

Spectator's Guide

Bands compete in Grade 1, 2, 3, 4a and 4b plus a Juvenile Grade for those 18 years and under. Because of the large numbers in Grade 4, and the wide difference in standards, having two divisions should make for a more even contest.

In each Grade, the Championship is decided over two music events; the Set and the Medley.

The Set comprises a 2/4 March, a Strathspey, and a Reel. Music in this event is generally traditionally Scottish.

The Medley is a selection of tunes of the band's own choice, within a certain timeframe according to Grade. Music of many different time signatures is heard including hornpipes, jigs and slow airs.

These events are adjudicated by a panel of four; two piping Judges, one drumming, and one ensemble Judge. The Judges rank the band's performance and the rankings from each Judge are added together to give a total points score.

For example, if one Piping Judge ranked a band second, the other third, the Drumming Judge first and the Ensemble Judge fourth, that Band would have a total score of 10. The Band with the lowest total would win the event. To decide the Grade Champion, the totals in the Set and the Medley are added to obtain a final score. Again, the Band with the lowest total score would win the Grade.

Competitors in the Juvenile Event play one Medley section, and are also judged by the ranking system.

The Street March is a separate event in the five grades. The Music Judges are joined for this event by three Drill Judges, and each band is ranked by the Judges to obtain a total score. Again, the lowest score wins. The Street March is over a prescribed course including two wheels.

Other events are the Mace Flourishing, an open event where bands march on a prescribed course during which the Drum Major flourishes the Mace and is judged on the skills exhibited.

The Display is an optional event where a band presents a marching, musical and sometimes novelty performance. This is judged by Music, Drill and Celebrity Judges.

The Drum Majors Championship is judged during the Street March based on dress, deportment, control of band, word of command and drill.

Bass & Tenor drumming balance and flourishing is judged in the Set and Medley, and all bands are judged for Dress during either event as determined by the Contest Supervisor.

We hope everyone enjoys the colour, the stirring music, the impressive marching and all that goes with a Pipe Band Contest.