

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

ADJUDICATORS' COURSE
EDINBURGH - 1st MAY, 1982

T I M E T A B L E

9.30 a.m. Assembly at Headquarters, 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh
Morning Coffee / *Arrangements of Chairs, etc. as Seminar*

Mr. James Taylor - in the Chair

10.00 a.m. Talks on various aspects of adjudication by a
selected panel of adjudicators. *15 Mins. Talk - maximum*

11.00 a.m. Questions and Discussion *after each talk*

12 noon -

1.15 p.m. L U N C H

1.20 p.m. Assemble at Girl Guide Hall, 33 Melville Street,
Edinburgh

1.30 p.m. Adjudication of Children's Teams *Panel to take notes on Adjudication*

- Candidates will be asked to observe and adjudicate
between two teams dancing; this will take the form of
observing in groups of three and then each individually
giving a ten minute adjudication of the teams.

After having completed their adjudication candidates will
be free to depart but are welcome to wait for afternoon
tea should they wish to do so.

4.00 p.m. Afternoon Tea at Headquarters

*Miss Clemy Stewart.
Cornrigs.*

- Order: 1. Florence
2. Winnie Wadsworth
3. Mary
4. Duncan.

ADD ~~to~~ Even if selected act as scribe to gain experience

PREPARATORY WORK BEFORE ADJUDICATING A COMPETITIVE FESTIVAL.

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You may be interested, as I was, to learn that Competitive Musical Festivals have been active in Great Britain for over 100 years. To us as members of the R.S.C.D.S. IT is even more interesting that in 1923 the Glasgow Musical Festival Association was one of the groups instrumental in starting the Society. In fact, as we hope you will read in Dr. Milligan's biography, it was Mr. Bisset, a member of the Festival Association, who chaired the inaugural meeting in November of that year. The link continued and as early as 1925, the first competitive S.C.D. classes were added to the Festival syllabus. No need to tell you that the first adjudicator was Dr. Milligan, in whose steps we try to follow.

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at this point to find if numerical marking is required, which-if any!- marks are read out, and whether you will have the services of a scribe. (3)

Take scrap paper with you for your own jottings, in case it isn't supplied. ☉ Go to ☉ (Paragraph below line)

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Try to allow the very youngest teams to dance right through (8 times); if time presses, early teenagers 6 or 7 times. Adults, as you know, should dance the reel or jig 4 times and the strathspey 4 times; ~~but~~ they should be willing to accept any cuts lack of time forces on you, but try to let them know before ~~they~~ they come on to dance, if possible.

* Go to * at top of page. (Second paragraph)

THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF MUSIC FESTIVALS

106 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 3DB
Telephone: WELbeck 6371

JOINING THE FEDERATION AS AN ADJUDICATOR

The Federation does not maintain an official panel of adjudicators. Engagements are made by Festivals themselves, and in seeking adjudicators they look for not only good professional qualifications, but someone with personality and considerable skill in public speaking, who will interest both audience and competitors in the work being performed, and encourage an educated appreciation of standards.

Adjudicators who wish to become known to Festival organisers are strongly advised to attend the Federation Annual Conference which is held at a different venue around the country every year. In all fields of work it is essential to be on the spot and interested in what is going on; Festival work is no exception. Adjudicating is a highly specialised occupation, and Secretaries are extremely careful in engaging judges unless they have met them personally, or heard them speaking in public. Federation Conferences are friendly, sociable weekends and newcomers are made particularly welcome.

New adjudicators who have not competed at Festivals in earlier years are wise to attend as many Festivals as they can as members of the audience, to become familiar with the Festival routine and especially the marking system. It is also useful to compare one's own judgement with that of very experienced adjudicators and to observe their approach to the principles of the Competitive Festival Movement. A Festival is not meant to be an examination. A relaxed and friendly atmosphere of encouragement to the competitors should be felt, and a good adjudicator can make the more severe criticism which is sometimes necessary without disturbing this. The Federation Secretary will be pleased to advise on the larger Festivals where a new adjudicator could usefully observe several sections of the Festival during the course of a short visit, and benefit from listening to the more experienced adjudicators.

The Federation publishes a Year Book every March which contains the names of all individual members of the Federation (General Members Section). Member-adjudicators who have been engaged at an affiliated Festival in the year previous to publication are listed separately.

The British Federation of Music Festivals

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
President: SIR ADRIAN BOULT, M.A., D.Mus.(Cxon), Hon. D.Mus.(Cantab.), F.R.C.M.

Chairman:
SIR KNOWLES EDGE Oe.

Hon. Treasurer:
GEOFFREY T. BRIDGE, F.C.A.

Secretary:
Mrs. EILEEN CRAINE

106 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

Telephone: 01-935 6371

ADJUDICATING AT COMPETITIVE FESTIVALS

1. It is important to remember that a Festival should not be conducted like an examination. Performers appear for a report on their work, and to obtain constructive advice for the future. They are relying on you for help, and you should regard the occasion as one where you 'take their temperature', rather than work on a 'Pass' or 'Fail' basis. The atmosphere generated by the adjudicator should be cheerful and pleasant.
2. Two important qualities for an adjudicator (apart from expert knowledge), are kindness and detachment. Reports should contain some words of encouragement as well as the criticism the adjudicator feels must be made. This is equally essential when speaking from the platform.
3. Judge on the actual performance, and not on whether one candidate has more promise than another. You may however find it advisable to consider promise when it merits a comment on the mark sheet, or in cases where there is a tie for a place.
4. Start writing your comments during the performance. Delaying your own work makes for a long and wearisome class for competitors and audience.
5. Do not discuss the competitors with the Adjudicator's Steward, unless you require information on arrangements, or a regulation.

Speaking from the platform

6. A very helpful and sensible method of adjudication is to open your remarks on the platform with a general statement of what you hoped to hear in the performance of the item concerned. All competitors will benefit from this, and you can incorporate some criticisms which might be difficult to make individually.
7. Address your remarks to the entire audience, not just the competitors. The basic purpose of the Festival Movement is education, and you can help all your listeners towards a better understanding of the works being performed.
8. Keep to the point. Remember time is always short at Festivals, and your words must be chosen for economy and maximum help to the competitors in the time available. Avoid reminiscences or anecdotes.
9. Avoid most carefully any remarks which may be considered too personal. A competitor who stands badly may have some handicap. It is better when in doubt to couch advice in general terms, and address all the competitors on say, the importance of good posture for singing, or verse-speaking, or whatever the case may be.
10. Avoid also any criticism of the quality of teaching. The adjudicator's business is only to judge the performance. If you feel that some guidance must be given, it should be worded with care. To give an example: Own Choice

continued

pieces often show uncertainty of judgement on the teacher's part, rather than that of the competitor. An adjudicator can often help tactfully by suggesting that the competitor might also enjoy working on other pieces 'such asetc!.

If you have any criticism of festival arrangements, or choice of test pieces, refrain from making this from the platform. Matters of this kind are best discussed with the Secretary afterwards.

Marking

11. Local attitudes to levels of marking vary considerably. It is advisable to ask the Secretary before you begin about the usual level of marking at that Festival, bearing in mind the following paragraph:
12. Most experienced adjudicators mark between 70 and 85. 90s should only be awarded for very exceptional work. Palliative marking only misleads the competitor, and does not spur him to further efforts to improve.
13. Written remarks are more eagerly read if they begin with a word of encouragement or praise, provided it is sincere.

Business arrangements with Festivals

Although the Federation continually urges Festivals to be business-like in their correspondence with adjudicators, Secretaries change frequently, and volunteers without a business training do not always appreciate the need for exactness. It will be helpful to both sides if you ensure that the answers to the following points have been obtained well beforehand in writing.

1. Exact dates; number of sessions; which classes; fee, and whether expenses are extra or included. The usual procedure is for expenses to be treated as an extra.
2. Venue of the Festival
3. The time at which the adjudicator should be there, ready to start the engagement, and the time when he can expect to finish.
4. Transport: check on suitable trains, or how long it will take by car. Is the adjudicator being met? If not, directions on reaching the Hotel and Festival venue may be needed.
5. Ask for a copy of the syllabus and programme of the previous festival, and also for the Syllabus (when ready) relating to your engagement. Every festival is different, and studying these details beforehand will help you in doing the work well.
6. Have ready a few copies of a paragraph giving some information about yourself and your work, in case this is required for inclusion in the festival syllabus.

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AS ADVICE TO ADJUDICATORS

- A. Before aspiring to become an Adjudicator, a dancer should not only have had ample teaching experience, but preferably should have had experience of festival work either as the teacher or a member of a competing team.
- Failing this, he should attend festivals as a member of the audience or, better still, as a writer for an official adjudicator.

B. BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

1. Choice of test pieces. These must be carefully graded to suit the age and experience of the dancers. To encourage entries, it is advisable to avoid very complicated dances. Where alternatives are suggested for each class, the chosen dances must be as nearly as possible of equal difficulty, in order to ensure accurate adjudication. As a rule, dances of more than 32-bars should be avoided, especially strathspeys. ~~Ideally~~ all test pieces should be from R.S.C.D.S. publications. Where this is not insisted on by the festival committee ^{and where the adjudicator cannot insist that this takes place}, competitors should be asked to submit a copy of the instructions and music to the adjudicator, at least one week before the festival. - *But where would "correctness to book" come in?*

2. An adjudicator should ascertain in good time how each festival is run, e.g. do they expect the mark of every team to be read out? Is there a system of marking for Honours? - and so on.

3. Time is precious at festivals, and often a dance cannot be allowed the full eight repetitions. It is kind to let children's teams know beforehand how often they will be expected to dance, and, of course, the younger the dancers the more repetitions should be allowed.

C. DURING THE COMPETITION

1. The adjudicator should try to note briefly the points which must be stressed during the adjudication. Note: It is out-dated and unnecessary to read every team's adjudication from the sheet.
2. Though dancing is an art and each adjudicator necessarily has his individual preferences, certain basic rules and observances are laid down by the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, and an official adjudicator must accept the Society's interpretation of each dance. In no circumstances should marks be deducted for what is the recognised R.S.C.D.S. form of the dance.
3. The adjudicator should look for gay, simple, effortless dancing, with no stylised affectations of dress or manner.

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Miss Florence H. Adams' talk to the first Adjudicators' Course,
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