



**The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association  
(Northern Ireland  
Branch) Local  
Competition Rules**

DOCUMENT CONTROL		
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# RSPBANI – Local Competition Rules

The following are the rules operated by the Northern Ireland Branch of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association at all competitions organised under its auspices. The R.S.P.B.A. rules will apply in all other respects.

## 1 COMPETITION GRADES

- 1.1 Each competition will offer all Major Championship Adult band grades. Provision for Juvenile band grades will be made based on a minimum entry of 3 eligible bands for each grade. [2015 AGM, Amended 2024 AGM]
- 1.2 Each competition will offer the following Drum Major Grades: Novice, Junior, Juvenile and Senior.

## 2 LOCAL COMPETITION FORMAT

- 2.1 Deleted 2015 AGM
- 2.2 Bands in Grade 1 may be permitted to play both March, Strathspey and Reel and Medley Selection at the request of the competition organiser. The result will be determined in accordance with RSPBA rules. [2015 AGM, Amended 2024 AGM]
- 2.3 Bands in Grades 2 and 3A and 3B may be permitted to play both March, Strathspey and Reel and Medley Selection at the request of the competition organiser. The result will be determined in accordance with RSPBA rules. [2015 AGM, Amended 2024 AGM]
- 2.4 Deleted 2019 AGM
- 2.5 Any competition that falls the week prior to a Major should have a full adjudication panel consisting of 2 piping, 1 drumming and an ensemble judge. [2017 AGM]
- 2.6 The starting time for Grade 4 and Grade 3 should be alternated [2022 AGM]

## 3 COMPETITION ENTRIES AND DRAW

- 3.1 Competition entries must be submitted using the method provided.
- 3.2 The closing date for all competitions shall be a minimum of 10 days before the competition date.
- 3.3 Block booking competition entries is permissible.
- 3.4 No entries will be accepted late including the day of the competition except in exceptional circumstances and approved by the Branch Association Directors.
- 3.5 The entry fee for each competition will be decided by the organising committee.
- 3.6 The entry fee must be paid at the time of the entry by any of the payment methods made available.
- 3.7 A band may play earlier than the order in which it has been drawn provided the permission of an Association Director has been granted
- 3.8 All draws will be broadcasted live [2020 AGM, amended 2021 AGM]

## 4 BAND COMPETITION ATTENDANCE

- 4.1 On arrival at the contest venue each Band Steward shall register their attendance at the facility provided.
- 4.2 The Band Steward shall be responsible for their band being at the starting position at the required time.

## 5 PLAYING FOR DRUM MAJORS

- 5.1 All bands, with the exception of grade 4B, must prepare a 6/8 March and play for the Drum Major competitions when requested.
- 5.2 Bands will only be requested to play for Drum Major competitions at the end of their band competition performance.

## 6 MARCHING AND DISCIPLINE

- 6.1 Where a Marching and Discipline competition takes place, the adjudicator will provide critique sheets for all bands and nominate a winner.

## 7 FINALE

- 7.1 Failure to attend the finale at the given time shall result in a fine, the amount of which to be determined annually by the Executive Committee.
- 7.2 All competing bands must take part in the grand finale, unless permission to be excused has been granted by the Contest Secretary
- 7.3 When the march past of any competition has commenced No band will sound except the centre duty bands or the massed band.

## 8 TROPHIES

- 8.1 The Branch Trophy Officer will nominate two Trophy Return Events for Bands, Soloists and Drum Majors to return trophies. The dates and times of these events will be communicated to all Band Secretaries. All trophies must be returned at these events.
- 8.2 If a trophy is not returned by the last Trophy Return Event the Band/Competitor may be fined and suspended under R.S.P.B.A. rules.

## 9 CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

9.1 In Champion of Champion awards when there is a tie, the winner will be decided by the number of 1st places, if still a tie it will be awarded to the winner of the Ulster, All Branch and Section contests will be Champion of Champion status.

9.2 The Champion of Champions prizes will be calculated as:

5 or less competitions: The best scores from all competitions

6 or more competitions:

The best scores from (n-1) competitions where n is the total number of Champion of Champions Competitions.

For example: best 6 scores from 7 competitions, best 7 scores from 8 competitions etc

Tie breaker decided based on reference document [[link](#)] [2016 AGM, Amended 2024 AGM]

## 10 NUMBER OF PERFORMERS

10.1 The following personnel constitute a Mini Band:

10.1.1 Grade 1 & 2: 6 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers & 1 Bass Drummer

10.1.2 All other grades: 4 Pipers, 2 Snare Drummers & 1 Bass Drummer

## 11 ADJUDICATION

11.1 All local Branch competitions should have 4 adjudicators per ring as in Major Competitions (subject to availability of relevant trained adjudicators).

## 12 DUAL REGISTRATION

12.1 A Drummer from a higher grade band may Dual register as the Leading Drummer of a Grade 4A or 4B band. The Dual Registered Leading Drummer is in addition to the minimum of 2 snare drummers required in Grade 4 i.e. when a dual registered Leading Drummer is playing in the Grade 4 band there should be a minimum total of 3 snare drummers. The Dual Registered Leading Drummer will be eligible to play in both bands at all competitions organised under RSPBA Northern Ireland Branch Rules.

12.2 A piper may dual register as a snare drummer with a band in a different grade. The main registration will be with the higher grade band. The dual registration will be held in the NI Branch and only valid for competitions organized under NI Branch Rules.

12.3 Dual registration forms must be submitted to Branch office a minimum of 7 days prior to the contest

## 13 COMMUNICATION

- 13.1 Band Secretaries must have an email address and access to the internet to manage all communication with the Branch and competition entries. Where a Band Secretary does not have email and internet access the band is required to nominate an Assistant Secretary with email and internet access to manage communication with the Branch on behalf of the band.

## 14 ULSTER SOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 14.1 In the A Grade Piping at the Ulster Solo Championships, the combined placing of the MSR and Piobaireachd A decide the Overall Ulster Piping winner.  
In the event of a tied score, the overall placings will be decided by the following preferences:

*1st Preference: In the Overall Ulster Piping, any tie in the overall result will be decided on Piobaireachd preference.*

*2nd Preference: Highest number of highest places awarded throughout all Adjudicator placings.*

*3rd Preference: By Adjudicator preference of all Adjudicators involved, original placings shall remain unchanged throughout consultation [2018 AGM]*

## 15 EMERGENCY BASS DRUMMER

- 15.1 In rare and exceptional circumstances, occurring within 1 week prior to the local contest date, where all other avenues have been exhausted, a band may request permission from the Northern Ireland Branch Directors (via the Branch Secretary) to utilise an Emergency Bass Drummer from another registered RSPBANI/IPBA Band to enable the band to compete. Permission will be granted if the majority of bands in the same grade are in agreement. [2023 AGM, Amended 2024 AGM]