

Subject: Proposed NVPS Competition Rule Changes for 2013-2014**Introduction**

In September 2012 a committee was established to evaluate our current competition procedures and to suggest changes to the club rules that might improve the quality and efficiency of our monthly competitions. The five (5) final recommended changes to the rules for the 2013-2014 club-year are presented below for your consideration. The NVPS board has conditionally approved these changes pending a membership vote that will happen in May.

Now, you (the NVPS membership) will make the final and binding vote on these changes at our Tuesday, May 7 meeting. We hope you can make it to the important meeting on May 7.

The purpose of this document is to explain the rule changes and to provide some of the backup material such as survey results and analysis that helped guide the committee in making the final decisions.

Committee Members:

Bob Friedman, Sandi Croan, Michael Kane, Georgette Grossman, Beth Morris, Mike Whalen (chair).

The committee met at least 6 times, considered many competition issues, conducted a member survey, and analyzed competition results from previous years.

Objectives

The main concerns that we currently face during competitions are a large total number of images, a disproportionate number of advanced digital images, a large advanced class size and a large spread in skill level in our advanced classes. The large number of entries results in very long competition nights, which taxes the judge, and limits the time available for critiquing each image. The disproportionate number of advanced digital images makes judging this category more difficult and produces an excessive number of honorable mention awards. The objectives of this committee were to find ways to

- reduce the total number of images presented in monthly competitions,
- reduce the number of entries in the advanced-digital class/category, and
- address the large spread in skill level and the large size of the advanced class.

Additionally, an NVPS member survey was conducted to help guide the committee in making recommendations. The key survey results are given in Appendix A.

Summary of (5) Recommendations

1. Include a third competition Class (we currently have two classes: Novice and Advanced)
2. Change the names of the Classes to:
 - a. Class 1 (current novice class)
 - b. Class 2
 - c. Class 3
3. Limit the number of entries per category from two to one, except for Class 1 (novice),
4. Eliminate the "participation point" given to submissions when no award is given.
5. Encourage members and judges participating in competitions to adhere to a policy of strict anonymity

Explanation of Recommendations

Include a Third Competition Class

The addition of a third class will distribute members of the large existing "advanced" class among classes "2" and "3". This will solve the problem of the large advanced class size and it will also distribute the advanced class talent pool among 2 classes which should permit most members to compete on a more level playing field. The survey shows 84% acceptance among the membership for a third class. Three-class photo clubs also exist in other clubs in our area and in other states.

Change the Names of the Classes to "Class 1", "Class 2", and "Class 3"

There are various connotations and interpretations to possible class titles such as: "Master"; "Advanced", "Intermediate", "Beginner" and "Novice". The use of class labels "1 - 2 - 3" is an attempt to neutralize any implications that other class titles might have brought by their use. "1 - 2 - 3" has no implication of skill or photographic aptitude which makes it a safe choice. We offer the following class definitions:

- **Class 1:** Any Club member new to photography and is in the process of learning the basic photographic skills, principles and concepts such as manual camera controls; composition; exposure; metering; depth-of-field, etc.
- **Class 2:** Any Club member that has demonstrated basic photographic skills and principles and has a sound understanding of the craft.
- **Class 3:** Any Club member who has demonstrated photographic skills at levels of consistently high quality and creativity or is a working professional photographer.

Allow one entry per category instead of two, (except for Class 1)

This change would restrict the number of entries per category from "two" to "one" except for Class 1 (novice) which would still allow "two" entries. *(Creating competitive monochrome prints may be beyond the ability of many novice members. However, novice members can still compete in the Monochrome category if they so desire.)*

Allowing only a single entry per category (digital, print, or monochrome) should address one of the main competition issues: It will reduce the number of monthly entries making competitions more

manageable, allowing more time for critiques, and/or avoid late competition nights. Although it is hard to predict the reduction amount, the monthly numbers will certainly be smaller with this change. About 64% of those surveyed were in favor of this rule or didn't care if the number of entries allowed was reduced from 2 to 1.

Eliminate the 'participation point' given to submissions when no award is given

We currently give "one" point to 75% of our monthly competitors who submit entries but don't win awards. However, giving "participation points" may be unfair to those who win awards. For example, a member can submit 27 images, and receive 27 points and never win an award and still have more points than someone who submits 3 images and wins first, second and third place awards. This recommendation proposes to eliminate this "participation" point.

Encourage members and judges participating in competitions to adhere to a policy of strict anonymity.

During competitions, NVPS goes to some lengths to hide the identity of the artist from his/her photographs to eliminate any possibility of bias by the judge during competitions. This is the reason that an artist's name cannot appear on the front of competition images.

A number of our judges are also working professional photographers, and from time to time offer workshops and photo tours where some NVPS members may participate. During these workshops the instructor may suggest subjects to shoot, assist in the setup and composition of an image, or even critique such work. During competitions, judges may recognize their former students and their associated work. This loss of anonymity could be seen by some as a bias or in rare instances possibly create judge bias. In an effort to preserve anonymity, a rule is suggested that asks members to submit their "workshop" created competition images at competitions when the instructor and the judge are not the same people.

The following rule is suggested:

Members who submit image(s) into a competition that were created or critiqued as a part of a workshop, class, or other instruction provided by the judge of the competition must be sure to maintain anonymity during competitions. A breach in anonymity either by the member or the judge could result in image disqualification. It is therefore recommended that any image in question be entered into other competitions for which they qualify that are to be judged by a different judge. An exception would be when a substitute judge has to be assigned shortly before a competition leaving members inadequate time to prepare other images.

Division of Members into 3 Classes

Members in the "novice" class this year would be relabeled "Class 1" next year. This year's Novices who are at the top 15% of their class this year would move to "Class 2" in September.

The current advanced class will be divided into "Class 2" and "Class 3". To facilitate this division, one may think of class 2 as an intermediate class and class 3 as the current advanced class. Members would be allowed to self-select either Class 2 or Class 3 with the following guidelines and requirements:

1. It is recommended that current advanced class members move to Class 2 if they:
 - a. Moved up from Novice to Advanced class within the last several years.
 - b. Compete often but rarely win an award in the advanced class.
 - c. Do not meet any of the exceptions below (in # 2).
2. It is required that current Advanced class members remain in Class 3 if they:
 - a. Have often won awards in NVPS monthly competitions.
 - b. Ever won any “Advanced Photographer of the Year” award, or “Print of the Year” award in an advanced or monochrome category.
 - c. Work as a professional photographer or photography instructor.
 - d. Are recommended to remain in Class 3 by the VP’s of Competition.

Note that this is not an exhaustive list and there certainly may be some exceptions. If you have competed in the advanced class for a number of years and your images occasionally win awards then you should likely continue to compete in class 3. If you are unsure which class to participate next year, please see or email one of the VP’s of competition (Mike Whalen or Mike Kane) before this club year has ended.

Appendix A: Analysis

Survey

A 10-question anonymous survey was created and offered to our membership in December. We received 100 responses to the survey. Thanks to all who participated.

The key results of the survey are:

1. The members overwhelmingly support the creation of a third competition class (84%).
2. About half the members in the advanced class would consider moving to a less difficult class. Similarly, about half the members in the advanced class would also consider moving up to a more challenging class. However, a small number of members objected to using the name “Master” for the name of a 3rd class.
3. The majority of members (50.5%) favored changing the number of entries per category from two to one. 36.1% were not in favor of the change and 13.4% didn’t care.
4. In deciding how to place members in a competition class, members responded as follows:
 - a. A rating based on my past performance in NVPS competitions. 65.3%
 - b. My standing in a previous photo club. 15.3%
 - c. A decision by The VP's of Competitions. 24.5%
 - d. Let members decide for themselves. 39.8%
 - e. I'm not sure or I'd rather not say. 10.2%
5. With respect to “themed” competitions, 68.3% felt we currently have the correct number of 3 themed competitions per year.

Analysis of Previous Year’s Competition Results

Last year’s competition entry results can be found below in Appendix B. These results show that

- The average total number of monthly entries (in all class/categories) is 150 images.
- Approximately 80% of our competitors were in the “Advanced” class.
- Digital images are favored over color prints by about 2 to 1.

Additional analysis (not shown) indicates that:

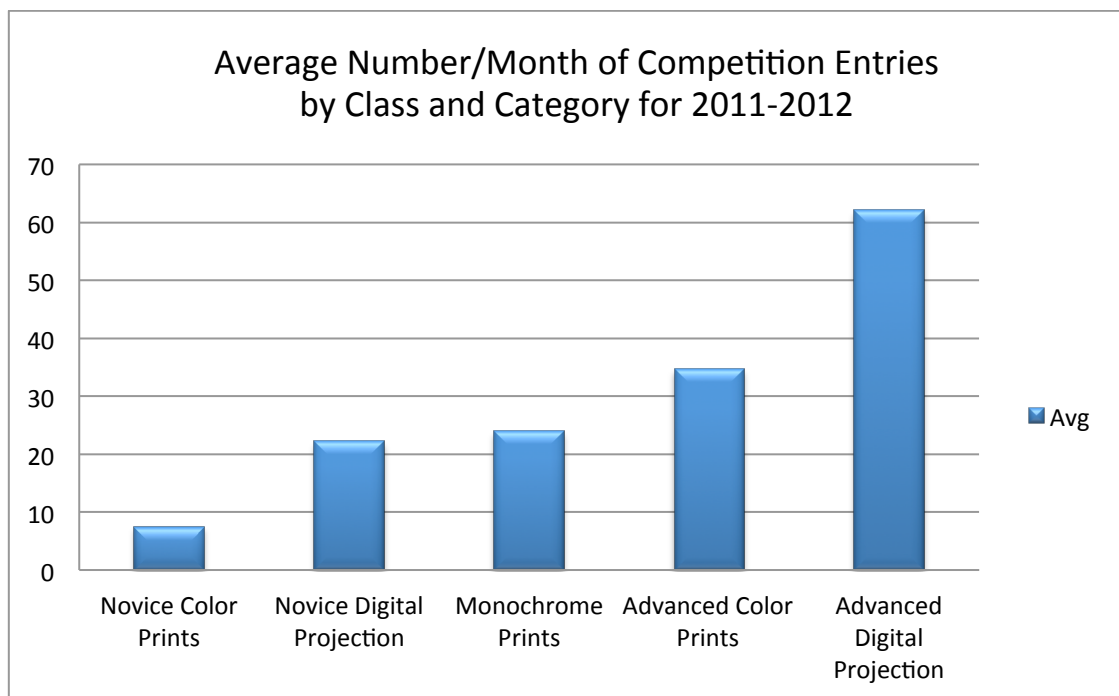
- More than 4 out of 5 entrants in the advanced digital category submit two entries there.
- Limiting the number of entries in class 2 and class 3 to a single entry should lower the total number of monthly entries. Although it is impossible to predict the reduction amount, it is believed this number may be at least 10% and possibly higher.

Appendix B: Number of Competition Entries (2011-2012)

(mike whalen 9/10/2012)

Plotted
Below

CLASS/CATEGORY	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Avg	STD	Avg# HM's
Novice Color Prints	5	7	11	7	7	5	10	6	9	7	2	0
Novice Digital Projection	14	20	29	23	23	26	26	15	23	22	5	3
Monochrome Prints	21	25	31	24	27	24	23	20	20	24	4	3
Advanced Color Prints	39	48	50	37	22	33	33	23	27	35	10	6
Advanced Digital Projection	63	61	62	65	66	68	69	49	56	62	6	13
(Total Monthly Average)										150		



What the chart show

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