

# The Ancient & Honourable Guild of Town Criers



## Rules for Guild Competitions

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### **1.General Requirements.**

**1.1** When organising a Guild approved or Chartered contest the competition rules of The Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers **MUST** be adhered to at **ALL TIMES**. Organisers will be required to sign a binding declaration to this effect.

**1.2** The Organising Committee must provide a business plan showing:

- a) Approval by the town/city council,
- b) Sources of finance and budget,
- c) Organisational details.

### **1.3 Chartered contests**

World Championships  
European Championships  
The Guild Championship  
[Possible British Championships].

**1.4** The Guild Competition Co-ordinator, or an approved deputy will be in attendance, and will be in overall control of the competition. He / she will have the authority to intervene, whenever he / she thinks necessary, and his / her decision is final.

**1.5** The Host Crier must be a member or associate member of The Ancient & Honourable Guild of Town Criers or a member of an affiliated organisation.

**1.6** A championship may take place at a location other than the Host Criers home Town. As long as the Host Crier Conforms to the requirements of article 1.4

**1.7** The host crier **must** be a member of the organising committee.

**1.8** The Host Crier and any other Crier involved with the Organisation of the championship may not compete in the championship.

**1.9** The World Championship is open to all *bona fide* Town Criers over 18 years of age.

Evidence of Appointment must be provided when returning entry forms.

**1.10** For International competitions Participating Criers will be responsible for their expenses in travelling to the host venue.

**1.11 PHOTOGRAPHY.** The press and general public will naturally want to take photographs. Time should be put aside for this, preferably prior to the commencement of the competition.

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**1.12 All competitors must attend all events arranged by the organisers, with the exception of Church parades, unless specific permission is given to do otherwise.**

**1.13 When on parade, the Guild Standard and its escort will take precedence, directly behind the Host Crier, and his / her national flag.**

**1.14 The ensign of the Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers will be flown at all Guild Chartered Championships.**

**1.15 The Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers shall not be responsible for any expenses or debts incurred by the organisers, and equally will have no call on any profits.**

**1.16 That the entry closing date for all competitions, World, European, Guild, or any other competition, should not be more than six months, prior to the opening day of the contest.**

**1.17 A list of competitors for Guild Chartered Competitions is to be forwarded to the Guild Secretary and the Guild Competition Coordinator immediately following the closing date. Late entries will not be accepted.**

**1.18 Props, including animals, may NOT be used by Criers whilst a competition is in progress. A crier may only take one means of calling attention onto the crying platform and carry a scroll for their cry.**

**1.19 Deposit: A non-returnable levy of £50 shall be payable for each person attending a World or European Championship. A £25 deposit, returned on attendance, may be required for all other competitions.**

## **2. MULTIDAY CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

**2.1 Accommodation must be provided for all criers and their escorts from the Day prior to, until the day after the competition.**

**2.2 It is understood that single Criers, of the same sex may be asked to share accommodation. If they refuse, then a single person surcharge may be asked for from the crier.**

**2.3 Accommodation will consist of bed and breakfast, and a further hot meal must be provided by the organising committee each day.**

**2.4 Accommodation may be provided in hotels, guest houses etc. or suitable private homes. (*Suitable means to the satisfaction of the Co-ordinator.* )**

**2.5 Accommodation must be within reasonable walking distance of all sites being used during the Championships, or transport must be provided.**

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**When allocating accommodation, individual criers needs and agility should be taken into consideration.**

**2.6 Should a Crier and Escort wish to extend their stay, prior to, or following the contest, the organisers should, if possible, endeavour to seek accommodation at reduced rates.**

**2.7 The Guild Competition Co-ordinator must be invited and he / she and his / her escort must be offered the same Terms and conditions as the Criers.**

**2.8 It is the responsibility of the organisers to provide prizes and awards for the best cry, and the best-dressed categories.  
There should be prizes or awards for at least the first three criers in the best cry category and also for the best dressed Crier.**

**2.9 Any other awards or prizes are at the organiser's discretion. This, for example, covers prizes for best dressed places, best dressed escort, best dressed couple.**

**2.10 In the case of the World Championship, the World Championship Chain of office is the Property of the A.H.G.T.C. and must be returned to the AHGTC Competition Co-ordinator, or designated trophy officer, at least two months prior to the start of the championship. Repairs, Insurance and carriage are at the cost of the returnee.**

**This chain may only be offered as the decoration of the World Champion at a World Championship authorised and chartered by The Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers.**

**The board of directors of the AHGTC shall have the right to request the return of the chain at any time.**

**2.11 A daily briefing should be held to ensure that all competitors, are aware of the day's activities.**

### **3 Single Day Competitions (eg Guild Championship)**

**3.1 Guild Championships Accommodation for one night for criers travelling more than 80 miles should be provided.**

**3.2 A meal must be provided for each Crier and Escort, preferably following the competition.**

**3.3 For the Guild Championships the Guild trophy will be awarded to the best crier. The Bob Walker Shield will be awarded to the crier placed highest in the Guild Championships who has not won a competition. Other awards or trophies will be at the discretion of the organisers.**

**3.4 The Competition Co-ordinator and his /her escort must be offered exactly the same terms and conditions as the Criers.**

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**3.5 A briefing should be held, prior to the competition to ensure that all competitors are aware of the day's activities. Any adjustment must be communicated to all participants and Judges.**

### **4 ALL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**4.1 Where each crier is to shout more than one cry each cry shall constitute a round.**

**4.2 Should the number of entrants exceed 20, each round may be run in heats. All criers shall compete in any final round unless that be a cry-off for first place.**

**4.3 If the contest consists of more than one round, the scores from each round shall be added together to decide the winner.**

**4.4 The order of the cry will be decided by a draw. The draw will take place in the presence of a majority of the participating Criers.**

#### **4.5 The draw**

**4.5.1 In order to ensure fairness alphabetical draws will not be permitted.**

**4.5.2 Two drawing containers will be required. The first will contain tokens with the names of the participating criers, the second will contain numbered tokens, one for each competitor. Under the supervision of the Guild Competition Coordinator a token will be drawn from each container in turn to decide the order of cry. [ *With the agreement of competitors and the Guild co-ordinator the draw may be made by taking the names of entrants from a single container* ] The drawing of names should be by an independent person or by the Coordinator. The position token may be drawn by the crier or by a non competitor.**

**4.5.3 Computer aided draws are not permitted. Draw results may be held on a computer.**

**4.5.4 A separate draw must be made for each round of competition and for each heat within each round, reversal of draw is not permitted.**

**4.5.5 If a Crier has confirmed their entry and is present and if their name is omitted from the draw, such draw is null and void.**

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### **4.6 Escorts**

**4.6.1 Participating escorts accompanying Criers in competition must be in costume and over 16 years of age.**

**4.6.2 Only one escort per crier shall be eligible for judging and must be declared when submitting an entry to the organisers. Competing Criers may not be an escort.**

**4.6.3 Where a crier is accompanied by a person under 16, for example because of disability, that person is not eligible for judging and shall not be in costume. Their presence must be advised to the organisers on the entry form.**

**4.7 Once a decision has been announced to the public, this decision is final and must not be altered.**

**4.8 In international and national contests there shall be no limitation on the number of Criers taking part, but there may be a cut off date, after which no more applicants will be accepted (see 1.16).**

**4.9 A Crier must participate in every round to be eligible for the final placing. All competitors must be available within 1 minute of their name being called**

### ***ONE MINUTE RULE***

***Any Crier failing to attend when called, may be disqualified, or, at the discretion of the Competition Co-ordinator, may cry last, but will have his or her score halved. When this takes place the judges should be informed accordingly.***

**4.10 Criers must not wear badges, awards or medals relating to previous championship wins, or any such decoration that could influence the judges.**

**4.11 The category judges shall have no contact with the competitors prior to or during the competition. Any Crier or their escort approaching any category judge prior to the end of the championship may, at the discretion of the Competition Co-ordinator, be penalised or disqualified. Judges must be provided with suitable badges to enable identification.**

**4.12 Any Crier encouraging crowd participation may, at the discretion of the Competition Co-ordinator, be penalised or disqualified.**

**4.13 A raised surface i.e. a table or stool will be provided for the convenience of the Criers who prefer not to place their bell, or other means of calling attention, on the floor.**

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**4.14 The introduction of Criers during the competition is to be only by name and the community they represent. (This rule covers the facilities in any programme.)**

### **5 THE CRY.**

**5.1 A cry will be between 100 and 125 words, including the Three oyez's, and God Save The Queen.**

**(Non British Criers may substitute this with a national Declaration.)**

**5.2 The word count is from the first aural sound to the last aural sound**

**5.3 Years are counted as follows, 1999 is 2 words as is 2000. One thousand Nine Hundred and ninety-nine is Six words.**

### **5.4 NUMBERS**

**122 is four words, as is one hundred and twentytwo**

**For Roman numerals, Elizabeth 11. Is three words as Elizabeth the second.**

**Hyphenated words are regarded as one word**

**E.g. Co-ordinator.**

**5.5 Penalty points can only be deducted by the Competition Co-ordinator NOT the competition organisers or the judges.**

**5.6 One penalty point, up to a maximum of 10 points will be deducted for words added or left out. Or under or over the permitted numbers per article.**

**5.7 A copy of the Hometown cry - and the theme cry(s) if used - must be submitted by the date as specified by the organisers, to enable the co-ordinator to check them.**

**Where the crier is required to hand in cries prior to the competition they must either be returned to the crier at the end of the contest - or as soon as possible thereafter – or destroyed and not be retained.**

**5.8 A hometown cry must have at least 75% hometown content. The theme cry(s) will be determined by the organisers and should have 75% content of the theme.**

**5.9 All cries must be non-political, non-religious, and in good taste.**

**The Competition Co-ordinator shall have the authority, to penalise any crier who digresses from the spirit of this article. His/her word will be final.**

**5.10 Commercial cries will not be allowed as part of the competition.**

**As a means of fund raising, cries could be asked to carry out a Commercial cry at the sponsors premises or in the City/Town AFTER the competition.**

**5.11 Each crier MUST carry and use a scroll. This includes a single sheet of paper as well as a more substantial cover.**



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### **5.12 EXCEPTIONAL NOISES.**

If, during a cry, there is an exceptional noise or distraction – for example Helicopter, Motorcycle, Explosion, Peal of Bells” - the Crier may stop their cry and restart, either from the position in their cry that they had reached, or from the beginning of their cry, without loss of points.

## **6 JUDGING**

**6.1 The appointed Guild Competition Co-ordinator will have the full authority and power to deal with all complaints and interpretation of the rules of competition, and he/she will be the final arbitrator. The Co-ordinator may consult with Guild Officers as they see fit.**

**6.2 The organisers will provide adequate time for the Guild Competition Co-ordinator to instruct the Judges. The Co-ordinator is to be satisfied that the judges are fully aware of the rules governing their particular disciplines, and will have the authority to disallow any judge they feel is unsuitable.**

**(a) It is recommended that Judges should have knowledge of the skills they are expected to judge e.g. in their professional capacity.**

**(b) Judges will be briefed solely by the Co-ordinator**

**6.3 The judges shall be supplied with:**

- (i) A copy of these rules**
- (ii) The criteria appertaining to the disciplines that they are judging.**
- (iii) A list of competitors.**

**At least 14 days prior to the meeting with the co-ordinator.**

**6.4 The judges must inform the co-ordinator if any of the competitors are known to them. Failure to do so could result in the competitors disqualification.**

**6.5 Competitors must inform the Co-ordinator if any of the judges are known to them on a personal basis. Failure to do so could result in the competitors disqualification.**

**6.6 There shall be at least one judge per discipline category.**

**6.7 The judges for each discipline shall be seated at separate tables, and shall not communicate with each other, or through a third party, whilst the competition is in progress. They may consult with the Competition Co-ordinator regarding interpretation of the rules only after a crier has finished their cry.**

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**6.8 The use of Interpreters to advise judges is NOT allowed.**

### **7 THE CRY.**

**7.1 There are Four Sections to be judged at most competitions**

- 1. Diction (The pronouncement of the words)**
- 2. Inflection (The pitch of the voice and it's variation)**
- 3. Volume (The output of Sound)**
- 4. Clarity (The ability to be understood despite the volume)**

**7.2 Accuracy [World & European Championships]**

**The Judge should have a copy of each competitors cry. For each word omitted or added, or under or over the permitted number allowed - i.e. 100 to 125 words - a point should be deducted , up to maximum of 10 points,**

**7.3 Scoring**

**7.3.1 Diction, Inflection, Volume and Clarity shall be scored to a maximum of 25 points each.**

**7.3.2 The maximum Total score shall be 100 points**

**7.3.3 Judges may use half a point where required.**

**7.4 A benchmark cry will be given, by a non competitor, to enable accurate assessment of competing criers. This should be taken as being at the mid point of the possible range of scores for each of categories 1 to 4 above – a total of 50 points.**

### **8. BEST DRESSED.**

**THIS MUST BE KEPT COMPLETELY SEPARATED FROM THE ABOVE.**

**8.1 This should be judged by judges with some experience of period costume and materials. Their judgement should be:**

- (i) Is it design of the period as described by the crier?**
- (ii) Is it able to withstand the rigours of the duties of the crier – for example weather wise?**
- (iii) Is it worn correctly?**

**8.2 This judge will be allowed to speak to the competitors and escorts, and question them about their dress.**

**8.3 The judge may award a maximum of 100 Points for this category.**

**8.4 For multi day competitions the Judge may reassess their scoring on subsequent days.**

### **9 Venue Items**

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**9.1 Venue(s) for cries should be selected to enable the judges to accurately assess each cry. Venue(s) should provide an element of 'feed back' to the crier. Venue(s) should enable spectators to enjoy the competition without interfering with the criers. Minimum distances for seating of Judges will be set by the Guild Co-ordinator.**

**9.2 The venue(s) for cries shall be assessed for suitability by the Guild Competition Co-ordinator whose decision shall be final.**

**9.3 Organisers must provide liquid refreshment for criers on each competition day, preferably non alcoholic.**

**9.4 Organisers should provide adequate seating for criers and escorts during the competition.**

**Any request for dispensation or variation to any of the above rules must be requested in writing to the Secretary AHGTC, at least 12 months prior to the competition for consideration by the Board, whose decision will be final.**

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