

POSITION PAPERS

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I. MUSICAL COMPLEXITY/OVER-EMBELLISHMENT

A. Introduction

This paper aims both to clarify the position of the Musicality Category regarding what complexity and over-embellishment are and to provide general guidelines for how they can be recognized and adjudicated in performances of songs other than parodies.

B. Background

The Musicality Category respects the roots of our style in "ear" music and discourages performances that seem to be more a demonstration of arrangement devices than the performance of a song, which is defined by the melody, lyrics, rhythm, and implied harmony. At the same time, embellishment is a fundamental characteristic of the barbershop style, and relatively wide latitude is given to arrangers to embellish with a variety of devices, which help create musical interest, as well as provide for both unifying and contrasting thematic material.

Accordingly, the Musicality Category wishes to allow the arranger a reasonable degree of license and creativity in writing arrangements of varying levels of complexity, with varying approaches to thematic development that are suitable for contest use, while asserting that the primary theme must

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be based on musical elements: lyrics, rhythm, melody, harmony, or a combination of song elements.

C. Policy

Arrangements that are overly complex or over-embellished are the result of a level of embellishment that:

1. Obscures the song itself. A guiding principle for defining the barbershop style is that “Embellishments ... should support and enhance the song” (Section 4, The Judging System, I.B.8, of this handbook). When this principle is compromised, the Musicality judge may no longer be hearing the song itself but rather a catalogue of ornamental devices that do not support the basic song elements.

2. Produces a musical texture that compromises the requirement that barbershop music is “characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a primarily homorhythmic texture” (The Judging System, I.A.1, of this handbook).

3. Alters the composer’s melody beyond the parameters described in the Musicality Category Description, III.C.4. (See Section 5 of this handbook.) In addition, performing ability is an integral part of adjudicating whether or not the arrangement is overly complex or over-embellished. The performers’ abilities influence the Musicality judge’s perception of the degree to which a particular song is or is not over-embellished. Given a song with a high number of embellishments, a group performing at the A level may be able to perform it in such a way that the embellishments do not overwhelm the song or performance. The same arrangement performed at the C level may create the perception that the song is over-embellished. The judging system recognizes and provides a basis for scoring these two performances differently under the Musicality Category Description, Section III, and Introduction. Performing ability notwithstanding, the Musicality score will be lowered for song performances that are inherently over-embellished and overly complex. Outside of parody performances, guiding principles for adjudicating complexity and over-embellishment are:

a. Barbershop performers may take great liberties with the rhythms of a song. However, the arrangement should not modify lyrics, melody, and implied harmony to the extent that the song itself gets lost. The guideline in III.C.4 stating that stylizations should result in “a passage suggestive of the original” may be compromised if two or more of these three elements are modified. In particular, rewriting the melody with different harmony for much of a repeated song section will likely result in a passage that is not suggestive of the original.

b. The main statement of a song is generally in the chorus of that song. Accordingly, the Musicality judge is prepared to accept more modification of a verse, even in the first statement, than of the chorus. Abridging a verse to make it an introduction to the chorus is acceptable as long as it is musically appropriate.

c. Extensions are acceptable at the end of a song section, provided they contain an even number of measures and are artistically appropriate.

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d. The Musicality judge will reduce a score for distracting melody alterations in proportion to their incidence and/or impact on the overall arrangement. It is understood that the Musicality judge can only become distracted by altered melodies when the judge definitely knows the correct melody.

e. Regarding Musicality Category Description, III.C.4, it is understood that a repeated section usually means a verse or chorus, but sometimes the last A phrase within the first statement of an AABA section may be stylized effectively.

f. The arranger is expected to use the composer's melody as the basis for harmonization and embellishment a song. Melodic alterations might be distracting, especially when the melody is well-known. Alterations that are made for the purpose of satisfying the standards of acceptable harmonic progressions and harmonic rhythm stated in II.4 are not permitted. Alterations are acceptable in the following circumstances:

(i) Minor melodic alterations may be made to enhance the potential for increased consonance and singability, as long as the notes that are changed are not essential to defining the character or shape of the melody.

(ii) When an alteration of the melody is commonly known and accepted.

(iii) When, in a repeated section (verse or chorus) of a song, the arrangement alters or stylizes the melody. Stylized segments may occur during repeats of a song section as long as the stylization results in a passage suggestive of the original. Alterations beyond these parameters will result in a lower Musicality score.

II. TASTE¹

Performances containing bad taste, or which could be considered offensive, are not common in Barbershop contests. Performers are usually aware of the need to have positive audience engagement.

The test of whether a performance is distasteful or offensive is whether, in whole or in part, it would be offensive to today's audiences or society in general.

The Performance judge will assess whether the performance's impact offends contemporary society's standards of cultural currency and sensitivity. These rare performances may range from inadvertent offense to a complete disregard for the potential impact on the audience. Judicial discretion in analyzing these situations is paramount, and judges draw on their own life experience as well as their judicial education and training.

¹ Former section II (Female Impersonation) has been deleted. Sections II and following sections have been renumbered from III and following.

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Performances that are considered in poor taste will be subject to penalty up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge(s). In cases where there is not clear intent to be distasteful the judge may afford the benefit of the doubt to the performer.

If a performance raises questions or could meet the above criteria, the Performance panel will conference to discuss a possible action. (For guidelines see Performance Category Description, Chapter 6 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*, Section II.I.1.b.)

III. OBSCURE LYRICS

The first responsibility of any art form is to communicate. The use of obscure lyrics can make it difficult to carry out that responsibility and therefore may interfere with the delivery of emotional impact to the audience. This can conceivably result in a lower Performance score.

The audience should not have to work hard to clearly understand the message being communicated by a barbershop performance. Consider the following lyric lines: "The sky isn't blue for a red rosy hue is there in the air today" or "I was jealous and hurt, when your lips kissed a rose, or your eyes from my own chanced to stray." In isolation, with one of this type of line at a time the audience could probably glean the message and could be convinced by the surrounding material that their guess was accurate. But too much of this type of lyric would leave most barbershop audiences frustrated. An example of a song whose lyrics get in the way of communication is "Send in the Clowns." This song's obscure lyrics require a highly skilled performer to effectively communicate the meaning of this song to the typical audience.

The heartfelt performance is not just an attitude or emotion of a song or theme, but rather the lyrics must contribute to generating human emotions in the listener. If either the emotions or the words are unclear, obscure, or ambiguous, heartfelt delivery is affected, which will generally result in a lower-scoring performance.

Notwithstanding the above, there is nothing inherently wrong with folksy, artsy, or poetic songs. They can be magnificent, thought-provoking and emotional works of art. Many of these songs are not, however, typical of the material we have come to understand as "barbershop." The Contest & Judging System has a stated responsibility to preserve the barbershop style; therefore, contestants should choose material with lyrics they can effectively communicate on its first performance.

IV. PATRIOTIC AND RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCES

A. Patriotic Performances

References to national pride or the military are generally acceptable in contest. The rule violation would come into play in a performance where the theme is primarily extolling a particular national government. Examples include performances of national anthems or similar songs (for example, O Canada, God Bless America, or I'm Proud to Be an American). Such songs shall be considered primarily patriotic, and that song's scores would be subject to a penalty up to and including forfeiture by the Performance judge.

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This rule does not prohibit the use of songs of an historical national nature, or general characterization of any nation. There is a wealth of contest-worthy material that falls into the acceptable range, such as Yankee Doodle Dandy, My Old Kentucky Home, Over There, If There'd Never Been an Ireland and many more.

The rule also does not prohibit the use of satire, or other comedic political material or manner of performance.

The Performance judge, in determining the application of this rule, will assess whether a typical audience would reasonably determine a song as performed to be primarily patriotic.

B. Religious Performances

References to God, religion or prayer are acceptable as long as the performance is not primarily focused on extoling a deity. Many songs refer to elements of religion or prayer without the focus being primarily religious. These can be work or struggle songs, many rhythm, dance, show vehicles or those alluding to a "revival". Examples include Get Happy, Blow Gabriel Blow, Wind Beneath My Wings, You Raise Me up, etc.

The test of whether or not a song or performance is primarily religious is not based on religious language or whether a song is published in a hymnal. Many secular songs are often utilized because of their message of uplift and spirituality offering hope and encouragement to all people, some of which allude to positive values and the impact of a power greater than ourselves, while not meeting the guideline of being primarily focused on extoling a deity.

The Performance judge will always be guided by the principle of primary focus and the likely impact of the performance of the song in its entirety on the audience. Where there is reasonable doubt that a performance would meet the criteria of being primarily religious, benefit must go to the performer and no penalty is justified. Otherwise the Performance judge shall apply a penalty, up to and including forfeiture. (For guidelines see Performance Category Description, Chapter 6 of the *Contest and Judging Handbook*, Section II.I.1.a.)

V. SCORING DIFFERENCES AMONG JUDGES

The Contest and Judging System adopted by the Society in 1993 has moved the judging of contestants toward an evaluation of the artistic impact of a performance on the audience, as opposed to an analysis of the craft of creating effects. Therefore, the judge's individual perspectives have become more relevant, since the judge not only represents, but is a part of, the audience.

The audience that the judge represents may be defined as a mature, musically astute, experienced barbershop audience, whose primary focus is being entertained in the barbershop style. Any attempt to define all of the terms in the preceding sentence would be inappropriate, as it would run contrary to the natural diversity that exists within audiences and among judges.

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Whereas scoring differences in the past may have reflected differing opinions on the technical effectiveness with which a performance was delivered, under the current judging system, differences among judges may now reflect the differing emotional impacts upon the judges that performances may have created.

Since each judge, like each member of the audience, has different life experiences and personal backgrounds, some performances may create differing types and levels of impact upon different judges and therefore be reflected in their scoring. For example, a performance intended to be a tribute to Jimmy Durante may not have as much impact on a thirty-year-old judge as on an older judge who can relate to having actually seen Durante's performances. Such a performance would have a similarly diverse impact on the audience, because of the age spectrum that exists. Many other examples could be given, but this same principle affects performances that include inside jokes, period material, or any other performance that has, as part of its content, an attribute not universally understood or appreciated by the audience.

Performing material or using a style of delivery that invites a mixed reaction among audience members relative to taste, empathy, comprehension, relevance, or some other facet, also invites the chance of a mixed reaction on the part of the judges. It is natural that this mixed reaction may be reflected in scoring, as it should be.

Certainly, the Performance Category intends to reward creativity in both concepts and delivery of concepts, but that creativity must "connect" with, and be appreciated by, the audience and the judges, to have emotional impact. Obviously, those performances that are universally enjoyed by all members of the audience will also have the best chance of being uniformly appreciated by all of the judges. Such performances will lessen the chances of divergent scoring.

If divergent scoring is to be minimized, the responsibility rests both with the judges and the contestants. Judges must accept training on category standards and agree to implement that training to the best of their ability. Contestants must work their craft and artistic skills toward the goal of reaching every member of the audience to the greatest degree possible.

VI. MUSICALITY CATEGORY PROCESS FOR STYLE PROBLEMS

The Musicality Category uses its email forum to discuss style issues. We have a standing rule that Musicality judges report style problems from recent contests to the category, which then holds a discussion. Factors include the relationship between performance and current category wording, matters of degree, appropriate amount of effect of the problem on adjudicated score, and any aspects of natural style evolution that may exist. The forum discussions keep judges current on the state of our thinking about style, and the category will continue to use this process as an integral component of our style guardianship role.

The progression typically follows this pattern:

- A. Questionable material is heard in contest. In real time, Musicality judges decide to what extent the material affects the performance and score.

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- B. The performance becomes the subject of discussion, initiated either by a panel judge or an outside query, and is brought to the attention of the Category Specialist.
- C. The Category Specialist initiates an internal discussion of the performance and the style issues involved. All sides of the issue are openly discussed in the Musicality Category forum.
- D. A consensus is reached (if possible) on how this and similar material should be handled in the future.
- E. Individual judges align their adjudication to the Category consensus, with the understanding that this is the expected reaction when hearing this or similar material in future contests.

VII. FREQUENCY OF THE BARBERSHOP 7TH CHORD

One of the defining hallmarks of the barbershop style is the barbershop 7th chord (major-minor 7th (1-3-5-^b 7)). The previous Arrangement (ARR) Category description stated that arrangements should have a minimum of 33% barbershop 7th chords by duration (at first it was 35% and later lowered to 33%). The Musicality Category Description continued this legacy requirement. The percentage was derived by taking arrangements that were considered solid barbershop and counting the frequency of 7th chords to the total number of beats.

The Musicality Category accepts a wider spectrum of songs for competition arranged in the barbershop style than the Arrangement Category did. Most of them still met this criterion. However, there were a number of songs that fell short of this requirement, even though the songs were clearly and solidly barbershop. Barbershop singers and audiences accepted them as barbershop. Judging these songs against this criterion created discrepancies in application as well as incorrectly assessing the true count of 7th chords. As a result, this criterion is no longer appropriate to assess stylistic suitability.\

The Musicality judge listens to the musicality of the performance through the filter of the barbershop style. The Musicality judge is in a position to address performance issues that are generated by the elements of the song and/or arrangement that may be stylistically weak. Through this, the intent of featuring the hallmark of the barbershop 7th chord is maintained without a need to quantify the actual count.

At the heart of the barbershop 7th chord is the tritone interval (augmented fourth). In a barbershop 7th chord, the tritone is the interval between the 3rd and flatted 7th (^b7). We find this relationship not only in the barbershop 7th chord but also in the traditional 9th chords used in barbershop (1-^b 7-2-3, 5-^b 7-2-3 of scale tones) as well as other chords such as the half-diminished 7th (1-^b 3-^b 5-^b 7). The role of the tritone is critical in barbershop. Songs that feature circle-of-fifths movement exhibit what is known as tritonal movement, which creates energy and tension. As a result, these songs will have a high frequency of barbershop 7th and 9th chords and provide the characteristic sound of barbershop.

Arrangements that have fewer barbershop 7th and 9th chords could result in several performance deficiencies. Arrangements that feature more minor triads and minor 7th chords could exhibit a lower consonance level. Quartets/choruses that do not possess high levels of tuning will have more problems and the score will likely be lower than an arrangement with a higher 7th count. Arrangements that do not have high circle-of-fifths motion will have less built-in tension. Quartets/choruses will have to work harder in order to overcome this weakness in the music.

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Delivery and thematic development will likely be lower, affecting both Musicality and Performance scores. From an audience perspective, arrangements that are low in 7th chord count may not be as appealing as songs that are higher in 7th chord count.

As the Musicality judge listens to a song/arrangement that is low in barbershop 7th and 9th chords, the judge will make a decision as to whether the arrangement is still characteristic of the barbershop style. Does it still create musical tension? Does it still provide opportunities for lock and ring? If it does, then it is acceptable. Arrangements that do not provide for these attributes will likely result in a lower Musicality score, and the Musicality judge will identify the weakness of a low barbershop 7th and 9th chord count as part of the reason.

VIII. STATISTICAL VARIANCES

There are many statistical tests available to detect “variances”. “Dixon’s Q Test” was chosen for its simplicity.

Steps:

- Calculate the range (R) from the highest and lowest values.
- Calculate the largest distance (D) from the most extreme value (high or low) to its nearest score.
- Calculate the ratio of $Q = D/R$.
- If that ratio is “statistically significant”, then it is a variance.

“Statistically significant” depends upon how many judges and the confidence that it is truly a variance and not by chance and chance alone. 90% confidence level was chosen.

Judges	Q (90%)
3	0.941
6	0.560
9	0.437
12	0.376
15	0.338

It is possible that 5 out of the 6 judges were extremely close (e.g. 71,70,71,71,70). A final score of 73 would flag as a variance in this example, but both C&J and competitors would accept this sort of variability in scores. As a matter of policy to avoid minor anomalies, the difference between the identified variance and the nearest score, higher or lower, has to be greater than four (4) points before an official variance would be generated.

EXAMPLE

MUS = 77, 68 PRS = 78, 77 SNG = 76, 77

- The total range (R) is $78-68 = 10$.

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- The largest distance (D) is $76-68 = 8$.
- $Q = 8/10 = 0.800$.
- For a double panel (6 judges), the critical value is 0.560.
- Since $Q = 0.800$ is greater than the critical value of 0.560, we would conclude that the MUS Category has a variance.
- The difference between the lowest score (68) and next lowest score is $76-68 = 8$. This is greater than 4 so this song would flag as a variance for the MUS Category.

At the end of the contest round, the PC will provide the MUS category with all scores for that performance. After the MUS judges review their notes, the MUS judges could stand by their original scores or one (or both) MUS judges could modify their scores for either song in the performance per Contest Rules, Article VII.B.2.

A variance will also be generated for any song in which a single judge's score is more than 5 points from the average of that judge's category. For example, on a double panel a variance will be generated for any scoring difference of 11 or more points within a single category. This is the traditional computation used on the Scoring Analysis generated at the end of each contest session and indicated by an asterisk.

For a single panel a variance is also generated when the high or low score is at least 10 points from the middle score. This accounts for a limitation of Dixon's Q Test with a small sample.

The SCJC recognizes that from time to time, a score is provided by a judge that is too high or too low relative to the rest of the panel. This often happens when all of the category elements are not properly weighted or there were distractions that led to the result. In other cases, there can be disagreements between judges within a category. In any event, this process is available to enable judges to reflect upon the performance and all information before finalizing the official scores. The SCJC wishes to ensure that the competitors receive the scores they deserve and doesn't want a potential judicial error to affect competition status or advancement.

IX. COMEDIC CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES

Barbershop audiences love to laugh, and the rush of having a huge comedic hit has driven many Barbershop performers to include comedic elements in their performances. While different things are found amusing by different people, most successful comedic barbershop performances exhibit hallmarks of good comedic concepts and technique. The Performance Judge will evaluate these, and their resulting comedic effect, as part of the overall entertainment value of the performance. Here is a brief description of some of the more common concepts and techniques.

The Comic Premise: Comic situations arise from the juxtaposition of a ridiculous character in a normal world, or vice versa. The Comic Premise is the gap between comic reality and real-world reality. In barbershop performances, we often see a quartet with three seemingly normal characters trying to soldier on despite the antics of the fourth one, usually the goofball standing on the end. Other examples of a strong comic premise include "fish out of water" situations such as hillbillies arriving in the big city, or aliens coming to Earth to sing in a quartet contest. Barbershop

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choruses have earned laughs by singing about real human feelings, but playing the roles of aquarium fish, or vegetables, or plastic green army men. A strong comic premise provides the structure and theme to a skit or performance; without one, a series of jokes can seem random and empty.

Characterization: The strength of a comic premise often depends on the audience being able to easily recognize the characters and personalities being portrayed by the performers. Barbershop performances, and other forms of low comedy, often use easily recognizable Stock Characters: the Nerd; the Jock; the Yokel; and so on. Once the audience has an expectation of how a character might behave, comedy can be derived by delivering the unexpected. In a two-song performance, there is very little time to convey character traits, but suitable costuming, brief spoken words, or stereotypical gestures can often do the trick.

The Rule of Three: When presented with information, humans intuitively search for patterns; it helps us learn, remember, and understand. Comedy is derived from delivering the unexpected, so comedy writers set up their gags in three parts; three is the smallest number required to establish a pattern. The first two phrases (or looks, or gestures) are consistent with each other, which sets up an expectation for the next one. The third one takes a left turn, and that surprise creates the laugh. It's as easy as 1, 2, C!

Timing: The secret of great comedy; pace and delivery affects the success of a joke. A fast pace can improve some gags but ruin others, and the skillful use of "beats" can be a source of comedy in itself. A beat is a pause used to allow the audience to absorb and process the action, or to create tension and expectation before a punch line. Jack Benny and Victor Borge are famous for using the "extended beat", and in the barbershop world, the quartet FRED also made good use of this technique.

Setups and punch lines: These could be sung, spoken, or acted out physically. In any case, for a comedic moment to be successful, there has to be clear and clean communication, and there are several ways to accomplish this. Excellent enunciation of song lyrics, especially if they are parody lyrics that the audience has not heard before, is essential. Successful sight gags usually feature crisp gestures and movements, ie the visual equivalent of excellent enunciation. Punch lines, whether spoken or sung, are often best constructed with the funniest word of the punch line at or near the end. Also, a contrast between setup and punch line heightens the surprise; an intensely delivered setup followed by a deadpan punch line (or vice versa) is a common device. Once again, skillful comic performers use beats, and allow brief amounts of space in between looks or gestures; all the better to allow the audience to absorb and understand the action.

X. DISTINCTLY SEPARATE CHORUSES

The SCJC seeks to establish a balance between providing opportunities for members to compete in more than one chorus, while at the same time ensuring fairness to all competing choruses. However, the concept of "fairness" has two divergent set of concerns:

:

1. It would be unfair to the other choruses in a contest to allow the same group of singers to perform as two or more separate choruses while competing for the same contest award. For

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example, two separate chapters could each enter their chorus into one contest comprised of dual chapter members, which could then essentially be the same ensemble getting two opportunities at the same award. Likewise, that same unfair scenario could occur if a single chapter wished to create and enter more than one chorus (with mostly the same chapter members) into a contest.

2. It would also be unfair to prohibit a chapter from entering more than one chorus into the same contest if they were actually distinctly different ensembles. [The previous version of Article I.B.2 only allowed a chapter to enter one chorus per contest.]

Recent changes to the Society membership policies now allow for (and encourage) chapters to establish more than one chorus. Therefore, the limitation for a chapter to enter only one chorus to compete had to be addressed, while at the same time protecting other competitors from one chapter “stacking” multiple choruses against them unfairly. Article I.B.4 uses the threshold of a 75% overlap to provide a balance of fairness thus addressing both set of concerns

1. While individual members can compete in more than one chorus, each chorus ensemble must still be distinct or “unique enough” so that each group of singers is only competing once for that award.
2. Chapters that are evolving additional choruses may initially contain several overlapping members from within their chapter. Each chorus (if it is “unique enough”) should be allowed to compete at the same contest against all of the other choruses. C&J would not be very encouraging of new choruses to form, if we were to expect that every new chorus would be required to charter as a separate chapter just to be eligible to compete.

Some have asked why this rule is necessary since many districts offer separate awards for men’s, women’s, and mixed (all voices) choruses. The reason is that many districts have established “overall” district championship awards as well as most-improved awards extended to choruses of all gender classifications. To help chapter and chorus leaders better understand how to comply with the rule, the following use cases are provided as examples of two ensembles that are close to the 75% threshold calculation. While all of these groups would be eligible to compete for separate awards – those just over the threshold would not be eligible to compete for the same award.

To help chapter and chorus leaders better understand how to comply with the rule, the following use cases are provided as examples of two ensembles that are close to the 75% threshold calculation. While all of these groups would be eligible to compete for separate awards – those just over the threshold would not be eligible to compete for the same award.

1. Two choruses with 20 and 40 members: 14 are in both. Eligible because the smaller chorus has 70% that are also in the larger chorus.
2. Two choruses with 30 and 50 members: 23 are in both. Not eligible because the smaller chorus has 76.7% that are also in the larger chorus.
3. Two choruses each with 13 members: 9 are in both. Eligible because the “smaller” chorus (either one) has 69% that are also in the other chorus.
4. Two choruses each with 13 members: 10 are in both. Not eligible because the “smaller” chorus (either one) has 76.9% that are also in the other chorus.

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XI. ELECTRONIC ENHANCEMENT, SOUND EFFECTS & RECORDED SOUND

Within Article X.B, there are a few restrictions that could benefit from elaboration.

Article X.B.3 restricts the use of artificial enhancement, whether through electronic or other devices. Examples would include functioning hand-held microphones, long megaphones (as seen in cheerleader squads), or even kazoos. The purpose of this rule is to maintain the focus on the natural, acoustic hallmarks of the barbershop style, and the fair adjudication of the natural skill of our singers.

As such, any penalties assessed would be commensurate with the device's impact on the overall vocal performance. A single note is likely to receive a minor deduction, while entire phrases could result in a 0 being awarded by the Singing Category. The use of hands to imitate an "old time radio" effect or to beatbox are not considered within this rule, and would be adjudicated under the appropriate category.

It is important for the performer and judge to consider the difference between singing and making a sound effect. Yelling "Hey!" into a megaphone would not be considered singing. Similarly, using a kazoo to create a brief duck call noise would also not be considered singing. Length and context will help determine if it is sung. When in doubt, the Singing and Performance categories should consult. If deemed to be a sound effect, the Performance Category would adjudicate it holistically under Article X.B.4 as to whether it was a benefit to the performance.

Article X.B.2 discusses the use of recordings, both musical (vocal or instrumental) and the spoken word. Restricted instances would include interludes between songs, or a pre-recorded introduction of a performance. It is important to note that this rule exists even during non-singing time, either between songs or during breaks in a song. The purpose of this restriction is to focus our attention on the skills of the performers on stage, and not allow the influence of additional performers to be introduced via recording.

As such, any penalties assessed would be commensurate with the recording's impact on the overall performance. A single note is likely to receive a minor deduction, while lengthy interludes or drawn-out speech could result in a 0 being awarded by the Singing Category. Please note that use of recordings over the top of 4 parts singing can draw additional attention as being than 4-parts at once. Instruments being played beyond that of pitch-taking is already disallowed within the Musicality Category, and this rule will be considered similarly.

This restriction does not affect the use of brief recordings that would be considered a sound effect. A church bell chiming 3 or 4 notes would be considered a sound effect. A church bell playing the entire line of a song would be discussed as a potential penalty. The sound a simple doorbell or knocker would also be considered a sound effect. A voice shouting "Who's there?" or "What?" would also be considered a sound effect, however, a voice asking "Who is it that stands at my door?!?" would likely be considered as recorded speech.

Repetition of a sound effect or multiple sound effects within a performance can rise to level of being considered recorded music or speech. When in doubt, the Singing and Performance categories should consult. If deemed to be a sound effect, the Performance Category would adjudicate it holistically under Article X.B.4 as to whether it was a benefit to the performance.

XII. FESTIVAL-STYLE SCORING

When BHS Judges are asked to judge an event that uses “festival-style” scoring, whether a BHS-sponsored event or outside, there can be questions as to what, exactly, that means. It is important to first clarify if different songs within the performance are judged to different standards. For instance, some festivals will require one song to be sung within BHS contest guidelines, while the others do not. Sometimes all songs fall outside of official guidelines. **It is the “non-contest” songs that will be addressed here.**

For songs in a festival that are required to be “contestable” and identified as such, all categories are expected to adjudicate the elements, qualities, levels, as well as any penalties per the current category descriptions and BHS contest rules.

For non-contest, please see the below exceptions and clarifications per category:

Musicality

1. II.2 – **Four-part a cappella style.** The Musicality judge shall not penalize or forfeit a festival song that exceeds four parts (Article IX.A.2.b)
2. II.3 – **Melody sung by the lead part.** Festival performances featuring tenor or bass melody are permitted. In these cases, the Musicality judge shall not penalize or forfeit the score (Article IX.A.2.c.)
3. II.4 – **Lyrics sung by all four parts through most of the duration of the song.** Solos and songs featuring non-lyrical syllables such as scat or instrumental imitation are permitted. The Musicality judge will not penalize or forfeit the score (Article IX.A.2.d)
4. II.5 – **Other stylistic elements.** Stylistically-related musical elements such as chord vocabulary, characteristic chord progressions and harmonic richness, strong voicings and primarily homorhythmic texture are included in the Harmonic Integrity performance element (III.A) and are reflected as part of the contest rules as such (Article IX.A.2.e.) In a festival performance of a non-contestable song, the pure stylistic impact of these musical elements shall not negatively impact the Musicality score. However, the MUS score will be impacted by the precision of execution, intonation and balance of these progressions, chord vocabulary and voicings, and non-homorhythmic textures as they would in a typical contest performance.

For purpose of a festival, the following provisions from the Musicality Category Description **will still apply for the non-contestable song(s):**

1. II.1 – **Musical accompaniment.** All songs must be sung without musical accompaniment or instrumental introductions, interludes, or conclusions (See Articles IX.A.2.a and Article X.) Violation of this provision will result in penalties up to and including forfeiture by the Musicality judge(s). Vocal percussion is acceptable, and, based on the allowance of >4 parts for non-contestable songs, is permitted as an additional texture.
2. IV.E.3.e – **Song repetition.** The rule related to use of a substantial part of one song in performance of another song (Article V.A.2) still applies within a festival setting. A

Position Papers

Musicality judge may recommend forfeiture to the panel chair if a contestant repeats a song or a substantial portion from one of its songs in another song.

Performance

1. II.G.1.a - **Primary Patriotic or Religious**. The Performance judge shall not penalize or forfeit a song if determined to be primarily patriotic or religious. (Article IX.A.3.a)
2. II.G.4 - **Barbershop Style**. The Performance judge shall not adjudicate whether the non-contestable song preserves the artistic aspects of the style as noted in paragraphs I.B.4, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11.
3. II.G.5.a - **Non-members on Stage**. The Performance judge shall not assess a penalty or forfeiture concerning non-members on stage, except in the case where a quartet would have more than four members participating in a prepared performance. (Article IX.A.1)
4. II.G.5.c - **Non-singing dialogue**. Given the festival setting, the Performance judge will give significant latitude for spoken dialogue before, during, or after songs. (Article XII)

For purpose of a festival, the following provisions from the Performance Category Description **will still apply for the non-contestable song(s)**:

1. II.G.1.b - **Taste**. Taste penalties, as articulated in II.G.1.b, will still be enforced by the Performance judge.

Singing

1. II.A and II.B – **Intonation and Vocal Quality**. Both of these elements should be adjudicated normally, with the exception of focusing on resulting expansion as appropriate to the style being performed.
2. II.C – **Unity**. The element of Unity will be considered differently, appropriate to different styles. Songs that are more homorhythmic will be considered similarly to contestable pieces, whereas intentionally non-homorhythmic pieces will be considered on their execution and successful interaction of the moving parts, and unity of those intended to be unified.
3. II.D – **Vocal Expression**. Vocal Expression can be considered from an overall impact standpoint per usual. However, a broader allowance of vocal deliveries that are appropriate to the style being sung should be considered and rewarded as performed.
4. III.E.1 – **Article X Penalties**. The use of self-contained recorded music or spoken word used **between songs** will not be penalized under Article X.B.2. Those used within a song would still be determined, along with Performance, if it is a brief sound effect or recording worthy of penalty up to and including forfeiture.

Position Papers

For purpose of a festival, the following provisions from the Singing Category Description **will still apply for the non-contestable song(s)**:

1. III.E.1 – **Offstage Use of Sound System.** Offstage use of sound system will remain a violation of Article X.B.1 and result in a penalty up to and including forfeiture.
2. III.E.1 – **Amplification or Modification.** Use of electronic or other devices to amplify or alter the voice will remain a violation of Article X.B.2 and result in a penalty up to and including forfeiture. This is not to be applied to use of devices supplied as part of the event (i.e., hand-held microphones available to all groups).

Conclusion

It is advised that a panel review this among the categories prior to judging a festival. If there is an exception requested specifically of the event organizer, come to an understanding and agreement **prior** to commencement of the performances.

If any uncertainty remains within the event, take the opportunity to have a **brief** conference to make sure we are serving the contestant fairly.