

## Steps For Organising A Major Competition

*The following schedule has been compiled by Brian Langley whose experience as a competition co-ordinator includes the organisation of the West Australian State Championships in 2005, 2008, 2011, 2013. We thank Brian for his permission to include his insights as a sample of a competition co-ordinator's role.*

*(N.B. Please refer to the Guidelines and assessment sheets in the current ABPA Competition Package which contains Guidelines and recommendations to assist with the compilation of entry forms and assessment sheets, selection of classes and categories and instructions for utilising the Rank Order Tally System judging criteria.)*

I believe that it is important that ONE person be in charge of the project. Management by committee, unfortunately often leads to the situation where people assume that someone else has done one of the necessary tasks. Unfortunately it often happens that everybody concerned has the same thoughts and nobody has actually done it, e.g. booking venue, organising judges, publicity, PA system etc etc.

### Long Before the Event:

**General:** (determined by Committee)

- Determine viability, will you have enough entrants? Can it be tied into another regional festival? – this will reduce publicity costs and also have the opportunity for a larger audience.
- Determine dates – try to minimise clashes with other local or poetic events.
- **Book the Venue** – for Performance Competition (this is essential many months before the event to ensure that the venue will be available)
- Seek sponsorship / advertising
- Appoint Manager (and Entry Form recipient)

**From Here-on – it is the Manager's role to ensure everything is done** – He/she should report to and liaise with their committee regularly.

### 6 - 4 Months before the event:

- Determine what categories will be included (see below)
- Determine entry fee and prize money
- Ensure you have the appropriate entry forms available ASAP – include sponsor info
- Determine closing dates (will late entries be accepted?)
- Arrange PA equipment and operator, if necessary
- Advertise widely **at least 3 months before closing date**

### Performance Competitions

- Make tentative timetable (allow 10 entries / hour – allow some flexibility in program)
- Check Venue for lighting, sound, where to display results, "office" space, emergency exits, toilets, etc. etc.
- Organise judge(s)
- Advertise for "helpers"
- Compile necessary Paperwork –
  - Entry Forms; make available on-line ASAP
  - Judging sheets (ABPA)
  - Running Order / Result sheets, per category and overall
  - Job Roster Sheets (MC, Judges, Timekeeper, Scrutineers, Result Compiler, others)

### Written Competitions

- Determine categories (see below)
- Determine criteria (standard ABPA or local)
- Determine maximum number of entries per person
- Organise judge(s)
- Compile necessary paperwork –
  - Entry Forms – make available on line ASAP
  - Co-relation sheets

## **When Entries Close**

### **Performance Competitions**

- Compile running sheets – try to avoid same person being at same place in multiple categories
- Refine Timetable
- Compile Roster of “Jobs”
- Check that you have a timekeepers clock and signage
- Check that you have sufficient copies of all necessary forms (judges, running sheets etc)
- Check that you have all necessary signage, also whiteboards or similar to display results on
- Advertise widely (for audience)
- Ensure local “dignitaries”/sponsors etc. will be available – advise them of timetable

### **Written Comp**

- Compile running sheets
- Send Entries to Judge(s) – (ensure that you keep a copy, just in case there is a postage glitch)
- Ensure that results are received from judge(s) prior to the event

## **At the Event – on the Day**

- Early – arrange venue, PA, outside signage – Have “Next performer” seats at the front to avoid delays
- Manager to be AVAILABLE and CONSPICUOUS for “troubleshooting” throughout the event
- Ensure Job Roster is prominently displayed – Check that people are ready to do their job at the appropriate time
- Ensure Judges and other officials have everything they will need
- Have copies of all necessary documents (a computer and printer are almost essential – printer should be capable of printing certificates)
- Start ON TIME – try and stay with timetable
- Ensure MCs give sponsor promotions
- Have treasurer on hand to write cheques / issue money for prizes

## **At the end of the Competition:**

- Announce Winners and Place-getters, issue trophies, prize money and certificates
- Allow time for “photo opportunities” (try and get local newspaper involvement)

## **After the Event**

- Notify written place-getters if absent – send prize money, certificates
- Report to Committee – Act on any issues / problems which arose
- Examine Financial report – were there any surprises?
- Thank Sponsors (in writing) – “butter them up for next time”
- Advertise results

## **Categories and Classes:**

Factors to consider for selection –

**For Performance** – will you have separate men and women’s comp – or mixed?

(N.B. Where feasible, ABPA Championship events should include Classic, Contemporary, Original Serious and Original Humorous)

Junior? Original and/or Others, Age groups – Primary and secondary or mixed?

Novice/Intermediate? – Original and/or other (N.B. Consider “Reading” in Novice and Intermediate classes).

Yarn Spinning and other ancillary events (optional)?

Novelty events? Poets Brawl? City Vs Country?”

**For Written:** Open (N.B. ABPA Championships recommend the inclusion of Serious and Humorous categories in the open class), Junior? (what age groups?), Novice?, Local?