

Proposals for 2014 EUSPBA Annual General Meeting.

1. Rule Review/Clarification of contest rules for Tenor Drum Competitions (submitted by the Northeast branch #1)

There seems to be a misunderstanding of Novice Tenor Grading. Several Novice Tenors were moved up to Amateur Tenor 2 because they play in a band. The Rule Book does not state this requirement.

Proposal: Reconfigure Tenor Grades to: Professional, Amateur, Novice with the playing requirements remaining the same for Professional. Amateur to be the current playing requirements for Amateur Tenor 1 and Novice to be the current playing requirements of current Amateur Tenor 2.

2. Rule Review and Clarify the rules for Splitting Large Contests. (submitted by the Northeast branch #2)

The following rule is not being consistently followed: “Any contest Grade 2 and below having more than 20 entrants must be split into separate events with a minimum of 10 and maximum of 20 competitors per heat.....Each heat within a particular grade should contain the same players for all events.....

This rule is not being followed in many competitions resulting in small heats. Every effort should be made to keep the heats as large as possible up to the maximum. The most problematic part of the rule is: keeping heats the same across events as many players in Grades 3 & 4 don't always sign up for Piobaireachd events.

3. Rule Change Grade 5 and Grade 4 Band Requirements (submitted by the Northeast branch #3)

The current playing rules for Grade 5 and 4 Pipe Bands has created a chasm that is difficult for Grade 5 bands moving into Grade 4 to negotiate.

Consider the following options:

A. Grade 5 remains with QMM, Grade 4 is divided into 4B (2/4 March Set and Simple Medley –Simple Time, Slow Air, Compound Time) and 4A (Mini MSR— all 2 parted tunes & Medley)

B. Grade 5 remains with QMM, Grade 4 is remains as one grade with Mini MSR and 2/4 March Set (8 parts of march—2 parted tunes)

C. Grade 5 with a Modified Medley (Time Signature changes, 2 breaks, Slow Air) and Grade 4 playing requirements remain at they currently are (Mini-MSR and Medley)

4. Rule Change: Music Rule Change: Eliminate the medley from Grade 4 bands and restore the QMM. (submitted by the Mid-Atlantic branch #1)

Rationale: The current jump from grade 5 to Grade 4 is a huge leap. Bands need to add Strathspey, Reel, jig, and Hornpipe. If we make this change, Grade 5 bands need to add only Strathspey and Reel to their repertoire. This puts them in a position to move to Grade 3 with the addition of a jig and hornpipe. The current system is preventing bands from moving up.

5. Rule Change Music Rule Change: Allow grade 4 pipe bands the option to play four parted strathspeys and reels. (submitted by the Mid-Atlantic branch #2)

Rationale: You are probably aware of the tune requirement change for grade 4 bands. From a judge's perspective, it would be a welcome addition of two more parts of strathspey and reel music. It can be very difficult to judge 30 seconds and 20 seconds of music at the grade 4 level. Bands should be allowed the option to play 4 parted strathspeys and/or reels instead of the current mandatory two different two parted strathspeys and reels. This would allow grade 4 bands to be fully prepared to move up to grade 3.

The "gap" between grades 4 and 3 is the most difficult of all grade transitions. If the EUSPBA allowed grade 4 bands the above-cited option, they would be better prepared for grade 3 if they and the grading committee felt they were "ready."

It should be noted the Music Board's recommendation to the Executive Committee DID allow the four-parted option. The EC changed the musical decision because it did not conform to RSPBA grade 4 tune requirements. For the record, the RSPBA requires grade 4A bands to play two two-parted marches, as well as two two-parted strathspeys and reels so the current rule does not conform. Furthermore, the judge who originally submitted this proposal said he checked the EUSPBA entries at the World Pipe Band Championships for the past three years. Only one grade 4 EUSPBA band competed at the grade 4A level. The EUSPBA needs to reconsider whether or not the development of our 54 grade 4 member bands is better served by allowing the option as described above. Especially since that is what our own Music Board recommended in the first place.

6. Rule Change Music Rule Change: Beginning with grade 3, separate grades for Light Music and Piobaireachd pipers. (submitted by the Mid-Atlantic branch #3):

Rationale: Some particularly senior pipers are stuck being unable to progress because competition for light music is rather intensely youth-successful, but Piobaireachd gives them an opportunity to develop musically and on a more even playing field.

7. Rule Change :Change the solo requirements as follows: (Submitted by the Mid-Atlantic branch #5)

Grade	Piobaireachd	Common Time March	S&R	6/8 March	Jig	H&J	Slow Air or March
Open	4	4	4&4	4, Play 2	4, Play 2	4&4, Play 2 of Each	
I	3	3	3 Sets	3	3	3 Sets	
II	2	2	2 Sets	2	2	2 Sets	
III	1	1	1&1, 4-Parts Each	4-Parts	4-Parts	4-Parts Each	
IV	Full Tune	4-Parts	2-Parts Each	2-Parts	2-Parts	2-Parts	2-Parts Slow Tune
V		4-Parts					2-Parts Slow Tune

Rationale: There is a provision in the Grade III S&R event in the EUSPBA Rules & Regulations stating that two two-parted tunes may be used in place of one four-parted tune for either or both of the tunes in the S&R event.

A similar provision is mentioned later in the document regarding the Grade IV 2/4 and 6/8 March events, as well as for the Grade V March event. Expanding these provisions will allow for a more gradual, intuitive ascent through the lower grades, and will encourage players to compete with greater frequency from an earlier point in their development. This, in turn, will result in a greater repertoire and higher quality of performance being developed across the grade levels, as well as produce a higher level of involvement in lower-grade competition.

The biggest changes involve expanding the lower-grade events, both in number and inclusiveness, while simultaneously cutting back on entry barriers. Changing the requirements to "Two Parts" in Grade IV will allow beginners to either compete with the first two parts of a four-part tune or simply compete with a two-part tune, whichever accommodates their particular learning path. Changing the requirements to "Four Parts" in Grade III will allow those same competitors to move up and continue competing either with the third and fourth parts of their tune included, or with a second 2-part tune, as they continue to expand their repertoire, stamina, and performance skills.

8. Rule Change: Change Grade 5 from Practice Chanter to Grade 5 Jr. 4 parts, 2/4 March on pipes. (submitted from the Ohio Valley branch #1) Add Grade 6 as practice chanter. This would be a 2, 2parted 2/4 march or 1, 2 parted 2/4 march played twice. Recommend eliminating 2, 2-parted 2/4 marches from Grade 4.

9. Rule Change: Add Grade 5 Jr. Piobaireachd as Ground and 1st variation. (submitted from the Ohio Valley branch #2)

10. Rule Change: Allow Players to change band rosters two (2) times per year. (submitted by the Ohio Valley branch #4)

11. Rule Change :To experiment with a one-year hiatus from having Ensemble score, and replace with a third piping judge. (submitted by the Southern Branch#1)

Rationale:

This would put more emphasis on the pipe section of a PIPE band. At present, piping represents only 50% of the total score. Drumming and Ensemble represent the other 50%, but in the case of a tie, Ensemble takes precedence. So in reality, piping has less than half of the decision-making power in the outcome. In many instances, even when piping places 4th, 5th, or 6th, a band can place high due to the Ensemble score. Since we call our groups PIPE bands, piping should be the main focus. If a band has poor piping, should they be able to achieve a high ensemble score? (The RSPBA does not require an ensemble judge in MANY contests. Without an ensemble judge, there is a 2/3 piping and 1/3 drumming breakdown to achieve the final result.)

12. Rule Change: Amendment to In the case of a tie between bands shifting the tiebreaker from the Ensemble placing to the Piping placing. (submitted by the Southern Branch #2)

Rationale:

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13. Rule Change :Allow each member of the EUSPBA to be a band member of up to three bands, without having to use special designations of "instructor" or "dual musician", in each of the following categories: "Home" band would be the band of the lowest grade, a second band that may be part of any association anywhere, and a school band during the school year. (submitted by the Southwest branch #7):

Rationale: Allowing membership in three bands without the limitations accompanying the designations of "instructor" or "dual musician" allows more upper level players to play in the presence of a lower grade band on a regular

basis. Lower grade band members would benefit from consistently hearing a higher level of play and musicality, getting more opportunities to build their ears and technique.

Rationale:

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14. Rule Change :Require all band draws to occur a minimum of 1 week prior to the contest

(submitted by the Metro branch)

Rational: Many band leaders and band members usually are scrambling to attend a band meeting/draw which seems to pull away from other activities these members could be addressing. The draw in advance would eliminate time spent by our volunteers on contest day waiting for folks to attend the draw when they could be assisting soloists or band members on other activities.

15. Rule Change :Require all solo orders of play be posted a minimum of 1 week prior to the contest

Rational: Soloists and volunteers have plenty to do on games day. Worrying about “when” to play is not something that should enter anyone’s mind on games day. The best run contests have the order of play posted in advance. This also allows our games volunteers to tend to other important issues on the day of the contest.

16. Policy Manual Change: The Executive Committee should be required to pay dues like everyone else (submitted by the Mid-Atlantic branch #3)

Rationale: Sometime during the past ten years, the Executive Committee waived their annual dues requirement. Since they recently voted a dues increase to everyone else, they should also bear the burden of paying their dues and helping defray the increased costs incurred by the EUSPBA that necessitated a dues increase.

17. Policy Manual Change: Every branch to receive at least one (1) seat on the music board. (submitted by the Ohio Valley branch #3)

18. Policy Manual Change: Require the music board to send minutes to the Executive Committee. (submitted by the Ohio Valley branch #5)

19. Policy Manual Change: An effort should be made to have each administrative position (Membership Coordinator, Sanctioning Officer, and Results Coordinator) be held by a different person for the sake of redundancy with ONE person coordinating for oversight and reporting to the Executive Committee. (submitted by the Southern branch #5)

Rationale:

We currently have all three positions held by one person that has worked quite well, but leaves little redundancy in our process. It is proposed that the Coordinator be present for all EC meetings reporting on behalf of the administrative positions.

20. Policy Manual Change: Form a feasibility committee to study the establishment of a Senior Judges pool and discuss how it might best be deployed. (Submitted by the Southwest branch #1)

Rationale : There have been a number of statements heard from members of the association that although all of our judges are qualified according to the EUSPBA certification process there are certain times when some have appeared unfamiliar with alternate settings of a Piobaireachd or demonstrated a lack of understanding about the expression of a tune. In a high level, high profile contest where our best and brightest professional players are competing against one another we need to ensure that only our MOST knowledgeable and experienced judges are adjudicating.

21. Policy Manual Change: Form a feasibility committee to study a method by which an "Approved Judges" list can be established that would allow select judges from other associations that have a proven record of judging success to be allowed to judge at EUSPBA sanctioned games without being required to take the EUSPBA judging test or requiring games to get permission to use them every time they are hired for a sanctioned contest. (submitted by the Southwest branch #2)

Rationale: The EUSPBA is no longer limited to three states and couple-hundred competitors. Outlying parts of the association often have trouble finding association judges who are available, or are able to travel the significant distances required to be there on games day. At the same time, there may be qualified judges from other associations living within driving distance of those games and on a different competition cycle making them available for use. Some of these judges guest judge regularly now, but games organizers must request permission to use them for each instance. Judges on this list would be those that have a proven record of competent judging at EUSPBA sanctioned games. These guest judges would be allowed to judge without repeated administrative action on the part of the association and without repeated requests from games organizers.

22. Policy Manual Change: Examine the possibility of changing the structure of membership in the EUSPBA to require band members to join as individual members. (submitted by the Southwest branch #3)

Rationale: The number of individual members has been in steady decline over the last ten years, reducing the size of the association and dues revenue. By having everyone join as individuals, dues could be slightly reduced (the increase in individuals would offset the reduction of dues). (Band organizations could choose to pay or offset the dues for individual members.) This would increase membership and revenues of the association. A side benefit to band members is that they would be able to compete in solos without additional application. The cost of supplying The Voice to the expanded membership could be reduced by using online PDF access. This change in membership would increase awareness and knowledge of the association, and give more members access to the excellent and instructional articles appearing in The Voice. It could also lead to greater interest in volunteerism and involvement in association and branch government. In addition, with the added income we could afford to make regional instructional activities available at low or no cost to members.

23. Policy Manual Change: Form a committee to study the feasibility of establishing one or more high level, high profile EUSPBA sponsored solo contests. (submitted by the Southwest branch #4)

Rationale: Although the EUSPBA contributes sponsorship to several high level contests, the association does not have its own high level, high profile solo contest.

24. Policy Manual Change: Amend the EUSPBA Mission Statement to include education as part of the association's focus and correct grammatical errors. (Submitted by the Southwest branch #5)

Rationale: (EUSPBA Mission Statement, below)

The Mission Statement implies education is part of the association's focus by professing a goal of "raising the level of our art." However, the Mission Statement is heavily weighted toward a competition focus, and contains minor grammatical errors. Recommended amendment to the Mission Statement: "The EUSPBA recognizes that music competitions provide a means of improving piping, drumming, and pipe band musical performances, and has established a set of rules and regulations governing such competitions. We aspire to assist individuals and bands in reaching their highest competitive potential. We also aspire to raising the level of our art through education. Contests agreeing to follow the EUSPBA guidelines may be sanctioned by the association, providing competitors a measure of uniformity in terms of rules, standards, and judging."

Current version of the EUSPBA Mission Statement: "The EUSPBA recognizes that music competitions provide a means of improving piping, drumming, and pipe band musical performances, and has established a set of rules and regulations. We aspire to assist individuals and bands in reaching, not only their highest competitive potential, but also raising the level of our art. Contests that agree to follow the EUSPBA guidelines may be sanctioned by the association. EUSPBA sanctioning provides competitors a measure of uniformity in terms of rules, standards, and judging."

25. Policy Manual Change:: Publicize the “education program” (Progress Certification Program?) events on a page on the website dedicated to the program and publish a report, post-event, in each issue of The Voice.

(submitted by the Southwest branch #6)

Rationale: The PCP, and therefore the association’s commitment to education, is practically invisible to most EUSPBA members. Publicizing PCP events on the website would raise awareness of this educational process. Publishing reports of PCP events, including the number of people attending and a count of the certifications earned (numbers, not necessarily identities) increases the visibility of the program. Also, it allows tracking of the usage rate and offers an opportunity to track subsequent success of those using the process.

26. Policy Manual Change: Send renewal notices to former members with expired membership of over 6 months and less than 5 years, reminding them they have not renewed. (submitted by the Southwest branch #7A (2 number 7’s))

Rationale: With the loss of membership in the Association, every effort should be made to encourage former members to renew their membership. If a former member does not need to compete, they may not remember to renew their membership, as there is only a single reminder, which is sent to them. Either email or postal notices would be inexpensive, and may encourage members to renew who otherwise may have forgotten to do so.

27. Bylaw revision: Make an amendment to the EUSPBA bylaws to disallow paid employees of the EUSPBA to run for or hold a position on the Executive Committee. (submitted by the Southern branch #3)

Rationale:

This creates an obvious conflict of interest when voting on items that may directly or indirectly deal with the position held. Abstaining from such votes takes away one of the 7 votes which changes the percentage in which each vote is weighted as well as creates the possibility for a tie.

28. Bylaw Revision: Clarify and state what the monetary compensation of the positions of Membership Coordinator, Sanctioning Officer, and Results Coordinator are in the bylaws of the EUSPBA. (submitted by the Southern branch #4)

Rationale:

Currently there is NO mention of what monetary compensation is for each of these three positions.

