

European Barbershop Convention 2017

CONTEST RULES



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DEFINITION OF THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterised by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonising above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonising notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics and easily singable melodies, whose tones clearly define a tonal centre and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that resolve primarily around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. Barbershop music also features a balanced and symmetrical form, and a standard meter. The basic song and its harmonisation are embellished by the arranger to provide appropriate support of the song's theme and to close the song effectively.

Barbershop singers adjust pitches to achieve perfectly tuned chords in just intonation whilst remaining true to the established tonal centre. Artistic singing in the barbershop style exhibits a fullness or expansion of sound, precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Ideally, these elements are natural, unmanufactured and free from apparent effort.

The presentation of barbershop music uses appropriate musical and visual methods to convey the theme of the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying and entertaining experience. The musical and visual delivery is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and its arrangement throughout. The most stylistic presentation artistically melds together the musical and visual aspects to create and sustain the illusions suggested by the music.

OFFICIAL EBC 2017 CONTEST RULES

FEBRUARY 2017

FOREWORD

These rules apply to all quartet and chorus contests. In matters not specifically covered by these rules, the LABBS Education & Judging Committee (E&J) may exercise reasonable latitude and prerogative and with reference to the published LABBS Contest & Judging Handbook 2017 where appropriate.

ARTICLE I: ELIGIBILITY

A. Quartets

1. Each member shall be a full member of the Barbershop organisation(s) which they are representing.
2. Members of Male and Female Quartets must be of the relevant gender. Mixed Quartets must contain at least one male and one female member.
3. No professional quartet shall be eligible to enter. A quartet shall be considered professional when its members' principal means of income is from fulfilling quartet engagements.
4. It is permitted to sing in more than one competing quartet in the same contest, however no provision for this will be made in the draw.
5. Right of appeal in any matter pertaining to eligibility shall be to the LABBS E&J Committee, whose decision shall be final.
6. Convention Registrations: All contestants shall hold full registrations for the European Barbershop Convention.

B. Choruses

1. Choruses must be registered entities of the barbershop organisation which they are representing.
2. Choruses shall ensure that all their members are full members of the Barbershop organisation which they are representing.
3. Choruses on stage shall consist of no less than nine singing members, all of whom must be of the appropriate gender for the contest entered. This does not preclude having a Director of the opposite gender.
4. Failure to comply with the above will result in forfeiture by the Chairman of Judges.
5. Convention Registrations: All contestants shall hold full registrations for the European Barbershop Convention.

ARTICLE II: CONTEST ENTRY PROCEDURES

1. Contest entry will be by invitation only to the respective European Barbershop organisations, who shall nominate and confirm their representative(s).
2. Completed forms containing information regarding song titles and contestant announcement must be received via the nominated email by the date notified.
3. All contestants are required to observe the copyright laws in the acquisition, arranging, learning, and performance of songs and arrangements.
4. The contestant reserves the right to alter songs up until two hours prior to the start of each relevant contest, having informed the LABBS Contest Administration Category accordingly.

ARTICLE III: SCORING CATEGORIES

Each scoring judge awards a score from 0 to 100 for each song. All contestants shall be judged in the three BHS style scoring categories:

A. Music

The Music judge evaluates the song and arrangement, as performed. The judge adjudicates the musical elements in the performance: melody, harmony, range and tessitura, tempo and rhythm and meter, construction and form, and embellishments. The judge assesses how well the musical elements of the performance establish a theme, and the degree to which the performance demonstrates an artistic sensitivity to that theme. The judge adjudicates the degree to which the musical elements of the song and arrangement display the hallmarks of the barbershop style.

B. Performance

The Performance judge evaluates how effectively a performer brings the song to life - that is, the believability of the theme in its musical and visual setting. The judge responds to both the vocal and visual aspects of the performance, but principally evaluates the interaction of those aspects as they work together to create the image of the song. The judge adjudicates the quality and appropriateness of the overall effect. The Performance judge evaluates everything about the performance that contributes to emotional impact upon the audience.

C. Singing

The Singing judge evaluates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style. This is accomplished through precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill and appropriate vocal expression, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Mastering these elements creates a fullness, and expansion of sound, and when combined with expressive vocal skills will convey a feeling of genuine emotion to support the message of the song.

ARTICLE IV: CONTEST JUDGES AND ADMINISTRATORS

1. Contest judges and administrators shall be appointed by the LABBS E&J Chairman in accordance with their qualifications to judge one of the three scoring categories or to serve in the Contest Administration category.
2. There shall be a quadruple panel appointed for each European contest, i.e. four judges per scoring category, totalling 12 judges. Each category shall be represented by judges from the following associations:
 - a. BHS
 - b. LABBS
 - c. BABS
 - d. Sweet Adelines International
3. All scoring judges shall adjudicate contestants' performances according to the BHS Category Descriptions published January 31st, 2017.
4. The LABBS E&J Chairman reserves the right to replace a judge on the panel with a suitable qualified alternative, in cases where the pre-appointed individual is unable to carry out their assigned duties for any reason.
5. Official panel members on a contest judging panel must not coach any of the contestants in that contest within the preceding 30 days.

ARTICLE V: TYPES OF CONTESTS

A. All Contests

1. Contestants shall be judged on two different songs in one appearance.
2. Song Repetition
 - a) *Substantial Part Repeated*: Within all rounds of a specific contest, a contestant may not repeat a song or a substantial part of a song. In the context of these rules, the term "song" may refer to a single song or a medley in which major portions of two or more songs are used. A parody of a song previously sung would be considered repeating a song.
 - b) *Recommendation by the Music Judge(s)*: A Music Judge shall recommend forfeiture to the contest administrator if a contestant repeats a song or a substantial portion from one of its songs in another song. If there are two or more Music Judges, the decision to forfeit must be unanimous.
 - c) *Recommendation Unanimous*: When the decision to forfeit is unanimous, the contest administrator shall record as zero the contestant's entire score in all categories for the repeated rendition of the song(s).
 - d) *Recommendation not unanimous*: When the decision to forfeit is not unanimous, the score(s) for the recommending judge(s) shall be recorded as zero.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICIAL RESULTS

A. Official Scoring Summary

An official scoring summary shall be published and shall show the contest date, the scores for each song in each category for each contestant, the total score for each contestant, the names of the songs and the names of the official panel members.

ARTICLE VII: RANKING OF CONTESTANTS

A. Ranking

Contestants shall be ranked in accordance with the cumulative total scores of points awarded by the panel of judges.

B. Scores

1. Reporting After Performance

The judges will report their scores to the contest administrator immediately following each contestant's performance.

2. Statistical Variances

During each contest round, the contest administrator will notify the panel if any statistical variances exist (where one score is statistically higher or lower than the rest of the panel for a given song). The judges will review their notes and all scores provided by the panel for either song given in the performance. At that time, any judge can change their scores for either song or let them stand. The contest administrator will make any changes indicated and thereafter the scores are official. (See "Position Paper VI. Scoring Differences Among Judges" in the Contest and Judging Handbook for more details).

C. Ties

1. First Place Ties

A tie for first place shall be broken by ranking the contestants according to their overall scores in the Singing category or, only if that does not break the tie, according to their overall scores in the Music category. If a tie still exists, the tie shall stand.

2. Other Than First Place

Except for first place ties, tie scores shall not be broken, and the official scoring summary shall list the tied contestants in alphabetical order by the name of the quartet or chorus, as appropriate.

3. Medals

When a tie situation occurs, any medal(s) specified in Article V that immediately follow(s) the tie ranking will not be awarded. E.g.: With a tie for 2nd place, medals are awarded to places 1, 2, 2 and the second-place trophy is shared. No bronze medals or trophy would be awarded in this example.

D. Ineligibility/disqualification

1. Reranking

In the event a contestant is declared ineligible or disqualified for any rule violation after the results are announced or published, their rank order shall be filled by the next ranked contestant and a revised official scoring summary will be published. All remaining lower-ranked contestants will have their rank order adjusted accordingly.

2. Return and redistribution of Medals and Awards

If the disqualified or ineligible contestant was given medals and/or other award(s), all members of the disqualified quartet or chorus must return the awards to LABBS E&J Committee for presentation to the appropriate contestant.

ARTICLE VIII: ORDER OF APPEARANCE

1. Contestants shall sing in the order in which their names are drawn by lot or otherwise as determined by the E&J Committee.
2. Where representative contestant names are not known at the time of the draw being made, slots will be reserved for each Barbershop organisation for the anticipated number of representatives. Once the representatives have been confirmed, the Barbershop Organisation is responsible for informing the organisers of the order of appearance for their given slots in the draw by the designated date.
3. The Chorus contests will take place over two days. Where possible, organisations should ensure that their representative choruses are able to travel for the time slot(s) available in the draw, before making final allocations for each slot. If it is the case that all the slots for an organisation are drawn on the same day, AND if this would force a chorus to withdraw, the organisation may appeal to switch days for the relevant contestant. Appeals must be received by the advertised deadline for consideration by the E&J Committee. The circumstances of each chorus will be balanced against the need to run the contest in a balanced and efficient manner and the decisions of the LABBS E&J Committee will be final.
4. Any contestant failing to appear in its assigned order when called, shall be excused by the Chairman of Judges if circumstances were beyond the control of the contestants and the contestant shall appear at a time decided by the Chairman of Judges.

ARTICLE IX: SONGS AND ARRANGEMENTS

A. Songs

1. Barbershop Style

All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style. (See style definition above). A song performed in contest must be in good taste, be neither primarily patriotic nor primarily religious in intent, and have a melody and implied harmony consistent with the barbershop style.

a. Jurisdiction, Adjudication and Penalties: Songs not consistent with the barbershop style will be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Music judge(s). Actions by any contestant that are not in good taste will be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Performance judge(s). Violation of the provision relating to patriotic or religious intent will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judges(s) only.

2. Unaccompanied

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.

3. Chorus Subunits

In chorus contest performances of songs, selected use of a soloist, duet, trio or quartet is acceptable as long as it is brief and appropriate. At no time should the musical texture exceed four parts. The spoken word, brief and appropriate, is not considered an additional "part" in this context. Compliance with this provision will be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Music judge(s).

B. Copyright Compliance

Contestants shall comply with the copyright law in the acquisition, arranging and learning of songs for contest performance. The LABBS E&J Committee reserves the right to request documented proof of copyright clearance in advance of the contest.

C. Penalties

Violation of this article will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by one or more judges as follows:

1. Violations of this article relating to taste and patriotic or religious intent are the responsibility of the Performance judge(s) only.
2. Violations of this article in relation to songs consistent with the barbershop style, including accompaniment and chorus subunits, are the responsibility of the Music judge(s) only.
3. Violations of this article relating to copyright law compliance are subject to post-contest action deemed appropriate by the LABBS E&J Committee.

ARTICLE X: SOUND EQUIPMENT AND STAGE SETTING

A. Equipment

1. Provision

The best possible sound equipment shall be provided, if needed. Monitor speakers are permitted. Sound equipment should be operated by a competent operator.

2. Testing and Approval

The stage setting shall be set up sufficiently in advance of the starting time of the contest so that the sound equipment and lighting may be tested to the satisfaction of the appropriate persons, as agreed by the Category Directors and under the supervision of the Contest Administration Category Director. The contest shall not start until the Chairman of Judges has given approval.

B. Restrictions and Exception

1. Own Equipment

Contestants may not use their own equipment to electronically amplify or alter their voices.

2. Offstage use of House System

Contestants may not make offstage use of the house sound system.

3. Recorded Music or Spoken Word

Nothing in this rule shall be interpreted to permit the use of recorded music (including singing) and/or recordings of the spoken word. Nothing in this rule shall be interpreted to permit the use of technology to enhance the performance electronically.

4. Electronic Pitch and Brief Effects

Contestants may use electronic means independent of the house system to take pitch or to provide limited, brief and relevant sound effects.

C. Jurisdiction and Penalties

Violations of Article X.B are subject to penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s).

ARTICLE XI: STAGING

A. Restrictions

1. Non-members

Persons who are not members of the competing chorus or quartet may not appear on stage during the performance.

2. Bad Taste

Actions by any contestant that are deemed suggestive, vulgar or otherwise not in good taste shall not be allowed. In addition to adjudication by the Performance judge(s), the performance may be stopped by the Chairman of Judges per Article XIV.

B. Jurisdiction

The Performance judge(s) shall have jurisdiction over issues of staging. See the Performance category description for a discussion of unacceptable staging.

C. Staging

1. Chorus Loading

Choruses are expected to get on and off stage in a prompt manner so as to ensure the contest flows smoothly. Development of additional staging can detract from the flow of the contest. If a chorus anticipates that they will require additional time they should request this from the Contest Administration Category Director at least 4 weeks in advance of the contest. Reasonable requests will be considered for approval and timetables adjusted appropriately.

2. Props

If props and/or stage enhancements are to be used, they must be simple enough that at most two individuals can carry and set them up, and they must be freestanding.

- Nothing can be attached to or leaned against the riser (back) safety rails.
- No extensions to the end risers are permitted.
- No props or stage enhancements can be used that may contravene local fire and safety codes (open flame, fireworks, open water other than in a glass or pitcher, etc.)
- No artificially assisted methods of propelling confetti or streamers may be used. This rule is not intended to preclude the use of hand-thrown confetti or streamers.

3. Financial Liability

Competitors will be held financially liable for any damage, extra labour or equipment required for clean-up through their use of props or stage enhancements.

4. Clean-up

If there is any possibility that the stage will be left in a non-pristine condition upon a prompt exit, the performer must inform the LABBS Stage Manager of all relevant details at least 4 weeks in advance of the contest, so that appropriate clean-up can be planned. Such details will be kept confidential, except in cases where the Stage Manager believes the contest timetable will be delayed. In these cases, the Stage Manager may consult with the LABBS Contest Administration Category Director, who in turn may decide to escalate the issue to the LABBS E&J Committee for discussion and a case-by-case ruling.

D. Penalties

Violation of this article will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s).

ARTICLE XII: NON-SINGING COMMENT/DIALOGUE

A. Spoken Comments

Non-singing dialogue is generally not a part of a contest performance. However, brief comments made with supporting visual communications may be permitted to more clearly establish mood/theme, to assist the transition of packaged songs, or to add to the effect of closure of mood/theme.

B. Penalties

Spoken words deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance shall be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Performance judges.

ARTICLE XIII: PENALTIES AND FORFEITURES

A. Forfeiture

A scoring judge indicates forfeiture by awarding a score of zero. Forfeiture or any penalty is appropriate only when specifically provided for in these rules.

B. No Public Announcement

There shall be no public announcement of any penalty or forfeiture.

C. Inclusion in Official Scoring Summary

Penalties and Forfeitures shall be published as part of the official scoring summary, with citation of the rule violated, if appropriate.

ARTICLE XIV: OPERATION OF THE CONTEST

Once the contest begins, and until the contest results are determined, the Chairman of Judges is completely in charge of the operation of the contest.

Announcement of the results of the contest shall be the responsibility of the LABBS E&J Committee.

The Chairman of Judges is responsible for ensuring that the contest environment is as fair and consistent as possible for all contestants, and Right of Appeal is available through the Stage Manager.

The Chairman of Judges alone has the authority to stop the performance and judging, and re-schedule part or all of the performance later in the contest. The Chairman of Judges may exercise discretion to allow a contestant to repeat part or all of a performance later in the contest.

In making these decisions, the Chairman of Judges shall consult with scoring judges as appropriate.