

BARBERSHOP IN HARMONY

CONTEST RULES For UK MIXED QUARTETS



**Published by
The BinH nominated representatives of BABS,
LABBS and Sweet Adelines Region 31**

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CONTEST HOSTED BY LABBS

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DEFINITION OF THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterised by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homorhythmic texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonising above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonising notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

Barbershop music features songs with understandable lyrics and easily singable melodies, whose tones clearly define a tonal centre and imply major and minor chords and barbershop (dominant and secondary dominant) seventh chords that often resolve around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. Barbershop music also features a balanced and symmetrical form. The basic song and its harmonisation are embellished by the arranger to provide appropriate support of the song's theme and to close the song effectively.

Barbershop singers adjust pitches to achieve perfectly tuned chords in just intonation while remaining true to the established tonal centre. Artistic singing in the barbershop style exhibits a fullness or expansion of sound, precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Ideally, these elements are natural, not manufactured and free from apparent effort.

The performance of barbershop music uses appropriate musical and visual methods to convey the theme of the song and provide the audience with an emotionally satisfying and entertaining experience. The musical and visual delivery is from the heart, believable, and sensitive to the song and its arrangement throughout. The most stylistic performance artistically melds together the musical and visual aspects to create and sustain the illusions suggested by the music.

OFFICIAL BARBERSHOP IN HARMONY MIXED QUARTET CONTEST RULES

FEBRUARY 2022

FOREWORD

These rules apply to BinH mixed quartet contests only. When the contest takes place at a LABBS Convention, in all matters not specifically covered by these rules, the current published Official LABBS Contest Rules and LABBS Contest and Judging Handbook will apply, which are in line with the BHS. Thereafter, LABBS Education & Judging Committee (E&J) may exercise reasonable latitude and prerogative provided that the established ethics and policies of LABBS are closely observed.

ARTICLE I: ELIGIBILITY

A. Quartets

1. Each member shall be a fully paid up full member of LABBS, BABS or Sweet Adelines Region 31. A competing Mixed Quartet must contain at least one female and at least one male, of any gender expression. A mixed quartet may contain up to four Club at Large/Don Amos Club/Chapter at Large members.
2. At least three members of the competing quartet must be UK residents.
3. The Mixed Quartet name and individual membership must be verified by the contest manager, as appointed by the hosting BinH organisation. Such registration must include the same personnel that enter the contest.
4. No professional quartet shall be eligible to enter. A quartet shall be considered professional when its members' principal means of income is from fulfilling quartet engagements.
5. A Mixed Quartet may be registered and be eligible to compete in the BinH Mixed Quartet Contest with any number of quartet champion members from LABBS, BABS and Sweet Adelines Region 31 national contests.
6. Previous Mixed Quartet contest winners are eligible to compete again in any Mixed Quartet contest run by any of the three UK barbershop associations.
7. It is permitted to sing in more than one competing quartet in the same Mixed Quartet contest; no special provision will be made in the contest draw to avoid scheduling issues.
8. Personnel Change After Qualifying: To remain eligible for subsequent rounds (if applicable) within a competition cycle/year, at least three members from the mixed quartet should remain constant.
9. Failure to comply with the above will result in forfeiture by the Chairman of Judges.

10. Right of appeal in any matter pertaining to eligibility shall be to the LABBS Education & Judging Committee, whose decision shall be final.

ARTICLE II: CONTEST ENTRY PROCEDURES

1. Contest entry forms shall be published on the LABBS website. In addition, the contest entry forms will be promoted by BABS and Sweet Adelines Region 31 to their members.
2. Completed information regarding song titles, copyright compliance and contestant announcement information must be submitted via the manner instructed by the date specified.
3. All contestants are required to observe the copyright laws in the acquisition, arranging, learning, and performance of songs and arrangements.
4. The contestant reserves the right to change their songs or order of performance up until two hours prior to the start of each relevant contest. The contestant must inform CA if the order of performance of their songs is different to their original entry form, or if a new song(s) to those on their submitted songsheet will be performed. The contestant must also provide proof of copyright compliance for any new song.

ARTICLE III: SCORING CATEGORIES

Each scoring judge awards a score from 0 to 100 for each song. All contestants shall be judged in the three scoring categories:

A. Music

The Music judge evaluates the song and arrangement, as performed. The judge adjudicates the suitability of the material to the barbershop style and the performer's musicianship in bringing the song and arrangement to life. The quality of any barbershop performance depends largely on the accurate execution and artistic delivery of the consonant harmony. The judge adjudicates the performer's sensitivity and demonstrated understanding in handling these musical elements, skilfully developed, delivered, and effectively integrated in support of the musical theme(s). Furthermore, when considering the song and arrangement, the Music judge takes into account musical elements provided by the composer and arranger, such as melody, lyrics, rhythm, embellishments, implied harmony and stylistic progressions.

B. Performance

The Performance judge evaluates how effectively a performer brings the song to life - that is, the believability of the theme in its musical and visual setting. They respond to both the vocal and visual aspects of the performance, but principally evaluates the interaction of those aspects as they work together to create the image of the song. The Performance judge adjudicates the quality and appropriateness of the overall

effect, evaluating everything about the performance that contributes to emotional impact upon the audience.

C. Singing

The Singing judge evaluates the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the barbershop style. This is accomplished through precise intonation, a high degree of vocal skill and appropriate vocal expression, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble. Mastering these elements creates a fullness, and expansion of sound, and when combined with expressive vocal skills will convey a feeling of genuine emotion to support the message of the song.

ARTICLE IV: CONTEST JUDGES AND ADMINISTRATORS

1. The Contest Administrators and scoring judges for Preliminary Round, Semi-Final and Final Rounds shall be appointed from the official registers of Registered Judges and Administrators of BABS and LABBS by the LABBS Education & Judging Committee through the respective Category Directors. The determination of the number of Judges/Administrators for a given contest shall be made by the LABBS Education & Judging Committee.
2. The E&J Committee reserves the right to appoint registered judges from other associations if required.
3. Expenses for judges and administrators are payable according to the current published LABBS Financial Policy.

ARTICLE V: TYPES OF CONTESTS

A. All Mixed Quartet Contests

1. Contestants should prepare two different songs to perform in one appearance.
2. Song Repetition
 - a) *Substantial Part Repeated:* Within all rounds of a specific contest, a contestant may not repeat a song or a substantial part of a song. In the context of these rules, the term "song" may refer to a single song or a medley in which major portions of two or more songs are used. A parody of a song previously sung would be considered repeating a song.
 - b) *Recommendation by the Music Judge(s):* A Music Judge shall recommend forfeiture to the contest administrator if a contestant repeats a song or a substantial portion from one of its songs in another song. If there are two or more Music Judges, the decision to forfeit must be unanimous.
 - c) *Recommendation Unanimous:* When the decision to forfeit is unanimous, the contest administrator shall record as zero the contestant's entire score in all categories for the repeated rendition of the song(s).

- d) *Recommendation not unanimous*: When the decision to forfeit is not unanimous, the score(s) for the recommending judge(s) shall be recorded as zero.
3. Convention Registrations: All contestants shall hold either a full registration, or at minimum a registration for the day on which the mixed contest is held.

B. Mixed Quartet Preliminary Round Contest

1. The BinH comprising representatives from the nominated bodies of BABS, LABBS and Sweet Adelines Region 31 shall determine whether or not a preliminary round contest shall be held and if so, where and when it should take place.
2. The qualification criteria or number of contestants going forward from a Preliminary round contest to the Final round shall be determined by the BinH comprising representatives from the nominated bodies of BABS, LABBS and Sweet Adelines Region 31.

C. Mixed Quartet Final Round Contest

1. The Mixed Quartet Final Round contest shall be held in conjunction with the LABBS Annual Convention and shall be under the general supervision of the Education & Judging Committee.
2. Songs from a preliminary round may be repeated in the Final Round.

D. Selection of Mixed Quartet Representatives

1. A minimum score of 70% is required to be eligible for selection to represent the UK at contests held in Europe.
2. Representatives for a "World" or European Mixed Quartet Contests will be selected only from those quartets competing in the nominated 'UK Final' contest, previous contest results will not be considered. The barbershop associations hosting the World and European contests may consider extra wildcard entries at their own discretion.
3. Selection of Mixed Quartet Representatives is at the discretion of BinH, comprising representatives from the nominated bodies of BABS, LABBS and Sweet Adelines Region 31.
4. In the event of a representative quartet withdrawing from a World or European contest, substitutions may be made as long as the minimum score was reached. This is at the discretion of the BinH team comprising representatives from the nominated bodies of BABS, LABBS and Sweet Adelines Region 31.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICIAL RESULTS

A. Official Scoring Summary

An official scoring summary shall be published and shall show the contest date, the scores for each song in each category for each contestant, the total score for each contestant, the names of the songs and the names of the official panel members.

ARTICLE VII: RANKING OF CONTESTANTS

A. Ranking

Contestants shall be ranked in accordance with the cumulative total scores of points awarded by the panel of judges.

B. Scores

1. Reporting After Performance

The judges will report their scores to the contest administrator immediately following each contestant's performance.

2. Statistical Variances

During each contest round, the contest administrator will notify each category if any statistical variances exist (where one score is statistically higher or lower than the rest of the panel for a given song). The judges in that category will review their notes and all scores provided by the panel for either song given in the performance. At that time, the judges in that category can change their scores for either song or leave them stand. The contest administrator will make any changes indicated and thereafter the scores are official. (See Position Paper IX. Statistical Variances in the Contest and Judging Handbook for more details).

C. Ties

1. First Place Ties

A tie for first place shall be broken by ranking the contestants according to their overall scores in the Singing category or, only if that does not break the tie, according to their overall scores in the Performance category. If a tie still exists, the tie shall stand.

2. Other Than First Place

Except for first place ties, tie scores shall not be broken, and the official scoring summary shall list the tied contestants in alphabetical order by the name of the quartet or chorus, as appropriate.

3. **Medals**

When a tie situation occurs, any medal(s) specified in Article V that immediately follow(s) the tie ranking will not be awarded. E.g.: With a tie for 2nd place, medals are awarded to places 1, 2, 2 and the second place trophy is shared. No bronze medals or trophy would be awarded in this example.

D. Ineligibility/disqualification

1. **Reranking**

In the event a contestant is declared ineligible or disqualified for any rule violation after the results are announced or published, their rank order shall be filled by the next ranked contestant and a revised official scoring summary will be published. All remaining lower-ranked contestants will have their rank order adjusted accordingly.

2. **Return and redistribution of Medals and Awards**

If the disqualified or ineligible contestant was given medals and/or other award(s), all members of the disqualified quartet or chorus must return the awards to the BinH hosting organisation /contest administrator for presentation to the appropriate contestant.

**ARTICLE VIII:
ORDER OF APPEARANCE**

1. Contestants shall sing in the order in which their names are drawn by lot or otherwise as determined by the the BinH hosting organisation/contest administrator. In the event that circumstances beyond the control of the contestants would prevent them being able to perform except by being placed first or last in the order of appearance, a contestant may make a request in writing to sing first or last, provided the request is submitted (with reasons) to the BinH hosting organisation/contest administrator before the draw is made.
2. Any contestant failing to appear in its assigned order when called, shall be excused by the Chairman of Judges if circumstances were beyond the control of the contestants and shall appear at a time decided by the BinH appointed Chairman of Judges. Any contestant failing to provide justification for missing their assigned order of appearance may be permitted to perform by the CoJ, but will be subject to a penalty of 5 points per scoring judge.
3. Any contestant failing to appear in any round shall not be eligible to compete in any subsequent round in that contest.

ARTICLE IX: SONGS AND ARRANGEMENTS

A. Songs

1. Barbershop Style

All songs performed in contest must be arranged in the barbershop style. (See style definition above). A song performed in contest must be in good taste, be neither primarily patriotic nor primarily religious in intent, and have a melody and implied harmony consistent with the barbershop style.

2. Music Category Elements: In a contest, certain musical elements are so significant to the style that deficiencies must be noted explicitly in order to provide sufficient information on the basis for the scoring and for performer feedback.

- a) *Unaccompanied*: Songs must be sung without any kind of musical accompaniment and without instrumental introduction, interlude, or conclusion. The latter provision applies to both the entire performance and each individual song. Violation of this provision will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Music judges(s).
- b) *Four-part Texture*: In chorus contest performances of songs selected use of a soloist, duet, trio or quartet is acceptable as long as it is brief and appropriate. However, at no time should the musical texture exceed four parts. Violation of this provision will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Music judges(s). The spoken word, brief and appropriate, is not considered an additional "part" in this context.
- c) *Melody*: The melody should be present and distinguishable and is most consistently sung by the lead, with the tenor harmonizing above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonizing notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Excessive passages with the melody not in an inside voice will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Music judge(s) only.
- d) *Characteristic Chord Progressions*: The song's harmony must feature the natural occurrence of dominant seventh (and ninth) chords based on a variety of roots. Chord progressions in the barbershop style are based on the harmonic practice of dominant seventh (and ninth) chords resolving around the circle of fifths, while also making use of other resolutions. Songs lacking these characteristic chord progressions will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Music judge(s) only.
- e) *Lyrics*: Lyrics should be sung by all four parts through most of the song's duration. Excessive passages without words in all four parts will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Music judge(s) only.
- f) *Other Issues*: Songs not consistent with the barbershop style for any other musical reason (including chord vocabulary or lack of homorhythmic texture) will be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Music judge(s).

3. Performance Category Elements

- a. *Patriotic or Religious Intent*: Songs primarily patriotic or primarily religious in intent will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s). (See Performance Category Description in the BHS extract, referred to in the LABBS Contest & Judging Handbook for levels of penalties.)
- b. *Good Taste*: Songs or actions by a contestant that are not in good taste will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s). (See Position Paper III. Taste in the BHS extract, referred to in the LABBS Contest & Judging Handbook for more details.)

B. Copyright Compliance

Contestants shall comply with the copyright law in the acquisition, arranging and learning of songs for contest performance. The BinH hosting organisations/contest administrator reserves the right to request documented proof of copyright clearance either in advance of, or within a month following the relevant contest round. Violations of this article relating to copyright law compliance are subject to post-contest action deemed appropriate by the BinH hosting organisations/contest administrator, including being declared ineligible and disqualified.

C. Penalties

Violation of this article will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by one or more judges as follows:

1. Violations of this article relating to taste and patriotic or religious intent are the responsibility of the Performance judge(s) only.
2. Violations of this article in relation to songs consistent with the barbershop style, including accompaniment, are the responsibility of the Music judge(s) only.
3. Violations of this article relating to copyright law compliance are subject to post-contest action deemed appropriate by the BinH hosting organisations/contest administrator.

ARTICLE X: SOUND EQUIPMENT AND STAGE SETTING

A. Equipment

1. Provision

The best possible sound equipment shall be provided, if needed. Monitor speakers are permitted. Sound equipment should be operated by a competent operator. .

2. Testing and Approval

The stage setting shall be set up sufficiently in advance of the starting time of the contest so that the sound equipment and lighting may be tested to the satisfaction of the appropriate persons, as agreed by the Category Directors and under the supervision of the Contest Administration Category Director. The contest shall not start until the Chairman of Judges has given her approval.

B. Restrictions and Exception

1. Own Equipment

Contestants may not use their own equipment to electronically amplify or alter their voices.

2. Offstage use of House System

Contestants may not make offstage use of the house sound system

3. Recorded Music or Spoken Word

Nothing in this rule shall be interpreted to permit the use of recorded music (including singing) and/or recordings of the spoken word. Nothing in this rule shall be interpreted to permit the use of technology to enhance the performance electronically.

4. Electronic Pitch; Sound Effects

Contestants may use electronic means independent of the house system to take pitch or to provide limited sound effects. Sound effects, electronic or otherwise, deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance shall be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Performance judge(s). In order to avoid surprise and potential delay for inquiry, contestants should communicate planned use of loud or unusual sound effects to the contest administrator prior to the performance.

C. Jurisdiction and Penalties

Violations of Article X.B are subject to penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s).

ARTICLE XI: STAGING

A. Restrictions

1. Non-members

Persons who are not members of the competing chorus or quartet may not appear on stage during the performance. Violation of this rule in contest will result in the performance being declared ineligible and disqualified. (See Article I for membership eligibility/violations.) The stage is defined by the

performer/performance, and thus may on occasion extend past traditional boundaries set forth by the performance venue. While this may allow for choruses and quartets to build rapport with, or generate response from the audience, the song(s) must be performed solely by members of the competing chorus or quartet. In the event this comes into question, the Contest Administrator, with assistance from the Performance judges, will make a determination if a non-member violation has occurred.

2. **Poor Taste**

Barbershop performances should not contain vulgar, suggestive or otherwise distasteful actions or lyrics. In addition to adjudication with penalties and potential forfeiture by the Performance judge(s), the performance may be stopped by the Contest Administrator per Article XIV.A.3. In consultation with the Performance judge(s) the Contest Administrator will determine if the performance may be rescheduled or adjudicated up to the point of stoppage.

B. Jurisdiction

The Performance judge(s) shall have jurisdiction over issues of poor taste and staging. (See the Performance category description in the BHS extract, referred to in the LABBS Contest & Judging Handbook for a discussion of unacceptable staging.)

C. Staging

1. **Props**

If props and/or stage enhancements are to be used, they must be simple enough that at most two individuals can carry and set them up, and they must be freestanding.

- Nothing can be attached to or leaned against the riser (back) safety rails.
- No extensions to the end risers are permitted.
- No props or stage enhancements can be used that may contravene local fire and safety codes (open flame, fireworks, open water other than in a glass or pitcher, etc.)
- No artificially assisted methods of propelling confetti or streamers may be used. This rule is not intended to preclude the use of hand-thrown confetti or streamers.

2. **Financial Liability**

Competitors will be held financially liable for any damage to the stage or technical equipment, including microphones and lights, extra labour or equipment required for clean-up through their use of props or stage enhancements.

3. **Clean-up**

Materials which are difficult to clean-up (requiring mops, brooms, vacuum cleaners, etc.) are discouraged. If there is any possibility that the stage will be left in a non-pristine condition upon a prompt exit, the performer must inform the Stage Manager of all relevant details at least 4 weeks in advance of the contest, so that appropriate clean-up can be planned. Such details will be kept confidential, except in cases where the Stage Manager believes the contest

timetable will be delayed. In these cases, the Stage Manager may consult with the BinH appointed contest administrator, who in turn may decide to escalate the issue to the BinH hosting organisation's Judge's committee for discussion and a case-by-case ruling.

ARTICLE XII: NON-SINGING COMMENT/DIALOGUE

A. Spoken Comments

Non-singing dialogue is generally not a part of a contest performance. However, brief comments made with supporting visual communications may be permitted to more clearly establish mood/theme, to assist the transition of packaged songs, or to add to the effect of closure of mood/theme.

B. Adjudication

Spoken words deemed to be excessive or detrimental to the performance shall be adjudicated in terms of the quality of the performance by the Performance judges.

ARTICLE XIII: PENALTIES AND FORFEITURES

A. Forfeiture

A scoring judge indicates forfeiture by awarding a score of zero. Forfeiture or any penalty is appropriate only when specifically provided for in these rules.

B. No Public Announcement

There shall be no public announcement of any penalty or forfeiture.

C. Inclusion in Official Scoring Summary

Penalties and Forfeitures shall be published as part of the official scoring summary, with citation of the rule violated, if appropriate.

ARTICLE XIV: OPERATION OF THE CONTEST

A. Chairman of Judges Responsibility and Authority

1. Authority for Contest Operation

Once the contest begins, and until the contest results are determined, the Chairman of Judges (CoJ) is completely in charge of the operation of the

contest, subject to the final authority of the Chair of the hosting organisation's judging committee.

2. **Contest Environment**

The CoJ is responsible for ensuring that the contest environment is as fair and consistent as possible for all contestants. Action on environmental issues will consider contestants, audience, and panel, in that order of priority. Right of appeal is available through the Stage Manager.

3. **Stopping Performance and Rescheduling**

a. *Sole Authority:* The CoJ alone has the authority to stop the performance and judging, and may reschedule the entire performance later in the contest if appropriate.

b. *Repeat Performance:* At the sole discretion of the CoJ, a contestant may be allowed to repeat an entire performance later in the contest.

c. *Cancellation and Rescheduling:* If the CoJ must cancel a round or an entire contest, that round and/or contest will be rescheduled by the judging committee of the hosting organisation, in conjunction with the Events Team. In making these decisions, the CoJ will consult with scoring judges as appropriate.

B. Announcements

Announcement of the results of the contest will be the responsibility of the judging committee of the hosting organisation.