

# JUDGES GUIDELINES



## Responsibilities:

1. To evaluate competing vocal groups and rank them in order of preference.
2. To make concise and constructive notes to help the competing groups improve their performance. Judges' notes will be passed on to the groups after the competition.
3. To choose the best original arrangement.
4. To choose the best original song.

## Scoring:

The groups are judged equally on performance and musicality. The Harmony Sweepstakes A Cappella Festival is geared toward performing groups, so musical skills and performing abilities are of equal importance, and we emphasize originality.

You are welcome to keep a running score by assigning a numerical score or whatever works for you as a reminder. The final scores will be tallied and verified by the judges at the end of the competition. As a judge, all you need to do is rank the groups in order of your first choice down to the last.

## Notes:

Your constructive notes are very important to the groups. Remember the importance of writing as clearly as possible. Also, don't feel pressured to write volumes. Some judges have gotten so involved in note writing that they missed part of the performance. You will have a little time to amend or elaborate on your notes at intermission and during deliberations after the competition. Please remember to be concise and kind. Constructive criticism is the focus. Also, be aware that your comments will be passed along (anonymously) to the competing groups.

During the competition, you will be seated in the audience with a clipboard with a light. After each group is finished, you will have a few minutes to finish up your notes before the next group starts. The lead judge will see that everyone is done before signaling the host group to introduce the next group.

At intermission you can adjourn to the meeting room to work on your notes. After the last group finishes, you will again go back to the meeting room to deliberate the ranking of the groups in order from the most successful to least successful, in your professional opinion. If there are eight groups you will order them from 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> place. The designated "scorekeeper" will then assign a numerical score to each placing and then add all scores from all judges together.

The scoring system works as follows, 1<sup>st</sup> place is given 0 points. After this each place gets that number of points. 2<sup>nd</sup> place gets two points, 3<sup>rd</sup> place gets 3 points, etc. Since there isn't much time during deliberations to do decide the place for each group, you will have a worksheet with you that can help you keep score during the competition. Hopefully, everything can be finished in 20-25 minutes.

If any (or all) of this sounds confusing, we will have time before the competition to go over all the instructions.

## Best Original Arrangement:

There is no scoring system for this award. You will know ahead of time if a group wants one of their songs considered for the best original arrangement award. One song per group will be eligible for this award, and it will be noted on the score sheet. The judges in the past have been confident that an arrangement will jump out at them, and so far it usually has. This award is for best arrangement, and not necessarily an original song.

## Best Original Song:

Again there is no specific scoring for this award. It is your duty to decide which of the songs being considered for this award is the one you liked best. Again, the songs to be considered for best original song will be noted on the score sheets.