

SANTA ROSA PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY COMPETITION RULES

(January 2010, version 2) **Version 2 changes are highlighted in green.**

Sections in yellow highlight are trial rules that will be voted on at the end of 2010.

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1.0 BASIC RULES

1.1 COMPETITIONS

- Monthly competitions: January through November (see 2.0)
- End-of-Year Competition: November (see 6.0)
- Al Shelton Trophy Competition: January (see 5.0)

1.2 CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

All full and honorary members may enter club competitions. Members will not be required to be present to compete.

1.3 COMPETITION FORMATS

Two competition formats are acceptable: prints and digital images. The formats are judged together.

1.4 PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- The original image and any components must be made by the member. Images may not incorporate elements produced by anyone else.
- Images must originate as photographs (image captures of objects via light sensitivity) on photographic emulsion or acquired digitally.
- Any modification of a digital image entry must be made by the member. A print entry must be made by or under the direction of the member.
- Neither non-photographic artwork nor computer graphics may be incorporated into the image.
- Borders and frames: In the Nature category, a one or two pixel stroke to delineate the edges of an image is allowed. The addition of any style of border or frame is permitted in the General and Creative categories. Borders and frames are considered part of the presentation of an image rather than the image itself. The addition of computer generated text to an image, border or frame is not allowed.
- Images will be rejected if they are not received on time, are not correctly submitted, or do not conform to the rules of the category, as specified in these rules and in the auxiliary document “Preparing Images for Competition” which is found on the club web site.
- Further information on entry requirements can be found in “Competition Entry Information” which is located on the club web site.

1.5 RECORDS

The Competition Chair will keep a record of each competition as a basis for determining awards and advancement. Records will be kept for a period of 5 years.

2.0 MONTHLY COMPETITION RULES

2.1 LEVELS

- Each member will compete in one of four levels: B, entry level; A, second level; AA, third level; Master, fourth level.
- New members start at the B level unless advanced to the A level per 4.2. No new member will start higher than the A level.
- Re-entering members may be reinstated at the level previously attained.
- Members will compete in their respective levels (B, A, AA, Master) in each subject category.
- In the event there are four or fewer members in the Master level, those members will compete in the AA level competition, but their scores will be kept separately. When there are at least five members at the Master level, a Master level will be formed.

2.2 CATEGORIES

There are three subject categories in the Monthly Competition: General, Nature and Creative. (See Category Rules in 3.0)

2.3 COMPETITION SCHEDULE

- Monthly competitions are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month, January through November. The date of the November competition varies and may be moved to the first Thursday.
- Competitions in all three categories – General, Nature and Creative – are included in each monthly competition.

2.4 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A maximum of two images per member may be entered in each Monthly Competition. The entries may be divided between the print, and digital image formats, as well as among the subject categories, in any way the member chooses.
- An image may be entered a maximum of three times. Submitting the image in a different format does not allow for additional submissions.
- Any image winning 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in any category may not be submitted in the monthly competition again in any format, including in a higher level if the member subsequently advances, but may be entered in the End of Year Competition and in other special competitions.
- Identical or substantially similar images may not be entered in different subject categories or in different formats on the same evening.
- Submissions must be made as specified in these rules and in the document, “Preparing Images for Competition” which is found on the club web site.

2.5 JUDGING AND AWARDS

- A qualified non-member judge will critique each entry. After the entries have been shown and critiqued, the judge will review them, with the digital entries displayed together on the laptop screen in a lightbox view, and will rank the first, second and third place entries in each level within each category.
- Regardless of the number of entries in a category/level, at his/her discretion, the judge may award:
 - Only a first place winner, or
 - First and second place winners, or
 - First, second and third place winners, or

No winners at all.

- Points will be awarded as follows: Ten points for first, eight points for second, six points for third and two points for all other entries. In the event the maker of a winning entry is not present when the winners are announced, one point will be deducted. Points will be cumulative toward advancement.
- In the event no qualified non-member judge is available a panel of three club members will critique and judge the entries. Members may not judge a category in which they have an entry.
- There is no minimum number of entries required in a category for entries to be critiqued scored and for ribbons to be awarded. ~~1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons are to be awarded in each category except when only one or two entries are submitted. In such cases, the number of ribbons awarded changes accordingly.~~
- All ribbon winners will be eligible to compete in the End of Year Competition (see 6.0).

3.0 CATEGORY RULES

3.1 NATURE CATEGORY

The Nature category encourages club members to look more closely at the natural scene and to develop a heightened awareness and appreciation of nature, while promoting members' camera skills through a documentary approach.

3.1.1 Photographic and Post-Camera Requirements

- The image should be presented as seen in the field. No elements from other images may be added.
- No major elements may be removed except by cropping. Minor cloning is allowed in the computer as long as it does not change the integrity of the nature story. Dust on the sensor, water spots on lenses and lens flare may be removed.
- Either global or local adjustments to achieve an image as seen in the field are allowed. This may be accomplished by the use of filters (including polarizers), flash or adjustments in the computer. The addition of catchlights is allowed.
- Filters such as colored warming and cooling filters may be used in the field, and the equivalent global adjustments may be made in the darkroom or in the computer; however, such adjustments should be minimal and consistent with the visual appearance of the subject in the field.
- Graduated neutral density filters that balance the range of light between two areas of an image, such as sky and foreground, may be used in the field, and the equivalent local or masked adjustments may be made in the computer. Techniques to expand the tonal range captured are also allowed.
- Polarizers may be used in the field and the equivalent local adjustments may be made in the computer, such as darkening skies, increasing detail in clouds, and lightening and warming foliage.
- Fill light may be used in the field and equivalent local adjustments may be made in the computer as long as they do not change the truth of the image. Examples of allowed changes are adjustments to brightness, contrast, saturation and color balance in isolated areas of the image.

3.1.2 Nature Definitions and Requirements

- The image should depict observations from any branch of natural history except anthropology or archaeology in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject matter and certify as to its honest presentation. The image should emphasize the nature story. The story-telling aspect of an image should be weighed more than the artistic, pictorial quality.
- Human elements including hybrid plants should be present only if they relate to animal habitat or behavior, such as a bit of barn with a barn owl, a bit of fence post or other typical roost where a bird is perched, or a part of a hybrid flower where a butterfly is perched. Human elements should be minor elements in the image and secondary to the subject. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.
- Elements not acceptable: domesticated animals, cultivated or manmade hybrid plants, mounted specimens and artificial arrangements.
- Elements acceptable: Naturalized plants, feral animals, captive wildlife, and uncultivated plants in natural and adopted habitats. (An adopted habitat is one in which a non-native plant or animal can survive, reproduce, and spread on its own.) Photographs of specimens maintained in conservatories, botanical gardens and private collections, which meet the requirements above, may be submitted in Nature.
- Black and white images, infrared images, monotonies, silhouettes, and soft focus treatments that do not show nature as it is generally seen in the field, are not permitted in this category. The subject must be readily identifiable.
- Artistic enhancements such as decorative borders and drop shadows are not allowed. A one or two pixel stroke to delineate the edges of an image is allowed.

3.1.3 Competition Factors

- A designated reviewer with power of rejection will determine conformity to the Nature rules.
- Images should be judged on photographic excellence and strength of the nature story depicted. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject and to certify to its honest presentation.
- Titles must identify the subject matter. The title should be factual and descriptive but scientific names are not required. Cute titles and those that do not identify the subject may lead to disqualification.

3.2 CREATIVE CATEGORY

The Creative category encourages the development of imagination and promotes experimentation and exploration. The creative image takes the photographic image beyond the straightforward.

3.2.1 Photographic Requirements

- The maker may use any technique or modification whether applied in the camera, in the darkroom or in the computer. Images acquired through straightforward photography but which render a subject in a manner not usually perceived or photographed may be included in the Creative category. The emphasis is placed on the final appearance of the image. The image, no matter how created, should exhibit a departure from realism by creativity of subject matter and/or photographic manipulation.

3.2.2 Creative Definitions

- Techniques include montages, sandwiches, composites, and multiple exposures as well as images that result from digital manipulation or other major alteration such as burnt film. In this category, manipulations/alteration goes well beyond the usual darkroom optimizations.
- Both realistic and creative/artistic images are placed in this category if they have been achieved through these techniques. The final image should be substantially different from the original image. All components must have originated as a photographic capture and must have been created by the maker.

3.2.3 Competition Factors

- Images should be judged on originality and on visual and emotional impact.

3.3 GENERAL CATEGORY

The General category encourages the development of camera and digital darkroom skills using a pictorial approach to the capture of images. Members are encouraged to strive for image excellence.

3.3.1 Photographic and Post-Camera Requirements

- Images may reflect any style or type of photography. The emphasis is placed on the final appearance of the image. If the image appears to be a realistic subject it is included in the General category regardless of how the image arrived at its final presentation. Black and white and composite images are appropriate for this category provided they are pictorial representations of the subject.
- Image optimization may include cropping and standard darkroom adjustments, both overall and to specific areas, done either in the darkroom or on the computer. (More extreme manipulation belongs in Creative.)
- Dust and water spots from lenses and digital sensors, since they are not actually part of the photographed image, may be removed.

3.3.2 General Definitions

- Images are not confined to any particular subject, type or style of photography. Any subject may be submitted, limited only by the confines of good taste and social acceptability.

3.3.3 Competition Factors

- Images should be judged on technical excellence, composition and visual impact.

4.0 ADVANCEMENT

4.1 ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

- The Advancement Committee, under the direction of the Vice President, will determine which members meet the qualifications for advancement. This entails reviewing petitions to enter the club at A level, deciding on petitions for advancement during the year, reviewing the year's competition results to determine which members are eligible for automatic advancement, and confirming that candidates for the Master level have satisfied all requirements. End-of-Year advancement and Master's eligibility will be announced at the Annual Awards Banquet.
- The Advancement Committee will consist of the Competition Chair and two members appointed by the Vice President, with the Vice President serving as an

- alternate. At least one of the three regular members will be a Master.
- In the event that the Vice President or Competition Chair becomes eligible for advancement, the decision on that advancement will be made by the remaining members. Should an appointed member become eligible for advancement after appointment, that member will be replaced by the Vice President or by a new appointee who is not eligible for advancement.

4.2 PETITIONING FOR ENTRY ADVANCEMENT AND MID-YEAR ADVANCEMENT

- While new Club members generally enter at B level, those with higher levels of skill and experience may petition to enter at A level by submitting to the Vice President 20 images for Advancement Committee review. The Advancement Committee will decide on the appropriate placement level.
- At any time during the year, a B or A level member may request advancement to the next level by submitting to the Vice President 20 images for Advancement Committee review. The Advancement Committee will decide on the appropriate placement level.
- Should a member move to a new level as the result of petitioning, points already earned at the lower level are not transferable to the higher level.

4.3 END-OF-YEAR ADVANCEMENT TO LEVEL A OR AA

- Following the End-of-Year Competition in November, the Vice President will receive from the Competition Chair recommendations for automatic advancement from B to A level and from A to AA level. The Competition Chair may also recommend consideration of other individuals or clusters of individuals whose scores indicate significant achievement during the year.
- To be eligible for advancement, the member must have submitted a minimum of 15 entries in any combination of categories in the Monthly Competitions during the year. If the member was advanced to a higher level during the calendar year, only entries at the new level are considered.
- The members in the B and A levels receiving the highest and second highest total scores in all categories of the Monthly Competition combined will automatically advance to the next level. Only the total scores of members who have submitted a minimum of 15 entries will be considered.
- The Advancement Committee will determine if additional members will advance to A or AA. The committee will base the decision on the total scores in all categories of the Monthly Competition combined. In the event there is a cluster of top scores, all members represented in that cluster will be advanced, provided they have met the minimum submissions requirements.

4.4 ADVANCEMENT TO MASTER LEVEL

4.4.1 Purpose and Method

- It is the intent of the Santa Rosa Photographic Society to recognize outstanding accomplishment in the field of photography by promoting qualified members to the Master level.

4.4.2 Qualifications

- A member will have four consecutive years in which to qualify as a Master's level

candidate. In the event a member has not qualified within the four-year period, the oldest year of achievement will be dropped at the beginning of the following year. No member may advance to Master candidacy in less than two years since it is not possible to meet all the requirements in less time. The minimum time for a member to remain in AA Level is two consecutive years, provided all other requirements are met.

- Qualification requirements are based on two factors: active participation in the club and notable levels of achievement in the monthly competitions.
- The member must have submitted the minimum of entries required to qualify for advancement as set forth in the competition rules in at least two of the qualification years.
- The member must be ranked as one of the top two Level AA members during at least one of the years of the qualification period. (Ranking is based on overall average competition score.) When a member achieves a top-two ranking twice within the qualification period, the requirement for a best image award will be dropped.
- During one of the qualification years, the member must win a first place in one or more of the competition categories in the Monthly End of Year Competition.

4.4.3 Method

- Following the End-of-Year Competition in November, the Competition Chair will notify the Vice President of any AA-level member who has become eligible for the Master level.
- The Vice President will submit relevant information to the Advancement Committee for review. The Advancement Committee will confirm the member's eligibility for Master Candidate status. Decisions will be made in conformity with club rules.
- The Vice President will inform the Master candidate of his/her eligibility, of the requirements to be met, and of the procedure to follow during the year of candidacy. Notification of Master candidacy, if not given at the Awards Banquet of the qualifying year, will be given by the end of January at the latest in order for the candidate to have sufficient time to prepare the Master's Presentation Outline.
- By April 1st, the Master Candidate will give the Vice President a "Master's Presentation Outline." The Vice President will distribute the Outline to the Advancement Committee, requesting approval of the topic and contents of the proposed presentation and suggestions for improvements as necessary.
- The Vice President will notify the Master Candidate of the Advancement Committee's recommendations and confirm a date for the Master's Presentation as one of the regular programs during the year.

4.4.4 Privileges and Requirements of Master Candidacy

- Following a successful qualification period, the member begins a one-year period as Master Candidate. During this year the member will compete at the Master Level.
- The Master Candidate is required to give a Master's Presentation for club members during the year of candidacy.
- The Master's Presentation will be a photographic presentation and lecture of approximately 45 minutes in length in the medium of the candidate's choice. The purposes of the presentation are to educate club members and to demonstrate the candidate's proficiency in a specific area.
- Failure to give the Master's Presentation within the candidacy year results in loss of eligibility, and the member will need to begin the qualification process again.

5.0 AL SHELTON TROPHY COMPETITION

5.1 LEVELS

All members compete in one group, regardless of level.

5.2 CATEGORIES

- Digital Images – General
- Digital Images – Nature
- Digital Images – Creative
- Prints – Any subject

5.3 COMPETITION SCHEDULE

This competition is held on the 4th Thursday in January.

5.4 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Members may submit two entries in each category.
- Any image taken in the previous calendar year is eligible. Images may or may not have been submitted in regular competition during the prior year.
- Submission requirements: Image submissions will be made in accordance with Section 1.4.

5.5 JUDGING AND AWARDS

- Two non-member judges and the club member who won in the respective category in the prior year will serve as a three-judge panel.
- Members serving on the judging panel the year following their win may not enter in the category they will judge.
- In the event a qualified non-member judge is not available, a member judge will serve as replacement. Members serving as replacement judges may only score in categories they have not entered.
- The judging panel will select one entry for an award in each category. Each judge will use a paddle for silent scoring. In case of ties, the non-member judges will select the winners.
- Members may not win in more than one category per year. In the event an individual receives the highest score in more than one category, the non-member judges will choose which entry will win. Scores may be announced during the competition.
- Winners will receive a Perpetual Trophy, suitably engraved, and will retain the trophy for the balance of the calendar year.

6.0 END-OF-YEAR COMPETITIONS

6.1 COMPETITIONS

- End of Year Competition for monthly ribbon winners
- Palmer Field Trip Competition

6.2 COMPETITION SCHEDULE

The End of Year Competitions are held in November, generally in the week following the 2nd Thursday of the month.

6.3 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

6.3.1 End of Year Competition for Monthly Ribbon Winners

- Eligibility: All 1st, 2nd and 3rd place ribbon winners in the Monthly Competitions during the year are eligible for submission in the same category and level in which they won. In the case of members advancing to a new level during the year, only images winning ribbons in the member's new level will be eligible.
- The Digital Projection Team will retain the winning digital submissions from the Monthly Competitions. Those images do not have to be resubmitted. Eligible images originally submitted as prints must be delivered to the competition and must retain the labeling used in the initial competition.

6.3.2 Palmer Field Trip Competition

- All members compete in one group, regardless of level.
- Two entries per field trip held during the calendar year of the competition or after the 2nd Thursday of November in the prior calendar year are eligible for submission. The entries must be in digital image format.
- Images may or may not have been submitted in regular competition during the current year.
- Submission requirements: Image submissions will be made in accordance with Section 1.4.

6.4 JUDGING

- A panel of three qualified non-member judges will score but not critique each entry.
- In the event three non-member judge(s) are not available, club member(s) will join the panel to score the competitions. Members may not judge a category in which they have an entry.
- Each judge will use a paddle for silent scoring.

7.0 END OF YEAR AWARDS

- High Point Average award plaques are given at each level of each category to the members with the highest and second highest total scores in all categories combined for the year in the monthly competitions. A tie in averages will result in multiple High Point Average awards.
- Best image and 1st runner-up and 2nd runner-up awards are given to the highest-scoring entries in each category and level, if appropriate. In case of ties the judges will select the places. The awards are announced at the awards banquet.
- A plaque is awarded for best image in each of the levels in the General, Nature and Creative categories.
- 1st and 2nd runners-up in all categories and levels will receive rosettes.
- To be eligible for High Points, the member must have met the overall requirement of 15 total submissions for the year and must have had 6 submissions in a competition category – General, Nature, or Creative – in order to qualify in that category.
- Entries submitted in the print, and digital image formats are totaled to determine the overall number of entries submitted.