



Rules for Solo Piping Competitions

1 General Rules

1.1 Purpose

The BAG was founded with the aim of promoting the Piping and Drumming scene in Germany and continuously raising the level of play by organizing and supporting various competitions. Since 1990, several competitions have been established in Germany. These rules are intended to ensure consistency, but above all, clarity in the design of the competition among competitors, organizers and judges.

Competitions are divided into different levels (Grades). This is to ensure that players of the same level compete against each other. In addition, organizers can offer different stages of individual disciplines.

1.2 Validity

The present revision of the rules is valid from the 2018 season. The Solo-Board of the BAG is responsible for updating and interpreting the rules as well as final decisions (solo-board@bagev.de). The old regulations lose their validity from the 2018 season. Beginning and end of a season correspond to the beginning and end of the calendar year.

2 Rules for organizers

The organizers of competitions appoint at least one contact person who is authorized by the BAG to make decisions that will become necessary on the day of the competition. Judges and helpers must be informed about this person (s). The contact persons must ensure that the order of the contestants in the individual game levels is announced in advance of the event and stewards are deployed to ensure the smooth running of the event. A short-term registration on the day of the event itself is possible after individual agreement with the organizer.

In addition, at least one member of the BAG Management Board and / or the Solo-Board should be present at these BAG events.

The judges should rate at least the first six places of each event, depending on the overall size of the field. The organizer shall inform the judge. The organizer also informs the judge about the requirements of the respective events.

The placement of the first six places must be published right after the award ceremony. In the week following the competition, a list of all competitors, arranged according to levels and results, must be sent to the BAG Solo-Board (solo-board@bagev.de).

Critique sheets must be handed out to the competitors directly after the award ceremony. However, organizers are not obliged to forward critique sheets to previously departed competitors.

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Organizers provide tuning rooms for indoor competitions, which are available to the participant about 30 minutes before the performance. Outdoor Competitions uses an open space near the stage.

Organizers should grant discounts to BAG members on start-up fees.

The organizers are free to offer further competitions beyond the events mentioned here, e.g. Practice Chanter or Open Competitions. The participants must be informed about the valid rules for these events when registering.

3 Rules for Participants

3.1 Classification ("Grading")

Newcomers to the competition will be given the opportunity to self-rating their skill level once. As a rule, this is done with the first competition application. In case of uncertainty, consultation with the Solo-Board is recommended.

When you grade yourself, please consider, that grade 5 is for bagpipe beginners only and it is not the entry level for players who take part at their first competition. Intermediate and advanced players go to grade 4 minimum or higher.

The distinction between professional and amateur competitions usual in Scotland or North America does not exist in Germany. As long as this is the case, players who have successfully participated in professional competitions will automatically be classified in Grade 1 (Light Music and Ceol Mor). When the new involved open grade will be offered at live competitions as well, professional players will be taking part there and not in the amateur grades. Amateur players are allowed to take part in the open grade, but professional players is a participation in grade 1 allowed, when there is no open grade.

The player usually stays in the respective game level, at least until the end of the season (end of the calendar year). A change of the classification (Up- or Down- Grading) can only be made on request to the Solo-Board. For this purpose, references must be submitted (competition results, international results either, certificates, audio or video recordings), which justify the change of the level of play. The final decision is up to the solo board. Unauthorized up / down grading or compulsory up grading after winning a competition is not possible.

At the end of a season - even if no request is made by the player - the Solo-Board reserves the right to review the classification of individual players and, if necessary, to adapt it to the respective level of play. In exceptional cases, this can also happen during a current season.

The grades in Light Music and Piobaireachd should be considered separately so that, for example, a player playing Light music in Grade 2 might play Piobaireachd in Grade 4.

The BAG Solo-Board, with the support of the organizers, will try to ensure compliance with the rules. However, it is requested that all participants abide by the rules and personal grades to the best of their knowledge and belief. The Solo-Board reserves the right to disqualify players in case of non-compliance with the rules for the respective event or withdraw a supposed victory.

The BAG and the Solo-Board will maintain and regularly review and update a list of all competitors and their current grade. This will be made available to the organizers before competitions so that they too can check compliance. The list of grades is for publication.

3.2 Further rules

On the day of the events, the competitors will contact the organizers before the start of the competition. During the competition and award ceremony, the competitor is asked to wear Highland dress.

In online competitions is highland dress encouraged. When it isn't possible in individual cases, an appropriate dress is desirable. Hier some ideas what highland dress can be or what we mean with appropriate dress:

Dress 1:

- band dress:

kilt, kilt hoses, flashes, brogues, sporran, shirt, tie, waist (jacket can be if you want).

Dress 2:

- light dress:

kilt, kilt hoses, flashes, brogues, sporran, polo shirt, perhaps kilt belt.

Dress 3:

- ladies dress:

kilt, pair of tights, pumps oder ladies brogues, no sporran, polo shirt or nice top, perhaps kilt belt.

Dress 4:

- appropriate dress:

this must not be the highland dress, it can be an appropriate dress, for example black trousers, white shirt / polo shirt, or similar. Not appropriate dress would be sponge bob shirt, shorts and slippers. Sport trousers and similar are no appropriate dress.

In the case of pieces or settings that differ greatly from the standard, the player should, in his own interest, submit the notes to be presented to the judge.

Competitors should use the opportunity to review the scores with the judges.

Judges are allowed to take part at competition events. They have to consider the rules. They are not allowed to take part at events and grades where they are judging.

4 Levels of Solo Piping

The terms in Solo Piping are:

Light Music *Piobaireachd*

Practice Chanter

Grade 5

Grade 4 Grade 4

Grade 3 Grade 3

Grade 2 Grade 2

Grade 1 Grade 1

Open Grade Open Grade

If the number of competitors is small, the organizer may reserve the right to combine degrees, whereby the requirements should be based on the respective lower level. It is desired that at least one Light Music and one Piobaireachd event are offered for each level. The events of each level and the requirements for the Solo Piping Competition are the following:

4.1 Light Music

For all events is required that the tunes are played by heart without music sheets!

Practice Chanter:

- Slow March or Slow Air: minimum 2 parts, every part has to be repeated, own choice.
- March (2/4, 4/4, 3/4 oder 6/8): minimum 2 Teile, every part has to be repeated, (apart from 4/4), own choice.

Grade 5:

- Slow March or Slow Air: min. 2 parts, each repeated, own choice
- March (2/4, 4/4, 3/4 or 6/8): min. 2 parts, which are repeated (exception: 4/4 March), own choice

Grade 4:

- 2/4 March: min. 4 parts, which are repeated each time, own choice
- Strathspey / Reel : min. 2 parts each, own choice
- 6/8 March: min. 4 parts, each repeated, own choice

Grade 3:

- M / S / R: consisting of a minimum of a four-part „competition type" 2/4 March, and one at least two-part Strathspey and Reel of own choice
- Slow Air or Slow March/Jig : consisting of a at least two-part Slow Air / March, where each part is repeated and a min. four -part Jig , own choice

Grade 2:

- M / S / R: consisting of one at least each four-part „competition type" 2/4 March, Strathspey and Reel of own choice
- Hornpipe / Jig : each at least four parts, own choice of piece.

Grade 1:

- M / S / R: the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice (3 at least four-parted 2/4 Marches, Strathspeys and Reels), the judge composes the set
- Hornpipe / Jig : the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice (3 at least four-parted 2/4 Marches, Strathspeys and Reels), the judge composes the set

Open-Grade:

M/S/R: the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice (3 at least four-parted 2/4 Marches, Strathspeys and Reels), the judge composes the set.

Hornpipe/Jig: the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice (3 at least four-parted Hornpipes and Jigs), the judge composes the set.

Medley: the player submits a medley of his own choice between 4 and 6 minutes, including change in tempo and time signature.

6/8-March: the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice (every tune has to be four-parted). The judge select two and the order to play.

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It is, in any case, only complete tunes to play. A list of song examples and suggestions can be found in the appendix.

In online competitions the rules of the tune selection in grade 1 and open grade could be different. It could be that you can play tunes of own choice and no selection by the judges.

4.2 Piobaireachd / Ceol Mor

Grade 4:

- The Ground / Urlar of a Piobaireachd is to play, own choice of tune.

Grade 3:

- The Ground / Urlar and the following two variations of a Piobaireachd are to play, own tune selection. As independent variation counts e.g. the doubling of a Ground or the singling or doubling one of a variation.

Grade 2:

- A complete Piobaireachd is to play, own choice of tune.

Grade 1:

- the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice, the judge select the tune to play.

Open Grade:

- the player submits 3 tunes of his own choice, the judge select the tune to play.

A list of song examples and suggestions can be found in the appendix.

In online competitions the rules of the tune selection in grade 1 and open grade could be different. It could be that you can play tunes of own choice and no selection by the judges.

The Board and the Solo-Board of the Bagpipe Association of Germany e.V.

Kladrum, the 28th October 2017, reworked: 09th January 2021.