



NEW ENGLAND CAMERA CLUB COUNCIL, INCORPORATED

## Electronic Photograph Interclub Competition Instructions for Host Clubs

Please read these instructions carefully. Note particularly the section on *Selecting Judges*. It is important that judges be selected so that there is no hint of favoritism.

### Selecting Judges

Three qualified judges should be selected and contacted well in advance of the competition. We suggest that an alternate judge also be contacted at the same time “just in case.” **Each judge must be from a different club** assuming the clubs are competing, and **must not have photographs of his/her own (or by members of his/her family) in the competition**. Also, it would be best if the judges are selected from clubs that don’t compete in the electronic photographic interclub competition, or even judges who have no club affiliation when this is possible. Also be careful as some judges belong to more than one club.

There are two categories of competition which are very different. The pictorial (open) category allows photographs of the *creative* or *experimental* type and “anything goes.” The nature category is restricted to photographs that meet the PSA definition of nature. Finding three judges who can fairly evaluate both types of photography may, in some cases, be a challenge. If the host club prefers, they can invite more than three judges and change the panel between categories. This is particularly a good option if one of the judges is from the host club, a position that could be filled by two different members with different photographic skills.

A list of qualified judges is available through the NECCC VP in charge of the *Speakers & Judges Listing* (see any current issue of the *NECCC Bulletin*). All judges should be experienced in judging photography by PSA/NECCC standards.

The host club will pay any fees required by the judges. No judge should be asked to judge more than one NECCC Electronic Photograph Interclub competition in a season.

It’s not always possible to avoid conflicts and still find competent judges; the following guidelines have been formulated to try to help you make the best of a less than ideal situation. These guidelines are an attempt to “level the playing field” when, as inevitably happens, a judge is asked to judge photographs from his/her own club. To arbitrarily dictate that a judge can not legitimately evaluate a photograph from his/her club would severely restrict the number of qualified judges available, resulting in either a reduction in overall competition quality, or even a curtailment of interclub activities

1. **Never** select two people who are members of the same club as judges for a competition if the club in question competes in Electronic Interclub Competitions. If the judges’ own club doesn’t compete, there’s no problem. Be careful because some potential judges belong to more than one club so be certain that you don’t get two judges who are members of the same competing club.
2. A judge may not have one of his/her own photographs (or one by a member of his/her family) in the competition. This situation creates the *appearance* of unfairness which must be avoided in all cases.
3. In scoring a photograph that a judge recognizes as being from her/his own club, the judge must make every attempt to be as objective as possible. It is assumed that the judges possess a high degree of personal integrity and will make every attempt to be as objective as possible. Whenever a judge feels that objectivity is

compromised, he/she should disqualify himself/herself from scoring that photograph. If the judge honestly feels that a truly objective evaluation is impossible, then he/she should score the photograph as a *one*, and the overall score should be corrected as follows. To correct the score, the sum of the other two judges' scores is to be multiplied by 1.5, and any one-half (0.5) point value should be rounded up to the next higher whole number. Rounding up will only occur when the sum of the two useable scores is an odd number, expected to occur about 50% of the time. In fairness to the judges involved, who freely give of their time for these events, this one-half point "edge" does not seem unreasonable. In addition, rounding up of odd numbers follows the convention used in everyday mathematics.

## **Preparing for the Judging**

The photographs will arrive on a CD already numbered and sorted in the order in which they should be judged. There will be four directories of photographs on the CD, two for each category (classes A and B will be in separate directories). The host club will need to provide a laptop computer (either PC or Mac) and a digital projector with 1024 x 768 resolution. As soon as the CD is received you should copy the images from the CD to the hard drive of the computer and make sure they can all be properly displayed for judging. Once this is done please notify the co-directors that the CD has been received.

If you have a favorite program to display the images full screen **with a black background**, you are free to use it. If you don't have a program, FastStone Image Viewer (PC only) or iPhoto (Mac only) are suggested.

If you do not have experience running an electronic photographic competition, it is suggested that you practice with your computer and the program you plan to use. Be sure you can easily display the first image in each class (a title) and smoothly cycle from image to image. You should also practice copying a few images to a new directory and displaying them which you may have to do if it is necessary for the judges to decide which of two or more tied first place images will be published in the *NECCC Bulletin*.

Use the title photographs provided for each class and category to check your projector for proper alignment. All four title photographs have a one-pixel wide line around the perimeter of the image. Be sure you can see that line on all four sides. If not, you will need to find the adjustment in the projector's menu system to correct the problem. It is important that you see line on all four sides as some competitors put a stroke around their images and if it isn't visible on one side that could unfairly penalize them.

The CD will also contain Excel spreadsheets which are to be used for recording the scores. The Excel spreadsheets **must** be returned to the co-directors with the scores filled in following the competition. **Do not alter these spreadsheets in any way except to fill in the scores and indicate the photograph in each class and category that should be published.** The spreadsheet format is part of the director's workflow which depends on the format being unchanged.

## **Instructing the Judges**

A separate set of instructions for judges is provided on the CD; please make copies and make sure each judge receives a copy to review before the judging begins. This document explains the scoring system (3 to 9 for each judge), the different categories of competition, and the number of classes. You may also want to review these instructions for hints on running the competition.

## **The Judging**

Electronic photographs must be judged by projection. You can judge nature or pictorial in either order, but class B should be judged before class A for each category. The classes are judged and scored separately.

Use care to keep any light used for recording the results from falling onto the screen and spoiling the chances of success for some images. This problem can be solved by using a small light and keeping it well away from the screen and shielding it with a cardboard box.

If you have a second computer available for the judging, it can be used to enter the scores directly into the *Excel* spreadsheets. If a second computer is not available, the scores may be entered on paper copies of the score sheets and then be transferred to the spreadsheets after the competition, but before returning them to the competition co-directors. It is suggested that two score keepers be used as a check to be sure the scores are recorded correctly, either using two copies of the paper score sheet, or directly on the computer and on a paper score sheet.

[Note that if you do not have *Excel* available, you can download a free office suite of programs (word processor, presentation program, spreadsheet program, and database program) from [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org). This suite of programs includes an excellent spreadsheet program (*Calc*) that can open, manipulate, and save *Excel* files.]

## **Procedure**

1. For **each of the four classes** (A and B for Nature; A and B for Pictorial) do a partial or complete run through of the photographs being judged. If time is available a complete run through is preferable, but if the number of photographs is large or the time is limited a run through of **one complete round** (preferably not the first round) is adequate. A run through of at least one round is needed so that the judges gain a sense of the level of the entries so that they can spread their scores over the scoring range.
2. After the first run through **carefully refocus the projector**. The internal parts of electronic projectors become quite hot which, in some models, causes the focus to drift very slightly as they warm up. Refocusing the projector after it is well warmed up compensates for this problem.
3. After the run through, project each photograph and allow the judges time to vote. **No titles, maker names, or clubs are disclosed at this point.**
4. The score is called aloud and is recorded on the score sheets. The score keepers should be careful that the titles match the photograph being projected.
5. Continue showing the photographs until they have all been scored.
6. If there is only one first place photograph the competition is finished. However, if there are two or more photographs tied for first place it is necessary to have the judges choose one to be published in the *NECCC Bulletin*.
  - a. Copy the first place image files into a separate directory on your computer's hard drive.
  - b. Show the eligible photographs to the judges and allow them to discuss among themselves and decide which photograph should be published. This designation will not change the scores received and all first place winners will receive ribbons; it only determines which photograph will be published to represent the competition in the *NECCC Bulletin*. The judges may use the likelihood of good reproduction in black and white as one of their criteria for deciding.
7. After the judging of each class is complete the top scoring photograph(s) should be shown and the title, maker's name, and camera club affiliation should be announced.

## **After the Competition**

Enter the scores into the *Excel* spreadsheets if that wasn't done during the judging. If there are two or more first place photographs, indicate which was selected for publication in the *NECCC Bulletin*. Then e-mail the completed spreadsheet to the competition co-directors at [NECCC@optonline.org](mailto:NECCC@optonline.org) and [cgosselin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cgosselin@sbcglobal.net) within one or two days of the judging. **In the e-mail include a brief report of the judging including: date of competition,**

**location, names and information on the judges, and a list of the competition chairman and workers.** The co-directors will use this information in their report to the clubs.

There is no need to determine which photographs win ribbons for first, second, and third place or HM's. That will be done by the competition co-directors after the spreadsheet is returned with the results. Awards will be made to each of the first-, second-, and third-place club and individual winners as well as honorable mentions to individual winners only. Individual awards will be given to *approximately* 20-25% of the highest individual scorers in each of the four competitions; this 20-25% will include all first, second, third, and Honorable Mention winners. The co-directors will also take care of sending the selected photographs to the editor of the *NECCC Bulletin* for publication.

## **Postponing a Scheduled Judging**

All competitions must be run on the dates specified in the information sent to the competing clubs. However, we recognize that New England's winter weather or other emergencies may force a scheduled judging to be postponed. If a contest has to be postponed, the judging must be re-scheduled as soon as possible (preferably within two weeks). This competition doesn't have any prints that have to be returned in a timely manner, but clubs are understandably anxious to know the results so rescheduling as soon as possible will be appreciated by all concerned. If it is necessary to postpone a judging, please inform the co-directors as soon as possible telling them when and where the competition will be held so that they can keep the participating clubs informed regarding the status of the competition.

## **Thanks**

On behalf of NECCC, please thank the judges, your workers, and your club for hosting the competition. Without everyone's volunteer efforts competitions such as these would not be possible.

## **Additional Information**

If you have any questions, please contact the NECCC Electronic Photograph Competition Co-directors (e-mail preferred):

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