



JUDGING AT BRIDGWATER CARNIVAL GUIDANCE NOTES

Overview

The purpose of this document is to offer advice and guidance for the judges of Bridgwater Carnival. These notes, as well as guiding judges in some of the less obvious aspects of their task, also provide those taking part with a better understanding of how they will be judged.

Items to note

Judges should note that the age criterion for juvenile entries is that they are under 17 on the 1st November in any given year. All mounted entries (classes 1 – 5) should have a minimum of eight personnel on the entry; (class 6) should have a minimum of six. Any entries conflicting with this should be marked as normal and the situation reported to the adjudicators on your return.

Entries are permitted to break tableau/stop performing if the procession comes to a halt in excess of 2 minutes, points should not be deducted or the entry judged in these circumstances.

Where should I judge?

A zone will be allocated to you prior to the procession between the main entrance to the Innovia site and the end of the procession route at the junction of Taunton Road and Broadway; there are four zones. Judging should not take place in the rest area, and the difficult junctions at the top of St Mary's St/Cornhill and Penel Orliou/Broadway.

Even avoiding these areas, there are miles of route along which judging can take place. Judges are respectfully requested not to congregate in pairs or small groups and to try not to stand in front of the same people all night. The judging will be fairer for all concerned if the judges are spread over a wide area within the zones. In addition, if judges do congregate, and they may well be judging different classes, the perception to the public and competitors alike is that collusion is taking place.

Whenever possible, judges are asked to judge both sides of all entries in their class. It is recognised that the sheer number of entries in some classes may make this impractical. Please do the best you can with the time available.

In the mounted classes, judges are advised to preview the entries in their class where they line up on the Sydenham estate. They should not be judged here, but a preview helps the judges to form an overall opinion of the standard of entries and can therefore pitch their marks at a practical level on the earlier entries.

How do I judge mounted entries?

Each entry is marked under six different headings.

1. **Cart build up.** – It is the effectiveness that is most important. Points for effectiveness of the cart build up should, however be tempered to reflect your view on the quality of workmanship and the technical skills demonstrated.
2. **Presentation and general effect.** – This is your own subjective view and no real guidelines can be given. If an entry creates a greater impression or has a greater effect on you than the other entries, for whatever reason, then that entry is the one to which you should award the greatest points under this heading.
3. **Musical Appropriateness.** – This category should cover several elements; judges should take particular note if the music played is appropriate to the entry, the quality and clarity of the music and the volume. There is nothing worse than watching a Carnival and having to stand in front of a cart with the volume so high that the speakers are rattling, volume is okay providing the sound is not distorted. You should be judging this category from the spectator's point of view? Is the music appropriate? Is it good to listen to and can you make out what the song is? If there is no music points cannot be awarded in this category.
- 4a. **Life and movement (classes 3, 4 and 6).** – These entries should be judged not for the amount of movement but for the effectiveness of the movement and the appropriateness to the theme. Rhythm, timing, choreographic impact, energy and action portrayed are all significant elements of movement that must be considered in determining the overall effect of movement of an entry.
- 4b. **Stillness (class 1 and 2)** – Points should be awarded for the ability of the personnel on the cart to maintain a position of complete stillness and the difficulty of the pose. A participant, whose eyes clearly move, following someone in the crowd spoils the illusion of the entry as a tableau. Even eye movements should be considered when judging movement, albeit blinking clearly has to be catered for and recognised on grounds of health and safety as a matter of necessity.
- 4c. **Comedy content (class 5)** – In order to ensure that comic entries actually do provide comedy content, this category of points is virtually triple that of the other categories in this class, this is to encourage more humour in the entries. Since the points awarded are more than the other elements, we would hope to see the spread of points reflect this, a range of pointing say from 40 to 50 out of a possible 80 would not. To clarify this, we would appreciate judges using the full range of points available to them, as this will encourage entries in this class to give far more importance to the comedy content.
5. **Lighting.** Here again effectiveness is the keyword. It is not the sheer volume of light that should score the highest points but how effectively that light is applied.

How do I judge an entry when its lights have failed? – Lighting failures are difficult and often the saddest aspect of an entry to judge. Whilst you may be sympathetic, as a judge you must remember that, first and foremost, our carnival is advertised as an **illuminated** procession. For this reason, if an entry has a complete lighting failure, then no points can be awarded for lighting. The entry should not be judged on how good it might have been with full lighting. Whilst all points under the lighting category will be lost, other categories will inevitably also suffer. Presentation and general effect cannot be as good without lighting as it would have been with it.

In the case of partial failure of lighting, the lighting should be judged according to the effectiveness of the remaining lighting. The absence of one light bulb is unlikely to do anything at all to detract from the quality and effect of an entry. It has to be at the discretion of the judge as to the degree of the failure and how it impacts on the competitor's performance.

Entries suffering lighting failure of any degree should always be judged.

Should I give a club the chance to get their lights back on before I judge them? – Yes, if time permits. Seek advice from one of the entry's stewards to see if the lights will be back on in the near future. Obviously this may be difficult to tell, you will have to form your own opinion. If you believe there is a reasonable chance, then move along with the entry until its lights return or until you reach the end of your zone. You should not move out of your allocated zone, remember that the first entry with no lights may not be the last.

6. **Costume and make up.** – The effectiveness of the costume is the most important issue along with the appropriateness of the costume to the theme. Strict attention to detail (e.g. accuracy of military costumes) should not adversely effect the pointing for what is, after all, a CARNIVAL procession. Room must be left for artistic interpretation of costumes according to the way the entry wishes to portray its theme.

How do I cope judging classes 2 & 4 together?

The purpose behind this is to ensure that the Ker Cup is awarded to the best local entry. Therefore under all category headings, **gangs and features will be judged on the same scale.** This may not be easy where movement is concerned, but should be possible when it is considered that it is the effectiveness of movement or lack thereof which is being judged. When working out positions all entries are as one, **there should not be a first in each class.**

How can I tell whether or not to judge a tractor or a generator?

The guideline is quite simple, the tractor and/or generator should only be judged if it has clearly been decorated to be part of the entry. Generally speaking the decoration of both/either tractor and generator will enhance the entry. Entries who have gone to this extra effort will expect to benefit accordingly. Clubs are asked to put their numbers at the start and end of that which they wish to be judged, although clearly if lights have failed on a tractor or generator the entry should not be marked down.

Walking Entries

Each entry is marked under four different headings.

1. **Costume & Makeup:** details of costume and workmanship should be observed to assess how representative of the theme or character of the entry they are. Makeup and facial accessories if used should be complimentary to the costume. Props should be appropriate.
2. **General Effect & Entertainment Value:** The effect, impression created, the effort and enthusiasm portrayed by the entry should be assessed according to the theme.
3. **Presentation & Routine:** Walking or Mounted; with or without props, the ability to bring to life the theme of the entry and the effort to do so should be assessed.
4. **Ingenuity:** The skill in the use of costume and props to portray and enhance the theme. (Definition of Ingenuity = Cleverness, Resourcefulness, Initiative, Originality, Inventiveness, Skill, Creativity & Cunning)

Single Masqueraders and Pairs can be difficult to see, so judges in these classes need to be extra vigilant, it is very easy for them to get mingled up with other groups or pedestrians. The most important element of a walking entry is usually the costume and make up. Please use the full spread of points in all categories. **Entries should be self-propelled, with or without props.**

Walking Groups

Groups increasingly use wheeled props, often with personnel mounted on them. Judges should note that walking entries should not have more than three personnel mounted at any one time. **This does not apply in class 10 or 11 if they are self-propelled (i.e. using bikes, scooters etc).**

Cup Classes

There is no written points system for the cup classes, Judges should use their own discretion when judging, but use the above guidelines for direction in deciding the winners.

What should I do if I see an entry deliberately holding up the procession?

The smooth flow of the procession is critical to the future of our carnival. We therefore seek the assistance of our judges in controlling the flow of entries. If an entry is considered by a judge to be holding back, posing for video cameras perhaps, or creating an "advantageous gap" for judging or effect purposes then the judge should draw the attention of the procession marshals to the offender. If the offence is thought to be serious enough the Procession Officer with agreement from the President and Chairman has the authority to deduct 5 points from each judge's total for any offending entry.

What should I do after the procession?

Return to the Town Hall as soon as possible, entry for judges this year is via the front door in the High Street, this will give you direct access to the Town Hall balcony, saving you getting caught up in the congestion in Clare Street, this should speed up the delivery of your results. Refreshments will be available for you on the balcony, access is via the steps on your left as you enter the Town Hall, where you should add up your points, access will be for judges only. Please do not delay in the Town Hall, as the sooner we get your results the sooner we can publish the final results, we have a lot to do and a restless crowd. You should work out the positions you have given the entries, **please remember if you have a tie you need to skip a position, i.e. first, equal second, then fourth, not third!** Once you have finished all your calculations you should then hand your completed sheet to one of the adjudicators who will be in the room collecting them. The adjudicator will have all your additions and positions checked so that if there is any discrepancy they can confirm with you that all is correct before the final results are calculated. **It would be appreciated if all judges would remain in the Town Hall until their sheet has been checked.**