



**GUILD OF  
JUDGES**

# **CONTEST RULES**

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## **VERSION**

### **11.0**

## **APPLICABLE FROM OCTOBER 2018**

# Change History

## Version 11.0 – October 2018

Article 1(c)	Definition of male and female added
Article 2	Wording changed to include Male Chorus and Mixed Chorus contests
Article 7(a)	Amended wording for ladies appearing on stage
Article 7(g)	Wording amended to clarify entry conditions
Article 7(i)	Paragraph deleted and subsequent paragraphs renumbered
Article 7(m)	Wording clarified
Article 7(n)	New rule added regarding Don Amos Club members
Article 7(o)	New rule added for Mixed Choruses.
Article 20	Wording amended to distinguish Male and Mixed choruses
Attachments 3, 4, 5	Minor amendments to clarify application to Male chorus contests
Attachment 5	Minor changes to wording and qualification for divisions
Attachment 6	Updated to show financial support available for International contests

## Version 10.0 – January 2018

Article 3(c)	Amended to include criteria for wildcard entries to International.
Article 3(e)	New clause to clarify quartet personnel changes between qualification and International
Article 3(f)	New clause setting out criteria for replacing an International quartet
Article 5(c)	Amended to include criteria for wildcard entries to International.
Article 5(d)	New clause to clarify quartet personnel changes between qualification and International
Article 11(c)	Amended to reflect new Performance category criteria
Article 14(a)	Amended to clarify use of stage lighting
Article 16	Amended to reflect new Performance category criteria

# Article 1

## Scope

- (a) These rules apply to all British Association of Barbershop Singers (BABS) contests.
- (b) In general these rules apply to quartet and chorus contests, the word "contestant" being used to denote either a quartet or chorus. Where the word "quartet" or "chorus" is used, that rule shall be specific to that type of contest. Such rules are identified by the letter Q or C, as appropriate.
- (c) Where rules make reference to gender, 'male' is defined as any individual who, wherever possible and recognisably, lives their life as a male person, and 'female' is defined as any individual who, wherever possible and recognisably, lives their life as a female person.

*Paragraphs in italics are for guidance of contestants and do not form part of the Contest Rules.*

# Article 2

## National Contests

The National Quartet, Male Chorus and Mixed Chorus Contests shall be held each year in conjunction with the BABS Annual Convention and shall be under the general supervision of the BABS Guild of Judges, hereinafter called "The Guild". The following procedures shall be observed unless otherwise ordered by the Guild.

- (a) Preliminary Contests may be held as deemed necessary.
- (b) If necessary, byes may be given in the Preliminary Contests.
- (c) **Q** At the BABS Annual Convention, quartets shall be judged in the first stage of the contest, which will be known as the BABS Quartet Semi-Final.
- (d) **Q** From the Semi-Final, the top six quartets plus ties shall be selected to compete in the Final Contest.
- (e) **Q** At the end of the Final Contest, the placing of quartets shall be computed by the combined scores obtained in the Semi-Final and Final Contests. Contestants placed first, second and third shall be designated Medallists, whilst the remaining contestants appearing in the Final shall be recognised as Finalists.
- (f) **C** Following any Preliminary Contests, choruses shall be judged in only one stage, this being called the Final of the Male Chorus Contest or the Final of the Mixed Chorus Contest.
- (g) **C** The highest scoring Chorus in the Male Chorus Contest will receive automatic qualification to the International Chorus Contest, held at the next-but-one International Convention.

# Article 3

## International Quartet Qualifying Contest

An International Quartet Qualifying Contest shall be held concurrent with the BABS National Quartet Semi-Final and Final at the BABS Annual Convention.

- (a) **Q** All of the BABS National Contest entrants who qualify from the Prelims will automatically be entered into the International Quartet Qualifying Contest.
- (b) **Q** Past BABS gold medal quartets may enter for the International Qualifying Contest to achieve the qualifying score for the International Contest. Their scores will be used for qualification only and will not appear in the scoring summary for the National Contests.
- (c) **Q** The highest scoring quartet in the International Quartet Qualifying Contest (which may or may not be the winner of the BABS National Quartet Contest) will receive automatic qualification to the International Quartet Contest, held at the next-but-one International Convention. Other quartets who achieve the qualifying score set out by the BHS may apply for a 'wildcard' qualification spot. This must be supported by a video from a scored contest.
- (d) **Q** Qualification for International will normally take place at a BABS organised contest. In exceptional circumstances, a BABS registered quartet may request to compete in a contest run by another national barbershop organisation. To be eligible for consideration to represent BABS at International, the quartet must obtain approval from the BABS Board and the other national organisation in advance of the contest being held.

- (e) **Q** After qualifying for the International contest, a quartet may replace one member and still be eligible to compete. If two or more personnel changes occur between qualification and the International contest, that quartet will become ineligible to compete.
- (f) **Q** If prior to the International contest, the highest scoring quartet becomes ineligible or unable to compete, and no other BABS quartet has been accepted to compete, the next highest scoring quartet will be offered the place, provided they have achieved the qualifying score set by the BHS from time to time.

*Confirmation of acceptance of any quartet for the International Quartet contest will not normally be received before the end of January immediately preceding the contest.*

## Article 4

### Seniors Quartet Contest

- (a) **Q** A contest for BABS senior members shall be held, (normally held in conjunction with the BABS National Quartet Preliminary Contest) as directed by The Guild. The winners shall be known as the "BABS Seniors Quartet Champions".
- (b) **Q** Entry qualification is by age: 55 years or over with a minimum aggregate quartet age of 240 years. Seniors Quartets shall be held on a separate register from the National Quartet Register.

## Article 5

### International Seniors Quartet Qualifying Contest

An International Seniors Quartet Qualifying Contest shall be held concurrent with the BABS Quartet Contest Preliminary Round at the BABS Quartet Prelims event.

- (a) **Q** All of the BABS National Competition entrants who meet the definition of a Seniors Quartet (outlined in Article 4b) can enter the International Seniors Quartet Qualifying Contest. Quartets entering the BABS Seniors Contest will be automatically entered.
- (b) **Q** Past BABS Seniors gold medal quartets may enter the International Seniors Quartet Qualifying Contest. Their scores will be used for qualification only and will not appear in the scoring summary for the National Seniors Quartet Contest.
- (c) **Q** The highest scoring quartet in the International Seniors Quartet Qualifying Contest (which may or may not be the winner of the BABS Seniors Quartet Contest) will receive automatic qualification to the International Seniors Quartet Contest, held at the next-but-one Midwinter Convention. Other quartets may apply for a 'wildcard' qualification spot. This must be supported by a video from a scored contest.
- (d) **Q** After qualifying for the International contest, a quartet may replace one member and still be eligible to compete. If two or more personnel changes occur between qualification and the International contest, that quartet will become ineligible to compete.

## Article 6

### Youth Quartet Contest

- (a) **Q** An open contest for youth quartets shall be held, (*normally held in conjunction with the BABS National Quartet Preliminary Contest*) as directed by The Guild. The winners shall be known as the "BABS Youth Quartet Champions".
- (b) **Q** A Youth quartet is one where all members of the quartet are under 26 on the day of the contest.

## Article 7

### Eligibility

- (a) Everyone on stage will be male, with two exceptions:
- A female chorus director may take part in the Male Chorus Contest but shall not be heard to sing.

- Singers in the Mixed Chorus Contest will be male and female. The chorus director may be male or female.
- (b) **Q** With the exception of quartets entering the Youth Quartet Contest, every Quartet member shall be a full member of BABS. Quartets entering the National or Seniors Contests, and their individual members, must be registered with the BABS Quartet Registrar at least 28 days before the contest.

*Quartet members who are not full members of BABS should check their eligibility to compete with the BABS Director of Administration or BABS Membership Secretary.*

- (c) **Q** A quartet winning the National Contest shall not recontest in that contest. A quartet winning the Seniors Championship/Contest shall not recontest in that contest. A quartet winning the Youth contest shall not recontest in that contest. A champion quartet shall be defined as containing more than two members from the original personnel of the quartet that won, regardless of any name change.
- (d) **Q** A member shall be permitted to compete with more than one quartet provided he is a member of each quartet before the Preliminary Contest. Where no Preliminary Contest takes place then the member should be registered with each quartet 28 days prior to the contest
- (e) **Q** A BABS novice quartet shall have never previously competed in a BABS contest with their present personnel and may include not more than one previous Finalist.
- (f) **Q** Professional quartets may not enter.
- (g) **C** Each registered BABS club may enter only one Male Chorus and/or one Mixed Chorus contest in a given year. Each chorus shall consist of fully paid up BABS members of that club (male or female). Singers may compete with more than one club. For the Mixed Chorus Contest, female singers already registered as members of LABBS or SAI Region 31 will be granted free-of-charge BABS membership for the purposes of singing in a BABS club's mixed chorus. LABBS/SAI Region 31 membership or paid BABS membership must be current at the time of contest. Competing chorus members shall be registered with the BABS Membership Secretary no less than 28 days before the contest.
- (h) No-one is allowed on stage during a contest performance who is not a member of the competing quartet or club.
- (i) **C** Two or more BABS clubs shall not combine to form one competing chorus.
- (j) **C** A member shall be permitted to compete with more than one club provided he is a member of each club before the Preliminary Contest. Where no Preliminary Contest takes place then the member should be registered with each club 28 days prior to the contest.
- (k) **C** A competing chorus must be composed of 12 or more members on stage, with or without the director.
- (l) **C** A club winning a BABS Chorus Contest shall not compete in the equivalent competition the following year.
- (m) **C** Don Amos members may not compete in BABS Chorus Contests. They must be full members of the club they are representing.
- (n) **C** In the Mixed Chorus Contest, no more than 70% of an ensemble shall be of the same gender. Each of the four voice parts may include both genders.
- (o) Violation of any of the eligibility articles (7(a) to 7(n)) will be penalised under Article 15.

## Article 8

### Entry To Contest And Provision Of Contest Rules

- (a) Entry shall be made on the appropriate online form. The completed form must be returned to the relevant Contest Manager to arrive not later than the published closing date.
- (b) Late entries may be accepted in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the relevant Contest Manager and shall sing in a draw position to be determined by him.
- (c) Copies of the current Contest Rules can be obtained from the Guild web-site.

# Article 9

## Order Of Appearance On Stage

- (a) Contestants shall sing in the order in which their names are drawn by the Chairman of the Guild or his appointee, except as allowed in Articles 8(b) and 10.
- (b) Violation of Article 9(a) will be penalised under Article 15.

# Article 10

## Penalties for Tardiness

Any contestant failing to perform in the assigned order of appearance shall, unless there are exceptional circumstances, be penalised. The penalty will be 15 points on a single panel of judges, 30 points on a double panel, 45 points on a triple panel etc. The Chairman of Judges shall have the power to waive the penalty where the situation that has arisen to cause the tardiness is clearly outside the control of the contestant. The Chairman of Judges shall permit such contestant(s) to appear where minimum inconvenience is caused to other contestants.

# Article 11

## Contest Material

- (a) A song performed in contest must not be primarily patriotic nor primarily religious in intent.
- (b) A song performed in contest must be in good taste and have a melody and implied harmony consistent with the barbershop style. All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style, which is an unaccompanied vocal style of music. Songs must be sung without any kind of musical accompaniment and without instrumental introduction, interlude, or conclusion. The latter provision applies to both the entire performance and each individual song.

*Contestants are referred to the BABS Judging Reference Book or to any qualified member of the **Music Category** for a detailed explanation of the Barbershop style and suitability of a song.*

- (c) Gestures or visual presentation by any contestant that are deemed suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste will result in a lower score.
- (d) In chorus contests, selected use of a soloist, duet, trio or quartet is acceptable providing it is brief and appropriate. At no time should the musical texture exceed four parts.
- (e) Songs used in contests should be sung in the English language except for the occasional word or phrase which may occur naturally as part of the song.

*Any difficulty in understanding a song (whether due to language or otherwise) reduces a judge's scope for rewarding the performance.*

- (f) Disregard of Articles 11(a) may result in points reduction or forfeiture by one or more judges, as explained in the BABS Judging Reference Book.
- (g) Disregard of Articles 11(b) - (e) may result in points reduction by one or more judges, as explained in the BABS Judging Reference Book.
- (h) Contestants must comply with copyright laws in the acquisition, arranging and learning of songs for contest performance.

# Article 12

## Number of Songs

- (a) At each stage of the contest, including the Preliminary Contest, contestants shall sing two songs, either or both of which may be a medley.
- (b) **Q** Taking the Semi-Final and Final Contests as a whole, no song (including constituent songs of a medley) may be sung more than once.  
*This rule is not intended to bar the use of musical quotes. Material sung at a Preliminary Contest may be repeated at a later stage.*
- (c) **C** No song, including constituent songs of a medley, may be sung more than once.

*This rule is not intended to bar the use of musical quotes. Material sung at a Preliminary Contest may be repeated at a later stage.*

- (d) The title of every song, including the constituent songs of a medley, shall be recorded. The Chairman of Judges will penalise any violations of Articles 12 (a), (b) or (c) under Article 15.

## Article 13

### Scoring Categories

Judging of contestants' performance will be carried out in three categories: Music, Performance and Singing. Each category may use up to a maximum of 100 points per song per judge.

*For the criteria being judged refer to the current BABS Category Descriptions from the Guild web-site.*

## Article 14

### Sound Equipment and Stage Effects

- (a) Contestants may not use their own or additional in-house electronic amplification, sound producing equipment or stage lighting.  
*Establishment of pitch using an electronic pitch pipe is permissible.*
- (b) Contestants may use props, but they should be limited to those which can be easily carried on and off stage by one person.  
*Any queries with regard to props should be referred to the Quartet or Chorus Contest Manager prior to the event.*
- (c) Contestants should leave the stage in the same good condition as they would wish to find it for their own performance and props should be chosen accordingly. Anything that can be quickly cleared by a stage hand is acceptable. Confetti and similar small material that requires extensive clean-up is banned from use in both chorus and quartet contests. Other materials which are difficult to clean-up (requiring mops, brooms, vacuum cleaners, etc.) are strongly discouraged from the stage.  
*Any queries with regard to props should be referred to the Quartet or Chorus Contest Manager prior to the event.*
- (d) A chorus may request the use of a provided stage microphone during a performance for an announcer, as provided by Rule 16. Written notice of such requirement must be given to the Contest Manager no less than 30 days before the contest. Such microphones shall be turned off at all other times.  
*Microphones used for announcements are normally not switched on during a performance.*
- (e) Any effects used on stage which make loud or sudden noises must be declared in advance to the appropriate Contest Manager with specific details of where the effect will occur.
- (f) Violation of Article 14 will be penalised under Article 15.

## Article 15

### Disqualification

The Chairman of Judges shall be responsible for penalising violations of Articles 7, 9, 12 and 14. The penalty is disqualification and such contestants shall receive no score and shall not appear on the official scoring summary, except by way of a note using the wording

**"Contestant.....disqualified: Violation of Article....."**

## Article 16

### Verbal Comment

Non singing dialogue is generally not part of a contest performance. However, relevant **brief comment** with supporting visual communications are permitted, to help establish the mood and/or theme, before, in between and at the end of the performance package. Spoken words deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance are adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance, but are not subject to penalty of forfeiture.

# Article 17

## Disturbances during Contests

Should any event occur which, in the opinion of the Chairman of Judges, adversely affects the contestant, such contestant shall be offered the chance to sing again after the last contestant has finished and at least fifteen minutes after the disturbed contestant has left the stage. The contestant shall be given a reasonable period of time to make a decision. If the contestant accepts the offer, the scores from the first performance will be discarded and the contestant will be judged on the second performance.

# Article 18

## Ranking of Contestants

- (a) Contestants shall be ranked in accordance with the total score of points awarded by the judges.
- (b) If two or more contestants are awarded the same total score, including all previous rounds except Preliminary Contests, ties will only be broken for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places in Finals. The method used for breaking ties will be:
  - 1) The highest total score awarded by the Singing Judges will be ranked as the "Tie-break" and that contestant will be ranked above the other(s) in the tie.
  - 2) If a tie still exists the highest total score awarded by the Music Judges will be ranked as the "Tie-break" and that contestant will be ranked above the other(s) in the tie.
  - 3) If the tie is still not broken the following shall apply: The "Tie-break" shall be the highest total score at the Preliminary contest. If the tie continues unbroken the Singing score at the Preliminary contest shall be the "Tie- break" and if still not broken the Performance score at the Preliminary contest shall be used.
  - 4) In the event where a tie cannot be broken for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place, joint medallist status will be awarded
- (c) Total scores for 4th place and below will be ranked as equal placing. At Preliminary contests ties will be ranked as equal placing and if there is a tie at the cut-off for the Semi-Finals or Finals contest, all tied contestants will go through.

*Where there have been no qualifying Preliminary rounds, it may be necessary, if the above procedures result in a tie, where only one can go forward to a Society contest, for a draw to be held to determine which group is given first refusal to go to that contest. Such a draw would have no effect on the status of the groups concerned.*

# Article 19

## Publication of Results

At all BABS contests, results shall be made known by the Chairman of Judges or an appointed nominee for each stage, as follows:

- (a) An Official Scoring Summary shall be displayed at the contest site, showing the score per category and per song; details of any penalties or disqualification by the Chairman of Judges, including the Article number violated; details of any ties; and the names of the Judging Panel.
- (b) The scores obtained by the Finalist Quartets in the Semi-Finals shall be held over for publication after the Final.
- (c) There shall be no public announcement at the venue of penalties and disqualifications.  
*Publication of a full report detailing penalties and forfeitures will be available on the web-site in a suitable time frame after the contest.*
- (e) Following the public announcement and publication of results to the satisfaction of the Chairman of Judges, there can be no change to rankings or scores.

# Article 20

## Trophies

- (a) Quartets



The following quartet medals and trophies shall be awarded at the relevant Quartet Contest:

Quartet Champions 1st Place	Gold Medals	Tyneside Trophy
2nd Place	Silver Medals	Michael Sides Rose Bowl
3rd Place	Bronze Medals	The Ian Stone Trophy
Novice Quartet		The Sheng Pitch Pipe (see Attachment 1)
Most Improved Quartet		The BQC Trophy (See Attachment 2)
Seniors Quartet Champions	Winners' medals	Seniors Champions Trophy
BABS Youth Quartet Champions	Winners' medals	The Steve Hall Trophy.

(b) Male Chorus Contest

The following chorus trophies shall be awarded at the Male Chorus Contest:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place Chorus	Gold Medals	Crawley Cup
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Chorus	Silver Medals	Bristol Cup
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place Chorus	Bronze Medals	Wearside Trophy
Individual certificates shall be awarded to the top 3 choruses. Chorus certificates shall be awarded to all competing choruses.		
Chorus Division Winners		Division Winners' Plaques (see Attachment 5)
Small Chorus Award		Jim Carter Trophy (see Attachment 3)
Most Improved Chorus		Cambridge Scroll (see Attachment 4)

(c) Mixed Chorus Contest

The following medals and trophies shall be awarded at the Mixed Chorus Contest:

To be confirmed

## End of Contest Rules

# Attachment 1

## The Sheng Pitch Pipe

The Sheng Pitch Pipe shall be awarded to the highest placed novice quartet in the BABS Quartet Final. If no novice quartets appear in the Finals, it shall be awarded to the highest placed Novice quartet from the Semi-Finals.

A novice quartet consists of any quartet which:

- (a) Contains no more than two members who have previously competed together in a BABS quartet contest (Preliminary or Semi-Final).
- (b) Contains no more than one member who has previously competed in a BABS Quartet Final.

Seniors quartets are not eligible for this award.

# Attachment 2

## Most Improved Quartet

To be awarded to the quartet showing the "greatest improvement" between two consecutive quartet contest cycles.

The "greatest improvement" is evaluated as:

$$(S2 - S1) / S1 \times 100\%$$

where

S2 is the highest score(%) achieved by the quartet in the current contest cycle.

S1 is the highest score(%) achieved by the quartet in the previous contest cycle.

The "highest score" may be the score from Prelims, the Semi-Final or the Final or any other stage of a contest cycle. It will not necessarily be from the same stage of the contest in both seasons. It is expressed as a percentage to eliminate possible differences in the size of judging panels from contest to contest.

The following rules will apply:

- (a) The results of two consecutive contest seasons will be used unless decreed otherwise by the BABS Contest Manager to accommodate unusual circumstances.
- (b) Except for (c) and (d) below, any quartet competing in any round of a BABS contest is eligible including those competing in the Youth Contest, the Seniors Contest or for a placing at the BHS International Contest.
- (c) A quartet must compete in both seasons to be eligible, unless allowed otherwise under rule (a).
- (d) Any quartet forfeiting all their marks in any one or more categories, in either season, will not be eligible.

# Attachment 3

## The Small Chorus Award - "The Jim Carter Memorial Trophy"

In order to encourage smaller choruses to enter the BABS Chorus Contests, Reading Barbershop Harmony Club donated in the 1970s a trophy, to be known as The Jim Carter Memorial Trophy, to be presented to the highest placed small chorus competing in the Male Chorus Contest covering both preliminary and final rounds.

The rules governing the award of this trophy are:

- (a) Only choruses with 25 or fewer singers will be eligible (excluding the chorus director)
- (b) The highest placed eligible chorus shall be declared the winner
- (c) The winners of the trophy may not win the award more than once in any three year period

# Attachment 4

## The Most Improved Chorus Award - "The Cambridge Scroll"

To be awarded to the male chorus showing the "greatest improvement" between two consecutive Male Chorus Contest cycles.

The "greatest improvement" is evaluated as:

$$((S2 - S1) / S1) \times 100\%$$

where

S2 is the highest score(%) achieved by the chorus in the current contest cycle.

S1 is the highest score(%) achieved by the chorus in the previous contest cycle.

The "highest score" may be the score from Prelims, the Semi-Final or the Final or any other stage of a contest cycle. It will not necessarily be from the same stage of the contest in both seasons. It is expressed as a percentage to eliminate possible differences in the size of judging panels from contest to contest.

The following rules will apply:

- (a) The results of two consecutive contest seasons will be used unless decreed otherwise by the BABS Contest Manager to accommodate unusual circumstances.
- (b) Except for (c) and (d) below, any chorus competing in any round of a BABS contest is eligible.
- (c) A chorus must compete in both seasons to be eligible, unless allowed otherwise under rule (a).
- (d) Any chorus forfeiting all their marks in any one or more categories, in either season, will not be eligible.

# Attachment 5

## Chorus Divisional Awards

To be awarded to the Chorus placing highest in each division of the Male Chorus Contest. Choruses are placed in divisions based on their last score achieved by their club in a BABS competition, provided they have competed at least once in the two preceding years, according to the boundaries below:

- Division 1: 71% and above
- Division 2: 61% - 70.9%
- Division 3: 55% - 60.9%
- Division 4: Below 55%

# Attachment 6

## Contest Bursaries and Financial Support

### Contest Bursaries

Award winners in the Male Chorus Contest, Quartet Contests (including Youth and Seniors) and Mixed Chorus Contest, will receive bursaries to aid future development. Further details about these bursaries, including amounts, can be obtained from the BABS Finance Director.

### International Contest Bursaries

Quartets who gain automatic qualification to the relevant BHS International Contest (i.e. International Quartet and International Seniors Quartet Contests) will receive financial support, on condition of attendance at the relevant International Convention. Should the BABS Youth Quartet Champions qualify for the International Varsity Quartet Contest (through application independent from BABS), they will also receive financial support, on condition of attendance at the International Convention. Further details about this financial support, including amounts, can be obtained from the BABS Finance Director.

# End of Attachments