

Rules for Competitors at This FIRE-Sanctioned Competition

This competition is sanctioned by Scottish FIRE (Scottish Fiddling Revival, Ltd.), the national Scottish Fiddling Organization, and is conducted according to these rules. For full rules, see the Scottish F.I.R.E. Facebook page.

Conduct of the Competition

- ~ Each **Open** category competitor will play four tunes. First, an air, followed by a pause. When signaled by the judge, the competitor will play a march, a strathspey, and a reel, in that order, without pausing between the tunes.
- ~ Each competitor in the **Junior** or **Intermediate** category will play as described for the Open category.
- ~ Each **Novice** category competitor will play three tunes. This can be either (1) an air, then a pause, then a strathspey and a reel without a pause between tunes; or, (2) a march, a strathspey, and a reel without a pause between tunes. Novice competitors may also choose to play an air, march, strathspey and reel as described for the Open category.
- ~ The use of written music is optional. Although it is customary to play from memory in Scottish competitions, do not let this discourage you from competing: If you need written music, bring it!
- ~ Each competitor will perform on a fiddle, AKA a violin, without accompaniment.
- ~ Highland dress is encouraged but not required.

Definitions of Categories of Competitors

Open: Any fiddler may compete in this category, including those wishing to be considered for referral to the National competition.

Junior: Any fiddler under the age of 18 may compete in this category, including those wishing to be considered for referral to the National competition.

Intermediate: Any fiddler may compete in this category, including fiddlers who wish to play for personal satisfaction and for the judge's expert feedback rather than for Nationals consideration. In a particular competition, the Intermediate category may be divided into Intermediate Junior (under the age of 18) and Intermediate Senior.

Novice: Any fiddler new to the art of Scottish fiddling may compete in this category. After winning first place in three Novice category competitions, a competitor will be required to enter in the Open category (or Junior, if under 18). In a particular competition, the Novice category may be divided into Novice Junior (under 18) and Novice Senior.

Performance Standards

For all tunes played, factors will be considered and weighted on the competition rubric as follows:

- **Execution, 30 points:** Command of the instrument, both fingering and bowing, and technical skill in playing, intonation, ornamentation, and mastery of effects.
- **Time, 30 points:** Tempo, rhythm, pulse, musical continuity. The tempo must be appropriate both to the tune and to the style of execution. The rhythm must be appropriate to the tune (i.e., strathspey, reel, etc.). While some variation may serve interpretation, the overall context and structure of the tune should not be lost to any technique of execution or expression.
- **Interpretation/Expression, 40 points:** The quality of the performance that appeals to the listeners' feeling, reflecting the performer's judgment and ability in capturing the sentiment of the composer or the traditional associations of the tune. In the march/strathspey/reel sequence, the following additional factors will be considered as part of expression:
 - ~ Transitions: March to strathspey, and strathspey to reel. Does the transition suit the tunes and provide an effective bridge for the listener in terms of melodic flow, tonal and rhythmic punctuation?
 - ~ Overall coherence and effect: Extent to which the tunes, as played, stand together as a coherent musical statement.
 - ~ In all aspects, performance in the traditional Scottish style will be the significant element in distinguishing otherwise technically comparable performances.
 - ~ There will be no favor or penalty for playing in any particular Scottish style, such as Northeast, Highland, Cape Breton, etc.; timing, execution, expression and interpretation should be appropriate to the chosen Scottish style.

Types of Tunes Permitted in each Category

- **Air:** Any slow air, pastoral, slow strathspey, lament, or other tune played as an air.
- **March:** Any march (pipe march or other) whether 2/4, 4/4, 6/8, or any other tune played as a march.
- **Strathspey:** Any dance strathspey, or other tune played as a strathspey.
- **Reel:** Any reel, Scots measure, hornpipe, or other tune played as a reel.

NOTE: Waltzes, jigs (6/8 and 9/8), and hornpipes played in the original manner are not allowed as substitutions for any of the categories above.