
HISTORY OF SPEBSQSA / BHS CONTEST & JUDGING

PART 1 – SOCIETY CONTESTS ARE BORN: 1939-1943



BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

HISTORY OF SPEBSQSA / BHS CONTEST & JUDGING

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KEVIN KELLER

SPEBSQSA/BHS MEMBER SINCE 1978
BHS CERTIFIED MUS JUDGE, 1998-PRESENT
MUS BOARD OF REVIEW, 2001-2007
MUS CATEGORY SPECIALIST, 2008-2010
CHAIRMAN, CONTEST & JUDGING 2012-2015
PAST CHAIR, CONTEST & JUDGING 2016-2019
C&J HISTORIAN
2020 BHS HALL OF FAME



HISTORY OF CONTEST & JUDGING (C&J)

- This will be a multi-part video series on the history of our Society's Contest and Judging System
- Rather than waiting until all are recorded, each one starting from the beginning will be recorded and posted
- Each new video will be based upon the time I have available to finish the documentation and record!



PURPOSE OF THE VIDEO SERIES ON JUDGING

- Since the very beginning of SPEBSQSA we have been a society driven by competition
- Judging has had tremendous influence on the development of the barbershop style and arguably the most influence on the style
- There have been rules and structures that were once true about judging but have long since been gone, yet many members recall what it was and think that still is (myths and legends)
- Quite often rules appeared and disappeared without public understanding of why



DOCUMENTARY

- We are going to examine blocks of time throughout the history of our society through the lens of judging
 - It is initially planned that it will be a 10 part series, with each video lasting no longer than an hour each
 - The videos will be presented over time and the viewer is encouraged to watch each in order to understand the changes over time



OUTCOMES

- Preservation of a detailed history of the most important influence on the growth and development of the barbershop style
- Members understand and appreciate decisions made at the time about changes required for judging
- Members understand when rules and structure were in place and why they might have changed



DOCUMENTS

- Documents used:
 - Contest & Judging Manuals (thanks to countless individuals contributing!)
 - Harmonizers
 - The “Harmonizer” did not exist until late 1941 (Initially “ReChordings”)
 - The “Harmonizer” throughout time has always been a reflection of the messaging from Harmony Hall. In some cases this may have not reflected all sides and opinions
 - Board meeting minutes didn’t start taking shape until the early 1940’s
 - In the early 1950’s, C&J annual and mid-year reports first appeared but are not consistent throughout time. These have more details about “why” but again are what was shared with the Board vs actual discussions. Over 60 years worth of these reports exist
 - Private papers of Joe Stern, Warren “Buzz” Haeger, Denny Driscoll, and others were shared throughout the research process. These proved invaluable in providing more insight
 - Books such as “Keep America Singing”, “Melodies for Millions”, and “Heritage of Harmony”, celebrating Society anniversaries (10th, 25th, and 50th respectively)
 - Judging Magazines “Directions” and “New Directions” (roughly the last 40 years)



DISCLAIMERS

- Until the last 5 years there has been no purposeful archiving strategy as it relates to C&J. Therefore not all materials are still around that can fully answer questions
- Maintenance of C&J Handbooks from 1971-1993 was poor. Because of the costs, any changes to the handbook would be sent to the members and then they were requested to throw away the older sections. There was no revision history noted on these rule changes. Therefore one could have a manual dated 1978 but have rule changes that were from 1992!



DISCLAIMERS

- Where printed words exist, we have “facts”. Yet, between sources there are errors. We will address those that are important.
- Where words don't exist, I will provide my best analysis.
- Even where words exist, there is still analysis.
 - I fully acknowledge that I don't know all history and events. This represents my humble analysis reading all materials available at the time and talking with people who would recall the times and events of the day.
 - If you have facts or stories that provide a different narrative, please share them with me at kkbari@charter.net



HISTORY OF CONTEST & JUDGING (C&J)

- Society forms in 1938
- In June of 1939 a national convention was to be held
- Within the convention weekend, a contest would be held



SPERBSQSA

**The
SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION
AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF BARBER
SHOP QUARTET SINGING IN AMERICA**

203 TULSA BUILDING
TULSA, OKLAHOMA



O. C. CASH-FOUNDER
SOS ASSISTANT
TEMPORARY VICE-P
RUPERT E. HALL
ASSISTANT TO AGO
E. M. SLEVEN
BAYON WARE
ESTER SHUMATE
CHANCELLOR OF
EXCHEQUER

Dear SPERBSQSA Brother:

You must help us decide a momentous question regarding our first annual Contest and Convention.

The famous Ann Sheridan, "Oomph Girl" of the movies, and reputed to be a combination of Clara Bow, Jean Harlow and Theda Bara at their best, has offered to be a judge during the Contest in Tulsa.

We have tried so hard to keep the SPERBSQSA "for men only", but this is something that neither I nor the officers nor even the membership of Tulsa Chapter No. 1 dare to decide ourselves.

YOU must vote! Enclosed is a postal card on which you may record your solemn decision. Do it now and let us know whether to "Oomph" or not to "Oomph".

And while you're at it, fill out the rest of the questionnaires, too. We're enclosing the program of the convention, and we want to know if we can count on you and others from your chapter or community.

Yours for harmony, festivity
and maybe even "OOMPH!",

O. C. Cash

O. C. CASH -
Founder of Father Chapter

Postcard mailed to all
members in 1939

Dear Brother Cash: Herewith answers to questions in your note:

1. I vote _____ (yes or no) on letting "Oomph Girl", Ann Sheridan of the movies be an SPERBSQSA contest judge.
2. I will be present June 2-3 to participate in contest _____.
3. There will be _____ other harmonists from my city.
4. We have an organized quartet _____.
(If not, will you sing in "pickup" quartet at convention?)

Signed _____

Address _____

City _____

TOP HARMONY

1939 RULES

RULES and REGULATIONS

1. Only "amateurs" eligible for prizes and awards.
2. Championship competition restricted to Quartets (male) with or without accompaniment.
3. Any four registered delegates may form a competing quartet, regardless of whether they are from the same locality or not. Tenors, leads, basses and baritones will be so labeled. Quartet can be organized at convention.
4. Each quartet will be permitted to sing two numbers of own choosing in qualifying and final rounds, one of which may be a medley.
5. Different numbers may be used as qualifying in contest progresses.
6. Each competing quartet must sing as scheduled in qualifying and final rounds.
7. Costume and makeup will be permitted but not required.
8. Quartets will be known to judges by number only.

- Note: There is nothing about needing to woodshed arrangements. This has never been a printed rule.
- Per Dec 1942 "ReChording" Glenn Howard did arrangements for Capitol City Four.
- We know with the 1942 Elastic Four that Frank Thorne arranged their music.



1939 - QUALIFYING

- Qualifying AT National Contest in Ballrooms
 - 23 Quartets competed
- Top 15 in the Finals
- The judges were
 - Educators Harry Gowans and Oliver Hodges of Tulsa, OK
 - Dr. Harry McKown, Pittsburgh, PA
 - Raymond Fields, Guthrie, OK, State Legion Commander
 - Oklahoma's Lt. Gov. James E. Berry



CONTEST RESULTS: WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED IN 1939?

- Deac Martin was commissioned to write a book documenting our 1st 10 years as a society
- It's clear that the Bartlesville Barflies won and Capitol City Four were 2nd. After that, there is discrepancy

which made strong bids for National and International championships and became the Flying L Ranch Quartet, "mascots" of Oklahoma's Governor Roy J. Turner and rancher Bill Likins.

Second place went to the Capital City Four, Springfield, Ill., composed of a farmer, writer, grocer and carpenter. The Shell Quartet of Arkansas City, Kans. came in third. The Flatfoot Four of Oklahoma City, with Police Chief Granville Scanland singing bari, took fourth. Topeka's State Journal quartet won fifth place with "I Had a Dream" and "Little Sir Echo", and their fans blamed the modernism of the latter.

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for their lower ranking. Twenty-three quartets competed.

What all this meant in opening long desired possibilities to men throughout the country who read newspaper reports of the Tulsa con-



CONTEST RESULTS: WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED IN 1939?

■ Harmonizer Mar 1943

THE HARMONIZER 11

Winners in Previous S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. National Contests
(The Society has held four National Contests)

	1939 at Tulsa	1940 at New York	1941 at St. Louis	1942 at Grand Rapids
First Place	Bartlesville Barflies Bartlesville, Okla.	Flat Foot Four Oklahoma City, Okla.	Chord Busters Tulsa, Okla.	Elastic Four Chicago, Ill.
Second Place	Capitol City Four Springfield, Ill.	Bartlesville Barflies Bartlesville, Okla.	Barber Pole Cats Kansas City, Mo.	Barber Pole Cats Kansas City, Mo.
Third Place	Flat Foot Four Oklahoma City, Okla.	Four Barbers (Commuters) New York, N. Y.	Phillips 66 Bartlesville, Okla.	Phillips 66 Bartlesville, Okla.
Fourth Place	None	Kansas City Police Quartet Kansas City, Mo.	Harmony Kings Springfield, Ill.	Harmony Kings Springfield, Ill.
Fifth Place	None	N. Y. City Police Quartet New York, N. Y.	Capitol City Four Springfield, Ill.	The Four Misfits Chicago, Ill.

■ Harmonizer Sep 1943

THE HARMONIZER 17

Winners in S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. National Contests
(The Society has held five National Contests)

	1939 at Tulsa	1940 at New York	1941 at St. Louis	1942 at Grand Rapids	1943 at Chicago
First Place	Bartlesville Barflies Bartlesville, Okla.	Flat Foot Four Oklahoma City, Okla.	Chord Busters Tulsa, Okla.	Elastic Four Chicago, Ill.	Four Harmonizers Chicago, Ill.
Second Place	Capitol City Four Springfield, Ill.	Bartlesville Barflies Bartlesville, Okla.	Barber Pole Cats Kansas City, Mo.	Barber Pole Cats Kansas City, Mo.	Barber Pole Cats Kansas City, Mo.
Third Place	Flat Foot Four Oklahoma City, Okla.	Four Barbers (Commuters) New York, N. Y.	Phillips 66 Bartlesville, Okla.	Phillips 66 Bartlesville, Okla.	Main Streeters Tulsa, Okla.
Fourth Place	None	Kansas City, Mo. Police Quartet	Harmony Kings Springfield, Ill.	Harmony Kings Springfield, Ill.	Aristocrats St. Louis, Mo.
Fifth Place	None	New York City Police Quartet	Capitol City Four Springfield, Ill.	The Four Misfits Chicago, Ill.	Harmony Halls Grand Rapids, Mich.

MORE EVIDENCE

No. XIII

Appendix No. XIII SPEBSQSA CHAMPION QUARTETS

1939

CHAMPIONS—Bartlesville Barflies, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
2ND Place — Capitol City Four, Springfield, Ill.
3RD Place — Flat Foot Four, Oklahoma City, Okla.

1940

CHAMPIONS — Flat Foot Four, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
2ND Place — Bartlesville Barflies, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
3RD Place — Commuters, New York City
4TH Place — Kansas City Police Quartet, Kansas City, Mo.
5TH Place — New York City Police Quartet, New York City

1941

CHAMPIONS — Chord Busters, Tulsa, Oklahoma
2ND Place — Kansas City Barberpole Cats, Kansas City, Mo.
3RD Place — Phillips 66 Barflies, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
4TH Place — Harmony Kings, Springfield, Illinois
5TH Place — Capitol City Four, Springfield, Illinois

1942

CHAMPIONS — Elastic Four, Chicago, Illinois
2ND Place — Kansas City Barberpole Cats, Kansas City, Mo.

BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL MEDALIST QUARTETS 1939—1950

* Designates Int'l. Champions.
 () Figure in parentheses indicates number of times quartet won Medal Ranking.

Quartet	Contact	Quartet	Contact
ANTLERS (2)—Gay L. Stepper, 1928 W. Durbrecht St., Flint 4, Michigan.		*GARDEN STATE QUARTET (2)—John J. Brady, 110 Lincoln St., Jersey City 7, New Jersey.	
ARISTOCRATS (1)—Dr. Norman Robert, 936 Arcade Bldg., St. Louis, Missouri.		GIPPS-AMSELIN FOUR (1)—John Henson, 934 E. Olive St., Bloomington, Illinois.	
*BARTLESVILLE BARFLIES (4) Later known as the "Phillips 66 Barflies"—Norman Koles, c/o Phillips Petroleum Co., Bartlesville, Okla.		*HARMONY HALLS (2)—Ray Hall, 341 Somerset Drive, N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.	
*BUFFALO BILLS (1)—Albert Shea, 61 W. Cleveland Drive, Buffalo 11, New York.		HARMONY KINGS (2)—Springfield, Ill.	
CAPITOL CITY FOUR (2)—Springfield, Ill.		MSLO'S (1)—Paul Abendroff, 6080 W. Greenfield Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin.	
*CHORD BUSTERS (1)—Dr. N. T. Kessler, 2811 E. 18th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma.		KANSAS CITY POLICE QUARTET (1)—Kansas City, Mo.	
CHORDLIERS (2)—Walter E. Chambers, 3274 - 32nd St., Rock Island, Illinois.		KANSAS CITY BARBERPOLE CATS (2) Later known as "The Sevensides"—Bert F. Phelps, 6635 Park Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri.	
CLEF DWELLERS (2)—Harold Rosen, 15499 Sussex Ave., Detroit 27, Michigan.		LAMPGLINTERS (1)—J. Cecil Rowe, Lamp Dept., Gen. Elec. Co., New Park, Cleveland, Ohio.	
COMMUTERS (1)—New York City.		MAINSTREETERS (1)—George McCoslin, 1144 N. Main St., Tulsa, Oklahoma.	
CONTINENTALS (1)—John Bishop, 3073 Ada Ave., Muskegon, Michigan.		*MID-STATES FOUR (1)—Morris S. Mendon, 411 Everett Rd., Glenview, Illinois.	
*DOCTORS OF HARMONY (2)—Max E. Cripe, 412 S. 2nd St., Elkhart, Indiana.		*MUSKIE (1)—E. V. "Cy" Perkins, 22 E. Maple St., Chicago 18, Illinois.	
*ELASTIC FOUR (1)—Frank H. Thomas, 6216 W. 86th Place, Chicago 28, Illinois.		NEW YORK CITY POLICE QUARTET (1)—William Danner, 175 Columbus Avenue, Yonkers, New York.	
*FLAT FOOT FOUR (2)—Sam Stegoff, c/o Police Department, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.		NOTE BLENDERS (1)—Walter Eby, 12553 Kenrick Avenue, Detroit 4, Michigan.	
FOUR CHORDERS (1)—Art Potomian, 792 Elton St., London, Ontario.		*PITTSBURGHERS (1)—J. M. Ward, 243 Bailey Ave., Pittsburgh 11, Penna.	
*FOUR HARMONIZERS (1)—Charles Schwab, 3556 S. Palmdale Blvd., Chicago, Illinois.		SONGMASTERS (1)—Paul M. McAnis, 1823 Bay St., Lansing 10, Michigan.	
FOUR SHADES OF HARMONY (1)—Conway Hornell, c/o Harold Beauty Meet, Terre Haute, Indiana.		VARSITY FOUR (1)—Ed Enslay, 169 Fullerton, Detroit 2, Michigan.	
		WESTINGHOUSE QUARTET (1)—Harry W. Smith, P. O. Box 1617, Pittsburgh, Penna.	

PRIZES and AWARDS

WINNING QUARTET—Title of *World's Champion Barber Shop Quartet*, with official rights to all emoluments, gratuities, appurtenances and benefits appertaining thereto, certified by credentials establishing this claim in all countries of the world (including the British Empire and its colonies and the North and South Poles but excepting The Nazi Reich, Latavia and the Principality of Monaco Commission to each member as Colonel on the staff of Hon. Leon C. "Red" Phillips, governor of Oklahoma Audition for movie or radio purposes Suitable cash prizes.

SECOND BEST QUARTET—World's Championship Barber Shop Quartet *Ranar-Up Title*, with all rights, credentials, et al. . . . Adoption of each member into Pawnee Indian Tribe Movie or radio audition Suitable cash prize.

THIRD BEST QUARTET—World's Championship Barber Shop Quartet *Consolation Title*, with proper credentials, et al. . . . Commission to each member as "Little Colonel" on staff of Hon. James E. Berry, Lieutenant-Governor of Oklahoma Movie or radio audition Suitable cash prize.

THE ALSO RANS—A box of throat lozenges and best wishes for the next Convention.

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The Society for the Preservation and Arrangement
 of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.
 20019 Packard Avenue :: Detroit 28, Michigan

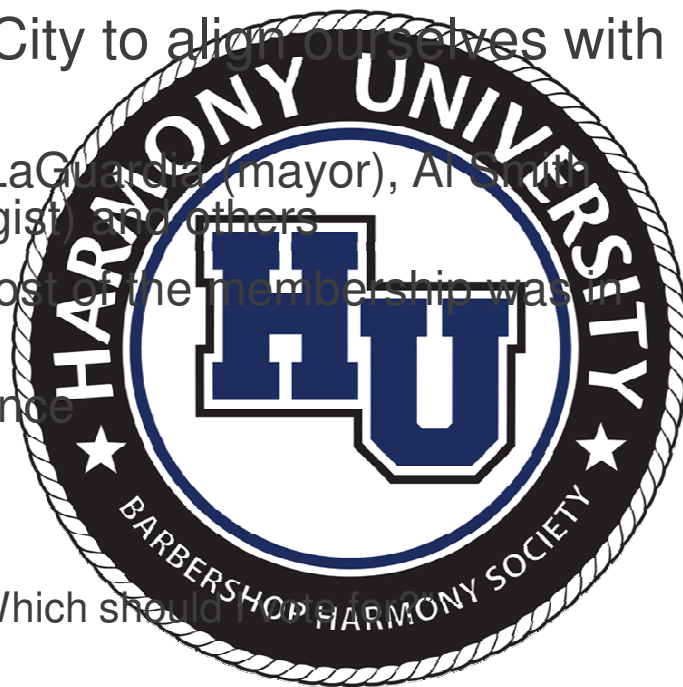
SING OFF TO DETERMINE THE WINNERS!

- A sing-off was held between the **Bartlesville Barflies** and the **Capitol City Four** to assist the judges in determining the winner.



1940

- Decided to have the convention in New York City to align ourselves with the New York City Parks Department contest
 - Again, celebrity/dignitary judges including Fiorello LaGuardia (mayor), Al Smith (Former NY governor), Sigmund Spaeth (musicologist) and others
 - Not well attended by SPEBSQSA membership – most of the membership was the Midwest
 - Top 5 vs Top 3 which has been carried forth ever since
 - Same rules as 1939 for SPEBSQSA contest
 - “Gee, Sig, they all sound the same to me” *
 - Per Heritage of Harmony “They all sound good to me. Which should I prefer?”



1941

- The National Board of Directors decided that from now on that SPEBSQSA contests would be judged by SPEBSQSA judges
- Joe Stern, future Society Treasurer and first Editor of the “ReChordings” (what would be the “Harmonizer”), had been singing barbershop long before the society was formed. He was asked to come up with some definitions of barbershop



JOE STERN DEFINED THE BARBERSHOP STYLE FOR SPEBSQSA

THE SOCIETY FOR THE
PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT
OF BARBER SHOP QUARTET SINGING IN AMERICA

Joe Stern

Kansas City, Mo., May 31, 1913

TO ALL NATIONAL OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS:

Since the rise and growth of our Society, I note there is some misunderstanding, and some confusion of opinion as to what kind of harmony constitutes barbershop singing. I was raised on it, but I find it difficult to put my conception of barbershop harmony into words. However, I want to set forth, what seems to me to be a few fundamentals of this kind of harmony.

1. Real barbershop harmony contemplates four part harmony, that is to say chords with four different notes, as far as possible.
2. There should be a minimum of doubling. By doubling I mean where two of the parts are on identical notes, or an octave apart on identical notes.
3. High bass is preferable at all times. Low bass (sometimes called "church bass") is not necessary to place harmony and should be discouraged. When times the bass can take his note exactly one octave below the normal range for the note, however, the note at the high end of this octave is best for close harmony.
4. Lead, tenor and baritone, never double with each other at any time, that is to say, at no time do any of these three parts ever duplicate or sing on the same note. Every single chord struck by these three parts should consist of three different notes, and there are no exceptions to this rule.
5. The bass at times will double with each of these three other parts, usually on notes below the part which he is doubling with. However, such doubling should be kept to a minimum at all times. Four part harmony is preferable, whenever possible.
6. Close harmony chords are best. A chord with an extremely high tenor, and a very low bass, produces a long range chord, and while this sort of chord may be alright for an orchestra or piano, it is not good in a barbershop quartet of four male voices, because such a chord is difficult for the listener to comprehend, and it does not carry the punch and drive of close harmony chords.
7. It is undesirable, in fact, sometimes expedient, to change the lead melody in order to improve the harmony.
8. PITCH - If a song is pitched too low, the harmony will sound "muddy". If pitched too high, it may cause the singers to show evidence of straining. A medium high pitch will cause the harmony to "ring clear" and this kind of a pitch is best - just high enough so that no one has to strain.
9. No piano or other accompaniment is permissible with a barbershop quartet. For the reason that a quartet should strive to smooth out the rough spots themselves, so that no accompaniment is necessary to cover them up. Besides, the accompaniment detracts from the ability of the quartet.
10. In judging a barbershop quartet's work while obviously should be taken into account, I believe that a small ratio of points is sufficient for this, and that no measure of success should be placed on the quality of good old fashioned barbershop harmony.
11. Generally speaking, if you can distinguish which individual is singing, keep harmony level as close, when a quartet is singing at a distance of about fifty feet, then it is an indication that the blending of voices is not good. In other words, at this distance it should be impossible to pick out who is singing what part. In a quartet quartet it is impossible to pick them out even if placed much closer than fifty feet.

I am sending this to all the National Officers and Directors. Maybe some of you can define barbershop harmony better. I shall appreciate hearing from some of you and look forward with lots of pleasure to seeing you in St. Louis.

Sincerely yours,

Joe, E. Stern, Pres. Kansas City Chapter
2nd Temple Building, Kansas City, Missouri.

... I was raised on it, but I find it difficult to put my conception of barbershop harmony into words. <snip> what seems to be a few fundamentals of this kind of harmony.

Maybe some of you can define barbershop harmony better.

- No instruments
- High bass vs church bass
- Contemplates 4 parts at all times
- Expedient to change the melody to improve the harmony
- Major emphasis on quality singing
- Can't distinguish who is singing what part



1941 NATIONAL CONTEST

- Three Categories

- Harmony and Blending 50%
- Song Selection and Originality 25%
- Stage Presence 25%

- Joe Stern: *“while showmanship should be taken into account, I believe that a small ratio of points is sufficient for this, and that major emphasis should be placed on the quality of good old fashioned barbershop harmony.”*

- Judges are SPEBSQSA Members of some notoriety



1941 NATIONAL CONTEST

- Judges provide a single score for each quartet, weighting their score against all three categories
- There are still no “preliminaries” prior to the National Contest
- Top 3 from each ballroom at the National Contest move to the finals with 15 in the Finals



ATTITUDES ABOUT SONGS

- There is no evidence in the rules that any songs are judged negatively based upon date of publication
- However, one interesting find in a 1944 Harmonizer by a competitor suggests that at the beginning with society judges there was more concern when a song was written. This could be a mix of myth and reality

“Doc” Enmeier, tenor of the Chord Busters, (1941), notes that the “restrictions” on song types that prevailed in 1941 and before have been considerably eased. He says that at that time opinion seemed to hold that any song less than a quarter of a century old couldn’t possibly be “barbershop.” We gather that “Doc” thinks the change in this type of thinking has been for the better in allowing a greater variety of songs to be used.



CHAIRMAN OF JUDGES MAURICE (MOLLY) REAGAN IN WORKING WITH JUDGING PANELS

"Men, let us keep well in mind that our most important task is to pick the best quartet, as we hear them, to represent our Society as champion for the next 12 months."



LEADING INTO 1942

- Immediately after the 1941 convention and contest, surveys were conducted about what should be evaluated in a contest
 - Harmony Accuracy – 25%
 - Song Arrangement – 25%
 - Voice Expression – 30%
 - Song Selection – 10%
 - Stage Presence – 10%



1942 CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

- 25% 1. Harmony Accuracy.
This shall be defined as, "Absence of discord". Discord is produced when one or more voices are off pitch, or when a chord is sung the notes of which do not produce pleasing harmony.
- 25% 2. Song Arrangement.
This item shall be judged according to the degree in which a quartet effectively includes pleasing, difficult, and original chords, and combinations of chords, as opposed to simple straight harmony.
- 30% 3. Voice Expression.
This item shall cover the quality of the voices, the blending and balance of voices, use of volume, phrasing, precision of attack and release, enunciation, pitching of the song within the limits of the quartet's voice range, and pitch maintenance.
- 10% 4. Song Selection.
Songs selected should be typical barber shop songs, songs that adapt themselves to barber shop harmony.
- 10% 5. Stage Presentation.
Excellence of poise and personality shall be the main consideration in judging stage presentation. Acting, "mugging", and injection of comedy, are immaterial. Four men neatly dressed in any outfit will not be penalized over four elaborately costumed singers.

1942 – GRAND RAPIDS CONTEST

- Similar to previous contests
 - National Board appoints and approves all judges
 - Rules mailed to competitors (audiences don't know the rules)
 - “Elimination” contests around the society were encouraged to reduce the number of competitors in Grand Rapids
 - 60 quartets competed in “Elimination” rounds in five ballroom contests throughout Friday and Saturday
 - Finalists from 1941 St. Louis contest split amongst the 5 ballrooms
 - Three quartets from each ballroom advance to the Finals, regardless of “score”
 - New – 6 minutes maximum singing time (no description of penalty for second judge)
 - 12 Judges in the Finals (all providing single scores for the quartets) and 6 alternates



1942 – GRAND RAPIDS CONTEST

- In the rules it stated that it would announce the results from 15th to 1st. In the Harmonizer (ReChording) it states that this did not happen – quartets 6-15 would remain a mystery.
- Although past champions have been eligible prior to this year to compete, none did this time.



“The basis of grading is not near as important as the selection of competent judges”

Hal Staab

1943

- After Elastic Four won in 1942, they announced they would do what others had done and not compete. This ultimately led to the rule of “Once a Champion, Always a Champion”
- Same categories as the year before
- 80 quartets signing up
- Same elimination process
- 25 Judges were identified for the contest; 11 served
- Still no announcements of quartets 6-15



1943 OUTCOMES

- First Contest & Judging Committee initiated (Thorne Chair)
- Two major issues were identified in the 1943 contest
 - Sometimes the quality in the ballroom eliminations weren't equally weighted (some were stronger fields than others) – pushing towards scoring everyone and rank ordering improves 3 automatic qualifiers
 - Judges were finding it impossible to provide scores for five different categories
- Lots of Harmonizer articles defending judges now appear
 - Rumors and anecdotes about biasing
- Starting to see more evidence of local contests – nothing authorized by SPEBSQSA National Board



RULES VS GUIDELINES

- *THE MECHANICS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY*

- *Maurice (Molly) Reagan*

- Harmonizer – Vol 3, No. 1 (Sept 1943)

- *The fact that the above are Guides only must be stressed. They are not presented as rules. Any attempt to lay down unchangeable rules would limit the expansion into new and untried harmony fields. That can't happen here. Not in this Society.*



NEXT TIME

- In our next episode, we will
 - Review the rules from 1944-1950
 - Evolution of the C&J program itself
 - Evolution of the regional contests (ultimately Districts)
- 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 kkban@charter.net



