

# British Columbia Pipers' Association

## Rules for Solo Piping Competitions

Revision 17 Effective October 6, 2021

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# **British Columbia Pipers' Association**

## **Rules for Solo Piping Competitions**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Objectives**

- 1.1.1 The objectives of the British Columbia Pipers' Association (the "Association") with respect to solo piping competitions are as follows:
- (a) To devise and administer comprehensive rules governing solo piping competitions;
  - (b) To preserve, promote and encourage proficiency in pipe music; and
  - (c) To promote and encourage participation of solo pipers at Highland Games and Scottish Cultural events for the benefit of Games Sponsors and Games attendees.

#### **1.2 Geographical Area and Sanctioning**

- 1.2.1 The geographical area where the Association sanctions solo piping competitions is the province of British Columbia, Washington state, and Oregon state. Sanctioning is a cooperative agreement between the Association and the organization sponsoring solo piping competitions (Games Sponsor) to ensure that the competitions are run according to the Association's rules for solo piping competitions, are fair and respected, and are of benefit to the competitors, the Games Sponsor, and the Association.

#### **1.3 Integrity of the Rules**

- 1.3.1 Solo Piping members of the Association and members of the Association's Approved Adjudicators Panel should not take part in any competition which would cause the Association's rules to be compromised to the significant detriment of the Association, the Games Sponsor or the competitors. It shall be the responsibility of the Association's Board of Directors (the "Executive") to inform members and adjudicators of any such competitions.

#### **1.4 Affiliated Associations**

- 1.4.1 Officially recognized pipe band associated affiliated with the Association are:  
Alberta Society of Pipers and Drummers, Saskatchewan Pipe Band Association, Prairie Pipe Band Association of Manitoba, Pipers and Pipe Band Society of Ontario, Atlantic Canada Pipe Band Association; Western United States Pipe Band Association, Midwest (U.S.) Pipe Band Association, Eastern United States Pipe Band Association, Australian Pipe Band Association, Royal New Zealand Pipe Band Association Inc., Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, Irish Pipe Band Association, Competing Pipers Association (UK residents only)

### **2. Competition Rules**

#### **2.1 The Competition Committee, Chief Steward, and Chief Scorer**

- 2.1.1 The Games Sponsor shall designate a Competition Committee which shall manage and run the competition activities on the Games day. The Competition Committee shall designate a Chief Steward and a Chief Scorer. The Competition Committee shall include at least one executive of the Games Sponsor's organization. In the event of a formally submitted protest or grievance, the Competition Committee shall be increased to include the Association's representative and one other member of the Association without obvious conflict of interest regarding the respective parties.

## **2.2 Steward's Responsibilities**

- 2.2.1 A Steward shall be assigned to each event. The Steward shall be responsible for ensuring a regular and orderly stream of competitors to the event's competition area.

## **2.3 Competitor's Responsibilities**

- 2.3.1 Competitors shall be responsible for reporting to the Steward prior to the event, for obtaining their position in the order of play for the event, and for being ready to compete when their position in the order of play arrives.
- 2.3.2 Competitors shall signal the adjudicator when they are ready to commence their performance.
- 2.3.3 Any competitor who interferes with, threatens, or uses abusive language towards the adjudicators, officials, stewards, or members of the Competition Committee shall cause themselves to be liable for suspension from further competitions for as long as the Executive deems is necessary in the circumstances.
- 2.3.4 The same penalty shall apply to situations involving the abuse of private property at the Games site.

## **2.4 Association Representative**

- 2.4.1 A member of the Executive, or their designate, shall be in attendance as the Association's Representative at all sanctioned competitions and shall be available to the Games Sponsor's Competition Committee for that day.
- 2.4.2 The Association Representative shall monitor the competitions for compliance and fairness, provide answers to questions on the competition rules, and assist in the resolution of complaints, disputes and protests relating to the competition rules.

## **2.5 Splitting an Event**

- 2.5.1 Where a piobaireachd event is not offered in the events for a grade at a competition: If there are more than twenty five (25) competitors in an event, that event may be divided into two or more sections and designated as such, and prizes shall be given to each section of the event as if it was a separate event.
- 2.5.2 Where a piobaireachd event is offered in the events for a grade at a competition: If there are more than twenty (20) competitors in an event, that event may be divided into two or more sections and designated as such, and prizes shall be given to each section of the event as if it was a separate event.
- 2.5.3 If one event in a grade reaches the number to split the event and the Games decides to split that event, then all events in that grade shall be split.
- 2.5.4 Games Sponsors shall avoid placing a numerical limit on the number of competitors who can enter for an event.

## **2.6 Order of Play**

- 2.6.1 All orders of play and the start time for each event shall be posted at the Competition Registration Area prior to the commencement of the competitions.
- 2.6.2 Competitors not ready to play in the posted order may be disqualified at the discretion of the Steward for the event.
- 2.6.3 If given, posted competitor times are always subject to change at the discretion of the Steward for the event.

## **2.7 Communication of the Selected Music**

- 2.7.1 Prior to beginning their performance, competitors shall address the adjudicator and inform him/her of the tune(s) they will perform.
- 2.7.2 At that time, for events where submission of more than one tune/set is required, the adjudicator shall select the tune/set from the competitor's list.
- 2.7.3 Particular competitions may permit the competitor to receive their selected tune/set in the final tuning room only if stated so on the entry form and the tunes/sets are submitted with the competitor's entry form.

## **2.8 Performing without the Aid of Music**

- 2.8.1 All competitors shall perform their event without the aid of printed music.
- 2.8.2 Competitors should be prepared to supply music to the adjudicator for unusual or unconventional tunes or settings.

## **2.9 Tuning Time**

- 2.9.1 Tuning on the platform shall be limited to three minutes, except for piobaireachd which shall be five minutes. On expiration of the tuning time, the competitor shall immediately commence their performance or may be disqualified at the adjudicator's discretion.

## **2.10 Acceptable Highland Dress**

- 2.10.1 Competitors may be prevented from competing and accepting trophies onstage for not wearing acceptable and properly worn highland dress. Kilt (or trews), shirt, hose and shoes are the minimum requirement. For beginners, dress pants, shirt and shoes (for boys or girls) & skirt, blouse & shoes (for girls) are acceptable.

## **2.11 Local Competition Rules**

- 2.11.1 Local competition rules or requirements may take precedence over the above rules and regulations but only upon submission to and approval by the Association.

# **3. Membership**

## **3.1 General Requirement**

- 3.1.1 All competitors residing in the sanctioning area and desiring to compete in sanctioned competitions should be members of the Association.
- 3.1.2 All competitors who are not members of the Association or an officially recognized piping/pipe band association affiliated with the Association or only a Honorary Member of the Association shall pay to the Games Sponsor a fee of \$12 CDN or \$10 US per Games, in addition to the published entry fee, to compete in the solo piping events at the particular Games.

# **4. Grades and Grading**

## **4.1 Grades**

- 4.1.1 Piping grades shall be classified, in ascending order of ability, as Beginner (on Practice Chanter), Grade 5, Grade 4, Grade 3, Grade 2, Grade 1, and Open. All grades, except for Open, shall be only amateur grades of competition. The ability range for the Adult grade shall be as defined in clause 4.1.4. Pipers may compete in one grade only. Games Sponsors shall offer competitions in at least the following grades: Grade 5, Grade 4, Grade 3, Grade 2, Grade 1, and Open.
- 4.1.2 Grades shall be determined by ability and not by age, sex or affiliation, with the exception of the Adult grade or confined or special events as defined by a Games Sponsor.
- 4.1.3 The Beginner (on Practice Chanter) grade is limited to competitors who have played in the Beginner grade for less than 12 months and who have not competed on the pipes in solo competition.
- 4.1.4 The Adult grade is limited to competitors 18 years of age or older and is limited to a maximum ability of the Grade 4 Piping grade. Upon approval of the Grading Committee, the promotion path is into the Grade 4 Piping grade.
- 4.1.5 The Adult Prep grade is limited to participants 18 years of age and older who have never competed on pipes before. Effective October 1, 2021, participation is limited to a maximum ability of the Grade 4 Piping grade. Participants in this grade are not eligible for prizes or placings but will only receive adjudicator's feedback.

## **4.2 Grading**

- 4.2.1 Competitors shall compete in the grade appropriate for their ability, as determined by the Association. A list of competitors promoted to each grade shall be published by the Association in September of each year.
- 4.2.2 A competitor may play in a grade of higher ability at a competition outside the Association's sanctioning jurisdiction if the competitor's grade is not offered in the external jurisdiction.
- 4.2.3 The Association shall have the authority to re-grade a competitor at any time.
- 4.2.4 A competitor who chooses to appeal his/her grading shall make the appeal in writing to the Association.

## **5. Music Requirements**

### **5.1 Music**

- 5.1.1 Any piper in a particular grade shall be required to play any of the music listed for the grade as set out in Appendix A "Music Requirements for Piping, Drumming and Pipe Band Competitions".

## **6. Rules for Adjudicators**

### **6.1 Authority**

- 6.1.1 Within its sanctioning jurisdiction, the Association shall have the responsibility and authority to determine people qualified to adjudicate piping in sanctioned piping competitions and to maintain an Approved Adjudicators List of these qualified people.
- 6.1.2 For each adjudicator on the Approved Adjudicators List, the Association shall determine the grades of light music and piobaireachd the adjudicator is qualified to adjudicate.
- 6.1.3 The Association shall provide current copies of the Approved Adjudicators List to Games Sponsors at minimum once per year or when the Approved Adjudicators List is revised.

### **6.2 Selection of Adjudicators**

- 6.2.1 The adjudicators for sanctioned competitions shall be drawn from:
  - (a) the Approved Adjudicators List of the Association; or
  - (b) the Approved Adjudicators Lists of piping/pipe band associations officially recognized by and affiliated with the Association.
- 6.2.2 Adjudicators shall adjudicate only grades of light music and piobaireachd for which they have been qualified by their home Association.
- 6.2.3 Games proposing to use an adjudicator who is from a jurisdiction without an adjudicator approval process for the discipline(s) he/she may be retained to adjudicate and who is not on an Approved Adjudicators List identified in Clause 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 shall obtain approval by the Association prior to engagement..

### **6.3 Number of Adjudicators**

- 6.3.1 Only one adjudicator is required to adjudicate a solo piping competition.
- 6.3.2 Special individual competitions, when practical, should be adjudicated by up to three adjudicators, who may sit as a panel.

## 6.4 Guidance for Adjudication

- 6.4.1 Piping events shall be adjudicated under the categories of Execution, Expression, Tone and Tuning, and Tempo. Suggested weightings for the various categories may vary from grade to grade as determined by the Association's desire to emphasize the above aspects of piping in various grades.
- 6.4.2 On the adjudication sheets, adjudicators shall provide an accurate assessment of the competitor's performance and, where appropriate, constructive criticism. At the end of each performance, the adjudicators shall provide the competitor with a verbal interpretive and instructional assessment of the performance, up to one minute in duration. Adjudicators shall not criticize the setting of a tune.
- 6.4.3 Following commencement, any piper breaking down during his/her performance shall be disqualified. Other serious flaws, such as drone stopping or mistakes in the tune, shall be left to the discretion of the adjudicator.

## 6.5 Determination of Final Result

- 6.5.1 Adjudicators shall be allotted up to five minutes at the end of each event to arrive at a decision. For all grades, excluding the Beginner (on Practice Chanter) grade, the number of prizes awarded shall be based on the number of competitors who begin their performance, as shown in the following table:
- |                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| less than 3 competitors | - one (1) prize    |
| 3 competitors           | - two (2) prizes   |
| 4 to 10 competitors     | - three (3) prizes |
| 11 to 15 competitors    | - four (4) prizes  |
| 16 to 20 competitors    | - five (5) prizes  |
| 21 and over competitors | - six (6) prizes   |
- 6.5.2 If there is only one competitor in an event, the adjudicator(s) shall confer and make a documented decision as to whether the performance is worthy of being awarded first prize.
- 6.5.3 For the Beginner (on Practice Chanter) grade, every competitor will be awarded a prize, up to a maximum of 6 competitors.
- 6.5.4 The Adjudicator's decision shall prevail in determining the merits of each performance, and his/her decision shall be final.
- 6.5.5 No ties are permitted.

## 6.6 Determination of Aggregate Winner

- 6.6.1 At a sanctioned competition, the aggregate award for a grade should be determined over a minimum of two events.
- 6.6.2 The points to be assigned for the calculation of aggregates, including the Grand Aggregate, shall be based on placings. The number of placings to be assigned shall be one less than the number of competitors who played in an event, to a maximum of six placings. If only one competitor plays, one placing shall be assigned. The number of points to be assigned for each placing is as follows:

Number of Competitors Who Played In An Event	Number of Placings That Earn Points
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5
Greater than 6	6

Placing	Points Assigned
1st	88
2nd	56
3rd	38
4th	25
5th	16
6th	10

- 6.6.3 Ties in aggregate points shall not be broken. If a travel prize is awarded to the aggregate winner of a grade, a tie for the travel prize shall be broken according to the following order.
- (a) Winner of the Piobaireachd event;
  - (b) Winner of the March, Strathspey & Reel event;
  - (c) Winner of the 2/4 March event;
  - (d) Winner of the Quick March event.

## **6.7 Determination of Grand Aggregate Winner**

- 6.7.1 At the end of the competition season, the Association shall award a Grand Aggregate Award in each grade determined by clauses 8.1 and 8.2 to the Association member with the highest accumulated points at the Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions determined by clauses 8.1 and 8.2.
- 6.7.2 The points to be awarded for the calculation of Grand Aggregate Awards shall be according to Section 6.6.2 plus 1 point for each competitor placed ahead of.
- 6.7.3 Ties in the Grand Aggregate points total shall not be broken. If a travel prize is awarded to the Grand Aggregate winner of a grade, a tie for the travel prize shall be broken according to the following order.
- (a) Highest Grand Aggregate points in Piobaireachd events;
  - (b) Highest Grand Aggregate points in March, Strathspey & Reel events;
  - (c) Highest Grand Aggregate points in 2/4 March events;
  - (d) Highest Grand Aggregate points in Quick March events.

## **7. Interpretation of Rules and Protests**

### **7.1 Interpretation of Rules**

- 7.1.1 In the event of any misunderstanding or ambiguity in these rules, the Executive reserves the right to supply its own interpretation which shall be final and binding.
- 7.1.2 The Executive shall ensure that written records are maintained on every decision resulting from a protest or interpretation of the rules to create a list of precedents that can be available to assist in the future interpretation of the rules.
- 7.1.3 No member of the Executive or their designate shall be allowed to rule on a protest in which his/her student or immediate family member is involved.



## **7.2 Protests and Grievances**

- 7.2.1 Any protests shall be made in writing accompanied by a \$50 deposit and lodged with the Competition Committee, with a copy to the Secretary of the Association.
- 7.2.2 Where relevant, the complainant shall submit the original adjudication and adjudicator's result sheets, which will be verified by the adjudicators involved and the Chief Scorer as authentic.
- 7.2.3 Should the protesting party or any parties affected by the findings of the Competition Committee disagree with the findings of the Competition Committee, they shall have the right to appeal to the Association. Pending the result of the appeal, the findings of the Association shall be final.
- 7.2.4 The Competition Committee on the day of the competition and before the distribution of prizes, being satisfied that a competitor has willfully violated or is willfully violating any of the rules, shall have the power to de-bar such competitor from the prize list, suspend the decision of the adjudicators for that competitor, and award the prizes to the respective competitors next in order of merit.
- 7.2.5 The Executive shall have the right to act similarly after the competition, if satisfied that a willful violation of the rules took place.
- 7.2.6 In the event of a prize being awarded to the wrong competitor because of an error, it shall be the responsibility of the Competition Committee to re-award such prizes to the deserving competitor as soon after such discovery is made.

## **8. Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions**

### **8.1 Criteria for Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions**

- 8.1.1 Competitions shall be approved by the Association's Board of Directors as Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions on meeting all the following criteria:
  - (a) The competition is held within the geographical area indicated in clause 1.2
  - (b) The competition organizers are current Highland Games Association members of the Association in good standing and have been current members for at least three months before the first Grand Aggregate Awards Competition of the fiscal year occurs. Otherwise, Grand Aggregate Awards Competition status for the competition is suspended until the competition becomes a current member in good standing
  - (c) The competition organizers have demonstrated that they have run a competition for a minimum of two years
  - (d) The competition has been run under the Association's competition rules
  - (e) The competition has used the Association's common music events and their music requirements as defined in clause 5.1
  - (f) The competition has used the Association's Approved Adjudicators or adjudicators from the approved adjudicators panels of piping/pipe band associations that the Association officially recognizes, as defined in clauses 6.1 and 6.2
  - (g) The competition has offered all the disciplines (solo piping, solo snare drumming, solo tenor drumming, and pipe bands)
  - (h) The competition has offered in each discipline, each official grade for which the full instrument is played
  - (i) The competition has offered the appropriate number of events in each official grade across the music disciplines (i.e. minimum 2 events per grade in solo piping and solo snare drumming, minimum 1 event per grade in solo tenor drumming, minimum 2 events per grade in pipe bands except for Grade 5 band events which shall be minimum 1 event)
  - (j) A minimum of 60 solo competitors who actually competed at the particular Games, otherwise the Grand Aggregate points awarded at the particular Games shall be scaled by the number of solo competitors who actually competed divided by 60. If a Games achieved Grand Aggregate status and had 60 or greater solo competitors who actually competed at the Games in a year, scaling would not be applied for two subsequent

years at the Games if the number of solo competitors who actually competed at the Games was less than 60 in each of those years

- (k) A minimum of 6 pipe bands which actually competed at the particular Games, otherwise the Grand Aggregate points awarded at the particular Games shall be scaled by the number of pipe bands which actually competed divided by 6. If a Games achieved Grand Aggregate status and had 6 or greater bands which actually competed at the Games in a year, scaling would not be applied for two subsequent years at the Games if the number of bands which actually competed at the Games was less than 6 in each of those years
- (l) The competition has been run effectively and efficiently as per the BCPA Purposes, Effectiveness Measures, and Goals.

8.1.2 The Association shall publish a list of the Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions.

8.1.3 A Grand Aggregate Awards Competition shall meet all of the above conditions for their competition, otherwise the Association and the competition’s organizers shall jointly develop and execute an improvement plan to bring the following year’s competition into compliance. Except in the case of clause 8.1.1b, an existing Grand Aggregate Awards Competition shall retain its Grand Aggregate Awards Status despite non-compliance.

## **8.2 Criteria for events to award Grand Aggregate Awards Points at Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions**

8.2.1 Criteria for events to award Grand Aggregate Awards Points at Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions are:

- (a) The particular grade (Grade 5, 4, 3 etc) for the discipline (solo piping, solo snare drumming, solo tenor drumming, and pipe bands) must be offered by a minimum of 50% of the Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions; and
- (b) The event must not have a numerical limit on the number of competitors or a geographical restriction on who can enter for the event; and
- (c) For pipe band competitions, the event must be a full band event; and
- (d) For competitions which are more than one day in length, the event may occur on any day of the competition

Revision Date	Revision Number	Revisions Summary
Mar 11 2007	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Calibre element to calculation of Grand Aggregate Award points earned for placings.</li> <li>• Extended scope of competitions not included in Grand Aggregate Awards points calculations</li> </ul>
Nov 3 2007	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised clause 3.1.2 to update non-member fee to \$3.50 CDN or \$3.50 US per event</li> </ul>
Mar 29 2009	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add List of Highland Games - Grand Aggregate Status</li> </ul>
Oct 18 2011	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deleted List of Highland Games – Grand Aggregate Status</li> <li>• Added Section 8 – Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions</li> <li>• Amended clause 6.7.1 to refer to new section 8 clauses</li> <li>• Amended clause 6.5 to account for change in prizes awarded for Beginner (on Practice Chanter) grade</li> <li>• Revised fees in clause 3.1.2 to \$4.50 CDN or \$4.50 US per event</li> <li>• Some spelling errors corrected</li> </ul>
Apr 23 2012	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised clause 4.1.1 (identification of grades of ability) and clause 4.1.4 (criteria for the Adult Piping grade) to add a maximum ability limit of the Grade 4 Piping grade, effective October 1, 2012.</li> </ul>
Mar 31, 2014	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deleted the defunct Southern United States Pipe Band Association from the list of affiliated associations</li> <li>• Clarified the expectations for commencement of performance upon expiration of tuning time and disqualification at the adjudicator’s discretion</li> <li>• Editorial changes</li> </ul>

Mar 9, 2015	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renamed Professional to Open and Side to Snare</li> <li>• Defined all grades, except Open, as only amateur grades of competition</li> <li>• Added requirement for adjudicators to provide the competitor, at the end of their performance, with a verbal interpretive and instructional assessment of the performance, up to one minute in duration</li> <li>• Added condition that if there is only one competitor in an event, the adjudicator(s) shall confer and make a documented decision as to whether the performance is worthy of being awarded first prize</li> <li>• Editorial changes</li> </ul>
Jan 5, 2019	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Competing Pipers Association (UK residents only) to list of affiliated associations</li> <li>• Revised the solo events non-member fee to a flat fee for a Games and applied to Honorary Members</li> <li>• Revised Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions Criteria to add minimum 2 events per grade in pipe bands except for Grade 5 band events which shall be minimum 1 event</li> <li>• Revised Grand Aggregate Awards Competitions Criteria to introduce scaling of points if lower than minimum numbers of solo competitors and bands</li> </ul>
Oct 6, 2021	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised clause 4.1.4 to indicate promotion from the Adult Piping grade is to the Grade 4 Piping grade</li> <li>• Added new clause 4.1.5 to add the new non-competition Adult Prep Piping grade and its criteria</li> </ul>