

# The 2019 Macra National Talent Competition

## Rules & Information

### GENERAL RULES

1. The competition will be known as "The 2019 Macra National Talent Competition".
2. Participation is open only to officially affiliated members of Macra na Feirme.
3. Those eligible to compete are :  
Persons who are affiliated members of Macra na Feirme at either
  - (a) The time they first compete in a county round of the 2019 competition or
  - (b) At the time of the closing date for entries to their Regional / County Executive, whichever of (a) or (b) is decided by the Regional / County Executive, or it's Competitions Sub-Committee. All competitors who go forward unopposed to the national rounds of the competition must be affiliated members at the time the county entry is being forwarded to the Organising Committee.
4. All competitors must be under 40 years of age on 1st January 2019.
5. A club may not pay a participant to perform.
6. The following are the seven events which comprise the Macra National Talent Competition :

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.Solo Instrumental Music | 5.Mastermind                |
| 2.Disco / Modern Dancing  | 6.Set Dancing               |
| 3.Solo Singing            | 7.Pop / Folk / Ballad Group |
| 4.Novelty/Comedy          |                             |
7. A branch may participate in any number of the seven events.
8. It is up to each County or Regional Executive to decide if branches can enter more than one competitor or group per event at county level. Each county can only enter one competitor/group per category (with the exception of Cork who can have 2 entries per category) to the national rounds.
9. **Rainbow teams:** Counties/regions who have not entered a particular event in the last three years will be allowed to enter a rainbow team consisting of members from a number of different clubs within the county/region for that event.  
  
Where there is a club entry, a county/region cannot enter a rainbow team
10. The seven events are, in effect, seven separate competitions. There is no overall competition.
11. **Entry Fee:** None for branch entries to the County Executive. €60 from each County Executive to the National Talent Competition Organising Committee.
12. **Substitutes & Replacements:** Substitutes may be used at any stage of the competition, other than

for individual events after the first round at County level, provided they fulfil all the conditions and rules and provide proof of membership.

13. **Objections:** Objections arising from the national rounds of the competition must be lodged in writing with the NTC Organising Committee so as to arrive with the Secretary within five working days of the round in question, accompanied by a fee of €30. The fee will be returned if the objection is sustained. The basis of the objection will be entertained in writing only. No oral submissions will be allowed nor will anybody other than the members of the NTC Organising Committee be allowed to attend the meeting which considers the objection.
14. **Late Sign-In :** Five per cent of a competitor's or team's (for group events) total marks on each scoresheet will be deducted if the competitor, or the entire team in the case of group events, has not signed in by the official check-in time. Late sign in for the Mastermind competition will incur a penalty of 2 questions which will be deducted from the specialist topic round. The Presiding Officer will be responsible for enforcing this rule.
15. If a competitor is more than half an hour late, his / her branch will be disqualified from the event(s) in which that competitor is participating.
16. **Scoring:** Aggregate scoring will be used to determine the result of all events with the exception of Mastermind. In the event of a tie after aggregate scoring the team with the greatest number of 'firsts' will be the winner. If there is still a tie at this point the team with the most points in each of the below categories will be deemed the winner:
  - Solo – Instrumental Music – Intonation & Phrasing
  - Disco Dancing – Choreographic Content
  - Solo Singing – Tonal Quality
  - Novelty/Comedy – Entertainment Value
  - Set Dancing - Footwork
  - Pop/Folk/Ballad Group – Tonal Quality
17. All competitors must use the sound system provided.
18. For any acts that go over the stated time there will be a time penalty of 5 marks per minute, or part thereof.
19. It is the responsibility of competitors who require an instrument(s) to bring their own.
20. Specific effects such as smoke, special lighting or flashing of stage lights are not allowed.
21. The use of naked flames and the lighting of cigarettes/E-cigarettes is not allowed.
22. Competitors are not allowed to throw water or material that will soil the stage and thus cause a delay in the next performance.
23. Transgression of rules 18 to 20 will incur a ten mark penalty, at the discretion of the providing officer or the organising committee.

24. The presiding officer cannot take part in the competition.

### **PARTICIPATION BY PREVIOUS COUNTY & NATIONAL WINNERS:**

Individuals who win a national title in one category in two consecutive years cannot compete in that category the following year.

### **Specific Rules For Each Event**

#### **1. Solo Instrumental Music**

1. Each competitor must play two, but only two, tunes. Medleys are not allowed.
2. The two tunes **must be of contrasting tempo i.e. one FAST and one SLOW. Adjudicators will only mark out of 50 if this is not complied with.**
3. The maximum time allowed for any one tune is five minutes.
4. No accompaniment of any kind is allowed.
5. A competitor may play only one instrument, which can be electric but cannot be electronic. The exception to the latter is an electronic keyboard or synthesiser provided that it is used solely in plain piano mode i.e. no drum beats, any other backing instruments or special effects of any kind.

#### **2. Disco Dancing**

1. Each team must have a minimum of four and a maximum of eight dancers.
2. Any combination of males and females, or all of either, is allowed.
3. Each team's performance may last for a maximum of five minutes.
4. Live or recorded music is allowed. Musicians need not be Macra members nor is there a limit to their number. There are no marks for using live instead of recorded music, nor is the quality of the music taken into consideration in the marking, apart from its impact on the dancing performance.
5. Any type of music or dance is allowed, with the exception of Ceili and Set Dancing.
6. Any type of costume may be worn. There are no extra marks for costumes.
7. More than one song and / or dance routine may be used during a performance. However, there are no extra marks for the quantity of dance routines. Adjudication will be on the basis of the complete overall performance.

### **3. Solo Singing**

1. Each competitor must sing just one song.
2. Any type of song is allowed.
3. One instrumental accompanist, who need not be a member of Macra na Feirme, is allowed.
4. Self-accompaniment is allowed, but only one instrument may be used.
5. Only one of 3 or 4 above is allowed.
6. No backing track or electronic instrument can be used. The only exception to the latter is an electronic keyboard or synthesiser which may be used provided that it is used solely in piano mode i.e. no drum beats, other backing instruments or any special effects. Accompaniment by an electric instrument is allowed.
7. No extra marks are given for accompaniment.

### **4. Novelty/Comedy Act**

1. Each act must put on a sketch, comedy or novelty item with the emphasis on originality, light-heartedness and entertainment value.
2. The performance must not last longer than six minutes.
3. The maximum number of people allowed in an act is eight, while the minimum is one.
4. Each act will be allowed two minutes to prepare the stage before their performance and one minute to clear the stage afterwards. If either of these limits is exceeded, there will be a penalty of five marks per minute or part thereof.
5. Under no circumstances may an act bring on, or put up, props of any kind, or prepare the stage in any way whatsoever, other than during the two minutes allowed immediately before their performance or during the performance.
6. Teams may use sound effects and recorded or live music (musicians need not be members of Macra na Feirme provided they do not appear on stage). The setting up of effects or music must be done during the two minutes preparation time. Transgression of this rule may incur a ten mark penalty at the discretion of the Presiding Officer or the Organising Committee.

### **5. Mastermind**

1. This is an individual quiz consisting of questions on a contestant's specialist topic and general knowledge.
2. Specialist topics must be selected from the following list only :
  - (a) Irish History
  - (b) World History
  - (c) Irish Geography
  - (i) Science and Nature
  - (j) Classical Music
  - (k) Pop & Rock Music

(d) World Geography (l) Country & Western Music

(e) Literature (m) Musicals

(f) Cinema (n) Current Affairs

(g) Irish Sport (o) Television

(h) World Sport (p) Art

(q) Food and Drink

Note1: ' World ' categories can include Ireland. Note 2: 'Classical Music' includes Operas.

Note 3: A contestant may only select one specialist topic but can change it from one round of the competition to the next.

3. The format for a particular round of the competition will either be :

**(a) Two rounds of ten questions**, the first on the specialist topic and the second on general knowledge with five seconds to answer each question **or**

**(b) Two speed rounds, each of 90 seconds duration**, with again the first on the specialist topic and the second on general knowledge.

**4. County and Regional Executives can choose either format for county rounds.**

**5. The format for the National Semi-Finals can be either 3(a) or 3(b) and will be decided by the organising committee.**

**6. The format for the National Final will be 3(b).**

7. All questions are of equal value in both formats i.e. one point.

8. As stated in Rule 3, the time allowed to answer each question in format (a) is five seconds.

9. There should be a Question Master, Adjudicator, Scorekeeper and Timekeeper. The Question Master can double as Adjudicator if necessary.

10. The Adjudicator's decision in any situation is final.

11. Only the first answer will be accepted.

12. In the case of a prompt from the audience, another question must be given.

13. No part marks or half marks can be given. A person has to answer a question fully correct or else no marks can be awarded.

14. Except where specifically allowed by and stated in the question e.g. "to the nearest 100 miles ", " to the nearest five years ", a competitor must give the exact answer.

15. In the event of a tie, the person with the higher score in the specialist round will be the winner. In the event of further equality in the specialist round, the person with the least number of passes will win. If there is still inequality the person with the least number of passes in the general knowledge round will win.

16. A draw for the asking order should be made in the presence of the contestants before the Mastermind commences.

## **6. Set Dancing**

1. Each team must consist of either four (a half set) or eight persons (a full set).
2. Any combination of males and females, or all of either, is allowed.
3. Live or recorded music is allowed. Musicians need not be members of Macra na Feirme. There are no extra marks for live as opposed to recorded music. It is recommended however, in the interests of audience appeal and general presentation, that, if at all possible, teams should use live music.
4. Teams must perform two, but only two, parts of the same traditional Set Dance.
5. **Adjudicators should not mark down a team on the basis that they have a half set, nor should they favour a personal favourite traditional set over others.**
6. Marching on and marching off is not permitted. Transgression of this rule will incur a 10 mark penalty at the discretion of the presiding officer.
7. Teams must submit what set and what figures of said set they will be dancing in advance of the competition. Both figures danced must be from the same set.

## **7. Pop / Folk / Ballad Group**

1. A group must have a minimum of three and a maximum of six members.
2. Groups must sing **two songs of contrasting tempo i.e. one fast and one slow**. Adjudicators will only mark out of 50 if this is not complied with.
3. Any type of song e.g. Irish, Ballad, Pop, Rock, Country & Western is allowed.
4. Music may only be provided by the group. Accompaniment outside of the group of six is not allowed. This does not mean that all musicians (pianists for example) have to be on stage. All musicians must be Macra members. Groups are not necessarily required to have music.
6. Both electric and electronic instruments are allowed.
7. Adjudicators should not mark group(s) in the context of a preference for or against particular type(s) of songs or any particular instruments.
8. The maximum time allowed per song is five minutes.

## **MARKING SYSTEM**

The following is the marking system for each event:

## **1. SOLO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

Technique 20

Intonation & Phrasing 30

Interpretation 30

General Effect 20

## **2. DISCO / MODERN DANCING**

Technique 20

Presentation 20

Musical Sense 20

Choreographic Content 20

Teamwork & Overall Effect 20

## **3. SOLO SINGING**

Tonal Quality 30

Phrasing 20

Interpretation 30

Suitability of Song to Singer 10

General Effect 10

## **4. NOVELTY/COMEDY ACT**

Delivery 20

Originality 10

Content 20

Presentation 10

Entertainment Value 40

## **6. SET DANCING**

Footwork 30

Timing 30

Carriage & Teamwork 30

Overall Effect 10

## **7. POP / FOLK / BALLAD GROUP**

Tonal Quality 30

Phrasing 20

Interpretation 30

General Effect 20

## **FURTHER INFORMATION / ENQUIRIES**

For further information contact;

- Adam Burke, Secretary, Macra National Talent Competition  
[macrante@gmail.com](mailto:macrante@gmail.com) 086-2498897
- Alan Beirne, Chairperson, Macra National Talent Competition  
[al@albeirne.com](mailto:al@albeirne.com) 085-1414619