

# **SCOTDANCE USA COMPETITION AND CHAMPIONSHIP ORGANIZERS' MANUAL**

**v.10.0**

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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

The intent of the Federation of United States Teachers and Adjudicators (FUSTA) (doing business as ScotDance USA since 2018) Competition and Championship Organizers' Manual is to provide Competition Organizers a central resource that includes information on how to plan for and run a competition or championship, including a description of some of the Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (RSOBHD) rules that govern the running of competitions and championships.

Please note this manual is for BOTH Competition Organizers as well as Championship Organizers. Within this document, "competition" refers to either a competition or championship unless otherwise specifically stated.

## ANNUAL COMPETITION ORGANIZERS' REGISTRATION PROGRAM

All Highland Dance competitions in the United States – including Competitions, Championships, and Premierships - are required to annually register with ScotDance USA. The registration period is for January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. All Competition Registrations are due by February 15. This annual registration program insures that all Competition Organizers have access to the latest, most accurate information needed to run a successful dance competition. The goal is to have well-run competitive events that favorably advertise themselves, develop a loyal following, and promote Highland Dance in the United States.

Competition Organizers for all competitive events in the US must annually register their events on-line via the SDUSA website – <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/competition-organizers/>.

Competition Organizers running championship or premiership events must annually apply to the RSOBHD for approval either at the September or November meeting of the previous year in which the event is held.

## WHY HIGHLAND DANCE COMPETITIONS MUST ANNUALLY REGISTER WITH SCOTDANCE USA?

1. The 2018 RSOBHD Rules Book (page 15) states that "all Competition Organizers world-wide conducting competitions under RSOBHD rules, and with Pre-Premier classes, **MUST** be registered with the RSOBHD, an RSOBHD Subsidiary Body, or an authorized registration agent". ScotDance USA is the RSOBHD's authorized registration agent in the United States.
2. The Competition Organizers' Registration program insures conformity of rules among all competition organizers who hold "Pre-Premier" sections at their competitions. It also insures fair play among dancers and among competitions on a world-wide basis.
3. All competitors taking part in competitions advertised and run under RSOBHD rules, must be registered with the RSOBHD or RSOBHD subsidiary body or other organization authorized by the RSOBHD to act as registration agents, such as ScotDance USA and ScotDance Canada.
4. At competitions where Pre-Premier dancers are competing, RSOBHD-certified judges must adjudicate the event.

## ATTENDANCE AT COMPETITION ORGANIZERS' MEETINGS

1. The RSOBHD requires Competition Organizers to attend at least one Competition Organizers' meeting every two years.

2. To assist Organizers who may not be able to attend meetings, an Organizer may name a proxy who can attend an Organizers' meeting on their behalf. The proxy is named during the annual competition registration process.
3. An individual may be a proxy for one other Organizer.
4. Non-attendance at Competition Organizers' meetings for a period of two years will result in automatic removal of competition registration number.
5. SDUSA normally holds electronic Competition Organizers' meetings in January and / or July. Other Competition Organizers' meetings can be scheduled at other times of the year with the permission of the ScotDance USA Vice President.
6. Either Competition Liaisons or the Vice President will lead the Competition Organizer meetings. If these members are not available, the Vice President may appoint an Organizer to conduct the meeting.

**Additional duties of the Vice President shall include:**

1. Approve all scheduled Competition Organizers' meetings in the United States and post the meeting agenda.
2. Distribute competition information from the RSOBHD website to US Competition Organizers.
3. Send all US Competition Organizer meeting minutes and attendance sheets to the RSOBHD for approval .
4. Use the official RSOBHD Competition Organizer Meeting Template at all US meetings.

**SCOTDANCE USA CODE OF ETHICS**

1. ScotDance USA has a Code of Ethics that governs all behaviors by all "Participants" in the Highland Dance Community. ScotDance USA has adopted the same Code of Ethics as the RSOBHD.
2. In the Code of Ethics, a "Participant" includes Judges, Teachers, Competition Organizers, Parents, Dancers, and Volunteers at Dance Competitions – in fact, all parties connected with dancers. Therefore, everyone who teaches and judges dancers, everyone who has children who dance, everyone who organizes and volunteers at competitions, and everyone who dances and competes are honor-bound to support and follow the rules and behaviors in the Code of Ethics!
3. All Competition Organizers need to sign the Code of Ethics during the annual competition registration process. Competition Organizers need to insure that all competition volunteers read and follow the Code of Ethics.
4. The Code of Ethics is printed on the ScotDance USA Membership form and on the ScotDance USA Dancer Registration form. These forms are available on the ScotDance USA website.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE MANUAL**

We hope the information contained in this manual provides Competition Organizers with all the information needed to run a successful, error-free competition. For any further questions, guidance or assistance, please contact the ScotDance USA Vice President. Contact information for the Vice President may be found on the ScotDance USA website.

This manual is divided into three sections.

The first section of the manual includes technical information an Organizer needs to know to run a competition in compliance with RSOBHD rules. All cited rules come directly from the most recent edition of the **Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing Constitution and Rules**.

The second section of the manual includes technical information an Organizer needs to know to run a championship and premiership in compliance with RSOBHD rules. All cited rules come directly from the most recent edition of the **Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing Constitution and Rules**.

The third section of the manual includes practical information an Organizer needs to run an efficient competitive event.

A list of all U.S. registered competitions for the current year is found on the ScotDance USA website - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/calendar/scotdance-usa-events/>.

## SECTION 1 - TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF RUNNING A COMPETITION

In the United States, all competitions are run and conducted according to the rules of the RSOBHD. All Competition Organizers should advertise that fact in all brochures and entry forms.

### CATEGORIES OF COMPETITIONS

**1. Premier competitions** - The RSOBHD operates a world-wide annual registration system for Premier dancers just as it does for Competition Organizers. Premier events enable dancers to compete against each other and are restricted only by the stated age grouping or to dancers from a certain geographic area.

**IMPORTANT:** Competitions that are not advertised or announced to be Pre-Premier are automatically Premier competitions. A Pre-Premier dancer competing in a Premier competition automatically becomes a Premier dancer thereafter even if they do not place.

**2. Pre-Premier competitions** - The RSOBHD also operates a world-wide annual registration system for dancers from Primary through Intermediate levels. RSOBHD Dancer Registration was instituted to bring Pre-Premier categories in dancing competitions under RSOBHD control to help ensure that every dancer can compete with dancers of comparative ability.

Dancers are not permitted to hold a ScotDance USA dancer registration card until the age of four years. The RSOBHD registration scheme allows Pre-Premier dancers to monitor their own progress by means of a registration card. Beginner, Novice and Intermediate dancers must earn six stamps before moving on to the next level. The rules governing when a dancer earns a stamp are listed under "Competition Sections", pages 11-13.

**3. Pre-Championship Competitions** – Pre-Championships are competitions restricted to Premier dancers who have never won a Championship or a Pre-Championship. Pre-Championships can only be run in conjunction with a Championship and not on their own.

The dances at a Pre-Championship are the same as for a Championship but the current-year set steps are not required and one adjudicator may judge each dance. In a Pre Championship event, any Reel can be danced. It does not have to be the same Reel as danced in the Championship. A Pre-Championship group must have at least six dancers to proceed. If there are fewer than six dancers, groups may be combined to comply with Board rules.

### THE WORLD-WIDE STANDARD REGISTRATION SCHEME

1. The RSOBHD oversees and administers the world-wide dancer registration scheme. The dancer registration form is available on the ScotDance USA website –

<https://www.scotdanceusa.com/>

2. US dancers taking part in "Premier," "Pre-Premier" or "Pre-Championship" competitions are required to annually register directly with the RSOBHD's agent in the US (ScotDance USA) and abide by the rules of dancer registration.

3. US Competition Organizers are required to annually register their competition(s) with ScotDance USA and run their competitions under RSOBHD rules, including the rules pertaining to dancer registration. The competition registration form is available on the ScotDance USA website - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/>.

Definition of a **Competitive Event**:

1. A multiple-day competition is considered a single event, or one competition, so long as no dance is repeated within any dance category over the multiple days of the event. Primary dancers are excluded from this rule. Primary dancers may repeat their dances in a multiple-day event.
2. Pre-Premier dancers may earn at most one stamp per event regardless of the number of days of the event.
3. For the Beginners and Novices, they are only allowed to compete at the Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, Reel, Lilt, Flora and Special/Trophy Fling.
4. If a Special/Trophy Fling is danced in the Beginner or Novice categories, it is a separate dance – not counted toward the aggregate trophy. A separate trophy and medals are awarded. Stamps are awarded to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers in the dance. (Still only one stamp is awarded a competitor per event.)
5. If an event is run over multiple days, and a dancer receives their 6<sup>th</sup> stamp or reaches one year in the dance category (whichever is longer) on the first day of the event, the dancer does not move up dance categories for the subsequent day(s) of the event.

Definition of a **Demonstration Event**:

1. A Demonstration Event is not a competition, but such an event allows new dancers to gain confidence in being up on a stage in front of an audience without the additional pressures and requirements of competition.
2. ScotDance USA recommends the following guidelines when running a Demonstration Event:
  - a. No awards are given to the dancers.
  - b. Participation certificates may be given.
  - c. No written critique from the judge is given to the dancer.
  - d. An entry fee should **not** be charged.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF WORLD-WIDE REGISTRATION SCHEME**

Each registered Competition Organizer is provided a competition number. They may also receive, on loan, a stamp showing the assigned competition number. This competition number is listed on all material pertaining to that competition, including entry forms, and the stamp is used to mark the competitor's registration card if the competitor has been successful in the competition. Rules governing when a dancer earns a stamp are listed on pages 11-13 under "Competitions Sections". Please note that there is also a space on the dancer's card to enter the date of the competition.

**IMPORTANT:** Only one stamp is made for any successful competitor regardless of the number of prizes awarded at one competition. Any competition that is run over two or more days, is organized by the same organizer and uses the same registration number is considered a single "event" and only one stamp is issued to any successful dancer over the entire event.

Each registered competitor is provided a dancer registration number and issued a registration card showing their registration number. This registration number should be written on entry forms for all "Premier" and "Pre-Premier" competitions. All entry forms for Pre-Premier and Premier competitions must have a space for the dancer to indicate their registration number. This provides the organizer the opportunity to verify all dancers at their competition are registered with the RSOBHD. Entries should not be accepted without the dancer's registration number.

Certified teachers of Scottish Highland Dancing may not compete in any Pre-Premier competition sections. If an Organizer discovers that a teacher is registered as a Pre-Premier

competitor, the Organizer must contact the teacher so he/she can rescind that registration and re-register as a Premier competitor.

### **COMPETING AT RSOBHD-SANCTIONED COMPETITIONS**

When competing outside the United States, please plan ahead and research each competition where a dancer wants to compete. Teachers, dancers and parents want to insure the competitions where you compete are RSOBHD sanctioned, particularly for Pre-premier dancers.

The SOHDA, Scottish Official Highland Dancing Association, also runs competitions in Scotland. Pre-Premier dancers SHOULD ONLY compete at RSOBHD-sanctioned competitions so they advance correctly following RSOBHD rules. Be sure to read entry forms to make sure they are sanctioned by the RSOBHD. The entry form should state that the competition is RSOBHD sponsored, which indicates that it is okay for Pre-Premier dancers to participate in that competition.

### **RSOBHD RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITION ORGANIZERS REGISTERED COMPETITIONS**

1. A minimum of four steps should be danced in the Highland or National dances in any section, Pre-Premier or Premier, except for the Sword Dance when the minimum should be two slow steps and one quick step.

2. At competitions, a competitor is restricted to a maximum of eight solo dances on any one day. Dances are to be chosen from the following:

- a. Highland Fling
- b. Sword Dance
- c. Seann Triubhas
- d. Reels (Strathspey and Highland Reel, Strathspey and Half Tulloch, Full Tulloch and Strathspey Highland Reel and Half Tulloch)
- e. Sailor's Hornpipe
- f. Irish Jig
- g. The lesser known dances:
  - i. Flora MacDonald's Fancy
  - ii. Scottish Lilt
  - iii. Wilt Thou Go to the Barracks Johnnie
  - iv. Highland Laddie
  - v. Blue Bonnets
  - vi. Village Maid
  - vii. Earl of Errol
  - viii. Scotch Measure

3. Make sure that each competition section (Primary, Beginner, Novice, Intermediate, and Premier) are competing at dances that are allowed by the RSOBHD. The allowed dances for each competition section are specified in the 2024 RSOBHD Rule Book, pages 25-26 or on pages 11-13 of this manual.

4. A category of non-solo dances includes Broadwords, Highland Reel teams. These dances may be danced in addition to the eight solo dances allowed.

- a. A traditional Broadword is a sword dance performed by four people wearing traditional Highland Dress dancing around and over four Highland Broadwords placed tip to tip in the form of a cross. The dancers wear kilts. The dance consists of steps in Strathspey tempo, followed by steps in Reel tempo, the steps to be based on Highland technique. The music is a Strathspey and a Reel played on the bagpipes. In view of its military connections with the Scottish regiments, the dance may be preceded and



completed by a short march and salute. A traditional Broadsword is for Premier dancers only, as clarified in the 2024 RSOBHD Rule Book, page 23, which lists the dances for Premier dancers and pages 25-26 which lists the dances for Pre-Premier dancers.

b. A choreographed Broadsword can be danced by all registered dancers per page 48 of the 2024 RSOBHD Rule Book. A choreographed Broadsword can be danced by any number of dancers. It can be danced to any piece of music and can have any type of costume. In other words, it is a choreography with swords.

### **DANCER REGISTRATION CARDS**

The registration card must be carried to all competitions and checked by the Organizer prior to the start of the competition. Additionally, the card must be produced for the Organizer at any other time it is requested.

The cards are five different colors.

Card 1: Green cards for Primary dancers

Card 2: Blue cards for Beginner dancers

Card 3: Yellow cards for Novice dancers

Card 4: Pink cards for Intermediate dancers

Card 5: White cards for Premier dancers

When a Beginner competitor has successfully placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, Reel, or Special / Trophy Fling, the registration card must be presented to the Organizer for stamping before the prize is given to the competitor. Any competitor unable to show a registration card will forfeit the prize(s) until the registration card has been shown to the Organizer. The Organizer passes on the competitor's name and number to the U.S. National Registrar, who may advise all Organizers not to accept an entry from the competitor until such matters are cleared up. The competitor **MUST** produce the card to the Organizer within ten days of the competition, at which time any earned awards are given to the dancer.

This same procedure applies for Novice and Intermediate competitors who have successfully placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in any dance.

The registration card is stamped **only once** at a competition (even if the competition runs over multiple days) and the one stamp covers all prizes awarded at that competition. Boxes on the registration card should be stamped in order- left to right on the top row, then left to right on the bottom row. Each box must be dated. If all boxes are stamped and the dancer is competing under the twelve month rule, no further processing is required.

**ONLY** the original card may be stamped! A photocopy of a dancer registration card **CANNOT** be stamped.

### **TEMPORARY CARDS**

A Temporary Card form is available for Pre-Premier dancers if there is insufficient time between competitions for a dancer's registration form and stamp-filled registration card to be sent to the Regional Registrar and a new card processed, sent out and received. Temporary cards are issued by the Organizer of the competition event that is the dancer's last competition in the lower category. The Organizer returns their section of the Temporary Card form to the appropriate Regional Registrar as soon as possible after the event. The dancer should use their section of the Temporary Card form along with their old card at any competition events prior to submitting both the form and the old card to the Registrar for

an updated registration card. The dancer must return their section of the Temporary Card form when sending in their application for a new registration card.

**For Example:** A dancer competes and receives a sixth stamp at a Saturday competition and wishes to compete at a different competition on the following weekend. The Organizer of the Saturday competition should provide the dancer with the top portion of a Temporary Card form. This top portion of the form (the Temporary Card) along with the current Dancer Registration Card filled with six stamps is shown to the new Organizer at the competition on the following weekend. If the dancer is successful at this competition, the Organizer stamps the Temporary Card.

A Temporary Card form is **ONLY** valid for **14 days** by which time the current Dancer Registration Card filled with six stamps, the Temporary Card form and the appropriate registration form and photograph **MUST** be sent to the Regional Registrar for a replacement Dancer Registration Card.

**Only one Temporary Card can be issued to a dancer at a time!** A Temporary Card must NOT be issued when the dancer has already sent for a new dancer registration card from the Regional Registrar.

Competitions Organizers **MUST** keep a record of the Temporary Cards forms issued and send the bottom section of the Temporary Card form to the National Registrar within 14 days from the day it was issued. Temporary Card forms can be downloaded from the ScotDance USA website - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/>.

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Registrar, the National Registrar – [Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com) or the National Competition Organizers Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com) for further clarification.

### **AUTOMATIC ADVANCE**

Dancers competing in a higher category for whatever reason must remain in that category once they have moved up. Dancers may not return to the lower category.

### **CHANGING OF DANCE TEACHERS**

The length of time a dancer must wait before competing in front of their former teacher is six months. Should a dancer arrive at a competition and discover that their former teacher is the judge and it has not been six months since the dancer left for whatever reason, the dancer must withdraw from the competition.

### **THREE-MONTH RULE**

Direct from the RSOBHD: Judges who conduct teaching or coaching classes, seminars or any other forms of teaching (e.g. by Skype) may not adjudicate any competitor who has attended any of these classes for a period of three months after the last class, workshop or any other form of teaching that the competitor has attended. In the situation where a competitor has entered a competition with a judge with whom the dancer has attended a class or workshop within the last three months, the dancer must step down from the competition.

### **REGISTRATION CARDS / NO CARD – NO DANCE**

All competitors **MUST** present their registration card to the Competition Organizer prior to competing. If no card is produced, the dancer may not dance in the competition.

## **LOSS OF A REGISTRATION CARD**

If a registration card is lost, it should be reported immediately by the dancer to the ScotDance USA National Registrar - [Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com). If the competitor is a Beginner, Novice or Intermediate dancer, a replacement card is provided after payment of a penalty to be decided by the RSOBHD and the dancer may continue to compete in the appropriate class for six months from the date of process of the original application. If a competitor is a Primary and loses their Registration Card, a replacement card is provided after payment of a penalty to be decided by the RSOBHD, and the dancer may continue to complete the remaining time in the category. If a Premier dancer loses their registration card, the lost card is replaced on provision of the appropriate information and at the current registration fee.

Lost card issues should be directed to the National Registrar. Delegates will inform teachers to tell ANY student who loses a card to notify the Regional Registrar who will instruct them to contact the National Registrar directly about the circumstances.

## **COMPETITION SECTIONS**

There will be no general "all Pre-Premier" events. Instead, dancers are divided in the following classifications:

### **1. PRIMARY: (GREEN CARD)**

NOTE: Only 4 dances may be danced in the Primary category.

- a. 16 Pas de Basques
- b. Pas de Basques and Highcuts
- c. Highland Fling (4 steps)
- d. Sword Dance (2 slow, 1 quick)

In view of the basic level of ability and technique expected in this category, it is not appropriate that trophies are presented to Primary dancers. **Organizers must not award trophies either as individual prizes or for most points overall in the Primary category.**

The Primary category is designed to assist the introduction of the youngest dancers to competitive dancing. A competitor under seven years of age may compete in this section until the seventh birthday is reached, after which that competitor is classified as a Beginner dancer and is no longer eligible to enter a Primary event. A Primary dancer may elect to compete in a more advanced category at any time before reaching the age of seven years, but thereafter must continue in this new category and/or advance in accordance with Pre-Premier Registration rules.

### **2. BEGINNER: (BLUE CARD)**

This status is held until the competitor either

- a. Gains a first, second or third prize in the Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, Reel, or Special or Trophy Fling in SIX separate Beginner competitions, or
- b. Until TWELVE months following the first Beginner stamp, whichever is later, after which that competitor is classified as a Novice dancer and is no longer eligible to enter a Beginner event.

### **3. NOVICE: (YELLOW CARD)**

This status is held until the competitor either

- a. Gains a first, second or third prize in ANY dance in SIX separate Novice competitions, or

- b. Until TWELVE months following the first Novice stamp, whichever is later, after which that competitor is classified as an Intermediate dancer and is no longer eligible to enter a Novice event.
- c. The Beginner and Novice categories are restricted to competing in 7 dances in any one day. The Beginner and Novice categories are restricted to competing in the following dances:
  - i. Highland Fling
  - ii. Sword Dance
  - iii. Seann Triubhas
  - iv. Reel
  - v. Flora MacDonald's Fancy
  - vi. Scottish Lilt
  - vii. Special Fling or Trophy Fling

#### **4. INTERMEDIATE: (PINK CARD)**

This status is held until the competitor either

- a. Gains a first, second or third prize in ANY dance in SIX separate Intermediate competitions, or
- b. Until TWELVE months following the first Intermediate stamp, whichever is later, after which that competitor is classified as a Premier dancer and is no longer eligible to enter an Intermediate event.
- c. an Intermediate competitor is limited to a maximum of 8 dances in any one day.

The Intermediate Category is restricted to competing in the following dances:

- i. Highland Fling
- ii. Sword Dance
- iii. Seann Triubhas
- iv. Reel
- v. Flora MacDonald's Fancy
- vi. Scottish Lilt
- vii. Barracks Johnnie
- viii. Highland Laddie
- ix. Sailor's Hornpipe
- x. Irish Jig

#### **5. PREMIER: (WHITE CARD)**

This status is held until the dancer quits or retires from competitive dancing. Premier dancers may compete in any of the dances listed in the previous section, "Registered Competitions", page 8. This card is reissued every year when the dancer registers.

#### **OVERALL TROPHIES**

##### **For a single age group**

The overall winner is determined by the total aggregate points obtained over the individual events regardless of the number of competitors in each dance.

##### **Over several age groups**

When awarding an overall trophy or award over several age groups, there must be at least six competitors who competed in each of the age groups for the aggregate points earned from those dances to qualify in calculating the overall winner. If there are fewer than six competitors in an age group for an individual dance, then the points gained in that dance for that particular age group are not included in the total aggregate points calculated toward the overall award for those dancers.

If it has been decided in advance to hold a “dance-off” for an overall award, then all eligible competitors may compete regardless of the number of competitors within the individual group. (For example, all Premier age group trophy winners are eligible for a “dance off” to determine the overall Dancer of the Day. Even if there were only 5 competitors in an age group, that age group trophy winner may still compete in the “dance off”). All rules pertaining to an “overall” trophy or award must be advertised on the entry form or program.

The 7-dance rule for Beginner and Novice and the 8-dance rule for Intermediate and Premier dancers is not affected by this extra dance.

Organizers may award a trophy or trophies over a range of age groups - Best Beginner, Best Novice, Best Intermediate – but a trophy may not be awarded over a range of categories - not Best Pre-Premier. Beginner, Novice and Intermediate dancers may not compete against one another in a dance-off.

## **Special Trophies**

### **1. Special or Trophy Fling**

- a. This dance does not count toward an aggregate trophy.
- b. This dance does count as one of the 8 maximum dances a dancer may compete in one day.
- c. A separate trophy is given to the winner of this dance event.
- d. Medals can be given for runner-up places (up to 6<sup>th</sup> place) in this dance event.
- e. A stamp is earned for placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> place in this dance (Beginner and Novice sections).
- f. Either one or three judges judge this dance event. If three judges judge the event, the results should be posted.
- g. No other Highland dance (e.g. Sword, Seann Triubhas) may be used in a Special Event.

### **2. “Dancer of the Day” Dance-Off**

- a. This dance does not count as one of the 8 maximum dances a dancer may compete in one day.
- b. Either one or three judges may judge a Dance-Off event. If three judges judge the event, the results should be posted.

### **3. Most Promising Dancer Awards**

- a. Most Promising Dancer Awards may NOT be awarded over multiple Pre-Premier categories.
- b. Most Promising Dancer Awards must be awarded within separate categories (1 award for Beginners, 1 award for Novices, 1 award for Intermediates) if they are given.

### **4. Challenge Dances**

- a. All criteria for a Challenge dance should be listed on the entry form.
- b. A Challenge dance may be danced using the same Premier age groups as the rest of the competition but have a separate award OR different age groups with separate awards may be used.
- c. The Challenge dance may also be a dance final over a number of age groups, with the finalists determined from the results of the dance in the regular part of the competition.
- d. Dancers may only dance a dance once during the competition unless the Challenge dance is the final of one of these dances.

### **5. Best Dressed Events**

- a. Only Premier dancers may participate in Best Dressed Events.

## **RSOBHD PANEL OF JUDGES**

The RSOBHD maintains a list of judges who have passed an examination set by the RSOBHD and who are, in the opinion of the RSOBHD, qualified to adjudicate at Highland Dancing competitions. This list is referred to as the Worldwide Panel of Judges.

## **JUDGES FOR COMPETITIONS**

All competitions run under RSOBHD rules must be judged by an adjudicator selected from the RSOBHD Worldwide Panel of Judges. Judges who are listed on the Worldwide Panel of Judges are eligible to adjudicate at Championships and all other competitions worldwide unless some other specific limitation appears by their name. An updated list of the RSOBHD Worldwide Judges' Panel is available under the Competition Organizers' section of the RSOBHD website and under the Members section of the ScotDance USA website.

## **JUDGES DECISION**

Per RSOBHD rules, the decision of the judge is final. No discussion or correspondence regarding any decision made by that judge should occur between a judge and competitor, or the parent or guardian of a competitor.

Sheets containing the judge's marks are to be used for scrutineering purposes only. These sheets must not be given out to competitors, parents, teachers or the public for any reason.

Discussion by scrutineers about information on these sheets prior to the end of the competition or after the competition is strictly forbidden.

## **PENALTIES**

A registered Pre-Premier dancer dancing in a non-registered Pre-Premier competition and/or providing incorrect information on an application form will incur a six-month penalty. During this period, they will not be accepted as eligible to enter any registered competition. This rule is in the interest of the dancers to insure fair competition and has the complete backing of Competition Organizers registered with the RSOBHD.

A registered competition failing to operate under RSOBHD rules, including the rules pertaining to the registration scheme, will be asked to provide the RSOBHD with details of any reason for non-compliance and will be dealt with at the discretion of the RSOBHD. Failure to furnish details and reasons for non-compliance on request of the RSOBHD constitutes grounds for expulsion from the registration scheme. All complaints and clarification required for situations not covered by the rules and regulations are dealt with by the RSOBHD Registration Unit, whose decision is final.

## **PROTESTS AND OBJECTIONS**

An objection to a person's eligibility to compete in any competition must be made in writing and shall not be considered unless the complainant gives their full name and address accompanied by a deposit, the amount to be set by the RSOBHD, currently \$25. The deposit shall be returned should the objection be sustained. Such objection must be lodged with the Organizer of the event concerned, if possible before the event and not later than seven days after the date of the event. Unless resolved by the Organizer he/she shall refer the matter to the RSOBHD. If there is not time for the RSOBHD to reach a decision before the event takes place, then the person about whom the complaint has been lodged shall be permitted to dance in the competition on the understanding that any awards he/she may win shall be withheld until the

decision of the RSOBHD be known. Should the objection be sustained, such awards shall be passed down to the competitor next in order of merit and any other awards suitably adjusted.

Any complaint made by an individual against the organization or adjudication of an event must be made in writing giving the complainants full name and address and shall be lodged with the Organizer if possible on the day of the event and not later than 48 hours after the event. Such complaint must be accompanied by a deposit, the amount to be set by the RSOBHD, currently \$25. The deposit shall be returned should the complaint be upheld. If within seven days of lodging such complaint the complainant has no satisfaction from the Organizer, then the complainant may refer the matter to the Honorable Secretary of the RSOBHD.

Any complaint made by an Association, as opposed to an individual, against the organization or adjudication of an event shall be sent direct in writing to the Honorable Secretary of the RSOBHD as soon as possible and not later than 48 hours after the first meeting held by that Association following the event concerned. When sending such complaint to the RSOBHD, a copy of same shall be sent by the Association to the Organizer or Judge against whom the complaint is directed.

### **AFTER THE COMPETITION**

All paperwork pertaining to the competition should be held for a period of one full year from the date of the competition.

### **RSOBHD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPETITIONS ACCOMMODATION AND MARSHALING OF THE COMPETITORS**

Suitable changing and toilet accommodation should be provided for competitors.

An official should be appointed to marshal competitors and should be a teacher or competent parent. Premier dancers who have yet to compete that day should **NOT** be used as marshals or "runners."

### **SIZE OF PLATFORM**

The recommended minimum dimensions of the dancing platform, or other area used for dancing such as a stage or gymnasium, should be as follows:

Width	26 feet
Depth	20 feet
Height	3 feet

### **EQUIPMENT – SWORDS**

In Premier competitions, Highland Broadswords or similar type swords should be used for the Sword Dance and the Organizer must provide a sufficient number - three sets of swords per platform. If two right-handed swords are used which will only lie one way, the Organizer or someone assigned to the task should place them on the platform.

In Pre-Premier competitions, especially in the Primary category, flat swords or a sword and a sheath are recommended.

### **MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DANCERS ON THE PLATFORM**

The Organizer in consultation with the judge(s) may determine the maximum number of dancers (3 or 4) on a platform in all Highland and National dances, except the Strathspey and/or Reels, taking into consideration the available space on the platform and the safety and optimum performance of the dancers.

Strathspey and/or Reels: one set only.

In the Fling, if 5 dancers are recalled for a final, all may dance together provided there is ample platform space.

### **PIPING ACCOMPANIMENT**

The same piper should play for all competitors within a section in any one dance. If there is only one set dancing at a time, you may change pipers at the end of each section.

### **RSOBHD CHOREOGRAPHY COMPETITION GUIDELINES**

1. There are three categories: Solo – consisting of one dancer; Duet – consisting of two dancers; and Group – consisting of a minimum of three dancers and a maximum number of dancers set by the Organizer if necessary.
2. A group choreography competition is open to registered dancers, the age groups to be set by the Organizer.
3. Pre-Premiers may compete in Choreography events. Pre-Premier cards are not stamped for choreography events.
4. Content should consist primarily of movements from Highland, National, Hornpipe or Jig books.
5. Choreography may be classified as either:
  - a. Themed – defined as the main idea on which the dance is based and may be set by the Organizer
  - b. Choreographed Broad Swords or Reel
  - c. Set-piece – choreographed dance to a piece of music set by the Organizer
  - d. Open – may include
    - i. Themed or
    - ii. Choreographed Broad Swords or
    - iii. Reel or a dance which is an interpretation of the music with no theme.
6. The classification of choreography event is at the discretion of the Organizer and must be pre-advertised.
7. Judges of the event must be furnished with the same criteria that is issued to teachers and choreographers prior to judging the event.
8. A maximum time limit of five minutes should be set for the item to include entrance and exit of competitors and setting up and removal of props.
9. Teams may use props during their performance, either static or non-static, but live animals are not permitted.
10. Music may be live or pre-recorded and may include vocals or percussion. Music must be predominantly Scottish or Celtic in style. Music may be provided by the Competition Organizer. The Competition Organizer should arrange to have the competitors email their musical selections to them in advance of the event.
11. Costumes must follow the theme and content of the dance.
12. Judges must be from the current RSOBHD World-wide Judges Panel. The number of judges must be one or three to comply with the current scrutineering system. A total mark should be awarded. No separate prizes for costume etc.
13. Whenever there is a panel of three judges adjudicating together for any dance at any competition (including Choreography), the results should be scrutineered and displayed as per Championships.
14. Duets and teams either consist of registered dancers from:
  - a. One school only or



- b. More than one school, in which case, the teacher/choreographer, if a judge, must abide by the Three-Month teaching/judging rule.
15. RSOBHD rules regarding Choreography competitions do not specifically state that it is permissible for Pre-Premier dancers to be included in teams with Premier dancers; however, some Organizers allow mixed teams of Pre-Premier and Premier dancers to compete.
16. The Organizer may set age groups and restrictions.
17. If Beginner, Novice or Intermediate dancers are part of a winning team, **their Registration Card should not be stamped.**
18. If a duet or group entry consists of dancers registered with different teachers, the duet or group **MUST** fill out the Joint Team Choreography Form. Please find this document in the Appendix - Joint Team Choreography Form.

## **SCOTDANCE USA RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITIONS JUDGES' AND PIPERS' FEES**

In 2018 judges' and pipers' fees were reviewed. ScotDance USA recommends the following standard fees for judges and pipers:

1. Judging a Competition (up to 8 hours per day) - \$300 (minimum of \$275)
2. Judging a Championship (up to 8 hours per day) - \$350 (minimum of \$325)
3. Judging – beyond 8 hours per day - \$50 / hour
4. Teaching a Workshop / Special Event - \$60 / hour – recommended fee
5. Piping fees should be on a par with Judging Fees
6. Judging or Piping fees per diems and reimbursements should be given to the Judge/Piper prior to leaving the competition venue.

## **JUDGES' AND PIPERS' CONTRACTS**

Judges and pipers should be furnished with detailed contracts regarding the events they will be attending. ScotDance USA has created contract templates for judges and pipers that can be duplicated and filled in. These templates can be downloaded from the ScotDance USA website. <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/competition-organizers/>. ScotDance USA recommends Organizers using these ScotDance USA templates for Judges' and Pipers' contracts to insure all issues are addressed.

A judge and a piper may reasonably expect the Games / Organizer to arrange and / or cover the expenses for the following:

1. Travel to and from the judge's / piper's home to the competition. This includes:
  - a. Travel between the home and local airport.
  - b. Travel between the destination airport and hotel.
  - c. Travel between the hotel and the venue of the competition. Parking and / or ground transportation charges incurred while traveling to and from the competition.
  - d. Mileage will be reimbursed at 50¢ per mile.
2. Accommodations:
  - a. Arranged by the Organizer at a hotel reasonably near the venue.
  - b. It is expected to have individual rooms for each judge and piper.
  - c. Clear directions to the hotel and the hotel phone number should be given to the judge / piper prior to travel.
  - d. The judge / piper must have a number to call or text should any problems arise.

3. All meals and other expenses related to the competition:
  - a. Organizers can choose to provide a cash allowance per diem for meals or to reimburse meal costs from receipts. Recommended meal allowance is \$70 per diem if no meals are provided by the Organizer. Recommended individual meal allowance is Breakfast - \$15, Lunch - \$20, and Dinner - \$35.
  - b. Meals and other costs incurred by the judge / piper during travel to and from the competition should also be reimbursed if the total travel time requires six or more hours or occurs during meal hours.
  - c. A fee for judging / piping. See ScotDance USA recommendations listed above.

## **SECTION 2 - TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF RUNNING A CHAMPIONSHIP / PREMIERSHIP**

The RSOBHD annually grants permission to Organizers to run a championship or premiership event. It is up to the Board to approve a championship or premiership application from an Organizer. The Board insures that championships and premierships are properly carried out and insures that championship titles are not duplicated.

Even though all championships and premierships are registered and approved by the RSOBHD, US Competition Organizers should also register them – at no cost – with ScotDance USA. If the Organizer is also running a Pre-Premier competition in conjunction with the Championship or Premiership, that event MUST be registered with ScotDance USA and there is a fee to register the Pre-Premier event.

### **HIGHLAND DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS RECOGNITION OF CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. An application to the Board for recognition of a competition as a championship must be made in writing to reach the Board in time for the September meeting of the Board. The application must contain the proposed name of the championship, age groups, venue, and Organizer information. No championship applications for the upcoming year are accepted after the November RSOBHD meeting. All applications must be sent in with their appropriate registration fee.
2. An Organizer **may** opt to apply to organize a championship event after successfully holding a non-championship competition for three years. There is no automatic granting of a permit and all applications including choice of title are subject to approval by the RSOBHD at the September meeting.
3. Each dancer must dance the steps in the sequence set by the Board for that year.
4. A championship must include all four Highland Dances:
  - a. Highland Fling
  - b. Sword Dance - the dance must be performed over a set of right- and left-handed raised hilted swords.
  - c. Seann Triubhas
  - d. Reel - Strathspey and Reel of Tulloch or Strathspey and Highland Reel or Reel of Tulloch (Hullachan) or Strathspey, Highland Reel and Reel of Tulloch
5. A competitor is restricted to a maximum of eight solo dances on any one day.
6. No competition in Highland Dancing may be entitled "Championship" without the sanction of the Board.
7. A championship must be held under the rules of the RSOBHD and must be advertised as "Recognized by the RSOBHD."
8. Age groups must state the age of the youngest competitor eligible to compete in the class (7 & under 10, 10 & under 12). This does not include the oldest age group.
9. Championships must have at least 6 dancers in the age group to proceed. If a dancer withdraws during the event (once the age group has started to dance) due to illness or injury, leaving fewer than six dancers in the age group, it does not affect the championship status.
10. If there are fewer than six dancers in an age group, the Organizer may amalgamate age groups to meet the minimum number of dancers required for a championship. Amalgamation may not include dancers under age 16 with dancers in 16 and over age groups, or under 12 years and 12 years and over.
11. Organizers must hold judges/scrutineering sheets for one year from the date of the Championship. Judges/scrutineering sheets may be called in at random for checking.

12. Championships may be held on the same day provided they are at least 750 miles apart.
13. Closed championships may be held on the same day and at the same venue as an open championship or at a different venue on the same day as an open championship provided the venues are at least 750 miles apart. A closed championship may be held on the same day as another closed championship regardless of distance provided that one closed championship does not include the boundaries of the other.

### **TITLES OF CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Titles of championships are limited to the following five classes:

1. **World** – occurs at the Cowal Gathering in Scotland at the end of August
2. **National** - including the entire country
3. **Area** - covering a large geographic area in the country
4. **County** - covering a geographical county, district or region

All Championship titles must be approved by the RSOBHD.

### **OPEN AND CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. **Open** - all competitors may compete.
2. **Closed** - competitors must qualify by birth or by being a resident for six months prior to the event in the county or area covered by the championship.
3. **National or Area** - may be open or closed at the discretion of the Organizer.
4. **County** - may be open or closed at the discretion of the Board, but only one type will be sanctioned during any one calendar year for a particular county.

### **OPEN AND CLOSED**

1. An Open Championship is one in which competitors resident outside the area named in the title may compete.
2. A Closed Championship is one which the competitor must qualify by birth or by having been a resident for six months immediately prior to the event in the county, area or country covered by the Championship.
3. If a dancer moves to a new county, area or country, that dancer retains residency in the old county, area, or country until 6 months residency takes place in the new county, area, or country.
4. There is a minimum age of 7 years required for competitors in an Open or Closed Championship. There is no maximum age limit.

### **CERTIFICATES**

1. The winner of a championship receives a certificate issued by the RSOBHD.
2. The Organizer has the responsibility to:
  - a. Provide championship reports to the Board containing the names of the winners within seven days of the event.
  - b. Forward the completed certificates to the respective winners after receiving them from the Board.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP GROUPS**

1. The age groups requested on your RSOBHD championship renewal form **MUST** match the age groups listed on your entry form.
2. Championship report sheets and Championship Organizer Report forms can be downloaded from the RSOBHD website. An updated Judges Panel list can be downloaded from the Organizers section of the RSOBHD website.

3. Please ensure that Championship and Premiership reports are **fully completed**, including **the correct Championship or Premiership title, venue, and date along with the Town/City and post code** for the recipients of the certificates.
4. Organizers should ensure that all reports are signed prior to submitting to the RSOBHD. If any age groups are cancelled or amalgamated, full information should be provided to the RSOBHD when submitting the reports.

### **AMALGAMATING AGE GROUPS**

1. The RSOBHD recommends Organizers of Championships and Scottish National Dance Premiership to combine age groups if there are insufficient dancer numbers in each group on the day of the Championship or Premiership. It is not allowed to combine groups under 12 years with groups 12 years and over and groups under 16 years with groups 16 years and over.
2. Even though it is currently a recommendation to combine groups, Organizers do not need to. However, the RSOBHD asks Championships and Premiership Organizers to list the number of dancers competing in all Championship and Premiership groups on the day of the competition, as they are keeping track of competitor numbers for all Championships and Premierships worldwide. If an Organizer decides not to combine age groups when there are insufficient numbers to make a Championship group, please provide a reason why you are not combining age groups on the championship report.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP AND PREMIERSHIP PAPERWORK**

1. Championships and Premiership applications are only approved at the September and November meetings of the RSOBHD. There are no exceptions to this process. Be sure to allow sufficient time to submit your applications before the Board meeting.
2. After the Championship / Premiership event, it is essential to submit your paperwork in a timely manner. The reports need to be printed and signed by all the judges for the event.
3. If there are any issues that delay the completion of the reports, please contact the Board Office immediately and let them know the issues. They will appreciate knowing of any issues and are likely to be open minded about helping you solve the issues to complete your report
4. It is very important to get Championship and Premiership reports to the Board Office as soon as possible after your event. The Board Office reviews and approves all Championship and Premiership reports at the bi-monthly RSOBHD Board meetings. If there are any issues, they are discussed at the Board meetings. If there are significant delays or issues in communicating with the Championship/Premiership Organizer, these issues may be considered when voting to approve the next year's renewal application for the event.

### **JUDGES FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. A judge for a championship must be selected from the RSOBHD Worldwide Judges Panel. Special designations on the list of judges indicate those judges who are qualified to judge at the championship level.
2. In a championship there must be at least three judges who mark independently. They should be seated to allow an uninterrupted view of the dancers. They do not communicate with each other while judging. If for an unforeseen reason, a judge is unable to continue judging during a championship and it is impossible to fill his/her place with an eligible judge, the remaining judges may continue judging the championship. This should be announced to the competitors and an explanation sent to the RSOBHD.
3. During a competition, no person should be allowed to contact the judges except the scrutineers or the person authorized to pick up the judges' sheets for the scrutineers.
4. For championships, the judges write their marks on a sheet supplied by the Organizer. These sheets are in duplicate – the top copy is handed to the scrutineer and the second copy is held by the judge. No other notes should be kept.

5. An RSOBHD judge may not adjudicate the same championship more than three years in succession.

### **SCRUTINEERING AT CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. In a championship, it is highly recommended by ScotDance USA to have at least three or four scrutineers who can check one another's results. In some cases, you may have two sets of people using separate computers. Make sure that they understand the difference between a judge's dancer mark (score between 0 and 100) and dance points (137, 91, 71, 53, 37, 23). Judge's marks are only used by the scrutineers to rank the top six dancers in each group.
2. The following errors are the only time a scrutineer should go back to an adjudicator to ask them to amend their marking sheet: (1) Figures are not legible, (2) Wrong competitor number taken down, (3) Judge's sheet not signed.
3. Where there are six or more Championship or Scottish National Premiership groups, there must be at least four scrutineers.
4. Please be sure to complete the Scrutineering Policy form and the RSOBHD Championship Organizers report – please refer to these documents in the Appendix.
5. Please refer to the ScotDance USA Scrutineering Manual for clarification on any scrutineering questions.

### **DANCER OF THE DAY AWARD AT A CHAMPIONSHIP**

1. If a Dancer of the Day trophy (based on points) is to be awarded at a championship, there must be at least six competitors who have competed in the age group for the aggregate points earned from those dances to qualify in calculating the overall winner. If there are fewer than six competitors in an age group for an individual dance, then the points gained in that dance for that particular age group are not included in the total aggregate points calculated toward the Dancer of the Day Trophy for those dancers. If it has been decided in advance to hold a "dance-off" for an overall award, then all eligible competitors may compete regardless of the number of competitors within the individual group. (For example, all Premier age group trophy winners are eligible for a "dance off" to determine the overall Dancer of the Day. Even if there were only 5 competitors in an age group, that age group trophy winner may still compete in the "dance off"). All rules pertaining to an "overall" trophy or award must be advertised on the entry form or program.
2. Other issues related to a "Dancer of the Day" Dance-Off:
  - a. This dance does not count as one of the 8 maximum dances a dancer may compete in one day.
  - b. Either one or three judges must judge a Dance-Off event. If three judges judge the event, the results should be posted.

### **POSTING OF CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS**

In a championship, the top six placings of each judge must be posted for display after the results are announced. These results are the computer-generated judges' placing sheets – NOT the original judges' scoring sheets! The judges' placing sheets MUST be posted at the competition venue even if copies of the placings are printed and sold.

### **PRE-CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Pre-Championships may ONLY held in conjunction with a sanctioned Championship. Entry in a Pre-Championship is restricted to those dancers who have never won a Championship or Pre-Championship. The dances in a Pre-Championship are the same as for a Championship, but set steps are not required and one adjudicator may judge each dance. The event may be

advertised as a Pre-Championship, but there is no title associated with it. In a Pre-Championship event, any Reel can be danced. The Reel does not have to be the same one as the reel that is danced in the Championship.

## **SCOTTISH NATIONAL DANCE PREMIERSHIPS**

Scottish National Dance Premierhips, commonly known as Premierhips, are a relatively new style of competitive event in the US that includes only National Dances. These events follow a championship-style format by having 3 judges and set steps defined for each dance.

Premierhips may include four National Dances in their format. Several larger US competitions who host championships have also hosted Premierhips as part of their competition event.

Guidelines have been defined and are used for organizing Premierhips. As of 2017, the RSOBHD governs the annual granting of Premierhips. The RSOBHD also defines the rules for organizing Premierhips.

## **APPLICATION, APPROVAL AND RENEWAL OF PREMIERSHIPS**

1. The RSOBHD is the World Governing Body of the 'Scottish National Dance Premierhips' (Premierhips). Premierhips are subject to the rules of the RSOBHD and sanctioned by the RSOBHD. These events can only be run by championship organizers.
2. Organizers wishing to host a Premierhip event must apply to RSOBHD for an event in the following calendar year. An organizer may apply to hold a Premierhip after organizing a championship for the 3 years preceding. Premierhips may be run in conjunction with a championship or as a standalone event.
3. An application to the Board for recognition of a Premierhip must be made in writing to reach the Board in time for the September meeting of the Board. No Premierhip will be authorized for the calendar year after the November RSOBHD meeting. Each application must be accompanied by the full registration fee which is set forth each year by the RSOBHD.
4. Organizers will be able to suggest 3 possible titles for their Premierhip event, one of which will be selected by the RSOBHD. That title will be granted only to the requesting organization until that organization, as indicated in writing, wished to discontinue renewal of their Premierhip. Premierhip titles may only be utilized once in any calendar year.
5. Premierhips are categorized as Open. As with RSOBHD-sanctioned Championships, Open Premierhips occurring on the same day must be separated by 750 miles.
6. The winner of a recognized Premierhip shall be entitled to a certificate issued by the Board and signed by the President of the Board. The Organizer is responsible for providing the Board, within seven days of the event, with full particulars with which to complete the certificates.
7. Judges marking sheets and results should also be retained for the period of 1 year. Judges sheets may be called in at random by the RSOBHD.
8. No event Organizer may advertise the title of 'Premierhip' without the sanction of the RSOBHD.

## **JUDGES FOR PREMIERSHIPS**

1. A judge for a premierhip must be selected from the RSOBHD Worldwide Judges Panel. Special designation on the list of judges indicates those judges who are qualified to judge premierhips.
2. In a premierhip there must be at least three judges who mark independently. They should be seated to allow an uninterrupted view of the dancers. They do not communicate with each other while judging. If for an unforeseen reason, a judge is unable to continue judging during a

premiership and it is impossible to fill their place with an eligible judge, the remaining judges may continue judging the premiership. This should be announced to the competitors and an explanation sent to the RSOBHD.

3. During a competition, no person should be allowed to contact the judges except the scrutineers or the person authorized to pick up the judges' sheets for the scrutineers.

4. For premierships, the judges write their marks on a sheet supplied by the Organizer. These sheets are in duplicate – the top copy is handed to the scrutineer and the second copy is held by the judge. No other notes should be kept.

### **PREMIERSHIP EVENT DETAILS**

1. Premierships must be advertised as 'Recognized by RSOBHD'.

2. Premierships are open to Premier dancers aged 7 and over only. Organizations not adhering to the rule risk the RSOBHD not renewing their event as a Premiership.

3. Similar to RSOBHD Championships, RSOBHD's Scottish National Dance Premiership steps will be selected for two categories: Juvenile (7 Years – Under 12 Years), Junior (12 & Under 16 Years) and Senior (16 Years & Over).

4. Premiership classes can be divided after the event's registration closing date at the discretion of the organizer listed on the organizer's Premiership application. Six (6) dancers constitute a class. Withdrawal of entrant(s) due to injury or illness incurred during the event does not nullify the Premiership.

5. In the event of there being insufficient entries in a stated age group, prior or on the day, the event Organizer has the option to amalgamate or amend the age group to meet the minimum number required. Amalgamation cannot include under 16 years and 16 and over or under 12 years and 12 years and over.

6. Each dance in a Premiership is scrutineered to 6 places and prizes are awarded to 6<sup>th</sup> place. Premiership points may be awarded. Overall prizes are awarded to 6<sup>th</sup> place.

7. Four (4) dances will be included in Premierships and such dances as well as their steps will be decided upon each calendar year by the RSOBHD. Dances may include the Irish Jig, Sailor's Hornpipe and any of the following Scottish National Dances: Flora MacDonald's Fancy, Scottish Lilt, Blue Bonnets Over the Border, Village Maid, Scotch Measure, Earl of Errol, Wilt Thou Go to the Barracks Johnnie? and Heilan' Laddie.

8. Dancers participating in a Premiership must dance the dances and steps as given by the RSOBHD for that calendar year. Dancing a non-Premiership step in a Premiership will lead to disqualification.

9. The use of pipers or musicians is strongly recommended for Premierships.

10. Duplicate judges' mark sheets must be used.

### **SCRUTINEERING AT PREMIERSHIPS**

1. In a premiership, it is highly recommended by ScotDance USA to have at least three or four scrutineers who can check one another's results. In some cases, you may have two sets of people using separate computers. Make sure that they understand the difference between a judge's dancer mark (score between 0 and 100) and dance points (137, 91, 71, 53, 37, 23). Judge's marks are only used by the scrutineers to rank the top six dancers in each group.

2. Please refer to the ScotDance USA Scrutineering Manual for clarification on any scrutineering questions.

### **POSTING OF PREMIERSHIP RESULTS**

1. In a premiership, the top six placings of each judge must be posted for display after the results are announced. These results are the computer-generated judges' placing sheets –



NOT the original judges' scoring sheets! The judges' placing sheets MUST be posted at the competition venue even if copies of the placings are printed and sold.

2. If you are interested in hosting a Premiership, it needs to be registered with the RSOBHD on an annual basis, as with a Championship. Please contact the ScotDance USA National Competition Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com) if you are interested in hosting a Premiership at your championship event.

## SECTION 3 - PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF RUNNING A COMPETITIVE EVENT

### PLANNING YOUR COMPETITIVE EVENT

#### FIND A SUITABLE DATE (minimum of a year prior to event)

Start by checking your regional listings - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/calendar/scotdance-usa-events/> - to find out when other competitions are scheduled. If you are close to a neighboring region, you should check the competitions in those regions as well. You **DO NOT** want to choose a date that would conflict with another established competition in your area, as both competitions will suffer from lack of competitors.

#### FIND A SUITABLE VENUE (minimum of a year prior to event)

##### Should it be indoor or outdoor?

1. Outdoor – if you decide on an outdoor venue, unless the platform is covered you will also need a back-up indoor venue in case of inclement weather. Regardless of the venue for an outdoor competition, it is imperative that the dance platform is level and that the seams are tight and smooth so there is no chance a dancer catches their foot where two or more boards are joined. The platform should conform to the minimum recommendations outlined in Section 1, “RSOBHD Recommendations for Competitions”, page 16.

2. Indoor – choose a venue that will accommodate dancers, audience and equipment, such as a computer, printer, public address system, etc. The floor should be suitable for dancing, i.e. wood floor, suitable risers with covering or very tight seams. Platform should be raised, or if that is not available, the seating should be raised as in a gymnasium with bleacher seating.

**NOTE:** In selecting a venue (indoor or outdoor) and selecting / constructing the competition platform, PLEASE consider the safety of the Dance Competitor. Please insure that the dancing platform / surface is:

- a. Stable and non-slippery
- b. Wooden and has some flexibility – PLEASE avoid cement surfaces!!
- c. Shaded (for outdoor venues)
- d. Well lighted (for indoor venues)

#### Items you will need at either an outdoor or an indoor venue

- a. Power source to run various equipment
- b. Computer
- c. Printer
- d. Scrutineer sheets/folder for each age group
- e. Marshal sheets/clipboard for each Marshal
- f. Dancer list/programs
- g. Judges sheets (bring extras), folder or clip board for each judge to hold their judge's sheets
- h. Extension cords
- i. Stamp pad and competition stamp for Beginner, Novice and Intermediate cards
- j. Office supplies - tape, scissors, safety pins, paper clips, stapler, staples, etc.
- k. Temporary Card forms for Pre-Premier dancers who are moving up a category
- l. “Last Set” sign on back of Marshal's clip board
- m. Current copy of the RSOBHD Constitution and Rules
- n. Latest version of the ScotDance USA Competition Organizers' Manual
- o. Swords

- p. Duct tape
- q. First aid kit
- r. Water
- s. Ice
- t. Shade tents for judges, pipers, scrutineers, if outdoors
- u. Additional items per your event type/venue: decorations, table skirts, drape, etc.
- v. CD player for playing CDs

### **HIRING JUDGES AND PIPERS (6 months to a year prior to event)**

Judges and pipers should be hired well in advance of the competition. Some Organizers choose to hire their piper(s) and judge(s) a year in advance of the competition. The earlier you hire these professionals the better chance you have of getting the judge(s) and piper(s) you want before they are booked somewhere else.

A list of recommended judges for competitions, championships and premierships can be found on the RSOBHD website under the Competition Organizers section or on the ScotDance USA website (Members only section). Alternatively, contact the SDUSA National Competition Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com) – for the latest copy.

A list of recommended pipers for competitions, championships and premierships can be found on the ScotDance USA website (Members only section). Alternatively, contact the SDUSA National Competition Chair – [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com) – for the latest copy.

If you choose not to hire a piper but use recorded music, then you need to insure you have a sound system that is consistent, reliable and can be heard by all dance competitors on the stage, the judge(s) and the audience.

### **How many Judges and Pipers do you need for your competition?**

Opinions vary on this question; however, a general guideline for determining how many judges and pipers you will need for your competition is:

- a. Maximum of 75 dancers in an 8-hour day of judging per judge
- b. Maximum of 70 dancers in an 8-hour day of piping per piper

Please be sure to allow time in the competition schedule for the judge(s) and piper(s) to have a break.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS (6 months to a year prior to event)**

1. Make judge and piper travel arrangements and hotel accommodations.
2. Remember transportation for the judge/piper to/from the airport and to/from competition venue is necessary.
3. You may want to reserve a block of rooms at the local hotel for competitors to stay if they are traveling any distance. Alternatively, you may want to list suggested local hotels and rates on the entry form or associated website.

### **ADVERTISING YOUR COMPETITION (6 months to a year prior to event)**

List your competition and entry form on the following websites, as applicable:

- a. ScotDance USA website (once you fill out a ScotDance USA Competition Registration form - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/competition-organizers/> - or by contacting the National Competition Organizers Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com)

- b. ScotDance USA Regional websites – contact the Regional Competition Liaisons for information
- c. Local dancing association(s)

### **EVENT INSURANCE (6 months to a year prior to event)**

**Check with your venue to find out if you need to purchase event insurance. If you are organizing a large event at a venue other than a Games, you may need event insurance.**

**What is event insurance?** Insurance associated with events covers and protects organizations/organizers in specific areas.

- a. General Liability insurance protects a company or organization and all parties involved in the event - the organizer, venue, caterers, etc., for losses due to bodily injury or property damage caused by the insured's employees or agents. Venues and agents will usually require liability for \$1,000,000.
- b. Third-party damage insurance covers damages to a location while it is under your control, protecting you from having to pay for repairs.

**Why you should consider Special Event coverage.** In a society where litigation runs rampant, it's always best to protect yourself from ever having to deal with those worst-case scenarios, especially if you're the one in charge. It's not just for your own protection. Many venues and vendors won't do business with a group that doesn't have insurance.

**Choosing the best policy.** With so many terms flying around in the world of insurance - "liquor liability," "general liability," "additional insured" - it's hard to know what is right for you. Most groups purchase general liability, which provides broad coverage for such incidents as people slipping and falling or a faulty product passed out in a gift bag.

**How to get it.** The first step is to call your own insurance agent and find out if you're already covered, and for what. In some policies, event coverage is automatic. Be sure the insurance carrier is financially stable and has a well-defined program for special event insurance. Remember that things like liquor and weather are add-ons, and you are responsible for informing your insurance agent if you plan to serve alcohol at an event.

Many groups opt to get a one-time event policy separate from the one that covers their day-to-day business. This effectively isolates the event, so that any incidents that occur do not affect the regular insurance plan.

### **CREATING YOUR ENTRY FORM (6 months to 9 months prior to event)**

Entry forms should be divided into two sections and include at least the following information:

#### 1. Competition Information for Dancers

- a. Dancer Categories - Primary, Beginner, Novice, Intermediate, Premier
- b. Age groups if pre-determined by age or to be determined by Organizer
- c. Dances in each category/age group with number of steps to be danced  
**On your entry form - if you are doing the Jig, please list the number of finishing steps (e.g. 3&1 or 4&2)**
- d. Entry fees
- e. Closing date (should be highlighted) - Indicate a late fee if you take late entries.
- f. ScotDance USA Competition Number
- g. Dancer registration times for morning and afternoon

- h. ScotDance USA fee – Some ScotDance USA Regions include a ScotDance USA fee per dancer (usually \$1 or \$2) that the Organizer collects and sends on to the Regional Treasurer. This money is used to help the Region with annual operating costs.
  - i. Start times for morning and afternoon dancers
  - j. State that the competition will run under RSOBHD rules
  - k. Organizer contact information including email, address and phone number
  - l. Name and address of competition venue (should be highlighted)
  - m. Awards, including special awards
  - n. Name and address of host hotel
  - o. Name of Judge and Piper if contracts are signed and returned (**This information is helpful to publish, but it is not required to do so.**)
2. Tear-off sheet or separate sheet of dancer Information to be sent to Organizer
- a. Dancer name
  - b. Dancer contact information including email, address and phone number
  - c. Dancer category
  - d. Date of Birth**
  - e. Age on day of competition
  - f. ScotDance USA / ScotDance Canada or other SOBHD dancer registration number
  - g. Kilt tartan (optional)
  - h. Events the dancer is entering
  - i. Disclaimer release for parent or guardian to sign
  - j. Teacher name (another way to get information to the dancer if necessary)
  - k. Email address of dancer/parent.
  - l. Additional donation or ticket information (award donations, advanced ticket sales, etc.)
3. Competition Rules
- a. All ScotDance USA-registered competitions must be run in accordance with RSOBHD competition rules outlined in the first section of this manual.
  - b. Entry forms may specify age groups **OR** entry forms may state that age groups will be decided according to entries received. Regardless which method is used, Organizers still reserve the right to alter specified age groups to suit entries received. However, any change in age groups from what is stated on the entry form must be announced prior to commencing the competition.
  - c. The RSOBHD does not insist that dancers dance in any order except that the lowest number in each set of dancers should always be on the Judge's left. The general practice at most competitions is "**first to enter, last to compete**," which means the earlier a dancer enters the higher the number in the group he/she receives and the later a dancer enters the lower the number in the group he/she receives. Many organizers continue to take entries the week before the competition. While no one wants to turn away entries, the practice of taking late entries can make management of the contest less efficient.
  - d. The Organizer is responsible for accepting and processing entries. This may be done manually or using a computer. Most Organizers process the entries as they come in, starting with the highest number for each age group and assigning numbers thereafter in descending order, so that early entries receive a high number and late entries receive a low number. The lowest number at a competition should be 101, not 100 or any double-digit numbers.
  - e. An experienced Organizer will be able to balance age groupings not established on the entry form to ensure sufficient entries per age group, bearing in mind the age range.
4. Competition Recommendations
- a. ScotDance USA recommends that all Intermediate dancers under 12 years' dance "cut steps". The reasoning behind this recommendation stems from the 2014 RSOBHD

decision to reduce the number of steps in a championship for Premier dancers in the 7 & U12 age categories. If there are Intermediate entries for dancers younger than 12 years and older than 12 years, it is the Competition Organizers decision whether to divide the Category into two or more sections. If the Intermediate category cannot be divided, then it is the Competition Organizers' decision whether to have the Intermediate group dance "cut steps" or long steps in their dances.

b. ScotDance USA recommends that Competition Organizers insure having a Premier U12 years' age category despite the number of entries in the age group. The reasoning behind this recommendation stems from the 2014 SOBHD decision to reduce the number of steps for Premier dancers in the 7 & U12 age categories. Premier U12 years' dancers dance cut steps in Championships, and it would be unfair if they had to train for long steps for Competitions because the Premier age groups were combined due to insufficient entries.

c. ScotDance USA recommends that Competition Organizers work with teachers and other Organizers in your area to coordinate the dances and number of steps for each dance during a competitive season. The concern has been raised that if no coordination among competitions is reached, then the younger and less experienced dancers have a lot of new material to learn in a short period of time, which creates a lot of stress for both dancers and teachers.

#### 5. Age Group Classifications

a. Age groups should be listed specifically in terms of allowable age groups – Example - 7 years and under 10 years. The RSOBHD has discontinued the practice of listing the next group as "9 and under", so Organizers should no longer list age groups that way. Instead, what used to be known as "9 and under" should now be listed as "7 and under 10". Also, "11 and under" should now be listed as "10 and under 12," "13 and under" has become "12 and under 14," 15 and under" is now "14 and under 16," "17 and under" is now "16 and under 18" and "18 and over" remains unchanged.

b. If age groups are not pre-determined, Organizers should attempt to divide dancers into even-sized groups based on number of entries received keeping in mind dancers' age (so an 8-year-old is not competing against a 16-year-old if possible) and healthy quality of competition (try to avoid very small groups).

### **PURCHASING TROPHIES / MEDALS / PARTICIPATION AWARDS**

(12 months to 3 months prior to event)

1. Purchase medals to be awarded to all Pre-Premier classes for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd places. Ribbons **OR** medals for all 4th, 5th & 6th place winners. Plan on purchasing at least an additional five of each to provide enough for any ties that may occur.
2. Each age group requires a class trophy (except Primary). Purchase one extra in the event of a tie (or be ready to order one quickly to ship out ASAP to the winner).
3. If there is prize money for the Premier dancers, putting either cash or checks into envelopes prior to the competition makes the awards ceremony more efficient. Some large competitions use prize vouchers that can be cashed at the Treasurer/Cashier's office at the Games.
4. Be sure to purchase any special trophies well in advance of the competition, as well as keeper trophies to give the dancer if the award is perpetual.
5. If your competition has perpetual trophies (trophies that are awarded each year with the new winner's name added to the trophy) be sure to send out letters to the winners reminding them the trophy is due back well in advance of the competition. Request that any engraving be done prior to returning trophies. It is also helpful if the winning dancer (or parent) signs a release form with their contact information and a waiver of liability making them responsible for damage to the trophy or replacements if necessary.

6. It is common practice to give each Primary dancer a participation award/gift before the Primary award ceremony. These can be anything you would like, except a trophy or item that could be deemed a “trophy”.
7. In planning for the number of awards to purchase and present at the competition, it is ultimately the Organizers’ choice how many are given in each category. The Organizer should communicate with the judge PRIOR to the competition to discuss how many places should be given for each age group.
8. ScotDance USA recommends being as generous as possible when determining the number of awards to give. We still want to promote strong competition with quality dancing and good technique; however, if it is within the Organizer’s budget, please be generous in the number of awards that are presented. We want to be encouraging to the dancers as well as their families and teachers.

### **RECEIVING COMPETITION ENTRIES (6 months or more to 2 weeks prior to event)**

#### **1. Set age groups**

As close to the competition as you can the Organizer should divide the entries in each category into age groups. Class size is determined by the Organizer; however, a good guideline on class size would be to not have more than 16 dancers in one class (unless the class can’t be broken because of the age of the dancers).

- a. Age groups are determined using the dancers’ age as of the date of the competition, or other predetermined date, which is why you want to have their actual birth date on the entry forms.
- b. If the number of entries in a category is low, it is still the responsibility of the Organizer to split (or not split) the category into age groups.
- c. Age groups should be as balanced as much as possible in terms of number of dancers. An experienced Organizer will be able to balance age groupings to ensure sufficient entries per age group, bearing in mind age range.
- d. Age groups cannot be broken in the middle of an age, so all dancers the same age will always be in the same group. For example, if there are 20 dancers in the Beginner category, with 10 dancers between 6 and under 12. The remaining dancers are 12 years and older, with three dancers all age 12. A break could be made for all dancers under 12 which would give you one class of 10 dancers, and another class of 10 dancers. Or a set could be made of dancers over 12 years, creating a class of 13 dancers and one class of 7 dancers.
- e. When breaking categories into age groupings, be sure to keep in mind that an age group in any Premier category not having six dancers in it would not qualify for an aggregate trophy awarded over several Premier age groups unless it was based on a dance-off of each age group aggregate trophy winner.

#### **2. Assign competitor numbers**

The number sequences assigned to the competitors must have three digits, which means the lowest number assigned would be 101. Other than that, the numbers are up to the Organizer’s discretion. The numbers needed will depend on the sequence used for each category and each age group and the total number of dancers registered for your competition. There are two generally accepted methods for assigning numbers to dancers.

- a. Upon receiving the first entry form, a number is assigned. When subsequent entries are received, the next number, in numerical order, is assigned. This method means that the numbers in an age group will not be in numerical order, but it is very efficient in handling large numbers of entries. Because the numbers in each age group are not sequential most judges and some tally teams do not like this method, so an Organizer may want to discuss this with their head scrutineer.

- b. Another more commonly used method is to assign a number to the first entrant into a category/age group and giving the next number to the next entrant in that same category/age group. For example, the first Primary dancer to enter would be number 130, the next would be number 129, and so on. Unless you have used this method in the past, it can be more difficult to use, as you may have no idea how many dancers may enter in a category/age group
- c. Competitor numbers
  - i. Numbers should be approximately 3" X 5" in size.
  - ii. Numbers and safety-pins can be purchased online from various vendors. (Google search for "competitor numbers")
  - iii. To save money, numbers can be drawn onto interfacing, printed on cardstock, or printed on Tyvek®. This is convenient for small competitions, but an Organizer should keep in mind that cardstock tears easily, and the numbers must be large enough to be easily seen at 20 feet.

**PLATFORM ASSIGNMENTS AND JUDGES ROTATION** (2 weeks to 1 week prior to event)

The Organizer needs to make platform assignments for the age groups and judges rotations for each dance when there are two or more platforms. An Excel spreadsheet or something similar is useful when creating platform schedules.

When doing platform assignments, groups that are approximately the same size should dance at the same time, so the platforms finish within a set or two of each other. Pre-Premier and Pre-Championship groups can be run at the same time because they perform the same dances and the same number of steps.

Several platform assignments and judges' rotation are possible for the following scenarios:

- a. Competitions (Pre-Championship, Pre-Premier, National Dance) with three platforms (using three, four or six judges)
- b. Championships with one platform (three or four judges) and two platforms (six judges).

Contact the SDUSA National Competition Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com) for further information on judges' rotation.

If you are holding Choreography competitions, the Organizers must use either one or three judges. If three judges are used, judges mark individual score sheets, the event is scrutineered as for a championship, and the judges' results must be posted following the competition results.

Be sure to include the number of dancers in each group and the number of sets in each dance on the platform sheet for the Marshal. This same information should be noted on the Judge's sheets as well.

If there are multiple platforms, a separate Marshal is recommended for each platform.

A copy of the platform assignments should be:

- a. included in the Judges' folders in addition to their judges' sheets so they know which platform they are judging on next.
- b. given to each Marshal so she/he can line up the appropriate age groups on the correct platform.
- c. given to the Announcer so he/she can call the age groups to the marshaling area.
- d. given to each piper so they know the order of the day and the size of each group.



## **ORGANIZING VOLUNTEERS** (4 weeks to 1 week prior to the event)

Make a schedule of volunteers for the day and over-communicate your needs/expectations to your volunteers. The quality of your volunteers can make or break how your competition is run so make sure they understand exactly what their responsibilities are and how to do them.

**1. Marshals** help get the dancers lined up numerically in the lineup area and put the dancers up on the platform in correct order (lowest number to the judge's left). When selecting Dance Marshals for your event, ScotDance USA recommends that people over 16 years of age be asked. Marshaling is an important task to take on and situations may arise that a younger person may not be able to easily manage.

**2. Scrutineers** should be certified by ScotDance USA if possible. They should be asked to sign the RSOBHD Scrutineering policy prior to starting the competition. That way you are getting someone who is trained to do scrutineering by hand or by computer as well as a person less likely to make mistakes and more likely to be able to solve problems as they arise. Refer to ScotDance USA's Scrutineering Manual for any questions.

**3. Runners** retrieve the completed judge's sheet from the judge once he/she is done adjudicating the group and takes the completed sheet to the scrutineers.

**4. Announcer** announces results along with other pertinent information throughout the day.

**5. Registration** – We recommend having more than one person registering dancers so that the process does not delay the start of the competition. If you have multiple platforms or many age groups, you may want to have additional volunteers to register the dancers. At Registration, all dancers must present their current registration card. The Organizer needs to be sure that all dancers have current cards.

**6. Swords** - A minimum of three sets per judge are needed unless you are not doing a Sword dance that day.

**NOTE:** Some large competitions and championships have started having "staff" shirts for the volunteers and other workers. This helps identify staff people to make it easier for your attendees to know who to go to with questions.

## **COMPETITIVE DANCERS AS ORGANIZERS**

SDUSA allows for competitive events to have currently registered adult dancers as members of the Organizing Committee. Due to the fact that these adult dancers are still competing, SDUSA believes that in order to comply with RSOBHD Rules, these adult dancers may not interact with judges who will be adjudicating their events, either on the day of the event or in the planning stages. Here is a list of responsibilities that may be assigned to registered adult dancers helping to plan / run competitive events.

### **1. PRIOR TO THE COMPETITION**

- a. Work on the entry form
- b. Register the competition with SDUSA
- c. Receive entry forms and create the dancer list by category
- d. Set up and/or clean up the competition venue.

### **2. ON THE DAY OF THE COMPETITION**

- a. Check in dancers upon arrival at the competition and hand out competitor numbers
- b. Help the scrutineers by stamping Pre-Premier cards
- c. Hand out awards
- d. Announce at the competition
- e. Operate the CD player if there is no piper

### 3. THEY SHOULD NOT

- a. Hire the judge(s)
- b. Interact with the judge(s)
- c. Dance in the competition
- d. Split the entered competitors into age groups for each category

### **PREPARING PAPERWORK** (4 weeks to 2 days prior to the event)

Examples of all items listed below are available. Contact the SDUSA National Competition Chair - [Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com), for the most current forms.

1. Judge's sheets
2. Dancers' list handout/program - This includes a list of competitors organized by competitor number, category and events. It is common to include space to record the results for each group.  
**NOTE:** This document should not be distributed until the day of the event and should NEVER be given to the judge(s) prior to the competition.
3. Announcer sheet
4. Dancer Safety Announcement – template available in “Competition Organizers” folder on the ScotDance USA website
5. Marshaling sheets and platform numbers/letters
6. Temporary Card Forms/instructions

### **Create a Competition Box / Binder and Files** (at least one week prior to the event)

A great tool to have is a complete competition box/file, which can contain the following:

1. For the Registration Table:
  - a. Admission Stamp and Ink Pad
  - b. List of Free Admissions (volunteers, patrons, sponsors, etc.)
  - c. List of Competitors
  - d. Binder or folder with all dancer entry forms
  - e. Safety Pins
  - f. Registration Card box with ScotDance USA competition stamp and ink pad
  - g. Competitor Numbers
  - h. Group Folders
  - i. First Aid Kit and Ice (if no EMS is hired for the event)
2. For the Scrutineering Table:
  - a. Calculators
  - b. Pens and Pencils
  - c. Stapler
  - d. Current copy of the RSOBHD Constitution and Rules
  - e. ScotDance USA Competition Organizers Manual
  - f. Judge(s) Sheet Folders
  - g. Scrutineering Sheets (blanks if scrutineering electronically – just in case)
  - h. Copy machine/printer for Highland Scrutineer or last-minute copy needs

### **SIGNS**

Remember – you can never have too much signage. Letting people know where things are is key to a successful competition. Be sure signs are clearly legible from far away, don't include unnecessary decoration on the signage, and make sure they are hung high enough in an unobstructed view of the audience seating area.

1. Platform numbers/letters
2. Registration area
3. Other signs per your location's needs
  - a. Changing rooms
  - b. Order of dance list
  - c. Directional signs in building
  - d. Parking signs
  - e. Driving directional signs at major crossroads

### **SETTING UP THE SCRUTINEERING AREA**

**(Highland Scrutineer is recommended for computer tally) or have items ready for scrutineering by hand (4 weeks to 2 days prior to event)**

1. Hire/ask certified scrutineer(s) -- All attempts to have Certified Scrutineers for your competition should be made as they have undergone the workshop and have passed the test to become certified. This knowledge makes it easier to effectively scrutineer manually or using a software system and to resolve any issues related to scrutineering.
2. All scrutineers should also be able to manually scrutineer the competition and scrutineering result forms should be available at all competitions. Some competitions run both the manual and computer systems. This can be helpful should a computer crash during the competition or power become unavailable at outdoor venues. Refer to the ScotDance USA Scrutineering Manual.

### **COMPETITION DAY**

To have a successful competition, the Organizer should be the communication center for all aspects of the Highland Dance competition.

1. Communicate with venue/grounds/games committee.
2. Coordinate transportation and timing of Judge(s)/Piper(s) arrival to and exit from the competition.
  - a. Do NOT keep the judges/pipers waiting to leave the competition site until you are done with whatever you are doing. Designate someone to transport them if you are not able.
3. Solve problems for all aspects of the competition - Registration, Scrutineering, Marshaling, etc.
  - a. Coordinate volunteers
  - b. Remember Competition Box/Files!

### **VENUE SET-UP (chairs, line up/marshaling area, scrutineer/announcing area, platform)**

If possible, set up the night/day before so that you are ready before competitors arrive. Something is bound to come up the morning of the competition. It is easier to handle the unexpected when the expected is taken care of. The competition should be completely set-up 30 minutes prior to registration.

Try to place marshaling chairs off to the side of the platforms, clearly labeled so the judges don't have dancers behind the platform and dancers/parents can easily see where they need to line up.

### **DANCE PLATFORM**

1. See suggested dimensions in Section 1, "RSOBHD Recommendations for Competitions, page 16. (8 meters x 6 meters and not less than 1 meter high)
2. Stairs to platform recommended.
3. If outdoors, who is the Field/Grounds contact? How will you be able to contact them?

4. Upkeep, sweeping of stage, is needed periodically throughout the day.
5. Supplies: duct tape, broom, drills (if outdoor), etc.

### **JUDGES AREA**

1. Is centered and in front of stage approximately 20 feet from the platform.
2. Includes a table and chair for each judge.
3. If it is a sunny area, you will need to be prepared for shade (e.g. easy up)
4. This area needs to be roped off (from the front of the stage to comfortably behind the judge). The judges cannot be disturbed by dancers, photographers, spectators, etc. This space is off limits to all except the Organizer and runners.
5. Check with your judge(s) about their area before you begin the competition.
6. Check with your judge prior to the start of the competition about the number of awards you want to give out for each of the competitive groups. Upfront communication will prevent any unpleasant surprises. Also inform your judge of the number of competitors in each competitive group. The number can be placed in a corner of the judge's sheet.
7. Provide refreshments for the judge(s) during the day.

### **REGISTRATION / SCRUTINEERING / ANNOUNCERS AREA** (usually isolated and possibly under a tent and needs to be roped off)

1. PA system – reliable system that allows all competition participants to clearly hear announcements
2. Registration table (1) and chairs (2) – can also be in a separate area from scrutineering to keep dancers and spectators from coming up to scrutineers/announcer and asking questions, etc.
3. Be sure to post the SDUSA Child Protection Plan and the SDUSA Data Protection Plan at the Registration table.
4. Scrutineering table (2) and chairs (4)
  - a. Only scrutineers, the Organizer, etc. should be allowed near the table during the event
  - b. If using a computer for scrutineering, you will need to plan appropriately for outlets and leads for computer(s) and printer(s)

### **LINE UP / MARSHALING AREA**

1. Could be on either side of the stage or just one side
2. Stairs for the platform (if needed)
3. Chairs (number of your largest group is a good indicator of amount)
4. Dance boards for warm up are appreciated by dancers
5. Supplies: Clipboards for marshals, marshalling sheets, water with cups, etc.

### **COSTUME CHANGING AREA FOR COMPETITORS**

SDUSA wants to make its best effort to ensure the safety of all participants (including competitors) during all SDUSA-sponsored events. SDUSA also wants to make its best effort to ensure the privacy of all participants. Competition Organizers – as agents of SDUSA in planning and running competitions – need to provide adequate changing areas for competitors that ensures the safety and privacy of all competitors.

The changing areas for the competitors need to be near the competition area.

There are several options for changing areas.

1. Two separate private changing areas – one for males and one for females

2. Individual private changing area for families – to allow for parents and guardians who need to assist their dancer with costume changes - Recommended by SDUSA
3. Individual private changing area for individual competitors – to ensure adult participants are able to change in areas that are not in the same space as minors, or for individuals who prefer a private changing area for any other reason - Recommended by SDUSA

### **OTHER FACILITIES / EQUIPMENT**

1. Access to rest rooms in the immediate area. If not, you may need to use portable toilets.
2. Swords (if you have competitors dancing the Sword dance)
3. Table and chair for piper(s)
4. Seating for the audience - The audience should be a minimum of ten feet behind the judge's table
5. Shade tents for everyone including audience (if outside)
6. SDUSA strongly recommends that water be provided for all dancers competing at and all volunteers working at all competition events. Volunteers include the marshals, scrutineers, announcers, runners, and those helping with registration. The health and safety of all attendees at SDUSA events is of paramount importance.

### **REGISTERING COMPETITORS**

1. All competitors should have **CURRENT** registration cards. Make sure the sticker reads the current year.
  - a. Primary (Green)
  - b. Beginner (Blue)
  - c. Novice (Yellow)
  - d. Intermediate (Pink)
  - e. Premier (White)
2. Bring a binder/folder with a copy of all received entry forms in case someone shows up who you do not have on your list. That way you can check your files and know if they paid and you just missed them or if they need to pay you!
  - a. It is also helpful to write the check number on each entry form as it's received or to make a copy of all checks and keep them in the binder as well so that you have them on hand in case of an issue or question.
  - b. Some competitions are starting to use online registration. If you want to do online registration, be sure to print out the registration form so you have it easily on-hand that day.
3. If you have not already done so, provide the dancers with their competitor number and a list of the dancers entered in the competition (list can be available for purchase if you choose, just be sure it is available). If you have many competitors, you may want to organize the competitor numbers by category and age group.
4. Once all dancers are registered, go through the list to determine who is in attendance and who is not. Those dancers not in attendance should be marked off all marshaling lists. (This will avoid delays looking for dancers in the marshaling area who aren't at the competition.)

### **RUNNING THE COMPETITION**

1. Announcing
  - a. Begin with housekeeping information (No food in theatre, washroom locations etc.)
  - b. Welcome dancers and parents
  - c. Read out Dancer Safety Announcement – use template available in “Competition Organizers” folder
  - d. Introduce Judge(s) and Piper(s)
  - e. Announce order of dances

- f. Make first call for the first dance – (Use platform names/numbers if more than one). After a few moments make final call for group(s).
- g. Depending on size of group – make first call for next group with a minimum of four sets left to dance
- h. The announcer needs to do the final call for dancers to come to the marshaling area one or two sets before their group is up to compete
- i. When announcing, the category, age group and dance to be performed needs to be clearly stated. This way, if some dancers are not performing that specific dance, they do not need to report to the marshaling area.

### **DANCER SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

ScotDance USA maintains that the protection of all dancers is paramount! In support of that position, ScotDance USA recommends that all Competition Organizers read out the following statement to the audience at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions of their competitive event.

*Attention Dancers, Parents and Teachers:*

*The (Insert your event name) along with ScotDance USA (Insert your Region) would like to make the following reminders for the protection of all dancers.*

- *We ask all dancers to use the available changing areas for costume changes. Please do not change costumes in a public area. We will allow enough time between dances for costume changes.*
- *If you are an adult competitor, we request that you do not change costumes in the presence of minors who are not a member of your family.*
- *The available changing areas for the competitors are as follows (State which options below are available for the competitors):*
  - *Two separate changing areas – one for males and one for females (State location)*
  - *Individual private changing area for families – to allow for parents and guardians who need to assist their dancer with costume changes (State location)*
  - *Individual private changing area for individual competitors – to ensure adult participants can change in areas that are not in the same space as minors, or for individuals who prefer a private changing area for any other reason - (State location)*
- *If you are taking pictures or videos of your dancer, please be sure that you are only photographing or videoing your dancer and not anyone else!*

*ScotDance USA takes the safety and security of all dancers very seriously and we hope that you will help us ensure this goal.*

## **2. Marshaling**

a. Marshals have a very important job. The marshals need to make sure the dancers are all accounted for before the group begins dancing. Also, the marshal needs to ensure the dancers are in ascending order (from left to right from the judge's viewpoint) on the stage.

- b. When the set of competitors on stage is dancing, the marshal makes sure the next set of competitors is ready to enter the stage. The marshals also need to make sure the only people in the marshaling area are the competitors who have been called there.
- c. Unless there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. severe weather) prohibiting dancers from leaving the marshaling area, the only people in the marshaling area should be the dancers called for the next sets and the marshal.
- d. When selecting dance marshals, ScotDance USA recommends that people over 16 years of age be asked. Marshaling is an important task to take on and situations may arise that a younger person may not be able to easily manage.
- e. Number of dancers on the platform for a Fling is 3 or 4. Three for all other dances except Reels (4).
- f. Ask the Judge for their preference as to how many dancers can be put up.
- g. The marshal needs to be aware of the total number in the group to make sure no dancer dances alone at the end of the group.
- h. Be sure to show the "last set" sign to the Judge so he or she is aware that the final set is about to dance.
- i. Reels: This is more difficult to marshal. You may be required to ask for volunteers and/or the first dancers to stay and dance with the last one or two sets. These dancers must remove their numbers from their kilts so the Judge is aware who are the fill-ins. The fill-ins are always put in the set as if they make up the last one or two dancers and never the first or second dancer of the set.
- j. Plan ahead for the Reels to ensure there are enough dancers to complete the sets or bring back fill-ins to make up the numbers. If left with 9 dancers, then 3 dancers plus one fill-in in each of the last three sets for the age group. If left with 5 dancers, then three dancers and one fill in an two dancers and two fill-ins would dance.
- k. Fill-ins should be given one set to recover if being asked to fill in.
- l. It is recommended to leave a one set gap at the end of a group to allow for the judges to tally their marks.
- m. Ensure that there is enough room for dancers to dance around the swords. If two dancers are dancing they should dance at swords 1 and 2. A gap should not be left. Do not remove the extra sword.
- n. Flat swords are recommended for the Primary class.

### 3. Running

In most cases, the runner is sitting a little away from the judge, but not usually in the audience, ready to take the sheets as an age group finishes.

- a. The runner is used to run the judge's score sheets from the judge to the scrutineering area.
- b. The runner is not to look at the sheets, nor communicate with anyone other than the judge, scrutineer or the Organizer.
- c. Judges will only turn in their sheets when an age group has been completed. The runner should not stand by the judge and wait for them to finalize their marks. They should approach and collect the sheet when the judge is finished with it.

### 4. Scrutineering

- a. The number of places awarded per age group should be decided ahead of time (and communicated to the judge) so all parties (judges, scrutineers, and awards people) know how many places to go to when compiling scores and awarding prizes.
- b. At a competition it is recommended to have at least two experienced scrutineers. Make sure they understand the difference between a judge's dancer mark (score between 0 and 100) and dance points (137, 91, 71, 53, 37, 23). Judge's marks are only

used by the scrutineers to rank the top six dancers in the group. Please refer to the ScotDance USA Scrutineering Manual for clarification on any scrutineering questions.

- c. Part of the job duty of a scrutineer is to protect the privacy of the information and activities in the scrutineering area. Under NO circumstances should information from the judges' scoring sheets be shared with people outside of the scrutineering area.
- d. All scrutineering sheets should be kept by the Competition Organizer for at least one year after the competition has completed.
- e. Please see the complete list of Duties for SDUSA Competition Volunteers in the Appendix.

## AWARDS

### 1. Presenting awards:

- a. The Pre-Premier groups are the most difficult as you are required to stamp Beginner, Novice and Intermediate cards for the first, second or third place winners.
- b. Have all dancers who placed called up onto the stage..
- c. Have one runner stand behind the dancers who will take the dance cards from Beginner dancers who placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Fling, Sword, Triubhas, Reel, or Special or Trophy Fling only. Cards should be taken from Novice dancers and Intermediate dancers who placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in ANY dance so they may be stamped. This runner will take the cards to the stamper. The dancers must be reminded to pick up the cards before leaving the platform area.
- d. Other smaller competitions take the cards as dancers register in the Pre-Premier levels. The cards are stamped prior to awards being handed out. All dancers pick up their cards immediately following the group's awards.
- e. For easy flow of awards, it is best to have the medals laid out in sets PRIOR to the start of awards, or better yet, the start of the competition.
- f. Rather than have the award person walk to each dancer, the person handing out the award should stand to the left or the right of the group. Each winner when called walks to the award person, receives their medal then walks behind the group, back to their place to await the next dance.

### 2. Announcing

- a. An announcer's sheet is helpful to show the dancer's number, name, and hometown (in many cases), in order of their placing.
- b. The results for all events in a single age group are announced before moving to the next age group.
- c. Dances are generally announced in the order performed.
- d. The overall trophy for the age group can be announced at the end of the age group's individual dance results or after all the dance results have been given. **Remember** – The Primary group **does not** receive trophies.

### 3. Stamping cards

#### Twelve-month rule:

- a. A dancer moves from Beginner to Novice after placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Fling, Sword, Seann Triubhas, Reel or Trophy Fling in six different competitions, or after TWELVE months from the date of their first win, whichever is longer.
- b. A Novice dancer moves to Intermediate after placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in any dance in six different competitions or after TWELVE months from the date of their first win, whichever is longer.



- c. An Intermediate dancer moves to Premier after placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in any dance in six different competitions or after TWELVE months from the date of their first win, whichever is longer.

What to do if dancer receives a sixth stamp:

- a. The stamper should provide the dancer with a Temporary Card form to hold for up to 14 days. The temporary card allows the dancers to continue competing while a new card is being applied for.
- b. See Section 1 “Temporary Cards”, page 10.

What to do when a dancer receives the first stamp:

- a. A dancer receiving a stamp for the first time must have the date of the competition added to the card. This is the responsibility of the Competition Organizer.
- b. This date indicates the start of the twelve months in that category.

Multi-day competition “event” (Fri, Sat, Sun, etc.):

- a. For multi-day “events”, dancers only receive one stamp during the event regardless of how many days they win.
- b. To be considered a single “event”, no dances can be repeated over the course of the event.

## **AFTER THE COMPETITION**

1. Balance finances to track where money was lost/made.
2. Distribute results to necessary individuals/websites.
3. Pay judges/pipers and other expenses.
4. Send collected ScotDance USA fees from each dancer to the Regional Treasurer.
5. Write down thoughts/suggestions for improvements for following year.

## **FORMS / TEMPLATES / DOCUMENTS NEEDED**

The following are found on the ScotDance USA website under the Competition Organizer section - <https://www.scotdanceusa.com/competition-organizers/>

1. Lists
  - a. RSOBHD Judges
  - b. Pipers
  - c. Certified Scrutineers
2. Judge/Piper Contract
3. Entry Form
4. Temporary Card forms
5. Scrutineering manual

Additional forms that are available include:

1. Competition and Championship event evaluation form – from the RSOBHD website
2. Dancer Protection Announcement – pages 38-39 of this manual
3. Judge’s Sheet Template
4. Tally Sheet Template

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **ScotDance USA National Contact Information**

National Competition Organizer Chair / ScotDance USA Vice President -  
[Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Vicepresident@scotdanceusa.com)  
National Registrar - [Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com](mailto:Nationalregistrar@scotdanceusa.com)

### **ScotDance USA Regional Registrars’ Contact Information**

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