
HISTORY OF SPEBSQSA/BHS CONTEST & JUDGING

PART 2 – THE EARLY YEARS OF SOCIETY JUDGING 1944-1950



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C&J HISTORIAN
2020 BHS HALL OF FAME



WHERE DID WE LEAVE OFF?

- The year was 1943
 - The Board can't manage the growing demands of C&J – Frank Thorne is appointed Chair of the C&J Committee
 - We see all sorts of articles in the Harmonizer and other documents that there is a general distrust of judging – many accusations of bias
 - Our membership doesn't know how quartets are judged
 - Our judges are judging everything!
- What we don't know now but will soon know is that the 1943 National Convention judging wise did not go well



1944

- “Judging Radically Changed” (Mar 44 Harmonizer)
 - 8 judges with 4 alternates
 - Judge every quartet in the elimination as well as the Finals
 - If one judge drops, an alternate is added and all of the scores for that judge are discarded
 - Top 15 from all elimination rounds vs “Preliminary Winners”



1944

■ 4 Categories

- Harmony Accuracy – 300 points
- Voice Expression – 300 points
- Song Arrangement – 300 points
 - Song selection is gone but Religious/Patriotic songs now banned
 - No penalty due to date of publication
 - Penalized due to violations of the barbershop style
- Stage Presence – 100 points
 - Now judging “costume” – ordinary street clothes penalty of 50 points
 - Gay 90’s costume award independent of regular awards during “elimination” rounds
- Two judges per category – still providing a single score for the performance
 - Judges in “actual earshot” of the quartet



1944

■ Other Changes

- Elimination rounds (one Thursday, two Friday, two Saturday)
- Time Penalties defined
- Champions no longer eligible
- No one can compete in more than one quartet
- Quartets can practice on Finals stage with microphone/sound engineer
 - Didn't know until 6PM that Saturday – **8 PM is the Finals!**
- A “shell” will be used (had been used in Michigan contests)
- In the future, elimination contests will happen regionally (58 Quartets competed in 1944)
- Now International society



1944

■ Breaking of Ties

- In the event of ties, judges get together to discuss the tied competitors
- Judges will adjust scores by a few points to break the ties
 - Huge issue in Chicago contest (1943)
 - Expanded scoring range to allow for more granularity
 - Recognizing consistency needed in how much “merits” and “demerits” should be worth



1945

- As an outcome of the “regional” elimination contests, more contests are springing up around the country – this is the start of “District” contests
 - Using SPEBSQSA rules, but not judges. There is still just one major contest (International)
 - First set of regional preliminaries (May 17-20, 1945)
 - Same 4 judges for all contests (Reagan, Thorne, Stern, Pallerin)
 - Qualified 12 Quartets for the Finals (could stay under the Wartime travel restrictions of 50 people)
 - New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Kansas City
 - Top 5 for each contest announced but no announcement of International qualifiers until all contests done
 - Yet 15 Quartets appeared in the Finals!!!! (Aug 1945)
 - 3 Quartets from Michigan (Finals in Detroit)
 - No announcements of 6-15



1945

- More refinement of rules & what is to be judged
 - Under 4 minutes time penalty
 - More granularity to weights of elements within categories and clarity to what is being assessed
 - Deductive Judging Starting Officially
 - First meeting with Judges and Competitors at the contest site
 - Judges still do not judge quartets from their own home town (alternate judges)



1945 - TIME PENALTIES

TIME PENALTY

In Society contests a quartet shall sing not less than 4 minutes nor more than 6 minutes. Penalty for each second under or over time shall be as noted in the following table:

Over or under time—seconds	Penalty	Over or under time—seconds	Penalty
1	1	14	105
2	3	15	120
3	6	16	136
4	10	17	153
5	15	18	171
6	21	19	190
7	28	20	210
8	36	21	231
9	45	22	253
10	55	23	276
11	66	24	300
12	78	25	325
13	91	26	351



1945 - VOICE EXPRESSION

structed to follow the following scoring system:

VOICE EXPRESSION	Score Points
(a) Lack of Blend	100
(b) Attacks and Releases	50
(c) Shading	50
(d) Enunciation	50
(e) Time and Rhythm	50
Total	300

- (a) Lack of Blend. Sometimes a quartet either has blend or does not have it, or perhaps has a good blend in a portion of their voice range and completely lose it in another portion. One voice may be considerably more harsh in one quartet than in another so that there can be degrees of blend for which this 100 points will be contested. A good blend throughout all singing parts should receive the proportion of 100 points which may be earned in this feature. Complete lack of blend throughout shall lose the full 100 points.
- (b) Attacks and Releases. Carelessness in the manner of solid and uniform attacks, and uniform releases, will be penalized. Each judge shall deduct 5 points for each such offense, up to a maximum of 50 points.

- (c) Shading. Shading of tone in a presentation is desirable and should be encouraged. The judges shall start with a level of 40 points, adding 5 points for each good shading effect and deducting 5 points where serious omission of shading occurs. Maximum 50 points per judge.
- (d) Enunciation. This phase of presentation is very important and, barring interference of noise, the judge should be able to hear every word and recognize it. A penalty of 1 point should be deducted for each word that is not enunciated properly. Failure to put the final syllable on a word should also call for a one point penalty unless the song particularly calls for it by dialect or other similar circumstance. Maximum 50 points per judge.
- (e) Time and Rhythm. A tendency to progressively speed up a number or slow one down (unless in harmony with the theme) shall be penalized. The judges shall also penalize numbers sung in too fast or too slow a rhythm. Change of pace for expressive effect or to permit full enjoyment of swipes shall not be penalized unless, in the opinion of the judge, it is grossly over exaggerated. Total penalty not to exceed 50 points.



1945 - SONG ARRANGEMENT

SONG ARRANGEMENT		Score Points
(a) Song Arrangement	150
(b) Voice Arrangement	50
Plus Possible Credits		200
Total		300

Comments on Song Arrangement:

(a) Song Arrangement. The judge shall start with a point level of 150 and add 10 points for each clever or unusually good use of a chord or harmony progression and deduct 10 points where a wrong chord or sequence is used. Deduct 5 points where the quartet fails to use an obviously good chord or sequence where they should. Chord changes should always be pleasant to the ear. The maximum score for this portion is 250 points.

Under b) Voice Arrangement, we actually find the first defined tenets of the barbershop style articulated succinctly (courtesy of Molly Reagan and Deac Martin)

(b) Voice Arrangement. In judging this feature each judge will penalize that portion of voice arrangement which does not adhere to the following definition:

Barbershop harmony is produced by four voices, unaccompanied; when the melody is consistently sung below the tenor; when rules of time, expression and word theme are sacrificed to obtain blending harmony satisfaction; and usually with at least one harmonizing chord on each melody note.

The judges will give due significance to the word "usually" in regard to the harmonizing chord on each melody note so that very short solo parts will not be penalized if not too frequently used. Each arrangement judge shall penalize up to 50 points for violation of this definition.

In early 1947, "when the melody is consistently" is modified to "...melody, for the most part, is consistently..."

1945 - HARMONY ACCURACY AND STAGE PRESENCE

HARMONY ACCURACY 300 POINTS

This division deals principally with tone accuracy where each of the four individual voices is judged. Should an individual voice stay sharp or flat on a chord, each of the two judges shall deduct 5 to 10 points, depending upon the degree of error. Should the judges detect more than one voice not in harmony with the rest, the penalty shall not be increased because of the fact that the first voice being off may be the cause of the other voices trying to shift to a compensating tone.

Should the one or more voices slide into a chord, deduct two points for each offense unless the spirit of the song is definitely such that this effect is in keeping with it. If a voice starts a chord flat or sharp and immediately adjusts into a good blend and true pitch, deduct one or two points depending on length of time taken for the adjustment.

No penalties shall be assessed for change of pitch from the start to the end of the song.

STAGE PRESENCE and COSTUME

- (a) Stage Presence 50 points
 - (b) Costume 50 points
- Comments:

- (a) Stage Presence. Grading shall be done on poise and natural presentation with deductions made for awkwardness and gawky presentation. Each judge shall start with 40 points, deducting points for violation and adding points for successful poise and presentation. Total points possible—50 for each judge.
- (b) Costume. 50 points will be allowed for each judge for this feature and no deductions will be made for costumes which represent uniformity of dress or period. Quartets appearing in ordinary modern street clothes will be penalized the full 50 points by each judge.

1945 - SONG SELECTION

- There has been little written in the official rules about song selection, other than one song could be a medley.
- However, the beliefs are building that one must sing a ballad and an uptune to impress the judges and now in black & white.

BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

Harmonizer, Feb 1945

Frank Thorne, bass of the Elastic Four (1942), writes:

"We sang 'Way Down South' and 'Down by the Old Mill Stream' in the Finals and I'd be happy to use the same two numbers again except for one thing. The International Board's adoption of the Martin-Reagan definition of barbershop harmony excludes too extensive use of solo parts and I'm afraid 'Way Down South' is on the ragged edge in that regard.

"Boiling it all down, it seems to me a quartet that does not sing a rather fast spirited or lively number and then a soft, sweet type takes a chance on not impressing the Judges. I wrote an article for the Harmonizer some time ago giving my thoughts on how to win a Contest and my ideas have not changed at all."

Ray Hall, bari of the Harmony Halls, (1944), agrees with Frank, specifying that one song ought to be of the ballad type to show the quartet's blend and chord perfection, the other, a fast, rhythmic number. Ray points out one thing that should be of interest to many of our quartets, particularly newer ones, that haven't yet developed a style of their own. He says, "All songs are not suited to all quartets. What one group may go to town with, another may bog down terribly. Choose songs that fit the abilities of the men and are in tune with their personalities."



1945 – SONGS SUNG

- Even in 1945, people are welcoming a lack of duplication of songs and arrangements.
- Note that our champs are only singing two songs for their championship (a function of the wartime restrictions)

Harmonizer, Aug 1945

WHAT THEY SANG

Without any advance planning, this year's Finals show only one duplication of songs. Many have asked for a list of the numbers used—here it is:

Westinghouse Quartet—Sunbonnet Sue, Goodbye Old Dixie; Lamplighters—Melancholy Baby, Five Foot Two; Misfits—Indiana Medley, Grass Shack; Bell & Howell—Tulips, I Want a Girl; Serenaders—Kentucky in June, Irish Mother; Chordoliers—Dreaming—(Medley), Alabama Jubilee; Progressive Four—Sylvia, Swanee River; Sunbeam Songfellows—Irish Eyes, Old Quartet—(Medley); Garden State Quartet—Mother's Rosary, Roses of Morn; Gardenaires—Old Apple Tree, Mary; Continentals—Meet Me in St. Louis, Heart of My Heart; New York Police—Sweet Adeline—(Medley), Old Man River; Flying L Ranch—Sweet and Low, Darkness on the Delta; Gipps Amberlin Four—Tumbled Down Shack, Roll on Mississippi; Doctors of Harmony—Honey Gal, Heart of My Heart.

LEADING INTO 1946

- From reading many Harmonizer articles, there is continued lack of credibility in the judging system.
- An experiment occurs in late 1945

OHIO CONTEST TO USE QUARTETS AS JUDGES

Harmonizer, Nov 1945

The Second Ohio State Quartet Contest will take place in Timken High School Auditorium, Saturday evening, December 1st, Canton, Ohio. An unusual feature of this Contest will be the fact that the Judges will consist of two high ranking quartets, the Westinghouse Quartet, Pittsburgh, (1945 Int'l. 2nd Placers), and the Lamplighters, Cleveland, present Ohio Champions, (1945 Int'l. 4th Placers). Maurice Reagan, former Int'l. Vice president and one who has had wide experience in judging our Contests for the last five years will be Chairman of Judges.

International Board Members, members of top ranking quartets, and many members of the Society will watch this event with considerable interest as the possibility of quartets judging quartets has been given very serious consideration during the last few months.



MORE CHANGES LEADING INTO 1946

- Same 4 city preliminary pattern with the same judges
 - Reagan, Thorne, Stern, Hall (Ray)
- This time 30 quartets will compete
 - 30 in the Semifinals (Friday morning and afternoon)
 - 15 in the Finals (this time on Friday night)
 - Pins for all of the Finalists
- First official C&J Handbook is made available



DEFINING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PROFESSIONAL

- “Professional quartets” are not eligible to enter any contest (International, District, State)
 - “Anyone deriving more than 50% of his income from an occupation in the field of vocal music will be considered a professional and not more than one professional may be a member of any competing quartet”
- Prior to this, it was defined as a group deriving more than 50% of their income from singing together



GUIDANCE IN 1946

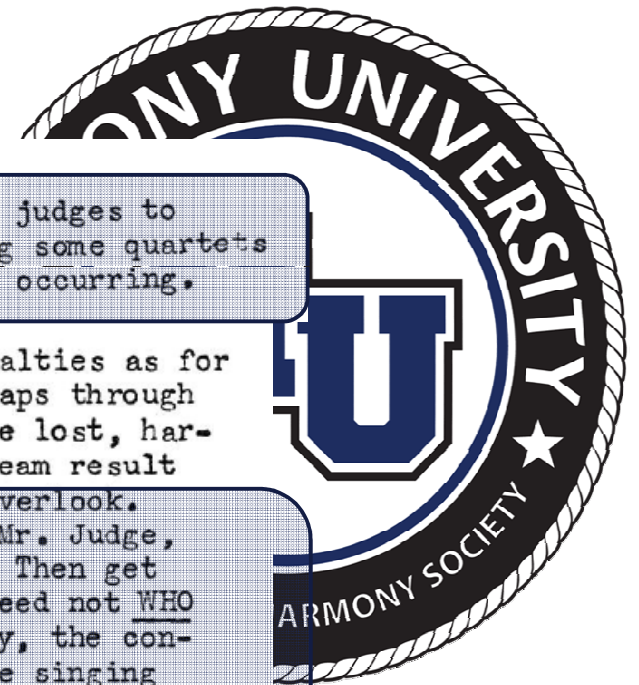
■ Frank Thorne to Judges:

REMARKS

It may be found best for all but stage presence and costume judges to form the habit of keeping their eyes on their score sheet. Watching some quartets might even disconcert one's attention from the penalty which may be occurring.

There are times when the same error may cause several different penalties as for instance when members of a quartet completely lose their parts perhaps through only one singer missing his part. In such circumstance blend may be lost, harmony accuracy penalized and the awful struggle to get back on the beam result

in chord progressions that no song arrangement judge can possibly overlook. Such errors are indeed very bad and consequently very costly. So, Mr. Judge, study the rules well, over and over. Be sure you understand them. Then get yourself into a thoroughly judicious state of mind. Care not nor heed not WHO is singing what. Never once consider how well, or indeed how poorly, the contesting quartet has sung a number. Concentrate only on how they are singing it in the contest. Call your shots as you honestly hear or see them right now, during the actual contest. Then check your figures and marks very carefully, add and subtract accurately and let the chips fall.



LEADING INTO 1947

- Later in 1946/early 1947, first “District” Champs are determined
 - Two convention cycle has begun
- Serious discussions and controversy on what quartets should wear (costumes vs suits)
 - “Lots” of outside feedback thinking quartets should have period costumes



LEADING INTO 1947 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

- First year of Preliminaries to determine qualifiers
 - 139 entered, 119 competed
 - All same weekend (May 9-11, 1947)
 - Must use approved list of SPEBSQSA judges
 - At least one qualifier from each “area”
 - 11 Districts but 8 “areas”
 - Qualifiers based upon “area” membership
 - Any awards can’t look like International awards
 - Quartets can find out where they stand after the contest relative by category



1947

- First “judging” school to be held Saturday afternoon of International convention
- Contest Schedule
 - 30 Quartets in the “Preliminaries” Friday morning and afternoon
 - 15 Quartets in the “Semi-Finals” Friday night
 - 5 Medalists in the “Finals”
 - Scores from Semis do NOT carry over

Harmonizer, May 1947

WHY FIVE IN FINALS?

The new procedure of screening finalists down to five for the Int'l. Finals is a direct result of trial-and-error. No getting away from the fact that it's a strain for most quartets to face a great audience while under stress of competition. The main audience criticisms heard from the Cleveland '46 finals was "We came to see some fun—and the boys were serious". So, Sectional Preliminary winners will be screened at Milwaukee largely before our own folks. Then the five Finalists will be part of the show of International Champions which will give the audience thrilling competition and also the gayety that goes with the Int'l. Champs when they can "play to the audience" entirely.



CHANGES IN ATTITUDES ABOUT BARBERSHOP HARMONY

- From the 1947 Judging School at International

Harmonizer, Aug 1947

Reagan stressed the fact that rules must "encourage" quartets while "preserving" barbershop type harmony. In that connection most of the judges felt that the melody also should be preserved, though an occasional original note thrown in by the quartet in search of unusual arrangements would not be judged too harshly. It was generally agreed that 6th chords can be used logically for song endings, but that ending on a 7th chord "leaves the harmony out on a limb" since the 7th is a resolving chord.

1947

- Myth surrounding song selection
 - “Judges” needed to know the song to “win”
 - Doctors of Harmony winning singing unknown songs

'This department thus far has heard only one serious criticism of this year's Int'l. Contest. Phrased in various ways it boils down to this. "We want to hear the tune of a song, particularly when it is an old timer that we know."

Harmonizer, Aug 1947



1947 SONGS SUNG

SONGS SUNG AT MILWAUKEE (As Recorded by Ted Tinsman, Rochester, N. Y.) Titles may not be exact in some cases, but songs will be recognizable.	
PRELIMINARIES	
Continental, Meet Me in St. Louis, Heart of My Heart—Medley.	Songfellows, Love to Live in Cleveland—Medley, I'd Like to Bring Back that Old Quartet, Gamboliers, Down in Arkansas, If I Had My Way.
Midstates Four, I Want a Girl, Old Black Joe, Doctors of Harmony, Dreamy Wabash River, I Love you the best of all.	Atomic Bums, Gang that Sang Heart of My Heart, Bridget O'Flynn.
Tom Cats, Old Mill Stream, Carolina in the Morning.	Lamp-lighters, 5 Ft. 2, Memories.
Jolly Whalers, Way Down Home—Medley, Zipadee Doodah—Medley.	Lions Club Serenaders, Ireland Must Be Heaven, Blue Hawaii.
Rosanna Four, Over the Hills to Virginia, Those Will Be Some Changes Made.	Withered Four, Moonbeams—Medley, Yona from Arizona.
Auditors, I Love You the Best of All, Indiana—Medley.	
Coca Cola Four, Lindy, My Little Girl—Medley.	
Hi-Lee Quartet, Walkin' With My Honey—Medley, Memories.	
Mello-Men, Old Cherry Orchard, My Gal Sal, Jolly Fellows, Where the Morning Glories Grow, Ma, She's Makin' Eyes at Me.	
Four Naturals, When the Man in the Moon Says Hello, Dear, When a Peach Way Down in Georgia Weds a Rose from Alabama.	
Gardenaires, Roll on, Tennessee Moon, I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles.	
Four Kerels, When It's Moonlight, Nellie Darling, I'm Afraid to Love You.	
Claf Dwellers, Down in Louisiana, Mandy Lee.	
Bez Saws, Red, Red Rose—Medley, Somebody Loves Me.	
Chordallers, Down on the Levee, Tura Lura and Irish Eyes.	
Harmonizers Quartette, Mandy and Me, I'm Going Away Back Home and Have a Wonderful Time.	
Food City Four, Southern Medley, Jealous, Liénaires, Riding Down the Canyon, Apple Blossom Time.	
Big Towners, Never Miss the Sunshine, Down the Trail to Home Sweet Home.	
Harmonizers, Honey Man, All By Myself.	
Westinghouse Quartet, Where the Roses Have Faded Away, Frickles.	
Footmas Chippers, Gang that Sang Heart of My Heart, Moon Over Driveway.	

AUGUST, 1947

Harmonizer, Aug 1947

BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

- Note: Quartets in the Finals sang the same songs as in the Semi-Finals, but sang different songs than the "quarterfinals" (Preliminaries)



INTERESTING OUTSIDE OBSERVATION

Walter Whitworth, Music Critic, Indianapolis News, reported the Section-

al Prelim Contest and commented in part as follows: "Barbershop quartet singing is a highly specialized field. It follows a definite formula, and this formula is strange to a reporter accustomed to symphonic music, instrumental music and the art song. The Barbershoppers, naturally, adore a tempo rubato (for which they would be promptly killed, were they singing serious music.) Their phrasing is startling and unconventional. Their choice of breathing places has nothing to do with music or words. It is a bit disturbing.

But these technical aspects of the singing are proper, it seems, and they don't really matter, since the idea is not art. Anyway, all 12 quartets possessed good balance, good blending of voices, good ensemble. The tone quality, too, was pleasant. What one missed -- because it was seldom in evidence -- was a rhythmic sense. One had to wait for the Misfits to provide the spine-tickling elements of forward flow with definite accents.

The audience, which was fairly large, had a good time (the reviewer had a good time, too, as a matter of fact, once he had adjusted himself to the formula) . . . " Looks as if we might convert Mr. Whitworth if we can get him to "adjust himself" to our formula often enough. — ED.

Harmonizer, Aug 1947



LEADING INTO 1948

- OC Cash is planting the seeds for a chorus contest (Aug 1947 Harmonizer)
- Stage Presence points are now increasing (!)
 - 200 points vs 100 points (but still 10% - everything else changed!!!)
 - Start with 80 points and deduct or add/bonus
- 11 Preliminary Contests will be held May 1-2, 1948
 - 40 Quartets instead of 30
 - Still allocated by area/district membership
 - 248 quartets competed
- Secretary of Judges for all contests should be someone outside the district and preferably a Board Member
 - At International, Secretary must be a Board Member



MORE CHANGES FOR 1948 WITH THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

- Modern chords are “forbidden”
 - Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, Diminished seventh chords to make “sufficiently” modern
 - Loss of 300 points out of 1000 points
- Songs must end on a major triad (“contest only”)
- Limited use of bass on the 7th
- Limited use of melody above tenor
- Original melody can be altered slightly to get the right chord sequence
- Can have some background harmony humming while lead sings melody



OTHER CHANGES FOR 1948

- Preliminaries are now strictly district events
 - “Orphan” states are assigned
- Entrance and Exit counts for Stage Presence
- Small difference in costuming counts off
- Each song is now judged vs the two song performance



OTHER CHANGES FOR 1948

- New categories
 - Harmony Accuracy and Blend (600 points)
 - Voice Expression (600 points)
 - Song and Voice Arrangement (600 points)
 - Stage Presence and Enunciation (200 points)
 - Still 10%
 - Disqualification not being dressed alike or in costume



CHARLES MERRILL PROVIDED A LOT OF INSIGHT IN 1948 TO HOW C&J IS RESPONDING TO THE NATURAL EXPLORATION OF COMPETITORS



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Charles M. Merrill

Harmonizer, May 1948

The international quartet contest at Oklahoma City certainly is the most important Society event in the near future. So I'll devote my column this issue to contest and judging in the hope that some disappointment and perhaps bewilderment on the part of eliminated quartets may be dissipated.

One of the most important problems of the international Contest and Judging Committee is to make its rules of judging understood by competing quartets. The committee is constantly on the alert for ambiguities. Letters to the committee asking whether this or that is permissible are given careful study. If the rules can be clarified to answer such questions, they are reworded. If rules of thumb can relieve some ambiguity or remove some phase of judging from the wide-open discretion of the judges, such rules may arbitrarily be adopted.

Such a rule, adopted at the mid-winter meeting of the Board, was the rule against ending a number with a ninth, a seventh or a sixth chord. This does not mean that the Board regards such endings as not barbershop, and it is anticipated that outside of competition such endings will still be used. The rule was passed for the protection of quartets against those judges (and there are many) who find such endings objectionable. Without such a rule a quartet would not know whether it could safely use such an ending unless it had advance information as to how its particular arrangements judge would react.

Unfortunately it is not possible to remove all ambiguities or to relieve the judges of all discretion, particularly in the arrangement category. However, the rules and the definition of what is "barbershop" for contest purposes are being clarified and expressed as carefully as precise use of the English language will permit.

This means, of course, that as the rules become more clear and more closely fixed, and as a judge's discretion is limited by adoption of arbitrary rules, the rules become increasingly technical. Again—this is done not to banish a quartet but to protect it by telling it what it may or may not in all safety do. A careful study

of the rules and their explanations is exceedingly important if a quartet would have its uncertainties removed.

The fact that contest rules are becoming increasingly technical may well have another effect: that of increasing the distinction between contest barbershop and show barbershop.

In judging any contest where the manner and style of achievement are of importance (e.g., diving or figure skating as distinguished from track events where time or distance is all that matters) it is the little details of precision, unnoticeable to all but an alerted expert, that name the winner. Contest barbershop concentrates on detail and precision. Show barbershop aims to please the audience. This in itself is a popular subject of criticism.

However, it should be obvious that we cannot go too far in this direction. We cannot let ourselves follow the example of the fiddler who has to do a Russian dance or stand on his head while playing in order to get an audience reaction. Barbershop is and must remain essentially a musical form. A competition performance must remain essentially a demonstration of ability to recognize and execute the fine points of that musical form.



LEADING INTO 1949

- Controversy over the 1948 results
- C&J is now responsible for Judging matters
- Same preliminary process – 40 quartets across 13 districts
- Same contest structure



JOHNSON TEMPERAMENT TEST

- In 1941 a compatibility test that scored different features of temperament was developed
- SPEBSQSA adopted this as the first hurdle in being a judge
 - Nervous ↔ Composed
 - Depressive ↔ Lighthearted
 - Active-Social ↔ Quiet
 - Expressive-Responsive ↔ Inhibited
 - Sympathetic ↔ Indifferent
 - Subjective ↔ Objective
 - Dominant ↔ Submissive
 - Hostile ↔ Tolerant
 - Self-Disciplined ↔ Impulsive

Hi and Congratulations:

Your Johnson Analysis indicates that you apparently have a judicial mind with stable attitude. Your committee has confidence in your integrity and believes that you will be fair and just.

You have, therefore, progressed one more step toward qualification as an International Contest Judge - an assignment not to be taken lightly.

You will soon be receiving instruction data for categories as indicated on your application. Study these instructions carefully and then return your answers to test questions to the committee member indicated. Your PROMPTNESS will be greatly appreciated.

The new rules will be sent to you as soon as possible after the International Board votes on them at the January meeting.

Good luck.



1949 CHANGES

- Judge Training by Category
- Rules are “laws” – rewrite of language for clarity
- Scores from Semis to Finals WILL carry over
- Every song must be different
 - 1st year of 6 songs to win gold
- Quartets can request summary of all scores after the contest
- Scoring each song separately is discontinued (still deductive process)
- International 3 judges per category vs 2 judges
- No alternate judges – judge all quartets
- Reorganizing categories and coverage
- Breaking Ties is finally addressed (H&A, VE, ARR, sing off with one song greater than 2 minutes)
- First year of the Landino Trophy
- Time penalties back to constant five per second



1949 CHANGES WITH STYLE

- Penalties for too much of harmony parts humming or neutral syllables
 - Can use neutral syllables on a limited basis/embellishments
- Removed the rule with bass on the 7th of the chord
- Songs that are suggestive or offensive are barred
 - Majority of judges approving DQ



SLIGHT ALIGNMENT/REFINEMENT OF CATEGORIES

- Harmony Accuracy and Blend
 - HA 200 pts
 - Blend 100 pts
- Voice Expression
 - Attacks and Releases and Enunciation 100 pts
 - Phrases and Shading 100 pts
 - Time and Rhythm 100 pts
- Arrangement
 - Harmonization (Song Arrangement) 150 pts
 - Voicing (Voice Arrangement) 150 pts
- Stage Presence
 - Stage Presence 100 pts
 - Costume Cause for disqualification



SCORESHEETS FROM 1949

VOICE EXPRESSION . . . ATTACKS & RELEASES AND ENUNCIATION —PHRASING AND SHADING—TIME & RHYTHM.

QUARTET No. _____

QUARTET NAME	CONTEST	HELD AT	DATE
ATTACKS and RELEASES and ENUNCIATION Maximum Score 100 Points Minimum Score 0 Points PENALIZE ONLY. Cross off highest open number for each penalty.	PHRASING and SHADING Maximum Score 100 Points Minimum Score 0 Points Start at a level of 50 points. To credit, cross off a black number. To penalize, cross off a red number.	TIME and RHYTHM Maximum Score 100 Points Minimum Score 0 Points Start at a level of 50 points. To credit, cross off a black number. To penalize, cross off a red number.	
100 95 90 85 80 75 70 65 60 55 50 45 40 35 30 25 20 15 10 5	+ 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 — 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 + 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 — 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	+ 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 — 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 + 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 — 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	
SCORE _____ (Maximum Score 100 Points)	STARTING LEVEL 50 + or — _____ SCORE _____ (Maximum Score 100 Points)	STARTING LEVEL 50 + or — _____ SCORE _____ (Maximum Score 100 points)	

ADD TOGETHER A. R. E. SCORE _____

P. & S. SCORE _____

T. & R. SCORE _____

TOTAL SCORE _____
(Maximum Total Score 300 Points)

CHECKED BY SECRETARY _____

CLERK'S INITIALS _____

SIGNATURE OF JUDGE _____

HARMONY ACCURACY AND BLEND

QUARTET No. _____

QUARTET NAME	CONTEST	HELD AT	DATE
HARMONY ACCURACY MAXIMUM SCORE—200 Points MINIMUM SCORE— 0 Points PENALIZE ONLY. Cross off highest number for each penalty.	BLEND MAXIMUM SCORE—100 Points MINIMUM SCORE— 0 Points Score on a percentage basis, giving consideration to the maintenance of blend and its quality.		
200 195 190 185 180 175 170 165 160 155 150 145 140 135 130 125 120 115 110 105 100 95 90 85 80 75 70 65 60 55 50 45 40 35 30 25 20 15 10 5	100 95 90 85 80 75 70 65 60 55 50 45 40 35 30 25 20 15 10 5		
SCORE _____ (Maximum Score 200 Points)	SCORE _____ (Maximum Score 100 Points)		

Add together H. A. SCORE _____

BLEND SCORE _____

TOTAL SCORE _____
(Maximum Total Score 300 Points)

CLERK'S INITIALS _____

SIGNATURE OF JUDGE _____

CHECKED BY SECRETARY _____

HOW FAST SCORESHEETS CHANGE – 1948 TO 1949

QUARTET No. _____		<h1>STAGE PRESENCE AND COSTUME</h1>	
QUARTET NAME	CONTEST	HELD AT	DATE

Maximum Score 100 Points — Minimum Score 0 Points

Judge Starts at level of 50. TO CREDIT, cross off one or more black numbers.

TO PENALIZE, cross off one or more red numbers.

+	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
—	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

STARTING LEVEL 50

+ or —

TOTAL SCORE _____
(Maximum Total Score 100 Points)

ERK'S INITIALS
CHECKED BY SECRETARY
SIGNATURE OF JUDGE

[illegible]

IS IT A DEDUCTIVE SYSTEM OR SOMETHING ELSE?

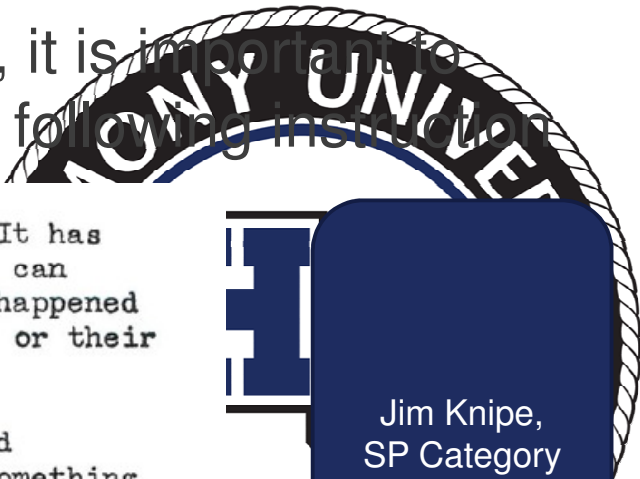
- As much as all judges are doing accounting, it is important to recognize that the judges are also given the following instruction

Experience has demonstrated that a starting level is a necessary thing. It has also shown that a Judge has to have something in front of him on which he can tabulate credits and penalties. Otherwise he's too prone to forget what happened five, or six, or eight minutes ago and score a quartet on their fine exit or their bad finish, overlooking bad or good stuff that happened earlier.

Your scoring form is a mechanical aid to your memory. You make credit and penalty marks on it to help you remember how many times the quartet did something good or bad.

BUT, IT IS YOUR JUDGMENT OF THE QUARTET THAT IS TO GO DOWN ON THAT PAPER AS THEIR FINAL SCORE.

If, after you have finished the arithmetic, you arrive at a figure you feel is not right, you do not have to stick to that figure as the final score. Up to the instant the sheet leaves your hands you may alter the final score to whatever figure you feel fairly represents what the quartet has earned.



Jim Knipe,
SP Category
Specialist to
SP judges and
candidates,
Mar 15, 1949

LEADING INTO 1950

- Complaints of over-arranging are emerging
- Numerous comments about quartets not knowing the rules
- 14 Districts now hosting preliminary contests
 - Many judges trying to cover all contests on a single weekend
- Informal judging workshops are being held in conjunction with other events
 - Trying to get judges to handle the large demand of contests and save on travel costs



BUT THINGS ARE NOT "RIGHT" YET

Mr. Jerry Beeler
1830 West Ohio St.
Evansville, Ind.

Dear Jerry:

First of all Jerry, let me say that while I am not entirely satisfied with our judging system, I still haven't got the right answers myself. I have a few suggestions to offer, which can be put in the pot with the suggestions you receive from others and out of the whole group undoubtedly some good will come of it.

1. I think that all the judges must admit that our judging cannot be mathematically exact, although we compute our scores mathematically. It seems to me that under our system, when two quartets score within about 50 points of each other, for all practical purposes, it is a tie. When this condition exists, why not have the quartets which have tied each other, sing over again in an effort to get a difference of more than 50 points.
2. The official rule book is the one and only guide for competing quartets. I think the rule book should carry a recitation somewhere to the effect, that an arrangement published by the Society, or published in a folio, is not a guarantee that it's a winning arrangement. Likewise, any songs, as well as arrangements, sung by winning quartets in the past, is no guarantee that it will win again. I think some quartets rely on these factors.

3. Although it has long been a rule of the National Board, that recordings shall not be taken during the actual contest singing, there is no mention of this fact in the rule book. I am strongly in favor of this rule and I think it should be given prominence in the rule book.
4. The rules for judging the various categories seem to be complex. Perhaps they can be simplified, I don't know at this moment.

Jerry, you will get better answers from some of the others. My thinking can isn't working today. In the beginning, we just made up our judging rules between ourselves, prior to the contest. Since that time, the succeeding contests and the judges have added to and elaborated on the rules considerably. They have done an outstanding job and I know that much thought and effort has gone into their work. I wouldn't for anything criticize the efforts and work of these judges. However, I do think a general review and suggestions from others may help crystallize the problem still further.

Sincerely

JOSEPH E. STERN

Jerry Beeler is a judge and now SPEBSQSA President.

Based upon the actions in 1951, we know that the Board is driving for improvement

CERTIFICATION EFFORTS AND INTEREST ARE CREATING AN IMBALANCE IN CATEGORY COVERAGE

- In 1950, 41 judges are now “certified”
 - 4 in all categories (Harmony Accuracy/Blend, Voice Expression, Arrangement, Stage Presence)
 - However, the same four are the only certified judges in HA/Blend & VE
 - 2 in ARR only
 - 30 in SP
 - 5 in both SP and ARR
 - Desire is that judges judge only one category (but can't support for a while)



WHAT EXACTLY IS BARBERSHOP – FRANK RICE COMMENT HARMONIZER SEP 1950

"I think the biggest gripe is the different interpretations of barbershop harmony from the north, east, south and west. What I call good barbershop harmony is sung here in the southwest. The stuff I grew up on, and thought I learned to sing. But how do we expect the boys from the far east to know what we are talking about. I couldn't even write a set of rules of southwest harmony. Maybe it's because I can't explain it.

"But, I do think the rules we have are getting harmony more on a national level. In other words, the first barbershop contest I heard the eastern boys sing was back in 1940 when we held the contest in New York City. All the quartets sounded more glee club style. No "mean" swipes, etc. But as we go along from contest to contest they are following rules and trying to sing like the rules say. They at least know what is expected of them.

This comment fairly reflects the reality that "barbershop" has a variety of styles.

The style that evolved in the early days of the society and "codified" in the rules reflects a regional interpretation

DISCOURAGEMENT OF PARTICIPATING IN NON-SOCIETY CONTESTS – 1950 QUARTET MANUAL

VI. CONTESTS

Quartet contests are a special and traditional feature of the Society. In recent years the popularity of our contests has led many outside agencies to attempt to invade the field and exploit it for their own benefit.

While we can hardly claim to have a copyright on barbershop quartet contests, still since barbershop and the Society are now almost invariably associated by the public, the result is that the Society suffers when any non-Society contest is held. The Society is anxious, therefore, to discourage all contests save those held under Society auspices and subject to the Society's carefully conceived rules of judging. Society Quartets are urged *not to enter such contests*, no matter what the prize or what the manner of judging or what statements may be made disassociating the Society from the event.

Society contests are conducted under carefully prepared rules and are judged by carefully schooled and tested Society members as judges. All quartets interested in competition are urged to secure from the International Office a copy of the contest rules and procedure. Do not ask the Committee on Quartets to explain or interpret the rules. All matters relating to contest procedure fall in the jurisdiction of the International Contest and Judging Committee. Send your inquiries regarding contest rules to the International Office to be forwarded to that Committee.



NEXT TIME

- In our next episode, we will
 - Review the rules from 1951-1960
 - Look at the 1951 infrastructure which is the same infrastructure that has been used for the past 70 years
- Video Series is “free”
 - Donations in the name of this series are gladly accepted to <https://give.barbershop.org/preserve>
- Any new information you may have, please contact me at kkkari@barbershop-harmony.net



