that a breakdown would have to be more clearly defined and implemented by all adjudicators for this proposed rule to be effective. Also, there was divided opinion about awarding points if a placing was not earned by the competitor.

As a result, the BOD decided to reject this proposed rule change.

**4. Award one half the points for first place when there is only one competitor who actually played in a solo event and did not breakdown**

*Revise the BCPA Solo Piping and Solo Side Drumming and Tenor Drumming competition rules to add that a competitor's solo event performance be awarded one half the points for first place when there is only one competitor who actually played in a solo event and did not breakdown.*

Rationale: The logic in recommended rule revision #2 should apply to events where there is only one competitor who actually played in a solo event and did not breakdown because they did not place ahead of anyone.

BOD Decision: Several members felt strongly that this proposed rule devalued a first prize, through no fault of the competitor. They indicated that the competitor can control only their performance and not whether other players compete in the event.

As a result, the BOD decided to reject this proposed rule change.

## **5. Setting a maximum calibre limit on the Adult Piping grade**

Presented Rationale: The BCPA has received several complaints over the years on the wide playing standard allowed in the Adult Piping grade. The foundation of the complaints is that it is inconsistent with the BCPA's goal of promoting advancement based on merit (that exists in the other grades) and discourages beginner Adult Piping competitors by having them compete with much higher caliber Adult Piping competitors.

BOD Decision: In 2011 and 2012, the BOD and the Solo Grading Committee attempted to address this matter. Several ideas were considered, including eliminating the Adult Piping grade completely, establishing age groups for Piping Grades 5 and 4, and establishing a maximum calibre limit on the current Adult Piping grade. There were mixed opinions about the most appropriate solution to address the problem.

At its April 23, 2012 meeting, the BOD approved a consensus solution, setting a Grade 4 Piping maximum calibre limit for the Adult Piping grade. If a player competes in the Adult Piping grade and performs above a Grade 4 Piping calibre level, they will be promoted out of the Adult Piping grade to a numbered Piping grade for light music, piobaireachd, or both.

The Solo Grading Committee will administer this standard as part of the decisions on promotions at the end of the 2011/12 season. In the 2012/13 season, the BOD and the Solo Grading Committee will monitor the affect of this rule change.