

# **Midwest Pipe Band Association Music Board Guidelines**

## **Background:**

In response to a growing concern with the activities relative to competitor grading, the Midwest Pipe Band Association (MWPBA) Executive Committee has requested that a standing committee be formed to address the policies, practices and guidelines for monitoring and administrating appropriate competitor grading.

## **Music Board Membership**

The Music Board will be chaired by a member of the MWPBA Executive Board or Advisory Committee and shall consist of 4 additional members to be nominated and confirmed with the MWPBA Executive Board. The members selected for the Board should be recognized as the more senior members of our membership (bands and/or soloists) who possess the understanding of the skill levels needed to differentiate one grade from another.

The Board should possess at least 3 individuals holding full adjudicator status within the MWPBA.

For purposes of selection, the Executive Board should consider qualifications such as the following:

- ✓ Current Adjudicator – holding full judge status
- ✓ Pipe Major, Pipe Sergeant, or Lead Drummer – past or present
- ✓ Open Competitor – past or present
- ✓ Any other qualifications deemed appropriate

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of the MWPBA Music Board is to create, facilitate and administer consistent application of competitor grading levels not only within the MWPBA, but more importantly, across a much broader scale of associations and alliances. This is intended to have all competitors entered at an appropriate level for the overall good of the association and its membership.

## **Policy:**

- a) Effective May 1, 2000, all competitors wishing to change grades must petition the MWPBA Music Board for consideration. A petition form has been provided and must be completed for consideration by the Board.
- b) From time to time, but no less than annually, the MWPBA Music Board shall convene for the following purposes:
  - i) Review the re-grading petition forms submitted to the Music Board for consideration;
  - ii) Review the composite results from the solo and band competitions and determine the need to upgrade or downgrade a competitor or Band (in only rare occasions will an upgrade/downgrade take place during the season);
- c) As described in the 1999 MWPBA AGM minutes, an additional sheet will be provided to each judge for each competitive event. Upon judging the contest, the judge will be asked to mark whether the competitor is playing above his grade level or below his grade level. These sheets will be utilized, along with other information and knowledge to properly grade competitors.

- d) A decision by the Music Board to re-grade any competitor will be communicated to the soloist or band's Pipe Major prior to any communication to the general MWPBA membership.
- e) The decisions reached by the MWPBA Music Board will be considered final with regard to appropriate competitor grading. Petitions in writing are to be filed directly to the Music Board Chairperson.
- f) No committee member shall be involved in the grading decision of a student or member band for which a direct relationship exists. The committee member shall declare conflict of interest in advance of any vote. Failure to do so shall result in immediate dismissal from the Music Board.

**General Guidelines:**

- a) Bands shall be graded as follows: Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5. The MWPBA Music Board will assign a grade to all member bands. Bands shall be allowed to compete only in the grade assigned by the MWPBA.
- b) Bands may challenge up to the next grade as long as there are at least 3 bands already competing in that grade. No Champion Supreme points will be awarded to bands that play in a grade in which they are not registered. It is at the discretion of the games committee to allow for such challenges at each contest.
- c) Individual member pipers and drummers will be assigned a grade by the MWPBA Music Board. Sanctioned grades are:
  - 1) Piping (Light Music): Open Grade; Amateur Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, Sr. Novice (30 years old or over by first contest of the season), Jr. Novice and Practice Chanter
  - 2) Piping (Piobaireachd): Open Grade; Amateur Grades Intermediate and Advanced and Novice
  - 3) Snare Drumming: Open Grade; Amateur Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and Novice
  - 4) Tenor Drumming: Novice and Advanced
- d) All new competitors applying for membership shall be referred to the Music Board for grade assignment. When applying for readmission to the Association, a competitor/band shall be placed in its former grade, except on appeal, wherein it shall be referred to the Music Board for a recommendation as to the appropriate grade.
- e) Competitors from other jurisdictions shall play in the same grade in which they play in their home association. Any commentary on re-grading will be made formally to the Music Board chair for that individual's home association. The sheets previously outlined in section "C" under "Policy" will be utilized when determining the need to make such commentary.

Approved April 19, 2000  
Effective May 1, 2000