



Enriching Our World Through Photography

Competition Manual

Section I

Member

Revised June 20, 2016

By The 2016 Competition Committee

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Additional revisions October 2017

By the 2017 Competition Committee

Chairpersons: Teresa Bruni and Steve Hoadley assisted by Dennis Snipes

CLUB COMPETITONS

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Competition events provide our club members with an opportunity to display their photographs as well as have them impartially judged and critiqued. Constructive critique provides an opportunity for improving the skills of, not only the individual photographer, but of all attending club members

1.2 COMPETITION PARTICIPANTS

All current club members are encouraged to participate in club competitions. Members at large will enter their images during the period specified by the Competition Committee for each competition. However, to prevent any unfair advantage being gained by viewing other entries, Competition Committee members may enter only during a special 1-week period prior to the period specified for the general membership.

1.3 COMPETITION SUBJECTS & SCHEDULES

Subjects for competition and the number and type of competitions per year are the responsibility of the Competition Committee and the Board. Every effort should be made to provide the subject topics and any specific rules well in advance of the competition. The following guidelines should be used with regard to establishing the competition program.

1. Not later than each September, the Board shall have the subject of “competitions” scheduled on the month’s Board meeting agenda. At that time, the Competition Committee Chairperson(s) and the Board shall discuss a plan for the next two calendar year’s competitions. Items to be determined are the total number of competitions to be held and the number of print vs. digital competitions. This may influence the selection of topics.
2. Not later than each October the Competition Chairperson(s) should recommend to the Board for approval a list of subjects, dates and any special rules (see below) for the following year’s competitions, and the subjects for the second year. A final list should be approved at the October Board meeting and published in the club newsletter no later than November for the benefit of the member’s planning. The publishing of subjects for the next two years will provide members with image planning.
3. Special rules for any specific subject are at the discretion of the Competition Committee, and should be communicated to the membership by the Chairperson(s) with the schedule and list of topics. An example of special rules is the hand-of-man restrictions normally associated with subjects such as Nature or Flowers. Special rules may include restricting the type of images and/or the method(s) used to acquire and produce them.

4. Notifications of any changes to the approved competition subjects and schedule shall be made to the membership at least 60 days prior to the earliest affected date.
5. Not later than each August, the Competition Chairperson(s) should provide the Board with the Competition Committee budget for the following fiscal year.
6. Additional notices should be provided as follows:
 - a. PDF file posted on the website with the information from the November newsletter on next year's schedule and subjects and the subjects for the following year.
 - b. Three newsletter issues prior to competition, the following will be provided: Notice of competition Subject, Date, Number of Entries Permitted, and All Special Rules.
 - c. Two newsletter issues prior to competition, the following will be provided: Reminder of Competition Subject, Date, and Name(s) of Judge(s) if known.
 - d. Newsletter immediately prior to competition, the following will be provided: Complete Details of the Competition.
 - e. In the rare case that an error or conflict is discovered in previously published rules, subject, topics and/or definitions after the 60-day restriction for making changes goes into effect, the Competition Committee may enact immediate resolution based upon its best judgment and, if appropriate, propose an update to the Competition Manual.

1.4 COMPETITION CLASSES

There are three competition classes, A, B and C.

Class B (Novice) is for members with little or no experience in photography and/or who are new to competitions. Class B members will be moved into Class A when they have accumulated 15 award points in competition.

Class A (Advanced) is for members who have advanced through Class B or for new members who have already had prior photography experience and elect to be in Class A.

Class C (Unrestricted Processing) is open to Class A and Class B members who choose to enter one or both their allowed images in Class C.

The Competition Committee will maintain records from the competition events of each member's competition result and provide notification when a Class B member moves into Class A. Records will include: Dates of Competing, Titles Entered, Winning points awarded, and Class.

Class A and B Guidelines

These classes are limited to photographs taken with current conventional consumer digital cameras and cell phones. Images may be altered, either electronically or otherwise, only by the maker, so long as the alteration does not alter the truth of the photographic statement.

Allowed:

- a. Color balance adjustments, cropping, conversion to monochrome, brightness, contrast or sharpening.
- b. Minor manipulations such as cloning, blurring or erasing to remove insignificant items.
- c. Black and white or sepia images are allowed whether captured in camera or created in post processing.
- d. The use of an optical filter in front of the camera lens (neutral density, gradient, color, soft focus, polarizing, etc.).

Not Allowed:

- a. Introducing elements which were not part of the original image when captured.
- b. The use of digital processing filters that alter the reality. (Note: this does not include optical filters that are attached to the camera lens).
- c. Having one color element in an otherwise black and white or sepia image.
- d. No frames, borders, vignette or manipulation of the edges of the photo.
- e. Combining of multiple exposures of one image (HDR-High Dynamic Range).
- f. Focus stacking, the combining of multiple exposures of one image to expand the depth of field.
- g. Stitching together images of the same subject to form a panorama.
- h. Images taken by an infrared, ultraviolet or any other type of specialized camera or electro-optical imaging device, or simulated by use of a digital program.

Class C (Unrestricted Processing) is open to members who want to submit photos processed with techniques beyond the Class A and B minimal post processing restrictions and/or created with specialized cameras (like infrared, ultraviolet, microscope, telescope, x-ray, electron beam, or any electro-optical imaging device). Members from both Class A and Class B can enter one or more of their allowed submissions into Class C. Editing of the image is unrestricted. However, the original image must be an image taken by the member and meet the time and subject criteria for each competition. Use of textures, frames, borders which are part of editing software, taken by the photographer or acquired with permission are allowed, but images taken from other sources that were created by someone else are not permitted. Points obtained by Class B members competing in Class C will go towards advancement to Class A. In this class only the finished entry will be uploaded to SmugMug for judging, but the committee has the authority to request additional information if they feel it necessary.

1.5 COMPETITION POINTS

Places awarded in competition will be 20% of the total number of entries for each class, always rounding up (1 for every 5 images competing). For example, if there are 31 entries in Class A, then there should be a 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4 honorable mentions. ($31 \times 0.20 = 6.2$, which rounds up to 7)

* There must be 5 entries to receive points in a competition*

1st Place.....5 points

2nd Place.....3 points

3rd Place.....2 points

Honorable Mention.....1 point

1.6 ANNUAL AWARDS

Three Annual Stoffel awards will be presented at the end of the year to the three members who have accumulated the highest number of award points, one in Class A, one in Class B and one in Class C. Anyone starting the year in Class B is eligible to receive the Class B award even if they moved to Class A during the year. Normally, all points for an award must have been scored in the same class as the award. However, in the unlikely situation that a member who graduated from Class B to Class A receives more A, B and C points than the highest Class B member, both will be given a Class B award. In the event of a points tie in any class, two awards will be given.

1.7 ENTERING PHOTOGRAPHS IN COMPETITION

Only SPC members who have paid dues for the current year are eligible to enter photographs in Club Competitions. The image must meet the published specifications of the competition and, regardless of the competition subject, must never depict explicit human sexual acts or scenes.

The member will enter images in either Class A, B or C. See section entitled Competition Classes for details on class assignment.

Competitions are held throughout the year. A schedule is published by the Competition Committee that shows the dates and subjects for the competition for one calendar year and list of just the subjects for the following year. The schedule for one calendar year will also identify the definitions of the subjects and any additional restrictions or modifications that might impact the content of the images for that specific competition. The competition chairperson(s) or committee member(s) will review all images entered into competition and reserves the right to reject any images that do not meet the competition guidelines and rules for entries or are not in good taste.

1.8 GUIDELINES AND RULES FOR ENTRY

The following standard guidelines will apply to all competition classes and subject categories, unless specifically modified and published on the competition schedule by the Competition Committee.

1. Photographs should be taken within 3 years prior to the upload deadline unless specified otherwise by the Competition Committee. You MUST include in your metadata the date that the photo was taken or your photo will not be accepted.
2. The number of entries allowed will be determined by the Competition Committee and announced prior to a competition. Each member will be allowed one or two entries, depending on the number of expected entries and the judge's preference on how many images he/she is willing to judge. You must identify which of your two entries is to be used if only one will be allowed in the competition. In the file name submitted list them as A1, A2, B1 or B2. Example: Chairs_A1_Smith_Jane_Sitting Pretty.jpeg
3. The photograph may not be entered if it has previously won an SPC competition award (1st, 2nd, 3rd. or HM).
4. Images entered must have originated as a photograph (image-capture of objects via light sensitivity) made by the entrant on photographic emulsion or acquired digitally.
5. Photographs of another person's artwork and presented as the photographer's work will be rejected unless the image contains elements that enhance the original artwork.

Example:

Not allowed- An image of a painting or mural that fills the frame

Allowed- An image of a painting or mural being observed by spectator

1.9 How to Submit

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO SUBMIT ENTRIES AND THE MEMBERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BEFORE THE COMPETITION WHICH OF THE METHODS IS TO BE USED. THE METHODS ARE SMUGMUG OR EMAIL.

USING SMUGMUG

1. Prior to the competition, the Competition Committee will open up the SmugMug site for entries. This means that the Competition Committee will limit the time allowed for submission and all entries must be made in this time frame. This site is turned on and off by the committee and does not function beyond this time frame.
2. The time frame will be announced by the Competition Committee.

3. Change the file name to Comp_Class_Last Name_First Name_Title.

Ex: FLOWERS_B_Doe_Mary_Rose or FLO_A_Smith_John_Pink Rose (Remember if asked by committee to include B1 or B2, A1 or A2.)

***Please remember to change your file name on the photo in this way or
we will not know who entered it and it will be rejected.***

4. Prior to the opening of the competition, each member in good standing will be sent an email by the person sending out notices for the club. The mail will contain a link to SmugMug for entering your photos. It will also remind you of the time frame for entering.

5. To use the links, click on the link that pertains to you...Class A, Class B or Class C. You will enter your photo directly into the proper class so be sure to choose the correct link.

6. When you click on the link, the SmugMug site opens and you will see a gray box that says upload your photo here. Drag and Drop your photo into that box. This will be easier to do if you have saved your image to your Desktop. (See Helpful Hints below for various programs).

7. Please Note: If you do not have an HTML downloader on your computer the site will direct you to BROWSE. To do this just click the browse box on the screen and browse to where you have stored your image, click on the photo file and click OPEN. The photo will upload to the site. This method takes a bit longer so be aware of that.

8. The file format preferred is JPEG, sRGB color space and the file must not be larger than 35 MB. Recommended pixel size is 3000 on the longest dimension. Minimum acceptable pixel size is 1040 on the longest side and 300ppi. The Competition Committee will size all the photos at once for optimum display with the club projector for the competition.

9. You will receive confirmation that your photo was accepted (or is under review for acceptance) within 48 hours. If you have not received a notice please contact the committee with an email to: competitions@sandhillspgphotoclub.org.

10. By virtue of submitting an entry, the entrant certifies the work as his own and permits the SPC to reproduce the entered material free of charge for publication and/or display in media related to the competition or exhibition. This may include low resolution posting on a website. The SPC assumes no liability for any misuse of copyright.

USING EMAIL

This method would most likely be used only if there is a problem with SmugMug, in which case the Competition committee will provide detailed instructions.



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Section II

Competition Committee

Revised January 9, 2016

By The 2015 Competition Committee

Scott Duvall, Chairman; Donna Ford; Bill Matthews; Neva Scheve

Additional revisions October 2017

By the 2017 Competition Committee

Chairpersons: Teresa Bruni and Steve Hoadley assisted by Dennis Snipes

2.1 Judges Selection Process

Judges will be selected by the Competition Chairperson(s). Every attempt should be made to select judges who are well known for their knowledge and experience in the art of photography, their reputation for objective evaluation, and their ability to effectively communicate constructive criticism.

1. An individual judge or a three-member panel may judge competitions. The three-member panel may include members of SPC or non-members. SPC panel members may not be entered in the competition he or she is judging. The three-member panel will use electronic judging devices.
2. Upon approval of the current board, the competition chairperson(s) may offer out-of-area judges reimbursement for mileage and travel expenses, as well as dinner preceding the competition. Local non-member judges may receive a small gift of appreciation at SPC expense and/or dinner preceding the competition. SPC members will receive no honorarium or expense reimbursement for judging.
3. Prior to competition, the chairperson(s) shall provide the judge(s) with SPC guidelines for judging. This will include a copy of the topic and the rules for competition as written for the entrants and published in the newsletter and a guideline for assigning points to each image. Whenever possible, the judging will be done ahead of competition night to facilitate a faster judging process on the night of competition.

2.2 Rules, Guidelines & Procedures For Presentation

Equipment & Specifications Used for Presentation to the Judge.

Prints: TBD In the event of a print competition, guidelines will be announced.

Digital Images:

1. In most cases, the judge(s) will be provided with links to the SmugMug galleries, and will judge from his/her own computer.
2. If judging is done on the night of competition Digital Images will be presented to the judge by the club projector and the projector will be calibrated visually or with a colorimeter. The judge must be supplied a set of rules of the competition, the rules for judging and a list of the images for his comments.

Displaying Images for the Audience:

The room must be set up in such a manner that the audience can view the images on the competition night. To preserve shadow detail in the projected images, the room should be darkened sufficiently to reduce the ambient light in the room to the lowest level possible (specifically, the ambient room illumination on the screen should be about 1% or less of the projected white level).

2.3 Responsibilities of the Competition Committee

The committee is headed up by the Competition Chairperson(s), who is appointed by the Club President. The Competition Chairperson(s) serves on the Board and takes responsibility for:

1. Maintaining a two-year schedule of competitions, which includes: a one-year schedule of topics, dates and any other special rules for conditions for specific competitions; and a one-year list of future competition topics. All topics are presented to the Board for final approval.
2. Securing appropriate judges for scheduled competitions.
3. Maintaining records of member's entries, scores, and points earned for each competition.
4. Coordination each competition presentation.
5. Entering each digital image into competitions.
6. Presenting the competition winners and ribbons.
7. Maintaining the Competition Manual
8. Check each print or image prior to entry for competition to insure it complies with the specific rules for the event.
9. Competition Committee members and the club's Webmaster may submit images in club competitions only in the specified committee-member early-submittal period before entries are accepted from all other club members. This prevents committee members and the club's Webmaster from gaining any advantage from seeing other entries before deciding on theirs.
10. The Competition Chairperson(s) will appoint members to form the Competition Committee to assist the Chairperson(s) in carrying out the above duties. It is recommended that a member on the committee be considered for the Chairperson position in the following year(s), and that one or two new committee members are brought on board in August each year to shadow the current committee.



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Section III

Judges

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By The 2015 Competition Committee

Scott Duvall, Chairman; Donna Ford; Bill Matthews; Neva Scheve

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By the 2017 Competition Committee

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GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITION JUDGES

What Judge(s) need to know

We have a club site on SmugMug that will contain three galleries, one for each of the classes- A, B, and C. Each participant can enter up to 2 images. The number of awards is based on the number of entries and is included in the email containing the Judge's Packet.

The Competition Committee is responsible (and does their best) to ensure each image meets the rules of entry. We accept photos that generally fit the topic description but we do not judge how well the image fits the spirit of that description.

All metadata has been intentionally hidden. Judge(s) are discouraged from downloading images and checking the metadata for any information such as the types of lens used, exposure and post process method. All images should be judged strictly on how they appear in the gallery.

Our members go to fieldtrips and daytrips together so sometimes the judge(s) may see images of similar or the exact same subjects. It may appear that they were taken by the same person, but in fact they are not. Some judges have been confused by this and have eliminated one or the other.

Judging Entries

Members enter their work in three classes:

Class A contains images from advanced photographers. Post processing is limited to standard/minimal processing as described in this manual.

Class B contains images from novice photographers. Post processing is limited to standard/minimal processing as described in this manual.

Class C is open to members who want to submit photos processed with techniques beyond the Class A and B minimal post processing restrictions as described in this manual and/or created with specialized cameras (like infrared, ultraviolet or any electro-optical imaging device). Class C is open to both Class A and B members. Members may use as many or as little editing techniques as desired to create their best image. For instance, backgrounds may be replaced, elements may be removed or added, images may be combined as long as the original image is taken by the member, etc.

The judge(s) will be provided the same written description of the competition topic as the club members received. In most cases, the judge(s) will have up to 10-14 days to review and score the images. In the event of a print competition, the judge(s) may preview the images prior to the competition night in order to get an idea of the quality of material submitted. This enables the judge(s) to successfully tailor the range of scoring to the actual range of the quality.

The judges packet

The judge's packet includes score sheets- one for each class. Class A, B and C will be judged separately. The judge(s) shall give each entry a total score from 3 to 10 (3 for weak and 10 for outstanding) using the outline defined below and shall critique each image. Use the columns as follows:

POINTS GUIDELINE

IMPACT: 1 to 4 Points

Does the image elicit a **strong emotional response** as a first impression with feeling of mood and does it hold your eye and interest?

COMPOSITION: 1 to 3 Points

Is there design and balance in the image, bringing all of the visual elements together? Does it draw the viewer to look where the creator intended? Is the subject emphasized by the placement, contrast and framing with no distracting elements? Does the image have a **strong point of interest**?

TECHNICAL: 1 to 3 Points:

Proper exposure, color balance, image focus, and good tonality should exist in the image as appropriate to the subject.

No image should be given a score of 0 in any category. Judge(s) will provide a quick critique of each image in the comments column. The critique should be brief, friendly, and positive in tone, pertain to the image as a whole, and be impartial. Special emphasis is to be given to constructive suggestions for the improvement of images so that members can learn and advance their skills and techniques.

After completing the Score Sheets, use the Judge's Results Sheet to award images based on the score. The highest scoring image receives the 1st place award, and so forth. It is the judge's responsibility to break all ties. This could be based on how well the photo fits the spirit of the competition description or other factors at the judge's discretion. The Competition Committee will announce winners and award ribbons at the competition based on this document.

At the competition meeting, the images in each class shall be previewed once without comments, and then, on a second viewing, critiques and scores will be given. Winners are announced at the end of the judging.

If the judge is unable to attend the competition meeting night, the Competition Chairperson will read the judge's comments to the members, reporting the scores and winners as judged.